

The Fall 322

Chapter 322: Convergence of Fate

Considering the circumstances Zac still felt it was extremely lucky that he went back to the monastery in time. If they went by their original plan to simply study Salvation's belongings inside the Mystic Realm outpost they would have entered a state of false security while The Great Redeemer was bearing down on them. However, that still left the issue of actually destroying the black pillar.

The old man suddenly produced a small fruit knife from his sleeve, and the next moment the golden ribbons in the air started to flutter wildly. The golden light from the monks all poured into the knife, filling it with a massive amount of the unfamiliar power.

Both the monks and the Abbot himself looked extremely drained after, and a few of the younger ones even looked ready to keel over from the expenditure. The amount that the Abbot personally infused was just shocking, and Zac felt it was even more energy than what his [Infernal Axe] contained.

"Master imparted me with a skill that allowed me to condense the will of us all into an item. It contains our hope for this planet and its people. Bring it next to the item and the rest will become apparent," Abbot Everlasting Peace explained. "The other three ties can be severed the same way as the last one."

Zac looked down at the small knife that the old monk gifted him, and if it wasn't for the special sight temporarily given him he would never have guessed it contained such massive power. It truly was a simple fruit knife without a single fractal, but if he figured out a way to turn the energy into a weapon he might even be able to kill one of the Dominators with it.

"This one truly wished he could do more, but the result of the last battle was largely due to this mountain, and it's power is not endless," the Abbot sighed. "This is the limit of what this penniless monk can do. I am truly ashamed."

"Don't be. This gift is perfect," Zac said as he stowed away the knife. "Without this item all our efforts might have been for nothing."

"This old man also spent the past month to divine the fate of this planet. I believe it might be of importance to benefactor," the old monk added. "The fate many forces on Earth have converged on the very same hidden realm that benefactor has connections to. This old monk believe-"

"That is sufficient," the child suddenly interjected, cutting the old man short. "Exposing heaven's secrets does not come without a price. You are yet not strong enough to divulge more than that without permanent ramifications."

"That's enough," Zac hurriedly agreed, not wanting to turn the old man crippled. "I will look into it."

The news came like lightning out of the blue. The hidden realm likely referred to the mystic realm. But how could any other forces have connections to that realm? And which forces?

It also begged the question of what made people so interested in that place. It was truly a very odd Mystic Realm, but the energy inside wasn't amazing enough to indicate there being some supreme treasure inside. And even if there was something of great value inside, how would he even go about seizing it for himself?

The forces staying on Earth weren't the only ones he would have to fight with if he entered the fray inside. There was also the natives who were far too strong to contend with for the current Zac. If one added the Dominators and the stronger Incursions into the mix the whole thing turned into a deathtrap.

"We must leave now, I should not stay in this sector for much longer," Lord 84th said before turning to Zac. "If fate wills it, you two will meet again."

The floating child Buddhist pointed at the mountain next, and it quickly phased out of existence. Zac looked at the empty space with wide eyes before turning back toward the mysterious expert. But not only were Lord 84th and the Abbot gone, but so were all the other monks.

"I recommend you keeping my identity to yourself to avoid any ties of Karma between your planet and me," Lord 84th voice echoed in his mind.

Zac didn't even have time to react to the disappearances before finding himself standing in the middle of his courtyard, looking around with confusion. It almost felt as though everything had been a dream, but when he opened the teleportation screen he saw that Mount Everlasting Peace was gone from the list.

A thought suddenly struck him, and he opened up the Dao Ladder to see if it had changed. Abbot Everlasting Peace was gone as he suspected, putting him in the first position. Better yet, the change actually wasn't only good for his vanity, but it brought real benefits. When Zac opened his status screen he noticed that he had gotten his first Limited Title.

[Frontrunner [Limited]: Maintain the first position on all three ladders in world. Reward: Effect of Attributes +5%.]

From the wording it seemed like he would hold the title for as long as he held the first position, which meant the title was secure at least in the short run. The only way someone would pass him at the moment was if he got stalled because he aimed for high-rarity classes, allowing others to evolve much quicker than him.

The additional Attribute effect pushed the efficiency to 140%. It was a huge difference compared to normal cultivators, and it made his overtuned attributes even crazier. The effect would easily nullify any boost wrought by cultivation manuals when he encountered experts from the multiverse in the future.

It was still somewhat of an empty feeling to receive these gains as he only got them because the abbot left Earth rather than through his own effort. But Zac shook his head to snap out of it. Now was not the time to get picky about the power-ups. He hurriedly left his courtyard and teleported over to Mystic Island. Every second that the karmic link persisted was a threat to those around him.

Soon enough he reached the core of the island and found Ogras standing some distance from the spatial cracks with a large chest by his side. The chest was wide open and housed dozens of metallic stakes full of fractals, likely the array flags needed to stabilize a path to the Mystic Realm.

The demon immediately noticed Zac's arrival and gave him a questioning look.

"Making sure your money gets used properly?" Ogras jested when he saw Zac hurry over.

"I wish I had that much free time," Zac sighed before retelling his experience with the Abbot, though he didn't mention the identity of Lord 84th as instructed.

"I have never heard of such a thing, but he sounds extremely powerful. Cultivation through rebirth," Ogras mumbled before throwing Zac a weird look. "How odd that a baby planet not only birthed a monster like you but a second oddity like that old monk. I can't remember a single person from my planet ever gaining insight into the Dao of Karma, yet that old goat did it within a month of getting integrated."

Zac nodded in agreement. Stranger yet, it felt like the Abbot wasn't the only one. Salvation would be completely unstoppable on Earth unless Zac was there to thwart him, showcasing a power far beyond what was normal for his level. And there was Billy with his superhuman power and the primordial aura he emitted when he changed form. And those were only the ones he knew of.

Perhaps there were even more oddities that simply matured a bit slower and couldn't be found on the ladder yet.

"So what do you think about what the prophecy?" Zac asked.

"We know too little to be sure what's hidden inside the Mystic Realm. But if multiple forces are currently invested in that place it can only mean that our entrance isn't the only one. Things might get extremely chaotic soon, which might be our only chance. Perhaps we can fish in muddy waters and snatch the benefits for ourselves," Ogras mused.

"I've been thinking about it. The Underworld Incursion is fire-attuned, which might be troublesome for you. It might be better if you stay here and investigate. I could bring Verana instead to test her out down there," Zac ventured.

Ogras hesitated for a bit before he reluctantly nodded.

"You better not hoard all the goodies down there if I do this for you," he muttered. "You're going to the treasure caves and I'm stuck wandering those spooky halls where E-Grade monsters might be lurking around every corner. And don't give those beast maniacs too many benefits, they have just joined and haven't contributed anything."

"I'll set aside anything that looks like it might benefit you," Zac said with a snort before taking out the small golden dagger. "Are you ready?"

Ogras nodded and threw out the mangled corpse of Salvation.

"I still haven't touched anything in his Cosmos Sack yet. How do you know which item is sharing our position?" Ogras asked.

"No idea," Zac said a bit sheepishly as he held the cutter. "The Abbot said things would become apparent."

"He wasn't messing with you by any chance?" Ogras said as he skeptically looked at the small fruit knife in Zac's hand.

Zac was about to open the floor to suggestions when the knife suddenly burst into an almost blinding light reminiscent of the golden ribbons that Zac had seen. He had to cover his eyes for a second while Ogras shied away as he shrouded himself in layers of shadows.

“What the-“ the demon shouted, but as soon as the knife burst into light the blinding radiance disappeared.

But a golden luster was still circling the knife as it hummed with power, and Salvations’ Cosmos Sack was actually humming with it. Zac walked over to see what was going on, and when he spread his awareness into the sack he immediately spotted the thing that was causing the connection.

It wasn’t the golden fractal as Zac had expected, but rather a small nondescript token that seemed to be made from stone. There were no fractals on it and no power emanated from it either when he took it out from the pouch. Zac would have thought it was a simple memento if it wasn’t marked by the knife.

“What now?” Zac asked, looking over to Ogras.

“How would I know? Try stabbing it, that usually solves most of my problems,” Ogras shrugged, still keeping a respectful distance.

Zac didn’t have any better idea, so he placed the token on a stone before stabbing down at it with the fruit knife. He didn’t use a lot of his power, but the stab still contained enough force to turn a normal stone to dust. But his swing was stopped short the moment it hit the stone and not a single mark was left on the surface, proving it was no ordinary stone.

The knife suddenly shattered, making Zac's eyes widen in alarm, but the next moment a flood of golden light poured into the token until it cracked with a loud snap. A hurricane of energies erupted from the stone, throwing Zac a dozen meters away and almost pushed him into the zone with spatial tears. Zac grunted as he got to his feet, but he froze when he spotted a familiar figure within the storm of energies that the token unleashed.

It was The Great Redeemer.

Two people floated in space, seemingly unbothered by the fact that there was no oxygen to breathe. They were looking down at a planet with two massive continents separated by a vast singular ocean. But only they knew what they were seeing as their eyes sparkled with enigmatic light.

“Such a grand convergence of fate,” Lord 84th said with some wonder. “But I wonder if it is orchestrated or the will of the heavens?”

The other monks and the mountain had already been stowed away and missed out on the spacewalk. Even the Abbot had been shocked to find that his master housed a whole world in his heart where his disciples resided.

It was where he would live as well for the foreseeable future, hidden away from all pain and suffering of the mortal world to ponder upon the mysteries of the universe. To his aide were senior monks who had walked the path for thousands of years and treasures that most could only dream of. But even though such an opportunity had presented itself he couldn’t help but feel unreconciled.

“Is there nothing this poor monk can do to help? Is severing Karma truly the only path?” Abbot Everlasting Peace sighed from the side as he looked down on the planet.

“You should understand the price of meddling with karma by now,” Lord 84th said as he pointedly looked at the old man’s arm that was limply hanging to the side. “There is nothing you can do.”

But the Abbot looked resolute even though divulging the path to his young friend had cost him the use of his arm.

“What is the point of enlightenment if one cannot use it for saving others?” he retorted.

Lord 84th shook his head as he looked into the distance.

“You remind me of my senior brother. He walked the path you are speaking of, taking on the world’s sorrows. That path is wrought with suffering, the sea of bitterness has no bounds. And who knows if there is even salvation at the end of the road? Is it truly worth it?” the little master said with sorrow in his eyes.

“But if this useless monk doesn’t step through the gates of hell, who will?”