

The Mighty 501

Chapter 501 1.8 Meters Tall with Long Legs

Goltai, who was in charge of the glass sales negotiation in Coral City, took the opportunity to purchase three second-hand cargo ships for the territory. The cargo ships had not been refurbished yet and were temporarily dispatched to the New Harbor on Black Horse Island to participate in the salvage of the Sky Ship.

With the combined pulling force of six ships, the Sky Ship was finally dragged up from the seabed and bit by bit hauled to the shoreline.

Liszt was there at the site, watching the salvage.

At that time, heavy snow was flying, and a layer of ice and snow had already accumulated on the beach. However, the falling snowflakes couldn't bring a trace of severe cold to Liszt, draped in a Flack·Abaie cloak with red-facing, black-backed, and gold-edged fabric. Since he had advanced to the rank of Sky Knight and acquired the Advanced Fire Attribute Dou Qi, he had no fear of the cold.

And the Advanced Fire Attribute Dou Qi was even gradually transitioning to Dragon Dou Qi.

As Fire Dragons obviously knew no fear of the cold, so too did Liszt, imbued with the abundant Dragon Dou Qi, naturally not feel the biting chill. The feather-covered landwalker bird Loki, perched beneath him, also feared not the cold; its tall long legs stepped in the snow, warmed by a thick layer of keratin, just as unfazed by the frost.

"My lord, the sunken ship has been dragged up!" Blair said excitedly.

Liszt naturally could see it.

The overall shape of the Sky Ship was now fully discernible. It was a ship that resembled ancient Chinese tower ships, lacking both masts and sails. The body of the ship was rather narrow and elongated but significantly massive. In comparison, it was even larger than the most advanced three-masted sailboats of this era.

Having once traveled on The Court's exclusive three-masted fast sailboat, he knew it was clearly not as large as the Sky Ship.

Blair continued to analyze excitedly by his side, "Without sails and masts, it must be a galley. Looking at the coral and shellfish cluttering its hull, the shipwreck must be at least a few hundred years old. Hundreds of years ago, the Duchy of Sapphire was still a desolate island, right? It's unknown which country developed such a large galley."

A galley?

Liszt didn't correct Blair's analysis; he simply said, "You direct the salvage team to carefully clean up the items on the ship after it's dragged ashore. And remove all the attached corals, shells, and the like—I want to see the original appearance of this sunken ship."

"Yes, my lord."

Blair quickly began directing the serfs to continuously clean the vessel.

Liszt, riding the landwalker bird, circled the Sky Ship, observing it meticulously. Knowing the ship sailed the skies, he looked at it from that perspective, finding something strange about the ship—its means of flight was hard to pin down—there were no airplane-like wings, nor were there hot-air balloon-like envelopes.

So, instead of believing the Sky Ship flew by physical means, Liszt was more inclined to believe it flew on magic power, perhaps using some sort of magic array.

The entire Sky Ship might even be a piece of Magic Equipment.

But now, the Sky Ship had deteriorated to the point of being a residence for shrimps and crabs. After the thirteen chests containing Magic Medicine Seeds, books, and scepters were taken by Ach, and other somewhat intact items were also removed, there was hardly anything of value left on the ship.

The serfs kept on cleaning and kept hauling out more and more rubbish.

There were rusty weapons, fragmented utensils, and a great pile of stuff unrecognizable in their original form. However, just when Liszt was no longer hopeful, in the rear half of the shipwreck, buried beneath silt and scooped out from the cabin by serfs, they finally discovered something valuable.

Three cabins were intact and undamaged.

In one of the ship's cabins, there was a pile of wood—not just any wood, but branches, none thicker than an arm. It seemed that as long as they had been buried, the branches had once sprouted midway, but ultimately, they had died and become mere wood.

Liszt took a branch and used the Eye of Magic to inspect it but found no magic.

When he tried to break it, he found that the branch was harder than Thorn Ironwood, comparable to the kind of rockwood that could be hundreds of years old.

"Excellent wood, transport it to the port town and store it there; do not allow its use for now." Liszt wouldn't let the branches be used recklessly without fully understanding their purpose.

In the second cabin, there was a pile of metal ore—metal with a pale blue luster that showed no signs of rust. The color immediately reminded Liszt of the pale blue metal in the fourth circle of the Sun Scepter. These two metals were obviously the same and worth collecting for research.

The third cabin held no treasures.

But there were skeletons.

"My lord, there are a total of twenty-one skeletons, only bones left, their clothes long since decayed."

"Bring me one of the skeletons."

Soon, a skeleton was placed before Liszt. The white bones shared little difference with humans, suggesting the race of the Children of the Sun were indeed human—Sun

Descendants like Philip and Old Phil were normal humans, and it's unlikely their ancestors looked like aliens.

However, there were subtle differences.

From the skeleton, it was evident that the Children of the Sun had a higher leg length ratio, boasting significantly long legs. Beyond that, Liszt discovered nothing new.

Moreover, he suddenly thought, "Perhaps the long legs are an exception; I haven't noticed Old Phil having particularly long legs. On the contrary, it's I who have long legs."

I wonder if it's because of consuming too much of the Long Taro Family's elongated taros that made their legs quite long.

"This is a female skeleton." Marcus, who had been involved in salvaging the shipwreck and had just cleaned the mud off himself, came over, "My lord, this woman was probably around 1.8 meters tall, with a somewhat delicate bone structure. Judging from the closure of her growth plates, she might have been underage."

"Female? Underage? Teacher Marcus, do you also know how to examine bones?"

"Unlike nobles who practice Dou Qi, as commoners in the Knight Academy, we are taught by our teachers how to discern the flow of energy channels through the skeleton. I've learned a bit more and have seen many different human skeletons, even considering how to use bones to enhance the lethality of my archery."

"I see, then continue to analyze this skeleton for me."

"Yes, my lord." Marcus squatted down and observed the skeleton closely, "Long leg ratio exceeding that of ordinary people, pelvis not yet open, apparently has not given birth... Beyond that, I'm unable to ascertain more."

Afterward, Marcus analyzed each skeleton brought out, one by one.

All the skeletons belonged to underage individuals, ranging from 1.9 to 1.3 meters tall, of various heights. There were both males and females, all with a notably prominent leg

length ratio. But no other differences from humans were discovered. The race of the Children of the Sun were essentially humans with longer legs.

By this time, the exterior of the ship also had been cleaned.

A large amount of coral and seashells had been stripped off, revealing the true appearance of the Sky Ship—a loush ship whose exterior had been peeled away, leaving only its main structure.

Standing on a plank, Kostor suddenly shouted, "My lord, you should come up and take a look, it's incredible, the keel of this ship... The keel of this ship is actually one whole branch, my goodness, it's unbelievable, just like a keel grown from a tree!"

Chapter 502 Sinking of the Moon Empire's Ship

With a slight push on Loki's neck, Liszt soared into the air and landed on the railing of the Sky Ship. Following the route pointed out by Kostor, he clearly saw what the dragon bone of the Sky Ship looked like.

It was indeed an entire tree branch.

Starting from the bow, instead of a ram, the branch split into two, extending towards both sides of the ship's bottom, forming three parallel lines with the main branch. These three lines constituted the main dragon bone and two side dragon bones, together forming the ship's main support structure.

Above these dragon bones, many smaller branches extended to either side, forming the ribs.

In other words, the core structure of the Sky Ship was constructed out of a single tree branch. Only this branch was very standardized and symmetrical, as if cast from a mold. The other parts were assembled on this trunk, and upon closer inspection, it was observed that many components, like the dragon bone, were also whole tree branches.

This was a Sky Ship "grown" from various branches.

"Indeed, it is incredible," Liszt couldn't help but marvel, "Such technology definitely surpasses this era. No noble in our country possesses this kind of technology."

"Lord, our country has the most advanced shipbuilding industry. If our country cannot build such large ships, then I think... only the Moon Empire has the capability to build such ships," Marcus, who followed up, offered his firm analysis, "This ship might have sunk to the ocean's depths thousands of years ago!"

The Moon Empire was a convenient scapegoat.

Anything inexplicable or unexplainable could be attributed to the Moon Empire.

Naturally, Liszt wasn't going to reveal now that this was a Sky Ship built by the Child of the Sun race from another continent. So he joined in the blame-shifting, "I think so, too. Only during the era of the Moon Empire was there such a powerful force capable of building such great ships."

"We have actually salvaged a shipwreck from the Moon Empire, this is truly magnificent!" Blair praised earnestly, "The glory of the knight truly favors you, Lord, favoring this territory!"

In traditional belief, the relics of the Moon Empire were synonymous with treasures.

This shipwreck had been deemed by them as such a relic, and salvaging it was a common method of obtaining treasures found in knight novels.

A method of wealth everyone pursued and aspired to.

Of course, in Liszt's territory, aside from the designated commercial and agricultural revenue, all other produce belonged to Liszt.

This shipwreck, too, belonged entirely to Liszt.

"Kostor, you have a better understanding of ships. Do you think it's possible to modify this ship into a sailing ship?" Liszt tested the hardness of the "tree branch," which, despite being submerged in the sea for countless years, was still strong and showed no signs of decay. The main structure of the entire ship remained intact.

Kostor pondered seriously, "I think it is possible, Lord. We have a stock of rockwood for making masts, Thorn Ironwood for supplementing the rest of the ship's body, plus the intact dragon bone of this Moon Empire shipwreck can be used to build a fast sailing ship... however, we lack shipbuilding technology."

Liszt had brought many serfs and craftsmen from the continent, but there were no shipwrights among them who could build ships.

Shipwrights who could build large sailing ships were exclusive to the Duchy of Sapphire, with the expertise concentrated in the hands of a few major families.

"If we lack the technology, we'll explore. We'll train our shipwrights. We've refitted several cargo ships already; are we afraid of not gaining experience? With rubber, an excellent adhesive material, I believe that even a ship put together at random could sail the seas!" Liszt declared seriously.

The Fresh Flower Vessel, Thorn Number, Pearl, Mangrove Number, plus three newly purchased cargo ships.

The serfs of the territory had also learned quite a bit of shipbuilding technology. They might not be able to build advanced sailing ships, but the technology level of the sailing ships of this era wasn't high to begin with. With rubber replacing rivets in the joining techniques, the shipbuilding technology was greatly simplified to the level of assembling blocks.

As long as one wasn't foolish, with enough study and practice, it was possible to build the sailing ships of this era.

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Branches from the ship's hold, light blue metal, and twenty-one skeletons were transported to the warehouse in the harbor town.

As for the wreck of the Sky Ship, Liszt researched it for several days in a row. The only thing he confirmed was that the branches used to make the Dragon Bone were the same as the ones stored in the ship's hold. Beyond that, no further discoveries were made, so he handed the remains over to Blair, instructing him to organize serfs and try to convert the Sky Ship into a sailing ship.

"My plan is for you to select the more clever serfs from this group and train them to become shipbuilders capable of constructing ships."

"Yes, my lord!"

Liszt then instructed Kostor, "You are the sailing instructor of this territory, and I hope you can train more sailors quickly. I'll continue to supplement our fleet with more cargo ships in the time to come. You must ensure the sailors are adequately staffed and definitely train more qualified senior crew members such as captains and first mates."

"Lord, that may be difficult in a short time. The serfs that come from the continent are completely unacquainted with the sea; they don't even dare to swim, let alone overcome their fear of the ocean," Kostor responded.

"I will have Consultant Goltai provide you with ample support. What you need to do is to train qualified sailors for me!"

"As you wish, my lord!"

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When leaving Black Horse Island.

Liszt took some branches and light blue metal with him for further research—items stocked in the hold of a Sky Ship were certainly no ordinary objects.

Especially these branches, which could grow into Dragon Bone, simply defied imagination.

"If I thoroughly research these branches, does it mean that I could make my own Sky Ship? Even if I can't make a Sky Ship, I can still continuously produce seafaring sail ships. Naturally-grown Dragon Bone is obviously much sturdier than Dragon Bone assembled with rivets," he pondered.

In his spare time, he often visited the glass greenhouse.

Unfortunately, even after five days, not a single seed inside the glass greenhouse had sprouted. He wasn't sure if it wasn't time yet, if the temperature was not right, or if the seeds were dead.

He still had patience to wait.

On the other hand, he was gradually losing his patience.

"Bawel, haven't you managed to make tofu yet?" Liszt arrived at the Fresh Flower Tavern to inquire about the chef Bawel's progress. More than a week had passed since he funded Bawel's research.

There was still no sign of tofu.

Bawel was a bit panicked; he had gotten a sponsorship fee of ten Gold Coins and had even hired ten assistants, but still no results: "I'm sorry, Lord Landlord, I... I haven't found a way to make tofu yet."

"As soon as possible!" Although Liszt was anxious, he kept his impatience to himself, considering that the other party was a candidate recommended by the Smoke Mission.

Perhaps the success of making tofu lay with Bawel.

Pressuring him too much could inadvertently impede the appearance of tofu.

After urging Bawel, Liszt also chatted with Chris Truth, partly to collect the month's supply of Magic Potions and partly to see if she had any ambition to become a Grand Magician right away. If she managed to break through directly, there wouldn't be a need to rush the Smoke Mission.

"Viscount, I haven't attempted to break through to Grand Magician recently, I am focusing on researching Elf Bug Amber. I have a feeling that the secrets it contains are key to my breakthrough!" Chris spoke with excitement—she had found many significant clues within the amber.

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Chapter 503 The Secret in Amber

The Elf Bug Amber was still brilliantly yellow, beautifully beyond words.

However, for Chris Truth, it had another layer of beauty, "Viscount, what do you think elves truly are as an existence?"

"I've discussed this with Granney Truth; he outlined to me the triangular relationship between the spirit, the material, and magic power," Liszt pondered, then replied, "I somewhat agree with his understanding that the fusion of the material with magic power, under certain conditions, creates an individual's spirit."

"Are you saying that elves are the fusion of plants and magic power, an accidental creation of spirit, thus endowing life to an individual?"

"I believe that whether it's elves or dragons, they all originate from this," Liszt explained earnestly, as he himself was currently nurturing a Fire Dragon, and his understanding of it was profound, "I don't know how the spirit comes into being, but I feel that everything begins with seeds."

"Seeds?"

"Plants sprout from a seed, growing into a flower or a mighty tree. Elves are also, in a way, nurtured from a seed, and no one has clearly explained the birth of dragons; perhaps they, too, are nurtured from a seed. Moreover, humans are also nurtured from a seed."

Chris was surprised, "How can humans come from a seed?"

"That involves human physiology... let me use a frog for example. Have you seen the eggs laid by frogs by the field ditch? Actually, those eggs are the joint masterpiece of a male and a female frog; each egg is a seed, which could turn into a tadpole and then grow into a frog."

Chris frowned and took a while to respond, "I'm sorry, Viscount, but I haven't seen frog eggs."

"Eh."

Liszt gave an embarrassed smile, "Then you've seen a hen lay eggs, right? Actually, an egg can also be considered a seed, a normal egg can be said to have no 'spirit', no soul. This is like the seed of a plant, but in the nurturing process, it ultimately possesses a soul, which must be due to the production of spirit in some way."

"Is that the same with humans?" Chris humbly asked; she had long discovered that the young Noble Landlord she was affiliated with had knowledge that sometimes surpassed even a Grand Magician.

"Humans are the same, but they are incubated in the mother's stomach, belonging to viviparous creatures, just like cows, horses, and sheep. In fact, no matter the animal or human, at the beginning, it all starts with a seed, just pure matter, and spiritual power is gained later."

Liszt tried to make his explanation of the origin of life as simple and clear as possible for Chris.

Linking this to elves and dragons—however, after such an explanation, not only did Chris not understand the relationship between seeds and elves or dragons, but he himself also became entangled, feeling there indeed was no connection.

So he decisively switched the topic, "You were asking me what exactly elves are, right?"

"Yes."

"I think elves are a very magical type of magic creature."

Chris smiled, unsure whether she understood Liszt's dry humor or not; she began to explain her own understanding, "When studying amber, I found that the magic structure encased within the amber is actually a Magic Array. And the reason why the Elf Bugs inside still have magic reactions is the Magic Array hasn't collapsed."

"Magic Array?"

"Yes, so I believe that elves are a kind of special Magic Array. By understanding this kind of Magic Array, one could utilize it to achieve magical effects just like the elves."

Liszt suddenly perked up, "Then have you understood it?"

"I'm sorry, I cannot understand... The Magic Array that constitutes Elf Bugs is far more complex than I imagined; I think even an Archmage could not unravel such a complicated Magic Array. The Dynamic Magic Arrays that a Grand Magician needs to master are already complicated enough; the Elf Bug's Magic Array is countless times more complex than a Dynamic Magic Array."

"So what use is this piece of amber, and how does it help you?"

"This piece of amber could possibly be designed as a type of Magic Equipment to replace Cordyceps, though I'm unsure how to design it... As for its help to me, it has inspired my cognition of Magic Arrays, and that's the biggest help," Chris paused for a moment, then seriously added, "Viscount, I plan to go into quiet meditation for a few days, trying to break through to Grand Magician status."

"Is there anything that I can help with?"

"Not at the moment."

"Alright, take the Elf Bug Amber for now. It might provide you with some inspiration when you attempt to become a Grand Magician."

"Thank you."

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Chris finally began her attempt to become a Grand Magician.

Meanwhile, the results of the research on tofu development released by the Smoke Mission were still pending.

Liszt didn't have too much work to do for the time being, but he spent every day fully engaged, so much so that he didn't have any spare time from morning till night.

Training dogs, cultivating, and feeding the Little Fire Dragon occupied most of his day.

The Magic Power of the Fire Dragon dwindled day by day, and the supply of volcanic glass that Black Horse Island could mine was also approaching exhaustion. The Mini Little Fire Dragon grew robustly, falling into a deep sleep immediately after eating its fill, all the while continually excreting impure magic power, aiding the growth of Liszt's Dragon Dou Qi.

The practice of the Advanced Dou Qi Manual "Rising Sun Blaze" was going smoothly; Liszt soared through the sky daily and continually stimulated the Landwalker bird Loki to fly as well.

Loki's body had stopped developing, clearly indicating the effects of the Bloodline Fruit had been fully realized, and its abilities had significantly improved.

Considering the dispersal of magic power, Loki had become on par with Douson, reaching the status of an Intermediate Dragon Beast.

Yet it still only knew the Light Body Skill and its progressively longer wings were still useless—it couldn't fly.

Returning from his training that day, Liszt, as usual, took a walk through the glass greenhouse. He loosened the soil, weeded, and calmly waited for the Magic Medicine Seeds to sprout. However, a week and a half had passed since planting, and the seeds had yet to sprout, diminishing his hopes for their viability.

On the other hand, while researching the Sun Scriptures, he had some new inspiration.

"The Child of the Sun, Sky Ship, Tree City, Druids, Long Legs, Sun Scepter, Magic Medicine Seeds... The Child of the Sun race seems somewhat similar to the elves from Western legends on Earth—those tall, handsome beings who live in the forest and are proficient archers."

However, thinking of the appearance of the Sun Descendant—Old Phil—he seemed to have nothing to do with handsomeness.

Then another thought occurred to him.

The continent where the Child of the Sun lived was likely across from the Devil's Sea.

But the wreck of the Sky Ship was submerged near Black Horse Island, which meant it had crossed both the Devil's Sea and the Sea of Azure Waves. This suggested that the continents had interactions long ago—the fact that the Sun Descendant could be exiled to the Duchy of Sapphire also served as clear evidence.

"Thousands of years ago, there was a human kingdom called the Moon Empire, and across the continent lived a group of the Child of the Sun. 'Moon' and 'Sun', could there be a connection? Was the Sky Ship a tool for different human races across continents to interact?"

Information was too scarce.

He couldn't make any substantial judgments.

He bent his head and continued weeding the soil of the glass greenhouse—while the Magic Medicine Seeds failed to sprout, various weeds were racing to emerge.

Just then, as his small shovel removed a weed, he suddenly discovered a Magic Medicine Seed pushed upward by the loosened soil. The seed had split open, and a tender green-white shoot extended, pushing it to the surface of the earth, almost ready to break through the soil.

"The Magic Medicine Seeds have sprouted!"

Chapter 504 New Magic Power Hardware

The seed had just germinated and hadn't broken through the soil yet.

So, Liszt didn't disturb it but simply used his Eye of Magic Power to observe it for a while, finding no trace of magic power. It seemed that the magic potion had degraded along with the seed, turning into an ordinary plant.

"It's good that it has sprouted. As long as we know what plant it is, we can find the corresponding Elf Bugs. If all else fails, with the existence of the Smoke Mission, I believe there is a high probability that these plants will nurture Elf Bugs," said Liszt in a good mood as he personally watered and fertilized the plant.

Only after doing all this did he proceed with his routine research for the day.

When he arrived at the smithy in Fresh Flower Town, the steward in charge of the smithy came forward to report, "Lord Landlord, our research on the pale blue metal is not going well. Forging this metal is no less difficult than forging Mithril. Perhaps only an Iron Knight could accomplish the forge."

An Iron Knight was a blacksmith who practiced Dou Qi, typically one had to become an Earth Knight to earn the title of Iron Knight.

Their Dou Qi had special properties, and the Dou Qi Manuscripts they cultivated were also unique, with all their skills dedicated to forging. Magic metals like Mithril, Mountain Copper, and Fine Gold could only be forged by Iron Knights.

"Does that mean this pale blue metal might be a magic metal?"

"I... don't know, Lord Landlord," the steward replied quietly. "The blacksmiths in our smithy used the bellows to burn the best charcoal, trying to get the furnace as hot as possible, but we still couldn't melt it or shape it by hammering."

Liszt nodded.

Suddenly, he felt that he should use Fire Dragon Magic Power to build a stronger furnace for the smithy. Maybe Fire Dragon Magic Power could fully forge magic metals—it was something to consider over the long term, as the Fire Dragon Magic Power was constantly decreasing and could be completely exhausted at any time.

He couldn't possibly stop cultivating the Mini Little Fire Dragon.

At that moment, the Mini Little Fire Dragon within his heart awakened and immediately started clamoring in his mind with a "Whoa-ho!" It was simple in its desires—it wanted to eat, to consume Fire Dragon Magic Power.

Eat, eat, eat!

That's all it knew day in and day out!

Liszt had to restrain it to behave inside his heart. Then he left the smithy, took out a Fire Dragon Jar, released and absorbed Fire Dragon Magic Power to satiate it. Each time the Mini Little Fire Dragon consumed enough Fire Dragon Magic Power, it would excrete about one-tenth the amount of magical impurities.

This helped Liszt's Dragon Dou Qi grow in a very special way.

He hardly needed to cultivate himself and continued to grow stronger—the power of the Dragon Dou Qi greatly increased the power of his Combat Skills. He hadn't fully learned the Rising Sun Blaze yet, but felt that merely with the addition of Dragon Dou Qi, he could hold his own against an Earl.

"Maybe I should find an opportunity to have a real fight with the Earl... Wouldn't it be wonderful to accidentally defeat him in combat?"

He thought wryly.

Although getting stronger felt great, the thought of the priceless Fire Dragon Magic Power being continually consumed caused him a sharp pain in his chest.

After taking a few deep breaths to suppress the pain, he quickly took out the pale blue metal to shift his attention. The smithy was unable to forge it, and he hadn't figured out much about it himself—it was as heavy as Fine Gold, conducted Dou Qi well, but its other properties were unknown.

Mithril was light as a feather.

Fine Gold was indestructible.

Mountain Copper was unbreakable.

These were the properties of the three known magic metals. The properties of Fine Gold and Mountain Copper were just descriptive; there was no logical relationship between spear and shield. A weapon made of Fine Gold could easily destroy an ordinary Mountain Copper weapon; a powerful weapon made of Mountain Copper could easily block an ordinary Fine Gold weapon.

"The light blue metal is highly likely a magic metal, but I don't know what it's called in Sun Script. However, since this continent doesn't have a similar magic metal, I can name it whatever I want in Serpent Script—let's just call it Blue Steel. Gold, silver, copper, steel, that makes four types of magic metal."

Fine Gold, Mithril, Mountain Copper, Blue Steel, arranged neatly in order.

Yet, Liszt suddenly thought, "The Sun Scepter contains five layers of materials. Other than the central material that seems like crystal and might not be a metal, the other four could possibly be metals, even magic metals. Additionally, the materials of the Messaging Drift Bottle and the thirteen chests could also be magic metals."

He took a chest out of the Gemstone Space.

This was a chest for storing books, but the books had already been removed by Liszt and were piled up in the corner of the space. Handling the chest, roughly the size of a delivery box, it was easy to discover that the metal was quite unique – very light and felt a bit like plastic to the touch.

But it was undoubtedly metal.

"Its weight could match that of Mithril, and it's similarly durable. Moreover, the items it has preserved for hundreds, even thousands of years, are still intact, which speaks volumes about the value of this metal. Most crucially, it seems capable of being engraved with a magic array and can be activated using the blood of a Sun Descendant."

Liszt couldn't be certain whether the magic array was the lines on the chest or something else.

But he knew that the effects of this metal were potent: "Now that I have Blue Steel, I should give it another name. What should I call it? Hardware is usually... gold, silver, copper, steel, aluminum, or gold, silver, copper, steel, tin?" He had little to do with hardware tools in his previous life, not even fixing a pipe.

He couldn't remember whether hardware included aluminum or tin.

However, tin seemed to have less application in daily life, mainly for tin foil used in grilling? Liszt was inclined to think of hardware as aluminum, since he had seen many aluminum products, like aluminum alloy windows and doors used in construction. Moreover, he knew there was a layer of metal paper inside cigarette packs, called aluminum foil.

It was clear that aluminum was very common.

"Then, this magic metal shall be named after aluminum. It's mainly used for packaging, lightweight, with a feel like plastic; let's just call it Cast Aluminum... Why does that name sound so odd?"

Despite the peculiarity, he still decided to name this metal Cast Aluminum—Cast Aluminum Drift Bottles and Cast Aluminum Chests.

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While Liszt was immersed in his research of Blue Steel and Cast Aluminum.

In the Magic Workshop.

Chris Truth was struggling hard to cast the Advanced Magic Water Wave Shield. Without the innate talent of the Sea Sprite Ake, who could cast it successfully in one try, her attempts were met with repeated failures. Finally, as she kept trying, the Water Wave Shield she released grew larger and larger until a light blue curtain of water enveloped her.

"Just a little more, and I'll be able to close the Water Wave Shield and truly anchor the Dynamic Magic Array of the advanced magic!" Beads of sweat dripped from her forehead. Even in winter, she felt both tired and hot.

But she clenched her teeth and made a final effort.

Bit by bit, the Water Wave Shield began to close.

At last.

Ten minutes after casting the magic, the Water Wave Shield completely closed. Instantly, her mind surged, entering a new realm. Her perception and mastery of the magic Water Wave Shield advanced to an insightful level, feeling that the next time she cast it, it wouldn't be nearly as strenuous.

The details of the Dynamic Magic Array had never been so clear.

"I did it!"

Chris allowed herself a modest smile, her emotions stirred as she looked at the Water Wave Shield enveloping her: "Overcoming cognitive barriers, discerning the Dynamic Magic Array, successfully casting advanced magic. Now, I have finally become a Grand Magician!"

Chapter 505 Mage Tower

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Thank you, Alliance Hierarch Bittertree, for the red envelope. Four more updates will follow.

Chris Truth had advanced to Grand Magician.

The tofu hadn't been made yet, but good news had already arrived; upon seeing Chris, who had come to report the happy news at the castle, Liszt's mood was equally excited.

He indeed had opinions about magicians.

It was not because magicians liked to mess around with explosions or the like, but because their quest for truth made them disregard any taboo. Those lunatics at the Goat Assembly even dared to slaughter dragons—what else was there they wouldn't dare to do? Liszt did not wish for such a group of lunatics to exist within his territory.

However, Sea Sprite Ake, the Water System Grand Mage, was different; he was Liszt's own, a direct source of ocean wealth. The Light System Mage, Black Dragon Childe Paris was also different, the new leader of the Patrol Knights, who, even though turned to be a magician, had no interest in exploring truth.

Last but not least, Chris Truth, a true human Grand Magician who was comprehensive in her knowledge, was also different.

She had indeed said she would dedicate herself to truth, willing to explore it for the rest of her life, but after all, Liszt had saved her life. With such a relationship, it would curb her crazy thoughts. Besides, after spending time with her, Liszt also felt that Chris was just a normal scholar.

She indeed liked exploring truth, but she didn't harbor any insane, twisted ideas.

Under Liszt's continuous influence, she had integrated into life in the territory, often going for baths, dining out, enjoying nature, and even developed a liking for comedy plays.

She lived the life of an ordinary person.

Liszt was reassured, "Congratulations, Chris, you've finally achieved your wish and become a Grand Magician. I will also fulfill my promise and build you a Mage Tower on Black Horse Island that belongs to you."

"Thank you, Viscount."

"You've been helping me make magic potions; it is I who should thank you."

"Serving you is my unquestionable duty," Chris said modestly without any pride in making magic potions, "I've heard that the territory's finances are somewhat difficult; I'm not in a hurry for the Mage Tower. I hope you, Viscount, can solve the territory's financial issues first and build the Mage Tower later for me."

What a considerate act.

"No worries," Liszt said with relief, "Recently, the glass produced in the territory has begun to be sold externally, and it's a very profitable industry. Plus, the earnings from Fresh Flower Brew are also ready to be collected; the territory's finances have become healthy again. I had been planning to build a new castle, and now it's the perfect time to build your Mage Tower."

"Ah, Viscount, you should build the castle first; my Mage Tower can be built later."

"No need to argue, let's build the Mage Tower first," Liszt said definitively.

All at once, Chris was touched, her eyes sparkling, "Viscount, you are really too kind to me... I hope to serve you forever."

Liszt simply smiled, without a word.

In fact, a big part of the reason he chose to build the Mage Tower first was to let the territory's architects accumulate experience in constructing new style buildings through the Mage Tower—having rubber, glass, ironwood, rock, bricks, and the modern architectural knowledge in Liszt's mind.

Of course, new style architecture should be built.

He planned to build a castle with a name for himself, designed in the neoclassical style—the most typical example being The White House.

This world's traditional castles are buildings dominated by the idea of sustainable defense.

Yet Liszt had no interest in this, finding that castles only made strategic sense in certain locations. On a small island like Black Horse Island, the enemies faced would only be

pirates. Pirates wouldn't besiege a castle on an island for dozens of days, so there was no need to build a castle that could withstand a siege for half a year.

He had originally wanted to design a seaside castle and had even planned out the location.

However, after synthesizing the architects' opinions, a castle soaked in seawater would be too damp. So, he moved the castle's location slightly inland from the shoreline and decided to build it in the style of The White House. He also planned to excavate a canal leading to the sea, allowing Ake to come and go freely.

The castle's scale might be designed on the standard of a four-story building.

If the pressure testing is completed, it might well be a five-story building. Even though he would be living alone, it didn't stop him from building the castle as a synonym for luxury — "What should be enjoyed, must be enjoyed; there's no need to shortchange oneself."

Thus.

Before that, he decided to build a Mage Tower first, which would be a good opportunity to test whether the new architectural style would have enough strength to support each layer of structure.

"Chris, first solidify your realm as a Grand Magician. In a few days, follow me to Black Horse Island. Select a suitable location and build the Mage Tower," he said.

"Thank you, Lord Viscount." Chris's face flushed with excitement. "I plan to focus on magic arrays and simultaneously craft magic equipment, hoping to help the Viscount create the Calming Wind Pearl and Water Calming Pearl in the future."

"I'm looking forward to it."

After sending away Chris Truth.

Liszt directly summoned the Smoke Mission.

"The mission has changed."

As expected, Chris advanced to Grand Magician first, and the Smoke Mission changed accordingly. A new mission was released immediately, and Liszt's eyes lit up.

"Mission: The comedic actor Avril Mask, who has come to perform in Fresh Flower Town, loves the clean and tidy streets here, which inspire many creative ideas in her. However, she is perplexed that she can only perform in comedies. Why not help her realize her artistic dreams?"

Reward: Loki's new magic."

"Loki is about to possess a second type of magic, which indicates that it truly has become an Intermediate Dragon Beast. Low-level magical beasts and dragon beasts can only have one type of magic!"

Liszt looked forward to the new magic of the Landwalker Bird, so naturally, he would take on the mission immediately: "Comedic actor Avril Mask? No longer wants to perform comedies, asking me to help her achieve her artistic dreams... If she doesn't want to perform comedies, then why not let her try opera, Peking opera, Huangmei opera? I know both 'Princess' Husband' and 'The Match of Heaven Fairy'!"

However, Huangmei opera and Peking opera obviously don't quite fit the aesthetic of the Duchy of Sapphire.

After some thought, he decided to call Avril Mask over and ask her in person. It just so happened that North Valley City's comedic troupe was performing in Fresh Flower Town today—thanks to the prosperous life in Fresh Flower Town, the civilians here had money to spend, and their desire to consume was gradually increasing, spending a lot on theatrical tips.

This attracted several comedic troupes.

"My lord, Avril Mask has arrived in the castle's living room to wait," a servant informed him.

"I know."

Liszt went downstairs and in the living room, met the comedy actress with artistic aspirations. She was a tall, blonde woman, quite good-looking. She seemed a bit older, probably over thirty years of age.

"Avril pays her respects to the respected Lord Landlord," she greeted.

"Rise," Liszt gestured with a wave, "So your surname is Mask. Does that mean your family has been in comedy performances for a long time?"

"Yes, Lord Landlord, since my grandfather's time, we've been performing comedies."

"I've had enough of comedies."

Avril couldn't help but exclaim, "Ah!"

"Comedies are interesting to watch occasionally, but the same ridiculous appearances and childish actions every time can be boring. Avril, haven't you ever thought about innovating? Performing comedies all day long, don't you think the audience gets enough, don't you get enough yourself?" he asked.

"Lord Landlord... Avril does have some complaints about performing too many comedies, but please rest assured, Lord Landlord, Avril will go back and rearrange something fresher to entertain you," she assured him.

"I do not wish to watch comedies; I want to see some normal performances. Avril, I have an idea that I need you to realize. Of course, you may refuse, and if so, I will look for other comedy troupes," Liszt said with a faint smile.

Avril quickly became anxious: "Please instruct me, Lord Landlord. Avril's troupe is the best in North Valley City; we can definitely meet your needs!"

"I would like you to perform plays."

"Plays?"

"It's a form of drama where the performance is primarily based on dialogue. You could bring folktales, love stories, and the like to the stage," Liszt explained briefly—truth be told, he didn't particularly enjoy plays, but to complete the Smoke Mission, he had to give Avril a hint.

Of course, if it had to be done, it should be done well.

He decided to buy out Avril's comedic troupe and turn it into a drama troupe, rehearsing a couple of classic plays to enrich the cultural life of the territory.

Perhaps he could even take the opportunity to glorify the great Lord Landlord of Black Horse Island through the plays.

Chapter 506 Varcey Knight's Loyalty Song

More precisely, Liszt was setting out to create a stage play in the form of a spoken drama, akin to the style of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet."

Of course, he didn't know much about this kind of stage play.

He had never watched a complete stage play.

But that did not prevent him from creating an entirely new stage play in this world. He didn't need highly sophisticated art forms or rich plot content—just to pioneer the theatrical form of stage plays. Once stage plays became popular, surely novelists would craft genuinely good works.

Even more so.

Liszt simply needed to adapt one or two classic Knight's Novels to create a stage play. Besides, according to the Smoke Mission hint, Artknow Veil Mask itself possessed artistic aptitude; what it lacked was merely inspiration. Adapting stage plays could be left to her.

"Avril, I plan to acquire your comedy troupe and help you create an entirely new form of drama plays. Your group will move to Fresh Flower Town and perform mainly for the residents of my domain. As long as you rehearse classic plays, I will recommend that you go perform in larger cities."

The members of the comedy troupe were all freemen and lived quite a challenging life, mostly being relatives of one another.

With Liszt willing to purchase, there was no reason for Avril and her family to disagree. Moreover, the idea of brand-new stage plays deeply attracted Avril: "Lord Landlord, Avril is very willing to perform stage plays for you. I just don't know if they will be popular."

"Don't worry about whether it will be welcomed or not. Once I acquire your troupe, I will set a basic salary according to the standard of workshops in the domain. Afterward, the earnings from each performance will be shared... My expectation for you isn't to make money but to study art."

Whether stage plays could make money depended on whether this artistic form could gain recognition.

But, even if stage plays became popular, the troupe's performance times and frequency were limited; thus, making substantial money was difficult. Liszt had a vast number of industries under him and did not need to rely on stage plays to earn money.

His investment in stage plays was partly to complete a mission and partly for promotion.

He was even willing to continue despite potential losses.

Upon receiving Liszt's affirmative response, Avril was overjoyed and immediately asked Liszt how to rehearse the stage play.

"I have already told you about the form of the stage play. You might still be confused, but you have plenty of time to explore. I'll recommend two Knight's Novels for you, 'Varcey Knight's Loyalty Song' and 'Sir Pierrot of Grand Ambitions.' Simplify them, distill the main stories, and then adapt them to the stage."

These two Knight's Novels didn't have many battle scenes and were in a realistic style, which made them easy to adapt.

Most crucially, their themes were very wholesome.

'Varcey Knight's Loyalty Song' can be understood from its title as a story that describes the loyal protection offered by a knight of the domain to his Lord Landlord; 'Sir Pierrot of Grand Ambitions' depicts how a commoner, through bravery and following his Lord Landlord, eventually becomes a glittering Noble Honored Knight.

Without a doubt, these are stories that plebeians enjoy and nobles appreciate.

"Avril, quickly rehearse a rough story, and when the time comes, I will guide you on which parts have problems, and you can then make corrections," said Liszt in order to finish the task promptly, setting a deadline, "Within three days, I want to see 'Varcey's Song' brought to the stage."

"Lord Landlord, is three days too short? I—I don't know if I can do well."

"Then let me give you a bit more guidance. The story of 'Varcey' is quite simple—bandits arrive in the domain, the Lord Landlord gets injured, and Varcey loyally protects him. He performs extraordinarily, defeating the bandits and securing the safety of the domain, therefore, the Lord Landlord rewards him greatly. You just need to capture the main storyline, add a bit of dialogue, and do some simple action imitation."

"Then I'll give it a try."

"Go ahead."

...

Avril's comedy troupe was renamed "Black Horse Island Drama Troupe," and they began to diligently choreograph "Varcey Knight's Loyalty Song."

Liszt, along with Chris Truth, went to Black Horse Island to select a site for the Mage Tower.

Magicians typically build their towers in secluded places to conduct their research on Truth undisturbed. However, Chris could no longer live apart from the town, so she chose a site on the edge of the port town to build her Mage Tower.

Additionally, the port town, the new castle, and the Mage Tower were arranged in a triangular formation.

Chris did not have a say in the architectural style of the tower because Liszt proposed an entirely new style—arched doors, floor-to-ceiling windows, and large pillars.

It also featured separate stairwells and a plumbing system with its own water tower.

The design was five stories high, with a circular structure, and each floor had four rooms besides the stairwell. Calling it a Mage Tower was a bit of a misnomer—it was actually more like an apartment building. Liszt planned to continue adding such towers in the future to train more magicians or magic scholars.

He did not like the madness of magicians when they studied Truth, but exploring magic power and magic arrays was a worthy research direction for the future.

It was entirely possible to industrialize magic.

Of course, this idea was not yet feasible, as Chris was not even willing to take on a magic apprentice, let alone train a large number of scholars to research magic. Besides, magicians posed a high level of danger. To realize the industrialization of magic, one must first gain complete control over the land.

Only the Dou Qi of knights could contain the threat of magic.

"The requirements are clear, you need to complete the Mage Tower design as soon as possible. Once it's approved by Her Excellency Chris and me, construction shall start immediately," Liszt commanded Jomaya Bangtu.

This architect with a tarnished record had been conscientious since arriving on Black Horse Island and had caused no further trouble. Having arrived early, he had extensive research experience with rubber, bricks, glass, and was temporarily serving as the chief architect of the land. Architects among the new serfs still struggled with the language and needed to adapt to the building style.

"Lord Landlord, please rest assured, we will perfect the design of the Mage Tower!"

Liszt then turned to Chris and said, "The Mage Tower will be built according to your preferences. Do not hesitate to make any requests." That being said, since he had established the architectural tone of the tower, Chris did not have the heart to overturn it and build the Mage Tower she envisioned.

Besides, Liszt's plan was indeed quite appealing.

A Mage Tower in the neoclassical style would certainly be more aesthetically pleasing and practical.

...

Three days later.

Liszt had returned to Fresh Flower Town, and the Black Horse Island Drama Troupe's performance of "Varcey" had officially debuted in the castle's manor, with only the town's officials as the audience.

The stage was primitive, the content of the drama even more so, and the actors' performances were incredibly poor.

The fifteen-minute "Varcey" came to an embarrassing close. To call it a drama was a stretch; it was more like a farce. Liszt was left speechless, realizing that these comedians had no idea how to perform a stage play.

Nevertheless.

When he summoned the Smoke Mission, he couldn't help but smile happily.

"Task completed, reward: Loki's new spell—Levitation Spell."

Chapter 507 Seven Lessons for Knights and The Five Institutes

"Varcey Knight's Loyalty Song" was a thoroughly laughable stage play, yet it still represented a new form of art.

And it had won applause from the town officials.

"Wow, what a great performance, such a respectable Varcey knight, he should be a role model for all the knights in the land!" Goltai exclaimed loudly.

"When Varcey fought the robbers, I felt my blood boiling. If Fresh Flower Town encountered robbers, I would definitely pick up a spear and fight them to the death!" Nemo, the Defense Officer, declared earnestly. In truth, he was just an Apprentice Knight who was getting fatter by the day and probably found it hard to even ride a horse.

"The performance by Miss Avril deserves my applause, she is very beautiful, and having such a wife is the source of Varcey's vigorous fighting spirit."

"I like this play... yes, drama, it's not as funny as a farce, but it made me get involved, I truly wish I were Varcey Knight!"

"It's a pity that the battle scenes are hard to watch, they don't even know Dou Qi."

"Don't be too picky, the comic actors are just ordinary people, they don't have Dou Qi at all."

Such feedback surprised Liszt; he had expected the play to be popular, but he hadn't anticipated that such a low-quality drama could actually reap applause and positive reviews.

It could only be said that the entertainment activities in this world were indeed very limited.

Music and dance had certainly developed, with pianists holding a status comparable to nobles, and social dances were a must-have for the aristocracy, but there was still a pressing need for more entertainment among the nobles. It was the same for the commoners, and this need was not something outdated farces could satisfy.

The birth of drama had a foundation to become popular.

"It looks like the drama will become fashionable quickly. Should I let them explore and develop on their own, or give them a few pointers?" The Smoke Mission had been completed, and Liszt's enthusiasm for the drama had suddenly dropped by fifty percent, "Better give them a few pointers, one shouldn't do things halfway."

After summoning Avril and the others, Liszt began to give his advice.

He didn't know much about drama, but he at least knew what the modern form of drama looked like, how the content should be structured with a beginning, development, turn, and conclusion, and how the performance should be naturally engaging. He also knew about the use of props and lighting on stage, and he could even add unique elements of Dou Qi and Magic to this world.

However, such stage plays were costly.

Before the plays matured, there was no need to get too complicated.

After giving his advice to the Black Horse Island Drama Troupe, he finally had time to focus on the new mission.

"Mission: The number of serfs in the territory has increased dramatically, as has the number of orphaned children. The boarding system can no longer sustain such a large number of children, and as the future of the territory, the children deserve the landlord's care in establishing an orphanage to provide them with a proper education. Reward: One Elf Bug."

The reward was an Elf Bug, which Liszt particularly liked.

The content was to build an orphanage.

He had no hesitation, "Indeed, we need to build an orphanage. During their growth, children must feel the landlord's care for them. Only in this way, when the orphans grow up, will they be loyal to me." In fact, many great landlords would build orphanages to gather the orphans of their lands.

Well-raised orphans have a much higher level of loyalty than the average citizen.

For both emotional and rational reasons,

Liszt had to build an orphanage.

He assigned the task to Goltai, "Consultant Goltai, select a suitable location around the port town of Black Horse Island. I want to build an orphanage. This orphanage should accommodate all the children of the territory and be staffed with Dou Qi teachers, Serpent Script teachers, and craftsman skill teachers."

"My lord, I will start working on the orphanage right away."

After Goltai left,

Liszt was still in deep thought.

The buildings required for the development of his territory clearly went beyond just the new castle, Mage Tower, and orphanage. There would also need to be a Knight Academy, municipal building, watchtowers, squares, theaters, hospitals, waterworks, exchanges, and other facilities. He was not an ordinary landlord who allowed the city to develop amid filth and excrement.

He intended not only to construct a modernized castle but also to modernize the accompanying city.

While he had no intention of revolution, he still took the basic welfare of his subjects seriously, ensuring at the very least that the serfs of Black Horse Island could lead stable lives without suffering from hunger and cold. They should be able to receive treatment when sick, and while major illnesses might be incurable, minor ones must certainly be treatable.

However, the road must be taken one step at a time; the main issue in his territory at the current stage was to solve the clothing, food, and housing needs of the serfs.

"Clothing, food, and housing can be arranged by the officers. I'll start by planning out the orphanage and Knight Academy system... Call together the main officials and Earth Knights of the territory for a full meeting," he decided.

His attitude was to act upon decisions immediately.

The next day, in the port town's temporary administrative building on Black Horse Island, the meeting took place. The building had a large meeting room specifically for such occasions, big enough to accommodate eighty to ninety attendees—the territory had a total of seventy-nine Earth Knights, including twelve Elite Earth Knights.

"The purpose of today's meeting, which I have convened, is to discuss the construction of the orphanage and the Knight Academy. The purpose of the orphanage and Knight Academy is clear to all, to train future knights for the territory. Therefore, I hope to establish a complete knight training system within the territory," he stated.

...

The meeting did not last very long.

Borrowing practices from other territories, a new system was quickly established.

As the main institution for knight training, the Knight Academy covered the entire curriculum needed to train a knight. In fact, even before Liszt discovered Black Horse Island, he had already secretly formed the Knight Academy. This time, he finalized all affairs regarding the institution's teaching staff and construction standards.

Naturally, Liszt assumed the role of dean of the Knight Academy.

Port town consultant Goltai and Elite Earth Knight Marcus both took up the positions of vice dean, with Marcus in fact serving as the chief vice dean in charge of daily operations.

The Knight Academy offered courses in loyalty, Dou Qi, warfare, administration, arts, navigation, and culture, known as the seven knight courses.

Under the Knight Academy were established the orphanage, responsible for the adoption and educational arrangements for orphans; the Craftsman Institute, dedicated to training in handcraft, agriculture, and commerce; the Apprentice Institute, responsible for the early education of the children of the territory's subjects; the Administrative Institute, tasked with training administrative personnel for the territory; and the Elite Institute, responsible for the exchange and management of Elite Earth Knights.

By then,

The structure of the seven courses and five institutes of the Black Horse Island Knight Academy had taken shape, and it would continue to provide a steady stream of talent for the territory.

The Craftsman Institute and Administrative Institute were advocated by Liszt himself.

The Craftsman Institute would be independent of the Knight Academy, employing local craftsmen to teach civilian apprentices, with job placements arranged upon the completion of their training. The Administrative Institute was designed for knights with insufficient talent in cultivation, who would undergo a period of administrative training before taking office, becoming familiar with the affairs of the territory.

The old way of knights charging on horseback and administering off horseback was rather crude.

Liszt hoped knights would specialize in charging into battle, advancing toward regular military personnel, while administrative officers would specialize in management, ascending the ranks as officials—of course, regular knights who retired would also enter the official hierarchy and receive preferential treatment. Liszt also stipulated that only nobles could hold significant positions among officials.

Significant positions mainly referred to the roles of consultant and Administrative Officer.

With nobility in short supply at the current stage, apart from Goltai, all town Administrative Officers could only bear the title "acting."

Including the elders Isaiah and Blair.

Chapter 508 One Third Germination Rate

"Task completed, reward: one Thorn Bug."

As Liszt was riding the Landwalker bird Loki, which had learned the Levitation Spell, they were flying midair when a changing smoke appeared before his eyes, signaling that his task had been completed.

The orphanage had been temporarily established.

The requirements for the Smoke Mission were not strict; much of its content resembled reminders. Once he noticed them and began working on them, the tasks were considered complete.

"Another Thorn Bug?" Liszt's eyes sparkled. He had just contracted the Thorn Bug that was a reward from a previous task the day before yesterday and had moved the Cordyceps to the Thorn Garden that was planned for the yet-to-be-built Thorn Town, "The cultivation of two consecutive Thorn Bugs will greatly increase my production of Thorn Magic Potion, excellent!"

Patting Loki's elongated neck, Liszt called out loudly, "Loki, to the Thorn Garden!"

This Thorn Garden was the Thorn Garden of Fresh Flower Town.

"Clatter!"

Loki responded cheerfully, flapping its wings, turning its body, and flying toward the Thorn Garden next to the dairy farm at an unhurried speed. A light Wind Attribute Magic Power was supporting Loki's body, making it as light as a feather, allowing it to fulfill its dream of flying by flapping its wings.

The Levitation Spell is an Advanced Wind System Magic and is a more advanced form of the Light Body Skill.

The Light Body Skill is Magic that every Magician will research when studying Wind System Magic. It gathers Wind Attribute Magic Power to lift oneself or other objects to reduce weight. It is very practical Magic, and Magicians like to use the Light Body Skill to climb mountains or move heavy objects.

But the Light Body Skill is after all just Common Magic, and it can't make one fly.

Its advanced form, the Levitation Spell, however, has standard flying capability and can gather a mass of Wind Attribute Magic Power, lifting oneself or other objects into midair, as if floating. This Magic is challenging; even Grand Magicians find it difficult to master, almost as hard as the Invisibility Technique in the Light System Magic.

However, Loki had refined Magic Array information in its bloodline, allowing it to easily grasp this Magic and truly fly in the blue sky.

Unfortunately, the Levitation Spell allowed Loki to fly but caused it to lose its speed while running on the ground.

No matter how Loki flapped its wings, its speed was only comparable to that of a sparrow. The Levitation Spell also had a time limit; it would collapse every fifteen minutes, requiring re-gathering of Magic. Fifteen minutes was not enough to cross the sea, let alone travel the sea area between Black Horse Island and Fresh Flower Town.

But it was possible to fly from the port town to Mangrove Island.

It could also fly from Nameless Castle straight to the Thorn Garden. After landing, Liszt immediately used the Eye of Magic to look for the new Cordyceps that would nurture the Thorn Bug. Since basically all of the Thorn Garden consisted of Magic Medicine with magic feedback, it was somewhat difficult to search, but he still found it after half an hour.

"Carefully protect my Cordyceps, and notify me immediately when the Thorn Bug is nurtured and emerges!" he instructed the Bug Guard Members.

The Bug Guard Members replied loudly, "Yes, Lord Landlord!"

Satisfied, Liszt left. With that, he now had three Little Minor Elves, twenty-nine Elf Bugs, as well as Ach and the five Elf Bugs she had contracted. This foundation already far surpassed that of an ordinary Viscount, with huge potential for development. While he still lacked a bit compared to the foundation of an Earl, he believed he would soon catch up.

"Whether it's my strength or my Elves, I will soon surpass the Earl."

Thinking of that exciting scene in the future, he couldn't help but let out a laugh: "Hehe."

On the way back.

He summoned the Smoke Mission again: "Mission: You have already studied the Blue Steel, Cast Aluminum, and unreadable books left behind by the Sky Ship, along with those magic-infused seeds. Why not continue researching that pile of strange wood? Perhaps it can provide you with new inspiration. Reward: a follower with extraordinary talent."

The strange wood mentioned in the mission content was the pieces of wood salvaged from the Sky Ship.

The wood seemed to have sprouted at one point and was very hard, not of lesser quality than Thorn Ironwood. However, Liszt had studied it for a few days before and had not discovered much information. He even planned to use it to build a castle if there were no leads—the branches of its kin had already been used to build the Sky Ship.

Now it seemed, these strange pieces of wood were hiding a secret.

"However, what does 'a follower with an astonishing talent' mean? Does it require me to recruit another follower from among the new serfs? What kind of talent qualifies as astonishing, could it be even more astonishing than mine?"

Liszt was somewhat conflicted in his heart.

Of course, he hoped to have a follower with great strength, yet he preferred the title of "astonishing talent" for himself.

"First complete the mission, then pay attention to this follower over time."

Upon returning to the castle, he immediately set out to study the strange wood, which clearly belonged to building materials. Its most unique feature was the naturally formed dragon bone shape within the Sky Ship, which demonstrated the high malleability of the wood.

However, Liszt felt that it was shaped by magic.

According to the clues at hand, the Child of the Sun lived in the forest, with trees as companions. They also possessed a profound mastery of magic, not only able to transform into bears, eagles, leopards but also into trees. It was not surprising they mastered a magic that allowed trees to grow in a fixed shape.

This kind of magic was even recorded among that batch of Sun Scripture.

Regrettably, Liszt's knowledge of the Sun Script vocabulary was too limited to understand the content of the books: "I speculate that among the Magic Medicine Seeds I've harvested, there are seeds that grow into this kind of tree... But what does the Smoke Mission mean by asking me to study the wood again? What other secrets do the wood conceal waiting to be unearthed?"

In the castle, he subjected the wood to soaking in water, burning with fire, and chopping with a knife; besides proving it reached the quality of ironwood, he still did not discover much useful information.

Shaking his head, he temporarily set aside his research on the wood.

He went to the glasshouse and patiently tended to the Magic Medicine Seeds, which one third had sprouted. The first to sprout, a fava bean seed, had grown into a seedling, its tender leaves looking no different from those of any common plant.

While he was loosening the soil, a seed was accidentally turned over.

He was just about to rebury it when he suddenly noticed that the seed had sprouted, but the sprout had died at some point.

"The seed died?"

He was surprised for a moment, then thought of something and quickly dug up another spot with a seed that hadn't sprouted. A seed was unearthed, and just like the previous one,

it had sprouted but died. Several more seeds were dug up in succession; except for one that had not sprouted, the others had all sprouted but died.

"Why would they die after sprouting, is it because they were stored for too long and lack vitality?" Since the dead seeds involved many varieties, and there were corresponding varieties growing robustly, environmental issues could be ruled out.

He pondered deeply, feeling it was likely due to the seeds being too ancient and thus lacking vitality.

Despite some regrets over the nearly two-thirds of dead seeds, the one third that had sprouted still somewhat lessened his disappointment.

It was at this moment that a flash of insight struck him.

He associated the seeds with the wood, "The seeds sprouted but died, and the batch of wood I salvaged had also sprouted once but the sprouts quickly died... Does this imply that the batch of wood cut into segments was originally intended as a 'seed' for cultivating plants?"

Not all plants rely on seeds to sprout; there are numerous plants that can sprout directly from the trunk.

Therefore.

He hastily took out a few pieces of wood and buried them in the soil of the glasshouse, watching for any changes.

Chapter 509 Astonishingly Talented Mutant

Time imperceptibly reached February.

Snow was still falling intermittently, and the serfs of Black Horse Island and Fresh Flower Town continued to toil through the heavy snowfall. Liszt, who was researching wood, received a message from a knight at Tulip Castle, inviting him to a banquet. The theme of the banquet was to celebrate the breakthrough of his younger brother, Lidun, to Earth Knight.

"A fourteen-year-old Earth Knight, it seems Lidun's birthday is in November, which means he's actually just thirteen years old and a few months," Liszt had the butler entertain the messenger knight and did not accept the invitation, "This talent is indeed not bad, stronger than Levis at the time."

Liszt was not interested in what Lidun's future would hold.

Rushing the butler to prepare a congratulatory gift, he continued with his research work—his status now meant he didn't need to care about what others thought, and if he didn't want to attend a banquet, not even an Earl could compel him. No one in the Tulip Family would dare to blame him.

Strength was the source of confidence.

"It seems in another month, I'll turn eighteen, and the five power-gathering moves in "Rising Sun Blaze" will almost all be mastered... After I complete them, I'll challenge the Earl to see just how wide the gap between me and a Sword Saint really is."

He was confident, relying on the powerful attributes of Dragon Dou Qi, to duel the Earl.

However, before the fight began, it was difficult to directly predict the outcome of the battle. There were many factors that affected the fights between Sky Knights, not just a contest of Dou Qi.

"Woo-ah!"

"Chirp-chirp!"

Suddenly, Thorn Minor Elf Jela, chasing after the Corn Minor Elf Mickey, flew out from the castle. Mickey flew directly to Liszt for refuge, with Jela in hot pursuit. However, upon seeing Liszt, it turned around and flew out of the castle—to vent its anger in the Thorn Garden.

A conditioned reflex had formed; whenever it got angry, it would run to the Thorn Garden to plant thorns.

The first Thorn Bug might not have much to do with Jela, but the second Thorn Bug still incubating was definitely affected by Jela's continuous use of magic.

Liszt was pleased to see this outcome.

"Chirp-chirp, chirp-chirp, chirp-chirp." After Jela left, Mickey became lively, flying around the glass greenhouse, occasionally touching the recently sprouted Magic Medicine Seeds with its little hands.

Fearing it might harm the young plants, Liszt waved his hand: "Mickey, go play outside."

"Chirp-chirp."

Mickey was obedient and immediately flew outside.

Not long after, Servant Thomas came over: "My lord, Administrative Officer Isaiah wishes to see you."

"Let him come over."

Isaiah was waiting beneath the Apple Tree Cordyceps in the castle, and it took only a few steps to reach the glass greenhouse: "My lord, Isaiah has come to report the fiscal revenue of Fresh Flower Town for January."

"Go ahead."

"The main income in January was glass sales. The nobles of Coral Island showed tremendous enthusiasm for glass. The glassware made by the glass workshop, blown glassware, and pressed window glass were the most popular products, and the sales profit for just half a month exceeded the revenue from Fresh Flower Brew."

"Glass is that popular?" Liszt didn't worry too much about administrative affairs, but he was interested in profitable business. He remembered the production of glass was not very high yet, and was surprised to learn that the profits had already surpassed spirits.

"Glass is extremely popular. However, glass is not a consumable item like spirits. As nobles purchase large amounts of glass products, the Coral Island market will soon become saturated. The Tulip Family's merchant fleet is already prepared to sell to other islands. This is our exclusive product, with no competition, and we can completely monopolize the entire country's market."

"We can also sell to the mainland, and the future development of glass will definitely exceed that of spirits." Liszt was very clear about the potential of glass, "What restricts us now is the production capacity of the glass workshop and the protection of the glass-making technology."

Afterward.

Isaiah introduced other fiscal revenues, and overall, the financials of the territory had turned from deficit to surplus in January, with Fresh Flower Town alone bringing in more than three hundred Gold Coins. And with the revenue from spirits soon to be collected, the territory's income would greatly increase next month, eliminating the need for Liszt to keep subsidizing aggressively.

Up until now, the funds for territory construction had largely come out of his own pocket—of course, the territory was his personal property.

He hoped to separate his personal earnings from the territory's revenue.

It was just not very likely to be so clear-cut; after all, things like magic potions, magical beasts, and pearls could be counted as either his personal property or as special produce of the territory. Only things like sunken ship treasures strictly qualified as his personal income and could be added to his private coffers.

With his purse bulging, Li Si Te felt his confidence return.

If there was not enough magic potion, he'd buy it; if there was not enough magical beast meat, he'd buy it; if there was not enough food for the serfs, he'd buy it; if there were not enough construction materials, he'd buy it. He even wrote to Tulip Castle and Long Taro Castle, asking them to keep an eye out for Dragon Kui Bugs and Thorn Bugs; if someone were selling them, he was willing to pay a high price to purchase them.

Dragon Kui Bugs and Thorn Bugs were of little use in others' hands.

In his hands, they were priceless treasures.

Besides, whether it was Barley Bugs, Little Wheat Bugs, or Millet Bugs, he was interested in buying them if they were available. The territory's grain output was too small, and they were far from being self-sufficient, which made Li Si Te feel insecure. He hoped that the territory would not only rely on various special products to make a fortune but also achieve self-sufficiency in food.

In a flash, another three days passed.

The wooden seeds that Li Si Te had been eagerly awaiting finally sprouted, confirming his conjecture about wood breeding: "Indeed, this batch of wood is the seed, and although I don't know how to guide them into growing into dragon bone shapes, I can start exploring. One day, I'll figure it out...let's call it 'Seedship Wood'."

Seedship Wood could grow into timber for ships.

As the secret was unearthed, the Smoke Mission was also completed.

"Complete the mission, reward the Dou Qi Sublimation of Emily."

"Huh?" Li Si Te's eyes widened, "Emily's Dou Qi Sublimation, what does that mean? I remember I also once received the reward of Dou Qi Sublimation, and at that time, I broke through from Apprentice Knight to Earth Knight. Does it mean that Emily has broken through to Earth Knight as well?"

All in all, Emily had only been practicing Dou Qi for a year.

Even with the aid of magical beast meat and Dragon Breed Milk provided by Li Si Te, it was unbelievable for her to break through to Earth Knight from scratch in a year.

Li Si Te let out a breath and calmed down: "No wonder the Smoke Mission calls her an extraordinarily gifted follower, her talent completely outshines Lidun!"

Lidun was currently the earliest genius in the Tulip Family to break through to Earth Knight.

It had taken him at least five to six years to become an Earth Knight at the age of just under fourteen, thirteen years old. Emily started practicing at eleven, and at twelve, she had already become an Earth Knight. Comparing the two, one could see how terrifying Emily's talent was.

So terrifying that it made Li Si Te envious.

He had actually noticed quite some time ago that Emily found the cultivation of Dou Qi effortless, having abundant low-level Dou Qi six months ago, with the potential to break through at any moment.

But to actually see her break through was still hard to accept: "It shouldn't be, she's just a commoner's daughter... Based on my research on this world, the cultivation of Dou Qi is directly related to nutrition and is a decisive factor, with nobles inherently not lacking in nutrition. And so-called talent often means that noble bloodlines are more likely to produce outstanding offspring."

He once summarized this.

The theory of getting stronger in this world—nobles rely on taking drugs, commoners on mutation.

Indeed, among the commoners, there were those with decent talent who, through several generations of effort, entered the ranks of the nobility. But a mutation like Emily's was unheard of. Her background was very clear; in the Eagle Kingdom, both her parents were ordinary serfs.

She was not of noble blood, nor had she gone through several generations of genetic improvements.

"Such a mutation is terrifying. If commoners could all mutate like this, the foundation of noble rule would have been severed long ago... But then again, if she had not met me, Emily would probably be just another peasant, farming for life. Even the best talent, without the chance to be unearthed, will still be buried."

He decided not to dwell on Emily's talent any longer and went straight to find Emily to see for himself.

To see if she had truly broken through to become an Earth Knight.

Chapter 510 Thunder Attribute Earth Knight

Emily continued her training in Fresh Flower Town, while her companion, Maggie, had already moved to Black Horse Island. Emily stayed because the knight instructors had nothing left to teach her, so they let her practice on her own.

She practiced on the castle's grassland.

She would come to the castle for meals every day.

In fact, Liszt was very good to this follower hinted at by the Smoke Mission, providing her daily with Magical Beast Meat, Dragon Breed Milk, and even gifting her the first mixed-breed foal born from the Fire Dragon Horse and Li Dragon Horse—Sara. He had high hopes for her and would occasionally find time to give her some pointers.

In the relationship between landlord and follower, in fact, Liszt played the overlapping roles of teacher, father, and landlord.

When he stepped out of the castle and came to the grassland, he saw Emily riding Sara in the distance, sprinting and practicing the knight's charge, deeply engrossed and shouting the slogans in her childish voice.

Liszt didn't rush to disturb her and simply returned to sit under the Apple Tree Cordyceps in his rocking chair, waiting for her to finish her training. A servant brought him milk tea and pastries, and he took out the Fire Dragon Jar, preparing to feed the Mini Little Fire Dragon with Fire Dragon Magic Power. This little creature that slept after eating would wake up calling "oho," "oho," wanting to eat.

By the way.

He glanced at the new Smoke Mission.

"Mission: The booming sales of glass have made you realize that technology is the primary productive force, and monopolizing technology is an important measure to ensure wealth for your territory. You need to schedule the security of important technological processes, please form a security team. Reward: A book of Magic."

"Form a security team, reward me with a book of magic..."

The task was not difficult, and the reward was nothing new.

Forming a security team was definitely necessary, but how exactly to form it required careful consideration. Currently, the territory's defense forces were mainly composed of three parts: the formal Knight Order made up of Earth Knights, the Patrol Knights upgraded from the Patrol Team, and the Bug Guard Teams in each small town.

The formal Knight Order did not need to change, as it is the foundation of the knight system and its existence is justified.

The Patrol Knights were akin to the functions of armed police and public security; the Bug Guard Team was similar to the functions of militia and security organizations. These two could be reformed.

"Moreover, the territory needs to add a rat force," Liszt squinted his eyes, aware that not all nobles could possibly be upright; shady dealings in the dark were essential.

Although Liszt wouldn't actively engage in underhanded tactics, he could not ignore the possibility others might use such methods against him.

When Fresh Flower Town was still weak, there were rats arranged by other nobles infiltrated among them, even inside Tulip Castle—rats have always served as the ears and eyes of nobles. It was also a rat from Tulip Castle who first discovered Black Horse Island, but because the ships were wrecked, it ended up benefiting Liszt.

He pacified the clamoring Mini Little Fire Dragon.

He took out thick parchment and a quill pen and began to sketch and write.

He outlined a new organization: "Keep the formal Knight Order as is, rename the Patrol Knights to just Patrol Team, remove the militia aspect from the Bug Guard Team... Initially, the territory was short of people, so serfs were used as Bug Guard Members, but now the territory has no shortage of Apprentice Knights, so a professional Bug Guard Team can be entirely established... It's best to integrate the Bug Guard Team with the security team to form a Security Team."

Thus.

The territory's armed forces would form three teams: the Knight Order, the Patrol Team, and the Security Team. This was the apparent armed force, in private he would also recruit and train rats to form a Ranger Team. The Ranger Team would focus on intelligence work, collecting information both inside and outside the territory and counter-espionage operations.

"Leave the Knight Order to Marcus to manage for now; a few years later, Emily should be able to grow up and take over," Liszt looked up into the distance, where Emily was still training.

The Patrol Team would be managed by Paris.

The Security Team required a careful selection, his previous Retainer Knight, Karl Ironhammer, was too weak to be suitable. He was leaning towards the Elite Earth Knight, Charles Trap—Charles wasn't young anymore, and after a few more Pioneer Mandates and being knighted as an Honored Knight, he should also withdraw from the front-line combat sequence.

Managing the security team was just right.

As for the Ranger group, there was no suitable candidate yet, but there was also no hurry. Choosing the right person and training them to be a rat would take time.

He put away the heavy parchment and began to write a letter.

Having finished a letter, he said to his personal servant Thomas, "Call Xavier over."

"Yes, sir."

Retainer Knight Xavier quickly came running, "My lord?"

Liszt scrutinized Xavier carefully. The once frail boy had grown strong, "I have just finished an appointment. Take a ship to Black Horse Island and give it to Consultant Goltai, letting him issue the appointment on my behalf."

"As you wish."

By having a retainer knight deliver the letter, there was no need for him to go to Black Horse Island himself. Currently, with no castle on the island, each visit meant staying in wooden huts. The food prepared by the chefs there was not to Liszt's taste either; he preferred Mrs. Abbie's cooking—Mrs. Abbie understood him.

Watching Xavier's departing figure.

Liszt was pensive, "Xavier is a bit old for cultivating Dou Qi, and he lacks potential. Becoming an Earth Knight might be a bit of a stretch. However, he is quite clever. Among my retainer knights, he is the cleverest... Maybe, I could let him try managing the Ranger group?"

The thought flickered briefly.

But it did not continue.

The formation of the Ranger group wasn't urgent.

At that moment, Emily, who was originally in training, had found Liszt. Following her usual rhythm, she would have continued her training without needing to come greet him.

But this time, Emily ran over to him.

Dressed only in thin clothes during winter, sweating profusely, she was out of breath. Excitement she couldn't hide sparkled in her eyes. She made an effort to steady her breath and bowed respectfully, "My lord!"

Liszt smiled slightly, "What's the matter?"

The twelve-year-old girl before him, her skin sun-tanned, was brimming with vitality. She was growing taller, already past one meter sixty, and her once frail body was beginning to develop secondary sexual characteristics, her chest budding and her hips showing a noticeable curvy change.

On her dark face, deep eye sockets and a high nose bridge made her look like a beauty with a hint of exotic charm.

She restrained her excitement, trying to appear more mature and composed, "My lord, Emily has made a breakthrough. Just now, Emily has become an Earth Knight!" Although her tone was not exultant, the excitement trembling in her voice betrayed her emotions.

"Is that so?" Liszt immediately employed the Eye of Magic.

Indeed, before him, Emily's magic power was no longer chaotic and colorless, but instead showed a purple-white hue, the color of Thunder Attribute Dou Qi!

Thunder Attribute Dou Qi was known for its outstanding burst power in combat. More importantly, Liszt had in his possession a Thunder Attribute Advanced Dou Qi Manual, "Thousand Thunderstrike Sky Flash," confiscated from Count Sned of Celery Fort. As for ordinary Thunder Attribute Dou Qi manuals, they were not scarce on Coral Island.

Emily's path of cultivation was destined to be smooth.

As for whether she could become a Sky Knight, with such talent and Liszt's nurturing, it was almost a certainty. Pushing aside a fleeting twinge of envy, Liszt said with a smile, "Congratulations, Emily, you have now become a Thunder Attribute Earth Knight."

"Emily's achievements now are all thanks to your lordship's diligent cultivation," she said, meeting Liszt's gaze with determination. "Emily swears undying loyalty to you, my lord, ready to charge into battle and not take a single step back in retreat!"