

22 - The Shackles of Artifice

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(Please feel free to edit the speaker names if incomplete or inaccurate. Names are handled on a best-effort basis depending on the info on the source file. Dialogue is left as is.)

[01:13] Nar

The genius from the
darkness, Akagi Shigeru,

[01:15] Nar

versus Washizu Iwao,
the monster of the Showa Era.

[01:18] Nar

The first and second matches
of their battle to the death

[01:22] Nar

both ended in victory for Akagi.

[01:27] Aka

You're actually quite the
coward, Washizu Iwao.

SIGN Episode 22

SIGN The Shackles of Artifice

[01:37] Was

A 3, 6 of characters wait?

[01:40] Was

This is impossible!

[01:41] Was

*And you declared your riichi by
discarding the 1 of characters?!*

[01:45] Nar

Akagi could have stayed with the

[01:46] Nar

closed wait for the 2 of
characters for an iipeikou.

[01:49] Nar

Or if he had to declare riichi,
he could have done it

[01:51] Nar

with a 1, 4, 7 of characters wait
for more possibilities to win.

[01:54] Nar

And yet he deliberately chose
the 3, 6 of characters wait.

[02:00] Was

He manipulated me?

[02:02] Was

*He saw through my hand
and manipulated me?!*

[02:07] Was

*Then you took my winning
3 of characters tile from Suzuki*

[02:13] Was

using a head bump.

[02:15] Was

What is this?!

[02:18] Was

Why didn't I see it?

[02:20] Was

It was an obviously strange riichi!

[02:25] Nar

With Akagi's riichi, the
requirement for Washizu

[02:29] Nar

to take the lead had lowered
from a haneman to a mangan.

[02:34] Was

*It was so obvious that he
had an ulterior motive!*

[02:38] Was

Damn it!

[02:41] Nar

And with this, the second match is over.

[02:44] Nar

It seemed like a close
game, but in the end,

[02:48] Nar

Akagi is more than 10,000
points ahead of Washizu.

SIGN Washizu

32700 pts.

2nd place
rank bonus

Total

SIGN Akagi

43200 pts.

1st place
rank bonus

1st place
bonus

Total

[02:52] Nar

His game score now tops Washizu by 50 points.

[02:55] nar

Which means that on top of his
50 million yen in winnings,

[02:58] nar

Akagi will receive an additional
16 million in bonus payments.

[03:01] nar

Combined with his winnings from the
first match, that is 118.5 million yen.

[03:06] nar

It is an overwhelming amount.

[03:09] nar

In today's terms, that would
be around 1.2 billion yen.

[03:14] nar

And yet, Akagi once again refuses
to transfuse any of his blood back.

[03:18] nar

He waits for the next round
with 1,100 CCs of lost blood.

[03:23] nar

The next mangan he deals
into would kill him,

[03:26] nar

but he makes no attempt to
escape this dangerous situation.

[03:30] Yasu

Why not?

[03:32] Yasu

Why won't you get some
of your blood back?

[03:34] Yasu

This does nothing but hurt you,
without a single advantage.

[03:40] Aka

That's not entirely true.

[03:49] Aka

Take that last hand.

[03:51] Aka

Not returning any of my blood
is what led me to victory.

[03:55] yas

Led you... to it?

[03:56] Aka

Yeah.

[03:58] Aka

This last hand, my starting
tiles were horrible.

[04:01] Aka

That was because there was one tile
among them I could never discard,

[04:05] Aka

the dora west wind.

[04:08] Aka

Not only was it the dora,
it was also Washizu's wind.

[04:11] Aka

That one tile froze my entire hand.

[04:16] Aka

The possible wins were extremely limited.

[04:20] Aka

It wasn't something I could
solve on my own power.

[04:23] Aka

Therefore...

[04:26] Aka

To win...

[04:28] Aka

I needed Washizu to make a mistake.

[04:30] Oug

A mistake?

[04:32] Aka

The green dragon and the
8 of circles in the beginning.

[04:35] Aka

Those calls weren't a big problem,

[04:37] Aka

but after his 1 of circles
pon in the seventh turn,

[04:40] Aka

he discarded a 3 of circles,
an obvious mistake.

[04:43] Aka

Going for a chanta with such
a limited wait was not smart.

[04:47] Aka

He should've kept the 1 of circles pair

[04:49] Aka

and the 3 of circles to go for a honitsu.

[04:53] Aka

He had a much higher chance
of winning with that.

[04:56] Aka

There was no need to rush,
but he ended up rushing anyway.

[05:01] Aka

He prioritized getting into
tenpai over everything else.

[05:05] Aka

That was foolish.

[05:06] Aka

He was in a rush to win.

[05:10] Aka

What pressured him is my
refusal to transfuse blood.

[05:13] Yasu

What?

[05:15] Aka

If you had to name it, my insanity.

[05:18] Aka

My refusal to avoid death by
having any blood transfused back

[05:21] Aka

woke up a fear sleeping
deep within Washizu.

[05:27] Was

This man may be able to kill me.

[05:32] Aka

In my total disregard for my own life,

[05:35] Aka

he started to pick up the scent
of his own potential death.

[05:39] Aka

Of course, he probably
doesn't know it yet.

[05:45] Aka

This fear is still tiny.

[05:48] Aka

Right now, in manifests
more in the urge to rush,

[05:51] Aka

impatience, rather than in actual fear.

[05:55] Aka

Washizu's mental balance fell apart.

[05:57] Aka

As a result, he started rushing.

[06:02] Aka

And that was my chance.

[06:06] Aka

It was my opportunity to discard the west wind I couldn't discard until then.

[06:10] Aka

With that tenpai...

[06:13] Nar

Akagi's hand started to progress.

[06:18] Nar

The ice was thawing.

[06:25] Aka

At the same time, his trump card, the west wind, was also drained of power.

[06:28] Aka

If anything, my west wind gained power.

[06:31] Yasu

Power?

[06:32] Aka

After that, it clouded Washizu's eyes.

[06:36] Aka

It became an imaginary force.

[06:39] Yasu

An imaginary force?

[06:41] Oug

Now, wait a sec.

[06:42] Oug

You're talking about it like that was your strategy,

[06:45] Oug

but there are a few things that doesn't explain.

[06:49] Oug

For example, how could you know at the very beginning

[06:52] Oug

of the game that you could not discard the west wind?

[06:54] Oug

Yes, we saw that Washizu had one of those tiles in his hand.

[06:59] Oug

We knew it was a dora.

[07:01] Oug

And that it was his wind.

[07:02] Oug

I can understand if you felt it
was a difficult tile to discard.

[07:05] Oug

If Washizu had a pair of west
winds and you discarded it,

[07:11] Oug

the moment he called it,
he'd have his wind and three dora.

[07:13] Oug

Already a guaranteed mangan.

[07:16] Oug

Of course you couldn't discard it then.

[07:18] Oug

But if you knew he only had one,

[07:20] Oug

you should've taken care of
it with your first discard.

[07:24] Oug

You talk about it like you
were already certain he had

[07:28] Oug

a pair of west winds,
from the very beginning.

[07:31] Oug

How can you know that before
he discards even a single tile?

[07:38] Aka

But he already had discarded many tiles.

[07:42] Yasu

What?

[07:44] Aka

I had two East-South matches worth
of tiles to see how he discards.

[07:48] Oug

B-But that's...

[07:51] Aka

You can really see the flow of the game

[07:54] Aka

and Washizu's own luck pretty clearly.

[07:58] Aka

Keeping in mind his own innate talent,

[08:02] Aka

I knew this last hand
wouldn't end without a fight.

[08:07] Aka

Sure enough, the dora he drew
happened to be his wind tile.

[08:10] Aka

And those dora west winds flowed toward
him as if they were drawn to him.

[08:16] Aka

I had one mixed up in
my own starting hand.

[08:20] Aka

All of these indicated that
it was no mere coincidence.

[08:23] Aka

You could say the dora west wind

[08:27] Aka

was a messenger sent from
heaven to help Washizu win.

[08:38] Aka

Had the game progressed normally...

[08:40] Oug

...Washizu would have won, you say?

[08:44] Aka

That dora west wind had the power to
kill me if I didn't handle it just right.

[08:49] Aka

It was an assassin and a venomous
demon at the same time.

[08:55] Aka

If I were recklessly brave

[08:57] Aka

and discarded it, he would call it.

[08:58] Aka

A guaranteed mangan.

[09:01] Aka

But if I'd kept it,
I wouldn't be able to move.

[09:05] Aka

It would lead to death.

[09:07] Aka

A damned if I do, damned if I don't tile.

[09:10] Aka

My only hope for escape was
a misstep from Washizu.

[09:16] Aka

Like what happened.

[09:18] Aka

Being in tenpai sounds great,

[09:21] Aka

but calling too many tiles
restricted his hand.

[09:25] Aka

I had no choice but to wait until
he couldn't move any further...

[09:30] Aka

and then to discard it.

[09:33] Aka

Just discarding it wasn't enough.

[09:34] Yasu

What?

[09:36] Aka

I needed to set up the
situation to discard it.

[09:40] Aka

If I screwed up the order, it was over.

[09:42] Oug

Wait.

[09:44] Oug

What you're saying is
that you knew from the

[09:48] Oug

very beginning that Washizu
had a pair of dora west winds.

[09:52] Aka

I did.

[09:53] Oug

Then isn't it strange that you

[09:55] Oug

discarded the north wind right after
you drew it on the 10th turn?

[10:00] Oug

During the ninth turn, Suzuki drew a
west wind, but Washizu didn't call it.

[10:06] Oug

Which means that would've been the
ideal time to get rid of that west wind.

[10:11] Oug

Washizu's next draw could have let him

[10:14] Oug

switch to a double pon wait for
the west wind and anything else.

[10:20] Oug

The only way I could rationalize you

not discarding the west wind at that point

[10:25] Oug

was that he might've be in a single wait
for the west wind with a mangan hand.

[10:30] Aka

Right.

[10:32] Aka

I wanted to create that illusion.

[10:35] Nar

That is the imaginary force.

[10:37] Aka

When I hesitated to discard the
west wind, Washizu thought...

[10:43] Was

He hasn't figured out my hand yet.

[10:45] Was

*He thinks I'm waiting
on a single west wind.*

[10:50] Aka

He guessed wrong.

[10:55] Oug

You purposefully acted
like you were hesitant.

[10:59] Aka

Those who see get to choose.

[11:04] Aka

You can reveal what you can see directly.

[11:07] Aka

You can pretend that you
can see even if you cannot.

[11:11] Aka

Or you can pretend to
not see even if you can.

[11:15] aka

Just by discarding a tile one turn later,

[11:19] aka

you can control the thought process
of your opponent almost freely.

[11:34] aka

Just by discarding a tile one turn later,

[11:37] aka

you can control the thought process
of your opponent almost freely.

[11:40] oug

I don't believe it.

[11:42] oug

He was manipulating us...

[11:44] oug

Both Washizu and even me, the spectator.

[11:47] nar

Akagi wasn't trembling at all.

[11:51] nar

He wasn't unable to
discard the west wind.

[11:54] nar

He explicitly chose to not discard it.

[11:56] oug

*He's got his sights on
something totally different.*

[11:58] oug

*For us, it's all we can do just to deal
with with the efficacy of the tiles,*

[12:02] oug

and the flow of the game.

[12:05] nar

But Akagi is trying to manipulate
the thought process of the opponent.

[12:09] nar

Even the idea to do that
is no longer normal.

[12:13] nar

It's outside the realm of ordinary men.

[12:16] oug

He's like a devil...

[12:19] yas

Akagi, can I just ask you one more thing?

[12:23] yas

Even if you had figured out the dora west
wind, what about the rest of his hand?

[12:29] yas

You sniped off the 3 of
characters for the head bump

[12:32] yas

that Suzuki tried to deal
into Washizu's hand.

[12:35] yas

You knew that he had a
single wait for the 3.

[12:38] yas

And since we're there already,

[12:40] yas

doesn't that also mean you knew

[12:41] yas

that he had a closed wait for

a 2 of characters before?

[12:47] yas

I mean...

[12:49] yas

I also figured that he couldn't have a circles honitsu since Suzuki

[12:54] yas

didn't deal any of his many circle tiles into Washizu's hand.

[12:58] yas

But how could you deduce his wait from that?

[13:01] aka

Yasuoka-san, if you've come that far, the answer is right in front of you.

[13:09] aka

This time, instead of trying to read Washizu's hand,

[13:12] aka

you just need to take a good look at Suzuki's hand to reveal Washizu's tiles.

[13:19] aka

This hand, Suzuki was only focused on dealing

[13:22] aka

into Washizu's hand instead of trying to win himself.

[13:27] aka

Then all you have to do is see what Suzuki's hand looked like.

[13:34] aka

Over half of his tiles were circle and honor tiles.

[13:37] aka

They were the building blocks Washizu needed to complete his initial honitsu.

[13:43] aka

The rest were 1s and 9s for the chanta.

[13:48] aka

And since Washizu didn't call the west wind when Suzuki drew it

[13:53] aka

to go for a win immediately, these tiles were out.

[13:59] aka

Meaning the only remaining possibilities were around the 1 of characters.

[14:03] yas

But with the chanta, couldn't it also
have been a 2, 3, 7, 8 of bamboo wait?

[14:09] aka

No.

[14:12] aka

He'd already discarded all the tiles around
the 4 and 6, so that would take away

[14:16] aka

his ability to win off them.

[14:18] aka

He wouldn't do that
after all those pon calls.

[14:25] aka

So his possible waits could be narrowed down
to side or closed waits for character tiles.

[14:31] aka

And since I had the black 2 of characters,

[14:36] aka

it meant Washizu was in a closed
wait for the 1 and 3 of characters.

[14:40] aka

Or from the other angle,
the reason Suzuki held on to

[14:45] aka

the seemingly pointless 3 of characters
was because Washizu had such a wait.

[14:51] aka

Remember that he needed a haneman
if he won off Suzuki's tile.

[14:55] aka

Even if he had,

[14:57] aka

green dragon, west wind, three dora
only adds up to a mangan.

[15:01] aka

Keeping this 3 of characters
had no real meaning,

[15:04] aka

but it was a tile that
Washizu had in his hand.

[15:07] aka

A tile that Washizu could
use for a single wait.

[15:11] aka

Considering that, if I were
to declare riichi, as I did,

[15:17] aka

a mangan would be
enough for the upset.

[15:20] aka

Or, a green dragon kan
could yield new dora

[15:23] aka

that could give him a haneman,
even with the 3 of characters.

[15:28] aka

That's why Suzuki kept it.

[15:31] aka

But in the end, that plan backfired.

[15:35] aka

Still, the most important part of this

[15:38] aka

was Washizu's state of mind.

[15:42] aka

The difficult part was
knowing if Washizu's emotions

[15:46] aka

would behave the way I wanted them
to when I declared my riichi.

[15:52] aka

It was difficult, but at this point,
I had no reason to doubt yet.

[15:57] aka

For him...

[16:00] aka

the temptation of victory was stronger.

[16:07] aka

The setup that guaranteed victory.

[16:10] aka

Its attraction was stronger...
because Washizu was starving for victory.

[16:16] Yasu

Starving?

[16:18] Aka

That's right.

[16:20] Aka

Washizu won his way through life.

[16:23] Aka

For him, victory was always certain.

[16:26] Aka

He knows well the difference
between victory and an advantage.

[16:30] Aka

It goes without saying...

[16:33] Aka

Advantage and victory are similar,
but also very different things.

[16:37] Aka

Put bluntly, having an advantage
has little meaning by itself.

[16:42] Aka

Whether for gain or self-benefit,

[16:46] Aka

all of that only becomes certain
after the actual victory.

[16:51] Aka

Successful people know this intimately.

[16:55] Aka

Which is why they try harder
to win than anyone else.

[16:58] Aka

Washizu is no different.

[17:04] man

Washizu-sama, what shall we do?

[17:06] man

Will you continue into the
third match, or will you stop?

[17:09] man

I believe that exercising
prudence is a viable option.

[17:13] man

Should you stop now, you will have
lost only a little over 100 million.

[17:19] Was

Are you mad?

[17:20] Was

You're telling me to run away?

[17:24] Was

You're telling me to
run and leave Japan?

[17:26] Men

Washizu-sama....

[17:28] Was

That cannot happen.

[17:34] Nar

The third match.

[17:36] Nar

Washizu has lost both the
first and second matches.

[17:39] Nar

He needs to win the third at any cost and erase that disgrace.

[17:45] Nar

He can't keep losing.

[17:49] Nar

His pride as king...

[17:54] Nar

cannot allow him to let that happen.

[17:57] Nar

Washizu has already lost 118.5 million yen.

[18:03] Nar

At this rate, his entire fortune of 500 million will melt away.

[18:08] Nar

His ruin seems near.

[18:13] Nar

It is rising...

[18:16] Nar

The raging water that will kill Washizu.

[18:19] Nar

It is slowly reaching a critical point.

[18:21] Nar

Still slight, but it has begun to overflow.

[18:23] Nar

It has started to wet Washizu's feet.

[18:28] Was

If I fall in, I die.

[18:33] Was

I must stop this.

[18:36] Nar

The third match has begun.

[18:39] Nar

Yasuoka is the first dealer.

[18:41] Nar

Washizu wants to reverse the flow of the game during East Hand 1.

[18:46] Nar

He wants to escape this bad flow.

[18:50] Nar

But his hand is not so good.

[18:55] Nar

His draws are also sub-par.

[18:57] Nar

He is clearly going downhill.

[19:02] Nar

On the other hand, Akagi is doing well.

[19:05] Nar

By the third turn, he's already one away from tenpai, with three dora.

[19:11] Nar

But Akagi does not relax his game.

[19:14] Nar

No.

[19:16] Nar

Akagi never was in the position to either relax or tighten his game.

[19:23] Nar

He has transcended that.

[19:26] Nar

If he hadn't, he could not have survived.

[19:28] Oug

Ranking below Washizu even once would mean certain death.

[19:35] Oug

He is still missing 1,100 CCs of blood.

[19:39] Nar

That is to say, should he deal into a single mangan hand

[19:42] Nar

of Washizu's, he would lose 800 CCs of blood.

[19:45] Nar

Combined with the 1,100,

[19:46] Nar

that would amount to 1,900 CCs of blood,

[19:48] Nar

just one step away from the fatal amount.

[19:53] Oug

He could die at any time.

[19:56] Oug

Of course he can't relax under these conditions.

[20:02] nar

Always one step from death.

[20:05] nar

And then Washizu has a certain feeling.

[20:10] Was

I have a feeling.

[20:12] Was

If I kill this man, I will have arrived...

[20:19] Was

At the apex of my 75 years of life.

[20:28] Was

To the moment of supreme bliss.

[20:31] Was

I may have been born to kill this man.

[20:43] Nar

At the end of the first
and second matches,

[20:44] Nar

Akagi has lost 1,100 CCs of blood.

[20:48] Nar

Washizu has lost
118.5 million yen in cash.

[20:53] Nar

But in the third match,

[20:56] Nar

the monster Washizu Iwao has a hunch
that he may make a counterattack.

[21:00] Nar

A premonition of a great storm.

[21:02] Nar

The dawn of destruction is approaching.

[22:16] Nar

Next time, "The Power of Brute Luck."

SIGN Next Episode

SIGN The Power of Brute Luck

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