

The Oracle Paths

Volume 2: The First Ordeal

Chapter 90 - The Seventh Stat

The Violet Aether. The Seventh Stat. Following the logical order of the rainbow colours, it was an expected revelation. The pure Aether that was absorbed and then compressed upon the death of a creature was white. In other words, an amalgamation of the different types of Aether.

However, it should not be forgotten that the colors and different types of Aether did not really exist. A body was by default imbued with a certain amount of Aether depending on its world of origin. There was no distinction between strength, constitution and agility.

The encoded Aether simply attached the Aether to our bodies by encrypting it. This forced it to follow certain routes and behave in a certain way that amplified the desired faculties. So what could this Violet Aether possibly be ?

Jake had his own thoughts on the matter. Generally speaking, Red, Orange, Yellow and Green affected the body, Cyan and Indigo affected the brain and sensory organs. In other words, our consciousness, our perception of the world.

These colors were connected to each other. The nervous system was modified when one gained in strength or agility, became more resilient when one gained in constitution or vitality.

The first six stats, despite the distinction between the physical and the mental, were still based on the human body itself. The Aether

only amplified existing functions. Therefore, the seventh stat had to touch the mind and spirit, but without this direct connection to the physical body. More simply, the soul.

‘Does it concern the soul, or the psychic realm?’ Jake investigated, deciding to test his hypotheses.

Lu Yan, who hadn’t spoken much so far, tapped his brother’s shoulder to let her take over.

‘The Violet Aether is called Extrasensory Perception by the Oracle System.’ The shy young woman merely stated. ‘At first glance, its effect is not much different from classical perception. To be honest, in my case, it’s even less effective. »

‘What do you mean?’ »

‘First of all, I’d have to explain why I unlocked it so early and you didn’t...’ Lu Yan stammered, suddenly looking at her feet in embarrassment.

‘I’ll take care of it, sis.’ Her brother intervened to help her out of the predicament with a conciliatory smile. He knew exactly what was bothering her.

Lu Yifeng stared at Jake and Kyle in turn, feeling awkward about it as well. Finally, after taking a deep breath, he resolved to spill the beans.

‘Simply put, we’re idiots. All of us. Lu Yan has been an exceptional genius since childhood. A genuine one. An IQ higher than 210, perfect pitch, 25/10 of visual acuity (it really exists: the person in question can read newspaper characters of 1 mm at a distance of 5m), and can see Ultraviolet (the normal human has 3 cones to see colors:

blue, red and green, some very rare have a 4th one. So they see colors you have never seen before).

‘Basically, her intelligence and senses are unique. Her Body Status indicated 21 of intelligence and 20 of perception as soon as she received her Oracle. It is suspected that these are the or one of the conditions required to unlock Extrasensory Perception. »

Jake’s ego had just taken a hit. Even though there were many gifted people in his family, it was still classic giftedness. 150 or 160 IQs for the best of them. Impressive and unattainable for most, but in the realm of the possible. In comparison, Lu Yan was a real oddity.

‘I don’t think that’s enough to unlock the seventh stat, otherwise our robots equipped with a quantum computer processor would have long since developed psychic abilities.’ Jake pointed out a flaw in Lu Yifeng’s explanation.

‘Indeed.’ The young Asian boy nodded. ‘Even on earth you may have heard of mentalists, psychics, fortune tellers, people who are luckier than others, or who claim to have excellent instincts. »

‘Mmmm...’ Jake didn’t dare contradict him, even though it was superstitious bullshit to him.

‘Of course, all these people are fakes.’ Lu Yifeng immediately explained himself when he saw Jake and Kyle’s puzzled expression in front of him. ‘Most of them are quacks, and those who formally believed it cannot pass the test of a serious double-blind study. »

‘So?’ Kyle interrupted him, not sure what he was getting at.

‘And so, that doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist or that it never existed. There really are some strange phenomena. It’s just that most of the

time it acts below the level of evidence required to be authenticated. Lu Yan is one of those cases.

‘ We realized at an early age that she won abnormally often at games of chance and that her decisions were often correct when instinct or luck was the only decision-making element present. »

‘Couldn’t it just be a subconscious instinct? ‘Jake immediately disputed in good Cartesian.

‘After all, if her brain processes information faster and her senses are much more developed, she may be absorbing and processing a lot of information she is not aware of. Body language, the look, a texture, the smell of the wind, instinct may seem supernatural, but it responds to a logical explanation. »

‘Hmm, you’re not wrong. ‘Lu Yifeng admitted it was a valid argument. ‘But we think it’s just the second condition. With great intelligence and sharp senses, we can develop a kind of sixth sense, which synthesizes the information recorded by our senses and interprets it. According to Lu Yan, this would open the door to Extrasensory Perception. »

Jake wasn’t at all convinced by that speech. Artificial intelligence on earth was well developed in the 22nd century. It was perfectly possible to create a robot more intelligent than Lu Yan and capable of perceiving much more information in its environment, such as electromagnetism or X- and gamma rays. This probably had to exist, at least experimentally.

Lu Yan suddenly realized that they were mistaken about Extrasensory Perception, as was his brother. She tried to clarify her brother’s words in her small voice.

‘I unlocked the seventh Aether Stat when I received my bracelet, but that doesn’t mean you don’t have that stat too. Like the other Aether stats, we all had 10 points by default on earth. It’s the same with the violet Aether.

‘I only unlocked it because the Oracle System deemed the requirements were met. All the missions and quests that I’ve done in Trial Worlds have given me a lot of points, making me rank 3, almost rank 4. This is a special reward. And my real feeling was that the Oracle considered that I had already participated in several Ordeals. Some kind of bug, even though I don’t think this artificial intelligence can bug. »

It was plausible, thought Jake.

‘What do you think, Xi?’

[It is likely.] She confirmed in a dull tone.

[The Ordeals are extremely important to the Oracle. Conflicts between Universes are resolved in part through these Ordeals, and they are very important to the Oracle’s growth. If the Oracle has deemed that she has exceptional talent to succeed in these Ordeals, and meets the necessary conditions, a reward like this makes perfect sense].

‘I see...’

‘Lu Yan, were you the best at Trial Worlds, or were other people better than you?’ Jake suddenly changed the subject.

‘I don’t know about that. There were only a few thousand players playing at that time.’ She tried to remember the events not without some difficulty. ‘I think I was average. I was finishing the levels, but

my final score wasn't exceptional. I don't think I was even in the top 2000 ranking of professional players. »

That was good news and bad news. It meant that mankind had many more prodigies than he had imagined and that their odds were not so bad. Even at the beginning of the 21st century, the absolute IQ record was 234, but many thought that this was incorrect, that IQ tests were simply inadequate. If that was true, it changed many things.

Most of these geniuses had undoubtedly been approached and then recruited by the Earth Government. Others like Lu Yan had probably refused, because they were too young or wanted to keep their freedom.

That was the bad news. If he met such people in his Ordeal, he would surely be a pawn at the mercy of their schemes. He could only hope that they were as far away from him as possible and that his Ordeal would not be affected.

It was the first time he had ever felt helpless. He felt like a kindergarten child having to prepare for a big debate on General Relativity against Einstein himself. A painful experience. Especially for Einstein...

In conclusion, he absolutely had to get smarter. The problem was that it would take a lot of Aether to do that. A lot of Aether.

He realized then that the most important question had not been asked.

‘ What does Extrasensory Perception do ?‘