

The Mighty 911

Chapter 911 Isn't It Wonderful?

"Ach, you and Bard wait outside. The scene might get a bit bloody, so you'd better not follow," he gestured for Bard and Ach to move away.

Liszt personally wielded the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword as he charged into the logistical support team of the Eagle Kingdom.

With his Dragon Dou Qi and Dragon Might unleashed, he embarked on a killing spree. Knights and servants in the support team, all were buried under his sword; not one escaped.

There were no scenes of blood splattering; the Fire Attribute Dou Qi cauterized and scorched the flesh as it cut through. Igniting a fire, the support team's camp was completely torn apart by flames that buried everything.

Watching the flames ascend.

A trace of inexplicable emotion arose in Liszt's heart. There was a time, not long ago on Earth, when he considered the slaughter of a chicken as cruel. Now, a mere momentary decision led him to massacre a group of people. Fortunately, they were the enemy, the competitors for dragons, and no innocents were involved, saving him from self-reproach.

In a world ruled by knights, being weak was a sin.

Especially when it involved dragons.

"It was the Eagle Kingdom who made the first move. I'm merely retaliating. Besides, you colluded with the traitor Andre from the Sapphire camp, a crime unforgivable," he casually fabricated an excuse for his own psychological comfort. Shaking his head, Liszt turned and left the blazing camp.

Ever since his first battle, killing no longer posed a psychological barrier for him.

As long as he wasn't slaughtering civilians, wars between knights, in his view, were nothing more than a game.

"Let's go, Ach." Liszt returned to the Formless Dragon's side and glanced at Andre. Originally intending to kill him, upon consideration, he felt it better to keep Andre to hand over to the Sapphire Duke.

He could exchange him for some Dou Qi Secret Techniques, or information about the Dragon Domain LandLord or the Lich.

However.

He soon thought again, "If I ride dragons too often in the short term, I might arouse a strong sense of crisis in the three major kingdoms. Perhaps I could disguise it as Andre successfully Dragon Riding and counter-killing the Eagle Kingdom's support team, betraying the Eagle Kingdom."

As for the Eagle Kingdom daring to let Andre ride a dragon, they must have had some checks in place; but who could guarantee Andre wouldn't undo these measures.

"Such checks are unlikely to involve threatening family members; emotional bonds have little power over Nobles, it's probably some kind of Magic contract or curse. With Ach the Archmage and the extensive group of Magicians in the Magic Guild, breaking a contract shouldn't be hard."

"Even if Andre is killed by the contract or curse, what loss would it be to me..."

"So it's decided."

He gestured to Bard to capture Andre. Then Liszt quickly hurried to where Ethan, Leo, and the Mountain Copper Dragon were fighting, finding a corner to drop Andre.

He then drove Bard directly into the battlefield.

"Woaaaaah!"

The Formless Dragon didn't attack the Mountain Copper Dragon. Ethan and Leo also ceased their attacks; the previous dragon fight had not been fierce, focusing mainly on restraint.

"Hoo-hoo!" The Mountain Copper Dragon watched the suddenly emerging Formless Dragon, unruffled.

"Oh-ho!" Leo responded defiantly.

"Mountain Copper Dragon, I know you understand the Wind Language. Why don't we put aside our disputes and talk peacefully? I think there's been some misunderstanding between us," Liszt broke the tense atmosphere, speaking loudly.

From Andre, he had already extracted information about the Mountain Copper Dragon. Over its long period of being fought by knights, it had clearly learned Wind Language -- dragons are very intelligent; after hearing a few sentences, they can easily grasp the meaning. There would be no problem communicating.

The Mountain Copper Dragon glanced at Liszt with a look one might give an ant, deeming him unworthy of communication.

"To show my sincerity, I have brought your favorite Wind-Thunder Bird Eggs, specially grilled tender steak, and some of the fruits you love," Liszt calmly took out a batch of food from his Space Ring, placed it on the ground, and displayed his attitude.

In truth, he had only brought tender steak, intended as a reward for Leo, Bard, and Ethan; dragons generally love beef.

The Wind-Thunder Bird Eggs and a large batch of fruits, however, were collected from the support team's camp, intended for Andre's attempt to tame the Mountain Copper Dragon.

Now he utilized them - he had slipped a Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit into the specially grilled tender steak.

This was a spur-of-the-moment idea. His original plan was to subdue the Mountain Copper Dragon first and then forcibly feed it the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit. However, the lingering grievances of the Grey Iron Dragon Ornn made him think that perhaps his methods could be somewhat gentler. The effects of coercing a dragon in a daze versus forcible taming would certainly differ.

"Hoo-hoo!" The Mountain Copper Dragon squinted its eyes, its golden scales glittering in the sunlight. Its pupils shifted slightly as it glanced at the food on the ground.

He let out a warning roar.

This indicated that it was not moved by Liszt's friendly gesture and did not want to engage in further communication with Liszt. Even the scales on its body expanded, signaling a readiness to attack.

"Since you're unwilling to accept my good intentions, then let's part ways here," Liszt didn't waste any breath.

He called the three dragons and flew straight away.

Leo and Ethan indeed flew out of the Mountain Copper Dragon's sensory range, but Bard sneaked into the material boundary, quietly hiding at the edge of the distance the Mountain Copper Dragon could sense. Liszt took out a telescope and carefully observed the clearing where he had dropped the food, watching the steaks he had arranged.

Due to the presence of Dragon Might, no wild beasts or magical beasts came to eat, and the food lay quietly on the ground.

The Mountain Copper Dragon stayed away from the food, lying atop another mountain. It neither went to eat nor showed interest in the food. It was unclear if it was out of caution, lack of hunger, or disdain for Liszt's offerings.

"Brother, are we going to keep waiting like this?" Ach curiously asked.

"Let's wait a bit longer, wait till nightfall. If it still doesn't eat, then I'll take the steaks back," Liszt was very patient. To seduce a dragon with intelligence comparable to a human, one must be patient.

Dragons have a special constitution; no poison could kill a dragon.

Thus, a free meal presented in front of them, if it were Liszt, he certainly wouldn't want to waste it, nor would he be suspicious.

...

Night fell quickly.

The Mountain Copper Dragon, having lain there half a day, did not receive the familiar little ants to bring it food and was somewhat puzzled. However, it soon thought that the little ants might have already been killed.

"It was that damned human, and the three pieces of trash willing to be ridden by ants." The Mountain Copper Dragon, being an adult, had experienced hundreds of years of life and encountered quite a few humans; it knew very well how fierce the human struggle for dragons was. The previous Dragon Knight had definitely come to seize dragons.

Therefore, it had to kill the competitor first.

"What a hassle!"

It lifted its head, feeling that it could no longer rest well in this place. That Dragon Knight would certainly come again, followed by another tiresome struggle. Deep down, it disliked that Dragon Knight, feeling that his character clashed with its own, seeing no glint of sacrifice or devotion.

However.

The Mountain Copper Dragon suddenly remembered that the Dragon Knight seemed to leave behind some food when leaving, attempting to tempt it with the food.

"Naïve, childish, laughable!"

Was it a dragon that would bow down for such a small amount of food? There was no ant in the world worth lowering its proud head for.

"I need to find a new place to live, and on the way, see if there are any ants pleasing enough to provide me with food," the Mountain Copper Dragon moved its wings and stood up, slowly moving towards the clearing where the food had been placed, "However, before leaving, why not eat the food the Dragon Knight left behind? Wouldn't that be delightful?"

It disliked Liszt but did not despise the food.

Walking over, the food was still lying there quietly, with only a few real ants crawling on it. These small insects did not react to the Dragon Might. However, with just a slight breath, the ants died instantly—an elementary application of Dragon Magic Power. Then it swallowed a whole basket of Wind-Thunder Bird Eggs in one gulp.

The Wind-Thunder Bird is an intermediate magical beast. Interestingly, the male has a Wind Attribute, and the female has a Thunder Attribute. Still, the eggs contain both wind and thunder attributes.

As the gender develops, the attributes eventually leave only one behind.

During its long dragon life, the Mountain Copper Dragon had a particular fondness for Wind-Thunder Bird Eggs. However, Wind-Thunder Birds like to nest in narrow caves, and they are very clever. As soon as the dragons' huge bodies appear and their might is revealed, the birds quickly flee, making their eggs difficult to find.

After eating the eggs, the Mountain Copper Dragon ate some fruit, and finally looked at the tender steaks.

The steak had gone cold, and the flavor was not as rich as when it was fresh from the oven, but the Mountain Copper Dragon sniffed them and still swallowed all the steaks down its belly.

"Mediocre, passable," it finished eating all the food and prepared to find a mountaintop to spend the night, planning to leave early the next morning.

But as its wings flapped, suddenly, a wave of sleepiness overcame it, it shook its head vigorously but couldn't resist the strong urge to sleep, its eyelids heavy as lead. Moments later, unable to fend off the sleepiness, the Mountain Copper Dragon thudded to the ground, crushing a large swathe of forest.

"Hurrrrr..."

The loud snoring echoed through the sky.

From a distance, within the material boundary, Liszt, holding the telescope, couldn't help but snap his fingers: "Done!"

Chapter 912 Eighty

In the midst of mighty snores, Liszt descended from the sky to the side of the golden Mountain Copper Dragon. The sky was growing dark, but that didn't hinder him from taking out his Crystal Lamp—a Hand Magic Tube—to meticulously observe the enormous creature.

The classification of Metal Dragons was quite interesting.

Gold, silver, copper, iron, tin—all these metals had corresponding dragons, and so did lead, mercury, titanium, platinum, etc. Moreover, often a single metal didn't correspond to just one dragon.

Iron Dragons could be classified into at least five known types: Black Heart Iron Dragons, White Heart Iron Dragons, Malleable Cast Iron Dragons, White Maw Iron Dragons, and Grey Iron Dragons; Copper Dragons had at least four, including Bronze Dragons, Purple Copper Dragons, Brass Dragons, and White Copper Dragons. However, the Mountain Copper Dragon didn't fall under the category of Copper Dragons but belonged to the Magic Metal Dragons.

Mountain copper, an indestructible metal, seemed a bit like gold but with a brighter color, and couldn't be forged by ordinary casting methods.

Only an Iron Knight could forge it relying on Dou Qi.

The Long Taro Family from Red Crab Island had a Knight Order that wore armor made from a Mountain Copper alloy, looking shiny and quite dashing.

"Ding-ding."

With the pommel of his sword, Liszt tapped on the scales of the Mountain Copper Dragon, eliciting a crisp metallic sound. "Ach, do you think if I were to infuse Dragon Dou Qi and thrust down hard, I could pierce through this scale?"

"Hehe, big bro, why would you want to stab it?" Ach giggled.

"I'm irritated with this guy; it scorned me before."

It was just a joke, having confirmed that the Mountain Copper Dragon had been thoroughly stupefied by the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, he quickly found the Dragon Tooth Platform where the dragon's neck met its body. "Guard me, I'm going to start the Mind Battle."

"Understood!"

With Ach guarding him, Liszt felt secure.

He positioned himself on the Dragon Tooth Platform, and with a plop, sat down. Boom—a peculiar, marvelous feeling rushed to his forehead, and in the next moment, he had entered a world sparkling with gold. In this world, everything was golden: the soil, the giant trees, and in the golden sky hung a golden sun.

In the center of the world stood a massive transparent, golden-yellow rock, from which deep snores emanated.

The Mountain Copper Dragon was deep in slumber inside the rock, its body flickering with the seven colors of the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit's power that enveloped it.

"Although it's not the first time I've used the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, every time I see a dragon stupefied in the world of the mind, I am reminded of the strong power of the Jade Dragon. I fear that any dragon that consumes the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit would be bound by this power, leaving it at the mercy of others."

Leo was tamed after consuming it, Ornn was tamed after consuming it, and now it's the Mountain Copper Dragon's turn.

Only the Formless Dragon hadn't been stupefied by the Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit, but that was not because the fruit lacked power; it was because Bard had seen through the fruit and refused to eat it. Had it not noticed and simply eaten it, the outcome likely would have been the same—total stupefaction.

Even if the Formless Dragon had been stupefied, overcoming it in a Mind Battle would still be quite a challenge—the complexity of its maze was no easy task for any knight.

Without it consciously lowering the difficulty of the maze, Liszt couldn't hope to win.

"Now, do I need to just smash this rock?" Standing before the hundred-meter-tall rock, Liszt already knew how to proceed with the Mind Battle.

To emerge victorious, one must shatter this rock that symbolizes the Mountain Copper Dragon's indomitable nature.

It's hard to imagine how Andre might break the rock if he were to mount the Mountain Copper Dragon—even licking the dragon to ecstasy in reality wouldn't make the Mind Battle any easier when facing this nearly unbreakable rock. Perhaps with years of endless pounding, it might finally shatter.

But time in the Mind Battle is limited.

All the so-called preparations made by Andre and the Eagle Kingdom, in their hubris, were utterly in vain.

"The brown-noser licks but ends up with nothing in the end, heh," Liszt shook his head. "That's why I still prefer to use force and get it done!"

He glanced at the Blue Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword in his hand, and as the thought flickered through his mind, smoke rapidly converged upon the sword, transforming it into a large hammer.

He took a deep breath.

Liszt suddenly swung the hammer and struck down hard on the golden yellow transparent rock, "Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

Three blows landed, but the golden-yellow rock merely trembled twice and was left without a single mark. Clearly, he couldn't smash the rock with a hammer and had to think of another way. If it had been a native Knight, he would have probably been at his wits' end, but Liszt still had many ideas.

The smoke twined again, and the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword this time transformed directly from a hammer into the shape of a drill bit.

He took another deep breath; inside his body, the Dragon Dou Qi traversed, employing the Dou Qi Secret Technique - Spiral Rotation, then drove the drill in his hand to spin wildly.

Ang ang ang!

Between the drill bit and the rock, a screeching, grating noise rang out, and the next moment, powder sprinkled everywhere, with the drill bit having already penetrated the rock's outer layer.

"It worked!"

Liszt reassured himself, focusing his thoughts, the smoke grew denser. The drill in his hand sped up further, drilling through the rock's outer skin bit by bit with an incessant ang ang ang ang ang. The moment the outer skin was perforated, the entire rock surface cracked from the drill bit's position.

Crack crack, like a spider web, the cracks extended everywhere, quickly covering the entire rock surface.

Seemingly reacting to this, the Mountain Copper Dragon inside the rock trembled its eyelids slightly but was soon suppressed by the flickering rainbow light, unable to affect the rock.

He pulled out the drill bit.

Liszt once again relied on the power of the smoke to transform the Ice Soul Dragon-Slaying Sword into a large hammer, and struck hard at the drill hole, "Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

Each blow expanded the cracks a bit more and produced even finer fractures.

"Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

"Eighty!"

On the tenth swing, finally, the dense cracks covered every inch of the rock and upon Liszt's eleventh forceful swing, the rock collapsed with a mighty crash. Once the dust settled, the Mountain Copper Dragon, unbeknownst to him, had already awakened, watching Liszt with a complex gaze.

It was a tangle of emotions mixed with confusion, reluctance, surprise, relief, and loss.

But in the end, it let out a call towards Liszt, "Rooooar!"

With a mighty leap, Liszt was already mounted on its Dragon Tooth Platform, and at that moment, the minds of man and dragon united, inseparable. The Mountain Copper Dragon flapped its wings, its massive body lifting into the sky toward the golden yellow sun, the sunlight dazzling, its radiance bathing the world.

When the blinding light in front of him dissipated, Liszt suddenly realized that he had left the spirit world and returned to reality.

Beneath him, the Mountain Copper Dragon was still emitting deafening snores, but there was now a strong mind connection between it and Liszt.

"It's done."

Liszt stood up, gave a slight smile to Ach, "Once the Mountain Copper Dragon awakens, we'll set off and leave the Rupture Mountains."

Chapter 913 The End of Dragon Breath

Nobody knew that at this time, the Rupture Mountains were home to four dragons: Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan, Fire Dragon Leo, Formless Dragon Bard, and Mountain Copper Dragon Mata.

Mata, this was the name Liszt had prepared for the Mountain Copper Dragon.

It originated from a game he had played before, "Monster Hunter", which featured a monster nicknamed "Mamu Tarot," the discarded glow dragon that resided in the land of veins called The Golden Homeland, revered as the earth goddess of gold. The Mountain Copper Dragon didn't look anything like Mamu Tarot, nor did it have any relation to gold.

Perhaps the only similarity was their color.

But Liszt's logic, which was beyond ordinary, still linked them together.

As dawn broke the next day, Mountain Copper Dragon Mata finally awoke, its massive body coiled on the ground, its mind still in disarray. To it, the previous night had been like a terrible nightmare, yet the more terrifying fact was that the nightmare was real... It stared at Liszt, its black, narrow pupils flickering.

"Mata, this is the new name I've given you. How about it, do you accept it?" Liszt looked into the dragon's eyes and said with a gentle and refined smile.

After a long while, Mountain Copper Dragon Mata slowly turned its head away and let out a snort from its nostrils, tacitly accepting it all. Regardless of how complex the process had been, in the end, Liszt overcame it in the Mind Battle, which was enough to subdue the dragon's pride and dignity, and to earn its recognition.

"If that's the case, Ach, use the Magic Platform to contact Yevich and have him determine the coordinates with the Sextant. On our way back, let's take in the views of the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy."

Liszt leaped nimbly onto Mountain Copper Dragon Mata's Dragon Tooth Platform and instantly completed the mental bond with the dragon before guiding Mata into Dragon Knight Resonance and swiftly entering Dragon Rider Mode. For an experienced Dragon Knight, this whole procedure was a breeze.

Ach, riding on the back of Formless Dragon Bard, took out the Magic Platform and contacted Yevich.

While waiting for the reply, Liszt and Mata flew to the logistics supply team camp that had been burned the day before, leaving behind a few footprints from the Mountain Copper Dragon and simply staged the scene. They made it appear as if Andre had ridden the Mountain Copper Dragon, forcefully destroyed the camp, and defected from the Eagle Kingdom.

After completing these tasks, by the time they returned, the Magic Platform had already received a response.

Ach received the precise coordinates and determined their specific location: "Brother, from here, if we head fifteen degrees west-southwest and fly about three thousand kilometers, we'll reach Yevich's location."

"Three thousand kilometers, that's a day and night's flight, then let's set off!" With that thought in his mind, Mata flapped its wings and soared into the sky with a roaring "whoosh."

Bard followed closely with Ach.

Then came Leo and Ethan, with Ethan's claws still clutching Andre, who was bound tightly, blindfolded, and gagged—a young knight despised by the Sapphire Duke. Though

not of great value, if he could be exchanged for some information regarding Domain Knights or Liches, it would be a gain.

Even the smallest mosquito leg is still meat.

Even Liszt, who kept five dragons, had to live frugally.

The team traveled intermittently, and their mood upon departure was entirely different from when they had arrived; the sun seemed so bright, and the moonlight so pure. Meanwhile, Liszt used the riding time to communicate closely with Mata, fully understanding its capabilities to devise a training plan, and started creating the "Mountain Copper Dragon Knight - Dragon Dou Qi Manual".

"Mata, do you have a copper plating state?"

The copper plating state was a kind of innate talent of Metal Dragons. Some dragons had it, and others didn't. The Grey Iron Dragon Ornn, for instance, didn't have this instinct.

Strictly speaking, it should be called the "gold plating state." It's a protective measure extended by the dragon's innate Superior Magic—using its source to generate an outer shell of the same kind of metal, enhancing the defense of its body surface. The gold plating state of the Mountain Copper Dragon could, roughly, perhaps, maybe, also be called the copper plating state.

"Roar!"

Mata answered arrogantly—it couldn't and didn't need to, due to its already formidable natural defenses; it had no use for such fanciful instincts.

"What a pity. Although you don't need protection, your knight does. In critical moments, if you had the copper plating state, the Mountain Copper Dragon Knight's fighting power would be off the charts." Liszt flicked the golden scales on Mata's neck, finding it hard to imagine the level of force needed to penetrate them.

Maybe only a full-powered blow using the Dragon Dou Qi Manual might scratch the surface.

"Roar!" Mata was proud of its strong defensive scales and believed that its golden color was the most beautiful and the most aesthetically superb among dragons.

Beauty aside, compared to the flowing crystal-like Bard, it was akin to a nouveau riche adorned with a thick gold chain.

Regarding this matter, Liszt didn't respond; he bluntly changed the subject: "What is the status of your Dragon Breath? Is it a metallic torrent?"

The Purple Copper Dragon's metallic torrent Dragon Breath could transform into innumerable bullet-like metal spheres; the Grey Iron Dragon's metallic torrent Dragon Breath could turn into countless blade-like iron shards.

"Roar!"

Mata responded with a negative; its Dragon Breath was a special Magic Power with extremely strong plasticity. It could form a shield to ward off attacks, transform into a long spear to pierce through enemies, and also wrap objects in a thin film. Moreover, it could recycle the Mountain Copper produced by the Dragon Breath back into a Magic Form.

Under Liszt's strong insistence, Mata decided to demonstrate its Dragon Breath.

The dragon's mouth opened, and a golden-yellow stream of air sprayed out, swiftly turning into a huge javelin against the wind and shooting towards a mountain peak.

Pfft!

The Mountain Copper javelin plunged directly into the mountain, its powerful Impact Force almost shattering the entire peak—its might was formidable. Then it flew low over the ground, and as it passed the mountain peak, its mouth opened, sucking back a golden-yellow stream of air through the original hole of the javelin, swallowing it back into its belly.

Even though it could be recycled, a bit of Superior Magic was still lost between releasing and retrieving it.

Of course, this bit of Superior Magic was nothing to mature Mountain Copper Dragons, which had lived two hundred years and had accumulated enough Superior Magic within them to flaunt for a considerable time.

"It's a powerful move; I've decided, this move will be called 'Dragon Breath Terminator'!" The T-1000 from "Terminator," made of thought-controlled liquid metal, came to Liszt's mind at that moment, capable of free transformation.

His thoughts then diverged: "So, Mata, can you freely retrieve all the Mountain Copper? I'm referring to the Mountain Copper that might not have been produced by you."

Mata responded that it could not. For a short time after being released, the Mountain Copper created by the Dragon Breath Terminator maintained the properties of Superior Magic. But as time passed, if more than an hour elapsed, that Superior Magic would dissipate into intangibility. Without the Superior Magic, the Mountain Copper was virtually indistinguishable from ordinary Mountain Copper and could not be recycled.

"In that case, how about we exchange a resource? Mata, I will spare no resources in providing for you from now on—delicacies, Magic Potions, you name it. In return, could you now exhale for me a ten-meter-long Mountain Copper Dragon Lance?"

He had an Alloy Dragon Spear that was five meters long—Wrath of Thunder.

While coordinating with Bard and Ethan, the five-meter-long Dragon Lance was sufficient. But with Mata's body length of eighty meters and a wingspan of seventy-five meters, a five-meter-long Dragon Lance was severely inadequate. It had to be ten meters long to facilitate cooperation and execute the Dragon Dou Qi Manual. Since Mata was capable of such a feat, it was a perfect opportunity to create a ten-meter-long Dragon Lance.

A pure Mountain Copper Dragon Lance didn't need the forging skills of an Iron Knight; it was already a powerful weapon on its own.

Feeling enticed by Liszt, Mata turned its head to look at him.

Liszt smiled back at it.

For a full fifty kilometers, the pair kept this eye contact while flying, their minds locked in a Mind Battle. In the end, Mata succumbed—perseverance was victory in the contest between dragon and Knight, and steadfastness was one of Liszt's admirable qualities.

Reluctantly, it opened its mouth and aimed at Liszt, gently exhaling a golden-yellow Magic Power stream that immediately transformed into a ten-meter-long, arm-thick Dragon Lance in the wind. The lance had a sharp conical head, a spiraling twisted pattern along the shaft, and the tail tapered off to a point as well.

The ten-meter-long Mountain Copper Dragon Lance was crafted completely according to Liszt's wishes.

He grabbed it with his hand and felt as though it weighed ten thousand jin—it was so heavy that he wouldn't have been able to lift it without his strong physique and the support of his Dou Qi.

Trying to swing it around, it felt heavy and stable. Although he wasn't quite proficient yet, the feel was excellent.

"This is the Dragon Lance I wanted!"

Suddenly infusing it with Dragon Dou Qi, the Mountain Copper Dragon Lance erupted into blazing red flames, its conductivity for Dou Qi virtually like a "superconductor", without any sluggishness.

"Mata, charge with me!"

Guided by willpower, man and dragon began their somewhat clunky first charge, plunging towards a steep mountain peak not far away. The golden-yellow wings tucked in, skimming past the mountain. At the same time, Liszt brandished the Mountain Copper Dragon Lance, unleashing a Flame Slash mixed with Dragon Magic Power and Dragon Dou Qi.

It struck the mountain peak, shearing off a large portion of it—as the thunderous sound of countless boulders tumbling into the valley broke who knows how many trees.

"Thrilling!"

Chapter 914 A Single Word

Enjoyable it was.

But not far away, Little Fire Dragon Leo let out a dissatisfied roar, objecting to Liszt's ever-growing number of dragons. This put Liszt in a difficult position, and he gradually felt drained of energy.

A common Dragon Knight needs a lifetime to manage a single dragon, yet he had to develop so many in such a short time, which was indeed challenging.

Now he could only hope to quickly imprint his presence in the minds of some resource dragons, and then find suitable knights for them—or as they might cheekily be called, poop scoopers.

For now, Emily was tentatively assigned as Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan's Dragon Knight, and Ethan was also close to forming a Mind Brand.

"Still not enough, having only Emily does nothing to alleviate the burden of caring for the dragons on me. It seems I must select a group of exceptionally talented orphans to train upon my return, hoping that in a few years, or a decade or so, some from this group could become qualified Dragon Knights."

The qualifications for becoming a Dragon Knight were exceedingly difficult, and all the major kingdoms had contingency plans for Dragon Knights. However, not every dragon could find a suitable knight.

Many dragons had even been neglected for decades, if not a century.

Without Dragon Knights for cooperation, just relying on the Mind Brands left by the First Dragon Knights posed a serious issue—the kingdoms couldn't command these dragons at will. Some dragons, when they got into a temper, wouldn't even give the King face, and a significant amount of resources had to be provided for the dragons' daily consumption.

"It would be best to issue a few Smoke Missions regarding talent, so as not to let the good seeds go to waste."

In any case.

The more dragons he had to ride, the more Liszt suffered in his pleasure.

Day and night went by, and in early June, Liszt left Mountain Copper Dragon Mata and Light Green Gemstone Dragon Ethan to rest in a forest, recalled Little Fire Dragon Leo, and rode the Formless Dragon Bard with Ach directly to a designated coordinate.

It was a small city in the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy.

The domain of a viscount.

Pretending to be part of an Eagle Kingdom Adventure Fleet, Yevich Water Peanut had struck up a deal with this viscount to discuss border smuggling matters, and thus he had taken temporary residence in this small city, known as "Bulb City"—named after a large, colorful bird resembling a chicken, famous for its abundance in Bulb City.

The Viscount of Bulb City, Kansas Qingke, was the landlord here, and he owned a Qingke Sprite—where Qingke was quite similar to barley, although whether they were the same species was uncertain.

At a manor outside the city bought by Yevich, Liszt and Ach, having crossed the material boundary, met Clear Water Sword Saint Yevich Water Peanut, whom they hadn't seen in over half a year, along with two other Sky Knights, and a large number of Adventure Fleet members.

"Your Highness!"

Seeing their Lord Landlord in a foreign land thousands of miles away, Yevich and his Adventure Fleet members were thrilled.

"Yevich, you have been diligent and responsible during your voyage, to my satisfaction, and you have also made great contributions to the establishment of new territories for the Flame Kingdom. I now formally confer upon you the title of Earl and, once the Flame

Kingdom is founded, will grant you land and nobility immediately," said Liszt without any pleasantries, offering the carrot first to reward his knights.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Yevich almost burst into tears, "Thank you for your favor, Your Highness, Yevich is willing to charge into battle for you!"

He had become famous in his youth through the Dragon Knight selection program but went through twists and turns, nobility problems, and poor relations with several landlords. He thought his life might never amount to anything and yet, unexpectedly, was granted the title of Earl in the yet-to-be-established Flame Kingdom.

"This is the title and land you deserve. The future Flame Kingdom will still need your enthusiastic contribution."

Liszt consoled Yevich, then turned to the other two Sky Knights, who had surrendered to him during the battle at sea, and then later joined the Adventure Fleet. They had contributed to the discovery of the Third Archipelago, supplied the Great Island, and conducted investigations in the Yellowstone Kingdom, and were therefore also bestowed the title of Viscount.

Essentially, their titles from before their surrender were restored.

The distribution of land would also wait until the founding of the kingdom.

The other knights of the Adventure Fleet were variously bestowed the titles of Honored Knights or Barons, and the serfs who came from sailor backgrounds were also promised by Liszt the restoration of their Freeman status and granted land—in fact, anyone of Flame People origin would gradually be arranged by him to become Freemen, paving the way for the future Knight Class.

The indigenes known as Moon Slayers would form the primary serf class.

However, he would also cultivate a group of Knight Class from among the Moon Slayers to differentiate them. Even if there were exceptionally talented individuals among the Moon Slayers, it was not impossible for them to be promoted to Dragon Knights—like the young girl named Hippolyta, who was among the first batch of Moon Slayers trained by Liszt.

Because he sheltered a few elves, he had a good impression of Hippolyta and had already decided to set her up as a future noble.

The little girl's magical talent was very poor, and she had already switched to learning Dou Qi. It was uncertain whether she could achieve anything.

"Your efforts need not worry about no gains, as your Lord Landlord, I will not forget any knight who has fought for me—land, wealth, women, elves—as long as you follow and dedicate yourselves to me, I can grant you everything you desire!"

"Willing to charge for Your Highness!"

The knights, who had just been promoted to nobility or had their titles elevated, shouted enthusiastically, eager to immediately mount their horses and charge into battle to repay Lord Landlord with their lives.

After the commotion had subsided.

The knights were dismissed to continue doing what they should be doing—gathering information.

Liszt kept Yevich and the other two Sky Knights with him to inquire about the detailed information they had gathered during this time.

Yevich narrated, "As per Your Highness's instructions, we have conducted detailed investigations on the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy and the Yellowstone Kingdom. However, due to constraints of time and manpower, most information is garnered through local noble channels, which may not be very accurate."

In an era where knights primarily relied on foot travel, the sparsity of population greatly restricted the circulation of information.

The knights of the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy probably didn't even know about the existence of the Duchy of Sapphire in the open sea, let alone that a battle of dragon slaying

had occurred there. There were no official diplomatic or trade channels between the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy and the Eagle Kingdom.

"Give a general description."

"The Yellowstone Kingdom has six vassal states; the situation with dragons and Dragon Knights is unknown. Among them, the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy is within the northern border of the Yellowstone Plains, but due to the Ice Field acting as a barrier and the fact that the Eagle Kingdom has never cultivated its south side, there is little communication between the two countries. The main communication channel between Yellowstone and the Eagle Kingdom is through its other vassal—the Dragon Spring Lake Grand Duchy."

The Dragon Spring Lake Grand Duchy allegedly has two dragons. It borders both the Eagle Kingdom and the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom, serving as the sole official channel between Yellowstone and the Eagle.

Because of the distance, it's difficult to gather information about that area, and Yevich doesn't know much.

His main understanding is of the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy, which is mostly situated on the highlands. The country's name originates from the perpetual snow and mountains.

The surname of the Dragon Rearing Family is Cicada, with the current duke being Scora Cicada. The cornflower is a common blue flower found throughout the Legendary Continent. The Cicada family is not named after this little blue flower but because they rear a Cornflower Gem Dragon.

Cicada blue refers to a shade deeper than ordinary blue.

The Snowstorm Mountain Duchy is poor, the Knight Class is poor, the duke is poor because their only trading partner is the Yellowstone Kingdom. As a result, the country's products, including the cornflower sapphires, are undervalued by the Yellowstone Kingdom, leading to a very difficult and backward life. If one wished to conquer it, they would simply need to employ a strategy backed by gold to definitely win over half of the knights.

Even to the point where giving enough money could embolden the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy to rebel against the Yellowstone Kingdom—Duke Scora once initiated a war against the Yellowstone Kingdom.

Although he ultimately lost and was forced to compensate with a large amount of goods.

Combining this information, Liszt felt that he could completely absorb the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy in the dark, just like how he initially took over the Grey Iron Duchy in secrecy.

Then, using the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy as a cover, he could rapidly establish a foothold on the Legendary Continent.

"Yevich, do you plan to return to work on Flame Island or are you willing to continue working here... I plan to snatch the vast barren land by the sea at the junction between the Eagle Kingdom, the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy, and the Yellowstone Kingdom, incorporating it as part of the Flame Kingdom. From there as a foundation, we shall commence trade with the two great kingdoms or, perhaps... war!"

On the rudimentary map just sketched by Ach, he casually drew a circle, encircling an area of millions of square kilometers.

Then he conveyed one intention—seize!

The sea no longer satisfied his ambition; it was time to start claiming land. Of course, it wasn't yet wise to brazenly rob land, risking getting sandwiched by two great kingdoms.

After stabilizing his base on Flame Island over the next few years, it would be convenient to implement this plan.

"On the side of the Yellowstone Kingdom, we can start by establishing contact with the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy and claim land in the name of the duchy. As for the Eagle Kingdom, a battle seems inevitable sooner or later. When that time comes, forget the consequences; at the worst, we'll just have a few more dragon-slaying wars!" Liszt pointed out territories on the map.

With eyes full of ambition and an undeniable presence of authority, he proclaimed, "I have the Formless Dragon, I have several dragons, and nothing can stop me from getting what I want!"

Yevich and the two Viscount Sky Knights were inevitably left breathless—Lord Landlord's formidable power and boundless ambitions were precisely what knights desired in a leader to chase glory because only through war could knights gain all the riches and status they sought.

Chapter 915 Seki Returns

Yevich had prepared a batch of fertile Bulb eggs, and Liszt didn't stay in Bulb City for too long, as there wasn't much of interest in the poor and remote Snowstorm Mountain Duchy.

He led his own giant dragon army directly toward the sea.

Of course, considering that Ach was eager to return and summarize the information collected about the Heart Reed Teleportation Formation and the improvements to the magic array, he had Bard take Ach through space to return to Reed City first.

He rode Mata, with Leo and Ethan, flying slowly behind. Mountain Copper Dragon Mata was visiting the Flame Islands for the first time and didn't know the way, so she needed to be guided. Besides, he wanted to use this opportunity to get to know Mata better and lay the groundwork for establishing the Mind Branding of the First Dragon Knight.

By the time they reached the Endless Volcano Cluster, it was June 6th.

Leo returned to its Dragon Nest—Doomsday Volcano Crater and focused on cultivating. The Phoenix Perch Parasol Tree Greater Elf Annie took the chance to indulge herself in a bit of handiwork, while Little Yellow, Little Red, and Little Purple, the three Flame Dragon Birds, excitedly circled around Leo. The three little birds had grown a lot and were very obedient under Annie's training.

Even with Annie's soothing, Liszt managed to ride each of the three little birds for a while, which showed that the creatures known as "Phoenixes," these super dragon beasts, could potentially be tamed as mounts.

"Unfortunately, I have the mounts, but not the qualified knights. At least young and promising Elite Earth Knights of Fire Attribute are required to ride these Flame Dragon Birds and to form a branch of the Burning Legion—the Royal Knight Squad... Of course,

three Flame Dragon Birds are too few; next time I hear news about Phoenixes, I should capture a bunch to breed."

Super dragon beasts were treasures all over, and part of their bodies harbored souls, like the teeth of dragons, involving some special kind of property transformation.

This inspired Liszt for the next stage of the dragon knights' training—he and Ach had deduced that to break their shackles, dragon knights must study souls.

That is, Spiritual Power.

Matter, Magic Power, and Spirit are the three fundamental rules that make up this world, and dragon knights, being at the pinnacle of power, must start with these rules to break through.

"There's also a Lightning Dragon Turtle on Black Horse Island, its shell, like the Flame Dragon Bird's tail feathers, with properties that pertain to the soul. But there aren't enough super dragon beasts; when I have the time, I should go to Pegasus Great Forest in search of the Wind Attribute Unicorn."

He had received the lead about the Unicorn, a super dragon beast, a long time ago, but he never found the time to search, unsure about the existence of Unicorns or whether any had been captured by the knights of the Steel Ridge Kingdom.

He shook his head.

After dismounting from the Flame Dragon Bird, he waved at Annie, "Annie, I'm leaving, I will see you in a few days."

"Alright, Liszt, bring me some blue soft Jade Powder, I want to change up my flavor," said Annie.

"No problem."

...

Leaving Doomsday Volcano Crater, Liszt had an idea.

He flew directly with Mountain Copper Dragon Mata and Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan to Hourglass Valley, which was the Moon Slayers' Holy Mountain and had a Holy Tribe at the foothills, along with six broken statues of Ancient Magicians. Hourglass Valley had excellent terrain, plus it was the absolute center point of Flame Island.

There was also the entrance to a ruin, waiting to be excavated.

"Perhaps I could establish my King's Castle here, the Ancient Magicians chose to construct some ruins here, obviously after careful selection... Moreover, once the entrance to the ruins and its natural node are well managed, we could build a Magic Teleportation Array, allowing the King's Castle to communicate quickly with other places... Best if it can directly connect to the Legendary Continent."

In thought.

The Hourglass Valley was already within sight.

"Hoo-hoo!"

"Hoo!"

Mata and Ethan simultaneously let out earth-shaking dragon roars, signaling to the tribe within the valley that a dragon knight had arrived—their great "Seki" had returned.

In the Moon Language, Seki means sacred. Originally, when Liszt rode atop the Formless Dragon and successfully subdued the Holy Tribe, the Moon Slayers shouted "Seki" in awe, bowing down in worship.

At this moment.

Sasumit, who enjoyed the gentle kneading of his shoulders by the Moon Slayer women inside the tribe, was feeling very content. He was just one of many Ancient Mages in the

Holy Tribe. However, an unexpected disaster left the original Listener and the Ancient Mages loyal to the Listener slaughtered.

That unknown "Seki" from afar, along with the terrifying "Biggleswade," exerted their inviolable majestic might and directly appointed him the new Listener of the Holy Tribe.

From then on,

Sasumit became the most authoritative person in the Holy Tribe, and wherever he went, everyone respectfully addressed him as "Su."

While enjoying himself, Su suddenly heard two distant, imperious roars that could not be violated. The sound was very special. Because of the distance, it wasn't very loud. However, the sense of power it conveyed made his scalp tingle, as if it came from some indescribable noble presence.

"What's that calling!" He immediately stood up from between the legs of the Moon Slayer woman and quickly walked to the window of the wooden hut, looking in the direction from which the sound originated.

"Su, is it a wild beast calling?" one of the Moon Slayer women responded.

"No, it's not right, the cry is wrong. I've never heard this cry before, but it's very familiar, eternally unforgettable familiar!" In Su's mind, another peculiar cry "Wuuuiyaaa" emerged, the call of Biggleswade by Seki's side.

Legend had it that the ancestors fought alongside Biggleswade and killed the moon.

The "Wuuuiyaaa" was different from the "roar" and "howl," but the nobility and authority they contained were the same, stirring in him a feeling from the depths of his soul that made him want to submit.

He looked at the azure blue sky, nervously anticipating something.

Suddenly, two small black dots appeared in the sky, growing larger and larger, eventually turning into two black silhouettes.

Seeing those two silhouettes, Su's heart violently trembled, breathing quickened, almost suffocating: "Yes, yes, it's Biggleswade!"

"Biggleswade?" The women in the wooden hut turned pale with fright.

They had never seen that Seth alongside his companion Biggleswade, because when the Dragon Might was released, they fainted on the spot. It was only afterward that they learned Seth had killed the former Listener and a host of Ancient Mages, and then supported Su, and laid down the strict rule of prohibiting harm to Elves.

The ban on harming Elf Bugs meant that Magic Dust could not be produced, this caused many young people who aspired to become Ancient Mages to grumble and complain.

However, Su executed this regulation strictly; previously, tribe members who secretly killed Elf Bugs were discovered by Su and immediately skinned and flayed. Since then, no one dared to oppose it.

Su also said that Ancient Mages could not protect the tribe, and Seth would bring new methods of cultivation—Knights. Because Seth himself was a great Knight, a Knight riding Biggleswade!

Half a year passed, and Seth had not returned. The methods of Knight cultivation had not been received either.

Many young men doubted Su behind his back.

But Su was full of confidence.

He had felt the greatness of Seki, knew what Seki meant to the Holy Tribe, and was willing to believe that Seki would return—that would be the moment when the Holy Tribe would leave the forest and return to the glorious civilization of the ancestral period.

"Biggleswade, two Biggleswades!"

"It's Seki!"

"Seki has returned!" Su shouted loudly, running out of the house to quickly gather all the Ancient Mages of the tribe and rush to the altar of the six statues.

By the time they reached the altar, the two Biggleswades had also landed with immense and boundless Dragon Might. Unlike the flowing Crystal Biggleswade in Su's memory, the Biggleswades this time were one light green like a gemstone and the other brilliant like gold.

Their color, size, and posture were all different, but the overwhelming Dragon Might that made one feel breathless remained unchanged.

"Roar!"

"Rawr!"

The two Biggleswades roared again, asserting their authority before slowly retracting their Dragon Might, and then a Knight jumped down from the back of the golden Biggleswade.

Tall, straight, handsome, valiant, noble, too dazzling to look at directly.

It was indeed the Seki of Su's memory.

He immediately knelt down excitedly, exclaiming: "Seki! Biggleswade!"

The other Ancient Mages did not dare to delay and fell to their knees, following Su's cries: "Seki! Biggleswade!"

Chapter 916 Envoy Group Arrives

After a systematic study, Liszt had mastered the basic conversational ability in Moon Language. After deterring the Moon Slayer people of the Holy Tribe, he let Listener Su and the Ancient Mage stay behind.

"Su, my visit this time is to fulfill my promise to the Holy Tribe. Since you sincerely follow me, naturally I won't let the Holy Tribe decline. I will send the Knight Order to the

Holy Tribe to teach you a brand new knight cultivation system to replace the obsolete magic system."

Su was still somewhat incredulous, "Seki, is magic really in decline?"

"The Magic Web is waning. How do you think a magician like you could ever achieve the level of power that I have reached now?" Liszt snorted coldly, very dissatisfied with Su's doubt—when had his followers ever questioned his words in his own territory, only these natives were dull-witted.

"Su dares not compare himself to Seki, but Seki, can Su also become trained as a knight?"

"You can't. You Ancient Mages are doomed to be eliminated by the times. Starting now, select excellent youngsters who are the seeds for receiving knight training. In the future, under my rule, the Holy Tribe will have a wonderful future, not one where they're chased by wild beasts in the forest."

When the knights began to teach, the talented young Moon Slayer children would learn Wind Language and Serpent Script, and they would be instilled with the concept of loyalty and patriotism.

When this group of Moon Slayer knights grew up, assimilation would also be complete.

By then, the superior-feeling Moon Slayer knights would surely exploit the ordinary Moon Slayer people even more ruthlessly—history has proven that the Banana People often treated their own kinsmen more harshly; ethnic Germans who joined the American forces in World War II fought the German army to the death, ethnic Japanese who joined the Americans fought fiercely as well, not to mention the Chinese who joined the Japanese or American forces.

Human nature is just like this.

You might not envy a stranger who has more money, but if Wang Gou Dan, who you grew up playing with, gets rich, you'd certainly be driven mad with jealousy. And how else to prove that kowtowing to foreigners was the right thing to do, if not by demeaning and crushing one's own people—not that everyone is like this, but most people certainly are.

Su felt very aggrieved by Liszt's blunt words as he didn't want to be eliminated, and he still wanted to serve as a Listener until death.

However, having held high positions for many years, Liszt had developed a piercing insight into the hearts of people, "Su, how many children do you have?"

"Su has one boy and one girl. The boy is fifteen and is learning magic, and the girl is twelve, learning to work with the women."

"The boy is fifteen, it's not too late for knight training. I will ensure that he receives special attention. In the future, he will become a noble of the Flame Kingdom, with his own lands and servants. The girl, at twelve, let her go to Flame City's girls' school to learn, so that she may marry a noble in the future."

As Liszt spoke, he turned to look at the other Ancient Mages whose eyes were filled with expectation, "It's the same for you. Your children will all become part of the Flame Kingdom's Knight Class. Remember, as long as you're loyal to me, you will all have a beautiful future."

Su and the Ancient Mages immediately began to trip over themselves expressing their loyalty.

After a session of flattery.

Liszt gestured with his hand for everyone to stop, no more brown-nosing, as these natives with limited vocabulary only repeated some common words like "great," "Seki," "handsome," with no novel or imaginative phrases, "I grant you a beautiful future, and I also entrust you with two tasks."

"Please speak, Seki."

"Biggleswade-Mountain Copper Dragon Mata will stay in the Holy Tribe, and its diet will be your responsibility. It represents my authority; its vision is my vision. Everything in the Holy Tribe will be in my sight. Do you understand?"

Mata had simple requirements for its Dragon Nest.

It was simply too lazy to move and liked to have someone bring food to it.

Staying in the Holy Tribe was a good choice, firstly to keep the news of the Mountain Copper Dragon under wraps, and secondly to suppress the Holy Tribe and facilitate the extension of its own authority.

"Understood, Lord Seki!" Su and the other Ancient Mages not only had no complaints, but felt an excitement that was almost suffocating—they would have the chance to assist the ancestor, Biggleswade, in battle and provide him with food, which felt awesome.

With a light smile, Liszt continued, "Your second task is to cooperate with the Knight Order I will dispatch here, subjugating the nearby Moon Slayer Tribes. Also, extend the reach of the Elf Ban, and make sure to strictly protect every Elf you find!"

"Ah, Lord Seki, the surrounding tribes may not heed the orders of the Holy Tribe."

"If they don't comply, invite their Listeners and Ancient Mages to visit the Holy Tribe and let them see Biggleswade...you needn't worry about this detail; my knights will faithfully execute my command, and you are to follow the arrangements of the knights."

After giving his orders, Liszt enjoyed various delicious fruits offered as tribute by the Holy Tribe.

Then Su brought over seven Elf Bugs that the Holy Tribe had found during the past half year, all of rare variety yet of little value.

Still, Liszt contracted the seven Elf Bugs.

After securing the Elf Bugs, he communicated his farewells to Mata, "You'll stay here. I will send people to take care of you. There will be Magic Potions, Jade, and delicious delicacies in abundance. What you need to do is to select a location nearby to produce Mountain Copper ore. When I find the time, I will build you a new Dragon Nest."

"Huh! Roar!" Mountain Copper Dragon Mata nodded happily, feeling rather pleased not to see Liszt.

This was likely a downside of using Bewildering Dragon Mind Fruit for Dragon Riding; the Dragon harbored grievances towards Liszt, the Knight. Over time, they would interact more closely, share their hearts, and ultimately leave behind a Mind Brand.

Waving his hand,

Amid the farewells of the Moon Slayers, Liszt mounted the Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan and continued eastward. When he passed near Jade City, close to the Flame Mountain Range, he stopped to inspect the city's development. He noticed rapid progress, with construction accelerating across several cities as more Flame People arrived.

Trade and commerce were also picking up as many specialties from Flame Island began to be transported outwards, transforming into economic value.

After a simple rest at Jade City for one night, Liszt set off the next day, first visiting Dragon Valley City to inspect the metal mining operations, as well as the excavation work on those large pits... Leaving Jade City, he then traveled to Flame City—its status had abruptly fallen with the opening of the Heart Reed Teleportation Formation.

It was now being repositioned and replanned as an agricultural city, with numerous plantations opening up here.

After inspecting Flame City, Liszt finally returned to Reed City for a brief rest before switching to ride the Formless Dragon Bard, traveling through space directly back to Black Horse Island.

Because at this point in time, the Envoy Group from the Steel Ridge Kingdom had finally arrived, and accompanying them was the Envoy Group from the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom—The Blast Furnace Fortress Envoy Group traveled on three huge Intermediate Dragon Beasts, Floating Colossal Kites, which were Wind Attribute creatures that resembled large, tailed flying saucers.

They looked somewhat like stingrays from Earth, possessing flat, round bodies more than ten meters in diameter, and solely relied on Wind System Magic for flight. They were swift flyers with impressive stamina.

These were Intermediate Dragon Beasts bred by the Blast Furnace Fortress Royal Family, weak in combat but surpassing airplanes as a mode of transport.

That's why the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom Envoy Group was able to rapidly cross tens of thousands of kilometers, arriving at Black Horse Island simultaneously with the Steel Ridge Kingdom Envoy Group.

Liszt returned to Black Horse Island this time to receive these two Envoy Groups.

Chapter 917 Hitting People with Money

"Mathew of the Red and White Roses, head of the envoy group from the Steel Ridge Kingdom, greets His Highness the Dragon Knight."

"Bruce Silverhand, head of the envoy group from the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom, greets His Highness the Dragon Knight."

In the reception hall of Thorn Castle, Liszt met the leaders of the two nations' envoy groups, a young and handsome knight, and an elegant middle-aged knight.

He greeted them with a smile and gestured for them to sit down, "There is no need for formalities, please, take a seat."

"Thank you, Your Highness."

Mathew hails from the Red and White Rose Family, prominent in the Steel Ridge Kingdom, while Bruce was born into the Silver Hand Family, a ducal family without dragons, akin to a distant relation of the Golden Crown Family of the Blast Furnace Fortress Royal Family, similar to the relationship between the Blue Blood Alliance and the Sapphire Family.

Such distinguished representatives clearly show the high regard that the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom and Steel Ridge Kingdom had for Liszt—or rather, their respect for the invisible entities like Formless Dragon Bard, Little Fire Dragon Leo, Light Green Gem Dragon Ethan, and Grey Iron Dragon Ornn behind him, and the regard for Archmage Archy.

Before any formal discussion on the intentions of the envoy groups, both nations presented their gifts.

The King of Steel Ridge Nation brought a batch of grains, metal resources, and several strands of twinkling golden wool. This was wool from the Earth Attribute Super Dragon Beast, Golden Mountain Goat, akin in importance to the Phoenix Feather of the Flame Dragon Bird—an offering on par with the gifts from the previous envoys.

The Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom came without grains and metals since they had arrived on a Floating Colossal Kite and could not carry much.

However, the gift from the king was a batch of Magic Books, which included some unique and bizarre spell plans, magic arrays, and several books authored by archmages. The value of the gifts was outstanding, especially since Archy as an archmage could maximize the potential of these Magic Books.

"Thank you for the gifts from King Osborne, King Helder. It's getting late; perhaps everyone would like to dine and drink freely, and the formal envoy documents can be submitted in the afternoon."

"As Your Highness commands."

The banquet was rich and sumptuous, and the envoys dined happily. However, Liszt was not quite satisfied—Mrs. Abbie's chef team had already gone to Flame City, and those left at Thorn Castle were her apprentices, whose skills were somewhat lacking.

With cups and dishes interchanging, there naturally came much flattery and bootlicking.

Especially Mathew of the Red and White Roses, who showed an outsized enthusiasm toward Liszt, making him naturally think that they might want to marry off their sister to him.

But such a blind arranged marriage was not to Liszt's liking, so he chose to deal with it tepidly.

He barely managed to play along until the banquet ended and wanted to take a good nap, but Mathew came seeking him again, "Your Highness, the gifts from the Steel Ridge Kingdom have been presented, but the Red and White Rose Family's gifts have yet to be given to Your Highness, please allow me to present them personally."

"The Red and White Rose Family prepared gifts for me too?" Liszt pretended to be surprised—he already knew the family was wealthy and liked to throw money around.

And now they indeed intended to shower him with money.

Thinking about it, Liszt felt a bit excited.

Mathew smiled proudly, "My parents hold Your Highness in high esteem, my sister admires Your Highness greatly, and I, too, admire Your Highness's distinguished qualities from our frank discussion. Therefore, my family intends to foster good relations with Your Highness, and these humble gifts are merely a token of our goodwill, not worth mentioning."

Soon thereafter,

The knights of the Retainer Knights from the Red and White Rose Family brought batches of gifts, announcing the name of each item as they presented them.

"Twenty rubies, and thirty other gemstones of eleven different colors."

"One ton each of mithril, mountain copper, and fine gold."

"Three pairs of adult Low-Level Dragon Falcon Dogs, twenty puppies."

"Fire Attribute Abandoned Bug Grass - Red Pen Ghost, Dark Attribute Abandoned Bug Grass - Black Tiger Palm Spores, nutrients, and twenty Serfs for cultivation."

Every time a gift's name was mentioned, Liszt's heart inevitably raced.

The value of fifty gemstones was over tens of thousands of Gold Coins, three tons of Magic Metal was priced nearly at one hundred thousand Gold Coins, the capabilities of the Low-Level Dragon Beast Falcon Dog were unknown, but the value of a breedable Dragon Beast was definitely not low, including the generally valued Abandoned Bug Grass with the Dark Attribute.

The Light and Dark Attributes were rare to see, corresponding to very high prices of Magic Potion, thus the value of Black Tiger Palm was huge, definitely exceeding tens of thousands of Gold Coins.

Before Liszt could recover,

Another knight came over holding a large box and loudly exclaimed, "One thousand Platinum Magic Potions!"

Hearing this gift, Liszt's eyebrows rapidly rose. Platinum Magic Potion, made from the White Rose that was part of the origin of the surname of the Red and White Rose Family, claimed to have the best amplification effects. Many grand nobles' families were willing to spend countless Gold Coins to purchase Platinum Magic Potion for their offspring.

The best descriptor was — Steel Ridge Kingdom's designated Magic Potion for the Dragon Knight reserve plan!

It was said that one Platinum Magic Potion in Steel Ridge cost five hundred Gold Coins, and the value of one thousand Platinum Magic Potions was five hundred thousand Gold Coins.

While he was stunned by the Platinum Magic Potion, another knight brought another large box, handing it to Mathew who personally shouted the name of the gift: "Two hundred bottles of Red Dragon Water!"

"Red Dragon Water!"

Liszt abruptly stood up, unable to maintain his composed demeanor, and swallowed hard, "Mathew, the Red and White Rose Family actually brought out Red Dragon Water as a gift?"

Red Dragon Water, another Magic Potion made from the Red Rose, another surname origin of the Red and White Rose Family, whose effect on enhancing a dragon's Magic Power was terrifying — since it could also boost the Dragon's Super Magic, it counted as a strategic material in war strategies. Generally, Steel Ridge Royal Family purchased all the Red Dragon Water, and it was rare to see any sold externally.

Occasionally, one or two bottles would be released, priced in Dragon Coins.

One Dragon Coin equaled ten thousand Gold Coins!

Red Dragon Water was always priceless.

"Your Highness, the Red and White Rose Family is even richer than the Platinum Family, these gifts are worth nearly five million Gold Coins, but it's just a friendly gesture from the family to Your Highness," Mathew handed the box to a castle servant who did not know what Red Dragon Water was, with a warm smile on his face.

Seeing the shocked expression on Liszt's face, he felt quite proud inside.

Perhaps his own talent was not that outstanding, being a member of the Dragon Knight reserve plan, yet Dragon Riding remained distant, but he had his own confidence and backing.

Nothing else.

The family was wealthy.

Having grown accustomed to using money when power couldn't handle things, the Duke of Rose, in his time, had used wealth to sway the Princess of Steel Ridge Kingdom, then further used money and kinship to sway the King, preserving the status of the Red and White Rose Family.

Thus, the offspring of the Red and White Rose Family, what they liked to do most and were best at, was using money to influence people: "The Red and White Rose Family wishes to foster a closer friendship with the Flame Family, with the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family and the power of the Flame Family, this friendship will surely bloom with dazzling light."

"Indeed, the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family is astonishing," Liszt exhaled a breath heavily, having to admit he was truly nearly swayed by the onslaught of money.

Mathew flicked the collar of his Flack·Abaie, smiled, and asked, "I wonder, Your Highness, if you are satisfied with the gifts from the Red and White Rose Family?"

Chapter 918 I Have a Dragon

The gift from the Red and White Rose Family was satisfactory or not?

Regarding this question,

Liszt didn't beat around the bush, responding enthusiastically, "I'm very satisfied. I gratefully accept the friendship of the Red and White Rose Family." Such a wealthy and generous friend, he was naturally willing to make their acquaintance.

Receiving occasional gifts was enough to prosper.

The value of the gift from the Red and White Rose Family alone exceeded the entire annual output of the Flame Territory. One couldn't begin to imagine how many sheets of white paper, sea salt, and glass it would take to amass a fortune nearly five million Gold Coins. An ordinary Marquis Family would have to sell everything they owned, and still, it wouldn't be enough.

Therefore, the two of them eagerly chatted for a full hour. In the end, Liszt personally escorted Mathew to the castle gates, acting as if he were seeing off an old friend he hadn't seen in years.

"Please stop here, Your Highness. Mathew will return to the embassy to rest a bit and we shall meet again in the afternoon."

Liszt grabbed Mathew's hand and gave it a firm shake, "Alright, Mathew, go and rest. We'll deal with the handover of the envoy's documents this afternoon, and in the evening, I'll join you for a drink. We won't return until we're completely drunk!"

"Yes, we won't return until we're completely drunk!"

As Mathew left, he walked with a bit of a swaying gait. He glanced at the Grey Iron Dragon not far from Thorn Castle.

His heart swelled with pride, coupled with a sense of superiority that he couldn't suppress: "Although knightly glory has looked favorably upon me, and my talents surpass all the youth in the three kingdoms, it's incredible to have ridden four dragons. But in the end, he's just a poor country boy, displaying a shabby appearance, dazzled by such wealth."

Scratching a stray lock of hair at the corner of his brow, he thought contentedly: "But this feeling is quite pleasant. Our ancestors used money to win over the Steel Ridge Kingdom, and now I use money to win over the future Flame Kingdom. Isn't this equal to the Red and White Rose Family secretly controlling two great kingdoms?"

The more he thought about it, the happier he became. His mood felt like dancing in a club.

So exciting.

It felt like he had reached a climax in life.

It felt like he had reached the pinnacle.

...

Meanwhile, in the study of Thorn Castle, Liszt and his father Li Weiliam were marveling at the priceless trove of gifts, clicking their tongues in amazement.

"Liszt said, "Worthy of the Red and White Rose Family, such financial capacity, such boldness, almost made me lose my composure." He picked up his teacup and gulp down a big swallow, calming his excited emotions.

Gemstones, Magic Metal, Low-Level Dragon Beasts, and Abandoned Cordyceps – each one of these gifts was lavish.

Yet the most extravagant were the two chests containing Magic Potions. One thousand vials of Platinum Magic Potion and two hundred vials of Red Dragon Water, two types of Magic Potions famous worldwide from the Red and White Rose Family, given in a quantity worth millions. Such valuable gifts, if it were Liszt, he would never part with, even if it killed him.

Too extravagant!

Li Weiliam also took deep breaths, trying to calm his emotions: "The Red and White Rose Family truly knows how to make a grand gesture. I've weathered many storms over the decades, but I've never seen such a generous gift-giving. It seems like several generations of a medium Noble Family would struggle to compare to a single gift casually given by one of these Dragon Rearing Families."

"The Tulip Family wouldn't be able to come up with this much wealth, not even one-tenth, without having to sell off their estates."

"Father, there is also a vast chasm between Dragon Rearing Families. Not every Dragon Rearing Family has access to Platinum Magic Potion and Red Dragon Water. Moreover, the gifts from King Osborne and King Helder were quite ordinary. The gift from the Red and White Rose Family is different."

"That's true. Free food tastes more expensive than rare delicacies. The Rose Duchy is far to the north of Steel Ridge, and it is challenging to establish relations. Why would Mathew send such valuable gifts?"

Li Weiliam wasn't very familiar with the Red and White Rose Family, only having heard that the family was famous for its wealth.

Liszt took out a vial of Platinum Magic Potion and, using his Eye of Magic, closely inspected the dense Chaotic Magic Power within, saying, "Father, have you ever heard of the Steel Pearl or the most beautiful woman of the Northland?"

"No."

"Marilyn Rose of Red and White, sister of Mathew, daughter of the Duke of Rose, niece of King Osborne, fifteen years old this year, and yet unmarried. Although Mathew didn't say it outright, he hinted everywhere that he has a beautiful sister, and that an alliance through marriage could secure the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family."

"The Red and White Rose Family wants a marriage alliance with you?" Li Weiliam gasped for breath, "So, what do you think about that? Do you have any plans for such an alliance?"

Liszt set down the Platinum Magic Potion he was holding and regained his usual calm demeanor, "Does Father think I should enter into a marriage alliance?"

Li Weiliam wanted to say "Stop hesitating, marry into wealth as quickly as possible," but then he remembered his daughter, the Archmage Acherlroides Truth.

On one hand lay boundless wealth, on the other, vast magic.

It was indeed a difficult choice.

"This... marrying the daughter of the Red and White Rose Family would be an excellent choice, of course. Acherlroides is a wonderful girl not to let go of either. As the head of the Flame Family and King of the Flame Kingdom, the decision of marriage is yours to make, and I won't interfere."

Acherlroides represented strength, Marilyn represented wealth, and Li Weiliam did not want to put himself in a difficult position making choices for Liszt—besides, he knew he couldn't make decisions for him.

Not to mention that as a second son who had branched out from the family, even if he hadn't, he wouldn't be able to sway Liszt's convictions.

However, he still spoke with a trace of concern, "Liszt, there's one thing I hope you'll think about carefully. Once you become King, you must be responsible for all the citizens of the Kingdom, and the most important responsibility of a King is to produce an heir to ensure the smooth succession of the throne."

He often saw Acherlroides and was all too aware of her Sea Serpent identity.

So, in his heart, he hoped to counsel Liszt—indicating that between Acherlroides and Marilyn, he preferred Liszt to choose Marilyn.

Though he had never met Marilyn in person, the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family had already successfully dazed him.

Liszt did not respond immediately; he closed two cases containing Magic Potions and directly stored them in his Space Ring, then gathered the gemstones and Magic Metals as well.

The Abandoned Cordyceps Bloody Pen Ghost and Black Tiger's Paw would be planted by the serfs as arranged by the officials, and the Falcon Dogs would be handed over to specialized breeders for care.

After attending to these matters.

He asked indifferently, "Father, what do you think is the greatest power in this world?"

Li Weiliam asked curiously, "What is it?"

"Dragons!"

Without beating around the bush, Liszt said directly, "With dragons, one has everything, because dragons signify power, and wealth cannot represent power. The Red and White Rose Family may seem to dwarf the Steel Ridge Royal Family in wealth, but they are nothing but rootless trees, or to put it plainly, merely puppets manipulated by the Steel Ridge Royal Family."

Mathew, heir of the Duke of Rose, was majestic and glimmered with gold, yet Liszt had already seen through the flaw of the Red and White Rose Family: their strength did not match their wealth.

If he were just a poor boy, he would be easily stunned by money, but as penniless as he was, being a Dragon Knight with five dragons, acquiring wealth was all too easy.

Just like this time, the Red and White Rose Family had come from afar to bring money.

"The Red and White Rose Family's reason for wanting a marriage alliance is simple; they have money but no dragons to protect it, so they're hoping for a new support, which is me. However, the question worth pondering is, does the Steel Ridge Royal Family truly wish to share the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family with me?"

Li Weiliam pondered with furrowed brows.

Liszt offered an answer straight away, "You see, Mathew is the heir to the Red and White Rose Family, not Marilyn. The Steel Ridge Royal Family just needs to hold on to Mathew, and they've got the purse strings of the Red and White Rose Family, as well as control over the extent of wealth I can acquire."

"So, Mathew serving as the leader of the Envoy Group, and the Red and White Rose Family's intent to marry us off—is it all being manipulated by the Steel Ridge Royal Family behind the scenes?"

"Who knows? Maybe Osborne wants to ensnare me using Marilyn, or perhaps the Duke of Rose is eager to break free from the Platinum Family's constraints... But these don't matter. What matters is that I have dragons. Father, you might not yet know, but I've recently ridden another dragon."

Li Weiliam widened his eyes: "Ridden another dragon?"

"Yes, I have five dragons, I am a Dragon Knight, Acherlodes is an Archmage." Liszt said this with a release of the frustration he had felt from being almost swindled by Mathew's wealth, "Though I might not have money, I have dragons, and as long as I ride out on dragons, their money will ultimately be my money!"

Chapter 919: His Majesty the King

Li Weiliam returned to his room to rest, his mind still buzzing with the words Liszt had said in the last moments.

"I've ridden another dragon recently."

"Although I don't have money, I do have dragons, five of them."

"Their money will ultimately be my money."

These words circled relentlessly in his mind, leading him to express an inexplicable sentiment, "It makes so much sense that I find myself at a loss for words."

Against the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family, he didn't have much power to resist, yet he knew Liszt was right. Control over dragons was the true foundation of wealth, the reason why the Dragon Rearing Family were among the top nobility lay in the dragons they raised, capable of suppressing a kingdom.

Despite understanding this, an inevitable thought still emerged: "What a pity."

Liszt himself had the same thought.

He saw through everything, clarifying the essence of strength and wealth, but while anyone can understand the principle, truly letting go is much harder. The Flame Kingdom had five dragons, and the wealth required to sustain them was immense; the fortune of the Red and White Rose Family could easily fill the void of their growth period.

"What a pity."

"The knight system adheres to monogamy, and while a noble can have countless lovers, they cannot have two wives. Otherwise, I could totally follow the ancient Chinese emperors and take Marilyn as a concubine. It wouldn't matter if she had been open before; just gathering the money would be fine."

His biggest concern with noble misses was the libertine culture among the nobility, with women's pre-marital experiences involving who knows how many revelries.

While other nobles might not care, Liszt certainly did.

However, life is about growing amidst compromises.

Cousin Mei Oubo married the fallen Angela Sapphire and still lived a happy life; their son was already born—according to the secret magical methods used by the Long Taro Family, they affirmed the child's lineage as truly inherited from the Long Taro Family, with no possibility of a switch at birth.

"But I could never betray Ach in this lifetime. It seems that if I want to attain the wealth of the Red and White Rose Family, I'll have to find other means."

Money can be tempting.

Mathew of the Red and White Roses, basking in the apex of life, had no clue that his confident display of wealth did, indeed, stun people, but the stunned reactions varied greatly.

He rested for a while at the embassy.

Then he cheerfully went to participate in the exchange of diplomatic documents in the afternoon and fraternized with Liszt over drinks at the evening banquet, radiating enthusiasm. Liszt treated him with a warmth that exceeded that towards other envoys, they were all but sworn brothers. This made the emissaries from the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom and the negotiators from the Eagle Kingdom very envious.

To them, this signified that Liszt would soon lean towards the Steel Ridge Kingdom.

Once Liszt sided with the Steel Ridge Kingdom, it would inevitably disrupt the balance of power in the northeastern corner of the Legendary Continent. The Eagle Kingdom, having lost several dragons, was declining in power and could only ally with the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom to counter the Steel Ridge Kingdom, but with the addition of the Flame Kingdom, the power of the Steel Ridge Kingdom was bound to inflate.

So, following that, the emissary from the Blast Furnace Fortress began to vigorously court Liszt, and the negotiating team from the Eagle ceased nitpicking.

After accompanying Mathew around Black Horse Island, Liszt excused himself on the pretext of having matters to attend to and left Black Horse Island, entrusting the negotiations to his father, Li Weiliam.

Li Weiliam seized the opportunity to make a request, “The Flame Kingdom is about to be established, and we hope that the three great kingdoms will immediately recognize the status of the Flame Kingdom.”

Mathew responded promptly, “Please rest assured, Marquis of Bull Tail, the Steel Ridge Royal Family has already acknowledged the establishment of the Flame Kingdom by the Flame Family. As soon as the Flame Kingdom is founded, we will establish official diplomatic relations.”

“Thank you for His Majesty Osborne’s recognition, and we also hope to enhance our friendship with the Red and White Rose Family.”

“I feel a close affinity with Prince Liszt and believe that this friendship will surely blossom into dazzling light.”

Li Weiliam beamed with a smile, “Liszt also said he felt an immediate kinship with Prince Mathew.” Since Mathew is the heir of the Grand Duchy, he may be addressed as ‘Prince’.

Facing the aggressive courting posture of the Steel Ridge Kingdom.

Bruce Silverhand gave it some thought before swiftly responding, “I carry the attitude of Helder Your Highness, the Blast Furnace Fortress Royal Family will not oppose the establishment of the Flame Kingdom, and is willing to establish formal diplomatic relations. We hope the two kingdoms can trade with each other and communicate openly.”

“This is natural, as the Flame Kingdom has powerful maritime trading forces. Even though Blast Furnace Fortress is distant, we can still exchange trade.”

Thus, the positions of Steel Ridge and Blast Furnace Fortress were already clear.

Only the negotiation team from the Eagle Kingdom had yet to articulate a clear stance. Seeing this, Li Weiliam, after exchanging covert communications with Liszt, gradually adopted a more forceful tone, “Team Leader Alexander, if you cannot represent the attitude of the Eagle Royal Family, then please go back.”

“Marquis of Bull Tail, what do you mean by this?” Alexander White Iron’s face became somewhat unsightly, “As the special envoy of the king, I naturally have the right to represent the attitude of the Eagle Royal Family.”

“In that case, I’ll speak plainly, Prince Dragon Knight is very angry at the Eagle Kingdom for its prolonged inability to reach a ransom agreement, and its reluctance to state its position on the Flame Kingdom. If the Eagle Kingdom continues with this attitude, then there’s no need to talk further—we can just wait for the next dragon-slaying war.”

“Prince Liszt is going to start a new dragon-slaying war, thinking the Eagle Kingdom is easy to bully!”

“You can try if you wish. After all, the Flame Kingdom is lame and poor, with nothing to lose. If the Eagle Kingdom wishes to be an enemy, then we can only choose retaliatory measures to deal with it.”

“This is a threat!”

Li Weiliam said with surprise, “It is indeed a threat. Have you been staying here all these days and not understood that?”

Alexander’s face flushed red, but he struggled to come up with any strong words to say.

Who could blame him? The Eagle Kingdom had already been defeated twice in dragon-slaying wars, losing Dragon Knights and dragons; it was hard to take a hard line. Now that both Steel Ridge and Blast Furnace Fortress had recognized the Flame Kingdom, if the Eagle Kingdom did not compromise, it probably would have to face a third dragon-slaying war.

Once Steel Ridge helped the Flame Kingdom restrain Blast Furnace Fortress...

The Eagle Kingdom might very well suffer Liszt’s retaliation.

Although the Kingdom still had several Dragon Knights and dragons, they were needed to suppress the restless borders. Otherwise, the surrounding duchies and even the families of great kingdoms wouldn’t mind taking the opportunity to plunder wildly. Even if another Dragon Knight were to fall, it’s possible that the Kingdom would have to beg for peace by ceding territory.

So, left with no other choice, Alexander had to back down.

He exposed the bottom line of the Eagle Kingdom, “The Eagle Kingdom can recognize the Flame Kingdom and is willing to pay the ransom with a Grain-type Dragon Elf under two hundred years old to redeem Duke Pierrot. At the same time, we will not interfere with the title succession in the Grey Iron Duchy... but the two countries must sign a treaty of friendship and cease warfare at the dragon level.”

“If you had made this decision earlier, there would have been no need for such an extensive discussion. Team Leader Alexander, Prince Dragon Knight is a peace-loving and just Knight. We only wish to develop calmly on the seas. The sea belongs to the Flame Kingdom, and we hope the Eagle Kingdom will not encroach again next time.”

Finally, the results of the negotiations were formally agreed upon.

At the same time, declarations from the three kingdoms were also successively published. The content of the declarations was simple; the three kingdoms all recognized the establishment of the Flame Kingdom and began formal diplomatic relations with it.

There were no details, no legal bindings, and no demarcation of power.

The declarations merely indicated that another kingdom-level player had joined the game of knights. As for the rules, content, and outcome of the game, it was all left for the Flame Kingdom to fight for.

After the declarations were published.

Liszt returned to Thorn Castle, receiving the envoys of the three great kingdoms as king, sitting high in the main seat, watching calmly as the messengers paid their respects anew.

“Leader of the Steel Ridge Kingdom envoy team, Mathew of the Red and White Roses, pays respects to His Majesty the Flame King.”

“Leader of the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom envoy team, Bruce Silverhand, pays respects to His Majesty the Flame King.”

“Leader of the Eagle Kingdom envoy team, Alexander White Iron, pays respects to His Majesty the Flame King.”

Liszt responded indifferently, “You may rise.”

Chapter 920: Skeleton Dragon Might

“An announcement was issued, and the Flame Kingdom confirmed its decision, and the three envoy groups began to bid their farewells one after another, with Mathew of the Red and White Roses not lingering any longer although he very much wanted to deepen his relationship with Liszt.”

“However, as part of the envoy group, he had to quickly relay the signed agreement to the king of Steel Ridge.”

“Of course, he did delay for a day, only choosing to leave after the Blast Furnace Fortress Envoy Group and the Eagle Negotiation Group had departed. Before leaving, he once again engaged in a private conversation with Liszt in the study and, at the end, took a small box out of his pocket and handed it to Liszt.”

“What is this?” Liszt was a bit puzzled as the gift giving seemed to come out of the blue.

Mathew explained with a smile, “My sister, Marilyn, greatly admires your grace, and she also holds a deep respect for Lord Acherloides, your Archmage. Therefore, she asked me to deliver a gift to both you and Lord Acherloides, which is said to be an offering from the sea.”

When the box opened, two fish scale-like earrings shimmered with a deep blue radiance.

Without the need to utilize the Eye of Magic, Liszt could feel the abundant Water-Attribute Magic Power contained within them; these were undoubtedly very rare and precious magical items.”

Liszt took the box and examined it carefully, growing more and more convinced of the gift’s preciousness, “Is this an offering from the sea?”

“Yes, it is called Mermaid’s Protection, and it was a gift given to her by a Court Grand Mage of the Steel Ridge Royal Family when my sister was born. Though the Grand Mage has passed away, he left behind a story about these earrings—that they were unearthed from a marine relic.”

“A marine relic, what kind of marine relic?”

“It was a peculiar palace, possibly constructed by some ancient marine intelligence. However, of the many intelligent races from ancient times, only humans have continued to thrive; those non-human races seldom make appearances before the world anymore,” Mathew explained with a meaningful smile.”

He was reminding Liszt, already aware of Acherlroides’ identity as a Sea Serpent.

But Liszt didn’t notice his phrasing, and instead, his thoughts turned to the Fish Ugly Temple. In that temple, the statues of Yu Chou, Naga, and Mermaids were worshipped. From a Mermaid statue’s neck, the wondrous magical item, Mermaid’s Tear, was found.

Ultimately, relying on the mystical power of the Mermaid’s Tear, Acherlroides successfully made contact with the Magic Web, laying the foundation to become an Archmage.”

If these Mermaid’s Protection Earrings also possessed mystical power similar to the Mermaid’s Tear, wouldn’t it imply that they could also help a Grand Mage make brief contact with the Magic Web and eventually advance to an Archmage? Moreover, there were two earrings, which seemed not to be a single entity; perhaps they could assist two Grand Mages in advancing.”

Thinking this, he naturally put away the box, “Since Miss Marilyn has gifted it, I gladly accept, and I think my sister Acherlroides will like them.”

“It’s good that Lord Acherlroides will appreciate them.”

Mathew’s smile was radiant.”

Seeing Liszt accept the gift without hesitation, he felt that the other had clearly understood his intention; otherwise, there would usually be some hesitation or second thoughts.”

With this,

Mathew left Black Horse Island satisfied with his envoy group.”

It was almost as soon as Mathew had departed that Liszt followed, directly commanding the Formless Dragon Bard to fly to Reed City to deliver the Mermaid's Protection to Acherloides."

"Acherloides, take a look at these earrings."

"Oh, brother, these earrings look so familiar to Acherloides." She was surprised as she took the earrings, "Acherloides remembers now, they emit an aura of magic power exactly like the Mermaid's Tear used before, it's a special type of high Water-Attribute Magic, likely made of the same material."

"The same material, do you think it could be material from a Mermaid?" Liszt ventured a guess."

Mermaid's Tear could likely be a Mermaid's tears.

Mermaid's Protection, by its shape, might be a Mermaid's scales."

As for whether Mermaids are real creatures, he thought it very likely, since so many mythic tales have been verified over time—even the existence of a creature like the Dragon of the Magic Web—why couldn't Mermaids exist."

"I don't know, but materials with such magical power must be very special. Acherloides also hopes it's truly from a Mermaid."

"Regrettably, no matter how powerful the Mermaids are, they have already declined, with only the Sea Serpents being the most cherished sprites of the sea."

"Heehee, the sea loves Acherloides the most." Acherloides chuckled in agreement, then continued, "Although the 'Mermaid's Protection' is magical, it's not much help to me; I can only study its properties. Brother, you can use them to train new Archmages."

Acherloides also felt that the 'Mermaid's Protection' could help magicians touch the Magic Web, just like the 'Mermaid's Tear' did.

“No need.” Liszt picked up the earrings and put the sapphire blue, fish-scale-shaped earrings on Acherloides’s ears, one by one, “This is a gift from a Dragon Rearing Family of a small kingdom trying to please me. They look really beautiful, so I accepted them. They suit you well.”

Acherloides waved his hand to conjure a mirror made of water: “Do they look good, brother?”

“Very beautiful.”

“Heehee.”

...

Giving the ‘Mermaid’s Protection’ to Acherloides, Liszt didn’t do anything in the romantic atmosphere; he soon left Reed City and flew towards Dragon Valley City.

There, incredibly magical things awaited his testimony—the rewards of the Smoke Mission.

After the three big kingdoms acknowledged the Flame Kingdom, the Smoke Mission was completed, and the original reward was ‘Dragon’s Might in Skeleton.’ However, after completing the mission, the reward clarified what ‘Dragon’s Might in Skeleton’ was.

“Complete the mission, reward: one Bone Dragon.”

Bone Dragon!

The ‘Dragon’s Might in Skeleton’ was the aura emitted by the Bone Dragon.

And it just so happened that the official in charge of mining in Dragon Valley City sent a message through the Magic Platform—they had discovered many large bones in the mine, likely Dragon Bones.

“Dragon Bones!”

“Bone Dragon!”

“Dragon Pit Great Mine!”

“Man-Eating Tree Dragon Sprite!”

A series of clues connected in his mind, leading him to a clear logic: “In ancient times, five Metal Dragons fought here, their blood formed the five types of metal ore we see today; dragons died here, so there are Dragon Bones in these metal ores...”

Metal Dragons cannot resurrect like Elemental Dragons, but they are still dragons, mystical and unimaginable. Thus, these bones combined, underwent some unknown changes, and revived into a Bone Dragon.

And the ‘Man-Eating Tree Dragon Sprite Kali,’ initially sensed the aura of the Bone Dragon, and gradually evolved into a Dragon Sprite.

“What exactly is a Bone Dragon, why have I never heard of this type of dragon, Kali also never mentioned Bone Dragons?”

Kali’s relationship with Liszt had improved, and their feelings gradually grew closer as they communicated about its growth process. It is hard to describe specifically; the memories of the Little Minor Elf were confused, and as a Greater Elf, the memories were also quite vague, mostly the monotonous life memories in the Dragon Pit Valley.

It was originally just an ordinary Man-Eating Tree.

It grew up in confusion, then became enemies with the Moon Slayer, and began plotting revenge against the Moon Slayer. It had never seen a Bone Dragon, never touched any Dragon Bones, it only knew about the aura it liked from the Dragon Pit Valley side.

Once it evolved into a Dragon Sprite, it no longer felt a special preference for that aura.

“Your Highness, these are the bones unearthed from the mine, possessing Dragon Might, likely remnants of Metal Dragons that died. We are still excavating; the deeper we go, the more Dragon Bones we find.” The official in charge of mining was Iron Knight Nicholas Bellows Count, who had abundant experience in mining.

Liszt looked at each piece of the decayed, broken Dragon Bones, felt the faint Dragon Might emanating from them, his gaze flickering—he could confirm that if they continued digging deeper into the mine, they would soon unearth the Bone Dragon rewarded from the Smoke Mission.

He just didn’t know what form the Bone Dragon actually existed in.

A living creature? A dead object?

Belonging to Dragons? Or some kind of Specter? Or perhaps something similar to a Lich?