

Multiverse 25

Chapter 25: Chapter 73: At a Disadvantage? Take Down Kirin?

"Boom—!"

The massive pillars of flame erupted from the ground like a volcanic explosion, then swiftly curled inward like the claws of a fiery beast, attempting to crush Kaiser within their grasp.

Surrounded by the raging inferno, Kaiser finally grasped the situation.

"So, it wasn't just me stalling for time... They were stalling, too?"

He had deliberately engaged Ayato Amagiri in conversation to create an opportunity for Kirin Toudou to close in on Julis-Alexia von Riessfeld.

At first, he had thought that Ayato had fallen for his trap.

But now, it seemed he was the one who had been deceived.

Ayato and Julis had clearly anticipated that Kaiser and Kirin would opt for a one-on-one engagement strategy. So instead, they played along—leading Kaiser to believe he was keeping Ayato occupied, when in reality, they had used that to lure him into a trap set by Julis.

Flameclaw of Honor.

Among the abilities Julis possessed, this was one of her trap-based techniques.

That meant that, once placed, it remained active without the need for direct control. The moment an enemy stepped into its range, the ability automatically activated—like a landmine.

In the semifinals, Irene Urzaiz had similarly used Gravisheath to create a defensive gravity field around Priscilla Urzaiz, aiming to protect her from attacks.

Now, Julis had done the opposite—her setup was not defensive, but purely offensive.

Thus, the five towering flame pillars curled inward, ready to engulf Kaiser.

"Not that easy!"

Kaiser held the Ser-Veresta parallel to the ground and, just as the flames closed in, spun in a rapid 360-degree arc, slashing outward in a full-circle strike.

"Schwing!"

A ring of violet-black sword light carved a perfect arc through the air, severing the closing flame pillars.

"Bloom—Longiflorum!"

Almost at the exact same moment, as if anticipating Kaiser's escape, Julis swung her rapier-type Lux once more.

The surrounding flames coalesced, transforming into massive, spear-like projectiles that shot toward Kaiser like bullets.

These fire spears were much faster than her previous flame wheels.

Even with his reflexes, Kaiser was a fraction of a second too slow to swing his sword in time.

He barely managed to twist his body—dodging the first Blazing Spear by a hair's breadth.

"Boom!"

The spear missed, landing on the stage and exploding into flames.

"Boom!" "Boom!" "Boom!" "Boom!" ...

One after another, the flaming projectiles detonated wherever they struck.

As Kaiser continued weaving between them, the flames erupted in rapid succession, their intense heat licking at his heels.

If not for the heat aura emitted by the Ser-Veresta, which neutralized some of the incoming flames, Kaiser would have already been caught in the chain explosions.

Even so, he was forced to keep dodging.

Then—

"Bloom—Scorching Rose of Melting Sky!"

At some point, Kaiser had stepped onto another of Julis' trap spells.

The moment his foot touched the ground, an enormous magic circle unfurled beneath him.

Like a camellia in full bloom, a gigantic firestorm burst forth from above, spiraling downward in a fiery vortex.

Its blast radius was immense.

Within an instant, the entire ten-meter section of the stage was swallowed in an explosive inferno.

The audience let out collective gasps.

The defensive barriers around the stage immediately flared up, containing the explosion to prevent its heat from reaching the spectators.

"Kaise-senpai!"

Kirin, who was already engaged with Ayato, managed to dodge an incoming strike and turned her head at the last second.

Seeing Kaiser consumed by the flames, she instinctively called out.

"Kirin, I wouldn't let your guard down if I were you."

Ayato grinned, his Wole-Zain gleaming in his hand.

With unrelenting speed, he launched into a fierce flurry of sword strikes, forcing Kirin to dodge frantically.

She knew better than to block his Wole-Zain directly with Senbakiri. Instead, she focused entirely on evasive footwork.

Meanwhile, the commentators in the broadcast room erupted in excitement.

"This is incredible! It looks like Kaiser and Kirin Toudou are struggling!"

"They've been pushed back! While their individual strength is undeniable, Ayato Amagiri and Julis-Alexia von Riessfeld have an incredibly synergized battle strategy that perfectly suits a two-on-two fight. This is proving to be a serious challenge for Kaiser and Kirin, who both specialize in close combat!"

Ayato and Julis' strategy was simple.

Since Kaiser was focused entirely on Ayato, and Kirin was determined to take out Julis first, they took full advantage of their positioning.

With this setup, Ayato was able to break away at key moments, ensuring that Kirin never got close enough to Julis.

Meanwhile, Julis kept up her ranged attacks—focusing all of her firepower on keeping Kaiser pinned down.

If things continued like this—

Ayato would soon find an opportunity to take down Kirin.

And once Kirin was eliminated, the two-on-one battle against Kaiser would decide everything.

"My apologies, Kaiser. Until Ayato finishes off Kirin, you'll have to put up with me."

Julis stood confidently amidst the lingering flames, issuing her challenge.

However—

"Finish off Kirin?"

From within the firestorm, Kaiser's voice rang out.

"I think... you're underestimating her."

The moment those words left his lips—

The situation shifted drastically.

"Amagiri Shinmei Style—Four Bee Sting!"

Ayato rushed forward, executing an incredibly fast and unorthodox movement—his footwork twisted, sending his body into a wide, circular motion around Kirin.

With a swift wrist twist, he lunged with Wole-Zain, driving it forward like a wasp's sting.

The attack was both fast and precise.

With his newly awakened perception, Ayato calculated the exact timing and angle for a perfect, unavoidable strike.

And yet—

Kirin saw through it.

"There!"

Almost as if she had been waiting for this exact moment, Kirin's focused gaze gleamed with sharp insight.

She pivoted, spinning on her heel in a rapid motion.

With a perfectly timed counter-swing, she struck the flat of Ayato's sword.

"Clang!"

A clear, bell-like impact rang across the stage.

Ayato's blade was deflected.

Not blocked.

Not clashed.

Deflected.

The strike completely disrupted the trajectory of his attack.

The Wole-Zain was sent veering off-course.

Even though it could cut through space itself, its cutting edge had been bypassed entirely.

"...?!"

Ayato's eyes widened in shock.

"Yaaah!"

The moment she deflected his attack, Kirin immediately followed up.

Her silver-white blade curved through the air in a cold, swift arc, slashing directly toward Ayato's school badge.

At the last second, Ayato managed to dodge, twisting his body away.

But—

The edge of Senbakiri still cut through the fabric of his uniform.

Had he reacted a split-second later, the match would have ended right there.

"...That was an incredible strike, Kirin."

Ayato leapt backward, instinctively widening the distance.

For the first time in this battle, his expression was one of awe.

"You really live up to your title as Seidoukan's former Rank One."

Kirin held her sword steady, calm and unwavering.

"My eyesight is excellent," she said plainly. "Once I adapted to your speed, I could track your blade's motion with ease."

"Still... it's a pity I couldn't end the match right there."

Kirin exhaled lightly, adjusting her stance.

Ayato, on the other hand, felt a faint shiver run through his body.

In that moment, he fully realized it.

The girl before him—

Was a true genius.

Her skill.

Her instincts.

Her talent.

This was the swordswoman who once reigned supreme in Seidoukan Academy.