

## An Understated Dominance (Dustin Rhys)

Chapter 2663

At the peak of Embercrest Hill, inside a quiet old temple, Grace stepped out of the hidden chamber just as a female guard rushed in.

“Your Highness, we’ve got a situation. A powerful intruder is breaking through the outer gates,” she reported

“Who is it?” Grace asked calmly, as if she’d expected this would happen.

“Judging from their appearance, they look like elite fighters from the Hall of Gods, or royal gods,” the female guard replied gravely.

The defensive and offensive formations around Embercrest Hill didn’t stand a chance. Both shattered on impact, as if they’d never been there. Only someone at the royal god-level could force their way in like that.

“They got here faster than I expected,” Grace muttered, eyebrows knitting with concern.

She hadn’t left the temple, but she already knew who it was. At a time like this, the only ones who’d come to Embercrest Hill were Zeus and Hera.

Grace had been keeping tabs on the situation in Oakvale.

At first, she’d figured Nathaniel’s plan to divert the threat would spark a clash between Zeus and Matthias’ forces. That way, Matthias would be too tied up to go after Dustin. But things hadn’t played out the way she’d hoped.

She suspected Matthias had slipped out clean and sidestepped a major disaster. What was supposed to be his problem had landed squarely in her lap.

“Your Highness, the Hall of Gods is still pushing through the defenses. Should we step in to stop them?” the female guard asked.

Grace didn’t answer right away. Instead, she asked, “How many formations are left on the periphery?”

“Most of it has been destroyed. I estimate the Hall of Gods’ fighters will reach the mountain peak within an hour.”

“Don’t bother fighting them off. Just keep feeding energy into the barrier to buy us as much time as you can.”

“Yes, Your Highness,” the female guard replied before leaving.

Grace walked out alone into the open clearing and took out a small steeple from her pocket. At first glance, it looked ordinary-only a few inches tall-but its seven-tiered frame gleamed with a faint golden light.

She murmured an incantation and tossed it into the air.

A low rumble followed. Caught by the wind, the steeple swelled in size. Within seconds, it was taller than a house.

Grace kept chanting. The golden steeple continued to rise as it expanded tier by tier. In less than a minute, it loomed like a mountain.

She formed a hand seal and commanded, ” Drop!”

The massive steeple came crashing down and slammed onto the peak of Embercrest Hill. A second later, it vanished like it had never been there.

Grace let out a slow breath. “Let’s hope the Seven Shards Steeple holds up.”

It was a divine artifact tied to her life force, built for defense and said to be nearly indestructible. But even the strongest artifact had its limits.

If it were just one royal god attacking, the steeple might hold. But if two came at once, she wasn’t sure it would last.

All she could do now was hope Dustin would finish absorbing the Dracan essences and break through in time.

If the formation around Embercrest Hill collapsed and the steeple failed to hold, it wouldn’t just be her problem but a disaster for everyone.

Grace sat in the courtyard and poured herself some tea. There was nothing left to do now but wait.

Every so often, a muffled boom rolled up from the base of the hill-a reminder that the enemy was hammering at the formations and breaking through.

She’d prepared for this. She’d laid down dozens of formations, pouring in money, resources, and time. She’d called in every favor she could, rallied every ally willing to fight tooth and nail when the time came.

She had done everything she could. What happened next was out of her hands.

Now, it all came down to Dustin. Whether they made it through or fell apart depended entirely on him.

At the base of Embercrest Hill, Zeus had just smashed through one formation when another sprang up to trap him. This one wasn’t built for defense or attack, but rather it was an illusionary formation.

Thick fog rolled in from every direction. It was so dense it swallowed the sky, leaving him blind and disoriented. He couldn’t see a thing, and that only made him angrier.

Zeus wasn’t the type to solve problems with finesse. He preferred brute force-hit hard, kill fast, move on. It was simple, direct, and effective. He had no patience for delays or drawn-out fights.

Since the moment he stepped onto Embercrest Hill, formation after formation had been popping up to stop him. He’d already destroyed plenty, but more just kept coming.

“You Dragonmarsh pests are starting to piss me off. If I catch even one of you, I’ll tear you limb from limb.”

His roar echoed across the entire hill like rolling thunder.

Behind him, Hera followed at her own pace, calm and unbothered. She hadn’t lifted a finger. These little tricks weren’t even worth her attention.

Her focus was on one person-Logan Rhys, the man who took down Poseidon. She’d make her move when she saw him face to face.