

The Fall 632

Chapter 632: Asura

A swarm of Drones shot out through the portal above the heads of the soldiers as well, though Zac could still see that Kenzie hadn't passed through the portal. They didn't follow the charging army but rather formed what looked like a protective array. Layers of barriers appeared the next moment, protecting the spatial tunnel from any errant attacks.

It allowed Zac to focus on the task at hand, and he shot forward, aiming straight for the most energy-dense spot according to [Cosmic Gaze] since the previous attacks had turned any visibility to zero. A squad of lizardmen soldiers suddenly appeared to his left, but they didn't even have the chance to react before they were bisected by a fractal edge that ripped through them like they were made from dry wood.

It wasn't Zac himself, but rather the special edge he could summon with [Chop]. As for himself, his back was already lit up with a lustrous halo as he took another step with [Loamwalker], appearing right in front of his target. Or so he thought.

Zac expected to appear in front of the bishop, but he instead found himself face-to-face with a three-meter tall Asura with six arms. One arm held a cudgel, another a spear. Two held burning censers and the last two were empty-handed. It radiated an oppressive aura as four burning halos behind its back lit up the surroundings. Dense scriptures were visible inside the flames, and Zac found himself drifting off after trying to discern their meaning.

He quickly snapped back to reality, just in time to avoid a lance of flames that shot out from one of the Asura's hands. An extremely forceful attack with the cudgel quickly followed, but Zac had already adapted by this point and met fire with fire as he swung [Verun's Bite] at an upward angle. A scorching wind slammed into his face when the weapons clashed, and he felt a stab of pain in his arm when a foreign Dao tried to burrow its way into his body.

The wave of heat was extremely painful as well, forcing him to close his eyes for a moment as to not get blinded. The power of the divine avatar was pretty impressive, but he was obviously no slouch himself. His upward swing had forced the Asura off its feet and thrown it a few meters back. It was already working on its next attack though, as two plumes of golden smoke spread out around him from the censers.

Zac had no idea where this oppressive creature had come from, but he could only assume it was some sort of transformation of the bishop. In fact, after having clashed once with the divine being he realized it was expending lifeforce at a crazy pace, far more than the Anointed ever did. He guessed that this transformation was an ultimate suicide attack that only the elites of the church could use.

Not only that, but the Asura was also clearly imbued by a War Array since Zac could see streams of energy enter his body from the still-shining sun above. He wanted to attack the support squad, but he couldn't actually figure out who was powering the sun. He had heard of War Arrays with masking abilities before, but this was the first time Zac encountered one.

Killing the soldiers who empowered their leader with a War Array was such an obvious tactic, so a lot of people had worked on solutions to the issue. One such method was to obfuscate the source of the

boost, just like now. It helped keep the supporting soldiers safe, but it had clear disadvantages as well. First of all, it only worked in large-scale battles where the Array Masters could blend in with other soldiers. Secondly, the range was generally limited.

Zac thought of ignoring the Asura and instead target the normal soldiers, but he eventually gave up on the idea. The bishop was radiating impressive power, and he would be able to cause a lot of destruction of his own if Zac wasn't there to stop him. The bishop was probably more than willing to adopt a scorched-earth-tactic, but Zac was a lot less willing to sacrifice his people.

The censers in the Asura's hands had already been activated, and more and more of the golden dust spewed out in the surroundings. Zac knew he couldn't let the bishop continue unchecked, so he disappeared from his position as he activated his movement skill. Zac appeared behind the Asura almost instantaneously, and a powerful swing empowered by [Conformation of Supremacy] shot straight toward the halos that kept burning life-force.

A pained wail shocked suddenly his mind, forcing Zac to quickly cancel his attack. It was Verun that was actually harmed by the fierce heat. Something empowered by that much lifeforce could even harm his Spirit Tool it would seem, so Zac could only find another method to deal with his enemy. The Asura turned into a blur before he had the chance to launch a second attack though.

The golden diety pivoted with almost impossible speed, and the unencumbered hands made some unknown seals. Zac felt some danger the next moment, and he barely had time to jump back before one of the halos released a massive conflagration that swallowed the Asura and the ten meters surrounding it. It was the golden dust in the air that had ignited in spectacular fashion.

The flames were extremely intense, to the point that Zac couldn't see anything inside. He knew that even he would get badly burnt by those flames, so he could only stand guard outside the flame pillar, waiting to see what happened with the Asura. After all, he hadn't gained any Cosmic Energy, not that Zac believed the bishop would blow himself up the first thing he did.

As expected, the bladed head of a spear shot out from the conflagration with enough force to disperse the flames. Zac angled his head to avoid the stab, but he still felt a burning sensation on his throat as the spear radiated a terrifying heat. This much wasn't enough to stop Zac in his tracks though, and he took a step forward while taking advantage of the outstretched spear.

[Verun's Bite] keened as he ferociously swung at the Asura's chest just below the outstretched left arm holding the spear. The cultist tried to intercept the strike with its cudgel, but Zac caught the bishop's arm in a vise-like grip with his free hand as he continued the swing. Just as he was about to create a massive wound another arm turned to a blur, and one of the two censers appeared to block his edge.

The ceremonial tool was destroyed in an instant, and the whole hand holding it was cut-off at the elbow. Zac was, unfortunately, unable to keep his momentum going, as the censer exploded after being destroyed, releasing a huge cloud of that extremely combustible golden dust.

As expected, a halo lit up the next moment, and Zac stepped back to avoid a second inferno. However, his eyes widened when he realized that one of the free hands had grabbed his robes by the lapels, lifting him just as he was about to activate [Loamwalker]. The whole world turned white as a searing pain

threatened to swallow him whole, but Zac forcibly suppressed the agony as he swung his axe in a ruthless downward arc.

He felt molten metal beneath his feet a moment later, and he desperately rushed out of the conflagration. The flames dissipated only a few seconds later, exposing an Asura that now was missing two hands standing knee-deep in molten Memorysteel. The bishop seemed utterly undeterred though as he rushed forward to engage in another melee.

The screams and clamor of battle echoed all around him, meaning that the battle had turned into a frantic melee just like his own situation. Visibility was still very limited as the Asura had actually managed to set the Memorysteel around him on fire, but he could see blazing suns slamming into the Anointed's sigils, causing massive shockwaves. The ground beneath them was thankfully pretty thick, but Zac still couldn't help but worry that their war would destroy the whole section of the mountain, sending them into the abyss.

The quicker he finished the battle the better. But Zac didn't use any of his aces even when knowing that. He had already managed to confirm that the true leader of the Church of Everlasting Dao was missing. This man was pretty powerful, but he was ultimately just slightly stronger than the other bishops they had fought.

The leader he had encountered in the Dead Zone wasn't there, and Zac guessed that part of the cultists had already set off toward the Dimensional Seed. There was also the True Sky Faction, The Lunar Tribe, Void Beasts, and god knows what else to worry about. He couldn't burn through all his ultimates the moment he set foot on the mountain.

Thankfully it didn't seem like it would come to that anyway. Zac and the Asura kept fighting in a brutal melee, where the Asura tried to ensnare and incinerate Zac while Zac kept whittling the cultist down with ruthless efficiency.

A thump echoed out as the arm holding the large spear was fell onto the ground, and the Asura was covered in wounds and golden blood by this point. Zac was working quickly and methodically to dismantle him, but he was once more forced back as the Asura started swinging his censer like a lasso before unleashing a massive wave of flames.

Zac sighed in annoyance as he backed away again, his eyes scanning for a weakness in the sea of flames. He hadn't managed to unleash a killing blow, but not for a lack of trying. It felt like the Asura's Danger Sense could rival his own, as every time he was about to launch a lethal strike one of the four halos erupted, forcing Zac to back away.

The bishop was on his last legs though. One of the halos had already extinguished after just one minute of heated exchanges, and the remaining three were a lot dimmer compared to before. Each wave of flames was powerful enough to harm Zac, so they were definitely powered by a pretty significant amount of the bishop's remaining life-force. A couple of waves more and he might not even be able to keep standing.

Zac shot forward again, and he caught a lucky break when the Asura stumbled forward due to exhaustion and blood loss. Zac immediately pounced on the opening, but he realized something was wrong when he saw a ruthless gleam in the Asura's golden eyes.

“Glory to Heaven!” the Asura roared with an otherworldly tone that sounded like a chorus rather than one singular voice, and his arms wrapped around Zac's body in a burst of speed.

Over a hundred screams echoed out from all over the battlefield the next moment, and the sun above their head turned almost blindingly radiant. The halos behind the bishop's back turned horizontal as they rapidly started expanding, and the sun above their head started falling apart as the halos gobbled up the chaotic energies. Zac immediately tried to get out of the bearhug, his struggles only turning more violent as his Danger Sense kept growing in volume.

He was caught in an extremely tight embrace, but he was still able to move his right arm somewhat. It allowed him to unleash a furious barrage at the midriff of the asura, and he suddenly felt a surge of Cosmic Energy enter his body as the bishop was hacked in two. However, Zac's eyes widened in shock when the death of the cultist leader had no impact on the halos growing above their heads.

“Retreat!” Zac roared in case any of his soldiers were in the vicinity as he untangled himself from the corpse of the bishop.

However, he personally stayed behind as his Specialty Core activated. Transforming in the middle of a battlefield was a risky move, but he couldn't deal with the current situation in his human form. If the bishop's final attack was allowed to go off, it might collapse the whole section of the mountain. It was instilled with all the remaining life-force of the asura, along with what Zac suspected the life-force of the hundred soldiers who just screamed with pain.

Some fractal leaves wouldn't cut it against something like that; he needed to bring out his big guns.

He was making a bet; that his transformation would be quicker than the final attack of the Bishop. The three remaining halos kept expanding, and Zac couldn't help but panic as he saw them expanding toward where battles still raged. But the transformation finally completed, and Zac instantly stomped down on the ground. The fortifications of [Profane Seal] sprung up the next moment, sealing the growing halos inside.

Fifteen spectral chains started slamming into the radiant flames, but the halos were just too full of power. The chains couldn't even get near them, let alone damage them. Still, Zac kept infusing more and more Miasma into the skill to keep the lashing going. He hoped that every slam would weaken the halos a bit, which would make it easier to contain the final eruption.

As for Zac himself, he saw no reason to stay inside the cage. The chains of [Loves Bond] wound themselves around a Memorysteel cliff next to the closest gate, and Zac threw himself out through a small opening in the door he created. The Miasmic gate closed behind him, just in time before an apocalyptic explosion erupted inside.

Cracks spread across the gates and the towers of [Profane Seal], and the dome in the sky fluctuated wildly from the pressure. It looked like he tried to contain a sun. Zac infused more and more Miasma into the skill, but he knew that it was just a matter of time before it fell apart.

Just five seconds later the miasmic cage crumbled, and a sea of fire so dense that it had essentially turned into a liquid rolled toward him. Zac's skill had absorbed most of the kinetic force of the blast, but much of the raw energies remained. Zac could only grit his teeth and conjure [Immutable Bulwark] and expand it as much as he could.

The skill turned into an indomitable wall that towered twenty meters into the sky. But his Seed of Sanctuary had unfortunately been used to create the Fragment of the Bodhi, meaning that he was no longer able to turn it into a huge protective dome-like before. A series of earthen walls suddenly appeared to the sides of his barrier though as one Anointed after another appeared.

A scorched and bloodied Billy also appeared before he slammed his club into the ground, which caused a series of jagged metal spikes to block off part of the heat. Finally, a towering wall of shadows rose behind Zac, making it harder for anyone to spot Zac's transformation. Their help was enough to create a long enough wall to contain the flames, and they raged just for half a minute before they finally ran out of steam.

The sounds of battle were growing more and more sparse as well, and Zac even heard the sound of hundreds of drones flying about, blasting the ground with their powerful lasers. If Kenzie had gone through the portal their people had mostly reached the mountain already, and with the bishop gone and the remaining cultists exhausted, things would be settled soon enough.

The question was what he should do next, and his eyes turned toward the huge metal sphere hanging in the sky.