

The Mighty Dragons Are Dead #Chapter 241: 0241: The Deceased and the Ennobled (First Update) - Read The Mighty Dragons Are Dead Chapter 241: 0241: The Deceased and the Ennobled (First Update)

Chapter 241: The Deceased and the Ennobled (First Update)

That evening, Liszt hosted a feast for his friends at Tulip Castle, a total of fifteen people. They were all descendants of knights who could not acquire an earldom or Apprentice Knights currently studying at the Knight Academy.

Among them, the ones Liszt valued most were two Earth Knights: Rick Trace, who had previously said he would follow him on the noble estate, and Griffin Haystack, an orphan.

Griffin's Dou Qi attribute was Lightning, and he had just turned twenty. His combat ability was decent, but his only flaw was a stutter.

Nobles pay attention to their appearance and also to their bearing. One can be ugly but not disabled; a stutter is categorized as a disability. Therefore, Griffin was never selected for the Knight Order of Coral City and was deeply saddened by this for a long time. Liszt's predecessor even mocked Griffin for it.

But later, when he found Griffin to be a good, honest person, he gradually felt a sense of camaraderie—of course, maybe he hoped to have a disabled person by his side to set himself off.

Now, Liszt was very satisfied with Griffin.

Being honest and hard-working, and seeing himself as a "kindred spirit," Griffin could be said to be a most suitable candidate for a follower, with assured loyalty.

Besides Rick and Griffin, the rest were Apprentice Knights.

They might suffice as officials, but fell far short of the requirements for a Knight Squad.

"By my count, with Marcus, Lasse, Rondo, Rick, and Griffin, I already have five members for the Knight Squad. If I can gather seven more, I can form a team," Liszt considered quietly in his room, where he had lived for over a decade, after sending off his drunken friends.

Knight Squads work as units, able to practice combined strike techniques, mixing Dou Qi into a single force.

Having a Knight Squad is what grants the right to enter the battlefield. As for Liszt himself, he could entrust his safety to Douson and the hired Paris—believing that the explosive power of one man and one dog could save him from disaster, even if he were chased by a Sword Saint.

“Besides, I am the Earl’s son; logistics work is my duty!”

If Levis could engage in logistical work on the battlefield, there’s no way he could lose to Levis; he must seize the logistics work for himself.

...

The next day was the celebration banquet.

All the nobles from near and far of Coral Island rushed to Tulip Castle, and together with their servants, the place was as noisy as a marketplace.

The members of the Knight Order who participated in the battle and had no noble rank—certain they would not be receiving one this time—collected their Gold Coin rewards and promptly returned home to their families.

Seven knights without titles were left behind.

These seven had distinguished themselves greatly in the battle and could be knighted as Honored Knights. They were all immersed in immense joy, eager for the knighting ceremony to begin immediately.

In fact, there were another three knights eligible for knighthood, but they were followers of two Viscounts and thus could not attend the celebration banquet hosted by the Earl.

At that moment in Tulip Castle, there were three Viscounts—Trick Weed, Jonas Shattered Stone, Levis Tulip.

Sixteen Barons, including Liszt Tulip; seventy-six Honored Knights, and with the newly promoted seven, there were eighty-three.

“If I remember correctly, the Earl had eighty-two Honored Knights before. It seems we lost six Honored Knights on the battlefield this time,” he noted.

The sacrifice of knights was quite normal, and the loss of Honored Knights was not rare. The death rate for Barons and higher-ranking nobles decreased—the role of a Landlord is to command his following of Knights. It is the followers who are supposed to fight to the death in dangerous charges; the Landlord certainly wouldn’t lead the charge himself.

Just like Liszt, when forming his Knight Squad, he never intended to count himself as part of it.

He had his own reasons for not participating in battle. Mounted on Douson, he was a rearguard presence: "With me here, no need for panic. Charge!" he would say.

"

It's said that there are two types of charismatic leadership—"follow me" and "go for me."

Leaders who say "follow me" can win the support and love of their subordinates, thus unleashing great combat power; still, Liszt always chose "go for me." How can the life of a rustic compare with that of a noble! Leaders who say "follow me" are often already etched on monuments, while those who say "go for me" are always your leaders!

"In fact, this statement isn't very precise. There should be three types of landlords."

The first type says, "Everyone, follow me, and we'll share the benefits." The second type says, "Everyone, go for me, and we'll share the benefits." The third type says, "Everyone, go for me, and I'll keep all the benefits."

"I most aspire to be the third type of landlord, but for now, I'll settle for the second type."

...

The knighting ceremony before the victory banquet was lively, with seven new Honored Knights holding the medals symbolizing their Honored Knighthood, their eyes brimming with hot tears.

There is a vast chasm between commoners and nobles, often requiring the effort of several generations to bridge.

But once they have a title, even if they die on the battlefield, their descendants will inherit the title, an honor that is hereditary and unshakeable—unless there are no offspring or a grave mistake is made that rarely leads to deprivation of the noble title.

"I pledge to serve you to the death, my lord!"

The seven Honored Knights knelt on one knee, solemnly performing the standard knightly loyalty ceremony to the Earl.

The Earl sat in the main seat, accepting their homage, and spoke words of encouragement and caution, essentially meaning— I hope you will serve me diligently in the future. I have bestowed upon you your titles, and I can also take them back. Maintain a humble attitude, adhere to the knightly virtues, and don't disappoint me.

After the knighting ceremony, the atmosphere instantly peaked.

The Honored Knights were drinking and boasting downstairs, while the Barons, Viscounts, and Earls were doing the same upstairs. Whether they had earned their stripes in battle or not, everyone was drinking heartily.

Liszt still wasn't accustomed to such boisterous banquets and lapsed into silence. He only raised his glass when others toasted to him, exchanging a few complimentary words—Liszt's identity was no longer just that of the Earl's useless son but that of a Viscount on the rise.

Even Baron Henderson, who had loudly cursed Liszt for his greed in the territory, sought an opportunity to offer Liszt a pleasing smile and a toast, rather than complaining to the Earl.

"Baron Liszt, I wish Fresh Flower Town a prosperous business."

One does not strike a smiling face; Liszt simply responded, "I also wish your territory a prosperous business."

Baron Henderson wanted to say something more, but he opened his mouth and said nothing. Instead, he drained his glass in one gulp, smiled ingratiatingly again, and returned to his seat.

The most eye-catching young generation at the banquet.

Was not Liszt, but his brother Levis.

This time on the battlefield, though Levis was in charge of logistics and communication, seeing blood and killing enemies had made him a qualified heir in the eyes of the Earl's followers. With the Earl being too austere, barely wetting his lips with his drink, the followers naturally focused their attention on Levis.

Liszt was merely affected by the fallout.

But even with his reticence, his efforts to remain unnoticed, by the end of the victory feast, he was thoroughly intoxicated.

As the servants helped him to bed, his hazy mind harbored a single thought, "Someday, I will also rise to the rank of Earl. It will be me urging others to drink, with no one daring to coax me to drink!"

A new week, please vote for me~

“

Chapter 242: Brad's New Life (Second Update)

After a good night's sleep, the Dou Qi within had dispelled the symptoms of his hangover, and Liszt returned to his lively and vigorous self.

He proposed his departure to the Earl, “The annual festival is just two days away, I need to return to Fresh Flower Town to attend to some estate matters.”

“Perfect timing, I was about to send someone to notify you about something,” the Earl said.

“Please speak, Father.”

“Last night, ships from Coral Island arrived; the vice butler of Long Taro Castle came aboard one of them, bringing a letter from your uncle Mesiro. The letter mentions that your grandfather's health has not recovered and this year is likely to be the last time he celebrates the festival. Thus, your uncle hopes that you and your siblings can celebrate the festival at Coral Island.”

The end of Marquis Merlin's life... Liszt felt an inexplicable sadness. He was very fond of the Marquis who had once gifted him the Gemstone Weapon Bloodsword, not to mention the emotional connection from the memories of his former self.

“When do we depart?”

“You'll return to Fresh Flower Town today, come back here tomorrow, and the day after, you all will set sail together. Two days of sailing will get you there just in time for the festival,” the Earl determined the schedule.

“Understood.”

...

“Finally, time to go back!” Paris stretched and perked up, “I've started to miss the egg rolls of Fresh Flower Town already; heaven knows why Coral City doesn't have egg rolls!”

“Not every place is called Fresh Flower Town,” Liszt quipped as he donned his cloak and mounted his Li Dragon Horse.

The black warhorse, black Magical Beast Leather Armor adorned with a bright red cloak, with the hood not worn over his head, revealing his short light golden hair that fluttered in the cold wind.

He could dazzle a whole crowd of young ladies and spinsters alike.

“Young Master Liszt is just too handsome!” The maids cleaning outside the castle gates blushed at the sight of him.

They might be imagining some sort of Mary Sue or Tom Sue story.

Paris overheard the maids’ whispers and rolled her eyes, but when she saw Liszt on horseback, waving goodbye to Lady Penelope, Li Vera, and Lady Marie, she too was struck with vertigo, overwhelmed by a towering Tom Sue aura that invaded her entire being.

“No man should be this handsome!”

Riding all the way and arriving at Fresh Flower Town, snowflakes were still falling from the skies of the town, the snow on the ground wasn’t much. The main road was well-cleared; during the days Liszt was away, the officials and serfs of Fresh Flower Town had obviously not slacked off.

After returning to the castle, the officials immediately came to report their work.

“Consultant Goltai, these people are Brad’s family; they’ve moved to Fresh Flower Town. You are to arrange housing for them. Also, Philip, send for Brad. I have some matters to assign to him.” After Liszt spoke, he added another question, “Have the iron ingots the caravan brought back been handed over?”

“The iron ingots have been stored in the castle’s warehouse, and without your instructions, they have not been given over to the smithy to forge.”

“Keep three thousand jin of iron ingots in the warehouse, take ten thousand jin out and give them to the smithy. Make a batch of construction tools and woodcutting tools as much as you can. The harvesting of the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns will be a big problem in the future.”

“As you wish.”

Soon, the crystal craftsman Brad, who was carving volcanic glass vessels, hurried over to the castle. Then he learned from his family that the Earl had ordered their relocation to Fresh Flower Town to become Liszt’s subjects—a life to be lived in Fresh Flower Town hereafter.

Brad’s heart was in turmoil, going from a comfortable city dweller to a small-town bumpkin.

But he dared not complain, for this was the Earl’s command. On Coral Island, no one dared to defy the Earl’s will, not even the noble lords.

Seeing Brad's reluctance, Liszt was in a good mood and offered a rare consolation, "Brad, don't worry about your future life; the wonders of Fresh Flower Town will exceed your imagination."

"I... Lord Landlord, I'm not worried about living," Fresh Flower Town is very beautiful, and the food is delicious—I know all that. But I... I'm worried about my job; I can't get any crystal carving work here, oh heavens, I feel like I might starve to death." The more he thought about it, the sadder he became, almost crying.

"I've told you, don't worry about your livelihood, and there's even less need to worry about work. You just need to work for the castle, for me. I can assure you of your income, it won't be less than what you earned in Coral City."

Brad was a craftsman level artisan, and Liszt valued him highly because he could not only carve crystal but also volcanic glass—this meant that future glass carving could entirely be entrusted to Brad—glass was a product that Liszt was bound to research eventually.

After offering a few simple words of comfort, he quickly grew impatient; even the most skilled craftsmen were just commoners in his presence.

A few kind words if he felt like giving face, or a direct whipping if he didn't: "Isaiah, remember to build a crystal workshop in the workshop district and let Brad take charge."

"As you wish."

The town's affairs were not too few, yet not too many either.

At least, the annual festival of Fresh Flower Town had to be organized—it was a celebration enjoyed by every country. The town also needed a festival so that the denizens could relax and strengthen their sense of unity.

Goltai, as the consultant, could manage this year's annual festival for him; Marcus could be sent to Black Horse Island to preside over the festival there.

With Isaiah, Blair and others taking care of the territorial engineering projects, he felt at ease.

Moreover, he had decided to let Zambrotta start his duties ahead of schedule, first serving as the town's legal officer and assisting Isaiah with the management of the construction projects.

Lasse and Rondo, the two Earth Knights, were plainly sent home for the holiday—after all, they had not officially followed him yet.

This way.

The report concluded.

He dismissed the officials.

Liszt began dealing with the castle's private matters, instructing Butler Carter, "I must return to Tulip Castle tomorrow, for this year I will spend the annual festival at Long Taro Castle on Red Crab Island. Hence, I won't be back for at least ten days to half a month; preparations must be made. Mr. Carter, look after the castle for me."

"Of course, your will is my guide to action," Carter replied elegantly.

"Then help me choose gifts first. What gifts shall I bring for grandfather, uncle, and cousin? With Levis and Li Vera taking the lead, there's no need for me, a mere country baron, to spend too much. It's best to bring some special products—the Fresh Flower Soap is quite good, and the oyster sauce as well!"

Oyster sauce was the specialty of Oyster Village, with half of the Fresh Flower Caravan's seafood business revolving around selling oyster sauce.

The nobles of Coral Island needed oyster sauce for their cooking.

It was very fitting as a gift, especially since men, in particular, would like the effects of oyster sauce.

With oyster sauce and Fresh Flower Soap as the foundation, Carter helped to select a few more supplementary gifts, completing the list of presents. They then discussed issues like how to care for the Elf Bugs.

Suddenly, Carter remembered something, "My lord, there's a matter I'm unsure how you wish to arrange."

"What is it?"

"When Old Difo from the dog kennel came to check on the Earth Matron, he said she might give birth within the next half a month. I wonder how you plan to handle it?"

"Did he give an exact time?"

"He can only estimate broadly. Should I have Old Difo called over?"

"Hmm." Liszt nodded, the Fierce Earth Dog whelps in the Earth Matron's belly were magical beasts he held in high regard, essential for the future Fierce Earth Dog army.

Chapter 243: Goose Feathers Sent Thousand Miles (Third update, bonus for 2400 subscriptions)

The Earth Matron's status in Fresh Flower Town could be described as pitiful. Ever since she was captured, she had not only been used as Douson's breeding machine but had also been confined to a secret room. Her ferocity had long been worn away, leaving only subservience.

This was the destruction of life, the erasure of nature.

If there were animal protection organizations on the island, Liszt would definitely be nailed to the pillar of shame, subjected to the spitting and cursing of thousands. Unfortunately, there were none on the island, and humans had no sympathy for Magical Beasts—weren't Magical Beasts born to be killed for their meat and to earn humans Gold Coins?

The snow was thick in Dog Prison these days; no one had come to clean it.

Although it was true that the Earth Matron no longer released magic, having almost forgotten the existence of Rock Spike, to ordinary people, she was still a huge threat.

"Lord Landlord, it, it really won't kill me?" Old Difo followed Liszt shakily into Dog Prison. "I, I, I think I'll just look at it from outside the Dog Prison."

"Don't be nervous, Old Difo, with me here, what are you afraid of?" Liszt said gently. "This time I want you to observe from up close, to have a clear idea of the approximate time of delivery for the Earth Matron... Don't be nervous, look, I'm already standing here. Has the Earth Matron made any dangerous moves?"

Old Difo wanted to step forward, but his legs wouldn't obey: "Lord Landlord, sir, a pregnant beast, when approached by strangers, will become enraged."

"The Earth Matron will not."

"I, I..."

Snap!

Out of patience, Liszt kicked Old Difo's rear with his boot: "If you're told to step forward and observe, then do it. Otherwise, go directly to my Retainer Knights and receive a hundred lashes!"

A hundred lashes could beat a strong man to death.

Kicked into a stumble, Old Difo finally overcame his fear of the Earth Matron and began to carefully inspect her condition around the cage.

The Earth Matron turned her head to watch Old Difo, her mouth slightly open, emitting a low growl.

Liszt casually threw a piece of jerky into the cage, and the next moment, the growling Earth Matron began wagging her tail and chewing on the jerky. Douson reached out its claw from outside the cage, eager to snatch the jerky; it had never known the concept of pity for the fairer sex.

After a moment.

Old Difo gave his conclusion based on his observations: “Lord Landlord, judging from the change in the Earth Matron’s physique and the moisture in her private area, she is not yet ready to give birth. She probably needs another half month of gestation. However, I can’t guarantee it; she might also give birth prematurely.”

Generally, dogs can give birth after two months of pregnancy. The Earth Matron is a Magical Beast, so her gestation period is somewhat longer, but, being a dog, it wouldn’t be much longer.

Old Difo, who had raised dogs for many years, was experienced with the gestation and birthing periods of ordinary dogs, but he could only guess when it came to a Magical Beast and couldn’t be sure.

Liszt had a rough idea in his mind.

His biggest concern was the offspring the Earth Matron would give birth to; it shouldn’t see anyone else but him when it opened its eyes—the reason Douson was so loyal was that it had seen Liszt upon opening its eyes.

If the Earth Matron gave birth in ten days, then Liszt could make it back from Red Crab Island before the young pups opened their eyes.

Otherwise, he would miss the moment the pups opened their eyes. By that time, the pups would likely see the Earth Matron first. Even though they could be trained from a young age, loyalty could not be completely assured. Liszt did not like this kind of uncertain loyalty—while humans could be bound by interests or kinship, it was difficult to control Magical Beasts other than through recognition of their master.

Take Marcus, for example; his family is all in Fresh Flower Town. Liszt trusts him greatly because the cost of Marcus’ betrayal is so high that it’s almost more than he can bear.

Essentially, these officials and knights find it very difficult to betray on Coral Island under the Tulip Family.

Consider Paris as well. The fact that she has a sister, Maggie, as a restraining factor means as long as Mrs. Harriet’s family can establish an unbreakable bond with Maggie,

it's also very hard for Paris to betray. Of course, there is still a risk of her betrayal, and establishing real trust will take time.

As a Black Dragon Childe, she possesses great research value, which makes it worth the risk for Liszt to keep her by his side—to study her slowly in the future.

After instructing the servants to clean Dog Prison thoroughly, Liszt, with Douson on a leash, reluctantly parted from Earth Matron.

...

He could only stay in Fresh Flower Town for one night.

Since the Fresh Flower Vessel was still docked at Black Horse Island, Liszt couldn't retrieve his Calming Sea Pearl, which made him uncomfortable—it was high time he asked Grandini Truth to forge another Calming Sea Pearl. Without it, he always felt a bit unsafe at sea.

Upon reaching Tulip Castle, he met Ranieri, the deputy butler of Long Taro Castle.

Ranieri had exquisite curly hair and the most fashionable steel lingo of high society, even more standard than Liszt's: "Young Master Liszt, Ranieri sends his greetings."

"Mr. Ranieri, how is my grandfather's health?"

"The old master can get out of bed and walk now, but he sustained serious injuries when he was young, leaving behind a chronic condition that Advanced Dou Qi can't heal. This has significantly dragged down the old master's health," said Ranieri gravely. As an old Sky Knight, Merlin Taro had fought in many battles when he was young, resulting in countless injuries.

While Dou Qi can certainly heal physical wounds, injuries that seriously affect the internal organs are hard to heal with Dou Qi, which is more suited for external wounds.

"I believe in my grandfather's incredible strength, enough to overcome any chronic condition and regain his health."

"Thank you for your blessing; we all think so."

After exchanging greetings with Ranieri, Liszt found Levis and Li Vera to inquire about their gift arrangements. As the heir to Tulip Castle, Levis naturally had a pile of gifts, all very high-end, including precious gifts from an earl to his father-in-law.

The gifts from Li Vera were much lighter—small but thoughtful presents. As a female noble, no matter how small the gifts she offered, no fault could be found.

“Let me see your gifts, Fresh Flower Soap and Fresh Flower oyster sauce? And what are these, egg rolls, bread, and longevity noodles?” After checking the gifts for Liszt, Li Vera asked, “What are longevity noodles?”

“It’s a very long noodle. Oh, I forgot you don’t know what noodles are yet. Noodles are a new food invented by Mrs. Abbie. A long strip of dough boiled in water, topped with condiments, and served with a couple of eggs makes a very delicious meal. Besides, the length of the noodles signifies longevity.”

“It’s very creative; I’m envious that you have a chef like Mrs. Abbie. My chef can only make bread and can’t even learn to fry an egg. But don’t you think these gifts are too light? Your grandfather once sent you a gemstone weapon. Are the gifts you’re sending worth a Gold Coin?”

“Probably... worth two Gold Coins,” Liszt admitted, feeling ashamed after Li Vera pointed it out. These gifts, while called local specialties, could also be seen as cheap local goods if seen less favorably.

After thinking it over, he added, “I’ll throw in a Black Pearl as well.”

A fist-sized Black Pearl can be made into defensive Magic Equipment worth over a hundred Gold Coins. With this addition, his gifts had both sentimental value and worth, no longer embarrassing.

“You have so many nice things.” Li Vera said with a hint of envy, “If your grandfather feels your sincerity, maybe he’ll send you another piece of gemstone equipment. What he gives me is always the latest fashion for noble ladies... I can make my own clothes!”

Chapter 244: Devil Cloud Strikes (Fourth Update, Additional for 2600 Subscriptions)
The sailing ships of Red Crab Island boasted sails that could block out the sun itself.

They bore the massive emblem of a “Sapphire,” the symbol of The Court, representing the nobility and authority of the Sapphire Family.

“This ship is enormous, much larger than those of the Tulip Family,” Paris said as she saw such a huge ship for the first time, filled with wonder.

Without regard for his noble image, Liszt sat on the deck’s stairway at the bow, leaning against the soft fur on Douson’s belly.

The strong sea breeze tousled his meticulously combed pale golden hair incessantly.

“This is The Court’s swift sailing ship, fast enough to reach 10 knots with the wind behind it. My grandfather once commanded The Court navy, a position of high authority

that garnered immense trust from the Grand Duke; he was gifted several swift sailing ships upon his retirement.”

The Long Taro Family was known for its shrewdness and were unwavering followers of the Grand Duke. Back when Marquis Merlin’s father was still an Earl, he had spent his entire fortune to support the war efforts of the previous Grand Duke.

It ultimately earned him the title of Marquis and the vast Red Crab Island.

Upon the ascension of the new Grand Duke, he especially relied on Marquis Merlin to command The Court navy. One must understand that for the Duchy of Sapphire, whose power extends across the sea, the navy is indispensable, underscoring the Grand Duke’s reliance on Marquis Merlin.

Unfortunately, Marquis Merlin fell ill and currently no longer holds a position at The Court.

As for Liszt’s uncle, Mesiro Taro, although also a Sky Knight, he did not inherit Marquis Merlin’s valor. The family’s magic potions had artificially boosted him until, at the age of thirty-five, he finally broke through to Advanced Dou Qi. At this age, Li Weiliam already leveraged the combat power of a Sky Knight to establish his own branch on Coral Island.

Despite Mesiro’s lackluster talent, it was said that his cousin Meioubao had promising abilities. At only twenty-five, he was already nearing the threshold of a Sky Knight and could break through at any moment.

One cannot deny the truth.

At the level of wealth accumulated by a Marquis Family, even a pig could be molded into a Sky Knight. Although there might be a gap compared to a naturally gifted individual like Li Weiliam, who consumed potions for his abilities, ensuring the family’s continuation was undoubtedly secured. With extra effort in nurturing the next generation, the family could always maintain its everlasting prosperity.

“You’re called Paris?” Li Vera, who had appeared on the deck at some point, greeted Liszt with a smile, and then struck up a conversation with Paris.

“Yes, Baroness Li Vera.”

“You’re not a local of Coral Island? Your accent is very different from those here.”

“I’m from the Eagle Kingdom.”

“A serf?”

“No, I’m a mercenary.”

“Hmm, there are many mercenaries on the mainland. How did you come to Coral Island and end up in the employ of my brother?”

“I came by ship. My sister was sold to Fresh Flower Town, and I tracked her here, then accepted the employment of Baron Li.”

“How are your combat skills?” Li Vera suddenly felt an urge to test Paris.

Liszt watched quietly from the side as Li Vera attempted to win over Paris, offering no comment, just a faint smile as he idly scratched Douson’s itch.

He actually wanted to see if Li Vera could coax Paris to switch sides, viewing it as a perfect opportunity to test Paris’s loyalty.

After glancing at Liszt, who was focused on grooming Douson’s fur, Paris turned back to Li Vera and said, “I am an Elite Earth Knight, Baroness Li Vera. Do you wish to challenge me?”

“I haven’t reached the elite level yet. It would be great to learn some combat skills from you!”

“As you wish!”

Thereupon, the two drew their longswords and began to duel. A noisy clash of metal ensued until Li Vera’s longsword was knocked out of her hand, marking the end of the encounter.

It was clear that Paris had held back.

She hadn’t even used the maneuver “Light and Shadow Tug,” defeating Li Vera, who possessed Dou Qi, simply through superior physical prowess.

After the competition, Baroness Li Vera openly praised Paris, chatted idly with Liszt for a while, and then left the bow to return to her cabin without directly expressing her intention to recruit Paris—Baroness Li Vera had indeed become more restrained than before and no longer tried to snatch the good things in front of Liszt’s face.

“Your sister is far inferior to you in strength,” Paris suddenly said.

“She was promoted to an Earth Knight before she came of age and is considered a very talented genius among female knights,” Liszt smiled calmly and said, “But my talent is even more exceptional.”

Paris turned away, not picking up on Liszt’s words.

...

After the female mercenary left, aside from a few sailors working on deck, only Liszt and Douson remained.

Douson was too large and did not like to stay in the cabin, so Liszt did not return to his either, continuing to accompany Douson on deck to enjoy the breeze.

Sailing at sea was an extremely boring affair. Liszt dozed off, his mind wandering aimlessly.

He thought about his journey to Long Taro Castle and whether he would see Asina Salmon again, the beautiful girl who had left a deep impression on him. But he was too shy to inquire about Asina's recent situation with the deputy butler Ranieri, considering Asina's age, it would be hard for her to remain single.

After all, she wasn't someone as picky as Li Vera.

"It wouldn't be right to say that Asina isn't picky either. Choosing me out of the crowd at the ball shows that she has very high standards when it comes to selecting a partner," he mused.

He was fantasizing about Asina seeing him again and expressing her love anew.

Suddenly, he heard the startled cry from the lookout at the top of the mast: "It's the Devil Cloud!"

Immediately following, the lookout blew the horn.

The low, penetrating sound of the horn instantly awakened everyone on the ship from their slumber, sending them scurrying out of their cabins. Liszt, of course, understood the meaning of the horn—it signified that the ship was in danger. He quickly stood up, grabbing Douson, and nervously scanned his surroundings.

Upon looking, he saw dark clouds rolling in on the horizon of the ship's forward course.

It was the tumult of dark clouds, interspersed with flashes of lightning, bearing down in a crushing line towards them.

"The Devil Cloud!"

"It's the Devil Cloud!"

The sailors cried out in alarm until they were silenced by the captain's voice: "Don't panic! Take down the sails! Drop the bow anchor immediately, and get the stern anchor ready."

The voice was not particularly loud, but the well-trained sailors immediately calmed their agitation and began expertly lowering the sails. A group of strong sailors operated the winch, casting the wooden bow anchor. Driven by the anchor, the huge wooden chain emitted a screeching friction noise as it rapidly sank to the seabed.

Lacking iron, the anchors were made of wood.

Though they were wooden anchors, they were made of ironwood, which sinks as soon as it touches water.

The weight of a single wooden anchor could be as heavy as half a ton. Once submerged, the massive dragging force immediately caused the sailing ship to halt and anchored it in place on the sea surface.

Liszt's heart was somewhat panicked.

As he hadn't brought the Calming Sea Pearl, he was already feeling uneasy, and now they truly encountered danger at sea. It would be all too easy for the vast sea to swallow a few people.

Seeing Levis rushing towards the captain's quarters, he followed, just in time to hear Levis's bellowing: "What is the Devil Cloud?"

The captain took out a flask, took a swig of liquor.

Steadying himself, he said, "Gentlemen nobles, there is no need for alarm, it is just a sea storm, in my life I have encountered more storms than white bread I've eaten. The Giant Crab was once a Court sailboat, with a massive tonnage capable of withstanding a storm. It can definitely hold its own against the Devil Cloud!"

Hearing his nonchalant explanation, everyone settled down a bit.

But Liszt, with his acute observation, noticed that the captain didn't seem as relaxed as he portrayed, and pressed, "Captain, tell us, what exactly is the Devil Cloud?"

Chapter 245: Marquis Cohen's Ghost Ship (Fifth Release, Bonus for 2800 Subscriptions)

Out on the vast sea, sea monsters are a topic that seafarers cannot avoid, but beyond the sea monsters, various storms and disasters are also an eternal topic of discussion.

In addition to these, ghost ships, sirens, and so on, are also frequently mentioned by sailors.

The Devil Cloud belongs to a tale that combines both storms and ghost ships, the origins of which Liszt is not unfamiliar with.

The captain pointed at the rolling black clouds on the distant horizon and the lightning within them, and spoke with undeniable fear, “The Devil Cloud... it is transformed from the resentful spirit of Marquis Cohen!”

“Marquis Cohen?”

Liszt quickly recalled that in his gemstone space, there was a Dragonbone Stabilizer. According to Captain Kostor of the Fresh Flower Vessel, the Dragonbone Stabilizer Technique originated from the Magician of the Cohen Marquis Family. However, with Marquis Cohen’s involvement in a court coup, the family was ruined, and the technique was lost.

“The Ghost Ship Captain Marquis Cohen, once the unrivaled King of the Sea of Azure Waves, legend has it that he ventured into the Devil’s Sea and acquired the Devil’s power!”

As the dark clouds and lightning drew closer, the captain trembled while saying so.

In this world, there are no legends of gods, but there are legends of devils. The sea beyond the Sea of Azure Waves is known as the Devil’s Sea because, according to legend, it is where devils roam, and even Dragon Knights dare not traverse the Devil’s Sea.

However, Levis, growing impatient, scolded, “What nonsense! Marquis Cohen was just a marquis from a hundred years ago who committed heinous crimes and was executed in a prison on Blue Dragon Island!”

The captain let out a hollow laugh, which felt foreboding, “But... there truly have been sailors who’ve seen a ghost ship within the Devil Cloud, flying the Goat Head Flag of Marquis Cohen. That goat head burns with green flames and can transform into a skull that sucks out all of a person’s blood!”

“Molodo!”

Ranieri, the deputy butler who had just arrived, immediately intervened upon hearing his words, “Stop your absurd tales. These noble guests have infinitely more knowledge than you. Keep your ghost stories to scare yourself! Hurry up and find a way to get through this storm!”

After finishing, Ranieri turned to the three siblings and said, “My apologies, Young Master Sun, Miss Sun, Captain Molodo has a penchant for making up wild stories. He surely has a way to get through this storm... let him stay in the captain’s quarters to command the sailors against the storm. You all go ahead and rest in the cabin.”

Liszt had no desire to rest, for he wanted to understand more about the Devil Cloud as mentioned by Captain Molodo.

But Levis, who was persuaded that Molodo was spouting nonsense, had already left first. Liszt thought for a moment and felt it wasn't appropriate to disturb Molodo during his command, so he reluctantly followed out of the captain's quarters.

Once in the cabin,

Ranieri had the servants bring some coffee and explained, "Young Master Sun, Miss Sun, please forgive Captain Molodo's ramblings. He was once the finest captain on Red Crab Island, commanding a sailboat and escaping from what was believed to be a deadly whirlpool. However, he later suffered a setback when his son died in a storm accident."

A melodramatic story came from Ranieri's lips.

Five years ago, the Ranieri family was harmonious and happy, with a handsome and charismatic only son whose dream was to command a sea vessel across the Sea of Azure Waves just like his father did. Pursuing this dream, the young man started as a sailor, worked his way up to first mate, and finally got the chance to command a vessel on his own.

However, three months later, the sea vessel did not return, and only two sailors from the ship managed to escape back.

They claimed the ship encountered a devil hiding within a storm cloud, a ghost ship that flew the flag of the Cohen Marquis Family, and swallowed their sea vessel.

Ranieri's son was devoured by the devil, and they, unconscious on a plank, were rescued by a passing merchant ship.

"Since then, Molodo has been convinced that the Devil Cloud will eventually come for him, seeing any storm cloud as the arrival of the Devil Cloud... He has a high standing on the ship, and the sailors are all personally trained by him. He says it's the Devil Cloud, so the sailors cry out Devil Cloud."

Levis frowned after listening and said, "Mr. Ranieri, if Molodo has already become a madman, why does Long Taro Castle still allow him to continue as a captain?"

Ranieri responded with an awkward tone, "His experience is an irreplaceable treasure. At sea, he always overcomes the storms; no one is better suited to be a captain than he is. When the old master was still fit to fight, he would embark on every expedition overseas on Molodo's ship, and they were always victorious."

Only then did Levis raise an eyebrow but said nothing further, after all, Molodo was a meritorious captain of Long Taro Castle.

Occasional folly is not enough reason to be cast aside.

Liszt, looking at his now calm brother and sister, still felt uneasy and promptly walked out the door, "I feel a bit suffocated, I'm going up to see what's happening."

"Baron, do you feel anxious?" Paris followed him out.

As he stroked Douson's fur, Liszt did not speak. Instead, he used the Eye of Magic to observe the dark clouds and lightning almost pressing down upon them. It was like a towering black wall roaring and severing the connection between this sea area and the world, isolating the fast sailing ship from everything else.

The sight of the sky split between black and white made one tremble.

Through the vision of the Eye of Magic, the black clouds and the rising and falling lightning seemed to hint at magic power presence, but it also looked like it was just a magical reaction caused by lightning. When lightning flashed, a trace of magic appeared; when it ceased, the trace vanished.

"It doesn't seem to be the magic of a ghost ship, just the lightning stirring the free-floating magic power." Liszt had seen thunder and lightning before and had noticed that lightning could provoke magical phenomena.

If there were a ghost ship, just as he could detect the 36D Ghost hidden within the Dragonbone Stabilizer, the Eye of Magic would undoubtedly reveal the magic of the ghost ship.

The absence of any sign meant this was not some Devil Cloud, but simply a pure storm.

He could relax his emotions.

But his heart was still tense and annoyed, "I should have brought the Calming Sea Pearl with me! When I return, I must ask Grandini Truth to craft a Calming Sea Pearl for me! No, I should turn the largest Black Pearl into a Calming Sea Pearl! I hate storms!"

His anxious emotions were swiftly repressed.

Touching Douson's fur, he said inwardly, "Douson has learned to swim, I could ride it adrift at sea... It can also release Rock Spikes in the water, killing ordinary sea monsters shouldn't be too difficult."

However, he quickly remembered a problem.

He immediately instructed his Retainer Knight Philip, "Go inform Sir Layden to remember to have someone guard the life rafts. If there's no issue, then fine, but if there is, we must ensure we control the life rafts."

"Yes, my lord!"

Suddenly, he thought of Paris standing right beside him, having heard his self-centered words, she would surely despise him and his loyalty would decrease.

But his mind worked very fast, turning his head, he directly said to an as yet nonplussed Paris, "If the storm capsizes the ship later, remember to stick close to me and don't wander off. There are only a few life rafts on board; they cannot save many. I don't want you to suffer an accident."

Confused, Paris immediately felt moved, "I... understand... Thank you, but I should be the one protecting you."

"Surviving is the only way to have a chance to protect me."

At this very moment, the Oscar statuette seemed to be waving at Liszt.

Chapter 246: Green Flame in the Darkness (First Update)
You jump, I jump!

(If you jump, then I jump.)

Back then, Little Lizhi stood on the ship's bow, bewitching countless ignorant young girls.

Liszt always thought, what's so touching about that? It's just cheating, depicted as though it were as intense as a thunderous strike igniting the earth.

But at this moment, looking at Paris, who was so moved that she stammered, he suddenly understood that women really are a different species from men. After uttering that sentence just now, he got goosebumps; it was truly disgusting. He found it hard to imagine how he could say it with even a slight hint of emotion.

The most crucial point was that Paris actually believed it and was touched, her eyes becoming tender.

"The Controlling Path is profound and vast... Speaking to men about honor and interests can be effective. But for women, interests and honor are secondary; emotions are what truly matter," he reflected. At this moment, many realizations dawned on Liszt. Practice brings true knowledge, and his understanding of women had ascended a level.

And he immediately realized why in his past life he'd always hit a wall when chasing after girls, even though he had personally made ice cream for them—he had failed to win their favor.

The reasons were simple, two in fact:

Not handsome enough, and not good at sweet-talking.

Now, not only was he handsome, but he had also learned how to sweet-talk: “The loyalty of the female mercenary toward me has probably risen by ten points. If the full value is one hundred, it should be around seventy by now.”

The lingering atmosphere vanished in an instant, as the black thunderclouds with lightning flashes had approached. The sky darkened completely, with only the flicker of lightning shining.

“Let’s go, back to the cabin!”

“Mhm.”

Douson was also pulled into the cabin.

In the cabin, Levis and Li Vera received the notice, and the three siblings exchanged glances, instantly sharing their thoughts—should danger arise, the life rafts would be allocated by them. If necessary, all the sailors on this ship could be sacrificed.

A pang in his conscience, Liszt sat down and sighed inwardly: “I hope nothing really happens. It would be best to arrive at Red Crab Island safely.”

Crack! Boom!

A bolt of lightning struck just outside the window, and the dark clouds enveloped the fast-moving ship, heralding the full assault of the tempest. The fierce winds howled, accompanied by the pitter-patter of large raindrops, and the once-stable ship started rocking wildly in the waves. Liszt, with one hand braced against the wall, calmly looked out the window.

The darkness was impenetrable, with no light to be seen save for the flashes of lightning.

It was as if a giant mouth was swallowing the whole ship. Faint shouts from the sailors could be heard on deck as they struggled to control the ship, preventing it from capsizing in the fierce wind. At sea, wind and waves are the main causes of accidents, and experienced captains know how to navigate through them.

At this time, the waves weren't that high, but the wind was very strong, and together with the rain, it slapped the fast-moving ship around like a toy.

The sister and brothers, who rarely experienced storms, grew tense for a while. Then, realizing that though the ship rocked and its bow and stern rose and fell, there was no sign of it capsizing, they began to relax. Looking out the window, they saw no sign of any Ghost Ship.

"Molodo was indeed talking nonsense; there's no Ghost Ship of Marquis Cohen." Levis said with disdain.

"Did Marquis Cohen really die in the prison on Blue Dragon Island?"

"Yes, that's no secret. After Marquis Cohen's involvement in the failed coup, he was immediately imprisoned by the Grand Duke. Once all of his family members had been captured, he was secretly executed in prison. The Sapphire Family didn't create their present glory by being kind and merciful."

Levis spoke with a tone of admiration. He held the Sapphire Family in high esteem.

...

It seemed just as Levis had said, this was only a common storm.

Half an hour later, the clouds still enveloped the sky, but the lightning had ceased, and both the heavy rain and fierce winds had gradually settled, as the swift sailboat regained its stability.

"The storm has finally passed," Li Vera stretched her back.

But before she could finish her sigh of relief, the lookout who had climbed to the top of the mast blew the horn once again, its deep sound spreading through the gloomy environment, giving off a sinister feeling.

"What's happening?"

No excessive words were needed, the continuous sound of the horn made everyone's heart sink sharply, all understanding the gravity of the situation—the storm had stopped, but the danger had not passed. There must be a new threat approaching. Normally, they might think of a sea monster, but having been haunted by the Devil Cloud,

everyone felt a sense of foreboding as though they had encountered the Devil Cloud itself.

That feeling became reality.

Suddenly a sailor cried out: “Ah, light! Light! Light! It’s the green light of the ghost ship!”

Liszt and the others quickly climbed from the cabin to the foredeck, then towards the darkness in the distance where a green glow was moving, heading in this direction, flickering as if truly a wraith of flames.

Others could only see a wraith of flames.

Using the Eye of Magic, Liszt saw signs of magic power, faint green magic outlining the vague shape of a tattered sailboat.

“It’s really a ghost ship!”

He shuddered violently. To say he was surprised was not quite right; he had seen specters before, and had even a Black Dragon Childe with ties to wraiths by his side; specters were not a legend but a very real existence. Nonetheless, he was very tense, as encountering a ghost ship on the vast sea spelled unmistakable danger.

“The spectral vessel of Marquis Cohen, could it actually be real?” Levis, swallowing his saliva, was equally tense beside him.

No one keeps their composure when facing the implausible sight of a ghost ship; even Douson, the Intermediate Magical Beast, sensed the unease in the air, his fur standing on end as he growled softly.

At that moment, Levis’s guard, Honored Knight Captain Layden stepped forward: “Do not panic, Sir Levis, Baroness Li Vera, Baron Liszt, we knights possess Dou Qi, even devils can be beheaded by our blades! Gather all knights, prepare for battle against the ghost ship!”

“Philip, Xavier, you lead the Retainer Knights and follow Captain Layden into battle!” Liszt made a swift decision.

Soon, a fighting team composed of knights and Retainer Knights was assembled.

Under Sir Layden’s command, everyone drew their weapons, prepared to face the ghost ship drawing closer, whose decaying, damaged, and spotty hull could now be seen clearly along with the Ram Head Flag hanging from the mast, engulfed in green flames—as Captain Molodo had said, this was the ghost ship of Marquis Cohen.

“Baron, be careful!” Paris drew her greatsword, guarding in front of Liszt, her tone grave, sensing the threat of the ghost ship.

Her inner turmoil was intense, her hand clenching white as she held onto Douson’s leash.

But on the surface, Liszt still maintained his composure, forcibly appearing calm: "It's just a ghost ship, it might not have been strong while alive, let alone in death. My Crimson Blood Sword has yet to taste fresh blood; it seems it couldn't wait for the battlefield, so let's use phantoms to whet its blade instead!"

Clang!

The Crimson Blood Sword was drawn, and the Dou Qi within him stirred, ready for combat.

Creak, sizzle, creak...

The ghost ship, drawing ever closer, stirred not a single wave on the sea surface, yet it made a grating noise of decay as it bore directly towards the swift sailboat's bow, without any intention to evade, just charging straight ahead.

Chapter 247: Overlapping Worlds (Second Update)

The sky was still shrouded in dark clouds, with not a single ray of light.

Only the ghost ship flickered with dots of greenish ghost fire, and the Goat Head Flag was ablaze with flames, illuminating parts of the sea.

"Hard to port! Turn! Turn!"

Marquis Molodo's voice pierced the quiet, followed by the ratcheting sound of the ship's wheel turning. But despite this noise lasting for a while, it was still impossible to feel the fast sailboat turning around.

"We've been hexed by the devil, Captain, we can't turn the ship!"

"There's no wind, no waves, even rowing won't get us anywhere!"

"It's over, it's truly the Devil Cloud, it's Marquis Cohen's Ghost Ship, coming to take vengeance on us!"

"I shouldn't have peeked at Lady Gaia bathing in the tavern, truly, I knew I'd face retribution!"

The sailors were already petrified.

Marquis Molodo was also out of options, the fast sailboat was as if under a freezing spell, motionless, waiting for the collision with the ghost ship.

“Douson, Multiple Stone Spikes!” Liszt, seeing the Captain was out of options, suddenly decided to strike first, pointing at the ghost ship and giving Douson the command.

Douson, very nervous due largely to the atmosphere, had no idea what the ghost ship opposite was, and upon hearing Liszt’s command, immediately spewed magic from his mouth.

Pfft!

Pfft!

Pfft!

Several Rock Spikes protruded from the ghost ship’s deck one after another, but unexpectedly, these Rock Spikes did no damage to the ghost ship; instead, they fell directly off the deck, and you could even hear them plunging into the sea with a splash, splash.

“This...”

Liszt wanted to say this was unscientific.

But after seeing dragons, elves, specters, and Black Dragon Wraiths, what else could be scientific? Perhaps, in this fantastical Different World, the existence of such things was scientific, merely inexplicable by science.

In a daze.

Some sailors had begun to scream, clutching their heads, some even wetting themselves from fear; the Captain slumped in the cabin, his bottle of wine wobbling, wanting to drink but unable to lift it to his lips; even the normally brave Li Vera gripped her longsword, shouting shakily: “Don’t!”

Unable to resist!

Everyone watched helplessly as the ghost ship, with an unavoidable posture, collided head-to-head with the fast sailboat, bit by bit.

“Hold tight!”

“Prepare for boarding combat!” Captain Layden raised his Knight’s Longsword and bellowed, “Knights, summon your courage and charge with me!”

His display was worthy of a knight’s stature, fearless and valiant.

However, the atmosphere wasn't as he imagined; the collision never came. The decaying ghost ship simply passed through the fast sailboat, like a mist, without any physical presence.

"Uh..."

With his Knight's Sword raised, Captain Layden was somewhat dumbfounded.

At that moment, the previously tense Levis suddenly burst with courage: "Liszt, Li Vera, gather around me! Captain Leo, organize the knights to hold the deck. We'll stay right here and collide with these damn phantoms. Knights with Dou Qi are invincible in battle!"

Liszt gripped his Crimson Blood Sword tightly, quickly joining Levis: "I was just thinking of fighting side by side with my brother and sister!"

As he spoke, he deployed the Eye of Magic in his eyes.

He could see the ghost ship burning with green ghost fire, its structure outlined by magic, slowly engulfing the fast sailboat. Or perhaps not engulfing, but passing through like a phantom. In the blink of an eye, the decayed hull was already rushing towards him.

The decayed wooden hull was tattered, and one could even smell the stench of rot.

It looked very real, but this ghost ship had already "swallowed" several sailors who failed to dodge in time. Their cries for help could still be heard as they sat on the deck calling out for salvation.

Creak!

The grating sound burst through the eardrums as the Eye of Magic, pushed beyond its limits, collapsed in an instant.

Liszt and the others were also swallowed by the ghost ship, and everything in front of them seemed to change in an instant. He was no longer standing on the deck of the once-fast sailing ship, but on the crumbling deck of the ghost ship. The surrounding area was shrouded in mist, and he couldn't see Paris, Levis, and the others who were just beside him.

But that was only what the naked eye could observe.

It was as if he were trapped on the ghost ship; he even extended his foot to probe a hole in the deck, and indeed he could actually slip his foot in, meaning he truly was standing on the deck of the ghost ship.

“Why is this happening?”

Suppressing his anxiety, he thought rapidly but could not understand why one moment he was standing firmly on the deck of the fast sailing ship, and the next he was on the deck of the ghost ship, stepping on it and hearing the creaking as if the boards would break at any time—very real, not an illusion.

“Levis!”

“Li Vera!”

He called out, but there was no answer, only the creaking of the wooden boards.

“Douson!”

“Paris!”

All without response. The mist was swirling, the light dim, and even the will-o'-the-wisps he could see earlier were now gone: “Have I been trapped inside the ghost ship? Why is this happening, are my senses experiencing an illusion? Or have matter and spirit twisted at this moment?”

The triangular theory believed by magicians surfaced in his mind; he remembered what Granney had said about the theory—the constant transformation of matter, magic power, and spirit.

But the Crimson Blood Sword was still in his hands; he refused to believe that so many people and the vast fast sailing ship could be transformed so swiftly.

“I must be having an illusion!”

“Yes, an illusion!”

Rubbing his eyes fiercely, the feeling of fatigue seemed to have subsided a bit. He immediately cast the Eye of Magic again. In a flash, everything around him underwent a drastic change. He saw where his companions had gone; their human shapes outlined by magic power had not strayed far.

They were just spinning in place, even brandishing weapons to fight, engaged in infighting.

He saw Levis, desperately swinging his sword at the air in front of him. He saw Li Vera, holding her sword and trembling. He saw Captain Layden, who had chopped down an Apprentice Knight to the ground.

Then, he spotted Paris, right behind him, less than a meter away.

Douson was over there too, but Paris and Douson hadn't noticed each other. Paris held her knights'sword and vigilantly surveyed her surroundings, while Douson kept opening his mouth, apparently barking.

At that moment, the movement of a magic power figure alerted Liszt—the subject had fallen from the deck into the hold of the ghost ship.

Which meant, even though these people, including himself, were plunged into illusions.

The place they were in was no longer the fast sailing ship but indeed the ghost ship, for only the ghost ship would have such a decayed and hole-riddled deck.

Without the time to ponder the reasons, Liszt moved straight towards Douson and then slapped him hard on the back: "Douson!"

Douson turned and snapped, shooting a Rock Spike.

Luckily, Liszt was prepared, he twisted away and continued to slap Douson while constantly calling out: "Douson! Have you even forgotten your master?"

But Douson seemed completely unresponsive, his dog eyes confused as he continued to recklessly release Multiple Stone Spikes.

It wasn't until Liszt took out a piece of jerky, found the opportunity to stuff it into his mouth, that Douson finally bit down hard on the jerky, then shook his head, his dog eyes regaining clarity.

Seeing clearly the person in front of him was Liszt, he held the jerky and barked joyfully: "Woof woof!"

Chapter 248: Bursting Human Faces (Third update, bonus for 3000 subscriptions)
After awakening Douson, Liszt's tense mood greatly eased. The phrase "man with his dog" might sound a bit offputting, but having Douson by his side really brought comfort.

"Woof, woof!"

Douson devoured the jerky in two bites and started barking again; it still couldn't see its surroundings clearly, seeing only the misty fog all around. Liszt too couldn't see the environment clearly; he could only infer his situation through the magic lines outlined by the Eye of Magic.

However, the Dou Qi Secret Technique of the Eye of Magic collapsed once when the Ghost Ship switched the real scene.

As a result, his eyes were still fatigued. Just after awakening Douson, he couldn't persist and had to dispel the Eye of Magic. Once the Eye of Magic was dispersed, the boundaries between reality and illusion blurred once again, going round and round on the deck, unable to contact anyone else.

"What exactly is my current state?"

"How exactly does the Ghost Ship cause such effects, far beyond mere illusions?"

He tried to grope his way toward Paris's location based on memory, but regrettably, after walking dozens of steps and crossing several holes in the deck, he still hadn't reached Paris.

Only Douson was following behind him.

Since Douson had been awakened by the jerky, it didn't fall back into delusions. Liszt firmly held the leash in his hand. Feeling that this wasn't secure enough, he tied one end of the leash to the belt of his pants to prevent himself from letting go of Douson's leash if he fell into delusion again.

Maybe it was because he had been nervous too many times, but now, although the situation was unknown, he seemed to have adapted to it, and his mind had returned to its calmest state.

"A dragon's magic power infects the surroundings, producing treasure; an elf's magic power affects crops, making plants thrive; Douson's magic can create rocks, and my Dou Qi can burn detached from my body. All these things show that magic power exists, not only can it create out of nothing, but it also has unbelievable effects."

He looked closely at the rolling mist around him.

He felt that he was touching the essence of what was happening with the Ghost Ship, "So essentially, this Ghost Ship belonging to Marquis Cohen is also a display of magic power? To say it's illusory, it sure is illusory, because it's just made up of magic power; to say it's real, it certainly is real, because magic power can affect reality."

The more he thought about it, the more he felt that this conjecture was correct.

But it seemed that knowing the principle was of no use; those who were trapped on the Ghost Ship were still trapped.

"I should wait for my eyes' fatigue to ease, then cast the Eye of Magic again. Without the Eye of Magic within the bounds of the Ghost Ship, I can hardly move an inch!"

The recent collapse of the Eye of Magic made him feel as if he was suffering backlash, causing his eyes to fatigue. Ever since he had completely mastered the Eye of Magic,

he had been able to perform the Dou Qi Secret Technique continuously without experiencing fatigue.

As he circulated his Dou Qi to recover from the eye fatigue, he sighed silently, "I hope not everyone is dead."

They were supposed to go to Red Crab Island for a joyful festival, and perhaps obtain some good things from Marquis Merlin, but they encountered the almost impossible Ghost Ship.

Such rotten luck.

Anxiousness won't make hot tofu cook faster.

He didn't immediately cast the Eye of Magic, still waiting for his eyes to recover from fatigue. After a while, with continuous restoration from his Dou Qi, his eyes became spirited again, with not a hint of fatigue.

"That's more like it!"

In an instant, he cast the Eye of Magic, and the vision shrouded in mist changed once more. The outlines of the ship and the shadows of people drawn by magic reappeared. Comparing his memory, he first found Li Vera trembling, being chased in circles by an Apprentice Knight.

Bang! Thud!

Liszt kicked the Apprentice Knight away and then grabbed Li Vera, "Wake up, Li Vera!"

Splash! Splash!

Slapping her own face twice, Li Vera still didn't wake up.

Having no other choice, Liszt directly dragged her and stuffed her into a cabin of the ghost ship... Without anyone to chop at her, he let her cause a commotion in the cabin first.

After rescuing Li Vera, Liszt didn't stop for a moment and, with quite an effort alongside Douson, captured Levis, dragging him into a cabin as well.

The groggy Levis couldn't muster the combat strength of an Elite Earth Knight.

With his brother and sister rescued, he planned to drag Paris into a cabin next. But Paris was far more skillful than the others, and despite Liszt and Douson throwing punches at her, they still couldn't restrain her, and she even showed signs of transforming. Seeing this, Liszt simply left her be.

With her combat strength, she probably had no equal on this ship.

“To wake these people, we’ll probably have to deal with the ghost ship!” For Liszt, who possesses the Eye of Magic, a ghost ship without phantoms posed no threat.

“Come on, Douson, to the place with the brightest magic power!”

Leading Douson, they headed straight for the place where the magic power of the ghost ship was most concentrated. This ghost ship, with its green magic power, formed vague outlines, among which were three distinct centers of magic concentration.

One was at the top of the mast with the Goat Head Flag, where magic flames blazed fiercely.

Another was at the bow, where the figurehead was a depiction of the Sapphire Dragon. People from the Duchy of Sapphire believed that the Sapphire Dragon could suppress all the sea monsters of the Sea of Azure Waves and protect the safety of the sailors. Only now, with green flames burning on the figurehead, it looked less like a dragon and more like a bat.

The last, and also Liszt’s intended destination, was in the middle of the ship’s cabin.

While not as powerful as the Goat Head Flag or the Dragon Bow Figurehead, it seemed like the heart of the entire ghost ship, with every trace of magic power outlining the ship starting from there.

“Woof woof!”

Douson’s massive body struggled to follow Liszt, moving through the decaying wood towards the middle of the cabin. The creaking sounds below their feet kept coming, as if the wooden planks could snap underfoot at any moment—Douson really shouldn’t have been brought down here, as the cabins and passages below were too narrow.

It wasn’t suitable for Douson to move freely, but with Douson by his side, Liszt felt bold enough to walk alone on the eerie and terrifying ghost ship.

“We’re almost there!”

A few more steps and they would reach the cabin chamber where the magic radiance was most vibrant. But at that moment, the previously silent ghost ship, where only the sound of wooden planks was heard, suddenly echoed with a faint whisper.

Unclear.

But Liszt was certain he wasn’t having auditory hallucinations since Douson, too, pricked up its ears, looking in the direction from which the voice came: “Woof, woof!”

“Douson, hush!” Liszt calmed Douson.

He listened intently.

The voices were intermittent but were indeed coming through, vague and incoherent, only catching a few disjointed words: “Chase... death... Andite... loyalty... Mom... home... magic... save... Curtis... madman... no...”

And these words were obviously not spoken by one person; it was a group of people shouting in disorder.

“Andite? Curtis? They sound like two names.” As Liszt muttered these names to himself, suddenly, on the wall outlined by magic in front of him, a ghostly pale face appeared.

The face seemed to be shouting at Liszt, or just shouting to itself: “No!”

This unexpected sight startled Liszt so much he instinctively swung his sword, plunging the Crimson Blood Sword into the face, the Fire Attribute Dou Qi exploding and shattering the magic shaping the face.

The face vanished, and the shouting stopped.

Withdrawing the Crimson Blood Sword, Liszt’s face was cold: “Come on, Douson, let’s see what’s playing tricks and conjuring a bunch of low-grade phantoms!”

Chapter 249: Violent Dismantling of the Ghost Ship (Fourth update, additional chapter for 70,000 recommendation votes)
Thump!

Kicking the door open with one foot, Liszt entered the destination with the Crimson Blood Sword in hand.

Only after entering the cabin did he realize why there was such a concentration of magic power here—it was because the entire cabin’s walls were densely carved with magic runes.

In the square cabin, there was nothing but a simple square table and a stool. On the table lay a book, a box of ink, and a goose feather quill dipped in the ink.

The green magic runes flickered continuously, creating a mysterious and magical atmosphere.

“Woof woof!”

After Douson squeezed into the cabin, he rushed toward a wall and barked aggressively. Following Douson's gaze, Liszt looked at the wall and saw another pale face emerge, suddenly screaming a piercing, "Damn it!"

"Go to hell!" Liszt raised the Crimson Blood Sword and stabbed forward, bursting the pale face.

But on another wall, among the gaps of the magic runes, another pale face appeared, its features blurred, accompanied by a piercing noise: "Curtis, you madman!"

"Shut up!"

Liszt wanted to strike with another sword, to destroy whatever thing that might be, whether a ghost or a specter, but he suddenly stopped—these things didn't seem to possess any harmful power, so he might as well listen to what they had to say.

He decided not to kill it.

After shouting that sentence, the face dispersed.

Then, on the third wall, another pale face appeared, shrieking sharply, "They're coming after us!"

Following that, on the fourth wall, a pale face emerged and screamed, "Grand Magician, save us!"

"So, these are similar to messages left behind by the crew before their demise?" Liszt took a deep breath, walked to the edge of the table in the center of the cabin, raised the Crimson Blood Sword, and touched the book on the table.

The book didn't seem to be really there, because its outline, too, was outlined by magic power.

At that moment, the pale face on the first wall, which should have been destroyed, reappeared and screamed, "Mom, I want to go home!"

"Woof woof!" Douson barked in response.

Liszt paid no attention.

When the longsword touched the book, he distinctly felt something solid, and it didn't trigger any traps or mechanisms.

This reassured him enough to pick up the book with his hand.

It was thick and heavy, the cover inscribed with "To Prince Annuette—The Truth of Curtis". After a single glance, he tried to place the magic book into the Gemstone Space.

It went in easily; this was a real book, not some phantasm conjured by the Ghost Ship, something between reality and illusion.

Of course, it was also possible that it really was a book between reality and illusion, but its presence was fixed by the special properties of the Gemstone Space, allowing it to continue existing within.

Just then, another pale face appeared on a wall, shouting, "Loyalty to Prince Annuette!"

"Prince Annuette?" Liszt continued his task undisturbed, packing the ink, quill, table, and stool into the Gemstone Space. "If I'm not mistaken, Prince Annuette belongs to the Sapphire Family? The prince who hasn't taken the seat of the Grand Duke?"

The name of the Sapphire Family starts with an "A" as a tribute to their ancestor.

The first generation Grand Duke was Dragon Knight Anderson Sapphire, the second was Ambrose Sapphire, the third was Andite Sapphire, the fourth was Ancheck Sapphire, and the current, fifth-generation Grand Duke Andrew Sapphire. This was common knowledge among the nobles.

If a noble doesn't even know the recent Grand Dukes, that noble is definitely unqualified.

"There is no Grand Duke named Annuette."

As he pondered,

Another pale face appeared, shrieking, "We're done for, it's Andite's fleet!"

"Hmm?"

Liszt's heart skipped a beat; Andite was the name of the third generation Grand Duke!

On one hand were shouts of allegiance to Prince Annuette; on the other, screams as Andite's fleet closed in. With these clues, the answer hidden in the mist seemed ready to emerge. Prince Annuette must be a member of the Sapphire Family vying for the position of Grand Duke, likely a close sibling of Grand Duke Andite himself.

Considering that Marquis Cohen was executed for his participation in a court coup, it became evident that he probably supported Prince Annuette.

In the end, it was Andite who prevailed.

“Well, now that I know this court secret, what should I do next?” Liszt looked at the empty cabin and then at the dense array of Magic Runes on the wall, pondering quietly.

Pallid faces kept appearing on the wall.

Repeating various screams.

“They’re chasing us!”

“Damn it!”

“We’re done for, it’s Andite’s fleet!”

“I swear my loyalty to Prince Annuette!”

“Mom, I want to go home.”

“Grand Magician, save us!”

“Curtis, you madman!”

“No!”

The piercing screams irritated Liszt, and he didn’t have the luxury of time to ponder deeply. The longer he delayed here, the more people above might die... all turning on each other, just like the son of Captain Molodo, who had encountered the Ghost Ship – in the end, only two sailors returned alive.

“Forget it!”

Liszt sheathed the Crimson Blood Sword at his waist and pulled out a Fine Steel Battle Axe from the Gemstone Space. Then he aimed it at the cabin wall and swung down hard with the axe.

Thud! Bang!

Wood splinters flew from the wall, and the Magic Runes were shattered and sent flying. Douson tried to chase after the Magic Runes, only to see them pass through its body and fly back to the wall. Even the pieces of wood split by the axe began to vanish gradually, and the wall started to heal itself.

“Hmm?”

Liszt didn’t buy it and swung two more axe chops, splitting a large plank of wood that fell to the ground. As he watched the plank seem to disappear gradually and new wood

emerge faintly on the wall, he had an idea. He picked up the plank from the ground and threw it into the Gemstone Space.

The next moment.

The phantom of the new wooden plank on the wall dissipated, unable to restore itself, and the Magic Runes that should have been inscribed on the plank lost their medium and hung silently in the cabin.

Liszt smiled, "It's working!"

He proceeded to swing the axe relentlessly, breaking down the wall, throwing each chopped plank into the Gemstone Space: "I don't care what the Ghost Ship is about, I'm going to dismantle all four walls inscribed with Magic Runes and see how you're going to play ghost!"

As he demolished the wall, he gasped for air – this was tough work: "If tearing down the four walls isn't enough, I'll wager all my one hundred and sixty pounds today and take apart the whole Ghost Ship!"

Clang.

Clang.

Amid the cheering and barking of Douson and the continuous appearance and disappearance of pale screaming faces, Liszt forcefully used an axe to bring down all four walls of the cabin, stuffing each plank into the Gemstone Space. Only the supporting outer columns of the wall remained, teetering on the brink of collapse.

The Magic Runes all fell from the planks and hovered in mid-air.

When Liszt took away the last plank, the Magic Runes seemed to trigger a chain reaction. They began to rotate rapidly, and under Liszt's astonished gaze, they scattered, reformed, and transformed into a female Magician cloaked in a Magic Cloak.

Beneath the hood, two green pupils stared coldly at Liszt.

Chapter 250: Exiled Lands in the Mist (Fifth Update, 80,000 Votes Bonus Chapter)
"Who are you, and why do you disturb my eternal slumber!"

A female magician made of green light, her cloak also burning with a faint green glow, made it impossible to discern her figure or face. One could only sense that she was a petite woman, her voice ethereal and wavering, which felt especially sinister in such surroundings.

Liszt had seen a 36D Ghost before, so the appearance of this ghostly form didn't frighten him.

He found it interesting that a person really could exist in the form of a soul and still retain independent consciousness. He put away his Fine Steel Battle Axe and drew the Crimson Blood Sword, summoned his Fire Attribute Dou Qi within him, ready to counterattack at any moment. Only then did Liszt speak, "Are you Curtis Truth?"

"Curtis..." The specter of the female magician lowered her head as if recalling something, and after a while, she looked up, the green ghostly light in her eyes twinkling, "That was my name before I exiled myself. Knight, why do you disturb my eternal slumber!"

Self-exile?

Liszt was a bit confused; he hadn't opened the "To Prince Annuette—The Truth of Curtis" magic book.

Thinking about it now, it might be a sort of "suicide note" written as a book.

"It was not I who wished to disturb your eternal slumber. In truth, you disrupted my travels. My ship encountered a storm at sea and then your Ghost Ship came alongside, pulling me onto this inexplicable phantom vessel."

"Ghost Ship..." The spectral female magician fell into thought again; probably her mind wasn't very sharp after such a long slumber. Judging from the time Duke Andite ascended to power, it must have been over a hundred years, "Goat Number has become a Ghost Ship, Annuette... Uncle Cohen..."

The green light flickered as the specter of the female magician submerged into memories of the past, her voice growing even more distant.

Liszt, however, didn't care for the mood, rudely interrupting, "Stop, just wait a second, my friend has been enchanted by the Ghost Ship and is still on deck, fighting amongst themselves. Can you first lift the Ghost Ship's enchantment?"

"I have exiled myself. Goat Number becoming a Ghost Ship is not within my control... Huh?" The previously ethereal voice of the spectral female magician suddenly became sharp, "My resting place, you, damn you, you actually destroyed my resting place!"

"Uh, the resting place you're talking about, is it that wall with the magic runes carved on all four sides?"

"Damn it, those were set up as a cursed Magic Array using the souls of the entire ship's crew as casting materials for my self-exile and slumber!" The spectral female magician

trembled with rage, her whole body illuminating in green light, causing the entire Ghost Ship to rock and shake with her trembling.

The rotten wood fell off piece by piece, as if it could shatter at any moment.

“Using the souls of an entire ship’s crew as casting materials?”

Liszt’s scalp tingled. He hadn’t expected that the female ghost before him, in life, was such a ruthless Grand Magician. No wonder among those faces, some were cursing her as a madwoman.

“To die and then drag a ship full of people to share a fate worse than death, Curtis, you open my eyes!”

“I let them die because they deserved to die. On Goat Number, there were either traitors who betrayed Annuette or followers willing to sacrifice everything for him!”

Her matter-of-fact tone was incredibly irritating.

He had no interest in arguing with the spectral female magician any longer, and he commanded bluntly, “Enough, we can chat about this nonsense later. Now, you need to lift the Ghost Ship’s control over my friend. If you refuse, I’ll dismantle this Goat Number right here and make sure you haven’t got a place to stand!”

“Where did you bring my resting place to? It was constructed from the remnant souls of dragons, the Soul Submerged Wood cannot possibly be destroyed by you, where did they go!”

“Burned.”

“Burned? Impossible!”

“Really burned, otherwise where could they have gone.” Liszt, while holding the Crimson Blood Sword, thought of extracting useful information. Only by knowing the purpose of the so-called Soul Submerged Wood could he blackmail the spectral female magician.

“Burned!”

The specter of the female magician trembled violently, and the Ghost Ship shook continuously along with her, creaking incessantly, as if it could fall apart at any moment, “Since they’re burned, then you might as well go die!”

She suddenly transformed into a streak of green light, lunging at Li Si Te.

Li Si Te quickly unleashed the Fire Attribute Dou Qi within his body, raised the Crimson Blood Sword, and swung a Great Fire Wave. The Dou Qi burned with flames and exploded instantly as the ghost female magician pounced.

Boom!

The ghost female magician was instantly blasted into pieces, reformed into magic runes one by one, spinning in the air, and then condensed back into the image of Curtis Truth.

With a resentful glow, she glared at Li Si Te without pouncing again, "You haven't burned the Soul Submerged Wood; you can't burn the Soul Submerged Wood. Since my soul willingly exiled itself, it has fused with the Soul Submerged Wood. If you burn the Soul Submerged Wood, I'll also vanish, instead of continuing to exist!"

"It seems you have regained your sanity," Li Si Te still held the Crimson Blood Sword, highly alert, "Indeed, the Soul Submerged Wood wasn't burned, and it's in my hands. If you want it back, then first lift the curse from the Ghost Ship and let my companions regain consciousness."

Li Si Te's Eye of Magic had already seen that the people on the deck were still walking in circles, occasionally attacking each other.

Quite a few had already fallen.

"Return the Soul Submerged Wood to me, or all your companions will die," the ghost female magician's voice returned to its previous chilling tone.

"If that's the case, I only have to dismantle this Ghost Ship and find a way to rescue them myself," Li Si Te ordered Douson directly, "Douson, Multiple Stone Spikes!"

Pfft!

Pfft!

Douson's Rock Spikes fired wildly, thick Rock Spikes impaled the Ghost Ship, leaving wood chips everywhere. It could then be seen that the Rock Spikes dropped into the sea one by one, as if the wood of the ship was just an illusion that didn't exist. But in fact, many planks were broken by the Rock Spikes, and those broken planks could not be restored.

"Woof woof!"

For quite some time, Douson had been eager to act but had no orders. Now that he had them, he couldn't contain himself; his Rock Spikes pierced wildly as if they cost him nothing.

The extent of the violence far exceeded Li Si Te's.

Under its violent piercing, the Ghost Ship soon began to make unbearable cracking sounds, as if its dragon bone structure was breaking. Then the ghostly outline of the ship, drawn by magic power, began to dim slowly.

Watching the Ghost Ship being damaged little by little.

The ghost female magician's chest heaved violently, and she could not restrain herself, her voice chilling again, "Stop your dog, and I'll tell you how to break the Ghost Ship's Exiled Mist."

"Exiled Mist?"

"Between reality and illusion lies the origin of magic power, the exiled lands of the soul! The Ghost Ship, sailing upon the seas of the Exiled Lands, takes away everything it encounters," the ghost female magician said irritably, "You wouldn't understand the explanation. Now, do as I say!"

"Go on."

"The figurehead at the bow is the gatekeeper to reality, while the Goat Head Flag on the mast is the marker of the Exiled Lands. Remove that flag and place it upon the dragon head of the figurehead, it will guide the Ghost Ship out of the Exiled Lands and back to the real world. At that time, you will also be free from the Ghost Ship."

"And what about you?"

"Return to me my Soul Submerged Wood, and let me continue my self-exile... I brought disaster upon Annette and Uncle Cohen; only by my soul's eternal exile can I find the best destination and redemption."

At this moment, the ghost female magician.

The face under the hood, which was originally unclear, suddenly became visible.

It couldn't be described as beautiful or ugly, after all, it was only a semblance of light, but the face of light showed a look of devotion.