

## Multiverse 223

### Chapter 223: Urgent Action

Why would Kaiser know so much?

This was the first thought that surfaced in the minds of the Captains.

But the moment they recalled Kaiser's figure surrounded by countless Zanpakutō, the ease with which he suppressed Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto—the strongest Shinigami in a thousand years—and how even Sōsuke Aizen, who had manipulated everyone like pawns, could do nothing against him, failing to even block his retreat using Negación, they all suppressed their doubts.

No matter why Kaiser knew so much, or how he saw through Sōsuke Aizen's schemes, he was currently an ally on the same side.

In that case, there was no need to pursue those matters too deeply. Otherwise, it would only cause division and negatively affect the future confrontation with Sōsuke Aizen.

More importantly, Kaiser was too powerful. Stronger than even Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto, the Captain Commander. None of them wanted to force him into becoming an enemy.

That would be far too terrifying. Completely unnecessary.

"If Aizen's target is the Soul King, then he must be thinking of a way to reach the Soul King Palace, right?"

Shunsui Kyōraku was the first to speak, drawing everyone's attention to this matter.

"Trying to reach the Soul King Palace is no easy task."

Jūshirō Ukitake, seemingly reminded of something, wore a complicated expression in his eyes.

"To reach the Soul King Palace, one must first obtain the Ōken."

Retsu Unohana stated this in a calm tone.

The Ōken refers to the key used to open the Soul King Palace.

There are seventy-two barriers between the Soul King Palace and Seireitei, which almost no one can force their way through.

Only by using the Ōken can one break through the countless barriers and reach the Soul King Palace.

In that case, for Sōsuke Aizen to reach the Soul King Palace, he must first obtain the Ōken.

"Then Aizen's next move should be figuring out how to create the Ōken, right?"

Mayuri Kurotsuchi, seemingly interested in the topic, revealed the side of a mad scientist.

"So, what's needed to create that so-called Ōken?"

Kenpachi Zaraki frowned and asked this question.

The one who answered was Byakuya Kuchiki.

"To create the Ōken, one needs a hundred thousand souls, as well as a Concentrated Spirit Zone with a one-spiritual ri," Byakuya Kuchiki suddenly said. "This is a condition recorded in an ancient text passed down by the Kuchiki Clan."

The Four Great Noble Clans were close retainers of the Soul King and had once assisted him. It's only natural they had records related to the Ōken needed to reach the Soul King Palace.

"It actually requires the use of a Concentrated Spirit Zone?"

Sajin Komamura's face changed on the spot.

Concentrated Spirit Zone zones refer to spiritually significant areas or special locations in the Human World.

These spiritually significant places shift over time and are the most likely places in the Human World to attract spiritual phenomena and possess high levels of Reishi.

To create the Ōken, one must not only use the Concentrated Spirit Zone zone as the ritual site, but also require a full hundred thousand souls.

These hundred thousand souls, naturally, would serve as sacrifices for the ritual and as material for creating the Ōken.

If Sōsuke Aizen wants to create the Ōken, then what he needs to do next is to locate a Concentrated Spirit Zone in the Human World and gather one hundred thousand souls to use as sacrifices.

This is undoubtedly a great atrocity, and one that could very well disrupt the balance of the Three Worlds.

The very existence of a Concentrated Spirit Zone is closely tied to the order of the Human World. If anything goes wrong in such a place, the Human World may undergo upheaval, which would in turn affect the stability of the Soul Society.

And once the Soul Society becomes unstable, if Sōsuke Aizen attacks, it would make things much easier for him.

At that point, even if the Gotei 13 wanted to stop Sōsuke Aizen from heading to the Soul King Palace, it would become much more difficult.

This was a plan that killed two birds with one stone!

"Concentrated Spirit Zone..."

Not knowing what she recalled, Sui-Fēng began muttering to herself.

"What is it, Captain

Shunsui Kyōraku keenly picked up on this and immediately asked.

Sui-Fēng glanced at him, hesitated a moment, then voiced what she had just thought of.

"Those Ryōka all came from a city called Karakura Town, which seems to be the current Concentrated Spirit Zone."

At these words, everyone fell silent.

"Looks like Aizen doesn't even need to gather a hundred thousand souls," Kaiser said indifferently. "The Concentrated Spirit Zone he needs is already a city full of living people."

"One hundred thousand souls—he can just gather them on the spot."

This was simply a natural advantage.

However, for the Gotei 13, this was an enormous piece of bad news.

Moreover, Kaiser knew that Sui-Fēng hadn't told the others one more thing.

That is, besides being the residence of Ichigo Kurosaki and others, Karakura Town was also the long-time base in the Human World for Kisuke Urahara and Yoruichi Shihōin.

Even those Captains and Lieutenants involved in the Hollowfication experiment over a hundred years ago were now hiding in Karakura Town.

Even more, the long-missing Isshin Shiba had also concealed himself there.

Over twenty years ago, Isshin Shiba was ambushed by Sōsuke Aizen in the Human World. By a twist of fate, he was saved, and also lost his Shinigami powers, later changing his name to Isshin Kurosaki and fathering Ichigo Kurosaki—the protagonist of the original story—in Karakura Town.

One could say that Karakura Town had already become a very special place, and it would only become more so from here.

"Bang!"

Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto heavily struck his wooden staff and declared with an unquestionable tone:

"Aizen must not be allowed to succeed!"

This was no longer just about betraying the Gotei 13, scheming against various important individuals, and participating in forbidden experiments. It was now a matter of threatening the balance of the Three Worlds, the Soul Society, and even the Soul King himself in the Soul King Palace.

If Sōsuke Aizen succeeded, it would be a disaster for the Three Worlds.

"The operation to eliminate Sōsuke Aizen must commence immediately!"

Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto listed this as the highest priority.

The problem was...

"How should we eliminate and stop Aizen?" Jūshirō Ukitake said gravely. "He's neither in the Soul Society nor in the Human World right now—he's in Hueco Mundo, right?"

As the name implies, this is the place where Hollows reside.

It lies in the space between the Human World and the Soul Society, the final realm of the Three Worlds beyond the Human World and Soul Society. Its environment differs greatly from the Soul Society, with no streets or buildings like in the Human World—only a barren white desert-like land with quartz-like withered trees scattered about. It is eternally night, and even the moon is in the opposite position from the Human World.

Due to its harsh environment and unique location, the Soul Society cannot monitor activities in Hueco Mundo. If a Shinigami enters, they will most likely lose contact and it will be very difficult for the Soul Society to rescue them.

"That's exactly why Aizen chose to take refuge there, fleeing to Hueco Mundo, right?"

Sajin Komamura said this as he clenched his fists.

"No, I don't think Aizen is using Hueco Mundo just as a retreat." Shunsui Kyōraku recalled what happened that day and shook his head. "He was rescued by Menos Grande using a Negación, which means he has deep ties with the Menos Grande in Hueco Mundo."

"Perhaps Hueco Mundo is Aizen's actual base, and the Soul Society was merely the stage he used to carry out his goals."

Hearing this, the Captains all grew serious.

"No wonder Aizen was able to stay hidden for so many years."

"His Zanpakutō... While Kyōka Suigetsu's ability to manipulate perception allowed him to hide his true face, the fact that he didn't leave any trace or flaws likely owes much to using Hueco Mundo as his base."

"So, most of the shady and risky things he did—were they all carried out in Hueco Mundo?"

"Clearly, that's a logical guess. Otherwise, where else could he get so many Hollows to experiment on?"

"The experiment to Hollowfy Shinigami could be done in the Soul Society, but to Shinigamify Hollows—the reverse—could only be done in Hueco Mundo, right?"

"What a man... Aizen..."

The Captains began discussing heatedly. The more clearly they understood Sōsuke Aizen's true nature, the more fearful and hateful they became of him.

"So, we're going to attack Hueco Mundo next, right?"

Kenpachi Zaraki locked onto the key point, grinned, and revealed his fierce battle intent.

He didn't care about all the subtleties—he just wanted a fight.

An assault on Hueco Mundo was without a doubt something that thrilled Kenpachi Zaraki and made his blood boil.

That place was the habitat of almost all Hollows. Regular Hollows were everywhere, and Menos Grande were abundant.

Gillian were as common as dogs, Adjuchas roamed everywhere, and even the terrifying Vasto Lorde—stronger than Captain-level Shinigami and capable of destroying the entire Soul Society with just ten of them—frequented the area.

Just thinking about this made Kenpachi Zaraki eager to charge into battle.

"Hueco Mundo..."

Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto's aged eyes gleamed as he said solemnly:

"Even if we must march to Hueco Mundo, we cannot deploy en masse."

"The Soul Society and Human World still need to be guarded and protected. We cannot give Aizen any opportunity to exploit."

"We must discuss the specific course of action here and now."

"We must devise a concrete strategy as quickly as possible. Otherwise..."

Otherwise, each day of delay will hand Sōsuke Aizen that much more of an advantage.

Time is not on the side of the Gotei 13. It's on Aizen's.

Once he fuses with the Hōgyoku, ascends to an even higher realm, and fully prepares to create the Ōken, the Soul Society will be put in an extremely passive position.

Even Kaiser didn't want to give Sōsuke Aizen too much preparation time.

There was no choice. That man's intellect and cunning were simply too terrifying. The more time he had, the more terrifying his schemes could become.

At the very least, he would definitely target Kaiser.

If given too much time, Kaiser might very well fall into one of his traps and die.

And so, the Captains began intense discussions, and a course of action gradually began to take shape...