

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 215 – Myrtharian

Jake, Sarah and the rest of the group watched the whole process with great interest. Even for Anya, who had been quiet since they had arrived in Jay Parks' office, it was completely new. He didn't know if his cousin had assimilated any particular bloodline, but she had probably never met a real Aetherist.

They soon realized, however, that it was boring as hell. There was nothing to learn from all this, as the little alien simply closed his eyes, his hand pressed against the machine.

All Jake could deduce was that the Aetherist had begun to analyze the bloodline more seriously in order to isolate the relevant genes and duplicate them. After a moment that seemed endless to them, but in fact only took a few minutes, Cekt Mogusar reopened his eyes.

He then retrieved the container containing the black liquid for Sarah and poured it into another doughnut-shaped machine to which several tubes were connected. By interpreting some of the Oraclean symbols on the machine, Jake realized that it was a kind of matrix providing the raw materials required for the duplication of cells or genes.

One liter of blood was not enough to replace all of a person's cells with new DNA. It was absolutely necessary to copy these genes until a sufficient number was reached so that each cell could be modified.

Even though Jake was not yet a specialist in this field, he was still aware of the risk of rejection. The human body could generate violent

and potentially fatal immune responses by being transfused with a small amount of blood from the wrong blood type. Modifying just a few cells was not enough, since they would be immediately recognized as foreign by the immune system and thus destroyed.

For this to work, the gene transfer had to be as fast as possible, and all the cells in the body had to be modified at the same time so that no rejection reaction would occur.

Although the volume of the black liquid in the vats remained the same, Jake did note the alien's satisfied expression. The nutrients in the tubes disappeared one by one into the doughnut-shaped machine, being quickly swallowed by the black liquid without leaving a trace.

Fifteen minutes later, Cekt Mogusar calmly stated, 'It's ready.'

The alien retrieved the vat full of black liquid reserved for Sarah and levitated the liquid in front of the young woman's face. Sarah raised an interrogatory eyebrow, but didn't dare to shy away.

'I, what do I do now?' She asked in an uncertain tone.

Cekt Mogusar giggled, 'You drink it, or I'll put you to sleep if it's too difficult for you.'

'What's this?' Jake finally asked the important question. At first glance, it looked like a glass of petroleum, but without the smell.

'They're bio-nanorobots.' The Aetherist explained succinctly. 'All genetic manipulation, as well as gene transfer, is done by these nanobots under my supervision. The first step where I had my eyes closed was to set them up.'

'What the hell were you thinking? That I was going to perform a surgery on the scale of a millionth of a meter personally?' Cekt roared with laughter again at their disappointed expressions. 'I'm just the

orchestra conductor. All the algorithms, I design them in advance. Transferring a bloodline is actually very simple for someone like me. But there's years of work behind it.'

Jake and Sarah felt enlightened after that explanation, but not everyone did. For Tim it was just dead boring, while for the two princesses it was even more mystical than the magic of their own world.

Meanwhile, Sarah was in paranoid mode, wondering if it was going to hurt to have all those robots in her body tampering with her cells' DNA and whether it would leave any lasting effects. The Wendok, of course, was accustomed to these anxious responses, and he quickly reassured her.

'Nothing to fear. I was joking when I said you have to drink it. Since these nanobots work at the DNA level, they're naturally small enough to pass through cell membranes, including the skin. Put your hand in the fluid and it will be absorbed into your body right away. No pain to expect normally except for a tingling and a feeling of alienation for a few minutes while you get used to your new body.

'When you are ready you can start.'

Relieved, Sarah took a deep breath, then dipped her hands in the black liquid. As expected, it seeped into her skin like a glass of water through the sand of a desert. A mere second later, the liquid had been completely absorbed.

Sarah stood still for a few seconds with apprehension in her eyes, and then the changes began to take place. She felt her body become a little lighter, and her anxious state of mind was quickly replaced by a feeling of utmost confidence and a sense of near invincibility.

These feelings seemed artificial to her, but she knew from the start that this was part of the bloodline. Her Status information also changed accordingly, indicating that she had indeed acquired several Aether Skills and her species had been replaced by Half-Myrmidian.

When the operation was completed, she felt different, but strangely... the same! As she stared at the witnesses of her transformation, she noticed that they were watching her attentively as if they were still waiting for something. They may have to wait a long time.

‘No need to wait for her to grow some scales or a tail, that’s not the way it works. ‘The little alien sneered in a mocking tone.

‘The genes may have been changed, but it will take time for them to start producing proteins and for the body to be modified accordingly. Depending on her Vitality, the first physically observable changes should appear within an hour or two.’

It did indeed make sense, Jake thought. The effects on her bone structure, eye colour or hair colour couldn’t be achieved instantly after a few genes had been altered. It was the expression of the genes that were responsible for these effects and it would take some time.

‘Now it’s your turn. The rest of you can leave the lab and go about your business, as it will take longer for this gentleman’s bloodlines. ‘ Cekt Mogusar suddenly began telekinetically pushing them up the freight elevator to clear the lab.

A moment later, it was just Jake and the alien left in the room. Anya wanted to stay and watch her cousin’s transformation, but she was pushed out with the others.

‘I said there was no risk in the previous case, because it was only one bloodline extremely compatible with your species. Myrmidian and Kintharian are like water and fire. Since they do not live in the same

environments, they hardly ever mix and therefore do not reproduce together. The anatomy of the Kintharians at a high level does not really allow it since they are generally too big and their body temperature too high. In contrast, Myrtarian hybrids have existed in the past.

‘This mix will be a surprise and it will be essential that you share your Body, Aether and Spirit Body Status information in real time so that I can check how your body is behaving. At the slightest sign of trouble, I will replace the problematic genes with the Myrtarians genes, which are less at risk or your original genes if it doesn’t work either.

Jake nodded without flinching. As long as he didn’t look like a misshapen monster at the end, there was nothing to shudder about.

Cekt Mogusar then went back to work and started the procedure a second time. Balancing the Myrtarian and Kintharian genes matching human biological traits was the easiest, since these genes were present in close forms in all 46 human chromosomes.

However, it took the whole afternoon to decide how to arrange the extra pairs of chromosomes characteristic of each bloodline, and the little alien was dripping with sweat when he completed the process. Because Jake had been accepted as an apprentice, the Wendok took the trouble to explain each step as he completed it.

‘Without any manipulation, you would have ended up with 52 chromosomes or 26 pairs, the three extra pairs corresponding to each bloodline, including the Eltarian bloodline. Since some genes are redundant, but the alleles are different, I managed to make it out with 25 pairs. This will simplify things for the nanobots and avoid unpleasant surprises.’

Jake nodded his head at every explanation as if it was a brilliant move, but the truth was that he was kind of out of it. The scientific

jargon of the Aetherist was completely beyond him and his intelligence only allowed him to understand the essential.

There was also an extra step compared to Sarah's bloodline and that was to make sure that the Aetheric Code in both blood types recognized the new mixed genome that had its own signature. Thankfully, this did not cause any issues.

By the end of the day, the black liquid was ready and Jake repeated the same actions as Sarah had done earlier. The black liquid infiltrated his body and a few minutes later, his Status confirmed that the transgenic operation was a success.

He didn't need his Oracle device to tell him that it was a success. He could once again perceive the Aether in the earth and the radiation all around him. Mood-wise, he felt strong and confident, even overbearing, but with a kind of extreme calm that provided him with an exceptional clarity of mind.

Hurhudmzov, vu jfl f Mwzovfzafz.
