

Multiverse 327

Chapter 327: "The Last King"

Nikkō City, Mount Nantai.

This was the divine body of the Futarasan Shrine, a symbolic mountain of Nikkō with an elevation of 2,484 meters, and a revered object of worship for many people.

Legend has it that Mount Nantai was opened by the monk Shōdō in the year 782. Since then, Nikkō developed around this mountain and became a sacred site for mountain worship, and even now, it continues to be a place of strong faith.

On this mountain, not only can one see the beautiful scenery of Lake Chūzenji and the surrounding mountains, but also enjoy views of Mount Hiuchi in Oze, the Daishakuzan mountain range, and even the majestic Mount Fuji. In summer, the local flora blooms with beautiful flowers, allowing climbers to enjoy the sights as they ascend.

And at the summit of this mountain, there were the inner shrine and the torii gate, enshrining the great deity of Futarasan.

At this moment, a beautiful young girl stood here, right at the edge of the summit.

She was a blonde beauty with the appearance of a classical doll, looking about twelve or thirteen years old.

Though young, the girl possessed an indescribable mature charm and an enchanting beauty. If a Hime-Miko with extremely powerful spiritual inspiration were present, they would surely feel as though they were seeing their ancestor, witnessing the source of an ancient bloodline, sensing the mystery hidden beneath her youthful appearance.

This girl stood proudly against the wind, holding a heavy circular medallion in her hand.

It was a disk forged from gold and iron, about the size of her fist, with inscriptions and reliefs reminiscent of "swords" carved upon it.

Holding this fist-sized disk, the girl felt the power being activated from it and spoke with a voice steeped in disappointment.

"The Great Saint has fallen, and His 'Steel' is about to be absorbed by the Disk of Arrowheads. It seems He is not the King we've been desperately seeking after all."

The disappointment in the girl's voice was so thick it bordered on pitiable.

Clearly, confirming this fact was a severe blow to her.

A voice then rang out in the girl's mind, engaging her in conversation.

"An unsurprising result."

The voice, as if transmitted from water, a mirror, or mist, echoed within the girl's mind without any sense of reality.

"My Lord is the strongest Steel in this world, the Last Steel, the Steel of Steels, the King of Kings. As a God of the Sword, His nature is more prominent than any other deity."

"That Monkey King was indeed a mighty hero of Heaven and Earth, a Steel God of the Chinese land, but his Divinity was too complex."

"That Divinity was fundamentally far removed from My Lord's. An outcome like this is no surprise."

Though the distorted voice rang out like a still well, it still caused the girl's expression to show her unwillingness.

"That may be so, but my uncle and I have searched all over the world, and still have found nothing. This land of the Far East is our last hope."

"Uncle must have seen it too, right?"

"The ancient Ancient Covenant that can defeat the Demon Lord and save the world—that is my Lord's... the greatest privilege of the hero born in accord with fate, the Last King, the Strongest Steel!"

No one knew just how excited the girl had been when she witnessed Sun Wukong using that privilege.

She had searched for the King to whom she would pledge loyalty for a very, very long time—so long that she sometimes could not even remember how many years she had wandered the earth.

When she saw Sun Wukong use the Ancient Covenant, she thought she had finally achieved her wish and found the King she would serve. But to think he was slain so easily by a new King...

That could never be the King she had sought so desperately.

"The Monkey King did his best. It's just that the God-Slayer was far too powerful."

The voice in the girl's mind began to stir with emotion.

"To be able to use that \Ancient Covenant without being a hero born of fate—though incomplete—it still proves that one's strength and valor are extraordinary."

"Any ordinary Campione facing a Sword God of Steel who had invoked the Ancient Covenant would have no choice but to be vanquished."

"But that man was clearly special. To be able to trigger the ancient covenant even in solo combat—that in itself is abnormal."

At these words, the girl sighed faintly.

"But He is not the King we've been desperately seeking. This journey has been in vain."

However, the voice in the girl's mind rebutted.

"Though the Monkey King was not the King we sought, obtaining His 'Steel' here as a reserve is already a worthwhile gain."

"Moreover, just because the Monkey King wasn't our goal doesn't mean we came to the wrong place."

"Led by the hero-god Susanoo, the ability-users who migrated to the Netherworld were the culprits who turned the disobedient Steel into a national guardian sword... Is that not so?"

Hearing this, the girl was first stunned, then her eyes lit up.

"Yes! Those ancient ones used a Chinese spell called Keeper of the Horses to bind the Great Sage Equal to Heaven in the Western Heavenly Palace, using that ape god to slay the dragons and serpents manifesting in this land, thereby solidifying this country."

"Even the Great Sage Equal to Heaven was utilized in the Dragon-Serpent Sealing Grand Curse... Why go to such lengths?"

"Does the appearance of dragons and serpents on this land pose such an unacceptable threat?"

Using the power of gods to deal with gods in order to protect the nation and this land—that's understandable.

But why only target the dragons and serpents?

Wouldn't the manifestation of other gods also bring serious consequences to this land?

Of course it would!

So there must be a deeper meaning behind this grand curse targeting only the dragons and serpents!

"I understand now! Uncle!"

The girl seemed to have figured it out and clapped her hands excitedly, speaking in a tone of delight.

"Those ancient ones feared that the appearance of the Dragon and Serpent would stimulate the Steel Divinity... would awaken the slumbering Strongest Steel!"

"If a Dragon-Serpent Divinity of overwhelming power appeared on this land, then its aura could very well trigger the awakening of the Steel Divinity sleeping here!"

"There must be an extremely powerful Steel God on this land—one far stronger than the Ame no Murakumo no Tsurugi, far stronger than Susanoo, far stronger than the Great Sage Equal to Heaven!"

Only this could explain why those ancient Netherworld dwellers were so wary of the manifestation of dragons and serpents.

"A Sword God of Steel stronger than those—aside from Uncle, that could only be My Lord!"

"So... My Lord must be on this land!"

"Isn't that right, Uncle?"

The girl called out with joy and anticipation, only to be met with a faint chuckle from the voice in her mind.

"I merely had a sudden inspiration and thought it a possibility. As to whether it's true, that's something you'll have to find out yourself."

He was a pure warrior, pure Steel, not one to play with wisdom.

To run wild on the plains, to freely wield his spear, to cherish women and protect them—that was his wish.

Other matters were but trivialities irrelevant to him, things that would only make him sluggish and weak.

Holding to such a thoroughly warrior's creed, living only for the battlefield, it was already remarkable that he could come to such a thought.

"I understand, Uncle. This has always been my mission."

The girl showed no dissatisfaction, instead revealing a bright smile.

"Time is of the essence. I'll begin investigating this country immediately."

However, just as her words fell, the voice in her mind suddenly interrupted.

"No, trouble has come to us. We can't leave."

These words caused the girl's smile to freeze.

In the next moment, she sharply raised her head and looked into the sky.

There, a figure had appeared at some unknown point.

"Whoosh!"

Like teleportation, the person stepped lightly, appearing atop the mountain, landing behind the girl.

"So it was you, sneaking around with petty tricks. I was wondering who it might be."

This voice, the girl had never heard or seen before.

At least, not face-to-face.

But she knew who the voice belonged to.

After all, just moments ago, she had watched as he personally slew a powerful Sword God of Steel.

"...My apologies, King of Sacred Treasures."

The girl's body stiffened momentarily before she turned around, lifted her skirt, and bowed to the one behind her.

"Forgive me for failing to greet you in time."

Her graceful etiquette, elegant voice, and posture all showcased a refinement and maturity far beyond her apparent age.

Kaiser gave her a deep look, then his gaze shifted to the disk in her hand.

"So, you were using that thing to steal my spoils?"

A golden gleam flashed in Kaiser's eyes, piercing through the disk's nature.

"That is the Disk of Arrowheads, also called the King's Arrowhead. A treasured artifact passed down in secret by successive Witch Queens. It stores the Authorities summoned by Sword Gods and serves as a vessel to retain them as combat power after death."

The girl showed no guilt for stealing someone else's spoils. She smiled openly and explained generously.

"Witch Queen?" Kaiser no longer pursued the issue and said blandly, "In other words, you're a witch?"

"Indeed." The girl bowed once more and said, "My name is Guinevere, Witch Queen, the present-day Divine Ancestor."

Divine Ancestor.

This was the final fate of the Earth Mother Goddess slain by the hero who was the Strongest Steel, the Last King, and the Campione Slayer.

The Earth Mother Goddess slain by the sword of that hero would reincarnate as a Divine Ancestor and serve that hero as her Lord and King, offering her devotion.

They were beings surpassing humanity, not as powerful as gods, but possessing exceptional Spirit Vision and the ability to weave magic as naturally as breathing.

They had no memories of their time as goddesses, but as reincarnated snake god descendants and transcendent witches, their power far surpassed ordinary humans—at the level of Divine Beasts, Demigods, or Paladins.

But...

"Guinevere, huh?" Kaiser said with a smirk. "Your background really is obvious."

This was the wife of King Arthur in legend, the one who caused the Round Table Knight Lancelot to fall in love, leading to his fallout with King Arthur, which in turn caused the disintegration of the Round Table and the downfall of Britain.

In this world, Guinevere was the ancient Earth Mother Goddess, the snake goddess slain by the hero born of fate.

Since the Divine Ancestor before him claimed the name Guinevere, she must be the reincarnation of the slain Earth Mother Goddess.

"All Sword Gods of Steel are enemies of the Earth Mother Goddesses, and yet you, a reincarnated Earth Mother Goddess, serve the Strongest God of Steel. I really wonder how you can so brazenly state your name."

Kaiser's words made Guinevere glance at him.

"So you know of My Lord's existence?"

Guinevere seemed slightly surprised.

"Of course," Kaiser replied coolly. "Didn't that monkey say it? Among the ancient deities' covenants, there's a group of special Sword Gods of Steel who can invoke their covenants to draw power from heaven, earth, and the stars to slay Demon Lords and destroy Campiones like us."

"And among those special Sword Gods of Steel, there is one who was born with the destiny to slay Campiones."

"He is the Strongest Steel, the Last King said to appear on Earth in legend."

It's said that when the Last King appears on Earth, the fate of many lives will be triggered.

At that time, fierce winds will rise, oceans and land will boil, volcanoes will erupt, heaven and earth will roar, and many things and beings will face their end.

His power, even if combined with all the Campiones on Earth, would still be greater, because he is a hero born of fate. As long as he is in peak condition, he will naturally invoke the Ancient Covenant, and his strength will grow stronger in proportion to the number of Campiones in the world.

Even if defeated by a Campione, he would turn into a divine sword to slumber. After a few months or a few years, he would revive.

As long as there are Campiones in the world, he will revive infinitely and never fall.

"The War God who annihilates Demon Lords, the Campione Slayer, the last King to appear in the world, the Strongest Steel, the God of Demon Lord Annihilation, the Divine Child of Destiny, the King of Kings, the hero with the noblest fate, the Tiger Among Men, the Supreme Hero..."

"The one who bears all these titles, the Heretic God born solely to slay Campiones..."

"That's your so-called Lord, isn't it?"

Kaiser's indifferent tone and calm narration caused Guinevere's heart to become unsettled.

"To think that, as a newborn Campione Demon Lord, you actually know of My Lord's existence," Guinevere said with a hint of admiration or astonishment. "Even though My Lord has slumbered for many years, very few know of His existence. For you, a newly born King, to know this—Guinevere is truly amazed."

Hearing her words, Kaiser laughed.

A deep, meaningful laugh.

"You're amazed just by that?" Kaiser said. "Then what if I told you... I know even more than you think?"

"Oh?" Guinevere smiled. "Such as?"

At those words, Kaiser's next reply froze the smile on the Divine Ancestor's face.

"For example... I also know where that guy is right now."