

The Mighty Dragons Are Dead

Chapter 381 : 0390: The Conclusion of Sword Challenge in Little River City (First Release)

From the moment the castle wall was breached by Douson, a massacre was inevitable. Viscount Jonas, who had been holding his breath, stormed to the front lines in a frenzy. Nearly two hundred Earth Knights from the following two Knight Orders charged powerfully into the castle, killing anyone they encountered.

The castle, built beside the river and without a name, became the arena for a gory battle.

Countless combat skills burst forth within the castle grounds.

Liszt, choosing not to attack, continued to dismantle the castle with a well-rested Douson, not stopping until half of the castle wall had collapsed. Such a gaping breach could no longer stop the onslaught of the Knight Order, and a climax of the battle was in sight.

At that time,

Liszt waved his hand, signaling for all remaining Earth Knights to follow suit and squeeze into the castle.

He too drew out his Crimson Blood Sword and leaped towards the castle. The situation was already decided, so getting a share of kills wasn't bad. Or rather, it wasn't so much about getting kills as it was about decisively crushing the enemy to mitigate the losses of his own Knight Order.

"Great Fire Wave!"

With a silent incantation, he effortlessly executed a combat skill. His flame-wrapped Crimson Blood Sword easily cleaved through the armor of an enemy

Earth Knight, leaving a deep, bone-exposing wound. With another standard attack, he instantly killed a Common Earth Knight, whose face still bore the marks of youth.

In fact, among all the knights on the battlefield, his face was equally youthful.

Advancing and killing as he went, he quickly penetrated deep into the castle. There, on a walkway, he saw Viscount Jonas engaged in an evenly matched duel with an opponent.

No one else could even get a strike in.

Observing the attire of the man, Liszt instantly deduced that he was facing the master of the Nameless Castle, Viscount of Little River City, also an old Elite Earth Knight. Perhaps lacking a bit in heritage, as his castle didn't even have a name, but the strength was considerable. Viscount Jonas, who had sustained light injuries, was unable to subdue him.

"Quick battle, quick decision!"

Liszt had no concern for a fair one-on-one duel, and the battlefield didn't concern itself with fairness either. As he lifted his Crimson Blood Sword, he immediately executed the ultimate mystery technique of the "Fire Dragon Drill" — the Heart of the Fire Dragon Drill.

He cut into the battle decisively.

With the support of Liszt, Jonas attacked the Viscount from both sides. With Liszt's help, the scale of the battle instantly tipped. A minute later, the opposing Viscount, running out of stamina, stumbled, and both Liszt and Jonas's eyes lit up as their longswords simultaneously pierced the gaps in the Viscount's armor.

Squelch!

Squelch!

The Dou Qi erupted, especially Liszt's Fire Attribute Dou Qi, which exploded inside the Viscount, severely damaging his internal organs.

"Ah!"

The Viscount screamed loudly and could no longer maintain his stance, kneeling to the ground, dying of wounds.

He had died, making such a tragic scene. Liszt found it distasteful and kicked the Viscount's body over before stepping over the corpse to support more of the localized fighting. Jonas also roamed around to provide support, the Elite Earth Knight who followed the potion-flowing method fought impressively, achieving effects akin to reaping crops.

Twenty minutes later, the sounds of battle within the castle began to subside.

Half an hour later, there were no more scenes of combat.

The siege of the castle thus concluded.

Without much fanfare.

"Count the casualties." Shaking off the dried blood from his Crimson Blood Sword, he stepped out of the castle, breathing in the fresh air outside—inside the castle was thick with the stench of blood and decay.

A moment later, Captain Layden approached: "Commander, a hundred and forty knights of the Black Knight Order joined the battle—nine fell, seventeen severely wounded; sixty-nine of the Grey Knight Order—eleven fell, twenty-one severely wounded. In this battle, a total of one hundred and five Earth Knights were killed, along with numerous Apprentice Knights."

The Black Knight Order had sacrificed nine knights, including one of Liszt's followers, Leslie Pile of Dead Leaves, who had not been following him for long.

Among the seriously injured knights was another follower of Liszt, his former classmate Rick Trace. This nineteen-year-old son of a minor noble had just advanced to an Earth Knight and was still quite naive. He had been seriously wounded as soon as he charged into the castle and had lain on the ground groaning for half a day until he was discovered after the battle had ended.

In fact, it's rare for knights to be killed in one blow in battle; most of them are severely injured and lose their combat capability.

After the battle ended, the casualties were either captured as prisoners or rescued by their companions, so the rate of combat loss wasn't very high. However, this time the Grand Duke refused to take prisoners. Any knight on the losing side who didn't die was finished off, leading to the total annihilation of the knights from Nameless Castle.

"Sigh."

The battle at Mane City, zero battle losses; the battle at Little River City, nine men perished.

Liszt knew that sacrifices in battle were inevitable, but he still felt uncomfortable upon hearing the numbers and asked, "Captain Layden, what should be done with the people who sacrificed their lives on the battlefield?"

"Cremation, may they return to the glory of knights."

"Then let's go with cremation."

"Yes, Commander!"

...

Treating the injured, looting the castle, resting and relaxing.

Leaving these tasks to his subordinates, Liszt and Jonas stayed in the highest room of the castle, drinking freshly brewed coffee, and summarizing the battle losses.

Jonas's complexion was not very excited, even a bit pale: "The battle was harder than I imagined. I've become accustomed to the style of warfare in the Pioneer Mandate, and I'm somewhat unaccustomed to siege warfare. This has led to the Grey Knight Order suffering heavy losses and now verging on collapse."

Previously, the knights charged headlong, and the Grey Knight Order, unprepared, suffered severe damage to half of its knights; this time, in the siege, they lost nearly thirty more men.

Now only thirty-seven knights remain fit for battle.

"Viscount Jonas, what is the style of the Pioneer Mandate?" inquired Liszt.

"The Pioneer Mandate is oriented towards plunder. We follow the Earl from city to city, looting the resources we desire; we rarely engage in siege warfare. To prevent their precious resources from being plundered, the knights in the castles have to come out and battle us, which gives us the opportunity to charge."

In open-field charges, with the Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam at the helm, Coral Island's Knight Order was very formidable. Moreover, they specifically targeted the weaker opponents. Those areas under established marquis and earl, Li Weiliam hardly ever touched. They would strike swiftly and move on like the wind, always achieving victory.

Furthermore, local mercenary forces would take advantage of the chaos to loot the population and then conduct business secretly with the knights of the Duchy of Sapphire, by trading serfs.

Therefore, in the Pioneer Mandate wars, the excess resources looted were not taken away but were disposed of on the spot.

Human hearts always surrender to profit.

Jonas had become accustomed to open-field charges in the Pioneer Mandate and had relatively less experience with siege warfare. Using his old approach led to significant losses in this battle.

"If it hadn't been for you and Douson arriving in time, I'm afraid I couldn't have taken Little River City's castle at all; a lifetime of glory charging into battles might have been completely lost here!"

Thinking of the dreadful outcome, Jonas's robust body trembled slightly.

Perhaps everyone, including the earls, had in one way or another underestimated the differences between this war and the Pioneer Mandate—the followers of the Marquis of Bull didn't care about the gain or loss of the territory resources; they only cared about whether they could hold onto the castles and resist the Grand Duke's retribution.

Liszt's face was stern, but inside he felt rather at ease, "If glory is lost, then we'll take it back. Now that we have taken over Little River City's castle and all the knights have been dispatched, we'll set out for Green Shade City first thing tomorrow morning. Together with Viscount Trik and Viscount Levis, we will take over the Green Leaf Fortress of Green Shade City!"

Green Shade City also has a viscount, a very well-established one, with a castle that has a name—Green Leaf Fortress.

Chapter 382 : 0379: The Great Battle of Green Leaf Fortress (Second Update)

Green Leaf Fortress was far larger and sturdier than Nameless Castle.

However, under the suppression of the Black, Yellow, Blue, and the remaining Grey Knight Order, Douson still spent half a day in dismantling one of the castle walls.

Next was a swarm of knights from the four Knight Orders rushing in.

Liszt, Trick, Jonas, and Levis, four elite Earth Knights who indulged in drug use, formed an ultra-luxurious combination. They bulldozed their way through, and in less than an hour, the siege of Green Leaf Fortress was over. This time, by assembling elite knights from four different Knight Orders, the casualties were fewer.

The Black Knight Order lost just five knights in battle and had ten seriously injured.

After three battles, out of the one hundred and forty-two knights in the Black Knight Order, fourteen had died, twenty-nine were seriously injured, leaving ninety-nine knights still capable of combat.

Besides military honors and Liszt's previous gains, there were not many spoils of war to be privately divided—just some gold coins.

Most resources had been moved, especially valuable goods, which were taken by the knights' relatives to Iron Hoof City—Marquis of Bull had long been prepared for the assassination of the Sapphire Dragon and the subsequent retaliation from the Grand Duke.

That very night.

The four Knight Orders, with their coin pouches bulging with gold, met up with the Earl.

"You've all worked hard," the Earl hosted a feast at the camp to welcome the commanders of the four Knight Orders. However, there was no drinking—just a hearty meal.

Jonas wore a look of shame, "I'm sorry, my lord, I've disappointed you!"

"Indeed, your performance was disappointing, Jonas," the Earl said. "Count Sned is just an ordinary Sky Knight, and his followers are far below you in

quality. If it had not been for Liszt's support, your casualty rate would have far exceeded that of the opponent, and that's during a charge on flat ground!"

Jonas knelt on one knee, silent.

The Earl waved his hand, "You'll have to bear the consequences of this mistake yourself, but now, you still have a chance to make amends. Merge the Grey Knight Order into the Black Knight Order and serve as Liszt's deputy."

Jonas did not complain, "Yes, my lord!"

Liszt didn't mind.

He wasn't bothered by Jonas sharing a piece of the pie because he was the one who led the Knight Order, and all credit had to go through him before being distributed to the members of the Knight Order.

In the knighthood system, Great Lords are only accountable to Minor Lords and their directly affiliated knights. All military achievements of a Knight Order or Knight Squad led by a Minor Lord are credited to that lord. When the Great Lord distributes rewards to the Minor Lord, the Minor Lord then calculates how to share these rewards with his knights.

Now, Jonas's rewards would also be calculated by Liszt.

"My lord," he replied aloud, "with Viscount Jonas's assistance, the Black Knight Order can take on more tasks." His mind was already making calculations.

The more the Black Knight Order distinguished itself, the greater the likelihood of him being granted the title of Viscount.

As long as he became a Viscount, all was well—he could extract funds from Fresh Flower Town as rewards for his knights. Even if this meant incurring

some debt in the short term, the ownership of Black Horse Island was the most crucial outcome.

The Earl understood Liszt's intentions.

He nodded, "Douson will be very useful, the Black Knight Order naturally needs to take on more tasks... Now, let's plan the capture of Celery Fort. We rest for a day and then commence the siege right away! Be the first to complete the purge of Bull Hair City!"

...

Bow and arrow suppression.

Douson released Magic Stone Grenades and Rock Spikes.

The whole day was spent repeating this routine, and Li Weiliam rode his warhorse, surveying the area below the fortress, ready to charge without hesitation towards Sned should he dare show his face and engage him in a fierce battle.

Once Douson's magic power was exhausted, the knight order would retreat.

After Douson had recovered, the knight order would charge again and continue the suppression with arrows.

Back and forth with this torment, the knights of Celery Fort could only watch helplessly as Douson dismantled the castle, bombarding it from windows and other spots. Each rock grenade blast would create cracks in the walls, and in less than two days, they would surely take down an entire wall, leaving Celery Fort wide open.

So the battle situation was as expected, and by the following morning, Count Sned of Celery Fort could no longer endure it.

Seizing the moment when Coral Island's knight order retreated to rest, he quickly led his knights out and launched a charge. Unfortunately, his every

move was anticipated. They were constantly under surveillance with telescopes, and the every action of Celery Fort was monitored.

"The time for a decisive battle has arrived!"

Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam raised his longsword high, with one yellow and one green gemstone shining brightly on it: "Charge!"

The knight order of Celery Fort launched a charge, and the knight order of Coral Island also charged forward—Celery Fort had roughly three hundred knights, while Coral Island had about five hundred knights, a significant disparity in strength. Sned was an ordinary level Sky Knight, while Li Weiliam was a Sword Saint Level Sky Knight.

This battle, from the moment Douson joined the fight, had its conclusion already written.

A southwesterly wind blew, rolling up clouds of sand that enveloped the sky, and the two cavalry torrents rapidly approached each other. The thundering sound of hooves on the ground made it seem as though an earthquake had erupted within miles around, scaring all wild beasts and birds into fleeing in all directions, leaving only the uniform charge cries echoing across the battlefield.

"Charge!"

"All troops, attack!"

Liszt, riding a Li Dragon Horse, charged shoulder to shoulder with Douson. Facing such a deluge, he couldn't help feeling that an individual was insignificant; it was only through merging into one that the knight order became a true war machine. Various Dou Qi diffused and mixed, concentrating the spirit of every person into one.

That surging mixture of Dou Qi connected to the Dou Qi within each knight, boosting their bursting force by at least twenty percent.

Clutching the knight's spear in his hand, Liszt's body rose and fell with the gallop of the Li Dragon Horse, and suddenly, three lines from "The Song of the Great Wind" came to mind.

"When the great winds stir and clouds fly, my might spreads far and I return to my homeland. Who can bring forth the valiant to guard all sides!"

The spears were about to clash.

He quickly focused and gave the command, "Douson, Multiple Stone Spikes!"

Douson's magic power hadn't fully restored but unleashing Multiple Stone Spikes several times was not strenuous. Rock spikes like bamboo shoots burst forth in an instant, disrupting the formation of the knight order facing the Black Knight Order.

Their connected Dou Qi scattered.

The enemy knights lost their power enhancement, and their charge stumbled. Meanwhile, the Black Knight Order, with Liszt and Jonas at the forefront and the ferocious behemoth Douson adding two tons of Multiple Stone Spikes, tore through the opponents' defense in an instant, like three sharp knives plunging into the chest, beginning to gut them.

Splash!

The knight's spear pierced through an Elite Earth Knight.

The two cavalry torrents collided in a moment, with blood and flesh flying, Dou Qi and horses in a deadly dance. After breaking a knight's spear, Liszt immediately switched to another, and if there was no time to switch, they used their shields or drew their swords. In just a few breaths, the Black Knight Order, with the help of Douson, penetrated the enemy's formation.

Turning their horses around, the unified Dou Qi didn't scatter but immediately commenced a second charge.

Just at that moment, a thunderclap sounded in the sky.

Distracted, Liszt momentarily lost focus and looked up to see a mass of emerald green and a mass of pale purple light colliding violently in the sky.

Thunder roared, lightning flashed, and a downpour began.

Li Weiliang battled Count Sned a hundred meters in the air, their surging Dou Qi blooming, altering the weather itself.

Chapter 383 : 0380: Sky Knight Bows Out (Third Update, 150,000 Recommendation Tickets Bonus Chapter)

Thunderstorms mingled but did not affect the knight's charge on the ground.

Liszt, eager to claim the glory, immediately charged toward another Knight Order after routing the one opposite him, taking advantage while Douson could still cast Multiple Stone Spikes a few more times, to defeat more knights and expand the victory.

Five hundred against three hundred, they already had the advantage in strength.

Added to Douson's impact, the charge was utterly one-sided, and the eradication of Celery Fort's knights was just a matter of time.

Liszt, covered in blood, no longer knew how many Earth Knights he had sent flying with his Knight's Spear. Douson was right by his side protecting him, and Paris, with her Light and Shadow Tug ability, was ready to rush into the battlefield to rescue him whenever necessary. Therefore, his fighting was aggressive and unrestrained.

Such ferocity, combined with his Dou Qi's attribute, unleashed tremendous combat power.

When all his Knight's Spears had broken, he glanced over the battlefield. The knights of Celery Fort were in disarray, being surrounded and cut apart in repeated charges by the Coral Island Knights.

"Jonas!"

He yelled aloud.

Jonas, who was fighting fiercely, turned around with bloodshot eyes, his reason barely holding on: "What's up!"

"You take command, I'm going to assist the Earl!" After saying that, Liszt spurred his horse and galloped away from the main battlefield, with Douson following close behind.

Having transferred the command, on his way to assist the Earl, he quickly switched to the Swift Shadow Bow.

However, he did not head towards the two Sky Knights in combat, but towards his own camp. Approaching the camp, he shouted as he rode: "Open Loki's cage!"

The Retainer Knights guarding the camp hastily opened the cage holding the Landwalker bird.

With a whistle from Liszt, the Landwalker bird Loki hopped over and carried him on its back.

"Take good care of my horse!"

After the brief order, Liszt commanded, and the Landwalker bird dashed towards where the Sky Knights were fighting—Sky Knights can briefly move through the air, posing a great threat to Liszt. Fortunately, the equally adept jumping Landwalker bird could effectively dodge the Sky Knights' attacks.

With it joining the battle, he had a layer of security.

On his way, he blew a new whistle, and soon, another whistle was heard not far away—it was Paris responding.

Having taken high altitude security precautions, the Landwalker bird also brought him to the place of the battle where the Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam was suppressing Count Sned.

Count Sned had the Thunder Attribute, his body flickering with lightning, yet Li Weiliam's Water Attribute held a gentle beauty, as if the soft could overcome the hard, with mist always able to deflect the other's bolts of lightning.

"Earl, I'm here to lend you a hand!" Liszt shouted as he drew his bow and released his arrows, starting with the "Three Arrows Released Together" that he had already mastered.

The three finely shot arrows flew in a chi character pattern, and under the Swift Shadow Bow's boost, covered a hundred meters almost instantly to strike at Count Sned.

Having trained in "Multi-Arrow", Liszt had already mastered Double Arrow and Triple Arrow, while Multiple Arrow and the Ultimate Mystery Technique still needed more practice. But since he could use Triple Arrow at will, it was enough to declare a significant achievement.

At first, Count Sned did not take Liszt seriously—riding a strange bird did not change a mere Earth Knight's weakness.

Not being able to fly, it was difficult to harm Sky Knights.

However, the speed of the Three Arrows Released Together still startled him. Almost in the blink of an eye, the arrows were before him, forcing him to retract his longsword to block them. One misstep, and he faced Li Weiliam's relentless assault, like wave upon wave of an unending sea!

Then, to his misfortune, he discovered Liszt shooting three sharp arrows from another direction, in sync with Li Weiliam's offensive.

They were as swift as lightning.

"An Earth Knight dares to interfere in the battle; I'll finish you first!" Enraged, Sned frantically activated his Thunder Attribute Dou Qi to increase his speed, abandoning Li Weiliam to turn and go after the "backstabber" Liszt.

Li Weiliam chased closely and warned, "Be careful!"

No reminder was necessary, as Liszt was careful enough.

"Douson, stop him!"

Douson, who was standing beside him, lunged ferociously at Sned.

The Intermediate Magical Beast's might was ferocious; it spat out a Rock Grenade, forcing Sned to land and dodge, effectively blocking his assassination attempt. Facing Douson, similar to but much larger than a Fierce Earth Dog, Sned chose not to confront it head-on but to continue seeking a path to chase after Liszt.

Yet when he looked up, Liszt, who had been close by just moments ago, had already hopped away on the strange bird with a long neck and long legs, bounding hundreds of meters away.

This distance left no chance for further pursuit.

For both Li Weiliam and Douson were simultaneously lunging at him.

"Sned, did you really think you could kill another in my presence!" Li Weiliam descended from the sky, his longsword's gemstones bursting with brilliant light, conjuring a massive sea wave that enveloped Sned.

"Heave!"

Sned rose up to counterattack, his longsword wrapped in numerous streaks of lightning, wildly striking at the sea wave.

Water splashed everywhere, sparks flew in all directions.

The ground around them turned into a marsh, but most of the green grass within was scorched, emitting wisps of yellow smoke. Before Sned could catch his breath, the earth beneath him cracked open and a rock spike headed straight for his rearmost parts, scaring the hair on his head to stand, and raising his armor by an inch.

In a panic, he leapt away, narrowly dodging the sneak attack of the rock spike.

But at that moment, the sound of wind whooshed by his ears, and three sharp arrows flew toward him, targeting his neck, cheek, and chest, forcing him to bend rapidly, draw his sword, and parry, deflecting the three sharp arrows.

The onslaught seemed relentless.

The strikes from Li Weiliam's longsword left him with no room to dodge, and a spark erupted from his chest's armor as he was struck by a formidable force and sent flying.

Thud!

Blood sprayed out through the eye holes of his helmet; he was injured.

Strike while the enemy is down!

Li Weiliam, Liszt, and Douson once again joined forces to attack. Sned simply lacked the strength to fight against Li Weiliam, not to mention facing the Intermediate Magical Beast Blizzard Beast and the archer Liszt of superior skill, he had no ability to contend. No more than three exchanges later, Li Weiliam had struck him with two swords.

As he landed, another rock spike from Douson grazed his calf.

He also endured a midair arrow from Liszt, and although it failed to pierce through his armor made of unknown material, the Dou Qi explosion on the arrow still blew him off balance.

"Li Weiliam! I'll remember you!"

Sned roared furiously, madly churning his Dou Qi, turning to ascend into the air with the intent to flee.

However, no one would allow it!

Li Weiliam's eyes were piercing, his longsword stirring up endless sea waves, dragging Sned back into the fray and pressing him back down to the ground. Meanwhile, Liszt also bellowed, "Douson, tear and bite him!"

At the same time, he drew six arrows, biting three in his mouth and placing the other three on his bowstring.

He executed the Ultimate Mystery Technique of "Multi-Arrow"—Multiple Phantom Arrow!

He released the first three arrows in a spiraling flight, the latter three arrows swiftly chasing them and colliding mid-air, changing each other's trajectories with the Dou Qi attached to them. No one could capture the changed trajectories of the arrows; it was as if six arrows had become a hundred, filling the sky with their shadows.

Assaults like sea waves from the Sword Saint, and the frenzied tearing and biting of a wild beast.

Sned couldn't focus his attention, couldn't see the trajectory of the arrows, and couldn't rise into the air again, naturally unable to dodge this Ultimate Mystery Technique's attack. In the next moment, his vision blurred, his longsword hesitantly lifted to block, the arrow shadows vanished, yet he blocked nothing.

In an instant.

Sharp pain in his left knee as all six sharp arrows hit the same spot; though they didn't penetrate due to the armor's protection, they caused a profound dent in the armor at that single point from the concentrated burst. The explosive Dou Qi caused severe damage to his knee, nearly twisting it off.

His entire leg went numb, even lifting it was difficult.

When he looked up again, he saw Douson opening his huge maw, biting down on him.

"Get lost!"

He mustered his Thunder Attribute Dou Qi and fiercely slashed with his sword, pouring all his strength into this pinnacle of precise technique, and Douson couldn't dodge in time; he was struck directly in the shoulder and flew backward screaming.

But that was also Sned's last defiance.

Thud!

Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam's longsword plunged through his chest, piercing the front and back layers of the armor, creating a through-and-through: "Even at death's door, you dare resist!"

**Chapter 384 : 0381: The Second Assassination Attempt on the Sapphire Dragon
(Fourth Update, Bonus for 200 Monthly Tickets)**

Sned had not died.

Pierced through the chest by Li Weiliam's sword, the robust physique of the Sky Knight still sustained his vitality, having lost only the ability to fight, he lay fatally injured.

The battlefield quickly ended with Sned's exit, and the knights of Celery Fort scattered like smoke—those knights, nurtured at great expense, were all brought to their end here because of the Grand Duke's wrath.

Cooling his head, Liszt couldn't help but clench his fist and sigh.

The number of knights sacrificed in the years of the Pioneer Mandate probably couldn't compare to the number slain in this one battle at Iron Hoof Island. The Earth Knights, held high in the eyes of the commoners, were reaped like slaughtering dogs, leaving a profound impact within the heart of every victorious knight.

But such were the nobles under the knightly system. Traitors must pay with their lives to deter other knights and ensure their loyalty to their own landlords.

"Collect the names of all the fallen and give them to me," the Earl said as he rode slowly across the blood-drenched battlefield, his tone heavy. "Their lives will not be sacrificed in vain. Their honor will extend to their offspring, and you all will enjoy the supreme glory after the battle!"

"Roar!"

"Roar!"

The victorious knights, raising their spears and longswords, shouted out loud, responding to the Earl's promise.

When the shouting ceased, the cleanup of the battlefield continued. Captain Layden and Viscount Jonas were busy tallying the casualties, while Marcus rode up to Liszt's side, reporting solemnly, "My Lord, Lasse Steelyard has died in battle."

Lasse Steelyard.

An Earth Knight who had joined him alongside Rondo Waterpot, second only to Marcus, had become one of his earliest followers, often participating in feasts at the castle.

Lasse Steelyard was more familiar to Liszt than the previously fallen follower, Leslie Pile of Dead Leaves.

After a moment of silence, he steeled his spirit: "I will remember his name. Teacher Marcus, tell everyone in the Knight Squad that glory awaits on the road ahead. Once the battle is over, everyone will partake in it, whether sacrificed or surviving."

"From the moment we joined the battle, we have all understood this truth. To charge and die in battle for my lord is our honor as well," Marcus said, clutching his fist, "And we are proud to follow you. Your strength now qualifies you to participate in Sky Knight battles, and you are certain to gain noble authority!"

"Noble authority, huh..."

Liszt gazed toward the vast distance, his military exploits from the battle of Bull Hair City were absolutely radiant. First was the overwhelming victory over the knight legion of Mane City, then rushing to assist Little River City and capturing Nameless Castle, coordinating with Levis and Trick to take Green Leaf Fortress. Lastly, returning to Bull Hair City, assisting the Earl in slaying the Sky Knight.

Such accomplishments dare not assure a barony, but he was decidedly not far from it.

After recuperating, he might even participate in the battle for Iron Hoof City, seizing yet another round of exploits. Thus, a barony for Viscount Black Horse Island was virtually a certainty.

"Step by step, what's mine will eventually be mine, and no one can take it away!"

He turned his head and called out, "Douson," who, with an injured shoulder blade, staggered up to him. The blow Sned had unleashed was far from what Douson, barely over a year old, could withstand.

If it were a duel, Douson might have already been slain.

Patting Douson's large head, Liszt rode his Landwalker Bird toward the now occupied Celery Fort; the Earl had already taken the severely wounded Sned into the castle for interrogation.

Perhaps from his mouth, they might uncover the secrets behind the dragon-slaying incident.

...

In the room.

The Earl was interrogating Sned: "What orders did the Marquis of Bull give to you?"

With his hand clutching his chest, Sned's breath was weak, but he cooperated surprisingly well: "To defend Bull Hair City to the death, to resist the invading knight legion from Iron Hoof Island."

"Why do you have to do this, do you know?"

"Of course I do, because Lord Marquis is going to accomplish the great feat of slaying the dragon."

"Dragon slaying, do you really think it's something you can get involved in? The Duchy of Sapphire has lost its dragon, do you think you, or any of us, can get a better ending?"

"I can't decide all of this, yet I look forward to change." Sned's eyes seemed a little distracted, "Lord Marquis had made all the arrangements long ago, including now, all within his plans. Li Weiliam, you did indeed defeat me today, but that doesn't mean you will still be the victor in the future!"

"Heh."

The Earl sneered coldly, "You are going to die, how can you defeat me?"

"When the Duchy of Sapphire disintegrates, you people will be buried with it! My offspring have already been safely relocated, they will reclaim the glory of Celery Fort, and even more so!"

"Disintegrate? No, the Duchy of Sapphire won't disintegrate, but Iron Hoof Island will certainly be annihilated. In fact, the Knight Order that broke through led by the Marquis of Bull has already been blocked by the Grand Duke's Knight Order, none of you will escape from Iron Hoof Island, and your offspring will certainly not continue, they will burn to ashes in the Grand Duke's fury."

"Ha-ha, you will soon know, the Sapphire Dragon is already dead... or not dead, but it will be critically wounded, then..." Sned lifted his head, locked eyes with the Earl, and grinned with a cough, "Cough... There will be another wave of assassination, that dragon won't live long!"

"Another assassination?"

"Calculating the time, it should have already ended, and the news of the Sapphire Dragon's death will soon spread throughout the Eagle Kingdom and the Steel Ridge Kingdom... especially the Knight Order of the Eagle Kingdom, they will cross the sea quickly to purge this maritime area."

The new assassination made Li Weiliam's heart shudder.

But he did not show it, remaining calm, "I'm curious, how does it benefit you for the Eagle Kingdom to purge this place?"

"Lord Marquis will lead us back to the mainland."

"Back to the mainland..." The Earl shook his head, his tone not without mockery, "Having lost the footing of your territory, even if you return to the mainland, how much glory can you obtain."

Everyone yearns for the mainland; it was because the Sapphire Family could not establish itself on the mainland that they came to this maritime area to found a nation.

Though remote and lacking resources, it was a patch of soil that provided shelter. The nobles here have grown accustomed to the current way of life, with the wars far from the archipelago, occurring on the mainland. Few people wanted to return to live on the mainland anymore, having rooted themselves on the islands of this maritime region.

Upon further questioning, Sned did not reveal any more information.

...

"What do you think of what Sned said?"

After a round of interrogation, the Earl asked several Knight Commanders.

"Is the Sapphire Dragon really facing a second assassination? I doubt this very much. I think he's just bluffing. The Grand Duke wouldn't fail to make the defenses," Levis said.

Liszt thought for a moment.

He offered his view, "Father should immediately contact Marquis Glendenton to probe his reaction. I believe Marquis Glendenton must know the situation of the Sapphire Dragon... or, we continue at our own pace, as real news will spread quickly, why not see how the other families react?"

Li Weiliam was just Coral Island's Count.

Above him, there were six Marquises drawing the attention, so there was no need to act high-profile.

Then, Liszt added, "Moreover, I suspect that things are not as Sned described. His offspring might very well be controlled by the Marquis of Bull, which is why they had no choice but to hold fast to Celery Fort, and the second wave of assassination against the Sapphire Dragon is likely nothing but a rumor deliberately spread by the Marquis of Bull."

Li Weiliam nodded, "I will contact Marquis Glendenton right away... and then continue the interrogation of Sned!"

Chapter 385 : 0382: The New Weapon Sky-Cleaving Greatsword (Fifth Update, additional for 400 monthly tickets)

The interrogation lasted half an hour.

The outcome did not change.

"I have nothing to say, Li Weiliam, give me a swift end!" Sned coughed up blood profusely, barely able to hold on.

"Your struggle is utterly meaningless." Li Weiliam shook his head and sighed, "Whether you speak or not, the glory of knighthood always favors me!"

Having spoken,

he drew his treasured sword and skillfully stabbed it into Sned's chest, stirring it once.

Blood flowed out along the blade, Sned's pupils dilated wildly, then contracted fiercely, and all signs of life ceased in that moment.

He was dead, a generation's Sky Knight, perished in a room at his own Celery Fort.

Phschtt.

Withdrawing the longsword, Li Weiliam strode out of the room and instructed, "Arrange tonight's watch schedule. We will remain at Celery Fort for a day, waiting for further battle plan arrangements."

"Yes, Baron!"

...

Inside the study,

Liszt was searching meticulously; the Earl had already killed Sned, and his Smoke Mission was completed accordingly.

"Mission completed, reward: Advanced Dou Qi Manuscript, "Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash"."

Without a doubt,

this Advanced Dou Qi Manuscript wasn't the Fire Attribute Dou Qi Manuscript that Liszt had hoped for, but the Thunder Attribute Dou Qi Manuscript that Sned had cultivated.

Nevertheless, with this manuscript,

he could totally trade it for a High-level Fire Attribute Dou Qi Manuscript.

Nobles monopolized Advanced Dou Qi Manuscripts, but no one would complain about having more varieties of manuscripts in their collection, not for their own use, then for their descendants—Dou Qi attributes were only slightly related to blood inheritance, and it was common to have different attributes between father and son; Liszt was among them.

Right after transmigrating, he seriously doubted whether he was actually the neighbor's child.

After all, the Earl cultivated Water-Attribute Dou Qi, and so did his brothers and sisters, as well as his grandfather, uncles, and cousins; among the whole family, only he had Fire Attribute Dou Qi, which was rather embarrassing. Yet his appearance mostly inherited from his mother, Melissa, with a minor resemblance to the Earl.

After comprehensive judgment, he should be undoubtedly from the Earl's lineage.

He had merely inherited the best genes from his parents.

"Where exactly is this 'Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash' hidden? Sned should have often reviewed and contemplated it, it couldn't possibly be in a place too concealed."

"Baron, have you seen this book? Is this what you need?" a knight assigned by the Earl to inventory the spoils came over with a thick book in his hands, "Found it in the bedroom, in the bedside drawer of Sned, handwritten, appears to be an Advanced Dou Qi Manuscript by the title."

Taking the book,

he saw the familiar handwritten "Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash" and breathed a sigh of relief—it was undoubtedly this one: "Tell the Earl I'll hold onto this manuscript for now, I will make a copy for him later."

"Yes, Baron."

With the Advanced Dou Qi Manuscript in hand, Liszt finally had the mood to look at the new Smoke Mission update.

"Mission: The strike from Count Sned just before his death inflicted severe damage on Douson, not only physical but also mental, exposing it to the

threat of life and death. Please craft a suit of armor for it to increase its sense of security. Reward: Douson's new magic."

"Hmm!"

Seeing the mission reward, Liszt felt much more at ease, "Douson is going to learn new magic again. It seems that this war has made it grow rapidly."

The last sword strike from Sned had damaged Douson's bones.

But with the constitution of a magical beast, it wasn't a big deal, and in time it would heal the wound by itself. What he hadn't expected was that Douson's spirit was also hurt, to the point it needed armor to increase its sense of security.

"Then let's craft one for it. After all, there are so many Earth Knights slain in battle, Fine Steel Armor can be collected in sets. We could disassemble a few sets of armor, and tie some of the armor fragments together with silk thread to make a dog armor for Douson." Horses have horse armor, so naturally, dogs can have dog armor too.

Right away, he dispatched Retainer Knights to disassemble the armor.

The Fine Steel Armor of knights, in order to fit well and not hinder movement, is made up of perforated iron plates tied together with a special silk thread.

Simply collect those iron plates and tie them again, and you can assemble a bigger armor.

"You follow this method and make a dog armor similar to horse armor for Douson, understand?" He instructed for a moment and soon grew impatient.

As the leader of the Knight Order, he had many duties.

So, he had to leave it to the Retainer Knights to do.

He himself then went to participate in the distribution of spoils of war and future combat planning—the spoils that couldn't be distributed privately would naturally be sealed away, and those that could be taken away, no one would be foolish enough to leave for the Grand Duke to handle. Such a high casualty rate was unprecedented in the history of Pioneer Mandates, and a substantial amount of spoils was needed to compensate.

"No Elves, no precious treasures, but from the bodies of the fallen knights, we've found quite a bit of Magic Equipment. I will distribute these according to the contributions of your Knight Orders. Complete the distribution directly, don't leave a single piece behind, don't give others an excuse."

The Earl said.

Liszt and the others naturally agreed, "Yes, Earl."

Among all the Knight Orders, the Black Knight Order received the most Magic Equipment, and the Earl even allocated Sned's side sword to Liszt, "Liszt, I am proud of you. I've always looked forward to fighting side by side with my son, but I never thought that so soon you would be able to assist me in slaying a Sky Knight."

The Earl patted Liszt's shoulder with satisfaction.

The son who once disappointed him the most had become the most outstanding young knight. At seventeen, he could already intervene in battles among Sky Knights—although much credit goes to Douson, Liszt's own superior archery skills were also commendable.

"Sned's side sword is a Gemstone Weapon not much inferior to mine. If I'm not mistaken about the material of its blade, it comes from the thigh bone of some Intermediate Magical Beast, meticulously polished, and has had a good deal of Fine Gold plated onto it by a magician, indestructible!"

The property of the Magic Metal Fine Gold is indestructibility.

It was a greatsword with a slightly curved blade, somewhat similar to an English broad blade sword.

It was slightly shorter than the Crimson Blood Sword that Liszt used, which resembled a German two-handed sword in appearance, but the blade was wider. It was also inlaid with a gemstone, a blue one, which must be the Sapphire produced by the Sapphire Dragon.

He took it into his hands.

He couldn't help but weigh the sword, which was more than twice as heavy as the Crimson Blood Sword that might have Mithril added to it, but it felt more comfortable to handle.

The bone-made blade combined with the Fine Gold plated by magical means gave it an exceptionally sharp edge. The Sapphire inlaid at the end of the hilt imbued it with power—the magical property of Sapphire lies in strength, allowing the user to exert greater force.

Vastly different from the attribute of Ruby, which amplifies Dou Qi.

"There's a Magic Array carved on its hilt, which can quickly draw the power of the Sapphire and thereby unleash a much more powerful strike. The sword strike that injured Douson must have leveraged the power of this Magic Array," explained the Earl. "Now, you can name it anew."

"Sky-Cleaving Greatsword!" Liszt named it without hesitation.

"Sky-Cleaving Greatsword... the greatsword that slew a Sky Knight," Levis said enviously as he looked at the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword. "That name has quite the presence."

Sky-Cleaving.

Liszt wanted to constantly remind everyone that he had acquired this sword by assisting the Earl in slaying a Sky Knight, lest anyone forget this point.

The wielder of this sword, very strong!

Chapter 386 : 0383: Douson's Special Armor (First Update)

The value of the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword was hard to judge.

Considering the gemstone settings, the price difference between sapphires and rubies was not significant. Seen purely as a gemstone weapon, it was on the same level as the Crimson Blood Sword.

Compared to the Earl's longsword, which had two gems embedded, there was quite a gap—setting a single gemstone was manageable, but embedding two required much more skill to coordinate without interference between the stones.

However, the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword was not a standard gemstone weapon.

The hilt was carved with a magic array, a feature of magic equipment, which, with the blessing of the array, allowed it to better leverage the power of the sapphire.

In addition, the sword's blade was made from the bones of an intermediate magical beast mixed with magic metal fine gold. This material was significantly better than the fine steel of the Crimson Blood Sword, which had been mixed with mithril.

"In my opinion, its value might be a bit less than the Swift Shadow Bow, but more upscale than the Crimson Blood Sword," Liszt had already decided to replace his Crimson Blood Sword with it.

As for the Crimson Blood Sword, he planned to keep it as a spare weapon in the Gemstone Space.

...

After the meeting was over.

Liszt quickly oversaw the allocation of battle achievements for the Black Knight Order, mainly distributing magic equipment. There were a total of eleven pieces of magic equipment, and he picked out two for himself.

One was an Amplification Bracelet that could slightly enhance the level of Dou Qi.

After replacing the Crimson Blood Sword with the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword, he needed a piece of magic equipment to replace the function of the Crimson Blood Sword. The bracelet, which could boost Dou Qi, had a slight effect, but it was better than nothing.

The other was a Stabilizing Ring, worn on the thumb, which could stabilize the Dou Qi in the hands when shooting an arrow, thereby improving archery precision.

He wasn't very reliant on this magic equipment.

But since he had acquired them, why not use them? Even if they weren't used, it would be good to keep them in the Gemstone Space as a collection.

All knights participated in the allocation of this batch of resources, which could be privately divided: Gold Coins and magic equipment, as well as a few common Dou Qi Manuscripts. A clerk recorded the distributed resources, and after returning to Coral Island, these pre-distributions would be taken into account when allocating battle achievements.

Subsequently.

Liszt began his new task—training the landwalker bird Loki.

This was a critical period for taming. The landwalker bird was on the verge of transformation, its magic power ready to burst forth at any moment. Thus, Liszt planned to quickly establish a conditioned reflex with Loki, solidifying

their riding relationship. Previously, the landwalker bird had already helped him participate in Sky Knight battles effectively.

Next, he wanted to charge into battle shoulder to shoulder with the landwalker bird.

Ordinary warhorses charged at around 60 kilometers per hour, which was precisely the most common speed at which a landwalker bird could run, and it could maintain this pace for most of the day.

He tamed Loki until late into the night and then personally fed it before returning to the castle.

He couldn't sleep yet, as he had to take potions and practice "Breath Decay"—regardless of how difficult the conditions were, his training routine could not be neglected. In fact, the conditions weren't too difficult; everything he needed—magical beast meat, magic potions, dragon breed milk—was all stored in the Gemstone Space.

Not long after taking the potions, just as he was about to take a bath, someone knocked on his door.

"My lord, the armor for Douson has been crafted, but Douson doesn't want to wear it," entered Xavier, a retainer knight with a quick wit, who was held in high esteem by Liszt.

"Let me have a look."

Arriving at Douson's tent, it was gnawing on a large bone, while a few retainer knights stood by, holding the armor. They dared not force Douson to wear the armor as it was unwilling.

Now that Liszt had arrived, soon Douson was forced into dog armor. The armor protected its neck and upper body, which were the most vulnerable to attack.

As for the helmet, they didn't create one for Douson. Firstly, there was no blacksmith to forge a suitable helmet, and secondly, the helmet might have interfered with Douson's magic casting.

Dressed in the dog armor, Douson felt uncomfortable and constantly tried to take it off.

Liszt had an idea.

Thinking back to the initial teaching of the new magic "Rock Wall" to Douson—simulation, demonstration—he found a rock and smashed it in front of Douson.

Douson looked on, puzzled, and decided to lower its head to continue gnawing on its big bone.

Quickly, Liszt put a set of fine steel armor, dismantled by half, atop the rock and struck it again. With two clangs, the rock, protected by the armor, did not shatter. He shook the rock in front of Douson, repeating the routine, trying to get Douson to understand that armor could protect it.

Nevertheless, Douson still refused to wear the armor.

After persisting for an hour, and the night having grown deep, it still refused to wear the dog armor. Just when Liszt was getting impatient, Douson suddenly opened its mouth, and the next moment, a layer of cracked rock quickly surfaced on its body, wrapping itself—only partially, as most of its torso remained uncovered.

"Hm!"

Liszt raised an eyebrow, "Good, it seems the magic you've learned can completely replace this set of dog armor, so... Douson, take a few steps to try it out!"

The cracked rock armor, distributed across the neck, forehead, shoulders, back, and thighs, looked like it was adhering to the body, not hindering movement as it cracked or contracted with its steps.

"Woof woof!"

Douson barked proudly, showing off its new armor.

Liszt hammered the rock armor, finding it very sturdy, and unlike ordinary rock, it seemed to have reached a crystalline level. Under the illumination of candlelight, it even had a faint translucency. With effort, he could break off a piece.

Then, he thrust violently with a spear, and with a loud thump, the rock was sent flying but didn't immediately crack.

"With the force I just used, even fine steel armor would have been pierced, but the rock didn't crack. Its hardness is almost catching up with mithril armor!"

Liszt was quite astonished.

He then summoned the Smoke Mission.

"Complete the mission, reward Douson with new magic—Firmstone Armor."

"Firmstone Armor? I remember now, Elkerson mentioned that within the Earth System magic, there is a spell that only a grand magician can master, called Firmstone Armor. It can arm oneself like armor, defending against attacks, many grand magicians proficient in Earth System magic like to research Firmstone Armor."

However, very few grand magicians successfully learned this magic—of course, magicians were already rare to begin with.

"My Douson is growing stronger." He used Eye of Magic to gauge the level of magic power consumption and found that Douson's magic power had thinned significantly, suggesting that Firmstone Armor was highly demanding of magic

power, and he couldn't help patting the rock on Douson's body, "Douson, take it off, can you remove it?"

He made several gestures.

Douson quickly understood, shaking its body as if shaking off water, and the yellow-gray rocks were flung in all directions, not a single one remaining.

"Very good, now let's learn a new command—Douson, Firmstone Armor!" Liszt decided to strike while the iron was hot and get Douson accustomed to its new magic as quickly as possible.

Lest it forget.

Chapter 387 : 0384: Time for Iron Hoof Island to End (Second Update)

The Firmstone Armor was very consuming of magic power.

From Liszt's observations, if Dou Qi releasing a Rock Spike required 1 point of magic power, releasing a Rock Grenade required 5 points of magic power, and releasing a Rock Wall needed 7 points of magic power, then releasing Firmstone Armor would need at least 20 points of magic power.

"This probably has to do with the degree of condensation of the rock, the rock of the Firmstone Armor is almost to the point of crystallizing into gemstones; whereas the rocks of the Rock Wall, Rock Grenade, and Rock Spike are just rock."

A quantitative change leads to a qualitative change.

The more magic power consumed, the higher the quality of the rock can be.

With this set of Firmstone Armor, Dou Qi will have an even more explosive combat power in the future, capable of charging into enemy lines and defending towers effortlessly. Having trained until midnight, Dou Qi was

already good at understanding the command "Dou Qi, Firmstone Armor," and only then did Liszt yawn and go back to sleep.

He too was exhausted today, a charge taking a heavy toll on his physical strength.

Before falling asleep, he suddenly missed Fresh Flower Town—the elves, Sea Sprite Ake, the servants in the castle, and the Little Wheat Bug he hadn't managed to bond with, as well as the Eight Tiny Ones he was unsure had learned to use magic or not.

Cultivating an army of Blizzard Beasts was a dream he never gave up on.

In a trance.

A phantom Smoke Serpent Script slowly emerged in front of him.

"Mission: a knight hastily flying is bringing new messages, how tomorrow's battles will commence is unknown, but you also have the chance to become one of the flying knights, please assist Landwalker bird Loki in mastering the method of releasing magic. Reward: Loki's magic."

This was the new Smoke Mission.

Its content was explosive; it meant for Liszt to become one of the flying knights, and he couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement, "It's about time Loki released some magic, what kind would it be? According to the Smoke Serpent Script, will Loki be able to fly soon? Is it not a flightless bird?"

Flightless birds, such as ostriches, emus, and kiwis, are adept at running but cannot fly.

The Landwalker bird fits the profile of a flightless bird well, with long legs that allow high-speed running, a hefty body, and wings so short they can be practically ignored.

It's hard to imagine how it could fly.

"Perhaps it's just a fledgling and when it matures its wings will grow, turning into something like a Red-crowned Crane?" Liszt thought to himself.

Wading birds, with a pair of long legs, like to live by the water and search for food in the water or mud, with birds such as cranes, storks, snipes, and bustards falling into this category.

The Landwalker bird, with its features, could barely wade in the water relying on its long legs.

"No!" Liszt suddenly remembered, the long legs of the Landwalker bird are covered with feathers, and having feathers makes it difficult to walk comfortably in water, it will not become a wading bird.

So, thinking it over, Liszt still had no idea how the Landwalker bird was supposed to fly, and moreover, its very name, Landwalker bird—why would it fly?

...

The next day, he continued to rest at Celery Fort.

The Earl was still waiting for the next war instructions from Marquis Glendonton, while Liszt continued to tame the Landwalker bird and attempted to help it learn to cast magic.

His relationship with the Landwalker bird was not as close as with Dou Qi, making it difficult to infuse Dou Qi and guide the flow of magic power.

Therefore, he could only do some superficial work, stimulate the Landwalker bird's magic power a bit, letting it be vented out to complete the basic casting of magic.

The difficulty is somewhat high, so success has not yet been achieved.

However, Liszt did feel one change: as Loki's magic power became more abundant, its running speed, endurance, and jumping power had all seen substantial improvement.

It was clearly still maturing, and once it was fully grown, its capabilities were likely to be even more formidable—after all, it was a low-level Dragon Beast with the bloodline of a dragon.

Landwalker bird.

The leisure time passed just like that.

He didn't get to relax for long, as at dusk, a messenger knight dispatched by Marquis Glendon arrived at Celery Fort, delivering new orders, "Earl Li Weiliam, the Marquis orders you to lead the Knight Order immediately and set out for Bull Ridge City to the west. He needs to see your arrival by the morning after next."

"Why the urgency?" The Earl frowned. "It's a full day's march from Bull Hair City to Bull Ridge City; this is forcing us to travel at night."

"I don't know the reason, as the Marquis did not reveal it, but when I departed, the Marquis himself was also leading the Knight Order toward Bull Ridge City. According to the marching time, if we are to arrive at Bull Ridge City by the morning after next, the Marquis will also need to march through the night."

Marching at night is not a good decision, as it is the most susceptible time for an ambush.

But when an order is given, it must be executed.

The Coral Island Knights, having rested for a day, were back in peak condition. Leaving behind some of the injured to continue garrisoning Celery Fort, the Earl immediately led his knights to break camp and head west.

Naturally, Liszt was no exception.

Riding the Landwalker bird, he led the Black Knight Order along with the rest of the troops as they set out.

They hastened on their way.

Both the men and their mounts were exhausted but had safely arrived at Bull Ridge City, where the forces of Glendenton had just barely made it as well.

Armies from several other Earls had also only just arrived shortly before.

"The First Prince has taken Iron Hoof City, which the Bull Family has cultivated over generations, and even Bull Castle has been occupied. However, no battle took place—Bull Castle was already empty. A month before the assassination incident, the rebel Andy had already transferred the people from Bull Castle overseas."

Glendenton Red Maple Leaf, with a solemn expression and more pronounced creases on his face, said: "The vast majority of the riches on Iron Hoof Island, along with the seed of various noble families, have all fled overseas, possibly to the Eagle Kingdom or the Steel Ridge Kingdom—it's impossible to know."

"Then, Marquis, is the Marquis of the Bull still on Iron Hoof Island?"

"That is why I have called you here." Glendenton unfolded a map of Iron Hoof Island and drew a circle with his hand around a large area between Bull Tail City and Bull Ridge City, "The Wrath Knight Order was repelled by the reinforcing Knight Order that arrived later and retreated into this area. All the exits to the sea are blocked; they can only continue to hide!"

He looked around at the Earls gathered in a circle and said in a cold tone, "Our task is to find the Wrath Knight Order, the rebel Andy, and those sinister magicians from the Goat Assembly! The Grand Duke's directive is to find them and kill them on the spot, we don't need any survivors!"

Then, Glendenton presented the information he had on the Wrath Knight Order and the Goat Assembly, including the composition of their members.

Next, he assigned tasks: "Bull Rump City, Bull Tendon City, these two major cities, along with the nine smaller cities under them, we'll primarily search these four smaller cities... Earl Li Weiliam, you need to lead the Coral Island Knights to search Snow Pear City thoroughly, not missing any trace..."

Tasks were distributed.

Finally, Glendenton said, "The Grand Duke's wrath will burn for a long time, until the entire Bull Family is destroyed, no matter where they hide! Now, our job is to annihilate their main forces, shatter the backs of the rebels... It's time for Iron Hoof Island to draw the curtain."

He paused.

He attempted to smile to lighten the mood, but his deeply etched creases only made his expression seem grimmer, "A new order will be established on this land, gentlemen, and all have an opportunity!"

Chapter 388 - 0385: Ground Glider (Third Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration)

This chapter is a special reward update for "Lone Swan's Night Flight".

The meeting ended.

Li Weiliam found Marquis Glendenton in private and asked, "Have you received any feedback regarding the second wave of assassination attempts on the dragon that Sned disclosed?"

"Fake news. Do you think the Marquis of the Bull, already trapped on Iron Hoof Island, has the strength left to assassinate the Sapphire Dragon?" Marquis Glendonton denied directly.

Thinking it over, that did indeed seem to be the case.

To injure the Sapphire Dragon once already lived up to the Marquis of Bull's thirty-year plans. Another assassination attempt would imply that the Sapphire Family's efforts on Blue Dragon Island had been in vain. Unless the Sapphire Family was raising pigs, they would not allow the assassin to target the dragon twice.

...

The battle at Bull Ridge City didn't take much effort, the castle there, nestled against the mountains and by the water, was very sturdy; yet under the assault of numerous Sky Knights, it stood no chance, and was taken down within half a day.

After settling into the castle, with a brief rest, Li Weiliam led the four Knight Orders from Coral Island, left the castle, and began the search toward Snow Pear City.

In order to find the hidden Wrath Knight Order and the magician from the Goat Assembly, Li Weiliam personally searched through each small town.

The Knight Orders were not split up in order to prevent being ambushed—as everyone knew that tremendous war exploits were hidden in this area; however, the Marquis of the Bull was not an opponent who could be easily subdued. Carelessness could lead to an outcome like that of the Second Prince, assaulted by the Wrath Knight Order and the entire army annihilated. With telescopes equipped, danger could be avoided in advance.

Thus, Liszt wasn't particularly concerned about finding the Wrath Knight Order; he was just repeatedly guiding the Landwalker Bird, urging it to unleash magic.

Although it had already reached the critical point of magic power exhaustion, it still hadn't learned any magic.

This made Liszt question how wild magical beasts mastered magic in the wild without being taught; it seemed that for a long time, they wouldn't be able to use magic.

"Gee-da!"

Loki's cry sounded like a mix of a chicken and a duck's call.

Now, well-fed and frequently running, its magic power and physical strength were abundant; it no longer required the Thorn Magic Potion to continue stimulation... In fact, Liszt was running low on his supply of Thorn Magic Potion, and there wasn't even enough for his own consumption.

"Speed up, Loki!"

"Run at full speed!"

"Gee-da!"

"Gee-da!"

The Landwalker Bird, prompted by Liszt, put forth all its strength and had already surpassed 200 kilometers per hour, still accelerating. The wind howled past Liszt's ears, and he had to lean down and hold tightly to Loki's neck to minimize his wind resistance, adjusting his movements to keep up with Loki's rhythm.

As an Elite Earth Knight, his riding skills were excellent, so after a few adjustments, he was well integrated into the rhythm of Loki's running steps.

By this point, Loki could cover dozens of meters in a single stride. To call it running was an understatement; it was more like skimming along the ground.

The surrounding scenery had lost its shape, turning into streaks of afterimages, swiftly receding backward.

"Gee... da..."

Loki's calls, altered by the force of the wind, were becoming indistinct. But Liszt could feel its exhilaration; this was a speed it had never achieved before.

"At least 250 kilometers per hour!"

Liszt slightly raised his head, watching the scene ahead with just as much excitement; the faster Loki ran, the higher its value proved to be. Although its combat prowess was lacking, its performance in skirmishing and pursuing was unmatched, even by Dragon Breed Horses like the Black Blood Treasured Horse.

"Clip-clop..."

As Loki ran, it suddenly started to leap, jumping very high with each stride. The repeated leaps baffled Liszt for a moment—why switch to leaping when it was running just fine?

However, the next moment revealed the difference.

This time, Loki's leap didn't result in a brief hover before landing. Instead, it seemed as though a whirlwind supported it, allowing it to glide less than five meters off the ground. This glide lasted a full dozen seconds before Loki touched down. Then it leaped again, gliding through the air.

Utilizing the Eye of Magic, Liszt noticed that with each jump, a portion of magic power was drawn from Loki's body.

It was unmistakably casting a spell!

"This is... the Light Body Skill; a spell that any magician who studies the Wind System would know. It gathers the Wind System magic power to lift the body or heavy objects, reducing their weight."

It wasn't an overly complex spell, and its power was limited, but combined with Loki, it was almost like divine assistance.

Under high-speed running and leaping, Loki was essentially gliding close to the ground. With the addition of the Light Body Skill, gliding became a basic maneuver.

"Loki, leap!" he commanded.

"Clip-clop!" Loki responded with the Light Body Skill spell.

Then it leaped high, bouncing up like a rubber ball from the ground, with the height increasing continuously. Only when the landscape below shrank did its momentum slow, hovering for a dozen seconds before slowly descending. Landing was gentle, as the Wind System magic power significantly lightened Loki's weight.

"At least ten meters, more than the height of a three-story building!"

Liszt was exceptionally proud; although Loki was still far from flying, it was no longer bound to the ground. It could be called a flying mount, albeit reluctantly.

"As expected, I've become a Sky Knight."

On the way back.

Smoke Serpent Script wafted before his eyes: "Mission completed, reward: Loki magic—Light Body Skill."

It was immediately replaced by new Serpent Script: "Mission: The search for the Wrath Knight Order and Goat Assembly is underway. This might be the downfall of the Marquis of Bull, but no one knows the final outcome. Please wait patiently for the war to end. Reward: Unknown Award."

"Another waiting mission with an unknown reward... Last time it was waiting for the festival to end, this time it's waiting for the war to conclude... Is there anything in common?"

Liszt couldn't discern anything particularly special about these types of missions.

He didn't bother to dwell on it, instead anticipating: "I wonder what the unknown reward will be this time. The reward for the festival was Sea Sprite Ake. Will it be a creature from legend this time? A unicorn as a symbol of purity, a mermaid as enchanting as a sea serpent, or perhaps a Greater Elf... At the very least, a beautiful Vampire woman would be nice."

By the time he returned to the camp stationed in the small town.

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Before he even had time to take a sip of water, he immediately received a notification to attend a meeting.

He quickly learned the topic of the meeting; his uncle Mesiro had sent a secret messenger with news for the Earl and his son: "The Grand Duke's dragon must be in serious trouble. From our channels at The Court, we've learned that the Grand Duke has left with his dragon, and his whereabouts are unknown."

"Unknown whereabouts?"

"Yes, no one has spotted where the Grand Duke has gone, including many within the Sapphire Family."

Li Weiliam frowned deeply, "Tell me in detail about the situation on Blue Dragon Island, especially the dragon-slaying incident!"

Chapter 389 - 386: Of Course, We Must Seize the Military Achievements (Fourth Update, Additional Chapter for 600 Monthly Votes)

The Sapphire Dragon did not reside in the Castle of the Sapphire Duke — Azure Sky Peak Palace.

Instead, it nested in the cliffs beneath the Azure Sky Peak Palace, a place known as the Blue Dragon Garden. The Blue Dragon Garden was tremendously vast, possibly even larger than Coral Island. Court servants entered the Blue Dragon Garden daily to collect gems produced by the Sapphire Dragon and to search for ore that had transformed into crystal.

Sometimes the Duke would train the Blueblood Knight Order in the Blue Dragon Garden or hunt there — the garden was home to a massive number of wild beasts and magical beasts, which served as sustenance for the Sapphire Dragon.

When the incident of dragon slaying occurred, the Duke was hunting with the Marquis of Bull.

Then, the dragon slaying event erupted.

"According to the rumors I've uncovered, the Marquis of Bull and his magician had secretly set up a huge magic array in the Blue Dragon Garden in advance. When the Sapphire Dragon stepped into the magic array, they immediately activated it, gravely injuring the Sapphire Dragon... The Marquis of Bull took advantage of the chaos to escape from Blue Dragon Island,"

The secret messenger revealed everything he knew, "After issuing the order to besiege Iron Hoof Island, the Duke left Azure Sky Peak Palace; it had been several days before his absence was noticed... Meanwhile, Lady Sarette has taken control of The Court, with the support of Marquis Nesta, purging the Court of any servants deemed suspicious."

The Sapphire Duke vanished with his Dragon.

The Duke's wife, Lady Sarette, born into the Dahua Weilan family, supported by her brother Marquis Nesta Big Flower Hydrangea, was purging the Court of any servants possibly involved in the dragon slaying incident.

The Duke's two sons, along with his son-in-law, Marquis Glendenton, were attacking Iron Hoof Island.

At present, this was the situation in the Grand Duchy of Sapphire.

"Does no one know where the Duke has gone?"

"Perhaps Lady Sarette knows, but no one else does, or perhaps others do but we just can't find out,"

"Do Marquis Merlin and Brother Mesiro have any plans?"

"Not at the moment. After receiving your letter, Marquis Merlin instructed Lord Mesiro to convey to you..."

"To convey what to me?" Li Weiliam assumed a listening posture.

The secret messenger replied, "He has worked with the Duke for half his life and is very familiar with his old friend's character and tactics. He hopes that you will not hastily lose faith in the Duke before the dust settles."

"I understand," nodded the Earl, "I also have some information that I hope you will relay to Brother Mesiro."

"As you wish."

...

"Quite clearly."

After the secret messenger left, Liszt shared his opinion, "My grandfather's advice is prudent and cautious, urging us to watch the changes and refrain from making hasty decisions. The Duke's departure with the Sapphire Dragon must be part of a more important plan, one that could determine the future."

"So we do nothing?" Levis frowned deeply, "I always feel that while this is indeed a stable approach, it's not really the most appropriate action. What if the Eagle Kingdom intervenes?"

After a moment of thought, Liszt calmly responded, "We fight!"

"Fight?"

"As long as the Eagle Kingdom doesn't deploy Dragon Knights, what do we have to worry about? The Marquis Family won't compromise easily. Just repelling the attacks of the Knight Order will prove our strength. I believe neither the King of the Eagle Kingdom nor the King of Steel Ridge Kingdom would mind having a group of powerful followers."

This was already the agreed strategy: remain loyal to the Sapphire Family and demonstrate value until the situation became clear.

The rest was a matter of choosing which branch to perch on.

Having been through the baptism of war, Liszt felt very high-spirited at this moment, fearless of any situation: "No matter what, if there's a chance to eliminate the Marquis of Bull, we shouldn't miss it! For the family's interest, for personal emotional release, the traitor must be killed!"

Had it not been for the Marquis of Bull causing all these disturbances, Liszt would still be peacefully farming in Fresh Flower Town, waiting for this year's Pioneer Mandate.

He preferred this methodical way of life and disliked too many upheavals.

Thus, he had no fondness for the Marquis of Bull.

This is a matter of personal emotions.

From the perspective of interests, whether the Sapphire Dragon is alive or dead, the Marquis of Bull should be eliminated—if the Dragon is alive, eliminating him could curry favor with the Grand Duke; if the Dragon is dead,

doing so could prove loyalty and eliminate a competitor—the Bull Family, which has already transferred heirs and wealth overseas, is definitively the greatest rival among the domestic nobles.

Although the land is boundless, the resources available to seize are not plentiful. If the Marquis of Bull consumes more, others will have less.

The principle is roughly as such.

After the two sons concluded their discussion, the Earl wanted to offer some insights with long-term vision, but Liszt had already said everything that needed to be said, leaving nothing worth adding.

This left him feeling quite displeased, so he could only latch onto a few details and repeat some lines.

Afterward.

They continued searching for traces of the Wrath Knight Order and the Goat Assembly.

...

Departed on June 7th, landed at Bull Horn City on the 11th, set off for Mane City on the 13th, and captured the Nameless Castle of Mane City on the 14th.

Headed to Bull Hair City on the 15th, reinforced Little River City on the 16th, captured the Nameless Castle of Little River City on the 17th, supported Green Shade City on the 18th, and captured the Green Leaf Fortress of Green Shade City on the 20th.

Went to Bull Hair City again on the 21st, captured Celery Fort of Bull Hair City on the 23rd, departed for Bull Ridge City on the evening of the 24th, arrived at Bull Ridge City on the evening of the 25th, captured the Castle of Bull Ridge City on the 26th, and set off for Snow Pear City on the 27th.

Today is already June 30th.

They scoured the towns near Snow Pear City for two and a half days, thoroughly purging each small town, but found no traces of the Wrath Knight Order or the Goat Assembly.

"No need to search further, attack directly, and seize Pear Fort of Snow Pear City!" commanded the Earl, as his Knight Order encircled Viscount Castle's Pear Fort like a rising tide.

Douson made his entrance, bombarding with Rock Grenades.

The castle collapsed, and the war swiftly ended.

Meanwhile, victory reports were also coming in one after another from other cities' battlefields. With the combat power of the Earl's Knight Order, exterminating the castles defended by Viscounts was really a simple task.

July 2nd.

The Coral Island Knights joined forces with other Earl's Knight Orders and, under the leadership of Marquis Glendon, they headed straight for one of the last two cities, Bull Rump City, where they would converge with the Second Prince's Knight Order—the Second Prince's Blueblood Knight Order had already been annihilated, and Marquis Ramirez White Glutinous Rice, who joined him in attacking Bull Tail City, had also suffered heavy losses.

Thanks to the support of Wallace Pineapple Green and Mesiro Taro, the situation finally stabilized.

Bull Rump City.

The Knight Orders from the White Glutinous Rice Family, the Pineapple Green Family, the Taro Family—the three Marquis Families, as well as numerous Knight Orders from families directly under the Grand Duke assembled here.

It took only two days to defeat the Earl who guarded Bull Rump City.

"The current war is already a one-sided form, with everyone vying for military achievements," Meioubao Taro said to Liszt in the tent; he was his cousin.

Dressed in indestructible and flashy golden Mountain Copper armor.

Fortunately, he had a direct elite Knight Order, all equipped with golden Mountain Copper armor, which meant he didn't stand out too much.

Otherwise, he would have been a live target on the battlefield.

"Of course, we have to seize them," Explore more at NovelBin.Côm

Liszt, holding a cup with fresh local milk—the stock of Dragon Breed Milk had already run out—said, "Not to grab military achievements with almost no danger would mean you're either out of your mind or, like cousin, you don't need achievements to earn your title."

In the fight to attack the castle, Liszt led his Knight Order, relentlessly slaying enemy knights.

During the battle at Bull Ridge City, and now at Bull Rump City, he had racked up quite a few heads, furiously grabbing military achievements to smooth the way for his Viscount title.

Chapter 390 - 0387: The Legend of the Dragon Elf (First Update)

With the conclusion of the battle at Bull Rump City, the siege of Iron Hoof Island reached a clear stage.

The trace of the Wrath Knight Order was also discovered around the last major city, Bull Tendon City, which had not been parceled out and still belonged to the Marquis of Bull.

Not only did the Wrath Knight Order appear around Bull Tendon City, but magicians from the Goat Assembly also swaggered into the city to select various magic materials.

They made no attempt to avoid the encircling knight orders that were soon to besiege Bull Tendon City.

They were fearless.

"The Hemp Eagle Knights have locked down the Marquis of Bull's location." After the meeting, Li Weiliam summoned his followers and announced the final battle plan set by the Second Prince, "All knight orders will immediately break camp and head to Bull Tendon City to join the First Prince and complete the encirclement of Milk Lake."

Liszt took a deep breath, "Earl, is this the final battle?"

Li Weiliam looked at his second son, who had been frantically claiming credit in the recent two battles, and felt extremely gratified, "Yes, this is indeed the final battle!"

After this battle ended, perhaps, the Tulip family might advance even further.

No matter what, it was always a pleasure to see one's son grow up at such a chaotic juncture.

...

Ten kilometers away from Bull Tendon City lay a huge lake called Milk Lake.

In the center of the lake stood a towering Solitary Island, upon which was a castle, not too grandiose but slightly larger than Tulip Castle — Juniper Castle.

The name of the castle originated from the dense shrubs and small trees on Solitary Island — the junipers.

The fame of Juniper Castle was known throughout the Duchy of Sapphire, for it was the place where the precious cellar-aged spirit, "Juniper Wine," was produced. There was an obscure rumor that the Bull Marquis Family had a

Dragon Elf with a lifespan of five hundred years, the Juniper Dragon Spirit, which specialized in brewing wine.

This Juniper Dragon Spirit was a gift from the First Grand Duke to his favorite youngest son.

It then became the Bull Family's heirloom.

If the rumor was true, then the Duchy of Sapphire would have a total of two Dragon Elves — the Sapphire Family also had an Oat Dragon Elf.

Because Dragon Elves were so rare, scarcely more numerous than dragons themselves, few people knew what Dragon Elves actually looked like.

Liszt did not know either.

"I've gathered information about Dragon Elves, and the most reliable theory is that in order for an elf to evolve into a Dragon Elf, it needs the help of a dragon."

"A dragon's help?" Paris rode a Li Dragon Horse alongside Liszt as they set out with the knight order.

Now that Liszt could mount a Landwalker Bird and charge at will, he lent Paris the Li Dragon Horse, so she could be quicker in coming to his aid when necessary.

"Or it can also be described as an 'infection,' which is my own speculative conclusion," Liszt said. "Just like Dragon Breed Beasts and Dragon Breed Magic Beasts, dragons can probably 'infect' a Greater Elf, which then uses the dragon's miraculous power to transform and become a Dragon Elf."

"Is that so? I've heard that Dragon Elves are servants to dragons."

"That's one theory. Dragon Elves are very friendly with dragons and enjoy living around them. I've seen some magic books that mention Dragon Elves

appearing around evil dragons. However, there are also a few magic books and knight novels that suggest another interesting idea."

"What idea?"

"Dragon Elves are servants to dragons, but when a Dragon Elf evolves into an Elf King, the dragon will become its steed, subject to its command."

"Baron, does the Elf King really exist in this world?"

This was an interesting question. Most people might refute such a statement, believing the Elf King to be merely a legend, since from ancient times to the present no one had ever seen the Elf King, nor was there an accurate description of him—some said the Elf King was as large as a forest, others said he could ride dragons.

However.

Liszt replied, "He exists, the Elf King exists in this world."

"Really? What does the Elf King look like?" Paris asked with keen interest.

"I have not seen him, so I cannot answer."

His reliance was because the creatures of legend, one after another, appeared before his very eyes. First specters, then dragon wraiths, followed by liches, and soon sea serpents... Therefore, should the Elf King one day appear before him, he would not be surprised at all. This world is not Earth.

It doesn't necessarily have to adhere to the theory of species evolution.

Paris did not dwell on whether the Elf King existed or not. Her thoughts shifted quickly, "Baron, why is the Marquis of Bull not called the Marquis of Iron Hoof Island, or why doesn't he change his name to Andy Juniper?"

According to the ennoblement system, the correct title for a noble is the fief followed by the rank—for instance, Li Weiliam Tulip's title is Coral Island's Count; Liszt Tulip's title is Baron of Fresh Flower Town.

Only the Marquis of Bull had the title Marquis of Bull and not Marquis of Iron Hoof Island.

"It is a remembrance," Liszt knew the interesting story behind it, "Before the Sapphire Family came to this sea area to establish a nation, they were in some place on the continent. Back then, the youngest son of the First Grand Duke had a nickname, Little Bull. When he was first ennobled, he was made Earl of Bull."

Afterward, when the Sapphire Family founded the nation, Little Bull was promoted to Marquis of Bull, with Iron Hoof Island as his fief.

Possibly not wanting to change this intimate relationship, the title of Marquis of Bull continued; as for the surname, it was more or less for the same reason, to emphasize the closeness to the Sapphire Family, the surname had always been Sapphire. Of course, it could also be that the Marquis of Bull didn't actually have a Juniper Dragon Elf.

Without a Juniper Dragon Elf, naturally, he could not bear the surname Juniper.

...

After a day's march, they reached the shores of Milk Lake.

The Knight Order that was besieging Iron Hoof Island had successfully rendezvoused, firmly surrounding the lake, ready to launch the final strike at any moment. Liszt was also making his final preparations; the entire campaign to besiege Iron Hoof Island boiled down to this last battle—if he missed this opportunity, it would be difficult to claim any battle honors.

Up until now, the news of the death of the Sapphire Dragon had not arrived, nor had the possible invading troops from Eagle Kingdom.

The battlefield became increasingly clear, and the Marquis of Bull was inescapable doom.

A cloth dampened with a bit of special resin, and he slowly wiped the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword; these maintenance tasks helped reduce weapon wear and tear and extended their lifespan.

Any weapon would wear down with constant use and ultimately become scrap.

Even a divine weapon forged from the teeth of a dragon would decay over time; only the rate of decay varied.

"Baron!" A messenger knight arrived, "The Earl asks that you get ready, in half an hour, please follow him to the banquet."

"I understand."

Half an hour later, Liszt, wearing Mithril Armor, accompanied by his father Li Weiliam and brother Levis, headed toward the First Prince's tent to take part in the evening's banquet—even in war, one could not stop the nobility from dining and drinking, and even wine cups were set out on the table.

Was this to be a bout of unrestrained revelry before the battle front?

Fortunately, the First Prince had not lost his senses. The first thing he said when presiding over the banquet was, "Everyone is limited to one beer only, to moisten your parched throats. After the war ends and the fury of the Sapphire Family has been vented, I will drink heartily with all of you!"