

FOOLISH GAME OF THE GODS

Chapter 4: Goddess of Fertility

Everyone was dumbfounded.

As the saying goes, there are no wrong nicknames, only wrongly given names.

In the [Faith Game], the number of male players who chose to become priests was already small, and those who chose to follow [Birth] were even fewer.

So when these two rare choices appeared together, right in front of them, it was like winning the lottery.

“Goddess of Fertility” was the nickname players gave to “Fertility Priests.” This nickname came about because priests of [Birth] had a chance to make their teammates “pregnant” when blessing or healing them.

This “side effect” from their god’s [Divine Will] didn’t lead to literal pregnancies, nor were the organs limited to the uterus. What was “conceived” wasn’t always a legitimate lifeform either—it could be anything across various phyla and kingdoms, with appearances that ranged from bizarre to absurd.

Because the will of [Birth] revered reproduction, using divine power could result in various “accidental pregnancy” situations that left players both amused and exasperated.

But, don’t underestimate this “pregnancy.” For every “new life” conceived within the healed individual’s body, the effectiveness of the healing would increase by 30%.

Thus, the Fertility Priest had a very potent healing output.

Song Yawen waved his hands frantically, shaking his head as fast as a fan.

“Bro, I beg you, don’t heal me! I’d rather accept healing from a priest of an opposing faith than have you swell up my belly!”

He’d rather die than be healed by a male Fertility Priest.

If he got healed by him, how could he face people afterward?

Would he have to tell others he “carried” a male teammate’s “child”?

Ugh—

Nangong was equally shocked. As a priest herself, she knew the rarity of male Fertility Priests in their profession.

Running into one with such lottery-like odds left her both amused and bewildered, but more than that, she felt gratitude toward Cheng Shi.

She understood that he was trying to persuade the others to accept her presence. She was grateful, but with two others still having unclear faiths, she didn’t dare reveal hers.

After all, players of the [Descent] path had a bad reputation.

Even though she wasn't an enemy of Cheng Shi.

Xia Wan, standing nearby, noticed Nangong's hesitation. It was precisely this hesitation that made her realize Nangong wasn't necessarily an enemy of [Birth], and she suddenly felt relieved. However, her face remained cold as she said:

"I'm a Genesis Hunter."

A Genesis Hunter—one who follows [Birth].

"?"

Another follower of [Birth].

Everyone was surprised that someone as icy as Xia Wan chose to follow [Birth], except for Song Yawen, whose expression turned grim.

He also realized that Nangong wasn't an enemy of [Birth], but considering that [Life] and [Descent] each had only three gods, this meant there was a 50% chance she was his enemy.

Just as he was contemplating whether to hide his faith, Chen Chong waved his hand, interrupting the conversation.

“The path differences aren't our fault, nor should they add too much pressure. Since the two priests aren't enemies, we can split the healing duties.”

He pointed at Nangong and then at himself and Cao Sansui:

“Nangong will take care of me and the mage. As for the [Life] followers, you handle yourselves.”

He then turned to Xia Wan and asked:

“Since you’re a follower of [Birth], I assume you have no issue with Cheng Shi?”

Xia Wan shot a casual glance at the somewhat decent-looking Fertility Priest and, without changing her expression, nodded slightly.

“...”

Xia Wan’s cold demeanor didn’t reveal any awkwardness, but Cheng Shi’s expression had become rather... peculiar.

Even more so was Song Yawen’s.

“I...”

Honestly, Song Yawen wanted to refuse, but he knew when to hold back.

Enough time had already been wasted at the start of the trial. With everyone agreeing to this arrangement, refusing now would make him seem unreasonable.

The team couldn't afford major disagreements right at the beginning.

If push came to shove, he could just try to avoid getting hurt as much as possible.

There was no way he could accept healing from a male "Goddess of Fertility"!

Chen Chong had effortlessly assumed leadership of the group. Seeing no further objections, he addressed everyone once more:

"Let's cut the chatter. We have between half to an hour to prepare. We don't know the cause of this war yet, so we won't leave our landing zone recklessly. During this time, let's complete our [Divine Will] and then find a defensible position."

The so-called [Divine Will] was the ritual through which players prayed for blessings from their gods.

After choosing to follow a god, players were granted an initial [Faith Talent]. Upon completing a [Talent Trial], gods would grant additional [Faith Talents], each unique to the player.

Depending on their score on the [Path to Godhood], players could carry varying numbers of talents.

These talents greatly enhanced players' combat abilities and often served as the cornerstone of their different class builds.

Of course, talents could be active or passive. To use an active talent during a trial, players first had to perform their god's [Divine Will].

For example, the [Divine Will] of [Birth] was to "embrace reproduction and create new life."

To put it plainly, it meant: copulate.

If you wanted to get stronger, you had to copulate.

As the first god of the [Life] path, [Birth] was not only the prelude to life but also the origin of all things. It embraced the union of yin and yang and revered reproduction.

In order to seek its blessings, one must first lead by example.

However, since trials are randomly matched and everyone is a stranger, no one is going to voluntarily overcome the awkwardness and shame to “help out” just because “[Birth] followers really need to copulate.”

As such, fulfilling this [Divine Will] perfectly is quite difficult.

But humans, as a species, are creative.

When something can't be solved through conventional means, they often invent many roundabout methods to achieve their goals.

For the matter of copulation, there are several alternative approaches, such as...

Self-pleasure.

This great invention has saved countless introverted [Birth] followers, though it has also stirred dissatisfaction among some players.

There was once a player who publicly denounced those who invented this alternative method in the faith channel of [Birth], outraged and accusing them of blasphemy against the god.

However, this accusation was countered by a group of eloquent "heretics" who rebutted it from a rather peculiar angle.

They claimed:

“As long as we think of [Birth] while performing the [Divine Will], it isn’t blasphemy but rather an offering.”

As for what exactly they were “offering”...

Ahem, those who know, know.

No one can say for sure if the god likes it or not, but the thing is, no one dares to say the god doesn’t like it, especially since [Birth] promotes reproduction.

But... today’s situation was different.

Present here were two followers of [Birth].

A male and a female.

Everyone knew that there was generally no danger during the preparatory time at the start of a trial, so everyone dispersed to perform their respective [Divine Will].

Only Cheng Shi and Xia Wan remained in place, standing still, neither speaking a word.

The awkwardness in the air was palpable, the kind that made your toes curl in embarrassment.

Though Cheng Shi maintained a smile, his face was clearly stiff.

He never expected that the cold and aloof Huntress would turn out to be a follower of [Birth]! Had he known, he would have revealed his true faith earlier.

This was a nightmare.

Fortunately, Xia Wan didn't seem to feel awkward. Her expression remained as icy as ever. Seeing that Cheng Shi hadn't made a move, she was the first to speak, her voice as cold as usual.

"Together, or separately?"

To be honest, Xia Wan was quite attractive.

Short hair, neat and crisp, sharp and defined features. And those legs...

Tsk.

Since she didn't seem opposed, maybe...

"Separately. I prefer men."

Cheng Shi fidgeted with his hands, shyly uttering the words.

“?”

For the first time, Xia Wan’s cold expression shifted. She scrutinized Cheng Shi up and down with a doubtful gaze before letting out a peculiar “hmm” and walking away.

Only when she left did Cheng Shi exhale a sigh of relief.

Jeez, that was close.

If he had agreed to her, and after performing the [Divine Will] he didn’t receive any blessings from [Birth], wouldn’t his earlier lie have been for nothing?

Having his lie exposed would be one thing, but pretending to be a follower of [Birth] to perform the [Divine Will]...

That would be... an entirely different kind of deception.

Wiping the sweat from his forehead, Cheng Shi sighed. Just as he was about to begin his [Divine Will], he furrowed his brow and turned toward a corner, saying faintly:

“Enjoying the view?”

“ ... ”

Song Yawen, who had been hiding in the shadows, didn't expect to be spotted. He looked like a ghost had spooked him, shaking his head furiously as he backed away:

“Sorry, force of habit. No, I wasn't enjoying it, not at all! You're the one who looks good, really! Brother, I like women, seriously. We're not compatible, forced love never works. I'll just go, I haven't done my [Divine Will] yet. Goodbye!”

With that, Song Yawen scrambled away, half crawling, half running. Cheng Shi frowned as he looked at the spot where Song Yawen had been hiding—a small triangular shadowed area formed by the remains of a broken wall.

He walked over, nudging aside some debris with his foot, and found a freshly dead white mouse under the rubble.

“A follower of [Death]? Interesting.”

This little episode didn't affect Cheng Shi much. He surveyed his surroundings to ensure no one else was around, then slowly opened his right hand.

In an instant, a six-sided die materialized in his palm, as if from thin air.

The die was bone-white, yet its dots shone with a golden radiance.

Cheng Shi's lips curled into an amused smirk as he devoutly prayed over the die:

“Lies of yesterday, mockery of today.

Yesterday, I deceived a follower of [Birth], so today...

I am a follower of [Birth].”

As soon as the words left his mouth, an invisible wave of energy rippled out from the die, gradually enveloping Cheng Shi’s entire body.

A sharp glimmer flashed in his eyes, and the light of [Birth] flickered within his pupils.

The [Divine Will] was complete, and the blessing had been granted.

For today, Cheng Shi was a follower of [Birth], a Fertility Priest.