

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 233 - Loser

GASP!

On asteroid Elinor VXIII, a handsome young man trembling and shivering with terror was suddenly expelled from the Sanctuary Bubble like a fish leaping out of the sea. His pupils were dilated and the man was hyperventilating and wheezing non-stop, visibly in the midst of an anxiety attack. The spacesuit wasn't making things any better. His usual confidence and arrogance had shattered and his slowly pulsating golden irises could not save his glamour.

This thoroughly traumatized individual on the verge of despair was Kyle Gibson.

No sooner had he set foot in this diabolical Bubble that he had been thrown into hell to be tortured. Believing himself to be a good swimmer, he had hastily swam to shore with a shark on his tail, only to be surrounded by some kind of dolphins.

Full of positive and candid prejudices about these marine mammals, he had been immediately relieved when the shark had given up the chase and even believed that these animals were coming to save him.

Unfortunately, he couldn't have been more wrong! These dolphins... were the most sadistic and perverse creatures he had ever had the misfortune to meet, and in addition to playing with him as if he were a moving piece of meat, one of the dolphins had even tried to \*\*\*\* him!

In the end, they pecked him apart piece by piece, devouring him alive until he was nothing but a pool of blood and flesh in the middle of the ocean. These cetaceans were so fast that there was nothing he could do, and his terror was so great that he had been unable to maintain even the slightest coherent thinking.

Therefore, when he had resurrected again, his subconscious had without hesitation seized the opportunity to get out of this hell when it presented itself. He hardly realised now that he had failed, but he did not care. What he had just experienced would give him nightmares until his death, and the idea that he could actually be eaten alive every time he faced the Digestors challenged his very will to get out of the Oracle Shelter to fight them again.

His mind was completely broken, having given up all his ambitions of greatness.

At that moment, a shadow passed over him, the silhouette of a four-armed giant floating peacefully in front of him.

‘Another loser?’ The Oracle Guardian supervising their group bellowed mockingly. He couldn’t count the number of similar vermin he’d already thrown out.

Kyle ignored the alien, knowing full well what awaited him. He just wanted it all to stop. Maybe after a good night’s rest, he’d see things more clearly. But right now, he just wasn’t capable of anything.

Seeing his panicked but strangely resigned expression, the Oracle Guardian suddenly felt like rubbing salt in the wound.

‘Among the Players who entered at the same time as you at your side, only you failed.’ It spoke gravely. The alien’s face was hidden under his opaque visor, but he was undoubtedly disdainful. ‘Even the child still persists. If you’re not a loser, what else can you be?’

Hearing these last words, Kyle looked up at the alien for the first time, a deep shame rising from the depths of his mind to meet his panic. He was already regretting that he hadn't persisted for even a few more minutes, but it was too late now.

'I'm really a loser...'

That was his last thought, when the Oracle Guardian grabbed his shoulder and threw him at the speed of a cannonball into the vacuum of space. His body disintegrated in a flash and he finally got the rest he deserved.

After Kyle was ejected, the Oracle Guardian continued to float in the same position, staring at the Sanctuary Bubble where Kyle and his companions had entered before mumbling,

'Interesting. '

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Meanwhile, Jake was unaware of his companions' situation and could hardly afford the luxury of thinking about it. He was fleeing the shipwreck area for the third time and the damn giant shark, or at least something as dangerous, was chasing him tirelessly, reminding him how much he didn't want to be eaten a third time.

The first two atrocious deaths had been enough.

This time he didn't intend to try the airway again. It was just pure suicide and he had learned his lesson. The sky was as deadly, if not more so than the ocean he was in.

The fleeting thought of giving up now was still running through his mind, and just the effort of concentration to retain his determination and keep moving forward demanded his full commitment. With his

Myrmidian bloodline, he enjoyed challenges, but it had to be within his reach!

For the time being, his initial feeling was that this challenge was impossible and it was undermining his courage and persistence. The fact that there was no time out between the two revivals meant that he had no time to mull over what he had just gone through and prevented him from flushing away the fear and despair burdening his mind.

It was a vicious ordeal, bringing together all the elements needed to torture his mind and make him renounce. But Jake suffered from an ugly character flaw from a very young age. If he had his back to the wall, he didn't know how to retreat. That was the description of his Fighting skill that the Oracle System had given months before.

Out of pride, he was able to endure the worst horrors if he knew it was worth it. As long as he knew he could come back to life, he would never give up! And this Ordeal was directly about whether or not he would become someone capable of making the law in the Mirror Universe in the distant future.

He hadn't yet received any Side Mission through the Coaching feature of his bracelet, and that meant that for the Oracle System persevering was enough. It would be up to him alone to find the solution to his plight.

Despite all his efforts and the fact that he was controlling the Strength and Agility Aether more and more finely in his body to increase his speed, the shark had already caught up with him. The fin was only a few meters behind him and he was already replaying the same scene from earlier in his head.

At that moment he turned around, staring at the shark with his Spiritual Golden Eyes and the monster's jaw no longer felt so

intimidating. Using his telekinesis to propel his body up into the air, the shark's jaw narrowly missed him with a loud CLACK!

Watching the shark below him and the birds in the sky above, he slid a few meters hoping that the sea monster would let go, but it was all for nothing. The fin was chasing him with the resilience of a homing device, as if the creature knew it was impossible for him to stay up in the air indefinitely. As for the pterodactyl vultures, one of them had already begun to swoop down on him like a sacred arrow falling from the heavens.

' Motherfuckers! If that's how you want to play it, I'll give you your money's worth! You want to eat, oh you're gonna eat! ' Jake lashed out at them with all his rage, his fear entirely replaced by outrage.

Inspecting the bird with his Golden Eyes skill, the bird's movements slowed noticeably, its Aether's flow, its nervous impulses and every contraction of its muscles becoming clear under his gaze.

CAW! CAW! CA-BWAGH?!

Cawing arrogantly, its fellow birds, cheering from the skies, stopped squawking when Jake's skillful twist avoided the bird's dive, and then retaliated with a devastating right hook to its face.

Aiovmpev ovu ezfsaow ezufiow taqaralvut val lozureov frt lnuut, vu vft npo val vufzo arom ao. Hal zaevo fzq azzftafout f Rut, Ozfreu frt Yuiimj eimj frt ovu aqnfho ozaeeuzut f imsuiw lmprrt jfsu, dmiimjut gw f CRACK.

Knocked out on the spot, the bird dropped further towards the ocean and became the sea monster's new snack, successfully replacing Jake.

CAW! CAW!

Receiving the birds' hateful cries, Jake gave them the finger, then plunged back into the water before the entire horde fell on him. There were several hundred of these giant birds flapping their wings a couple of hundred meters above him. If he just stood there, he wouldn't have lasted another ten seconds.

Getting a brief respite, Jake swam silently to shore, carefully scanning the waters for the slightest anomaly. The school of jellyfish that had intercepted him the first time couldn't be far away.

This time he had the chance to halt in extremis to admire the dam of jellyfish barring his way to the shore.

There were jellyfish of all colours and their semi invisible filaments stretched for tens, even hundreds of meters, making the area completely impassable. Their size was on par with the megalodon that chased it, and some of these jellyfish were already drifting in its direction, propelling themselves in a succession of contractions and extensions of their slimy appendages.

Within a blink he tried to turn back, but he was already surrounded. He then turned to the heavens, ready to use telekinesis once again, but at that very moment a stabbing pain pierced him from side to side and he felt grasped again by long claws, his heart and lungs punctured.

Watching the jellyfish shrink as he gained altitude, he just muttered a last 'fuck...' before dying for the third time.