

The Oracle Paths

Volume 2: The First Ordeal

Chapter 142 – Let's find out the Truth

AS soon as the Crown Prince yelled the order, all the Imperial Legionaries in the arena resumed their attacks. Without hesitation, dozens of them jumped from all directions at the small group taking the spotlight.

Serenely, the Princess unfastened her cloak, letting it slide to the ground, revealing a delicately forged golden armor underneath. Unsheathing her sword calmly, Gerulf, Khazus and Priscus followed suit.

Unlike Jake, who struggled to endure the multi-directional assault of these elite warriors due in part to his inferior equipment, Lucia's and her bodyguards were up to the task.

When the enemy troops came upon them, the group disappeared, leaving behind afterimages. Wherever they passed by sowing the wind, heads and limbs were separated from the rest of their bodies.

In a matter of seconds, almost half of the hand-picked Imperial legionaries had been decimated, a tornado of blood and flesh generated just by the sheer speed of their movements.

'Holy shit!' Jake exclaimed in complete shock.

He felt like the eye at the center of the tornado. Where he was in the center of the arena, everything was calm and peaceful, but a few meters away a cataclysmic slaughter was taking place. It was raining

blood and limbs all the way to the bleachers and quite a few spectators seemed to have bathed in ketchup.

Jake finally became aware of how much the poison had weakened Gerulf, Khazus and Priscus during the night attack on the Ludus. If they had been in good shape, those Myrmid Templars, whom he found so terrifying, would have been pulverized in an instant.

Guzpid jfl iacu f ofrc jaov ovu lnuut md f daevouz nifru, lqflvare uSuzwovare ar aol nfov, hmqniuouiw prlomnngiu jvuovuz ao jfl fr uruqw, fzqmpz mz f lomru jfii.

Khazus and Priscus were more subtle, but still incredible assassins. Wherever they went dancing with their blades, flowers of blood were sprouting, painting the white sand of the arena with a scarlet color.

Lastly, Princess Lucia was unrecognizable. A true golden glow pulsed behind her irises. Not the fake Aether color that only the Players could see, but a real yellowish light that everyone could behold. It imparted a heroic and sacred aura to her that made her even more majestic.

Every move she made would leave sparks behind her and be accompanied by a thunderous roar. She would flash from one end of the arena to the other as if she was teleporting, spreading death wherever she went. Her Aether and Body stats had already evolved to a level Jake couldn't possibly comprehend.

So this was what it meant to be a purebred Myrmidian, he realized bitterly. After such a demonstration, the Homos Sapiens of which he was a proud member could indeed only be considered as a primitive humanoid species.

At such a level of violence, even the Myrmidians, who were particularly fond of gladiator fighting, could only pray that this carnage reminiscent of a scene straight from hell would soon stop.

The Prince was shuddering with terror in his throne, unable to understand what had just happened. It was like trying to swat a fly to realize that you had just shaken a hornet's nest instead. And what hornets!

Less than fifteen seconds later, all the Imperial troops in the arena, including the centurion leading them, were dead. The four executioners were back at Jake's side looking as if they had never moved and were not responsible for the massacre.

'Brother, tell me, what should I do with you?' Lucia flicked her eyes at the Prince, stroking her chin as if she was seriously considering the question.

Jake couldn't help thinking that the Myrmidians did indeed seem to have a warlike instinct in their genes. Otherwise a peaceful princess who had never fought would never have been able to execute all those men in cold blood without batting an eyelid. If a human did that, there would be a good chance it was a psychopath.

Hearing his sister's words, the Prince swallowed hard, dripping with sweat. Shaken and completely terrified, he tried to get up from his throne, and when he finally did, he ran away.

As Lucia contemplated capturing him before thinking about how to punish him, another twist occurred. The imperial bodyguard behind the Prince suddenly drew his sword and cut him down at breakneck speed, severing the body of the Crown Prince in two.

At that moment, they were all shocked, noble and plebeian alike. Lucia was stunned on the spot, unable to process what had just

happened. She knew that her brother wanted to sell the throne to the other noble clans, but what was the point of executing him now? Moreover, his bodyguard was one of the Emperor's most loyal officers. It didn't make any sense.

Suddenly, something even more strange happened. Every nobleman, every plebeian, even the priest and the two Templars accompanying him rose from their seats. The movement of all the people in the Coliseum was perfectly synchronized, as if this staging had been repeated thousands of times. Everyone was looking with deadpan faces in the same direction.

In the midst of the silence, a steady rattle began to resound to the rhythm of the footsteps of a newcomer. The noise came from deep inside the Prince's box, hidden in the darkness. After a few seconds that seemed to last forever, the person responsible for the rattling finally revealed herself.

A mop of wavy golden hair shining like a thousand lights, golden iris, a regal face, an elegant silver satin toga covering a perfect body with curvaceous forms. Gold bracelets adorned her wrists and ankles, while a long pearl necklace responsible for the rattle hung around her neck. A sword also rested at her belt.

It was undoubtedly Antonia, Lucia's mother and Queen of the Myrmid Empire.

'Mo... Mother?' As the Princess whispered these words, she couldn't believe it, and from the slight tremor in her voice Jake could feel how upset she was. She must have missed her mother terribly the whole time she was running and hiding.

'That's right, it's me.'

Even though the Queen's response seemed trite, Jake felt there was something strange about her answer. As was the attitude of the crowd of spectators around them who were behaving strangely. These worries were swept away when Lucia's mother declared without warning and with a totally impassive air:

'You can come home now. The Emperor is dead...Your father is dead...'

Jake still felt she had a weird voice and tone. Thinking about it, he found that the Queen's voice and facial expressions lacked warmth and nuance. But as he looked out over the crowd and the nobles in the stands, he noticed that everyone in the audience other than them was displaying the same apathetic puppet-like expressions.

'What the fućk is going on right now? I've got a bad feeling about this.' Jake thought hard, his brain actively trying to figure out what was going on.

'Come with me, child. To inherit the throne, you have to accompany me somewhere. 'The Queen commanded in a formal tone devoid of maternal warmth. 'Agammen, lead the way. '

The old priest in the red toga who had not raised an eyebrow at the death of the Prince immediately replied by bowing low. ' With pléàsurè, My Queen. '

'What are you waiting for? We don't have time to waste. 'Antonia scolded coldly when she saw that her daughter hadn't moved a step.

'Can, can my friends come with me?' Lucia asked with some distress, she too felt something was wrong.

Staring at Jake and the other three Gladiators, the Queen simply replied indifferently:

‘They may come.’

‘I don’t like it, there’s something wrong...’ Jake suddenly whispered in the princess’ ear as he grabbed her arm.

‘I know... But I have to go.’ The Princess responded in frustration.

‘What do we do about Cassius and your sister if something goes wrong?’ Jake retorted ruthlessly.

‘...Priscus will stay with them.’

Without showing any change of expression, the old veteran just nodded discreetly, then with a blast blowing wind and sand, he disappeared from the Coliseum without anyone being able to intercept him.

‘Let’s go. Let’s find out the truth.’ Lucia finally said, reaffirming her will.

Jake said nothing, but contemplated the time of Ordeal that lay ahead. As long as he could survive this it was fine to follow her anywhere.

[Time remaining in the Ordeal: 21 minutes 18 seconds.]