

## **Multiverse 331**

### Chapter 331: The Heretic Athena

The platinum radiance only began to dim after Guinevere's figure vanished into thin air.

At the foot of Mount Nantai, having personally disposed of the unexpected enemy assault, Kaiser finally lowered the Divine Blade of Salvation in his hand.

"Not bad, it lived up to my earlier expectations."

Kaiser was quite satisfied with the performance of the Divine Blade of Salvation.

There was no need to mention Guinevere, but even Lancelot—an actual god—was unable to withstand two bolts of salvation lightning. The destructive power was undoubtedly maxed out.

It should be known that the Divine Blade of Salvation housed an inexhaustible number of such salvation lightning bolts. As long as Kaiser could withstand the consumption, he could continue to scour the land with them. At that point, not to mention destroying a city, even annihilating an entire country would be possible in a short amount of time.

And this was not even the true power of the Divine Blade of Salvation.

This divine blade, formed from the weapons of the gods of heaven, had yet to reveal its true form.

If it did, the blade would immediately transform into a square-shaped mandala-style magic cube—becoming the Divine Blade Mandala—unleashing the weapons of the gods and firing them as lightning.

It could also absorb the earth's essence, converting that energy into its own power, turning the land into a barren wasteland.

As the strongest steel, it was furthermore the bane of dragons and serpents, the nemesis of earth goddesses. Even the Ame no Murakumo no Tsurugi, being pure-blooded steel, could not compare to it in restraining dragon-serpent attributes.

In this world, there existed no divine instrument stronger than this, nor a weapon more terrifying.

As long as Kaiser willed it, the weapons of the gods used to forge this divine blade could be freely accessed—testament to its value.

One could only say that its earlier display was merely a minor test of the blade's edge.

If Kaiser were to go all out with it, whether the city of Nikko would still exist would be a matter of uncertainty.

"Too bad Lancelot was merely a divine shadow protecting Guinevere, not a Heretic God who had truly descended upon Earth. Even if defeated, no Authority could be usurped from him."

Though it was a shame, Kaiser felt no regret.

At this point, gaining one more Authority or one less no longer made much of a difference to him.

Moreover, while he hadn't acquired Lancelot's Authority, he had definitely obtained Sun Wukong's.

At this thought, Kaiser put away the Divine Blade of Salvation and summoned another weapon.

Golden bands on either end, black iron in the middle, and inscribed near the golden bands were the engraved words—"Ruyi Jingu Bang, weight: thirteen thousand five hundred jin."

Yes, it was Sun Wukong's signature weapon—the Ruyi Jingu Bang.

"Rise!"

Kaiser hurled the rod into the sky.

Immediately, under his control, the divine staff began to dance in midair.

Its ability could be gleaned from the word "Ruyi" meaning "as desired".

To summarize its power in one phrase: size at will, transformation at will.

It could freely change its size, length, and shape. With the wind it expanded, in water it enlarged. At its smallest, it could become a sewing needle, light and convenient. At its largest, it could reach the Thirty-Three Heavens above and the Eighteen Hells below—transforming into a pillar that pierced the heavens, as heavy as Mount Tai, utterly unmovable.

It could also turn into a rain of thousands of weapons, or morph into various other forms.

In the story of Journey to the West, Sun Wukong once turned the rod into a solid steel file, a three-pronged drill, a barber's razor, even a hooked blade, and once into seventy-one twin-pronged forks to stir silk.

Besides that, the rod itself was a pure yang item, containing intense yang energy, which had a strong restraining effect against sinister forces—including dragons and serpents, which symbolized life and death and were deeply connected to the underworld and the night. The divine staff could suppress them.

Hence, it was also known as the Lingyang Rod, for being a pure yang object.

It's worth noting that many believe the rod was called the Sea-Calming Divine Needle because it had the power to pacify the sea, but that is a misconception.

During flood control, Da Yu did indeed borrow the rod from the Grand Supreme Elder Lord, but it was used to measure the depth of rivers and seas—not to suppress them.

Because the rod was extremely heavy and could change its size at will, it was convenient for measuring depth at the bottom of lakes, seas, and rivers. That was why Da Yu borrowed it and used it extensively across various waters.

As a result, the rod came to be known as the "Celestial River Bottom-Setting Divine Treasure Iron." The term "Divine Needle" was a mistaken transmission; the original text only used "Divine Treasure," meaning a miraculous treasure.

After that, the divine staff was left in the human realm. During the peaceful era that followed flood control and mountain-cutting, it drifted to the depths of the Eastern Seas, ending up in the Dragon Palace.

To the Eastern Sea Dragon King's family, it was nothing more than a measuring staff, and so the sea tribes paid it little heed, making the rod an unregarded object—until Sun Wukong came and it returned to the world.

If it truly had sea-pacifying powers, it never would have been ignored, nor would Sun Wukong have taken it so easily.

Thus, the rod in fact has no such powers related to calming the sea. It has no connection to "sea" or "water" concepts.

Its special abilities are summed up in that one phrase: size at will, transformation at will, pure yang energy, banishing evil.

"Though its powers aren't especially exotic, it's precisely this simple and unadorned nature that highlights its strength."

If nothing else, Kaiser could simply toss the divine staff into the air, enlarge it to mountain size, and slam it down. The destruction caused would definitely rival a falling asteroid.

And if Kaiser were to go all out, disregarding the cost, enlarging it to pierce the sky and tossing it from space—then the mass extinction event of the dinosaurs might very well play out again on Earth.

From this, it was clear the divine staff was also an extremely powerful divine instrument—it all depended on how it was used.

Watching the rod dance freely in the air, growing and shrinking, multiplying and diminishing, shifting into all kinds of forms, Kaiser was quite satisfied as he stowed it away.

With that, the Heretic God descent event in Nikko City came to an end.

However, Kaiser did not leave immediately.

"You've been watching for a while now. Isn't it about time you came out?"

Kaiser suddenly spoke toward a corner.

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The air abruptly fell silent, a hushed atmosphere spreading.

"Do you want me to invite you out?" Kaiser said lazily. "I don't mind doing so. After all, I'm far from unable to fight again."

At these words, a cool, clear voice rang out.

"That's quite unfair."

As the voice echoed, an owl flew in from afar.

The owl landed before Kaiser and gradually transformed into the form of a girl.

It was a silver-haired girl dressed in modern attire, yet the aura around her clashed clearly with modernity—an ancient and dark presence.

"O slayer of gods, do you think I intended to strike you from the shadows while you were exhausted from battle with a foreign 'steel'?"

The girl stared at Kaiser with bright eyes, a clear displeasure in them.

"That is a disrespectful notion—a grave slander upon me."

"Though I govern wisdom, force and victory are likewise my servants."

"Therefore, I would never commit such an act."

The girl spoke as though declaring some heavenly principle, proclaiming her will.

Under her displeased gaze, Kaiser first raised an eyebrow, then smiled.

"You're Athena?"

Kaiser didn't pursue the previous topic, but directly revealed her identity.

"Oh?" Athena narrowed her eyes, as if trying to see through him. "So, you knew I would come."

"Of course," Kaiser said with a smile. "After all, your 'serpent' is in my hands. If you wish to return to your Trinity Queen form, you would definitely come seek me out."

"I just didn't expect you to come so soon."

Kaiser's frank words made Athena's eyes narrow further.

"It's just a matter of crossing the sea. For one such as I who can freely traverse the Underworld, so long as the destination is known, arriving is as easy as spreading my wings."

As she spoke, Athena's voice grew more elevated.

"Well then, slayer of gods, since you admit that my 'serpent' is in your hands, surely you won't refuse to hand it over?"

Athena's pupils became like those of a true owl, growing piercing.

The surrounding light seemed to dim, space itself darkening, and the aura of death and shadow quietly emerged.

Being stared at by those eyes, Kaiser felt as though bound by a serpent—his entire body slightly restrained.

But that sensation quickly vanished, bounced away by his extraordinary Magical Power resistance.

"This is what you want, right?"

Kaiser opened his hand to reveal a stone emblem resting in his palm.

It was the Gorgoneion.

Seeing that ancient stone, a flicker of realization surfaced on Athena's face.

She could feel the call of ancient wisdom.

She could feel her body longing for it.

It was her lost incarnation—one side of herself.

Driven by instinct, Athena almost reflexively reached out, summoning the Gorgoneion into her grasp.

"Heh heh..."

In that moment, a rare smile finally surfaced on the goddess's otherwise expressionless, exquisite face.

"Ancient serpent, lost serpent, my discarded half and wisdom..."

"I have finally found you, returned you to my side."

"With this, I can return to the Athena of old—the Trinity Queen, ruler of death and darkness, of sky and earth alike."

To Athena, being written into Greek mythology as Zeus's daughter was the height of humiliation.

Her Trinity Divinity had been split—one part defiled as Zeus's woman, another degraded into a monster to be slain. It was a past she wished to forget.

What goddess of Greek myth?

What chief Olympian deity?

She was not that.

She was the Holy Mother who once ruled the Mediterranean—the Trinity God-King!

"I chant, I chant the hymn of the Trinity Goddess, linking sky, earth, and darkness—this is the cycle and wisdom."

"I chant, I chant the song of the degraded goddess, the queen regarded as the forbidden serpent—this is the queen's lament."

"I chant, I chant the poetry of the sundered goddess, ravished by the exalted father—this is the compassionate mother's humiliation."

"My name is Athena, daughter of Zeus, guardian of Athens, eternal virgin."

Driven by instinct and fervor, Athena raised the Gorgoneion high, weaving a Kotodama hymn aloud.

"Once, I was the Mother of Earth who birthed all things!"

"Once, I was the Queen of the Underworld who ruled the darkness!"

"Once, I was the Queen of Wisdom who knew the dispersed wisdom of heaven!"

"I vow—Athena shall now return to the original Athena!"

The Gorgoneion raised high in her hand came alive, the eyes of the engraved gorgon shining, its serpent hair writhing.

Darkness coiled around it.

The stench of death spread outward.

The awakened ancient serpent-dragon manifested, and the Gorgoneion merged into Athena's body.

In that instant, Athena's form began to change.

Her figure grew taller, limbs lengthened, and an ancient aura thickened around her. Her clothes changed from modern attire to a white robe with an archaic style.

In the blink of an eye, the pitiful girl vanished—replaced by a stately, graceful queen with no trace of childishness, appearing seventeen or eighteen years old.

"I am the Mistress of the Underworld, the Queen of Darkness, Goddess of Death, descendant of the Earth Mother!"

Her blank expression gone, the returned goddess now wore a radiant smile upon her breathtaking face—vivid and enchanting.

She was now Athena, and also Metis, and even Medusa.

If Earth Mother Goddesses had rankings, then this being before him was undoubtedly the highest-ranked, strongest Earth Mother Goddess.

Having returned to her original, strongest form, Athena smiled as she looked at Kaiser.

"To think you would calmly watch all this happen. Truly beyond my expectations."

Athena had thought Kaiser would at least try to stop her.

She never imagined he would simply stand there quietly and observe from beginning to end.

And not only that—upon seeing her return to her original form, the smile on Kaiser's face was as radiant as hers.

That expression was exactly like a cat who had just stolen a fish.