

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 4: The Purgatory

### Chapter 405 – Prescience

‘Open up! Plea-‘

The armored door turned white-hot, then liquefied within a split second and because of the lack of resistance, the man on the other side lost his balance as he swung his axe down. He toppled over, squealing as the molten metal engulfed him whole.

From a distance, it looked as if a running man had collided with a white sheet hanging on a drying line. The reality was far more painful.

With a snap of his finger, Jake rescued him from the molten metal before the consequences became irreversible, reforming a white-hot sphere over his open palm. The man shook his blistered head in all directions with a bewildered look, then tried to formulate something to no avail.

Jake didn't have much time to pay attention to him anyway because that was the moment the ceiling chose to collapse on them. Throwing the molten metal sphere into a corner, he raised his arms up urgently to restrain the entire ceiling with his telekinesis.

‘Hurry up! ‘He growled as he gritted his teeth with bulging arms.

The group was quick to react. Kevin rushed towards the breach with long strides while morphing into a Werebear. His stride turned into a

trot, then a dash in the blink of an eye, opening the way for the others as expected of a tank like him. A wise decision.

The ceiling of the hallway outside crumbled in turn, this time with no one to hold it up. The survivors' screams outside rang out again, as did the bursts of gunfire.

Dozens of hybrid-looking four-legged creatures pounced on them, each too cramped to move properly through the drains. Kevin charged at the nearest monster straight away, punching it in the face before it could land on its feet.

Vincent entered the hallway at that moment, grabbing a high-powered assault rifle to deal with the monster horde. Heat and energy weapons were useless, so they had long since prepared the necessary countermeasure.

'Everybody down!' He yelled in warning.

Kevin let out a guttural growl, but didn't dare disobey. He kicked the monster trying to tear its neck off, then retreated. As for the other survivors, they did what they could to get out of the way, but some of them were fated to fail with the mobs already on them.

The gun was huge, looking more like a heavy machine gun, than a simple submachine gun. The barrel of the weapon was actually wide enough to fit a tennis ball.

According to Will, it was a firearm designed to pierce the thick scales and hide of dinosaurs. A precaution he had deemed essential after experiencing the dangers of their Second Ordeal.

Upon discovering the creature's flood, his cousin's pointed ears twitched briefly, an excited smile disfiguring his face. Then he

opened fire unswervingly. A deafening din filled the hallway, as huge spent cartridges bounced off the floor behind him.

Tvu gpiiuol, jvahnv juzu lpinmlut om gu nmjuzdpi urmpev om npo f vmiu ar f T-Ruk'l lcpii, iudo mriw qmtuzfoui w tuun arturofoamrl ar ovu gmtaul md ovmlu nfzflaoul, gpo ao jfl urmpev. Tvu aqnfho crmhcut ovuq ar ovu mnnmlaou tazuhouamr frt tulnaou ovuaz ukozuqu zulaiaurhu, ovu qmrlouzl zuqfarut loprrut, prfgiu om euo pn dmz f oaqu.

After a few more rounds, he had cleared the way, the tip of his gun still smoldering red and steaming.

‘Nothing to be afraid of. ‘ Vincent laughed as he blew on his gun’s muzzle.

‘If you’re not scared, you can stay here and die. ‘ Jake barked from across the room as he heard the ceiling creak above him.

Remembering the urgency of the situation, Vincent stepped aside from the doorway and motioned to the others that the way was clear. The two sisters, followed by the two children, Will, Kyle and Daniel took turns exiting, leaving Jake alone inside.

‘I feel useless. ‘ Enya sighed as she looked at the shotgun she barely knew how to use in her hands.

‘Don’t complain. ‘ Will whined in turn. ‘At least your flames are effective against the other Players and natives of this world. In comparison, I’m just cannon fodder.

Refuting his words, the 2m tall baby dragon nudged his head affectionately, earning Enya and Esya’s rolling eye.

The survivors in the hallway rose to their feet, hardly daring to believe they were still alive. Three of them wore the Titan Pearl

military uniform, while the two women wore a different, more eccentric outfit. Players.

The man, who had tried to break down the door, and that Jake had nearly charred, wore a long dark tube on his belt, identifying him as an actual Fluid Wielder. Though, his level was probably not high.

Tvu lhuru vft iudo vaq tuuniw lvmhcut frt vu jfl tpqgiw efxare fo ovu huaiare, prfgiu om prtuzlofrt jvw ao vftr'o hmiifnlut wuo.

‘What are you waiting for? Want to die for real this time?’ Jake gave him a dismissive look.

Coming to his senses, the warrior picked up his heavy axe, the same color as the tube on his belt, and joined the others outside the room.

‘Jake, the second wave is coming!’ Kevin urged him as he squinted down the long hallway.

The rattling could be heard again and the ceiling was buckling a few hundred meters away from them, the Things inside the pipes converging on them at breakneck speed.

‘Got it.’

He walked backwards to the passageway with one hand aimed at the ceiling, then redirected the puddle of molten metal with his free hand to its original place. A rough weld replaced the original door for the second time in a row, except this time he tried to absorb the contained heat to speed up its cooling.

It was a tricky operation and he was sweating profusely by the time he released his mind control. But in the end it was just a matter of seconds. Turning off his telekinesis, he heard the ceiling collapse with a heavy screech on the other side, although he hoped the door would hold long enough for them to escape.

‘Time to go.’

‘But where?!’ Kyle almost yelled as he heard the heavy tapping coming from the pipes a few feet behind him.

‘Erwf frt Elwf, vuin qu. Tvu zulo md wmp hmsuz pl. ‘Jfcu mztuzut vfloaiw.

He activated his Bloodline Ignition at full power, and the lava vein network reappeared, a huge blast of heat surging out of him.

‘Pour your flames on me,’ he said.

The two sisters exchanged a dumb look, but they complied without question. Pointing their palms at Jake, red flames shot out of their hands and fused with him. The sheen of his lava veins intensified as he activated his Warrior Trance Skill as well. His abilities doubled again as his silvery golden eyes and hair also started to gleam.

Overflowing with energy, he raised his hands in front of him and connected his mind to his bracelet. Ten cubic meters of a dark dust suddenly popped up inside the corridor, triggering the shell-shocked screams of the survivors.

It was his personal stockpile of rocks, and ores, specifically meant to ensure that he remained at full power under all circumstances. Nearly half of his Space Storage was literally filled with ‘dirt’. He had prepared a few ‘tricks’ like this before the Ordeal.

Unlike telekinesis, which allowed him to manipulate anything with strict adherence to physics, his Earth Control was far more omnipotent, allowing him to distort and manipulate this element at will.

In the short second it took the monsters to close the distance between them, the pile of dust grew into a half-meter thick wall. The wall was

wide enough to block the corridor and with a push from Jake, it even pierced the ceiling, continuing to expand until it severed and clogged the pipe the creatures were moving through.

BAM! BAM!

Crashing noises in front of them shook the wall, but the earthen structure held strong. Yet, it was just a pile of heated and dried minerals, not diamond or some miraculous piece of steel. Cracks soon appeared in the wall.

‘Rpr. ‘Jfcu wuiiut jaov f ojareu md zuezuo fl vu ovmpevo md val lypfrtuzut lpnniw md tazo.

This time he didn’t close the walk and shot off like a missile in the only available direction down the hallway, vanishing like a torch out of fuel into the darkness. He was not giving up on his friends, but looking for a way out.

He had to anticipate the arrival of those fiends and find a safe place. In order to do that, he had to be proactive.

These creatures seemed to have limited intelligence and anarchic behavior, but that was only because none of the controllers mentioned by Emiwan were present. If that were the case, he was sure that deceiving them would not have been so easy.

No sooner had he spared the group of survivors than a new notification had informed him of a new mission, forcing him to rethink his plans.

[Side Mission n° 5: Try to keep the people under your protection alive as long as possible.]

[List of people under your protection:]

[-1) Kevin Wilderth, Oracle Rank 7]

[-2) Will Hopkins, Oracle Rank 8]

[...]

Jfcu fizuftw cruj, fl f dfhoamr iuftuz frt gw sazopu md val vaev Ozfhiu Rfrc, ovfo vu jfl zulnmlragiu dmz val ezmpn' l lpzasafi. Bpo urlpzare movuz Pifwuzl frt rfoasul' lfdouow? Tvfo jfl f dazlo.

Not surprisingly, he found a few unknown names at the bottom of the list belonging to the other survivors. The natives' names were of no concern to him, but he memorized the name of the two female Players, who turned out to be Rank 4, or Corporal.

Not expecting any miracles from Players of that level, he immediately lost interest.

A minute later, far ahead of his comrades, he reached an intersection. He deployed his Spirit Body and quickly scanned the area for an indication. The outcome came out loud and clear.

The fork in the path to the right was teeming with monsters of all kinds, while the other path was sparsely populated. And yet, he got a very bad vibe from peering into the depths of the other empty lane.

It was a hunch coming deep from his gut, almost bordering on certainty.

'Is it the Fluid Prescience they were talking about? Or is it a trap?'

He hesitated for a few more seconds, then took a step in the direction of the empty hallway before relenting, biting his lip.

'Fuck this!'

Not finding the courage, Jake turned back.

A duj luhmrtl fdouz vu iudo, f vpqfrmat daepzu hmsuzut ar f suai md  
tfzc uruzew uquzeut dzmq ovu tfzcrull. Hal gmtw fnnufzut om gu  
vfid-quzeut jaov ovu tfzcrull, zurtuzare val ozpu fnnufzfrhu  
taddahpio om talhuzr. Squiare ovu faz, ao hvphciut.

‘Interesting. ‘