

The Mighty Dragons Are Dead

#Chapter 291: 0300: Magic Opens the Door to a New World (Fifth Update, Extra for 3200 Monthly Tickets) - Read The Mighty Dragons Are Dead Chapter 291: 0290: Magic Opens the Door to a New World (Fifth Update, Extra for 3200 Monthly Tickets

Chapter 291: Chapter 0290: Magic Opens the Door to a New World (Fifth Update, Extra for 3200 Monthly Tickets)

Karasko's Serpent Script was terrible, but even with a translator, smooth communication was impossible, because he always spoke in a halting, stammering manner, unable to fully articulate his thoughts.

It was futile to expect these people, who had toiled away their whole lives without any formal education, to express themselves proficiently.

Even if he had a myriad of ideas, being unable to express them made it all in vain.

Liszt didn't have time to waste on this: "Since you're so full of ideas, I'm going to entrust you with some creativity and let you bring it to life, Karasko. Can you do it?"

"Lord Landlord, Karasko, can do it!"

"Very good, do you see this blueprint?" Liszt pulled out a prepared blueprint, which depicted a rocking chair, "This kind of chair that can rock, do you understand it?"

Karasko took the blueprint.

After studying it intently for a full ten minutes, he slowly nodded, "I understand, Lord Landlord, Karasko will do it."

The blueprint was drawn in great detail, not just a single image, but with explanations from various angles, understandable by anyone who wasn't a fool.

A rocking chair was a very simple piece of furniture after all.

In this world without rocking chairs, when the Sun came out occasionally in winter, Liszt could only sit in a hard-backed chair, unable to enjoy the drowsy ambience that comes with rocking.

With a rocking chair, one could not only bask in the winter sun by the window, rocking and reading, but also cool off in the shade of an apple tree in summer.

After leaving the Carpenter's Shop, he thought to himself, "Should a rocking chair be able to open Karasko's mind, letting him unleash his creativity?"

If not, he was prepared to teach Karasko other wooden inventions that were absent from this world, such as drawers, cradles, curved ploughs, unicycles, and curio shelves.

If a rocking chair alone could complete the mission, Liszt would still slowly invent these things.

However, by then, he would arrange for skilled carpenters to build them: "The Carpenter's Shop is time to be upgraded to a woodworking workshop, and it's time to expand, Rapid Growth Iron Thorns will soon be mature, and soon the wooden products of Fresh Flower Town will become a new specialty—after all, they are made of ironwood."

Desks and cabinets with drawers, rocking chairs and baby cradles that can sway, and curio shelves of unique design, suitable for noble collections, should all be popular.

As for the curved plough and unicycle, Liszt still hadn't decided whether to develop them.

These tools could now be defined as strategic items; once invented, they would greatly promote the development of productivity. But the technology involved in these tools was relatively low and easy to replicate; they could end up propelling not just the productivity of Fresh Flower Town but of the entire Duchy of Sapphire.

He never denied his own selfishness.

As a noble, of course, he wanted to keep the good things for himself.

"I should wait until I grow stronger then develop these strategic items one by one. By then, I'll be able to use the advantage of being first to quickly expand my power and achieve exponential growth... Right now, Fresh Flower Town's capacity is simply not enough to develop leaps and bounds through these means."

Once he thought it through,

He was no longer troubled.

Returning to the castle, it was time to check on the progress of Sea Sprite Ake's magical practice.

"Ake, how is it going, can you cast Water Arrow Barrage now?"

“Not yet, brother.” A water arrow slowly emerged in Ake’s hand, but he was still unable to condense a second arrow, “It seems like Water Arrow Barrage isn’t very difficult, but Ake just can’t create the second arrow, even after trying many times. Is Ake very stupid?”

“How could you be.”

Liszt started stroking Ake’s deep blue hair again, enjoying the silky and moist feel of it, “Magical practice isn’t achieved overnight. Compared to magicians who spend years learning just one Water Arrow Spell, you are already a genius.”

Ake immediately grinned and said, “Yeah, Ake also thinks Ake is a genius.” Then he nuzzled his head into Liszt’s hand.

He enjoyed being petted by Liszt.

This gave Li Si Te a peculiar sense that he was engaged in a “Magical Girl Training” program, nurturing a sea sprite, not yet adult, into a powerful magic platform. He felt a tremendous sense of accomplishment.

Occasionally, he would remind himself, “Start with three years, with the highest penalty being death.”

His gaze swept past Ake’s chests as he chuckled, “Don’t you feel bored staying here all the time?”

“Not at all, Ake really loves the current life. I can quietly read books and learn magic, and I don’t have to worry about Dulu Miqita hunting me anymore.”

“I thought you would love the ocean very much.”

“Mhm mhm, Ake loves the ocean very much, but compared to magic, I have already lived there for forty-one years. Once I learn lots of magic and can defeat Dulu Miqita, I can go out to the sea with brother and travel around. For now, I need to read books.”

She lifted a magic book from beside her, her face glowing with a pilgrim-like radiance.

Magic had opened the doors to a new world for her.

“Ake will become an excellent water mage, I firmly believe this!” Li Si Te stood up to leave, “You quietly read your books and study magic. Fresh fruit has been placed on the table, help yourself if you want any. Also, keep an eye on Jela, I’ve decided to ground it for three days as punishment.”

The sea sprite nodded, “Hehe, Ake will take good care of Jela for brother.”

In the corner of the seashells, a small “Wah!” sounded.

...

Although Karasko's thoughts were a bit off the mark, under Li Si Te's guidance, he still crafted his first rocking chair within two days.

Since this was his first attempt, and he had no experience, the rocking chair was crooked and didn't conform to ergonomics.

When the rocking chair was delivered to the castle, Li Si Te almost failed to recognize that it was supposed to be a rocking chair—the sides were so unbalanced that it not only was uncomfortable to sit on but also felt like it would tip over at any moment when rocked.

“Karasko, sit on it yourself, and feel it,” Li Si Te said calmly as he stood up.

“Yes, Lord Landlord.”

Karasko sat down and rocked with difficulty.

Li Si Te asked, “What do you feel?”

“It seems, it seems less stable than a normal chair, and it pokes, pokes the bottom.”

“The legs that allow for rocking need to be uniform, and the curve must be just right, not too big or too small. And the chair back that supports a reclining person must be flat and comfortable. Continue improving the rocking chair, and don't disappoint the expectations I have for you. Strive to make a qualified rocking chair.”

“Y-yes, Lord Landlord!”

Having had many interactions with serfs, Li Si Te no longer lost his temper easily, even if the serf was incredibly dim-witted—he just calmly accepted the fact. With the experiences and perspectives from his two lifetimes, he had a deeper understanding of problems. Serfs were uneducated with narrow outlooks and rigid thinking.

Just as with the carpenters from Fresh Flower Town's Carpenter's Shop, aside from following instructions, they never thought to innovate or create new furniture or tools.

Although Karasko's ideas might have been off, at least he had ideas.

“When you make a qualified rocking chair, you will receive a reward from me. Now, get back to work seriously,” Li Si Te waved his hand, and the servants escorted Karasko and his chair out of the castle.

He took a sip of fresh Dragon Breed milk tea and summoned the Smoke Mission.

He had assumed that the mission wouldn't be completed since Karasko's rocking chair was seriously flawed, but apparently, the Smoke Mission hadn't set high requirements.

The Smoke Serpent Script suddenly transformed.

"Mission completed, reward: Rubber Tree Elf Bug Triplets."

Chapter 292: Chapter 0291: Pianist Deep in the Heart (First Update)
Dong, dong, dong, dong, dong...

Slim, powerful fingers danced across the piano keys.

"To Alice", the melodious tune, began to rise slowly, notes leaping at the fingertips as the graceful body wrapped in a gauzy veil shimmered in the glow of the furnace, as if coated in a layer of golden sheen.

Dong, dong, dong!

The last few notes fell.

Duniko Hyacinth released her hands and let out an imperceptible sigh all at once.

Behind her, a maid holding an evening gown spoke softly, "Miss, don't you want to attend tonight's banquet? Sir Richard is waiting to dance the first dance with you."

"I am only eighteen years old, Luya, do you understand? I am only eighteen, and I don't want to get married so soon. Why does this Richard act like an old man, starved for affection for fifty years, clinging to me, clinging to the Hyacinth Family? Can't he wait a few more years? He hounded me before the festival, and he's back at it again after the festival!"

"Miss, Sir Richard is deeply devoted to you."

"Oh, what a joke, it's just an alliance between families, with no foundation of feelings." Hyacinth tore off the gauzy veil, leaving her shapely body completely exposed, and allowed the maid Luya to help her change, "Besides, he doesn't meet my aesthetic standards."

The maid Luya asked, "What kind of noble do you favor, miss?"

“Elegant, detached, handsome, one who can play beautiful piano melodies... Music can express the soul, and only those without so much self-interest can play tunes that touch the heart.”

“Are you talking about Baron Liszt, miss? You now play ‘To Alice’ every day. But the master seems unhappy. He is very angry about what happened at Long Taro Castle; you should try to avoid making the master angry.”

“He is courting favor from the Pineapple Green Family, everyone thinks the Long Taro Family is in decline, so he is eager to find a new support. But I don’t want to fulfill his wishes, Brother Meioubao will get through the hard times, and the Long Taro Family will still be the rulers of Red Crab Island.”

Duniko Hyacinth got dressed in her undergarments, her hair was put up, regaining the elegant grace of a noble young woman, her face filled with nostalgia, “I just wanted to visit Long Taro Castle to clear my mind, and then, I met Liszt. His nonchalant way of playing piano was a freedom I had never seen before.”

“Yes, Baron Liszt is even a bit handsomer than Sir Meioubao.”

“I had the most delightful night of my life at Long Taro Castle, Luya, you have no idea how strong he is, and... how heartless!”

“No wonder you can’t forget him, playing ‘To Alice’ every day.”

“No, I will forget him, I forgot him the moment he left Long Taro Castle. I just want to change parts of ‘To Alice’. There are many flaws in this piece, as if it were improvisation... I guess it was Liszt improvising, I can tell from the way he was so indifferent at the ball.”

“Then why don’t you write to him and ask?”

“I...” Duniko paused abruptly, “I took the initiative once, I don’t want to do it a second time. I am the rose with thorns of Red Crab Island, not a humble foxtail.”

The evening gown was ready.

Duniko looked at herself in the crystal mirror, still as beautiful as a blooming rose. She took a deep breath and put on the standard smile of a noble young woman, “Let’s go.”

...

“Rubber Tree Elf Bug Triplets?”

Seeing the reward for the Smoke Mission, Liszt found it unbelievable. He had never heard about Elf Bugs having twins or triplets.

As the essence of plant gestation, Elf Bugs are always born singly.

At least, in the information he possessed, there had never been mention of twin or triplet Elf Bugs, not even in those absurd Knight's Novels, where no author dared to venture so far as to depict Elf Bug multiples.

"This mutation really is... exhilarating!"

Whether there had been elf bugs with multiple sprites before or not, the result now is thrilling. I thought there was only one, but suddenly, I got three of them.

It's like a promotional sale: buy one, get two free.

"Just in time, now that rubber has been analyzed to be increasingly important. With three elf bugs, rubber tree cultivation can be greatly enhanced, and the rubber output will increase as well."

This was a very good mutation, and Liszt was very satisfied with the result.

He suppressed his excitement and turned his attention to the new task at hand.

"Task: A performance of 'For Alice' will spread the fame of the Piano King Liszt across Red Crab Island, and also make a certain young girl's heart flutter. You might think a one-night passion is the conclusive period, but perhaps there's a chance for an encore. Please write a letter to Duniko Hyacinth. Reward: A melody from memory."

He read the content of the Smoke Serpent Script carefully.

Liszt's recent surprise was quickly replaced by a sense of absurdity: "What the hell is this!"

Piano King Liszt?

When Liszt had touched the piano at Long Taro Castle, he indeed had imagined his piano playing astonishing the world, but he never intended to actually become the Piano King.

Moreover, after a night of romance with Duniko, although he occasionally reminisced about the moment of passionate union of body and spirit, he had not considered stirring things up with her again.

What also depressed him was that the reward for the task was just a melody from memory. What significance did that hold?

He wished he was seeing things incorrectly.

But the Smoke Mission was written in clear, unmistakable Serpent Script, engraved with content he could not ignore. Indeed, the task was to write a letter to Duniko and then receive a certain tune, which could be the melody of a popular song or perhaps a piano piece.

In his previous life as an IT worker, he had a period where he liked to code while listening to '70 Famous Piano Works of the World', always looping that playlist.

A moment later.

He relaxed his emotions.

He accepted the reward from the Smoke Mission, no matter how useless, and would move on to the next task when it came; he also accepted the contents of the task, seeing no reason not to have another go with Duniko.

He was just pondering.

“Why does the Smoke Mission issue such peculiar content and dull rewards: ‘The Smoke Mission originates from the Smoke Dragon, it’s the power of destiny driving all this... What does destiny represent? The birth of elves in the territory, sea serpent encounters, invasions by formless dragons, Paris’s infiltration — all are events that could happen or not.”

But in the end, they did happen and were grasped by Liszt in the form of tasks.

There were other tasks that seemed to be tied to the residents’ desires, like Kostor wanting to sail, Reynard wanting to bake, Karasko wanting to be a craftsman, and even Douson wanting to release magic.

Then there were those things the territory already possessed, like the Miniature Saltpeter Mine, the fragments of Fire Dragon Bones, and the magical beasts of Thorn Ridge, and so on.

“So, the triggering of the Smoke Mission, or rather, the triggering of destiny, has three ways — the first is what I already have around me, which destiny guides me to obtain; the second is situations that may or may not occur, which destiny guides me to acquire or cause to happen; the third is that the desires and thoughts of people can also pull at destiny?”

Thinking this far.

He looked at himself in the mirror once more: “There’s no great surprise in wanting an encore with Duniko after having savored the flavor... And deep down inside, am I actually harboring a pianist?”

Chapter 293: Chapter 0291: Sealing a Letter with Pine Rosin (Second Update)

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The piano, an instrument that requires exquisite craftsmanship to produce, it is unknown when exactly it was invented.

Many people believe that the piano originated from the Moon Empire—a civilization that disappeared thousands of years ago, whose historical truths have long been distorted to the point that anything and everything can be attributed to the Moon Empire.

Self-proclaimed nobles cannot live without music.

And among all forms of music, it is the piano that nobles value the most, with many of them learning to play from a young age; for instance, the former Liszt spent no small amount of time at the piano.

His sister, Li Vera, played the piano well, and his cousin Meioubao was even more of a piano enthusiast.

Even some of the lesser nobles would scrimp and save to buy a piano for entertainment. Many younger sons of noble families, with no hope of inheriting a title and fearful of the battlefield, would turn their attention to the piano, practicing hard to master its play and become pianists.

After becoming pianists, they could continue to mingle in high society.

It's not uncommon for pianists to attract the favor of noble young ladies with their charm.

Famous piano performers, even within the court, receive considerable attention. And those pianists who can compose their own pieces are without exception called masters, welcomed by nobles everywhere they go, along with furtive glances from young ladies.

Liszt enjoyed such treatment with his performance of “For Alice” at Long Taro Castle.

The nobility's craze for pianos directly spawned a group of Iron Knights whose profession is to make pianos—Iron Knights are Dou Qi practitioners who craft magical weapons, gemstone weapons, and other equipment. They do not go into battle or practice combat skills, devoting themselves instead to forging weapons, regarded as advanced blacksmiths.

Those Iron Knights who make pianos are known as Piano Knights.

Only families of at least Marquis status have the financial ability to train a Piano Knight capable of making a qualified piano—every piano is equivalent to a magic weapon.

The cheapest piano costs at least ten Gold Coins.

As a result, many pianists start with second-hand pianos.

There were several pianos at Tulip Castle. Unfortunately, the Earl did not give any of them to Liszt, so after traversing to this world, Liszt did not discover the “Piano King Liszt” that lay deep within his soul.

“Could it be that the piano piece I played freely at Long Taro Castle has released the Piano King within me, prompting this Smoke Mission?”

He had already adjusted his emotions, accepting his fate calmly, without joy over gains or grief over losses.

The most important thing was to figure out a way to complete the mission.

“How should I write to Duniko? As a friend, or as a lover? Or should I just scribble something to get this Smoke Mission over with?”

He pondered for a moment.

Going back to the study, he unfolded a sheet of thick parchment and began dipping a quill in ink: “Dear Duniko...”

“I wonder if you are still practicing ‘To Alice’? Returning by ship, the surge of the ocean helped me organize the score, but the tossing cabin and the clamor of the waves always disrupted my grasp of the melody, perhaps there was also the unrest of parting playing a part.”

“Back in Fresh Flower Town, far from the hustle and bustle and breathing in the chilly air amidst the snow, my mind finally cooled down. Although the score had already been sent to Long Taro Castle with Butler Ranieri and then handed over to you, I still tried to play those melodies again.”

While writing this, he couldn’t help pulling out a thick piece of parchment covered in musical notes from the desk.

This was what he had rewritten after returning to Tulip Castle. After many performances, he finally unearthed the details of “For Alice” from deep within his memory.

The scores he had promised to send to Meioubao and Duniko were hastily written while he was being jolted on the sea.

Far from perfect.

When he left Tulip Castle, he chose not to send the more perfect version of “For Alice,” probably feeling it unnecessary since he didn’t have to rely on the identity of a pianist to enhance his noble demeanor.

So the score remained on his desk, gathering dust.

Looking at the forceful characters inscribed above, he felt as if he were recalling the wild euphoria of that night once again. In terms of beauty, Duniko was far outshone by the Sea Sprite Ake, yet the flirtatious allure Duniko possessed—blightless and innocent—was something that the guileless Ake lacked. One made you feel that desecration was a sin, the other made you want to sin.

Knock, knock, knock.

A knock on the door broke the silence, it was Butler Carter, “My lord, are you available?”

His thoughts retreated, and Liszt replied, “Please, come in.”

Carter came in with a cup of milk tea, “This is the milk tea Mrs. Morson just brewed, with just a pinch of fine honey added. If you like it, I will tell Mrs. Morson to continue brewing it this way.”

“Let me try it first.” Liszt took the cup and took a sip. Compared to the fresh milk he had before, the milk tea with honey was undoubtedly more delicious.

This fine honey had been scrapped out of a destroyed hornet’s nest on Black Horse Island, totaling twenty pounds, toxin-free and incredibly aromatic and sweet.

It was stored in several large jars and labeled “For the Master’s Use Only.”

And those honeybee pupae, after Mrs. Abbie stir-fried them with oil, salt, and seasonings, most of them were devoured by Liszt—half eaten on the spot, and the rest stored in the Gemstone Space for a chew whenever he pleased, utterly delightful.

At this moment, he finished the milk tea.

The delightful taste stimulated his taste buds, and Liszt couldn’t help but drink down the rest in one go, “Delicious, the sweetness is just right, Mr. Carter. Please convey to Mrs. Morson to measure the spoonfuls for the tea as she did today’s cup.”

“Yes, my lord,” Carter said before taking the cup and leaving.

Liszt continued to bury his head in his desk, writing a letter, the quill never pausing.

“...Now I have filled in the details for ‘For Alice,’ and I think it should be placed upon the piano rack of Miss Duniko who understands music best, accompanying your slender fingers as they turn into beautiful notes.”

“I think I’ve heard your touching piano play, lingering in my ears, as pure as moonlight.”

“Sending my regards!”

“Yours sincerely, Liszt.”

He set down the quill, picked up the thick paper and shook it to speed up the drying of the ink. Then after checking it twice and feeling that the wording was acceptable—not too unfamiliar, yet not shamelessly enthusiastic—he merely stated the reason for writing and did not suggest meeting again.

Men can do anything in a moment of impulse.

But with reason, they know better what to choose and forsake. He certainly couldn’t abandon the affairs of Fresh Flower Town and travel thousands of miles to Red Crab Island just to have a fling with Duniko.

If it weren’t for the absurd content of the Smoke Mission, he probably would never contact Duniko again.

Passion is not love.

As a Noble, one must be able to pick up and let go.

“I wonder what Duniko will think when she receives the letter...” Liszt folded the thick paper, took out an envelope, and tucked it inside.

On the envelope, he wrote “To be opened by Duniko Hyacinth,” “Sender Liszt Tulip.”

Then using a Flame Striker, he lit a candle and took a scoop from the box of rosin on the table, taking a few small pieces of rosin and placing them over the candle flame to melt.

When the rosin turned into a liquid, he poured it evenly over the seal of the envelope. Just as it was about to set, he took out his personal seal, a rectangular stamp bearing half of his name “Lis” in Serpent Script, and pressed firmly onto the rosin, leaving a distinct mark.

Having completed all this, he called over Retainer Knight Philip, “Have this delivered to Tulip Castle first thing tomorrow morning, hand it to Sir Levis and ask him to send it on my behalf.”

“As you wish, my lord.”

Chapter 294: Chapter 292: Running Under the Sunset is Youth (Third Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration)

This chapter is a reward for “Reading too many books”.

The letter had been dealt with, but the Smoke Mission had not been updated. Clearly, it would only be considered complete once it reached the hands of Duniko Hyacinth.

The next morning, Liszt heard that Philip had already gone to Tulip Castle to deliver the letter.

Liszt felt inexplicably melancholic, not knowing whether it was right to follow the instructions of the Smoke Mission and to stir up Duniko’s emotions.

However, Duniko did seem quite suitable for a lover, passionate when involved, and decisive in parting.

The melancholy was fleeting.

Soon, he returned to his usual composed state of mind—letting things take their natural course. With his noble status, handsome appearance, and exceptional inner qualities, his life was destined to be pursued by countless women. Rather than being spoiled for choice, why not leave it all to fate to decide.

“When sober, I sit before the flowers; when drunk, I sleep beneath them.”

Raising his hand to shield his eyes, he gazed at the rising sun in the east and saw a vision of his younger, more innocent self, like the snow on the castle meadow, gradually melting away.

Turning into streams, flowing towards the town’s rivers, and then out to sea, never to return.

He also seemed to see his immature self, holding homemade ice cream in the afternoon sun, waiting downstairs, but the ice cream had already melted on the concrete. He never did see the one who was to come down the stairs. These experiences, spelled “life” but read “Luther,” probably signified growth.

Today, the sun was shining and the skies were clear. Winter had not yet passed, but spring was already restless.

Liszt first trained Douson, having it continuously release Rock Grenades, achieving coordination that was as easy as pointing a finger.

Then he went to train the Eight Tiny Ones.

Storm, Flame, Rock, Surge, Thunder, Light, Ice Snow, and Shadow, the eight little Blizzard Beasts with imposing names, did not receive his warm treatment solely because of their adorable looks. If they performed well, they were rewarded with jerky and milk; if they did not, they were punished.

Just as he had trained Douson in the past, the carrot and stick was the right approach.

After training the Blizzard Beasts.

Liszt began his own Dou Qi cultivation for the day. He had mastered “Flaming Wave” and “Fire Dragon Drill” to perfection. He was considering whether or not to cultivate another Dou Qi manuscript. In the end, he decided not to take on a new Dou Qi Manuscript, for biting off more than one could chew was unwise, especially since he was still practicing “Multi-Arrow”.

The bowstring was drawn into a full moon.

The Dou Qi clad arrow flew in a T formation upon his release, striking the bullseye of a target two hundred meters away in the blink of an eye.

According to Teacher Marcus’s teachings, an Earth Knight only needed to master the basics of two arrows released together and two arrows crossing to become a sharpshooter and showcase their formidable strength on the battlefield. But Liszt was not satisfied; he had now successfully turned Three Arrows Released Together into a basic skill.

With a flick of his hand, three arrows would fly, never missing within two hundred meters.

Next, he planned to train the Three Spiral Arrows into a basic skill. The spiraling arrows were more unpredictable and would also be more lethal.

“Outside are the Blizzard Beasts, with rockets from Rock Grenades filling the sky, and I command from the center. Plus, with the Multi-Arrow, how many Earth Knights would probably not even get close to me.”

Strength, after all, is more reassuring when controlled personally.

The entire morning, he was immersed in cultivation, honing his combat skills and scientifically consuming potions.

After noon, he inspected his domain and saw how Sea Sprite Ake was doing with magic research, and also teased Jela, who was angry about being grounded.

Not long after.

A servant came to report, "Master, Mr. Marcus has returned and is waiting for you in the hall."

"Is that so, please ask Teacher Marcus to come to the study."

"^

A moment later.

He saw Marcus, "Is everything on Black Horse Island progressing smoothly?"

He gestured for Marcus to sit down before speaking.

With a cup of milk tea brought by the servant in his hands, Marcus replied, "Currently, everything is going well. With the assistance of Lasse and Griffin, the management of the serfs has been notably effective. The main streets and houses of the port town have been completed, and we are now preparing to build the warehouse district for Black Horse Port."

Black Horse Port is an important harbor for the construction of Black Horse Island; all materials must go through Black Horse Port, so a large warehouse district is essential.

"This time, bring more flour with you, and hurry to build the mill. I expect that in a while, the fleet selling serfs from Tulip Castle will return. Out of the two thousand five hundred serfs, I will relocate a thousand to the port town."

"Understood, my lord!"

Marcus was excited at the prospect of the arriving serfs. Currently, working with just a few hundred people was highly inefficient, and he missed the sense of rapid progress made during the united effort back in Fresh Flower Town.

After finishing the discussion about the construction of the port town.

The topic quickly shifted to the rubber trees and those three Elf Bug triplets, which Liszt was eagerly anticipating.

"My lord, the Cordyceps from the rubber tree is growing well. Following your instructions, I have had people pour plenty of compost beside the roots. The cut branches have started to heal, and the split bark as well. There hasn't been any wilting of branches and leaves."

After Liszt returned by boat the last time, he had Kostor carry a considerable amount of compost specifically for fertilizing the rubber trees.

Elf Bugs gestated in the wild often die prematurely due to malnutrition, and he certainly didn't want such accidents to occur on his territory.

"As soon as the Elf Bugs are bred, rush back to Fresh Flower Town and inform me immediately."

"Understood."

"Have you counted how many rubber trees there are on Black Horse Island?"

"That task falls to Lasse. He has traversed the entire island where there are trees and has come up with an exact number—there are a total of five hundred and seventy-three mature rubber trees, and there are also some immature ones scattered among the shrubs, which he couldn't tally, but the total number should exceed one thousand."

One thousand rubber trees is not a large number.

"How's the research on rubber from the rubber trees coming along?"

"My lord... we have verified that rubber is not toxic. I have caught some snakes, rabbits, wild chickens, and roe deer, and after ingesting rubber, they all behaved normally. Moreover, the rubber didn't solidify in their stomachs. We've been collecting the rubber in wooden barrels, and after sitting still, the surface forms a layer of solid, but the rubber inside remains liquid."

"Have you brought back the rubber?"

"Without harming the rubber trees, we have gathered a total of ten barrels of rubber that have all been brought back. We've sealed them in wooden barrels, and if you knock open the thin hard shell on the surface, you can pour out the liquid rubber inside."

"Good, have it transported to the castle immediately. I want to conduct the experiments myself." Liszt's mood brightened. Before, he was worried about how to collect and store the rubber, but Marcus had already found a way.

The servant promptly set out to fulfill the command.

Liszt then remembered something else, "By the way, have you extracted the bee toxin?"

"It has been extracted." Marcus carefully placed a small tauguan he'd brought with him on the desk, "My lord, this jar contains all the bee toxin. Through my testing, the toxicity of the bee venom is extremely strong, ten times more so than the poison from the Rapid Growth Poison Thorn. A single drop can kill a deer."

The deer is not a large animal, but nor is it small.

A drop of bee toxin can kill a deer, meaning it can at least seriously harm a human, which confirms its severe toxicity—no wonder those sixteen serfs were all stung to death just for being lazy and taking a break to defecate.

It's considered highly poisonous.

Such potent poison naturally must be kept in Liszt's private collection. Whether it's used for poisoning weapons in the future or for some other nefarious deed, it is good to be prepared.

“

Chapter 295: Chapter 0293: The Frenzy of the Ice Flame Potion (Fourth Update)
Sea Sprite Ake lay on a rocking chair cushioned with beast hide, gently swaying her body.

The chair, custom-made to suit Liszt's size, seemed somewhat too large for Ake, who was only one meter and fifty-five centimeters tall. Instead of staying in her shell, she had dragged along a long ribbon of seawater and lay down on the rocking chair. Without legs, she couldn't leave the vicinity of her shell.

Fortunately, she could control seawater, stretching it out into a ribbon, or else she wouldn't have been able to leave the shell at all.

It was a strange visual experience: having no legs, with everything below the ankles gradually turning into seawater. Liszt had always been puzzled by what that sensation might feel like.

He sat next to Ake and eventually couldn't resist asking, “Ake, do you feel anything below your ankles?”

“Yes, brother, this seawater is part of Ake's body. Although it's not as clear as the sensation from the flesh and bone part of Ake, it still feels.” she replied.

“Really? May I study it?” Liszt asked with a gentle smile, “My curiosity is just too strong.”

Ake shyly lowered her head and then sneaked a peek at Liszt, “Mmm, if brother likes, Ake will let brother study it, hehe, humans probably haven't seen a real sea sprite.”

Permission granted.

Liszt certainly didn't stand on ceremony. He immediately squatted down and touched Ake's ankles, which felt delicate, smooth, and elastic, like holding a mass of bone and flesh made from water.

He seemed to detect a faint aromatic scent at the tip of his nose, Ake's body fragrance.

The delicate touch swayed Liszt's mind for a moment, but he quickly composed himself and began to study earnestly. The area where the flesh and seawater gradually transitioned felt a bit like a gelatinous substance. After using the Eye of Magic, he could see that the mana in this part of Ake's body was very active, far surpassing the magic power within the rest of her body.

"Ake, if your ankles were severed from the water ribbon, what would happen?" he inquired.

After pondering seriously, Ake answered, "Ake would probably feel very uncomfortable and get hurt because Ake hasn't matured yet and can't leave the shell."

Well, Liszt abandoned that idea.

"What about when I touch the water with my hand? What do you feel?"

"It feels like brother's hand, yes," Ake responded. "It's the same sensation as when Jela and the Insect Baby swim in the water. Hmm, how can I explain it? The seawater is a part of Ake, but it's not exactly Ake's body. It's similar to what brother mentioned about the relation between Elves and Cordyceps."

Even so, Liszt still had no idea what that sensation was like.

Harming Cordyceps would cause injuries to Elves, and severe damage might even threaten their lives. However, most Elves could survive even if their Cordyceps died. They would endure and nurture new seeds, eventually developing into new Cordyceps plants—though greatly weakened, at least they would stay alive.

Suddenly, Ake asked, "Brother, do you think sea sprites are a kind of Elf?"

"I don't know, but even if sea sprites are Elves, they would be Elves of the sea, not like Jela," Liszt replied while caressing Ake's calf, enjoying the even more comforting texture, "You see, Ake, your body is almost the same as a human's, but Jela's body is different."

"Uh-huh," Ake nodded, "Jela is like a piece of soft jade, while Ake and brother are both made of flesh and blood."

"That's why you can master magic."

Having had his fill of touching, Liszt finally let go of Ake's legs and stood up to stroke her enticing azure blue hair, "How's your Water Arrow Barrage coming along? Any progress?"

“Not yet, but Ake has found the reason,” Ake said excitedly. “This book, ‘Detailed Concepts of Magician Advancement,’ has very meticulous records. It turns out the reason Ake’s Water Arrow Barrage failed was that there were no Magic Arrays formed inside the body... A magician needs to engrave magic in the form of Magic Arrays within their body.”

Liszt had studied magic books, but he only flipped through them roughly, not delving in deeply, “Do any of these magic books teach about Magic Arrays?”

“There are many. Magicians love writing research notes on Magic Runes and Magic Arrays,” Ake replied with a radiant smile, “Brother, it won’t be long before Ake becomes a true magician!”

“I’m always looking forward to it.”

...

Under the apple tree.

There was a rocking chair swaying back and forth, with Liszt sitting on it, lazily enjoying the sunlight.

The date had already passed February 15th, and as expected, just like the serfs native to Fresh Flower Town had said, the winter would disperse by mid-February each year.

Several days of clear, sunny weather had melted most of Fresh Flower Town’s snow, and although the temperature was still below zero, it was certainly worth going outside to bask in the sun.

He rarely let the Eight Tiny Ones and Douson out together.

Perhaps due to a father-son instinct, the Eight Tiny Ones were very clingy to Douson, chasing him all around the castle. To the servants of the castle, the dangerous and terrifying intermediate magical beast had become commonplace, and sometimes they even forgot that the Blizzard Beast was an intermediate magical beast, treating them merely as a pack of dogs.

“Baron, you seem quite at ease,” said Mr. Elkeson, clad in a magic cloak, as he walked over.

“Please, take a seat, Mr. Elkeson.”

“I’ve finished concocting the magic potion from the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms. Surprisingly, these Flame Mushrooms that thrive in cold, possess Fire Attribute Mana that can’t be matched by ordinary Flame Mushrooms. Please inspect this potion first,” he said, handing over a crystal vial.

The golden-red liquid swayed within the crystal tube.

This was Fresh Flower Town's fourth magic potion following the Black Tulip, Common Flame Mushroom, and Rapid Growth Magic Thorn—made from the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms.

The greenhouse cultivation technique for Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms had already been researched by serfs driven by Gold Coins. After initiating a mass effort, they had cleared fifty acres for mixed greenhouses, planting Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms. Liszt hoped to harvest another crop of Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms before the weather warmed up.

This magic potion thrived in the cold and couldn't be cultivated in hot weather, making it a seasonal potion. Every year, it could only be planted for about two or three batches during the three-month winter period.

However, its potent Fire Attribute Mana and the trait of growing in winter could well compensate for the magic potion yield during the cold season.

After all, the growth of various magic potions slowed down or even stopped during winter.

After drinking the magic potion from the crystal tube, Liszt immediately felt a Flame Ascension inside his belly—several times stronger and hotter than the Flame Mushroom Magic Potion, nearly making him cry out.

The Fire Attribute Mana tumbled inside his body, wildly stimulating his cells to expand and absorb the frenzied mana.

If there had been a thermometer, Liszt felt that his body temperature must have reached at least sixty degrees by now!

This burst of mana came quickly and left just as fast. Two minutes later, everything returned to normal. After collecting his thoughts, he felt that his Dou Qi had greatly increased.

The effect was indeed ferocious.

"That was invigorating, Mr. Elkeson. How many more potions can you make?"

"Unfortunately, the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms are in short supply. As it stands, we can only make three more Ice Flame Potions." Ice Flame Potion was the abbreviation for the Ice Snow Flame Mushroom Magic Potion.

Hearing Mr. Elkeson's words, Liszt felt a bit disappointed.

The potion was excellent, but there was just too little of it. He thought he should store the Ice Flame Potion. It would be better to save it for when the effects of the Flame Magic Potion and Thorn Magic Potion began to wane, and then use the Ice Flame Potion for a new surge and stimulation.

Taking potions scientifically was the way to ensure optimal use and double the results.

Chapter 296: Chapter 0294: Thorn of Rise Civilization Stick (Fifth update, additional chapter for 3400 monthly votes)

The sun shone on their faces as the serfs working in the fields took off their heavy cotton-padded jackets, shouted slogans, and raised their axes to slowly chop down the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns.

The Rapid Growth Iron Thorns, with the quality of ironwood lumber, would immediately sink when placed in water, which is why ordinary bone utensils couldn't cut through them, and metal tools had to be used.

However, the Bone Craftsman Shop in Fresh Flower Town had extremely hard bone utensils—crafted from decayed, ancient Fire Dragon bone fragments.

The Bone Craftsman Shop's bone tools were not for sale to the public, and they were distributed for free to the serfs using a numbering system.

Even though they had long decayed and lost the dragon's magical powers, they were still dragon bones, and Liszt did not wish for them to end up outside the town.

The Dragon Bone Cleaver, used to hack at the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns, was almost as effective as a fine steel axe and was a bit more wear-resistant.

With a Dragon Bone Cleaver in the hand of each serf, it took about half an hour to chop down an Iron Wood Thorn as thick as an adult's arm.

Unfortunately, dragon bones could not be polished finer to create dragon bone saws.

Metal saws were still the most effective for cutting wood; working in pairs, it only took five minutes to saw through an Iron Wood Thorn. However, due to the scarcity of iron, which was needed for many purposes, not many iron saws could be made.

Regardless.

The scene was bustling.

Liszt stood at a distance outside Thorn Garden, scanning the area as if conducting an inspection of the lumbering site. The Fresh Flower Town's Serf Lumberjack Team was

definitely a force to be reckoned with; they had cleared the vast Thorn Ridge under crude tools and the threat of magical beasts.

Let alone the mere Thorn Garden.

The officials led by Goltai were also very capable, organizing the serfs methodically through the various lumbering tasks.

Some were chopping down trees, others cutting branches, carrying timber, gathering foliage, and there were those who supplied hot water and bandaged wounds, replenishing and replacing damaged tools; teams worked in an orderly and efficient manner.

“The Rapid Growth Iron Thorns are high-quality iron wood thorns that have grown under Jela’s influence. Though thorns are low shrubs and can’t grow into towering rocks or stone trees, they can grow quickly. Once they reach the thickness of an arm, they can be harvested for making furniture and wooden implements,”

Liszt said to the person beside him.

The person next to him was none other than the son of Viscount Trick Lygrass, Aubrey Lycra, a big fat man: “I’ve experienced the allure of the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns at the Carpenter’s Shop. The high quality is astonishing, especially how their growth rate is even faster than wild grass.”

“Of course, it can’t compare to wild grass, but a three-month maturation cycle is indeed remarkable. It’s just that cultivating it is not so simple. Without Jela, its growth cycle might slow down by more than a dozen times. Based on what we’ve seen at Thorn Ridge, it would probably take about three years to mature.”

“Even three years is quite impressive,” Aubrey said enviously, “among nobles, it’s said that Jela’s magic potions will bring you glory, and these ironwood thorns are no less a mass of glory.”

“If Beer Island plans to introduce them, I can provide the roots and shoots of the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns,” Liszt said smiling, remembering that the final kind of thorn Jela needed was provided by Beer Island—a favor he had not forgotten.

“Really? Then I must properly thank you.”

“Just offer me a bit more hop flowers.”

“I’ll give you a third of what I can control, how about that?”

“You’re very generous, Aubrey.”

Aubrey patted his stomach: "I've also enjoyed your generosity, the delicacies in your castle are about to burst me."

"You're so fat, can you even make it onto the battlefield?"

"I'm not planning on going to battle anymore; I might just follow the Knight Order to skim some merits, but trading suits me better. By the way, Liszt, about the furniture you make from ironwood quality, let me handle the sales. It might not compare to the channels of Tulip Castle, but Beer Castle's fleet is bolder and travels farther."

According to the information Liszt had,

it seemed that Beer Castle's fleet had joined with several small to medium-sized nobility fleets from the outer islands, managing a smuggling route to sell goods in certain areas of the Eagle Kingdom.

Of course, as long as they weren't smuggling weapons, the Earl turned a blind eye to it.

After thinking it over, Liszt replied, "As long as the profit is right, why shouldn't we let Beer Island handle the sales?"

Today, Aubrey had come to Fresh Flower Town to talk business. Firstly, he wanted to order more Fresh Flower Soap, secondly, he was interested in sharing the profits from Fresh Flower Brew. Fortunately, this coincided with Fresh Flower Town starting to cut down the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns, so the sales partnership for ironwood furniture was also brought up.

Aubrey wanted to cooperate.

Liszt did not always want to rely on Tulip Castle's channels either, so the two of them quickly struck a deal.

The luncheon was very lively, and by the evening, when the specific details of the cooperation had been settled, the atmosphere was even more cheerful. Goltai, representing Liszt, got Aubrey and his party utterly drunk on the fragrant and potent Fresh Flower Brew. In the end, he dumped everyone into the public baths for a hot bath.

As it was in any era.

When the privileged class arrived, the public baths temporarily closed to the common people.

Liszt did not invite Aubrey and his entourage to stay at the Castle as he did not like hosting people other than family members, and besides, there was the matter of the Sea Sprite Ake on the second floor.

With Aubrey's entourage being quite large, the Castle could not accommodate them all, so he arranged for them to stay in the noble residential area.

"Given the current state of development in Fresh Flower Town, there will be more Nobles visiting in the future, should I consider building a guesthouse?"

There were no guesthouses in the Duchy of Sapphire.

All the Nobles accommodated visiting noble guests in their own Castles, but Liszt decided to set a precedent. After all, he had good reason—the Castle was small and couldn't fit many people.

Not only would it not violate noble etiquette, but it could also be praised for being warm and attentive.

However, with the development of his territory and when he became a great Noble, he definitely could not use a guesthouse to entertain guests anymore. Otherwise, guests might feel undervalued and could ridicule the Castle for being poor.

He rubbed his forehead.

Have a few more drinks with Aubrey.

Liszt was slightly tipsy, the intoxication lingering; he was not very inclined to sleep, nor was he in the mood to write history. His ambitious project, "Dragons Fight in the Wild," hadn't been touched in a whole week. Given the choice, he'd rather bask in the Sun than write.

In a corner of his study, he rifled through some items and found a stick carved with exquisite patterns.

"Is this my 'Sdeke'?"

The Sdeke, like the Flack Abbieye, was standard equipment for a Noble, representing noble grace and identity.

In the hands of a King, it was called the scepter.

In the hands of Nobles, it was called the civilization stick.

The civilization stick could be carved with patterns or inlaid with gemstones. It could be made of wood or forged with metal. Liszt's Sdeke was a wooden civilization stick, carved with a Tulip pattern—he had been presented with it during his investiture ceremony by an Earl.

However, since arriving in Fresh Flower Town, he had never picked it up again, let alone used it to attend noble gatherings.

Young Nobles rarely fancied walking around with a civilization stick.

“I have several thorn canes for training dogs; should I ask the carpenter to carve me a high-quality Rapid Growth Iron Thorns civilization stick?”

Liszt stroked his chin, struck by a sudden inspiration.

The civilization stick in his hand was made from rock wood over a hundred years old and was quite fine, but with the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns now available in Fresh Flower Town, using a rock wood civilization stick didn’t quite fit his status.

He immediately ordered someone to call the Carpenter’s Shop’s manager: “Carve a civilization stick for me, use this stick as a model, and carve the name Jela on it.”

Jela, a name that meant—Thorn of Rise.

Chapter 297: Chapter 0295: The Strain of Work Without Documentation (First Update)
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After sending off Aubrey and his party, the town returned to its tranquil state once more.

“Fresh Flower Soap, Fresh Flower Brew, gourmet food, and now ironwood—the specialties of Fresh Flower Town are growing in number.” Li Si Te sat in his study, flipping through the records of public affairs sent by Goltai, quietly sipping his milk tea.

With a net profit of five Gold Coins per day from Fresh Flower Soap, as long as the technology isn’t stolen or counterfeited, he could continue to monopolize the market and gradually expand the scale with the channels of Tulip Castle and Beer Castle.

“No one should know the technology formula of Fresh Flower Soap in the short term.”

Soap Maker Bunier Zhen Dan was continuously refining the formula for Fresh Flower Soap. Compared to the initial Fresh Flower Soap, the present version, although still primarily made of soap powder, pancreas, and plant ash, now included several additional auxiliary materials. These enrich the variety of Fresh Flower Soap and improve its cleaning effect.

Even if inferior counterfeit soaps appeared on the market, they wouldn’t pose much of a threat to Fresh Flower Soap.

Li Si Te picked up his quill, dipped it in ink, and wrote down the number “10” on a blank piece of thick parchment. He hoped that Fresh Flower Soap could reach a daily net profit of ten Gold Coins.

If that were achieved, there would be no more worries about feeding the Castle and the Blizzard Beasts.

“So, the worry that the Blizzard Beasts would eat me out of house and home was an unfounded fear. As a transmigrator, I do have some goods in store; a casual move can bring in a substantial profit,” he thought with some pride.

Fresh Flower Soap was now the pillar industry of Fresh Flower Town.

Gourmet food is also a pillar, although it doesn’t make much money, it greatly enhances the reputation of Fresh Flower Town. Now, who on Coral Island doesn’t know that Fresh Flower Town has the most delicious food?

However, reputation is not very important to nobles; at most, it makes people notice Fresh Flower Town and Li Si Te.

Li Si Te himself didn’t place much emphasis on it. He developed these foods for his own stomach.

What he truly valued was the upcoming white alcohol business: “Next, whether we eat meat or drink porridge depends on the impact of this wave of Fresh Flower Brew.”

The expansion of the Brewing Workshop hadn’t been completed yet.

The Brewers sent by his brother Levis had already arrived and were learning brewing techniques under the tutelage of Frank Dregs and others. The family members who came along had settled in Fresh Flower Town. Thirteen thousand pounds of iron had been transported in two batches, and batches of corn and other brewing materials had also been delivered.

Wooden bottles, ceramic bottles, and jade bottles were being crafted.

Levis’s family tutor, also named Frank, often followed the convoys back and forth, supervising the progress of the Brewing Workshop. Clearly, Levis was more anxious than Li Si Te—Levis had taken some Fresh Flower Brew base and traveled through all the nobles in the six cities of Coral Island, inviting them to taste the new brew.

Pre-orders had piled up on the desk.

In about a week, the first batch of Fresh Flower Brew could be produced and then packaged for the market.

The quill paused for a moment.

Li Si Te forcefully wrote down the number “50” on the thick parchment, hoping that after dividing the profits, the daily business of Fresh Flower Brew could net fifty Gold Coins.

But he furrowed his brows slightly.

He crossed out “50” and replaced it with “100”, considering white alcohol as a luxury item here, a consumable luxury sought after by nobles in their daily lives.

As long as he could capture the markets of Coral Island and Red Crab Island, making a hundred Gold Coins a day should be achievable. If he could also take over Golden Island and Newland Island, the profits would be even greater.

By then.

Black Horse Island could forge ahead with full-scale development, instead of the current situation where he had to stealthily send a few hundred serfs who toiled night and day, barely managing to build a few streets and rows of houses.

Once the Rubber Tree Elf Bugs were in place, Li Si Te planned to immediately expand the planting area of the Rubber Trees.

After the spring, the grazing fields for Black Blood Treasured Horses would also need to be expanded.

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This requires a large workforce and it's impossible without money.

Thinking of this, he couldn't help feeling fortunate, “Thank goodness I have the Smoke Mission, which has already rewarded four types of magic potions. The revenue from the Black Tulips is used to pay for the current construction of Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island, barely enough. Flame Mushrooms, Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms, and Rapid Growth Magic Thorns, I'm keeping for my own use.”

The Black Tulip could bring in about four or five hundred Gold Coins each month, which would almost immediately be invested in town construction, not even getting a chance to warm up.

Now is the early stage of expansion and burning money.

Just buying food every month costs over a hundred Gold Coins—the price of grain is astonishingly high, especially in winter. The noble landlords on Coral Island can barely manage to feed themselves, let alone sell any grain.

“This winter, a large amount of farmland needs to be reclaimed. I hope that Fresh Flower Town’s grain can achieve self-sufficiency... no, if it can fulfill three-quarters of the food requirements, I’ll be satisfied, after all, there aren’t enough Elf Bugs to amplify the harvest. For the remaining quarter, I’ll have to buy with money.”

Now is the time to tighten one’s belt and work hard, for only through enduring hardship can one emerge superior to others.

Yet Liszt felt that he must first ensure his own quality of life, so... the expenditure for the castle is nearly catching up to the standards of a Viscount Lord.

It’s precisely because of his lavish spending on food and drink that he’s been able to quickly advance to an Elite Earth Knight and rapidly increase his Dou Qi reserves.

Those nobles with excellent bloodlines make it to Sky Knight in their twenties, and isn’t that also achieved through good nutrition?

Eating Magical Beast Meat like bread and drinking Magic Potions like water, even a pig could fly—his uncle Mesiro is the living proof of this, with mediocre talents and yet still trained by Marquis Merlin into a Sky Knight.

He yawned.

Liszt had no patience to look at these government records anymore. He tossed his quill into the inkwell, “Why do I need to know how much money is spent and earned each day? I only need to ensure that there’s enough money for spending, to meet the needs of my life and training, and then to keep getting stronger!”

He stood up and left the study.

He ordered someone to call Paris, ready for a real fight to sweat it out.

...

After a satisfying battle, he felt completely relaxed.

At noon, his appetite was wide open, and he ate an extra plate of scrambled eggs with tomatoes, then took a comfortable nap. Just after waking up, Liszt received good news.

Marcus had returned to Fresh Flower Town aboard the Fresh Flower Vessel.

He hurried to the castle, “Lord, the Elf Bugs of the Rubber Tree have been born! Incredibly, there are three Elf Bugs, an unheard-of occurrence! Lasse, Griffin, and I checked every two hours, and when it was my turn early this morning, I personally witnessed three Elf Bugs emerge one after the other!”

He emphasized that he had personally climbed the tree to check, fearing that Liszt wouldn’t believe him.

Liszt had already known this, so he showed no surprise, merely nodding calmly, “I know, Teacher Marcus. Triplets of Elf Bugs are indeed miraculous, but not impossible. As soon as the Fresh Flower Vessel is finished unloading and loading cargo, we will set sail immediately.”

Surprised by the Landlord’s reaction.

Marcus also suppressed his excitement and regained his composure, “Yes, Lord!”

Normally, the Fresh Flower Vessel would not sail at night, as nighttime navigation carried great risks. However, due to the urgency about the Elf Bugs, as soon as the Fresh Flower Vessel was loaded in the afternoon, Liszt urged Kostor to set out.

Splitting the seawater, the spray splashed.

They sailed at full speed towards the setting sun.

Marcus was describing the scene he had witnessed, “They were three ivory-colored Elf Bugs, identical, smooth like milk. One was crawling in front, two followed behind, moving lively from one branch to another. They looked very lively.”

“

Chapter 298: Chapter 0296: The Arrival of the Iron Wood Era (Second Update)

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Night had fallen, and the Fresh Flower Vessel had sailed in quite a circle before it finally located Black Horse Port.

“Black Horse Port needs a lighthouse, my lord. Navigating at sea at night by the stars might allow us to identify our direction, but it doesn’t help to accurately find the port,” Kostor said, after docking the boat.

“Let’s talk about it later. I don’t have an architect at the moment, and it’s not time to reveal Black Horse Island just yet.”

He disembarked.

Without any further ado, Liszt mounted Douson and headed straight for the location of the Rubber Tree Cordyceps. The crystal lamp illuminated the path, and he effortlessly followed the small trail that had been trodden through the bushes to his destination.

He used the Eye of Magic.

He saw the three Elf Bugs, motionless on a tree branch.

Without wasting words, he began climbing the tree. For an Elite Earth Knight, climbing a tree was a piece of cake, and he easily reached the branch where the Elf Bugs were perched.

In the light, three plump, ivory-colored Rubber Tree Elf Bugs lined up in a row. It was unclear whether they were sleeping or not.

They were almost pure white, even their eyes, and without careful scrutiny, it was hard to tell which end was the head and which the tail.

The fingers were long, about as thick as a thumb.

They resembled caterpillars, but were prettier and more delicate, as if they were living creatures carved from jade. Even though Liszt could see Elf Bugs in the Castle every day, he still marveled at their beauty and the incredible artistry of their creator.

“Little guys, no more sleeping, how about some Jade Powder for a midnight snack?”

He spoke softly, and then proceeded with the usual routine, smearing Jade Powder in front of the Elf Bugs to entice them awake and begin licking the Jade Powder.

Next, he applied Jade Powder on his own finger and extended it toward the mouth of an Elf Bug.

A gentle nibble.

He contracted one Elf Bug.

A gentle nibble.

He contracted another Elf Bug.

A gentle nibble for the third time.

With the last Elf Bug contracted, he had successfully bonded with the trio of Rubber Tree Elf Bug Triplets, establishing a soul-connected ownership relationship.

“Come, onto my hand.”

He stretched out his hand to catch the three chubby Elf Bugs and he felt something very peculiar in his mind—a sense of having three overlapping, fuzzy emotions appearing in his head, perfectly in sync. Their emotions were exactly the same and the feedback they gave Liszt was also the same.

They climbed from his hand to his shoulder.

And followed Liszt as he left the Cordyceps.

“Congratulations on contracting with new Elf Bugs, my lord!” Marcus, Lasse, and Griffin, who had gathered around, congratulated him one after another.

Liszt placed the Elf Bugs into the Jade Box held by a servant, smiling at the congratulations, “It’s been hard work for you guys guarding the Elf Bugs recently. I brought a barrel of Fresh Flower Brew base. You guys share it.”

“Thank you for your generosity, my lord!”

“I should thank you for your hard work in building Black Horse Island.”

After exchanging a few pleasantries, they soon arrived at the port town. He would rest for the night, and tomorrow Liszt would return to Fresh Flower Town. There was no need for his presence on Black Horse Island any longer.

“Marcus, Lasse, Griffin, the contracting of the Rubber Tree Elf Bugs is complete, but I do not plan on moving the Rubber Tree Cordyceps. The environment there is quite suitable for the growth of Rubber Trees. If you find the time, you can organize a group of serfs to relocate the scattered Rubber Tree saplings to the vicinity of the Cordyceps and plan out a Rubber Tree garden.”

“Yes, my lord.”

...

The following day, Liszt got up very early in the morning because he wanted to share a bond with his mount Lightning and take it for a spin. He left under Lightning’s reluctant gaze.

“

Sitting at the bow.

Gazing at the sea, he had believed it would be another monotonous voyage, but the white clouds floating in the sky that day strangely stirred his heart, as if countless sparks of inspiration were bursting forth.

It was a familiar melody that quietly surfaced in his mind, lingering around his ears.

Without hesitation, he quickly took out heavy parchment and ink, picked up a quill, and, using Douson as a support, began to record the notes. Moments later, as the melody gently dissolved in his ears, the parchment was filled with dense musical notes.

“It’s “Castle in the Sky”...”

He shook the heavy parchment, the flash of brilliance in his mind had extinguished, but his heart still resonated with the excitement of recording the notes. The melody that appeared in his ears was indeed the widely known “Castle in the Sky”, comparable to “For Alice”, or rather, it should be called “With You”.

It was the classic work of the master musician Joe Hisaishi, the theme song of Hayao Miyazaki’s classic animated film “Castle in the Sky”.

The fame of this piece had even surpassed that of the film itself.

He carefully put away the hastily recorded music, then invoked the Smoke Mission.

The Serpent Script transformed remarkably: “Task completed, reward: Melody of “With You”.”

This meant Duniko Hyacinth had received the letter he had sent, and at the same time, the Smoke Mission opportunistically unearthed that segment of melody from his memory.

“The power of fate is indeed magical, to even bring memories to the surface... I wonder when it could reward me with the memory related to cement? I should have seen and studied how to make cement, but now I only remember a vague principle: limestone mixed with clay, finely ground then calcined in a kiln.”

He hadn’t yet figured out what limestone looked like, nor had he found clay.

Cement development, temporarily powerless.

If the Smoke Mission could dig out his memory, presenting images of limestone and clay he had seen, he would easily be able to find limestone and clay by comparison.

Glass was the same.

His thoughts were fleeting.

The Smoke Serpent Script changed swiftly: “Task: The Rapid Growth Iron Thorns have matured, and the carpenter at the Carpenter’s Shop has accepted the impact of the new invention; it is time to decisively drive the Iron Wood Era of Fresh Flower Town. Please

build a woodworking workshop and produce modern furniture. Reward: Three wild tea trees.”

“Hmm?”

He saw the reward content—wild tea trees.

It was known that there was “tea” in this world, which was necessary for making milk tea, but this ‘tea’ was prepared from a kind of fruit known as the Red Tea Tree.

After the fruit was dried and fermented, it could be used to make milk tea.

There were Red Tea Trees on Coral Island, and Tulip Castle even had a Red Tea Tree Elf Bug, yet Liszt had never heard of tea made from fruit. He had also tried to brew the leaves of the Red Tea Tree after frying them, but found the taste too bitter and astringent to drink, and the fruit-infused tea had an odd flavor.

This Red Tea Tree was clearly not the tea tree from Earth, and according to the information in the Knight’s Novel, there were no tea products to be directly brewed; he once thought that no such plant as the tea tree existed here.

Unexpectedly, he was now being rewarded with wild tea trees.

“It must be in some corner of Black Horse Island! Tea trees are great, as drinking tea can be beneficial for health maintenance, especially for its ability to clear greasiness, aid digestion, and act as a diuretic... If I remember correctly, in ancient China, tea leaves were strategic commodities like salt and iron, particularly in trade with northern nomadic tribes.”

Nomadic tribes mainly consumed meat, which was too greasy and hard to digest without tea to offset it. Hence the Tea-Horse Exchange, trading strategic resources like horses for tea leaves.

Even America’s independence could be said to have been sparked by tea—the Boston Tea Party, in protest against the Tea Act, directly ignited the flames of the Revolutionary War.

The importance of tea was thus evident.

Liszt’s situation was similar; he ate too much meat, especially Magical Beast Meat which was greasier and harder to digest than regular meat, and the digestive effect of milk tea was limited. With the help of tea leaves, he could better absorb the nutrients of the Magical Beast Meat.

This applied to most nobles.

“One can imagine, tea leaves will become another major specialty of mine!”

His spirits lifted: “Once I return, I’ll immediately build a woodworking workshop, bringing the Iron Wood Era to Fresh Flower Town as soon as possible!”

Chapter 299: Chapter 0297: In the Name of Truth (Third Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration 1/2)

This chapter is a special reward update for “Fantasy Reaper 11”.

Not only did he have to build a woodworking workshop, but the accompanying logging field and wood warehouse also needed to be constructed, located near the Thorn Garden; he already had it all planned out.

In the Thorn Garden, influenced by Jela, three-quarters of the plants were magic potions, one-quarter were Thorn Ironwood, and a few were regular Rapid Growth Thorns.

The common Rapid Growth Thorns were the source of various mutated thorns; he still hoped they could produce new mutations.

The surrounding area of the Thorn Garden, Thorn Ridge, would have all areas unsuitable for farmland planted with Thorn Ironwood. He would only leave a small section to plant Rapid Growth Spiky Thorn and Rapid Growth Poison Thorn to ensure they wouldn’t become extinct.

The Fresh Flower Town of the future could actually be renamed Thorn Town.

“Wuwah!”

“Wuwah!”

After returning to the Castle, Jela immediately came to greet them. When Liszt took the Rubber Tree Elf Bug Triplets out of the Jade Box, it rushed forward, grabbed one, and continued to cry, “Wuwah! Wuwah!”

“Jela, put it in the box inside the Worm Room, don’t damage it!” Liszt hastily called out.

Fortunately, Jela knew how to handle them with the necessary gentleness. It played with the Elf Bug but never dared to harm them because it understood very clearly that Liszt would not allow it. This was the power of the contract, making it irresistible.

The three Rubber Bugs were somewhat panicked.

After being calmed by Liszt, they settled down slightly and began to crawl around in the box sprinkled with Jade Powder, occasionally bumping into other Elf Bugs to greet them. Being triplets, they were in sync, although it didn't seem to have any use, but at least it increased Liszt's number of Elf Bugs to twelve.

The initial excitement had subsided, and he began to contemplate, "I own Rubber Bug Triplets, but not three Rubber Tree Cordyceps... so, have I made a profit or a loss?"

In general, it was a loss.

After all, he had to spend three portions of Jade Powder to raise them, but their range of influence as Rubber Tree Cordyceps was no different from that of a single Elf Bug.

No! That's not right!

Suddenly, he blinked, "You can't say there's no difference. At least for now, the influence range of the Rubber Tree Cordyceps is unknown; maybe it's three times that of ordinary Cordyceps. Moreover, giving birth to three at once might increase the success rate of evolving Little Minor Elves in the future by threefold?"

Staring at the Rubber Bug Triplets crawling leisurely, he felt this mutation definitely wasn't just a plain increase in number.

It must have something magical about it; it just hasn't been discovered yet.

Unable to figure it out, he set the thought aside.

Walking through the corridor, he went to chat with Sea Sprite Ake. Ake was still unable to successfully cast Water Arrow Barrage. She was fully dedicated to inscribing the Magic Array, a very serious and diligent attitude, almost always holding Magic Books and studying.

Sometimes Liszt thought, don't turn the innocent and pure Sea Sprite into someone crazy like Curtis Truth.

After all, most magicians were a bit off in the head.

"Ake, take a break, don't tire yourself out."

"I'm not tired at all, brother. Ake will soon be successful in inscribing the Magic Array for the Water Arrow Spell, hehe. And then Ake will be Magician Ake... Oh right! Brother, should Ake change her name? It seems magicians should all have the surname Truth," Ake pondered seriously.

Liszt couldn't help but smile, "Acherlroides Truth, huh? Sounds very imposing."

Ach shook her head, word by word she said, “No, it should be Tanaxistie Ulapapni Selaino Liukateya Forekus Buniseis... Cassandra Acherloides Truth.”

Upon hearing this long string of names, Liszt couldn't help but twitch the corner of his mouth—why on earth would a little sea monster, who was born and raised in the sea and had never even seen her own people, want to give herself such a long name.

He hadn't even recovered from the shock of the name when,

Ach giggled and laughed out, “Hehe, let's just listen to brother and go with Acherloides Truth.” It turned out that what she had said before was just a joke.

He vigorously ruffled her hair.

Liszt sighed in his heart, the little sea monster who used to shiver in fear had learned to joke—time really was a butcher's knife, and he should protect her even more, to not let the tainted society affect Ach's purity.

...

The construction of the woodworking workshop progressed rapidly.

The town had as many as five carpenters, who brought along a group of carpenter apprentices, and under their guidance, hundreds of serfs worked tirelessly for several days to build the woodworking workshop near Thorn Garden.

The primitive mud workshop featured no technical content whatsoever.

A lumberyard was also casually set up, with a few shacks erected, then Rapid Growth Iron Thorns were sawed into sections and cut into planks inside.

The lumber warehouse was even simpler, merely an area demarcated with a few poles erected, then thorn branches and wheat straws were woven into a roof and secured on the poles, becoming a lumber warehouse. Those Thorn Ironwoods that were not yet cut were temporarily carried to the warehouse for stacking.

After the completion of the woodworking workshop, Liszt also finished the design drawings for a few wooden furniture pieces.

“This is the drawing of a drawer, look closely, when making cabinets and tables, remember to add drawers, and fully use your imagination for the styles... This is a curio shelf, which is very different from a bookshelf, bookshelves are for books, curio shelves are for valuable items, with compartments of various sizes.”

Like rocking chairs, drawers and curio shelves were other types of new furniture that Liszt had chosen, preparing to introduce them to nobles.

In fact, he could also consider baby cradles, but the babies of the poor couldn't afford iron wood cradles, and babies of nobles had servants to care for them, so they didn't need a special cradle, which made inventing one pointless.

Once all the carpenters had received the drawings,

Liszt took out a new type of practical living ware he had only recently come up with: "This is called a clothes rack, as the name implies, it's used for drying clothes..."

As a noble, he didn't have to wash or dry clothes, as all that was done by servants.

However, he did appreciate watching the castle's best-shaped maid, Little Lily, hang clothes. He noticed that the clothes were simply draped over ropes to dry and when collecting clothes, especially a gown like Flack Abbieye's, they were also draped over wooden racks, which easily left creases at the waist.

In other words, there were no clothes hangers.

Clothes hangers today are generally made of wire. With iron being scarce in the Duchy of Sapphire, iron hangers were out of the question. Polished smooth wooden hangers, with their rounded support parts, wouldn't damage the shoulders of clothes, and were the best choice for hanging gowns, while also being very easy to source.

Clothes racks, rocking chairs, drawers, curio shelves.

The woodworking workshop would gradually introduce them.

But while these were all new types of furniture that would inevitably spark a home living revolution, Liszt didn't expect them to bring in much profit, because carpenters working for nobles from other regions could take a few glances and probably know how to copy them.

What would be needed to capture the market were the quality of Thorn Ironwood.

Ironwood quality combined with lower prices made such household products definitely the favorites of the middle and lesser nobles. By that time, the woodworking workshop could both produce household items and provide Tulip Castle with ironwood-quality weapon shafts and arrow shafts. The Iron Wood Era of Fresh Flower Town was fast approaching.

Jela's name would also resound all over Coral Island.

Chapter 300: Chapter 0298: The Fratricide of Father and Son in Tulip Castle (First Update)

The woodworking workshop will need a few more days before it can begin operations.

Liszt was now focusing on the soon-to-be-launched Fresh Flower Brew, having visited Tulip Castle and brought a barrel of the brew to the Earl.

“Is this the Fresh Flower Brew?” the Earl tasted it and nodded, “You have made me see you in a new light, Liszt. The liquor trade is more profitable than the Magic Potion business; it’s a lucrative industry.”

“The Fresh Flower Brew business still needs the protection of Father.”

“Of course, I am your father... Fresh Flower Brew has shown me many possibilities. Perhaps it will become the greatest aid for the Tulip Family to climb the ladder of power.” The Earl clearly saw the hidden profits behind the liquor business, “Levis, Li Vera, you, and Lidun are all blood of our family.”

It felt like the Earl’s next words were leaning towards splitting the liquor profits equally.

Liszt interjected directly, “Father, I thought my brother had already reported to you about the collaboration model for Fresh Flower Brew.” He glanced at Levis, who stood beside him, as he spoke.

“Of course I reported it, how could Fresh Flower Brew smoothly launch on Coral Island without Father’s approval?” Levis quickly said, “The result of my discussions with Father was that I would give twenty percent of the profits to the Tulip Family as a fee for using the channels, with the remaining split between the two of us brothers.”

Out of the total profits, Liszt was to take forty percent, with the remaining sixty percent for Levis.

Now it seemed that Levis also held only forty percent, handing over twenty percent to Tulip Castle.

From Levis’s attitude.

Liszt roughly understood and smoothly said, “I also think such profit distribution is reasonable, although as the heir to Tulip Castle, my brother can use the channels freely, we still haven’t split our estates with Lidun, so we should take care of our brother and leave twenty percent for Tulip Castle.”

“Just like you said, Liszt, Lidun is also my brother. How could I not take care of him? Twenty percent of the profits are for Father to cultivate Lidun, I won’t have any complaints.”

The two brothers.

One by one, they confirmed the profit distribution, blocking any space for the Earl to interject.

Perhaps, as a father, he felt the Fresh Flower Brew was too valuable and that a larger share of the profits should be redistributed. But to Levis and Liszt, this was out of the question.

Even Li Vera and the others were not willing to share it, let alone Lidun, their half-brother from another mother.

On this point, the brothers were resolute.

The Earl sat behind his desk, looked at Levis, then at Liszt, and saw that both appeared calm as if nothing had happened.

A look of gloom appeared on his face.

He drank the Fresh Flower Brew in his cup in one gulp.

Then, placing the cup down with force, he said, "Should I feel proud and gratified at your shrewdness? From minor nobles to major Nobles in just twenty years. Have you really inherited the ambition I hoped for? Why has Tulip Castle, like all great Nobles, begun to exude a scent of decay?"

"Father, I am diligently practicing every moment, looking forward to earning my merits on the battlefield just like you," Levis said solemnly, with his left hand on his chest.

Liszt had no desire to explain.

He didn't need to explain anything. The development of Fresh Flower Town was proof enough.

He even had the mood to jest, "Like wine that improves with age, perhaps decay is just an exquisite presentation of nobility."

"Liszt, I am not joking with you," the Earl said, looking at his increasingly blurry second son. Suddenly, he felt his paternal authority was faltering, "The old you wouldn't joke either. I'm comforted by your growth, but I do not wish for it to make you lose some... familial love."

The young Liszt used to be very afraid of his father.

But the current Liszt treated the Earl more as an equal — between father and son, no matter how much they argued or created a ruckus, there was nothing to fear, as the Earl could not possibly break his own son's legs.

Therefore.

He expressed his view directly, "Father, you might see sharing between siblings as familial love, but I think holding an invincible Sword in my hand to protect my siblings is also a kind of familial love."

"I think Liszt makes a lot of sense," Levis agreed deeply.

The Earl fell silent for a moment.

He poured another glass of Fresh Flower Brew for himself and one for both Levis and Liszt. Lifting his glass, he offered a slight toast, "I hope you both remember what was said today. Furthermore, decay is not a trait befitting a Noble!"

The atmosphere relaxed.

Liszt picked up his glass.

He pretended to drink it down with gusto, but he really didn't like drinking clear spirits.

After finishing his drink, Levis suddenly said, "Father, what about the top-grade Fresh Flower Brew for the Grand Duke's tribute?"

"I will need to enter The Court for a spring session in a few days. I will bring along the... Century Aged Tulip you've concocted."

And so,

the brief confrontation in the study came to an end, with the brothers preserving their interests.

Walking along the corridor, Levis heaved a long sigh of relief, "You don't live in Tulip Castle, so you might not be aware. After Fresh Flower Brew came out, Lady Marie acted crazily, performing several crying dramas in front of father, and I almost couldn't hold on. Thankfully, what you said today convinced father."

"The influence of pillow talk is indeed tricky to handle, I understand."

The master of Tulip Castle was Li Weiliam Tulip.

Levis was just the heir.

But Lady Marie and Lidun held special positions; they were destined never to become masters of the Castle. Therefore, they had to find ways to gain more advantages before Levis could inherit the Castle.

Selfishness is the way of the world.

While it's not right to think too ill of others, it's also unwise to regard them as saints. How Lady Marie conducted her pillow talk behind the scenes was unknown to Liszt. He only needed to know one thing, to defend his own interests—if he gave in today, he might give in even more tomorrow.

The once meek and bullyable Liszt.

Now, he had to adopt a new image, to show everyone that Liszt was not one to be trifled with. If pushed too far, he would unleash Douson and stir up a great commotion.

Apart from the Earl, perhaps no one on Coral Island could stop Douson.

Therefore,

“I can swagger around Coral Island, and that's no jest.”

...

The famous Fresh Flower Brew,

finally hit the market before March, sans the queues for purchase that were not a fad here just yet.

The pre-ordered lists have already been placed on the desk in Levis's study.

All Liszt had to do was pull over the Fresh Flower Brew, then bottle it by type before handing it over to Levis—he didn't even need to know who bought the Brew, just count the number of bottles, and his share of the profit was secured.

Of course, he calculated using the wholesale price.

The freight cost differed from region to region, altering the retail price, but that was none of Liszt's concern. He simply handed over to Levis at the rate of five silver coins for a wooden bottle, fifty silver coins for a ceramic bottle, and ten gold coins for a Jade Bottle.

Just this batch,

sold a total of two hundred and ten wooden bottles, twenty-six ceramic bottles and eight Jade Bottles—the Shattered Stone Castle and Beer Castle each purchased four Jade Bottle Fresh Flower Brews.

The total value exceeded one hundred and three gold coins, roughly enough for the island's Nobles to drink for a week.

"It's a pity that the Earl forced the Fresh Flower Brew to be sold to Tulip Castle at cost before departing for Blue Dragon Island. Otherwise, Tulip Castle's consumption of liquor could have matched the total sales of all the minor Nobles combined," Liszt reflected with slight disappointment as he pocketed his forty gold coins share.

This was just the sales from Coral Island.

The next target was to distribute to Red Crab Island.