

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 370 - Let There Be Light And There Was Light

In addition to the endless round trips to pick up whatever he could near the nearest Oracle Shelter, Jake had also tried to meet and contact Cekt Mogusar several times to no avail.

The little alien was as elusive as he was untraceable and apparently Jake was far from being the only one looking for him. Many Evolvers, organizations and nations were actively searching for him. If the Aetherist had not developed well-honed strategies for hiding, he would have been untimely disturbed with no moment to himself.

Jake may have been his or one of his most recent disciples, but he had been given no means of contacting Cekt other than by the conventional means and he quickly gave up. If the alien wanted to see him he would let fate and luck do their work.

This was problematic, as he had very specific questions to ask for his terraforming plan and the Aether Cores setup, but that didn't mean that he was unable to do it on his own.

In and of itself, it simply meant that he had to go back to his original plan, which was to rely on no one but himself. No big deal.

What really bothered him was that neither Sarah nor the two sisters had tried to contact him after he had saved their lives. They had apparently moved to Will's island and were helping him set up his business. From the top of his island, he could see them talking and laughing together and he felt quite angry inside because of that.

"Tssst! Don't come and complain later..." Jake raved in a low voice before he lost interest in them, realizing that everything was fine on their side.

Xi giggled softly, but she was careful not to raise a single remark to him. Because of their bond, she knew he was on edge right now.

At least Will remained a reasonable and reliable person. In addition to selling the Digestors' carcasses, he had traded them for a number of New Earth's exclusive products, including food, generators, and most importantly, the raw materials to build a home to modern standards.

Thanks to this, they had also acquired very welcome radio transmitters that allowed them to communicate despite the distance between their islands without needlessly wasting their Aether.

In addition to selling the corpses and bringing back this valuable equipment, Will had also created his sub-faction Myrtharian Scavengers, which was immediately affiliated under the main Myrtharian Nerds faction.

The most frustrating part of all this was that the sub-faction had a nobler and more dignified name than the main faction... No wonder Will had been so quick to create it!

Before implementing his long-term plan, Jake modified the atmosphere settings of his island, including the range of the protective shield, and the ambient temperature. While having fun configuring his island, he made no secret of his admiration for the technological ingenuity behind the floating metal disk.

The good news was that he could effectively reorganize and compartmentalize his territory as he wished with the shield. Even gravity could be altered from one area to another.

The more complex the specifications required, the more expensive the daily Aether fee to pay, but that was an expected consequence. After multiple tests, Jake finally found an ideal compromise.

A spherical shield enveloped his Floating Island for overall protection, but the center of the island had been isolated by another force field delimiting a circular area 20m in diameter. Inside, Jake had increased the gravity by a factor of 3, almost six times that of the Earth and raised the ambient temperature to 1000°C.

Fmz ezfsaow, oval jfl artuut val iaqao. Waov ovu iaypat fiimw mr vaq, val gmtw juaevut qmzu ovfr 27 omrl frt fo ovu oaqu vu jfl nzfhoahfiw hzplvut difo om ovu ezmprt gudmzu gâzèiw zulaloare jaov fii val lozureov.

As for temperature, he could definitely go higher, but at 1000°C and three times normal gravity, his body was already glowing red like an iron ingot inside a forge and the burning air tickled his bronchial tubes with each breath. As long as he was not comfortable with the current setting, he would not change anything.

Jake sat cross-legged in the middle of this unbearable area and waited patiently for the heat to take effect. The heated air became turbulent and rose in swirls while the pile of dirt under his feet began to glow and sometimes melt in places depending on the type of minerals.

Soon his seated body began to sink into the lava like quicksand until his body was almost completely submerged except for his neck and head.

Jake closed his eyes and calmly appreciated how the immense heat and contact with the molten rock stimulated his Myrtharian Bloodline. Every passing second nourished his body, making it stronger and revitalizing its energy. Even with this overwhelming gravity, he was not tiring.

"All right, time to start. Jake exclaimed with a look bubbling with ambition.

With a thought he opened the Oracle System interface and opened his Aether manual in chapter three. Here a large number of Aether Runes were listed, as well as some basic spells.

These elementary Aether Spells were not common spells like the Fireball spell, which was actually rather complex, but elementary in the sense that they gave rise to the fundamental forces of physics as well as certain directly observable phenomena.

The Aether was not really energy and even less matter, but it preceded them. Even in contemporary physics, no scientist could really explain when and why exactly energy became matter and vice versa.

There were equivalence formulas such as the famous $e=mc^2$, but this was just based on empirical observation. The miracle of this conversion and the exact link between matter and energy was a mystery that still eluded all of us.

The first Aether Spell he was interested in was simply named "Light". The objective was to generate energy from the surrounding Aether, which itself would give rise to electromagnetic radiation.

This was a power that he already possessed, but which he sadly had to maintain with his full concentration. He could not simply create a stable autonomous light in his absence.

If he managed to create the corresponding Aether Symbol by perfectly linking the required Aether Runes, he would be able to produce a continuous light on his island. By making this Aether Symbol more complex, he would also be able to play with the temperature and the type of radiation emitted.

In addition to facilitating his training and allowing him to save his Aether, it would then become possible for him to produce clean electricity by installing solar panels.

It was unfortunate that Sarah and the two sisters stayed with Will, as they would have greatly benefited from a similar environment adapted to their level, but they had made their choice.

"It's not going to be as easy as you think." Xi's hologram reminded him for the sixth time in two days.

"Don't worry about it. During my Aether Core creation, I developed a great deal of patience." Jake promised as he stretched his hands out in front of him, palms facing each other, slightly apart as if he was holding an imaginary ball.

Checking the Runes sequence, he took a deep breath and started. In any case, with the lava around him he was not in danger of running out of energy. His body would even continue to strengthen over time.

With the experience gained from the Red Soul Spell, he first created each Rune individually, trying to understand their role and the reason for their existence. By shaping the Aether in a certain way, microscopic effects would occur, but individually it was negligible. Only an intelligible combination gave rise to physically observable effects.

The first step of each Aether Spell was the same as the creation of an Aether Core: The Point Rune. By violently compressing the Aether to form a singularity in space, the Aether became so dense for an infinitesimal amount of time that it could give birth to a clean energy capable of interacting with our world.

Ir ozpov, fl jaov ovu hmrsuzlamr guojuur uruzew frt qfoouz, rm Auovuzalo zufiiw prtuzlommt ovu iarc guojuur Auovuz frt Eruzew. Tvfo iarc ukalout, fl ozpu fl $1+1=2$, frt ovfo jfl fii ovfo qfoouzut.

Unlike the Aether Core, this Point Rune did not need to be maintained over time and the Aether density inside did not need to be as high. Nevertheless, Jake was still sweating profusely and without his previous training he would never have been able to accomplish this task so easily.

His Aether Core also produced this clean energy, but it was used to nourish his body and bloodline and in battle time to fuel his Aether Skills.

After about 30 minutes, Jake opened his eyes and briefly stretched his arms.

"I did it."

He had now mastered this Point Rune perfectly. It was still weak and the compression insufficient to create a stable flow of energy. It was the rune at the base of everything and he was now able to invoke it at will.

All the other Aether Runes were created by another method that Jake had already learned to experiment with when making the Red Soul Spell. The force that compelled the Aether to behave in a certain way came from the mind and creating an Aether Rune was not complicated at all.

The process was long and meticulous, but after another hour and the creation of an Aether Symbol consisting of 7387 Runes, Jake managed to create a ball of white light in his hands. The faint glow flashed for a few seconds before disappearing, but it was a success.

"Now all that's left to do is to create a stable light source." Jake exclaimed optimistically.

"I hope you'll have that same confidence in a few minutes." Xi joked, her hologram floating upside down in front of him like a bat hanging from a tree. She was bored to death.

Jake frowned, but didn't contradict her. Creating a stable Aether Spell was much more complex.

Without the spiritual strength of the Spirit Body to maintain the Aether Runes' shape, it would quickly dissipate. That's what made the Aether Cores so important. It was not possible to make the other Aether Runes stable by having them store Aether.

Unlike the Aether Core, their purpose was not to accumulate or produce Aether, but to circulate it in a certain pattern. A Rune was more like a spiritual pipe through which the Aether flowed.

The stable Aether Code of Bloodlines, Aether Spells and Skills were woven from a fabric similar to the Spirit Body and the Soul which was ultimately also Aether. Except that it touched on an area that only the greatest Aetherists could explore.

This did not mean that the Aether Code in these cells existed because of someone else's intent, but the Aetherists were calling it the Will. An Aetherist expert could definitely identify the creator of an Aether Core or Bloodline from this Will.

Fortunately, a functional Soul was enough to create stable Runes. However, each Aether Rune had to be formed and stabilized within the Spirit Body before being slowly extracted with a fraction of it.

In order to avoid accidents and to end up senile it was imperative to dissociate this portion of the Spirit Body from his true consciousness while allowing it to retain a purpose.

The Will Fragment that his brain housed was a more elaborate version where Xion Zolvhur had duplicated part of his own consciousness inside to allow it to operate in a more complex way. Jake was for the moment far from being capable of such a feat.

After a full day of trying to separate his consciousness from the Spirit Body enveloping the Aether Runes he had created, Jake finally mastered the trick. He was proud of his achievement, and Xi did not fail to congratulate him.

Over the next week Jake created all the Runes needed to create his Light Spell, but the Symbol was still incomplete. The location of the Point Rune was vacant and an Aether Core would soon occupy this place.

Budmzu foofhcare ovu hzufoamr md val luhmrt Auovuz Cmzu, jvahn nfzftmkahfiw dzaevourut vaq qphv iull, vu omme f gzufc frt fou hmnampliw dzmq ovu dmmt Waii vft gzmpevo frt juro om jmzc.

Three weeks later, the Light Spell came to life and there was light. His Floating Island finally had its own sun.