

Multiverse 291

Chapter 291: The Hidden Secret

The Netherworld, the Boundary of Life and Immortality...

In a mountainous forest space where a storm was raging, a plain wooden cabin sat here, making one wonder if it would be blown away in the very next second.

Inside the modest wooden cabin, around an old-style hearth, three people were seated.

Among the three, the old man sitting at the head was clearly the owner of this cabin.

The old man sat cross-legged, standing at least one hundred and eighty centimeters tall. He was very tall and wore only a rough kimono, allowing his extraordinarily muscular body—completely unfitting for his age—to be seen clearly. That muscular physique outshone even most burly men, forming a truly robust figure.

However, this strong old man suddenly coughed up blood for no apparent reason, startling the two people sitting beside the hearth.

"Master."

A gentle female voice was the first to speak, expressing concern for the old man.

"Are you alright?"

The one who spoke was a woman dressed in a vibrant twelve-layered kimono only worn by noble princesses during the Heian period, possessing a beauty far beyond mortal standards—so beautiful she didn't seem like something from this world.

Her pupils were a clear glass-blue, her hair was flaxen, and her skin was smooth ivory, exuding an aura of nobility and gentleness—just like a true princess, graceful and beautiful.

In contrast, the other person present displayed an utterly harsh demeanor and actually spoke with sarcasm.

"Is the old man really getting old? Or is he suffering from some incurable illness? How come he suddenly started coughing up blood?"

This was a person dressed in black monk robes, with dry, shriveled skin, completely devoid of real flesh—like his body had been stripped of all its meat, resembling a mummy.

His voice was hoarse, but his aura was not sinister; on the contrary, it carried a sense of enlightenment—like a worldly transcendent, or even a Buddha. However, his way of speaking was far too caustic, giving off a cold and unsympathetic impression.

Facing these two companions—completely opposite in both appearance and personality, one beautiful, one ugly; one gentle, one harsh—the old man seemed used to it, casually wiping the blood from the corner of his mouth.

"I underestimated that guy a bit," the old man said, whether as an explanation or a passing remark. "Even though I'm still in the Netherworld and only cast my Authority toward the mortal world to bring down a storm, part of my Divinity was severed through that Authority. That kid really is something."

Upon hearing this, the glass-blue-eyed princess and the mummy-like mage immediately understood what had happened.

"He was actually able to sever a portion of your Divinity while you're in the Netherworld?" the mage said in shock. "That newly-born young Campione has such power?"

Clearly, the mage was well aware of what the old man had been doing.

"I didn't expect it either," the old man said indifferently. "I was originally just trying to test his aptitude. I didn't expect to be outplayed instead. If he hadn't become a Campione right here in our territory, I'd have thought he was a seasoned warrior."

Before the mage could respond, the princess with the glass-blue eyes spoke up first.

"Testing Lord Rakshasa's aptitude in such a manner was never appropriate to begin with. Acting recklessly and bringing about such a result—are you both satisfied now?"

The glass-blue-eyed princess seemed different from the old man and the mage. While she understood what had happened, she clearly did not approve of their actions.

Therefore, her exquisitely beautiful face bore a trace of displeasure—yet was ignored by the two.

"To be able to sever my Divinity across the boundary of the life domain, even if it was done using that God-Slaying sword, still proves that boy's power is extraordinary,"

The old man now seemed fine. He lifted his sake cup and resumed drinking as he said this.

"What a pity. That kid is too mysterious. I don't know where he got the Circle of Usurpation, and with it, so many powerful divine artifacts. He's just too much of a threat. Otherwise, I really would've liked to meet him and talk face to face."

The old man's words again drew a sarcastic response from the mage.

"From the looks of it, this new Campione has quite the temper. You even deliberately sent your granddaughter to his side to test him. If you meet him in person, he might just stab you to death with that terrifying spear."

Though sarcastic, the mage was also subtly advising caution.

He was a truly enlightened high monk, viewing things from a broad perspective. Thus, he had already foreseen that a meeting between the old man and the new Campione would not be pleasant.

The old man was inherently hot-tempered. Even though he had "aged" and no longer rampaged around like before, he was still not someone who would easily compromise or swallow his pride.

And that new Campione seemed even more hot-tempered than the old man. Just one test had resulted in him injuring the mastermind. If they truly met face to face, it'd be surprising if it didn't lead to a clash.

The glass-blue-eyed princess thought the same, and thus spoke to dissuade them.

"Since we already understand Lord Rakshasa's attitude, we shouldn't provoke him further," said the glass-blue-eyed princess. "Gentlemen, we should not take further action. If conflict arises again, we'll be the ones paying the price."

To this, the old man made no comment, while the mage redirected his fire toward her.

"Doesn't the princess worry?" the mage provoked deliberately. "After all, he became a Campione in this very country—he's far too close to the Heretic Gods."

"Besides, he's a Campione deeply obsessed with seeking out gods and utterly loyal to his fighting spirit—a full-fledged God-Slaying Beast."

"Aren't you afraid he'll discover the secret we've hidden away and awaken that thing?"

"Or... is that the scenario you actually want to see, princess?"

Despite the mage's provocation, the glass-blue-eyed princess remained unfazed.

"Can you stop joking like that?" she stared at the mage, her eyes brimming with displeasure. "None of us want that being to awaken. Isn't that a consensus we've long held?"

"So scary, so scary." The mage, being glared at by the princess, instantly raised both hands in a gesture of surrender and mockingly said, "Don't look at me like that. I was just reasonably speculating."

"Enough." The old man put down his sake cup, speaking with clear displeasure. "I'm the one who got hurt, not you two, so don't spout nonsense in front of me."

"Right now, we still don't know the true attitude of that newly-born boy. Staying vigilant is necessary."

"The mage is right. Judging from his actions so far, if he finds out the secret of this island nation, it might really lead to the awakening of the Heretic God."

"That secret must remain hidden. It must never be exposed."

The mage and the glass-blue-eyed princess immediately fell silent.

This was effectively an acknowledgment of the old man's handling and a sign of their agreement.

"The question is—what should we do?" the mage rasped. "This new Campione is clearly no easy opponent. Unless the old man personally descends to the mortal world, whatever he wishes to do there—who could stop him?"

"I don't think you two need to overreact," the glass-blue-eyed princess said. "I observe that Lord Rakshasa, while somewhat combative, is not an unreasonable person. Perhaps a peaceful dialogue can lead to a shared understanding."

"Spare me, princess," the old man shook his head firmly. "I really don't want to clash with that boy."

"That kid already had one—no, two dangerous spears. Now he's gotten a terrifying sword from a foreign war god. He's practically becoming the nemesis of the divine."

"I'm genuinely worried he'll stab me to death with one of those spears if I say the wrong thing."

"Though I'm old, I'm not ready to return to myth just yet."

There weren't many people who could make this man say such things—at least none of the other Campione could.

But precisely because he had personally witnessed what Kaiser had obtained, the old man admitted defeat.

A Gungnir that guarantees a sure-hit victory was already dangerous enough. Now, add a Golden Sword that can sever Divinity—faced with such a combination of trump cards, what god would rush in just to show off?

Even the most hot-headed wouldn't dare!

Not just the old man—even the ever-sarcastic mage, who seemed to rebel against everything, said:

"If we're really going to negotiate, princess, you're welcome to go yourself. As for us, count us out."

Knowing full well how unlikable the two of them were, the mage decisively shoved all responsibility away.

"Very well," the glass-blue-eyed princess, though a bit helpless, still nodded and said, "If it really comes to that, I will personally invite Lord Rakshasa to the Netherworld and discuss the matter."

The old man and the mage immediately nodded in agreement.

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At the same time, Shichio Shrine.

Night had already fallen, allowing the bright moonlight to descend from the heavens and bathe the grounds of Shichio Shrine—now somewhat messy after the sudden storm.

The grounds of Shichio Shrine were full of pits and scars of destruction. Because it was night, no repairs were being made yet. They'd have to wait until morning to start.

In the office building behind the shrine, light shone from the window, illuminating the path at night.

In the room that had formerly belonged to Mariya Yuri and now belonged to Kaiser, Seishuin Ena was lying in bed, receiving treatment for her injuries under Mariya Yuri's care.

"Honestly, you two were being reckless."

While tending to Seishuin Ena's wounds, Mariya Yuri grumbled non-stop.

"Can't you talk things out properly? Did it really have to come to a fight?"

Her tone was filled with dissatisfaction.