

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 385 - Intimidation

The command room was shaped like an 8 with one loop much narrower than the other. The smaller section served both as a monitoring and control room. It was filled with screens relaying live video from the cameras, but also many key parameters of the Titan Pearl such as the oxygen level or the internal temperature of the ship.

From this room, the automated doors could be locked or unlocked remotely and damaged portions of the ship could be sealed with a single click. All decisions concerning the Titan Pearl and its passengers were made here.

The second section, paradoxically larger, was an outrageously spacious cockpit. The enormous armored glass surrounding this cockpit gave a direct view of the space and accentuated this impression of immensity.

The solid or holographic control panels present were simply used to pilot the Titan Pearl. The rare screens relayed information coming from outside and it was also here that the intergalactic communications were carried out.

These two rooms could have appeared normal at first glance, except that a subtle detail had occurred which transformed the surroundings: a pirate shuttle had directly crashed in the armoured glass of the cockpit.

The catastrophic consequences of this incident were without surprises. Although the pirate landing had been perfectly controlled and had not led to a depressurization of the cockpit, it had devastated the command room to an unimaginable extent.

The prow of the shuttle had penetrated almost as far as the 8's second loop where the surveillance screens were located and had destroyed everything in its path like an unstoppable battering ram. The soldiers present sufficiently sensitive had just enough time to dive to the side or to fall back, but for all the others it had signed their death warrant.

All the furniture and officers still present in the cockpit had been reduced to mush and their corpses had flown all the way to the far end of the room to crash miserably on the opposite walls, forming a firework of blood and guts.

Just after a screeching sound, an opening had appeared in the unwelcome shuttle and a tide of pirates had poured out of it. Those survivors who had barely recovered from their shock were immediately submerged and most of them were butchered in a matter of seconds.

However, it was not the command room for nothing. General Shanmin and her senior officers were also in the surveillance room at the time of the invasion and each of them were formidable warriors. With few exceptions, they had all survived.

Id Jfcu frt val ezmpn hmpit ukouzqarfou f lvpooiu md ouzzadaut nazfoul jaovmpo ovu liaevoulo uddmzo, ovuzu jfl rm tmpgo ovfo ovu vfzturut suouzfrl md ovu Taofr Pufzi juzu film hfnfgiu md ao. Tvulu nazfoul vft guur janut mpo ar qarpoul frt hmpit mriw gifqu ovuaz gft iphc.

Avy Shanmin, in particular, who was already in a dark mood, had used these cannon fodder as an outlet and single-handedly eliminated 3/4 of the pirates. Jake and his group arrived just in time to witness the beheading of the last pirate.

As dramatic and bloody as the scene was, it wasn't enough for Jake and the others to call it apocalyptic. Even if there had been ten times as many bodies, it wouldn't have made them flinch more than that.

So why were they all so shocked with such gloomy expressions? In three words: Incoming pirate mothership.

Through the still intact piece of armored glass, an even more massive star cruiser than the Titan Pearl was eerily approaching them, as silent as a ghost. The hull of the pirate ship had been painted a blood-red color to look like some kind of monster with its jaws wide open.

In that wide-open jaw was a long cannon and a blinding light was rapidly accumulating at the end of this tube. The pirate ship could fire at any moment.

Upon hearing Jake and the others arrive, Avy Shanmin, whose teeth could be heard rattling in fury, turned to them with a ferocious beastly look.

Perhaps because of her sense of powerlessness or fury, she immediately viewed them as enemies.

"DIE! "

The young woman dashed towards them at such a speed that for the weaker ones it felt almost like teleportation. The black metal tube in her hand suddenly extended to form a huge saber of the same color and she brought it down on them.

A vfim md ezfwalv iaevo ursuimnut ovu giftu frt fr piozflmrah vpq dmiimjut fimre jaov usuzw qmsuquro md ovu jufnmr. Io jfl hiufziw f qpztuzmpl frt laralouz jufnmr. Esuzwovare ovfo jmpit gu hpo gw oval qmrlozmlaow jmpit tau ar fr arlofro.

And of all the people it could have chosen to attack, it had to be Jake her first target.

"Fuck, seriously?! "Jake cursed her inwardly as he hastily raised his own machete to parry.

CLANG!

The ground under his feet caved in on impact and a gust of wind swept what was left of the room. As for Avy Shanmin, she remained suspended in the air with a shocked expression, her weapon clashing against Jake's.

"You're not a pirat-" she suddenly realized in disbelief.

BAM!

The young woman's body folded in half as she took a monstrous kick. A distinct shock wave resounded this time and the Titan Pearl's general took off like a rocket towards new skies. Jake had kicked her hard enough to send her into orbit.

Except that there was a metal ceiling in her path, followed by the thick shielding of the ship. A light crater formed in the ceiling and her body fell pitifully, like a failed pancake peeling off from the wrong place.

Seeing the frail body of the young woman fall back to the ground, then remaining curled up and cramped like a shrimp suffering from a vicious gastro, even Jake felt bad somewhat. But he swept away his guilt with a thought. She had it coming. What a shitty idea to mistake him for a pirate!

Tvu qmlo fqplare zufhoamr jfl dzmq vuz mddahuzl fit ulnuhafiiw dzmq ovu gufztut qfr jvm vft jfzrut vuz ufziauz fgmpo vuz guvfsamz. Wvm jmpit vfsu ovmpervo ovfo cfzqf jmpit lozacu lm ypahciw ?

A heavy silence settled in the room where the survivors of both groups continued to observe each other, barely daring to breathe. Still, there were exceptions.

Seeing the young woman gradually regain her composure, he saw her trembling fingers flailing in search of the metal tube, again extinguished, acting as her weapon. Jake didn't let her do so. With a wave, the tube floated to his hand and he cracked a smile.

"It's mine now. In memory of our meeting." He said shamelessly.

Avy, who was still having trouble breathing and was still wincing in pain, turned reddish-violet hearing his excuse and almost fainted in anger. It was the first time she had ever suffered such a setback.

With trembling arms, she took a deep breath and grabbed a second tube from her belt, longer but also thinner. She then pointed it at him like a wand and a dark, heavy energy quickly built up at its end. A bit like the cannon of the pirate ship holding the Titan Pearl at gunpoint.

She kept her "wand" pointed at him, her arm trembling and her teeth clenched in frustration, but she didn't dare to fire.

"Who are you?" She asked curtly, hoping to restore her image in front of her officers.

Sadly, it was a complete failure. After saying these three words, her eyes rolled back briefly and she almost knocked herself to the ground. If the bearded officer hadn't caught her in time, she would have definitely hurt herself.

Amused and certainly not feeling any guilt, Jake shrugged while keeping his smile. Alas, the pirate ship cannon, still charging in his field of vision, reminded him of the gravity of the situation.

"We are passengers on the Titan Pearl." He explained in earnest this time. "We noticed that communications had been cut off, so we went here to try to get more information. In the meantime, the Titan Pearl was boarded by these pirates and we killed our way here, rescuing a few soldiers along the way.

As proof, he showed his identity papers and the six soldiers accompanying their group. Recognizing some of these faces, the general of the Titan Pearl had to face the facts.

"Oh! So it was all a misunderstanding! Hehe." Avy Shanmin could be shameless too. She gave the other officers a glare so that they would laugh with her, and soon nervous laughter erupted in the room, though it didn't really ease the awkward tension.

Once the introductions were made, Avy accepted her fate. She despised the weak and worshipped the strong. After Jake's performance, she was still angry with him, but she was also extremely admiring.

Just as Jake was about to ask if they had heard anything about the rest of the ship, the previously non-functional Titan Pearl's communications suddenly sizzled and an elderly voice echoed throughout the ship. Even passengers who knew nothing in their cabins were startled when they heard this ominous voice.

"This is Emiwan Gimak, more eerily known as the Captain of the Red Eels. My ship is currently pointing a Dark Matter cannon at the Titan Pearl. Some deserters have fled from my crew and have taken illegal refuge on your ship. We would like to recover them to grant them the punishment they deserve...

"That's why I'm requesting clearance to land. We will leave as soon as justice is done. In case of refusal, in order to guarantee that none of these criminals commit the slightest evil, we will be forced to use more radical means...

"I'll give you an hour to think it over."