How different would the Narutoverse be if two things happened? If 1. Mizuki tricked Naruto into stealing the Forbidden Scroll early and 2. the whiskered ninja didn't just learn one thing from it... How much would that change things? In this story, you will find out.
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See the end of the work for more notes.
Naruto panted as he jumped through the trees, the Forbidden Scroll of Seals safely strapped to his back.

He grinned as he ran, he had done it, he had taken the Scroll without too much of a fuss, actually, he doubted anyone knew what he had done just yet (little did he know that half of Konoha’s ninja were about to go on the hunt for his head) and he was quite pleased with himself as he remembered what Mizuki-Sensei had said to him.

~Flashback~

Naruto had just left the Academy building after a rough day at school. The halfway point in the school year was getting closer; and Naruto only had a few more months until the next Graduation Exam came up.

This made our blond hero sigh.

He hadn’t gotten much better than the last time he tried graduating. No one gave him the time of day, besides Iruka-sensei; but he was busy with teacher stuff, and the Hokage couldn’t help him because he was, well, the Hokage.

Plus, the old man said it would be kind of cheating if he was taught by the renowned “Professor” of all people.

At first Naruto just accused the older man of being a lazy ass, but after a bit of thinking on his part he sort of got what the Sandaime was talking about; people would probably accuse him of cheating (though if the same thing happened to someone else they would just talk about what an honor or how cool it was for the person [cough* cough* Sasuke*cough] and move on with their lives), especially his fellow students, so he reluctantly agreed and tried to train by himself, like he always did.

But that wasn’t what he was thinking about. What he was actually thinking about was how the Hell would he be able to pass the Exam this time around?

Because, so far, the Graduation Exam always had the same tests! Including his most wretched enemy; the Bunshin,

Oh how he loathed the Bunshin!

Why oh WHY did the Graduation Exam have to have the stupid Bunshin?! What good were a couple illusions anyway? They couldn’t help him fight or sneak or trick anyone! All they were was a fake that could maybe fool someone into fighting it!

Naruto was so deep in his thoughts that he realized too late that someone was in front of him and crashed right into them, forcing him and the person to fall back and for Naruto to unceremoniously land on his rump.

He grabbed at his aching bum for about two seconds before sitting up straight and bowing to the person he ran into,

“I’m sorry!” he yelled; he just wanted to get the apologies over with so he could get back to his thoughts (wait, what was he thinking about again? Ah who cares?)And get out without much of a
fight, though that depended entirely on the person he rammed into.

A light chuckle had Naruto quickly looking up to only relax,” ah, sorry about that, Mizuki-sensei....”

Oroki Mizuki.

He was a Chûnin and an Academy teacher. He often was the assistant to one Umino Iruka and was one of the few people who didn’t sneer whenever Naruto was present, or made any stupid excuses about how he was cheating in something when he clearly wasn’t. Granted, he hadn’t done much for Naruto, but like with Sakura, his standards of being treated as a human were so low that he thought or perhaps tricked himself into thinking that he had a close relationship with the elder man.

Mizuki smiled down at his young Academy student before pulling himself to his feet, offering a hand to help Naruto up as well.

Shock was replaced with quick gratitude and Naruto took the offered hand. After Mizuki helped Naruto up to his feet he smiled down at him once more in that teacher-ly fashion.

“Naruto, what has got you so preoccupied that you don’t even notice me in front of you?” he asked curiously. Truth be told Naruto had some great sensing skills and seemed to be able to locate a person or avoid an attack without seeming to realize it.

But back onto the current topic, Naruto seemed to think it over a moment before shrugging his shoulders nonchalantly, acting as if it weren’t a big deal,

“Nothing really, I guess.....” Crap. Naruto thought when he saw the look that Mizuki sent his way. He totally should not have said ‘I guess’ at the end of that.

Total disbelief and slight worry shown in Mizuki’s eyes before he asked Naruto the dreaded question;

“.... What do you mean ‘I guess’? Naruto, what’s wrong?” Mizuki’s voice suddenly took a much gentler tone than anything he had ever used around Naruto. This surprised the blond greatly because he had never thought Mizuki the “touchy feely” type.

Naruto suddenly felt very tired and weighed down, and he couldn’t stop himself from acknowledging his Sensei’s words,

“I-I don’t really want to talk about it here....” Naruto trailed off. Mizuki nodded his head before turning around, motioning Naruto to follow him.

Later the two arrived on the roof of one of the governmental buildings and both quickly made for the side before dangling their legs over the building.

They sat in silence for a while before Mizuki prodded Naruto again.

“So, what is it?”

And in that moment it was as if a dam had been broken; because then Naruto was spilling a good number of his insecurities about the ever approaching Graduation Exams and how he would probably fail horribly and then be kicked out of the Academy once and for all, making his dream of becoming Hokage also impossible and -holy shit how the hell was he going to get through it all?-he just continued in that way for quite some time.

Mizuki merely listened, nodding his head every once in a while letting our blond hero know that he
was truly listening.

It took about an hour for Naruto to get everything out which was followed by another half hour of utter silence; the sun dipping deeper and deeper behind the Hokage Monument.

After a long while, Mizuki looked up from his musings and suggested the following:

“Well, I know of something that is an extra credit course of sorts that will give you extra points in the final exam…” he mused aloud.

This instantly caught Naruto’s attention. Extra credit course? As long as it wasn’t some stupid written test he was all for it!

“What is it, Mizuki-sensei?” Naruto nearly shouted in excitement.

Mizuki smiled at him and said softly, “well, there is this old Scroll in the Hokage tower called the Scroll of Seals….”

~End Flashback~

Naruto smiled.

Mizuki-sensei had really helped him. This extra credit would make it a certainty that he graduated and became a Shinobi, finally! But that was only if he could stay hidden for a few hours.

Pfft, as if this could deter him! Uzumaki Naruto was the most famous for getting away from even the ANBU after his greatest of pranks.

No way was anybody finding him for at least five hours.

It was by this time that Naruto got to the designated meeting spot. He smiled proudly at himself for getting there as fast as he did, and so sat down by the little storage shed that sat in the little clearing.

It took a minute or two before Naruto got full rein of his lungs again, and then promptly another five seconds before his curiosity got the better of him and he just had to look at what was inside that scroll; I mean, it had to be awesome if it had a name like Forbidden Scroll of Seals! It had to be filled with awesome jutsu!

Plus, if he could learn one of the jutsu in the Scroll, he’d probably get even more points for the final exam!

So the young Academy student tore through the scroll, trying to finds its secrets, his eyes settling on the first Jutsu in it.

*Tajuu Kage Bunshin Jutsu.*

Naruto stared at the characters and they stared right on back.

Why did the first Jutsu have to be Bunshin of all things?

Naruto nearly screamed in frustration before something dawned on him.

What if he could do it? It would be a great challenge and he would finally kick that stupid Jutsu’s ass.

Naruto smirked in glee before looking over the Jutsu, starting his practice right away.
An hour had passed, and in that hour, Naruto had made the Kage Bunshin his bitch, “that’s what you get for messing with me! Uzumaki Naruto cannot be beaten! Mwahahaha!” he cackled gleefully to himself as sweat trickled down the nape of his neck from exertion.

After laughing for a good couple minutes Naruto finally calmed down and looked at the other Jutsu written on the scroll.

He looked over a good portion of the Scroll, actually trying to memorize the words and depictions of hands and/or people doing something; five hours wasn’t long enough to learn everything from the Scroll, it was MASSIVE, so Naruto opted to just try to memorize things instead of practice them.

After a minute or two he shook his head, reached into his hip pouch and brought out a normal scroll and a pen, trying to write down some of the harder to understand/memorize jutsu’s. Some time passed as Naruto wrote down the characters and trying to redraw the drawings before he dropped the pen onto the Scroll, which then caused for the ink to spatter onto the old paper.

The blond froze, feeling like he was having a heart attack before he hastily cleaned up the mess he had made.

Luckily, he was able to clean it up without much residue left behind; he wiped his forehead in relief letting out a large sigh as he opened his eyes and looked over the Scroll again.

It then took about two seconds for Naruto’s eyes to find the strange seal that had the same design as his beloved jumpsuit’s shoulder, hiding near an edge of the Scroll, as if it weren’t important; and so took a closer look at it.

Slowly putting away his own scroll and pen and laying the Scroll of Seals out on the ground carefully Naruto inspected the strange symbol before he noticed words running along the edge around the strange seal,

“Uzumaki Clan seal; rank A; should not be opened unless under dire circumstance,”

Naruto pondered over the writing with a thoughtful expression. ” Dire means important or dangerous, from what I remember, and circumstance means, uh…… An important event! See, I’m not dumb!” Naruto thought, and it is true, he isn’t dumb, just ignorant, to an extent; but that’s beyond the point, and Naruto was still thinking over the words.

Technically, him becoming a Genin was a dire circumstance, plus, it had his last name on it, so again- technically- he had every right to it.

So without much more thought, Naruto swiftly placed his hand over the seal and pushed chakra into it.

Nothing happened.

Naruto frowned. But he quickly started to try to come up with reasons why it hadn’t worked.

Racking his brain for everything he ever heard about seals, Naruto was luckily able to remember the words of his favorite sensei.

‘Some seals’, Iruka-sensei started, ‘requires not just chakra. Some require just blood while others need Chakra and blood as well’. Naruto smiled, Iruka-sensei’s horrendously long and boring lectures were good for something after all.
So, without further ado, Naruto swiftly grabbed a kunai from his pouch and nicked his thumb. With that done, he placed his now bloody hand on the seal and pushed chakra from his hand into the seal.

Nothing happened at first, but then the seal suddenly glowed brightly, so brightly that Naruto had to pull his hands away from the Scroll to shield his eyes. As the light faded Naruto carefully pulled his hands away from his face; only to suddenly have a floating pale blue crystal in front of his face.

He yelped in surprise and scooted back from the crystal and stared at it with wide eyes.

The crystal didn’t move; it simply stayed in place, hovering with a light hum coming from it while emitting a soft glow that seemed to be full of warmth. After staring at the crystal for a couple minutes, Naruto’s curiosity got the better of him and so he moved closer to the shining object.

The first thing he did was poke it, and all that resulted in was it moving slightly in the air before going back in its place, still humming and still glowing. Naruto hummed loudly in his throat, examining the crystal before he tried to take it out of the air, it worked, now what else to do?

Deciding to inspect the crystal, Naruto started to turn it around, examining the crystal from all angles. It was a long crystal with jagged and pointy ends. On one of the smoothed edges there was a strangely shaped symbol that looked a bit like the swirl symbol on his jackets shoulder and back.

Naruto, in a moment of brilliance, decided to run his finger on the likely sharp edged symbol, causing him to cut himself, and for the blood to fall into the symbol.

A bright light shown before slowly fading away, leaving words in its wake,

**Welcome to the game Gamer!**

**Would you like to play?**

**Confirm (Y) Decline (N)**

Staring dumbly at the text, Naruto makes the, again, brilliant decision to press the “Y” without giving a single thought to what could possibly happen.

**Game Start!**

**Welcome, Player 2!**

The crystal then shattered into a million little pieces, everything suddenly got too bright for Naruto to see; his world went white.

……

Everything was bleary and fuzzy; he couldn’t see anything but he could feel someone shaking him.

Naruto blearily opened his eyes to see the face of Iruka looking at him in slight concern but there seemed to be annoyance in his gaze as well. Naruto blinked rapidly and sat up, a small groan escaping his lips as his head throbbed dully, but after shaking it a couple times the pain was gone which left Naruto with an Iruka that no longer looked concerned and just plain pissed off.

Naruto scratched the back of his head sheepishly,” hehe, I guess you found me…” he mumbled, Iruka merely huffed in annoyance.

“Naruto, what on earth do you have to say?” Iruka nearly exploded, but faltered ever so slightly,
seeing Naruto have his goofy grin in place really threw him off.

“What do you mean? I passed didn’t I?” Naruto asked confused while opening his eyes before stopping short.

There, above Iruka’s head was lettering, hanging and glowing like the crystal,

**Umino Iruka – Academy Instructor – LV27**

Naruto stared at the lettering, bewildered and wondering if he had gone insane, he also noticed that there was the Konoha symbol floating by his name as well that was glowing a soft green.

“E-eh, I-Iruka-sensei…?” Naruto stuttered nervously, Iruka didn’t really notice, still pondering what Naruto had said earlier, ‘what do you mean by ‘pass’ Naruto?’ he asked, a feeling of dread rising in his gut.

Naruto was momentarily snapped out of his wonderings and smiled largely, “Eh, what do you mean Iruka-sensei? Isn’t it that if someone can successfully steal this scroll and learn a jutsu from it they can graduate to Genin?”

Iruka started, his eyes widening considerably, “if you-who on earth told you that?” he nearly yelled, “Mizuki-sensei! He said that if I can successfully steal this scroll then I wouldn’t have to take the last part of the exam the next time around!” he cheered happily, but that cheer faded quickly when the look of surprise and alarm crossed his favorite sensei’s face.

Iruka suddenly turned and pushed Naruto out of the way, an array of kunai and shuriken rained down upon him suddenly as he brought his hands up to protect himself,” I see, so that’s how it is…” Iruka muttered,

“I’m impressed, Iruka, that you got here before I did.” A voice sneered from the trees. Naruto’s head snapped up only for him to see Mizuki standing there, with a less than friendly smirk in place. Naruto was suddenly filled with dread and guilt; it was as if he had just done something horrible, which he probably had,

Mizuki looked at him,” Naruto, give me that scroll, now.” He ordered firmly, not a single trace of the kind teacher from a few hours prior in his face or tone,

“H-hey! What the hell is happening?” Naruto asked, panicked.

“Naruto, that scroll has forbidden and dangerous jutsu in it, Mizuki used you so he could get his hands on it!” Iruka yelled while he pulled a kunai from his leg, his words only causing Naruto’s eyes to widen in alarm.

“He’s lying to you Naruto; Iruka’s just afraid of you having that scroll!” Mizuki sneered back,

“What are you saying? He’s the one that’s lying Naruto; do not give him that scroll!” Iruka yelled with as much conviction he could muster, but Naruto was only half listening,

“What do you mean? Why would Iruka-sensei be afraid of me?” Naruto asked, shaken. Mizuki smirked at him before he replied,

“Oh, would you like to know?” He asked mockingly while Iruka’s eyes widened,

“Don’t you dare!” Iruka yelled; but Mizuki ignored him as he continued,
“Would you like to know why all the villagers hate you?” He asked in the same mocking tone. Naruto suddenly perked at that. Did Mizuki really know? What was the reason for the hatred directed towards him his entire life?

“Wh-why do they hate me?” Naruto asked in a shaken voice, Mizuki sneered again,

“There was a law passed eleven years ago,” Naruto looked confused.” A, a law?” he asked, Mizuki smirked, “yes, a law that says something that everyone can know, except for you, that is,” Naruto started.

“Stop, Mizuki!” Iruka nearly screamed but he merely ignored him again while Naruto was even more confused than before,

“W-what is it?!” he questioned in desperation.

“It is the law to not say that Naruto is actually a monster fox! In other words, you are the nine-tailed fox that destroyed the village and killed Iruka’s parents eleven years ago!”

“Eh…?” was all that left Naruto, this new revelation causing him to pause,

“Stop!” Iruka screamed in a hoarse voice that was filled with desperation.

“Didn’t you think it strange? How everyone in this village seemed to hate you, despise you for no reason at all? Wasn’t it-“ but that was all Naruto heard from him, Naruto’s world suddenly froze, everything seeming to pause as this bit of information was processed in his mind, and though he felt like getting angry or panicking Naruto was surprisingly and unnaturally calm, his mind logically dealing with the matter,

“I see, so that’s why the villagers hate me…. It makes sense as to why they treated me in such a way, and is probably why Mizuki chose me to do this; he probably hates me like everyone else… but what about Iruka-sensei? Does he hate me too?”

His thoughts were suddenly cut through by Mizuki’s voice,” -and if I kill you now, everyone will see me as a hero who has done a great deed!” he announced while loosening one of the fuuma shuriken strapped to his back, spinning it furiously,” Die demon!” Mizuki yelled while he let loose the spinning blade of death.

Naruto suddenly started to try and get away, but his legs weren’t working right and all he could do was attempt at crawling away from the crazed man,

“Naruto, get down!” Iruka’s voice cut through the clearing, so Naruto did just that, curling his body with his hands covering his head, waiting for the inevitable pain.

But none came.

Upon feeling something wet and warm fall on his face with the grunt of pain and gasp of surprise, Naruto looked up, only to see Iruka kneeling over him, blood trailing from his mouth and tears in his eyes.

All Naruto could do was stare in shock,” w-why…?” he asked in a broken voice. Iruka didn’t answer at first, before he looked Naruto in the eyes,

“Because, I know what its’ like to be alone. After my parents died, no one paid attention to me, praised me when I did something right or helped me when I needed it. So I made a fool of myself,
just so that I would get some attention, it wasn’t like I was all that good in class to begin with, but I just made it worse, since no one noticed me when I was a good student; so I acted like an idiot….”

Tears were suddenly falling onto Naruto’s face,” it was tough,” Iruka almost whimpered,” right Naruto? You were lonely right? It was tough right? I’m sorry, Naruto. If only I had been more aware, maybe you wouldn’t have had to have suffered like that.” Naruto was just about to answer when the dark chuckling of Mizuki filled the clearing,

“Don’t kid me! Iruka has hated you ever since you killed his parents! He just wants to get that scroll back!”

He wanted to run, oh so badly, but he didn’t his mind wasn’t letting the panic overrule him, but then, Iruka grabbed his shoulder, his tears still running down his face but a determined look within his eyes,

“Naruto, run,” Iruka urged softly, so that Mizuki couldn’t hear him,” make sure Mizuki doesn’t get that scroll!” he told him sternly.

Naruto quickly nodded and started to run away, but not before taking a glance at Mizuki and the letters hovering over his head.

Oroki Mizuki – Traitor – LV34

There was also the Konoha symbol floating by the name, but instead of being green, it was a deep red with a slash through it.

Naruto’s heart nearly stopped at that. Mizuki was a higher level than Iruka, and from what Naruto remembered from the few games he had played in his life, that also meant he was stronger.

But Naruto didn’t stop running and just prayed that Iruka could defeat him.

But suddenly, a blue window appeared before him,

**Quest Alert:**

Run, run as fast as you can!

Run away from Mizuki and keep the Forbidden Scroll from him!

Completion reward: Exp 1000

Increased Reputation with Konoha +200

Increased Reputation with Umino Iruka +500

Increased Reputation with Sarutobi Hiruzen +600

Completion Failure: Exp 100

Decreased Reputation with Konoha -5000

Death

Confirm (Y) Decline (N)
Naruto nearly screamed in surprise before staring at the box blankly before hurriedly and hesitantly pressing the **Confirm** and heading off again, running away from Iruka and Mizuki.

……

It was some time later when Naruto finally stopped. He sat against a tree catching his breath from running so far but soon calmed down. But his heart was sent racing again when yet another blue box sprung to life,

**Objective completed: Awarded Exp 1000**

**Completion Awarded: +200 with Konoha, +500 with Umino Iruka, +600 with Sarutobi Hiruzen**

Naruto tapped the screen and it was gone again. He sighed, “*This is not good for my health!*” he thought exasperated.

He thought this because his mind was working over time because every time he focused on something, even just a little it would suddenly give him a name! Naruto sighed, he had a feeling this strange ability he suddenly had was caused by the crystal, and he probably shouldn’t have touched the damn thing! Because now, everything looked like a damn game!

It wasn’t like he’s been playing games his entire life, but he has played enough to notice that his life seemed to have just turned into one, what with all the levels and quests and all that.

Sighing once again, Naruto looked down at the scroll he held in his arms,

**Forbidden Scroll of Seals – LV?**

Naruto grimaced as he saw the floating yellow words when suddenly a loud ping sounded.

*A special skill has been created through a special act.*

Naruto nearly yelped in surprise before he stared dumbly at the blue box that hung in the air before he hesitantly touched it causing it to disappear only for another box to take its place.

*Through continuous observation a skill to find more information “Observe” Lv. 1 has been created.*

All Naruto could do was stare at it before tapping the box, yet again causing it to disappear, though Naruto half expected another blue box to appear, he looked down at the scroll in his arms before trying out his new “skill”. Because if this was a game, all he had to do was say the skill for it to work, and so he did just that, muttering, “*Observe,*”

Suddenly an orange box popped up momentarily surprising Naruto before he shook his head and started to scan it,

**The Forbidden Scroll of Seals**

**Level: LV?**

**Status: Catalogue**

This powerful scroll was created by the first and second Hokage being filled with many
powerful and dangerous Kinjutsu.

Naruto’s eyes widened yet again before another box popped up,

[Observe]’s level has risen by 1.

“Awesome,” he grinned while tapping the box causing it to vanish, but his grin disappeared when the sounds of grunts of pain and the sound of something or someone hitting the forest floor was heard.

Naruto stiffened before subtly looking around the tree he was hiding behind to see Iruka on the ground with- wait, was that him?- standing and breathing heavily, then Iruka started to talk,

“How, Naruto?” Iruka asked as the other Naruto took the scroll from his back and unsteadily backed into a tree as Iruka turned with a look of murder on his face,” How-“ a puff of smoke,” did you know I wasn’t Iruka?” Mizuki sat there, looking about ready to kill the other Naruto, who chuckled before another puff of smoke filled the air,

“Because I’m Iruka,” The now revealed Iruka muttered lowly,

”Ah, I see,” Mizuki spoke while he stood, placing his hands on his hips while turning to Iruka looking at him in almost disappointment,

“What good is it to protect the one who killed your parents?”

“I’m not going to let an idiot like you get your hands on that scroll.” Iruka spat at Mizuki,

“Ha, you’re the idiot. Naruto is like me,” Iruka looked at him in disbelief,

"Like you?” he questioned,

“Anything is possible with that scroll. There’s no way that Naruto, the demon fox, won’t use its’ powers.”

“Hmm, you’re right.” Naruto heard Iruka consent. This caused for Naruto’s eyes to widen and for him to hide his face in the scroll.

“I knew it. Iruka-sensei doesn’t see the real me-“

“If he was a demon fox,” Naruto’s eyes widened,” But Naruto is different. He’s an excellent student that I recognize fully. He’s a hardworking, clumsy, and honest kid; and no one recognizes him. He knows the pain of others well, but we don’t see his pain. He’s not a demon fox; he’s Uzumaki Naruto of Konoha!” Iruka finished.

By this point Naruto’s tears had long ago welled up and were now streaming down his face, but they stopped when he heard Mizuki start talking,

“Heh, what a fool. Iruka, I said I would kill you later, but now I take that back,” the sound of metal sliding against metal caused Naruto’s heart to quicken and his eyes to widen, but then;

**Quest Alert:**

**Defeat Mizuki!**

Defeat Mizuki and protect Iruka, but remember to keep the Forbidden Scroll from harm and
Mizuki’s greedy hands.

Completion reward: Exp 2000

Increased Reputation with Umino Iruka +500

Increased Reputation with Sarutobi Hiruzen +100

Increased Reputation with Konoha +200

Bounty reward 1500 Ryo

Completion Failure: Exp 0

Death of Umino Iruka

Decreased Reputation with Konoha

Death

“Now die!” Naruto heard Mizuki scream, so he quickly pressed Confirm and sprung to action.

Naruto jumped out from his hiding place and head butted Mizuki, sending him flying back and making the large shuriken fly into the trees.

"Don’t lay another finger on Iruka-sensei; or I’ll kill you!” Naruto said in a menacing voice causing a shiver to go down Iruka’s back,” Observe,” Naruto then quietly muttered so Mizuki wouldn’t be able to hear him,

Name: Oroki Mizuki

Level: LV34

HP: 745/800

MP: 1000/1050

Mizuki is traitorous scum that has been working for an Unknown person for quite some time and has been selling information about this generation of Shinobi to the highest bidder; he is merciless and cruel, making him a formidable foe.

Naruto then grit his teeth, “how am I going to defeat him? I don’t even know how strong I am! But at least I know a little more about him.”

“Talk while you can!” Mizuki yelled,” I’ll take a kid like you out in a second.” Naruto scowled at that,

“Oh yeah? Well I’ll just repay it a thousand times over!” Naruto crossed his fingers together,

“Why don’t you try if you can; demon fox!” Mizuki yelled hysterically,

"Tajuu Kage Bunshin no jutsu!”

Suddenly, there were a thousand Naruto’s standing in the clearing, in the trees and bushes which caused Mizuki to gasp and look around him in alarm,
“Eh? Didn’t you say you were gonna get me?” taunted the Naruto’s as Mizuki’s alarm only grew as he ungracefully landed on his butt.

“Well, if you won’t get us, we’ll get you!”

Mizuki screamed.

[Ahem, not appropriate for children]

Objective Completed: Awarded 2000 Exp

Completion Awarded: Increased Reputation with Umino Iruka +100, Increased Reputation with Sarutobi Hiruzen +100, Increased Reputation with Konoha +200, Bounty 15000 Ryo

Congratulations! Your level has increased by 1.

A special skill has been created through a special act.

By continuous badmouthing, the skill “Taunt” Lv. 1 has been created, continue to badmouth your enemies and piss them off to have a higher chance of winning.

Naruto happily tapped the boxes before looking at what he had done. After the beat down; Mizuki lay on the forest floor, his HP having reached zero and was broken and bloody twitching every so often. This caused for Naruto to sheepishly scratch his head,

“Ehehehe, I may have gone overboard…..” Iruka stared in disbelief before shaking his head with a smile on his face,” Hey Iruka-sensei! You alright?” Naruto asked, concern lacing his tone. Iruka looked back up at him and smiled,

“I’m fine Naruto-“suddenly he hunched over in pain, clutching at his stomach which caused for alarm to cross Naruto’s face who rushed over, muttering,” Observe!” while he ran over to him,

Name: Umino Iruka

Level: LV27

HP: 300/750

MP: 10/1000

Umino Iruka’s parents died in the Kyuubi attack, and as such became an orphan. Because of this he became the class clown to get attention, but matured once he grew up and followed his passion to teach by becoming an Academy Instructor and quickly found a soft spot for one of his students; Uzumaki Naruto.

This caused worry to enter Naruto’s veins which was only made worse when every few seconds the HP bar would lose ten points. He quickly reached his teacher and asked while pretending he didn’t just see what he did,

“What’s wrong? Ah, I’m an idiot; you were just stabbed in the back! Oh course you’re in pain!” Naruto quickly chastised himself before looking over Iruka;” don’t you have a first aid kit or whatever?” He asked hurriedly.

“Yes,” Iruka muttered, strained, while he slowly straightened himself before pulling a scroll out of
one of his vest pockets, opening it and placing some of his blood on it.

A first aid kit appeared and Naruto quickly grabbed it but before he could do anything a blue box appeared,

**You have obtained [First Aid Kit] would you like to add it to your Inventory?**

Naruto quickly scanned the words, and, because he had no idea what this ‘Inventory’ was, pressed no and opened the kit up,” Observe,” he muttered, Iruka was in too much pain to notice,

**Tape Bandages: a Medical Item used for covering wounds. Ointment should be applied before use. Stops bleeding effect.**

**Medical Ointment: a Medical Item that helps heals wounds faster than by leaving them alone. +50% to overall HP recovery; 20 HP points per minute.**

**Cotton Ball: Used to absorb liquids, it can be used to place medicinal ointments on wounds or to clean blood from wounds.**

**Band aids: a small bandage that is used for covering smaller cuts. Stops bleeding effect.**

**Alcohol: alcohol used on wounds to disinfect them, can also be consumed if patient is in a lot of pain.**

**Pain Killers: Pills that lessen the pain by half for every one pill taken. Temporary -10% to STR every three pills taken**

Naruto slowly nodded his head before taking out the alcohol and cotton balls. But before he could do anything Iruka tried to take the items from his hands, only managing to fumble and almost drop them. Naruto grabbed Iruka’s hands,

“No Iruka-sensei! Let me help you.” He chided the man. Iruka chuckled before leaning back against the tree,

“Okay Naruto, help me.” He said with a kind, yet tired, smile.

**A quest has been created.**

Naruto blinked,

**Quest alert:**

**Iruka’s request: Wrap it up!**

**Disinfect and wrap up Iruka’s wounds before he passes out from blood loss.**

**Completion reward: Exp 100**

**Increased Reputation with Umino Iruka +400**

**Completion Failure: Decreased Reputation with Iruka Umino -2000**

Umino Iruka’s possible death
Naruto gulped before pressing **Confirm** and getting to work.

It took a while, but he was able to clean Iruka up pretty good. He had to forcefully take his vest and shirt off because Iruka was very adamant about not taking them off but Naruto needed to get to the wound in his back so Iruka eventually complied. After that Naruto wrapped what he could on the rest of his body, but he made sure to place disinfectant and the ointment on Iruka’s wounds before wrapping them.

Naruto sighed as he wiped the sweat off his forehead, ‘**that was hard work!**’ he thought with a smile at Iruka who was looking better than before but without his shirt since Iruka told Naruto that if he moved around too much it could irritate his wounds and make it worse, so putting Iruka’s shirt and vest back on was a no-no but at least Naruto got something else out of it.

**A special skill has been created through a special act.**

**Through diligent work the skill to wrap up, disinfect and heal wounds “Medical Prowess” Lv. 1 has been created.**

**Objective Completed: Awarded 100 Exp**

**Completion Awarded: Reputation with Umino Iruka went up +400**

Naruto had almost whooped at that, he even gained an additional level to the skill, plus, Iruka’s HP had stopped going down and was slowly filling back up.

Naruto stood up and stretched,” Iruka-sensei, are you feeling better?” he asked nervously. Iruka grinned at him before nodding,

“Yes, I am feeling much better, thank you Naruto.” Iruka looked up at the sky,” we should probably head back now though,” he muttered to himself. Naruto stiffened; he had been afraid that that would be the case.

“Okay, let me help you get up so that we can get going,” he muttered begrudgingly. And so Naruto helped Iruka back to his feet, grabbed the **Forbidden Scroll of Seals** and strapped it to his back and helped Iruka walk back out of the forest. It wasn’t long before they were surrounded by five ANBU, one of whom had a tiger mask on and stood forward.

Naruto looked at all of them and the words above their heads,

**Tora – ANBU Captain – LV?**

**Neko – ANBU – LV?**

**Karasu – ANBU – LV?**

**Rat – ANBU – LV?**

**Inoshishi – ANBU – LV?**

Naruto was surprised that he couldn’t see their real names, or levels for that matter. Did that mean he could only see levels up to a certain point? His thoughts were interrupted by Tiger,

“Chūnin Umino Iruka, report.” He stated in a commanding tone. Iruka nodded and quickly told them a brief version of what had happened. Tora nodded as he was signaling to the crow masked ANBU
member who swiftly disappeared, only to reappear a moment later with an unconscious Mizuki thrown over his shoulder,

“Neko, take Umino-san to the hospital.” The ANBU Neko nodded once before taking Iruka from Naruto.

Before Naruto could protest Iruka gave him a reassuring look that made Naruto keep quiet and nod his head with a frown. Suddenly, Iruka and Neko vanished, along with all but Tora of the ANBU and he looked down at Naruto, “come, the Hokage wishes to see you.”

Was all he uttered before turning and sprinting away. Naruto went after him quickly and quietly, he was worried about what the old man would say. Would he be angry? Naruto was sure he would. Would he let Naruto explain himself? Maybe, maybe not. Naruto knew what he had done was horrible, but there wasn’t much he could have done, well, if he had listened to the little voice in his head that said not to trust Mizuki this probably wouldn’t have happened, but then again, the village probably wouldn’t have known about Mizuki’s betrayal before it was far too late.

Naruto decided to go with that thought; it was by far more pleasant than the rest. And so he continued to follow Tiger towards the village.

[Location: Hokage Tower]

After running for about thirty minutes Naruto and Tora arrived at the Hokage Tower, and upon seeing it Naruto gulped audibly. Tora glanced his way briefly before muttering, ”the Hokage is in his office, he is expecting you.” And with that he vanished, along with the Forbidden Scroll.

Naruto sighed dejectedly before trudging into the large building, it was empty save for a few people who of which just ignored him, it was awfully late, or early so most people were at home sleeping.

Walking through the almost empty building just made Naruto nervous, but it was countered by the strange calmness of his mind that was starting to freak him out, but before he could ponder on it he was in front of the Hokage’s office. Naruto gulped again and knocked hesitantly on the door.

“Enter,” Came the gruff voice of the Sandaime. Naruto took a shuddering breath before opening the door and swiftly entering, the door closing behind him.

Sarutobi Hiruzen sat behind his desk, his pipe in his mouth with a stern look on his face. Naruto shrunk into himself slightly at the look and he fidgeted in the spot he stood, ”sit Naruto.” Hiruzen commanded. Naruto quickly nodded and sat in the chair in front of the desk. After a couple minutes of calculating silence the Hokage spoke,

“So, Naruto-kun; what led to your little adventure tonight?” Naruto sharply took a breath before letting it out slowly; he just had to tell the truth; that was the only logical thing to do. Wait a minute, since when did he think logically? But that wasn’t important and Naruto shook his head to clear it while taking a deep breath,

“Well, it started at the Academy…..” And so, Naruto went on about how he had confessed some of his insecurities about the upcoming Graduation Exam and how Mizuki had lied to him about an extra credit course. He talked of how he had stolen the scroll, ran to the clearing and even learned the Kage Bunshin, which caused the Sandaime’s eyebrow to rise slightly, but he skimmed over the whole strange ability thing. He spoke of how Iruka had found him and how Iruka had saved him, telling him to run and keep the scroll safe and how Mizuki had tried to kill Iruka and what Mizuki had told him. Here the Hokage stopped him,
“So, he did tell you?” Naruto nodded,

“Yeah, he told me that I am the Kyuubi—“

“You are not the Kyuubi, Naruto-kun, nor will you ever be. Understood?” Naruto was surprised by the sudden outburst,

“But, he said I was…?” Hiruzen shook his head.

“No Naruto-kun, that is not true, but it is close to the truth.” Naruto’s heart sped up,

”Wh-what’s the tr-truth?” Naruto stammered. The aged Hokage smiled kindly at him before answering,

“You are what’s called a Jinchuuriki, Naruto-kun.” Naruto looked puzzled,

“A genie-what?” he asked confused. Hiruzen chuckled.

“It’s Jinchuuriki, Naruto-kun. It’s the term applied to a person who has a Biju sealed in them.” Naruto nodded his head but a confused look still adorned his face.

“What’s a Biju?” he asked with confusion.

Hiruzen sighed,” a Biju is a creature made entirely out of Chakra, like the Kyuubi, and there are only nine of them, the Kyuubi being the strongest, I was hoping I would be able to tell you about this myself after you became a Genin but I guess that won’t be happening now. Do you understand?”

Naruto sat for a moment before nodding his head,

“Yeah, I get it, but what do you mean by sealed and why me?” Naruto asked. Hiruzen seemed to ponder that for a moment before taking out a scroll and a kunai from what seemed like thin air and placed them on the desk.

“Do you see these Naruto-kun?” he asked, Naruto nodded and so he proceeded,” let’s say that you are the scroll and the Kyuubi is the kunai,” Naruto unsurely nodded his head again,” now watch,” he placed the kunai on top of the scroll, did a few hand seals then laid his hand on the scroll. A puff of smoke later and the kunai was gone.

“See? The kunai is now gone, it has entered the scroll, but even though this is true, that doesn’t make the scroll the kunai. Do you understand now Naruto-kun?” the aged Hokage asked patiently. Naruto sat with a finger to his chin, a contemplative look on his face, but then he looked at the Hokage,

“So, what you’re saying is that even though the scroll has the kunai in it, it isn’t the kunai, and the same goes for me and the Kyuubi?” he wondered aloud. The Sandaime nodded his head, a fond smile on his face,

“Yes, you are correct Naruto, though there are a lot more complications and complexities regarding the sealing done and the seal containing the Kyuubi, these are the basics that allowed the Yondaime to seal the Kyuubi, and to answer your other question,” Naruto sat on edge, ” I cannot tell you!” the old man finished with a grin. Naruto deflated before glaring at the Hokage,

“You can’t tell me or won’t?” He asked suspiciously. Sarutobi chuckled good heartedly before answering,

“A little bit of both, Naruto-kun. I don’t know the exact details of why the Yondaime chose you but I do know some, sadly that is classified information that I won’t be able to tell you any time soon. The
Yondaime wanted you to be told once you became a Chūnin, so, perhaps then?” he seemed to ask himself which just caused for Naruto to scowl at him again. The Hokage chuckled again before motioning to him, “but now with that out of the way, you may proceed with your explanation, Naruto-kun.”

Naruto sighed before continuing again. It took a moment for him to remember exactly where he left off before he went off again, telling of him running and hiding then protecting Iruka from Mizuki, he even talked of how he helped patch up Iruka before the ANBU found them, he even slipped in the information about Mizuki working under someone else,

“He even stupidly mentioned how he was getting the scroll for some sort of offering for whoever he’s working for,” he slyly added, having absolutely no idea how right he was.” And well, now, here I am…..” Naruto finished lamely.

Hiruzen nodded his head before he leaned back in his seat. A couple minutes passed while the Hokage let the information swirl around his brain, processing how to handle the situation exactly.

Coming to a conclusion, the old man sat up in his seat catching Naruto’s attention and he too sat up. After staring at him for a few more seconds Hiruzen opened his mouth,” Naruto-kun, though I can’t tell you why the Yondaime chose you yet, I can tell you who your mother is and some other questions you may have.” Naruto brightened at this,

“Really? You knew who my mom was?” Naruto asked with a hopeful look, Hiruzen nodded.

“Yes. She was a fine woman; you are actually a lot like her, Naruto-kun.” Naruto smiled, “Really?” He breathlessly asked, the Hokage nodded, his features softening,

“Really. Would you like to know her name?” He asked kindly. Naruto nodded his head vigorously which caused the old man to chuckle,

“Okay then I shall tell you. Her name was Uzumaki Kushina, one of the last of the Uzumaki clan.” Naruto’s face brightened before a look of confusion over took his face,

“Uzumaki clan? I have a clan?” he asked confused. Hiruzen sighed,

“It would appear you haven’t been paying attention in class, Naruto-kun, this should have been mentioned in the history lesson at the Academy.” The Hokage chided, Naruto scoffed,

“Yeah, like I would know anything about that.” Hiruzen raised a brow,

“Oh? And why would that be, Naruto-kun?” he asked curiously. Naruto looked at him incredulously before answering,

“Well, first off, it’s really boring,” Hiruzen chuckled, “and now that I know that I’m a Jinchuriki-”

“It’s Jinchuuriki Naruto-kun,” Hiruzen interrupted patiently,

“Yeah that,” Naruto frowned. He still had a hard time remembering big words,” Anyway, now I know why they did it, but ever since I joined the Academy, most of the teachers either ignored me or belittled me and would send me out of the classroom for no reason or for something really little like yawning during a lecture-” The room suddenly dropped a few degrees, forcing Naruto to stop talking immediately, looking up at the now enraged Hokage.

Hiruzen was livid. He couldn’t believe anyone was willing to do that, just to get at a child! He would
be having some words with the teachers in the Academy, because, if they were willing to sabotage Naruto, what would stop them from sabotaging other children?

“Naruto-kun,” Hiruzen started in a clipped tone, making Naruto gulp nervously,” who were these teachers?” his voice was eerily calm, which caused Naruto to choose his words carefully,

“U-um, it was, uh, Kai-Kairi-sensei and some of the assistants…. but no one else!” Naruto didn’t really want anyone to get in trouble because of him, mainly because it would end up making a lot of things worse. The Hokage took one deep breath then let it out slowly,

“Naruto-kun, you can tell me anything, always remember that.” Naruto nodded his head before looking up at Hiruzen,

“But I-I don’t want to get anyone in trouble….. Won’t that just make it worse?” he asked. Hiruzen shook his head,

“This isn’t just about you anymore, Naruto-kun, if they are willing to do what they’ve done to you, regardless of your status, what’s to stop them from cheating on any other child? I want to get rid of this problem before it bleeds out towards all the other children. I’m sorry for not noticing before, Naruto-kun, I should have realized something was wrong when you couldn’t pass the exam twice in a row, especially since you were so excited about going to the Academy and becoming a Shinobi, that was neglect on my part so I am sorry.” Naruto was stunned. The Hokage had never apologized to him before, mainly because he was always apologizing to whoever was his latest prank victim.

Naruto then smiled brightly,” That’s okay Jiji! It’s not all your fault. It’s not like you can spend all your time looking out for me when you have an entire village to look out for!” He cheerily exclaimed which put a smile on the old mans’ face.

“Thank you Naruto-kun. Now, what would those teachers’ names be and what exactly did they do?” The Hokage asked and so Naruto dutifully replied, telling the few names of the teachers and assistants that had messed with his education, belittled him and seemed to just overall not teach anything whenever they couldn’t just send him out, though he was a bit hesitant about telling everything they had done to him but the aged Hokage was able to coax most of it out of him.

“Now that that’s out of the way, what else would you like to know?” Hiruzen smiled after writing all the names down along with their crimes, he would definitely be having some words with them.

Naruto immediately perked up at this, then put on a thinking face with a finger to his chin while thinking,

“Well, can you tell me more about my clan?” he asked, hopeful once again. Hiruzen chuckled warmly,

“Of course, Naruto-kun,” And so, the aged Hokage went on and told all he knew of the Uzumaki, how they lived, where they lived and how they had been killed off. Naruto was sad that most if not all of his clan was dead, but that was short lived when he found out about something,

“Fuinjutsu?” Naruto asked excitedly. Hiruzen nodded with a smile,

“Yes Naruto-kun, your clan was well known for their Fuinjutsu prowess, most if not all were masters of it, your mother included.” Naruto grinned,” awesome!” he exclaimed which caused for the old man to laugh heartily,

“Yes, it is awesome.” A few more chuckles escaped his lips before he continued speaking,” anyway, Naruto-kun, there isn’t much else on the Uzumaki that I can tell you, what else would you like to
Naruto sat back with a finger to his chin, pondering on what exactly he should ask next. There wasn’t much else he wanted to know, but there was a strange nagging feeling that he had forgotten something. Naruto quickly glanced up above the Hokage’s head, seeing the light glow of blue and green.

**Sarutobi Hiruzen – Hokage – Professor – LV?**

Naruto just stared at the lettering. “That’s strange,” he thought, “There’re two titles instead of one…” He shook his head and opened his mouth to say he didn’t have anything else to say, but then was suddenly struck with an idea.

Hiruzen chuckled at the suddenly bright face of his pseudo grandson,

“Can you get me a teacher?” Naruto suddenly exclaimed. Sarutobi was surprised by the question,

“And what do you mean by that Naruto-kun? Don’t you already have Iruka as your instructor?” he questioned. Naruto vigorously shook his head.

“Not that I don’t like Iruka-sensei, I do, but he can’t take all that much time out of his day to help only me or fix everything that’s probably been messed with. He has an entire classroom to take care of, not just me, so I was thinking that maybe you could find someone to teach me some things.” The Hokage nodded his head to that, and then a thoughtful expression covered his face,

“Do you have anyone in mind?” the old man asked; names and faces swirling in his head. Naruto grinned,

“Yeah!” he exclaimed before continuing,” I was thinking that it could be Inu-nii!” Hiruzen stopped short, glancing up at Naruto with a bit of surprise.

“Inu-nii? Now who would that be?” he asked, inwardly laughing at the face he imagined said Inu-nii would have made if he had heard Naruto ask for him. Naruto simply beamed at this,

“I now know why they were there, but I remember when I was little, there was an ANBU squad that sometimes helped me when I was in trouble or when I needed help with something. Inu-nii was the one that seemed to like me the most out of all of them, aside from Weasel, who was the one that taught me how to read and write. He was really cool and I haven’t seen him in a long time! I want him to teach me because it would be totally awesome, and also kinda because I want to thank him for helping me out,” Naruto scratched the back of his head sheepishly, “Plus I want to see his real face!” he finished with a wide grin. Hiruzen chuckled heartily at that before going a bit more serious.

“I’m sorry Naruto-kun,” Naruto slumped at this, “but I won’t be able to do that,” he held a hand up before Naruto could start complaining,” the reason is that your Inu-nii is a very busy ninja, one that I currently can’t allow to stop working yet, though I’m sure he would be very glad to see you again, he has a lot of work to handle right now, especially now that we’ve captured Mizuki and you’ve given us some very helpful information. I’m sorry, Naruto-kun.”

Naruto slumped in his chair even more,” that’s okay,” he mumbled,” but can I still meet him again?” he asked hopefully, giving the Hokage his best puppy dog eyes, he knew the old man wouldn’t be able to resist that. True to his thoughts, the old man relented,

“Yes, I believe I can do that. Just give me a couple days and I will see what I can do.” Naruto
literally jumped in victory before hurriedly running around the desk and hugging the old man. Sarutobi laughed heartily through the hug, patting the young blond on the head.

After a few seconds Naruto pulled away and ran back to his seat, sitting down. A few more chuckles escaped the Hokage before he was able to ask,” So, do you have anyone else in mind?” Naruto looked up in thought for a moment,

“Eh, I sorta know Kotetsu and Izumo; whenever I’ve seen them they looked pretty bored, uh.... Oh, Genma and uh, his names Raidou? That’s all I can think up though... what about you?” he asked curiously.

Hiruzen nodded to at the suggestions before taking a moment to think. After a while he shook his head,” I can’t think of anyone else at the moment,” Naruto nodded to that; Hiruzen smiled, glad that he wasn’t complaining or whining and smiled while saying,” let me think about it for a couple days, I’ll get back to you on that.” Naruto nodded his head, but then suddenly, he stretched and yawned widely. Hiruzen chuckled,” it would appear I have kept you up too late, Naruto-kun. You are dismissed.”

Naruto opened his mouth to protest but merely shrugged before he sleepily stood up, waving carelessly to the Hokage,” bye Jiji,” he tiredly mumbled while heading out the door. Hiruzen once again chuckled,

“Goodbye Naruto-kun. Have a good night.” Naruto nodded and left the room.

As soon as Naruto was gone Hiruzen looked straight at the wall,” Inoshishi,” a boar masked ANBU suddenly appeared in the room,

“Hai, Hokage-sama?” he questioned.

Hiruzen nodded toward the door,” make sure he gets home safely.” Inoshishi nodded once before disappearing again. Sarutobi sighed while leaning back in his chair, before he stood, turning toward the window partially and staring at the Hokage Monument, more specifically, the Yondaime’s face.

“It would seem I have failed your son, Minato-kun,” he sighed tiredly,” I’m sorry.” And with that, the aged Hokage turned and headed out the door, heading home for the night.

[Elsewhere]

In the darkness of the night someone was walking along the streets. The soft clip clop of their footsteps echoing eerily in the quiet of the night as everyone was in bed, and so the streets were empty.

Suddenly they stopped, lifted their hand into the air swiftly before seeming to press it,

“Ah,” a voice murmured quietly,” it would seem I have company.” A smile glittered in the moonlight,

“This will be fun.”
As soon as he got home Naruto went straight to bed, waving away the blue box that stated that he had gotten *something* as an award and that it was put in his inventory, and was barely able to change into his night clothes before he fell face first into his bed sheets, promptly falling asleep.

It was early morning when he woke again,

**You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.**

He waved away the words and was quick to make the usual morning meeting with his floor before he groggily got up, stretched, grabbed his tracksuit from the floor and a fresh pair of underpants from his dresser and headed for his bathroom.

Now, Naruto definitely did not have the best bathroom in the world, but at least it functioned properly, if not a bit poorly.

That being said, the fact that the toilet sputtered while flushing or that he didn’t have any hot water didn’t faze him as he went about relieving himself from the excess liquid that was housed in his bladder before he took a short, cold, shower, which effectively woke him up.

Sighing in light bliss and shuddering from the cold, Naruto grabbed a small towel and a small bar of soap and made quick work of cleaning himself. He was momentarily surprised to see the red of blood being washed from his body and was dumbfounded as to how it had gotten there in the first place, he didn’t feel any pain.

He was jerked from his thoughts with a hard shudder from the cold, which reminded him that he should probably turn off the water and get out.

And so he did just that.

Jumping out of the shower Naruto lazily grabbed the dry, but slightly dirty, towel that hung on the towel rack before swiftly drying himself off, then he bent forward and grabbed his clothes and put those on quickly. Deciding that his clothes were on to his liking, but was still puzzled over the fact that blood was splotched in random areas, the young blond looked into his mirror.
And almost killed himself when he fell down in surprise.

He slowly stood back up and peeked over the sink counter, only to straighten quickly almost making him dizzy.

There above his head, were words. And they weren’t just any old random words, they were,

**Uzumaki Naruto – The Gamer; Player 2 – Jinchuuriki – LV4**

He just stared at the words, uncomprehending, before the memories of the night before smacked him in the face. “So, that wasn’t a dream…?” He murmured aloud, reaching a hand up to wave through the words. Nothing happened; his hand just passed through like it wasn’t there, which struck him with an idea.

Forming the Ram seal he closed his eyes and shouted,” Kai!” he felt a burst of chakra leave his body before he opened his eyes, seeing the words still over his head, he shook his head and put his hands together again. “Kai!” he shouted once more, opened his eyes, saw the words and closed them again,

“Kai!”

“Kai!”

“Kai!”

“Kai!”

He breathed heavily, staring at the words, still hovering above him. He took a gasping breath before straightening,” So,” he began,” either I did that wrong, or this is real….” He muttered, he shook his head,” and with the amount of times I did that, I really don’t think I did it wrong. So, this is real?” he asked the air, looking again at the words.

A large grin suddenly came to his face,” Yatta!” he yelled loudly, grinning all the while.

His grin remained as he looked at the words, specifically his level before he suddenly deflated.

If he was only level 4 then that meant that he was really weak. Iruka had been a level 27 while Mizuki was a freaking 34! Naruto suddenly brightened again.

He defeated a level 34 almost all by himself!

He beamed brightly before remembering that he had to get on with his day, worse he had to make it to the Academy before school started!

Naruto scrambled around, finishing his morning necessities, including breakfast, and changing into a different pair of clothes because his tracksuit was dirty with blood, and ran out the door at around 7:30, he had to be quick or he would be late for class which was at 8 o’clock, he was quite a ways from the Academy.

Right before he could start heading towards the Academy, a new box popped up,

**Quest Alert:**

**Don’t be late!**

**Get to the Academy before school starts, or suffer the consequences!**
Detention

Naruto swiftly read the words before tapping the box, a timer appeared to the right of his vision and started to count down, so he decided the quickest way to get to school was by running, so, he tried something out that he knew ninja did, but hadn’t tried to do yet himself before.

He pushed chakra into his legs to try and go faster, and was surprised when it worked, being confirmed when a new blue box appeared,

A special skill has been created through a special act.

By pushing Chakra in your legs to make yourself faster, the skill “Chakra Sprint” Lv. 1 has been created.

He tapped the boxes with a wide grin before he nearly shouted,” Chakra Sprint!” and he suddenly burst forward, going faster than before and nearly flattening some people along the way.

[Location: Academy: Time 7:55 A.M]

Naruto arrived breathing heavily. He was early by five minutes to class which he was happy about and everyone in the room seemed surprised that he was already there, then there was another chime which only caused his heart rate to quicken slightly before going back to normal, he was starting to get used to that.

Quest Completion: 100 Exp gained

Because you arrived early, you have gained +10 REP points with your class and an additional +5 REP points with the Konoha Twelve (1 point per minute) continue to arrive early to class to earn more REP points.

A grin found his face before it was switched with a look of confusion.” Who the hell are the Konoha Twelve?” Naruto wondered before shaking his head, “ah, it doesn’t matter.” He thought before looking for a place to sit, but stopped short when he saw the words floating above everyone’s heads.

While most of the kids only had levels 5 or 6, there were seven that stuck out to him the most.

Nara Shikamaru – Academy Student – LV8

Aburame Shino – Academy Student – LV9

Yamanaka Ino – Academy Student – LV7

Haruno Sakura – Academy Student – LV6

He only noticed Sakura’s since she is his crush,
And last but not least,

**Uchiha Sasuke – Academy Student – LV12**

Naruto stopped cold when he saw that. Why the hell was Sasuke three levels higher than the highest levels?!

It made total sense now why Sasuke always beat Naruto’s butt, he’s eight freakin levels higher than him! And until yesterday, he was nine levels!

It was then he realized that the only reason he beat Mizuki was because he underestimated him, which caused for him to deflate quite a bit, having that bit of information shoved in his face, he wasn’t as awesome as he thought, which kind of sucked. Naruto sighed tiredly before shaking his head, looking around for a spot to sit.

There were a few open spaces left, one was by Sasuke—there was no way he was sitting with him—one by Ino, one by Shikamaru and Shino, Chouji wasn’t there and one by Sakura. He stood for a moment before he started to head for the seat by Sakura before stopping, turning and heading to sit in between Shikamaru and Shino, they seemed the least likely to turn him away.

“Hey guys!” Naruto called to them cheerily. Shikamaru responded with a grunt and a lazy wave while Shino stiffly nodded his head to him, “would you mind me sitting here?” he asked, nervous they would turn him away but hiding it with his grin.

Shikamaru simply shrugged his shoulders, “eh, I don’t mind.” He replied in his lazy drawl while Shino pushed his glasses up,

“Hey guys!” Naruto called to them cheerily. Shikamaru responded with a grunt and a lazy wave while Shino stiffly nodded his head to him, “would you mind me sitting here?” he asked, nervous they would turn him away but hiding it with his grin.

Shikamaru simply shrugged his shoulders, “eh, I don’t mind.” He replied in his lazy drawl while Shino pushed his glasses up,

“You can sit here if you would like to, Uzumaki-san.” Naruto grinned before sitting,

“Thanks! And you can just call me Naruto, Shino!” Shino once again nodded stiffly, but a soft pink seemed to touch his cheeks, “as you wish, Naruto-kun.” Naruto opened his mouth to tell him to drop the ‘kun’ before he just shook his head. He didn’t mind being called Naruto-kun, the old man called him that all the time anyway.

Naruto then settled into his seat leaning back and looked up at the ceiling before looking to the side and above Shikamaru’s head, then to Shikamaru himself. Shikamaru merely glanced at him lazily before laying his head on the desk, seeming to fall asleep. Naruto narrowed his eyes, “Observe,” he muttered quietly, an orange box popped up,

**Name**: Nara Shikamaru

**Level**: LV8

**HP**: 100/100

**MP**: 500/500

Nara Shikamaru is a part of the Nara clan, who are known for their Shadow manipulation techniques, lazy attitudes and massive intellects. Shikamaru is one of the smartest in his clan which also makes him one of the laziest.
Naruto looked at the information thoughtfully before a ping sounded.

[Observe]'s level has increased by 1.

Smiling Naruto turned his head and looked to Shino, again muttering,” Observe!” Shino seemed to raise a brow at him, but didn’t comment. An orange box appeared showing Shino’s stats.

Name: Aburame Shino

Class: Academy Student

Title: Aburame Heir

Level: LV9

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 400/400

MP: 200/200

STR: 25

VIT: 55

DEX: 45

INT: 50.5

WIS: 35

LUK: 9

Status: Bug Keeper (+10 in Trust; +20 in bug control; 25% in Kikaichū control) Aburame (-20 in overall REP; -25% in Social Skills; 50% in Kikaichū control)

Being a part of the well-known Aburame clan for their bugs Shino is as silent and slightly creepy as the rest of his clan and as the heir is stronger than most of his peers.

Naruto’s eyebrows rose at that. He didn’t know that Shino was the Heir of his clan, well; he probably should have known and was probably told only to forget. He was cut from his thoughts by Shino’s voice,

“Why are you staring at me, Naruto-kun?” the older boy asked; a hint of annoyance in his voice. Naruto blinked a couple times before sitting back with a grin,

“Ah, sorry about that Shino! I was just spacing I guess…..” Naruto laughed nervously while scratching the back of his head sheepishly. Shino once again raised a brow,

“Am I bothering you with my presence? Would you like for me to leave?” he asked, though Naruto was sure he heard a small tremor in his voice, as if afraid that that was the case. Naruto quickly shook his head, his trademark grin on his face,

“Naw, I don’t want ya leaving, you’re pretty cool actually!” he replied enthusiastically, which caused
for Shino to have both of his eyebrows to rise in surprise, his lips turned upward slightly in a light smile of surprise.

“You- do not mind my presence?” he asked curiously. Naruto raised his own brow,” uh, should I?” he asked confused. Shino opened his mouth before snapping it shut, turning forward he looked to the front of the classroom.

“Most do not appreciate my presence because of my clan’s technique that includes-“

“Oh yeah!” Naruto interrupted,” your clan works with chakra bugs right?” Shino glanced at him from the corner of his eye,

“We do not merely work with them; they actually live inside our bodies.” He finished shortly, awaiting Naruto’s response. It took a full minute for Naruto to reply, a look of shock on his face,

“I had no idea. That’s….” He seemed to struggle with how he wanted to phrase his next word before finally continuing,” Interesting.” Shino was surprised to say the least when he heard that. Most people said it was creepy or gross, not usually interesting.

“Really?” he asked,” just interesting? You don’t think that it’s creepy or gross?” Naruto looked at him a moment before answering,

“Uh, am I supposed to? Yeah it seems a little creepy, and I guess a bit gross, but I don’t think that should affect the way people see you. You aren’t creepy or gross.” Naruto finished with a soft grin. Shino simply stared at him, before a soft smile adorned his lips,

“Thank you. No one’s ever told me that before. Most people just avoid me because of it…..” Naruto snorted,

“I totally know what that’s like!” he exclaimed cheerily while slapping Shino on the back who jerked forwards slightly,” ah, sorry about that!” he cheekily called out to which Shino just nodded, when suddenly-

You have gained +200 REP points with Aburame Shino causing your Reputation to move from “Neutral” to “Friendly”.

Naruto grinned and tapped the box, but then another one popped up.

A special skill has been unlocked.

He blinked.

By being able to relate to and feel the emotions around you, the skill “Empathy” Lv. 13 has been unlocked.

Naruto was confused by that one. What did it mean by unlocked, and why did it unlock after he said he could relate with Shino? He shook his head and looked at Shino again who was looking at him curiously. Naruto just laughed and waved his hand, saying it was nothing causing Shino to nod his head and look ahead again.

Naruto narrowed his eyes momentarily before muttering,” Empathy,” at first nothing happened, but then a red box popped up,

The skill “Empathy” cannot be used without the skill “Observe” being in use.
He frowned for a second before shaking his head, ”Observe, Empathy.” Naruto muttered this time.

Once again Shino’s stats appeared, though nothing seemed out of the ordinary he stopped short when he saw that what seemed to be Shino’s character summary was now longer, though the beginning was the same there was something extra added to it,

**Being a part of the well-known Aburame clan for their bugs Shino is as silent and slightly creepy as the rest of his clan and as the heir is stronger than most of his peers. (Empathy Bonus) because of his clan’s known relationship with bugs people tend to avoid the quiet boy, but all Shino wants is to be accepted by others and not be treated like some creepy freak.**

**Does not have any Flaws**

Naruto was confused by the flaws comment but quickly forgot about it and became sad to see that Shino was treated differently because of his clan’s technique and knew whole heartedly that he could really relate to him now.

Naruto reached out and pat Shino on the back, who turned to look at him once he did so. He smiled and then asked softly, ”if you’d like, we could be friends?” Shino looked surprised, before he smiled again,

“Yes, I would appreciate that, Naruto-kun.” Naruto’s smile broadened, ”good!” he exclaimed happily, before suddenly, the door to the classroom opened causing for the new found friends to look up, only to see Iruka walking through the door.

He had a limp in his step, several bandages covered his exposed arms and he held a crutch in his hand and he wasn’t wearing his Chūnin vest, instead he was just wearing the standard ninja pants, shirt and shoes. He smiled brightly and addressed the class with his good hand.

“Good morning everyone!” he called happily; everyone dutifully replied to him but were distracted by his bandages. Iruka either didn’t notice or decided to ignore it and called out, ”I have an announcement to make,” everyone tuned in,” school will be canceled for the next couple of days-“ he was interrupted by the class, everyone either standing up in surprise with a yell or asking why this was at the same time.

"QUIET!” he yelled causing for everyone to sit down and shut up. Iruka took a deep calming breath before continuing,” Like I said, school will be cancelled for the next couple of days because of the incident last night-“

“Sensei; is it true that someone stole the Forbidden Scroll of Seals?” Iruka was once again interrupted and after the question the entire room broke out in murmurs, everyone talking at once which caused for Iruka’s face to turn red and veins to start popping up, which caused for everyone to suddenly go quiet. He took another calming breath before continuing,

“That is true,” he held up a hand before anyone could voice anything,” but everything to do with that, is classified.” Everyone groaned loudly before Iruka quieted them,” oh don’t be like that, I’m sure most of you will find out more once you go home today anyway.” He finished with a small, teasing grin.

Suddenly one of the children stood and pointed to Naruto,” it’s all Naruto’s fault, isn’t it!” she yelled which caused for surprise to cross Iruka’s face before he shook his head,

“Now Tsubaki-chan, please don’t-“he was cut off,
“I knew it! It’s always Naruto’s fault! Mama said so!” the girl, Tsubaki, continued to yell, causing more than a few heads to nod in agreement. Iruka frowned, really seeing how everyone thought of Naruto and how they seemed to just use him as a scapegoat. His frown deepened and he opened his mouth to hush everyone when a loud buzzing filled the room, effectively quieting everyone down.

Iruka looked up to see Aburame Shino standing, an angry frown on his young face with something black crawling up his neck, Iruka instantly realized it was his kikaichū that was doing that, it was probably also his kikaichū making the buzzing noise.

Naruto looked up at the angry boy curiously. He was used to being pointed at for things he didn’t do, or being blamed when it was mostly someone else’s fault, so, why was Shino so upset? He didn’t have to wonder for long because Shino decided to speak,

“Please refrain from talking about Naruto-kun in such a light. You have no proof to point to it being his fault, and even if it somehow was, you do not know the circumstances behind the ordeal, so, shut the hell up!” Somehow, Shino had been able to keep his voice calm and even as he addressed everyone, but as he neared the end his voice rose a few octaves in anger as he all but shouted the rest.

Everyone stared, stunned, by the sudden outburst. Shino was known for being quiet and keeping to himself, he had never once raised his voice in class before, and he never stood up for anyone before, especially Naruto.

Everyone then heard the sound of someone else standing from their seat, turning their heads slightly, they saw that it was Shikamaru in all his lazy glory, hands in his pockets and a slight slump in his posture while his eyes lazily scanned the room,

“Though it’s troublesome, Shino is right. If Naruto was somehow involved in the theft last night then he was probably manipulated into doing it, or in other words, someone was using him for their own gains. Don’t make snap judgments just because you want someone to blame.” He yawned after his explanation before he sat back down, laying his head on the desk and seeming to go to sleep again.

Everyone then looked back at Shino who nodded his head curtly in Shikamaru’s direction before he too seated himself.

Iruka sighed in both exasperation and relief, looking up at the faces of all his students he addressed them,“ Shikamaru and Shino are both right, this also can be used as a valuable lesson. As a ninja, you should never place the blame on someone you don’t like; that causes for missions to fail, more deaths out in the field and wars, many have been started from less than that. Tsubaki-chan, you have absolutely no proof that could point to Naruto being the culprit-“

“But sensei,” Tsubaki began,“ you didn’t say that Naruto wasn’t the culprit!”

“Tsubaki-chan,” Iruka spoke sternly,“ you weren’t pointing to Naruto because there was a possibility that he was the culprit, but because you were just trying to blame someone. Whether or not Naruto was part of the whole ordeal is none of your concern, as the matter is classified, and you should not try to blame people that you don’t happen to like. You never know, they may be the ones that are doing what’s right rather than wrong.”

Iruka finished with a sigh. “I was just going to tell you all that the next week of classes are cancelled before dismissing you, so now, you’re all dismissed!” Iruka called before turning for the door,” goodbye everyone, I hope you have a wonderful day.” And with that, he left.

After a few seconds of silence everyone started getting up to leave, though most of the girls went and
bothered Sasuke with their gushing and fangirling, Naruto stood from his seat with a sigh and started to leave before he felt a hand on his shoulder,

“Naruto-kun,” the voice of Shino sounded behind him.

Naruto turned and grinned brightly, “oh yeah! Thanks for sticking up for me today Shino! No one’s ever done that before, well, not in class that is,” Naruto rubbed his neck briefly before opening his eyes. He was slightly amused to see the shock on Shino’s face as he stared at him, dumbfounded, before he found his voice again,

“Uh, do not mention it, Naruto-kun. I wanted to know if you would mind walking with me for a while. Perhaps even some lunch if you have the time of course.” Naruto looked at him strangely, “What- like a date?” Shino’s entire face seemed to turn red while he hastily shook his head, “N-no! Of course not! I-I believe the term is “hanging out”…. You said we were friends, right? That’s what friends do, they hang out.” Realization came to Naruto’s face before he laughed loudly and smacked Shino on the back,

“Haha, sorry about that man, I don’t have friends so I didn’t really know,” Naruto didn’t see the surprise and sadness in Shino’s face when he heard that, “Sure! I’d love to hang out with ya!” Shino’s red face lightened considerably while a half smile found his face. The two friends were about to head off when a tired sigh came from beside them.

They looked to see that it was Shikamaru who had sighed, no surprise there, and he was slowly standing up, acting as if it were a huge chore, “it’s troublesome, but I don’t really have to be home for a couple more hours and since Chouji’s not here it’d be really boring to go cloud watching by myself, so could I come with you guys?” Naruto found Shikamaru’s voice very soothing for some reason. The lazy drawl just seemed to wash him in laziness.

Shaking his head, Naruto turned to Shino with a questioning stare. Shino merely shrugged as if to say ‘I don’t mind’. Naruto grinned while turning to look to Shikamaru, ” sure! The more the merrier neh?” he called happily, slinging an arm around both Shino and Shikamaru’s necks before leaving the room.

Only after leaving the building did Shikamaru and Shino pull away from Naruto’s grasp, Shikamaru sighed and mumbled something about ‘troublesome blonds ‘ and Shino merely shook his head a couple times before waking forward, Shikamaru and Naruto close behind.

“So,” Naruto started, ” where should we go?” he asked curiously. Shino looked about him for a moment before answering,

“How about the park? There are many types of bugs this time of year and it is close to restaurants and food stands in the case we got hungry.” He looked at Naruto who grinned again who then turned to Shikamaru. He grunted with a shrug which caused for Naruto to punch a fist into the air,

“To the park then! Dattabayo!” he merrily called, confidently walking forward with Shino and Shikamaru in tow.

It didn’t take them long to get there.

The villages Main Park was a nice scenic portion of the village, having trees and beautiful flowers scattered about the area, dirt paths were paved into the grounds that led every which way and both benches and picnic tables were strategically placed about the well-kept grass, nothing too close or far apart from each other.
On the main road, or near it, there were some stalls selling their wares, most of them selling food, and a couple buildings that housed restaurants lined the rest of the street.

Naruto looked about the park, excitement evident in his mannerisms; Shino couldn’t help from smiling lightly, seeing Naruto so happy just filled him with happiness as well.....

Before Shino could even begin to ponder what that could possibly mean, said blond turned to him, a smile literally lighting up his face,” what should we do first? Do you wanna walk around, or get some food? Maybe sit down- nah not that, so, what, what?” he asked excitedly, bouncing on the balls of his feet.

“It’s only about 8:45 so we probably shouldn’t be eating, I’d like to find a nice place to lie down and watch the clouds, but there’re too many people around here for that to be worth it...” Shikamaru’s mumbling words cut in before Shino could answer. The other two looked to the lazy Ninja-in-training before glancing around again,

“Perhaps we can walk along the paths; there is a small forestation some twenty meters north of here, I have traversed there before and have found many types of bugs....” Shino trailed off, not knowing if they would like to look at bugs with him. He was surprised by Naruto’s answering bright grin.

“Sure! Let’s do that! We can walk ‘round there for a bit then come back here and get some grub; after that maybe we could go look for a field where we can cloud watch for a bit!” Shino was sure that Naruto’s smile was brighter than the sun, there was no way it could be that cheerful and bright otherwise.

But suddenly, Naruto’s smile disappeared, leaving behind a look of uncertainty and resignation,” that is,” he muttered,” we.... We don’t hafta do any of that....” Something cold seemed to settle in Shino’s stomach at Naruto’s face; it just felt wrong for the normally cheerful orange-clad ninja to look so down and forlorn.

Unbeknownst to him his hand was reaching for the down blond, it landing on his left shoulder, and apparently Shikamaru felt the same pull, for his own hand was touching Naruto’s right shoulder.

The blond boy looked surprised, no, shocked, but why was that? Shino thought for a moment before coming to a conclusion. He knew Naruto was an orphan, that he was also mostly ignored by everyone when they weren’t disparaging him, was he just not used to people taking his words into account? That had to be it. The bug boy decided right then that he would do whatever he could to make Naruto happy, because in the short time he has personally spent with him, Naruto has made, and kept, Shino happy and content, and he wouldn’t allow his new friend to feel sad because he thought they wouldn’t listen to him.

“No, that sounds good,” Shino intoned; Naruto’s azure eyes snapped to him, staring at him in awe, it made him feel both amazing and uncomfortable.

“Yes; it wasn’t even close to a bad suggestion,” Shino heard Shikamaru say, prompting Naruto’s intense gaze to snap to his face. The whiskered boy looked back and forth between them for a moment, but then, a warm, somewhat shy, smile spread across his face,

“Ohayoo... thank you.” He murmured, looking to Shino again,” well, will you lead the way?” he asked. Shino nodded, his hand slipping from Naruto’s shoulder, turned and started walking.

Naruto wasn’t entirely certain how to react.
He was trying to, more or less, appease his two new friends. He was afraid that if he didn’t do exactly as they wanted, then they would turn on him and leave; he couldn’t stand that, it would hurt too much to go through that, so he had made a suggestion when none of them knew what to do, and for whatever reason this made him feel like he had done something wrong. He wasn’t supposed to suggest anything, no one listened to him anyway; he was just the dumb demon brat!

But then, Shino and Shikamaru had gone out of their way to reassure him; was that what friendship was? Naruto didn’t really know, he had only had one friend before, and they were gone, and anyway their relationship had been closer to that of family than anything else, so to suddenly have two new friends, it had thrown him off.

But, Naruto was happy that he was friends with them. He and Shikamaru had mostly been acquaintance-friends, they hung out every once in a while, and sometimes Naruto would include him in the creation and completion of one of his pranks, but besides that, they didn’t do much together, but he somehow felt closer to the brunet, as if they were just more-of something; Naruto grinned to himself as he walked, companionable silence surrounding them, today was a good day, he just hoped it stayed that way.

It didn’t take long for them to make it to the small forestation; it happened to also be a part of the village Naruto didn’t frequent.

The blonds head snapped every which way, taking in as much of the surroundings as possible; he couldn’t help the smile that graced his face, he just felt so excited for some reason.

A soft whistle sounded, catching both Naruto and Shikamaru’s attention, looking to Shino who was standing beside a tree, motioning them over with his hand. The other two boys made their way to him, coming to stand beside him; at which point Shino turned and pointed to something on the tree.

It looked to be a beetle of some sort, Naruto’s eyes roved over the creature; taking in its black body and elongated pinchers before his eyes stopped at the words hovering over the little creature - Albino Stag Beetle- He tilted his head to the side; didn’t albino mean white? If so, why did the black bug have Albino in its name?

“It’s an Albino Stag Beetle.” Naruto heard Shino’s voice cut in. He turned his head swiftly to look at the brunet, his brows furrowing,

“How?” Naruto questioned,” Albino means white doesn’t it? How can a black beetle be albino?” the blond asked, genuinely confused. Shino looked at him for a moment, before reaching over carefully, picking the beetle up and bringing it closer to Naruto’s face;

“See that?” he asked while pointing at the stag beetles white eyes,” beetles aren’t like other creatures or animals; when they are albino only their eyes are white, not the rest of their body.” The bug boy explained clearly. Naruto looked closer at the bug, staring at its almost glowing white eyes, a small gasp of awe living his lips,

“Wow,” he breathed,” that’s really cool!” Naruto swiftly looked up at Shino, a grin covering his whiskered face. Shino was looking back at him, a small smile tugging at his lips; Naruto couldn’t help smiling wider at that, Shino rarely ever showed any emotion, it was nice knowing that he was able to insight a reaction from him.

Soft humming trickled into Naruto’s ear, causing his attention to go to his other companion. Shikamaru was looking closely at the beetle, eyeing it up,” I actually didn’t know that,” he murmured softly. Shino merely nodded before placing the beetle back onto the tree, where it proceeded to open its wings and fly away.
Naruto watched as it flew off, smiling softly before turning and looking around for other bugs and animals.

.....

And so hours passed as the trio walked around, going from tree to tree looking for more bugs, and, in Naruto’s case, birds and/or small animals; in the hopes that he could level up his Observe ability—which he swiftly found out that all he had to do to use it was think the word ‘Observe’-which by the time lunch came around, he had leveled up the ability quite a bit.

[Observe]’s level has gone up by 7.

Naruto grinned, tapping the box to make it go away before heading off with his friends.

The trio made the semi long trek back to the main street where the stalls and restaurants resided. They looked at the food stalls first, since they would probably be cheaper than the restaurants; Naruto swiftly lost his good cheer from the past couple hours, as the vendors seemed to take pleasure in subtly-not subtly-taking jabs at his intelligence, status, wealth and anything else they could think up.

It took only about ten minutes for Naruto to want to just leave the vendors and just go home, that is, until what happened next.

Naruto was just being insulted by another vendor, this one being a thin face woman with brown hair and eyes,”—since you obviously don’t know the first thing about finances, oh, excuse me, money spending, I don’t think it would be in my best interests to allow you to use your no doubt dirty money here,” she sniffed at him, a smirk playing at her lips.

Naruto’s fists were clenched so tightly they were turning white, futilely trying to breathe deeply to calm himself; forcing himself to glare at the merchandise and not the woman-no doubt she would come up with some other stupid excuse to not only not serve him, but get him in trouble too.

Just as he was about to nod his head and turn away, a new voice cut in,“ I think you’re wrong,” it began, catching both Naruto’s and the woman’s attention,” you obviously have something against Naruto, otherwise you wouldn’t be trying so hard to insult him,” Shikamaru continued, a hard edge to his normally lazy gaze,” if you don’t wanna serve him, then just say so, no need to be such a bitch about it,” he yawned lazily while the thin faced woman spluttered; wanting to say something against him but not knowing what she could say, he was the Heir of the Nara clan after all.

“Exactly, so, if you wouldn’t mind, we’ll be on our way; I’ll make certain to tell my clan not to come to this particular part of town since everyone here is so rude to their customers—I would imagine that they wouldn’t want to deal with a couple of civilians that they risk their lives keeping healthy and safe within these walls disparaging them after a hard day’s work,” Shino turned away, Shikamaru following suit, with Naruto shortly after if not a bit hesitantly.

His words seemed to have done their purpose, as the woman was sweating horrendously, her body twitching in random places; Shino turned his head back to the woman, raising a brow above his glasses,” unless, of course you’ve changed your mind?” Shino continued the ploy, pushing up his sunglasses in the process.

The woman flinched violently for some reason before a dark scowl overtook her face,” what would you like?” she asked, her voice seething. Naruto cautiously looked back at her, hesitant in going back to her; a nudge in the back from Shikamaru made the final decision for him, and so he headed back up to her, his two friends right behind him.
“Um, I’d like one Imagawayaki with red bean paste, two Nikuman, Yakisoba and three Takoyaki, please.” He asked, softly, making sure to say please at the end; she may have been mean to him, but it would probably go over faster if he was polite.

She nodded stiffly before gathering the items, making sure to put the Yakisoba in a box and the others wrapped in paper before putting all of his things in a bag, handing it to him just as stiffly as her nod,” that will be 450 Ryo,” she stated, her smug grin coming back.

Naruto stiffened, closing his eyes—he just knew something like this was gonna happen! He was about to give back the bag, thinking it easier to just walk away from the situation than to fight it, when he got another surprise;

“I believe you meant 200 Ryo, Madam.” Shino’s monotone cut in.

Naruto looked at him in shock; was he going to stand up for him again?

“No, I mean 450.” The thin faced woman stated confidently; sure she had won, but then-

“You seem to think we’re blind,” Shikamaru put in, causing her to flinch again,” the Yakisoba costs 70 Ryo, the Nikuman; 25 Ryo each. The Imagawayaki is only 50 Ryo and the Takoyaki is 10 Ryo each, which rounds up to 200 Ryo, not 450; you’re trying to make Naruto pay more than twice the actual price!” The Nara glared harshly; forcing the woman to take a panicked step back.

The Nara continued to glare at the woman; then he begin talking, “I’ve decided something,” Shikamaru professed in a deathly calm tone,” how about, you give Naruto all of his food for free?” he asked, seemingly innocent.

She spluttered yet again,” what!?” she screeched. She went silent immediately as Shikamaru glared at her harder,

“Yes, free,” he calming replied,” since you’ve been so unreasonable this whole time, it’s the least you could do for your customers who have had to put up with your rude attitude and mannerisms; wouldn’t want anyone to hear about how this is such a horrible place to buy food, now would we?” his normally lazy voice had shifted into a low alto, a quite rage and a hint of sultry flare filling his words.

The brunette woman could only gulp, before reluctantly complying,” I-I guess I could allow it this once....” Shikamaru smiled, malicious intent rolling off of him and Shino in waves.

“Wonderful; now, I would also like to purchase something from you, and if you can behave, then I’ll pay the money due; for me that is.”

“As will I,” Shino added; his voice rough with a growl.

The woman nodded vigorously, fake-ly cheerful in taking their orders and filling them, and true to their words, they paid her.

“Thank you, now we shall be off.” Shikamaru gave a dramatic bow before turning and heading back towards the woods, Naruto and Shino behind him.

As they left the street filled with murmurs of passersby, wondering what on earth could have caused the Heir of the Nara clan, the laziest clan in all of Konoha, to react in such a way, especially on the part of the little menace-Uzumaki Naruto.

But, the trio paid them no heed, choosing instead to continue on to the small forestation.
About ten minutes later, they were all deep within the woods. Not one of them had spoken a word since leaving the vendors which made Naruto nervous.

He didn’t know how to respond to such a situation, considering the fact that he had never been in that type of situation at any time in his life. He glanced nervously at the two walking with him, seeing their taut shoulders and stiff gait; they were no doubt beyond furious-and of course, it was all Naruto’s fault.

If he hadn’t been with them then they wouldn’t have had to have dealt with the absurdities the stall lady had forced them through, if he had just walked away or, hell, just gone to Ichiraku-the one place that never turned him away-then they wouldn’t have been forced to see that. Naruto felt ashamed; he had ruined a perfectly good day-scratch that Great day; because he was just the dumb demon brat.

He sighed weakly, feeling an annoying burn at the back of his throat and eyes; it was getting harder to breathe, now that he thought about it...

“Is that what it’s like?” Shikamaru’s voice cut through Naruto like a blade, causing him to snap his head up,

“What?” he breathed, nearly gasping for breath his throat closing in,

“Is that what you have to go through every time you want to buy something?” the Nara’s voice was strained, barely holding back his emotions.

Naruto’s eyes widened; oh kami! What was going to happen now? How was he supposed to answer?! Should he lie? Naruto mentally shook his head; no, he wouldn’t lie, he’d just tell the truth, and hope that they let him down as kindly as possible.

“Yes,” he breathed; voice barely above a whisper; boy, it sure was hard talking around that strange lump in his throat.....

“Dammit!” the shout followed swiftly by the ‘thunk’ of Shikamaru’s foot hitting the trunk of a tree caused Naruto to flinch violently away, taking a couple hasty steps back.

This caused for the lazy nin to pause, a strange look overcoming his face,” Naruto? Are-are you okay?” he asked carefully.

The blond nodded jerkily, not knowing how else to respond-he had never seen Shikamaru become violent in any way before, it had surprisingly scared him. Images of the past flashed through his mind, causing him to look suspiciously at Shikamaru; after all, what was to stop him from taking his anger out on him? Many had done it before, and Naruto had no doubt that there would be many to come in the future.

“Yeah; fine, are you?” he asked cautiously. Shikamaru shook his head,

“I feel like shit.” He stated plainly, his voice tinged with pain.

This surprised Naruto; what did Shikamaru mean?

“Why?” he asked softly, confusion marring his face. Shikamaru looked at him long and hard, the muscles in his face contorting with pain, as well as shame;

“Because, I’m no better than the rest of them,” Naruto blinked in surprise.
“What do you mean?” he asked, stunned. The lazy Nin sighed, leaning against the tree while looking away. A couple minutes passed before he opened his mouth to answer,

“I mean, that until I saw how those vendors treated you, I just sorta assumed, just like everyone else in our class, that you lived the life of luxury, more or less; you don’t have any parents to nag at you to do anything, you can live the way you want with nothing to hold you back-you were also just a attention seeking brat, no better than Sasuke; though he’s quieter about it, considering everyone hands it to him on a silver platter, but,” he stopped short, shaking his head and looking to Naruto again,” but you’re none of that. You’re an orphan, and being an orphan means that you’re alone, with no one there to help you when your hurt or sick or just plain old not feeling well; yeah, I get annoyed by my parents sometimes, especially my mom since she likes to nag at me all the time, but, I still love them-I still want to live with them and be taken care of by them and I’m not just saying that because I’m lazy,

“I’m saying it because I really do love them..... You haven’t lived any life of luxury, have you?” Naruto shook his head, shocked into silence. Shikamaru sighed again,” thought so..... I’m so sorry, Naruto; I’m no better than the rest of them.....”

Silence ruled, even the chirping of birds and buzzing of insects had gone silent in the wake of this confession.

Naruto meanwhile stood rooted to the ground, speechless. How was he supposed to respond to that? He was so used to being at fault that when someone else not only admitted to something but took the blame for it; he just didn’t know what to do. The blond then stared long and hard at Shikamaru, taking in his every emotion; he could see sorrow, self-disgust, shame, anger and, strangely enough, hope? Naruto took a deep breath, closing his eyes for a moment, thinking carefully; no strange game-like superpowers were going to save him now, this was entirely up to him.

Opening his eyes Naruto set his azure gaze on Shikamaru; he opened his mouth,” it’s not your fault,” he started, Shikamaru seemed shocked but Naruto carried on,” it’s normal to assume people are a certain way when you only see one side to them, or when you’re surrounded by people who only have bad things to say about them. If you’re a horrible person for believing some of the things people said about me behind my back or from the way I acted, then I’m a horrible person for thinking that you were just a lazy assed ninja that didn’t like trying; something that really bugged me since I have to try so hard whenever I really want to learn something because I don’t just get it like everyone else; I probably learn differently than everyone else which makes it even harder! But, after spending time with you not just here but also before, when we would do those pranks together.... I had so much fun doing that with you,” he smiled honestly, confidence oozing off of him in waves,

“You’ve done nothing wrong Shikamaru; you just grew up in an environment that taught you to think that way about me, nothing you could have done about that.” Naruto shrugged, showing that he really didn’t care-his infectious grin over-taking his face.

“You....”Shikamaru murmured, seeming to not know how else to respond to him. Said blond just continued to grin, which then in turn caused both Shikamaru and Shino to smile back, when-

You have gained +300 REP points with Nara Shikamaru and Aburame Shino; this has caused your Reputation to move from “Friendly” to “Honored”.

[Empathy]'s level has gone up by 4.

Naruto blinked in surprise, staring at the words for a moment before he blinked again and swiftly made it go away, somehow doing it without the knowledge of his two friends.
He glanced back up at them before speaking, "we should probably eat our food before it goes cold," he states simply. The other two nod in agreement before looking about for an adequate place to eat. A couple minutes later Naruto looked to the trees and pointed up, "how about up there?" he suggested, looking to the duo.

They looked at each other for a moment before looking back at Naruto, "why in the trees?" Shino asked simply. Naruto shrugged,

"Well," he began, "no one will really be able to bother us unless their ninja and if any of the vendors from the street decided to go after us, well, me, then they probably wouldn’t be able to find us, we are ninja-in-training after all!" he happily finished his explanation.

Shikamaru looked impressed, "those are really good reasons," Shino nodded in agreement. Naruto smiled again, after which he fashioned his bag closed, secured it to his belt, taking a running stance for a brief moment before shooting off towards a tree, running up its trunk then leaping to a branch, catching hold and pulling himself up. He grinned to himself in satisfaction as he looked down to the ground, seeing the looks of absolute shock and surprise on Shino and Shikamaru’s faces made him burst out laughing, barely catching hold of the branch he was straddling in an effort not to fall; and quite possibly break his neck.

Shikamaru and Shino looked to each other again before copying Naruto, they fastened their food bags to themselves, took running stance and took off up the tree, one at a time of course, running up and jumping to the nearest branch, which Naruto had moved off of and into a higher one in order for them to do so.

The blond grinned at the brunets and then turned to his bag of food and opened it up, taking a whiff of the succulent scents and grabbing the first thing he could, which happened to be one of the Takoyaki.

"Itadakimasu!" he cheerfully called then took a bite. The other two called out quieter versions of the same word as they too started to eat.

They all silently ate their food, each making a comment every once in a while, but nothing of consequence was ever brought up.

And so, time passed in companionship, the soft breeze, gentle chirping and light buzzing of the bugs filling in the silence.

.....

A content sigh left his lips as he ate the final bite of his food; packing the trash into their bags, Shikamaru, Shino and Naruto all hopped down from the tree, landing deftly on the ground with nary a sound.

Shikamaru looked to his companions, smiling at them as they left in search of a garbage can of some sort before they all headed off in search of a nice field for them to lay in to cloud watch. Shikamaru really liked that bit, and was actually excited for it, finally, he would be able to simply lay back and laze the rest of the day away.

It didn’t take them that long to find one, after they threw away their trash they headed off, this time with Naruto in the lead, trying to find a field or meadow; he briefly cut through the trees but swiftly moved out of them a couple minutes later as they came upon a small beaten path within the grass; though it seemed faded which suggested that no one had used it in a while.
They followed the small path and came upon a lush, slopping field with wild flowers sprinkled here and there, the small and vibrant splashes of color mixing in with the green making for a beautiful sight.

Shikamaru saw a large grin overtake Naruto’s face as he turned to him, cheerfulness brimming in his eyes,” this is a good spot, right?” he asked, his tone just as cherry as his eyes. Shikamaru nodded,

“Yeah, this is good,” Naruto smiled again and they all as one headed up, making their way towards just below the top of the slope, the best place to lean back and cloud watch from.

Reaching the point, they all took a moment to look about themselves, making certain that there wasn’t anything unpleasant in the way of their leisure time (like rocks or pokey plants). When nothing was found to be wrong or in the way, they all lay down next to each other; forming a circle with their heads in the middle.

Shikamaru took in a deep breath of the clear air, cleansing his body of the earlier anger and frustration; it had affected him more greatly than anything had ever affected him before; the only thing that could compare was when he found out those boys from their class had tried to get Naruto killed by tricking him into going to a dangerous place with enemy ninja.

He had been secretly glad and relieved that Naruto had survived, as well as that he had come back; he didn’t know why, but, ever since he had met the blond, he had felt...... something for the blond, a kinship stronger than the one he shared with Chouji-who was his very best friend-it drove him to want to get closer to him; but, from his personality, Shikamaru thought that they wouldn’t have been able to mesh well, that they were just a little too different to be able to be friends.

That’s why he had told his dad that he thought he and the whiskered boy would probably never become friends, because it just made sense; especially if you consider the fact that Naruto held a personality that was similar to Ino’s (in levels of loudness at least) who, while he grew up with her, didn’t get along with her very well (though, maybe that had to do with the fact that she was really bossy, he wasn’t sure) so the fact that both today and the times before, when they had pulled off those pranks, they had gotten on really well, like, surprisingly well, even better than Naruto and Kiba had gotten on which was pretty good; at least when they weren’t throwing insults at each other, or when Kiba made fun of Naruto just because he was Deadlast, but yeah, they got on really well other than that.

Shikamaru shook his head, taking in another cleansing breath; he really didn’t want to think about it, he just wanted to relax and laze away the rest of the day with his two friends letting the calm overtake him on this beautiful, warm and sunny day.

Shikamaru opened his eyes upon hearing movement to his left. Cracking open his eyes, he turned slightly to see what was making the noise; unsurprisingly, it was Naruto. He was stretching out, his hands above his head while his back arched off the ground, a soft moan of content vibrating within his throat before a sigh left his lips his whole body relaxing into the ground when he finished.

For some reason he couldn’t fathom, Shikamaru couldn’t take his eyes off of the other boy, taking in Naruto’s sturdily built, yet lean physique; which was a lot easier to see since Naruto wasn’t wearing his normal bright orange and baggy jumpsuit.

He was actually wearing a black quarter sleeved shirt with a red Konoha swirl symbol on the center of it with blue wrist sweatbands adorning his, well, wrists, and beige cargo shorts; the average blue Shinobi sandals on his feet; he also wasn’t wearing his goggles on his forehead; that caused for his hair to softly fall in his face, some of his bangs reaching his lashes.
A desire to reach out and touch his hair overtook the Nara, which effectively shocked him back to himself ‘what the Hell was that?!!’ he thought frantically; never had such thoughts entered his mind before! He felt a warmness growing within his cheeks, and a strange tingling in the rest of his body.

Before he could question his emotions and bodily reactions, Naruto turned, looking at him in curiosity, clearly he had felt Shikamaru’s staring and was no doubt wondering why it was happening.

Shikamaru didn’t know what to do, so he blurted out the first thing that came to mind,”” so, Naruto,”” he started hastily,”” earlier I asked you what it was like to buy things, but I was wondering, what has it been like to live on your own? I know you and the Hokage are pretty close, does he come by to check on you?”

Shikamaru had no idea why he’d asked that, it was totally none of his business to ask something like that; but, before he could try and take back his words, Naruto responded;

“Not really, no. He’s really busy having to take care of the village, and deal with stupid people who want unrealistic and stupid things for themselves, so he doesn’t come around all that often, if ever…….” Naruto shook his head and looked away. Shikamaru just stared at him for a moment, “So, you really do live all by yourself? With no one there to help you?” he asked in disbelief. He didn’t know how to handle such a thing; he has always been taken care of by his parents and clan, so it was strange to think about them just, not being there, at all.

Naruto looked at Shikamaru, seeming to gauge him before responding,”” I’ve always taken care of myself, there wasn’t and isn’t anyone else who will so that responsibility falls to me of course,”” the blond shook his head softly,”” but,”” he sighed,”” that doesn’t mean I don’t want to rely on others, or have friends, or family but I don’t have anyone, that is until today……” Naruto glanced at him, smiling softly.

“You guys are the first friends I’ve had that are my age, the only other person I was friends with was older than me, and their gone anyways, so really; you are my first friends.” His smile turned shy, causing for Shikamaru’s breath to catch in his throat.

He couldn’t get over how beautiful Naruto was, especially when he smiled; it made his insides go all tingly and caused him to want to flush all over.

Shikamaru started to have a nagging feeling as to why he was reacting this way to the blond, but he didn’t want to think too hard on it right now, especially when he still didn’t know Naruto all that well.

Shikamaru turned slightly more in the grass so that he could get a better look of both the blond and other brunet laying with him,”” well I definitely see myself as your friend,”” he boldly stated, not an ounce of his usual laziness within his tone or body language.

“As do I,” Shino’s quiet voice resounded after his own, Shikamaru looked at him, a smile turning his lips; yeah, he and Shino were Naruto’s friends and they would do everything in their power to keep him happy and strong, staying by his side no matter what and they would never abandon him!

Naruto smiled brightly, a faint flush spreading across his cheeks,”” thank you,”” he whispered, his azure eyes glowing in the afternoon light.

Shikamaru smiled back, elation filling him to the brim; he felt like he was about to burst! But he simply turned onto his back again and watched the clouds that were starting to turn pink in the pre-
dusk light and just let the gentle breeze and warm sunlight lull him into a sense of security, a wonderful sensation between sleep and wakefulness, simply laying there and allowing time to pass him by like he always did; but this time, he was with someone that held a very important and warm position in his heart and mind.

It was as what felt like hours yet at the same time seconds passed when Shikamaru was awoken. He groggily opened his eyes, having apparently fallen asleep sometime while within the lull of safety. He looked up, wondering what had woken him; idly noting that the sky was a deep navy blue, surrounding him in darkness before his eyes registered the whiskered cheeks and bright blue eyes looking down at him.

“Shikamaru,” Naruto questioned softly,” I think you'd better be getting up, it’s late and probably time for dinner, or something…..” Shikamaru’s eyes widened dramatically, he’d forgotten about that!

His mom was soo gonna kill him!

He sat up quickly, accidentally knocking his head into Naruto’s, “Ouch!” Naruto yelped, grabbing hold of his forehead; tears of pain glittering in his eyes. Shikamaru rubbed at his own forehead, wincing slightly in pain,

“Sorry…” He mumbled specks of his own tears within his eyes. He eyed the blond seeing the angry red mark on his forehead, wincing when Naruto winced; that had to have hurt for Naruto to still be wincing in pain, Naruto seemed to have a high tolerance to any and all pain,

“Sorry,” he mumbled again, reaching out to touch the mark. Naruto rubbed it one last time before shaking his head, causing for Shikamaru to pull his hand back, though he did it both hesitantly and reluctantly,

“its fine,” he smiled,” it was an accident, anyways the pains mostly gone now,“ he moved to a kneeling position before standing; holding his hand out to the Nara, grin upon his face.

A flush spread across Shikamaru’s face as he took the other boys’ hand, being pulled to his feet swiftly with a strong, and surprisingly, soft hand. It wasn’t as soft as a civilians but it was softer than most ninja, even ninja-in-training tended to have rougher hands.

Naruto smiled at him when he was fully standing before turning and leaning down, apparently Shino had fallen asleep as well.

Naruto shook the bug user, calling his name for about a minute before he responded. He blinked several times; they were able to see his eyes due to the fact that his sunglasses had evidently fallen down his nose some during his rest.

Shikamaru squinted to better see his eye color, after all, Shino wore those glasses all the time; as far as he knew, no one aside from his family had ever seen his actual eyes before. It was a bit hard to tell in the dark but they appeared to be a honeyed hazel, though again it was hard to know for sure because of the lighting.

Back to the Aburame; he didn’t react nearly as much as Shikamaru had when he had been woken up.

He sat up slowly and calmly, his glasses falling down his nose even more; though he didn’t seem to notice as he glanced around, confusion in his eyes. The silence was broken by Naruto,
“You have really beautiful eyes Shino!” He exclaimed brightly. Shino snapped his head towards the blond, his eyes widening in surprise before he started trying to push his glasses back up. Naruto looked both startled and confused, “wait! You don’t have to cover them up!” he shouted.

Shino stopped abruptly, looking at Naruto then took a deep breath and far more calmly pushed his glasses back on. Naruto looked a bit put out by this but he allowed it without protest. Once his glasses were back on Shino gazed at Naruto and Shikamaru in his usual manner.

“I apologize,” he started, “it is that I merely wished to get my glasses back on. Why? Simple, those of my clan have very heightened eyesight; similar to that of a hawk or eagle. Without our glasses, at the least when we are young, we can become easily distracted without them. We have to wear these specially designed glasses to allow us to get used to these abilities lest we go blind from information overload or other such things.” He finished curtly.

The duo looked at him in surprise, shocked by what was just revealed to them.

“That's….” Shikamaru heard Naruto start but stop abruptly. He turned to him, seeing the look of contemplation on his face, obviously carefully trying to come up with his next words,

“Really cool, actually.” He said while nodding his head lightly. The blond grinned brightly, resulting in Shino’s entire face going pink; Shikamaru felt like bursting into laughter at his face, and he would have if it weren’t for the fact that his own face was probably just as pink as the Aburame’s, and, his face then drastically paled; if he weren’t late to dinner and he was going to die when he got home…..

“Shit,” Shikamaru gasped in dread, turning around frantically trying to figure out where they were so he could get home.

A hand grabbed hold of his shoulder causing him to turn swiftly in alarm. Naruto was looking at him in both concern and stifled humor,” calm down Shika, if you leave right now you’ll get home probably in about ten minutes if you run; twenty if you walk. You should get going now though…..”

Shikamaru nodded slowly for a moment, smiling in turn with his two new friends,” yeah, well I’ll be heading off.” He nodded at them, then looked around a second to see where he was, which only caused for Naruto grab hold of him and bodily turn him around.” ah, thanks,” he smiled sheepishly, but before he could head off Naruto, for some reason that caused Shikamaru’s heart to quicken and his body to become flushed and tingly; grabbed hold of his hand.

“Let’s head back together; we are heading in the same direction after all.” His smile widened.

Shikamaru nodded, watching as the whiskered boy turned to Shino and grabbed hold of the other brunets hand; something which didn’t cause any sort of feelings of anger or jealousy to stir within him, surprising him momentarily; in most cases these sort of feelings led to anger and jealousy when the object of desire turns their attention towards another; at least that’s the impression that Shikamaru had gotten from Ino or Sakura, or any of Sasuke’s fangirls really, whenever he heard them talking about their crushes on the emo king himself; they all made it seem like some big competition to win.

But, seeing Naruto holding Shino’s hand, he wasn’t upset, not even a little; maybe it was because he knew that Naruto didn’t know much about such social graces, maybe it was because Naruto had always been a kind, if not slightly loud and occasionally obnoxious, person; or maybe it was because if Naruto found out one day that he liked him, and if he wasn’t interested Naruto wouldn’t be disgusted or mean; he’d just let him down kindly, if ungracefully.

Whatever the case, Shikamaru still wasn’t angry or jealous, which was fine by him. All he could do was smile, holding the hand of his apparent crush, and heading off back to the village.
It took only seven minutes for them to get to the main road, Naruto let go of their hands and turned away from them.

“See ya guys later!” he called cheerfully, waving at them while walking backwards,

“Bye, Naruto,” Shikamaru replied softly,

“Goodbye Naruto-kun,” the bug user called out; they both waved back as he left, disappearing into the night.

They then headed on to their homes, walking side by side as their Clan compounds are located in the same direction.

The two heirs walked side by side silently, peacefulness between them. They didn’t talk to each other nor were they ignoring each other, they were simply walking peacefully; silently, comfortably without any anger or jealousy tinged the air around them.

Shikamaru took in a breath of the cool night air, letting it fill his lungs and cleanse his body; today was an interesting day to say the least, discovering that you're gay or at the least bi was not an everyday thing; maybe it was just Naruto though—after all it is possible for a straight person to develop feelings for a member of the same sex if that particular person met certain personal and/or subconscious requirements that were set down for any potential significant others….

Shikamaru shook his head, he wasn’t going to think about it; at least not now considering he was walking with someone else that held similar if not the same feelings towards the same person as himself, nothing against Shino, he just wanted to be able to fully and completely think about and through the entire thing with no one around to bother him.

“Shikamaru-san,” the words cut through his train of thought; he looked over at his companion. The brunet nodded his head to him,” it would appear this is where we depart,” he spoke calmly.

It was then that Shikamaru realized that they had reached the separation in the road leading to their respective compounds. He looked to the Aburame, taking him in, gauging him—nodding to himself,

“No matter what, we’ll stay by him?” he questioned softly. Shino looked at him hard and then shockingly pulled off his glasses; staring right into Shikamaru’s eyes, his gaze unwavering.

“No matter what, always.” His firm affirmation made something within the shadow user run with chills, but at the same time it solidified something else; it would appear he made the right choice in going with Shino and Naruto to hang out, he almost hadn’t, while everyone was leaving the classroom for the day, talking with their friends and deciding what to do for the rest of the day he was thinking of just heading home and lazing the rest of the day away; he was glad he’d gone with the duo. Shikamaru smiled, Shino was the perfect person to share the same feelings with, and they would stand by Naruto always, no matter if he felt the same way or not; always, always, because Naruto deserved nothing less.

“Yeah,” he nodded,” always.” they silently nodded to each other, then, the moment was over. Shino put his glasses back on and Shikamaru’s lazy posture returned as they nodded to each other one last time while turning around and heading home.

As he headed down the road, Shikamaru almost started to drag his feet on the way; he knew he was in for it; his mom was going to kill him or at the least talk his ear off. Damn, why’d he have to fall asleep? It would’ve been a lot better if he hadn’t,

‘Ah, too bad,’ he thought, ’no point in griping about it now; it’s happened and I just hafta deal with
Shaking his head he looked forward, and seeing the door to his home, a sigh escaped his lips- now or never- were his last thoughts before he slid open his door and braced himself for impact.

“I’m home…..” He mumbled, taking his shoes off and setting them aside his father’s much larger pair by the step. As he did so he heard the sound of hurried footsteps coming his way, stopping right in front of him just as he lifted his head from taking his shoes off, and he saw her, his mother in all her pissed off glory.

Her face was twitching, her brown eyes filled with fire and a deep frown was settled firmly on her face; she narrowed her eyes at him, hands on hips,

“And where have you been, hmm?” she intoned angrily; Shikamaru sighed, “I fell asleep, okay? It was an accident,” he sighed again. The twitch got worse, her eyes becoming smoldering pits of rage.

“Now see here-”

“Oh, welcome home son,” the calm voice of his father cut in right before she could get into her rant. Yoshino turned and glared at Shikaku, but he paid her no mind as he smiled languidly at his son,” have a good day?” he asked while turning away, Shikamaru deciding it best to follow him.

“I guess you could say that,” he muttered in reply; glancing carefully at his mother out of the corner of his eye. Thankfully, she didn’t look all that angry anymore, just more resigned as she silently shook her head before following her husband and son.

“Hmm? What do you mean by that Shikamaru?” his dad questioned, heading into the dining room and taking a seat at the table. Shikamaru almost took a seat too, but his mom gave him the stink eye; sighing Shikamaru helped set the table with his mom while answering,

“Something unexpected happened today,” he placed the rice at the center of the table, looking to his dad as he sat down with his mom. Shikaku looked intrigued; but refrained from commenting as they all clapped their hands in thanks and moved to serve his wife and son,

“I take it that you don’t mean not having class for a while?” Shikamaru nodded,

“Yeah, not that…..” He trailed off, seeming lost in space for a moment as his dad placed his food before him.

“Then what?” Shikaku asked, bringing him out of his thoughts. Taking a deep breath and a couple bites of food, Shikamaru turned to his father,

“I found something out today about one of my classmates…. Though I guess, now that I think about it, I was already semi aware of it before today…..” He trailed off again.

He shook his head briefly, looking to his dad when he was done;” you know Uzumaki Naruto, right?” he started. Shikaku glanced at him in surprise; they hadn’t talked about him since the incident concerning said blond being set up to go somewhere dangerous, he was really curious now.

“Yes, I know of him,” the elder Nara replied calmly; he could see a worried look on his wife’s face out of the corner of his eye. Shikamaru nodded, taking no heed of his mother’s worry;

“Well, after Iruka-sensei dismissed us for the day at around 8:20 we, Naruto me and Aburame Shino, decided to hang around the Main Village park for a while; we mostly spent time looking around some nearby woods for bugs and small animals.” He explained, both of his parents nodding along as
“Well, when it was about lunch time we all headed back to buy some lunch, but then, it happened,” a dark scowl settled on his face,” the vendors, they treated Naruto like GARBAGE! They all talked down to him like he was less than the dirt they walked on! It was as if he was just this big idiot who couldn’t understand even the basics of speech; the last lady was even going on about how his money was dirty, he was just a dirty, disgusting little rat that they didn’t want to have to deal with.”

Shikamaru shook his head, anger and disgust rolling off of him in waves.

His parents looked to each other, concern and anger filling them, to act such a way; especially in front of another child! Sometimes the villagers were despicable.

“And Naruto!” Shikamaru continued on, catching their attention,” he just stood there and took it!” he looked at them with disbelief shining on his face,” the Naruto, the one that likes to proclaim that he’ll be Hokage one day, the one that yells back when Kiba or Sasuke or anyone else says something mean about him to his face; just stood there, looking down and not making any eye contact, obviously angry but trying his hardest to not reply, as if it would be some horrible sin for him to defend himself from their unwarranted words and attitudes. He was gonna leave!”

He looked at them, telling them with his eyes what a crazy thing that was,” just- leave! He was just gonna nod his head and turn around….. but I couldn’t let that happen, I couldn’t stand watching them mistreat him anymore; I told the lady off for talking to him that way and Shino even threatened to tell his clan not to come to that part of the village for services anymore, that got her to shut up; she served Naruto but then tried to take more money than was needed, she was trying to get Naruto to pay 450 Ryo instead of what it really coat, 200 Ryo.” He shook his head in disgust again, “She wasn’t just disrespecting and insulting Naruto anymore, she was treating me and Shino as if we were idiots as well! I finally just got her to give what Naruto wanted for free, though I had to threaten her to do it; never thought that I’d use my family name like that in my life, after that we left but, just, how they all blatantly mistreated Naruto, how everyone was literally surprised when Shino and I stepped in and stopped it, it just made me feel disgusting, like, they were infecting me with their pettiness and anger and hate and just, EVERYTHING! I almost just came home to take a shower I felt so dirty. How they can live with themselves I have no idea…..” Shikamaru wrapped his arms around his waist, looking sick.

That was when they moved. Shikaku and Yoshino got up from their seats, moving around the table so that they could hold their only child, who looked like he was about to cry.

Feeling his parents arms wrap around him, he couldn’t keep the tears in any longer, because all he could think about was how if this were Naruto, if he was the one that was upset; he wouldn’t have anyone there to comfort him, to hold him when he was sad. And that thought just hurt him, because Naruto deserved better, and he couldn’t do a damn thing about it.

Soft sobs left his lips as his body shuddered, still tense from trying to stop them, his parents held on to him, tightening their grips the more he shook with his sobs; Shikaku leaned forward, whispering into Shikamaru’s ear,” it’s okay, just breath, c’mon Shika, just breath.”

His soothing tone and strong grip helped Shikamaru regain himself, but when he calmed down and was no longer shaking, he held onto them, not wanting them to let go, not wanting to lose that contact. So, they all sat on the floor, holding onto each other, comforting each other as they all just breathed in and out trying to remain calm.

Shikaku, after a moments’ silence, leaned forwards again,” everything will be okay, Shika,” Shikamaru turned to look at him, questioning him with his eyes ‘how?’ they desperately asked.
Shikaku smiled fondly at his son, ”because, you’re his friend now, right?” he asked softly.

Shikamaru’s eyes widened as he nodded; Shikaku nodded back, ”so, everything will be okay, since you’ll be there for him just like you’re there for Chouji, right son?” he asked again.

A soft smile made its way to Shikamaru’s face; he nodded again, ”yeah,” he spoke, his voice cracking slightly,” I will be, cause, he’s my friend, and I don’t wanna lose him; not now, especially not now.” Shikaku and Yoshino nodded back to him before they all pulled in together again.

Shikamaru held fast to his parents, two people who he wouldn’t trade anything for, not even being able to laze away and cloud watch for the rest of his life, because he loved them that much. He smiled to himself, ‘ I want to be that close to Naruto,’ he thought, ‘ I want to be someone who he can come to depend on no matter what, I want him to understand, that I care..... no matter what, I’ll stand by him, no matter what!’

As those thoughts passed through his mind, he held on even tighter to his parents, their embrace strengthening his resolve, and for that one moment, he felt like he would be able to do anything he set his mind to.

He closed his eyes sighing in content, tomorrow would bring more chances to become better and stronger; and for Naruto, he would do anything.

[Location: Naruto’s apartment]

Naruto sighed, leaning against his beds’ headboard. For some reason, he just didn’t feel tired not to mention the fact that his new ability was making him slowly lose his mind!

He sighed again, but this time more roughly. Seriously, this thing would make random boxes pop up, give him strange Abilities and dump quests onto his head! He didn’t understand how it worked, and it wasn’t making it any easier!

“Shouldn’t there be some kind of tutorial for this thing?! ” he grumbled to himself, annoyance and frustration filling his very being.

But then-

Quest Alert:

Find Player 1!

Player 2 wants to know how to play, so what better way than to be taught by Player 1? Locate Player 1 within the time limit and have all answers concerning the game answered!

Completion reward: EXP 500

Increased Reputation with [???] +500

Completion failure: EXP 100

Unable to fully use Gamer Abilities

No Reputation with [???]

Naruto stared at the box; apparently asking how to use his new abilities was a good idea. A smile formed on his face as he read the contents, pressing the (Y) button which then caused for a timer of
30:00 to start counting down.

Leaping from his bed Naruto rushed around his apartment, putting on his goggles then his sandals before leaping out his window (since he didn’t feel like unlocking then locking his door) and out into the village.

As soon as his feet touched the street a map popped up with a still five second timer above it; it showed an image of his face where he was in the village, then rushed off to another, shadowed face, off somewhere else in the village, before it lifted up to show a birds eye view of the map with a red line starting from him and moving to connect with the shadowed face.

Once that finished the five seconds started counting down, Naruto then got that he had to memorize the way to the-moving image! He tried to memorize it the best he could, forcing himself to keep the image of the map in his mind, trying his hardest to not let any thoughts distract him as he raced off; luckily since it was nighttime most people that weren’t in any restaurants or bars were already home, which meant the majority of the streets were practically empty, with only a small group of people here or there.

Running off, Naruto concentrated on the image in his head, running through the village at top speed, even using his [Chakra Sprint] to go even faster. After about five minutes Naruto thought it would be best to run around on the rooftops, he’d be able to see more from up there and he was better at maneuvering the village from the rooftops; less walls to run into or block the view.

He leapt onto the nearest building, looked around to see where he was exactly; meshed where he was with the image of the map and rushed off again.

It took about another ten minutes for him to make it to where the map had indicated, but, just as he thought it would be; there was no one there. He heaved a sigh before running off, remembering the direction the shadowed face had gone and following.

As he ran, a strange burning sensation filled him; it wasn’t painful and it didn’t make him feel like he was out of breath.... maybe, it was the first player? Maybe he was close and that burning was telling him! Naruto ran even faster at the thought, sharply turning when needed and jumping over anything that might impede his speed (like potholes or bumps).

As he ran Naruto noticed the scenery around him started to change a little bit from buildings close together to a bit farther apart; actually, it looked like he was getting closer to the woods that he had taken the Forbidden Scroll of Seals into.....

Something flared within his chest causing for Naruto to look up sharply-There was someone ahead of him!-he stopped himself sharply, just barely keeping himself from toppling over his own feet. Once he stopped he leaned forward, panting hard for a couple seconds before whipping his head up, making sure the other person hadn’t left already. They hadn’t but they were still walking away, towards the woods as if they hadn’t heard him come trampling towards them.

“Hey, you!” Naruto shouted; this caused for the figure to stop, turning partially around, face still shadowed from view. Naruto didn’t stop talking,” you’re this Player 1, right?” he asked; breathing heavily.

The figure fully turned around then, it was a little hard to see their full face, but Naruto could see their mouth.

Then a lithe figure stepped into the soft moonlight.
A smile;

“Ah, I was waiting for you; I’m Yaiba Kira, it’s nice to meet you.”

Chapter End Notes

I put in the persons’ name since the next chapter is going to have their name as the title.

Here are the foods that Naruto ordered, I took them all off of a website called Japan Talk . com that I found with google;

Imagawayaki: Imagawayaki resemble a thick-pancake with a filling of red bean paste, custard, cheese, meat, potatoes or curry. They are known by more than 20 different names depending on region of Japan, type and brand name.

Nikuman: Nikuman is the Japanese name for Chinese Baozi dumplings filled with pork.

Takoyaki: Savory ball-shaped pancakes with octopus at the center topped with mayonnaise, ginger pickles and fermented fish flakes.

Yakisoba: Fried wheat noodles with pork in a thick, sweet sauce.

I just copy and pasted the descriptions of the foods onto here since that was easier; none of the descriptions belong to me so now I can’t be sued.

I guess I should put in that Yaiba Kira does not belong to me, Yaiba Kira belongs to RealmeNevertobeseen; it was one of the requirements when I took over the story, this character had to be in it or no story.

I don’t really have anything more to say.

I’ll get back to you guys next week.
Naruto stood staring at the one before him; this person was not what he was expecting when he went on this Quest.....

Speaking of-

**Quest Completion: EXP 500**

**Increased Reputation with [Yaiba Kira] +500**

A bonus for finding Player 1 with 13 minutes to spare has been added to your Inventory.

Naruto looked over the words a moment before closing the box; which then led to another alert popping up-

You have gained +500 REP points with Yaiba Kira causing for your Reputation to move from “Unknown/Neutral” to “Honored”

Then-

**Quest Alert:**

**Tutorial!**

Now that Player 1 has been located, it’s time to take the Tutorial! To begin say “Please Teach me Player 1!”

**Completion reward: EXP 1000**

More knowledge of your new Ability, The Gamer

+12 to INT

+12 to WIS

Increased Reputation with Yaiba Kira +300

**Completion failure: EXP 500**
No new knowledge of your new Ability, The Gamer

Decreased Reputation with Yaiba Kira -100

While Naruto was looking over his new Quest he was unaware that an identical box had appeared in front of the one before him; raising their hand and pressing it to the floating box.

Shaking his head Naruto pressed the (Y), looking back up at his companion his eyes roving over their figure and taking them in; and Kira simply stood there, a soft smile upturning their lips.

Yaiba Kira had a fairly slight build, from what Naruto could see; soft curves and well-rounded hips (not too rounded, but just rounded enough to be noticeable), slender arms and legs of average length that made Naruto realize something as she-he? Naruto couldn’t really tell-stepped a little closer; Kira was shorter than him, something of which Naruto wasn’t used to, considering he himself was the shortest in his class....

Naruto shook his head again, refocusing on examining Kira.

He noticed the pale skin-that was covered with a black long-sleeved shirt, a pair of black pants and blue Shinobi sandals-that almost seemed to glisten in the soft moonlight and the black as night hair, it being cut short about their head with short bangs only brushing their forehead. Looking down a bit Naruto looked into Kira’s eyes, eyes that were two different colors; the right one was a liquid-y silver that shimmered in the light while the other was as blue as a clear lake, it too shimmering in the light.

Naruto narrowed his eyes once he noticed that there was a marking on Kira’s face; it appeared to be two katana blades crossing in an ‘X’ shape, the sharp ends pointing downwards. A beige circle with the kanji for Wind was situated in it, above it was the symbol for Fire colored red, to the left was Lightning in yellow, on the bottom; Earth in brown and on the right was Water in blue.

As Naruto finished his inspection Kira placed her-his-whatever hands behind her-his back, smile widening, mirth dancing within mismatched eyes,

“Are you finished Naruto-san?” Kira asked good-naturedly. Naruto flushed deeply, belatedly realizing that he had been sort of checking Kira out; he reached behind his head, scratching at his neck,

“Ah, sorry ‘bout that....” he mumbled. Kira chuckled softly.

“It’s fine; you probably didn’t notice, but I was checking you out too, Naruto-san!” Kira seemed just a bit too cheerful with that exclamation..... Naruto startled all of a sudden,

“Wait a minute,” he started, narrowing his eyes at the brunette,” how’d you know my name?” he asked with suspicion lacing his tone. Kira pointed above Naruto’s head; Naruto was confused for a moment looking up, then flushed when he saw the glowing letters hovering over his own head,” oh....” he whispered; Kira laughed while pointing above them,

“You can see mine right?” she-he asked. Naruto looked to where she-he was pointing and saw similar glowing letters to his own-

Yaiba Kira – The Gamer; Player 1 – Academy Student – LV51

“Ah, yeah, Kira......” he whispered distantly, taking in the words hovering in the air. Kira stepped forward, going closer to Naruto; said blonds head snapped down noticing that only a few scant feet separated the two of them now. Not knowing what else to do Naruto stuck his hand out,” it’s, ah, nice to meet you!” he belatedly greeted. Kira looked surprised for a moment before smiling in a
friendly manner,

“Un, it’s nice to meet you too,” she-he took Naruto’s hand and firmly shook it; they both noticed that
they both had smooth hands compared to that of normal ninja, even ninja-in-training tended to have
rougther hands; heck, Shikamaru, the laziest ninja that Naruto knew had rougher hands than his own-
though that was most likely due to Naruto’s higher healing ability. He wondered why Kira’s hands
were so soft; she-he was probably younger than him, not being in the Academy for long usually
meant softer hands.

This reminded him,” Uh, how old are you?” Naruto asked tentatively. Another laugh escaped Kira’s
lips,

“Heh, I’m ten, turning eleven in June; and before you ask, I’m a boy.” Naruto had started to open his
mouth but snapped it shut quickly,

“Oh; I couldn’t really tell, not to, uh, be rude or anything but you are both very feminine and
masculine at the same time.... well, not really masculine but-“

“I get it; I look a little bit like a boy and a girl, I don’t really mind if people confuse me, it’s not like
I’m purposefully trying to make them know I’m a boy or anything; I only really care if the person
that calls me a girl already knows I’m a boy,” a dark scowl overtook Kira’s features,” that’s really
annoying, and my classmates really like to do that, especially the girls..... But that doesn’t matter,” he
shook his head as he regarded Naruto,

“Aren’t you going to start the Quest?” he asked simply. Naruto’s eyes widened; they had gotten
distracted, hadn’t they? He laughed sheepishly as he looked at Kira,

“Yeah, I probably should, shouldn’t I?” another chuckle left him as he tried to remember the words
to start the mission....

“Ah! Right, uh, P-Please teach me Player 1!” Naruto felt a little weird saying that, but any more
thoughts he may have on it were swept from his mind as a sudden blue glow erupted from Kira and
his own chests’. Kira smiled while Naruto stared on in awe, watching as the light surrounded them
forming a dome, then a sphere as something pulled them up to hover in the air, moving them about as
everything seemed to swirl around.

Naruto looked around in both awe and excitement, seeing that Kira too looked a bit surprised by
what was happening.

“Has this ever happened before?” Naruto asked curiously. Kira shook his head,

“No it hasn’t, you’re the only other person that knows about this Ability, and you only know about it
because you have it too; I’ve never told anybody about it.....” Kira trailed off, looking about once
more, Naruto felt a thrill to see scattered dots within the sphere that looked an awful like stars and
constellations.

Finally everything stopped spinning and Naruto and Kira came to a stop, standing on, well nothing,
about a foot from each other. Glancing about one last time Naruto took note of the fact that the
sphere seemed to have enlarged itself, as if they were floating aimlessly inside of some sort of black
abyss with pale blue glowing stars scattered around them.

His attention was pulled from his surroundings when he felt hands grab hold of him. Turning
forward again Naruto saw Kira holding onto his hands grinning cheerily;

“Let’s get started, Naruto-san,” he spoke softly, his voice echoing quietly around them. Naruto
opened his mouth,

“First off, just call me Naruto, no need to add ‘san’ to it, though if you feel the need to add an honorific then just use ‘kun’, Jiji and Shino call me by that one already.” Kira nodded his understanding before gesturing with his head, urging Naruto to ask his first question.

He thought it over for a moment before speaking,” what, exactly, is this Gamer Ability?” he questioned.

Kira nodded and answered,” The Gamer is an Ability bestowed on those who have gained an Ability Crystal,” Naruto’s eyes widened,

“You mean that strange floating crystal that came out of the Forbidden Scroll of Seals?” he asked. Kira looked surprised for a moment, “Is that where you got yours? Wait; were you involved with the theft last night?” Naruto flinched back, slapping himself in his mind; stupid, he forgot that that was classified! But looking at Kira, he noticed that he didn’t seem accusatory but just curious. He hesitantly ventured,” Y-yes, I was.....” he wasn’t expecting the large grin he received for that,

“Really? And you found an Ability Crystal in the Scroll?!” Kira seemed excited. Naruto nodded which caused for Kira to throw back his head and guffaw loudly in complete glee,” ah! I can’t believe it! Who would’ve thought that an Ability Crystal would’ve been in that thing?” a couple snickers left him; Naruto joined in the laughing, because, yeah, who would have thought that a thing like an Ability Crystal would be in the Forbidden Scroll of Seals?

A minute or two passed with them laughing calming as time ticked by. Finally they were able to calm down all the way and continue with their conversation,” just out of curiosity, before I continue did the seal containing the Crystal have a name on it?” Naruto looked at Kira strangely, “Yeah, it said the seal was made by the Uzumaki clan, my clan,” he stated with pride, happy that he could finally talk of family, though he didn’t know any of them,” and after using my blood and Chakra the Crystal popped out and almost gave me a damn heart attack!” Naruto looked quite disgruntled by the end of that sentence; Kira snickered a moment before straitening,

“I’ve heard of that clan, though I don’t know much about them other than they were really good at Fuinjutsu,” he grinned with Naruto grinning back,

“Cool, maybe we could do research on them later?” Kira nodded in the affirmative,

“Yeah, but let’s finish with this “Tutorial” shall we?” Nodding they both got back on track,

“Now to start again, this Ability is bestowed on anyone who has gained an Ability Crystal. I got mine from a scroll too, though it wasn’t a powerful Scroll like the Forbidden Scroll of Seals, it was just a scroll my mom left to me after she died,” Naruto felt his heart clench,

“Oh, I’m sorry....” Kira shook his head,

“It was years ago, plus, she died protecting me so I’ve been able to come to terms with it,” He shook his head again,” but anyway, let’s not get off track again! I don’t know if there are any more Ability Crystals, it’s entirely possible, after all, you found one, there are probably more out there, hidden to keep just anyone from finding and using them. But for now that doesn’t matter, what matters is you found it and used it and have become Player 2 of this Game that is life; you’ve played actual video
games before right?”

Naruto nodded again, Kira continued,

“Good, that’ll make it easier; I hadn’t so it took a while for me to be able to figure out, but anyways, your life is now a Game, you have **HP, MP, Stats and Special Abilities** that you can use and level up, you know what **HP** and **MP** stand for right?” Naruto nodded a bit unsurely,

“Something to do with health and magic, right?” Kira nodded,

“Yeah; **HP** stands for **Health Points**; its’ how much Life you have and how many hits you can take-some people call them **Hit Points** because of that-and there are two ways for you to lose them. The first is when you fight, taking hits mean you lose **HP** and if you lose too much, depending on the person you’re fighting and what type of fight you’re having: a training duel or an actual fight against an enemy, you will either pass out once you reach zero or get a **K.O.** death.” Naruto gulped in fear, Kira had a very scary and serious look on his face,” be careful when fighting and try to keep an eye on your **HP** as much as possible; alright?”

Naruto nodded his head vigorously. Kira smiled in content,

“Good. Now, the other way you can lose **HP** is by doing things that your body can’t take, this is especially true if your **DEX** is down which leads to your body not being able to take as much damage. An example of doing something that your body can’t take would be, like, if you jumped off of a building; if it’s too tall you’ll hurt yourself. There are, of course, multiple ways to combat this **but**, we’ll get into that later.”

Naruto held up a hand,” yes?” Kira questioned. Naruto let his hand fall by his side,

“Can you wait a second? I want to make sure that I remember this,” Kira looked surprised, but nodded all the same. Naruto then closed his eyes, concentrating on what he had just been told. A moment later he opened his eyes,” you can go on now,” Kira nodded his head and began again,

“Alright, next, **MP** stands for **Mana Points**, I don’t know why it’s **MP** instead of **CP, Chakra Points**, since we have Chakra not Mana, but meh, either way it measures the amount of energy a person has. **Active Abilities**, meaning Abilities that you are consciously using, use **MP** to power while **Passive Abilities**, meaning Abilities that you aren’t actively using, don’t, which is good, since it means there will be things you can do without using up your **MP**!” Kira grinned cheerily,” now, **Stats**! I’ll give you a brief explanation before I have you do something, alright?” seeing his nod Kira continued,

“Good, okay here goes. Stats are things like Dexterity or Strength; they help you know how strong you are or how much you can take, a quick run-down of stats and their meanings are, **VIT** standing for **Vitality**-which is how much energy you have, it’s basically your stamina-**DEX** stands for **Dexterity**-which measures how strong your body is, this also means how much damage your body can take-**STR** stands for **Strength**-obviously how physically strong you are-**INT** stands for **Intelligence**-it measures how you are able to perceive certain situations and understand things either spoken to you or what you read-**WIS** stands for **Wisdom**-how much common sense do you have, how street-smart are you, how much are you able to learn from past mistakes and use that to your advantage-and finally, **LUK** which stands for **Luck**-how lucky are you? **LUK** will help you in really any situation, especially when you are gambling; it makes it more likely for you to be able to win in things, or if you have really bad **LUK**, it’ll make it so you lose. Now, any quick questions before continuing?”
Naruto closed his eyes for a moment, pulling in the load of information and committing it to memory; but as he finished, a little thought struck him; snapping open his eyes he asked,” uh, yeah. When I used **Observe** on my friend Shino, it said that he didn’t have any Flaws. What does that mean?” Naruto tilted his head slightly to show his confusion.

Kira looked surprised” it said he didn’t have any Flaws?” Naruto nodded. Kira let out a breath,” that’s surprising, most people have Flaws.....” Kira trailed off, seeming lost in thought. After a couple minutes of silence Naruto pushed,

“But what does Flaws even mean?” Kira snapped back to attention.

“Oh! Uh,” he coughed in embarrassment,” a Flaw is something most everyone has, it’s also connected to ones **Stats**, in a way at least. A Flaw is something that can and usually will lessen a persons’ capability in certain areas; you’ll see in a moment what that means. Oh yeah, some Flaws are good to have.” Naruto looked weirded out at that,

“How?” wasn’t that the complete opposite of what a Flaw meant? Kira just smiled reassuringly,

“Trust me on this, you’ll see soon,” Naruto nodded, obviously not certain with what Kira was saying but agreeing nevertheless. Kira smiled again,” good! Now, I want you to say something, alright?” A nod,” okay, say **Status Window!**” suddenly a semi-transparent screen appeared in front of Kira’s face, who smiled behind it,” go on!” he urged.

Naruto took in a deep breath, letting it out slowly before a determined look overtook his face.

“**Status Window!**” he confidently called, and just like that, it appeared-

**Name: Uzumaki Naruto**

**Class: The Gamer; Player 2 – Academy Student**

**Title: Jinchuuriki**

**Level: LV4**

**Affiliation: Konohagakure**

**HP: 600/600**

**MP: 2000/???**

**STR: 78 (-7; -35% [46.8])**

**VIT: 69 (-7; -15% [52.7])**

**DEX: 72 (-7; -40% [39])**

**INT: 56 (-85% [8.4])**

**WIS: 59 (-75% [14.75])**

**LUK: ???**

**Status: Uzumaki (+8 every level to INT; 90% success in Fūinjutsu skill; 80% faster in filling**
up Chakra Reserves) Jinchuuriki (+10 to WIS; +17 to DEX; 25% to STR and VIT; -90% to Reputation) Prank Master (+10 to INT; 45% to Stealth skill; 55% to Trap skill; -10% to Reputation) [???] (-85% to INT; -75% to WIS; -60% in defense against Mind Control; -7 to DEX, VIT, and STR; +50% to being misled) ?x2 (-50% to Teamwork; +85% resistance to Mind Manipulation Jutsu)

Uzumaki Naruto is the Deadlast of his class, and most likely the Academy, and has taken the Genin Exam twice before while clearly not being ready, but that hasn’t stopped him from trying with all his might to be the best Shinobi he can be. (Empathy Bonus) After finding out that he is the container for the most hated creature on the earth (or at least in Konoha)-the Kyuubi no Yoko-he now understands why he was mistreated and hated and is willing to do anything to change the way others see him and to find out more about his unknown past and heritage.

Has 6 Flaws

AP: 24

Naruto stared, uncomprehending, of the words floating before him,” the hell is this....?” he whispered harshly, eyes roving over the -75% and -85% that was taking away from his INT and WIS,” the hell is this?” he called louder, anger entering his veins, the hell was [???] anyway? Why’d he have it? And why the hell was it suckering away his INT and WIS?! By this time he was breathing heavily, just so damn angry that he didn’t know what to do with himself; he could feel his Chakra moving, churning inside of him in reaction, building more and more-

“Naruto!!” hands grabbed hold of him and a voice desperately called out to him snapping the blond out of his anger; gasping for breath as his churning Chakra moved wildly within him, not calming down since he lost his hold on it.

”Shh, Naruto, it’s okay; calm down, breathe just breathe, it’s okay shh....” Kira’s soft voice and calming words surrounded him, pulling him down, bringing him peace.

Finally, finally Naruto felt himself calm, slumping forward into the strong hold of Kira who immediately wrapped his arms around him, angling his head into the juncture of his neck; hand resting lightly yet firmly on the back of his messy blond locks.

They stayed like that, floating within nothing and holding on to each other. Naruto couldn’t help noticing how small Kira was compared to him; the blond himself was only about 4’ 9” but Kira was so very obviously smaller than him, he was probably also the smallest in his class, just like Naruto since most would be getting closer to or over Naruto’s height.

Mentally shaking his head Naruto pulled Kira closer; he felt himself start to shake, tears trying to escape; he was just so tired, he wanted to stay right where he was ‘thank you very much’ and he didn’t plan on moving any time soon.

He felt Kira sigh under him while squirming a little bit; Naruto suddenly came back to himself sharply pulling away from him,” I’m sorry!” he apologized frantically. Kira held him still, not allowing him to pull away but not pulling him back to him either,

“It’s alright,” he spoke soothingly,” I started it, calm down, it’s alright. I-I don’t mind being this close.....” stopping his struggling Naruto angled his head down, looking into Kira’s face, which was lightly flushed in embarrassment, looking just a bit uncomfortable.
Naruto slowly started to pull away, “you don’t have to if you aren’t comfortable with it,” Kira’s face flushed darker,

“I-I’m not really used to it..... B-but I can!” He looked determined. It warmed Naruto’s heart, helping him to fully come back to himself, and he grinned,

“How ‘bout, we sit like this?” the blond suggested as he pulled back some more, crossing his legs so he would be sitting in the air, his hands holding onto Kira’s. The brunette copied him carefully, their knees touching in the new position, tightly holding onto Naruto’s hands; he took a deep breath and let it out, opening his mismatched eyes to watch Naruto in concern,

“You okay?” he asked softly. Naruto also took a deep breath, letting it out he nodded,

“Yeah, I’m okay.....” silence spread between them for a moment,

“Why were you so angry?” Kira questioned quietly. Naruto shook his head, looking away in shame,

“It doesn’t matter.“

**Observe!**” the words were spoken resolutely, surprising Naruto to just stare at Kira as his eyes roved over the screen in front of him, a look of shock, concern and just a smidge of disgust covering his face.

“The hell...” he whispered as his eyes hovered over the bottom, looking at his **Status,**” who the hell....” he stopped again, seeming unable to finish his sentence, he shook, almost violently, his head as if to dispel his thoughts and looked back to Naruto,

“Do you have any idea who did this to you?” eyes widening Naruto just stared at him.

“What?” he breathed. This caused for Kira to start talking rapidly,

“Well, the only way any of your **Stats** should be as low as they are is if someone did something to tamper with them, or more specifically, they were trying to sabotage your education! Dammit, who the hell would do this?! And if they try to say they did it because you’re a freaking Jinchuuriki then heads will be rolling.“

“Wait, what?!” Naruto cut in suddenly, “h-how’d you know I’m a Jinchuuriki? How do you even know what a Jinchuuriki is?” Kira looked to Naruto, a strange emotion he couldn’t identify on his face. Then, he spoke,

“You aren’t the only Jinchuuriki in the world, Naruto. There are others, some of which I’ve met before; I’m not from Konoha, I came here a couple years ago after wondering around for a while.....” shaking his head Kira went on,” but that doesn’t matter right now. I know you’re a Jinchuuriki because it’s your **Title**.....“

“Oh.... okay. Wait, there are other Jinchuuriki?” Naruto was surprised; though he supposed he shouldn’t be-after all he had heard of the other eight Biju, it made sense that there would be other Jinchuuriki for the other Biju in the world, it just never occurred to him before,’ of course not,’ he mentally chided himself,’ I just found out I was a Jinchuuriki yesterday; of course I hadn’t thought about it!’

“Yes, there are in total nine Jinchuuriki, or last time I knew there were nine, who knows, one or more of them might have died or something and their Biju escaped; I dunno, but anyways, I wonder what [???] Means?” Kira scrutinized the screen before him closely; hand on his chin in thought.
This brought Naruto back, he squared his shoulders and spoke, ”Status Window,” it appeared before him again and he looked over it more closely, taking note of his Status and seeing that there were some good things to be found there-

**Status:** Uzumaki (+8 every level to INT; 90% success in Fūjinjutsu skill; 80% faster in filling up Chakra Reserves) Jinchuuriki (+10 to WIS; +17 to DEX; 25% to STR and VIT; -90% to Reputation) Prank Master (+10 to INT; 45% to Stealth skill; 55% to Trap skill; -10% to Reputation) [???] (-85% to INT; -75% to WIS; -60% in defense against Mind Control; -7 to DEX, VIT, and STR; +50% to being misled) ?x2 (-50% to Teamwork; +85% resistance to Mind Manipulation Jutsu)

Apparently being an Uzumaki lead to really good Stats, as well as being Prank Master and Jinchuuriki but those two unknowns were really grating on him, especially since he had no idea what they were.

“Do you know what the [???] or ?x2 means?” Naruto asked. Kira shook his head,

“No, I don’t. Maybe if you weren’t a Player like me I would know, but since you are I can apparently only know about as much as you about your own Stats, but maybe if we look through the rest of your Status we’ll be able to find out! But for now, I’ll just tell you about anything you want to know about this!” Nodding his head in understanding, Naruto pointed to the top of the window, “What do these mean?” he asked; Kira pressed on the window before him, making it disappear, then moved to sit beside Naruto, looking at his Status Window,

“Ah, well, this,” he pointed to Class and Title,” means two different things, since you no doubt know what Name is referring to. A persons Class is referring to what position they hold in society; like, you and I are both Academy Students so that is our Class, same goes for our The Gamer Class, we’re both Gamer’s and that’s our Class, other people can have multiple Classes but most people only have one, again we have two because we’re Gamer’s. Another example of Class is, if you were to compare the Hokage with a Merchant, then their Classes would be Kage and Civilian, respectively. On a side note most Civilians don’t have any other type of Class, some might have a different Class but usually it’s just Civilian.” Kira’s finger then moved down,

“Now, Titles are a little more complicated,” Naruto nodded, absorbed in Kira’s words,

“Titles refer to something that was either bestowed onto someone or they have naturally, more or less, Titles are usually gained through some type of accomplishment, like say, you cook a lot and are really good at it, in that case, a Title you might gain would be something like Master Chef or something like that—it depends on what level in whatever you’re gaining a Title in is.”

“Hmm,” Naruto hummed in thought, causing for Kira to stop speaking, looking to him curiously. Naruto, realizing that Kira had stopped, looked back at him,” ah, sorry, didn’t mean to interrupt,” he grinned sheepishly, scratching the back of his neck nervously.

Kira continued to stare at him, blinking slowly, then,” do you need another moment to, ah, absorb the information?” he asked.

Naruto blinked owlishly, then a sheepish giggle left his lips,” I guess, so, one moment ‘kay?” upon seeing Kira’s nod Naruto shut his eyes, committing to memory the words spoken to him. It didn’t take too long and before he knew it, Naruto was listening to Kira explain things once again,
“Titles also tend to give you better Stats in one form or another, like your Jinchuuriki Title ups your WIS by 10, your DEX by 17 and your STR and VIT by 25%. Your Jinchuuriki Title is also one of few ways to gain one without having to work for it, since you’ve been a Jinchuuriki since you became one, which happened whenever it happened.... Do you know when you became a Jinchuuriki?” Naruto was thrown off by the question, but answered nonetheless,

“Uh, I think it was the day I was born.....” nodding Kira made an interesting noise in the back of his throat,

“Hmm, interesting,” he nodded to himself a moment then continued,” anyways; I don’t know how many Titles a person can have, maybe you have to have some sort of special circumstance to have more than one, like maybe you could have more than one since you’re a Jinchuuriki and won’t really be able to change that so you’ll probably be able to get another Title at some point, if you try hard enough that is.

“That’s all there is about Titles and Classes though. Now this,” Kira’s hand moved farther down the screen,” is your Level, Affiliation, HP and MP - and might I say, that I’ve never seen someone’s MP look the way yours does, not even other Jinchuuriki, though they had really high MP, even higher than yours; though I’ll attribute that to them having more control of their Chakra that has been given to them by their Biju-“

“I actually, uh, just found out about being one yesterday.....” Naruto interrupted, feeling strangely compelled to be honest with Kira. Said boy eyed Naruto in confusion,

“Really? How did you not know? All the Jinchuuriki I’ve met were fully aware of their status when I’d met them.....” Kira questioned him, curiosity radiating off of his body in waves.

Coughing in embarrassment, Naruto again scratched at his neck,” yeah, well, I’m different than them I guess..... Jiji made it sound like I’m only a Jinchuuriki because the village was being attacked by the Kyuubi and sealing it was the only way to stop it from destroying everything,” he shrugged,” so, I wasn’t told for some reason, I actually don’t know why Jiji never told me, he only told me because a traitor had told me, cause apparently he wanted to tell me when I became an official Ninja or somethin’.....” he looked away, feeling uncomfortable with the situation (even though he was the one to cause it).

A moment of silence passed between them, then,” well, from what your Jiji said, you weren’t made to be a weapon, which is the reason most villages have Jinchuuriki, but to protect it from destruction. That’s probably why he didn’t tell you, or maybe there’s some other reason he never told you, but either way, you know now, and it also explains why your starting Chakra levels are lower than other Jinchuuriki I’ve met; you, unlike them, haven’t had any type of training to control your Biju’s Chakra, since you were unaware even of its’ existence until just yesterday, so I’m curious as to where your Chakra levels will go,”

A grin was sent Naruto’s way,” now, Level is pretty self-explanatory, it refers to what level you currently are, which is 4 right now-also, something about Levels that you should know about is that each person has 10,000 EXP points to earn in order to go up another level, i.e if you had about 7,000 EXP points when you first got The Gamer then that would be why you leveled up so quickly, but the higher the level, the harder it is to gain EXP points, since the more you do and the higher you level up the less EXP you’ll gain from the same things; you’ll have to do harder and more things to gain the same amount of EXP.”

“Like what?” he asked curiously,
“Well, like if you were to gain 500 EXP for completing a certain task, like, say, a D-ranked mission, the amount would be lessened after you level up. In that case you’d have to take either twice the amount of D-ranked missions to level up at the same pace as the previous level, or, you’d have to take higher, and harder missions.”

“The same thing actually goes for Ability leveling; though in this case each Ability has 1,000 EXP points to gain, and the more it’s used for the same things, the less points will be gained; but I’ll get into that more later, when we talk about Skills and all that.”

“Now, Affiliation is who you feel allied with, who you work for to protect or any number of reasons, you’re currently affiliated with Konoha, as am I and most people who live here, mostly only traitors aren’t affiliated with their villages. People can also only be affiliated with a single person, so if you meet someone in this village who is only affiliated with a person don’t be too surprised; everyone has to find a reason to fight after all, and sometimes they only fight for a single person, it’s just how it is,” Kira shrugged before moving forward,

“You already know what HP, MP and all these Stats mean, so we’ll be looking at this,” his hand stopped even lower on the screen,” Status’! Now, as you’ve seen, some of these aren’t all that good, but most of them are good and give you extra Stat Points that, once you get rid of all of your negative Stats, will really make you stronger and smarter. Use everything your Status gives to you to your advantage, being Prank Master will definitely make you an even better Ninja in the long run, since traps are a very important part of an accomplished and high leveled Ninja’s arsenal; so even if you’re told to stop pulling pranks, you shouldn’t! Practice and raise your trapping skill levels even higher!” Kira laughed in glee,

“Ne, ne! If it isn’t too much trouble, can I pull those pranks with you?” excited giggles erupted from his throat, a look of unrestrained glee shining on his face. Naruto couldn’t resist and smiled mischievously,

“A minute or two passed as they laughed, they both offering minor pranking ideas (though Naruto’s were better than Kira’s; obviously) but they were able to finally calm themselves and continue on with the Tutorial.

“Okay, heh, after your Status is what is basically your Character Summary, speaking of, I like yours, it’s nice and, now that I think about it, I should have known that you had only just found out about being a Jinchuuriki; it does say ‘After finding out that he is the container for the most hated creature on the earth (or at least in Konoha)-the Kyuubi no Yoko-he now understands why he was mistreated and hated’ after all, I shoulda paid more attention,” he shrugged, sticking his tongue out slightly with his eyes closed,” oops,” he shrugged again; this caused for Naruto to giggle before he caught onto something that Kira had said,

“Wait, you have Empathy too?” he asked. The brunette looked at him, a strange looking confused expression overtaking his face.

“No, I don’t. That’s probably a skill that only you have, why do you ask?”

“Ah well, it’s just that, that part of my uh, Character Summary, at least when I read it, says Empathy Bonus in front of it, so I just sorta, y’know, assumed that you had it too.” Shrugging, Naruto looked away.
A sound of understanding vibrated from Kira’s throat,” ah, well, no, that’s still only a skill that you have, but I have a similar, sort of, one,” Naruto turned back to him,

“Really? What is it?” Kira nodded with a smile,

“Yeah, really! Mine’s called **Status Completer**, I got it a while ago and it sort of automatically finishes the **Status** of anyone I’m **Observing**, so yeah, that’s mine,” another smile,” and, hm, you have six Flaws,”

Naruto flinched away at that. Kira looked up at him, since he’s sitting right next to him and so felt the flinch and smiled reassuringly,” don’t worry so much, I have nearly as much as you anyway!” Naruto looked at Kira in surprise while said brunette continued to grin,” besides, you never know, some of them might be good! Now,” Kira cut Naruto off, stopping him from questioning how any Flaws could be good as he moved on,” to look at your Flaws you need to say Flaws: Uzumaki Naruto; ‘kay?” Naruto huffed quietly, not looking happy. Kira sighed before offering his incentive,

“If you do it I’ll let you look at my Flaws, okay?” This caught Naruto’s interest. He glanced at Kira for a moment, before nodding his head, turning to glare lightly at the bottom of the screen as he muttered,

“Flaws: Uzumaki Naruto!” a new screen popped before him and his eyes looked over them-

**Flaws:**

**Boisterous Flaw/Skill** (You are a fairly loud person, and though that’s fine when not on missions, it can cause disastrous results to any mission you take; but it’s also a gift. It allows lightening tense moods, cheering others up and even changing people who were on dark paths to lighter ones; -10% to REP with others Neutral and below; +25% to REP with others Friendly and higher and with Unknowns; cannot be cured, but it can be lessened through constant reminding’s and great patience)

**Malnourished Flaw** (You don’t keep to a healthy diet by either not eating the right kinds of food or not eating enough/at all; -20 to STR; -25% in DEX; can be easily cured by change of diet)

**Unkempt Flaw** (Hygiene is very important, especially when one is a Shinobi. It is good for first impressions and attracting potential clients; -45% REP to members of opposite sex; -15% to DEX, VIT and STR; can easily be cured through frequent grooming)

**Unpredictable Flaw/Skill** (You are very unpredictable, though it is good in most fights, going into any situation with a plan is almost as equally good; -10% to Teamwork; +50% in battle situations; +10% to REP with others Neutral and higher; cannot be cured, but it can be controlled to a point with forced planning and patience)

**Isolated Flaw** (You have been alone for a long time, either on purpose or it being forced upon you, but either way it ends with the same results; -50% to Social Skills; -20% to REP with others; makes it hard to find motivation for anything [can be countered with Boisterous and Kind Hearted traits]; can be cured through frequent company of others with Neutral to Exalted REP’s)

**Other Personality Flaw/Skill** (You have another personality in your brain, one that is your true nature that you hide either consciously or subconsciously, but separating a part of
yourself always leads to killing your true self; +50% against Mental attacks; -25% to Teamwork; -10% to Trust; can be cured by growing into real personality/accepting part of yourself

Azure eyes widened in surprise when they finished their journey over the screen, getting what Kira had meant by ‘some Flaws are good’ but he still felt unhappy at some of his Flaws. A low whistle sounded next to him,

“How, this is interesting,” he said while looking over the words presented to him,” you have some of the same Flaws as me!” that caught him off guard.

“Really? Which ones?” the blond asked. Kira grimaced before sighing,

“Aa, I might as well just show you....” he took in a breath, let it out then looked before him in determination,” Flaws: Yaiba Kira!” he spoke clearly and yet another screen popped up-

**Flaws:**

**Isolated Flaw (You have been alone for a long time, either on purpose or it being forced upon you, but either way it ends with the same results; -50% to Social Skills; -20% to REP with others; makes it hard to find motivation for anything [can be countered with Boisterous and Kind Hearted traits]; can be cured through frequent company of others with Neutral to Exalted REP’s)**

**Stray Cat Flaw (You act like a stray cat that wonders through the streets, never remaining in a single place for too long, in fear of out weighing your welcome anywhere you go resulting in small trust issues and small crimes like stealing food; -10% to Trust; -20% to Social Skills; -25% to Teamwork; can be cured through being with someone who has gone through something similar or building Trust with others)**

**Unkempt Flaw (Hygiene is very important, especially when one is a Shinobi. It is good for first impressions and attracting potential clients; -45% REP to members of opposite sex; -15% to DEX, VIT and STR; can easily be cured through frequent grooming)**

**Stubborn Flaw/Skill (You are so stubborn that it’s become a permanent fixture in your personality; and while being stubborn in some situations is okay and can even lead to good and unexpected results, being too stubborn will usually hurt you; -25% in REP with others Unfriendly and lower, -25% in Battle situations, +25% to REP/Other in Special situations, cannot be cured)**

**Malnourished Flaw (You don’t keep to a healthy diet by either not eating the right kinds of food or not eating enough/at all; -20 to STR; -25% in DEX; can be easily cured by change of diet)**

“See? I only have one less than you! And we have three Flaws that are the same!” Kira smiled up at Naruto, though it looked exasperated. Naruto giggled as he looked over the new set of Flaws and saw that, yes, he and Kira shared three Flaws in common; they were both Isolated, made sense-they were both orphans after all-Unkempt, though Naruto didn’t know why they had that one since neither one of them smelled bad or anything, and Malnourished, this one Naruto got, a bit grudgingly, knowing that Ramen wasn’t a balanced enough food when you were a growing Shinobi.
Suddenly Naruto sighed in relief, seeing that the biggest reasons for some of his negatives were from two of those three, and that they could be pretty easily cured through minor changes to his lifestyle.

His thoughts were cut into by the sound of a ping and the screen that housed his Status flashed until Naruto pressed on it. It moved forwards and he looked over it, not seeing why it was trying to gain his attention, but once his eyes got to the Status portion, he understood-

**Inner Nарutox2 (-50% to Teamwork; +85% resistance to Mind Manipulation Jutsu)**

He just stared at it, uncomprehending, just, what the hell was this shit?

“Huh,” Kira’s voice sounded, it too sounding uncomprehending and a bit strained,” well, I guess that’s what ?x2 meant. You have Multiple Personality Disorder, or something very close to it!”

All Naruto could do was nod his head dumbly, he didn’t know how or why he had that, since he doesn’t remember ever switching personalities before in his life, but that didn’t matter; he was fucked up in the brain!

“Ah, fuck!” he grabbed at his head, glaring at the words, angry that he had something like that messing with his abilities and mind..... ‘Maybe that’s why I have a hard time concentrating, besides the bullshit [???] Messing up my stuff....’ he thought grudgingly, trying to find some sort of bright side to his situation.

“Well, let’s look back at your Flaws, shall we?” Kira questioned. Naruto turned and glared at him, causing for him to raise his hands in surrender,” I’m only suggesting it because I think I saw a Flaw in there that is the cause for you have MPD!” he defensively spoke, trying to get his point across to the blond.

Luckily for him, Naruto was able to see his point, though he still didn’t want to look at his Flaws again, and brought them back up,” Flaws: Uzumaki Naruto!” once he spoke they popped back up, and their eyes both roved over the screen before both landing on the same thing, both moving to point at it,” there!” they said at the same time-

**Other Personality Flaw/Skill (You have another personality in your brain, one that is your true nature that you hide either consciously or subconsciously, but separating a part of yourself always leads to killing your true self; +50% against Mental attacks; -25% to Teamwork; -10% to Trust; can be cured by growing into real personality/by accepting that part of yourself)**

After carefully reading the Flaw they looked to each other in silence for a moment, then Kira spoke up,

“Well,” he started,” at least it’s a Flaw/Skill! And look,” he pointed to the end of the summary,” it can be cured by accepting and/or growing into it-or in this cause-them!” Kira smiled encouragingly at his companion; Naruto looked over the Flaw again and, yeah, Kira was right, he just had to grow/accept that part of himself!

There was just only one teeny tiny problem with that.....

“I don’t know what they are! I didn’t even know I had MPD until just now!” the whiskered blond exclaimed loudly; Kira jerked away from him in surprise, then he reached a hand up and put his pinky in his ear,

“No need to be so loud, sheesh,” he grumbled then shook his head looking back up at him,” and so
what? You didn’t know you were a Jinchuuriki until just yesterday! Now that you know about this you’ll be able to figure out what they are and how to deal with them!” huffing up at him Kira looked away from Naruto,” but anyway, you’ll survive this dude! Let’s move on, since I don’t have any ideas on how to use the information the Flaw has given to you, we’ll come to that later, when we’ve both thought about it, okay?” seeing him nod Kira continued,

“Good. Now, we’ve already spent an awful lot of time on Flaws, so we’ll be moving on! I don’t know how time passes here and I don’t fancy not getting any sleep tonight!” he huffed again while puffing up his cheeks in irritation; Naruto got the feeling he was seeing more of the real Kira, that strange form of stubbornness was strangely endearing, like Shino’s silence or Shikamaru’s laziness.

“Up next is Skills; we’ll only be talking about a couple of them for now, and I’ll tell you how to look at them—just say Skills along with your name, like what you did to see your Flaws.” Naruto nodded his understanding, Kira continued,

“Now, something you need to know about Skills is that this Game will make just about anything into a Skill,”

“Like what?”

“Well, like a Cooking Skill or a Doing Laundry Skill and a whole plethora of others that I won’t be getting into since different people seem to get different Skills! But a Skill I will talk about is Observe, this particular Skill is a Passive/Active Skill, which I’ll get into right now,” Kira continued on before Naruto could ask what Passive/Active meant,

“An Active Skill is something you use, well, actively; you have to say, or think, Observe in order to use it right?” Naruto nodded,

“Exactly. An Active Skill calls for you to say or think its name in order to use it which automatically means that all Jutsu are Active Skills since you have to use them actively by either thinking the name of the Jutsu or saying it to use it. Now Passive Skills are different; they don’t call for you to say or think of the Skill you are currently using, for example, do you see the words hovering over my head?” Kira asked while pointing above him.

Naruto looked up, seeing them and nodded, “yeah, I see them,” he spoke, nodding again. Kira smiled,

“Good, that means that you’re currently Passively using Observe, since Observe is the thing that allows to see a person, of things, Stats which is why it’s a Passive/Active Skill, you can use it both ways, but another difference between these two types of Skills is that Passive Skills don’t use any MP while Active Skills do, so when you look at your Skills later make sure that you keep an eye out for that, alright?”

“Okay, I get it, but, one sec okay?” Naruto responded, a look of concentration on his face.

“Sure, take your time! I want to sleep tonight but I also want you to be able to remember everything that I’m telling you,” Kira smiled at him goofily, this made Naruto starting snickering,

“Thanks!” he managed to get out between snickers. It took a moment for him to be able to calm himself but he eventually did, closing his eyes, bringing in and committing to memory everything that was mentioned, even reviewing the words spoken to him earlier, making sure that he did in fact remember everything that was told to him.
Happy that he was able to remember everything that he and Kira had talked about he opened his eyes to look at said brunette, grinning as he did,” okay, I’m ready for more!” Kira nodded while grinning back,

“Okay, next up is **Inventory**!” Naruto looked Kira in surprise,

“**Inventory**? Oh! You mean that thing that kept telling me I had gotten something and it was placed there?” he clarified,

“Yes,” Kira nodded,” that’s what that is. The **Inventory** is some sort of sub-space type dimension thing that holds any items that you put into it, like food or equipment or weapons or what have you. It’s very helpful when traveling around places since it keeps anything put into it safe from anyone who might want to steal from you; in other words if you have something that’s special to you or important then you can put it in your **Inventory** and no one, except for maybe another **Gamer**, will be able to take it from you. I’d like to think that this will be very helpful during missions that require you to take some important document somewhere; if you’re attacked the enemies won’t be able to find or take it! Now with that out of the way we’ll be looking at it so say **Open: Inventory**, kay?”

Nodding again Naruto turned forwards and intoned,” **Open: Inventory**!” a pale green screen appeared before him, almost entirely empty except for the first few spaces at the top,

“Cool, you already have stuff! Now, just tap on the item in order to know what it is, okay?” nodding, Naruto did just that; moving his finger he tapped on the first item in the slot, that looked like it was some sort of scroll-

**Jutsu Scroll: Shunshin no Jutsu – Rewarded to Player for successfully capturing a Traitor to the Village**

Looking at it, Naruto wasn’t entirely sure what it was. He was happy that he had gotten a Jutsu, but the Jutsu itself was unknown to him-though he had a feeling that he should have known what it was-so he just stared at it until,

“If you want more information on something, just double tap it,” Kira said from his side.

“Ah! Okay,” Naruto double tapped the scroll and more information popped up-

**Shunshin no Jutsu: The Shunshin is a Jutsu a Ninja uses to move at incredible speeds, giving the illusion of teleportation. A Ninja can move short to long distances very quickly, the amount of chakra required depends on the overall distance and elevation between the user and the intended destination. Ninja Jutsu Level [D] “Kawarimi” [Lv. Maxed out] is required in order to learn this Jutsu; Chakra stores [500] is required to fuel the Jutsu**

Naruto was pleased with this. It seemed to be a very cool and useful Jutsu that he would be able to learn! He just had to figure out what level his **Kawarimi** was, but he would do that later, for now he moved on to the next item, which looked like some sort of bandage wrap-

**Medical Item: Beginners First Aid Kit – Rewarded to Player for gaining the Skill, Medical Prowess**

Naruto double tapped on it and viewed the full summary-

**Beginners First Aid Kit: The Beginners First Aid Kit, or BFAK, holds the basic Medical Items any aspiring Medic needs to learn how to heal and take care of their comrades. The BFAK**
holds; Tape Bandages, Medical Ointment and Cotton Balls. “Medical Prowess” Lv. 1 is required to use this Item

‘Interesting....’ Naruto thought as he looked at the summary, but he moved on to the final item-

**Jutsu Scroll: Bunshin Daibakuha – Rewarded to Player for finding Player 1 with 13 minutes to spare**

**Bunshin Daibakuha: The Bunshin Daibakuha is a Bunshin that looks like an ordinary Kage Bunshin, but with one big difference; it has the ability to detonate! The Bunshin looks like a normal Kage Bunshin, that allows the user to get it close to the target without them expecting anything besides a normal attack, or the target might even close in willingly to try to attack the Bunshin. Using multiple tricks and diversionary tactics to disguise the nature of the Bunshin can make this technique more likely to be effective. Ninja level [A] “Kage Bunshin” is required to learn this Jutsu; Chakra stores [2000] is required to fuel the Jutsu**

A pleased grin spread across Naruto’s face as he read the summary, very happy with this one.

“You got some good stuff! You should use them, but later as we’ll be moving on for now,” Kira spoke up for the first time in several minutes.

“One of the last things we’ll be talking about is **Reputation. Reputation** is what it sounds like, hell; you’ve even seen REP boxes pop up like the one that popped up when you finished the Quest to find me! Your REP helps decide what Quests you can get, how many and how often; but Quests is another topic I’ll be teaching you about so I’ll leave that alone. Now, before you look at your **Reputation**, I’m gonna tell you a couple more tidbits about it. REP is short for **Reputation** and there are eight REP status’, or in other words, there are eight ways for people to view you in terms of closeness; the first is **Unknown**, just like the name, it means that the person doesn’t know you so they don’t have an opinion of you, the next is **Despised**, this is the lowest you can go for someone to feel about you, both **Unknown** and **Despised** status’ are an automatic 0 REP points. Next in line is **Hated**, anyone that has 1-100 REP points for you automatically are in this group, then comes **Unfriendly** with it being 101-300 points, then after that is **Neutral** which is 301-500 points, 500-750 **REP points** is a **Friendly** status, then 751-1,000 points is **Honored**, and finally, last but not least is **Exalted** ranging from 1,001-10,000 which is the highest a persons’ REP can go up for someone. Now, let’s have a looksee at your **Reputation**, shall we?”

Kira grinned while Naruto gulped, scared by what they might find, certain that there would only be [Despise]’s, [Hated]’s and [Unfriendly]’s with only three or four of any of the other ones.

Gulping Naruto forced himself to take a breath, calming and steeling himself for what was to come, a look of determination on his face,” **Reputation: Uzumaki Naruto!**” he intoned causing for a lilac screen to pop up, Kira grinned next to him,

“Good job, you were paying attention,” he murmured quietly as they both looked over Naruto’s **Reputation** with all that he had met-

**Villages;**

**Konohagakure – Hated 460/10,000**

**Sunagakure – Unknown 0/0**
Iwagakure – Unknown 0/0
Kumogakure – Unknown 0/0
Kirigakure – Unknown 0/0
[???] – Unknown 0/0
[???] – Unknown 0/0
[???] – Unknown 0/0
Other – Unknown 0/0

Groups/Clans:

Konoha Twelve – Neutral 355/1,000
Academy Classmates – Unfriendly 280/1,000
ANBU Corp – Neutral 460/1,000
Academy Teachers – Hated 75/1,000
Chūnin Corp. – Neutral 500/1,000
[???] – Neutral 300/1,000
[???] – Neutral 300/1,000
[???] – Neutral 450/1,000
[???] – Despised 0/0
[???] – Neutral 450/1,000
Hyuuga Clan – Hated 5/1,000
Inuzuka Clan – Unfriendly 120/1,000
Aburame Clan – Neutral 400/1,000
Nara Clan – Neutral 410/1,000
Yamanaka Clan – Unfriendly 235/1,000
Akimichi Clan – Unfriendly 300/1,000
Sarutobi Clan – Friendly 600/1,000
[???]– Unknown 0/0
[???] – Unknown 0/0
Individuals:

Sandaime Hokage/Sarutobi Hiruzen – Exalted 2,560/10,000
Ichiraku Teuchi – Exalted 2,000/10,000
Ichiraku Ayame – Exalted 2,000/10,000
[???] – Honored 970/1,000
Hagane Kotetsu – Friendly 550/750
Kamizuki Izumo – Friendly 550/750
Umino Iruka – Friendly 520/750
Oroki Mizuki – Despised 0/0
Hyouga Hinata – Honored 923/1,000
Uchiha Sasuke – Hated 45/100
Inuzuka Kiba – Neutral 360/500
Aburame Shino – Honored 910/1,000
Yamanaka Ino – Unfriendly 372/500
Haruno Sakura – Hated 25/100
Nara Shikamaru – Honored 835/1,000
Akimichi Chouji – Friendly 500/750
Yaiba Kira – Honored 900/1,000

Others – Unknown 0/0

“Oh yeah, I forgot to say that Villages look different in this, whoops,” Kira’s voice carried over Naruto as he looked over his REP with others, which was not as bad as he thought it would be; it definitely could have been worse.

“I have a lot more [Exalted]'s and [Honored]'s then I thought I would, so that’s good! But, ugh, still so many [Hated]'s..... But more [Neutral]'s, that’s also good.....” Naruto mumbled aloud, speaking to himself without realizing he was doing it out loud. In the middle of his mutterings Kira pointed to the Individuals portion,

“This part will get larger the more individual people you meet and make a lasting impression on, whether negatively or positively, mine’s not all that big even though I’ve met a lot of people while traveling outside of Konoha, I just didn’t get all that close to anyone since I was a little more concerned with surviving and not running into the wrong kind of people; it’s only a little bigger than yours actually,” he smiled again in Naruto’s direction as said blond nodded along to his words,
“Hmm,” he hummed and looked over the list again, when he suddenly felt depressed once he acknowledged Sakura’s **Reputation** with him,” only 25……” he muttered dejectedly; Kira snickered,

“Well that either means you need to leave this Sakura alone or you need to change your approach to her, since what you’re doing now to gain her affections is clearly not working,” he snickered again. Naruto looked at Kira in indignation,

“I’m not trying to gain her affections! I-I just wanted to be friends with her….. Sh-she was my first friend, or she would have been if her mom hadn’t told her to stay away from me when we both started going to the Academy…..” a stifling silence followed that confession, neither one of them knowing what to say in light of it.

“Well, you should still change how you approach her since her **REP** with you is so low, whatever you’re doing now is really not helping in making her like you at all; or, like I said, you should just leave her alone…..” Kira offered quietly, breaking the stifling silence, allowing for Naruto to breathe

‘**Wait, when did I even stop….?**’ he silently wondered to himself before shaking his head deciding it didn’t matter and turning to Kira,” yeah, you’re probably right….. I’ll try changing my approach to her, but if that doesn’t work then I guess I’ll just leave her alone, maybe after some alone time she’ll be more willing to be friends?” Kira shrugged, not knowing the pink-haired girl’s reaction since he doesn’t know her at all.

More silence followed as they again didn’t know what to say.

After several minutes it was broken, but this time by Naruto,

”Well, you’ve taught me about a lot, is there anything else left?” he asked curiously.

Kira nodded,” yes, there’s only, ha! One more thing for us to talk about! Quests!” Kira looked to be excited to be finishing (**just like how the author is excited that this chapter is almost done....**) and just speaking excitedly,

“Okay! Quests are things that the **Game** asks you to do, whether or not an actual person asks for it to be done. There are several different types of Quests, which are; **Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Random** and **Circumstantial**. The first three are just what their names say, they are Quests that can happen daily, weekly or Monthly while **Random** Quests will happen, well, randomly and usually only if certain things happen, like someone decides to do something near you that requires you chasing them or if you ask a question and the **Game** answers through a Quest-“

“Like how we met?” Naruto interrupted. Kira looked at him a moment, 

“Probably, how did you get the Quest to find me?” he asked. Naruto grinned sheepishly,

“Ah, I was a little fed up with the strange notices and boxes popping up all over the place and wondered out loud if there should be some sort of tutorial to help me with it…..” Kira snorted on a laugh, seeming to choke while holding in his laughs,

“Re-hehe-really?” he chuckled, trying to force the words out. Naruto snickered as well, though there was a hint of sheepishness in it,

“Yeah, I did...” that did it, Kira burst into laughter, somehow catching Naruto off guard with his loud and cheerful guffaws; tears streaming down his cheeks. Seeing Naruto startled look caused for Kira to laugh even harder, squeaking he was laughing so hard! He was almost at the point of laughing so hard he wasn’t making any noise but squeaks.
This broke Naruto and he too started laughing, guffawing happily and without restraint, snorting every other breath, this setting the two off even more as the snorting sound Naruto made just made everything seem even funnier.

Who-knows-how-much time passed while the two continued to laughing, hanging off of each other as they could no longer contain themselves, gasping for breath but still laughing all the while, not able to stop at this point, their stomachs were starting to hurt they were laughing for so long and hard!

An undetermined amount of time passed again as the two finally started to quiet, though that took quite some time in and of itself! But finally, they calmed and gasped in air, giggles and snickers escaping their lips while they wrestled for control of themselves again, and then, they were calm once again, though again a snicker or giggle would leap from their throats in rebellion.

“Ah, I should probably finish this up, shouldn’t I,” Kira breathed happily, a giggle escaped Naruto’s throat again as he nodded,

“Yeah, heh, probably,” Naruto agreed, closing his mouth to stop anymore giggles to escape,

“Hehe, okay, um, the last type of Quest, Circumstantial will happen while you’re in a certain situation, like they will be when an event is happening, like a Festival or something, and you are then asked by someone to do something for them that can only happen while that event is taking place and at no other time, so you need to be careful with those, especially if there are any Special Rewards you can get from them! Whoa, that was a lot to talk about!” Kira grinned happily, looked pleased to be finished, but then frowned,

“Oh yeah, one small thing you need to know; when fighting enemies, whether they are human or otherwise, or if it’s part of a Quest, you’ll gain Loot if you defeat them.”

“Really? What kind of Loot?” Naruto was excited at the prospect, his grin nearly reaching his ears,

“Oh several kinds, like money, Ability Scrolls like the ones in your inventory, weapons and armor, or Special Rewards which can be literally anything! Be sure to pick up after all of your fights, you never know what you might find!” Kira heaved a large sigh, “but, that’s the end of the tutorial; anything you have questions about before we finish?” he looked curious, but just a tad dreading; Naruto decided to have mercy on the boy—it’s not like he had any more questions anyway-and shook his head,

“No more questions here, but wait a moment, kay?” having gotten used to this, Kira just nodded his head with a smile while Naruto closed his eyes and looked at, committed and reviewed all of the information given to him within the last..... Who-knows-how-long.

Opening his eyes again Naruto nodded to Kira, who grinned widely as boxes appeared before them both-

**Quest Completion: 1000 EXP gained**

**More knowledge of your new Ability, The Gamer, has been gained**

**Your INT has gone up by +12**

**Your WIS has gone up by +12**

**Increased Reputation with Yaiba Kira +300**
You have gained +300 REP points with Yaiba Kira causing for you Reputation to move from “Honored” to “Exalted”.

Naruto was pleased and surprised that his Reputation with Kira had grown so quickly, but decided not to question it, maybe Kira just really like him or something, or maybe the Game was just extremely broken, who knows?

Naruto exited out of the box and saw Kira doing the same out of the corner of his eye, who sighed in relief when he did,

“Now with that done,” he straitened his back and spoke clearly,” you are finished with your Tutorial, Player 2!” the second the words left his mouth everything started to move and shift around.

Looking around in awe, Naruto noticed as the stars and blackness swirled around them, coming closer and closer to them.

The strange abyss shrunk around them even further, swirling as it had while it grew around them the first time only in reverse, it getting smaller and smaller. Only a small amount of time passed as it finished, Kira and Naruto standing before each other once again as the abyss had moved them to that position while it shrunk; the stars were so close now, just barely touching the tips of Naruto’s spiked hair, it also felt a bit as if they were in a bubble.

Then, with a soft ‘pop’ it burst, the lights twirled in the air forming two orbs of light that, once finished forming, floated down and entered both Naruto and Kira. Once the orb entered him, Kira breathed in deeply, content smile on his face,

“Ah, that was nice! And it doesn’t look like any time has passed while we were in there, look,” he pointed towards the sky, Naruto’s azure eyes following the motion,” the moon hasn’t moved from where it was when this started! Neither have the stars!” Kira was right, they hadn’t moved; the light from the moon and stars were shining on them in almost the exact same way they had when Naruto had caught up with Kira.

“Hm, you’re right....” he muttered softly in reply, smiling at the sky, the feel of the cool night air touching his cheeks and caressing his hair as the breeze danced over them. The blond quickly took in and released a breath to bring him back to himself and turned to look at the brunette with him, smiling at him,

“I guess I should be heading back to my apartment.....” he said, not sure where he and Kira stood at this point; were they friends? Or were they just acquaintances? He knew that according to his REP with him they were friends, but they had just met, so could they really be friends?

“We’re friends now, right?” He then asked, deciding it best to be upfront than to silently stew in his own worry and doubts. Kira seemed a bit caught off guard by the question,

“Of course we are! We may not be, like, best friends or anything, but we’re still friends!” He huffed, a put out expression on his face. Naruto chuckled,

“Sorry, sorry, I just wasn’t sure is all!” he grinned in an attempt to turn Kira’s attitude; it worked, luckily, the brunette’s face went from put out to grinning in turn, snickering a little,

“Hehe, I know people say that laughing makes you live longer, but if I laugh any more I think I’ll burst!” a couple more snickers left him and Naruto both, but they swiftly brought themselves under control-they weren’t in that strange abyss anymore, didn’t want anyone to find the two of them
laughing randomly in the middle of the night—no good would come of that.

“Well,” Naruto spoke again, raising his hand to his newest friend, “I’ll see you later?” Kira nodded,

“Yeah, how ‘bout tomorrow? We can train together!” he looked excited at the prospect. Naruto felt excited too, training would give him something to do over the week long break from school and keep him out of the collective hair of the Village,

“Sounds good,” he grinned again before swiftly telling Kira where he lived before they took their leave, Naruto in the direction of his apartment and Kira in the direction of the forest; saying something about having to do something before heading in for the night,

“Goodnight Naruto!” Kira called joyously, waving all the while,

“Night Kira!” Naruto returned the wave, his own voice filled with cheer.

And so, they went their separate ways.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry about it being so exposition-y, I just wanted to get a lot of stuff out of the way and I didn't feel like I could do it any other way.

But, whatever, I’m finished and if any of you think there are any misspells or choppy writing make sure to tell me; I’ll probably look through this again later and rewrite some of it so that it flows better, but for now I’ll be updating it as is.

Translations:

Shunshin no Jutsu = Body Flicker Technique

Bunshin Daibakuha = Clone Great Explosion

That’s it, from what I was able to find when I skimmed through to make sure I didn’t miss anything; and don’t any of you worry, I’m not like one of those authors who randomly put in Japanese words/sentences while the characters are speaking and just leave the reader to try and figure out what exactly I’m saying without giving you any info (putting words like Ohayo [which means “Good morning”] don’t count as it’s just a single word).

Also, since I was late for you all, I will be updating a treat for all of you after this chapter that was supposed to be for next week, but since I was late this week I’ll give it to you now!

That is all, I’ll get back to you guys next week.
The Ability Crystal

Chapter Notes

Mid-week updates!

Yay!

I'm only posting this chapter so early because it's really short (only 200+ words) and because I was late in updating this week! That is all, now on to the story!

Disclaimer: I don’t own the Naruto cast or the world, The Gamer elements and anything that might belong to other people

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jee-Han watched silently as yet another Healing Crystal burst in his hand, softly sparkling out of existence.

‘Huh,’ he thought, ‘I wonder, where do they go? Do they just disappear from existence? Do they return to the Monster that I got it from? Or do they go somewhere completely different? I wonder....’ Pondering on it for a moment more Jee-Han shook his head, continuing on with his business, the thought leaving him to maybe plague him later.

Unbeknownst to him, he was correct in one of his wonderings; the remains of the Healing Crystal didn’t just fade out of existence, at least some of them didn’t, the larger ones didn’t-they would fall into the Abyss; the one thing holding all worlds, be they Parallel or otherwise, apart; but sometimes, things fell through the teeny-tiny creaks that formed within the Abyss on occasion.

Things such as magic and other energies was able to slip through those cracks, particles of other worlds, mingling and empowering them; worlds where there were no powers suddenly gaining them, worlds that have strange monsters and beings coming from the ether itself to ravage the lands, or a world ruled by god-like creatures and being overturn by the sudden appearance of a tree to never eat from; one that would grant awesome powers to anyone that tasted it’s fruit-one that would one day lead to the creation of entire nations......

Strange how the Universe works, ain’t it?

Filled with the power of Jee-Han, The Gamer, these crystals flew through the Abyss bringing them to a world of ninja and settling them within the Earth to one day be found......

What a beautifully strange Universe......

Chapter End Notes

There, it’s been explained. I also made reference to My Hero Academia, One Punch Man and Naruto; respectively. Just so you know, no, this isn’t that type of crossover
story; there won’t be any visiting characters from other Anime/Manga/Movies/etc I was just sort of coming up with my own reason as to why certain things happened in the first two worlds (we are after all told in the very first episode of My Hero Academia that Quirks literally appeared out of nowhere....)

I’ll get back to you guys next week.

P.S I don’t remember the actual name of the Healing Crystals so I just called them healing crystals; I haven’t read the Manhwa in a while and I didn’t really feel like reading it over just to find the name.....
I'll make a Man out of YOU!

Chapter Notes

I am posting it today instead of tomorrow is because I'm going to be busy tomorrow so I decided to post it early :P

And thank you thekiltedlettuce for the comment!

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See the end of the chapter for more notes

Floating....

Nothing touched me; I was just, floating.....

..... It almost felt like..... I was swimming..... Like.... I was falling.....

... But I wasn’t.....

Nothing was around me, just Darkness.....

..... An Abyss.... nothing..... Just, nothing.....

..... What a depressing sight.....

Nothing made a sound, just Silence.....

..... Wait....

...No...

There, there was something; something in the distance....

What.....

What was it?

Oh....

.... It's gone.....

Nothing made a sound, just Silence.....

Nothing touched my nose, just Scentless.....

Wait.... There....

What is it.....?
.... Is....

....Is that.... Food.....?

Can I smell; food.....?

Light....

There was..... Light....

More was.... it’s getting brighter.....

“Naruto.....”

Who is that.....?

“....Naru.....Ake...P.....”

Is, is someone there?

“He.... It...... Up.....”

Is someone in my apartment?

“Serious..... an’t...... is.....”

No..... no one, it can’t.....

......

........

........

..... It’s gone.....

I.... Was right..... no one..... Is here.....

....

......

......

......

..... Huh.....?

A.... it’s a..... Silhouette?

Who..... Is that.....

I....

.... I can’t see.....
... Just..... Black against..... Light?

Wait, there’s more......?

Who are they?

One....

Two....

Three.....

Four.....

......

Seven.....

......

T-twelve......?

......

.........

Twenty..... There are..... Twenty.....

Twenty..... No..... There are thirty.....

Who are they.....?

They’re, coming closer....

Closer....

Wait; st-stay away!

I-I don’t... no.....

..... Please.....

.....

I....

......

I’m.....

.....

......
Eyes snapping open and mouth gasping for breath the whiskered blond woke up tangled within his own blankets. A strangled sound left his throat as he attempted to get free of his bindings; which only led to him falling flat on his face on his wooden floor.

“..... Ouch.....” he muttered, feeling a hot flush rising up his neck. He turned his head to the side once he realized that someone was standing right next him, evidenced by the sandal covered feet near his head, and saw Kira as he crouched by him, a look of irritated concern on his face,

“You okay?” he asked in mild worry, but his eyebrow continued twitching to show his annoyance. Naruto nodded,

“Yeah, I always fall out of bed when I wake up.....” Naruto sighed, wriggling to get out of the tangled blanket. Hands suddenly were there helping unwrap him, pulling him upright and it took a moment for Naruto to realize that it was Kira (who else?) was helping him.....

Shaking his head Naruto smiled at the brunette,” thanks!” he called cheerfully while grinning; Kira looked him up and down a moment, then pulled on him while standing, bringing the blond with him,

“Welcome, you should probably take a shower before anything else,” he clapped Naruto on the back with a grin before heading into the kitchen where Naruto could smell something.....

“You can eat when you’re done, but you need to shower first, kay?” Kira gave Naruto a look that clearly said that he wouldn’t be getting any of the food if he didn’t do as he was told.

Nodding his head vigorously, he sighed in relief when Kira grinned back at him.

It was then that he saw the text floating before him-

You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.

Tapping the box to make it go away Naruto shook his head and moved over to his drawer; taking out a new pair of underwear and his orange vest, picking the shirt and shorts he wore the day before off of the floor too and made his way over to his bathroom.

Quickly using the toilet (which thankfully flushed) and brushing his teeth Naruto took off his pajamas and jumped into the shower turning it on and waiting for the cold water to hit him; only, it wasn’t cold water that hit him— it was warm.

Yelping in surprise and spitting out the water the fell into his mouth Naruto took a small step back while he looked up at the nozzle, wondering why he had hot water when he almost always only had cold.

Wiping some of the water dripping in his eyes he squinted and realized that there were small symbols carved into the head that looked like the characters for “hot” and “steam”....
Carefully he stepped back under the spray and sighed in bliss as his body was pelted with the soothingly warm liquid. After just standing there for a couple minutes he decided it was time to clean himself, so he grabbed his soap and towel and scrubbed himself, luckily there wasn’t much grim to get rid of since he hadn’t done much the day before.

Once finished he turned the shower off but he didn’t step out, staring at the characters carved upon the nozzle.

After a moment he narrowed his eyes, ”Observe,” left his lips and a screen popped up-

**Banged up Shower nozzle**

**Level: LV1**

The nozzle is connected to the plumbing system and allows for any to take a shower if they please; though it has seen better days and sometimes doesn’t work the water it produces is usually clean so that’s something; this nozzle has had “Hot” and “Steam” carved into it with Fūinjutsu which forces the water passing through it to become hot.

Naruto looked on in surprise.

He hadn’t known that Fūinjutsu could be used in this way; he’d thought that it could only be used in sealing like with Sealing Scrolls and what have you.

‘Hmm, I’ll ask Kira about it.’ He decided, shook his head then stepped out of the shower. He thoroughly dried himself off with his towel and dressed before he headed out of the bathroom, his hair still a bit damp, but he decided that he would just air-dry it.

He made his way to the kitchen to be met with Kira leaning against his counter with a bored expression on his face, his arms crossed over his chest; Naruto also realized that he was also wearing what he had the day prior.

Seeming to have heard him Kira lifted his head,” ah, good, you’re out,” he grinned before gesturing towards the table in the middle of the room,” c’mon, sit and eat so that we can head out ne?” it was then that Naruto finally took notice of the food spread out on his table.

It consisted of a bowl of rice, a plate with sunny-side-up eggs, what probably were hard-boiled eggs in another bowl and ham on a plate with two smaller bowls sitting in front of the two chairs. He also noticed a bowl of chopped fruit next to the bowl of eggs.

Blinking at the food Naruto didn’t make of move towards it, just staring uncomprehending.

A cough caught his attention and he snapped out of his stupor, grinning at Kira sheepishly,” sorry, no one’s ever made food for me before.... so thanks!” he tried to expel the awkward atmosphere at the end, speaking in a bright and cheerful tone.

He was happy to see that it did in fact work as Kira grinned back at him,” s’all good! Now c’mon!” he pat the table causing for the glass on it to jingle while he took his seat. Nodding Naruto moved forwards and sat down in the rickety chair that creaked under his weight, ’I’ll need to look at that later,’ he thought absently while picking up his chopsticks, but didn’t move to serve himself.

“It won’t bite ya, if that’s what you’re thinking,” Kira commented, then gestured towards the food,” serve yourself, I made this food for you too, got it?” he nodded his head, took a deep breath then reached over towards the rice, putting some in his bowl, then he took a couple eggs and some pieces
of ham and placed them over the rice, sitting back he raised his bowl,

“‘Itadekimasu!’” he called before chowing down, barely taking note that the flavor was a bit bland but was overall very good, ‘might need some salt,’ he thought but he didn’t hate it, and he didn’t think it was important enough to stop eating to mention so he carried on, hearing Kira do the same.

A couple minutes passed as the two ate their fill, eating every piece of food down to the last crumb; though Naruto was a bit leery about eating the fruit,

“Just eat it, it’ll help with your Malnourished Flaw so how bad can it be?” after that Naruto did eat it and found that the slices of apples and strawberries weren’t all that bad, after that they didn’t speak anymore, more focused on eating.

Now, with them finishing their food, they both put the bowl back on the table, sighing in content.

Looking up at him, Kira asked,” so, Naruto; how’d you like it?” Naruto smiled,

“It was really good! But you could have put a little more salt on the rice and eggs; besides that it was perfect!” Kira grinned happily,

“Good! I only just became an Intermediate Cook so I’m not the best at it, but I’ll keep that in mind next time!” finished speaking Kira stood, and started gathering the plates and bowls; seeing this Naruto also stood and helped pick them up and headed over to his sink to deposit them to be cleaned later.

“Oh yeah, before I forget I wanted to ask you something,” Naruto spoke up as he remembered that he wanted to ask about Fūinjutsu. Kira looked at him

“Sure, go ahead,” nodding Naruto continued on,

“I was wondering about what you did to my shower, oh, thanks by the way,” Kira just grinned,” anyway, when I had asked Jiji about it he made it seem like Fūinjutsu was just sealing, but what you did to my shower wasn’t just sealing. What all can Fūinjutsu do?”

At that Kira looked up,” well,” he began softly,” Fūinjutsu can do just about anything,” he smiled at Naruto,” really, the only limit is your imagination; speaking of, since you’re a Prank Master and not a Trap Master that probably means that you have quite a bit of imagination yourself; would you like for me to teach you?”

A large grin came to Naruto’s face,” really? You’ll teach me? Of course I’d love to! Jiji said that the Uzumaki Clan were Fūinjutsu masters, so of course I wanna learn!” Kira smiled gleefully,

“Okay, then I’ll teach you, but not yet, I’ll have to gather up the materials before then, okay?” nodding they both fell into silence, which was then broken by Naruto,

“So, what now,” Naruto asked. Kira smiled up at him, a sadistic glint in his eye,

“Now,” he chuckled,” it’s time to go train!” with that he grabbed Naruto by the wrist and bolted from the apartment, barely allowing the blond to put on his sandals and then they were out with Naruto secretly wondering if telling Kira where he lived was such a good idea, considering that as they passed his room he saw his clock say that it wasn’t even six in the morning yet.

After a while a running around the village Kira randomly stopped, causing for the whiskered blond to crash into him; them both going flying and hitting the ground in a heap. After some groaning Kira spoke up,
“I actually have no idea where we should go train.....” Naruto made a noise and rolled over to get off of Kira,

“You don’t?” Kira shook his head as he sat up with the help of Naruto,

“Nope, not a clue.....” they stood up, brushing the dirt and dust off of themselves while they both seemed to be in deep thought.

“How ‘bout we use Training Ground 1?” Naruto asked after a couple minutes. Kira looked at him,

“Training Ground 1? Does anybody else use it?” he asked curiously, thinking that it might work. This was confirmed when Naruto shook his head,

“Nope, well as far as I know no one uses it. It’s where I go to train when I want to make sure nobody is watching; I always get this feeling of being watched whenever I train near the Academy.....” he trailed off while shivering-if someone was watching him train he really didn’t want to meet them, they made him feel strange and not in a good way.

Kira nodded,” that’ll probably work,” he nodded again,” okay yeah, so lead the way then,” he dramatically gestured forwards, Naruto snickered while grabbing hold of Kira’s wrist, smirking deviously,

“Let’s go!” he called out and took off dragging Kira behind him this time.

Naruto ran through the village, taking a strange path to the Training Grounds by going through alleyways, side streets and over the building, it was as if someone was chasing him and he was trying to lose them, something of which Kira decided he would question him on once they got there.

After quite a few more twists and turns they made it to Training Ground 1.

It was a wide field looked like it hadn’t been used for some time with grass growing in random places surrounded by forests on ¾’s of its side with a good sized pond on the last ¼, behind the pond there was a waterfall that fell down a steep rocky cliff that looked like it was grassy on the top.

Looking around Kira nodded, yes, this was definitely good! He turned to the one beside him,” this is really cool! How’d you find it?” he asked curiously,

“A while ago, I was just wondering around sorta trying to find somewhere where I could train without being bothered and sorta just stumbled on it,” he shrugged,” I’ve been using it ever since, glad you like it!” Kira then pointed to one of the trees,

“Let’s go over there and talk about what we’ll be doing!” nodding they both headed over and sat down by the tree, looking to each other,

“So, what do you think we should do?” Naruto questioned, deciding it best to trust the one who was stronger. Looking up in thought for a moment seemingly to collect himself Kira started talking,

“I thought about it yesterday, but I’m not entirely sure,” he looked at him,” it really depends on what Skills you have, so, what do you have?” Naruto sighed,

“Well, last night before I went to bed I decided to look at them myself to see what I was good at and to see where I needed to get better.....”

~Flashback~
Having gotten home Naruto changed into his pajamas and sat on his bed, contemplating whether he should look at his Skills now or tomorrow.

After coming to the conclusion that it would be better to get it over with now, he straightened his back and spoke the words Kira had told him to say,

“Skills: Uzumaki Naruto!”

Skill List

[Gamer’s Mind] [Passive] [Lv. Max, EXP: 000]

Allows for the Gamer to think logically and calmly in any situation; allows peaceful state of mind and immunity to Psychological attacks

- Allows Gamer to calmly and logically think in any situation

- Immune to Hypnotism

- Immune to Psychological Trauma/Status effect

[Gamer’s Body] [Passive] [Lv. Max, EXP: 000]

Grants the Gamer a body as if they were in a game

- Allow Gamer to live in the real world as if they were in a game

- Keeps majority of attacks from leaving physical damage, only slash wounds remain

- Sleeping in bed fully restores HP, MP and all Status Effects

[Observe] [Passive/Active] [Lv. 9, EXP: 570]

This Skill can observe objects, people and situations, allowing for the Gamer to gain information. The higher the Level the more information can be gained

- Allows for Gamer to view the Stats of any person or object

[Empathy] [Passive/Active] [Lv. 17, EXP: 050]

Having been exposed to many differing emotions the Skill Empathy was created, allowing for the Gamer to get close to and better understand those around them

- Grants the Gamer to view another persons’ full Character Summary

- Allows for Gamer to better emotionally understand and help others suffering in any situation

[Detect KI] [Passive/Active] [Lv. 19, EXP: 200]

Allows for the Gamer to detect KI (Killing Intent) both Passively and Actively and whether the Intent is directed towards the Gamer or not

- Range: 100 meters
[Stealth] [Passive/Active] [Lv. 57, EXP: 490]

The Skill to move without being seen or heard as if you were a ghost

-Avoid detection by 70%

-Attack enemies without alerting any near them by 60%

-Increases Critical Hit by 50%

-Increases chance of successful Pickpocketing by 69%

[Trapping] [Active] [Lv. 50, EXP: 999]

The Skill that Allows for the Gamer to create, set, detect and dismantle traps

-Increases chance of a Trap being successful by 60%

-Increases Trap setting speed by 60%

-Keeeps Gamer from activating Traps by 40%

-Detect Traps 50% better

[Street Taijutsu Style] [Active] [Lv. 14, EXP: 670]

A Taijutsu Style that is learned while living on the streets, kicks, punches and underhanded techniques are what make up this Style

-Passively increases STR by 15%

-Passively increases DEX by 18%

-Passively increases VIT by 14%

-Passively increases chances of landing a Critical Hit by 23%

[Taunt] [Active] [Lv. 1, EXP: 300]

A Skill that allows for the Gamer to distract, confuse and/or anger the target by trash talking and insulting them, allowing for a better chance at impeding the target and keeping them from being able to focus causing for a higher chance at winning

-Passively increases chances of confusing target by 3%

-Passively increases chances of distracting target by 2%

-Passively increases INT by 2%

-Passively increases chance of winning by 3%

[Basic Academy Taijutsu Style] [Active] [Lv. 1, EXP: 300]

The basic Taijutsu Style taught at the Ninja Academy of Konoha that covers the very basics of
close combat

- Passively increases STR by 2%
- Passively increase DEX by 1%
- Passively increases VIT by 2%

[Basic Shurikenjutsu] [Active] [Lv. 3, EXP: 980]

The basic way of throwing Shuriken that helps teach how to throw accurately

- Passively increases damage of Shuriken 5%
- Passively increases throwing speed by 3%
- Passively increases Aim by 2%

[Basic Bukijutsu] [Active] [Lv. 4, EXP: 0,679]

The basic way of handling Kunai and other weapons be it throwing or dueling

- Passively increases damage of Kunai/Other by 6%
- Passively increases throwing speed by 7%
- Passively increases stabbing damage by 6%

[Henge no Jutsu] [Active] [Lv. Max, EXP: 000]

A D-ranked jutsu taught at the Academy, this Jutsu allows the Gamer to transform into any form he/she chooses ranging from other humans to inanimate objects such as rocks (Note: the longer/more complicated the form the more Chakra used)

- Passively uses 10 MP per minute while in use
- Passively helps Chakra control by 10%
- Passively increases Stealth Skill by 5% per minute when in use
- Physically able to transform

[Kawarimi no Jutsu] [Active] [Lv. Max, EXP: 000]

An ability that allows for the Gamer to replace themselves with another object (usually inanimate) to get away from dangerous situation or to trick their enemies into attacking a comrade or log

- Replaces Gamer with an object
- Uses 100 MP per use (Note: 10 MP is added for every 5 meters)
- Range: 150 meters

[Bunshin no Jutsu] [Active] [Lv. 0, EXP: 000]
A replicating Jutsu that makes it appear as if there are multiple tangible copies of the user, but cannot stand up to any type of attacks like other Bunshin Jutsu can

-Number of Bunshin: 0
-Uses 20 MP per Bunshin

[Kage Bunshin no Jutsu] [Active] [Lv. 8, EXP: 900]

A replicating Jutsu that creates a tangible exact copy of the user by evenly splitting the Chakra of the Gamer, these Bunshin can bleed and perform any Skills or Jutsu that their creator can

- Creates tangible Bunshin that can stand up to most attacks

-Number of Bunshin: 1,005
-Passively increases chance of landing Critical Hit by 4%
-Uses [???] MP per Bunshin

[Chakra Sprint] [Active] [Lv. 1, EXP: 999]

A Skill that many Shinobi know that allows for them to make themselves faster by pushing Chakra into their legs to strengthen them

- Increases speed by 15%
-Passively uses 20 MP per minute

[Medical Prowess] [Passive/Active] [Lv. 2, EXP: 456]

A Skill that allows for the Gamer to properly clean, fix, bandage and heal all types of wounds, the higher the Level the more the Gamer is able to heal

-Passively increases INT by 3%
-Passively increases WIS by 4%
-Allows for more chances of raising REP
-Ability to properly take care of others whatever their condition

[Intermediate Cook] [Passive] [Lv. 6, EXP: 560]

The Skill to successfully cook Basic and Intermediate recipes without the threat of burning the food and also giving the cook the chance to revitalize themselves and fill up their HP and MP when depleted

-Passively increases all created Meat foods HP Recovery by 10%
-Passively increases all created Dairy foods HP Recovery by 8%

Looking over all of the Skills Naruto was quite surprised that he had many Skills with high levels.
Not counting Gamer’s Mind and Body he had seven Skills that were either over level 10 or Maxed Out, but that still left ten Skills that were below (if only barely) level 10.

Sighing Naruto made sure to remember to speak to Kira about it the next day before heading to bed.

~End Flashback~

“...And that’s it.” He finished while shrugging. Kira nodded, “You have a good number of Skills there, so I guess that means we’ll be working on those, time to up your Skill with Shuriken and Kunai! Maybe even the Academy Style but I’m not sure since you seem to have another Style that is probably better, hmm....” he hummed in thought, the blond waiting a bit impatiently for him to come up with something; luckily it didn’t take long for Kira to start talking again,

“So, here’s how I think it will go, at least for now. First you’ll be practicing the Skills you have a low level in and I’ll give you pointers if I can, then you’ll work on leveling up your good Skills, we’ll take a break then spar or something and continue trying to up your level. Sound good?”

Nodding they both got to work.

With Kira’s help Naruto was able to find out that his Academy Taijutsu was completely out of whack and wrong (Curse you Mizuki-teme!) but was soon able to rectify that, he was even able to level it up a couple times. Next came his Shurikenjutsu and Bukijutsu, Kira again pointed out that Naruto was holding the weapons wrong and worked to fix it (Curse you Mizuki-teme again!).

When they came to the Bunshin they both realized that the only reason Naruto wasn’t able to do it was because it took so little Chakra that he just wasn’t able to do it; and from that Kira forced Naruto to learn the Leaf Concentration Technique to improve his Chakra Control with much grumbling from the blond, but sadly he didn’t make any progress on the Bunshin and very little progress on the new control technique.

After that Kira had Naruto practice his Chakra Sprint by running around the field, though he ran around with him so that Naruto couldn’t say that Kira was being mean and skimping out on it. He was even able to level it up some!

After running around the field more than a dozen times Naruto heard a ping-

Congratulations! Your level has increased by 1.

This encouraged Naruto and pushed him to run even faster and longer. After running around a couple dozen more times (and earning two or three more levels in the Skill) Naruto and Kira collapsed on the ground under a tree, breathing heavily with their arms sprawled out and tongues hanging out of their mouths.

They just lay there trying to breath and both cursing at not paying attention to their MP to realize that they were too quickly using it all up.

It took a couple more minutes for them to be able to sit up, but then they decided that it would be best is they (Naruto) decided to take a quick break.

Kira, who was also tired, agreed and they both lay back down and talked about nothing important, one of those being how tall Kira was,
“You’re only 4’ 3’’?” Naruto asked, though it made sense, considering he was a lot shorter than himself. Kira nodded and they continued on.

After about thirty minutes they got back to training.

Naruto summoned a bunch of **Kage Bunshin** and had them run around doing random things, but then Kira decided to stab one of them when Naruto wasn’t looking, causing for it to dispel.

Naruto then suddenly whirled around and pointed at Kira,” why’d you stab my Bunshin Kira?” he accused. Kira looked surprised,

“How’d you know I stabbed your **Bunshin**?” Naruto rolled his eyes,

“Duh, cause I felt you do it! By the way, that hurt!” Kira’s eyes widened even more,

“Are you saying that... that you remember what your Bunshin remembers?” Naruto paused for a moment, before an excited and slightly wicked smile turned his lips,

“Yeah, yeah I did!” he laughed gleefully, thinking of all the mayhem he could cause with this Jutsu when,

“Doesn’t that mean that you can use **Kage Bunshin** to train and speed up the process?” Naruto’s eyes widened even further, his mouth agape, but then an even wickeder smile turned his lips,

“Ohh, I’m going to enjoy this!” he said while gleefully rubbing his hands together.

It took a little time but Naruto was able to confirm that yes, he did remember everything his **Bunshin** did and, if they had any left, he also gained a portion of their Chakra back when they dispelled.

From then on Naruto had them doing many things, from practicing the **Leaf Concentration Technique**, to **Bunshin** to **Shunshin no Jutsu**, deciding to learn the Jutsu when he discovered the **Kage Bunshin’s** secret.

After spending several hours doing a bunch of training (both Naruto and Kira) they broke for lunch; heading into the village to grab something to eat.

Before they entered any of the convenience stores Naruto got the brilliant idea to use **Henge** so that the store owner wouldn’t know that it was him, later explaining to Kira that many of the villagers didn’t like him and liked to throw him out once he set foot in the store, including the one they went to.

Kira nodded in understanding, though he looked unhappy at the prospect and suggested that they prank the man later which Naruto wholeheartedly agreed to, after that they ate then headed back to training.

Kira said that they would spare, so that is exactly what they did.

Kira was obviously above Naruto in skill and speed and even strength, but the brunette didn’t rub it in his face nor did he taunt him about it, instead he applauded Naruto for being able to keep up with him at his current level and suggested ways Naruto could fix his Street Taijutsu Style to improve it, to which Naruto pointed out a couple mistakes that Kira had made in his own Style, saying that he recognized them from his fights with bullies and other such people-they were the type of openings any trained fighter looked for in an opponent.
Thanking Naruto for the help, Kira continued to spar and help Naruto along, just being a tad too strong for Naruto to take it easy but not so strong that Naruto was completely floored without learning anything from it.

After some more sparring Kira was able to come up with a way for Naruto to level up his **Medical Prowess Skill**. He had Naruto fight him with a Kunai and didn’t always dodge when he attacked, resulting in him getting cut. After a couple minutes of that Naruto patched Kira up with his BFAK and they were all good.

By the end of the day Naruto had leveled up three times in his overall level and leveled up his **Skills**, at least most of them, several times over.

When they finished they headed out of the Training field and went their separate ways, planning on doing the same the next day.

And then the next day came.

It started similarly as the first, only this time Kira dragged Naruto out of bed and nearly shoved him towards the shower rather than Naruto going himself.

He washed himself then headed into the kitchen to eat the food that Kira had prepared, which was almost exactly the same as the day before, the only difference being that the eggs were scrambled and not sunny-side-up.

Once finished they headed to Training Ground 1, and after they got to the Training Grounds Kira and Naruto started off the same way they did the day before, with Kira and him throwing Kunai and Shuriken, Kira making slight adjustments to Naruto’s stance with the Academy Style and applauding him on his Street Style, working more on the Jutsu Naruto wasn’t as good at then trying to level up his new Jutsu some more. They spared and took a break then spared again, Naruto showed Kira how to properly set and dismantle traps and then helped him try to level up his **Trapping Skill**.

After that they ate lunch, but instead of heading back to Training Ground 1, like they had the day before, Kira started heading somewhere else,

“Kira, where are we going?” Naruto asked in confusion. The brunette smiled at him,

“You’ll see~” he replied in a sing-song tone; sighing Naruto just followed him, hoping that they weren’t wasting time.

A bit later they came to stand before an entrance to another training ground,” this is Training Ground 11, it’s different than some of the other training grounds,” Naruto raised a brow at that,

“It is? How?” he asked suspiciously. Kira just grinned,

“Like this,” He grabbed hold of Naruto’s wrist and stepped forward. A strange barrier type wall wobbled as they did before a box pinged in front of Naruto-

**Training Ground 12: Dungeon**

**Do you wish to enter?**

**Must be LV5 to enter**

Not knowing why it was asking him this, or why you had to be LV5 to enter, Naruto took the risk and pressed the (Y) button and watched as it disappeared.
He was just about to ask why they were there when a rumbling started in the ground. Trying to find balance Naruto spread his feet so that he wouldn’t fall over, keeping his eyes firmly on them; but that didn’t last as he heard strange squeaking and skittering sounds and he raised his head up to see-

Giant spiders that had to be at least a meter long and half a meter high!

“The Fu—“he cut himself off as he jumped back, almost stumbling to get away from the large arachnids.

He heard laughing and turned his head accusingly to the side,” the hell Kira?!” he yelled while moving away from the spiders and saw the other boy move forwards, taking out a Kunai to slash at the creatures,” whadaya doin’?!” he screeched partly to get over the sound of the spiders and partly in fear,

“What does it look like I’m doing? I’m training!” and with that Kira dove right in, killing spiders left and right. Gulping Naruto shook his head and looked to see a spider right in front of his face; flinching back he swiftly pulled out his own Kunai and swiped at the thing, knocking it away.

Gasping Naruto used **Observe** on it while it was still down-

**Chakra Spider**

**Level: LV3**

**HP: 60/100**

**MP 90/100**

**Chakra Spiders are one of the most common Chakra animals that exist, right after Chakra Rats and usually reside in forests and empty fields**

Nodding to himself Naruto pulled out another Kunai and, just like Kira, jumped into the fray, though he felt shivers run across his body as he did.

Nearly half an hour passed when the last of the **Chakra Spiders** were deposed of, and Naruto sighed in relief at that while Kira giggled.

He then shot his companion an accusatory glare,” why the hell didn’t you tell me what you were doing?” Kira laughed again,

“Because I was sure that you’d be against it if I did, and even if you weren’t, a Ninja has got to be ready for any situation!” he raised a finger as if he were giving a lecture; this, however, did not lessen Naruto’s glare and he continued to glare for a long moment before speaking up,

“I hate you,” he muttered. Kira shrugged,

“I’d hate me too if I were in your situation. Either way, you did well! This will make it easier to level up so be thankful kay?” Naruto huffed but conceded that Kira was right, this would probably help make him stronger faster so he didn’t hold on to his anger for long and nodded,

“Thanks,” he grumbled. Kira giggled again,

“No problem.” He pointed to the field,” you’ll be gaining more than **EXP** when doing this, look!” and he did look, seeing items scattered across the ground in random areas. Tilting his head to the side Naruto went over to investigate.
Getting closer Naruto realized that some of the things on the ground were Ryo, neatly stacked and sitting innocently on the ground. He immediately picked it up and as he did a screen popped up-

**500 Ryo**

**Would you like to have any Ryo gained to automatically be placed in “Inventory”?**

Seeing no harm in it Naruto pressed the (Y) and the money disappeared from his hands-

**500 Ryo added to your “Inventory”**

**Currently has: 15,865 Ryo**

He was confused at the amount at first before he remembered that he had gotten 15,000 Ryo when he had defeated Mizuki. He grinned and started picking up more stacks of money, seeing Kira doing the same out of the corner of his eye.

Refocusing on what was before him he saw something else lying on the ground.

It looked like it was some type of chemistry flask with a red liquid sitting inside of it-

**Minor Health Potion**

**A minor health potion that heals up to 100 HP when used**

**Would you like for Minor Health Potion to be placed in your “Inventory”?**

Naruto pressed the (Y) and continued to pick the potions and Ryo up. A little later and they were both finished.

“See? I told you yesterday that when you defeat enemies you’ll get rewards!” Naruto nodded, happy that Kira had been telling the truth, but then the ground started to shake again,” oh, looks like another wave is coming,”

“Wait what?! I’m not ready-Ahhh!” and just like that, another wave of spiders hit and Naruto was forced to continue fighting.

**Congratulations! Your level has increased by 1.**

Naruto sighed tiredly,” can we leave now?” he asked,” I need to come to terms with the fact that I’m fighting Giant flippin’ Spiders!” he shouted, clearly pissed. Kira just laughed at his outburst,

“Sure, you’re not ready to fight the Boss anyway, so we should leave before the last wave hits that will then summon the Boss, c’mon,” they both picked up the potions and Ryo lying on the ground and then they left the Dungeon.

When they were out of the Dungeon they both noticed how dark it had gotten,

“Oh, it must be late, didn’t realize how much time passed while we were in there; whoops,” Kira said while shrugging. Naruto nodded along then turned to Kira, getting an idea,

“Would you like to go somewhere to eat?” he asked. Kira looked at him in mild surprise,

“Really? Sure, why not?” grinning Naruto turned,
“Follow me!” and started running with Kira right behind him.

It didn’t take all that much time before they got to where they were going, which was, of course, Ichiraku Ramen stand. Naruto happily walked to the stand and sat down,” Evenin’ Teuchi-Ji-san!” he called cheerfully,

“Ah, good evening Naruto-kun!” the man responded with equal enthusiasm,” and good evening to you, you lady! What might you’re name be?” the old man asked once he noticed the person standing next to his favorite customer.

Kira smiled kindly,” I’m Yaiba Kira, and I’m a boy,” he replied sweetly while taking a seat. Teuchi laughed heartily,

“Ah really? Sorry ‘bout that then son; now, what do you want? And for you Naruto, the usual?”

Said blond was about to answer in the positive when he remembered one of his Flaws, grimacing he turned and looked at the menu and tried to find the healthiest options on it; once he did he then turned to Teuchi to answer,

“No, I’ll be having the Vegetable Ramen and the Shrimp-and-Bok Choy Stir-Fry with Crispy Noodles and also a, ah, Mixed Green salad please,” he didn’t look all that happy but knew that if he wanted to get rid of his Malnourished Flaw then he would just have to get over it.

Teuchi on the other hand looked shocked; it sort of looked like he had turned to stone but he was snapped out of this state when Kira spoke,

“I’d like the same please,” the brunette asked politely. The man nodded slowly, shook his head almost violently then turned to Naruto,

“Are you sure you’re Naruto? When did we first meet?” Teuchi immediately questioned, obviously not thinking the one before him was Naruto.

The blond looked at him in indignation,” when I was six! Jiji bought me some miso Ramen and that was when he got me my apartment! Come off it Teuchi-Ji-san; I’m trying to eat healthier!” he huffed in agitation and crossed his arms.

Teuchi sighed in relief, before grinning sheepishly,” sorry, sorry, Naruto; just making sure. You’ve never ordered that type of food from me before. Right, I’ll be making up your dishes right away!” he replied joyfully. Satisfied with that answer Naruto turned to his companion, deciding it was best to leave Teuchi alone to focus on his cooking.
“So,” he began, “wanna tell me more about the training ground you almost killed me in today?” he asked nonchalantly. Kira snickered,

“Oh get over it, you’re fine. But, sure why not? There just like a Dungeon in a game; it’s a place you go to fight mobs of enemies of any kind, the one we into just happened to have spiders in it,”

“What happens when other people use them?” Naruto asked suddenly worried, but felt it subside when he saw Kira shake his head,

“It only activates when someone like us goes there otherwise it’s a perfectly normal field, with one or two Chakra Spiders coming out to play every once in a while; you have to know that Chakra Animals are a real thing, this ability just takes advantage of that.” Nodding, Naruto decided to push further,

“Are there any other fields that I should be aware of?” Kira looked up for a moment in thought, then,

“As far as I know, Training Ground 11-45 are Dungeons; and I say as far as I know since I haven’t been to all of them, the fields 10 down are just normal Training Grounds.”

“Wait, 11-45? If it starts at 11 then how come we went to 12?” A snicker,” eh, I wanted to see how you’d react to the spiders; Training Grounds 11 has rats and they aren’t as scary, just normal-albeit big-rats, the spiders on the other hand.....” he snickered again.

Naruto sighed but snickered along as well; Kira had managed to pull one over him, and finding another mischievous soul such as himself was worth having to put up with a little teasing.

“Order up!” they were both brought out of their world by Teuchi’s loud call and they turned to find their food placed right in front of them,” hope you enjoy!” he grinned at them as he stepped back.

Naruto hesitantly picked up his chopsticks and broke them apart; gulping audibly he muttered a quiet ‘itadekimasu’ and took a bite. Chewing for a moment, Naruto realized that yeah, it was good! Maybe not as good as his favorite miso with ham Ramen, but it was still good, so, humming in content, Naruto ate all that was before him fairly quickly.

Once finished with all of his food Naruto asked for seconds, making certain that he only got seconds and no more, and once they were both finished eating Kira and Naruto talked with Teuchi a bit more; but left after about thirty minutes so that they wouldn’t be taking up any space when more customers came by for the dinner rush.

So they said goodbye and headed off.

Kira dropped Naruto off at his apartment and promised that he would be coming on by the next day so the bid each other a goodnight and Naruto took care of nightly ablutions and headed to bed.

The rest of the week went by in a similar fashion.

Kira would wake Naruto up by either shouting at him or pulling him out of his bed (which usually left said blond disgruntled) ordered to take a shower, that, once was finished, would then allow Naruto to eat, Kira eating with him with vigor.

After they ate they would head off to the scarcely used Training Ground 1, do warm ups and work on anything Naruto needed help with, take a break and discuss whatever happened to be on their minds before heading back to training.
After lunch they would head off to either Training Ground 11 or 12 and fight off the monsters there (well it was mostly Naruto, Kira tended to stand back and just watch Naruto, only intervening when he thought it was necessary) then at about five o’clock they would either go their separate ways or head over to Ichiraku’s to eat, only their healthy foods of course (as healthy as they could get anyway).

On the third day Kira started teaching Naruto Fūinjutsu from the basics; this meant that Naruto had to learn Calligraphy but it wasn’t all bad, he was a pretty fast learner, though he wasn’t able to master it within the week, but he was going at a higher than average pace so it was fine.

They were also able to pull off a couple pranks during that week, the ANBU being unable to capture Naruto or Kira, since the blond was the one helping him get away, most of their pranks were against villagers that had wronged Naruto in some way, though none of them were malicious just, mischievous.....

But, the week was up and tomorrow the two would be heading back to the Academy. After much arguing Kira had been able to convince Naruto to not show off too much of his new skills, like Kira who was seen as a fairly average student in his own class, but after much shouting, arguing and wrestling (literally) Kira was finally able to get Naruto to agree to keep most of his new abilities and skills to himself.

Kira didn’t stop grinning in triumph for the rest of the week, much to the chagrin of Naruto.

Tomorrow was a new day, and Naruto was determined to take full advantage of it; he also couldn’t wait to see Shino and Shikamaru again, along of course with Iruka-sensei.

A new day.....

‘I can’t wait!’

Uzumaki Naruto – The Gamer; Player 2 – Jinchuuriki – LV13

Chapter End Notes

Translations:

Henge = Transform
Kawarimi = Replacement
Shurikenjutsu = Shuriken Technique
Bukijutsu = Weapon Technique
Jiji/Ji = Old man/Grandpa (Ji can also mean Uncle)
Onee/Nee = Big sister (if you are younger than someone and you don’t know them well/at all it is polite to refer to them as Nee-san/chan)
San = Polite way of referring to someone, similar to the English Mr. or any over variation
Chan = Usually refers to teenage girls or small children, can also be used as an insult towards a male, especially if they don’t like it

Kun = similar to Chan but for boys, can also be used for a girl in a show of respect

I think that was all. If there are any Japanese words that you don’t understand that are in here then please let me know and I’ll make sure to clear that up.

I’ll get back to you guys next week.
I will probably be moving updating days to Sunday as I am busy the rest of the week, and if I don't do it on Sunday I'll probably forget to do it at all so..... so I'll be starting the new posting schedule this coming Sunday.

Review responses:

thekiltedlettuce: I'm glad you thought it was funny :)

Onihime99: I'm very pleased that you like it :D I hope you continue to read

DutchessOfDirt: I'm planning on taking it somewhere interesting, at least I think it's interesting, so you have that to look forward to, and thanks!

Disclaimer: I don’t own Naruto or The Gamer or any of the things from the other stories I used. All I own are my OC’s and plots, and maybe some other things but I don’t know.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.**

Naruto waved the words away while he stretched all the way off his bed onto the floor.

“Top of the morning Naruto, I see you’re as peppy as ever,” a voice sounded above him, causing for him to groan lightly and turn onto his side to glance up at the owner of the voice,

“Hey Kira, I see you’re as grouchy as ever as well,” he grumbled tiredly while he attempted to wriggle out of the death trap that was his blanket. Kira giggled while reaching down to help untangle the preteen.

Once free Naruto grinned up at Kira in thanks, who just smiled in turn, straitening and moving back to the kitchen, calling over his shoulder,” it’s your turn to cook today!” he smiled gleefully then skipped into the room ignoring the glower on Naruto’s face.

Sighing Naruto pulled himself off of the ground and made his way to his bathroom to brush his teeth and take a shower after which he dressed in his normal orange jumpsuit and went to the kitchen to make their breakfast-

**Greetings Chef Naruto! What would you like to make today?**

-Rice

-Eggs (Scrambled)

-Eggs (Boiled)

-Eggs (Sunny-side-up)
-Ham

-Bacon

-Instant Ramen

-Waffles

-Pancakes

-Toast

-Fruit

-Vegetables

Naruto pressed on the bacon, waffles, fruit and eggs (boiled) which then caused for the items to make everything pop out of the air.

Naruto grabbed them and set to work making breakfast.

For some reason whenever Naruto or Kira try to cook that thing pops up, asking what they want to cook and such, but it only really works if the food items in question are in the Inventory otherwise it sort of just throws the food from wherever it happens to be (like the refrigerator or the cupboard) and that just made a giant mess so they both just left any food that they had in their Inventory so that they wouldn’t have a giant mess to worry about.

“Why’re you wearing that?” Kira’s voice sounded from behind him. Naruto glanced back briefly to see that Kira was leaving against the table then turned back to what he was doing,

“Well, you said that I shouldn’t show off to many of my new skills; I thought the best way would be to not just randomly be wearing what other people think is Shinobi acceptable attire, dattabayo,” he grunted when his ever famous verbal tic made itself known, Kira chuckled,

“Eh, nothing wrong with your verbal tic Naruto!” Naruto grunted again before sighing,

“People like pokin’ fun at me for havin’ it at all, ttebayo; it’s just really annoying to hafta deal with.” He huffed as he cut the fruit into thin slices and set them on a plate. He sprinkled some sugar onto the slices then reached over to pick up the mixing bowl with the waffle batter in it,

“Hmm,” came Kira’s hummed reply,” I guess that makes sense; don’t wanna drag too much attention towards you when you’re just starting-“

“Don’t want anyone accusing me of cheating, since they no doubt will no matter what I said,” Naruto cut in before Kira could finish. Kira hummed again as he pushed off of the table, coming over to lean against the counter that Naruto was working at, reached over and stuck a finger in the batter and licked off his finger before Naruto could do anything.

Playfully glowering at him, Naruto started to push the brunette away with his foot,” get outta here, I’m cooking,” he playfully scolded while Kira giggled and moved back over to the table to get away from his foot.

A few chuckled leapt past Naruto’s lips but he quickly suppressed it as he started pouring some of the batter into the waffle iron (which he had found abandoned in an alley a year or so ago and fixed
it up to use) and closed it, moving over to the stove and flipping the bacon then checking on the eggs and concluding that they were done being boiled, turning off the fire beneath the pot.

After that he moved back over to the bacon and moved them onto a plate, that was when a pop sounded, capturing Naruto’s attention who took out the finished waffles and placed those onto another plate, then put the last of the batter into the waffle iron and closed it again, finished placing the bacon onto its plate and moved to place it on the table, Kira cutting in and grabbing it and the plate of fruit to the table and setting it up with bowls and chopsticks.

Naruto grinned and hummed in thanks as he turned around and checked on the rice, finding happily that it was finished, took the pot it was in then poured it into another serving bowl. Sighing as he finished the last of the food he placed the bowl on the table as Kira took a seat then placed the plate of waffles down as they were finished.

Sighing again Naruto sat himself, summoned his Inventory and pressed on one of the items, causing for a bottle of syrup and a small plate of butter to appear in his hands which he placed on the table. They then clapped their hands, called out a cheery ‘itadekimasu!’ and started serving themselves.

After a couple minutes of nothing but the clinking of silverware against plates and bowls the blond spoke up,

“Will we be training today? School starts back up today after all,” he asked as he gulped down his food, swiftly putting more in his mouth once he finished. Kira nodded, finished his chewing and swallowed before answering,

“If you want to be a real Shinobi then you need to find a way to fit training into your day without it interfering with taking missions; most Ninja do this by getting up early to train before doing any duties they may have that day. So, yeah, we will be training today; anyway it’s only.....” he trailed off as he looked over at the alarm clock set on the counter,“..... 5:23 AM so we have about two hours before we have to head to the Academy anyway, that’s enough time to get a good warm-up and work-out done, especially since you have Bunshin to help you!”

With that they finished eating, put away the dishes, cleaned up the table and counters-Naruto placed the leftover ingredients back into his Inventory and then they headed out.

They ran through the village and Naruto was able to spot two or three Jounin and five or so Chūnin jumping around on the rooftops, not sparing either Academy student a glance as they passed them, since Kira and Naruto were also taking the rooftops just in case to avoid any early rising villager.

Naruto was about to refocus on getting to Training Grounds 1 when he felt the sudden presence of something; stopping abruptly Naruto looked around him, subtly sniffing the air and scanning the area with his Chakra, a neat little trick he had learned over the last week, and then, he felt it again; the presence was there and hiding but who was it......

“Naruto? Why’d you stop?” Kira asked curiously, looking around them as well just in case. Naruto stood there a second more, smelling the air and recognizing the smell, but deciding not to comment on it-at least for now-and turned to Kira and grinned sheepishly,

“Ah, sorry, musta been my imagination, ttebayo!” he scratched at his neck for a moment while Kira gave him a long look, nodded his head then turned,

“Well whatever, let’s get going ne?” nodding as well Naruto and Kira headed off, leaving the presence behind.
It didn’t take much time from there for them to get to Training Grounds 1, but before they got to training Kira rounded on Naruto,

“Okay,” he started, his hands going to his hips,” what did you feel?” Naruto puffed up his cheeks for a moment while squinting,

“I think I felt someone I met a while ago, it felt like them at least, but I’m not sure, ANBU are really good at hiding their Chakra signatures so it’s possible that I just mixed up the signature with another ANBU, oh yeah, did I ever mention that when I was younger a squad of ANBU would sometimes look after me?”

Since Kira hadn’t been able to come up with a response to the blond they had simply gotten to training, doing warm-ups like push-ups and sit-ups then they spared for a bit, and then after that they focused on upping a couple of their Skills, but by then the two hours were up so they headed on to the Academy.

Using Chakra Sprint to get to the Academy quickly both Kira and Naruto got there at around 7:20 so they had about forty minutes until their classes started; but Kira had also convinced Naruto to start getting to the Academy early, so, here he was.

They bid each other goodbye once they arrived and went to their respective classrooms.

Naruto headed down the hallway to his classroom while ignoring the looks of some of the teachers as he passed them, they didn’t look happy and it seemed like they were blaming Naruto, “Jiji probably railed at them for actively sabotaging me, hmph, serves them right; they could have really hurt the class since I didn’t know how to control my Chakra, it would’ve been their fault if that had happened!” he thought to himself, but then shook his head; he didn’t want to think about it anymore so he just continued to ignore the glaring adults.

Thankfully it didn’t take much longer before he was standing in front of the classroom door and he entered swiftly escaping the hardened glares. quickly making his way inside the blond noticed that only eight other people were there, but that made sense-he was early after all, most of the students probably didn’t get there until around 7:40 or something-and made his way to a desk in the middle of the room; it was the safest without being in the back and since Naruto has never willingly sat in the back he decided that taking this seat would be the best without drawing too much attention.

Sitting down with a sigh Naruto leant forward onto his arms, looking about him in boredom-there wasn’t much to do in the classroom this early in the morning and he didn’t feel like pulling a prank right now so he just sat there in silence, silently ignoring the few other people in the room who ignored him in turn.

But alas, while Naruto isn’t as impatient as most people assumed he was, the poor child wasn’t Buddha (or Shikamaru) so it took only about three minutes for him to start subtly glancing around, trying to find something to do while the rest of the class arrived.

But then-
Quest Alert:

Level-Up!

It’s been a week since you’ve interacted with your classmates so it’s time to see who has leveled up over the week of break and who hasn’t!

Completion reward

If you can look at all of your classmates’ Levels by 8:05 you will get:

2000 EXP, 20 REP with every classmate, Jutsu Scroll (C)

If you can only look at 80% of your classmates’ Levels by 8:05 you will get:

1000 EXP, 5 REP

Completion failure

If you can only look at 50% or lower of your classmates’ Levels by 8:05 you will get:

100 EXP, -50 REP

Naruto accepted the Quest then started to look at his classmates’ levels.

Some of them had leveled up but most of them hadn’t, them still being only level 6 or so and all of their Stats were average so he wasn’t all that interested, but then the higher levels of the week before started arriving which renewed Naruto’s curiosity, surely they would have higher levels?

The first to arrive was Sasuke so, narrowing his eyes, Naruto looked at Sasuke’s Stats and Status-

Name: Uchiha Sasuke

Class: Academy Student

Title: Clan Avenger/Heir

Level: LV15

Affiliation: Konohagakure/Himself

HP: 450/450

MP: 500/500

STR: 99

VIT: 50

DEX: 30

INT: 40

WIS: 20
LUK: 11

Status: Avenger (-25% to Teamwork; -25% to Social Skills; +50% to all Skills when fighting Betrayer) Uchiha (+50% in Fire Affinity; +20% to Fire Jutsu) [???] (10% to INT every level; 20% to VIT every level; 25% STR every level; +2 to STR, DEX, INT, WIS and VIT when activated)

Being one of the only remaining people of his clan, Sasuke is very strong and highly thought of because of his Uchiha name, though Sasuke himself tends to ignore everyone around him because of his set vengeance against his older brother who was the cause of the Uchiha Massacre. (Empathy Bonus) Because of both his clans’ massacre and the unhealthy attention the Village and his Fangirls have given him, Sasuke has fallen for his own hype and believes himself to be the very top—perhaps even stronger than the Jounin of the Village—and while he can back up some of this he is sorely mistaken and it will take a very big challenge for him to be thrown off of his high horse

Has 5 Flaws

Naruto felt his eyebrow twitch when he saw that Sasuke was still a higher level than him (grr) but, he sighed, that was fine, it was only by two so he’d be catching up and maybe even overcoming him soon so it wasn’t that big a deal. But, Sasuke’s overall Stats were to be expected so even though he was mildly miffed by the increased level, he wasn’t all that bothered about the rest of his Stats, and his Character Summary just made him realize that yeah.... Sasuke was definitely a spoiled brat, though the fact that it was his own brother that had caused for Sasuke to no longer have a clan was sad.... but yeah Sasuke had always been the way he was, he had just gotten slightly quieter and more distant after the incident so it wasn’t like it had majorly changed him or anything.....

He shook his head a moment then refocused on the words, smiling once his eyes got to the bottom, ‘Oh, I have got to see this!’ he thought in unrestrained glee, feeling the urge to rub his hands together and cackle uncontrollably, but he was able to curb that feeling and so just thought, ‘Flaws: Uchiha Sasuke!’ and there they were in all their glory-

Flaws:

Avenger Flaw/Skill (You want to kill someone, someone who has caused you great pain and so you wish to inflict pain onto them; -25% to Teamwork; +50% on all attacks against Betrayer; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured through making something else more Important)

Depression Flaw (All joy in the world seems bland and causes you to lose sight of what’s important; -25% to Social Skills; -10% to Teamwork; can be cured by people with Kind Hearted and Boisterous Traits)

Jealousy Flaw (You are easily pushed to Jealousy; especially against people who were supposed to be weaker than you; -10% to trust; -25% to Teamwork; can easily be swayed by others; can be cured through good natured Rivalries)

Pride Flaw (You let your Pride speak for you, making it difficult to admit you are wrong or let others take charge without questioning their authority even in dire situations; +25% chance of death in missions; -45% to Social Skills; can only go away in time or when something drastic happens that’s an obvious and direct result of this Flaw)
Arrogant Flaw (You have a high opinion of yourself and almost refuse to listen to others’ reason; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured by forcefully being put down by superiors or by being shown up by someone believed to be above)

Naruto looked over the words silently, nodding along to most of them cause, yeah, besides the Depression Flaw, this was the impression he had gotten from the Uchiha, so it wasn’t all that surprising, though, again, he hadn’t expected depression, but it made sense—considering his clan was dead and he was alone—but, yeah, Naruto just shrugged and looked for more classmates to Observe.

The next ones to arrive were Sakura and Ino who were fighting about who would get to sit next to Sasuke; Naruto looked over the pink haired girl and, felt nothing. Yep, he didn’t feel embarrassed, flustered, eager or anything really. He just looked over her, feeling disappointment enter him when he saw that she hadn’t leveled up over the past week, but he looked at her Stats anyway—

Name: Haruno Sakura

Class: Academy Student

Title: none

Level: LV6

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 100/100

MP: 100/100

STR: 25 (-50% + -20 [2.5])

VIT: 15

DEX: 20 (-25% [15])

INT: 38.5

WIS: 17

LUK: 6

Status: Chakra Control (+2.5 to INT every level) Book Worm (+1 to INT every level) Inner Sakura (-25% to Teamwork; +50% resistance to Mind Manipulation Jutsu)

Haruno Sakura is the daughter of civilians that entered the Academy when she was eight, while very intelligent; she doesn’t spend nearly enough time on her body for it to be strong enough for her chosen line of work, and thus has been left behind physically. (Empathy Bonus) She was bullied when she first entered the Academy for her large forehead before being befriended by Ino, but has recently broken that friendship after finding out that Ino and her have a crush on the same boy; Uchiha Sasuke and has thus developed a borderline obsessive infatuation of him.

Has 4 Flaws
Naruto immediately looked at her Flaws so that he could get to Ino’s Stats faster-

Flaws:

Fangirl Flaw (You are wholly obsessed over someone because you think they are “cool” or “hot” and almost refuse to realize that they probably don’t feel the same way; -25% to Teamwork; easily manipulated by person of interest; can be cured through a rough beat down by older women or by growing out of it [this is not likely])

Malnourished Flaw (You don’t keep to a healthy diet by either not eating the right kinds of food or not eating enough/at all; -20 to STR; -25% in DEX; can be easily cured by change of diet)

Inferiority Flaw (You are intimidated by others and look down on yourself, thinking you are useless or worthless, this can cause you to hurt someone who could be a friend by treating them the way you feel; -25% to Teamwork; -50% to STR; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured through confidence build-up)

Other Personality Flaw/Skill (You have another personality in your brain, one that is your true nature that you hide either consciously or subconsciously, but separating a part of yourself always leads to killing your true self; +50% against Mental attacks; -25% to Teamwork; -10% to Trust; can be cured by growing into real personality/by accepting that part of yourself)

‘Huh,’ he thought distantly, ‘she has two of the same Flaws as me..... No wonder she doesn’t have much STR,’ blowing air out through his nose Naruto then turned his sights onto Ino-

Name: Yamanaka Ino

Class: Academy Student

Title: Yamanaka Heiress

Level: LV7

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 100/100

MP: 150/150

STR: 25

VIT: 25

DEX: 30

INT: 36

WIS: 25 (-20% [20])

LUK: 10
Status: Flower Keeper (+20% to Teamwork; +3 to INT) Vanity (-25% to Teamwork; -20% to WIS) Yamanaka (+25% resistance to Mind attacks; +25% to Mind Control)

Being a part of the famed Yamanaka clan who are known for their unique mind manipulation techniques, Ino knows a lot about the human mind and just as much about flowers, though she’s a bit vain. She spends most of her time pining after Uchiha Sasuke and fighting with Haruno Sakura, the rest of her time is looking for anything to gossip about. (Empathy Bonus) She is a good person deep down but doesn’t let that side of her show due to her pride; she also fights for the affections of Uchiha Sasuke, while secretly wanting her ex-best friend back.

Has 4 Flaws

Flaws:

Vanity Flaw (You are obsessed with your looks, putting them above other more important things; -10% to Reputation with others, -20% to Teamwork; can be cured through constant reminder of wrongs or by being talked down by someone held in high esteem)

Pride Flaw (You let your Pride speak for you, making it difficult to admit you are wrong or let others take charge without questioning their authority in dire situations; 25% chance of death in missions; -45% to Social Skills; can only go away in time or when something drastic happens that’s an obvious and direct result of this Flaw)

Fangirl Flaw (You are wholly obsessed over someone because you think they are “cool” or “hot” and almost refuse to realize that they probably don’t feel the same way; -25% to Teamwork; easily manipulated by person of interest; can be cured through a rough beat down by older women or by growing out of it [this is not likely])

Bossy Flaw (You act like you’re in charge of everything going on and tend to get on others’ nerves; -25% to Reputation with others; can only be cured through forcefully being put down by superiors)

Again, like Sasuke, most of this was expected, Naruto was only surprised that she didn’t have some sort of gossiping Flaw, but he’d attribute that to her dad teaching her that there are certain things that you don’t talk about, no matter how juicy.

He shrugged then turned his head away, looking to some of his other classmates he had yet to Observe like Tsubaki and her friends....

A moment later, once he finished Observing a couple more people, several other people came in. Turning his head to take in the new people, Naruto realized that it was the Hyuuga girl, ’Hinata I think,’ Kiba and Chouji, who was eating some chips with a smile.

Before Naruto could focus of Hinata he spotted Shikamaru walking through the door. He felt himself perk up and he raised his hand, waving at the boy. The Nara spotted him and waved back with a smile as he made his way over to him, followed shortly by Chouji.

“Hey Naruto,” Shikamaru spoke with a smile as he slid into the spot to Naruto’s left,

“Hiya Naruto, how’re you?” Chouji asked with a munch as he sat next to Shikamaru. Naruto grinned back,
“Hey Shika, Chouji, I’m good! How’re you guys?” he asked enthusiastically. Shikamaru shrugged his shoulders as Chouji responded for the both of them,

“We’ve been good, though Shikamaru’s been really motivated to train this week, it’s been really tiring!” Chouji’s cheeks puffed up for only a moment before he was smiling again.

But Naruto was surprised, Shikamaru had been training? What had caused that? His thoughts were cut into by said boy,

“By the way Naruto; Shika?” he asked questioningly. Naruto thought back and realized that he had in fact called him Shika instead of Shikamaru. Scratching at his neck Naruto smiled sheepishly while a light blush stained his cheeks,

“Ah, sorry, just that ah, Shika is shorter than Shikamaru and I dunno, I said that instead of your full name.....” he tried to explain but couldn’t come up with anything since he wasn’t even entirely sure why he had called him in such a familiar way. But his worries were dashed when Shikamaru started to shake his head,

“Hm, it’s fine, you can call me Shika, I don’t mind,” he shrugged on of his shoulders nonchalantly, though Naruto was positive that he had spotted some pink creeping onto his cheeks, though he wasn’t sure and so decided against bringing it up, instead asking,

“Are you sure?” a nod,” thanks Shika!” he called joyously and opened his eyes only to see-

You have earned 50 REP with Nara Shikamaru

Blinking in mild surprise Naruto wasn’t sure how to feel, ’apparently he really liked the nickname....’ was all he could think as he banished the box. But then he remembered that he had to Observe all of his classmates levels before 8:05 so, since he was closest, Naruto focused his gaze onto Shikamaru, though he made sure that it didn’t seem like he was staring by leaning onto his arms and tilting his head slightly-

Name: Nara Shikamaru

Class: Academy Student

Title: Nara Heir

Level: LV11

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 200/200

MP: 250/250

STR: 35.9 (-25% [26.9])

VIT: 35 (-25% [26.25])

DEX: 30

INT: 217 (+25% [271.25])
Nara Shikamaru is a part of the Nara clan, who are known for their Shadow manipulation techniques, lazy attitudes and massive intellects. Shikamaru is one of the smartest in his clan which also makes him one of the laziest. (Empathy Bonus) Though he says most things are “troublesome” Shikamaru isn’t afraid to go to great lengths to get what he wants, be it knowledge or a fight, and now that he has a reason to get better and stronger he will become even more dangerous to his enemies.

Has 2 Flaws

‘He has gotten stronger....’ Naruto thought as he looked over his Stats, ‘at least, his HP and MP have gotten higher,’ he concluded since the last time he had used Observe on Shikamaru he had only seen a little bit so for all he knew only his HP and MP could have changed.

Sighing softly he forced himself to look at his Flaws since he’s looked at everyone else’s Flaws it wouldn’t be fair if he just skipped Shikamaru, that and he was sure that looking at the Flaws was part of the deal to properly complete the Quest.

So, taking a breath Naruto summoned Shikamaru’s Flaws-

Flaws:

Lazy Flaw/Skill (You are lazy and avoid doing things or put things off for as long as possible, making you late to things ranging from minutes to hours; -20% to Reputation with others; +20% to Tricking Opponent in Battle; can be cured through perseverance and a forced schedule)

Passive Flaw (You are too lax in everything you do; +25% chance of death in battle situations; can only be cured by being in a situation effected directly by this Flaw)

They were as he expected, but Naruto was a little worried about the Passive Flaw; he hoped that that would go away soon; he didn’t want Shikamaru to get killed while on a mission because of it...

Shaking his head again Naruto then moved his eyes to look at Chouji-

Name: Akimichi Chouji

Class: Academy Student

Title: Akimichi Heir

Level: LV9

Affiliation: Konohagakure
HP: 200/200
MP: 150/150

STR: 68 (-50% [34])
VIT: 35
DEX: 36 (+65% [62.6])
INT: 25
WIS: 30
LUK: 8

Status: Hardy Body (20% in DEX; -25% to Taunt resistance) Loyal Friend (+50% when protecting friends; 25% to attack power) Akimichi (10% to cooking skill; 20% to Body Manipulation Jutsu’s) Butterfly Watcher (+25% to trust; +30% to Loyalty; +45% to DEX)

Akimichi Chouji is a part of the Akimichi clan who are known for their large bodies and even larger appetites, though usually docile, he can be angered to fighting if called a certain three letter word. (Empathy Bonus) Chouji is a kind hearted boy who was bullied for his kind nature when he was young, but after befriending Shikamaru; has grown more confident, and he has become fiercely loyal to any and all of his friends and will go to great lengths to help them if it is within his power.

Has 1 Flaw

Flaws:

Inferiority Flaw (You are intimidated by others and look down on yourself, thinking you are useless or worthless, this can cause you to hurt someone who could be a friend by treating them the way you feel; -25% to Teamwork; -50% to STR; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured through confidence build-up)

Naruto nodded to this then moved on to the other two that had entered, Hinata and Kiba. Since he was closer to the dog boy, Naruto decided to look at Kiba’s Stats before Hinata’s.

Name: Inuzuka Kiba

Class: Academy Student

Title: Inuzuka Clan’s Second Heir

Level: LV10

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 550/550
MP: 300/300
STR: 55
VIT: 35
DEX: 30
INT: 25
WIS: 20
LUK: 7

Status: Instincts (+10% to Teamwork; 45% in Battle situations; 80% to Tracking success)
Inuzuka (+5 to STR; 10% to INT; 25% to DEX; 25% to VIT)

Inuzuka Kiba is part of the Inuzuka clan, people who are known for their techniques with
ninjutsu, he is the son of the clan head, and second child making it that he’s not the direct heir
of his clan though he is one of the strongest in his age group. (Empathy bonus) Though he is
loud and rash, he has a crush on the shyest person in class, though since that person holds
affections for someone else, he is fully ready to give up his own if it means the others
happiness.

Has 1 Flaw

Flaws:

Arrogant Flaw (You have a high opinion of yourself and almost refuse to listen to others’
reason; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured by forcefully being put down by superiors or by
being shown up by someone they believed they were above)

Naruto wasn’t all that surprised by Kiba’s one Flaw, or by anything else in his Stats, Naruto
apparently knew his classmates a lot more than he’d thought.

He then turned towards Hinata, but then turned away; she made him feel weird and it wasn’t a nice
feeling so he looked at the last of his classmates minus Shino, since the bug boy had yet to arrive.
When he finished he forced himself to look at Hinata, Shino still hadn’t shown up, and used
Observe on the quiet girl, who seemed to notice he was looking at her and started to blush while
poking her fingers together...... He had a bad feeling about this-

Name: Hyuuga Hinata

Class: Academy Student

Title: Hyuuga Heiress

Level: LV8

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 350/350

MP: 500/500
STR: 35 (-50% [17.5])
VIT: 45
DEX: 40
INT: 45
WIS: 36
LUK: 6

Status: Byakugan (25% to INT; +2 to WIS each level) Hyuuga (+10 to Reputation; +10% to VIT; 20% to INT and WIS)

Being a part of the Hyuuga clan, one of the strongest clans in all of the land of Fire for their well-known Doujutsu and Taijutsu, Hinata is seen as weak because of her insecurities and her dislike towards fighting, and as such is looked down upon by both her clan and classmates. (Empathy Bonus) As the Heiress to her clan Hinata is fairly strong but is held back by her shyness and the mean words of those of her clan for her gentleness but she tries to break out of it for the one she admires and obsesses over most.

Has 4 Flaws

The bad feeling intensified but he moved on anyway-

**Flaws:**

**Inferiority Flaw** (You are intimidated by others and look down on yourself, thinking you are useless or worthless, this can cause you to hurt someone who could be a friend by treating them the way you feel, though that doesn’t always happen; -25% to Teamwork; -50% to STR; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured through confidence build-up)

**Fear Flaw** (You are afraid of so many things that it has become a serious problem and setback to a lot of things in your life; -25% to Teamwork; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured through years of patience and perseverance and someone who is willing to help)

**Shy Flaw** (You are very shy and tend to keep to yourself even when you want to be with others and you tend to chastise yourself when your shyness keeps you from enjoying things in life; -25% to Social Skills; cannot be cured easily, and can usually only be cured when older and more confident)

**Stalker Flaw** (You are obsessed with someone but, instead of openly showing this obsession like a Fangirl would, you silently follow and watch the one you admire regardless of the personal feelings of the one you desire above all else; -25% to Social Skills, will excuse any negative behavior done by self or person of interest, -25% to Teamwork, -25% REP with person of interest; unclear if it is at the point of being past curable, if it can be cured it can only be cured by person of interest openly-in front of others held in high opinion and/or close to-denouncing any notions that they hold the same feelings towards stalker)

When Naruto saw that she had a **Stalker Flaw**, he felt the intense need to leave, to run away and
hide from her searching Byakugan eyes, he couldn’t help but feel like it was directed at him from how she seemed to only blush and stutter around him, not anyone else; something of which Sakura, or any of Sasuke’s fangirls really, tried to do whenever they spoke to him.

Naruto then turned away from her swiftly, his body shaking and his breathing coming in short, quiet gasps, he wanted to run; should he run? Or would that just make it worse? The only other time he’d felt this bad was those times when he was little and those people were going to.....

He gasped for breath, trying to shake the blurry, half-remembered images from his mind; he placed his hands over his mouth in an attempt to quiet his breaths and maybe even stop himself from gasping-as far as he knew no one had noticed his reaction and he wanted it to stay that way! But, they didn’t stop and he felt it getting worse....

“Naruto!” a harsh, but somehow kind, whisper sounded in his ear. Jerking up Naruto felt arms wrapped around his shoulders-no, he had to get away!

Just as he was about to struggle soothing words were whispered into his ear,

“Shh, shh, Naruto, it’s okay; it’s just me, Shika, it’s okay, you’re okay, shh...” He felt his body calm as he slumped against the desk behind him, regaining his breathing and working to steady it. A minute or two passed and he finally had control over himself; he turned slightly to his left and realized that yes, it was Shikamaru who had calmed him down, who had his arms around him and was still speaking to him softly so that no one but Naruto would hear him.

He glanced around and realized that no one else had noticed his little panic attack, and another glance showed that Chouji was the only other one who had seen it, but he seemed more occupied with looking around as if he were making sure no one had seen-wait, was he making sure that no one would see him having a panic attack?-but besides maybe Hinata herself seeing it then he knew that no one else had seen it, no one had seemed to realize he was there since he had gotten there so early and hadn’t brought all that much attention to himself, not even when he had called out to Shikamaru.

Naruto took another breath, just to center himself, then nodded to Shikamaru.

The brunets grip loosened and moved over his shoulders but one of his hands stayed on his left shoulder,” you okay?” he asked in a hushed whisper. Naruto nodded again,

“Yeah-“ his voice cracked, so he coughed to clear it before trying again,” yeah, I’m fine, just,” he shook his head to dispel the feeling,” just, a bad feeling is all.” He inhaled deeply then let it out, subtly leaning into the others hand. That hand then moved to his back rubbed calming circles into it causing for Naruto fully relax and a sigh of equal parts relief and content rushed passed his lips,

“Thanks,” he quietly murmured. Shikamaru nodded,

“No problem,” a smile, “do you wanna-“

“What’s wrong?” before Shikamaru could finish his question he was cut off. Opening his eyes Naruto looked up to see that Shino was standing before him, his eyebrows were raised and his lips were turned down in a frown; all in all, Shino looked genuinely concerned and it warmed Naruto’s heart, the boy rarely showed emotion in the first place so it was nice that he didn’t hold back his emotions where Naruto was concerned.

Smiling a slightly strained smile, Naruto shook his head,” I’m, ah, okay..... Later, we’ll talk later,” he cut in before Shikamaru or Shino could denounce his words.
They looked him in obvious disbelief but they relented and didn’t bring it back up.

Naruto then decided that he should look at Shino’s Stats, so he used **Observe**-

**Name:** Aburame Shino  
**Class:** Academy Student  
**Title:** Aburame Heir  
**Level:** LV11  
**Affiliation:** Konohagakure  
**HP:** 400/400  
**MP:** 300/300  
**STR:** 36  
**VIT:** 60  
**DEX:** 49  
**INT:** 54.5  
**WIS:** 40  
**LUK:** 9  

**Status:** Bug Keeper (+10 in Trust; +20 with bugs; 25% in Kikaichū control) Aburame (-20 in overall REP; -25% in Social Skills; 50% in Kikaichū control)

Being a part of the well-known Aburame clan for their bugs Shino is as silent and slightly creepy as the rest of his clan and as the heir is stronger than most of his peers. (Empathy Bonus) because of his clans known relationship with bugs people tend to avoid the quiet boy, but now that he has been accepted by someone who understands the pain he went through, Shino has become stronger and more determined to get even stronger to stay by that person’s side.

**Has 0 Flaws**

As he looked over them Naruto saw that Shino had leveled up as well, not only that but his **Empathy Bonus** had changed, was that because of him? Did it change because Naruto had become his friend?

Shaking his head Naruto decided not to dwell on it, and so glanced around to see if there was anyone else for him to **Observe**.

Just as he came to the conclusion that no, there wasn’t, Iruka entered the room with two people following him.

They were both male and young looking, they looked like they were in their late teens, one of them had blue hair that was cut short in a military cut, peach skin and brown eyes, he was also wearing the
standard Chūnin uniform, as was his companion who had red hair that seemed to reach just below his ears and the same shade of skin with hazel eyes. They both wore their forehead protectors the standard way (on their foreheads).

Naruto then decided to use **Observe** on them since class hadn’t started yet and the three of them were just organizing some things on the desk, so, without further ado he use ‘**Observe**!’ -

**Name: Umino Iruka**

**Class: Chūnin**

**Title: Academy Instructor**

**Level: LV27**

**Affiliation: Konohagakure**

**HP: 750/750**

**MP: 1000/1000**

**STR: 70 (+10 [80])**

**VIT: 90 (+10 [100])**

**DEX: 99 (+10 [109])**

**INT: 127**

**WIS: 100 (+5 [105])**

**LUK: 8 (+5 [13])**

**Status: Academy Instructor (+20 in REP with students that they help; +5 to WIS and LUK; Gives up to +10 points for any Stat to any student that pays attention/participates during class) Kind Hearted (+10 in Reputation with most whom they meet; +20 trust from others) Chūnin (+10 to STR, VIT and DEX; Authorized to take solo missions up to B-Rank Authorized to take Team missions up to A-Rank)**

Umino Iruka’s parents died in the Kyuubi attack, and as such became an orphan. Because of this he became the class clown to get attention, but matured once he grew up and followed his passion to teach by becoming an Academy Instructor and quickly found a soft spot for one of his students; Uzumaki Naruto. (Empathy Bonus) Now that it has been brought to his attention that Naruto, the student he loves most yet didn’t know how to act around, was being mistreated by not only his classmate but his former teachers as well he has become determined to do everything in his power to support the orphan boy, as well as all of his current and future students!

**Has 2 Flaws**

Flaws:

**Anger Flaw** (You are easily angered through taunts and jeers and thus can lose control of
your emotions; this can lead to death in Battle situations; can be cured through hard work and patience as well as self-control)

Stubborn Flaw/Skill (You are so stubborn that it’s become an permanent fixture in your personality; and while being stubborn in some situations is okay and can even lead to good and unexpected results, being too stubborn will usually hurt you; -25% in REP with others Unfriendly and lower, -25% in Battle situations, +25% to REP/Other in Special situations, cannot be cured)

He was a little surprised by his sensei’s Flaws, like, yeah, Iruka could get angry pretty easily, but he hadn’t known that it was a permanent Flaw! But, the Stubborn Flaw was to be expected, actually, Naruto was surprised that he himself didn’t have a Stubborn Flaw, considering how, well, stubborn he is.

He then moved his eyes to the other two-

Name: Koyami Hikaru

Class: Chūnin

Title: Academy Instructor Assistant

Level: LV26

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 800/800

MP: 1015/1015

STR: 56

VIT: 70

DEX: 69

INT: 89

WIS: 80

LUK: 9

Status: Academy Instructor (+20 in REP with students that they help; +5 to WIS and LUK; Gives up to +10 points for any Stat to any student that pays attention/participates during class) Chūnin (+10 to STR, VIT and DEX; Authorized to take solo missions up to B-Rank Authorized to take Team missions up to A-Rank)

Being a Chūnin in Konoha, Hikaru is aspiring to be a Jounin but the only way to become one is through different means than usual, as Konoha has recently changed how it will be done in order to become a Jounin. (Empathy Bonus) N/A

Has 1 Flaw
Flaws:

Loud Flaw (You are unnecessarily loud at the most inopportune times which can really grate on others nerves and bring disastrous results to missions; +45% chance at dying in Battle, - 25% in REP with others Unfriendly and lower; cannot be cured at this point)

Name: Koyami Haruka
Class: Chūnin
Title: Academy Instructor Assistant
Level: LV26
Affiliation: Konohagakure
HP: 795/795
MP: 1000/1000
STR: 56
VIT: 89
DEX: 80
INT: 100
WIS: 50
LUK: 10

Status: Academy Instructor (+20 in REP with students that they help; +5 to WIS and LUK; Gives up to +10 points for any Stat to any student that pays attention/participates during class) Chūnin (+10 to STR, VIT and DEX; Authorized to take solo missions up to B-Rank Authorized to take Team missions up to A-Rank)

Being a Chūnin in Konoha, Haruka is aspiring to be a Jounin but the only way to become one is through different means than usual, as Konoha has recently changed how it will be done in order to become a Jounin. (Empathy Bonus) N/A

Has 1 Flaw

Flaws:

Passive Flaw (You are too lax in everything you do; +25% chance of death in battle situations; can only be cured by being in a situation effected directly by this Flaw)

‘Well, that's interesting, they have the same Character Summary.....’ Naruto mused to himself before he nodded his head as he was finished with Observing everyone when a chime sounded-

Quest Completion: 2000 EXP
20 REP with all of your classmates

_Jutsu Scroll (C)_ has been added to Inventory

**Congratulations! You have looked at all of your classmates’ levels before 8:05, you have been given an extra bonus for finishing with 10 minutes to spare! Not only that but you also looked at your teachers levels, and for doing so you have been rewarded a bonus! Both of these bonuses have been placed inside your Inventory.**

Naruto was both surprised and pleased by the added bonus; it made him want to finish any other _Quests_ earlier in the case he gets even more! And though he wanted to look at the new Items and the Scroll, he knew that he couldn’t for now, so, instead, he turned and talked with Shino, Shikamaru and Chouji for the last ten minutes.

Then, time was up and class was starting.

Iruka began by doing roll-call, and seemed surprised when the blond boy answered when his name was called, apparently Naruto became invisible when he wasn’t actively trying to draw attention to himself, ‘_huh,’_ he thought, ‘_I should keep that in mind for later._’ He decided silently, but then refocused his attention onto Iruka.

“Alright, class is now in session!” Iruka called out with a smile, the two behind him smiling as well. The scarred man continued before anyone could question the presence of the two behind him,” so, I’m sure you’re all wondering who these two with me are, well the answer to that is..... They are my new teaching assistants! Now before all of you ask why I have two assistants instead of just one I’ll be telling you, so hold off on any questions for after I’m done, alright?” getting nods from all of the children in the room Iruka got down to explaining,

“Okay, so, Hokage-sama, after holding off on the classes from last week, decided to look into how well all of the students in the Academy are doing because it was apparently brought to his attention that at least one of the students wasn’t being taught to their fullest potential, so, he order all of us teachers in and had a talk with us about various things like, who we thought had the most potential, who was behind, who wasn’t pushing themselves and other things, and after hearing everything decided that the Academy wasn’t doing as well as it had been twelve years ago. So, he decided to implement a new teaching method that was being implemented thirteen years ago, but then the Kyuubi attack happened and it ended up being swept under the rug,”

Naruto shifted uneasily at that, he hoped he wasn’t being blamed for that. A quick reassuring glance from Iruka calmed him and told him that no, he wasn’t the one to blame. Smiling at that, Naruto settled down to listen,

“_It has been statistically proven that the amount of graduating Genin that, either remain Genin or survive past the first few months of being a Genin are really low; there aren’t that many Genin that are able to remain Genin for a long period of time, so, we are rectifying that! From now on the new teaching method that was supposed to be implemented into the Academy Training Program, the Uzumaki Method, will now be started and kept! That is why I have two teaching assistants instead of one, the Uzumaki Method calls for at least three teachers, one teacher and two assistants, in every classroom to make certain that all of the students are being helped, now, before we begin do any of you have any questions?”_

Several hands shot up at that, but Iruka ended up picking Sakura,”_yes, Sakura-chan?”_ he asked pleasantly. The pink-haired girl smiled sweetly before an ugly scowl overtook her face,
“Sensei,” she asked in a whiny voice, “why is it called the Uzumaki Method? What’s that baka,” she pointed at Naruto, “have to do with anything? Shouldn’t be called the Uchiha Method?” Iruka sighed as he heard the mutterings of the whole class, agreeing with the girl—this wasn’t good he thought—but he pushed forward.

“The reason, Sakura-chan, is because this method was developed by the Uzumaki Clan—”

“Wait, there’s an Uzumaki Clan?!” she screeched in indignation, as if the thought that anything that mildly had to do with Naruto, even if it was just his last name, could be in any way a good thing or even important! Iruka sighed again,

“And this is why Hokage-sama said that the Academy was behind. Yes, Sakura-chan, there is an Uzumaki Clan and before you say anything Hokage-sama has confirmed that Uzumaki Naruto is in fact a part of that clan. Now before any of you interrupt; the Uzumaki Clan were allies with Konoha a long time ago, but about thirty years ago they were killed off with the combined forces of Kumo, Kiri, Suna and Kusa; and, since the Uzumaki lived on an island in the middle of the sea, Konoha wasn’t able to get there in time to help save all of them, but there were a couple that survived, but from what we know most of them decided to become nomads and simply travel the lands. Naruto here just happens to be related to one of these Uzumaki though I don’t know which so don’t ask me, and before you try to ask Naruto, don’t, you can ask once school lets out and only if he wants to talk about it, okay?” they all groaned out an unenthusiastic “okay” before class started for real,

“Good, now, this is Koyami Hikaru-san,” he gestured to the man on the left, he was the one with blue hair, then Iruka gestured to the other one who had red hair,” The two men stood forward and bowed, straitening Hikaru spoke first,” hey, you can call me Hikaru-kun or sensei, whichever one you want; I’m the oldest and I’m seventeen,” he spoke in a clear and loud voice, a bit louder than was necessary, but it was fine. Haruka then spoke up,

“Same! Call me sensei or Haruka-kun or even chan! I don’t really mind! I’m sixteen!” he seemed very happy and outgoing yet laid-back, the three teachers seemed to be very well balanced.

Smiling they all jumped right into the first lesson of the day: Finding out what they have missed!

The first two periods were dedicated to finding out absolutely everything that the students weren’t aware or, such as certain laws of different times, what happened at certain points in history and other such things that were very important for their education as Ninja.

By the time third period came up Iruka and his two assistants were able to come up with a teaching plan that would start the next day, for now, they began the History lecture.

Naruto was pleased to find out that he wasn’t totally bored out of his mind by it, probably had to do with the fact that his INT had gone up a lot....

Soon third period was over so they moved on to forth, then fifth, then sixth, before the final lesson of the day was happening which was Stamina Training!

Naruto was glad that he was able to completely wipe the floor with everyone’s asses during this lesson, he didn’t even have to use Chakra Sprint, but, it was more focused on Stamina rather than speed so....

Anyway he was the one able to last the longest, going ten more laps around the track field than Sasuke! That made Naruto whoop in joy when Sasuke had had to stop from being tired out.
But after that they did a couple other things, like going over an obstacle course that Naruto forced himself to not do too well at since he was still trying to not attract too much attention—he was allowed to show off his stamina since everyone already knew what a “Stamina god” he was so if he suddenly had no stamina then people would have been suspicious, but since he was acting pretty normal, no one seemed to notice, who knows about the next day, considering they would be gaining an entirely new schedule.

Then school let out for the day and Naruto walked out the front doors like everyone else, but just as he was turning to leave for Training Ground 1 to meet with Kira, a hand fell into his shoulder.

Turning swiftly Naruto grabbed the hand, twisted it and pushed it into the person’s back, but only for a second because—

“Naruto! It’s just me,” a calm, lazy yet urgent voice called out to him. Realizing his mistake Naruto let go, scratching at his neck,

“Heh, sorry ‘bout that Shika! Y’see, I’ve been training and my instincts are still a little jumpy so…..” the Nara shook out his arm a moment before he shook his head,

“Nah, it’s fine, nothings broken so it’s not that big a deal,” he nonchalantly shrugged and the blond could tell that it was sincere so he relaxed; but then he shook his head,

“Heh, thanks, so, is there something you want?” he asked, but what was said next actually caught him off guard,

“Yeah, do you wanna hang out? We had a lot of fun last week so why not this week?” Shikamaru asked as Naruto’s eyes widened in surprise. It was then that he noticed that Shino and Chouji were with Shikamaru; Chouji looked like his usual self, smiling with a bag of chips in his hands, but Shino was looking at him with a small smile on his lips, his eyes looked softened as he waited for Naruto’s reply.

Seeing this Naruto felt that he couldn’t deny them and so said,” yeah, of course! But I’ll only be able to hang out for, like, an hour since I’ve got to get to training,” nodding in understanding the quartet headed off, though Naruto strayed away from them for a couple seconds so that he could make a clone to send to Kira to tell him that he was going to be a bit late and why.

When that was done Naruto focused back on his friends and had fun with them.

They all walked around for a time, Naruto and Chouji carried the majority of the conversations, but they didn’t mind since neither Shikamaru nor Shino were ones for talking much, though it was for different reasons.

Naruto and Chouji spoke of mostly casual things, like what had happened that day during class and what was awaiting them the next day and so on.

But then Shikamaru decided to butt in with,” why did you freak out before class?” referring of course to Naruto’s almost panic attack that he had gotten after seeing Hinata’s Stats and Flaws. Flinching Naruto looked away, obviously uncomfortable, but Shikamaru didn’t stop,” I know it wasn’t nothing, please, tell me Naruto, I want you to trust me,” with that the blond stopped walking, just staring at the brunette for a long time and he waited as patiently as he could for a reply.

After a couple more seconds passed, Naruto spoke, taking a deep breath to center himself he began,” for the longest time, whenever I’ve seen that one girl, uh, Hyuuga Hinata I think her name is? Anyway, whenever I look at her or I’m near her I always get these weird feelings,” he shook his
head,“ and they are far from nice feelings..... I just realized that; that I’ve felt those feelings before when I was supposed to be alone and..... I think she’s been stalking me, and that really freaked me out I guess,“ he chuckled, it was mirthless and just a smidge bitter, but it was mostly nervous. He suddenly took a breath then let it out,

“I don’t like her, she freaks me out.” He stated resolutely while looking at them. Shikamaru looked surprised for a moment, and in that moment Naruto thought that he would tell Naruto that he was wrong and that what he was feeling wasn’t what was happening, but then,

“Everyone thought that Hinata had a huge crush on you that rivaled that of Sasuke’s Fangirls; we all sort of just thought that since you didn’t pay any attention to her that that meant that you weren’t aware of her feelings-but I know you better than that, and from what you’ve just told me, I gotta say that you avoiding her because she gave you bad feelings strangely makes more sense than you just being totally oblivious..... Now that I think about it, I have seen her staring at you a lot and even sort of following you so, to say that she’s obsessed with you enough to stalk you doesn’t seem like that much of a stretch,”

He shook his head before he looked Naruto in the eye,“ don’t worry, as long as we’re around you won’t have to worry about her,” he said this while gesturing to himself, Shino and Chouji who both nodded at that.

Naruto looked down as he felt a warm tingle rushing through his body, bathing him in a delightfully wonderful warmth that he wanted more of; sniffing lightly he looked at them shyly,

“Thanks,” they all nodded again and Shikamaru and Shino both placed a hand on his shoulders.

After that they hung out for a bit longer before Naruto stated that he needed to get going so that he would have enough time to train that day. Nodding the trio waved to the blond as he left, saying a cheerful “See ya tomorrow!” and he was off.

The Uzumaki headed straight for Training Grounds 1 where he found Kira who was looking over a scroll laid out on the ground. He lifted his head when he heard Naruto’s footsteps and smiled up at him,” hey,” he called as he rolled the scroll back up to place in his hip pouch while standing from the ground. Naruto nodded back him,

“Yeah, hey, sorry bout not coming immediately, it’s just I wanted to hang out with some of my friends-

“That’s fine, I don’t mind,” Kira cut in before the other could finish. Nodding Naruto still pushed a little bit more,

“Okay, but, would you like to meet them? Y’know, my friends become your friends and all that?”

Kira stopped at that, looking up in thought for a moment, then he shook his head,

“Nah, at least for now, no, I don’t really wanna meet them; but, that’s just for now we can meet later. You and I are friends already so it’ll eventually happen that I’ll at least meet your other friends, by the way, have you told them about,” he gestured above his head. Naruto shook his head,

“No, I didn’t really know how to bring it up so I didn’t say anything..... which reminds me, what happens if they wanna train with us? Would that, I don’t know, mean that they’ll find out about this ability? I normally wouldn’t be worried but Shika has become really motivated to train out of nowhere and Shino is strong in his own right while Chouji sort of just follows Shika around and does what he does so if Shika’s coming then that means that Chouji is coming so.....” he trailed off as Kira shook his head,
“I dunno, let’s just get to training, kay?” nodding the two started warming up.

But once Naruto brought it up it got Kira to thinking, so he tried something that of course startled Naruto-

**Yaiba Kira wants to be in a Team! Would you like to accept?**

A box had popped up before the whiskered blond who nearly jumped out of his skin when it popped up before he rounded on Kira, railing at him for startling him again and to “Stop do that, dammit!” though Kira was in no way repentant, simply grinning up at the taller boy before interjecting that “We can team up with people, so, since we don’t want anyone to know about the Gamer let’s try to find a way to *secretly* team up with other people, that way any benefits from teaming up will be there but without the hassle of having to explain anything!”

After that the two tried to find ways to team up with others secretly, though it didn’t quite work the first couple times....

Poor villagers had no idea what the strange pop-ups were neither did they understand why they randomly spasmed before disappearing from view.

Naruto and Kira ran around the village, preying on unsuspecting villagers with their experiments of trying to secretly team up with someone, which all failed the first day, but they vowed to keep trying in the case that Shino and/or Shikamaru asked to join Naruto in his training.

But with that they headed off, ate at Ichiraku’s then went home to sleep.

**You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.**

Waving the words away Naruto rolled out of bed onto the floor, like usual, stood up and looked over at his alarm clock which read a blaring 4:45 AM. The boy sighed tiredly but then he shook his head and headed for the bathroom to take a shower and brush his teeth, and once he finished he dressed in his normal orange jumpsuit, he didn’t feel like wearing something else since that would take more effort; but then he realized that Kira wasn’t there to be his lovely snarky self, but he simply shrugged his shoulders and got to making breakfast.

It wasn’t until five o’clock on the dot that the mismatched eyed boy came sliding through Naruto’s kitchen window, though he stopped short when he noticed that Naruto was up and almost finished with making their breakfast,

“Oh, good morning Naruto.....” he trailed off, not knowing how else to respond. Said boy simply grinned at him,

“Yo, mornin’ Kira! I woke up early I guess so I decided that it’ll be my turn to cook again, is that fine?” nodding a bit dumbly Kira went to sit at the table as Naruto finished plating the last of the food and setting it on the table and with that they started eating.

A moment of silence followed as the two simply ate without speaking but it was short lived as a ding pulled Naruto from his eating. He looked up and saw a box was in front of him-

**Congratulations! Because you have been eating regularly and healthily the Flaw “Malnourished” has been removed. Continue to eat healthily and regularly so that it stays that way!**

Naruto just stared at the words for a moment, then-
“YES!!!” he yelled while throwing his clenched fists into the air and leaning back in his seat; which was a bad idea as he lost his balance and flailed around uselessly for a second before crashing to the ground.

“Ack, Naruto!” Kira screeched and reached for the blond but missed as he hit the ground. Kira swiftly stood and ran over to him, “are you okay?!” he asked in concern. A moment passed before Naruto responded,

“.....Ouch......” he shook his head and twisted around, Kira helping him to sit up, then scratched at his neck while chuckling sheepishly, “ah ha ha, sorry ‘bout that.... I’m fine!” Kira nodded then sighed before he smiled,

“Well that’s good. What did the notification tell you?”

“Ah! I don’t have the Malnourished Flaw anymore!” Naruto responded in excitement. Kira’s face also lit up with excitement,

“Really? Me too! I popped up at the same time as yours did!”

The two of them cheered and celebrated for a moment (How ‘bout some cake tonight?-Sure!) but then settled down and got back to eating, finished and headed out to train for the morning as well as continue to try to activate a way to secretly team up with other people.

They didn’t get all that far before they had to head off to the Academy, Naruto telling Kira to not expect him for an hour again after class let out since he had a feeling that Shikamaru, Shino and Chouji would want to hang out again. The brunette nodded before they bid each other goodbye and headed on to class.

Class that day was different. When Naruto came in Iruka, Hikaru and Haruka were already there and they were writing things down on the chalkboard as well as setting some other things up, Naruto thought that they looked a lot like some type of launcher but he wasn’t sure-he was going to keep his eye on that, just in case-and made his way to the middle desk again.

He had a pleasant conversation with Shino and Shikamaru when they got there before class started but once it did Naruto kept completely focused, remembering one of the advantages to Iruka and the Assistant teachers.

Basically, what would be happening from then (May) to graduation (October) was they were going to revise everything that they had learned, have more quizzes (boo!-Shuddap! If you wanna stay Ninja then you gotta deal with paperwork!) have their physical training upped, have their Chakra control training upped, have a couple more Jutsu thrown in to be learned before the end of the school year and finally have several higher level Ninja, such as Jounin, come in and teach them (at the least verbally) what they specialize in so that they could find out what would be best for them to pursue as Ninja.

With that they all started class, and it was brutal!

No longer was Sasuke at the absolute peak and neither was Naruto at the bottom, what was considered the bottom had been changed to someone having absolutely no talent in anything and being the top was changed to being moderately good at everything (this included being social adept which Sasuke was not) and even Naruto was good at something (Pranks!) so he was no longer considered the deadlast, at least in the terms of the lessons and school, most of his classmates still saw him as bellow them but Naruto didn’t pay them any mind and instead tried to concentrate on focusing, committing everything to memory and participating whenever he could.
They did much as they did the day before, simply harder, before they were let out.

Naruto hung out with Shikamaru, Shino and Chouji again after school and after an hour he went to train with Kira, then after they trained they would try to find a way to secretly team up with someone but continued to fail but that didn’t stop them from trying.

The next week passed in a similar fashion, and by the end of that week, Shikamaru finally asked Naruto if he could train with him, Shino doing the same after Shikamaru asked. Naruto said that he’d think about it but that it would probably be a yes, it was just that he had a training partner (that got them curious) and he needed to check with them before saying yes.

This was also around the time that Naruto remembered that he had gotten items and that they were in his Inventory, so, he looked in his Inventory to find out what he had gotten-

**Jutsu Scroll: Fūton: Daitoppa – Rewarded to Player for successfully completing Quest**

**Jutsu Scroll: Suirō no Jutsu – Rewarded to Player for completing Quest with extra time to spare**

**Crafting Tool: Intermediate Fūinjutsu Brush – Rewarded to Player for looking at teachers Stats as well as their classmates’**

Naruto was quite happy with them, but decided to check them out later.

Then, Saturday came, and Naruto got a note from an ANBU that he was needed at the Hokage’s office at twelve noon.

What could the Hokage possibly want?

**Uzumaki Naruto – The Gamer; Player 2 – Jinchuuriki – LV14**

Chapter End Notes

Translations:

Fūton: Daitoppa = Wind Release: Great Breakthrough

Suirō no Jutsu = Water Prison Technique

That’s all I think, if I missed any just tell me and I’ll edit and re-upload this chapter.

Well, I don’t have much to say to this, only, that if you hate me for giving Hinata the Stalker Flaw, then I don’t care, in my point of view she was a stalker; I don’t have much against her, I don’t hate her but I don’t like her either, I’m just meh about her. But anyways, I believe that that is all.

I’ll get back to you guys next week.
Inu-nii-chan

Chapter Notes

It's technically Sunday so I'm posting it now :P I'm gonna be busy today so I've decided to post this early while I still have the time.

I guess I'll warn y'all, there will be interesting relations between Naruto and an older character (you can probably take a guess who) that have seemed to make some other people uncomfortable when I posted this elsewhere, so I've decided to warn you, nothing sexual, just interesting.

Review responses:

YonaO: thanks, I am also a fan of male harems and wanted to contribute by making certain that there are more well written ones. I do think you should read The Gamer as it was good when I last read it (which was a long time ago but whatever) and when it comes to Hinata, I don't dislike her, it's just I'm not her biggest fan and generally just ignore her. :P who knows what'll happen to her though.......

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Naruto gulped as he made his way to the Hokage Tower.

He had done some light training with Kira, but they didn’t do much, ate a light lunch-as he was too nervous to eat a lot-then took a quick shower and put on his black quarter sleeve shirt, his cargo shorts and his googles, and now, he was walking to the Hokage Tower.

In his nervousness he didn’t notice the glares that many of the villagers were sending his way, that was until-

[Detect KI]’s level has gone up by 1.

This snapped him out of his nervousness, making him sigh while banishing the box with a wave of his hand; he looked around him in defiance as the sneers and glares intensified. Deciding that he really didn’t want to deal with this right now, Naruto shrugged then ran over to a building, jumped to the roof then made his way to the Hokage Tower without having to deal with the stupid villagers and their prejudice.

It was actually faster this way so it took only a couple more minutes before Naruto made it to the Tower. Stopping on the roof he was on he looked up at the window that he knew led to the Hokage’s office, debating on whether or not he should go through it, it’d be faster and easier than going through almost the entire building to get to it and there was a higher chance of him not running into someone that would try to give him trouble for simply existing.

It took a while, but Naruto eventually decided that no, he wouldn’t be going through the window on the account of there being ANBU that would probably kill him if he tried; so, with a sigh of resignation, the blond hopped down from the roof and made his way to the main entrance where several people were either entering or exiting.
Lowering his head so that he’d be a little less recognizable, but not so much that he wouldn’t be able to see what was in front of him, Naruto walked into the building without being seen by the few civilians that were entering and/or inside, which caused for a quiet sigh of relief to expel from his lungs, though he sort of wished that he had thought to use a **Henge** so that he wouldn’t be seen at all.....

His head jerked up some when that thought came before he dashed out of the crowd, making his way to a small storage closet that he knew was near the entrance room, unlocked the door then went in.

Walking as far as he could into the closet, Naruto leaned against the back and thought for a moment-what should he transform into?

Many faces and people passed through his mind (none of which were actual people) but he didn’t feel like he should use them. He wanted his Jiji to recognize him, but he didn’t want anyone else to be able to, what to do, what to do.....

After a minute or two an idea popped into his head, ‘yes! That’ll work!’ he thought with conviction as he formed the necessary hand sign to use his Jutsu; normally he didn’t need to use a hand sign, but when he was concentrating really hard on doing a certain image he had to-he was hoping that he would get to a level where that wasn’t a requirement.

Once he completely finished forming the image in his head he softly muttered,” **Henge!**” then a small poof went off, thankfully not enough to alert any Ninja outside the room to his presence.

As the smoke cleared the figure of a girl came into view.

This girl was about 5’ 4” tall with long black hair that was braided from the middle on; her body was curved but not overly so with a sizable-but again not overly so-bust, she was wearing a black tank top, pale violet arm warmers that went over her elbows, grey short shorts (not quite booty-shorts) black and white stockings (one side black the other white) with a pair of shiny black pumps that were actually a type of Ninja sandal, which then made her seem 5’ 7” tall.

Once she opened her eyes her clear, almost azure, blue eyes shone in the dim light, pale skin almost glowing from the stark contrast of her surroundings; but on her left cheek were two lavender lines that curved, starting near the middle of her nose and ending near her chin, it almost looked like a flower petal, then on her right cheek was a diamond near the corner of her eye, almost like a teardrop.

A smile came to her petal pink lips as she looked over herself.

“Yes,” she murmured, her voice high yet soft,” this is perfect,” nodding in satisfaction she made her way to the door and opened it carefully; peeking through the crack to make certain that no one was paying where she was any mind. Happy when she discovered that it was safe, she stealthily slipped out of the room, closed and locked it then mingled in with the crowd almost flawlessly-

**[Stealth]’s level has gone up by 1.**

+1 in **INT**

+2 in **WIS**

From there she headed up to the Hokage’s office, she turned a couple heads, both male and female, but she didn’t stand out too much so she wasn’t bothered by anyone; add in the fact that she was
walking with confidence as if she belonged there and no one questioned her.

It took only a couple minutes for her to get to the Hokage’s secretary who was seated a little bit away from the door to his office. On her approach a brown-haired woman who had her hair in a bun and was wearing a dress shirt that only revealed her collarbone looked up and narrowed her eyes on the girl.

“How may I help you?” she asked, eying the girl in obvious distrust. The girl simply smiled at the woman,

“You may not, but Hokage-sama can; I have an appointment with him, if you’ll excuse me,” bowing she made her way around the desk to the door, leaving a sputtering woman behind her when the sound of a chair skidding across the floor alerted her to her pursuit,

“Just wait a minute! You can’t go in there without permission!” she screeched indignantly; the blue-eyed beauty merely sighed,

“I just told you, I have an appointment with him, so if you’ll just excuse me....” trailing off she placed her hand on the door, pushing it open, but the secretary wasn’t finished and so grabbed her by the wrist before she could fully open and step through the door,

“Now see here-!”

“Whatever is the matter Konami-chan?” an elderly voice cut off the impending rant, causing for both women to look up to see the desk the Hokage was situated behind who had a look of concern and confusion on his aged face.

At seeing him the girl smiled and stepped fully into the room and waved at the old man cheerfully,

“Heyo, Hokage-sama!” she called in a friendly manner, something of which caused for the secretary, Konami, to splutter again as she marched into the room to stand beside the new girl,

“Now see here! Show a little more respect!” she opened her mouth to continue on but was hushed by the Hokage,

“Now, now Konami-chan, that’s no way to be speaking to my guest here,” he chided her gently while gesturing to the girl. Konami looked at him in shock as the girl spoke up,

“Yes, I told her that I had an appointment with you, but she didn’t believe me,” shrugging as if in disappointment Konami felt a flesh rush up her neck and made to yell at the girl again when she was silenced by the Hokage again,

“Don’t take that into offence Konami-chan: you were simply doing your job. Now, if you will, I ask of you to return to your job so that the private conversation between my guest and I can start, alright?” he ordered, but in such a way that it didn’t sound like one, though everyone in the room was aware that it was one. Nodding her head hesitantly, Konami bowed to her leader, glanced at the girl in distain, and then left the room, closing the door tightly behind her.

After she left a silence filled the room for several minutes, but was then broken by a sigh,” why do you look like that Naruto-kun?” the old man asked tiredly. A mischievous laugh left the girls lips, her hand rising to cover her mouth while also revealing the bright orange Uzumaki swirl on the palm of her arm warmer. Another moment of snickering took place before an answer was given,

“Heh, I didn’t feel like dealing with people being idiots to me, so I changed to look like this,” she shrugged good-naturedly before she opened her still piercing eyes to look the man in the eye,” and
by the way, I’ve decided that this forms’ name is Yūbina!” she stated before a puff of smoke appeared, hiding her body from view until it cleared and in Yūbina’s place stood Uzumaki Naruto who had the most mischievous grins on his face,” not like I hurt anyone or anythin’, ttebayo!” the now boy stated cheerfully.

The old man shook his head with a chuckle,” ‘Graceful’, eh? Hm, figures you’d choose such a name for yourself Naruto-kun,” with another shake of his head and a few more chuckles the Hokage gestured Naruto closer;’ come here, take a seat please,’’ he asked as Naruto came closer so that he could sit on the chair before the Hokage’s desk, sitting surprisingly gracefully on the chair with a strange air of elegance and innocence coming off of the boy.

Naruto scratched at the back of his head sheepishly,” ah, sorry for actin’ all graceful still, whenever I transform I sometimes keep the personality of the person I transformed into, especially when I concentrate really hard on them when I’m transforming-oh! I have an idea!” he suddenly shouted, thus effectively snapping the aged Hokage out of his trance of watching the graceful creature before him.

Naruto continued without waiting for any indication that the old man was even listening,’’ how ‘bout, when I graduate, you let me have Yūbina registered as a Ninja! That’d be really cool and really useful while I’m out on missions!” Naruto giggled in glee, thinking of everything he’d be able to do while as Yūbina.

The Hokage chuckled a moment before replying,” perhaps Naruto-kun, I’ll have to think about it, but you’d had best be on your best behavior in order for me to say yes.” He told him sternly. Naruto deflate a bit, then regained himself and looked back at the Hokage in defiance, “I’ll behave, but I won’t stop pranking!” the old man opened his mouth to comment, but Naruto beat him to it,” I just found out not all that long ago that pranking is just a different form of trapping; and trapping is really important in a Shinobi’s arsenal so I won’t stop pranking since I refuse to get rusty! Okay, I’ll try not to prank people randomly anymore but I ain’t makin’ any promises, Dattabayo!” he pointed at the man, who stared at the blond boy for a long moment -but Naruto refused to lower his hand before the Hokage answered him and so kept it up.

Several minutes later the Hokage sighed,” fine, if, and that’s a very BIG IF, Naruto, that I say yes, I will not require you not to prank anymore.... hmm, perhaps you could use your pranking, or should I say, trapping abilities to help your classmates,” he suggested with a smile. Naruto stared at him blankly for a moment, but then it dawned on him-

+1 in INT

He grinned back at him,” yeah, I wouldn’t mind that Jiji, as long as no one’s told right away, and I can’t be allowed to get in trouble for it!” chuckling Hiruzen nodded,

“Yes, of course, of course Naruto-kun, I’ll keep that in mind-BUT! That isn’t the reason I’ve asked you here, if you wish to speak more on the subject then I ask that you come by tomorrow afternoon to discuss it, alright?” nodding to show that he understood, the Hokage moved forward,

“Now then, with that out of the way,” just as he started back up Naruto perked up suddenly, a look of contemplation on his face; his nose was twitching as if he could smell something and his eyes were focused yet glazed over in memory, but then, they widened and the boy jumped up,

“Eh?!?!” left his mouth loudly, causing for everyone (including the ANBU) to flinch back at the loud noise. But Naruto didn’t stop there as he started speaking again while gesturing at his hair wildly,” the silver-haired dude is here?!?” he asked loudly, though thankfully not as loudly as before.
The Hokage blinked at Naruto in surprise but wasn’t able to question the blond when he spoke up again,

"He was there when those crazy Kunoichi were trying to get that kunai that I found a while ago; Iruka-sensei said his name, Kanabi, Kahoshi, Kashi..... Ah! Kakashi!" at that Naruto pointed towards the Hokage, who moved back a bit, though Naruto wasn’t close enough to hit him by moving like that, add in his height and he would have had to been flush against the desk or standing within a foot of the aged man in order to be close enough to hit him.

“You remember that?” he asked the blond in curiosity. Naruto nodded with a “duh” look on his face,

“Of course I remember! They tried to kill me just because I had that dumb kunai-seriously....” he shook his head while puffing out his cheeks in agitation. But Hiruzen shook his head which caught the boys’ attention,

“I didn’t mean that, I was asking about remembering his name, you said Iruka-kun said it?” he asked gently, stifling back a laugh as he could only imagine the look that said man was currently making.....

“Eh, yeah, Iruka-sensei said it, though it was when I was sorta unconscious, I don’t usually go all unconscious if I pass out so I heard him say his name when he was tryin’ to get away from the crazy bitches, ttebayo! I wasn’t really able to hear eveythin’ but I remember I heard that!” Naruto looked determined, sure that he was right. The Hokage smiled,

“Well,” he began with a chuckle while his left hand made a somewhat strange gesture that caught Naruto’s attention,” that’s good, since he

Staring up into the mans’ eye Naruto could see awe, surprise and confusion there as well as..... something else. It wasn’t hatred or disgust, of that Naruto was certain, but he couldn’t quite read what the emotion was, it was warming, but, at the same time smothering and Naruto couldn’t for the life of him figure out what it was!

It wasn’t long before the man shook his head and raised a hand to him, his eye going to a lazy tilt as if he were disinterested, but from the way he had looked at Naruto a moment ago the blond knew that that wasn’t true, then he spoke,

"Yo.” He called. His voice was fairly deep, not really deep, but deep enough; there was a lazy drawl to it as well that had a hint of aloofness to it, but Naruto didn’t really believe in the aloofness-for some reason it just felt like a front, like when he went around acting like a total bumbling idiot so that the villagers would leave him alone and stop calling him a demon all the time.....

Shaking his head Naruto was just about to answer the man when, suddenly.....

A whiff.....

A whiff.....

..... Fa..... Familiar.....
..... Wait....

Is-is it......?

Can it be.....?

Is that.....

“Inu-nii-chan.....?”

Kakashi’s eye widened, and it was then that Naruto realized that he hadn’t thought it, but said it out loud. Gulping Naruto looked up into the mans’ eye and asked, almost desperately,” are you? Are you Inu-nii-chan?” he blushed as he said the name, feeling a bit embarrassed to be calling a fully grown man and Jounin “Nii-chan” but, he didn’t want to call him anything else.

The ANBU Inu, he’d, he’d been there for Naruto when he’d needed someone-okay maybe he wasn’t there all the time and maybe he had only actually interacted with him a couple times, but it was those couple times that had made all the difference, they had made the blond feel better when the darkness had been trying to swallow him, and while they didn’t get rid of it, they helped keep it away for just enough time that he was able to breathe.

He hadn’t realized that he was shaking or holding his breath until Kakashi brought up a hand then, though very hesitantly, placed it on his head,” hai.....” he nearly whispered, he was looking at him with that strange emotion again, but Naruto didn’t care.

Once he got the confirmation the blond rocketed forwards into the mans’ stomach, almost desperately holding onto his midsection while he buried his face into his vest.

“Thank you-!” he spoke with a gasp. He felt the man stiffen beneath him but he didn’t care, he had to get this out!” Thank you so much, ttebayo! I-if you hadn’t been there when those people were gonna-“he cut himself off, not wanting to bring back all of those painful memories,” just, thank you.....” he trailed off, but didn’t let go, not yet, he wanted to hold on to his Inu-nii-chan just a bit longer.

It took a moment, but finally the man relaxed in his hold, then, though with great hesitancy that Naruto could feel within this mans’ very being, he rested his arms around his shoulders, squeezing him gently and awkwardly-as if he had never done such a thing before-then spoke,

“You’re welcome, Naruto,” he was almost whispering again, Naruto could feel the tremor in his body and voice as he spoke,

‘He’s nervous,’ he concluded, ‘has he ever hugged someone before? At the very least I don’t think he’s done it for a while...... ’ he shook his head lightly and just pressed closer to the man.

After some time, Hiruzen coughed into his hand in order to bring the two back from wherever they had gone. Naruto pulled his face away from Kakashi’s chest but he didn’t let go of the man; the aged Hokage mentally smiled at that but didn’t comment as he spoke,

“Well, Naruto-kun, you asked me if you could see your ‘Inu-nii’ again, and I told you that I’d try, so, here he is!” he chuckled good-naturedly while the look of surprise came back to Kakashi’s face. Looking down at the blond he questioned,

“You asked to see me?” he seemed baffled by this, meanwhile Naruto looked away in embarrassment, a light flush crawling up his neck. He nodded his head jerkily, but then a thought came to mind, looking at the man out of the corner of his eye, the blond asked,
“Why would you be here if you didn’t know that?” Naruto saw a silver eyebrow twitch as the man reached up one of his hands to scratch at the back of his head,

“Maa, Hokage-sama ordered for me to be here, so I stayed behind; he said something about wanting me to meet someone; actually I thought he wanted me to meet that girl you came in as, Yūbina right? But then he called you Naruto, and then you were Naruto,” he shrugged his shoulders,” I was just listening to orders like a good little Jounin.” He shrugged again, but stopped when he heard Narutos giggle.

The whiskered blond couldn’t help but laugh at the way Kakashi had said “Good little Jounin” though he wasn’t entirely sure why he thought it was so funny; but, once he felt Kakashi start to chuckle-feeling the vibrations from it running through his body from where their bodies were flush against each other-he decided that it was a good thing that he had, smiling sunnily at the cyclopean Nin as his eyes caught sight of the words floating over his head-

**Hatake Kakashi – Sharingan no Kakashi – LV?**

‘Oh, yeah,’ he thought idly, smile still lighting his face,’ I haven’t checked his **Stats out yet....**’ he silently mused this while he pulled away from the man, blushing a deep crimson as he realized that he had been clinging to him like a monkey, or a toddler.

Coughing into his hand, Naruto then scratched at his neck nervously, not sure what else he should be doing, when,

“Well, it’s about time the two of you head off, isn’t it?” Hiruzen asked cheerfully, catching Naruto’s attention. Naruto felt himself deflate at the words, oh yeah, Kakashi’s a Jounin, and probably a busy one at that since it had taken two weeks for the Hokage to be able to get Naruto an audience with him-but he had wanted to spend a little more time with him....

But the old man didn’t stop there.

With a grin he made a shooing motion at the two before him,” well, get going, you can’t get to know each other and talk in here, I have a lot of work to do, so go on, and there will be more chances to speak out of here!” Kakashi looked at the Hokage in surprise-did the man just **order** him to spend time with Naruto?

“But-but, Hokage-sama....” the man spluttered uselessly for a moment,

The blond had also picked on the tone his Jiji had taken, but decided that he would just pretend he hadn’t noticed as he smiled at the man,” sure thing Jiji!” he called then turned to Kakashi, hope filling his eyes as he looked the man in the eye,” shouldn’t we get going?” he asked, hope also filling his voice.

A tense minute passed before the man with silver hair sighed,” yes, let’s get going....” Naruto simply grinned happily and triumph as they both turned to leave. But Naruto stopped short,

“Oh yeah!” he exclaimed, his fist falling into his open palm in a sign of remembrance, then, his hands moved into the Ram sign, he took a deep breath then-

**Poof!**

A small puff of smoke appeared, swiftly dispersing to reveal Yūbina standing there. The beautiful girl smiled up at Kakashi, she lifted a hand delicately and gestured to the door gracefully; her petal pink lips took on a smile as she spoke,” shall we?” she asked softly.
Kakashi looked at him-no wait-her in confusion for a moment, then he shook his head while sighing and then crinkled his eye, as if he were smiling,

“Maa, yeah, sure let’s go,” a soft giggle left the girls lips as the two of them left, though she turned and waved to the old man with a cheerful smile gracing her features,

“Goodbye, Hokage-sama!” she called as Kakashi just lazily waved his hand without turning; the aged man chuckled,

“Good day to you too, Yūbina-chan, as well as you Kakashi-kun!” and with that, the two left the room.

As the two passed by the secretary-Konami-she glared up at Yūbina who just smiled back while Kakashi completely ignored her presence, the woman snorted in derision and disgust, clearly aimed at Yūbina who just ignored it and went on her way with her silver-haired companion. After that it didn’t take long for the two to make it out of the Hokage Tower; at the entrance the two looked about, but kept walking, trying to figure out where to go.

After a moment of contemplation Yūbina spoke,” how about we head to Ichiraku Ramen?” Kakashi looked at her a moment, before nodding, and then they headed that way. As they were walking they turned many a head; many men and women looked on in surprise and awe when they saw the beautiful brunette walking beside the slightly slouched and nonchalant form of Hatake Kakashi, one of the most powerful Ninja in Konoha, a man who seemed to revel in spiting others with reading a certain book at all times regardless of the situation and who had never walked about town with a member of the opposite sex unless it was someone he had graduated the Academy with, and even then if he was walking around with anyone, it was usually Might Gai who took great pleasure in accompanying the aloof man, even if he never reacted to any of his gestures of friendship.

But here he was, calmly walking beside a beautiful woman who couldn’t be older than nineteen, who did not look the least bit annoyed by his behavior or his lack of conversation, and simply walked with a smile on her lips.

Any and all lookers were further shocked by this interaction when Kakashi, in typical form, pulled out his little orange book and began reading it.

“That stuff will turn your brain to mush, y’know,” the soft voice of Yūbina expressed with a strange lilt to her voice, as if she weren’t happy but not quite angry, yet.

Kakashi eyed the one beside him, humming,” hmm, read this have you?” he asked tersely, obviously unhappy at being told such a thing about something he likes. Yūbina sighed tiredly,

“I’ve caught Jiji reading it sometimes, I’ve also read it myself; it was complete garbage!” she huffed out a breath. Kakashi stopped at that, staring at the girl beside him in mild disbelief. Raising his one visible brow, he asked,

“You’ve read it? Really?” the incredulousness in his voice could be heard by everyone. The brunette huffed out a breath again, looking at the man beside her.

“Yes I have! I found it one day when I was bored and, since I’ve seen Jiji read it, I read it, thinking that it had to be interesting; but it’s just sex! No plot, barely any dialogue that isn’t out of whack kinky or sexual in some way, barely any humor or reason for any female to read it without feeling either insulted or under-appreciated!”

Many ladies nodded along to what this girl was saying, though they had never read the book
themselves, they knew some of their males friends read it, but the men felt uncomfortable at what she was saying, since it was pretty true.

But Yūbina didn’t stop there; she continued on before Kakashi could come up with a defense,” not only that, it gives men highly unrealistic expectations about sex, woman and even other men! Not all men are wonderfully ‘well-endowed’ or ‘sculpted like a god’ or anything like that! This book will make men who aren’t at least one of those things feel incompetent, as if they don’t have a chance to be someone just because they didn’t embody one of those traits.” She puffed up her cheeks cutely, though it was done in irritation. She then crossed her arms, leaning her body to one side, her hip cocked out as she stared Kakashi down, daring him to refute her.

The cyclopean man gulped in mild fear, not sure how he should feel over the fact that an eleven year old boy knew so much about a porno series and understood exactly what it had said, ‘what type of life has Naruto led if he can understand such things completely?’ he wondered to himself, but shook himself, straitened his back and replied,

“It isn’t that bad-“

“Yes it is~” he was cut off by Yūbina’s sing-song tone, and, looking at her, saw a strange fire ignited within her azure gaze. She huffed out another breath and shook her head,” seriously, if I had written Icha Icha Paradise, I would have gone about it differently! If you can’t connect with your readers then you’ll lose more than gain, which is bad for any writer! If I had written Icha Icha, then I would have given slightly more realistic character to the girls, made the males more believable as well, and thrown in an actual plot that wasn’t just having sex on any available surface! Icha Icha Paradise has a great potential to be a romantic-comedy, yeah sure it’ll still be an erotic novel, but there are other erotic novels that are written well so why not?”

Kakashi could only stare at her, not sure how else to react, then, he looked up in thought for a moment, speaking,” I guess you’re right..... I’m actually surprised that you don’t want it to die in a fire like most women seem to.” Some of said women listening in on the conversation started to bristle, but stopped once a harmonious laugh traveled through the air.

Yūbina had one arm wrapped around her stomach, as if she were trying to hold herself together while the other was near her mouth, a hearty laugh escaping through her lips; tears of mirth danced at the edges of her eyes as she looked at Kakashi. Finally, after a moment she was able to pull herself together enough to reply,

“Haha, a porno is a porno, no matter what anyone says; there are plenty of porno made only for women out there,” at this many a lady blushed in embarrassment,” so I don’t really care about it being a porno, just that it’s a fairly dull, uninteresting, and pretty generic porno. Like I said, I only care about the book at all because it has potential to be better so I’m disappointed that it isn’t what it could be! Heh, people need to realize that just because you’re a lady don’t mean that you’re innocent and pure; just because we don’t actively broadcast that we’re doing something doesn’t mean we aren’t doing it.” She snickered a bit more before she reached a hand out, slapping Kakashi on the shoulder,

“But anyway, that doesn’t matter, I just wanted you to know that reading that will turn your brain to mush,” she shrugged while straitening her back, a few more giggles of mirth leaving her lips,” ah, let’s get going!” she then started to walk away again, Kakashi following shortly after, though he seemed uncertain about something.

The villagers simply watched the pair as they continued to banter back and forth about the book and how well it really was written, completely ignoring all those around them, just in their own little world....
The villagers of Konoha then wondered, had the famed Sharingan no Kakashi finally found someone to settle down with to restart the Hatake line? Only the future would tell.

[Location: in front of Yaniniku Q]

Yūbina and Kakashi were just about to pass by the entrance to Yaniniku Q, when,

“Ah! Kakashi, my rival, how do you fare this most Youthful day?!” a loud and boisterous voice called out joyfully. The two stopped and turned, looking over to the one who had called to the silver-haired man; a sigh left Kakashi’s masked lips as his eyes took in the man,

“Hey Gai,” he called back in nonchalants while Yūbina seemed unable to take her eyes off of the man.

The man who had spoken was tall and very well-muscled, a fact easily seen by his almost skintight, bright green leotard that clung to his body. He had bright orange leg warmers covering his calves and just over his sandal clad feet, a Jounin vest rested on his shoulders, hanging loosely open, his forehead protector was tied about his waist and the cloth was red.

Now, this mans’ face was the most interesting.

He had a strong face, his jaw was wide and well sculpted, his nose was large but not overly so and tanned skin; black hair cut into a bowl cut, his eyes were a bit strangely shaped but they weren’t that bad, just had very large lashes on the bottom and not many on the top.

But, what drew Yūbina’s attention were the two, very, very **large eyebrows that were sitting just above his eyes!** Holy Kami, those things looked like they would come alive and start wrecking-havoc at any moment!

“Ah, you and your hip attitude! I cannot get enough of it! But, who is this fine young lady you are with?” Yūbina shook her head when she was mentioned, then smiled up at the man, bowing politely to him,

“Hello, I am Yūbina; it’s nice to meet you Gai-san.” She smiled sweetly at him, causing for the man to slap a hand to his chest dramatically,

“AH! What beauty! It is entirely my pleasure, my fair lady!” he boasted, kneeling before her and taking one of her hands to kiss. The girl giggled good-naturedly while Kakashi twitched, not sure if he should be angry or amused at the situation, considering that Gai was actually kissing the hand of an eleven year old boy.

“Thank you Gai-san,” Yūbina replied to the man’s enthusiasm with a cheerful smile of her own, then turned to Kakashi, smiling brightly,” he’s fun!” she exclaimed happily as Gai stood back up. Kakashi though just grunted, turning his gaze away in mild annoyance-though the man himself didn’t know why he was annoyed in the first place-and commented a bit roughly,

“‘Well, if you like him so much, why doncha marry him?’ Yūbina was sure that the silver-haired man was pouting, and felt strangely warmed by it, though she wasn’t sure why. Before she could reply to the petulant words Gai’s boisterous voice erupted from beside them,

“What? Marry? Wait, did I perhaps just kiss the hand of your fiancée?! Is the beautiful Yūbina-chan your fiancée Kakashi?! Have I befouled our relationship, nay, *your* relationship?!” he questioned wildly.

Yūbina stared at him both blankly and in surprise, before her hand landed on her cheek as she
“Aww, you’re so sweet! But,” she laid an open hand on her forehead dramatically, “no, we aren’t a couple, such a sad, sad thing,” she pouted her lips cutely, but then a devious grin came to her lips, but perhaps, not for long~” she sing-song-ed joyously, chuckling to herself at the dumbfounded looks on both men.

“I’m kidding, I’m kidding!” she laughed out, unable to keep them in anymore. Gai was the first to snap out of it; he grinned largely, his teeth glinting in the light and throwing a thumb up, “I look forward to it!” Kakashi looked at him in disbelief, but the man simply laughed in glee, his head thrown back almost dramatically as he did so.

After a moment more of this, Gai looked back at the couple, and then his usual grin came to his face, “How about the two of you join me and my team for lunch? We were just about to head into Yaniniku Q!” he asked happily. Yūbina looked surprised, it was then that she realized that there were three children, probably around twelve or thirteen, standing behind the man.

Two of them, a brown-haired girl whose hair was put up in buns and a black-haired boy whose hair hung down his back, looked exasperated at the man before them, while the other boy, who had black hair which was braided in the back, looked awed by him with stars sparkling in his eyes.

She then saw, out of the corner of her eye, Kakashi raise his hand, as if her were to reject them, but she cut in before he could even finish the motion, “we’d love to!” she excitedly exclaimed. Kakashi looked at her strangely with a mild annoyance shining in his eye, while Gai, and the boy with braided hair, looked at her in glee, “Well then, let us be off!” Gai called then made his way into the building, his team and the couple following after him.

They soon got a place for them all to sit at and ordered before they sat back to wait for them to be filled.

There wasn’t even a chance for any sort of silence to fall, for Gai spoke up, though thankfully not too loudly, directing his students, “well, you three need to introduce yourselves! Go on!” at that the boy with braided hair straightened his back and looked at the older woman before him, “Hai, Gai-sensei! Hello, it is nice to meet you Yūbina-san! I am Rock Lee, a part of Gai-sensei’s Team 9!” he determinedly exclaimed in a clear, and loud, voice. Yūbina nodded her head to him, “Hello Lee-san, it’s nice to meet you too!” then the next child, the girl, who tapped the back of Lee’s head before she did so, “Don’t be so loud you idiot. Hey, I’m Higurashi Tenten, but you can just call me Tenten!” she greeted happily, but not with nearly as much enthusiasm as Lee had. Yūbina nodded to her as well, but then the last of the children, the other boy, spoke up before she could reply, “I’m Hyuuga Neji,” he nodded to her sharply, “pleased to meet you.” Just from his tone of voice Yūbina knew he wasn’t ‘pleased’ in the slightest, but she simply smiled back at him, “It’s nice to meet you too, Neji-chan!” she couldn’t help herself; if he was going to be a little hardass then she was going to mess with him!

Everyone else stiffened at the table, not knowing how the Hyuuga would respond to that. But, Neji
just nodded back at her, even stiffer than before, but refrained from commenting.

‘Hmm? He has surprising self-control, but, how long will it last?’ the girl thought, but refrained from pushing, instead, she decided to have a bit of “Researching” and looked at them calmly as they waited for their food to arrive,

‘Observe!’-

Name: Hyuuga Neji
Class: Genin
Title: Hyuuga Prodigy
Level: LV44
Affiliation: Konohagakure
HP: 700/700
MP: 600/600
STR: 255
VIT: 128
DEX: 161
INT: 119 (-30% [83.3])
WIS: 116
LUK: 16 (-7 [9])

Status: Byakugan (25% to INT; +2 to WIS each level) Hyuuga Prodigy (+20 to Reputation; +5 to STR; +10% to VIT; 20% to INT and WIS) Caged Bird Seal (-30% to INT; -7 to LUK)

After his father was killed for his clan, Neji has held a deep hatred for the Main House in his clan and has worked his hardest to prove himself better than all in the Main House, especially his younger cousin, Hinata. (Empathy Bonus) Because of his pain Neji has been blinded to any and all around him, becoming a believer of Fate and tells anyone that isn’t a Prodigy or Genius that they are a lost cause. If he were to be beaten by a “Dead last” he would most likely change his view on Fate.

Has 3 Flaws

Flaws:

Fatalism Flaw (You whole heartedly believe in “Fate” and constantly announce how Fate exalts you to the point of obsession; -25% to Reputation with others; can be cured by being shown that Fate can’t stop you from making your own decisions)

Arrogant Flaw (You have a high opinion of yourself and almost refuse to listen to others’
reason; -25% to Social Skills; can be cured by forcefully being put down by superiors or by being shown up by someone they believed they were above)

Anger Flaw (You are easily angered through taunts and jeers and thus can lose control of your emotions; this can lead to death in Battle situations; can be cured through hard work and patience as well as self-control)

‘Hmm? I’m now even more curious! Will he be able to keep his mouth shut, or will he explode?’ Yūbina was interested to put it lightly, but she didn’t linger on the Hyuuga boy and then turned her gaze to Lee-

Name: Rock Lee

Class: Genin

Title: Konoha’s beautiful Green Beast Jr.

Level: LV40

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 650/650

MP: 50/50

STR: 550 (-20% [440])

VIT: 520

DEX: 325

INT: 25

WIS: 30

LUK: 9

Status: Hard Work Genius (+10 to STR; +5 to DEX; +20 to VIT) 4 of Eight Gates (+50 to SPD; +100 to STR; +50 VIT) Weights (-20% to STR; -75% to SPD)

While not able to manipulate Chakra, Rock Lee is a very formidable shinobi thanks to his Jounin Instructor, Might Gai, and has grown ever stronger in Taijutsu and in his speed. (Empathy Bonus) Being bullied for his lack of talent in Ninjutsu, Lee has turned himself into a very hard worker, gaining him the Hard Work Genius status as a result and it is his dream to prove to all those that ridiculed him that he is a worthy shinobi.

Has 1 Flaw

Flaws:

Boisterous Flaw/Skill (You are a fairly loud person, and though that’s fine when not on missions, it can cause disastrous results to any mission you take; but it’s also a gift. It allows lightening tense moods, cheering others up and even changing people who were on dark paths
to lighter ones; -10% to REP with others Neutral and below; +25% to REP with others Friendly and higher and with Unknowns; cannot be cured, but it can be lessened through constant reminding’s and great patience)

‘Hmm, he has one of mine....’-

Name: Higurashi Tenten

Class: Genin

Title: Weapons Mistress

Level: LV38

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 600/600

MP: 300/300

STR: 116

VIT: 112

DEX: 80

INT: 58

WIS: 35

LUK: 13

Status: Weapons Mistress (+2 to STR and VIT each level) Apprentice Blacksmith (25% efficiency in Black Smith skill; +7 STR to all weapons crafted)

Having been adopted by Higurashi Yukari, Tenten has grown up with weapons of all kinds and knows how to make and reinforce just about any weapon out there, but she prefers to use them. (Empathy Bonus) Because of something that happened when she was younger, Tenten is determined to prove to the world that she is a real Kunoichi and should be treated as such; and that just because she is a girl doesn’t mean she can’t kickass; but for some odd reason she is also determined to prove to the world that she isn’t a girl by refusing to do things she thinks are “girly”, Ex: cooking, sewing, Etc.

Has 0 Flaws

Yūbina was surprised by that; already she has met another person who didn’t have any Flaws, well, at least no Gamer Flaws.

But then, their food was served so she decided to focus on that instead of looking at Gai or Kakashi’s Stats, so they were safe from her prying eyes, but only for now.

Lee was very talkative and nearly talked her ear off with how much he did it without breathing; she had even had to remind him to breathe when he almost suffocated himself with his enthusiasm. It
wasn’t until they ordered another round that the blue-eyed beauty got the chance to look at the two men’s Stats-

Name: Might Gai

Class: Elite Jounin

Title: Konoha’s Beautiful Green Beast

Level: LV?

Affiliation: Konohagakure

HP: 5,000/5,000

MP: 3,000/3,000

STR: ?

VIT: ?

DEX: ?

INT: ?

WIS: ?

LUK: 49

Status: Weights (-20% to STR; -75% to SPD) 8 of Eight Gates (+300 to SPD; +500 to STR; +200 VIT)

Might Gai is a very kind, loud and enthusiastic man who holds a very close relationship with the renowned “Sharingan no Kakashi” but he is powerful in his right, being an Elite Jounin just as his silver-haired friend it, and he aspires to show the Ninja world that Ninjutsu isn’t the only way one can be powerful. (Empathy Bonus) After his own father died, Gai has tried with every ounce of his being to prove to everyone around that being a Genius didn’t automatically mean that you were the very best Ninja in the world, that there are other ways to be a great Ninja, but he has tried to prove this none harder to Hatake Kakashi, whom he refers to as his “Rival” when they are really friends, and he knows that his friend who is broken needs him until he finds someone who may be able to fix him; this is the reason he bothers Kakashi, so that he doesn’t fall to deeply into his depression.

Has 0 Flaws

Another person who didn’t have any Flaws, what an interesting day this was for Yūbina.

But then she saw his (Empathy Bonus) and couldn’t help her heart constricting in her chest; Kakashi.....

Shaking her head she glanced at the man as their server gave them their order.

He was eye-smiling indulgently at the ones before him, as the students and Gai himself had decided
to sit across from the couple, he grabbed some of the meat slices and placed them on the grill sitting between them and waited with the rest as it cooked.

He didn’t speak all that much, only commenting here and there, but nothing much and not much commitment was given to his words.

Yūbina-no, Naruto-felt a great sadness coming from the man, actually, he had felt it whenever he was in the man’s presence, even when he was small, and he wanted to help the man, but, would he be able to...?

Only one way to find out; and so Naruto snapped himself back to Yūbina and looked at the man’s Stats-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Hatake Kakashi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class: Elite Jounin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title: Sharingan no Kakashi “The Copy Ninja” “Copy-cat Kakashi”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level: LV?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation: Konohagakure</td>
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<tr>
<td>HP: 7,000/7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>MP: 10,000/10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>STR: ?</td>
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<td>INT: ?</td>
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<td>WIS: ?</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUK: 57</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Status: Genius (35% to STR; 25% to DEX; +25% to INT; +2% WIS) Sharingan (5% to INT every level; 10% to DEX every level; -100 MP extra on Chakra Reserves every minute) Stealth Master (+5 to INT; 45% to Stealth skill; +10 to Speed; 50% in battle success) Lazy (-25% to STR; -10 to Speed; -10 to REP with others)

Hatake Kakashi is well renowned as the elusive Copy-Ninja that is said to be able to get out of situations without a single scratch. He is also known as the Yondaime Hokage’s only surviving pupil and the son of the great White Fang of Konoha; not only that but he is also very well known for his aloofness and his love for Icha Icha paradise, an adult book written by Jiraiya of the Sannin. (Empathy bonus) Kakashi may seem like all that, but under that aloofness and bravado is a broken man who knows almost nothing but pain; his father killed himself when he was but a child and his sensei, the man he viewed as a surrogate father was also killed, but by the Kyuubi in this case. After his sensei died Kakashi threw himself into nothing but missions in order to mask the pain, but that pain has yet to leave him. This has also caused for
him to be cold to others and be stuck in his own grief, since he hadn’t let it run its course, and still hasn’t let it run its course, and remains stuck within it to this day. (Hint) If he were to meet someone who has suffered similar or the same pain, he may be able to pull himself out of his grief.

Has 4 Flaws

Pervert Flaw (You are openly perverted, sometimes going as far as to read Porn in front of others; -45% to REP with others; cannot be cured at this point)

Lazy Flaw/Skill (You are lazy and put things off for as long as possible, making you late to things ranging from minutes to hours; -25% in Teaching efficiency; -20% to REP with others; +20% to Tricking Opponent in Battle; can be cured through perseverance and a forced schedule)

Sidetracked Flaw (You are constantly thinking of something or someone and this stops you from moving on in life, causing you to become weaker when you could be stronger; -25% to Battle success; -25% to REP with others; -40% to Teacher Ability; can be cured through consultation from someone who has gone through similar pain or the same thing)

Deep Depression Flaw (All joy in the world seems dank and grey, as if it were nothing but a blank expanse of land and sky, and causes for you to lose sight of what’s important, even if you have friends there to help you through it; -85% to Social Skills; -10% to Teamwork; can be cured only by people with Kind Hearted and Boisterous Traits)

Yūbina felt her heart leap into her throat, Kami, she wanted to cry! What a Character Summary, hell, what Flaws! This poor man, gone through so much in his undoubtedly short life, the man couldn’t be older than thirty and no doubt he was still in his twenties.

One of her hands lightly touched Kakashi’s shoulder, though didn’t realize she had done such a thing until Kakashi looked at her with an unreadable expression, but, instead of pulling her hand away, she simply smiled, then, her impulsiveness took over her and she leaned in and placed a light, though inexperienced, kiss on his cheek.

When she pulled away a look of absolute shock was on the cyclops’ face, but she just smiled again and went back to eating, ignoring the looks of absolute shock on the faces of not only those at her table, but also of those who had been eavesdropping and watching them conspicuously, those they tried to be inconspicuous, it didn’t quite work.

But after several minutes the restaurant went back to its bustling self as the patrons went back to their eating and talking.

But it appeared that that was also the time a certain white-eyed boy couldn’t hold it in anymore. He bashed his hands against the table, catching the attention of his companions, and glared at the girl sitting across from him, who just raised a brow in confusion, which seemed to make him even angrier,

“You,” he began, seething within himself, then shook his head and put his glare back on her face, “how dare you, refer to me in such a disrespectful way!” he nearly exploded, but Yūbina simply looked at him, then, a snort sounded from her as she attempted not to smile at him,

“Wow, that took you a while to react to,” she stifled her chuckles by placing her hand on her mouth,
her eyes crinkled shut, turning from him as she tried to stop laughing. Neji just bristled at this, but before he could start shouting-

“Neji-kun! Do not talk to Yūbina-chan in such a way!” Gai reprimanded him. Neji looked at his sensei, opened his mouth to retort but then snapped it shut at the serious look on his face. He turned away, a light flush crawling along his cheek, and refused to speak from then on.

A while later they all finished eating, paid (No Gai-san you don’t have to pay!-Nonsense! It would be my pleasure!) then left. Lee and Tenten were able to convince Kakashi and Yūbina to stay around a little longer and so they walked around for a while.

[Location: Village Market]

Kakashi watched on as Yūbina, Gai, Lee and Tenten continued to talk at a rapid pace while the six of them walked through the market, Neji had kept quiet ever since he had been reprimanded for exploding at the blue-eyed beauty.

They all mostly just ignored the bartering and bantering of the vendors who were attempting to sell their wares to those in the vicinity, but then, something caught the cyclops’ eye.

Tilting his head to the side slightly, Kakashi saw the sparkle of something metal hanging at the stall of a Jeweler. Deciding that he would check it out, and that the five others were too busy talking and looking at something to notice his absence, he walked over to investigate.

Once in front of the stall Kakashi took a closer look at the trinket, eying it, wondering if, maybe-should he? Perhaps.... But would-no.

He shook his head and sighed, turning around to walk away when a voice called out to him,

“Fancy it, eh?” glancing back, Kakashi saw the man running the stall, he smiled up at the Nin before carefully picking up the trinket, allowing for Kakashi to have a closer look, who took a step back to do just that.

“A beauty, ain’t it? One of my finest pieces, years old though, it’s actually been handed down in my family for generations! Never seemed to catch the right persons’ eye....”

Kakashi was only paying the man half an ear, continuing to look the piece over, then, he nodded. Looking up at the man he spoke resolutely,

“I’ll take it.” With a smile, the man tallied up the cost then handed it over once it was paid for.

“Hope yer girlfriend likes it!” he joyfully called out as Kakashi left, but he paid him no heed as he made his way back to the group. They hadn’t moved much in his absence which was good; he felt something warm thrum through him as he got closer but his nerves also wanted to play at him, but, he pushed it all away and called out,

"Yūbina."

The girl in question turned to him, a smile and reply on her lips, but it never left them, for she had stopped in shock when Kakashi reached a hand forward, pushing something into her bangs covering part of her face, forcing them back closer to her head and from her eyes. He nodded in satisfaction,

“It looks good on you,” he commented, his voice still holding a lazy lilt to it, but it was no longer nonchalant or aloof.
Yūbina reached a hand to her hair, brushing her fingers against the metal object in her hair, tracing it, feeling its contours and smooth edges, it almost felt like a butterfly.

“Oooh, Yūbina-san! That butterfly hairclip looks wonderful on you!” Rock Lee joyously called out as Yūbina touched the clip, Tenten nodding along while Neji narrowed his eyes in confusion and Gai looked on in shock.

‘Did he just... buy this for me....?’ she thought to herself, her eyes widening as quiet words tumbled past her lips,” no one’s... no one’s ever bought something for me before...... especially not something like this....” then, bam! Her entire face was red and she was looking down in embarrassment; her eyes took on a suspiciously glassy look and her hands rested on her cheeks, pushing at them a little as she hid her face from view-she looked like she wanted to disappear right then and there.

Lee and Tenten questioned how someone like her could not get any type of gifts, but Kakashi just stared at her a moment, closed his eye and started to walk away.

Yūbina then jerked up, realizing that Kakashi, he’d, he’d bought her something! And he was just gonna leave?!

She couldn’t let that stand, wouldn’t let it, so, she ran after him.

Kakashi stopped his walking and turned around when he heard the hurried footsteps of someone behind him, but he was not expecting what was to come next.

She had jumped.

Yūbina had ran up to him and jumped onto him.

Just as their bodies collided Kakashi’s arms wrapped around her waist as her arms wrapped about his neck; she leaned her head forward and pushed it into the side of his face, right where his jaw and neck met, her feet were dangling, several inches off the ground, but she didn’t care, she just wanted to hug him.

“Thank you....” she whispered, she was shaking again, Kakashi noted, just like before.....

His eye fell closed and he tightened his grip on her waist, placing his face into the cruck of her neck,“ you’re welcome,” he replied gently, her softly spoken words of not even five minutes ago coming to mind.... he’d just given her something, and no one had ever given her something.

An unseen smile came to Kakashi’s lips, and he relaxed where he stood, relishing the kind embrace.

Unbeknownst to his longtime friend also had a smile touching his lips, though no one noticed as everyone stared in shock and awe at the display before them. He chuckled and shook his head, ‘Perhaps, Kakashi no longer needs me in that way, perhaps, he’s found someone who can truly fix him.’ He thought to himself, his smile never leaving his lips. He would never leave Kakashi, the man needed all the friends he could get, but, now, he had Yūbina, and she seemed like just the right person to fix his broken heart and soul.

After a time, they pulled apart. Yūbina smiled a watery smile down at the man while Kakashi eye-smiled back then, carefully, moved his hands to her waist-causing for a small “eep!” of surprise to leave her lips-and lightly put her back on the ground.

Gai gestured to his team not question the duo about what had just transpired and then spoke loudly,
“Ah! Is it that time already? It would appear that my team and I still have some training to do! We must now be off, Kakashi, Yūbina-chan, have a most Youthful day!” and with that they all raced off (well, Gai and Lee raced off, Neji and Tenten ran but didn’t go at the same speed as their sensei and teammate).

The couple could only stare at where they just were, but Kakashi just shook his head—he didn’t want to think of what Gai could have possibly thought was happening in that moment, then touched Yūbina on the shoulder, catching her attention.

“Let me take you home,” he quietly offered. Yūbina looked surprised for a moment, but then smiled up at him, though her face was still pink it wasn’t the tomato red from earlier, and nodded, “Alright,” and with that, they were off.

It didn’t take them that long to get to the Apartment Complex that Uzumaki Naruto lived at and it took even less time for the two of them to slip through the boys’ open window that led to his kitchen.

Once inside Yūbina’s form shifted into that of a boy, and he moved away from the man beside him, his flush coming back to his face; but, Kakashi didn’t want that and so spoke, “Why’d you kiss me?” he asked softly. Naruto stopped in his tracks, but he wouldn’t turn to look at the man. After a couple minutes of silence, a soft voice answered, “I..... I don’t know.....” the blond turned his head slightly, allowing for Kakashi to see part of his flushed whiskered cheeks, as well as the corner of his azure eyes. The silver-haired man stepped forward and placed a hand on his shoulder in comfort, then, Naruto looked up at him, searching, and Kakashi noticed that the clip was still in his hair, keeping some of his locks away from hanging over his face, then he heard him speak, “why’d you give me this?” he asked while his fingers gently brushed over the hairclip.

Kakashi watched the motion before shaking his head, “I don’t know.....” he replied honestly, because, truly, he didn’t know why he had gone over to the stall in the first place, why he’d thought to buy it for Naruto-not Yūbina, Naruto—and then actually buying it for the boy.

His hand reached up and unclipped the piece then showed it to the boy, and a gasp of surprise sounded from him.

The clip was small and seemed to be made out of platinum for it was lighter and shone differently than silver would. On one side was a small butterfly with swirling and curling etchings carved into its wings; it looked as if the metal was placed over an aquamarine stone then the metal was carved away in order to show some of it off.

Then, it was turned over, and on the other side was a swirl, it looked almost exactly like an Uzumaki swirl, the carving in this followed the swirl from beginning to end, but the stone showing under this wasn’t an aquamarine. A shimmering white that had a rainbow of color reflecting off of it, though not so much that you couldn’t see the white; was under the metal.

Naruto realized that it was an opal, and, opal was his birth stone.

He couldn’t bring himself to look up at Kakashi, so, he just leaned his face into his chest again, just standing there stiffly, as if he were waiting for him to push him away.

But he didn’t push him away.

Kakashi’s arms came up and rested on his shoulders gently, he squeezed him and held him close.
Naruto took a deep breath, then, raised his arms and wrapped them around the man’s back, but, he still didn’t push him away, he just took a slight step forward, so that they would be closer, and continued to hug him.

A faint sting entered his eyes, but Naruto pushed it away as he burrowed his face into Kakashi’s chest and just stood there, holding this man who had entered, left, then reentered his life again. He smiled, this man, he was awkward, but that was fine, so was Naruto; he wanted to help him, to heal him, to fix him, but he knew that that couldn’t happen until he got his own act together, that damned [???] was stilling fucking with his Stats and mind, literally, so he couldn’t be Kakashi’s pillar right now, but, maybe Yūbina could.

Tucking that thought away for later, Naruto started to pull away from Kakashi. He looked up at him and smiled at him,’’ thank you, again, Kashi,’’ Kakashi startled at that, but didn’t comment, nodded then handed Naruto the hairclip.

“You’re welcome Naruto. I should be going though; goodbye,”

Naruto nodded to him and waved as the man left, who waved back with a nod and a quiet “see you later” and then he was gone.

After he left Naruto let out a calming sigh, looked at the clip in his hand and smiled down at it, then, placed it back in his hair, though with the swirl side facing out instead of the butterfly-didn’t want to blow his identity as Yūbina before he had even completed it.

After that he stood there, not sure what he should do; then, he perked up and left his apartment, heading over to Training Grounds 1.

When he got there Naruto spotted Kira under his usual tree, looking over a scroll, but he glanced up once he arrived. Smiling up at him Kira stood while putting the scroll away.

“Hey! Had a good time?” he asked as Naruto got closer. He leaned against the tree he had been sitting under and crossed his arms over his chest, smiling at the blond. Naruto stopped in front of him, excited energy rolling off of him in waves. He gestured excitedly at his hair,

“Do ya like it?” he asked, almost bouncing on his toes. Kira looked up into his hair and saw the hairclip; a look of surprise was then on his face,

“Ooh! That’s really pretty! Where’d you get it?” he asked eagerly. Naruto smiled and twirled around-something of which he would no doubt deny to his dying breath-and made a swooning motion,

“Eh, the ever well renowned Hatake Kakashi, the Copy Ninja, got it. And he was aware of who I was, though no one else did!” he snickered,” I’d asked Jiji to let me meet one of my old ANBU guards from when I was younger, and he pulled through! Hatake Kakashi, what a person.....” he trailed off, his smile fading, murmuring,” what a beautiful, wonderful, broken person.....”

Naruto then looked at Kira, took in a deep breath, then let it out asking,’’ can we go to one of the Dungeons? I need to beat something up-I think I have too many pent up emotions!” the brunette looked at him closely, wondering what had taken place during the few hours he was gone, but, he didn’t push and just smiled at him in understanding, subtly letting the blond know that he was there for him,

“Sure, let’s go. I think it’s time you fought one of the Bosses now,” with that he led Naruto away to Training Grounds 12, they both entered and started fighting the many Chakra Spiders that wanted to
After each wave they picked up any items that were dropped before fighting the next one, but once they finished with the third wave, they weren’t able to do so.

Right after Naruto killed the last of the Chakra Spiders the ground started to shake again, though this time, it was much worse than before,

“The hell!” Naruto yelped as he tried to steady himself; he heard Kira grunt out his reply,

“I think the Boss is coming!” he called out before, out of the trees, a **GIANT FREAKING SPIDER LADY** burst in. From what appeared to be her waist down was the body of a spider, creepy, clicking legs and all, but the top half was of a woman, she was pale skinned and her body was willowy and was covered with a red Kimono that had gold and black accents with long black hair flowing down her back in waves; her face was angular and her eyes were a deep crimson. A fanged smile came to her face,

“Ah~ it would appear you have been killing my children....” her features then sharpened into a fierce glare,” Prepare for death you cretins!” she screeched, her spider legs rushing her towards them.

The two of them just barely moved out of the way of the woman, her now clawed hands just missing their bodies. Jumping back around, Naruto looked at the spider woman, ”**Observe!**” he yelled, jumping back as his yelling caught her attention-

**Jorogumo**

**Level:** LV33

**HP:** 1000/1000

**MP:** 2990/3000

**Jorogumo is the mother of all natural born Chakra Spiders; she has them by luring traveling men to her with her beautiful features before trapping them and taking them to impregnate her-though this spider-woman is thought to be nothing but a myth, that is not true. She will kill any who harm her children, even if they only did it out of self-defense**

Gulping back his fear Naruto dashed out of the way of her claws, Jorogumo hissed when she missed yet again and twisted her body around in order to keep her prey in her sights. A strange growling purr erupted from her throat as her eyes narrowed in concentration.

Naruto made an attempt to circle around to Kira so that he’d have a higher chance at surviving, but Jorogumo saw this and actively kept them from each other, making Naruto clench his teeth in frustration and worry,

‘*Can I kill that thing?’* he thought in worry, biting his bottom lip, ’I mean, I’m only Level 14 for Kami’s sake! Argh, how can I defeat this lady?!’ Just then Jorogumo rushed at him, slicing at his cheek. His eyes widened as he felt a numbness fill his face, ‘*Poison.....*’ he thought distantly, his mind finally calming all the way down.

The moment that happened he took in Jorogumo again, and watched as she carefully turned around, a malicious smirk gracing her face. His face had gone blank, taking in her form, the way her body moved, the way her legs clinked together, and then, whoosh, she was going at him again.
He spun out of the way, one of his Kunai popping out and tearing into the side of her spider body.

She hissed and drew back, her hands fell onto the wound, and when she looked up, murder was in her eyes,” you little cretin! I’ll kill you!” she screeched and shot at him again, faster this time, but Naruto moved out of the way, sure, one of her legs caught him in the side but he would survive; out of the corner of his eye he spotted the loss of fifty HP, hmm, he would have to be careful.

After she came at him a third time, Naruto knew he got her.

She had a pattern, and anyone he has played videos games knows, that once you figure out the Bosses pattern, you’ll win.

A smirk came to his lips as he rushed forward, his hands flew up and formed a cross,” **Kage Bunshin no Jutsu!**” he called out, then, fifty **Kage Bunshin** came to be, surrounding the woman. She hissed every which way, trying to locate the original, but found that she couldn’t; they all felt the same, all smelled the same, all **looked** the same.

Something within her broke and she let out a blood curdling scream, and then, from her body burst forth hundreds of Chakra Spiders, though these looked far more fearsome and vicious than the ones before—gleaming red eyes, dripping mouths, sleek black bodies. They all rushed the blond, but Naruto refused to be pushed back.

Brandishing a Kunai, he rushed at her, dodging his clones and the spiders, his eyes focused on the prize.

But then, he was stabbed, right through the stomach.

“**Naruto!????**” Kira screamed.

Jorogumo laughed in glee while she brought him to her face. She sneered at his choking face, relishing in the blood pouring from his lips; she got right in his face,” not so confident now, hmm?” it was perfect.

Then it wasn’t.

He.

Smirked.

Back.

“Not quite.” Then, poof! Gone, then-

Pain, in her throat.

He was behind her that was a clone!

“Surprise, Bitch.” And then she knew no more.

Naruto sliced through her neck, taking it off in one fell swoop. It went flying into the field as her body disintegrated, along with all of the other Chakra Spiders.

Kira rushed over to Naruto and sighed in relief when he saw that he was fine, but then-

“**Hwa!**” Naruto turned and threw up, choking a bit on it. He inhaled sharply and stepped back, his eyes closed. Kira put a hand on his shoulder, be the blond simply shook his head.
“Just, just give me a sec. I’ve never, never ki-killed something remotely human looking before so, just, one sec.” Kira nodded and took a step back.

Naruto took in a couple more breaths and was fortunately able to center himself again. He turned to Kira and smiled, though a bit weakly.

“Well, that was an experience!” before Kira could reply-

**Congratulations! Your level has increased by 1.**

Kira chuckled while Naruto sighed. He laughed harder when the whiskered boy shot him a dirty look,

“Were you trying to kill me Kira? What the hell man?” he exclaimed angrily. Kira waved his hands in defense,

“What? Of course not! Bosses are picked spat out randomly! She was a higher level Boss, she shouldn’t have been spat out first, it should have been some other type of Boss! I swear, that was not on purpose!”

Naruto looked at him in distrust more a moment, before he nodded,” okay, I’ll believe you..... But seriously, this game is trying to kill me...” he shook his head, then suddenly perked up,” oh yeah, **Rewards!**” he exclaimed then ran over to the small pile on the ground.

The first stack was money, which he picked up-

**5,000 Ryo**

Then it vanished to appear in his **Inventory**. Smiling Naruto looked at the next thing, which looked like a potion bottle but it was larger-

**Health Potion**

**A health potion that heals up to 300 HP when used.**

There were two of them so he picked them both up. Then the last of them was some sort Kimono that looked a lot like the one Jorogumo had been wearing-

**Jorogumo’s Kimono**

**This beautiful Kimono once belonged to the seductress Jorogumo, but it now belongs to you**

**+50% in Sex Appeal**

**+30% in Defense**

**+40% in Stealth when worn**

Naruto was in awe of the garment, but sadly it wasn’t something he’d be able to wear, since it was a very girly Kimono-

He stopped himself at that, grinning gleefully, and then placed the Kimono in his **Inventory**.

Then, he turned around and left the Grounds, leaving Kira and his Bunshin to pick up the extra items left over. Kira went rushing after him, happy that when Naruto’s Bunshin picked something up it
automatically put it in his Inventory, and asked,” where’re you going?”

Naruto looked at him right before the threshold of the Training Grounds and smiled sweetly, then, Naruto was no longer there and a black haired, blue eyed beauty stood in his place.

“I’m going shopping.” And with that, she left. Kira followed swiftly after her, looking up at the much taller girl, and asked,

“Really? Why?” the girl smiled down at him kindly as she replied,

“Oh, it has to do with my hairclip,” she gestured to the clip, which was showing a butterfly instead of a swirl,” I transformed into this when I went to go see Jiji, I didn’t feel like dealing with stupid people, but then I got the idea! How about I make this person real? I’m going shopping for some needed things as a strong female who don’t need no man!” she had whispered this to Kira, not wanting anyone else to hear, then grinned at him,” by the way, my name is Yūbina.” Kira nodded and followed along silently as Yūbina made her way through the village.

She stopped at several stores, all of them Ninja, but left almost immediately, as she decided that it wasn’t what she was looking for. It wasn’t until the seventh store that she decided to actually look around, Kira right behind her.

She looked around and grabbed a couple shirts, they were all in shades of blue, violet or black, some shorts that were either black or grey, and some accessories, like arm warmers or leg warmers, stockings and the like.

She tried on a couple and then nodded her head in satisfaction, but stopped at the Shinobi sandals before making her way to the front counter.

Right there, right before her eyes, were several pairs of black and navy blue high heel sandals, but what caught her attention was that, the heels, on the sides of the actual heel, was sharpened, but it was subtle and not easily noticed-heck, she’d only noticed because they were near her face.

She grinned deviously and grabbed a pair, then went to the front, and bought them from a nice man named Higurashi Yasahiro, Tenten’s adoptive father.

“Hope you have a wonderful day, miss,” he told her politely as she put everything she had just bought into a sealing scroll. Yūbina smiled at him,

“Thank you, and the same to you!” with that she bowed politely then left, Kira trailing after her.

They both made their way to Naruto’s apartment complex, then entered the boys’ room, Yūbina’s form melting into Naruto’s once they got there. The boy stretched and as he did a Bunshin appeared, who took the sealing scroll and made its way to Naruto’s room. The whiskered blond smiled at his friend.

“I’ll make dinner!” he stated and started it up, making rice and Yakitori. Once they sat down to eat Kira moaned after his first bite, commenting,

“Seriously, your cooking is so good! I just want to eat it all the time!” Naruto looked at Kira and smiled,

“Tell me where you live, I can make you breakfast so that you don’t have to come all the way here all the time!” Kira looked away at that, a blush forming on his cheeks. Naruto looked at him questionably while the brunette replied,
“Yeah, well, that won’t really be possible....” Naruto tilting his head to the side in confusion,

“Why’s that? Where do you live?” he asked. Kira shook his head,

“That’s just the thing,” he looked Naruto in the eye, “I don’t.” He stated simply. Naruto just stared at him for a moment, flabbergasted, “wha? Whadaya mean?”

“I don’t have an apartment.”

“But why? You have the Ryo to pay for one?” Kira looked away, uncomfortable,

“Well, you saw it for yourself,” he mumbled, “it’s one of my Flaws, it’s my Stray Cat Flaw; I can’t really stay in one place for too long, I get antsy and feel like I’m intruding on other people, even when I know I’m not,” he shook his head again and fell silent. Naruto just stared at him a moment, but then he softly spoke,

“Well, I’ll still make breakfast for you.....” Kira nodded his head in thanks, and then that topic was dropped though Naruto didn’t forget it, it was still on the back of his mind, just waiting for him to poke at it.

They finished eating and Kira headed out for the night. Naruto offered his place to stay but Kira declined,

“Nah, I’m fine. I wanna be out tonight anyway, and no I’m not being sarcastic nor am I lying.” Naruto closed his mouth and nodded to the other boy, then, when he was gone took a shower, brushed his teeth and headed off to bed.

You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.

Naruto, like every morning, rolled out of bed onto his floor, but he just dusted himself off and took a shower and brushed his teeth. A created a clone that was sent off to find Kira and tell the boy that he would be meeting with him later to train some more, but for now he had business to attend to with the Hokage; he also sent some breakfast with the clone.

Once he finished with his own breakfast he went into his room and unsealed the clothes he got.

After a moment he decided on a violet long-sleeved tee shirt that had little holes on the ends for him to stick his thumbs through, black short shorts (again not quite booty-shorts) and pure white stockings with black Shinobi sandal high heels.

He transformed into Yūbina, completely naked save for a bra and panties-I need to go buy some underwear later-and put the clothes on.

Lastly he placed the hairclip in her hair, butterfly out. Just as she was leaving the apartment a thought struck her,’ I’ll need to buy a chain or something to hold this so that I don’t lose it when I’m not wearing it....’ and with that she was off.

[Location: Hokage Tower]

Yūbina walked into the Hokage’s office, a smile on her face, the Hokage smiled back at her, taking in her new clothes,” go shopping did you?” he asked, though it was in jest, so he wasn’t expecting for the girl to nod to him,

“Yes, yesterday afternoon I decided to go shopping, I needed to have nice clothes for when I’m,
well, you know,” she grinned at him. Hiruzen opened his mouth to ask just where Naruto could have possibly gotten the money to get her new clothes but, just shook his head with a sigh.

“I’ll never understand the way you do things, so there’s no point in trying....” he muttered tiredly, Yūbina simply laughed at him.

Another shake of his head and he was back, smiling up at the girl, and restarting the conversation,” well,” he began as he gestured to the chair sitting right before his desk, a lot closer than before, as if he wanted her to be able to use his desk as well,” you’re here which means that you want to continue with what you suggested yesterday, so please, let us get on with it.”

Yūbina nodded then sat gracefully in the chair; then noticing the papers neatly stacked in the middle of the desk, seeing that they were some sort of information and ID papers. She laughed softly then leaned forward, one of her hands resting lightly on the surface and she smiled at him,

“Shall we?” she asked. The aged Hokage nodded, then reached over and picked up the first paper on the small stack, handing it to her,

“Here you are, please place your full name, age, gender and home address on here, then write on this registration,” he grabbed at the next piece of paper,” your application to become a Kunoichi of Konoha, if you have been a Kunoichi of any other village, please put it down, then, on this one, which is attached to the Ninja registration sheet, you will writing down your strengths and weaknesses; don’t worry, you can add or take away anything in the official registration before you become an official Ninja. Please fill it out,” he nodded at her, though there were still a couple pieces of paper left over, but, Yūbina nodded with a gulp, then reached over and started to fill in everything.

She looked over the paper, grabbed the pen sitting on the desk, then put it to the paper-

Name: Kaiyō Yūbina

Gender: Female

Age: 19

DoB: May 17th

Home Address: Akashingō Street, Complex 12, 2nd floor, Room No. 19

She filled in a couple more things before moving onto the registration, then when she finished with that she waited for the Hokage to give her anything else. Hiruzen looked over the papers briefly, then looked at the address she had given. He raised questioning eyes to look at her,

“Akashingō Street? Are you sure?” Yūbina nodded with a determined and serious look on her,

“Yes. I’m the only person who lives there, not only that but I own the place so I thought it best to just use that instead of trying to find somewhere else that could potentially have unhappy results.” She shrugged, but the Hokage nodded at that,

“Hmm, okay, Akashingō it is,” he looked over the words a bit more then stopped on her DoB, chuckling at it,” yesterday was the 17th, well, I guess you aren’t lying in that regard,” a few more chuckles left his mouth as he looked over the rest of the papers, then he smiled at her,” well, all this appears to be in order, but before we’re finished,” he handed her the last two papers,” you need to have a look at that.”
Yūbina took them from his hand, and once she started reading realized that they were some sort of Rules and Regulations sheet for all Ninja, all well as waiver form that stated that if she were to die on the field anything she owns, if not designated to a specific person in the below designation form, then they would be given to the village to be used at its’ leisure along with a couple other things.

Once she finished she picked the pen back up and signed the papers, stating that she understood what applying to be a Kunoichi meant and who her designated person was, which at this point was no one since she doesn’t know that many people.

Once that was finished she handed over the papers, the Hokage looked over them, nodded with a satisfied smile then wrote his signature on them to show that he both approved and was a witness to the proceeding. When that was finished he made the same strange gesture with his hand that he had the day before, when he had been signaling Kakashi to come out of hiding, and an ANBU appeared, nodding to the Hokage, took the papers then disappeared.

The Hokage smiled at Yūbina,” well the last thing you’ll need to do is have a picture taken, which I have arranged for, you will mind the man on the rooftop, where most of our pictures our taken, than after that it’ll take at most a couple weeks for all of the paperwork to be finished processing, but then you’ll be an official Kunoichi of Konoha!” he stood up, Yūbina doing the same and shook his hand when he presented it,” I look forward to working with you, Yūbina-chan,” the girl nodded, an excited smile on her face,

“Un, as do I, Hokage-sama!”

After that they talked a bit, though this time as Naruto and Jiji, and the man agreed to let Naruto to prank his classmates in order to help them get better as Ninja and that he would be alerting the teachers of that soon, then, he shooed him off with a smile, and Naruto was certain that his life right now, was as perfect as it would ever get.

Uzumaki Naruto – The Gamer; Player 2 – Jinchuuriki – LV15

Chapter End Notes

Translations:

Yūbina = Graceful
Kaïyō = Ocean
Akashingō = Red Light
Yakitori = Grilled chicken

That’s all I think, though a quick one that I just remembered (Hai = yes, okay, anything like that)

I just called the street Naruto lives on Red Light street, because Naruto lives right next to the slums, and what do people sometime call the slums? The Red Light district.

Also, Naruto’s alter-ego is just “Graceful Ocean’ because I’m a lil shit.
That’s all that I have to say on that.

I’ll get back to you guys next week.
The Beetle within the Shadows

Chapter Notes

Hopefully I'll be able to finish the next chapter by next week, so you will find out then if I was able to finish on time or not.

Disclaimer: I don’t own the Naruto cast or the world, The Gamer elements and anything that might belong to other people

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The Beetle within the Shadows

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Or

Shino and Shika

[May 19th: 6:00 Am]

Beep beep, beep beep, beep beep, be-click

The sound of an alarm clock beeping was cut off by a soft click; the rustling of sheets soon followed as a body sat up in a bed.

A soft sigh drifted into the quiet room as the one giving it got out of bed.

Aburame Shino ran his fingers through his short hair as he stood from his bed and made his way to his personal bathroom.

He used the toilet then took a quick shower and brushed his teeth, then made his way out of his room, holding his Jinbei in his hands while a towel was wrapped about his waist, a smaller one on his neck to catch the few droplets that fell from his hair.

He quietly sat back on his bed, taking the towel about his neck and quickly drying it, and then took his larger towel and swiftly dried the rest of himself. After that he put on his normal glasses then a black training gi and headed out of his room.

He quietly made his way through the halls of his home, knowing that the only person currently awake would be his father, but that he was busy taking care of Clan business so it was best if he kept quiet and didn’t disturb him, so, putting his Ninja training to use he crept along the halls and down the stairs until he made his way to the backyard.

Heaving a sigh of relief the brunet made his way to the middle of the yard, taking a seat and crossing his legs in the standard meditation stance. He first breathed in, then he focused on the Kikaichū
skittering within his body; they were excited, just like him, he would be seeing Naruto again today.....

He knew that his father would wonder why his Kikaichū were so out of control, especially since he has always had tremendous control over his emotions even when he was little, so he worked to calm them first, evening his breathing and focusing on the serene atmosphere; the gently rising sun, the soothing breeze, the faint rustling of the leaves in the trees, he soaked it all in, entering his very being—he took in a breath and let it out—his Kikaichū were calm, as was his heart and thankfully it stayed that way.

After he was able to calm himself completely he stood up, spread his legs slightly in a fighting stance while bringing his arms up to his chest, palms out, breathed in, then out, then he struck out his right arm, the air whooshed about it as he swiftly moved his other arm. He kicked the air then struck out with his palm all the while calmly breathing in and out.

He went through a few more katas and stances before he brought his arms back to himself, took a breath, and then allowed for his entire body to completely relax. Then, he moved on to doing some other things, like crunches, push-ups and sit-ups.

All too soon it was 7 o’clock and he headed back into his home and up to his room, wiped the sweat from his body and put on his usual gear before he headed to the dining room where his mother was setting out breakfast.

He kissed his mother on the cheek while muttering a ‘good morning’ as he helped set the rest of the table.

The Aburame Clan was similar to the Hyuuga, but the main difference was that the other clan members weren’t treated like servants to serve the Head of the clan and his family hand and foot—Shibi, Shino’s father—preferred that the members of the clan, including his wife and son, take responsibility for the things they could do themselves, like setting the table and cooking breakfast, Shibi believe that if you can do something yourself and if there is no reason why you don’t need to be doing it, then you should do it.

That was something Shino admired and loved about his father. He was a quiet man, like most Aburame, he wasn’t lazy and he wasn’t afraid to do things like his own laundry or cook—though he was banned from the kitchen on the account that the last time he tried to cook he set it on fire—and he really admired that in him; which is why the Hyuuga tended to upset him as they usually just delegated every little thing to the ‘Lower’ Hyuuga of the Branch family while the ‘Higher’ Hyuuga of the Main family mostly just sat around on their asses and enjoyed their free time by being assholes.

He had at first thought that Hinata was different, but, then she had started to stalk Naruto all the time, and she just let everything happen to her and he knew, after the revelation of the day before that she most likely, though maybe she only did it subconsciously, purposefully holds herself back and doesn’t defend herself because Naruto refuses to stand by and watch anyone being bullied.

He sighed then mentally shook his head, shooing away the thoughts as he sat down to eat with his parents.

There wasn’t much conversation at the table, but there rarely ever was. Every one of the Aburame Clan tended to be quiet, including him and his parents, though his mother was more outgoing than his father, it wasn’t by much so there wasn’t much on that front. She would occasionally say something or ask her husband or son their thoughts on a certain topic, but for the most part there was only silence at the table.
As he finished eating he got up, politely excusing himself, but before he could move to the door his father’s voice sounded in the quiet house,“you need to calm your Kikaichū Shino, you know what will happen if you lose control of them.” The man glanced at him while Shino nodded, fighting down the flush that tried to claw it’s why up his neck, he couldn’t help it; he felt excited again.

The brunet took a deep, calming breath then slowly exhaled, feeling his body relax again. He nodded to his father and mother,” I’m heading out,” he called as he pulled on his sandals and then he was out the door.

It didn’t take him all that long to get to the Academy, luckily he wasn’t late like he had been at the beginning of the last week, but the blond Uzumaki was still there before him.

He felt his body going warm at the sight of the blond as he got closer to him, taking the seat to his right since Shikamaru appeared to prefer the one to his left,” good morning Naruto-kun,” he murmured softly, a barely there smile playing at his lips.

The boy next to him though had no such reservations and grinned largely, his eyes squinting with how wide it was,” hey Shino! How’re you?” he leaned forwards slightly, his hair swaying with him, his hair was getting longer....

“I am doing well, and you?” he asked as he spotted the third and fourth of their group making their way towards them. Naruto grinned wider, if that were possible,

“I’m doing good! Oh yeah, Shika,” Naruto turned to the other brunet with a closed eyed grin,” you guys were wonderin’ if you could train with me and I was able to talk it over with my training partner, they said that it was okay so tomorrow we’ll start training together!”

Shikamaru nodded as he sat, Chouji just behind him as he spoke up,” okay, but why are we starting tomorrow? Why not today?” the Nara questioned. Naruto blinked at him a moment before he squinted at him, replying,

“Uh, cause you guys have parents and if you randomly disappear all day I think they’ll get worried, so you should tell them where you’ll be for the day after school so that they won’t get all worried. I don’t want to be the reason your parents yell at you or anythin’,” he shrugged while bouncing his leg, it looked like he wanted to sit cross-legged at the seat but was forcing himself not to.

Shino was surprised that Naruto had even thought of that, though, he mused to himself, Naruto wasn’t quite the person everyone had assumed he was, if he thought ahead more than people thought then that was simply a part of him that no one had yet seen.

“Ah, okay, I’ll make sure to tell my parents,” Shikamaru reassured the blond, who nodded happily,

“As will I.” Shino agreed quietly which earned him a warm grin.

“Me too,” Chouji added while he ate his chips. Naruto smiled at them all while leaning forward, his hair swaying again and catching Shino’s eye.

It was then Shino noticed the gleaming hairclip in the Uzumaki’s hair, holding back the bangs falling softly over the right side of his face, partially covering his eyebrow, this was a surprise as Naruto was wearing his goggles which usually kept his hair out of his face in all ways, but it appeared that it had grown too long and heavy for it to be able to keep it from falling in his face.

He reached his hand out, towards the hair, reaching....

Naruto started, looking at the Aburame in surprise as Shino’s index and thumb closed around and
lightly tugged on one of his locks of hair.

“Your hair has gotten longer,” he commented almost idly, his eyes focused on the length of hair within his grasp, twirling it gently. Naruto blinked owlishly at him before he reached a hand up and tugged on a lock of his own hair, a look of contemplation overtaking his features,

“Hmm,” he hummed quietly,” I guess so… Now that I think about it I haven’t cut it in a while….” He mused to himself, twining the soft strands around his fingers before he let them go with a flick of his wrist, the strands bounced in the air before coming to a gentle stop.

Shino couldn’t help the flush from creeping onto his cheeks, the action had been strangely graceful and he had never seen Naruto move in such a way… that boy would no doubt be the death of him, he just knew it.

Shaking his head in order to clear it, Shino continued the conversation,” you cut your own hair?” he asked, reluctantly bringing his hand away from the surprisingly silky soft strands.

Naruto nodded his head absently, reaching a hand back to his hair, twirling it again,” hm, yeah, I usually have to do it every couple days since my hair grows pretty fast. But I don’t feel like cutting it, so I’ll just let it grow out; I wonder how long it will get?” he mused aloud, his lips pursed in thought as his eyes glazed over.

Before anyone could say any more Iruka and his assistants started class.

“Alright class; quiet down its time to begin!” some of the students began quieting down while others continued to talk, either because they hadn’t heard Iruka speak over the din of the other speaking students or because they were ignoring him in favor of gossiping with their friends.

A large sigh left Iruka’s lips before his face took on an angry flush, then-

“Shut up ya brats!?” he nearly screamed, causing for everyone to go quiet and sit at attention. Iruka smiled in satisfaction at that before continued,

“Good, you’re all quiet, now,” he picked something up from his desk and held it out before him; Shino realized that it was a clipboard as the man started taking roll-call.

Once that was finished, and after a quick smile sent Naruto’s way, the man started up again

“Now with that out of the way, the first lesson for today will be Chakra control exercises, and no, no one is allowed to skip out on it!” several groans filled the space of the classroom, though instead of looking angry like Shino would have thought him to be, the man simply looked greatly amused,” oh calm down the lot of you, you’ll survive! Now, I will be calling you down in groups of three; if you make a fuss about it then the one in here who was given permission to cause mischief in this class will be raining hell on your head!”

Everyone stopped at that, all of them seemed both intrigued and terrified by the implications of that statement. Iruka nodded his head in satisfaction and then held up his clipboard again,

“Will Aburame Shino, Akimichi Chouji and Aisaka Harumi please come down.” The two boys and one girl nodded then silently made their way down to the front of the classroom.

“Good, now, here, I want to see how far along you are with the leaf concentration technique-you all will be doing this first so keep that in mind!” he called out to the class as he handed each Academy student a leaf.
At his nod the three of them placed the leaf on their foreheads and concentrated on keeping it there with Chakra alone.

Of the three of them Shino did the best, being able to last for a couple minutes while the other two weren’t, though Iruka just smiled encouragingly at them while Hikaru and Haruka were writing something down on their own clipboards.

After that everyone was called down alphabetically, Shino saw as Shikamaru did the best out of his own group and how Sakura did the best in her group, then the last three were called up,

“Next and last will be Uchiha Sasuke, Uzumaki Naruto and Yamanaka Ino! Please come down you three.” At that the three preteens nodded and got up, made their way to the front of the class and took the leaves offered to them by Iruka.

As they all started Shino didn’t take his eyes off of Naruto, wondering how he would do – after all, the boy had been training so perhaps he had been training in this way as well?

He got his answer in the former of Naruto grabbing a couple more leaves and placing them on his forehead, after removing his goggles, and on his wrists, then he just stood there with his eyes closed, breathing in calmly and deeply as he concentrated on the task at hand.

Shino was surprised by this, Naruto was able to do more than one at a time? That was unusual, though, perhaps it was to be expected, the boy had way too much energy as it was, and maybe he also had too much Chakra as well and needed to have more than one outlet?

His silent contemplation was interrupted by a whiny voice,

“Sensei! Naruto-baka is cheating!” one Haruno Sakura called out in a whine. This just caused for Iruka to sigh loudly, obviously trying to convey his displeasure at the accusation that way instead of flipping his shit at the pink haired girl. He looked at Sakura and stated simply,

“No, he’s not. If Naruto needs more than one leaf then he can use more than one leaf, I never once said that it wasn’t allowed to use more than one leaf, Sakura-chan, and,” he cut her off before she could start whining again,” if you accuse any of your classmates, including Naruto, again of cheating without reason other than you dislike them then you will be suspended from school for three days.”

The girl sputtered in shock for several seconds which allowed for Iruka to address the rest of the class,” the same goes for everyone else! If I catch any of you saying one of your classmates are cheating or lying just because you happen to not like them then you will be suspended for three days, the first time. Do not force my hand further or you will regret it,” Everyone nodded at the suddenly deadly serious man nervously, not wanting to invoke the wrath of a truly pissed off Iruka who was pretty terrifying when he was just mildly angry.

Once he saw all the nods Iruka nodded back then turned to the three behind him, who were just about finished. A couple more seconds then Iruka called for them to stop, taking the leaves from them and sending them back to their seats.

But as that happened Sakura regained her wits and scowled at her teacher, fuming before she nearly screeched,” you can’t do that! My Aunt is on the Civilian Council, so if you wanna keep your job then you better not suspend me!”

Shino was surprised and disgusted at the girl, how dare she assume that just because she had a relative of high standing that she could boss around and threaten a teacher. Thankfully Iruka spoke up before anyone else could.
Iruka focused his gaze on the girl, it was scarily calm, and he spoke softly, slowly as if he were speaking to a two year old.

“You are an Academy student, Sakura-chan, that means that you almost exclusively fall under the rule of the Hokage, which means that you aren’t a full civilian. The Civilian Council has no legal say in how Ninja do anything, unless it directly affects the civilians of this village. If you want to throw around your Aunt’s title to get special privileges then perhaps you should quit the Academy and go to one of the civilian schools, where that threat you just gave me would actually matter. Now, I will only say this once,” he slowly made his way to the girl, stopping right in front of her, his face hard and disapproving, the girl shrank back from him, finding it hard to breathe,

“If you ever threaten me again, you will be facing consequences; that person I mentioned earlier who has permission to cause mischief also has authority to discipline unruly students who disobey their sensei without reason; do I make myself clear?” the girl nodded her head swiftly, gulping audibly as she tried to sink in to the desk behind her.

Iruka nodded with a smile then calmly went over to his two assistants as if nothing had happened and started to quietly discuss with them the results of the exercise. While that was happening Shino decided to speak to the blond who was sitting beside him.

“Why did you use more than one leaf?” he asked in curiosity, Naruto grinned at him, “Cause, it’s just about the only way I can do it. If I only use one leaf it’ll go flying so I have to use more than one, I have way too much Chakra and way too little control to be able to do only one like you or everyone else; I can’t wait until I’m able to only do one! It’ll mean my controls a lot better!”

After the Chakra control exercises; and after the threat Iruka leveled on everyone, the class moved on to other things, Iruka told the class that they would have to wait until the next day for the results of the control exercises before they moved on, which had earned him many a groan, but he ignored it in favor of teaching them other things, like History and Taijutsu and the like.

Soon the end of the school day came.

Shino, Shikamaru and Naruto headed out of the Academy, talking as everyone else streamed out of the building around them; well, mostly Naruto was speaking, but that was to be expected, and it wasn’t like Shino or Shikamaru weren’t talking at all, they just didn’t do much of it.

Chouji wasn’t there because he said that his parents had told him to head home right after school ended because something had come up that they wanted to speak to him about. After hearing that the other three nodded and bid the hefty boy farewell as they made their way out of the place.

The remaining three just walked around, not wanting to go and buy anything but not wanting to just sit around and do nothing, not even Shikamaru—he said something about getting his energy up for training later as the reason he didn’t want to sit and do nothing.

Soon, their hour of hanging out together was nearly up, and Shino voiced that he would be needing to be heading home shortly, when-
“Oh yeah!” Naruto suddenly exclaimed, stopping in his tracks he turned and rummaged around in his hip pouch. The clink of metal on metal sounded before Naruto pulled two coin like shapes out of his pouch, smiling he took one in each hand and handed them to the two brunets with him,” here ya go!” he gleefully exclaimed.

Shino took hold of the small object and cast a cursory glance over it before he set it within his own hip pouch, knowing that he still had to head home soon and he wanted to talk to his parents as soon as possible about the training he would be doing with Naruto. Nodding his head curtly he thanked the blond,

“Thank you, Naruto-kun; I will look at it more closely when I return home,” Naruto nodded to him in understanding as Shino bowed his head,” goodbye, I will see the both of you tomorrow,” and with that he left, waving to the blond and brunet who were both waving back, though Naruto was doing it a lot more enthusiastically than Shikamaru, then he turned and left for his home.

It didn’t take him long and before he knew it he was stepping into his family’s home, calling out a quiet “Tadaima,” into the silent house as he pulled off his sandals and set them beside his mothers, his father’s weren’t there so he was probably still out for the day.

“Okaerinasai Shino-kun,” a soft feminine voice greeted him and the brunet spotted his mother standing in the hall, a soft smile on her face as she wiped her hands on the apron tied about her waist. Shino nodded to the woman,

“Kaa-sama,” he moved over to her and lightly hugged her, a soft giggle left her lips as she held him back, smiling at him softly before she turned and headed to the kitchen with Shino following her,

“How was school today Shino-kun?” she asked softly while she made her way to the sink and tending to the dishes within it. Shino moved beside his mother, after taking off his trench coat, and helped her by drying the dishes she finished washing.

“It was a good day, Iruka-sensei is very serious about changing the way the Academy works,’’ his mother nodded to that and then they fell silent as they finished with the dishes, putting them away in the cupboards of the kitchen before Shino’s mother started to make a quick snack for the two of them.

Just as they were about to sit down and eat the sound of the door opening and closing sounded, followed closely by,” Tadaima,” the deep voice called a bit gruffly into the house,

“Okaerinasai,” Shino and his mother called out at the same time.

Shibi came into the room and nodded to Shino in acknowledgement then moved over to his wife, softly placing his cheek against hers almost as if he were kissing her.

“Manami,” he quietly murmured to her as he pulled away from her. Manami smiled up at him serenely,

“Shujin-sama,” she replied, her voice taking on a cheerful lilt. He pressed his face to hers again for a moment before he pulled away. He then turned to Shino and placed a heavy hand on his head in an act of affection, one that Shino secretly reveled in since his father rarely gave such affectionate touches, and then laid his own smaller hand on top of his fathers.

They nodded to each other before his father took a seat and the three of them ate the snack Manami had prepared.

Shortly after they finished Shino excused himself and headed out to his backyard.
Shino sat in the middle of his yard, letting out a long sigh; today’s lesson had been hard, truly the Hokage and Iruka were serious about changing the way the Academy worked; but, he smiled softly, that was fine, it meant he would be stronger, it meant that Naruto would also be stronger.....

At the thought of the blond he remembered the coin shaped object he had given him earlier.

He reached into his hip pouch and drew out the coin. He hadn’t had the chance to get a good look at it earlier, but now that he did all he could do was smile, his face flushing and his body tingling with warmth. He reached a hand up and took off his glasses, so that he could get a good look at it, twisting it in his hands carefully, as if it would break if he weren’t careful.

The pendent was small and was both the size and shaped like a coin. It was made out of some sort of metal, probably iron, and had smooth ends, the character “Beetle” (甲虫) was carved into the top while the character “Black” (黒) was carved into the bottom, a hole just large enough for a string for a necklace to be pulled through was in the middle of the pendent and surrounding the hole was a simple flower, just large enough to surround the hole but not so large that it touched the characters.

Shino’s smile grew larger, softer, and he brought the pendent closer, then, lightly placed his lips on it.

‘Thank you, Naruto-kun,’ he thought warmly, then brought the pendent to his chest, taking in a deep breath to calm himself before he headed back inside. He could feel the fluttering of his own heart along with the skittering of his Kikaichū, he had to get better at not allowing for his own emotions to take control of them, his father would not stand for this lack of control-scratch that, he would stand for this lack of control-you can’t very well protect the ones you care about if you can’t control yourself appropriately, especially if you’re an Aburame....

He took another calming breath, looked at the pendent one last time then got up, heading into his home for the evening.

“Mother, would you happen to have something I could use as a string to make a necklace?”

[May 20th: 6:00 AM]

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BE-Smack!

The sound of an alarm clock blaring was then replaced by the sound of someone smashing a hand into it.

A low groan drifted into the air as the rustling of bed sheets sounded along with it.

Nara Shikamaru groaned again as he pulled himself to a sitting position, flicking his black hair out of his face with a huff of annoyance. He huffed again as he reached a hand up to rub the sleep out of his eyes, yawning loudly as he crawled, literally, out of his bed, stumbling as he stood but was soon able to regain his balance.

He yawned again as he made his way to his personal bathroom and took a quick shower along with brushing his teeth.

After he finished he went back to his room with only a towel about his waist, another around his neck, catching the many droplets of water that fell from his long hair. Pulling the smaller towel over his head, he ruffled it roughly then scrubbed at his body with his larger towel. After he was mostly dry Shikamaru pulled on his boxers but nothing else.

He threw the towels into a laundry hamper then bent forwards, bringing his torso almost flush to his legs. He sighed in annoyance when he felt a drop of water make its way down his forehead, shaking
his head to get rid of it then laid his head to his knees.

He stood like that for a moment before he changed position, bending backwards, cracking his back in the process, and made the ‘Bridge’ and stayed like that for a time. He went through several more stretching motions before he dressed the rest of the way in his regular gear then headed out his room to the backyard.

Here he greeted the many deer that liked to hang about in the yard in the early morning with soft words and scratches on their heads as he gave them all specially made deer treats that he had helped make just for this purpose.

Shikamaru knew that he was a lazy ass, actually he had pretty much reveled in the fact for most of his life. He hadn’t felt any great need to push himself one way or another, and being lazy and laid-back had actually led to his close friendship with Chouji, who had been fairly self-conscious when they were younger-he knew he was still self-conscious, but that would go away in time-and that was all he had cared about for his short life.

But then he had gone to the Academy for the first time.

And then, he had met one Uzumaki Naruto.

The blond was overly active.

He was always running around and yelling about this or that, and even though he hadn’t been all that good at school himself he still tried, for the most part, sometimes Naruto had been petulant to his former teachers before Iruka and caused mischief for them, leaving them to pick up after him when he finished.

Shikamaru had always felt something for the blond, but he hadn’t been entirely sure what it was.

At first he thought he was simply intrigued by the blond who had no rhyme or reason to him-he was truly an unpredictable Ninja-something of which would spark the interest of any genius like Shikamaru who was able to figure out most things before they even happened because of his fast-paced mind.

Naruto had thrown unpredictability into his life, something it had been sorely lacking for a long time, and he had been grateful for such a thing, but, it wasn’t until after he had done his first prank with the blond that he had realized that his interest hadn’t been caused by the Uzumaki’s unpredictability.

It had taken several years for him to finally figure out what he was feeling for the blond, coming to many conclusions but finding them all unsatisfactory for one reason or another; it wasn’t until only a couple weeks ago that he had finally figured it out.

Up until that day, he hadn’t had any close interactions with the other boy.

Naruto had pulled pranks with him for sure, but at the same time he had also been pulling those pranks with Kiba and Chouji, it was never just Naruto he was spending time with, so he hadn’t had a chance to just talk with the blond.

But then, Chouji got sick and couldn’t come to the Academy that day, then, Iruka had walked into the classroom injured and had told the class that school had been canceled for the next week, then Naruto had been accused of being the reason behind the postponed schedule, then, Aburame Shino, the quietest person in the entire class, had risen and defended the blond; and suddenly he found he himself standing up for the whiskered blond, then, he had decided to hang out with the Aburame and Uzumaki on a whim.
He had seen a different side to Naruto that day.

The blond hadn’t said anything in his defense to the accusations laid against him and he had made friends with the silent Aburame.

Shikamaru had seen how the blond had shown an excited curiosity in his surroundings and would listen with rapt attention to any information given to him; he asked questions about the various insects that they had come across in the forest, and Shikamaru had been mildly amazed at the wealth of knowledge that Shino had, he was even knowledgeable about some of the small animals they had spotted.

And then lunch time had come and they had gone to get something to eat; and Shikamaru was still disgusted with the behavior of the merchants and shocked by the behavior of Naruto. The once hyper-active blond just stayed quiet and allowed for them to berate and mistreat him with harsh words and cutting comments; oh he’d been upset for sure, but he hadn’t done anything more than clench his fist and walk away.

Discovering that Naruto was mistreated by the villagers was a harsh slap to the face that Shikamaru supposed he had deserved, better to have a reality check now then when he was in the middle of a mission in the future. But Naruto had forgiven him for his own mistreatment of him, had apologized even for his own assumptions of him, and it was then Shikamaru started to feel like he was understanding exactly what it was he was feeling for the blond, what he had always felt for the blond, but he didn’t quite acknowledge it until later, when he had looked upon Naruto after they had all lay down in the grass.

He had noticed, at least consciously, for the first time just how beautiful the boy was, and not only that, he had a pleasant personality. But he didn’t fully grasp his feelings until he’d laid eyes on the blond after he had woken him up. He had realized with startling clarity that he had very deep feelings for the blond and it had actually scared him.

Up until then he’d had his entire life planned out, maybe not in detail but it was planned.

He was supposed to meet an average girl who wasn’t too pretty or too ugly and marry her, he was going to have two children, a boy and a girl, then, after an average life as a Ninja, he was going to retire when his son grew up all the way and use the rest of his time cloud watching.

He wasn’t supposed to fall in love for a hyper-active, blond-haired blue-eyed whiskered cheeked boy that was more beautiful than he would ever know and who loved to pull pranks and cause mischief for those who wronged him or against those he felt like messing with.

He wasn’t supposed to be drawn in by this enigma of a boy who was kind and selfless yet determined and headstrong along with being unpredictable, he wasn’t supposed to have fallen so quickly and helplessly for those bright azure eyes or that teasing grin and the cute whisker marks adorning his cheeks; that was never a part of the plan, never had even entered his mind as a possibility! But he’d fallen for him anyway, and he had been terrified.

But then, he’d calmed down.

He had been able to reason within himself that the possibility of Naruto even returning his feelings were logically slim to none, the boy was most likely heterosexual and he had his sights set on Haruno Sakura, the exact opposite of him in both looks and personality not to mention gender. He had found a strange calmness with that, because he had known that even if somehow he accidentally let slip his true feelings Naruto would never mistreat him or abandon him for them, he’d just tell him he wasn’t interested then pretend it never happened....
Shikamaru was suddenly brought out of his musings by a doe who was nudging at his chest, a light tinkling noise sounding.

Shikamaru chuckled as he pushed the doe away gently, reached into his mesh shirt and pulled out a necklace,” did you wanna see this?” he asked teasingly as the doe went right back to nosing the object, Shikamaru chuckled again as he looked at the small pendent attached to the string about his neck.

It was round like a coin and had a small hole in the middle where the string was pulled through. On the surface of the coin was the character for ‘darkness’ (闇) at the top, and from it swirled lines went to the bottom and touched the character that rest there which was ‘shadow’ (影), the coin was made from what appeared to be iron.

Shikamaru felt warmth spread through him as he looked at it, brought it to his lips and kissed it then let it fall back against his chest, laughing as the doe and several other deer came other to poke at it with their noses.

He playful shooed them all away, giving the rest of the treats out, running with them through the forest mere yards from his house to get in his daily exercise.

After that he made his way back to his home and went inside, wiped off the sweat and swiftly ate breakfast, knowing that if he wanted to be early enough to talk to Naruto or Chouji before school started he’d have to leave soon, and quickly.

Once he finished he gave his mom a lazy kiss on her head and his dad a one armed hug before he was off, making his way to the Academy and running into Chouji on the way there. They talked while they walked about nothing in particular as they neared the Academy building.

But then Chouji said something that the Nara had not been expecting.

“You're in love with him, aren't you?”

Shikamaru stopped in his tracks, staring at his hefty friend in surprise and disbelief. Chouji just chuckled, patting the brunet on the back as he continued,” I think I only noticed since I know you so well, don’t worry, no one but Shino knows about it.” Shikamaru forced himself to breathe again as he straightened, not telling Chouji that he and Shino had basically already told each other that they liked the same person without specifically saying so.

He sighed then pushed at Chouji’s shoulder,” just give me a damn heart attack, why don’t you?” he asked sarcastically. Chouji laughed, nudging him back good naturedly, Shikamaru knew he was still waiting for a verbal answer.

He sighed again, looking away slightly while his cheeks grew warm.

“But to answer your question, yes..... or at least, it’s a very big crush.” Chouji laughed at that,

“You are not the type of person to crush, that’d be too troublesome; you either go all the way or not at all! So, never thought you had a thing for blonds, considering how much you say they’re troublesome.”

Shikamaru huffed as they started walking again,” well it’s not like I planned for it to happen, it happened all on its own and by the time I figured out what was happening it was way too late. I’ve decided to roll with it rather than against it, easier that way,” he shrugged again.

Chouji nodded his head to that, but didn’t push the subject for they had gotten to the Academy and
he knew that Shikamaru wouldn’t want him to discuss it where someone with ill intentions, or Naruto himself, could hear him.

They both entered their classroom and sat at the center desk where Naruto seemed to sit every day now, greeting Naruto as they took their seats, talking about nothing in particular while they waited for class to start.

Not much happened that day for class; it was pretty similar to the day before but they all we told who had the highest scores in the Chakra control exercises.

Surprisingly it was Shino, with Sakura as a close second, who had won and the boy had obviously not expected it and Sakura had complained about not being the top when she was almost always on the top when it came to any type of control exercise.

They were also all belted with dried beans in the middle of History, along with paint bombs during the Theory portion of class.

Iruka had mumbled about the person who had been permission to cause mischief wasn’t pulling any punches and was clearly grateful that he and his assistants got through it unscathed, though that probably wouldn’t hold true for long.

Besides that though there wasn’t much that happened and Shikamaru went through the school day, excited for his training with Naruto later.

Finally, school ended and everyone was let out; Shikamaru, Shino and Chouji all followed Naruto as he led them away from the Academy and to a training ground that was a bit out of the way, and it appeared as if not many people used it all that often.

As they walked over the grounds Shikamaru noticed someone else there. They were sitting under a tree with a scroll laid out before them.

Shortly after he noticed this person they looked up at their approach, a smile on their androgynous features, Shikamaru wasn’t entirely certain if they were a boy or a girl, they looked rather young and pretty, but he still wasn’t sure, he could have just been a pretty boy, or a slightly masculine girl.

The person moved forward and presented their hand, ”hi, I’m Yaiba Kira, I’m ten and a boy,” he introduced himself, obviously used to people confusing his gender. Shikamaru nodded and shook the hand presented to him and introduced himself as well, Shino and Chouji just behind him.

“Well,” Naruto spoke up once they finished introducing themselves, ”now that you’ve all introduced yourselves, let’s get to training!” with that exclamation, Naruto put his fingers into a cross symbol then called out, ”Kage Bunshin no Jutsu!” and what looked to be twenty exact copies of the blond burst forth in a cloud of smoke, all grinning at them with frightening glints in their eyes.

“Hehehehe, ah, it’s time to begin!” Naruto chuckled menacingly as he motioned his copies forward. They all rushed forward and the training began.

Several hours later Shikamaru, Shino and Chouji were all sprawled out on the ground, gasping for breath. They had just been put through the hardest workout of their lives. Naruto stood over them, snickering as the last of his Bunshin poofed out of existence; he leaned over them with a mischievous grin and a mirthful twinkle in his bright azure eyes.

“Had fun?” he asked teasingly and laughed as they all groaned in reply to him. Straightening himself out Naruto turned to Kira, who was also panting but not nearly as hard and he wasn’t on the ground either,” was I that bad when we first started?” he asked curiously.
Shikamaru forced himself to sit up while he asked, Shino moving with him though Chouji stayed where he was, still gasping for air.

Kira, meanwhile, shook his head as he looked up in thought, humming, “hmm, no you weren’t, actually even though I’m stronger than you, you definitely have more stamina than me; but neither of us got to this point when we first trained together.” Naruto just snickered at that, turning to the ones on the ground with another grin,

“Ah, I guess that just means I’m better than them, ttebayo!” he teased, but reached his hand out to help them stand, patting them roughly on the shoulder once they were standing, “and now that we’re finished, let’s have a quick snack at Ichiraku’s!” Chouji was standing immediately at that, his eyes shining at the prospect of food causing for Naruto, Kira and even Shikamaru to laugh good naturedly.

“C’mon, let’s go!” and with that the group headed to the Ramen stand.

Once they got there they all sat down in a line starting with Kira then Naruto then Shino, Shikamaru and finally Chouji. They each ordered and talked while they waited for their orders to be filled, none of them seeming to notice what the other had ordered as three of them were too sore and too tired to.

They were then all served and they started eating with gusto, happy to be filling their bellies with the life-and energy-giving food and sighing in content as they did so.

Shikamaru noticed then that Naruto was eating vegetable Ramen instead of the miso Ramen that he and Chouji were eating. He was surprised at this and questioned the blond,

“Why’re you eating the vegetable Ramen Naruto?” the blond turned and looked at him a moment, his mouth full, held up a finger indicating that he needed a moment, finished chewing then swallowed.

But before he could reply,

“Good boy, Naruto-chan!” the Ramen stand owners daughter, Ayame Shikamaru thought her name was, praised the blond while patting his head, petting him like a dog. A disgruntled look came to Naruto’s face and he huffed at the girl,

“Ayame-nee-chan; I’m not a dog!” he whined while puffing up his cheeks cutely; Ayame giggled,

“You were being so well mannered Naruto-chan! Waiting to talk until after you finished chewing, I’m so proud!” she teased while reaching to pat his head again.

Naruto bat her hand away, he still looked put out as he retorted,” of course I did! You’ve basically beaten manners into me Ayame-nee-chan! Now stop petting me!? I’m not a dog!” Ayame laughed at that,

“You already said that Naruto-chan!”

“Well maybe I wouldn’t’ve if you’d freakin listen!”

“Oh, Naruto?” Shikamaru had the feeling that they’d go on forever if no one did anything, so he interrupted before it could continue on. The blond stopped glaring petulantly up at the brown-haired girl to look at Shikamaru, his head tilted in confusion and interest.” Aren’t you going to answer?” he asked him, wondering if Naruto had forgotten his earlier question, but was put at ease when Naruto’s eye lit up in understanding.
“Ah! Well, I’m trying to be healthier, so if I’m eating here then I make sure to have at least one bowl of the vegetable Ramen, I usually eat healthy food when I’m home, but eating healthy outside of home is important too! So I try to have the more healthy foods when I’m here, though, can I have a large bowl of Miso Ramen with ham?” he directed the last sentence at Teuchi, who nodded with a grin,

“Of course Naruto-kun, coming right up!” and turned to prepare the blond’s order. Naruto turned back to Shikamaru with a grin,

“So yeah, that’s why.” Shikamaru nodded to that, understanding on his face.

Naruto smiled again then went back to his eating, swiftly finishing his vegetable Ramen and moving to his miso Ramen in glee shortly thereafter.

Several more minutes passed with no one else talking, but that was changed when Kira hummed loudly in thought. The mismatched eyed boy looked to the only blond in the group and commented,” Y’know Naruto, you’re almost at the level of this Ramen, and this Ramen is high quality!” Naruto looked at Kira in surprise, then back at the food, then back at him again. He swallowed his food before responding,

“Are you sure? Cause I’m fairly certain you’re wrong,” he shot back. Kira merely shook his head,

“I’m not wrong; your food is some of the best food I’ve ever had! Ah, I wanna eat it all the time~!” he trailed off, a bit of drool rolling down his chin as he looked off with sparkles in his eyes. Naruto shook his head with a laugh,

“Well, if you want to want to eat it all the time, why don’t you move in with me?”

Everyone stopped at that, including the stand owners, and just stared at the whiskered blond who was looking to Kira in seriousness.

Kira’s face lost its dumbfounded look and soon was engulfed in a heated flush; it happened so fast that hi eyes seemed to get watery as he sputtered,” bu-b-b-b-b-but! What about, like, payment and, contracts with the landlord and, just, what?” Naruto laughed at his stuttering’s, patting him on the shoulder he answered the flustered boy,

“It’s fine, you don’t have to worry about all that; I actually own the apartment complex I live in, Jiji bought it for me when no one else wanted to live there after I’d moved in when I was six, I’m the only person that lives there right now so you have nothing to worry about!”

It had taken Naruto a bit of poking and prodding but Kira had finally relented and agreed to live with the blond, after which Naruto celebrated with a loud whoop.

Shikamaru had questioned Naruto on him owning an apartment complex, but the blond hadn’t revealed much, just that shortly after he moved into the building almost everyone else moved out so his Jiji (they had no idea who this person was) had decided to buy it for him.
Naruto wouldn’t reveal anything else so he was ultimately forced to drop the topic and continue to eat and change the topic to something else.

A while later and they all finished, bidding each other a goodbye and good evening as they split into two groups and went their separate ways, saying that they would see each other the next day.

Shikamaru, Chouji and Shino headed to their Clan Compounds together, no one spoke as no one had anything to say, though Shikamaru knew that Chouji wanted to say something, but either wasn’t comfortable with the presence of Shino or just didn’t know how to word it.

He let his longtime friend work himself up to speaking as he looked up at that darkening sky; beautiful reds oranges and soft pinks painted the sky in a harmonic symphony of color. Breathing in the fresh and warm air Shikamaru couldn’t help but feel content; his body ached and he was sure it would continue to ache with the hard work-out he’d gotten from training with Naruto, but that didn’t mean he hated it-maybe he was a bit annoyed but then again he was sort of perpetually annoyed and/or passive-he couldn’t wait for the next day, wondering what else he would find out about the enigma of a blond he had as a friend.

“So, both of you?” Chouji’s voice brought Shikamaru back to the present.

Both brunets looked to the Akimichi in question; who just shrugged, though his cheeks were painted red in mild embarrassment. He peeked at them with a pensive look taking over his face,” the both of you like Naruto?” he asked more clearly, causing for his companions to stop, flushes rising on their faces.

“Really Chouji, now?” Shikamaru asked in embarrassment, his face steaming even though he and the Akimichi had already had this conversation earlier that day. Chouji merely shrugged again,

“You guys just, like, stare at him sometimes, like you’re trying to take in everything he’s doing regardless of what it is; you made me curious.” He shrugged again and refused to comment further. Shikamaru shook his head violently then sighed harshly,

“You already know my answer Chouji,” he glanced over at Shino,” and Shino has the right not to answer you so, just, no more questions about that, okay? I don’t know how much more my heart can take....” he muttered as he started walking again, Shino right beside him, though his face was still red. Chouji then nodded his understanding and left it at that for the rest of the walk.

Once they got to the fork in the road Shino nodded to them, though his face was still pink, and left for his own Compound; Shikamaru and Chouji nodded back as they went to their own Compounds, parting ways when Shikamaru got to the entrance of his first.

Sighing, Shikamaru trudged up to his house, took off his sandals and made his way into the living room,” Tadaima,” he lazily called out, not knowing if he’d get a response as both of his parents tended to be busy with various activities-his mom was in charge of the Medicine Corps after all-and she tended to get home at six, but sometimes she stayed longer for one reason or another, and his dad was the Head of the Jounin Corps of the village so he also was busy most days with that, and that didn’t even count in his Clan Head duties that he had to tend to every day.

“Okaerinasai,” a soft but masculine voice called back to him. Shikamaru spotted his dad’s head peeking into the room from his office that was connected to the living room, a smile on his lips,” how was school and training?” he asked, disappearing a moment as he got off of his chair and came to sit at the kotatsu, pushing his long legs under the table. Shikamaru nodded to his day,
“It was fine, tiring, but fine; Shino was the best in the Chakra control exercises that we did yesterday, we got the results of it today,” he replied off-handedly, remembering the events that took earlier in the day.

Shikaku nodded to that as he leaned forward onto the kotatsu with a content sigh, his eyes were half-lidded in content and Shikamaru couldn’t help but mirror him as he leaned his arms onto the table and breathed his own sigh of content,” how was your day?” he asked, only mildly interested.

Shikaku chuckled warmly as he responded,” eh, same old, same old. Had to give a couple of the newly minted Jounin some time off for pulling stupid and unnecessary risks while in the middle of a mission, putting the client and their teammates at risk. Besides that,” he shrugged,” nothing much. I was just finishing up some paperwork for the Clan when you got home.” Shikamaru nodded, he felt his body slowing down, knowing that he’d probably fall asleep soon......

“Tadaima!”

Shikamaru jerked up, realizing that he had indeed fallen asleep, and that his dad wasn’t at the kotatsu anymore. He blearily looked around him, spotting the form of a man in the kitchen then yawned, hearing his father call out a merry yet mellow,” Okaerinasai Yoshino,” then stood to make his way to the kitchen where his mother stood beside his father,

“Okaeri Kaa-san,” Shikamaru greeted his mother who turned and smiled at him, though a bit tiredly, and kissed him on the forehead,

“Hello Shikamaru; how was your day?” she asked as she gestured for him to help her set the table while his dad finished making dinner.

Funny fact, because Shikamaru thought it was hilarious; Nara Shikaku was actually a brilliant cook but he didn’t do it all that often since he was really busy most of the time, so his mom was the one that usually cooked since she wasn’t as busy as him.

Shikamaru did as he was told and helped his mom set the table while recounting some of the days’ events, though he didn’t go into much detail.

Shortly after that they all sat to eat; the sound of chopsticks clinking against glass bowls was soon the only sound that permitted the room, as they all wanted to get some food in them before talking some more.

After getting several mouthfuls Shikamaru remembered something that had happened during his training with Naruto, so, turned to his dad and asked,

“What’s the Kage Bunshin no Jutsu?” Shikamaru asked his father idly, coming off as simply curious and nothing more. Shikaku looked at his son in surprise a moment,

“How do you know of that Jutsu?” he asked carefully. Shikamaru shrugged noncommittally as he answered,

“Eh, I saw someone use it today, so I got curious about what it is.” He shrugged again, knowing his father wouldn’t catch him in the ‘lie’ as technically he wasn’t lying, he had seen someone use it that day and he was curious about what it was. Shikaku looked at him a moment longer then nodded,

“Hmm, well, the Kage Bunshin is a B-ranked Kinjutsu that mostly only Jounin are able to use, as it takes a large amount of Chakra to make just one Bunshin in the first place. Most Jounin-and people in general-are only able to make at most five Bunshin at a time, so if someone is able to make more than that then that means that they must have very large Chakra reserves.” At his father’s explanation
Shikamaru’s eyes widened considerably.

Naruto had summoned more than twenty within minutes of each summoning; how much Chakra did that boy have?!

“Ah.... okay, cool,” he wasn’t entirely sure how to respond to that revelation; unluckily for him his father noticed his shock and narrowed his eyes at him,

“And who was this person you saw using the Jutsu?”

Shikamaru mentally smacked himself but just shook his head, looking away from his prodding eyes, muttered,” no one.... I was just surprised ’cause they’d summoned a lot more than five when they’d used it.”

Shikaku stared at him a bit longer, his dark eyes drilling into Shikamaru’s face, then, he sat back with a sigh and a shake of his head.

“Well, whoever it is, if you see them again just tell them to be careful, alright? That Jutsu also has the ability of Knowledge transference which can cause brain damage if you aren’t careful.” Shikamaru jerked up at that, surprise and mild panic on his face; but then he shook his head and took a calming breath, looking back up at his father,

“Okay, I’ll make sure to do that.” And with that they all finished dinner, only idle conversation occurring after that discussion.

After Shikamaru finished dinner he bid his parent’s goodnight and headed up to his room to do some reading before he went to bed. Yoshino and Shikaku called out their own goodnights’ and went about their own business before they themselves headed to bed.

Shikamaru changed into his pj’s and sat on his bed, picking up the book he had left on his bedside table, reading a couple chapters of it before he went to bed.

The book was on the medical practices of the Nara Clan, something all Nara were taught, regardless of whether they became Ninja or not, and since he was the Clan Heir he needed to be fully aware of the inner workings of the Clan, which included the medical side of things.

But, that wasn’t the reason why he was reading the book.

He was actually reading the book so that he would have something more to offer to Naruto in the future, even though he was 99.99% certain that he wouldn’t be placed in the same team as the blond, at least not that blond, he still wanted to be useful to him, and having extensive knowledge about medical things was a very good way to be useful to everyone, not just Naruto.

So, he leaned against his pillow, drinking in the words, the pendent Naruto had given him a welcoming and warming weight upon his chest.

Aburame Shino – Academy Student – LV13

Nara Shikamaru – Academy Student – LV12

Chapter End Notes
Yes, I am using the clichéd Civilian Council in my story, but they will be different in several ways, one of them being that it isn’t Sakura’s mom whose in the Council but her Aunt as I just think that makes more sense, especially since Sakura’s mom doesn’t have pink hair, she’s a dirty blond, so I decided that the Haruno side of Sakura’s family are the ones with pink hair.

Translations:

Jinbei = a type of traditional sleepwear that is worn by both genders; generally made out of cotton

Kaa-san/chan/sama = a way of referring to your mother, Shino is being extremely respectful with the way he is calling his mom, the actual word is Okaa

Shujin-sama = a very traditional and very respectful way of referring to one’s husband, it is basically calling him “Master”, when I found this word it said that wives only really use this if they are very comfortably the sub of the relationship, and considering the personality I gave to Shino’s mother I thought that she would be very okay with referring to her husband that way

Manami = Beautiful love. I just thought it’d be cute to call Shino’s mom that

甲虫 = Kabutomushi = Beetle

黒 = Kuro = Black

闇 = Yami = Darkness

影 = Kage = Shadow

Kotatsu = a table that has a heater attached to it and usually a blanket type cloth attached to the bottom of the table to keep the heat under the table

Tadaima = I’m home (the way most people in Japan announce their presence when they get home)

Okaerinasai/Okaeri = Welcome home (traditional reply to Tadaima)

Just in case there is someone out there who doesn’t know; Baka = idiot, stupid, anything along those lines

I don’t have anything else to say.

If I misspelled anything make sure to tell me and I’ll fix it and re-upload the chapter later.

I’ll get back to you guys (hopefully) next week.
A Day at the Academy

Chapter Notes

I!
AM!
A!
BAD!
PERSON!!!!!!
I’M SORRY!!!!!!!

If you hate me.... I wouldn’t blame you, I’d hate me, I actually sorta already hate me for not being able to finish this chapter faster, guh, sorry.....

Soo.....

A lot has happened over the last couple weeks (cough*YEAR(s)*cough) that have kept me from writing, then add in writer’s block and you have a beautiful combination of problems!

I was at first thinking of trying to make up for all the weeks I missed, but I decided that I would just start up a new routine where I update when I am able, I already have a couple (future) chapters already written up (not the next two but the two after that) so yay for that. I already have the outlines written for the next two chapters, i just have to actually write them, also they should also be very long chapters as they will be the actual time-skip chapters that this one was supposed to be; HA! If that happened then this chapter would be over 100 pages, and nobody wants to slog through that! So yeah, have a 50+ paged chapter instead!

Also, fair warning, just so you all know and can rage quit if you want to, this story will have an OP Naruto, but thankfully, after everything is explained, it will make sense and he won’t be OP just because I decided him to be, so look forward to that lovely scene to come.

Another fair warning, this is a yaoi harem story, so..... If you don’t like harem stories then this, and basically any other story I write (though not all) ain’t for you, sorry, but I like having main characters, especially abused main characters, have lots of people that they can have lots of lovin’ from.

Who will be in the harem? I haven’t actually decided yet, I’m still working out who and how many exactly, but that aspect of the story won’t really take full effect until the sequel, which will be a far more sexually mature story anyway, but you’ll probably see most of the potential partners in this story (no doubt you have an idea for a couple of them) so, I just thought that, since I’m telling you that this will be an OP Naruto story that I might as well tell you about this as well.

That is all so on to-
Review responses:

thekiltedlettuce: Yeah, I just want my abused babies to be loved

Yona: Thanks! I'm glad you liked the chapter, hope you're looking forward to more!

Someone brought up that they disliked the aspect about the story where it seemed that everyone was gay (you know who you are) and this was my response to them:

"Just so you know, the entire cast isn't gay. Mainly only the people interested in Naruto are going to be gay/bisexual, Naruto himself is actually bi, he's just a little more interested in guys than girls for reasons that will be explained later.

Most of the cast is straight, but since I've been focusing on Naruto, Shikamaru and Shino, it seems like everyone is gay.

There is still Sasuke's fan club, Iruka is straight as is most of the boys in Naruto's class, Rock Lee, Gai and Tenten are straight. Kakashi is bi like Naruto, and I guess so is Shikamaru? He likes Naruto but he hadn't ever had a crush on anyone before Naruto, since he has a mom and a dad he just assumed he would end up with a girl as well.

Kira is, something. I haven't decided who he's going to end up with and whether that person will be male or female so I'm waiting on that one. In other words don't worry! Stories that make everyone out to be gay always make me laugh or cringe as it's unrealistic. When I write stories with gay characters, mainly only the characters interested in the main character are gay while just about everyone else is straight. And there will be female characters interested in Naruto (like Hinata) since Naruto draws people to him, it's just that he now draws people to him in a slightly different way now."

So yeah, if anyone was worried about all of the cast being gay, this is my response to that.

Also, THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR FAVORITING AND FOLLOWING THIS STORY!!!!!!

Disclaimer: I don’t own the Naruto cast or the world, The Gamer elements and anything that might belong to other people

See the end of the chapter for more notes

[Location: Naruto’s Apartment – May 21st: 4:45 AM]

You have slept in your bed. HP and MP have been fully restored.

Waving away the words and grunting as he hit the floor, Naruto got up to begin what he now knew as a normal day in his strange everyday life.

He gathered his clothes, a black tee-shirt, cargo shorts, his orange vest and a pair of boxers, and headed to the bathroom, glancing into his sort of living room on the way, taking in Kira’s form on his couch. He hadn’t been able to do much else for the brunette after he’d offered his home to him, and
Kira had insisted that he not take Naruto’s bed—though the blond wouldn’t have minded sharing—and had instead opted for the couch.

’Hmm, I really should start fixing everything up after school today,’ Naruto mused to himself as he stepped into his bathroom and took care of his morning business.

After taking his shower he headed to the kitchen and started on breakfast. Kira was still asleep, so he decided he would wake the other boy when it was time to eat and continued on with the preparations—

Greetings Chef Naruto! What would you like to make today?

-Rice

-Eggs (Scrambled)

-Eggs (Boiled)

-Eggs (Sunny-side-up)

-Omelet

-Ham

-Bacon

-Fried fish

-Curry

-Muffins

-Sausage

-Fruit (chopped)

-Fruit Salad

Clicking on the rice, sausage, omelet, bacon (he debated over the muffins but decided he didn’t have the time) and fruit salad he got to cooking.

While he was preparing everything he also grabbed his old teapot, filled it with water and put it on the stove; he wanted tea, and tea gave an extra INT and Stamina boost that he liked to have every morning, made it less likely that he would fall asleep during class, even the more boring ones.

He hummed happily as he went about making the food and tea, flipping the bacon and turning the sausage with a spring in his step; he also went about making bentos for himself and Kira as there was no longer a lunch period during school, just a short lunch break, which was another way the instructors were training them, getting them used to only having a short amount of time to eat their food while out on missions.

Soon enough Naruto was finished making the bentos and with breakfast so he went over to Kira and shook him awake, “c’mon Kira, it’s almost time to eat!” he called not so quietly, not caring about his vocal level since he was trying to wake the boy up.
Kira groaned quietly but pulled himself up, rubbing at his eyes in a rather cute manner, Naruto noted mentally, then stretched with a wide yawn; his back popped a couple times before he slumped forward, looking up at Naruto through squinted eyes.

Naruto smiled down at the boy, “good morning, it’s almost time to eat! You can take a shower first if you want though,” he straightened his back as Kira nodded to him in acknowledgement and then made his way back to the kitchen and finished up with everything, quickly set the table then plated all the food.

[Intermediate Cook]’s level has gone up by 2.

Naruto grinned cheerily as he closed the pop-up.

Just as he finished Kira came out of the bathroom wide awake and dressed. He smiled at the blond as he slid into his seat. “Good morning Naruto,” he greeted, Naruto nodded back before they clapped their hands and let out merry “Itadekimasu!” and got down to eating.

They made light conversation as they ate, talking about what they’d be doing before and after school that day. Kira decided that today would be the day that Naruto start learning Fuinjutsu, or at the very least look at a beginners scroll, and the blond agreed wholeheartedly as they finished their breakfast. They gathered up the dishes and placed them in the sink, but just as they were wondering if they had the time to do all the dishes Naruto was struck with an idea.

Grinning with glee Naruto put his hands in a cross symbol, “Kage Bunshin no Jutsu!” and just like that, a clone appeared.

The clone turned to Naruto with mild annoyance on its face, eyebrow twitching as it shook its’ head, turning around and getting to work on the dishes. Naruto grinned, “thanks a bunch!” he cheekily thanked then headed out of his apartment with Kira and to Training Grounds 1.

[Location: Konoha’s Academy – 7:00 AM]

After he and Kira parted ways for classes that day Naruto started stealthily moving through the building, moving within the shadows and out of sight of everyone. He carefully made his way to an unused office and created twenty clones who all grinned mischievously at each other, then, disappeared.

Naruto smirked but he forced it off of his face, no need to make anyone suspect him when he hadn’t actually done anything, yet.

He forced his body to relax all the way, not even allowing for a heightened heartbeat, and made his way out of the office and swiftly headed for his classroom.
Naruto took in the classroom, noticing that there wasn’t anyone there, not even the teachers. The boy grinned, ‘*must be my lucky day,*’ he thought before swooping in; he was going to make today even more memorable than yesterday.

Naruto sat back in his seat with a content sigh as his other classmates started to trickle in the room, the noise level steadily getting higher and higher as more people entered.

“Hello Naruto-kun,” the blond turned to the right and grinned at Shino, who smiled softly back.

“Hey Shino! How’re you?” he leaned onto his elbows, looking with interest at the bug user, who shifted a bit before nodding,

“I am doing well, Naruto-kun, thank you for asking. How are you faring?” Naruto couldn’t help chuckling at the way Shino had phrased that before he answered him,

“Ah, I’m faring very well, thank you for asking!”

“Hey Naruto,” the two moved to look to the left and watched as Shikamaru and Chouji slid into the seat beside the blond; Naruto nodded to them, grinning all the while,

“Hey yourselves! How’re you doing today?”

“I’m good, I wonder what we’ll be doing today,” Chouji smiled warmly as he swiftly finished the last of his chips.

“Me too, I’m doing good; how’re you Naruto?” Shikamaru replied while leaning heavily on his arms, his eyes lazily moving over the blond who just grinned again,

“I’m doing great! I actually can’t wait for class to start!” he was nearly vibrating in his seat from obvious excitement.

The four of them talked for the rest of the time left before class started, Shino and Shikamaru again thanking Naruto for the pendants that he had gotten them, and Naruto waving it off, saying that he had seen the pendants and decided that they would suit the two very well.

That just caused for the two brunets to blush; and for the Akimichi to giggle uncontrollably; the blond had absolutely no idea why either was happening.

He wasn’t able to question what was going on though as class then started.

“Good morning class!” Iruka called cheerfully, Hikaru and Haruka nodding to them with grins on their faces. The students quieted down and greeted the scarred man back with differing levels of enthusiasm; Iruka merely continued to grin,” Let’s start class for today, shall we?” a chorus of ‘*Hai*’ drifted around the room as Iruka went to pick up the attendance ledger.

The man swiftly took rollcall then jumped right into the first lesson of the day.

“Today will be another Chakra Control day, now follow me class!” he made his way out of the classroom and everyone followed him, all of them moving outside to continue with the class.

As they walked out Naruto remembered how they had started learning the Tree-climbing Exercise
the day before, and that they were all expected to train in it in their free time, he himself had been trying to work on it as much as he could since the day before.

[1st Period – Chakra; 8:05 AM]

Once everyone was outside Iruka turned to everyone, a glint in his eyes; then, Shuriken were flying at them!

Naruto jumped and caught the three that were headed for him and two that were headed for Chouji, who wasn’t as fast at reacting as the blond, just barely being able to grab hold of the third heading his way.

Naruto shook his head out of his instinctual trance and looked around, noticing that Hikaru and Haruka were standing near some of the other students with multiple Shuriken within their hands and mild looks of annoyance and disappointment on their faces.

Naruto then noticed that only about half of the class had been able to grab/dodge the Shuriken, the majority being the Clan Heirs.

“Well, that was disappointing,” all of the students turned to Iruka, who was shaking his head,” you’re all training to be Ninja, but you can’t even properly dodge Shuriken!” he sighed again with an exaggerated shake of his head.

A certain student suddenly regained their wits and started screeching.

“Sensei!? Were you trying to kill us?!” Sakura questioned hysterically, a panic-stricken look upon her features that was also mixed in with righteous fury.

The girl stopped speaking when Iruka leveled her with a calm glare; she gulped audibly, along with the majority of the class, and withered under his glare.

Iruka opened his mouth.

[Detect KI]’s level has gone up by 1.

“ Again, Sakura-chan, you are training to be Ninja. You only have a couple months until the graduation exam and it’s my job as both a Ninja of this village and your Instructor to make certain that all of you reach the new average that Genin are now being expected to reach. No longer is just anyone going to be allowed to pass the Academy, only those who work for it and reach the actual level of Genin will be able to become Genin; much better to have fewer Genin that are strong in multiple ways and can survive to Chūnin than to have many Genin that will be too weak to make it to Chūnin either because they just aren’t talented in the Ninja arts or because they weren’t prepared enough to go out onto the field and got killed because of it.”

Iruka tilted his head down slightly, his face becoming menacing.

“What do you want to die before you reach fifteen, Sakura-chan?” he asked calmly.

The girl vigorously shook her head, small gasps escaping her lips.

Iruka nodded at her response,” then I suggest you stop complaining. I am doing this in order to help you become stronger, better, and help you find different ways to be useful to the village.” He cast his gaze over all of the students, his eyes periodically straying upon different students’ faces; he no longer looked menacing, now he just looked serious.
“Not all of you will become field Ninja,” he started, causing for many to make sounds of protest, but
they all quieted at Iruka’s stern look.

“Let me finish. Not everyone is made to go out into the field. You as Ninja will be called to kill, how
many of you think that you would be able to kill if the time came without hesitating? I can guarantee
that several of you will not be able to kill without hesitating. I know because I have hesitated before
killing while out in the field, a decision that had nearly killed both me and my teammates more than
once; it’s one of the reasons why I’m a Academy Instructor, Hokage-sama decided that I would be
more useful to this village by passing on my knowledge of being a Ninja than being an active Ninja;
there are all sorts of factions within this village that don’t do much out in the field but do other things
within the village to help keep it strong in different ways. You can be useful to the village in more
ways than going out of it and fighting people, there are all sorts of things you could do in this village,
things that we will be elaborating on during History for the rest of the school year, so keep that in
mind in the coming months; you have until two weeks before the final exam to decide which
profession you wish to be a part of yourself before it is chosen for you based on your strengths and
weaknesses.”

He took a deep breath and let it out slowly, opening his eyes they took on their normal warm and
friendly look and he smiled at them all, allowing for them to take in everything that he had dumped
on them.

Naruto thought over what Iruka said, and found that it made sense. Not everyone could fight really
well and some people were more talented in other areas even if they were good at fighting, not only
that but he was aware of some of the extra factions in the village that didn’t specialize in fighting and
had guessed that they were like all the other factions in the village; in the end they were there to help
protect and inform the village in any way that they could, it isn’t always fighting that can save a life.

Naruto was brought back from his thoughts as Iruka clapped his hands, speaking once again,

“Alright, so today I will be teaching you Chakra Sensing. Now, before any of you ask me what that
is, Chakra Sensing is the ability a Ninja uses in order to feel their surroundings by using their Chakra.
I myself am a Sensor, someone that has the natural ability to sense the Chakra signatures of those
around them. There aren’t a lot of natural born Sensors in Konoha, and the Hyuuga clan doesn’t
count as they have a Doujutsu that allows for them to see Chakra, which is not the same as Sensing.
Sensing is merely feeling the Chakra, not just seeing it, I guess you could say it’s more comparable to
the Inuzuka clan who have heightened senses, do you understand?”

The students all nodded in understanding which made Iruka smile in satisfaction,” good, now,
another way to use Chakra Sensing is through what I just did to you. Chakra Sensing allows for
Ninja to know when a weapon is being thrown at them even if they can’t hear it, it’s also a form of
Chakra control which is why I am teaching it to you today.”

A hand shot up into the air and Iruka turned to look at the child it belonged to,” yes, Tsubaki-chan?”

The brunette let her hand fall as she began her question,” Iruka-sensei, how is it a form of Chakra
control?” she asked.

“Well,” Iruka began with a smile,” it’s a form of Chakra control because if you aren’t a natural born
Sensor then you have to be careful how much Chakra you’re using when sensing. Too much and
you’ll get too much information and that will distract you from what you are trying to focus on, too
little Chakra and you won’t be able to sense anything at all, or only when it’s too late. So I, Hikaru
and Haruka will be helping you learn the proper amount to push out, remember, the amount differs
for each person as someone like Kiba probably won’t need to use as much as someone like Sakura,”
the boy smirked while the girl scowled in irritation. Iruka, meanwhile, carried on,
“Kiba already has heightened senses so he doesn’t need to push out as much Chakra because that could really mess with his already heightened senses, Sakura has more average senses so she will need to be able to push out more Chakra because of that. Does everyone understand?” he asked once again.

Everyone nodded again in understanding which then led to Iruka pairing up different students to work together, one with heightened senses while the other had average or below average senses.

Unfortunately that meant that Naruto and Sakura were paired together.

“Ugh, why do I have to work with the likes of you? Iruka-sensei, why couldn’t Naruto-baka work with Shikamaru or Shino or Chouji? Their always hanging out together anyway!” The pink-haired girl whined. Iruka sighed in irritation, but then noticed that Sakura’s question had caught the attention of the rest of the class; shrugging he looked to Sakura and explained,

“You and Naruto were placed together because Naruto has heightened senses while you do not. Every pair here is made up of one person with heightened senses and one with average or below average senses so that the one with the more average senses will be able to learn from the ones with higher senses, though me and Hikaru and Haruka will of course be walking around and helping anyone who needs it; and before you can start complaining, Sakura, you can learn something from Naruto.”

The girl snapped her mouth shut at that and pouted while Naruto just sighed, strained grin upturning his lips as everyone moved to positions across from each other so that they would be able to throw shuriken and kunai at each other more easily, everyone was also very spread out so that no two groups were closer than two meters to each other.

After that was finished one person in each group put on a blindfold that the Instructors had given them while the other took out either a kunai or a shuriken and readied their position, waiting for Iruka, Hikaru and Haruka to give them a signal to throw their weapons at their partners; the first to go were the more Chakra sensitive people, which made Sakura secretly happy as that meant she would be allowed to throw sharp things at Naruto without getting into trouble.

The girl normally didn’t allow for herself to think too deeply of the blond, especially after her mother and aunt had warned her against the boy- something about him being dangerous -they had encouraged her to avoid him and not interact with him if possible, but she was also subtly not subtly told that if she had the chance she should put him in his place, so she has been doing just that for as long as she could remember.

But she has been thinking of the boy a lot recently, not because of what he was doing, but because of what he was NOT doing.

He no longer hounded on her for dates or tried to get close to her or even challenge Sasuke; in the past few weeks Naruto has basically completely ignored her, Sasuke and everyone sans Shikamaru, Shino and Chouji, who he seemed to be spending more and more time with; not only that but he hadn’t been wearing his eye searing orange jumpsuit as often, oh he still wore orange but it was rarely the jumpsuit, just his orange vest.

The pinkett was really confused by this display, she was even more confused by the twisting feeling in her chest at the prospect of being ignored by the blond-haired, whisker cheeked boy and she didn’t want to understand why!

So, when she saw Iruka give the signal, she put as much strength as she could into her throw and aimed right for the blond’s irritatingly silky looking, flowing hair that gently moved with the breeze.
He probably didn’t even have to use shampoo or conditioner to get his hair like that! How unfair!?

Sakura was snapped out of her inner ranting when a tan hand caught hold of the fast flying shuriken, and then dropped it on the ground, waiting for the next throw.

Sakura scowled at this and threw another shuriken at the blond, but he merely caught hold of it again and gently let it fall to the ground. The girl actually growled this time while she took out three shuriken and two kunai and threw them at the blond in irritation, smirking in self-satisfaction at the thought that there was no possible way the blond could catch all of them at the same time (completely ignoring the fact that if Naruto wasn’t able to catch them, she ran the chance of hurting one of her other classmates).

But, she soon found that she was wrong.

Naruto twirled out of the way, one of his arms shooting out to grab hold of the shuriken, then, with the same hand, he threw two of them at the two kunai that were headed for the backs of both Shikamaru and Sasuke while the third hit the ground; the two shuriken hit the kunai and they altered course, spinning towards the ground when-

*Thunk*

The pointed ends were then embedded in the ground with the final shuriken resting on the ground near them.

“Haruno Sakura!” Iruka nearly screamed; his voice tinged with hysterical anger. He stomped up to the girl, ignoring her blond partner who was pulling the blindfold off of his face and looking at her with a strange emotion in his eyes.

Sakura opened her mouth to reply to Iruka but he didn’t let her, cutting her off sharply,” what on earth is wrong with you?! Why did you do that, you could have hurt Naruto, hell, you could have killed Sasuke and Shikamaru if Naruto wasn’t so fast in reacting to your throws! Are you really willing to kill two of your classmates just to get at Naruto?! Is it really that big of a deal that you have to work with Naruto that you have to try and hurt him?”

Sakura paled dramatically while Iruka yelled at her, realizing that she could have seriously hurt Sasuke with that stunt of hers. But, she shook her head, refusing to take the blame for her actions.

“But sensei! Naruto was-“

“Naruto wasn’t doing anything, Sa-ku-ra! He didn’t do anything wrong so don’t you dare try to blame him for what you did! You have detention for the next month with me Sakura, every day after school ends for two hours, starting today, and that is final!”

“But sensei; I have-“

“I don’t care Sakura, unless you are attending a funeral, which I know you aren’t, you will be serving your detention no matter what you say, now, come here and apologize to Naruto, Sasuke and Shikamaru for intentionally putting their safety at risk.”

Sakura again tried to get out of it, but Iruka refused to back down and so the girl was forced to suck up her pride and go over to first Sasuke to apologize, and then Shikamaru, and then finally Naruto.

“Sorry, Naruto, for intentionally putting you in danger....” she gritted out through clenched teeth, angry that she had to apologize to Naruto of all people.
Meanwhile the blond merely smiled kindly, if a bit strained, “I forgive you Sakura; if you have a problem with me please just take it up with me, don’t put others at risk to tell me how you feel about me.”

Sakura nearly growled at the blond’s response, and then she did growl when Iruka bumped her in the shoulder, clearly indicating to her needing to say more, and Sakura knew exactly what he wanted her to do, and she refused to do it! But, after a bit more prodding, and Iruka threatening to lengthen her detention time, she muttered darkly,

“And... thank you for catching my shuriken and kunai before they were able to hit Sasuke-kun and Shikamaru.....”

Naruto didn’t verbally respond to that, he just smiled again and gave her a thumbs up.

After all that Iruka sighed, shook his head and then called out, “alright, Kiba, come over here! You’ll be working with Sakura from now until the end of class, and Naruto, you’ll be working with Ino, alright?” both of the boys nodded while Sakura groaned in displeasure, frustrated that Sasuke wasn’t going to be her new partner.

Naruto made his way over to Ino and smiled at the girl who, though a bit weakly, smiled back.

“Allright everyone, get in positions again please! Once more and then you’ll switch!”

A chorus of “hai” was his response and the lesson continued on.

Naruto heaved a quiet sigh as he put the blindfold back on, took up position and waited for Ino to throw her shuriken at him.

A small amount of time passed when Naruto felt and heard the star-shaped knife heading for him; which caused for his natural instincts to kick in which led him to shooting his arm out, catching the shuriken in mid-air.

He smiled in triumph as Iruka called for them to switch positions; Naruto took off his blindfold and handed it to Ino, who looked nervous to be going, but Naruto smiled reassuringly at her which seemed to calm her nerves some, but not as much as Naruto would have liked but he wasn’t able to do anything more as Ino pulled the blindfold on and, because he didn’t want to distract her, Naruto kept quiet and waited for Iruka to give the signal to start throwing.

Naruto then spotted his sensei raise a hand, which was obviously the signal, and so he threw his shuriken at the blonde girl who actually squeaked and froze in place, not moving out of the way.

So, without thinking, Naruto swiftly took out another shuriken and threw it at the first, causing for them to collide and hit the ground right in front of Ino instead of the girl herself.

Naruto sighed then walked up to Ino, grabbing hold of her shoulders firmly, “Ino,” he started gently, lifting a hand to take the blindfold away from her eyes; Ino blinked surprised eyes open as she looked back at him with her pupil-less ice-blue iris’, then, her face scrunched up into an irritated scowl,

“What is it Naruto?”

Said boy couldn’t help chuckling at her response, something of which caused for Ino to flush in reaction (though he didn’t notice). He opened his eyes again and answered the girl,

“Let me help you, ne? That’s why Iruka-sensei paired everyone off after all, so that we could help
each other; so, how ‘bout it?” it was then Naruto noticed that Ino’s face was flushed, though he couldn’t fathom why.

Ino giggled in a nervous sort of way as she looked at Naruto with lidded eyes,” s-sure, Naruto, what was I doing wrong?” she asked, forcing control into her voice as she took in a deep breath, she felt her face flush again as Naruto moved around her and grabbed hold of her arms, bringing them into a better position in front of her body.

Naruto was about to move his leg in order to kick hers into a better stance when a ping sounded, pulling his attention to in front of him to see-

**Quest Alert:**

**The Art of Teaching**

Teach Ino how to listen and sense an incoming object and up her Chakra Control, but be careful, certain people are watching you and if you make the wrong move they will become angry with you!

**Completion reward:** EXP 1200

Increased Reputation with Yamanaka Ino +200

+5 to INT

+5 to WIS

C-Rank Scroll on Chakra Control

**Completion failure:** EXP 500

Decreased Reputation with Yamanaka Ino -250

Decreased Reputation with Hyuuga Hinata -200

Decreased Reputation with Nara Shikamaru -100

Decreased Reputation with Aburame Shino -100

‘Why the hell would my RE**P** with Shika and Shino be decreased if I mess up with Ino?’ Naruto thought, bewildered and a little panicked as he stared at the screen in front of him, before he just shook his head and thought with trepidation, ‘**uh, accept?**’ a soft sigh of relief left his lips when the screen disappeared at that, apparently all he had to do was think it, that was good to know.

Pulling his mind back to the present Naruto finished moving Ino’s arms and legs, letting go he moved to stand in front of the girl, a look of accomplishment on his face.

“You should try holding your arms like this whenever you expect something to be thrown at you,” Naruto pointed to the arm positioned closer to her side,” one arm should always be held in a position in order to grab anything coming at you from behind, an enemy might try and trick you into thinking the threat is in front of you when really it’s behind you, and standing like this will keep it more relaxed and make it easier to jump out of the way if you have to move suddenly. Also, try to remember to push out Chakra while standing like this, just a little pulse will do, try and pulse it out every other second; do you understand?”
Ino’s hands twitched as she looked herself up and down, then nodded at the blond boy,” yeah, I get it,” she then moved from her position, pulling on the blindfold, then moved back into position.

Naruto was impressed that she was able to remember almost the exact position, he smiled, then, threw a shuriken at the girl.

Another squeak left the girl but she moved her hand out and grabbed hold of the shuriken anyway, though she cut her finger on it. Naruto forced himself not to go over immediately and threw another shuriken, which Ino was able to grab again, this time not cutting herself.

Naruto threw a couple more shuriken and Ino was able to catch all but one of them, which Naruto had been forced to knock to the ground so that it didn’t hit her or anyone else; then, Iruka called for them to switch.

Naruto moved forward while Ino pulled off the blindfold, hissing in pain as her cut rubbed against the rough fabric.

“Here,” Naruto murmured, gently taking hold of Ino’s hand,” let me help you.” Ino nodded as Naruto moved a hand to his hip pouch, pulling out a scroll and, with one hand, unsealing his small Medical Kit from it. He handed the kit to Ino and asked her to hold it as he opened it and pulled out a cotton swab and poured a little bit of ointment on it, then pressing it to Ino’s open cut.

Ino hissed again in pain but Naruto ignored her as he switched hands and grabbed hold of a band aid which he applied to Ino’s cut when he was finished cleaning it.

He almost leaned in and kissed the covered wound but stopped himself short, thinking that Ino would probably try to kill him for such a bold and inappropriate act and instead patted it twice, gently, taking his kit back and putting it away again in the scroll then finally back into his hip pouch.

He smiled at the girl,

“There,” he said cheerfully,” all clean!” he giggled which then caused for a surprised burst of laughter to leave Ino’s lips, as she was definitely not expecting Naruto to giggle of all things, which then caused for the two of them to break into loud snickers that they tried fruitlessly to hide.

“And what’s so funny you two?” Naruto and Ino’s laughing session was cut short as Hikaru asked them, a brow raised as he looked from one to the other.

Naruto smiled cheekily up at the man,” ah, nothing Hikaru-sensei, just working off some stress!” Hikaru’s brow went further up his head, but then he just shook it and walked away, saying off his shoulder,

"Get into position again you two, we’ll be starting again in a minute.”

“Hai!” Ino and Naruto called back at the same time, snickering together for a moment before they were finally able to calm down and go back to position, with Naruto putting on the blindfold.

And so for the rest of the lesson Naruto and Ino simply continued to go back and forth with Naruto gently correcting Ino whenever he saw a flaw in her stance or how she was controlling her Chakra until Ino very nearly perfected the exercise by the time Iruka called for everyone to stop and head back into the Academy building.

Naruto leaned back, cracking it and let out a sigh as the pleasurable relief rushed through his body, then he followed the rest of his classmates into the building, when-
Question Completion: EXP 1200

Increased Reputation with Yamanaka Ino +200

+5 to INT

+5 to WIS

C-Rank Scroll on Chakra Control

Bonus; Increased Reputation with Nara Shikamaru, Aburame Shino and Hyuuga Hinata +200

You have gained +200 REP points with [Yamanaka Ino] causing for your Reputation to move from “Unfriendly” to “Neutral”

You have gained +200 REP points with [Nara Shikamaru, Aburame Shino and Hyuuga Hinata] causing for your Reputation to move from “Honored” to “Exalted”

A Bonus for raising REP with all named individuals has been added to your Inventory

A Bonus for obtaining [Exalted] status’ with five people has been added to your Inventory

Naruto let out another sigh as he waved away the screens, still bewildered by the fact that he could have lost some REP points with Shikamaru and Shino for some reason.....

Naruto shook his head, putting the puzzling thought out of his mind and ran into the building.

[2 nd Period – History; 8:59 AM]

Everyone moved to their seats and waited for Iruka, Hikaru and Haruka to start the lesson.

The three men rummaged around the front desk as they set up for the next lesson, Haruka went to the chalkboard and started writing something down while Hikaru pulled out several textbooks and turned to the class, placing a tall stack of the books on each of the front desks,

“Take one and pass the rest up,” he ordered, moving back to his brother as the students did as they were told.

Soon, everyone had a textbook and Haruka finished with the chalkboard, he looked to Iruka who smiled at him then turned to the class,” alright everyone, for this lesson, Haruka will be the one teaching you so pay attention to him!”

Haruka startled at this but wasn’t able to protest as all of the students obediently responded with ‘hai’ to their teacher, then moved their focus onto the redheaded man/teen and waited for him to start the lesson.

Haruka remained silent for a moment, but then shook his head and smiled up at his students,” heh, well, I wasn’t expecting that! Thanks for giving me a heart-attack Iruka-Senpai!” this remark caused a stream of giggles to descend upon the room, Haruka smiled wider,” anyway, open your textbooks to page 129, today for History we’ll be learning about the Warring Clans Era.”

A moment of silence passed as everyone turned to the correct page, a hand shot up as they did so, belonging to none other than Naruto himself.
Haruka looked at the blond then nodded encouragingly,” yes Naruto?”

The boys hand fell to the desk as he answered,” that was the time just before the Hidden Villages were created, right?” he asked, his eyebrows scrunching up in thought.

Haruka nodded his head excitedly, ”yes, that’s right! Now, the end of the Warring Clans Era is just as Naruto said, the start of the Hidden Villages; but that’s not what we’re talking about today. This particular Era was known as “Warring” because of all of the Ninja clans that were fighting back then, almost all Ninja clans were fighting for one reason or another.” Haruka cleared his throat, took a breath, and continued.

“During this period in time the lands of the Elemental Nations were in a constant battle for land, power and opportunity; these fights were largely led by Warlords that weren’t Ninja and didn’t know any type of Ninjutsu. Some of them were greedy, some of them weren’t, but that didn’t change the fact that they were all still fighting for the same things. But, they couldn’t just send soldiers at each other could they? They’d lose more than they gained that way, which is why the vast majority of these battles were done by shinobi, mercenary shinobi to be precise whom represented their interests. Sadly, this wasn’t a time for peace so most shinobi’s loyalties were to the highest bidder, meaning that if they were working for someone but another offered them more money, they were very likely to abandon their original client to work for their new one.”

Haruka looked at them all with a grave expression, impressing on them how dreary this time period was.

“We as Ninja of Konoha talk of loyalty and peace, mercy and friendship, but this is not what life of shinobi used to be, that is a far more recent event; it’s been just over a hundred years since the formation of the Hidden Villages, the Warring Clans Era still has us by several centuries. It was a great time of grief, death, destruction and hatred. There was constant warfare, and because of that, many died young, even younger than most Ninja die today, at most these shinobi only lived to be about thirty, but many died before they could even get to that point; actually, when it comes right down to it, the fact that anyone was able to survive this time period is a miracle. Just a little over a hundred years ago, children were the most likely to die, forced to fight for their clan at a young age and being killed so that that clan would then be destroyed forever, this was a world of hardened adults, and if you didn’t grow up fast, you wouldn’t make it past twelve at the most.”

Haruka paused for a moment, letting that sink in. The room had become deathly quiet, no one wanted to speak as everyone was morbidly fascinated by this time period. The redhead continued on.

“In an attempt to avoid conflict caused by the ever-changing alliances and resulting vendettas, shinobi were in the habit of never divulging their family names to strangers. But, in the middle of all this death and deceit, two young boys met and became friends. They were the Heirs of two of the most powerful clans in the Elemental Nations-the Senju and the Uchiha-they met but never gave their family names, frightened that they would then be forced to fight and kill each other; but this was not to last, eventually they learned of the identity of each other, that being Senju Hashirama, the Shodai Hokage and Uchiha Madara, and were thus forced to never see each other again outside of battle, as any who hired one of the clans their enemy would hire the other, thus was the equal power the two held over the rest of the Shinobi world. The two fought time and time again, but, by the time they were adults peace was achieved, we’ll talk more on that later, for now we’ll talk about some other things during this Era.”

A moment of silence passed, being broken by Haruka clapping his hands with a smile,” like, on a much happier note, which clans didn’t partake in the Warring, or at least the ones that actively tried not to be a part of it; one of which was the Nara clan,” here Haruka gestured to Shikamaru,” based
on both historical accounts from other clans that have become a part of Konoha, and even some who hadn’t, and from the clan itself, the Nara Clan was much like it is now; the vast majority of the clan kept to themselves and only sought to achieve knowledge, otherwise they were doing everything in their power to keep their own clan safe from others. They rarely ever took on jobs that called for them to war against other clans as they were aware how suicidal that was and instead made themselves useful in other ways, so that people would come to them for reasons other than fighting; this then led to the Nara Clan becoming some of the most well-known and best healers and doctors within the Elemental Nations as they had come up with a large variety of medicines, most of which are still used by our village to this day! The Nara was also the first clan to join the newly formed Konoha and pledge their allegiance to the Shodai Hokage.

“Now, another clan that actively tried not to participate in the wars was the Akimichi Clan, again from historical accounts from other clans and from the clan itself, the Akimichi Clan was more concerned with perfecting cooking techniques and feeding themselves and others. They joined Konoha because, in their own words, ‘it is the most peaceful of all the villages’. And one moment real quick I’m going to tell you why I’ve only mentioned two-and soon to be-three clans, and the answer to that is that only these three clans actively tried not to participate in the wars. There were other clans that were more neutral towards the wars but if they were approached with a mission they would generally accept, especially if the client offered them a tempting sum of money.

“And now, finally, the third clan that actively tried not to participate in the wars was the Uzumaki Clan. They were a nomadic people, though they did have a central village in the form of an island off in the middle of the ocean, but a good number of them traveled the Elemental Nations in order to spread their views, which was, actually, peace and prosperity. They were also one of the strongest clans around, but because they weren’t the only strong clan around peace could not be attained until the other clans came to an agreement and stopped fighting; also, the Shodai Hokage was married to an Uzumaki, her name was Uzumaki Mito and she was a Fuinjutsu master-as most Uzumaki were-and is the reason why Konoha has such complex sealing arrays embedded within its walls in order to keep it safe; also because of the marriage the Uzumaki Clan was an ally to Konoha, but sadly the majority of the Uzumaki Clan was wiped out because of the Kumo-Kiri-Suna alliance which is why there aren’t that many left.

“Little fact, the Uzumaki Clan was able to hold off their enemies for four days straight before they were defeated, it took time first for Konoha to get the distress call, then a little bit more time to gather the troops then to actually get to the island of Uzushiogakure, but sadly by the time they got there everything had been destroyed, the forces of Konoha took care of most of the remaining opposing forces but, as far as we could tell anyway, there wasn’t anything left, just a destroyed village with nothing left behind, from what was found the Uzumaki destroyed everything before their enemies overcame them, meaning that any Fuinjutsu, or Jutsu in general, that the Uzumaki had created was lost as they got rid of it all before they were overcome.....”

Silence filled the classroom once again for several moments, then, Hikaru cleared his throat and stepped forward.

“Konoha suffered much that day and there was much grieving after that, but in the spirit of the Uzumaki, we did not call for a war against the ones who killed our allies, the Uzumaki, though strong, generally did not partake in violence; oh they were a Ninja village just like all the others, but they didn’t indulge in things such as revenge and hatred. In the words of Uzumaki Mito herself, ‘Hatred, revenge and death just creates more hatred, revenge and death. A never ending cycle that continues, over and over again, to destroy the lives of any that it touches. Hatred and revenge are worthless as they do not solve anything, and so we, as Uzumaki, no, as humans, will look to the horizon with a smile on our lips and hope within our hearts, forgiving those who have brought pain to us, and helping those who are in pain. If the world showed just a little more kindness, there would
be far less grief and betrayal within it; but I cannot control the actions of others, only of myself, so I will continue to show kindness to others, even if they won’t show the same to me.’ ....”

There was another moment of silence as everyone digested this new information, Haruka speaking up once he felt his brothers words had sunk in,

“We, as Konoha Shinobi, wear a red spiral on our clothes and uniforms. This spiral wasn’t just a fashion choice or because the Hokage felt like we needed a cool symbol to wear, but because of the Uzumaki. The spiral is their Clan Symbol, though originally it was white, and we wear it to symbolize our alliance with the Uzumaki Clan, but to also show our respect for them as, if we were the ones in trouble, they surely would have tried with their very beings to get to us in time to help us, because we were their allies, and there wasn’t another clan more faithful and loyal than the Uzumaki. May their souls rest in peace,” Haruka bowed his head for a moment and everyone copied him, everyone thinking of this clan that was such an intricate part of their history, but they hadn’t even known it, and some of them couldn’t help but wonder if there was a sinister reason behind that, specifically regarding the resident Uzumaki of Konoha.....

A loud clap sounded in the room which brought everyone back to attention. Haruka smiled as he put his hands on his hips,” well now,” he began cheerfully,” let’s get on with the rest of the lesson!”

And with that, Haruka spoke on about different traditions within the time period, exactly how long it lasted, when it truly began and other such things.

It was in the middle of his lecture when Naruto’s carefully laid traps were set off, showering down confetti and multicolored paint on both the teachers and the students. It was such a shock to everyone that they all remained silent for a full minute, before chaos ensued and they all began to freak out, many of the girls screeching about how the paint had gotten in their hair, and several of the other students complaining about it getting on the books.

Naruto had to fight hard to keep the grin from overtaking his face as the chaos reigned supreme. His shoulders shook from the effort, his body slowly moving as his eye twitched. He was lucky that everyone was too busy freaking out to notice his reaction to what happened.

Eventually the instructors were able to calm everyone down and get everything cleaned up before resuming the rest of the lesson. Whispers of who was responsible for the whole mess moved through the whole class, the other preteens wanting to all collectively beat the ever loving shit out of whoever it is. But, unfortunately for them, they wouldn’t be learning who that was anytime soon so they were instead forced to focus on the class at hand, leaving their bloodlust to be sated another day.

At the end of the class, Naruto let out a content sigh as he closed his textbook, passing it forward back to his teachers as History ended and the five-ten minute break between each class began, though he didn’t get to rest his mind long as Iruka called for everyone to go back outside to their section of the training field. Naruto let out a small groan but followed his sensei just like everyone else.

[3 rd Period – Ninjutsu; 9:55 AM]

“Today’s Ninjutsu lesson will be on how well each of you is at Kawarimi and Henge! We will see where each of you are then help the ones who are still behind or could do better but aren’t motivated enough to do better,” several people glanced at Shikamaru at this,” while those of you who are as far as you can go will be taught a new Jutsu! What that Jutsu is..... Well, you’ll see if any of you are ready, hmm? Now, everyone form lines in front of each of us, when I tell you to start you will do Henge first then Kawarimi, you will be transforming into the instructor that you are in front of then you will be switching with one of three logs that are over there! Everyone understand?”
A chorus of ‘hai’ was Iruka’s answer as everyone formed a line in front of the three instructors and waited for their turn to show the men how far they’ve come in both Jutsu.

Naruto was patiently waiting with the rest of his class, when-

“Oh yes, one more thing,” Iruka started up again, a grin on his face,” you will all be given points, the amount of points you have will affect whether or not you will be learning the new Jutsu, I won’t tell you how many points you need, but know that your behavior will also determine whether or not you will learn this Jutsu, this is also a competition, I will announce who won at the end of the lesson, alright?”

“Hai!” they all called back, many of them brimming with excitement, such as Naruto himself who was eager to get first place, but then-

Quest Alert:

Can you be the very best, like no one ever was?

Can you get the highest score in this class? If you do, you’ll get something neat!

Completion reward:

If you get 1st place you will receive:

1000 EXP, 100 REP with every classmate, Jutsu Scroll (B)

If you get 2nd place you will receive:

750 EXP, 50 REP with every classmate, Jutsu Scroll (C)

If you get 3rd place you will receive:

500 EXP, 20 REP with every classmate, Jutsu Scroll (D)

If you get 4th place or lower you will receive:

100 EXP, 0 REP with every classmate

Completion failure:

If you get last place you will receive:

10 EXP, -50 Rep with all classmates (Note: Those with Honored or Exalted REP’s will not be affected)

After looking it over Naruto nodded to himself and pressed the (Y) and waited for his turn to perform. While doing so he discreetly watched Shikamaru and Shino perform and noticed that while they were about the same in the use of the Henge, Shino was better at Kawarimi, causing for Shikamaru to huff in irritation, but luckily for him they both passed and were directed to stand to the side where everyone who was deemed good enough were told to wait to be taught the new Jutsu.

Soon after this Naruto was at the front of his own line so he took a deep breath, calmed his mind and lifted his hands to do the hand seals, then-
POOF!

Where Naruto once stood was now the redheaded Haruka, not a hair out of place. The Chūnin looked back at the once-blond in both approval and awe before he then gleefully wrote something on his clipboard and, with a grin, instructed,” okay, great! Now, do **Kawarimi**!" poofing back to his original form, Naruto grinned back at the man as he once again did the hand seals, disappearing from sight as a log with a bright red streak painted onto it took his place, only for Naruto to once again replace himself with it. Haruka then laughed in glee while jotting something else onto his clipboard, a merry,” you pass!” passing his lips as he eagerly gestured for Naruto to join the group to the side.

Feeling excitement at the prospect of learning a new Jutsu forming in his gut, Naruto happily nodded and dashed over to the group, purposefully bumping shoulders into Shino and Shikamaru who both looked happy at his passing.

“Good job, Naruto-kun,” Shino murmured as he carefully adjusted his glasses, a smile stealing across his lips.

“That was the best **Henge** and **Kawarimi** I’ve ever seen, good going.” Shikamaru praised, raising a hand up and ruffling Naruto’s hair. The blond giggled happily, not even caring that he was caught giggling as he was too happy at the praise so kindly given to him. Scratching at his cheek Naruto gleefully responded,

“Yeah, thanks you guys! I guess I’m just that awesome, dattebayo!” he laughed good naturedly at his own exclamation, proving that it wasn’t one made with ill intent or in arrogance and his two friends started laughing with him, happily lost in their own world.

Unluckily for them, that meant that they had caught the attention of their sensei, whose new mission was to make certain that any and all of his students that were to be put on the field belonged on the field, so, his eye glinting, Iruka discreetly reached within his hip pouch, withdrew a kunai and let it fly.

It all happened within a split second.

One moment the three preteens were happily talking, then the next, Shino and Shikamaru found themselves being bodily shoved out of the way by their blond companion.

They turned to him, about to demand why he had shoved them, when they stopped short, eyes widening at the sight of blood dripping from Naruto’s throat, a kunai sticking in the side of his neck. All movement stopped for what felt like an eternity, but then,

“Oi, Iruka-sensei, why’d you do that, dattebayo?! You could’ve killed someone!” Naruto’s voice rang out in the open air, and everyone collectively started to breathe again.

Meanwhile Naruto turned to his teacher, removing his hand from his neck, it being free of any cuts; everyone then realized that Naruto had moved his hand over his throat in order to protect himself from the killing blow, and the boy did not look pleased.

Iruka shook his head in order to clear it before responding,” You weren’t paying attention to your surroundings, so I was rectifying that,” he stated simply. Naruto scowled at him before he stuck his tongue out,

“I **too** was paying attention to my surroundings! If I hadn’t moved then you could’ve gotten Shika or Shino! So I was paying attention, you’re just being an ass!”
At that proclamation the entire class erupted into surprised and muffled giggles as Iruka stared at the blond boy in surprise. He was snapped out of his shock as Naruto ripped the kunai out of his hand causing for a spurt of blood to start trailing down his fingers to the ground.

“Naruto!” more than one voice yelped in surprise and concern, one of them coming from Iruka himself; but with a shrug Naruto merely reached into his hip pouch and pulled out some tape bandages and wrapped his hand up-knowing that the wound would in no time be completely healed but he also knew better than to show that strange ability off to everyone there-so, with another shrug, Naruto nonchalantly spoke,

“Calm down, I’m fine and it’ll heal in no time, no need to fuss over it,” he finished as he then again glared at his teacher,” but there wouldn’t have been any need for concern in the first place if someone hadn’t been a jackass!” he quipped, causing for Iruka to narrow his own eyes at the boy while his lips twitched, the man attempting to fight the smile such words would usually cause.

“Well,” he replied as he continued to fight down his grin,” I am your instructor, it’s my job to make certain that all of you are prepared for the field, which means that you need to be aware of your surroundings at all times and have the ability to appear relaxed and unattentive in order to put your enemy or anyone watching you into a false sense of security so that they will make a mistake that you will be able to capitalize on. Something of which you seem to have mastered, Naruto, I wasn’t aware of you being able to do that!”

Raising a brow at the man, the boy stuck his tongue out,” and did it ever occur to you that that was my intention?” with a lift of his shoulders Naruto turned away from the man, surprise once again etched across his face, soon followed by one of contemplation as Naruto went back to talking with his friends.

After that little display the tests continued on as usual until all of the students had been tested.

Taking only a moment to look over his clipboard, Iruka pointed to the group of students who had succeeded and directed them away from the rest of the class,” alright, you guys will be following me so that I can teach you the new Jutsu while the rest of you will remain here with Hikaru and Haruka; they’ll be helping you with the Kawarimi and Henge, alright?” several sounds of acknowledgement came from the unfortunate group before the two groups were led to different parts of the field so that the practising group would be able to concentrate and not try and learn the new jutsu.

“Alright,” Iruka called out once they were far enough away, causing for the preteens following him to stop. Grinning at them, Iruka began.

“Today, I will be teaching all of you the Kanashibari no Jutsu, it’s a Jutsu that will allow for you to temporarily restrain your opponent, giving you the perfect opportunity to deal the finishing blow or take them into custody if that is the goal for your mission. Now, would anyone like a demonstration?”

Naruto, along with the rest of the group, nodded their heads, Naruto being a tad more eager than the rest of his classmates. Giving them a grin Iruka lifted his hand in the needed seal as he focused his sight on Naruto, the blond then being filled with a feeling of dread, having a feeling he knew what was going to be happening next….

“Kanashibari no Jutsu!” Iruka called out, and as he did Naruto felt, restrained somehow. It felt as if he had been tied up with ropes and he thought that just had to be the case; but when he looked down he saw that he wasn’t, that there wasn’t anything holding him except for-

His eyes widened as he spotted tiny threads of blue energy curling around his frame…
“....And that does it! All you need to do is focus your attention on your opponent and control your Chakra and you will be able to restrain them!” Naruto was snapped out of his staring at Iruka’s voice, taking notice that the blue threads faded from his body and he didn’t feel restrained anymore.

Naruto then started swinging his arms around and wiggling his body to make certain that nothing had remained restrained.

“Wow, I can’t wait to learn this so that I can make Naruto sit still for once.”

Startled out of his focus Naruto threw a nasty glare at Shikamaru who was unrepentantly smirking right on back.

“What? It’s true, you can never sit still for longer than five seconds, it’d be nice to not have to deal with that for once.”

Eye twitching, Naruto threw his head to the side petulantly, quietly muttering, “if you hate it so much then just sit somewhere else, ass,” Shikamaru opened his mouth to respond, but was unable to as Iruka let out a cough, giving the two a look clearly stating that now was not the time.

Huffing, Shikamaru kept his mouth shut, but threw Naruto a glance that said that they would be talking later while Iruka started back up.

“So, each of you will be practising on each other and you’ll have until five minutes to the end of class to practise, so grab a partner and get started!” at that the group of preteens made a mad-dash for a partner, not wanting to end up with someone that they didn’t get along with.

Naruto himself chose Shino, grabbing him by the shoulder the blond let a smile bloom across his face as the other boy nodded his consent to the choice.

“Naruto...” Shikamaru let out a sigh as the named boy barely turned to look at him. Shino subtly shook his head at the brunet, telling him it wasn’t the time to be talking about it, so Shikamaru moved away to stand with Choji, his chosen partner, and started with the practise.

Shino grabbed hold of Naruto’s hand and pulled him away from the other two boys, and once they were far enough away from them they started to practise.

It was a lot harder than Naruto expected it to be. The Kanashibari Jutsu was one that was based primarily on Chakra control, which meant that for someone like Naruto to get it, they had to either have a very weak version or an over the top version that could both be spotted from a mile away and be more or less easily disrupted if you knew the different ways to disrupt a Genjutsu.

Case in point, even though Naruto was able to perform the jutsu and it looked like it was strong as it tightly wrapped around Shino with thick blue ropes; the other boy was pretty easily able to break it as he had the best Chakra control in the entire class.

Letting out a huff of irritation Naruto moved back into position, attempting to calm his heartbeat and breathing so that he could better concentrate; but that concentration was cut into as Shino performed the jutsu on him, binding him in place with his Chakra.

A low growl built up in Naruto’s throat, irritation once again filling him as he tried to break the binds holding him, but he couldn’t. He couldn’t move and he couldn’t get out and he couldn’t break them and couldn’t, couldn’t, couldn’t!

“RRRAARG!!”
Naruto screamed in frustration, his Chakra bursting out as he thrashed in place, trying to get rid of his restraints. As he did wind started whipping around him as his own Chakra latched onto Shino’s covering his body, causing for it to latch onto Shino himself, the boy being pulled about by Naruto’s Chakra as it lashed out in his frustration.

“Naruto ?!” Shino shouted in alarm as he attempted to remain on the ground, barely able to hold himself there with Chakra as Naruto’s wild, and far stronger, Chakra attempted to lift him from the ground.

Iruka, who had noticed what was happening, made his way over to the blond boy, attempting to calm him from his frustration.

“Naruto!” Iruka shouted, arms over his face to protect it from the dust flying around the boy.

“Naruto, stop it!” a new voice called over the howling winds, causing for Iruka to look up, spotting Shikamaru as he made his way over to the blond boy, far closer than Iruka himself was. Panic welled within the man-no, Shikamaru could get hurt!-and he tried to lift an arm while shouting at the preteen,

“Shikamaru, no! Stay away from him, he’s not stable!” it killed the man to have to say such a thing, but Naruto was too far gone in his own frustration that he wasn’t paying attention to the people around him, unwittingly putting them in danger from his violent Chakra.

But, Shikamaru didn’t listen, only moving closer and closer to his blond-haired friend.

Using his Shadow in order to move closer to Naruto, Shikamaru was having it latch onto the ground so that he would be able to move forwards, against the strong winds being whipped up by Naruto’s Chakra.

When he was finally within arms reach Shikamaru grabbed hold of his friends’ shoulders, pulling him back so that he was flush against him. Reaching his hands down, Shikamaru pushed his own Chakra into Naruto’s hands; attempting to use his own Chakra to calm Naruto’s down.

It was a bit hard as Naruto was still struggling, but those struggles slowly ceased as Shikamaru pushed more of his healing Chakra into Naruto’s. It wasn’t too long before the winds whipping around them stopped and Naruto remained still against Shikamaru, his breathing harsh and ragged as he attempted to catch his breath.

All was still, no one moved as they cautiously watched the blond boy for any more outbursts, now weary of the boy as they all collectively remembered that he had large Chakra reserves. So it was with bated breath that they watched Naruto as he calmed, his breathing becoming calmer and his body losing it’s tense lines.

Harsh breathing filled his ears and he couldn’t quite understand where it was coming from. It was also incredibly hard to see, everything was blurry images and swirling lines. Hands tightened around his wrists. He jerked forwards in reaction.

“It’s okay, it’s just me…” a voice whispered in his ear. Naruto lifted his head some as he registered the body at his back. He wanted to panic, but he couldn’t, the Gamer ability forcing his mind to refocus instead of being stuck wherever it had gone.

Vision returning, Naruto took one final breath, his body tightening once more before letting go of it’s tenseness. He straightened his back and the hands holding his wrist loosened their grip, gently falling away as he took a step forward and away from the body at his back.
Turning his head, and then his body, Naruto spotted Shikamaru standing there, concern having taken over his features. He offered a weak smile, but couldn’t do much more than that.

The silence persisted; unwavering until Shikamaru shifted in place. His hand lifted towards Naruto before falling at his side. He offered his own smile, kind and genuine in nature, it warming his eyes.

“You okay?” he asked, filling the silence at last.

Naruto nodded, his hand coming up to rub at the back of his neck, a sheepish laugh falling from his lips in the process,” yeah… just lost control there for a bit.” he turned his head to look behind him, finding Shino standing right where he had been this whole time. Naruto could practically hear his heart beating erratically and it pained him, knowing he was the reason behind it.

Turning his body the rest of the way, Naruto took a hesitant step towards the other boy, and felt a pang in his heart when he flinched away from the motion. Remaining still, Naruto offered his best, most sincere smile, holding his arms out on his sides to show that he meant no harm, but also not making another attempt to get closer.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to, well, lose it like that…”he shook his head, took another calming breath and renewed his smile,” I just, lost control… again… I’m sorry for putting you through that; are you okay Shino? I didn’t hurt you, right?” The Aburame shook his head in the negative, carefully holding his arms out to the side so that Naruto wouldn’t think that he was lying to him by hiding his injury.

Naruto nodded his head, a sigh of relief escaping him at the sight, a small smile upturning his lips. That smile was dashed, however when Naruto brought his other foot forward, Shino flinched back again, his body taking a loose fighting stance.

It were as it he was stabbed in the heart. He couldn’t move, couldn’t breathe, couldn’t do anything but look at Shino, his vision blurring around the edges as everything in him remained still, afraid of moving again, afraid of seeing that fear creep back into Shino’s body.

Forcing breath into his lungs Naruto allowed for a wobbly smile to grace his lips. Closing his eyes, Naruto forced the smile to turn into his normal idiotic grin and countenance into his body and face, throwing his feelings of pain and regret to the background.

“Ah, I’m glad, Dattebayo!” he exclaimed in his usual jovial tone, his body feeling emptier the longer he grinned, the longer he stood there.

Forcing feeling back into his limbs, Naruto backed away, keeping his eyes closed, keeping his heart closed. He didn’t want to be near anyone, he didn’t want to talk to anyone. But he couldn’t leave, not yet, so he moved over so that he would be by Iruka.

Naruto didn’t allow himself to look at anyone’s face, knowing exactly what he’d find there and not wishing to see it, for there was only one thing that would be on his classmates faces.

_Fear._

_Fear or pity._

And Naruto _hates_ pity. It was just another reason for people to see him as less and it hurt almost as much as the fear and hatred. So, he refrained from looking at their faces, kept himself from noticing their reactions, detached himself from everything, so that he wouldn’t be able to feel at all.
Iruka clearing his throat brought everyone back from the incident. The man let out a sigh, “Alright, time to get back to work…” looking down at the top of Naruto’s head, the man knew that no one would be willing to work with the blond, and that the blond was most likely in no mood to work with anyone either. So, with another light sigh, the man spoke back up.

“Naruto, you’ll be working with me for the rest of the exercise, Shino, you’ll be working with Shikamaru and Chouji, will that do?” at their nods of consent Iruka sent his own back, “Good, now, everyone back to work!”

A chorus of ‘hai’ was his answer and back they went to practising the Jutsu, this time though they kept sending glances in Naruto’s direction, whispering gossip following the looks.

Knowing that he wouldn’t be able to do anything about the looks, or the gossip, Iruka instead focused his attention back onto his favorite student. Naruto still hadn’t moved since he had stopped in front of him, his head bent low at an angle and keeping his gaze from landing on anyone. It was something that Iruka had never seen from his most hyperactive student and so he didn’t quite know how to handle the situation. Trying to think up a way to cheer Naruto up, or at the least make him react to anything, Iruka was genuinely caught off guard when Naruto started to speak, his voice chillingly devoid of emotion.

“So, were you telling the truth that I’ll be working with you, or are you just going to make me stand here and wait till class is over?”

Turning to look at him, Iruka felt a pit form in his stomach at the look of detached apathy on the whiskered face of his most hyperactive and jovial student. He understood now, that trying to cheer Naruto up wouldn’t be an option, at least for now. Now he needed to keep to his word.

With a resolute nod, Iruka answered, “Yes, let’s get started now, shall we?” Getting into position, Iruka started helping Naruto with the Kanashibari Jutsu, the Jutsu that had started this whole mess.

Gradually, over the course of the rest of the class, Naruto was able to slowly bring himself back to the present, away from his detached emotions and pain, and back to focusing on mastering this new Jutsu, a new determination filling him. He would overcome this Jutsu, he would beat it and he would never, ever allow for something like that to happen, again.

Carefully keeping his breathing even, and his mind clear, Naruto focused on breaking out of the Jutsu, using his Chakra and placing it on the surface of his skin in order to break the bonds of Iruka’s own Chakra. It took some work and control but he was eventually able to break out. He wasn’t satisfied yet, though, his face remained pinched in determination as he conjured up his own Chakra, throwing it at Iruka and binding the man in place. Annoyingly his Chakra was still visible but with his clear mind and careful control, he was at the least able to make it strong enough to make it difficult to break out of, something of which that was proven as Iruka took longer than he had the first time to break free of Naruto’s hold.

This kept up with Naruto gradually getting better before Iruka called for an end to the practice and directed everyone, including the students who weren’t learning the new Jutsu, back together so that he and his assistants could make their final assessments.

Naruto didn’t move towards his friends, he instead stood off to the side, closer to the instructors but away from the his classmates as he knew that they all still felt uneasy of his presence—not like he could really blame them—and instead focused his attention on the clipboards in Iruka, Haruka and Hikaru’s hands, watching as their mouths moved in their quiet conversation.
But, eventually Naruto’s own energy filled body wouldn’t allow for him to remain still, so he started looking around himself in order to keep his overabundance of energy in check.

While he was doing this, he spotted Sasuke and decided to check out his current Level, though he was fairly certain he already knew what he would be finding there-

**Uchiha Sasuke – Academy Student – LV20**

Letting out a sigh of resignation, Naruto couldn’t keep the frustration and feelings of being inadequate from entering his body. Yeah, he was already Level 15 himself, but no matter how hard he tried, Sasuke always seemed to be three steps ahead of him. Sasuke had been the strongest in the class when he had first gotten this ability, but even with Naruto’s extra training and his new focus on being a better student Sasuke was still above him.

Shaking his head, Naruto knew the real reason why he was focusing on Sasuke like he used to. It was because he didn’t want to think about the possibility of losing his friends.

He knew he had fucked up, and fucked up good. Shino was scared of him now, no doubt Chouji was as well; he didn’t know how Shikamaru felt about him, but it couldn’t be anything good, no doubt he was trying to come up with a tactful way to let Naruto down easy on the end of their friendship.

Clenching his teeth, Naruto mentally berated himself for his thoughts. He had no right to ask them to remain his friends when he couldn’t even guarantee their safety while in his presence. No right to expect them to be willing to throw caution to the wind and willingly put themselves in danger just to satisfy his own damned needs! Scrunching his eyes closed, Naruto shook his head of the thoughts plaguing it. Now really wasn’t the time to be thinking about this! He needed to refocus on the task at hand and deal with whatever consequences to his actions later.

So, with renewed resolve, Naruto lifted his head and focused in on his instructors, and it appeared to be just in time as they were all turning to look at the whole class, clearly stating that they had come to a final conclusion.

“Alright everyone!” Iruka called out to catch the classes attention. “We’ve tallied up all of the points and we’ve decided on the top three best performers!”

Everyone crowded forward in anticipation, wondering who the top three best students in this challenge were. No doubt Sasuke would be in first place, that was a given, but who would be in second and third place?

“So, in first place, the one who got the most points today is...”

With bated breath, everyone leaned forwards in anticipation, but were genuinely surprised at the reveal.

“... Aburame Shino!”

Shocked gasps filled the clearing as everyone turned to look at the trench coat wearing boy. It was hard to tell his own reaction, but not to Naruto who was able to see that he was just as surprised as everyone else was at winning the competition and while he wasn’t participating in the excitement himself, Naruto was quietly proud of his friend.

Letting a smile curl his lips, Naruto sent Shino his own congratulations in his mind, knowing that it would most likely not be that well received if he tried to do it personally. Shaking his head of such
thoughts, Naruto reminded himself that it wasn’t all about him and that he needed to focus on his friends victory.

The excitement quieted down after a moment which allowed for Iruka to reveal the other two best students.

“Okay, in second place we have…” a grin flitted over his lips as he gestured with a flourish of his hand,” Uzumaki Naruto!”

“...Eh…?”

“WHAT?!?!?!”

The class all shouted in unison.

None of the preteens could believe their ears. How had Naruto gotten a higher score than Sasuke?! It had to be some sort of fluke! But none were more surprised than the blond boy himself. Naruto had pegged himself as last in the roster after his freak out; he had not only lost control of himself but he had placed a classmate in unnecessary danger! So why was he in second place?

Taking a step forward, Naruto raised his hand, determined to get answers.

“Yes Naruto?” Iruka questioned with a knowing smile. Naruto squared his shoulders, steeling his nerves in preparation for the conversation to come.

“Um, Iruka-sensei? Why am I second? I thought that after my, uh, freakout, that I would’ve lost all of my points and be last place, especially since I put Shino in danger…” trailing off at the end, Naruto forced himself to look in Iruka’s eye, even though he wanted to look away in shame.

Watching Iruka’s face for any sign of anger or disgust, Naruto was surprised when instead the man started to chuckle, his amusement apparent to all that were looking.

With a grin spreading over his face, Iruka answered the blond. “Hm, I had a feeling you’d be curious, and that you’d ask instead of just accepting it-” raising a hand to stop Naruto from commenting on that, Iruka continued,”-and that’s one of the reasons why you were given that position.”

Now Naruto just looked bewildered. Shaking his head, Naruto turned confused eyes upon the scarred man,” what’s that supposed to mean?”

Laughing good naturedly, Iruka moved towards the blond while answering,” it means that you have a good attitude, Naruto.” Stopping in front of the boy, Iruka reached a hand out to ruffle it through the soft blond locks of Naruto’s hair. Tilting his head to the side with a crooked grin the man continued,

“Yes, you had a freak out that could have put your other classmates in danger, you had even put your friend in danger! But, Naruto that isn’t who you are.” He leaned down some, looking straight
into Naruto’s widening eyes. “Naruto, I think I know why you lashed out in the first place, it was because you don’t like the feeling of being restrained, is that correct?”

With a shallow nod of his head, Naruto gave his answer. Iruka smiled softly, before that smile turned into a grimace,” and,” he pushed,” would I be correct in assuming, that the reason you had such a wild reaction to being restrained, is because you have been restrained before, haven’t you?”

Flinching back from the man, Naruto turned to look away, shame and the shadow of unpleasant memories clouding his eyes…

*Shadowed figures stood over him as his back arched off of the table, his breathing coming in quick gasps…*

*Everything hurt, everything was dark… he couldn’t see right in front of him but he could feel the ninja wire constricting his movements, could feel the bodies surrounding him.*

*He blinked his eyes hard, trying to see, trying to catch a glimpse of these people, but all he saw was, an ANBU mask?*

*No, not ANBU… a mask like ANBU…*

“Am I correct Naruto?”

A sharp inhale of breath was all the indication that Iruka got, but it was answer enough for not just him, but for anyone paying attention.

Letting out a sigh of regret, Iruka reached his other hand out, gently gripping Naruto’s shoulder.

“Another reason you got second,” Iruka continued on, hoping to distract the boy from the shadows of his past,” is because you had gotten the highest score during the first portion of the class. You’re Henge and Kawarimi are the best I’ve ever seen! If it weren’t for you lashing out then it’s very possible that you could have gotten first, but Shino did do very well during both the first portion as well as the second, so who knows?” letting out a laugh, the man was relieved when he heard Naruto’s own laughter following after.

Naruto’s signature grin was back on his face and the boy couldn’t keep it from forming. He really did deserve to be second, despite everything, he did deserve it.

“And the final reason you got second,” Iruka abruptly started talking again, causing for Naruto’s eyes to snap open in surprise. A grin stretched over his lips,” the final reason is, because you are honest. Most people wouldn’t have questioned why they got rewarded after misbehaving, but you did. I knew you would because despite all of your pranking and mischief, you are an honest person, an honest person who unfairly measures himself against his classmates.”

Naruto looked taken aback at those words, as did the rest of the class who were all listening in. A look of determination overcame Iruka’s face as he pushed forwards, not allowing for Naruto’s look of disbelief to sway him.

“Naruto, you not only have wild Chakra but an overabundance of it, trying to control it would be hard for anyone, let alone a kid like you. But you treat your failures of controlling yours like someone who has considerable less amount of Chakra who has a hard time controlling theirs as the same thing when they aren’t. You were born with large reserves of Chakra, and because you didn’t have someone there to help teach you how to control it when you were young-or even when you first started coming to the Academy-you never learned the basics of control; so learning them now
when the rest of your classmates already know how to do it just makes it harder, but you are honest
Naruto so you have measured yourself against people who are weaker, Chakra wise, than you,
because that’s what everyone else does.”

Shaking his head, Iruka straightened his back, looking down at Naruto with his eyebrows creased in
frustration.

“But you aren’t like everyone else.” he stated firmly.

He held up a hand before Naruto could start yelling at him, which the blond seemed to be two
breaths away from doing.” Naruto, you are the only child in this entire class that has the amount of
Chakra that you do. No one, not Sasuke, not Chouji, not Shino, has anywhere near the same level as
you. Why do you think I was always able to find you so well? You have an overabundance of
Chakra that, if left unchecked, is easy to find. The amount of Chakra you have would be hard for a
Jounin to control and mask, let alone a kid who hasn’t been taught the basics whose Chakra is still
growing and will continue to grow to be at least three times the size it is now by the time you turn
twenty! You are a hard worker Naruto and We, Hikaru, Haruka and I, will all be helping you learn
how to control your Chakra, but what you were able to do with it today, despite your lack of
training, was admirable, so the three of us decided that you deserved to be in second, despite the
freak out and the weaker control, because you deserved and earned it. Do you understand?”

Throughout the explanation, Naruto’s look of anger had slowly transformed into one of awe.
Opening his mouth, he tried to say something but found no words forthcoming. His mind refused to
supply anything and so all he could do was stand there and stare at the man standing before him.

After a moment Iruka let out a chuckle and pat Naruto on the head,” I said, do you understand
Naruto?” he repeated himself, his grin full of mischief as he did.

Shaking his head to bring himself back from his confusion and surprise, Naruto allowed for his own
smile to light up his face. “Heh, yeah Iruka-sensei! Thanks, Dattebayo!”

**Question Completion: EXP 750**

**Increased Reputation with every classmate +50**

**C-Rank Scroll on Ninjutsu**

**Increased Reputation with the Konoha Twelve +20**

**Chakra Control level Increased by 1**

**Penalty; Decreased Reputation with all classmates -25**

**Decreased Reputation with the Konoha Twelve -10**

Naruto wanted to be upset at the penalty, but couldn’t really muster up the feeling. It was his own
fault for getting it so he would just have to work harder in order to gain back the points.

With renewed determination brewing, Naruto listened to find out who was in third place.
Considering that Sasuke was in neither first nor second, Naruto guessed he’d be in third at least.

“And third place is… Nara Shikamaru!”

“Well, I guess not then,’ Naruto thought as everyone started shouting in surprise, Sasuke’s fangirl’s
being the loudest. He watched as Shino and Chouji congratulated Shikamaru on his success, who
seemed to be even more surprised than Naruto had been at his placement. But he took it with grace and thanked his friends for the kind words.

After that it was revealed that Sasuke was in fourth place, and the boy wasn’t all too happy about it. But there wasn’t anything that he could about it so after a bit of huffing and puffing on his part, they all moved on until everyone within the class had been placed.

And so, after all that was over and done with their break started. All of the preteens moved around into their friend groups to talk before the next class started.

Naruto looked on in longing at his own friend group, but noted with a pained grimace that none of them moved to get him, they didn’t even turn to look at him, so it was with a sigh that Naruto started to make his way to his own secluded corner of the field.

But he was stopped on the way.

Looking up, Naruto met the warm brown eyes of his sensei. The man smiled down at him, telling him softly, “I believe that it would be for the best, at least for now, that you stay with me. Wouldn’t you agree?”

Nodding his head to that, Naruto hummed his reply and so walked over to where the teachers were standing together, each of them talking of casual subjects that Naruto didn’t feel the need to inject himself into.

And it was within a couple minutes that the class was called back together by the instructors, who started on the next lesson.

[4th Period – Genjutsu; 10:45 AM]

“Okay everyone! Today in Genjutsu we will be learning how to spot, and dispel a Genjutsu that you are put under. We will be using the D-ranked Genjutsu Magen: Narakumi no Jutsu in order to teach you this.”

Murmurs of excitement and worry built up within the crowd of students; mildly put at unease at the name of the Genjutsu that was to be placed upon them (it was, after all called Demonic Illusion: Hell Viewing Jutsu) so it was with trepidation that the class of preteens were directed to stand in groups of three, each of them being instructed on how to break themselves, and their partners, out of a Genjutsu when it was placed on them, which, just like during their Chakra Control exercise earlier in the day, they wouldn’t be made aware of when it happened.

Not much happened during the class. There were a couple of hijinks that took place, but they were primarily performed by the teachers in order to throw everyone off so that they wouldn’t know when they were put under a Genjutsu. These antics ranged from silly to traumatizing in order to keep everyone on their toes, forcing them to pay attention and learn how to tell the difference between a Genjutsu and reality.

Naruto wasn’t all that bothered by the hijinks, as he quickly discovered an interesting ability of his-

**A special skill has been unlocked.**

**By being subjugated to Genjutsu with it not affecting you, the skill “Genjutsu Immunity” Lv. 25 has been unlocked.**

Intrigued, Naruto stealthily looked up the Skill in his Skill List and read it’s description.
Genjutsu are illusions to be feared. They trick one’s mind into believing a false reality—a false reality that is made in order to put the one under it in grave danger. But you are immune to such things!

- Immunity to Genjutsu Rank D
- Immunity to Genjutsu Rank C
- Immunity to Genjutsu Rank B
- Ability to recognize Genjutsu Rank A-S raised by 45%-25%
- Increases [Chakra Sensing] by 15%

Naruto was quite giddy at the prospect of this Skill. From what he could remember from his hazy and blacked out memory, Naruto had been forced under Genjutsu by others before, and it had always been a terrible experience; those glowing red eyes still haunted him…

But seeing as this Skill had been locked much like his Empathy Skill had been, he was starting to wonder if the damned [???] was doing more to him than he first thought…

Deciding to look into it later, Naruto focused the rest of his time of the class into sensing when one of his Sensei activated a Genjutsu, in order to get back into the hang of recognizing them—being immune is good and all, but most people didn’t have that luxury, so Naruto wanted to be able to recognize a Genjutsu when it was being used so that he would be able to break his comrades out of it if the need arose.

And so the class passed relatively fast for the blond as he observed all of his classmates react differently to the Genjutsu being placed on them. But soon enough the lesson was over and so they all started making their way back inside. But then Naruto accidentally ran into Sakura who turned around and gave him the stink eye.

"Watch where you’re going!" she barked. Naruto nodded his head quickly while holding his hands up in surrender.

"Ah, I’m sorry, didn’t mean to, ‘ttebayo!" he smiled weakly in an effort to placate her. Sakura huffed and was just about to turn away again when Naruto, making up his mind with a rush of determination (and some desperation), called out, “wait, I have something to ask you, Dattebayo!"

Sakura looked back at the boy, eyebrows drawn low on her forehead in a scowl, her jaw was stiff, as if she were clenching her teeth, and she responded through those clenched teeth,” what?"

Naruto smiled pleasantly back at her while he allowed for his hands to fall to his sides and relaxed his posture, his smile turning into a grin,

“I was wondering if you would like to hang out later; just hang out! I’m not asking you out on a date! I just want to hang out, y’know, like friends do!” he waved his hands in front of him as he explained himself. Sakura looked at him in surprise and wonder, and Naruto thought, for a moment, that she just might accept his offer.

But then, she shook her head harshly, as if she were dislodging her previous thought, and glared at the blond, snidely saying,” what in Kami’s name brought you on to ask me that, you little freak?!!
I’ve told you before and I’ll tell you again; I will not go out on a **DATE** with you! Now, stop asking me you idiot! When will you get it through your thick skull that I don’t like you, I have never liked you and I never will like you! You’re just an annoying, good-for-nothing, waste of space, **IDIOT** that just can’t get it through his head that he is the most unlikable person in this entire village!? Now leave me alone and never bother me again!”

Everyone was silent, stunned by the pinkett’s outburst, none more than Naruto himself, who was looking at the girl in surprise and hurt.

But then, his features darkened, his lips pulling into a frown and his brows scrunching up in anger.

And for the first time ever, he spoke back to Haruno Sakura.

“I wasn’t asking you out on a date, Sakura,” his voice was quiet, his stare unrelenting as he carefully continued. “I very clearly said that I just wanted to hang out as friends, I wasn’t asking you out on a date!” his teeth clenched in his frustration before a spark of realization zapped through his eyes, lighting them up with even more anger.” In fact, all I’ve ever done was ask you if you wanted to hang out! You seem to be under the delusion that I have a crush on you!” His stare hardened as he finally understood, after all this time, what he should have realized long before.

“I. Don’t, ‘Ttebayo!”

Shaking his head, he fixed her with a different look in his eyes, one of pain, and exhaustion,“ I don’t think I ever have. The first time we met, yeah, I thought you were pretty, but that doesn’t mean I had a crush on you! Maybe both of us confused my feelings for what they weren’t, but I can say with extreme clarity now that I most definitely don’t feel that way about you! The only reason I’ve been ‘chasing’ you for a relationship at all was because I thought you’d be a good friend! Don’t you remember how we first met? It was before the Academy!”

Bringing a hand up to his chin, Naruto over-exaggeratedly started looking around in question,

“Now, let me think, what was happening when we first met? Oh! That’s right! You were being **BULLIED** by a bunch of kids for your pink hair! They were going on and on about how someone with pink hair couldn’t be a Ninja because they’d give them away! They all left you alone after I stepped in and told them to fuck off, saying that plenty of well-known Ninja, including the Nidaime and Yondaime Hokage, had brightly colored hair and that the color of a person’s’ hair didn’t determine whether or not they were good Ninja! Do you remember that, Sakura?”

The girl suddenly looked uncomfortable, answering Naruto’s question,

“Oh, of course you remember! After that I told you that I was also going to be going to the Academy to be a Ninja and you said that we could be friends! You said that you couldn’t wait to start the Academy and have a friend be there with you! I was also excited; just think of it, my very first friend! But then—”he cut himself off, shaking his head he sighed harshly, dispelling his anger in an instant.

“Y’know what?” he started up again,” I don’t care.” He walked past the girl, stopping and turning to look at her,” Sakura, if one day, on the very off chance that you change your opinion of me, I mean, when you actually start thinking for yourself and not just what dear mommy and aunty have told you about me I might be willing to be your friend, but until then, I’m done. I’m done putting up with your abuse, telling myself that you don’t really mean it, I’m done acting as if it’s’ okay for you to act that way, or that it’s okay for me to act that way...” he sighed,” I’m just, done.” And with that, he walked into the Academy building.
Everything was quiet, no one knew what to say, before Shikamaru and Shino snapped back to reality and rushed after their friend.

They found him in a closet; the one that Naruto, Shikamaru, Kiba and Chouji would hide in when they were coming up with pranking ideas. After they hadn’t been able to find him in the classroom, Shikamaru had told Shino to follow him, as he had a feeling he knew where the blond would be.

Pulling the door open, the two brunet’s looked down to see the shiny blond hair of their friend, tucked in a corner with his knees pulled to his chest and his arms wrapped around them. His chin was tucked behind his arms, so they weren’t able to see his mouth and nose and his normally bright azure eyes shone dully.

Shikamaru was the first to enter, kneeling in front of Naruto.

"Naruto…?" he called softly, but the blond only turned his eyes away.

Shino then entered the room, closing the door behind him to give them privacy, and he too kneeled before the blond boy.

“Naruto-kun…? Are you okay?” he asked softly, carefully reaching a hand out and laying it on his elbow.

Naruto flinched away at the contact, pulling his body in more tightly, stiffly.

Shino felt as if he had been slapped in the face, nausea clogging his throat and coiling his stomach. He was almost angry at Naruto’s reaction, wanting to reach out and bop the blond on the head for doing such a thing. But Shikamaru grabbing him and looking at him both sternly and meaningfully brought him back to himself.

He was a bit confused by the way Shikamaru was looking at him, his eyes telling him he had no right to be mad, and Shino just couldn’t understand why!

Shikamaru, in turn, grabbed Shino by the back of his head and forced him to look at Naruto, really look at him, causing for even more confusion to enter him, why would Shikamaru make him look at Naruto? He didn’t understand and as his frustration mounted his Kikaichu started buzzing loudly beneath his skin.

Naruto flinched back again, pushing himself into the corner of the room even more fiercely, a low whimper rising from his throat.

Shino felt as if he were slapped again, and this time he understood why.

“Oh, Naruto…” he choked out of his clogged throat, the blond’s response merely being him shifting away from him again, as if he were frightened that he would strike him, and Shino felt a deep sorrow settle in his stomach.
He had reacted in a similar way not two hours prior. He had at first felt justified in his reaction, but he knew now that he hadn’t.

Not that his initial reaction had been wrong, he had been manhandled by Naruto’s Chakra and it had been terrifying. So wanting to take some time from being around him after such an ordeal was understandable, Naruto himself would most likely agree to that.

But the way he had acted after couldn’t be excused.

He had purposefully kept his distance from Naruto. He should have tried making an attempt to reassure Naruto that he was fine now, that he wasn’t scared of him and that he just needed some time away from him in order to properly calm himself.

But he hadn’t.

Instead he had cruelly kept away from him, not looking at him or allowing for him to approach him. He didn’t let Shikamaru bring him up and Chouji had taken his side, telling the Nara that Shino deserved some time to come to terms with what had happened, not knowing that Shino had already come to terms with it, he just wanted to sulk in his own misery and self-righteous anger for a while longer.

He had selfishly toyed with Naruto’s emotions to make himself feel better about what had happened.

And now, he felt like shit for doing it, rightfully so, he reprimanded himself.

Yes, Naruto had terrified him and very nearly hurt him.

But it had been an accident.

An accident that he had apologized immediately for. But Shino wanted to selfishly hang onto his fear and sulk over what had happened, actually hoping that it was tearing Naruto up inside—Naruto was kind, he was forgiving, he’d be willing to forgive him and would no doubt accept his sulking after Shino was done—and he had been planning on talking to Naruto later, but now he hated himself for what he had done.

Looking at Naruto, really looking at him, Shino saw that he was trembling, his sides heaving up and down quickly though he couldn’t hear any heavy breathing. He was hiding his pain, Shino understood with a stab to the heart.

‘Enough is enough!’ he thought resolutely and reached out his hand and gently placed it on Naruto’s shoulder again. Looking from the corner of his eye, he noticed that Shikamaru hadn’t moved to grab his hand away this time, letting him finish what he had started with a raised, and knowing, brow.

Shino nodded to him in thanks before turning his attention back onto the blond he was touching, the boy continuing to not look at him, though his trembling had increased, causing for Shino to scoot towards him. Shino didn’t let up, didn’t pull his hand away, waiting for Naruto to acknowledge him and look at him. He almost wanted to back down, but he couldn’t leave things the way they were, he didn’t want Naruto to suffer anymore than he already had. But he wouldn’t budge, so Shino started talking softly, laying down everything for Naruto to see, wanting him to know that he wasn’t angry with him, that he didn’t blame him for what happened, and that if Naruto was angry with him, well, he had every right to be. What he did

He explained with a heavy and pained heart that he had purposefully stayed away in order to hurt him, something of which caused for Naruto to stiffen even more under his touch, but Shino didn’t back down, wanting Naruto to understand that it wasn’t his fault, and that he didn’t blame him for what happened, and that if Naruto was angry with him, well, he had every right to be. What he did
was mean, no, it was cruel, and he didn’t want Naruto to forgive him if he didn’t want to,

“...And if you want to continue being friends... I’m open to that, but please, don’t misunderstand what I am saying. If you don’t want to forgive me right now that’s fine. I will remain your friend if that is what you want. If you do want to forgive me I’ll be very grateful...”

It took a little time, but finally Naruto started to lean into Shino’s hand, uncurling his arms and letting his legs fall open as he reached up, wrapping them around Shino’s back, tugging him closer as his trembling vanished. Shino felt a lump form in his throat as tears pricked his eyes. Lowering his head so that he was resting his cheek on the crown of Naruto’s head, he tightened his hold, rubbing his back as quiet gasps attempted to escape him.

“I’m sorry,” he whimpered into Naruto’s hair,” I’m so, so sorry....” He breathed out with a sniff. He took a moment to hold Naruto to him, to apologize over and over again, all the while Naruto gently caressed his back and hummed in encouragement, which helped Shino from losing his head.

After a couple minutes of this Shino finally loosened his hold, pulling himself away from Naruto, though he kept his hands on Naruto’s shoulders, and tried to look him in the eye, but couldn’t as he was looking down with his eyes still closed.

“Naruto-kun?” Shino called out in worry. The boy didn’t respond, only leaning away from Shino in order to lean against the wall, his eyes still closed.

“Naruto-kun?” he called again, the worry growing bigger.

And yet he still got no response.

“Naruto.”

Shino was surprised to hear Shikamaru’s voice sound right next to his ear, but he didn’t turn to look at him as his full attention was on the blond, wondering if Shikamaru’s call would get him to react.

It seemed to work because this time Naruto responded.

He took in a calming breath then lifted his head, opening his eyes he looked at Shino, the azure orbs shiny with unshed tears. It was a little hard for the Aburame to see them in the darkened room so he pulled off his glasses, causing for Naruto’s eyes to widen and for a soft gasp to leave him, reaching his hands up and touching Shino’s face gently.

He smiled.

“You really do have beautiful eyes...” he murmured softly, running his thumb under Shino’s eye gently.

Shino responded by running his hands up Naruto’s arms until they rested on his hands, he smiled and squeezed the smaller hands within his own, murmuring a thank you to the boy.

They sat like that for a long moment before the pain of not wearing his glasses got to be too much and Shino had to put them back on. Naruto looked to be disappointed but he didn’t protest it, he simply rubbed his fingers over Shino’s cheeks before trying to retract his hands. Shino didn’t want that and so grabbed them and placed them back on his face, smiling encouragingly.

“It’s okay,” he murmured, breath ghosting over Naruto’s skin,” I don’t mind...” he smiled warmly.

Naruto let out a strange noise as his face steadily got darker in embarrassment, something of which
Shino was only just barely able to see because of his glasses, which caused for him to want to take them off again though he knew he couldn’t. So instead he scooted closer to Naruto, actually sitting down on his bum instead of continuing to kneel and letting his legs come near Naruto’s.

The blond lifted up his own legs and allowed for Shino to place them even closer in a more comfortable position, which resulted in Naruto’s feet to almost meet near Shino’s butt, his thighs touching Shino’s knees.

Leaning against the wall Naruto wrapped his arms around his stomach, his eyes carefully taking in first Shino, and then Shikamaru.

Having remained quiet and still, for the most part, Shikamaru finally let out his held breath in a sigh. He scooted closer to the blond and other brunet, his left leg going under Shino’s and his right behind Naruto in the space between the wall and his back, he leaned into Naruto’s personal space, resting his head on the blue-eyed boys’ shoulder, sighing again as he asked,” are you okay?”

Naruto placed his cheek on top of his, nodding his head,” yeah,” he whispered,” just…” he seemed to have a difficult time continuing, but then Shikamaru pressed his face into Naruto’s neck, letting his fingers trail up Naruto’s shoulder and to the back of his neck, softly messaging there.

Naruto let out a breath of content as he started up again,” I’m s-sorry Shika…” he murmured with a sniff, Shikamaru let out a noise of confusion while allowing for his other hand curl around Naruto’s bicep.

“Why are you apologizing?” he asked lowly, continuing to message Naruto’s neck.

Naruto let out a hum of content as his body slowly became less tense, his eyes closed again as he sagged against the wall.

“Nhm, about-about earlier… before we started learning the Kanashibari Jutsu, what you said… what you said wasn’t mean. But I got angry at you for saying it…” he trailed off again, and Shikamaru could hear his breathing start to become erratic again so, in one swift movement, he gathered Naruto into his arms, just as Shino did, the two of them pulling him close as they squished him to them, which caused for Naruto’s legs to be hiked up higher over Shino’s thighs, his body being pressed from the front and his side.

Naruto’s eyes snapped open in surprise, a small gasp leaving him as Shino wrapped his arms under his and around his back, and Shikamaru wrapped his around his shoulders, pushing Naruto’s face against Shino’s neck in the process.

Naruto gulped before lifting shaking arms to wrap around Shino’s shoulders and Shikamaru’s bicep. He hiccupped before speaking up again.

“I-I know it was just supposed to be a joke… and I know I overreacted, but…”his voice cracked, leaving him gasping as his body continued to tense up like a wind-up toy, and at any moment he was going to pop.

“It’s just that… people, before you, before I really got to know you, th-they’d get cl-close to me, just so that they could h-hurt me…” he sniffed,” and I… I didn’t wanna get hurt again…”his body started jerking as choked sobs left his mouth.

Shaking his head, he pushed his face into Shino’s shoulder as barely contained sobs wracked his body.

“I-I’m so-sorry! I shouldn’t have done that to you, Shika, I knew, I knew that you weren’t trying to
be mean, that it was just supposed to be a joke, but, my mind, it decided th-that that was your way o-of letting m-me know that, that our friendship was over, that you didn’t care anymore!”

Shaking his head again, he clutched even tighter to his two friends, his breath coming in sharp gasps that left him breathless.

“Naruto…” Shikamaru whispered, feeling his throat clog with his own emotions. He wanted to pull Naruto even closer, but he couldn’t, it was physically impossible to pull Naruto even closer than he already was. But he couldn’t help but want to! He wanted to hold and comfort his friend, his crush, the person he cared so much for it was almost painful, and make all of his suffering go away.

But he can’t. And he knows he can’t, and that’s what made it so frustrating.

So instead of pulling closer, he lifted his head from Naruto’s neck, leaned forwards and pressed a firm kiss right behind Naruto’s ear.

“It’s okay…” he whispered there as he gently started to rock his body, Shino swiftly following suit.

“We’re here…” he murmured, placing another kiss on his head.

“...I’m here… and I won’t leave you… no matter what, Naruto…” Shikamaru felt a burning flush spread over his cheeks at his own words. It felt as if he were confessing to the object of his affections with those words. And though he felt the need to pull away, to take those words back in fear of being rejected, he held on strong, because fuck what he was feeling, Naruto needed him and those words and Shikamaru would freely give them, even if they came to bite him in the butt later!

“As well as I,” Shikamaru was snapped out of his inner turmoil when Shino spoke, the other boy had moved his hand so that it wasn’t only wrapped around Naruto’s back, but was also holding Shikamaru’s arm that was wrapped around Naruto’s shoulder.

Shikamaru gulped hard all the while Shino continued.

“We are here, and I will not leave your side, no matter what!”

Shino spoke firmly, his face scrunched up in a serious frown for a moment before he leaned forward again, guiding Naruto’s head so that it would rest on his collar bone. He placed his chin on top of Naruto’s head, humming a soothing lullaby in order to calm him.

Shikamaru could feel Naruto’s body start to lose it’s tenseness, though his crying didn’t cease, he was just not sobbing uncontrollably now, his face still tear stained and his eyes shedding those tears.

Letting out a sniffle Naruto allowed for his eyes to fall shut as he leaned his face fully into Shino. His breathing was stilted and a little off, but he was starting to calm down.

Blowing a soft sigh into Naruto’s skin, Shikamaru placed another kiss behind Naruto’s ear before repositioning his face in Naruto’s neck once again, carefully rocking his body as Shino continued to hum his lullaby.

The three remained that way for quite some time. Even after Naruto had calmed and his crying had petered out into soft sniffling, they remained squished up into each other.

It was when Shikamaru felt on the verge of falling asleep from the pleasant atmosphere that Naruto started to move.

Lifting his head, Shikamaru saw Naruto carefully start pulling away from Shino, and given the
limited space between him and them, he wasn’t able to get very far. Letting out a quiet sigh, Naruto turned his eyes first upon Shino, then Shikamaru, a small, though genuine, smile upturning his lips.

He leant forwards and brushed his nose against Shino’s neck, then turned and pressed his cheek to Shikamaru’s.

“I think…” he trailed off, smile still firmly in place as Naruto looked at his two companions. “I think we should get to class, ‘Ttebayo…”

The other two boys nodded their agreement and, after untangling themselves from each other, got up from the floor and left the closet, heading to their classroom.

[5 th Period – Elemental Nations History; 11:42 AM]

“……Ha, that allows them to create ice by combining—oh, you’re back now huh?” Iruka cut his lecture off as Shino, Shikamaru and Naruto entered the room, none of them looking sheepish or sorry for their tardiness. Iruka raised a brow at that but decided it wasn’t worth his time reprimanding them over it and so only gestured to their seats,” well, go to your seats please, I think the rest of us would like to finish this lesson.” And so the three swiftly made it to their desk, sliding in next to Chouji who looked relieved at their arrival.

Iruka let out a sigh as he shook his head, continuing the lesson.

“Anyway, back to what we were talking about; the Yuki Clan is a clan from Mizu no Kuni who used to reside in Kirigakure before what is called the “Bloodline Massacre” took place. The “Bloodline Massacre” was where the Mizukage put a call out for all active ninja in Kirigakure to kill anyone that had a kekkei genkai, stating that they are the reason for all the wars that they had gone through, but, we’ll cover more of that later. For now we’re talking about the Yuki Clan. It is currently unknown if any of this clan is still alive, as they were one of the first reported clans to have been wiped out because of the Mizukage, but since they were a clan of ninja it wouldn’t be impossible for some of them to have escaped and go into hiding. The Yuki had the Hyoton kekkei genkai, which allowed for them to create ice by combining the Elemental Chakra water and wind…..”

And Iruka continued to talk to them about the Yuki Clan, along with little tidbits about Kirigakure, like how it was known as ‘The Bloody Mist’ and how they have the Seven Swordsmen.

Finally, the class ended and it was then time for lunch.

[10 minute lunch break – 12:40 PM]

Naruto let out a sigh of relief as lunch period started.

His face felt a little dry from all the crying he had done, and his throat was sore and dry, but he paid it no mind as he, along with the rest of the class, pulled out his bento, taking it from his Inventory. He carefully made certain that no one saw him (especially the three boys sitting with him) and opened it, cheerfully digging into the lunch he had worked hard to prepare himself.

“Whoa, Naruto, where’d you get that?!” the blond was snapped out of his thoughts by Chouji, who was looking at his food in what appeared to be awe and envy.

The blond couldn’t help but laugh, I made it, I live alone y’know—well I did until Kira moved in—but that’s beside the point! I can cook; it’s sort of a necessity for me, I’ve been doing it for most of the time I’ve been in that apartment, ‘Ttebayo.” Chouji tore his eyes away from Naruto’s food to look
him in the face,

“But you still eat cup ramen, right? If you can cook, then why do you still eat that?” he asked, confused. Naruto merely shook his head,

“Baka, food costs money and I have to use most of my money to pay for my electrical and water bills, the rest goes to anything I might happen to need, like food, but food is expensive and cup ramen is really cheap and it lasts a long time, so I just buy it in bulk then use it whenever I might need it! Anyway, I’m hungry so I’m going to eat, Dattebayo!” and with that he started picking up the pieces of pork in his Bento and ate them.

He stopped when he felt Chouji’s stare still on him. So it was with a sigh that Naruto turned to Chouji and raised his Bento, “want some?” he asked with a raised brow, but his annoyance left as he started laughing when Chouji nearly dove for the box, hastily picking up some of the food and eating it.

Once the rotund boy got some in his mouth he stiffened up a moment, which worried Naruto that it tasted bad, but before he could say anything, Chouji turned to him, a strange look on his face, then, and this is the weird part, he grabbed Naruto’s hands in his own, holding them up to his chest and he, in the most serious voice anyone had ever heard the hefty boy use, asked-

“Uzumaki Naruto, will you marry me?”

Complete silence.

“....What?”

“Will you marry me?” Chouji asked again, just as serious as before.

Before the blond could respond though……

“The hell Chouji?! Where’d that come from?!” Kiba called from across the room, his eyes sending the fluffy boy daggers as he tried to subtly gesture at Hinata who looked like she was about to have a mental breakdown. But Chouji merely ignored them, paying attention only to Naruto, causing for the Inuzuka to get pissed off and to march over,” Chouji-”

He was cut off by said boy, who had taken some of Naruto’s food and stuffed it into Kiba’s mouth, making him stop talking.

There was a moment of silence before Kiba was also holding onto Naruto’s hands, the same strange look on his face as he asked in all seriousness,” Naruto, marry me?”

“What?!” Naruto yelped, a feeling of dread overcoming him, telling him that this was far from over. Several other people started to question the two boys, to which their response was to feed them Naruto’s food. ”OI, THAT’S MY LUNCH!?!?” which then caused for even more people to grab hold of Naruto’s hands, and ask for his hand in marriage.

Only thing is, they couldn’t all hold onto Naruto’s hands at the same time which then caused for them to start fighting over Naruto’s hands which then caused for Iruka to break them up.

“What on earth are you brats fighting over?! It’s just food-”

And Chouji stuck some of Naruto’s food into his mouth.

The man paused for a moment...
Then, he leaned over, about to grab hold of Naruto’s hands, when-

“No!” the blond screamed, jumping away from the crowd, a look of confused anger on his face, “I will not marry any of you!? You marry someone because you love them, not just because they’re good cooks or because you think they’re pretty! Do any of you actually like me that way? Or do you just like my cooking?”

That seemed to snap the small crowd of males out of it and they all looked to be both embarrassed and shamed by their behavior, each murmuring an apology.

Naruto let out a sigh,

“Whatever, it’s fine-” he cut himself off, then, his face grew thunderous as he glared at the group in front of him,” actually, no, it’s not fine, you aTE ALL MY FOOD YOU ASSHOLES!!” he screamed while thrusting his Bento in front of them, showing everyone that it was completely empty.

They all gulped and leaned back as Naruto’s glare grew stronger.

“You better fuckin’ get me some lunch, or I just might have to stab a bitch,” he muttered through clenched teeth, his eyes making it clear that it would be one of them that was the bitch that would be stabbed.

The small group then scattered in order to gather food for the blond, taking some from their own lunches and putting it into Naruto’s Bento, after which he nodded his head to them, sat down, and started eating, completely ignoring everyone around him.

The only interesting thing that happened after that was Naruto throwing Shikamaru and Shino the stink eye when the two started snickering loudly, the snickering turning to full blown laughter after the shock the situation wore off.

Letting out a huff as a blush started creeping him his face, Naruto turned away from his friends in annoyance, muttering something about traitorous friends and how everyone was out to get him under his breath.

[6th Period – Taijutsu/Weapon Handling; 12:50 PM]

After lunch was over everyone was rounded up once again and directed outside for the start of their next lesson.

“Alright everyone, for today we will be focusing solely on Taijutsu. Next time we’ll be doing more on weapon handling like in previous days, but today we will be focusing on your Taijutsu styles. Now, those of you who only know the Academy Taijutsu style make a group over here, and the ones who are creating their own or know another style on top of the Academy style make a group over there!” Iruka looked at the two groups that were made and saw that the students who didn’t know another Taijutsu style made up the largest group, something that wasn’t surprising to the man; besides people in clans, most people (especially Civilian born students) didn’t think about creating or learning a new Taijutsu as it would never cross their minds to do so-the Academy was there to teach them so they thought that they would learn everything from the Academy without having to look elsewhere for guidance-which resulted in mostly only students from Clans knew any other styles.

“Okay then, I and Hikaru will be helping this group,” he gestured at the larger group,” with refining the Academy style and help you guys start learning a new one. Haruka will see the rest of you perform your current styles and help you refine them in any way that he can; alright everyone?” the class made noises of confirmation and Iruka nodded before heading over to the larger group.
Naruto watched as the redhead came over and smiled at them, before asking them to line up and show off their Taijutsu style,” I’ll help or give you pointers if the need arises, alright?” and once everyone was situated he called out,” alright, Sasuke-kun you may go first.”

But just as the other pre-teen nodded-

**Quest Alert:**

**Best Stance!**

*It's time to show off your Street Taijutsu Style and show everyone what you’re made of! Who knows, you just might get some new admirers if you can pull it off!*

**Completion reward: 1000 EXP**

**Taijutsu Scroll (from) Umino Iruka**

**Increased REP with class +30**

**Increased REP +10 with the Konoha Twelve**

**Completion failure: 100 EXP**

**Decreased REP with class -20**

**Decreased REP -5 with the Konoha Twelve**

After finishing reading everything Naruto pressed the (Y) button before refocusing on Sasuke and his showcasing of his Taijutsu style.

Taking in the slow and deliberate yet somehow stiff movements that Sasuke showcased Naruto came to the conclusion that this was a style learned from a scroll and not a person otherwise Sasuke’s movements would have been much smoother-he was one of the best students for a reason-but Naruto kept that information to himself as he watched Haruka write something down on a clipboard before giving Sasuke some pointers,

“‘You should loosen up your shoulders some, otherwise you could end up hurting yourself, okay?’ Sasuke glared at the older teen in reply for a moment before turning his head to the side, nodding without looking at Haruka.

This merely caused for the teen to laugh as he moved onto the next student, watching them perform their style before moving onto the next-Naruto was happy to note that both Shikamaru and Shino did very well with their styles-and then finally it was his turn.

“Alright Naruto-kun, show me your style!” Haruka said with excitement, his eyes dancing merrily.

Naruto grinned largely before focusing on his movements, swiftly moving his arms and legs as he kicked and elbowed the air, showing off his unique street brawler ninja style and putting his all into it.

Once finished Naruto took in a breath then turned and looked Haruka in question,” how was it?” he asked, mildly worried that he hadn’t done well or that it wasn’t good for an actual fight. Haruka looked at him a moment before a large grin graced his features; he hurriedly wrote something down as he answered,
“It was excellent Naruto-kun! You had good form and it was loose to allow for fast movements! I’ve fought many Shinobi and I don’t think I’ve ever seen someone use that particular fighting style—what is it? Did you find it in a scroll or did someone teach it to you?” he asked in interest.

“Ah, well, I sorta came up with it myself,” Naruto stated a bit hesitantly as he scratched at his chin nervously; which increased as Haruka looked at him with sparkly eyes, a large smile blooming across his face.

“Really? That’s amazing! How did you come up with it? Were you inspired by someone to do this?” he asked in quick succession. Naruto looked a bit overwhelmed, having to take a moment to sort through all of the questions in his head for a moment,

“Oh, I came up with it because… I had to? Y’know, I live by myself and I live smackdab in the middle of what you would call the ‘Red Light District’ so I had to learn how to, y’know, defend myself… and some of that is really just the dirty way people fight there. You can’t fight fairly down there so I had to learn how to fight dirty…”

Naruto trailed off at last, not having anything else to add. Haruka looked stunned for a long time, as if it hadn’t occurred to him that that could be a reason for someone to come up with a unique fighting style. This just made Naruto think that most people forgot that the reason well known genius’ came up with their own unique and well known styles was out of necessity, in order to protect themselves and others by using all of their strengths to their advantage, not just because they were genius’ and so therefore they came up with an amazing fighting style.

Naruto let out a small cough to bring Haruka back from his stunned state, and the teen looked embarrassed to have been caught so off guard.

Letting out a nervous cough of his own, Haruka let a strained smile curl his lips. “That, uh, that makes sense… Ahem, anyway, moving on… Naruto-kun, you have an amazing and unique style! I’ve seen some brawls in my time, mostly in other towns, but your style didn’t make me think of those times. It has a strong basis in what makes up most fighting styles; using every strength to your advantage! You are very flexible and I can see you using that in your style, you also seem to have firsthand experience which has shaped this style into more than just a brawlers style!”

Giving the blond a thumbs up the teen gained a true smile, “all in all, it’s a pretty great style! Just a quick pointer; having a strong foundation is always important, so I’ll be helping you with that today, okay?” smile widening at Naruto’s nod of affirmation, Haruka finally moved on.

Directing the group of preteens to stand side-by-side with about two feet separating them, Haruka asked for them to just stand in their default fighting stance so that he can move down the line and help physically correct them. And just as he said, Haruka helped Naruto with building a stronger foundation to his style, a foundation that was similar to the Academy Style, something that Naruto picked up on rather quickly.

Objective completed: Awarded Exp 1000

Increased REP with class +30, Increased REP +10 with the Konoha Twelve

Naruto felt a little triumphant grin take over his face which was quickly followed by a look of confusion, as he remembered that one of the rewards for completing the Quest was getting a Taijutsu scroll… so why didn’t he get a scroll?

“Alright class, gather around please!”
Naruto was brought out of his thoughts by Iruka’s voice, so even though he was still confused, he made his way with the rest of his classmates to the center of the field. Once they were all gathered together, Iruka clapped his hands together to garner their attention, the smile alighting his face one of pride.

“Well, everyone you all did well today! For those of you who have finished mastering the basics of the Academy style we’ll be spending the next couple weeks helping you create or learn a new style to compliment your personalities and strengths. For those of you who already have a fighting style, whether learned or created, we will be helping you adapt them to be able to fight anyone or anything. Some of you will also be getting special instruction where you will be incorporating a brand new style into your current one. So on that note, the names I call out please come forward to receive a scroll from me!”

As the man finished Iruka pulled a scroll from his hip pouch, opening it and releasing it’s contents to reveal a small table with a pile of scrolls on top of it.

Letting another smile touch his face, this one in reassurance, Iruka went on to call out the names of the chosen few.

“Nara Shikamaru! Aburame Shino! Hyuuga Hinata! Yamanaka Ino! And Uzumaki Naruto!”

At his name being called Naruto heard the rumble of displeased voices move throughout the class, hearing more than one of them say that it should have been Sasuke getting such an opportunity, not the “Deadlast” Naruto. But he didn’t let those words sway him as he walked up to Iruka, the man’s eyes turning soft as he gave him one of the scrolls.

Giving a grin in reply to the kind look, Naruto discreetly put the scroll that he had received into his Inventory under the guise of putting it into his hip pouch.

Once that was done and over with, Iruka clapped his hands again to gain the attention of students.

“Alright, now with that out of the way, class is dismissed! Please make your way to the obstacle course everyone, we will be beginning shortly!”

[7th Period – P.E; 1:45 PM]

As they still had about five minutes before the next class started everyone leisurely made their way to the obstacle course situated behind the school building.

As they all made their way over, Naruto took notice of a group of preteens leaving the grounds as they neared, coming to the easy conclusion that one of the other classes had just finished using it.

Just as they were at the threshold of the area, a woman with long black hair broke away from her group of preteens and made her way to Iruka, pushing up her glasses on the way. Realizing that this woman was most likely the Instructor of the previous class Naruto was just about to pull his attention away from her when the woman looked at him.

It wasn’t so much a look though, as a glance but Naruto noticed all the same; how could he not, when she was looking at him like that? Naruto felt his chest tighten as the glare of this woman lighted upon him, telling him exactly what she thought of him and his existence.

Heaving in a quick breath, the blonde preteen forced his eyes away. Sidestepping so that he would be closer to his friends, Naruto kept his eyes cast downward as he knew that if he made the wrong move, that woman would try and get him into trouble.
Thankfully, she didn’t seem to be in the mood to cause trouble and so she continued on to Iruka, ignoring Naruto and his group of friends as she called out to him, asking to speak with him a moment. Glancing up, Naruto saw Iruka nod his head in confirmation before waving his assistants and the rest of the class away,” we’ll be just a moment,” smiling warmly he turned away from everyone with the lady and spoke with her quietly.

The rest of the class, including Naruto and his friends, made the rest of the way to the obstacle course that lay in front of them, stopping to talk as the class had yet to start.

“Did you do something to make her hate you?” Chouji suddenly asked while they were waiting. Naruto, Shino and Shikamaru all turned to look at the rotund boy in shock. Shrugging his shoulders, Chouji pursed his lips at them,” what? People only usually look at Naruto like that if he’s pulled a prank on him! I was just wondering what he had done to make her hate him so much!” shrugging his shoulders again with a light flush flashing over his face, Chouji forced his attention on Naruto, waiting for an answer.

Naruto stared at the rotund boy for a long minute before he shook his head harshly, glaring at him lightly.

“Nothin’, unless you count existing as doing something…”

Chouji appeared surprised at his response, but Naruto didn’t allow him to comment as he continued speaking.

“I’ve only seen her once or twice, now that I think about it, but I don’t even know her name, let alone anything else about her besides that she’s an Instructor like Iruka-sensei and a woman.” he shook his head and looked away from Chouji, glare lightening some.

“...whatever, it doesn’t matter in the end, let’s just get over to the obstacle course…” with another shake of his head he started to walk away to the obstacle course, Shino right behind him while Shikamaru lagged behind with Chouji.

He looked over at his long-time friend, a strange look on his face that slowly morphed into an understanding smile.

“I know it’s easy to forget, but remember when those kids tricked Naruto into going into that forest even though they knew that there were enemy ninja there? They did it because they knew that no one really liked Naruto. They knew that he would probably die if he went, but they told him to go anyway. Remember what they said? That he was a nuisance and that their parents had told them that Naruto deserved to die?”

Chouji gained a sickly green color as he nodded his head in understanding.

Another strained smile made its way onto Shikamaru’s face as he shook his head in disgust.

“Yeah… I know it can be easy to forget, based on the way Naruto acts sometimes, and just for the fact that, in any case not involving Naruto people don’t act the way they do towards Naruto unless they’ve done something to deserve it, but Naruto’s a special case. I don’t know why, but they’re people that seem to hate him just ‘cause it’s him; not because he’s done anything, just that, if it’s Naruto, then he must deserve everything that everyone throws at him.”

Shaking his head again, Shikamaru let out a quiet sigh,” just, don’t assume I guess? Don’t assume that people don’t like Naruto because he’s done something, because their have been plenty of people that have mistreated Naruto just because he’s Naruto, and not just because he’s actually done
anything wrong… anyways, let’s catch up with them, yeah?”

And with that Chouji and Shikamaru ran up to stand with Naruto and Shino, Chouji apologized to Naruto about his assumption and after Naruto said that he forgave him they dropped the topic altogether and instead focused on wondering aloud how the obstacle course would be altered for their lesson that day.

After a time of Iruka and the lady instructor talking, the class got back on track and started the obstacle course, each run around being spaced by short lectures about the terrain of the other lands, with Iruka, Haruka and Hikaru using Suiton and Goton Jutsu to change the terrain to allow them to experience the terrain themselves.

With how interesting and entertaining the lesson was time flew by and before everyone knew it, the class had ended and they were all herded up to head back into the classroom for the final lesson of the day.

[8 th Period – Extra-curricular; 2:40 PM]

“Alright everyone, calm down!” Iruka called out, attempting to quiet his class.

Iruka allowed for his eyes to sweep over the whole of the room as he made sure that everyone was in their place before with a flourish of his hand he gestured at the tall, lanky man standing beside him, a grin over taking his features as he announced,

“Everyone paying attention? Yeah? Good! Now, this is Hatake Kakashi! He will be the extra-curricular instructor today! He, like the others, will tell you what position he holds in the village and how his particular skill set is useful to the village!”

Naruto was fidgeting in his seat, brimming with excitement as he looked at Kakashi, who stood there Iruka with an air of aloofness, something of which Naruto knew for certain was only a facade.

Catching the man’s eye, Naruto grinned with all his might, expressing his joy at seeing him again. Kakashi merely inclined his head, his own eye curving into what Naruto knew to be a smile before he refocused his gaze back on the whole of the classroom.

Bowing his head with an eye-smile, Kakashi started.

“Hello, like Iruka-kun said I am Hatake Kakashi. I am an Elite Jounin of the village, and the position that I hold in the village is that of, well, I guess you could say that it’s Jack-of-all-trades. I am very talented in most fields of Ninjutsu, Taijutsu, Genjutsu as well as others. In these fields I tend to lean towards Nin and Tai, but that doesn’t mean I am incapable of using other forms of Jutsu. Are there any questions?

Through the rest of the class, Kakashi was asked various questions by Naruto’s classmates, some inquiring about his age (“that’s a need-to-know thing, and you don’t need to know!”) his exact skill level, how many missions he’s taken over his entire career as a Jounin and anything else they could come up with.

Kakashi also demonstrated some Jutsu to them, showcasing that he was proficient in all the elements, which Iruka reminded that within a couple weeks they would all be learning their elemental affinities, as well as asking some of the more Taijutsu leaning students to show him their styles so that he could give them some pointers.

Soon enough, time was up and the final class of the day ended.

“Ah, I can’t wait to get to the training field! What are we gonna do today Naruto?” Chouji called out
to the blond haired boy.

Naruto looked up in thought, finger on his chin as he thought about his answer, walking with his friends as they all started to leave the classroom.

“Uzumaki-kun.”

Naruto stopped at Kakashi’s call, turning to look at the silver-haired man with a questioning gaze, Naruto’s three friends stopping as well in the threshold of the classroom.

Offering an eye-smile, Kakashi inclined his head, “follow me, the Hokage wishes to speak with you.” He stated simply, reaching a hand out to Naruto in an obvious gesture for the boy to take it. It didn’t take long for the inevitable to happen-

Quest Alert:

The Hokage’s Request

The Hokage has specially asked for your presence concerning something of great importance! But, you have to go to find out what will happen! Will you go?

(Y) Yes (N) No?

‘Strange,’ Naruto mused to himself, irritated with the lack of information. He stared at Kakashi’s outstretched hand once again, before glancing back at his friends. They all had looks of surprise on their face, as if they couldn’t comprehend what was happening before them. But then Shikamaru shook his head, gesturing with it for Naruto to go on.

And so, with a quick grin, Naruto turned back to Kakashi and took the man’s hand, and, with a poof of smoke, the two disappeared from the room.

Uzumaki Naruto - The Gamer; Player 2 - Jinchuuriki - LV16

Chapter End Notes

Steamy: Well, that’s the end of that one.

Translations:

Kanashibari no Jutsu = Temporary Paralysis Technique

Magen: Narakumi no Jutsu = Demonic Illusion: Hell Viewing Technique

Sorry again about the late update! Hopefully the next one won’t be as long of a wait.

I’ll get back to you guys another time.
Darkcloudalpha came up with the crystal and is in their story, Naruto: The Gamer. That is all for this one, nothing else was used. Goodbye!
Concerning the ANBU names; I decided to use the Japanese translations of most of the names, you probably noticed that I didn’t for some of them. The reason for that is because the Japanese translation for Rat (at least the ones I was able to find) was Ratto which is not that much different than Rat, and in the case of Weasel, Itachi—the word-means weasel, so I didn’t want to make it seem like Naruto was talking about Itachi but just an ANBU named Weasel. I will be doing this in the future if I run into any other type of Japanese word that looks like it’s just an English word with a few added letters.

Translations:

Tora = Tiger
Neko = Cat
Inoshishi = Boar (which, for those who don’t know, is why Sakura calls Ino a pig)
Karasu = Crow
Inu = Dog (wolf is ōkami)
Tajuu Kage Bunshin no Jutsu = Massive/Multiple Shadow Clone Technique

And just in case some of you weren’t aware;

Kage = Shadow
Hokage = Fire Shadow (this is true for all Kage [the position] it’s the name of their land with Shadow attached at the end)
Bunshin = Clone/Replication
Jutsu = Technique

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