

Multiverse 263

Chapter 263: Nothing but a Joke

Right now, the only person who knew that Kaiser was on Sardinia—or rather, knew he was about to face two deities—was probably Mariya Yuri, whose Spirit Vision was extraordinarily powerful.

Last night, when Kaiser entered a state of sleep, he sensed a gaze cast from afar, which was hurriedly withdrawn before it could land on him. It was as if someone had accidentally turned their gaze toward this place, then suddenly realized it and hastily looked away.

Even though that gaze hadn't fallen directly on Kaiser, he still noticed its presence and knew who was capable of such a thing.

Without a doubt, it must have been Mariya Yuri's Spirit Vision.

She probably hadn't done it intentionally, but rather had been constantly concerned about him and his movements, and so she accidentally triggered Spirit Vision and nearly peered into him again.

Precisely because of this, in the morning, Kaiser had taken an interest in Erica's words and casually inquired about the status of the Spirit Vision practitioners within the Copper Black Cross—only to once again realize just how rare and precious the talents of that Hime-Miko were.

Whereas others could only rely on chance no matter how hard they worked, with only a small probability of triggering it, and even then the information they could glimpse would be limited—merely some traces of abnormal Magical Power—that Hime-Miko could trigger it easily, and sometimes couldn't even suppress it if she wanted to. If she wasn't careful, it would activate on its own. This was an overwhelmingly cruel blow that could make all Spirit Vision practitioners around the world cough up blood in frustration.

Even the one known as the "Fairy Knight," who could go head-to-head with Erica in Milan, couldn't achieve this level. The chances of her triggering Spirit Vision were extremely low, while Mariya Yuri could do so every few days, and even guide and trigger it actively. The gap was simply beyond measure.

To be honest, Kaiser was already a little tempted and wanted to recruit Mariya Yuri.

With her Spirit Vision, it would be much easier to search for gods in the future, wouldn't it?

Of course, that was something for later. For now, Kaiser's attention was still focused on the two deities on Sardinia.

Seeing Erica keeping her head lowered, no longer bearing the confident demeanor she had before, Kaiser couldn't help but speak.

"After seeing a true Heretic God, what are your thoughts?"

Hearing this, Erica fell silent.

After a while, she finally spoke.

"As expected, a god is a god. Even if they've betrayed their own myths and become a heretical existence, they're still not beings that insignificant humans can contend against."

As she spoke, Erica wore a clearly self-deprecating and crushed expression.

The blow she had suffered this time was indeed heavy.

From a young age, Erica Blandelli had always been someone who amazed and earned the praise of countless people wherever she went, someone seen by all as having unlimited potential.

Genius, prodigy, noble lineage, exceptional bloodline... the labels attached to Erica were all radiant and extraordinary, making her deeply aware that she was different from others.

What others had to pursue for a lifetime, she could attain with just a stretch of her hand.

What others had to toil for their entire lives to achieve, she only had to follow the proper path to reach.

Even the position of Paladin, held by her uncle and respected worldwide, would one day be hers if she so desired.

After all, she had already become a Great Knight—just one step below a Paladin—at the age of fifteen. Even if the rank of Paladin was extremely difficult to attain, give it ten, twenty, even thirty years—could she, Erica Blandelli, really not obtain it?

To Erica, becoming a Paladin wasn't some far-off dream, but something she would naturally acquire in due time.

Under such circumstances, how could Erica not develop extraordinary confidence?

She firmly believed that what others could not do, she, Erica Blandelli, absolutely could.

She also believed that things considered extremely dangerous to others could be turned around by her, Erica Blandelli.

So, for the so-called title of "Diavolo Rosso," Erica had unhesitatingly decided to come to Sardinia.

Because she had confidence in herself. Even if she couldn't rival those monster-like Campiones or accomplish the great feat of God-Slaying, when it came to simply sealing a god, with her abilities, she could definitely do it.

Until today—or rather, until just moments ago—Erica had finally realized just how terrifying the existence she thought she could seal truly was.

Just standing before the being made her whole body tremble uncontrollably. Her biological instincts were pushing her to flee, to turn and run without lingering.

A mere mortal like her couldn't even look directly at a god, let alone confront one or oppose one.

Her talents, her potential, her power that was just a step below that of a Paladin—no matter how outstanding or astonishing among humans—they amounted to nothing more than a tall person among dwarfs. At the core, she was still just a small human, still a dwarf.

No matter how talented she was, no matter how diligently she trained, even if she mastered every skill in the world to perfection, she still couldn't surpass a god.

To slay a god, one didn't rely on innate talent, nor on hard-earned skill, but on miracles, on luck, on the many choices—whether by chance or necessity—made while treading a thorn-filled path. Only the culmination of all those factors could lead to the impossible feat of God-Slaying.

Aside from that, even gathering more magi, achieving greater success, assembling more powerful allies—it would all be useless before a god.

Her confidence, her pride, her strength—all of it was nothing but a joke before a god.

Realizing this, Erica's confidence, dignity, and even her pride were utterly shattered.

She understood deeply: if she hadn't encountered Kaiser here on this island—hadn't met the newly born seventh Campione—then with her previous lack of understanding and reverence toward gods, her rash approach would have ended in only one outcome.

That would have been exactly like just now—unable to even make a god glance her way before being devoured by a swarm of tens of thousands of locusts.

At this thought, Erica's body trembled again.

If not for realizing she was still standing before a God-Slaying king, she would have found a place to hide and cried her heart out.

Unfortunately, she didn't have that luxury.

"To be able to survive before a god, that alone is no small feat," Kaiser said casually, as if he hadn't noticed Erica's mental state. "Now that you've realized your shortcomings, it's not too late."

Not too late...?

Indeed, it wasn't too late.

Although her previous plan was undoubtedly naïve, the emergence of a God-Slaying king on Sardinia meant that the situation hadn't spiraled out of control.

With him around, even if the two gods started a major battle on Sardinia, there would still be someone capable of stopping them, right?

"My king," Erica steadied herself slightly and spoke, "Where is the god-king Melqart now...?"

"He ran away," Kaiser answered frankly, knowing what Erica wanted to ask. "Even though Shinsō struck him, he's still a god, a god-king at that. That level of damage means nothing to him."

This was also a flaw of Shinsō.

Its speed was incredible—even Kaiser had to admire it—but it was still just a Zanpakutō, not some God-Slaying weapon.

If an ordinary person were struck by Shinsō, they'd either die or be seriously injured. But for gods, beings at the pinnacle of all lifeforms, even if their entire body were destroyed, they might still revive on the spot—or abandon their shell and let the soul escape.

That strike from Kaiser might have been just a superficial wound to Melqart. If not for the damage inflicted by the Golden Sword, Melqart might have already burst out from the underground and continued the battle with Kaiser.

"He already escaped?" Erica asked urgently. "Then let's hurry and pursue him!"

"Forget it," Kaiser cast her a glance and said blandly, "Even if we could catch up, so what?"

Melqart, as he was now, wasn't the opponent Kaiser wanted to fight.

What he wanted was to battle a god at full strength. A weakened god, even if slain, wouldn't be acknowledged by the Circle of Usurpation.

So from the start, Kaiser hadn't intended to eliminate Melqart here.

"I came here just to confirm his current state, to see how long it'll take for him to return to full strength," Kaiser said directly to Erica without hiding his thoughts. "When he and Verethragna recover completely, that's when our battle will begin."

"But..."

Erica's brows furrowed tightly.

She was worried that if Verethragna and Melqart both returned to full power and clashed with Kaiser, it would bring catastrophic trouble to Sardinia.

Any one of those three could destroy the entire island. If it turned into a three-way battle, Sardinia, as the battlefield, might not just sink into the Mediterranean—it might shatter into pieces.

When that happened, what would become of the people?

Even if she came to Sardinia for the title of "Diavolo Rosso," as a knight, she couldn't simply watch the people suffer and do nothing.

So...

"My king, I beg you—please show mercy and save this island."

Erica pleaded, hoping Kaiser would consider the people and deal with Verethragna and Melqart before they could cause trouble.

"This is Italy. It's Salvatore Doni's domain. Protecting the people here should be his responsibility."

Kaiser's calm response left Erica speechless.