

## **The Gods 84**

Chapter 84: A Bent Hook and Salty Bait, Yet Some Fish Still Bite

In the end, the two liars stuck together.

Why? Simple—fear of death.

At their level of play, it was rare for players to have direct contact with the void.

Meeting gods didn't count.

To ensure their safety, the two decided to stick together.

Of course, whether sticking together made them safer or put them in more danger was still up for debate.

They wandered through the void for what felt like a long time, exploring in every direction, only to discover that they were inside a spherical pocket of the void, surrounded by void rifts.

The good news: The void rifts were expanding outward. As long as they didn't make any reckless moves, their space wouldn't be immediately crushed.

The bad news: The only way out seemed to be through the void rifts.

The worse news: Apart from the two of them, their other teammates were nowhere to be found within this sizable void.

Had they been scattered into other void spaces, or had they already been annihilated, their trials abruptly ended?

No one could answer that question.

Perhaps they'd only find out if they managed to escape this place.

As for why they had to leave this seemingly safe space...

Though time did pass in the void, it didn't flow the same as in reality.

Here, a thousand years might pass while only a moment slips by in the real world.

So waiting, in the void, was utterly pointless.

"Clown, think of something."

"I'm working on it, Big Bro Yida. Stop rushing me," Cheng Shi muttered irritably.

He was getting sick of Su Yida's incessant chatter. Despite having his identity exposed, Su Yida didn't seem the least bit bothered. He just kept blabbering on like before, asking questions about everything, wanting to know everything.

But whenever Cheng Shi threw a question back, not a single truthful word came out of Su Yida's mouth.

This kind of mentally exhausting conversation was driving Cheng Shi up the wall.

You're not a trickster from the demon realm, bro; you're Tang Sanzang himself!

"Clearly, the void rift is the only way out. There's no Vortex Devourer this time; you can't fool me, and I can't fool you. Use that wild imagination of yours and dazzle me again."

Heh.

Are you the deadweight here or am I?

Cheng Shi ignored him and sat down to rest.

“Giving up? You’re giving up already? You wouldn’t be thinking of waiting for them to come rescue us, would you?”

Wake up. Only followers of [Void] can walk in the void.

They’re already dead, and you know it, don’t you?

There’s nothing to feel guilty about; this is just how the world works—survival of the fittest.

Only the strong deserve to live.”

“And what are you strong in? Your mouth?”

“I’m strong in my will, strong in my determination, strong in my refusal to give up. Only by becoming stronger can we get closer to the gods. Only by getting stronger can we study them. Only by becoming stronger can we become them!

Just think about it—the Path to Godhood. It’s such an obvious hint. If we keep following that path, we’ll become gods!”

Cheng Shi chuckled.

“You ever think that the fabric you’re weaving is just making clothes for someone else?”

“Of course I’ve thought about that. In fact, we’ve always known that. That’s why we research, why we explore, why we carve out a new path that leads us to the thrones of the gods.”

Su Yida's expression became firm and fanatical, as if the road had already been paved and was just waiting for him to walk it.

"...The Logic Association really has lost its mind."

"No, it's not us who are crazy—it's you.

Cowering in the gods' game, deluding yourselves, all while being played for fools by them. And you aren't even mad about it. You're not players—you're toys!

Are you content being a mere toy?

Cheng Shi, I have high hopes for you. Join us. Join us and achieve greatness. Perhaps one day, like me, you'll sit on those thrones and look down upon all creation."

"....."

Cheng Shi didn't respond. He wasn't considering joining the Logic Association; he was wondering if he had some kind of "attraction" to organizations like these. Why did every group want him to join?

Still, Su Yida's offer was surprisingly sincere, with not a trace of deception.

It gave Cheng Shi a deeper understanding of the mentality of the Logic Association members, and more importantly, it gave him an idea for how to break their current predicament.

Although the plan was a bit underhanded, it might just be a mutually beneficial solution.

The situation was simple enough—it was a repeat of what had happened above the boundary line, with the only difference being that the number of people who needed to make a decision had gone from six to two.

Someone had to test what lay beyond the void rift.

Cheng Shi had no intention of going, so naturally, that meant Su Yida had to.

But Su Yida wasn't going to volunteer, so Cheng Shi would need to give him a little push.

"Do you want to know how the [Divinity] within my body was sealed?"

Su Yida wasn't dumb. The reason he still believed that Cheng Shi carried a sealed fragment of [Prosperity]'s divinity, even after discovering Cheng Shi's real identity, was because of the faint trace of Le Le'er's ancient aura that Cheng Shi had revealed.

That ancient aura of [Prosperity] couldn't be faked.

Such a thing was incredibly difficult to fabricate with any known talents, and Su Yida had never encountered an [Deceit] talent capable of simulating [Divinity].

So, when Cheng Shi brought it up, Su Yida's constant chatter finally came to a stop.

He stared at Cheng Shi, his brow furrowing.

"You're trying to use that secret to get me to go risk my life? You think that'll work?"

Cheng Shi ignored him and continued speaking to himself:

"That [Chosen One] of Prosperity... We didn't know he was a [Chosen One] back then.

He had something that looked a lot like a semi-divine relic. He used that thing to cut open the void, then threw us and the [Divinity] inside.

Under the grinding forces of the void rift, the [Divinity] was forced into our bodies.”

Su Yida was stunned at first, but then his face darkened.

He understood. Cheng Shi was baiting him to go test the void rift.

How laughable.

Does he really think I’m that stupid?

Su Yida let out a cold laugh.

“You might want to make that story a little more believable. Even without being a ‘Deception Master,’ I can hear the holes in your story.

The void accepts everything—why wouldn’t the [Divinity] simply dissipate into the void instead of getting forced into your body?

Come on, do you believe your own story?”

Cheng Shi shook his head and smiled.

“I’m just stating the facts. Whether you believe it or not, that’s up to you.”

Su Yida frowned again, clearly deep in thought.

Cheng Shi lowered his head slightly, a subtle smirk tugging at his lips.

So, he was telling the truth earlier.

He really did possess a fragment of [Divinity] and was indeed searching for a way to contain it.

So, there were only two lies in his previous statements: one about how he obtained the [Divinity], and the other about whether or not he had joined the Logic Association.

But his invitation hadn't been a lie, so the lie must have been about how he acquired the [Divinity].

As expected, if someone had a method to obtain [Divinity], the crazy scholars at the Tower of Logic wouldn't share it with anyone.

I should have realized sooner.

Su Yida has his own method of obtaining [Divinity]!

What he really wants is the fragment of [Prosperity]'s [Divinity] inside me!

Cheng Shi's thoughts clicked into place, and he couldn't help but curl his lips into a slight sneer.

So that's it!

This bastard had been intentionally feeding him a mix of misinformation, trying to keep Cheng Shi's attention focused on the Logic Association.

It was all just a way to lay the groundwork for a future lie, or perhaps to make Cheng Shi misjudge the situation, so that Su Yida could later claim the [Divinity] for himself.

Good thing the [Divinity] is fake, and I didn't move too late.

Now, it's my turn to play the offense.

But it looks like the bait as it stands isn't quite tempting enough.

"You heard the history Gao Yu shared earlier, didn't you?

Even though you walked away, I know you were listening."

Su Yida didn't confirm or deny it, so Cheng Shi smiled and continued.

"He likes to wander through the void—that much is clear.

Whether it's to get closer to [Existence] or for His own amusement, there's no denying that He keeps a close eye on everything in the void.

So, don't you think there's a chance that right now...

He's watching us?"

There was no question about it—Cheng Shi was referring to their patron, [Deceit].

And what he was implying was this:

Why, when someone and a fragment of [Divinity] both end up in the void rift, doesn't the [Divinity] simply dissipate into the void?

Could it be...

That this was the will of their god?

The Trickster God's love for chaos and amusement was the most well-known fact among all of His followers.

So...

Su Yida understood.

What Cheng Shi was trying to convey was that the reason [Divinity] had sealed itself into Cheng Shi's body, and the reason they were being watched now, was because it was all part of their god's will.

In other words, if Su Yida dared to step into the void rift, he might become just like Cheng Shi, with a fragment of [Divinity] sealed within him.

As for the side effects...

Since Cheng Shi's claim to be a follower of [Birth] was a lie, naturally, the side effects were fabricated as well.

Regardless, obtaining [Divinity] would be an incredible opportunity for studying its properties. Even if Su Yida wasn't part of the Logic Association, no one interested in godhood could resist such temptation!

Su Yida looked at Cheng Shi with a mixture of complicated emotions, finally understanding his intentions.

This wasn't a scam.

It was a bold, open-ended plot.

A scheme specifically targeting someone like Su Yida, a player with ambitions of sitting on a god's throne!

His gaze grew heavy, his face conflicted. After much deliberation, Su Yida made his choice and decided to “believe.”

He had no other option. The temptation of containing [Divinity] within himself was simply too great!

“You win, Cheng Shi.”

With that, Su Yida turned and walked straight toward the nearest void rift.