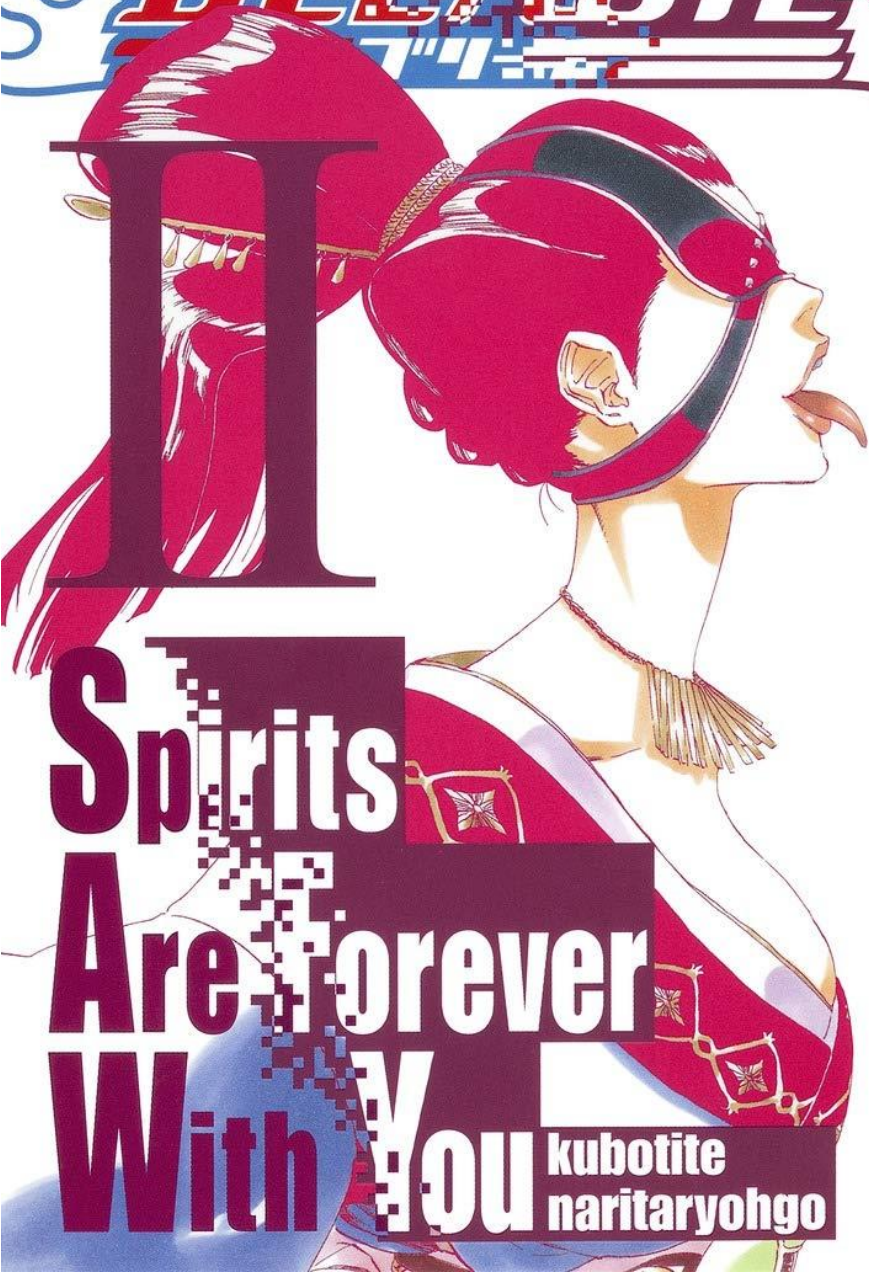


# BLEACH

# II

Spirits  
Are Forever  
With You

kubotite  
naritaryohgo



## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

### Spirits Are Forever With You volume II

#### Prologue (p10-20)

Kenpachi ZARAKI is heading towards the Senkaimon. Towards battle. But he's not alone. The entire 11th Squad is walking behind him. A black sea fills the streets. ZARAKI says he'll be fine on his own, but Ikkaku reminds him that he can't locate Roca, an arrancar with low spiritual-pressure, by himself (and if they find Roca, ZARAKI will be able to fight AZASHIRO). The 11th Squad is a band of ruffians, and the civilians living near their barracks are cut from the same cloth. For example, the female owner of a local bar has no problem breaking bottles over an unruly soldier's head. Even so, she watches in awe. She has never seen the entire squad depart at once. But one of her clients, an old man, has seen this scene many times before in the past. Back when Kenpachi KURUYASHIKI was still captain. The nostalgia brings a tear to his eye. But the civilians aren't the only ones watching this rare scene. Renji ABARAI (vice-captain of the 6th) and Tetsuzaeemon IBA (vice-captain of 7th) are also watching from afar, standing on a rooftop. Both of them used to belong to the 11th Squad. The scene before them makes their blood itch. As Renji feels the violent and heavy spiritual-pressure of the man walking in front of this black sea, he asks himself, — "How the hell... did Ichigo ever manage to defeat Captain ZARAKI without even using his bankai?"

#### Chapter 11 (p21-38)

Hundreds of years ago, in a certain country, there were two brothers. The older brother was a general and the younger brother was an alchemist. They lived very different lives but possessed the same cruelty. The older brother would take his prisoners of war to his younger brother's lab. The younger brother would commit inhumane experiments on them. Eventually, the bitter souls of his victims in his basement gave birth to a monster, a hollow. The monster waited until both brothers were in the lab and killed them. It wanted to torment them and eat them. But the younger brother let out an insane laugh as he looked down at his own corpse and at the monster before him, saying "This is exactly what I wanted." The younger brother approached his older brother's soul and took a bite out of his neck. He kept eating with a victorious smile on his face, as if he wanted to say he knew exactly how hollows worked. And yes, the chain on his chest broke and a hole grew in his chest. The monster, realising the horror unfolding before him, tried to flee, but the hollowfied brother ate him too. He never stopped laughing as he did.

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

A day passed and as he looked at his grotesque hands, he whispered, "I see. The perfect existence, which I'm looking for, lies beyond this." ~~~ In the past, there was a *menos grande*. His name was Szayelaporro GRANZ. After eating countless hollows, he had turned into a *vasto lorde*. He was feared by many. He was usually a "calm" scientist. Performing all kinds of experiments, such as creating artificial *adjuchas*. He hardly ever fought, because once he entered battle mode, he'd lose control of his own powers and kill his opponents (he wanted them alive for his experiments). Eventually he was employed as a scientist under King Baraggan. When the new king AIZEN appeared, he was chosen to become one of the Espada. He was bestowed with the number given to the strongest Espada: #0. But only when he ran wild in battle. He held a different number in his scientist role. But Szayelaporro wasn't satisfied. He didn't want "power" or "ranking". He wanted "the perfect being". After countless experiments, he came to the conclusion that he couldn't achieve Gabriel in his current humanoid form. He had to devolve back to *adjuchas* and then evolve once more.

In his opinion, the part of him which lost control during battle was a burden. That's why, having devolved back to *adjuchas*, he split himself in two. He isolated and separated the "swordsmen" part inside him, of which his brother's soul (the first soul he had eaten) had been the foundation. This meant he lost most of his power. He was removed from the Espada. But Szayelaporro continued his experiments and eventually perfected the power of Gabriel. He was allowed back into the Espada — relying solely on his power as researcher this time — and was granted the number #8. His brother, now an *ox-type adjuchas*, wandered Hueco Mundo and joined a group of other *adjuchas*. A strong panther-type *adjuchas* joined them, and they eventually served under AIZEN. Szayelaporro didn't feel anything towards his "older brother". His brother was a piece of thrown-out trash in his eyes. He didn't care about raw power either. Having gained the power of rebirth (Gabriel), Szayelaporro was confident that he had attained "the perfect being". Even so, in the end, he lost to a soul reaper and went to Hell. That's how Szayelaporro GRANZ's story ended. But story of the *arrancar* who mirrors his appearance is just beginning.

— Present time | Somewhere in Hueco Mundo

The Szayelaporro-lookalike remembers "his" past. Yes, it's true, he's a mere duplicate. But his memory was clear, maybe even better than the memory of the real Szayelaporro. The backup-system, which had created him, contained memories which the real Szayelaporro may have forgotten over time. Most importantly, it contained memories of the time before Szayelaporro had split himself in two. Of the time when Szayelaporro had possessed tremendous power. Combining two *arrancars* doesn't mean the power merely gets multiplied by two. No, it can act like a "key" to open the

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

door to enormous power. Like STARRK and Lilynnette. Like Szayelaporro and his brother. He thinks Szayelaporro was foolish to give up such power. And, if he's a mere copy, then there's no need to remain chained down by the thought of being Szayelaporro. He's his own person now. He's someone who wants to regain Szayelaporro's original power. He releases a Cero. The Picarro are impressed, they think he released a Gran Rey Cero. He corrects them. It was a normal Cero, and it was only 30% of what the real Szayelaporro could've released in his golden age. The real Szayelaporro? His words confuse the Picarro. If he's not Szayelaporro, then who is he? He renames himself Cien, after his new number [Cien means #100 in Spanish]. Half of the Picarro will look for Roca. The other half will help Cien look for "treasure". Cien surmises that he can regain his full power if he recollects the parts which Szayelaporro had thrown away all over Hueco Mundo after splitting himself in two. What will he do once he has regained his full strength? Become the next king of the hollows? Take revenge on Soul Society? These thoughts — which would've sounded like a waste of time to Szayelaporro — sound good to Cien's ears.

But his priority is to break Roca to the point that she can no longer regenerate herself. He needs her "threads system" to infiltrate Soul Society and Hell. He'll destroy her and take the system out of her. Yes, he could just give her the order. She still listened to him, but for how long? Mayuri has cut Cien off from the negación threads, his back-up system. Without it, his spiritual-matter is slowly crumbling. At this rate, he'll eventually turn to dust. But that's no problem. He simply has to eat. He'll survive as long as he takes in more spiritual-matter than he loses. He could reconnect to Roca's threads and live on as part of her. But that would be an insult. To be left alive by someone beneath him. By a tool. Cien looks at the palm of his hand, seeing spiritual-matter slowly detaching itself from it. Releasing his powers (like the Cero just now) accelerates the crumbling process. But there's no need to stress. His emergency food is right in front of him — the Picarro.

### Chapter 12 (p39-57) — Soul Society

The captain meeting is over. KOMAMURA asks KYÔRAKU why AZASHIRO revolted against Soul Society. Yes, he has dangerous ideas, but he doesn't seem like a villain. KYÔRAKU says AZASHIRO revolted for the sake of justice. But what benefits the justice of Soul Society and the World of the Living doesn't necessarily benefit Seireitei and the Rukongai. — "Everyone has their own definition of justice. You know this, don't you?" KOMAMURA remembers the face of his old friend at KYÔRAKU's words.

— 249 years ago | Soul Society, in front of White Road Gate



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

Jidanbō tries to stop AZASHIRO from passing his gate. But he's not trying to keep him out of Seireitei. He's trying to prevent him from leaving it. Jidanbō lowers his ax again and again. AZASHIRO simply passes behind him (Jidanbō thinks he has turned AZASHIRO to dust), but UKITAKE and KYÔRAKU are waiting for him outside the gate. It turns out AZASHIRO had suggested the idea to use his powers to alter Rukongai citizens into strong soldiers. Those soldiers would then be used to invade Hueco Mundo. Central 46 had laughed at the ridiculousness of his plans. They authorised it ("Give it a go! If you can!"). But AZASHIRO actually succeeded in modifying the souls of a few criminals. Seeing these soldiers, who pledged loyalty to AZASHIRO, Central 46 quickly changed its attitude — probably fearful of their own position. Central 46 hid the fact that they had authorised the plan. Instead, they accused AZASHIRO of "altering the souls of criminals without permission". He was branded a criminal. AZASHIRO had simply stated that he would continue his plans without Central 46's permission and walked away, as if he was going on a simple stroll.

UKITAKE and KYÔRAKU try to persuade AZASHIRO to stop his plan. AZASHIRO, on the other hand, tries to persuade them of the righteousness of his plan. Neither side manages to persuade the other. AZASHIRO takes a step forward and UKITAKE and KYÔRAKU release their shikai. AZASHIRO starts to chant a kidô, but stops halfway. He turns his head back to Seireitei, whispering, — "I see... Even the Soul King rejects my plans." AZASHIRO says he'll surrender and undergo Central's 46 trial. The trio heads back into Seireitei, passing by Jidanbō, who is surprised to see AZASHIRO still alive ("A twin!?!"). Back in Seireitei, they're greeted to the sight of several hundred fallen soul reaper. There are several captains amongst them. They were all defeated by AZASHIRO. (They're still alive.) AZASHIRO only regrets that the Silver Dragonfly's shop assistant got injured during the scuffle. He says he'll pay them back the expenses eventually. AZASHIRO is sentenced to 19.500 years in the Muku. AZASHIRO's idea to "improve souls" would eventually be taken up by Yushima Ouko. This man pressed forward with the research of Mod Souls and Spearhead, but the program was frozen by Central 46. In the end, one of the Mod Souls would escape and meet a certain soul reaper Agent in Karakura Town, but that's a different story.

— Present time | 1st Squad Barracks

KOMAMURA asks KYÔRAKU why AZASHIRO let himself be arrested so easily. — "The Zero Squad." They had arrived when AZASHIRO had turned his eyes away from KYÔRAKU and UKITAKE and towards Seireitei. He must've concluded that — although he could take on the 13 Court Guard Squads — taking on the Zero Squad would be "a pointless action". After his explanation, KYÔRAKU asks himself in his thoughts (so as

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

not to be heard by AZASHIRO) why AZASHIRO didn't simply merge with the Rukongai to escape. Is there a limit to his powers?

### Chapter 13 (p58-84)

— "Bohahaha" Don KANONJI is driving through Karakura Town in his beloved car, Jeanne d'Arc. Roca is in the passenger seat beside him. She's wearing an extravagant dress. A hat and scarf cover the skull on her face.

— One hour ago | On the roof of the abandoned hospital

Roca is surprised at Don's sudden appearance. Don introduces himself and asks whether he can help her. She's not sure what to do and tries to ask her master Szayelaporro for orders. But she can't reach him. Her thread is being cut off by something. Roca had no way of knowing that this was Mayuri's doing, of course. She feels lost without Szayelaporro. Her master at least gave her meaning as "a tool". What should she live for now? She tells Don that she doesn't know anything. She doesn't know what she wants to do. That's why she can't request him to help her with something either. She's about to thank him for caring and disappear, but Don grabs her hand, and tells her, — "Fear not, lady! Wandering spirits like yourself often lose their memories of their previous life. You should simply experience different things to discover what you want to do!" Roca wants to correct him — she's not a Plus — but his confident smile makes her lose her words. Don says he'll help her find herself. If you don't know your inner self, then try a change of pace via your outer self: a new outfit.

— Karakura Town, before Karakura Honchou Train Station, a high-class boutique

Don and Roca enter a boutique where Don often buys his clothes. The flamboyant shop owner helps Roca pick out a new outfit. As the Don and the owner exchange small talk, Roca realises this is the first time that she's being treated as a woman instead of as a tool. Don drives her around the city, in hope that seeing new things will help her remember herself.

— At the same time | Bus

The producer of Don KANONJI's program is getting ready for shooting. One of his staff members comes up to him. The staff member saw Don driving just now when he went to get a coffee. There was a woman beside Don in the car — the mystery masked woman! Don already found her! The producer tells his staff to get the bus ready. It's show time. ~~~ Don bought Roca some ice cream. She takes a bite but remains silent.

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

Don asks if she dislikes it. She reassures him that the ice cream is "fun". He laughs and corrects her: You're supposed to say "tasty". Roca realises this is how "tasty" feels. She never needed to eat. In the past, Szayelaporro would force spiritual-matter into her, and nowadays she replenishes herself with spiritual-matter by automatically connecting to her surroundings with her threads. She never ate spirits like other hollows. And although strong hollows with a degree of intelligence (like the Espada) would sometimes eat like humans on special occasions, it had never even occurred to Roca to eat something in the World of the Living. She's learning all kinds of new things. She's learning what it means to "have fun".

— At the same time | Karakura Town, Mashiba

ISHIDA senses an arrancar as he's heading back home after his visit to Sunflower Sewing. It's the masked woman. He has sensed her presence countless times before over the year, but never managed to get to her in time. Even so, he can't ignore it. This might be related to the hundred arrancars which appeared last night. He senses that she's travelling faster than usual. And there's a human beside her. The human's spiritual-pressure feels faintly similar somehow. He rushes to their location and is surprised to see Don KANONJI driving with an arrancar in the passenger seat. Meanwhile, in the car, Roca feels guilty. Don thinks she's simply a wandering soul — she's deceiving him. She's thankful to him, but decides to disappear again, lest she'll get him into trouble. But she suddenly freezes. She feels someone eating away at part of her threads that are connected to Seireitei. There is "something" following her threads and getting closer to her. She can't sense what, but it unsettles her deeply. It feels as if an unknown being is crawling up her body. What should she do? She mustn't get Don involved. She hears a voice just as she's getting ready to fade again. — "Found you!" It's the head-phoned Picarro. He's standing on top of the traffic lights, which Don's car was waiting for. — "Hey, will you... play with us now?"

Chapter 14 (p85-115) — A few minutes ago | Inside the Dangai

The 11th Squad is in the Dangai on their way to the World of the Living, led by dozens of Hell Butterflies. ZARAKI thinks they're going too slow. Can't he just grab one of those butterflies and run? Ikkaku interjects that the butterfly can't act as guide if he's holding it. And Yachiru comments that ZARAKI would probably crush the butterfly anyway. Yumichika senses a mysterious spiritual-pressure. He notices it earlier than the others, because... he's been face to face with this spiritual-pressure before. It's AZASHIRO. He's standing in front of the gate that leads to the World of the Living. The seated officers look on silently, but the more than 200 lower-ranking soldiers are angry to see AZASHIRO wearing a robe ("Imposter!"). ZARAKI quietly whispers at them

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

to shut up. They immediately fall silent. Silenced by his spiritual-pressure, more so than this words. AZASHIRO and ZARAKI exchange names. ZARAKI says he'll cut down AZASHIRO at least once. Even if he turns out to be weak. Because he might lose the name "Kenpachi" otherwise. AZASHIRO surmises YAMAMOTO ordered the entire Squad to accompany ZARAKI in order to re-enact the Kenpachi "ceremony" (whoever beats the current Kenpachi in front of 200 men will become the next Kenpachi). Yumichika wonders why AZASHIRO bothers to face them like this. If he can fuse with anything, he could just fuse with the air in the Dangai and kill them, right? Is there a limit to his powers? Yachiru jumps off ZARAKI's shoulder, wishing him good luck. But a hindrance appears before the duel can begin — the Picarro. Ikkaku yells at them for their horrible timing. Some of the Picarro recognise him as the bald demon they saw before. Another voice corrects them — Ikkaku isn't a "bald demon", he's Tsururin! It's Yachiru. She's happily mingling with the Picarro, much to Ikkaku's anger.

Yachiru tells the Picarro to stay out of ZARAKI's fight. If they do, Yachiru will play with them afterwards. The Picarro comply. Ikkaku tells them to just return to Hueco Mundo already. Suddenly a blade grows out of the throat of one of the Picarro, piercing its throat. It collapses. AZASHIRO scolds Ikkaku for giving an arrancar the chance to flee. He hasn't moved, but it's obvious the blade was AZASHIRO's doing. ZARAKI asks him what's the point of killing a weak brat. It won't even serve as warm-up. AZASHIRO counters that soul reaper should only focus on killing hollows as effectively as possible. There's no need for fun or pride. More and more Picarro collapse as he talks. ZARAKI swings his zanpakutô at AZASHIRO, to show him who his real opponent is. The force of his attack creates a violent gust of spiritual-pressure, raging through the Dangai and towards the gate that leads to the World of the Living.

— At the same time | Karakura Town

The Picarro asks Roca if she wants to play. He sees Don and realises he lost the race. ISHIDA is on a rooftop nearby, ready to strike. He senses the spiritual-pressure of something which he's even more cautious of than hollows: a soul reaper. It seems to be coming from somewhere in the sky nearby. Don also notices that there's something out there. Meanwhile, the Picarro is communicating with the others in the Dangai. He wants to go there too. He says he'll go as soon as Cien arrives. — "Cien says we'll play a game where we crush Roca once he arrives. Sounds fun, right?"

— Inside the Dangai

ZARAKI's attack doesn't harm AZASHIRO. It does damage the gate, though. Meanwhile, the Picarro continue to fall one by one. ARAMAKI tells them to run away.

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

They may be hollows but seeing a bunch of children being massacred doesn't sit well with him. But one of the Picarro simply asks him who's attacking them. ARAMAKI answers. The Picarro all turn their eyes to AZASHIRO with a smile, "That means... that man will play with us, right?" AZASHIRO tells the men that he'll give them one last chance to flee. None of them move. He sighs. He turns to ZARAKI. Will he give up? ZARAKI simply says that if AZASHIRO can really turn into air, then he'll just... cut the air. That would be interesting. AZASHIRO realises there's no reasoning with them. He closes his eyes and starts chanting a kidō. One of the collapsed Picarro gets back up. Much to Ikkaku's surprise. Suddenly, they hear different kidō chants coming from all directions. Dozens of them. Mouths (to chant) and arms (to form seals) grow out of the walls, ceiling and floor of the Dangai. AZASHIRO merged several hundreds of artificial bodies from the Technological Development Bureau with this space in the Dangai. Under AZASHIRO's command, the group of mouths and arms chants kidō after kidō. Hundreds of kidō assault the 11th Squad at once. The gate leading to Karakura Town cracks under the pressure, pouring an enormous gust of spiritual-pressure into the World of the Living.

— Karakura Town

Don waves off the Picarro's words with a laugh. You're not supposed to crush people when you play with them, boy.

But Don falls silent when a crack opens high in the sky — roughly one kilometre away — and an enormous volume of spiritual-pressure pours out. ISHIDA is shocked, as well. He had expected a Senkaimon to open. Not this. He wants to check it out, but he can't leave Don KANONJI alone with those arrancars. Should he take Don with him? Suddenly he senses more arrancars. Ten of them, give or take. The Garganta opens near the traffic lights. A dozen of Picarro appear and... The sight of this man makes a cold, sharp pain run through ISHIDA's body. For a split second, he remembers the sensation of his organs being squashed. Although its spiritual-pressure was slightly different, the new arrival looked exactly like an arrancar which ISHIDA knew very well... Szayelaporo GRANZ.

Chapter 15 (p116-155) — Soul Society, the Technological Development Bureau

There's an alarm going off in the The Spiritual Wave Measurement Lab. Lin announces that the Picarro and the intruder who attacked their lab in the morning have appeared in Karakura Town. The intruder's spiritual-pressure is much and much higher than it was before. Akon tells him to report it to the Captain Commander, so he can decide whether to send additional backup or not. Akon is worried about what will happen if

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

the intruder and the two Kenpachi's clash. Will they have to move the entire town again like during AIZEN's attack?

— Karakura Town, Kitakawase Intersection, in front of the traffic lights

Roca is shocked to see Cien — She calls him Szayelapporo-sama. He tells her he's called Cien now for convenience's sake. Roca asks why he's here. Cien says that's none of her business, she's just a tool that is about to be scrapped. He gives her his last order: Don't move. It'll be troublesome to get her "spinning wheel" out of her if he destroys her in the wrong way. He collects spiritual-pressure in his right hand, but an arrow hits his hand before he can attack her. Cien glares at ISHIDA. They exchange some words. ISHIDA surmises from their exchange that Cien isn't Szayelaporro. His spiritual-pressure is slightly different, too. It feels like there's another arrancar mixed in with the original Szayelaporro's spiritual-pressure. And ISHIDA can sense that Cien is much more powerful than the original Szayelaporro was. Roca realises that Cien's spiritual-pressure feels like the way Szayelaporro's spiritual-pressure felt before he split with Yylfordt. — "By the way, Roca. Who is that clown beside you?" Don KANONJI introduces himself, calling Cien 'intellectual glasses boy #1' in the process. ISHIDA is exasperated at the way Don is completely unaware of the danger he's in. (And briefly thinks: "Wait, does that make me 'intellectual glasses boy #2'?" ) ISHIDA gets ready to attack again, but then the railing on the rooftop deforms and tries to wrap around his wrists. He quickly steps back. — "You're... Uryū ISHIDA. The last quincy. Correct?" AZASHIRO appears, standing on top of Don's car. AZASHIRO tells ISHIDA that it's bad for the soul balance if a quincy kills these arrancars.

That's why he stopped him. It's his duty as soul reaper. Cien addresses AZASHIRO as if he knows him. AZASHIRO asks him whether they've met before. Cien says he should thank AZASHIRO. After all, if Szayelapporo hadn't seen AZASHIRO's and KURUYASHIKI's duel, then Roca's "threads" wouldn't have been made. AZASHIRO comments it's very unpleasant that Urozakuro's powers were used for a hollow's research. Even so, he'll use Roca to exterminate the hollows. Roca thinks that AZASHIRO looks at her in the same way as Szayelaporro did — as if she's a mere tool. AZASHIRO turns back to ISHIDA. This affair has nothing to do with him. He'll let ISHIDA live if he throws away of his weapons and lives out his life as a normal human. ISHIDA counters that he doesn't trust soul reaper enough to believe that this affair has nothing to do with him. AZASHIRO steals his quincy cross. He says he'll return it to ISHIDA later. He might need a quincy to mediate the number of souls later. AZASHIRO also comments that he'll take back the title Kamaitachi back from ISHIDA. It's a title given to the person with the strongest projectile weapon. It was originally a mere nickname given to AZASHIRO. Urozakuro laughs behind AZASHIRO. You're sure paying a lot of attention to "a mere

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

nickname". Did it bother you? You thought Byakuya KUCHIKI, who wields Senbonzakura, would inherit your title, right? But it went to Jidanbō's little brother! I guess the clever Byakuya KUCHIKI didn't want a title which has your fingerprints all over it! Kihahaha! AZASHIRO denies being attached to his nickname. Could he silence her if he "controlled" her completely like other bankai users do?

But a strong spiritual-pressure catches his attention before he can finish that thought. Cien recognises that it's ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure. He avoided fighting him this morning. But taking down ZARAKI should be no problem now. After all, Cien has collected some of the parts thrown away by Szayelapooro in Hueco Mundo with the Picarro. He's now at roughly 60% of his full power. ...But wait. ZARAKI feels stronger now than he did this morning. AZASHIRO senses it too. He guesses ZARAKI has taken off his eyepatch. Urozakuro tells AZASHIRO not to underestimate ZARAKI. She's not almighty, after all. She suggests it's better to go back to Seireitei — where she's in perfect condition — and kill him there. AZASHIRO tells her to shut up. He doesn't want to fight in Seireitei too often. It might give the Technological Development Bureau opportunity to develop a counter-measure against her powers. He has to fuse with the arrancar's "threads" outside of Seireitei. He can fuse limitlessly. But if his real form is completely blocked by the Sekkiseki, then whatever he's fused with most will become his real form and his consciousness will be trapped there. Urozakuro says she could just kill the entire Development department. AZASHIRO says he doesn't want to kill more soul reaper than necessary. — "Kihahahah! What are you saying!? How strange! Didn't you commit a huge massacre when you used me for the first time? Kihahaha!" AZASHIRO doesn't answer but does decide that he needs to get rid of ZARAKI.

ZARAKI appears on the scene, an evil grin on his face. He's bleeding from all over his body. He turns his eyes to AZASHIRO. He admits that he underestimated kidō. AZASHIRO's little "magic trick" turned out to be quite entertaining. He's in a good mood now. ZARAKI's presence makes a shiver run down Don's, Roca's and ISHIDA's spines. ISHIDA is surprised Kurosaki managed to survive fighting such a man. Ikkaku, Yumichika and a few other soul reapers also arrive. They're also wounded, although not as heavily as ZARAKI. AZASHIRO is surprised to see that ZARAKI still has his eyepatch on. AZASHIRO decides to take out Cien first. He tries kill him with his invisible swords, but he can't materialise them. There's a strange current of spiritual-pressure surrounding Cien. Cien turns to him, "I told you "I" created Roca after seeing your powers. Did you think I didn't also create a counter-measure against you while I was at it?" AZASHIRO remains calm. He'll simply have to try a different tactic. Meanwhile, Roca feels worries that she got Don involved in all of this. She could use her threads to flee, but she doesn't want to leave him. Who knows what the arrancars or soul reaper might do to him? Don admits that he doesn't really understand what all these spirits

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

are talking about, but... he hits the gas and they speed off. Cien releases a Cero towards the car, but his Cero's trajectory suddenly changes. It explodes high in the sky. Cien uses his pesquisa and sees that Roca spun countless negación threads between the buildings and the car.

Her threads created a rail which changed the trajectory of his Cero. negación doesn't allow any interference from the outside. She used this to avoid his attack. Cien is shocked at first. Not because of threads. He knew they could be used like this. No, he's shocked that Roca — his tool — made the choice to avoid his attack. He ordered her not to move. He told her he's going to dismantle her. ...Did she disobey him? His shock turns to rage. How dare she! She's a mere tool! He grabs one of the Picarro by the throat. He says he had expected her to betray him at some point, but it enrages him much more than he thought it would. He asks the Picarro if they're going to defy him as well. Just as he's about to snap the boy's neck, ZARAKI approaches him ("You and AZASHIRO... Do you enjoy tormenting brats?"). They exchange some words. Cien lets go of the boy and orders the Picarro to go after Roca. Killing a Picarro or two won't be enough to quell his rage. He needs a proper fight. And ZARAKI — the man who took out Nnoitora — will do just fine. ZARAKI comments that he enjoyed his fight with Nnoitora. He hopes Cien will entertain him like Nnoitora did. Cien remembers the time when the GRANZ brothers were still alive. Their days were filled with "death". Cien isn't like ZARAKI and Nnoitora. He doesn't only crave power and battles. But he does enjoy being surrounded by "death". His spiritual-pressure is becoming less and less reminiscent of Szayelappora GRANZ. But he does still possess the same insanity as Szayelaporro. Cien unsheathes his sword, swallows it and releases his resurrección, — "...Sip, Fornicarás."

— Karakura Town, Gakuen Block, in front of Karakura High School

Don parks his car on the visitor parking lot behind Karakura High School. (The school is empty, it's spring break.) He tells Roca to get out of the car. She assumes that he's rejecting her. She's happy, because this means he'll be out of danger, but another feeling wells up inside her... She... doesn't want to die. They've only spent an hour or so together, and yet this man left an enormous impact on her. He treated her as a woman instead of a tool. Shopping, talking to humans, eating ice cream, listening to music — She experienced what it's like to have fun for the first time in her life. She doesn't want it to end. But Don has no intention of abandoning her. He tells her to hide in the gymnasium's storage room. He doesn't really understand what happened back there, but those bad spirits are preventing her from moving on to the next world, right? He'll defeat them! He's a hero, after all. She tries to correct him. She's not a



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

wandering spirit. Two soul reaper arrive before Don can respond: Yumichika and Ikkaku.

Chapter 16 (p156-215) — 250 years ago | Soul Society, somewhere in the Rukongai

AZASHIRO defeats KURUYASHIKI as soon as their duel starts. Which makes him the new Kenpachi. But the 11th Squad soldiers don't accept this. AZASHIRO didn't even move! He cheated! They charge at AZASHIRO. KYÔRAKU tries to stop them, but KURUYASHIKI beats him to the punch. He releases his shikai, Gagaku Kairô, and blasts them away. KURUYASHIKI's shikai is a living type zanpakutô, like UNOHANA's Minazuki. A white monster. The size of a bear. It has no eyes, nose, ears or limbs. Only a mouth with large fangs. There are 13 of them floating around KURUYASHIKI. KURUYASHIKI somehow managed to get back on his feet. He's barely alive but manages to find the strength to yell at his subordinates in anger. What the hell are they doing!? I lost! Accept it! Don't bring shame to the 11th Squad! He turns to KYÔRAKU and asks him to tell YAMAMOTO to look after this youngster. He says he wished he could've battled KYÔRAKU and UKITAKE once. KURUYASHIKI is on death's door. His zanpakutô reverts to its pre-shikai form and he drops down to his knees. AZASHIRO looks down at the kneeling KURUYASHIKI. AZASHIRO admits that he may have lost if KURUYASHIKI had immediately released his bankai.

KURUYASHIKI's bankai was very famous in Soul Society. It summoned an enormous jaw with large fangs from the ground which ate and pulverised everything in its reach. It made no distinction between animate and inanimate. It ate everything except for KURUYASHIKI himself. But his bankai had two drawbacks. First, KURUYASHIKI couldn't use his bankai and shikai for 6 months after summoning it. Secondly, he couldn't control its power properly, meaning that anyone in the area — foe AND friend — would be killed. Central 46 had deemed its power too dangerous and had forbidden KURUYASHIKI from using it inside Seireitei. AZASHIRO comments that KURUYASHIKI could've used his bankai here in the Rukongai, but probably didn't in order to spare the lives of his subordinates. How foolish. KURUYASHIKI asks his opponent's name. AZASHIRO answers that his name is Sôya AZASHIRO. KURUYASHIKI acknowledges him as his successor and whispers something to him. Finally, he turns to his subordinates and KYÔRAKU with a smile, "Don't worry. I may die, but... "Kenpachi" never dies..." KURUYASHIKI falls down. Never to rise again.

— Present time | Karakura Town, Kitakawase Intersection

Seeing ZARAKI and Cien confront each other made AZASHIRO briefly remember his duel with KURUYASHIKI. He can't remember the last words which KURUYASHIKI

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

whispered to him. But it doesn't matter. Reminiscing the past is a waste of time. He sees Cien release his *resurrección*. Cien opens the Garganta. It engulfs him and ZARAKI. AZASHIRO avoids it. He doesn't mind this development — it'll mean less damage to the town if those two fight in the Garganta. Urozakuro talks to him again, "Kihahaha! That was close. My world almost "reached" even those weak little *arrancars* children! You should've killed that woman when she was still in *Seireitei*! Kihahaha!" AZASHIRO answers that taking down ZARAKI and Cien takes priority. Urozakuro agrees, "True! True! Fusing with living beings is a pretty risky bet for you! You learned that the hard way during your time with KURUYASHIKI, right? Kihahaha!" Unlike fusing with things like the air or minerals, fusing with living beings who had a "self" (like soul reaper, hollows or animals) was very risky. That's because living beings will reject him strongly. During his duel with KURUYASHIKI, AZASHIRO figured that simply manifesting blades in the air as usual might not be enough to cut him. That's why he had fused with KURUYASHIKI's muscles and heart in order to forcefully loosen his spiritual-pressure.

But, unbeknownst to those watching the duel, KURUYASHIKI's rejection had left great damage on him. Even so, AZASHIRO plans to fuse with Roca no matter the cost. Urozakuro laughs. Yes, every strong bankai comes at a price. Like AIZEN not being able to use it if someone hasn't seen his *shikai*. Like Ichigo KUROSAKI losing his soul reaper powers in exchange for his trump card. Her price is pretty cheap in comparison, you know? Yes, Urozakuro's fusing powers also came at a cost. Firstly, AZASHIRO is vulnerable to attacks that belong to a certain special category... Secondly, he can't train his body at all when he's using his bankai. If you were to compare it to a video game: He gained a special power, but threw away the ability to improve his physical strength and durability in exchange. If you took away his *zanpakutō*'s power, AZASHIRO was as delicate as he looked. Some *Rukongai* ruffian could probably kill him. Although, in AZASHIRO's opinion, his *zanpakutō*'s personality was the biggest drawback. He was far from pleased that she had blabbered about her powers towards Yoruichi and URAHARA. He can sense the rest of the 11th Squad approaching his position. ...He made sure not to kill them earlier, in the Garganta. Why must they insist on chasing him? Why can't they just flee?

AZASHIRO melts into the air of Karakura Town and looks over the town. He agrees that the town is indeed very high in spiritual-matter concentration. He might be able to do "it" here. Urozakuro warns him that the Zero Squad might interfere again. AZASHIRO says that's why he needs Roca's thread powers. To fill up the gap in Urozakuro's power: She can't get past *Sekkiseki* and Soul Warding Membrane. And Roca's power is much faster too. That said, Roca only has the ability to "connect" and "share", not the ability to "control" like Urozakuro. So, he can't ditch Urozakuro. If AZASHIRO gets

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

Roca's thread power, then he'll be able to fuse fast enough to escape the Zero Squad's grasp. And he'll also be able to "alter" all the living beings and souls in Karakura Town to invade Hueco Mundo. Karakura will serve as a good base for his Hueco Mundo invasion.

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area

Before confronting Cien, ZARAKI had told his men to capture Roca, just in case. That's why Ikkaku, Yumichika and their fellow soldiers are chasing after Don and Roca. Ikkaku yells at them to stop, but Don just hits the gas harder. His car speeds off. The soul reaper give chase. Don comments that they're wearing the same soul reaper outfit as Ichigo. Ikkaku asks if he knows Ichigo. Don replies that Ichigo is his number one pupil. Ikkaku says he's lying ("URAHARA is his sword teacher!") and gets even angrier. Don talks some more, but Ikkaku doesn't understand what he's blabbering about. Ikkaku asks Yumichika if he understands. Yumichika (who can't decide whether Don's loud fashion sense is beautiful or ugly) doesn't either. Ikkaku decides to just stop them by force. He is about to unleash his shikai when... one of the Picarro uses his head as steppingstone to reach the car. Twenty Picarro join the chase. Ikkaku tries to stop the car, but the Picarro block him ("No, mister. We're playing tag with Roca first!"). Ikkaku says he'll really kill them this time if they don't scream. He means those words as a warning, but it means only one thing to the Picarro: Let's play! Ikkaku agrees that fighting is also the 11th Squad's definition of playing. Fighting at full power, that is. The Picarro respond that they'll also play at full power in that case and they release their resurrección. The release command of their resurrección is...

— Soul Society, Technological Development Bureau, Autopsy Room

A researcher is surprised to see his supposedly sedated subject (the captured Picarro) suddenly open its eyes. At the same time as its friends in the World of the Living and the Dangai, the Picarro whispers, — "Play..."

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area

All the Picarro utter their release command at the same time, "Play, Rangosta Miguratoria". They grow semi-transparent wings on their backs, their spiritual-pressure rises greatly and a strong wind starts to blow. Ikkaku asks their names. They answer that they only have one name: Picarro. Ikkaku asks if Yumichika will fight too (he lost his zanpakutō to AZASHIRO). Yumichika comments that soul reaper use the four Zankensouki. He's not going to flee just because one is missing. The Picarro and 11th Squad are ready to clash. But it's not them who commence the battle. It's a gun...?

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

— Karakura Town, Yumisawa, a multi-tenant building

Two Yakuza of rivalling gangs are arguing. A middle-aged man with a face like that of a stuffed animal pig is tied up, in tears. He claims to be a caretaker at a nursery. But the other man accuses him of trying to kidnap his boss' child. Suddenly, the door opens and a large number of policemen enter the room. There's a short scuffle. The detective opens a hidden door in the room, expecting to see a large number of contraband firearms in it. But there's none. He turns to the Yakuza, but they are just as shocked as he is.

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area, inside the bus

Don's producer and his team spot Don's car. They zoom in the camera to find Roca, but then they hear a loud noise. ...Did Don's car just get shot?

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area, on the road

Ikkaku sees a Picarro get shot through the chest. It's the artificial bodies. They're growing out of the ground, guns in hand, like zombies rising from the grave. They haven't been outfitted with actual faces yet. There are holes where their eyes, noses, ears and mouths are supposed to be. It's a creepy sight. AZASHIRO appears behind them, saying he'll help them exterminate the hollows. Ikkaku tells him to stay out of their fight. Meanwhile, the gunshot-holes in the Picarro's bodies close and they get back up. It doesn't seem to surprise AZASHIRO. He materialises 20 artificial bodies and fades again. The sound of gunshots rings through the air. The Picarro are happy to play. The wind of spiritual-pressure grows stronger. One of the soul reaper notices that his arm is bleeding. He didn't get shot... No, it's the wind...

— Soul Society, Technological Development Bureau

The awakened Picarro had opened the Garganta and escaped. The researchers report this to Mayuri, afraid of his reaction, but he isn't angry. He had already finished analysing it. The Picarro no longer hold his interest. The Picarro "share" their lives. If one is about to die, then the others share a bit of their spiritual-pressure with the dying one. This transfer method makes a sound that normal ears can't hear. This "exchange of sounds" can also be used as projectile weapon. The more Picarro are together in one place, the stronger this weapon becomes.

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area, on the road

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

The 11th Squad is experiencing the Picarro's "wind of blades" first-hand. And the artificial bodies are starting to shoot at them as well. Several soldiers are already heavily wounded. Even so, the 11th Squad is in a good mood. They love to fight.

— Inside the bus

The video crew can't hear the laughter of the soul reaper, but they can see the artificial bodies and their guns. They keep the camera rolling, but the producer does tell the driver to pull back. They flee in the same direction as Don's car was going as the producer mutters, — "Misaomaru-chan... what in the world are you being chased by?"

— Karakura Town, Kinogaya, the site of the demolished Sukari Building

Don parks his car on a vacant piece of land. It seems they managed to shake their pursuers. He asks whether Roca is okay. She asks him why he's worried about her. She got him into this mess. ISHIDA arrives and introduces himself. He asks Roca to explain what's going on. He has no time for chitchat, the situation is getting out of hand. Don tells ISHIDA to leave Roca alone. ISHIDA tells him that Roca is a hollow. Don himself should know this too! They quibble a bit, but Roca steps in. She says ISHIDA is right and starts to explain who and what she is.

— 10 minutes later

Roca finishes her explanation. She apologises to Don for tricking him into thinking that she was just a wandering soul. Don objects. She didn't trick him. He made that conclusion on his own. Roca closes her eyes. She asks ISHIDA to kill her with Seele Schneider Schneider. (She knows his weapon's name because of Szayelaporro's records inside her. And AZASHIRO didn't steal Seele Schneider because he didn't know of its existence. ISHIDA didn't have it with him when he first went to Soul Society.) ISHIDA declines. He thinks about what his grandfather would do. Even if she really had to be killed, his grandfather would let a soul reaper cleanse her instead of shooting her himself. But Ichigo has lost his powers. Why did it have to be the 11th Squad...? ISHIDA decides to ask URAHARA for help, not knowing that URAHARA isn't in town. Meanwhile, Don comes to the wrong conclusion that ISHIDA can cleanse souls and send them to Soul Society like Ichigo. But he quickly realises that's not true when ISHIDA remains silent. He asks Roca if that's alright. She'll disappear! Roca says it's the best way. She has no use here. She's a threat. But Don is having none of it.

If she really wanted to die, then she wouldn't look so sad. She's just giving up. And as hero, he will never give up. He admits that a reasonable adult might fulfil Roca's

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

request. But most of his fans are children. How would they react to him letting her be killed? He wants to save her. That's his own selfish desire. ISHIDA listened to Don's speech without butting in, although he does feel partly exasperated. The words "reasonable adult" make him think of his father. Ryūken would probably eliminate Roca without even blinking. ISHIDA makes up his mind. He'll help them. ZARAKI taking out Cien and AZASHIRO is the best-case scenario. But ISHIDA doesn't think ZARAKI will win. If Cien fights the same way that Szayelaporro did, then ZARAKI will probably lose against Cien's tricks. ...However, ISHIDA didn't know what kind of ridiculous power those who carry the name "Kenpachi" possess.

### Chapter 17 (p216-251) — Dangai

ZARAKI is standing in the Garganta on a foothold of spiritual-matter. Although, technically, his foothold is buried under a pile of defeated clones and he's standing on top of those. The clones look just like ZARAKI except for a strange pattern on their faces. Cien is in his released form, tentacles growing out of his body. He's holding a miniature doll of ZARAKI in his hand. He's trying to squash one of the doll's organs (which would cause the real ZARAKI's organ to be squashed as well), but it's as hard as steel. He could probably slice through it with his sword, but then he might as well slice the real ZARAKI. ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure is higher than he had anticipated. Cien couldn't collect enough spiritual-matter in the area to create perfect clones and organs. And, although the clones had managed to injure ZARAKI, the soul reaper didn't seem tired in the least. His spiritual-pressure actually seemed to have grown even denser. Cien comments that, based on the data from ZARAKI's fight with Nnoitora, his tricks should've worked. Maybe Cien's techniques are inferior to the original Szayelaporro's techniques? Szayelaporro would've probably trembled in fear if none of his techniques worked. ZARAKI doesn't give a damn. Who is this Szayelaporro guy? Tremble in fear? He's not interested in cowards. He asks whether Cien is done with his little magic tricks. Cien agrees he's not interested in Szayelaporro anymore either. He throws away the ZARAKI doll. Yes, he's done with the magic tricks. Their battle will be one of brute force. ZARAKI is happy to hear it. They exchange names. Cien GRANZ and Kenpachi ZARAKI. They clash. Cien releases Cero's from his tentacles and ZARAKI swings his zanpakutō. Yachiru looks on from a distance, "Looks like you're having fun, Ken-chan!"

— Karakura Town, Kinogaya, the site of the demolished Sukari Building

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

Don and ISHIDA feel the sky tremble. It's unsettling. They don't know it's being caused by ZARAKI and Cien fighting in the Garganta nearby. ISHIDA senses something approaching. It's a group of artificial bodies. They're on motorcycles (the vehicles are driving themselves), holding all kinds of human fire-weapons in their hands. One of them even has a grenade launcher. Don quickly starts the car and they speed off. ISHIDA stands on the backseat, countering the artificial bodies attacks with Gintō (silver tubes). More motorcycles appear from the front, trapping Don's car in a pincer attack. Don makes a sharp turn and... manoeuvres his car on the railroad tracks. ISHIDA yells what the hell he's doing. Don reassures him. They're near Karakura Town Train Station. Any train coming from the station won't have much speed yet. He'll have time to dodge it. But ISHIDA sees the words "Limited Express coming through" on the station's notice board. A train is running towards them at high speed. They're about to clash, but Roca opens the Garganta and they disappear from the World of the Living. Leaving the people on the station platform very confused.

— Inside the Garganta

Time passes differently inside the Garganta than outside it. Cien and ZARAKI have already been fighting for over an hour. They're covered in blood. They're enjoying themselves immensely. A few Picarro appear. They hand Cien a transparent orb which has another weirdly coloured orb inside it. It's the last piece of data which Szayelaporro had thrown away. Cien absorbs the orb. The number #100 on his eyeball changes to the number #0. Cien's spiritual-pressure grows explosively. Cien asks ZARAKI to take off his eyepatch. ZARAKI says "Ha! Make me!" and swings at Cien. Cien doesn't avoid or block it, he stops ZARAKI's sword with hierro (Iron Skin) alone. Cien uses his tentacles to tear off the bells in ZARAKI's hair. He tells ZARAKI that he won't need any handicaps when fighting him. ZARAKI agrees and finally takes off his eyepatch. ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure also rises explosively. Cien is happy to have such a strong opponent. They continue their fight. The Picarro look on in envy. They want to join in. But Yachiru told us not to, remember? She'll play with us later if we don't interfere. How about we join the others in the World of the Living? Let's play with AZASHIRO! But Cien grabs the Picarro with a few of his tentacles. He sucks their energy from them. He needs their spiritual-matter if he wants to keep fighting. The Picarro pass out. (Even if they run out of energy, the other Picarro will share their spiritual-pressure with them via their sharing power.) Cien continues fighting with the Picarro in his grip.

— Karakura Town, Eastern Area One

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

of the Picarro whines that he's really hungry. The Picarro leave, saying its time for dinner. Ikkaku tries to go after them, but the artificial bodies shoot at him and he returns to the fight.

— Karakura Town, in the sky above Minamikawase

AZASHIRO is up in the sky, fusing slowly with the air. He's annoyed that Roca escaped into the Garganta. He can't open the Garganta himself, so he can't follow her. He could steal the tools to do so from URAHARA Shop, but he'd still need a kidō user to stabilise it. He decides to use this time to fuse with a larger area. But it's taking quite long. Soul Society is made up from spiritual-matter, but the World of the Living has Kishi. It takes longer to fuse with Kishi. Then he senses that the Picarro are approaching his location. Almost a hundred of them. He has a bad feeling about this, but when he decides to blast them away with a kidō, it's already too late...

— Karakura Town, in the sky

The assembled Picarro notice that there are still a few of them missing. Those few are still busy "playing" with Cien. One of them asks why they didn't just eat those soul reapers. Another one says he doesn't want to eat them. Those soul reaper are "good people". Some soul reaper shielded them from AZASHIRO's kidō earlier. It could have been a mere coincidence, but that didn't matter to them. The child-like Picarro didn't think in terms of soul reaper versus hollows. They divided the world in "good people" and those who aren't. They didn't eat "good people". They form a circle around a certain spot in the sky. This place has the densest spiritual-matter in all of Karakura Town. They wonder why. Usually it's a temple or something. The Picarro don't know that they're actually surrounding the place where AZASHIRO is fusing with the air. They unleash a new power, Chutsu Cheria. They pass their "sounds" to each other, through the dense spiritual-matter. A black hole appears in the air. It sucks up all the spiritual-matter in the circle.

— Soul Society, Technological Development Bureau

Mayuri watches the Picarro unleash their power from one of the monitors in the Institute. He explains to Akon that if the Picarro can send spiritual-matter to each other, then it's logical that they can also steal spiritual-matter. He twists his mouth into a smile, "Well then. Let's observe how Kenpachi AZASHIRO is doing after this little "meal", shall we?" ~~~ AZASHIRO's bad feeling came true when he saw the Picarro's black hole. To think that their power would be of this special category... AZASHIRO is weak to absorption-type attacks. It's one of the costs of using Urozakuro's power. If the place he's fused with suffers such an attack, it hurts him several dozen times



## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

worse than a normal person. That's why he had stolen Yumichika's Fuji Kujaku. The world before his eyes turns black.

### Chapter 18 (p252-401)

How many hundred years ago did this happen? It was a time when the struggle for power between Soul Society's noble families was much fiercer than now. Those who lost the power struggle would be falsely accused of crimes and would be sent to the execution site. Those with enough power to defeat hollows would be sent in the Dangai without Hell Butterflies. Several generations ago, the AZASHIRO Family had climbed itself up to a noble family thanks to their powerful swordsmanship and kidō abilities. But nowadays they relied on the power of money. They had grown weak and corrupt. Caring only about money. The young Sōya AZASHIRO was no exception. But his big sister was different. She held pride in the family's history. She wanted to join the 13 Court Guard Squads and she wanted Sōya to do the same. She wanted them to become strong soul reaper. Money can disappear, but pride lasts forever. Sōya didn't see the point.

Why did he have to fight scary hollows? But he loved her smile. She was pure. She was the only pure soul in the family in his eyes. Sōya didn't mind becoming a soul reaper for the sake of her smile. But several other noble families conspired against the AZASHIRO. Accused of false crimes, the family was sent to the execution site. They were sent to fight a hollow one by one. Each one of them failed, too weak to kill even a single hollow. The other nobles laughed at the scene. Sōya and his sister were the last to go. Sōya was scared that the nobles might make him, and his sister fight each other. The suggestion had indeed been made, but it had been turned down. His sister was a student at the soul reaper Academy and Sōya was without any training. It would be a boring match. Instead, Sōya and his sister were sent in to fight the hollow together. To prove just how weak the AZASHIRO had become. His sister goaded the nobles into agreeing to let them go if they managed to defeat the hollow. Because it would prove that the AZASHIRO weren't as weak as they said. His sister fought bravely against the hollow. Sōya was too scared to move and could only watch. Finally, the hollow bit into her stomach. Fatally wounded, his sister gave him one last smile, "Become a strong soul reaper, Sou-chan."

She recited a kidō incantation of a spell she wasn't yet proficient at: Sōren Sōkatsui. It exploded, killing both her and the hollow. Sōya screamed for what seemed ages. Why did she die? Why her!? Why did I survive and not she!? She was the only pure one of us!? She should've lived! When he finally stopped screaming, he heard five cruel words: "Bring in the next hollow." The nobles laughed. They had let an entire family

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

and their servants — 342 people — be slaughtered. And yet still they kept laughing. Still they craved more blood. Their laughing faces made it clear to Sôya that his sister had died in vain. This revelation made something snap inside him as another hollow stepped into the ring. For a moment, the nobles thought the boy had been eaten by the hollow. But then one of the nobles fell into the hole and was vaporised by Soul Warding Membrane. Afraid, the other nobles tried to flee, but they couldn't move. The floor had wrapped around their legs as if it was alive. One of the nobles investigated the hole and noticed that there was a hole in part of the wall, and another hole just above the Soul Warding Membrane, as if it had tried to avoid the Sekki Seki. Then he turned back to the other nobles and saw Sôya standing amongst them.

When the leader of the Covert Operations grew suspicious of the fact that the execution still hadn't been reported as finished, he went to the site and was greeted to the sight of countless corpses. They had been murdered in every way imaginable. The only thing still moving was the hollow. He quickly reported it to Central 46, who put the blame on the hollow, had it executed and closed down the execution site. Sôya wandered through the Rukongai. He had killed the nobles in every cruel way possible. But he didn't feel better. Revenge hadn't quelled his sorrow. It didn't bring his sister back. What should he do now? He only had two things left: his new power and his sister's last words ("Become a strong soul reaper"). He wandered the world for years, hiding himself. Accompanied only by the laughter of his zanpakutô. Until the day he challenged Kenpachi KURUYASHIKI to a duel.

— Present time | Dangai, inside the Senkaimon

AZASHIRO is woken up by his zanpakutô, Urozakuro. He's in the Senkaimon, the place where he attacked the 11th Squad with countless kidô. He was forcefully returned to this place because the part which he had fused with in the World of the Living, had been sucked dry by the Picarro. He asks Urozakuro how long he was passed out. She answers 30 seconds, in World of the Living time. AZASHIRO asks if his dream just now was Urozakuro's doing. Maybe? She remembers that, back then, he had cried she should've appeared sooner. His sister could've survived! But that was Sôya's own fault, wasn't it? Part of him had thought that his sister would fix things. Like always. It wasn't until he had realised the true horror of his situation that Urozakuro was awakened. AZASHIRO ignores her. He opens the door the World of the Living again. Only 30 seconds? He thinks not much could have changed in 30 seconds. But he's wrong...

— Karakura Town, Mashiba

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

A crack appears in the sky and black spiritual-matter pours out. Then, the crack immediately closes again. Another crack appears somewhere else, only to close again. KURUMADANI and ARAMAKI look up to the sky in fear. And then they resume their argument. ARAMAKI lost sight of his companions and grabbed KURUMADANI to act as guide. On the other hand, KURUMADANI wants to know what the hell is going on and why the scary 11th Squad is on his turf. They fight the most meaningless fight of the day

— Karakura Town, in the sky

AZASHIRO enters the World of the Living and sees that the boundary between the World of the Living and the Garganta is starting to collapse. He senses that it's being caused by ZARAKI and Cien. He's surprised at how much higher their spiritual-pressure is than before. He starts to fuse with the sky near the cracks.

— Inside the Garganta

This happened a short while before ZARAKI removed his eyepatch. There's a car driving through the Garganta, on a road made by Roca's threads. ISHIDA thanks Roca for saving them from the train, although it doesn't feel very pleasant to be here in his normal body. Don realises Roca saved them and calls her a heroine. He invites her to join the Karakura Defence Force as Karakura Platinum. He invites ISHIDA to join too, as Karakura Sky Blue. ISHIDA declines. Roca doesn't want Don to help her. She's a hollow! She's his enemy! They argue a little. Don says he's a hero. He's not the supporter of humans — He's the supporter of those who are sad, human or not. Their conversation is cut short when a strong gust of wind almost knocks over the car. It's ZARAKI and Cien. ISHIDA notices that they're much stronger than before. It reminds him of the time when Kurosaki lost control of his hollow form. The fight is bending the spiritual-matter in the area, causing the Garganta's walls to crack. The two are too busy fighting to notice the car. Don notices the knocked-out Picarro in Cien's tentacles. He wants to save them. ISHIDA heaves a sigh but agrees. Stealing those Picarro away from Cien might weaken him. Roca says she wants to help too. ~~~ AZASHIRO used the cracks in the sky to infiltrate the Garganta. He's shocked at how much higher ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure has become. It makes him remember a certain conversation in the Muken...

— Half a day ago | Seireitei's underground prison Muken

AIZEN and AZASHIRO are having a conversation. AZASHIRO asks AIZEN why he confined Inoue Orihime in Hueco Mundo. AIZEN doesn't give a straight answer. AIZEN says AZASHIRO should ask about who he really wants to know: Kenpachi ZARAKI. AZASHIRO admits that he was surprised to hear that ZARAKI won against an Espada

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

even though he had lost against a bankai-less Ichigo KUROSAKI. Byakuya KUCHIKI's victory was no surprise. KUCHIKI had trained day and night after his defeat. But ZARAKI hadn't. So, why had he won? AIZEN comments that isolating ZARAKI in Hueco Mundo was one of the positive effects of kidnapping Inoue. He figured that, if Kurosaki entered Hueco Mundo, Soul Society would also quicken its procedure to send captains to Hueco Mundo. And they did. Just as planned. AIZEN thought that YAMAMOTO and ZARAKI could pose the biggest hindrance to his plans. He wanted to avoid fighting ZARAKI until after he had awakened the hōgyoku and gained his immortal body. He let Ichigo grow stronger, giving him opponents to fight who were close to him in power. He had deemed the jump from fighting Renji ABARAI to fighting Byakuya KUCHIKI too large. That's why had let him fight ZARAKI. He had set up various little tricks to make sure they'd run into each other. AZASHIRO must've "seen" that. AIZEN says that, although AZASHIRO may see everything, he only looks at the superficial results. That's why he'll lose. He'll lose to the name "Kenpachi".

AZASHIRO thinks AIZEN only said those things to confuse him. He checks up on his tools. It seems the artificial bodies lost to the 11th Squad while AZASHIRO was knocked out. He takes a "look" at any other things which he could use in Karakura Town. He knows where everything is in the town because the Technological Development Bureau once made a complete copy of the town. That's also why he knew where to find the guns earlier. Then he turns his consciousness briefly towards the two monsters fighting in the Garganta. It unsettles him. But he tosses that emotion inside. He takes a deep breath and enters Urozakuro's inner world. He uses her world to discard his useless emotions. Like the way Kurosaki subconsciously isolated part of his heart as hollow in his inner world. His impatience, unease, resentment — He discards everything in this inner world. He also feels a brief irritation at Don KANONJI. It surprises him. Why is he irritated at someone who he has only briefly run into? He tries to discard this irritation into Urozakuro's world as well, but she tosses it back to him ("You can keep this one!"). She warns him that it might help him later. She knows why Don irritates him. He tosses all his "unnecessary" emotions to her. She knows him better than him. He tells her to disappear. She says she really will this time ("Try to defeat ZARAKI and that arrancar on your own! I'll give you a kiss if you do!"). AZASHIRO calls out to her. It remains silent. He quickly checks whether his powers still work. They do. He discards the fear he felt just now. Then he continues to fuse with the Garganta.

— Karakura Town, Mitsimiya, in front of URAHARA Shop

Yumichika and Ikkaku inform Tessai about the situation. URAHARA is absent. Ikkaku is annoyed. The Picarro have run off somewhere and the artificial bodies suddenly

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

stopped moving. So much for fighting. They brought the artificial bodies to the shop. Humans can see them too, so they couldn't just leave them in the streets. They turn their eyes to the sky. Cracks are still coming and going. Then they see something else in the sky. Something which soul reaper hardly ever see. Something which normal humans often see...

— Inside the Garganta

ZARAKI and Cien are still fighting happily. Cien is enjoying himself immensely. His light pink hair is turning gold in places, probably due to Yylfordt's influence. Suddenly they hear a loud noise. A crack appears in the Garganta, showing the blue sky and... a large device flying towards them.

— Karakura Town, in front of the train station, inside the bus

The producer and his team are trying to find Don. They don't see his car anywhere. They hear the sound of an helicopter. A fighter helicopter. It's equipped with a ridiculous amount of firearms. They turn their camera to the helicopter. A few seconds later, its canon starts shooting.

— Dangai

The helicopter's bullets are fused with AZASHIRO, making them able to withstand being inside the Garganta. He used his powers to fuse all kinds of weapons together and create his own special fighter helicopter. But the helicopter is just a distraction to drown out other sounds. So, while ZARAKI and Cien are busy fighting the helicopter, AZASHIRO materialises many artificial bodies behind them and lets them chant kidō again. ZARAKI doesn't even notice it, but Cien does. (Cien keeps the tentacles which are holding the Picarro low, because he can't afford to lose them.) Preoccupied with their battle, none of three powerful beings notice the car that's driving towards the captured Picarro at full speed (on a road made by Roca's threads). Roca used the data from her records to recreate ISHIDA's Ginrei Kojaku with her threads. (He can't summon the real one without his Quincy Cross.) The data is one year old, so it doesn't match ISHIDA's current full power, but he'll just have to manage. He fires at Cien's tentacles, freeing the Picarro. Roca catches them with her threads. Cien notices the attack and looks down. He sees Roca. He freezes. ZARAKI notices this and asks why he stopped. AZASHIRO looks on, stopping his helicopter. (The artificial bodies finished their chants and are ready to strike, but AZASHIRO leaves them on stand-by for now.) The Garganta turns silent... expect for the sound of one car.

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

AZASHIRO finally notices the car too. He sees Roca, the quincy and... Don KANONJI. He feels irritated again, but quickly tucks this emotion away. Cien turns to ZARAKI and says he needs to pause their fight for now. He really doesn't want to, but he has to. ("Please play with AZASHIRO for now.") Cien vows that he'll resume their fight later. He glances at AZASHIRO. He tells ZARAKI not to lose to someone as weak as AZASHIRO. Then, he speeds off, towards Don's car. ZARAKI tries to chase him, but the helicopter fires at him again. AZASHIRO asks ZARAKI why his spiritual-pressure grew so much in such a short time. ZARAKI doesn't know what he's talking about. AZASHIRO sighs and lets the artificial bodies release their kidō. Don's car is driving through the Garganta at full speed. The Picarro are knocked out, but ISHIDA can feel that their spiritual-pressure is being restored. They'll wake up soon... Suddenly, ISHIDA yells at Don to turn the wheel. He quickly does. A Gran Rey Cero flashes by where the car was a second ago. Cien is on their tail. Cien is still quite far away, but Roca can see his face. There's pure hatred on his face. The attack just now was probably aimed at her alone. She tells Don to slow down the car. She gives him a sad smile and thanks him for everything, "The ice cream was really tasty. I hope we can all eat it together next time".

Then, she gets out of the car, opens a gate towards the World of the Living and closes it again after the car has passed through it. She turns to Cien's direction. She's relieved to see that Cien seems to only be interested in her. She has decided to fight Cien. Cien sees Roca run towards the darkness that connects to Hueco Mundo. He chases after her. He hates her. He hates that he was created by such an inferior tool. But that's not the only reason why he wants to destroy her. He's afraid. He's afraid she'll use her powers to create a second or third version of him. He's afraid to be reduced to merely Cien #1. If he was calmer, like Szayelaporro, he could've decided to simply hold Don KANONJI hostage, but he isn't calm. He wants her gone. If he kills her and takes in her "spinning wheel", he won't need the Picarro to replenish his energy anymore. He fires a Cero at her, but she avoids it using Zommari's Gemelos sonído technique. She opens a Garganta and escapes into Hueco Mundo. Cien grits his teeth and follows her into Hueco Mundo. He makes sure to keep his guard up. He knows how troublesome Roca can become if she uses her powers completely.

— Present time | Karakura Town, Tsubakidai, on the roof of the abandoned hospital

Don's car lands on the hospital's roof. He quickly hits the breaks on instinct before they hit the railing. Roca isn't with them. ISHIDA says she probably stayed behind as decoy. Don briefly curses his lack of power, but quickly recovers. He hasn't given up. He will save her! ISHIDA and Don exchange some words. ISHIDA realises that Don knew from the beginning that Roca is a hollow. Then why? Why did you try to save

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

her? Don knows he's weak. He's not god. He can't stop wars, he can't stop people from dying. But he can help save the souls of those who have died. That's why he vowed to himself that he'll never flee as long as someone is in his reach. And Roca was in reach. That's why he can't give up. — "To shake off the hand I once held, to act as if I never felt that sensation... that's something I cannot do!" ISHIDA silently thinks that Don is an idiot like Ichigo. But... he himself is probably an idiot too. ISHIDA says they can't reach Roca, but he knows someone who might be able to: URAHARA. He tells Don to wait here. But then the Picarro wake up. They ask Don if he saved them. Don answered that he, Roca and ISHIDA ("my number two pupil") saved them. The Picarro leave in search of Roca. ISHIDA heads towards URAHARA Shop. Meanwhile, Don is left alone on the rooftop, wondering how he's ever going to get his car down again. Then, he finds something on the backseat of his car...

— Garganta

The Garganta is filled with scent of something burnt. The Souren Soukatsui spells didn't hit ZARAKI. No, the artificial bodies fired the spells at each other, burning them. AZASHIRO turns to ZARAKI and bids him farewell. A hundred burnt artificial bodies circle around ZARAKI, like a merry-go-round. They chant the forbidden spell which releases an all-powerful pillar of flames in exchange for oneself — hadô #96, Ittô Kassô. Flames erupt with ZARAKI at its centre, sacrificing the artificial bodies and a part of AZASHIRO's soul (which was fused with the artificial bodies) in exchange.

— Hueco Mundo, Las Noches

A big part of Las Noches was destroyed during the battles with Ichigo KUROSAKI and co. Especially Szayelapoorro's area suffered much damage. And that's where Roca is standing right now. Cien appears from the Garganta, "So this is where you were." (He guesses she's already been in Hueco Mundo for five minutes now, due to the distortion of time in the Dangai.) He steps towards her. He's furious. She got in the way of his fight with ZARAKI. Did speaking with that clown and quincy make her think that she's no longer a slave? Does she have hope for the future now? She's nothing! Killing her isn't enough. He'll kill that clown, the quincy and everyone in Karakura Town too! Roca calls him a child. She's not taunting him. It's a simple observation. Cien tries to kill her, but she avoids it again. She uses attacks from Dordonii (#103) and Cirucci (#105). Seeing this, Cien curses out, "That damn Nelliel..." Roca remembers Nelliel's kind words...

— The past | Las Noches

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

Nelliel — the 3rd Espada — asks Roca why she doesn't have a zanpakutō, even though she's an arrancar. Roca tells Nelliel what Szayelaporro told her: No zanpakutō materialised when AIZEN turned her into an arrancar. They chat a little more. Nelliel invites Roca to join dinner sometimes, but Szayelaporro arrives and tells Nelliel not to monopolise other people's tools. Nelliel says that he doesn't have the right to call Roca a tool — she's an arrancar. They argue a little more until Nelliel orders him to leave. (Szayelaporro isn't an Espada at this time.) Nelliel turns to Pesche and Dondochakka. Should she request AIZEN to make Roca her fracción? They happily agree. Roca hears this conversation through her threads. It makes her happy (although she feels guilty for eavesdropping). But her hopes are squashed when Nelliel is attacked a few days later and is forced to leave Las Noches. Roca knows her master played part in this.

— Present time | Hueco Mundo

Roca thinks she probably rescued Nell from the Picarro yesterday out of guilt. The skull on her face frays into threads. Those threads take on the shape of a sword in her hand — She creates a zanpakutō out of her threads. But that won't be enough to stop Cien — She releases her resurrección, "...Dance... Teirurenia"

— Garganta

Flames are raging in the Garganta. AZASHIRO can't sense ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure from the flames. It's finally over. He turns to Yachiru behind him and asks if she plans to fight him. She says she won't. She stares at the flames, "Ken-chan is still fine, you know?" He thinks she's in denial. But... a few seconds pass and ZARAKI steps out of the flames. Why!? His spiritual-pressure had disappeared! AZASHIRO feels... fear. He trembles. A chill runs through everything he has fused with — through all of Seireitei. He materialises all the weapons he can and fires them at ZARAKI. Die! Die! Die! He feels another ominous spiritual-pressure, different from ZARAKI's, well up from somewhere inside him. He turns his consciousness towards a certain place in Seireitei and a voice rings through his ears, — "Can you hear me, Kenpachi AZASHIRO?" It's AIZEN. From the Muku.

— Muku

AIZEN tells AZASHIRO that he failed to mention one thing. ZARAKI indeed lost to Ichigo once. But that's only because, in a split second, Ichigo had grown unbelievably stronger after connecting to his zanpakutō. Higher than ZARAKI's instinct had calculated. ~~~ AZASHIRO realises what AIZEN's words mean. ZARAKI's eyepatch wasn't his only constraint. His own instincts constrain his spiritual-pressure. ZARAKI



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

wants to fight, not to murder. He loves to fight on the brink of death. After receiving the first blow from his opponent, he'll calculate his opponent's strength and adjust his spiritual-pressure to be able to fight a close fight. If AIZEN's words are true, ZARAKI merely lost to Ichigo because he couldn't adjust his powers in time to match Ichigo's sudden increase in power... If he had used Ittō Kassō from the start, ZARAKI would've probably died, but AZASHIRO had kept trying to kill ZARAKI with as little power necessary. Causing ZARAKI to adjust and release more spiritual-pressure step by step. As proof, it now took ZARAKI only one swing to destroy the weapons with which AZASHIRO was fused. AZASHIRO decides to do what he did to KURUYASHIKI: fuse with ZARAKI's body and slash him from within. But when he tries to materialise a sword from ZARAKI's lungs, a hot pain runs through AZASHIRO. The pain reminds him of when Uryū ISHIDA had used Letzt Stil and enslaved all the spiritual-matter in the area to defeat Mayuri in Seireitei. The air and stones which he was fused with, had crumbled. The pain he had felt back then is similar to the pain he's feeling now.

ZARAKI's spiritual-pressure is currently too strong for the surrounding spiritual-matter, causing the spiritual-matter to crumble. Burning it. He could probably cut air now. AZASHIRO feels despair. He calls out to Urozakuro, but there's no reply. He erases himself from ZARAKI's vision. ZARAKI decides to just attack everything in the area instead. He tells Yachiru to stand back and unleashes a large attack, creating a big crack between the World of the Living and the Garganta.

— Hueco Mundo

Cien is surprised to see that Roca can actually release her zanpakutō. The mask on her head has been replaced by a cloth of thread and four large arms have grown from her back. They look like spider legs, with sharp nails at their ends. Cien already knows her ability (from Szayelaporro's memories). Szayelaporro hadn't explained Roca's ability to Roca because he had been afraid something like this would happen. Like the way she could reproduce Szayelaporro as Cien based on the data inside her backup, she could also reproduce other things as long as she had data on it. Cien attacks her. She uses Gemelos sonído again to avoid his attacks. But she can't reproduce Zommari's technique perfectly. She can make up to four clones, not five. Roca takes a deep breath. This is her first fight in 250 years. She has a plan to defeat Cien. Just one attack. If she can replicate "that attack" perfectly, she'll win. She laid out her threads all over Hueco Mundo to absorb enough spiritual-matter for this attack. Just a little more... She'll probably need two more minutes to download enough data and to store enough spiritual-matter. She tries to talk to Cien to buy time, but he sees through her tactic. He tries to attack her again. Roca replicates Luppi's Trepadora, growing eight tentacles. She has strengthened the tentacles' defence by spanning her negación

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

threads around them. He fires another a Cero at her. Roca opens her mouth. Cien quickly realises what she's planning and covers his body with his tentacles to defend himself.

Roca swallows the Cero and then fires it back with a force exceeding that of the original — Cero Doble. Nelliel's technique. But taking in a Gran Rey Cero with a technique that's not her own takes a great toll on her body. She coughs up blood. Her entire body aches. But she was used to pain due to Szayelaporro's experiments. Cien is also heavily injured, many of his tentacles have been severed. But his blood is somewhat transparent and vaporises to spiritual-matter-dust as it falls to the ground in drops. Roca realises he doesn't have a physical body. She had assumed Cien had already fused with Szayelaporro's corpse. But Cien knows that this wasn't Roca trump card. She's trying to buy time for another attack. Which is it? Baraggan's curse? STARRK's attack? No. He knows what she's really after... He throws a Cero behind him and destroys what remains of the dome where Ichigo and Ulquiorra once fought. Did she think he hadn't noticed all the threads? Did she plan to reproduce one of their attacks? Hah, too late now.

He grabs her, ready to eat her and steal her power. He hates her, but he thanks her for giving birth to him. Roca gives him a look of pity and says he really isn't Szayelaporro. Szayelaporro would never thank her and he wouldn't... have fallen for such a decoy. The threads covering Roca's body light up. Her spiritual-pressure rises. Szayelaporro is afraid. Did she copy one of AIZEN's attacks? How did she get data on that!? He didn't fuse with the hōgyoku until after he left Hueco Mundo. Did she connect with the Muken!? Roca shakes her head, "Do you know how many months I wandered through Karakura Town?" No way... Cien quickly tries to break her neck, but he's too late. — "What I downloaded... is... the power that stopped AIZEN-sama."

— Karakura Town, Unagiya Shop

Unagiya Ikumi heaves a sigh after another phone call in which she had to explain that they're not an eel restaurant. The town is crawling with policemen. They're rounding up large group of Yakuza. She tells her part-time worker to work inside today. The young man — with bright orange hair — didn't notice the many negación threads connected to him, duplicating his "data". He couldn't know, having lost his spiritual-energy,

— Hueco Mundo

Cien tells Roca to stop. Using an attack like this while not being its rightful owner, would have severe consequence on her as well. She knows that. She knows she has no

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

right to use this power. A power which Ichigo KUROSAKI had gained after overcoming despair again and again. Her body might crumble. But she can't think of any other way to defeat Cien. She can't replicate AIZEN's powers without the hōgyoku. And she can't properly replicate the hōgyoku or things like Baraggan's curse with just her threads. Her threads turn black. A black sword grows in her hand. Part of her arm ruptures. She can't handle this much power. Her neck, her legs, her organs — her body is losing. She's bleeding all over, but she swings the blade. She doesn't utter its name. She unfairly snatched the boy's technique. That's why, at least, she'll won't lay her fingers on its name. The dark night of Hueco Mundo gets enveloped by an even darker shadow. ~~~ Cien is trapped in a dark place. He's surrounded by "death". He starts to crumble... No! He still has to fulfil his promise to the soul reaper! He promised they would fight again! He can't die yet!

— Hueco Mundo

Roca is barely alive. She doesn't know what happened exactly after unleashing her attack. It's empty around her. The debris from Szayelaporro's quarters is gone. There's only sand. She thought she would also be swallowed by the darkness, but part of the orange haired boy's memories had flown inside her. He has met and parted with many people. She used the power of a strong and kind person for herself. She closed her eyes, ready to be carried away, but a flashy man stood out in the boy's memories... — "Bohahaha!" — "I can't possibly run away!" — "Starting today... you are... my number one pupil!" Ah. Don KANONJI acted just the same in the boy's memories as he did with her. Always a hero. It pulls her consciousness out of the darkness. She wipes her tears. Her limbs are in pieces, but she uses her threads to forcefully bind them together again. She slowly gets back up and opens the Garganta. To return to her hero.

Chapter 19 (p402-449) — Present time | Karakura Town, on the roof of the abandoned hospital

Don is impatiently waiting for ISHIDA to return. The Garganta opens and Roca collapses in front of him. Don rushes to her side, worried. She connects her threads with her surroundings and starts healing herself. She tries to smile at him (because he had told her earlier that he wanted her to look happy). Suddenly a pain runs through the four spider legs on her back. Several swords pierce her skin and sew her onto the wall. Don turns to her attacker — Kenpachi AZASHIRO. ~~~ Let's rewind time a little. AZASHIRO ran away from ZARAKI. Although, it was more like he was thrown out of the Garganta and into the sky of Karakura Town by the force of ZARAKI's blow, which had caused another crack in the sky. He's angry. He threw away so many things to become strong. To become the strongest soul reaper, the Kenpachi. But everything has come

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

to nothing. No. He hasn't lost yet. He has two choices: return to Seireitei, or chase after the "thread" power. He's in doubt, but then... Roca appears in the World of the Living again. He could fuse with the air for safety, but he must be quick. Before ZARAKI comes after him. He thinks he has one minute, maybe two.

He materialises some of the few weapons he has left and pins her to the wall. He assumes the human will run away in fear. But the human doesn't run — He actually moves in front of Roca, to shield her. It's Don KANONJI again. The annoyance which he felt earlier resurfaces. But he shouldn't kill a human. The human will become one of the tools to invade Hueco Mundo later. He materialises a few daggers in hands.

Planning to scare the human off. It marks the start of the battle between Don KANONJI and Kenpachi AZASHIRO. Don will lose if he or Roca dies. AZASHIRO will lose if he runs out of time and ZARAKI finds him. ~~~ Don recognises AZASHIRO as one of the spirits from the intersection. But he looks different now. He's pale and breathing heavily. He isn't bleeding, but it looks like he could drop dead any minute. He looks exhausted. He looks... like a cornered animal. A dagger pierces Don's shoulder. It hurts but he doesn't waver. He's the only thing between Roca and this bad spirit. AZASHIRO tells him to move. Don refuses. A second dagger flies into his direction, piercing his leg.

Don asks AZASHIRO why he's doing this. In return, AZASHIRO questions what Don is doing. Why is he protecting a hollow? Don explains he's a hero. He has decided to save Roca. Don's words anger AZASHIRO even more. He knows he shouldn't waste time on this human, but his anger won't be silenced until he breaks this human's will. He throws a third dagger, piercing Don's left shoulder again. Don drops to his knees, but holds his stick high, still protecting Roca. Roca tries to free herself, but she's still too weak. Don tells her it'll be ok. She saved him last time; he'll save her this time. Don turns to AZASHIRO. He may be weak, but that doesn't mean he'll flee. AZASHIRO tells him he'll just die in vain in that case. Don tries to form some sort of ball of spiritual-energy in his hands, but AZASHIRO throws the weakest hadô at him, sending Don flying. AZASHIRO reaches out to Roca, ready to fuse with her. — "I found a bad person!" The Picarro appear. AZASHIRO looks on in confusion as they move to help Don and release Roca. Why are those hollows helping them? — "We're playing hero. We're members of the Karakura Defence Force!" What?

— 20 minutes ago

Don discovers a weakened Picarro girl in the backseat of his car. There's something black on her neck. He tears it off. It's ZARAKI's eyepatch. It tries to eat his spiritual-energy and Don quickly tosses it away. When he turns back to the girl, there's a head-phoned Picarro, holding the girl. The boy asks whether Don saved the Picarro girl. Don

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

says that Roca and ISHIDA helped. He explains about hero's and the Karakura Defence Force. The boy loves it. The boy had come back to admit their defeat towards Don and to receive their punishment. (They had raced to find Roca. Don won.) Don says they must join Karakura Defence Force as Karakura White and help protect the city. The boy and girl leave to inform the other Picarro.

— Present time

More and more Picarro appear from the Garganta. Don asks whether they can open those "gates" themselves. They say yes. Don has a plan... AZASHIRO feels so much anger towards Don. Why won't he give up!? He knows he can't win! He knows he's weak! Don gets in his car and drives towards AZASHIRO. The soul reaper laughs and prepares a kidō spell. AZASHIRO looks closer: Roca isn't in the car. Don's car disappears into the Garganta. Is he leaving her behind? Did the human finally decide to flee? AZASHIRO's anger towards Don disappears. Good. The human finally showed his true colours. But then... The Garganta opens above AZASHIRO. Don jumps out of the car towards AZASHIRO, stick in hand. AZASHIRO laughs. He is about to melt into the air when a sudden realisation shocks him to his core. ...He realises why he hates this human. This human... has the same brave eyes as his sister. The eyes which his sister had when she died protecting him... Don's attack should've missed, but a pain runs through AZASHIRO when the stick hits the air he's fusing with. Attached to the tip of the stick... is ZARAKI's eyepatch. AZASHIRO realises he wasn't angry at Don.

He was angry at himself. His weak self who was too afraid to even lift his sword back then. AZASHIRO — who had less endurance than a normal person in exchange for his powers — is sent flying off the roof. And the kidō spell which he had been preparing explodes. ~~~ Don can barely stand. He mistakenly assumes that the kidō explosion was caused by his own attack. The Picarro cheer. Roca is happy he's safe. Don blinks for a few seconds and then realises he has won, "Yeahhhhh!! Mission complete!!" After leaving Don, ISHIDA had arrived at URAHARA Shop, only to hear that URAHARA was absent. Tessai tells him why the 11th Squad is in the World of the Living. He's about to decide on his next move when he senses the Picarro assemble at the hospital. ISHIDA heads back and sees an explosion in the distance. In a hurry, he arrives at the rooftop of the hospital. And he sees... a medium, yelling and posing like some sort of model, embraced by Roca and praised by over a hundred Picarro.

The scene is so strange that it almost overthrows everything he knows as a quincy. He asks Don what happened. Don answers that he and Karakura White took down a bad spirit. But then, AZASHIRO reappears. He tosses the quincy Cross back to ISHIDA. AZASHIRO is covered in blood. He says that Don only managed to hit him by a sheer

## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

accumulation of coincidences. But that doesn't change the fact that he still did. He thanks KANONJI for letting him find his past again. Before they can ask what he meant, ZARAKI appears from a crack in the sky and cuts him down. (AZASHIRO doesn't try to avoid it.) The hospital collapses under the pressure.

— 30 minutes later | Dangai

AZASHIRO wakes up, standing in the Senkaimon. Mayuri had predicted this is where he would reappear. He's surrounded by the 11th Squad. ZARAKI is standing in front of him. ZARAKI says they'll continue their fight. AZASHIRO asks why. He has already lost. None of his attacks worked. ZARAKI comments that AZASHIRO talks about himself as if he thinks he's weak. He fights like that too. Like a weak dog with a loud bark. Why, though? AZASHIRO is plenty strong. AZASHIRO remembers KURUYASHIKI final words, "Don't... become like me. Show your challengers... your full strength as "Kenpachi". That is the duty of those who inherit the name Kenpachi." AZASHIRO accepts ZARAKI's challenge. He calls Urozakuro's name. Her voice returns ("Did you miss me?"). He tells her to return to her shikai form. She asks if he's sure. He'll no longer be fused to Seireitei. It would take over a year to fuse with such a large area again. If the Technological Development Bureau will let him... He tells her to do it anyway. She smiles and tells him not to die. She dispels her bankai. The zanpakutô in AZASHIRO's hand looks like a regular asauichi. It has no special characteristics. But the spiritual-matter of everything he had been fused with, has been condensed into the sword. AZASHIRO lost his all-powerful shield but gained a powerful spear instead. He introduces himself as Captain of the 11th Squad Kenpachi AZASHIRO. ZARAKI simply replies that he's Captain of 11th Squad Kenpachi ZARAKI. They fight, swords clashing.

Chapter 20 (p450-495) — Soul Society, Seireitei

The 11th Squad leaves the Senkaimon and enters Seireitei. They're covered in wounds and blood. The clash between ZARAKI and AZASHIRO had caused a storm to rage in the Garganta. When it finally settled, only ZARAKI was still there, wounded. But he was in a good mood. It had been fun. Rumours circled that ZARAKI's attack had vaporised AZASHIRO, but Yumichika knew this wasn't true. His proof? His zanpakutô had suddenly been returned to him.

— Seireitei, ÔMAEDA Family

AZASHIRO appears before Mareyo. He apologises for calling her family worthless. Seeing his grave wounds, she starts to heal him. He asks why. She should know by now that he's a criminal. She says that he could've killed her and her father and brother, but he didn't. He thanks her and fades away. He reappears near the gate of the

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

ÔMAEDA's residence. KYÔRAKU is there. He comments that the air in Seireitei is different since AZASHIRO released his fusion to it. (AZASHIRO can still use his bankai, but it takes more effort to move in the air now.) He asks what AZASHIRO plans to do. AZASHIRO answers that he'll return to prison. He asks KYÔRAKU to offer sake to KURUYASHIKI's grave in the Rukongai in his stead. He leaves some money in KYÔRAKU's pocket and fades again. KYÔRAKU mutters, "It seems he's finally been freed from the name "Kenpachi", KURUYASHIKI."

— Seireitei, Muken

AIZEN greets AZASHIRO. He had given AZASHIRO a 10% chance of winning: if he had fought ZARAKI with his shikai right from the start. AZASHIRO comments that there was one thing which AIZEN probably couldn't have predicted: AZASHIRO lost to a powerless clown-like human. The clown had shown him that defeat can indeed be meaningful. AIZEN asks if he's referring to KANONJI. He mentions he ran into him once too. KANONJI hadn't fled, even though he had known he couldn't win. The world is interesting because men like him appear from time to time. Someone like that better suited to rule the world than "that thing" (Soul King). Don't you agree? AZASHIRO asks if AIZEN is trying to recruit him as some tool like he did with Gin and TÔSEN. AIZEN says he's free to interpret his words however he likes. AZASHIRO says, "The next time I appear before you, I might be a different person than I am now."

AIZEN answers, "I'm looking forward to seeing whether you'll be a good neighbour or a good enemy then, Sôya AZASHIRO." Darkness returns to the Muken. ~~~ AZASHIRO returns to his cell. He has the Super-Man drug (developed by the Technological Development Bureau) in his hand. It can make a second feel like a hundred years. He injects it into his neck. He wants time alone now. People will probably come soon, in relation to his escape. He wants to spend a long time in solitude first. He calls Urozakuro. She laughs. Is he sure he wants to spend so much time alone with her? He says he wants to take back the things he left in her care. It'll probably take years. He realises that she had been trying to guide him. He doesn't even know her release command. He'll obtain her power again. Not by her whim, but by his own will this time. He'll learn her Release command. Urozakuro smiles at him and removes the band covering her eyes. AZASHIRO comments that her face resembles his sister's. In the darkness of the Muken, AZASHIRO starts his long, long journey. To reclaim the things which he had thrown away inside himself. To learn true strength and fulfil his promise to his sister.

— Various places in Soul Society

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

soul reapers from the Covert Operations ask ZARAKI about Roca. ZARAKI responds that he completely forgot about her. She was being driven around by some weird guy, though. Who cares? Ikkaku comments that the weird guy is Don KANONJI. He said something about being Ichigo's teacher. Sounded shady... Ikkaku's words spread through Seireitei. Don's name even spreads through the Rukongai — "I know him! I saw him on TV when I was still alive", "He helped me cross over!"

— The next day, evening | Karakura Town, the site of the demolished Sukari Building

— "Bohahaha!" It's time for Don's live recording. There is a huge crowd. Why? Well, Don KANONJI is currently being celebrated as the hero who saved Tokyo. Helicopters, motor gangs, collapsing buildings, explosions... Yesterday's events had shocked many people. The Technological Development Bureau had altered people's memories into believing that those had been acts of terrorism — The people were made to believe that Don KANONJI had accidentally discovered the terrorist's hideout in the abandoned hospital during his recording, had destroyed their weapons and had saved the hostages. Don denied everything, but the people assumed he was just being modest. And, by delaying AZASHIRO, Don had indeed helped save the world.

— Yesterday

Don wakes up in URAHARA Shop. The collapse of the hospital knocked him out for half a day. ISHIDA is also safe. Roca and the Picarro are nowhere to be found. When KANONJI asks about them, ISHIDA readjusted his glasses and whispers, "The girl and those children can last without eating humans because they live in Hueco Mondo, a place rich with spiritual-matter. If they stay here too long there's a chance, they'll lose to their instinct to eat humans." After stating the truth, ISHIDA continues explaining, mixing in his conjectures, "They probably avoided staying in the World of the Living so as not to inconvenience you. Even if they didn't, they'd catch the attention of Soul Society if they linger in the World of the Living too long." KANONJI understands that ISHIDA is speaking ambiguously on purpose. He probably couldn't confirm whether Roca and the others were safe either. KANONJI remembers, when the hospital collapsed, he saw a bright light swallow up the Picarro and felt Roca's "threads". She had saved him again.

— "Farewell, Blue Hawaii! Never forget courage and justice, until the day we meet again!" Having been healed enough, KANONJI bids ISHIDA farewell and jumps into Jeanne d'Arc, which had been parked in the yard of URAHARA's shop. The car had been involved in the explosion at the hospital and much more. It hardly retained its original form, but when KANONJI turns the key, the engine starts up properly, be it



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO

with some strange noises. — "When you're in a crisis or when you're lost in life, call my name! Heya!" Seeing KANONJI drive away while yelling like a cowboy, ISHIDA whispers, "What's truly amazing... is the maker of that car." ISHIDA readjusts his glasses and thinks back on the actions of KANONJI. And with a little respect and a slight smile, he whispers, "I see... That man might really be Kurosaki's teacher."

— Present time | A temporary stage

Don hopes that Roca and the Picarro are alright. He had ordered a ton of ice cream and had stored it in the ice box of the production bus. (Roca had said she wanted to eat ice cream with everything again someday.) Don is greeting his fans when suddenly Cien appears and pins him to a wall. Cien's body is falling apart. Don recognises him and asks whether he did something to Roca. Cien counters that she was the one who did something him. Roca's attack had almost killed him, but he had managed to escape into the Garganta when her body had reached its limit and her attack had weakened. Cien is too weak to go after Roca or ISHIDA now. But he can still eat Don and his audience to gain energy again. Don tries to defend himself but doesn't stand a chance. Then... the Picarro appear. They're holding the ice cream from the bus ("Tasty!"). They form a circle around Cien and use Chutsu Cheria.

— Half a day ago | Hueco Mundo, Las Noches

The Picarro wake up in Tres Cifras. Apacci, Mila Rose and Sun-Sung tell them to be grateful to HARRIBEL. The Picarro starts chatting about going back to the World of the Living. HARRIBEL throws one of her water attacks at them to literally "cool them down", but they simply think it's a game. HARRIBEL heaves a sigh and addresses the woman standing behind her, "I saw your fight yesterday. I'm sorry, but we'll place you under surveillance again." She pauses for a moment, "Can you... look after these children?"

— Present time | Karakura Town

Cien is caught in the Picarro's attack. His only regret is that he can't fulfil his promise to ZARAKI.

— Soul Society, in front of the 1st Squad Barracks

Mayuri tosses a new eyepatch to ZARAKI ("Why do I have to waste my time on this barbarian?") It absorbs ten times more than the previous one. Akon calls Mayuri and informs him that Kon has grown to giant size and invaded the barracks of the 12th Squad's female soul reaper. Mayuri leaves. ZARAKI tells Yachiru that he's looking

## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190

forward to fighting Cien again someday. Maybe tomorrow, maybe in a hundred years. Someday.

— Karakura Town

Cien's consciousness is barely hanging on. Roca reaches out a negación thread to him. He hesitates to take it. His soul is being chipped off bit by bit with each passing second. Szayelaporro's dark greed, Ylfordt's impulses — Everything is chipped away until he's left with only one promise... That's when Cien grabs the thread and gets merged into a sea of information. He's no longer trapped by Szayelaporro's and Ylfordt's memories. He holds only his promise in his heart. What's left of Cien's soul is enveloped in threads and sleeps like a foetus. ~~~ After some time, the Wandenreich will attack Hueco Mundo. Roca will be watching the Picarro "play" with the menos in menos Forest. And a child arrancar with pink and gold hair will be fighting with the red-haired soul reaper Ashido, saying "I have to become stronger ...because I have a promise to fulfil." But that's another story. ~~~ The Picarro tell Don that "big sis" let them go to the World of the Living for a bit. Don quickly looks around to see if Roca is here too.

He feels a string of thread wrap around his finger and hears Roca say, "Spirits are always with you." This incident was observed by Soul Society and Don KANONJI was marked as "the mysterious man who tames arrancars and says he's Ichigo KUROSAKI's teacher". Central 46 feared that soul reaper would lose part of their fighting spirit if they knew that there are "friendly arrancars" out there. That's why they censored articles about Don KANONJI. When Don turns back to the Picarro, they're already gone. Don's commentator asks if he's alright. The audience has no clue what happened just now. With tears glistening in his eyes, Don simply yells, "Yeahhh!! Mission! Complete!" Don could tell from Roca's voice that she's happy. And that's enough for him. — "Spirits are always with you!!"

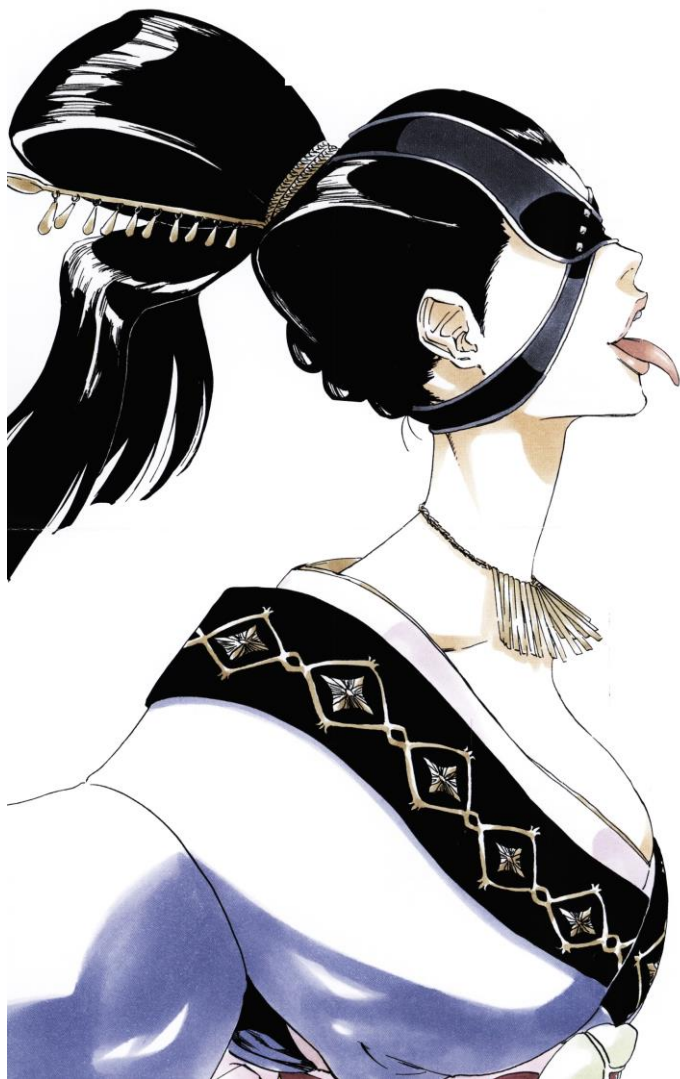
— A few weeks later | Karakura Town, Kurosaki residence

Yuzu and Karin are watching a rerun of Don's recording in Karakura Town. It's late, but they're staying up to wait for their big brother. Ichigo arrives and they greet him happily. He tells them to hurry to bed.

END

## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190





## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



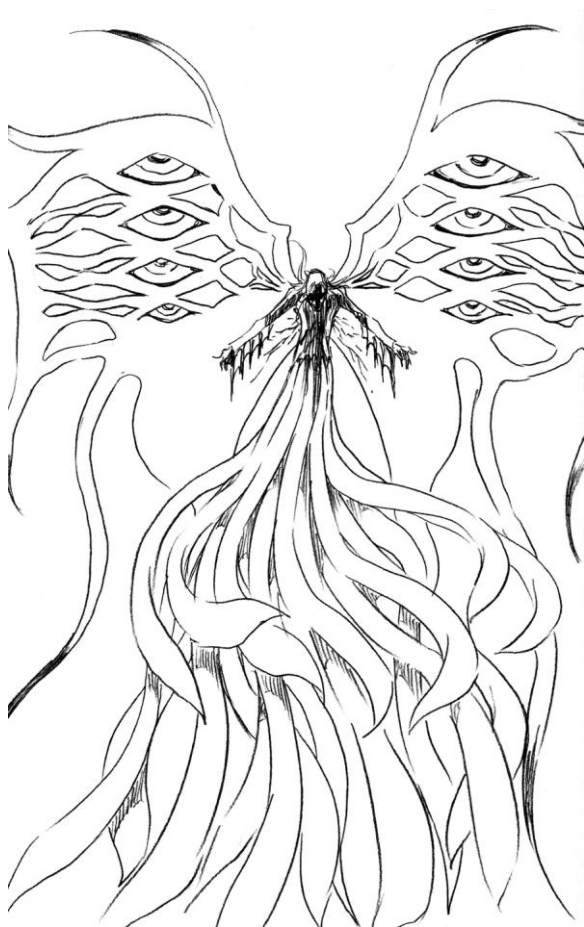
## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## **Spirits Are Forever With You**

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## Spirits Are Forever With You

summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190



## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO



## Spirits Are Forever With You

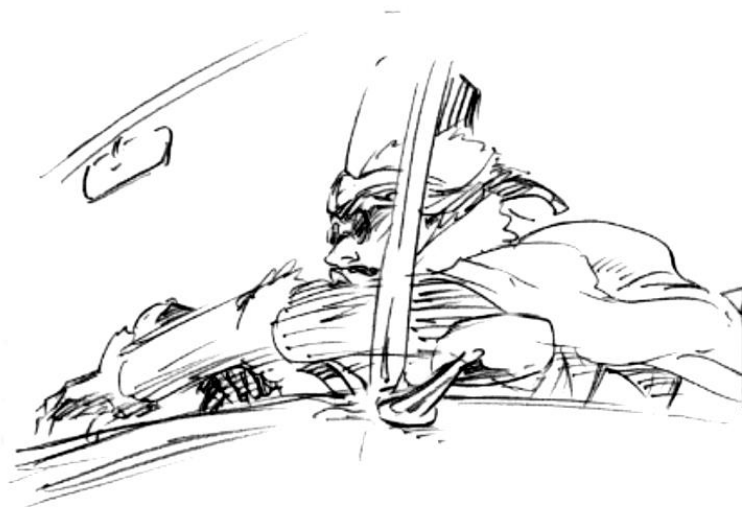
summary translated by tenshiscave & edited by tari101190





## Spirits Are Forever With You

written by Ryōgo NARITA & Tite KUBO





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



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

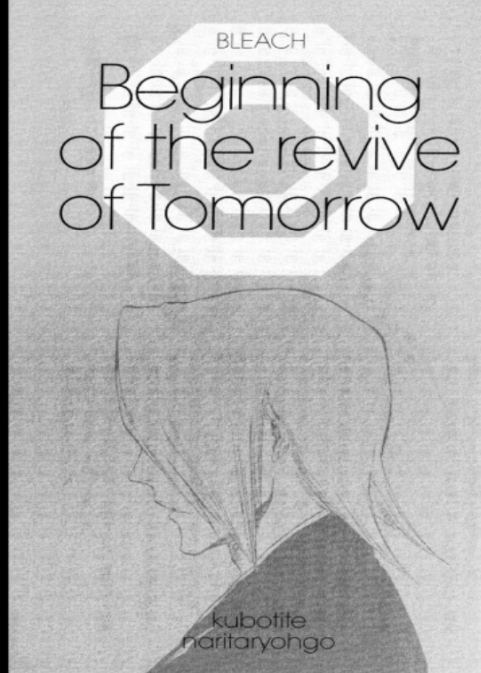
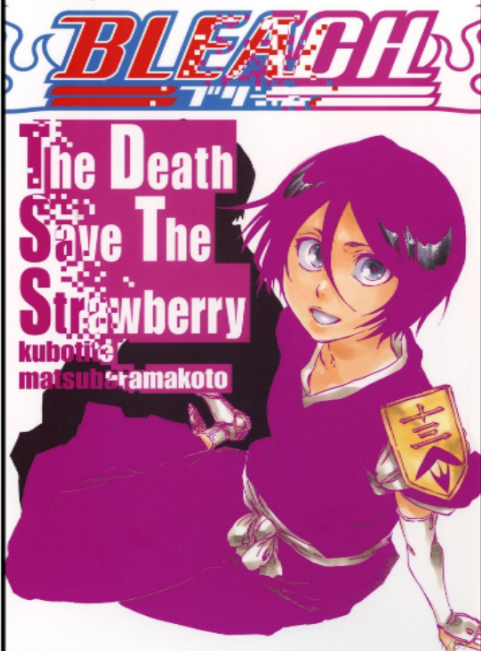
小説 JUMP J BOOKS



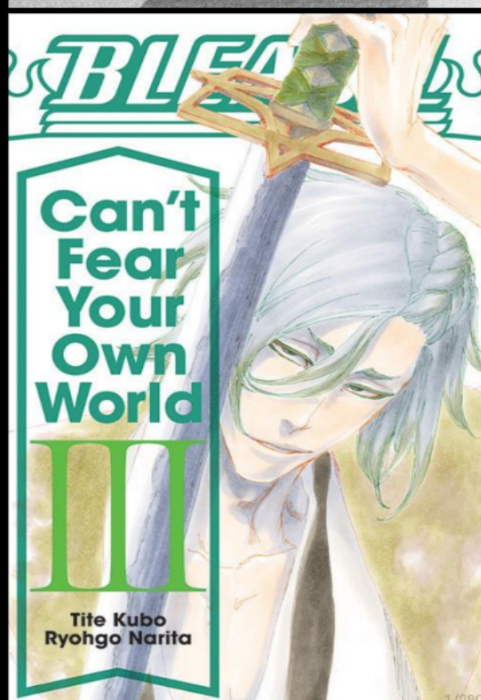
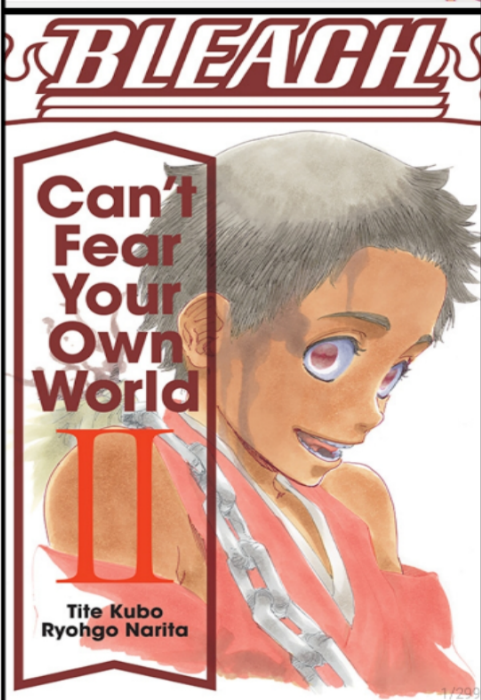
小説 JUMP J BOOKS



小説 JUMP J BOOKS



小説 JUMP J BOOKS



小説 JUMP J BOOKS

