

## Multiverse 268

### Chapter 268: The Only Pursuit Is Victory

In the Mediterranean Sea, the blizzard still raged, turning the world into a vast expanse of white.

The torrent of icy currents, surging like ocean waves, quickly pounded onto the snowy and icy terrain, shattering much of the frozen surface.

Kaiser, borrowing the power of Gravisheath, manipulated the gravity around him and remained suspended in midair, not falling onto the icy sea below.

Holding Hyōrinmaru, which continuously emitted cold air, Kaiser looked down from above at the shattered ice, his eyes as sharp as torches.

He did not believe that kick just now could defeat Verethragna.

Although, in that kick, Kaiser had not only applied explosive gravity to massively increase its force upon impact, but also activated the boosting power of the Boosted Gear to double its strength—this blow, powerful enough to blast apart a mountain, whether it could take down a god was still questionable.

"The Circle of Usurpation didn't react either, so you're still alive, right?"

Kaiser muttered to himself in a low voice.

"In that case, why don't you come up and continue the battle?"

This sentence was extremely light, completely unable to penetrate the howling blizzard to reach the seabed below.

But he still heard it.

There was no helping it—he was a God of War. It was impossible for him not to hear a challenge.

"Boom!"

The shattered ice surface exploded again as a violent wind rushed out from the turbulent seabed, accompanied by towering waves, appearing before Kaiser.

"...To think, I would actually be struck first by you."

Verethragna's voice, unable to hide his delight, came forth, and his battered appearance entered Kaiser's view.

At this moment, Verethragna was not only bleeding all over, but his chest was also heavily caved in.

"I am the strongest, the one who holds all victories, who eliminates all enemies that dare stand before me, who crushes all obstacles..."

Chanting the sacred words that represented himself, Verethragna's body emitted a thick vitality that continuously healed his injuries.

That was the ability of his eighth incarnation—"Shepherd."

Verethragna's eighth incarnation "Shepherd" was the ultimate manifestation of life force.

In ancient times when pastoral ability was directly equated with wealth, sheep that could grow quickly and had strong reproductive ability symbolized vitality and affluence.

Abundant, fertile, and prosperous... Such a display of life was perfectly suited for the God of War, who had to guard kingship and wage endless battles.

Thus, when using the "Shepherd" incarnation, Verethragna would gain extreme vitality—so much so that even if he died once, his body could be regenerated and revived.

"O God-Slayer, your strength astonishes me!"

While letting the power of "Shepherd" heal him, Verethragna stared at Kaiser with fervent eyes and spoke joyfully.

"Indeed, you are the long-sought formidable foe, the one capable of defeating me and letting me taste the flavor of defeat!"

As a God of War who pursued victory, Verethragna was now completely dominated by the madness of a Heretic God. Even though severely wounded, he was genuinely enjoying the battle and feeling joy at his opponent's strength.

"If you so desire defeat, why not simply surrender?" Kaiser said with a faint smile.

"Of course not!" Verethragna answered without hesitation. "Though I wish to taste defeat, losing to another and losing to oneself are worlds apart!"

"If I casually surrender, then I've only lost to myself—that's not what I desire!"

"Only when I give my all, exhausting every bit of my strength, wisdom, tactics, skill, and even spirit, and still lose to a powerful enemy—that is a true defeat!"

"Such a defeat is meaningful!"

Upon hearing this, Kaiser chuckled mockingly.

"From what I see, you never even considered the possibility of losing, did you?" Kaiser said indifferently. "As the always-victorious God of War, all you've ever pursued is victory."

"What you crave is not an opponent who can defeat you, but an enemy capable of defeating you, yet still overcome by your all-out effort."

"Even defeat must be conquered—only then is it the ultimate enjoyment, the greatest victory to you."

"At least, that's how it is for you now, isn't it?"

As the protector god of the people and the guardian of kingship, Verethragna was undoubtedly a benevolent deity.

He was a member of the faction of light, a retainer of the light-representing Mithra, and himself a symbol of justice, an existence that stood against demons.

"Against all enemies, whether human or demon, crush their hostility"—this sacred hymn already expressed Verethragna's stance.

Therefore, if he were his original self, upon realizing that his identity as a Heretic God would bring calamity to the world, he would certainly hope someone could stop him, defeat him.

But as a Heretic God ruled by madness, Verethragna had long since forgotten all that.

Now, he was merely a God of War who pursued powerful opponents by any means, eager to defeat them and transcend defeat.

"Hahahaha!"

Exposed by Kaiser, Verethragna could not help but laugh maniacally.

The laughter was not unpleasant, but it was filled with the madness of battle.

"That's right! I am now a deviant!"

"I was once the guardian of light and justice, but now I am merely a deviant God of War!"

"To seek strong enemies! To transcend defeat! To shine the brilliance of victory! This is all that I am now!"

Verethragna's wounds were fully healed, and his divine power burst forth like a storm, shaking the icy world.

"The stronger you are, the more joy I'll gain from defeating you!"

"All formidable enemies capable of defeating me shall ultimately be overcome by me!"

"Victory is my essence, my pursuit!"

As the words fell, Verethragna instantly transformed into a fierce gale and charged toward Kaiser.

Verethragna's first incarnation "Gale" had a very pure ability—it allowed him to become the wind and possess the power of tornadoes.

If someone called Verethragna's name, he could also use "Wind" to instantly teleport to that person's location, no matter how far.

Knowing that divine speed was useless against Kaiser, Verethragna no longer used the "Phoenix" incarnation to charge but instead turned directly into a raging wind and swept toward Kaiser.

"Prismatic Ice Array!"

Kaiser immediately raised Hyōrinmaru, and from its blade tip, a massive chill emanated.

The chill froze the air, and a finely structured ice wall composed of intricate ice formations bloomed like a frost flower in front of Kaiser.

"Boom!"

The howling gale crashed into the ice wall, triggering a deafening roar and blasting out countless shards of ice and debris.

"Bang!"

Soon, the wind broke through the ice wall and reformed into the figure of a youth before Kaiser.

"O bull with golden horns shining bright, lend me your aid!"

"O wicked being, fear me! Grant me a strong body with the fierce mark of the camel!"

While loudly chanting Kotodama, Verethragna launched a frenzied assault on Kaiser.

It was a bout of combat to the extreme. Verethragna's legs kicked out like lightning, each blow triggering a burst of sonic booms. The speed was astonishing, and in the blink of an eye, the strikes all landed on Kaiser.

"Bang!"

Struck repeatedly by heavy kicks, Kaiser's whole body shattered like ice.

Frost bloomed in midair, causing Verethragna's eyes to narrow sharply.

"An ice clone?"

Just as Verethragna said that, Kaiser twisted space and used Sonído to appear behind him.

"Ice Dragon Tail Whip!"

Hyōrinmaru was pulled back to the limit, and Kaiser slashed fiercely toward Verethragna's back. The path traced by the blade erupted with a roar and instantly turned into a field of ice.

It was like the tail whip of an ice dragon, resembling the breath of frost.

But—

"Useless!"

Facing a strike like an ice dragon's tail whip, Verethragna casually kicked, and shockingly shattered the entire glacial field of ice.

Verethragna's second incarnation "Bull" was the embodiment of strength.

Its ability was to grant overwhelming brute strength beyond human limits during battle and to enhance the body.

The stronger and larger the enemy, the more terrifying the "Bull's" power became.

Verethragna's fourth incarnation "Camel," on the other hand, allowed the user to attain divine-level kicking techniques. The power of the kicks and the durability of the body would drastically increase, and combat technique and battle awareness would reach the realm of gods. It also numbed pain, dulled the sensation of suffering, and could even stop bleeding.

Now, Verethragna was simultaneously using the powers of "Bull" and "Camel," possessing peerless brute strength and divine-tier kicking skills. His physical toughness and endurance had greatly increased, making his close-combat ability terrifying.

"Flock of Ice Pillars!"

Kaiser did not stop his attack. With a swing of Hyōrinmaru, countless ice projectiles shot out like a swarm of icy birds, striking at Verethragna.

"I told you—it's useless!"

Verethragna grinned wildly and confidently. His legs moved with godlike precision, shattering all the incoming ice birds with successive kicks.

However, the shattered ice birds did not vanish. Instead, they seemed to bloom on Verethragna's body, and ice formed at all the points of contact.

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

At this moment, one giant ice pillar after another rose up from the frozen ground below.

"Thousand-Year Ice Prison!"

Kaiser pointed Hyōrinmaru at Verethragna and, like turning a lock, gave it a sudden spin.

"BOOM!!!"

The massive ice pillars violently crashed inward, smashing into Verethragna amidst a thunderous explosion, trapping him within the ice.

A massive prison of ice appeared on the frozen plain—towering to the heavens and standing immovable.

That scene was like a reenactment of myth—majestic and magnificent...