

The Gods 165

Chapter 165: Indeed, I Am Studying Him

As expected from a follower of [Truth], Ji Yue's offer didn't have any hidden tricks.

Once the group heard the distant howls and roars coming closer, they wasted no time and entered the void.

Ji Yue shot one more hateful glare in the direction where Mo Wu had fled, thrusting her spear into the air in frustration before stepping into the void herself.

Back home again...

Cheng Shi stared at the boundless darkness before him, his emotions a mix of conflicted feelings.

I've been in and out of this place so often... I wonder if He's getting annoyed with me?

With that thought, Cheng Shi mentally recited a prayer of praise, offering it up without specifying any names. After all, both of Them could hear it, so why not just pray to both?

Unlike Cheng Shi's "calm and collected" demeanor, Bai Ling, clearly unfamiliar with the void, instinctively reached out and clung to his arm as her feet touched the "ground" of the void.

"If you keep holding onto me like this, I'll have to charge you. This is the VIP girlfriend seat," Cheng Shi teased.

Bai Ling blinked, then clung even tighter. She licked her lips, clearly lost in some fantasy.

"How much? Do you charge by the day?"

I could pay for a day first!

One-day girlfriend sounds nice...

But, hey, a one-day girlfriend shouldn't only last for one day, right?"

"?"

Cheng Shi was flabbergasted.

Sometimes, I really don't belong in the same world as you [Corruption] folks. I'm too... normal.

It wasn't just Cheng Shi—everyone's eyes were now on the "innocently perverse" follower of [Corruption], who bashfully lowered her head under their gazes.

Ji Yue looked at Bai Ling with amusement for a moment, then turned to Fang Shiqing and Cheng Shi. Without waiting for them to ask, she immediately explained:

"It's not that I don't like using the void—it's just that this place isn't under the light of [Truth].

Also, my ability only allows six people to step into the void at once. You should know that until we find Experimental Site No. 69, coming to the void is pointless, even for refuge.

That's because the High Wall of Truth surrounding the void experiment sites won't allow even one more person inside at this moment!

So even if we're here, we won't find what we're looking for, and worse, we might run into followers of [Chaos] who can move through the void.

And those people are way harder to deal with than the Death's Bell Knights."

Everyone nodded in agreement, except Cheng Shi, whose face remained slightly awkward as he listened. He couldn't help but mutter,

“None of that matters—you’re the one who lost it and attracted those Death’s Bell Knight lunatics in the first place.”

“.....”

Ji Yue froze, her hands clenching into fists as her gaze grew icy. Anger visibly gathered in her eyes.

“I’m curious, you’re supposed to be a scholar of [Truth], but why are you acting like one of those hot-headed [War] brutes, unable to control your temper?”

Her expression became colder, and her glances at Cheng Shi were practically radiating frost.

“Well, look at that face. Am I wrong? Don’t you all agree?”

“Good. Very good,” Ji Yue spat, her face darkening as she drew a spear from the void, poised to strike. But just as she was about to thrust the spear, Fang Shiqing moved closer, mimicking Bai Ling by linking arms with her.

The touch instantly brought Ji Yue back to her senses.

The fury in her eyes quickly cleared, and she exhaled deeply, letting the spear fall to the ground.

“Smart. You saw through me.”

Cheng Shi arched an eyebrow, silently noting that his suspicions had been correct.

From the moment he first met Ji Yue, something about her didn’t feel quite right.

From his prior experiences, followers of [Truth] often exhibited traits like composure, intelligence, and a sharp eye for detail—like Fang Shiqing. She was the picture of a true [Truth] scholar.

But Ji Yue was different. While she was certainly perceptive and quick-minded, she was also volatile, quick to anger, and even a bit aggressive.

However, this volatility wasn't as obvious as it would be in someone more brute-like. It was integrated into her own unique style—cool and aloof, but with emotions that flared up rapidly.

Her temperament was like shards of coal mixed into a pile of white sand—perhaps not jarring, but certainly odd.

Could it be... she's started to "fuse" as well?

And if so, had she fused [Truth] with [War]?

How else could one explain a follower of [Truth] who had such an affinity for collecting spears?

Shouldn't they be more fond of rulers and chalk?

Cheng Shi didn't voice his suspicions, but Ji Yue seemed to read his thoughts. She didn't bother to hide anything and very cleanly and directly revealed her "secret."

"The foundation of cooperation is understanding each other. Since we're on the same path now, I won't keep any secrets from my companions.

Yes, I have been tainted by [War]'s divinity."

As soon as those words left her lips, both Cheng Shi and Fang Shiqing frowned.

Cheng Shi furrowed his brow because, while he had been correct in the general direction of his suspicions, he had gotten the details wrong.

She hadn't fused divinities—she had been tainted by it.

“Tainted” was different from the other ways of interacting with divinity that had been described.

If we think of divinity as an “object” and the human vessel as a “storage chest,” then:

Sealing would be storing the object, absorbing would be painting the chest, and tainting would be placing the object near the chest, causing negative effects on the chest without placing it inside.

Cheng Shi was deeply curious how she had come to be tainted by [War]'s godhood, so he stayed silent, waiting for her to continue.

Fang Shiqing, on the other hand, had a different reason for her frown.

She was reflecting on how, during their previous four days of trials, Ji Yue had never been this “open” with them.

The reason wasn't hard to guess: their team had been weak, and the divide between a scholar ranked above 2400 and those below it made them impossible to relate to.

As this realization dawned on her, a self-deprecating smile crossed Fang Shiqing's face, but her expression also became noticeably more serious.

Clearly, this Torchbearer was also very interested in anything related to [War].

Ji Yue didn't waste time and continued:

“The Tower of Logic has many research branches, but very few of them focus on concepts applicable to the battlefield.

Scholars from the Void Matter Theory department, in particular, may excel at communicating with the void, but their combat capabilities are practically zero.

This lack of practical combat skills isn’t obvious at lower ranks, but at higher ranks, research and discovery can only serve as support—they can’t replace direct confrontation.

So, when I reached 2000 points, I began to prepare for this.”

She paused briefly, then added, “And the solution was simple—learn.”

“As a scholar from the Tower of Logic, I’ve never lacked access to learning resources. And the followers of [War] are the easiest battle templates to study.

So, I began emulating them, trying to combine their combat methods with my ability to manipulate the void.”

Hearing this, Cheng Shi suddenly understood.

No wonder he had never seen a scholar summon a rain of spears from the sky before—she had invented this technique herself.

“After much trial and error, I finally found inspiration. I merged the void’s expulsive force with the sharpness of cold steel.

But there was still a problem—I didn’t have enough weapons to make this technique effective.

As you’ve probably noticed, this method relies on quantity. If I don’t have enough, I can’t win.

So, when I hit a wall that brute force couldn't overcome, I prayed to my Patron for a solution.

And He guided me...

To a trial of [War]."

As Ji Yue said this, an odd expression briefly crossed her face, as if she didn't want to recall the trial. Yet, she pushed through the discomfort and continued:

"It was a legendary battle from the founding of the Nation of [War]. I survived for three days and ultimately won the trial.

My squad and I were the last to ascend the blood-soaked walls under the blazing sunset, overlooking a sea of corpses outside the city. That's when I finally understood His guidance.

And so...

I transported the entire wreckage of that battlefield into my void.

From that moment on, this battlefield, tainted with [War]'s divinity, began affecting me constantly..."

Cheng Shi's expression changed slightly, his heart pounding.

Whoa, you're seriously not afraid? Carrying something like a contaminant source of divinity around is no different from carrying a virus!

But then, his brow furrowed again.

Wait a minute, hadn't Ji Yue not yet been affected by [War] back then? Why would she do something so obviously dangerous, with such clear negative consequences?

Epecially considering she's a scholar, she should've known better...

Wait!

A scholar!?

Hold on, was she really just after all those weapons?

Could it be she was trying to study [War] itself?

Holy crap, she learned the fighting methods of [War]'s followers, and that wasn't enough for her—so now she's turned to studying their Patron directly!?

As Cheng Shi's eyes shone with sudden realization, Ji Yue smiled, as if pleased by his reaction.

"You're smart, no wonder Fang Jue was fooled by you.

Yes, you're right. I am studying Him."