

THE FALL OF THE DIVINE

7

Good News

About ten minutes later, the group arrived in front of a two-story standalone building. The structure had a rustic appearance yet exuded an undeniable sense of authority. Its surface was etched with intricate runes, each one softly glowing as though it were breathing. Karl stopped in his tracks, turned to face the trio, and said steadily, "This building will be where you train for the foreseeable future. Your training will begin with the most basic task—sensing spiritual energy."

Pointing to the runes glowing on the building, Karl explained, "The Spirit Gathering Formation here will help you draw the spiritual energy from the surroundings, making it easier for you to sense the flow of this energy. The first step of your training is to learn how to convert this energy into nourishment for your Divine Seeds. If you focus, you'll notice that the spiritual energy in the air ebbs and flows with the rhythm of the runes, as if being guided by an invisible force, all converging towards the center of the building."

Lucian glanced at the building, filled with confusion, and couldn't help but ask, "Master Karl, how exactly do we sense spiritual energy?"

Karl nodded slightly, as if he had anticipated the question. He slowed his speech and responded, "Sensing spiritual energy requires you to clear your mind. First, you must eliminate distractions and focus on your inner self. The Divine Seeds have already been implanted in your consciousness; they are like seeds of divine power. You must learn to listen to them and feel their interaction with the spiritual energy. Close your eyes, block out all external

disturbances, and slowly sense the fluctuations in the air around your body. That is the presence of spiritual energy."

Emma was the first to try. She closed her eyes, and her breathing gradually steadied. Lucian and Darin stood by, quietly observing. A few minutes later, Emma opened her eyes, a hint of surprise in them. "I felt something... It's faint, but it's there."

Karl nodded approvingly. "Good. Keep training, and you'll gradually learn to control its flow."

Unable to suppress his curiosity, Darin asked, "How long will it take for us to convert spiritual energy into power? Will it take a long time?"

Karl chuckled lightly. "That depends on each person's talent and comprehension. Some people can do it in a day, others might take months, while some may need years, even decades. Don't rush; this is a process that requires patience. Remember, everyone progresses at their own pace."

Though Lucian was anxious, he refrained from asking more. He understood that he needed to calm down in order to truly grasp the secrets behind it all.

Karl continued, "In the early stages of your training, Divine Stones can aid you. Each of you will receive three ordinary Divine Stones from me." A flash of light appeared, and from a ring on Karl's left hand, he pulled out three small pouches, handing them out to the trio.

Before they had time to be astonished, the trio eagerly opened the pouches. Inside, three Divine Stones lay quietly, each about the size of an egg, translucent with small flickering lights within, as if containing some mysterious force.

"These Divine Stones will help you absorb and store spiritual energy faster. When you hold one, you'll feel a warm energy flow through it and into your body. This energy will guide the spiritual energy into your Divine Seed,

accelerating its growth. With the help of the Spirit Gathering Formation, training with Divine Stones will yield twice the results with half the effort," Karl explained. "But remember, the energy within a Divine Stone is not infinite. Once its energy is depleted, it will become no different from an ordinary stone. Also, relying too much on Divine Stones may hinder your own true growth. So don't become overly dependent on them; focus more on your own cultivation."

"In addition, Divine Stones serve as currency among those who cultivate divinity. Just like money in the mortal world, they can be used to exchange for the resources you'll need in your training. Later, you'll see how useful they are. Every member of the Dawn Church receives ten Divine Stones annually once they reach the Enlightened Realm. Completing church missions can also earn you more Divine Stones or other rewards. There's a booklet in your pouches that will answer many of the questions you're likely to have at this stage."

After distributing the Divine Stones, Karl led them inside the building, pointing to the rooms on the first floor. "Your training areas are here. You can enter the Spirit Gathering Formation to train at any time, and I'll be upstairs focusing on my own cultivation. If you have any questions, feel free to come find me."

Lucian listened carefully, silently calculating in his mind. He still remembered Freya's life hanging by a thread, fragile like a candle flickering in the wind. Time was running out.

Once Karl had returned upstairs, Lucian could no longer hold back. He knocked on a wooden door on the second floor. The door creaked open slowly, and Master Karl stood there, his gaze steady and sharp as he looked at Lucian.

"What is it?" Karl's voice was as calm as ever, as though nothing could disrupt his rhythm.

Lucian swallowed nervously, took a deep breath, and said, "Master, there's something personal I need to ask you about... It's regarding someone who is very important to me."

Karl frowned slightly but motioned for Lucian to enter. The room, like the floor below, was filled with intricate runes, but the atmosphere here was much heavier. Lucian slowly recounted the story of Freya, their relationship, her accident, and how the envoy of Zyros had found him and offered the contract.

"Every time I think about her accident, I'm overwhelmed with regret. If only I'd been more careful, maybe none of this would've happened..." Lucian's voice trailed off, his gaze dimming.

Karl listened in silence, his eyes remaining cold. "I see. You want me to help you find a way to save her."

Lucian nodded fervently, his eyes filled with hope as he pleaded, "I'm willing to do anything, whatever it takes, as long as I can save her."

Karl remained silent for a moment, a barely perceptible hint of complex emotion flashing in his eyes. Then he said, "I understand how you feel. While we possess powers far beyond those of mortals, it is no easy task. There are reasons for this that you will learn in time. I can't guarantee a solution." His voice remained calm, but it carried a profound, immeasurable weight.

Lucian felt a wave of disappointment wash over him, but he refused to give up. He asked earnestly, "Is there any other way we can try?"

Karl thought for a moment before replying slowly, "There are methods to prolong her life. Though it won't cure her, it could buy her more time. I can teach you techniques for conducting spiritual energy so you can transfer it into her, temporarily stabilizing her life force."

A glimmer of hope flickered in Lucian's eyes. Buying more time was already very good news. He nodded eagerly and bowed deeply. "Please, Master, teach me!"