

The Mighty Dragons Are Dead #Chapter 311 - 0320: Beware of being deceived (Second update) - Read The Mighty Dragons Are Dead Chapter 311 - 0309: Beware of being deceived (Second update)

Chapter 311: Chapter 0309: Beware of being deceived (Second update)

There was a group of nobles.

They followed their Lord into battle, only for the Lord to die on the battlefield. The fief lacked an heir and was directly annexed by the superior Lord. However, the superior Lord refused to recognize the landed rights of this group of followers of the deceased Lord. Consequently, their lands were stripped away, leaving them with nothing but an empty noble title.

And there was a group of impostors.

What they were best at was forging their own noble identities, such as a bankrupt Honored Knight, a Baron's follower whose Lord had died, or a Viscount wrongfully deprived of his lands. In short, they possessed so-called noble statuses, fabricating all sorts of fallen backgrounds.

The state's vast territory and backward transportation made it very difficult for ordinary nobles to verify these impostors upon encounter.

Thus, when dealing with such "nobles," their approach was to extend a courteous reception once or twice but never to truly acknowledge the other's noble status.

Charles Trap was one such noble.

Originally a follower of Count Feirolan, who fell on the battleground of the Eagle Kingdom seven years ago, leaving no offspring to inherit the title, his Lord, Marquis Wallace Pineapple Green, reclaimed the fief according to the laws of the Grand Duchy.

He refused to recognize the legitimate rights of Count Feirolan's followers to the land.

Marquis Wallace believed that it was the failure of his followers that led to Count Feirolan's death, and thus, he stripped them of all their lands.

Charles was deprived of his lands, and he harbored resentment, thinking Marquis Wallace too greedy.

He left Pineapple Green Family's domain of Deep Throat Island and wandered to Coral Island.

Li Weiliam Tulip did not take Charles's word for it—he was not familiar with Feirolan, and even less about his followers.

Therefore, on Coral Island, Charles became a marginalized man. He could join the battlefield, might be inducted into a mixed Knight Order, but even after fighting desperately, he still couldn't earn much merit.

The Earl simply didn't care about such an Elite Earth Knight; his elite Knight Order was made up of Elite Earth Knights. The two Viscounts were also unwilling to share their merits, much less with an outsider, a knight – and possibly an impostor. As a result, Charles wasted seven years and gained nothing.

He began to set his sights on Fresh Flower Town.

Initially, he wrote to Goltai, recounting old times, after all, they were both dispossessed nobility.

Now, he simply came in person to Fresh Flower Town, making his intentions clear as day. Yet, Liszt did not see him and only arranged for Zambrotta to receive him—Lord Landlord of Fresh Flower Town, too, was cautious, fearing that if the other party were truly an impostor, his lifetime reputation could be ruined in an instant.

Dealing with a knight of unknown origin required caution.

In his former life, Liszt had heard of many high provincial officials who were deceived by imposters, shaming themselves all the way to their grandmother's house.

When the time for the banquet came, he kept Zambrotta back.

He inquired about the reception of Charles, "What do you think of Charles?"

"My Lord, from what I know of Charles, his strength is indeed formidable, but as for his identity... Many strong knights prefer to take shortcuts. If they can impersonate nobles and attain glory without fighting on the battlefield, why would they risk their lives there? As you know, not every Elite Earth Knight can obtain a noble status," replied Zambrotta.

"I need some more objective information," said Liszt.

Zambrotta was indeed worldly-wise and had a knack for amusing conversation; however, he had one bad habit—he liked to talk broadly about theories without getting involved in practical matters.

Good at abstract ideas, but lacking in practicality.

After clearing his throat, Zambrotta answered, "I've heard that he used to fight quite bravely in the battlefield a few years ago, but in the last two years, his performance

started to become mediocre. He tries too hard to fit into the circle of nobility, often overexerting and appearing too deliberate. When I received him today, I could feel that he was too anxious.”

“Too anxious?”

“Yes, he kept bringing up Lord Landlord yourself during our conversation, which made me feel that his intentions were too strong, and he was always trying to hide something,” Zambrotta tried to sound more earnest. “We can clearly see the purpose of his visit to Fresh Flower Town, but he seems to think that we can’t.”

To put it crudely, it’s as if “he wants to play the harlot but also erect a memorial archway.”

Liszt understood and responded, “Then continue hosting him without agreeing to anything. Let him hang for a while to see clearly what he needs to do, and then I’ll meet with him again.”

First, dismantle the other party’s facade.

Then, engage in an honest meeting to discuss the intertwined interests of following and being followed.

...

In the following days, Liszt became very busy, as he went to Black Horse Island.

The sparks of inspiration from the inventor surged, prompting him to order others to carry Jomaya Bangtu on a stretcher, personally overseeing the construction of the kiln at the Fire Dragon Brick Factory.

“I brought you here, not just to have you guide the stonemasons in building the brick factory’s kiln but also to hope you will learn about the help rubber water provides to construction,” he said to Jomaya.

Then he entered a simply constructed kiln, took out a Fire Dragon Jar filled with Fire Dragon Magic Power, and released the magic power.

After several adjustments, he successfully confined the activity range of the Magic Little Fire Dragon within the calcination space of the kiln. He then instructed the stonemasons to use rubber water to bond a stone wheeled cart together, testing the push and pull effect. He personally led people to find the right brown-red soil and yellow clay soil on Black Horse Island, mixing them into a clay material.

Using a wooden brick mold filled with the mixed clay, a rectangle of brick blank was formed with the press of a wooden board.

The hundreds of serfs might have been somewhat dull, but they followed orders unconditionally, without needing to ask why, and went straight to work.

So the pace was quick. A cart of brick blanks was already stacked up.

“One, two, three!”

Chanting the count, the serfs exerted their strength together and pushed the stone wheeled cart into the kiln, starting the calcination.

This would take some time.

Liszt then went to the other side where Jomaya was observing the serfs mix rubber water with the beach’s sand and stones, then pile up a new brick factory’s kiln.

“What do you see?”

“Lord Landlord, this rubber water is really incredible. It’s faster than glutinous rice juice which needs at least one day to solidify and a week to be completely firm. You asked me to build a lighthouse, and I originally estimated it would take a month to complete. Now it seems, maybe it will only take a few days!” Jomaya exclaimed.

Building a lighthouse was no easy task.

It first required choosing a perilously high location, usually atop cliffs or reefs, involving not just the transport of materials but also significant danger. The stone construction would also need to solidify for a long time, and building a large lighthouse was even more challenging.

But with the fast-setting effect of rubber water, the construction time would be reduced significantly, and it was no difficult task to build a lighthouse in a short time with massive accumulation of manpower and materials.

Liszt didn’t plan on building a large lighthouse. He only intended to build a small ten-meter-tall lighthouse on the nearby Rocky Beach of Black Horse Port.

Once equipped with a Crystal Lamp, a range of two or three kilometers would be sufficient.

Moreover, the lighthouse would only be lit when the Fresh Flower Vessel navigated at night—although Black Horse Island was not on a sailing route and was only discovered by the Rats by accident, if one or two ships happened to pass by, a lighthouse shining all night would undoubtedly expose Black Horse Island’s coordinates.

Now was not the time to expose Black Horse Island.

But even if it were exposed, Liszt wasn't particularly concerned—The Earl was on the rise, and the Grand Duke, even if aware, would not rashly assign Black Horse Island and annoy his own “groomsman”; Liszt himself was also on the rise, and as long as he kept the secret of the Black Blood Treasured Horse, the Earl would not vex his own son.

In the meantime,

The first batch of bricks had been fired.

Chapter 312: Chapter 0310: Spring Tea Harvesting and Frying (Third Update)

Splash water for cooling.

Great plumes of smoke rose from the grayish-brown bricks as a serf, wearing gloves, removed a few and handed them to Liszt, Goltai, and Marcus.

“Test the hardness.”

Clang, clang!

Two hammer strikes shattered the brick.

“The hardness is mediocre, the level of firing is not enough, let's try another kiln.” Liszt said calmly, as this batch of bricks obviously did not meet the quality of his experiments.

The next batch took an extra ten minutes to fire, a full half hour before leaving the kiln.

After cooling with water, the hardness of the grayish-brown bricks met the standards, hardly inferior to the hardness of granite.

Jomaya Bangtu felt the hardness and weight of the bricks on a stretcher, and couldn't help but exclaim again, “Lord, with bricks of this uniform shape, constructing any building would be very convenient. Compared to those fragile ceramics, the hardness of the bricks is just like stone.”

“As long as they're useful, that's good. As for the remaining brick kilns, I'll leave their design and command to you. Once the brick factory construction is complete, start working on the lighthouse immediately.”

Without Jomaya's early arrival, he wouldn't have been able to produce quality bricks at this point and complete the task, encountering Jomaya only after successful brick manufacturing. However, the Smoke Mission had changed, with Jomaya arriving ahead of time, and he had begun preparations for the lighthouse construction, significantly shortening the task's time frame.

Liszt turned and asked Marcus, “Teacher Marcus, have you chosen a location for the lighthouse yet?”

“Captain Kostor and I have inspected the site in person, and we’ve decided to build it one mile west of Black Horse Port. The land there is high, with a good viewing angle, the lighthouse will be very clear from the ships. Additionally, the surrounding Rocky Beach will not obstruct walking, making transportation of building materials very convenient.”

“Then we’ll construct the lighthouse at that location, Consultant Goltai, continue to oversee the brick factory construction.”

“As you wish, Lord Landlord.”

With the construction supervision tasks assigned to Goltai, Liszt, along with Marcus, Lasse, and Griffin, mounted his steed Lightning and commenced another task of their journey on Black Horse Island—searching for wild tea trees.

Trees were already scarce on the island.

Most of them were rubber trees.

Therefore, trees of indiscernible varieties were very rare. It took only a day for Liszt to find the reward from the previous Smoke Mission, three wild tea trees. These three wild tea trees, growing closely together on the northern slope of Ice Grass Hill, were clearly visible at a glance.

These shrub-type tea trees weren’t very tall, at just about two meters.

With numerous branches in a wild, disorderly fashion, these trees lacked the neatness of those cultivated by humans. It was March, and the buds of the wild tea trees had just started sprouting, slightly different from the tender buds of tea trees in Liszt’s memory, with less distinct serrated edges and less pronounced bud heads.

They were not as refined as the domesticated tea trees.

In tea picking, particularly spring tea, one could pick single buds, as well as one bud with one leaf or one bud with two leaves.

A single bud is just the newly emerged bud, not yet formed into a young leaf; one bud with one leaf is when a bud has grown into a young leaf; one bud with two leaves is when two buds have grown into young leaves.

Some people enjoy drinking the single buds, where typically forty thousand buds are needed to produce one pound of single buds. The undeveloped single buds have a freshness that isn’t fully expressed, a slight bitterness, and are not resistant to multiple

infusions. Yet, those who like them savor the buds' delicate fragrance and sweetness, as well as the noble ambiance they evoke.

The first and second leaves are rather common, well-developed with plenty of amino acids and vitamins, and the aroma of the tea is also sufficient. However, when brewed, they do not have the visually pleasing aspect of the "stand-up-like-a-needle" form seen in single buds, and the rich flavor of the tea lacks a few threads of elegance.

Premium Longjing tea, for instance, is made from the roasting of single buds.

Liszt had no familiarity with this knowledge; before his transmigration, he was just an ordinary wage earner, consuming more beverages than tea. His understanding of tea came from pervasive advertisements on video websites, learning about large-leaf teas, small-leaf teas, the numerous processing steps, and how aged experts personally supervised production.

"If I'm not mistaken, these three trees should be called tea trees," Liszt said, standing in front of the wild tea trees, speaking indifferently.

Full of curiosity, Marcus asked, "Black tea trees? My Lord, black tea trees don't quite look like this. Their leaves have a slightly reddish, plump shape, and they bear fruit."

"This is... a green tea tree," Liszt said. "I read in a magic book that green tea trees are completely different from black tea trees. Their young buds can be picked and roasted to be brewed directly into tea, which is very beneficial for health."

"Green tea tree?"

Marcus chewed over the name of the tree without saying much more; he understood that he did not possess the extensive knowledge of Liszt—the young landlord, who was well-read and knew many things. The rubber tree was the best example: without the Lord Landlord's wisdom, they would have missed something of tremendous importance like rubber.

Without any delay, Liszt gave a direct order to gather a group of female serfs to pick the young buds of the three green tea trees.

Regardless if they were single buds or one bud with one or two leaves, or even with three or four leaves.

Pick first and talk later.

Of course, with his middle school biology knowledge, he knew that tea picking should focus on the tips of the tea tree. This is because of the apical dominance in plants—top buds grow first and suppress the growth of lateral buds. After the top buds are picked, the lateral buds will grow, and the growth of the tea tree will not be affected.

Nearly fifteen hundred serfs were now working on Black Horse Island.

There were also many female serfs. Griffin called for twenty of them and brought several ladders to pick the top buds of the green tea trees. Watching the serfs at work, Liszt suddenly thought of a legend about tea picking—the Lip Tea.

The story goes that there is a kind of tea leaf picked by virgins using their mouths, imbued with the unique fragrance of virgin saliva. After being roasted, the tea is further processed by being placed near the bosom of virgins for flavor infusion, resulting in newly produced tea that is fragrant and fresh, carrying the unique scent of virginity—a tea called Lip Tea.

The legend is not credible; at least Liszt did not believe it.

If the virgins picking the tea happened to resemble the unattractive character Feng Jie, he doubted anyone would be willing to drink such Lip Tea.

In two hours, the serfs had picked most of the top buds, which wasn't a lot, roughly two pounds. With the two pounds of tender leaves and buds, Liszt was ready to catch a boat back to Fresh Flower Town—the work on Black Horse Island was under the watchful eyes of Goltai and Marcus, so there would be no problems.

Just before departure, Goltai looked at him wistfully, “My Lord, Freya is nine months pregnant and could give birth at any time, yet I can't be by her side.”

“Don't worry, once the lighthouse construction is finished, you can come back... Consultant Goltai, Fresh Flower Town is important, but so is the development of the port town on Black Horse Island. It needs you to maintain things for a while longer; Teacher Marcus simply lacks experience.”

With things as they were, Goltai could only rally his spirit: “Rest assured, my Lord, I will diligently plan the development of the port town!”

After comforting Goltai,

The Fresh Flower Vessel set sail, cutting through the waves under the blue sky and over the azure sea.

Looking at the basket containing two pounds of fresh tea leaves, he couldn't help but wonder, “I don't know how many pounds of dry tea these will make, or what the flavor will be like when brewed?”

Chapter 313: Chapter 0311: Sword Defeated by Veteran Elite Earth (Fourth Update)

A pound of fresh tea was fried into about two ounces of dry tea.

Mrs. Abbie, following Liszt's instructions, continuously stir-fried the tea leaves on low heat with her palms until, after about an hour, the leaves had become curly and dried out, signaling completion.

Since he didn't know the appropriate temperature or what the tea should look like when done, Liszt stored the leaves in the Gemstone Space to keep them fresh.

He only took out a pound of fresh tea for the experiment.

After the fried tea leaves were spread out to cool, the next day Liszt tried brewing a cup.

Watching the curly, dried leaves slowly unfold in the crystal cup with the infusion of hot water, as if coming to life, and seeing the tea's color gradually turn a light yellow-green, he felt sure that success was waving at him.

Indeed it was.

After the tea had cooled down a bit, he immediately began to taste it.

Upon the first sip, the familiar taste of tea exploded on his taste buds. He was moved, his eyes even becoming a bit misty: "Tea, I have tasted you! This is truly tea... Although it's a bit bitter and the quality isn't very good, it is undoubtedly tea!"

Two ounces of dry tea could brew about ten cups.

In the Gemstone Space, there was still a pound of fresh tea, which could be made into about four ounces of dry tea, equaling about forty cups of tea.

"If I drink one cup a day, I can only drink for forty days. After three months, I should be able to pick the summer tea, another forty cups; seems like I can pick again in autumn, another forty cups. That is to say, I can drink one hundred and twenty cups of tea in a year!" Liszt thought about it and felt that this wasn't the right calculation.

If all the tea leaves were drunk, what would he do later on: "I should focus on cultivating tea trees, but... who can tell me, how do you plant tea trees?"

Is it through the cutting method?

Or perhaps through direct seeding?

He wasn't very familiar with this, and did not recall ever hearing about tea trees flowering and fruiting.

“Forget it, let’s wait and see if tea leaves will flower and bear fruit. If they do, I’ll collect the seeds and begin sowing next year; if not, I’ll use the cutting method to plant green tea trees next year.”

Savoring the pure taste of the tea.

Liszt had already decided to cultivate tea trees on Black Horse Island, even if he didn’t spread tea culture, he should plant a tea garden and fry tea for his own consumption.

A cup of tea was finished.

He wasn’t sure if it was just his imagination, but he felt noticeably lighter, as if the greasiness from all the meat he had eaten was dissipated by the tea.

At dinner, he had a great appetite and ate an extra piece of magical beast meat.

...

After a few days of airing out.

Through Zambrotta, Liszt knew that the Honored Knight who had come to Fresh Flower Town had gone from initial anxiety but restraint to just irritability, and now to full disappointment.

Liszt decided to meet Charles Trap.

Regardless, on Coral Island, the nobles still recognized his title of Honored Knight, and etiquette must not be neglected.

“Sir Charles, how have you found your stay in Fresh Flower Town these few days?” Liszt asked with a noble’s standard smile, under an apple tree that had just started to bud and was preparing to bloom, rocking in a rocking chair.

The weather was agreeable today, very sunny and pleasant.

Charles sat up straight on a stool. Liszt’s reception reignited his previously disappointed heart: “Baron, Fresh Flower Town has a great future!”

“Many have said so, including my father and my grandfather, Marquis Merlin.” Liszt appeared quite casual, and not boastful on purpose, “When I first came to Fresh Flower Town, it was just like many other small towns without a landlord, living in privation.”

“It was your arrival that brought happiness to the civilians of Fresh Flower Town.” Charles commended earnestly.

“A person’s fate, ah, must certainly rely on their own struggle, but also consider the historical process... Sorry, you might not understand what history is.”

Liszt picked up his milk cup, gesturing for Charles to have some milk as well.

He took a sip to moisten his throat.

He continued, “The development of Fresh Flower Town is not just due to my leadership, but also the support from Tulip Castle, the slave trade, seafood, Fresh Flower Soap, Fresh Flower Brew. The market is large but one has to integrate into it to see the broader world. So, Sir Charles, what do you see?”

“I...” Charles didn’t understand what Liszt was talking about for a moment.

Actually, it was just a pretense of mystery.

Liszt didn’t give him time to think deeply and simply said, “I heard you are a veteran Elite Earth Knight with exquisite combat skills and great strength. Recently, my talent has begun to show, and I have defeated more than one Elite Earth Knight, so why not have a sword duel for practice?”

“Since Baron is interested, Charles is willing to accompany Baron in a sword duel practice.”

“This will be a real combat practice, go all out. I can defeat Elite Earth Knights, I’m not joking.” Liszt drew a Fine Steel Longsword and walked onto the grass field. Now considering going into battle, he would not miss the opportunity to spar with an Elite Earth Knight.

Charles, about forty years old, took the Fine Steel Longsword handed over by a manservant, and his demeanor abruptly changed. A strong aura emanated from him, even more imposing than Marcus’s.

One with Fire Attribute Dou Qi, the other with Thunder Attribute Dou Qi, they were ready to clash.

“Great Fire Wave!”

Liszt made the first move with a fierce attack, typical of his style. Beating the master with wild punches, he didn’t care how exquisite the combat skills were, he relied on his abundant Dou Qi fueled by potions to launch a strong offense.

Charles’s sword flashed with lightning, swiftly cutting through the sky-full of fire Dou Qi and aiming straight for Liszt’s head.

Precise and ruthless.

With just that move, Liszt dared to assert that Charles was stronger than Marcus, stronger than Paris when she wasn't transformed. But, just this level couldn't scare Liszt off.

His blood boiled even more fiercely, Dou Qi exploding out as if he wanted to release it all at once: "Fire Dragon Sweep!"

Clang!

The swords collided, sparks flying everywhere, not just fire sparks but electric ones as well.

Liszt's body, wrapped in Fire Attribute Dou Qi, was still hit by some Thunder Attribute Dou Qi, making the affected areas feel slightly numb.

But it hadn't reached the point of affecting his movements.

"Fire Dragon Roll!"

Another huge burst of Dou Qi exploded, and Liszt came on even more aggressively, pressing Charles in the fight. His rough-looking attack style was actually nuanced, always on the lookout for Charles's counterattacks. Incorporating feints with reality and occasionally sneaking in a clever attack.

With such a ferocious fighting style, he caught Charles completely off guard, gradually wearing him down. Charles wanted to counter, but was surrounded by a sea of flames, unsure of where to strike back.

Despite his solid defense, he felt incredibly frustrated, feeling that he was not facing an Earth Knight, but a domineering Sky Knight.

However.

Being a veteran Elite Earth Knight who had fought on many battlefields, his eyes were bright, searching for any chance to counterattack.

He believed!

Violent attacks never last long.

Yet this principle was ineffective against Liszt, who suddenly bellowed, "Inferno Slash!" His Fine Steel Longsword turned into a fanning rain of fire, wildly assaulting Charles.

Just as Charles had barely withstood the explosive attack, there came another roar: "Heart of the Fire Dragon Drill!"

This time, the Fine Steel Longsword transformed into a fire dragon, gathering up the scattered Fire Attribute Mana from the Inferno Slash around it, and charged madly. With one thrust, the Dou Qi-illusioned giant fire dragon crashed heavily into Charles.

Bang!

Charles's solid defense crumbled like paper, unable to hold any longer. His longsword flew out of his hand, and the front of his leather armor was heavily struck by the fire dragon, sending him, like the longsword, flying into the air.

He somersaulted several times before crashing to the ground heavily.

Seeing stars, he was disoriented when he slightly recovered from the dizziness. He suddenly realized a red-hot Fine Steel Longsword was positioned at his neck.

The tip of the sword was scorching hot, as if it could sear his skin at any moment.

The person holding the sword, standing with his back to the sun, had an unclear face, but his figure highlighted by the light was tall and imposing, involuntarily invoking a sense of submission.

"I... lost."

Chapter 314: Chapter 0312: Vampire Dracula (Fifth Update)

Defeating Charles Trap seemed like a commonplace matter to Liszt. Just as most who rely on performance-enhancing drugs can defeat those who rely solely on combat skills, money indeed can do as it wishes.

But, as Liszt's opponent, Charles found this difficult to accept; he was over forty years old and had been unable to defeat a youth of seventeen.

It was an outcome he never expected before the live combat training.

The most crucial point was the utter lack of resistance—being dominated from beginning to end, a situation quite embarrassing.

Yet the longsword, emitting a scorching heat, was already at his neck, and Charles had to admit that he truly was defeated, beaten by a young person.

This should have been a matter of shame and anger.

Taking into account Liszt's identity, he quickly came to terms with it. Heir to the Tulip Family and inheritor of the Long Taro Family's bloodline, such a high-born noble should naturally possess such strength.

In the end, he could only sigh and say sincerely, "I... have lost."

"There are more than one Elite Earth Knights defeated by my hand; you need not be too concerned. Amongst the Elite Earth Knights, your strength is not bad, and the paralyzing effect of your Thunder Attribute Dou Qi is quite threatening," Liszt said indifferently. In reality, he'd only had friendly spars with Marcus and Paris.

It wasn't really about who won or lost; they weren't fighting to the death.

But at the Earth Knight level, sword duels were rare, with group charges being the main strategy. Liszt did not plan to enter the battlefield for duels anytime soon; he focused more on archery. Learning the "Multi-Arrow" technique from Marcus, he had already surpassed the teacher.

If it were a battlefield showdown, he'd definitely rely on shooting arrows from the outskirts.

"Baron, your strength is formidable. Charles is both convinced and in awe. The bloodline of the Tulip Family is one of the noblest I've seen," said Charles as he got up, his words half flattery and half heartfelt, "The only thing separating the Tulip Family from a Marquis Family is time."

Liszt tossed his fine steel longsword to the servant and took a handkerchief to wipe his hands, "One should attain a peerage sooner rather than later; time is the enemy of us all."

Charles felt this deeply: "Yes, feeling as enemy to time is indeed terrifying."

As an Elite Earth Knight like him, with no hope of breakthrough and no money to spend on drugs, he feared his physical capabilities would start to decline in a few years.

That was why he was eager to look for opportunities: "Baron, if you need support on your glorious road to peerage, Charles is willing to charge forward on your behalf!"

He was prepared to follow.

However, Liszt considered, "I am but a Baron, the second son of an Earl. The members of my Knight Squad are knights struggling against their fate, just like me. They have no choice but to fight for glory. What about you? You have so many options, why come to Fresh Flower Town?"

Of course, because Fresh Flower Town offered opportunities.

But Charles knew that such an answer was not what Liszt wanted. Just as knights choose a landlord to follow, landlords also choose suitable followers.

He needed to prove to Liszt that he was a worthy follower.

But how to prove it, he didn't quite understand at the moment, "Baron..."

"Do not be hasty, Sir Charles. Time is indeed our enemy, but it can also help us to clearly recognize what we want. You can go back first, take some time to think about what you want and what you can achieve. Then we can talk about following," suggested Liszt.

In the end.

Charles still left Fresh Flower Town with regret and confusion, as well as a glimmer of hope.

...

Under the apple tree.

The new conversation partner had turned to Zambrotta, "Sir, you refused to accept Charles's followership?"

"No, but I didn't accept it either. I told him to go back, understand himself, and then come back," Liszt said while sipping his milk tea, "That was just an excuse to send him away. In fact, I haven't decided whether or not to accept his followership. As you've said, his identity is an obstacle."

To take an Elite Earth Knight as a follower would actually be quite good.

But there was the fear that the other party might be a noble with a fake identity, and if one day they were exposed by fraudsters, it wouldn't just be Charles who would lose face, but Liszt more so—the pitiable Noble Landlord deceived by a scammer.

Zambrotta nodded, somewhat emotionally, "The very noble title he values most is what's hindering his path to knightly glory."

"Perhaps one day he'll figure it out and abandon his title for the sake of striving for glory," Liszt chuckled, thinking it unlikely, and changed the subject, "Where did we leave off last time? Was it the Duke of the Rose Duchy's Count Dracula, who was mistaken for a vampire?"

"Yes, he secluded himself in Blood Castle and never partook in social gatherings among the nobles. He was once the most glorious Sky Knight of the Rose Duchy, even the granddaughter of the Duke of Rose was smitten with him."

Talking politics wasn't Zambrotta's strong suit, but in storytelling, he was always able to narrate engagingly, "As the Earless succumbed to a deep slumber, Count Dracula also

became dark and eccentric. Hence, people said he had made a pact with the devil, turning himself into a vampire, hoping to revive the Earless.”

“I guess that Earless must have been remarkably beautiful,” Liszt guessed.

“When I passed Blood Castle, I lingered for a long while, yet rarely heard others discuss the Countess’s appearance, and even the identity of the Earless was elusive... quite regrettable,” said Zambrotta.

Vampire and werewolf tales were widespread.

However, a living Earl being mistaken for a vampire was quite amusing. This provided Liszt with a lot of inspiration, and he felt the urge to write the historical epic “Dragons Fight in the Wild”—perhaps he could invent an ancient great war between humans and vampires.

The vampires retreated, blending into humanity.

Perhaps even amongst us.

...

Unfortunately.

The writing plan for “Dragons Fight in the Wild” was delayed once again.

He barely managed to settle the matters with the carpentry workshop and the brick factory and hadn’t had a few days of leisure when he received notice from the Tulip Castle’s Knight that the young heir of the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family had visited Long Taro Castle. Levis accompanied the return and informed Liszt to attend to the guest.

As fellow noble heirs, they naturally had to socialize with each other.

Liszt had no choice but to arrange affairs in Fresh Flower Town and spent a few hours playing by the sea with the Sea Sprite Ake. He then led his standard mount—a Blizzard Beast Dousen—accompanied by his Personal Guard, Black Dragon Childe Paris, and set off for Tulip Castle the next morning.

“Sigh, nobles are really keen on socializing, always finding ten thousand reasons to gather and feast... I don’t aspire to live such a life,” he lamented.

Sitting in the carriage adorned with the Black Tulip Banner, Liszt boredly gazed at the landscape outside the window.

Forests, shrubs, wastelands, farmlands, sparsely scattered cottages composing a village—this was an era with significantly backward productivity, full of primordial

customs. When the carriage entered Coral City, the bustling crowds almost seemed to pull him back to the dirty and chaotic streets of the medieval ages.

Yet, as they traveled up the hillside blanketed with a sea of tulips towards the grand and majestic Tulip Castle,

What struck him was the light of civilization.

The lives of the nobility and the commoners were two different worlds. Liszt stepped out of the carriage, and seeing the old Butler Louis greet him, he felt immensely fortunate to be a noble.

Chapter 315: Chapter 0313: I'll Definitely Help You With This (First Update)

"Liszt, you must help me!"

Before even meeting the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, Levis rushed over and pulled Liszt into a corner of the hall, speaking with some urgency, "Whether my brother's marriage can be happy falls on your shoulders!"

What did that mean?

Liszt didn't catch on at first, even wondering if there was something wrong with Levis physically, needing him to stand in.

But the next moment, Levis gave his own answer: "Loria has some resistance to Marquis Roderick's arrangements, and she didn't show a good face to me during my trip to Golden Island. Although the marriage is settled due to pressure, she might back out at any time."

"Why? With your status, you are definitely a qualified marriage match."

An earl's heir in his ascendant, the future heir to Coral Island, with talent of his own too, an Elite Earth Knight, ready to break through as a Sky Knight – an ideal match for many noble maidens, that was Levis.

"Because she has a bastard sister!" Levis said through gritted teeth, "Who always instigates Loria to defy Marquis Roderick and pursue true happiness. I really want to kill her! But I can't, Loria is very close with her sister, I must win over Rona Sally!"

Rona Sally Golden Wheat, Loria's younger sister, had just turned sixteen this year.

Liszt inquired, "So what do you need me to do?"

“Win over Rona Sally!”

“What?”

“Conquer her, just as you did at Long Taro Castle. With your looks, winning over a sixteen-year-old girl should be easy... If the two sisters marry us brothers, it would make a classic love story that could be written into a knight’s novel.”

“I’m sorry, brother, I refuse,” Liszt said bluntly, “I have no intention of getting married, at least not for now.”

“You will eventually need a noble wife to accompany you for life. Rona Sally is an excellent choice, the daughter of a marquis – you won’t get a better marriage prospect than this.”

“Sorry, I prefer to let things take their natural course, I don’t like to force matters of status.”

“I really can’t fathom your thoughts!” Levis complained, then added, “But no matter what, you must help me win over Rona Sally... My dear brother, for your brother’s happiness, you wouldn’t refuse, right?”

He had put it that way.

Liszt couldn’t refuse, unless he wanted to ruin Levis’s marriage: “Of course, I will try to win over Rona Sally.” Being too handsome, sometimes... is also a kind of trouble.

Seeing Liszt nod,

Levis then took him upstairs to the second-floor hall, where there was something like a family tea party in progress. Around the round table spread with various fruits and pastries sat Lady Penelope, Lady Marie, Li Vera, Lidun, and two unfamiliar young people.

One was a male, quite handsome, around twenty years old.

The other was a female, with brown-black hair, large eyes, a pure face – like a fairy. The lady’s dress fitted her perfectly, her extraordinary beauty instantly reminded Liszt of Deborah Silva, a Brazilian model he had once followed online.

On a scale of ten, she could score an 8.5, almost equal to Duniko Hyacinth’s rating.

“Roger, Rona Sally, let me introduce to you, this is my dear brother, Liszt Tulip. He is currently the Baron of Fresh Flower Town, but on Coral Island, everyone knows that Liszt’s future is boundless, he is the glory of the Tulip Family.”

In front of others, Levis gave Liszt a lot of face, turning a country baron into the light of Coral Island.

He then introduced to Liszt: "This is Roger Golden Wheat, the son of Marquis Roderick, the heir of Golden Island, Loria's brother; and this is Rona Sally Golden Wheat, Loria's sister, the most beautiful flower of Golden Island."

"Sir Roger, it's a pleasure to meet you," Liszt said with a smile.

"Likewise, it's a pleasure to meet you, Sir Liszt," Roger responded with a standard nobleman's smile, using the customary courteous phrases.

Liszt looked toward Rona Sally, and from the moment they met, he had decided that, for the sake of his brother's happy marriage, he must lend a hand, "Miss Rona Sally, it's a pleasure to meet you."

"Hello, Sir Liszt," Rona Sally responded with slight reserve.

After the greetings were exchanged.

Liszt took off Flack Abaie's coat and handed it to a servant to hang on the rack, then he took his seat. He wasn't in a hurry to join the conversation, merely smiling and listening quietly.

The topics were tedious — just some nobles' anecdotes or mutual flatteries about the prosperity of each other's families.

Throughout the luncheon, he barely said much, certainly not because he couldn't get a word in, but purely out of disinterest. Discussing trivial noble anecdotes wouldn't make him appear witty or conversational; in fact, he only needed to maintain a presence as beautiful as the flowers beside him.

The presence of a noble with his aura evidently raised the overall caliber of the gathering by a great margin.

Confidence endowed him with charm; no one could overlook the Liszt of today.

As lunch ended and afternoon tea began, Rona Sally approached Liszt to strike up a conversation, "I heard from Levis that 'To Alice' is a wonderful piano piece you heard in a distant land?"

"I don't know if Levis has told you the story behind 'To Alice,' the heart-wrenching, sincere love between a brother and sister... I heard someone play this piece, but it was incomplete, so I added and altered some of the melodies myself."

“Then you must be a talented pianist; I tried playing ‘To Alice’ several times, it sounds so perfect, it’s almost flawless.”

“Almost flawless means there are still some minor flaws, Rona Sally. May I discuss with you where the flaws might be and how to correct them?”

“I’m afraid my skills might not be enough to offer you a better suggestion.”

“That’s alright, it’s just a mutual exchange. On the piano, I am but a novice. I have a decent grasp of melodies, but I don’t often play the piano, so I need someone who can play proficiently to work with me.” Liszt extended an invitation, inviting Rona Sally to the piano room.

The Tulip Castle’s piano room was large, housing several grand pianos.

The servants quickly lifted the covers, brought in tea, and fetched a score of ‘To Alice’, placing it on the stand.

Liszt sat at the piano, his hands gently caressing the keys, the touch of the grand piano incomparable to that of his upright piano.

“I will play it through first, to familiarize myself with the melody,” he stated.

Rona Sally smiled and said, “I look forward to your performance.”

Dong!

Without further ado, he began to play like a focused concert pianist, seemingly there only to discuss the piano. His long, powerful fingers danced across the black and white keys, his whole demeanor merging seamlessly with ‘To Alice’.

He had been emanating a calm aura before.

Now, it seemed as if a stream of warm affection was flowing from him.

Suppressed and led by the singing of the Sea Sprite Ake, his current technique in playing was masterful, at least for ‘To Alice’ and ‘With You’.

Ding dong, ding dong, ding dong ding...

The crisp notes fluttered through the empty piano room; the slightly chilly atmosphere gradually warmed, the charm of music at work.

And the radiance that Liszt exuded.

Seated on the stool, her legs together, knees touching, Rona Sally maintained her dignified ladylike posture, her eyes lighting up as she watched Liszt's shoulders move with the rhythm.

Chapter 316: Chapter 0314: The Embrace of a Stumble (Second Update)

The man playing the piano always brings a feeling called “romantic” to women.

This is the charm of music, as well as the cultivation of culture. When nobles regard the piano as an essential possession, playing the piano becomes synonymous with the best of noble temperament.

If, in addition, the man playing the piano is handsome and dashing, that's even more romantic.

The piece ended.

Liszt waited for the notes to completely settle in the piano room before turning his head and looking at Rona Sally, who was immersed in the music, “Miss Rona Sally, my performance was not very good, I'm embarrassed.”

“Just call me Rona Sally.” She smiled sweetly. “But I think you played brilliantly, really. I've always thought there were a few minor details that weren't quite right. But now I see it wasn't a flaw in the score but rather in how I didn't know what technique to use.”

Liszt raised his eyebrows.

Rona Sally continued, “After hearing your performance, I now know that ‘To Alice’ truly is a flawless existence.”

“Nothing in the world is flawless—your belief that it is is because you've learned how to appreciate it,” Liszt stood up and extended his hand toward Rona Sally, “Come, try playing it as well. Perhaps you'll have a burst of new inspiration and find its flaws for me.”

She reached out her hand and placed it in Liszt's, letting him pull her up.

Rona Sally felt the atmosphere was so good at the moment that she sat in front of the piano with a smile on her face, “If I don't play well, don't laugh at me.”

“Nobody would laugh at a beautiful lady.”

Liszt sat down, picked up a cup, took a sip of the coffee he didn't particularly like, and assumed a listening posture.

Rona Sally took a deep breath. Her not-so-prominent chest quivered slightly, fully revealing her slender figure. Her side sitting posture was dignified, back straight, with an impeccable ladylike demeanor—good manners cultivated from childhood in a household of nobles.

The sound of the piano started, different from Liszt's style.

Each note was played correctly, but there was something lacking in liveliness, as if played deliberately for accuracy—it was apparent to Liszt after just a short segment that Rona Sally's piano level was technically solid and skilled, but truly not gifted.

What he heard was not the youthful tenderness of "To Alice," but rather like a schoolchild overwhelmed by homework.

Honestly, the level of her playing was a stark contrast to the image of Rona Sally. From what Levis had described, Rona Sally often encouraged Loria to pursue a free marriage. It was hard to imagine someone "longing for freedom" could produce such rigid piano playing.

When the music ended,

The contrast was striking.

Rona Sally clearly recognized her issue, "I'm sorry, Liszt. I was too nervous while playing."

"I didn't feel that way. Indeed, there were two melodies that were a bit stiff, but the rest was quite good, skillful, not a single note misplaced."

"Do you really think so?" Rona Sally asked, hopeful, "My piano teacher said I'm not good at expressing my emotions through the piano. But I love playing the piano; it makes me feel like a bird flying."

Liszt thought for a moment.

It was difficult to praise the playing with a clear conscience, so he replied, "I think you're lacking a spark of collision, like there's something missing in your life, some crazy act?"

"Would rebelling against my parents count as a crazy act?"

"Every rebellious young person resists their parents, but those are not the kind of sparks I'm talking about... Have you ever thrown caution to the wind and just ridden a horse at full speed? Instead of having afternoon tea, why not ride a horse and have a good run? That's what relaxation is," Liszt suggested a new leisure.

Riding horses, having tea, hunting, playing the piano—those are common diversions for nobles.

He really didn't want to listen to Rona Sally play the piano—Rona Sally was a fine listener but not a good performer.

Ever since he awakened the soul of a pianist, his appreciation for music had ascended dramatically. Though he needed to please Rona Sally to help Levis, he saw no need to torment his own ears.

The young lady nodded gently, "Then let's go riding."

...

Liszt rode on a Li Dragon Horse.

Rona Sally rode a brownish-yellow steed from Tulip Castle, which clearly had a much lesser pedigree than the Li Dragon Horse, and appeared uneasy in its presence.

North of Tulip Castle, along the slope, was a vast grassland perfect for a full gallop.

As the two horses took off, Rona Sally's brownish-yellow steed clearly couldn't match the speed of the Li Dragon Horse and fell behind by a length, and that was with Liszt slowing down.

He gently kicked the Li Dragon Horse's belly, drawing closer to Rona Sally, and shouted against the wind, "From here, further north, is the Rocky Beach by the sea. Rona Sally, when you ride, you must let loose and chase the source of the wind! Only then can you, like the horses, become one with nature."

"Go!"

The Li Dragon Horse accelerated.

"I understand now, go!"

Rona Sally too urged her brownish-yellow steed to chase continuously.

The wind howled in her ears, a friction of freedom, casting off the restraint of being a noble lady, and letting her spirit soar through the air, which felt extraordinarily liberating.

She tilted her head and, through strands of hair tousled by the wind, she watched the handsome rider ahead on horseback who occasionally turned back to flash her a smile.

Suddenly, she felt that the moments in life worth looking forward to were not when a prince on a white horse slowly led his steed over.

Instead, it was when a dark horse prince unexpectedly arrived to sweep you off your feet.

Thump, thump, thump...

Her heartbeat quickened.

She watched the Li Dragon Horse gradually widen the gap and, with a flick of her riding crop, shouted, "Go!"

The brownish-yellow steed, pained by the whip, broke into a wild gallop, but it still couldn't catch up with the speed of the Li Dragon Horse, making her anxious as she continued to press it to run faster.

As they streamed across the grassland and entered a rocky wasteland with loose stones, the brownish-yellow steed suddenly stepped on an unstable rock and stumbled, falling over.

Caught off guard, Rona Sally was violently thrown to the ground.

She let out a sharp scream, "Ah!"

"Woah!"

Upon hearing the scream, Liszt immediately reined in the Li Dragon Horse, and with a swift turn, he galloped towards Rona Sally. Dismounting, he knelt on one knee to help her up, and asked with gentle urgency, "Where are you hurt, Rona Sally?"

"I'm not hurt, just a bit sore from the fall." Rona Sally had trained in Dou Qi, and after flexing her wrist to make sure she was not injured, but only clothed with some soil, she said with a touch of embarrassment, "I'm sorry, I was too impatient with my horse."

Glancing at the side, the brownish-yellow steed seemed to be injured, lying on the ground without getting up, yet its manner of nibbling grass suggested otherwise.

But it was obviously not suitable for riding again.

Seeing the Retainer Knights had not yet caught up, Liszt carried Rona Sally, "Let's share one horse for now." He said, gracefully mounting the horse, and placed Rona Sally on the back of the Li Dragon Horse.

Encircling Rona Sally's waist.

He nudged the Li Dragon Horse's belly and spoke, "If you're not in a rush to go back and change clothes, let's stick to the original plan and head to Rocky Beach by the sea first."

Rona Sally shifted her position.

Feeling her heartbeat quicken from being held in an embrace, she pretended to be calm and responded, "I'm fine, Liszt."

"Go!"

One horse, two riders, continued to gallop in the sunset.

When the Retainer Knights arrived, aside from the horse still lying and eating grass, they saw only the retreating figures of Liszt and Rona Sally, fading towards the seaside.

Chapter 317: Chapter 0315: This is How a Lord Landlord Should Be (Third Update)

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As Liszt rode the Li Dragon Horse along the shoreline, holding Rona Sally in his arms and admiring the sunset, he had to admit, he didn't know what to do next.

His original intention was just to help Levis, to leave a good impression on Rona Sally, so she wouldn't coax her sister into pursuing freedom and would settle down to marry Levis.

But after the horse stumbled, the two of them ended up riding together.

The contact between front chest and back, coupled with the beauty of the sunset sinking into the sea, made the atmosphere unconsciously turn ambiguous. He felt the slight trembling of the petite body in his arms, could even listen to her quickening heartbeat, and the breaths growing heavier and heavier.

Suddenly, as if by some telepathic connection, Liszt gently turned her shoulder.

She obediently twisted her upper body around, tilting her neck backward, closing her eyes. Liszt leaned forward, looking at her long lashes, with no formalities, he wrapped his hands around her slender waist, pulling her into his embrace, and then kissed her red lips fiercely.

Sucking.

Entwining.

Finding the position somewhat awkward, he suddenly broke the intensely entwined lips and tongues, quickly picked up Rona Sally, and placed her sideways on the horseback.

“Ah... Mm...” Rona Sally didn’t have time to exclaim before her outcry was muffled, reduced to a faint hum through her nose.

The passionate kiss was like practising a difficult piano piece, requiring all his strength to match, with his mind void of any thought but the warmth coming from the contact, moving ceaselessly through their clothes, so tantalizing that he wanted to resist but couldn’t bear to do so.

They lost themselves in the primitive, natural bliss.

Allowing the red sunlight to strive in elongating their shadows.

...

In the distance.

Retainer Knights of two nobles gathered together, watching the entwined figures from afar, none daring to approach, silently dismounting and leading their horses to graze.

Zavier Dung patted Philip Wool on the shoulder and whispered, “Lord Landlord is incredible.”

“What?” Philip was somewhat puzzled.

Zavier jerked his chin and said, “I mean his charm, Lord Landlord’s charm is unbeatable.”

“Yes, Xavier, you’re right, everyone in Fresh Flower Town respects and adores Lord Landlord, he is truly a Son of Glory, the knightly honor that favors him shines as brilliantly as the sun.”

“Er, I wasn’t talking about that.”

Philip blinked, “Then what were you referring to?”

“Haven’t you seen what Lord Landlord is doing?” Xavier said in an astonished voice, “Who is that with him? It’s the young miss from the noble Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, unreachable like a star in the sky. But now, she’s in our Lord Landlord’s arms, enjoying his passion.”

“That sounds normal to me.” Philip looked towards the distant shore where Liszt and Rona Sally had dismounted and were walking hand in hand among the rocks, “Lord Landlord is like the sun, and the miss from the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family is like a star; isn’t it natural for the sun and star to be together?”

“Er...”

Zavier suddenly found Philip's words to be quite reasonable and was left speechless.

He wanted to say that it should be surprising! After all, their Lord Landlord was merely a country Baron, while she was from the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, destined to be a lady of the nobility. Yet within half a day, she had fallen into the Lord Landlord's hands.

However, upon thinking again, the future of Lord Landlord was bound to be bright, his status equally noble, so why couldn't he kiss and hold hands with the miss from the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family?

They had seen at Long Taro Castle, a young lady from an Earl's family adjusting Lord Landlord's collar with deep affection at the moment of farewell.

“

He had also seen that formidable, beautiful female mercenary, looking at Lord Landlord with eyes full of deep love.

From the moment he had been chosen as a Retainer Knight, he felt as if Lord Landlord was glowing, radiating the knightly glory, and he firmly believed that following Lord Landlord would bring him under the many gazes of glory.

Therefore.

Looking again at the noble couple strolling hand in hand on Rocky Beach, he couldn't help but think how harmonious they were, as if it were only natural: “Lord Landlord should indeed be like this.”

Suddenly.

He remembered the mercenary Paris: “Thank goodness she didn't come along, or, seeing Lord Landlord with the miss of the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, her heart might have broken. But after all, she's just a mercenary; she should understand that Lord Landlord isn't someone someone of her station could aspire to.”

Nobles, commoners, the stark disparities of status are etched into everyone's mind.

Without a sweeping movement of enlightenment, those chains of thought can never be erased—yet, the transmigrator Liszt, who should have hoisted the flag of reform, had already degenerated into one of the nobles, sweetly dreaming of a dragon-riding life, with no time for reform.

...

The setting sun finally sank beneath the sea, leaving only a faint afterglow, a trace of brightness remaining.

Holding Rona Sally's hand and looking at the excited smile of the sixteen-year-old girl, he couldn't help but smile himself, "Dear, it's time to go back."

"Mhmm." Rona Sally hopped down from a rock, rushed at Liszt, and hugged his arm, seemingly wanting to hang from him, tilting her head back, her big eyes blinking, "But I don't want to go back yet."

Liszt leaned down and kissed her desirable red lips again.

The girl had passed her initial awkwardness, her hands moved from his arm, reached upward to embrace his neck, stood on tiptoes, and began to respond eagerly to Liszt's kiss. She was a bit over one meter sixty, appearing somewhat short in front of Liszt who was over one meter eighty-five.

They broke the kiss.

Composing himself, Liszt released his hands still wandering on Rona Sally's body, took her small hand again, and repeated, "We should head back."

"Mhmm." Rona Sally, rewarded with a kiss, didn't throw any tantrums and nodded obediently.

A whistle.

The Li Dragon Horse grazing in the distance galloped over, Liszt supporting Rona Sally's waist, hoisted her up, then swiftly mounted himself.

He encircled the girl's slim waist and spurred the horse into a gallop.

By the time they rushed back to Tulip Castle, it was already dark, and guided by moonlight, they chatted playfully, stopping at the castle gate. After helping Rona Sally off the horse, Liszt did not hold her hand again. This wasn't the passionate moment after a dance where indulgences could be excused, he had to maintain some of the nobility's decorum.

"Is that Douson?" Rona Sally exclaimed upon seeing a huge dog approaching.

"Yes, would you like to pet him?" Liszt gestured, and Douson came over wagging his tail, letting Rona Sally stroke his glossy black fur.

He caught a glimpse from the corner of his eye of his guard Paris, peeking out from a window on the first floor of the castle and then retreating.

He didn't mind, only saying with a smile to Rona Sally, "Douson is about to be one year old, I was lucky to have met him when he was younger."

"I've never seen such a gentle Intermediate Magical Beast, Liszt, will you ride it into battle?"

"Of course, it will be my battle companion," he affirmed.

Rona Sally looked up at him with her big eyes, bright and twinkling, "You have a great future ahead, and I hope to see you gain even more glory in the near future."

"There will be such a day," Liszt nodded, "Come, Grandpa Louis is already waiting for us at the door."

Chapter 318: Chapter 316: There Is Only One Rule (Fourth Update)

The banquet found Liszt returning to his reticent self.

However, this time, there were always young ladies who approached him for conversation, "Liszt, can we visit Fresh Flower Town tomorrow? I believe it must be very beautiful."

"Of course, if you wish to go, Fresh Flower Town is always welcoming to your visit," Liszt responded with a smile, slicing a piece of steak and eating it with elegance.

On the other side, Roger Golden Wheat, also elegantly enjoying his steak, cast a smile towards Rona Sally and then glanced at Liszt.

Without saying anything, he raised his glass to clink with Levis's and savored the Crescent Moon Wine in small sips.

Meanwhile, Lady Penelope played with the fried egg on her plate while silently exchanging glances with her granddaughter, Li Vera, seated next to her.

Then, she said to Rona Sally, "There's nothing remarkable about Tulip Castle for those from Harvest Castle. It's good for young people to go out and get some fresh air if they feel bored. Fresh Flower Town is a nice place, if not for the bumpy carriage ride, I would go there often to enjoy the scenery."

"Old madam, will you and Li Vera join us tomorrow?"

"Oh, no, I am old and prefer to stay in my own house, quietly watching the ivy cover the whole wall. My ivy is thriving; it might even give birth to an Elf Bug. Let me tell you, Rona Sally, my potted plants have really produced an Elf Bug before, and Liszt knows it best."

Rona Sally suddenly became interested, “What kind of Elf Bug was it?”

“A Dragon Kui Bug, the Dragon Kui potted plant was sick. I took it away, intending to replace it with a new Dragon Kui for grandmother, but to my surprise, it bred an Elf Bug, and then grandmother gave it to me as a gift.”

“Wow, that’s such a heartwarming story. I really wish my grandmother would also give me a potted plant that could breed an Elf Bug.”

Liszt, however, sighed seriously, “But since then, each holiday, grandmother just gives me a potted plant and tells me—Liszt, please cherish this plant, maybe it hides an Elf Bug!”

“Ha ha.”

The people at the banquet burst into laughter, especially Rona Sally, who laughed with delight.

A not-so-humorous brief joke was, to her, the funniest deadpan joke in the world. This made Liszt feel quite embarrassed, having made her laugh so hard with his simple teasing. What if he had told a few genuinely interesting tales, would she need artificial respiration?

The banquet ended in a bustling atmosphere.

Liszt left the still-chatting dining room to go downstairs and see Douson, having heard Douson barking outside earlier. Now when Douson went out, he was looked after by the manservant Tom. Thomas was the head manservant, handling everything before and after for Liszt; Tom was the second manservant, doing the same for Douson.

“Tom, what happened to Douson just now?” Liszt saw Douson lying on the ground chewing on a bone, seemingly without any issues.

“Master, Douson saw a Doberman earlier, but after a few barks from Douson, the Doberman got scared and ran away.”

Well, maybe Douson just wanted to befriend the Doberman, but the Doberman clearly didn’t entertain such a thought. Liszt rubbed Douson’s neck, stood up, and left, ready to return to the Castle.

At that moment he heard a rustle nearby, yet couldn’t see anyone.

“Paris?”

No one on either side.

Paris revealed herself, "Baron."

"Haven't gone to rest yet, is something the matter?" Liszt asked in a gentle tone.

Paris opened her mouth, and said softly, "The young miss from the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family is very beautiful."

Liszt nodded, "You mean Rona Sally? Indeed, she is beautiful."

"So, will she become the lady of Fresh Flower Town, I apologize, Baron, I'm just a bit curious," Paris said somewhat awkwardly.

Glancing at Paris, who had become increasingly womanly after regaining her figure,

Liszt suddenly felt a heavy pressure, as the world was filled with so many wonderful things, tempting him to fall into decadence. Fate was ever so fickle, preferring to entangle all simple emotions together, making one owe debts everywhere.

He looked up at the stars in the sky.

Blinking.

Tonight there is no moon, only these twinkling stars.

Drawing back her gaze, she said calmly, "Perhaps it will, perhaps it won't, you know, I have never thought about these things. I like to let things take their natural course, just like you don't know whether it will be sunny or rainy when you wake up in the morning, but no matter what the weather is, it's a new day, embrace it, and that's all."

Having said that, he patted Paris on the shoulder, "Good night, Paris." Without waiting for Paris to respond, he went straight into the castle.

Paris was left behind, chewing on the words "let things take their natural course."

She was a Black Dragon Childe with only ten years left to live, and life, for her, was also about letting things take their natural course. With a wry smile, she no longer dwelled on the sadness in her heart, returned to her room, took out a book, and slowly started reading under the light of the crystal lamps in the corridors of Tulip Castle.

One day Liszt had said, "You should learn to read and write," and so she began to study Serpent Script, despite finding it extremely difficult.

...

Just as she returned to the corridor of the dining hall, she saw that everyone had already come out.

“Liszt, Roger and I are planning to go to the study to discuss some matters, you and Li Vera accompany Rona Sally,” Levis said.

“Alright.”

After Roger and Levis left, Li Vera, helping Lady Penelope, said, “I’ll take Grandmother home first, you guys go and have a cup of tea.”

With that, she also winked at Liszt.

In the blink of an eye, the bustling crowd dispersed, but Lady Marie, having sent Lidun to do his homework, did not leave. As the lady of the castle, she couldn’t be rude.

Liszt didn’t want to stay with Lady Marie any more than necessary, and asking a servant to pick up a bottle of Flack·Abaie from the rack, he asked, “Rona Sally, would you like to take a walk outside?”

“Yes, I’d like that very much,” she replied.

“Then Lady Marie, would you care to join us for a walk?” Liszt asked.

Lady Marie smiled, “You two go ahead, I’m not accustomed to walking at night, but it’s cool outside. Rona Sally, Liszt, remember to ask the servants to bring an extra coat, don’t catch a cold.”

“Thank you for your reminder, Lady Marie.”

...

A walk was just a walk.

At most, holding hands, hugging a few times, and kissing.

About an hour later, Liszt was leading Rona Sally back to Tulip Castle.

“My dear, I’m too excited today, I’m afraid I won’t be able to sleep tonight,” Rona Sally said reluctantly as he was about to take her back to her room.

“Rest well, I’ll take you to Fresh Flower Town tomorrow.”

“So it’s settled then.”

“Of course.”

The servant stood at the door, and Liszt did not leave Rona Sally with a farewell kiss, but simply waved his hand and turned away elegantly. In her room, Rona Sally remained

seated on the edge of her bed, smiling dazedly for a long time after Liszt's departure, until a maid informed her that Master Roger had arrived.

"Brother."

"Did you have fun today?" Roger asked, having drunk a bit, his face still slightly flushed.

Rona Sally was a little shy, but still said boldly, "Yes, brother, I had a lot of fun today."

"Well, as long as you're happy," Roger leaned against the wall, raising an eyebrow, "but I have to remind you of something, as a woman of the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, you need to understand some truths—'There are no laws, no restrictions, just one rule: never fall in love.'"

Chapter 319: Chapter 0317: The Prince Turns into a Frog (Fifth Update)

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"I don't want to go to Fresh Flower Town anymore, dear. Let's just take a stroll around Coral City."

After breakfast in the early morning, when Li Si Te invited Rona Sally to visit Fresh Flower Town, he received an unexpected response. The girl, who the night before had been so passionate she'd wanted to give her body and soul to Liszt, stood by his side today as distant as if separated by a vast sea.

Liszt could not fathom it.

Why had there been such a change from yesterday to today, just over the course of one night?

He simply concealed the slight disappointment in his heart, smiled, and remained as gentle and sunny as ever, "Then let's go to Coral City. I haven't been to the city for a long time."

The servants brought two specially-made dried tulip flowers, the rich fragrance of which was enough to mask the pungent smell of Coral City. Even the boots were changed, replaced with high-soled long boots to avoid stepping on anything disgusting.

Shopping in the city.

It was not a great choice, at least for Liszt. He wasn't accustomed to the aromatic wafts of stench.

However, it seemed that many nobles could tolerate such an environment. Probably because they grew up accustomed to the city being just that way, dirty and foul-smelling.

The carriage bore the flag of the red tulip, and as it moved through the streets of Coral City, every peddler, serf, and freeman would halt and bow in respect to the carriage. In Coral City, the Tulip Family was seen as kings by the commoners, an untouchable authority.

Pulling back the carriage curtain, Liszt pointed at various shops along the street and incessantly shared both interesting and dull stories with Rona Sally.

After making a round through Coral City, they went to visit Lady Penelope at her castle to have a chat with the grandmother about her precious potted plants.

In between, Liszt took a bathroom break.

Lady Penelope took Rona Sally's hand and said, "I haven't met your sister Loria, but I like you, Rona Sally. I can imagine what Loria must be like. I hope you can also come to like Coral City and Tulip Castle and convey to your sister this old lady's expectations."

"I will, my lady."

"Liszt is an excellent young man. His grandfather, Marquis Merlin, holds him in high regard. He will be the pride of the Tulip Family. When I saw you and him coming down from the carriage holding hands, I felt as if I beheld a match made in heaven," Lady Penelope prattled on.

As one ages, one tends to enjoy gossiping about the young.

Rona Sally forced a smile, then, tinged with a trace of dejection, asked, "My lady, should a woman always sacrifice her own life for her family?"

"Hmm, that's a serious question," Lady Penelope made a deliberate face, "My crush, when I was young, was not Liszt's grandfather. But when Liszt's grandfather died, I truly wanted to follow him. Thankfully, I persevered."

"Were you also in a marriage of alliance?"

"Yes, as a noble lady, you either meet a Prince Charming at a ball, or await the family to arrange a Frog Prince, hoping he'll turn into a handsome, tall human prince after turning around." She touched the green gemstone ring on her finger, "If he can't become a human prince, you'd better pray you have enough sweet memories to comfort yourself."

"I don't know how to choose..." Rona Sally frowned, clearly distressed.

“Then throw caution to the wind, and just love,” Lady Penelope said liberally, “My girl, at least once in your life, you ought to forget yourself for someone. Don’t seek an outcome, don’t ask to accompany them on their journey, don’t long for past possessions, and even don’t demand that he loves you. You just hope that during the most beautiful years, you meet him.”

“Grandmother, whom are you hoping to meet?” Liszt returned to the living room and caught the last few words Lady Penelope said.

“Certainly not you, you little rascal.”

After chatting a bit more.

Lady Penelope started shooing them away, “Off with you, off with you. I know you young people have no patience for an old woman’s ramblings. Go on, I didn’t plan on keeping you here for lunch.”

Leaving the little castle.

Strolling down the country lane, Rona Sally said, “The old lady is really adorable, and it’s so much fun to be with her.”

“Yes, she has her wisdom and her ‘sharpness,’” as long as her old feud with my mother doesn’t always involve me, I quite enjoy chatting with her.”

“Feud?”

“Yes, like in every great family, it is always difficult for the mother of the male head of the household to get along with his wife.”

“It seems to be the case; my mother often quarrels with my grandmother over trivial things.”

“Perhaps that’s just life.”

In the countryside paths of March, the wild grass had already grown out, lush and green, feeling soft underfoot. The Retainer Knights, along with male and female servants, followed not far behind, giving space to the man and woman. When two people of opposite genders are together, the ambiance easily drifts into flirtation.

The sunlight wasn’t too dazzling and was not enough to make the early spring heat up.

Suddenly.

Rona Sally stopped in her tracks with an “ouch.”

“What happened?”

“I stepped in dog poop.” She moved her foot, revealing a half-dried lump of dog feces precisely squashed by her riding boot.

“Scrape it off on the grass roots beside you.”

“Isn’t this just bad luck? I didn’t have any problems stepping in anything in the city, but I end up stepping in it on a country path.”

“That means you have good luck.”

Rona Sally looked up, curiosity in her eyes, “Why is stepping in dog poop considered good luck?”

“On... some island, the locals believe that stepping in dog poop brings good fortune; they call it ‘poop luck,’” Liszt said offhandedly. In fact, in this world, there was no such saying as ‘poop luck’; stepping in poop was just a normal everyday occurrence.

“So, will I have good luck today?” Rona Sally laughed, “Like, perhaps, finding a wonderful love?”

As she spoke, she paused, her bright eyes gazing at Liszt, filled with bold affection and full encouragement. Setting aside the dog poop incident, the whole atmosphere was quite pleasant, even the gentle sunlight was just right. With just one more step, there would be endless possibilities.

Liszt also stopped, reaching out to smooth a stray lock of Rona Sally’s hair behind her ear.

He sighed softly in his heart.

There are some things you hope will happen, others you fear will happen, but more often than not, it’s about whether you choose to let them happen.

“Miss Rona Sally.”

“I’m listening.”

“Some are superficial, others are all glitter on the surface but trash inside,” he said, pointing to the spot where she had stepped in the poop, and smiled, “One day you will meet someone as dazzling as a rainbow. When you meet them, you’ll feel that everyone else is just insignificant.”

A moment later.

Rona Sally held her head high with a touch of pride and said, "The rainbow I meet will appear in my room at midnight!"

Chapter 320: Chapter 318: Laputa: Castle in the Sky (First Update)

Some people are superficial, some people are all glitz and no substance; one day, you will meet someone as dazzling as a rainbow, and after you meet that person, everyone else will seem like fleeting clouds.

...

Rona Sally leaned against the window.

Gazing at the vast, azure sea outside, she could almost hear the words Liszt once whispered to her at the height of their deepest affections.

It was already the second morning, and after breakfast, Roger Golden Wheat, who should have stayed another day, excused himself from Tulip Castle, citing urgent business matters.

Lady Marie and Levis tried their best to persuade him to stay, but ultimately, luggage was packed.

Liszt sat at the breakfast table, elegantly savoring his meal from beginning to end, bidding farewell with a smile, without a single word of persuasion. If he had said anything, Rona Sally didn't know whether she would have stayed regardless of everything, even if Roger urged her to leave.

Roger said, never fall in love.

Lady Penelope said, at least once, you should forget yourself for someone else.

She could easily do what Lady Penelope said, let go of restrictions and enjoy. But she found it very difficult to do what her brother said, not to fall in love.

"Are you trying to tell me that you are all glitz and no substance?"

She waved her hand gently, wiping away the moist tear from the corner of her eye, "But how do you know, why aren't you someone as dazzling as a rainbow? Do you know how many nobles on Golden Island have pursued me? But after seeing you, those people became fleeting clouds."

She bit her lower lip.

She lifted her head, trying to appear as calm as possible, "It's a pity I was born on Golden Island, a woman of the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, and you are just a country baron, even with a bright future ahead, right now you are still weak... Thank you for the happiness we shared, I look forward to seeing you again, Liszt!"

The sea breeze howled.

The ship sailed into the vast, blue yonder.

...

Tulip Castle.

Liszt stayed in the piano room, not touching a single key for half a day.

Until Li Vera walked in, "Why are you hiding in the piano room but not playing the piano? I saw your Retainer Knights and your dog haven't left, which is strange. You usually don't like to stay in Tulip Castle for long... Is it because of the beautiful and enchanting Miss Rona Sally, my affectionate and cruel brother?"

"Cruel?" Liszt asked lightly.

"Why not cruel? You stir the strings of a girl's heart, yet leave her to wait in agony at night. A single word could warm a heart, yet you always refuse to ask her to stay; isn't that cruel?"

"You are well-informed," he noted.

Li Vera smiled proudly, "Of course, with so many servants and retainers in Tulip Castle, they are all my informants. Did you think that after I was granted my own fief, this place would become Lady Marie's territory? Impossible!"

Liszt couldn't deny it.

Honestly speaking, this place is now the domain of the Earl, and in the future, it should be Levis's domain. It really has little to do with Li Vera.

"I have to admire you, Liszt, with your sickeningly sweet good looks and decent demeanor, you always manage to attract any noble lady of high standing. At Long Taro Castle, a single error-ridden piano piece was enough to bed Duniko Hyacinth; here, just by riding a horse, you've captured the heart of Miss Rona Sally Golden Wheat."

"Why do you stay in Tulip Castle all day? Doesn't your own domain need governing?" Liszt noticed that Li Vera had reverted to her adolescent ways.

He was not in a good mood.

It was probably because of the wrong beginning paired with the wrong end, breathlessness, chest tightness, unable to accept.

But the way things turned out was beyond his expectations. He should not have agreed to Levis's request to help him woo Rona Sally, needlessly creating so many ripples. In fact, with Roger present, Loria would surely become the future mistress of Tulip Castle without a hitch.

However, from the moment the horse stumbled, things had already become irretrievable.

"Actually."

He really wanted to confide in someone, and Li Vera was a somewhat suitable choice, "I had planned to practice diligently, to present her with a newly composed piano piece, and then to tell her a story about 'Castle in the Sky'... But time was limited, and who could have expected Roger to leave right after breakfast?"

"Perhaps he feared you would cause his sister to fall." Li Vera's tone was slightly gentle, "In the eyes of the Golden Wheat Sheaf family, women are merely tools for forging connections. Since they had already made ties with Coral Island through Loria, naturally, they wouldn't want to leave another behind. By the way, what is the story of 'Castle in the Sky'?"

"It's to charm little girls; you wouldn't like it."

"What about the piano composition? You can actually compose piano pieces? Play it for me, quick."

Liszt stood up and left the grand piano, "I find you really have a lot of leisure time. Sorry, but I've lost my inspiration and can't play anything. Let's talk about it next time. It really is getting late; I should return to Fresh Flower Town. I haven't been practicing earnestly these past few days, which is not proper for a knight."

He had just shaken off the slightly huffy Li Vera.

Levis, who had come back from the send-off, now sought him out to speak.

"Liszt, truly worthy of being my own brother. Do you know? Roger dared not stay longer in Tulip Castle. He's afraid if Rona Sally doesn't leave today, she'll never be able to leave. Haha, I enjoy seeing him at a disadvantage. The women of the Golden Wheat Sheaf family should all marry into Coral Island!"

"You're happy that Roger is angry? Aren't you worried he'll ruin your marriage with Loria?"

“He’s not like the naive Rona Sally. No matter how upset he is, he won’t stop the alliance between Golden Island and Coral Island. Besides, it was on your own merit that you won Rona Sally’s heart. Who can find fault with that?” said Levis indifferently, “I really envy you for having such a handsome face.”

He was of average looks, and despite brandishing his status as the Earl’s eldest son, he frequently faced rejection.

After all, not every noble young lady would be dazzled, enticed by the title of an Earless. It was the handsome nobles like Liszt, whom they preferred, appealing to their desire for a brief escapade rather than everlasting love.

“Being handsome has its own troubles.”

Liszt didn’t wish to dwell on the topic.

He refused to admit that he had become one of the many licentious nobles, for he believed he had a heart full of feelings—after the passionate encounter with Duniko, he would have been willing to marry her if she had asked, regardless of any past; after spending time with Rona Sally, he feared that too many emotions might encumber a fine lady.

Perhaps this was the true face of nobility—desire and advantage at a crossroads.

Every person was sacrificing or indulging for the sake of benefit.

Therefore.

After much deliberation, he still believed that he should shift his focus away from romantic entanglements and prepare seriously for the great endeavor of Dragon Riding, aiming to become a Dragon Domain Landlord!

“By the way, brother, when do you plan to marry Loria?”

“I had a pleasant talk with Roger, especially after tasting Fresh Flower Brew. He won’t allow Loria to act recklessly. Our wedding will take place this September,” Levis stated excitedly.

Liszt nodded, “Then you should settle down as well and manage this marriage earnestly.”

“Marriage of course requires serious management, as it concerns the future development of Coral Island, and must be approached with gravity. However, that doesn’t mean one can’t enjoy pleasures outside of marriage,” Levis said, winking, “There’s an underground ball next week, held in Serpent Spear City. I’ll take you there to see for yourself!”

“No, I want to go home.”

Indulgence without responsibility for a single night—he needed time to heal his deeply wounded spirit. How could he possibly attend such a depraved gathering?

...

The sound of horse hooves hastened and Fresh Flower Town came into view.

On the gravel road of Thorn Ridge, a caravan caught up with a carriage bearing no insignia. The carriage pulled to the side, and Elkerson stepped down, removing his hood, and gestured a greeting to Liszt’s coach.