

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 182 - Fighting a Horde (part 1)

Yet while he was concentrating with all his might to control and condense the Aether on the surface of his skin, the Digestors kept piling up in his direction, piling on top of each other like a voracious zombie pack ready to do anything to get a bite out of him.

The Myrmidian and Kintharian blood circulating in his stomach contained the precious genetic and Aetheric code that allowed these creatures to mutate and evolve. To the Digestors, Jake right now was like a shining beacon of light.

His smell was so enticing that the creatures couldn't suppress their urges, each of them salivating profusely as if a tap had been left on. Jake's unique Aether was the most bewitching and attractive flavor, and absolutely nothing, not even their fellow brethren could deprive them of such a meal. It was a compelling hunger that nothing could contradict.

As the heap of Digestors piling on top of him grew higher and higher, Jake soon became completely unable to move, the pressure on his chest becoming so high that he couldn't breathe at all. With the Digestor trying to stick its fangs down his throat, Jake's face was red and congested and his vision began to blur.

Luckily, as the two bloods were digested by his body, the Aether contained in them began to take full effect. The perception and feeling of control over the earth and rock beneath him was getting stronger by the second, and his body was radiating a distinct heat

that was gradually becoming uncomfortable to the Humanoid Digestor crushing him.

The Myrmidian blood affected his personality, strengthening and consolidating his will to fight and exterminate his enemies. Despite hypoxia and blurred vision, Jake's mental clarity was more outstanding than ever. His willpower was like a knife that was constantly being sharpened back to its original edge.

At long last, after a time that seemed endless but was actually very short, the blood took full effect and Jake felt the flow of Aether gushing out of his digestive system dry up. However, the previous Aether was not lost, and for the next twenty-four hours, his body would benefit from the abilities of a Kintharian and Myrmidian to the extent of the amount he had consumed.

The purebloods were different from the others. Their Aether had a different quality and their Aetheric Code was more complex, endowed with powers that the other impure descendants were deprived of. Now that the effect of the blood had reached its maximum quality, Jake felt empowered beyond his wildest expectations.

He still couldn't move, but his sheer tenacity drew the Aether to him, as the already overloaded Aether stats began to grow noticeably. Every passing second made him stronger, faster and more resilient. His intelligence and the efficiency of his senses were also constantly increasing and his extrasensory perception was not spared.

While he had originally gone off to hunt Digestors in order to accumulate Aether and max out his Seventh Stat, it was slowly but surely climbing towards 100 points without him having to spend anything. If the trend continued, his Extrasensory Perception would exceed 50 points in less than two minutes.

Despite this, the weight and pressure on his body was increasing much faster than his stats and the point of no return had been reached. Without taking action, he would simply end up asphyxiated. If he lost consciousness, he would lose control of his Aether and the Digestors would take a bite out of him.

Feeling that the ground in contact with his back was fully controllable, Jake concentrated his mind and suddenly without any warning he fell into the 'ground' as if the earth and rock beneath him was just water.

The fangs of the Humanoide Digestor snapped shut on rock, its body ending up trapped underground as it was carried away with Jake. Underground, Jake inexplicably felt good, not being compressed or oppressed by the mass of earth around him.

The earth and rock within four meters was perfectly under his control and no longer weighed anything. This range increased second by second as his Extrasensory Perception continued to grow.

Despite the darkness and his closed eyes, Jake could easily orient himself by sensing where the Aether in the earth and rock stopped. The Aether in the humanoid Digestor stuck underground with him had a very distinct texture in comparison.

This perfect control of the earth, though, wasn't free of charge. It demanded intense mental fortitude and mobilized his full attention. Yet, thanks to the uplifting effect of the Myrmidian blood, the Aether continued to flow towards him and enhance him, the excess Aether inside his body refusing to dissipate for the time being.

His mental capacities were thus entirely dedicated to the thought of how to defeat his enemies and not that of controlling his excess

Aether so that it would not dissipate. And since his Aether stats were constantly increasing, it was getting easier and easier.

Ulare ovu ezmprt gurufov val duuo om nzmnuu vaqluid, Jfcu ljfq om ovu vppqfrmat Daeulomz lophc prtuzemprt jaov vaq frt jaov f lftaloah hmitrull lophc val qfhvuou arom aol vufzo gudmzu guvufitare ao jaovmpo ovu hzufopzu guare fgiu om zufho.

A large stream of Aether was absorbed by his wristband and swimming away from the Digestor's pile, he was finally able to resurface to take a deep breath of oxygen. A little more and he would have really choked.

His Constitution allowed his body to withstand prolonged anaerobic stress, but this was not without consequences. The lactic acid had reached a concentration that was lethal to a normal human and his heart was beating furiously to consume and convert the lactate into pyruvate. His muscles were on the verge of cramping and he was moving them only by sheer will.

He was hoping for a moment's respite, but the Digestors were everywhere and the unique aura of Aether he emitted was following him wherever he went. The pile of Digestors collapsed seconds after he left, like a house of cards from which a bottom card had been removed.

Soon, a new mob of Digestors were pouncing on him, their frenzy rekindled by his reappearance near them. But this time, Jake was ready for a fight. Using the ground to move like a stealthy shadow, his machete on the surface of the earth was like the dorsal fin of a shark splitting the surface of the ocean. All Digestors in his path were dismembered without mercy, the Aether of the victims following in his wake.

As Jake became more familiar with controlling the land, his movements became faster and more precise. Using his extreme intelligence, he began to build obstacles, corridors of rock and dust behind and in front of him, creating a fertile ground for his ambushes and guerilla tactics.

The largest and most powerful Digestors were soon hampered by all these obstacles, while the smallest and fastest ones smashed against these ramparts and rock spikes, sacrificing themselves needlessly until the obstacle gave way.

Of course, when an obstacle gave way, Jake could easily reinforce it or create a new one, but most of the time he would simply change his position and start again. AS soon as his creations left his control area, most of them would collapse like a pile of sand in a gust of wind, but those made of rocks would hold.

If Jake had had a better grasp of masonry and physics, he probably could have erected durable structures, but he was only an amateur in this field and didn't have the time. Killing Digestors was the only thing that mattered.

AS he swam underground and to the surface at ever-increasing speeds, Jake finally noticed the presence of two other humans fighting beside him. Dubious, he thought for a moment that they were the two pink-haired sisters, but he instantly refuted the possibility.

He didn't doubt the courage of the two young women, but if they entered the horde, he wouldn't give much of their skins. Faced with Rank 3 and 4 Digestors in profusion, surviving for more than a few seconds would be a miracle.

Walking along the surface of the ground in their direction, cutting down all the monsters in his path, Jake recognized slackjawed the two helpers. Sarah and Kyle. Sarah was back, okay, but he had no idea what the hell Kyle was doing there.