

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 4: The Purgatory

### Chapter 468 – Night Commando Mission

Jake then took advantage of the opportunity when the whole village was gathered to beg for more Jackpot and Lottery Cards. Sadly, only Mihangyl, who was not part of his faction, held such a Card. He did, however, retrieve a nice stack of Lottery Cards.

However, from the crowd's cautious attitude, he quickly noticed that not everyone was honest. He therefore had to clarify his intentions, which was actually the least he could do.

‘If you didn't miss the brief Purgatory shutdown, you probably saw the station walls reappear for a short time.’ Will finished calmly. ‘That was us. We caused the equivalent of a power outage when we diverted all the Fluid generated by that Fluid Artifact. To replicate this feat in a sustainable way, we will need much more Fluid than that. For those who participate, you will be compensated in proportion to the profit generated. So this is not an extortion, but an investment.’

Will said no more, and Jake didn't see fit to add his two cents either. As for the more or less 600 natives in the Village, Jake had no solid way to convince them.

Although it was indeed possible to establish Pseudo-Contracts using their Fluid Cards, apart from a few simpletons, no one was fooled. If the Fluid Artifact was really deactivated permanently, then the runes enforcing these Contracts would no longer have any hold on them.

His real target was the nearly 150 Players who had joined his faction. On the one hand a Contract could be established through the Oracle System, but more importantly even if they died prematurely Jake would still be required to pay them once back on B842.

In the end, less than a quarter agreed to contribute their Fluid, 37 Players and 112 natives. Seeing this, Jake and Will's expression hardened. With another eye contact, the businessman crossed off a second batch of names, many more this time than the last.

Much of their selfish behavior could be attributed to the Corruption's influence, but even the worst sociopath should have a functioning brain. If they were lucid enough to seek refuge with him, then their refusal to cooperate was inexcusable.

Fortunately, Mihangyl proved to be more promising than his uptight Wood Archmage demeanor suggested. He gladly gave up his Jackpot Card, but his condition was that he would not take his eyes off his investment.

That is, Jake. This meant that from now on he would have to deal with Mihangyl and Fire Knight Ralnor tagging along until his plan came to fruition.

In and of itself, this wasn't necessarily a bad thing. Ralnor was in a foul mood, overcome by his *désiré* to kill, but Mihangyl was remarkably serene. Perhaps his Nature Magic had some techniques for placating the mind when faced with those sorts of nefarious influences.

Jake then went to visit Peter Brady, who was still between life and death. There he found Kewanee and Svava, who were doing their best to take care of this difficult patient.

Kewanee's Healing Potions had stabilized his wounds, but did not seem to be able to cure him. The third conviction in the Pit was clearly not of the same ilk as the previous two sentences.

Kewanee felt she could save him by brewing a more potent Healing Potion, but to do so she would have to upgrade her Witch Role and obtain rare herbs that could only be obtained by drawing the right Treasure Card. There was no time for that.

Enya offered to use her Oracle Heal on him, but Jake and the others balked. Peter knew perfectly well what he was doing when he went out on his own to scout, and his intentions were not fully motivated by the impulse to help.

Even in front of them, the dying drug addict with only a right thigh and a charred torso left didn't seem to really care about his condition.

'CZT-3... C...T-3...' The Player spluttered in his restless sleep, his eyes flaring open suddenly, but somehow still unfocused.

Jfcu zfalut f ypuloamrare uwugzmj fo Kujfruu, jvm jfl ourtare om ovu tware qfr, frt lvu lvzpeeut ukflnuzfoutiw.

'It's an artificial neurotrope found in the Titan Pearl's pharmacopoeia...' She explained as she sponged Peter's forehead. 'It causes a euphoric trance that is hard to imagine in addition to completely inhibiting pain. It's normally used to relieve terminally ill victims of radiation. That's why he kept pestering Daryl. When he died, Peter got the last few doses but instead of rationing it he used it all at once...'

The two sisters who were silently listening to the conversation were stumped.

'With his Body Stats and the Myrtharian Body Passive shouldn't it be impossible to drug us?' Esya exclaimed in wonder.

Kewanee let out a long, exhausted sigh, but didn't find the courage to respond. It was Will, as a good soul, who took it upon himself to elaborate. He knew all the important items in this Ordeal, whether it was the food on the Titan Pearl or the Cards in this Monster Game.

'If it was for humans, it shouldn't affect him all that much. But this is a world where most professional soldiers are Fluid Wielders... Their metabolism and recovery is much faster than normal people and this drug is designed to work even on Fluid Adepts. With his current stats his withdrawal should take about 2 days.'

'But he's been in this state for more than two days, right?' Drastan objected dismissively.

The Troll Slayer held the utmost contempt for those who were slaves to their desires. In his world, where he had to fight the Versings day after day, there was no time for such nonsense.

Svara opened her mouth as if to say something, but hesitated at the last moment, not quite sure how to bring it up. It was Kyle who gave the black warrior the answer he was seeking.

'Aaarrrrrh!'

A vufzogzufcare wuin md nfar àllfpiout ovuaz ufztzpql. Puouz Bzftw mnurut val uwul jatu jvauu gzufcare mpo arom f ljufo, f vpzo frt zulurodpi uknzullamr lozfarare val dufopzul. Gzaooare val ouuov, val efxu duii mr val ovìgv lopqn, arom jvahv f ljmzt jfl rmj uqguttut om ovu vaio.

'Stop faking it.' Kyle said mercilessly. Then he slowly withdrew his blade.

The Myrtharian Nerds now facepalmed with embarrassment, then Jake snorted softly,

‘Bury him under the sun and light a fire. If he asks for drugs again, have him eat a rock.’

Peter Brady’s indignant eyes almost popped out of his face as Kyle and Tim grabbed the ‘log’ and took it somewhere else. Kewanee and Svara stared at him in abhorrence, while Mihangyl distinctly muttered ‘friggin barbarians’ but made no move to interfere.

Of course Jake wasn’t trying to kill him. Although Peter did not have the Accelerated Healing skill, he was part of their faction and therefore was enjoying all the perks provided, including the Myrtharian Body passive. Even if his limbs didn’t grow back, keeping him warm underground should be enough to keep him alive until the Ordeal was over.

‘Gu-Guys! I-I’m feeling much better!’ After a few minutes, Peter’s overstressed, pleading scream resounded abruptly from outside.

When Jake and the others went out to take a look with amused smiles, Peter’s charred-looking skin had returned to its normal state, while tiny, babyish, still-pink feet and hands were growing grotesquely from his stumps like ugly swellings.

Kyle and Tim had long since dumped him into the ‘grave’ they had dug for him and were about to fill in the hole when this miracle happened right before their very eyes.

If this astounded and entertained the bystanders of this event, Kewanee’s and Svara’s facial muscles, which had been wasting their time tending to him, twitched with anger.

‘Peter!’ The two women shouted with bloodshot eyes.

Striding briskly toward the grave, Svara extended an open hand toward Kyle as if to grab something and ordered aggressively,

‘Hand me the shovel.’

Peter was in for a rough time.

As the druggie was buried alive by the two young women while squealing like a pig being slaughtered, the sun finally set and the people returned to their homes.

All those who wished to were gathered together in his Castle, while Jake and some of the Players gathered inconspicuously in a small wooden hut outside. In addition to his regular faction members, Carmin, Drastan, Kewanee, Svara, Peter, Hephais, Mihangyl, Ralnor, Wilde, Kurchin, Shulyov, Valentin, Yamabe, Pavao and Ostrexora were also present.

Peter had given up begging for his dose of CZT-3 and was now showing a ghastly face, regularly casting horrified glances at the two young women. He was now sporting a disgusting pair of arms and legs comparable to those of an 8 year old child. If the result was as disturbing as it was ridiculous, at least he was able to move.

‘As soon as it starts, we’ll get to work.’ Jake finished the briefing and probed the faces of everyone present, especially Peter as well as Wilde and his men, who seemed in a hurry to leave.

With everyone agreeing to the plan, Kyle nudged Wilde, who nodded in kind. From his backpack, he pulled out several sets of identical Boots and Capes. Will also placed a wooden crate on the table, which contained identical garments. In the end, there was enough to outfit 10 people.

‘With this, you have what you need to activate 10 Traveler Role Cards. I wish you luck.’ Wilde ragged, knowing full well that without the Legendary Card that went with it, these clothes would remain completely useless.

This Card was extremely rare, but not nearly as scarce as the Jackpots Cards... Jake wasn't the only one who had managed to get one. Regardless, it was still a difficult Role to acquire. Ten was the number of such Cards they had managed to assemble for tonight's secret mission.

Ultimately, it was decided that Carmin, Hephais, Mihangyl, Ralnor, Enya, Esya, Peter, Kyle and Tim would accompany Jake. Because Ostrexora could roam freely at night as an Alpha Monster, she would also join in.

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