

The Gods 135

Chapter 135: Victory Isn't Easy, Cheng Shi Sighs

Far Dusk Town.

After Fate's Final Judgment concluded, Qin Chaoge awoke from her unconscious state.

That's when she realized there was another girl lying unconscious beside her.

And that girl was none other than Shaman!

While she was still piecing together how things had developed to this point, and why Hu Xuan had appeared in the final answer, Cheng Shi arrived.

He glanced under the bed once, his expression darkening like the bottom of a charred pot, and then he spoke:

"Damn it, a trickster!"

Qin Chaoge's face immediately grew cold as she shot him a sidelong glare.

"Who are you cursing?"

"Big sister, I'm talking about that swindling woman who knocked you out!

She told me this was her true form—what a load of crap. There's not a single truthful word that comes out of her mouth!

And look at you—such a strong warrior, and you still got sucker-punched. Aren't you ashamed?"

Without waiting for a response, Cheng Shi reached out a hand and pulled her out from under the bed.

Qin Chaoge's face twisted in anger, her teeth grinding, as she hissed, "I'm a bard."

"Yeah, yeah. Inside, you're a warrior. Outside, you're a bard. So you're only tough when it's your own people?"

"Cheng Shi!"

"What? I helped you win, and I'm still not allowed to have a little fun?"

Cheng Shi stood tall, staring her down with undeniable confidence.

Qin Chaoge's eyes flickered with a mix of frustration and shame, but after a long moment, she swallowed her pride.

However, she still turned her head away, her voice cold and firm:

"I cast the vote. The crucial vote."

"Oh, right, right. So, can you explain why the great bardess, who carried her team, voted for a woman who wasn't even married but is already the mother of your child?"

"....."

Boom—

Silence filled the room.

Well, there wasn't really a room anymore.

Not long after, they found themselves on the roof of Shaman's neighbor's house.

“Hiss—See? I told you, you’re only tough with your own people.”

“.....”

Qin Chaoge glanced at Cheng Shi, who was sitting there, healing himself with an annoyed look on his face, and couldn’t help but burst out laughing.

“That’s also a talent, something given by Him: The Peace Pact.

As long as I don’t hurt anyone, no one can strike first to hurt me.”

“?”

Cheng Shi’s eyes widened with realization, finally understanding why this bard, despite her incredible strength, never initiated attacks.

Of course, that didn’t apply to judgment strikes.

“Then how did Zhen Xin knock you out?”

Cheng Shi was genuinely curious. He had just recounted the entire story to Qin Chaoge, and upon hearing this question, her face darkened.

“Do you really have the nerve to ask me that? You stabbed her in the shoulder. When I went to pull out the knife, I caused damage to her, canceling the Peace Pact!

You...”

Qin Chaoge's expression turned sour, clearly regretting missing out on the exciting team fight that followed.

"....." Cheng Shi was speechless.

So, in the end, it's my fault?

How did this land on me?

He shook his head with a bitter smile, then asked:

"But your strength... it shouldn't require a Peace Pact."

"Precisely because of my strength, I need it." Qin Chaoge said firmly, her gaze fixed on the massive sun in the sky, as if she were explaining to Cheng Shi while also speaking to herself:

"If a person can't control their desires, how are they different from beasts?"

I don't want to become a mindless killing machine."

"Tsk, it's a shame you didn't choose [Order]."

Qin Chaoge burst into laughter:

"I don't like being bound by rules."

Watching this carefree and unrestrained teammate, Cheng Shi suddenly understood her.

A bard who doesn't like being bound by rules, yet who can constrain her own inner desires.

Freedom, after all, is just that simple.

“Enough about me. How about you?”

You’re not a follower of [Decay], are you?”

Cheng Shi wasn’t surprised. Smiling, he asked, “What gave me away?”

“The way you made decisions without any visible conflict—another blessing from Him.

Say little, observe much. As long as I personally create the gap in information, I hold the advantage of knowledge, and my decisions become increasingly accurate.

That’s how I was able to pick the exact option you wanted me to.

Cheng Shi, followers of [Decay] don’t usually go for these roundabout methods. They prefer straight-up damage...

So you’re not one of them.”

True enough, followers of [War] also don’t tend to play so many mind games.

No wonder you chatted so much during the trial but never took any direct action.

Always pretending this and that...

You sure are crafty.

Seeing the curious look in Qin Chaoge's eyes, Cheng Shi, finally relaxed after passing the trial, let his guard down.

With sincere honesty, but a light-hearted tone, he answered:

"Mm."

Qin Chaoge stayed silent, expecting him to continue.

"I'm a follower of [Fate]. Actually, I borrowed the fate of a blood-exchange priest."

"You sly fox! I knew it!"

Qin Chaoge glared at Cheng Shi, itching to punch him again!

She couldn't help but think back on everything Cheng Shi had done—every step seemed to align perfectly with the twists of fate, constantly nudging fate back on course.

She really should've realized sooner. How could any player receive so much favor from [Fate]?

He had to be a follower of [Fate]!

A quiet Weaver of Fate, constantly stitching it back together!

Cheng Shi had no idea what was going on in Qin Chaoge's head, but seeing that she seemed to believe him, he swallowed back the rest of what he was going to say.

He had half a mind to tease her further, but since she believed him now...

Well, then everything he said before must be true.

And I don't lie.

Shrug.

"You killed one of your own. Won't your patron be displeased?"

Heh, hasn't He already been displeased enough?

Cheng Shi forced a stiff smile. "He likes choices. This time, He chose me. Simple as that."

Qin Chaoge nodded silently, mulling it over before suddenly speaking in an awkward tone:

"Cheng Shi, I'm not asking for there to be one more good person in the world. But I also don't want there to be one more bad person.

Let's do our best, okay?"

Cheng Shi blinked, taken aback by the sincerity in her eyes, brimming with hope.

But after a few seconds, he couldn't hold back and burst into laughter.

"Ku ku ku ku ku, don't make me laugh, sis.

Do you have a case of teenage syndrome?

Did you choose your faith after watching too many hot-blooded anime?"

Before he even finished speaking, Qin Chaoge punched the roof next to his head, blowing off half the structure.

“...”

Seeing the embarrassed, flushed look on her face, Cheng Shi’s heart skipped a beat.

Crap, I was right.

All this time, our bard’s been a total chuuni!

This is insane!

Qin Chaoge, now that her secret was out, shot Cheng Shi a glare filled with frustration and embarrassment before disappearing on the spot.

She left in a fit of awkward rage.

“Tsk, hard to rate this one.”

Cheng Shi sighed, lying back on the roof as he stared up at the Eternal Sun rising in the sky, its divine essence of [Prosperity] resonating with the [Prosperity] within his body, while his gaze grew distant and thoughtful.

A conclusion?

What conclusion?

The fate of an experiment is to be expended as part of the process, to be replaced and discarded.

The only thing they could take pride in was that, unlike other test subjects, they had the honor of being part of a great experiment.

There was no way the Stellar Dagger, with all its history, would come to a sudden end.

Would He allow that?

Cheng Shi didn't know what had transpired in the void, but when he saw the travelers and townspeople going about their business as usual, when he saw the sun rising in the sky as always, he knew...

This place had no conclusion.

Look at the divine essence of [Prosperity] radiating from the Eternal Sun—doesn't that just symbolize the Council of Scholars replacing one resource with "another type of experiment fodder"?

At that moment, Cheng Shi wondered what kind of story would unfold next in this place.

How would faith shift?

And who would the new Divine Envoy be?

Would it be the same one, or was a new one already on the way?

And...

Would the Bloody Moon be the incomplete [Decay]?

How would history record the changes that came to the Great Sun?

"Sigh, why am I thinking so much? It's none of my business.

Waste of time—time to go.”

Cheng Shi chuckled as he saw the real Shaman waking up amidst the ruins of the courtyard, looking around in confusion. With a laugh, he exited the trial.

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[Special Trial (Who Deserves Redemption [Fate]) Challenge Cleared]

[Scoring in progress, calculating rewards...]

[Player: Cheng Shi, Performance Score: S]

[Reward Item: Mask of Appreciation (S) x1]

[Reward Item: Mask of Trust (S) x1]

[Reward Item: Mask of Desire (S) x1]

[Reward Item: Mask of Cunning (S) x1]

[Path to Godhood +15]

[Ladder of Ascent +2]

[Current Path to Godhood Score: 2156, Global Rank: 443,877]

[Current Ladder of Ascent Score: 166, Fate Path Rank: 59]

[Trial Complete, Preparing to Exit]