

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 275 – Post Battle

Before returning to the base, Jake checked the disaster area one last time for any useful scraps, but unfortunately to no avail. When exploding, the Nosk's body had been thoroughly vaporized and its bracelet had disappeared with it.

Cutting off a participant's arm and leaving him alive to absorb his Oracle device was not so easy to accomplish and it was likely that many participants would prefer suicide to the idea of getting their bracelet demoted.

Jake didn't know what the exact consequences of absorbing the bracelet would be, but he imagined at the very least a significant reduction in the efficiency of the available functions, a loss of Aether proportional to the amount of Aether contained in the Aether Storage, and potentially a temporary reduction in Oracle Rank.

Naturally, this was all just his personal assumptions. He had never experienced this tragedy personally and did not know anyone who had directly experienced this situation. On the other side, he knew the benefits of assimilating another bracelet and he could not help but long for the prospect of reliving such an event.

With a last sigh of bitterness and regret, he dodged a huge hailstone by casually tilting his upper torso sideways before climbing back up the hill to his camp. He really should have tried to cut off this alien's arm while it was still alive!

As injured as he was, Jake managed to hide his apparent signs of weakness. He was still wearing his leather armor and except for his swollen face and

arms, the internal damage he had sustained was impossible to guess without scanning him with an Oracle device or a Spirit Body.

The door had been ripped off its hinges as well as an entire wall panel, and the fire in the chimney had long since been extinguished by the freezing wind blowing in from outside. Kevin and Sarah were struggling to put the door back in place to block some of the wind, but it was a lost cause.

When he returned to the clearing safe and sound, Sarah almost cheered with joy, but in the end she just gròànèd and started to tend to her wounds. The deadly Nosk' s mental wave had shaken her brain and many small blood vessels had ruptured from the trauma.

Aware that Tim, Lily and Daniel's lives depended on her behaviour, she had first checked their condition and then wrapped them in the island animal furs they had accumulated over the week. Only after that had she started to worry about the door being ripped off.

Kevin was in a similar situation, but his bestial form was worthy of the threatening appearance it gave him. Although he had lost as much blood as Sarah, he had recovered much more quickly from the mental àssault and immediately àssisted her by listening to her instructions.

If Jake had seen him sagely obeying Sarah's orders, he certainly would have taunted him non-stop on the subject for the next few days, but sadly he had missed that great opportunity. Upon discovering that his cousin was seriously trying to fix the door, he decided to tolerate his existence for the time being. No matter how much he disliked him, he was a member of his family and as such, it was ten times safer to cooperate with him than with any other candidate.

Because their grandfather had insisted that they help each other and collaborate as much as possible, those who decided to betray their own family during the Ordeal were sure to regret their actions at a heavy price.

Their grandfather's disapproval was not a tough trouble to deal with, but to be disinherited and rejected completely was definitely possible.

If Jake was expelled from the family, it would have left him totally unmoved, but he didn't want to inflict this on his uncle and cousin Anya.

'How are they doing?' Jake asked in the most normal tone possible to cover up his injuries. His face was smiling and relaxed, and he could not help but be proud of how far he had come in his acting.

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'Their brains were badly damaged. I don't know if they can heal from such a brain injury without suffering any after-effects. I'm afraid the Ordeal is over for them. As for Daniel, he was already seriously injured and in a coma even before this psychic attack took place. His cerebral arteries had ruptured and he died instantly.'

Jake listened calmly to the young woman's report with an increasingly sullen expression. If the Nosk was chasing Lu Yan, this bitch truly had screwed them up good by running all the way back here. He hadn't forgotten her last words before she was knocked out by the alien. She was clearly hostile and full of bad intentions.

The only reason she was still alive was that Lu Yifeng had sacrificed himself to save her and that the Nosk was really looking for a shelter to weather the storm. It would have knocked on their door sooner or later.

Ignoring the door and the destroyed wall for the moment, he in turn examined Tim, Lily and the koala bear with his senses, but he came to the same conclusion as Sarah. They would probably survive because of their high constitution and vitality, but he did not know if human genetics could heal such wounds perfectly. The brain had always been an extremely complex and mysterious field.

To avoid unpleasant surprises, he stuck his bracelet to theirs to access their Status directly. His Oracle Rank being superior and the latter being unconscious, he faced no particular resistance and detailed reports popped up in his mind.

Lily was indeed human, but he was unsettled to learn that Tim was no longer human either. He had assimilated a Beskyrian bloodline and his anatomy was blessed with supernatural luck. Upon discovering the characteristics and perks brought by this bloodline, he couldn't help but feel a little jealous as well as slightly angry for hiding this ability behind them.

No wonder they had found this clearing so easily. Even the Oracle had been unable to designate a safe place and Tim was able to do so in less than two hours! As he remembered, it was indeed the boy who was leading the way back then.

As for the koala bear, he was a Ziwid literally called Simpleton in his native gibberish. The alien had no vocal cords, but Kevin claimed that communicating with canids and ursidae was no problem for him. Jake could simply use telepathy, but he refrained from dampening his enthusiasm.

Daniel was as dead as a doornail and after assessing the extent of the damage, he did what he could to optimize their recovery. With his telekinesis, he meticulously drained all the bloated blood that had accumulated inside their skull and was exerting pressure on their damaged brains. Once this stage was completed, the two children and the bear could be considered to be out of the woods, but the rest was up to them.

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Jake was seriously tempted to cut off her arm to absorb her bracelet, but in the end he eventually abstained. After dissecting the report about the young

woman, she no longer held any secrets from him and he knew that she posed no immediate threat.

‘In memory of Lu Yifeng, I’m going to give you a chance... you better not waste it. ‘He grumbled as he got up. He had no intention of attending to her injuries.

He then took over from Kevin and Sarah to repair the collapsed wall and door and with his telekinesis and Earth Manipulation, it only took him a few seconds to put the door back in place and plug the wall.

Of course, the plugged wall had been clumsily sealed, but it was enough to prevent the freezing air from creeping into the building. Sarah then proceeded to rekindle the fire and soon a pleasant warmth filled the room again.

For the rest of the day, everyone dressed their wounds in their own corners and night finally fell. The familiar green light soon began to radiate from the clearing and an invigorating energy soothed their exhausted minds.

This was what Jake had been waiting for, and he used the mental clarity it brought to cleanly repair the wall and door as Kevin looked on in awe. Never in his wildest delusions could he have imagined that one day he would have to depend on his cousin to survive a mere thunderstorm. He was feeling like a child again.

The stone house being as good as new, the still awake trio feasted afterwards without saying a word and soon after Jake bid them farewell before disappearing underground without offering any explanation. He still telepathically warned Sarah that he would be nearby.

In fact, as soon as he disappeared, he had buried himself under the chimney fire as close as possible to the NaeQuat deposit below the clearing. Combined with the nutrients provided by the soil, the warmth of the fire and the soul energy of the Green Soul Stone, Jake was finally able to dedicate himself fully to his recovery without any worries.

