

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 494 - Bring It On

As soon as Jake started chasing Nylreg, he knew he would never catch up. Even after stripping himself of all of his liquid alloy, he could barely keep the distance between them. To catch him he would have to resort to much riskier methods that he would rather save for their final battle.

[Prepare to eject from the shuttle. Nylreg is coming for your heads.] Jake shouted telepathically to all the members of his faction. If they could at least run off in different directions it would save him a few seconds.

No response.

After a few seconds, Kyle's breathy, bitter voice rang through the comlink.

'We can't. Tootega and Wyatt have taken over the ship. If we didn't threaten to blow it up we'd have been dead long ago. Daniel more or less saved us at the last minute, but he's dead. From what I can tell, this Tootega killed his daughter and he spent the whole Ordeal tracking her down. You should have seen the bullet he fired between her eyes. Ever since then, she's been stuck in her snowy form and hasn't been able to recover. If Wyatt hadn't arrived just now we could have regained control of the shuttle.'

'Damn it!' Jake cursed before coming to the realization that this was actually a pretty good thing. 'If they want to keep the ship, let them

have it. You have my Myrtharian Body. Store as much oxygen as you can in the Faction Vault or your own Space Storage and use Enya and Esya's flames to keep you warm.'

He didn't ponder over where Daniel had been during this whole Ordeal. He was his uncle and he was free to do whatever he wanted. Finding his daughter's killer couldn't have been easy with his mediocre Oracle Rank. Truth be told, Jake didn't know if he even had a Bloodline or Aether Skills to speak of. However, if he could injure Tootega badly, then he clearly had more than one trick up his sleeve.

He didn't ask if they were still lucid either. At this juncture of the Ordeal it was very unlikely. Despite Kyle's coherent speech, he could tell by his voice how severely injured he was. If not for that, the Playboy would probably still be fighting Wyatt and Tootega.

Refocusing on Nylreg, he activated Bloodline Ignition and extended his Spirit Body at full range to draw in as much Fluid and Aether as possible. To hell with the Corruption. If he didn't move faster, he would soon have nothing to protect.

His Aether and Fluid Core instantly began siphoning energy from the void nearby and the telekinetic force propelling him tripled almost instantly. On the other hand, the anger and murderous impulse he was barely keeping in check skyrocketed and he had to make a tremendous mental effort to keep all that pent up rage focused on Nylreg and not the space shuttle that had just entered his field of vision.

Striking left or right, his one point of True Will would determine in a moment whether Jake was destined to kill or save his friends.

Regardless, now that he had a higher energy input, he slowly began to shorten the gap between him and Sigmar's son and to his pleasant surprise, Nylreg did not accelerate again.

It was as if Nylreg wanted to keep him in sight, or rather maintain the illusion that saving his comrades was indeed possible. Jake knew all this, but he could only grit his teeth and take the bait.

Nylreg and Jake were like two silent shooting stars speeding through the cosmos and in less than a minute they caught up with the shuttle that was about to enter the electromagnetic storm zone.

A few kilometers from the shuttle, Nylreg lazily raised his index finger and coolly aimed at the shuttle, whose engines had been shut down. The familiar black laser streaked across the space separating them in the blink of an eye and the ship... was erased.

Jake stopped breathing for a split second until he recognized the flamboyant pink hair of the two sisters drifting in the void not far away. It was only after checking his Side Mission n°5's list of members to protect that he was able to resume breathing normally.

Because of the vacuum, he heard no screams of pain nor explosions to indicate what had happened inside the shuttle when the Destruction Laser Beam landed, but he did make out two familiar figures after the beam passed through: Wyatt and Tootega.

Wyatt's reflexes were as astounding as one could imagine, and although the laser had struck at lightspeed, he had managed to partially dodge the attack. The precognition conferred by his Fluid Core had probably saved his life. Sadly, even with his outstanding reflexes, the entire body part below the belt had simply disappeared.

Still, he was worthy of his Vampire Progenitor status and his legs had already begun to regenerate like crazy. A steady stream of Blood Energy was being consumed every second to speed up the process and Wyatt started to show signs of fatigue for the first time. The look he gave Nylreg was absolutely appalled.

Tootega wasn't so lucky. Whatever Daniel had done to her had affected her enough to prevent her from dodging the attack. Right now, her body and mind had been reduced to a snowflake the size of a pine cone and her condition was unclear.

However, Jake was not the forgiving type and he fired at her with a laser of his own. It wasn't as wide and destructive as Nylreg's, but it was still a highly concentrated beam of gamma light. When Tootega was hit by this non-visible laser beam, the snowflake was vaporized in one fell swoop.

Immediately afterwards, two huge scarlet fireballs hit the very spot where the snowflake's remains had been, and he recognized the two sisters' signature Fire Magic. Apparently, he wasn't the only one who hated her with all his heart.

Regrettably, he had no chance to congratulate himself because those two fireballs had revealed the two sisters' location and he saw Nylreg adjust his posture right away in their direction for a follow-up attack.

'I won't let you do this!' Jake roared as he activated Bloodline Ignition at full power.

'Keep running!' Jake yelled telepathically into the comlink before transforming into a torch of light.

Like a moth running towards a flame, he instantly unleashed everything he had been preparing over those long 90 seconds to fool Nylreg. The Aether Sun Core, Purgatory, Bloodline Ignition, Xion Zolvhur's Soul Stone, all of these things appeared at once and an overwhelming, oppressive aura of power radiated forth from his body.

It was as if his full potential was being forcibly squeezed and the resulting formidable energy levels could threaten even a Fluid Grandmaster. Alas, against Nylreg it still wasn't close to enough.

Still, it did the trick. Nylreg stopped preparing his shot at the two sisters and turned his attention back to Jake. As strong as he was, he could not ignore such an opponent. The bursts of energy he was picking up were enough to mortally wound him if he wasn't careful.

Even so, there was a huge gap between being able to hurt one's opponent and succeeding. When Nylreg pointed his finger at Jake, Jake immediately ducked under his Oracle Shield and continued to charge bravely towards the enemy.

The Fluid Grandmaster immediately noticed that the laser was ineffective and his body dispersed into an indistinguishable dark energy mist that quickly spread before recondensing around Jake. Without physical support, Jake soon noticed that the Purgatory was not all that effective. In a vacuum, the volcanoes and lava he had created had no anchor, and the Fluid wasted to maintain them was unnecessarily high.

Familiarizing himself with his Bronze Artifact, Jake shrank the deployed surface to a small circle of 20m in diameter, then with his Aether Sun Core he waited for Nylreg to arrive. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw that the two sisters and the others had indeed escaped and he felt some relief but also a sense of emptiness.

Deeming them far enough away, Jake breathed in deeply and opened the box he was holding. The Ancient Designer's Soul Stone inside flew into his hand and as his mind connected to it, the different types of Soul Energy he was familiar with began to flow through his body, feeding his cells first before ending up in his brain, and Spirit Body.

With just a wisp, Jake's body, but especially his Spirit Body, was covered in a halo of red, green, blue and silver and a multi-colored rainbow began to sparkle behind his pupils in addition to the usual gold and silver.

When the Red Soul Energy reached his very Soul, his killing intent surged forth with an intensity immeasurably greater than that of the Corruption and like a raging bull his vision narrowed like a tunnel, keeping only Nylreg, the target to be slaughtered, in his sights.

Just as he was about to go into Berserk mode and lose any instinct for self-preservation, the Blue Soul Energy also reached his Soul and an unimaginable aloofness and coolness then started to conflict ruthlessly with the raging fury welling up inside him.

The Green Soul Energy then revitalized his mind and all the mental fatigue he had accumulated melted away instantly, while the full potential of the Red and Blue Soul Energies was heightened.

Last but not least, the Silver Soul Energy was a harmonious blend of the three previous types and tended to quickly break down into the three above types of Soul Energy. Yet, the little that reached his intact Soul brought about a series of cataclysmic changes.

Buhfplu, gulatul ovu uruzew hmrofarut ar ao ovfo arlofrofrumpli
uruzeaxut val Snazao Bmtw jaovmpo frw hmprouznfzo, jvfo oval
Smpi Somru ozpiw hmrofarut juzu quqmzaul. Muqmzaul tunzasut md
ovuaz uqmoamrfi hmqnmruro frt hmrofarare fii cartl md nzfhoahfi
crmjiuteu jaov tadduzuro ifwuzl md hmqniukaow.

Jake didn't have to learn anything. When this silver wisp reached his Soul, it merged with it and new memories and knowledge that he did not have before filled his skull. At the same time, an unbearable pain wracked his head and while his Spirit Body held up, many of his neurons burst from the information overload.

The fiery heat and radiation he was bathed in kicked the Accelerated Healing passive into high gear and he unknowingly began to use his Silver Stone skin on his own neurons to augment them. This was something he had been unable to do even a second earlier.

Coughing blood, Jake was eventually forced to shove the Soul Stone back into his dedicated box so he wouldn't stupidly die of brain explosion, but the multicolored aura enveloping him had already transformed so much in a matter of seconds that for the very first time Nylreg began to have doubts.

This growing uncertainty fanned his impatience and he made up his mind to end it all.

'Stop hiding!' Nylreg shouted back with hostility as he fired yet another laser at him.

Jake looked up and this time the silver glow in his eyes was different from before. The multicolored aura surrounding him and his killing intent were gone and for the first time he deactivated his Oracle Shield with the firm intention to fight.

He would not hide anymore.

'Bring it on!'