

Multiverse 57

Chapter 57: Just How Capable Are You?

"Hm?"

As Kaiser led Raynare out of the forest, preparing to step onto the main road, a crimson glow suddenly flickered ahead, causing him to halt.

A teleportation magic circle shimmered in the red light, and several figures materialized from within.

"Devils?"

Raynare, still reeling from her earlier humiliation, found her lingering distress momentarily displaced by the unexpected development.

When she finally saw who had arrived—particularly the person standing at the front—her eyes widened in shock.

"That red hair... Could she be from the Gremory family?"

Indeed, the ones who had appeared were none other than Rias Gremory and her group of peerage members.

"It is him..."

Koneko Toujou and Yuuto Kiba immediately recognized Kaiser, their expressions heavy as if confirming their suspicions.

"Fallen Angel..."

Meanwhile, Akeno Himejima's gaze shifted past Kaiser, locking onto Raynare's dark-feathered wings. A visible look of disgust spread across her face.

As for Rias, though she briefly acknowledged Raynare's presence, her focus quickly returned to Kaiser.

"Good afternoon, Kaiser."

She carried herself with the same elegance and confidence as when they first met. Yet, only those with keen perception could catch the subtle undercurrent of destruction within her gaze—a quiet but palpable threat.

"You again?" Kaiser wasn't the least bit surprised by Rias's arrival. He simply shrugged. "I figured that if I made enough noise, the heir of the Gremory family would have to show up."

Rias's smile remained, but the warmth in her eyes faded, replaced by a hint of irritation.

"I recall telling you—don't cause trouble in this town."

"Did you forget?"

"Or..." She took a step forward, her voice lowering. "Do you simply not care what I, Rias Gremory, have to say?"

Clearly, she was angry. And why wouldn't she be? Once again, Kaiser had caused a massive disturbance in her territory.

Before Kaiser could reply, Raynare unexpectedly spoke up in a mocking tone.

"Rias Gremory... Heir to the Gremory family. Sure, you may be a High-Class Devil, but at the end of the day, you're just a naïve little girl playing leader. You should watch how you speak—unless you want your family to make some dangerous enemies."

The moment those words left her lips, both Kaiser and Rias turned to look at her in mild surprise.

Kaiser, in particular, was taken aback.

She's... defending me?

Raynare should hate him after everything that had just happened. And yet, here she was, throwing verbal jabs at Rias on his behalf.

Then, he saw it.

The hatred in Raynare's eyes.

Not toward him.

But toward Rias.

I see... So it's not that she's siding with me—it's just that she hates Devils more.

Given her attitude toward humans, Kaiser had already assumed Raynare looked down on them.

But compared to humans, it seemed her opinion of Devils was even lower.

And with Rias—a beautiful, graceful, and noble Devil standing before her—perhaps there was even a touch of jealousy at play.

Interesting...

As Kaiser entertained this thought, Rias's group also reacted.

"My, my... I don't recall giving a Fallen Angel permission to speak here."

Akeno's voice was laced with venom, her usual yamato nadeshiko demeanor taking a sharp and unexpected turn.

Those who knew her well found themselves momentarily surprised—this was not the warm, gentle Akeno they were accustomed to.

Of course, Raynare—who didn't know her—was oblivious to the shift.

Instead, she scoffed.

"And you? Just a lowly servant of the Gremory heiress. What gives you the right to speak?"

She made no effort to conceal her disdain for Akeno, causing the latter's expression to darken.

The two women, both mature and alluring in their own ways, locked eyes in a silent battle of wills.

Akeno raised a hand, light crackling in her palm.

Raynare, not backing down, let arcs of lightning dance across her fingertips.

It was clear—they were about to fight.

"Enough, Akeno."

Rias placed a hand on her Queen's shoulder, stopping her before things escalated.

Kaiser, on the other hand, didn't say a word.

He merely glanced at Raynare.

And that was enough.

Like a frightened bird, she immediately shut up, swallowing whatever words she had planned to say.

Only then did Rias speak again.

"Who did you run into this time?"

Her voice was calm, but there was an underlying concern.

From her perspective, it was likely that the same unknown force that had targeted Kaiser before had resurfaced, leading to yet another conflict.

Whoever they were, they had clearly been after him—or rather, after his dangerous Sacred Gear.

The last time she had investigated, she had come up empty-handed.

Despite mobilizing the Gremory family's considerable resources, no solid leads had surfaced.

It didn't make sense.

After a battle as destructive as the one Kaiser had been involved in, something should have been left behind—traces of his opponent's power, residual energy signatures, or at the very least, fragments of their attack remnants.

Yet, nothing had been found.

Almost as if someone had intentionally erased every trace.

Who was behind it?

A faction from one of the Three Great Powers?

Or was this the work of an entirely different mythology?

If they could evade the Gremory family's detection so effortlessly, then they were no mere small-time organization.

For the past few days, this mystery had weighed on Rias's mind.

That was why, the moment another massive disturbance broke out, she had personally come to investigate.

And then there was Kaiser himself.

Until recently, he had never bothered to conceal his whereabouts. Rias had only needed to send out a few familiars to keep tabs on him.

But suddenly, he had disappeared.

Vanished without a trace.

Then, just as suddenly, he had reappeared—out of nowhere—and caused yet another scene.

Her spies hadn't even noticed his return.

Something wasn't right.

And now, standing before her, was not only him—but also a Fallen Angel.

Had this woman been involved?

Just what had Kaiser been up to these past few days?

And more importantly—what exactly had happened here tonight?

Rias questioned him while rapidly contemplating in her mind.

However...

"I didn't encounter anyone. This time, it was something I caused myself."

Kaiser shook his head and said those words.

"You caused it yourself?"

Rias was slightly taken aback.

"Yes." Kaiser admitted frankly and said, "I had some business with the Fallen Angels in this area, but unfortunately, they weren't too welcoming of my visit. The moment I stepped through the church doors, I was attacked by her subordinates."

"She wasn't very cooperative either, so I had to use a bit more force."

"Well? Does this answer satisfy you?"

Kaiser explained to Rias why there was a Fallen Angel following him.

"You..."

Rias wanted to say more but was interrupted by Kaiser.

"Don't tell me that this is your territory, and that by causing such a commotion here, I ignored your previous warning?" Kaiser looked at Rias with a faint smirk and said, "The whole world knows that churches are the domain of the Church and the Angels, not the Devils. Even if that place has been abandoned, it has already been occupied by the Fallen Angels here."

"If I stir up trouble there, the Church has a reason to come after me, and so do the Fallen Angels. But you Devils? You have no reason at all."

"If anything, right now, you Devils are the ones stepping into someone else's territory. Wouldn't that count as provocation?"

With just a few words, Kaiser rendered Rias speechless.

Though she always claimed that Kuoh Town was her domain, in reality, it was merely an area where she, as a Devil, was active. It wasn't truly her personal territory.

Her real domain was Kuoh Academy, a high school that had been an all-girls school before transitioning into a co-ed institution a few years ago, backed by the House of Gremory.

Rias was a third-year student there, and all of her peerage members were also enrolled as students. Besides them, there was another noble pure-blood Devil heiress attending the academy with her own peerage. That was her true domain in the strictest sense.

As for Kuoh Town, it wasn't just a place where Devils operated in the shadows. The Church, Fallen Angels, and other factions also had a presence here.

Given these circumstances, Rias appearing near the church did indeed mean she was stepping into the Church or Fallen Angels' territory.

"Rias Gremory, I've heard a bit about you. I know that among the pure-blooded Devils, you're considered one of the better ones. Or rather, the House of Gremory has a rather good reputation in the Devil community. As long as someone doesn't have a prejudice against Devils and understands your usual conduct, they'd probably think highly of your character, wouldn't they?"

Kaiser smiled at Rias as he spoke.

"That's precisely why I didn't take issue with you too much."

"If not for that, do you really think I would care about your warnings?"

"I'll just give you one piece of advice—don't meddle too much in matters that don't concern you."

With those words, the atmosphere at the scene plummeted to freezing levels.

"...And if I insist on meddling?"

Rias' smile did not fade, but a cold glint surfaced in her eyes.

Crimson energy flared up from her body like flames, making the hem of her dress flutter slightly.

Her long red hair swayed and undulated, painting her figure like a valiant Valkyrie on the battlefield.

But to this, Kaiser had only one response.

"That's fine too." He chuckled, as if his interest had been piqued. "Then let me see how capable the heir of the House of Gremory really is at this stage."

With that, Kaiser did not summon any specialized weapon. Instead, he let his aura surge forth from within.

A brilliant white light engulfed his body, turbulent and overwhelming, causing dust to swirl wildly in the air.