

## The Fall 555

### Chapter 555: Trinity

Zac's robes fluttered as his massive aura caused sharp winds to blanket the mountain peak. However, he wasn't in any state to notice the tumultuous state of the mountain he was sitting on. His full attention was split between the magical scene in the air that held the conceptualization of his path, and the all-out struggle below that resonated with him.

The two spheres seemed to hold the powers to both destroy the world and recreate it, but they were still bound and manipulated by the third force in the middle. If the two spheres were represented by the two armies below, then the war itself represented a third force that drew the two opposites toward each other, changing their energies through conflict.

Most of Zac's waking hours over the past months had gone into trying to understanding the various moving components that comprised his unique situation, when he wasn't putting out fires left and right. On the most fundamental level, there were his two classes and their corresponding Daos, but that was just one aspect of his cultivation path.

There were also his weaponry and skills, and even Port Atwood. Yrial and his guidance was also an important factor, and his master's own path had been the reason that Zac so arduously tried to form a cycle of Life and Death until giving up during the Tower of Eternity. There was also the issue of the two remnants in his head, and the powerful bloodline he suspected himself to have.

Not everything needed to necessarily be part of some sort of cultivation masterplan, but the more the better. The more factors behind his success he managed to integrate into his path, the better and sturdier it would become. That would become even more important if he actually managed to take the step into Dual Arcane classes in the future.

Moving forward from that point on would be far more complicated, putting huge requirements on one's foundation. Certainly, no piddling E-Grade warriors would be able to fathom a perfected path, but if there contradictions and mistakes were too large, then he might not be able to fix them further down the path.

The problem was that there had been a fundamental barrier to his improvements all this while; deciphering how all his unique points fit together. There was undeniably a theme of Life and Death, but he hadn't really figured out how to fuse that with his axe-work just yet. [Rapturous Divide] and [Blighted Cut] was a move in the right direction, but gaining scheduled skills couldn't be considered understanding one's cultivation path. He was still making isolated improvements without thinking of the whole, which was starting to become dangerous.

But that finally started to change.

He had completely lost any sense of time or his surroundings on the mountain by this point as his whole being was consumed by his epiphany. The Dao always felt elusive and intangible, but it was so clear to him at this moment. It felt like one breath right now was as effective as hours of silent meditation. He suddenly understood everything with unprecedented clarity. Where he currently was, and where he needed to go.

Zac realized that he had looked at it all wrong until now. He had thought of his cultivation path as one of duality, where life and death were the main components. He had two races and two classes and even two remnants to match them. However, there were also triplets in the mix.

He had three sets of Daos, each distinct and unique, and he could produce three different 'Sparks' from the remnants based on his Daos. However, he had been stuck in a mental trap even after discarding a cyclic path and the original purpose of [Cyclic Strike]. He had still seen his future path as one of duality, even if it wasn't one of skill and balance but rather force.

But Life and Death weren't the concepts that defined him or his rise after the Integration. It was his struggle.

His path was not one of Cyclic Dominance that used skilled control to seamlessly switch between states and concepts, and neither was it one of Harmonic Equilibrium. His path was one of struggle, where the flames of war would open the path of Life and Death. His path was one of a Defiant Struggle that would pave a bloody path all the way toward the peak.

One year ago, Zac had been stranded in the middle of nowhere with nothing but a hatchet in his hand. Now he was one of the most powerful people in the younger generation in the whole sector, and his name was known across whole galaxies. Was this thanks to his deep insight into Life and Death? Of course not.

The air screamed as [Verun's Bite] appeared in his hand, its blackish edge casting a deathly gleam. Zac's eyes turned down to the axe, the weapon which had followed him since the beast waves. His weapon had been a constant through his struggles, but yet it had been relegated to become some sort of delivery-method for his "more advanced" concepts.

But that was completely backward.

His weapon wasn't just a replaceable component, it was the catalyst to everything. Without it, his path was dead in the water, just like the two remnants in his mind who were stuck at an impasse that would only end when one of the two was defeated.

Zac's eyes flashed as he remembered the Stele and the vision it brought. The ancient plaque carried the essence of a primordial concept as it soared through space in search of new generals. It pushed the idea that without struggle there would be nothing. A universe could be born, only to never flourish. It would remain lifeless and slowly die to entropy over the countless eons if there was no catalyst for change and improvement.

It wasn't a duality he was looking to create, but a trinity with the axe in the center. The axe contained his struggle, his determination, and his undying will, and those things could even influence life and death itself as long as he became powerful enough. It would be the catalyst, the seed for change.

In the case of the sparks, 'War' also represented his personal control. He had seen how things went once already when he excluded his Fragment of the Axe to create the Chaos Pattern. He had immediately lost control and conjured the System itself. He was just a cog rather than someone in control, and it was almost a miracle that he was still alive after doing something so foolhardy.

If his current ideas were correct, then the Fragment of the Axe was crucial when touching upon Creation and Oblivion. It was the fragment he was the most skilled with, and it was outside the purview of the two remnants. It was truly his, and he could use this fact to draw in the opposing powers of both his two other Daos or the Remnants, and from there push their struggle to suit his goals by being the general in charge of the war.

That was why the Fragment of the Axe had been needed to create useable sparks. If you took that part out of the equation, you only had Oblivion and Creation to create Chaos, and those two were still exclusively the Heaven's Domain. He was only borrowing a small and simplified corner of the vast power of Oblivion and Creation through the remnants, and there was no point in making it the core of his cultivation path.

That small insight made him realize something else. Was the ultimate spark perhaps not the combination of his Fragment of the Bodhi and Fragment of the Coffin, but rather a combination of all three of his Daos? Was that the key to activating both the Remnants at the same time? He had essentially become a vessel for the System the last time, but things might be different in the future if he managed to impose his will with the help of his Axe Dao.

Of course, he wasn't ready to test that any time soon. First of all, creating a spark with both remnants and his Fragment of the Axe would require him to somehow modify [Cyclic Strike] to allow three simultaneous streams of energy. Besides, he didn't dare something like that before his soul was much stronger.

It still wasn't certain that Zac would need to evolve his Fragment of the Axe into a Branch of War in the future to accommodate his most recent insights. He knew too little about those Daos. Of course, he knew too little about that powerful Dao, so taking that specific decision this early was pointless.

Besides, it wasn't like everything needed to revolve around the remnants. They contained mysterious and incredible power, but the dangers were there to match. For now, he just needed to survive them. Controlling them would come later. Whether they would be truly integrated into his classes or remain as foreign objects that could be used to unleash ultimate strikes was still impossible to decide.

Who knew, as long as he followed this road he might one day become powerful enough to control both Creation and Oblivion by himself without the need of any remnants at all. At that time he might be able to absorb them, or at least discard them as they would be useless by that point.

Because at that point he would become an actual wielder of Creation and Oblivion, perhaps even able to conjure Primordial Chaos.

A sense of danger suddenly cut through his thoughts as the skies themselves rumbled in anger. Zac was forcibly snapped out of his reverie and finally regained the sense of his surroundings, prompting him to look around in confusion. The sky was still colored crimson from one of the suns setting, aptly matching the still ongoing carnage below.

However, there were mountains of Zhix corpses by this point, making Zac realize hours might have passed in his special state. There was no one around him either, and Zac saw that the others in his elite group sat a few hundred meters away from him conversing with low voices or spectating the battle.

None of them seemed to have heard the thunder crashing into his ears just now though, as they didn't even glance toward the sky.

The fact that no one else seemed to have heard the thunder didn't relieve him, but it rather filled him with dread. He was pretty much a demi-god by old-world standards, there was no way he was hearing things wrong.

A flash of lightning stretched across the whole sky the next moment. It was massive, drawing a line as thick as the smaller sun across the stratosphere. It looked to be extremely far off as well, which only magnified just how much lightning that arc contained. It might spear straight through the planet if it landed instead of just passing by Earth through the horizon.

Zac's eyes were wide as he witnessed the spectacle, and even the furious battle down below was utterly forgotten. The bolt looked absolutely terrifying, but it was also extraordinarily beautiful. It felt like they were condensed from the purest Dao, and Zac felt that limitless insights were just out of his reach.

If he could only absorb a little bit...

However, Zac immediately cursed his stray thoughts. An extremely small tendril suddenly appeared just a few thousand meters above him. It looked like a purple piece of string, but Zac didn't hesitate to start running away from his people even if they were hundreds of meters apart. His mind was screaming with horror, and it was not just his Danger Sense.

That purple lightning was far less mysterious and a lot more terrifying when it was bearing down on you. It felt like that seemingly insignificant tendril contained the wrath of the Heavens themselves, and just the thought of getting struck by that thing filled him with horror. His first instinct was that it was the System sending lightning at him a second time, but something told him that might not be the case.

The bolt looked completely different compared to the lightning that the System conjured in the Tower of Eternity when he summoned the Chaos Pattern. For one, it was purple instead of blue and gold. Secondly, Zac had been able to sense a sort of presence that time, but now the feeling was completely different.

Before it had felt like a vast and indifferent being had looked down at him from high above, but he couldn't sense a being this time. It was rather like the Dao itself tried to kill him as he sensed a boundless, but inanimate, fury and killing intent in the bolt. It made him think that it might be less of a tribulation to withstand and more of an assassination attempt to survive.

It was futile. Zac was pushing [Loamwalker] to the limit, but it looked as though the tendril was affixed to the space right above his location no matter how far he moved. It snaked its way down with deceptive speed, and Zac barely had time to sit down and erect all his available layers of defenses.

However, some things were the same as during the Tribulation. His skills, talismans, and even Daos seemed utterly incapable of impeding the bolt. The shields cracked and even his soul received a backlash as the thunderbolt struck straight between his eyebrows.

What followed next was a pain even greater than when he jumped into the Cosmic Pond.