

Re-Attack

Something was wrong, she could tell. The hairs on her body stood up for no reason she could discern. Zach didn't answer her call, and already on edge, she triggered her **True Link-Zacharia Gardner**. Her awareness of him blossomed inside her mind, and she realized that he was closer than he should be. He was in the tower. She touched her crystal, and attempted to call him again when the space next to her twisted and he was there. She blinked, surprised. He had just... blinked at her, through the walls. He wore his simple tunic and trousers, but she could see a strange outline around him—his **Telekinetic Armor**.

She opened her mouth to ask him what he was doing, but before she could even ask anything, the floor beneath her feet trembled, and she frowned. One of her crystals flashed a moment later and she answered the incoming call.

"The city is under attack," Ikris said. *"Make your way to the sanctum."*

She turned to Zach and he shook his head.

"It is a distraction, focus on your sense, someone is about to attack the tower," he said, his voice clearer than she had heard him in months. Something was different about him, there was a... almost like a field around him. Not a skill or a perk, and she didn't have the time to ponder before her sense caught someone moving on a floor beneath them.

"I have them," Naha told him.

"Point me where," he said then pointed down. "Ride in my shadow."

She had no reason to doubt him, and they were short on time. She stepped behind him and then melded into his shadow. A moment later he was moving, his will spreading out around him. It was... stronger than she had ever felt, from him or anybody else. Stronger than it had been against Hastur. It washed over her, but it didn't hurt or smother her, though she was sure that it would've done that to anybody else. It was controlled and she could tell that it was doing something. Then it pressed down, on him and the world, and she felt something snap into place. He had just created a new skill, she recognized the sensation.

Then their speed increased, and she could feel his skill affecting her too inside his shadow.

The world around them was passing by so fast, and everybody else was moving as if they were passing through water. *A haste skill?* She wondered, but there was no time. In barely a few seconds they arrived on the floor where the intruders were and she pointed him in their direction. They were in a large round room, a crossroad of kind, with half a dozen corridors leading elsewhere.

They arrived quickly enough that she saw the glowing blue ring that had brought them here close, pieces of art that the ring had manifested in were on the floor, cut apart where they had touched it. *A spatial portal of some kind*—she thought. There were twelve intruders, all obviously high tiered and powerful. They already had sentries and they noticed Zach's arrival. Immediately they attacked, a human male wearing robes and holding a large staff pointed it at them. Almost two dozen spikes of stone formed in the air and flew at them. Zach raised a hand and she felt his will reach out. The spikes stopped in the air in front of them, and then were crushed as if squeezed by some invisible hand. The dust and crumbling earth fell to the ground.

Before another attack could come, Zach spoke.

"This will not end the way you think it will," he told them slowly. "Return home, there is no honor in the deaths that you seek to cause."

The intruders didn't answer, instead they got ready.

A ravzor woman standing at the back of their group, near where the portal that brought them here closed, spoke an order.

"Verney, deal with him," she said then turned and gestured to the others, and groups started splitting, getting ready to head down other corridors.

A demasi man grinned and lightning sparked around his body, then the entire corridor was filled with light. Shadows were banished, and her sense lessened, but she still saw out of Zach's shadow. The man flashed across the room, small blades extended from his forearms stabbing at Zach. Before she could even figure out what happened, Zach sped up, the blades shattered and Zach had the demasi by the throat, squeezing.

As the demasi man struggled, lightning flashing around him and trying to hit Zach—and by extension her—it was stopped by Zach’s **Telekinetic Armor**. Zach turned his eyes to the rest as they started moving, spreading out and heading down other corridors. He raised his arm and she felt his will bending the world again in a familiar matter—creating a skill. The air shimmered at the entrances of every corridor around the room, even the one behind them. One of the intruders tried to get through and hit a solid wall. It was a strange wall, though she couldn’t tell exactly why. She had a sense of it, some of the shadows had been caught in it, but... they felt almost... frozen, but without any cold. Somehow... solid.

A few intruders tried to blast their way through, but their attacks were futile. Finally, they all turned to look at Zach, just as the man in his hand stilled. Zach dropped him on the floor behind them, and she saw that he was unconscious but still alive.

Then, their enemies attacked.

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Zach’s will was so high, so powerful, that he felt like he could stop the world. And perhaps he could. He didn’t, of course, and he focused only on the task at hand. Time was still rippling around him, around this entire area, perhaps the entire world, as the river settled into a new path. He could feel it, and he wondered if others could too. He had created two skills shaped by time, easier than ever before, and both of high rarity and tiers, thanks to his **Sage of Time**. Which gave bonuses to anything linked with time. But, he hesitated to do any more. He realized just how far his madness had pushed him, his obsession with Time. His mind was clearer now. Making all of his skills related to Time wouldn’t be... the most optimal. Related, synchronized, yes, but they didn’t need to all be about Time. That would’ve made his image... he didn’t know what. But Naha had some ideas herself, her skills were mostly about shadows, but there was more there, movement, space. Two skills, no more, for now. It was... unfortunate. The potion wouldn’t last for much longer, and with it he could push himself all the way to the top, he knew that. Time came easier, though perhaps, he could squeeze out another

skill or two. But... there were other things to concern himself with now. He had cut the others escape routes by creating a new skill—**|Perfect Field of Frozen Time|**. He didn't really put walls there, he just stopped time in the entrances, making it impossible for anything to get through. They could still blink to the other side, or go through the walls. But he didn't think that they realized that yet.

The invaders attacked, two blinked close to him, a female demasi and a male ravzor. One wielding a spear and the other a halberd. There were too many of them for him to truly relax, even though he was certain in his strength. He didn't truly know his strength, he had fought only a few times and he didn't think that those instances should be used as a measure. What he knew was what Naha had taught him, what she counseled him—and that was that anyone, no matter their power, can die to a knife in the back. So he didn't hesitate, and he didn't hold back.

He moved, pulling out his **Sealing Blade of Learning** and with **|Perfect Greater Parry|** deflected the halberd, while using his **Frost Blade** to do the same for the spear.

He was faster than they were with his new skill—**|Perfect Accelerated Movement: My Time, Slower Than Theirs|**. But still, he felt as if something was wrong, as if his body didn't move exactly right.

The spear user used an ability and her body twisted mid air, then the spear thrust forward a dozen times hitting his **Telekinetic Armor**. Spear against will, and his will held. He tried to swing and cut her hip, but missed, his hand moved a moment after he wanted it to. He grimaced, it was his stats. He leaned his willpower on his body, and evolved his skill. **|Perfect Tireless Body|** >> **|Perfect Tireless Body: My Body, Under My Will|**. A new perk was being formed, or given, and he leaned on the Framework, getting what he wanted. It didn't even resist him, perhaps it would've already granted him what he needed.

Regardless, he felt his movement improve as he dodged an attack from the ravzor. Then, two more joined the battle and Zach decided that he shouldn't let them overwhelm him. He started using more perks.

First, his new skill perk—**For Every Second, Two**—time, or at least his perception of it slowed while he remained as fast as he was. He felt the

River of Time tremble around him. And then, for every second that everybody else had, he had two.

Last Sovereign of Terra

Phantom Avatar

He was faster than they were and he saw more than they did.

[I Focused And Saw All Flaws], the flaws in their armor were apparent to him. Increased with his other skill perks.

They came, and he used **Wind Master** to send a blast of wind at them all, a moment of distraction for them, two for him. Enough time. He whispered to Naha as he extended his will over her, letting her enjoy some of the effects of his speed.

“Don’t kill,” then he moved.

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He whispered his words so low that no one else could hear, but she hiding inside his shadow could. Then they moved, and she moved with him, faster than she had ever moved before. He was speeding her up too, somehow. They entered the center of the enemy formation, and they all attacked. Powers and weapons, everything came at them. These were high tiered people, she could tell. But Zach danced in between them, parrying, blocking, deflecting.

An attack came from his side and he whirled, blocked, then stabbed with his sword. His blade hit the armor, and slid through as if there was no resistance, exploiting a flaw in the armor, cutting right through the demasi’s leg. Other’s tried to take advantage, but they were slow and he was using his telekinesis to trip them up, push them into each other, buying time.

A female ravzor in the back suddenly blazed with light, and fired a fist sized orb of red energy that made the space around it tremble. It flew at Zach, but he stepped to the side and her world twisted. They were somewhere else in the room, the ravzor woman raising her hands at... at Zach’s back? She fired the orb, and it hit Zach, but there were two of them? Two of her as well. The orb passed through, swallowing the Zach and Naha that were fading

away, pulling them into itself. It hit a wall and swallowed the wall, pulling everything around it as if it was an implosion, crumbling all in its path.

Zack used his perks and attacked those closest to him in their confusion. She saw him use **Dazzling Strike** to blind, then cut off a demasi's arms at an elbow. Then **Double Aspect Strike**, a blade that sent a gust of wind struck and threw a ravzor into a wall. He was disabling them, a strike to the head strong enough to concuss, a cut that severed the lower spine. These were classers, all of them were flesh and blood. Some had perks and powers that let them heal, restore themselves. But Zach was relentless, attacking again and again.

Then, a demasi appeared behind him, fast his spear glowing with ominous dark light. He stabbed at Zach's back, and she felt that he wasn't going to be able to respond in time. Two others had occupied him from the front, another two he was holding with his telekinesis.

|Perfect Unseen Stab|

She rose from his shadow and stabbed the man in the stomach with Illuiy, her left hand grabbed the spear. The man's surprise was evident, but he was stronger than she was. The spear kept going and she used **Primal Channel**, channeling the power of one of her monster forms that was heavily strength based. She pushed the spear out of the wave as she stepped out of Zach's shadow fully, then with **Greater Partial Shift** she changed her arms and legs, more strength and dexterity. With **Primal Strength** and **Primal Blow** she struck, kicking. She broke the man's knee, shattered it, then stabbed him in the stomach, cutting out to the side and disemboweling him. A difficult wound, but not instant death, a healer or a powerful enough potion could save him.

She turned around as Zach battled half a dozen of the others, if they weren't in the relatively small room, it would be more. As it was they were forced to fight him like this, a handful at a time. She used her circlet and suddenly two more Zach's were in the room, fighting, attacking. She guided them, but they were as strong as Zach was, if without his powers. Zach took advantage of the distraction and moved, blinking through the room. His will billowing out and crushing half of them in an instant. His telekinesis forcing them to the floor that cracked beneath them.

Only three were left standing, and she saw the ravzor woman that gave orders before put her hand out and a large metal box appeared beneath her hand. She moved to touch it—and her hand flew off, as Zach blinked next to her. The world twisted and he opened a fissure into another realm. Wind blasted out, sending everyone, but him and the box that he braced with his leg, flying away. He closed the fissure and put his hand on the box, then stored it in his storage.

Everyone else was down, she stood with her Zach illusions, staring at those who were on the ground but still able to fight.

“No,” Zach said, his eyes staring straight at the woman that pulled out the box. Naha didn’t know what it was, but seeing the look on Zach’s face, she could guess.

The walls that kept the other corridors sealed fizzled out, and sect warriors spilled into the room. Ikris arrived first. He looked at the downed invaders, then at Zach.

Before anyone could say anything, a notification blared inside her head.

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They were defeated, Zach had made sure to disable as many of them as possible, and the rest he held down with his will. They couldn’t match it, though some tried. One of them was a skill user, fairly strong even. He let his fields of frozen time down, and the sect warriors arrived. The world around him settled. He felt it, when Time finally accepted the change, when the present caught up to the future that never was or would be.

Ikris looked at him and opened his mouth, and then—

NEW EVENT
THE GATES OF THE FORGOTTEN

The Gates of the Forgotten have opened around the city of Dragon’s Peak and allowed the ancient beings of forgotten worlds to pass through. Their goal is to destroy the city and all in it, a punishment for what would never be. Kill all of the Great

Forgotten and survive the attack from their forces to gain great rewards.

Attack arriving in: 15 min
Great Forgotten still alive remaining: 3

Ah...

Zach looked around and knew that everyone had gotten the same message. It seemed that there were more consequences to turning back time than he had anticipated.