

## The Gods 259

Chapter 259: [Birth] Rank One: Eternal Sun

The instant his faith toggled back to [Deceit], Cheng Shi's familiar [Deceit] chat channel returned.

The same grand assembly of liars where not a single true word was spoken, where every trickster unleashed their wildest imagination with reckless abandon.

The only pity was that this channel had no target audience — it was all tricksters from top to bottom.

Cheng Shi scrolled casually for a moment and noticed quite a few people still spamming "Hail the return of the Dragon King." He couldn't help but grin, then pulled up the latest [Deceit] Ladder of Ascent.

[Ladder of Ascent (Existence — Memory) / (Void — Deceit)]

1. Li Jingming (Deceit) — 211
2. Oh No, This Is the Real Dragon King (Deceit) — 209
3. Like A Dream (Memory) — 208
4. 2 Points From Sweeping Gold-Silver-Bronze, Fuming (Deceit) — 206
5. This Love Could Wait (Memory) — 203
6. Sir Lü Is Brave! (Deceit) — 202
- ...
43. True Heart (Deceit) — 179

...

57. I Never Lie (Deceit) — 169

...

But after he finished reading the latest rankings, the grin vanished.

'Huh?'

'Lü Jingming reclaimed the top spot?'

'And he did it as a [Deceit] follower!'

'I thought "Hail the Dragon King" was just a meme. Turns out you actually went and did it?'

"..."

'Absolute legend!'

Beyond "legend," Cheng Shi genuinely couldn't think of a second word for the man.

'Running this fast on [Deceit]'s path — don't you worry your former patron [Memory] will off you?'

'Or are you an undercover agent too, just waiting for the day you bring that number-one seat back to [Memory]?'

Thinking about it led Cheng Shi right back to himself. After all, he'd walked even further down the oathbreaking road than Li Jingming.

Pot, meet kettle. Nothing to laugh about.

But aside from the Dragon King situation, there was another noteworthy development: Zhen Xin's score had apparently bottomed out and begun climbing again.

This meant that regardless of whether the prophecy's target was that farce or Cheng Shi himself, the prophecy's shelf life had expired.

He could finally stop living on tenterhooks, worrying about Chosen Ones dropping in to cause trouble.

But Zhen Xin's score alone wasn't enough for full confirmation. So Cheng Shi frowned, opened the priest channel—

—And found it chattering away with almost zero useful information. Struck by inspiration, he switched back to [Fate], put on a mage mask, and sneaked into the mage channel to gather intel.

Sure enough, three minutes of browsing the mage channel yielded more actionable intelligence than three years in the trickster channel could ever produce.

The veteran mages were discussing the Chosen Ones.

Apparently, every Chosen One who'd previously dropped in score was climbing back up. In the past few days, several faiths' Chosen Ones had already reclaimed the number-one throne, once again demonstrating their prowess to all players:

Down when they wanted. Up when they wanted.

The ordinary players trailing behind them might as well have been playing an entirely different game.

"Here's a summary of the Chosen One intel discussed earlier. As of now, the only faiths whose Chosen Ones haven't returned to their thrones are: all of [Life], [Corruption], [Time], and [Fate].

(Chart attached)

Note 1: The 'Chosen Ones' referenced here aren't simply whoever's currently first in each faith, but those who've held the top spot for longer than one-third of the Faith Game's total duration. Of course, the current first-place holders can also be called Chosen Ones — your call.

Note 2: Due to the [Memory] Chosen One's oathbreaking to [Deceit] and subsequent re-ascension, there's been some confusion, so these two faiths weren't included.

Note 3: Data sourced from this channel. Records are searchable but shouldn't be taken as gospel. Judge for yourselves."

Cheng Shi stared slack-jawed at the data table compiled by this helpful mage, heart brimming with emotion.

'When has any other channel seen anything like this? This is practically pre-chewed food being spooned straight into your mouth.'

'Don't tell me all those selfless bros who used to share everything on public forums before the Faith Game descended... all picked mage?'

Even more frightening — this wasn't the only organized data dump. Shares and analyses flooded past in a relentless torrent. Cheng Shi had to scroll way back through the chat history just to find the topics he cared about.

"..."

'By comparison, the priest channel is a mess. Actually — aside from maybe the hunter channel — probably no channel can match the mage channel for its constant, rolling stream of pure [Truth].'

"Adding supplementary data: [Birth]'s 'Infertility Specialist' has been stuck at number 10 for a while, seemingly sandbagging their score. The current top-ranked [Birth] follower has an interesting ID — 'Eternal Sun.' Any history buff should recognize that name. Looks like she's got ambitious plans.

[Prosperity]'s 'Bald Guy Uses Rejoice' is still outside the top 50. Technically he doesn't meet the one-third threshold the previous poster mentioned, but [Prosperity] being [Prosperity], the Chosen One seat rotates. Tu Tou just sat in it the longest.

[Death]'s 'Cemetery Caretaker' had been climbing — reached around 20th at one point — but has slipped again these last two days. Currently at position 41."

Cheng Shi speed-scrolled through the messages. When the ID "Eternal Sun" appeared in the chat, he paused.

'That ID plus that ranking... could it be her?'

'Hu Xuan?'

Cheng Shi pulled out the Night Curtain Spring Whistle from his storage space, lost in thought, remembering the trial he'd shared with this would-be [Birth] envoy.

'Sure enough, in this world, it's the brave who embrace Divinity first.'

'Compared to her, I'm miles behind.'

But things weren't bad as they stood. At least he hadn't heard of any Chosen One walking the path of Faith Coexistence yet. By that measure, he'd quietly pulled a tiny bit ahead of the curve.

'Praise [Deceit]! Praise [Fate]! Praise the great [Void]!'

That said, while ordinary players could aggregate information, analyze, and speculate about the top-tier players' situations and the game's trends, they still lacked the first-hand intel that high-end players gained through personal experience.

Interestingly, that small elite group traded intel among themselves quite frequently — just never shared any of it with those below them.

This created an enormous gap in critical intelligence and key historical knowledge between the absolute apex and everyone chasing them — an unbridgeable information divide.

And there was no way to close it. The only method was to push your own score higher, and then... join them.

Otherwise, they'd probably never share a word of this with low-ranking players.

Cheng Shi continued scanning through the chat logs. After a good while, he could roughly confirm that the prophecy — the one that had sent every Chosen One plunging down the rankings in search of its subject — had truly ended.

The storm had passed. It looked like future trials wouldn't pit him against so many peak players anymore.

At this thought, Cheng Shi let out a long, heavy breath of relief.