

The Oracle Paths

Volume 2: The First Ordeal

Chapter 125 - Princess Lucia is...

Jake was startled when he saw the System notification. From the beginning he was convinced that the features and performance of the Oracle Device depended on its Oracle Rank. This didn't seem to be the case anymore, or at least not completely.

[Oracle Rank is still the most important thing] Xi doused his enthusiasm immediately.

[It gives you access to certain functions that were inaccessible to you and increases your level of authority as well as your right to access information. No matter how many bracelets you absorb, the computing power will never compare to that of the Oracle System itself.]

‘In other words, the wristband would be like a local computer connected to the main Oracle via a super wireless network with almost infinite computing power?’

[Something like that.] Xi confirmed. Her vague answer showed that it wasn't that simple, but he knew he wouldn't get a better answer.

Inspecting the information in his Oracle Device in detail, he discovered two changes. His Oracle Rank hadn't changed, but his Oracle Device now had a low grade designation. The second change was that a new function was indeed available.

[Scan lvl 1: Allows you to scan objects or life forms within a distance of one meter to obtain information about their nature or

Aether. Using the Scan costs 1 unit of Aether. Aether information is limited to the average density, highest and lowest stat.]

‘ Oh, that’s a game changer. ‘ Jake exclaimed with a big smile. ‘ Xi, didn’t it take a Rank 3 to unlock this skill? ‘

[Indeed, this function is normally only unlocked at the Private 1st Class level. But it is not the Oracle Rank itself that unlocks the function, but the upgrade that goes with it. You don’t see it, but every time your Oracle Rank is promoted the energy level of your bracelet increases significantly. By absorbing this bracelet, you’ve indirectly gained the benefits of a promotion.]

‘ Does that mean I can get an Oracle Device as powerful as a General’s if I make it devour enough bracelets? ‘ Even for Jake, it seemed too convenient.

[Of course not.] Xi promptly refuted him, cooling his spirits.

[Available features like Aether Vision, Compress, Aether Storage, Encode, and now Scan are pre-built in. Your bracelet was already capable of them, it just lacked the intrinsic quality to use them.]

[Most of the functions must be purchased from an Oracle Store in one of the Oracle cities and require an adequate Oracle Rank not to mention the exorbitant price often required to acquire them. Don’t forget that until the 5th Ordeal you are considered a beginner who needs help to take your first steps in the Mirror Universe. Therefore, the bracelet already contains a Beginner Pack from the start.]

‘Ugh...‘ He was feeling depressed now. Just the thought of having to spend a fortune of Aether on a simple Oracle Skill didn’t make him happy.

[The good news is that your Oracle Device has some leeway now. Its energy level has increased significantly, as has the amount of metal

it contains. The rate at which it absorbs Aether from the atmosphere has doubled and you still have room for one more Oracle Skill.]

[Beware, however. The scan is indeed only a scan. Your bracelet can perform primary scans, but the general Oracle System has the most detailed information. A higher Oracle Rank will always be more advantageous.]

Meditating on Xi's revelations, Jake decided to sleep for a few hours despite the fact that it was already dawn. The night of fighting had exhausted him both physically and mentally. But he felt he had come through it fairly well. In addition to the bracelet and his stats, which had improved significantly, he also had 2584 Aether points in his bracelet ready to be invested. Damn, how rich was this guy to stock so much Aether before Gerulf cut his hand?

He soon fell asleep and woke up after noon when someone knocked on his door.

'Jake, are you there? Servius Cassius wants to see us in his office.'

He recognized Hugo's baritone voice on the other side of the door. Although he would have slept longer, he was in fact perfectly rested. A human could have used the excuse of being exhausted, but with a Constitution and Vitality like his it was impossible. In an instant he put on his armor and boots and went to the Lanista's house with Hugo.

The other survivors seemed to have resumed training in view of the bossy shouts of Khazus and Priscus they heard coming from the arena. The sound of the wooden swords striking the palus resounded unceasingly and as they passed through the patio they could see that the arena was much emptier than the day before the mutiny.

With half of the gladiators being traitors and two thirds of half of the loyal gladiators remaining deceased, there were only about twenty warriors left, not counting the Players like Jake or Lu Yan who were in the official ranking.

Or ovu zuhzpao latu, ovu laopfoamr jfl rmo lm nullaqaloah. Tvu qfbmzaow md ovuq vft imlo hmrlhamplrull fo ovuaz qufi ovu tfw gudmzu frt rmgmtw vft nfat ovu liaevoulo foouroamr om ovuq. Tvuzu vft film guur f duj ozfaomzl fqmre ovuq, qmloiw Pifwuzl jvm ovmpervo ovuw vft dmprt fr pruknuhout mnmzopraow.

Most of them, however, were unaware of what had happened and followed the training with an expression of disbelief and incomprehension at seeing so few people in the arena among them.

Lu Yan and Lu Yifeng were training under the supervision of Khazus and watched with a perplexed frown as Jake and Hugo went to Cassius' residence. Hugo had been training with them earlier, but after a maid had given Priscus a message, the veteran had then asked the Big Guy to follow him.

Priscus had returned shortly afterwards, but alone. To find Hugo with Jake again was rather surprising, since the day before they were hardly talking to each other.

Indifferent to the attention paid to them, the duo calmly climbed the stairs leading to the top floor of the mansion. They then crossed the long familiar corridor until they reached Cassius' office room at the end of it. The door was already ajar, and before they even thought of knocking to announce themselves, the Lanista beckoned them in. The Lanista was sitting behind his desk with an ink pen in his hand.

'Jake and Hugo, how are you this morning? I àssume you have some questions. ' Cassius got right to the point.

Hugo didn't really have any, or at least he wasn't interested in the answers. It was different for Jake, who wanted clear explanations.

'What's your connection with the one whose name must not be said?' Lucia didn't have Voldemort's ghastly potential, but it was the best moniker that came to his mind.

The balding man didn't answer directly. First he motioned to them to close the door. Even though most of the traitors were gone, he had no guarantee that there were not a few undercover servants left among his staff.

Understanding the message, Hugo closed the door after making sure no one was lurking nearby. Jake kept his arms folded waiting for an answer.

'First of all, what I'm about to tell you only Khazus and Priscus knows. I suspect my wife knew too, but she didn't say anything until the end... '

'Why tell us in this case and not the other survivors and loyal guards who fought to defend this ludus?' Hugo asked, slightly confused.

'Because unlike them, you both saw her with your own eyes. It is impossible to hide her identity from you any longer, you may already know who she is. '

Jake obviously knew that it was Princess Lucia who was allegedly kidnapped and missing, but to Hugo's expression he had no idea. Cassius was surprised at the latter's ignorance, but not more shocked than that either, considering their Throsgenian origin. Rather, it was Jake's exceptional quick-wittedness that was unusual for a Throsgenian, considering their limited cognitive faculties.

‘The young woman Jake saved along with me is indeed the missing Princess Sexta Caelia Lucia. ‘ Cassius simply said.

The effect of this revelation was that of a pebble falling into the water. Apart from a small splash, it left them totally unmoved. Hugo didn’t even know that the princess was missing and didn’t know anything about the political situation in the Empire. His Ordeal consisted of training, so he trained.

‘Cough, cough, more importantly. Princess Lucia is also my half sister...‘

‘What?! ‘Jake and Hugo exclaimed at the unison. That old crouton was royalty?!