

## The Gods 104

### Chapter 104: Dungeon Insights

The hall of the Traveler's Office had dozens of service windows, and it didn't take long for Cheng Shi and Qin Chaoge to get their turn.

Looking at the beautiful staff member at the window, Cheng Shi politely expressed his desire to change his tour assistant.

The staff member glanced at the records and seemed to understand. Her eyes were full of "comprehension," and she smiled, asking Cheng Shi to wait for a moment.

Seeing her meaningful smile, Cheng Shi had a sinking feeling that things were about to take a strange turn again.

Sure enough, only a few minutes later, a handsome, charming young man was led over by the staff member, excitement radiating from him as he eagerly approached Cheng Shi.

The moment they met, the man quickly ran over in small, eager steps, trying to link arms with Cheng Shi.

Cheng Shi's face turned pale, and before he could stop himself...

"Bang!"

"Thud—"

"....."

Cheng Shi was arrested.

Right there in the middle of the Traveler's Office.

The charge: intentional harm to a tour assistant.

The guards immediately took him into custody and issued a prompt sentence—his request for a new assistant was denied, and he was sentenced to three days in prison.

Cheng Shi didn't resist. Instead, he lowered his head, deep in thought, allowing the two guards to twist his arms behind his back and escort him to the holding cells located beneath the Traveler's Office.

What he saw there surprised him.

The holding cell was enormous, and the number of imprisoned travelers was staggering. It was as lively as a marketplace.

Cheng Shi looked around in disbelief and asked the guards escorting him:

"Why... are there so many people?"

The guards seemed unbothered by the situation and scoffed with a sneer:

"The High Priest is too lenient with you travelers. Harming residents should be considered blasphemy, a crime punishable by death. You're lucky you're only getting a few days in here, you bunch of trash!"

With that, they spat on the ground and tossed Cheng Shi into a cell.

None of the other imprisoned travelers paid much attention to the new arrival. They continued chatting or sleeping, their attitudes relaxed, creating an oddly peaceful scene.

With the constant chatter filling the air, Cheng Shi realized he might have stumbled into a goldmine of information by accident.

Everyone here was a talker, and the snippets of conversation were full of valuable intel.

So, Cheng Shi sat down in a cross-legged position, closing his eyes as if pretending to sleep, but keeping his ears wide open, ready to absorb whatever information he could hear.

“Where’s the food? Why haven’t they brought the food yet? I’m starving! Give me food! Otherwise, don’t expect me to bless you with a child!”

“Newcomer, stop shouting. There’s only one meal a day, at night. If you want to fill your stomach, you’ll have to wait until you’re out.”

An experienced inmate, leaning against the wall, waved dismissively, trying to calm the newcomer down.

“What? I’ll starve like this! Damn these people! Hey, old man, how long have you been here? What did you do?”

“Me? I got a month-long sentence. The charge was malicious gifting.

Take my advice—don’t mess around with that damn gifting ritual, or you’ll end up stuck here, starving for a month like me.”

“What do you mean? Aren’t they the ones asking us to give them a gift? How can it be ‘malicious gifting?’”

“Hah, it sounds like you haven’t gifted them a child yet.

Far Dusk Town’s law is that without a special decree, each traveler can only participate in the ritual once, and the recipient must be a tour assistant.

There was this one... ahem, a lady I was familiar with, she begged me for a few days, and my idiot heart softened. So I gave her what she wanted.

And now, here I am. You see how it turned out.

You guys who got thrown in here right away are actually lucky. Since you haven't gifted them a child yet, you still get to enjoy the pleasures when you're released.

But those of us who've already participated in the ritual, well, we're out of luck. Once we're released, we'll just be deported.

The guide wasn't wrong, though—it is a 'wonderful journey.' I'll probably remember it for the rest of my life."

"Wow, old man, tell us more about this gifting ritual."

Many of the newer inmates began clamoring, and the experienced inmate happily obliged, generously sharing his knowledge.

"The ritual itself isn't all that interesting. Once you and your tour assistant get close enough, she'll tell you everything there is to know about it.

All you have to do is hold hands and recite a strange prayer. Under the watchful eye of their god, you'll bestow them with a child.

The fun part comes after. To show their gratitude, these beauties will...

Tsk tsk..."

Cheng Shi stopped listening, his brows furrowing in thought.

This ritual sounded eerily similar to what Hu Xuan had been talking about.

If the two rituals were the same, did that mean [Eternal Sun] wasn't just related to [Birth]? Could [Eternal Sun] actually be [Birth] in disguise?

A [True God], hanging over... Far Dusk Town?

A hellish joke.

Unable to make sense of the situation, Cheng Shi turned his attention back to the conversations around him. Now that someone had started sharing, the other inmates followed suit, each recounting their own "pleasant" experiences.

Noticing that the experienced inmate had gone quiet, Cheng Shi scooted over and called out through the bars:

"Old man, you've seen a lot. Where are you from?"

The man laughed and replied:

"Gasmira."

"Oh, from the Tower of Logic, huh? Judging by how knowledgeable you are, you must be a scholar?"

"No, no, how could I be a scholar? I'm just a... wait, what do I do again?"

Sigh, with the poor food and drink in here, I've been forgetting things lately."

Forgetting things?

That didn't add up. He had just recounted everything in vivid detail, without missing a beat. How could he remember all the details but forget his own profession?

Cheng Shi frowned, watching the man scratch his head in frustration. Rather than pressing further, Cheng Shi turned and struck up a conversation with the newcomer in the neighboring cell.

“Hey, your flowing golden hair looks just like a Judicator I used to know. Very noble. You’re not a Judicator, are you?”

“Ha, you’ve got to be kidding. If I were a Judicator, my whole family would be laughing their heads off. I’m a... wait, what was it again?”

Cheng Shi’s gaze sharpened, but he kept smiling as he abruptly ended the conversation.

Just then, there was a loud clanging sound from the cell next door—someone else had been thrown in.

Cheng Shi glanced over and found that the new inmate was none other than Qin Chaoge.

The [War] follower grinned widely as she approached him, her first words being:

“You think it’s fun hogging all this to yourself without inviting me?”

“?”

Cheng Shi shook his head in disbelief. How could being locked up with a bunch of filthy prisoners be considered fun?

He watched as Qin Chaoge surveyed the room, then teasingly asked:

“Got caught for murder?”

“Of course not. I was careful. He committed suicide.”

Cheng Shi chuckled helplessly.

“So why are you in here?”

“I hit on a staff member and tried to, you know, make a baby with her. And, well... here I am. Charged with harassment, sentenced to five days.”

“Pfft—”

Cheng Shi nearly choked on his own spit.

Not surprising.

“Find anything interesting?”

Qin Chaoqe didn't seem to care about the supposed “imprisonment.” She assumed Cheng Shi had come down here for reconnaissance, thinking he must've found something.

In truth, Cheng Shi's arrival here was an accident, but he had indeed stumbled upon some strange clues.

Not only did many of these travelers seem to have forgotten what they used to do, but judging by their appearances and demeanor, they didn't look like successful people from the Land of Hope.

They had the vibe of street rats.

If Cheng Shi remembered correctly, every traveler who came to this town had been brought here by some unseen guide, after paying a large sum of money.

But would people like these really have money to waste on leisure?

Or, even if these vagabonds had the money, why would they waste it here instead of improving their own lives?

Just to have a child?

Far Dusk Town wouldn't allow them to take the children with them. The children were the population, the foundation of their faith.

So, where did things go wrong?

Instead of answering Qin Chaoge's question, Cheng Shi asked one of his own:

"Have you heard about the gifting ritual?"

Qin Chaoge's expectant expression instantly froze, and a vein bulged on her forehead as if she were debating whether Cheng Shi was intentionally trying to provoke her.

"Don't hit me—hear me out first, or your sentence will get extended. I'm being serious. Have you heard about the gifting ritual?"

"I've heard of it."

The one who answered wasn't the still-fuming Qin Chaoge, but someone else.

Both Cheng Shi and Qin Chaoge turned in surprise to see that the hunter lady had also somehow ended up in the dungeon, a smirk playing on her lips as she looked at them.

Qin Chaoge quickly returned to her usual playful self.

“Oh? What a coincidence—did you get caught trying to ‘catch a duck’ too?”