

The Oracle Paths

Volume 3: The Oracle Cities

Chapter 343 - Last Struggle

Jake had no expectations in looking for them, since their Oracle Ranks surpassed his own, but if they wished to be found it was possible. If they were smart, they would have made it as close as they could to make it as easy as possible for him. Anyone still alive would have understood the true nature of this labyrinth long ago. It was the lack of Soul Stones that was the issue.

He wished to locate Ruby and Bawopi, but it turned out that the Nosk did not wish to be found. Luckily, his Shadow Guide gave him a direction when he tried to locate the young woman.

Once the target was pinpointed, Jake set off immediately. After almost two weeks of slow recovery, he needed to keep his mind busy. His Aetheric and physical stats had increased slightly after all the fighting and he was close to creating his Aether Core. He felt stronger than ever.

When he needed to feed himself, all he had to do was leave the hall between two room shifts and use the time to hunt one or two Thralls. During his convalescence, he had not lost a single gram, Quite the contrary!

He was mentally prepared to face armies of mutant Thralls on his way to meet Ruby, but the hike turned out to be much less than he had imagined. After crossing four deserted halls, he heard people screaming and the racket of detonations behind a locked door to his right. The Shadow Guide was pointing in that direction.

‘Cough, cough! Somebody help! Please open up!’ A man’s voice yelled in a hurried tone, pounding on the door frantically.

Jake was surprised that Ruby's voice had broken so much in such a short period of time, but he remembered that she still had a comrade. Craig was still alive today.

'Forget it, if we stay here any longer we're going to die... We have to move now!'

This time it was a woman's voice he recognized. It had lost its joyfulness, but the timbre was absolutely familiar to him. He hurriedly inserted a Flintium stone to save time and the door opened with a click.

Hu jfl fgmpo om npii ovu tmmz omjfstl vaq jvur ao lptturiw lifqqut mnur ar val dfhu. Tvu tmmz jfl crmhcut mdd aol vareul frt ojm vpqfrl, f dmzquziw hvpggw qfr frt f lcuiuofi jmQfr jaov imre jvaou vfaz diuj fhzml l ovu zmmQ, lQflvare fefarlo ovu lfQu tmmz guvart jvahv vu jfl loftare, jaov lpznZalut uknzullamrl fo ovu lmdorull md ovuaz dfii.

Indeed, with Jake's weight, he had only glided back one or two meters despite the heavy impact.

A split second later, two roars rang out as two colossal humanoid aliens, Bawopi and the Krish leader, erupted into the room, startled that the door had opened for no reason.

Upon discovering that Ruby and Craig had collapsed over the door, Bawopi's eyes emitted a sadistic glow and his dendrites, less plentiful and lengthy than originally, curled without a second thought to form a huge cannon. The Krish leader was not to be outdone, and with his only remaining arm he pointed his rifle at them to fire two successive bursts of plasma.

The two aliens definitely wanted them dead.

Ruby stood up with a jerk and waved her hands to slow down the projectiles with her telekinesis and a wall of ice, but her mental fluctuations were abnormally weak. The projectiles barely slowed down, and a mental assault

from Bawopi disrupted the young woman's technique and she reeled off with a bloody nose.

BAM!

Jake, who was below them, grabbed the armored door with both hands and threw it like a Frisbee out of fire reach. His exposed body bore the full impact of the explosion and his initially healed body was given a gaping hole in his lower abdomen. The wall behind him could be seen through it.

If he had not used Bloodline Ignition and removed the ultraviolet inhibition, he would probably have died, even with his increased resistance to heat and radiation. The Krish plasma was not too dangerous for him, but the energy shot discharged by Bawopi was of a very different nature.

The only advantage was that the wound had cauterized instantly and most of the heat from the shots had been successfully absorbed by his body. The hall had been largely destroyed by the blast of the explosion, but Jake was still standing there in one piece.

Rpgw frt Czfae juzu ar lvmhc om gu loaii fiasu. Tvuw juzu nzunfzut om plu ovuaz iflo ozpqn hfzt om lvauit ovuqluisul dzmq ovu giflo, gpo Jfcu vft tuhatut movuzjalu. Suuare ovu tuqmrah fnnufzfrhu md Jfcu, jvmlu dfhafi dufopzul juzu talomzout gw jzfov, ovu ojm vpqfrl juzu lnuuhviull.

'Hmmp! Do you want to die so badly? Let me grant your wishes.' Jake croaked as he gnashed his teeth to muffle his pain.

So much for his healed body! One second had wiped out his two weeks of recovery, but this time he still had both his legs and he was fully armed. He had every intention of giving free rein to his revenge.

In comparison, Bawopi and the Krish leader was like Ruby and Craig, a shadow of their former selves. Their appearances were emaciated, their skin covered with burns, scars, bruises, cuts and bites.

Since the Thralls had long since become invincible, only flight was still possible. Even Jake had given up the idea of hunting three days ago. Like them, he was fasting.

Bawopi had forsaken the notion of victory to exact his revenge and Ruby, Craig and Xiaoming had been relentlessly pursued by this psychopath, driven day after day into the dire situation in which they now found themselves.

By a stroke of bad luck, they had stumbled upon the two Krishs a few days earlier and had been forced to fight to the death against them, killing Arrogant Warrior in the process. Since then, when the Krish leader had discovered that they were carrying all those Blue Soul Stones, he took it upon himself to hunt them down, joining forces with Bawopi in the process.

Without the increasing growth in strength and numbers of the Thralls there to slow down the two aliens, they would have long since died.

‘Krish! ‘(It was an accident!) The Krish leader hastily blurted out in a vain attempt to placate him, but alas, his mandibles snapping was incomprehensible gibberish to Jake. All he witnessed was incomprehensible mumbo jumbo.

‘Go to hell, you ĆŃkroach! ‘Jake retorted by lunging at them with a supersonic blast in his wake.

Tvu Nmlc Quovmtahfiw iadout val turtzaoul om tudurt vaQluid frt arouzojarut ovuQ om dmzQ f hplvamrare ruo, jvaiu ovu Kzalv iuftuz iao val iaevolfguz ar tulnuzfoamr jvaiu ftmnoare f hfpoampl lofrhu.

Both aliens felt the gale raised by Jake’s swirling stroke before seeing his sword. It was a fiery wind, which alone verged on a thousand degrees. Bawopi’s dendrites basked in this energy, their inner light regaining some vigor, but the Krish leader ġrŃnèd in pain instead as he struggled to protect his eyes.

Their advantage, though, was that their Shadow Guide could predict Jake's movements and produce appropriate strategies and responses. Bawopi effortlessly avoided Jake's terribly fast attack and his dendrites wrapped themselves around his arm to restrain him from moving.

Upon discovering the heat resistance of Bawopi's dendrites, Jake did not give in and grabbed the dendrites wrapped around his arm with his free hand with the intention of planting his claws into them to absorb the heat and radiation. The Nosk reacted accordingly and released him before Jake could execute his plan.

The Krish leader standing beside had already turned off his lightsaber and fled in the opposite direction, his Shadow Guide having already determined that winning was probably impossible in a battle at such a short range. His massive figure faded away after passing through another door and just left them in peace.

Bawopi, on the other hand, was a Nosk through and through and was willing to fight to the death for his beliefs and honor. To use his Shadow Guide was tantamount to confessing weakness. The first Nosk that Jake had faced for example had not used his Bracelet or the outcome of the fight would have been very different.

Tragically, if Bawopi could stand up to Jake and even injure him repeatedly with careful control of his dendrites using his reflexes and his Shadow Guide, he had made a mistake by sticking around.

Centered on his fight with Jake, he had forgotten about Ruby and Craig, whom he thought was out of the picture. After catching their breath, Ruby and Craig joined the battle alongside Jake, their Shadow Guides however being able to predict Bawopi's movements.

In one-on-three and already fully occupied by Jake's vicious and devious attacks, the alien didn't last long and began to accumulate numerous wounds,

mainly caused by Ruby's ice and the Blue Soul Spell that Craig had cast on him.

Faced with a combination of cold exposure, visual and auditory hallucinations, and a craving for sleep, Bawopi was overwhelmed by the unstoppable Jake in an instant. A shimmering metallic reflection flashed and a huge head covered with long lightless dendrites rolled over the floor, his resentful expression remaining concealed by his thick metal helmet.

Jfcu, Rpgw frt Czfae lommt dmz imre luhmrtl vpddare frt npddare ifgmzampliw.

'Is it really over?' Craig murmured skeptically, his once chubby face now as emaciated as a terminal AIDS patient.

Ruby frowned but didn't dare answer. Neither the dendrites, the armor, nor the devices on Bawopi were showing the slightest reaction compared to the previous time. Jake was expecting the Nosk to explode, but seeing neither Ruby nor Craig running away, he assumed there was nothing to fear this time.

BOOOOM!