

Crossing Over

Von konpaku

Kapitel 7: Small Reunions

Chapter 7 – Small Reunions

Near Konoha

“Your quarreling caught the attention of the guards from the nearby village! They are on their way here to find out what the ruckus is about! If we don't leave here right now they will catch you and they will ask even more questions than they already do!” Yelled Rangiku gesturing in the direction of the Hidden Leaf Village.

Seeing that the other two did not comprehend her words she grunted and simply grabbed them by their collars and dragged them a little farther into the forest. Away from the direction in which the ANBU were searching for them.

After a short while of stumbling behind their colleague the men just entered into a jog beside her.

When she saw an old rundown shack they finally stopped and entered it.

Waving her hands and whispering the incantation of a barrier-Kidou she hid their presence from any possible follower.

“Well, this should do...” She mumbled, turning to the others who just looked at her in disbelief.

“What's the meaning of this?” Ikkaku demanded to know when he got out of his stupor.

“The explosion brought us to this place. It's...”, Rangiku started her explanation, but was interrupted by “SO IT WAS YOUR FAULT!”

“SHUT UP!”

Raising her Reiatu she hit the men again, causing them to cower in fear.

“Would you stop it so I can explain?!” She tried again.

Glaring at each other and looking at her angry face the two decided that keeping quiet was the safer choice.

“May I?” She asked with an innocent smile, but murderous intent in her eyes.

“Sure go ahead.” They replied at once waving their arms in defeat.

“It's like this: The explosion Renji caused – ”

“Told ya!” Ikkaku interrupted again, elbowing the other.

“AS I WAS SAYING...”, Rangiku started again staring intensely at the bald man.

“That incident caused us to enter this realm. It is a realm of the living, but not the Karakura Town one. The people here still live in a feudal system, having Daimyo's and stuff. Also they have several Ninja villages...”

“Ninjas?” Renji interrupted this time.

"Yes Ninjas, would you..."

"You mean like a whole bunch of Squad Two cowards?" The third seat wanted to know.

"They aren't cowards. Any of them. And if you interrupt me one more time...", she threatened, leaving the result untold.

Gulping the two motioned for her to continue.

"Where was I? Ah yes, Ninjas." Rangiku tried to remind herself tapping a finger at her chin and snapping when she found her answer.

"The village closest to us is the Hidden Leaf. I've been there for some days now. They are really nice people though they try to get information out of me every night...", she paused thinking of what to say next.

"You've been here for several days?" Abarai asked using her pause.

"How do they try to get the information?" Madarame followed suit.

"Yes I've been here for several days. I also noticed that you weren't here til today. I set up a map with cute, little flags that I made and..." She put her fingers together, showing the size of the flags and was about to talk more about her artistic abilities, but stopped herself from that. This was no time to goof off.

"The map I made contains the information where everyone is. If you hadn't made such a commotion I would have started searching for you this evening and wouldn't have to skip out of a talk with the Hokage that suspiciously." She answered the first question.

"What's a Hokage?" Both of them asked, forgetting about the other question.

"The Hokage is the leader of the Leaf. Every village has their own Kage. From the amount of people underneath them they would be akin to a captain."

"What did you have a talk with the captain for?" Ikkaku asked misusing the title.

"Kage. Hokage to be precise." She corrected him.

"They do have captains, but they are way lower ranked. Anyway...we were just about to have our usual talk over some Sake. She's one awesome woman. Exactly how I like 'em to be." Matusmoto fancied over Tsunade wiggling a bit back and forth.

"So she's hot?" Ikkaku concluded imagining a woman like Rangiku and starting to blush a little.

Blushing as well Renji cleared his throat and asked more seriously: "So you've gained her trust?"

Ignoring Ikkaku, Rangiku answered: "No. I don't think so. She lets me stay. And as I told her that there are more of our group she even allowed me to gather everyone in the village. Still the place I'm staying at belongs to a man that tries to use his...what do they call it?...Jutsu to collect intel from me."

"Jutsu?" The anticipated question came right away.

"It's a bit like Kidou. Though it uses physical and spiritual prowess...", seeing their uncomprehending faces she simply told them: "It's like Kidou only different."

They nodded, even though they did not understand a word. Being as inept with the Deamon Arts as one could be.

Sighing Rangiku went on.

"Anyway. Your show earlier caught the attention of the ANBU, an execution group like our Omnitsukidou, and yes they have a Squad Two among the Squad Two people." She answered Ikkaku's unasked question, causing him to close his mouth reluctantly without saying a word.

"These guys are probably searching the forest right now. So I skipped out to warn you and get you out of their way. And now we have to find a way to get you properly into the village." She closed her explanation, releasing the Kidou.

Not too far away the ANBU gave up on their search. They had lost track of both Rangiku and the strange force. So they couldn't do any more than to return to the village. Reporting an unsuccessful mission and hoping the Hokage would not be too mad about it.

In another forest

After running and Shunpo-ing through this forest for a long time Byakuya finally found the Reitsu he had searched for so long. Rukia was close, so he picked up his pace again.

Sensing her brother's presence as well Rukia stopped and changed her direction immediately. Too relieved to finally meet him again in this strange land she used Shunpo to reach him.

Stopping when they noticed her absence the group followed the trail Yumichika had picked up.

"Nii-sama!" Rukia cried out loud when she saw her brother in the distance.

Halting their movements when they came close to each other the Kuchiki siblings stood before each other. Looking up with watering eyes Rukia couldn't help herself but to launch forward and hug her brother around the waist. Unsure and still unused to this habit Byakuya remained calm and unmoved by his sister's actions. Moving away Rukia respectfully bowed down.

"I am sorry Nii-sama."

"Don't be." He responded placing his hand on her head.

"I am glad to see you unharmed as well." He then told her, smiling slightly.

Feeling his touch and the warmth accompanying it Rukia lost a weight on her heart. Her brother was here with her. He really was here. She let a single tear slip down her cheek. As she straightened herself she met his gaze and returned his smile.

"And who's that?" A now familiar voice asked from behind her.

"Kuchiki Byakuya-dono." Yumichika told the cat boy without hesitation and bowed down respectfully.

"You gotta be a big shot if everyone's bowing to ya." Kankurou concluded further.

"He is the head of one of the four noble families in our realm, insolent brat!" Rukia scolded him.

By now she had turned around to face the youngsters. Looking surprised the insulted wasn't able to say a word.

"We should take a break so you can regain some energy." Gaara suggested.

"No, we should keep moving." Byakuya declined.

"Are you being followed?" The Kazekage asked locking eyes with the noble.

"It may be." The Kuchiki simply answered unwavering.

"Well then we shall move on." He decided breaking the gaze.

They returned to their previous route using the branches of the trees to jump through the top of the forest. Following it for some time Byakuya slipped more than once and barely managed to come to a halt in a way that wouldn't be caught as unusual. As it occurred more often Rukia suddenly requested: "Could we take a break?"

Exchanging looks of understanding the group knew this wasn't for her own sake, but for her brother's. Nodding in agreement they returned to the ground and took a rest.

Crossing his legs Byakuya sat down leaning against the trunk of a tree. Inwardly

thanking his sister for the opportunity to regain some energy. With this many people they would be able to hold off anyone who might still be following him. Using this chance he focused his mind on his sword trying to find a way to release it again.

'Senbonzakura' He called out.

At first he didn't gain an answer, but faintly he could hear:

'Byakuya-sama'

Going deeper into his mind he searched for his Zanpakutou spirit. Following the calls he soon reached a completely white room. Looking more closely he could see bars that separated him from the huge cherry tree on the other side. A wooden frame surrounded the bars, making it almost seem like a huge door. Yet the doorway itself seemed to be sealed, judging by the two papers with the Kanji for "seal" written on them.

'Senbonzakura.' The Shinigami called out again.

'Byakuya-sama' The voice of the tree echoed accompanied by the rustling of his blossoms.

Cautiously Byakuya stepped closer. Slowly he ripped off one of the seals, but it didn't bring the result he had hoped for. Neither did tearing off the other. Instead of freeing his spirit from its prison they simply reappeared again, causing a puzzled look to appear on Byakuya's face. Only in company of his most trusted companion – beside his wife – would he allow himself to show this kind of emotion.

'What is the meaning of this?' He demanded to know from his sword, pointing at the papers.

'I do not know Byakuya-sama' The tree replied reluctantly, fully knowing the Shinigami would be disappointed by this.

'But I think I can still lend you my strength so you will be able to move onwards.' He offered his master instead.

Slowly the blossoms fell and floated through the bars, surrounding Byakuya and granting him some of his own energy.

In the outside world a whirlwind that smelled of cherry blossoms and held a rosy colour had enclosed Byakuya. He hadn't moved a muscle and this phenomenon would seem rather unusual if they hadn't all known their own ways to muster strength in the time of need. Yet this was different. Temari didn't dare to think of it as pretty. Pretty was a girly way of thinking and she was not at all girly. Looking at her brothers she could see confusion in Kankuro's and consideration in Gaara's face. She didn't know what to make of it herself. The other girl, Rukia, glowed nearly in admiration, while that annoying twit sparkled with joy. He definitely thought this to be pretty.

Opening his eyes again the Kuchiki looked at the people around him, discarding their different impression by simply turning towards Rukia.

"Are you able to move on?" He then asked his sister trying to cover his own display of weakness earlier.

"Yes I think I'll be alright." She helped her brother, knowing that he had seemingly found a way to still gain power from his Zanpakutou.

She had expected nothing less from her brother; one of the most powerful captains of the thirteen court guard squad's.

Near the entrance of Konoha

On their way to the village Rangiku had told her comrades more about the village and the war that was going on. Besides that, she told them about Inoichi and his family and what she had learnt about their abilities.

"So you think he uses that Yuzu stuff to get into your mind?" Renji asked after a moment of silent contemplation.

"I don't think so, I know it. Ino-chan told me about it. And she only made me promise not to tell her father that she did so." Rangiku corrected, smiling brightly.

She could still see the flustered girl, when she realized what she had told the foreigner.

"Do you think they will do the same thing with us?" The other lieutenant asked then, stopping in his tracks.

"Probably." Matsumoto concluded sighing, stopping as well.

"But you said, you talked to that chick about us, what's different to that dude forcing information out of us with his little tricks?" Ikkaku wanted to know, standing before them.

"Are you stupid or something?" Rangiku asked before adding "Wait don't answer that one."

Offended the other Shinigami huffed, but was silenced by the woman as she explained:

"When I voluntarily tell her about the structures and traditions of Soul Society then I am not breaking my vow to not tell a mortal about our realm. But if they just take every available piece of information from my memories, then it is not clear whether they would understand them correctly."

"They might even feel threatened by it" Pondered Renji folding his arms in front of him.

"So we better not let them do that?" Madarame concluded.

"Exactly. So be careful while sleeping. As he would probably attempt it at night." Rangiku warned them.

"Have you found anything else, where we could get more information on this realm?" The red haired lieutenant asked.

"Of course, silly. There is a library that holds just about everything this village has ever known." The other replied.

"Can we go there like that?" He wanted to know next.

"You think there is something important?" Ikkaku interjected.

"My gut says so..." Renji mumbled, looking down.

"Mine as well." Rangiku assured him, placing a hand on his shoulder.

Everyone thought Renji to be just another brute from Squad Eleven, but his time in the Sixth Squad had helped him to expand his strategic thinking. Rangiku knew better than to judge a person by mere appearance and attitude. Though the boy still seemed insecure at displaying it. With a former superior like Zaraki Kenpachi, the most brutal and thoughtless captain in the Gotei 13, this was no surprise. Some things just stay with you longer than you wish.

"But I don't think we could freely enter the library. We probably would have to sneak in to look if they have anything about Shinigami or akin to it." Matsumoto told them after a pause.

"Sneaking into a building of Squad Two like people. Sounds like fun." The third-seat exclaimed grinning widely, grabbing the place where his sword would have been. Witnessing this Renji added another question:

"What happened to our Zanpakutous?"

“I wish I could tell you...” Rangiku replied sadly.