

The Gods 41

Chapter 41: You're Not Like a Follower of [Chaos]

Yunni glanced at Cheng Shi with a playful smile, her raspy voice dripping with a smoky charm:

“You’re calm and methodical, not the erratic type you’d expect from a follower of [Chaos].”

“And you show restraint and don’t cause harm, which is quite unlike a follower of [Oblivion],” Cheng Shi shot back, continuing the banter.

Yunni paused, frowning slightly. Without hesitation, she adjusted her grip and stabbed her dagger into Cheng Shi’s shoulder.

Cheng Shi didn’t panic. He couldn’t afford to, because he knew this was Yunni testing him.

This sharp-witted assassin wasn’t suspicious of him solely because of his calm demeanor. She must have had some other instinct or method that made her doubt Cheng Shi’s identity.

With a sigh, Cheng Shi grasped her cold hand, pulling the dagger out of his shoulder. Then, in front of everyone, he cast a healing spell imbued with Shared Divine Grace.

Upon seeing the healing spell, the expressions of the other players became noticeably more intrigued.

Everyone would be pleased to have a strong healer in their ranks.

But there was a catch—the healer was a Devourer of Reason.

As the name suggested.

Under the influence of [Chaos], a Devourer of Reason’s healing gradually erodes the recipient’s sanity, eventually driving them to madness and causing them to embrace the chaos.

However, this setup didn't seem to have much effect on Yunni. She once again pressed her dagger to Cheng Shi's chest, clearly irritated.

"In this rank, I know almost all of His followers. I've never heard of you. Who are you? Lies of Yesterday? Are you from [Deceit]?"

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They even know about Lies of Yesterday?

Then again, it made sense. Players at 2400 points could unlock SS-rank abilities, and given enough time, they were bound to run into a [Deceit] follower with that talent.

Cheng Shi's heart tightened, but he remained outwardly calm and replied:

"Who told you that every player appears on the Ladder of Ascent?"

This was a lie Cheng Shi had made up on the fly, hoping to use an air of mystery to throw her off.

To his surprise, Yunni seemed to accept the statement. She raised her eyebrows and withdrew her dagger without further question.

Apparently, she found this explanation quite reasonable.

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Cheng Shi was stunned.

Wait, there really are high-ranked players who don't show up on the ladder?

What kind of creatures roam the 2400+ range?

This is big news.

But at least he had managed to bluff his way through this encounter.

Though Fang Jue, as a follower of [Order], had a faith that stood in direct opposition to Cheng Shi's, he didn't display any overt hostility.

After scanning his surroundings, Fang Jue naturally assumed the role of leader.

"His trial is simple: find the right offering, and we're done.

However, given the extended duration of this trial, I believe our target won't appear right away. Let's each gather information for now. We'll regroup on the first floor of the inn after sunset to share what we've found.

One more reminder—until we've located the offering, especially during the first day, don't go around killing people.

Everyone here is smart enough. I don't think I need to repeat myself."

With that, Fang Jue shot a glance at Cheng Shi.

Clearly, his warning was directed at the [Chaos] follower.

"Let's all carry out our Divine Will. If you need assistance, I'm happy to help."

Wei Guan, the Fool Hunter, glanced disdainfully at the group before departing on his own.

Du Xiguang waved goodbye to the others in a casual manner.

Yunni vaulted over the railing, landing on the first floor below, leaving the two faith-opposed men staring at each other.

By the time Cheng Shi noticed, the man at the end of the hallway had already left without a sound.

Silent as a ghost.

“You’re the only priest, and I’m the only bard. Let’s hope we work well together.”

“Idiot.”

Cheng Shi scoffed and turned away.

Fang Jue didn’t seem offended. In fact, he would have found it strange if a [Chaos] player didn’t insult him.

“Alright, let’s just hope I brought enough healing supplies.”

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The group split up, each going their own way. Cheng Shi returned to his room to quickly finish his Divine Will.

Since the trial was going to last for quite a while, and the investigation would likely take days, he decided not to draw too much attention from the NPCs. Like the others, he changed into the inn’s provided clothes.

The clothes fit him well, but they were ugly—and made him look like a stableman.

Wait, why did he suddenly think about stablemen?

Cheng Shi chuckled to himself, shaking his head. He left the room once again, wandering around the inn.

The inn had an interesting name: “The Burgeoning Light of Life.”

The kind of flattering, exuberant name that immediately told outsiders that the innkeeper was a follower of [Prosperity].

The inn had three floors, with four skylights that ran from top to bottom. All the doors faced inward, while the windows faced outward, forming a grid-like layout.

Cheng Shi strolled leisurely through the inn, observing every detail and striking up casual conversations with anyone who seemed approachable. Within a short amount of time, he had gathered a significant amount of information.

Inns were, after all, one of the best places to gather intel. As he organized the information in his mind, Cheng Shi quickly pieced together an understanding of the players’ current situation.

It wasn’t just the innkeeper who followed [Prosperity]. Every single person in this town, called Yongzhan, was a follower of [Prosperity].

This place was a settlement for [Prosperity] believers, and it was under the watchful gaze of the god.

The town was located in the southwest of the Land of Hope, technically under the jurisdiction of the Grand Tribunal, but in reality, it was part of the Natural Alliance’s autonomous territory.

The Natural Alliance wasn’t a national alliance but rather a coalition of countless small factions, all of which followed various [Life] path gods.

Each faction within the alliance had autonomy, but because they were so scattered and disjointed, their civilization and social development lagged far behind the organized systems of the Grand Tribunal and the Tower of Logic.

Moreover, since the alliance wasn't tied to a particular geographical region, many of its factions had agreements of shared governance with the larger powers, like the Grand Tribunal and the Tower of Logic.

In simpler terms, when members of the alliance faced difficulties, they would pay these larger powers to help them solve problems.

These problems ranged from technological advancements and urban development to criminal justice and other issues.

Eternal Bloom Town, as it happened, was currently facing some problems and had requested assistance from the Grand Tribunal.

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“What, where’s the fun at night? Are you crazy? You’d dare go out at night? Aren’t you afraid of... well, never mind, I won’t mention his name.”

“You’re new here, huh? Don’t know about it? There’s been a group of cultists challenging [Prosperity]’s will, and the town’s officials are having a hard time dealing with it.”

“The Law Enforcement Bureau’s officers have been swamped lately. They won’t even bother with petty theft right now. Why? Oh, it’s because of the deaths... ah, never mind, I won’t say more.”

“Word is, the Law Enforcement Bureau has already requested help from the Grand Tribunal. I wonder if those judges have eyes growing all over them. Otherwise, how do they always know who the criminals are?”

“Life flourishes, both in growth and decay. I can tell you’re a newcomer who’s just found their way. Eternal Bloom Town always welcomes people like you. Go to the town center—He is waiting for you there.”

He?

Cheng Shi stared blankly at the lively innkeeper, blinking in confusion.

The innkeeper noticed his puzzled expression and chuckled.

“Don’t be alarmed. He hasn’t descended, but His will watches over us there.”

Without a word, Cheng Shi turned and headed straight for the town center.