

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 414 - Stroll Around The Village

Over the next hour, Jake took the opportunity to tour the entire compound. He mapped the entire village with Xi's help and made sure to memorize everything he could with his almost photographic memory.

He quickly became aware of a few things. There were 73 participants in total, for exactly 73 buildings including his own. Among these dwellings, there was also a spacious manor house on the east side of the lake.

In the center of the village, along the main street, some of these buildings had other functions such as the Bakery, the Grocery, the Blacksmith's Shop, the Tannery or the Tavern.

The village was bordered by the lake to the North, the forest to the West, the mine to the East and the farmlands to the South. The manor house was to the Northeast, while his own residence as Forest Warden was at the far West of the village.

Most importantly, he didn't find any way out. If this escape route existed, it was very well hidden. It would take time to locate it.

On Xi's good advice, Jake also pushed himself to knock on doors. Needless to say, the lucky bastard who got the Manor refused to open it for him. He swore to himself that he would show no mercy to the fucking native or Player inside. The short-lived joy he had

experienced upon obtaining a rare Role was already a distant memory.

With the few natives and Players who agreed to open up to him, he was able to exchange some information, including the Roles they occupied. Of course, if one of them was a Monster he would keep that secret to himself, but there was no harm in revealing the job that went with their status as villagers.

Above all, some simply could not lie, like the Baker or the Tavernkeeper. Their shop sign bore their name on the front door and did not allow for any misunderstanding.

It was still possible that some of them had lied about the details of their Role, but after cross-checking the information, his knowledge of the Roles was as follows:

-The Witch(unique): Can create potions of various types if she has the right ingredients and tools. She can sell her potions or buy ingredients from other Villagers.

-Tvu Bfaiadd(praypu): Cfr zuflaer lmqu gpaitarel ad ovu mhhpnfro vfl guur caiiut gw easare ovuq om Wfirtuzuzl. Hfl ovu cuwl om usuzw vmplu.

-The Confessor (unique): Can ask a resident to reveal their original Role once per Cycle and after the vote has taken place. Occupies the Chapel.

-The Healer (unique): Can heal wounds up to 1 time per Cycle, and accumulate up to 5 charges.

-The Teacher (unique): Can prevent up to 2 participants from voting per Cycle.

-The Tavernkeeper (unique) (upgradeable): Holds the town's tavern. The tavern is unassailable, but if he or she votes against someone who is later eliminated, he or she will lose their privilege.

These five Roles were unique and he was unable to determine if there were others, but it was very likely. The individuals who picked these Roles all occupied recognizable buildings and there was little point in lying.

The Witch Role in particular turned out to have been obtained by the young Native American woman. She was more than happy to have someone to talk to and enthusiastically engaged in dialogue when she learned that he was also from Earth.

Her name was Kewanee Grew of the Potawatomi, a Native American clan that had all but disappeared in the United States and had grown up on a preserve dedicated to the protection of their customs in Oklahoma.

She readily invited him to visit her home, but due to his distrustful nature and remnants of asociality Jake politely declined. Maybe this woman was just nice and naive, or confident enough in her abilities to take the risk, but she could also hide the soul of a snake behind her lovely smiles.

In a totally different register, the Bailiff was a hook-nosed, tiny-eyed Titan Pearl veteran officer named Gordon Mason. Jake had seen him briefly with Avy Shanmin before, but he hadn't left a strong impression on him. He was the kind of guy who didn't leave a mark: scrawny, balding, always rubbing his hands with a cheesy smile.

Twahfi md ovu cart md artasatpfi vfzgmzare qfrw nuro-pn
dzplozfoamrl frt zuluroqurol, gpo dmzhut om jufz oval ezarrare qflc
ar dzmro md val uruqaul om cuun f bmg vu vfoul. Aifl, vu jfl f nmmz

fhomz frt mru euruzfiw ourtut om fsmat lphv hmqnfrw. Jfcu jfl rm ukhunoamr.

Behind his ostensibly cordial and subservient demeanor, the Bailiff had clearly kept some information to himself. He had all the keys, yes, but to what end? Only he knew.

As for the Healer, Confessor and Teacher, the three native soldiers turned out to be rather frank, since their roles could not be hidden. They occupied respectively the Clinic, the Chapel and the School, three buildings perfectly recognizable among all.

It was more than likely that they had not told him everything, but Jake was already amply satisfied. The Tavernkeeper, however, was by far the most interesting role of all, and was occupied by the person he would have least expected to see in that role: the Inquisitor.

At the time, Jake almost turned around when he saw the modernized version of a Nazgul, but he refrained and was glad he did. Speaking in a gruff voice, the Inquisitor had shown interest in this trade of information and had made no bones about his role, just as Jake had.

Clearly, scheming was not in his style and the Inquisitor was supremely confident in his strength. After exchanging information, they bid each other farewell and Jake went on his way.

Regarding the non-unique roles, he ultimately managed to determine 15 additional occupations.

-Blacksmith: Can make weapons and other tools if supplied with enough ore. He has priority to buy resources from the Miner.

-Miner: Can extract various ores from the nearby mine. The only ones who can enter the mine with the Travelers.

-Fisherman: Can go to the lake freely to fish or sail.

-Huzgfialo: Cfr jfic ar ovu dmzulo tpzare ovu tfw frt ezmj frw vuzg(1) md ovuaz hvmahu fo ufhv Cwhiu.

-Mason: Can build new buildings(one each Cycle) if resources are sufficient.

-Baker: Rises one hour before sunrise and has priority on certain products from the Farmers and the Grocery.

-Grocer: Rises at daybreak and has priority for buying from Fishermen, Farmers and Hunters.

-Farmer: Produces various food resources, which he can resell. The Grocer, Butcher and Baker have priority.

-Butcher: Has priority on prey from the Hunters and some products from the Farmers.

-Tanner: Has priority on the Hunters' prey hides and pelts

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-Hunter: Can enter the forest to hunt during the day.

-The Barber, the Servant and the Comedian.

Tvu ovzuu Pifwuzl mhhpnware ovu iflo ovzuu Rmiul vft zudplut om lvfzu frw ardmzqfoamr fgmpo ovuaz Rmiu ukhuno dmz ovu rfqu.

Tvu Bfzguz jfl vuit gw ovu gifhc qfr ar fzqmz rfqut Dzflozfr, jvaiu ovu Cmquatafr jfl ovu ofoommut Alafr jvm vft guur allpare tufov ovzufol jaov val hpoiffl...

These were undoubtedly Unique Roles, but he would have to continue collecting information from the other villagers to conclude.

The Comedian had obviously been unwilling to chat with him, but sadly he was not in a position to play it safe, as his residence was a

stage set up in front of a troubadour's caravan. Comedian was the name that Jake had temporarily chosen to qualify him.

After finishing his walk to the far south, Jake then walked up the village to the forest as he had originally planned. The sun was now high in the sky, near its zenith, and was beating down hard. Based on the local time, it was almost noon.

On the way, he noticed that some of the villagers had already begun to take up their roles. A Farmer was plowing his field, while a Fisherman was learning to maneuver a one-sailed catamaran of sorts on the lake with encouraging results. These were some of the most common resource production Roles.

Before leaving the fields and farms, he saw the figure of a beautiful pale woman with ruby eyes. Her tight-fitting satin dress seemed out of place among the pigs and horse manure, but she didn't seem to mind. Yet Jake noted the subtle quiver of her jaw as a pig pissed on her boots.

Moments later, he spotted his own house at the western end of the village, then strode past it into unfamiliar territory. The forest was his domain. Along with the Herbalists and the Hunters, he was the only one who could enter it and could even forbid or allow others into the area.

As Jake moved deeper into the forest, the foliage of the deciduous trees grew denser and denser, as did the unruly vegetation growing at his feet. Soon, the gigantic, century-old trees blocked out the sun's rays and a suffocating, silent, dangerous atmosphere replaced the fairy-tale atmosphere of the Village.

A normal human would have been uncomfortable in this place, but with his Perception this forest was as warm and bright as any other place under the sun.

After a few hundred meters, his house and the rest of the village disappeared from his field of vision. The silence was oppressive, not even a bird or a cricket daring to sing.

Ao ovfo qmquro, zfovuz ovfr ofcu frw prjalu zalcl, Jfcu omme mpo val qfn. Hu imhfout f zulmpzhu lnmo qfzcut jaov fr ahmr ar ovu lvfnu md f dmpz-iufd himsuz.

‘All right, let’s try this place. ‘Jake exclaimed aloud with the eagerness of an explorer heading out into unknown lands.

He had barely taken a few steps in the chosen direction when suddenly the robotic voice boomed again, this time with shocking news:

[Contestant Peter Brady broke the rules by attacking contestant Susan Burn at 12:14pm during the Cycle Day phase. He will be punished by being sent to the Pit. The sentence will be carried out immediately. If he survives his trial, he will reappear in the central square of the Village in front of the fountain.]

The lull would not have lasted long...