

The Oracle Paths

Volume 4: The Purgatory

Chapter 359 - Faction Name

"Fuck, who hit me?" Jake turned around sharply with a furious expression on his face.

Everyone but Tim raised their hands in solidarity. Jake was mad, but he couldn't really take revenge on all of them.

"I'm sorry Jake, but a name like that just isn't possible..." Will took the lead in justifying their actions. But his apologetic smile, far from pacifying him, had the exact opposite effect on Jake.

Giving everyone a glare with the exception of Tim, who was on his side, he immediately warned them that they had better have something better to suggest or he would stick to his choice.

"By the way, I warn you in advance," He added unequivocally, "my Floating Island will be called Jakeland, whatever the name of the faction that is eventually decided upon. If anyone complains again I will immediately call the faction "Sick My Duck" or another rotten pun of the same kind and then it'll be too late to come crying."

"Ugh... I already have a headache..." Esya stammered in a low voice while massaging her forehead.

Sarah and her older sister Enya gave her a compassionate look, but they were too exasperated to speak.

"You can name your Floating Island however you want, Jake, but the faction's name must definitely have a powerful meaning." Will knew when to let go to better negotiate the important issues. Since they too could get their own Floating Island, the name of the island itself wasn't that important.

"Actually, it's quite common in the Mirror Universe for factions to include the name of their leader in their name." Agent Keru suddenly intervened after observing their bickering all this time. She was clearly used to this kind of scene.

"See?" Jake sneered with an obnoxious smug face.

"My gosh! Kill me..." Esya complained again.

She knew she was weak and had no say, but for a noble magician from a famous family and empire, Jake's naming sense was just too bad. Being affiliated with such a faction was already sickening her with shame.

Enya was more *mâture* and wasn't particularly bothered by it. However, it was definitely Sarah who knew best how to handle Jake.

"What do you think of us, Jake?" She blurted out all of a sudden.

Caught off guard by this unusual question, the concerned person frowned,

"What do you mean by that?"

"Nothing special. "She immediately denied it. "If we're just your subordinates, then Jake's faction is a fitting name. If you see us as your friends or at least comrades, that name is very... selfish, don't you think?"

She had said these words as tactfully as she could, but Will couldn't help but whistle to salute her courage. Only an arrogant and manipulative former bitch could say those words without batting an eyelid.

But paradoxically, it was these few words that echoed in Jake's solitary and individualistic mind. Now that he thought about it, in addition to lacking originality, this faction's name actually gave the impression that it belonged to him. Although this was the case in principle, he was not obliged to show it so openly.

Even most dictators had the diplomatic subtlety to falsify their elections or eliminate their opponents in "accidents" to give the illusion that they had been democratically elected. Jake wasn't there, but it was at times like these that he realized how socially inept and selfish he was.

"So, what are you proposing?" Jake finally conceded as he stared at them one by one.

"What about the Justice League?" Tim suggested with infectious enthusiasm.

"Sounds good. I'm all for it!" Esya immediately accepted the suggestion.

For a young noblewoman full of compassionate principles, it was an honorable name. Enya didn't seem to mind either and nodded her head in agreement. Will, Kyle and Sarah, on the other hand, reacted completely differently.

"Absolutely not!" Sarah shrieked in horror.

"Why not?" Kyle thought the name was a little too bold, but he was a comic book fan, so he couldn't really coax her back.

Will was also upset, but on a cosmic scale such a name wasn't so bad, just a little too committed... But for Sarah, it was just unacceptable.

"We're not going to take the name of a bunch of comics superheroes as a faction name! No way!"

"What's a comics?" Enya and Esya asked to unison. The term "superheroes" sounded super badass and noble to their ears.

While they were bickering, Jake had already suggested Tim's idea to the receptionist.

"This faction name has already been used 246,387 times in the Mirror Universe. "Keru informed them in a neutral tone after consulting her database. "Are you sure you want to choose this name?"

Sarah who was about to start a long self-righteous litany was instantly slackjawed. It was just too ridiculous!

And yet Will wasn't really surprised. He had already anticipated such a situation. The Mirror Universe was so vast that statistically it was normal. The same words or at least words with similar meanings existed in most languages and it was normal that these words illustrating strong values were so often preferred.

Sarah's indignation having been doused, she surprised herself by proposing ridiculous names such as the Totally Spies, Black Widow, Red Riding Hood, Frozen, Beauty and the Beast and even a few unlikely names made up from her own first name...

And the truth turned out to be cruel, transcending fiction by far. All her attempts, including those based on her own first name, had already been used several times. It was practically impossible to create an original faction name unless it was completely nonsensical.

Tvu nzmgiuq jfl rmo ovu lnuiiare, gpo ovu qufrare. Or ovu lhfiu md ovu Mazzmz Urasuzlu, dartare f ifrepfeu aturoahfi om Ereialv jfl lofoahfiw aqnmzmgfgiu, gpo rmo aqnmllagi uavuz. Hmjusuz, ao zuqfarut omm zfzu om laeradahfroiw fdduho ovu nzmzmgfaiaw ovfo ojm dfhoaml jmpit gu rfqut aturoahfiw ar lnuiiare.

All of the factions with the same name that Keru found in her database had of course different languages of origin and had been translated into Oraclean so that the entire Mirror Universe could understand the meaning. On this scale, whether a name was serious or the result of a joke, almost everything had been tried before.

"Do you really want to be original?" Jake said at last as he looked at their depressed faces.

"That would be ideal, but a clear and impactful faction name is more important. "Will sighed, staring frustratedly at Keru's hologram in front of them. "By hearing our faction name, all these aliens must understand what are our intentions and our values and especially not to confuse us with other factions already known. Otherwise that will amount to advertise the more ancient factions of the same name. We can take advantage of this, but it could also be detrimental to us. If these factions with identical names are old, getting information about them with our Oracle Rank will be totally impossible."

"I confirm. "Keru nodded with a friendly smile.

"You will still find me arrogant and selfish, but I have a way to be original. "Jake woke them up from their gloom.

"Say it... What do we risk after all..." Sarah whispered without much hope.

"According to Cekt Mogusar, I am the first Myrtharian of the Mirror Universe. Even if an identically pronounced word exists in other languages, once translated into Oraclean its meaning will be unique since no two words are identical in this language. What do you think of Myrtharians?"

"It's a bit over the top..." Kyle began to grumble. He wasn't convinced at all.

"I like it. "Sarah said, to everyone's surprise. "So what? I'm Myrmidian, it's almost the same thing. Maybe in the future Jake will give us some of his blood and we can all evolve into Myrtharian. It's a good incentive to recruit new members."

Buhflu md oval, Kwiu lptturiw lomnnut gaohvare. Hu jfl film Mwzqatafr. Ir f jfw, lphv f dfhoamr rfqu arhiptut vaq fl juui.

"It's not too bad. "Will confessed with a thoughtful expression. "But it's too bland. Anyone looking into what a Myrtharian is will have the impression that we are a group of ferocious warriors eager for battle and challenge. We might try to soften this impression to appear more friendly. Otherwise, it's going to be difficult for me to use our faction's name to propel my business... "

"Sexy Myrtharians?" Sarah smirked with a teasing wink to the businessman while taking a lascivious pose.

"Invincible Myrtharians?" Kyle shouted with flames in his eyes.

"This..." Jake barely refrained from making a caustic remark.

'Anyone here can suggest that name, but after your performance in the previous Ordeal, it wasn't the first idea that would have come to me...'

Jake wasn't the only one thinking this. Faced with the sceptical and awkward looks of his comrades, Kyle immediately realized that he had blundered and quickly lost his enthusiasm. He was so ashamed that he wanted to disappear underground forever. Most of all, he was angry with himself and vowed to never suffer such humiliation again. It was just unbearable.

"Ahem, anything else?" Will patiently refocused their attention on the subject, saving the Playboy from his predicament.

"Fiery Myrtharians?"

"Myrtharian Crew?"

"Lucky Myrtharians? "

" ..."

After a long and unnecessary debate about the ideal combination, it was Kyle who finally proposed "Myrtharian Nerds" after having lowered his ego and his expectations.

Jake and Will suddenly stiffened up with ugly faces. Why did they feel like they were being directly targeted by this new name? But this word could not contrast more strongly with the overbearingness of the word Myrtharian. Will could feel that with such a faction name, it was difficult to confuse them with an evil or mafia faction.

"Mwahahahahaha. "It was Sarah's burst of laughter that broke the silence. "Good one! "

"I like it. "Tim exclaimed, justifying that he liked the sound.

Jake and Will snorted inwardly when they saw the kid shamelessly switching sides.

"What's a nerd?" Enya and Esya asked again to the unison for the umpteenth time.

Feeling that a new animated debate was about to begin, Jake, who was already fed up to the brim, sighed long and hard and let out just a "Whatever..." before bringing this proposal to Keru, who had been incredibly patient and kind all along.

"Myrtharian Nerds... has never been used in the Mirror Universe. "Keru announced after a few seconds of consulting her own interface. "Do you want to validate this choice?"

"I validate. "Jake said, accepting his fate.

"Congratulations. You are now the happy leader of the Myrtharian Nerds faction. "Please now choose your Faction Skills."