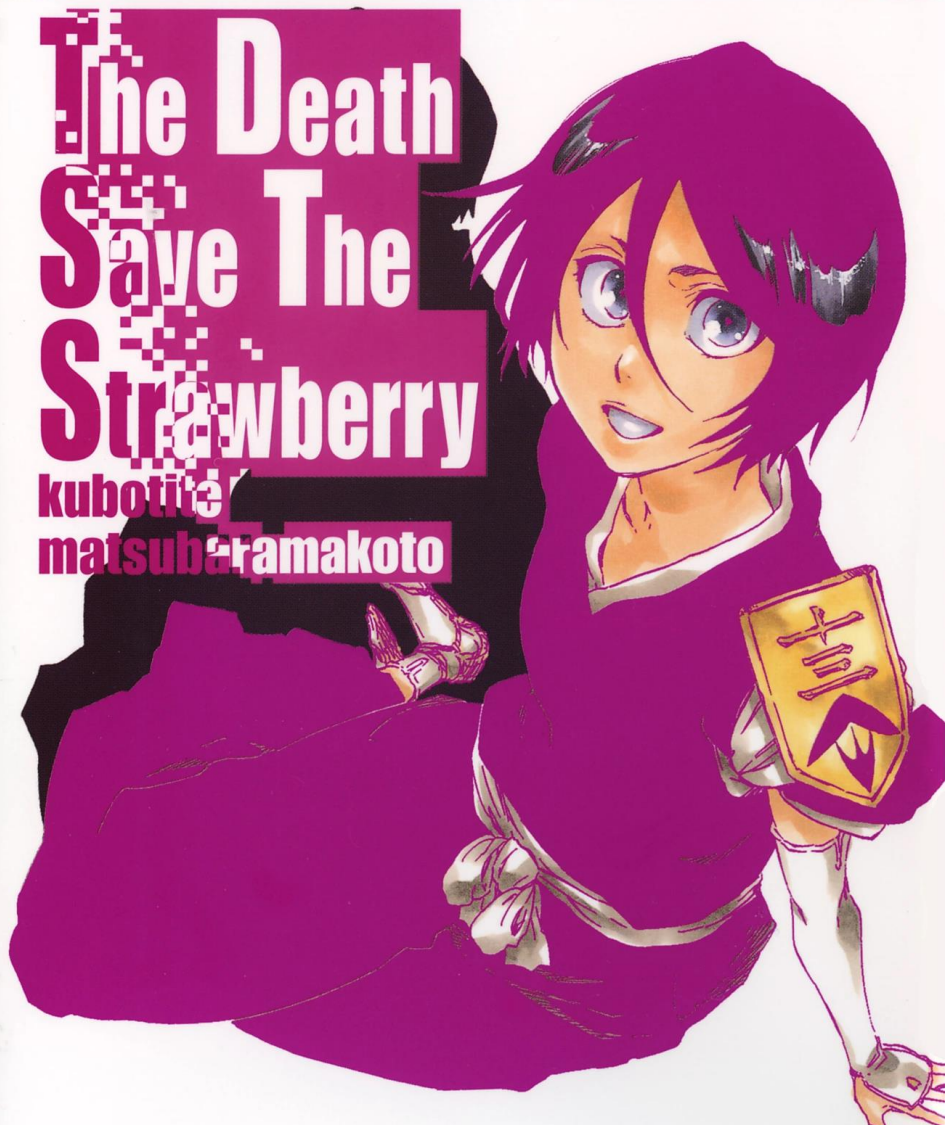


小説... JUMPj BOOKS

# BLEACH

## The Death Save The Strawberry

kubotite  
matsubara tamakoto



## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Five months after the Winter War, everyone in the living world has advanced to the second year. The story starts with INOUE sweeping her brother's grave, and what she tells her brother about how everyone's doing. INOUE herself is working at a sweet shop called ABCookies. The reason for this was because she always looked so happy whenever she frequented this shop, to the point where people on the street started asking her where she bought the stuff. Business got better and the store owner decided to hire her.

Uryû is substituting for Ichigo as agent of the soul reapers. URAHARA originally wanted him to take over the job, but Uryû believes that Ichigo will not be willing to remain powerless and will definitely gain his powers back, so he's only substituting for him for the time being.

Also, Uryû became the student council president during the last semester of his first year. This is because the previous president, Keigo's sister Mizuho thought that he looked like a student council president the first time she saw him, so she came to his apartment and gave the sleeve-thing to him. Although he was unwilling at first, Mizuho was persistent and when she mentioned that the student council president could buy things for half price at the school store, he gave in... This is how he became student council president.

Chad has started to learn boxing. The reason for this is because he critically examined his own abilities after the war and thought that his foundations weren't as strong as those who had trained before like Ichigo, Uryû, and the soul reapers. That was why he wanted to start again from the beginning.

Tatsuki was the same, her experiences made her instantly raise the amount of training she did. She always trained until very late. When it was time for finals, adding studying to it all made her not get enough sleep and end up with dark circles around her eyes. INOUE tells her not to try so hard, since Tatsuki says that she only got second place at last year's competition because her right hand was broken. Otherwise she could've even beaten up the boys. However, now that Tatsuki's seen Ichigo and the others fight, she's discovered that she can't beat anyone, so she wants to get stronger and not have to experience anything like that again. Even if she doesn't become strong enough to protect anyone, she won't be deluded anymore either.

INOUE had been in Soul Society during the one month when Ichigo was in a coma, helping them heal. When she went back to the living world, UNOHANA gave her a spirit phone, so she can talk to everyone in Soul Society. So, from then on she kept in touch with them.

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However, Ichigo's been extremely bored ever since. At school he would always stare at places where spirits used to appear, but he couldn't see anything at all. He's tried to convince himself that this was the life he'd wanted all along, forcing himself to smile. INOUE was at first very relieved that he lost his powers, since he wouldn't get hurt anymore, and because she always felt extremely hurt whenever he got hurt. But now faced with an Ichigo like this, she doesn't know what to do... Currently, Rukia sends a text, and INOUE decides to go ask her for help.

### **CHAPTER TWO**

Rukia currently has been a lieutenant for only a couple of days. She takes INOUE to the Thirteenth Squad's training grounds. The two of them sit beneath the cherry blossoms, eating super-expensive food prepared by the KUCHIKI family. INOUE says Rukia's gloves are very pretty, and Rukia says that they're a gift from Byakuya. He was also the one who recommended that she become a lieutenant. While Rukia's thinking about how to reply to INOUE's question of "has anything changed since you became a lieutenant," HIRAKO shows up.

Next is HIRAKO telling about what happened to each of the Visoreds. First up is HIRAKO and HINAMORI. A month ago, HIRAKO went to the Fourth Squad to see HINAMORI, and they started talking about AIZEN. After they talked for a while, a true Captain-Lieutenant pair was born! After she returned to the squad, HINAMORI worked so hard that HIRAKO told her that she needed to rest. Her way of doing things reminded HIRAKO of AIZEN when he was a lieutenant. AIZEN back then was a reformer and really did make things better for the squad members, so he left behind more than just a blackened name.

Hiyori very much dislikes soul reapers and isn't willing to return to Soul Society. She also believes that HIRAKO is betraying them. Others who stayed with her in the living world are Hachi who still needs to maintain the barrier and Love who wouldn't go to a world where he couldn't read JUMP. Lisa and Mashiro sometimes go to see them.

Kensei became the Ninth Squad Captain. Mashiro wanted to be his lieutenant again, but when she was given another job – ultra radical scoop editor, responsible for reporting on strange occurrences in both worlds, she instantly agreed. The editor of the Seireitei Communications is still HISAGI. It seems like he'll have to continue since Kensei can't be bothered with it.

Lisa's started up a bookstore in Kūkaku's territory selling books from the living world. However, they're mostly porn, and quite popular among the male soul reapers. She's

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saved up enough money to build herself a house in Rukongai called 'The Imperial Palace of Porn.'

Next up is Rose and KIRA. Rose likes to take walks, and KIRA hears his singing about nostalgia and melancholy. KIRA invites him into the guest lounge, and Rose takes out a violin that he had hidden in there. Since the lieutenant back when he was a captain did not allow him to perform, Rose had changes done to the room so he could hide his violin there.

When Gin was captain, he only planted a single persimmon tree. When it was time to make dried persimmons, he would hand over all the squad duties to KIRA, and lecture about his methods to stray soul reapers walking by. Rose says that they should continue to make dried persimmons this year, which makes KIRA feel very moved. The only proof that Gin ever existed was this one persimmon tree. Even if KIRA suffered a lot because of Gin's betrayal, he still didn't want to break off that relationship.

When KIRA arrived back from the storage area with a ladder, he finds Rose surrounded by a ton of people, all of whom are willing to help and are thankful that there's still an opportunity to make dried persimmons. Because they're still able to do things that they're accustomed to, the squad gets livelier every day.

Rose continued to perform on his instrument. Even if it's noisy, it still helps the Third Squad develop again along a better path.

After he relates all this info, HIRAKO has to leave because he's received a text from HINAMORI. Rukia asks INOUE what she wanted to talk about.

"KUROSAKI-kun... has been troubled all this time."

Without his powers, he's been lost and confused.

He says that this is the life that he's always wanted with such a lonely smile.

"I want to do something for KUROSAKI-kun, but there's nothing I can do..."

INOUE's tried to use her powers to bring Ichigo's soul reapers powers back, but she couldn't do it. Thinking back to his lonely smile, INOUE feels so hurt that she starts to cry. Rukia pats her on the back and says:

"...Ichigo has always fought in order to protect something. This is the foundation behind all of his actions. Now faced with the ordinary struggles of people without any power, he shouldn't ever lose. So, he should still be able to protect many people."



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It was true that he was still able to protect a lot of people after he lost his powers. He even received a certificate of thanks from the police.

“However, he already knows. There are still things that he can’t protect with only an ordinary human’s abilities...”

“To Ichigo, whose determination to protect something is so much stronger than other people’s, this must be pain that extremely hard to bear...”

She wanted to do something.

She wanted to do something immediately, no matter what it took.

She made the determination to bring Ichigo’s powers back and told INOUE to just leave it to her.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

After she saw Orihime off, Rukia went back to her barracks to take care of some business. When it was completely dark, she went to go visit Karakura Town. She stood on top of an abandoned building, looking down at the rows of houses.

It felt so nostalgic.

“Even though I’ve only left this place for a few months... this town, contains so many unforgettable memories...”

Perhaps because she had so many memories of this place, it felt like she had lived here for so many years.

Sitting on Ichigo’s back when he became a soul reaper, patrolling the town at night to perform a soul-funeral, when did these things happen...

It felt like it was so long ago.

The teenager, who had received the power to protect after he had met her, did his duty happily yet also grumbling at the same time.

“Wait for me, Ichigo...!”

I will definitely help you regain your powers.

With determination in her heart, Rukia leapt into the pitch-black night sky.

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Flying past one house after another, she finally arrived at URAHARA's shop. When she saw that the outer door was still open, she turned her head sideways.

(Closing time should've been a long time ago...)

As if attracted by the light streaming out of the door, she walked closer and heard a familiar voice shout angrily from within.

She looked through the glass window and saw a familiar figure yelling inside the shop.

A red jumpsuit and two golden pigtails by either ear – it was Hiyori SARUGAKI.

Since the paper door that separated the store with the living quarters was open, she could see the store's owner Kisuke URAHARA sitting on a tatami mat inside the living quarters.

(What are they doing...?)

While silently asking this to herself, Rukia said "Excuse me," and opened the inner door.

At the same time, Hiyori's angry shouts filled the store.

"I said I wouldn't do it! How many times do I have to repeat myself!? Are your ears blocked!!"

"Now~ Now~ Hiyori-san..."

"I'm leaving!"

Hiyori turned around while URAHARA shrugged and saw Rukia still frozen in a state in between opening the door and standing outside. She mumbled "You are..."

Meeting her gaze, Rukia nodded at her. "He- Hello..."

"Kisuke! You have a guest!"

Hiyori turned around and shouted towards the living quarters.

"A guest...?"

URAHARA stood up while mumbling. When he saw Rukia standing behind Hiyori, his eyes turned very round.

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“Isn’t this KUCHIKI-san! It’s been a while!”

He hurriedly put on his clogs and walked into the store.

“I heard from Yoruichi-san! You recently became a lieutenant? Congratulations!”

“Ah, thank... Uhwa!?”

Before she had a chance to finish her sentence, Hiyori grabbed her by the collar and jerked her right under her eye. Their faces were so close that their foreheads were almost touching.

“Hey! Thirteenth Squad! Do you know Shinji HIRAKO?”

“Ah, yes...”

Under this sort of close-up interrogation, Rukia’s eyes were starting to water.

“Listen up, if you see that baldy Shinji, you need to tell him “This is from me!” and then give him a good kick on his bald head!! Understand!?”

“Eh... I, I will help you... relate that as such...”

“I’ll leave it to you!!”

After she said this, Hiyori let Rukia go and pulled down the zipper in front of her jumpsuit. Under both people’s gazes, she grabbed fistfuls of the pastries on the shelf and started stuffing them inside her jumpsuit.

“Ahhh, Hiyori-san! You can’t just take the products like that! ...At least wait until I’m not here to take them!”

Hiyori completely ignored him and continued to stuff pastries inside her clothes. Her slim figure instantly bloated up to one like a snowman’s.

She only stopped when her clothes were completely stuffed full and turned around to stare at URAHARA.

“This is all because I had to come to this store full of annoying baldies to listen to stuff I didn’t want to listen to. It’s completely natural to take some stuff as restitution!!”  
Hiyori wasn’t at all sorry but instead pushed open the glass window and left. Some candy spheres leaked out of her clothes as she left.

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URAHARA grimaced and picked up the candy spheres, before silently closing the window.

“What was wrong with SARUGAKI-dono...? It seems like she was very angry...”

“Eeyaa~ That’s because the store’s become quite busy as of late, so I asked Hiyori-san if she could come work here...”

Looking at the bright red hand mark on URAHARA’s face, she guessed that negotiations fell through.

“You’re so busy that you don’t have enough help?”

That was quite surprising, Rukia thought.

In this store, other than URAHARA, there was also Tessai TSUKABISHI, Jinta HANAKARI, and Ururu TSUMUGIYA who worked as his employees. At a pastry shop in a suburb that didn’t even have many major roads, she didn’t think there would be a need for more workers than the ones he already has. Even if he was selling to soul reapers, he still shouldn’t have all that many customers.

“Aiya~ It’s true that we’re really busy... Before when we were only smuggling some stock and then secretly selling it, I could even do it alone... But after that big battle, it seems like we’ve been officially recognized by Soul Society.”

Because of that incident, Kisuke URAHARA’s name became widely known among the regular soul reaper. The ones who were deployed to the living world all came to shop there.

“So, it’s like that! Then they won’t go after your crimes anymore...”

“That’s right. It seems like the Commander went and talked with the Central 46. All the judgments against Tessai-san, Yoruichi-san, and me from a hundred years ago have been invalidated. Everything was part of AIZEN’s plan, I was blameless... like that.”

The Central 46 was comprised of forty people known for their wisdom and six judges. It was Soul Society’s highest ruling body. If trust in the Central 46 disappeared, then order would very quickly disappear in Soul Society. That was why it was hard to believe that any of their rulings would be invalidated.

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Since all the long-time members had been killed by AIZEN, the Commander of the 13 Court Guard Squads Genryūsai Shigekuni YAMAMOTO had taken on their duties while new members were being chosen. His record during that time had been praised by everyone, and when the new Central 46 had started up, his words still carried with them a certain weight. That was why previous decisions were able to be taken up again.

“It’s been so long...”

URAHARA looked down.

----- One hundred years.

He had continued to single-mindedly pursue his research.

In the end, he still couldn’t undue Shinji and the others’ hollowfication. Just using the tactic of going to one’s inner world and defeating the inner hollow, they had already used all their strength to stop it from progressing.

“HIRAKO-san and the others have gotten their captain positions back... How wonderful.”

He murmured to himself as he opened his eyes again, only to see Rukia staring directly at him.

“What is it?” URAHARA turned his head sideways as he asked.

“...Thank you so much.” Saying so, Rukia lowered her head.

She was thanking him both as the Lieutenant of the Thirteenth Squad, and from the bottom of her heart. If it wasn’t for his help and the advanced technology under his command, it wouldn’t have been possible to capture AIZEN.

URAHARA winced and laughed, “Please stop already!” He seemed very much embarrassed as he scratched his face.

“Even though I didn’t come to the living world willingly... but I’m very much satisfied with my current life.”

Rukia nodded and said, “Is that so,” with a peaceful expression. She then smiled as well.

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translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Well then... did you need something important today? Ah, let’s not stand here talking. Please come in.”

They walked together into the living quarters and sat facing each other across a low table.

“Today, INOUE came to Soul Society...”

Rukia related what Orihime had said about Ichigo to him.

After he had heard everything, URAHARA murmured “So it’s like that...” with a knowing look.

“I want to figure out a way to bring his powers back...! It can’t be that there is no way? If there’s anything that I can do then I will definitely not decline! That’s why...!”

Seeing the pleading look in her gaze, URAHARA sighed and said, “You’re late one step...”

“...What does that mean?”

Rukia looked extremely confused.

“To tell the truth, I’ve already started researching this... From the moment when KUROSAKI-san lost his powers.”

“URAHARA...!” Her eyes were completely round by now.

URAHARA continued. “The root reason why KUROSAKI-san lost his powers is because I made the hōgyoku... From the time when he had no choice but to use “Mugetsu,” I had started to think about a way to bring back his powers.”

He could still remember the look in his eyes the very second when he lost his powers.

It was like that of a lonely child who had lost his support.

“I originally wanted to report when my research had come to fruition, so I could properly scare everyone— Ah, I’ve let it all slip—” URAHARA sighed loudly on purpose.

“Don’t look at me with a grudge,” Rukia laughed.

“...Please give me some more time. I will definitely complete it for you.”

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Faced with his honest words, Rukia nodded forcefully again.

### **CHAPTER FOUR**

A year went by before she was contacted by URAHARA again.

When she received his message, she hurried to his shop. Under Tessai's guidance, they walked through various white structures in a corner of the underground chamber.

Quite a few unidentified machines were placed closely together here, and the floor was covered with innumerable cords and lines. This was URAHARA's research lab.

"Owner! KUCHIKI-dono has arrived!" Tessai called in to the depths of the lab.

"Okay, okay! Please come in!"

URAHARA's voice came from somewhere nearby. But with all the static and noise being emitted by the machines, she couldn't tell exactly where his voice was coming from.

"I'll take you there. This way, please, and watch your step."

"Ah, thank you," Rukia nodded and murmured quietly. She walked carefully behind him.

Even so, she still almost tripped and fell. Luckily Tessai noticed immediately and said, "Danger!"

Since he grabbed her by her uniform collar, she didn't fall, but instead dangled in mid-air.

"Is it okay if we continue on like this?" she was asked.

"No, please let me down as soon as possible!" she protested, blushing, before she was set down again.

After that, she carefully watched where she stepped and managed to find URAHARA without further incident.

"Welcome, KUCHIKI-san! There seemed to be a bit of a disturbance... what was the matter?" asked URAHARA who had been watching a giant monitor.

"What disturbance! There was no disturbance, just these power cords on the floor!"

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translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

"That's not it, it's impossible. Ururu-chan and Jinta manage to trip and fall beautifully each time. Even though I didn't think they would... I put the cords there just so they could arrive without incident. But let's get back to the main topic..."

"Exactly! Let's get back to the main topic!" Rukia felt responsible for allowing their conversation to stray.

URAHARA shrugged slightly and said, "Okay, sorry. Well then Tessai, if you would please."

"I understand!"

After receiving URAHARA's instructions, Tessai pushed a cart in the corner towards Rukia.

On the cart was a transparent cylinder measuring 65 centimetres across, and roughly 120 centimetres in height.

"This is..."

Inside the cylinder was a glowing sword. It swayed slightly and didn't have a distinct shape, giving off a warm yellowish-white light.

"This is the sword that will transfer spiritual power to KUROSAKI-san."

"Transfer spiritual power... you mean the transfer of soul reaper powers... Is that to say that this is a zanpakutô?"

Ordinarily, transferring soul reaper powers required stabbing another with one's own zanpakutô, transferring spiritual power, allowing the other to turn into a soul reaper.

"It's quite similar, but this is not a zanpakutô. However, it follows the same process of power transfer. Thanks to Isshin-san, I was able to use Engetsu as a base to make it."

Ichigo's zanpakutô Zangetsu was very similar in nature to his father Isshin KUROSAKI's zanpakutô Engetsu.

Restoring his soul reaper powers --- along with his bond with his zanpakutô and the transferral of powers, Isshin's help was absolutely necessary.

"I finally completed researching the process to make this sword a week ago. And when I asked Isshin-san for help, he said he wanted to think about it..."



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Restoring his powers meant that Ichigo would return to the battlefield.

As a father, Isshin's concern was completely natural.

"...Yesterday, Ishida-san was attacked by someone."

The sudden news gave Rukia a great fright.

"What...!? Who was it!? How are his injuries!?" she asked, trembling.

"It's not clear who did it. Ishida-san is currently in the hospital, and it seems like his life is not in danger."

Rukia calmed down a little. "So, it's like that..." She let out a deep breath.

"Because Ishida-san was attacked, KUROSAKI-san realized again how powerless he was... Last night Isshin-san came and said that he would help, probably because he didn't want to see KUROSAKI-san like that anymore..."

Isshin was once unable to save his beloved wife KUROSAKI Masaki from a hollow.

He knew better than anyone the pain that results from not being able to protect someone.

"I know that we can use this sword to transfer soul reaper powers... But isn't the strength of the powers after the transfer proportional to the amount of power put in? If Ichigo wants to have the same strength that he had before, then this will require a great deal of spiritual-pressure..."

"That's right, I know. That's why we need everyone to give their spiritual-pressure to this sword."

Hearing this, Rukia's eyes became very round.

"Everyone needs to give their spiritual-pressure..."

"That is correct." URAHARA sat up straight. "This will be a very difficult process..."

One's spiritual-pressure was similar to a fingerprint. No two people have exactly the same spiritual-pressure. In Soul Society, one of the reasons why transferring soul reaper powers was a grave crime was because giving someone else your spiritual-pressure was similar to giving them your own identification.

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Mixing different kinds of spiritual-pressure together was a very difficult matter. The technology that would allow two or more kinds of spiritual-pressure to exist in one object still did not exist in Soul Society.

"Everyone in the living world has already given their spiritual-pressure to this sword. Hiyori-san, AIKAWA-san, Hachi-san... And both Tessai-san and me as well."

"Everyone came to help..."

"Yes. After I contacted them, they came immediately."

Hachi pressed both hands together in front of his chest and said, "I can finally repay KUROSAKI-san's kindness..."

Love smiled and said, "As a man, I have to repay this favour!"

Hiyori bared her fang and mumbled, "Ichigo was the one who defeated AIZEN in the end... This is as thanks."

The three of them gathered and put in their spiritual-pressure in order.

"Are we going to the convenience store."

"It's so annoying how you stand there and read forever!"

"I want to go to the pharmacy on the way," they said as they left.

It seemed like they were all very happy in each other's company.

"Then, I'll do it too..." But as her hand was about to touch the sword, URAHARA stopped her.

"Please wait! I want to let KUCHIKI-san be the last person to add her spiritual-pressure."

"The last...?"

"That's right. The spiritual-pressure added to this sword will not mix together, but rather will layer on top of each other like rings in a tree."

URAHARA closed his fan and used it as an example in his explanation.

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“KUCHIKI-san will be the outermost circle... That is to say, yours will be the very first spiritual-pressure to go into KUROSAKI-san’s body. With KUCHIKI-san’s spiritual-pressure as the sword’s outer covering, everyone else’s spiritual-pressure will mix better... This is because KUROSAKI-san has had KUCHIKI-san’s spiritual-pressure in him before.”

“...So, it’s like that. Then I will be the last person to add it.”

Seeing her nod, URAHARA removed his hat and placed it against his chest.

“I’ll be relying on you,” he said as he bowed slowly.

“I will also be relying on you.” Rukia returned the bow.

“Well then, I will start the preparations to bring this sword to Soul Society. Before tomorrow ends, I will bring it to Kûkaku-san’s place in West Rukongai. Can KUCHIKI-san help me notify everyone?”

“Yes, leave it to me!”

“Sending so many hell butterflies will be too noticeable. When you contact everyone, please do it either in person or through a text. The Technological Development Bureau shouldn’t give you any trouble about the texts. I’ll take care of that.”

The Technological Development Bureau commonly kept a watch on communications in Soul Society. No matter what channel it went through, be it hell butterflies, spirit phones, or even Tenteikura, all illicit communications were reported and investigated. If investigations found that laws were broken, then it would be reported up to the Chief of the Technological Development Bureau – Mayuri KUROSTUCHI. And then according to Mayuri’s judgment, he would send the information to either YAMAMOTO or the Ômitsukido for the individual to receive appropriate punishment.

URAHARA used his own computers to hack into the Technological Development Bureau’s surveillance mechanisms. For all of tomorrow, he made it so that it would not interfere even if it discovered the texts asking about transference of soul reaper powers.

Since he had been the one who invented the mechanism over a hundred years ago, he knew his way around it.

“Your work is progressing so quickly!”

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translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Since Ishida-san has been attacked, this is now a pressing matter.”

“...That’s right. Goodbye then, see you tomorrow.” Rukia looked nervous as she started to leave.

“Ah, see you tomorrow. Also, watch your step...”

Before URAHARA had a chance to finish, Rukia managed to get trapped by a bundle of cords and fell flat on her face.

“...Are you okay?” URAHARA asked.

Tessai walked up to Rukia, who was trembling in pain and embarrassment. “Clearly I need to help you out of here!”

He picked her up by her collar and started to carry her outside.

“Aiya stop it! I can walk by myself! Hey! Can’t you hear me!? I said stop already!? Put me down!! Bastard, why won’t you put me down!? I’m asking you...! I’m asking you to put me down—!!”

Rukia’s cries of despair slowly receded into the distance.

URAHARA watched them leave, while also figuring out how he would handle the communications this time.

### **CHAPTER FIVE**

#### **Thirteenth Squad Barracks**

The next morning, Rukia arrived at her office even earlier than usual. She held her spirit phone with a serious expression and started to think of what to say to those whose help she sought.

Just as she was deep in thought, the time crept closer to the start of the workday. The Third Seat of her squad, Kiyone KÔTETSU called out “Good morning~!” as she entered the office.

“Good morning, KÔTETSU-dono.”

Rukia hurriedly stood up from her seat and bowed.

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written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“You don’t need to stand up. I mean, you’ve already been Lieutenant for a year, and if the Third Seat comes in then all you need to do is reply, okay~! If you understand then don’t stand there anymore, sit down sit down sit down!!”

“Yes, yes! I’m very sorry!”

Kiyone watched as Rukia leaned back against her chair again and laughed. “And still apologizing~” She then sat down as well.

Ordinarily there would only be two desks in this office, for the captain and the lieutenant. However, since Captain UKITAKE was not well and could not come work very often, the Thirteenth Squad had two desks for his support officers.

Ring – ring – ring!

The bell indicating the start of the workday started to ring across Seireitei.

“I’m going to be laaaaaaaate—!!!”

Right when the bell stopped ringing, the other Third Seat Sentarô KOTSUBAKI slid into the office.

“Saaaaaaaate—!!!!”

“I was almost out! Hey, what are you doing Lieutenant? Why are you still standing?”

Rukia had stood up to say “good morning” to Sentarô, but she remembered what Kiyone had said and sat back down, embarrassed.

“Lieutenant, I wasn’t late, was I?!” Sentarô asked, slapping both his hands down on Rukia’s desk.

“Baka! Of course, you were late! Tell him, Lieutenant!!”

Kiyone left her seat and came over. The two of them slapped wildly at each other, while both staring at Rukia.

“First, first let’s all calm down...”

Rukia held out both her hands, trying to calm them down.

However, her right hand was still holding the spirit phone and the two of them were able to vaguely see what she had already written.

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translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“In order to allow Ichigo, who has lost his powers...” “

“Regain his soul reaper powers once again...” Hey, is this real KUCHIKI, err I mean Lieutenant?!!”

“What are you up to?!”

Pressed by their questions, Rukia hesitated for a few seconds before seemingly reaching a determination.

“Kisuke URAHARA has invented a sword that will allow Ichigo to regain his powers. As long as everyone puts their spiritual-pressure into it, then we can give Ichigo back his soul reaper powers. But this is an illegal transfer...”

“Put mine in as well!!”

“Put mine in as well!!”

Both Kiyone and Sentarô spoke up at exactly the same time.

“Why are you copying me, you big beard!!!”

“You’re copying me, you monkey woman!!!”

“What did you say?!!!”

“Want to fight?!”

Watching the two of them pressed against and staring at each other, Rukia bowed deeply.

“Thank you... very much...”

When she raised her head again, she smiled. “But first stop fighting.”

“You don’t need to thank us. Before I always thought that KUCHIKI always followed her heart, and I admired that. That’s why, now that I’ve come across a difficult decision, I’m also going to follow my heart! I’ve decided!” Kiyone laughed, embarrassed.

“Even though I don’t want to agree with this monkey woman, but that’s how I feel too, KUCHIKI! You should allow your senpais to do something admirable now and then!!”

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

Sentarô poked her forehead with his forefinger.

“Aaaaaa this is sexual harassment!! How dare you do that to the lieutenant, you smelly vile bearded short man with bad breath!!!!”

“You said that I smelled twice, you bastard!! What if I really started to smell!!!”

“But you do smell.”

Looking at the two of them arguing, Rukia laughed softly.

Ever since she became a lieutenant one year ago, the two people who never left her side and never stopped supporting her were Kiyone and Sentarô.

Even if some people said that she “only became a lieutenant due to the KUCHIKI family’s influence,” they would immediately get attacked by Kiyone and Sentarô until they took back their words.

The two of them always dragged her out of the office when she shut herself inside. They would then bring along the ordinary squad members on trips to the sweet shop. Sometimes they all went gardening and ended up covered in dirt and mud. Other times they went visiting at other squads.

Afterwards, the squad members who weren’t familiar with Rukia soon started becoming friendly.

“Good morning, Lieutenant!”

“I made a lot more of that chestnut-flavoured red bean sticky soup that Lieutenant had last time!”

“Listen to me, Lieutenant! Third Seat KÔTETSU went too far!”

“Ah, Lieutenant! I picked a lot since there were so many of them, so if you’d like then please put these flowers in the office.”

“Are you leaving? You’ve worked hard Lieutenant~!”

Everyone slowly started talking her now and then.

“Then who are you sending it to?”

Kiyone asked her after she had finished writing the message.

## The Death Save The Strawberry

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Hm... First, I’ll send it to the people whose addresses I know. The Fourth Squad’s Hanatarô YAMADA is with Captain HITSUGAYA’s team...But I think it’s best to send it to people other than Captain HITSUGAYA...”

“Yeah~! Of course, the captains can’t break the laws!” Sentarô yelled.

“OK~! Then we’ll need to keep Captain UKITAKE in the dark~~ I’ll go talk to my sister first.”

Before Rukia even had a chance to say, “I’m relying on you then,” Kiyone picked up her own spirit phone and ran outside.

“Yosh~!! Then we’ll need to take care of today’s business as quickly as possible!!”

Sentarô rolled up his sleeves and started to separate out the day’s important paperwork onto the three desks.

“Umm... KOTSUBAKI-kun... No matter how you look at it, my stack is a bit thin...”

The stack on Rukia’s desk was only half as high as those on the other two.

“You need to arrive at Kûkaku-san’s before the two of us to start a discussion with everyone!! So this much is enough!!” Sentarô sat down, his face a bit red.

“Thank you very much!” Rukia placed both hands on her desk and nodded.

Sentarô grimaced and laughed. “No need to thank me! You need to buck up! You’re our superior officer after all~! Send that message out already~!!”

With his encouragement, Rukia hit the send button with a prayer in her heart.

“Please forgive this sudden disturbance. I am Rukia KUCHIKI of the Thirteenth Squad. I have heard lately that Kisuke URAHARA has completed a method that will allow Soul Reaper Agent Ichigo KUROSAKI to regain his soul reaper powers. It requires many different soul reapers to give their spiritual-pressure to a special sword, which will be transferred to him via stabbing, allowing him to turn into a soul reaper again. This is an illegal transfer of soul reaper powers, against the laws of Soul Society, and will result in severe punishment if discovered. I hope that those who have thought this over yet still wish to help will gather today after the workday is over, at the house of Kûkaku SHIBA in District 1 Junrinan of West Rukongai.”

Fourth Squad · Corridor in front of Admin Barracks



## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“Mmhmm...Right, like that... Hmm... However... Hmm...”

Isane KÔTETSU leaned against the wall as she spoke on the phone. She had a troubled expression on her face as she listened to her sister Kiyone.

After she heard the news about transferring spiritual-pressure, Isane was still a bit confused about how to answer.

She wanted to do everything she could but breaking the law would complicate matters for her revered Captain UNOHANA.

And that was something that she just couldn't ignore.

“Isn't sister really thankful for what Ichigo KUROSAKI did? Isn't that right?”

“If, if you put it that way then yes...”

“Well that's settled then~! Thanks for the help~!”

“Wait, wait a second! Kiyone!”

She pressed the phone close to her hear but didn't hear any reply from Kiyone.

Isane looked at the screen that said the call had ended, and mumbled to herself, “She, she hung up... What am I going to do...”

Just as she clutched her head in frustration, Isane felt a sudden pat.

“What is it? Isane?”

She looked back in tears at the owner of the hand – Retsu UNOHANA, who was questioning her with a kind tone of voice.

After they went back into the admin office and after she had heard the entire story, UNOHANA only said “so it's like that...” before going silent.

“Like I thought... it's not okay...”

Isane looked down at her two hands as they twisted together and said, “No matter what the reason might be, we can't break the laws... just like I thought... I have to go stop Kiyone...”

She waited a while and realized that UNOHANA hadn't replied at all.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Captain?”

She lifted her head, unable to stand this silence, and saw that UNOHANA was looking at some documents as if nothing had happened.

“What is it, Isane?”

“Eh?”

“I didn’t hear anything at all.”

UNOHANA looked outside, truly as if nothing had happened.

“The weather today is so wonderful. It’s quite rare to get weather like this... perhaps everyone should leave early today to enjoy it. What do you say, Isane?”

As she looked back, her smile was warmer even than today’s sky.

“Captain... Thank you so much!!”

Isane bowed deeply and said, “Then, I’ll let each station know~!” She then flew out of the office.

At the same time · General Medical Station · Pharmacy

Hanatarô, who was busy looking for today’s medicines, also received Rukia’s text.

After he read it, he gripped his spirit phone tightly. “I have to try harder to finish all this up earlier~!” he mumbled to himself.

The soul reapers in the Fourth Squad, who specialized in healing and logistics, were weaker in terms of fighting ability than those in the other squads. Because of this, they were looked down upon by the other squads, especially the Eleventh Squad which specialized in fighting. They were often given extra tasks that had nothing to do with their duties, so working overtime was nothing new to them.

“It’d be great if you finished up earlier, Seventh Seat Hanatarô.”

His fellow Fourth Squad member and Eighth Seat Harunobu OGIDÔ had been standing by a nearby shelf and heard him mumbling, so he decided to respond.

“Ah, sorry!! Did I disturb you?”

## The Death Save The Strawberry

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“How could you? Not at all. I just overheard you so don’t let it bother you.”

Seeing him smile, Hanatarô let out a deep breath.

“However... today... you have a date?”

“Noooooooooooo, that’s not it! No, nonononono!!!”

Hanatarô shook his head so hard it seemed like he was concerned it had become a puppet head that couldn’t move.

(It’s so easy to tease Seventh Seat Hanatarô...)

OGIDÔ smiled while secretly thinking up practical jokes. At the same time, the window opened and Third Seat IEMURA poked his head in.

“Hanatarô, so you’re here. I’ve been looking for you all day.”

He didn’t bother to come in and continued speaking through the window.

“Captain UNOHANA says that everyone can leave work today at 5:00 PM. You can let your Team 14 know.”

“Yes! Yes!! I will let them know right away!!”

Hanatarô might be looked down upon by everyone for his yielding personality, but he was the leader of Team 14 due to the strength of his healing abilities.

“Why the hurry? Is today special or something...”

IEMURA held his chin and replied, “No... it’s because ‘the weather is really nice today’ ...”

“Weather eh...”

Their heads might be full of question marks, but Hanatarô knew what was going on.

(Captain UNOHANA... it can’t be because she already knows about that thing with Ichigo-san...)

If that really was the case, then that would explain why they were let out early today.

Even if he had no proof, Hanatarô believed that this was the case.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Then, I’m going back to my team!”

He bowed towards IEMURA and OGIDÔ and started running out of the pharmacy full of enthusiasm and also empty-handed.

“Hanatarô!! You forgot this!!!”

He saw IEMURA running after him with a medicine case labelled ‘Team 14’ and suddenly knelt without thinking, lowering his head. Some female soul reaper saw this and later said:

“Third Seat IEMURA made Seventh Seat Hanatarô kneel for him again.”

“That is so excessive of him.”

“I really hate being on a team with that glasses guy the most.”

In front of the Sixth Squad Barracks

When Renji ABARAI received the text from Rukia, he was in the middle of talking with Rikichi YUKI about his work diary. As he read it, he couldn’t help but start mumbling to himself.

“What is she doing... that Rukia... doing this sort of stuff in secret...”

“What are you mumbling about? Is that some sort of congratulatory text?”

Renji said, “They’ve found a way to give Ichigo KUROSAKI back his powers!” He then handed the phone over with the text still open.

Rikichi at first was laughing as he read it, but his expression gradually became more serious.

“Renji-san, could you forward this text to me?” he asked as he handed the phone back.

“Sure, sure... but... you want to join in too?!”

Rikichi looked away when he was questioned and replied “Yes!”

“Let’s not mention the lieutenants, but ordinary members probably won’t even be given the chance to speak up for themselves before getting their throats cut. Even so, do you still want to join in?”

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“Definitely! I’ve already realized that people like me who didn’t participate in either Hueco Mundo or Karakura have all been protected by Ichigo KUROSAKI-san. As a member of the 13 Court Guard Squads, I have to do my best to repay him even a little bit!!”

Faced with an opponent as strong as AIZEN, there was nothing that he could’ve done.

“I’m sure there are a lot more people like me. If you send the text out to more people, then I’m sure that a lot of them will come! Even if individually we don’t have much spiritual-pressure, but together we should be able to gather a lot... That’s why... please help us!!”

Seeing Rikichi lower his head, Renji punched a few buttons and forwarded the text to him.

“Take it!”

“Thank you so much Renji-san! I’ll go send it out to everyone right away!!”

After he waved at and said “Oh~! See you later” to Rikichi as he ran off, Renji forwarded the text to his classmates from the Spiritual Arts Academy KIRA and HINAMORI.

“It’ll be OK~!” he said, preparing to leave.

However –

“Waaaaaaaaa!!! Captain?!”

Right behind him was Byakuya KUCHIKI.

“What are you yelling about?” asked Byakuya, who frowned at him.

“Eh... about that, it’s better if I just show you this.” Renji handed his spirit phone to him, with the text from Rukia still open.

After he finished reading it, Byakuya immediately realized why Rukia had come home late last night and said “So that was the reason” to himself.

“Captain agrees that I should go, right?”

Faced with this question, Byakuya frowned a little, surprised. Renji stood up straighter, vaguely feeling that Byakuya was about to get angry at him.

## The Death Save The Strawberry

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Renji.”

“Yes, yes!”

“Did you need to ask that question?”

Renji immediately raised his head when he heard this.

There was no anger in his eyes. His expression was as sedate and calm as usual. – It seemed like he had secretly agreed.

(Of course, go.)

“No no no, of course there’s no need! I’m sorry!” Renji recollected himself and bowed deeply.

“Come back to work.”

“Yes! Captain!!”

He walked back into the admin office with Byakuya, patted himself on the face a few times, and dove back into his work.

[I am Renji ABARAI! Forwarding Rukia’s text message to you~! <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

[Message from Rikichi YUKI of the Sixth Squad: Forwarding a message from Lieutenant of the Thirteenth Squad Rukia KUCHIKI. Us ordinary squad members always use the tactic of regrouping immediately after we’re scattered, so please think about this and decide. I believe that there will be no better opportunity to repay Ichigo KUROSAKI-san’s kindness. <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

Tenth Squad Barracks · Admin Office

Tôshirô HITSUGAYA was currently in the middle of review reports from each section on the last few days’ work. Rangiku MATSUMOTO, who had been lazing away and almost fallen asleep, suddenly yelled “Waaa!!” and jumped off her chair.

“What are you doing!” HITSUGAYA looked up, so startled that his shoulders were shaking.

“It scared me since I forgot to turn off the spirit phone’s vibrate function~!” Rangiku laughed while pulling out her spirit phone from her boob crack without any embarrassment at all.

## The Death Save The Strawberry

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“I say why did you have to stick it in there!!!”

“Because then there’s no way that I’ll lose it.”

“Women shouldn’t do that in front of other people -----”

“Ah~! A text from KUCHIKI, how rare~~~~”

Since he was interrupted, HITSUGAYA decided to ignore her. At the same time, Rangiku started reading the text.

HITSUGAYA frowned and turned his attention back to the documents. This sort of thing happened quite often, so he didn’t continue the argument.

(That child... wants to secretly do something like this.)

After she read the text, Rangiku smiled warmly while staring at the screen.

“Captain, want to look?!”

HITSUGAYA looked up from his documents with a surprised expression.

“Why are you showing it to me, wasn’t it sent to you?”

“But the contents are of interest to you. It has to do with Ichigo.”

“KUROSAKI? What’s happening with him?”

“Ma, ma, you’ll know if you read it~!” Saying so, Rangiku forwarded the text to HITSUGAYA. She added, “I’ll send it to Captain KYÔRAKU and Nanao too,” and put their names in as well.

Renji ABARAI, Rangiku MATSUMOTO, Ikkaku MADARAME, Yumichika AYASEGAWA, Hanatarô YAMADA.

Other than Hanatarô, the rest of them were all part of the forward team that were sent with HITSUGAYA to fight the Arrancar. At that time, they had all exchanged contact details to make communicating with each other easier. And they were aware when they received this text that HITSUGAYA had been purposely left out.

After she heard this, Rangiku just said, “Ah, that’s true?” in a very matter-of-fact way.

“What do you mean ‘that’s true?’ Since you know, why did you still...”

## The Death Save The Strawberry

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“So Captain, will you put yours in too? Your spiritual-pressure.”

Faced with this question, HITSUGAYA did not respond.

Rangiku turned her head slightly to the side, silently waiting for his reply.

However, she already knew how her superior would reply, which was why she had forwarded it even though she knew why Rukia had left him out.

HITSUGAYA avoided her gaze, frowned, and let out a deep breath.

“Don’t ask questions that already had answers long ago.” Then he picked up a stack of documents at the corner of his desk. “Finish these up already!”

Rangiku replied “Okay~~”, stretched a little, and then sat up straight. “Okay, I’m going to work really hard today~!”

HITSUGAYA sighed and replied, “Please do, and keep it up.”

[This is from KUCHIKI in the Thirteenth Squad. A very important matter that needs everyone’s help! Please send it on.]

Rangiku MATSUMOTO ❤️ <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>

Eleventh Squad Barracks

Thirty minutes after work started for the day, a person drifted along the corridor outside the captain’s quarters, still only half-awake. Her light pink hair was still sticking up in places and bounced along with her shadow as she walked.

It was the lieutenant of the Eleventh Squad, Yachiru KUSAJISHI.

“Ken-chan... wake up already—” Yachiru yelled, knocking on the door.

“...Stop knocking already.” When Kenpachi came out of the door wearing his captain’s cloak, he saw that Yachiru had fallen asleep on the floor outside.

“Hey, Yachiru, get up.” He picked her up by her belt and noticed that the floor was already covered with her drool. “Che, so dirty...”

“Hmm...? Ah, good morning Ken-chan.” Yachiru scratched her face as if she was a little animal and was finally totally awake.



## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“Captain! —“

From far away, they could see Ikkaku MADARAME running over with his spirit phone.

His shaven head shined under the morning sun’s rays.

“Uhoh!?” Ikkaku stepped on Yachiru’s spit and slipped.

“Uhoouooooooooh.”

He took a nasty fall.

“Aha! The baldy fell so prettily—“

Yachiru started clapping her hands and laughed as she watched.

“I don’t know why, but it’s so wet here!!”

A vein was bulging on Ikkaku’s forehead and he knocked against the floor as he spoke to Kenpachi.

“It’s Yachiru’s spit.”

“Hey, it’s your fault then!”

Just as Ikkaku yelled at Yachiru who was still laughing, Kenpachi muttered, “So damn noisy...” He dug into his ear with his pinky and glanced over at Ikkaku.

“Is there something important?”

“Yes, it’s like this... please look at this. It looks like Ichigo can get his powers back.”

Ikkaku brought up Rukia’s text on his phone and handed it over to Kenpachi.

“I want to see too!”

Yachiru scrambled on to Kenpachi’s back from his arm and peeked over his shoulder at the spirit phone’s screen.

Ikkaku looked annoyed but still said, “This is...” and explained the situation. No matter what, Ikkaku was still very considerate.

At this time, they heard someone running towards them in the corridor.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“Captain, Ichigo KUROSAKI...”

The person who turned a corner and appeared was Yumichika AYASEGAWA.

When he saw the three people standing in front of the captain’s quarters, he instantly understood and shrugged. “...So Ikkaku got here first.”

“Oh! You also got Rukia-chan’s text then!”

“Yes, it looks like she sent it to the forward team led by Captain HITSUGAYA... There’s probably a reason why she left him out... See, if you look here you can see who she sent it to.”

Yumichika held out his spirit phone and brought up the to-do list. Ikkaku looked at it and said, “What, only these people,” and frowned.

“Rukia-chan knows that this sort of communication method is pretty limited... However, everybody’s continued to send it on. Renji should’ve sent it to his classmates Izuru KIRA and Momo HINAMORI. Rangiku-san probably sent it to those two in the Eighth Squad.”

“You’re right... that is to say we should send it to IBA-san and them!”

“Yes, I’ll do it.”

“Yumi, I want it too--!” said Yachiru, who took out her pink spirit phone.

“Okay, I’ll send it to the lieutenant too. Speaking of which, it can really take in multiple people’s spiritual-pressure... What amazing technology...” Yumichika said as he swiftly sent out the text, clearly having had a lot of practice.

Ikkaku nodded and turned toward Kenpachi. “It seems like his power level after the transfer will be proportional to the amount of spiritual-pressure transferred... That is to say, the more we put in, the more powerful Ichigo will be afterwards. Isn’t that right, Captain!”

“Heh~, so it’s like that...” Kenpachi laughed along with Ikkaku. “This is the captain’s orders! Everyone in the squad has to go put their spiritual-pressure in. Even those with crap spiritual-pressure will be useful if we get enough of them.”

“Yes, Captain!!”

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“Understood, Captain!!”

As if they were waiting for the captain to come to this realization, the two of them quickly ran out.

“I’m going to tell everyone too!” Yachiru sent the text to the Women’s Soul reaper Association with great enthusiasm.

“Ever since that AIZEN was captured, every day has been so peaceful and boring... If Ichigo gets his powers back, there might be some big fights again...!”

The idea of going into battle again made both Kenpachi’s spiritual-pressure and the air around him bristle.

“Ken-chan seems to be looking forward to it a lot!”

As if responding to his excitement, Yachiru’s heart also started beating faster.

[I am Yumichika AYASEGAWA. I would like IBA-san to also take a look at this text that I’ve received, so I’m forwarding it along. <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

[This is the President! Ruki has a very important message for everyone, so be sure to read it! <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

Fifth Squad Barracks Barracks

“Eh...?”

A sudden ring from her phone interrupted Momo HINAMORI’s work.

“Oooh? Could it be a boyfriend?”

Shinji HIRAKO laughed as he flipped through a fashion magazine.

“That is considered sexual harassment as well, Shinji,” said Lisa, as she leaned against his desk and read adult magazines. She had come to deliver the fashion magazine that he had subscribed to and stopped to chat.

“I don’t want to be called a harasser but someone who reads adult magazines in the open!”

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

"You're so damn noisy it's distracting me, so shut up."

"You dare to speak to your customers this way!? Is that what businesspeople are supposed to say!?" Shinji pointed at Lisa's nose, criticizing her customer service.

"My business isn't affected by the loss of one or two customers. If you continue complaining, then I won't deliver anymore magazines to you, okay?" Lisa said as she continued to read her magazines with an expressionless face.

"No doooooon't~~!!"

"Can you two quiet down already!" HINAMORI stood up and walked between them.

"ABARAI-kun sent this... Captain and Lisa-san should see it too."

She handed her phone over to HIRAKO. Lisa leaned close to read it as well.

"Good going, Rukia-chan...!"

The corners of HIRAKO's mouth turned up as he handed the phone back to HINAMORI.

"Momo! Forward it to me! I want to send it to Rose and Kensei too!"

"Yes, Captain."

HINAMORI nodded and started to forward it. Lisa didn't say anything and quietly walked out of the office.

"Hey! Wait a second Lisa!" HIRAKO hurriedly shouted.

Lisa poked her head back in the doorway. "What is it?"

"What is it... Are you going back?"

"Yes, I am."

"If you're leaving, then you should say so first! If you go without saying anything, then I'll sink into this weird sort of 'why did she leave without a word' atmosphere!"

"Eh? Oh...sorry. I was busy thinking about what sort of preparations to do..."

"Preparations?" HIRAKO asked, confused.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

Lisa nodded forcefully. "Since a lot of soul reapers are going to be gathering, this is a great opportunity to expand my customer base! ...First I need to ask Kûkaku-san to let me put posters up on her house..." Lisa started reciting her advertising strategy as she walked out into the corridor.

"What an amazing mind for business..." HIRAKO mumbled to himself as he forwarded the text to Rose, Kensei, and Mashiro.

"...Okay, Momo. What do you plan to do?"

HIRAKO put his phone on the table and looked at her. She was currently silent, thinking.

"Even though Rukia-chan sent the text, transferring soul reaper powers is against the law... If you don't want to go, you can just pretend that you didn't know that I'm going..."

"I'm going too."

Seeing that there was not a shred of hesitation in her eyes, Shinji was a bit surprised. In his eyes, HINAMORI was the most law-abiding and serious person that he knew, someone who would never break the law no matter what the circumstances were.

HINAMORI closed her eyes and said, "'Of course, following the law is important. However, if you're breaking the law to do something that you believe is just and right, then maybe the real problem is with the law itself. If we're held back by the law and forced to let go of things that we should do, then that is wrong.' ...Captain AIZEN once said this."

She responded naturally, as if she was quoting some great sage.

Even though she still looked a bit melancholy, but she had already improved a great deal when talking about those things that had happened seventeen months ago.

"He did say some pretty things, that fellow... Then can we say that I said it instead? Help me spread the word, Momo!"

"How could I! That's too much!" HINAMORI laughed.

After AIZEN betrayed them, everyone always took care not to mention anything that would make her think about him. HIRAKO was the only one who would talk about him without any sort of constraint.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Of course, he wouldn't bring up AIZEN on purpose. He simply did not avoid the topic. This sort of normal conversation helped Momo's unhappy feelings slowly melt away over time.

"Okay, let's start working then! Captain, please put your magazine away!"

"Eh? Then, I'll put it away as soon as I finish reading this special..."

HINAMORI smiled as she watched HIRAKO flip it open again. "Do you want me to take it away?" she asked, her smile not reaching her eyes.

"I understand. I understand." HIRAKO quickly put it away.

"This is too much, why is my lieutenant the only one who's so serious it gives one a headache..."

HIRAKO complained as he flipped open documents. Yet even as he complained, he still smiled happily.

[This is Shinji! Look at this! I already told Lisa so you don't need to contact her! <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

Third Squad Barracks

"Good morning."

Rose walked into the office, swinging a guitar in his hands. When he met KIRA's gaze, the latter instantly looked very much annoyed.

"...You're late, Captain."

KIRA pointed at the clock on the wall. From the time when the workday started, it had already been forty minutes.

"Sorry, sorry, this child never wants to give me a break..."

Rose closed his eyes and slowly stroked the neck of the guitar that he was intoxicated with.

"Please do not place the blame on inanimate objects," KIRA coldly interrupted.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“So strict—” Rose put the guitar by the wall and sat down at his desk. “Hmm, those sheets of music that I just finished, where – did – I – put – them -- ?”

He started to shuffle around the documents on his desk, looking for his newest composition.

KIRA stared at Rose who seemed to have no intention of working and sighed deeply. He held out his spirit phone.

“Please first look at this instead.”

He put the screen in front of Rose. On it was the text from Rukia that Renji had just forwarded.

Rose stopped looking for his music and his eyes widened as he finished reading it. His eyes sparkled with inspiration and he sighed, “How incredible...!” He instantly picked up his guitar and started to strum it violently.

“It’s starting again...” KIRA mumbled, annoyed, as he put his spirit phone away.

“The 13 Court Guard Squads gathers together to aid Ichigo-chan!” His strong voice filled the room.

“The laws that cannot be broken...! The squad members who are so confused and troubled...” The melodies suddenly changed and became melancholy.

“The strong will that will never be broken! The glory that has been won! The best end!!” The melodies then became high-spirited again, and it seemed like he was going to break the strings of his guitar at the end.

“What do you think, KIRA!? That was good, wasn’t it!? Who knows, it could become this century’s masterpiece...!!”

Faced with Rose’s excitement, KIRA replied, expressionless. “Yes, it’s great, but didn’t you tell me that you wouldn’t play that guitar here Captain? If you can remember your promise and not play that here anymore, that’d be even better.”

“...Please don’t use that tone of voice when you speak... how scary, KIRA... I won’t do it again... Because the muse of music will not play without a smile...!”

Even though he thought to himself “of course he’s going to do it again,” KIRA had no choice but to soften his expression and said, “Thank you.”

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

"It's a crime to force me away from my music..." Rose put the guitar by the wall again, took out his spirit phone, and returned to his seat.

"Ah! I just received the same text from Shinji!"

He had received it thirty minutes ago, right when he was playing his guitar before work. He probably didn't hear the ring because he was so immersed in his music.

"Other than me, he also sent it to Kensei and Mashiro... Is everyone sending the text to their friends then?"

"That's right. ABARAI-kun sent it to both HINAMORI and me."

"Then who will KIRA send it to?"

KIRA rested his head on his hand and looked down. "The people that I can ask probably already received a text from elsewhere... No, actually HISAGI-senpai probably hasn't received a text yet..."

"HISAGI, is that the tattooed child? The one with Kensei?"

"Yes, he is the lieutenant of the Ninth Squad."

"Isn't that the centre of everything? Someone should've sent him a text already..."

"Everyone thinks that, so in the end nobody will send him one."

KIRA's deduction was correct. Renji thought Rangiku would do it. Rangiku thought Renji would do it. Ikkaku and Yumichika thought that either Renji or Rangiku would do it, so in the end nobody sent the text to HISAGI.

"Oh? What a poor child."

"Yes, in some sense he is a very pathetic person." KIRA calmly made that rude remark and forwarded the text to HISAGI.

"So?"

"What do you mean so?"

"Is KIRA going or not!"

"Of course, I am," he replied without a shred of hesitation.



## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

“Without hesitation! How attractive!” Rose whistled jokingly.

“Please do not joke about it. I don’t have a really strong sense of justice... I just want to reduce our guilt for forcing him to sacrifice himself for us. And...”

“And?”

“...He is also the last person who saw the Captain alive.”

Ichimaru Gin’s grave was located where he and Rangiku first met – the Sixty-second district of East Rukongai “Withered Flowers.” Rangiku had built it herself. Even though his cause was righteous, his actions were undoubtedly wrong, and he was not allowed a grave inside Seireitei.

In front of that grave, Rangiku told KIRA one last piece of information about Gin. He, when he saw Ichigo after he had learned Mugetsu, had closed his eyes and peacefully gone on his way.

Knowing that his revered superior officer had not died in despair, KIRA felt like his own spirit had been saved. His face was full of melancholy, which made Rose’s creative inspiration go wild again.

“Okay, we should get started and work hard!” (And afterwards I will definitely compose again!”

Of course, he wasn’t able to speak his innermost thoughts aloud.

“Yes, we should work hard!” KIRA didn’t know what Rose was thinking and thought that his captain really was full of hard-working spirit.

[This is KIRA. This is a text from Rukia KUCHIKI of the Thirteenth Squad. Perhaps senpai has already received this text, but I’m sending it just in case. <From: Rukia KUCHIKI>]

Eighth Squad Barracks Barracks

While Nanao ISE was calmly taking care of documents, Shunsui KYÔRAKU came back from his morning patrol duties.

KYÔRAKU always patrolled around the entire squad every morning, in order to come into contact with as many squad members as possible. If he saw any that was low on morale, then he would invite them to a bar later and help them talk about whatever was bothering them until they became happy again.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

"Nanao-chan, have you seen Rukia-chan's text?" He came straight to Nanao's side after entering the room.

"Yes. Just now, President... Lieutenant KUSAJISHI also sent a text with the same contents."

Nanao put her pen down and pointed at her own spirit phone.

"Oh? I guess everyone is sending it along to their own friends?"

"It looks that way."

"Then I'll send one to UKITAKE too!"

Seeing him press on his phone, Nanao hurriedly stopped him.

"Wait a second, Captain! Is this right!? Even if it's to save Ichigo KUROSAKI, isn't this a great crime...!?"

Seeing her stand up, KYÔRAKU patted and consoled her.

"It's just passing along some news. It's nothing terribly bad. As for whether or not they're going to do it, that's something that everyone has to decide for themselves."

"Even so... but..."

"Okay, sent!" KYÔRAKU stuffed the phone back inside his robes and returned to his seat.

"Then... What is Captain planning to do?"

"Haha, what should I do? Speaking of which, what is Nanao-chan planning to do?" KYÔRAKU asked as he rested his chin on his hands.

"I..." Nanao opened her mouth, but then lapsed into silence. KYÔRAKU did not ask again, and only waited quietly for her to speak again.

Not too long afterwards, Nanao decided.

"I'm going to go."

This answer made KYÔRAKU's eyes widen. Nanao lowered her head, looking down at her two hands clasped close to her chest.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

"I've always felt that it was unacceptable... that our current peaceful lives came at the cost of his great sacrifice. And I couldn't do anything to express my thanks... Ever since that battle ended... I've always thought so, and it's been very painful..."

Seeing Nanao do her best to express what was in her heart, KYÔRAKU smiled.

"...Captain, if I lose my position because of this..."

"You won't."

Nanao was a bit surprised at his confident expression.

"It won't happen. How convenient that I've been thinking about this too lately..."  
KYÔRAKU didn't seem worried at all.

"...Yes, Captain." Seeing him like this, Nanao let out a deep breath and returned to her work.

"Umm, Nanao-chan? I have a little thing to take care of, can I do today's work tomorrow..."

"No," she replied without hesitation.

"Of course,... Sorry I'll get started right away..." Looking at the huge stack of work in front of him, KYÔRAKU sighed deeply.

### Seventh Squad Barracks

The lieutenant of the Seventh Squad Tetsuzaemon IBA was currently running about, looking for his captain, Sajin KOMAMURA.

At this time in the morning, KOMAMURA was often with the barracks' pet dog Goro, taking a walk and receiving news from the previous day at the same time. Even though other squads sent the news into their offices, KOMAMURA thought that this was something he could take care of while taking a walk, so he persisted with this policy.

IBA heard that "the Captain is going over to the centre court!" so he ran over there. When he arrived, he heard that "Ah, sorry you just missed him... the Captain already left," so he ran elsewhere.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

After going back and forth a few times, by the time he finally found him, KOMAMURA had already received all the reports, finished his walk, and arrived back at the doghouse.

"What's wrong, Tetsuzaemon? Isn't it your day to be on duty?" asked KOMAMURA, seeing IBA completely winded with his sunglasses all crooked.

"Because... I... have... something... that... I... have to... tell... Captain..."

"...Please sit down and rest first. You can report it after you've calmed down."

KOMAMURA pointed at a long wooden bench next to the doghouse. He had it specially made so he could sit down and play with the dog.

"Even... if you... say so... that bench was made especially for the captain..."

"I'll sit down too. Is this okay?" KOMAMURA sat down first and gestured for IBA to sit as well. IBA bowed and sat down. He was still breathing heavily. Goro laid down by his feet and barked. KOMAMURA was able to understand animal speech, and instantly started to laugh.

"No, Goro. Tetsuzaemon is resting today. He didn't bring anything."

"Today... what...?"

KOMAMURA leaned down and patted Goro's head. "Goro is asking if you brought anything. He says that Tetsuzaemon usually brings something for him to eat."

"So, it's like that... Sorry, Goro! I came empty-handed today." IBA opened both hands, gesturing that he didn't have anything. Goro barked disappointedly a few times and laid down at KOMAMURA's feet instead.

"I hope he's not annoyed..."

"Don't worry. He's always like this after a walk."

Goro's white fur was bathed in the spring sun's rays as he stretched contentedly.

"What is it, Tetsuzaemon? Have you calmed down?"

"Yes! I'm so sorry for taking up your time! However, I have something that I'd like the Captain to look over..."

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

Tetsuzaemon took out his spirit phone and brought up the text that Yumichika had forwarded. He then offered it up with both hands and bowed. "Please look."

KOMAMURA read over the text in silence and nodded as he handed the phone back.

"Tetsuzaemon, I..."

"Please don't say anything at all, Captain!!" IBA stood up from the bench and knelt in front of him. "Captain, I've decided to go. If I don't repay Ichigo KUROSAKI's great kindness to us, then it goes against what it means to be a man!" Compared to the rules, there was something that IBA held even more dear, and that thing was his rule on what it meant to be a man.

"However, if I went and did it without letting Captain know, then that's the same as betraying Captain... I'm going to be causing trouble for Captain, so I'm extremely sorry!! I hope that Captain will pretend not to know anything about what I've said or shown you today! Please! Please!"

IBA lowered his head to the ground. Goro licked his face and barked at KOMAMURA.

"Goro is asking 'what happened.' He's worried about you. Please raise your head, Tetsuzaemon."

IBA looked up and Goro took the opportunity to place his front paws on his knee. He looked at IBA's eyes through the sunglasses and continued to bark.

"He says that 'if you've been yelled at, then let's apologize together.'" After he translated what Goro said, KOMAMURA couldn't help but start laughing.

IBA also laughed and patted Goro on the head. "Thank you."

KOMAMURA crossed his arms and looked up at the sky.

"I always follow the law because I want to repay Genryūsai-dono's great kindness. I've said this many times, correct?"

"...Yes, I've always remembered it."

"That's why, Tetsuzaemon. That's why I can't believe that the Genryūsai-dono that I respect is someone who forgets kindnesses done to him... Even if there's the matter of the law..."

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

KOMAMURA directed his gaze away from the sky and looked straight ahead. He closed his eyes, yet both his ears kept twitching as if he was thinking about something.

Goro barked and as if that was a signal, KOMAMURA opened his eyes.

"Can you lend me that text message? That way, even if I cannot give any spiritual-pressure to Ichigo KUROSAKI, if Genryūsai-dono asks then I can still do all that I can... I'm the same as you, in that I want to do something for that teenager..."

"Captain..." IBA's words of thanks were lodged inside his throat. Even he did his most to suppress the excitement in his heart, it still came bubbling up. As if he felt moved by IBA's tears, Goro started to lick his face again.

IBA adjusted his sunglasses and wiped off his face with his soul reaper robes. He then handed over his spirit phone and said, "I'm relying on you!!"

Ninth Squad, Seireitei Communications Editorial Office

In order to expedite the editing and distribution of the "Seireitei Communications," there was a two-story building in the Ninth Squad barracks that was called the Seireitei Communications Editorial Office. In here, the first floor was in charge of printing while the second floor did the editing. It was built so that the newspaper could be printed as soon as the second floor finished its work.

After he received HIRAKO's text, Kensei MUGURUMA left his office and started walking towards the editorial office. He stopped by the blackboard which indicated where all the workers were and verified that Shûhei HISAGI was inside. However, after he stepped inside, he realized that this was in fact a battleground.

"Who thought of this headline!? It's so cliché!! Do it again!!"

"Hey... the number of pages in the special isn't right! Isn't it missing a page!?"

"The table of contents is ready!!"

"Can someone go get the manuscript from Captain KYÔRAKU!!"

Since the deadline for proofreading was five in the afternoon, the atmosphere was very tense.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

In order to not disturb anyone, Kensei walked along the wall in order to reach the office of the editor-in-chief. Since he had refused the position, HISAGI was still in charge. In exchange, Kensei had to take on all of his lieutenant's duties before the proofreading was over.

"Shûhei, I'm coming in." Kensei pushed open the door without bothering to knock.

HISAGI, who was currently looking over an ever-growing stack of manuscripts like his life depended on it, immediately looked up.

"Captain...! Why are you here? Is this to say that you've finally decided to take on the position of editor-in-chief..."

"Of course not. Didn't I say that I'm never going to do it during this lifetime! You're so noisy!"

"Really...during...this...lifetime..." HISAGI laughed tiredly and looked back down at his manuscripts. "Is there something else? I can't leave my desk right now."

"I understand. I'm looking for Mashiro. Do you know where she is? She's not answering her phone." He took out his phone and dialed Mashiro's number. From somewhere nearby came the sound of a phone ringing.

"Mashiro-san turned in her manuscript just now."

HISAGI pointed at a long bench, on top of which was a rug that was all bunched together. The ringing sound was coming from beneath that rug.

"Hey, Mashiro!" Kensei lifted up the rug and saw that she was currently curled up in a ball, sleeping peacefully.

"If she's asleep, then she won't wake up for a while."

"I know, so annoying..." Kensei put the rug back on her.

"If she wakes up, then tell her to look immediately at HIRAKO's text."

"Text... Are you talking about an electronic text? What happened?"

Kensei raised an eyebrow at his question. "What? Nobody sent one to you?" He handed it over for HISAGI to see.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Both of his shoulders were shaking as he slowly said, "This is the first time I've seen it..."

"...So, you don't have any friends then." Kensei looked at him in sympathy and walked out of the office.

"Hu...!" HISAGI bit his bottom lip and forced himself not to cry as he looked blurrily at the manuscripts again.

Half an hour later, when he saw KIRA's forwarded text, he started to cry in silence.

West Rukongai, First District, Junrinan

At Kûkaku SHIBA's house, the spiritual-pressure transfer party was currently in session.

In order to avoid notice, they had set the sword up inside the house at the base of her giant cannon.

Around it, they were setting up a tent that could completely stop anyone outside from sensing what was inside. Right now, they were setting up the most critical segment.

"Making me do this sort of thing..." Captain of the Second Squad Suî-FÊNG complained while setting up the tent poles. Yoruichi SHIHÔIN, who was doing the same, looked over when she heard Suî-FÊNG's complaints.

"Didn't I already tell you? I'm not going on a walk like I do usually... In the end, you didn't ask any questions and persisted in saying 'take me along too!' Isn't that right?"

"That's because..."

"Hm? Isn't that right?"

"Yes... However..."

Suî-FÊNG pouted and Yoruichi burst into laughter, patting her head.

"Okay, the games are over! ...It isn't too early to start now. You should go back to your squad, Suî-FÊNG."

"Yoruichi-sama...! Why so suddenly...!?"



## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

Yoruichi explained slowly upon seeing her confusion.

“The person who oversees punishing those who are in violation of the law is you. As the commander of the Ōnmitsukido, you cannot do anything that is against the law. Do you understand, Suî-FÊNG?”

“But...!”

Yoruichi grabbed her by the collar and started to pull her out of the tent.

“What is it? Are you done?” Seeing the two of them like this, URAHARA asked as he worked on something outside.

“Yes! Now Suî-FÊNG is about to leave!”

“Yoruichi-sama! I didn’t say that I was going to leave...!” Even if Yoruichi had her by the collar, she was still doing her best to argue.

“That’s right... As commander of the punishment squad, you can’t do this sort of thing.”

“Shut up!! I will definitely not leave!! I will not leave Yoruichi-sama alone with a shady shopkeeper like you...!”

Not far away on the base of the cannon, Kûkaku heard this as she drank her sake. “I’m here too!” she joked.

Next to her and helping her pour sake, her little brother Shiba GANJU also yelled, “Don’t forget me!”

However, Kûkaku kicked him and yelled, “Don’t shout by my ear!”

“Shady shopkeeper... I’ve clearly been exonerated you know...”

“Shut up you...!!”

“Okay, okay! Stop, Suî-FÊNG.” Watching Suî-FÊNG try to leap at URAHARA, Yoruichi laughed bitterly.

“Yoruichi-sama, please let me go!”

Just as she was struggling, a ringing sound came from by her chest.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Yoruichi stuck her hand inside Suî-FÊNG's robes without hesitation, ignoring her cries and feeling around. "Hm? This is?" She took out the spirit phone and let go of Suî-FÊNG's collar.

Suî-FÊNG instantly sat down on the ground.

"Wow..." URAHARA took a few steps back after seeing how rough Yoruichi was.

"Here! It might be something important," she said as she gave the phone back to Suî-FÊNG, who was bright red.

She took a look at the text that Yachiru had sent and instantly changed color. "Yoruichi-sama, this..." She opened up the To: line and handed it back to Yoruichi.

Right there, on the list of recipients was "Nemu KUROSTUCHI."

"This just got complicated..." Yoruichi frowned and handed it to URAHARA.

"Yes..." He also prepared himself for possible complications.

### Twelfth Squad, Lieutenant's Quarters

Lieutenant of the Twelfth Squad Nemu KUROSTUCHI was currently lying naked in the middle of the room and on top of a metal worktable.

Numerous wires and tubes connected her body with a large machine by the wall. Inside the room, there was a buzzing sound much like that made by the wings of an insect.

"Oh... It's being used up very quickly..." Mayuri KUROSTUCHI was staring excitedly at a screen, surrounded by keyboards and monitors. The lieutenant's quarters of each squad were intended to be private rooms. However, since Nemu was an artificial being created by Mayuri, her quarters were converted to be her maintenance room instead.

"...So, it's like that."

Mayuri opened his eyes wide and was about to type on the keyboard when a ringing sound came from behind.

"Che! What is this!?" He stood up and pulled the phone out of a pile of Nemu's clothes.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

On it was the text from Rukia that Yachiru had just sent to the entire Women's Soul reaper Association.

"This is...! I have to report this to the Commander..." Mayuri's eyes rolled around and he smiled as he picked up his captain's cloak and put it on.

"Get up, Nemu!" He pressed a red button on the metal table and a weak current flowed into Nemu's body.

She opened her eyes. "Good morning, Mayuri-sama."

"The numbers that needed to be changed have been loaded into the computer! You can take care of the rest by yourself, right?"

"Yes, thank you very much, Mayuri-sama... Are you going somewhere?" Nemu asked him as he walked out of the room.

"I have something to report..." Mayuri laughed.

In front of the First Squad Barracks

Jūshiro UKITAKE saw who had arrived before him and couldn't help but stare. "Captain KOMAMURA..."

As he came closer, he saw another person who had been hidden in KOMAMURA's giant shadow.

"Captain KUROSTUCHI is here too!"

Mayuri sniffed in displeasure as he heard his name.

After he received KYÔRAKU's text, UKITAKE immediately made his way to the First Squad. On the way, KYÔRAKU texted him to say that he didn't finish his manuscript for today's "Seireitei Communications" and got yelled at by Nanao, so he couldn't come as well.

"Do the two of you need something?"

KOMAMURA handed IBA's spirit phone to UKITAKE, who looked very much surprised. "Since you all have a phone, I guess we're all here for the same thing..."

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

He was correct. Both UKITAKE and Mayuri were holding a spirit phone.

"Is that so... But, could you leave this to me? KUCHIKI is my lieutenant after all..."

"Eh! Are you trying to protect your lieutenant, who's inciting everyone to break the law?" Mayuri criticized him.

"... It's true that this is against the law... However, I don't feel as if KUCHIKI has done anything wrong. As her Captain, I feel that I should do my part as well."

Just as he was preparing to receive a new round of criticism from Mayuri, the door to the barracks opened and Genryûsai Shigekuni YAMAMOTO appeared before them all. Behind him was the lieutenant of the First Squad, Chôjirô SASAKIBE.

"What a rare sight this is..."

Genryûsai sensed the three captains' spiritual-pressure as he was working, so he decided to take the initiative and show himself.

"Three captains have come... has something happened?"

"Genryûsai-sensei, my lieutenant..."

UKITAKE stepped forward to speak, but suddenly his spirit phone started to emit a sharp sound.

"What is this...!?" Genryûsai raised his eyebrows. UKITAKE hurriedly looked at the screen and saw that it was full of "emergency message" markings.

"Answer it please." Genryûsai nodded and UKITAKE pressed the answer button.

"Reporting to Captain Jûshiro UKITAKE of the Thirteenth Squad! According to the Soul Reaper Agent's badge held by Ichigo KUROSAKI, there are signs of the previous agent of the soul reapers! This is an emergency, please come immediately to the Technological Development Bureau's Spiritual-pressure Analysis Lab!"

"...I understand! I will go immediately!"

At the same time, Mayuri had received the same urgent message. "Increase the number of people doing surveillance! I will come immediately."

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

They exchanged glances. Mayuri narrowed his eyes and said, "Looks like we got the same message... Since this is urgent, I will have to take my leave, Commander." He bowed respectfully and walked off.

"I will take my leave as well, Genryūsai-sensei! I will come back to report later!" UKITAKE also bowed deeply and left.

As he walked past KOMAMURA, UKITAKE turned and said to him, "Can I leave the matter of Ichigo-kun to you?"

"Leave it to me."

After this brief conversation, UKITAKE quickly walked off as well.

"...Well then, let's discuss this. KOMAMURA."

SASAKIBE opened the door, and Genryūsai walked back into the barracks.

"Yes." KOMAMURA followed respectfully behind him.

### **CHAPTER SIX**

Thin, flimsy clouds flowed across a sky that was turned a brilliant orange by the setting sun.

Ring ring – Ring ring – Ring Ring...

The bell signalling the end of the workday rang across Seireitei.

Many soul reapers had already gathered by now at Kûkaku SHIBA's house, waiting their turn to add their spiritual-pressure.

The earliest ones to arrive were the Fourth Squad members who were given an early dismissal by UNOHANA. Next came the people who finished up their work early after reading the text. There was already a long line by the time the dismissal bell rang. This was because the text forwarded by Rikichi ended up making its way across many of the squads, gathering many ordinary members.

"Are you interested in literature from the living world? You can subscribe to any kind of magazines that you want --! There is absolutely no worry about privacy! Please come visit the YDM Bookstore--!"

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Lisa called out and handed out fliers to the gathered soul reapers. The walls of Kûkaku's house were covered with many huge posters advertising YDM Bookstore, steadily increasing its name recognition.

"The end of the line is over here--!"

"Would those in front please continue walking forward--!"

The two SHIBA House servants Koganehiko and Shiroganehiko shouted, keeping the lines tidy and moving.

Neighbouring people from Rukongai also came by to see what was going on and to sell refreshments to the soul reapers. The SHIBAs' house was so surrounded it was like a festival was happening.

"Ahh – KUCHIKI-san! You've been a huge help!" Next to the sword's tent, URAHARA made a noise of astonishment.

"I had no idea that it would spread to this degree...!" said Rukia. She had been amazed at the crowd that had gathered when she arrived.

"...No matter what, we know that Mayuri is going to interfere. It's best for the spiritual-pressure transfer to go as quickly as possible."

The two of them both agreed with Yoruichi.

"Everyone in line! Please do not add your spiritual-pressure slowly, bit by bit! Do it all in one go! Thank you so much for your cooperation!"

Using a loudspeaker from the living world, URAHARA called out to the line. Thanks to this, its forward speed increased dramatically.

"This way we should finish up earlier than expected." He let out a deep breath.

Rukia agreed, looking at the end of the line. She then noticed something black fluttering towards them.

"This is...!"

"...It looks like we've been discovered," Yoruichi murmured, narrowing her eyes.

It was a flock of black Hell Butterflies that were used to issue commands to the soul reapers.

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO

[Urgent notification. Will all the captains and lieutenants immediately gather at the First Squad Barracks. Also, will Kisuke URAHARA bring the sword in question to the captains' meeting area.]

The hell butterflies flew to each of the lieutenants and captains present and issued their commands. Afterwards, they gathered in a flock and flew back towards Seireitei.

"If he's asking Kisuke to bring the sword with him, it doesn't look like he's going to punish anyone... Even the captain commander has been changed..." Yoruichi looked up at the sky with a happy expression.

Every single soul reaper in the 13 Court Guard Squads had been changed.

Everything that Ichigo KUROSAKI did impacted everyone's hearts that had been restrained before by the rules –

"Since it's like that, we should hurry! We can't make the captain commander wait for long!" URAHARA also laughed happily.

### **CHAPTER SEVEN**

#### **First Squad Barracks, Captains' Meeting Area**

Standing between the rows of captains and lieutenants that had gathered there and in front of Genryūsai, URAHARA explained the details of the sword that he had brought there.

"Just now, we received news through Captains KUROSTUCHI and UKITAKE that the first agent of the soul reapers has made contact with Ichigo KUROSAKI."

"The first agent of the soul reapers... that's Kûjo GINJÔ!" As soon as HITSUGAYA mentioned the name, the atmosphere in the room instantly became tense.

"Ichigo KUROSAKI finally fulfilled his purpose of being bait..." Mayuri looked at UKITAKE.

UKITAKE remained silent and lowered his head with an extremely sad look on his face.

"Since he's already contacted Kûjo GINJÔ, then we don't have a moment to waste... Take that sword! Kisuke URAHARA!"

UNOHANA opened her eyes wide at hearing these words. "Commander, this is...!"

## **The Death Save The Strawberry**

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

“...No matter what, we were all saved by Ichigo KUROSAKI. This time it is our turn to save him. Even if it requires violating our own laws, allowing such a debt to go unpaid would be the 13 Court Guard Squad’s eternal shame!”

Genryûsai stepped forward.

“This is the Commander’s order! All captains and lieutenants of the 13 Court Guard Squads will add their spiritual-pressure to this sword!” Genryûsai’s commanding voice rang through the silent meeting area.

“...Even though I have received reports that many soul reapers have already gone ahead and added their spiritual-pressure without waiting for my order... I will not pursue this, only this one time.”

It was only after that, that several people on the scene finally stopped holding their breath. Mayuri stared at URAHARA and ground his teeth so loudly that everyone present could hear him.

“Kisuke URAHARA! You must definitely help Ichigo KUROSAKI regain his soul reaper powers!”

URAHARA lifted his head and looked straight at Genryûsai. The two eyes that looked back at him really did display confidence in him.

“I obey. Definitely...!” As if keeping his tumultuous feelings under control, URAHARA bowed deeply.

“This is the sword that URAHARA prepared for you.

Thanks to it, I was able to transfer soul reaper powers to you again...!”

END



## The Death Save The Strawberry

written by Makoto MATSUBARA & Tite KUBO



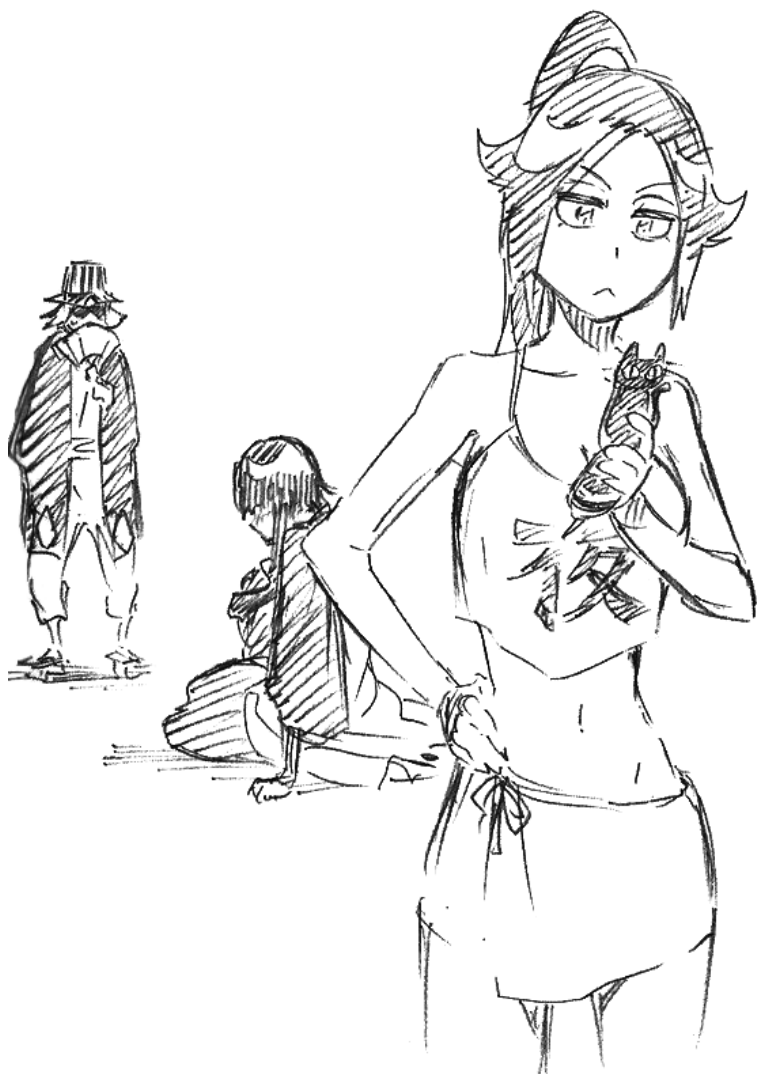
## The Death Save The Strawberry

translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



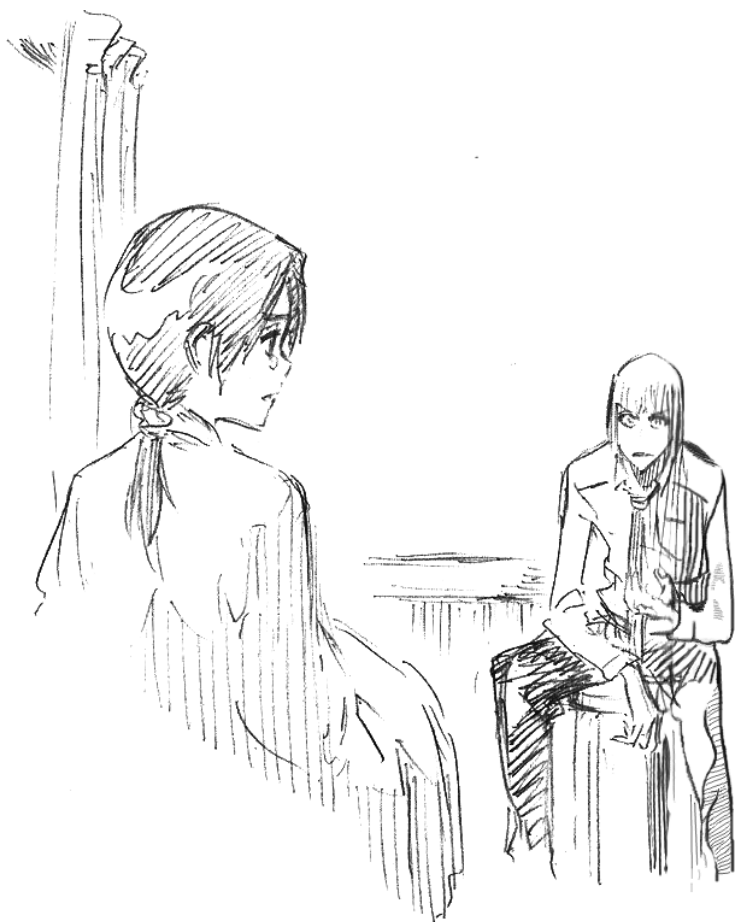
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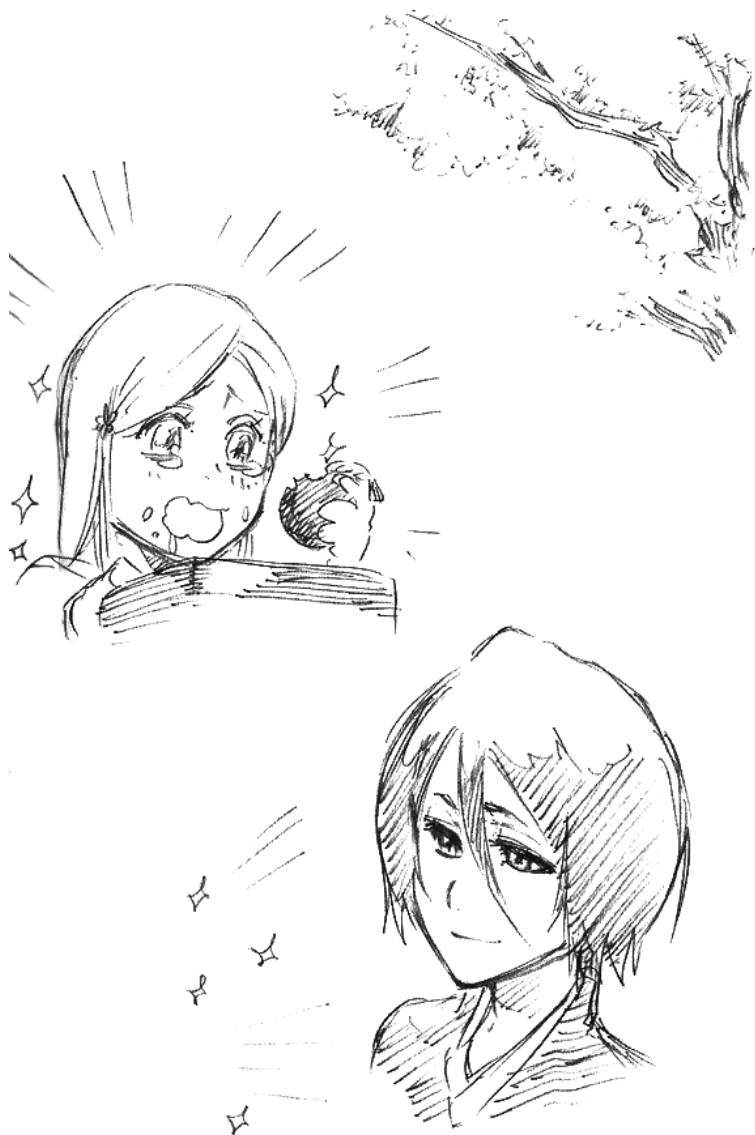
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YAMMY- YAMMY-  
IT IS NIGHTTIME IN OUR WORLD AGAIN...



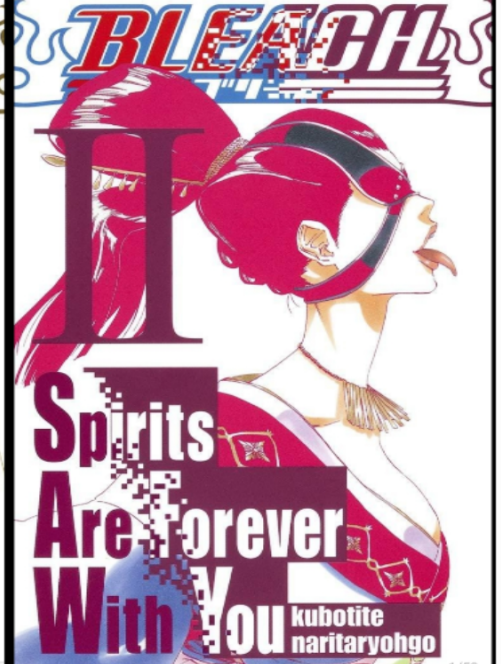
**Nestle to Night**  
MAKOTO MATSUBARA × TITE KUBO

小説 JUMP J BOOKS



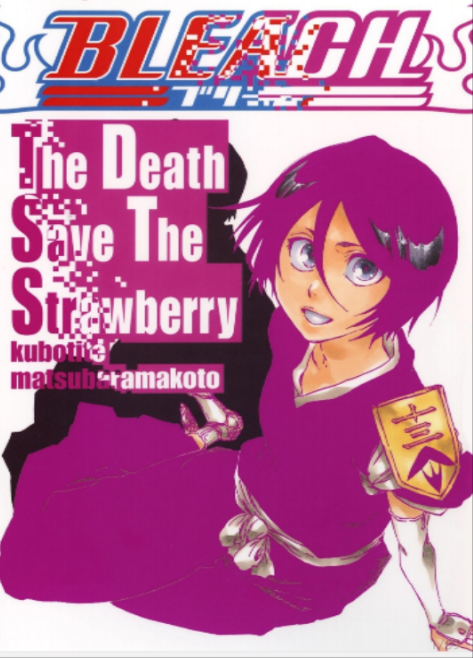
kubotite  
naritaryohgo

小説 JUMP J BOOKS



kubotite  
naritaryohgo

小説 JUMP J BOOKS



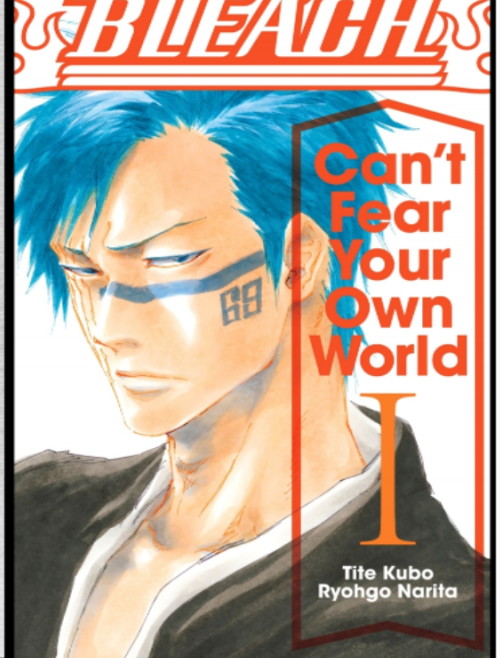
kubotite  
matsubaramakoto

BLEACH

Beginning  
of the revive  
of Tomorrow

kubotite  
naritaryohgo

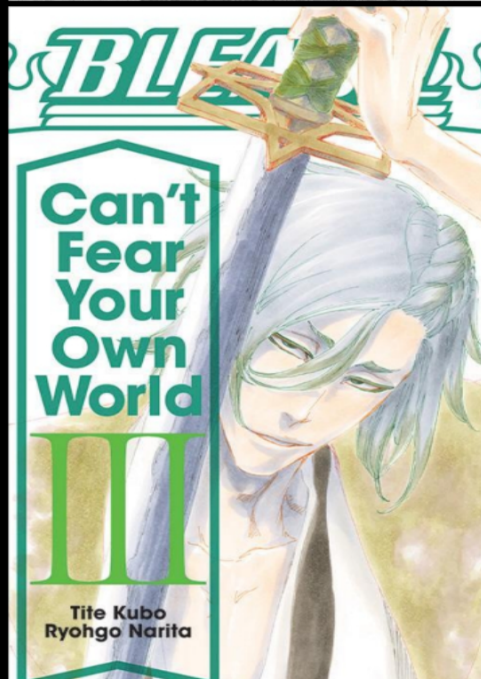
小説 JUMP J BOOKS



Tite Kubo  
Ryohgo Narita



Tite Kubo  
Ryohgo Narita



Tite Kubo  
Ryohgo Narita



kubotite matsubara makoto