

FOOLISH GAME OF THE GODS

Chapter 10: A Rare Moment of Respite

Before Xia Wan “gave birth,” Cheng Shi cast a timely healing spell on her.

Because Xia Wan was pregnant with multiple “children,” the healing spell was highly effective, instantly restoring her to full health.

However, this also meant that the newborns she delivered would be exceptionally healthy.

As the group ran frantically, it wasn’t long before the lifeforms growing inside Xia Wan began to make their entrance into the world.

The life created by the [Genesis Seeds] wasn’t going to wait for some delivery doctor. Midway through their run, the bulges on Xia Wan’s body started to burst open, releasing several grotesque creatures—half flesh, half plant-like vines.

The good news was that these vines weren't particularly strong. Song Yawen managed to deal with them on his own.

The bad news was that Xia Wan was now fine, but Nangong was on the verge of collapse.

Her eyelids fluttered half-closed, her body burning up with fever. She was clearly teetering on the edge of life and death. The wounds on her ribs and abdomen still reeked of [Decay], continuing to rot, and her breathing was shallow and labored.

"If this continues, Nangong will die."

After having just survived a life-and-death ordeal together, and with more than half of the trial remaining, no one in the group wanted to lose a teammate here.

They had weathered the Terror Fiend army's assault; dying here would feel like such a waste.

Chen Chong stopped, dropping Cao Sansui to the ground. He turned to Cheng Shi and said:

“Nangong’s body can’t handle [Birth]’s healing. If you can’t heal her, let the mage use time magic to keep her alive.”

Cao Sansui wanted to help, but he was a mage, not a priest or bard, and didn’t have that many support spells.

Seeing the worried faces around him, Cheng Shi sighed, reaching into his personal storage space and pulling out a small red bottle.

“What’s that?” Song Yawen immediately came over, sensing something from the bottle that reminded him of [Death].

“A-rank potion, ‘The Scorn of the Dead.’ It’s made from the devout followers of [Death].

Their emissaries believe some people are unworthy of death, so they extract this scorn and brew it into potions to punish those who've committed grave offenses.

It prevents them from nearing [Death], cutting them off from His teachings.”

As Cheng Shi explained, he poured the potion over Nangong.

“As long as it's mixed with her blood, she won't die, even from severe injuries. But, it won't heal her either—it'll just keep her alive.”

“What? There's something like that?” Song Yawen, quick with his hands, tried to catch a drop to examine, but Cheng Shi was quicker, slapping his hand away and laughing.

“Even a single drop missing, and it won't work. You want her to die?”

Song Yawen's face flushed in embarrassment. “I... I didn't mean to. Nangong, I'm sorry, I wasn't trying to—”

Nangong, pale and too weak to reply, simply watched as the liquid quickly merged into her bloodstream. Then...

She felt nothing.

“Is this... really working?”

Cheng Shi gave her a sidelong glance and replied:

“It’s working. And it’s expensive. Once you’re better, make sure to pay me back.”

Gritting her teeth, Nangong nodded heavily. “Got it!”

Although Xia Wan had just “given birth” and was still bleeding from various places, as a follower of [Birth], she had a natural resistance to “reproduction,” so Cheng Shi didn’t use any potions on her. Instead, he healed her as usual.

They were lucky—she wasn't pregnant again.

Chen Chong, seeing that Cheng Shi had smoothly saved two lives, asked seriously:

“Cheng Shi, what's your real score?”

“I...”

“Not 1501.”

“...”

Cheng Shi glanced around, seeing the questioning looks in everyone's eyes. Though they didn't believe him, he still brazenly insisted:

“It really is 1501.”

Chen Chong wasn't having it. His tone grew stern:

“You think I'm stupid? That healing chain you cast earlier—no way that was anything less than an S-rank talent. And those two bottles of ‘The Scorn of the Dead’? There's no way you're below 2000.”

The starting score for the [Path to Godhood] was 1000 points. At each settlement, falling below 1000 meant death, while those scoring above 1200 could unlock B-rank talents or items. Above 1600, you could get A-ranks, and only scores above 2000 could unlock S-rank talents.

“Right, right, so do you want to keep guessing my score, or follow me?”
Cheng Shi intervened, scooping Nangong into his arms and leading the way forward.

The others exchanged a helpless glance, then hurried to follow him.

What could they do if the big shot didn't want to admit the truth? Obviously, they'd just follow his lead!

Song Yawen, who couldn't keep his mouth shut, bombarded Cheng Shi with questions the entire way.

“Brother Cheng, what's your talent? Tell me!”

“Brother Cheng, what's your real score?”

“Brother Cheng, do you have more of that red potion? Can I trade you something for it...?”

“Brother Cheng...”

Finally, Cheng Shi couldn't take it anymore and asked:

“...Aren’t assassins supposed to be the silent type?”

Song Yawen grinned cheekily. “I call it contrast. It’s trendy nowadays.”

“ ... ”

...

Thankfully, for the next hour, no other units from the Skeleton Army came searching for them.

The group trekked across the open plains, with no place to hide, until they finally spotted a dense forest in the distance.

Always talkative, Song Yawen volunteered to scout ahead. He found that it was an abandoned home of the Wood Elves. Aside from a few deserted treehouses, there were no signs of life.

Relieved, Cheng Shi and Chen Chong quickly led the group, especially the injured, into the forest.

Cao Sansui was the first to stabilize; he had burned through too much mental energy, leaving him weak and unable to control his muscles properly. He could only weakly mutter to the others about what he knew of the Wood Elves.

“The Wood Elves are followers of [Prosperity], a race eternally neutral. They revere nature and never live among other races. If they chose this place as their home, it should be relatively safe.”

Song Yawen, hearing this, asked curiously:

“If it’s safe, why did they abandon it?”

“I said *relatively* safe. Before the war, this place must have been safe. But after the Skeleton Army launched its attack on the Land of Hope, there’s nowhere safe on this continent anymore.”

Meanwhile, Chen Chong kept watch outside the treehouse for safety. Turning back, he asked:

“I’ve heard that the Skeleton Army attacked the Land of Hope, but what was the cause of the war?”

Cao Sansui shook his head weakly:

“The people in the mage channel speculate it was a war of faith, but those in the faith channel think the underground creatures were fighting over something. [Time] only watches the present, so our information is limited. Maybe the followers of [Memory] could know more by looking into the past.”

Cheng Shi had been listening with interest, but when he heard the name of the god [Memory], his smile froze for a moment.

“I’ve checked the time. We’ve been in this trial for 6 hours; we still need to survive for another 18. But I need 10 hours to recover...”

Cao Sansui made it clear: they had pushed through so far, but with no mage support for the next 10 hours, things were going to get tough.

No one knew what they might face next. And just because they had somehow survived the hellish Terror Fiend ambush didn't mean the rest of the trial would be any less dangerous.

For an ordinary trial, maybe. But for a special trial? No way.

Cheng Shi pondered the trial's name, his brows furrowing slightly.

“Song of Blood and Fire... We've already seen the blood. So where's the fire?”

Tsk. The group was holed up in a forest now. If a fire swept through...

Would it be like the ancient tale of the “Eight Hundred Miles of Burning Camps”?

No way, right?

Sigh, no point overthinking. Take things as they come.

Cheng Shi scratched his head and pulled out a bottle of cola from his storage, gulping it down.

“???”

Song Yawen stared dumbfounded at the scene.

“Brother Cheng, personal storage space is incredibly precious—and you use it to store that?”

Cheng Shi pointed at Chen Chong and laughed. “Chen Chong stores wine in his space. What’s wrong with me keeping a few bottles of cola? If a man loses his cola, what’s the point of cola anymore?”

Chen Chong didn’t turn around, but the furious nodding of his head showed that he deeply agreed.

Song Yawen had some emergency water in his personal storage, but that was for survival in extreme conditions, nothing to match the pure joy of cola. Watching Cheng Shi drink so happily, he couldn’t help but swallow his saliva.

“Brother Cheng... do you have more cola?”

Without a word, Cheng Shi pulled out five more bottles.

“Brother Cheng??? Is your entire storage space filled with cola?”

Cheng Shi raised an eyebrow, remaining silent.

Song Yawen was thrilled. After all, it wasn't his storage space that was being used up. He quickly grabbed a bottle and even distributed the remaining ones to the others.

As it turned out, enjoying some soda after a battle was incredibly refreshing.

Everyone felt a little more relaxed after a couple of sips.

Even Nangong, who could barely move, managed to drink some with Cheng Shi's help.

"The forest is still too exposed. Let's rest for 2-3 more hours, and then we'll move further away," Chen Chong said, finishing his drink and stepping outside, sword in hand.

Standing guard was his duty as a follower of [Order].

Xia Wan and Song Yawen stayed inside, tending to the wounded and taking the chance to rest their eyes.

But as soon as Song Yawen closed his eyes, a wave of sleepiness washed over him.

The drowsiness came so gently, so comfortably, that he had no desire to resist.

Thud.

Song Yawen, who had been sitting on the ground, suddenly slumped to the floor. The other injured members of the group also slowly closed their eyes, drifting into slumber.

Just as everyone had fallen deeply asleep, Cheng Shi suddenly opened his eyes, a mischievous glint flashing within them.

“Tsk. Drinking whatever you’re given... clearly, you haven’t been beaten enough.”

Chuckling to himself, his gaze shifted toward Nangong.