

## The Gods 83

### Chapter 83: A Confession Above the Void

[Void] had no concept of time. But once it crossed paths with [Existence], the void began to experience something akin to the passage of time.

To scholars of the Void-Energy School, it was precisely this characteristic—the ability to record moments of change—that made it possible for humans to study the void.

Back to the present.

Time certainly flowed in the void, but how much had passed, no one could say.

It wasn't until Cheng Shi awoke, looking up to see himself floating in the void, the boundary line between reality and the abyss above him, and the endless blue sky stretching infinitely beyond, that he realized he'd won his gamble.

The Vortex Devourer had indeed been the key to crossing the boundary.

These “pets” of the [Void] swam between reality and the void, unaffected by the rift. The reality it swallowed inside its belly would slowly be eroded, turning into new void.

In this way, as long as they could endure the void's pull inside the Vortex Devourer, they might just be able to outlast the “annihilation” at the boundary between reality and void!

Because while you can resist the pull of the void, annihilation occurs in an instant. There's no negotiating with it.

And that was the gamble Cheng Shi had made.

The stakes? The lives of all six of them.

If the water hadn't receded so quickly, perhaps Cheng Shi would have figured out the answer when they first saw the boundary.

But the trial's disasters had come too suddenly, too swiftly, giving them no time to react.

Had it not been for the presence of a fellow deceiver, Cheng Shi wouldn't know how they could've survived this ordeal.

Speaking of fellow deceivers, since he was awake, it at least meant that a follower of [Void] should be fine in the void.

Which meant that Su Yida should also...

Just as Cheng Shi had that thought, he heard footsteps behind him.

It was strange. He was clearly floating in the void, with no ground beneath his feet, yet he could hear the sound of someone walking.

Turning around, Cheng Shi saw Su Yida... walking toward him, upside down.

Indeed, Su Yida was inverted, hanging from what appeared to be the sky, his head level with Cheng Shi's, while his body was above him.

Yet, Su Yida didn't seem the least bit uncomfortable, and the look of shock in his eyes seemed to say, Why are you the one upside down?

Such was the nature of the void.

Both real and unreal.

There was no established reality here, no shared rules. Everything was possible, and everything was impossible.

Su Yida approached, his face dark, and the first thing he said was:

“I didn’t expect you to be a clown.”

Cheng Shi chuckled.

This wasn’t an insult—because Cheng Shi really was a clown.

A clown, a priest of [Deceit].

A priest who healed others with lies, just as a clown draws laughter with fake smiles. The essence was the same, even if the methods differed.

Su Yida had finally seen through Cheng Shi’s identity!

But in reality, it wasn’t that he had uncovered it—Cheng Shi had revealed it himself.

The solution, the Vortex Devourer, had come too early, and by the time the sea had disappeared, the players no longer had the key to continue the trial.

Luckily, there had been a fellow deceiver among them, someone with the power to “create” anything.

But even with the ability, it wasn’t enough. For Su Yida to fabricate something, the team had to believe it, and belief had to be grounded in plausibility.

In an open sky, anything that suddenly appeared would arouse suspicion. The usual methods wouldn’t work.

But Cheng Shi never relied on conventional methods.

The moment he grabbed Su Yida's leg, he said:

"Hey, Big Bro Yida, did you just pee yourself? Something's dripping on me from above!"

This statement had two purposes.

First, it introduced the idea of dripping water, setting the stage for the upcoming fabrication.

Second, it hinted to Su Yida how to break the situation.

As Cheng Shi said these words, he channeled a sliver of [Deceit] into Su Yida through the grip on his ankle.

The timing of the infused [Deceit] aligned with the words "Hey" and "Dripping."

Su Yida had a fondness for science fiction—this was no lie.

And after deducing Su Yida's secondary identity, Cheng Shi was fairly certain that this man yearned to transcend reality through imagination and power.

He was confident Su Yida would grasp the cryptic hint.

Still, it was a small gamble. Cheng Shi was betting that Su Yida would seize the opportunity and immediately collaborate with him.

And evidently, he had won.

Su Yida had both the mind and the capability for such a task.

To be honest, in that tense moment of decision, when Su Yida sensed the [Deceit] flowing into him, he had been completely thrown off guard.

Internally, his thoughts were a chaotic storm, but on the outside, he had to cooperate with Cheng Shi, putting on a quick reaction.

Who would've thought that the man he had been chatting with, the priest of [Birth] who had [Prosperity]'s divinity sealed in his body, and who could never make anyone pregnant with his healing, was actually a fellow deceiver.

Despite the shock, Su Yida knew that the information Cheng Shi had conveyed with such effort must be the key to breaking the trial—or at least the key to finding the way out.

In that moment, the power of [Deceit] resonated between the two of them.

Su Yida quickly deduced that the way to cross the boundary was likely connected to the water from before. While he hadn't yet figured out the role of the Vortex Devourer, the immediate priority was to bring back the water that had vanished.

Thankfully, Cheng Shi had already handed him the solution.

The phrase: "Hey—Dripping."

A wildly imaginative idea, but an effective one.

At least, in that moment, it seemed more plausible than conjuring something out of nowhere.

So Su Yida played along, looking up and pointing out to Tao Yi that the "disappeared" water had now returned—right above their heads!

And with that, the deluge began.

At that moment, the catastrophe ceased to be part of the god's trial and became a stage for two followers of [Deceit] to showcase their elaborate lies.

The others finally found a way to cross the boundary. But since Cheng Shi had already known Su Yida's identity, he couldn't see any of it.

All he could do was perform alongside the others, going through the motions until the final moment when he used the same method to break open the belly of the beast.

Unfortunately, the perfect performance had one small flaw.

He couldn't see the beast, so he missed with his punch.

But he hadn't blown it completely. The Vortex Devourer still took the full force of his Thunderclap Judgment.

After that, to ensure he could hide inside the non-existent belly of the beast, Cheng Shi closed his eyes and ears, clinging tightly to Tao Yi.

He couldn't see it, but he could still be brought in by someone who could.

The so-called "Mirage in the Rift Between Reality and Illusion" was all about blurring the line between falsehood and truth.

The "Deceit" of self, and the "Reality" of Cheng Shi.

Su Yida couldn't help but admire Cheng Shi's bold thinking. To find the answer in such a moment and come up with such an outlandish plan to break the trial was truly impressive.

Seeing Su Yida's complex expression, as though he had something to say but couldn't find the words, Cheng Shi couldn't help but laugh out loud.

“How does it feel? Walking by the river long enough, you’re bound to get wet. Doesn’t feel great to be deceived, does it?”

“You...” Su Yida’s face twisted in frustration. “Was the [Prosperity] divinity in your body fake too?!”

Of course, even at a time like this, all he cared about was the divinity.

How interesting.

“So you really did join them,” Cheng Shi replied with a smile.

“That’s not important. What matters is... the [Divinity] in your body...”

“Sigh, the players in the Logic Association have long since abandoned reason in their quest for godhood. Su Yida... wake up.

Consider this a friendly reminder from one professional to another. Whether you like it or not, I’m not saying this twice.”

Cheng Shi sighed as though he pitied his fellow deceiver, who wasn’t entirely terrible but had clearly gone down a dangerous path.

But Su Yida didn’t change the subject.

“The [Divinity] in your body...”

“...It really happened. I only lied about my identity.”

Hearing that, Su Yida finally seemed relieved.

Cheng Shi could see the subtle relaxation in his body, and he couldn't help but feel amused.

I lied to hide Le Le'er's aura... What are you hiding?

After a brief pause, Su Yida spoke more earnestly:

"I'll be honest. Yes, I did join the Logic Association. And with their help, I obtained a fragment of scattered [Divinity]. I'm currently studying how to preserve it.

If you're carrying a fragment of [Divinity], then that means... I can serve as a vessel for [Divinity] as well."

Despite his sincerity, he was lying.

But what was the point of lying now?

Cheng Shi raised an intrigued eyebrow, signaling for him to continue. But what Su Yida said next caught him completely off guard.

"I see now. Your talent must be Deception Master!"

"???"

"No wonder I never suspected you from the start. A priest of [Birth] who can't make people pregnant? Now that's ridiculous. It all makes sense now. Cheng Shi, you're quite something.

So, what's your score? Let's have an honest talk."

Cheng Shi burst out laughing. He wasn't too concerned about being found out by a fellow deceiver, as these things had happened before.

After all, who understands a liar better than another liar?

Still, Cheng Shi was curious. There hadn't been anything obvious in their conversation that would've tipped Su Yida off, so he asked with a smile:

"How'd you figure it out?"

Su Yida shrugged. "Didn't figure it out. Just a lucky guess."

"?"

"I threw it out there, and it happened to be right."

"....."

Talking to a fellow "deceiver" who knows all your tricks... is incredibly annoying.

Cheng Shi shook his head and chuckled, putting an end to the conversation.

"Fine, you win this round. Let me reintroduce myself: Cheng Shi, the Clown, 2401."

"Hah, what a coincidence. Su Yida, Trickster, 2401."

Cheng Shi's face lit up in surprise.

It was still a lie, but clearly... it wasn't the score that was lying.

But why lie about the score...?

Su Yida, do you really not trust me? I'm being honest here!

"Alright, let's stop wasting time testing each other. The trial isn't over yet. This calm is only temporary. We should figure out how to get out of here."

Su Yida laughed softly, turned, and began walking deeper into the void.

"Coming?"

Cheng Shi watched his unguarded back, and a mischievous thought crossed his mind. He picked his nose and flicked a booger in Su Yida's direction.

Just as the booger was about to hit him, Su Yida spun around and caught it between his fingers.

His expression was playful, as if he had anticipated Cheng Shi's move all along.

Cheng Shi gave him a "You're amazing" look, then casually walked off in the opposite direction.

"Let's split up and cover more ground."

After Cheng Shi left, Su Yida looked at the "projectile" in his hand.

"...You son of a..."