

I dreamed.

In the dream, I have my Zanpakuto in my hands.

I'm not even sure what I'm doing, or where I am.

All I know is that the scenery in front of me is changing at a frightening speed.

I feel uncertain.

I feel doubt.

And then, the dream stops.

[Adam POV - Inner World.]

The moment my dream stopped a strange sense of awareness came over me, the kind of awareness anyone would subconsciously connect to being awake.

Though, I wasn't sure being awake was the right term right now.

I wasn't in the guild, in the room Makarov had given me until I could get something of my own.

No, I find myself in a completely white world.

I remembered my inner world being similar to Ichigo's.

Perhaps it had changed?

But that wasn't normal, was it?

"I wonder wh--" I stopped mid-sentence, realizing something. My voice, it was deeper, and it sounded just like it had before I had reincarnated.

Taken back by this revelation, I looked down at my body, revealing that not only my voice had changed, but my body as well.

I looked exactly how I used to look before I died.

"It's one of those dreams, is it?" I muttered out loud, suddenly realizing I wasn't alone anymore.

My Zanpakuto had appeared in the middle of this world of white nothingness.

"Depressing, isn't it?" Zanryuzuki's lips pulled into a thin line as she gazed out at the white sky. She turned to me and her eyes seemed to ask a question.

I didn't know what to answer.

I didn't even expect her to see me like this like I used to be.

Zanryuzuki turned her head up to look at the sky, her long dark hair falling over her back like a curtain. Her voice was soft but heavy with emotion. "I already knew about your past life."

I suppose that is to be expected. Zanpakutos are supposed to know their masters better than they know themselves.

Zanryuzuki paused and slowly turned her head to look at me. Her eyes were intense, almost piercing. "Did you know that a Zanpakuto is actually stronger before it gains its name?"

I... that can't be, can it?

A blade without a name is just that, a blade.

Zanryuzuki's eyes softened, and a faint smile formed on her lips as she noticed my confusion. She gestured slowly with her

hands as if to emphasize her point. "Asauchi are actually the ultimate Zanpakutō, for they have the potential to become anything. Whether that anything is something powerful or not depends on the Shinigami. That is the reason why Shinigami in training must spend their every waking moment with their own Asauchi, so they slowly and methodically imprint the essence of their soul into their Asauchi. This is how they guide and mold their own unique Zanpakutō"

"I never had you as an Asauchi," I replied, wondering how she had formed if that was the case.

Zanryuzuki slowly moved her head and gazed up at the white sky. "You did, but not in a traditional way. I was always within you, from the moment your soul entered this world, I was with you. It wasn't until the Tower that my name started to form."

"Why am I here? What happened to my inner world?" I asked, trying to figure out what was happening.

"This is your inner world," Was Zanryuzuki's reply.

"I know that, but what happened to it? There used to be buildings around, but now... now there's nothing," I replied.

Zanryuzuki's dark eyes locked onto mine and she said, "You happened," her voice laden with meaning. She gestured with a slender arm around the room. "This world looks how it looks because of you."

Is it my fault?

What had I done then?

"Like a Zanpakuto, the world within a soul is given form by the Shinigami," Zanryuzuki said calmly. "And like a Zanpakuto each world is drastically different from one another, making them unique."

I looked around, and there was nothing. Just a white void as far as the eye could see.

"Why is my world empty then?" I asked, wondering what had I done to erase everything there was before.

"You're full of doubt," Zanryuzuki turned to me, her gaze was hard yet soft as she stared into my eyes. "Not only on me but in everything."

That couldn't be right.

I don't recall a moment I was drowning in self-doubt or a moment I didn't trust in my Zanpakuto.

"But... I don't doubt myself," I replied, a small frown on my face. "Or you. Not even when I was at the Tower."

Zanryuzuki remained silent for a moment. "There's more than one face to the feeling that is doubt, Adam. This world and its instability is a representation of that."

I was doubting myself in a different way...?

"This world has had many different shapes," The corners of Zanryuzuki's mouth slowly curved upwards, but her eyes remained sorrowful as her lips twitched in a tender, almost imperceptible smile. "The one you saw, a world full of buildings similar to a metropolitan city, and the ones you didn't see. There was one submerged in the sea, one of a forest brimming with life, and there was the one that was on the moon."

My inner world had changed that much in so little time?

Zanryuzuki's heavy gaze seemed to pierce through me for a moment and her lips curved down into a somber frown. "Your soul is in conflict," she murmured, the words barely audible in the stillness of the room.

"How can I fix it?" I asked, hoping she would know how. I didn't know much about the exact workings behind an inner world but even I could tell that these many changes weren't something good.

Zanryuzuki's features softened. "You have to accept yourself as you are now. Not as the man you used to be," She said in a

gentle, understanding voice. "The one you used to be is and will always be a part of you, but that isn't who you are anymore. You cling to that perception of you because you feel it will comfort your pains because you feel that who you are now, is not capable of dealing with the circumstances around you."

I wasn't accepting myself?

I didn't doubt Zanryuzuki was telling me the truth, but I just couldn't see or remember an occasion that I rejected who I was now.

Zanryuzuki stared at me intently, her eyes narrowing. Her voice seemed to echo off the walls of the room as she spoke. "Who are you?" she asked, her gaze fixed on me. "Are you Adam? Or are you the man that died and reincarnated in his body? That's the question you and only you can answer."

I looked at her for a moment and before I could give her an answer, I felt a strong pull.

[Adam POV]

I slowly opened my eyes, adjusting to the soft illumination of the sun shining through the window of my room. I took in my surroundings as I lay in my bed, feeling the smooth sheets against my skin as I stared at the ceiling.

I guess Zanryuzuki had said what she wanted to say and had kicked me out.

"Who am I?" I muttered.

That was quite a philosophical question.

I sighed.

Was Zanryuzuki right? Was I rejecting myself? And if so in what manner?

It wasn't like I could just stop seeing myself as I have for most of my life.

As I pondered over this dilemma, the sounds of shouting and clanging could be heard from down in the guild hall. The voices and noises became increasingly louder as the seconds passed and their friendly squabble intensified.

I might as well eat something before I start asking myself the questions that have haunted many philosophers throughout the ages.

Pushing the covers of my bed aside, I jumped out of the bed and walked to the door.

The moment I opened the door a wave of noise filled my ears. Downstairs the guildhall was alive with people clashing most of them laughing as they did so, while others shouted encouragement to their partners.

Amidst the chaos, the only one that wasn't smiling was, who I could see was about to lose his patience.

It was only a matter of time before he went full Giant on them to scold them for their behavior.

Mapping the best path to avoid getting hit by someone in an accident, I descended through the staircase of the guildhall and approached the bar.

Waving at her, I took a seat and asked her if she had anything available for breakfast, and if she was allowed to give me some.

She smiled at me nodding before opening a small wooden window in the wall, where she pulled out a platter of oatmeal with diced fruit sprinkled on top.

“A healthy breakfast for a growing mage.” The woman said, reaching for my face with her hands with a motherly smile,

her eyes twinkling with affection, before going back to work, but not without giving both of my cheeks a pinch before releasing me.

I wonder why adults always do that to kids.

I never felt the need to do that.

A few meters away, I could as Makarov's face turned beet red with fury and his voice boomed through the room. He pounded one of his fists against the wooden table as he shouted, his body growing in size, "ENOUGH!"

The fight came to a complete stop, I guess they know when to stop.

"Hey don't be mad Master. It's bad for your age."

That voice, Gildarts.

I blinked, that didn't compute at all. If Gildarts were to have been in that fight I would've woken up covered in debris, or dead.

The guy is so destructive that Magnolia decided it was best to completely rebuild and make a mechanical system so that when he arrives they can minimize how much he destroys.

Confused, I turned around only to find Gildarts setting a table behind me.

When in the fuck did he get there?

"Morning kiddo," Gildarts waved at me, noticing I was looking at him.

"You were there all this time?" I asked.

"No, the chair summoned me from the depths abyss," Gildarts replied with a grin. "You tell me brat, was I here or not? Maybe your magic is not seeing things, like the price of things."

Oh, I see, so that's how we're going to play this. Okay, two can play that game.

"Maybe," I smiled, turning on the innocent charm up to a thousand. "But that's water under the bridge? So tell me? Did you sleep well, dad?"

Gildarts reaction to this was a full-body twitch. "You said I wasn't your dad yesterday, brat."

I looked down as sad as I could. "Because I knew you didn't want me, you left mom, and you left me. But that's okay."

Gildarts twitched once again, and now the entire guild was muttering under their breath how bad of a father he was, that they never expected Gildarts of all people to be so rotten.

"Who said that?!" Gildarts barked, looking around the crowd. "I dare you to say it in my face!"

"I can't believe... Have I taught you nothing? You never abandon your children, son," Makarov said, his eyes looking down in sadness and disappointment.

Though I could see the mischievousness shining through the old wizard.

He was playing along with me.

Seeing Gildarts panic, I grinned before going back to my oatmeal.