

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 281 - Discovery

[BODY STATUS:]

[Physics: Myrtharian Body lvl1]

[Height: 2.11 meters]

[Weight: 135kg]

[Strength: 68.3 points.]

[Agility: 60.5 points]

Constitution: 87.2 points]

[Vitality: 84.6 points]

[Intelligence: 36.4 points]

Perception: 31.6 points]

(NB: Asuzfeu vpqfr lofol: 5 nmarol)

His Strength, Agility, Constitution and Vitality had increased by about 50% and even more in the case of the last two. His Intelligence and Perception had also increased slightly, even if it was derisory compared to his physical stats.

In three days, such a progression was mind-blowing, since combined with the multiplier coefficient from his Aether stats his effective fighting strength had actually increased by more than 50%.

Currently, even at equivalent amounts of Aether, his body was about four to six times stronger than that of a world-class human athlete of the same height. Speaking of his height, he was beginning to freak out seriously.

Being over two meters tall had already shocked him when he became a Myrtharian, but this height, although rare on Earth, was not abnormal. In three days, he had gained another 8 centimeters and it was beginning to become worrisome.

Although he would have no trouble being selected for a basketball team, he sincerely hoped that his second growth spurt would come to an end soon. Because at this rate... he was afraid he wouldn't be able to walk through the doors any time soon.

While this could be worrisome, Jake had long noticed that this was a general trend, observable in virtually all Evolvers. Sarah herself, who was about 1.7 meters tall when he first met her, was now over 1.8 meters tall. In fact, even Tim was quite tall for a child of 10 or 11.

Seeing how his body was transformed during those three days, Jake was earnestly tempted to dig down a little closer to the lava lake and then bury himself again for another indefinite period of time, but he knew he could not afford to do so without making sure his companions were well.

'Any important news to mention that would have taken place during these three days Xi?' Jake lazily asked his trusty Oracle AI in the tone of someone asking his secretary to make him some coffee.

[...]

'Xi?'

[Sigh... Nothing serious, but something has indeed happened. Esya, one of the two pink-haired sisters has been eliminated.]

Jake stiffened slightly when he heard the news. Before this Ordeal began he thought that the two noblewomen would have been weeded out in a matter of minutes, but when he discovered their names in the Player Ranking and the fact that they had not tried to find them, he had come to believe that they were doing very well on their own. Who would have thought that the younger sister would be eliminated while he was sleeping?

Musing over the news a bit more, Jake shook his head with a fatalistic attitude. It was too late to rescue them. Since Enya was still alive and hadn't tried to contact them, it meant that she was either out of trouble or unable to get to them.

With his Shadow Guide, he checked the direction in which the young woman was heading and was able to confirm that she had not joined Sarah and the others. As for Will, he was still on his own somewhere in the middle of the island.

'I find it hard to believe that Will hasn't tried to contact us all this time...'

Jake was amazed at the score of the businessman who was in 72nd place.

He was exactly 20 places behind Jake and 16 places ahead of Sarah. In his group, only Jake and Kevin were in front of him. He was supposed to be the weakest in their group with Tim. However, to be honest, no one in Jake's group had a ranking below 200.

With their teamwork and the reduction in the number of Players still vying, their ranking was slowly but steadily rising. Right now, there were less than 2,000 candidates left, and the killings between Players had begun to dwindle. Either the small fry had been eradicated, or the remaining survivors were much more cautious and had formed their own groups.

During this brief moment of reflection, Xi had started to offer some semblance of an answer.

[There are plenty of ways to survive on this island without resorting to violence. Like Tim with his luck, he may be using a skill of his own to survive and thrive on this island. Since his first Ordeal was focused on his eloquence and management skills, his special rewards should have been derived from these past experiences.]

‘Or perhaps he’s made some dependable allies.’ Jake shrugged. ‘I seem to remember that he was awarded the Aether of Charisma, but I can’t imagine what use that would have here. At least I couldn’t even tell the difference. Can it work on the monsters on this island?’

[Probably. Just because his stats were insufficient and he didn’t try to influence you doesn’t mean that this stat is useless. After he got his share of the sale of the Rank 7 Digestor, that’s surely not the case anymore. Like the Grey Aether, the Charisma Aether uses the intrinsic qualities of individuals to make them even more dazzling. On a truly ugly and socially inept man or woman, the effect would be extremely limited. On the other hand, on a beautiful and eloquent man or woman, a simple smile can have unexpected effects].

Jake remained silent for a few seconds, his eyebrows frowning intensely, and then he said in a hesitant tone,

‘Should I visit him then? I’m curious now...’

[You’d better check what Lu Yan and the others are doing beforehand.] Xi replied adamantly.

‘Jake sighed as he levitated to the entrance of the rock tunnel he had excavated.

He dreamed of being able to roam around this island without worrying about anything or anyone, but unfortunately if he did not check the situation of Lu Yan and the others, he would not be at ease.

However, just as he was about to stick his head out of the entrance of his artificial cave to levitate to the top of the volcano, a rustle, followed by moderately high-pitched and guttural sounds, but still intelligible, petrified him on the spot.

Suddenly retracting his head and his Spirit Body, he lay down on the rocky ground and stopped breathing to conceal his presence. Seeing that the voices had not changed tones and that they were moving away from his position, he relaxed and only after the volcano became silent again did he dare to take another breath.

‘What was it? It sounded like Oraclean, but with a strong accent. ‘Jake wondered with uncertainty.

[I don’t think they were participants... Those voices sounded familiar to me]. Xi answered after a long time.

‘Familiar?’ Jake repeated, stroking his five-day stubble. The last time he shaved was before his expedition with Lu Yan.

Considering that Xi was just the tampered consciousness of an over-powerful Evolver, it had to be something important for his IA to remember it after her memories were repressed by the Oracle.

[I’m sure of it. I recognize those intonations. Just follow them, and when I see the way they look, it should come back to me].

‘ All right... ‘

Jake hovered out of the tunnel in search of the owners of these voices, but he found nothing inside the volcano but the lava lake below him and the rocky walls of the crater. Confused and unsure of what to do next, he flew to the top of the crater, but found no evidence of the recent passage of any other life except his own and Lu Yan’s footprints, which had not faded away yet.

In order not to draw attention to himself this time, he didn't set foot on the ground once as he descended the volcano, but scanned the ground surface around him with his Spirit Body for clues.

When he had descended about halfway down the mountain, he found the giant tracks of the humanoid monsters from the second trial, and upon inspecting them again, he was caught by a detail.

Why did these traces stop here? The footprints disappeared in the jungle, but they emerged exactly where he was, as if these monsters had spawned here by magic.

Intrigued, he directed his Extrasensory Perception to the ground beneath these footprints and the nearby rocky elevation, and unsurprisingly discovered an underground entrance and a secret passageway. He could see in his mind that an archaic mechanical system was holding a huge boulder in front of a gallery dug into the volcano. Where the footprints were located, a system of ropes and gears and a precise demarcation at ground level indicated that it was a freight elevator.

Ir movuz jmztI, ovuzu jfl f luhzuo urozfrhu tpe arom ovu latu md ovu Qmprofar frt fr uiusfomz bplo ar dzmro md ao. Bw ukourtare val lurlul om ovuaZ iaQaol, Jfcu zufiaxut ovfo gmov nllfeul juzu luunare arom ovu tunovl md ovu smihfrm.

'No wonder those creatures didn't notice me. They were walking through an adjacent tunnel. 'Jake realized with some disbelief at such a discovery. 'Could this be the base of the Zhorions?'

As if to confirm his suspicions, a System notification popped up in his mind at that very moment.

[Side Quest enabled: You have discovered a mysterious secret passage belonging to a native civilization. Find out where it leads and uncover its secrets.]

