The Mighty 691

Chapter 691: Rings on Ten Fingers

Setting down the tea cup that was already half-emptied, Marquis Li Weiliam Tulip did not immediately leave his study but took out a piece of thick paper and dipped his quill in ink.

He first wrote down the words "Dragon Knight," followed by "Archmage."

Staring at the two terms, he unwittingly fell into a reverie and it took him quite a while to snap back to reality. He then took out a flint and steel, lit the thick paper on fire, and watched as it turned to ash in the ashtray on his desk. It was only after a deep exhale that he finally stood up from his desk with a beaming smile.

Descending the stairs, he mingled back into the lively conversation among the nobles.

Yet his mindset was different from before. A lone Dragon Knight still had to be on edge to avoid becoming the target of a dragon-slaying war launched by the Continental Kingdoms. However, with just one more Archmage as an ally, unless the Continental Kingdom dispatched two Dragon Knights, there was no chance they could defeat the combination of a Dragon Knight and an Archmage.

As Liszt's father, seeing the relationship between Liszt and Ach, he understood all too well that this corner was not one that just anyone could prise away.

So, once his own son founded a kingdom, it would be home to both Dragon Knights and Archmages, the two pinnacle forces of power.

It would undoubtedly be more stable from the outset than the initial founding of the Duchy of Sapphire, and the Tulip Family could take this opportunity to flourish and spread in this new nation, ensuring the continuity of their lineage.

The glory of the family would reach its zenith.

"Now everything is ready; it's just a matter of when Liszt decides to found his kingdom."

With boundless pride in his heart, Li Weiliam felt while conversing with these nobles that he wasn't just a cut above the rest; he was two cuts above, and even the First Prince was nothing but a child in comparison. Of course, nobles are adept at disguising their true feelings, and he still played the part of the Marquis of Bull Tail very well.

The guests laughed merrily, and Tulip Castle knew not a single moment of silence from the bustling atmosphere.

. . .

Elsewhere.

After returning Ach to Fresh Flower Town, Ach didn't linger and went directly to Black Horse Island to continue researching the magic of clothing storage with Mary and the other vampires. Now that she had grown legs, she never felt bored and always had endless things to do every day.

Immersing herself in the ocean of knowledge and tirelessly pursuing truth, she was full of enthusiasm.

As for Liszt, after dawdling over some administrative work in Fresh Flower Town and giving Butler Carter some instructions to take note of, he prepared to leave Fresh Flower Town to return to Tulip Castle—he planned to accompany Meioubao tomorrow to visit Marquis Merlin on Red Crab Island, whose days were numbered.

"Wuh wah!"

Jela flew over and landed on Liszt's shoulder. The Thorn Minor Elf was a bit unhappy.

Liszt picked her up and asked, "What's wrong?"

"Wuh wah."

"Did you have a disagreement with the Coptis Minor Elf?" Liszt, sensing Jela's emotions, understood she was annoyed with that particular Coptis Minor Elf.

At the mention of the Coptis Minor Elf, Jela suddenly shouted, "Wuh wah!" her emotions growing agitated.

Liszt could clearly feel the story behind this surge of emotions—it turned out that Jela was quite discontented with the Coptis Minor Elf. In the previous major fray, although it was Jela who had initiated the fight, the Coptis Minor Elf did not show weakness, rallying other minor elves to join the melee and successfully stealing the spotlight from Jela.

Now the minor elves recognized both the Coptis Minor Elf and Jela as the bullies of Nameless Castle, ones not to be trifled with easily.

What should have been the exclusive title of "Bully of Nameless Castle" for Jela alone had been snatched away by the Coptis Minor Elf, so how could Jela be happy? Especially since the Coptis Minor Elf was not weak in combat and was pugnacious, Jela felt she might not be able to handle the rival on her own.

Felt even more unhappy.

So she complained to Li Si Te.

However, he wouldn't bother with such listless behavior, so he simply comforted and admonished her as usual, telling Jela to sleep soundly and not to fight or cause trouble. Then he sent Jela back to her own room, took the opportunity to inspect the Worm Room, and warned every Little Minor Elf.

Feeling that he had quelled the restless Little Minor Elves, he finally left the castle, riding the Landwalker bird Loki to Tulip Castle to continue the noble social interactions.

Inside the Worm Room.

Jela pushed open the lid of the box above her and lay on the edge of the box, a pair of shiny black eyes on that small head looking at the glass window of the Worm Room and the apple trees swaying outside, deep in thought. Autumn was approaching, and many of the apple tree leaves were turning yellow and falling.

A fallen leaf drifted along the path of the wind, landing on the glass of the window.

Jela darted over in a flash, pressing her face against the glass to watch the leaf, which curled slightly showing the faint outline of its veins amidst the yellowing.

She made a sound that seemed curious and happy at the same time: "Wuwa."

...

Riding Loki.

Charging through the sky, every time she touched the ground lightly, Loki would soar again, running much faster in the air than flying.

Following Loki's ups and downs, Liszt suddenly felt a surge of pride swell in his heart, "I am the leaf in the wind, watch how I fly". Although he was riding a Landwalker bird, which was barely considered an Intermediate Dragon Breed Magical Beast, in his heart, he was actually dragon riding.

A Dragon Knight should ride a dragon!

Moreover, he wasn't just any Dragon Knight. In the Gemstone Space, he still had two Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruits, indicating that he had two dragons—at least one Formless Dragon was confirmed, and the other, an Immortal Dragon, still without a clue. If his Smoke Mission also implied a dragon, he would have four dragons.

Besides the Fire Dragon being a formidable Elemental Dragon, the remaining Formless Dragon, Immortal Dragon, and Smoke Dragon were all Sacred Dragons.

"If I could find two more Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruits, maybe in the future I could be known as a Holy Dragon Knight with a collection of five Sacred Dragons," he mused.

The Smoke Dragon representing fate, the Immortal Dragon representing life, the Formless Dragon representing space, the Twilight Dragon representing time, and the Jade Dragon

representing dreams—each Sacred Dragon represented a magical power, but he didn't know where to find them.

Liszt hoped for the Power of Destiny to guide him.

Just like the Smoke Mission led him to ride the Little Fire Dragon Leo and coaxed the Formless Dragon into becoming an old friend, perhaps one day the Smoke Mission would lead the other three Sacred Dragons into his path.

Just as Elves are independent beings, dragons are also independent entities, capable of tricking each other.

No problem there!

Touching the three Space Gems hanging on his chest, his thoughts jumped erratically: "There's no need to hide anymore. I'll have Alvin make three Mithril Rings, set the Space Gems into them and create Space Rings for easier use."

The Gemstone Space was positioned on the chest, requiring a reach every time he wanted to use it.

If he simply wore them on his fingers, a thought would suffice to take or place items at will, quick and efficient.

"Once I ride the Formless Dragon, I must wear a Space Ring on each of my ten fingers, filling them with all the essentials of life. One day, riding with the dragons on adventures, I'll explore every secret of this world."

Chapter 692: Li Vera's Spring

October 26th, the weather was clear and sunny.

The gentle breeze swept the fallen leaves, and the trees around Tulip Castle created a pleasant atmosphere. Thanks to the Tulip Cordyceps, the castle's surrounding tulip gardens were still thriving, colorful and vibrant.

Nobles who attended the celebration banquet embarked on their journeys home.

When the First Prince left, all nobles naturally went to the port to see him off, with the Marquis of Bull Tail making customary farewell speeches with the prince and others.

Liszt, however, rode a Landwalker Bird by himself, standing at a distance, with no interest in participating.

Behind him stood Yevich Water Peanut and Alvin Eagle Sword, a Sword Saint and an Iron Knight, respectively. He planned to take these two followers with him to Red Crab Island —a Sword Saint and Iron Knight as followers would certainly enhance the prestige of his travel entourage.

Levis and The Loria Couple were instructing servants to load gifts onto the Chang Yu family's Court Fast Sailing Ship.

They didn't plan to accompany Liszt, so they entrusted him with the task of presenting the gifts to Marquis Merlin.

"Please send my regards to Grandfather. There are many matters to handle in the Bull Tail Domain, and I truly can't spare the time to go to Red Crab Island. I hope Grandfather can understand our situation."

"I'll explain to Grandfather," Liszt nodded, then asked, "Is Li Vera certain she's not going?"

"Her?" Levis gestured to not far away where they saw Li Vera intimately conversing with a male noble, who even helped neaten her slightly disheveled hair, "Li Vera stayed in Grape Manor last night with the son of the Earl of Longwhite Island, Hubert Rollo."

"Grape Manor?"

Liszt remembered the manor, full of different varieties of grapes, belonging to Tulip Castle, and there a Minor Elf Cordyceps grew. The Tulip Family's specialty, Crescent Moon Wine, came from this manor: "What did they go to the Grape Manor for?"

Levis laughed, "You're pretending to ask."

"Well, I wasn't sure," Liszt understood Levis's implication. It was simply about men and women hooking up, then taking advantage of the long night to roll in the sheets.

For the nobility, such matters were common. He himself had done the same, so he wasn't surprised—Li Vera had a strong personality, and over the years, Liszt had heard plenty of rumors about this sister, but none had come to fruition.

This time it was probably just a one-night affair.

"Do you think there's hope between Li Vera and Hubert?" he asked casually, not particularly interested in Li Vera's life. Although siblings by blood, his relationship with this sister was generally weak. He remembered Li Vera getting along well with Levis.

In fact, of all the relatives, he admired Marquis Merlin the most and was closest to his cousin Mei Oubo.

After them, likely Lady Penelope and Li Weiliam, and he even found looking at his uncle Mesiro more pleasing than his own brothers and sisters.

However, despite their differences, Levis and Li Vera were still the closest siblings and trustworthy family members. If all went well, the family would eventually move to the nation he intended to establish, continuing to thrive as nobles.

He probably should intervene in Li Vera's choice of spouse.

"I don't know, Li Vera has her own thoughts. Maybe she's taken a liking to Hubert, maybe not. However, Hubert is good-looking and comes from a good family. His approach to Li Vera must have ulterior motives... But it doesn't matter. As long as Li Vera is happy, that's what counts."

True love among the nobility is rare; it's usually about combining interests, including Levis and The Loria Couple, whose marital life was good, but initially based more on interests than affection.

"I won't worry about my sister's affairs then. You and Loria take more notice, as it seems she'll continue to associate with Hubert. I'll go join Uncle and Aunt first."

The arrival of the uncle's family meant the aunt's family would naturally follow. Aunt Melinda Taro and her husband Roland Pinecone came along. Cousin Russell with his wife Cassie Broccoli and daughter Rossi, as well as cousin Rolie, all came to attend the celebration banquet.

On the return trip, the whole family gathering together should be quite lively.

. . .

After joining up.

"

The Long Taro Family's fleet sailed out of the harbor.

Watching the Court Fast Sailing Ship cutting through the waves, Liszt thought about his previous idea, "Uncle, I wonder if I could purchase a Court Fast Sailing Ship from the Long Taro Family? I hope to refer to some shipbuilding technology to help develop the shipyard in my domain."

"You're planning to study shipbuilding technology? This is not a simple technology. The Long Taro Family researched the Court Fast Sailing Ship for many years and still do not understand how it's constructed," Mesiro said.

"I'm not copying the technology, just referencing it. My shipyard has its own technology direction," Liszt said with no small amount of pride.

Firstly, the powerful effect of rubber water can well replace the mortise and tenon structure, reducing many technological barriers.

Secondly, the rapid growth of the Rapid Growth Iron Thorns ensures a continuous supply of raw materials for shipbuilding. Apart from a small amount of primary Dragon Bone-like materials that require century-old rock wood or stone wood, other planks can be replaced with Thorn Ironwood.

Thirdly, he possessed the complete Dragonbone Stabilizer Technique, lacking only the Dragon Beast bone material—although Dragon Beast bone material is quite expensive, it's still possible to buy it.

Last of all, he had shipbuilding technology from Earth—the ramming technique and the square sail technique.

Once these technologies are integrated with the technology referenced from the Court Fast Sailing Ship, combined with the Water Calming Pearl and Calming Wind Pearl, it would be enough to create a top-tier sailing ship that would dominate the seas.

By then, the curtain of the Age of Exploration would slowly open.

Even crossing the Devil's Sea wouldn't be impossible.

"Since that's the case, when you go back, take this Court Fast Sailing Ship with you."

"Thank you, Uncle. I'll pay the price of a new ship on the market."

"It's just an old ship. Half price will do."

Liszt did not bargain. The Long Taro Family was not short of money but short of people. In the future, he would just need to give more support to the Long Taro Family. With a Dragon Knight as their support, the Long Taro Family's status within the Sapphires should be quite stable. Even if it wasn't stable, if the Long Taro Family was willing to go to his country, they could still enjoy the treatment of an earl.

The day and a half journey passed quickly.

After another half a day's journey on land, the fluttering flags of Long Taro Castle came into view. Due to the shortage of people, there were no formalities, and he headed straight to the bedroom to visit the bedridden Marquis Merlin.

"Grandfather."

"Liszt, you've arrived!" Marquis Merlin propped himself up in bed, his face already sallow and his spirit not very good, as he could leave this world at any moment, "You wrote that you would come but never did. I thought I would never see you again and was prepared to curse you out in my will."

"I'm very sorry, Grandfather. I was delayed by some matters."

"Never mind, it's good that you came. Where are Levis and Li Vera?"

"They couldn't leave. Father has just been promoted to an earl and the family is busy taking over the Bull Tail Domain. As for Li Vera, she's probably preoccupied with her marriage."

"That makes sense. With your help, Li William has been promoted to an earl; he must be so proud he's wagging his tail! Levis doesn't need to struggle and will inherit the earldom, surely smiling every day... Has Li Vera found a satisfactory partner yet? This old maid is going to be twenty-two soon."

"She'll be twenty-two after the holiday season."

"Twenty-two, it's time to find a noble to marry, or else when she gets older, she'll only be able to settle for a good-for-nothing pretty boy." Marquis Merlin prattled on, chatting with Liszt about family matters.

After a while.

The family chat was nearly finished, and Marquis Merlin regarded Liszt with the eyes of an elder, suddenly with a burst of emotions, "You look so much like Melissa... all the good traits of Melissa and that youngster Li William, all combined in you."

Liszt maintained a smile.

Chapter 693: Flame Mountain

"When I was young, I fought in countless battles and sustained numerous injuries, yet I never knew how to take care of myself. It wasn't until I got old that I realized how important one's health really is. Compared to those established Marquis families, us emerging Marquess families still have a long way to go," Marquis Merlin said, taking a sip of his medicine and mustering his energy.

Liszt asked with concern, "Grandfather, do you need to rest for a bit?"

"No need, lying in bed all day, I have had more than enough rest. I've been looking forward to your visit because there's a lot I want to discuss with you. You are the inheritor of the Ghost Swordsman legacy; I don't understand it, but since it bestows such formidable strength, it means that you have a bright future ahead."

"The Grand Duke has suggested to my father that I be promoted to Marquis of Iron Hoof City, but I have no interest in the nobles of the Blue Blood Alliance, so I declined," Liszt replied.

"You refused the position of Marquis just like that?"

"Yes, I declined."

"Ha-ha, you have personality, truly my grandson," Marquis Merlin laughed heartily, only to be swiftly interrupted by a severe bout of coughing. The butler at the bedside immediately set to patting his back and massaging his chest, while a servant held a spittoon for Marquis Merlin to cough into.

After coughing, he took a brief moment to catch his breath.

Marquis Merlin continued, "It indeed is unsatisfactory for the nobles of the Blue Blood Alliance, but being a feudal noble is much more comfortable, and you are right in your thinking. Besides, with your strength, it's only a matter of time before you snatch one of the other two Feudal Marquis titles on Iron Hoof Island; perhaps one day your father's and your domains will be right next to each other."

"Perhaps," Liszt agreed noncommittally.

"Thinking of it like this, in the future the Tulip Family, your family, the Long Taro Family, and the Golden Wheat Sheaf Family could all support each other, forming a significant power."

"I'm afraid the Grand Duke does not wish for the Marquises to be too closely connected," Liszt commented.

"The Grand Duke has his thoughts, and we have ours. The best way to get along is to find a mutual understanding... The potion formula you sent to Meioubao, he should already be using it; I wonder how effective it will be. The Long Taro Family still needs your help," Marquis Merlin sighed.

He had been deeply troubled by Meioubao's issues.

The noble system does not allow for the adoption of heirs; once a noble loses a direct male descendant to inherit the title, the fief would be directly reclaimed by the landlord—of course, it's also possible to choose a daughter as the heir, and then have her son inherit. However, doing so is no different from handing over the family domain to others.

In any case, inheriting the title always happens among male descendants; passing it to a daughter means the extinction of the family.

Naturally, Marquis Merlin did not wish to see the Long Taro Family extinct.

"Please rest assured, Grandfather, within my abilities, I will do everything I can to help the Long Taro Family," Liszt assured.

"You are a mature and steady child. Sometimes, I find myself quite envious of that lad Li Weiliam—he has three sons. Levis may not be the best, but he is more than capable of maintaining what has been accomplished, and that boy named Lidun, I've heard he's quite talented too. What's most surprising is your talent; it's beyond everyone's expectations," said Marquis Merlin.

Liszt spoke modestly, "I've only worked harder than others."

"Whether it's hard work or talent, you've grown to a height unreachable by anyone else in Sapphire, defeating a Domain Knight head-on; that achievement might well be unprecedented," Marquis Merlin referred to a level below that of Dragon Knights.

However, Liszt felt ashamed; if he were to be without his dragon, he wouldn't perform much better than any other knight.

Without the dragon, he would probably have been at the pinnacle of being a Completion Level Sky Knight in his lifetime—but there are no 'if's in the world, and he does have a dragon. Starting as an ordinary Sky Knight, he began training with the Fire Dragon, creating a legend of his own in Sapphire.

After confirming that he would help the Long Taro Family,

Marquis Merlin and Liszt did not dwell further on the topic.

Liszt began to seek advice from Marquis Merlin on the training of a Completion Level Sky Knight. As a seasoned Completion Level Knight with a wealth of insights and experiences, Marquis Merlin naturally did not hold back his teachings. They talked for over an hour, which gave Liszt a profound understanding of what it meant to be at the Completion Level.

"The Sky Chronicle of Liszt" now has enough basic material to be completed at any time.

...

After the noon banquet came the afternoon rest.

Liszt summoned the Smoke Mission, and at this moment, the mission finally changed, "Complete the mission, reward: clues to the Sub-dragon Phoenix." He suspected the clues were in the hands of Marquis Merlin and prepared to inquire further in the afternoon.

A new mission was also released immediately.

"Mission: Although you no longer care about Elf Bugs since you have dragons, the Elf Bugs are still silently toiling away, producing materials for the Black Horse Island Domain; among them, the Rubber Bugs are becoming more valuable. The use of Tri-Phase Force seems to have addicted them, please use it more frequently. Reward: Mutated Rubber Tree Species."

"Hmm?"

"A mission rewarding a new plant species, it's been a long time since I received a similar mission... The use of Tri-Phase Force is addictive for Rubber Bugs, it seems I need to use Tri-Phase Force frequently when I get back, to train the Rubber Bugs' mutation abilities." He did not use the Tri-Phase Force often.

Because after each use, the Rubber Bug triplets would be listless, looking as if they had suffered a great loss of energy.

But with the guidance of the Smoke Mission, it indicated that not only was the Tri-Phase Force harmless, but it actually stimulated the Rubber Bug triplets and thus should be used more often.

"However, coming back to it, ever since I shifted my focus to becoming a Dragon Knight, the domain's Elves have indeed fallen into a stagnant state of development. Does this mean the power of destiny represented by the Smoke Mission is actually limited? After the shift of focus, the influence on other areas began to weaken?"

It seemed to make sense.

Liszt felt it was necessary to learn how to control his subconscious to guide the Smoke Mission to issue more practical tasks—like Dragon Riding.

Elves are important, but no matter how valuable they are, they can't compare to dragons.

With a dragon, one could snatch many, many more Elves.

"Give me an Immortal Dragon!" he quickly identified the dragon he wanted most, trying to hypnotize himself continuously, looking forward to the performance of the Smoke Mission.

In the afternoon.

After Marquis Merlin had rested and refreshed, Liszt went to his bedroom again for a chat and soon started to ask about the Phoenix Feather. He had written a letter before asking about it, and Marquis Merlin had replied that it was seized from the battlefield and he didn't know its origin.

This time, however, Marquis Merlin gave a new answer: "Since your letter, I have been attentive and asked the 'Rats' of the family to follow the trade caravan to the continent to inquire about the Phoenix Feathers. Indeed, they extracted quite a few valuable clues from that Captive Knight."

"What clues?" Liszt's spirits were uplifted, knowing the reward for the Smoke Mission had arrived.

Indeed.

Marquis Merlin said, "According to that Captive Knight, his uncle was a mercenary who had once taken on a secret mission for a Noble to investigate an uncharted primeval forest. They found a large tree, which was said to shelter a Phoenix, and obtained several Phoenix Feathers."

As a result of uneven loot sharing, or perhaps crisis situations, the Mercenary Corps fell apart.

The uncle of the Captive Knight managed to escape with one of the Phoenix Feathers and handed it to the knight before dying shortly afterwards. And because the knight had the Earth Attribute, he couldn't make use of the Phoenix Feather and didn't dare to display it openly—the knight knew that his uncle had obtained the Phoenix Feather through shameful means.

So after being captured on the battlefield, he offered the Phoenix Feather as ransom to Marquis Merlin.

Liszt inquired, "Grandfather, where on the continent is that Captive Knight, and where is the forest his uncle explored?"

"Around the Dense Corridor area, there is a 'Flame Mountain,' and the Phoenix Feather was obtained from the primeval forest of Flame Mountain."

Chapter 694: Dou Qi Armament

Having noted the name Flame Mountain and remembered the captive knight's name and identity, Li Si Te successfully received the rewards for the Smoke Mission and prepared to go on an adventure to Flame Mountain when time allowed.

To find the possible existence of a Sub-dragon Phoenix.

Whether it was to slaughter for its meat or to tame as a mount, it would be of immense value.

As for the Phoenix being within the territory of the Eagle Kingdom, that was not a problem. As a Dragon Knight with an Archmage as an assistant, Li Si Te felt there was nowhere in the wide world he couldn't go. After all, it wasn't as if Dragon Knights were a common sight. Once he had completed the Phoenix hunt and simply left, not even a hundred Dragon Knights could catch up to him.

He rested for a night in Long Taro Castle.

Then Li Si Te bid his farewell, "Grandfather, I am busy with territory affairs and don't have time to accompany you further. During the festival, I will bring the newly decorated Sunset, which is extremely luxurious and remains untroubled by storms. Then I will pick you up and take you to celebrate the festival on Black Horse Island, staying at my Thorn Castle."

"Good, I must live to see the festival," he replied.

"Your health will definitely recover," Li Si Te encouraged.

"No need to comfort me, I see things clearer than you young people. You have many things to do, so hurry back," said Marquis Merlin. Though he was old, he still had a hearty spirit. After Li Si Te said his goodbyes, the Marquis did not try to keep him but urged him to return home, as carefree as in his youth.

After bidding farewell to his uncle's family and arranging a time to go hunting in Bull Tail Domain with Meioubao, he boarded a Court Fast Sailing Ship named "Giant Crab" and set off for Coral Island.

This Giant Crab was sold to Li Si Te for three thousand Gold Coins for his research and use.

The skilled sailors and the captain of the ship were also sold directly to Li Si Te. It must be said that the Long Taro Family was always very generous.

Two days later.

November came and the weather began to cool. Li Si Te returned to the port of Fresh Flower Town and handed over the Giant Crab to the Territory Officer, directing them to take it to the dockyard of New Harbor for research.

He then took the Rubber Bug triplets with him to Black Horse Island to unleash the Tri-Phase Force.

Ach was not in Fresh Flower Town, and Rainbow Whale Rose was nowhere to be found, so he had no choice but to ride Loki across the sea at full speed. Loki had two Wind System Magic abilities, Light Body Skill and Levitation Spell, which made him as light as a feather with the aid of Magic, allowing him to run freely on the surface of the sea with truly swift speed.

Moreover, the sensation of rushing over the water's surface was incredibly stylish.

The only downside was the higher risk factor. If he stumbled and fell into the water or encountered a Sea Monster, it would be very troublesome. However, the risks were all within manageable limits—if Loki were to fall into the water, he could call out Little Fire Dragon Leo to ride and then grab Loki to bring him back to shore.

In short.

He rode this colorful big bird swiftly across the sea.

In about an hour and a half, he arrived at Black Horse Port, then went straight to the Rubber Plantation. He took out the Rubber Bug triplets and released the Tri-Phase Force; Magic Radiance flashed continuously, cutting down a round of Rubber Trees before they quickly recovered to health.

"Continue harvesting," Li Si Te instructed the Steward of the Rubber Plantation after putting away the Rubber Bugs.

"Lord Landlord, would this harm the Rubber Trees and your Rubber Bugs?"

"It will not."

"Understood, Lord Landlord. I will arrange for the serfs to come and harvest the rubber right away."

Leaving the Rubber Plantation, Li Si Te watched the lethargic Rubber Bugs and felt their emotions, finding apart from fatigue, there were no other emotions. The Smoke Mission depicted them as addicted to releasing the Tri-Phase Force, but this Li Si Te truly had not noticed.

Either way, as soon as the Rubber Bug triplets had recovered a bit, he would immediately carry out the second round.

"

After nearly one hundred thirty-six Smoke Missions, he had come to fully trust the Smoke Mission. Formerly, there had been some thoughts of challenging the Smoke Mission's advice, wondering why one couldn't go right when the Smoke Mission directed left. Now, understanding the principles behind the Smoke Mission, he followed its guidance and reaped the greatest benefits.

Among countless changes of fate, the Smoke Mission, in all likelihood, offered the best solution, bringing the clearest path to the forefront for him.

Before long, he arrived at the Mage Tower.

Undoubtedly, if Ach wasn't in Fresh Flower Town, he would be at the Mage Tower, conducting experiments. Indeed, this turned out to be true; not only did he find Ach, but Ach also brought good news.

"Brother, after collaborating with Mary and the others, we've cracked the spell for storing clothes."

"Tell me about it."

"It's a kind of magic that deals with the transformation between matter and magic power, storing matter in a magical form. After casting the spell in reverse, the magic reverts back to matter. However, there are requirements for the material composition; it must be comprised of materials that possess magic power."

"It sounds very interesting. So, besides releasing magic, can it release Dou Qi?" Liszt was equally intrigued by this method of changing clothes at any time.

Ach smiled, "It can. The working principle isn't difficult, and with your control over Dou Qi, you'll easily learn it."

At this point, Mary Dawn Break interrupted, "Lord, Lord Acherloides has not yet named the magic. Perhaps you could name it."

"Mm, brother is very good at naming," Ach nodded seriously, clearly agreeing.

Liszt stroked his chin, not rejecting the idea, "Then to which system does this magic belong?"

"The magic power used belongs to Chaotic Magic Power, similar to the Druid's Natural Magic. In the classification of magicians, there are ancient records referring to it as

'Neutral Magic'. Grand Magicians like Chris have presided over discussions, and we refer to these types of magic as Neutral Magic."

"Neutral Magic, huh? Not bad."

Liszt immediately showcased his creativity, "Although it involves the storage of items, and belongs to a highly applicable category of Neutral Magic, the essential nature of the original magic was designed to facilitate dressing. So why not call it 'Magic Armament,' and when released with Dou Qi, call it 'Dou Qi Armament.'"

Magic Armament, Dou Qi Armament.

Once it was named, everyone, including Ach and Mary, clapped and cheered. It was indeed a vivid and appropriate name.

Subsequently,

Ach began to explain to Liszt the technical applications of Dou Qi Armament, as well as the details involved – Dou Qi Armament was not simply a Dou Qi move, but rather a more systematic Dou Qi system that included the selection of equipment materials, Dou Qi corroding materials, methods of retrieving and storing materials, and so on.

"Materials from Magical Beasts are the most suitable for Magic Armament and Dou Qi Armament. Clothing made from Magical Beast materials, due to their inherent magic power, readily integrates with magic and Dou Qi, completing the Dou Qi Armament. The fusion process with other materials is time-consuming and prone to damaging the material structure."

"So my Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword can't be stored with Dou Qi Armament?"

"Brother, the materials of the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword are too special. Dou Qi Armament cannot merge it with Dou Qi without damaging the material."

"What about gemstones? Can they not be merged either?"

"It would destroy the stability of the gemstone's structure." Ach had given careful thought to Liszt's equipment, "The equipment you can use Dou Qi Armament on includes Mithril Armor, the Red-faced, black-based, gold-edged tricolor cloak, and Snakeskin Inner Armor because the materials themselves are simple or possess magic power."

"I see. Then let's start with the Snakeskin Inner Armor!" Liszt declared, then suddenly remembered something, "Right, Ach, I haven't made you a few sets of clothes from Magical Beast materials. Perfect, let's make a few sets together. No more worrying about getting our clothes wet when we head out to sea."

Ach was delighted, "Yes!"

Chapter 695: Complete Library in Four Sections

Magic Armament and Dou Qi Armament have many restrictions, but it's undeniable that they represent a method of magic and Dou Qi cultivation with considerable potential for development.

Vampires initially relied on Magic Armament to carry clothes, weapons, and other items with them while transformed into bats.

Liszt immediately decided to make a batch of clothes compatible with Magic Armament and Dou Qi Armament. For himself, he prepared a set of undergarments, a set of leather armor, and a set of plate armor; for Ach, a set of undergarments, a Mage Robe and cloak, as well as a set of leather armor.

As for weapons, neither Liszt nor Ach needed to use Dou Qi Armament to store their weapons since they had Space Rings.

In fact, the use of Magic Armament and Dou Qi Armament was not significant, at least not for daily life on land where it wasn't needed at all. Nor was there any need to store clothes through magic when not transforming, especially on land. Only when going into the sea and coming ashore was the use of Dou Qi Armament necessary.

The process basically involved—wet clothes being stored as Dou Qi and dried off, then promptly released from within, effectively drying both the body and the garments.

What seemed like a sophisticated approach, in the eyes of Liszt and Ach, served merely the purpose of a drying machine.

But regardless, Liszt spent the past few days practicing the Dou Qi Armament, continuously fusing his clothes with Dou Qi. Similar to Dragon Knight Resonance, but more streamlined and easier than his initial treatment of Paris. Once a piece of leather armor was completely fused with Dou Qi, with a mere thought, the leather armor would be absorbed into Liszt's body.

"It's a strange feeling, like there's a special kind of Dou Qi in my meridians that's dramatically different from my surging Fire Attribute Dragon Dou Qi... very inactive, like stagnant water, and even more rigid than Primary Dou Qi."

When he released this kind of Dou Qi, it instantly transformed into leather armor on his body.

It was released through the skin, so the clothes appeared on the very inside layer. If multiple garments were layered, the armor should be released first, followed by the leather armor, and finally the undergarment.

"It's interesting, but keeping it inside my body feels awkward. It's better to just throw it into the Space Ring and put it on when I need to go to sea."

. . .

Besides being busy with the cultivation of Dou Qi Armament,

Liszt also took the time to complete "The Sky Chronicle of Liszt," a cultivation journal. The White Paper Workshop had gone through several improvements and finally produced clean, neat white paper—not quite top-quality writing paper yet, but very close.

He immediately commanded the paper craftsmen to use the "Liszt Paper" to bind standard notebooks. Then he had his servants meticulously transcribe the notes he had recorded on thick parchment into these notebooks. After examining for any omissions, they were adorned with exquisite covers.

Flipping through the neatly written black characters page by page, Liszt was very satisfied with the white paper.

"The papermaking industry can definitely support a significant portion of the financial revenue. With exclusive control over the technology, as long as I do not divulge it, I believe no one can steal it."

The technological content of papermaking isn't high, but as long as the 'Window' remains unbroken, others won't know how white paper is made. The same goes for glass—without revealing the secrets, no one else would be able to produce it.

His thoughts drifted for a moment, then returned to the journal.

"The handwritten text is still a bit of an eyesore. I should use printing to publish all my works, to be admired by future generations."

He flipped "The Sky Chronicle of Liszt" to the first blank page.

He had originally planned to write a preface on this page, but after pondering for a while, he still hadn't decided what to write. Suddenly, an idea struck him, and he penned in bold font: "I dedicate this book to—Marquis Merlin Taro, in gratitude for the help my grandfather provided on my path of cultivation."

After writing, he put his pen down with satisfaction.

His Serpent Script was becoming more and more attractive.

"I wonder if the Marquis of Bull Tail will have some thoughts when he sees this dedication. He too has provided me with much assistance on the path of a Sky Knight... But it doesn't matter now; this book is written for him. He should be satisfied with it, for it's a genuine token of filial piety!"

After closing the journal, he handed it to Butler Carter to be packed: "Wrap it securely and arrange for a message Knight to deliver it to Tulip Castle, to my father."

"As you wish, my lord."

After delivering the manual, Liszt did not rest; he immediately set out to realize his idea—he wanted to build a printing workshop on his territory and explore the art of printing on his own.

The development of heavy-duty paper had long since promoted the advancement of printing technology, so all he needed to do was to improve on the existing printing techniques to suit the white paper he produced. In doing so, he could package the papermaking, printing, and packaging business together, creating a complete industrial system.

Beyond that, he also planned to organize a team to proofread and compile the collection of books, striving to create a work like the Yongle Encyclopedia, just as Emperor Zhu Di had.

The format would be divided according to the Complete Library in Four Sections.

He had even decided which four sections they would be—Dou, Magic, Records, and Stories.

Dou would consist of Dou Qi cultivation manuscripts, Dou Qi secret techniques, notebooks, and so on; Magic would include specialized magic books, spell casting schemes, alchemy experiments, magic theory, and so on; Records would consist of various recorded articles, including geography, astronomy, ghosts, customs, legends, history, and so on; Stories referred to literary works, all sorts of interesting knight novels, folk poetry, piano scores.

Compiling such a Complete Library in Four Sections was no easy task.

But Liszt had a good attitude. He would collect materials when possible, and compile less if not. In any case, he was pioneering this work in the world—the most crucial point was that he was cultivating magicians to transition into scholars, who could eventually take over this work.

All he needed to do was to hang his name like Emperor Yongle, and then await his fame to last through the ages.

After all, he had more important tasks to do—visiting Dodo Island every half a month, harnessing the Tri-Phase Force every five days, and daily dragon riding and cultivation. Essentially, that was all of Liszt's work in November.

His strength was steadily increasing.

By the end of the month, he used the Tri-Phase Force for the seventh time, restoring the rubber trees in the rubber garden to good health. Although the triplet Rubber Bugs experienced high-intensity releases of the Tri-Phase Force that left them languid each time, they were quite content with no complaints.

He summoned the Smoke Mission.

"Complete the task, sap mutation variant of the rubber tree."

"Hmm, the task is already complete, but what is this sap mutation variant of the rubber tree? Sap mutation should refer to rubber mutation, could it produce a completely different kind of rubber?" Liszt looked at the lush rubber garden, dismissing his Eye of Magic.

The rubber tree had a sap mutation, not a Magic Potion mutation, meaning no Magic Potion had been born.

Currently, besides the ordinary rubber tree, two mutant varieties of rubber had emerged: fruit rubber and fan rubber. The fruit rubber's fruit was rich in rubber, making it easier to harvest than tapping rubber; the fan rubber could also be tapped, but its leaves were perfect planks.

The soft green leaves of the fan rubber could be folded into any shape and, once dried, the rubber within would solidify quickly into sturdy planks.

Pots, pans, ladles—all could be made from fan rubber leaves, but the territory gathered them mostly to make knight armor plates. A fan rubber leaf folded multiple times would become laminated planks, light in weight yet strong in defense.

Particularly, its resistance to magic could greatly reduce the damage from Dou Qi, making it an excellent material for knight's armor.

"I'm afraid I'll not find the sap mutation variant of the rubber tree right now. I have to wait

until this batch of rubber tree saplings grows before I can discover what sap mutation is."

No sooner had he thought this than one of the triplet Rubber Bugs became rapidly agitated.

Without Liszt's guidance, the bug consumed its normal Cordyceps, shrinking it into a seed,

which it then swallowed. Moments later, it spat the Cordyceps back out, planting it in its

original spot.

However, the Cordyceps had changed.

Thicker and fuller—Liszt seemed to understand something and made a small cut on the

trunk of the Cordyceps.

Whoosh!

Immediately, a large amount of milky-white rubber sprayed out from the cut, like a fountain sprouting from the tree. As the fountain gushed forth, the thick and full trunk

began to slowly shrink, as if a balloon were deflating. Startled, Liszt quickly reached out

to cover the cut to stop the flowing fountain.

"Is this the sap mutation? Rubber production from the rubber tree is like water injection...

But the key is, can Cordyceps also mutate?" he wondered somewhat blankly.

The triplet Rubber Bugs brought him too many questions about elves.

Chapter 696: Territory Range

Although Liszt covered the cut on the rubber tree cordyceps, the rubber would burst forth again as soon as he let go. Wrapping the wound in cloth, the surging rubber was still able

to stretch the fabric, continuing to gush out. He had no choice but to instruct the serfs to

bring buckets to collect the rubber.

Then he washed his hands with water.

Rubber doesn't stick to your hands when it's not solidified, so a little water rinse is enough to clean it off.

When the rubber stopped spurting from the cut, the serfs had collected three large buckets of high-quality rubber produced by the cordyceps. And yet, the rubber tree cordyceps didn't appear as wilted as expected—the leaves were still green, just not as thick and full, and the cut was slowly healing.

From the restless rubber bug, there was no sense of the cordyceps being damaged.

"Could this be the harvesting method for the sap-variant rubber trees, poke a hole and directly extract all the rubber? Perhaps it really is like this... As for what these rubber trees should be called now, 'sap,' 'fountain,' let's call it 'Fountain Rubber,'" Liszt swiftly completed the naming.

Henceforth, under the rubber tree branch, there were three varieties: Fruit Rubber, Fan Rubber, and Fountain Rubber.

Each one was quite magical. Fountain Rubber evidently had a rich yield; Fan Rubber belonged to directly produced finished products; while Fruit Rubber was easy to store and transport—the only pity was that the triplet rubber bugs were merely Elf Bugs, and could only affect a limited range of rubber trees.

Otherwise, with continuous expansion of cultivation, the rubber tree industry would be absolutely lucrative. Currently, they could only rely on artificial planting of rubber trees through fertilization to expand the plantation area.

He washed his hands and dried them.

Liszt left the rubber plantation and went to the Mage Tower to find Ach and told him about the variations of the rubber tree cordyceps, "This should be a very significant discovery, Ach. If you have the time, you could delve into this research and try to unravel the secrets of the Elves."

"Hmm, Ach will study it carefully," Ach responded.

In the month plus after being promoted to Archmage, Ach hadn't made many research breakthroughs apart from inventing Magic Armament and Dou Qi Armament.

She was more focused on understanding all aspects of being an Archmage, as well as exploring the Magic Web.

There were no Magic Books about Archmages in circulation, and no living Archmages in the vicinity, so everything had to be explored by Ach on her own. Liszt couldn't be of much help either, as his own Dragon Knight cultivation methods were resolved with Ach's assistance.

Leaving the triplet rubber bugs for Ach to study, he hurried off to complete the next Smoke Mission.

"Mission: The territory is about to enter winter, and most plants will stop growing during winter. However, that doesn't mean winter is a silent time without hope. Perhaps at the turn of a corner, there lies throbbing life. Please personally inspect every plantation in your territory once. Reward: Unknown number of Elf Bugs."

After a long time, there finally was a new mission for the birth of Elf Bugs.

"It seems like recently I've shifted my attention back to the Elves, so the Power of Destiny represented by the Smoke Mission has started to stir the Threads of Destiny for me again... It's a pity that even though I hypnotize myself every night before sleeping, the Smoke Mission does not seem to respond, not giving me any tasks related to the Immortal Dragon... Maybe my subconscious is not deep enough yet?"

Riding the Landwalker bird Loki, Liszt followed the map of Black Horse Island, inspecting each plantation one by one.

He used the Eye of Magic in every plantation to carefully observe the magic feedback light within sight. Now that his territory was large in both family and industry, this was indeed not an easy task. Fortunately, with Loki's quick pace and the strong observational power of the Eye of Magic, he managed to inspect a large number of plantations each day.

The first day yielded nothing.

But the second day brought good news. Within the influence area of the corn Minor Elf Mickey's cordyceps, at the corn plantation, a Stick Corn that belonged to the third growth found magic feedback light. After confirmation, this piece of Stick Corn was nurturing an Elf Bug. This invigorated his spirit, and he continued his inspections with mounting excitement.

"

The third day brought two pieces of good news. One was that a cutting of green tea in the plantation had already nurtured an Elf Bug in its seedling stage; the other was that during the inspection on Mangrove Island, a small arboreal sea helleborine was found to be nurturing an Elf Bug. Sea helleborines belong to mangrove plants and are quite common in the Mangrove Forest, although they are of little use.

On the fourth day, all plantations on Black Horse Island and those in Fresh Flower Town were inspected, with no further Elf Bugs discovered.

The excitement of the past two days dissipated, and Liszt began to mutter to himself, "Could there be only two Elf Bugs?"

He summoned the Smoke Mission and found that nothing had changed; the content of the Smoke Serpent Script remained the same. It showed that he had not yet completed the inspection of all the plantations in his territory.

"How could this be, I have clearly inspected all the plantations on land, even the several affiliated islands meticulously... Oh right, there's one place I haven't checked!" Liszt suddenly realized that he had only inspected the plantations on land and had not yet inspected those in the sea.

So, he mounted Rainbow Whale Rose and began to inspect the surrounding sea areas of his territory.

Indeed, in the Giant Algae Forest, a new Giant Algae Elf Bug was discovered that had nurtured itself, and Liszt contracted it directly.

Other than that, no further Elf Bugs or bugs in the process of nurturing were found.

Still, the Smoke Mission remained incomplete.

"What could be the reason for this? Could it be that during the inspection of the Magic Potions, because there was too much Light from the magic feedback, something was overlooked?" Liszt analyzed seriously but could essentially rule out this possibility. His Eye of Magic had evolved through many Dragon Knight Resonances with Leo.

His sensitivity to the Light from magic feedback had increased to a higher level, and the Light from Magic Potions and nurturing Elf Bugs were fundamentally different, something he would not overlook.

Regardless, he still spent three days to re-examine everything carefully.

But the Smoke Mission still remained incomplete.

"Impossible, the mission can't be incomplete; either I misunderstood it," Liszt looked closely at the content of the Smoke Mission. The mission required him to inspect all the plantations in his territory personally, "That's it! The focus of the mission is on inspection, not necessarily on finding Elf Bugs!"

According to the consistent principle of missions, as long as Liszt completed the inspection of the territory, the Smoke Mission would directly inform him of all the varieties of Elf Bugs.

There was no need for him to make an effort to search.

"So, I haven't completed the inspection?" He pondered deeply, still not understanding where he may have failed to inspect. The territory in total was so small that even a cursory glance should have been enough to finish inspecting.

"Oh ho!"

At that moment, Leo, who was asleep on his chest, woke up and notified Liszt through their mental connection that it was time to go to Dodo Island Volcano Crater to enjoy the Superior Magic (Dragon's Intent) condensed from the volcano.

Liszt was suddenly struck by a realization, thinking of a possibility: "I haven't inspected Dodo Island yet; the Smoke Mission must also include Dodo Island as part of my territory!" Essentially, the Smoke Mission projected according to his subconscious, and whether subconsciously or consciously, he considered Dodo Island part of his territory.

After clearing things up,

He laughed heartily: "Let's go, let's go to Dodo Island!"

Chapter 697: Unique

"Task completed, reward: one each of Hemp Rope Vine Elf Bug, Human Skull Elf Bug, Giant Algae Elf Bug, Sea Lotus Elf Bug, Green Tea Elf Bug, and Corn Elf Bug."

Having spent a day completing his training, Liszt also finished inspecting Dodo Island and found two pregnant Elf Bugs, one of which was a Hemp Rope Vine Elf Bug and the other a Human Skull Elf Bug, both close to hatching. He took out the packaged fertilizer from his Space Ring and carefully fertilized the two cordyceps.

The task consequently concluded.

It took two weeks in total; although it was a bit of a long time, the harvest was bountiful: six Elf Bugs. It was a cause for celebration to harvest six Elf Bugs at the end of autumn and the onset of winter. Moreover, the bountiful gains clearly hadn't ended yet, as the new Smoke Mission was again about Elves.

"Task: A fallen leaf gave Jela countless inspirations. She is a unique Little Minor Elf, struggling and breaking free from the shackles of fate. Though not quite perfect, she always manages to touch your heart. It's love and impatience that let her keep growing. Please let her understand her own uniqueness. Reward: Mutated Thorn Variety."

"Easy points!"

Liszt approached the task with ease. Through the heart-to-heart connection of the Elf contract, he could easily make Jela feel that way.

And in his mind, Jela indeed was unique.

This could be seen from the name of Thorn Castle: "Just in time, Thorn Castle is almost finished, with only some room decorations remaining. I can already move into Thorn Castle... Let Jela be the first to move into the new Worm Room of Thorn Castle, to enjoy a spacious and bright private room."

Returned to Black Horse Island.

After confirming with Jomaya Bangtu that Thorn Castle was habitable and wouldn't be disturbed by the remaining construction, Liszt quickly began the relocation. As the landlord, he had no need to worry about the moving process; Goltai took charge of organizing manpower, bustling between Fresh Flower Town and Black Horse Island.

Leaving some basic living supplies in the Nameless Castle of Fresh Flower Town, most of the materials were continuously transported to Thorn Castle.

Liszt stood in front of the grand entrance of Thorn Castle with his hands behind his back, and to say he wasn't thrilled would be a lie, given that this would be his new home for the coming years.

The main body of Thorn Castle could be divided into the main building, the left guard tower, and the right guard tower, all connected, but with intervals between each floor that could be blocked by heavy doors at any time. The castle rose five stories high, each floor six meters, topped by a ten-meter watchtower, totalling forty meters high.

The guard towers on both wings were six stories and thirty meters tall, with a five-meter-tall water tower on the left guard tower and a five-meter-tall middle building on the right.

Below ground level, there was a first basement floor, and under the main building's basement, there was a second basement.

Thus,

Thorn Castle could be considered nine stories tall, each floor with a specific use planned.

Seventh Floor: Only the upper half of the main building's watchtower was dedicated to vigilance.

Sixth Floor: The lower half of the main building's watchtower for storing guard materials; the left guard tower's water tower; the right guard tower's bell tower; as well as a small garden of Lithops on the rooftop and a simple observatory with long telescopes.

Fifth Floor: The experiment lab for Ach on the main building and left guard tower; Liszt's indoor training room on the right guard tower.

Fourth Floor: Bedrooms, bathrooms, study, and toilet, and other master living rooms for Liszt and Ach on the main building; Worm Rooms on both the left and right guard towers.

Third Floor: Guest rooms, bathrooms, toilets, and other guest living quarters on the main building, left guard tower, and right guard tower.

Second Floor: The main building houses a dining room and living room; the left guard tower contains an entertainment room; the right guard tower has meeting and duty rooms and other administrative spaces.

First Floor: Lobby, exhibition room in the main building; kitchen, boiler room, and other servant workspaces in the left guard tower; servant quarters in the right guard tower.

Basement Floor: Storage rooms in the main building, left guard tower, and right guard tower.

Basement Level Two—comprising only the main building's underwater worm room, the Rose Swimming Pool, and the underwater passage, which directly connects to the Tonghai Canal in front of Thorn Castle.

Jela stood on Liszt's shoulder, curiously observing the tall white castle in front of her.

She let out a meaningless cry, "Uwa."

"Jela, this castle is our new home, and it's called Thorn Castle," Liszt said, turning his head to speak to Jela on his shoulder, "from today on, you and I will live here. Do you understand?"

"Uwa!" Jela expressed her excitement.

"You are the first Little Minor Elf to move into Thorn Castle. The entire castle is even named after you. Do you know that, Jela, you are a unique sprite in my eyes?"

Jela was even more thrilled, "Uwa!"

"Come on, I'll take you to the worm room to see your new home."

"Uwa!"

Although the castle claimed to have nine floors, it only had a main structure of five floors, and there wasn't any elevator. Climbing the broad staircase made it easy to reach the fourth floor. The left and right wing guard towers on the fourth floor were divided into very small compartments, each serving as a private worm room for a single Little Minor Elf.

The room with Jela's nameplate was right by the passage of the main building, the very first one.

"Go and enjoy your new home," said Liszt as he opened the door to the compartment, and Jela immediately rushed in, fluttering about the room haphazardly.

The compartment, about twenty-five square meters, was quite spacious. Aside from a Jade Box, there were many small toys, mostly wooden carvings that could be thrown around or smashed, designed to relieve the Little Minor Elves' boredom. True to form, Jela brazenly grabbed a wooden carved Elf Bug and casually threw it to the floor.

"Uwa!"

She excitedly darted around, showing satisfaction with her new home.

When she grew tired of playing, Jela returned to Liszt's shoulder, and he once again declared affectionately, "Jela, do you like your new home? I live right next door to you... Remember this, my favorite Little Minor Elf is you because you are a unique sprite!"

"Uwa!"

"Good, make sure to remember that firmly."

"Uwa!"

After settling the overexcited Jela, Liszt called forth the Smoke Mission and discovered that the task had changed without notice, "Complete the mission, reward Auxiliary Magic Medicine of a mutated Thorn variant."

"Auxiliary Medicine quality?"

Immediately, Liszt thought of the most important Magic Potion in his territory—the Dragon Kui Auxiliary Medicine. The Dragon Kui Auxiliary Medicine had almost no effect when taken alone, but when combined with other Magic Potions, it could multiply their effects significantly. Its value was immeasurable, even though the only drawback was its somewhat low production.

Because there were only two Dragon Kui Bugs.

"I didn't expect the Thorn to mutate into an Auxiliary Medicine quality Magic Potion, good, very good!" Liszt understood the value of Auxiliary Medicine—it was essentially doubling the effect of the territory's Magic Potions. With the Thorn output Jela could influence, planting most of it as Thorn Auxiliary Medicine would be enough for all the Magic Potions in the territory to be used in combination.

When the time came,

Liszt could be more generous with taking potions, and his training with Leo would progress even more swiftly—the digestive power of Leo was such that he could probably handle eating Magic Potions by the ton.

"Haha, truly worthy of being my unique sprite, Jela, this achievement is all thanks to you!"

"Uwa!"

Chapter 698: Unknown Reward

Following the precedent set by Dragon Kui Auxiliary Medicine and Auxiliary Medicine Dragon Mallow, the thorn mutation's auxiliary medicine shall be called Auxiliary Medicine Thorn, and the magic potion created from it shall be called Thorn Auxiliary Medicine. Liszt quickly decided that within the area affected by Thorn Cordyceps, more than ninety percent should be planted with Auxiliary Medicine Thorns.

The remaining ten percent would be planted with Rapid Growth Magic Thorns and Rapid Growth Fire Thorns, two types of magic potions.

Using Thorn Auxiliary Medicine in combination with Giant Algae Magic Potion would be the future go-to method for potion consumption in his domain.

As of now, the domain's magic potion plants included Black Tulip, Rapid Growth Magic Thorn, Auxiliary Medicine Dragon Mallow, Magic Medicine Kelp, Rapid Growth Fire Thorn, Erect Centipeda, Coptis, and Auxiliary Medicine Thorn, totaling eight varieties; magic potions from Abandoned Cordyceps included Flame Mushroom, Ice Snow Flame Mushroom, Blue Pine Mushroom, Black Truffle, Golden Cordyceps, Monkey Head Mushroom, and Horse Bladder Fungus, seven varieties in total.

One could say that the magic potion industry was booming, far exceeding the output of many earl nobles' domains, but magic potions were still not enough—his and the Little Fire Dragon Leo's daily consumption was a bottomless pit, lesser quantities could mean a lesser frequency of consumption, but more magic potions could be gone in a day.

However, there was still a Knight Order to sustain, and although the Elite Earth Knights did not count on consuming potions to break through, they still needed to be regularly distributed some magic potions to ensure their Dou Qi did not wane.

The talented Emily had become an Elite Earth Knight, and her daily potion consumption was not insubstantial in order to cultivate her talent.

Yevich Water Peanut, as a Sword Saint without personal wealth to sustain himself, also required a regular provision of magic potions to ensure his Dou Qi did not deteriorate.

Becoming a landlord did not solely mean enjoying power, it also came with the obligation to provide support—the knights following him were like the "vibrant social organization" underboss's lackeys; to get the lackeys to follow orders, the underboss certainly had to offer benefits, and without benefits, how could he attract the loyalty of lackeys?

Of course, Liszt had not yet encountered any demanding lackeys.

His two Pioneer Mandates and one Iron Hoof Island suppression campaign all resulted in a great harvest, with his knights basking in the benefits, reaping rewards to their heart's content. Now, the majority of the rudderless knights in the Sapphire domain probably wished to follow Liszt, including those from the great nobles' younger sons.

Because following Liszt meant gold coins and titles of nobility.

With his strength, he would at least need the title of Marquis in the future to match his stature, and one could imagine how many military exploits it would take during the process of advancing ranks.

In short, the birth of Auxiliary Medicine Thorn was great news, but the demand for magic potions was endless, and the domain needed continual development and accumulation to support Liszt in raising dragons and establishing a kingdom—speaking of which, he could not yet really be considered raising dragons, as Fire Dragons were Elemental Dragons and could grow by relying on volcanoes.

For a Sacred Dragon like the Formless Dragon, he had no idea how to raise them, but certainly, they couldn't be thrown near a volcano and be expected to grow indefinitely.

"Only thing is, raising a Fire Dragon is good for me right now, since the Dodo Island Volcano can meet most of Leo's needs. Raising a Gemstone Dragon or Metal Dragon, apart from providing flesh and food, would likely require a vast amount of other resources... A Formless Dragon could also be seen as a Gemstone Dragon."

His train of thought was somewhat erratic.

For some reason, he had jumped from Auxiliary Medicine Thorn to dragon-raising, but Liszt timely brought his thoughts back, refocusing on the content of the new Smoke Mission.

"Winter's arrival is imminent, meaning that all things in the domain will enter two months of dormancy, affecting both production and daily life significantly; however, all these impacts are not as profound as the lurking crisis, which you may need to prepare for and decisively choose your stance. Reward: Unknown Rewards."

"A lurking crisis? Choose a stance?"

"Unknown Rewards?"

Liszt's gaze sharpened, contemplative. Disregarding this mission reward, he had already received five instances of Unknown Rewards, always after the New Year and wars.

The first New Year's Unknown Reward was the sea sprite—Sea Sprite Ake.

The Unknown Reward from the Iron Hoof Island campaign was the revival of dragon bones.

The reward for the first Pioneer Mandate was the rebirth of Dou Qi—promotion to Sky Knight.

The second New Year's Unknown Reward was the Little Fire Dragon in its form of fire.

The reward for the second Pioneer Mandate was three Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruits.

From this, it can be seen that every unknown reward was quite substantial; however, this was neither a festival nor a war, just an ordinary daily task, yet it offered an unknown reward. This truly sparked Liszt's curiosity, "Could it be because the task itself is somewhat horrifying?"

The task was not very clear, but the lurking dangers and the choices of standpoints indicated that this would be a significant conflict.

"What could it mean?"

He instinctively felt that it might have something to do with the Grand Duke, because the task involved taking a stand, "Could it be that the Grand Duke has learned of my dragon, thus forcing me to choose between surrendering it willingly or waiting for him to come and plunder? But what exactly does the lurking danger represent, could it be the remnants of the Goat Assembly?"

Aside from the very likely Grand Duke who could become the Dragon Domain Landlord, the only others who could threaten him were the few missing Grand Magicians of the Goat Assembly—after all, they had once severely wounded an adult Sapphire Dragon, and with the strength to slay a dragon, they were a threat.

"However, if I carefully analyze it, whether it's the Grand Duke or the Goat Assembly, could they withstand the combined strength of me and Ake?"

It wasn't that he was arrogant, but rather that it was a fact. A Dragon Knight and an Archmage working together were virtually unchallenged across these sea islands, and even if they were to gallop across the continent, there weren't many threats—no nation would be foolish enough to casually attack a Dragon Knight and an Archmage, as it could easily result in mutual destruction.

Having dismissed the Grand Duke and the Goat Assembly as the lurking threats, he immediately thought that the danger might not originate from within the country, "It's also possible that it comes from abroad, with Eagle Kingdom being the most likely suspect. Perhaps the Smoke Mission's threat is the Dragon Slaying Battle… but what does the choice of standpoint mean"

He didn't believe that this choice of standpoint was about whether to surrender or resist in the Dragon Slaying Battle.

"Forget it, Ake and I will both be cautious. At the slightest signs of trouble, we'll jump into the sea to escape and reconvene. Then, we can plan our second move!"

The identities of Dragon Knight and Archmage gave him tremendous confidence, and his ability to survive in the sea was an exceptional escape skill. Thus, no matter how ominous the Smoke Mission might sound, he was undaunted.

He shook off the shadow of the Smoke Mission.

And continued to dedicate himself to the development of his territory.

The birth of Thorn Magic Potion had greatly increased his interest in magic potions, and he thought of another opportunity to expand the field, "I had previously come across two kinds of Abandoned Cordyceps, Flame Mushrooms and Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms. Although both come from the same source, there are some differences in nature. I wonder if the limitations of the Magic Web will be shared."

Winter was coming, and the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms could be planted.

He needed to test the planting results of the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms to see if they would affect the Flame Mushrooms, leading to a decline in the quality of both types of Abandoned Cordyceps.

If the restrictions of the Magic Web were not shared, then the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms could be traded for new Abandoned Cordyceps.

This work required him to merely give the order, and then it could be handed over to Chris Truth for research. Serving so many Magicians and Grand Magicians was not just about refining magic potions or creating a few Temperature Calming, Calming Wind, or Calming Water Pearls, or even making some ordinary magic equipment.

Any magic-related work could be arranged by Chris.

"Viscount, please rest assured, I will send someone to follow up on the planting of the Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms and strictly control the quality of both the Flame Mushrooms and Ice Snow Flame Mushrooms."

"Hmm, I'm very confident in your work," Liszt said indifferently.

In the past, when dealing with his female subordinates, he used to habitually flash a charming smile to enhance his personal charm.

However, ever since Ake appeared, Chris had been wholeheartedly following Ake to study magic, showing a perfunctory attitude towards him, their extremely handsome lord. Therefore, he had become too lazy to maintain any charming smile and would issue orders directly. After all, with Ake's powerful allure, the magicians would only regard Black Horse Island as a holy land.

After Chris left, he called for Mary Dawn Break.

"My lord, what are your orders?"

"Lately, I have an uneasy feeling, as if someone is secretly spying on Black Horse Island, or other places. Dispatch the Blood Servants to investigate the islands of Sapphire, especially the information on Iron Hoof Island... If there is news from abroad, that would be even better."

Mary bowed and saluted, "As you wish, my lord!"

Chapter 699: Underwater Castle

After dispatching Blood Servants to gather information, Liszt spent the following two days busy with the castle relocation. All the elves were transferred to Thorn Castle and moved into the new Worm Rooms.

The Elf Bugs had nothing to say about the move; wherever they were placed, they'd crawl about contentedly. With their low intelligence, they didn't exhibit any special behavior.

However, the Minor Elves were a bit more troublesome.

Calm Minor Elves like Mickey, the Corn Minor Elf, just needed a handful of corn kernels and they could spend half a day leisurely counting them in the room. Occasionally, Liszt would ask Mickey how many kernels there were, to which Mickey would show a blank expression.

Sorry, but it couldn't count.

Nami, the busy Mangrove Minor Elf who worked all day, also got a Worm Room, personally arranged by Ach, since it was a Minor Elf contracted with Ach. Nami felt indifferent about the new room, but the peanut nougat candies filling the small cabinet indicated great excitement.

After gnawing on a peanut nougat candy, it let Ach take her back to Mangrove Island to continue looking after her little duck business and didn't stay overnight in the Worm Room.

Liszt always felt that Nami's personality was greatly influenced by Ach—they both had independent character traits. While Nami did show some of the Mangrove Minor Elf's bossiness, it still preferred to wander alone outside and wasn't clingy.

Minor Elves like Wheat, Sword Grass, Green Soybean, Sorghum, Apple, White Flip Grass, Pine, and Tobacco moved into their rooms without making any fuss.

The two Coptis Minor Elves contracted with Yevich were even quiet. Without the care of their master, they seemed rather pitiful. Therefore, Liszt generously had Yevich come to the castle to comfort the two Minor Elves before sending Yevich off to the dock.

The Adventure Fleet was being organized, and besides becoming familiar with water, Yevich had to learn about sailing, get to know the structure of ships so he could face dangers at sea.

Settling these Minor Elves went quite smoothly.

However, there was inevitably some commotion after the Coptis Minor Elf moved into the Worm Room, mainly because Jela was unhappy to see the Coptis Minor Elf also having its own fancy Worm Room. The two Minor Elves, one crying "Wuuwa" and the other "Ula", quarreled across the hallway for half a day.

Ultimately, Liszt settled them down with a flick of Finger-Flick Magic, and they went back into the Jade Box to sleep obediently.

The placement of the terrestrial Minor Elves concluded, and soon the aquatic Minor Elves were settled as well, with the Elf Bugs dutifully staying in the ponds. The three Giant Algae Minor Elves also had their own ponds, blissfully enjoying the pond bottom sprinkled with Jade Powder. However, Giant Algae Greater Elf Pike threw a temper tantrum.

"The standards are too low, the lighting is insufficient here, this place is uncomfortable to live in. Even though there's water, it's not flowing smoothly—no, no! The handsome Pike cannot endure such an environment, I demand a change of location!"

"This place is quite nice. If you feel oppressed, you can swim along the water channels to Tonghai Canal. The canal is managed by people, and there are gates at the sea entrance that close, so you won't encounter any danger."

"Liszt, I thought you understood me. The handsome Pike needs light and freedom. Help me build a castle underwater in the sea; I like underwater castles."

"Haha."

"That attitude isn't good. A comfortable environment can stimulate an elf's desire to work. Build me an underwater castle, and I guarantee a 10% increase in the production of Magic Medicine Kelp from the Giant Algae Forest."

Although Pike's thinking was a bit off and its behavior unreliable, its words weren't entirely false. If the elves are willing to work on their own, the yield of the crops can indeed increase significantly, at least in terms of farming, reducing a great deal of labor costs.

With just a casual sowing from Pike, it could probably plant several acres of Giant Algae—although it couldn't guarantee whether the result would be Magic Medicine Kelp or just ordinary Giant Algae.

Since Pike couldn't guarantee the variety of Magic Medicine, Liszt naturally wouldn't let Pike meddle with the planting of Giant Algae at will.

However, feeling a kind of mental connection, he did sense Pike's dissatisfaction. Compared to the undemanding Giant Algae Minor Elves, Pike was a Greater Elf who understood refined pleasures.

"Let's do this, I will arrange for Virginia the Necrofish Ugly to build you a simple underwater castle at the mouth of the Tonghai Canal. If you like it, you can live there. But don't run around recklessly; the sea is not safe, and if you encounter any danger, hide in Thorn Castle."

Pike grinned, showing his sharp teeth, "Hurry up and find that Necrofish Ugly. The handsome Pike can hardly wait."

Virginia Truth had completely adapted to her identity as a Necrofish Ugly. She usually stayed within the Tear Staff, resting, and would come out to work once she had enough rest, dredging the depth and breadth of the harbor. Now, not only had Black Horse Port and New Harbor become deep-water harbors, but Fresh Flower Port had also completed the construction of its deep-water harbor.

She then lingered around the mouth of the Tonghai Canal, preparing to widen it to match Liszt's future plans of developing the canal's mouth into a harbor.

After getting accustomed to the power of the Necrofish Ugly and undergoing a period of training, she could now stay outside for a continuous hour.

Working for one hour each day and sleeping for the rest of the time.

"Don't worry, my lord. Building a small castle underwater is as easy as constructing a toy castle. As long as you prepare the materials and the design plans, I can start building underwater anytime."

"Thank you very much," Liszt responded courteously.

He always treated his followers and other subordinates with gentlemanly manners; he did not like to put on airs or to act needlessly profound.

Following the completion of Thorn Castle by Jomaya Bangtu's team of architects, there wasn't much work scheduled for them, so they could immediately start on the underwater

castle—for what was called a castle might more accurately be described as a small underwater villa, just enough for Pike to live in without needing luxury.

And so it was.

Thorn Castle officially commenced operation, with Ach directing the magicians to move one experimental device after another to the fifth-floor laboratory. Butler Carter, on the other hand, directed the servants to decorate each room, seeking to reveal a sense of luxury amid simplicity, fitting with Liszt's personal taste.

As for Liszt himself, there wasn't much for him to do, except suggesting some ideas for the arrangement of the study and the bedroom.

After that, he went out t0 find a place to continue his Dou Qi Cultivation with Leoregardless of what hidden dangers the Smoke Mission hinted at, only by becoming stronger could he better face these crises. If he was strong enough, even a myriad of conspiracies would be futile; a single show of strength would solve everything!

Not far from the castle's entrance, Patrol Leader Paris was leading a team of knights on patrol.

Upon seeing her, Liszt signaled one of his Retainer Knights to call Paris over.

"My lord."

"How is your recovery coming along?"

"I have fully recovered, and I feel better than at any time before," Paris said with a beaming smile, having finally laid to rest the health issues caused by the Black Dragon Childe.

She felt buoyant, radiating the joy of a young girl.

Liszt nodded and asked, "How about your cultivation?"

Upon hearing this, Paris's smile grew even brighter, "I can now cast Light System Magic again, although Light and Shadow Tug is still a bit of a struggle and might need more attempts. The cultivation of my Light Attribute Dou Qi is progressing quickly; I feel that I will soon complete my apprentice Dou Qi Cultivation and be ready to attempt to become an Earth Knight."

"Good. If you're lacking any resources, just ask me. You are a very special Light Magic Swordsman, and your cultivation system represents a new direction," Liszt said with concern—he was keen on mass-producing Fire Paladins, eager to discover the effects of cultivating both magic and Dou Qi.

Chapter 700: Blood Shadow at the Port

Paris' Light Magic Swordsman cultivation system is worth following, but her strength has been greatly reduced for the time being as she's just starting on this path, so there isn't much we can discern yet.

She is already twenty-one years old and will turn twenty-two after New Year's festival; her body isn't as young as when she was seventeen or eighteen. Moreover, as a woman who experiences bleeding monthly, it's hard to guarantee how high she can reach on the path of a Light Magic Swordsman—her journey is more pioneering in nature.

Having just finished talking with Paris, several magicians now approached the castle's front path, followed by a few horse carts.

Chris led the team and quickly came to pay respects upon seeing Liszt: "Viscount, are you preparing to go out?"

"I'm looking for a quiet place to practice. Are you here to set up a magic array?"

"Yes."

It's possible to set up a magic array around the perimeter of the castle. Generally, a magic array uses a magic barrier to protect the castle's safety. This kind of magic array requires precious materials and uses the magic power inherent in those materials to form the barrier. While effective, they are not very cost-effective, and most castles are reluctant to set them up.

Liszt encountered such a magic array during the siege of Juniper Castle on Iron Hoof Island, where it was clear that the Marquis of Bull was quite the spendthrift.

Liszt wasn't that extravagant and lived quite a tight life, but he also didn't plan to set up a magic array like Juniper Castle's. The magic array being prepared by Ach was a modified version, and its purpose wasn't to protect the castle but to secure the safety of the fifth-floor laboratory.

When magicians experiment with magic, it's inevitable that magic power sometimes gets out of control and may explode accidentally.

Even as an archmage, Ach didn't dare to be careless, especially since the worm room was directly below, and Liszt would be devastated if any harm came to the elves. Therefore, a magic array was needed to protect the laboratory—the walls and floors had already been reinforced during its construction.

Not even a grand magician's magic could destroy the outer walls of the laboratory.

For magic with a higher degree of danger, Ach wouldn't conduct experiments in the laboratory of Thorn Castle; this magic array was more about providing a double layer of protection.

With Ach and Chris overseeing these matters, Liszt didn't need to worry.

After exchanging greetings, he left Thorn Castle for the wilderness of Black Horse Island and summoned Little Fire Dragon Leo to begin Dragon Knight Resonance.

Every time he entered Dragon Rider Mode and observed the world through Leo's eyes, he felt the incredible magic and seemed to understand the essence of things on a deeper level. All trajectories of magic power could not escape from the vision of the Eye of Magic under these circumstances.

He dubbed this state "Dragon Eye Trajectory" and included it in "Liszt's Complete Dragon Knight Training Manual" as the seventh method of cultivation.

Dragon Eye Trajectory wasn't focused on practice but on uncovering the secrets of things, constantly observing the world, elves, magical beasts, gemstones, magic, and anything else observable.

Even Ach was observed under this state.

Within Dragon Eye Trajectory, Ach's stationary form was just a highly concentrated blueand-white magic human figure, but when Ach casted spells, her body resembled a glowing sphere, extending countless dense threads as if drawing high-energy magic power from the void.

Liszt didn't know whether this was akin to seeing the Magic Web, but at least he saw how Ach drew high magic from it.

With Dragon Eye Trajectory, Liszt was preparing to find all the magic power nodes and could cause chain damage with a slight exertion of force on these nodes—this was one of his important trump cards. Without the Eye of Magic to help identify such nodes through Dragon Eye Trajectory, other Dragon Knights would not be able to find and exploit these weaknesses.

```
"Leo!"

"Full Sun Wheel!"
```

Holding the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword and riding Little Fire Dragon Leo, he executed a charged move fiercely. The erupting fire attribute Dragon Dou Qi burst forth like a full sun, exploding in the air ahead, filling the sky with unextinguishable flames. If there were a Sky Knight in front of him, the explosive shockwave might have torn the opponent apart.

Yet Liszt was not entirely satisfied.

"As a weapon of the Greater Elf Warrior, the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword is indeed very powerful, but it is more suited for sword combat between two Sky Knights, and not for fighting while riding a dragon," he commented, looking at the azure sword in his hand

and sighing slightly. "I need a very long, very long Knight's Spear—at least ten meters long to unleash the strongest attack methods of a Dragon Knight. And if I want to attack flexibly and freely, it could be a bit shorter, around seven meters would suffice."

The Knight's Spear used for dragon riding could be called a Dragon Lance.

Liszt needed a high-quality Dragon Lance, but neither he nor the entire Duchy of Sapphire possessed the technology to make one.

A seven-meter or ten-meter Dragon Lance, sturdy enough to avoid easy breaking or swaying, presents a significant technical challenge. It would likely require the indestructible magic metal, Mountain Copper, to forge a handle that can be grasped firmly to maintain the stability of the spear shaft.

Otherwise, a Dragon Lance made of wood or ordinary metal would keep shaking during use, affecting its effectiveness.

"I wonder if those Dragon Knights trained by the kingdoms have Dragon Lances as their weapons. If they do, I should steal one to bring back," he thought for some reason. Whenever he lacked something, his first thought was to go out and take it—yet he had always been a person who loved peace.

Without a Dragon Lance, a regular Knight's Spear was not very useful, so he continued to practice with the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword.

It was dusk by the time he returned to Thorn Castle.

Unexpectedly, Mary Dawn, whom he had just sent away not long before, had returned at some point and was now waiting in the castle: "My lord, I have important news to report."

"Speak."

"Our Blood Servants have discovered traces of vampires on Coral Island."

"Vampires?" Liszt's expression remained unchanged, but his eyes flickered slightly.

"Where were they discovered, what did you do about it, and did they notice you?"

"They were discovered at the Coral Island Port. Hamil was about to board a ship to set sail when he suddenly recognized a familiar face, his former colleague Brutus the Black Knight, nicknamed Crazy Ghost Haben. Hamil reported to me, and I immediately arranged for him and Uso to monitor Crazy Ghost Haben without alerting him."

"Is there any other vampire besides him?"

"I don't know, but I have asked Phoebe to investigate inns and other places near Coral City, and Vansa to start investigations in the Black Horse Island Domain. If any vampires have infiltrated, we will have them firmly locked down."

"Just keep watch for now and report their activities to me at any time. Be careful not to be discovered. Moreover, we need to send people to investigate on Iron Hoof Island as well."

"Peggy and Wimbleton have gone to Iron Hoof Island, and Seth to Blue Dragon Island. I have not asked them to return."

"Be more careful. I will have Captain Marcus cooperate closely, and I will also notify Tulip Castle to be fully prepared for defense on both Coral Island and Black Horse Island," Liszt indicated to Mary to continue monitoring the new vampire while he enjoyed his dinner as usual.

However, his mind was racing: "Vampires have come to Coral Island, what does this mean... It means that the Black Knight Family is investigating the deaths of Tuobert and Fomuir, the two Purebloods? However, a more likely possibility is that it has something to do with Alonso Xiankelai."

The Smoke Mission hinted at a looming crisis of great impact.

If it was just a few vampires who dared not expose themselves, it would hardly count as a crisis. Moreover, since the mission involves choosing a stance, the target is clear: the lurking crisis is Alonso Xiankelai, the Bronze Dragon Knight from the Eagle Kingdom, the master of Trapped Dragon Mountain Iron Mine.

"It's certain that Alonso is behind the Marquis of Bull and the Goat Assembly, and now I've also snatched his iron mine and captured two of his Sky Knight followers."

Wisdom sparkled in Liszt's gaze: "So he's set his sights on me?"