

## The Gods 218

### Chapter 218: Fate Works in Mysterious Ways

Honestly, Cheng Shi had overestimated his excavation prowess.

He discovered that even with an entrenching tool stashed in his personal storage, he couldn't make quick progress through the compacted rubble.

The surrounding soil contained more than just dirt—there was wood and steel as well. His shovel wasn't sharp enough, and sometimes he had no choice but to snap obstructions apart with his bare hands.

And so, one man and one rat inched forward bit by bit, following the direction their rodent "captain" indicated.

Barely an hour in, Cheng Shi stopped, drenched in sweat.

"Can't you at least sing me a song? Give me some kind of buff?"

"Squeak squeak."

"I suspect you're trying to exhaust me so you can make your move."

"Squeak squeak."

Cheng Shi's face darkened. He whacked the rat on the head with the butt of his scalpel, leaving it spinning.

"That's for mouthing off."

"?" The rat reeled, the world rotating around it.

It wasn't that Cheng Shi didn't want to push harder—he was genuinely spent. A Hero of Today was heroic in battle, not in digging tunnels. Making a favored child of [Fate] do the work of a burrowing rodent was an abominable waste of talent.

But there was no alternative. For now, this appeared to be the only path forward.

Staying put and waiting for the trial to end was no longer viable—Cheng Shi could already hear faint shouts filtering down from above, along with an increasing rumble of vibration.

Montelani's garrison knights had likely assembled and begun rescuing the buried citizens.

"You'd better not be lying to me. Otherwise, every ounce of suffering I've endured will come back to you tenfold."

Li Yi sat expressionless inside the cage, feeling that life as a rat could not get any bleaker.

'If I hadn't run into you, I probably would've found a suitable corpse for soul transfer by now,' he wanted to say. 'But then I just had to bump into you, you little—'

'No. I'm not the Clown. I am the clown.'

...

Meanwhile, while Cheng Shi was toiling away, in a hidden chamber deep beneath the prison, another rat silently squeezed its way out of a ceiling ventilation duct.

It surveyed the scene below with surprise, then descended along a wall-mounted pipe until it reached an unoccupied desk. There, gazing at stacks upon stacks of illustrated documents, it sank into deep thought.

This was unmistakably a laboratory concealed underground, and this particular room was an office within it. The documents spread across the desk likely contained information about the experiments being conducted here—possibly the laboratory's greatest secret.

The rat that had stumbled upon such an unexpected treasure should have been thrilled. Instead, it felt no joy whatsoever, because...

It couldn't read.

It circled the desktop twice, scrutinized every corner of the small office, and made a decision.

It would steal these documents—but first, it needed to do one thing: find a not-too-clever human and swap bodies.

Indeed, this rat was Su Wu in disguise.

The moment the fog had risen in the prison, he'd planned to stay put. But someone had crept up and stuck one of Li Yi's Purification Cards onto his lower back.

The card's glow instantly attracted the surrounding Penal Knights, who closed in on him. Seeing his position compromised, Su Wu activated his backup plan—he slapped his own Purification Card onto a rat, flung it in the opposite direction, swapped identities with the rodent pinned under his foot, and slipped away in the chaos.

He'd planned to escape through the ventilation ducts, but the one he'd chosen didn't lead to the surface—it went deeper underground.

So, cautiously and carefully, he ended up here: a subterranean laboratory connected to Montelani's deathmatch prison.

A laboratory built in a place this secret had to be hiding something enormous—that much was obvious.

Especially since the documents bore the insignia of the Tower of Logic.

Yes—the Tower of Logic.

Su Wu couldn't read, but that didn't stop him from recognizing the Tower of Logic's emblem.

How fascinating. Buried beneath the heartland of the Grand Tribunal, under the very feet of Montelani, lay a hidden laboratory belonging to the Tower of Logic.

All of this sent Su Wu's curiosity into overdrive. He crept to the office door and waited for the first unlucky soul to appear.

He waited and waited. No unlucky soul showed up—but a teammate did.

Gao San!

The Acrobat—whose entire body could go boneless like an octopus—had squeezed out of the same duct opening.

And that massive, rigid prisoner helmet on his head? Right now it was as pliable as an octopus tentacle, clinging to his deformed skull as it slid out of the pipe!

This Acrobat actually had a talent that could soften objects attached to his body!

Even so, he still hadn't been able to shake off that infernal iron casing.

The moment Gao San landed, Su Wu lay motionless at the doorway—no hiding, no flinching. Man and rat locked eyes across the room.

"..."

"..."

Seeing the rat's unnervingly intelligent gaze, Gao San instantly understood everything. He frowned, silently raising his guard:

"Beast Tamer?"

"The tracks in the duct—those were yours?"

"Hmph. No wonder you died so readily. Shame—I thought I'd personally sent you to your grave."

The rat wrinkled its nose and slowly rose to its hind legs.

"So you're the Acrobat." A shrill, distorted human voice squeezed from the rat's throat.

Had any ordinary person been present, the sight of a man conversing with a rat would have sent them fainting. But Gao San wasn't the least bit surprised—this was simply how Beast Tamers worked.

"How does it feel, having the 'end of fate' you discovered suddenly become your own? Quite the surprise, isn't it?"

"Who knows? Perhaps I'll discover a new 'end of fate' right here—and this one will belong to you."

Gao San snorted coldly. He glanced at the office door first, then walked to the desk and attempted to pocket the documents.

Anyone with eyes could tell these were valuable. How valuable, though—Gao San didn't know.

Because he couldn't read either.

"You think you can take those? You're just a rat."

"Su Wu, Su Wu. I don't mean to look down on you, but if you were in any form other than Beast Tamer mode, I might give you some respect. Right now, though... you think you can kill me?"

"Ha. Keep dreaming. It's adorable."

The rat's eyes hardened. It placed a paw on the door.

The message was crystal clear: 'You don't want to negotiate? Then I'll knock. Whatever's on the other side—we'll leave that to fate.'

Gao San's hand froze on the documents. His expression darkened.

"What do you want?"

"The documents go to me. Everything outside this room goes to you." The rat pointed a claw beyond the office, clearly inviting the other to go open that mystery box himself.

But Gao San was never going to entertain such an outrageous demand. With a cold laugh, he vaulted from behind the desk to the front in an instant.

Despite the violence of the movement, his landing made absolutely no sound.

"I need exactly one second to snap your neck, then I grab the documents and leave. One more chance—what do you want?"

Far from being frightened, the rat let out a hissing chuckle and crawled two steps toward Gao San.

"Why don't you try?"

Did Gao San dare try?

He did not.

No one underestimates a Beast Tamer, and no one takes risks in an unknown situation. His earlier show of force was meant to catch Su Wu off guard—to see if intimidation alone could cow him. But the moment Su Wu advanced toward him instead of retreating, his bluff collapsed on its own.

'He has a backup plan. He definitely has a backup plan. Then again, what deceiver doesn't?'

Gao San stepped back to the desk, his expression grave.

And Su Wu—or rather, the rat—slowly relaxed his hind claws.

Su Wu had no backup plan whatsoever.

He was bluffing too—betting that his opponent wouldn't dare call it at this moment.

'Close. This sky-high standoff—and I won the gamble.'

"Now then—shall we discuss a partnership?"

Su Wu seemed to have seized the initiative. He sprawled at Gao San's feet with effortless composure, jabbing a claw at the documents on the desk.

"We split them fifty-fifty, then push this door open together and see what's beyond. Deal?"

Gao San didn't dare make a move, but that didn't stop him from sneering:

"I can contribute ten out of ten for opening that door. So from these documents, I'll leave you... one-tenth."

"After all, this is a partnership—I should let you earn a little something, right?"

"..."

The counter-offer rendered Su Wu speechless, because when it came to pushing that door, he truly couldn't contribute.

A rat's strength compared to a human's was laughably feeble—especially when that human was a Warrior.

But just as he was about to fire back at Gao San, a voice drifted down from the duct above.

"You sure it's here?"

"If you're sure, I'm cutting through. Alright—three, two, one!"

BOOM—

CLANG—

Thud, thud, thud...

A figure clutching a rat cage dropped straight through the shattered ceiling. The instant he landed steadily on his feet, a delighted smile spread across his face.

"Tsk, tsk, tsk..."

"Fate works in mysterious ways."

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