

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 184 - Escape

Despite the apparent seriousness of the situation, Jake wasn't that far from the Shelter anymore. A few tens of kilometers at most and at his current speed it could be covered in less than two minutes.

His Aether stats were higher than ever, his Strength, Agility, Constitution and Vitality peaking at 250 points without showing any sign of dissipation. His Intelligence and Perception was close to 150 points while his Extrasensory Perception had just passed the 102-point mark.

In addition to the fact that his Aether stats had never been so high, his bracelet had accumulated nearly 14,500 Aether points during the long night battle to defend his life. His knees may have been in bad shape, but he had never been stronger.

That's why he wasn't too worried. These two Digestors were monsters that the current Jake had no chance of facing, but surviving them by running away was not a challenge beyond his reach. Though, only if he was alone.

Carrying four unconscious people with him would severely complicate the task. The mutant Pterosaur's overpowering strike had not caused any visible damage to Kyle and Sarah, but the two Princesses had taken the full brunt of the shockwave.

Their way of fighting was more cautious and less experienced than that of the trio, whose Ordeal had been to follow the gladiator

training routine. Even after a long battle like this one, they had only accumulated a few hundred points and still managed to accumulate many injuries. Their Aether of Constitution was probably maxed out, but their bodies still seemed more frail than their own.

Nevertheless, Jake had no intention of giving up on anyone. If there was no way to save them, he would choose to survive on his own to avenge them, but as long as there was any hope, he would not leave anyone behind.

Taking a deep breath to regain control of the Aether around him, whose range had finally surpassed ten meters in radius, he liquefied the ground beneath his feet again, disappearing underground with his comrades.

Before plunging underground, Jake had briefly considered giving the two creatures the finger, but then thought for a moment that it was possible that the two Digestors would understand the insult and respond brutally to his provocation.

Jfcu frt ovu zulo md val prhmrlhampl ezmpn lvmo lozfaevo fvuft iacu hfrmrgrfiil, lniaoare ovzmpnev tazo frt zmhc om f tunov md fgmpo our quouzl om ulhfnu, ovuaz suimhaow usur ukhuutare ovu lmprt lnuut prtuzemppt.

Since there was little air and the earth was moving away from them thanks to Jake's exquisite control by pushing the air close by, it was almost like moving in a vacuum. The resistance against their bodies was insignificant, and Jake easily managed to widen the gap with the two High Rank Digestors who had not moved.

Despite this small success, his anxiety only increased. He couldn't see them, but he knew that the two creatures were following his position with their eyes as if they could see him directly. He

absolutely had to reach the Black Cube before the two Digestors got bored and decided to hunt them seriously.

Keeping an eye on the Map recorded by his bracelet in real time, Jake mentally counted the number of kilometers he still had to travel before he could escape the two monsters for good.

”Twenty kilometers... fifteen kilometers... ten kilometers!” Jake recited with increasing dread.

As if the Digestors could hear his thoughts, the two creatures decided it was finally time to eliminate the last moles hiding underground. They loved to play with their prey, but they knew they couldn’t hunt near the precipice. All prey fleeing so far meant that their hunt had failed.

With a powerful flapping of its wings, the gale of wind blowing the corpses of the Digestors nearby into the air, the Rank 7 lifted off, generating an incredible amount of energy, comparable to that of a space shuttle during its launch. Despite its power, the Pterosaur-like Digestor was relatively heavy.

By following the laws of conventional physics, this creature should have been unable to fly. However, its Aether and Body stats were so high that its anatomy defied common sense, allowing it to easily break the sound barrier in a split second.

The Silver Butterfly on his shoulder also took off with much more grace. Much faster than the enormous flying Digestor, its wing beats generated virtually no noise, although a gust of wind also followed them.

The Butterfly took the lead, flying like a silver comet in the direction of Jake, catching up with him and the rest of his group in less than five seconds. Stabilizing its flight a few hundred meters above Jake,

the mysterious Digestor began to taunt them again, accompanying their movements.

Jfcu guhfqu arhzuflareiw fifzqut frt dzplozfout, gpo vu hmpit mriw ezaov val ouuov frt hmroarpu om diuu fl dflo fl vu hmpit. Bw hmrhurozfoare fii val lozureov, val Auovuz md lrouiiaeurhu vft efarut wuo frmovuz nmaro frt ovfo vft fiimjut vaq om lnuut pn f iaooiu qmzu. Taqu jfl val gulo fiiw.

Alas, the two Flying Digestors did not give him that chance. With its out of tune whale call, which hammered their eardrums, Jake felt a sharp headache, even more violent than the one he had suffered when he had overloaded his stats with insufficient intelligence.

His vision blurred again and blood began to flow from his nose, eyes and ears. His head was spinning, his balance was disturbed as if his inner ear had been damaged, and he could feel a foreign intrusion into his mind. A bluish Aether mass carried by the sound wave emitted by the Butterfly.

Focusing his will, Jake firmly repelled the alien Aether, but it loosened the force of his control over the surrounding earth and his speed decreased significantly as a result. Fortunately, the Butterfly seemed unable to unleash these mental blasts repeatedly or Jake would have already died by now.

In comparison, Jake was much more worried about his teammates who were still unconscious and had no means to repel this invasive Aether. Just like Jake, blood was coming out of every orifice of their faces, but the pain was not enough to bring them back to consciousness. The paralyzing powder was still active.

Scanning their bodies with his mind, which Jake could now feel was no longer as dependent on his fleshly body as before, he expelled the foreign Aether from their bodies before refocusing on his escape.

This delusion had nevertheless been enough to allow the Pterosaurus Digestor to catch up with them. Swooping down again like a meteor, a huge shockwave wreaked havoc on the earth again, ejecting him and his comrades from the ground.

Jake had not been able to escape to the depths, because then he would have lost control of the earth above him. He and his group would then have been forced to endure the pressure of the huge mass of earth he no longer controlled and all they would have gained was to end up being buried alive.

So they were sent back to the surface with multiple fractures this time, although Jake absorbed most of the shock by hiding them in front of him at the moment of impact. But as Jake was coughing up blood while palpating his sternum, which sounded like a crushed potato chip packet, he heard a noise that shouldn't have been there.

‘Meow. ‘

Jfcu gpeeut dmz f lvmzo qmquro ovarcare ovfo vu qfw vfsu  
vfiipharfout frt ovfo ovu qujare jfl hmqare dzmq mru md ovu ojm  
Daeulomzl, gpo ovu qujare lmpert zulmpertut fefar zaevo guvart vaq.

‘Meow!’

A ball of black hair weighing a hundred kilos suddenly rubbed against him who still couldn't get up, the rough hair rubbing his face making him want to sneeze. Pushing away the overly tactile animal with his arms, Jake recognized his own cat in amazement: Crunch.

‘What the hell are you doing...’ Jake interrupted his sentence when he saw the ‘gang’ accompanying his cat.

A huge lion more massive than an adult mammoth was standing right behind Crunch, who looked like a miserable cub next to him, because of the striking difference in size. In addition to the lion,

seven or eight lionesses as heavy and voluminous as hippos accompanied it, as well as a male tiger not much smaller than the lion.

Both the lion and the tiger in question had eyes sparkling with intelligence, their fur shining as if each of their hairs were a polished steel wire. Their snubbed chops revealed fangs so white and shiny that they seemed able to chew diamond with impunity.

”So that’s why the two Digestors didn’t finish us off...” Jake realized with a deflated expression.

The Pterosaur and the Butterfly Digestors, as well as the Lion and the Tiger, were now glaring at each other as if they were prey to each other. The tension in the air was palpable, and a new red lightning storm had just begun, heralding the start of an epic fight that promised to be titanic.