

# OPHIDIAN WARS

## Ophidian Wars: An Interview with Arkzilipul

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OGN Reporter Yura Kadasak walks into a building where no humans are allowed in the Dkarthad Homeworld planet as the entrance to the Anatokian Immersion Pits, a recreation of a mud oasis found on Skiverkilial, Arkzilipul's planet of origin, places there.

A hooded male alien with dark orange skin and green eyes leads him down a long corridor without making a whisper. They come to an elevator and take it down several levels. When they get to the bottom, they walk down a wide spiral staircase made of dark stone. As they descend into the darkness, it seems as if they descend down into the building's foundation of rock and granite.

The stairs lead to a large room lit by the luminous abdomens of two Cr'athak insects standing as guards to the entrance of a cave. Beyond the entrance, moans are heard and a bitter stench of burning Skiverkilial incense makes Yura Kadasak cover her mouth.

The hooded male leads Yura past the guards into a larger area with a very high ceiling, as they bow to him. Dimly lit, a lot of figures move slowly in the background. Yura twists her head in the direction of a sudden crack of a whip. It appears a demon is being tortured... or pleased. It gurgles a laugh after each lash. Yura shivers as she shakes her head. The male touches his arm and walks gently towards the center of the area.

There, emerged from his chest down in an elevated pool of bubbling black mud sits Arkzilipul. The male bows to the demon.

"Get lost," he says to the hooded male. As he leaves, Yura begins by taking a step forward. "Thank you for seeing m—"

Arkzilipul puts his hand up, silencing the mortal. His muscles are covered in the oily black mud. The odor seems unbearable for Yura as the reporter breathes sporadically.

"Come closer," Arkzilipul whispers.

Yura takes another brave step forward. Arkzilipul grins. And waits as Yura approaches the demon. "Mr. Arkzilipul—"

"Graaa!" Arkzilipul tilts his head back and closes his eyes. "Never address me with humanoid titles!" The demon leans forward in the mud, it is very thick and flows slowly. The ripples move like a wave of roaches toward Yura and splash at the edge of the pool. Bubbles croak softly as they burst.

"Forgive me, thank you for having this interview." Arkzilipul cracks the bones in his own neck.

Yura continues, "Can you tell OGN more about your past... before Ophidian." Yura thinks there is something else in the pool with Arkzilipul, but she is not sure.

Arkzilipul responds, "Wars. Pain. Destruction of the innocent. Torture. Terrors beyond your wildest nightmares."

Yura continues, "Why did you try gladiator combat?"

"Change of pace, perhaps." Hideous giggles sound in the background as demonic enchantresses have taken interest in the interview. They are scantily clothed in dark and loose fabrics.

"You won various singles events six years in a row. And after winning the Ophidian Ironman Deathmatch, you've grown quite a following. What are your thoughts on your fans?"

Gray hands with red fingernails rise from the mud pool massaging Arkzilipul as he speaks, "Most of them are fools. I draw my powers from my opponents and their weaknesses."

Yura continues, growing bolder, "What about Freakshow?"

All motion in the room stops. The hands freeze, the enchantresses gasp in silence, the whip falls.

A heavy rage covers Arkzilipul as he rises from his bath. The hands vanish. Black mud slowly drips off his skin.

"Freakshow has little time left. When we meet again, it will be the end for him. And this time, no one will save him." Arkzilipul sinks back into the mud and wades closer to Yura, "One last question. It will be time to eat soon."

Yura continues, "What are your thoughts on the recent fan incident when you (in)advertently pulled two fans from the front row to shield you resulting on their deaths due to injuries received by your opponent Version 9.1?"

Arkzilipul smiles, "They were weak, but their death are the result of the clumsiness of Version 9.1. What more could you expect from that Construct. He should have been retired for years."

"Thank you Arkzilipul, enjoy your meal."

Arkzilipul stands in the pool, "Not so fast, human, you will join my dinner."

Yura gets nervous, "Um, I'm not very hungry."

Arkzilipul's laughter cracks like lightning, "Who said you were going to eat?"

Yura stood still, and pulls a contract from her pocket "The Ophidian Gladiatorial Service News took precautions regarding you after what happened last time you granted OGN an interview."

Arkzilipul stopped smiling and gazed Yura with disbelief.

Yura continued standing still ahead of him "After what to did to Henry, Arkzilipul, the OGN managed to get a contract from Ophidian that states that if you ever harm another OGN crew member you'll be marked for termination"

"Graaa!" Arkzilipul tilts his head back and closes his eyes, shouting "Damon Paul get over here!"

The hooded male alien with dark orange skin and green eyes returns to the chamber. The male bows to the demon, "Yes Master."

Arkzilipul points for the contract that Yura still has in her hand. Damon Paul came closer to her to read the contract.

Damon Paul makes a unpronounceable sound, and turns to his Master "The contract is valid!"

Arkzilipul laughs again as he comes out of the pool, dripping in black mud. "Very well... Another time... Get lost from my sight."

Damon Paul turns and take Yura Kadasak into the outer entrance of the Anatokian Immersion Pits. As the cameras fade to black, Arkzilipul reenters the elevated pool of bubbling black mud.

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