

Multiverse 288

Chapter 288: [Hime-Miko of the Long Sword]

A day of school life ended before the sun had even set.

With the ringing of the dismissal bell, students began leaving the classrooms one after another, some even leaving Private Jonan Academy and heading home. Only those who still needed to participate in club activities remained at the academy, keeping the campus bustling.

Originally, as a member of the tea ceremony club, Mariya Yuri was also supposed to attend after-school club activities. However, she simply didn't have the leisure or mood today, so she requested leave from the club president early on and, just like the students who went straight home, set out for home as well.

"...I probably won't forget the look the president gave me when I asked for leave."

On the road leading to Shichio Shrine, Mariya Yuri, hugging her school bag, wore a dejected expression, as if she were tired, or perhaps struck by something.

"You still haven't explained things clearly?"

In contrast, Kaiser, who had been wandering around this unrelated school all day, showed no sign of boredom at all. His breezy, carefree demeanor made Mariya Yuri feel an urge to bite someone for the first time in her life.

"I've already explained it, and I've explained it many times." Mariya Yuri said, nearly in tears. "But no one believes that the relationship between you and me is extremely pure."

"...The moment you say something like that, it's already not pure anymore." Kaiser was speechless. "Why don't you just tell them straightforwardly? Just say you already belong to me!"

"H-how could I possibly say that out loud?!" Mariya Yuri shouted with an over-the-top reaction. "Saying something like that would just make people misunderstand even more!"

"But it's the truth." Kaiser said nonchalantly, "Just tell them you've already decided to offer everything to me. Wouldn't that settle it?"

"...My king." Mariya Yuri's eyes suddenly lost their light, and the way she looked at Kaiser seemed unfocused and hollow. "Could it be that you're saying all this and doing all this just for fun?"

The corners of Kaiser's mouth twitched slightly, and his back involuntarily grew a little cold.

Looking at Mariya Yuri's lifeless appearance, Kaiser suddenly became a bit worried—was he about to break this woman?

At that moment, Kaiser coughed and straightened up.

"Didn't I already say it? I didn't do anything!"

All day today, Mariya Yuri had been interrogating him about this matter, as if determined to get to the bottom of it.

As a result, Kaiser had spent the whole day playing hide-and-seek with Mariya Yuri around Private Jonan Academy, and only when school ended did they regroup at the school gate.

Naturally, that scene was witnessed by countless people, shocking countless girls and shattering the dreams of countless boys on the spot.

It was foreseeable that tonight, many people would cry into their pillows and be unable to sleep.

In short, the relationship between Kaiser and Mariya Yuri had been completely misunderstood by everyone at Private Jonan Academy.

From now on, the news that Mariya Yuri's heart was already taken would be the hottest of hot topics throughout the academy.

Mariya Yuri would likely be questioned by her classmates constantly, and Kaiser would probably have to undergo a household investigation.

Unfortunately, this should be both Kaiser's first and last visit to Jonan Academy. From now on, he wouldn't be coming back.

"Really?" Mariya Yuri looked at Kaiser suspiciously. "Please look me in the eyes and tell me—I didn't do anything bad, right?"

Upon hearing that, Kaiser immediately stopped walking, turned around, and stared directly into Mariya Yuri's eyes.

"You sure about that?"

He had no intention of avoiding her gaze. His eyes, fixed on Mariya Yuri, were straightforward and filled with amusement.

Those bright, piercing eyes so close to her made the pure-hearted Mariya Yuri blush without surprise.

"O-on second thought, never mind. Please don't look at me like that." Mariya Yuri instinctively raised her school bag to cover her face and muttered like a mosquito, "I believe you didn't do anything bad."

The corners of Kaiser's mouth lifted slightly. He turned around and continued walking.

Mariya Yuri heard the sound of footsteps and then lowered her school bag, her cheeks glowing as she shyly followed behind Kaiser.

On the road that followed, neither of them spoke.

In this silence, they climbed the stone steps of Shichio Shrine together, entered the shrine grounds, and walked toward the shrine office.

However, as they passed the front hall of the shrine, Kaiser suddenly stopped.

"Yah!"

Not noticing in time, Mariya Yuri bumped straight into Kaiser's back and let out a surprised cry.

"W-what's the matter?"

Holding her aching chest, Mariya Yuri's face turned even redder.

But Kaiser's next words made all the shyness in Mariya Yuri's heart vanish in an instant.

"There's a guest."

Gazing at the front hall, Kaiser smiled meaningfully and spoke.

"And she's brought something interesting with her. Is she someone you know?"

Those words, filled with implication, made Mariya Yuri jump in surprise.

She also turned her eyes toward the front hall of the shrine, and a faint glow emerged in her pupils.

"This divine aura... could it be?"

As if recalling someone, Mariya Yuri quickly ran over and opened the doors to the front hall.

The next moment, Mariya Yuri saw a person.

A person she hadn't seen in a long time.

"You're back, Yuri!"

A clear and cheerful voice echoed into Mariya Yuri's ears.

In the center of the shrine's front hall, a girl sat upright on the floor, like the master of the place, welcoming Mariya Yuri's arrival.

She had sleek, glossy black hair and looked every bit the classic Yamato Nadeshiko beauty. She wore a school uniform from some unknown academy, and next to her rested a long, narrow cloth bag.

"Ena!"

Mariya Yuri called out her name in shock.

"That's me. Long time no see, Yuri."

The girl still looked cheerfully composed, but her sitting posture was exceptionally proper. Despite behaving like a carefree and innocent beauty, her manner and bearing were as refined as that of a noble lady raised in a secluded manor.

Kaiser walked out from behind Mariya Yuri and looked at the girl sitting in the front hall. His eyes glanced at the long, narrow cloth bag beside her.

From that bag, Kaiser not only sensed extraordinary Magical Power, but also a sharp divine aura.

As Kaiser observed the cloth bag, the girl sitting upright had already turned her gaze to him, a faint light in her eyes.

"Nice to meet you. Please forgive Ena's uninvited visit, O great king."

The girl bowed deeply to Kaiser with impeccable formality.

"My name is Seishuin Ena, a companion of Yuri's. Please just call me Ena."

The girl gave a brilliant smile, beautiful as a blossoming flower, filled with natural charm, making it impossible for anyone to dislike her.

"Seishuin..."

Kaiser turned his gaze toward her and narrowed his eyes.

"One of the Four Great Families like Sayanomiya, right?"

As previously mentioned, in this country, there were four ancient family lineages that had served the emperors with their own Magical Power since antiquity.

Seishuuin, Kuhoutsuka, Renjou, Sayanomiya... The Four Great Families held an extremely important position in this country, with considerable influence, and were still active in the world of magic today.

Among them, the Sayanomiya family was the core think tank of the History Compilation Committee, while the Seishuuin family was the noblest of noble families, with ancestors dating back to feudal lords of the Sengoku period. They held political power and were especially skilled in martial prowess.

Seishuin Ena—this name already indicated that she came from this ancient family.

"Yes, Ena is the heir of the Seishuuin family, one of the Four Great Families. Just like Yuri, she's a Hime-Miko who protects Musashino."

Seishuin Ena introduced herself without any reservation, her open and confident manner once again evoking an inexplicable sense of goodwill.

Of course, if that were all, others might just assume that Seishuin Ena was a noble-born Hime-Miko.

In reality, the identity of the girl before them was far more than that.

"Although Ena is also a Hime-Miko like me, among all the Hime-Miko, she can be considered the highest-ranked and strongest."

Mariya Yuri quickly explained to Kaiser.

"Although Ena is the only daughter of the current generation of the Seishuin family, she has long been training in the deep mountains. She is the number one Hime-Miko of this generation—[Hime-Miko of the Long Sword]."

—[Hime-Miko of the Long Sword].

This was both Seishuin Ena's title and her symbol.

Kaiser once again looked toward that long, narrow cloth bag and spoke calmly.

"A Hime-Miko who carries a divine blade? That fits quite well."

At those words, Mariya Yuri's reaction aside, Seishuin Ena was somewhat surprised.

"The king knows Ena's partner?"

Seishuin Ena reached out and touched the long, narrow cloth bag beside her.

"Rather than that, it's more like it's eager for me to notice it, isn't it?" Kaiser said with a half-smile. "Ever since I appeared, the thing inside has been growing more and more restless, releasing divine aura and sharpness stronger and stronger, like it's afraid I'll ignore it."

"Looks like it really wants to challenge me."

Kaiser's words made Seishuin Ena show an expression of admiration and delight.

"That's right! Ever since Ena arrived here, Ame no Murakumo no Tsurugi has been quite unsettled, eager to come out and greet the king."

"The king even knows that?"

"Amazing as expected of the king!"

It seemed that Seishuin Ena misunderstood, thinking that all Campione could perceive the emotions of her partner just like Kaiser.

Of course, that wasn't the case.

The only Campione who could sense the emotions of what lay in that cloth bag was likely Kaiser alone.

Because, aside from being a Campione, he was also the king of all weapons.