

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 204 - Transaction

‘Out of your lair at last?’ Will joked and greeted him with a friendly handshake. ‘I didn’t dare bother you after the deal was closed, but I didn’t think you’d stay cooped up in your cabin this long!’

It was clear from the businessman’s tone that he was hoping Jake would tell him about his week, but he had enough restraint not to invade his privacy. After all, if he was sleeping or fooling around with pretty refugees looking for a place to stay, it was none of his business.

‘The hell you thinking?’ He chuckled inwardly at Will’s innuendo-filled gaze.

Instead, he simply replied:

‘I was training. I would have continued, but my cousin came ringing at my door.’

‘Oh...’

It was only then that Will noticed that Jake wasn’t alone. He had already met Anya a week earlier when she was accompanying the two soldiers Patrick and Alima, but her civilian officer’s outfit made her much less striking. Knowing that he had been rude, he rectified the situation by politely shaking the young woman’s hand.

Seeing that Will was no longer planning to leave, the Lion, the Tiger, and then the rest of the felines laid down or sat on the paved square, silently listening to their conversation. Jake noted that each of them

seemed to have a translator and had probably learned how to spend their Aether. They all seemed smarter than he remembered.

Only Crunch hadn't used his Aether points, but he was after all the only cat in the group. The simple feat of reaching the size of an adult Tibetan mastiff was already a great accomplishment.

Jake thought it was best to let nature take its course by giving him high quality food so that he would grow in the most optimal way possible. As long as these felines teamed up anyway, he would be fine.

'How was the sale of the Rank 7 Digestor?' Jake worried as he got to the heart of the matter.

Will cracked a big smile.

'Sold five days ago. Except for some of the meat we processed and dried for our own consumption and the felines' food, the rest was sold outright for just over 500,000 Aether points.'

On hearing the bomb Will had just dropped, Jake blinked with a stunned face. 500,000 points? That was more than 50 times his most optimistic estimate. Even Anya standing next to him was completely shocked.

'You're the one who sold the corpse from the Rank 7 Digestor?!

'Anya exclaimed with an expression of disbelief. 'How is that possible? I mean, no offense, but you guys are newbies on B842...'

Jake silently pointed to the Lion and Tiger behind Will as they were grooming themselves in a nonchalant manner.

'You may not have noticed, but we've made some friends.' He said with a smug smirk on his face.

Anya had indeed noticed the feline gang, but she just thought they were waiting to borrow the Orange Cube to leave the plaza. Even on New Earth, there weren't many animals specifically trained and fed to become Evolvers or Players. Their behavior was just too unpredictable.

'When I think about how hard I worked to get those 10,000 points...'
'She breathed a long sigh of discouragement. 'You're richer than me right now, I think...'

'Not really. It was the Lion who eliminated the Rank 7 Digestor.' Jake consoled her by patting her shoulder like a good cousin. 'Without him, we'd all be dead in a split second. '

Jake's words cheered her up, but it didn't change the fact that they had a real fortune in their hands. 500,000 points... With her current salary and without counting any bonuses, nor any hunted Digestor, it would take her at least a year to raise that amount.

Of course, it would be totally idiotic not to do anything during that period. By then she would have participated in a few more Ordeals and completed a significant number of missions.

Jake and Will then introduced her to the felines, who had no names yet, except for one of the lionesses named Nala, who had been raised on a wildlife sanctuary. Only the Lion and the Tiger nodded slightly during the introductions. The other felines, even with the help of the translators, did not understand everything. As for Crunch, the obnoxious black cat totally ignored them.

'And that... is my cat Crunch. 'Jake revealed by giving the rude cat a good kick in the butt.

Crunch hissed in response, only to recognize the perpetrator and humbly flatten his ears shortly afterwards. Abandoning the female leopard who could barely tolerate him, he then came to rub against them, purring like a good house cat.

Jake reacted too late and the cat's rough and hard like steel hair tore his new pants. Anya, reacted just in time by stopping the feline's forehead with the tip of her hand.

Looking down at his shredded trousers, he felt the tiredness of the last week overtake him at once. Will and Anya refrained from commenting, but they were on the verge of bursting into laughter.

‘ Give me the Aether, I'll do the distribution. ‘ Jake said abruptly to distract his urge to kick his cat again.

‘ No problem. ‘

Will knew he was just the salesman in the story. He hadn't been in the fight that night at all. He was still hoping Jake wouldn't forget his efforts.

After receiving the 506,348 Aether points, Jake mentally communicated with the Lion to decide the distribution. He knew that the feline couldn't count, and he went to great lengths to make him understand what this amount of Aether points represented.

All the Lion understood was that it meant a lot of Aether, but not enough to buy anything really interesting in the Oracle Store.

‘Here's what I'm suggesting...‘

After a long and trying mental battle, Jake managed to convince him to leave him this sum of Aether to reinvest it optimally. However, Jake still allowed 10,000 points to each of the felines, including his cat, so that none of them would run out of Aether during their stay in

the Oracle Shelter. As the pack consisted of 12 felines, the initial sum was reduced to 386,348 points after these transactions.

When Jake explained to Will and Enya the deal he had just made with the Lion, the businessman was quite satisfied.

‘How much do you need Will to start your business?’ Jake checked before deciding how much to give him.

‘It’s hard to say. Enough to buy a store in Oracle City, but we don’t have anything to sell yet. We can also recruit refugees or Evolvers to form our own faction, but Cho Min-Ho’s already taken the initiative in this town.’

‘How much does it cost to get your own Floating Island?’ Jake asked his cousin who’d been to Thelma before.

Svu jfl lpznzalut ovfo vu jmpit flc vuz oval ypuloamr, gpo lvu omit vaq usuzwovare lvu cruj jaovmpo lvware fjfw.

‘You need to be at least Rank 6 Sergeant Leader and be an active Player to be able to acquire your own Floating Island. You also need to identify your own faction, since the Floating Islands are considered Nation Islands in their own right. As for the price, an uncustomised Grade 1 Floating Island costs only 100,000 points.’

‘It’s a lot cheaper than I thought...’ Jake mumbled lost in thought. The Oracle System had accustomed him to higher prices. Will was sharing the same doubts.

But Anya’s next words brought them all back to reality.

‘The Grade 1 uncustomized Floating Island is only 100 square meters in size and cannot be moved. The location of the island is completely random. If the Oracle Store didn’t provide a Yellow Cube, and a force field that provides radiation protection, temperature, and a

breathable atmosphere, these islands would be completely cut off from the world.

‘If you have 100,000 points to spend and no good reason to buy a Floating Island, it’s better to rent or buy a small house in an Oracle City. ‘

Jake didn’t totally agree with her. A Floating Island remained a space of which he was the sole owner, difficult to locate and ideal for anyone who wanted to settle down durably. The cabins in the Oracle Bunker were also suitable for training and/or quiet, but the exponential price required to expand the cabin meant that their use was limited to extra accommodation or storage.

‘We’ll see about that when I get to Rank 6,’ Jake finally declared, feeling it was too soon to make a decision. ‘ Will, I’m going to New Earth with my cousin, you wanna come? ‘

‘That’s good, I was planning on going there after I gave you back the Aether from the deal. ‘Will gladly accepted. ‘ I think Sarah, Kyle and Tim wanted to go too. ‘

‘Then let’s go get them. ‘

Tvu ozam omeuovuz jaov ovu duiarul dmprrt ovu zulo md ovuaz ezmpn ar ovu nifxf jvuzu ovu Yuiimj Cpgu jfl imhfout. Aiaqf frt Pfozahc, ovu ojm lmitauzl jmzcare dmz ovu Efzov Gmsuzrquro juzu film ovuzu, hvfooare jaov ovuaz dzaurtl fo f ifzeu ofgiu jvaiu lannare cccofail.