

Multiverse 80

Chapter 80: "Artificial Sacred Gear"

"Boom—!"

In the desolate wilderness, thunderous explosions echoed continuously. Dust storms spiraled up one after another, resembling a natural disaster sweeping through the land—a breathtaking sight.

Far from the battlefield, at a considerable distance, two girls stood watching the combat from afar, each with a different expression.

Kuroka stared intently, her tail swaying back and forth behind her, fully revealing the turmoil in her heart.

In contrast, Asia, after watching for a moment, clasped her hands over her chest and began praying earnestly.

"Do you really think praying here will help?" Kuroka, upon seeing this, spoke with a tone that was either mocking or teasing. "The opponent is a Fallen Angel who has abandoned God, and our boss is wielding a spear capable of piercing God Himself. Even if you, a witch, pray here, do you think God will cast His gaze upon us?"

Asia didn't open her eyes, nor did she stop praying. Instead, she responded in a devout voice.

"I don't know if the Lord will look upon this place, but I will still ask Him to bless His messenger. Even if I, a witch, am unworthy."

As she spoke, her demeanor was wholly sincere. Her praying figure, with eyes closed, was so pure and holy that it gave the title "witch" an ironic twist.

"I've told you so many times already, haven't I? Our boss isn't the messenger or incarnation of the God you believe in."

Kuroka seemed to be deliberately provoking Asia, intentionally saying things to upset her for amusement.

"No, Kaiser-san is definitely the Lord's messenger," Asia said with unwavering conviction. "The Lord's will is with him. The Lord's grace is upon him. The Holy Spear is also a divine relic bestowed by the Lord to humanity. That Kaiser-san has obtained all of this must be due to the Lord's favor."

"Someone like me aside, Kaiser-san is surely someone who can draw the Lord's attention and cause Him to cast His gaze here."

"So, even if the opponent is the Governor of the Fallen Angels, I must pray—for Kaiser-san's victory."

On one side is a man wielding a divine relic, one in whom God's Will resides.

On the other is a Fallen Angel who betrayed God and chose to fall.

There was no doubt in Asia's mind about which side she should support.

To her, this was practically a holy war—a holy war in which Kaiser, blessed by the Will of God, was confronting the highest-ranking Fallen Angel.

She couldn't help Kaiser in battle. All she could do was support him in this way—by praying for him, by offering her devotion.

Seeing Asia's devout and resolute appearance, a trace of pity—subtle and easily overlooked—flashed through Kuroka's eyes.

She suddenly felt inclined to agree with something Azazel had said before.

"Michael really dropped the ball. To think someone like you was in the Church, and yet you still ended up getting hurt."

Wasn't that line perfectly suited for Asia?

This child had such firm faith, such sincerity and purity—she could rightfully be called a natural-born saint. And yet the Church, simply because her Sacred Gear could heal Devils, treated her as a heretic and exiled her?

What a loss—what a grave failure.

Wasn't that Sacred Gear created by God?

Wasn't it a gift from God?

God gave such a gift to His follower, only for them to be rejected, labeled a heretic and a witch?

What kind of twisted logic was that?

"Good thing I'm a Reincarnated Devil, nya~~~"

Kuroka stopped teasing Asia and instead made fun of herself.

Devils were called enemies of God, and their stance had always been irreconcilable with the Church.

Not having to worship such a God, and even opposing Him, was actually a blessing in Kuroka's eyes.

But remembering what Azazel had said earlier, Kuroka couldn't help but grow anxious again.

"The highest-ranking beings of the Devils, Angels, and Fallen Angels have all gathered in Kuoh Town. What's going to happen next?"

In such a situation, what would the future hold for people like them?

Would her dumb little sister... end up getting dragged into something terrible?

"What a hopeless, always-worrying-me idiot of a sister..."

Kuroka's murmurs drifted with the wind, unheard by anyone.

"Boom—!"

On the battlefield ahead, another deafening explosion rang out, shaking the very earth.

...

"Hiss!"

Amid the soft sound of slicing wind, the tip of the Holy Spear—radiant like condensed light—shot through the air like a flash of lightning. Breaking the sound barrier and tearing through the storm of dust, it launched skyward.

Azazel's six black wings beat behind him as his form flickered like a phantom, dodging the incoming Holy Spears while hurling massive light spears down below, each as thick as a pillar. His attacks rained like a storm.

"Boom—Boom—Boom—Boom—!"

Each light spear crashed to the ground like a meteor strike. Upon impact, they destroyed everything within dozens of meters, blasting up clouds of dust.

Kaiser was shrouded in surging white light. Like Azazel, he flickered through the battlefield at high speed—running, leaping, flying, teleporting—nimblely evading every single light spear.

"Incredible. To think you could train in Touki as a Human, without using Senjutsu—you really are worthy of that spear!"

Azazel dodged another thrust from the extended Holy Spear and laughed heartily. Gripping a long halberd formed from condensed Light Power, he suddenly dove down, swinging the weapon at Kaiser, who had leaped onto a boulder.

"Bang!"

The light halberd shattered the boulder, reducing the human-sized rock to a spray of rubble.

Kaiser twisted his body mid-air to dodge the slash, then extended the spear's tip, gathering Holy Power to transform the spearhead into a blade of light—swinging it down at Azazel.

"Clang!"

Azazel raised the shaft of his halberd to block the strike, only for the spearhead of the Holy Spear to slice clean through it.

"Whoa, that was close!"

Azazel barely tilted his head back in time to avoid the next slash of the Holy Spear, but the smile on his face never faded.

"As expected of the Holy Spear—its sharpness far surpasses that of Holy Swords or Demonic Swords. Probably only Emperor-class swords like the Demonic Emperor Sword or the Holy King Sword could go toe-to-toe with it."

"A weapon formed purely from Light Power trying to clash with a legendary spear like that? Totally unrealistic."

"And the spear's extension speed is amazing. Even if it doesn't reach the speed of light, it easily exceeds the speed of sound."

"Of course, the most troublesome part is still that Holy Power. If I weren't a Fallen Angel—if I were a Devil or some other demonic being—just grazing it would cause serious damage."

"Yeah... in all aspects, its capabilities exceed previously recorded data. The True Longinus really has become stronger in your hands."

Azazel spoke like a researcher, listing off observations—not so much conversing with Kaiser as confirming data and solidifying his own thoughts.

Kaiser narrowed his eyes, then, without hesitation, opened the spear's tip and fired a beam of Holy Power at Azazel.

"...!"

Azazel snapped back to reality, his face changing as he shot backward like a bullet.

"BOOM!!!"

The Holy beam exploded across the ground, advancing with thunderous force and obliterating everything in its path. It left behind a trench dozens of meters wide and nearly a kilometer long.

"Whoa, whoa, you're really going all out, huh?"

Azazel rose into the sky, his smile turning wry. One of his wings was smoking—clearly grazed by the beam.

"Weren't you the one who said you wanted an doomsday battle?"

Kaiser spun the Holy Spear once and slung it across his back, looking up at Azazel with a slight smirk.

"Since you're the opponent, there's no need for me to hold back. Didn't you want to study the Holy Spear? Then bring out your full strength!"

Hearing those words, Azazel narrowed his eyes.

"I am going all out, you know?"

At that, Kaiser curled his lip.

"Who are you trying to fool?" he said, resting the Holy Spear on his shoulder as he spoke lazily. "You're still hiding a trump card, aren't you?"

"I've heard about it."

"Artificial Sacred Gear... that's what it's called, right?"

Azazel's narrowed eyes snapped wide open.

"You even know about that?"

He was genuinely shocked, his smile vanishing.

Gazing deeply at Kaiser, Azazel muttered:

"Has the Khaos Brigade's intelligence network infiltrated the Grigori?"

The existence of Artificial Sacred Gears was still classified.

Aside from members of the Grigori, no outsider should know about them.

Azazel, a lover of Sacred Gear research, was the only one who had successfully deployed an Artificial Sacred Gear in actual combat.

He had kept this trump card well hidden—yet Kaiser had just called it out.

Had the Khaos Brigade infiltrated the Grigori?

Or... was there a traitor among them?

As Azazel pondered this, his hands didn't slow.

He pulled out a device from within his robes.

It was shaped like a short staff, topped with a gemstone, and entirely golden—a cylindrical short spear.

"That's the Artificial Sacred Gear?"

Kaiser's gaze was instantly drawn to it.

"That's right." Azazel nodded, introducing it like a proud parent. "This is the Down Fall Dragon Spear. Among all the Artificial Sacred Gears I've made, it's the only one currently combat-ready."

"Its prototype is based on all dragon-type Sacred Gears, including Longinus-class ones. Sealed within is one of the Five Dragon Kings—the Golden Dragon King, Fafnir."

Sealing a dragon's soul within a Sacred Gear to create a weapon imbued with dragon power was not uncommon, but each one was an extremely high-end artifact.

"It passed all field tests without issue. Now, let me try it in real battle."

Azazel raised the short spear in his hand.

"Balance Breaker..."

Light burst forth from the Sacred Gear.