

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 4: The Purgatory

### Chapter 410 - Elevator Ride

With the horde of monsters having deserted the floor, Jake and his group were granted a rare moment of peace and quiet. The creatures hadn't fled completely, however. The echo of their shrieks and cackles still carried muffledly through the walls and vents, reminding them grimly that they were not yet out of the woods.

'What was this technique?' Enya asked, remembering hearing a similar howl during her Second Ordeal. She had attributed it to another Player, but now realized it was probably Jake.

'A Soul Glyph combined with a sound and mental attack.' Jake replied matter-of-factly. 'The attack isn't perfected yet.'

The other members of the group gasped. If this overpowered technique wasn't finalized yet, what would the final version look like? They felt a deep sense of urgency as they imagined such a scenario. If they didn't make faster progress, Jake would soon leave them in the dust.

'Hmmp, I can bust their eardrums with a good roar too.' Kevin grunted competitively, flexing his long fangs.

'Yeah, yeah, we believe you.' Kyle sneered while patting his huge back. Somehow, it looked like he was petting a dog to comfort him and that was exactly how Kevin interpreted his false compassion.

‘Want to die?!’ The Werebear deflected off the ex Playboy’s wrist and with his free hand grabbed him by the throat, hoisting him about a meter above the ground.

Kyle didn’t even try to resist, but kept his smirk, apparently determined to taunt him to the end.

Jake felt something was off with the two of them, but he pushed the thought away: The Hunters seemed to have overcome their fear and were already turning back.

‘Kevin, put it down. Kyle stop doing that. This isn’t the time for bickering.’ He reminded them, pointing to the monsters that had just reappeared at the end of the hallway.

Seeming to realize his stupidity, Kevin loosened his grip around the intruder’s neck. After putting Kyle down, he snorted and decisively ignored him. Instead, he concentrated on the luscious curves of the two sisters in front of him, hardly making the slightest effort at discretion.

Fortunately, the two sisters were focused on the approaching monsters and did not take offense.

‘Let’s hurry.’ Will urged them with an anxious tone.

The group then ran to the elevator, and luckily it was still functional. Jake flipped the switch so the door would open, but it was apparently on a different floor. The good news at least was that there was no code or security measures required to use it.

Surprisingly, as soon as they pressed the switch, the horde began its counterattack. Charging at full gallop, the herd of Hunters descended upon them from both directions of the corridor.

‘ Brace yourselves for impact. ‘ Daniel yelled as he stepped forward between the children and the monsters.

Tim clutched tightly the trigger of his submachine gun, while Lily pulled a dagger with a delicately silver handle with a determined look on her face.

As the monsters entered his range, Jake energized his Apex Predator Glyph again, but without combining his Spirit Body with a sound attack, the result proved disappointing.

The closest Hunters slowed briefly, yelping defiantly, before being trampled by their fellows behind them. After a few casualties, the monsters overcame their apprehension through the crowd effect and charged again, unstoppable.

‘ I can use the War Cry a second time, but it’s extremely taxing for my mind. I feel sleepy after that attack and my throat is on fire despite the precautions taken with the Aether of Constitution and Vitality.’

Physical mental fatigue and spiritual fatigue were two different things. His brain could recover as quickly as his muscles as long as he didn’t damage it irreversibly, but resting his Spirit Body and Soul was more complicated.

Since his Spirit Body had reached Ghost Rank 11, Jake could feel an intangible mental force within him that was difficult to fathom.

Sometimes he felt like he was reaching out to it, and in those moments he felt exceptionally empowered, able to change the world with sheer willpower. It wasn’t just a matter of resting and feeling good. It was a much more ethereal feeling.

Though, the times when he felt this strange sensation best was when it was missing, as it was right now. He felt mentally numb, with an

urge to do nothing and give up. He had already experienced this lethargic depression during his Second Ordeal, and he knew the risks of pushing his mind too far.

In the end, Jake gave up on using this hybrid technique a second time. They just had to hold on long enough until the elevator opened.

A few seconds later, the monsters swooped down on them. Will's dragon leapt into the fray for his master, Kevin sprang at a group of enraged monsters, while Vincent danced a deadly ballet amongst the creatures, slicing tendons and ligaments with his rapier.

Enya and Esya's fire magic was ineffective against these Hunters, yet they had no intention of letting the others sacrifice themselves in their stead. Like Daniel and Tim, they opened fire with the assault rifles they barely knew how to use.

Kyle was a bit of an exception. With his Myrmidian bloodline and sword, hand-to-hand combat was his specialty, but his poor performance during the previous Ordeal made him barely more useful than Arryn and Siraye.

Still, he had his Golden Sight skill and with it he could accurately read his enemies' movements, and gain a clear picture of their weakness. The slightly slowed down perception of time that this skill granted him allowed him to take the risk of fighting in the front line.

Duouzqarut rmo om gu f gpztur om ovu oufq, vu ezaout val ouuov frt lpqqmrut val hmpzfeu. Hu ljadoiw nahcut f qmrlouz ovfo Varhuro vft jmprtut frt hiufsut ao tmjr.

Already enraged by the severed hock of its back leg, the attacked Hunter let out a shrill howl as it raised its arms to protect itself. Kyle visualized the monster being sliced in half by his blade, but instead he immediately felt resistance as soon as his sword touched the bone.

Regardless, he was prepared for it and with Jake's Sharpening Aether added to his blade and the focus of his Strength Aether, he managed to slice through its arm.

‘Shrrri!’

Kyle narrowly sidestepped to escape a retaliatory claw strike that would have decapitated him, then with his sword raised, slashed down with all his weight. This time he was prepared and the creature's severed head rolled to the ground releasing a spray of yellowish blood.

‘Fuck yeah!’

He could do it! Then he turned his head and saw the pile of corpses several meters high in front of Jake, and the others and his face fell. Even the two sisters had taken out more monsters than he had with their machine guns.

But that was the way to go. Myrmidians needed tough fights and pushing themselves to their upmost limits to improve further. He had just taken the first step. The first step before many others.

In a completely different style, Tim proved to be a much more formidable shooter than one would expect from a child his age. Although he held his gun in an amateurish manner, his bullets took strange trajectory curves, all of them, without exception, finding their way into the vulnerable orifices of their chosen targets.

Whether it was an eye, ear canal, nostril, or anus, his bullets always found their way to the narrowest of destinations. The tortured screams of his many victims were proof of this.

Wvur val epr zfr mpo md gpiiuol, vu tzuj val ozplow fku frt lounnut ar om àllalo Dfraui ar nzmouhoare Laiw. Waov val Lphc fo jmzc, vu

opzrut mpo om gu hmqnfzfgiu om Kwiu ar vfirt-om-vfirt hmqqfo, tulnaou val dzfai nvwlaypu. Oru mr mru jfl rm nzmgiuq dmz vaq fefarlo f rmzqfi qmrlouz.

The battle seemingly reached a standstill for a brief moment that gave them renewed confidence. The only thing they didn't realize was that Jake and Kevin alone were holding one side of the corridor. The side where the black-eyed Hunters were.

If Tim or Kyle had tried to take on one of them, the outcome of the match would have been much more uncertain.

At last, after an intense battle that lasted no more than thirty seconds, a bell rang behind them and the long awaited elevator opened its doors.

'Will, escort the kids inside. Vincent, Kevin and I will cover you.

'Jake shouted as he generated a mini telekinetic blast to shake off the six monsters trying to bite through his armor.

' Roger. Come on kids. '

Lily met Tim's eyes and the latter smiled, saying as he offered his arm,

' Ladies first. '

By this one action, Tim had just shown himself to be more gallant than Kevin, Will and Jake had ever been. Perhaps he was a natural, or his luck was far more useful than they suspected.

Either way, his gallantry paid off. Lily gave him a sweet smile before entering the elevator.

A duj luhmrtl ifouz, mriw Jfcu frt val ojm hmplarl juzu iudo daevoare frt fdouz f duj qmzu liflvul, ovu uiusfomZ tmmZl himlut jaov ovu uroazu ezmpn arlatu.

Not even pressing a button inside, the floor immediately began to shake under their feet and they felt the effect of a sudden acceleration pinning their bodies to the floor.

The elevator was moving up.

A few minutes later, which seemed awfully long for an elevator ride at that speed, the car began to decelerate before coming to a complete stop.

Siraye timidly offered to open the door, but Vincent stopped her with his arm.

‘I’m going in.’ He declared, seeking confirmation from his cousins’ eyes.

‘Together.’ Jake and Kevin nodded.

But their concern turned out to be for nothing. The doors opened and a room devoid of monsters unfolded before them. Yet the room was not empty.