

The Mighty 991

Chapter 991: “Complete the mission, and receive the Heart of the Mermaid as a reward.”

Sharivara reflected on the past while Liszt absentmindedly summoned the Smoke Mission. Once the mermaids were revived, the mission was naturally completed.

“Mission: The mermaids have offered you the Heart of the Mermaid and have become your followers. However, each mermaid has a thorn in her heart that has not been removed. Perhaps exploring the Devil’s Sea will help them regain confidence in life.
Reward: One Greater Elf.”

Exploring the Devil’s Sea was part of the set course, incidentally helping the mermaids remove their thorns.

After he dispersed the smoke, Sharivara had finished her reflection; thus, everyone continued their journey, heading towards the deep sea along the continental slope. On this route, they increasingly felt the ocean currents grow stronger and even chaotic whirlpools roamed freely in the sea. Sometimes when they surfaced, they could see the ocean covered with dark clouds as the storm raged relentlessly.

“When not tainted by the Cursed Dragon, the Devil’s Sea was known as the Stormy Sea. It once birthed a mermaid named Olakhir who tried to harness the power of the Heart of the Mermaid to calm the never-ending storms in the Stormy Sea, but unfortunately, she was not successful.”

King Eternia of the Great West Nation looked at the storm and said to Liszt.

“And here I thought it was the pollution from the Cursed Dragon that turned the sea this way.”

“The Cursed Dragon only polluted the seas, not the sky or land. During the era of the Moon Empire and Sun Empire, these two great human nations relied on Sky Ships for communication, which were the grand creations of Archmages. Unfortunately, in my time, both empires had long since vanished,” Eternia explained to Liszt.

Among the seven mermaids, she was the strongest and also the oldest; not counting the time she was sealed, she was three hundred and seventy-nine years old and knew a great deal.

Mermaids have a lifespan of five hundred years, which placed her in late middle age.

Furthermore, she had once given birth to a mermaid, but unfortunately, her daughter was also corrupted, turning into a devil.

“What else do you know about the Moon Empire and the Sun Empire?” Liszt asked, hoping to gather more information from Eternia, “In ancient times, a great war occurred where human Archmages and dragons teamed up and killed a Moon Dragon.”

“Moon Dragon?” Eternia was puzzled, “Is there such a dragon? I thought there were only Evil Dragons, Sacred Dragons, Elemental Dragons, Metal Dragons, and Gemstone Dragons.”

Obviously, she was also unaware of the Dragon of the Magic Web.

“It seems you do not know about the great ancient war.”

“I haven’t heard of it, but it must have existed. Otherwise, how could the Moon Empire and Sun Empire have declined, and how could the Cursed Dragon have been slain... Unfortunately, I cannot provide Your Majesty with more information. When I was born, the ocean was already shrouded in the shadow of the Cursed Dragon.”

...

As the ocean currents grew increasingly violent, navigating became difficult. Liszt felt this most acutely; despite having obtained six Hearts of the Mermaid, he still struggled to move freely in the tumultuous seawater.

Even the mermaids were somewhat affected, slowing down.

Only Ach, riding a unicorn, was completely unaffected and blissfully at ease—this was due to the unicorn’s special ability, Void Sprint, which ignored the constraints of space and matter, making even the wildest currents unable to shake its form.

Envy.

Alas, unable to ride it, Liszt could only cling tightly to Eternia’s hair, pressing close to her garment transformed from fish scales to reduce the drag.

“We’re about to arrive at the Devil’s Sea!”

The leader of the Lost Sea, Cocolix, called out ahead. Her former realm, the Lost Sea, was located on the edge of the Devil’s Sea, making her very familiar with these waters—while the land had undergone drastic changes over thousands of years, the sea had changed very little.

Half an hour later.

Cocolix again reminded everyone, “This is the Hermit Crab Trench, the boundary of the Devil’s Sea and also the boundary of the Lost Sea. Your Majesty, honored guests, we have entered the Devil’s Sea!”

“Is this the Devil’s Sea? It doesn’t look very devilish.” Liszt said as he illuminated the surroundings with a bundle of Hand Magic Tubes. Since they were at the deep sea bed where no natural light reached, the atmosphere seemed gloomy. With the Eye of Magic Power, he could see sea monsters lurking around.

There was no sign of any devils.

“Perhaps the power of the Cursed Dragon truly has been purified by the sea itself?” Gulvig speculated uncertainly.

Eternia said sternly, “Be cautious.”

As they were talking, Ach, who was using the Eye of Magic Power, suddenly spoke up, “There’s a huge monster’s carcass ahead, with numerous small sea monsters parasitizing it!”

Following her direction, Liszt quickly spotted the carcass, which still faintly radiated chaotic magic power. The giant carcass was almost larger than an aircraft carrier, with dragons appearing tiny in front of it; inside the carcass, numerous bizarre sea monsters were parasitic.

“This is the Whale Fall of Leviathan!” Eternia explained.

“Leviathan? Whale fall?”

“A whale is the largest creature in the ocean. When they die, their bodies slowly sink to the ocean floor, a process that can last hundreds to thousands of years. Small creatures then parasitize the whale’s carcass for survival. When the whale remains sink to the ocean floor, they quickly form a seabed of jade, with stronger whales forming higher-quality jade.”

“So, what is a Leviathan?” Liszt asked, thinking of the legendary sea behemoth Leviathan, said to be as powerful as a dragon.

Before Eternia could respond, the youngest mermaid next to her, Bluposi, leader of the Salty Sea Tribe and only sixty-six years old, eagerly replied, “I know! The sea behemoth Leviathan is the most powerful creature in the ocean, as mighty as a dragon. It is said that when mermaids become archmages, they are accompanied by a Leviathan.”

“So, is Leviathan also a type of whale?” Liszt was now near the carcass of the Leviathan, his Hand Magic Tube illuminating the remains, which were too damaged to discern the original appearance of the Leviathan.

“Leviathan should be the largest whale, born with Superior Magic. It’s extinct in our time, yet here we find its Whale Fall,” Eternia casually crushed a jellyfish-like sea monster that overconfidently tried to attack, “Your Majesty, if I’m not mistaken, this Leviathan Whale Fall must have been sinking for over eight hundred years.”

“How can you tell?”

“The Whale Fall of Leviathan sinks ten meters a year; our current depth is about eight thousand meters, just right for over eight hundred years.”

“What do you usually do when you encounter a whale fall?” Liszt surveyed the largely skeletal remains of the Leviathan, wondering if they could be fashioned into weapons.

He no longer doubted any legend, as creatures from the legends had all appeared.

Three types of sub-dragons, claimed to be as powerful as dragons—the Sky Behemoth Qizhi, the land behemoth Behemoth, and the sea behemoth Leviathan—just by observing Leviathan’s size, one could guess they might indeed be as mighty as dragons. In fact, unicorns and phoenixes were not much weaker than dragons.

Eternia smiled, “We would feel fortunate... In mermaid customs, encountering a whale fall signifies good fortune accompanying us.”

She further explained, “A whale fall is part of the oceanic life cycle. For us mermaids, it holds little value; we wait for it to sink and form jade. Of course, if the Naga Species or Fish Ugly Race come across a whale fall, they might take some of the bones as weapons.”

Chapter 992: Tower of the Devil Liszt had wanted to take some bones back to forge weapons but, on hearing that Yu Chou also used Leviathan bones for weapons, he dismissed the idea.

He needed to maintain a certain level of prestige.

Still, he dismantled two smaller Leviathan bones to take back for research. If they proved valuable, he would remember this location and return to harvest them.

Leaving the Whale Fall of Leviathan, the team continued their exploration, finding the deep-sea world even more desolate than Liszt had imagined. There were no colorful, vibrant creatures; it was an eternal darkness, devoid of light, accompanied by all sorts of eerie and bizarre sounds. Prolonged exposure would definitely lead to oppressive madness.

Occasionally, when they encountered roaming Sea Monsters sensing the Mermaids’ presence, they would turn tail and flee.

Thus, while sailing for a while, Cocolix suddenly shouted, “Your Majesty, My Lords, everyone, ahead is an underwater tower, likely an edifice from the ancient Sea Kingdom!”

Everyone sped up.

However, as they neared the tower, they slowly sensed a familiar presence: “It’s the aura of the Cursed Dragon, this tower contains remnants of the Cursed Dragon’s power!” Gulvig, having been tainted by the Cursed Dragon, was particularly sensitive to it.

“Be careful!” Liszt warned.

“There’s something wrong with this tower,” Ach said, frowning. “Charlie senses a very malevolent force within; it is awakening... the power of the Cursed Dragon is awakening!”

“Snort!” The Unicorn replied with an uneasy snort.

In fact, they did not need Ach’s warning. It quickly became clear to everyone that something was off with the tower.

When the Hand Magic Tube’s light shone on the tower, instead of seeing ancient rock constructions, they saw piles of skeletal remains, stacked upon one another through the ages, many fused together.

It was, in fact, a tower of corpses.

As if provoked,

the bones began to crumble, and through the Eye of Magic, they could see that the tower, which had previously shown no magical feedback, was suddenly radiating a dark, shimmering Magic Brilliance—the light of the Dark Attribute, a black with undertones of purple.

“This is not an ancient edifice left by the Sea Kingdom, it’s a tomb built from Devil corpses!” Eternia screamed loudly, “These Devils are about to crawl out from their graves; they have not been cleansed by the sea!”

As she screamed, the bones that made up the tower burst apart, and swarms of agile monsters sprang out, charging towards Liszt and his companions. These creatures, like hounds unleashed from their cages, one after another, formed an underwater Storm.

The seven Mermaids became panicked, wanting to turn and flee.

“Don’t scatter, unleash Magic!”

Liszt grabbed Eternia’s hair, rapidly issuing commands: “They’re just Low-Level Devils, don’t panic, hold them off!” He could tell that although there were many Devils, their Magic Power level was Low Magic, and their concentration was weak, akin to that of Low-Level Sea Monsters.

He could take on an entire legion of such Sea Monsters.

Under the influence of the Heart of the Mermaid’s pact, the Mermaids quickly stabilized and began releasing their own Magic, hurling countless Water Whirlpools, Rings of Water, and other spells into the crowd of Devils.

Ach, who had the quickest and calmest reaction, rode atop Unicorn Charlie, swiftly donning the Gemstone Crown and wielding the Eight Dragons God Sword, casting furiously. She commanded the Seawater to condense into water bolts, which shot forth like lasers, rampantly striking the swarm of Devils.

Almost instantly, the viciously charging Devils, like dumplings, all sank to the seabed.

“Brother, we’ll fight as we retreat. These are just the outer Devils of the tower,” Ach saw in the tower, even more powerful Devils awakening—possibly fallen Naga Devils, and maybe even fallen Mermaids Devils.

“Understood!”

Liszt turned and gave the orders: “Fight while retreating, Gulvig, Eternia, and Bluposi cast Magic to hold back the Devils, Tibidais, Sharivara, and Cocolix take charge of controlling the Seawater, assist them in retreating!”

Three Mermaids retreated while three fought.

Under Liszt's command, they cooperated orderly.

On the other side, Ach was commanding Viswinti while fighting and retreating. With her individual combat strength surpassing that of all the mermaids combined, she could act with ease—Unicorn Charlie knew how to coordinate with her.

There were no brilliant fireworks, only Magic Power boiling at the bottom of the sea as the battle rapidly escalated.

Layers upon layers of devil-like dumplings were killed, but more and more devils rushed over. The distant towers collapsed at a rate visible to the naked eye, transforming entirely into more devils. Except for the outer devils, which were purified into corpses, the inner devils were still very much alive.

Liszt did not join the fight. He was using the Eye of Magic to carefully observe the battlefield, with a black and purple sheen outlining the forms of the devils.

Some resembled Yu Chou, with half their bodies fish and the other half frog, also possessing humanoid arms. Some devils were unarmed, while others wielded bones. It was clear that in life, they were Yu Chou tainted by the power of the Cursed Dragon, their severely shrunken bodies belied an increased fighting strength.

Among them were also devils not fallen from Yu Chou, likely fallen from fish, jellyfish, octopi, turtles, and similar sea monsters.

"The numbers are growing!" Eternia said, panting.

"The devils fallen from Naga have already burst out of the tower." Ach's voice was very calm, "There are too many devils. I'll cover the rear, you all should leave quickly... Eternal Sturdy Ice!"

As she spoke, the Eight Dragons God Sword glowed, condensing a huge frozen city wall in the surrounding sea area and blocking countless devils on the outside.

Snap!

Snap!

Snap!

Countless devils crashed against the frozen city wall, and soon, massive fractures appeared, followed by thunderous shattering.

Seizing this opportunity, the mermaids had retreated some distance, finally avoiding being surrounded by devils.

Seeing this, Liszt shouted, “Mermaids, unleash your magic with all your might, bombarding the devils swarming around Ach!”

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Sound could be transmitted through the sea, and the massive booming of magic attacks, strong enough to shatter currents, whipped up countless bubbles, blasting batch after batch of Yu Chou devils into debris. But more Yu Chou devils kept filling in, moving like zombies without any concept of fear or retreat.

Thus, a magical team composed of sea serpents and mermaids struggled against a devil legion made up of Yu Chou and other fallen sea creatures at the seafloor, eight thousand meters deep.

The mermaids, having fought for just a moment, began to wheeze for breath—their bodies had not yet recovered to their best condition.

Gradually, Ach became the main fighting force, but even she alone held off the charges of the devil’s army. With half her body as a Water Elemental Embodiment and the other half an Ice Elemental Incarnation, she alternately deployed Water System Super Magic and Ice System Super Magic, staunchly holding off the devils’ frenzied onslaught.

“Hiss!”

After a considerable number of casualties, some Yu Chou devils began to cast magic, as dark rings of magic power rippled from their bodies, rapidly enveloping the battlefield.

Ach's Super Magic, upon encountering these dark magic rings, seemed to dissolve, its power growing weaker and weaker.

By then, the second wave of devils revived by the tower had also charged over. Their bodies were even larger, bearing various weapons, resembling upright serpents. Their forms varied from two hands to six, clearly Naga that had fallen into devildom, saturated with too much Dark Attribute Magic Power.

The magic they released was also stronger, corroding Ach's Super Magic at an increasing rate.

"Ach, if you can't hold them, don't get bogged down in the fight, let's retreat!" Liszt shouted—The mermaids had already withdrawn from the battlefield's reach, and Ach could return at any time.

However, the usually tranquil Ach seemed overcome by a rush of blood, leaving behind just one remark, "Brother, you and the mermaids wait a moment. Ach hasn't used her magical powers to their fullest in a long time. It's a perfect opportunity to let loose and familiarize myself with the true combat style of an Archmage."

Having said that, the half of her that was an Ice Elemental Incarnation swiftly switched to a Space Elemental Incarnation. With a flick of her hand, she conjured a spatial rift that devoured countless devils without leaving a trace of bone behind.

Her demeanor was relaxed and carefree, with no hint of the tension one would expect in the face of devils.

Chapter 993: Ach's Divine Display Boom!

A black fissure spread through the sea, splitting the body of any devil it touched in two, regardless of whether it was a low-level sea monster like Yu Chou Devil or a high-level one like Naga Devil, or any other fallen sea creatures.

This was the power of space magic, which was irresistible to any creature that couldn't exempt from material damage.

Initially, Ach used water and ice system magic merely to test her abilities; it was only after she switched to a space elemental incarnation that she truly exhibited her extraordinary strength. Amplified by Unicorn Charlie, each of her spells became a construction of superior magic, increasing in power tenfold.

"So powerful!" Eternia exclaimed.

"Lord Ach is more powerful than any archmage of ancient times. I have never heard of anyone who could use superior magic constructions with such ease," Viswinti equally marveled, secretly pleased to follow such a powerful archmage and sharing in the glory.

"Your Majesty, has magic developed to such an extent in this age?" Gulvig asked in surprise.

Liszt, watching Ach's formidable figure, was delighted. The initially fragile nixie had finally become one of the most powerful individuals in the world, "Ach's talent is exceptional. There have likely been few archmages throughout history who could master space magic, and she has also been favored by a unicorn."

"Unicorns only favor the pure-hearted. Were Ach in the era of the Moon Empire, she could undoubtedly contend for the position of the Great Emperor."

The Moon Empire was a magocracy and slave-holding state ruled by magicians, where the Great Emperor was the leader of the empire.

Unlike the Knight Era where nations generally had male successors, the Moon Empire had many female emperors since magic training bore no relation to gender, and the probability of women becoming archmages was no less than men.

"Ach would definitely be able to contend for the position of the Great Emperor," Liszt nodded in agreement, knowing well what others might merely regard as miraculous. He understood very clearly — all of Ach's powerful spells sourced from Unicorn Charlie's enhancement; this miraculous creature was no different from a dragon in that regard.

“Now that Lord Ach is eliminating the devils, it seems we have nothing left to do,” Bluposi said.

After a moment of thought, Liszt instructed, “You should capture a few solitary devils. It’s best to get a few of each type, and they must be alive. Bring them back for experiments, so we can find a way to completely purify the seas as soon as possible.”

“Yes, Your Majesty is quite right.”

The mermaids, eager to purify the seas, swiftly captured a variety of devils in the gaps between Ach’s spells, one of each type.

Liszt shook his head, “That’s not enough, we need at least three of each type.”

“Your Majesty, we do not have the necessary restraints. Capturing too many will be hard to manage.”

“I have them here. Here, Mountain Copper manacles and chains. Take as many as you want.” He pulled out chains and manacles one after another from the space ring.

With the presence of Mountain Copper Dragon Mata, there was no shortage of magic metal Mountain Copper. As he often needed to capture magical beasts while traveling, he carried a large number of Mountain Copper manacles and chains with him. Naturally, these weren’t purely made of Mountain Copper; they were special equipment mixed with Mountain Copper, designed to lock magic power.

The only equipment truly forged from pure Mountain Copper was a ten-meter-long Mountain Copper Dragon Lance, which he did not bring from the castle since the diameter of the space ring was only five meters, and thus couldn’t contain the lance.

With the Mountain Copper equipment, the mermaids quickly captured a total of twenty various kinds of devils.

These devils retained the biological forms from before their corruption, yet all their magic had transformed into dark attribute magic. Their bodies became shriveled, covered in tumors and pustules, their nature savage, mindless, and their combat abilities might

surpass what they had been before their corruption – many Yu Chou lacked magic before their fall, but almost all possessed dark attribute magic power afterward.

“It is hard to imagine that a dragon’s power could contaminate so many creatures.”

“The Evil Dragon is a legendary creature that was born with this world, neither alive nor dead, unbound by a thousand-year lifespan, something even the Sacred Dragon cannot achieve,” Eternia clarified for Liszt, “That’s why the death of the Cursed Dragon could contaminate an entire sea, making it impossible to purify completely for a million years.”

It’s not that the Sacred Dragon is less powerful than the Evil Dragon, but the powers of the Sacred Dragon are quite special.

The Formless Dragon’s spatial power, the Smoke Dragon’s power of destiny, the Twilight Dragon’s temporal power, the Jade Dragon’s mental power, and the Immortal Dragon’s life force are perhaps not suited for battle, but their magical nature is irreplaceable.

As for the Evil Dragon.

The power of the Silent Dragon is unknown, as is that of the Shadow Dragon, but it is only known that the Cursed Dragon can contaminate creatures, from their bodies to their souls, a power more akin to that of the Light Dragon infected by the Black Dragon Wraith and White Dragon Wraith, rather than the Cursed Dragon’s own power.

The difference between a Devil and a Dragon Wraith seems negligible.

After observing the Devil for a moment, Liszt withdrew his gaze and addressed Eternia and the mermaids, “Perhaps the sea is still under the influence of the Cursed Dragon’s power, but worry not, for now that Ach and I are aware of this, we will purify the sea completely.”

“Thank you for Your Majesty’s merciful action.”

“It is my duty, I am the king of the Flame Kingdom, recognized by all kingdoms of the Legendary Continent as the lord of the seas, and all seas are my territory,” Liszt proudly proclaimed, feeling it to be a matter of course, “Cleansing the sea will also require your help, let us work together to strengthen the Flame Kingdom.”

“Rest assured, Your Majesty, we owe our lives to Your Majesty and Lord Ach, and will follow behind you for the rest of our lives.”

Seven mermaids expressed their loyalty solemnly.

Liszt maintained a gentlemanly smile, eyes fixed on the scene ahead where Ach continued combating the Devil.

The dense swarm of Devils, like a plague of locusts, rushed forward but were sliced to death by the dense spatial rifts near Ach. Layer upon layer of devils charged fearlessly only to become corpses, creating a thick carpet of devil carcasses on the ocean floor.

The Eight Dragons God Sword offered no enhancement to spatial magic; Ach retracted it into the Space Ring.

The Gemstone Crown she wore, however, sparkled brilliantly, reflecting against Unicorn Charlie’s golden spiral horn, the copious magical light flickering, continuously drawing magic power from the void, even forming a spiderweb visible only through the Eye of Magic behind her—that was the Magic Web.

A massive amount of magic power was drawn from the Magic Web, leaving Liszt astounded and uneasy, feeling that the Magic Web might collapse at any moment.

He couldn’t help but think, “If such battles continue, I wonder if the Dragon of the Magic Web will be drained dry?”

It seemed unlikely.

After all, the Dragon of the Magic Web once supplied magic power to the flourishing magical civilizations of both the Moon Empire and the Sun Empire. At that time, there was no shortage of Archmages, all drawing from the Dragon of the Magic Web’s magic power without draining it entirely. Now, although the Dragon of the Magic Web slumbers and the Magic Web has shrunk, Ach, a single Archmage, could not consume all the magic power alone.

Amidst his rising emotions, a puff of smoke slowly floated before him, condensing into a segment of Serpent Script.

“Mission accomplished, reward: one Greater Elf.”

Meanwhile.

At the distant Flame Castle, one of Liszt’s many Little Minor Elves suddenly became listless, oppressed by their spirits. It had been scolded by the bully Jela again today, and had it talked back, it would have been beaten—when would such days ever end?

Chapter 994: The Gourd Minor Elf, once living a muddled existence in the forest, was suddenly discovered one day by a group of Moon Slayers who seized it and bound it to an altar.

Just at that moment, the great Dragon Knight descended from the sky and rescued it.

The Elf thus became one of the contracted Minor Elves of the Dragon Knight. However, because there were so many Elves in the castle, the Gourd Minor Elf didn’t receive much attention, not even a name. Of course, the Gourd Minor Elf didn’t mind; it was just a mischievous little Elf, amusing itself every day.

It enjoyed filling its gourd with water to sprinkle around the castle carelessly, even soaking several masterpieces on the castle owner’s walls.

Normally, even if it did such naughty things, no one would scold it. At most, servants would stand by, preventing it from continuing to ruin paintings and other items. However, until one day, a batch of new Elves arrived at the castle, among them a Thorn Greater Elf who immediately declared that it had taken over the castle.

“Wu wa!”

The Gourd Minor Elf remembered vividly; every time it sprinkled water from its gourd, a vague roar of anger would resound from behind it.

Then that hot-tempered Greater Elf would curse at it loudly.

This annoyed it greatly, making it anxious each time it sprinkled water, for fear that the Greater Elf would jump out and scold it with a “Wu wa.” And today, taking advantage of when the bully Greater Elf was arguing with the Dragon Elf Kali, it took out its precious gourd from atop its head and wildly sprayed around.

Then it was caught by the bully, fresh from the argument, and cussed out to no end.

“Bubbling sounds!” Fed up with being scolded, the Gourd Minor Elf raised its head and roared back at the Thorn Greater Elf, as it was not one to just take things lying down.

“Hmm?”

The Thorn Greater Elf was stunned for a moment, then let out an even louder roar, “Wu wa!” It raised its hand to strike, but for some reason, the hand never fell.

The Gourd Minor Elf took the opportunity to make a quick getaway.

Although it escaped a beating, the Gourd Minor Elf became more and more angered the more it thought about it, feeling as if a shadow loomed over Flame Castle, and it was powerless to resist this shadow; life would continue to be a tragedy. However, it did not notice that its body was undergoing changes while it felt sad about the bullying.

It began to grow taller and bigger, its need for Jade Powder increased, its thinking became more agile, and its emotions also grew richer.

The light had already arrived unawares.

“Mission: The Fish Ugly Race is highly suited to be used as labor; however, as the legacy of an ancient wise race, the constraint on their development is the difficulty of breeding. As the King of the Flame Kingdom, why not solve this problem and expand the scale of the Fish Ugly Race? Reward: Magic Cloak.”

At the bottom of the Devil’s Sea, Liszt looked at the new Smoke Mission, lost in thought.

He had a hunch about the reward of the Magic Cloak; it was likely to originate from those six statues of Ancient Magicians—where all the equipment he had acquired so far was sealed.

As for the mission content, it was nothing more than helping the Fish Ugly Race solve their breeding problem.

The first solution that came to mind was the Magic Registry's improved potion for the vitality of the little ones, named "Source of Vitality." This potion had benefited many families with fertility issues; even his Cousin Mei Oubo had offspring thanks to the Source of Vitality.

He could delegate this mission to the Magic Guild, allowing magicians to adjust the potion formula according to the physique of the Fish Ugly Race, enhancing their fertility.

In a daze,

the battle between Ach and the Devils had become one-sided; many Devils surged out from the high towers, but they couldn't withstand Ach's frenzied slaughter. Spatial magic was much more powerful in practical use than elemental magic, such as earth, water, fire, wind, especially when cast by an Archmage of Superior Magic.

"The Devils have lessened, the Fish Ugly Devils have been almost entirely wiped out; only Naga Devils remain... no, wait, that is... that is a Mermaid Devil!" Eternia pointed ahead and exclaimed.

Following the direction of Eternia's finger, Liszt saw a giant devil. Its original mermaid form was no longer discernible, only a massive fish tail for its lower half, while its upper body was pitch black like ink, with eyes flickering green flames, holding a staff in its hand.

The top of the staff was mounted with a huge monster skull, which looked incredibly evil.

As soon as this mermaid made its appearance, it raised the skull-topped staff high and let out a hoarse roar. Immediately after, a shiny black luster emerged from the top of the staff, booming straight towards Ach.

"Ach, be careful!"

“Watch out, Lord Ach!”

Liszt and the mermaids’ warnings were unnecessary, for Ach had already noticed the mermaid devil. With a casual wave of his hand, several cracks appeared to block the path of the dark magic arrow. The next moment, the spatial magic cracks were seen being forcibly corroded away by the dark magic arrow, several of them.

Only at the last moment were they blocked by the rifts.

But Ach simply waved his hand again, retaliating with a spatial magic arrow—an accurate shot straight towards the mermaid devil.

Crack!

The rift opened up, and a large hole appeared in the chest of the mermaid devil. No blood flowed out, just green flames burning at the wound. This mermaid devil’s form was already ghost-like, and the magic power on general phantoms, being related to the soul, is either blue or green.

“Roar!” the mermaid devil did not mind the large hole in its chest, still raising the skull-topped staff high and continuing to release dark magic arrows.

This was high magic with the dark attribute, extremely corrosive.

Unfortunately, it encountered a Sea Monster Magician using superior magic, and if one spatial magic arrow wasn’t powerful enough, Ach would unleash several more.

Zap, zap, zap, zap!

Four rift arrows shot out, hitting the mermaid devil with swift cracks, creating four large holes in its body, and most importantly, a large hole in its head as well.

This time, the mermaid devil could no longer survive, turning into a corpse and sinking to the seabed. And the skull-topped staff it originally held in its hands was taken by Ach,

controlling the water flow—looting equipment was something Ach naturally learned without instruction, having followed Liszt for so long.

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Watching the mermaid devil's corpse sink to the seabed, the mermaids, who were hunting isolated devils, opened their mouths wide again: "Lord Ach is really incredible!"

"Truly a great Archmage!"

"If Lord Ach had existed in our era, the seas might have been purified long ago."

"It's not too late now, with the help of Lord Ach, the ocean will eventually return to its original tranquility...it's only a pity there are only seven of us mermaids left, and after three or four hundred years, there might indeed be no more mermaids in the world, becoming just a legend in human books."

"If you think about it, Tibidais, we have already become legend. Now revived by His Majesty and the Lord, it is to fulfill our wish to purify the ocean."

"Yes, we once lived bathed in the glory of the ocean, and now is the time to sacrifice for the ocean's glory."

"Lord Ach is our hope, the hope of restoring the ocean's glory!"

At this moment, the seven mermaids sincerely kindled their confidence in life and set purifying the ocean as their life's striving goal—the ocean gifted the mermaids their noble status, and they in turn took it as their duty to protect the marine ecology and maintain order in the sea.

Humans and nature must live in harmony.

Mermaids and the ocean must also live in harmony.

Chapter 995: The Furious Knight Three Mermaid Devils were hunted down by Ach, who then, with the help of seven mermaids, eradicated the remaining Naga Devils.

A Devil-constructed tower thereby vanished.

All that was left was a thick layer of Devil corpses on the seabed and that dense, lingering aura of the Cursed Dragon.

“These corpses must be purified, or else, after some time, the power of the Cursed Dragon will infect new Devils,” Eternia said.

“We’ve run out of materials to set up a purification Magic Array, so we can only let the Devil corpses lie here and see how the sea’s own purification abilities handle it.”

“Perhaps we can start with the tower; there must be a reason for so many Devils to have built it.”

“Take the three Mermaid Devil corpses with us; they’re important research materials.”

The mermaids cleaned the battlefield while Liszt swam to Ach’s side and said with concern, “Your combat performance was brilliant, with magical barrages that were both powerful and exhilarating. If Dragon Knights could also fight underwater, I fear they wouldn’t match your speed at hunting Devils.”

“Hmm, Ach also had a great time; it was finally a chance to test my combat skills.”

“How was the magic consumption for this battle?”

“Magic consumption wasn’t much of an issue; the Magic Web supported Ach in continuously drawing power. However, it’s mentally exhausting, and now Ach feels a bit fatigued.”

“Then you should rest well, and I will go with the mermaids to investigate the tower.”

“It’s okay, brother; Ach is just a bit tired, it doesn’t affect the research.” She still insisted on joining the investigation of what caused the tower to disappear and obtain firsthand observations for the study of Devils.

The tower had already disappeared, but amid the carcass rubble, the intense aura of the Cursed Dragon could still be felt.

The mermaids cleared the debris, and soon Liszt saw the source of the Cursed Dragon's aura; it was a piece of rotting flesh emitting an aura of Superior Magic. Just like the piece of decaying flesh that had condensed to form a dragon claw during the purification ritual, it was a special power structure.

"It's the dispersed Dragon's Super Magic; energy like this is surely scattered in every nook and cranny of the Devil's Sea. Only by cleaning all of it can we completely purify the sea. The Devils gathered here by the Cursed Dragon's Super Magic, seeking its protection to continue surviving."

"No rush, we'll take our time; there will come a day when it's all purified."

After packing the rotting flesh, the group began their return.

Without venturing further, encountering a Devil Tower had already been dangerous enough; they didn't want to come across another.

Now everyone was in poor condition; the mermaids had not recovered, Ach was mentally drained... As for Liszt, underwater, he could only shout "666" to cheer them on.

...

Back at the Overmarine Laboratory.

Ach and the mermaids immediately immersed themselves in the study of Devils, while Liszt, along with the youngest mermaid Bluposi, headed to Estuary City.

His plan was to construct a large sea city in the shallow waters near Estuary City, to be the residence for the Fish Ugly Race.

Then, through the management of the mermaids, he hoped to enlist the Fish Uglies into the labor force, engaging in construction, marine aquaculture, and the like.

Of course, the specific arrangements would be handled by the Development Committee; he personally lacked the patience for such detailed mundane matters.

“Dimaria, the arrangements for the mermaids and Fish Uglies will be left to you. My father is currently at Azure Sky Peak Palace helping the Sapphire Family with funeral preparations, and I need to rush there in a few days too. You should consult with Emily more about the work of the Development Committee. From now on, I’ll entrust the management of marine tasks to Emily,”

Liszt instructed Dimaria Yuhua Stone at the administrative office in Reed City.

Among his most trusted followers, Emily undoubtedly was going to shoulder more important tasks in the future, and dealing with the Mermaids’ affairs would eventually be given to her.

However, Emily now needed to learn how to manage a vast territory, and Dimaria would make a qualified teacher.

Additionally, he planned to have Bluposi get along well with Emily for a while before finally handing over Bluposi’s Heart of the Mermaid contract to Emily—he didn’t need so many Hearts of the Mermaid himself, after all, when he went underwater, he could only sit on the Mermaids’ shoulders and shout “666”.

“I understand, Your Majesty,” Dimaria was still in a state of shock.

Since he had arrived in the Flame Kingdom, one startling event after another had occurred: he had seen the Sacred Dragon, the Unicorn, the Phoenix (mistakenly thought to be a Flame Dragon Bird), passed through the magical Magic Teleportation Array, each event being shockingly overwhelming. Now, he was additionally astonished by the Mermaids.

“Moreover, don’t forget to hire a few Serpent Script teachers for the Mermaids; they don’t speak the official language.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.” Seeing Liszt rise, Dimaria quickly stood up to see him off and asked somewhat incredulously, “Your Majesty, did Mermaids truly rule over the ocean?”

“Who knows? Anyway, I am now the master of the sea. You must remember this. Don’t be overly humble when dealing with Mermaids.”

“I will pay attention to my attitude.”

Leaving the office.

Liszt then went to the Magic Guild and met the executive vice president: “Chris, I have a task I need to entrust to the Magic Guild.”

“Just give your commands, Your Highness.”

“Kenley should have already sent you a message. I’ve recruited a new batch of Mermaid followers and have obtained several million Fish Ugly race laborers.”

“I have heard, Your Highness. I would very much like to visit the Overmarine Laboratory to see the Mermaids myself... Being able to follow Your Highness and witness so many wonderful things that exist only in legends... Dragons, Unicorns, Mermaids...”

“You will have plenty of time to meet Mermaids later. Right now, I need you to gather a group of Magicians who are relatively knowledgeable about the Source of Vitality Potion and arrange for them to go to Estuary City to collect samples. I want the Magicians to research a Source of Vitality Potion suitable for the constitution of the Fish Uglies.”

“Are the Fish Uglies facing reproductive issues?” Chris asked curiously.

“Yes, it is precisely because of the reproductive difficulties of the Fish Uglies that the once densely populated seas are gradually becoming silent and disappearing. If I don’t intervene, in a few hundred years, the Fish Uglies could truly go extinct.”

“I will arrange for Magicians to go to Estuary City to collect samples and research the Fish Uglies’ Source of Vitality.”

After giving the task and reviewing a batch of the latest Magic Guild research topics, Liszt finally returned to Flame Castle. He then saw the Gourd Minor Elf in the midst of a temper tantrum.

“Master, the Marquis has already come to confirm that this Gourd Minor Elf is evolving. Its physical development is very good, and the probability of a successful evolution is very high,” said Butler Carter joyfully. Liszt hadn’t lived in the Castle for a long time; these Elves were like children he looked after.

He was filled with affection for each and every one.

He rejoiced sincerely for the Gourd Minor Elf’s evolution.

“Bupiji bupiji!” The Gourd Minor Elf stood on Liszt’s arm, expressing its recent troubles; it absolutely despised the Greater Elf bully in the Castle.

Liszt couldn’t help patting its head: “Remember this feeling, once you’ve successfully evolved, you’ll be able to resist Jela’s oppression.”

He actually felt like laughing; he hadn’t expected Jela to really trigger the Tuna Effect.

The Gourd Minor Elf was the first Elf stimulated to evolve by the Tuna Effect.

“Bupiji bupiji!”

“Since you’re about to become a Gourd Greater Elf, you should have your own name... You’re quite angry now, so why not call you Furious Knight-Klay!”

Chapter 996: Generous Friend The evolution of the Gourd Greater Elf Klay was a cause for celebration.

However, Liszt couldn’t help feeling a tinge of regret because the one evolving was not a Magic Potion or Grain class Minor Elf, but a Gourd Minor Elf.

In this world, gourds are similar to those on Earth; they also bear small gourds.

Currently, the uses of small gourds are twofold: one is to stir-fry them while tender as a type of vegetable; the other is to use them as containers for wine once they mature. But both uses lack significant potential for development—as vegetables, gourds have low yields, and as water containers, they have small volumes.

“Forget it, the fact that it evolved into a Greater Elf is enough; everything else is trivial.” Liszt hugged Klay with great affection.

At that moment, a cry of “Wah” rang out.

Klay immediately leapt from Liszt’s arms, staring wide-eyed at Thorn Greater Elf Jela, who floated at the door, and kept calling out to Liszt, “Bubbling bubbling!”

That was a plea for help.

“Ahem.” Liszt signaled Klay not to panic, then waved his hand to beckon Jela over.

Jela flew over with her hands clasped behind her back, full of pomp: “Liszt, this little elf has been disobedient, causing havoc all over the castle; you must educate it properly!”

“Education is fine, but you can’t physically hit the elves. It just told me that you hit it a few days ago.” Liszt looked forward to the effect Jela had, like a catfish effect, but hitting was not allowed—scolded Minor Elves might evolve in anger, but beaten Minor Elves could end up useless.

“I did not hit it, wah!” Jela glared at Klay before saying to Liszt, “I just scared it. Now that I’m a Greater Elf, I must maintain my authority while managing so many elves.”

“Ahem.”

Liszt was at a loss for words, unsure where Jela came up with so many ridiculous ideas.

And Jela’s ideas didn’t stop there: “Liszt, help me prepare a set of Flack·Abaie; I’m going to start wearing clothes.”

“Why suddenly decide to wear clothes?”

“Carly and Yadi both wear clothes, and as the Elf Butler, I naturally should too!”

“Alright, I’ll have the Tailor tailor a set of Flack·Abaie according to your size. But if you want to be the Elf Butler, you must pay close attention to your behavior in the future, because everything you do will set an example for the other elves.”

Jela snorted, “I understand!”

...

Days at the castle didn’t last long.

When March began, the young shoots in the fields gradually turned lush and green. After meeting with Ach, Liszt, carrying the Dragon Soul of the Sapphire Dragon, set out for the Azure Sky Peak Palace.

The funeral would be held in the coming days.

Envoy Groups from Blast Furnace Fortress, Steel Ridge, Eagle, and other countries had already arrived to mourn Duke Andrew.

Among them, the Envoy Group from Steel Ridge Kingdom was led by Liszt’s old friend, Mathew of the Red and White Roses.

After the banquet ended, he found Liszt to privately share his thoughts: “Your Majesty Liszt, you’re already twenty-one years old, and the Flame Kingdom’s development is fierce, with everything on the right track. Have you started to consider personal matters?”

“Mathew, my friend, I appreciate your and the Red and White Rose Family’s concern for me. I very much wish to establish a closer friendship with the Red and White Rose Family. However, with the countless affairs of the realm’s development, I hope to consider my personal matters after the founding of Flame Kingdom three years from now.”

“Another three years?”

“Two and a half years. My followers and I have a covenant to found the kingdom within three years, and now two and a half years remain.”

Mathew thought for a moment. His sister, Marilyn, was just sixteen years old and not yet of age. In another two and a half years, she would only be eighteen or nineteen: “If that’s the case, I won’t ask further. However, my sister Marilyn is having her coming-of-age ceremony in two months, and she hopes to have your blessing.”

“Marilyn’s coming-of-age ceremony? I will certainly send my blessings.”

“Additionally, I’ve also brought some gifts for you.”

“Ah, how can I possibly accept this?”

“It’s just a little token of appreciation from the Red and White Rose Family.”

“Thank you very much.”

Liszt smiled as he accepted the gift Mathew had brought, undoubtedly another batch of Platinum Magic Potion and Red Dragon Water—the Red and White Rose Family was always so generous!

And he had prepared some gifts in return—Contribution paper among white paper and glass crafts.

They were of little value, yet quite precious abroad.

Mathew was very satisfied with Liszt’s gifts, just as Liszt didn’t care for a bit of Contribution paper or glassware, Mathew didn’t really care for Platinum Magic Potion or Red Dragon Water either, because the Red and White Rose Family couldn’t possibly consume so much Magic Potion, but they valued the Contribution paper and glass crafts more.

In any case.

Both felt they had gained a great deal and thought the other to be truly generous, and their friendship deepened as they chatted about everything under the sun until midnight.

...

“Mathew brought you another batch of precious gifts?”

“Father, did you also receive gifts from Mathew?” In a guest room in the Azure Sky Peak Palace, Liszt and the Marquis of Bull Tail found time for a rare catch-up.

Li Weiliam nodded, “Mathew is very generous and gave me a batch of Platinum Magic Potion.”

“He is indeed generous.”

“What do you think?”

“I’ve told Mathew that I’m not considering personal matters before the founding of the kingdom.”

“In fact, I think Marilyn would be a great choice, but of course, you are the King, and it’s up to you to decide on your matters. I won’t interfere.”

With that, the topic ceased and soon shifted to a new one.

Li Weiliam asked, “I’ve received the Magic Guild’s transmission from Dimaria and learned about the Mermaid matter. Liszt, you’ve brought Knight’s glory once again.”

He held his teacup and felt very amazed inside.

He should have been incredibly surprised at the appearance of Mermaids, yet when he received the transmission from Dimaria’s Magic Platform, he was unexpectedly calm,

without a ripple in his heart. It was like hearing a Little Minor Elf had evolved into a Greater Elf—there was surprise, but everything seemed so natural.

“Stumbling upon the Mermaids was an accident, and I didn’t expect that the sea still harbored seven Mermaids and millions of the Fish Ugly Race.”

“So, the legends about Mermaids are all true?”

“If Father is referring to those very beautiful descriptions, I can only say they are exaggerated. Actually, Mermaids are equivalent to Magicians and Nobles in the sea. They also wage war against each other due to desires and enslave a large number of Naga and Fish Ugly to work for them.”

Li Weiliam nodded, “Now that the seven Mermaids have offered you their Heart of the Mermaid, does it mean their loyalty is assured?”

“Pretty much, the Mermaid’s kingdom has long perished, and due to certain pollution issues, they have lost their ability to breed, unable to continue propagating the next generation of Mermaids. So, I don’t think they harbor any ambition to reign over the seas again.” Liszt said somewhat sentimentally.

He actually hoped that the Mermaids would regain their fertility, continuing to thrive in the ocean, as they were a magical species.

Besides, without the Mermaids, commanding the Fish Ugly wouldn’t be easy.

Once the Magic Guild had developed the Source of Vitality Potion for the Fish Ugly, it might be possible to help the Mermaids research the Source of Vitality Potion as well.

As his thoughts wandered.

Li Weiliam let out a long sigh, expressing his feelings, “Since leaving Coral Island, I’ve come to realize that this world hides so many magical wonders. If there is such a thing as Knight’s glory, I believe it all resides with you, my son, Liszt Flame.”

Liszt came back to his senses and smiled slightly, “Perhaps.”

If the Power of Destiny represented by the Smoke Dragon is a form of Knight's glory, then Knight's glory truly favors him.

Chapter 997: Duke Andrew's funeral took place on March 6th, with a fine drizzle falling from the sky.

The local customs did not honor a funeral culture; when people died, they were simply buried in the ground, and there were no annual rites of remembrance.

In accordance with Duke Andrew's last will, he was buried around the Dragon Nest of the Sapphire Dragon—his most cherished charge.

At this moment, thanks to Ach's healing intervention, the Sapphire Dragon had merged with the part of the Dragon Soul that was taken from it. It lay in the Dragon Nest, watching the ant-like humans file past Duke Andrew's grave. A fleeting trace of sorrow flashed through its dragon eyes.

Dragons, by their nature, are proud and look down on humans; however, it had directly communicated with Duke Andrew's soul and shared life and death with him.

Some memories are destined to be unforgettable.

So, it turned its head away from the funeral, closed its eyes, and quietly went to sleep.

...

After the funeral was over, everyone dispersed.

After exchanging farewells with his good friend, Mathew of the Red and White Roses, Liszt also returned to Flame Island. In Flame Castle, he saw Jela, already dressed as Little Flack Abiye—walking around with her chest puffed up, her transparent wings fluttering as she slowly inspected the entire castle.

The Greater Elves could ignore Jela, but the Little Minor Elves were quite fearful of Jela's tyranny and hid in their Worm Rooms upon seeing her. The Elf Bugs still didn't understand fear, and Yati, the Buckwheat Dragon Sprite who stayed in the castle, also disregarded Jela.

Jela likewise ignored Yati.

After all, it was not on the same level and could not defeat Yati.

“Wow, Liszt, the Little Minor Elves are performing well,” Jela exclaimed as it quickly flew to Liszt and reported its work with great pride.

Liszt did not skimp on praise: “Hm, well done, Jela.”

Jela immediately puffed up her chest: “Of course!”

A display of youthful arrogance.

After teasing the elf for a while, Butler Carter came to report: “Sir, Lady Mary has returned from abroad and is resting in Flame City. She hopes to meet with you at the earliest opportunity.”

“Hm, send someone to notify her to come over.”

“Yes.”

After the invitation, Mary Dawn Break arrived soon at Flame Castle and entered Liszt’s study.

“Sit,” said Liszt nonchalantly as he flipped through a newly published Knight’s Novel.

“Thank you, Your Majesty.”

“The Blood Servants have worked hard during this time, traveling across the three great kingdoms to gather a lot of valuable information for me,” said Liszt as he personally poured a glass of red wine for Mary. He didn’t like drinking wine, but pouring wine for his followers was one way of showing closeness as a landlord.

Mary accepted the wine glass, deeply moved: “Working for Your Highness, the Blood Servants are full of enthusiasm, and to participate in the founding of the Flame Kingdom from nothing is indeed an unparalleled honor.”

They exchanged a few courteous remarks.

Liszt got straight to the point, “Mary, how is the investigation about the Vulture Family going?” He had previously dispatched Mary to personally go to the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom to investigate the Vulture Family, which was the original holder of the Dou Qi Secret Technique “The Eye of Magic”, the family of Steve Vulture.

Mary took a sip of red wine and replied, “Your Majesty, the Vulture Family had perished over a hundred years ago. According to the information I gathered from my inquiries, the last patriarch of the Vulture Family was closely associated with the Sapphire Family. Because the Sapphire Family left the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom, the Vulture Family planned to follow but ended up not going and soon perished. No one knows why.”

“Perished, you say?” Liszt frowned, “Did you find out any information about this person, Steve Vulture?”

“I did. He was the last patriarch of the Vulture Family, and his title was Earl of Wind-Thunder City. However, the deeds of Earl Steve are no longer remembered by anyone. I’ve been to the original castle of the Vulture Family, and another earl’s family has occupied the castle for over a century now.”

“Is there any other related news worth mentioning?”

“I heard from an elderly noble that the heir of the Vulture Family did not die in the disaster that wiped out their family, but became a destitute novelist and wrote a book about the Vulture Family. He then vanished without a trace,” Mary said as she took out a book from her bosom, “but there’s a remnant of that book that has been passed down.”

This was a torn and moldy book with a thick leather cover; half of it was already rotten. Liszt flipped through a page, and it was in the script of the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom—Serpent Script.

Unreadable.

Mary seemed to have expected this and explained, “I asked the elderly nobleman, and he said that the novel’s title is “The Vulture Knight Stephan’s Expedition”. It primarily describes Steve Vulture’s campaigns to the south and north, quite dull and without any noteworthy plot.”

“The Vulture Knight Stephan’s Expedition...” Liszt looked at the damaged Serpent Script book and pondered with a frown.

The book from which he had obtained the Magic Eye Dou Qi Secret Technique was “The Vulture Knight Stephan’s Expedition”, but it was published in Serpent Script.

A gold leaf that recorded the Dou Qi Secret Technique was hidden in its cover.

The volume in Serpent Script at hand had a rotten cover, and clearly, it couldn’t hold a gold leaf that bore the Dou Qi Secret Technique. He was greatly puzzled—why didn’t the Serpent Script edition contain the Dou Qi Secret Technique, whereas a book with the same title published thousands of miles away in the Duchy of Sapphire had a cover concealing the Dou Qi Secret Technique?

Unfortunately.

Too much time has passed, and the Vulture Family had already turned to dust in history, with no more understanding of what happened to them.

Liszt could only guess—at a stretch, he presumed that Steve Vulture, due to his close association with the Sapphire Family, got implicated when they defected from the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom, leading to the family’s demise, and Steve’s son happened to be a novelist, thus published a knight’s novel documenting his father.

Due to poor sales and financial pressures, the son crossed the Steel Ridge Kingdom and sought refuge with the Sapphire Family.

When he arrived in the Duchy of Sapphire after much hardship, he might have been rejected by the Sapphire Family or for some other reason did not prosper. So, when penniless, he hid the two pieces of Dou Qi Secret Technique in two books, one being “The

Vulture Knight Stephan's Expedition", and the other "Searching for the Magical Beast Beetle King among the Pincered Beetles".

Hoping that someone destined could obtain the Dou Qi Secret Technique and restore the glory of the Vulture Family, and driven by the power of fate, both books ended up in Liszt's hands.

As a person obsessed with scraping book covers, Liszt, of course, happily accepted them.

Regardless, he was fairly certain: "The Eye of Magic and Breath Decay, these two Dou Qi Secret Techniques, should only be possessed by me and could serve as the Flame Family's hereditary Dou Qi Secret Techniques."

Of course.

The Eye of Magic already had a version for magicians, the Super Magic – Eye of Mana, which Ach had taught to seven mermaids who would search in the sea for Elf Bugs.

"So, should I also pass on the Eye of Magic to my dedicated followers, letting them help me collect elves?"

Mary's news of the Vulture Family's extinction made him understand all at once that the Dou Qi Secret Technique was merely a minor skill, and even if nobles acquired it, they wouldn't be able to join the Dragon Rearing Family. The true foundation of the Dragon Rearing Family is dragons, and the Flame Family has six dragons!

It's only in the hands of the Dragon Rearing Family, and specifically practiced by Dragon Knights, that the Eye of Magic can realize its full potential.

Chapter 998: Shadow Incarnation The Source of Vitality Potion, specifically designed for the Fish Ugly Constitution and after repeated research by the Magic Guild, was finally completed at the end of April.

After taking the Source of Vitality Potion, the fertility rate of the Fish Ugly Race surged by a dramatic 300%, causing a large number of female Fish Uglies to enter a state of pregnancy. This meant that the Fish Ugly Race would soon witness the hope of a resurgence, and at the same time, Li Si Te (Liszt) had the Magic Guild begin research into the fertility issues of Mermaids.

For the Mermaid physique, to see if it was possible to completely eradicate their inability to reproduce due to the curse.

“Complete the mission, reward: Magic Cloak.”

The challenge of Fish Ugly fertility was solved, and the Smoke Mission naturally concluded, with the reward immediately reaching Li Si Te (Liszt)’s hands. Unsurprisingly, this item was obtained from the newly conquered Moon Slayer Native Tribe and was a part that had been sealed within the statue of an ancestor of the Moon Slayers.

According to the Knowledge Ancient Book’s appraisal of the Magic Cloak: “Zhuoer Spider Silk, Mushroom Mycelium, Infinite Magic Power, Magic Guard.”

After Ach’s analysis, the Zhuoer Spider Silk and Mushroom Mycelium were respectively, the silk produced by a strange race, the Zhuoer Spiders, from ancient legends, and the mycelium made from a mass of Abandoned Cordyceps. This Magic Cloak could provide the wearer with infinite magic power and form a protective circle of magic guard.

Without a doubt, this was another piece of equipment for Magicians, and it suited Ach the best.

The Knights, a newly emerged Cultivation System, had no ancient relics waiting to be discovered; if they wanted good equipment, they would have to craft it themselves.

Wearing the Magic Cloak, Ach could gather a foggy, light-emitting shield around her body, and even when Li Si Te (Liszt) unleashed his Superior Magic Dragon Dou Qi, it would take three strikes to break through. This undoubtedly greatly strengthened Ach’s defense, on top of her own magic might.

In battle, she was almost invincible.

In the future, Ach would be the main force in purifying the undersea demons, and with this Magic Cloak, Li Si Te (Liszt) could finally shout “666” to cheer her on without worry.

For the next few days, he was immersed in studying the new Smoke Mission.

“Mission: The assassin walks in the shadows, malice from a distant country has already reached Flame Island, lurking and spying on all your achievements. To prevent malice from bearing bitter fruit, you should take the initiative to strike and find the malice from within the shadows. Reward: Undersea Sanctuary.”

The reward could be ignored for now; what made him frown was the malice from a distant country.

Clearly, some country had sent an assassin to Flame Island, hidden in the dark watching everything. However, Flame Island was simply too big, with a population that had already reached two million. Plus, there was a continuous flow of Moon Slayer Tribes being subsumed and integrated into the Kingdom by the Knights.

To find an assassin among so many people was extremely difficult.

Back in Fresh Flower Town, the town was so small, so it was very easy to discover Paris lurking invisibly. Now, even if Li Si Te (Liszt) rode the Formless Dragon and switched on the Crystal White Trajectory vision, he still could not find the assassin—the magic was too diffuse and overwhelming to the eye.

“The best plan for now is to draw the snake out of the hole. Should I have the Magic Guild announce a major scientific breakthrough, or should the Development Committee announce an important meeting?”

Suddenly, a new idea to lure out the snake struck him: “The Mermaids have already joined the territory, yet only a few have seen them. Why don’t I hold a knighting ceremony in Estuary City to officially confer titles upon the Mermaids, and then lure out the assassin?”

Mermaids, being such magical creatures, were something everyone would want to see. By keeping the knighting ceremony limited to the high-ranking officials of the territory, it would be easy to root out any assassin who wanted to gather information on the Mermaids.

“Perfect!”

Having thought through his plan, he quickly issued instructions to the Development Committee to hold the knighting ceremony in Estuary City. He also contacted the seven Mermaids, each with their roles, to rush to Estuary City for the ceremony.

May 3rd.

The weather was clear and sunny.

The news of the ennoblement ceremony had spread throughout the territory, and many commoners and minor nobles were discussing mermaids, but they were not allowed to attend the ennoblement ceremony in Estuary City.

Only a select few from the upper echelons would show up in Estuary City.

At noon on the day, in the mangrove forest of Estuary Swamp, where the Fish Uglies had built a temporary ennoblement site, a group of nobles gathered, enthusiastically speculating about the mermaids' situation.

Liszt rode the Formless Dragon Bard, invisible above the site, with the Crystal White Trajectory activated, he carefully distinguished the magic power situations around the site—since the target was an assassin, they must have magic power or Dou Qi. Identifying an unfamiliar one would allow him to pinpoint the assassin.

The time swiftly approached, the mermaids had already arrived at the Estuary Swamp and began to reveal themselves. Their huge bodies and beautiful forms captivated all of the nobles' attention as soon as they appeared.

And at that moment,

Liszt detected a special magic power emerging within the crowd, a black dark attribute magic power that hadn't taken human form but was hiding in the shadow of a noble.

He suddenly remembered the introduction from Smoke Mission—assassins walk in the shadows.

“So one can merge into the shadows, this strange ability... must be the Shadow Incarnation from the Ancient Warrior Inheritors!” Having never ceased his search for

information about the Ancient Warrior Inheritors, Liszt was also familiar with the profession of “Shadow Incarnation.”

Thereupon,
he locked onto the magic power within the shadow.

He directed the Formless Dragon in a nosedive, then unleashed the reckless Dragon Might, furiously assaulting the Shadow Incarnation. Liszt leaped from the dragon’s back, stepping out of the material boundary, and reached out to the targeted shadow. With a tug and a pull, he had extracted a blurry humanoid creature from the shadow of a Moon Slayer Viscount.

Struck by the Dragon Dou Qi, the blurred humanoid was forced to reveal his true form, a short, naked man.

Snap!

Before the nobles could even react, Liszt had already taken out the Mountain Copper Manacles and shackled the naked man, immobilizing the magic power within him.

He then tossed him over to a nearby knight, “Take him into custody!”

“Your Majesty...”

“Your Highness...”

The nobles then realized what had happened and exclaimed in surprise.

“There is no need for alarm, we have merely found an assassin. Earl Geoffrey, take him away, and let us continue with the ennoblement ceremony,” Liszt waved his hand, indicating the ceremony should proceed as usual.

Though filled with curiosity, the nobles continued to engage in the ennoblement ceremony following Liszt’s orders.

During the ceremony, Liszt personally conferred titles and ranks upon the mermaids one by one: “Marquis Fisherman – Gulvig... Marquis Great West – Eternia... Salty Sea Marquis Blue Posey... Marquis Aquamarch – Tibidais... Marquis Sea Trench – Sharivara... Marquis Fugitive – Viswinti... Marquis Lost – Coquelix.”

The titles and ranks of the other mermaids were uncontentious, except for those of Viswinti and Coquelix, which were indeed indelicate.

However, considering their original kingdom, one named Country of Fugitives and the other Lost Sea, if they themselves did not mind, then Liszt cared even less.

Among the mermaids’ oath of allegiance, the ennoblement ceremony hastily concluded.

Liszt signaled for the nobles to mingle and make connections with the mermaids on their own, while he hastened away, eager to interrogate the origin of this Shadow Incarnation.

Chapter 999: Kushan Empire The methods of interrogation required no reminder from Li Si Te, as they had already been applied to the Shadow Incarnation. After enduring physical pain, the short assassin finally spilled everything.

He was named Xisile Ying, an Ancient Warrior Inheritor-Shadow Incarnation, from the distant great empire in the west – the Kushan Imperial. He was dispatched by the emperor of the Kushan Imperial, Emperor Jupiter, to the Flame Kingdom to investigate the news of the Sacred Dragon-Invisible Dragon.

“We were a group of five Shadow Incarnations, all lurking in various places within the Flame Kingdom. However, one week ago, one of the Shadow Incarnations left with news about the Formless Dragon, and the remaining three... I have no idea where they are lurking. It is my job to scout for information in Estuary City.”

“How do you contact them?”

“We meet weekly in a tavern in Dragon Valley City to share news. According to the schedule, there are three days left until the next meeting.”

Li Si Te narrowed his eyes, finally understanding why, even after capturing this Shadow Incarnation, the Smoke Mission had still not been completed. There were still three

Shadow Incarnations lurking in the shadows. Moreover, one had already left Flame Island, and it was impossible to capture them again.

“The Kushan Imperial...” A serious thought flickered in his mind, but he suppressed it immediately.

He continued to interrogate Xisile Ying.

First was the professional information about Xisile himself: a Shadow Incarnation was one of the Ancient Warriors, did not cultivate Dou Qi, but did cultivate Magic Power, all practitioners possessing Dark Attribute Magic Power. Unlike magicians, they infused Dark Attribute Magic Power into their bodies and underwent transformation.

This enabled their bodies to blend into any shadow-filled environment through special methods.

“We were originally Earth Knights. After showing signs of Dark Attribute Dou Qi, we were selected by the royal family to be cultivated into Shadow Incarnations through special means, undertaking tasks such as assassination and reconnaissance... I can tell you the specific cultivation methods, but the process of transforming Dou Qi into Magic Power involves several medicinal baths, the formulas for which I don’t know,” Xisile said.

This essentially dashed Li Si Te’s thoughts of cultivating his own Shadow Incarnations.

However, it was also very normal; since the royal family of the Kushan Imperial had mastered the method of cultivating Shadow Incarnations, they certainly held the formula for the medicines closely and would not leak them at will.

After all, they could not ensure that a Shadow Incarnation wouldn’t be captured and reveal the cultivation methods.

“My strength is not strong; I belong to the Deep Shadows among the Shadow Incarnations... Shallow Shadow, Deep Shadow, and Shadows correspond to Earth Knights, average Sky Knights, and Completion Level Sky Knights, respectively.” Xisile was a Deep Shadow, equivalent to an average Sky Knight.

His most powerful assassination tactic was to leap from the shadow and perform the assassination—while he might not win against a Sky Knight in direct combat, a surprise attack could even kill a Sword Saint.

However, the Shadow Incarnations also had limitations—their clothes could not merge into the shadows.

So before spying, they would hide in a corner shadow and, unsuspecting, jump naked into the target's shadow to follow along. After completing the assassination, they would leave the scene naked, retrieve their clothes, and fade away into the crowd as ordinary people.

“Then at night, couldn't you go anywhere?” liszt asked, voicing a doubt.

Xisile Ying gave a bitter smile, “Actually, it's harder to assassinate at night, because shadows can get lost in the darkness, and we might not even find our target... When merging with a shadow, I can only move along the edge of the shadow and sense the outside light.”

Without light, a shadow has no edge, making it unclear how to move, and thus he would get... lost.

With this explanation, it made sense; otherwise, Shadow Incarnations would be unstoppable at night, killing anyone they wished without limits.

After understanding the professional information about the Shadow Incarnations, Li Si Te began to inquire about the Kushan Imperial.

Xisile, having learned his lesson, answered promptly to all questions: “I don't know how Emperor Jupiter came to know of the Formless Dragon. I am just a Shadow Incarnation, I've only seen Emperor Jupiter a few times, the orders were given by the leader of the Shadow Incarnations... Once you become emperor, you are a person without a surname.”

“A person without a surname?”

“The emperor has no surname, for a surname can no longer carry the emperor's glory.”

“Heh,” Li Si Te chuckled and continued to interrogate, “Then what was the surname of the family Emperor Jupiter was born into?”

“The Light of Tranquility.”

“The Light of Tranquility, what does that imply?”

“I do not know.”

“How old is Emperor Jupiter?” he suddenly asked very interestedly, wanting to know the age of the Imperial Emperor to judge whether the emperor was a Dragon Domain Landlord.

“I do not know, but I guess Emperor Jupiter is about forty years old.”

Through the conversation with Xisile, Li Si Te quickly sketched out an image of Emperor Jupiter: forty years old in his prime, a Dragon Knight riding an Elemental Dragon-Dark Dragon. The dragon was ink-black, with a body length and wingspan over seventy meters. Emperor Jupiter had once personally led a Knight Order to annihilate a vassal state and slay their dragon.

He was a capable ruler.

The Kushan Imperial spoke Chai Script.

Xisile spoke a few sentences in Chai Script, which sounded a bit like Moon Language, and its writing resembled stacked logs, giving the feeling of cuneiform script. However, Xisile also spoke Serpent Script—they, as Shadow Incarnations, were trained in multiple languages from young to be sent to different countries for missions.

The empire was vast with frequent border wars, especially with the Neverfall Empire, erupting in a major war every few years. Dragon Knights often waged dragon-slaying wars.

“I do not know how many dragons the empire has; I have been in the Mercenary City-State performing assassinations... The Mercenary City-State is a power formed by many

exiled small countries, located between the empire and the Fallen Leaves Kingdom and the White Deer Kingdom, highly chaotic, a sanctuary for mercenaries and Rats.”

Xisile couldn't explain the geography of the Legendary Continent well, he only knew that the Mercenary City-State bordered the Kushan Imperial, the Fallen Leaves Kingdom, and the White Deer Kingdom.

After receiving the order from the leader of the Shadow Incarnations, he and the other four Shadow Incarnations set out from the Mercenary City-State, headed east.

Passing through the Fallen Leaf Kingdom and the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom, they reached the Eagle Kingdom, then took to the sea towards the Duchy of Sapphire, eventually finding out the route to the Flame Kingdom. They mixed into a merchant caravan to enter the Flame Island and began to disperse and gather intelligence on the situation in the Flame Kingdom with a focus on investigating the Invisible Dragon.

“The empire has many vassal states, all Grand Duchies and Duchies. The imperial city is built on a mountain, the whole mountain is the city, and there are springs flowing over the entire imperial city...”

After listening to Xisile's description of the Kushan Imperial, Li Si Te suddenly asked, “Does the Kushan Imperial have Archmages?”

“Yes...”

Chapter 1000: Water Comes, Soil Covers Thank you to the Warlord for the 150,000 starting coins reward, Old White had turned into such a salted fish yet the Warlord is still willing to support, I am deeply grateful!

I also thank the readers who are still following the genuine version and those who are still voting for Old White!

I feel that the amount of updates now does not live up to everyone's expectations!

The presence of an Archmage in the Kushan Empire did not surprise Liszt. Although the three great kingdoms had not seen any Archmages for many years, given the vastness of

the Legendary Continent and the millions of Magicians, there would always be powerful Magicians who could access the Magic Web and thus advance to becoming Archmages.

Xisile Ying had never seen an Archmage from the Kushan Empire; he only knew that this Archmage had been appointed as the imperial chief magic advisor by the empire, but he did not know the Archmage's name.

“Even the Kushan Empire has an Archmage, the other two empires must also have Archmages... and Elemental Dragon Knights. It's not just me who can ride Fire Dragon Leo. Emperor Jupiter of the Kushan Empire rode a Dark Dragon... The strength of the nations on the Legendary Continent should not be underestimated.”

Liszt felt quite emotional about this.

In the living room, listening to his sentiments, the Marquis of Bull Tail said, “Liszt, the focus now should not be on whether the Legendary Continent has Archmages, but on the intentions of the Kushan Empire. Emperor Jupiter sending a Shadow Incarnation to investigate the Formless Dragon clearly intends to target the Sacred Dragon; we must be cautious.”

“Father, rest assured, I will not take this lightly. The Flame Kingdom is secluded and far from the Kushan Empire. Even if Emperor Jupiter truly intends to target Bard, I will make him understand the principle that ‘even a mighty dragon can't suppress local snakes.’” Liszt had confidence in this.

The Smoke Mission was always ready to provide him with a warning, and the power of fate always favored him.

The Kushan Empire had just shown its malice, and the Smoke Mission had already helped him root out this malice—he had already planned the next steps. With the help of Xisile and other Shadow Incarnations' weekly gatherings, he planned to capture the remaining three Shadow Incarnations in one fell swoop.

As for the Shadow Incarnation that had left, he could only watch as the entity left.

However, if another Shadow Incarnation came again, he would ask Ach to take action, leading the magicians of the Magic Guild to set up surveillance-type magic arrays at the entrances and exits of the teleportation array to quickly identify the unknown intruders.

Of course, as the Flame Kingdom develops, there will be fewer secrets that need to be strictly guarded.

Mermaids, Unicorns, Mountain Copper Dragons,—what's the harm in exposing them? The Formless Dragon had already been exposed, so exposing a few more magical creatures would not be surprising.

Moreover.

He had the means of the Magic Platform to communicate information at long distances, which did not mean other countries didn't have it. The information of the Flame Kingdom had probably been leaked by rats long ago, and the reason why there's still peace is probably because other countries have not yet figured out how to deal with the Flame Kingdom.

The Eagle Kingdom is preparing to show weakness—they are indeed weak now.

The Steel Ridge Kingdom is planning to form alliances through marriages, with the Platinum Family clearly being the driving force behind the Red and White Rose Family. King Osborn could not allow the Red and White Rose Family to socialize recklessly.

The Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom is currently just showing goodwill without any clear actions; the two countries are too far apart for the Flame Kingdom to affect the Blast Furnace Fortress Kingdom in the short term.

Once the development of the Flame Kingdom affects the core interests of the three great kingdoms, a dragon slaying battle is likely to occur.

It's just that he didn't expect the Kushan Empire to interfere now, which brought certain pressure and urgency to Liszt. After all, the Kushan Empire had Elemental Dragon Knights and Archmages, and their combat power should not be underestimated. He did not fear any kingdom, but he might not be able to withstand an empire.

It's known that a kingdom could have several Dragon Knights, but an empire would have at least ten, and it wouldn't be impossible to have twenty or more.

With such a number of Dragon Knights, they could completely overwhelm Liszt with a sea of dragons tactic.

The only consolation was that the Kushan Imperial did not maintain friendly relations with the surrounding nations and had to wage war with the Neverfall Empire every few years. It was impossible for them to send Dragon Knights across tens, if not hundreds of thousands of kilometers to trouble the Flame Kingdom—they could only secretly plot some conspiracies.

From the investigations of the Shadow Incarnations primarily focused on the Formless Dragon, it was known that Emperor Jupiter was interested in the Sacred Dragon, and it was very likely that he would target Formless Dragon Bard, planning some devious plots.

“Fortunately, Bard is about to come of age, and with the help of me and Ach, he has prematurely perfected control over spatial travel. He might not be strong enough in direct combat, but no dragon or Dragon Knight could stop him from escaping,” Liszt always cared deeply about Bard’s growth.

The newly acquired gifts of Red Dragon Water were biasedly distributed, with most going to Bard.

...

Three days later.

In a small tavern in Dragon Valley City, three Shadow Incarnations, unaware of their own identities being exposed, walked into the tavern like ordinary people and met with Xisile Ying.

Just as they were about to exchange the information they had gathered,

Liszt took action personally, his Superior Magic Dragon Dou Qi surged powerfully, and in a single encounter, he captured the three Shadow Incarnations and then locked them up with Mountain Copper Manacles.

After more questioning, he got more information about the Kushan Imperial from these three Shadow Incarnations, Rudolf Ying, Cassio Ying, and Barritt Ying.

Although not comprehensive, he at least had a preliminary impression of this distant empire, a warlike empire, and a warlike emperor. The empire's national strength could not match that of the Neverfall Empire and Blue Dragon Empire, but its combat prowess was no less formidable, exerting strong pressure on the neighboring kingdoms.

"Being targeted by such an empire is not a good thing," Marquis of Bull Tail was still very worried.

Liszt did not say much; soldiers will block the water and cover the earth with soil, that was all. He completed the Smoke Mission immediately after interrogating the Shadow Incarnations.

"Mission completed, reward: Undersea Sanctuary."

Simultaneously, a new mission was issued: "Mission: The malice brought by the Shadow Incarnation is just the beginning, no one can guarantee whether this is a probe or a start. However, to forge iron, one must be strong oneself, developing the Flame Kingdom is the priority. Please build a second Magic Teleportation Array. Reward: one Greater Elf."

Yet another Greater Elf as a reward.

As his power developed rapidly, the reward level for the Smoke Mission had risen significantly. Ordinary Little Minor Elves could no longer be used as rewards, and Greater Elves were equivalent to past Elf Bug rewards—Smoke Missions had already rewarded several dragons and dragon-related clues.

The new mission was to build a second Magic Teleportation Array, already designated from Jade Mountain to the Legendary Continent, to extend to the Snowstorm Mountain Duchy and broaden the trade channels of the Flame Kingdom.

However, Ach was currently unavailable, so the Magic Teleportation Array would have to wait a while.

He took this opportunity to rest. He didn't have to be busy with Smoke Missions all the time; he was a man in control of his destiny, not one to be pushed around by it—though he often found himself being pushed by fate.

At this time.

Regarding the reward from the last mission, the Undersea Sanctuary was soon secured.

Marquis Great West-Etenia, a mermaid, while searching for Elf Bugs in the deep sea, accidentally discovered a sanctuary. This sanctuary was not a relic of the ancient Sea Kingdom but a naturally formed underwater marvel.

“Your Majesty, that sanctuary is truly magical. An area devoid of seawater has been maintained at the bottom of the sea, containing flora, and land animals live there.”

“How magical, come, take me to see it!”