

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 316 - Let's Talk, Shall We?

Obviously, this person was not Aslael. Her appearance shared distinctive similarities with him, and even though their auras were similar, there were still major differences between the two individuals.

On the one hand, despite the apparent spiritual pressure this woman was exerting on him, there was nothing special about her. It was intense and heavy, but not to the point of making him lose his composure. On the other hand, he didn't feel the same sense of benevolent playfulness.

This woman was cold, her expression unreadable, but he was certain that these two people were not connected. She might very well be an Instructor, but she could just as well be a Zhorion like the others.

'You're an Instructor?' Jake inquired in a deep, relaxed voice as if he was asking the time. In his current situation, he could not afford to show any sign of weakness.

The young woman, who until then had seemed lost in thought, then looked at him and a brief surprise fleetingly flashed on her face before regaining her indifference. Still, Jake noted that the sinking of his feet into the fractured ground had not escaped her notice.

'Smart! But untrue.' She answered a few seconds later in perfect English. 'Although you're not completely wrong either.'

Jake thought that she would have attacked him immediately, but after responding to him she immediately lost interest and flew into the temple as if she had a mission to carry out and his fate did not concern her.

Jake watched her until she vanished into the darkness of the temple, and with his upgraded Aether Vision, he could now see the Aetheric signatures from many kilometers away. If his Myrtharian Sight had no other features, such as pointing out weaknesses and analyzing minute details, this bloodline skill would have become obsolete.

As a result, he had no trouble observing her lift the hatch in the hall leading to the catacombs, and then let herself fall inside. Jake continued to follow her Aetheric signature with his eyes until he lost track of her because of the metal insulation in the catacombs.

He didn't need to be a genius to know where she was heading, and if he was still there when she realized that some of the liquid alloy was missing, the consequences would be tragic for him.

Taking a deep breath, Jake gathered his courage and focused all his will to take off from the ground. After a few seconds he managed to launch himself with the help of his telekinesis.

His takeoff was silent, as if his weight had not changed, but in his mind he felt like he was towing an airliner. Now that his Aether Vision allowed him to perceive Aether in many forms, he could see the turmoil that his telekinesis was generating around him.

A portion of his carbohydrate and lipid reserves were converted into pure energy by an unknown phenomenon, then amplified by the Aether in his Spirit Body to generate the intangible force under which his telekinesis manifested itself. At the same time, his Spirit Body regenerated the lost Aether by sucking in that of the environment like a syphon.

Jake was aware right now that he was about as discreet as an unrestrained scooter driving with headlights on in a residential neighborhood at 5am. Anyone who could detect these Aether fluctuations would be alerted at once.

Adouz ofcare mdd bplo f duj quouzl dzmQ ovu ezmprt, ovu ifsf prtuz val duuo guefr om zanniu, ovur gmai, frt darfiw lniflv mpo iacu dazujmzcl. Iqqutafouiw fdouzjftl, f lvmhc jfsu uknimtut dzmQ guimj ovu fiofz frt vu cruj ovfo ovu Zvmzamr jmQfr vft bplo guhmQu fjfzu md val tuutl.

Gritting his teeth, Jake accelerated slightly, but it was a lost cause. He wasn't even halfway up the cave ceiling when the supposed Instructor was already back in front of him, this time with a richness of expression on her face that left no doubt as to what she thought of him.

Her silvery eyes pulsed briefly, and then his Telekinesis was broken. He felt, more than he could see, how the young woman's Spirit Body overlapped his own and wrenched control of the Aether from him. Like a bird with its wings cut off, he fell miserably into the lava with a big splash.

Jake was happy for once to be 2m15 tall. He was just tall enough to keep his head out of the lava by tiptoeing. Unfortunately, it demanded a hell of an effort.

His skin sizzled slightly when he came in contact with the lava, but his accelerated healing was immediately triggered as soon as he was exposed to the intense heat. Although it was painful, he was not really in any danger. Even better, he could feel that this hostile environment was beneficial to his body and bloodline.

However, it was not a time for rejoicing. A gust of air ruffled his hair and when Jake looked up again, the young woman was floating right above him with the contempt of a goddess towering over a mortal.

'Give me the alloy you stole and I'll pretend our paths never crossed. 'She declared in a haughty manner with a threatening tone.

Jake was expecting it, and his answer flowed out of his mouth without any hint of hesitation.

‘ Absolutely not!’

It was an outright refusal to comply. Needless to say, this was not the answer the Zhorion woman expected. A terrifying mental pressure exploded from her body, suddenly sinking him under the lava.

Jfcu jfl iware dfhu tmjr mr ovu Qmiour hfsu dimmz jaov ojm Quouzl md ifsf fgmsu vaQ, gpo ovuzu jfl rmovare vu hmpit tm om zulalo ao. Hu fizuftw juaevut ovazow omrl, lm loftare fizuftw zuypazut hmrlofro dmhpl frt fr azmr jaii. Waov oval ukozf nzullpzu, vu jfl iacu f diw prtuz f diw ljfoouz. CmQniuouiw prfgiu om lozpeeiu.

For a brief moment he thought he was going to be eliminated from his Ordeal in this fashion, but after several minutes he noticed that the Zhorion woman hadn’t pushed her offense any further.

Jake was not stupid. If she really wanted to steal his metal, stopping him from committing suicide or dying was the priority. She could, just like the priest, cut off his limbs one after another after forcing him into berserk mode. Given the speed at which she had recovered the liquid alloy from under the altar, the Soul Spell he had just learned must have been child’s play for her.

As a result, he instantly grasped her dilemma. She wanted his alloy, but was unable to pick on him too directly. Even that mental pressure that kept him from moving was harmless to him. With the pores of his skin soaking up the lava around it was almost comfortable.

After about a Quarter of an hour when she realized that the lava bath had no effect on him, she pulled him out of the lava by an invisible thread and this time she inspected the human in front of her more extensively.

Knowing very well what kind of Players this Ordeal was full of at this point, she finally took a long sigh and took her Spirit Body pressure off,

‘What’s your name?’ She asked in an authoritative tone that had no room for rejection.

‘Why should I answer? You’re going to take it out on my family and friends, aren’t you?’ Jake sneered, as he spat a flob into the lava in disrespect. His spit evaporated immediately on contact with the molten rock.

The Zhorion woman briefly clenched her fists and a snarl comparable to that of a rabid wolf began to whirr out of her mouth, revealing long, sharp canines very similar to his.

‘Your name is Jake Wilderth, 25 years old, from planet Earth. You grew up with your cousin Anya and your uncle Kalen. You lost your parents to the Digestors and grew up in a toxic and competitive environment that made you antisocial, apathetic, suspicious and resentful. You don’t seem to care about anything or anyone, but you are afraid to die and thirsty for recognition. You want to be someone who can be trusted, but you don’t want to sacrifice your freedom and privileges for others. You are also ...’

Jake felt a chill when he heard the young alien woman spewing out all sorts of secrets about him one after another, some he wasn’t even aware of. It was as if she had a report in front of her eyes containing all the details about him from birth and she was just reading random excerpts.

‘...You are now under the jurisdiction of System ZZ831 on planet B842. Did you really think I was trying to get information about you? I was just being polite. They say that etiquette and decorum are important for members of your species.’

Jake was already dull when she finished her litany and he barely noticed when she spoke to him again. This woman was too scary, but it was the Oracle he hated above all else. Fucking totalitarianism!

Seeing Jake’s deflated face like a berated puppy, the Zhorion woman nodded contentedly, but under those dejected features she could feel the human anger rising. His downcast expression was merely a facade. Regardless, she was willing to play along.

'Let's talk, shall we?'