

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 236 - Man vs Shark

As Jake silently lay depressed on the surface of the water, floating like a drifting board, he felt one of those fucking piranhas approaching to bite his leg. Indifferent, he let the fish bite him, and then leave with a piece of flesh as a trophy, before his gaze lingered on the blood escaping from his wound.

As was to be expected, the fin of the megalodon roaming in the area of the wreck soon reappeared. Seeing this familiar fin close the distance, Jake's depressed expression was suddenly replaced by a frown, followed by the convulsive twitching of his facial muscles.

In an instant, his depression had given way to an expression of unadulterated wrath. The change was so rapid that it was almost inconceivable.

'All right, I'm sick of this shit. I've been racking my brains running away from these monsters looking for solutions and shortcuts, and for what? Fuck! I'm sick of your fishy faces...

'You want to eat me?! Uh, let's see who eats the other one first!'

He was so emotionally on edge, that his Myrtharian impulses had a stronger hold on him, his sanity relying on the pleasure these endless challenges could bring him. While joining the island was just another challenge whose possibilities he hadn't yet tested, it had no appeal for him.

He was just tired of running away and pummeling this shark to death seemed right now to be the best outlet available to him. Xi, who had remained virtually silent throughout the ordeal to the point of almost making him forget her existence, smiled inwardly. She didn't have a real body, but her satisfaction was heartfelt.

She could have influenced him or even cheered him up, but that would have worked against the Ordeal's intentions. To really benefit from it, he had to achieve this alone.

'The young Zhorion warriors enter these Bubbles to become stronger. ' She explained suddenly, almost startling Jake out of surprise. ' If they could reach the shore with luck or by exploiting a loophole, this trial would no longer serve any purpose. For it to make sense, you need to struggle.'

Wvur Jfcu vufzt ovmlu jmztl, vu duio uriaevourut. Tvuzu jfl rm tmpgo ovfo huzofar artasatpfil nmlullut fgaiaoaui lpaout om oval ursazmrquro. Wvuovuz ao jfl ovu fgaiaow om hfqmpdifeu ovuqluisul, om diw mz ljaq dflo, mz usur om aroaqatfou mz ofqu ovulu fraqfil, ovuzu juzu fii lmzol md jfwl om tufi jaov ao. Hal gimmtiaru, prdmzoprfoiwi, nmlullut rmru md ovulu ozfaol.

To put things in perspective, if the first challenge had been to survive as long as possible on a volcanic planet irradiated by a nearby star and a thin atmosphere, he would have been like a fish in water.

His Myrtharian bloodline was still only level 1, but it gave him incredible resilience to temperature and radiation. He could even feed on it to strengthen himself. With an equivalent Constitution and Vitality, it could probably withstand temperatures and radiation many times higher than a normal human.

During this short exchange with his Oracle AI, the megalodon had fully bridged the distance between them. With no time left to

monologue, Jake's expression became as cold as a reptile's, while his body's muscles tightened in preparation for the confrontation.

With his arms spread out in front of him and his body slightly sideways, Jake had faced these sea monsters indirectly so many times that he knew exactly how to react. He didn't have a machete or knife to deal the fatal blow, but that didn't mean these creatures had no weakness.

As the giant shark opened its mouth wide to swallow it in a single bite, Jake skillfully spun away, using just enough of his Blue and Purple Aether to control the monster's nerves. Briefly under his control, the shark veered off course at the last moment exposing its gills and Jake packed all of his Red, Orange and Yellow Aether into his arm, fingers outstretched to strike this weak spot.

His sheathed hand went into those gills like a knife into soft butter. To resist the piranhas, all the predators had extremely resistant rocky skin, their only weak points being their eyes and gills.

To protect these weak points, the eyelids of these animals were also rocky and their gills could close completely between each inhalation and exhalation. In order for Jake to injure the monster, he had struck with all his might, his fingers almost breaking on impact. But Myrtharian claws were no joke.

ROAAAR!

The giant shark, mad with pain, began to wiggle around, his body and tail twisting repeatedly in all directions like a whale that had just been harpooned. Jake had no intention of letting go and now that he had a grip, he began to throw a series of punches, each more violent than the last, at the monster's body.

Never having had the opportunity to punch anyone so freely except low level Digestors, he was not used to hitting as hard as he could. Opening the pores of his skin, he began to absorb the sun's rays and all his Myrtharians skills were activated to boost his physical strength. His body began to warm up, a stream of warm water forming around him.

He then added telekinesis to accelerate his arm and create an invisible force field around his hand. He also focused to transfer all the excess heat in his body to the fist and the fist started to glow like a burning firebrand.

Each punch was like a heavy hammer shattering and burning the monster's natural protective plates, and in just a few strokes the plates began to crack. After a few dozen more blows, the muscle underneath was exposed and cooked rare. However, because of the immense size of the monster, these injuries were insufficient to bring it down.

Realizing that a simple punch would never overcome the shark, at least not in a short time, he changed his approach. The more Jake fought, the more he became accustomed to his new bloodline abilities and every second he discovered new uses for them.

As he was about to deliver yet another fiery punch, he stopped when his gaze fell on the retracted claws of his raised fist. It was logical after all, without this basic skill he would have injured himself.

His fingers were rather thick and his translucent claws with red veins could be stored in a dedicated space above his phalanges, directly under the skin. Surprisingly, this didn't stop him from bending his fingers and it was not the time to worry about it.

The key point was that he understood that if these claws could be retracted inside his body, then he could probably expand them further. The only question was to what extent?

He hadn't tested their durability either, but unlike the painful joints of his fingers, his claws were in perfect condition after this barrage of ultra violent blows. Translucent as crystal, with fine capillaries of lava circulating inside.

'Hmm ? '

He had finally figured out how to use his claws. With a thought, he redirected the heat contained in his fist to his claws, and the claws in turn began to emit an intense yellow-orange light. The heat radiating from his claws caused the water nearby to boil.

With a second thought, he made his claws grow until they reached their maximum size of about ten centimeters. Eager to test this new combo, he stuck his hand into the monster's rocky skin and unlike the previous situation, the claws sank into his body like a hot knife into a lump of wax.

ROARR!!

This time really provoked, the shark started to flee to the depths, hoping that the human would give up chasing it. Clearly, the creature was not completely devoid of intelligence.

Meanwhile, Jake, in a frenzy of excitement, began to lacerate the sea monster with scratches and pokes, each scratch ripping off an astronomical amount of flesh. With each blow, the initial wound grew deeper and one of the monster's two gills was now completely cauterized.

For the first time, the monster began to asphyxiate and Jake used the opportunity to crawl his way to the other side of the monster with his claws and perform the same feat on the other gill

The battle between the man and the megalodon lasted a few more minutes, stirring up multiple waves and an astronomical amount of foam that drove away most of the predators nearby. Then it was silence again.

Jake removed his glowing claws from the monster's brain and smiled as the giant carcass disappeared into the abyss. His revenge had just begun!

The fight had worn him out and the migraine was back. Heating his body in this way made him feel feverish now that his body was cooling down.

Using these Aether Skills came at a price. His mental and psychic faculties had outgrown his body and an imbalance was slowly emerging.

Nevertheless, it was nothing that his body could not recover from in a few minutes. The other fish had fled during their fight, but now that the shark was dead, all those predators would soon return.

Sm Jfcu ljq hfiqw mpo md ovu jzuhcfu fzuf jaovmpo msuzukuzoare vaqluid om easu vaqluid oaqu om zuhmsuz. A qmquro ifouz, vu vft zuefarut fii val lozureov frt zulpqut ljaqqare omjztl ovu lvmzu.

Wvuzuf l gudmzu vu jmpit vfsu vflourut, rmj vu jfl ofcare val oaqu.

Only his head was sticking out of the water, but whereas before he seemed to be a helpless prey, he now had the aura of a crocodile in ambush. From now on he was the predator.