

## Multiverse 247

Chapter 247: A Gaze Across Space

At this moment, Kaiser was leisurely strolling along a main street in downtown Tokyo.

He had no particular destination; he simply wanted to find a restaurant and grab a meal to reward his stomach first, then figure out what to do next.

"Even after becoming a Campione, I still need to eat..."

Rubbing his growling stomach, Kaiser muttered inwardly.

In fact, if he wanted to, with the power of the Hōgyoku, he could evolve a body that required no sustenance.

But he didn't do that, because he never thought that not needing to eat was a good thing.

There are many pleasures in this world, and enjoying delicious food is one of them.

If one were to lose the joy of tasting food, then a large part of life's enjoyment would vanish as well.

Before becoming the Librarian of the Fantasy Library, due to his harsh and frugal lifestyle, Kaiser had little opportunity to savor gourmet food.

Now, he had the chance to taste all kinds of cuisine—even foods from different worlds. Such an exciting prospect was certainly not one he wanted to lose.

Anyway, because of the Hōgyoku, he was already immortal. Even if he didn't eat, he wouldn't die—at most, he'd feel hungry. There was no need to transform himself into something inhuman.

Eating was a habit he would continue to maintain.

Thinking this, Kaiser reached into his pocket and found a wallet on him.

The wallet was very thin. After all, the background he received was that of an outsider who had to live off part-time jobs. It contained only a few bills, and their denominations were not high.

"This is even more miserable than my life before becoming the Librarian."

Kaiser laughed and shook his head, but he didn't mind. He directly found a ramen shop and went inside to order a bowl of tonkotsu ramen, with extra chashu, double portion.

"Tonkotsu ramen, extra chashu, double portion. Please enjoy!"

A delicate-looking ramen shop waiter quickly served a large bowl of ramen, finally allowing Kaiser to treat his stomach, which was just as flat as his wallet.

It seemed this wasn't the ramen shop's peak business hour. Inside, there were only a few scattered customers: an uncle with a briefcase, an aunt with a child, an elder dressed in traditional clothing—and him. The atmosphere was rather quiet.

But the television in the ramen shop was broadcasting news about a massive tsunami that struck the coastal region, drawing the attention of the idle boss, the staff, and the customers, all of whom looked toward the TV.

"How could a tsunami appear so suddenly?"

"Luckily, there weren't many casualties."

"But... with such a huge tsunami, how could there be so little damage?"

"Who knows? This is probably an unsolvable mystery."

The customers chatted idly, not realizing that the greatest culprit behind this event was right beside them. That person merely glanced at the TV before losing interest, quietly continuing to eat his noodles, thinking about where to go after finishing.

"Hmm?"

Suddenly, Kaiser paused mid-bite, as if sensing something. His brow raised, and he looked toward the void.

At the same time, a gaze seemed to travel across time and space from afar and landed on him.

Kaiser and the gaze's owner looked at each other across a great distance, and both could actually see the other's current appearance.

Kaiser saw Mariya Yuri, who was sitting upright in the shrine entertaining guests.

Mariya Yuri also saw Kaiser, saw him sitting in the ramen shop eating noodles, with a strand of noodle still hanging from his mouth.

"..."

Silence.

An indescribable silence.

After the silence, Kaiser slurped up the noodle with a "whoosh" and murmured quietly.

"There are some things in this world... that shouldn't be looked at."

At that moment, Kaiser's inhuman resistance to magical power activated.

The gaze sent from afar was instantly repelled, and Kaiser vaguely heard a surprised gasp.

After the gasp, everything stopped abruptly, as if nothing had happened.

Kaiser also nonchalantly quickened his pace, finishing even the broth and leaving the bowl spotless before pulling out a bill and casually walking away.

The direction he went—was toward the Shichio Shrine.

.....

"Ah!"

Inside the Shichio Shrine, Mariya Yuri, whose eyes had suddenly gone blank, let out a startled cry, as if someone had pushed her, collapsing to the ground.

"What's wrong?"

Sayanomiya Kaoru was immediately shocked and quickly stood up.

The middle-aged man behind Sayanomiya Kaoru tensed up all over in an instant. Though he looked like a useless office worker, at that moment he exuded a disciplined aura.

Mariya Yuri finally came to her senses, her delicate face turning pale.

"I-I caused trouble!"

Mariya Yuri cried out in a voice laced with sobs.

"Trouble?" Sayanomiya Kaoru was clearly a clever person and instantly made a connection, her expression changing slightly as she said, "Could it be..."

Sayanomiya Kaoru's speculation was quickly confirmed.

"I-I saw the new king." Mariya Yuri's face was pale, her voice trembling. "He's... on his way here now!"

With these words, Sayanomiya Kaoru's heart sank completely.

Even the middle-aged man behind her was momentarily dumbfounded, then blurted out:

"Can I request to leave early? My job description never mentioned dealing with a Campione!"

The two had come here specifically to inquire about the new king.

First, since this event occurred in their country, they needed to uncover the cause and consequences as soon as possible.

Second, because Japan had never produced a Campione, they had only heard terrifying rumors about them and didn't know how to interact with one, so they came to Mariya Yuri.

Mariya Yuri had once participated in a summoning ritual for a Heretic God involving an ancient king. Although it was a traumatic experience and a past she would rather forget, she had indeed interacted with a Campione before and could offer some useful advice to Sayanomiya Kaoru and her companion.

Moreover, the new king seemed to have some connection with the Shichio Shrine and possibly with Mariya Yuri herself. She had used Spirit Vision to witness a divine descent before the incident even occurred, which is why Sayanomiya Kaoru and the others came to consult her.

But who would have thought—before they could even consult her, the final boss was already on his way?

Who could they even complain to?

Clever as she was, Sayanomiya Kaoru was now also feeling flustered.

As for Mariya Yuri, she was even worse off—her delicate frame trembling from fear.

She remembered the hellish ritual she participated in years ago.

Although the ritual succeeded, nearly all the participants went insane. Only a few, including herself, escaped without losing their minds.

That ritual was extremely dangerous—Mariya Yuri had foreseen that much with her Spirit Vision before participating.

But the king who orchestrated the ritual paid no heed, as if the ones being sacrificed weren't dozens of precious Hime-Miko and witches, but lumps of meat from who knows where. He forcibly carried out the ritual.

And the reason he insisted on the summoning?

It was just because he was bored. He wanted entertainment. He wanted to slay a god and gain a new Authority—so he needed to summon an opponent.

That was a true Demon Lord, a monster who viewed humans as ants—just like the gods.

The forces of Japan's mystic side didn't understand how terrifying Campiones were or how to face them—but Mariya Yuri understood all too well.

These were not beings ordinary people could talk to.

They were terrifying existences that could endanger an entire nation.

Someone like that—she only wanted to stay far, far away from. Just the thought of meeting him again made her panic.

After what just happened, she didn't even dare to activate Spirit Vision to look at him again. She couldn't even prepare by learning about his temperament and finding a way to approach him.

In the end, it was Sayanomiya Kaoru who took a deep breath and regained her composure first.

"No matter what, since it's already happened, we must think of a way to deal with it."

Sayanomiya Kaoru was indeed decisive.

"We've all heard enough rumors to know how terrifying a Campione is."

"Although our country has never produced one or interacted with one, to be safe, we must maintain the right attitude."

"Remember—keep reminding yourself to treat him with awe. If not for ourselves, then at least for the country. Our deaths are minor, but dragging the whole nation into disaster would be a catastrophe."

At her words, the middle-aged man immediately raised his hand.

"I'm just an attendant, a nameless nobody. I'm not qualified to meet a king. Can I retreat now?"

Unlike the middle-aged man who desperately wanted to flee, Mariya Yuri, though afraid, still mustered her courage and showed a determined gaze.

"It was my disrespect that made the king come. I will apologize with everything I have, and not let others suffer because of me."

Mariya Yuri recalled yesterday, when she had a face-to-face conversation with him here.

It was only just now that she realized the new Campione was the one who had been sweeping here yesterday, the one who had triggered her intuition.

No wonder she had felt so uneasy yesterday.

No wonder she became so fixated on him after meeting him. And after learning his name, she had directly witnessed the descent of a god.

Because a Heretic God was about to descend, she had panicked and failed to think deeper about it.

If only she had realized it back then—perhaps she could have done something, anything.

Mariya Yuri felt a pang of regret.

But unfortunately, there is no medicine for regret in this world.

And they could no longer stay here.

Because—the king had arrived.

.....

The Shichio Shrine was located not far from Shiba Park and Tokyo Tower.

Surrounded by luxury hotels, schools, TV stations, radio stations, and embassies, the number of shrines and temples nearby was unusually high. Shichio Shrine was just one of them.

Right beside a main road, a narrow and winding path sat. Following this path led to a stone staircase with two hundred steps.

At the top of these steps stood the Shichio Shrine, surrounded by lush greenery and beautiful scenery that attracted many worshippers.

Though not a particularly famous shrine, Shichio Shrine employed many shrine personnel due to the fact that its shrine maiden was the Hime-Miko overseeing the spirit users of Musashino.

But today, all those shrine personnel had been dismissed. Only Mariya Yuri and Sayanomiya Kaoru stood atop the platform, facing the stairs, awaiting the arrival of the Demon Lord.

The middle-aged man behind Sayanomiya Kaoru—Touma Amakasu—was feeling very bitter.

"Are you really not letting me go? What right do I have to meet the new king with my status?"

He made no effort to hide his desire to escape.

To that, Sayanomiya Kaoru simply replied:

"If something happens because you leave, I'll make sure to drag you down with me to take the blame."

Her heartless statement rendered Touma Amakasu completely silent.

"...You really are a great boss."

"Of course. I've always been very considerate of my subordinates."

"I didn't expect my boss to be so utterly lacking in self-awareness. The History Compilation Committee is doomed under your command."

"Thank you for the compliment. If it were any other time, I'd make sure to dock your entire year's salary."

Perhaps trying to find humor in hardship, the two bickered like master and servant.

But Mariya Yuri wasn't in the mood. Her heart was beating faster and faster, her hands tightly clenched together in anxiety.

Until a certain moment—Sayanomiya Kaoru and Touma Amakasu simultaneously fell silent and held their breath along with Mariya Yuri.

The three of them could feel it: the atmosphere around the shrine had changed.

This was a place that served the gods.

This was sacred ground that enshrined the divine.

Normally, it was quiet, tranquil, peaceful, and holy—a place that brought serenity to the soul.

But at this moment, even the very air had grown heavy.

Because the God-Slaying Beast that defied all gods had boldly stepped into this place.

"Clack!"

A clear footstep echoed, and a figure appeared at the base of the stone steps.

He walked up slowly, one step at a time like an ordinary tourist, passed through the torii gate, and entered this sacred domain under the weight of the heavy air.

Dressed in simple white, he looked no different from a regular shrine priest, entering as if nothing were out of the ordinary.

"Just one day without sweeping, and there's already so many fallen leaves and dirt."

The Demon Lord who had already become a Rakshasa approached with a half-smile, speaking his first line.

"My part-time shift doesn't seem to be over yet. Coming here now—I must be seriously late, right?"

"Will I get docked pay?"

"If I start sweeping now, is it still in time?"

His playful words made both Sayanomiya Kaoru and Touma Amakasu hold their breaths, not daring to make a sound.

Neither of them had ever faced a Campione before. They had no idea how terrifying one could be.

But now—they knew.

As members of the mystic side, their instincts were screaming in alarm.

As if wailing and shrieking...