

The Gods 139

Chapter 139: Praise the Great God of [Deceit]

Cheng Shi made another deal with Xie Yang.

He acquired another corpse, clearing Xie Yang's debt in the process.

Now, they were even.

First, Cheng Shi hurriedly sent a message to the entity seated atop the bone throne—his debt to [Death], promising that he would soon deliver enough sacrifices.

Then, he immediately grabbed his dice and began trying to contact his Patron.

There was a serious problem now—his opponents had started offering bribes.

Patron, pick up the damn phone already! If you keep me waiting any longer, I might not be able to resist the temptation of these sweet offers!

Cheng Shi muttered prayers to [Deceit] as he fiddled with the dice, all while examining the exquisite ring that [Memory] had bestowed upon him.

Floating Dream of the Memory Sea (SSS-rank): A divine artifact crafted personally by [Memory], this ring allows you to witness 3 instances of [Existence]. After using any effect 3 times, the ring will no longer [Exist].

Special Effect – Foam on the Sea of Dreams: You can activate the ring and begin a countdown. At any point within 24 hours, you can stop the countdown. Any traces of your actions during the countdown will not enter anyone's memories.

Special Effect – Surge of the Tidal Wave: When a memory has already been recorded in the Sea of Memories and become history, and you are part of that history, you can activate the ring to reasonably alter it. All traces of the changes you make will become the new history.

As Cheng Shi stared at the ring, which glowed with a subtle yet deep luminescence, he had to bite down hard on his lips to stop himself from drooling.

This was essentially a semi-divine artifact that could alter memories, and even history itself!

In other words, Cheng Shi now had three chances to become invisible or three chances to change history!

Or, if needed, a flexible mix of the two!

[Deceit] had secretly altered a part of history, [Memory] had discovered it, and now He had come to investigate.

Yet, rather than being angry or punishing the person covered in graffiti (him), [Memory] had instead given him a... SSS-rank semi-divine artifact.

This kind of recruitment tactic, this kind of approach... anyone would be trembling at the mere thought of it.

What have I done to deserve this...?

If the noble won't abandon me...

Wait, no! Cheng Shi, hold yourself together!

Cheng Shi's mind was in utter disarray. Since his Patron hadn't responded, he set aside the dice and started to think carefully—what had happened that he wasn't aware of? What could have prompted [Memory] to offer such an overpowered gift to a follower of a rival faith?

After a long stretch of pondering, Cheng Shi could only recall one thing his Patron had once said:

“As part of the deal, that [Memory] Chosen One who entered my trial... didn’t fare very well either.”

[Deceit] had punished [Memory]’s Chosen One, and now [Memory] was rewarding a follower of [Deceit].

Seeing it from that angle...

Well, then...

I’m just thinking out loud here, not accusing anyone of anything.

But I’ve got to say, [Memory] sure plays dirty.

If there’s more dirty play coming in the future, well...

Please, bring it on!

I can handle it!

Cheng Shi chuckled to himself and casually opened the Ladder of Ascent rankings, which he hadn’t checked in a while.

He wanted to see where exactly “Sincere and Truthful,” the player who had plummeted in rank, had ended up after their recent chaos.

What on earth would drive a Master of Trickery to lose points so drastically?

But as soon as the rankings appeared, Cheng Shi instantly understood why [Memory] had responded with kindness instead of anger.

No way, Patron, you're playing like this?

This is what you meant by "didn't fare well"???

Ladder of Ascent (Existence-Memory)/(Void-Deceit)

1. Gotta Think Bigger, Brothers (Deceit) – 206

2. Lingering Emotions (Memory) – 203

3. As If in a Dream (Memory) – 200

4. Look, Fun ↓ (Deceit) – 199

5. Li Jingming (Deceit) – 197

6. Look, Fun ↑ (Memory) – 197

...

58. Double-Crossing Traitor Lu Jingming (Memory) – 167

59. I Never Lie (Deceit) – 166

60. Fraud Prevention Pioneer (Deceit) – 166

61. Sincere and Truthful (Deceit) – 164

...

“.....”

Turns out there really was someone who adopted the surname “Lu”???

Cheng Shi suddenly understood everything!

Alright, alright. Patron, you’re still the expert here.

Pulling [Memory]’s Chosen One over to our side? How did you even come up with that?

Could you teach me?

Ever since I met your Chosen One and witnessed your divine operations, I’ve realized that my understanding of [Deceit] is still lacking.

My imagination isn’t wild enough, my thoughts don’t jump around enough, and my logic isn’t disjointed enough. I’m in desperate need of some advanced lessons.

No wonder [Memory] is targeting me—you’ve been pulling stunts like this. How could He not be pissed?

Oh my god, the biggest prank of the century just happened right under my nose!

Come and see!

[Memory]’s Chosen One has broken their oath and become a follower of [Deceit]!

Staring at the absurd leaderboard, Cheng Shi quickly opened the chat channel.

Sure enough...

The faith channel for [Deceit] had already exploded.

Countless messages were flooding in, and they all said the same thing:

“Welcome back, Dragon King!”

“Welcome back, Dragon King!”

“Welcome back, Dragon King!”

“.....”

Cheng Shi scrolled up through the chat log, and sure enough, ever since the last trial ended, the [Deceit] chat channel had been nothing but this one message on repeat.

These maniacs had been spamming the same phrase for an entire week!

Are you guys insane?

Cheng Shi was dumbfounded, but he quickly typed into the chat:

“Welcome back, Dragon King!”

Ah, that felt good.

The thought of having so many fellow lunatics gave him a strange sense of belonging.

Just as Cheng Shi was grinning at the chaos in the chat, a familiar ripple of the void descended over his head.

His heart skipped a beat, but before he could react, his consciousness was dragged into the dark abyss.

It was those familiar upturned eyes again, the swirling spirals that seemed to see through everything.

Seeing those eyes, Cheng Shi exhaled in relief.

Nothing dirty this time.

This time, I'm really home.

"Praise be to You, great God of [Deceit]. It is through Your—"

"Alright, enough with the fake praise. You've been shouting for me for so long. What is it? I'm in a hurry."

So, You are aware I've been calling for You this whole time?

I was starting to think You couldn't hear me.

The eyes swirled twice, as if seeing through Cheng Shi's thoughts, and a playful laugh echoed in the darkness.

"At every moment, countless prayers ring in my ears. If I had to listen to each one patiently, that would be far too boring.

But you were right about one thing—I can't hear your prayers."

“?”

Cheng Shi blinked in confusion. Did that mean he hadn't been devout enough in his prayers?

That couldn't be right. Those flowery praises and phony compliments were enough to make anyone puke, and yet that still wasn't devout enough?

Scratching his head, Cheng Shi felt utterly wronged.

The eyes laughed again, this time with a hint of amusement.

“You were calling My name through that dice, weren't you?”

“.....”

Wait a second!

Cheng Shi's heart skipped a beat as a sense of dread crept in.

“That's right. Because your prayers were only heard by Him. Even if I could hear them, it would only have been because He... impatiently passed them along.”

“?????”

Cheng Shi was stunned.

He stared at his Patron in disbelief, feeling as if he'd just discovered he was adopted.

No, wait—I was adopted, wasn't I?

In every sense of the word...

“.....”

“So, when I said that your every invocation was an insult to Him...

It’s because His ears are filled with the reverent prayers of [Fate]’s followers, and then, among them, He hears this:

‘Lies like yesterday, mocking today.’

Hehe~

It’s one thing to pray, but did you really have to include the word ‘mock’? Isn’t that a bit too harsh?”

“.....”

What the hell!

Cheng Shi’s face darkened, and he was at a loss for words.

That prayer was part of my innate ability, “Lies of Yesterday,” meaning it was a prayer You specifically designed, oh great Patron of [Deceit].

Now that I think about it, did You tailor that prayer specifically to mess with [Fate]?

Damn...

Was it really worth it, Patron, just for a laugh?

Is it not enough that I'm a clown by profession? Do I have to be one in person as well?

Heh, I really am a clown.

"Alright, hurry up and say what you need to say. I've got a battle to get to, and I can't waste too much time here."

"....."

The biting tone Cheng Shi had prepared quickly faded. Swallowing the retort he had in mind, he dutifully reported everything that had happened during his encounter with [Memory].

His recollection was clear, his words precise, leaving nothing unsaid.

But he had a feeling that his Patron already knew about it.

Sure enough, when he finished his account, the spirals in the eyes took on a deeper meaning.

His Patron looked at him, a mixture of amusement and regret in those eyes.

Amusement that he hadn't lied.

Regret that he hadn't lied.

"I see. Anything else?"

"?" Cheng Shi was stunned. He asked, "You have no opinion on this? He... He's poaching even from here."

“No need to worry. I poach His followers all the time too.

If you want to go, go ahead. I won't hold it against you.”

“.....”

Cheng Shi looked at the Patron's brightening eyes in disbelief and asked again:

“No Oathbreaker's Curse?”

“Of course not.”

“.....”

Heh, do You think I believe that?

“You're testing me, but I'm not falling for it. I'm a faithful follower of [Deceit]. No one can shake my faith!

It's not about You. This is my lifelong pursuit!”

The eyes swirled again, letting out a snicker before responding:

“Speaking louder won't make you sound more sincere.

Remember that. Alright, this visit doesn't count as an official audience. I was just passing by. Off you go.”

Cheng Shi hesitated, pausing for a moment before quickly blurting out:

“Wait! Patron, I encountered Your Chosen One during the trial. It was a [Fate] trial. Did You send her there?”

“Oh? Interesting.

Did you meet the older sister, or the younger?”

What?

“Zhen Xin has a sister?”

“Mm, that must’ve been the younger one, then.

Too bad—seems like you missed out on a proper meeting.

Alright, run along now. Don’t ask questions you shouldn’t, don’t dwell on things you shouldn’t. Just lie like you always do.”

And with that, a tremendous force crashed down, landing squarely on Cheng Shi’s hand.

His consciousness plunged into darkness once again, and when he woke up, he found that the hand holding the “Floating Dream of the Memory Sea” ring had been broken.

“.....”

Isn’t this just personal revenge?

And what’s the point of a god holding a grudge against a ring?

But with that blow, Cheng Shi understood his Patron's stance.

The ring could be used. No need to worry.

Praise [Deceit]!

Casting a healing spell on himself, Cheng Shi's lips curled into a wide, satisfied grin.

Since those foolish rivals had offered such firepower...

It's time to use these tools to start deceiving!