

The Oracle Paths

Volume 2: The First Ordeal

Chapter 63 - Enya

The noble young woman was the Crown Princess of one of the many Dukes of the Velsyos Empire, which itself was one of the ruling nations on the planet Ega.

This planet was older than Earth, larger and more luxuriant. The gravity was therefore slightly higher and the density of life forms was considerably greater too. Humans fought over the most fertile territories against all sorts of creatures, and other humanoid species that the Earth's folklore would not disavow.

As a result, the concentration of Aether was higher there. Even today, there were many theories in the Mirror Universe about the origin of Aether and what explained its concentration from one world to another.

But there was an assumption that the majority of Evolvers and Players would all admit out of pure experience after a while: The more people in one place, the more Aether. And the more spiritually evolved these creatures were, the faster the Aether grew. And the more Aether, the more these creatures evolved. A virtuous circle.

No matter which Seed World was considered, any civilization advanced enough would one day feel or detect the Aether, and then finally use it.

However, there were also universes and planets like Ega, where life forms were so abundant that the Aether grew much faster,

encouraging changes in the Aether Code. Living beings not so evolved would thus awaken gifts, which for the natives of these worlds could only be called magic.

Like the genetic code, accidental mutations were constantly occurring and the trigger for these was always the Aether itself. At least, that's what most people thought and what Xi was able to reveal. These mutations were most often hereditary, leading to the appearance of bloodlines.

Each Seed World had a fundamental Aetheric Code, characterizing as a signature every element that was part of it, from an electromagnetic wave to the most elementary particles of matter. This made it easy to trace the world of origin of newcomers to the Mirror Universe.

With enough Aether and a bit of luck, this fundamental Aetheric Code could mutate as well. This created myriad worlds with very different Aether manifestations. And these mutations were also transmitted from energy to matter.

Tvu nifruo Eef vft aol Auovuz urhmtut ar f dmzq md uiuqurofi Auovuz. Fazu Auovuz, Laevorare Auovuz, Wfouz Auovuz frt lm mr. Ruepifziw lhauroadah qfeul mz ovu jmzit aoluid gw fhhaturo jmpit hzufou ruj Auovuz nfzoahiul frt lmmr ovuw guhfqu f ruj lofrtfzt md oval jmzit.

After millions of years of evolution, these lucky ones making up the noble class of Velsyos had inherited an excellent sensitivity to an elemental type of Aether, which was more classically called 'elemental affinity' among the Mages.

These affinities being hereditary, one could only feel and control the elemental Aether for which one was calibrated. These affinities

could easily be identified by hair color, making the detection of innate talent for magic extremely simple.

Fiery red hair betrayed an affinity for fire, heat, or blood; and white for light, healing, and purification. This double affinity gave pink hair and was extremely rare on Velsyos and an excellent omen.

If Jake knew all this, he would probably ask himself, why is it such a cliché? After all, the fire wasn't necessarily red, the blood could be yellow or green and the light could take on any color. So why were the same preconceived ideas and concepts found in S and video games from Earth? Well, he'll think about that another day.

The final word was that the young noblewoman couldn't detect any of the elemental Aether particles she used to manipulate to cast her spells.

It was the problem of a code, whether genetic or Aetheric. It programmed our traits and behaviors, but we had little or no control over them.

If we took the oxygen out of the air, we would all continue to breathe for a while, and then suffocate. It was conciously impossible for a human to filter nitrogen and CO₂ from the atmosphere or switch air molecules as the primary fuel.

It would take millions of years of evolution, the creation of advanced technology, or a genetic manipulation of the whole body. Either way, it was out of our reach. At least for inferior human species.

Since their arrival on B842, their guards had dealt with the most common dangers. Unfortunately, such a large group could be spotted from afar and was a real magnet for Digestors. In the course of their journey, they had faced entire hordes of these monsters and their numbers had been cut in half.

On a few rare occasions, the Digestors were so numerous and so strong that the intervention of the nobles and their magic had been necessary. Unable to regenerate their 'Mana', they had been forced to use their own reservoir of elemental energy. Energy that they could not renew once lost.

Although her status as the daughter of a Duke gave her the highest authority among this group, the Velsyos Empire was a society that recognized the superior authority of the mages because it was based on a very real power supremacy.

AS soon as it was revealed that the nobles were running out of power and would soon become the equivalent of normal humans again, mutiny would undoubtedly break out. The four ducal guards accompanying her were like uncles to her, having watched her grow up from the cradle.

And yet, even to them, she had not dared to explain clearly the reason for this late visit. Without her powers, she and her sister were just women with a more trained physique than average. Instead, she had vaguely mentioned that she imperatively needed to satisfy her curiosity in case their faction met enemies with such weapons.

'What's that? Is it yes or no?' Jake urged her impatiently. The young woman seemed completely lost in thought.

Returning to the ongoing negotiation, she closed her eyes for a moment before reopening them, decided.

'Ele vileis elst zacni.' The lady nodded, taking out two more purses identical to the first, much to Jake's surprise.

Those big factions were really something else. What he had obtained in battles of life and death, a young and perfumed woman in a satin dress could easily obtain it just by letting her subordinates do the work for her.

Inside, Jake was gloating. His first negotiation was a success. A whale like that, he had to bleed her a little more. This woman probably had her own circumstances, but he had his own.

The second stage of his plan was the natural continuation of things. Showing her how the weapon works, to finally introduce the concept of ammunition and thus negotiate a second deal.

Cmqpprahfoamr nzmsut om gu taddahpio, frt jvur vu tzuj val epr om lvmj vuz vmj om mnuzfou frt qfarofar ao, vuz dmpz epfztl zulnmrtut gw tzfjare ovuaz mjr ljmztl, guiausare ovuaz iftw jfl ovzufourut.

After raising both hands in the air as a sign of peace, and a nod from their princess, the guards reluctantly sheathed their weapons.

Demonstrating how the weapon worked was then relatively easy, although it was not certain that she understood the part about the safety catch. It would be foolish if the bullet didn't leave at the fateful moment.

Jake's magazines could hold 12 to 20 bullets and were manually reloadable. As for his ammunition boxes, they contained 300 rounds of ammunition each.

In the end, Jake, with Will's help, managed to sell two fully loaded magazines and about 100 rounds of ammunition for 40 more Red Crystals. In total, after counting the crystals from the first three purses, they had obtained nearly 100 Aether Crystals, which at this point was a real fortune in their eyes.

‘It was a pleasure doing business with you.’

‘Enya.’ She said with a slight bow, her goddess face deeply relieved and grateful. Then hearing no answer, she turned around and disappeared into darkness the four guards in her wake.

Jake didn't know if it was a farewell, a thank you, or her first name, and the asocial he was had not been able to answer when she looked at him like that, despite the good counselling of his Shadow Guide.

'Jake,' he whispered in the night, long after she was gone.

'AAAHHHHHHH!!!'

But instead it was cries that answered him, bringing him out of his torpor.