

The Gods 124

Chapter 124: The Mad Zangier!

Nothingness is not something tangible. The “nothingness” that the older Cheng Shi spoke of was still part of the void—just a deeper layer hidden beneath the surface of the visible void.

Few had ever laid eyes upon this place, nor even knew of its existence.

At least, Cheng Shi hadn't. And now, he was utterly stunned.

“This is...”

“Heh, the Stellar Dagger.”

The older Cheng Shi had fully torn away the disguise of the void, bringing Cheng Shi face-to-face with the enormous corpse.

Cheng Shi stood frozen, eyes wide open, gazing at the terrifyingly close [Bloody Moon], feeling the overwhelming divine power of slaughter that radiated from it. He dared not move an inch.

“What is... the Stellar Dagger?”

“Hmm, it's a bit complicated to explain. But I'm sure if I say one name, you'll immediately figure out what it is.”

The older Cheng Shi smiled meaningfully, watching Cheng Shi's astonished expression for a moment before slowly uttering a name:

“Zangier!”

“Buzz—”

Cheng Shi's mind exploded.

His first reaction was, Of course, that makes sense. His second reaction was, How is this possible?

He remembered that strange rumor Gao Yu had once told him:

...

"There's no official record of it. However, there are rumors. It's said that Zangier had initiated an experiment called 'The Creation of a Flesh God.' He allegedly stole [Truth] divinity from the Council of Scholars and tried to combine it with alchemical puppet techniques to create an entirely new [God]."

...

Cheng Shi was completely dumbfounded, unable to wrap his mind around it.

"This is... his creation?"

This is... the remains of a [God]!?"

His voice shot up several octaves in disbelief, echoing through the starry void.

"But didn't he steal the divine essence of [Truth]!?"

How did this turn into... [Birth] and [Corruption]!?"

Didn't he succeed?"

How did his creation end up dead?"

Does this mean...

This is a dead new [God]?”

The older Cheng Shi shot Cheng Shi a disdainful glance, his expression one of mild disgust.

“Who told you he stole the divine essence of [Truth]?”

The essence of [Truth] only manifests during the Council of Scholars’ meetings in response to prayers. If Zangier could have stolen it, he might as well have done what Galyusha did and wiped out the entire Tower of Logic from the inside!

Stop wasting time on rumors. You’d be better off reading a couple of adult magazines.”

“...”

Really? Is this the time for that?

Cheng Shi’s mind was already overwhelmed, but his eyes sparkled with a hunger for knowledge as he stared intently at the older Cheng Shi.

Seeing his eager expression, the older Cheng Shi chuckled.

“You look just like I did when I first learned about all of this.

This part of history is fascinating. I had to pry it out of someone in the History School. It’s one of those top-secret, classified events that might never be officially disclosed.

Zangier was a once-in-a-generation genius who elevated alchemical creations to the pinnacle of the Tower of Logic's academic departments. He was even on track to secure a seat on the Council of Scholars.

And that wasn't just because of his unmatched expertise. It was because he proposed an idea to the Council!

A crazy, bold, and utterly blasphemous idea!

He wanted to create a [God].

And he had already found a method!"

Cheng Shi instinctively blurted out, "What method?"

"By harnessing divine essence.

You have to understand, ever since the civilizations of the Land of Hope discovered the existence of the [Gods], becoming a [God] has been the ultimate goal of all life for thousands of years.

The Tower of Logic's rise only further fueled this ambition.

In the mind of the average mortal, the key to becoming a [God] was to absorb divine essence.

But here's the problem: by its very nature, divine essence cannot be absorbed by mortals.

For centuries, humanity has exhausted itself trying to collect and preserve divine essence—so much so that even using it properly is hard enough, let alone absorbing it.

It's not that they didn't try. Every experiment they conducted only allowed mortals to wield divine essence more effectively, but they never found a way to absorb it.

During that era, a theory emerged from within the Tower of Logic—that there was already a [God] on the preordained path to godhood, and He would not allow any mortal to claim His authority!

This made it seem as though the path to godhood was blocked.

Without the ability to absorb divine essence, there was no other way forward.

There were countless fragments of scattered divine essence, but only the [Gods] knew how to piece them together.

But how could one even begin to piece them together without first becoming a [God]?

Thus, these dreams of godhood led to a dead end. The ladder to ascension was broken by a paradox.

At this time, with no progress being made in theology, society became restless, and people grew uneasy. You probably know what happened next...

War began to brew.

But the reason civilization advances is that some people never give up on exploration.

Zangier was one of those people.

A mind like his worked in ways entirely different from that of ordinary mortals.

He came up with a method—a method that could turn the situation on its head, allowing him to absorb—or rather, capture—the [Gods]' authority!"

The older Cheng Shi's expression had become a bit more animated as he spoke, and with a snap of his fingers, he conjured two glowing orbs at his fingertips.

One white, one black.

He slowly brought his hands together, and as the orbs grew closer, they began to pull at each other, the tension between them mounting until they started to unravel and dissolve.

In the end, both orbs vanished into nothingness.

Cheng Shi watched the display intently, waiting for the follow-up explanation.

"Did you see that?"

When opposing divine essences recognize each other's presence, their instinct is to seize each other's authority!

But in the process, since neither can overpower the other, the divine essence is torn apart and dissipates.

The Tower of Logic has conducted countless studies on this phenomenon. In fact, they even went so far as to collect every divine essence puzzle piece they could find, reconstructing a false, incomplete version of a [God].

And it was from these experiments that Zangier got his inspiration. He came up with an idea so absurd, yet so brilliant, that it bordered on genius!

He wanted to...

Join the fray!

As a...

Thieving opportunist!

He planned to step in while the opposing forces of divine essence were battling each other for authority and capture the remnants of divine essence that were about to dissipate, then pour them all into himself!

Since these fragments of authority were torn away by the opposing [Gods], they had no mortal touch. Therefore, the [God] would believe that the authority had been lost.

Thus, the [God] would relinquish ownership of these pieces of authority!

And at that moment...

The opposing [God] wouldn't have claimed them either!

So as long as he could find that perfect moment during the tug-of-war for authority and seize the unclaimed divine essence...

Wouldn't it be possible to absorb it without any of the [Gods] rejecting him?

Of course, real [Gods] are omniscient and omnipotent. There's no way a mere mortal could slip through the cracks during their divine battle.

But!

What about false [Gods]!?

Those divine essence puzzles pieced together by the Tower of Logic... they aren't quite omniscient or omnipotent, are they?

At least part of that divine essence has already been lost from the real [Gods]!

And so, a thief who could steal the [Gods]' authority...

Was born!"

"!!!"

As the older Cheng Shi recounted this hidden piece of history, Cheng Shi's head buzzed the entire time.

He listened intently to this secretive history, one rarely known to the outside world, but every time Zangier's madness was revealed, Cheng Shi felt a sharp shock in his mind.

By this point, he had begun to suspect what was coming, but he couldn't be sure. No one could.

This insane plan to steal fragments of divine essence from the [Gods] during their battle—it was almost suicidal.

But was Zangier afraid of death?

Maybe not.

Perhaps, to these mad scholars, failure to complete an experiment was worse than death.

"Have you figured it out yet?"

That's right. What you see before you is Zangier's experiment—the great 'God-Thief Experiment'!

He presented the idea to the Council of Scholars, but it was so insane that none of the members dared to approve such an absurd yet plausible experiment.

In the end, Zangier gave up his seat on the Council, allowing the Tower of Logic to save face. Only then did the Council members reluctantly approve the use of all available resources to fund Zangier's 'God-Thief Experiment.'

They selected the most stable divine essence, [Birth], and the most inert essence, [Corruption], as their targets, creating a massive experimental device dubbed the Stellar Dagger.

And it stands right before your eyes.

Zangier planned to use this 'Stellar Dagger' to cut open the [Gods]' pockets and steal the authority they had hidden away!"