

## The Gods 190

Chapter 190: Those Believable, Yet Lamentable...

Reality, Unknown Province and City, Some Office Building.

When Ji Yue opened her eyes, she remained completely still.

She lay there, staring blankly at the white ceiling, her expression tangled with complex emotions.

After a short while, a knock came from the door.

“Knock, knock, knock—

Ji Yue?”

It was Fang Jue.

Ji Yue shifted her gaze toward the door and softly called, “Come in.”

Fang Jue didn’t fully step inside; he simply opened the door, leaning against the doorframe with a teasing smile.

“You’re acting different today. Everyone else is already up, but you’re still lying in bed?

Failed again?”

It was clear that Fang Jue knew what she was searching for, but this process had been going on for so long that even the friends in the Mutual Aid Society were starting to worry about her.

Ji Yue sat up in bed, looked at her half-confidant standing in the doorway, and suddenly smiled.

“Failed?”

No, I succeeded.”

“?”

Fang Jue was taken aback but soon burst into laughter.

“Don’t scare me like that. You don’t look like you’ve succeeded.”

Before he could say another word, Ji Yue stretched out her hand in front of him.

Her slender, jade-like fingers moved gracefully in the air, and before long, each fingertip ignited with a flickering flame.

Fire!

It was burning!

Fang Jue’s pupils contracted at the sight, and he immediately straightened up, disbelief evident in his exclamation:

“You really succeeded?”

[War]’s flame?

Are you the second Ji Yue?

Where’s your true body?”

Faced with the barrage of questions, Ji Yue extinguished the flames on her fingers and stared at her hand in a daze, her eyes losing focus once again.

“Succeeded?”

No, I failed.”

“???” Fang Jue froze, dumbfounded. “What do you mean?”

What do I mean?

Even I don’t know what He means.

Ji Yue let out a bitter laugh and glanced at her player status panel.

[Ji Yue, Female, 30 years old]

[Fate: Civilization]

[Faith: War]

[Class: Mage]

[Path to Godhood Score: 2604, Global Rank: 30,062]

[Ladder of Ascent Score: 181, Fate Path Rank: 34]

[Talents:

– Truth Forsaken (SS): A forsaken oath of truthfulness. Impatience is the folly that buries truth. You remain a scholar, but you no longer walk the path of truth. While you may retain His blessings, you can no longer receive His guidance.

.....]

Yes, Ji Yue had forsaken her oath.

In the last trial.

After she drank the “Twin Elixir,” which she had practiced brewing countless times to the point where she could almost make it with her eyes closed, she had instantly fallen into a state of near death.

This was because the so-called Twin Elixir had never truly existed, and the records in history were nothing more than the conjectures and fabrications of later generations.

In a moment of life and death, with no way to verify the elixir and with no luck on her side, Ji Yue had the courage to take a desperate gamble, but fortune did not favor her.

Or perhaps it had, but her luck had run out at some point.

Fortunately, at the brink of death, the guidance that [Truth] had once granted her saved her life again.

The desolate battlefield she had hidden in the void suddenly came to life, pulling her back from the gates of death with its thick blood and scorching flames.

At that moment, with no other choice, Ji Yue grasped at the only hand extended toward her. Amid the hymns of blood and fire, she abandoned her oath and became a [War] mage, a Preacher of Purgatory.

Ji Yue slowly explained everything that had happened, then stared into Fang Jue’s eyes and asked softly:

“So, what do you think? Did I succeed, or did I... fail?”

“.....”

Whether it was success or failure was hard to determine, but one thing was clear: Fang Jue was at a loss for words.

With a similarly complex expression, he closed the door behind him, thinking that maybe what Ji Yue needed right now wasn't company, but time alone.

And he was right. Ji Yue did indeed want to be alone.

But not to calm her emotions.

She was contemplating Fang Shiqing's invitation.

An invitation to join an organization called the “Torchbearers.”

“Interesting,” Ji Yue muttered with a shake of her head and a faint smile as she reignited the flames on her fingertips, staring at the flickering light deep in thought.

“If I can light this flame, does that mean... I now possess the qualifications and ability to bear the torch?”

—

Void, Path of the Torchbearers.

Fang Shiqing clutched the Whispering Petal, which was now looking somewhat dim, as she hurried along the rising steps of the void.

She could feel the [Existence] energy within the petal starting to dissipate, so she was trying to deliver the petal to someone as quickly as possible—someone who might be able to find a way to preserve it.

This petal had been won through countless hardships, and if it were to lose its power due to issues with preservation, she would never forgive herself.

But as she rushed along, a figure appeared above her.

[Flame of Hope]!

The deity who watched over the Torchbearers hung upside down in the air, face-to-face with Fang Shiqing, blocking her path.

Fang Shiqing stopped abruptly, her expression anxious as she spoke:

“Whatever joke you’ve got this time, save it for when I get back. I’m really in a hurry.”

However, instead of moving aside, the flames covering [Flame of Hope] burned even more intensely. For once, He wasn’t joking. Instead, He looked into Fang Shiqing’s eyes with uncharacteristic solemnity and spoke in a grave tone:

“Shiqing, your memory has been tampered with.”

“!!!”

Fang Shiqing’s pupils shrank, and fear quickly spread across her face.

“Are you sure!?”

She panicked, frantically trying to remember everything that had happened recently, but no matter how hard she thought, she couldn't pinpoint when or where someone had tampered with her memories.

After all, [Flame of Hope] had once promised the Torchbearers that He would protect their memories from being altered—unless one of the [Gods] themselves intervened...

Could it be...

One of Them had intervened?

Who? [Memory]? Had she been discovered by [Memory]?

When? Where? What did He know?

Were the Torchbearers... exposed?

Fang Shiqing's body tensed up, and her face turned pale as she looked to [Flame of Hope], her eyes filled with desperation, begging for an answer.

But now it seemed that the answer might not be the one she wanted to hear.

"Don't panic. It wasn't Him—at least not Him personally.

Let me take a look... Hmm, it was one of His creations. A powerful one, at that.

Impressive—someone used His creation to erase parts of your memory. And this happened just recently, during the trial you just completed.

In the memories that were hidden from you, I caught a glimpse of someone you know. Uh, sorry, I wasn't snooping; I just happened to see..."

Hearing that [Memory] hadn't acted directly, Fang Shiqing felt a slight sense of relief, her heart settling somewhat. She clenched her fists tightly and blurted out:

"Were we exposed?"

"No, relax. We're still safe."

"Phew—thank goodness..."

Fang Shiqing felt as though her back was drenched in sweat, and her legs nearly gave out underneath her. She almost collapsed to the ground.

[Flame of Hope] steadied her with His divine power and asked:

"Do you... want to recover those memories?"

Fang Shiqing nodded firmly:

"Yes, I need to recover them. I need to know who I saw in those missing memories and what was said.

The safety of the Torchbearers rests on my shoulders. I can't allow myself to be deceived, not when the stakes are so high."

[Flame of Hope] nodded in agreement. With fingers made of flickering flames, He snapped them.

Snap!

With a crisp sound, the erased memories flooded back like a tidal wave, overwhelming Fang Shiqing's consciousness.

And just as her mind was engulfed in the rush of memories, [Flame of Hope] chuckled softly and, with a sly grin, snapped His fingers two more times—silently.