

## **Multiverse 266**

### Chapter 266: They're All My Prey

"Rumble—"

No one knew when it began, but in the pitch-black sky, lightning and thunder started to erupt.

Lightning flickered within the dark clouds, sometimes flashing, sometimes streaking across, creating a scene akin to doomsday, causing unease throughout all of Sardinia.

Howling storms gradually emerged, growing fiercer and fiercer, and before long evolved into a massive typhoon.

Rain poured down from the sky like sharp arrows, sweeping across the Mediterranean in a deluge, shrouding Sardinia in a grand curtain of rain.

"Crack..."

On the rooftop of a high-class hotel, the door at the entrance suddenly swung open.

Kaiser stepped out, entering the storm, yet his body remained untouched by the rain.

At some unknown moment, his body had become hot, scorching even, like a furnace, with tremendous magical power turning into invisible heat that poured out from him.

The rain and storm surged toward him, but all were blocked by the heat-like torrent of magical power, unable to come anywhere near Kaiser.

Kaiser strolled through the storm and arrived at the edge of the rooftop.

"Is it coming?"

Feeling the change in his body, and sensing the battle spirit and fighting intent welling up uncontrollably from deep within his heart, Kaiser knew—the enemy he had been waiting for had appeared.

"Is it time to depart, my King?"

Erica's figure silently appeared behind Kaiser, kneeling on one knee and offering the salute of a knight.

"Don't follow me this time, young lady." Kaiser spoke without turning his head. "The battlefield ahead is not a place you should follow me to."

"...Indeed. That is a battlefield for gods and kings—a forbidden domain that no mortal must set foot in." Erica spoke with a complicated tone. "Unfortunately, our allied lord has ultimately failed to arrive in time to fight alongside you."

According to the itinerary, Salvatore Doni still needed about one or two more days to reach Sardinia.

And that was based on the previous schedule.

Now, all of Sardinia and its surrounding areas were shrouded in storm, making it impossible for planes to land or ferries to enter Sardinia.

So, even if that Italian king did manage to arrive, he wouldn't be able to come directly—he would have to travel on foot from midway.

This would again delay his arrival.

Therefore, the scenario of two kings battling two gods was no longer possible. Next, Kaiser would have to charge alone into the battlefield between the two gods, very likely facing both alone.

The opponents were Heretic Gods of the highest rank—one was the King of Gods, the other an undefeated War God. Both held divinities highly adept in combat—one could easily imagine how difficult they would be to deal with.

To face two such gods simultaneously...?

There could be no worse scenario.

Verethragna and Melqart—either of them alone had the ability to crush a Campione. No Campione could claim certain victory against either of them, let alone fight both at once.

This was truly a hellish beginning...

Erica's heart was filled with indescribable anguish.

However, what Erica did not know as she thought this was that, if Salvatore Doni had come, the two gods versus two kings situation she envisioned would not happen.

What might appear instead... could be Kaiser versus all three.

After all...

"Since I've come here, I have no intention of letting others take my prey."

Kaiser turned around, glanced at the kneeling Erica, and smiled.

"This is my battle—don't let anyone disturb me, alright?"

With that said, gravity twisted around Kaiser's body, and he slowly began to float.

"My King!"

Erica couldn't help but cry out.

"Wishing you glorious victory!"

Upon hearing this, Kaiser casually waved his hand, and then his entire figure turned into a blur, flying toward the other side of the storm.

Erica kept watching Kaiser, until his figure completely vanished, before she stood up, thoroughly soaked.

Thinking back on the encounters of the past few days, Erica couldn't help but reflect on just how unrealistic her original lofty aspirations had been.

The imagined scene where she could display her full strength and wisdom, contend with the divine beings in Sardinia, ultimately seal them, and win great prestige and honor—that had now completely crumbled.

The only ones who could face gods were always Campiones.

And she, merely a human, had no qualifications to step onto that battlefield.

However...

"I also have things I must do, battles I must fight."

Erica's gaze grew resolute, and she turned to leave the rooftop.

Her battlefield was not the one with one king versus two gods, but here—on Sardinia, which was about to be affected by divine battle.

To evacuate Sardinia and its citizens as far as possible from the battlefield, from the disaster, to avoid casualties—that was what she had to do, and must do.

...

"Boom!"

In the dark sky, a bolt of lightning came crashing down with tremendous force, striking directly at the shadow darting forward.

"Bang!"

Kaiser didn't even look back. With a casual swing of his hand, he scattered the incoming lightning, causing it to break apart into countless streaks of electricity.

"Swish!" "Swish!" "Swish!"...

With successive flashes and bursts of speed, Kaiser finally flew out of Sardinia.

Or rather, he had reached the coast of Sardinia, entering the Mediterranean Sea.

There, he encountered "myth".

"You've come, God-Slayer."

A thunderous voice rang out.

"I've been waiting for you for a long time."

A brawny man exuding wild ferocity grinned and said such words.

His tangled mane fluttered in the storm. He still wore his tattered cape and leather breastplate, his attire crude to the extreme. Compared to their last encounter, he didn't seem much different.

It was clearly Melqart.

But at this moment, compared to the last time they met in the underground temple, two massive changes had occurred to Melqart.

First, the golden sword previously embedded in his chest was gone. His entire body now radiated fearsome majesty and divinity, utterly different from his prior gravely injured state.

Second, his body had become enormous, at least fifteen meters tall. His feet were submerged in the sea, and he stood upright in the ocean like a giant reaching the sky.

"Well? This time, you don't see me in that wretched state again, do you?" Melqart looked at Kaiser, who had flown in front of him, and said with a thunderous voice. "This is my true battle form—the form of a king, the form that the strongest hunter and warrior should possess."

Indeed, seeing Melqart in this state would instinctively fill anyone with a sense of awe and greatness.

If Erica had seen this Melqart, she would surely be forced to realize that the god who had so shaken her confidence was actually at his weakest back then.

Kaiser's eyes gleamed, just as he was about to speak—he stopped.

"That's something I cannot agree with, King Melqart!"

This was the passionate cry of a youth.

A strong gust countering the storm blew from Sardinia behind them, and instantly arrived before man and god.

"Indeed, thou art a powerful hunter, a majestic king, a dragon slayer, a demon god, a ghost god."

"But to call thyself the strongest warrior—that is still premature."

"After all, the one who has never known defeat—stands here still."

The hearty laughter that followed tore through the wind, and the youth appeared from it.

Long purple-black hair reaching his shoulders, a slender face, dressed in traditional garb like a desert wanderer...

"War God, Verethragna."

Melqart spoke deeply.

"So you've recovered as well."

The newcomer was undoubtedly the mysterious youth Kaiser had met in Cagliari when he first arrived in Sardinia.

He was the War God of ancient Persian mythology who governed the concept and law of victory—Verethragna.

"Indeed, I too have recovered," Verethragna said with one hand on his hip, floating mid-air and smiling. "Originally it wouldn't have happened so quickly, but I made a promise with someone to fight a grand battle on this island. Given that, there was no reason to keep lazing around."

Saying so, Verethragna turned to look at Kaiser.

"As I expected, thou art here too. All the better."

At this moment, compared to the time when Kaiser first met him, Verethragna gave off a completely different feeling.

Back then, he had been mysterious, peculiar, with an elusive and fragmented aura, yet exuding peace and tranquility.

Now, the smile on Verethragna's face brimmed with fighting spirit, his eyes were sharp, and his presence overwhelming—making it clear he was a non-human entity beyond comprehension.

This person—no, this god—though appearing as a human youth, was in truth more artificial than a true human.

A Heretic God who rebelled against orthodoxy—at this moment, Verethragna fully radiated that madness peculiar to Heretic Gods, no longer appearing gentle and kind.

"O War God."

Melqart stepped forward, raising huge waves.

"That God-Slayer is my prey. You are not allowed to attack him at will."

Melqart's warning was met with nothing but Verethragna's laughter.

"What? Is the King of Gods also planning a duel with this human?"

Verethragna seemed to be enjoying the situation of being attacked from both sides, his face full of delight.

"No promise was made—but he stabbed me once. That must be repaid."

Melqart glared at Verethragna and said with tremendous authority.

"I stabbed you too," Verethragna countered with a smirk. "King of Gods, if you're going to make a move, shouldn't it be on me first? Why fight over an enemy?"

The two instantly confronted each other, both vying for the opportunity to strike at Kaiser.

To this, Kaiser had only one thing to say.

"You can both come at me together." Kaiser said flatly, "After all, I'm a Campione—the enemy of gods."

You have every reason to join forces against me. Why bother going one by one?

That was what Kaiser implied.

Unfortunately, whether it was Verethragna or Melqart, both fiercely objected.

"The God-Slayer is detestable, but this arrogant War God is equally loathsome. I have no reason to ally with him!"

Melqart declared loudly. His voice blew away the storm, sending the sea surging.

"Thou art a worthy opponent I've set my eyes on. That King of Gods over there is one I summoned myself. As a Heretic God whose essence is battle and victory, when I desire a worthy foe, one appears. So I will not miss such a rare opportunity!"

Verethragna laughed boldly, his fighting spirit entirely different from before.

In such a situation, it was Kaiser who moved first.

A Trident appeared in his hand, and he raised it high.

"I wasn't asking for your permission."

"To me, you're both my enemies—my chosen prey."

"Which one to deal with first—or both at once—it makes no difference."

With those words, immense magical power surged into the Trident, its divine force erupting like a roaring ocean.

"BOOM!!!"

The sea beneath the one man and two gods surged violently, a massive wave rising from nowhere, crashing down toward Verethragna and Melqart.

"A divine artifact that controls the sea?"

Verethragna was surprised, but his reaction was swift—lightning-fast, even—transforming into a golden phoenix and shooting away at incredible speed, like a beam of golden light soaring skyward.

"Ooohhhhhh...!"

Melqart moved much slower. His massive body was imposing, but his agility had plummeted, and he was helplessly struck by the giant wave, swept into the sea, entangled by countless currents, as though dragged to the bottom, slowly vanishing beneath the surface.

"Hmm?"

Kaiser, still holding the Trident aloft, suddenly sensed something and hurled it.

"CLANG!!!"

A sharp metallic sound rang out as the Trident struck a suddenly appearing golden sword, knocking away the youth who held it.

"Oh?" Verethragna said with surprise. "You actually saw through my 'Phoenix' transformation's god-speed?"

"You have keen eyes, young one."

As he praised, Verethragna's expression grew more and more delighted.

A smile also appeared on Kaiser's face.

To stand face-to-face with a god—this reality had already ignited the god-slaying blood within him to a boil.

So, he fully immersed himself in the battle spirit and fighting will surging through his body, letting his instincts guide him.

Thanks to that, even without shutting off his senses, he could now fight by instinct alone and pierce through Verethragna's divine speed.

"Come."

Kaiser pointed the Trident at Verethragna.

"I come!"

Verethragna wholeheartedly accepted Kaiser's provocation, laughing as he charged forth.

A divine battle had officially begun.

The storm... continued to rage.