

# The Medallion

## CHAPTER 8 MAGIC POWER

"This guy seems to be looking at me weirdly. What have I ever done to him? Did I take his woman or something?" Rocky thought to himself as he returned the man's stare. "We have gathered here today to celebrate our thirty new-born royal spirit manipulators, who will ride dragons in the service of our country!" The emperor of the Holy Dragon Empire declared with great passion. He took a grand step forward and looked at the crowd. Cheers and applause erupted in the Grand Dragon Hall. "I declare the beginning of the ritual! Salute to the Holy Dragon Bead!" Priest Dean announced, standing next to the Emperor. Everyone knelt on one leg and bowed down to a tarnished bead on a pedestal in the shape of a dragon talon. It was a holy item of the Holy Dragon Empire with a history that stretched back hundreds of years. This Holy Dragon Bead had once been a Dragon Spirit Bead. Legend had it that when this Bead was borne by the Dragon Master Clan, the earth shook and transformed. It shone brightly and contained so much power of spiritual race within. The Elder of the Dragon Master Clan prophesized that whoever fused with this Dragon Spirit Bead would be the King of Spiritual Manipulators. That very year, that Dragon Spirit Bead had been brought to the Holy Dragon Empire for the humans to attempt to fuse with it. Yet it was too strong and too powerful for the human body, and no one was successful. Years went by, and no one succeeded. Finally, the Holy Dragon Empire gave up and ordained this Dragon Spirit Bead as the holy item of the Empire. They changed its name to Holy Dragon Bead and enshrined it in the Grand Dragon Hall for eternity. Rocky knelt down like everyone else. 'Do as the Romans do,' he figured. "Please welcome the Witch to open the door for the arrival of the messenger of the Dragon Master Clan!" Priest Dean announced next. There came another round of warm applause. Lena emerged and curtly nodded at everyone. She then turned and went up the stairs, all the way to the step right below the topmost one. She held up her arms and faced the round platform on the top floor. Holy light shone like sun out of her body and bathed the entire hall with a golden color. Everyone immersed in the light felt peaceful and comfortable. Rocky stared at Lena without blinking. A look of surprise flashed through his eyes. Although he had seen her power before, he was still shocked to witness it so close. A ball of golden light appeared in Lena's hand and slowly floated up into the sky.

Suddenly, a beam light fell like rain directly onto the round platform on the top floor. Instantly, a human silhouette surrounded with thirty twirling multicolored oval light beams appeared on the platform. The light beam quickly faded and was soon gone without a trace. "I welcome you, messenger of the Dragon Master Clan," Lena saluted, addressing the human silhouette. The emperor of the Holy Dragon Empire, Priest Dean, and everyone else bowed to the messenger to show respect, all except for Rocky as he had no clue what was happening. The messenger of the Dragon Master Clan slightly nodded at the formality. He then spoke to Lena in an indistinguishable voice and stepped off the platform. "The messenger said that he had brought thirty Dragon Spirit Beads here so our ceremony may begin right away," Lena translated the message to the emperor. The emperor nodded and then stepped aside. Priest Dean spoke to the thirty young boys on both sides. "Our empire is proud of you all. Don't let us down! You shall succeed!" "Yes, Sir!" They answered dutifully, with high spirits. They couldn't wait to establish their own legacy. The first boy stepped onto the platform and stood next to Lena. She guided him, instructing him to put his hand on one of the Dragon Spirit Beads. The messenger of the Dragon Master Clan began to chant a spell and soon, the Dragon Spirit Bead began to glisten as if something was about to burst out of it. Suddenly, it broke like an egg hatching and turned into colorful light stripes which snaked up the arm of the boy and finally became a mark. On his skin, its lines looked like a delicate embossment. It was the same symbol as Shirley's. "This boy has the spiritual power of the second grade of Mortal Stage after acquiring the dragon spiritual power!" many exclaimed. The royal spirit manipulators' biggest advantage was that they had the chance to fuse with Dragon Spirit Bead, which would grant them some spiritual power and put them in a leading position compared to other ordinary spirit manipulators who had to start from scratch. 'Interesting. Is it that simple to become a spirit manipulator that can ride a dragon? I really can't understand why this prince Basil has been unable to fuse with Dragon Spirit Bead yet...'

Rocky was growing increasingly fascinated by everything he witnessed. This world was more abstract and strange than he had thought. When the first boy completed the ritual, warm applause erupted from every corner in the hall. The boy held up his arm and showed with great pride the evidence that he had become a royal spirit manipulator. The rest of the candidates went on to the altar one by one for their processes, which all went without a hitch. The ceremony drew to a close as the last candidate stepped up. Those who had fused with Dragon Spirit Bead immediately acquired the spiritual power of the

second grade of Mortal Stage and some of them were even bestowed the third grade!

"Your Royal Highness, it looks that it went much more smoothly than past years when some imbeciles were kicked out..." Priest Dean said, glancing at Rocky in the corner.

"Priest Dean. It takes strength, and sometimes even luck, to become a royal spirit manipulator. Also keep in mind that acquiring the dragon spiritual power through fusion with Dragon Spirit Bead is just a beginning. One will have to go through countless trials and hardships in order to be a true royal spirit manipulator. After all, they have different duties from other ordinary spirit manipulators. So this is not the time for total celebration yet," Lena shot a look at Priest Dean and responded solemnly. "You are absolutely right, Your Royal Highness," Priest Dean replied, the smug look draining from his face. Just as he said this, a loud scream resounded. They looked and saw the last candidate screaming in pain as the light strips fed on his arm like a giant maw. Everyone was shocked at this scene. "Is this a rejection?" A look of shock also flashed through Lena's face. She managed to keep her composure and said, "If we don't stop this fusion in time, he will be consumed by that Dragon Spirit Bead." Priest Dean hurried down to check on him. His right arm was shining brightly and exquisite lines showed up, overflowing with power. Priest Dean grabbed his hand, his face growing rigid with concentration as he employed his power. Suddenly, silver light shone from his palm. It was as bright as the rising sun and sent airwaves across the hall, ruffling through everyone's clothes. "Damn! He is good!" Rocky was wide-eyed at what was happening. Priest Dean blasted away the Dragon Spirit Bead, sending it flying all over the place in a spiral. The power it unleashed unsettled the entire Grand Dragon Hall. The royal members and nobles all backed down to take cover as they knew that a rogue Dragon Spirit Bead contained very strong power and it could not be stopped easily. After flying around in the air for a while, the Dragon Spirit Bead suddenly shot towards the altar and hit the Holy Dragon Bead squarely. The Holy Dragon Bead was blasted into the air as the Dragon Spirit Bead fell to the ground, apparently exhausted of all its power. Everyone including the emperor of the Holy Dragon Empire was astonished to see that the Holy Dragon Bead hit the ground. "Bang! Bang!" It fell hard onto the ground, its innate spark suddenly turning into a bright and blinding light. With its sheer force, a huge airwave blew through the Grand Dragon Hall. Its raw power was tremendous. The Holy Dragon Bead fell less than a meter away from Rocky, right in front of him. "Basil, get out of there! It is very dangerous!" Lena shouted in a panic as she saw the Holy Dragon Bead explode into light right under

Rocky's feet. Rocky didn't know at the time that it was the holy item of the Holy Dragon Empire. He was dumbfounded by its brilliance. Lena's voice echoed in his head and he snapped out of it. Just as he was preparing to dodge it, he heard a weeping sound. Rocky thought it was an illusion, but the weeping sound came once more. This time he turned his sight to the Holy Dragon Bead and almost instantly he figured out that it was the source of the weeping quite reminiscent of a lost child. He stopped unconsciously and approached the Holy Dragon Bead as if it were calling on him. Everyone noticed Rocky's strange actions and some of them even began to mock him. "Is this prince dumb or what? He's running straight to it. That is the holy item of the Holy Dragon Empire with extraordinary power! No ordinary person can touch it!" "I heard that he got ill not long ago and was about to die. He barely escaped death, but it might have done something to his brain." "He has always been a loser. It will not be a loss if he dies." "Basil, stop!" Lena shouted again as she saw Basil continued to approach the Holy Dragon Bead. But it was as though he were in a trance. He had already made it before the spinning Holy Dragon Bead and he reached out his hand to take it. The moment he touched it, the Holy Dragon Bead shone again and then it turned into many light stripes which instantly spread throughout his arm, entangling into a shocking pattern!