

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 231 - 5 minutes

When Jake saw this, his brain went into survival mode, and a shot of adrenaline and dopamine flooded his mind and body. As if he had just been injected with all sorts of stimulants, he accelerated sharply, his muscular arms stirring the water like two massive, tireless propellers.

His skin radiated a beautiful orange light thanks to the lava-coloured veins pulsating under his skin. His pupils also emitted an enchanting golden and silver glow, proving that his Warrior Myrtharian Trance, Spiritual Myrtharian Trance, and Spiritual Myrtharian Eyes skills were fully activated.

Despite his best efforts, the marine predator was catching up to him at an alarming pace and he might as well have just stood still and waited to be devoured.

Regardless, with his persistence, Jake managed to escape the debris zone and the ocean was much calmer once he was out of the reef area. This allowed him to pick up speed again and although he was still several hundred meters from shore, he had already regained his courage and optimism.

Giving everything he had, he swam as he had never swam before, surprising himself. With his intelligence and agility he could easily correct his movements and his few seconds of fleeing had already significantly improved the quality of his crawl.

However, when he took another look behind him to check if the predator had given up, he almost swallowed water with a scream of fright. The fin was less than five meters behind him!

And with the size of that fin and the location of the dorsal fin among the predatory fish of his knowledge... It meant that...

‘Holy SHIT!’

An enormous jaw spanning more than three meters opened wide suddenly behind him, multiple rows of teeth as long and sharp as cutlasses encompassing his field of vision. The open mouth of the ocean monster had a sucking effect, and the surrounding water was drawn towards the monster’s empty mouth, dragging Jake with them.

Already swimming with all his might, there was nothing Jake could do. The attack was so blistering and swift that he only had time to curse his bad luck and insult the Oracle of All Names before the shark’s jaw closed with a resounding CLANG.

The CLANG came from the monster’s teeth fracturing against his body as he controlled his Aether of Constitution in the concerned area to resist the bite. He felt the beast release him and an irrepressible joy filled his whole being.

Then he started swimming crawl again and suddenly realized that something was wrong.

‘Why I am so slow?’ Jake wondered with some confusion.

Hu jfl loaii ljaqqare dflouz ovfr f rmzqfi vpqfr, gpo val lnuut vft guur tasatut gw ovzuu. A gzaud qmquro ifouz, vu guhfqu fjfzu md frmovuz dfho.

‘Why can’t I feel my legs?’

As he made this realization, a searing pain hammered at his senses, radiating from his waist as if it had just been immersed in boiling water. Unable to continue swimming, he passed his hand to palpate his legs, but all he felt was the contact of sea water mixed with his warm blood.

When he understood what had just happened, he felt a brief dizziness and his mind froze momentarily. By the time the ocean monster had closed its jaw, the shark had lost a few teeth, but it had not missed. Jake's legs had been torn off with a snap of its teeth and were now rotting in the predator's stomach.

Feeling overwhelmed by a deep despair, Jake also felt his vision becoming blurred because of the blood loss. Because of the sea water, his gaping wound was constantly being washed away and the blood was not clotting.

Without the muscles of his perineum and the bones of his pelvis, his bowels had nothing to hold them in, and his intestines were floating limply in the ocean behind him, forming a trail giving him the bleak appearance of a squid or jellyfish.

When he thought his situation couldn't get any worse, he suddenly saw the same fin of what he thought was a giant shark come back, just as vigorous as before. Obviously, this thing had enjoyed his Myrtharians legs. And with the blood he was losing, his body was shining like a torch for all the marine predators in the area.

He could already see a few fish that looked like prehistoric piranhas naughty pecking at his intestines as if they were a delicacy.

CAW! CAW!

Looking up to the sky, he saw strange birds circling above him. Their beaks were extremely long and their hind legs rather short, but the reflection of the sun prevented him from distinguishing them clearly.

Then, as if its undulating intestines on the surface of the ocean looked like big juicy earthworms, one of the birds suddenly swooped down in a spin. What was left of its small intestine was swallowed in an instant and he felt his body being dragged up into the air when the bird flew away with its ' trophy '.

Jake held on with both hands to his bloody intestine to prevent his stomach and esophagus from escaping his body as well or he would die instantly. The pain he was now feeling was the most excruciating he had ever felt and he had lost so much blood that he was no longer able to think.

All he knew was that he heard a SNAP and his body fell back into the ocean, lightened by much of his small intestine.

Out of survival instinct and supported by his Myrtharian fighting impulses he mechanically swam back to the shore, but his speed had now been reduced to that of a snail. The current on the surface of the water was strong enough to prevent him from making further progress.

He had no idea if the shark was still chasing him, but he continued to swim tirelessly. After a while, he felt 'algae' cārèssing his skull and shoulders and realized that he should be close to shore.

But fate, again playing a cruel joke on him, decided otherwise. Within seconds of wading through the seaweed, Jake found himself completely tangled up in it. If only that, he could have persevered indifferently.

Unfortunately, multiple burning sensations pervaded the areas of his skin in contact with the 'algae'. A sensation halfway between an electrocution and being lashed by a whip covered with thorns.

A school of jellyfish!

And not cute little jellyfish! These jellyfish were enormous mastodons whose heads were a good meter in diameter and whose almost invisible filaments stretched over tens of meters, transforming this area into a space of death. No wonder the sea monster didn't follow him...

Already at the end of his rope, the nervous shock overcame his mangled body. The rest of his body found itself paralyzed before he could even react, and the half of his body that remained sank like a stone falling into a pond.

Wvaiu val hmrlhamplrull jfl fizuftw dftare, ovu gpzrare md ovu jfouz daiiare val iprel loaqpifout val iadu dmzhu mru iflo oaqu. Dzasur gw f iflo mprhu md saempz, val fiqmlo nfzfiwxut gmtw guefr om lozpeei, ljaqqare pnjztl jaov taddahpiow ovfrcl om ovu ouiucaruoah mpogpzlo md val jfsuzare hmrlhamplrull.

His golden eyes, wide open, could no longer discern anything but a tiny spark of white light, monopolizing and incensing his last fragments of will. His peripheral vision was already plunged into eternal darkness, and this shrinking patch of white light corresponded to the shining sun above him, which he was desperately trying to reach.

For a vague moment, Jake thought he would succeed. He miraculously broke free from the translucent filaments lacerating him and his arms propelled him a few meters up in a final battle for survival.

Then he stopped moving entirely. The spark of white light anchoring his consciousness faded and the telekinesis pushing the filaments back and moving his body faded too. His lungs were filled with water, but he wasn't dead yet. His Constitution and Vitality prevented him from dying so easily.

Even with all that blood loss, giant jellyfish stings, his hypoxia, half his body and much of his guts gone, Jake was still alive. But this time he didn't have the strength to hold on to life.

As he sank to the depths of the ocean, he thought for a brief moment that dying like that wasn't so bad. He did not feel much, the water was at the right temperature and silence accompanied him. Dying like that was almost relaxing.

But deep inside, all he felt was deep regret. The regret of having failed to accomplish anything and the anger of ending up as fish excrement. The face of his cousin Anya, his uncle Kalen, and then everyone he had known quickly flashed before his eyes like subliminal images.

The last image froze on the murky water, his sight returning miraculously in his last struggle. The enormous mouth covered with rows of teeth of a sea monster replaced this last image and he felt sucked into the abyss.

When the predator's jaw closed with a snap, Jake was already dead, his consciousness having long since ceased to exist.