

The Mighty 1011

Chapter 1011: Reminder of Fate Facing the threat from Liszt, Marquis Pilof of Boulder, Pilaf the Earth Frenzy, ultimately backed down. He couldn't guarantee that Liszt wouldn't utterly annihilate the Earth Fury Family in an instant.

With Liszt's formidable military achievements, even the Eagle Royal Family felt helpless, let alone his mere Ancient Warrior Family.

To dare question Liszt's arrangements and make sneaky moves would likely result in the loss of heritage among the Ancient Warriors cloaked in bear skins the very next day.

Rules, as a Noble, one must follow rules, especially those set by the Dragon Rearing Family.

"Your Majesty, the Earth Fury Family is willing to offer five Greater Elves in exchange for a second chance at the Mind Battle, and thereafter we will follow this sequence to strategize,"

"A wise choice, that simplifies matters. Now, let everyone hand over the Greater Elves, and then we can formulate a plan to conquer the Aluminum Dragon. Even though this is a juvenile Aluminum Dragon, it's not something that can be easily achieved." Liszt clapped his hands and decided on a cooperative plan among the three Dragon Riding families.

Soon after, the Earth Fury Family released Florenza Chase Wind Arrows, and Florenza shared the secrets of conquering the Aluminum Dragon.

"The uninhabited wilderness south of Firm Earth is where the Aluminum Dragon roams. I once honed my Dou Qi in that wilderness and accidentally discovered this young Aluminum Dragon. According to my estimation, the Aluminum Dragon is about fifty years old and not very hostile towards humans, so I deliberately approached it."

Firm Earth is the fiefdom of Marquis Pilof of Boulder, and the uninhabited wilderness to the south is where the Aluminum Dragon moves about.

"Have you figured out the preferences of the Aluminum Dragon in your efforts to conquer it?" Liszt inquired, knowing the preferences of a dragon could ease the conquest.

Florenza, though young, was already a seasoned Sword Saint and on the verge of becoming a Completion Level Sky Knight.

His time conquering the Aluminum Dragon would not be too long, as he was already close to the Mind Battle, clearly having figured out the Aluminum Dragon's preferences.

After looking at Liszt, Pilof, and Piero, Florenza hesitated for a moment and sighed, "The Aluminum Dragon's preference is for the metal silver. With enough silver coins, one can please the Aluminum Dragon. I've already built a nest for it deep in the wilderness out of silver coins, so it no longer resists letting me ride on its back."

A metal-loving Aluminum Dragon that oddly favors another metal, silver.

If one were to bring the Silver Dragon from the Eagle Royal Family, who knows if the Aluminum Dragon would just fall under their spell, truly a bizarre occurrence.

...

"Complete the task, reward Aluminum Dragon clues."

After discussing the specifics of the Mind Battle, Liszt finally took the time to review the completed Smoke Mission and pondered new tasks.

"Task: Interests can easily blind people; sometimes, one must not only observe the surface but also look beyond it to see the hidden conspiracies. A juvenile Aluminum Dragon active in the wilderness—who can ensure that it is an isolated entity and not a tool being used? Please be cautious in the first two Mind Battles. Reward: Unknown."

After reading the new task description, Liszt furrowed his brow. Clearly, a task with an unknown reward is a warning from the Power of Destiny.

"Conspiracy... It seems that this appearance of the Aluminum Dragon is not a mere pleasant surprise but a schemed plot. But which faction could be plotting from the shadows? The Eagle Kingdom or... the Kushan Imperial?" The conspiracy occurring in the Eagle Kingdom also involves a dragon.

Evidently, one can't exclude the Eagle Royal Family.

But judging from the waning situation of the Eagle Kingdom as Liszt saw it, the Eagle Royal Family is unlikely to initiate another powerful dragon-slaying war.

It's not a lack of strength, but rather, should they fail, the risk could lead to the downfall of the Eagle Kingdom.

Despite not perishing, it was at least torn asunder in four or five places.

Thus, he quickly thought of the Shadow Incarnations he had discovered based on the Smoke Mission. Four Shadow Incarnations were still imprisoned in the dungeons of Flame Island. Behind these Shadow Incarnations was the malice from the Kushan Imperial.

It appeared that one of the Shadow Incarnations had already left, likely to convey information back to the Kushan Imperial.

Perhaps Emperor Jupiter had already passed on new instructions, and it was very likely that he was plotting this conspiracy.

"The Smoke Mission made me cautious about the first two Mind Battles, which means, the conspiracy is likely to be launched during these two Mind Battles."

He slowly pondered.

He wasn't overly anxious, as the malice from the Kushan Imperial was anticipated, and now with the reminder of the Smoke Mission, he could completely avoid or even use their own plans against them.

"The Blood Servants have already cultivated quite a few new seeds. and infiltrated expertly near the three major kingdoms and dependent territories. It's easy to pinpoint the movements of those dragons and Dragon Knights. Hence, the peril I'm facing must involve tactics similar to those Marquis of Bull once used in the assassination attempt on the Sapphire Dragon."

So, he asked Ach, “Ach, if someone were to plot against me using the Aluminum Dragon, what tactics would they use?”

Ach tilted his head and asked in return, “What is brother’s most powerful tactic?”

“Of course, it’s the space teleportation in coordination with Bard... Do you mean, if they target me, they would tamper with space?”

“Bard is not yet of age, his spatial abilities have not fully developed. It’s entirely possible to use the magic power to seal the space, making it impossible for Bard to freely teleport beyond physical realms, and even unable to enter the physical boundaries. At that time, brother and Bard would be forced to confront the enemy.”

This was indeed likely and was also the best method to target Liszt. Once they launch a conspiracy where he is strongest, it is almost certain they could truly kill him.

Concerning his own safety, he couldn’t help but pay utmost attention, “Then, is there any way to break the seal?”

“Just purify the magic lock.”

“How to purify?”

“This requires coordination from Bard, and also Charley’s help; and starting now, Ach will start making Magic Equipment. When someone locks the space, immediately perform a purification spell to unlock the space again.”

“Alright, then start making it quickly. Also, don’t just make it capable of a single purification. It’s better to purify several times.” Liszt never fought unprepared. With Magic Equipment to purify the magic lock, he had to prepare three or four times the amount to feel secure intervening in the disputes over the Aluminum Dragon.

Thus.

Florenza Chase Wind Arrow began his final preparations to strategize over the Aluminum Dragon, supported by Duke Pierrot. Pilaf closely watched, ensuring Duke Pierrot did not

betray the agreement between the three parties this time; while Liszt returned to the Flame Kingdom earlier with the Greater Elves donated by the Grey Iron Family and the Earth Fury Family.

Duke Pierrot contributed seven Greater Elves. For the Grey Iron Family, such a number of Greater Elves was enough to greatly weaken them — but for the chance to ride dragons, they had to pay.

Pilaf contributed five Greater Elves. For the Earth Fury Family, it was an act akin to self-harm.

In fact, both families could have negotiated amicably, each having a turn at dragon riding, entirely avoiding the involvement of Liszt — of course, without Liszt stepping in, they might not have been able to sit down and negotiate peacefully.

Moreover, this time, it might just be that those plotting the conspiracy were motivating from behind, using Greater Elves as bait to attract Liszt.

“Anyway, as the saying goes, the mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind. I, Liszt, am destined to be the oriole!” Holding a large pile of reluctant Greater Elves, Liszt rode the dragon gallantly, soaring among the blue sky and white clouds.

Chapter 1012: Everything is Ready Oats, barley, apples, tomatoes, peas, White Crystal Chrysanthemum, ice grass—Piero Grey Iron paid with seven Greater Elves, of which only the White Crystal Chrysanthemum Greater Elf could plant Magic Potions.

Rockwood, tobacco, tea trees, barley, millet—Pilaf the Earth Frenzy paid with five Greater Elves, none were of the Magic Potion variety, but they all just barely counted as grain types.

Suddenly, with twelve more Greater Elves, the number under Liszt’s command had doubled. It had to be said that only as of today did he barely manage to build a bit of the foundation befitting a Dragon Rearing Family—at least in terms of the number of Greater Elves, not much behind an average Grand Duchy’s Dragon Rearing Family.

In this world of knightly systems, the Nobles might rule, but they were strictly divided into hierarchies.

The common Honored Knights lived comfortably just by looking after an Elf Bug; a Baron may have a few Elf Bugs, cultivating a small town; a Viscount owned a Minor Elf, managing a small city; an Earl had a Greater Elf, operating a large city and several smaller ones; the number of Greater Elves a Marquis had varied.

For Marquis Pilof of Boulder from an Ancient Warrior Family or Marquis Nuta with Dimaria Yuhua Stone who were Domain Knights, both had a dozen or more Greater Elves.

Even the former Marquis of Bull had a Dragon Elf.

And for Grand Ducal families like Piero Grey Iron, having over twenty Greater Elves was standard, and there should be two or three Dragon Elves as well. If it was a Grand Ducal family like the Red and White Rose Family, the number of Greater Elves might reach forty or fifty.

Then moving higher up, each major Kingdom's Royal Family might have Greater Elves numbering over a hundred, and they could also breed many Dragon Elves.

"The journey is long, and I need more accumulation," Liszt sighed, already embracing the Greater Elves as they entered the world beyond material with Formless Dragon Bard.

Upon seeing the world beyond material for the first time, all the Greater Elves trembled.

Feeling sulky, aggrieved, excited, they all held back their little tempers and hid in Liszt's embrace.

These small beings who couldn't be infused with Space Magic Power would usually not be brought along. However, Formless Dragon Bard was growing; its Dragon Magic Power spread out, moving the surrounding space into the world beyond material.

"Ach, do you think if Bard keeps growing, it could expand the range of its Dragon Magic Power and then carry a flock of dragons through space?" Liszt calmed the Greater Elves while conversing with Ach, who was leisurely strolling around Bard on Unicorn Charlie.

Ach pondered for a moment, "Ach isn't sure, but judging from Bard's growth trajectory, it's quite likely. The full power of an adult Formless Dragon is unimaginable."

“If that were truly possible, it’d be marvelous.”

He had beautiful thoughts; if it were truly possible, Bard would equal the Master Spell in ‘Warcraft,’ an outstanding group teleportation. It was conceivable that a Dragon Knight in flight would suddenly face a group of dragons appearing before them, be overpowered and killed, and then the dragons retreat in a puff of smoke.

Coming without Shadows, gone without a trace, it would be the nightmare of any ordinary Dragon Knight.

“Wuu ya!” Feeling the scene Liszt imagined, Bard also got excited, expressing its certainty that it could achieve all this—as long as it had a sufficient supply of Red Dragon Water Magic Potion to grow quickly, helping Liszt conquer far and wide across the Legendary Continent sooner.

“Red Dragon Water isn’t easy to come by; the Red and White Rose Family aren’t fools. This friendship won’t last too long.”

“Wuu ya!” Bard indicated that while the friendship was still strong, they should exchange more gifts for Red Dragon Water; with Red Dragon Water, everything else would be negotiable.

“I’ll do my best, I’ll be sending an Envoy Group to the Rose Duchy for exchanges soon.”

...

For Liszt, retuning from an outing with twelve Greater Elves hardly caused much of a stir in the estate. Even the servants at Flame Castle were just momentarily pleased.

They had experienced too many wonders at Liszt’s side over the years.

Dragons were brought home as though they were wholesale items, let alone Greater Elves. For the Son of Glory, who was believed to be favored by the glory of knighthood, all this was just part of the routine—a fact that somewhat irked Liszt, who now felt unable to attract attention without making a big move.

“Father, I’ll leave these Greater Elves to the Development Committee to handle. They should build plantations for them as quickly as possible. If we sow now, we can still reap one or two harvests after autumn.”

“Have you named them?”

“There are too many, impossible to name them all at once. We’ll decide on that later. I’ve been quite busy lately and might have to be away for a while. If there are no particularly difficult decisions to make, I’d like you to oversee everything.”

“I will take good care of everything on Flame Island for you.”

After sorting out the estate development matters, Liszt immediately immersed himself in Ach’s laboratory, working with Ach to set up a purification magic. This magic was based on a Magic Array and, with the help of Bard’s abilities, could reverse the sealed space, breaking down the barriers of space.

Conspiracies were brewing in secret, necessitating meticulous preparations.

While creating the purification magic, Liszt was also developing his Phoenix Incarnation abilities, practicing several powerful magics that Ach had developed for him.

Even with a strong set of trump cards,

he was still genuinely arranging fallback plans and various escape schemes, fearing not for the ten thousand possibilities but for the one that might actually occur. Dragon Knights seemed to stand at the pinnacle of power, yet dragons were diverse in kind, including Sacred and Evil Dragons, and the enigmatic Dragon of the Magic Web. Who knew whether forces existed that could threaten him.

Fortunately, the destiny power represented by the Smoke Mission was truly formidable, revealing the conspiracies in advance and facilitating Liszt’s strategic planning.

He and Ach labored in the laboratory for a whole week, arranging numerous fallbacks. Feeling that the preparations were about right, he then prepared to set off for Firm Earth to oversee Florenza Chase Wind Arrows’ first Mind Battle.

Accompanying them were four Blood Servants adept in Wind Language, equipped with the latest model of the Simple Magic Platform. The task of these four Blood Servants was to monitor Florenza and Picart Earthrage, to be informed of their progress in subduing the Aluminum Dragon at all times.

They brought magic equipment personally designed by Ach, extremely capable of hiding their presence, especially at night when even Domain Knights could not detect them.

After arriving at Firm Earth, the four Blood Servants immediately went undercover.

Ach continued to ride Unicorn Charley, hiding at the edges of the material world. Liszt did not show himself immediately either, riding the Formless Dragon Bard as he searched the vicinity for a natural node. He carefully scoured the wilderness to the south of Firm Earth and indeed discovered a natural node.

The exit was within the Aluminum Dragon's territory, on a somewhat bald hillock. He tried scraping at the hillock, only to find that it was actually a mine—a Brass Ore mine.

The value of Brass Ore was average, mainly used for equipment and making copper coins; a pity that the mine was far within the boundaries of the Eagle Kingdom, and Liszt could not mine it. So he simply noted down the location, perhaps for the time when the Flame Kingdom could annex this territory after the fall of the Eagle Kingdom.

“The natural node has been found. This way, the journey to and fro can be greatly shortened. No amount of Kushan Imperial's conspiracies will be able to truly get at me!”

A few days after discovering this natural node of Brass Ore, Florenza, under the influence of silver coin persuasion, finally got the chance for a Mind Battle with the juvenile Aluminum Dragon.

And with this, Liszt's vigilance was heightened to an extremely cautious level.

Chapter 1013: Failure The appearance of the Aluminum Dragon was not one of shining silver; instead, it had a greyish-white texture, and seemed delicate and soft at first glance.

But though the Aluminum Dragon's face was slender, its features were rough and rugged, which somewhat disrupted the animal's overall softness, adding instead a strange sense of

power. At the moment, the creature was only about thirty meters long, with a wingspan of roughly the same, not particularly large, but for its age of just fifty years, it wasn't small either.

The details of Florenza Chase Wind Arrow's Mind Battle were known only to Liszt, hidden at the edge of the material realm, witnessing the entire process.

There was nothing too complex about it, simply mounting up and then, in a flash, the Aluminum Dragon paused, jerked its neck in the next moment, flinging Florenza away, then let out a roar before turning away and soaring towards the blue sky and white clouds.

Obviously,

Florenza had failed.

Witnessing it all, Liszt's lips curled into a smile; none of this had been outside his expectations. To ride a dragon, with Florenza's talents and skills, there was still some ripening needed.

Ach curiously asked, "Brother, if these people truly succeeded in dragon riding, would you let the Aluminum Dragon go? Aren't dragons extremely precious creatures that we should never let go of no matter what?"

Liszt ruffled her hair, "If they really succeed in dragon riding... Hehe, it's okay. Destiny, you see, if it belongs to you, it will come to you even if you don't strive for it; if it's not yours, even if you seize it, you won't be able to hold on to it. We just need to do what we must, and leave the rest to destiny."

Whose side was destiny on?

Clearly, it was on Liszt's side.

Florenza had already failed at dragon riding. The young knight, thrown to the ground, watched the receding figure of the Aluminum Dragon, lying lost and dispirited on the muddy ground for a long time without getting up. He had been so confident of succeeding in dragon riding, especially since the Aluminum Dragon had shown him some affection, he hadn't expected such an ending.

However, Florenza's ordeal was far from over.

When the news of his failure got back, what awaited him was the look of cold indifference in the eyes of Duke Piero Grey Iron, and the ill-concealed schadenfreude of Marquis Pilaf Earth Frenzy.

There was also Picart Earthrage, incessantly querying him for details of the Mind Battle—according to the agreement among the three houses, those who failed at dragon riding were obligated to reveal the process of their failure.

In the small castle, Liszt held a teacup, sipping his tea while listening to Florenza's narrative.

Stumbling and hesitating.

Florenza reluctantly disclosed the reason for his failure in the Mind Battle—it turned out that during the battle, the Aluminum Dragon had been an adult and was able to turn into a stream of water. It didn't resort to violence; instead, it required Florenza to break through its liquid transformation and successfully locate the Dragon Tooth Platform.

"So you couldn't even find the Dragon Tooth Platform within a mass of liquid?" Piero bit his lip in frustration, "Have you remembered nothing of what I've told you about dragons?"

"Father, you cannot fathom the strength of the Aluminum Dragon during the Mind Battle!" Florenza retorted forcefully, filled with suppressed rage.

Seeing no more information forthcoming, Pilaf swiftly left with his son Picart, preparing to woo the Aluminum Dragon with the ready silver coins to earn a chance at the Mind Battle. Young dragons are easily swayed, especially when one caters to their preferences, but even a simple task demanded swift action.

Delays can lead to unexpected changes.

Liszt too prepared to depart, as no schemes had surfaced and it seemed none would unfold now.

But just as he was about to leave the castle, Florenza Chase Wind Arrow suddenly caught up to him: “Your Majesty, Florenza apologizes for taking up a moment of your time.”

“Hm?” Liszt looked at Florenza curiously, wondering what the other man wanted.

Florenza knelt on one knee, “Florenza, having failed at dragon riding, no longer sees a purpose in staying in the Grey Iron Duchy. As a bastard son, I have not contributed to the duchy, and have no place within the Grey Iron Family. I wish to follow Your Majesty!”

He was actually planning to pledge allegiance to Liszt; this took Liszt by surprise, “Why do you wish to follow me?”

“The Grey Iron Duchy has no place for me, and the Eagle Kingdom will treat me no differently. Only the Flame Kingdom is the most suitable choice for me. And Your Majesty, your past great achievements are all things I admire. Following behind you is the best path for Florenza.”

These words were very candid, and whether judging from relationships or prospects, Liszt was an eminently suitable Landlord to follow.

Though Florenza had not succeeded in Dragon Riding, he had obtained the preliminary recognition from an Aluminum Dragon, and was on the verge of completing his Dou Qi at a young age, clearly showing exceptional talent, and could be recruited as a follower.

“You may rise. As for your allegiance, I need Duke Piero’s consent,” Liszt stated.

“In fact, this is exactly what my father hoped I would do.”

“Oh, why is that?”

“He probably no longer has faith in the future of the Grey Iron Duchy. With the Aluminum Dragon Riding attempt failing, this nation is almost out of options. Having lost the Dragon and at odds with the Eagle Royal Family, my father needs someone to make sensible choices for the family... He also has an illegitimate son who may have a chance to attempt

Dragon Riding in the next opportunity, while I wish to continue our family's presence in the Flame Kingdom."

"Very well, I can accept your allegiance. However, you will have to make your own way to the Flame Kingdom. You will have plenty of time on the journey to think it over, and if you regret this decision, you may leave midway."

"I won't regret it!" Florenza stood up, bowed deeply to Liszt, and determined that he would head to the Flame Kingdom.

To leave this place that brought him shame and disappointment.

What he didn't know was that as he was packing his belongings, saying farewell to Duke Piero, and setting off on his own, Liszt was secretly observing him the whole time. Only after he left the Grey Iron Duchy and traveled far beyond the southern wilderness of Firm Earth did Liszt confirm that the conspiracy had nothing to do with him.

"With Florenza not involved, Duke Piero is unlikely to be a major factor either, or the conspiracy would have acted by now... That means the conspirer, the schemer from the Kushan Imperial, must stand behind the Earth Fury Family... Next, I'll send more Blood Servants over, to monitor the Earth Fury Family!"

...

Having not encountered the expected conspiracy, Liszt was quite disappointed; he disliked being the target of someone else's attentions.

Picart Earthrage's ambition to conquer the Aluminum Dragon might still take months, meaning that he had to guard against a conspiracy for a few more months. Fortunately, with Blood Servants monitoring the Earth Fury Family, he didn't need to stay in Firm Earth at all times, and could thus avoid danger.

He could develop his territory with peace of mind.

It was just a pity that the Smoke Mission had to be delayed further.

Shortly after Liszt departed, several Blood Servants quietly infiltrated the Earth Fury Family's Castle, working cautiously as servants by day and stealthily transforming into bats at night to gather information.

That night.

A Blood Servant, in the guise of a bat, carefully avoided the Magic Array set up in the Castle, hanging upside down in a corner of a secret meeting room.

The servant listened to the entire meeting clearly from beginning to end, which started with Marquis Pilof of Boulder and his two sons, Picart and Pilet, discussing how to conquer the Aluminum Dragon.

Soon a guest was ushered in.

As the guest entered, Marquis Pilof of Boulder immediately questioned, "You said you would act when Florenza attempted Dragon Riding, so why the delay? Now, Liszt has left, and there's no chance to take action!"

"Don't rush, Marquis Pilof. There's a reason we didn't strike. Although my master is powerful, the target is a Formless Dragon, and we must be extremely cautious since there is only one opportunity."

"Wasn't this time a perfect opportunity? With Florenza attempting Dragon Riding, Liszt would've certainly been watching!"

"Do you think a Dragon Knight who could establish a new Kingdom would lose his sense over an Aluminum Dragon and be completely unguarded? Be patient. Let him think the conquest of the Aluminum Dragon is truly pleasant cooperation. Only this way, during the next Mind Battle, he will become complacent, and then..."

At this, the Blood Servant held its breath, listening intently as the guest ominously said, "Then will come the moment to deal Liszt a fatal blow!"

The atmosphere in the meeting room seemed to pause.

After a moment.

The guest continued, “When that time arrives, the Sacred Dragon-Formless Dragon shall belong to my master. And the Earth Fury Family, Picart and Pilet can continue their attempt on the Aluminum Dragon; if successful, they will establish a new Grand Duchy under the support of my master and join the ranks of the Dragon Rearing Families!”

Chapter 1014: It Belongs to Me Now “There’s only one chance, one strike for a sure kill, hmm, indeed a perfect plan, which relieves me quite a bit. So it’s the Marquis of Boulder in cahoot with the Kushan Imperial, plotting against me... The Cloaked Bear-wearer should have been swept into the dustbin of history by now!”

It was hard for the Kushan Imperial and the Marquis of Boulder to imagine that their conspiracy had long been thoroughly seen through by Liszt.

And after seeing through the conspiracy, Liszt had actually relaxed, as all necessary preparations had been completed early on; now he just awaited the arrival of the second Mind Battle. At that time, he could counter their plans and ensnare the schemers from the Kushan Imperial in one go, and take the opportunity to snatch away the underaged Aluminum Dragon.

“Now for the next few months, just carry on as usual.”

Liszt intended to go about his activities as usual over these months, waiting for Picart Earthrage from the Marquis of Boulder to initiate the Mind Battle, before he would move to confront the conspiracy. However, just a month had passed when new information was delivered by a Blood Servant: Picart had bonded well with the Aluminum Dragon.

It only took a month, and not many silver coins had been spent to already gain the Aluminum Dragon’s favor, preparing Picart for the Mind Battle.

This was an unexpected contingency; no one had thought that Picart and the Aluminum Dragon would bond so well.

There were almost signs of a prearrangement.

Because of this, Liszt could not wait any longer, “Ach, get ready. Let’s set off for Firm Earth right now, witness this Mind Battle, and brace for the ensuing conspiracy.”

“Mhm, brother, don’t worry — Ach is fully prepared.”

Subsequently, the two headed for Firm Earth and stealthily hid at the edge of the material boundary, watching from afar the Aluminum Dragon and the circling Picart. They even checked the camp of the Earth Fury Family, finding no unusual presence there, just some ordinary Knights.

If it weren’t for the reminder from the Smoke Mission and the reports from the Blood Servants, Liszt might actually believe this was a friendly collaboration.

But now, he remained extremely vigilant and had Ach follow closely behind, secretly protecting himself within the material boundary.

With Ach’s capability for instantaneous Super Magic, he could block any assassination attempt at once.

“It seems everything is normal; however, it is precisely this state of normality that hints at something abnormal. Be careful, Ach.”

“Don’t worry, brother — Ach will protect you!”

“Not just me, you must also take good care of yourself.”

Liszt smiled and then, riding the Formless Dragon, appeared openly to greet Marquis Pilof as a way to lure the snake out of its hole, “Marquis Pilof, your son is quite remarkable, to have won over the Aluminum Dragon in such a short time.”

“Ha-ha, thank Your Majesty for the praise. It’s all due to Picart’s own efforts, but he cannot compare to Your Majesty. To tame an Aluminum Dragon is to have the glory of a Knight shine upon the Earth Fury Family,” Pilof couldn’t contain his excitement, trying to remain composed but unable to calm down.

Dragon!

The Dragons at the pinnacle of power in this world!

And the Dragon Knights who harness them will establish a state belonging to their family and ascend into the ranks of the Dragon Rearing Families! For this opportunity, the Earth Fury Family was willing to risk everything.

Soon after, Liszt, Pilof, and Piero of Duke Grey Iron were sitting together in the same tent.

Duke Grey Iron Piero's entire face was green as if his wife had been tormented by someone else for three days and three nights. The Aluminum Dragon was discovered by his illegitimate son and took the family's vast resources to attempt taming it. Now, just one step short, he stands to lose both the dragon and wealth; how could he be calm and collected.

Behind him was another bastard, a very young Knight who, given the chance, would be the next to attempt Dragon Riding.

Currently, this young Knight's eyes were also green with envy, wishing he could instantly devour Picart to prevent him from Dragon Riding.

Marquis Pilof of Boulder wore a full-faced smile, not minding Piero's rage at all. It was a glorious moment for the Earth Fury Family, why not smile.

As for Liszt, he appeared serene, seemingly unconcerned whether Picart would successfully ride the Dragon or not.

In reality, he was exceptionally focused and ready to transform into a Phoenix at any moment to escape Kushan Imperial's deadly plot.

The Bone Dragon Vinnie formed a faint skull pattern on his face, which would immediately transform into armor to protect Liszt and provide him with a Divine weapon – the Bone Dragon Sword – should any battle break out.

Little Fire Dragon Leo remained vigilant as well, ready to burst out and transform into a majestic Fire Dragon for a head-on battle.

Formless Dragon Bard had slipped into the material boundary, constantly alert to prevent other Dragon Knights from stealthily approaching. Ach and Unicorn Charlie stood on the back of the Formless Dragon, also preparing to take action.

Now everything was ready, all that was missing was the east wind.

And this east wind was actually hidden within the camp, in a tent where two individuals dressed as Knights were observing something through a mirror-like device. There was no reflective surface on the mirror, only magical runes forming strange patterns that flickered on and off.

“Counselor, the mage called Acherlroides is right above the camp, while the target is inside the tent. Should we make our move now?”

“Do you have a guaranteed kill if we move now?”

“I’m confident I can take out Liszt directly, then use the Jade Fruit to incapacitate the Formless Dragon. But are you sure you can hold off that Sea Monster Magician?”

“The young Archmage, who has reportedly mastered both the Water and Ice Elements, is still not enough in my presence.”

“Dominance. I admire that dominance of yours Counselor. So let’s begin the assassination!”

“Shall we not wait? Should we start the assassination when Picart engages in the Mind Battle? Starting now, our preparation isn’t sufficient and Liszt’s attention won’t be easily diverted.”

“You might be good at plotting conspiracies Counselor, but assassinations are my forte. An assassin who truly walks in the shadows never needs to be fully prepared, only to catch the victim by surprise!” the Knight-clad assassin declared, as he took off his armor and stripped off his clothes.

Naked, his body was covered in black patterns, dense and intricate like a layer of silk-tight clothing.

Next moment.

The assassin, as if diving into a river, jumped directly into the corner shadows of the tent. His body seemed to melt and merge into the shadows.

Watching the assassin disappear, the other Knight, known as the Counselor, also removed his armor, and from a box beside him, he donned a luxurious golden Magic Cloak. He took out a magic staff adorned with a dozen gemstones and held it in his hand, activating each gemstone in turn.

Then he glanced again at the mirror device in his hands. When the magical runes on it formed the correct pattern,

He, with a face showing signs of age, put on a stern expression, sharply stabbing the magic staff into the ground and activating all the gemstones at once.

Next moment.

A golden Light burst from the top of the magic staff, radiating like sunlight in all directions, lighting up all the space instantly. In the blink of an eye, the golden light covered a radius of over a hundred kilometers. Above and below, everywhere was bathed in magic light as brilliant as the sun's rays.

"Sunlight illuminates everything; there's nowhere to hide!" whispered the elderly magician.

At the same time.

The tent where Liszt was located, too, was penetrated by this dazzling light, casting faint human shadows on the ground. Just then, Liszt felt a sudden jolt in his heart; his pupils dilated rapidly as he saw a distorted human figure leaping out from his own shadow.

The twisted figure held a gruesome greatsword composed of countless shattered crystals, which pierced straight through Liszt's chest. The Thunder Roar Armor, acquired from the previous Light Green Gemstone Dragon Knight Carlo Violet, offered no protection whatsoever.

Without even a chance to react, he was skewered through the heart by the shattered crystal greatsword.

“Death is like the wind, always at my side!”

The twisted figure let out a grating laugh, a taunt as well as a declaration of death.

The very next second, the twisted figure unhesitatingly leapt out of Liszt’s shadow, its gloomy body bending down, legs coiled, ready to spring toward the diving, rescue-bound Formless Dragon.

But before he could leap,

A giant Ice Block had already crashed down from above. He was ready to dodge, but suddenly felt his back seared as if by a red-hot iron.

A Flame had mysteriously wrapped around his body, and a detached voice reached his ears: “Death is like the wind, always at my side? I quite like that line of yours, but it belongs to me now.”

Chapter 1015: Why Is It So The twisted figure glanced back only once and saw Liszt Flame, whom he had just stabbed through the chest with his sword, truly transform into a blaze of fire. The massive hand of flame already gripped him, binding him, preventing any chance of escape.

The flames seemed about to morph into a giant bird, yet maintained a human shape without alteration. Through them, one could vaguely see Liszt’s blurred face, with a pair of clear eyes upon it. His gaze was as cold and indifferent as his tone, as if looking at a dead man.

“You...”

Before the twisted figure could register shock, a huge block of ice smashed down upon his head.

With a thunderous crash, the twisted figure was slammed into the ground by the sturdy ice, though it was uncertain if he was flattened. However, Liszt wouldn’t easily assume that an

assassin who could leap out of the shadows could be so simply crushed to death. He swiftly cancelled the Phoenix Incarnation that had kicked in at the critical moment, and reconnected with Bone Dragon Vinnie.

In the blink of an eye, a set of Bone Dragon Armor forcibly shattered the damaged Thunder Roar, rearming Liszt, with the Bone Dragon Sword taking the place of the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword as his weapon.

His eyes coldly swept over the tent still enveloped in golden light.

Piero was dumbstruck, bewildered by the sudden turn of events. Pilaf watched Liszt in horror, as if shocked by the assassination attempt, but, in fact, terrified that Liszt remained completely unscathed. As for the others, there was panic and chaos all around, with each reacting differently.

Liszt paid no attention to these people, for to him, they were merely ants. What he needed now was to find the assassin who could pose a threat to his safety.

The assassin's ability to leap from the shadows left no doubt that he was a Shadow Incarnation from the Kushan Imperial, and his power far exceeded the levels of Shallow Shadow, Deep Shadow, and Shadows. The sudden and powerful assassination attempt was beyond imagination in both strength and method—without the assassin's death, Liszt would find no peace.

“Do you really think you can escape my sight!” Liszt's sword blasted the huge ice block to pieces, but beneath it, he found only a humanoid depression and no sign of the assassin's corpse.

Clearly, the assassin had once again merged into the shadows.

But beneath the skull-like helmet, Liszt was using the Eye of Magic, carefully observing every inch of shadow and meticulously sensing every change in magic power.

...

Above in the sky,

“Woooo!”

The Formless Dragon’s cry was filled with rage; someone dared to lay an assassination attempt in front of it, against its Knight. This was a relentless slap in the face of its proud dragon life.

It, too, was deeply concerned for Liszt’s safety—in its mind, Liszt’s shadow had become increasingly clear, and it was not far from a successful Mind Branding.

The golden light locked down the space, and it couldn’t reach Liszt’s side immediately. It could only breathe out Dragon Breath Shattering Space to utterly break the space around the tent. In cooperation with Liszt, it blocked the assassin’s escape route—the enemy could lock down Liszt, but Liszt could do the same to the enemy.

With the attempt at a one-strike kill foiled, the moment to be led by Liszt had come.

...

Riding on a Unicorn, Ach dove down following the Formless Dragon. Her delicate, pretty face was very stern, while her heart brimmed with self-reproach. She blamed herself for not being able to cast magic immediately to block the assassin’s strike, even though Liszt had managed to dodge the crisis with Phoenix Incarnation, she couldn’t let it go.

She had promised to protect her brother, and now she had failed.

The anger in her heart needed release!

After instantly casting the Advanced Ice System Magic—Eternal Sturdy Ice, she quickly began setting up a Purification Magic Array to dispel the golden light covering a hundred-kilometer radius. Magic exploded from her hands, and with Unicorn Charlie’s amplified blessing, countless invisible ripples spread out.

They collided rapidly with the golden light, as if in silence yet seemingly producing the screeching sound of glass shattering. The golden light managed to hold for barely ten seconds before it broke down progressively.

The space that had been sealed by the golden light also reverted to its original state at once, and the Formless Dragon could once again traverse the boundaries of matter.

At the same time, a sizable disturbance came from a tent—it was the Magician clad in a golden Magic Cloak, whose wand embedded with a dozen gemstones exploded thunderously, with each gem shattering to dust.

“This!”

The middle-aged Magician was greatly shocked.

However, the gaze of Ach glittered in mid-air. “Found it, the source of the space blockade! Charley, let’s go down. Whoever dares to assassinate my brother is not a good person; they must all be killed!” Although she was a pure Sea Serpent, she was never a mere vase in a greenhouse, having lived in the ocean since childhood.

Always fighting against Sea Monsters, how could she possibly be tender-hearted?

“Humph.”

Unicorn Charley’s golden spiral horn flickered, and with a leap, he was already at the entrance of the tent. Ach casually sent a gust of wind to blow away the tent—after mastering the Earth Elemental Incarnation perfectly, she had been practicing the Wind Elemental Avatar and had already achieved minor success.

As the tent was blown away, a burst of golden light shone from where the tent had been, the middle-aged Magician in the golden Magic Cloak reacting quite promptly.

This burst of golden light was his cast Magic.

Yet Ach, with the Eight Dragons God Sword in hand, the Gemstone Crown on her head, and the Magic Cloak draped over her, merely waved the Divine Artifact in her hand, and Ice Blocks quickly formed in front of her.

Boom!

Even though the Ice Blocks were shattered instantly, the golden light dissipated as a result.

Upon seeing this, the middle-aged Magician snorted coldly and casually unleashed a seemingly powerful Thunder Magic spell, coldly saying, “Young Sea Serpent, the vastness of Truth is beyond your current comprehension... Lightning Storm!”

As his words fell,

Boom!

A massive storm suddenly rose from his hands, mixed with countless flashes of Lightning, striking towards Ach.

Ach, who never deigned to communicate with strangers, merely waved the Eight Dragons God Sword again. Numerous rocks and clumps of soil rose from the ground, as if underground monsters opened their gaping mouths, quickly swallowing the tornado laced with Lightning. Soon after, a few crisp sounds were heard from within the earthen envelope, which failed to tear it apart, and then everything fell silent.

“Hmm?”

The middle-aged Magician was taken aback once again and, without time to ponder why, he prepared to unleash another spell.

Ach seized the initiative, as numerous streams of water condensed from the air, wrapping directly around the middle-aged Magician like chains binding him. With a gentle tug outward, his limbs were immediately dislocated—of course, whether they were merely dislocated or actually broken bones was temporarily unknown.

“Ah!” The middle-aged Magician screamed, then, enduring the sharp pain, asked, “Why is your Magic so powerful!”

Ach had no intention of communicating and was about to cast Eternal Sturdy Ice instantly to freeze the Magician solid, then leave him for Liszt to deal with.

The middle-aged Magician, unwilling to be restrained, opened his mouth and re-cast a new spell. It was a Wind System Magic that could form a Wind Blade capable of tearing everything apart with a mere breath. However, contrary to the Magician's expectations, as soon as the Wind Blade took shape, the Eternal Sturdy Ice also condensed.

Encasing both him and the Wind Blade he had just produced within the Eternal Sturdy Ice, both frozen as lifelike statues.

With his body frozen, his mind could still operate, and through the transparent ice, the middle-aged Magician watched Ach's departing figure, with only one thought echoing in his mind: "Why did it turn out like this?"

Chapter 1016: Courage "Thank you 'Ban Meng' and 'Traveler Lost in the Stars'"

Without any hesitation, Ach had frozen an Archmage with loose strength and was already riding Unicorn Charlie, rushing towards the central tent where Liszt was.

Formless Dragon Bard had already sealed the space around the tent, making it impossible for Ach to approach. He could only reinforce a Water Wave Shield on the periphery to prevent the assassin from escaping, "My brother will be fine, the Phoenix Incarnation ignores physical attacks, and even severe wounds can heal instantly."

However, she still kept her attention ready to release magic, quietly waiting for news.

At this moment, Liszt inside the tent had not seen the location of the assassin through the Eye of Magic, which puzzled him. He could clearly feel the assassin hiding in someone's shadow but could not pinpoint the exact position, which was quite mystifying.

"Vinnie, switch the view, I need to use the Bone Dragon's vision!"

"Yes, Your Majesty."

In an instant, Liszt's eyes under the helmet had turned into eerie blue ghostly fires, and his vision suddenly changed into a peculiar gray-white world. In this vision, the real materials of reality only had vague outlines, while souls were vividly displayed.

They floated around like glowing light bulbs.

“Your Majesty... this matter has nothing to do with me,” Duke Pierrot said from the corner, trembling, as Liszt’s presence inflicted immense pressure on him.

Pilaf also hurriedly said, “Your Majesty, I also have no idea why there is an assassin here.”

“Shut up!”

Liszt swept his gaze over them with an intense killing intent that was utterly undisguised. He had already spotted a strange light by Pilaf’s feet. This vague, bright light was very distorted but faintly showed a human figure bound within a shadow, clearly the assassin.

The assassin’s special magic concealment technique could deceive even the Eye of Magic, but it couldn’t hide his soul.

The next moment.

In Pilaf’s widened pupils, Liszt lifted the Bone Dragon Sword and suddenly stabbed at his feet. In that moment, Pilaf thought Liszt was about to kill him on the spot, giving him no chance to defend himself for being involved in the conspiracy, so he immediately chewed the Dog’s Mantle Mushroom hidden in his mouth.

With a fierce aura, he bellowed, “You devil, for the honor of the Earth Fury Family, you must die!”

Boom!

His body swelled up like a balloon.

But all of this happened very quickly to others, yet very slowly to Liszt, who was utterly indifferent about what Pilaf thought. The Bone Dragon Sword pierced straight into Pilaf’s shadow, and through the Bone Dragon vision, Liszt could see the Bone Dragon Sword accurately striking the assassin’s twisted soul.

It was only a moment's pause before the twisted soul flowed like water towards another side, clearly not locked down by the Bone Dragon Sword.

The assassin's methods also ignored physical attacks.

"Leo, assist me!" Liszt decided instantly, abandoning the Bone Dragon Sword, reaching down with both hands to grab the twisted soul, mentally communicating with Leo who was ready to strike.

The raging Fire Dragon Magic Power mixed with his Superior Dou Qi was entirely concentrated at his fingertips as he lunged forward, directly seizing the fleeing twisted soul.

Flames transformed in his hands, and Dragon Might surged wildly.

"Ah!"

The twisted soul suddenly revealed itself, a strange blurred body, bound by flames, unable to escape, only able to emit a piercing scream.

Countless fire attribute magic powers surged into his body, almost instantly dispersing the magic power within him, no longer able to maintain operational balance. The special techniques he employed also collapsed as a result, fully revealing a human body—completely covered in tattoos.

Liszt had just grabbed him by the neck.

He asked coldly, "Who gave you the guts to assassinate me?"

"Uh..." The tattoo-covered assassin couldn't utter a word, his body trembling like it was electrified, the result of the fire attribute magic power burning his organs.

Crack!

A great sword, made of broken crystals, fell down; it was the very one he had used to assassinate Liszt.

At that moment, Pilaf the Earth Frenzy, who had been busy transforming, finally swung his basin-sized fist at Liszt, “Die!”

Liszt slowly turned his head. From the shoulder of his Bone Dragon armor, a small bone dragon claw extended automatically, striking at Pilaf’s fist. However, in a hair’s breadth moment, Pilaf dodged Liszt’s unexpected bone dragon claw and smashed his fist towards the assassin in Liszt’s hand.

“Killing to silence him?”

The unexpected occurred, but it didn’t affect Liszt’s movements.

He simply used the bone dragon wings on the back of his Bone Dragon armor to cover the assassin, blocking Pilaf’s fist. The seemingly ferocious punch hit the bone dragon wing without causing any pain or itch. The Bone Dragon Sword, which had already recovered its tail, swept sideways, harshly dragging Pilaf into the ground.

Deeply embedded underground, a perfect human outline was imprinted.

Liszt then lifted his foot and lightly stepped on him, making it impossible for Pilaf to struggle, even producing the sound of bones cracking.

Even the most ferocious Cloaked Bear-wearer, when facing a knight merged with a dragon, was merely a slightly larger ant. Even though at this moment Liszt was merged with an incomplete bone dragon, he could still easily crush Marquis Pilof: “And who gave you the courage, Liang Jingru?”

...

“Mission completed, reward: submission from the Grey Iron Family.”

The crippled assassin was thrown onto the ground by Liszt, his magic power completely bound by the Mountain Copper manacles—he possessed High Magic of the dark attribute, which surprised Liszt, a Shadow Incarnation actually cultivated high-energy magic power.

Marquis Pilof was also shackled with Mountain Copper manacles, guarded by Duke Pierro.

His son, Picart, was the same.

In fact, even without the shackles, they couldn't make any waves, having been turned into half-dead cripples by Liszt's punches. Moreover, Ach was already riding a unicorn, ready to release Advanced Magic—the Eternal Sturdy Ice to freeze them one by one.

At this moment, as he observed the nervous expressions of the people in the camp, he was slightly absent-minded, already summoning the Smoke Mission. The mission about being vigilant of two mind battles was smoothly completed, rewarded with the submission of the Grey Iron Family—this intrigued him.

But he did not continue to dwell on this.

He checked the new Smoke Mission.

“Mission: As the king of the Flame Kingdom, the conspiracy against you by the Kushan Imperial undoubtedly is an enormous provocation, intolerable to endure. Since the Kushan Imperial is beyond reach, why not vent your anger on the conspirators first? Reward: Cloaked Bear-wearer Cultivator's Manual.”

“Venting on the conspirators, does that refer to these few?” Liszt looked at the assassin covered with a piece of rag, the father and son of Earth Fury lying unconscious on the ground, and the archmage frozen within a chunk of hard ice outside, “Next, indeed, it's time to properly settle the account for this assassination.”

Chapter 1017: Coercion and Bribery The wilderness camp had already been taken over by Li Si Te (Liszt) with a firm hand.

At this moment, he was staring at Piero as he interrogated, “Duke Pierrot, I believe you owe me an explanation. I came here at your invitation to oversee the distribution of the

Aluminum Dragon, only to find myself the target of a long-planned assassination. If I weren't well-prepared, I might not have been able to leave here alive today."

"Your Majesty, I beg you to believe me, the assassination has nothing to do with me, the Grey Iron Family, or the Grey Iron Duchy. I truly wanted to invite Your Majesty to oversee the Dragon Riding distribution... All of this must be the work of Pilaf colluding with assassins, it must be, and the Eagle Royal Family is certainly fanning the flames behind the scenes!"

The more Piero spoke, the more nervous he became, "It must be so, the Eagle Royal Family is behind Pilaf, and all of this, including the Aluminum Dragon, is a conspiracy of the Eagle Royal Family. Adonis Moonlight Silver is indeed cunning, taking advantage of my eagerness to revive the Grey Iron Family and thus luring Your Majesty here!"

Piero knew nothing about the Kushan Imperial, so he was unaware that the assassins were from the Kushan Imperial—the Archmage and the assassin were now unable to speak, and both Pilaf father and son were unconscious, leaving no one to tell Piero the truth.

Therefore, after Piero had filled in the blanks with his imagination, he was increasingly convinced that all this was backed by the Eagle Royal Family: "Your Majesty, Adonis must have used me, please believe me, I, Piero, have never thought of betraying Your Majesty!"

Liszt was noncommittal.

With a clench of his teeth, Piero said, "The assassination attempt has failed, and the Eagle Royal Family will surely react soon. When that time comes, not only will the Aluminum Dragon be out of reach, but the Grey Iron Duchy will also have reached its end... Your Majesty, please take in the Grey Iron Family, the Grey Iron Family is willing to follow you to develop in the Flame Kingdom!"

This was clearly the so-called reward of the Smoke Mission, after being scared by the facts concocted in his own mind, Piero decisively decided to amputate a limb to survive.

Giving up the Grey Iron Duchy and fleeing to the Flame Kingdom for refuge.

"I will not leave the Aluminum Dragon for the Eagle Kingdom," Liszt followed Piero's self-created narrative, announcing his sovereignty over the Aluminum Dragon, "I will ride

away the Aluminum Dragon, making the Eagle Kingdom lose both its lady and its soldiers... As for the Grey Iron Family, I am willing to believe you, Piero, did not play a role in the conspiracy.”

“Thank you for your trust, Your Majesty,” Piero breathed a sigh of relief.

Liszt added, “But are you sure the Grey Iron Family will unite with you to give up the Grey Iron Duchy and go to the Flame Kingdom?”

Piero was taken aback for a moment, then gave a bitter smile, “Your Majesty’s concern is indeed valid, my credibility within the family has greatly diminished, and traveling such a long distance to develop in a new kingdom would frighten many knights.”

However, his tone changed and Piero’s expression gradually became serious, “But staying would mean being swallowed up by Adonis sooner or later, I understand this King of the Eagle Kingdom. The future of the Grey Iron Family is already cut off in the Eagle Kingdom, only by following Your Majesty will the Grey Iron Family be able to revive in the Flame Kingdom.”

“If you really intend to develop in the Flame Kingdom, I welcome the Grey Iron Family to prosper there, as long as you can take away a large number of the Knight Class and join the Flame Kingdom, even your title of Duke can be hereditary.”

“The title of Duke can be retained?”

“A Duke without a duchy.”

Normally, the title of a duke without a duchy is usually granted to the offspring of the royal family of a kingdom, or marquises with outstanding military achievements. Only Dragon Knights can found a nation and receive the title of Grand Duke, and if offspring fail at Dragon Riding, they can inherit the title of Duke and continue to manage the duchy.

Although the status of a duke without a duchy is somewhat lower, it is still much wider in territory than that of a marquis, and they can enjoy more resources.

Together with the original foundation of the Grey Iron Family, even though they are no longer in the Dragon Rearing Family sequence, they can still enjoy the treatment of top-tier Nobles.

This was a better damage control plan than any, and Piero was thrilled, “I will try to persuade more of the Knight Class to go to the Flame Kingdom... But as Your Majesty is concerned, the Grey Iron Duchy is too far away from the Flame Kingdom; the long journey there would scare off most knights. And if the Eagle Royal Family discovers this, they might chase us along the way.”

“I can draw a map for you, setting you on another safer route, to the coastal border south of the Eagle Kingdom and the Yellowstone Kingdom. There, I have established a new Teleportation Array, directly connected to the Flame Kingdom.”

...

Recruiting the Grey Iron Family and the knights of the Grey Iron Duchy was just a side story.

Liszt restrained the assassin, the Archmage, Pilaf, and his son. His next step was to conquer the Aluminum Dragon. If time permitted, he could peacefully use silver coins to conquer the Aluminum Dragon. However, it was hard to say that the Eagle Kingdom hadn't been involved in this assassination plot.

To avoid prolonged complications, he decided to take violent measures.

He signaled Duke Pierrot to return to the Grey Iron Duchy, preparing for the family's relocation, and then he began searching for the Aluminum Dragon in the wilderness. He quickly found the dragon, which was drinking water in a valley, a juvenile Metal Dragon with a thirty-meter body length and wingspan that had also noticed the arrival of Liszt and his companions.

Leo and Bard firmly locked onto the Aluminum Dragon's position.

From left and right, they flew calmly towards the valley, pressuring the dragon but not so much that it was driven to flee in panic.

“Leo, Bard, it’s up to you now... and Ach, please ask Charlie to help with the translation, so the Aluminum Dragon understands the choices it faces,” Liszt, sitting on Bard’s back, said to Ach, who rode on Unicorn Charlie—Charlie could discern good from evil and communicate with many creatures’ minds.

It could also engage in vague communication with dragons, proving to be a very capable diplomat.

“Roar!”

The Aluminum Dragon’s scales bristled as it let out a sharp, wary cry, its body tensing, ready to take flight at any moment.

“Oh roar!”

“Woo yeeya!”

Leo and Bard each emitted a majestic dragon’s roar, responding to the Aluminum Dragon’s alarm.

With a snort, Unicorn Charlie’s golden horn flickered, already initiating a mental conversation with the Aluminum Dragon.

After a moment of conversation,

Faced with two formidable dragons and the promise from Liszt that it could lay on a mountain of silver coins to sleep, the juvenile Aluminum Dragon was indecisive. But rationality prevailed, and through Charlie’s translation, it expressed its willingness to undergo a Mind Battle with Liszt.

However, should the Mind Battle fail, Liszt must let it go free.

“Agreed!” Liszt didn’t hesitate for a moment. He was confident in himself and had extensive experience with Mind Battles. He was also well-aware of the mental battle tactics of Aluminum Dragons and didn’t expect to fail—if he did, he would let it go as promised.

If it were to flee, he could always capture it later and try a second Mind Battle using a Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit.

In any case,

After persuading the dragon with good words and without a dragon-slaying battle breaking out, Liszt successfully gained the opportunity for a Mind Battle. Taking a deep breath and under the Aluminum Dragon's slightly resentful gaze, he leapt onto its back and steadily walked toward the exquisite Dragon Tooth Platform.

He found his footing on the uneven spots and settled down.

In an instant,

An extraordinary feeling swept over him, and he entered a world shimmering with silver light.

Chapter 1018: Ever-changing Li Si Te didn't know why an Aluminum Dragon was so fond of the metal silver, so much that even its mind world was a shimmering world of metallic silver.

There were no flowers, plants, or trees, only mountains of silver and rivers flowing like silver from the horizon to Li Si Te's feet.

On the opposite bank, an adult Aluminum Dragon with cold, gleaming eyes was giving Li Si Te a malevolent stare.

In the real world, it couldn't resist Li Si Te's oppression, but in the mind world, it was completely in control. With a roar that undeniably declared it was about to use cruel methods to deal with Li Si Te—an approach different from Florenza Chase Wind Arrow's mind battle.

Florenza didn't encounter a battle, merely needing to break through the Aluminum Dragon's liquid transformation and find the Dragon Tooth Platform.

Clearly, such different treatments in the mind battle were entirely determined by the Aluminum Dragon's likes and dislikes; it admired Florenza, so the mind battle hovered near the baseline; it loathed Li Si Te, so the mind battle reached the highest difficulty.

“But, you think this can scare me off, Aluminum Dragon?” Li Si Te held the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword in his hand, his body shrouded by a faint mist.

The mist, representing destiny, slightly flowed and turned the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword a fiery red.

“Roar!”

The Aluminum Dragon moved its nearly sixty-meter-long body slightly; its grayish-white scales looked like candles about to melt, and it spat out a silver-white metallic torrent in response to Li Si Te’s challenge.

“Break!”

Li Si Te, holding the sword in both hands, released a surge of Dragon Dou Qi and abruptly cleaved the metallic torrent. The Aluminum Dragon’s metallic stream, unlike the Iron Dragon and Copper Dragon’s, resembled a dense liquid that, even when split, could still extend and wrap around to completely swallow Li Si Te and turn him into a statue.

However, such a minor technique couldn’t trouble Li Si Te; he stimulated his Dragon Dou Qi into flames that exploded around his body, shattering and spurting the metallic torrent in all directions.

“Aluminum Dragon, unleash whatever techniques you have. I’ll make you fully understand that whether it’s the real world or the mind world, I am the nightmare you cannot escape!” Li Si Te said, as a pair of wings suddenly sprouted from his back, belonging to a Phoenix Incarnation.

With his development of the Phoenix Incarnation, he had long mastered the ability to partially transform.

Flapping the wings of fire, he rose into the air, looking down at the Aluminum Dragon that had yet to take flight.

It was unclear whether it was his ability to fly that enraged the Aluminum Dragon, or his boastfulness, but the Aluminum Dragon suddenly unfolded its sixty-meter wingspan. As it

flapped its wings progressively larger, its body also melted more and more. In a blink, it liquified and continuously extended into a pair of wings that could blot out the sun.

These wings ascended continuously, reaching the high skies of the mind world and then swooped down towards Li Si Te.

Enveloped by the force of wind and thunder, it seemed poised to obliterate Li Si Te in one strike.

“Fancy tricks, useless!” Li Si Te’s eyes widened as wisps of mist merged into his body, making the already fiery Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword burn even fiercer, as though it were a weapon belonging to a fire god, “A blaze that sets the prairies afire, this sword exists only in dreams!”

Buzz!

Boom!

The flaming longsword, facing the Aluminum Dragon turned into wings of wind and thunder, struck heavily—the flames surged and extended for miles, as if slicing through the world itself, viciously striking the wings of wind and thunder.

Clang, crack, snap!

The wings of wind and thunder were instantly split in two, where the liquid metal aluminum was intensely burned by the red flames, sending out dazzling white flames.

Accompanied by horrible cries from the Aluminum Dragon, it was unclear where they originated: “Roar...”

The two halves of the wings fell directly onto the metallic silver ground. As the white flames died down, the two halves melted and recombined into an Aluminum Dragon.

Throughout this process, Li Si Te didn’t intervene, simply speaking coldly, “The mind world is but a dream. You can do as you please in your dream, but I can, too. Because the

dream worlds I have visited are beyond your imagination, my understanding of the dream world also surpasses your imagination, Aluminum Dragon.”

This was the absolute truth.

He indeed had participated in the dreamscapes of the Fire Dragon, Formless Dragon, Light Green Gemstone Dragon, Grey Iron Dragon, Mountain Copper Dragon, among others—rich in experience. Moreover, he owned the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, a fruit originating from Jade Dragon representing the power of dreams—more terrifyingly, he also had a leg of the Jade Dragon in his collection.

Although the Jade Dragon’s Hind Leg was difficult to research, Liszt, or rather, Ach managed to glean some information and tap into a corner of the power of dreams.

To describe it precisely, it was like Neo in “The Matrix” gaining superpowers within the simulation because he understood it was a fictitious networked world, enabling him to manually remove bullets from the heroine and even fly within the matrix.

Liszt experienced something similar, after tapping into a hint of dream power, he too could harness the surrounding mist to augment his own strength.

This was his greatest confidence in dragon riding.

“Roar!”

The Aluminum Dragon, unconvinced, attacked again.

With the Phoenix wings flapping on his back, Liszt gently shook his head, “Foolish Aluminum Dragon, becoming my dragon is an inescapable fate for you. Better realize it sooner!”

Pfft!

The Flame Sword swung again, its giant blade slicing the Aluminum Dragon into two halves, the cut fiercely burning. Not waiting for the Aluminum Dragon’s screams of agony,

he swung the Flame Sword once more, making a horizontal chop that quartered the bifurcated Aluminum Dragon.

The four pieces of Aluminum Dragon fell to the ground and quickly reformed into one in agonizing screams, panting heavily and staring intently at Liszt.

“Still not convinced?”

“Roar!”

Of course, the Aluminum Dragon was not convinced, its intention clearly communicated to Liszt—defeating it did not mean winning the battle of minds, he had to shatter its liquid transformation, find the Dragon Tooth Platform, and mount it.

At once.

It transformed into a pool of metallic liquid and merged indistinguishably into the silvery river.

“This is indeed challenging, but not enough to stop me!” Liszt felt like he was Erlang Shen fighting Sun Wukong in their transformation duel, his three eyes atop his head seeing everything. No matter how many times Sun Wukong transformed, he could not escape his ‘divine sight,’ always being discovered, “If you hide, don’t blame me for unleashing my powerful moves!”

Whistle!

A Phoenix cry, and Liszt had transformed into a majestic, flame-composed Phoenix, hovering over the metallic silver river, his wings beating and shaking off clusters of flames.

Soon the entire metallic silver river was engulfed in flames, continuously searing.

When the temperature surpassed 660 degrees Celsius, part of the metallic silver abruptly melted into liquid—that was not silver, but aluminum. Silver melts at 962 degrees Celsius,

while aluminum melts at 660 degrees Celsius; a single transformation distinguishes silver from aluminum.

In the interplay of the five elements, fire overcomes metal, and Liszt firmly suppressed the Aluminum Dragon.

“Roar!”

Unable to hide any longer, the Aluminum Dragon resentfully regrouped into its dragon form. At that moment, Liszt returned to his human form, diving directly onto the back of the Aluminum Dragon. Amidst the Aluminum Dragon’s reluctant twists, he accurately found the position of the Dragon Tooth Platform and settled down onto it.

This time,

Between man and dragon, a true spiritual union and mental connection were established.

Liszt could empathize with the Aluminum Dragon’s frustration and helplessness, while the dragon could sense Liszt’s spirited mood. Their emotions intertwined and finally transformed into a loud “Roar,” soaring into the shiny silver sky, crossing the dazzling brightness in a blink.

The view shifted, returning to the real world.

Smelling the familiar wild scents, sitting no longer on a sixty-meter-long, adult-winged dragon, but on a thirty-meter-long, winged young Aluminum Dragon.

Chapter 1019: Collecting Some Interest When Liszt rode the newly conquered Aluminum Dragon and descended upon Iron Shell Fort, Duke Piero’s gaze was fixed on the Aluminum Dragon with a mix of emotions before he finally let out a long sigh.

It was only two days, yet the Aluminum Dragon had become something in Liszt’s pocket, a feat of dragon-taming so terrifying it overwhelmed him with emotion. The last hope of the Grey Iron Duchy had vanished, and for the Grey Iron Family to carry on its glory, he was left with no choice but to choose this uncertain path as a follower.

“Your Majesty, of the twelve marquises of the Grey Iron Duchy, I have been in contact with five. Two have decided to follow my heir, Pifort, and stay in the Grey Iron Duchy.

Three marquises, all direct followers of mine, have decided to relocate their families and accompany me to the Flame Kingdom.”

Duke Piero added, “However, they wish to meet you and hear your promise.”

“Only three are willing to go? What about the other seven marquises?” Liszt was somewhat disappointed, as not many nobles were willing to go.

“The seven are marquises with large fiefs. I have sent messengers to them, and if they are willing, they will follow later. If they are not, they will stay. In addition, there are a bunch of earls and viscounts whom I have also contacted. Only about ten to twenty percent are urgently ready to leave with me.”

Given time, Piero was confident he could persuade a third of the nobles to follow him to the Flame Kingdom.

However, since time was of the essence and to avoid being intercepted by the Eagle Kingdom in a protracted endeavor, Piero would only stay here for a few days before departing. With such haste, many nobles simply could not take their family resources with them, hence their reluctance to leave.

“If the Eagle Royal Family does not come to stop them, these nobles can take their time to decide. After all, the Grey Iron Duchy has its sovereignty, and if the nobles wish to leave, the Eagle Royal Family wouldn’t dare to intercept too aggressively. Should they attempt to, I shall intervene, and I believe the Eagle Royal Family would not dare to rekindle the Dragon-slaying War.”

“Then I’ll go and rally them again.”

“Yes, feel free to rally them. For now, I will hold off the Eagle Kingdom. After all, I promised to protect the Grey Iron Duchy for twenty years.” This was an excuse, a reason for Liszt to remain there without being pushed to leave; as long as he did not force the Grey Iron Duchy’s nobles to leave, the Eagle Royal Family was unlikely to turn against him outright.

At most, there was an unspoken agreement for Liszt to partition the Grey Iron Duchy with Piero acting as his spokesperson, while Pifort would presumably represent the Eagle Kingdom.

The nobles had just divided the dragons among three households, and now two were dividing up the country, such were the exchanges of noble interests.

However, before that, Liszt had one more issue to attend to: “Duke Piero, there are two marquises, direct followers of yours, who are not willing to go, tell them to promptly assemble their knight orders and follow me to conquer Firm Earth, for I must exterminate the Earth Fury Family.”

The Earth Fury Family had dared to participate in an assassination conspiracy, a challenge to a sovereign king and a Holy Dragon Knight. Eradicating them was the only way to quell Liszt’s wrath.

The Smoke Mission had also said that he should vent his anger on the conspirators—since it was impractical to seek revenge against the mastermind behind Gaius, Emperor Jupiter of the Kushan Empire. He would simply take some interest now and wait until a later date, when he was more powerful, to settle the full account with the Kushan Empire.

...

“Father, why must my people wage war and plunder the Earth Fury Family for him? This will leave me at a great disadvantage in the future, how are we to handle our relationship with the Eagle Royal Family!”

Inside Iron Shell Fort, Pifort argued with Duke Piero.

Duke Piero looked at his eldest legitimate son and legal heir as if he were a stranger: “Because he is the great Holy Dragon Knight, and no one can defy his orders, not even our Grey Iron Family.”

“Grey Iron Dragon, Aluminum Dragon; father, you have made too many mistakes in this matter, leading to the decline of the Grey Iron Family’s honor.”

“The loss of the Grey Iron Dragon was indeed from my hands, but the fault lies ultimately with Adonis, not me. I never intended to lead our family to ruin, but Adonis had already set his sights on the Grey Iron Family... The Aluminum Dragon is a conspiracy, Pifort, you shouldn’t be so trusting of Adonis.”

“At least King Adonis is more trustworthy than you, Father, who believes the man who took our family’s dragon!”

“The fault of the war lies neither with Liszt, Adonis, nor myself. I find no hatred for Liszt, for he had ample reason to seek revenge on the Grey Iron Family involved in the Dragon Slaughter War. Instead, Adonis should have compensated the Grey Iron Family for our losses, but he did not; that is a betrayal of the alliance.”

“I do not agree with your words, Father!”

“Forget it, we need not speak so self-righteously; I will not abandon the Grey Iron Family, and neither will you. From this day forth, you and I, father and son, will part ways. I shall take the surname ‘Grey Iron’ and head to the Flame Kingdom to forge my path, and you, do as you please.”

After a moment of silence.

Pifort said coldly, “The Grey Iron Family dissipated in the hands of my father, not me... From now on, ‘Fallen Iron’ shall be my surname, a constant reminder of this shameful period.”

“Hmph!”

Piero Grey Iron flung his hand in dismissal, “Do as you wish!”

...

“As of today, the Earth Fury Family will vanish into smoke, and this castle will also be destroyed by me, to serve as a warning to any noble who dares to act against a Dragon Knight—prepare to face the rightful fury!”

Pilaf and his son, Pilaf the Earth Frenzy, were sentenced to death by Liszt—all that awaited was the interrogation to extract all information about the conspiracy and the martial heritage of the Cloaked Bear-wearer, and then they would be exiled to the Exiled Lands—a death sentence for a noble, euphemistically called exile.

“Charge!”

On the ground, a large number of knights surged toward the castle, while knights from the Earth Fury Family guarded it fiercely.

Seeing this, Liszt immediately brandished his Shattered Crystal Greatsword, and with a fierce burst of Dou Qi, he split a crack in the castle, killing countless knights with the blast of Dou Qi.

Following the breach in the castle walls, the charging knights swarmed in and quickly overwhelmed the castle.

“This sword is indeed fine, with a very unique and imposing design, perfectly suited for my use.” Not paying attention to the battle below, Liszt took pleasure in appreciating the greatsword in his hand.

The sword had been seized from an assassin, and the seizure also yielded a Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, which surprised yet didn’t surprise him—since a Mind Fruit Tree could grow on Mind Island and bear Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruits, other places must surely do so as well.

And this also meant that the Royal Family of the Kushan Imperial certainly had possession of parts of the Jade Dragon’s remains.

“I wonder if assembling the Jade Dragon’s body could resurrect this Sacred Dragon, a creature of incredible power.”

Regrettably, the assassin was still unconscious, the Archmage who broke the ice was also out cold, and the Pilaf father and son were wailing that they knew nothing, leaving too little information to be interrogated. Regarding the Kushan Imperial and this conspiracy, they would have to wait for the assassin and the Archmage Su to awaken.

“First, I’ll collect some interest from the Earth Fury Family, and later, I’ll deal with this Archmage and this assassin.”

Chapter 1020: Death by Arrogance The Earth Fury Family had already been overrun by the raging charge of the Knight Order, and with Pilaf the Earth Frenzy no longer presiding

over it, the castle relied solely on his legitimate eldest son, Pifonte Earth Fury, to maintain its operations.

Compared to Pilaf, whose strength was on par with top Domain Knights, Pifonte's current power was, at best, that of a Completion Level Sky Knight.

And the two Marquises from Grey Iron Duchy advancing on them were both Completion Level Sky Knights. Outnumbered two to one, Pifonte was directly and disastrously defeated. His defeat, just like the war orchestrated by Liszt, had a predetermined outcome. Every person, young and old, was captured and became prisoners at the victor's feet.

"Hand over all the contracts of the Elves, offer up the wealth of the Earth Fury Family, confess your guilt, and you and your remaining three brothers commit suicide, and I will spare the Earth Fury Family the sin of attempting my assassination." Liszt stood in front of Pifonte, who was bound by Mountain Copper Manacles, looking imposing in his Bone Dragon Armor.

Pifonte did not look at his brothers; he simply turned his head and glanced at his wife, teary-eyed, and his three sons, aged ten, eight, and four.

Then, with a mixture of sorrow and anger, he looked at Liszt: "I am a noble of the Eagle Kingdom. My father and brothers attempted to assassinate you, but that did not betray the knightly code of ethics!"

"Do you really want to play on the literal meaning of the words, 'victory for those in power, defeat for those who are vanquished'?"

Hearing this, Pifonte ultimately succumbed and said, "I understand. On behalf of the Earth Fury Family, I am willing to acknowledge my sins to His Majesty King Liszt, and am also willing to hand over the family's Elves and wealth... May I meet my father before I take my own life?"

Liszt casually said, "No."

"Uh..." Pifonte nodded his head, asked for nothing more, and honestly severed all contracts with the Elves, then handed them one by one to Liszt.

To Liszt's disappointment, he had thought that, as an old Marquis and an inheritor of Ancient Warriors, the Earth Fury Family would have at least a dozen Greater Elves. But aside from the five Greater Elves previously surrendered, the Earth Fury Family now only had six Greater Elves left.

Two Little Wheat Greater Elves, one Magic Potion-class Iris Greater Elf, one Sticky Rice Greater Elf, one Ginger Greater Elf, and one Beet Greater Elf.

In other words, over the years, the entire Earth Fury Family had only accumulated eleven Greater Elves—though considering Marquis Nuta Dimaria Yuhua Stone of Kushan Imperial, there weren't many Greater Elves either. These eleven Greater Elves were already considerable, just not in line with Liszt's expectations.

In addition, the Earth Fury Family had one hundred seventy-two Little Minor Elves and more than eight hundred Elf Bugs.

"It's a bit less than expected, but it's still a huge replenishment for me, further closing the gap with the dragon rearing families' heritage... Flame Island is simply too large; one can never have too many Elves." Liszt happily packaged up the Elves and secured them on the back of the Formless Dragon.

Next, he took possession of the Earth Fury Family's wealth. Assets such as gemstones, Magic Metals, Crystals, Gold Coins, and other materials that could be taken away were all chosen by him.

The remaining assets like immovable property and resources like food, copper coins, and metals were distributed among the knights who had come charging.

...

The Earth Fury Family was annihilated, gone like smoke and clouds.

Liszt had already returned to his domain with a wealth of materials, tearing through space. So many Elves and such treasure, upon reaching the ears of the astonished nobles of Flame Island—they understood that their Son of Glory, who had become their king, had once again made a grand transaction out in the world.

“The Earth Fury Family has just been destroyed like that?” Marquis of Bull Tail, Li Weiliam, asked in surprise upon hearing the news.

“Yes, Father, assassins and archmages need strict supervision; not a single oversight can be allowed. As for Father Pilaf and his three sons, you will personally oversee their interrogation to ensure they spill everything. I need to know how the Kushan Imperial is conspiring with these people, plotting against me.”

“Don’t worry, I will take good care of these three... But you also need to be cautious. The news of the Earth Fury Family’s downfall could very well enrage the Eagle Royal Family.”

“I know, but I must go to protect Duke Piero and these knights who have fled to me. If the Flame Kingdom wants to develop, population is its biggest constraint. Moreover, in this matter, I am the real victim, having been assassinated for the second time, I believe the Eagle Royal Family will not dare to turn their face.”

Two assassination attempts, the first with five dragons and two Dragon Knights, were forcefully counterkilled by Liszt.

The second was the formidable assassin and Archmage from the Kushan Imperial, who joined forces to set a deadly trap, yet Liszt still managed to evade and counterkill.

Without preparation for a sure-kill, the Eagle Royal Family would absolutely not dare to act recklessly.

Therefore, Liszt returned once again to the Grey Iron Duchy, carrying the prestige of having decimated the Earth Fury Family, and more Noble Knights from the Grey Iron Duchy joined the migration caravan, following the map personally drawn by Ach, heading in the direction of Heroic Yellow City.

One could imagine.

As the Eagle Kingdom could not come up with any countermeasures, more Nobles from the Grey Iron Duchy would choose to flee and seek development in the Flame Kingdom.

Anyone could see that after losing the dragons, the fate of the Grey Iron Duchy was hanging by a thread.

Now it was a multiple-choice question, whether to join the Eagle Kingdom or the Flame Kingdom. The advantage of joining the Eagle Kingdom was that there was no need to migrate, and the family could preserve its wealth to the greatest extent; the downside was that as a vassal to a ruined country, it would not be easy to vie for glory.

The disadvantage of joining the Flame Kingdom was the need to migrate and the surrender of a great deal of wealth and serfs; the benefit was that in the new kingdom, opportunities abounded, and with ambition, one could eventually grow and strengthen the family.

“Your Majesty, from this moment on, the Grey Iron Family will charge into battle for Your Majesty!”

After departing from Iron Shell Fort, Piero realized he had taken with him only a group of followers, along with several mistresses and illegitimate children, and had not brought any family members. His lawful wife decided to stay and live with his son Pifort, continuing to defend what was ultimately indefensible in the Grey Iron Duchy.

“Look forward, Duke Piero.”

...

When Piero left the Grey Iron Duchy with his knights, thousands of kilometers away in the Royal Palace of the Eagle Kingdom – the Iron Dragon Chain Palace.

King Adonis Moonlight Silver, looking at the intelligence in his hands, showed no emotion.

He simply narrated calmly to the Queen, “Emperor Jupiter has indeed set his sights on the Sacred Dragon – Invisible Dragon, but in his cleverness, he refused to collaborate with me and instead chose the brute Pilaf. Now, he has gained nothing, having lost his most important assassins and Archmages.”

“That’s not a good thing, Adonis. Liszt has grown stronger, and he has taken the Aluminum Dragon!” the Queen sighed.

“I think it’s a good thing. I understand Emperor Jupiter; the man is stubborn and vindictive. Just wait, he will not be content with this failure. When he comes again, it’s destined to be a wild battle with Liszt, and that’s when my chance to profit will come!”

“I hope so,” the Queen shook her head, then asked, “What do you think should be done about the Earth Fury Family?”

“Pilaf the Earth Frenzy, if he hadn’t been greedy for the Aluminum Dragon and had reported to me, I would naturally have protected the Earth Fury Family. But since he chose to betray me, this is all self-inflicted. Now, with Piero busy escaping, I can use the pretext of dealing with the Earth Fury Family to swallow up the Grey Iron Duchy and compensate for the Kingdom’s losses.”

“That won’t really compensate for much.”

“Storing strength and waiting for the right opportunity, haven’t we been anticipating this situation for a long time?” Adonis took the Queen’s hand and spoke with forced cheer, “I’ve seen how many young heroes rise and fall. With Liszt’s unbridled nature, venturing thousands of miles just to snatch dragons, he will eventually die from his own arrogance.”

As he spoke, he stood up, pointing across the land with a laugh, “At that time, it will be my moment to sweep away the despondency and restore the glory of the Eagle!”