

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 208 - Jay Parks

The receptionist in question stared at her cousin for a few more seconds before succinctly replying in an apathetic voice, 'Like a Monday.'

'Is it Monday?' Jake tried to remember, but he couldn't remember the date. He had lost track as early as his last month on Earth when communications were cut off and he had to live in a state of constant vigilance without outside contact.

Chronologically it should have been the end of December if he did not count the two months he had spent in another world during his first Ordeal.

'What are you doing here Anya?' The one known as Elisabeth inquired in an icy tone. 'You're off duty and I doubt your contribution points are enough to claim anything. I remember you spent all your points on that Lightning spell not too long ago.'

Anya played with her curly hazelnut hair with an embarrassed look, but she quickly regained her usual composure. The receptionist seemed to intimidate her greatly.

'It is not for me that I am here, but for my cousin and his friends.' She explained coolly, avoiding going into too many details. 'He needs a genetic surgeon who also knows a thing or two about Aether to transfer a bloodline.'

She had been especially careful not to mention the term Aetherist in front of the receptionist. This may have been an unimportant detail,

but it revealed that her cousin or someone she knew had a manual about Aether or some knowledge of the subject. Because this information was jealously guarded on New Earth, she preferred to avoid drawing attention to her cousin.

Jake appreciated the consideration, but he didn't think it was that important. After all, he must not have been the only one who had taken the risk of buying a manual on Aether manipulation. All ambitious factions sooner or later would eventually make that investment, and loners like him who couldn't trust anyone also had valid reasons for making that choice.

Elizabeth examined them again one by one, taking a longer pause on Kyle and the two princesses before she stopped her gaze on Jake. He had stored the excess of his overloaded Aether stats in the crystals and he didn't look very different from Sarah except for his Seventh Stat. Kyle was much more striking in comparison, because he had already become a Myrmidian.

'Is he your cousin?' Elizabeth asked as she evaluated him. 'He kind of looks like you...'

Except for their brown hair color and the shape of their green eyes, they did not look alike at all. After months of training, plus two months of living like a gladiator basking in the sun, he was hardly recognizable.

He was as muscular as any veteran Evolver, and if you added to that his beard of several weeks, his neglected hair, the fact that he walked barefoot and his sun tanned skin, he looked more like a savage than a civilized being.

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The receptionist, nonetheless, was experienced and clearly an Evolver or Player of a higher rank than they were, and she had seen her fair share of refugees and survivors. Jake's appearance wasn't that rare on B842 for those with no background.

The young orange-eyed woman with three pupils then gave them each a form to fill in to clarify their requests before she lost interest in them and returned to her reading.

On the form, they had to specify the organic material used for the bloodline transfer, the desired bloodline and the expected effects. Their request would then be evaluated during the day and an estimate would be presented to them since they had no contribution points.

Jake hoped that this would not be too expensive, but he was more concerned about whether what he wished was possible or not. If filtering out the genetic drawbacks of two bloodlines and then merging them together proved too complicated, he would have to resort to searching for the Aetherist on Thelma.

If he couldn't find it in a reasonable amount of time, he would absorb one of the bloodlines as is with the help of one of New Earth's genetic surgeons. After all, he only had one life.

Even though he could not die in an Ordeal, he felt that successive failures on the second, third and fourth Ordeal would severely compromise his chances of survival for the fifth one where death became possible.

A quarter of an hour later, Elisabeth retrieved their forms and asked them to wait in a waiting room that was pleasantly well furnished. In

addition to a cafeteria for staff breaks, there were also other relaxing accessories such as game consoles, billiard tables and foosball tables.

Drinks and food in the cafeteria didn't require any Aether, but good old Earth dollars. A price in Aether was, however, indicated for visiting aliens. Jake couldn't help but laugh when he saw that a % 5 sandwich cost the same in Aether. It was cheaper than in the Oracle Store, but it was still a nice scam.

He could only imagine how many aliens the government had ripped off before the Earth was completely transported. It should not be forgotten that before that, it was possible to transfer resources directly from their home planet. Even though the transfer was expensive, with these prices it was easy to make a profit even if it was mainly for their staff.

He felt, however, that New Earth had to have enough arable and livestock fields to support their staff. Relying solely on the Earth's resources was not sustainable in the long term, especially now that the Earth had been absorbed by B842.

Will, who had kept a few bundles of cash, paid for food and drink for everyone. It was worth the detour to see Enya and Esya open a can of coke and time went by much faster than he had expected. They tried one or two VR games, played a game of pool and had another meal, until the receptionist came to fetch them again with a restless expression.

Jake expected it to take much longer than that, or even that they would be asked to come back the next day. He was somewhat unsettled to discover that their forms had been processed so quickly. New Earth's administration was devilishly efficient!

This time another man was accompanying her. He wore a symbolic white lab coat, but it was not buttoned. Underneath a suit of black armour perfectly fitting his body like that of Black Panther was showing through. Fortunately, he was not wearing a helmet.

He was a black man who looked quite elderly with a refined appearance. In his late fifties, with stylishly dishevelled hair, a goatee and a pair of sunglasses that made no sense in a normally lit research center. Except for the costume, he would have looked perfectly normal if he wasn't ten feet tall.

'Your applications have been accepted, but will require further verification. 'Elisabeth explained in a perplexed tone, trying to sound reassuring. ' The man on my right is Jay Parks and is one of the supervisors of this center and one of our best geneticists... It turns out he has some free time and has decided to take care of your applications... '

Jake held back from frowning, but inside he couldn't help but wonder. 'Does he want a Myrmidian or Kintharian blood sample? If he can do the bloodline transfer, I might be willing to give him a portion.'

'Thank you Eli, I'll take it from here. 'Jay declared in a kindly tone, patting her shoulder as if she were his own daughter.

The scene might have looked normal if the young woman weren't just at his stomach level. His hands were so huge that every pat made her bend her knees, and that was considering that she herself was an Evolver.

Seeing this, Jake was already much less confident about letting this man do the operation. This man clearly didn't have the proper anatomy to do fine surgery except perhaps to make skull necklaces.

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‘Do not worry,’ he said. ‘We use robots for this, or I would have killed a patient a long time ago.’

Everyone could not help but breathe a long sigh of relief upon hearing that. Jake was no exception.