

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 330 – Untrustworthy Cousins

‘Ugh, do I look like I need help?’ Jake retorted coldly.

He refused to give them that plaisir. Moreover, they had no regard, no form of attachment or kinship that warranted their involvement. It was obvious that his two cousins were also envious of his Red Soul Stones.

Whether they deserved his generosity was another matter altogether. At least, the Wengols had proved that they were ill-intentioned.

Perhaps for George and Brice, he seemed to be on the defensive. The fact that his Oracle Rank was lower than theirs was easy to guess or they would never have assassinated these two Wengol leaders when Jake was unable to take them off guard by executing much faster and devastating moves.

For Jake, the ambush of his cousins on these two Wengols was also a big surprise. Since these aliens were able to anticipate all his attacks without him being able to predict theirs, he knew that their Oracle Rank was superior to his own. By assassinating them without them reacting, George and Brice had thus proved that their Oracle Rank was at least 7.

Although he was confident in his abilities, it was still an extremely shocking revelation. Unless they had performed so much better than him during their first Ordeal, it was clear that they had been given more time to increase their Oracle Rank.

Jake had been through a chaotic career, but he knew that George was a government analyst. Brice, on the other hand, was a businessman running his own VR gaming company.

In the case of George, that he knew many details prior to the public was not too startling, while for Brice it was also plausible. Since he had become aware of the existence and purpose of the VR game 'Trial Worlds', he had a different perspective on the VR market.

When he was younger, his cousin was a video game enthusiast or he wouldn't have dared to set up his own company. Jake didn't know him well, but he wouldn't have been surprised if Brice was also a Trial World player in his day.

'Let's play fair.' George said, wiping away his smile. 'We loathe each other. If you didn't have the Soul Stones we need, we wouldn't care what happened to you here. But I know that Grandfather will give us a hard time if he finds out that we failed at the crucial moment because we acted selfishly. Family comes first.'

Jake snickered sarcastically as he heard this handy argument. George had always been sneaky. He was good with words and always seemed to be within his rights, even when he was committing the worst deceptions.

Brice was silent on the side, but Jake despised him just as much. The good thing was that Brice and George didn't like each other either. Normally, it was good enough if they saw each other twice a year at the end-of-year family dinners.

'What if I don't care?' Jake taunted them with an air of mockery.

'You mean...'

'Exactly. I don't give a damn about grandfather or the rest of the family. Except for Uncle Kalen and Anya, I don't really care what happens to the Wilderths. Even if you fail here, your situation is still enviable compared to the majority of the participants anyway. By taking care of Lily, Kevin, Kate, Elijah and Noemie while you were acting selfishly, I have already done more than my share.'

‘ ... ‘

Tvu foQmlnvuzu ezuj lptturiw ourlu guojuur ovu ozam, gpo jaov fii ovu Zvmzamrl frt Pifwuz fzmprt oaeavourare ovuaz rmmlu Qmzu frt Qmzu, Jfcu usuropfiiw zuiurout.

As before against the two Wengol leaders, he fiddled with his obsidian armor to reveal his Flintium haul and threw six stones to his two cousins without batting an eyelid.

‘And now get lost.’ He grunted curtly before shifting his gaze in another direction.

If Will and Enya didn’t catch up with him in a few minutes, he would go in without them. While his two cousins were grabbing the Soul Stones in mid-air with some disbelief, Jake had already swept all the unclaimed Green Soul Stones from the corpses within a hundred meters of him.

Virtually all of the Players and Zhorions still alive had one or more Green Soul Stones after killing each other so savagely. Many of these had been ignored once the ten Naequat Gates had been opened. After all, a single Green Stone was enough to open the remaining doors.

Jake just thought it was hilarious that they would go after him so hard without caring about Ruby’s group. Although he had few memories of the young woman, her white hair and navy blue and amethyst eyes were unique enough that he couldn’t mistake her for anyone else.

Although he had not noticed her in the tavern among all the aliens, his recent scan had provided him with all the information about the participants, including their appearances. The young woman’s report was almost empty, proving that she had a higher Oracle Rank than he did, but her outward appearance was no longer a secret to him. As a result, he was also aware of the bluish halo marking each human member of her party.

According to him, such a group had a good chance of entering the Phantom Sanctuary. If they did, the only source of Orxanium Stones would disappear. Too bad Jake didn't know that this group of humans was currently on the verge of being obliterated by the Nosks. Had he known, he might not have taken so long.

'In that case, goodbye cousin. 'George answered abruptly, taking Jake out of his mind. 'I'll see you inside... Tsk!'

Jake was about to nod unconsciously when he saw George's expression change. Without warning, the mirror scales on his cousin's skin cast a strange light in his direction.

At the time, Jake thought that his cousin had just launched an attack, but the white, spotlight-like beam illuminated an empty space less than a meter to his left. A peculiar outline was immediately exposed and his retina was instantly captivated by the shadow's elusive movement as it slipped behind him with a presence so ethereal that it felt like a spectre. Without George's Aether Skill, he would not have noticed anything.

Seeing that Brice had already disappeared, he and George exploded with rage at once.

'Bastard! 'They both insulted him in chorus.

Jake flipped around and with both hands generated a telekinetic shock wave as strong as he could towards the door he was defending. Brice, who had managed to insert two stones during this brief moment, was forced to make a crash dive to the side to avoid being flattened against the wall like a pancake.

To dodge this blow, he had rolled on the ground miserably, and this made Jake realize that his cousin was not confident in his ability to withstand his strike directly.

‘What does that mean?’ Jake and George questioned him with a frosty expression.

Instead of answering them, Brice, who hadn’t said a word from the beginning, retrieved the two Soul Stones he had inserted and left without looking at them.

Nevertheless, Jake, who had good hearing, heard him whisper once far enough, ‘George, I’ll remember that.’ His tone was extremely sinister. It was hard to believe that they were related.

Jake was happy to have thwarted Brice’s blitz, but he was mostly frustrated. Today, he had discovered first-hand the limits of his Oracle Rank. He was strong, but he couldn’t hurt anyone. He was fast, but he couldn’t hit his targets. He was smart, but his plans never came to fruition.

He was aware that Brice had failed not because of him, but because George’s Oracle Rank or George himself had reacted in time to spur him into action. By revealing Brice’s position, George had indirectly manipulated him.

Tvu Qmlo taleploare nfzo md fii oval jfl ovfo rm Zvmzamrl mz Pifwuzl vft frw atuf ar jvahv tazuhuamr Bzahu vft iudo. Hu jfl rmo arsalagiu, gpo val nzulurhu jfl bplo omm jufc. Io ommc f hmrlatuzfgiu uddmzo om imhc val uwul mr vaq. Jfcu vft rm tmpgo ovfo vu jmpit gu fgiu om dart frmovuz tmmz jaovmpo Qphv uddmzo.

Jake, in a bad mood, was about to ask George what he was still doing here when he caught a glimpse of the people he was waiting for out of the corner of his eye. It was about time. The Zhorions and Wengols around him had grown tired of their family drama. They were about to attack at any moment and he knew this time it would not be that simple.

‘Jake, we’re here!’ Enya cried out with joy as she waved her hand.

She had no idea where Hakkrasha was leading them, but as always he had been remarkably reliable. Where this omniscience came from was a mystery to her.

Will was also surprised that the alien sleeping all the time was so helpful, but his relief was apparent to all. However, when he saw the countless enemies tightly surrounding Jake and to a lesser extent George, he quickly lost his enthusiasm.

Before they had time to say anything, Jake repeated his magic trick for the third time and sent six more Red Soul Stones floating towards them. At first, Enya and Will were confused, but when they saw the reddish hue surrounding him, they understood his intentions easily.

His two comrades grabbed the stones hurriedly, immediately drawing the attention of some of the Zhorions and Players to them. Right now, the best strategy was no longer to join Jake, but to flee before they too were surrounded.

‘See you inside. ‘Jake said calmly as he prepared to activate his Soul Glyph Bloodline Ignition. If his hunch was right, the door would be unlocked and he would be teleported inside before anyone could react.

‘Wait! Do you have some Flintium for Hakkrasha? ‘Enya suddenly asked with some panic.
