

The Mighty Dragons Are Dead

Chapter 391 - 0400: The Defensive Barrier of Juniper Castle (Second Update)

At the banquet.

Liszt saw various nobles, most of whom held higher ranks than himself, or were noble heirs without a title yet.

"Marquis Wallace Pineapple Green of Deep Throat Island, Marquis Roderick Gold Wheat Sheaf of Golden Island, Marquis Ramirez White Glutinous Rice of Leather Island, Marquis Glendenton Red Maple Leaf of Red Maple City..."

Liszt counted the attending marquises to reinforce his impression of them.

In the Grand Duchy, there were seven marquises in total—four of whom were present here.

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The other three marquises were unable to attend.

Marquis Merlin Taro of Red Crab Island had retired and was residing at home; Marquis Andy Sapphire of the Bull had become a rebel and was now besieged; as for the last marquis, Marquis Nesta Big Flower Hydrangea of Quicksand City, he was assisting Lady Sarette in purging the court's servants.

The arrangement of the seven marquises had solidified since the accession of the fifth Grand Duke and had remained stable to this day.

"Perhaps in a few days, there will only be six marquises left," Liszt thought, finding little appetite for the coarse food before him—he still preferred Mrs. Abbie's cooking.

He then observed the First and Second Prince.

To be precise, these two were sons of a duke, not actual princes, but just as the daughters of the Sapphire Duke were referred to as princesses, so too were they called princes.

Crown Prince Anthony Sapphire, aged thirty-two, was known as the Ice Seal Sword Saint; Second Prince Angus Sapphire, aged twenty-seven, was known as the Ice Spring Sword Saint. One was a veteran Sword Saint and the other, a newly minted one. To be recognized as a saint with the sword at such ages meant they both were quite talented.

Both brothers bore a strong resemblance to each other, yet neither could be deemed handsome.

The Crown Prince appeared more amiable, exuding an inviting warmth; the Second Prince, perhaps due to the annihilation of the Knight Order, maintained a perpetually cold expression, unapproachable to strangers.

"From what my cousin has mentioned, Anthony and Angus only became Sky Knights after turning twenty. Their talents are indeed good, but not particularly outstanding. With the backing of the unlimited resources of the Sapphire Family, true prodigies would likely have become Sky Knights before reaching adulthood."

Liszt had only become an Earth Knight after coming of age and was now seventeen years old; he hoped to become a Sky Knight before he turned twenty.

Though he started from a disadvantage, he was now playing with a cheat—destined to win at the finish line.

Especially when he saw the Crown Prince mingling and toasting with the nobles, basking in their flattery, Liszt couldn't help but feel uncomfortable, malice creeping into his thoughts: "Perhaps the Sapphire Dragon is already

dead, and the Grand Duke is in a state of chaos, yet his son here is still merry as can be."

He picked up the juice in front of him and took a sip.

He also tried the medium-done steak, suddenly feeling poignant: "Having a banquet at a time like this seems inappropriate. Marquis of the Bull won't just sit back and wait for doom; he must be plotting something... It seems in this battle, I need to be extra cautious and not recklessly charge forward."

Those who scheme to slay dragons are definitely no pushovers.

When facing soft targets, one must strike decisively, but when dealing with tough ones, learning to be humble is key.

The steak was not particularly delicious, but the juice tasted good. He drained half the cup in one go and felt somewhat satiated by the meal, planning to supplement with some Six-Headed King Serpent meat back home.

Looking at the nobles still engaged in mutual adulation and toasting.

He suddenly had another thought: "If the Duchy of Sapphire really descends into chaos, could I seize the opportunity to obtain the 'Dragon Knight's Dou Qi Secret Manual' from the Sapphire Family?"

"Dragon Knight's Dou Qi Secret Manual," written by the First Grand Duke, was passed down to his descendants for cultivation, with the hope that some would become Dragon Knights.

Regrettably, in the hands of the Sapphire Family, no new Dragon Knights had emerged to date.

Liszt knew that he was a man destined to ride dragons, so the significance of this "Dragon Knight's Dou Qi Manual" for him was immense.

In this region of the sea, it was probably the only book on how to ride dragons.

...

Juniper Castle was surrounded by Milk Lake, preventing knights from charging.

But this did not stop them. The next morning, serfs from Bull Tendon City were driven to fell trees from the surrounding forests, and logs were brought to Milk Lake one by one, fastened into rafts, and cast into the waters. Countless rafts piled up, quickly encasing the edge of Milk Lake.

Layer upon layer of rafts could easily bear the weight of charging cavalry.

Though the lake was vast, it could not hinder the busyness of numerous serfs. Bit by bit, the surface of Milk Lake shrank visibly, as if covered by fabric, spreading towards the Solitary Island where Juniper Castle stood.

"The Marquis of Bull has no reaction, and the guards of Juniper Castle do not seem overly panicked," reported Li Weiliang from atop a nearby hill, putting down his telescope.

Liszt also lowered his telescope, "Father, I think the Marquis of Bull is planning something big."

"Maybe he's given up on himself, Liszt. You need to think more positively," Levis said with a relaxed expression. "With the army bearing down on him, the Marquis of Bull can't resist. From the beginning, when he tried to assassinate the Sapphire Dragon, he was gambling with his own life. Now, it's clear he's lost."

"Don't be too optimistic."

The Earl glanced at Levis and said, "When dealing with the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, remember to think critically, weigh issues from all angles carefully, and don't let love cloud your judgment."

These past days, Levis had been frequently visiting the tent of Marquis Roderick, eager to display his good qualities before his future father-in-law since he would not settle until he wed Loria Gold Wheat Ear.

Levis defended himself, "Father, you worry too much. My aim is to actively form ties with the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family to prepare for any potential future problems."

"It's good to form connections proactively, but don't make it obvious, and certainly don't become a pawn in someone else's hands. Learn to conceal your intentions," the Earl remarked with a tinge of sentimentality. "Both of my sons are outstanding, yet so very different; Levis, you mingle too eagerly, while Liszt, you neglect to do so."

Liszt smiled confidently and nonchalantly, "That's because I have more faith in my own strength, far more reliable than unpredictable connections. Besides, brother can handle the socializing; I will follow in the footsteps of Father and my brother."

The future Dragon Knight was unconcerned with establishing noble relations at the moment.

Li Weiliam shook his head slightly, feeling somewhat helpless; his sons were both exceptional yet had their own strong opinions and no longer listened to him attentively.

...

Three days passed, and on July 10th, the sun shone brightly.

Milk Lake was completely covered by the rafts, and the Crown Prince no longer hesitated, announcing the attack on Juniper Castle. Earth Knights assembled in the form of a Knight Order to besiege the castle; the Sky Knights soared into the sky for precision strikes.

A grand battle was about to unfold.

However, upon Solitary Island where Juniper Castle stood, a faint light suddenly blossomed, followed by rings of barrier-like ripples appearing in the sky above the entire island, seemingly inverting a large bowl over the castle.

The Earth Knights could not breach the barrier.

The Sky Knights could only cause the barrier to shake erratically.

"It's merely a defensive Magic Array; the magicians of the Goat Assembly can only create such an obstacle!" Crown Prince Anthony drew his longsword, pointing skyward with passion, "All hear my command! Charge with me, attack the magic barrier, and crush it!"

Boom!

The torrent of knights once again surged, fiercely colliding with the ripple-like luminescent barrier.

Chapter 392 - 0389: The Era of Knights (Third Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration 1/2)

This chapter is a bonus update sponsored by "Meow Xiaomei".

Riding on the back of landwalker bird Loki, Liszt didn't exert much effort, just gently brandishing the knight's spear as if swimming, stabbing at the halo barrier.

Magic is a truly marvelous existence—of course, anything related to magic power, whether it is creatures, magic, or Dou Qi, is extremely miraculous.

Certain bizarre materials combined with a magician's runes can activate magic power to form magic arrays with special properties. The halo barrier before him was such a magic array, similar to the water system magic Water

Wave Shield, but not composed of water. After deploying the Eye of Magic, the colors of the halo were not very clear, signifying chaotic magic power.

"It appears to be a type of mixed magic array."

While lightly prodding like swimming, he had ample energy to observe the halo barrier ahead; he could see the colors of magic power on the halo, some dim and some bright, the contrast delineating a network of nodes akin to a spiderweb.

Among them, there were several thick lines connected to different spots on the ground.

"If I cut off these nodal lines, it should be possible to destroy the halo barrier," Liszt's eyes brightened as he decided to test his theory.

He rapidly signaled with his flag, "Change formation, attack the direction I lead!"

Boom!

Charging ahead solo... on his bird, he attacked the nodes of the magic power network, followed by knights of the Black Knight Order charging one after another. Every collision seemed to have little effect, but Liszt clearly saw that with each attack, the thick magic power line faded a bit more.

The continuous assault almost led to the magic power lines being dimmed to the point of collapse by the Black Knight Order.

Just at that moment, from within the halo barrier, a resonant horn blast followed by the dull thudding of hooves resounded. A knight order clad in red helmets, red armor, and riding red horses, surged out from Juniper Castle, charging down the slope of Solitary Island toward the direction of the Black Knight Order.

This was none other than the Wrath Knight Order, the elite knights of the Marquis of the Bull—actually the most powerful knight order of Iron Hoof Island, who had entirely annihilated the three hundred knights of the Blueblood Knight Order under the Second Prince, as well as eight hundred knights from the domains of landlords such as Marquis Ramirez White Glutinous Rice.

Iron Hoof Island, located at the southwestern corner of the Grand Duchy, the closest to the mainland, is hailed as the barrier of the Grand Duchy.

The Wrath Knight Order is the barrier within the barrier.

Its reputation spread far and wide.

Seeing the Wrath Knight Order sally forth, Liszt's heart tightened as he realized his attacks on the halo barrier and disruption of the nodes had been detected by the opponent's magicians.

He would not engage with the Wrath Knight Order; these knights were carefully trained elite earth knights by the Marquis of the Bull, many of whom were under the substance influence, and even their mounts were not ordinary warhorses. Even with Douson's assistance, breaking their formation would be challenging; the Black Knight Order had no chance of victory.

Therefore.

Seeing the Wrath Knight Order sally forth, he quickly changed his flag signals, leading the Black Knight Order to avoid the nodes and "swim" elsewhere.

At the same time, he called out loudly, "The Wrath Knight Order has launched an attack! The magic array won't hold for long, attack swiftly! Eradicate the Wrath Knight Order!" Discover exclusive tales at

His roar caught the attention of many knights.

The Second Prince, who was overseeing the battlefield, also noticed, and he promptly led the Blueblood Knight Order, which had been reassigned under his banner, towards the Wrath Knight Order.

This was his chance for revenge!

The tide of knights surged forward!

Just as the red and silver knight orders were about to clash, suddenly the red Wrath Knight Order halted in its tracks.

The silver knight order came to an immediate stop in front of the halo barrier as well.

Separated by the barrier, they faced off against each other.

"What a pity they didn't keep charging. A few more charges, and the magic array would have certainly collapsed!" Far off, Liszt, who was still pretending to swim, saw the two opposing knight orders refusing to budge, couldn't help but curse the Second Prince for being a coward. He seemed all bluster as if intent on revenge, yet it ended in a stare-down.

He had no choice but to deploy the Eye of Magic again and look for another node to fiercely assault.

Similarly, it wasn't long before another Wrath Knight Order, wearing red helmets, red armor, and riding red horses, charged toward Liszt's location. This time, they were met by the knight order of the Long Taro Family, resplendent in golden-colored armor, with Liszt's cousin Meioubao Taro leading the vanguard.

A flicker in his gaze, Liszt spurred his mount to gallop over, "Sir Meioubao."

"Baron Liszt," Meioubao was confronting the Wrath Knight Order across the halo barrier and couldn't help but glance at Liszt riding the strange bird.

Once Liszt drew near, he whispered, "I've noticed something. Earlier, when I was attacking the halo barrier over by the Second Prince, the Wrath Knight Order directly charged at me. Then, after I attacked the halo barrier here, another Wrath Knight Order quickly charged over. Both these spots must be critical nodes of the entire halo barrier."

If it were someone else, he wouldn't reveal such information to avoid exposing the secret of his Eye of Magic.

But Meioubao was his cousin, with whom he had a good relationship, so even if there was a suspicion that Meioubao was hiding a secret, he wouldn't delve too deeply. Moreover, Liszt didn't mind giving Meioubao the credit for breaking through the halo barrier—given the threat of the Wrath Knight Order, he didn't dare to rashly attack the nodes anyway.

"Is that so?" Meioubao was half-doubtful.

"Try it and you'll know. I'll cover for you from the side! If successful, the Long Taro Family will surely be credited with the first merit in the conquest of Juniper Castle."

"Okay, I'll give it a try!"

Having confirmed his betrothal to the Grand Duke's younger daughter, Meioubao couldn't hide his desire to prove himself. Upon hearing what Liszt said, he went along with it.

"Charge!"

The Elite Knight Order, clad in mountain copper armor, instantly rushed towards the halo barrier. Opposite them, the Wrath Knight Order also initiated a charge with a do-or-die spirit.

However.

The Long Taro Family's Knight Order still slammed harshly against the halo barrier—there were so many knight orders here that Meioubao didn't worry about his own safety. The Wrath Knight Order couldn't intimidate him, and moreover, the actions of the opponents further confirmed Liszt's words; there was something wrong with this part of the barrier.

Boom!

A united burst of Dou Qi, using the knight's spears of the front-rank knights as outlets, slammed fiercely into the halo barrier.

The next moment, the halo barrier, which had been intact, suddenly flickered violently a few times as if it might collapse at any moment, but ultimately it stabilized.

But that slight change made Meioubao realize that Liszt was right!

He raised his knight's spear high and turned his horse's head: "Continue the charge!"

In the distance, the First Prince, seeing the flickering of the halo barrier, likewise shouted excitedly, "The magic array can't hold out much longer! All knight orders, charge at full force, to flatten Juniper Castle!"

"Flatten Juniper Castle!"

"Flatten Juniper Castle!"

"Flatten Juniper Castle!"

The attack on a node triggered a domino effect, completely exploding the pace of the battlefield as the knight orders besieging Juniper Castle began more ferocious charges.

It seemed they already knew it was an effort in vain.

The two hastily arriving Wrath Knight Orders, without looking back, turned around and returned to Juniper Castle. Just as they had gotten back to Juniper Castle, Meioubao had already led his elite knights in three charges, completely breaking the halo barrier, causing a chain reaction where the entire halo barrier flashed violently.

And then it completely dissipated.

The multitude of knight orders exclaimed: "Charge!"

"Charge!"

"Charge!" Liszt, mingling within the troops, called out the slogan calmly and unhurriedly, but was keen not to rush for a position in the front.

Just then.

The numerous knight orders had just stepped onto the shores of Solitary Island when the sky suddenly darkened overhead, followed by thunder, lightning, howling gales, and a torrential assault of hailstones, fireballs, rocks, and water jets from Juniper Castle as the center, firing madly.

"Magicians of the Goat Assembly!"

With a roar, the First Prince brandished his sword and soared, directly towards a rock falling from the sky: "Foolish, ignorant! This is the era of knights!"

Boom!

His sword, swathed in Dou Qi, struck, and the rock shattered into pieces.

The First Prince's figure stood tall in mid-air, his black cloak fluttering fiercely, his presence unrivaled.

Under his leading example, one Sky Knight after another burst out from the ranks of the knight orders, soaring into the sky, and began a relentless bombing of Juniper Castle!

The outpouring of Dou Qi whirled the free-floating magic power in the air into shreds, and all magic slowly broke down!

Chapter 393 - 0390: The Bull that Blows Blue Flames (Fourth Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration 2/2)

This chapter is specially added due to "My Horse Feeds the Sheep" reaching the reward of 10,000.

The choice of an era governed by knights certainly has its reasons, and at this moment, the scene of battle vividly displays the disadvantages of magicians.

When Knight Orders charge, and Sky Knights take to the air, the ambient Magic Power in the air becomes chaotic, preventing Grand Magicians from casting the spells they pride themselves on.

The seemingly overwhelming counterattack from Juniper Castle vanishes in the blink of an eye, leaving only the knights' cries.

Bows enhanced with Dou Qi incessantly pound the walls of Juniper Castle, and the staunch rock, fortified with glutinous rice juice, begins to peel off layer by layer. The castle's scant return fire is feeble against the onslaught of nearly ten thousand knights surrounding it, unable to even raise their heads, completely suffocated by the onslaught.

Moreover, the Sky Knights perform targeted bombings, with each swoop and powerful slash of their longswords repelling the little resistance they faced.

The battle unfolds just as everyone anticipated the evening before the banquet, with a completely one-sided situation.

Juniper Castle is in imminent danger.

Watching from a distance, Liszt feels anxious as he sees Juniper Castle being struck from the sky by the Sky Knights and from the land by the Earth Knights, bracing for the dual assault that could crumble the castle at any moment, "How could this happen? This is nothing like I imagined. The Marquis of Bull has no power to fight back!"

The knights of the Wrath Knight Order are suppressed within the castle walls, daring not to show their faces.

The magicians from the Goat Assembly have faded into obscurity.

The countdown to the end of the war is ticking.

Tick tock, tick tock.

"Damn it, I guessed wrong!" Liszt's frustration lasts only a few seconds before he then raises his Swift Shadow Bow and shouts, "Black Knight Order, focus your attack on Juniper Castle!"

This is a bid to snatch away the glory of victory.

If not now, when?

Three arrows infused with Fire Attribute Dou Qi fly towards the walls of Juniper Castle, knocking down a piece of rock. Liszt shakes his head, dissatisfied with the result, and blows a whistle. Douson, stationed in the center of the Black Knight Order, immediately charges over—Douson has been quite the show-off these past few days.

Many nobles have made excuses for social visits just to see Douson.

In truth, using Intermediate Magical Beasts in battle isn't rare. Many of the mounts for Sky Knights are magical beasts, and some can fly.

The mount of Marquis Ramirez White Glutinous Rice is an Intermediate Magical Beast Overlord Beetle, capable of flight and emitting lightning. At the moment, standing atop the Overlord Beetle's head, Marquis Ramirez wields his Combat Skills while directing the beetle to unleash lightning—the benefit of a magical beast is that it can cast Magic using its own Magic Power.

Of course, Douson can also cast Magic.

"Douson, Rock Grenade!"

Boom!

A massive boulder hits the walls of Juniper Castle, creating numerous fissures. When it comes to siege capabilities, Douson could mock all the others present as trash.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

With the output from Douson's Rock Grenades and the continuous barrage of arrows, the section of the castle wall primarily attacked by the Black Knight Order soon collapses, creating a small breach. The knights of the Wrath Knight Order stand at the gap, using shields to form a defense, preventing the charging knights.

Douson gasps for breath, depleted of Magic Power.

Liszt, holding the Swift Shadow Bow, continues to shoot, hoping to reap a few heads from afar.

Just then, out of the corner of his eye, he spots the First Prince descending from the sky, landing beside him. His expression is obscured by his visor, and the glare of the sun and shadows obscure his eyes. But the First Prince's voice sounds excited, "Are you the son of Li Weiliam, Levis?"

"Levis is my brother, I am Liszt, the second son of Earl Li Weiliam!"

"I've heard of you, Liszt!" The First Prince is just taking a break from flying, as Sky Knights cannot stay in the air for long, "The dog you've raised is quite impressive. In the capture of Juniper Castle, you've earned yourself significant merit!"

"Thank you, First Prince!" Liszt immediately responds with an exhilarated tone, "I am ready to charge for the Sapphire Family!"

"Very good!"

After speaking, the First Prince once again soars into the sky, heading straight for the breach blocked by the Wrath Knight Order. His longsword swings fiercely, and his Ice Attribute Dou Qi instantly forms numerous ice spikes that follow his slashes towards the knights at the breach.

Crash!

The shields upheld by more than a dozen Elite Earth Knights were violently repelled, causing them to fall onto the castle's walkway.

But before the First Prince could rush in, a streak of green sword light suddenly thrust out from inside, heading straight for him.

Clang!

The First Prince raised his sword to block the sneak attack, his voice icy, "Antus, are you betraying the Sapphire Family just like your father? Have you forgotten our past friendship? I'm giving you a chance now, surrender to me, and I guarantee your survival!"

The one who launched the sneak attack was none other than Antus Sapphire, the Marquis of Bull's son and a Sky Knight of the Sword Saint Level.

He held the title of Hurricane Sword Saint.

"My father's decision is my decision!" Antus coldly replied before withdrawing to the breach to continue marshaling Elite Earth Knights to block it.

Disappointment, loss.

The First Prince, landed and his face frosty with contempt, bellowed, "Attack, all of you attack! I want to see Juniper Castle fall within half an hour!"

Boom!

The battle around the castle's breach intensified fiercely.

Sky Knights charged at the breach, engaging in close-quarter combat with Sky Knights inside Juniper Castle, each employing Combat Skills from the Advanced Dou Qi Manuals. Despite the stalemate for a moment, as the castle walls continued to collapse and the breach grew wider, the defense of the knights inside Juniper Castle became increasingly ineffective.

Liszt's quiver was now empty of arrows.

At this moment, riding atop a Landwalker Bird, he ceased his attack and relished watching the Sky Knights in battle.

Dozens, hundreds of Sky Knights, nearly four-fifths of the Duchy of Sapphire's Sky Knights, had come. As several Sky Knights exhausted their Dou Qi and landed to recover, others joined the fray. They sustained relentless pressure on Juniper Castle.

Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam was among them, and as a Sky Knight of the Sword Saint Level, his performance was stellar.

Apart from a few veteran Sky Knights of the Completion Level, he was one of the strongest among the Sword Saints.

"This siege of Juniper Castle could possibly go down in the history of the Grand Duchy of Sapphire, an epic battle indeed!" Liszt's blood boiled as he longed to immediately return to his study in Fresh Flower Town and take the

neglected historical chronicle "Dragons Fight in the Wild" off the shelf to continue writing.

To record this segment of the battle.

"...Dragon Knight Liszt, in his youth, took part in the siege of Juniper Castle, leading the charge and breaching its defenses first. As an Elite Earth Knight, accomplished what a host of Sky Knights couldn't. With his help, the knights of the Duchy of Sapphire, captured Juniper Castle."

He then felt he should add, "The eldest son of the Sapphire Duke personally offered his profound respects to Liszt."

However.

Just when everyone thought victory was within grasp, that Juniper Castle would soon be conquered, suddenly the sky above the castle roiled with dark clouds, sunlight disappearing into the rolling mass, turning the sky instantaneously gloomy. Following that, a blue light burst from the highest spire of Juniper Castle, piercing into the dark clouds.

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Thunder boomed and rumbled within the clouds.

Such a dramatic change caused all the knights to pause their assault, fixating on the dazzling blue light. The surging atmosphere of war came to an abrupt halt.

"Anthony, are you so eager to see your uncle die?" A voice resonated between heaven and earth as if emanating from the castle and likewise from the clouds.

The next moment.

The light retracted.

The Wrath Knight Order at the breach of the castle unexpectedly cheered, making way for a passage, and after about a dozen seconds at the breach, a tall figure emerged.

A figure twice the height of a normal person.

Covered in pitch-black armor from head to toe, the bull-shaped helmet especially, with flames of blue in the area of the eyes, seemed icy, merciless. In the hands of this tall figure was a curved greatsword—or more accurately, a curved sword made of bone, with the same blue flames dancing along it.

Pitch-black armor.

Blue flames.

The towering presence, twice the height of a normal person, all exuded an immense oppressive force.

He simply stood there, yet not a single knight dared to attack—none had regained their senses to confront such a supersized human, a human doubled in height, eyes aflame with blue fire.

The bull-shaped helmet turned half a circle, scanning the knights amassed below the walls of Juniper Castle, and let out a disdainful laugh, "A bunch of ants, truly a bunch of ants... My dear nephew Anthony Sapphire, come and meet your immortal uncle—Lich Andy!"

Chapter 394 - 0391: Mesiro Takes Action (First Update)

Lich.

This term, or rather this type of artificial creature, originated from ancient times, possibly beginning in the Moon Empire—yes, it seems that everything in this world is eventually connected to the Moon Empire, as if there was only one human nation in the ancient era, which was the Moon Empire itself.

In some Magic Books of magicians, the Moon Empire is described as a realm in pursuit of magic, and thus gave birth to a wide variety of magical professions.

Just as recorded in the book he obtained from the Ghost Ship, "To His Highness Annuette—Curtis Truth," surrounding the triangular symbol of the Eye of Truth, there were professions like Alchemist, Vampire, Necromancer, Magician, Druid, Wizard, Sorcerer, Prophet, Succubus, Shaman, and others.

All these professions have been obliterated by the river of history, with only magicians continuing to exist.

According to the information that Liszt summarized and searched, liches originated from the wizards of the Moon Empire, who were roughly magicians studying soul techniques. An ancient wizard invented the Life Box Technique that could harbour souls and turned himself into an undying lich.

Afterward, there was a brief flourishing period for liches.

Of course, immortality hardly exists—because in this era, there are no longer any signs of liches' existence.

Those ancient liches have long since turned into mere dust between heaven and earth, and even dragons cannot live forever, so how could these artificial creatures grasp the secret of immortality.

It was probably just a technique for extending one's lifespan.

"But now it seems that the lich transformed by Andy Sapphire is somewhat unusual... Compared to the lich form of Curtis Truth, Lich Andy appears to be very formidable... His height is that of two men, and even the greatsword in his hand is emanating blue flames."

Liszt, watching the Marquis of Bull conversing with the Crown Prince at the breach in Juniper Castle, grew nervous.

He had guessed that the Marquis would certainly have a contingency plan, but the outcome turned out to be the Marquis smoothly transforming into a lich, and with an unrivalled manner, appearing before everyone.

The battlefield fell into a stunned silence.

Crown Prince Anthony, standing on the ground, looking up at the towering Lich Andy, said sharply, "Liches are nothing but relics discarded by time, and there is no one in the world who is immortal; the same applies to you. Andy, your act of self-deception cannot intimidate anyone!"

"Hahahaha, such laughable words." Lich Andy gently swung the greatsword in his hand; the sword had a striking design, with a blade resembling a piece of bone, and the hilt, forged out of metal, topped with a bull's head. The pair of bull horns acted as the sword guard, and the blue flames burned coldly, "I am not just trying to scare you, because, I'm about to come kill you!"

Boom!

Lich Andy suddenly leapt down from Juniper Castle, causing the ground to tremble slightly under his landing.

The Crown Prince couldn't help but feel a sense of fear, but he quickly roared, "All knights, throw your spears and shoot your arrows at this lich! Sky Knights, follow me to besiege him!"

"Do you really want to oppose me?" Lich Andy, seeing the knights around him preparing to attack, immediately spoke out loud, "I have become a lich and have taken the power of the Sapphire Dragon, my very existence proves the Sapphire Dragon's death, and yet, do you still choose to be buried with the Sapphire Family!"

His words instantly caused the movements of the knights to hesitate.

The dragon slaying incident had occurred, and now with the Marquis transforming into a lich so successfully, there was no doubt that he had stolen the power of the Sapphire Dragon. But then, what had become of this dragon that repressed the nation?

Everyone would certainly have doubts in their minds.

However, the Crown Prince quickly rebutted, "How dare you covet the power of the dragon. The Sapphire Dragon is safe and sound. Soon, it will recover from its injuries and eliminate the scum who dare to challenge its majesty!"

Having said that.

The Crown Prince charged directly at Lich Andy. At this moment, Liszt truly admired this heir to the duke, who not only did not retreat in such a situation but also charged forward without hesitation. Seeking to directly influence the judgment of the surrounding knights with his example.

In contrast, the Second Prince beside him did not immediately rush out with the Crown Prince.

This newly acclaimed Sword Saint was hesitant and wavering in his heart.

"This battle is going to be tough." Liszt certainly felt the urge to retreat as well. He did not know how strong the lich transformed by the Marquis was, but the success of the Marquis easily led one to speculate on the safety of the Sapphire Dragon, hence causing hesitation. Just like now, only the Crown Prince was charging forward alone.

Even the Second Prince began to waver.

The scales of victory had already tipped toward the Marquis of the Bull, and the new Lich Andy. Once the Crown Prince's assault tested Andy's immense strength, it was likely that a huge change would occur on the battlefield.

Thinking of his own retreat planned long ago, Li Si Te couldn't help but mock himself inwardly, "Nobles are the best at seeking fortune and avoiding disaster."

But the next moment.

He realized his understanding of nobles was still very superficial.

From their ranks, following right after the Crown Prince, another Sky Knight charged out, clad in golden armor and wielding a golden greatsword. This ostentatiously dressed figure was none other than his uncle—who, in Liszt's opinion, was considered as "useless" among the nobility and had only reached the rank of an ordinary Sky Knight by relying heavily on magic potions.

Mesiro Taro.

"Hmm?"

His gaze locked, he was momentarily unable to respond.

And there wasn't time to respond, for he soon discovered that his father, Sea Wave Sword Saint Li Weiliam, was following right behind Mesiro, being the third one to charge out. Then, one after another, Sky Knights surged forth, including the Second Prince, all heading toward Lich Andy.

Seeing such a scene, Lich Andy couldn't help but curse loudly, "Foolish ants! It seems you really don't understand your current actions, it's like committing suicide!"

Boom!

The greatsword emitting blue flames was raised and then lightly swept across, sending a fan-shaped wave of blue shock impact that rapidly struck many Sky Knights.

Instantly, the Sky Knights were sent flying backward as if they were small boats capsized by waves.

Li Weiliam was among those retreating, yet he was not injured—merely struck by a great force, causing his ribs to ache slightly. Catching his breath, he charged forward again, right beside the also retreating Crown Prince. He glanced at the Crown Prince, and the Crown Prince looked back at him.

Without any verbal or eye contact, the two quickly rejoined the fray.

This was going to be a difficult fight!

Thunder, hail, stone shards, Wind Blades, flames, waves—the magic power in the air was pulverized into sludge by the Knights' own Dou Qi, displaying a variety of phenomena, except for the rarer Light Attribute Dou Qi and Dark Attribute Dou Qi. The other six attributes of Dou Qi were displayed in the sky.

In such a wild onslaught, Lich Andy roared angrily, the greatsword emitting blue flames actually blocked the group assaults, and he even had the strength to counterattack.

Phut!

The blade emitting blue flames suddenly pivoted, and a Sky Knight of common strength who couldn't dodge in time was brushed across the chest by the greatsword, blood splattered and rapidly evaporated.

"Ah!"

The Sky Knight screamed as he retreated.

He couldn't even withstand a single sword strike from Lich Andy.

The vastness of the gap was chilling. The Earth Knights surrounding Juniper Castle didn't dare to join the battle, as this was a fight among the highest echelon of Knights—Lich Andy seemed like a creature made of magic, but his combat style was still that of a Knight.

Mingling among the Knight Order, Li Si Te raised his Swift Shadow Bow several times, only to put it down again.

With the Earl entering the fray, the Tulip Family's stance was quickly determined. The Coral Island Knights had no choice but to fight... But this battle was no longer at a level an Elite Earth Knight like him could participate in, even sneak attacks with arrows would be difficult.

"Andy with the 'Pleasure of Flame' is too strong. This feeling, it's like we're going to lose."

Chapter 395 - 0392: Pillaging the Study of the Marquis of Bull (Second Update)

In the game of World of Warcraft, the Lich King Arthas possesses a divine artifact known as Frostmourne. The Marquis of Bull now wields a similar greatsword that bursts with blue flames, easily reminding Liszt of another divine artifact, "Pleasure of Flame".

Of course.

The sword doesn't bear this name, but its majesty is in no way inferior.

Fighting alone against dozens of Sky Knights, the Marquis of Bull's support consists only of seven or eight Sky Knights from Juniper Castle. Yet even so, the Marquis of Bull holds the upper hand, his blue-flame-bursting greatsword grievously wounding a Sky Knight from time to time.

"How could ants understand the might of a Lich!"

With a fierce grin, the Marquis of Bull slashed out with his sword. One of the Sky Knights, unable to dodge in time, had his arm severed on the spot, rendering him completely useless as he screamed and fell to the ground. Fortunately, he was quickly rescued by the knights on the ground, who rushed over just in time to save his life, although his ordeal was just the beginning.

A minute later, another Sky Knight was seriously injured; his waist almost bisected by the greatsword that burst with blue flames.

If it were not for the Advanced Dou Qi that forcibly stopped the bleeding, he likely would have died already.

"Sir Captain, what should we do?" Captain Layden was visibly agitated. The situation on the battlefield was beyond what they, the Elite Earth Knights, could comprehend.

Liszt signaled him to keep calm and directly ran towards Levis's direction: "Sir Levis!"

"Baron Liszt." Levis, leading the red and yellow Knight Orders, likewise stood his ground, but his expression matched Captain Layden's, lost and anxious.

"Are you planning to run away?"

"What?" Levis shrieked before lowering his voice, "Have you gone mad? Father is fighting out there!"

He still had family ties and reason, not terrified by the battlefield.

Liszt took a moment to soothe his own tension before saying, "We can't help in the battle with the Sky Knights, but Juniper Castle is right in front of us. Since father has already decided to fight, we must not remain idle!"

Levis immediately gestured dismissively: "If you have a plan, just spit it out. We don't have time for your hesitations!"

"Very well, you must immediately round up the Knight Orders. We shall avoid the main battlefield and continue our assault on Juniper Castle!" Liszt spoke calmly.

His tense emotions did not cloud his judgment. On the contrary, his thoughts were more active.

He looked at Levis, who seemed to cling to a lifeline, and declared loudly, "We need to advance or retreat together with father, which means we must have an unshakable belief in victory. Thus, the glory of taking Juniper Castle must not be lost! You go and contact the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family, and I'll get in touch with the Long Taro Family!"

"Can we take down..."

Liszt cut him off directly: "Nonsense, can't you see the gap in the castle wall? Everyone charge together, and any castle can be flattened! Hurry and gather everyone!"

"Alright!" Levis clenched his teeth fiercely and followed Liszt's arrangement.

The two brothers, one to the left and one to the right, started rounding up the leaderless Knight Orders—the Sky Knights were all off fighting Lich Andy, and no one was paying attention to the insignificant Juniper Castle anymore.

However.

Liszt saw clearly that Juniper Castle was the key.

For two reasons, the first being the Lich had a Life Box—according to Curtis Truth's situation at the time, the Life Box wasn't fatal, merely the coordinates for her return from the Exiled Lands, but it wasn't necessarily the same for Andy Sapphire; perhaps his Life Box was his Achilles' heel.

The second reason was that taking Juniper Castle could at least disturb the Marquis of Bull's state of mind, as it was his stronghold. Inside, there might be plenty of wealth, as well as numerous magicians from the Goat Assembly, all representing military achievements.

The coordination was very smooth, and Meioubao immediately nodded, "I understand. I'll go coordinate with the other families. With our strength, we can directly capture Juniper Castle!" Experience tales at

About five minutes later, the battle in the sky reached a fever pitch with as many as ten Sky Knights seriously wounded. Marquis of Bull was also hit several times, his armor damaged and emanating more blue flames.

At the same time.

Under the leadership of the knights from the Long Taro and the Golden Wheat Sheaf Families, the Knight Order launched a renewed charge toward Juniper Castle. The Elite Earth Knights climbed up the breaches, fiercely clashing with the Wrath Knight Order. With their landlords battling in the skies, the Earth Knights on the ground naturally dared not slacken.

Especially the heirs to the families, wishing to alleviate the pressure on their fathers, were eager to capture Juniper Castle immediately.

Liszt was mixed in with the charging troops, not being too high-profile, nor coveting this bit of military merit—since the coordinated attack originated from him, he would definitely not lack his share of the honors; moreover, the First Prince had already acknowledged his other contribution in the siege earlier.

He had enough of the limelight.

As long as they won the war, the title of Viscount was assuredly within reach.

If he was too prominent now, should the Marquis of Bull casually strike down at him, he wouldn't even know how he died.

A massive battle was raging in the skies and at the castle.

Surrounding Juniper Castle, epic moments of the battle intensified, and after fifteen minutes, finally, the Knight Order broke through the blockade of the Wrath Knight Order and stormed into Juniper Castle.

The massacre of the people within the castle commenced.

"Vermin! How dare you!" Marquis of Bull, noticing the turn of the battle at Juniper Castle, turned and roared furiously, about to charge over to intervene.

But he was entangled by the First Prince and other Sky Knights. As they got accustomed to Marquis of Bull's strength, the Sky Knights stopped suffering casualties and managed to stabilize their positions, holding Marquis of Bull back. The First Prince even soared into the sky, bellowing, "Knights, flatten Juniper Castle, I am with you!"

"Flatten Juniper Castle!"

"Flatten Juniper Castle!"

Chanting the slogan, the Knight Order launched an even more frenzied assault.

Liszt also shouted a few times, leading Jonas and other Elite Earth Knights into the castle. He didn't go in any specific direction but searched for Marquis of Bull's study. In his view, the importance of knowledge far exceeded any other wealth in the castle. With the Eye of Magic activated, he could calmly avoid powerful opponents.

The Elite Earth Knights blocking the way were simply bypassed, engaging only the weaker Common Earth Knights. Soon, he burst into the third floor of the castle and found the location of the study.

"Jonas, guard the door. I need to find something!"

"Make it quick!"

There were bookshelves in the study with neatly arranged books, but Liszt did not bother to search through them, as they were mostly for show, just like the ones in his bookshelves at Fresh Flower Town. He searched on top of the desk, where the most important manuscripts and the ones Marquis of Bull perused often would surely be.

Indeed, there was a stack of books on the desk.

Atop the stack, Liszt caught a glimpse of a title—"A Night with Miss Havana in the Piano Room." Without a second thought, he stuffed the whole stack into the Gemstone Space along with a few other books from different corners of the room, again without even looking at them.

A silver-white knight's armor was hanging on the wall; he did not hesitate to take it down and put it into the Gemstone Space as well—if armor was stored in this study, it was certainly not ordinary armor.

Then, without looking back, he left the study, "Jonas, I didn't find anything good, let's go search Marquis of Bull's bedroom!" He remembered that the Advanced Dou Qi Manuscript, "Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash," was found by a knight on the bedside table of Count Sned.

Chapter 396 - 0393: I Will Return (Third Update, 10,000 Coins Reward Celebration)

This chapter is "Sky Sword Dance" special bonus update.

Strictly speaking, Juniper Castle is just a holiday castle for the Marquis of Bull, it can't compare with Bull Castle of Iron Hoof City at all, so there aren't many valuables here.

Those treasures should have been moved overseas with another son of the Marquis of Bull and his grandson.

There wasn't much to find in the bedroom; even the bedside cabinet, when opened, contained only sundry items and no books. However, hanging above the bed head, on the wall, was a portrait that appeared to be of the Marquis of Bull's wife, a middle-aged woman. Around her neck hung a necklace.

Within the vision of the Eye of Magic, the pink gemstone embedded below this necklace was actually real.

He easily prised out the gemstone and stowed it in the Gemstone Space.

After another careful look that revealed no items imbued with magic power, he hurried out, his voice as calm as ever, "All empty, there's nothing of value left in this castle!"

"This is just a refuge for the Marquis of Bull, there surely wouldn't be any wealth," Jonas said as a matter of course.

"Let's go, we're on to find the magicians of the Goat Assembly!"

Jonas exclaimed excitedly, "Great! Killing a Grand Magician should be enough to cover the losses of this trip!" The merit from downing a Grand Magician was enough to offset the battle losses of the Grey Knight Order.

The two immediately led the Elite Earth Knights in search through the castle, and upon encountering knights of the Wrath Knight Order, they immediately surrounded them and slashed wildly.

The castle was filled with the scent of blood, and the floors at every level were nearly drowned in it.

Your journey continues at

From the third floor to the first floor, they found no trace of the magicians from the Goat Assembly, and just as Liszt's frown creased his brow, Paris's voice reached his ears, "Baron, follow me!"

Liszt immediately led his knights, following the invisible Paris.

Others might not see Paris, but he could.

Under Paris's guidance, they quickly reached a deeper area in the castle, a plain storage room. However, one wall of the storage room was adorned with a huge goat symbol that seemed to glow faintly.

Liszt used his Sky-Cleaving Greatsword to lift the curtain-like symbol, behind which was a glittering Magic Array.

Behind the Magic Array lay a dark passage that stretched downward into the earth.

"Liszt, these Goat Assembly magicians probably escaped through this passage!" Jonas furrowed his brow while tossing over a chair.

Crack!

The chair disintegrated upon contact with the light strands of the Magic Array.

Liszt, meanwhile, knocked on the wall where the Magic Array was mounted, and the wall emitted a metallic clanging sound, "It's a wall poured with metal; unless the castle is demolished, it's hard to remove the Magic Array. Given its magical intensity, it can't be broken in a short time either."

"This is troublesome!"

"Let's attack and give it a try!" Liszt wasn't ready to give up, as catching a few Grand Magicians would be a tremendous triumph.

But the next moment, he changed his mind.

A loud boom resonated, and the castle trembled as if it might collapse at any moment.

Then came the angry roar of the Marquis of Bull, "A bunch of ants, dare destroy my castle, you're asking for death... Out of the way! Ramirez, you damned insect, just wait a few more minutes, I assure you, you'll be a corpse, feeding your damned worms!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The castle continued to shake as the Marquis of Bull found an opportunity to charge in, fending off the siege of Sky Knights while slaughtering the Earth Knights.

Paris quickly surveyed the situation and hurriedly said in Liszt's ear, "Baron, the Marquis of Bull has broken in!"

He reluctantly glanced at the stable magic array, waved his hand, and gave an order, "We must move quickly, leave the castle, the Marquis of Bull has already come back, it's too dangerous to stay here!"

The thought of the Marquis of Bull fighting alone against a group of Sky Knights sent a shiver down the spines of the Earth Knights as they silently followed Liszt to find an exit and quietly left Juniper Castle. At that time, surrounding the outside of Juniper Castle, there were still large numbers of Knight Orders wanting to charge into the castle, but they had no opportunity.

Liszt returned to the Black Knight Order waiting outside and mounted his landwalker bird Loki, rushing to find Levis and Meioubao.

Not seeing either of them, he directly ordered the knights who followed the two, "Go into the castle and find them! It's suicide for them to stay inside with the Marquis of Bull being extremely dangerous!"

"Understood, Baron Liszt!"

After all this, Liszt finally breathed a sigh of relief. With the battle having reached this point, he felt he had done his utmost and could no longer influence the outcome of the battle, "Now it depends on whether these Marquises and Earls can defeat Lich Andy... I hope Earl William is safe."

No matter what, Li Weiliam was his greatest support.

...

Boom!

Crash!

Juniper Castle was already riddled with holes, and the battle between the Sky Knights and the Lich was still ongoing. As injured Sky Knights were carried out of the castle one by one, the Marquis of Bull's furious roars gradually subsided. But soon, there was another tremendous roar.

It pierced everyone's eardrums.

"No!"

"My son!"

"Antus!"

With anger, sorrow, and boundless hatred, the Marquis of Bull roared as he charged out of the window, his huge figure in black armor now battered and tattered, blue flames leaking out of every crack, the flames dimmed considerably. It was anyone's guess whether the flames were his body or an illusion of magic power.

"I will remember every one of you!" he turned and with one sword thrust, a blue shockwave erupted from the sword, repelling the pursuing Sky Knights. In his other hand, he was holding a person—it was his son, Hurricane Sword Saint Antus Sapphire, his body limp, devoid of life.

"Stupid betrayer Andy, you will embrace death just like Antus!" the First Prince, with two obvious wounds on his body but high in fighting spirits, shouted, "You don't even deserve to be exiled to the Exiled Lands!"

Boom! Boom!

Several more Sky Knights, having rested, soared into the sky and then plummeted to attack the entangled Marquis of Bull.

The Marquis of Bull gasped and roared, "Wait until I fully master the Sapphire Dragon's power, no one below Dragon Knights can stop me then. At that time,

I will come to reap your heads!" With that, he leapt into the air and flew high up into the sky, speeding away in the distance, ready to escape.

His speed was like a bolt of lightning, far exceeding that of all the Sky Knights.

He left behind only one sentence, "I will be back!"

"The Marquis of Bull has fled!"

Liszt inexplicably breathed a sigh of relief. If the Lich could not find his Horcrux, killing him would likely be difficult, and he might even risk dying once to severely injure most of the Sky Knights.

Now that he had fled, at least for the short term, he would no longer be a threat.

But before Liszt could catch his full breath, the Marquis of Bull, who had fled to the skies, returned at the same speed and crashed to the ground in front of everyone still in shock, the blue flames on his body flickering, nearly extinguished.

**Chapter 397 - 0394: A Stunning Entrance (Fourth Update, 160,000
Recommendation Votes Special)**

"Cough cough..." Continue your story on

The dust settled, and Marquis of the Bull coughed weakly, unable to get up.

Sky Knights formed a circle around him, but everyone's focus had shifted from the Marquis of the Bull to the dark clouds in the northwest.

There.

A flying creature, resembling both a bird and a bat, lazily approached, and many hearts raced with recognition of its trajectory and silhouette.

Including Liszt's.

"This..."

Levis's astonished cry echoed in the ears: "It's a dragon!"

The approaching creature indeed had the outline of a dragon, similar to the Formless Dragon Liszt had once seen.

"Dragon!"

Someone suddenly yelled out loud.

Immediately, cheers erupted in waves: "It's a dragon!"

"Sapphire Dragon!"

"The Grand Duke has finally arrived!"

"The dragon is still alive!"

The First Prince surrounding Marquis of the Bull laughed heartily, "Sapphire Dragon, the symbol of authority for the Sapphire Family, it's still alive! Traitor Andy, your doom has come!"

"No... cough cough... how can this be... my power... is draining away... How can the Sapphire Dragon... still be alive!" The Marquis of the Bull's words were interrupted by fear, the blue flames on his body wavering and dissipating in the direction of the dragon's approach.

Second Prince lifted his visor, looking crazed.

"It's Father! Ha ha, Father rides the Sapphire Dragon!"

He suddenly raised his longsword, aimed directly at the Marquis of the Bull:

"The humiliation you forced upon me, today, I shall reclaim it all! Ha ha!"

"Impossible... impossible... impossible..." The Marquis of the Bull, not even glancing at the Second Prince, stared with blazing blue eyes at the ever-growing figure in the sky, "A familiar magic power... it's really it... impossible... why didn't the Sapphire Dragon die!"

Following his gaze, everybody looked up at the fully revealed Sapphire Dragon.

But unlike the Sapphire Dragon of their imagination, this one was grotesque, its skin and muscles were decayed in large patches, with muscles turned inside out at the rotting wounds, and in some places, the decay was so severe that bones were visible. A pale blue light emitted from the exposed bones, adding to its horror.

A dragon, not counting the two wings.

Has four legs, two shorter front legs, and two thicker hind legs.

However, not only was the Sapphire Dragon's body decaying, but one of its front legs was also broken, and another hind leg was reduced to bones shining with blue light.

The wings that it flapped were tattered, the membranous parts of the flesh-wings riddled with holes both large and small, resembling a burlap garment rotted over many years.

Despite its scales that shone like an elf's crystal luster, the blue was clear and seemed made of jade, it was still the ugliest dragon Liszt had ever seen.

Just like...

"Just like it has been doused in sulfuric acid, how did it become like this?" Liszt swallowed, his skin crawling with goosebumps, just like when he first saw the Formless Dragon.

Douson's hair stood on end, and Loki's feathers did the same.

The horses of the surrounding Knight Order became restless, and would have bolted if not for the knights holding them.

Different from the previous encounter with the dragon's magical silhouette, this time Liszt saw a real dragon, the Sapphire Dragon that suppressed the

Grand Duchy of Sapphire: "Levis had described to me, the Sapphire Dragon was an incredible creature that embodied both beauty and power."

But the Sapphire Dragon before his eyes was a dragon whose appearance had been utterly ravaged.

"Was it caused by Marquis of Bull's sneak attack, or did something go awry when the Sapphire Duke was healing it?"

Doubt circled in his mind.

The next moment.

The Sapphire Dragon had already descended from the sky, wrapped in strong winds, landing on a clearing left by the dispersing Sky Knights, directly opposite the Marquis of Bull lying on the ground.

This dragon, standing on its two feet and supporting its frame, was about the height of a four-story building; even with its wings folded, its wingspan was probably more than fifty meters, and it still appeared as massive as a building. It was many times larger and its Dragon Might many times stronger than the Formless Dragons Liszt had seen before.

The pressure was so intense that Liszt felt as though he was suffocating.

However, he still endured the discomfort and used the Eye of Magic to observe the landed Sapphire Dragon in another way. Inside its body was a vigorous blue light, but it wasn't Water-Attribute Magic Power. There were huge discontinuities on the surface of its Magical Power, with each one corresponding to a festering wound.

What should have been a beautiful gemstone creature now seemed chaotic and disordered because of these discontinuities.

It looked down at the Marquis of Bull on the ground, who was in a panic, and fiercely opened its mouth wide to bite down. Liszt could clearly see the same

blue light inside the body of the Marquis of Bull, and these lights flew towards the Sapphire Dragon like visible threads, quickly converging and healing the discontinuities in its magical power.

Just as the Sapphire Dragon was about to bite the Marquis of Bull, an authoritative voice rang out, "Sapphire, be still and patient."

The next moment.

The Sapphire Dragon stopped its mighty jaw and roared unwillingly.

The roar sounded like thunder from the heavens, mixed with the faint calls of a great elephant, a strange yet fierce bellow.

Bang Thud!

A silhouette jumped down from where the Sapphire Dragon's neck met its back, landing on the ground, shining in silver-white armour, a blue cape, and flaxen hair. The figure was not particularly tall or short, uncovered by a helmet, leaving his ordinary face visible.

With just a brief glance, Liszt felt an overwhelming pressure almost akin to that of the Sapphire Dragon washing over him.

It felt like a pair of large hands had clamped around his throat, once again giving him a sensation of suffocation.

"Huff!"

Liszt forcefully circulated his Dou Qi to drive away the uncomfortable feeling.

Meanwhile, under the leadership of the First Prince, all the Sky Knights had already knelt on one knee, loudly hailing, "Grand Duke!"

Following suit, including Liszt, the Earth Knights also knelt on one knee, "Grand Duke!"

On the entire battlefield, the only standing human was the Sapphire Duke himself.

He nodded gently, his face adorned with a faint smile, "Gentlemen, please rise. It seems I have arrived just in time. You have successfully vented my rage."

As the knights stood up, he looked towards the Marquis of Bull, whose expression was dazed as if unable to accept reality, the smile disappeared, turning to calmness, "Andy, my once most trusted partner, comrade, and kin, I never imagined we would meet in such a manner."

"Why isn't the Sapphire Dragon dead!" the Marquis of Bull asked blankly.

Shaking his head, the Sapphire Duke didn't speak a word; he simply walked towards the Marquis of Bull and squatted before him, seemingly letting out an imperceptible sigh.

He extended his left hand, suddenly opened it, and his fingertips transformed into beast-like claws, which he then plunged fiercely into the Marquis of Bull's chest.

"Ah!" The Marquis of Bull screamed.

Unperturbed, the Sapphire Duke pulled forcefully, extracting a sapphire gemstone about the size of a fist from his chest cavity.

His hand returned to normal.

With the sapphire in hand, he ordered indifferently, "Tie him up."

Chapter 398 - 0395: The Grand Duke's Dragon Might (First Update)

The Marquis of Bull was shackled, bound by metal handcuffs and shackles.

After the Sapphire Duke extracted the sapphire from his chest, his body rapidly withered away, with his armor nearly falling off. The blue flames

gradually disappeared, turning into faint green light that emerged from the gaps in the armor, just like Liszt had initially seen in Curtis Truth.

"This is probably the true appearance of the Lich, the faint green glow of the soul. The blue flames of the Marquis of Bull before were the result of the Sapphire Dragon's power being conferred upon him."

Liszt glanced at the listless Lich Andy, then paid him no more heed.

Activating his Eye of Magic, he repeatedly scanned the rotting Sapphire Dragon, overlooking no detail of its body, from head to tail, from outside to inside.

The Grand Duke quickly stuffed the sapphire into the mouth of the Sapphire Dragon.

The Sapphire Dragon opened its mouth and inhaled, and the sapphire entered its belly, vanishing from sight. Afterwards, its eyes, as tough as krypton, continued to stare at the Marquis of Bull, or to be precise, at the blue-flaming greatsword that had fallen to the ground. The blue fire on the sword had already extinguished, revealing a white blade.

A knight picked up the greatsword and presented it to the Grand Duke.

The Grand Duke fondled the blade.

The Sapphire Dragon became inexplicably irritable, its broken front limb shaking violently.

In the next moment, the Grand Duke already held the great sword up to the mouth of the Sapphire Dragon. The dragon inhaled and swallowed the sword into its belly. Opening its mouth, it let out a roar of dragon song, spread its wings fiercely, and with its hind legs pounding on the ground, it leapt into the sky amidst a raging wind and flew away without looking back.

The dark clouds had already scattered from the sky, and the sunlight shone on its broken body, making it glitter with splendid sapphire blue, shining brilliantly.

Transforming into a blue dot, it finally disappeared in the sky.

From its appearance to its departure, it took no more than five minutes, yet its figure was firmly imprinted in the hearts of all the knights, making every one of them boil with blood.

Riding dragons, it is definitely the lifelong achievement every knight dreams of.

Most knights might never see a dragon in their lifetime, but these ten thousand or more knights were fortunate, almost coming into zero-distance contact with the only known dragon within the territory of the Duchy of Sapphire.

The Grand Duke didn't say anything appropriate to the occasion.

After sending off the Sapphire Dragon, he went straight into the dilapidated Juniper Castle and convened his direct followers to discuss the aftermath of the war at Juniper Castle.

As for the others, they rested outside, pitched camp, and incidentally cleared the battlefield.

As a small landlord, Liszt naturally didn't need to be busy; he gathered with Levis, Jonas, and Trick to chat idly about the topic of the Sapphire Dragon.

Levis had seen the Sapphire Dragon, and he could discern the changes in the Sapphire Dragon more clearly.

"This is quite different from the Sapphire Dragon I saw on Blue Dragon Island. At that time, the Sapphire Dragon was clad in exquisite scales, like a giant

sapphire... I wonder what it went through to become what it is now, still majestic but with a bizarre appearance."

"It must be Marquis of Bull's assassination attempt that caused the Sapphire Dragon to be gravely injured and disfigured," Liszt said. "Did you notice the relationship between the Grand Duke and the Sapphire Dragon?"

"Are you talking about Dragon Might?" Trick keenly observed this point, "The Sapphire Dragon is gone, but the Dragon Might it possesses is still stimulating my skin."

"The Grand Duke has Dragon Might as well."

"Then he..."

The three of them didn't continue the topic. This wasn't the appropriate occasion to discuss the ruler of the nation, and they quickly moved on to talk about the war.

Jonas spoke with a hint of regret: "It's a pity that I didn't manage to kill a Grand Magician; my merit isn't enough to compensate for the losses of the Grey Knight Order."

"But we've completed the encirclement of Iron Hoof Island, and the Grand Duke's Dragon is alive and well. The Duchy of Sapphire will soon be able to flourish again, and in the future, Earl will lead us to continue to expand the continent," Trick consoled. "Earl, together with Lord Mesiro, followed the First Prince into battle. This time, our achievements in war may far exceed our expectations!"

The Marquis of Bull made a shocking appearance and used the news of the Sapphire Dragon's death to shake the besieging knights.

Mesiro was the first to attack with the First Prince, and Li Weiliam was the second. The facts proved that their gamble was a success, and this unhesitant loyalty was worth more than a glorious victory in battle.

Jonas suddenly said excitedly, "Do you guys think that Earl, because of this war, might be promoted... to be the new Marquis of the nation?"

Trick contemplated.

Levis rubbed his palms together, starting to waver with apprehension. "That, that shouldn't be likely, right?"

Liszt glanced at his brother and thought he was getting carried away. He couldn't help but interrupt his fantasy, "Indeed, that's not possible. The Marquis of Bull is just a Marquis. All nobles in the country are involved in the attack, and without creating resources or new territories, how could one be granted a Marquisate?"

The veteran Marquises all followed the Grand Duke of old to the continent, snatched up a great number of resources, and supported the Duchy of Sapphire before they were promoted.

Currently, it's just an internal rebellion. Unless Li Weiliam leads the Knight Order alone and obliterates Iron Hoof Island, there won't be any chance of accruing the merits to become a Marquis.

After analyzing the reality, he offered Levis a glimmer of hope: "But our father will definitely become a strong contender for the next Marquis in the eyes of the Grand Duke and the First Prince. As long as he accumulates sufficient merits, his ennoblement as a Marquis is as good as done." For such a loyal follower, the landlord has no reason to suppress.

Given equal conditions, Li Weiliam is definitely one step closer to that achievement.

For a landlord, sometimes a follower's loyalty is more important than strength. Suppressing his undue greed, Levis regained his clarity of mind and couldn't help saying to Liszt, "Regardless, once you return, you should be the new Viscount."

Trick and Jonas both nodded in agreement.

Liszt's contributions were evident—during the battle at Bull Hair City, it was thanks to Douson's siege efforts and his assistance with Li Weiliam in slaying Count Sned; at Bull Ridge City, he scraped together some kills, and the same at Bull Rump City, though the merits were not significant; however, at Bull Tendon City, also known as Juniper Castle, his role was crucial.

The breach in the walls of Juniper Castle was caused by Douson's destruction, and the First Prince personally acknowledged this contribution.

Initiating the coordination of the Knight Order's attack on the castle was Liszt's suggestion, demonstrating not just merits but also loyalty—not everyone has the guts to oppose the Marquis of Bull, who has become a Lich.

The only regret was not breaking the Magic Array and killing a few Grand Magicians. Now that the battlefield has died down, it's uncertain who will capture the escaping Grand Magicians.

All things considered, the title of Viscount is virtually in Liszt's grasp.

Suddenly.

Levis thought of a question: "If the First Prince remembers you, it's very likely he will recruit you as one of his followers. Liszt, would you accept the First Prince's ennoblement?"

For followers like Jonas and Trick, it would be challenging to change allegiances.

But in cases like Liszt's, as a second son directly descended from the landlord's bloodline, changing allegiances is easy, and the family would support such behavior.

However, Liszt just shook his head, "I plan to choose an uninhabited island near Coral Island as my domain."

"Are there still uninhabited islands near Coral Island?" Levis asked curiously.

"We're already at the northeasternmost corner of the Grand Duchy. Father said it took him a long time to find a suitable Earl's domain. Other than Viscount Trick's Beer Island, he didn't find any new islands."

"There will always be some, the Sea of Azure Waves is so vast."

Chapter 399 - 0396: The End of the Iron Hoof Island Campaign (Second Update)

The conference at Juniper Castle lasted a full two days.

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During these two days, the knights from various domains had gradually left, and the knights from Coral Island also left Juniper Castle on July 12, by order of the Earl.

"Levis, you lead the Knight Order back to Bull Horn City first and meet up with the fleet of our family. Once the meetings here are over, I will head directly to Bull Horn City," he ordered.

"Yes, Father."

After the Earl left the Knight Order and returned to Juniper Castle, Liszt chased after him and asked a question, "Father, there shouldn't be any major problems if I look for a few craftsmen in the cities along the way and take them with me, right?"

"The Knight Order of the Grand Duke has already taken over the major cities, so don't do that... We are currently discussing military exploits, and it would be best to follow the rules. It's not worth spoiling the glory that should be yours over some trivialities," the Earl advised. "Your Viscount title can be secured through this battle; that's what matters most."

Theoretically, as a land-owning Earl, William could grant anyone the title of Viscount.

However, in practice, he only held the rights to divide his own lands and to suggest and make deals for the ennoblement of new territories—officially speaking, this means that if he were to carve out a piece of land from Coral Island to grant a title to a follower, The Court would not interfere at all, even if he created ten Viscounts, as long as there was land to be divided.

But Coral Island is only so large; accommodating two Viscounts has already required carving out a lot of land, and sectioning off an entire city would destabilize Tulip Castle's finances.

At this point, it would be necessary to trade for new territories from the Grand Duchy to grant titles to followers.

The compensation needed for such a trade is military exploits.

The Court reserves the right to inspect and review the ennoblement of knights, and if a knight doesn't meet The Court's criteria for ennoblement, The Court has the right to refuse new land trades. Followers' military exploits can be accumulated as material rewards, or as a tally of exploits.

Wait for an appropriate method to cash in on those military exploits.

William hadn't increased the size of his domains in years, compensating for military exploits with material rewards because the demands for new territories were high.

Unless he could accumulate enough military exploits to be promoted to Marquis and obtain a larger island as a domain, using exploits to exchange for a new small island would be neither worthwhile nor meaningful.

"Are my military exploits sufficient?"

"They are sufficient. The First Prince is very satisfied with the performance of the Long Taro Family and the Tulip Family, and he had many good words to say, including about you. If you are willing, you could even become a follower of the First Prince, but I know, you're developing a new island?" William revealed.

Indeed, he had already learned about Liszt's project on Black Horse Island.

Liszt nodded, without denying, "I want Black Horse Island as my fief. The island is roughly two thousand square kilometers, which is about the same as the territory of a small city."

"Black Horse Island, eh? It will soon become reality."

"By the way, Father, can I keep Fresh Flower Town for a long time? It's just a small town, and I can offer the family additional compensation as if it were a long-term lease," he ventured.

William took a moment to consider, "That's possible, we'll discuss this later, I have to get back to the meeting."

After the Earl left.

Liszt was still contemplating the details of his ennoblement.

He had studied the knightly ennoblement system quite thoroughly. In this knight-dominated world, the ennoblement systems of different countries are essentially similar in nature—they are all inherited from the Moon Empire's system, where landlords have complete ownership of their lands.

But there are many differences in form.

The ennoblement system of the Duchy of Sapphire differs from the vassal Kingdom of the Steel Ridge Kingdom—the Steel Ridge Kingdom's feudal system is one of overlapping domains, while the Duchy of Sapphire utilizes an island exchange feudal system.

...

Fiefdom overlap.

This refers to the ability to continuously acquire territories and stack them together.

For example, a knight, after becoming an Honored Knight, receives a small village as his fiefdom, and then, after achieving military distinction, is promoted to Baron and receives a small town as his fiefdom. Hence, his titles would be "Baron of Some Town" plus "Honored Knight of Some Village," possessing two separate lands.

In this way, his eldest son could inherit the title of Baron of Some Town, while his second son might be able to inherit the title of Honored Knight of Some Village.

Of course, most of the time the eldest son gets all the titles, and the second son goes off to fight wars, write novels, play the piano, court noble ladies—the misfortunes of the younger son are probably one of the reasons why monogamy is practiced among the nobility. Having too many wives means there would be more younger sons, and the imbalance of fief distribution would intensify conflicts, leading to the collapse of the knight system.

...

Island exchange.

This is a special feudal policy of the Duchy of Sapphire, meaning that a noble can only own one island or one city; territories do not stack.

For example, a knight, after becoming an Honored Knight, receives a small village as his fiefdom, and then, after achieving military distinction, is promoted to Baron and receives a small town as his fiefdom. However, he can only choose the town as his fiefdom and must give up the original village fiefdom, retaining only the highest title of "Baron of Some Town."

But there's a considerate strategy to ensure that the benefits of the territory are not compromised—the original fiefdom can be retained for a harvest period of three to five years, to transfer wealth such as elves and population from the territory.

When the Tulip Family still bore the name Wafers, Liszt's grandfather, Greg Wafers, was the Viscount of Tahiti City on an island near Blue Dragon Island.

After Li Weiliam inherited the Viscount title, he distinguished himself and became an Earl, choosing Coral Island and retaining the three-year harvesting period of Tahiti City by paying taxes.

After transferring the family's assets, three years later, Tahiti City was reclaimed by The Court.

This system was adopted because the Duchy of Sapphire is an archipelago nation. With many islands, limited land, and difficult maritime transportation, it would cost nobles a fortune to connect two fiefdoms far from each other, so they might as well focus on a single island.

Thus, the island exchange system was born out of necessity.

However, systems are static, but people are dynamic.

Liszt wants to lease Fresh Flower Town long-term, and as long as he pays, there is no reason for Li Weiliam and Levis to disagree—after all, they're family.

"Fresh Flower Town is where my career began, and most of the rewards from the Smoke Mission originate from there, it may have special significance, I cannot bear to give it up."

Fresh Flower Town is his land of dragon prosperity.

Even though this world does not pay much attention to the concept of lands of dragon prosperity, Liszt is still somewhat influenced by geomancy and has a preference for such places. Even without considering the land's auspiciousness, Fresh Flower Town also holds the majority of his hard-earned achievements, making it difficult to let go so easily.

Most importantly, the Formless Dragon has graced this town.

This is one of the Dragon's clues, and perhaps one day the Formless Dragon will visit the town again, then Liszt could have a proper encounter with it, striving to ride it one day and become a Dragon Knight.

Wouldn't that be wonderful!

...

Li Si Te landed on Iron Hoof Island, Bull Horn City, on June 11th, and returned to Bull Horn City on July 14th. The Iron Hoof Island campaign, which took an entire month, finally came to an end.

Liszt could relax and lie in bed, enjoying the post-war tranquility.

Once the Earl arrives, he could begin the journey home.

Chapter 400 - 397: Dragon Knight Training Plan (3rd Update, Additional Chapter for 800 Monthly Votes)

The night in Bull Horn City.

A torrential downpour, mixed with howling winds.

Unable to venture out, Liszt hid in his room, taking stock of his spoils. The food, minerals, and other battle spoils couldn't be privately allocated, and he hadn't brought much in terms of Gold Coins and silver coins.

It was only during the battle at Bull Hair City that he had Marcus secretly transport seven craftsmen to the ship.

He summoned the Smoke Mission, the Serpent Script was the same as ever, "Mission: Searching for tasks related to the Wrath Knight Order and Goat Assembly is in progress. Perhaps this is the end of the Marquis of Bull, but no one can know the final outcome. Please patiently wait for the war to end. Reward: Unknown reward."

He probably had to return to Fresh Flower Town for this mission to be considered complete.

For the moment, the spoils he had obtained were all found in the study and bedroom of Juniper Castle. The pink gemstone set in the portrait of the Duchess in the bedroom probably originated from the "Pink Gemstone Dragon." After some investigation, Liszt concluded that this pink gemstone's property was to amplify spiritual power.

Up to now, he had acquired four gems.

The Crimson Blood Sword had a Ruby embedded in it, which could enhance Dou Qi effects, very powerful; the Sky-Cleaving Greatsword had a Sapphire, which could increase strength, equally powerful; he had swindled a Sapphire Ring from Curtis Truth, which could increase strength and also enhance a Magician's casting effects.

The last was this pink gemstone that amplified spiritual power.

"Gemstone Dragons are generally a type of dragon that specializes magic power and solidifies it in the form of gemstones, essentially a magic power converter that transforms properties," he defined Gemstone Dragons this way.

In his view, dragons could be seen as distinct magic converters.

Metal Dragons were material converters, transforming magic power into metal; Elemental Dragons were permanent converters, changing temporary properties of magic power into permanent ones, enabling them to carve and exist forever; Gemstone Dragons were property converters, turning ordinary magic power into special magic power, forming gemstones.

As for Sacred Dragons, it was hard to say.

Of course.

These were just superficial opinions; his understanding of dragons was still very limited. The Grand Magicians of the Goat Assembly must know a lot, but unfortunately, he had not been able to capture a Grand Magician nor obtain their collections of books and experimental notes.

He shook the pink gemstone.

Liszt felt that this was undoubtedly an important piece of war loot.

He could use it to craft gemstone equipment and then increase his own spiritual power to better control the flow of Dou Qi. It could also be given to Magicians, who have a great need for spiritual power.

"Perhaps Ach would like it..."

Besides the pink gemstone.

He also took out a silvery-white Knight's armor, which hung on the wall of the study and appeared to be made of Mithril.

The feel and quality were the same as the Mithril Armor he had previously found in the underground chamber of the Nameless Castle in Mane City.

A moment later.

He announced helplessly, "This is really just a set of Mithril Armor, an ordinary set of Mithril Armor with nothing special about it... Marquis of Bull, are you out of your mind, hanging a set of ordinary Mithril Armor in the study?" This kind of Mithril Armor was worth about seven to eight sets of Fine Steel Armor.

Not valuable.

"Not to mention getting some fine Magic Equipment, at the very least you should embed seven or eight gemstones to match the status of a Marquis!" Liszt was sorely disappointed.

Not willing to give up, he continued to examine the equipment and soon learned the reason why the armor was hung up.

On the shoulder blades of the armor, a line of small Serpent Script was engraved: "Iron Knight Andre Sapphire completed this in the autumn of the hundred and forty-ninth year, the first set of Mithril Armor, gifted to my grandfather."

"Is this the first set of Mithril Armor crafted by Marquis of Bull's grandson?" Liszt pondered for a moment, the words revealing Andre's talent, "According to the information I have, isn't the Marquis of Bull's grandson only fifteen years old this year? He was only twelve when he forged this Mithril Armor three years ago?"

Iron Knight is akin to a blacksmith among knights, not a position of high status.

But for a twelve-year-old child to be able to forge so well, it's clear he must have incredible talent in Dou Qi cultivation: "This Andre, as long as resources can keep up, might become a Sky Knight before the age of sixteen, qualifying to ride a dragon."

Liszt was very good at divergent thinking.

He thought of some kingdoms that have a special knight system—the Dragon Knight training program.

Not every member of the royal family has the qualification to mount a dragon—most have common talents—so the kingdom would select some young people with the potential to ride dragons, helping them to ride dragons and become a powerful barrier for the kingdom. One of the selection criteria is to become a Sky Knight before the age of sixteen.

These Dragon Knights would serve the kingdom and, after their death, return the dragon to the kingdom—how they ensure that the Dragon Knights are willing to return the dragons is unknown, probably involving some contracts about the soul.

"Perhaps the Marquis of Bull has already sent his grandson to some kingdom as a Dragon Knight trainee?" Investing the entire Bull Family's wealth might indeed be worth a shot to cultivate a descendant of a Dragon Knight.

Maybe in the Marquis of Bull's eyes, becoming an immortal Lich would allow him to watch over his grandson becoming a Dragon Knight.

It could even be that the plan to slay dragons was one of the conditions promised to his grandson by a kingdom as a candidate for Dragon Riding.

The more Liszt thought about it, the wilder his imagination spun.

He even concocted a conspiracy—a kingdom, let's assume Eagle Kingdom, wanting to counter the Duchy of Sapphire, schemed to revive the Goat Assembly, making contact with the Marquis of Bull. Using the Lich as bait, they intrigued the Marquis of Bull to slay a dragon, promising in return to train his grandson as a Dragon Knight.

Thus, the Marquis of Bull gambled everything, decided to slay a dragon, leading to many of the events that were unfolding now.

However, he quickly dismissed this conspiracy theory: "The plot must have started to unfold at least thirty years ago, long before the Marquis of Bull's grandson was even born... But it could be added to 'Dragons Fight in the Wild,' I believe it would captivate readers and add a sense of historical depth."

He shook his head.

No longer entangled with where exactly Andre had gone: "When I get a chance, I'll erase this Serpent Script, and just use it as a regular set of Mithril Armor."

He put away the armor.

What was left was the books he had found in the study.

The first book, 'A Night with Miss Havana in the Piano Room,' sounded somewhat suggestive, but he still flipped through it seriously.

And then.

He was speechless.

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This was nothing but a salacious novel, the kind with crude depictions devoid of plot. The protagonist was a down-on-luck knight without a noble title, only good at playing the piano, who was hired to teach an Earl's daughter.

Because he played the piano so well, he set the piano room aflame with passion with Miss Havana.

The same scenes repeated, over and over.

Making up this novella of about thirty thousand words.

"The Marquis of Bull actually had a taste for this kind of thing," Liszt reflected briefly, taking a blade and slicing open the cover... no Dou Qi Secret Technique was hidden inside.

This was indeed a purely salacious book.