

## Multiverse 216

Chapter 216: The Assailants from That Day

What was happening with Sōsuke Aizen was naturally unknown to Kaiser and the others on his side.

Not only were they unaware, but just after Kotetsu Isane exposed the full truth, Kaiser and his group suddenly encountered a change.

"Bankai..."

Right at the end of Kotetsu Isane's Tenteikūra, such a low voice immediately rang out.

"Suzumushi Tsuishiki: Enma Kōrogi."

As that voice sounded, among the surrounding Shinigami spectators, someone's Zanpakutō released a terrifying Reiatsu.

That Reiatsu instantly turned black and began spreading outward.

And that person—Kaname Tōsen—held his Zanpakutō, Suzumushi, whose ring-shaped ornament detached from the blade, spinning and expanding, splitting into several parts and expanding together with the black Reiatsu. Ultimately, it formed a massive ellipsoid barrier that enveloped everyone present.

"\_\_\_\_\_"

In that moment, everything disappeared from the vision of those inside the barrier.

The view before their eyes vanished.

The sounds in their ears vanished.

Even the faint scents of scorched air and blood in the air disappeared completely, not a trace remained.

"-----!-----!"

The Shinigami within the barrier immediately fell into a state of panic. Some screamed, others ran around blindly, thrown into chaos.

Kaiser, however, stood still in place. But his eyes could no longer see, his ears could no longer hear anything, and even the Reiatsu that had filled the surroundings became completely undetectable. He was now totally blind and deaf, severed from all awareness of the outside world—like falling into an abyss, like sinking into a swamp, as if devoured by boundless darkness.

"Tōsen... has activated Bankai!"

Kaiser didn't lose his composure. He grasped the current situation.

As someone familiar with the original story, he naturally knew—this was Enma Kōrogi, the Bankai of Kaname Tōsen's Suzumushi. Its ability was to eliminate all visual, auditory, olfactory, and spiritual sensory input within the barrier for everyone enveloped by it, leaving only touch so that one might feel pain at the mercy of Tōsen.

Within this barrier, only the person touching the hilt of Suzumushi would be unaffected by Enma Kōrogi's ability.

And Kaiser, of course, was not among them.

Kaiser wasn't the only one who figured this out—those who knew of Tōsen's Bankai, and those who had seen him release it, also understood what was happening now.

"Tōsen! What are you doing...?!"

Sajin Komamura shouted furiously toward the surroundings, but no one could hear him—not even himself.

"Why did Captain Tōsen release Bankai?"

"What is he trying to do?"

"Captain Tōsen!"

Others also began to call out one after another, especially the Lieutenant of Division 9, Shūhei Hisagi. As Tōsen's subordinate, he was desperately calling out to him.

But they didn't know—in Tōsen's eyes, they did not exist.

No, Tōsen couldn't see to begin with. He had no vision, so he couldn't see anyone's panic or questioning.

There was only one person who, at this moment, had their hand on the hilt of Suzumushi and could move freely within Enma Kōrogī's barrier.

"Bankai..."

Gin Ichimaru squinted his eyes in a smile, one hand holding the hilt of Suzumushi in Tōsen's hand, and the other already gripping his own Zanpakutō.

Like Tōsen, he too activated Bankai without hesitation, causing the blade of his Zanpakutō to instantly shrink into a dagger-like form.

But this short dagger possessed a power that even Kaiser had to regard with caution.

Now, Gin Ichimaru aimed that dangerous blade at Kaiser.

"Kamishini no Yari."

The ultimate blade light bloomed from Gin Ichimaru's hand.

"Zing!"

The crisp ring of the sword sang through the air—though none could hear it—as that bright and dazzling blade light instantly pierced space, striking directly at Kaiser with terrifying speed.

"Buzz!"

Kaiser didn't react to this, but the Zanpakutō circling around him suddenly solidified.

"Bang!"

One Zanpakutō was struck by the blade light and instantly shattered.

Yet more Zanpakutō continued to stand in the blade light's path, intercepting Kamishini no Yari.

"Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!" "Bang!"...

The sounds of shattering continued as the Zanpakutō in front of Kamishini no Yari broke one after another.

But in the end, the blade light created by Kamishini no Yari failed to penetrate the protection of the Blade Array Matrix and strike the Kaiser encircled within the sword formation.

"Failed, huh."

Gin Ichimaru didn't show any regret. Still squinting with a smile, he retracted the blade of Kamishini no Yari in less than a thousandth of a second.

"Crown of Heavens... the power of that Zanpakutō is too overwhelming. Even more exaggerated than the Captain Commander's Ryūjin Jakka. We can't do anything to him."

Gin Ichimaru frankly stated this fact.

"Just as Lord Aizen said, Kaiser—this man's threat level may surpass anyone within the Gotei 13."

Tōsen spoke calmly. His usual hatred for evil hadn't changed, and he acted now as if what he was doing was a righteous judgment—which sent chills down the spine.

"No helping it. Captain Kaiser is a genius, even Captain Aizen had to acknowledge his talent. People like us clearly can't handle him." Gin Ichimaru said with a smile, "Only Captain Aizen can deal with him—no one else can."

"Let's go. Captain Aizen should be finished by now."

"It's time for us to leave the Soul Society."

Upon hearing this, Tōsen nodded silently and was about to leave with Gin Ichimaru.

Just then—

"Boom!"

Kaiser, who had been motionless, suddenly erupted with golden Reiatsu and unleashed a massive, overwhelming slash in the direction of the two.

The slash soared toward Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen, its true form a Sword Pressure imbued with the majority of Kaiser's Reitsu.

That Sword Pressure surged forward like a flood, shattering the earth and burning the atmosphere. Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen's expressions changed drastically.

"Shup!"

"Shup!"

With no time to exchange words, the two used Shunpo to flee from the spot, narrowly evading the devastating Sword Pressure.

"BOOM!!!"

The slash continued on, colliding with the barrier of Enma Kōrogi, causing the pitch-black ellipsoid barrier to tremble violently before being easily torn apart and destroyed on the spot.

"It's back!"

"Enma Kōrogi was broken!"

"We can see again!"

The Shinigami discovered their sight, hearing, and smell had returned, and they all breathed a sigh of relief.

"Trying to escape?" Kaiser shifted his gaze toward one direction. "You think you can get away?"

With that, Kaiser stepped forward using Shunpo, and with a few flashes, he caught up to Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen.

"Boom!"

The Crown of Heavens, bearing the power of all Zanpakutō in existence, slashed down violently, unleashing a terrifying torrent of power that sent both Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen flying—despite them raising their blades to block. It was like they had been struck by a hurricane, their bodies launched downward, crashing into the ground and kicking up clouds of dust.

"Cough, cough, cough..."

"What terrifying power..."

Gin Ichimaru's body became ragged and torn, while Tōsen coughed blood from the corner of his mouth. They staggered up from the crater in the ground, clearly seriously injured.

"Why... how did you know where we were?"

Tōsen couldn't understand how Kaiser could launch a precise Sword Pressure attack in the midst of Enma Kōrogi's barrier.

To this, Kaiser, descending from midair, offered just one sentence.

"I couldn't see or hear—but the Crown of Heavens told me where my enemies were."

Relying on the instinctive mastery of his weapons granted by his authority, Kaiser had long since learned to fight by shutting down his five senses and letting instinct drive his body.

Tōsen's Enma Kōrogi, which was a serious threat to others, had no effect on him at all.

"Did you forget?" Kaiser narrowed his eyes, smiling slightly. "Back in the Division 5 barracks, even when I couldn't see you, I still responded to your attacks."

At those words, Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen's expressions tightened.

"...So you knew it was us who attacked you back then?"

Gin Ichimaru's smile remained, but his tone was full of deeper meaning.

Previously, in the Division 5 barracks, while Kaiser was confronting Sōsuke Aizen, he was attacked by a mysterious force.

Even though Sōsuke Aizen hadn't lifted a hand, Kaiser was slashed twice.

The first time, he blocked with his Zanpakutō.

The second time, he dodged with Shunpo.

And the ones who had attacked him then—were Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen.

Using the power of Sōsuke Aizen's Zanpakutō, they had concealed themselves, making it appear they weren't present. But in fact, they had been there all along and heard the full conversation between Kaiser and Sōsuke Aizen.

Back then, both Gin and Tōsen had been surprised by Kaiser's ability to handle their attacks.

But due to the circumstances, neither pursued the matter.

Now, once again, their concealment had been inexplicably pierced by Kaiser...

"Well, if even Captain Aizen's Zanpakutō couldn't fully fool you, then of course Captain Tōsen's Enma Kōrogi wouldn't affect you either. We didn't think this through."

Gin Ichimaru admitted his misjudgment—yet no one on-site sympathized with him.

"May I ask what exactly you're doing right now, Captain Ichimaru?"

Tōshirō Hitsugaya coldly questioned him.

"Gin..."

In the distance, Rangiku Matsumoto looked on with trembling eyes.

"Tōsen!" Sajin Komamura shouted at Tōsen, furiously demanding, "Why did you suddenly use Bankai? Were you planning to do something to us?"

All the Captains stared at Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen with stern expressions.

Perhaps they were already faintly aware of something. Only Ichigo Kurosaki stood there like an outsider, completely confused.

The blades of suspicion now turned toward Gin Ichimaru and Tōsen, with some even ready to draw their Zanpakutō.

Until—someone's voice arrived...

"You ask why they did this?"

"The reason is quite simple."

"Because... both of them are mine."

It was a familiar, gentle tone.

The voice of one thought to be dead.

Wearing the Haori of Division 5 and a pair of black-rimmed glasses, that person appeared just as he did when he first intruded upon Sōkyoku Hill—ordinary and calm.

"Aizen!"

"Captain Aizen!"

"Aizen! You...?!"

Seeing Sōsuke Aizen's approaching figure, many people clenched their Zanpakutō.

If some still doubted what Kotetsu Isane had said moments earlier, seeing Sōsuke Aizen reappear unscathed left no more room for doubt.

Sōsuke Aizen—this man was not dead.

He faked his death and slandered Kaiser, causing nearly the entire Gotei 13 to turn against him.

Rukia Kuchiki's execution was orchestrated by him.

The entire event was manipulated behind the scenes—by him.

He even killed all the members of Central 46—committing a heinous, treasonous act.

"AIZEN!"

Having learned the truth from Kaiser, and realizing who had plotted to harm Rukia, Renji Abarai shouted in rage, his face full of fury and hatred.

"So you've finally chosen to appear, Aizen."

Only Kaiser remained calm, watching Sōsuke Aizen approach.

"Did I disappoint you, Captain Kaiser?" Sōsuke Aizen ignored the others' anger and looked only at Kaiser, still smiling gently. "Did you, for a moment, wish I had really died that day?"

"I think I'm not the only one who wanted you dead," Kaiser said calmly. "The one who wants you dead the most is probably in the World of the Living right now."

This statement made Sōsuke Aizen glance to the side.

"Aizen..."

There, Yoruichi Shihōin stood beside Sui-Fēng, her body covered in strange butterfly markings, staring at Sōsuke Aizen with eyes full of killing intent.

If one were to ask who Sōsuke Aizen had persecuted the most—it would undoubtedly be those who, over a century ago, were falsely accused and forced to flee the Soul Society.

Whether it was Kisuke Urahara, or the former Captains and Lieutenants subjected to his Hollowfication experiments—they were all the ones who wanted Sōsuke Aizen dead the most.

Yoruichi Shihōin herself may not have been directly persecuted by Aizen, but in order to save Urahara and the others, she had been forced to defect.

Thus, in terms of grudges, Yoruichi was definitely among those with the deepest vendetta against Sōsuke Aizen.

But unfortunately, in Aizen's eyes, she didn't exist—or rather, he didn't consider her a threat.

"Yoruichi Shihōin... I didn't expect you to be the one to come this time." Sōsuke Aizen smiled. "I thought Kisuke Urahara would be the most anxious to stop me from taking the Hōgyoku."

"And yet, he didn't come?"

"What a pity."

The arrogant words of Sōsuke Aizen filled the entire scene with killing intent.