

The Fall 337

Chapter 337: Profane Dominance

Zac's leveling speed was shocking, taking just over one day to push from level 54 to 60. But he also knew that his way of going about things would only be possible for someone extremely overpowered like himself. The roaches didn't pose any real threat to him, but he was still covered in shallow wounds from their sharp mandibles and serrated legs.

The fact that the insects were able to hurt him even though his effective endurance was over 1000 proved that almost everyone else on Earth would be ripped to pieces in seconds from the rabid assault of the beasts. Even he was feeling the strain, so he quickly ate a healing pill before opening his status screen.

Name

Zachary Atwood

Level

60

Class

[F-Epic] Undying Bulwark

Race

[E] Draugr

Alignment

[Earth] Port Atwood - 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

Limited Titles

Frontrunner

Dao

Seed of Heaviness - Peak, Seed of Trees - Peak, Seed of Sharpness - High, Seed of Hardness - Middle, Seed of Sanctuary - High, Seed of Rot - High

Core

[F] Duplicity

Strength

718 [Increase: 60%. Efficiency: 140%]

Dexterity

320 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 140%]

Endurance

827 [Increase: 60%. Efficiency: 140%]

Vitality

432 [Increase: 50%. Efficiency: 140%]

Intelligence

174 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 140%]

Wisdom

248 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 140%]

Luck

140 [Increase: 65%. Efficiency: 140%]

Free Points

6

Nexus Coins

[F] 295 264 610

Zac hadn't bothered to allocate his free points while pushing down the tunnels, but now he put them all into Strength before opening up the quest screen. The Ascension Breaker quest showed that he had just under two days remaining, but he was more interested in the new quest he had just received.

Profane Dominance (Class): Kill 1000 peak F-Grade beings within 3 hours OR Defeat 1 being at least 30 levels above you. Reward: [Profane Discharge] OR [Profane Seal]. (0/1000 - 0/1)

Zac was surprised to see that it was a forked quest, just like the time he received [Nature's Punishment]. At that time he had the choice of whether choosing a nurturing path or a path of destruction going by the quest requirements, and this time there was a clear indication of what he would receive as well.

It was quite clear that no matter which option he chose, it would still be an offensive skill that he would get. [Profane Discharge] was likely an area skill that would help him kill large packs of weaker enemies, whereas [Profane Seal] was meant as a skill to take down powerhouses.

Indecision plagued Zac as he sat down to restore his depleted reserves of Miasma, and he went over the options over and over. It would be effortless for him to complete the first option, as he had killed

battleroaches at a far higher rate until now. But it would have been an extremely daunting task if he didn't have his massive pool of attributes given by his titles and second class.

In fact, if he kept going as he did he wouldn't be able to avoid getting [Profane Discharge] even if he wanted to since there were more floors beneath with more battleroaches. The only way was if he drastically slowed down his killing speed, but that might cause trouble with his other quest.

The other skill, [Profane Seal], more troublesome to complete for the current Zac, but not because of the difficulty. He had confidence in defeating most level 90 beings in his current form. It might take some time to whittle it down with [Deathwish], but he was sure he would be able to outlast almost anyone in his current state.

The issue was whether he could even find a level 90 being apart from the Dominators. All the E-Grade beasts he had encountered so far were between level 75 and 80, a far cry from level 90. His only hope was either the Warroach King or the Leaders of the incursions.

Furthermore, if he wanted to aim for this skill he couldn't gain too many levels either. Each level he gained would push the required level of the kill forward as well. Finding a level 90 enemy was hard enough, but if he grinded another ten levels he might not find a target for months.

Both skills were things that he wanted for his current class, and they would help him tremendously during the underworld incursions. This would be the first truly offensive skill for his Epic Class, and he couldn't imagine the skills were anything but amazing. The hours passed as Zac restored his miasma, and he slowly decided on how to proceed. When he was finally topped off, he jumped down to the next floor and was immediately greeted by another wave of battleroaches.

This time there were actually several battleroaches that were over twice as large as their brethren, and their outer shell had a mysterious pattern the same color as the lights in the crystals adorning the walls. Zac immediately realized these were battleroaches that had reached the E-Grade and received a large boost in strength.

Zac would normally have been elated to see the even juicier targets, but he couldn't help but frown in irritation when he saw the battlerroach captains. He only shook his head with a sigh as the large wall of [Immutable Bulwark] appeared.

Enraged screeches echoed through the cave as Zac steamrolled everything in his path toward the hole leading to the next floor. Insects were thrown in all directions, and even the larger evolved roaches could only stop Zac for a second before he inevitably kept pushing forward.

There was a simple reason he didn't unleash another wave of destruction on everything around him. He had chosen to go with the second skill, [Profane Seal]. Since he didn't know whether the Battlerroach King had a swarm of underlings surrounding him he didn't dare to kill any beasts to inadvertently get the other skill.

He had briefly considered killing the E-Grade roaches at least, reaping the huge amounts of energy from killing evolved beings, but in the end he decided against it. He immediately realized that one or two swings wouldn't kill those sturdy-looking insects, and he didn't want to waste too much energy on a bunch of underlings.

He was confident to complete the Class quest without any hiccups, but the quest called Ascension Breaker was another matter. Zac had a feeling that the system wouldn't award him the quest with such nice rewards if the Battleroach King wasn't a formidable foe. He would probably need everything in his repertoire to take that thing down.

Since there were no other exits in the cave system he would head down to the bottom floor to fight the boss. Afterward, he would slowly work his way up through the battleroaches he had passed. That would allow him to get the skill he wanted while wasting almost no time.

There was a simple reason he chose to go for [Profane Seal]. Getting the area skill might be more convenient for the current him if he wanted to farm out his levels, but Zac looked at it from a longer perspective. The choices he made would perhaps affect what Class choices he would get when upgrading his class, which made him think of Yrial's tips.

He would no doubt try to get a more offensive class when evolving, one that fit better with his personality and set of Dao insights. But that didn't mean he needed to get an identical class as his human side. His hatchetman had already proven to provide great area skills, especially with the addition of [Deforestation]. There was no need to head in that direction for his undead class as well.

Perhaps it would be possible to get one class that excelled at large scale battles, and another that would allow him to fight powerhouses and survive. That was at least the goal of Zac. Hopefully it would also allow him to quickly kill, or at least occupy, any Incursion leaders before they could set their sights at his allies.

Zac was unstoppable with the help of [Immutable Bulwark], and with a final push he soared out over the large pit. A dozen screeching battleroaches were also pushed down, and they all fell toward the next floor. Zac landed with a thud, and crunches could be heard around him from legs and shells cracking when the battleroaches landed all around him.

A glance up at the hole proved that apart from a few overeager battleroaches the others stayed on their floor, impotently screeching down at him. Zac sighed in relief as he kept pushing forward to the next pit and he kept moving further and further down, only killing when absolutely necessary. Each floor had stronger and stronger enemies, with the evolved battleroaches taking up a continuously larger share of the population.

This many E-ranked beasts would spell disaster almost anywhere on earth, but they only served as bowling pins at this moment. But even Zac was shocked by the sheer number of evolved targets, and he knew that he would be able to gain at least five more levels in this place after dealing with the battleroach king.

There was finally a change when Zac reached the 11th floor, as there was no new pit to jump into. Instead there was a tunnel leading into the dark, out of which a green mist slowly emerged. The tunnel entrance was completely crammed with E-Grade battleroaches, though none of them dared to enter the tunnel itself.

It looked like they were inhaling the green haze, meaning it was probably something beneficial to their cultivation. Zac looked around the room and saw there were more than a thousand battleroaches in total, with at least 200 of them being evolved. He hesitated for a bit before taking out his axe.

He slowly started to take down the roaches on the last floor one by one, forgoing to use [Deathwish] completely. He instead only used his axe to finish off the beasts and his shield to block out attacks, trying to perfect his coordination. But even then he was forced to slow down his speed by quite a bit to not inadvertently complete the wrong quest.

Frustration started to well up in his heart, and he felt the urge to go on a rampage, cutting down everything in his path, feasting on the blood of his enemies. But a shake of his head soon had him back in reality. It was the splinter acting up again, pushing him to unleash hell in the cave.

Zac forcibly ignored the violent impulses, but as the minutes passed he started to feel worse and worse. It was as though his whole body was itching, and he felt like he was starting to go crazy. His mind screamed for blood, and every second he felt like he was about to lose control. Zac's muscles shivered as he desperately held himself back from activating all his other offensive skills.

It was a shocking realization, how big of an impact the splinter had on him. When he went all-out it was just a small whisper in the back of his head cheering him on, but now he felt just how large the impact was. It made him wonder just how much the thing was affecting his actions and personality without him noticing.

Finally, the head of the last battleroach in the cave was crushed with a slam of his shield. Zac had repressed his urges for over four hours, and he slumped down on the ground more exhausted than from all his other battles combined. Every cell in his body was screaming at him to rush into the pitch-black tunnel to unleash a storm of violence at whatever was hiding inside, but he instead took out a Miasma Crystal with shaking hands and started to absorb it.

He had kept [Indomitable] going through the whole ordeal, but the mental defense skill seemed to be completely ineffectual against the insidious urgings of the Splinter of Oblivion. The effect slowly ebbed over the next hour though, finally allowing Zac some peace of mind.

Zac got up on his feet after another hour, finally completely back to normal. At least he hoped he was. His Miasma was topped off, and he hadn't expended any mental energy cleaning out the last floor, so he was ready to press on.

He quickly opened up his status screen since he had gained another two full levels from the cave. He put his free points into Strength again before walking toward the tunnel. The green mist was still floating out from the tunnel, and now that there wasn't a swarm of battleroaches to gobble it up it started to spread through the cave.

Zac hesitantly entered the mist and stopped, but he didn't feel anything bad was happening, and his danger sense didn't warn him either. He even felt a bit energized from staying in the mist even though he didn't breathe at the moment.

Since the mist didn't seem to be poisonous or have any adverse effects he immediately entered the tunnel. But Zac only walked two steps before he stopped in shock, as he was blinded by a blazing emerald light. No matter where he looked he saw huge crystals that were radiating a dazzling luster.

Zac frowned and looked back toward the cave where he came from, but it still looked completely normal. The only answer Zac could arrive at was that something was blocking the sight from outside.

But who would have erected an array at such a place?