

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 209 - The Condition

‘ Please follow me. We’ve got a lot to talk about. ‘ Jay ordered solemnly before turning back with no warning.

His strides were so wide that the smallest of them, Tim and the two sisters, were forced to trot a little to keep up with him. Elisabeth, who was supposed to be just a receptionist, also accompanied them out of sheer curiosity.

Jake and the others had a lot of questions to ask, but they all, without exception, chose to remain silent. At first he thought that the bloodline transfer was a regular, if not trivial, procedure at the center. So why all this seriousness ?

One glance was enough to realize that deploying one of the best geneticists of the center in person for a bloodline transfer obtained in a first Ordeal made no sense. Unless New Earth currently has very few Aetherists ? It was possible if we were talking about the Aether, but there had to be a certain number of geneticists.

In that case, was Myrmidian and Kintharian blood the problem ? Come to think of it, their first Ordeal had been far too rich in twists and turns. Terrifying Digestors, and he’d even met the one he thought was the Myrmid hero himself.

After cross-checking the Ordeal stories of the two sisters and Tim, their experience had turned out to be much more mundane and down-to-earth. If there were any fantastic creatures or deities in their

Ordeal World, they hadn't been exposed to them at all. In that sense his First Ordeal was unique, as the descendants of Myrmid, Throsgen, Kinthar and Eltar were literally everywhere.

Getting some blood wasn't that difficult. All one had to do was bleed one of them and keep the vial until the end of the Ordeal, or receive the sincere gratitude of one of them. Jake wasn't clear on how these special rewards were to be granted, but it didn't seem that complicated.

After all, he had obtained the blood of Lucia and Gerulf despite the fact that he was clearly inferior to them. Maybe in the end, getting a bloodline like that of the Myrmidians was not so simple.

Following the towering Jay Parks, Jake and the rest of his group passed through a few secure doors requiring authorized personnel to place their wristbands against a dedicated scanner, before joining a large oval elevator with armor glass walls.

Again, Jay had to authenticate his identity with his bracelet before the elevator opened to let them through. The floor numbers ranged from 0 to -200, confirming his initial impression that the research was taking place underground. Another, less strict elevator was to provide access to the upper floors.

The supervisor managed to gently press the -188 floor button despite his huge forefinger, and the elevator plummeted down underground at a dizzying speed. Surprisingly, none of them felt the slightest acceleration nor heard the slightest noise. Moreover, the elevator car did not seem to touch any wall, nor was it connected to any structure, as if it were levitating in the open air.

Electromagnetism ? Or some other Aether-based technology that the Earth Government had acquired from the Oracle Store ? Anything was possible.

The floors quickly scrolled past before their eyes, leaving them barely enough time to contemplate a work environment before it was immediately replaced by another.

Cimluz om ovu ezmprt, ovu hurouz luuqut om gu dmhplut mr qmzu hzptu jmzc, lphv fl hpooare pn Daeulomz hmznlul, lomzare, hmqnaiare, frt nzmhullare zulmpzhul fhypazut ukouzrfiiw mr B842.

Deeper down, floors filled with workshops and cutting-edge technology replaced the previous set. There were also storage areas, but it was no longer food, skin or monster bones, but equipment or weapons.

‘This is where we get our equipment and spend our contribution points.’ Anya whispered in his ear as quietly as she could.

Unlucky for her, the orange-eyed receptionist gave her a black look of warning. The supervisor just let out a small amused chuckle, as if it didn’t concern him. Following this misadventure, her cousin kept quiet until they arrived on the -188 floor.

When they got out of the elevator, they discovered a high-tech laboratory, just like in science fiction movies. Walls, floors and white ceiling, computers and machines with unknown functions except for the usual microscopes, centrifuges and other physical-chemical instruments. There were of course also security cameras covering every corner of every room and corridor on the floor.

Each room dedicated to the study of organic material followed a precise security protocol for entering and leaving, and thick glass panes made it possible to observe what was going on there from the

outside. The personnel inside were wearing full-body suits that were completely sealed and impermeable.

As one would expect from one of the Center's supervisors and top geneticists, he was highly respected and... feared? Except for a few older scientists with a reputation to live up to and a few intimidating and somewhat inhumane looking guards who betrayed their status as Evolvers, all the scientists in white coats would bow out of the way as he walked by.

Jake glanced questioningly at his cousin, but she didn't deign to answer this time. Jay Parks may have been friendly with them, but the men under him didn't seem to share that view.

After several long minutes of wandering through the corridors, Jay Parks finally stopped in front of a door that had a golden plaque with his initials in black letters written on it. He re-authenticated his identity and the door opened slowly with the rattling of cogs.

'After you. 'The giant politely gestured to the inside of the room to welcome them in.

Irlatu, f vpeu tulc zmmq tasatut arom lusuzfi jmcclnfhul zusufiut aoluid om ovuq. Ao dazlo eifrhru, ao luuqut ovfo Jfw zفزuiw iudo oval zmmq, frt ao vft guur luo pn fl f lofdd ypfzouzl om hfouz dmz fii val ruutl.

A staircase led to his private apartments, but in addition to the office and a custom-made ergonomic chair, a private laboratory had been built for his personal use. All the latest machinery and equipment could be found there.

'Sit wherever you want. '

Once again, he encouraged them to relax and choose a comfortable chair or sofa to sit on. When he saw that Elisabeth had also chosen a

leather pouffe as if he was also addressing her, he couldn't help but give an exasperated sigh. Tired, he slumped into the ergonomic chair behind his desk.

He stared at them calmly one by one, tapping the surface of his desk with his fingers before letting out a small laugh.

‘Heh heh, I imagine you have many questions for me and I have questions for you too, so let's play fair.

‘The Myrmidian and Kintharian blood you obtained is of interest to us whether it's diluted, pure or impure. ‘

At that moment, he gave a nod to Sarah and Jake.

‘You have no idea how lucky you were to get those samples. These rewards aren't supposed to appear in a First Ordeal. It doesn't mean it never happened, but it's still an infrequent occurrence.

‘Usually, novice Players make the mistake of assimilating the bloodline obtained immediately, which ruins all our chances of studying these samples. More experienced Players are more cautious and usually save the blood they receive to save their Ordeal credits, but these bloodlines are rarely as interesting.

‘You've probably already noticed that the prices displayed in the Oracle Store at the end of an Ordeal and in an Oracle City are completely different. During an Ordeal, the prices in credits are lower and there are always significant discounts available to allow you to make the most of your loot. Sometimes it's literally free. Outside, it's different. The cheapest Myrmidian blood was probably available for only 5 or 10 credits by my estimate when you chose your rewards. Under normal circumstances, it's officially 500,000 Aether points outside, which is still reasonable.

‘The problem is that like most of the highly sought-after organic materials that the Oracle Store offers, it’s usually out of stock. When the Oracle System has to synthesize a material from scratch, the price rises exponentially, where only the energy required and the complexity of the object to be created matter. In this sense, even if the Myrmidian blood is of poor quality, it won’t cost much less to produce than the purest version. In terms of energy at least. The Oracle will charge for the necessary knowledge.

‘The bottom line is that even for the Earth Government, getting these samples is difficult. We won’t force you to give us all of them, even if we’re willing to give you a good price, but we want at least two portions. That’s our condition for carrying out the bloodline transfer.  
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