

## The Mighty 851

### Chapter 851: Opening the Magic Gate

The time moved into mid-November.

The potato plantation of the Potato Great Elf Kuchi had long been established. In addition to Liszt coaxing Kuchi to sprinkle many potato seedlings, the Knight Order also found many wild potatoes from the wilderness, all planted in the plantation. Over the following days, various Elf Cordyceps fell to the ground one by one as plantations were built successively.

With the Knight Order's conquest of many large tribes, they had also rescued eight Elf Bugs and turned them over to Liszt for contracting. The planning for the plantations progressed quickly.

All the plantations were large in scale, but in reality, the plants inside were quite sparse.

Regardless, the Smoke Mission was successfully completed.

"Mission completed, reward for discovering new islands."

...

The reward had been issued, but Liszt had not yet received the Adventure Fleet's report. He could not be bothered by the Adventure Fleet's report because a new mission had already been released.

"Mission: Ach has perfected all the detailed steps of the Magic Gate experiment. The time has come to witness a miracle. Behind every miracle is a foundation of countless drops of sweat. Please assist Ach in completing the Magic Gate experiment. Reward: A new Elemental Incarnation for Ach."

"The Magic Gate experiment is finally going to start..." Liszt wasn't surprised at all. Ach often discussed the progress of the Magic Gate experiment with him. He had a very clear

grasp of it and was always ready to contribute his efforts alongside the Formless Dragon Bard.

Liszt pondered the reward for the Smoke Mission for a moment: “Ach’s new Elemental Incarnation, what could it be? She already has mastery over the Water and Ice Elements; the target she has set for the third Elemental Incarnation is the Earth Element... It should be the Earth Element, without any surprises.”

Swiftly,

He had already arrived at the Mage Tower and saw Ach, who was writing notes: “Ach, when do we start the Magic Gate experiment?”

“Ach is still writing out the details of the Magic Gate experiment. I will need your and Bard’s substantial cooperation when the time comes. We should probably rehearse for about a week first, so let’s tentatively schedule the official experiment to start a week from now.” There was plenty of fatigue on Ach’s face, and her eyes, unusually, were rimmed with red.

She had barely slept in recent days because of the Magic Gate experiment.

Liszt felt deep concern: “Since the theory has been completed, there is no need to hurry with the practical application. Once you’ve finished writing the experimental details, you should rest properly for a while. No more high-intensity work like this... Your health is more important than any magic, any experiment, understand?”

Ach smiled sweetly: “Yes, Ach understands.”

He ruffled her azure hair and, for a moment, felt a surreal confusion, as if Ach were still that gentle, delicate Little Sea Monster, not the great Archmage revered by Magicians.

...

“Operation Details of Magic Gate Experiment” was ultimately completed by Ach overnight.

After handing it to Liszt, Ach spent time carefully explaining every detail to him, only to be forced by Liszt to go and rest.

Holding the notebook, Liszt leaned on the Formless Dragon Bard, reading meticulously.

The experiment seemed far-fetched, but the details were quite thorough—mainly about opening nodes between two material spaces and then connecting them by tearing through the Magic Web. The operation was complicated, but Bard's capability was more than enough to accomplish it, to open two connecting Magic Gates.

As he familiarized himself with the operational details, the reward for the Smoke Mission finally arrived, though belatedly.

He finally received good news from the Adventure Fleet's report; they had discovered an island some five hundred kilometers west of the Flame Islands.

After the combined exploration of three Adventure Fleets, they found it to be a new archipelago. Although the islands were not large, possibly even smaller than the Whirlpool Archipelago, their strategic location was quite good. Positioned on the route from the Flame Islands toward the mainland, it would substantially shorten the sailing distance.

"I command Captain Yevich to continue leading the Adventure Fleet sailing towards the Legendary Continent to open a navigation route for the Flame Islands and to thoroughly investigate the information along the coast of the mainland... Figure out the distance of the Flame Islands from the mainland, clarify which kingdom this part of the coastline belongs to."

After a pause, Liszt added, "Pass the word to Yevich, when he reaches the coastline of the mainland, that will be the moment he is promoted to Earl."

"Yes, Your Highness." The twins Lucy and Ruth responded.

They performed excellently as operators, deserving the trust of Liszt. Shortly after learning from Ach, they each mastered common magic and advanced from being Magic Apprentices to become ordinary Magicians. They were becoming increasingly qualified as assistants to Ach.

A week flew by in a flash.

With plenty of rest, Ach began to oversee the Magic Gate experiment.

Liszt and Bard had memorized the operating manual and knew every detail by heart. The setup was similar to the last node observation experiment, with Ach setting up a large Magic Array. Two were needed, placed at the north and south ends of Whirlpool Mountain.

After the first Magic Array was activated, Liszt and Bard achieved the Unity of Man and Dragon and quickly used the Array's power to break through to the strength of a mature Dragon, then forcefully opened the node at the material boundary.

Then they hurried to the second Magic Array and opened the node with the same aggressive stance.

At this moment, the man and Dragon followed the predetermined steps of the experiment, entering the world beyond the material through the node. In the Crystal White View, two adjacent nodes were especially clear.

"Bard, time to work, construct a magic power channel between the nodes, complete the node traction, rip through the Magic Web, and create a real Space Passage!" Liszt thought clearly, without any delay, began directing Formless Dragon Bard to release Space Magic Power, using the Formless Dragon itself as a bridge to connect the two nodes.

Once the magic was connected, they could feel the mutual attraction between the two nodes.

"Let's start!"

"Woo-ya!"

Bard spread its wings in a boiling passion, its claws reaching fiercely into the pitch-black void to grip the connected strands of space magic power, then flew forcefully outward. The strands of magic power were continuously pulled and drawn, bringing the two nodes together in the same direction, creating ripples in the world beyond the material.

In the rippling area, the traces of the Magic Web could be faintly seen.

“Now is the time!”

“Burst forth!”

Liszt keenly sensed the disturbance of the Magic Web, and man and Dragon erupted forcefully, pulling hard. The next moment, as if something broke in the void, the strands of space magic pulled open a tubular passage. This channel just so happened to pass through the Magic Web, piercing through its barrier.

However, unlike the Wormhole Space of the Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix, this passage was not stable. As the Magic Web compressed continually, there were signs that it would soon collapse.

The two material nodes also began to become unstable.

“Go, Bard, let’s test the fluidity of the passage!” Without wasting any time, man and Dragon quickly flew into the newly formed passage.

To the left was the Magic Array at the south of Whirlpool Mountain, and to the right was the Magic Array at the north.

He chose to go left first. The Space Passage was brief, and in a blink of an eye, they passed through the fluctuating exit to the real material world—indeed, it was the entrance to the Magic Array at the south side of Whirlpool Mountain.

At that moment, the entrance flickered with a pale blue light. From any direction, it collapsed inward, forming a vortex-like portal. Liszt did not delay and charged back into the entrance and into the Space Passage. The passage was already showing cracks from the continuous squeezing of the Magic Web.

The man and Dragon did not dare to linger, passing through at top speed. They burst out from the other exit.

And they came upon the Magic Array entrance at the north side of Whirlpool Mountain.

Right after they emerged, the pale blue light at the entrance did not last long before it exploded violently, all light dissipated into invisibility, and the Magic Array also collapsed at that moment. Many precious magical materials dimmed at that instant, the magic power exhausted, turning into waste.

But Liszt laughed, leaping down from the Formless Dragon's back and guffawing: "Ach, the experiment was a success, we've successfully opened the Magic Gate!"

In front of the Magic Array.

Ach's eyes spun like whirlpools, as if she had seen all of Liszt's two crossings through the Space Passage.

A smile rose on her lips: "Hmm!"

## Chapter 852: New Elemental Incarnation

"Brother, Ach seems to have captured some strange information," Ach said, his pupils still swirling, a sign that he was deploying the 'Super Magic – Eye of Mana.'

"What kind of strange information?" Liszt asked, still immersed in the exhilaration and joy of creating the Magic Gate.

"It's a segment of magic with peculiar properties; it's very strange, much like the space magic powers Ach has been studying... It really resembles it, quite similar to the magic found in Bard." As Ach spoke, he looked towards Bard, who was poking his head nearby, "Brother, could you let Bard condense some space magic power?"

Bard already understood human language, so Ach could direct him, confident that he would happily comply.

However, Ach was a considerate Little Sea Monster, respecting Liszt, the Formless Dragon Knight.

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“No problem.”

Liszt communicated with Bard using the Dragon Heart Electrical Signal.

Bard then opened his mouth and emitted a Dragon Breath Shattering Space, the intense space magic power slicing through space like a fog, silently reducing the rocks on the ground to powder, much more potent than the high-temperature dragon breath of Little Fire Dragon Leo.

Moments later, Ach nodded, “Brother, it’s done.”

“How is it?” Liszt asked.

“I’m sure it’s the nature of space magic power, brother. Ach has now grasped the special operational method for the magic particles; it seems I can already condense space magic power,” she said, raising her left hand and extending a slender, pale finger, from which a point of white light blossomed.

Then,

she gently reached her finger into the void, making it slowly disappear from sight. Using the Eye of Magic, Liszt could clearly see the white magic power radiating from her finger—it had extended into the material boundary, concealing itself like the Formless Dragon.

Seeing this, Liszt suddenly realized that the so-called reward of “Ach’s New Elemental Incarnation” from the Smoke Mission was not the predetermined Earth Elemental Incarnation.

It was a Space Elemental Incarnation.

Sure enough, when he invoked the Smoke Mission, he found the experiment with the Magic Gate was complete along with the mission, “Completed mission: Reward is Ach’s space attribute elemental incarnation.”

“Incredible!”

“There might never have been a magician, since ancient times, who could release ‘space magic’ and obtain a space elemental incarnation... It’s possible, though; the Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix was the creation of an Ancient Magician, maybe someone among them mastered space magic... Regardless, my Ach is a unique genius, terrifyingly talented!”

Utterly stunned,

Liszt did not show it. In front of Ach, he still maintained the demeanor of a Dragon Knight, scholar, ruler, and brother.

He just smiled and clapped his hands, “Incredible, Ach, that you could master the space attribute of magic power. Given time, you might be able to open the Magic Gate by yourself and traverse the world at will.”

“Giggle,” Ach withdrew her finger, still maintaining the elemental incarnation of space magic laboriously, “Now that Ach has acquired the space elemental incarnation, my understanding of space is much deeper. The Magic Gate will soon be fully realized! Brother has the Formless Dragon Bard, and Ach can travel through space with you.”

Liszt ruffled her hair vigorously, “Exactly!”

Bard also let out a joyful cry, “Wu Yi Ya!”

The Formless Dragon felt quite smug inside. It was seeing Ach’s terrifying talent that had dignified Liszt to initiate two Mind Battles, eventually lowering the standards to achieve Dragon Knight. The purpose was to stay by Ach’s side, using his abilities to guide the way.

And the subsequent development went just as it had imagined, no longer fearing getting lost when shuttling through space.

“Brother, Ach needs time to adapt and practice the Elemental Incarnation, but before that, there are still tasks about the Magic Gate that you need to complete.”



“Just tell me.”

“In the Magic Gate experiments, the greatest restraining condition is the contraction of the Magic Web, which squeezes the newly formed Space Passage, leading to the collapse of the node entrance. To counteract the compression of the Magic Web, a huge amount of magic power is necessary, which isn’t feasible as no source of magic power in any Magic Array could match the Magic Web.”

“Indeed, so have you thought of any solutions?”

“We can directly search for natural nodes,” Ach nodded.

“Natural nodes?”

“Yes, the entries and exits of the Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix are natural nodes. It must have been ancient Archmages who found the natural nodes and connected them, thus eternally inscribing the Wormhole Space to resist the compression of the Magic Web. Brother just needs to find more natural nodes, and Ach can set up eternal Magic Gates.”

“I understand. I will join Bard in searching for more natural nodes.” The first natural node that came to Liszt’s mind was the entrance to the ruins on the Moon Slayer Sacred Mountain.

Although Hourglass Valley is somewhat dangerous, it’s probably not difficult to open an exit.

Once a Magic Gate is established, the vast area of the Flame Islands will become even more closely connected.

Ach continued, “Another thing to note about natural nodes is that the process of linking different nodes might not be smooth. The Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix is an example. The repulsive force in the Wormhole Space is unidirectional, allowing only one-way transmission. To establish a two-way transmission, you might need two natural nodes with a very high degree of compatibility.”

“I will try to find more natural nodes, and then gradually select the appropriate ones to build Magic Gates... Actually, one-way is fine too, worst case scenario, we just loop around and set up other reverse-direction Magic Gates.”

Liszt’s idea was simple.

One-way Magic Gates would mean A can only go to B, B can only go to C, but then finding another Gate that C can only go to A, thus B could go through C back to A.

Ach also understood this: “Mmm.”

...

Returning to Flame City.

Liszt’s excitement had not subsided, he was full of ambition, thinking about how to find natural nodes and establish Magic Gates.

At that moment, smoke slowly emerged in front of him, condensing into a segment of Serpent Script, announcing the latest Smoke Mission.

“Mission: Leo has not returned to the Black Horse Island Domain for a long time. Little Yellow, Little Red, and Little Purple are slowly growing but cannot alleviate the loneliness in the heart of the Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree Greater Elf Annie. As the master of the elves, why not resolve her worries. Reward: A Jade Vein.”

“Jade Vein?”

Liszt was suddenly thrilled, feeling delighted, “The domain currently lacks Jade. To meet the needs of the elves, Ethan, and the Magic Guild, the monthly spending on Jade is astronomical. Now, sleep has brought a pillow... Annie’s troubles, easy to resolve, let’s relocate her to Doomsday Volcano to accompany Leo!”

Chapter 853: Dominating Thorn Castle

Due to the experiments with the Magic Gate, the magical materials in Flame Town were almost depleted, and replenishments were desperately needed from the Flame Territory.

After delegating tasks, Liszt and Ach headed back to Black Horse Island. Although Ach could switch to some forms of a Space Elemental Incarnation, he had not formally developed this ability. Therefore, riding the Formless Dragon still did not enable him to be enveloped by space magic power, preventing him from traversing the Great Whirlpool alongside Liszt.

Thus, they still opted to first ride the dragon to the coast, then switch to Ach's shell.

Of course, first, they rode the Formless Dragon to the Endless Volcano Cluster to find Leo.

Next, they rode on Leo toward the sea—since, as a Dragon Knight without a dragon in attendance, one's combat prowess would dramatically decline, making any encounter with danger quite troublesome.

Only when Leo transformed into a Magic Form and possessed him did he have ample confidence, fearing no ambush.

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Indeed, after the Steel Ridge Kingdom and Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom had ignited war, Liszt had been on guard for something—the Eagle Kingdom might be gathering strength in preparation for revenge.

With their decades of preparation for the Dragon Slaying Battle ruined by a newly emerged Dragon Knight, the Royal Family of the Eagle Kingdom was certainly unwilling to let it go.

Moreover, the disappearance of the Light Green Gemstone Dragon in the vast sea made Liszt a prime suspect—after Liszt intentionally released news of the Light Green Gemstone Dragon, it was no longer just a suspicion, but a fact.

“Should the Eagle Kingdom prepare for revenge, the scale of a Dragon Slaying Battle will certainly not be small. Currently, the Eagle Kingdom possesses eight dragons, five of which have knights; their five vassal states have another five dragons, with two dragon

knights among them. Although it's not possible for all dragons to leave the frontier, a desperate gambit might allow the deployment of four or five dragon knights."

After the Sapphire Duke declined this year's Pioneer Mandate War, Liszt had already deeply considered the possibility of retaliation from the Eagle Kingdom.

Regardless, he had become a thorn in the side of the Eagle Kingdom.

In the process of founding the Flame Kingdom, a Dragon Slaying Battle would inevitably erupt sooner or later, reestablishing dominion over these seas and the new order in this corner of the Legendary Continent.

"If I were the king of the Eagle Kingdom, I would definitely start by showing weakness to the neighboring countries to curry favor, then stabilize internal forces, and choose an appropriate moment to concentrate all available Dragon Knight strength for a spectacular Dragon Slaying Battle for a sweeping redemption!"

Of course, the location of the Flame Islands was a mystery. Whether fleets from the Tulip Family or the Pinecone Family, the pilots of Flame Territory were responsible for leading the way.

Others had no knowledge of the location of the Flame Islands.

If the Eagle Kingdom wished to launch a Dragon Slaying Battle, the ideal battlegrounds would still be the Sapphire Archipelago and the Sea of Azure Waves. That's why there was danger for Liszt returning to Flame Territory, and it was essential to bring Leo—not just to show off that he had a dragon.

Leo provided brief responsiveness. With support from Ach by sea, it was enough to ensure his escape from any life-threatening situation.

If the Dragon Slaying Battle did not kill him, the remaining time would be his personal showtime. The Eagle Kingdom, unless wishing to destroy itself along with him, absolutely lacked the strength to withstand his retaliatory strike.

In any case,

The Dragon Slaying Battle might happen, or it might not.

But no matter where he went, he always needed at least one dragon by his side.

...

After quite a struggle,

It was already December when he returned to Black Horse Island, and in just over half a month, it would be the New Year's festival. Liszt did not know whether this year he would have time to spend the festival with the Tulip Family's relatives. Both he and the Marquis of Bull Tail were too busy to spare a moment.

He was developing the Flame Islands, and the Marquis of Bull Tail was also preoccupied with developing Tulip Island—the construction of the Bull Tail Domain had already been set aside.

When the Flame Dragon descended, enveloped by its fierce dragon might, the subjects of Black Horse Island already knew—their great Dragon Knight Lord had returned.

“Oh ho!”

Butler Carter, upon hearing the roar of the fire dragon, couldn't bother with the crystal dinnerware he was wiping and excitedly stood up, shouting, “Everyone drop your tasks, tidy your clothes, male and female servants quickly assemble in the hall. Mrs. Morson, Mrs. Morson, please check the list of female servants, Tom, check the list of male servants!”

“Mr. Carter, is the master back?” Tom had been promoted to head of the male servants, this once water-carrying servant had already competently undertaken the role of Butler Carter's assistant.

“Of course, sharpen up, Tom, the master doesn't like servants looking listless.”

“Understood.”

Along the castle’s corridors, Mrs. Morson’s voice also grew louder, “Alright, girls, drop the burlap, tidy your clothes and all gather in the hall downstairs. Do not hesitate, quickly, quickly, you are the maids of Thorn Castle, serving the Prince Dragon Knight!”

“Coming, Mrs. Morson!”

“Are my clothes a bit wrinkled?”

“Is the master back? I’ve never met him before, I’m so nervous!”

While the old and new servants busied themselves assembling to greet the arrival of the master of Thorn Castle, outside in the castle’s square, Liszt and Ach dismounted from the dragon.

Amidst the knights’ respectful salutations, they approached the castle.

Leo flew straight to a pile of rocks beside Thorn Castle; Liszt had once promised to build it a hundred-meter-high stone platform, but later reconsidered as impractical. The weight of the stone platform made it difficult to stack up to a hundred meters, so he casually piled up stones produced by the Blizzard Beast Squad for Leo to use temporarily as a landing spot.

“Klack!”

“Klack!”

“Klack!”

The Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree next to the pile of rocks housed Little Yellow, Little Red, Little Purple—three flame dragon birds nesting in the tree suddenly woke up, emitting joyful cries and flapping their wings toward Leo.

“Huh?”

The Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree Greater Elf Annie, idly daydreaming in the tree, also witnessed the long-absent fire dragon descend from the sky and land on the familiar pile of rocks.

“Shriek!”

She swiftly flew up, but without the arrogance to approach Leo closely.

She had seen how Leo had promptly flicked away Little Yellow, Little Red, Little Purple with his wings. This thrilling fire dragon, possessing a wildly unbridled and solitary nature, wouldn’t foster any warm feelings just from familiarity. Consequently, Annie thought it over and turned to fly toward Thorn Castle.

She understood well, only one person could suppress the wicked thoughts of Leo—Liszt.

By the time Annie reached the castle, neatly arranged male and female servants stood by the castle gate under the leadership of Mr. Carter and Mrs. Morson, bowing to welcome the master home. However, the originally orderly welcoming atmosphere was disrupted by several minor elves.

Thorn Greater Elf Jela, hands on her hips, had already landed on Liszt’s head, directing the surrounding fluttering minor elves with commands, “All of you, behave, back off, back off, whoa! I’m speaking to you, Coptis Minor Elf, consciously back off, quickly!”

“She’s really playing the tyrant.”

Annie slowly flew toward Liszt, not intimidated by the truculent Greater Elf, Jela.

All were Greater Elves, none significantly more powerful than the others. It was only because Pea Great Elf Ash was hopelessly addicted to ropework, Giant Algae Greater Elf was carefree deep under the sea, Mangrove Greater Elf Nami rarely stayed in the castle, and Annie herself spent all her days among flame dragon birds.

That left Jela to dominate Thorn Castle and become the bully feared by countless minor elves.

“Liszt, you’ve returned.” Annie flew over on her own, landing on Liszt’s shoulder, ignoring the glaring Jela above her.

## Chapter 854: The Cost of a Single Touch

“I’m back, Annie.”

Liszt greeted the Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree Greater Elf, Annie, and from the mess of elf emotions, he sensed its desire—it wanted to be close to Leo.

It was a matter Liszt needed to address, so he responded with a reassuring emotion and waved his hand. All the Little Minor Elves immediately followed him, chattering as they returned to Thorn Castle.

“Jela, take them back to the Worm Room, I’ll come to visit you there in a bit.”

“Wow, whoever doesn’t listen, Jela will beat them up!” Jela, upon receiving Liszt’s instructions, immediately became aggressive again—proving that Jela had become one of Liszt’s favored subordinates; otherwise, why wouldn’t Liszt instruct another Greater Elf and choose it instead.

Liszt’s actual intention was simply because Jela was more aggressive, and the intimidation of a bully always seemed stronger.

...

All the Little Minor Elves were driven back to the Worm Room by Jela, down the path, leaving only Annie, who remained unmoved and still followed Liszt.

It was already eager to be near Leo, to smell the sulfur-scented breath of flames.

“Master, now that you’re back, are you planning to rest for a few days before leaving, or will you wait until after the New Year’s festival?” Butler Carter waited for Liszt to settle the elves before asking.



“Rest for a few days and then leave. As for the New Year, it depends on the circumstances; I may not be able to make it back to Thorn Castle for the festivities.”

“If the master isn’t at Thorn Castle for the festival, then this year’s New Year will lack atmosphere. Last year, the atmosphere of the first New Year at Thorn Castle was memorable,” Carter regretfully said. Last year during the New Year at Thorn Castle, both the Long Taro Family and the Tulip Family had celebrated there.

Liszt smiled, “Even if I don’t make it back, Thorn Castle will still celebrate as usual, and you, Carter, will be responsible for it. Let the menservants and maidservants have a joyous festival.”

“Master is always so kind.” Mrs. Morson came over with a cup of steaming milk tea, “Just freshly brewed Banpo Cattle milk, the steward of the cattle farm just brought over a batch of fresh milk, and this is from those few specifically marked cows.”

Banpo Cattle were differentiated by grade, those few milk cows infected directly from the embryonic stage were purebred Dragon Breed Cows, not yet at milking age.

The directly infected adult milk cows, though not of a pure breed, still produced high-quality milk and had always been Liszt’s exclusive milk.

Liszt took the cup, sipped lightly, and immediately the fragrance of the milk filled his mouth, “Mm, it’s been too long since I’ve had fresh Banpo Cattle milk, it takes me back to the leisurely days of old.”

“You’ve really been too busy this year, master.”

Gulping down the cup of milk without minding the heat, Liszt then spoke somewhat sentimentally, “Yes, it’s been a busy year.”

Three dragons to raise, Flame Island to develop, countless responsibilities all hinging on his involvement.

It seemed from the moment he began Dragon Riding on Fire Dragon Leo, life was like a horse spurred on by a whip, galloping nonstop. He never took a proper break, to enjoy days free of disturbance, void of trifling matters—a peaceful life in Fresh Flower Town was what he yearned for most.

Living with Dragon Riding dreams, patrolling his territory's crops daily, life was simple, without the need for too much thought.

Such days were no longer possible to return to.

Sighs were but fleeting moments, as a Dragon Knight carrying the ambition of nation-building, having chosen a more challenging path, he must walk it unwaveringly.

"Mrs. Morson, have the maids ready some hot water, I want to take a bath in a little while."

"Yes, master."

"Mr. Carter, prepare for this evening's banquet at Thorn Castle, invite all officials from Black Horse Island to attend."

"As you wish, master."

After giving his instructions, Liszt, accompanied by Annie, left the castle and headed towards Leo's resting place. Those three Flame Dragon Bird chicks were still circling around Leo, but they no longer dared to make noise. Leo wouldn't show any courtesy to them just because they were Liszt's pets.

If it weren't for Liszt often suppressing Leo's malicious thoughts, those three little birds would have long been stuffed between Leo's teeth.

"Annie, go ahead, I'll have a good talk with Leo. After this, feel free to touch him whenever you want," Liszt said with a smile, patting Annie on the head.

“Thank you, Liszt,” Annie chirped, flapping her transparent wings and eagerly flying next to Leo. She reached out to touch a scale, then quickly drew her hand back, savoring the smell of sulfur and the fiery essence on her hands, her expression one of total bliss.

“Ugh!” Leo felt annoyed. Although Annie seemed no bigger than a flea to him, and he couldn’t feel her touch, he still disliked having this tiny creature near him.

Liszt then negotiated with Leo using Dragon Heart Electrical Signal.

“Leo, I plan to move Annie close to the volcano where you cultivate. Later on, when you come out to bask in the sun, let her touch you.”

“Why should I allow a flea to touch me at random!”

“She’s evolving and will become a Dragon Elf, which will be a great help to me. And helping me is the same as helping you, isn’t it? Think about it carefully.”

“I need Magic Potions. Ten potions for one touch!”

“You’re robbing me!” Liszt glared, “One potion for one touch, no bargaining!”

Eventually, after a fierce argument between the two, with Leo making exorbitant demands and Liszt countering firmly, a man and a dragon reached an agreement: two Magic Potions for one complete enjoyment of touching, not just for touching a scale once. Otherwise, based on Annie’s method of touching scales several times in a short period, she could bankrupt Liszt in two days.

Once the price was set, Leo lay down on a pile of rocks to sleep, allowing Annie to continue touching and indulging non-stop.

...

“Mission complete: Reward one Jade Vein.”

One drunken moment clears a thousand worries. As Annie reveled in the scent of Fire Dragon Leo, all her troubles vanished, and Liszt's Smoke Mission was completed accordingly—a Jade Vein was secured.

However, it was still unknown where the Jade Vein was, probably somewhere on Flame Island.

Leaving Annie to continue her blissful indulgence in Leo's scent, Liszt walked back, keeping an eye on the new Smoke Mission.

“Mission: After a long period of experimentation, the masters at the Fire Dragon Brick Factory have not figured out the firing of porcelain, but they have discovered that limestone can be fired into lime. However, this kind of lime lacks good adhesive properties, as if missing a crucial component. Why not help them solve this dilemma? Reward: The much-anticipated cement.”

Cement had always been a product Liszt looked forward to.

Although his territory possessed rubber, which was ten times stronger than cement, using rubber for road construction or building houses was a colossal waste. Rubber was now widely used in shipbuilding, equipment, containers, and other industries, as a strategic material, and he couldn't bear to misuse it in the construction industry.

So, cement was the best alternative, allowing rubber to be used where it was truly valuable.

“Are we finally going to produce cement? The Fire Dragon Brick Factory has been built for several years, finally yielding returns.” The Fire Dragon Brick Factory was a large workshop with facilities for brick firing, pottery firing, charcoal production, and so on, and had been constantly trying to produce cement and porcelain according to Liszt's instructions.

Alas, the porcelain wasn't successful, nor was the cement.

The crucial moment still required Liszt's intervention: “The lime isn't adhesive enough, lacking a critical component... What necessary component is missing? I don't know much about cement myself; how can I help them solve this problem?”

## Chapter 855: Spiral Positioning

Limestone and cement, Liszt admitted that he didn't really understand them; he only knew that both were calcined and very common.

But as for what the connection between them was or what their components were, that was not very clear to him.

“However, if I remember correctly, I once watched a documentary about China building the Mombasa-Nairobi Railway in Africa, where it mentioned the problem of cement production. Due to a lack of raw materials, the Chinese experts eventually chose to use local volcanic ash as one of the raw materials for cement?”

When he watched this documentary, Liszt felt very proud. It was a great achievement of his homeland. What he remembered most clearly was that cement could actually be made from volcanic ash.

So.

Thinking of this, he immediately went to inspect the Fire Dragon Brick Factory and provided the craftsmen who were responsible for developing cement with a new direction—asking them to mix limestone with volcanic ash to see if they could produce cement.

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As for the volcanic ash, Dodo Island had a lot of it, but the 800-kilometer journey was a bit far.

Coral Island also had a weathered extinct volcano. Liszt had once searched for signs of magma there to excavate volcanic ash.

These mundane affairs didn't require Liszt's attention; he just needed to provide a general direction.

In the following days, while he teased the elves and inspected his territory, he waited for Ach to set up experiments for the magicians of the Magic Guild and prepare magical materials. Meanwhile, the officials had prepared ten large frame ships filled with supplies and personnel, ready to transport to Flame City.

December 10th.

The departure was set.

“Woo wah, woo wah!” Thorn Greater Elf Jela was very reluctant to see Liszt leave.

“Be good in the castle, and don’t bully the Little Minor Elves. Once I’ve built a new castle and plantation in our new home, I’ll move you there.”

“Remember to come back soon.”

“Mm.”

“Woo wah!”

Jela let go of her hold, watching Liszt depart.

Among all the Greater Elves and Little Minor Elves, she was the one with the most abundant emotions. It wasn’t clear if it was because Liszt’s thinking was so different from the people of this world, or if Jela was inherently unique. Nevertheless, among the many odd elves in Liszt’s company, Jela remained the most special.

The ten large frame ships set sail, not to forget the one that had always been docked below Thorn Castle—that ship’s hold was sealing the hind legs of the Jade Dragon.

Now that Flame City had already been established on Flame Island, he decided to take the Jade Dragon’s hind legs to Flame City and hide them in the cellar of the soon-to-be-completed new castle. Concerning the precious treasures of the Mind Fruit Tree and Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, it was only safe when kept close to himself.

...

Returning to Flame City, he found the already returned Formless Dragon Bard.

Liszt didn't stop; he directly rode on Bard to take the Magic Form's Little Fire Dragon Leo, Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree Greater Elf Annie, along with three following Flame Dragon Birds, all to the Endless Volcano Cluster.

Leo quickly transformed from Magic Form into flesh and blood, then plunged headfirst into the rolling magma of the Doomsday Volcano Crater.

Liszt continued with Annie to look for the right place and finally found a dormant volcano halfway up the mountain. Annie happily planted her cordyceps.

The towering Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree sprouted from the ground and was fitted with bird nests. Little Yellow, Little Red, and Little Purple immediately circled around the Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree, chirping nonstop.

"Annie, I'll have Leo rest here often, so you can touch him freely."

"Liszt, you're so kind." Annie was sincerely grateful to Liszt; without his help, she couldn't get close to the dragon she loved the most.

"Take good care of these three little birds for me."

"Don't worry, Liszt. Little Yellow, Little Red, and Little Purple listen to me," Annie confidently said, and this was no bragging.

Back when there were two adult Flame Dragon Birds, they settled and nested securely in the Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree, without ever harming Annie, which demonstrated Annie's capabilities. Now, the three little birds depended heavily on Annie, and after Leo, they were closest to Annie.

Perhaps it was fate, or maybe it was mutual attraction.

“Take care of yourself, my power hasn’t extended here yet... Although Leo’s Dragon Might envelops the Endless Volcano Cluster, you still need to be careful.”

“Little Yellow, Little Red, and Little Purple will help me fight!”

Though they were but fledgling birds, the three Flame Dragon Birds had already learned the fire system magic carved within their bloodline—Flame Slash. With a flap of their wings, they immediately condensed flames into a blade, the power of which was rather astonishing. Against common low-level magical beasts, they were a piece of cake; even when facing intermediate magical beasts, they were no pushovers.

As for advanced magical beasts, within the range of Leo’s Dragon Might, no advanced magical beast would casually intrude.

So, the safety of Annie was basically not a problem.

...

“Bard, let’s go.”

“Woo ee ya!”

The Formless Dragon flapped its wings, rapidly entering the material boundary; then forcefully tore through the boundary, stepping into the world beyond matter. As the Crystal White Trajectory rotated, Magic Return Positioning was activated, searching for potential natural nodes while flying.

It was at this moment.

Liszt suddenly had a burst of inspiration, “Can the effect of Magic Return Positioning be strengthened?”

The effectiveness of the Dou Qi Secret Technique “The Eye of Magic” had, after fusion with the dragon, resulted in the intricately detailed Dragon Eye Trajectory and the distinctly tiered Crystal White Trajectory. He had just thought of something—he had two



Dou Qi Secret Techniques other than “The Eye of Magic”: “Breath Decay” and “Spiral Rotation.”

“Breath Decay” had little use at the Dragon Knight stage and had been abandoned.

“Spiral Rotation,” because it did not significantly aid a Dragon Knight in battle, had not been practiced for a long while.

“Spiral Rotation is a technique of Dou Qi circulation. What if I apply it to Bard’s space magic power, and use the spiral-shaped magic radiation to search, could I then locate the feedback from the material boundary with finer precision?” Upon thinking of this, he immediately practiced Spiral Rotation with Bard.

After all, it was just a trial; even if it failed, he would lose nothing, yet success would yield a great harvest.

Very soon.

Spiral Rotation merged with Magic Return Positioning, and the radiated space magic took on a spiral shape. However, the effect did not seem to be very pronounced. The world outside of matter remained quiet, with no response akin to the feedback from the previous Magic Return Positioning.

“Failed...?”

Just as he was preparing to give up, suddenly, a unique fluctuation signal came from afar. Both man and dragon shook in unison—they had located a natural node!

However, Liszt did not steer Bard closer but signaled Bard to stop the Spiral Rotation, locking onto the node using normal Magic Return Positioning.

In comparison, it immediately became apparent that the unique fluctuation, which was previously detectable, could no longer be felt.

“Bard, try the Spiral Rotation again!”

“Woo ee ya!”

Once the Spiral Rotation was executed, the special fluctuation was sensed once more by the Magic Return Positioning. While faint, the location was very clear.

“Let’s go!”

Liszt was overjoyed, clearly a genius having developed a powerful new skill—calling this upgraded version of Magic Return Positioning the Spiral Positioning. The birth of Spiral Positioning meant that the value of Dou Qi Secret Techniques had returned to his focus.

Initially, when “The Eye of Magic” combined with dragon power to exert potent effects, he had an immense craving for Dou Qi Secret Techniques.

Yet, the dispensable nature of “Breath Decay” and “Spiral Rotation” made him waver—apart from the special “The Eye of Magic,” other Dou Qi Secret Techniques seemed to serve little purpose for a Dragon Knight. Thus, his motivation to search for Dou Qi Secret Techniques gradually slackened.

Now, Spiral Rotation had reignited the great value of Dou Qi Secret Techniques.

“From now on, I need to obtain more Dou Qi Secret Techniques, gradually integrate them with dragons, and perhaps develop new skills!” As he fantasized about Dou Qi Secret Techniques, he was already flying toward that natural node.

Chapter 856: What’s mine is mine

Hidden natural nodes were difficult to discern, but even under the formidable searching capabilities of spiral positioning, they still had nowhere to hide. The Formless Dragon swiftly approached the natural node and then began to rely on its innate abilities to break through the node’s “thin” material boundary.

At the moment the boundary ripped apart, Liszt caught sight of the scenery outside.

It was a secluded environment, brimming with lush trees. Only when he and the Formless Dragon completely flew out of the natural node did he have a clear view—it was the interior of a dormant volcano crater. Once they soared out of the volcano, their vision commanded a top-down perspective, with Phoenix Perch Parasol's volcano not far to the left.

The Endless Volcano Cluster had nine active volcanoes and many dormant ones, most of them unnamed.

This particular dormant volcano was also unnamed.

“Having a natural node inside the volcano crater feels somewhat inconvenient for transportation, unless... we break through the volcanic tunnels. Hmm, if Ach picks this as one of the Magic Gates, we'll mobilize a group of Ancient Mages to bombard and blast, striving to open the volcanic tunnels sooner rather than later.”

...

With Thorn Ironwood, rubber water, and the impending development of cement, we already possessed the capability to construct tunnels.

Although this world lacked large tunnel boring machines, it had magic. While Magicians' combat spells might not be impressive, their effects were clear when applied to civil uses. Even if the Ancient Mages couldn't penetrate the rock layers inside the mountain, there was still Ach, the Archmage. With Super Magic – Spiral Ultra-High Pressure Water Drill, capable of crushing metal, let alone the mere mountain.

Thus,

Upon finding the first natural node, Liszt's heart surged with excitement, and together with Formless Dragon Bard, he redoubled his efforts, continuing to delve outside the material world, in search of new natural nodes.

At this time, the powerful search ability of spiral positioning could be fully demonstrated.

Before long, he discovered a second natural node. On penetrating the node, the other side revealed surging seawater, crashing against the material boundary, but unable to breach into the outside world.

“Regrettably, the node is in the sea, seemingly in a deep-sea location; this node probably can’t be developed,” he thought, not even daring to venture out.

Bard couldn’t swim; if he drowned in the sea, it would be no laughing matter.

Hence, they left the natural node and continued to fly in the world outside material reality, searching for natural nodes. The material world was vast, but the concept of ‘large’ did not exist in the world beyond it, as if everything was squeezed together. To use a vivid analogy, the material world was like a vast sheet of white paper.

Each point on this white paper could only move across its surface.

But in the world outside materiality, it was like the white paper crumpled into a ball. Continuing to walk on the surface of the paper would not change the distance, yet moving outside the paper could easily connect two points that were originally out of reach. Natural nodes were like finding such points where one could move outside the paper.

There were no boundaries or distances, and even the concept of time was hazy and unclear; for normal creatures, the world outside materiality was an inconceivable place.

Only the Formless Dragon could navigate here with ease.

“Another natural node discovered, let’s go!” Liszt urged, and the pair flew towards the third natural node. Moments later, they opened the natural node.

On the other side was a forest.

As Liszt flew out of the natural node, he immediately noticed an interesting problem—he had arrived near Flame Mountain, in one of the subsidiary mountain ranges of Flame Mountain. And Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan, whom he had settled within Flame Mountain, seemed to have sensed something. Ethan flapped his wide wings and flew from the valley of Flame Mountain in the distance.

“Roar!”

The dragon’s roar was a greeting to Liszt.

“Ethan, the environment around Flame Mountain isn’t bad, right?” Liszt appeared in form and looked at the Light Green Gemstone Dragon flying closer, communicating via Dragon Heart Electrical Signal.

“Roar!”

When Ethan flew to the mid-level of the adjacent slope, he didn’t approach any closer. He didn’t like the Formless Dragon, so naturally, he stopped there. However, the spot of the mountain he chose wasn’t good; the rock on the slope couldn’t bear his weight of over a hundred tons and was directly crushed, causing a landslide.

Fortunately, Ethan reacted quickly and took flight again.

However, Liszt noticed the slope crushed by Ethan, revealing a patch of milky-white mountain. At that moment, he and Bard were still using their Crystal White View. In the Crystal White View, the milky-white mountain flickered with a pale, chaotic light, the luminescence of magic power feedback.

With a thought, the man and dragon had already flown there.

Liszt jumped down directly from the dragon’s back, climbed to the location of the landslide, and upon looking with the naked eye, his eyebrows raised: “Jade!”

In an instant, he understood – this must be the Jade Vein that was the reward from the previous Smoke Mission.

He took out a Bone Hammer, tapping and cracking the surrounding rock. After the rock shattered, a series of milky-white Jade Veins were indeed exposed.

Bard showed no interest in the Jade Vein, dozing off to the side.

But Ethan rushed over excitedly: “Roar!” Upon seeing the trace of Jade exposed on the mountain, the whole dragon became exhilarated—feeling a delightful transformation from a chicken nest to a Phoenix Perch Parasol.

He originally thought that Liszt had randomly placed him in desolate ridges, but unexpectedly, there was a Jade Mine buried here.

“Roar!”

He extended his forelimbs and claws, gently sliding beside the Jade Vein next to Liszt. Instantly, he sliced through a vein, with half-rock, half-jade raw stones rolling everywhere and revealing an even richer Jade Vein deep within the mountain—what was seen before was just the outer layer of the vein.

“Alright, Ethan, don’t waste it; I’ll send people over to extract the Jade Mine. When the time comes, you’ll get your share. Eat as much as you want!”

“Roar!”

“I have a task for you: go scratch around a few other mountains and see how extensive this Jade Mine is.”

With Jade as motivation, Ethan was easy to talk to, immediately taking to the air. Flying to the mid-slope of a neighboring mountain, his claws casually scraped out new milky-white Jade Veins. He scratched ten peaks in succession, all harboring Jade Mines, with an entire subsidiary mountain range beneath them veined with Jade.

The reserves were conservatively estimated to exceed a hundred thousand tons.

On the market, Jade is sold by weight. Suddenly having a Jade Mine of a hundred thousand tons undoubtedly made Liszt feel like he was smacked by a bathtub full of large gold ingots.

“If this entire Jade Vein is excavated, it should be enough for my use for a hundred years!”

“Roar!”

Ethan roared to express his thoughts. He wanted Liszt to help him establish a Dragon Nest here immediately, and from now on he would settle in this “Jade Mountain.” As an adult dragon, he also smartly expressed that as long as the Jade supply was plentiful, producing Light Green Gemstone Mines wouldn’t be an issue.

“Good, your Dragon Nest will be built here. I will immediately send people... However, it’ll have to wait until after the New Year since the routes to Whirlpool Mountain and Flame Mountain haven’t been opened yet.”

Ethan nodded to show he understood.

Then he simply lay on the exposed Jade Vein, comfortably basking in the sun, with the thought in his mind—mine, mine, all mine!

#### Chapter 857: Group of Dragon Beasts

Volcano Crater natural node, the sea’s natural node, Jade Mountain natural node — on the return journey, Liszt discovered three natural nodes, among which the nodes at Volcano Crater and Jade Mountain were developable.

When the Formless Dragon saw the Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix, it immediately opened a passage back to the Whirlpool Cave Entrance, then returned to Flame City.

It reported the discovery of the three natural nodes to Ach.

However, Ach was still summarizing information about the Magic Door Project and had not yet devised a development plan. Additionally, she needed time to master the Space Elemental Incarnation; once she perfectly mastered it, the development of the Magic Door would greatly benefit — she would be able to shuttle through space at will along with Liszt and the Formless Dragon.

By that time, the setup of the Magic Door by Ach herself would be much easier.

“Brother, the more natural nodes we control, the better, as only then can we select the most suitable natural nodes to establish a Magic Gate and complete the Teleportation Magic Array.”

...

“Understood, I’ll handle this!”

Just as Liszt was gearing up to explore worlds beyond the physical, the Smoke Mission brought good news.

“Mission completed, reward: cement.”

Clearly, Liszt’s volcanic ash idea had helped the craftsmen at Fire Dragon Brick Factory successfully develop cement. With the cement development a success, a boom in the construction industry was imminent. Most importantly, Flame Island had the Endless Volcano Cluster, where the volcanic ash was virtually inexhaustible.

For future construction on the islands, cement would not be lacking.

“It’s a cause for celebration, but Black Horse Island will probably not need cement as I no longer plan to continue developing in the Flame Territory. I will maintain the current industry structure and focus all efforts on developing Flame Island,” Liszt thought clearly and planned to send instructions through the Magic Platform.

He prepared for the Fire Dragon Brick Factory to be ready to relocate; the next time he returned to Black Horse Island, he would move all craftsmen of the Fire Dragon Brick Factory to Flame Island.

He also planned to move the entire Magic Guild there, then stationed magicians at the Fire Dragon Brick Factory to continue developing new types of cement — volcanic ash could be used as a material for cement, and other kinds of ash might also be suitable.

However, when he saw the new Smoke Mission, he suddenly felt that his idea might be superfluous.



“Mission: The transport between Black Horse Island and Flame Island is the biggest obstacle to developing the Flame Archipelago. However, with the preparations for the Magic Gate, you have another option beyond the great sailing. Why not find the natural node around Black Horse Island in anticipation of building the Magic Gate. Reward: Intermediate Dragon Beast Group.”

This was in preparation for setting up a Magic Gate between Black Horse Island and Flame Island; once the Magic Gate was established, wouldn't Flame Island and Black Horse Island be connected.

“If the Magic Gate is really constructed, using Black Horse Island as a base could completely bring the Sapphire Family into my followers, making the Duchy of Sapphire a vassal state of the Flame Kingdom!”

He stroked his chin.

He temporarily suppressed this idea and looked at the reward for the mission: “They're awarding an Intermediate Dragon Beast Group, not just one but a group; this is going to make a fortune!”

So far, he had encountered many creatures of the dragon lineage.

Dragon Breed Beasts included Blue Blood Treasure Horse, Black Blood Treasured Horse, Half-Slope Dairy Cow, and Estuary Pig.

Low-Level Dragon Beasts included Rainbow Whale Rose and Landwalker Bird Loki, where Loki had evolved into an Intermediate Dragon Beast due to the Bloodline Fruit.

He had not seen natural Intermediate Dragon Beasts.

Nor had he seen any Advanced Dragon Beasts. However, he heard that in the Pegasus Great Forest within the Steel Ridge Kingdom, the Pegasus were Advanced Dragon Beasts, and even a Super Dragon Beast – Unicorn was said to have been born. Liszt had always intended to find a Unicorn and witness this magical creature that, as the legend goes, could only be seen by a pure virgin.

Super Dragon Beasts included Flame Dragon Bird and Lightning Dragon Turtle.

“I wonder what breed of Intermediate Dragon Beasts we’ll run into this time; I hope it’s a breed suitable for riding in combat so that I can establish the Dragon Beast Knight Order to contribute to the Burning Knights Group.”

...

For several days, Liszt had been searching for new natural nodes and indeed, his efforts bore considerable fruit—he found three new nodes.

However, two of them were in the middle of the ocean, and he dared not venture out, fearing he might drown.

The other was situated above the sea, around which he used a sextant for positioning and discovered the node was located between the Flame Islands and Whirlpool Archipelago, surrounded by the vast ocean with very low developmental value. If the natural node had been near the shore, with Ach’s incredible water control abilities, perhaps another great whirlpool could be established.

Alas, amidst the vast ocean, the risks were too great.

Time slowly passed, and Liszt did not discover any new natural nodes. The holidays were also approaching day by day.

Another day of fruitless search passed until he reached the Great Whirlpool Magic Teleportation Matrix; he rode the Formless Dragon Bard through the portal and returned to Flame City.

He then received good news. A squad from the Pioneer Knights had found a damaged statue worshipped within a large Moon Slayer tribe. Given that the tribe consisted of thirty thousand people, the Knight Squad opted to employ the corruption of an ancient mage to hire native Moon Slayers to work out of the forest.

Without haste to act, the statue remained within the large tribe known as “Xia.”

“Where is Xia Tribe located?” Liszt inquired.

“Here,” responded the Captain of the Knight Squad, pointing to a location on the map of Flame Island within the Whirlpool Great River Basin, though it was a tributary of another stream.

The map’s location records were clear, a testament to the efforts of the knights and magicians. Not only responsible for pioneering, but every destination explored had magicians accompanying to measure and record the terrain. By now, the entire terrain of Flame Island had been charted especially around the Whirlpool Great River Basin.

The next step for the Pioneer Knights was ready to advance toward the Broad Bao Forest south of Whirlpool Mountain.

“You lead the way. Select a magician skilled in Moon Language to accompany me; we are heading to Xia Tribe!” Liszt instructed crisply and clearly.

Since the Formless Dragon had essentially been exposed, as the knights and magician settled in the prepared baskets, Liszt directly maneuvered Bard, lifting the baskets, and flew toward Xia Tribe. He and the Formless Dragon remained invisible at the edge of physical matter, with only the baskets visible.

It appeared as if the baskets were flying through the air on their own, creating quite the peculiar scene.

Yet sitting in the basket, Earth Knight Dennis and Magician Harold possessed not a shred of embarrassment over this oddity, only an uncontrollable excitement.

“It’s a Dragon!”

“An invisible Dragon!”

“His Highness is invisible too; it’s unbelievable!”

Dennis dreamed internally, “His Highness truly has a second dragon; how great a Dragon Knight have I followed! Once the nation is established, I will surely become a noble of high standing!”

Harold aspired, “Terrifying Prince Dragon Knight, and Her Excellency Archmage... I wonder if I can ever become a member of the Royal Magicians?”

Not all magicians are indifferent to fame and devout to the Truth; many are drawn to worldly power, thus ending up serving among the nobles, and even taking positions within the Court, serving the noble class.

In an instant.

The valley home to Xia Tribe had arrived.

Chapter 858: Knowledge Ancient Book

Boom!

The Formless Dragon’s torrential Dragon Might spread out, causing all members of the Xia Tribe’s Moon Slayer Tribe to tremble under its power, and Dennis and Harold couldn’t help but tense up.

However, the Dragon Might quickly receded, and the transparent crystal-like figure of the Formless Dragon appeared above the valley.

...

The Ancient Magicians of the Moon Slayer Tribe trembled as they looked up at the flying Formless Dragon, feeling at a loss and utterly devoid of any thoughts of resistance.

“Let the Listener come forth and speak!” Magician Harold called out loudly in the Moon Language.

“I am the Listener of the Xia Tribe; who are you?” An Ancient Mage, dressed in a sackcloth black cloak and holding a wooden staff adorned with a skull at the top, carefully stepped forward.

“Tah, don’t recognize me?” Dennis, who had previously visited the Xia Tribe, lifted the visor from his helmet.

The Listener across from him was called Thanasto, known as Tah among the Xia Tribe’s Moon Slayers. Tah squinted at Dennis, possibly due to being shortsighted, and his wrinkled face remained expressionless: “It’s you, the foreign Flame Person, Knight, the businessman knight!”

When the Knight Squad strategized against the Moon Slayer Tribe, they all claimed they were businessmen, knights from the Flame Kingdom who had traveled far to reach here.

“Flame People, what else do you want? Our Xia Tribe has already refused; we will not send men and women to work for you without food!” Another Ancient Mage walked up beside Tah, loudly protesting.

“You can refuse me.”

Dennis held his head high, full of vigor, “But you cannot refuse my Landlord!”

He suddenly stretched out his hand toward the sky, pointing at the circling Formless Dragon: “Biggleswade!” And pointing at Liszt on the back of the Formless Dragon, he shouted: “Seki!”

Biggleswade is a Dragon, and Seki a Saint.

“Ah!”

The Ancient Mages suddenly exclaimed, they looked up at the sky in fear, and the cries arose: “Biggleswade! Seki! That is Biggleswade and Seki!”

The Ancient Magicians of the Moon Slayer Tribe had never seen a Dragon, but they had grown up on legends of Dragons, and Saint was the title they used for their ancestors. At this moment, witnessing Dennis’s shouts, they were struck with astonishment.

And as if playing along with the act,

Liszt once again released the torrential Dragon Might, knocking the Ancient Mages flat on the ground.

After several twists and turns, combined with the bluffs from Dennis and Harold, the Ancient Magicians of the Xia Tribe dizzily hailed Liszt as Seki and the Formless Dragon as Biggleswade, then they chose to submit. They acted as guides, taking Liszt and his party towards the statue worshiped in the valley.

The statue was placed inside a cave, with a platform in front, probably where they usually sang and danced around the bonfire.

Listener Tah gestured and jabbered at the mouth of the cave.

Harold translated for Liszt: “He says that this is the statue of their ancestor, a Saint like yourself, Your Highness. They are all descendants of the Saint, venerating the Saint.”

“Have him move aside.”

Harold instantly translated the command into the Moon Language.

Tah and the Ancient Magicians dared not resist and obediently moved to the side, watching Liszt step by step into the cave. Inside was a bust, severely damaged with cracks, some parts even propped up with wood. Its protection seemed stronger than that of the Holy Tribe and the Horn Tribe.

Of course, only marginally so.

I really didn’t know what was going through these Moon Slayers’ minds; the relics of their ancestors were right there, treated with such reverence, yet not preserved properly, allowing the statues to be eroded by wind and sun, almost turning to sandstone.

He didn’t care whether the statue was in pieces or not; seeing that the hands of the statue were still there, and that both hands were holding a book, he was reassured.

“

The Moon Slayer's Holy Mountain statues numbered six, and he had already obtained two Ancient Artifacts sealed within the hands of the statues: the Time Scepter and the Eight Dragons God Sword. Now, he was about to acquire the third Ancient Artifact.

“It appears to be a book of magic?”

Without further thought,

he jumped directly onto the statue's hand and took out the Bone Hammer to slowly start chipping away at the stone magic book. This action immediately stirred up the Moon Slayers.

The Listener, Thanasto, shouted, “That's the relic of our ancestors, stop at once!”

Harold and Dennis glared and said, “Shut up, the great Seki is at work; you can only stand by and watch quietly!”

However, their borrowed authority wasn't enough to scare off the Moon Slayers. Led by Thanasto, the Ancient Magicians started shouting one after another, trying to stop Liszt's actions.

Yet, Liszt's movements did not halt for even a moment. The Formless Dragon that had accompanied him unleashed its Dragon Might, striking the Ancient Magicians for the third time with an overwhelming blow. The Ancient Magicians of the Xia Tribe didn't have the same backbone as those of the Holy Tribe; under the pressure of the Formless Dragon's Dragon Might, they reluctantly fell silent.

Bang dong.

Liszt quickly broke open the stone magic book, and as expected, it contained a sealed Divine Artifact.

It was an open book carved out of special wood. However, it was odd that it wasn't an actual magic book. It was carved in the shape of an open book and could not be closed. The open pages didn't contain any text, making it appear very strange.

He didn't inspect it closely, instead, he put it straight into his Space Ring and found that it slipped in effortlessly.

It probably had nothing to do with the Sacred Dragon; this magic book seemed to be made of some kind of wood, possessing neither the power of time nor that of the Elemental Dragons.

He jumped down from the statue.

Liszt had Dennis and Harold translate and gave the Xia Tribe a good pounding, forcing them to open up to local hiring and allowing the Knight Order free entry and exit to the Xia Tribe before leaving. However, he didn't take Dennis and Harold with him but decided to station them within the Xia Tribe.

They were bound to be his serfs eventually; conquering them earlier meant they could contribute value sooner.

On the way back, he took out the special magic book again and started to fiddle with it. Unfortunately, despite all his efforts, the magic book showed no reaction. "I don't know what use the Time Scepter has; could it be that I also don't know how to use this magic book?" That would be a bit embarrassing.

Since the conventional method was ineffective, he decided to try something unconventional.

He had Bard land by a river, scooped up a bit of water, and sprinkled it on the book to see if there was any response. As expected, there was none; this textless wooden magic book was not of the type with hidden text revealed by water.

"Then, is the patina too thick?" He came up with another odd idea and drew out the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword he carried with him—the Eight Dragons God Sword was a supplementary weapon, not well-suited for constant carrying or immediate combat.



He scraped the blade over the magic book.

To test the hardness of the magic book.

A strange thing happened, though—as soon as the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword touched the book, the magic book burst into a ray of light.

Subsequently, glowing Moon Language symbols, previously absent, condensed onto the blank pages.

“What’s this?”

He moved the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword away, and the text remained, though it was slowly fading. He placed the sword back on the book, and the words brightened once more.

“How amazing!”

He pulled out notes on the Moon Language and, using a comparison chart, quickly deciphered the rough meaning of this passage—Elf Blood, Ice Dragon Bone, conversion to ice property...

“Is this directly translating the properties of the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword?” Liszt expressed shock. The material of the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword was indeed made from the Ice Dragon’s bones and had been soaked in the blood of a Greater Elf. Indeed, it could convert any Dou Qi into ice property Dou Qi.

However, the magic book omitted one function; it could also Ice Seal a Dou Qi Domain—perhaps in the era of the Moon Empire, Knights had yet to develop the Dou Qi Domain.

“If it really can decode the substance it touches, isn’t this artifact like a Great Encyclopedia, no, more like a scanner?” Liszt’s heart raced with excitement; his esteem for this Divine Artifact spiked to an unparalleled level. “This is a Knowledge Ancient Book!”

Chapter 859: Tree of Golden Apples

To verify whether the Knowledge Ancient Book was indeed as magical as it was said to be, Liszt then tried to touch it with various objects to see the interaction.

The Space Ring touched it.

A flash of light, a simple phrase in Moon Language appeared—Formless Dragon Gem, independent space.

The Eight Dragons God Sword touched it.

A flash of light, a simple phrase in Moon Language appeared—Elemental Dragon's power, amplification of Water, Fire, Earth, Wind, Lightning, Light, Ice, and Dark Attributes.

The Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit touched it.

...

A flash of light, a simple phrase in Moon Language appeared—Jade Fruit, power of the Jade Dragon, heart of the lost dragon.

Liszt nodded slightly, "So the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit was called Jade Fruit during the era of the Moon Empire, and the dragon leg I found was indeed from a Jade Dragon."

The Sapphire Pendant touched it.

A flash of light, another simple phrase in Moon Language appeared—Sapphire, power amplification.

He then touched it with an unpolished Golden Pearl.

A flash of light, an even simpler phrase in Moon Language appeared—Water Attribute material.

“Is it just Water Attribute material? Isn’t there more to it?” Liszt was slightly dissatisfied with the appraisal of the Golden Pearl. He knew that the Golden Pearl was a Water Attribute material; any magician or knight could figure that out. The key was what the Golden Pearl was used for.

Retrieving the Golden Pearl, he took out a Phoenix Feather.

A flash of light, a simple phrase in Moon Language appeared—Phoenix Feather, Fire Attribute amplification.

“This description is clear, especially the term ‘Phoenix’ in Moon Language... It seems that during the era of the Moon Empire, the Flame Dragon Bird was already called Phoenix; perhaps the legend of the Phoenix also originated from the Moon Empire.”

He then took out a Bloodthirsty Bat Fang, which he had confiscated from the vampires of the Black Knight Family, a powerful accessory that assisted vampires in their cultivation. He originally planned to reward Mary Dawn Break with it for her achievements.

After the Magic Book made contact, a flash of light, a new phrase in Moon Language appeared—Altered Dark Attribute material.

“Hmm, this description is interesting—altered, Dark Attribute. It appears that there had been research on Blood Magic during the era of the Moon Empire, but like the Bloodthirsty Bat Fang, there’s not much more detail.”

On the next part of his journey,

Liszt continued to verify various objects. Items like telescopes and one-handed swords that lacked magic power changed the Knowledge Ancient Book’s usual inability to appraise, showing no reaction. For ordinary magical equipment and magic materials, it only provided simple introductions like “XX Attribute material.”

But for materials from Super Dragon Beasts or equipment made from dragon materials, it could clearly identify the original materials and even provide a partial description of their function.

“How should I put this,” Liszt appraised the Knowledge Ancient Book, “In terms of material identification, it indeed has great functionality and value beyond measure. But it’s limited to high-end materials. Identifying low-end materials isn’t very meaningful, and it’s a big step from the Great Encyclopedia I imagined.”

Of course, one couldn’t expect a special Magic Book to encompass all knowledge in the entire world.

As long as it could provide attribute identification for high-end materials, that alone was a precious rarity, not less valuable than a Divine Artifact like the Eight Dragons God Sword.

“Once I get back, I’ll bring the Time Scepter from Ach to appraise; I wonder what the Knowledge Ancient Book will reveal.”

Before long, Flame City was in sight. He signaled Dragon Bard to go rest and went straight to the Mage Tower to find Ach, who was busy.

“Ach, I’ve found something great!”

“What is it?”

“First, bring me the Time Scepter.”

Taking the Time Scepter from Ach, Liszt directly touched the Time Scepter to the surface of the Knowledge Ancient Book, and the next moment, light burst forth.

A string of Moon Language appeared—Twilight Dragon Gemstone and the Tree of Golden Apples, reflecting time.

Ach, already adept in the Moon Language, immediately translated the meaning, “Brother, is this text an introduction to the Time Scepter? The Time Diamond is the Twilight Dragon’s gemstone, and the scepter itself is crafted from the Tree of Golden Apples... Golden Apples are legendary treasures, do they truly exist?”

“Since the Knowledge Ancient Book has given a clear appraisal result, it means Golden Apples do exist!” Liszt now generally believed in the legends of this world—the

difference lay not in whether the objects of legends existed, but whether the legends were exaggerated.

“Knowledge Ancient Book?”

“That’s this magical book here; it’s a Divine Artifact I found at the hand of the third statue. It can appraise high-end materials like those of dragons and give a general introduction to their properties.” Liszt pointed to the Moon Language in the book, “The material for this Time Scepter is the Twilight Dragon Gemstone and the wood from the Tree of Golden Apples, and its attribute is to reflect time.”

“What does ‘reflect time’ mean, brother?”

“I don’t know... In fact, it seems that using Magic Power to activate it achieves nothing; it doesn’t exhibit any function at all, which is why I handed it to you for research.”

“I don’t have time to research it for the time being.”

“When you have time, then talk about it, the Time Scepter isn’t going anywhere anyway.”

At that moment, Ach suddenly had a whimsical thought, “Right, brother, can the Knowledge Ancient Book appraise Elves?”

“Appraise Elves?” Liszt was taken aback; actually, there was no need to appraise Elves at all, as their species could be identified once they expel Cordyceps. However, he had never appraised a living creature before—his own hand didn’t count, as there was no response when placing it on the book.

So, he took an Elf Bug and placed it on the Knowledge Ancient Book.

Then, the magical book radiated light, but only displayed one phrase in Moon Language—Elf.

“Heh, what, you think I’m blind, needing to remind me that this is an Elf?” Liszt chuckled at the ability of the Knowledge Ancient Book, “Well then, this Knowledge Ancient Book

serves no use in my hands, I'll give it to you to wield, Ach, especially since you often need to appraise magical materials."

Ach didn't refuse, "Hm."

...

Having acquired the Knowledge Ancient Book, Liszt's heart began to grow eager about the Divine Artifacts sealed by the other three statues, curious about what unique artifacts were contained within.

But there was no rush. Once all the tribes of the Moon Slayers were conquered, these artifacts would inevitably fall into his hands.

Thus,

He continued to seek Natural Nodes.

Not just to fulfill the Smoke Mission, he also truly yearned to open the passage between Black Horse Island and Flame Island, so time passed day by day, busily searching.

Soon, Sapphire Calendar Year 154 moved toward its end, heralding the slow arrival of the New Year in 155.

Thorn Castle lacked the festive cheer of last year, and under Butler Carter's leadership, the servants had a simple New Year celebration. Flame City's recently constructed new castle, now named Flame Castle, teemed with toasting and festivities. Liszt and his followers celebrated the first New Year of Flame Island within its walls.

"Your Highness, I propose we declare this year as the inaugural year of the Flame Calendar and today as the first New Year's Day of the Flame Calendar," Durt Red Apricot suggested with a raised glass.

Liszt narrowed his eyes and said, "Let's not, the Flame Kingdom has yet to be established, and we'll not consider the Flame Calendar for now. We'll continue using the Sapphire Calendar. However, I will ask the Magic Guild to compile a new calendar system based on

Flame Island's seasons, incorporating the movements of the sun and moon. Once the kingdom is established, we will implement it immediately.”

## Chapter 860: Return to the Burial Ground

This year there was no unknown reward task during the festival, which Liszt found quite regrettable, as finding the natural node of Black Horse Island was somewhat difficult.

The Formless Dragon wanted to set out from the Whirlpool Archipelago and cross over 3,500 kilometers of sea, which was extremely challenging. Unless Ach could transport the Formless Dragon to Black Horse Island. However, though the Formless Dragon was mild tempered, it was unwilling to enter the water and completely uncooperative with Liszt's arrangements.

So, they had to enter the world beyond matter from the boundary of Flame Island, then find a natural node near Black Horse Island and cross over to start a thorough search of that area.

“I hope we can find a suitable natural node soon. We have already discovered eight new natural nodes and three old ones, but they are all within the area of Flame Island... We still need to go to Black Horse Island to find the natural nodes around it,” thought Liszt.

Three old natural nodes—Entrance to the Great Whirlpool, Whirlpool Cave Exit, and Hourglass Valley Ruins Entrance.

Eight new natural nodes—Volcano Crater, Jade Mountain, and four natural nodes in the sea, plus one remote natural node on the sea surface. The last one, also discovered as the festival approached, was in a lake in the southeast corner of Flame Island.

...

The lake's shores are covered with reed-like plants, hence it was named “Reed Marsh.”

That is to say, with three old and eight new natural nodes, eleven in total, six were usable, especially the Volcano Crater, Jade Mountain, Reed Marsh, and Ruins Entrance. If a Magic Gate could be opened, it would perfectly connect the northwest-central-southeast three major areas of Flame Island.

Ach was still earnestly practicing the Space Elemental Incarnation. The preparations for the Magic Gate had been perfected, and as soon as the Elementalization was perfectly mastered, he could activate the Magic Gate at any time.

Liszt and Formless Dragon Bard almost spent a huge amount of time in the world beyond matter every day.

After several improvements, the Spiral Positioning could perceive any fine fluctuations of the natural nodes.

“Wi yi ya!”

“Don’t worry, Bard, the natural node is right there, just waiting for us to find it!” Liszt comforted the Formless Dragon half-heartedly and partly comforted himself.

Last December at Flame Island, it didn’t snow, and the temperature didn’t drop below zero either. But the dry and cold climate was even more uncomfortable than snow, completely halting the growth in the fields, with elves already hibernating. The forest also lacked sufficient food; animals that should have been hibernating had long since vanished.

Now it was January.

The dry and cold temperatures became even more severe, showing Liszt the less gentle side of Flame Island.

“It’s quite tough, your highness. The potato harvest wasn’t as bountiful as anticipated. Employing Moon Slayer Natives as serfs consumes a lot of food; it’s difficult to maintain the stability of Flame City. South at Estuary City, they too have sent us an urgent message for food. Perhaps we should delay the conscription of serfs.”

Durt Red Apricot had earned Liszt’s trust and was in charge of the development work on Flame Island.

“No need to delay. If we are struggling, the Moon Slayer Natives are struggling even more. At this time, using food as bait to tame the Moon Slayer Natives is very easy... I



will personally transport food from Black Horse Island to support the pioneering team,” Liszt said, relying on himself and Ach to continuously transport food, thus he did not agree to Durt’s request.

However, he felt very regretful.

The Potato Great Spirit Kuchi was very effective, but the planting period was too short. Many potatoes hadn’t even started to develop before winter arrived.

Under the influence of the dry and cold climate, even the Great Spirit couldn’t promote the growth of the potatoes anymore.

Otherwise, this batch of potatoes could have supported half a month’s consumption; now, they could only transport food from Black Horse Island.

“I hope we can find the natural node leading to Black Horse Island as soon as possible.”

As if his wish came true, just as he worried endlessly about the food situation, Formless Dragon Bard suddenly sensed an anomaly from a natural node.

“Let’s go!”

They flew over, tearing through the material boundary of the node, and a set of practiced operations was completed. Man and dragon had already seen the world outside the natural node.

“Hmm, this place ... it’s Mind Island!” Liszt emerged from the natural node and found himself on Mind Island, which had been leveled.

This island, once concealing the Jade Dragon’s hind leg, was transformed as the Light Green Gemstone Mine was excavated; a great deal of soil and rock had been removed, cutting the height in half. Numerous stones were pushed off cliffs, accumulating around the island and doubling its size.

“Excellent!”

“This natural node is well-placed, only six hundred kilometers from Black Horse Island!”

Liszt was overjoyed to have discovered a natural node within the Sapphire Archipelago—though not in the immediate vicinity of Black Horse Island, it could still serve as an alternative link between the Sapphire Archipelago and the Flame Islands. He immediately took to the skies on the Formless Dragon, ventured into the material boundary, and headed towards Black Horse Island.

He also pondered the location of this node.

“Why is it on Mind Island?”

Previous natural nodes located at sea or underwater were momentarily out of question, but those on land were always interesting. The Volcano Crater was once a massive volcano, Jade Mountain was filled with abundant jade, and the purpose of Reed Marsh remained unclear.

The natural resource of Mind Island was clearly the jade dragon’s hind leg from the earliest times.

“These natural nodes’ formation—could they be related to the real material world? Is it possible that strong magic power disturbances at the material boundary create natural nodes?” he wondered, thinking about the Matter-Spirit-Magic Power triangle theory, where magic and matter constantly transform.

“It’s highly possible that regions abundant in magic power or places where magic power events occurred could lead to the formation of natural nodes!”

Of course, research on natural nodes was not yet profound, and their fundamental cause remained unclear. Liszt did not linger on this thought, flying swiftly and finally arriving at Black Horse Island as night fell.

Back on the island.

The Formless Dragon went straight to the Smoked Grass plantation to rest, while Liszt stayed in Thorn Castle, thoroughly enjoying the comfortable environment of the castle.

The next day.

After handling a backlog of official duties,

He incessantly rode Bard around Black Horse Island in search of natural nodes. Almost immediately upon entering the world beyond the material, he discovered a natural node. Efficiently opening the node, its entrance appeared in a secluded lake, the bottom of which was a long-solidified magma channel.

“Where is this?”

The Formless Dragon hesitated to enter the water, but following Liszt’s urging and seeing the shallow water, it reluctantly flew out from the node.

It then quickly emerged from the shallow lake.

Outside, to his astonishment, was a field of harvested crops covered with a layer of snow, where a few serfs in hemp clothing were setting bird traps in the snow.

This scene was all too familiar!

“Black Horse Island!”

“This is Bone Lake in Red River Town, originally the Burial Ground of the Former Fire Dragon!” Such a discovery overwhelmed Liszt with excitement. Could there be any more marvelous natural node than here on Black Horse Island, precisely at the most magically conflicted site—the Fire Dragon’s Burial Ground?

And the Burial Ground had also formed a natural node.

Boom!

Bard landed, and Liszt walked to the lake's edge, his spirits uplifted. A puff of smoke appeared, forming a passage in Serpent Script.

“Mission completed, reward: Intermediate Dragon Beast Group.”