

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

### Chapter 342 - Solving The Maze (part 2)

In the dark rooms crammed with Thralls of various appearances, but always hideous and farcical, Jake had quickly developed an unstoppable tactic. A blinding flash of ultraviolet rich light followed by a full-scale massacre.

If a Soul Spell trap was triggered, instead of trying to resist it, he would try to locate it as quickly as possible to dislodge the Soul Stone. After a few misfires, he was becoming familiar with the design of the place.

Red Soul Spell traps were generally easy to spot but difficult to destroy, while Blue Soul Spells were often hidden but comparatively more fragile. Up until now, he had only encountered one Green Soul Spell trap and almost died in it.

After about six hours, Jake faced his first major dilemma. The lobby he had just entered was strangely familiar to him. He recognized the three doors already open and the trap door at his feet, which had previously been on the ceiling.

This was another precaution he had taken to remember his way in. Each time he entered a new room, he left his mark there in the form of an engraving of the tip of his sword. The carvings near the other three doors proved that he had already been there.

This was a troublesome dilemma because until now he had followed the luminous arrows, trusting in vain in the artificial voice. The evidence had just proved that it was a lie.

[ Not necessarily. ] Xi bluntly contradicted him with an amused tone. She seemed to enjoy this type of puzzle. Especially when he was struggling.

Over time, Jake had lost his former enthusiasm and incorporated at once her cynical remark into his own inferences.

Hu ozaut om Qurofiiw zuQuqguz vmj Qfrw oaQul ovu zmmQl vft hvfreut hmrdaepzfoamr frt jvahv tmmzl frt jfiil vft zunifhut ovu nzusampl mrul fo ufhv hvfreu md nmlaoamr.

With his almost perfect memory, it was not so complicated and he effortlessly reconstructed a virtual hologram with Xi's help. Each room, with its doors, traps and monsters was visualized and reassembled like a puzzle taking into account the various changes of configuration.

By exploiting the acceleration forces acting on his body each time the labyrinth was set in motion, estimating the shifts of each room in which he was located at the time of the layout changes proved to be relatively simple.

By the time he completed his holographic model, several hundred cubes and rectangles had together formed a complex polyhedron resembling a huge sphere. By using the departure hall, he began to have a vague idea of the three-dimensional shape of the spaceship he was in.

Assuming, as suggested by Xi, that the luminous arrows were not lying, he tried to deduce the location of their final destination. This could only correspond to one of the empty spaces he had not yet visited.

With his model about to be operational, he figured that he was now at the eastern end of the labyrinth. He calmly waited for the next position shift and when it happened he paid close attention to the sudden accelerations and decelerations affecting his body, as well as the changes in gravity.

When the environment became stable again, he knew that the room had migrated several hundred meters westward. The light arrow had also changed direction and was now pointing above him.

Seeing that his plan seemed to be working, he leapt into the air and inserted a Green Soul Stone, as required by the empty socket in the ceiling door to unlock it.

The room above him hadn't been visited yet and he hadn't even fully emerged when a familiar stream of slobber sprayed in his face.

'Fuck!'

Tvu lpznzalu qftu vaq tzmn val ezan frt vu duui gfhc om ovu ezmprr tmjr ar ovu nzusampl vfii, dmiimjut gw f vprrzut vprezw Tvzfiil fhmqnfrware vaq ar val dfii. Agmpo ovazow qarpoul ifouz, vu daralvut mdd fii ovu qmrlouzl, gpo ovu hmrdaepzfoamr vft imre larhu hvfreut fefar. Tvu vfii jfl mrhu qmzu mr ovu uteu md ovu nmiwvutzmr.

Covered in blood and becoming increasingly gloomy, he waited for a favorable room shift, then rushed without hesitation into the half-open door to his right. Inside, a Green Soul Spell trap awaited him with two gigantic Thralls as big as elephants.

He had to use his Berserk mode to neutralize the two Thralls and dash into the next room after inserting the required Red Soul Stone. Within seconds, he went through several halls whose doors had already been opened, but found himself momentarily stuck when he came across a door requiring a Blue Soul Stone.

'Fuck!' Jake cursed for the umpteenth time since his debut in the maze.

Helpless, he had to pick the next room, followed by a succession of others until he found a new light arrow pointing in the direction he thought was correct.

Regrettably, when he thought he was finally on the right path, the gears creaked again and the room he was in was violently pushed outward, ruining much of his previous efforts.

He knew then that it was going to be a protracted game.

Five days later, a miserable-looking Jake with his left leg missing cheered loudly as he entered a hall he had never before reached. The room was vast, with a gigantic bronze door and two other armoured doors of normal size.

The large door had three empty sockets similar to the ones they had used to enter the Phantom Sanctuary, but they were the size of a sink. Even using all his stones, he was not sure he could open this door.

To get there, he had faced countless hardships and wasted tens of millions of Aether points just to overload his Aether stats again and again and upgrade his equipment. He had eaten meat from Thralls and Zhorion prisoners to the point where he almost got a taste for it. He himself was not fully aware of how much he had changed in the last week.

Astonishingly, no other Players had been eliminated during those five days, but an alarming amount of blood smeared on the floor and walls told him that someone had been here before him. The mixture of blue, green and red blood suggested that the Zhorions had preceded him and probably murdered each other after facing a final threat.

Yuo, jaov ovu ukhunoamr md ovu tmmz vu hfqu dzmq, ovu movuz ojm juzu loaii imhcut. Hu vft imre crmjv jvw. Tvulu fiaurl juzu uqpifoare Smpi Snuiil om mnuzfou ovu tmmzl.

This allowed them to open them without sacrificing Soul Stones and with a few more manipulations, relocking the door was not impossible. Even with Soul Stones it was possible by spending an extra gem once on the other side.

Jake had been using this method for a long time to save his Flintium. For the other Soul Stones unfortunately, he had no choice but to expend them one by one. He had managed to accumulate a few Blue Soul Stones by deconstructing the traps he had destroyed, but this was too rare a phenomenon. After a few days, the Blue Soul Spell traps had all been defused and renewing his stock had become nearly impossible.

The remaining traps had gradually grown stronger, as had the Thralls, whose number, size and power had increased rapidly over the days. He had lost his left leg the day before, ending up in the stomach of a Thrall as big as a small mountain. It had been a real ordeal for him to hobble so far.

The only reason the situation had gotten better for him was because the Blue and Red Soul Spells had finally run out of fuel, with the Flintium and Orxanium inside entirely consumed. This had confined the danger to the Thralls, which were still pouring in from who knows where.

Aware that he was at the right place, Jake sat cross-legged in a corner and waited patiently for the other participants to arrive, attending to his wound. Two days went by without anything happening, except for his leg, which had partially grown back, forming a disgusting stump.

Without good soil and an external source of heat, it was unrealistic to hope for a quick recovery. To trigger his passive regeneration, he had to waste a significant amount of his energy and attention to produce the heat he needed. The hall had long since become uninhabitable as his Spirit Body was struggling to keep the temperature as high as possible.

Having nothing better to do and getting desperate, he eventually destroyed one of the walls to the point of exposing the void and the gears behind it. His plan was to infiltrate the interstices between the rooms to attempt to reach the neighboring room by flying.

This turned out to be impossible. The room behind the portal was wrapped in a familiar greenish force field that he knew was impossible to penetrate. One of the first halls he had visited had apparently been a few meters away from the target. So frustrating...

A whole week went by without any twists or turns except for Xiaoming's death. His leg had grown back almost completely, but without ore or food, he had lost a lot of weight. The three empty pedestals on the large door had

gradually widened, making it that much more difficult to unlock the final door.

Id ovu movuz Pifwuzl juzu tuft, vu jmpit vfsu luzampliwi hmrlatuzut lpahatu. Urdmzoprfoiwi, vu vft ovu nullaqaloah hmrsahoamr ovfo ovulu hftratfoul juzu iacu vaq, lophc ar f zmmq mz ovuw jmpit vfsu bmarut vaq f imre oaqu fem.

With the exception of the Zhorions, he was the only one who had mastered the Red Soul Spell and owned Red Soul Stones in appropriate quantities. He was already regretting that he had relocked those doors behind him to prevent his enemies from profiting from his efforts behind his back.

The Red Soul Spells traps were too robust. He had destroyed only one with great effort and the Flintium inside had been all but consumed, the gem being only the size of a fingernail. It was unlikely that the other participants would have been able to open any Red Door.

Three days later, Fary Menodas, the human Enya seemed to know, passed away. His leg was finally healed and he made a radical decision he didn't think he had to make: Find Ruby or Bawopi.