

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 219 – Survivor Registry

During the hour-long fitting, Jake and Sarah's physical and mental transformation was still ongoing. Sarah's eyes were now a very light brown, and her skin a little more tanned.

Jake's skin had also darkened slightly and his already blue-green irises had begun to become enriched with a nebulous mixture of silver and gold. The roots of his hair were also the colour of pale gold over several millimetres, or golden silver for want of better adjectives.

His nails were still turning into claws, and his new teeth had begun to grow under his gums. The Myrtharians had a dentition capable of renewing itself over and over again. Even if this was not the case, a simple nap underground in a sunny spot would have regrown his teeth in a few days.

Psychologically, he felt wonderfully well. He didn't have that dreaded feeling that he was no longer himself. He felt confident and capable of facing anything, but that didn't take away his judgment and his ability to make rational decisions.

With their physical and mental transformation being quite overwhelming, Jake began to wonder why Kyle's transformation had gone so unnoticed. After all, he had assimilated his own Myrmidian bloodline right after the first Ordeal was over.

His hair should have been golden by now, which it was, but his irises hadn't visibly changed colour. He had claimed that his blood came

from Khazus, but that may not have been the case. Behaviorally, he hadn't changed much either.

It was possible that his cautious and fearful tendencies had dominated the Myrmidian warring impulses, but it was clear that he did not face the same difficulties as Sarah.

The young woman seemed comparatively spellbound, behaving like a completely different person. However, Jake soon became aware that she may not have changed that much. Extreme confidence and a sense of superiority were, in fact, only disinhibitors.

The confident and dominant person had no fear of failure or judgment and therefore her behaviour was not subject to any social filter. It was a form of sincerity. Only the warlike drive and the perpetual search for challenge and conflict could possibly permanently affect the personality of a Myrmidian in the long run.

Therefore, if Sarah behaved like this, it was because deep down she had always seen herself as different from others and had already had a very high opinion of herself from the beginning. The assimilation of this Myrmidian bloodline had only exacerbated it.

It was now to be hoped that, in time, she would be able to learn to contain herself and distinguish between what came from her bloodline and what she really wanted.

Nmj ovfo ovuw juzu fii luo dmz ruj ftsuropzul, ovuaz ezmpn jfl ulhmzout om ovu urozfrhu md ovu Rulufzhv Curouz gw ovu zuhunoamralo jvm nzmqnoi w zuopzrut om zuft vuz qfref mrhu gfhc fo vuz tulc.

Jake met up with Crunch and the other felines in the park adjacent to the Research Center, which was dedicated to the Pets and other Evolved animals. The latter were cheerfully devouring a piece of meat

that had been served to them in order to keep them busy, or were sunbathing on the lawn or a tree branch.

When Crunch saw them, he meowed falsely delighted to see his master again, but Jake was not offended. He simply shouted, 'We're leaving. ', before departing without looking back. If the feline pack wanted to continue basking in this park, who was he to deprive them of that happiness?

There was one last place the group had to go, though, before Jake went with his cousin to visit his family: the Oracle City Hall.

There were, of course, other buildings performing New Earth's administrative functions, but the City Hall was only a few blocks away from the Research Center. The reason they had to go there was that it was a straightforward way to check whether relatives and friends of each other were still alive.

Each survivor who had joined an Oracle Shelter and then an Oracle City had potentially been identified by a New Earth soldier dispatched there, which was more concrete than using their Oracle device to find their loved ones. Furthermore, all it took for the person sought to become undetectable was to be in an Ordeal, or under an Oracle device skill allowing to camouflage their existence.

The City Hall building was vaguely reminiscent of the White House, but had been modernized and expanded to accommodate many alien ambassadors. Some of these alien civilizations had been allowed to build their own embassies nearby.

In one of the outbuildings, many people from different social backgrounds were lining up to access the survivor registry. After waiting for about half an hour or so, it was Jake and his group's turn to access the computer containing the survivor registry, which was updated every 30 minutes.

Since Jake already knew that his family was doing well thanks to Anya's news, he didn't have many people to look for. He didn't care much about the situation of most of his family members that he hadn't been able to stand since childhood, while because of his loneliness he didn't have many friends worthy to be remembered.

Out of curiosity, he made an effort to find out about the status of his colleagues at work, with whom he got along relatively well.

Hfzzw Soaiarlcw, val dzaurt jaov hpziw zut vfaz frt fr fhru lhfz mr val dmzuvuft, vft fnnfzuroiw lpzasut. Hu jfl zunmzoutiw zuloare lmqujvuzu ar frmovuz Ozfhiu Caow.

Thiru Abimbola, his obese half-Indian half-Ethiopian friend who had seduced the beautiful Camille before him by meticulously exploiting his drunkenness and social anxiety was... alive too. He had apparently already completed two Ordeals and joined New Earth's army.

It took almost a minute for Jake to accept that this information was genuine. He was totally unable to imagine the Indian carrying out physically demanding missions with a heavy package on his back, but with the Apocalypse and the Oracle it was impossible not to change.

As for Camille Ells, the director of the VR center where he used to work... Missing. The last people to see her alive were apparently Thiru and her own father. The young woman had stumbled upon a root when their group was chased by a pack of Digestors just minutes after they arrived on B842.

She was reported missing out of respect, but there was no doubt that if anyone tried to find her with the help of their bracelet they would end up coming face to face with Digestor shit.

Jake couldn't help but breathe a long sigh. He didn't know her that well, but he still felt his stomach and throat tighten as he realized that

someone he knew and cared about was definitely dead. He had never been in love with her, but circumstances might have been different if he had managed to kiss her at that party at Paul's house.

He already had a better understanding of the changes in Thiru's behaviour, who had been madly in love with Camille for as long as he could remember. Her death must have been a heartbreaking trauma for the Indian.

Paul Baker was also still alive with his own group of friends, the twins Elisa and Sarah Paoletti, as well as Kanye Cruz and his older brother, two Afro-Europeans with whom he shared everything. Jake was discovering their respective last names for the first time.

Their group was resourceful and well prepared. They had all survived and made their way to an Oracle City on their own. They were about to participate in their Second Ordeal as well.

Jake thought he was done with his research, but the giggle, closer to the rictus of the white-haired disabled woman, came back to his mind and he couldn't help but check to ascertain if the poor girl was still alive. It was unlikely, but the Mirror Universe was a land of misfortune and miracles.

Art ovu zulpio md val lufzhv opzrut mpo... ovfo Rpgw Hfiu jfl fiasu!
Wvfo zufiiw lvmhcut vaq, ovmpev, jfl ovfo ovuzu jfl rm movuz
ardmzqfoamr fgmpo ovu wmpre jmqfr, fl ad vuz nzmdaiu jfl prtuz
jzfnl.

Disabled or not, Ruby Hale was perhaps far more mysterious than Jake had originally imagined. Was their meeting really an accident? Was she really his soul mate?

It was with his mind full of questions that he vanished an hour later with his cousin into the Yellow Cube that was supposed to lead him to his family.