

## The Gods 31

### Chapter 31

“It’s really you!! Huang Bo!!! Where is the real Ah Ming?”

“How is this possible?”

“Big shot, this...”

Cheng Shi smiled as he casually tightened the cap on the potion bottle, feeling a wave of relief wash over him.

Of course, the Truth of Confession was fake.

There were only four people here besides Cheng Shi himself, so [Offering to the Void] couldn’t have activated.

But that didn’t stop him from using the “confession” as a bluff.

A mix of truth and lies—always the best strategy for victory.

With his plan successful, Cheng Shi clicked his tongue and continued with his speculations:

“My guess is you used some kind of delayed death trick or life-sustaining item to keep Ah Ming stuck in the tavern, right?”

Huang Bo no longer attempted to hide the truth. With Ah Ming’s face still his own, he burst into mad laughter.

“Exactly! My master granted me an S-rank talent—Shared Appearance and Mind. Cheng Shi, you’re clever, but you can’t do anything to me.”

Huang Bo's voice was frantic, yet brimming with confidence.

"As long as I stay alive, that little assassin lives too.

But if I die, he dies as well!

So what if you found me? Doesn't it feel awful, being toyed with like puppets?

Hahaha, isn't it frustrating?

The only thing I didn't account for was that this poet here could revive you two.

But what does it matter? I outsmarted you, and yet there's nothing you can do..."

"Shhk!"

"Cheng Shi!"

"Big shot!"

"Cheng!!??"

Before Huang Bo could finish his rant, Cheng Shi suddenly pulled out a knife from who knows where and stabbed it right into his chest.

Feeling the blade tear through his heart, Huang Bo gasped in disbelief, his breath shaky as he stammered:

"Y-you're... insane... he... will die..."

Cheng Shi sneered:

“Whether he dies or not is none of my business. You stabbed me first, so now you get to feel what it’s like to be stabbed in the heart.”

Without another word, Cheng Shi swiftly pulled the knife out and plunged it into Huang Bo’s throat.

Only when he saw the life leave Huang Bo’s eyes did Cheng Shi skillfully sever the man’s head. Then, he calmly lit the body on fire before cracking his knuckles, feeling the weight lift from his shoulders.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

Let’s see if you can revive from this.

The three women standing nearby watched the whole scene, eyes wide in shock, their minds struggling to process what they had just witnessed.

Fang Shiqing was the first to snap out of it. Her eyes held a mix of complex emotions as she looked at Cheng Shi and said:

“You...”

“What about me?” Cheng Shi nonchalantly wiped the blood off his hands and smiled. “I told you from the start—I’m not a good person.”

Fang Shiqing didn’t respond. She closed her eyes for a moment, taking deep breaths to steady herself, before glancing at her watch and reassuming her role as the group leader.

“Now that we’re down two people, our investigation is going to be much harder...”

“Hold on, Sister Fang,” Xu Lu interrupted, tugging on Fang Shiqing’s sleeve.

Fang Shiqing turned to her, her cold expression making Xu Lu flinch for a moment. But Xu Lu gathered her courage and continued:

“Something doesn’t add up. Cheng Shi’s a priest, and Bai Ling’s a weak... well, not-very-powerful hunter. With Huang Bo’s abilities, he could’ve easily killed them. Why bother using NPCs?”

“?”

Xu Lu’s words struck a chord with everyone.

Cheng Shi was equally surprised—he hadn’t expected Xu Lu to be the first one to catch on.

Perhaps it was because Fang Shiqing and Bai Ling saw him through rose-colored glasses, and his swift killing of Huang Bo had shocked them more than anything else.

But Xu Lu, who had been watching coldly from the sidelines, had managed to make the first deduction.

After a moment of contemplation, Fang Shiqing seemed to come to a realization. She suddenly looked back toward the room.

“[Chaos] might have ordered Huang Bo to eliminate us, but it wouldn’t have provided him with the answers to the trial. So, it wasn’t that he didn’t want to strike—he needed someone else to help him find the answer.

And that answer... was the guard?”

She turned to Cheng Shi, seeking confirmation.

Cheng Shi clapped his hands lightly in approval and laid everything out, explaining his reasoning.

“Exactly. Maybe he overheard my conversation with the guard outside, or perhaps he already spotted the ring and was waiting for me to solve the puzzle for him.

I did find the answer. If I’m right, that guard isn’t dead. Huang Bo’s next move would’ve been to take the guard somewhere you couldn’t find him and leave the trial himself.

Of course, I’m not sure how he knew this was the final scene—maybe his patron gave him advanced knowledge.”

Fang Shiqing’s eyes grew complex.

“You suspected Ah Ming from the very beginning? Even before the fog incident?”

Cheng Shi chuckled. “It was just a guess.”

As he spoke, he glanced inside the room.

Understanding his intention, Bai Ling immediately rushed in to check the guard’s condition.

Sure enough, a faint “murky glow” lingered around the guard’s heart, keeping him alive.

“He’s still breathing!” Bai Ling called out.

Fang Shiqing followed in behind her and, seeing the guard barely clinging to life, turned to Cheng Shi and said, “Looks like your turn again.”

Cheng Shi didn’t object. He cast a healing spell on the guard, just as the man began waking up from the brink of death. Then, Cheng Shi immediately followed it up with a hypnosis spell.

This time, before Fang Shiqing could say anything, Xu Lu impatiently shouted:

“Hey! You! Is this a memory or not? Hurry up and answer!”

Her crude interrogation made everyone wince, but the guard, who was barely hanging on, was too far gone to think clearly. He nodded after a moment’s confusion.

A second later, the guard’s body exploded into countless points of light, which quickly reformed into a Memory Gate.

But this time, the Memory Gate had a golden frame around it.

The final gate!

Its appearance signaled that the trial was nearing its end.

If they stepped through, they would all survive and be rewarded.

“It’s... over?”

Xu Lu hadn’t expected things to wrap up so neatly. With plenty of time left, they had already found the final exit.

They had been in the trial for just over eight hours, leaving almost a third of the time still remaining.

“Sister... Fang?”

Xu Lu turned back to Fang Shiqing, beaming with joy, only to meet Cheng Shi’s frowning face instead.

Startled, Xu Lu instinctively took two steps back.

This was a man who had just casually killed someone, and a follower of an opposing faith no less. Would he make a move against her at the doorstep of the exit?

She didn't want to think about it, so she decided she would make a run for it.

Xu Lu's eyes darted around, taking in everyone's positions, before she gritted her teeth and bolted for the Memory Gate.

But just as she was about to leap through and complete the trial, a strong hand grabbed her arm and yanked her back from the door.

"Ahhhhh!!!!"

Xu Lu screamed in terror, instinctively using her bard talents to unleash an attack on Cheng Shi.

Cheng Shi didn't dodge in time, but instead, with a dark expression, accelerated his metabolism to neutralize the negative statuses before tossing her aside like a rag doll.

Seeing this, Fang Shiqing, her face flushed with anger, stepped in front of Xu Lu.

"Cheng Shi, that's enough!"

Bai Ling was utterly confused. She didn't understand why Cheng Shi wouldn't let Xu Lu leave, but she still drew her bow and stood behind him, unsure what to do.

Fang Shiqing's brows furrowed as she watched the scene unfold.

"Sister Fang, save me!"

“Cheng Shi, you—”

“No, something’s not right!”

Ignoring the chaos around him, Cheng Shi frowned deeply as he said:

“Something’s wrong! If this is the path to the next memory, there might not be an issue.

But if this is the final gate, the answer is too simple.

The prophet’s prediction hasn’t come true yet. Where’s the woman’s hand raising the teacup?”

Fang Shiqing blinked, suddenly realizing what Cheng Shi was saying. She let out a sigh of relief.

It seemed Cheng Shi wasn’t planning to kill anyone. He was just doubting the validity of their answer.

But there was only ever one final gate in a memory labyrinth. How could it be wrong?

Xu Lu, still trembling on the floor, stared at Cheng Shi with a mixture of fear and hatred, her mind racing with thoughts of revenge.

Fang Shiqing glanced back at her, then sighed and explained to Cheng Shi:

“We climbed over the outer wall and made our way to the second floor, where we found the duchess’s room. We did see the cup.

The prophet’s vision doesn’t always depict the current timeline. It’s possible the duchess used the cup earlier.

But honestly, I think the vision was just meant to lead us here.

The scene of the duke's death, or... maybe to find the duchess's lover.”

Cheng Shi frowned, shaking his head.

“Something's off. Where's the duchess?

We've wasted nearly an hour in this room. Hasn't the banquet started yet?

Or is everyone still patiently waiting for the duke to arrive?

The guests haven't left, so why not? What exactly is the duchess doing to cover up the duke's death?”

The more Cheng Shi thought about it, the more questions piled up.

It felt as if an invisible hand had placed the answer right in front of them, eager for them to accept it.

But this subtle pressure, this feeling of being rushed, didn't sit well with Cheng Shi.

Where had things gone wrong?

He began to think carefully.

The entire Eternal Night Labyrinth hadn't been that complicated.

In the first scene, they had found the tavern waiter. He had likely recalled the tavern because he recognized several of the patrons.

In the second scene, they found the duke's stableman, Yolke.

They had found him because they had seen the true nature of the “orc woman” and the dwarves hidden beneath the orc skin.

Yolke had been controlled by the dwarves, and in the third scene, they found the bodies of those very same dwarves.

Then, Cheng Shi had found the guard’s ring and confronted him.

The guard had acknowledged the ring and guided them to the Memory Gate.

It all seemed logical.

But...

Hadn’t the guard mentioned something about a “broker”?

A flash of insight struck Cheng Shi’s mind as he realized he had fallen into a mental trap!

“The broker!”

Title: The Death of Huang Bo and the Final Gate