

## The Gods 52

### Chapter 52: "Trump Card"

When a semi-divine artifact capable of threatening the very faith of the gods falls into the hands of the Grand Tribunal, do you think they would share it with players to help them solve the trial, even if just for a few hours?

The answer is obvious.

They wouldn't!

However, after Moxius took possession of the dagger, he didn't immediately tuck it away. Instead, he held it up, as if putting it on display for the fearless onlookers.

When Fang Jue saw this, his eyes narrowed.

This wasn't mere flaunting of a trophy.

A judge from the Grand Tribunal wouldn't be so overtly boastful.

So, there could only be one reason for Moxius to do this:

He was baiting.

Using the murder weapon to bait the killer!

Moxius was clearly waiting to see who in the crowd was interested in this artifact.

Even if he couldn't catch the real killer, catching a few small fry like Cheng Shi would be worth it.

Unfortunately for him, his intentions were far too obvious. No one dared to defy the Grand Tribunal by reacting to the artifact.

Du Xiguang also noticed what was happening, and like Fang Jue, he subtly lowered his head to avoid Moxius's gaze.

After waiting for a while without any new developments, Moxius, somewhat disappointed, finally spoke:

"This is a relic tainted by the divinities of [Corruption] and [Death]. This... this is the source of the calamity!

That filthy blasphemer used this artifact to sow fear and commit murder.

Though we haven't caught the 'rat' today, you need not fear any longer.

For he no longer has the means to desecrate the god of [Prosperity].

Rest assured, under the watchful gaze of the Grand Tribunal, no sinner can escape judgment.

It will only take a little more time."

With that, Moxius tucked When Fear Descends into his robes and left the inn without further delay.

As Moxius and the enforcers departed, Cheng Shi sighed quietly.

The players had missed their best chance to seize the dagger.

This also meant that the clues had once again slipped further from their grasp.

And this time, unlike before, there was almost no chance of turning back.

“By order of the town’s autonomous alliance, The Burgeoning Light of Life Inn is now unsealed. However, no one is allowed to leave Eternal Bloom Town. We hope everyone will stay a while longer to witness [Order]’s judgment and the sinner’s punishment!”

The town’s officials announced the lifting of the lockdown, but Cheng Shi didn’t feel this made their situation any better.

This so-called “lifting of the lockdown” felt more like a heavy shackle, binding the players to the inn.

It was likely that the Grand Tribunal was now closely watching to see which guest would be the first to leave the inn.

For anyone with something to hide, staying in a place that had Moxius’s full attention wasn’t exactly ideal.

“He” would probably be desperate to relocate.

And that was exactly what Moxius was counting on—luring the real killer by giving them room to flee.

From now on, no one would know where Moxius was or what he was watching.

The true mastermind, deprived of their greatest tool, would be left on edge, desperate to clear themselves of suspicion.

But any suspicious actions would be noted by the sharp-eyed enforcers, and soon enough, the Grand Tribunal’s laws would drag them off to the death cell!

The situation was spiraling deeper into chaos, with no glimmer of hope in sight.

After the crowd dispersed, Cheng Shi endured the numbness in his body, casting two healing spells on himself before dragging his still-paralyzed body over to Fang Jue.

Even though the [Order] follower didn't seem keen on continuing their cooperation, Cheng Shi still needed to find out what had happened downstairs.

This time, Fang Jue didn't reject Cheng Shi's questions. Perhaps he could sense the urgency of the situation. He gave a straightforward account of the "pursuit" of the "bard."

"It wasn't a 'person' at all. It was a puppet—a mindless puppet made from flesh."

A puppet?

Cheng Shi was momentarily stunned and immediately thought back to the desire puppets they had encountered in a previous trial.

This sort of thing was a known specialty of followers of [Corruption].

Could it be that the killer was, in fact, the "target" of their trial?

Du Xiguang added from the side:

"Since it was a puppet, I couldn't retrieve any memories from it."

As soon as the words left his mouth, Cheng Shi's frown deepened.

He wasn't disappointed by the lack of clues.

It was Du Xiguang who had lied.

The statement was short, and there was only one part that could be a lie: he had retrieved memories from the puppet but had chosen to hide them.

But why?

Cheng Shi discreetly glanced at Fang Jue, but the [Order] follower didn't seem to question Du Xiguang's words at all.

Fang Jue had no idea that Du Xiguang had lied—he was just as in the dark as everyone else.

The plot had suddenly become much more complicated.

How interesting—why was Du Xiguang holding back crucial information, even when the situation was so dire?

Could it be that he had received a revelation from [Memory] and uncovered Cheng Shi's true identity?

No, that didn't make sense.

Even if that were the case, Du Xiguang could have shared the information with Fang Jue. Followers of [Order] were the most reliable players, something Cheng Shi had always known.

And a team effort would always be more effective than one person working alone.

So why was Du Xiguang hiding the information, and what was he hiding?

Cheng Shi glanced at Du Xiguang, but the man didn't notice—he was still lost in thought.

Clearly, whatever was on his mind wasn't the same as Cheng Shi's suspicions.

But that was fine. At least there was a new clue. Keeping a close eye on Du Xiguang might lead to a breakthrough.

Cheng Shi nodded in acknowledgment, thanked Fang Jue, and turned to leave.

But before he could take more than a step, Fang Jue called after him:

“What happened in the room before we got there?”

Cheng Shi never lied, so he answered truthfully:

“The ascetic monk got to When Fear Descends before I did, but he wasn’t able to control the semi-divine artifact.

I tried to help him, but he refused.

You saw the rest.

He died at Moxius’s hands, and we... lost the trail.”

Fang Jue stared into Cheng Shi’s eyes for a long moment, but finding nothing suspicious, he nodded slightly in thanks.

Cheng Shi shrugged, offering a carefree smile before walking away.

He had two priorities:

First, he needed to leave Du Xiguang’s line of sight and then follow him discreetly to see where he went.

Second, he needed to “interrogate” the bard’s drinking buddies. After all, they had been drinking together for several days—how could they not have noticed that one of them was a puppet?

After Cheng Shi left, Fang Jue sighed and turned to Du Xiguang.

“It seems we won’t be able to find any more clues in the present. So, my dear Memory Traveler, it’s time to reveal your trump card. We could really use it right about now.”

Du Xiguang adjusted his glasses, a cryptic smile playing on his lips.

“When Fear Descends is in the hands of a follower of [Order]. You’re a follower of [Order] too. Shouldn’t you be the one showing your trump card first?”

Fang Jue fell silent for a moment before responding earnestly:

“It’s true, I do have a trump card, but I cannot tell you what it is.

You could think of it as a cheat. Even if we lose all our leads and endure until the final second, with this, I will walk out of the trial unscathed.

So...

Du Xiguang, I am trying to help you. In this situation, I can still help you.

As a follower of [Order], I have always adhered to the laws and morals of the pre-collapse human world.

And that is why, though I haven’t invited you to participate in [Order]’s Divine Will, you still receive my blessings.”

Du Xiguang’s eyes widened. He couldn’t believe it as he inspected himself, finding no sign of any blessings.

He knew that last night’s Conviction on the street wasn’t a singer’s blessing—it had been an attack from a Lawbringer, and it didn’t require teammates to follow [Order]’s Divine Will.

Seeing Du Xiguang's confusion, Fang Jue sighed and raised his hand. A faint light shimmered over Du Xiguang's body.

Now, Du Xiguang saw it.

"Light of [Order]," an S-rank faith talent. Within a certain range, as long as a target obeys the same laws as you, they can share your physical state. This effect is hidden from the target.

"!?"

"Now do you see? You can share my light, meaning you're not a twisted player. You are still upholding the old order!

That's why I still want to help you."

Du Xiguang was first stunned, but then he laughed.

"No wonder I've been feeling stronger. I thought it was the effect of Blooming in Waiting of Withering, but it turns out the source was right here.

Thank you... and thank me too.

Good thing I'm a good person."

"So?"

Du Xiguang quickly pulled a small, ticket-like item from his pocket, handing it to Fang Jue with a sly grin.

"Tonight at 3 a.m., right here. Let's take a little trip down memory lane!"