

Multiverse 18

Chapter 18: Chapter 66: A Celebration Before the Finals

Seidoukan Academy – Student Council Office

As night fell, most of the campus buildings had already turned dark, their lights switched off. Normally, the Student Council office would be among them, its vast space shrouded in darkness.

But tonight, the lights remained on, and the sounds of conversation drifted out from within. The atmosphere inside was lively, filled with warmth and laughter.

Listening closely, one could hear the unmistakable sounds of celebration.

And indeed, that was the case.

"Then, allow me, as the president of Seidoukan Academy's Student Council, to offer my congratulations to the four of you for advancing to the finals!"

Claudia, acting as the host, raised her glass with a smile.

"Cheers!"

The four individuals present—Kaiser, Kirin Toudou, Ayato Amagiri, and Julis-Alexia von Riessfeld—exchanged glances as they watched Claudia raise her glass. Though some sighed in resignation and others merely shrugged, they ultimately relented and lifted their own glasses, clinking them together in unison.

Tonight's gathering was a celebration for Kaiser and his fellow finalists.

However...

"Who starts celebrating before the finals have even taken place?" Julis muttered, holding her glass with an exasperated expression. "And besides, we're going to be opponents tomorrow. Is it really a good idea to throw a party where we're all gathered together like this?"

This was something Julis had wanted to say from the moment the celebration began. Beside her, Kirin and Ayato both let out awkward laughs.

"There was really no other choice," Claudia responded nonchalantly, still smiling. "All of you are students of Seidoukan Academy. Once the finals are over, regardless of who wins or loses, it wouldn't be appropriate for me, as Student Council president, to only celebrate one side, would it?"

"So, I figured we should just have a joint celebration today instead."

For Kaiser and the others, tomorrow's finals were undoubtedly crucial. But from the perspective of Seidoukan Academy as a whole, the outcome didn't matter nearly as much.

No matter who won or lost, the champion would still be a student of Seidoukan Academy.

With all four of their representatives securing spots in the finals, the event had already turned into a spectacle that stunned everyone.

Seidoukan Academy's complete domination of the tournament's final stage had caused an uproar online—the academy had secured both the championship and runner-up positions in the Phoenix Festa.

Such a situation wasn't entirely unprecedented.

For example, Saint Gallardworth Academy, a powerhouse in the Gryps Festa, had dominated that event numerous times, even producing finals where both teams belonged to their school.

But Seidoukan Academy?

A school that had been struggling at the bottom of the rankings for the past several seasons—now making a comeback by securing both first and second place in the Phoenix Festa?

It was an outcome that no one had expected.

With that in mind, Claudia had taken it upon herself to arrange this celebration.

Holding it tonight, before the final battle turned them into opponents, was indeed a clever idea.

"Unless... none of you actually want to celebrate together?" Claudia blinked mischievously. "Are you trying to avoid each other because you'll be facing off tomorrow?"

"...That's not it," Julis frowned, clearly uncomfortable.

For someone as principled and serious as the Princess of Lieseltania, the idea of sharing a joyous celebration with her final-round opponents did feel a little awkward.

But at the same time, she wasn't so narrow-minded as to view this match as a grudge match.

Even though only one of them could win, only one of them could claim victory and make a wish to the Integrated Enterprise Foundation, that didn't mean they were mortal enemies.

They all had good relationships with one another.

Unless someone valued winning the tournament more than their friendships, there was no reason to turn this into a hostile rivalry.

So, despite her discomfort, Julis ultimately chose to accept the situation.

"I'm sorry, Senpai," Kirin suddenly apologized, sensing Julis' unease.

"You idiot, why are you apologizing?"

Julis immediately reached out, placing a hand on Kirin's shoulder to stop her from bowing.

On the side, Kaiser and Ayato merely watched the exchange, offering no comments.

For them, there was no issue at all.

Unlike Julis, who felt awkward about celebrating before the finals, Kaiser and Ayato were completely at ease, exchanging amused glances before clinking their glasses together.

"Julis doesn't have a problem with you guys," Ayato said, explaining to Kaiser. "She's just... too serious about these things."

"Yeah, I can tell."

Kaiser shrugged indifferently.

The two of them shared a quiet laugh before continuing to sip their drinks.

"By the way, how are your injuries?"

Kaiser turned to Ayato, scanning him briefly before asking the question.

Unlike Kaiser and Kirin, Ayato and Julis had barely made it through the semifinals.

Just like in their previous matches, their victory had come at a heavy cost—Julis had collapsed from exhaustion by the end, and Ayato had sustained significant injuries.

"We're fine now," Ayato assured him, flexing his arms casually. "I've mostly recovered, and Julis should be in good shape as well."

This was where the difference between Genestella and normal humans became evident.

Neither Ayato nor Julis had suffered minor scrapes—their injuries were substantial.

If an ordinary person had taken damage like that, they would have required weeks of hospitalization to recover.

But Ayato and Julis? They had healed within half a day.

Of course, even if they hadn't, Asterisk had its own medical facilities, staffed with Strega and Dante healers capable of miraculous recoveries.

It was often said that as long as someone wasn't outright killed, they could be saved.

Though the accuracy of that claim was debatable, it was enough to reassure competitors that injuries weren't a serious concern.

"Then I don't have to worry about you two not being in top form for the finals," Kaiser said with a grin. "I'm really looking forward to our match."

"Same here," Ayato replied, matching his enthusiasm. "And so is she."

He patted the sheath at his waist, where his Orga Lux—Wole-Zain—rested.

"Vmm!"

"Vmm!"

Both Ser-Veresta and Ayato's sword began to vibrate faintly.

Though silent, their presence exuded an unmistakable excitement, anticipation, and battle-hunger.

It was clear—these two legendary weapons were eager to clash.

"Make sure you don't hold back tomorrow," Kaiser smirked.

"You either," Ayato responded.

At that moment, the casual grins vanished, replaced by expressions filled with fighting spirit.

The celebration among five companions continued in a relaxed and amicable atmosphere until late into the night.

By the time the dorm curfew was approaching, Claudia clapped her hands together, announcing the end of the party.

Julis and Kirin left together for the girls' dormitory.

As for Kaiser?

He didn't return to the boys' dormitory with Ayato.

Instead, he approached Claudia, requesting a favor.

And when Claudia heard his request—

Her expression became rather intriguing.

"This isn't difficult," she said, "but... are you sure about this?"

"It's dangerous, you know?"

Kaiser did not answer.

"Fine."

Claudia nodded.

"I'll have the intel delivered to me immediately, and once I receive it, I'll send it to you."

"Just... be careful."

With that, Claudia turned and left.

Leaving Kaiser alone.

He walked down the quiet corridors of the high school division, gazing out the window at the night sky.

His eyes gleamed with a dangerous light.

Suddenly—

He stretched out his hand.

Golden markings appeared across his palm.

And in the next instant—

A Lux Activator materialized in his grip.

Bathed in moonlight, its violet Urm-Manadyte core shone beautifully.

Holding the suddenly-appearing Activator, Kaiser smirked.

His smile was cold.