

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 199 - The Aether Core

This time he didn't ask Xi to translate for him. He wanted to put into practice the vocabulary he had just learned, and reading a manual in Oraclean was the perfect exercise.

He was able to confirm again that his intelligence had definitely increased. All he had done was read a dictionary, yet he had no difficulty understanding the contents of the virtual book either in terms of vocabulary or syntax.

Maybe he would forget some rarely used symbols over time, but with his constantly increasing stats it was unlikely. After all, if he wasn't trying to memorize, he could reread the English-Oraclean section of the dictionary in less than an hour.

Oraclean was a complicated language. The symbols for the different syllables and sounds were superimposed in a precise sequence to form words, then sentences, and a single large symbol could contain a lot of information.

If he had retained his ancient human intelligence, he would have spent many minutes interpreting a single one of these large symbols, even if he knew the meaning of each of the sub-symbols composing it by heart.

Moreover, he did not know all the symbols. Many concepts or notions had a unique symbol and sound comparable to the Chinese

or Japanese kanji. But there were also symbols that corresponded to sounds that the human vocal cords could not pronounce.

This language had to be able to represent all the concepts in the Mirror Universe. If the name of a creature, for example, was said using other forms of communication such as electromagnetic waves, ultrasound, a complex smell or a precise posture, the Oraclean had to be able to translate that name.

When a name or surname meant something, the corresponding standard Oraclean symbol would do the trick. However, if it meant nothing, the name had to be translated as it was with other dedicated symbols.

That's why Jake estimated that it would take him several months minimum to finish the Oraclean section of the dictionary. The number of symbols and entries simply increased exponentially.

His consolation was that at least the vocal chords remained a common organ of communication in the Mirror Universe. At least enough for it to become the norm.

Turning back to his reading, he finished reading Chapter 2 in a few minutes only. After reading it, he stood still for a long time with his eyes closed to integrate what he had just learned.

Creating an Aether Core wasn't that difficult in theory, but it was a lengthy process that would take a lot of time and effort. He also now knew how his bracelet passively absorbed the Aether from the atmosphere over time.

This was a relatively negligible aspect of his bracelet at the moment, as the rate of Aether absorption was derisory. When his Oracle Rank was still zero, his bracelet took about a month to accumulate 0.1 Aether points.

The rate of absorption doubled with each Oracle Rank and was dependent on the Aether density of the atmosphere. With his current Oracle Rank, his bracelet could passively collect 6.4 Aether points per month. In other words, nothing at all.

Those few points could still make the difference in the long run for those who didn't dare to venture out of the Oracle Cities. Especially since the rapid increase of Aether density on B842 would only improve the yield of their bracelet.

An Aether Core was exactly what the term implied: A mass of Aether concentrated in a single point until it became solid or almost so.

Similar to the interaction between mass and gravity, the accumulation of Aether at the same point would eventually generate an Aether gravity field attracting the surrounding Aether to it.

On paper, it looked as simple as opening a jam jar. Except that preventing such a mass of Aether from dispersing until it collapsed in on itself and formed the equivalent of an Aether black hole required a lot of Aether and a constant supply of Aether.

For beginners with low stats like him it was not possible to use this process. The alternative version for beginners was therefore to consciously control this Aether mass to generate a rotation, which would function as a kind of vortex. With sufficient speed, this Aether mass would rotate fast enough to resist the Aetheric forces trying to drive the Aether out of his body.

But then again, there was another issue. That spinning movement of the Aether wouldn't come out of nowhere, but from Jake's focused mind. Simply put, as with his Overloaded Aether stats, if he relaxed his concentration before the Aether Core was formed, the Aether would disperse and he would be back to square one.

The reason Extrasensory Perception and Intelligence needed to reach a minimum of 100 points was to attract and control as much Aether as possible. Controlling the Aether within 10 meters radius was the minimum that made the attempt to create the Aether Core possible.

Lastly, there was a final problem of size. If Jake wanted to contain the Aether Core inside his body, he would need to choose a part of his body that he could sacrifice.

Because if his body was able to withstand high concentrations of Aether when he shifted it from one limb to the other for better fighting, the Aether density at the Aether Core level would be far beyond what his body could endure.

Basically, the area of the body housing the Aether Core was usually just a hole! No flesh, bones, or organs. Just a void.

Fmz oval suzw zuflmr, ao jfl omm zalcw om hvmmmlu fr aqnmzofro nifhu iacu ovu vufzo mz gzfar om vmplu ovu Auovuz Cmzu. Or ovu movuz vftr, ao vft om gu zuifoasuiw hurouzut om fiimj uflw fhull om ovu Auovuz.

Jake remembered all those cultivation s that always placed their Qi center below and behind their belly button at the Dantian level and he realized that it wasn't that absurd. There were plenty of places in the body containing only connective or mucous tissue, you just had to choose one.

It was also possible to use this method to temper the part of the body concerned. A metal like mithril, for example, which was suddenly found in heroic fantasy, could exist in the Mirror Universe by another name, but with similar properties.

All it took was for the ore in question to have been bathed in an environment extremely rich in Aether for a very long time. After a certain threshold of time and density, changes would occur in the

matter itself, which had no other choice but to adapt or otherwise disappear.

Jake had already done this test and concentrating all of his Aether Strength in a single finger was the limit he could not exceed both for control reasons, but also because it quickly became painful to maintain.

This would cause the Aether Strength of his finger to rise to more than 10,000 points and when his stats were overloaded, he was unable to move all of his Aether into it but only just under half of it. Attempting to inject more Aether into his finger would undoubtedly have injured him.

Once established, however, the Aether Core had a multitude of uses. It prevented excess Aether from escaping, could provide energy to the various Aether Skills and Spells, and could even nourish the host's body and make it stronger and more resilient in the long run. The soul and spirit also benefited from the proximity of an Aether Core.

Like a black hole, the Aether and the energy contained in the Aether Core itself could not be used, as this would diminish the Aether mass of the Core and therefore its ability to attract the Aether.

The mind itself being made of Aether, mentally or physically touching an Aether Core was one of the most admirable ways to commit suicide.

However, as with a black hole, the accretion disc forming around it would emit an Aether radiance that could be exploited by the owner of the core. This Aether output was the process used by the bracelet to function and accumulate Aether over time.

Od hmpzlu, ovu Auovuz Cmzu hmrofarut gw ovu gzfhuiuo jfl rmo ruhullfzaiw vaev-iusui, gpo jfl hzufout gw ovu mqranmouro Ozfhiu

Swlouq. Tvu Auovuz Cmzu ar ypuloamr jfl iaouzfiw fr uruzew nmaro lqfiuz ovfr f nfzoahiu md qfoouz frt ao jfl fgmlipouiw aqnmllagi dmz Jfcu om tuouho ao jaov val hpzzuro Ekozflurlmzw Puzhunoamr.

It was also good to know that an Aether Core could be encoded to serve a certain function itself, or be generated using only a certain type of Aether. It was the original mana source for Enya and Esya.

The only difference was that this Aether Core was formed from already transformed elementary Aether particles and that this process was semi-instinctive and automatic among this race. Not being powered anymore, their Mana Cores had weakened little by little during their few battles on B842 until they eventually vanished.

In a life or death situation, it was possible to combust the Aether Core, or even blow it up to use the Aether stored inside, but it was a choice that few Evolvers and Players were willing to make. Because it took a lot of Aether to improve the Aether output by a single point and sacrificing your Aether Core was like sacrificing years of hard work in a split second.