

The Fall 341

Chapter 341: Firmament's Edge

Zac wasn't too surprised that the alien could identify his origins. He hadn't worn his mask during his time in the cave, which exposed his pallid skin and signature pitch-black eyes.

"Technocrat is imprecise and reductionist. I am a member of Firmament's Edge, something greater than what a miscreation like you can ever imagine," the alien arrogantly exclaimed. "Were you the one that ruined my experiment? More importantly, how did you get here?"

Zac mutely stared at the arrogant little alien, unsure of what to make of the situation. He had never heard of Technocrats participating in invading newly integrated planets, yet a member of them stood in front of him. He had no idea what Firmament's Edge was, but he guessed it was one of the many factions within the Technocrat Alliance.

The appearance of a true Technocrat caused a storm in Zac's heart as it dragged up the subject of his mother. Was the appearance of this thing linked to her? Or even worse, was it linked to the item in Kenzie's mind? But Zac forcefully calmed down his fraying emotions and gave the alien an impervious stare. He needed to act the part if he wanted to get some information.

"The Undead Empire goes where it pleases," Zac said with matching arrogance. "I'm here because there were a lot of things to kill."

"You! My poor roach. I spent so much money to infuse it with the genes for energy control! It might have caused an unseen evolution with the help of the Amanita, but you ruined it all!" the alien said with gnashing teeth.

Zac shrugged his shoulders without a care, though he was internally boiling with rage. Was this little prick the reason that the battleroach king had such annoying skills like the energy wings and the defensive shield? It made his life a lot harder than it needed to be. But he pushed down his annoyance since he truly needed to know what was going on.

"Your kind should know better than to encroach a planet under the Undead Empire. What are you doing here?" Zac said.

"Pah, Firmament's Edge doesn't fear you. Even if a few of your old undyings crawl out of their sealed cultivation graves we have people to meet them head-on," the alien snorted, but he suddenly froze in alarm. "Wait, what do you mean under your control?"

"We came to this baby planet through the Incursion, so naturally the planet belongs to The Undead Empire from now on," Zac snorted, stilling his fraying nerves.

The fact that the Technocrat wasn't backing down against a monstrous existence as the Undead Empire was pretty telling that Firmament's Edge wasn't some backwater faction. His thoughts went to the story that Karunthel told about the Technocrat who had no problem blowing up planets. Even Earth had the technology to ruin their world before the integration. What about a faction of hyper-advanced aliens?

“Shit, have you lunatics already started the terraforming?!” the alien gasped. “We need to speak with your leaders immediately. And how the hell did your people find your way down here so quickly? We have been drilling for months.”

“Why would I arrange a meeting like that?” Zac asked with feigned disinterest, ignoring the question of how he got down to the Underworld.

“We have no interest in the planet, kill all the natives for all I care. But we need to do a quick sweep of the planet before you terraform it,” the alien said. “We are even willing to compensate you for the trouble.”

“What’s so important that you came all the way here?” Zac probed.

“That’s private,” the alien immediately responded with a frown.

“Well, if you don't tell me what it is you're looking for, I don't see a reas-,” Zac pushed the alien, but he was suddenly interrupted mid-sentence.

For some reason his Cosmos Sack had started to vibrate, making Zac look down with confusion. When he infused his mind into the sack he was horrified to see that it was his mother’s necklace that was moving around in the bag’s subspace, something Zac thought was impossible.

He quickly looked up at the alien again, since what happened clearly wasn’t a coincidence. The amulet had been completely inert until now, and it only started to act up the moment he got close to a Technocrat. And as he expected the little alien had taken out some ball that emitted out a barely discernible wave at regular intervals.

“You have it! It’s on this planet! We actually found it!” the Alien screamed in shock and excitement as his eyes were glued to the ball. “The traitor has been found!”

A towering killing intent suffused Zac’s mind as he glared at the exhilarated alien. He had been wary of the Technocrat’s stance since he learned of his mother’s origin, but the alien’s last comment seemed to cement a disappointing reality that he had been dreading for months.

The Technocrats were enemies.

If his mother had been branded a traitor there was no way that things would end well if his and his sister’s origins were exposed. They were barely holding on as it was when the largest threat only was a vagrant D-Grade cultivator. They couldn’t handle being in the crosshairs of one of the universe’s most powerful factions.

This alien could under no circumstance be allowed to live. The danger to his sister was just too big.

A storm of energy swirled around Zac as he immediately activated almost every skill in his repertoire. He wouldn’t take any risks against the Technocrats, especially not when his sister’s safety was at risk. A large swathe of miasma billowed out from him in an instant as [Fields of Despair] activated, but Zac held off on summoning the large barrier.

The alien immediately noticed the change, and he looked up at Zac with a scrunched-up face.

“So you have already found it! You should never have meddled in the business of Firmament’s Edge,” the alien growled, and the two drones above the alien’s head started to hum as they shone with a sinister red light. “Die!”

Zac couldn’t sense any energy fluctuations from the increasingly blinding weapons, but he knew that they were charging some extremely strong attack. However, Zac still wasn’t worried as he kept the alien within his sight until the moment his danger sense warned him of something bad was about to happen.

Zac stomped down into the ground just before two huge beams shot at this position, causing a wide path of destruction. Even the air itself seemed to be immolated by the terrifying beams, and they even managed to carve holes in the walls that were so deep that the ends of the newly created tunnels couldn’t be seen.

But Zac suddenly appeared straight in front of the alien, completely unscathed, as waves of death radiated all around him. The little grey man looked up in shock at Zac’s sudden appearance, but he immediately started to disappear through some unknown means. However, Zac still wasn’t worried as he once again stomped down his foot.

“Seal” Zac growled, and the area around him drastically changed once again.

The miasma from [Fields of Despair] congealed into five large towers that formed a circle with Zac as the epicenter. On the top of each tower an azure fractal shone like a cursed lighthouse, and hazy fractals ran along the length of the spires.

The towers weren’t truly corporeal like the hand that Zac summoned with [Nature’s Punishment], but they were much more real than the specters from [Deathwish]. They were slightly reminiscent of the Unholy Beacons, but they emitted a far more arcane aura, as though they had been summoned from the true Underworld.

The sudden appearance of the towers wasn’t the end of the skill, as each tower shot out a ghastly chain that moved like a lightning bolt to converge at the same spot. A shrill shriek echoed across the cave as the alien appeared twenty meters away from Zac, completely chained down.

Four of the chains had fettered his hands and legs, and the final chain snaked around his neck. The technocrat desperately tried to break the chains with all his might, but it was like they were wrought from divine iron and didn’t budge the slightest. A bracer on the alien’s arm even shot out two radiant beams at the restraints, but it only left a small mark.

The technocrat only had time to unleash one attack before he started to howl at the top of his lungs as his whole body spasmed uncontrollably. At the same time a haze started to pour out from the chains, once again filling the area with miasma. They were currently forcibly converting the energy inside the small alien into miasma, just like [Field of Despair] did with corpses.

Zac grimaced as he looked upon the horrifying torture, but he made no move to stop it. This was, after all, a person who not only had tried to kill him, but also one that had been completely indifferent to the death of his whole planet.

But soon enough the alien managed to focus enough to command the two drones to help out, and they started to charge up new blasts. Zac couldn’t let that happen, so immediately hurled two daggers at

them. But a red shield sprung up to protect them, making Zac remember the extremely durable forcefield that had protected Kenzie at King's Crossing.

He couldn't allow the two drones to attack the chains or the towers, as even they wouldn't be able to last too long against the terrible blasts those small machines could unleash. The technocrat saw his approach, and he glared at him with hatred. Zac ignored the stare and got ready to destroy the two things with a swing of his axe, or at least make them miss their targets.

Blinding light suddenly stole Zac's vision as a blast hurled him into the distance, almost knocking him unconscious. But Zac refused to let his mind fill with darkness, not when the stakes were so high. He shook his head and immediately got back on his feet with a groan, and looked up at the fleeing form of the technocrat.

The small alien had actually sacrificed a hand and a leg while the self-detonations of the two drones had destroyed the three other chains. He was currently flying away in the opposite direction of Zac, somehow ignoring gravity. But his escape was immediately stopped the moment he tried to escape between two of the towers as an azure wall appeared to block him.

The alien screamed in frustration and launched a beam of light at the wall from his remaining hand. Zac couldn't tell whether it was a skill or another gadget, but he quickly got his answer as an alien ghost appeared behind the technocrat and gored him through his chest.

Zac wanted to run up and take down the technocrat before he could do anything else. But his legs stopped listening to him after a few steps, making him fall over once more. Luckily Zac wasn't out of cards just yet and took a deep breath.

This time he didn't simply exhale, but rather blew out a gust empowered by [Winds of Decay] with all the force he could muster. A black storm expanded from his mouth like a hurricane, and the whole cage created by the five towers were completely engulfed in a second. Screams could be heard from the other side, but Zac didn't stop and kept blowing and blowing, drowning the area in decay.

But even a minute later the screams didn't abate, and Zac frowned as he took out a healing pill and started to drag himself over toward where the screams came from. His sight had been blocked by the dense cloud he released, but when he finally reached the location even he couldn't help but blanch. The state of the Technocrat was beyond pitiful, and Zac almost instinctually killed him to take him out of his misery before stopping himself.

Half the alien's body was in a state of putrefaction, looking like a corpse dragged out of the sewers. But a mysterious force continuously restored his body and expelled the dead cells in a form of rapid regeneration. Zac couldn't see any machines, but he guessed it was some advanced technology at play.

But this process was clearly extremely painful judging by the alien's screams, and worse was that the moment his new cells were formed they immediately started to rot again due to the lingering effect of [Winds of Decay]. The alien was constantly dragged back and forth in a tortuous cycle of life and death, being both and neither at the same time.

It looked like he had lost all body functions since he couldn't move a muscle, he only looked up at Zac with despair.

“Kill me,” the alien cried when with a shaking voice.

“Give me answers first,” Zac said, fortifying his heart. “What are your Firmament’s Edge after?”