

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 352 - Drastic Changes

When Jake woke up the next day in his broken bed he felt completely refreshed. It was perhaps the first time since his arrival in the Mirror Universe that he had enjoyed such a good night's sleep.

Normally, he would meditate, stand guard or train in some way. The only occasions when he could be considered as sleeping was when he was seriously injured and forced to bury himself in the ground. This could hardly be considered relaxing sleep...

It was only after such a rest that he realized how much fatigue he had accumulated during all this time. His body was functioning as usual, but a huge burden seemed to have been lifted from his heart. He undoubtedly felt lighter, and not just figuratively!

With the chaotic end of his Second Ordeal and the choice of rewards, he hadn't really had time to consider his new Status, and the reconciliation with Sarah had made him forget his original plan.

Even before he checked his Status, the first thing he realized once he was rested was how light he was compared to the Sanctuary Bubble of the Second Ordeal. At first, he had unconsciously thought that the Ancient Designer had siphoned off most of his liquid alloy, but that wasn't the case.

The main reason was that since the Aether Density was only about 20 points, the gravity was also much lower than during the Ordeal.

For every Oracle Device Skill that the old Zhorion had given him, he had lost only one ton of liquid alloy, three tons in total. This was much less than he

feared at first, and it was also why he could be so generous with Sarah without showing the slightest reluctance.

The Ancient Designer probably wasn't lying when he said that he could have offered him much more than three Oracle Skills, but that he had to limit it to that number so as not to offend the Oracle.

In fact, the overall performance of his bracelet hadn't even faltered. On the contrary, it had even increased considerably. This could be explained by the rise in his Oracle Rank.

With each promotion, the Oracle would raise the energy levels of his bracelet by an unknown process. A kind of remote energy transfer that Jake was not able to understand at his current level.

[Advanced Grade]

[Weight: 27,857kg]

[Oracle Rank: Sergeant Major= 0/ 10T pts)]

[Oracle Features:]

[Status:]

[Guidance: Prediction+Coaching]

[Aether Storage: 446,657,832 Aether pts]

[Aether Vision:The Aether Grade as well as most types of Aether can be distinguished with the *nàkèd* eye.]

[Scan lv18 (318): Max range: 300km (12,5km| 300km)]

[Auto densification: Allows the bracelet to keep the same size regardless of its mass.]

[Passive Aether absorption from the atmosphere = Aether density*1120/day]
(In this world: 24693pts/day)]

[Combustion: If the bracelet lacks Aether, the liquid alloy can be used as a fuel, which could lead to a drop in the future performance of the Oracle Device.]

[Alloy Shielding/Coating: The alloy can be used to protect the body from enemy attack or to coat a weapon, but be aware that the Aether cost is high and not without risk.]

[AD Oracle Cloaking lvl1]: The owner of the Oracle Device can evade Evolvers' Oracle Paths with an Oracle Rank two ranks higher than his for a set period of time proportional to the Aether spent. Effect duration: 60min, Aether Cost: 20M Aether pts per activation.]

[AD Promotion lvl1]: The owner of the Oracle Device can temporarily get two ranks privileges above his current Oracle Rank. Duration of effect: 60min, Aether Cost: 100M Aether pts per activation]

[AD Oracle Space Storage lvl1]: The owner of the Oracle Device will be able to access a separate dimension to store his possessions. 1 cubic meter of space for every ton of liquid alloy that the bracelet contains.]

[Oracle Shield lvl1: An indestructible spherical force field enveloping the owner of the Oracle Device will be generated. Maximum range: 0m. Effect duration: 5 seconds. Aether Cost: 200M Aether pts per activation.]

[Oracle Heal lvl1: The owner of the Oracle Device will have his injuries, regardless of severity, treated instantly. Number of uses: 1 times per Ordeal. Outside Ordeals: the Aether Cost is 2000 times that of the Green Cube.]

[Pmzofgiu Ozfhiu Somzu isi1: Tvu mjruz md ovu Ozfhiu Dusahu hfr fhull ovu Ozfhiu Somzu dzmq frwjvuzu, arhiptare tpzare fr Oztufi, frt val npzhvflul jaii gu tuiasuzut arlofroiw. Hmjusuz, ovu nzahul md ovu emmtl ar

ovu Ozfhiu Somzu jaii gu 200 oaQul Qmzu uknurlasu. Ruefztiull md ovu aouQ npzhvflut, f Ivannare duu md 20M Auovuz nol jaii gu hvfzeit.]

The most noticeable changes in his bracelet, besides his many Oracle Skills, was the daily passive absorption of Aether from the atmosphere, which finally exceeded 20,000 pts per day. For the Jake of the past and most Civilians this was an unimaginable amount of Aether.

Even for the Third or Fourth Ordeal Players it was not a sum that could be earned so easily. His bracelet contained as much liquid alloy as in 50,000 Oracle Devices and this advantage was probably impossible to match by normal methods.

To be exact, an Oracle Rank 10 like him would only have a passive Aether production of around 102 points of Aether per day at the current Aether density. Compared to his, that was nothing at all. Especially since according to Xi his bracelet was not optimized to handle such a large amount of liquid alloy. The Oracle Rank promotion was also acting as a kind of system update.

His Oracle Status had also evolved greatly. All his battles in the maze had challenged him to stretch his limits, and that included the successful creation of his Aether Core. The resolution of the labyrinth as well as his first place finish had been extremely beneficial for his Aether Stats and Myrtharian Bloodline.

Yet, when he discovered his new Body Status, he was deeply shaken:

[AETHER STATUS:]

[Strength(S): 251.6 points] (231.6|251.6)

[Agility(A): 260.7 points](251.4|260.7)

[Constitution(C): 286 points] (246.7|286)

[Vitality(V): 284.4 points] (241.8|284.4)

[Intelligence(I): 269.9 points] (236|269.9)

[Perception(P): 244.3 points] (225|244.3)

[Extrasensory Perception(EP): 271 points] (227|271)

[Aether Core : 157 points] (1|157pts)

[BODY STATUS:]

[Physique: Silver Myrtharian Body lvl2]

[Height: 2.21 meters] (2.16| 2.21m)]

[Weight: 301kg(246|301)]

[Strength: 116 points (106|116)]

[Agility: 75 points] (68|75)]

[Constitution: 129.6 points] (121.9|129.6)]

[Vitality: 123.7 points] (117.3|123.7)]

[Intelligence: 57.4 points] (39.4|57.4)]

[Perception: 51.1 points] (33.2|51.1)]

[SOUL STATUS: Myrtharian Soul lvl 2(Heat,Earth, Radiation attributes), 4 Soul Glyphs: A Fish in Water, Apex Predator, Extreme Diver, Harbinger of Chaos.]

[Spirit Body lvl10 (Ghost): Its density is such that the Spirit Body begins to have tangible effects on the physical world and can temporarily separate itself from its carnal envelope. This is the minimum level that the soul of a deceased person must reach in order to qualify as a Ghost. Out-of-body journeys are now possible, but keeping in mind that in this form the soul is extremely vulnerable and the physical body abandoned in a state of clinical death.]

Apart from the impressive but expected progression of his stats, the most disconcerting thing was indeed the change of bloodline. From Myrtharian he had become a Silver Myrtharian. In terms of his body, it had advanced his mental stats by a great leap, but by consulting the Bloodline category of his Status, he discovered that nothing had changed.

With the exception of his Spirit Body which seemed to have taken a leap forward, his Bloodline Grade was still the same, as were his skills. However, there was one thing that was now substantially different after careful analysis and that was his cells and stomach.

The lump of liquid alloy lying in his stomach that he had been unable to digest despite his best efforts was gone! Unsurprisingly, he discovered that the Flintium, Orxanium and Naequat in his cells had been replaced by a new substance that neither his Status nor his scan was able to identify.

Thinking of something, he freaked out suddenly and hastily bought a mirror to embellish his new bathroom. After carefully inspecting himself from head to toe, he exhaled with relief, confirming that he hadn't lost his looks. Anyway, if he had changed that much, Sarah would surely have looked at him funny...

Jake paced back and forth in his room, stroking his chin, in an attempt to figure out the reason for such a change. Seeing that Xi had no idea, and cross-referencing his recent experiences, he effortlessly identified the reason: The greenish force field surrounding the Ancient Designer's prison.

Although he almost died inside, for an infinitesimal amount of time his bloodline had indeed been stimulated to such a level that he could barely fathom it. He had truly felt omnipotent at that moment. If there was a time when his body could digest this liquid alloy, it was this one.

It was also the reason why his Aether Core had evolved so quickly. From a tiny point of whitish light at the bottom of his belly, a clearly visible Aether accretion disc was circulating inside his body. This Aether radiance emitted

by his Aether Core was nourishing his body at every moment, bathing every cell of his being in a constant stream of Aether.

The first obvious advantage he discovered over before was that even with his ultraviolet radiation turned off, nothing happened. He remained himself, as calm as usual. Nonetheless, he was not so stupid as to believe that the liquid alloy in his cells had no impact...

This metal was so precious that it was the very source of the miraculous properties of Oracle Devices and many Oracle Skills required this resource when they were designed or activated. There was no way this liquid alloy was useless. Changing the name of his bloodline was the best proof.

In any case, Jake had no intention of exploring the limits of his new cells outside of an Ordeal. If he died here testing them, no one could bring him back to life, not even the Oracle... As long as everything was going well, he was happy for now.

Remembering that he had also received Xion Zolvhur's Soul Stone as a special reward, he immediately searched his new Space Storage for the relevant item. It was the only place where such a reward could be found anyway, since no object had been handed over to him when he stepped out of the Red Cube. The Oracle seemed to adapt perfectly to the circumstances.

Indeed, he found, as expected, a dark and cylindrical metal box whose only purpose seemed to be to isolate the Soul Stone contained inside. It took a while for Jake to become familiar with this storage space.

He had to immerse his consciousness inside and focus on what he wanted to transfer or remove. In order to transfer an object from the real world into this separate dimension, the object had to be in contact with his bracelet in some way or another. Because his body was filled to the brim with the liquid alloy making up his bracelet, this contact extended to his entire body.

A short while later, Jake was sitting cross-legged on his bed with the box in question placed in front of his eyes. It was a cylinder about twenty centimeters high and fifteen centimeters wide, and no grooves or lids indicated that the box could be opened. Even after inspecting it from every angle with his Spirit Body, he was still perplexed and helpless.

He was tempted to break the box by brute force, but his intuition was telling him it was a bad idea. He had experienced enough with these Soul Stones to know that exposure to radiation from such a stone would be incredibly dangerous.

The Ancient Designer might look friendly, but anyone could lie and hide sinister intentions, especially a billion-year-old Zhorion...

When he wondered what to do with the box, he remembered the comical appearance of the Aetherist Cekt Mogusar. He had actually created his first Aether Core and finished reading his manuals. Therefore, he had met the alien's requirements to properly begin his training.

It was the perfect opportunity to pay him a visit and ask him a few questions.