

The Fall 467

Chapter 467: Man Versus World

Over a hundred attacks teeming with power soared toward him, and the whole sky was shrouded by the multifarious display. Zac's fractal leaves condensed to cover a smaller area to create more layers of defense, but the defenses were quickly ripped to shreds by the onslaught.

Zac was far stronger than anyone here, but the attackers weren't weaklings by any means. This was a low-grade sector, but everyone present was still the strongest of a generation, all intent on taking him out. There was only so much [Nature's Barrier] could block before the leaves were exhausted, and he knew that he couldn't just sit around like a target dummy.

[Verun's Bite] keened with delight as Zac's arm was almost turning into a blur. One fractal blade after another radiating terrifying energy ripped into the storm of attacks, crushing most of them without even needing to clash. The extreme power that radiated out from the middle-stage Dao Fragment was enough to utterly dominate the weaker strikes, and they were ripped into swirls of Cosmic Energy.

However, if each of his fractal blades was like a powerful elephant, then the weaker attacks were like a sea of rabid hyenas that slowly managed to whittle them down. There were just too many attackers, and he felt his waves of fractal edges slowly getting pushed back as more and more cultivators joined the fight.

It was a bit disappointing to not being able to utterly crush his enemies with sheer might, but it was still a massive show of force that he could almost create a stalemate when exchanging blows with hundreds of the top geniuses of the sector. He also knew that it was a testament to just how powerful a Mid-Grade Dao Fragment was.

His weapon was just average if you discounted the uncommonly high spirituality of the Tool Spirit, and [Chop] was as basic a skill as they came. However, each blade still managed to crush a dozen beautiful and intricate skills that sailed toward him before they ran out of steam. Of course, if he didn't do something soon he might get himself or his two companions hurt.

However, Zac was prepared for exactly this kind of worst-case scenario, and Cosmic Energy streamed toward his neck.

Mysterious fluctuations spread out from his position the next second as a massive eye emerged out of the void. It was one of the treasures he had taken from the mentalist's Spatial Ring, a necklace with an eye that actually seemed alive. The conjured eye didn't move, but it rather just stared at the sea of cultivators and the incoming attacks. A mystic ray of blue light spread out the next moment, and the attacks cracked in an instant, leaving not a single one intact.

Dozens of warriors fell back with blood pouring from their eyes, their souls definitely hurt by the clash. It caused a lull in the battle, and Zac figured this was his last chance to stop the madness before it got out of hand.

"Stop now and I won't cause any trouble for you or your clans," Zac roared at the top of his lungs. "But I will kill everyone who stays behind, no matter heritage or affiliation! This is your only warning!"

His voice was filled with power, and the air shuddered around him as his blood-drenched aura was unleashed to its fullest. He hoped to wake these people up from their greed-fueled battle fervor. However, the effect of his words and his aura was far worse than he anticipated, and not a single one seemed willing to back down.

It was like they had eaten stimulants or some sort of berserking pill.

A few had been killed or incapacitated by the massive eye, but new warriors filled the ranks, and Zac could see that the streets were filling up with people who wanted to join the chaos. Just defending wouldn't cut it, and he needed to go with Ogras' idea. Kill a few chickens to scare the monkeys as the demon called it.

Another defensive treasure cracked on his hand, causing a shimmering fractal made from churning waters to appear in the air. Torrential typhoons shot toward the cultivators and swallowed up even more attacks, but a few still slipped through and slammed into his newly formed leaves. The storms weren't as effective as the mysterious eye in pushing back the attackers, but it gave Zac enough time to charge up [Deforestation].

Zac was going all-out from the start. If the first swing wouldn't convince them to back off, then there was a tsunami of flames waiting. If people still hadn't managed to curb their greed he would release the [Axe of Desolation] and end the battle altogether. The massive woodcutter's axe materialized above him, and Zac immediately initiated the [Axe of Felling].

You could say that he had started this battle with this very attack just before he was forced to flee into the tower, and he would end it the same way.

"Stop its activation!" a shout echoed out across the square, and Zac was suddenly covered in uncomfortable energy that made the Cosmic Energy in his body feel slow and listless.

He quickly activated the first defensive charge of [Hatchetman's Spirit], but his eyes widened when the attack passed right through the emerald shield and drilled into his chest.

"It's a curse, a rare type of mental attack!" Galau screamed from behind. "You can break it by force or treasures, look inward!"

Zac's eyes lit up and he looked inside, and he immediately spotted crude runes covering the Skill Fractal for [Deforestation]. He rotated a storm of Cosmic Energy to slam into it, and three forceful pushes cracked it wide open. It caused light internal bleeding as well, but it wasn't a big deal for someone like Zac.

However, that was just the first of dozens attempts to tie down the massive axe in the sky. It was covered in ten layers of restrictive arrays as well, and no matter how hard Zac struggled he wasn't able to move his arm forward. It was a type of counter to his attacks he had never seen before, and he couldn't figure out any quick fix to launch the skill.

His axe was already tied up in the swing, making it impossible to send out any fractal attacks to destroy the restrictions. [Nature's Punishment] was liable to destroy the axe as well, not that Zac was able to unleash both the attacks at the same time. Ogras seemed to have understood the issue as a beam of

darkness slammed into the restrictions from behind, but only the outermost of the many layers of restrictions were broken.

"Don't worry," Zac said as he looked back. "I'll deal with this."

He felt thankful that the demon was willing to stick his neck out in a messy situation like this, but Ogras was honestly more of a liability than an asset at this moment unless he had completely transformed during the time since they parted ways in the tower. He could only activate yet another of the one-time treasures, and he felt a large chunk of Cosmic Energy leave his body as a thousand golden swords shot toward the restrictions around the [Axe of Felling].

The restrictions were ripped to pieces before the swords continued toward the mob and caused widespread carnage as the summoned weapons slipped straight past hastily erected shields and into their bodies. However, the [Axe of Felling] was already dissipating, and Zac had lost his connection to the fractal axe. Nothing happened as Zac swung [Verun's Bite] over and over until the massive woodcutter's axe dissipated.

Zac growled with annoyance and tried to resummon the axe, but he was shocked to find that the skill wouldn't activate. It seemed that [Deforestation] had been put on its cooldown since the first swing had technically been initiated. Zac didn't even know that an outcome like this was possible, and he scrambled for new ideas to deal with the mob and their next salvo of attacks.

Zac activated another one of the treasures, an offensively geared ring that released an invisible force that made the whole square twist and bend. Dozens fell to their knees screaming, their eyes and ears bleeding as they clutched their heads. It looked like the mentalist had been in possession of multiple mental attack treasures in addition to her terrifying skills.

The attack gave Zac a short breather and he turned toward his two companions who were still hiding in the back.

"How do I defend against more curses?" Zac asked.

Galau only hesitated for a short moment before he took out a small doll and threw it over to Zac.

"Pour some energy into this. It will take your place. But curses are very hard to plant when the target is anticipating it," the merchant hurriedly said as his eyes darted back and in search of any lurking threat. "You can also guard your fractals with your Daos if they try it again."

Zac nodded in thanks before he turned back toward the enemies. Losing [Deforestation] to such a trick was a huge blow, but he wasn't out of options just yet. Cosmic Energy surged into his hand instead, and the sky above him cracked.

He also activated [Hatchetman's Rage] for good measure, as he was confident that the Splinter was in no condition to cause any trouble at the moment. The leaves surrounding him suddenly lost the beautiful fractals covering their surface as the wooden hand emerged from its separate dimension. Zac needed to make this one count, so he chose to infuse the attack with the Fragment of the Bodhi rather than his defensive canopy.

However, the wooden hand barely had time to move more than ten meters before it was almost blasted to pieces by three beams of light that converged right at its position. Zac endured the pain in his own

hand and looked around, realizing that three attackers were holding identical mirrors covered in fractals. It was no doubt an array, and if there was one there were bound to be more arrays waiting to be activated.

A shockwave spread out from his original position as he flashed forward, two massive avatars appearing in an instant as a bracer on each of his arms cracked. One formed a vast cloud of darkness that covered the sky. Everything that entered it disappeared, including the beams of light. The other was a kneeling warrior without features, and he enclosed Ogras and Galau in a protective embrace.

The second treasure was activated to prevent the attackers from taking his two companions hostage in case he needed to enter a melee with the mob, whereas the second one would let him complete his skill. The vast clouds allowed the hand to move forward shrouded in darkness, and it quickly managed to erect its emerald array above the chaotic army.

However, its activation was by no means uncontested as over twenty avatars and powerful attacks rose to meet it.

The combined power the dozen elite warriors was barely able to hold back the descent of the punishment, and Zac found it difficult to make any headway. Zac was considering whether he should try to cause some chaos by jumping into the fray or perhaps weaken their coordination with another treasure.

Finally, he also decided to make a move himself. It would put Ogras and Galau at some risk, but he felt he needed his hands to get a bit bloodied if he wanted to end this thing. Perhaps the mob thought he kept using treasures because he wasn't actually that strong, which emboldened them to keep going. It would put him in harm's way of his own punishment, but he was durable enough to withstand some friendly fire.

He was just about to flash forward with [Loamwalker] when a group of cultivators suddenly appeared out of nowhere at the front of the army. Most of them radiated a powerful aura that could almost match the weaker warriors in the Battle of Fates, and Zac knew that the true elites of the sector had made their move.

Zac wasn't worried in the slightest, rather the opposite. He believed if he managed to take out these people then any cohesion in the army would crumble, and he would only need to defend against some weaklings for another minute to make it out alive. Zac directly charged at the quintet, but he didn't have time to move before each of them produced a different treasure in their hands.

"Four Gates!" one of the men shouted, and one massive doorway appeared in each direction around Zac.

The doors cracked open, and four densely inscribed hands emerged, each one forming a different seal. Zac noticed there was a group of warriors behind the man who had created a War Array to support the summoning, but he didn't have a chance to even attack before he was beset by a series of hallucinations.

Not only that, it felt like the world was twisted and inverted. He saw that his hand moved when he tried to walk, and the world was suddenly upside-down. It was like all his wires had been crossed, and just making the smallest movement needed great focus. Eating one of the mental pills and cracking another

defensive treasure did alleviate the symptoms somewhat, but it was still a struggle to understand what was going on around him.

Zac knew he would have been able to improve the situation by infusing [Mental Fortress] with the Fragment of the Bohdi Rather than Fragment of the Coffin, but he knew that the still-struggling [Nature's Punishment] would be destroyed if it lost its Dao empowerment. He really needed to take out these five new arrivals, he arduously split his attention from the wooden hand to shoot out a series of fractal blades toward the group.

"Six Directions!" a second cultivator shouted immediately as Zac launched his attacks, and six elongated Fractals formed a circle in the sky.

Zac growled in annoyance when he saw that he had been trapped by a shield that blocked his strikes with only the smallest of cracks forming, and he realized that it might be even sturdier than the cage he created with [Profane Seal].

But these people would soon understand he wasn't someone they could trap so easily.