

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 2: The First Ordeal

### Chapter 112 – Plop!

The fall from the first floor wasn't too hard. Each of them had a well-trained body and Aether stats among the best of the recruits. After 5 or 6 meters of free fall, the trio landed like cats without making the slightest noise.

Without wasting a second the group cuddled up to the walls of the building to avoid Carbo's vulture's gaze. Carbo's senses were keen and he was convinced that he had heard something. Luckily for them, a pain-stricken wail echoed from inside one of the rooms on the first floor, making him forget his suspicions.

The three Players looked at each other in shock when they realized that there were still conscious people on their floor. Soon, however, their muscles relaxed. They didn't owe these people anything and they wouldn't have had time to warn everyone anyway. It was too risky and it would only draw attention to them.

In any case, they couldn't afford to find out what fate awaited the recruits and gladiators still conscious when those responsible would flush them out. Despite the moonless night, they were now out in the open not far from the patio, potentially in full view of the enemy. Numerous torches and oil lamps lit up the corridors of the Ludus at this hour, preventing anyone from truly hiding.

Instead of passing through the open corridors bordering the inner courtyard and the main arena of the Ludus where they could be

easily spotted, the trio decided to return to the interior of their residential building to travel under cover.

All the buildings of the Ludus were connected to each other through the ground floor in order to facilitate circulation within it. It was thus possible to travel from one's room to the thermal baths or from the thermal baths to the cantina. It was even possible to reach the outer courtyard of the Ludus made up of floral gardens and then perhaps escape. Naturally, the surrounding wall was always heavily guarded.

Still on tiptoe, Jake infiltrated the building, followed by the two siblings. Only the light from the torches gave them a semblance of light, but it was enough to get them going. They could still hear footsteps and voices in the background coming from upstairs, but at least the ground floor was deserted.

Accelerating the pace, the trio began to jog down to the spiral staircase at the end of the corridor. Once at the foot of the corridor, they entered the narrower right-hand corridor that they used to take to get to the Baths. At that hour, there should be no one left there except perhaps to access the latrines.

Al ovuw nzmezullut tmjr ovu hmzzatmz, ovu smahul md Cfzgm frt val fhmiwoul juzu ypahciw qpddiut, lmqujvfo immlurare ovu crmo ar ovuaz lomqfhvl. A duj luhmrtl ifouz ovu hmzzatmz jaturut fefar frt ovuw urouzut ovu ftbfhuro zmmq md ovu ovuzqfi gfovl jvuzu ovuw vft vft ovuaz vfaz hpo lfsfeuiw.

Of course, the potentially sharp utensils such as the stripe or the bronze razor with which they cleaned and shaved were kept elsewhere. Every evening after their ablutions, a servant would be assigned to count each item before bringing it back to the highly guarded main residence where Cassius and his wife resided.

Finding nothing to use as a weapon, the trio proceeded cautiously in case their enemies had the same idea.

Plop!

The trio spun around startled in the direction of the noise. It came from the latrine! Hearing another 'plop' the trio sighed long and hard, almost bursting into laughter. Hiding in ambush on either side of the latrine door, Jake and Yifeng waited for the stranger to finish dumping his log.

They had to put up with the disgusting sounds that this kind of place had the secret to, until the author of this symphony, proud of his feat, stepped out of the toilet. Even before he had time to understand what was happening to him, the poor man found himself on the floor, head down, his two arms bent behind his back on the verge of dislocation.

'Fuc-mmmmm!!!!!!' Lu Yan had put her hand over the idiot's mouth as quickly as she could, glaring at Jake and her brother for making such a rookie mistake.

Jake shrugged his shoulders with no apparent guilt. His Shadow Guide hadn't prompted him to do so, it meant that the young woman would have intervened with or without his participation. Her brother, however, had a sheepish expression on his face, a sign that he had simply been negligent.

Once certain that the man who had been pinned down belly down would not scream once they let him go, Lu Yan slowly withdrew her hand after telling him to keep his calm with a shushing gesture. Recognizing the young woman, the man cooperated without flinching. When Jake and Yifeng released him, he was finally able to get up. When Jake recognized him, he was astounded. It was Kyle.

‘Fuck! How could a guy like that get so lucky? Do you have any idea what’s going on right now?’ Jake cursed as hatefully as he could with a whisper.

With the puzzled expression and raised eyebrow of the Playboy, he didn’t seem to know anything about it. He wasn’t stupid, though. Realizing the worried faces of the trio, he began to whisper like them.

‘What’s going on?’ He asked in a curious tone.

‘Someone’s poisoned the food.’ Lu Yifeng replied soberly. ‘We don’t know if it’s general, but we can’t hear any more noise in the residential area, the patio or the cantina. »

‘Whoa, What?!’ Kyle looked like someone who just swallowed a fly while trying to catch his breath.

‘No matter what happens, this has already happened. We’ve got to think about what’s coming next now.’ Jake swept aside his questions with a wave. ‘And you, how come you’re fine?’ »

‘Oh that... I got another beating from Thomas in the duel earlier! 9th time I lose to him, it drives me crazy! I got knocked out again, so they took me to the infirmary. I woke up not too long ago and I had a hell of a need to take a cra— ‘

‘Thank you, but we don’t need the details!’ Lu Yan interrupted him curtly.

Thomas was the Player of the Orange group which was always one spot above Kyle in the rankings. The two were close behind each other and had developed a real rivalry during the Ordeal. Thomas and Kyle were currently respectively 84th and 83rd in the official

ranking. It wasn't much for Jake and the siblings, but it was quite a progression for both of them.

'What do we do now?' Kyle asked with a quick gasp, a sign that he was starting to panic. He was only just getting the full measure of the situation.

'Whatever we do, we need weapons to fight with. So off to the arena warehouse. It'll force us to go through the cantina, but it's better than walking around in the open in the middle of the arena.' Jake quickly explained the plan to him, cutting straight to the chase.

Hal Ozfhiu vft fizuftw euruzfout f jmzcare Pfov jaovmpo zuypazare frw lnuhafi tuompzl. Tvuzu qaevo gu prdmzuluur usurol fimre ovu jfw, gpo ao jfl ovu gulo nifr ovuw vft. Tvu lagiarel mgsampliw vft ovu lfqu Pfov fl vu tat.

Once Kyle had been briefed, the now quartet got back in motion. The group proceeded as quickly as possible through the many rooms of the thermal baths, before exiting the latter just a few meters away from the cantina.

As they got closer to the cantina, the group began to come across unconscious bodies whose postures indicated that they had tried to escape, suffering from horrible breathing pains before gradually weakening and falling into a coma.

When they took their pulse, they could confirm that most of them were already dead. They were all familiar with the corpses. All of them were professional gladiators from the Ludus, one of them even ranked 36th in the ranking. He seemed to be still alive, but he wouldn't be around much longer.

‘These are the symptoms of cyanide poisoning... Their food contained the same poison as yours.’ Lu Yan confirmed in a whisper.

Jake nodded to signal he was thinking the same thing. All they had to do was hope that the recruits had not been poisoned in the same way, or very few would survive this night.