

# The Oracle Paths

## Volume 5: The Last Tutorial

### Chapter 529 – The Fourth Faction

Still in shock, her jaw quivered in astonishment before the young mother finally managed to stammer out a string of coherent words,

‘I-I’m still alive?’ She stuttered as she carefully inspected every nook and cranny of her body with growing disbelief.

Seemingly forgetting something important, she tensed up and jerked her head around to check on her two sons. She was immensely relieved when she found that both children were frightened, but didn’t have so much as a scratch on them.

‘Thank God you’re okay!’ She sobbed as she pulled them into a tight hug. As they returned to the reassuring embrace of their mother’s arms, the frazzled nerves of the two boys gave way and they also melted into tears, bawling loudly.

‘Damn it, I hate brats.’ Grash grouched as he scratched his head aggrievedly.

Sensing the giant’s disapproving gaze, the two kids stiffened and immediately stopped sobbing their heads off. Their mother also regained her composure. Bowing to Jake, she humbly thanked him.

‘You’re welcome, but I didn’t do it for you. It was just along the way.’ Jake retorted, remaining impassive.

His principles hadn’t changed. Anyone who wasn’t willing to do what was necessary to survive didn’t deserve his concern.

‘If you want to survive, you know my rules.’ He added before raising his voice for all to hear. ‘It’s too late to get into a Red Cube and become self-sufficient warriors, but don’t think you can run away from here without a fight. Even with the best of intentions, I can’t protect you all against a tide of Digestors. Heck, maybe I won’t even survive all of this either! What I can do, instead, is give you a fair shot by making sure you don’t have to face enemies you don’t stand a chance against.’

Lifting his hand, a mental ripple radiated out from his body and spread in a 100m radius. All the objects, devices, tools, ingots, ores and other wreckage piling up in the nearby slums began to magically float over to him. As they converged towards his outstretched hand, their temperature increased sharply and a reddish glow began to emit from the materials. By the time they reached his hand, most of these objects had dissolved into a ball of molten metal.

Waov ovu vuin md val Muofi Cmrozmi frt Tuiucarulal, Jfcu dmzqut f ifzeu gfii md qmiour louui zaevo gudmzu vaq frt guefr om daru-opru val hmrozmi om ukozfho ovu aqnpzaoaul frt lfsu vaqluid f imre ouqnuzare. Tvu laxu md ovu eimjare gfii md quofi tuhzuflut gw ojm, ovur ovzuu, frt Jfcu darfiw tzmnnut f lfoaldaut lqazc.

Wiggling his fingers like a skilled puppeteer, Jake then began to finely manipulate this molten metal to mold various bladed weapons. These were mostly long swords, axes and spears of various sizes to fit different body types. Once shaped, he absorbed the heat inside his body and let them fall to the ground with a loud clang.

His first batch of weapons completed, Jake waved his hand with a grandiloquent air and with a generous expression he said,

‘These weapons are yours. From now on, these weapons will be your best allies so choose wisely.’

‘Really charismatic...’ Grash muttered in a low voice as he observed the scene.

The truth was that inwardly he was rather impressed. This Evolver may have been weaker than he was, but the versatility of his talents had already baffled him. Compared to this human, he had only his Herculean strength to rely on.

These weapons were not outstanding, but they were still of much better quality than the ones usually sold to them at high prices in the Outer Shelter.

It was worth noting that not all aliens were from advanced civilizations like those on Earth. While there were indeed species that outclassed Earthlings technologically and biologically, such as the Nosks and Silver Zhorions, there were also many that were stuck in the stone age.

These generally intellectually limited aliens like the Nawai males and other even dumber creatures were usually ripped off at every turn by the other species if they didn’t have enough strength to compensate for this handicap.

When they were too stupid or naive, sometimes even strength wasn’t enough. Grash’s rusty greatsword and plate armor was clear evidence of this. Even after five Ordeals, his intelligence clearly still didn’t allow him to escape these kinds of shady traps or he wouldn’t be out there proudly boasting about drinking cleansing alcohol as if it were an exceptional vintage.

Jfcu jfl loaii immcare dmzjft om quuoare oval ukozfmztarfzw vploiuz...

Seeing all these freshly cast weapons, the crowd of refugees was momentarily stunned by such a demonstration of magic, but this only increased their respect and admiration for this strange human. Those

who had already pledged their allegiance to him hesitated only a moment before rushing for the weapons.

Without drawing attention to himself, an old man in his eighties limped determinedly to a long steel spear and picked it up before wielding it expertly.

‘Good weapon!’ His misty eyes sparkled with a strange light as he examined the weapon.

‘Who are you?’ Jake asked warily, noticing the old man’s suspicious demeanor.

‘I was a slave until a few minutes ago, but it seems I’ve changed masters.’ The old man replied, looking at him strangely, yet with obvious gratitude.

Jake understood what was going on as he sensed his gratefulness. Inspecting his list of Contracts, he noticed that several names had indeed been added to the list. He then noticed that most of the refugees who had rushed to pick up a weapon and pledge their allegiance to him were precisely those whose Slave Contracts had been transferred to him.

By killing their former masters under Digestor control he had become their new owner.

‘Very well.’ Jake accepted the old man’s resolution. ‘If you are determined to fight, I will give you your freedom once we get out of here.’

The refugees with a master still alive wore envious expressions as they heard this promise. They would surely have to fight anyway. This promise was better than struggling without hope. How good would it be if their masters could be killed too...

The pile of weapons was quickly cleaned out by the refugees. There wasn't enough for all of them, but not everyone had the ambition to fight on the front line. Like everywhere else in the world, there were also selfish bullies hogging the best weapons, but that was not his problem. If even in the face of such a windfall they couldn't find it in themselves not to get stepped on, then they would never find it.

Jake then continued to tour the Outer Shelter, meticulously clearing each area of his undercover Digestors. After each intervention, the line of refugees behind him grew steadily longer, until more than three thousand humans, animals, and aliens were standing beside him, placing all their hope in him.

Each time, he would take the time to make a new batch of weapons, adapting to the characteristics of the different species present. Even the chickens and ducks got their own equipment. One could see them clucking and cackling along with their funny helmets.

Crunch, who had been so magnificently quiet up to now, made no secret of his jealousy when he saw that even a hen was entitled to more generous treatment than he was. Rubbing his big furry head against his master while purring like a V12 engine, he showed him his best puppy eyes. Too bad he didn't really have the size and cuteness potential of a kitten anymore...

'Fuck off!' Jake kicked him mercilessly when the intruder interrupted his grandiloquent speech for the third time.

He was barely starting to dabble in politics that his cat was already trying to screw up his career. With a hurt pout, Crunch gave him a resentful look before waddling off to lick his wounds.

Feeling suddenly guilty, Jake cursed the cat's shamelessness before snapping,

‘Fine! You win!’

Digging into his own supply of metals that he had scraped from the walls of the Oracle Playground, Jake formed a new ball of molten lava and carved a set of armor in no time for his cat. Given his haste, the result was barely passable, if not ugly as fuck, but Crunch finally stopped sulking in his corner.

Now Crunch just looked like a brilliant White Knight Cat and that was just ridiculous. But at least the feline was happy... Thomas 'O Malley, his cheetah buddy, was clearly envious and that was more than enough to boost his vanity.

Tvu zuhlpu qallamr zulpqut fefar frt Jfcu frt val ezmjare ezmpn nzmhuutut om janu mpo ovu Daeulomzl frt zuhzpao ovu zudpeuul proai fr prfsmatfgiu usuro dmzhut vaq om lomn: Tvuzu juzu rm qmzu zudpeuul om zuhlpu, rmz Daeulomzl om lifpevouz.

At that moment, Jake and his ‘army’ stared down the largely repopulated factions of Bhuzkoc, Shaktilar and Melkree with intense vigilance. The ‘four’ major factions were finally gathered together to decide what to do next.

Sweeping his gaze over the thousands of bedraggled refugees behind Jake and Grosh, Bhuzkoc was inwardly seething with rage, but he didn’t show it.

‘You’re more resourceful than I thought, I must admit.’ The Nawai leader acknowledged his mistake, but it was only to better retaliate. Not finding the other rat, he taunted, ‘Where is Maeve’s brother that you saved? Not dead I hope? I still have to show him how I express my love to his sister...’