

The Gods 40

Chapter 40: Like My Adam's Apple? It's Yours

2502?

Hearing this score, the fire of excitement that had been burning in Cheng Shi's heart was instantly extinguished.

Another 2400+ player, and this one had even reached 2500.

Good news: there were plenty of big shots.

Bad news: there were too many big shots.

The scores of the players in this trial seemed almost too high.

And he himself...

How many points again?

The Memory Traveler was a mage from the [Memory] path.

And [Memory], which faithfully records everything that happens, was the sworn enemy of [Deceit].

Having such an opponent right in front of him made it impossible for Cheng Shi to be completely calm.

But was he overwhelmed with fear? Not necessarily.

He had encountered players with these kinds of scores before—just not very often.

Du Xiguang was tall—at least 1.9 meters—wearing glasses that gave him a scholarly air. But beneath his trench coat, it was clear that his body was lean and powerful.

Cheng Shi's eyes skimmed over him briefly before quietly turning his attention to the dagger-wielding woman.

“Yunni, Apostle of Oblivion, 2491.”

Huh?

She was a follower of [Oblivion]?

[Oblivion] was the third god of the [Descent] path, representing the final stage of decay, the end of all life.

[Oblivion] believes that all life will eventually disappear, that the universe is doomed to destruction, and that all things will eventually vanish, returning to nothingness in the end.

Thus, followers of [Oblivion] tend to hold life in utter disregard.

To them, living is merely the process of heading toward vanishing, and death is just the beginning of the world's dissolution.

The entire purpose of existence, in their view, is to await the final judgment, after which everything will crumble to dust under the god's gaze.

Cheng Shi hadn't expected this lively, almost spirited woman to be a follower of [Oblivion].

Oh, right—she's an assassin!

An Apostle of Oblivion is an assassin who follows [Oblivion].

That made more sense.

Assassins were always full of contradictions.

Cheng Shi chuckled inwardly and moved his gaze to the next person.

The one who had knocked on his door.

This long-haired pretty boy who had changed into the inn's clothes had a cold, indifferent look in his eyes, completely unmasked in his disdain for everyone around him.

It was as if he were silently declaring: Apologies, but I look down on all of you equally.

That was the vibe he exuded.

Cheng Shi had already guessed this guy's identity.

“Wei Guan, Fool Hunter, 2450.”

As expected—a Fool Hunter, a hunter who follows [Folly].

Despite the name, [Folly] is anything but foolish. In fact, the god sees itself as even closer to the truth than [Truth].

Because it believes itself to be so close to the truth, it sees an immeasurable gap between itself and everything else in the world. Therefore, it views everything else in existence as foolish.

That is its will.

[Folly] believes: all life is foolish, and all civilization is idiocy.

And the god's followers have fully embraced that perspective, to the point where every [Folly] player has an air of superiority, always looking down on others.

From the moment they start following their patron, their minds become sharper than other players', their thoughts more active, and their knowledge more extensive.

Compared to followers of [Truth], they are top-tier in both accumulated knowledge and quick thinking, despite their unpleasant attitudes. Their strength is not to be underestimated.

Cheng Shi watched silently as the big shots finished introducing themselves.

Finally, when it was his turn, he frowned.

Three men and one woman, making five people in total including himself.

But where was the sixth player?

Wei Guan seemed to catch on to Cheng Shi's thoughts. He snorted, tilting his head toward the end of the hallway.

Cheng Shi and Yunni followed his gaze and were startled to see a muscular man standing silently in the distance, his upper body bare, expressionless, with his eyes closed as if meditating.

Cheng Shi's heart sank. He immediately understood.

He's a follower of [Silence]!

The god's will was evident from its name alone.

From the moment players began following [Silence], they likely gave up on speech altogether.

They followed, they observed, they listened, they thought—but they did not speak.

They lived like solitary monks.

And the muscle-bound man standing at the end of the hallway certainly looked like a monk devoted to asceticism.

An ascetic monk—a warrior of [Silence].

Wei Guan spoke again, confirming Cheng Shi's thoughts.

“An ascetic monk. Not worth wasting time on.”

“...”

Even though Cheng Shi was used to the scornful attitudes of [Folly] followers, he still found it grating.

Nobody likes it when a stranger constantly looks down their nose at you, especially when you're expected to work together for the next seven days—a trial that would provide plenty of time for tension to build.

Cheng Shi shrugged with a relaxed smile, his tone casual as he introduced himself:

“Cheng Shi, Devourer of Reason, 2401.”

As soon as the words left his mouth, Fang Jue raised an eyebrow in surprise, while the others frowned slightly.

A Devourer of Reason, a priest of [Chaos].

...

Let's rewind to the previous trial.

When Cheng Shi killed Huang Bo and severed his head, Ah Ming, who was still in the first memory, immediately died as well.

The story of the Executioner and the Discordant Bard should have ended there.

But at the last second, as Ah Ming's soul was fading away, Cheng Shi snapped his fingers.

A snap that represented a Forgotten Doctor's true disdain for death.

He made death forget about Ah Ming.

State Rewind!

Cheng Shi had secretly recorded everyone's status during the first memory, at the very first hour mark.

In that final moment before death, Cheng Shi had deceived the arrogant Huang Bo, making him believe that both he and Ah Ming would die together.

But once Huang Bo was dead, Cheng Shi used the rewind to bring Ah Ming back.

Death had taken away the follower of [Chaos], along with his confusion and resentment, disappearing into the world.

But the follower of [Order] was allowed to survive.

Thus, today Cheng Shi was a follower of [Chaos], a Devourer of Reason.

...

In fact, his talent Yesterday's Lie allowed him to choose from any of the faiths of the players he had deceived in the previous trial.

In other words, Cheng Shi could have chosen any of his teammates' faiths from the last trial.

Yet, he still chose [Chaos].

It was worth noting that [Chaos] and [Order] were mortal enemies.

And followers of [Chaos] didn't exactly have the best reputation. They weren't well-liked by many.

But it was precisely for that reason that Cheng Shi chose it.

Because a more controversial topic would divert everyone's attention.

With everyone focused on his faith, the lie about his score would naturally slip past unnoticed.

In a trial full of 2400 and 2500-point players, Cheng Shi couldn't afford to reveal his true score of 2100.

The only outcome of that would be immediate death, likely at the hands of the Fool Hunter standing before him, who wouldn't hesitate to kill him for his "stupidity."

After all, in the eyes of a follower of [Folly], a low score was a sign of ignorance.

And Fool Hunters—well, they specialize in hunting fools.

Lying about his low score allowed him to hide his true strength, and inflating his score slightly ensured his survival.

That was the beauty of [Deceit].

Cheng Shi had understood this from a young age.

But even after considering all of this, he didn't anticipate what happened next.

Before the Lawbringer Fang Jue could say anything about Cheng Shi's identity, the assassin woman, Yunni—who had already had some interaction with him—suddenly flashed in front of him, pressing her glittering dagger against his throat once again.

Cheng Shi blinked in surprise but remained calm and chuckled:

“You like my Adam's apple that much? Want me to give it to you?”