

The Fall 737

Chapter 737: Grand Origins

Zac woke up, and he was immediately beset by an intense hunger as he sat up with a grunt. He pushed down the sense of starvation as he looked around, and he was relieved to see that the situation wasn't too bad. He had been completely consumed by his Bloodline Vision even after having his soul evolve, but his surroundings were still somewhat intact.

Sometime during his breakthrough, the cave had been breached and flooded, but he was still protected from the currents outside. The cave itself had undergone a massive transformation though as all the flowers and the materials they had collected were gone, and the cave itself had grown to over five times in diameter.

It wasn't too bad, and Zac suspected it was thanks to the fact that he had somehow created thousands of small vortices this one rather than one massive one right behind his back. He couldn't be sure, but Zac felt the difference was related to Karz's ability at the end. However, while Karz had become something like a magnet that extracted pure energy from all kinds of sources, his bloodline had rather proactively gone out on the hunt to swallow them into the void.

It was the second time he had been shown Karz and his unique abilities, and the visions filled him with mixed emotions. He had already suspected it after the first vision, but now it almost felt certain. His mother's clan had somehow gotten their hands on the genes of the Limitless Emperor, and it was that supreme being's bloodline that coursed through his veins.

It was no wonder Leandra had said he carried the Original Sin. He had initially thought it was because his birth had drawn the wrath of the Heavens, but that wasn't necessarily the case. What could be considered Original Sin, if not creating the System itself? Emperor Limitless had to be the biggest sinner in the history of the Multiverse in the eyes of the Technocrats.

Zac didn't know what to think about the situation. He wasn't even sure if he was an actual descendant, or if Karz's bloodline had somehow been extracted and implanted into his body. Zac was pretty certain that he wasn't a pure clone though, partly through clues left behind by Leandra, and partly by the fact that he didn't look like Karz at all.

Karz was definitely human, but looked somewhat of Mediterranean descent, with black wavy hair and an olive complexion. His irises were golden, and his features were truthfully a lot better than Zac's.

The real situation was a bit unclear, but Zac had a decent guess what his mother's Clan had been thinking. It wouldn't be too surprising if the Limitless Emperor would have created some sort of unique access methods to the System, and Leandra might have planned on using his Bloodline like some sort of backdoor.

Add Jeeves hidden by a perfected Duplicity Core, and they had all they needed to sneak the Dao of Technology into the System, perhaps even take control of the System itself. It was no wonder that the System reacted so violently when he was discovered, if Zac's guesses were correct. Hopefully, he would be safe as long as his Bloodline was corrupted, but it was something to keep in mind.

Perhaps he'd only invite punishment again if he uncorrupted the Void Emperor-bloodline.

For now, he could only put the matter of his heritage and Emperor Limitless aside, and instead focus on the gains. And just as he was about to open his status screen to check, he noticed something extremely odd; the amount of Twilight Energy he was assaulted by was extremely low, to the point that his Hidden Nodes had no problems dealing with it.

That wouldn't have been surprising if the flowers were still there, but the flowers had been absorbed and the cave had been breached. He should be under a furious assault of Twilight Energy already, but he was leisurely sitting in the submerged cave like nothing was wrong. He immediately activated [Piercing Gaze], and even if its quality wasn't as good as [Cosmic Gaze], it immediately exposed an extremely odd phenomenon.

The cave was absolutely drowned in Twilight Energy, but the situation was different within a sphere of two meters around his body. It was like he was enclosed in a small sanctuary, where the density was just a tenth of the energy outside. It wasn't like some void was swallowing the rest of the energy, but rather that it was somehow kept at bay.

Furthermore, he could actually sense a familiar and ancient aura radiating from his body, and Zac could somewhat guess what was going on. His eyes lit up, and he quickly opened his status screen to confirm his suspicions.

Name

Zachary Atwood

Level

114

Class

[E-Epic] Edge of Arcadia

Race

[D] Human - Void Emperor (Corrupted)

Alignment

[Earth] Port Atwood - Planetary Lord

Titles

Born for Carnage, Ultimate Reaper, Luck of the Draw, Giantsbane, Disciple of David, Overpowered, Slayer of Leviathans, Adventurer, Demon Slayer I, Full of Class, Rarified Being, Trailblazer, Child of Dao, The Big 500, Planetary Aegis, One Against Many, Butcher, Progenitor Noblesse, Duplicity Core, Apex Hunter, Heaven's Chosen, Scion of Dao, Omnidextrous, Eastern Trigram Hunt - 1st, Tyrannic Force, Achievement Hunter, The First Step, Promising Specialist, Tower of Eternity - 8th Floor, Heaven's Triumvirate, Fated, Peak Power, Sovereign-Select, Frontrunner, Apex Progenitor, Pathstrider, Runebinder

Limited Titles

Tower of Eternity Sector All-Star - 14th, Weight of Sin, Equanimity, Heart of Fire, Big Axe Gladiator

Dao

Fragment of the Axe - Peak, Fragment of the Coffin - Peak, Fragment of the Bodhi - Peak

Core

[E] Duplicity

Strength

7825 [Increase: 105%. Efficiency: 238%]

Dexterity

3502 [Increase: 75%. Efficiency: 187%]

Endurance

6823 [Increase: 96%. Efficiency: 238%]

Vitality

5790 [Increase: 84%. Efficiency: 238%]

Intelligence

1447 [Increase: 69%. Efficiency: 187%]

Wisdom

2862 [Increase: 76%. Efficiency: 187%]

Luck

455 [Increase: 91%. Efficiency: 197%]

Free Points

0

Nexus Coins

[D] 938 715

His attributes hadn't changed since the last time he checked, and neither had he gained any Title for evolving his Bloodline. He had heard from Catheya that there was a title for awakening your bloodline while in F-grade, with a greater version available if you awakened before even starting cultivating. Unfortunately, it looked like simply catching up wasn't enough to get the title while in E-grade.

Still, Zac hadn't expected any title, and he was far more interested in his Bloodline Screen.

Bloodline

[E - Corrupted] Void Emperor

Talent

Force of the Void - 32%, Void Zone

Bloodline Nodes

[E]Void Heart, [E] Spiritual Void, [E] Purity of the Void

Zac looked at the result with satisfaction. He was already 99% certain after the vision, but he had really managed to evolve his bloodline to E-grade in one go. For now, he wouldn't need to worry about it for a long while, since gaining a D-grade Bloodline generally wasn't possible before actually getting there in your cultivation.

Of course, he would still have to nurture his Hidden Nodes to set the foundation that would allow him to quickly upgrade them after becoming a Hegemon.

The most obvious change was the addition of a second Bloodline Talent; [Void Zone]. It sounded like a domain ability, and he figured that it should be this ability that kept the Twilight Energy at bay. It was just like with his first bloodline talent, it was simply on by default until he managed to form a connection with it.

Zac turned his attention inward, trying to glean whether anything else had changed. At first, everything looked the same, but he realized that his pathways had widened a bit. Not only that, but he could feel that his cells somehow were larger even if they were the same size, even though that made no sense.

It was almost like they all were forming small spatial arrays, but for what purpose Zac still didn't know. He sensed his energy reserves, and they didn't seem any larger now compared to before. So what was the point of millions of small hidden pockets inside his body if they didn't do anything?

Zac couldn't think of anything in the vision that resembled what he was looking at either, and he could only put the matter aside for now. He figured that it shouldn't be something bad, and that the truth would sooner or later show itself. Instead, he tried to figure out exactly how his new Bloodline Talent worked.

There was no drain at all on his Cosmic Energy, and judging by the aura, the talent ran on the Void Energy provided by [Force of the Void]. He thought back to the vision of Karz he had just now, and it almost felt like the System or his mother had a sense of humor. In the first vision, Karz showed the ability to endlessly gain affinities through absorption, while he was perpetually stuck at no affinity.

Then Karz gained the ability to freely absorb energy that even more powerful cultivators had no way of extracting, but Zac got the ability to keep energy at bay?

The ability was definitely extremely useful in his current predicament, but its long-term usefulness was not quite as clear. However, Zac had high hopes for it to double as both a Defensive mechanism and a suppression. For example, the Twilight Energy could essentially be considered poison, but he was able to keep it away from him.

Would he be able to do the same if a cultivator drowned the area in a poison mist, keeping himself protected? Would he be able to do it even if it was something more corporeal, like a blade created with Cosmic Energy? Would it be barred from getting close to him, like an ultimate zone of nullification?

There were other things that were unclear, and he curiously took out a Middle-Grade Nexus Crystal and crushed it. A puff of energy spread out in his new domain, but it disappeared in just a few seconds. Furthermore, the amount of Twilight Energy that managed to pass through the void increased by a small amount when the [Void Zone] was tainted by Cosmic Energy.

He took out a Supreme Nexus Crystal next and did the same thing. The result was similar, but the effect was more pronounced. It looked like there was a limit to how much energy the [Void Zone] could push away or banish, or whatever it was doing. Still, it would be a great tool to add to his repertoire, and it was an ability that essentially was a cheat in this place.

With this, he essentially became infallible in the Twilight Ocean.

He wanted to experiment some more, but he first needed to get the ability under control before he ran out of Void Energy. Over three years had passed since he did this thing last, but he still hadn't found the slightest clue of any better cultivation method than [Bloodline Resonance]. Hopefully, it would work this time around as well.

Zac took out the manual to refresh his memory for a few minutes before he once more started to create a resonance with his second talent as well. The ripples in his body grew more and more intense over the next hour, and even his improved constitution was soon reaching its limits from the endless collisions ravaging his body.

But finally, he felt another connection form, this time to the second bloodline talent. He breathed out in relief before eating a healing pill. The damage was thankfully not too bad, and he started to play around with the talent after resting for just five minutes.

He turned it on and off, and Zac looked on with interest as the Twilight Energy surged and was pushed back, over and over again. It almost looked like waves crashing against the rocks on the shore, though the scene quickly calmed down after he stopped messing around. There was something he wanted to test, and he first swapped over to his Draugr form.

The powerful domain was completely unaffected by the change, keeping the Twilight Energy at bay as he was filled with miasma. He scanned his undead constitution for any changes, but just like his human body, the only change was the odd enlarging of his cells. Using [Void Zone] worked the same way as well, allowing him to move on to his next experiment.

Zac tried to activate [Profane Exponents] next, but he frowned when he felt some sort of resistance when trying to activate the skill. It looked like even his own body was under the effect of the weird field he emitted, prohibiting him from doing anything. Zac changed his tactic and tried to activate the skill outside the zone as well, but the sensation of great resistance was the same.

The suppression wasn't absolute though, and as he pushed even further the skeletons appeared behind him, though they looked a bit bleak. A barrier appeared, but it took its sweet time, and it was significantly weakened. Zac dispelled the three pygmies, but they returned just a few seconds later, this time full of power as they radiated that ancient aura of his hidden energy reserve.

Zac's heart started to beat faster as he quickly understood the implications. What if he was in a melee, and his new domain suddenly swallowed both him and his enemy? A seasoned veteran would

immediately force the skill to activate, but he would still be a bit slowed down and restrained. Meanwhile, Zac could actually speed up his skill summon, increasing the gulf even further.

Just how powerful was this ability?

This was a true domain, far surpassing those he used to create a restrictive hellscape inside the cage of [Profane Seal]. The only problem was that its radius was a bit too low for it to have too much practical effect since most fights ended without Zac getting within such close proximity of his enemies. However, the skill had just been awakened. Just like how the storage of [Force of the Void] grew, so should the radius of [Void Zone].

He could imagine the scene in the future, him locking down kilometers of space in every direction as he unleashed instantaneously conjured skills on his helpless enemies. These two abilities together created an almost unbeatable combination. Of course, this restriction would probably be a lot weaker against higher-leveled enemies, which was a shame since those were the only real enemies of his.

At least it should help him stay alive when swept into a conflict like the one in the Technocrat research base.

He still remembered how he had almost gotten himself killed by the errant energies when The Great Redeemer and The Collector clashed. If he had this Bloodline Talent back then, the wounds he had accumulated would probably not have been so bad. He might even have been able to stay conscious for the impartment of [Purity of the Void].

He kept trying out various things over the next thirty minutes to find any weaknesses of the ability. But it really looked like it was pretty well-rounded.

The biggest difference was whether the energy entering the domain was “owned” or not. If it was ownerless energy like the ambient Twilight Energy, the effect was extremely pronounced. However, even talismans maintained around half of their efficiency when he launched them at himself with the help of his chains.

Skills were even less restrained, and his Spirit Tools weren’t affected at all from entering or exiting the sphere. In other words, it was a pure energy barrier, with no real effect on physical objects. There was some more experimentation to be done, but he was starting to feel a drain on his body; he was fast running out of Void Energy.

The weird organ appeared in his lap, a stone-like clump over a meter across. It contained powerful energies, but Zac sighed when he sensed that he was unable to extract it at all while [Void Zone] was active. He was forced to deactivate the protection, and a surge of Twilight Energy came crashing in on him.

It only lasted for a few seconds before he cracked a Supreme Miasma Crystal as he took out his Soul Strengthening Array. The environment had been ruined after activating his bloodline, and he wasn't planning on staying here any longer. He would just rest up and figure out his next step while completing a full cycle with the array.

Remembering how his bloodline had gobbled up innumerable valuable flowers made him remember the void gates that had spread all across the mountain range, and Zac suddenly thought of something. Was it possible he had gained some Contribution points from awakening his bloodline like this?

[Arcaz Black – Contribution: 1,244,719 Rank: 1. Value: 150,000 (Bounty)]

Zac blankly looked at the ladder for a full minute, completely forgetting to activate the Soul Strengthening Array. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. He had shot up to the first position in one go, overtaking even that crazy vampire with 200,000 contribution points to spare. Whatever he had gobbled up during his Bloodline Awakening had been worth as much as twenty Mothertrees.

He was elated at the opportunity to snag a top-tier Limited Title, but the bounty on his head was a stark reminder that the danger his position represented. Everyone would suddenly be gunning for him, especially Uona and that Havarok princeling. Even more troubling, the System definitely wouldn't let him rest easy with his current rank.

No one had felt the sweet sorrow of the System's attention as frequently as he had during the early phase of the integration. The more outstanding you were, the more challenges the System would throw your way. Zac sincerely doubted the System would let him sit down at the bottom of the chasm and cultivate in peace after having taken the first position on the ladder.

A loud crash suddenly startled him awake, and Zac cursed himself for his nigh-prophetic misgivings. A second crash followed the first, and it contained such force that Zac felt like he had been physically punched in his chest even though the source came from the outside.

Zac started to get a sinking feeling as he remembered the broken peak he had climbed the other day, and he grimaced when an enraged roar ripped through the waters with such force that the whole mountain shook. A tremendous aura spread through the area next, and Zac could feel anger so palpable that the water around him almost boiled.

Zac couldn't see the originator of the furious bellow, but he didn't need to. The gargantuan snake had returned, and it was pissed off.