

Multiverse 239

Chapter 239: Volume 4 - Campione

Fantasy Library, in front of the bookshelf...

From the book whose cover read "BLEACH", Kaiser's figure materialized from illusion into substance, slowly walking out.

"Finally back."

Looking at the library, unchanged from what he remembered, Kaiser couldn't help but smile.

This was the third time he had completed a life experience in a fantasy world and returned to the Fantasy Library.

But this time, the duration he spent in the fantasy world was far longer than the previous two.

"In the Asterisk War world, I only stayed for a few months."

"In the High School DxD world, I also only stayed for a few months."

"The two life experiences combined didn't even total a year. How could they compare to this time—decades?"

Recalling those decades of experience, Kaiser couldn't help but sigh.

Decades—an ordinary human might only have one or two in a lifetime.

Before entering the Bleach world, Kaiser was just a young man not yet thirty. And now, the time he had spent in the Bleach world was already longer than his entire life up to that point.

If it weren't for the fact that his mentality and spirit had long since solidified, and his appearance had broken free from age-based changes, he wouldn't be just sighing—he might well be reminiscing for a long, long time.

"Thankfully, this life experience has been quite fruitful."

He had obtained his own Zanpakutō, seized both Kyōka Suigetsu and Shinsō from Sōsuke Aizen and Gin Ichimaru, and, in addition, obtained the Hōgyoku—the most broken artifact in the early canon. This time's harvest wasn't any less than the last two. In fact, it far exceeded what he got in the Asterisk War world.

If he hadn't obtained two God-class Sacred Gears in the High School DxD world, even that experience might not have surpassed this one.

Kyōka Suigetsu and Shinsō were unexpected bonuses. The true grand prize was still the Hōgyoku.

With it, Kaiser now had limitless potential—his foundation wasn't inferior to any protagonist from the original works.

"Of course, the rewards for this journey aren't over yet."

Kaiser raised his head and looked toward the Fantasy Library.

"Buzz..."

Suddenly, a formless thought descended upon him, settling on his body.

[Librarian detected returning. Commencing life experience settlement.]

[Based on the brilliance of this life experience and the realism of the world, the library will issue an additional reward to the Librarian according to their authority.]

[Settlement in progress...]

[Settlement complete.]

[Commencing reward distribution...]

As Kaiser received this wave of thought, one book after another on the shelves began to glow. One book shone brighter than all the others, flying out and arriving before him.

And from that book, an item flew out, entering Kaiser's vision.

"This is...?"

Kaiser focused his gaze and revealed a slightly surprised expression.

Because this time, the reward was different from the previous two.

The last two times, the rewards were weapons.

But this time, the reward was an artifact.

It was a large disc, carved with a totem resembling a dragon's head on the surface, and surrounded by eight sword-shaped markings.

The disc appeared ancient, heavy, and mysterious—like a relic passed down from a distant era. Though its appearance was unremarkable, it still commanded attention.

Kaiser could sense an extremely ancient aura from the disc, as if it wasn't a real-world object but a mythological one.

The moment Kaiser reached out and touched the disc, a message entered his mind.

Circle of Usurpation: Divine artifact. A tool capable of seizing the powers and authority of dead gods, enabling humans to re-manifest the divine attributes of the sword gods. It can only be activated by killing a god with one's own strength. Once a slain god is offered as a sacrifice, the ring will activate.

"What?"

Kaiser was instantly shocked, his eyes even widening slightly.

"This thing...?"

There is a world where such a race of great beings exists.

They existed even before the human race emerged—born with immense power, nameless, formless, and without any concept of species. Each one was a unique existence, sacred and mighty.

Humans didn't know when they first appeared. Occasionally, one might catch a glimpse of their figure across the vast sky or land, witnessing their divine powers, recognizing their greatness.

While threatening humankind with their power, they also occasionally granted blessings, bringing the two sides into contact.

To humans, they were great yet dangerous, mighty and unrestrained—disasters in the form of life. Every appearance could herald catastrophe.

Thus, ancient sages, to prevent these great beings from constantly threatening mankind with their overwhelming might, invented a ritual known as "mythology."

They gave these beings names and created stories to worship them—elevating them as omniscient and eternal, granting them the concept of kinship, and naming them collectively—gods.

And so, countless deities like stars in the sky were born.

They remained powerful, remained mighty, but with the bestowal of names and myths, they were no longer unbound.

The god of fire could only bring flame. The god of rain could only call rain. Whether granting blessings or punishment, they were bound to their domain and title, unable to act beyond their appointed station, even unable to descend freely to the human world—existing only within myths, within the undying realm.

Humans finally had the means to respond to divine threats and blessings, even to influence the gods themselves.

However, sometimes, certain gods would suddenly break free from myth and appear in the world.

They would revert to the form they had before being myth-bound—contradicting the narratives humans had created—wandering the earth, bringing calamity.

If the sun god descended, the world would burn.

If the sea god descended, the world would drown.

If the underworld god descended, plague would spread to every corner.

If the god of judgment descended, people would suffer divine punishment.

Simply passing through the world would create immense impact. Intervening in reality with their personal whims, these disaster-bringing gods were called—Heretic Gods.

The power of a god is unfathomable.

Their authority is unmatched.

A human could go insane just by making eye contact with one. No weapon forged by man could harm them in the slightest.

Even if one trained to death, studied to madness, and tortured themselves to achieve new heights—none of it could ever threaten a god.

Even uniting all of mankind's power and wisdom wouldn't reach a fraction of a god's. Just as humanity cannot resist natural disasters, such is the might of the Heretic Gods.

But if, by a series of unbelievable miracles and inconceivable luck, someone managed to kill a Heretic God—then the goddess who bestows all blessings upon gods and men—Pandora—would appear with the Circle of Usurpation, to perform a Black Christmas ritual for the miracle-maker.

By offering the slain god as sacrifice, the god's power and authority would be bestowed upon that person...

Thus, the God Slayer is born.

They are warriors.

They are kings.

While still human, they are also monsters—beings beyond common sense.

Not born of talent, not forged by effort, not chosen by lineage—but born from victory—Demon Kings capable of slaying gods.

Wielding powers beyond reason, defying the impossible—those who can kill gods...

These are God Slayers.

Now, Kaiser had received the very artifact used to create a God Slayer—the divine ritual tool used in the Black Christmas—used to seize divine power and authority: the Circle of Usurpation.

"Damn, my adoptive mother—uh, adoptive father is actually me?"

Since all God Slayers were created by Pandora, she was effectively the adoptive mother of every God Slayer—referring to them as her children and asking them to call her "Mama."

Unfortunately, now that Kaiser had obtained the Circle of Usurpation, he could create God Slayers himself—without needing Pandora at all.

"Buzz..."

Without hesitation, Kaiser activated his authority and bound the disc to himself.

The Circle of Usurpation immediately resonated with the book that had flown to Kaiser's side, both glowing intermittently.

[Open the book to enter the fantasy world recorded within and trigger a randomly drawn life experience.]

[Note: The Librarian currently holds a critical component of this fantasy world. If this book is opened, the draw will be narrowed to align with that component's theme, leading to a life background more closely tied to it.]

[The Librarian may also store the critical component to continue a full random draw without narrowing the range.]

As the familiar thought descended, Kaiser didn't hesitate. He reached out and opened the book before him.

The pages within began to flip on their own, separating and fluttering around him.

To avoid drawing a strange life background, Kaiser stored the Circle of Usurpation, and the pages swirling around him slowly decreased. When only one page remained, the cover of the book before him finally revealed its title—"Campione: God Slayer".

The final page of life experience flew into Kaiser's mind. Then, as he touched a blank book, he vanished from the spot...

"Chirp chirp chirp—"

It was the crisp chirping of birds.

The sound was pleasant to the ear and refreshing to the mind, making Kaiser feel that he had arrived in a rather nice place even before opening his eyes. His eyes still shut, the corners of his lips had already curved up slightly.

When he finally opened his eyes and saw the scene before him, Kaiser confirmed his earlier premonition.

He had indeed arrived in a decent place.

At the very least, the environment here was acceptable.

At this moment, he was at the end of a long stone staircase.

Before him was a flight of steps extending downward, beneath his feet was paved brick ground, and surrounding him were trees forming a grove—not quite as dense as a forest, but still lush and peaceful.

The environment nestled among the verdant trees calmed the mind, as if even one's spirit had been cleansed.

"Is this... a shrine?"

Kaiser noticed the torii on either side of where he stood. He was standing directly beneath a red torii gate, and behind him was a shrine.

The shrine wasn't large in scale, but Kaiser could faintly see figures in white robes moving about within, proving this wasn't some desolate shrine abandoned by people, but one that enjoyed a certain degree of recognition and offerings.

At this moment, he himself was dressed in white, holding a broom, like some kind of trainee shrine worker—was he sweeping?

"...What kind of opening is this?"

Kaiser couldn't help but complain.

He couldn't even remember the last time he'd held a broom or done such chores.

Not to mention the last two worlds he experienced—even just the Bleach world alone, he had become a Gotei 13 Captain within half a year, one ranked just below the Captain Commander, someone even nobles dared not offend or speak rudely to.

His room was always cleaned by his Lieutenant, Momo Hinamori, and that was of her own volition. Normally, a Lieutenant wouldn't be doing such chores, let alone the Captain himself. He hadn't done any kind of menial work for decades.

And now? Starting off as a cleaner?

"Where the hell even is this?"

This question had just formed when background information about this life experience entered Kaiser's mind.

According to the setting, he wasn't even a shrine worker here—just a temporary hire.

His ancestors came from another region, perhaps even from abroad. After settling here, they soon disappeared due to water and climate issues, leaving only him behind. With the help of kind neighbors, he did odd jobs to earn a small income and sustain himself.

Today, he had come to this shrine as one of those temporary jobs.

"So I'm not even a low-level employee, huh?"

Kaiser felt like he had encountered a truly disastrous opening.

Of course, compared to the previous world, maybe this opening was... acceptable?

After all, in the Bleach world, he had started off already dead, reduced to just a soul, and only entered Soul Society after getting tapped on the head by some unreasonable Shinigami. Worse yet, he'd been sent to the 80th District of North Rukongai—a place where you had to fight over bread, and draw blades over a sip of water.

And in the High School DxD world, he was nearly operated on like a lab rat at the very beginning, later forced to wander the world before finally settling in Kuōh Town.

So with that in mind, this opening... wasn't so bad?

"Alright, it's not important."

After all, he never expected to start off as the world's fated protagonist. Backgrounds were just settings—no need to fuss over them.

What Kaiser truly cared about was the fact that he was currently in the Kanto region.

The shrine before him was called Nanagami Shrine.

"Isn't this..."

Just as Kaiser recalled where this place was, and who exactly lived in this world, a figure slowly walked out from the shrine.

She was a girl with extremely delicate features and finely shaped facial contours.

She appeared to be around fifteen or sixteen years old, dressed in a white kosode and crimson hakama, with long, light brown straight hair cascading naturally down her back. The strands on either side of her face were tied with white hairpieces, giving her a look of beauty and gentleness.

From her attire, she was unmistakably a miko.

From her age, she was unmistakably a high school student.

But when this young miko walked out of the shrine, all the shrine attendants, both old and young, automatically stepped aside, bowing to her as they made way—with attitudes full of respect and reverence.

This clearly indicated that though this miko was young, her status and identity were extraordinary.

Kaiser knew her name.

"Yuri Mariya..."

Recalling her name from memory, Kaiser couldn't help but exhale softly.

"Never thought I'd run into one of the original heroines just as I arrived..."

Was this opening good or bad?

Kaiser couldn't say.

"Probably good?"

After all, he had immediately encountered a spiritual user who lived apart from society, and made contact with the supernatural world.

From that perspective, perhaps it could be called lucky.

Thinking that, Kaiser suddenly smiled, held his broom, and stepped aside like the other shrine staff.

But wanting not to attract attention was impossible.

Because someone had come here specifically for him.

...

Yuri Mariya was feeling restless today.

The unease had come without warning or reason—it simply appeared, compelling her to leave the shrine's inner sanctum and come outside just as she was about to begin her duties.

"...Did something happen?"

Though she had no evidence or explanation, Yuri was certain that something significant had changed around her.

Otherwise, she wouldn't feel so disturbed, so distracted that she couldn't even focus on her usual assignments.

If someone unaware of Yuri's background knew her current thoughts, they'd probably think she was just being overly sensitive.

But anyone who knew her true identity—knew what she was capable of—would not dismiss her intuition so easily.

For no other reason than that this girl was the Hime-Miko of Musashino—one of the highest-ranking members among Kanto's spiritual user circles.

The title "Hime" was usually reserved for the highest-ranking mikos.

In the world of spirit users and magic, a Hime-Miko was like a princess.

Japan had always passed down jutsu and spiritual traditions, and Yuri was one of those inheritors.

And her specialty was precisely spiritual sensing and perception.

Therefore, her sudden restlessness likely signified some shift or occurrence—some sign received by her miko senses.

In this almost revelatory state, even without knowing exactly what had happened, Yuri still felt compelled, still felt concerned.

Following that sense, Yuri stepped outside the shrine.

She had no destination in mind—just wandered aimlessly.

She wasn't intentionally looking for anything—just letting her thoughts drift as her steps moved naturally forward.

And in that moment, she saw him.

"Ah..."

When she saw the figure holding a broom, preparing to leave, Yuri instinctively understood.

That boy—he was the one she had been looking for.

"Wait a moment."

Before she even realized it, Yuri had already called out to him.

"Hm?"

Kaiser, who had been about to leave, stopped and looked toward Yuri.

And as he did, his brows rose slightly.

Because he keenly noticed that Yuri's gaze was momentarily hollow.

She wasn't looking at him, but rather at something incredibly distant.

Yet even so, Kaiser felt as if he had been "found" by her.

"Spiritual vision, huh?"

Kaiser pondered.

"Hello."

At that moment, Yuri came back to herself, bowed slightly, and greeted him with a bit of nervousness.

"Hello, Miss Mariya," Kaiser nodded. "May I help you?"

Hearing that, the first thing Yuri felt was... disbelief.

She couldn't help it—Kaiser's demeanor was too natural. His expression showed no surprise at being addressed out of the blue. His gaze met hers calmly—frankly and serenely.

Since she was often treated with politeness or even reverence both at the shrine and at school, Yuri couldn't remember the last time someone had looked at her so normally—so casually.

Even though she was the most respected figure in this shrine, and this boy seemed to be just a hired cleaner, the contrast in their statuses was stark. Yet Yuri felt as though it was her honor to be treated so equally by him.

It was... very strange.

"You are...?"

Yuri decided to first ask his name.

"Me?"

Kaiser narrowed his eyes and suddenly smiled.

"My name is Kaiser."

No longer the Captain of Division 3 of the Gotei 13, nor the legendary genius of the Shin'ō Academy.

Now, he was merely someone just beginning a new journey, about to embark on a new adventure.

For now, he was just a humble temp worker.

But even that identity—was only temporary.

Because soon, he would shake the world.

As long as... he could successfully slay a god.

"_____"

And just as Kaiser gave his name and his heart surged with resolve, Yuri Mariya trembled all over.

Her eyes, once again, turned hollow.