

## **Multiverse 120**

Chapter 120: I'll Be Waiting for You Anytime

"Artificial Sacred Gear..."

Naturally, Rias knew what Artificial Sacred Gears were.

After all, the deal between Kaiser and Azazel had taken place right before her eyes—right inside her Occult Research Club.

So, Rias was well aware that Kaiser had obtained the method for creating Artificial Sacred Gears from Azazel, along with the technology and means to produce them.

Because of this, when Kaiser previously took out two bracelets to assist Yuuto Kiba and Gasper, Rias hadn't been surprised in the slightest.

Now, seeing Kaiser take out an Artificial Sacred Gear made from fragments of a Holy Spear, Rias simply felt a bit confused.

"Why are you giving this to me?"

Rias asked.

"Of course, it's to help you win," Kaiser replied. "While it's true that the current Gremory peerage is highly unlikely to lose to that third son of the Phoenix family, and your strength is clearly above his, being strong is one thing—winning is another."

"At the very least, if you were to face that third son of the Phoenix family one-on-one, you might be able to suppress him, overwhelm him, but you still might not be able to defeat him in a Rating Game."

"You understand why I say that, don't you?"

Upon hearing Kaiser's words, Rias nodded grimly.

Of course she knew why Kaiser said that.

Because her opponent was none other than the so-called Phoenix.

As Devils who preside over fire, wind, and life—wielding powers nearly identical to the Holy Beast Phoenix—every pure-blood Devil of the Phoenix family possessed astonishing vitality.

Their wounds would visibly heal at a rapid pace, and even if reduced to ashes, they could instantly revive. They couldn't be killed—nor defeated—by conventional means.

Although Rias was stronger than that third son of the Phoenix family, in a direct confrontation, she would have a hard time posing any real threat.

To defeat a Phoenix, one could not rely on physical damage—it was necessary to target the mind.

Physical wounds could heal, but mental wounds could not.

With that in mind, to bring down a Phoenix, one had to deliver a severe mental blow—enough to shatter their psyche entirely.

That would require strength far beyond a Phoenix's.

If the opponent wielded god-level power, then crushing a Phoenix's body and mind together wouldn't be much of a challenge.

But while Rias was stronger than that Phoenix, she was far from reaching godhood.

She had only just barely touched the threshold of High-Class Devil, still a long way from the level of a Maou—let alone the realm beyond that.

Thus, defeating a Phoenix with sheer power was clearly impossible.

"In that case, you need to take a different approach."

That was Kaiser's advice to Rias.

"Alternatively, if one of you had access to illusions or mental-type abilities, you could bypass the body and directly attack the spirit."

"Or, you could prepare targeted countermeasures against the weaknesses of the Devil race."

The former wasn't feasible at the moment. No one in the Gremory peerage specialized in illusion or mental-type abilities—not even Koneko Toujou, who should have had potential in that area, had chosen to develop her close-combat capabilities instead. The others were no better.

That left Rias and her team with only the latter option to deal with Phoenix.

"Everyone knows a Devil's weaknesses—namely, holy items like crosses, holy water, or Holy Swords."

"The Light Power of Angels and Fallen Angels is also toxic to Devils. Luckily, you have a half-Fallen Angel who can use lightning infused with Light Power—that's an advantage."

"While the Phoenix can still regenerate even when wounded by holy items, the sacred element doesn't just harm Devils—it causes them pain."

"That's your breakthrough point."

Driving the enemy to collapse through pain and torment—this was undoubtedly one of the most effective forms of mental attack.

That's why Kaiser had created this short spear.

"Because I used fragments of the True Longinus in crafting this short spear, its sacred properties are extremely potent. Even compared to a Holy Sword—which Devils fear the most—it's not much weaker."

"I've also stored a large amount of the True Longinus's Holy Power inside it. Once triggered, the short spear's threat to Devils, even in a short time, won't fall too far behind the Holy Spear itself."

"However, once the Holy Power stored within is activated, it will be impossible to stop it from overflowing. The Holy Power will be released all at once until it's depleted, and the Artificial Sacred Gear will be damaged and unusable afterward."

Kaiser gave her a few warnings, then said to Rias:

"I've also made some adjustments—so as long as the short spear's wielder is its designated owner, even if they're a Devil, they won't be affected by the sacred energy."

"With this, even if your opponent is a Phoenix, your chances of victory won't be low."

"Combined with your own strength, you really have no reason to lose now, do you?"

Kaiser smiled, as if he had done everything he needed to do.

"This is the last thing I'm doing for you all."

Upon hearing this, Rias could no longer focus on inspecting the Artificial Sacred Gear in her hand. She abruptly looked up to face the smiling Kaiser.

"...So you're planning to step back now, is that it?"

Rias had already sensed it—Kaiser intended to leave.

"I've done all I can. The rest is up to you," Kaiser said calmly. "If you still lose after all this, then it means it's your fate. Just accept your family's arrangement and go be a housewife for Phoenix."

Unsurprisingly, this remark made Rias's eyebrows shoot up.

"I, Rias Gremory, will never marry into the Phoenix family to be a housewife."

With an undeniable tone, Rias stated this firmly.

"I have my own dreams—things I want to accomplish."

Rias's dream was to reach the top of the Rating Game.

She wanted to be the champion of the Rating Game, to become a top-tier Devil worthy of the Gremory name—worthy of being related to a Maou.

One of the reasons she resisted the engagement with the Phoenix family—aside from the fact that the fiancé wasn't her type and she wanted to choose her own partner—was that the engagement would interfere with her dream. That was another major factor.

No matter how she looked at it, there was no way she would agree to this engagement.

"That won't be easy, you know?" Kaiser naturally understood Rias's dream and said unhurriedly, "I hear that those ranked at the top of the Rating Game are all High-Class Devils with strength on par with Maou."

"They're the true elites of the Devil world. If a crisis arises, they're the ones the Underworld entrusts with critical responsibilities."

"To reach the top of the Rating Game, to become the champion—that's basically no different from defeating a Maou."

Just thinking about how difficult that is was enough to understand.

"Of course I know it's hard." Rias brushed her hair aside, smiling sweetly. "But that's exactly why it's worth challenging."

If it weren't difficult, would it even be worth the challenge?

Rias believed that if her older brother could become the strongest Maou, then she—who shared the same Power of Destruction as him—had no reason she couldn't rise to the top of the Rating Game.

Her beloved servants were all exceptional as well. Rias believed they would help her achieve this dream.

"When I succeed..."

Suddenly, Rias thought of something and looked seriously at Kaiser.

"When I succeed, I'll challenge you again."

That statement surprised Kaiser.

"Me?"

He hadn't expected Rias to say that.

"Of course."

Rias was serious—very serious. In her eyes, a fire was burning as she looked at Kaiser.

It was the same fighting spirit one might feel toward a powerful opponent—like Vali.

The same competitive urge one would feel toward a worthy rival—like Cao Cao.

"Back in the Human World, I fought you twice, and both times I lost—completely, without suspense."

"During this past month of special training, my servants and I have challenged you countless times—and we've never won once."

"I can't accept always losing. I can't accept not winning even once."

The red-haired girl made her vow.

"I know we're still weak right now—not even close to being your match, someone who can rival gods."

"But we'll grow stronger—strong enough to defeat even Maou, strong enough to reach the top of the Rating Game."

"Then, I'll challenge you again—challenge you at your full power."

Rias knew that even during this month-long special training, Kaiser had never gone all out.

Not once had he drawn his Holy Spear. He only used some unknown Demonic Sword, yet he still defeated the entire Gremory peerage again and again.

Vali had at least forced Kaiser to use his Balance Breaker, while she and her team hadn't even qualified to make him draw his Holy Spear.

How could Rias accept that?

Her pride wouldn't allow her to ignore it.

"Just wait," Rias declared fearlessly. "My servants and I will surpass you."

Though her words weren't heavy, Kaiser could feel the seriousness and determination behind them.

"Alright."

Kaiser also showed a fearless smile.

"I'll be waiting for you—anytime."

Kaiser was honestly looking forward to it.

After all, they were the main cast of the original story—the current and future central figures of this world. They were indeed worth anticipating.

If Rias and the others truly achieved it, Kaiser would be happy to go all out and face them in battle.

The two of them exchanged glances for a while, then silently looked up at the night sky, enjoying the peace.