

Real Sex  
by debbiechan

Disclaimer: Kubo Tite created Bleach. I don't own the characters of Ichigo and Ishida; I share them with an entire fandom.

Description: One possible outcome of the current rescue arc. Everyone goes home safely, but Ichigo and Ishida are trapped in Hueco Mundo. P (some) P. IchiIshi.

Warnings: NC17 yaoi, one woobie moment, unsexy blowjobs, anilingus, and this fic is almost 9000 wds long.

*for Quaedam because she asked for it*

## Part One

*"It seems sort of lonely, don't you think? There's nothing here." ~ Ichigo about Hueco Mundo, chapter 244*

Ichigo wanted to punch something, but that would help as much as slicing Tensa Zangetsu through sand.

Ishida's arrows, too, were impotent against their prison, so it looked like the two would have to wait for the Desert Brothers to return.

"If they ever come," Ishida said flatly. "They may be migratory creatures who build nests only to abandon--"

"Shut up."

Ichigo looked at the pile of rocks and sand made by his last attempt to blast out of the underground burrow. Any more avalanches like that and the place would fill up with debris; there would be even less room between himself and Ishida's obnoxious intelligence.

*Get out, get out, get out.* The missive shouted in Ichigo's brain and pumped in his heart and lungs.

Not that Ichigo was claustrophobic or that the burrow was small. It was as spacious as one of Aizen's palace rooms. The circular den was miles beneath where ground met sky,

but the reiatsu of Arrancar who had built it glowed. Between slabs of earth on the floor and walls, sandspecks twinkled in a soft white light.

*At least it's not pitch-black dark down here.*

Ichigo placed his open palm against a shiny but blank, blank expanse of wall.

*Get out, get out, get out.*

There shouldn't have been urgency in Ichigo's wanting to escape. Chad, Inoue, Renji and Rukia had crossed the channel leading back to the Living World, and the worst danger was behind his friends. Here, there was no one who needed Ichigo's protection (at that thought, Ichigo cast an impatient look at Ishida), and the Desert Brothers had sworn to come back and show the way out. Those clowns weren't so moronic as to forget *where* they'd hidden him and Ishida from the Aizen's Espada, were they?

Were they?

What Ichigo didn't understand was why Ishida seemed so comfortable here.

Ishida was kneeling, cupping sand in one hand, and stirring through the stuff with one long finger. His mind could *not* be analyzing the ingredients of sand any further....

*The guy is a burrowing little rodent.* Since the time Ichigo and Ishida had entered the den, Ichigo's eyelids had been developing a tic (random paroxysms of squinting), but Ishida's face had been relaxed. Those serious-business battle eyebrows were gone. *He's used to hiding. He calls it strategy but--*

Ichigo's imagination, starved for pictures in the colorless enclosure, visualized Ishida as a skinny white weasel popping in and out of desert holes ...twitching his nose....

*I can't live like this. It's better to meet the enemy head-on or die trying.*

Ichigo's hands clenched. A loud exhalation of breath escaped him. Ishida's head shot up.

"Kurosaki," Ishida's voice warned. "*Dooooon't.*"

"Arrrrgh!" Ichigo wasn't going to put his whole strength or even half of it into his fist, but he needed to fight something and that wall of sand was just asking for a dent.

Then Ishida tackled him, and much to Ichigo's surprise, knocked him off his feet.

"Stop it," said Ishida. "Kill yourself by being an idiot but not the both of us."

Ichigo liked hearing distress in the bastard's voice because Ishida had been annoyingly calm the past few hours.

“I wasn’t going to blast anything,” Ichigo grumbled. “What’s this knocking me down business? Since when are you some bad-ass street-fighter?”

“I’m a Quincy. I’m not going to let you get away with this behavior. Believe it or not, I really don’t want to watch a fighter like you die *stupidly*.”

Ishida’s face assumed the most infuriating self-admiration, and his arms let go of Ichigo’s knees. As the Quincy was rising to his feet, Ichigo, still lying on the ground, tripped him. Ishida fell against Ichigo’s body again.

“Don’t fuck with me, Ishida.”

A rivalry, the one Ichigo thought had abated, hunkered like a tangible presence between them.

“This is pointless,” Ishida said. His voice was muffled because his face was pressed against Ichigo’s chest and his arm was being twisted behind his back.

“Do *you* want to die--from either boredom or old age in this place?” Ichigo was going to fight Ishida if he couldn’t fight anything else. “Isn’t it better to take our chances breaking out?”

“This isn’t a time for showing off your lame karate. Even for you, Kurosaki, this is extremely moronic.”

Ishida’s arm felt awfully thin, no bigger than Karin’s arm when Ichigo hand-wrestled her. Karin always complained when her brother tried to let her win.

The reminder of Ishida’s frailty shocked Ichigo; he was used to viewing Ishida a fighter capable of superhuman displays of power. *But that’s only when he manipulates that spirit stuff in the air. When he’s not pointing that arrow, anyone could bowl him over with one punch.* Ishida was resisting the Ichigo’s grasp with force that tugged in the opposite direction, but Ichigo felt he could snap the bone without even trying. *By accident.*

Ichigo dropped Ishida’s arm.

Ishida lifted his head off Ichigo’s chest.

“It seems,” Ishida said, “that you’ve recognized the futility of these displays of machismo?”

*Where did Ishida pick up a word like that? Machismo.*

“It’s uncertain how long we’ll be here. Luckily our reiatsu, like that of the Hollow who live here, can live off the atmosphere. We won’t starve or die of dehydration.”

*Machismo. Doesn't that mean something like super-manliness in Mexico? I'm not like that. Ishida's the cocky over-confident one.*

“Will you look at me, Kurosaki? You have to swear--swear on your mother's shrine--that you are not going to try to blast out of here again. Even if our combined forces could cut through the Arrancar reiatsu that's packing the ground over our heads, all the sand would fall on us. Do you understand gravity, Kurosaki? We would be buried under tons of sand.”

Ichigo huffed and turned his face away. “Yeah.”

Ishida flexed his elbow and rubbed his shoulder. As though all he had been waiting for was Ichigo's acknowledgement of defeat, he got up. He wiped sand off his white pants.

“There's no telling how long we'll be here, but just stay quiet, stop throwing punches and let me think.”

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No night, no day, no measure of how much time was passing. Taking ordinary circadian rhythms into account, Ishida figured that maybe thirty or so hours had elapsed when Kurosaki fell asleep.

Ishida felt relieved. The loudmouth was always wanting to talk, and Ishida wasn't used to conversation. He lived alone, worked alone, organized a reality around himself that didn't match everyone else's.

He pulled up his sleeve and pushed a thumbnail into his arm. The flesh popped back up without any telltale signs of dehydration. He wasn't thirsty and he didn't feel the urge to urinate. Did Hueco Mundo somehow rearrange the body's distribution of fluids? The sand crystals overhead were sparkling over a wavering body of water. A pond, a lake, an ocean....

Ishida was not aware of having fallen asleep when he woke up and saw that Ichigo was still snoring in a far corner of the den.

No hunger, no thirst, no need ... except ...well, there was that usual wake-up call between his legs. The query that Ishida was used to answering thoroughly in the shower. Deciding that he would not spend his days trapped here with a permanent boner, Ishida put his fingers on the zipper tab at his crotch and looked around.

Kurosaki was dead asleep, so it was do-able. It would have to be a quick, efficient task.

Ishida stood, back turned to the snoring. He was used to thin apartment walls, but the dread of being caught by Kurosaki added a special anxiety to the lengthening moments.

One hand pressed against the glowing wall and the other encouraged a quick end to this. His ears burned with shame and he squeezed his eyes. When he came, his foot swept sand over the wet spot on the ground.

If he could control his reiatsu, why couldn't he control his hormones? Ishida sighed and drew circles in the sand with the toe of his shoe. *Teenagehood*. Were there any guys his age who could go longer than a couple days without having to masturbate?

Ishida called it scientific curiosity when he found himself waiting to catch Kurosaki jacking off.

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The circadian days passed, and Kurosaki Ichigo appeared to do little else beyond sleeping, moping, and trying to start conversations.

“Aizen thinks he killed us, Ishida. Doesn't that piss you off?”

“Why should it? That means he won't be looking for us. That means that he thinks his opposition's forces are diminished, and maybe he will underestimate the Living World and walk right into one of Urahara-san's traps.”

“You're not human. How can you sit here and not get itchy to get out?”

Ishida had never liked being called inhuman (adjectives like that were pronounced admiringly when he made perfect scores on an exam). *Inhuman* meant someone without a moral structure, without passionate pride and righteousness.

“I'm jittery,” Kurosaki would say. “I feel like I'm going to lose it if we have to stay down here much longer.”

Kurosaki's vocabulary was even stupider than your average person's. *Itchy, jittery ...* those words meant *impatient*, and it was tiresome to hear that impatience was a *normal*, even commendable masculine trait. Kurosaki walked in circles around the large, sparkly-walled lair, and wondered aloud about things Ishida had already evaluated. Was Inoue-san still safe? Did the Desert Brothers think that the Espada were still a threat? How do Arrancar dig themselves out of these burrows, anyway--what have they got that Shinigami haven't got? And the eternal question--*what's the matter with you, Ishida? Why aren't you worried?*

“Do you blab at your family like this?” Ishida finally asked. “My impression was that with very young sisters and an insane father, you essentially lived alone.”

Kurosaki looked puzzled, then unusually thoughtful. Ishida could see the strain on his neural connections.

“I already know about my family. It’s you I’ve never been able to figure out.”

Ishida blinked and didn’t respond. Why would Kurosaki want to figure him out?

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Isolation magnified their differences, and poor communication made the mere exchange of glances between them awkward. The passing time made Ishida more self-conscious (instead of less, as was to be expected) around Kurosaki, and sensory deprivation amplified the tension between them.

The dolt was getting harder to ignore. His hair was more orange, his comments were stupider, and the way Kurosaki insisted on trying to either make friends or start a brawl was damn irritating.

Sometimes Ishida felt like his very flesh hurt from being alone with him.

Since when had he ever been so aware of his skin?

As Ishida’s body grew more palpable and his physical presence felt more obvious, he knew that his ability to disappear into his head was failing.

He wished he had thought to bring a book to Hueco Mundo.

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Whenever Ishida played some sort of solitaire mahjong with squiggles drawn in the sand, Ichigo--amazed that anyone could actually entertain himself this way--would watch as long as he could stand. Ishida’s eccentricities should have been entertainment enough for him, but he always found himself slipping in and out of a light sleep.

Dreams had stopped being about the Outside World, and Ichigo had begun to worry about those in which he woke up in this burrow, woke up *again* and realized he had been asleep, woke up yet again and so on and so on.

He didn’t trust his senses and that had never happened before.

Time and time again, Ichigo searched his consciousness for *the Other*, for his Hollow self, for any evidence that this crazy and murderous part of himself was going to emerge. But no, the blank insanity of the white cave defeated the ambitious insanity of that Hollow. That being had owned a reason for existing--therefore it couldn’t compete with the vast meaningless of Ichigo’s surroundings.

Here, all parts of Ichigo were being deadened. Even his Hollow self.

The times Ichigo felt the most “alive” were when he was staring at Ishida. Ichigo didn’t risk staring at that fruitcake when he was awake because Ishida would glare back and say something witty Ichigo couldn’t answer. Ichigo was feeling increasingly helpless and dumb in this world, and he knew that he lacked the imagination to compensate for the blah-ness of his reality. When he could look at another human being, though, the twinkling walls of sand diminished from the foreground and he remembered the textures and colors of the Outside World.

The sound of even breathing ... not a wiggle of Ishida’s fingers or a slight turn of head ...  
... the indefinable certainty that if a stone fell near him, Ishida would not wake up....

Ichigo would walk over to Ishida’s side of the burrow, and bend forwards, hands on knees, to stare at him.

From far away, Ishida’s white Quincy clothes were not discernable against the whiteness of their surroundings, but close up, Ichigo could see the sleeve snaps, the pleats in the tunic. This was all very important. The detail, every fold in the fabric, kept Ichigo sane.

Finger joints and the bumps of veins and arteries preoccupied Ichigo for a while, but in the end, Ishida’s face held the most interest. Yuzu had once said “Ishida-kun is pretty,” but Ichigo had not noticed any prettiness before.

*Girls should be more interested in him, then. Maybe they always have been, and I just wasn’t paying attention to stuff like that.*

This Ishida didn’t look much like the one Ichigo remembered from the Outside World. That Ishida wore a pinched expression a lot of the time and acted like a snot. This Ishida slept with slightly parted lips and looked downright angelic.

Why?

The long face was symmetrical. Symmetry meant prettiness, didn’t it? There was nothing odd or irregular about the straight nose, the two black eyebrows, the two pink eyelids. Ishida’s skin looked like the kind that never got a pimple; it reflected the weird white lighting like a mirror, but still, Ichigo could see the all the different colors that made up a pale face. Light beige, dark beige, pale pink and a rosier girlier pink.

How surprised someone would be to see Ishida emerge from this hole after so many weeks. There was nothing tired, unhealthy, or insane about Ishida. If anything he looked more peaceful here--even when awake--than he had in the noisy world.

Ichigo could feel the circles under his own eyes even if he couldn’t see them. He took a lot of naps but there were still haggard depressions in his face. His hair was getting more and more tangled and his muscles felt atrophied from lack of exercise. Oh, at first he had bothered to do push-ups and stretches, but the stark fact that there was nowhere to *run* made him realize how much of a Shinigami’s time is spent running.

Ichigo's sense of purpose was leaving him.

Ichigo's mind would have been gone long ago had it not been for Ishida's being here too.

That and his imagination had recently latched onto a diversion....

*Kurosaki Ichigo was an expert masturbator, and he wanted to know if Ishida was better at it than him or not.*

First, it had been the annoying dreams that kept Ichigo from wanting to sleep so much. Now, he wanted to stay awake in order to catch Ishida jacking off.

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It was Ishida who caught Kurosaki. A loud clunk threw Ishida's consciousness out of the Sleeping World, and Ishida opened his eyes to find Kurosaki leaning in a strange position, forehead against the wall.

The dumbass had lost his bearings walking around in circles and had smacked into the twinkling sand-specks?

Ishida reached for his glasses. There was never anything to focus on in this place, but he wore them nonetheless. They felt like a part of his face.

Kurosaki wasn't awake when Ishida was asleep, and vice versa, so this was a rare moment. Head on elbow, Ishida watched Kurosaki for what seemed a very long while. Then Kurosaki's shoulders rose and fell, and Ishida recognized the exasperation of a silent orgasm.

"It's alright, Kurosaki," Ishida said in a loud voice. He felt a triumph he knew he didn't deserve. "I won't tell the other monks."

"Shut up."

Kurosaki tugged at his hakama and tied his sash and the usual silence fell between him and Ishida again.

Ishida turned around and settled into sleep.

Time passed, and the silences were another measure of it. Kurosaki would initiate a conversation, Ishida would discount everything Kurosaki said, and Kurosaki would pronounce Ishida "inhuman." A stretch of easy silence would follow, and Ishida would put his head on his arm, falling into dreams that he couldn't remember after waking up.

At some point, Ishida began to believe that he *was* inhuman. Kurosaki appeared to be trying to speed up time by shortening the intervals between his stupid questions while Ishida only wanted to pretend that he was alone, all alone.

“Isn’t the loneliness killing you?” Kurosaki asked.

It wasn’t his own loneliness but Kurosaki’s that got to Ishida eventually. Never adept at keeping up morale, Ishida believed that he had to do *something* or Kurosaki was going to go off the deep end. As much as Ishida didn’t want to be stuck here with Kurosaki, he didn’t want to be around an unpredictable *psychotic* Kurosaki.

What would it hurt to humor him a little?

Ishida wasn’t so inhuman as to deny him anymore.

So he and Kurosaki talked. It wasn’t so bad. They tiptoed over emotional topics like Death and family members. They avoided mentioning the Desert Brothers. They talked about how frustrating it was to be an amazingly talented, powerful fighter and still be considered a kid. They talked about why school was a necessary evil. When there was little left to say, they clung to the connection of conversation with mild insults.

Then there wasn’t anything else to talk about ... so they talked about masturbation.

“Don’t you think it’s weird that we can’t piss here but we can ejaculate?”

“Kurosaki, is that an actual scientific question?”

“You know these things. Why is that even though guys can get off by themselves, it’s not enough? They still need to seek out people to have sex with. Why isn’t jacking off enough?”

The very sincerity of the dumbass question made Ishida throw up his hands and raise his voice. “Are you telling me you don’t know why it’s not enough? It’s not enough because humans who are *not inhuman* apparently need social attachments. It’s not enough because the human race needs to maintain the birth to death ratio. It’s...”

Ishida felt anger crawl up his neck and burn his ears. “It’s not enough because there are other things that feel better than your hand ... like ... like...” Ishida didn’t want to talk about the particulars of sexual behaviors, but he felt compelled to make this final point. “*Mouths* feel better than your own hand.”

Kurosaki was staring at the ceiling like a defeated person. Ishida realized he had never seen him look that way before.

“I’m going to die here,” Kurosaki said, “without ever having had a blowjob.”

It was something Keigo Asano would say. Ishida fought the pity he felt for the Shinigami.

“Maybe you’ll never get a blowjob, but we’re certainly not going to die here.”

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After a few more rounds of the usual naps (Ishida slept first, then Kurosaki), it so happened that they fell asleep simultaneously, one on each end of the white den. Ishida opened his eyes and he heard Kurosaki’s breathing.

It wasn’t snoring breathing; it was jacking-off breathing.

It was *loud* breathing, punctuated with the occasional groan.

*You’d think that with sisters living in his house and some Shinigami girl living in his closet he would have learned to be quieter.*

Maybe now that he’d been caught, Kurosaki didn’t care about making noise? Maybe ... Ishida brushed away the notion that because of some boring perversion, Kurosaki *wanted* him to hear.

Ishida listened for a long while. Not surprisingly, Kurosaki had endurance, but there was also a uniform, *patient* way in which he crescendo-ed from a very faint passion to a noisy one.

When Kurosaki started making rough little grunts deep in his throat, Ishida couldn’t stand it anymore. He unzipped his pants and went at it. The excitement was so sharp that he wasn’t aware if he was breathing too loudly or what. His cock bubbled a fountain of fluids before he even felt like finishing, and when he finally came, it was with a deep, shuddering, resonating pleasure. Then he noticed that the back of his neck was damp. He could taste sweat on his upper lip.

Kurosaki was still going strong.

He *had* to have known what Ishida was doing.

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The simultaneous jacking-off sessions went on and were not spoken of. Ishida and Ichigo talked about recent battles, new fighting techniques, and the efficacy of this weapon versus that one.

Then Ishida used the word “masturbatory” to describe Kurosaki’s training methods, and the conversation again turned to the topic of jacking-off. First in the abstract--such as, do

girls do it as much as boys and why is it believed that warriors redirect their libidos onto the battlefield? Then Kurosaki ventured a personal observation.

“I didn’t think that one guy’s way would be much different from another’s.”

Ishida wasn’t going to blush over the remark. He looked away, his chin held high. “A Quincy’s way of doing anything is different.”

“Are you a virgin?”

There was no point in lying. “Yes.”

“Well, you *do* seem to have a lot of finesse. I thought maybe you had some experience. I think I last longer, but I wonder if your way doesn’t feel better.”

“Maybe we should give one another handjobs to alleviate the boredom?” Ishida wasn’t serious. He didn’t understand why Kurosaki bothered talking about masturbation--a trivial physical activity. A futile topic if there ever was one. It was like to complaining about how long they might be trapped here.

“Me giving you a handjob? That would make me really uncomfortable,” Kurosaki closed one eye and looked annoyed, if not exactly repulsed. “That would almost be like having real sex.”

*What’s wrong with real sex? Kurosaki really is a child. Or is it real sex with **me** that’s so unthinkable?*

“The other way around would feel even weirder,” Kurosaki added.

Ishida felt slighted. He tried to keep that feeling from lingering. He fell asleep and dreamed that Kurosaki was on task--sliding large hands over what Ishida couldn’t see. Ishida always dreamed in color. The hairs near Kurosaki’s hand were orange. Kurosaki’s tempo was slow, unbearably bracing, very very hot.

Then Ishida opened his eyes, sat up on his elbows and looked at Kurosaki. The dolt was sitting, arms folded, eyelids drooping, personality fading into the nebulous glow of the walls.

“Let’s try it,” Ishida said. “Let’s take turns masturbating one another.”

Kurosaki blinked sleepily. “I don’t know.... That’s just not right.”

“What’s the matter with you? I thought you were a normal sex-obsessed adolescent!” It was going to be difficult for Ishida to pretend that he hadn’t suggested what he’d just suggested. Twice now. “You’re strange, Kurosaki, strange. I don’t understand you at all.”

Kurosaki scratched his thatchy head. “I’m normal, Ishida. Maybe if you offered me a blowjob instead of a handjob, I might be a little interested.”

The silence between them assumed an importance it hadn’t had before.

“Both of us,” Ishida said. “Me and then you. We’ll see who finishes first.”

## Part Two

*“Beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table.” ~ Andre Breton*

When Ishida dropped his pants, Ichigo felt a rush of conceit because Ishida’s penis wasn’t all that big or all that long. Then the whole concept of competition was lost when Ichigo took the rock-hard organ in his hand. There was something formidable about Quincy penis and Ichigo wasn’t sure what.

The lingering touch was making Ishida’s hips squirm.

“Just do it, Kurosaki.”

Ichigo put his lips around the head. Not bad. The wetness on the penis was indistinguishable from the wetness in his own mouth. Not disgusting.

Ishida snapped shut an exhalation of breath. He was trying to control himself.

*Thinks he’s so smart.* Ichigo took his mouth off. “Not breathing isn’t good for you, Ishida. It’s not going to keep you from coming.”

“Shut up, Kurosaki.” Ishida’s breathing had already deepened to a noise of high arousal, and Ichigo hadn’t done anything yet.

*Yet.* Ichigo had already discussed in detail with Ishida what was expected from this sexual act. He lowered his mouth again and this time moved up and down an inch. Slowly. Cautiously. He really didn’t want Ishida to squirt in his mouth.

“Oh.”

Had Ishida actually let out a whole word? That was more noise than Ishida had made in eons (months, hours?) of masturbating near Ichigo. Another “oh” was followed by a long, musical sigh. Ichigo thought the sigh was a girly noise, but ... for some reason...the sight of Ishida’s flat, white belly moving up and down was exciting.

Ichigo took his mouth off again. “It’s that good, huh?” He was definitely going to get his turn. If Ishida backed out of the deal, Ichigo would have to beat him up.

“Don’t stop,” said Ishida, and the voice, though sharp, wasn’t demanding. There was a pleading quality to it that Ichigo liked. Yes, he liked it very much. *So there, you proud, stuck-up--*

Ichigo returned his mouth to the head and slurped with some force.

“Ohhhh.” Ishida’s hips bucked forward, and Ichigo’s mouth was suddenly full. He pulled his face away only to have Ishida push forward again, and then the pulling and pushing settled into a modest rhythm.

*This is real sex, Ichigo realized. We’re fucking with his cock and my mouth.*

Because both had agreed not to choke one another, Ishida didn’t push far. Ichigo didn’t use his teeth, and he couldn’t see the purpose of using his tongue. Ishida threw around a few more *ohhhh’s* and *mmm’s* but then the only sound for a long time was heavy breathing.

He held out longer than Ichigo expected.

“I’m...” Ishida said in a weak voice that sounded very much like some twelve-year-old’s. “I’m going to....”

Ichigo dropped the penis immediately and was sprayed on the chest and face.

*Swallowing it would have been less gross.*

The next moment should have been awkward, but it wasn’t. Ichigo decided he didn’t care about being sprayed because he was too eager for his turn. The moment after the non-awkward moment was even stranger. Ishida--his eyes half-closed and his mouth still open and gulping air--eased his head backwards against the wall.

It was the sexiest thing Ichigo had ever seen.

He stared and felt shocked by the things he wanted to do ... run his hands up and down that lean white torso ... thumb the sharp hips ... lift those thighs, one in each hand and ... *fuck him?*

*No way, Ichigo told himself, even as his arousal thickened. We are NOT going to fuck.*

He redefined fucking again--it had something to do with hip to hip action, faces too close to deny the intimacy of the act. And *definitely* any real sex involved a girl. This was... like masturbation, only a *mutual* scrambling towards relief from horniness. Not real, not real.

*Guys getting off with each other because there's nothing better to do is not real sex.*

Then as Ishida--without preamble, hesitation, or sign of revulsion--set about reimbursing Ichigo's blowjob, Ichigo tried to think about the sleazy, big-breasted movie star he'd seen in some television interview. Big nipples poking through a shiny jersey blouse ... double entrentres flying like kisses at the interviewer ... it had all been so terribly cock-teasing once upon a time, but now....

Ishida's head had started to bob.

Ichigo looked down at Ishida's shut eyes and black lashes on white cheeks. As those cheeks hollowed and the heat filled Ichigo's body, he thought: *Fuck him, fuck him. He's better at this than I am.*

His fingers curled into fists. The fists pressed helplessly against Ishida's black hair.

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Ishida told himself that he was not traumatized or changed in any way because he had begun to engage in oral sex with Kurosaki Ichigo.

The passage of time became measured not only by sleep but also by blowjobs. Whenever Kurosaki awoke, he nudged Ishida awake. Cupping Ishida's chin, he would drag the groggy face to his crotch. After every nap. After every single nap. Because of this, their sleep schedules began to synchronize.

Ishida still slept on the farthest point away from Kurosaki.

Drift off to sleep, wake up, have the same old argument about whether or not to blast away their prison. Ishida grew accustomed to the schedule.

The blowjob meant as much to Ishida as a yawn....

Except it was difficult not to want another and another and another.

Ishida sometimes worried that his penis might get chafed. He sometimes worried that after the Desert Brothers came back, the blowjob routine might feel as indispensable in the Outside World as it did here. Not that Ishida worried about becoming homosexual. He had arrived at the conclusion that sexuality existed on a spectrum of *circumstantial preferences* as well as biological orientation, and he *knew* that he wasn't homosexual because he had been attracted to females before.

He was only becoming increasingly attracted to Kurosaki *now* because these were special circumstances.

*If Sado-kun and Kurosaki were trapped in this place, would they start sucking one another's cocks?*

Kurosaki had begun groping Ishida's thighs and buttocks during blowjobs, and Ishida felt somewhat disinclined towards this sort of physical contact because it attached passion to the whole business. Still, there was no denying how good it felt to have Kurosaki's fingers kneading his skin.

And it wasn't just the feeling. It was because Kurosaki was causing the feeling.

Ishida prided himself on his self-insight. He walked bravely into all possible explanations. He decided that he understood *exactly* what all this sexual behavior was about.

*A special person, an unusual Shinigami, an admirable warrior, a handsome man ...*

Ishida could do worse.

That's what it was. Kurosaki was everybody's hero, and here Ishida had brought this champion to his knees. Anyone else--no, Ishida didn't think he could do this with anyone else under the same circumstances. Ishida had *always* wanted to knock Kurosaki down. What better way to humble a guy than to have him suck your cock?

Then one time Kurosaki, caught up in a spell of groping, somehow slid the tip of a thumb into Ishida's ass.

Ishida gasped, not from pleasure but from horror. "Kurosaki, what are you doing?"

The thumb was kneading somewhere else by then, but the idea had been planted.

*There are so many other sexual things that I haven't experienced.*

Many naps and blowjobs later, it was Kurosaki who suggested fucking, and Ishida could not act like the thought hadn't occurred to him.

"It isn't necessary," Ishida said. "Mouths provide a better range of stimuli. We don't need to have real sex."

Kurosaki's palms fell on Ishida's thighs and kneaded the thin fabric of Ishida's pants. Then a few minutes into a heated, gasping experience in which Ishida was writhing on the ground with Kurosaki's face between his legs, Ishida heard his voice say, "Real sex might ... real sex might ...be better."

He felt Kurosaki's mouth fall open a little in surprise.

“Yes, I’m talking about  *fucking* .” Ishida had to swallow hard in order to keep talking because Kurosaki, paying attention to Ishida’s words, was sucking more slowly. “Real sex might be something different. It might be interesting. It might be a kind of physical challenge in which--” Ishida’s voice wavered as Kurosaki speeded up again. “Damn it, Kurosaki, I’ll do it if you do.”

At that moment, Kurosaki deep-throated him, and Ishida was certain:  *oh yes, real sex is going to feel even better.*

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The agreement was that both boys would take turns being the bottom. Ishida was less averse to being penetrated so it was decided that he would go first. Ichigo expected that seeing Ishida survive the act would encourage his own bottom participation.

It was scary.

The very idea of real sex was terrifying, and Ichigo could not deny that.

It was also something Ichigo was going to do or die.

Both boys stripped and prepared to address the issue of lubrication and whose legs would go where. At the sight of Ishida’s exposed and defenseless whiteness, Ichigo felt some of his worst fears float away.

*This is Ishida we’re talking about here. What’s the worse that can happen?*

Ichigo had long ago started feeling comfortable being completely nude around Ishida, but Ishida still seemed self-conscious. For some reason, Ichigo found this very sexy and it made him all the more want to jostle the Quincy’s nervousness with a good hard poke.

“I don’t think saliva is enough,” Ishida said. “I think we need to stretch things down there first.”

“How do we do that?”

“I don’t know,” Ishida snapped. “You were the one with a thumb already half up my ass, so how do you  *think*  we’re going to stretch me?”

Ichigo licked his forefinger. He didn’t like how clinically Ishida was approaching this matter.

“That’s not enough saliva,” Ishida said. He was sitting on the ground with his legs spread apart. They had muscular definition for skinny legs. They were masculine. The knees were blocky.

“What’s enough saliva?”

“This,” said Ishida impatiently, and then he crammed the top of his hand into his mouth and slurped on it.

Ichigo’s cock rose at the sight. Why couldn’t he just break right in? Since when was Ishida so worried about pain? At some point in Soul Society, the guy had looked pretty torn up and he hadn’t complained *then*.

Ishida smoothed his wet fingers over the pink wrinkled circle that Ichigo intended to push past. The wet fingers went round and round, massaging tenderly and never penetrating. Ishida’s fussiness about preparing himself was getting to be damn frustrating, so Ichigo--without reflecting on the act in the slightest--dropped and began to lap at Ishida’s uptight anus.

Ishida was so surprised that he clutched Ichigo’s hair. He had never done that before. He had never allowed his hands on Ichigo’s person before.

“Kurosaki? *Ah, Kurosaki ...*” It was funny how quickly Ishida melted. Ichigo felt the pinched skin under his tongue relax, and then the tip of his tongue swept inside.

It was such an outrageous act that both boys were aroused beyond being able to speak.

Ichigo sucked and licked and time passed. It passed without its companions of silence and dream-sleep, and then Ichigo found himself panting against Ishida’s neck. Ishida made a growling sound when Ichigo entered him, and Ichigo wasn’t sure if it was an expression of pain or pleasure.

Ishida would later tell him that it was resistance to feeling either.

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Pushing, challenging, taking your endurance to the limit. Fucking was a lot like fighting except that Ishida allowed himself to be laid flat on his back. That, and he was as easy to flip over as a pillow.

Kurosaki had only let Ishida fuck him once, and he hadn’t liked it. *Fine*. Ishida still felt that he was overcoming Kurosaki somehow by bringing him to such faces of ecstasy. Kurosaki’s fucking face looked a lot like his fighting face, but there was vulnerability there.

That vulnerability was immensely arousing.

“Are you ready to be the bottom again, Kurosaki?” Ishida always enjoyed hearing the answer.

“No, no. No way. Uh uh.”

“You said it didn’t hurt, so what’s the big deal?”

Once, during especially long lull between blowjobs (both boys were exhausted), Kurosaki finally admitted what was scary about being penetrated.

“It made me feel like a girl,” he said.

Ishida, who never laughed, felt like laughing. “I don’t feel that way,” he said, “but I suppose I’m just more confident about my sexual identity than you are.”

At that point, Kurosaki had thrown himself at Ishida, flipped him over, and taken him from behind. A pissed-off Kurosaki was a great fuck. Whenever Kurosaki was annoyed, he didn’t paw and knead Ishida’s body so much. He kept his torso further away and had a better chance of angling his body so it would hit the spot that made Ishida’s eyes water.

Time quit being measured at all.

The boys talked less and slept less.

As he was pounded from the back or pounded from the front, Ishida sometimes wondered if they weren’t getting too carried away with all this.

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It felt like years had passed, but Ishida told Ichigo that such a thing wasn’t possible because there was no noticeable hair growth on either of their heads. Ishida had a genetically smooth-faced physiognomy, but maybe by the time he was seventeen, Ichigo should’ve seen the first sprouts of a beard.

“Your hair is messier, Kurosaki, but I don’t think it’s more than a centimeter higher.”

“But what if... ” Ichigo felt proud as a possibility Ishida hadn’t mentioned came to him. “What if there’s something about the reiatsu here that keeps our hair from growing just like it keeps our bladders from filling?”

Ishida’s eyes narrowed like he was seriously considering the remark.

“No, no, I don’t think so.” He held up a hand where there were red marks from pressing against the sand when Ichigo fucked him. “My knees are cut up like this too. The cuts bleed a little and heal. Epithelial tissue seems be retaining its fluid and its cells are dividing normally. What I honestly don’t get is why we’re not excreting the reiatsu that we use for nourishment.”

“You mean that if we’re feeding off reiatsu, we should be crapping and peeing reiatsu?”

Ishida shot Ichigo a look that said *you're so crass*.

“Anyway, I *feel* like a very long time has passed,” Ichigo said. “Maybe it’s because things are so different now. Maybe it’s because everything in here is like a dream.”

Ishida wasn’t listening. “It’s seems really arbitrary how reiatsu distributes itself for our bodily functions, but maybe--”

“Those Arrancar need to mate and stuff while they were trapped down here for long periods of time?”

Ishida stared at Ichigo. “That’s probably it,” he said.

The mention of *mating* made Ichigo think of girls. If they ever got out of here, would there ever be a girl in the world who turned him on as much as Ishida? Girls--delicate things. Ishida--well, for as delicate as he looked, he was a real fighter with an aggressive personality. And there was nothing delicate about the way he and Ishida fucked. It was hard sex, it was competitive sex, it was....

It wasn’t real sex.

Why?

*Why?*

They hadn’t kissed. Ichigo told himself that he couldn’t want that--kissing would add a needy, tender aspect to the whole business, and Ishida obviously didn’t want any *human* complications. Ichigo just wanted to feel alive; he just wanted to keep the insanity at bay.

*Kiss him, kiss him, kiss him.* The missive shouted in his brain and pumped in his heart and lungs.

*Fuck.* He really needed to kiss him. It was something Ichigo had to do or die. *Kiss him.* The need to put his tongue in Ishida’s mouth was as strong as the one to stick his dick up his ass.

“What?” Ishida asked. “What are you looking at?”

“Nothing,” said Ichigo. Sometimes he wanted to tell Ishida how pretty he was, but that desire was nothing like the other one.

*Kiss him, kiss him, kiss him.*

Ishida squatted on the ground and drew a circle in the sand. He had this amazing ability to cut Ichigo off and act as if Ichigo never existed.

*What's the worse Ishida can do? Bite?*

--

Neither boy bothered with clothes anymore. What was the point of dressing if within minutes you were going to undress again?

Ishida understood what a point of no return was. His life had been a series of them. The decision to become a Quincy...Sensei's death... snapping the Hollow bait in front of Kurosaki ... walking through Urahara-san's spirit converter ... taking off the glove with the clear understanding that he would lose his power.

Ishida also understood that sometimes things that felt like perfect endings turned around and played themselves over in another key... like with Ryuken. Who could have predicted that Ryuken would restore Ishida's Quincy powers?

What would Ryuken think about how Ishida was handling isolation here? Ishida was exchanging bodily fluids with a *Shinigami* of all people. Did people in the Outside World believe that he and Kurosaki had died? Not just Aizen and the Arrancar but Ryuken, Inoue-san, everyone. Had there been a funeral? Ishida found himself wishing that, like Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, he and Kurosaki could sneak home to see that.

Home. Ishida had never imagined that such a place would exist for him. He had gone from the Living World to Hueco Mundo feeling that he had no attachments and that he was ready to die in the battle to rescue Inoue-san. Now enough time had passed that Ishida felt less brave, a little afraid of dying. There was a place he actually missed. *Home*.

How much would change when he and Kurosaki went back home? How much did he *want* anything to change?

Ishida sat up and shook sand out of his hair. His back of his neck felt sore from Kurosaki's grasping fingers.

A millimeter away, Kurosaki snored.

*He must have been dreaming and crawled away from me.*

He and Kurosaki were no longer sleeping on opposite sides of the den. That was too much trouble. Worn out after sex, they slept where they fell--Ishida always taking care that no part of his body touched Kurosaki's any longer.

But sometimes Ishida woke up with Kurosaki's arm thrown over his thigh or a hand placed during dream-sleep at the crook of his neck.

If there was nothing wrong with the two jabbing one another with their sexual organs, then what was so wrong about innocent body parts touching after sex?

*Why I am always so horny?*

Ishida arousal stood steadfast for a few moments and neither hardened or softened. He wondered if he should go over and nudge Kurosaki awake. It was usually Kurosaki who did that. Kurosaki was the one with no restraint. Kurosaki was the one who tugged at Ishida's hair and kneaded Ishida's shoulders.

"Kurosaki," Ishida said.

The dolt didn't budge.

"Kurosaki," Ishida said more loudly. "Kurosaki, wake up."

The naked Shinigami blinked awake and stared Ishida in the face. Kurosaki never really looked too attractive upon waking up. He tended to squint a lot, and his eyebrows looked lopsided.

"What do you want, Ishida? I was sleeping."

Ishida didn't answer but began to stroke himself with thumb and forefinger. He parted his legs. There could be no clearer invitation.

Kurosaki was on top of him in a flash. Lately there had been no talk, not much teasing or foreplay, few variances from this one position.

It didn't feel so much like Kurosaki entered as it felt like Ishida opened and sucked him in.

"There," Ishida said between hard breaths. *"There."*

Whenever Kurosaki landed on that spot now, he never moved in any direction but forwards. Ishida, in all his ignorance of popular pornographic poses, had not thought it possible, but Kurosaki could lift Ishida's legs, spread them into a v, and pump furiously while sucking on Ishida's neck.

There was nothing for Ishida's feet to touch. He fought the desire to curl his legs and press his ankles against Kurosaki's ribs. It was a little disorienting but this way was good. This way sometimes navigated into oblivion. *Mmmmmmmmm*. The sucking on his neck felt wonderful. Kurosaki was sucking on a place where he had left a mark before, and the bruise was excruciatingly sensitive. *Ooooh. Mmmmmmmmm*.

Then, apparently from nowhere, the thought shot through Ishida's brain was that he didn't want to sport too many hickeys. He didn't know why. No one else but Kurosaki could see Ishida's pale neck reddened with them.

No one else would ever see *this*.

"Stop," Ishida said. He wasn't even aware of uttering the word.

Kurosaki didn't seem to understand what action Ishida wanted him to stop, but he froze mid-thrust, and a beautiful anguish flooded Ishida's body. Desire in its most perfect state. Almost fulfilled, almost relinquished.

What was it that he had wanted?

"Fuck me." It was a whispered command. "Fuck me."

Kurosaki resumed his pounding, and Ishida remembered.

"The hickeys, the hickeys," he sputtered, even as he felt himself on the verge of release. "Quit it with the hickeys. You're going to eat a hole right through my throat."

Kurosaki lifted his head. "What?"

The hole in the throat remark spoke of Arrancar, and the mood was more serious than Ishida wanted it to be.

"Just stop sucking on my neck," Ishida said.

"You never complained before," Kurosaki said. "I think you just like having something to boss me about."

"No!"

And at that word, Kurosaki's face lowered just as Ishida's face was rising, and the two clanked chins.

Kurosaki dropped Ishida's legs, Ishida's ass fell on the sand, and a penis slid out of an asshole.

"Ugh," Ishida breathed against Kurosaki's face. Inelegance while fucking wasn't uncommon between the two, but Ishida didn't like being dropped on his ass.

"I'm sorry, Ishida."

Ishida sat up to say something clever, but then Kurosaki's mouth was opening over his.

*He's kissing me.*

The back of Ishida's head hit the ground. Hard. For a second Ishida felt like he was going to lose consciousness.

He could taste the desperate affection in Kurosaki's kiss. How long had Kurosaki wanted to do this? Ishida felt sorry for him and then that feeling of being sorry turned into something else. Ishida could not pull his face away. He was kissing Kurosaki back because he felt sorry for himself. He was the kind of person who would kiss another guy just to get sex from him. *Is this what we've come to? We're crazy.*

Kurosaki took his mouth away first but he did not stop kissing Ishida. He kissed Ishida's cheeks, eyelids, forehead. He took Ishida's face in his hands and pushed his tongue inside. The thick feeling, the movement of Kurosaki's tongue inside his mouth made Ishida think *this is sexual, this is sexual, this is just sex.*

Then Kurosaki brushed his fingertips across Ishida's shoulders--a touch so gentle and slight that it zapped Ishida's skin like homoerotic static electricity--and Ishida realized that this *wasn't* just sex. Kurosaki was having some sort of fit of tenderness.

*I think he....* Ishida's eyes stung because they widened so much. *I think he loves me.*

Time ran in the opposite direction of that thought. If this wasn't just sex, then would this be happening if he and Kurosaki had never gone to Hueco Mundo? Never met those impossible Desert relatives, and never fallen into this crazy, crazy carnal abyss?

*But I can't love him back. I can't love him back.*

Dizzy, wondering if he was seeing stars or if those twinkling things were sandspecks, Ishida rose to a sitting position. Maybe that was Kurosaki lifting him to a sitting position.

"Holy fuck, Ishida." Kurosaki still held one hand at the base of Ishida's head but had pulled the other hand away. There was blood on the fingers.

"It's nothing." Ishida took a deep breath. He was feeling better already. The people in the Living World who were fighting Arrancar--they had suffered worse.

"I don't know how to do any of that healing stuff," Kurosaki said. His voice had calmed. He knew it was just a konk on the head. "I wish I could've had Rukia teach me...."

What time was it? What day was it? *People fighting Arrancar.* Could it be that the Winter War had already started? How could they possibly win without Kurosaki Ichigo.

Ishida realized that he was being held up by Kurosaki. Like the white figure in the Pieta. Like the dying best friend in the end of a war movie. Kurosaki pressed one arm around

Ishida's shoulders, held the other arm lightly around his waist, and another realization hit Ishida like a stone.

Ishida didn't *want* this to be just about sex.

What's more, maybe he never had.

Ishida, who was never humbled, lost his balance over that one.

In order to catch himself, his arms rose to wrap around Kurosaki's neck. Kurosaki, dumbass that he was, hugged him back.

*No, no, no.* Ishida resisted the truth until the last moment and then he couldn't resist anymore.

He felt like crying. He wondered if the weird reiatsu of the place would check his tears the way it stifled the flow of urine or excessive sweat. That wondering did nothing to push away what he was feeling.

Not love. Not grief.

*Both.*

And time would never again be measured by naps or blowjobs. Still clutching Kurosaki's neck, Ishida knew, if Kurosaki didn't yet, that the Winter War had to be over. It had been so long, *it had been so long* since either of them had seen a blue sky. Fear of returning to the Outside World as lovers, fear of never returning to the Outside World--these things had distracted them from the truth.

Everyone else was probably dead.

They had fucked away the moments, ignored the obvious passing of time, denied themselves the mercy of love.

"What's the matter, Ishida?" Kurosaki's voice sounded sad. He probably thought that Ishida didn't want to be held this way but didn't want to hurt his feelings too much. Proud Ishida. Annoyed Ishida. An Ishida who pitied people who needed attachments.

"What's the matter, Ishida?"

"I want to go home," Ishida said, and the words made Kurosaki press himself against Ishida's chest.

As the two boys rocked back and forth, each one comforting the other, Ishida was aware of time settling into one and only one moment. This one. It no longer mattered if the Desert Brothers would ever return. They would never return.

The Outside World was no longer there.

*END*