

The Gods 191

Chapter 191: ...Adorable...

Fang Shiqing remembered everything.

She remembered the Clown summoned by the mask, remembered the chaos the Clown stirred up on the battlefield, remembered the [Laughter and Mockery] beneath the void, and remembered the figure climbing down the Conjugated Whispering Tree.

Most importantly, she remembered the Clown's name.

Cheng Shi!

This "friend" who had once refused her invitation had re-entered her memory in such an unfamiliar way.

Fang Shiqing felt a tangle of emotions—gratitude, admiration, respect, approval.

But none of these complex feelings showed on her face; instead, a knowing smile replaced the fear and panic that had been there moments before.

This smile was like the rising sun cresting over a mountain peak, illuminating the entire Path of the Torchbearers.

Breathtakingly beautiful.

Even [Flame of Hope] was stunned.

"You..."

"What about me? Is there something else? If not, let's talk when I get back. I really need to find him."

"...Could this be what you humans call pulling...?"

“Don’t swear!”

“...” [Flame of Hope]’s candle flame flickered and dimmed, sulkily moving aside. “I’m hurt. I need Shiqing to comfort me before I can feel better.”

“I’ll comfort you when I get back. See ya!”

Fang Shiqing smiled and walked away. [Flame of Hope] watched her leave, His flame swaying back and forth, lost in thought.

The Path of the Torchbearers was long. She hadn’t walked far before bumping into Bai Ling, who was running towards her in a panic.

Strangely, the moment Bai Ling saw Fang Shiqing, she suddenly calmed down.

Fang Shiqing glanced at her thoughtfully and asked with a smile:

“Why are you in such a rush?”

Bai Ling skipped over and linked arms with her, grinning.

“I had a nightmare and was really scared, but the moment I saw you, Sister Qing, I suddenly wasn’t scared anymore.

Sister Qing, I feel like you’re glowing. You’re so radiant.”

“Stop teasing! I don’t have time for this. I need to talk to him about something. We can chat later.”

Fang Shiqing patted Bai Ling's hand and continued walking forward, but after a few steps, she stopped and turned back, asking somewhat randomly:

"Hey, I just remembered, what was the name of that knight team's priest we met in the last trial?"

I went over the whole trial, but I just can't recall his name..."

Hearing this, Bai Ling frowned slightly as if thinking, but the hand behind her back pinched her own waist tightly.

Her back was drenched in sweat.

"I think... it was Laier?"

Fang Shiqing had a moment of realization:

"Right, right, Laier. Hmm, I remember now. I'm heading off first, talk to you later."

Saying this, Fang Shiqing turned and walked away, her pace quickening, the sunny aura radiating from her growing stronger.

She could tell Bai Ling's heartstrings were in disarray, which meant Bai Ling likely remembered everything from the last trial too.

But she didn't want to pursue it or say much more. She just needed to know that Bai Ling had lied to her just now—that was enough.

Being a City Guardian meant learning to protect the beauty within one's heart.

And this little bird was learning quickly.

Bai Ling watched her leave, biting her lip tightly.

Her mind was filled with thoughts of one person, but it wasn't the departing Fang Shiqing.

A single sentence echoed in her heart:

I can't tell!

—

A short while later, Void, Torchbearer Hall.

Fang Shiqing once again saw that imposing figure—the founder of the Torchbearers, their steadfast anchor.

He was hunched over his desk, writing. Fang Shiqing walked quickly to the desk and placed the Conjugated Whispering Petal down.

“Thud.”

The man looked up, glanced at the petal, and smiled.

“What, you got it?”

“You don't seem surprised?” Fang Shiqing retorted, slightly irritated.

“If the Flame-Seeker couldn't bring back the thing she yearned for, then the Torchbearers wouldn't deserve to talk about protecting beauty.”

“...” Fang Shiqing laughed out of exasperation. “Don’t make it sound so easy, and don’t make me sound so great. This wasn’t my achievement, it was...”

The man stopped writing, stood up straight, looked at her, and smiled: “It was what?”

Fang Shiqing’s eyes dimmed for a moment, then instantly brightened again.

“It was the achievement of all Torchbearers!”

“Clap, clap, clap! Well said.”

The man laughed heartily. “I think we need to create a position for a motivator, and you, you’d be perfect for it.”

“...”

Fang Shiqing stared at the man before her for a long moment, then suddenly asked:

“You seem to be in a good mood. Any good news?”

“Is it that obvious? Not exactly good news, but at least it’s not bad news.

For people like us walking a tightrope, as long as it’s not bad news, it counts as good news.”

“What good news?”

“They were played. Someone just told me that those self-righteous [Chosen Ones] got played.”

Fang Shiqing paused, surprised. “Who? [The Gods]?”

“No, no, I don’t know who, but he’s... very interesting...”

You don’t need to know the details, because it involves someone... forget it, bad luck to mention her.

Until you meet her, you don’t need to know who she is, otherwise attracting her interest will only bring bad luck.

Alright, let’s talk about your business. It seems you came for more than just this petal.”

Indeed, Fang Shiqing’s initial intention was solely to deliver this petal, which was losing its power, so that the anchor before her could turn it into a Shadow Oath Elixir.

But now, she wasn’t in a rush.

The reason for this change was, naturally, because some fascinating stories had suddenly appeared in her memory. Although these stories were brief, they had given her great inspiration.

No, it should be said they gave her immense, unimaginable inspiration.

Fang Shiqing glanced at the petal on the table, hesitating.

She tried to speak several times, but she didn’t know how to relay Cheng Shi’s stirring words from the void.

Because she knew the man before her was exceptionally perceptive. If she opened her mouth, he would surely guess that someone had instilled these ideas in her and would press her about who that person was.

And Fang Shiqing didn’t want to mention Cheng Shi’s name.

Because she felt she wasn't the one being instilled, but the one actively accepting the ideas.

So she hesitated, conflicted, unsure how to begin.

The man saw all this and smiled again.

He was far more perceptive than Fang Shiqing imagined.

"It seems our Flame-Seeker has her own secrets.

No matter. Since you feel this secret shouldn't be told to me, then..."

The man stepped back, retrieved a syringe from under the desk, and placed it on the table.

"This is..." Fang Shiqing paused, asking with confusion.

"[Memory]'s creation, an SS-rank item, the Remembrance Needle.

Just a light touch with it, while thinking of the memory you wish to erase, and it will help you conceal everything.

Don't underestimate it just because it's an SS-rank item; its effect is on par with a Divine Artifact, but..."

Fang Shiqing's eyes widened as she murmured her guess:

"Consumable?"

"Bingo. It's a consumable."

“But this is your...”

“It belongs to the Torchbearers.” The man interrupted her, his smile widening. He spoke with great seriousness, “We always trust our companions. If you’re not ready to tell me this secret, it can only mean that I shouldn’t know it.

And that, Ms. Fang Shiqing, is also one of the beautiful things you, as a Torchbearer, must protect.

As the founder of the Torchbearers, I am only happy about this.

You should use it, and you need to use it.”

Fang Shiqing never denied that a large part of why she joined the Torchbearers was due to the charisma of the man standing before her.

She always felt that with someone like him leading, the Torchbearers could definitely walk the path they were meant to tread.

So she nodded heavily, then carefully organized her thoughts, mulled over her words, took several deep breaths, and finally spoke the words that had been weighing on her heart.

“I think...”

The will of the City Builders is too conservative.”

“...”