

EARTHS G MAGUS 18

18 Stronger than Yesterday

In the first trial, about forty acolytes out of the thousands were successful in moving the stones. Making it move looked easy because one would only have to push the rock even by a small margin and they'd be accepted as an acolyte for the institute of stone but considering how only a few of them had succeeded, it wasn't as simple as pushing it with all of their strength.

Hundreds of acolytes attempted during the course of the day and some were able to make it shake but shaking it wasn't enough for it didn't budge even one millimeter from its place. So, some of those who had failed sat again and pondered the manual imprinted in the palm of their hands and channeled the energy of stone of origin seeping out from the stone gate.

At the end of the day, around a hundred acolytes succeeded in moving the stones. Julian and Emery, on the other hand, weren't successful despite also studying and channeling the energy of the earth after attempting to push the rocks. Based on their observation though, since there were only a hundred that succeeded on the first day, they must be acolytes who had a spirit aptitude of rank s.

The sky was becoming orange, signaling the end of the day when all the remaining acolytes who failed were asked to return to their respective sky islands.

Emery and Julian arrived in their room and found Thrax, Chumo, and Klea also resting in the common area.

"How was your day, guys? Did any of you succeed on the first day?" asked Julian, waving his hand.

Thrax ignored Julian, not interested in answering even one bit. But based on how Thrax had his lips crooked downwards and brows furrowed, Emery and Julian knew Thrax hadn't passed his initial test in the institute of flames. Chumo was still silent as ever, but he responded with a shake of his head, which was more than enough to tell how he also hadn't succeeded yet.

Emery and Julian looked at Klea, who was the last to answer, and said the following in her sweet, unbothered tone, "Me? Of course, I succeeded."

She opened her hand and generated a swirling small whirlpool on the top of her palm. It looked just like Minerva's ball of wind but Klea's was much smaller.

"You're great, Klea," Emery exclaimed, leaning closer to take a look at Klea's hand.

"I appreciate you praising me, cutie. But what about the two of you? Did either one of you succeed?" she asked after dispelling the small whirlpool.

Emery shrugged. "Not yet, but I'll try again tomorrow."

Julian laughed awkwardly, scratching his head. "You're kidding, right? Klea? Hahaha."

Klea had the highest spirit power level amongst all of them and on just one day she had improved leaps and bounds ahead of them, so Julian didn't dare to mess around with her.

The next day came and Emery returned to the same institution with Julian the first thing in the morning. They wanted to practice channeling the earth's energy once more in the stone or origin room but like what Darius had said, first year acolytes could only use this room for only half a day, that meant only once during the seven days because the priority for this room was reserved for the senior acolytes.

Emery was disappointed because he could feel he was close to having a breakthrough in his understanding of the earth's energy. A little more of that push was all he needed. Still, he and Julian had trained outside the stone gate though and the pushing force from the origin of stone could still be felt the closer they were to the stone gate, so they decided to study the manual and channel the elemental energy of the earth on the spot once more.

They sat, cross-legged, and focused their mind but since this area was also where the other acolytes were taking the test of moving the stone, their focus was sometimes broken whenever a youth got accepted in the institute of stone.

There were fewer people than yesterday because half of the acolytes had already passed and got accepted and were moved to a different area.

It was already late in the afternoon when Emery opened his eyes. He wiped his sweating forehead first with his arm before looking at his palm. The spirit power increased by another point; he was somewhat satisfied. He thought whether he should continue here or take advantage of the other institutes he had an affinity with when Julian shot up from the ground shouting "That's it! I got it!"

Julian hurried to the big rock, placed both hands on the stone, and pushed it with all his strength to the point where veins in his head were starting to pop out. A faint yellow glow appeared on his hand and then the stone finally moved.

"Well done! Welcome to the institute of stone, young lad," said Darius, who was watching over them.

Julian punched the air with a big grin on his face. He did in fact have a breakthrough in the initial stage of earth spirit cultivation plus his spirit power had reached thirty after breaking through. He leaned in close to Emery and said almost in a whisper, "Do you want to know how I succeeded, Emery?"

Emery, however, had no hesitation in his answer, "No."

Julian's eyebrows twitched and followed up, "Why not?"

Emery looked at Julian with all seriousness and said, "Because if you teach me the trick, then how will I ever improve? I appreciate your offer, but I need to figure this out. I can't keep being a burden to others."

"Manning up now, aren't you?" Julian teased Emery before adding, "I am glad for you. For now, I'll go back and mess with that barbarian. Hahaha."

Emery nodded and looked around. Out of the thousands who had initially come with him and Julian, there seemed to be only a third left of the original examinees still focusing and channeling the earth's energy. He also noticed it was getting dark as Julian walked away but he wasn't about to go home. He had given a thought about what happened to him last night and could only come up with one answer. If only he was strong and confident like Julian, then maybe he could have saved his father from those damned Marauders.

Emery didn't say another word and determined himself to keep on training throughout the night. He wasn't alone though as there were hundreds of acolytes not budging from their positions as well. From time to time, these other youths also opened their eyes to know what was happening around them. They had realized they were the bottom third of the group and because of not wanting to lose face, these youths encouraged themselves to try harder.

Darius and Felicia were sitting on top of the stones they had made for themselves with smiles on their faces.

"We were just like them, don't you remember?" said Darius, warmly.

Felicia responded with her eyes widened. "Huh? What are you talking about? I remember that you were always that lazy, all-talk, acolyte in our class."

Darius simply laughed and said, "Hahaha, ahh nostalgia..."