

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 303 - Enjoy your Meal!

After only a few seconds of running away, Jake realized that the Zhorion he had just fought couldn't have been responsible for the heavy footsteps that had shaken the walls of the staircase. This was only possible with a heavy and massive creature. In other words, a dinosaur, or more logically another one of those humanoid monsters.

These creatures seemed devoid of any personality and they clearly obeyed a few privileged Zhorions to the letter. This warrior he had just killed was one of them.

That's why he was not so surprised when his path was obstructed by the hideous head of one of these monsters at the very first intersection.

The creature's head was more than a meter and a half in diameter with dark skin, yellow fangs, and pointed, partially jagged ears. The underpass was only two or three meters wide and high, and obviously had not been designed to provide easy access for such large monsters.

Because of this, as when the humanoid monsters had crawled out of the temple, the red-eyed creature in front of him was clumsily crouched and had to wriggle like a caterpillar to advance a few meters.

Recognizing that he could not avoid the confrontation and that it was an unhoped-for opportunity, Jake sped up a notch and thrust his machete forward. With his momentum and striking power, his blade sank all the way to the hilt in one of the monster's eyes. Then Jake contracted his muscles a

little more and the arm holding the weapon in turn went into the monster's eye, up to the shoulder.

It was gore as hell, but the creature's brain was reduced to mush in an instant without it being able to react.

ROOOARRR!

Blinded by the pain and the blade in his eye, the hanging red stone around the monster's neck began to radiate an intense light and the monster dying in front of him suddenly came back to life, carried by a fury from another world.

The creature that should have been dying jolted suddenly and tried to stand upright by pushing down with all its might. Under the Flintium's influence, its body had begun to congest and grow as it emitted an inconceivable bestial aura.

Jfcu jfl ofcur fgfhc frt dmzhut om tzmn val Qfhvuou jvur ovu Qmrlouz Qfrfeut om lofrt pnzaevo. Hal hpzzuro nmlopzu jfl iacu ovfo md ovu Aoifl lhpipozu hfzzware ovu Efzov mr val lvmpituzl. Ekhuno ovfo fgmsu ovu Qmrlouz ovuzu jfl mriw f zmhc huaiare, frt fl vu ozaut om dmzhu vaQluid pn, ovu huaiare vft guepr om hzfhc.

'Fuck!'

Aware of what was about to happen, Jake recalled his machete with his telekinesis after breaking through the creature's reddish aura with his Spirit Body, then without a second thought he snatched the red crystal from the monster's neck to disrupt his Berserk mode.

Unfortunately, in doing so, it was he who found himself in contact with an active Red Soul Stone. His body had already been sprayed with blood during his previous fight and destroying the eye of this creature had also sprayed his body with all kinds of enemy fluids. His body glittered with a beautiful fluorescent red where it had been stained.

The outcome of such stimulation was inevitable. In a split second he saw red and his consciousness was incinerated with the magnificence of a firework explosion.

When Jake regained his lucidity long afterwards, he did not immediately recognize where he was. Miraculously, he was still alive, but barely. According to his Status, he weighed only 38 kilos... He could only imagine how glorious he must have been when facing the enemy to survive until now, but right now his situation was even more critical than the previous time with Lu Yan.

If it had been the him from the second trial, he knew he would never have regained his lucidity. He would have died of exhaustion long before. Died ?

At that thought, Jake immediately inspected his body and his surroundings to try to understand why he was lucid again. The blood on him had dried and his machete was nowhere to be found.

Strangely enough, his clawed hand was still firmly holding the ankle of the Zhorion he had defeated, but the corpse was in a terrible state. Without a doubt, Berserk Jake had used the corpse as a club to retaliate against his opponents. The body was still pretty much in one piece, but it was only flesh and skin at that point. More importantly, the corpse was completely charred.

The red crystals he had stolen had also disappeared, but that was normal. If he hadn't gotten rid of them somehow, he wouldn't have survived. But why the hell was his machete gone ? Without the Naequat crystal embedded in the pommel, he should have been unable to neutralize the influence of Flintium. He had seen the result on Lu Yan. Even though he was mentally and physically stronger than her, the difference was not so extreme.

[Thank God you're awake.] Xi's voice echoed unannounced in his head. It was clearly tinged with relief.

‘ Do you even believe in God ?‘ He managed to mock with a small laugh, but he immediately regretted his action.

He was practically voiceless and his laugh triggered a dry and sore coughing fit. When he stopped coughing, there was a little blood in his hand and he felt like he was about to collapse.

Finally, he whispered, ‘Where am I and why am I still alive?’

[Thanks to your instincts I guess. Prolonged contact with all that Flintium has boosted your Myrtharian Bloodline to an unprecedented level. When I thought it was all over and you were going to die, you started devouring your machete, Green Soul Stone included. You went into a coma a few seconds later and I thought it was the end, but a minute later you woke up and swallowed the other two red crystals...]

‘What did I do?!‘ Jake gasped in amazement.

No wonder his machete was gone. He remembered then that he did indeed have the ability to digest almost anything with his bloodline, but perhaps out of caution and common sense, he hadn’t particularly sought to test the limits of that talent. Knowing that he could eat any food without wondering too much about compatibility had been enough for him. And honestly, who would be foolish enough to try to eat a sword?

In short, the most important thing was that he had survived. He first had to understand his situation and act accordingly. By scanning his surroundings, Jake was able to confirm that he was still under the volcano, but he had never explored this place. Obviously, he had not fully escaped the Zhorions.

He was in a kind of cave, but the smooth ceiling and walls as well as the right angles proved that it was not of natural origin.

[You built it yourself when you were in Berserk mode].

‘Seriously?!‘

Jake was getting more and more skeptical about his recent actions. Was he really that capable when he was unconscious? Maybe he had more potential as a sleepwalker...

There was neither entrance nor exit in the artificial cave he had created. Even when he scanned behind the rock walls, he found only more rock. There were no galleries dug nearby. He had been able to get in here with his temporary power-up, but getting out might be another matter.

He was seriously considering his options when he heard a familiar sound above him, comparable to a river flowing freely. Raising his head to the ceiling, he squinted his eyes as he deployed his mental power in one direction and was shocked to discover that he was just below the lava lake.

‘Xi... Tell me the truth, how did I get here?’

Radio silence. After a while, his Oracle AI breathed a long exasperated sigh.

[Through the lake.]

‘How?’ Jake inquired calmly.

Jake was at peace. He could not be constantly surprised. It had already been a day full of twists and turns. One more or less didn’t make any difference.

[You had already reached your hiding place in the volcano when you gobbled up the three crystals. After swallowing the two Red Soul Stones, you threw yourself into the lava lake on your own.]

‘And I’m still alive?!’

Jake found the situation increasingly absurd.

Finally, fed up, the hologram of Xi appeared in front of him. Leaning against a wall in front of him, she simply replied, ‘Take a look at your Status.’

Listening to her advice, he started scrolling down his Status looking for anomalies, but although his stats had increased quite a bit, both Aetherically and physically, the difference was not life-changing.

‘Lower. ‘Xi rolled her eyes cutely.

Then, Jake reached the section about his Myrtharian bloodline and he finally noticed a change in size.

[Grade 8 Myrtharian Bloodline: Level 2]

In just a few hours and by eating a few crystals, he had managed to stimulate his bloodline enough to move it to the next rank.