

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 214 - It's just an excuse

Barely daring to breathe, Jake scrolled down the report to access the analysis report summary of the second sample. As expected, it did not disappoint him.

[Second Sample Analysis: Grade 7 Bloodline]

Genome composition: 100% Kintharian, 24 pairs of chromosomes.

Similarity with the human genome: 84.62%]

[Expected physical characteristics:]

[-Silver Irises and hair.]

[-Dark skin.]

[-Lifespan quintupled.]

[-Overdeveloped canines, larger jaw, short claws.]

[-Increased libido.]

[-Increased height, wider and denser bones, stronger muscle fibers and more developed muscles.]

[-Reduced brain mass.]

[-Metabolic adaptations: The skin can absorb minerals from the soil as well as electromagnetic radiation, including sunlight, to provide energy and oxygen to its host.]

[Eknuhout qurofi hvfzfhouzaloahl:]

[-Aggressiveness, impulsiveness.]

[-Diminished intellectual faculties, more simplistic reasoning.]

Expected Aetheric Characteristics:]

[- Kintharian Body: The body continues to strengthen as long as there is a source of heat, radiation or minerals nearby.]

[-Kintharian Spirit Body/Soul: The mind is strengthened by the Aether contained in electromagnetic radiation and heat sources.]

[- Stone Skin: The body can withstand high temperatures and radiation, including high pressure and friction.]

[- Heat and radiation tolerance: The body temperature is no longer fixed at 37°C and can withstand a much higher internal temperature without shutting down.]

[-Earth Manipulation: Including all the minerals, atoms and inorganic traces found in the soil of Kinthar's home planet, which is a small volcanic telluric planet very close to its sun.]

[- Heat and Radiation Control: It becomes possible to thermally and energetically excite any object, including one's own body.]

[-Ahhuiuzfout Hufiare: Io al nmlagiū om vufi usur ovu qmlo iuovfi frt talfgiare jmprtl gw gpzware mruluid prtuzemprr ar f jfzq lnfhū. Ao f vaev iusui, oval gimmtiaru lcaii hfr vufi fiqmlo frwovare ar rm oaqu jaov f emmt ifsf gfov.]

Jake reviewed the two reports several times to make sure he hadn't missed anything, and then began to compare the strengths and weaknesses of each bloodline. The Myrtarian bloodline was rather balanced thanks to the influence of the Eltarian bloodline advocating

wisdom and spirituality. Self-Encoding and the Aether/Soul Tribute were the two greatest assets of this bloodline.

The Kintharian bloodline was much more flawed, but its specificities justified its Grade 7, while the Kintharian Body/Spirit Body complemented the Self Encoding of the Myrtarian bloodline. Indeed, there was nothing in the first report to indicate that the Myrmidians did not have a physiological limit that their bodies could not overcome. Only their Aether stats could grow continuously.

The Stone Skin skill was interesting, and this made the performance of the Player disguised as a Myrmid Templar all the more impressive, since Gerulf ended up covered with injuries. It was however possible that because of the poison he was unable to use all these bloodline abilities.

Jake had already tried earth and heat control against the Digestors horde a week earlier, and he also remembered the night Gerulf had buried himself in the ashen soil of his training yard to heal himself.

It was still quite a surprise to him, however, to learn that the Kintharians could survive simply with a little soil and sunshine. 'Was Gerulf in fact a fucking humanoid plant?' Jake lamented inwardly. Come to think of it, he had never shared a meal with the Kinthar.

The real concern was the reduction of his intellect. He knew the importance of intelligence to survive in the Mirror Universe and it was a risk he couldn't afford to take, even if it was compensated by the Myrtarian bloodline.

Gerulf was much more of a simpleton than any Throsgenian he'd ever met. And clearly, none of them had invented powdered water... Most of them didn't even know their left from their right! The Kinthar had a certain wisdom and simplicity of mind, but there was no doubt that by Earth standards he was moderately mentally retarded.

The final assessment of this Kintharian Bloodline, however, was that it offered excellent survivability by allowing it to thrive in environments considered hostile to humans. He would literally be able to stroll naked on a planet like Mercury without serious consequences.

‘So, are you ready?’ A voice croaked near his ear.

Tvu iaooiu fiaur jfl mgsampliw ezmjare aqnfoauro frt vft tuhatut om npo fr urt om ovuaz zudiuhomrl. Jfcu frt Sffzv zuiphofroiw lomnnut zuftare ovuaz zunmzo frt dmzhut ovuqluisul om ialour om ovu Wurtmc.

‘If you don’t have any objections, I’ll get started. I’ll start with the human with the blond mane because it’s the easiest.’

Sarah didn’t take offence, since after all she hadn’t revealed her first name to him and she didn’t care much for the eccentricities of such a creature as long as she got what she wanted.

‘Is it possible to reduce the bloodline’s drawbacks?’ She asked in a worried tone.

‘As for the mental and physical repercussions, I can lessen them, but not totally eliminate them.’ The Aetherist explained very professionally, with a rare seriousness. ‘It will, however, reduce the effectiveness of the Aether Skills linked to these genes, or even make them disappear altogether since the Aetheric Code needs that anchor. If the genes are too different, the bloodline won’t be recognized anymore.’

‘Sadly I’m only a Rank 3 Aetherist, and I can’t yet decouple the Genetic Code from the Aetheric Code. My mentor certainly could, but I haven’t heard from him in over a century. If you want to remove the risk of weakening in case of defeat, you will also have to remove the

reinforcement in case of victory, since the runes are linked to the same genes and weaved together in too complex a way. It would take me several months of hard work without any guarantee of success to achieve a result. Just a pure blood sample of a Grade 7 bloodline is not worth such an effort. ‘

Jake was a little disappointed, but his situation was different from Sarah’s anyway. The Myrtarian and Kintharian bloodline would be fused and therefore choices would have to be made as to which alleles of each gene to keep. The result would be partly a surprise.

Sarah was hesitant, but eventually agreed to assimilate the bloodline as it was, without any alterations. In the future, she might be able to complete The Myrmidian bloodline or find an Aetherist of Rank 4 or higher capable of doing this manipulation.

Jake agreed as well, but he was adamant about one thing. The preservation of his intellect. The Myrtarian genes were superior to those of the Kintharians when it came to the brain, and Jake was willing to give them priority, even if it affected one of his Kintharian bloodline skills.

Thankfully, the little alien confirmed that this was not a problem. It was even possible that the combination of the two bloodlines would form a new synergy like the Myrtarian bloodline which was not inferior to the original Myrmidian and Eltarian bloodlines.

‘In any case, I can promise you one thing.’ Cekt Mogusar said solemnly before initiating the transfer protocol. ‘As soon as I become a Rank 4 Aetherist, you will be my first customers. These portions of pureblood are the perfect study subject and I’m this close to succeed!’

Jake wasn’t the gullible type. That’s why he wanted to become an Aetherist himself as soon as possible. As the Wendok had said,

isolating the Aetheric Code from a Genetic Code was feasible, even for him.

It just took a long time with a high risk of failure. Jake and Sarah just wasn't worth the trouble. In that sense, not being a Rank 4 Aetherist was just an excuse.

In any case, Jake had gotten what he wanted by being accepted as an apprentice and would be able to study his own blood afterwards and even give his bloodline to other members of his group. He could accept that his bloodline wasn't perfect at the moment.

Cekt Mogusar retrieved their Blue Cubes again and this time poured their contents into a container. He then took out an opaque metal canister from which he removed the cap and turned a switch, pouring a liquid as black as night into each of the containers.

The black liquid mixed with the red blood, giving the contents a cloudy colour, but a few seconds later the red disappeared and only the black liquid remained inside the container.

The Aetherist then returned to the machine having scanned a drop of blood from their bloodlines and pressed his bracelet against it with his eyes closed. The operation had begun.