

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 323 - Collecting Rewards

The first thing Jake did while breathing in the fresh air of the island was to realize that underground or outdoors, it didn't make much difference. It was as dark inside as outside. His second action was to re-check his Player Ranking for the umpteenth time and his anxiety rose slightly when he noticed that the number of participants had dropped again.

Jake felt like he had been on this island for years, but it had really only been 53 days since his Second Ordeal had started. He had only been on the island for just over a month. In fact, he still hadn't broken his grandfather's record.

'Lucky old man!' Jake muttered as he set off towards the island's center, shaking the earth with every step he took.

He was pretty sure that not every second Ordeals was like that. He had just confirmed that there were only 196 participants left on this island. If his grandfather's Ordeal had been so difficult, he had to reassess the old man's abilities.

Jake had chosen to head towards the heart of the island without hesitation because it had become obvious where the Phantom Sanctuary would land. Just by looking up at the night sky above him, he had seen an oddly flickering pyramid-shaped object that wasn't there before.

The object was not large in his field of vision, like a ping pong ball ten meters away, but Jake could easily predict that the island center was indeed its destination. And given the distance separating it from its destination, the

celestial object must have been quite imposing. Only the so-called Phantom Sanctuary fitted this description.

If he had any doubt at this point, locating the Players left with his Shadow Guide had confirmed his suspicions. With the exception of a few cautious participants like Tim and Lily, who refused to take part in the final battle, everyone without exception was in the same place, including Will, Enya, Kevin and Kate. Of course, he could not locate everyone. Quite a few participants had a higher Oracle Rank than he did.

During his four days of volcanic swimming, his perseverance had shown its worth and the reward was commensurate with his efforts. His Strength, Constitution and Vitality especially were incomparable with what they had been before.

[AETHER STATUS:]

[Strength(S): 231.6 points] (202|231.6)]

[Agility(A): 251.4 points](230.3| 251.4)]

[Constitution(C): 246.7 points] (224.6|246.7)]

[Vitality(V): 241.8 points] (227.4|241.8)]

[Intelligence(I): 236 points] (233.2|236)]

[Perception(P): 225 points] (224.6|225)]

Extrasensory Perception(EP): 227 points] (223.9|227)

[BODY STATUS:]

[Physics: Myrtharian Body lvl2]

[Height: 2.16 meters] (2.14|2.16m)]

[Wuaevo: 246ce]

[Strength: 106 points (74|106)]

[Agility: 68 points] (66|68)]

[Constitution: 121.9 points] (94.3|121.9)]

[Vitality: 117.3 points] (91.6|117.3)]

[Intelligence: 39.4 points] (39.1|39.4)]

[Perception: 33.2 points] (32.8|33.2)]

Jake was satisfied with such a tremendous improvement, but he could not help but be frustrated deep down inside as well. He had grown another 2 centimeters! When would his growth stop?

He was really starting to freak out inside. He remembered just how tall the hero Myrmid was, who was literally a giant, and he couldn't help but be pessimistic about his future love life. Well, at least he was unlikely to be messed with for no reason... Talk about a consolation!

His trip to the island center took him 3 extra days. Jake could have reached the central plain in no time and that was his initial intention. However, the number of remaining participants had suddenly stopped falling.

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Obviously, this goal had been achieved during his venture beneath the volcano or the pyramid ship flashing like a disco ball would not have emerged so suddenly out of nowhere.

As imposing and flashy as this floating sanctuary could be, the object descended atrociously slowly. It was with this in mind that Jake had chosen to take his time to finish the few Feats he had left.

During those three days, Jake had completed a large number of hunting feats, as well as most of the auxiliary exploration feats, such as Herbalism, Geology, Botany, Biology.

These auxiliary exploits had been ridiculously simple to accomplish up to the Diamond level. All he had to do was to make a good big scan at maximum range every twenty kilometers. It had cost him a few million Aether points, but the rewards had more than made up for his investment.

Once Xi had finished compiling all the data, Jake had completed all of these feats in one fell swoop and reaped the rewards. He was not the only participant to have done so, and the scores of most had skyrocketed sharply in the last week.

His only regret was that he hadn't met any Monster Bosses, even with the scan's assistance. Those dinosaurs that scared him so much before seemed to have completely disappeared from the island. A shame that this was happening just when he was finally confident to face them.

The other good news was that after completing all these hunting feats, Jake had finally been able to combine his two Soul Glyphs: Abyss Apex Predator and Ocean Apex Predator with his new Apex Terrestrial Predator glyph that he had just obtained to create a fourth one:

[ -Title: Apex Predator (Diamond): Your body emits an extremely intimidating aura to other creatures, causing them to overestimate you. Also works against weak-minded Evolvers with inferior abilities. Is obtained by exterminating all Apex Predators in an area to the point where the few survivors recognize their inferiority and flee upon your sight.]

[Other Perks:]

[-Naevo Valamr: Ymp hfr rm imreuz gu tfxxiut gw f hvfreu ar iaevo.]

[-Lurking: When you hunt or spy, your presence fades away.]

[-Sideration: The prey that crosses your eyes can be paralyzed by fear.]

Jake now had fewer Glyphs than before, but the new one had all the benefits of the previous ones with a few extras. Overall, he was satisfied with his reward.

The remaining list of available feats was almost endless and he had no doubt that he was far from having peeled all the island's secrets. Regardless, he had done his best and that was all that mattered.

Once all these rewards had been collected, Jake was comfortably settled at the top of the ranking with more than 310 million points. He had never been so rich, but after using his scan many times he knew it was just an illusion. He could become poor again just as quickly.

The three days of traveling alone had also served another purpose. To allow him to become familiar with his body weight and his new muscles. It was the first time since his arrival in the Mirror Universe that Jake was suffering from a stats imbalance.

Previously, his agility and intelligence had always been aligned with his strength and he had had no trouble controlling his physical strength. In the lava, this was not noticeable. On land, however, Jake's movements were excessively brutish and combined with his 30-ton mass, he could probably crush a dog's skull to death trying to pet it.

If Sarah tried to hit on him once more, she would probably think twice and would be better off being on top. If she didn't... Jake didn't even dare to think about it.

Luckily, he was smart and the gap wasn't too critical. All this fighting had allowed him to adapt, but most of all he found that he needed his telekinesis to form a force field under his feet to better distribute his body weight with each step. He had lost count of the number of times the ground had collapsed as he walked by before implementing this.

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When he discovered the plain encapsulated in a bright ghostly greenish glow, Jake was momentarily taken aback, but it was the monument in the center that caught his gaze. Will, Enya and all the other Players were inside.

With his present senses, Jake should have been able to hear the conversations inside the building, but the temple was remarkably quiet. A few Zhorions with emerald eyes in armor were patrolling around the structure, and as soon as they saw a human appear, they immediately surrounded him, pointing their spears at him.

Right now, Jake was wearing a new obsidian armor hastily forged with his powers and his appearance was really intimidating to these guards. Since he could easily reforge anything in an instant from rock, he had designed an armor that was horribly thick and disproportionate to be able to draw the raw material he needed at any time.

Spirituality was the Zhorions' specialty, and they were all aware of the large force field deployed beneath Jake's feet. Even if they did not understand the reason for it, they knew that some very powerful Zhorions on Elinor moved in the same way.

Moreover, his new Soul Glyph: Apex Predator was definitely having an effect. These Zhorion guards, usually arrogant and confident, were barely holding back from running for their lives.