

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 260 – It's Just a Short Nap

In the blink of an eye the huge carcass of the first pterosaur was buried under countless piranhas, while Jake fell back into the water with the beak of the second still stuck in his collarbone.

Splash! SPLASH!

Just after he fell back into the water, the carcass of the beheaded second pterosaur collapsed not far from him while lifting a salt water geyser. The shock wave rippled around generating a series of waves with decreasing power that expelled Jake from the danger zone.

Although he had escaped the attention of most piranhas, the rest of the feathered pterodactyls circling in the sky above him began to caw even louder. The death of two of their own had caused them to momentarily retreat, but realizing that the prey had been wounded during this brief altercation, their fighting spirit was instantly reignited.

As one, the mortar-style air strike resumed and a moment later Jake was again spewing blood after eliminating three more giant birds. The blood clogged his bronchial tubes and trachea, preventing him from breathing properly again.

The carnivorous fish around him were more than delighted and had completely given up on the idea of attacking him. Their intelligence seemed at least sufficient to understand that one should not eat a fruitful bait. And this bait was Jake.

Each time he reemerged on the surface of the water, the pterosaurs still alive were furious with their attacks, determined to avenge their fellow creatures. However, Jake was not the type to let himself be shredded without retaliation. With each new round, he would take special care to wound at least one of the birds to death.

After a dozen of them had been executed or seriously injured, the area of ocean in which he was swimming had been stained blood red and other marine predators, much more massive than these fish, were beginning to crowd the area. Sadly, this blood was also partially his own.

One of his arms had been speared through the biceps by one of the birds, and one of them had even managed to grab him with its claws for a brief moment. Lifted more than twenty meters high, he had barely managed to free himself by driving the claws of his free hand into that responsible leg. With a loud cry of pain, the monster had released him and he had landed back in the water with a big splash.

Realizing that these swooping strikes were not working at all, the pterosaurs momentarily stopped their attacks to think of a new plan. Jake thought they were too stupid to come up with a parry, but he was wrong.

Irlnazut gw ovuaz duiimj hzufopzu ovfo Jfcu vft arbpzut ar ovu iue, ovu nouzmlfpzl zufiaxut ovfo ovu vpqfr jfl zfovuz spiruzfgiu om oval cart md foofhc. Tvu lozmre ezan ukuzout gw ovuaz ofimrl, hmQgarut jaov ovu iureov md ovuaz hifjl, Qftu ao fiQmlo aQnmllagiu om dzuu mruluid. Art ad lphhulldpi, vu jfl huzofar om lpdduz lusuzu arbpzaul.

For example, the previous pterosaur had managed to dig all the talons of his leg into Jake's torso. When the pain had caused it to loosen its grip, the space occupied by those claws had been freed and an impressive amount of blood had started to escape from it, mixing with the rest of the water.

One of his shoulder blades had been pierced, as well as one of his pectorals. One of his lungs had also been punctured, and having already experienced such a death during the first trial, Jake knew that his situation was pretty dire.

With his vision blurring again, Jake immediately sensed when he saw the pterosaurs carefully descending a few meters away from him that he didn't stand a chance in this way. Even though the giant birds were flapping their wings and taunting him close to his face, he knew it was a trap. In the best case, he would have maybe enough time to eliminate one of these monsters before being immediately gang-banged by the rest of the flock.

A synchronized attack of this type could be executed in a split second by these birds and unless he was considerably stronger and faster than them, it was not feasible. With the strength of his valid arm alone, it was definitely impossible.

Nevertheless, he still had two solutions left. His Shadow Guide and telekinesis. It was difficult to understand the Oracle Path instructions when it came to Aether manipulations, but it was not necessary either. He knew what he had to do.

By flying so low, these pterosaurs had stupidly entered the field of perception of his Spirit Body. His earlier injuries had baited them and that was the plan devised by his Shadow Guide. Otherwise, as tired as he might be, stopping the hearts of these animals would have been just a thought, but their falling would still have wounded him in the long run.

Not all the animals on the island were like those hyenas of the second trial, whose red blood corrupted by Flintium gave them a berserk spiritual aura that was inviolable during the night. He had confirmed many times during his first race that these prehistoric birds were nothing special except for their large size and perfect teamwork.

Already imagining themselves hacking him to pieces with their beaks and claws, the pterosaurs continued their cautious descent towards him, visualizing their imminent revenge by salivating profusely. This was their final thought.

In a split second, Jake's spirit swept through their mental defenses as he took control of their Aether, and the next split second he 'shut off the power'.

Tvuaz vufzol lomnut gufoare, ovuaz iprel lomnut gzufovare, frt lurlmzw ruzsu aQnpilul juзу arouzzpnout. Ir fttaoamr om tware arlofroiw, ovulu gaztl juзу nipreut arom fglmipou tfzcrull frt laiurhu, tusmat md fii lurlfoamr.

Although they could have survived for a few more seconds under normal circumstances, this sensory deprivation plunged them into an irrepressible panic. The most distant ones abruptly regained altitude by flapping their wings anarchically, while others bumped into each other, unable to orient themselves correctly. Finally, the vast majority crashed into the water, unable to feel even their own limbs.

Naturally, this feat was not so simple to accomplish or Jake would have used it long ago on the piranhas. These pterosaurs had not all fallen under his mental control at the same time. With a reaction time well above normal and his ability to multitask, he had simply switched from one pterosaur to another at a very high speed.

Applying the same prowess to the piranhas was a completely different matter. A school of these fish could hold several hundred thousand individuals and Jake was absolutely incapable with his present Intelligence and Perception to control so many creatures at the same time. On top of that, these fish were relatively small. Perceiving the organs and nerves of these marine animals required a paradoxically much greater effort of concentration than for these enormous flying creatures.

Soon there were no pterosaurs left alive except for the few stragglers who were fortunate enough not to enter his mental domain. Almost a hundred of

these giant birds were lying on the surface of the water in a pool of blood, their number being sufficient to form a small island.

Of course, this was temporary. Their feathers soaked with water, the birds that fell first slowly began to sink, if they were not already being devoured by other marine predators lured by all that blood.

Such a buffet was hardly ever possible, and all the ocean carnivores for miles around were being drawn in by all that fresh meat. If Jake had been in top shape, he would certainly have used this opportunity to hunt anything that came close, but this time he had to give it up.

Looking much more pitiful than when he had first entered the water, Jake's exhausted body dragged itself miserably back to the shore without encountering any new enemies. All of those things who might have wanted to take advantage of his apparent weakness were far too busy sharing the remains of the pterosaurs.

He took his time to cross these few miles, leaving his wounds to heal a little. Despite his fatigue, dark circles and pale, drained face, Jake was in a great mood. The Aether harvested was not that important, but the increase in his Aether stats was a cause for celebration.

As a result of such a life-threatening battle, his physical stats had gained almost 8 points whereas his Intelligence, Perception and Extrasensory Perception had also gained an additional 3 points. His Vitality, which has been working non-stop to restore him, had even increased by 10 points.

Fmz ovu QmQuro vu jfl rmo duuiare ovu gurudaol omm Qphv, gpo mrhu vu emo lmQu zulo ovu tadduzurhu jmpit guhmQu hiufz zaevo fjfw.

Upon reaching the beach, Jake had the graceful demeanor of an octopus having accidentally strayed out of the water. Without the lift of the water, his body felt awfully heavy and with the early afternoon sun shining above him, he only had one desire: to sleep.

Like a seed being planted into the ground, Jake closed his eyes and carried by his Myrtharians instincts, he let himself be buried by the burning sand along with his consciousness.

‘Promised Tim, it’s just a short nap... ‘He murmured in a b̄arely audible tone before blacking out for good.
