

# FOOLISH GAME OF THE GODS

## Chapter 14: Is Fate a Bitch?

Let's rewind a bit, to the moment when Cheng Shi shouted, "Fate is a bitch."

Above the skies of the Land of Hope, in a plane beyond mortal reach, three pairs of eyes opened simultaneously.

The first pair of eyes was heterochromatic: the left one burning like fire, the right one flowing like blood.

As soon as they opened, a rousing symphony began playing in the void, with every note stirring the soul and igniting a fierce battle spirit.

"This is... my trial... You... broke the rules..."

The second pair of eyes was cold and emotionless, filled with spiraling patterns in the whites, with tiny stars of divergence etched in the pupils.

Just making eye contact with them gave the feeling that one's soul was being pulled into an endless void.

This second entity glanced at the first with a cold tone:

“Since when did you exchange authority with [Order]?”

“...”

It was clearly a sarcastic remark, and the first entity remained silent, unable to retort.

As the two figures faced off, a low chuckle echoed from the third pair of eyes, the corners of their eyes lifting in amusement.

The third pair of eyes looked similar to the second, but the light in them was much more vibrant, more... human.

The third entity silently watched the first two confront each other, not speaking, only smiling.

“Why are you here...?”

“I heard blasphemous words and felt the mockery of fate. I have come to exercise my authority and exile the ignorant sinner.”

“This is... my trial... you... broke the rules...”

“...”

This time, it was the second entity's turn to fall silent.

The third pair of eyes suddenly burst into laughter.

“Interesting, very interesting! One idiot who believes in himself, and another fool who can’t talk about anything other than war. Hahaha, this is too fun.”

“Amusing?”

“Isn’t it?”

The second pair of eyes narrowed slightly, coldly glaring at the third.

“Why are you here?”

“Why are you here?”

“He is my follower, yet he has blasphemed against me. Naturally, I have the right to strip him of his qualifications. Or are you planning to violate the [Covenant] and protect him?”

“But now he’s in my hands, which makes him my follower. Are you planning to violate the [Covenant] and exile him?”

The eyes of the second entity, which pierced through the void, glared coldly for a moment. After a brief silence, they slowly faded away.

The third pair of eyes began laughing again.

“Why are you here...?”

“Me? I’m here to save my beloved follower, of course.”

Saying this, a crystalline, jade-like finger extended, piercing through the endless planes and reaching the presence of [The Wrath of Abomination].

The entity merely placed the finger where it stood, and the surrounding firelight retracted and tightened, scattering in avoidance.

[The Wrath of Abomination]'s tantrum was abruptly interrupted, and its rage flared. However, as it glimpsed the eyes behind the finger, its fury instantly cooled. The massive being trembled slightly.

Silently, with precision, it pulled the prison gate a little tighter, and no more meteors fell in the direction indicated by the finger.

The first pair of eyes widened slightly, the blood within them boiling, the flames roaring.

“...You... broke the rules...”

The third pair of eyes blinked innocently.

“And what of it?”

“ ... ”

The blood-and-fire-filled eyes stared at the third entity for a moment, then fell silent.

“Tch. Your followers wage wars across the realms to catch a glimpse of you. And you, the lord of war, bearing the name of [War], don’t even have the courage to fight me.”

“...The [Covenant]... cannot be broken...”

“Ha, boring.”

The third entity cast a glance toward the unknown stars and vanished in an instant.

...

Everyone was exhausted from running, especially Chen Chong and Xia Wan.

When they realized they had truly escaped danger, they refused to take another step, collapsing onto the ground and gasping for air.

Thanks to Nangong's healing, Chen Chong's condition was manageable, though Nangong — whom he had carried the entire time — looked pale, as if she had been dragged through the mud.

Xia Wan, on the other hand, despite receiving constant healing from Cheng Shi, had once again taken on the appearance of a “mother” in her “tenth month of pregnancy.”

Solving this problem would require the “abortion specialist,” Song Yawen.

Dutifully, Song Yawen stationed himself near Xia Wan, and each time a new twisted lifeform burst from her skin, he would immediately swing his blade, dispatching the “monster” before it even had the chance to open its eyes.

As he worked, he grumbled:

“Why is it that all of [Birth]’s newborns look so sanity-draining? Do lawful gods really prefer this kind of aesthetic?”

Xia Wan pursed her lips, saying nothing. She turned to look at Cheng Shi.

Her gaze was clear: Cheng Shi had more experience and a higher score, so he should know better.

There was little discussion of [Birth] in Cheng Shi’s faith channel, and he certainly had no idea why things were this way. Still, he confidently offered an explanation, though his face exposed a hint of discomfort.

“When you were unborn, if you could change your appearance, what would you want to look like?”

These newborns, who worship ‘my lord,’ simply want to resemble what they think ‘my lord’ prefers. The thing is...

They don't actually know what [Birth] likes, so they let their imaginations run wild.

And, well, you can see the results for yourselves.”

This was the first time anyone had heard such an explanation. Cheng Shi's words carried such conviction that they didn't sound like speculation but rather a knowledgeable explanation. Given how many times Cheng Shi had saved them from certain death, everyone was inclined to believe him.

Only Cao Sansui, eyes wide, sought confirmation:

“The general belief among [Birth] players is that the newborns *do* know what [Birth] looks like, but they can only recreate a part of it. What you're saying is completely different—you're saying that even the newborns born under [Birth]'s influence don't know what He looks like?

Is this true?”

The others turned to Cheng Shi, awaiting his response.

The reason they took this so seriously was that the answer directly impacted the relationship between gods and their followers.

If the newborns knew [Birth]'s true form and tried to replicate it, that meant gods could accept the reverence of their followers. In that case, the rumors of "being close to the gods and saving oneself" might hold some truth.

But if the newborns didn't know [Birth]'s form and were merely trying to please Him, the relationship between gods and followers might be much colder.

And coldness implies distance between the divine and mortals.

Those who begged for divine favor might forever remain trapped in the gods' games, surviving merely as players.

Cheng Shi had no idea if what he said was true or not. However, lying had become both his “habit” and his “restriction.” Even when he didn’t want to lie, his mouth would often have other ideas.

His smile was a bit strained, but his tone left no room for doubt:

“Absolutely true.”

Xia Wan blinked, staring at the tentacle-like newborns emerging from her body. Shocked, she asked:

“Where did you learn that?”

Cheng Shi smiled mysteriously. “That’s a secret.”

Xia Wan pondered this for a moment and didn’t press further.

However, Song Yawen suddenly interjected:

“Brother Cheng, are you [Birth]’s [Chosen] by any chance?”

The [Chosen], the top-ranked player of each faith on the [Ladder of Ascent].

Cheng Shi froze for a moment before hurriedly waving his hand to deny it:

“No, no, no! I’m nowhere near the top of the [Ladder of Ascent]. I’d have to break my neck just to catch a glimpse of the top.”

Hearing this, Xia Wan and Nangong exchanged glances, the same thought crossing their minds:

“Could Cheng Shi actually be [Birth]’s Chosen? Only a [Chosen] could have such an unbelievable way of escaping danger...”

Seeing their suspicion, Cheng Shi instinctively recoiled, continuing to deny it.

But Xia Wan didn't believe him. She quickly checked the [Ladder of Ascent] for [Birth] and [Corruption], seeing that the top-ranked [Birth] player's ID was "Infertility Specialist."

"..."

That name... kind of fit. It really did.

Just as the conversation continued to revolve around Cheng Shi, Chen Chong—having rested for a while and regained his strength—stepped in to interrupt.

"Uh... shouldn't we find a safe place first before discussing who the Chosen is?"

"Oh, right! Staying alive is more important."

The group exchanged glances and then burst into laughter.

The joy of surviving a life-and-death ordeal finally bubbled over.

“Normally, after the trial’s challenge has been identified, the danger level drops sharply, but we should still be cautious.

Let’s head southeast. Based on the battle positions of the Land of Hope and the direction the Terror Fiends were marching, the southeast should take us away from the center of the war.

If we walk for a while longer, we might reach the Stormwind Mountains. We could probably avoid any further conflicts there and hold out until the end of the trial.”

Cao Sansui had returned to his usual composed and knowledgeable self, leading the group toward the southeast, with Chen Chong by his side.

After surviving the Meteor Firestorm, everyone's spirits had lifted considerably, though they remained vigilant.

Chen Chong took point, Song Yawen scouted the perimeter, Cao Sansui managed the group from the center, and Nangong treated Xia Wan's injuries while sipping healing potions.

As for Cheng Shi...

He seemed like an elderly tourist on his first group trip, eagerly pestering "tour guide" Cao Sansui with endless questions about everything related to the Land of Hope.

Learning about history might improve a player's survival odds in the trials. Cheng Shi hadn't paid much attention to it before because the information in his faith channel was unreliable, and the intel in the class channel was hard to verify. So, he had only skimmed through it.

Now, with a “living history book” in front of him, he wasn’t going to miss the opportunity to ask.