

Multiverse 233

Chapter 233: Immaculate Morning Star

On the desolate white desert, the earth-shaking upheaval gradually subsided, restoring everything to silence once more.

A massive rift, like a bottomless abyss, sat in the middle of the land, splitting the white desert in two, strikingly conspicuous.

"Swish!"

With a flash of Shunpo, Kaiser appeared on the ground as if teleporting, stepping onto the white sand.

Within his perception, the Reiatsu of Grimmjow and Yammy had indeed vanished, and even Ulquiorra's Reiatsu had disappeared without a trace.

"Escaped, huh?"

Sensing that Ulquiorra's Reiatsu was also gone, Kaiser curled his lips slightly.

"Escaped pretty fast. As expected of a Vasto Lorde-class Arrancar."

Sensing the situation was turning dire, decisively abandoning his companions to retreat—this was precisely what one would expect of a Hollow. Truly very much in line with Hollow nature.

"Unfortunately, unless you completely retreat, leave Hueco Mundo, or abandon Sōsuke Aizen, the result won't change."

Kaiser released the Shikai of Crown of Heavens and sheathed it once more.

Then, he surprisingly absorbed Crown of Heavens back into his body instead of keeping it sheathed at his waist.

"Swish!"

As Crown of Heavens was reabsorbed into his body, a pair of transparent blue wings with white skeletal frames burst open from behind Kaiser.

"Boom!"

With a single beat of the wings, a burst of force exploded beneath his feet, blasting away countless grains of sand as his figure shot toward the sky, soaring into midair.

"It's been a long time since I've felt this blood boiling."

Hovering in midair, Kaiser suddenly smiled. Then, the Reiryoku within his body erupted like a tidal wave, transforming into pure white aura that exploded outward from his form.

"Balance Breaker!"

On the wings of Divine Dividing behind him, a hazy light suddenly blossomed.

Within that light, Kaiser's figure was gradually wrapped in the pure white aura, piece by piece being covered in white armor.

Blue jewels were embedded on parts of his body; a metallic dragon tail extended from his back; his outline took on the form of a pure, flawless white dragon; his wings spread wide, flowing with an overwhelming dragonic force.

Balance Breaker of Divine Dividing—[White Dragon Emperor's Armor].

After several decades, Kaiser once again assumed this form.

"Are you ready, Sōsuke Aizen..."

With a distorted smile and feeling the explosive surge of power throughout his body, the immaculate white dragon began to fly.

A long trail of light streaked through the sky of Hueco Mundo, flying at incredible speed in a single direction.

This day, Hueco Mundo was destined to undergo an earth-shaking upheaval.

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Las Noches.

In Hueco Mundo, a barren wasteland, this was perhaps the only existing structure.

Its appearance resembled a celestial pillar, but inside, it was a vast and complex labyrinth-like fortress. It originally belonged to the king who ruled all of Hueco Mundo, but after Sōsuke Aizen arrived and conquered nearly all of the Hollows, it became Aizen's base.

Using his own technology, Sōsuke Aizen created another world within this place, making the interior of Las Noches appear to possess a blue sky and white clouds—something that did not exist in Hueco Mundo. The Espada all had their own palaces here, and even Arrancar who were not Espada had residences assigned according to rank, giving the entire place a sense of order.

Inside and outside Las Noches were numerous detection and defense systems. Once an intruder broke in, their every move would be discovered—making it nearly impossible for any invader to remain unseen.

On this day, atop Las Noches' highest level, Sōsuke Aizen appeared.

He no longer wore his Shihakushō and white Haori but a white longcoat with black trimming and hakama, tied at the waist with a dark red sash. On that sash hung the dreaded Kyōka Suigetsu. Compared to his appearance in Soul Society, he now seemed even more imposing and regal.

Indeed, Hueco Mundo had practically become Sōsuke Aizen's domain. The Shinigami had become ruler over the Hollows and master of Hueco Mundo, leaving many Hollows with complicated feelings.

Even now, many Arrancar harbored rebellious thoughts toward Sōsuke Aizen—but none dared voice them.

Grimmjow, for instance, had always kept his fangs hidden, biding his time, ready to sink his teeth into Aizen's throat and kill the false king who had invaded Hueco Mundo.

Sōsuke Aizen was well aware of this yet paid it no mind.

On the contrary, he considered it a form of entertainment—curious to see when Grimmjow would rebel, and how.

This same amusement was something he also applied to Gin Ichimaru.

"Our dear Captain Kaiser seems to have arrived in Hueco Mundo, Gin."

Seated upon the throne, Sōsuke Aizen looked down at the standing Gin Ichimaru and Kaname Tōsen. After a moment, he smiled and addressed Gin.

"Well? Want to go greet him?"

At this, Gin Ichimaru, as always, wore his smiling expression, impossible to read.

"Please spare me, Captain Aizen." Gin spread his hands with feigned helplessness. "If I showed up in front of Captain Kaiser again, he'd probably cut me down without a word, wouldn't he?"

He had no doubt Kaiser had both the power and the will to do so.

"Seems Grimmjow and Yammy's Reitsu have disappeared," Kaname Tōsen said gravely. "It appears they've already been killed by Kaiser."

"What a pity, Grimmjow and Yammy," Gin said in mock sorrow. "They still didn't know the real reason Captain Aizen sent them to the World of the Living wasn't to scout Karakura Town—but to serve as bait."

The fact that Aizen had sent Arrancar to Karakura Town the day before the Gotei 13 Captains fully recovered clearly showed he had excellent intelligence on Soul Society's current state.

Thus, he also knew that if he dispatched someone to Karakura Town, the one sent to the World of the Living would most likely be Kaiser—strong and uninjured.

"Luring Captain Kaiser into Hueco Mundo by sending out bait—Captain Aizen's plan succeeded beautifully," Gin said with unclear sincerity. "As long as no one opens a Garganta for Kaiser, he won't be able to return to Soul Society or interfere with the World of the Living."

"Without Captain Kaiser, whether it's using Karakura Town as the ritual site to forge the Ōken, or invading Soul Society to open the path to the Royal Palace—everything becomes much easier."

"We've essentially eliminated a powerful enemy—someone even harder to deal with than Captain Commander Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto."

Gin smiled slyly.

"As expected of Captain Aizen—flawless as ever."

These slightly sarcastic remarks made Kaname Tōsen frown.

But Sōsuke Aizen remained completely unfazed.

"The Hōgyoku has already begun its fusion, but Soul Society clearly doesn't intend to wait for it to complete," Aizen said with a smile. "With Kisuke Urahara secretly maneuvering, they surely have a good idea of its fusion progress and timeline."

"To prevent the Hōgyoku's full completion, they'll likely act as soon as they recover their strength."

"In that case, we cannot sit idle—we must first remove the most troublesome enemy."

Sōsuke Aizen never expected to defeat Kaiser here in Hueco Mundo. That was unrealistic.

Even if Hueco Mundo was his domain, even if his Espada army was stronger than the Gotei 13, he didn't believe he could take down Kaiser.

Crown of Heavens—that Zanpakutō was far too powerful. Not only was its power overwhelming, its protective capabilities were exceptional.

So even with Kaiser alone, Sōsuke Aizen didn't believe they could defeat him.

What Aizen wanted was simple: to trap Kaiser.

As long as Kaiser was trapped, aside from Genryūsai Shigekuni Yamamoto, who in the Gotei 13 could threaten him?

Even for Yamamoto, Aizen had already prepared a surprise specifically to deal with him.

"As long as we can keep Captain Kaiser in Hueco Mundo, then the only remaining threats to my plan would be Ichigo Kurosaki and Kisuke Urahara."

Sōsuke Aizen continued.

"But Kurosaki isn't mature yet, and Urahara wouldn't dare act openly, fearing my countermeasures."

"Therefore, now is the best time to move."

"Invade Soul Society or forge the Ōken—let us start with one of these goals."

With that, Aizen stood from his throne and slowly walked down.

"Mm. Let's complete the Ōken first."

"Notify the remaining Espada. Tell them to prepare to head to the World of the Living."

"There's no need to leave anyone in Las Noches. I've already turned this place into a prison. Once he arrives—it will be his place of sealing."

Yet just as flawlessly as Aizen had arranged everything, he suddenly stopped in his tracks.

"Hmm?"

"What is this..."

Gin and Tōsen also seemed to sense something. They suddenly looked up, faces full of doubt.

"What is this?" Aizen murmured with a frown. "It's not Reiatsu, nor does it contain any Reiryoku... yet it's clearly a powerful force rapidly approaching."

"What kind of power is this?"

"Why..."

Do I have such a foreboding feeling?

Aizen couldn't finish his sentence.

Because in that moment, the Immaculate Morning Star descended.

"BOOM!!!"

The ceiling of Las Noches suddenly exploded, scattering into countless fragments.

White light poured down from the sky—illuminating all of Las Noches.