

The Fall 645

Chapter 645: Sever Karma

Hekruv Vira had already arrived, and he stood waiting a few dozen meters behind. However, he came over and looked over the cliffside after getting waved over by Zac.

"What a mess," the monkeyman muttered as he looked down at the battlefield.

"Can you make the Gemlings back away?" Zac asked.

"Are the insectoid warriors your people?" the monkeyman hesitantly asked. "If so... I think they might attack you as well. The Gemlings of clan Volor don't like to fight. But when they do, they go all the way. They'll fight until there are none left standing. That's why they're still around even though they were technically the weakest race for combat in this realm."

"Heart of a warrior," Rhubat nodded with appreciation, and a few of the Anointed gave the diminutive rockmen a second look.

"Those Zhix are a big reason why we came here. Not a single one can be left alive," Zac said, which made the monkeyman's eyes widen in surprise. "I'll deal with the cultists as well. We simply don't want the innocent to be caught up in the crosshairs."

"Alright..." Hekruv said with a nod. "I'll notify them of the situation. I should at least be able to have them not attack you. Give me a few minutes."

Something about the aura of Hekruv Vira changed the next moment. He stood just two meters away from him, but it was like he wasn't there. It wasn't just that he no longer emitted the slightest morsel of energy. There had to be some skill or Dao that made people discard his presence. Zac guessed it was some sort of stealth skill that the True Sky cultivator possessed, and Zac looked on with interest as Hekruv Vira jumped down and started running toward the battlefield without rousing any response.

"You heard him," Zac eventually said as he turned to Rhubat. "Do you need assistance?"

"With the Dominators missing the traitors are just rudderless children. We will perform the rites ourselves. Can your army deal with the fire-lizards?" Rhubat asked.

"We'll deal with them," Zac nodded. "Hopefully that's the last of the cultists in this place."

"Right," Ogras agreed from the side. "One quick genocide and then we'll get to the real good stuff."

The two made their way back, and the army was already mobilized by the time they arrived. Since Zac's people only needed to deal with a few hundred cultists, their army was only comprised of less than one hundred elites and roughly three hundred regular soldiers.

The elites included Zac, Billy, Ogras, Verana, four support squads, and one elite squad of 20 of the strongest warriors, making it an extremely powerful unit. As for the three hundred regular soldiers, they were the remaining people without any Spatial Seals, and they were just along for the ride to pick up a ticket back to Earth.

The other seven hundred people without seals were Zhix, and they would hopefully get theirs by taking out the thousands of traitors. Zac had already learned about the rules for Spatial Seals from Joanna. It was possible to take the seals of a fallen soldier, but those seals lasted for an even shorter duration than they did in the caves. Also, the one who seized the seal needed to have at least some contribution to the kill.

Thankfully that was easily circumvented by setting up War Arrays that provided weak but large-scale buffs. That essentially “tagged” the weak cultivators for all the kills. It would barely provide them Cosmic Energy from kills, but it was enough to seize the Seals. Everything came together in just a minute.

The warring sides had clearly been at it for a while, and Port Atwood just needed to clean things up. The Zhix Army and the elites of Port Atwood split up before they rolled over the hills like a tide, storming toward the combatants like a wave of death.

The battlefield was a perfect opportunity for Zac to consolidate his bloodline control through [Bloodline Resonance], and a ten-meter fractal blade rapidly grew in front of his axe. It shot toward the closest pack of cultists, but how could they not have spotted the army running toward them? A series of flaming barriers had already sprung up, which was barely enough to protect the lizardmen from the initial salvo.

However, a second blade, this one conjured by the void, shot forward the next moment, passing straight through the weakened shields and reaped the lives of three zealots. Zac flashed forward, and with a thought let his aura explode outward, instantly quenching the fires over a hundred meters around him as he killed another two cultists with a ruthless swing.

He didn’t immediately set out toward the next target, but he rather looked on as five warriors scurried forward, each of them jumping toward one of the fallen zealots. Three of them soon stood up with disappointment, but two warriors had wide grins plastered on their faces as they looked at the palms of their hands.

“Move back and let others take your places,” Zac said, and the two cultivators quickly retreated after giving thanks.

A few new faces took their place, and Zac moved toward the next group of cultists. He kept a relaxed pace as he moved, partly because he wanted to get used to the feeling of fighting with his bloodline, and partly to allow for the normal soldiers to keep up.

Four zealots saw his approach, and they launched a desperate and suicidal pincer attack in an attempt to drag him down to hell with them. The first lizardmen two were cut in two by Zac through a swift horizontal swing of his axe, but some problems occurred immediately after.

The remaining two warriors were spear-users, and two flaming lances shot toward Zac’s torso. Such an attack would normally never hit him, but Zac looked down in surprise when he suddenly felt two spear stab into his chest. They didn’t manage to pierce deeper than two centimeters, but it still hurt like hell. Zac growled in annoyance before a fractal blade appeared out of nowhere, decapitating the two warriors before they had a chance to react.

There was a problem with his bloodline, or rather his control over it. Turning it on or off wasn’t very hard, but there was a small delay when rapidly swapping back and forth. He had tried discarding the

normally conjured blade and instantaneously summon a new one, but his commands had been too quick which resulted in nothing happening.

That led to Zac holding out his axe in some sort of victory pose while letting the two spears gore him.

The injuries were just shallow flesh wounds though, and Zac quickly moved from pack to pack, and the people following in his wake kept changing as one warrior after another got their hands on a seal. Zac was making one discovery after another as well, and his battle style was rapidly incorporating [Force of the Void].

The second surprise after getting himself stabbed was that he wasn't able to activate [Hatchetman's Spirit] with the skilleven after trying multiple times. First, he couldn't understand what was going on, but he eventually had an idea and tried to activate a humongous fractal edge. Nothing happened this time either, but Zac kept trying until a fifty-meter blade appeared out of nowhere.

It was range.

His [Force of the Void] was somehow connected to his body, and it couldn't conjure things too far away from where he stood. Fifty meters seemed to be the limit at the moment, which was neither far nor short. It would still allow for ambushes in a one-on-one battle, but it wouldn't work with a maxed-out [Rapturous Divide] or large-scale skills like [Profane Seal]. [Deforestation] would probably work since the summoned axes would appear right above his head, but he didn't want to waste that skill on some cannon-fodder cultists.

His next insight was that he needed free space even within those fifty meters to use Void Energy. For example, Zac tried conjuring a fractal edge that would pierce the head of a cultist. That was an ambush tactic that worked fine when activating [Chop] the normal way, but the skill wouldn't activate with Void Energy when it would occupy the same space as the lizardman's body.

Zac's best guess was that the skills were conjured in an instant or conjured in the void and then teleported over. In either case, it wouldn't work when the skills would occupy the space of something else. Only after slightly moving his axe could Zac have the blade appear right next to the cultist's head, allowing Zac to quickly lob it off.

The final insight was that it actually was possible to start a skill the normal way and boost the speed by activating his bloodline. For example, he could conjure half a fractal blade, only to have the second half appear in an instant. It didn't save much time, but it might be possible to catch someone off-guard using that trick.

There were only so many enemies to test things out on though, and the battle was dwindling after just ten minutes. The Zhix and Gemlings was the weaker side even if they had an advantage in numbers, but they had made up for it in ferocity. The cultists were simply exhausted by the point Port Atwood arrived, making their bloody work extremely effortless.

Furthermore, Billy once more showcased his prowess as he summoned a massive golden hammer. It had to be one of his level 75 skills, and even Zac felt some pressure from the insane weight it emitted. As for the cultists that got hit by its slam, they were turned to a disgusting mush. Zac couldn't understand why the skill was so powerful at first, but he soon realized that the hammer resonated with the Memorysteel Mountain somehow, borrowing some of its nigh-endless weight.

The skill probably wouldn't be as powerful in a non-mountainous environment, just like how [Nature's Punishment] needed something to draw from to work. With Billy smashing over thirty cultists to bits the fight was essentially over since over two hundred of them had already been killed by that point. The rest started to self-immolate in a final act of defiance, but Zac and Ogras unleashed a furious offense to kill them before they could suicide as to not lose any of the remaining Seals.

The situation was similar on the Anointed's side. The traitor Zhix were completely trashed, but not one of them tried to flee. They fought to the last man, allowing them to at least die in battle. The Gemlings hadn't actually backed away either, just like Hekruv Vira guessed. With the cultists occupied, the Gemlings jumped at the Zhix with maniacal fervor, but they thankfully didn't extend their hatred to the Anointed and their army.

The battle was completely lopsided and the losses of Zac's forces were minimal. Left were roughly five hundred Gemlings that looked in Zac's direction hesitantly. Zac swung his axe once to rid it of the blood and viscera that covered it before he stowed it away.

"What now?" Ogras asked as he walked over. "Is it time?"

Zac didn't immediately answer, but he rather looked out into the empty air for a few seconds. As expected, a prompt appeared the next moment, showing him the way. He felt that there was nothing else to do down here, and it looked like the system agreed.

Sever Karma (Training (8/9)): Sever the final Karmic Ties to Voridis A'Heliophos. Reward: Reward based on performance at the end of training regimen. (0/1)

[NOTE: Failure to comply with training regimen will result in loss of rewards.]

Zac looked at the quest, his eyes lighting up. It was finally time to end things once and for all. The threat of The Great Redeemer had loomed above his head for almost a year by now, but it would finally be all over by the time this quest was completed. At least that was his takeaway.

After all, the quest itself provided an extremely important clue. The task was to sever the last karmic ties, which meant that the moment the quest was complete, the Great Redeemer shouldn't be able to find Earth any longer. Before this Zac had worried about hidden safeguards in place, but this quest shouldn't be worded like this if there were more hidden beacons on Earth or something similar.

As to where the quest wanted him to go, it was obvious. The Dominators had already abandoned their followers and captives, instead heading for the heart of the Mystic Realm.

It was up there the real treasures waited, and up there the fate of Earth would be decided.