

The Fall 462

Chapter 462: Dragon

Had dragons actually existed on Earth once upon a time? That was the only way Zac could explain it going by how stunningly similar it was to the depictions he had seen since he was a child. It looked like a traditional black dragon, though its scales were tinted slightly red at the edges. Two great horns adorned its head, and sharp spikes ran along its spine down to the edge of the thirty-meter long tail.

Only then did Zac realize that he had been dropped off right in front of an enormous cave mouth, which probably led into the dragon's den. What caused the surge of danger was a blade of power that was rushing toward him, seemingly caused by a swipe of the dragon's claws. Had he awakened the dragon and pissed it off by causing a ruckus at its door-step?

Zac had to push down a primordial fear as he prepared himself for battle. There was no way that this big thing wasn't the floor guardian. One good thing about the situation was that the dragon emitted an immense pressure that seemed to have subdued the remnants to some degree.

The swipe slammed into the bulwark the next moment, and Zac nodded in relief when he felt that the attack's power was immense but a lot more manageable than the Technocrat Captain's. He completed the transformation of [Vanguard of Undeath] before he stomped down on the ground as he activated all his passive skills. An explosion of miasma erupted as Zac appeared right beneath the dragon's chest, and the cage of [Profane Seal] rose from the ground the next instant.

Even the hundred skeletons of [Undying Legion] appeared and surrounded the enormous beast, and they immediately moved toward it without any fear of death. It was a pretty huge Miasma expenditure, but Zac figured that he would throw everything in his repertoire on the big bastard before swapping back to his human form as he still had one change remaining.

But Zac still felt a bit stumped as he looked up at the beast. How the hell would he take this thing down? He had grown to a hulking behemoth himself, but he wasn't even close to reaching the dragon's chest with his axe. The thick legs looked extremely fortified as well by thick scales, and it was not like they were very good targets anyway since the thing could fly.

However, the dragon gave Zac no time to form a proper battle plan as it stomped at him with one of its frontal claws. Zac quickly scrambled out of the way as he took out the five strongest Offensive Talismans he had been given by the Undead Kingdom. He threw them all toward the scales on its chest, and a huge explosion of ice and poison rocked the whole area the next moment.

Zac's pitch-black eyes widened in surprise when the vision cleared to display completely unblemished scales. The dragon was still infuriated by the attack, and its long neck curved as it tried to catch Zac in its massive maws. Ten spectral chains slammed into its head with enough momentum to veer it off-course, before they tried to find a way beneath the scales to burrow into its body.

The scene gave Zac an idea and a spectral chain suddenly flashed over to him and looped a few rounds around his body before it hoisted him up in the air. His arm swelled to almost ridiculous proportions as he forced as much miasma as possible into it with [Unholy Strike] while the chain lifted him toward the dragon's softer underbelly.

The creation energies worked in his favor this time, and it felt like there was no limit to how much Miasma he could infuse into his biceps. It just kept growing to accommodate. He still didn't dare to overdo it though in case he harmed his main arm. His left hand was still barely serviceable since it was reformed, though he felt that he was gradually regaining control over it. But he couldn't afford that sort of thing happening to the arm he used to wield [Verun's Bite].

Zac growled as he swung the massive black bardiche with everything he got, and the power was actually so great that the whole beast was pushed back a few meters. A small stream of blood leaked out from the wound, and Zac's eyes lit up as he saw his chance. The first swing had been infused with the Fragment of the Axe to cut through the thick scales, but his second swing was instead infused with the corrosion of the Fragment of the Coffin.

Zac wasn't done there as he breathed out a cloud of corruption into the open wound as he frenziedly swung over and over to cause as much rot and fester as he could. But he only managed to swing four times before the beast roared and moved with shocking speed. It almost looked like it teleported as the bleeding chest was replaced by a scaled tail barreling toward him.

The shield of [Immutable Bulwark] quickly moved to block, but he was still slammed into the ground like a comet while the spectral chain was fractured into pieces. The other fourteen tried to worm their way into the open wound in retaliation, which stopped any follow-up from the beast.

It didn't help Zac much though as the dragon's attack had been infused with some sort of Dao Fragment related to brute strength. The armor of his transformation broke apart all along his back when he slammed into the ground with enough force to cause a small earthquake. It felt like half the bones in his body had broken from the impact, but he suddenly felt a lot better as a cold and soothing stream of energy surged across his body.

Zac's first guess was that the Shard of Creation had yet again healed him at the cost of even more of his lifespan, but the feeling was completely different this time. There was not that aching hollow feeling that had accosted him the last times, and he crawled up from the ground with confusion just in time to see 12 of the closest skeletons crack and crumble into dust. What was this?

Only then did the real use of [Undying Legion] dawn on him. They were not only soldiers but also decoys that took damage for him. He had not used the skill a lot since trying it out against the Avoli Parasites, and when he did use the skill it was only on weaker enemies. The skill cost a lot and he didn't want to waste any Miasma in tough battles, which meant he had only seen the surface use of the skill.

Since he hadn't really been hurt until now he hadn't witnessed the secondary use of the skill; damage transference. He wasn't given 100 lives though, judging by the fact that over 10 skeletons were destroyed from one single strike. But it was still enough to let him keep fighting a lot longer. He also wasn't sure how strong the effect was.

For example, he doubted the skeletons could deal with a massive wound like the one where he got his whole torso blown to bits.

However, Zac's problems had just started as he found that the dragon was looking down at him with malice in its eyes. It almost seemed enraged at the fact that its mighty tail hadn't even managed to hurt

him. Its wings started to furiously beat, causing torrential winds that made the miasma and corrosive mists to billow into the air.

The azure fractal in the sky was obviously strained as large cracks appeared on it before they mended themselves, but it stopped the dragon from going airborne. The beast did however manage to rise onto its back-legs, and Zac felt a foreboding sensation as a very familiar light lit up deep in the open maw.

An unceasing stream of scorching flames slammed into Zac the next moment, and he could only turtle up on the ground beneath his Fractal Bulwark. The flames carried a terrifying heat, and it felt like he was being boiled alive inside his little bubble. Less than a second passed before he felt that all the skeletons outside had been turned to ash, and he even sensed that the whole miasmatic cage struggled to withstand the sea of flames that covered the whole area by now.

The shield of [Profane Seal] finally broke a few seconds later, and Zac received a strong backlash that made him groan in pain. Even the thick bulwark started to show signs of tearing as small cracks let droplets of flames through.

He felt a scorching pain in his leg as one of them dripped right through a crack in the armor, but the burn was immediately healed by the Shard of Creation at the cost of even more life force. Zac knew he needed to finish the battles quickly. He couldn't let the Shard keep draining him to heal his wounds, or he'd return to Port Atwood as a senior citizen.

The flames finally abated, and Zac looked around only to see scorched earth in all directions. All the skeletal soldiers were gone, as was the cage trapping the beast. Even the vast swathes of Miasma and corrosive mists from [Winds of Decay] had been singed clean, leaving only superheated air.

Zac saw his opportunity as the dragon seemed pretty drained from having expelled a small ocean of flames, and he immediately swapped back to his human form. Lush growth rose from the ashen fields as the domain of [Hatchetman's Spirit] emerged, and Zac immediately launched a series of Fractal blades at the open maw of the dragon.

However, the Fragment-infused blades only caused minor scars on its face before they broke apart, and Zac knew he would have to use something stronger than that. Cosmic Energy surged in his body as he activated [Nature's Punishment], and the wooden fist emerged from the crack in space before it flew toward the exhausted dragon.

But another pulse from the Shard made Zac's hand twist and deform. Shockingly enough the same thing happened to the wooden hand, and it suddenly looked like a misshapen stump. The scene thankfully only lasted for a second before both of them turned back to normal after Zac shouted in his mind.

He had accidentally put too much focus on his hand from activating the skill, which the Shard had interpreted as desire.

A grand peak emerged from the enormous fractal in the sky the next second, and it shot straight down toward the head of the dragon. Zac wanted to end it once and for all with one massive strike, but he was dismayed to find that he had underestimated the sturdiness of a dragon's skull. Blood poured down from its head like rain, but it resisted the downward push with a furious roar.

It looked like it refused to give up in a battle of pure strength, and its whole body trembled as it tried to throw away mountain pressing down on it. However, its head had been noticeably pushed down toward the ground, and its throat was only five meters in the air while its whole body was fixed in position.

Zac knew he wouldn't get a better opportunity than this.

This was his final shot, but he knew that any attack with [Verun's Bite] wouldn't cut it against the thick plating protecting the dragon's throat. There were only two things in his repertoire that had a shot at killing this thing in one go. The first option was the third swing of [Deforestation], but it was impossible to launch the skill again after such a short duration.

Besides, he didn't have time to wind up 3 consecutive strikes before the dragon had managed to divert the mountain. He was already feeling that he was losing control of [Nature's Punishment].

The second option was more fraught with danger, but he had already come to a point of no return. He felt that both the remnants were already building up for another strike at the fractal cage, and he knew that the rune was already teetering on the brink of collapse. His best shot at surviving whatever came next was to exhaust both the slivers first.

Two knives appeared in his hands and he stabbed them into his shoulders before he tried to launch what should be his ultimate move. He hadn't tried this before, but he saw no real alternative. A normal bronze flash was extremely strong, but the implosion area wasn't large enough to wound a beast of this size.

The pale pink flash he had managed to summon on the Technocrat Ship might work, but he still had no idea what it actually did. It might even heal the dragon rather than hurt it for all he knew.

Besides, either of those attacks would only exhaust one of the remnants, and he wanted to tire both of them out before the Miasmic Cage broke open. He needed to see if he could create a new flash by fusing Bodhi and Coffin in hopes it would create a mix of the two. That would involve both the slivers, and it should release the strongest force he could muster.

If that couldn't kill a dragon, then nothing would.

He was extremely drained already, but he still pushed more mental energy into the two fractals on his shoulders than he had ever done before. His vision was turning blurred, but he forcibly held on to his consciousness as he jumped toward the dragon's throat. The two Fragments entered the modified [Cyclic Strike] without issue, and streams of energies started to converge in the middle of his chest to merge as usual.

But the moment the two energies tried to merge in his chest the remnants turned insane.