

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 263 – Laughs and Grief

Elsewhere on the island, two aliens resembling huge wingless flies, but whose trunks had been replaced by mandibles, were camping around a fire. One of them was taller and wider, nearly three meters high, while the other alien was frailer, measuring three heads less.

These two aliens were the comrades of the Krish who had been chasing Tim throughout the day. The clearing they were in, with its hypnotic green glow of grass, was the same safe zone where the child had first met them. After a day of hunting, the two Players had returned here to recuperate and plan their next move.

‘Krish! (We’ve killed two other participants. That’s not bad!) The smaller Krish exclaimed in a cheerful tone.

Gulping a leg of lamb weighing several kilos in a few mouthfuls without bothering to chew, the other Krish swallowed with a noisy ‘gulp’, then after drinking a whole gourd of water, he commented in a placid tone,

‘Kriiish...’ (That’s not bad, but I am worried about Arrogant Warrior. The Player Ranking indicates that he is still alive, but the fact that he hasn’t come back yet and that his score hasn’t moved proves that it didn’t go well...)

The Krish people had an obscure mode of communication for other races endowed with vocal cords, closer to a kind of high-frequency Morse code than an articulated language. Thus, first names were most often a nickname that suited an individual well.

The first part defined their role in society and was decided before birth, when they were still in pre-larval forms, that is to say as simple eggs. As for the second part, it could change during the course of life, but tended to stabilize after a certain age. To bear such a name, the temper of Arrogant Warrior was no secret to anyone.

As they were about to put out the fire to sleep, with the leader volunteering to take the first watch, a movement in the bushes caught their eye. Pointing their plasma rifles in the direction of the noise, the two alert aliens stood still in that position for a few moments, but when they recognized the newcomer they couldn't help but let out a small laugh.

'Krikrikrish! Krish? Kriish! '(Mwahahahahaha! What's happened to you? Your deflated face is worth the trip! ) The smallest Krish mocked openly without trying to spare his ego.

The leader inspected him from head to toe with a pursed jaw, dwelling for more than reason on his crotch still covered with dried yellow blood, before looking the newcomer straight in the eyes.

'Krish? Krish, krish. Krishhh. '(Who did this? It's good that you came home safe and sound, but it makes me curious. Except for the Jakam and the these two Nosks, we should be practically invincible on this island. The majority of the participants are human and few human races are a danger for us. Especially in a second Ordeal).

Hearing the mockery of the other female Krish as well as the worried tone of his superior, the fists of Arrogant Warrior tightened so hard that a crack of articulation as loud as a firecracker resounded in the clearing. But in front of his leader, he could not afford to be disrespectful. Hierarchy took precedence over everything else for the Krishes.

‘Krish.’ (I did indeed fail, and that child has been driving me crazy all day, I admit it. However, I don’t regard it as fruitless. What I experienced today is a valuable lesson that I won’t soon forget. )

‘What a sore loser...’ His two comrades thought inwardly as they listened to this grandiloquent speech. Soon he would try to make them believe that he had sacrificed himself for the greater good of the Krishs. And indeed, he did not disappoint.

‘Krish, Krish. Krish...’ (The human child was indeed weak, but I knew right away that something was wrong with him. That’s why I insisted on continuing the hunt). Arrogant Warrior continued his diatribe with the fervor of a man of faith, whose only raison for being was the interests of the Krish nation.

(I was able to determine that he has an incredible sense of danger, certainly the result of an Aether Skill, but above all an incredible luck. I have tripped more times today than I have in the last ten years, not to mention my rifle jammed twice when I had a chance to deal him the final blow).

The Krishs couldn’t frown, as they didn’t have any eyebrows, and their facial muscles were also very limited, but there was a sense of skepticism in the other two aliens. As for Arrogant Warrior, if such a discipline existed, he could very well have won an Oscar for Best Actor. His verve and false patriotism was spot on!

As Arrogant Warrior told them the rest of his adventures, the expression of the other two Krishs became more and more gloomy. The atmosphere became heavy, their breathing becoming shorter and shorter, until he began to discuss the reason for his return.

‘... Krish?’ (...If I understand correctly, the leader recapitulated by massaging his skull, a group of four humans stronger than you confronted an

island monster that was even stronger than them, preventing you from catching up with the child, but these four humans were not his comrades...).

‘Krish...’ (That’s right...)

‘Krish. Krish?’ (After that, the child joined another female human who took his side, but she wasn’t strong enough to measure up to you and they fled again, retracing their steps. The chase was going well, but suddenly your Shadow Guide changed his mind and ran away in our direction. You also confirm these words ?)

Arrogant Warrior nodded in unabashed fury. Seeing his reaction and based on his character, these emotions were sincere and he had no reason to lie to them. The leader remained silent for a few seconds, sifting through every detail looking for something he might have missed, and then all of a sudden he got it.

‘Krish? Krish. Krish?’ (You said earlier that the child shouted in the middle of the day, didn’t you? Otherwise you would have lost much more time before reaching him, and he still took that risk, to the extent of attracting another island monster that not even we can defeat easily. In this case, the answer is simple. He called someone for help, but that person was busy or too far away and could not come in time. By retracing their steps later, the two humans managed to join him this time. Did you see this person)?

Tvu ovazt Kzalv lvmmc val vuft vuiniulliw.

‘Krish...’ (From far away, for a brief second. All I can say is that this is another human, a rather large male adult for their species. Very proactive in hunting me...)

‘Krish?’ (Are we going to attack them?) Arrogant warrior then asked in an almost begging tone. His heart was crying out for vengeance with all its might.

His leader looked at him for a long time, lost in thought, before replying firmly,

‘Krsh. ‘(No.)

‘...‘

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In a completely different section of the island hundreds of miles away from Jake or the Krish trio, another group of wounded humans were walking with an expression full of regret into another clearing cloaked in a protective greenish halo.

This was the group of humans who had confronted the mutant triceratops. But instead of four, as before the battle, there were only three. The bald and muscular man, as well as the short and chubby man were respectfully carrying the corpse of one of the young women.

In this clearing, there were several humans, of various looks and characters. Beautiful women in armor, a veteran close to retirement, and other talented young humans. Most of them were carrying a killing intent comparable to the Krish trio, the old man even surpassing them.

Bpo ovu mru jvm lvmru dmzov ar ovu qatlo md oval ezmpn, iacu f nmialvut tafqmrt fqmre ovu nuggiul, jfl f nuoau wmpre jmQfr md zfzu gufpow, jvmlu imre vfaz jfl fl jvaou fl uouzrfi lrmj. Huz iudo uwu jfl f tuun-qfzaru gipu jvaiu ovu zaevo mru jfl fquovwlo-hmimzut.

If Jake had met her here, he certainly wouldn't have recognized her, and yet he had met her once before, several months earlier in the VR center where he worked. Indeed, this girl was Ruby Hale.

‘What happened? ‘The young woman snarled in a bossy tone as she waved her hand.

Following this gesture, the corpse of the deceased young woman escaped from the hands of the two saddened men and floated straight to her. Checking the wounds, she barked curtly,

‘ Speak!’

The bald man complied and the rest of the group listened silently to his story before bursting into laughter in front of the shocked trio of survivors.

‘Well done for that bitch!’

‘She who likes things long and hard, I guess she got what she wanted...  
Hahaha!’

‘Pfft!’

‘ ... ‘

Truly... If anyone foreign to the group had witnessed this scene, it would have been hard to believe that these young men and women were filled with sadness and that this dirty talk and these laughs were their way to grieve their friend’s death . Geniuses... were just different.