

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 180 - The Blood Power

The two Ducal guards were a few seconds ahead of the two hordes, but no other soldiers accompanied them. Either they had all already been swallowed up by the Digestors or they had dispersed a little earlier to increase their chances of survival.

Either way, the bastard Ducal guards had continued to follow them, bringing with them an army of Digestors who appeared to relish them.

Despite the pain and inability to get up feeding his despair, Jake did not admit defeat. The Myrmidian mentality was the most valuable thing he had acquired during his First Ordeal. He was in no condition to run, so all he could do was fight.

In front of the dazed eyes of the two princesses, Jake put down his backpack and pulled out two Blue Cubes the size of a Rubik's Cube. Placing his hand against the two Cubes, he received a notification asking him if he wanted to retrieve the contents inside and he accepted without further ado.

Two strange crystal flasks, each containing a good litre of vermilion liquid, sprang out of their respective Cubes, like two objects emerging from water. Grabbing the two flasks, the two Cubes fell back into his backpack, their blue color being dimmer.

According to Xi, these Cubes were reusable as long as he simply used them to store the Ordeal's reward for which they were designed. In other words, Myrmidian and Kintharian Blood.

The Digestors were only ten seconds away from the trio, with the two Ducal Guards leading by a few meters. They too were about to be caught. Some Digestors from Rank 4 at the head of the horde was probably close to moving up to the next Rank.

'Ole gast palvni!' Enya urged him by pulling at his shirt. She didn't know what to do.

She didn't really understand what had just happened but she could see his wounds. It would be a miracle if he could still walk after that. As for Esya, she was fidgety and her lips were trembling, visibly hesitant to run away without him. But her older sister and her conscience prevented her from doing so. After all, they would already be dead without him.

Jake couldn't understand her words, but he sensed the urgency and panic in the young woman's voice. He ignored her, however, preferring to uncork the two flasks and take a big sip from each at the neck.

He had vowed not to consume Myrmidian blood until he had eliminated the inconvenience of it, but it no longer mattered. If he failed now, it meant he was dead. If he survived, it was his victory. The Myrmidian blood made perfect sense in those moments. If he survived, he would come out stronger than ever. He had enough blood for 10 transfusions anyway.

Kintharian blood, on the other hand, was more of a gamble against fate. He remembered Gerulf's powers well. Absurd constitution and vitality, ability to control and manipulate earth and rock, accelerated

regeneration when exposed to sunlight or heat or buried underground. Gerulf had shown that he could recover from the most serious injuries by burying himself in warm earth.

Jake didn't have the genetics or the body of a Kintharian, but if he could get a fraction of these abilities in the next 24 hours it was worth a try.

After consuming the two sips of blood, he put the flasks back in their respective Blue Cube, packed his backpack and took out his machete.

' Bring it on! 'Jake roared with an air of defiance to the horde of Digestors rushing at them.

The two Ducal guards trembled slightly when they saw the resolution in his eyes, believing that his roar was meant for them. A weird golden glow was pulsing inside and it wasn't Aether, but a real light that everyone could see with their own eyes.

But as Jake was about to face his potential epic last battle, he felt a hand grasping the collar of his jacket and was suddenly pulled backwards at the speed of a city car on the highway...

Turning his head with an indignant expression, he recognized the pink mane flapping in the wind from Enya, who had decided to take him with them without asking his opinion. After all, he had done the same thing a while earlier. She was just returning the favour.

Regardless of their good will, the two young women could not run fast enough. Like many Players and Evolvers, they had maxed out their Strength and Agility easily, but their Constitution and Vitality was not up to par. Running at the maximum of their physical strength would destroy their ligaments and tear their muscles in an instant.

‘It won’t work. Let go of me and get out of here. ‘Jake croaked in a hoarse voice. Both bloods were starting to take effect.

The two sisters continued to run, ignoring him as his legs dragged on the ground, but a new sensation was transmitted from the soil to his feet. Before he could only feel the pure Aether around him over two or three meters, but now he could also feel two other forms of energy.

Before the ground was only earth and rock, now he could discern something more. The Aether preceded energy and matter. At its source, everything was only Aether.

His extrasensory perception now seemed to view the ground as a manipulable source of Aether, even though he had no idea how that was possible. The only thing he knew was that he could control the earth beneath his feet with an instinct as natural as the one that allowed him to breathe.

He didn’t know if the Aetheric Code in this Bloodline was targeting a specific molecular structure or specific atoms or if it was much more conceptual. In any case, for the first time he really felt he had magical powers.

The second feeling he had was that he had a sharp sense of temperature. Both that of his own body and his environment.

Although he was not cold and his body was not affected by these neutral temperatures, he was now craving a much warmer environment. His instinct told him that this would be beneficial to him.

The last, almost negligible aspect was his mental state. An unshakeable will and a visceral desire to defeat his enemies and surpass his limits. By letting himself be carried away by this thought he already felt the Aether flowing towards him, nourishing

his cells. His already overloaded Aether Stats were showing signs of growth, although he didn't know if this was temporary or not.

As he discovered the effect of the two pure bloods after just one sip, he couldn't help but feel grateful to Gerulf and Lucia. He hoped that both had survived, but it was beyond his capabilities. He could only wish them good luck with his mind.

'So, this is the power of a god.' Jake realized with a sense of enlightenment, but his expression darkened a split second later. 'But even Myrmid was but a slave at the mercy of these creatures...'

While being dragged by Enya, Jake stared at the two Ducal Guards and then at the Rank 4 Humanoid Digestor leading the horde. This one was huge, almost five meters high. His one eye and his open jaw full of teeth expressed nothing but brutality and an inalterable will to destroy and devour. The creature was undoubtedly stupid, yet the Oracle feared them.

When the two princesses, who were too slow, were finally caught up and overtaken by their two former Ducal Guards, Jake finally uttered:

'Myrmid, let me take a little revenge for you.'

Pinching the nerve between the princess' thumb and forefinger, he forced her to let go of her grip with no warning. The young woman raised a high-pitched cry of pain and surprise, but it was too late. At her speed, by the time she turned around, Jake had already disappeared into the horde.

Worried and not knowing what to do, they couldn't bring themselves to turn back. They wanted to save him, they really wanted to, but if they turned back, they would die in a second. If Jake hadn't chosen to sacrifice himself, they would have died seconds later anyway.

Aegnor and the other guard were thrilled that a fool was sacrificed in their place. In their eyes, Enya had simply thrown him to the monsters to increase her chances of escape. However, they didn't hold it against her, because if they needed another bait to distract them, the princesses would be their first and only choice.

The two sisters had almost made up their minds when they saw two people rushing towards them, then past them to join the fray. One was a young woman with long blond hair with a valkyrie look, while the second was a handsome guy with brown short hair. The young woman carried a gladius, the second carried a Digestor bone saber.

These two people were Sarah and Kyle. They hadn't abandoned him.