

The Fall 561

Chapter 561: Liar

Void's Disciple emitted a terrifying aura in his changed form, and Zac couldn't help but consider taking one of his newly acquired [Rageroot Oak Seeds] to push his power even further. However, he quickly decided against it and refocused on his two attacks.

The seeds belonged to the same category as [Hatchetman's Rage], both being berserking methods. Using multiple such means at the same was the height of foolhardiness as the gain was far from multiplicative, while the dangers were exponential. He was somewhat confident that his uniquely sturdy body would allow him to survive using both at the same time, but that wasn't the only issue. He might even become weaker than his normal strength if the two rampant powers clashed.

That would put the whole group at risk, and the backlash might be so terrifying that he wouldn't be able to use his full power for months. After all, it was important to remember that while his longevity increased as he cultivated, so did the time required for recuperation. It wasn't unheard of for cultivators to enter seclusion for millennia in order to slowly deal with particularly nasty afflictions.

As he saw it, the item was better left for his Draugr side that lacked such abilities on its own. Of course, there was also the issue of secrecy to consider. He didn't want to reveal cards like the seed or his second class unless he felt confident in taking out Adcarkas, and it still felt like he was peeling away one layer of another of his enemy.

His current combo wasn't far from his peak strength though, and he was ready to make this one count. The enormous fractal appeared in the sky as the wooden hand was placed right above Void's Disciple, the pressure caused the Dominator to sink a few centimeters into the ground. However, his back was still ramrod straight, and he didn't try to extricate himself from either the chains or the pressure of [Nature's Punishment].

He seemed perfectly confident in being able to rebuff whatever Zac could bring forth.

A small branch immediately started to descend from the fractal, as it didn't feel that any of the other punishments would have a particular advantage against the Zhix. The Mountain would have a similar crushing effect, but it didn't benefit from his Fragment of the Bodhi nearly as much as the tree did.

However, the whole area was covered in darkness before the sapling had time to grow into a towering tree. It wasn't Void's Disciple who was conjuring a counter though, but rather Ogras who had drenched the whole area in shadows. A storm of attacks slammed into the Dominator's barrier the next moment as thousands of shadow spears rose out of the shade. The spears didn't contain a large amount of power on their own, but they were innumerable.

Ogras himself was enshrouded in extremely dense power, and he dove from the sky with shocking speed, his spear stabbing straight into the shield with enough force to cause the whole thing to wobble. It wasn't enough to completely break it, but his efforts should no doubt have pushed the barrier a lot closer to running out of steam as it didn't have a source of energy.

Rhubat and his brethren had summoned their enormous sigils as well, and they slammed into the shield from different directions to overtax the defensive shield. The sigils were a lot smaller now that they

weren't powered by the combined energy Zhix Armies, but they were still nothing to scoff at as they were powered by life force instead.

The shield shook and heaved, but Zac was shocked to see that it somehow managed to stay intact. Adcarkas' amulet must have been a real peak defensive treasure to withstand such punishment, almost rivaling the ones Zac had lifted from the mentalist's pouch.

Zac still believed it should be a peak E-Grade talisman at best though, even if Void Disciple wasn't restricted like people were in the Tower of Eternity. The reason was simple; activating even a low-quality D-Grade talisman was as taxing as throwing out over a hundred E-Grade talismans. Even Zac would be completely drained of Cosmic Energy before it was half-activated.

So it was with some confidence he instructed the branch to stab straight into the ceiling of the dome, and the barrier actually popped like a soap bubble. The desperate attacks of the others had exhausted the barrier enough to pave the way for Zac, and he intended to make the most of it.

The four chains grew taut as Zac tried to restrict the Zhix as much as possible, but the Dominator still managed to point his left hand toward the sky with a savage grin. Three small vortices appeared behind him the next moment, all of them hovering behind his head like a halo. They didn't look like galaxies though, but rather whirlpools with the core being a bottomless darkness like a black hole.

One of them flew up to Adcarkas' fist, and the vortex grew to over fifty meters diameter in an instant. Zac frowned when a black pillar rose out of it the next moment, rising toward the rapidly growing branch that kept gaining momentum as it pushed downward.

What were the odds that his nemesis had such a similar skill as his own?

The massive pillar collided with the tip of the blooming tree branch, and the clouds in the sky were pushed away from the tremendous shockwave. It was like space itself cried as the two strikes tried to destroy the other, but it looked like neither Void's Disciple nor Zac could claim an advantage. Zac didn't bother about that though as he rushed forward, and he was in front of the Dominator the next moment, both of them shrouded from the sun by the pillar above.

This close Zac actually made a new discovery. It wasn't a black pillar that Void's Disciple had summoned, but it was actually a massive finger over a hundred meters long. Even more shocking, not even the whole thing had emerged, making Zac wonder just how huge the being to whom the finger belonged was. But the good news was that it seemed as though Void's Disciple needed to match his finger with the skill, forcing him to keep pointing toward the sky.

The enormous branch was infused with the wrath of nature and his own Dao though, so even this massive poke wasn't able to eradicate it. Cracks and explosions kept appearing across the trunk as the finger was infused with whatever Dao the Dominator utilized, but the branch quickly regrew and shot more and more branches into the finger to whittle it down. If [Nature's Punishment] actually broke through right now Zac would harm himself as well, but he had a plan for that.

The radiant luster on both the wooden hand and the branch suddenly dimmed as Zac retracted the Fragment of the Bodhi, but his fractal edge lit up like a beacon instead. He had transferred his Dao infusion to his second strike, and the branch was quickly being dismantled as the finger pushed upward.

That was fine by Zac though, as [Nature's Punishment] was meant to create an opening and restrain the Zhix even further.

A puff of golden clouds swallowed them both as Zac slammed his axe in a downward motion aimed to cut the Zhix from shoulder to hip, but another of the vortices had appeared in front of Void Disciple's free palm. It actually swallowed a good deal of the golden clouds, but Zac still knew he had succeeded as his target was illuminated in a golden sheen. [Rapturous Divide] was his only E-Grade skill in this class, and it wasn't as easy to counter.

However, Zac needed to get the second strike in as well, and fast. His skill in the sky was on the verge of falling apart, and Void Disciple's other hand would be freed in a second. He activated [True Strike] a second time, pushing all of his killing intent into creating a believable illusion of a fatal attack. The Zhix had impeccable instincts though and ignored the feeling, but both Zac and he were surprised to see a familiar spear stabbing the Dominator from behind.

It was obviously Ogras who had taken the opportunity to launch a hidden strike from the large swathes of shadows that Void's Disciple had created with his finger.

The wound barely drew blood, but Adcarkas briefly lost his concentration from the surprise and pain, and Zac reacted by instinct. His fractal edge bloomed with the sinister power of both the second half of [Rapturous Divide] and the Fragment of the Coffin as Zac swung [Verun's Bite] with both urgency and force. Void Disciple's eyes widened in alarm and the last vortex started to expand with an explosive speed.

However, it was too late.

The two shrouds had come in contact, and the divide between Heaven and Hell was drawn. A smooth line appeared across Void Disciple's torso before his body fell apart. The spatial divide had completely bisected the Dominator, and the angle should have destroyed lungs, heart, and most of his innards in one go.

Jubilation filled Zac's heart, but his mind suddenly screamed of mortal danger. There was no hesitation as he flashed away with [Loamwalker]. Ogras, true to form, had already receded into the shadows once more, which was lucky as the three vortices simultaneously imploded. There was a bit similar to when he used his Bronze flash on Harbinger, but not quite as final.

A huge crack in space appeared where they had fought, swallowing everything from Zac's branch to tons and tons of soil before the scar closed. Zac had no idea where that scar led, but his instincts told him that his odds of survival would have been zero if he had been caught up in that blast.

"Good attempt," a snort echoed out from every direction the next moment though, and Zac's elation was quenched in an instant.

There had been no surge of Cosmic Energy when Zac killed the Dominator!

Void Disciple had appeared once more standing exactly where he stood earlier, or rather in the bottom of the crater he had created. Unscathed. The fatal wound was gone, and even the fetters of [Love's Bond] lay down at the ground covered in cracks. His face wasn't a mask of fury either, but one of ridicule as he stomped down on the ground with a force that matched Rhubat's earlier efforts.

A wail echoed out the next moment as Ogras was somehow forced out of the shadows. The demon desperately tried to escape, but he was punched in his chest with enough force to be thrown over a hundred meters away. A huge amount of blood splashed in every direction until Ogras haplessly fell on the ground. He rolled for over a dozen meters more before he finally lay there, unmoving.

Horror and confusion plagued Zac's mind, but there was no time to see if his companion was alive.

"I have to admit, I underestimated you. It is no disgrace that my son fell to your hands," Adcarkas said as he surveyed the battlefield. "I can't help but wonder what else you have in store. But no matter. My intuition tells me we will have a chance to find out in the future, if you can make it to the heart of the Mystic Realm that is."

A token appeared in his hand the next moment, and he crushed it before Zac had a chance to respond. A bright flash obscured the crater for an instant, and when the light disappeared the Dominator was gone, not leaving a single clue as to where he had disappeared to.

They had failed.

Shock filled Zac's heart, and he flashed over to Ogras' unmoving form instead of trying to find the fleeing Dominator. Not that Zac felt he had any chance of catching up in either case. He didn't have a clue where the Zhix had gone. Even his upgraded [Cosmic Gaze] could only see a yellow glow at the spot he crushed the talisman.

It was some sort of escape treasure, but not one dependent on the Dao of Space.

But Zac didn't care about that right now as the demon released a racking cough before he weakly looked around. Zac's eyes were trained on Ogras though, or rather the enormous hole in his torso where his heart should have been.

"Did we get him?" the demon weakly asked, his voice barely a whisper.

"We got him," Zac said with red-rimmed eyes.

"What a shitty liar," Ogras smiled as he closed his eyes.