

CASTLE OF BLACK IRON

Chapter 18: This Is My World



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Fascinated by the “Aura Value” option, Zhang Tie couldn’t wait to open it. Being similar to the two other options opened yesterday, there was a message at the top of the log about the “Aura Value” of the Castle of Black Iron. Compared to “Merit Value” and “Basic Energy Storage”, “Aura Value” gave Zhang Tie a better understanding of this world.

——Plants perform as the bridge between matter and living beings. Aura originates from the life energy produced from the combination of plants and matter. It is the basis that all living beings rely on to survive and evolve in which the universe and mother nature can coexist in harmony. The more aura value, the faster the plants will grow. With aura value, other living beings can become more energetic and further evolve.

Similar to the logs of the two previous options, the description of aura value shocked Zhang Tie once again. Zhang Tie read it more than ten times repetitively and finally understood why everybody liked the color green. Green was the color of plants, and plants represented the existence of aura, food, water sources, and all other living beings. A greener place meant more plants and more living beings. Try to imagine which would be a better place for humans to survive and reproduce: an unsettled desert or a lush mountain forest. Naturally, the latter option was more proper, as it contained more living resources and aura or life energy.

A tiny seed buried in the soil could grow into a towering tree in several years. When you think about it, isn't that spectacular? It was still a seed without soil; however, it's a life form that changes greatly in the soil. The change is due to the release of life energy when the two combined. Plants convert matter and energy that could not be directly absorbed and utilized by people and animals into visible food, fresh air, and invisible aura which would nourish all living beings and built a bridge between matter and living beings. As far as Zhang Tie was concerned, the rule of the harmonious coexistence between the universe and mother nature was a benign interaction between matter, plants, and all living beings. Plants could constantly provide aura for all living beings, while the living beings should ensure that the process of aura provision was not destroyed as well as creating proper environments for plants. A teacher once taught him that the reason the human world deteriorated and broke down before the Catastrophe was essentially due to human beings constantly destroying mother nature and violating the rules of the universe. At that time, human beings were extremely arrogant. They treated everything provided by mother nature and the universe as resources and objects that could be willingly plundered and destroyed rather than their homeland and co-inhabitants which they could rely on. Instead of giving gratitude and repayment, people were constantly demanding more and more. As a result, a series of problems occurred. This explained why the orthodox school education system treated the arrival of the Catastrophe and the Star of God as the disaster of human beings, while many extreme sects considered them as the rebirth of human beings. In the eyes of the extreme sects, the Catastrophe and the Star of God represented the end of the wrong behavior of human beings and the beginning of the new behavior for human beings.

Finishing reading the first message, Zhang Tie thought for a while before moving his eyes onto the next message that automatically appeared:

——On the evening of May 13, 889th year of the Black Iron Calendar (Friday), some potato seeds have begun to sprout in the Castle of Black Iron. The aura in the Castle of Black Iron has been slowly increasing. Attention, Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord. The aura in the Castle of Black Iron grows directly proportional to the quantity and the variety of plants within the space. The more high-end plants that could form different levels of life energy required by the Complete Ecological System, the more aura would be provided for the space within the unit time.

After reading the second message on “Aura Value”, Zhang Tie was very happy, as he had figured out another secret about this mystical space. He learned that several sprouted potatoes could provide 0.3 unit of aura value for the Castle of Black Iron overnight. What about other plants? Take those purple-leaf parasol trees on both sides of the street neighboring his home for example. Although Zhang Tie had not learned too much about the classification of plants, he could still instinctively feel that a tree could provide more aura to the space than several potatoes. As for how much aura would be provided by the tree, Zhang Tie could not answer it for the time being; however, this didn’t matter. Zhang Tie glanced over the spacious space and thought to himself, “Whatever it is, if only it could grow up.” Other unlikely and weird ideas came to Zhang Tie’s mind. As he was in the Castle of Black Iron currently and there were many more secrets to be discovered, Zhang Tie had to put down the unlikely and weird ideas for the time being.

Closing the basic attributes of the Castle of Black Iron, Zhang Tie touched another branch on the menu and opened the “Space and Topographic Creation” option. When he selected this function last time, the system tip stated, “As each of the three storage values of the Castle of Black Iron is 0, the ‘Space and Topographic Creation’ function is unavailable!” Zhang Tie really wanted to see what the surprise was when none of the three storage values were 0.

When he opened the “Space and Topographic Creation” option, there was truly a surprise — a menu of three lower-class items appeared as follows:

——Surface Layer

——Crypt Layer

——Underwater Layer

The options of “Crypt Layer” and “Underwater Layer” were both gray.

According to his experiences, Zhang Tie knew that they were currently not available, thus he pressed the option “Surface Layer”. Once it was opened, a three-dimensional image of about 0.09 m² appeared in front of Zhang Tie. After careful inspection, Zhang Tie found that this three-dimensional image was a miniature map of the entire space of the Castle of Black Iron. The entire image was so intricate that even the steel bar that Zhang Tie used to mark the ground was displayed. Feeling like the image in front of him should be able to rotate for convenient observation, Zhang Tie attempted to rotate the virtual three-dimensional image. Unexpectedly, it truly rotated along the direction of Zhang Tie’s force and presented the original appearance of the Castle of Black Iron from a different point of view. Zhang Tie’s excitement rose as he continued to rotate the image by 360 degrees and viewed his Castle of Black Iron from all possible angles. Besides the function of rotation, Zhang Tie also found that any part of this three-dimensional image could be enlarged or shrunk. When he moved his two hands to opposite directions on the map in a manner that was akin to drawing open the door curtain, the map would enlarge. Similarly, when he put his two hands on the map and drew them close to one another in a manner that was akin to closing a window, the map would shrink. When he moved one hand towards a direction, the angle of the view on the map also changed. He could observe each detail on the map in a more intricate manner through a casual change of size and view angle.

Really interesting! Zhang Tie played with the three-dimensional map as if he was playing with a magic square or a toy. He made drawings in the air to enlarge or shrink the entire three-dimensional map. He kept playing with it for more than ten minutes before he carefully studied other details. Even now, it was named “Space and Topographic Creation”. It was never just that simple.

He found no other functional options on the entire three-dimensional map. The moment he felt curious and wanted to do some “creation”, a line appeared before his eyes.

—— Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord, all creations are in line with the concepts of “Visualized Creation”. Namely, once any topographic image in your mind is cast onto the map, the Castle of Black Iron could create it for you.

What the #\$! So easy! Zhang Tie was determined to give it a try. Adjusting the map so that he was directly looking down on it, Zhang Tie gazed at a location on the upper left area of the map and imagined a pond of more than ten square meters. Gradually, a pale blue shadow of more than ten square meters appeared in that region. Although it was blurry, its outline was generally consistent with what he had in mind. Visualization was really energy consuming. With Zhang Tie’s present capabilities, he could not completely imagine all the details of the pond; therefore, the pale blue shadow of the pond was unclear on the map. He was unable to present it clearly no matter how much he concentrated on the pond in his mind. At this moment, another message appeared:

——Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord, the completeness of the details of your created topography is lower than 5%. Do you want the system to use the Optional Nature Creation Law to compensate for the lacking details? After the Nature Creation Law is used to complete the establishment, the Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord can adjust it manually!

——Yes ... No

Naturally, he chose “Yes”. The moment he pressed the “Yes” option, the blurry, pale blue pond became clear. As imagined by Zhang Tie, a more natural and life-like pond appeared in the upper left corner of the map. Staring at the virtual scene, Zhang Tie heaved a deep sigh. Although somewhat losing face, he had to admit that the system did it better than himself. After the past few days of practicing Mental Arithmetic by Abacus, the only thing he could visualize was an abacus. For his current self, it was difficult to even visualize an abacus, let alone a pond.

After the general topographic creation, the alleged “manual” adjustments became much easier. Namely, the general topographic creation adjusted the “size” and “outline” of the pale blue virtual scene, and its “location” on the map was made by making hand gestures as if one were kneading dough. As for other more detailed aspects, he could not create them with his hand. However, the “Space and Topographic Creation” function was a dozen times more interesting and convenient than Zhang Tie had anticipated. With this function, Zhang Tie saw the entire Castle of Black Iron as a very big, interesting toy — really #ing interesting!

Zhang Tie was very thrilled and almost sprang up. However, as he was grinning, a line of words appeared on top of the pale blue pond and instantly shocked Zhang Tie:

——This Topographic Creation Requires the Following Resources:

Basic Energy Storage——56879;

Aura Value——6878;

Merit Value——912

Do you want to create it?

——Yes ... No

Create crap! Staring at those items and the data behind them on the Basic Attributes column, Zhang Tie almost cried. According to the present schedule, even if he did all the housework, including sweeping the floor and washing clothes, he could only gain 3 merit values a day. It meant that he would have to do housework for at least two years to accumulate 912 points of merit value. As for aura value, he could see a beacon of hope from the sprouted potatoes. It could be easily achieved by planting more on the land. Once the plants were alive, the aura value would grow constantly. However, the basic energy storage made Zhang Tie really desperate. It required 56879 units of basic energy storage. The common pyrite that weighed almost 1 kg could only be traded for 0.2 units of basic energy storage when thrown into the Pool of Chaos. Did it mean that the 56879 units of basic energy storage required at least 140,000 kg (or 280 tons) of common pyrite?

Zhang Tie finally realized that he could not afford the huge toy known as “Space and Topographic Creation”. It seemed that this system complied with the strict law of “equivalent exchange”, implying that without sufficient resources being listed, the system would ignore you. Everything inside this space required the consumption of various materials and large amounts of efforts. No pie dropped from the sky even though the “Handsome and Magnificent Castle Lord” spent efforts for the achievements. That’s why not everybody could afford this huge toy!

Zhang Tie had no other choice but to check the other functions to find one that was affordable.

He then closed the “Space and Topographic Creation” option and opened the “Living Beings and Species Management” option...