

## The Gods 49

### Chapter 49: Guests, Please Do Not Panic

It was clear that the judges from the Grand Tribunal had noticed the presence of the players.

Whether due to strategic reasons or something else, the judges didn't pursue them. The players, knowing their limits, chose to abandon further actions for the night and returned to their rooms with heavy hearts.

The night's performance had come to a close, claiming a second life. The survivors were left with fear and unease.

Fang Jue and Du Xiguang headed to the same room, their complicated emotions visibly showing as they deliberately avoided Cheng Shi.

The situation had grown so chaotic that it was hard not to associate everything with the presence of a [Chaos] follower.

Although Cheng Shi hadn't done anything, that very inaction made him even more suspicious.

Since the trial had started, it felt as though they were being led by the nose.

Wherever they investigated, someone died.

It was eerily similar to trials where a [Chaos] follower was involved—except this time, the deaths seemed more coincidental, more “reasonable.”

Cheng Shi could understand what they were thinking, so he didn't bother trying to force his way into their good graces.

Like the ascetic monk, he silently descended the stairs by himself.

But instead of returning to his own room, he went to Yunni's.

Her room was empty—almost excessively so.

Not only were none of her belongings present, but even the furniture provided by the inn had disappeared.

Cheng Shi figured that Yunni had used those items for her Divine Will.

The Divine Will of a [Oblivion] follower was, after all, about obliteration.

With no useful clues in sight, Cheng Shi sighed in frustration.

Perhaps this was the hallmark of [Oblivion] followers—when they offered themselves to [Oblivion], all traces of their existence vanished as well.

It was as if they had never been there.

He lay down on Yunni's bed, turning to stare at the knife mark she had made in the wooden wall, feeling a bit dazed.

It had only been a few hours since that mark was created, but today felt as though it had dragged on for days.

Suddenly, he remembered the moment they had shaken hands—the red polish on her fingers remained vivid in his memory.

The fragmented scenes of his memories surged one after another, and the more he recalled, the deeper his frown became.

Of course, Cheng Shi wasn't reminiscing about those fleeting moments.

He was deep in thought.

Thinking about how that knife mark had come to be.

If he remembered correctly, the assassin girl had been able to pinpoint his exact location through the wall.

Which meant she had some sort of detection or sensory talent—and it wasn't a low-level one.

If that was the case, why hadn't she sensed anything amiss in the room before she entered?

Even if the judges from the Grand Tribunal had ways of hiding themselves, for a cautious assassin—a profession known for its wariness—there should have been some kind of warning of danger.

Yunni had even signaled Fang Jue and the others the moment she opened the door.

But!

The act of signaling was even more baffling.

Cheng Shi couldn't help but wonder—if it had been him, and he had detected danger in the room, he would have either made a swift escape or prepared for an all-out fight. He certainly wouldn't have immediately diverted his attention to warn his teammates.

He knew full well what Yunni's attitude toward her teammates had been.

She might have cared about her version of "fairness," but she definitely wouldn't have cared about the lives of others.

Even teaming up with Fang Jue and the others to fight would have been more sensible than simply signaling a warning.

So why did she act that way?

Cheng Shi spent a long time pondering, but he couldn't come up with a reasonable explanation. The only conclusion he could piece together was this:

She had been controlled!

It might not have been long-term control, but perhaps her mind had been influenced for just a moment.

And that momentary lapse had cost her life.

Someone in the shadows had the ability to manipulate people's minds!

But was it the killer? Or another player?

It was likely the killer.

Of course, Fang Jue and Du Xiguang couldn't be completely ruled out either.

Cheng Shi's face grew more and more serious.

It seemed that not only was there a perfectly hidden killer in the trial, but someone else was also taking advantage of the chaos for their own gain.

A storm of danger loomed in the night, and the inn was filled with hidden threats.

Thankfully, dawn wasn't far off.

And soon enough, the sun rose.

The guests woke up one by one, and the inn returned to its usual bustling atmosphere.

But the peace didn't last long. Just as Fang Jue and Cheng Shi stepped out into the hallway, a group of uniformed enforcers brusquely slammed the inn's front doors shut.

"By order of the Law Enforcement Bureau, under the request of Judge Moxius of the Grand Tribunal, we hereby seal off all entrances and exits to Eternal Bloom Town and the Burgeoning Light of Life Inn.

Guests, do not be alarmed. The judges have the situation under control, and your safety is guaranteed.

Please proceed in an orderly fashion to the first-floor lobby for further instructions.

I repeat, please head to the first-floor lobby!"

The Grand Tribunal had made its move!

Their response had come far quicker than expected!

The entire inn was now under lockdown.

Fang Jue exchanged a glance with Cheng Shi before silently heading downstairs.

Cheng Shi followed suit, dutifully keeping pace.

The Grand Tribunal wasn't after the players.

If the judges had spared them last night, they wouldn't suddenly cause trouble for them today.

The Tribunal's target was the killer.

As they descended the stairs, the players' minds were filled with unease:

If the killer really had fallen into the hands of the Grand Tribunal, would that mean their leads had been cut off?

Whether or not the killer was the ultimate offering, no one would be able to interrogate him once the Grand Tribunal took over.

Especially not the judge who had effortlessly executed Yunni.

The inn's guests were clearly alarmed by the Law Enforcement Bureau's announcement. Chaos began to spread as murmurs of confusion and panic filled the room.

"What's going on? Why is the inn on lockdown? Where's the innkeeper? He should be protesting this to the town council!"

"Are you out of your mind? This is an order from the Grand Tribunal! Do you even know what the Grand Tribunal is? The high judges wouldn't seal the inn without evidence—they must have something solid."

"Oh my god, the killer's in the inn? Praise [Prosperity], I'm still alive!"

"What? The judge leading the team is Moxius? My goodness, I would give anything just to see him, even for a second!"

"Who? The Son of Thunder?"

"That's him! He's a first-class judge from the Grand Tribunal, a student of the High Executioner Artair, and the most talented elemental judge in history. They say he's the most likely candidate to inherit the title of Grand Judge of [Order]!"

“Even... even just seeing him once would make tonight a dream I’d cherish for the rest of my life.”

“You sound ridiculous. If he sees you, he’d probably have nightmares!”

“You looking for a fight?”

“[Prosperity] help me. The judges have already identified the killer, so I’m not afraid of you or anyone else now.”

“.....”

The scene was chaotic. Amidst the restless crowd, the players positioned themselves separately, carefully scanning their surroundings for any suspicious individuals or activities.

Even as the Grand Tribunal prepared to deliver judgment, the players were still eager to uncover any clues before they lost their chance.

But there were too many people, too much noise. In such a chaotic environment, it was difficult to find someone who didn’t seem suspicious. Panic had caused many of the guests to act strangely, their behavior distorted by fear.

Cheng Shi sighed softly and began to rethink his approach.

Meanwhile, four enforcers from the Grand Tribunal quietly positioned themselves at the four corners of the lobby. With just four of them, they had effectively surrounded and secured the inn.

Not long after, amidst the nervous chatter of the guests, a figure appeared at the entrance—a judge in a long, flowing robe, with striking violet eyes.

Moxius!

The elemental judge of the Grand Tribunal, the most popular first-class judge in history!

“You know him?” Du Xiguang asked quietly from the crowd.

Fang Jue nodded.

“The Son of [Order], who died young. I read about him in the Grand Tribunal’s historical records.”

“Wait... died young? War?”

Du Xiguang was confused, but then realization struck him.

“So, we’re in the mid-Civilization Era?”

“No. Even earlier.

It’s likely the late beginning of the era. The civil war had just broken out, and [War] had only just started watching over this land. [Chaos] hadn’t even begun to spread His name.”

“!”

Du Xiguang’s mind raced as it all clicked into place. That’s why, despite there being a [Chaos] follower outside the inn last night, the judges hadn’t come to apprehend them.

They were in the early stages of the Civilization Era. [Order] and [Truth] had already descended thousands of years ago, and their followers had nearly unified the surface of the land. But [War] had only just started to notice the Land of Hope.

“And how did he die?”

“The Tribunal’s records are vague. I didn’t join them, so I don’t know much.”

“And what’s a ‘Son of [Order]’?” Du Xiguang asked.

This time, Fang Jue didn’t answer directly and instead asked in return:

“What did you trade your memories for?”

Du Xiguang’s face tightened, and he fell silent.

Fang Jue seemed to have guessed the truth and said no more.

Moxius, the judge with violet lightning flashing in his eyes, approached the crowd, tapping his scepter lightly on the floor, signaling for silence.

Whether it was the overwhelming presence of [Order] or simply respect for the Grand Tribunal, the room quickly quieted down.

Moxius hadn’t spoken yet, but following the tradition of [Order] followers, he performed a simple gesture of formal greeting. Instantly, a wave of “lawful obedience” washed over Cheng Shi, making him feel an overwhelming urge to confess.

“.....”

This is way more intense than Fang Jue’s Conviction last night.

As everyone lowered their heads, seemingly ready to “accept judgment,” Moxius finally opened his mouth to speak.