

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 463 - Sigmar's Village

Faced with Jake's questioning gaze, Carmin didn't think for a second about backing out. Tired, she answered with the only plausible reason that could explain it.

'Because I'm not a Vampire. I mean, not literally.' She confessed as she stared into his eyes.

'Go on.' Jake nodded.

'I didn't lie before. Me and my sister Lily are indeed from the Lich Clan and my grandfather was indeed turned by its Vampire Progenitor. But not us. My mother was already born at that time and we were simply adopted into the clan. The Vampire Progenitor and the rest of the clan took care of us and educated us as if we were part of their aristocracy. To protect us, the Vampire Progenitor and grandfather regularly gave us their blood and used many Blood Arts and herbs to strengthen our bodies.

'Over time, our bodies have changed and we have developed most of the attributes that characterize Vampire Progenitor offspring, but still remain human. Unfortunately, because we have become dependent on Blood Energy, we still need human blood to sustain ourselves, but unlike other Vampires the urge is not nearly as strong.'

Jake released the grip around her throat and her frail body slowly slid to the ground. He also noticed as he pinned her against that tree that she was once again skin and bones. Massaging her sore throat,

Carmin visibly relaxed as he saw that he had accepted her explanation. Still, he hadn't let go yet.

'What's your Bloodline then? I mean, if you're not a Vampire Noble, how does your Oracle Status identify you? Excuse me for speaking bluntly, but a bloodsucker with fangs doesn't really qualify as human anymore.'

Carmin flinched at being called inhuman, but she saw no point in hiding the truth any longer.

'I'm a Blood Human.' She said calmly, 'A Grade 6 Bloodline, but one that has the potential to evolve by consuming high quality blood. Using the Mirror Universe terminology, my body craves the Aether Code and energy contained in the blood of humanoid species.'

At that moment, she gazed at his neck, licking her lips with a longing look. Jake felt an inexplicable chill running through his body as he watched her behavior. He felt like the last piece of meat in a dog's bowl. His fate unavoidable.

Snapping his fingers in front of the Vampire's face to bring her back to the conversation, but also to mask his embarrassment, Jake waited for Carmin to pull herself together.

'Sorry...' She apologized, not sounding sorry at all. 'But your blood was damn good. My Body Stats went up twenty percent and I can last longer in the sun when I take my ring off.'

'Your ring?' Jake perked up.

'Yes, all Vampires have one if they want to walk around in the daylight. The poorer ones use sunscreen, but a ring, bracelet or pendant are still the absolute best.'

To demonstrate, she dangled her right hand in front of his eyes and Jake did indeed find a gold ring on her ring finger. Tiny inscriptions in an unknown language had been carved on its outer surface. For a moment he had thought she might be married or engaged, but apparently she wasn't.

'What? You thought I was married?' She teased him upon seeing that he was somewhat out of it.

Unwilling to indulge her, Jake ignored her teasing and set off for Sigmar Village. Their meeting was scheduled to take place soon.

Carmin harrumphed quietly, but after smoothing her dress she walked in his wake. Trotting alongside him, she decided to strike while the iron was hot.

'Jake...' She simpered softly, her former frostiness gone.

'What?' He snapped back.

'Can I have some more blood?'

' ... '

In the end, they arrived at Sigmar's Village about ten minutes later. They were slightly ahead of schedule, but that was all to the good. They hadn't been able to kill Wyatt, but his Village would be attacking this place by nightfall so it was even better.

Jake intended to take advantage of the confusion to deal a fatal blow to as many of his enemies as possible. To do this, he preferred the battlefield to be in a different Village than his own.

Upon arriving, Jake and Carmin immediately noticed that this Village was better developed than theirs. The infrastructure was more

advanced and extensive, as if they had been stuck in the Stone Age while this one had advanced technologically by several millennia.

The most spectacular thing was these black turrets with a double gun that seemed to have been directly cast out of a huge black crystal.

Native Titan Pearl soldiers were stationed at each of these heavy artillery machines and were vigilantly monitoring the area around the Village.

When Jake and Carmin emerged from the Forest, two of these heavy turrets were immediately pointed at them.

‘At ease, soldier!’ Avy’s gruff voice echoed through the Village as if she were shouting into a megaphone. She had apparently returned before them when Ilphora had come to pick her up.

After this order, the turrets pointed their guns elsewhere and resumed their surveillance of the vicinity. The duo then took the opportunity to meet with the Titan Pearl’s General.

Avy, who only reached Jake’s navel, still found him terrifying, but known for her recklessness she gave him a big hug and patted him on the back with loud slaps as if they were old friends.

‘Why the fućk are your muscles so hard? It feels like I’m hugging a block of steel and my hand hurts...’ He heard her mutter resentfully.

With a rictus stuck on his face, he had to hold himself back not to ‘return her slaps.’ No doubt she wouldn’t try it again after that.

‘Where is Sigmar?’ Carmin asked urgently as she spotted a vein pulsing on the young man’s forehead at her side. Avy really had no idea what kind of ticking time bomb she was messing with.

‘Ahh!’

Remembering why they were there, Avy stopped playing the tough guy and motioned for them to follow her. On the way, they found Edmond, the chief officer assisting her in all her tasks, but he pretended to have a lot of arrangements to finalize and slipped away.

Jake said nothing, but felt something was wrong with him. His sense of smell wasn't as good as Kevin's, but it did rival that of a dog. This man was wearing makeup. It was not the case before.

'He looks old, but his cells are young.' Carmin confirmed his suspicions telepathically. 'I think I've seen him somewhere before, and I'm not talking about the Titan Pearl...'

Jake stiffened imperceptibly as he listened to the Vampire, but he shared the same opinion. To tell the truth, even Grand Master Isbeus struck a chord with him. If they could make themselves look as young as they wanted, it was plausible.

Eureka! All of a sudden he remembered where he had seen this Edmond. At that moment, his voice was altered and he was wearing a long black hooded robe like those of the Inquisitors.

'This is the guy who explained the Monster Game rules to us in the first round.' Jake concluded with a grim expression.

Wvur Cfzqar vufzt val frljuz, lvu vft om qfcu f vpeu uddmzo rmo om ofcu om vuz vuuil frt zpr fjfw.

'Is-is this a trap? Should we run?' She panicked involuntarily.

'Too late for that.' Jake glared at the door in front of him or rather at what was behind it.

During their discussion, Avy had led them to the Castle and they were now standing outside its gates.

‘This is as far as I go.’ The usually brave General cut a constipated face at them before ditching them without looking back.

Obviously, she didn’t like interacting with the people inside. Jake didn’t have her qualms. Indifferent, he pushed the door open with a flick of his forefinger.

The large stone hall that revealed itself to him was dimly lit but just as luxuriously furnished and decorated as the one in his first Castle. The difference was that the furniture was more modern and the owner seemed to have an unhealthy fondness for dark colors.

A long golden carpet, the only touch of warm color in this eerie and spooky environment, ran from the door to the large throne sitting at the end of the hall. This throne also appeared to have been carved out of a huge black crystal and many spikes fanned out behind it, like a peacock performing a courtship dance for a female.

On this throne sat a youth, while to his right and left stood two Inquisitors. The one on the right was Ilphora, whom he was already familiar with, but the second guy it was his first time meeting him. By its stature, it was possibly a woman.

Yet it was not the presence of these Inquisitors that transfixed him, but that of the young man sitting in the middle. Because Jake had met this person before. If the Old Ghost hadn’t reported to him a few days earlier, he might never have considered the possibility.

Ao dazlo eifrhu, ovuzu jfl rmovare lnuhafi fgmpo oval qfr. Pfiu fl ad vu zفزuiw uknmlut vaqluid om ovu lpr, lvmzo frt prcuqno gifhc vfaz, f gufztiull dfhu, juii-qftu gpo hflpfi himovul, rmo suzw ofii, frt ifloiw f liaqrull hvzfzhouzaloah md f luturofzw nuzlmr lnurtare omm qphv oaqu mr f hmqnpouz jaov f nmmz fnnuoaou.

At least, that was what Jake thought before meeting him again today.

‘Hade...’ He uttered.

‘Let’s talk, Jake.’