

## THE MIGHTY DRAGONS ARE DEAD

### Chapter 411 - 0408: The Shortage of Craftsmen (First Update)

It was a Green-headed Duck.

A very plump and large Green-headed Duck, about the size of a wolfhound, with shiny, oily green feathers on its head.

It didn't fly, but instead, waddling through the mud, came from the island toward the shore.

"My lord, it's a... very plump wild duck!" Marcus quietly took off his bow and arrow, preparing for the hunt, "Take it on board, smear it with oil and char, we can change up the flavor."

Influenced by the castle, he had also become a part of those who appreciate fine food.

Liszt raised his hand to stop Marcus, "This is not a wild duck, it's a Low-Level Magical Beast called a Green-headed Duck, capable of shooting water arrows. Let's observe for a while and see how many Green-headed Ducks are on the island."

"Low-Level Magical Beast?" Marcus raised an eyebrow, much more cautious now.

Perhaps a Low-Level Magical Beast wasn't much of a threat to Liszt, an Elite Earth Knight well-equipped and adept at consuming magic-enhancing substances, but it still posed a threat to him, an Elite Earth Knight focusing on Combat Skills.

This Green-headed Duck had been living leisurely on Mangrove Island for over a month without encountering any danger, so its vigilance had greatly diminished as it strolled around looking for food. It seemed to notice a Green Caterpillar on the branch of a mangrove tree, so it snapped its beak, releasing a water arrow and accurately hitting the Green Caterpillar.

The Green Caterpillar was knocked down by the water arrow, and the duck walked over slowly, bit the caterpillar.

Its flat beak trembled rapidly a few times, then spit out the caterpillar, or rather, the green hairs of the caterpillar, eating only its flesh.

After finishing one caterpillar, it waddled away to look for more Green Caterpillars.

Only then did Liszt come out from behind the mangrove where he was hiding, "Green-feathered Ducks have come to Mangrove Island, which is good news. Let's look around for the eggs of the Green-headed Ducks, these Magical Beasts don't like making nests, so their eggs are scattered everywhere."

Before he finished speaking, Marcus shouted, "My lord! Here's an egg!"

A pale green large egg, probably three times the size of a normal duck egg. Liszt used his Eye of Magic to see the pale blue Magic Power flowing inside; undoubtedly, this was a fresh egg of the Green-headed Duck.

After spending an hour

The group roughly searched the entire Mangrove Island, not only finding twenty Green-headed Duck eggs but also several plump Green-headed Ducks. However, the whereabouts of the forty or so hatched ducklings were unknown. Liszt did not find them, and they were probably hidden by the Mangrove Minor Elf Nami.

Because when Liszt found the Mangrove Cordyceps, he had seen Nami hiding in the mangrove bushes, not greeting him, probably a bit apprehensive of the Retainer Knights following Liszt.

So, Liszt did not force her to show herself either.

There was no need to tell everyone about the treasure like an Elf; it's better to enjoy it privately.

"Carefully hold the Green-headed Duck eggs; let's head back!" Liszt specially took another look at Nami's Mangrove Cordyceps and felt it was just an ordinary mangrove without much use.

So, he didn't pay too much attention to it and returned directly to the Fresh Flower Vessel.

Having collected enough samples, it was possible to try breeding Green Caterpillars and Green-headed Ducks back in Fresh Flower Town.

Once the technology was fully mastered, the breeding scale could be expanded on Black Horse Island—Green-headed Ducks would definitely become a high-value Magical Beast industry in Liszt's hands.

On the ship.

Liszt commanded the Retainer Knights to lay the eggs on the deck, padded with cloth, so that the sunlight could continuously shine on them, to avoid delaying their hatching.

"Consultant Goltai, make sure to figure out the breeding techniques for green caterpillars and green-headed ducks as quickly as possible,"

"As you wish."

"I also need you to quickly arrange for the seven craftsmen I brought back," Liszt remembered, initially he had asked Marcus to search for craftsmen in Mane City and then have them sent directly to the seaside to secretly join the fleet. In total, there were seven craftsmen and their families.

He had planned to continue searching for craftsmen, but unfortunately, the Earl had called a halt to it. He did not want to risk losing what's important over something trivial, so the only craftsmen he could bring back were these seven.

"Fred Ginch's job is easy to arrange, I will set him up with a specialized drilling team," Goltai said, a bit excited, "His arrival is very important to Black Horse Island. It's difficult to get water in the harbor town, and the nearby rivers have too little flow, so drilling wells for water is a must."

Fred Ginch was the only one among the seven craftsmen to have reached master level, and he was a driller—an essential profession for the territory—not one who drills for oil, but for water wells. His surname also originated from drilling; "Ginch" is a wooden tool used to stabilize well walls.

It could be said that Fred's relocation to Black Horse Island had resolved the island's water source issue.

Goltai continued, "Paper craftsman Lavaigne can have a thick paper workshop built for him so we can produce our own thick paper; shoe craftsman Flaton can set up a shoe store in Fresh Flower Town, and I believe the business should be passable; the two carving artisans can be arranged to work with the carpenters in the woodworking workshop to carve furniture; umbrella craftsman Gomez can also prepare an umbrella shop."

"I recall there was also a gelding artisan?" Liszt inquired.

"Yes, Gelding Artisan Dwight," Goltai answered, revealing his increasing comfort with his role and diligence at work, "I asked him yesterday, and he can castrate cows and horses. He once gelded horses for the nobles of Mane City, and those warhorses all stemmed from his gelding. With the batch of crossbred horses about to be born in the stables, all future gelding work for the grown horses can be handed over to Dwight."

By calculation,

The pregnancy of the Fire Dragon Horse mares had reached eleven months; it was time for them to give birth.

This was the first batch of horses mixed with the bloodline of the Black Blood Treasured Horse—Liszt wasn't sure about their quality, but he held high hopes for them. Purebred herds of Black Blood Treasured Horses would take decades to cultivate and develop, making it challenging to equip the Knight Order. However, they could continue to breed and produce mixed breeds.

As long as the mares could keep up, these crossbred horses could expand in scale in a short period, easily arming the Knight Order—Liszt was now Viscount Black Horse Island and could support an Earth Knight Order of over a hundred people to fight for him.

Driller.

Paper Craftsman, Shoe Craftsman, Umbrella Craftsman, Carving Artisan, Gelding Artisan.

These seven selected craftsmen could somewhat compensate for the industries that Fresh Flower Town lacked, but to properly develop Black Horse Island, more craftsmen were needed—pot menders, vinegar brewers, butchers, scale makers, salt workers, blade sharpeners, pen makers, bamboo weavers, mold makers, wax workers, ink makers, etc.

Even comedians and other performers were necessary as part of the cultural enrichment.

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Back in Fresh Flower Town, the green-headed duck eggs continued to bask in the sun.

Liszt then took a trip to the Magic Workshop to inquire about Chris's progress on the Magic Notes. To his surprise, it had only been a day, and she had already solved all the questions.

"My lord, the magician who posed these questions is very clever, but his experience is immature. It seems as if he is groping in the dark; many of his basic understandings are incorrect. I have temporarily finished answering the questions in this Magic Notes. If you need it, I can write a more detailed basic magic textbook to give to you," Chris offered dutifully.

Seeing Liszt as her benefactor or as a patron of magic research, Chris was very committed.

Liszt certainly wouldn't refuse, "Then I'll have to trouble you. It's for a young relative of mine, a sister who doesn't like to practice Dou Qi but is instead very interested in magic."

Chris smiled and said, "If she has any questions, she can come and ask me anytime. I shall share all I know."

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## Chapter 412 - 0409: A High-Profile Appearance (Second Update)

Presenting the Magic Notes solved by Chris to the diligent Ach, the Smoke Mission was immediately completed, "Mission accomplished, reward: Water System Grand Mage Acherlroides Truth."

"Indeed, Ach is about to break through to become a Grand Mage... But then again, how exactly is the distinction defined between a Grand Magician and a Magician?"

Liszt was puzzled by this point. Magic, unlike Dou Qi, did not have a hierarchy of low-level, intermediate, advanced, and Dragon Dou Qi, so he wasn't clear about the differences between a Grand Magician and a Magician besides the variety of magic they mastered. Nor could anyone clear up this confusion for him.

So far, the only Grand Magician he had seen was at Red Crab Island, the Court Grand Mage Grimmand Truth, who set off fireworks for Marquis Merlin.

They had shared a drink at the banquet, but their chat did not exceed two sentences.

Chris obviously had been in contact with Grand Magicians, as her teacher was a Grand Magician. However, her teacher had not told her the significance of being a Grand Magician too early—probably treating her as cannon fodder for the Goat Assembly, not intending to teach her further magical knowledge.

"Once Ach breaks through to become a Grand Magician, I'll study it thoroughly. Perhaps I can summarize some data, which could be used to enlighten Chris and help her break through to become a Grand Magician as well... In this way, I'll have two Grand Magicians... Magicians are indeed evil, but I'm sure these two wouldn't harm me."

Liszt's impression of magicians was not very good. Granted, a knight's cultivation could not do without magicians to supply Magic Potions and create Magic Equipment.

But the magicians' obsession with Truth made them irreverent, always committing terrifying acts—causing explosions was one thing, but even daring to mess with dragons—The Grand Magician of the Maple Leaf Duchy using a Light Dragon to transform a White Dragon Wraith; the Grand Magician of the Goat Assembly, even using a Sapphire Dragon to transform a Lich.

As a noble Knight and a member of the ruling class,

Liszt naturally condemned the magicians, "Anarchy!" And decided in his heart that if he couldn't keep a firm grip on the magicians, he would not allow them to live on his territory.

In the Sea View Villa,

Ach was studying the book earnestly, his face sometimes puzzled, sometimes delighted, completely immersed in solving the Magic Notes. Liszt sat aside, contemplating new Smoke Missions.

"Mission: There are not many moments in a person's life that are worth engraving in memory. For a Knight, promotion of rank is definitely such a memorable moment. Approach this ennoblement ceremony with your utmost fervor, and enhance your noble prestige. Reward: Bursting Elf Bugs."

"Bursting Elf Bugs, what does that mean?" he pondered, "Does it mean another Elf Bug is about to evolve? Or does it mean that my territory is about to breed a new batch of Elf Bugs?"

Whichever it was, both were rewards that excited him.

Currently, he had two Little Minor Elves and nineteen Elf Bugs—wealth beyond madness for a Baron, and even for a Viscount it was a substantial fortune. Yet Liszt was not satisfied; his life goal was not to be just a minor Viscount, so he needed to accumulate Elves continuously.

"Approach the ennoblement ceremony with utmost fervor, enhance my noble prestige... I was planning to keep it low-key, but it seems I must make a grand gesture now."

His grand gesture was to lead a lavish entourage the next day en route to Tulip Castle.

The Landwalker bird Loki was his mount; Mithril Armor, a Sky-Cleaving Greatsword, a Swift Shadow Bow, paired with a bright red cloak embroidered with Black Tulips; the Blizzard Beast Dousen leading the Eight Tiny Ones who were taught a lesson and returned to their trembling days, followed closely behind; on the back of the Li Dragon Horse was his Personal Guard, Black Dragon Childe Paris.

Following them were ten Earth Knights from Fresh Flower Town, along with a host of Retainer Knights and officials waiting to witness his ennoblement.

It was as if he had brought out his entire following—only stopping short of placing Jela and Nami on his shoulders, and choosing nineteen servants to carry the Elf Bugs.

Such an ostentatious entrance, galloping all the way to Tulip Castle, drew countless gazes.

Having made a deliberate detour through Coral City, he had drawn countless citizens to the streets, sparking widespread discussion, "That's the Earl's most outstanding son, the new Viscount!"

"Magical Beasts, so many Magical Beasts! The Magical Beast dog that glanced at me just now scared me so much that I nearly wet my pants—it had such a terrifying gaze!"

"The one riding on the giant bird, that's the Viscount, with a noble aura as admirable as the Earl's, invoking respect from within one's heart."

"The Tulip Family's lineage is so noble, their glory unceasing."

The commoners' envy and admiration went unheard by Liszt as he roared away from Coral City and sped toward Tulip Castle. Escorted by the guard knights, he headed straight to the gates of the castle. Nobles who had come to attend the ennoblement ceremony walked out of Tulip Castle one after another to welcome Liszt's arrival.

"Viscount Liszt, congratulations, tonight will be your solo show," said Trick Weed as he came forward.

"Glory belongs to all the knights who will be ennobled tonight," Liszt responded with a smile.

Besides him, there were several other Honored Knights receiving their titles tonight, all veteran Earth Knights who had accumulated military exploits over several battles, earning their noble titles.

For these knights of common birth, today marked a day of transformation, the moment of glory they had long dreamed of.

The ten Earth Knights from Fresh Flower Town had not been ennobled, for they had not yet accumulated enough military merits, nor did they possess Liszt's talents and background.

"Viscount, Aubrey sends his regards," said the once jovial fat man who had been on friendly terms with Liszt. Now, he dared not speak to Liszt as an equal, standing respectfully beside his father and bowing deeply in greeting.

Liszt was inwardly moved, but even more so, he was proud.

Yet, his face remained as warm as a spring breeze, with the standard noble smile, "Aubrey, you've gained a lot more weight. Visit me in Fresh Flower Town or Black Horse Island when you're free."

"As long as you're not busy, I always look forward to visiting Black Horse Island."

Jonas Shattered Stone and his son also came to greet him, but their approach was not very warm—the Iron Hoof Island campaign had resulted in losses for Jonas that did not balance out with his gains, causing him silent distress.

No sooner had the greetings been exchanged than Levis appeared, wrapping an arm around Liszt and proclaiming loudly, "Liszt, welcome the true master of Tulip Castle for tonight's festivities!"

The remark was mostly polite, but it was also tinged with genuine pride for Levis.

After the pleasantries.

He swiftly changed the subject, "Liszt, is this your Blizzard Beast?"

"Yes, they've grown up, and I took this opportunity to bring them out, to prepare them for future battle training," Liszt snapped his fingers, and Dousen immediately led the eight tiny ones to gather around him, "I'm planning to form a Blizzard Beast siege team."

"I have regrets," said Levis in a tone of envy and complaint, "I really should have snatched a few Blizzard Beasts back then. Dousen is too eye-catching on the battlefield! By the way, has that Female Tyrant Earth Hound gotten pregnant again? Don't forget, you promised me half of the next litter from the Fierce Earth Dogs!"

"I said I would share a few with you, but not half. Of course, as long as they can keep reproducing, I'd be more than happy to share them with the family... However, it's somewhat regrettable that the Female Tyrant Earth Hound has not become pregnant," Liszt expressed his disappointment genuinely.

Reproductive isolation had broken his dream of building an army of Blizzard Beasts.

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## Chapter 413: Chapter 0410: Viscount Black Horse Island (Third Update, 1800 Monthly Votes Additional)

"I vow to serve you unto death, my lord!"

In the Tulip Hall, where the knighthood ceremony had already begun, impassioned, exhilarating, trembling roars echoed.



Five Earth Knights who had accumulated enough military merits held the medals symbolizing the rank of Honored Knights, tears brimming hotly in their eyes. Generations of effort had finally borne fruit in their time, a glory bestowed upon them, a pride like no other.

It brought to mind the days of old.

The ancestors of the Tulip Family, too, came from common stock, and even earlier forebears might have been serfs unknown to any nation. The great-great-grandfather, endowed with divine strength, returned alive from the battlefield and was made an Honored Knight, his title hereditary and indisputable. From there, step by step, the family grew and expanded to become the present day Earl family.

Being an Honored Knight was a new starting point for noble evolution. Although the road ahead was not without challenges, and they could fall in battle at any time, they now had a clear path—to continue their father's cause, to pioneer and enterprising.

The five new Honored Knights solemnly performed the standard knight's oath of allegiance to the Earl, who sat in the place of honor.

The Earl serenely accepted their fealty.

Then,

The knighthood ceremony quickly moved into its true climax. The Earl's Retainer Knights, holding the Metal Civilization Staff symbolizing power and the Viscount Medal symbolizing glory, stepped into the hall and stood to the side. Another Retainer Knight held Li Weiliam's sword.

The Earl stood up from his seat.

Taking two steps forward, he spoke in a deep voice, "My son, and my follower, Liszt Tulip. I shall repay courage with honor, loyalty with love, and betrayal with vengeance. Let the knight's glory be witness!"

Liszt stepped forward, knelt with both knees on the ground following the customary procedure, straightened his body, and calmly looked at the Earl, devoid of any joy or sorrow.

The Retainer Knight holding the sword gave it to the Earl, who took it smoothly.

Laying the blade of the longsword on Liszt's left shoulder, he declared solemnly, "In light of your performance on the battlefield, your fearless charge and disregard for life and death, you have achieved magnificent glory and brought considerable military achievements to Coral Island..."

The blade lifted, shifting to the right shoulder, "Now, I, as Coral Island's Earl, name you my Viscount, the Lord of Black Horse Island, with all authority over Black Horse Island, to foster knights and ride for me!"

The sword was passed back to the Retainer Knight, and the Earl picked up the Metal Civilization Staff that symbolized power, and solemnly handed it to Liszt.

Liszt took the staff with both hands and planted it firmly on the ground.

Clang.

The metal struck the floor, emitting a dull sound.

Using the staff to support himself, he stood up and bowed, performing the knight's oath of allegiance, "I shall manage Black Horse Island, foster knights, and ride for my lord."

Li Weiliam nodded slightly, picking up another medal shaped like a shield.

About the size of an infant's palm, it was a brass medal with a muted yellow-brass color. The front was engraved with patterns and designs that symbolized the Viscount, resembling a Tulip upon closer inspection. The back was inscribed with "Black Horse Island" in three compact Serpent Scripts. The craftsmanship was far from exquisite, rather rough to the eye.

But it was the noble proof of noble status.

"From now on, you shall walk the earth as a Viscount. Commoners seeing you shall perform a kneeling salute, your peers shall address you by your title. And I, your Lord Li Weiliam Tulip, shall affectionately call you by your name...Liszt Tulip!" The Earl placed the Viscount Medal on the front of his chest.

At once,

The nobles gathered in the hall cried out in unison, "Viscount Liszt!"

Followed by the knights without titles, who bowed reverently and called out, "Viscount, my Lord!"

Adorned with the Viscount Medal and holding the Metal Civilization Staff, Liszt turned around. Scanning the room with an air of confidence, he affirmed that he had become the fourth Viscount on Coral Island and the third to receive a titled fief. Thus, the brief yet thrilling ceremony concluded, the due honor had been received.

Next came the celebration banquet.

"Liszt, I am proud of you," the Earl approached him, raising his glass, "I hope that in the times to come, you manage Black Horse Island well, achieve greater glory, and make the Tulip Family known throughout the world because of your name."

"Father, I will constantly remind myself, to tirelessly strive for glory."

Levis also approached with a glass in hand, "I hope we brothers continue to fight side by side, striving together for the glory of the Tulip Family."

"Of course!"

Following that, his advisor Goltai, came over beaming with joy, lifting his glass high, "To my lord, the glory of the Tulip Family, the ruler of Black Horse Island, Liszt, I offer the most loyal respects!"

Marcus and the others hurried over, toasting to Liszt.

Drinking heartily from the Fresh Flower Brew, tonight Liszt decided to open his arms wide, turning away no one, "I stand with all of you!"

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"I am proud of you, my boy," Lady Penelope embraced him and offered her grandmotherly blessing as Liszt prepared to depart at dawn.

"Thank you, grandmother."

Li Vera also gave him a hug, "Well done, my dear brother, you always bring us surprises."

Lady Marie and Lidun also came to bid farewell, at least outwardly very enthusiastic, and he responded with a warm smile.

Then, he listened to his instructions in the Earl's satisfied smile, "When the envoy from the Court comes to measure Black Horse Island, I will have Advisor Jacob accompany him. This is your land, from now on, manage it well. If there are difficulties, ask the family for help."

"I will, father."

"Get Black Horse Island in good order soon, and your castle too. I'd like to have a room there."

"Grandmother, you, Lady Marie, Levis, Li Vera, Lidun, will all have a room in my castle, and are always welcome to visit Black Horse Island."

The Earl patted Liszt's shoulder, looking up at his son who was even taller than himself, his smile clear, "Go on then, I know you're eager for the matters of Black Horse Island."

Liszt nodded, mounted the landwalker bird Loki, and prepared to set off.

Just then Lady Penelope called out, "Oh, lad, wait a moment, I have one more potted plant to give to you. A young knight favored by knightly honor, it might bring you good luck." As she spoke, her personal maid struggled to bring over a potted plant nearly half a person tall.

On the tree hung several purple-red, oval-shaped fruits.

Liszt was rather helpless about his grandmother's habit of gifting potted plants, as not every potted plant could nurture an Elf Bug.

Nevertheless, he smiled and had the retainer knights move the potted plant onto the carriage.

Then the procession set off, truly walking the land of Coral Island with the stature of Viscount Black Horse Island. Now in the entire Coral City, there was no one who did not know the new Viscount had been granted his title, Liszt's name was no longer passed around as the second son of the Tulip Family, but as Viscount Black Horse Island.

The landwalker bird was very steady beneath him; he could summon the Smoke Mission at will.

The smoke curled up, forming a long section of Serpent Script. At first glance, it seemed as if the mission was not yet complete, but upon closer inspection, Liszt found that the mission had indeed been completed.

It was just that the rewards were astoundingly generous.

"Mission completed, reward one Fig Elf Bug, Smoked Grass Elf Bug, Green Tea Tree Elf Bug, Pea Elf Bug, Blackberry Elf Bug each."

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**Chapter 414: Chapter 0411: The Knight's  
Glorious Favor (Fourth update, additional  
chapter for 2000 monthly votes)**

"Five Elf Bugs?"

Liszt almost exclaimed in surprise. He had already been astonished when he was rewarded with three Rubber Bugs and four Serpent Blood Fruit Sprite Bugs. Yet, unexpectedly, now he was being rewarded with five Elf Bugs at once—and crucially, each of the five Elf Bugs was different.

"Just the day before yesterday, I was complaining that I hadn't found a single Elf Bug for over a month, and now here comes such a concentrated surprise!"

"The Smoked Grass Elf Bug will definitely be in the Smoked Grass Field, easy to find; the Green Tea Tree Minor Elf must be from one of those three Green Tea Trees; the Fig Elf Bug... Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island don't seem to have any figs, right, didn't grandmother just give me a potted plant that looks like figs?"

He quickly made his way near the carriage and instructed the Retainer Knight, "Open the carriage door, let me have a look at the potted plant."

Once the carriage door was opened, within the vision of the Eye of Magic, the potted plant indeed showed a magical response, and on one of the purple-red fruits, there were evident signs of red Magic Power converging.

"Take good care of this potted plant, don't damage a single leaf!"

"Yes, my lord."

His gaze left the fig potted plant, and Liszt suddenly didn't know how to describe his feelings—he had just been complaining that his grandmother always loved to give away potted plants, which seemed meaningless.

But this turned out to be the second potted plant she had given away that contained an Elf Bug.

"It seems I should often stroll through grandmother's balcony to see if a third Elf Bug will pop up." His mood was very cheerful; he had just been ennobled, and here were five Elf Bugs as a celebration, "With this, the whereabouts of the Fig Bug, Smoked Grass Bug, and Green Tea Bug are confirmed, leaving only the Blackberry Bug and the Pea Bug unaccounted for."

Blackberries are a very common wild shrub on Coral Island and are also a wild fruit often eaten by commoners, similar to raspberries and mulberries, with a taste both sour and sweet. Perhaps it is due to the abundance of wild blackberries that no commoners choose to cultivate them.

However, Mrs. Abbie does make a dish called blackberry pancakes, which is just pancakes sprinkled with a layer of blackberries.

The taste is... passable.

"Both Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island have an abundance of wild blackberries. If no one provides clues, it won't be easy to find the Blackberry Bug." Liszt frowned slightly, then started thinking about the other Pea Bug.

Peas are a common food for commoners.

Every commoner's household grows peas in their yard, and ripe peas can be ground into flour and mixed with wheat flour to make dark grain bread—the staple food for commoners. Tender peas can be eaten as a vegetable side dish along with bread—Liszt quite liked peas.

Especially stir-fried green peas.

It was just like the "American peas" he often ate before he crossed over, with a great taste.

"Nearly every commoner's house grows peas, but there are no large-scale pea fields. I wonder which family's peas will give birth to the Pea Bug. I hope that family is smart enough to notice the anomaly of the Pea Cordyceps early on and report it to the administration—hopefully, they won't damage my Pea Bug."

The policy in the domain is that there are high rewards for discovering Magic Potions, Elf Bugs, devising new technologies, etc.

It encourages the townspeople to explore the new world.

Yet, the number who actually receive this reward is not many. Nevertheless, this award is still enthusiastically endorsed by the townspeople, with everyone hoping to become that lucky person.

So.

Liszt wasn't worried about his Elf Bugs; what was meant to come would always come. He admired the scenery along the road, which seemed exceptionally beautiful today no matter how he looked at it.

Perhaps only the poetry of Meng Jiao could describe his current mood—"The spring wind puffs my cloak as I ride proudly, and in one day I have seen all the flowers of Chang'an."

He couldn't help but run his hand over the Viscount Medal hanging on his chest before taking it off. The time for ostentation had passed, and now it was better to be more composed. There was no need to continue wearing such a redundant decoration like the Viscount Medal.

"Made of brass, I wonder how many copper coins it could be turned into,"

Liszt thought.

The material of the medals was different according to the ranking of nobility. It was said that when the King conferred the title of Duke, the medal awarded was made from Magic Metal Fine Gold; Marquis medals were crafted from gold, Earl medals from silver, Viscount medals from brass, and Baron medals from Fine Steel.

As for the Honored Knight medals, they were made from refined iron.

These medals were only used once during the investiture ceremony or worn at high-level banquets. They were seldom taken out on ordinary days and not used as tokens of identity.

In Liszt's castle, there was also a Fine Steel Fresh Flower Town Baron Medal that he had never worn.

He handed the medal over to a Retainer Knight for safekeeping.

Liszt continued to review the Smoke Mission, and a new mission had been posted.

"Mission: As the new Viscount Lord with an independent island as your fiefdom, what you need next is a castle befitting your status that has a name. Please choose a suitable construction site for the castle. Reward: Advanced Dou Qi Manual."

When he first saw the reward for the mission, his eyes immediately blazed with excitement, feeling wrapped in knightly glory. But after cooling down and thinking, he couldn't help but laugh at himself.

He understood where this mission reward came from—in the battle of Iron Hoof Island, when looting spoils of war, he found the Advanced Dou Qi Manual "Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash" in Celery Fort. Accordingly, he asked the Earl to use this manual in a trade, exchanging it for an Advanced Manual suitable for Fire Attribute Dou Qi.

The Earl would naturally not refuse a request from his son, and besides, the family indeed had no Knights capable of Thunder Attribute Dou Qi.

"Although I know that Smoke Missions don't fabricate rewards out of thin air, still... this kind of reward, which I could have obtained without the mission, is indeed a bit awkward."

Like the cultivation of Elf Bugs, he very much needed the hints from the Smoke Mission to stir the strings of fate.

In the current situation, there was absolutely no need for the Smoke Mission to interfere—but since the Smoke Mission had intervened, Liszt found it rather helpless.

He now had two choices: wait for the Advanced Dou Qi Manual to arrive in his hands, which would change the mission and trigger the release of a new one, or complete the current mission.

"The mission just asks me to choose an appropriate site for building the castle, not to start the construction now, so it's not difficult." Since there was no difficulty, he naturally chose to complete it, to doubly ensure the appropriateness of the Advanced Dou Qi Manual for his use.

For he had gradually come to feel that his progress in potion-taking was going smoothly, his strength improving rapidly, far surpassing his brother Levis.

He had compared the total amount of Dou Qi between himself and Levis and discovered his own Dou Qi had clearly surpassed that of Levis.

Levis had been taking potions for several years, whereas Liszt had not yet reached one year.

"In one year of potion-taking, I've already surpassed Levis. I fear that in another year or two, I could really advance to Sky Knight before the age of twenty! Scientific potion-taking, it really works... Plus, I have Dragon Breed Milk for added nutrients, Green Tea to aid digestions of food, a constant supply of Magical Beast Meat, and I haven't even finished the meat of the Six-Headed King Serpent."

It could be said that, relying on his own gains, his potion-taking methods were now no less than those of large Noble scions.

"Right, I also have Dragon Hollyhock, an Auxiliary Magic Medicine. I wonder if it will enhance my potion-taking."

Lost in thought,

he had already returned to Fresh Flower Town.

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## Chapter 415: Chapter 0412: Contemplating the Uses of Smoked Grass (Fifth update,



# 170,000 recommendation tickets bonus chapter)

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Having returned to Fresh Flower Town, Liszt was ceaselessly busy. First, he settled the Fig Cordyceps in the castle's garden and instructed the servants on fertilizing and watering.

Then, at the luncheon, he gathered all the town's officials and announced a census, "Inspect all the crops in the territory. Over the past month, not a single Elf Bug has been bred; there might be oversights."

The census was merely a ruse designed to disguise the fact that he had prior knowledge of the Elf Bugs' existence.

In the afternoon, he naturally joined the census procession and patrolled Fresh Flower Town. Of course, his inspection was selective, and he quickly arrived at the Smoked Grass Field. He unleashed the Eye of Magic and began searching for the Cordyceps. Before long, in the corner of a farm, he spotted the Cordyceps.

To be precise, he also spotted an Elf Bug.

Though the Cordyceps was not very conspicuous because of its thriving branches and leaves, a plump grey Elf Bug crawled on it: "It has already been bred. It seems it happened while I was away... Perhaps the farm was fertilized more, greatly enhancing the breeding probability of Fresh Flower Town's Elf Bugs."

For a normal town, it would be a noteworthy harvest to breed one Elf Bug in a year.

The existence of the Smoke Mission greatly increased the survival rate of Elf Bugs in Fresh Flower Town, almost eliminating miscarriages.

As for why a plant can breed an Elf Bug, there are not enough data to analyze and make a judgment—it might be related to nutrients. However, the most nutrient-rich plants do not necessarily breed Elf Bugs, and even poorly nourished plants may produce them.

"My four Serpent Blood Fruit Bugs were bred from the blood of sea serpent monsters; that is probably a clue... Alas, I still don't understand what conditions trigger the breeding of Elf Bugs... Magic radiation? Nutrient stimulation? Or genetic mutation?"

His thoughts flashed by.

He had already taken out the Jade Powder and sprinkled it on the leaves of the Smoked Grass Cordyceps, attracting the Smoked Grass Bug. Watching the Smoked Grass Bug eagerly lick the Jade Powder, he extended his finger coated with Jade Powder directly towards it. Then, it bit him with a snap—not very painful and without bleeding.

The next moment, a contract of heartfelt communion was established, and he could already feel the little creature's vague emotions.

It was happy from eating the Jade Powder.

"Package it." Liszt took the Smoked Grass Bug and handed it to the Retainer Knight to be put in a Jade Box, "Rom, take good care of this Smoked Grass Cordyceps."

"Yes, my lord!" Rom responded excitedly, "Fresh Flower Town is truly a place favored by knightly glory; my lord is naturally favored by knightly glory!"

Liszt had almost grown calluses in his ears from listening to talk of knightly glory. However, he found that it always felt pleasant to hear and never grew tired of it.

He had contracted the Smoked Grass Bug.

The Blackberry Bug and Pea Bug would have to wait; the possible distribution of Cordyceps was too wide to search effectively, so he could only wait patiently for reports from the common people.

He planned to set sail for Black Horse Island tomorrow, complete the Smoke Mission, and incidentally contract the Green Tea Bug.

He hadn't left the Smoked Grass Field yet.

Hearing of the new Elf Bug contract, Goltai hurried over and started lavishing excessive flattery.

Liszt did not get lost in the flattery and remained clear-headed. He casually asked, "Consultant Goltai, how is the Smoked Grass processed in town?"

"It's mainly sun-dried, piled up in open spaces, and wrapped with straw. Normally, it doesn't have many uses."

The Smoked Grass had an extraordinarily foul smell, and it might be effective in driving away Magical Beasts and wild animals. Now that Fresh Flower Town had leveled Thorn Ridge, not to mention Magical Beasts, not even a few wild cats could be seen, making the Smoked Grass practically useless. The harvested dry grass was piled up in open spaces and left to rot.

But.

Even if the Smoked Grass was indeed useless, Liszt would not have it cut down—because it was the only thing capable of attracting the Formless Dragon.

...

Rational analysis concluded that the probability of the Formless Dragon returning to Fresh Flower Town was very small, yet in his heart, he still hoped that one day, the Formless Dragon would remember the scent of Smoked Grass and come back.

At that time...

"The value of Smoked Grass still exists, cultivation must not slacken, and now with the Smoked Grass Bug, maintain an area of one hundred acres. Also, assign people to research the uses of Smoked Grass, don't ignore it just because it smells bad," Liszt pondered for a moment before adding, "I'll provide a train of thought."

"Please command, my lord."

"If Smoked Grass can drive away Magical Beasts, have you considered diluting and weakening its scent so that people can't smell it, yet it maintains the effect of repelling mosquitoes and bugs?" He thought of a plant on Earth—mugwort.

Mugwort was traditionally hung by the door during the Dragon Boat Festival.

Ordinarily, many people used dried mugwort to repel mosquitoes, ground it into powder for filling pillows and sachets, and even the moxa used in acupuncture was made from mugwort.

This world probably didn't have mugwort, so Liszt wondered if Smoked Grass might have a similar effect: "You could start your research from this aspect... In any case, you must think for yourselves and consider the potential of these plants."

Goltai bootlicked, "My lord, you always have genius ideas! I will arrange for the serfs to research whether Smoked Grass can be used for mosquito repellent as soon as possible."

Liszt provided a train of thought, and Goltai could only think of this one idea, without any intention to actually use his own brain.

Having never experienced the baptism of the industrial revolution, human thinking was confined to the established rules and frameworks, which Liszt found quite helpless.

...

The Fire Dragon Horse was about to give birth.

One-Eyed Barton, who had already lost a leg, was very anxious. He left his sickbed, leaning on a crutch, to personally attend to the birthing of the Fire Dragon Horse.

After inspecting Fresh Flower Town for a round, Liszt visited his old friend—the Fire Dragon Horse—in the evening. For his predecessor, the horse held profound feelings; it was his birthday gift, the vessel of his knighthood dreams, and even carried the complex emotions akin to those between a father and son.

Liszt, the transmigrator, was also very fond of this gentle mare.

However, ever since taming the Li Dragon Horse, the Fire Dragon Horse made fewer and fewer appearances, gradually becoming merely a breeding tool. Stroking its fiery red mane, Liszt couldn't help but whisper softly, "After you give birth, I will ride you again."

The Fire Dragon Horse seemed to understand his words, rubbing its head gently against Liszt's arm with a soft snort.

After a moment of affection with the Fire Dragon Horse.

Liszt looked towards One-Eyed Barton with the crutch: "Barton, how is your leg injury?"

"Thank you for your concern, master. Although Barton's leg is crippled, my body has pulled through. I hope the master won't despise me; Barton can still raise horses and drive for the master."

"Of course, you can continue to raise horses for me. After some time, I will build a castle on Black Horse Island. Then, you will have even more horses to rear, and it might be very hard work."

"I don't fear hard work, master. Please rest assured, Barton will surely raise the castle's horses strong and healthy!" One-Eyed Barton said excitedly.

For him, staying to work in the castle was the best possible outcome.

Everyone envied working at the castle—of course, it would be better if that group of Blizzard Beasts stayed away. Thinking of those crazy big dogs, Barton felt a throbbing pain in his calf, the spot where it was pierced by a Rock Spike released by a frenzied Blizzard Beast.

"Take good care of your injury. Leave the heavy and tiring work to the five male servants being trained in horse rearing." Whether driven by a sense of compensation or valuing Barton's talent in horse rearing, Liszt was going to continue employing One-Eyed Barton.

He was someone who valued loyalty; as long as the servants did not make mistakes, he had no intention of dismissing anyone.

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## Chapter 416: Chapter 0413: Nami's Apple (First Update)

Having entrusted the production of the Fire Dragon Horses to One-Eyed Barton, Liszt returned to the castle.

Before dinner, he squeezed in some time to play the piano again. The impulse of a Piano King had probably faded, but he still enjoyed playing the piano very much.

Listening to the music, he purified his soul.

At the banquet, his followers got wildly drunk to celebrate his successful ennoblement of Black Horse Island.

"I really wish I could be carefree like them..." Liszt envied them, who could eat and drink without worrying about the future.

He felt somewhat depressed because before the meal began, the Finance Officer Blair reported to him, "My lord, the 4,260 Gold Coins you requested to be raised, considering Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island's finances, even moving all the business funds and tax revenues, we've only managed to gather 1,350 Gold Coins."

"How long would we have to mortgage the future earnings of Fresh Flower Brew to extract enough Gold Coins from Tulip Castle?"

"I've calculated it, considering the current production scale and market sales of Fresh Flower Brew, which have only partially spread to Coral Island and Red Crab Island, while still in negotiation with Golden Island, the monthly profits are around 600 Gold Coins... It would take about six months of mortgaging to withdraw enough Gold Coins."

"Then let's mortgage it."

"But my lord, if we mortgage the future income of Fresh Flower Brew, the territory's construction will immediately fall into difficulty in this half year... We don't have sufficient funds to support the construction of Black Horse Island, and relying solely on the income from Fresh Flower Soap, the carpentry workshop, and Black Tulip, we cannot sustain it," Blair said helplessly.

Fresh Flower Town was simply too thinly capitalized, and Liszt's eagerness for rapid development meant that the capital chain was always on the brink of collapse.

"Don't worry, let's first mortgage the income from Fresh Flower Brew. I'll figure out a way for the remaining Gold Coins," Liszt reassured him, but his heart bled. He knew that he had to sell off personal assets again.

So.

While his followers drank merrily, he couldn't bring himself to join in—he didn't want to and didn't like drinking.

Holding a glass of iced juice, he sipped it slowly, his thoughts occupied with how to make money: "Fresh Flower Town is so rich in resources, with a bunch of Elves enhancing production, but... it still can't keep up with my consumption. The most profitable Magic Potion is just enough for my own use... It's difficult to support an Elite Earth Knight addicted to Magic Potions."

In this world, as long as one was well-fed and not of too poor aptitude, one could generally train to become an Earth Knight.

But an Elite Earth Knight who insisted on daily use of Magic Potions was not something everyone could afford.

Black Horse Island was not yet developed, so Liszt's revenue all came from Fresh Flower Town. It was only with the help of the Smoke Mission and the development of products like Fresh Flower Brew and Fresh Flower Soap that a small town could support his continuous Magic Potion consumption.

Gold Coins were the greatest obstacle to a Knight's progress.

"Maybe sell the rubber. Black Horse Island hasn't been fully developed, and doesn't use much rubber. Such a fine product, Tulip Castle should need it, and it could fetch a good price." Following Magic Potions and ironwood, the most important agricultural output of the territory was the versatile rubber.

Certainly, the milk of the Dragon Breed Cows was also an important output, but it was not suitable for publicity and best used for internal supply.

In fact, he could also sell the stored Mithril, Jade and Crystal, but these were consumable resources, easy to sell but hard to acquire, and he was reluctant to sell them again.

"That settles it, sell the rubber."

...

After the banquet.

He made a trip to the Sea View Villa. These past few days, Ach had hardly gone swimming, instead, he was earnestly reviewing notes and studying magic, almost immersed in it.

It made Liszt feel a hint of neglect.

"Brother, Ach feels close, very soon I'll be able to grasp the key information and make a breakthrough to become a Grand Magician! To help Brother navigate the seas!"  
Thankfully, she was just too engrossed in her magic studies and not really neglecting Liszt.

"Hard work is a given, but don't stay up too late. Relaxing more can make your brain clearer and more effective than burying yourself in magic books all day,"

"Mhm, Ach understands,"

Even so, her eyes still couldn't leave the magic books.

Liszt didn't disturb her any further and began to play with Nami. The mangrove minor elf hadn't fed the ducklings on Mangrove Island today but had followed Ach to stay at the Sea View Villa.

"Chirp,"

Nami was sitting on the table with an apple she had bitten into in her hands, a gift from Liszt, and she liked eating apples very much.

"Nami, do you like the mangrove forest?"

"Chirp, chirp," Nami took another bite of her apple, then blinked her large eyes at Liszt, who couldn't tell if she understood his words.

"Based on the living habits of the mangrove forest, I plan to plant mangrove forests by the seaside in Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island to create a habitat for green caterpillars and green-headed ducks." He was ostensibly talking to Nami, but he was actually pondering to himself, "Green caterpillars cannot be bred in ordinary forests."

Green-headed ducks might be kept in cages, but to breed them properly, they can't do without green caterpillars.

The green caterpillars of Mangrove Island definitely couldn't support the large-scale breeding of green-headed ducks.

"Chirp."

Nami glanced at Liszt, then looked down at the large apple in her hands, and then, somewhat reluctantly, offered the big apple to Liszt, "Chirp."

"Haha, I won't eat it, you eat," Liszt pushed the apple back, then stroked the small green leaf and little red flower on Nami's head.

The emerald Nami was exceptionally pleasing to the eye.

Originally, her main use apart from looking good was that the mangrove could produce a kind of fruit that tasted faintly sour and sweet, not particularly delicious, and its use was unclear. However, as the food chain relationship between the green caterpillars and green-headed ducks was established, the use of the mangrove forest began to emerge.

The mangrove forest couldn't do without Nami's mangrove cordyceps, not to mention Nami also reared ducklings.

After playing for a while,

Liszt left the Sea View Villa.

...

The next morning, he took the Fresh Flower Vessel to Black Horse Island, which now basically traveled back and forth between Black Horse Island and Fresh Flower Town every day.

Captain Kostor was both transporting goods and using the voyages to train his crew.

Once Black Horse Island entered a rapid development phase, Liszt would have to assemble a flotilla to serve his own territory.

"Teacher Marcus, Isaiah, what do you think of this land for building a castle? I hope to build a waterfront castle, half submerged in the water and half standing by the shore," standing on the rocky shore to the east of the port town, Liszt asked his followers for their opinions.

"The castle is closely linked with the city, my lord. Have you decided to build the port town into a port city?"

"The size of Black Horse Island is too small; a port city is very necessary. Other than the current Black Horse Port, there is only one more harbor suitable for construction in the northwest," Liszt said, "In terms of shipping routes and distance, building a city at the port town is most suitable."

"Then I have no objections to the castle being built in this current location... However, my lord, perhaps we could build the castle entirely on shore to prevent attacks from marine creatures."

"No!" Liszt said emphatically, "I love a seaside castle!"



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## Chapter 417 Chapter 0414 Brad's Work Dilemma (Part Two)

Liszt planned to build a modern castle.

With rubber and ironwood, many plans could be realized—of course, there was no money to build a castle now, and he would have to live in a cash-strapped situation for a few days.

This did not hinder him from planning the location of the castle's construction, as well as its footprint, floor height, and other requirements.

An attached castle was generally the tallest building in a city. Fresh Flower Town's Nameless Castle only had two floors; most unnamed castles stood between two and three floors in height.

Named castles were mostly four floors high, and many viscounts and earls would build four-story castles. Beyond the four-story main body, there might be an even taller spire for vigilance and defense. Tulip Castle was a four-story castle, but it looked particularly majestic as it was built according to the mountain terrain.

Nobles generally chose steep and rugged terrains for their castles, easy to defend and hard to attack.

The most magnificent castle Liszt had ever seen was Long Taro Castle, which seemed to merge with the mountain range, a miracle of rock masonry five stories high.

"In the future, this Rocky Beach will be the site for the castle's construction; to the east and north, the castle's ancillary buildings will be constructed in succession; to the south, a stone road connecting to the port city will be built. And the planning of the port city, I hope, can be between that of a large city and a small one," he said.

By the way, Liszt also outlined his thoughts for his new city.

Typically, a landlord's city construction would develop organically, gradually accumulating population and slowly expanding in size. This led to cities appearing chaotic and filthy, with sewage and excrement flowing everywhere. Liszt did not wish his city to become another so-called excrement city.

Sewers, toilets, and septic tanks were essential facilities he required for building a new city and town.

Separating the commercial district, workshop area, and residential zone was another principle he advocated for city planning, as only such a city could be called the light of civilization.

...

Nighttime.

Liszt called forth the Smoke Mission, "The location for the new castle has now been decided, this place is definitely the right one."

Fate's threads moved, smoke twisted into trails like little snakes, forming a message in Serpent Script, "Complete the mission, reward: Advanced Dou Qi Manual 'Rising Sun Blaze'."

The Advanced Dou Qi Manual had arrived; it was probably being stored at Tulip Castle now.

He immediately turned his attention to the new mission.

"Mission: Crystal craftsman Brad is unemployed, and all the volcanic glass stocked in the town has been carved into vessels, leaving his crystal workshop completely idle. As a landlord, it is your responsibility to solve his employment issue. Reward: Mutated Variety Corn Grass."

"Mutated Variety Corn Grass?"

Corn Grass was currently being cultivated as fodder on a large scale, covering an area of 300 acres. Frequently harvested, it provided nutrition for the Black Blood Treasure Horses and Dragon Breed Cows.

Liszt thought to himself, "Could the mutated variety of Corn Grass develop towards a magic potion? Or toward... corn?"

Corn Grass is not corn.

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According to Earth's taxonomic classification, corn was domesticated from wild Corn Grass millennia ago by humans, and only in modern times has it turned into the grain corn with the big ears. This suggests that there is some connection between Corn Grass and corn ears, and in this world full of magic power, it is not impossible for Corn Grass to mutate into corn.

Compared to the fodder attribute of Corn Grass, the grain attribute of the corn ear is the real divine artifact.

"I remember not only that corn is a high yield crop but compared to other grains, it is the simplest to grow..." Liszt recalled some of the videos about Africa he had seen.

Africans love to grow corn because it can be directly sown into the fields without weeding or fertilizing, waiting until the harvest season when the wild grass withers.

They then find that the corn has managed to produce ears!

Corn could be processed into cornmeal, from which they made their staple food "xi ma" — similar to corn pudding, which could be eaten by pinching it with one's fingers.

"If only we could really mutate corn. Black Horse Island is huge, and I don't have enough serfs to cultivate it. But with corn, all you need to do is plant it and then leave it be. Come harvest time, the yield might not be high, but it'll be better than other crops that can be taken over by weeds and end up with no grains at all."

This was a wonderful expectation.

In order to obtain the possible corn cobs, Liszt decided to seriously solve the issue with Brad's employment.

Brad was a crystal craftsman, making a living by carving crystal items. He had a good income in Coral City, belonging to the wealthy class among the commoners. However, due to the secrecy of the telescopes, he was sent by the Earl to Fresh Flower Town, becoming one of Liszt's subjects and settling there.

Now there was no need to make telescopes, nor volcanic glass vessels, so he was idle all day long.

"I had originally planned to have Brad make glass in the future, but it seems glass won't be figured out anytime soon... Even if it is, glass seems to be very brittle and difficult to carve; it appears that glass is 'blown' into shape," Liszt recalled from his memories of glassmaking.

The red-hot glass, after being blown and inflated, then hand-molded, forms glass goods like wine glasses, tea cups, jars, etc. Moreover, there seems to be another method of flattening, pressing molten glass into flat pieces to be used as windowpanes.

Unfortunately, neither of these two manufacturing methods seems to have anything to do with Brad's profession. It's not like they could have him abandon his expert carving skills to deal with high-temperature glass solutions. As for finished glass, it doesn't require further carving.

"Should I have him learn other carving arts?" Liszt thought next.

But he quickly dismissed the idea, as the craftsman's trade is generally passed down through the generations -- a type of profession where the son follows in the father's footsteps. It would be very difficult for Brad to change to other forms of carving.

His thought processes had become rigid; it was clear when he was asked to carve volcanic glass that he was quite reluctant.

Besides, the art of crystal carving also requires constant practice to maintain proficiency.

"Why not just give him another batch of crystal to keep him busy, after all, once the castle is completed, a large number of crystal items will be needed for decoration. By the time he finishes carving this batch, it will be about time to mine new volcanic glass, keeping him busy... Those five revived Fire Dragon bones are still waiting for my rescue."

Having made a decision,

he could rest easy and sleep.

...

Early the next morning.

Riding the landwalker bird Loki, he headed to the pasture and switched to the King of Black Blood Treasure Horses — Lightning.

Actually, he no longer needed such ordinary Dragon Breed Horses as mounts, but in order to show that the Landlord and his following Knights were united, he still had to have a fine horse — even the Sapphire Duke kept a Blue Blood Treasure Horse as a mount, often charging into battle with his Knights.

Lightning was the link between Liszt and his Knights.

"Giddy up!"

Accompanied by the Retainer Knights, he dashed straight to the green tea trees on the north slope of Ice Grass Hill. The green tea was still being picked vigorously this season.

The tea leaves that had been fried could satisfy Liszt's personal drinking needs.

Using the Eye of Magic, he could easily see that the biggest green tea tree in the middle had already nurtured an Elf Bug, "Karl, this green tea tree has nurtured an Elf Bug. Protect it, and as soon as the Elf Bug is born, notify me immediately."

"The glory of a Knight favors us!"

Karl Ironhammer responded with excitement, "Please rest assured, my lord, I will protect the green tea tree cordyceps carefully and prevent the Elf Bug from any harm!"

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## Chapter 418 Chapter 0415 The Trafficker Elkerson (Third Update, 2200 Monthly Votes Additional)

Returning from Black Horse Island, good news kept coming.

First, a civilian family discovered their peas growing bigger and bigger and reported it to the authorities; Liszt later confirmed the presence of Pea Bugs within them. Then a Patrol Member found a blackberry bush with unusually large blackberries in the wild, which Liszt also confirmed as Cordyceps.

With that,

the rewards from the last Smoke Mission had been fulfilled—contract with Smoked Grass Bug had been sealed, and the identification of Cordyceps included the Fig Bug, Blackberry Bug, Pea Bug, and Green Tea Bug.

Following close on the heels of these events was news delivered by a messenger knight from Tulip Castle, "Viscount, Sir Meioubao from Red Crab Island Yam Fort visits Tulip Castle, and the Earl requests your presence to receive him."

"Cousin is here?" Liszt was surprised and then nodded to acknowledge, "Sir Meioubao visits Tulip Castle—did he mention a reason?"

"I'm not sure, Viscount."

"Alright, go rest and have a glass of juice."

"Thank you, Viscount."

By evening, Liszt had not immediately headed to Tulip Castle; he planned to go the next day. As for the reason Meioubao came by, Liszt did not speculate since he would find out tomorrow. In the evening, he still made his usual visit to see the Sea Sprite Ake who could break through to become a Water System Grand Mage at any moment.

Unfortunately, Ake was not at the Sea View Villa tonight.

Blowing the horn received no reply.

"I don't know where Ake has gone off to; never mind, let's head back." Not having seen Ake, he could only return and only upon arriving back at the Castle, did he learn that Mr. Elkeson True had come.

"Viscount, I have not been able to arrive at Fresh Flower Town in time to offer my congratulations."

"Mr. Elkerson, long time no see." Liszt gestured for Elkerson to take a seat at his leisure, "It's been several days since I returned, and I have been a bit anxious waiting for your magic books."

"I went on a trip to an outer island to connect with magicians I had known before in search of new magic and magic books. This time I've brought an entire cartload of magic books and seven new casting schemes," Elkerson said excitedly, knowing well that he could make a tidy profit once more.

Liszt's mouth twitched subtly in response.

He was now so poor he was close to having to sell his assets. The thought of spending lavishly again on magic books and casting schemes was causing him pain.

But for Ake's future, as well as for the advancements of Chris,

He decided to purchase these magic books and casting schemes regardless.

"Luckily, I still have a little private money left, enough to cover this expenditure," Liszt paid a total of sixty-two Gold Coins from the Castle's money pouch.

Where Elkerson got magic like "Waterfall" and "Permafrost," which only Grand Magicians could master, was anyone's guess.

Just these two magic books cost forty Gold Coins.

"Waterfall" was suitable for the future Water System Grand Mage Ake to practice, and "Permafrost" was suitable for Chris, who was proficient in Ice System magic.

Once the transaction was complete, Elkerson did not immediately take his leave.

Instead, he looked mysteriously around, ensuring the servants had departed before saying, "Viscount, have you ever heard of the Dragon Soul Soldier?"

"Dragon Soul Soldier?" Liszt shook his head; he had never heard of such a thing.

Mr. Elkeson explained, "Legends say dragon souls reside within their teeth, which is why Dragon Tooth Soldiers wield some of the finest divine weapons. However, they aren't considered the best weapons. Another legend speaks of extracting a dragon's soul and infusing it into a special blade to create a Dragon Soul Soldier, the ultimate weapon."

"Is there such a claim?"

"I've heard it mentioned," Mr. Elkeson said with a smile. "Viscount, I was chatting with a few magician friends on the outer islands during the Iron Hoof Island battle, so I know very little. Could you enlighten me with some details? Then I'll summarize and share some information I have with you."

On trading information, Li Si Te nodded, "What details do you wish to know?"

"The battle between the Grand Duke and the Marquis of the Bull."

It was no secret, Li Si Te remarked, "The Marquis of the Bull became a powerful Lich, shrouded in blue flame, standing two or three times taller than an average person, wielding a big sword that oozed blue fire. He was strong, fought off a group of Sky Knights, slayed several, and fled Juniper Castle."

Unfortunately, he encountered the Grand Duke riding a dragon, got slapped back, something pulled out from his chest, and was then taken away.

Mr. Elkeson realized, "So the plan was half a success."

"What plan?"

"Have you, Viscount, heard of the Goat Assembly?"

"I've heard of the Goat Assembly. The Marquis of the Bull, along with the Evil Magicians from the Assembly, executed a dragon slaying plot, but ultimately failed and fled," Li Si Te glanced at Elkeson, curious to see his expression when 'Evil Magician' was mentioned.

To his disappointment, Elkeson seemed unperturbed by the label, "The news I received indicated that the Goat Assembly collaborated with the Marquis of the Bull with the aim of creating a Dragon Soul Soldier. The Marquis needed the power of the Sapphire Dragon to transform into a Lich, while the Assembly sought to steal the Sapphire Dragon's soul."

"From your magician friends?"

"Yes, those magicians often organize exchanges, trading spellcasting materials, and such events tend to reveal some information. I was there to buy magic books and spell plans, and accidentally overheard this news, thinking it might be useful to you, Viscount."

Regardless of the veracity of this information, Li Si Te was rather appreciative of Elkeson's conduct.

"The news isn't very useful. Both the Marquis of the Bull and the Goat Assembly have been destroyed, and the Grand Duke's dragon is unharmed... However, living in the countryside does lead to outdated information. In the future, as you seek out magic books and spell plans, keep an ear out for any valuable news for me."

He then added, "I will compensate you accordingly, based on the value of the information."

"I would be pleased to serve you, Viscount." Elkeson's eyes narrowed into a happy smile; he had fallen from a magician who revered truth to a merchant solely focused on money.

"By the way, Mr. Elkeson, tell me more about the Dragon Soul Soldier."

"Honestly, I don't know much. My colleagues always act so mysteriously, telling half-truths, or adding their assumptions to the little they know... They believe the Grand Duke's dragon had its soul extracted, and the magicians from the Goat Assembly have already taken the dragon's soul to create a Dragon Soul Soldier. As for what it looks like, nobody knows."

The truth is, not just the Dragon Soul Soldier, but also the Dragon Tooth Soldier, remain unknown.

These are all just legends.

The best weapon known to actually exist, at least to Li Si Te, was a Greater Elf Warrior, a divine weapon steeped in Greater Elf blood, the Sapphire Duke's sword.

The name of that sword was the Wailing Cage Sword.

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My condition hasn't been great recently, preventing me from unleashing my full potential. For those of you feeling a book drought, you might want to check out three great completed novels: "Heavy Truck War Car at The Apocalypse," a sci-fi, Transformers-inspired rise, "Reboot High School First Year," a relaxing tale of writing anew upon returning to high school, and "The Legend of the Dragon Suit," a story of becoming a star from humble beginnings.

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# Chapter 419 Chapter 0416 Water Wave Shield under the Moonlight (First Update)

Why a Greater Elf Warrior weapon called the Wailing Cage Sword is so named remains a mystery.

But its value is absolutely enormous, after all, it requires soaking in the blood of a Greater Elf—whether the blood is from an enemy Greater Elf or an elderly one, the value is still expensive.

Beneath the weapons of Greater Elf Warrior rank are Dragon Bone Weapons, weapons made from dragon bones—Liszt highly suspects that the great sword of the Marquis of Bull that spews blue flames is a Dragon Bone Weapon. Coincidentally, the left foreleg of the Sapphire Dragon is broken off, and much of its power has been stolen by the Marquis of Bull.

The clues match.

Furhter down are Little Elf Soldier weapons, followed by Gemstone Weapons, followed by Magic Equipment—the value of Magic Equipment varies, depending on the value of the materials used to craft it. If it is made from materials of Advanced Magical Beasts or even Super Magical Beasts, its value can certainly be on par with Dragon Bone Weapons.

Above the Greater Elf Warrior weapons, the most likely weapons to exist are the Dragon Tooth Soldier weapons and Dragon Elf weapons, and now there is also the Dragon Soul Soldier weaponry informed by Elkerson.

"Perhaps in the future, even 'Elf King's Weapons' may appear and become legendary," Liszt thought to himself.

The Elf King is evolved from a Dragon Elf, and though only existing in legend, no one knows its appearance, abilities, or value. But it might become reality, as long as there's a possibility of existence, there's the possibility it could be slain, bled, and its blood used to soak weapons.

He even thought, "Using dragon teeth as the main material for the weapon, infusing it with the soul of a dragon, and then soaking it in the blood of an Elf King, could it become an ultimate, unparalleled Divine Artifact? I really hope that one day I can forge such a unique Divine Artifact, gallop across the continent on the back of a dragon, and explore this world."

In this world filled with magic power, there are countless hidden secrets waiting to be discovered.

Of course, Liszt is still very weak at present, and his range is limited to a few islands, so he must proceed step by step, very steadily.

One day, the dream will be realized.

...

Under the illumination of the Crystal Lamps, the study was bright.

Liszt flipped open the covers of magic books one by one, and if opening a hundred book covers could earn him the Bronze achievement "Cover-Sliding Maniac," he probably had become a Gold-level "Cover-Sliding Maniac."

"No."

"No."

"No..."

"Well, I didn't find any Dou Qi secret techniques in this batch of magic books, I can sleep easy now." Liszt piled the books into a stack, waiting for tomorrow to classify them into story type or research type, keep the story type, and send the research type directly to Chris and Ake, "I just wonder what they will think when they see the opened covers."

He left the study.

He had the servants prepare the bathwater, took a quick bath, and then went to the bedroom to sleep.

However, just as he fell asleep, many miles away at Black Pearl Lake, on a coral reef exposed at low tide, a huge white shell slowly swam upwards from the depths.

In the moonlight.

The white shell slowly opened, and the silhouette of a young girl slowly unfolded, propped up by the seawater within the shell, and soon she was floating above the sea surface.

With her back to the moon, she quietly hovered in midair.

A clear voice pierced the tranquility of the night at Black Pearl Lake, "Let meditation communicate with magic power, use magic power to build a bridge, the bridge extends into a pathway; at the end, surrounded and escorted by countless runes, there is magic!"

The girl slowly raised her left hand.

Her fingers spread apart, a faint blue light gathered at her fingertips, forming a shield with wrinkles the size of a bowl's mouth. The wrinkled surface slowly expanded outwards in the shape of water waves, creating a larger arc.

That faint blue light, along with the moonlight, illuminated the girl's face, revealing her to be the sprite of the sea—Sea Sprite Ake. At that moment, Ake's face was full of devotion, her gaze was especially firm and serious, and traces of sweat were seeping from her forehead, showing she was exerting great effort.

"Let the magic power boil inside the body, let the runes constrain them into a magic array, magic, is born within the magic array!"

"Ake will definitely succeed!" The sea nymph bit down on her teeth and tried hard to release the magic, "Brother is so looking forward to Ake becoming a Water System Grand Magician, Ake absolutely cannot disappoint Brother... In the name of Acherloides Truth, Water Magic, Water Wave Shield, come forth!"

Whoosh!

The seawater around the seashells trembled, splashing countless waves. Accompanied by Ake's final crisp shout, the arc-shaped water wave light in front of her abruptly expanded, bending and extending left and right, finally closing up to form an egg-shaped sphere of light, enveloping Ake within.

"Ah!"

Ake exclaimed in surprise, then unable to contain her joy: "Ake has done it, the Water Wave Shield that only a Grand Magician can master! Hehe, Ake finally overcame the cognitive barriers of a magician, completed a deep understanding of the magic array, and advanced to become a Water System Grand Magician!"

She sank into the sea from the surface like this, with the Water Wave Shield continuously surrounding her.

Without the need for much magic power to sustain it, the light shell could last continuously until the magic array that maintained it collapsed, which would likely be nearly half an hour.

Swimming swiftly, and then replacing the Water Wave Shield once along the way, she supported the Water Wave Shield and returned to the Sea View Villa.

Wanting to share the good news with Liszt, but looking at the pitch-black night sky, she suddenly thought, now it was the middle of the night: "Alas, I can't share the joy with my brother, how annoying."

...

The next morning, early on.

After Liszt walked the dog, Brad was already waiting in the castle: "Lord Landlord, do you have any orders for me?"

"I hear you've been idle recently, I just happen to have a task for you, I need a set of exquisitely carved crystal tableware, to reflect the prestige of a Viscount. I will have Mr. Carter take out the crystal tableware from the castle for your reference. You must carve this new set of tableware to perfection."

"Yes, Lord Landlord." Although he had complaints in his heart, Brad still respectfully accepted his new task in front of Liszt.

The problem that troubled Brad was thus easily resolved.

This set of crystal tableware would take him nearly a month to carve, and after a month when volcanic glass began to be mined, his work would be even busier.

Having sent Brad away, Liszt directly called out the Smoke Mission.

"Complete the mission, reward: Mutated Variety Corn Grass."

"Mutated grain variety, has it really become corn cobs?" Liszt expressed his surprise and then instructed a servant to pass the message to the Administrative Officer Isaiah in the town hall to halt the harvesting of Corn Grass.

He would go to Tulip Castle to meet with Meioubao himself upon their arrival and would personally find the corn cobs to arrange for cultivation.

To provide a new food source for the territory.

At this moment, he looked at the next Smoke Mission: "Mission: As a landlord, one only needs to manage one's own majesty well, but to achieve leapfrog development, one cannot avoid hard work, please carefully consider the positioning of Fresh Flower Town, and make an industrial transfer plan. Reward: Mutated Variety Corn Grass."

"Hmm?"

"More Mutated Variety Corn Grass?"

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# Chapter 420 Chapter 0417 Green Lush Hat (Second Update)

I wasn't sure what the new mutated variety of Corn Grass was.

On the way, Liszt had been contemplating the industrial transfer of Fresh Flower Town. Even without the prompts from the Smoke Mission, the idea of industrial relocation had crossed his mind.

The future would certainly revolve around the development of Black Horse Island.

His vision for Fresh Flower Town was clear: it was to serve as a trade hub for Coral Island and a location for cooperative industries.

He planned to relocate some industries with advanced intellectual property to Black Horse Island, within his own sovereign territory.

Once he roughly mapped out his plan,

he had arrived at Tulip Castle and soon met his cousin, Meioubao Taro. After exchanging pleasantries, he learned the reason for Meioubao's visit—his engagement to Angela Sapphire, the youngest daughter of the Grand Duke, had been set for August 17th, which also happened to be Angela's nineteenth birthday.

"Congratulations, Cousin," Liszt offered his good wishes.

Meioubao smiled, "Actually, there's not much to congratulate. After shedding singlehood, longing for the life I have now will not be easy."

"Indeed, especially since the other party is the Little Princess."

"Now that I'm engaged, your brother Levis also engaged to Marquis Roderick's daughter, it leaves only Li Vera and you... Now that you've become a Viscount, it's time to consider a Viscountess," Meioubao's matchmaking tendencies were still not subdued, even after arriving at Tulip Castle and taking such concerns to heart.

"I'm not in a hurry; time is on my side," Liszt interrupted promptly. He genuinely had no thoughts of marriage or children at present. He planned to wait until he was at least twenty-five or twenty-six before considering such matters.

"True, you are in the ascendant phase of knighthood's glory, and your future looks very bright. Do you know what Grandfather said about you three, father, and sons?"

"Oh, what did Grandfather say?"

"Grandfather said Uncle could become the new Marquis in the Grand Duchy." Meioubao glanced around, making sure no one was eavesdropping, "He said Levis could barely hold on to his achievements, but you... you might become the new glory of the Grand Duchy's younger generation if your strength can improve faster."

"I only advanced to Earth Knight after becoming an adult. Although I've now become an Elite Earth Knight, does Grandfather really think so highly of me?" Liszt felt curious.

His performance was extraordinary, but it still paled in comparison to real geniuses.

After all, those geniuses became Earth Knights before reaching adulthood.

Meioubao shrugged, "Grandfather said that he saw a strong confidence in your eyes, not the conceit common to geniuses but a calm confidence that you believe you can achieve greatness through effort. Honestly, I admit your eyes are bright, but not as bright as mine."

"Confidence and how bright someone's eyes look aren't quite the same thing, are they?"

By then Levis had come over, "Meioubao, Liszt, what are you two discussing?"

Liszt replied with a smile, "Cousin and I are comparing whose eyes are brighter, which shows who has more confidence."

"Hmm, is that so? Well, then I'm definitely in first place," Levis declared with an air of self-evidence, "Liszt can be second. As for Meioubao, after marrying the Little Princess, he's likely to live a dim and unilluminated life... Angela is not easy to deal with."

"I won't bring shame to the Long Taro Family. Just you watch; once Angela moves into Long Taro Castle, she will only be the lady of the house, and I... I will be the absolute master of Long Taro Castle."

Regarding this,

Liszt harbored doubts in his heart—he wasn't the kind to maliciously speculate about others' characters, but Angela Sapphire's reputation was truly poor.

Looking at Meioubao, who was still caught in the joy of his impending marriage to the princess, he silently prayed, "I hope Cousin Meioubao's hat doesn't turn green."

...

Meioubao had no plans to stay long in Tulip Castle, as many nobles still awaited his personal invitations; therefore, on the next day, July 25th, he left Coral Island.

"Angela is very sociable, she keeps in touch with many daughters of the great Nobles, don't worry, I will keep an eye out for you and strive to introduce you to a suitable noble lady to help you manage the castle," he said before leaving, still not forgetting to continue playing the role of matchmaker.

"Thank you."

Liszt said thanks, but inwardly he was speechless—dare he marry a noble lady introduced by Angela!

Birds of a feather flock together; Given Angela's open lifestyle, it was hard to believe that the noble ladies who socialized with her were very conservative.

After seeing off Meioubao,

Liszt soon received his reward for the Smoke Mission—the previous reward had been the Advanced Dou Qi Manual "Rising Sun Blaze".

This Advanced Dou Qi Manual was, in fact, brought over by Meioubao; the Earl's so-called trade of manuscripts meant trading with Long Taro Castle.

"Don't set your sights too high, Liszt, keep this Advanced Dou Qi Manual safe, and in a few years when you've advanced to a Sky Knight, then study it. At this stage, what you need is to earnestly consolidate your foundations... Right, I've been meaning to ask, when did you advance to an Elite Earth Knight?" the Earl queried in the study, speaking to Liszt alone.

This secret couldn't be kept—probably exposed during the battle at Iron Hoof Island, as his valiant fighting style, overpowering strength, clearly weren't things a Common Earth Knight could achieve.

"About a few months ago," Liszt replied humbly, "After exterminating the forces at Thorn Ridge, I gained a large amount of Magical Beast Meat, enough for me to engage in Dou Qi Cultivation. Moreover, I feel like my talent has begun to unfold, and perhaps I can make a push to surpass everyone and become the first Sky Knight."

The Earl's mouth hung open.

It took a moment before he said, "Your talent is indeed different from ordinary people. Seventeen-year-old Elite Earth Knight, a year earlier than your brother, maybe you really do have a chance to be the first to advance to a Sky Knight... However, I hope that between father and son, we can have more communication."

Liszt smiled awkwardly.

Perhaps he had been too overly cautious, treating the family of this body with wariness; in fact, he could afford to be more capricious—adopting the unreasonable stance of "my talent is unique".

He wanted to make amends.

So he said, "Maybe I've been holding my breath; I couldn't beat my brother or sister when I was younger. Now I want to achieve surpassing them to prove myself... Becoming a Sky Knight faster is the way to prove that my talent is not inferior to theirs."

"I understand. Maybe in the past, the pressure I put on you was too much, not only did it not help you, it may have suppressed your talent," the Earl, led by Liszt's words, began to find reasons in himself, "Fortunately, assigning you to Fresh Flower Town, the impoverished environment unleashed your talent."

"Arriving at Fresh Flower Town indeed gave me a new perspective."

"Now that you've become Viscount Black Horse Island, work hard on managing your own industries. The trade of Fresh Flower Brew, supported by Tulip Castle, should suffice for your daily expenses... I believe you can surpass Levis and become a Sky Knight earlier, after all, you carry the noble bloodline of Melissa and me!"

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