Blinded
by curiouscat99

Summary

From the moment he first saw her, he had put her on a pedestal. But at some point, Hashirama needs to choose between his 'Gift from Divine' and the village or the sorts. How can he do that? when he is too blinded by love. The impeccable, elusive, and vicious Madara Uchiha was born a woman. (Hashi X Fem!Madara, Genderbend)

Notes

Hello! Let me remind you first that this contains GENDERBEND

Originally posted in ff.net as aifos99. I decided to post it here for the heck of it. Aaaand this is completed, so you don't have to worry :)
Chapter 1

It was a very cold afternoon in the village of Konoha when she, together with her platoon returned.

"Neechan!" Izuna was running with wide grin on his face and was followed by some Uchiha clan members to welcome their clan leader and the co-founder of the rising village.

"Izuna." Madara patted her kid brother's head and decided to walk straightly in their home.

"Madara-sama, the Hokage is waiting for you." A Senju approached her before turning around to be with her brother. Izuna pouted and embraced his sister's waist like someone is going to steal her away from him. Madara looked down at him, their onyx eyes met. The boy was looking at her, puppy eyes as though telling her not to go just yet.

"Tell him I'll be there later." she said flatly. The Senju nodded.

Madara leaves together with her brother and her clansmen. Izuna's chuckle of joy can be heard in the background.

-xXx-

Hashirama Senju was on a veranda with a cup on his hand. The man was peacefully seated on a wooden chair when suddenly, Toka arrived.

"Hokage-sama." Hashirama almost jumped and pour the whole content of that cup to himself and notice that Toka was gawking at him. Truth to be told that this very powerful shinobi was just as clumsy as this.

Hashirama still facing the scenery on his veranda. He put down his cup on a small table beside him, combed his hair using his hands, cleared his throat and straightened his posture before facing her with his nicest smile. The smile turned into a frown when he noticed that Toka was alone.

Hashirama waited for a second …then seconds.

"My messenger told me that she will be coming here, later."

Hashirama nodded and made a 'hmm' sound before putting his hand over his chin.

"I see."

"...where is Tobirama-sama?" Toka asked, trying not to appear very consistent in looking for that man. She did not receive any answer coming from Hashirama but she caught a glimpse of sadness in his eyes when she mentioned his younger brother's name.

-A Day Before-

"Brother!"

Tobirama entered the Hokage office, raging like he will eat anyone who will get on his way. Hashirama was sitting on his desk - yes desk, not chair wearing the Kage clothes - just stared at the younger man.
"Since when that THAT GIRL is entitled to go on the other villages to MAKE A PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS?"

"Tobirama," Hashirama said with his eyes closed. He can already foresee the incoming complaints from his younger brother.

"Calm down."

Tobirama was raging mad because usually, he's the one or if not, it was Hashirama that is making peaceful negotiations with the other villages. To think that it was Madara's fault that the Kirigakure almost declared a war with them. Madara fought an elite shinobi from Kiri and unfortunately, she killed him. After the fight they, were informed that the shinobi was a hero of the village, on which everybody wants to avenge his death.

"You trust that girl too much!"

"Brother, you are overreacting." Hashirama commented and on this, Tobirama's blood pressure becomes higher than him.

"What if she never had negotiations with Kiri? That she just wanted to start a war, Konoha vs Kiri and then she can show off her abilities so that-"

"Tobirama! stop. I trust Madara enough to let her handle it."

Tobirama cannot believe what he just heard. His brother trusted the Uchiha that much even she was the sole reason of that 'almost war' and that he sent her to negotiate peacefully instead of him. He wanted to punch things, kick anything that can catch his terrible mood when he finally exit himself to Hashirama's office and made his way going to somewhere to cool his mind.

"Cooling his head." Hashirama answered.

The Senju head made his way outside his room.

"I'll be back later, Toka. If my brother happens to arrive before me tell him that I'm on a meeting."

"With who?" Toka twitched an eyebrow. As the personal secretary of the two Senju brothers, she was certain that Hashirama doesn't have any scheduled meeting with someone perhaps it is…

"With a person of great importance."

Later, Tobirama returned before Hashirama, just as the latter's prediction. Hashirama knew that Tobirama can easily lose his temper but it was also easy to calm down once he change his surroundings. However, it was only applicable between the two of them. The fearsome guy entered his brother's office and narrowed his eyes when Toka was the one seating on the main chair.

The girl stood up firmly and met Tobirama's raised an eyebrow, a seemingly allowing her to speak about his brother.

"He's on a meeting."

"With?"

Toka smiled awkwardly at the papers in the desk.

"Someone with great importance, he said"
Tobirama groaned and rolled his eyes.

-xXx-

"And then after that?" sitting on a tall chair, wagging his feet, Izuna watched as his sister prepared a meal for them.

"They pulled back the declaration of war." Madara put their meal on the table. Izuna giggled in happiness that his sister was preparing his food again after a long time. The younger Uchiha was enjoying his food when suddenly, a knock on their door was heard.

Madara stands to open it was shocked upon seeing Hashirama.

The man smiled at her. Madara let him inside and pulled another chair for the Hokage. Although in her seemingly emotionless face, Madara was in fact astonished on the Senju's presence, even if it's not the first time that he visits her in surprise. She can feel a somewhat annoyance whenever her friend does it, and even her cannot figure out why.

"Hello there, Izuna." Izuna almost choked in his food. The boy who was still munching his food threw a questioning look to his sister, while the Uchiha head is making her way to another seat.

"Izuna, if you're done you can go to your bedroom now." Madara stated or rather...commanded.

Hashirama's smile was still plastered on his face as she twitched an eyebrow to the man. Izuna on the other hand stood up to clean his utensils and made his way to the kitchen.

"You seem upset." commented by Hashirama who was smiling that made Madara even more annoyed.

"I already told your Senju that I'll be coming on your office." Madara said, avoiding Hashirama's eyes. A hint of irritation in her voice was obvious.

"Toka told me about it, relax."

Hashirama stared vividly to the woman with a pale face, thin lips, long and layered black hair that is sometimes mistaken to be blue, she have a very attractive eyes, still wearing her battle outfit though the armor was detached and a blue inner sleeveless shirt she's wearing, showing her arms even paler than her face, he admired those well-toned arms, it was not so muscular or thin yet it was obvious that she's a fighter.

"Cut that annoying smile!" Madara said, it wasn't a yell though an assertive request.

Hashirama can't help but to snicker, trying his best not to smile anymore. She then scowled at him.

"What's so funny?"

"Madara,"

Madara flinched the moment Hashirama called her name, he spoke her name in a whisper-like manner.

"I came here to know the urgent matter."

"Hnn, about that..." She cursed herself for flinching on Hashirama's mention of her name, yet she can't find a reason why did she ever calmed down when the man told her that he came only to know about the important matter of her latest mission.
"They pulled the declaration." She continued.

Hashirama nodded.

"Thanks to you." He said.

"Don't be ridiculous Hashirama,you know how much I hated that mission!"

Madara was not built in such negotiations, especially if she's the one at fault. Besides, she doesn't regret what she have done in killing the Kiri Shinobi ,on how did it end up to be a peaceful negotiations was still a puzzle to Hashirama.

"Im sorry Mara, mind if you tell me about the meeting." Hashirama requested (not an order)

'Mara',a pet name gave by Hashirama to her when they were kids. Madara rolled her eyes trying not to curse him for calling her a very feminine version of her name.

"The Mizukage told me that they will not attack us anymore, that;s all that matters."

Madara said in a very Uchiha manner, cold and straight to the point.

Hashirama did not say anything but to bow down his head and look depressed as ever, afraid that the impatient woman might yell at him if he ask questions after questions and that she might misunderstood that he is not trusting her enough. Hashirama was always afraid of her outbursts not because she's powerful enough to take a par on him but because of a very different reasons.

Silence reigned over the two of them and when Madara thought that she forgot how sensitive he was,guiltily,she stood up to get the scroll that the Mizukage signed as a testimony for them as the Kiri will not attack Konoha anymore.

Madara made her way to her room and grabbed the scroll in her cabinet. When she felt that someone was behind her, she instantaneously turn around. Hashirama flinched when Madara threw the scroll to his face and made him stumble on the ground.

"I told you a hundred times ,do not stand behind me!"

Hashirama massaged the bridge of his nose, still laying in the floor. Madara stepped forward to get the scroll that hit the Hokage's face. Hashirama held Madara's ankle and caused her to trip to the ground but Hashirama caught her.

"Stupid! Stupid Stupid!" Madara beat Hashirama in his body (thankfully not in his handsome face) but the man only laughed at her while dodging her slaps. He lets out an uncontrollable laughter when she blushed.

"So- sorry." He apologized ,still laughing .

When the period of hundred slaps has ended ,Hashirama smirked looking at her now blazing eyes of annoyance.

"Madara,"

"Stop making fun of me!" she yelled, unfortunately on his face which made him to move his head backwards - to the floor

"I'm not making fun of you,I just want you to.."
"To what!?" Madara seemed to forget that they were still on the ground, her body wrapped around Hashirama's arms and that she was pressing him down screaming at him. The poor Hokage can't do nothing but to seize it.

"To make you smile, you know since I enter your house all you did was to frown."

Hashirama always wanted to make her happy and in that he always fail, whenever he's trying to make her smile, make her laugh, it always ended up in slaps, glares, cursing from Madara. Since they both joined an alliance to create the village, he came back in his original self, the funny, humorous Hashirama that was lost in grief when she broke their friendship 9 years ago when they were 12 and 13.

They were in fact really, really close. Madara the bossy girl and Hashirama the over sensitive guy.

Madara tilted her head only to found out that Izuna was staring at them. His look can be translated as what in the world is happening right here? and is this the reason why you ask me to go on my bedroom?

Izuna just stand there saying nothing only gawking at the two young-adult who is laying on the floor. Dammit, a 13 year old boy was watching his sister on a highly suspicious manner.

Without second thoughts, Madara stand up and gasped after meeting Izuna's eyes, she silently cursed Hashirama in doing his stupid joke. Whispering words like "You'll going to pay for this Senju" and "Do this again and I'll kill you." was heard by the Senju afterwards.

Hashirama stood up waiting for Madara to reach for his hand to help him but there was nothing. As expected to the irascible girl, she just walk passed through him finally reaching the scroll and handed it firmly to Hashirama though her hands were shaking because of embarrassment to her kid brother.

"Thank you, Madara." Hashirama was sweating though the weather was cold. Looks like Madara's glares were enough to make him drop a sweat.

Oh heck, he really did annoy her a lot this time.

-xxx-

Tobirama was sitting on a balustrade his arms folded on top of his chest like he's about to fall asleep, despite knowing that there was a bed inside his brother's room. He was there all alone when the door opened. He welcomed Hashirama with a frown.

"So? do we need to prepare for incoming war?" asked by Tobirama with closed eyes and sarcastic smile.

Hashirama mentally sighed. Talking with his brother about Madara's accomplishment was futile, when he would rather sleep than listen to it. The older Senju handed him the scroll instead of saying anything about the matter.

"You need to prepare...to sleep, Tobi."

Tobirama read the contents of the scroll and looked away.
Stupid Funds

We must prioritize the bridge."
"The Uchiha needs to renovate some houses."
"They can wait. Traders need that bridge to deliver the villager's needs."
"I am not saying that the fund should be fully spent in our renovations, what I am trying to-"
"We have a little fund here,Madara"
"Tobirama."

They were on a meeting together with some Senju and Uchiha around the oval shaped table. Tobirama and Madara's exchange of (almost debating) words pressured both sides until Hashirama interrupted.

"Madara,continue on what you are saying." Hashirama said ,Tobirama sighed in disapproval.

"I believe that the fund will be use both to the Uchiha and the making of the bridge."

Hashirama glanced at the papers. The materials needed for the bridge, the cost estimate, the blue print and layouts and also the timeline on how long will it take to construct. As a Hokage he needs to double check, triple check all of the documents. Being a Hokage was tough, but it was way tougher to listen to his brother and friend's exchange or reasoning (more like a debate).

Another Uchiha who was seated beside her whispered at Madara, saying that maybe they can wait for an additional fund to come and that the village needed the bridge urgently instead of their house renovations.

Madara glared at her uncle. The poor uncle just shrugged and never say a word again

After a long moment of silence between two sides, Hashirama let out an audible deep breath. He hesitantly looked at Madara before saying a word.

"We'll be prioritizing the bridge."

Tobirama smiled looking above feeling like he won a war as Madara clenched her fist, bowed down, disappointed. The other Uchiha's reactions were not the same as Madara, though there were a bit of sadness in their eyes. Still, they do understand that they needed to expedite the building of the bridge for the merchants to enter Konoha.

Hashirama signed the documents and finalized the constructing of the bridge that Tobirama proposed. Together with him were 'Toka, Tobirama (who was happily victorious), Sadao Uchiha (Madara's relative. Sadao is an old man about his 60's , long lived enough to be wisest man in the Uchiha clan), Madara was beside Toka who was handling the documents. She was after all the 'second or sometimes ' leader of the village. If there was a position for a vice Hokage it would be Madara. People in the village were confused about this matter whether it was Tobirama or Madara was their second leader (Madara would be pissed if she ever heard she's a third leader knowing the a Senju was already the Hokage, she cannot accept it if another Senju was the second leader and the fact that she was Hashirama's co-founder - not just a founder...she was a co-founder) but Hashirama made it clear to the public that Madara is their second leader. Tobirama just shrugged.
Madara nevertheless signed the documents, Toka and Tobirama were talking about the materials needed to be ordered in far away villages (in fact, he was discussing it with Hashirama but it ended up with Toka because the Hokage was busy staring at the Uchiha head, few meters away from them around the long table) Madara signed, Hashirama signed, witnessed by Tobirama and Sadao, two Senju and two Uchiha as approvers and witnesses was fair enough. (of course) Toka sealed and filed the papers later on.

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Madara left the rest of them and made her way somewhere. She ended up going to a children's playground and sat on a swing

"Madara," a man called. She did not say anything and only looked in the horizon. Hashirama made his way on another swing beside Madara's

"The only reason..." She spoke.

"...that I agreed on establishing this village was because of my brother, my clan, my family"

Hashirama knew exactly how Madara put the Uchiha clan in top priority list. He looked depressed the way he stared at Madara while remembering her statement 9 years ago.

"I like it when we build our village, I'll get an even closer eye on my younger brother."

Izuna was her everything. All she ever wanted was for Izuna to experience living a normal, peaceful life.

"Mara, I want to apologize for-"

"Stupid Senju," her voice was emotionless. "Making a final decision and regret it later, you idiot." she added.

"I promise you that the next time we get a fund, it will be for the renovations."

Madara looked at him. Though she did not respond, Hashirama hoped that Madara did understand him that the bridge must be constructed first, then their renovations. But in Madara's mind, she knows that something was about to happen. If Hashirama kept on agreeing in his brother's proposals, advises, and projects, the Uchiha will be left behind.

She's a smart girl, a fierce fighter, even though her clan do not listen that much to her, all because she's a girl. A girl, on their era has no room in leadership. The Uchiha were somewhat ashamed that their clan leader was a female. They wanted Izuna to succeed Madara but the kid was too young for the position and of course, they were afraid of Madara.

They did not favor most of Madara's plans unlike the Senju clan who favored Hashirama and listened on whatever he said. She felt disrespected and that feeling gave her the idea of becoming the most powerful shinobi (not just the most powerful female shinobi). She thought that if ever she became stronger than any other shinobi, even stronger than Hashirama, her clan will finally fully accept her. Regardless of this, she will do anything and everything for; first for Izuna, second for the Uchiha Clan, and third for Konoha.
The fourth place was for herself and it was also the last one.

Madara tilted her head up in the sky and felt that something was about to happen.

xXx-

A storm.

Konohagakure was hit by a storm. It was not normal because Konoha has been always a warm place, and so who would have thought this occurrence? There was none.

Oh wait.

She knew.

Madara once had a (debate?) talk to Hashirama about a possible hurricane slash storm that will possibly hit Konoha, on which Hashirama just shrugged. Well it was not that he totally shrugged (He will believe in her in everything including saying that the earth is triangular in shape and not sphere)

"Mara, you're worrying too much." After that Madara went out of his office and did not talk to him for a couple of days.

She knew that there was still a possibility that Konoha will experience storm. A disastrous storm that can shake their homes, can destroy their crops, their food source. That was why she kept insisting that the Uchiha homes should get renovated - the home of her people.

Hashirama was busy looking around the village to keep an eye of the villagers needs. There was a medic tent for those who have been hurt. The Hokage can protect the whole village and with his powerful wood release, he can cover the whole village against the storm. But unfortunately, he was out of the village when the storm arrived, having a political meeting in another land and was busy on his bridge project. The only person that was to run the village at that time was none other than his second-in-command, Madara Uchiha.

She's powerful and all but her jutsu was far from helping people.

When Hashirama arrived, he immediately went to his office while Tobirama followed him.

"Madara!" That was Hashirama who was greeted by his empty Hokage seat.

No one was around his office. Where is she? Where is his second in command? she was supposed to be here.

Second in command, oh, how she hated that title.

Tobirama narrowed his eyes, Hashirama jumped out of his office and made his way to the villagers to check them. Gladly, most of them were fine and medical tents were put around the village.

"Hokage-sama!" A medic called.

"Where is Madara?"

Tobirama narrowed his eyes (he's still following his brother).

He keeps on asking where in the world Madara is..Madara..Madara..that girl..that Uchiha.
Instead of Asking how is the villagers/village so far, Hashirama was asking where is she? WHERE IS MADARA?

Tobirama was irritated, he wanted to lecture his brother but being a calm person he was and also a level headed young man, he went on his own way in helping the medics inside the tent.

"Madara-sama is on the Uchiha compound." the medic answered.

Tobirama was more irritated not because of she's on her clan's compound but the way Hashirama flew so fast going to the place where Madara is, Tobirama followed him after a while.

Madara helped her people. The storm almost destroyed the Uchiha shelters. She saw Hashirama from a distance but focused on helping to build her people's home.

"Neechan is that?-

"Izuna, focus on what you are doing." Izuna was carrying a large pile of wood that will be transported in the next house.


"I already sent the medics on where they are needed the most." Madara said without looking at Hashirama.

"No, I mean.." Hashirama gazed around and realized she was right. They badly needs the renovations. Hashirama had a guilt feeling upon turning his daze. He tried to help Madara but she only glared daggers at him (which of course scared the shit out of him)

Other shinobi were busy in the village. It was a good thing that their houses were in good shape when the storm occurred. However, the Uchiha were badly affected.

-xXx-

"So, you are saying that the construction of the bridge must be stopped?

"Tobirama,"

Those were the Senju brothers and the question was for Madara. They were on the Kage office (after a long day of helping the people but the village is now in good condition than earlier. Thanks to all of them including Izuna, who helped a lot during those time (with a lot of orders coming from Madara to Izuna to stop playing around while building houses)

Hashirama signed a waiver for Madara to have a fund for the renovations.

"Brother, I do understand that they need it." A new fund but not bigger than the first one arrived in Konoha, as a new clan joined them after his meeting with its head and they happily sent a small fund for the village as its first gift or whatever they call it)

"But the construction is nearly done." Tobirama said continued, Madara frowned at him.

"But at least the bridge has no people living inside it." Madara scorned.

She was getting impatient to Tobirama's selfish (selfish? but its for the village,...but still for Madara its being selfish) motives.

"The storm has gone, at least."
On this, Madara glared at him. She wanted to attack him right in his face. Hashirama immediately felt the incoming rage so he waltzed in the middle of the two forces. He knows that Madara's temper when it comes to his brother was close to none.

"And you're saying to leave my people with devastated houses like that? while your bridge is well made and fine?!" she growled.

"I am not saying that its' gonna be like that, I am saying that the bridge is nearly done just a little fund and a little time and it is done and then we can turn the succeeding funds in your Uchiha Compound and also..."

A pause, then he looked at Hashirama who was standing beside him (to avoid a fire style attack that can roast the whole office maybe?)

"My brother just won the Yamanaka's trust and will be transporting here immediately. That being said, they will need the bridge."

It was followed by a silence.

"So?" Madara mocked, Tobirama gawked at her.

"Tell me.." he started.

"Is there any particular reason that, it seems, you want the construction of the bridge to be stopped right away. Or maybe, you just do not want the other clans to join us for whatever reason."

Hashirama glared at him.

"Enough, Tobirama, the Uchiha needs the fund more and please, if you'll excuse Madara and I for a while." Hashirama walked near the door and opened it, suggesting Tobirama to step outside.

Tobirama scowled at his brother, but knew that he was not in the position to do so. He was still his big brother and he must respect him at all cost (plus he is the kage, nuff said) Tobirama stepped outside firmly and obediently. Hashirama closed the door with a soft click and was finally alone with the Uchiha.

"Mara, this is now for the Uchiha clan" Hashirama handed her the bag of fund.

"This is all you fault."

A pause.

"THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!"

A yell.

"Mara-

"Stop calling me that name you stupid Senju! it's because of your stupid decision that MY CLAN is now having a hard time sleeping with wet bed, wet things and they're having colds and fever living in that stupid damaged houses all because of that stupid bridge that your stupid brother stupidly proposed so that those alien clan will have their way coming to YOUR VILLAGE and then what?"

Hashirama who was sitting above his desk transferred beside the door. (on how did he get there is for you to think about, maybe he crawled? or ran)
"You are focusing on those alien instead of the clan that helped you in the entire establishment of this village?" she ranted.

"Do you know why did I order the medics to be around the village? so that the villagers will not suffer on high fever like my clansmen did!" her yell is getting higher and higher that it looked like she was about to fire a katon no jutsu on Hashirama anytime.

"...and then your brother said that the bridge must be finished first before we divided that STUPID FUND!" Hashirama wanted to cover his ears before the oh-so-angry Uchiha breaks his eardrum but if he did, he might be a toasted Hokage for sure.

"..and then ask me why the hell am I against to the other clan coming in this village?!" (thankfully she did not put 'stupid' in the village)

Hashirama didn't know how long he held his breathing. Madara marched towards the door, leaving Hashirama and the bag of the 'Stupid Funds'. She slammed the door so hard that Hashirama needed to use his wood release to cover some cracks of the poor door.

Luckily that the Uchiha head did not remember to mention about their debate on the possibilities of a storm to hit Konoha or else Hashirama might have a permanent hearing loss.

-xXx-

Hashirama went on his room closing the door behind and laid on his bed letting a heavy sigh. He knew he has a fault that he did not divide the first bigger fund. But if he did, they cannot buy the materials needed for the bridge. But since he did not divide it, the Uchiha suffered the damage of the storm. He still cannot move on about Madara's words. He was dead worried that the woman will be mad at him for several days, or weeks, or month, or years? or centuries? He doesn't know.

All that he knows is Madara is hard to deal with this time. He also forgot the bag of Madara's 'stupid fund' in his desk and wondered what she will do if he keeps on insisting to give it to her. Several hours had passed and he cannot sleep, how will he deal with the Uchihas now?
When he first met her, he cannot believe that a girl can throw pebbles like that (and that a girl can be fond of throwing pebbles). Usually, a girl at that age was playing dolls with her friends, with her mother combing her hair, teaching her how to cook, stitch, embroidery, cleaning the house and any other girly things to do.

Tapping her foot to the ground every time that the pebble does not hit the other side, Hashirama sensed that she is not just throwing pebbles.

She's throwing a nag. *A nag.* (which is a girly trait).

Hashirama picked a pebble and tossed it to the other side.

He found her cute, well, she was really cute. Pale skin, onyx eyes, dark, spiky, messy, shoulder length layered hair that was framing her doll-like face. His favorite was her very attractive eyes.

"I am Hashirama, and from now on I am your rival in skipping stones!" The boy delightedly introduced himself.

"What an idiot," she pouted.

...silence...

"I am Madara."

"Madara?"

...a pause...

"Are you deaf or what?"

"It sounds like a boy's name to me."

"It's because they wanted me to become one."

Hashirama was dumbfounded but deep inside of him: "*Is there a jutsu for that?*"

He didn't know why he was mingling with a girl. Punching, kicking, she even talk like a man. Hashirama usually plays with Tobirama and Itama as well as the other Senju children. But Madara was different. She was faster, tougher, smarter than any of them and Hashirama found it interesting to play with a girl who was stronger than a boy and can take a par on him.

-xXx-

"Are you sure about this?"

"Ha, watch and learn."

They both knew each other's ability by this time (personal information aside) but Hashirama was hesitating to have a sparring match with Madara. He didn't like the idea to fight a female shinobi. If she was an enemy, he can.

Hashirama was starting to doubt his thoughts of her being an Uchiha, because he Uchiha doesn't
have a female shinobis (yet).

-xXx-

Hashirama was sitting on a grass and Madara was lying. Both of them were panting heavily. He let out a suppressed laugh.

"Tch, someday I'm gonna beat you and turn you into pieces!" She was beaten by him on their match. Hashirama crawled to Madara's side (They were both damn good and damn tired)

"Now I know why you were named with a boy's name."

Madara narrowed her eyes looking at him.

"Like I care."

Hashirama held her arms gently for her to sit up.

"Mara,"

"It's Ma-da-ra!"

"But Mara suits you more." She scowled ,he grinned.

-xXx-

Madara bluntly said that Hashirama's hairstyle was terrible. She ridiculed him by saying he doesn't have any fashion sense ,a pot-look-alike ,a mushroom ,a bowl. Hashirama buried his face around his arms.

"Stop being so sensitive, I'm just saying the truth!"

There was a time after their sparring match when Madara was cleaning her clothes in the river. Hashirama was about to peek from behind when Madara punched the light out of him and yelled "Stop standing behind me!"

When Hashirama goes home ,Tobirama almost screamed that his brother has a very large lump in the head and Itama innocently asked what jutsu did he learn to have two heads in one body.

Tobirama became suspicious that his brother was doing something in secret. Every damn day he goes out of their camp instead of training with them, and when comes home he was happy and smiling, always greeting him with a "Hey Tobirama its a nice day isnt it?" (with the fact that they did not share the whole day because he was not around)

There was nothing bad about Hashirama being happy, but what troubled Tobirama was the reason why his older brother was obviously lying with them.

That's when he decided to follow him.

-xXx-

"MURMURMUR"

"Don't talk when your mouth is full!"

They were having lunch (they both agree to bring their own food because after they play and chat,
both of them were hungry before they even say their goodbyes after a long day. Thankfully, Madara's lunchbox don't have an Uchiha symbol cause it looks like everything an Uchiha owned have that fan symbol)

Hashirama swallowed his food.

"Mara-"

The girl glared at him, she doesn't like the sound of it that much.

"Madara," Hashirama repeated. "What do you think about establishing our own village?" The boy have a twinkling eyes, filled with hopes and dreams. Madara's jaw dropped.

"We are both strong! Someday, when we grow up, I can see that we can run a village, where there is peace and everyone can live without wars!" Hashirama said throwing his hands heavenwards in excitement. Madara looked straight in the horizon holding her lunchbox.

"I like it when we build our village, I'll get an even closer eye on my younger brother."

"Yes! Shall we made a pact huh? what do you think?"

"Sure! someday we'll be the greatest shinobis!" Madara agreed cheerfully.

They made a pinky swear that together they will find true peace on that village.

After they ate their lunch, Madara told him that her element was fire then he said that his element was wood. They trusted each other to the full extent that they almost revealed their respected clans.

"She's an Uchiha, but it doesn't matter to me."

"He's a Senju..."

-xXx-

"Ne, Hashirama, I'm already here."

Hashirama faced the river sitting still as Madara approached him.

"Hey!"

The boy slowly turned his head to the onyx eyed girl, teary eyed like he just finished a session of crying.

"I'm.. I'm sorry for shouting, It's okay if you don't want to play today." Madara stutter thinking maybe she's been rude to him that's why he's crying. Hashirama wiped his eyes and looked back to the river.

"My brother died."

"...Oh..."

Since then, both of them trained harder to gain the strength their need to establish their future village. As Madara said, "No one will follow a weak leader."

Hashirama almost forgot Itama's death because of Madara's presence. When she was with him, everything was complete. Even though she's fond of yelling at him and taking orders (sometimes
she was lecturing him about controlling his enormous amount of chakra and that she was certain that he is a Senju, with occasional 'friendly' punches that hits Hashirama's face when he failed to follow her instructions. But at the end of the day, the 'friendly' yell and 'friendly' punch resulted in Tobirama’s accusation that his brother fought a group of bears and praised him that he lived after that. Hashirama simply shrugged.

"Damn it Hashirama,"

"What?" Hashirama just woke up from a tiring training with Madara (Madara did sleep too beside him but woke up first)

"You're so ugly when you sleep!"

-xXx-

"Ha! I won this time!"

Madara announced after their match where she used a fire jutsu that Hashirama luckily evaded (or he will die for sure)

"Mara..." Madara stopped from rejoicing and glared at him.

"Madara,uh you cheated!"

"I didn't." She smirked.

"You never said it was allowed to use a ninjutsu in our match." Hashirama said narrowing his eyes.

"But I never said it's not allowed." Madara chuckled, Hashirama sighed but then smiled at her.

It was a beautiful day, and Hashirama's shirt just got burned so he goes home without it and explained to Toka and Tobirama that he fell on a river. Toka believed him while Tobirama did not (he saw what really happened and started to think that their father must know about the girl whom Hashirama was seeing)

-xXx-

They formulated a ninjutsu in a blank scroll (insert some yelling from Madara when she commented that Hashirama's handwriting was as terrible as his hair and Hashirama turned his back at her leaving Madara to write the jutsu name alone)

"Hashirama! you name it." Madara said guiltily but still yelling.

"..."

"..."

" I call it..."

And it was the dumbest jutsu name that Madara has heard.

-xXx-

"Time capsule?"

After they finally named the whatever jutsu they created, there was one little blank scroll that
Madara got (stole) from her clan's war tools. Hashirama tore the scroll into two, gave to Madara the other one and wrote something on his blank sheet of paper.

"When the time comes for us to read it, we will read it together." Seriously, this kid never runs out of ideas.

"That sounds great, but when is that right time?" she asked.

Hashirama stopped and stared at her.

"How about 10 years from now? for sure we already have establish our village at that time!" he said giddily.

"Hmm, well then." She began writing on her paper.

"Stop peeking Hashirama!"

"I am not!"

Hashirama got two empty bottles and together they buried their time capsule. Hashirama's was on the eastern part beside the river and Madara's was on the western part.

"What did you write?" The boy asked.

"As if I'm telling you, wait for 10 years."

Hashirama stared at Madara as she was burying her bottle and wondered what she look like when they grow up.

-xXx-

After 3 months, they continued to meet in secret (without asking each other what on earth clan they belong) Hashirama hoped Madara to be with him always and Madara trusted him more than she trusted anyone including her own father.

"Brother I need to talk to you." Tobirama approached the smiling (like an idiot) Hashirama. The older one looked puzzled.

"Hashirama," Butsuma said then the boy readied his self from a punch or a kick coming from his father because honestly, that was very normal of him to do it.

"So, you are meeting with a..." Hashirama's heartbeats raced.

"A girl?!"

Hashirama gulped."I asked Tobirama to follow you and he reported that you are meeting with a girl,"

Butsuma was always out of their camp fighting and busy slashing throats of their enemies with his men.

Hashirama continued to listen.

"I don't have a problem if you are meeting with some girl out there but--"

But
The last word made Hashirama nervous.

"Father-"

"That girl is an Uchiha!"

-xXx-

_Slap._

She was greeted by his father's slap and fell into the tatami floor, face first.

"Neechan!" A four year old boy ran on her side. She held her now red as tomato cheek trying to move up.

"Madara! " her father called, Izuna cried.

"Don't cry Izuna, I'm fine."

"Madara, you are my successor and I will not tolerate this."

"You aren't that dumb are you? you know what I'm talking about!" the man growled.

Tajima turned around with a frown. She was grounded not to go out in their camp but Tajima knew that she will break his rules.

And he was right about it.

-xXx-

_You must kill her_

His father's command echoed inside his head. Hashirama went outside their house and stared at his pebble.

_"I cannot kill her..how am I suppose to..oh wait. "_

He then remembered their formal greeting and decided to save her.

-xXx-

Hashirama was sure that she will escape before his father and brother know that he sent a warning in his pebble, disregarding what could happen after that. He will accept his punishment even if its death in betraying his father. If that's the only way he could save his friend.

He waited patiently for her at the riverbank with his heart pounding inside his chest. There was no other choice but to do this.

"Hashirama!" Madara was running like a dozen of bull is after her ,Hashirama did not notice it due to their distance. He held his pebble tightly and ready to throw it while Madara was looking for something in her pocket (her pebble).

Suddenly, something caught Madara's foot.

_"Wood?"

Hashirama saw a large boulder about to hit Madara from above.
"Madara!" Hashirama jumped on where Madara was when a man crushed the large boulder using a high level of taijutsu. Madara was left in awe watching as her father saved her. Tajima attacks Hashirama (that just made his move beside Madara) The girl opened her mouth in shock.

Hashirama's arm spilled blood when Tajima goes to launch a second attack using his weapon and in a blink of an eye, Butsuma Senju appeared to defend his son together with his other son.

Tobirama stood up in front of his wounded brother and faced Madara.

Why didn't she sensed that something was falling above her? A trick like don't work at her. Why did she let her guard down? she's the best of her generation surpassing male kids in her clan. Did she forgot that they're on a war times that anything can happen around her, that death occurs anytime? or is it because Hashirama was around and that she feels safe around him? Oh no, did she totally disregard the fact that he is a Senju? and that she never thought that he might betray her? or did he already...

Tobirama swung his sword and assaulted Madara. She came back to her senses to avoid his attacks. They continue to fight like that, Madara using kunai blocking Tobirama's katana.

"Tobirama,..Ma..dara!" Hashirama ripped a part of his clothes and quickly put in on his wound (good thing that Senju DNA is the best and so his wound regenerates faster)

As his brother and best friend were answering each others attacks, he glanced above seeing his father and hers clashing.

Madara made a roundhouse kick at Tobirama's abdomen, her taijutsu was inexplicably great for a girl and she jumped to distance herself from him and make some seals.

"Katon..."

"No! Madara! Tobirama run!" Hashirama running in top speed while making some seals.

"Mokuton!"

He made it facing Madara and she launched her jutsu.

"Goukkyayou no jutsu!" (Fire ball)

So Hashirama did

"Mokujoheki!" (literally: wood locking wall)

The trees around them transformed into a wall of wood protecting both Hashirama and Tobirama against Madara's jutsu.

Soon as her fire hits the wood of dome, she glared at Hashirama when their eyes met.

"He's my brother!"

"He attacked me!"

And that's when the problem started.

"So he is your brother..."

Tajima glanced at his daughter (still fighting with Butsuma) and threw a Katana, it falls beside her.
Madara slowly picked the katana.

"You said I am your friend and you are my friend." her voice was cracking.

"Madara-" Hashirama knows where was this going.

"Let me explain!"

"But YOU BETRAYED ME!" she awakened her sharingan. Madara assailed to Hashirama, he was left no other choice but to dodge her attacks. How can he gain back her trust and explain everything to her that he was planning to inform her about his father and brother's plan..and that boulder trap..how?

She landed a jab on Hashirama's wound and he groaned.

"I don't want to...fight you.."

"But you want me to get killed! "

"Brother!"

Butsuma glanced on his children and throw a long sword at Hashirama and he perfectly caught it. Hashirama and Madara slashed each other's weapon but he kept on defending himself rather than attacking her. Tobirama jumped and from above holding his sword in a torpedo like position targeting Madara.

Using the back of her sword making a powerful thrust on Hashirama's chin ,he stepped back but managed to balance his weight so he can keep his distance to stop Madara.

She sprung off to the ground to met Tobirama's attack. Her katana ready to chopped his throat when Hashirama knelt and grab her legs causing her to fall down

Her katana slipped to Tobirama's and he pierced her right shoulder.

He had no choice at all. He needed to stop her before she killed his brother didn't he? But there's a consequence about it..

"Madara!"

Tajima and Hashirama shouted in unison.

She rolled to the ground distancing herself to the Senju brothers. Her blood spilling in her blue robe. Hashirama looked in horror realizing her wound was bad.

He stepped forward then she eyed on him ,red as blood,ready to kill,sharp and full of hatred.

Tajima blows a fire ball at Butsuma and made his way to get her daugther. Butsuma evaded his attack that almost destroy the whole forest.

He looked at her wanting to explain everything, wanting to heal her wound,wanting to talk to her,wanting to be with her then she murmured some words that he and Tajima only heard,the two Uchiha poofed leaving the three Senju.

"Traitor."
Her last word for him

-xXx-

After the fight, Tobirama cleaned himself on the river only to find a stone - the one Hashirama was always carrying inside his pocket.

"It's a trap, leave!"

Tobirama looked at his brother (Butsuma healing his arms 5 meters away from the river) (The pebble rolled to the ground when Tajima attacked Hashirama and he lost it)

He nodded, left to right and kept the pebble in his shirt.

-xXx-

The next time they meet was in a battlefield as Senju Hashirama and Uchiha Madara.

"Madara, I know this is hard to believe! but I never betray you!"

"Like I will believe in you again Hashirama! Your stupid dreams will never happen as long as traitors like you lives!"

Clashes

Bloody wars

Killings

Tortures

Peace was an impossible word in this era...

Three years later, it so happened that Madara was the one to kill Butsuma in a battle while the Senju brothers are out on another fight against another enemy clan.

From then on, her beauty spells D-O-O-M to her enemy.

Hashirama succeeded and became the Senju leader.

Due to overusing of sharingan, Tajima became blind and eventually died in a battle and was succeeded by Madara.

Hashirama's name became known as the strongest and undefeated shinobi in the world, the only person who defeated the greatest female shinobi, Madara Uchiha.

-xXx-

A year later...

The Senju flag waved on the up north mountain.

The Uchiha flag on the south.

A tall man with tanned skin, a very well built body, dark eyes and waist length black hair, styled in a center parted fringe that framed his face, his hair is not pot-look-alike anymore. His armour constructed from numerous metal plates, formed into multiple protective guards along his body, in
particular: chest, shoulders, thighs and collar of his shoulder guards bore the Senju symbol emblazoned on them.

Hashirama Senju with his brother and clansmen at his back stands looking vividly especially to their opposing clan leader.

Fair skinned, taller than an average girl at her age, her long layered black hair that has a blue-tint in some sides, proudly wearing a blue robe (the inner part is a black sleeveless shirt) falling in her knees with a front slit, Uchiha clan symbol at the back, her side bangs framing her perfect face that people keeps on gossiping about on why a girl beautiful as her leads an army, kills countless shinobi without feeling grief, nevertheless they feared this lady just as everyone feared Hashirama Senju.

This is the first time after a long while that Hashirama have a closer look to his *former best friend*

"Madara."

"Hashirama."

Soon as the battle cry of their clansmen roared on the whole deserted place, clashing against each other, the God and Goddess of Shinobi (as the people call them) start their own fight

-xXx-

For countless times that Hashirama asked Madara to come with him.

For countless times that Hashirama tried to talk to her (which was answered by her katon, glares, curse and the swinging of her scythe)

For countless times that Hashirama dreamed about her and their dreams together.

At last, the Uchiha leader falls to the ground, hopeless, powerless, she knew that this will be the end of her... then Hashirama walks slowly and kneel before her.

"Kill me," she said, looking helpless laying there, her hair is terribly messy and some of it covered her face, she looks like an angel that miserably fell from heavens, Hashirama stared at her.

"Brother! this is the time! kill her... and we can achieve the peace when she dies... this is the end." Tobirama who is looking at the helpless lady talks to his brother

Madara glared at the two men who was staring at her.

Hashirama cupped her face

"Madara, we can still have the chance to build our dream."

"It's too late Hashirama, I'm unable to trust you again and your clan, I will never repeat those mistake ever again, I swore that to my father's grave."

"I cannot kill you."

"I would be glad if you do, just make it quick."

"Madara please..."

"If I die there will be peace, my brother will be the Uchiha head but he's still a kid, he's a pacifist so
I doubt that he'll be having a war-like persona like I have, if he do,” Madara grabbed Hashirama's collar.

"If he did avenge my death and you killed him..." sharingan rolling.

"If you die, I will find you in the depths of hell Hashirama...and kill you over and over again eternally! "

Hashirama smirked and Madara stared at him.

"Brother, if you cannot do it I will-"

"Don't you ever touch even one hair of hers, I dare you." Hashirama throw a terrifying glare at his brother. Tobirama flinched and was now scared of his own death.

"Just tell me whatever you want so that I can gain your trust again..."

His words rewinding in her head.

"Well then..." she started.

"Kill your brother or kill yourself, with that I can trust the Senju clan."
"Kill you brother or kill yourself and I can trust the Senju clan."

Tobirama was shaking in anger. He wanted to pull a kunai to end the life of the girl who lay on the dirt beside his brother.

"Brother! This girl is insane! what kind of words-" Before Tobirama continue his rambling, Hashirama stand up, detached his armor and pull out a kunai and face Tobirama and the other Senju shinobi.

"Hashirama-sama!" screamed by Toka. The others were shocked in their leader's action as well.

"Tobirama, listen to what I say for these are my last words. Create a village of peace, no one will hurt Madara and her brother Izuna, let them live in that village." and he turned to Madara.

"I'm sorry, Madara." he had flashbacks of their memories together, from their skipping stones, when he met her until the last time they saw each other when she branded him as a traitor.

"Mara..." A single tear fell to his cheek.

Madara grabbed his hand to stop him in killing himself.

-xXx-

And so it began.

Konoha was a name given by Madara for the village. It came from the word 'leaf' after she caught a flying leaf when asked by Hashirama on what name does she like to give for their village.

He also asked her to be the Hokage. A Hokage will run the village. The village will take orders directly to the kage but of course, it has many duties. (I said the Hokage will run the village so that's it I don't want to elaborate more or this whole chapter will be fully about the Hokage thing)

"I will ask someone to carve your face in a big stone facing the entrance of the village!"

"...Are you serious?"

Many villagers doesn't know about a little fact that the village founding anniversary was also Madara's birthday; December 24. That's one of the reason why Hashirama asked her about its name. (but being its Hokage is entirely different reason)

The villagers or...mainly the Senju and Uchiha voted for its Hokage. For about 54 people who voted, Hashirama got 36 votes winning the title. Madara did not question the voting (there were equal numbers of Uchiha and Senju there) she accepted it but was hoping that someday, Hashirama will choose her to be the next Hokage. Nevertheless, Hashirama was willing to do it. Madara runs the Uchiha clan and is also leading the village more especially when Hashirama is not around. He was giving her missions just like what Tobirama but the only different was that Madara has a higher position (since she lead the village when Hashirama is out of nowhere to have political meetings and stuff and Tobirama doesn't have that chance and also she was her clan's head and he was just a brother of their clan's head)

Hashirama was a charismatic, powerful, humorous shinobi and likes him, who would not love a
leader like him? he's very considerate, kind, good-hearted man that was always thinking about Madara... no no no no... I mean... Konoha.

Although the god and the goddess of Shinobi doesn't have the same opinions sometimes, they knew how to give and take about leading the village. People outside Konoha were astonished that the two of them are now allies.

One day, Madara bursted in Hashirama's office, rolled her eyes and looked annoyed.

"What happened?" Hashirama gave her a full attention (totally ignoring the mountain of paperwork around his table) (and he's wearing the Kage outfit)

"Nothing."

"Mara," (she's finally immunized by his pet name) "Tell me... what is it?"

"A letter came from Iwagakure." Hashirama listened very eagerly.

"Your brother successfully gained their trust."

"And?" Hashirama asked, wondering why would that kind of news disappoint her.

"That's it!" Madara snapped.

"I don't want to come in such negotiations ever again!" she added.

Hashirama sighed and put away the mission lists that Madara keeps on pointing.

"Relax."

"I can't!" she scowled.

A month earlier, Hashirama assigned Madara to Iwagakure to have an alliance between two villages. Madara never got an answer since she left the Iwa and then Hashirama decided to send Tobirama to ask about the alliance. Tobirama got an answer after two weeks and Madara felt like Iwa doesn't trust her and that they trusted the younger Senju more. Since then, she felt bitterness in the Iwa which of course Hashirama keeps on convincing her that it's fine and he hasn't lost his trust to her.

"Fine, I'm not going to give these missions to you anymore."

Madara nodded, still dismayed.

"I prefer battle missions, give it to me, give the freaking negotiations to your brother instead, and one thing, I don't like meetings so you do it."

Hashirama nodded.

"What else?" He asked.

"Give me some men, I will go somewhere." Hashirama's eyebrow twitched.

"What for?" the Uchiha glared at him.

"..o-okay I will."
"About the meetings," her

"Yes?" him

"Let me join you only if the meeting will be held inside the village."

"Sure."

(a reminder that Madara was not trying to be a boss here, she's the second-in-command and it's her right to say the things she wanted to happen around the village considering her missions, with regards to the last request, obviously one of them must be around the village when Hashirama or her is not around)

"Is this okay to you?" Hashirama handed her a group of bandits roaming around outside Konoha.

"I'll do it." she get the paper, read it, slowly walks away, open the door and..

"Madara,"

She stopped.

"Just..be..be here when you're done." He said, stuttering and hiding a blush.

"Hnn." She nodded then she closed the door with a soft click.

-xXx-

There was one time when he was all alone in the office when all he ever thinks about is what exactly is Madara doing (he forgot that he gave her an assignment to the Land of Mountain to escort a daimyo) then he goes out of the room and keeps on asking Toka where is Madara and his secretary rolled her eyes and reminded him that he sent her there.

Tobirama was about to enter the office and heard his brother's amnesia. Tobirama knew exactly why his brother is obsessed in looking for Madara but what he cannot and never understand is..

WHY?

Yes he knows why, of course didn't he? oh he knows! he know that his brother is in love- Tobirama, for crying out loud cannot believe that his brother was in fact in love with his arch nemesis, the best fiercest most powerful most admirable (especially for Hashirama) female shinobi in the whole entire...world.. (galaxy for Hashirama).

Tobirama was never been in love with a woman but he surely had crushes.

Women of course,

But he cannot, and again, never understand.

WHY HER? Whenever he ask himself, he got a headache. Whenever his brother stared at the said girl, he got a headache. Whenever the girl is around he got a headache. Tobirama has a great distrust of the Uchiha more over in Madara.

She is a girl, but not JUST a girl. She fought hundreds of shinobi, never been defeated (technically she was defeated many times by Hashirama but the truth is she is the real winner... well Hashirama cannot kill her after all)
Even by that time, that she asked him to choose between killing Tobirama or killing himself.

Tobirama already hated the Uchiha but on that incident, on that one helluva request, he totally lost totally lost all (ALL) his trust on the entire Uchiha blood line. Since then, he can never trust Madara the way Hashirama trusted her or even half of it...a half of a half of it...he cannot...he can never..

Even if she's a girl, even if she's pretty, or the prettiest of her clan or the whole village, Tobirama hated her since then. Been always against her and completely ignoring her when the two of them was going to pass by. He cannot forget her freaking idea and he cannot forget how his brother was willing to take his life...Take his Life for MADARA.

But despite of all of this Tobirama is an obedient younger brother for Hashirama. He's also powerful using the water jutsu (his specialty) though they don't look a lot they were really brothers by blood. Tobirama has a soft side with kids, he loves children (again, no homo) male and female kids loves him too (see? no homo) his favorite Hiruzen Sarutobi from planet of the apes...errr Sarutobi clan.

-xXx-

If you are a normal girl, a normal teen aged girl, or just a girl and you are not Madara and you are living in Konoha, you are blind if you don't admire the two Senju brothers.

Tobirama and Hashirama have their own fangirls.

There was a time when Tobirama's mail box is full of love he's reading it but most of the time he's not. On Hashirama's side, he is the Hokage so his mail box is not that really full (maybe some girls were intimidated by his social status but still he have many fangirls around the village).

He's much sociable than Tobirama friendlier than Tobirama, taller than Tobirama and have a longer hair than Tobirama (I guess that doesn't count) again, his mail box is not that full of girl's letter but it is super full of other villages social invitation meetings. While on his office and his spare time (when a day that there was a little work on his office and that's it) Hashirama tried to read one of his secret admirer letter and then Madara walked inside.

Madara was silent the whole time she was standing in front of him while Hashirama did not notice that she... was staring at him while he was grinning stupidly and chuckling from time to timewhile reading the letter. When Hashirama looked above he saw the dumbfounded Madara.

Sometimes, Madara was thinking that maybe being a Hokage can damage a human mind. But she still wanted to become the Hokage nevertheless. Maybe it's Hashirama who was really crazy for reading and laughing all by himself. He was asked by Madara what so funny about the paper he reads and he said the most stupid thing ever; that someone in a far village sends him a letter and has a joke written on it. Of course Madara was pissed (she was always serious and jokes were a no no when it comes to talking about the village) Madara said that she will kill whoever send that mail and even asked Hashirama who the hell was it.

Hashirama blushed and though he unintentionally lie to her, he can't help but to blush.

"I am going to kill whoever sends you that stupid mail!"

Hashirama (Of-fucking-course) did not give her the name of the sender (or else they will meet their maker sooner than expected) and convinced Madara that he will not entertain a mail like that ever again.
When he got home, he burned all the love letters including Tobirama's on which he was pissed.

"Why did you burn those and you also burn mine brother?!"

Hashirama just burned every single love letter he found on their cabinet, poor thing that Tobirama's letters was on the same cabinet.
Senju and Uchiha

(Mostly headcanons for further story development)

The Senju Clan, "The clan with a thousand skills" was the most feared, strongest most respected clan above all other clans in the ninja world during the war-torn era before the founding of the hidden villages.

They descended from the younger of two sons of Rikudo Sennin or the Sage of Six Paths. They were believed to be born with the 'body' of the sage. Before his death, Rikkudo asked his two sons on what course of power they would follow to lead the world. The elder son easily chose "power" while the younger answered "love". The Sage grew favor the ideals of the younger son over those of his older son. Therefore, before he died, he chose the younger son to be his successor, the elder brother, bitter, hateful at having been denied what he felt was rightfully his to inherit, attacked his younger sibling.

The Sage, deeply saddened and angered by this, cursed the elder son to have a passionate love that can become a bottomless well of despair the moment the one they care for the most is dead.

The Uchiha clan descended from the elder of the two sons and inherited the Sage's "eyes" and also the curse. They carry the "curse of hatred" since the day that the Sage chose the younger son to be his successor. From then on, the two clans, starting from the very beginning, were like water and oil.

-xXx-

Butsuma Senju was the leader the Senju Clan in the warring period originally had 4 sons in order; Hashirama, Tobirama, Kawarama and Itama. Hashirama the eldest son was the strongest but also the most hard headed son of his. Butsuma and Hashirama constantly fights (verbally and non verbally) hitting his son in the face when the kid angered him and was most of the time defended by his second son, Tobirama. Kawarama died first in battle and Itama was killed by members of the Uchiha Clan (it is unknown whether Kawarama was killed by Uchiha too). Hashirama grew hating the shinobi system saying that it was unfair to children that instead of playing and enjoying their youth, they are the ones suffering in war. Even as a child, he already figured it out how to attain peace starting with love.

Tajima Uchiha was the leader of the Uchiha clan and the counterpart of Butsuma. He had 4 sons and was gifted (cursed?) to have one daughter in order; Urumiya, Mikihisa, Madara, Izuna and the last one died without a name. His wife Reiko was killed by a Senju member, while pregnant of their child (and they latter know that the baby was a boy when they separate the mother and child on different coffin to bury). Urumiya was killed by Hashirama Senju, Mikihisa by another enemy clan, Tajima worried about his clan's future (his two older sons were now dead in the hands of his enemies). Madara was traumatized when her mother was murdered in front of her. She covered Izuna's eyes (she was 8 and Izuna is 3 at that time) carrying her little brother watching as her mother died together with a baby in her womb. Uchiha at that time neglect to have female shinobi as they believed that women especially children must stay at home taking good care of their family and mostly by their husbands that were busy killing members of the outside clan. Madara grew desperately wanting to fight and avenge her mother. Tajima observed his daughter surprisingly surpassing boys about her age made it clear that Madara (no matter how improbable it is to accept by the clan) will be his successor.

-xXx-
Uchiha were very proud of their hair and only cuts it whenever they lost a fight (Madara got the longest hair among the Uchiha passing her waist and is only cutting it whenever Hashirama defeat her in their past fights) She also influenced him (when they were still kids) telling him to try growing his hair (to ultimately change his stupid pot-look-alike hairstyle that make her feel not wanting to play with him again. Madara was a perfectionist when it comes to hairstyle) Hashirama was the only one to know on what brand of shampoo she was using (he once smelled her crown when they slept together (when they were kids! When they were kids!)) he joked about it after she bluntly said he look like an open umbrella on his sleeping position. He then told her she smelled like strawberries, Madara blushed (like strawberry). After that, she changed her shampoo to melon. Izuna her brother got the prettier between them and she's really fond of combing his kid brother's hair. One time that she mention it to Hashirama, (again, when they were kids) he made up his mind to grow his hair (so that someday she will comb his hair too and keeps daydreaming about it).

-xXx-

Unlike the Uchiha clan, the Senju doesn't look alike each other. The fact that Senju can marry outsiders brings them this many types of hairs, color of eyes, color of hairs, types of skin, heights, and many differences. Best example for this was Hashirama and Tobirama. They don't look alike but they are really brothers from one father and one mother (both dead). Hashirama got his dark hair from his father (thankfully he did not inherit his father's brutality to children) Tobirama got the lighter shade surely from their mother.

The Senju Clan best jutsu was the Mokuton technique, but after many years of their existence, only Hashirama awakened this. The Uchiha have their own signature Katon no Jutsu and everyone were taught to master it.

Uchiha respect their clansmen equally but they discriminate other clans. As they're descendant of the sage's elder son, they find themselves being the God race that is above all other. Uchiha also despises mongrels and treat those who haven't awakened the sharingan yet with a lower status than the rest.

When Madara became their leader, (and she's the first female leader of their clan) women must also train to be ninja but unlike men, most of them can't go on battles and have to stay home to take care of the children. Their fighting skills come in handy when they have to protect the village. There were, however, some exceptions of this.

Hashirama's father originally planned Tobirama to be his successor (because Hashi and his father were not in good terms) and Hashirama was willing to give it his younger brother anyway. But because the elder son was the most powerful and the Senju traditionally chose leadership by who's the most powerful, Hashirama retained to be its successor and became its leader at the age 16.

In the Uchiha Clan rule, the first son must be the next clan leader and if the current leader doesn't have an offspring or all his children were females, the next male closest to the current leader's blood (in their family tree) will have the next leadership bloodline. In Madara's case, her two brothers; Urumiya and Mikihisa were both dead, she's a female and the next is Izuna who was the rightful clan leader. But because Izuna was five years younger than her, he cannot lead a whole clan. When his father chose her to be the clan leader some Uchiha were not willing to follow a female leader (she's 17 at that time), but because of Madara's unnatural prowess, she then gained their trust.

In the Senju, if one member was able to beat its current leader on a battle, he can be the new leader. This was why it's the best to choose the most powerful one among them, so this situation can be avoided. In the Uchiha, they have a high respect on their leader and very rarely that a member can
eliminate or dethrone its leader because of the strong familial bond and respect (they are solid blood relatives unlike the Senju).

The Uchiha worships Neko-kami as their deity, the war cat god. They also train ninja cats and almost every family has one. (Madara is fond of cats, she have three cats, one of them was a gift from Hashirama on the day they established Konoha and its also her 18th birthday. She named it Orenji since it was orange in color but Hashirama named it "Aiko" They fought over it for one week because whenever she's calling the cat 'Orenji' it doesn't respond, but whenever she called it Aiko it does, so she trained the cat and forbid Hashirama to go in their house for a month).

The Senju worships trees. In the Senju compound they have the oldest, biggest tree (and they did move it from the forest of Rikkudo-knows-where to Konoha. Their former residence was in the middle of the forest by the way.) Their current leader Hashirama was fond of bonsai and wood sculpting (Tobirama once break one of his bonsai and the Hokage mourned for it for about 3 weeks. One day, he talked about it with Toka in his office and Madara heard their conversation. The next day the Hokage found a cherry blossom bonsai with a note: "Stupid Senju, I don't know what kind of bonsai did you lost but I picked this one because of its color so stop being so stupid and get over with it." Hashirama was loss for words. The cherry blossom bonsai was really beautiful (for him, just like Madara) he also found out an interesting trivia that Madara (without realizing it) likes the color pink.

Uchiha are picky eater. They aren't fond of meats and majority of them are vegetarian. One of their common trait is craving of sweets (most of them were diabetic, it can also be the cause of blindness aside from their overusing of sharingan. )

Senju has a high tolerance in alcohol (most Senju are alcoholic, too much alcohol is the reason why many of their members died in liver explosion lololol)

In Uchiha, once married they can't be divorced and if the partner caught the other cheating, he or she have the full rights to kill his/her partner. As for the Senju, they don't have a rule in marrying only one person (they can be polygamous) the leader can marry up to 4 women and for ordinary members, they can marry up to two (but this is only applied for men).
"Hashirama."

Madara entered the kage office (without knocking and without Hokage-sama) she glanced at the sitting Tobirama beside his older brother, the Hokage. Hashirama and Tobirama were having a conversation. Both stopped and stared at the incoming Uchiha. Tobirama's cool aura vanished and Hashirama's heartbeat skipped a beat.

"Am I interrupting something very important?" she asked.

"Ah, not at all. Tobi and I are done with our conversation." Hashirama glanced at Tobirama, the younger one narrowed his eyes almost saying "We are not done, we are not!"

"Good." Madara said and pulled a seat for her.

"I got a letter from Iwagakure regarding the alliance of Konoha and their village." She handed the letter to Tobirama (he's the one who won the alliance) but noticed that the letter already has the Konoha seal and a signature.

"Brother, it's... who signed this? It's not your sign." Tobirama.

"I did." Madara said, crossing her legs and leaning to the chair. Tobirama raised an eyebrow.

"Since when you are entitled to do it?"

"Since the founding of the village, Tobirama. I am your brother's second in command, right" she replied, proudly, sarcastically and pushing Hashirama to agree with her.

"Y-yes, of course, her signature is equivalent to mine." Hashirama said nervously.

Tobirama wanted to protest but realized that she has a point. Madara have the right to sign on whatever important document as long as Hashirama is giving her the power to do so (it's on the truce they signed when they build the village. They have two copies; one in the Senju compound head quarters and the second one is on the Uchiha head quarters), knowing he cannot do anything about it, Tobirama shrugged.

"If you're done checking it, you can file it, Toka." Madara ordered.

"Yes, Madara-sama" Toka answered but was looking at the shrugging Tobirama. Hashirama did not check the document. He simply let the document slip on Toka's hands and the secretary filed it on a clean folder.

There was a small smile on Madara's lips. She knew Tobirama wanted to protest so bad but she overpowered him and she likes it.

"Is there any concerns you have, Madara?" Hashirama asked, sensing the contest of the two particular persons in the room.

"Tobirama, please give the founders of the village a little privacy. I have something very important to tell to the Hokage." Madara... again... ordered (she is really overpowering Tobirama in this scenario) the younger Senju walked out without any words and left the two in the office.

Oh boy.
Hashirama readied himself on a breathtaking conversation with the lad. He's unsure if Madara is still mad at him or if she remembered their storm argument and wanted to continue it right in the freaking now. He gave some scrolls and books to Toka and the secretary exited herself in the room.

"About what happened last week," Madara started, Hashirama gulped. Wow it's been a week since they last talk (and for Hashirama its like 1 year)

"I know it's my fault -"

"I know it's your fault, I screamed it to your face and it is really your fault!"

Oh

"Madara-

"It's not that Im blaming you or something"

What? what in the world? Hashirama was astonished by Madara's statement..what? he thought he's the one at fault (and she really did scream it to his face )

"What?"

"It's...

"No it's okay, I know you're mad because your clansmen were-

"Of course I am!"

...where is this conversation going...Hashirama spoke at the back of his mind.

"What exactly do you-

"Do you still have-

"Madara-

"Hashira-

"Look we are not going-

"Let me speak first-

"Hold on Madara,

"Hashirama!"

"No, yes, ah no,! okay ladies first."

"No, you speak first, you're the Hokage."

...what the hell...

"So...uhh what are we talking about here?"

"About last week"

"Oh yes yes, last week, what about it?"
"YOU!"

...here they go again...

Hashirama sighed heavily, so did Madara. They both stopped speaking, both wanted to calm down, wanted to know where to start before talking.

A moment of silence

"Can I?" Hashirama

"No."

silence again

"is that? -"

Madara looked at the window.

"No, it's not." Hashirama, looking at the floor.

"So where is it?!" Madara, like she's looking for justice.

"I put it on our cabinet."

"YOU PUT THE FRIDGIN THING ON THE CABINET?!!"

...what exactly do they talk about...

"Where should I put that?" Hashirama asked innocently and thinking if he said something wrong (and what was wrong about it)

Madara was so angry and marched outside. She slammed the door behind her (same scenario as the last time they met) Hashirama was dumbfounded after that.

Where should I put the funds aside in the cabinet?... he said

Why the fuck did he put that stupid color bonsai on the cabinet!... she said..

Hashirama was talking about the funds.

Madara was talking about the cherry blossom bonsai.
The first Hokage, wearing his armor, packing scrolls, tools and weapons, was together with Toka and the other Senju going out for a special task; capturing the four tails, Son Goku. The four tails was last seen near the Iwagakure. The Tsuchikage asked Hashirama if they can help capturing the tailed beast and as their new alliance, they must show a full support to Iwa and so they accepted the Tsuchikage's request. (plus Hashirama's mokuton is powerful enough to handle the strength of tailed beast)

"Why she is not participating on this?" that was Tobirama.

"She's out for another mission." Hashirama answered, getting ready for their journey.

"Hashirama-sama, we're ready" said by a Senju member.

"Brother, you don't have to do this. Yes you're the strongest shinobi, but this tailed beast, it's different and the village needs you."

"Relax Tobirama, I wont let myself to get killed."

Tobirama sighed. He trust his brother, but no one was certain to live after a fight with a tailed beast (no one ever lived after they fought a supernatural monster like that)

"Besides, there's Madara if ever something happen to me." Hashirama said, half jokingly.

"That's why I can never relax." Tobirama replied with a frown as Hashirama jumped out of the Hokage office together with the other Senju.

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The five kage summit was held every time the villages has a very important (and it must be super important) matter to discuss. A letter came to Hokage's office after the capture of the 4 tails from the Tsuchikage (and he purposely noted that the letter must be read only by the Hokage himself) Tobirama was so glad Madara was not around the village yet.

"What does it says?"

"They want Konohagakure no Sato to join the kage summit!" Hashirama said happily. Tobirama of course was also very happy. Their sweats in establishing the village was now leading to success and Konoha will soon to be known in the world (and many clans will have an interest to be their alliance)

Hashirama just hoped that Madara was there to hear the good news.

Tobirama hoped Madara will never return in the village ever again.

The two brothers rejoiced, screamed in joy, applauding like crazy.

"We must celebrate this!" Tobrama called it.

Hashirama then compute their funds. He divided it by two but Tobirama noticed that the sum of two are not balance.

"Why is that?"
"For the Uchiha renovations."

"She's still not taking it?"

The latest fund which he gained from the capturing of the 4 tails was triple the amount of Madara's 'stupid fund' and the latest fund will now go to Uchiha renovations while the 'stupid fund' will be use for the mini celebration. Tobirama did not protest ,he knew the Uchiha needed it.

"It's not that I am complaining ,but the amount (for Uchiha) is too much,we can use the other parts of it for something?"

"No,Tobirama. It is my fault that they suffered in the storm. I just hope this will cover up Madara's anger."

When it comes to Madara, his brother was willing to give everything (including his life) Tobirama had a mini flashback when Madara asked Hashirama to kill himself to gain her trust.

"I think the celebration must be held after the Kage summit,what do you think?" Hashirama suggested.

"Sure,that's better."

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Hashirama, along with the other kage were allowed to bring two bodyguards, he picked Toka Senju and Jiro Uchiha. The Land of Iron was the place where it will be held, a neutral and samurai-controlled country leaded by Kyoh, a man about 50's. They were gathered in a long, circular table. The Tsuchikage first greeted the Hokage (they were really in good terms now) the Tsuchikage wondered what did Hashirama saw in Madara to have a truce on a such a wild shinobi like her.

The Mizukage arrived along with his bodyguards (the first one to arrive was Hashirama. It looks like he's very excited on his first summit meeting) while waiting for the Raikage and Kazekage, the Hokage and Tsuchikage chat for a while (the Mizukage stayed quiet the whole time and was just listening to the two chatting kages) By the way, the Tsuchikage was a man about 40's and was really getting along with Hashirama,he also said that he's a fan of his.

"Hokage-sama,may I ask you a question?" the Tsuchikage has an aura of a comedic person ,he's a short man (about 4 ft ) ,black hair and green eyes.

"Sure." Hashirama replied eagerly.

(Mizukage twitched an eyebrow as their conversation seems so casual like they're best buds)

The Tsuchikage leaned forward to the Hokage (not wanting the Mizukage to hear his question) and whispered;

"About the pretty girl you sent to us the last time...ma..Ma."

"Mama?" Hashirama wonders if the tsuchikage's mother is residing in Konoha for him to sent her there (and why on some reasons he cannot remember anything about it)

"The girl,having the long hair, wild as her,pretty eyes (he motioned his eyes and narrowed it slightly) Ma.""

"Ah! Madara...-sama"
The Tsuchikage motioned to lower the Hokage's voice putting his pointing finger in his lips and made a 'shhhh' sound. Mizukage was now intrigued.

"About her, what is your relationship with her..."

Hashirama was confused. What does the Tsuchikage mean? how did he know about them? and oh, is there really 'them'? in the first place?

"Is she a trusted ally to you.." (the answer is obvious, of course Hashirama trusted the girl that is why she sent her for their alliance isn't it? but the Tsuchikage cannot find an appropriate question (or how to ask it appropriately)

"She's Uchiha Madara, the leader of the Uchiha clan."

"MOTHER OF RIKUDO Sennin! I THOUGHT MADARA IS A MALE!"

The Tsuchikage slapped his mouth for bringing that too loud. Mizukage gasped.

"I also thought about that when we were kids, her name is a boy's name." Hashirama said but the older man did not hear him. Shocked upon learning the truth that Uchiha Madara was a female. He nodded his head from left to right feeling embarrassed on his actions.

"Wait, didn't she tell you about her last name when she entered your village?" Hashirama asked casually, the Tsuchikage shook his head.

"Oh! I heard she did, but she said it was Senju. That's why I'm asking you what is your relationship with her."

Hashirama fell from his seat.

He knew that Madara was very proud of her clan, but why didn't she tell the truth about her being the clan leader of the Uchiha? the Tsuchikage was still blabbering words he cannot hear. All he can hear was the question running through his head on why Madara said that she is a Senju? or is it.. is it because..

Madara Senju

It suits her.

Hashirama speaks to himself, smiling like an idiot when the Kazekage arrived and the Raikage (a very large man) sat on a chair.

"Shall we begin?" asked by Kyoh.

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"Today we are gathered here for the issue of the tailed beast. The Hokage, Hashirama Senju-sama, leader of the newly established village Konohagakure no Sato (Kyoh shows a great respect for Hashirama and bows to him, Hashirama did the same) captured the four tails Son Goku, the first tailed beast to be captured alone by a man. Hokage-sama, please."

Hashirama became nervous in Kyoh's invitation for him to have a simple welcoming remarks. He's a Senju leader and to have a speech in front of his clansmen never made him nervous before. But this time, he is going to speak in behalf of his own village, in behalf of Konoha, and not juts that, he is talking to the four most important people of the hidden villages. He thought if only Madara was
there she will help him in this situation. She will always be smarter than him in this kind of situation. He cleared his throat and grabbed a courage to finally speak.

The Hokage stands.

"It is a great pleasure to be here in the Kage summit, Konoha is a new village and its an honor to be one of the people who are seated in front of you all gentlemen, as Kyoh-sama said I, together with my Senju men with the help of our trusted Uchiha men, captured the four tailed beast Son Goku, capturing the tailed beast is never been an easy task as we know how devastating the beasts are, I do hope that at the end of our meeting, my fellow gentlemen, we can finally found a solution in our dilemma, thank you" then he seated.

The tsuchikage and kazekage showed satisfaction in the Hokage's speech

"I believe that everyone of you have their own opinions in capturing the tailed beast, let's begin." Kyoh announced.

"Capturing them is not the main issue here" The kazekage. "After that is what comes into my mind."

The four other Kages nodded, he has a point.

"But atleast the Hokage here found out a solution, his mokuton skill technique." Tsuchikage.

"Tsuchikage, surely this meeting is not just about how good the Hokage is, right? we must think on the solution after catching it." Mizukage.

"No, I do believe that we must think on how to capture it, not just the Hokage, we as the other Kage must participate in doing it." Raikage

"I second the motion, Raikage, how about we train our shinobi to fight the tailed beast?" Tsuchikage.

"Who and how?" Mizukage.

everybody looked at Hashirama, pushing him to say something (clearly he hasnt say anything yet except his speech)

"I'm willing to participate in the capturing of the other tailed beast, but we have different skills and techniques per village so I doubt if I can... train them?" Hashirama said.

"Hokage-sama, how about train your men with our men and on the next topic of our discussion we can talk about the place to hold their training and the budget." It was a nice suggestion coming from Tsuchikage.

"I liked that." Hokage.

"I doubt it. Hokage, you said that everyone of us have different abilities, how are you gonna train .. Tsuchikage's men? and our men as well?" Mizukage.

"Aside from that you are running your village and we might as well suggest to look for another Senju member to train these men." Raikage

The meeting was going well, everyone was participating.

Hashirama smiled at the Raikage.
"About that, I have Uchiha Madara, my second in command, she can run the village while I train these men."

The Kages have different reactions. Tsuchikage nodded, Mizukage raised an eyebrow, Raikage glared and Kazekage's mouth opened.

"Uchiha Madara." everyone except Hashirama said.

"Out of topic, but do you honestly trust that ..." Raikage looking for a word that can describe Madara.

"That pretty, wild girl." Tsuchikage continued raising his pointing finger, Mizukage and Kazekage scowled at his emphasis.

"Of course I do, Madara-sama is a great leader, she have an independent mind and can judge quickly. When I'm out of the village, she's in charge of it, together with my younger brother, Tobirama."

"Ah, your younger brother, the water jutsu user isn't it?" Raikage clarified, Hashirama nodded.

"Maybe you can ask your brother instead of ... her?" Hashirama didn't like the sound of it.

"Is there anything between your village and Madara, Raikage-san?" Hashirama asked.

"I honestly cannot trust that girl, she killed many of my shinobi and almost all the clans in my village is an enemy for the Uchiha." Raikage explained.

"That damn girl assassinate my family." Kazekage glowered. Mizukage looked at him as everyone made a surprised look.

"Looks like everyone here do not trust your partner, Hokage-sama." Mizukage mocked.

(just a reminder: Madara killed a Kirigakure hero and the Tsuchikage showed distrust in Madara in the first part of their chatting)

At first, no one believed that Hashirama Senju and Uchiha Madara were running their own village like they did not have any rivalry and countless fights before. Who would have thought about that? They wouldn't believe that the two founders were childhood bestfriends either.

"As far as I know, Madara also killed your father, right Hokage-sama?" Mizukage said that startled Hashirama.

"That's enough," Hashirama says in loud voice, slamming the table. "Are we looking for the solution on the tailed beast or just rambling here?"

Hashirama said while controlling his temper, he couldn't stand anyone who speaks ill about Madara. The bodyguards of the Kages jump in the long table to defend each of their Kages (Jiro and Toka too)

Without him knowing it, Hashirama's chakra cracked the walls of the room and alarmed the bodyguards.

"Hashirama-sama, please calm down." Toka asked anxiously. (still in defending position)

The other bodyguards were glaring, battle ready with their weapons. Even ants cannot passed through their tight defense. Hashirama calmed down himself and slowly sat on his chair.
Kyoh did not say anything but he himself was shocked to the very powerful chakra that Hashirama has

"Monstrous chakra, as expected to the god of shinobi." He said at the back of his mind.

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They continued the meeting once everyone's pressure subside. But this time, all of them have a lingering cautiousness (due to Hashirama's tendency to wreck a havoc in the room whenever they speak bad of Madara. They decided to leave that topic alone and proceeded to their main subject)

"Their Hokage is really powerful," one of Kazekage's bodyguard said.

"I dont think he still needs a bodyguard." the other one spoke.

"Imagine if the goddess and the god of shinobi clash in this room."

Toka and Jiro glanced at each other, both smiling like they wanted to comment on the two talking bodyguards. For Toka, seeing the Konoha founders clashing seems a normal day, so did Jiro.

"If only I can seal their anger to a scroll so they can forget about Madara's transgression... wait." that was Hashirama holding his forehead (like he got a headache) while Kyoh was discussing about the different types of tailed beasts.

"...the one tails was last seen near the.."

"Kyoh-sama," alarmed by the sudden speaking of Hashirama, Kyoh flinched.

"Yes Hokage-sama?"

"I have an idea."

Everyone focused their attention to the Hokage

"Proceed please," Kyoh said.

"How about to seal the tailed beasts?"

...silence reigns...

"SEAL?" that was Raikage.

"Hokage-sama are you serious about this? this is not the time to joke on such matters!" Raikage acted like he's about to blow a punch on the table when the Tsuchikage pouted pointing their bodyguards above signaling him to calm down or else...(with the size of the Raikage that wooden table with be dust in no time soon as he pulverized it)

"I am serious." Hashirama stated firmly.

"For the love of Rikudo Sennin...where are we going to seal those tailed beasts?!" Tsuchikage said throwing his hands upwards.

"This is nonsense! and who on the mighty world of shinobi would seal those creatures!" Kazekage commented.

Hashirama smiled and watched everyone's reaction.
"Ever heard of the Uzumaki clan?"

The four other kages looked at him...

"From the eddy village of Rikudo-sennin-knows-where?" Tsuchikage. Seriously this kage is a little bit religious isn't he?

The Mizukage was just listening the whole time.

"What about it?" Raikage asked, irritated.

"Uzumaki are very knowledgable in fujinjutsu (sealing techniques) actually, they were feared because of it. I can talk to them regarding this." Hashirama said while the others were staring at me.

"Do you where is this.. eddy village of nowhere?" Tsuchikage asked.

"I heard of this Uzumaki clan before, they are great in sealing techniques. Good one Hokage-san." Kazekage praised.

"They are distant relatives of the us Senju. It's been a long time since my father once talked to their leader before."

Everyone nodded except the Mizukage.

"About the scroll, it must be specialized in holding a great chakra." Tsuchikage said, everyone nodded (now including the Mizukage)

"The Uzumaki are very knowledgeable in creating such scroll." Hashirama suggested confidently.

"I believe this meeting is done." Kyoh announced and everyone agreed.
Madara walked to the gates of Konoha when she observed that the villagers are gossiping on the same topic all over again.

"Hashirama-sama is really great, he's the man!"

"Our Hokage is the best! I heard he's the one who found a solution against the tailed beasts!"

"I wonder if the Hokage is interested in marrying someday." a teenage girl giggled, Madara rose an eyebrow upon hearing it.

She made her way straight to the Kage office only to be greeted by Tobirama with some other people. There were unknown people inside the kage office.

"Madara, it's nice seeing you again." (she was so surprised by Tobirama's greeting, she narrowed her eyes to the white haired young man) is he planning to kill me soon... she thought, this is unbelievable! The younger Senju looks like he's on a very good mood today and not on his usual aura whenever he sees her.

Tobirama was talking with these people from different clans. Madara cleared her throat and politely excused her self to whisper something in Tobirama (but it's not actually a whisper like ear to ear but it's somewhat close to Tobirama)

"Who are they." she monotonously asked.

"Gentlemen, this is Uchiha Madara, my brother's second-in-command." Madara was in awe on Tobirama's nice introduction.

*Am I dreaming or this bastard is planning something.. or is he drunk or what or.. did he bang his head on the wall several times or.. he's not Tobirama or.. is he sick? what on earth.*

She's already plotting to activate the sharingan if she's on the top level genjutsu or whatever right on this moment.

The men stared vividly at Madara like she's the most perfect being they ever seen.

"Uchiha Madara-sama." Everyone greeted while bowing their heads

Madara felt she's a Buddha for a while then frown at Tobirama.

*Why is Tobirama here where is that Hashirama*

"My brother is on the Senju compound, planning about the mini celebration of the success of the Kage summit." he answered her unspoken words, Tobirama faced Madara and was smiling.

Madara found it really suspicious. Well who would not? She knew very damn well e how Tobirama hated her.

She turned to the eight bowing unknown men.

"If you'll excuse me." she exited herself in the room, closing the door and leaning behind it the moment it closed.
She felt something was off.

Why didn't Hashirama told her about the Kage summit? Why didn't he told her about the celebration...and these men, from her perspective, were noble men from different clans. Judging from their attires and the way they talked with Tobirama, they're talking about the settlement of their clan inside the village. Why she's being neglected? Hashirama can easily send her a message through the village falcon, but he didn't.

Madara felt like something pierced her heart thinking about this. Did she forgot that she and him are equal in their truce? Collecting herself, she made a way going to the Senju compound.

"Madara-sama!" a Senju kid greeted her (just about the same age as Izuna)

"Yori, right? " she said and patted the boy's head.

"Are you looking for Hashi-sama?"

How did he know about that? does Madara looks like she's looking for a death match, enough for the kid to conclude that it's Hashirama she's been looking for? (as I said, they have been on a countless battles before, people know that)

"Y-yes please, Yori-kun." aside from pink, she's also fond of children.

"He's there!" pointing his finger to the Senju headquarters (also Hashirama and Tobirama's home)

Madara smiled to the boy thanking him and walked passed through him then finally went to where the Hokage was.

Hashirama was standing like he's a preacher (he's wearing his kage robe) while discussing in the Senju members and they were laughing their ass off (Hashirama has great sense of humor whenever he speak in front of his clansmen) Madara was on the door still grabbing the now cracking door knob (in her anger)

"Hokage-sama," she said, it's not a shout or anything but it was loud enough for everybody to hear. The people turn their heads at her. Hashirama's eyes widened upon seeing her.

"I apologize for any interruptions but can you give me a moment please?" she asked, no it was a hidden demand!

Hashirama did not say a thing but to leave the rest of the crowd and made his way to Madara.

"It's good to see you again! How's the mission? Madara I have something to-"

"Follow me." Madara sauntered to the mountain top quietly with Hashirama following her.

"Why are we here? Madara we must celebrate! I was invited to the Kage summit last day and...and finally the hidden villages noticed our existence, Madara are you happy?... Madara?"

Madara clenched her fist, breathing heavily, sharingan on, bowing her head and thinking about her hidden sentiments on what Hashirama was saying.

"Of course... I am happy."

Both of them did not know how the other was thinking. For Madara, she was set aside on the picture given that she was supposed to know every decision from the in and out of the village. For Hashirama, he simply wanted to surprise his friend and to make her proud of him.
"You made it, Hashirama."

-xXx-

"Uzushiogakure?"

"Yes, I'll be going there, Mara."

They were sitting at the mountain top (below is Hashirama's giant stone face that is facing the whole village)

"..I'll be talking to the Uzumaki leader. By the way, they are distant relatives of the Senju. I want you to take charge while I'm there." he continued.

"...sure." she simply answered while watching the village below, resting her chin over her knees.

"How was it?" Hashirama referred to Madara's latest task. She just finished a mission regarding the water system of Konoha (Konoha is on the middle of a large continent and is facing difficulties in water supply)

"I found an interesting fact, but we need more funds." she handed a medium sized scroll to Hashirama.

"..you made this?"

Madara looked at him.

"Hnn." It is an architectural design of a water system that she planned to propose.

"This is magnificent! I never thought you could...draw like this."

Madara shrugged. Hashirama was totally awed by her design. Clearly, she was better than him in things like this. He can't take his eyes on the scroll and back to Madara and the scroll...and to her.

"You said you will train some other men from the different villages.." she said.

"Yes." (still looking at the scroll) and I will bring Tobirama with me once in a while so I can get back to the village."

Hashirama was the Hokage and there are many things that only him can do and documents that is exclusively for him to sign. However Madara has a slight different understanding on this.

"..okay." she answered

"Here," Hashirama gave the bag of new funds to Madara.

...the stupid funds..

"The Tsuchikage paid a lot after the capturing of four tails. There will be also a mini celebration for our accomplishment tomorrow night before my departure to Uzushio."

Madara accepted the funds. Finally.

"This will be enough." she said.

After their conversation Madara started to plan about the Uchiha compound renovations (with
Hashirama tailing her around until she got home, convincing they still need to talk but when is asked he simply said he thinks they still have a time to chat about random things then she turn him down and growled at him saying she must prioritize the renovation than to have a small chit chat with him.)

Hashirama went to his office, the men from different villages were already gone and he was greeted by Tobirama.

"How's the..hey are you okay?" Tobirama's cheerful disposition changed to a worried man.

Hashirama nodded.

"What happened?"

"Nothing." Hashirama and sat on his chair tiredly.

"Five of them agreed while three of them said they will wait for their clan leader to discuss in our conditions." Said by Tobirama about the noblemen.

"Make a written report in the settlement of those different clans in the village and give it to Madara." Hashirama ordered as a Hokage and not as his brother.

Tobirama was puzzled by his older brother's mood.

"I will go to Uzushio to talk to their leader tomorrow midnight, Madara will be in charge of the village, at the same time she have the Uchiha renovations project."

Tobirama nodded but was still confuse. Hashirama was really talking as a Hokage here.

"The celebrations?" Tobirama asked.

"Toka will take care of that"

The younger Senju sensed (he's the best sensory type ninja) that there was something wrong about his brother and it has something to do with the Uchiha leader. He kept his thoughts to himself anyway. Hashirama was cupping his head like he's having a headache (still wearing that long kage robe) leaning on his chair.

"Are you really okay? You look..problematic."

The older Senju did not respond. Well the truth was, he got depressed by Madara's rejection (and he didn't had the chance to do his traditional 'sulking jutsu' because Madara closed the door before he can do that after yelling him to go home)

Tobirama's thoughts are; maybe he's just tired after the kage summit its been a stressful situation for the Hokage and he needs to talk to the Uzushio leader as well and not just that, he also needs to train several shinobi from different lands. Tobirama realized it's one helluva commitments for Hashirama, maybe he's just stressed?

"Want some water?" the younger asked.

"No, just I just need to rest." Tobirama thought he was right, his brother was stressed. Well, a powerful shinobi was still human after all.

"Okay, I will leave now, anything you want?"
Hashirama frowned at him.

Tobirama made an 'ULK' sound.

"Well then, see you around, brother." he turn around leaving his brother in peace but was still bothered of the older Senju's behavior.
Celebrations

The day was warm and the blue sky was present. Everyone in the village were busy preparing for tonight's celebration. It was not of much grandeur, there were few colorful flag-lets , no fireworks ,but some loud music. Outsiders might think it was just an ordinary day in the village. Konoha was still young, doesn't have much fund for big celebrations, plus, the Hokage wanted it to be simple. Simple,yet everyone will participate, including the new clans as an addition to its villagers.

But they have a generous amount of foods and alcoholic drinks were coming on its way.

"A Senju-styled celebrations, great." she rolled her eyes, her voice with a thick sarcasm, Izuna was observing while on her side. The child found some kids about his age from a different clan,a group of male and female younglings and he shyly asked for his sister's permission to play with them (unfortunately for the kid he doesn't have peers on their Uchiha clan because he's the youngest at the time being) Madara observed the children a few meters from them, they were from the Inuzuka clan (or the dog clan as she commented to Hashirama when they talked about their settlement) Being the head of the meticulous (and lonesome) Uchiha clan ,Madara find it hard to let her kid brother befriends other children from a different clan. But seeing his twinkling pleading eyes ,she cannot help but to say yes.

"Hmm. she nodded.

Izuna happily hugged her and ran to the group of Inuzuka children.

"MARRAAAA!"

They were on the center of the village ,people gathered everywhere putting tables and chairs around ,food carts and barrels of drinks (mostly alcoholic drinks much to Madara's dismay cause she hates it even warned the Uchihas about the dangers of too much alcohol in their bodies). That loud call irked her too, not because of the loud voice,but because of one idiot who practically screamed the very feminine form of her name in front of their people. As far as they all know, Uchiha Madara was a name of a fearsome woman.

"That idiot."

The Senju was running, wearing that long Hokage robe. The villagers bowed at their Hokage while he responded with a quick bow (he's running FAST,ninja style)

"Ma-"

Before he again dropped her pet name, Madara glared at him hinting an irritation to his actions.

"Madara!.. I thought she's already okay with it." Hashirama forced a smile nervously after receiving 'the look'.Madara turned her back and continue watching Izuna having his new acquaintances, Hashirama interrupted.

"There's no need to worry, Inuzuka children were taught from an early age the self discipline and good manners of a shinobi." Hashirama grinned; he clearly knows what’s on her mind. Madara was always cautious, her trust can be compared to a diamond. Uchihas in general were just like her. In a way, Hashirama can relate, they were bestfriends and also Senju were like that before (the best example was his father Butsuma who would rather get killed than befriending their enemy clan)

Madar shrugged ignoring Hashirama's presence and walked somewhere. He noticed her irritation.
"Eh..Madara?" He followed her, not having any idea why the girl was on a very foul mood today. The Hokage followed her every steps (with some bowing there and there from the villagers for the two, occasionally Madara responded with a slight bow and nothing more)

A child tripped on the ground holding a pink flower, Madara stopped to help that young girl

"Be careful."

"Thank you, Madara-sama." She has the slightly surprised look and responded with a smile. The little girl wanted to give the pink flower as her gratitude.

"It's pink so she's going to-" that was Hashirama making assumptions.

"It's beautiful, but it's yours." she politely refused and patted the kid's head. The child gazed through her onyx eyes innocently and this made Madara confused. Did she disappoint her? The little girl made a quick grin and changed the direction of her gaze to Hashirama who was just standing behind Madara the whole time. The little girl giggled and grinned even more before running towards the Hokage.

"Hokage-sama,here!" His eyes wondered as he stuttered.

"Eh?"

The young girl pulled his robes slightly, signaling him to lean. The girl whispered something to him and a flush of red can be seen on Hashirama's tan cheeks.

She jumped on her way after thanking Madara once again.

The Uchiha's face cannot be read, probably waiting for an explanation on whatever the girl whispered to him. Hashirama was now holding the pink flower and cannot look straight at Madara's eyes; moreover he remained to be quiet.

"What did she tell you?" he made an inappropriate flinch causing her to be very suspicious, she narrowed her eyes, she knew Hashirama's gestures but this time her curiosity rose on another level. A little girl just made Hashirama speechless and that interests her.

"HAHA, nothing really," he knew it was the worst thing to say for he cannot fool the Uchiha so easily. But there was no other choice, that young fellow said something which made him nervous.

It was his weakness.

"Yet you cannot say, hnn." Madara mumbled after turning her back at him. It was just a kid anyways so she didn't insist to know about the small talk again. Addition to that, she have a schedule with Jiro in planning the renovations and that was more worthy of her precious time. Hashirama sighed (in great relief) hiding the beautiful pink flower inside his robe.

He silently hoped everyone in the village could witness Madara's kindness. Majority of them only knew her as the leader of a fearsome clan, a warrior, and an unbeatable opponent. Maybe if the two of them didn't try to kill each other in the past it would be easier. Well, she rarely showed it to anyone but Madara was a very caring sister, her kindness all over is covered with pride. Still, there are two persons who knew her true self.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"I have an important meeting today." she said as she departed
"But Madara, today is our big celebration day. I announced it as a holiday so you don't have to work and.."

She stopped still facing her back at Hashirama while he's looking for more accurate words without sounding suspicious again.

"Well pardon me, Hokage-sama, for being so disobedient that I have a critical things to do and can't follow to take a rest and have fun on the holiday you announced." she rolled her eyes, Hashirama can imagine that even though she's facing her back at him.

"It's not that I, well…to be specific..Madara!"

The Uchiha continued anyway.

"As you know this midnight, I will start my journey to Uzushio and it's also my send-off party, you know? Maybe we can ….."

She stopped again.

"Have a time together?"

Madara slowly turned her head over her shoulders.

"Why?"

Pokerfaced, Hashirama snapped nervously.

"ImLeavingTheVillageToYourCareForACoupleOfMonthsAndIHaveManyThingsToDiscussSo-" he said, holdings his breath (fast, ninja style).

Perfect. He said to himself, sounding very business-like matters wouldn't be suspicious and peculiar isn't it?

-xXx-

"I thought you are going to discuss important matters!" she almost growled at him, looking annoyed and uncomfortable, keeping her cool and making sure that she can be heard by the man beside her. The fact that everyone around them were cheering happily watching a dance presentation made by the newest clan addition to the village.

"Sure, I will." he smiled. The two were seating on the topmost corner of the still-on-going-construction of the village's arena. It's under construction but large enough for the people to perform activities.

"After the celebration." he added.

"Hashirama!" she growled but remained seated anyway.

Meanwhile, Tobirama also busied himself wanting to enjoy the small celebration, he did, but a view from above captured his attention more than the dance presentation. He can clearly see the two, talking, his eyebrows twitched every time they're whispering on each others' ears (the place is very noisy made by the drum rolls and musical instruments played by the second presenters) he did put a note that maybe (or surely) it's just their way to hear each other's talking and nothing more, nothing more like a private matter (that would make him find a medic for a blood pressure check up)
Suddenly, he felt as if he was knocked out by an enemy when he saw Madara's glance after glance at his brother's face when the Shodai was busy focusing on his childish cheer for the presenters.

_Nope, nope, nope._

Hashirama noticed this and she was caught by him then Madara points a finger to the other direction then quickly turned her face down. The Senju looked at the direction she pointed. Tobirama saw the Uchiha's face, a one of a kind reaction from Madara Uchiha.

Evening came and it was the best part of the celebrations, they went on the village center where the foods are waiting to be eaten, mostly male adult villagers are holding a bottle of sake, wines and a lot more alcoholic drinks (most of them are Senjus)

"Izuna, you should go home now."

"Yes neechan."

After telling her younger brother to go home, she went back to their table and finding Tobirama before her seat. The younger Senju was calmly seated. He glimpsed at her arrival and continued on his meal. There were three seats on the table now, the albino was at the center, Madara didn't bother herself and proceed to eat. Surprisingly in her part, Tobirama didn't take much alcohols like the other Senjus and he only have a half empty glass of wine.

Her wandering eyes pinned to the Hokage. She was extremely bothered (and annoyed) on what she saw.

Hashirama was dancing like a drunk man with a bottle of sake on both of his hands together with the other Senjus

"Hashirama you.." she lost her patience and moreover Madara cannot take to watch as her friend, the Hokage, no less than the leader of his people and the whole village was starting to move like a party animal. Have he lost his brain and forgot his dignity? Is this how a Senju celebrate? Madara straightened up, ready to knock some sense (or knock him literally, which she preferred) on him.

"Hold it, Madara." Tobirama said while resting his folded arms over his chest.

"Don't you know how disgraceful your brother is right now? You didn't even bother to stop him, unbelievable."

"My brother knows his limits and he's not drunk at that state, if that disgrace is what troubling you then rest assured."

"Limits? Yes, he looks like an idiotic person, he's the hokage! He's supposed to be a person with honor, or maybe you guys aren't so familiar with it."

Tobirama made a sharp look at the Uchiha and this addend the tension between them.

"At least all of the Senju trusts my brother completely, same goes with the villagers and the Uchihas."

Tobirama knew he did push the wrong button, if looks could kill; he was now murdered by Madara. The trust issues between Madara and the village never ceased, she killed more than a hundred heroes of other clans, and some of her commands weren't followed by her own clan, thinking her judgments were inhumane and would cause prolonged hate. Debating with Tobirama was never a good idea, but challenging Madara Uchiha's temper was the worst.
"You bastard."

"Tobirama, Madara come and join us here!" Hashirama called out (he have no idea how hostile his friend and brother's mood are right now)

"Tch." she angrily left the table abandoning the place (it was better rather than attacking Tobirama on the spot)

"Madara!"

She's walking fast avoiding him, why wass that man always follow her when she wanted to be alone? He caught her sleeve to stop her

"Did Tobirama said something again?"

She slapped away his hands from her sleeve "I don't care about you, go away do what you want!" But Hashirama insisted and now held her arms carefully pulling her.

"What did he say?"

"I said go away and leave me alone!" she shouted, Hashirama didn't released her, he carefully tightens his grip avoiding to hurt the raging girl not after she activates the sharingan.

Now this was getting out of hand. The crimson colored eyes alone can show.

"Madara,"

The Uchiha hid her eyes, a soft cold breeze and shuffling of leaves from trees somehow covered the silence between them.

"Look, we're not going to start a fight again because of this. I know he told you something you didn't like, It's just…it's Tobirama, my brother and I want to apologize for it."

She kept quiet thinking how irksome Tobirama was, one time he's smiling and friendly at her then another time she just wanted to punch him on the throat.

"I'm talking to you as someone who's with you, but I'm also talking as Tobi's brother. Madara, I'm leaving the village to your care when I leave, you are my second-in-command ,those will never change." Hashirama made an assurance for Madara's part. She's now getting tired of their situations, really. Nevertheless she's a vital part of the village.

"I'm going home now." she faced him now without the sharingan and it's a relief for Hashirama. No matter how improbable as it may sound, Hashirama insisted to walk her home. Madara was just tired of arguing with him the whole day and she still have the meeting with Jiro. The meeting was supposed to be earlier that day but ended up on the evening because of Hashirama's constant bugging.

He left her at the door of the Uchiha gathering hall (the hall itself also needs a renovations)

"Madara-sama." Jiro greets her and noticed Hashirama standing outside, the man bowed at him. Hashirama who was on the outside part of the hall watched Madara and Jiro inside; he sensed something unusual at Jiro's eyes.

It was like his,whenever he's talking at her.
Uzushiogakure

Madara Uchiha was very meticulous. She make sure everything was in order before she work. The raven haired lady put a finger and slid it over the Hokage’s table, windows and cabinets to check if it's dustless.

She frowned looking at her finger "I cant believe this doesn't bother him"

It's 6 o'clock in the morning, alone in the Hokage's office. She scowled seeing a box full of crumpled papers over the table. Clearly, she can never work on a place like this. Someone opened the door so sudden and the person was holding a pile of books.

"Madara-sama," The said Uchiha directed the person to put those books on the floor.

"What are those books?"

Toka arranged the books nicely (on the floor) as Madara ordered her.

"This is Tobirama-sama's …" answered by the Senju.

Fine.

The Senju lady observed as the Uchiha wiped dirt on the table, dumping unnecessary crumpled papers. After that Madara then cleaned the cabinet. Toka volunteered to clean the windows.

"That idi--...when did Hashirama last clean his office table?" a hint of disgust can be heard from the Uchiha.

"He is doing it monthly." The Senju lady replied plainly (while cleaning windows)

" For the love of Sage!"

After an hour of cleaning the whole office, Madara asked Toka to dump the sore-in-her-eyes box of crumpled papers outside and asked her to get a decent trash bin instead. Of course, they have to get a little amount of village's fund to buy the trash bin.

She was alone on the place and after a long while finally seated on the Kage's chair. She will be the Hokage until Hashirama get back; the office was now clean, far from it usual appearance.

Madara looked for a pen inside a drawer but instead she found a familiar object.

She held up a crystal jar containing the pink flower from the little girl yesterday, eyeing on the small paper together with the flower pulling if out.

A note.

Mara,

On the first drawer is the list of inventory of our office which I forgot to tell you yesterday.

P.S

I also forgot to clean everything! :D
Hashirama

"Stupid Senju."

Hashirama used his jutsu for the flower to grow back its roots and put some soil to keep it alive. He was fully aware of her cleanliness, might have thought on how to prevent her day to be ruined. The flower in his opinion can do an outstanding job, either way Madara put it as that.

Little did she know the fact where the original idea on giving her the flower came from

The Hokage-in-charge placed the jar over the table and started to work.

-xXx-

After a long three day tiring trip, Hashirama's group was nearing the Uzushio's entrance; a huge gate inscribed with the Uzumaki's symbol, the whirlpool. The Konoha group was greeted by the Uzumakis, leaded by its clan head. Ashina Uzumaki.

Ashina was an elderly man having long white hair; he's wearing a pure black kimono, the shoulders of which bore the crest of Uzushio. The two leaders bowed at each other and were followed by their respective men.

"Welcome, Hokage-sama." Ashina said smiling, the Konoha men were reassured by the Uzumaki’s warm welcome.

"A pleasure to meet you again after a long time, Ashina-sama." Hashirama replied with his ever bright demeanor.

"Well, let us save the reminiscing part after you and your group get some rest, welcome in our humble place!" the old man chuckled, leading the way inside Uzushio.

The Uzushio village was composed of several high-rise building, Hashirama observed his surrounding and realized how fast it developed. A wide river ran through the village and gapped by large bridges, the surrounding countryside was dominated by steep hills. While on their way he admired that every building seems to have the whirlpool symbol. Villagers were quietly watching their arrival. Though, he can vividly remember the last time he went here, that time Hashirama was 8 years old together with his father Butsuma and now he's a grown up leading a whole village.

Time flies so fast, everything was like a dream.

They get inside a temple-like building where other Uzumaki escorted the Konoha men on their rooms. Ashina and Hashirama entered a different room, escorted by a very pretty maiden. The lady was wearing a white kimono, her hair long and red (it's a common trait of the Uzumaki). She flashed glances to Hashirama. Two other women entered the room to serve tea and foods. (They're all having the red long hair) Hashirama thanked them (using again his bright and sunny demeanor) the two women bowed and left, while the younger lady remained and carefully filled Hashirama's tea cup.

"Oh, Thank you!" He gleefully thanked but the maiden was so alarmed by Hashirama's sudden turn to her that she slipped her hand and poured some tea on the Hokage’s armour.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" She worriedly apologized.

"It's fine, nothing to worry about. Besides, my armor here is already stained after our three day journey and it's an armor anyways so it's destined to get dirty." Hashirama grinned childishly,
making sure that he didn't scare the young lady. She was relieved in a way but still wanted to clean that armor.

"Mito, you can go now."

"Yes grandfather." Mito hurriedly walked away carrying a tray, she shyly glance at Hashirama's back before closing the door.

"She's your granddaughter?" the Senju asked.

"Yes, you didn't remember Mito ? " The old man asked back in a slightly surprised manner

"Mito?" Hashirama was dumbfounded.

"I was sure you've met before, 15 years ago. When your father and I did some business, well that's a long, long time ago, I guess."

Hashirama's eyebrow twitched, trying to recall those days but he cannot remember anything with Mito.

"Well..I can remember having playmates here that time," the tanned skin man said holding his chin.

"Why the hell I cannot remember her."

"Ohoho, you're just a child back then Hokage-sama." and now the continuation of the reminiscing part.

"Please, Ashina-sama you don't have to put an honorific, just call me like you used to."

"Young Hokage, I cannot do that when you are leading an entire village full of strong people around you ohoho! Also, I used to call to as 'Butsuma's mini version' and that would be inappropriate!" the older of the two laughed.

"But I'm different with my father..or perhaps," Hashirama sighed.

"Perhaps? You looked like him, very much. Ah, those were the days, Butsuma is a strong willed man, not to mention hard headed." The Uzumaki leader smiled and sipped his tea.

"That's the 'perhaps' I'm talking about." Hashirama removed his armor and placed it beside him.

"I once talked with him to stay away from wars for a couple of times, to have an arrangement with the Uzumaki and build a permanent settlement, but he refused." Ashina's face was saddened, showing a great bond between the Senju clan and its former leader.

"Too bad he died in the war." he adds, Hashirama nodded, his face unreadable for it was Madara who killed his father, no less!.

"But here you are, leading your newly established village! Butsuma must be proud, at least he has the son who has a …anyway, about your co-founder, is it true?"

"It's Uchiha Madara, leader of Uchiha clan." he instantly awaited for the old man's negative reaction and just as he predicted, Ashina frowned at him.

"The strongest female shinobi was said to be very hard to deal with." the Uzumaki said suspiciously.
"Well, that was in the past and about Madara, she have a lot of knowledge to run the village. In fact, I left the village to her care now with my brother Tobirama." the Hokage smiled saying everything proudly. Ashina just shrugged, a man of wisdom like him doesn't seem to judge people so quickly, let alone the reality that Madara killed Butsuma, but that's in the war-torn era and even an ant knows exactly how the Senju and Uchiha hated each other that time.

"Ashina-sama, about the letter I sent."

"Ah, yes. Let's begin."

Both started to have the serious, more dignified composure. The Uzumaki held out a large scroll after making hand seals and unfolds it on the tatami mat.

"This is our clan's secret Fuinjutsu scroll, we never show it to anyone before but you're a Senju, closest blood relative to the Uzumaki, your father already seen this too."

Hashirama started to understand his father more, about their close ties with the Uzumaki and how blood relations work. He felt honored to witness the secret Uzumaki scroll.

"Listed here are all the Fuinjutsu, sealing techniques of our clan. In the present we have 200 different sealing techniques, may it be a thing or even a person."

"Oh." Hashirama was in awe, 200 different techniques in one giant scroll was a symbol of might but it's kind of critical.

They were from only one kind so Hashirama can read the text in the scroll (they have the same ethnicity and letters), the young man narrowed his eyes, 200 kind of fuinjutsu yet it doesn't contain the sealing he needs.

"I guess you know now." Ashina said, the Senju looked at him.

"Is it impossible?"

"Almost."

The old man's reply made him think if it's still possible for a tailed beast to be sealed.

"We never thought of sealing an immortal creature before, needless to say our clan only specialized in Fuinjutsu and nothing more."

Uzumaki were never the type of war shinobi. This was also why they defected far away from the Senju. Most of them were peace keeper, they didn't bother to think onto sealing a mighty creature all because they never thought of capturing and fighting one of it.

The Hokage's eyes shifted on the scroll and looked worriedly. Now he doesn't have an idea where to get someone who have the knowledge in sealing an impossible monster.

"But..." Ashina continued "A scroll bigger than this one can temporarily seal the tailed beast."

His eyes widened and excitedly moved closer to Ashina

"How? And how long?"

"The tailed beast is a massive ball of chakra, this scroll is made from chakra. I told you it can seal a person too, a person has a chakra and all living things do. All we have to do is to create a special scroll that will restrain its movements," the Uzumaki pointed his finger to different fuinjutsu listed
in the scroll while he's discussing it.

"That's great!" Hashirama exclaimed.

"But…." Another 'but' came from Ashina and now it sounds troublesome.

"We doesn't know how long it will take an effect to the tailed beast, that's very dangerous Hokage-sama, one can die without an incredible level of caution." he shook his head.

"I fought the four-tailed beast and successfully captured it, it is presently imprisoned on the Land of Earth, Lord Tsuchikage assigned guards for the tailed beast and a special earth-styled-jutsu cellar. Though we all know it can't stay like that in forever."

"So you came up to an idea of sealing it? That's a nice suggestion Hashirama, but it's not easy."

"I know this is your specialty and I cannot think of anyone to do this and for everyone's safety.."

The old Uzumaki flinched and was astonished watching the strongest shinobi kneel down before him.

"Please!"

"Hashirama no need for that!" Ashina begged him to rise nervously.

"Your son is totally different from you, Butsuma, and you should be proud."

-xXx-

They settled the creating of the tailed beast scroll. Ashina proceeded to his clansmen to talk about its creation. Meanwhile Hashirama was left alone on his room (a room assigned for him as a special visitor) when he decided to roam outside. He saw a beautiful garden not far from the temple with many colorful flowers planted above the green field of grass. A peaceful quiet time for the Hokage. He somehow missed his little garden way back on their Senju yard.

He sensed a movement above and found a red haired girl picking apples, sitting on a branch of its tree.

"1..2..3..4..5.6.." she's counting the apples on her basket. Hashirama smiled, it was Mito's voice.

"I suppose you're going to make some apple pie?" his voice shocked the hell out of her, Mito tripped and lost balance making her fall together with her freshly-picked apples.

"Woaaaah!"

Strong yet gentle arms caught her in a blink of an eye. She locked her almost pupil-less eyes on his dark eyes. Her hair flew softly in the air.

"Are you okay?" he asked with an apologetic look "Did I scare you again?"

Mito's mouth left hanging for a while but came back on her self when Hashirama's feet touched the ground.

"Ah! Yes I'm okay, I'm ..I'm.. the apples!" she said panicky.

"You mean this?" Hashirama grinned; she was sure it scattered when she fell.
He handed her basket, the red head hid her face shyly "thank you, Hokage-sama"

Mito gripped the basket tightly and grunted when her right hand ached.

"Ow!"

Hashirama held the basket and placed it below (they are still on that bridal catch position) He gently put her down and held her aching hand. His tan hand big and calloused holding hers which was flawless.

Hashirama without using any seals performed his signature healing jutsu, Mito watched, fully admiring the technique and the person in front of her. "Take good care of your hand, shinobis cannot make seal without it." The admirable man winked and she almost melted.

"Better?" He asked.

Mito responded with a nod. She observed her now fully recovered hand. Amazing.

After the incident Hashirama commented that their garden have a good aesthetics. On how did he ever say it, she doesn't know. Mito just rode on his comment by saying it was made by the villagers. He asked her if he was right about making the apple pie, she nodded.

Hashirama laughed "That's just a wild guess," Mito observed his handsome face, the Hokage have the positive aura that can uplift anyone.

"So Mito, do you still remember me?" the female Uzumaki held her breath.

"Ashina-sama, your grandfather told me we've met before." there was a glint of pain in her chest realizing Hashirama did not remember her but it faded instantly, seeing his apologetic eyes.

"It's alright, 15 years is a very long time to remember someone." Mito smiled but looked down and bit the side of her lips.

"Can you tell me about the time I spent with you?" There was a deep curiosity on the Senju's eyes, Mito hurriedly recall those days.

"The three of us usually plays on the bridge." she said cheerfully.

"Three of us?"

"You, me and my brother Morito"

Great, now there were two people he cannot remember.

"Oh, Miroto!"

"Morito, Hokage-sama." she politely corrected.

"AH! Yes yes. HAHA , sorry sorry." he laughed out loud, scratching his temple.

Obviously, the Hokage have a lot of recalling memories to do.

Mito toured him around the village, from the garden to its supermarket. Hashirama perceived Mito as a noble girl, witnessing how she was respected by the people. They pay respect to the two of them as well. Uzushio was small compared to Konoha so their villagers were few in numbers. It was best described as a peaceful hidden village with a great purpose.
"Can you bring me to the bridge we used to play?"

"Of course." Mito headed their way to the biggest bridge in the place, not too far from the supermarket but it's hidden, covered by multiple trees.

"Here." she gleefully gestured to present the place. Over the bridge was an outstanding view of a waterfall, a river with floating water lilies. On the side, there were numbers of huge rocks. Mito observed Hashirama's reaction, hoping that maybe he can remember something about their past.

The Senju smiled, as a matter of fact he liked the place very much.

"Do you remember?" she asked sweetly, waiting for his answer.

After appreciating the place Hashirama responded;

"...my bestfriend would like this view." not really answering Mito's question cause he's thinking different things.

Or rather, a person.
"...for the Uchiha name..."

A pleading look in his eyes locked on a young girl, though his vision was already impaired. He's a leader, a leader who always have high hopes and pride for his clan, no matter how and what to do just for the sake of their name, may it be good or bad. It was his last moments and she cannot do anything but listen, her hand touched his.

"..you are my successor..."

She closed her eyes accepting the fate that was written at that very moment; to lead a clan, their clan. A big responsibility from then on, her father; a domineering and stoic man now so helpless and blind, about to die at any given time.

"...Madara..I..leave..our name...to.."

Tajima Uchiha, former leader of the Uchiha clan, on his deathbed pleaded his daughter, his only ace. Madara, 16 at that time will be the first and only female leader of a certain clan. Not just an ordinary clan, a powerful clan only bested by the Senju.

"I promise." Far from the normal girl at that age, Madara Uchiha was never a normal girl. Not a single tear dropped from her eyes, but deep inside, her heart sank knowing it will be her father's last words. Her father died with a delicate smile on his lips, trusting her completely.

It was never unusual for her to wake up earlier than a rooster, but this time, it's kind of a different degree. Rising up, putting her white robes tying its ribbon in front, she noiselessly walked through their corridor not wanting to wake a child whose room was just beside hers. Madara went to their veranda and breathe some fresh air. She hugged herself after an ice-like breeze greeted her, remembering the time when they established the village. It was like that time, cold and quiet, when a certain idiot Senju suggested her face to be carved on a rock facing the village. The Uchiha's lips curved into a smile, one that only Izuna knows what it exactly look like. She's leading the whole village peacefully for a month now, with some talking with Tobirama (that was purely business and nothing more)

"Neechan?"

The strongest of the Uchiha looked over her shoulders with wide eyes, looking at her still sleepy little brother before her (just like her, wearing a white robe) Her smile vanished the moment he called her.

"Izuna?" She was more than sure that her feet never made a noise.

"why are you here neechan? and why are you smiling?" the boy asked sleepily, rubbing his eyes using the back of his hands. Madara moved her head down and frowned.

"I was not." she said flat toned "...and why are you here, it's still so damn early." she added (not irritated but it's just the way she talkS)

Never did she imagined the question that was thrown to her, smiling? why was she smiling? SMILING.
The older of the two think for a moment what her thoughts were before Izuna arrived.

The village? the cold? was it?

The establishment of the village? maybe.

Or maybe...not that entirely.

Izuna talked about how the climate have just begun colder and colder, that the snow might drop anytime soon, and ultimately how he badly needs to pee (which was the entire reason why he gets up so early) though, his sister can barely hear him. The pale faced Uchiha girl still wondering if she really did smile few moments ago.

Or was it because she remembered the person with her at that moment?

"Neechan," coming back to reality after Izuna placed a hand over her arms (which was positioned in a Tobirama-like-manner, folded arms over chest)

"I'm hungry." the boy said, pouting. Madara sighed.

"What do you want for breakfast?"

After she feeds Izuna and their cats (and herself of course), the Hokage-in-charge prepared going to the office. Facing the mirror after a warm bath, she changed outfit from pure white bathrobe to her usual black inner long sleeve outfit covered with dark blue robes with Uchiha crest at the back.

"I said Im not going to wear that!"

"But Mara, just a try please?"

"I said NO!"

They argued for at least two hours before he finally stop convincing her in trying the Hokage robes and hat as well. Hashirama kept insisting that she needs to wear it being the Hokage while he's away, while she never favored light colored clothes and also ranting that the Hokage robes closer to a Senju's traditional robes. The Uchiha lady has a very meticulous fashion sense too. Hashirama had a mental battle whether Madara would change its color from white to black or blue, (hoping it would not be pink) when the day she would be the second Hokage comes.

Without her realizing it, her lips curved into a smile once again recalling her so called stupid moments with him.

"You are smiling again!" Izuna pointed a finger on her cheeks (just when did that kid arrived on her side seriously)

The younger Uchiha laughed childish "Neechan is smiling! Neechan is smiling!" he chanted, jumping while teasing his sister.

"Izuna!" she hissed, covering her brother's mouth for not wanting the child's laugh to wake the entire Uchiha compound (it's still so damn early according to her) and what more, he's declaring Uchiha Madara was smiling (which might start a petition for another celebration)

-xXx-

He and his troops were staying in Uzushio for a month. Hashirama rolled on his bed after a mild knock from the door awakened him. The Hokage quickly grabbed his robe to cover his naked
upper body before opening the door but clumsily tied its ribbon.

"Ah!" The one who knocked looked down quickly after meeting his eyes

"Oh, Mito." The tall man smiled greeting the young lady, slightly wondering if he scared her again because the Uzumaki seems to have a hard time looking directly at him. She used to tour guide him around the village before and they also had some bonding time but not too long because Mito was busy helping her grandfather in formulating the method of sealing techniques that Hashirama needs for the tailed beasts.

"Good morning, Mito," he said, the lady's eyes turn at his.

"Good morning!" she greeted back.

"I just wanted to tell you something..." Her eyes looked directly at his then on her side, back and forth. Hashirama observed her.

Something is new to her today.

"Morito arrived from their expedition." The girl said happily, Hashirama looks like he's having a mental battle again pinning his eyes to Mito.

Hmm, her hair.

"My twin brother just arrived."

Hashirama flinched "Oh! Morito, really? then we have to welcome him right?"

Did I say get his name right now?

Mito nodded. After that, he asked her to give him a moment so he can groom himself properly before finally going outside to welcome her twin brother (he just got up from bed, mind you). Hashirama quickly changed (or put) his inner clothes, turn to washroom to clean his face and was horrified after realizing something.

"You hair stinks! hnn."

He sighed, but smiled. Hashirama's starting to miss their petty fights.

The Senju jerked, how cruel of him to make a lady wait outside.

"My apologies, shall we go?" The two walk together going to the temple. Mito's face was bright just like Hashirama's personality but like he said, there was something new to her...

Her hair was arranged in buns with hair pins in them and three clips in the front, which was a new thing because she used to let her red long hair down and nothing more. Hashirama once joked about all the female in Uzushio almost looked alike each other because they all have long red hair, that's when she decided to change her style.

"Is there anything wrong?" she asked, the man kept on observing her head since they started walking together.

"Nothing! Nothing!" he shook his head sideways, Mito beamed at him.

"How was the meeting yesterday Hokage-sama?" she asked in a casual yet polite tone.
"Ashina-sama said he'll be finalizing the method this day, what about you? how was the exams?"

Hashirama had meetings every day with Uzushio officials and even when he's just in Konoha, the kage attends tiring conclaves like that. He also send messages for Tobirama and Madara about the village status every week (which iwas purely business because he's quite afraid his brother might read the falcon's message before it reached the Uchiha). On the other hand, Mito was a promising kunoichi who specialize sealing techniques, studying on the temple as a high priestess-in-training.

"Morito-niisama!" The beautiful Uzumaki (with buns in her hair) ran jumping to her twin brother and left Hashirama standing, watched while the siblings embraced each other. Morito was the twin brother of Mito and he looked exactly just like her except that he was a man. The room was filled by the two Uzumakis talking, before Ashina interrupted.

"Morito arrived from their expedition to the land of tea after a year." The old Uzumaki said, explaining why Mito reacted like it's the first time she saw Morito again.

"I see.." the Hokage simpered, relieved that his thoughts of Mito changing her hairstyle was not all because of his comments on everyone's hair looks entirely the same but because of Morito's arrival.

But it was not.

"Hashirama!" Morito greeted coolly, running towards the Hokage. The tan skinned man's height intimidates the Uzumaki. Meanwhile, their grandfather whispered what was like a hiss to him

"Hashirama is the Hokage now, pay some respect!"

Mito goes at Morito's back "He..doesn't remember." she spoke very softly but the Senju didn't missed hearing it. Morito's face turned into a slight frown as his aura of a cool guy vanished "But we're all pretty close!" he protested, Ashina's brows turn up and down.

"Welcome back Morito!" Hashirama greeted him warmly to avoid his forgetfulness or whatever, more importantly, he cant let someone down after he knows they've been good friends in the past, that's the kind of guy he is. The Senju's hand turned forward asking a handshake, Morito smiled generously accepting it.

"A pleasure, Hokage-sama." he bowed.

A brief exchange of greetings followed, they were having breakfast altogether and Morito tells them stories from his trek. From his knowledge, Hashirama joined the conversation for he knows some information about the Land of tea but he's never been there before and on this, Morito was pleased to describe the place more.

"How about your village, Hokage-sama?" The red haired man spoke.

"I left the village to my bestfriend's care and my brother." Hashirama answered, Ashina gawked at this bestfriend word, did he mean Uchiha Madara as the 'bestfriend' ? cause he was certain the 'brother' part was for his brother Tobirama Senju. It was the first time he heard him addressing Madara as 'bestfriend', the old man kept his thoughts on himself.

"Bestfriend.." Uzumaki Mito muttered. It was like his favorite word the way he mention it. Mito observed the Hokage's twinkling eyes speaking proudly of his bestfriend. Deep inside, she wanted to know what kind of person this bestfriend is, that Hashirama seems so fond of.

"Hashi-..Hokage-sama, see you later." Morito was a nice, cool guy. Hashirama promised them he'll
be at the bridge after his meeting with Ashina. Mito went outside with her brother just as Ashina request them to be.

"We finalized the seals." Ashina started, Hashirama was pleased and was very grateful and before he reacts in his delight ,the old man added

"Save your thanks to Mito."

-xXx-

Jiro entered the office with hands full of papers and books, pinning his eyes to the Hokage-in-charge. The Uchiha head was leaning on the window, gazing outside.

"Jiro," she called, still looking outside. The man was slightly alarmed by her sudden mention of his name. It was rather unusual. Usually, Madara doesn't talk to him so casually, speaking only if she have orders or requests.

"Madara-sama?" he replied.

"How long..will you go for our clan..?" It was five days since she last recall her dreams.

There was a pin dropped silence on the four corners of the room. It was filled with Jiro's thoughts on where-did-the-question-came-from. Worrying he didn't have the right amount of time to answer, Jiro replied simply.

"Til my last breath, Madara-sama. Our clan is our family, our entirety." He said, without doubts in his heart.

"Entirety," she repeated, turn around to face him and sat on the Hokage seat. Jiro just stood there observing the girl, there was something clogging in his chest whenever he watched her every move, like it's the best, the most, she's very admirable.

"...for the Uchiha name..."

again,it echoed around her head, she fought, won and lost over their clan's name. Whatever her people say about her she did her best, didn't she?

After a long while of her momentarily thoughts, someone barged in, who doesn't care to knock before going inside, holding a scroll.

"Madara!" the mad man called, he was followed by Toka who was panting.

The said woman was slightly surprised by Tobirama's sudden appearance but she was ultimately irked by his aura over that.

"What now." she murmured rolling her eyes lazily, just why in the world Tobirama all of a sudden would walk in like a mad bull at this time of the afternoon?

"What is it, Tobirama." she asked plainly (she spoke his name as if she's chewing a bubblegum)

"You..." he huskily replied, Jiro stepped in front, sensing a great turbulence of hatred from the Senju.

"Move away." he was talking eye to eye to Jiro.

"My apologies Tobirama (there was no sama) but I will not let you-"
"Jiro," the Hokage in charge stand up "let him." she commanded, the Uchiha guy was hesitant of course, but moved away so Tobirama can speak (or scold) her for Rikkudo knows why.

"WHAT is THIS!!" the Senju plopped the scroll over the table.

"It's a freaking scroll, you ass." she said at the back of her mind, oh how she hated it, dealing with Tobirama.

The Uchiha scanned the scroll's contents.

"It's..." her eyes widened upon reading it.

"Tell me why are they declaring war against us!" The Senju shouted angrily, demanding his question to be answered properly. Toka did close the door to avoid other people to hear the dreadful news.

"They're the one at fault here, I already talked to them." Madara defended her position.

"Then why are they still trying to attack us? it's a declaration of war, Madara. What have you done, tell me!" He angrily snapped, the Uchiha lady shrugged.

"If its war they want, so be it." she replied coldly and sat again, Tobirama was enraged.

"YOU.. are nothing but a war maniac! I dont know why my brother's placing his trust to a person like you." he scolded again, this time Madara can't hold it any longer.

"You were not there when I talked to them, get lost." The two have their glaring battle while their subordinates Toka and Jiro don't know what to do but to guard them if ever they get on physical with each other.

"What did you told them?" the albino asked, irritated.

"I warned them." She answered

"WARNED?!" he repeated, their argument was going to their own war and two other persons inside the room can feel it.

"That if they didn't pull the declaration, we'll finish them all."

Another pinned dropped silence filled the room, but now, from Tobirama's extreme emotions.

"You're insane!" just when did warning someone became a peaceful negotiations? he ridiculed, clasping the table by both of his hands, the Uchiha stand up

"Get out." she glowered.

The mad Senju placed a hand on his back, ready to pull his sword when Jiro moved to stop him. Toka warned him by pointing a kunai at his back, the Uchiha guy activated the sharingan. All of them were inside a magnet of tension like a bloodshed will start at any given moment.

"My brother doesn't need a person who has no heart and conscience, you dragged us unto this war, how dare you!" the bitterness in his words were enough to describe how mad he was. Madara activated her sharingan.

"So you're gonna kill me here?" she mocked
"You are dead a long time ago if not because of my brother." Tobirama hastily said.

"Your brother wants peace, people doesn't get it, see?" she continued that annoyed him even more.

The albino charged, his sword fully out of its cover ready to hit her neck. Jiro and Toka quickly faced each other not to fight but to stop the two, even though they know it would be impossible knowing Madara's strength. Madara was about to charge forward with response on Tobirama's attack when she felt a very familiar chakra.

In a blink of an eye, Tobirama's sword clashed an extremely hard vine, stopping its movements and his as well. It swirled around his arms. A person jumped over the Hokage table facing him.

"Tobirama," the voice called, Madara gritted her teeth.

"Tell me what is happening here." Hashirama Senju, the shodai demanded.
Threat

The tension was now covered by a total silence after the owner of the voice shook both side's ferocity. They remained on that position for awhile. A lady, particularly with red hair held her breath by covering her mouth using both hands. Her brother who was standing beside her almost dropped his jaw watching in awe. Never in their whole life they witness such fine moves given that those three people in front of them were definitely not ordinary shinobis (they just arrived with some men at the back beside the open wooden door). One was the hokage, Hashirama, who jumped to defend someone from his brother's rage.

"Tobirama? so that's Tobirama..." Mito whispered knowing from Hashirama's call that it was his brother. But why was that man so angry that he wanted to slash somebody? His sword were wrapped by his elder brother's jutsu the Mokuton, fully stopping his movements, preventing to clash with someone behind the Hokage. She then turn her attention to this someone, who is he protecting? who is this...

She scrutinized Hashirama's and saw a girl. The person was in fact a female and Mito can deduce that she's a shinobi. The female shinobi was on the position of defending herself gazing at Hashirama's back and look annoyed as hell, she's wearing a dark colored clothes, her bangs almost covering half of her face. Whatever Mito just observed from the three people, it bothered her so much.

"B..Brother," Tobirama stuttered, surprise at his brother's sudden arrival.

Everyone in the room including the visitors made different reactions; there's huff, quirky movements, panic and whispers. Hashirama sighed and was absolutely sure he cant get a proper rest, not after he solved this commotion.

"Now," his voice deep and dead serious, the mood Tobirama was unable to go against. He grunted in disapproval, knowing his brother was ordering him to put his sword away and calm down. But upon realizing there were unknown people or much like visitors behind them (that these people's eyes are watching them all along) slowly but unwillingly, he moved the sword down, gritting his teeth and glaring at a certain girl. Mito watched them carefully from every movements more especially, that girl behind him.

Hashirama kept the mokuton vines active but was now detached in Tobirama's sword, he then made an eye contact to Toka (the poor Senju girl panicked but came back to herself after the eye contact. He muttered an apology to the Uzumaki group (the visitors) after he deactivated the mokuton. Toka did the same and asked everyone (the visitors) to follow her outside the room. Jiro on the other hand was the more hesitant one, not long after Madara waved her hand as an order to get outside.

"You too, Tobirama.." the Hokage said asking him to get outside the room.

"Why?!!" His albino brother protested like a 6 year old kid not having a cookie after dinner.

"I'll meet you later, just let me and Madara.." The older Senju continued.

"Madara ?!!" in Morito's thoughts.

"Madara-sama?" in Mito's.

Both Uzumaki were in the process of getting outside on that moment.
"Well what's new?" the younger Senju threw his arms upward as if throwing a nag, sounding unconvinced.

"Just like what you always do, listening to that girl before me, your own brother!"

Madara kept quiet for a very long time now, she just observe the whole scenario and rolled her eyes at Tobirama's rage

"Tell my brother what you did." he pressed his line as if challenging Madara. The visitors were fully out in the office and the door was finally closed.

Hashirama shifted his attention to Madara, his second in command. She stood, glaring at the Senju brothers.

"What happened here?" Hashirama asked simply, it looks like Madara didn't want to answer so Tobirama did the pleasure.

"Kiri declared a war against us."

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A long silence.

Tobirama walked out of the room with anger and frustrations. He had been a good adviser to his Hokage brother, he had been a well disciplined shinobi, he had been responsible. And with those he can never understand why his brother doesn't seem to hear him out first before her. On that, the Senju stormed out after Hashirama begged him to calm down and they'll be talking later, of course the younger one cannot find the word "calm down" on his vocabularies, not on this time. Exasperated, he left the room.

The two founders were left alone inside. Deafening silence conquered every corners. Hashirama broke the extreme quietude. He smiled upon touching the crystal jar placed over his table.

"How are you?" the Senju asked using his normal voice, far from what he used before. Her eyes shot an inimical glance at him. Obviously he was talking to her, but he's looking at the crystal jar so it looks like he's talking to the flower. How is she? really? that's all he wants to ask? after his brother told him what awaits the whole village?

"If you want to ask me something, go ahead." The Uchiha stepped going in front of him face to face, between them was the table itself. Madara's eyes pinned through his. Hashirama placed the jar back to its original place, he then handed the scroll which contains the declaration of war from Kirigakure.

"...what happened ?" back then, when he sent the Uchiha to have peaceful negotiations with the Village Hidden by Mist when she accidentally.. (no, it wasn't an accident, but as the news spread widely around Konoha, it was delivered as 'Madara accidentally killed a Kiri hero' just to lessen and covering up the Uchiha head's hostile actions that can affect her image to the people, of course, Hashirama knows the truth). The Senju asked, patiently waiting for response.

"Heh, you really think I can have peaceful negotiations with them?" The girl remarked with unfavorable tone.

"As if you don't know them." She made a serious face, the one she makes on battles.

Hashirama sighed, she has a point. He knew from his past experiences that these Mist people
cannot be trusted, more especially their current Mizukage. Kiri never had a close ally village before, they keep distance on every outsiders and remained reticent so far. The Hokage then remembers the summit and the Mizukage as he hold grudges against Madara.

"But Madara we should at least try to..." then he cut off when the Uchiha's eyebrows met. The Hokage exhaled, it will be a very long argument again and this time it's gonna be tougher.

"Madara, what I'm trying to say is we should at least try to have negotiations with them in a fair way."

Fair way. That word piqued her tremendously. "Fair?" Madara, shocked in Hashirama's choice of word.

"There is no fair in war Hashirama! what do you expect from those low class traitors? to change their ways of thinking if I ever talked to them FAIRLY like you want to?"

"But Madara.." he paused then think for a moment how can he clear his point to her without putting the Uchiha's skyrocket pride down.

"I just want you to make it up with them, to clear your name."

Oops

Madara flinched and stared at him as if he was asking both of her kidneys, like he's the most idiot person in the entire continent.

"Excuse me?" she hastily said "...clearing what?"

Hashirama gaped at what he said and now having the urge to slap his face for saying things that will provoke her more to extend their argument.

"...and to prevent the war.." he quickly added.

"Are you saying that I'm a criminal that needs to clear a name?" The Uchiha said curtly.

Before Hashirama opened his mouth again to defend or keep her calm (no one knows), Madara grunted.

Why does it have to be like this, said by Hashirama in his thoughts. Well, he never win an argument except the girl exit herself in the room and refuse to talk to him for weeks. He's been always incapable of winning against her in battles like this.

"I'll settle this." He said with a heavy finality in his voice. The Hokage pulled out a blank scroll from the drawer and handed a pen, writing a letter in settling dilemmas with Kiri. Madara sighed and marched outside.

"Mara," he called but as usual she continues walking away "Madara,

The girl bit her lower lip, displaying her dark attitude. "Do what you think is right, I'm doing what I MUST." she turn her head glancing at the kage and left the room.

When she walked out from the Hokage office, all (malicious and non malicious) eyes were pinned through her. Some of them back offed and stepped away when she starts to move passing to these group of unknown people. They were foreign in her eyes (except Toka and Jiro on the other side) she rose an eyebrow upon noticing all of them have red hair. When she 'hnn-ed', these people
almost got killed by her like they fear her stare more than death. Madara did not hear them said one syllable nor their breathing, heck they didn't even move a single centimeter when she walked. But a certain redhead girl have the courage to maintain a gaze at her. The Uchiha's eyes are majestic, it's one of a kind, so beautiful. And if Hashirama is to be asked, it will be difficult for one human to disregard that fact. Hers were tempestuous, shaped by glory and the deep onyx color addend the intensity of her gaze which was quite rare.

Madara was a little amused by this redhead girl, maybe her age was closer to her or Hashirama's or maybe they at the same age. Either way she was only amused by her because she's the only one who is fearless in maintaining a gaze at her when everybody were tamed before her presence. But there was something on that stare and Madara as an experienced fighter, a shinobi no less, was knowledgeable of. Though Mito's eyes showed pure innocence.

"Interesting."

-xXx-

After the incident (or whatever you call it, a small war, commotion or everyone's lack of oxygen because the author described all scenes like that), the Shodai called an abrupt meeting which includes the temporary settlement of the representatives of Uzushio in Konoha. Hashirama didn't say a word about what happened (and gladly no one have the courage to ask) though he made it clear and informed the Uzumaki that Kiri and Konoha were having 'little misunderstandings' but assured them to settle everything as soon as possible. The visitors nodded, completely put their trust to Hashirama. He's a great speaker and his positive outlook shone in the meeting room as if there wasn't been a problem lately.

However, Toka was worried of the uncertainty between two villages and that they must somehow, tell the visitors the real situation. She leaned closer to the sitting Hokage (since she is standing on his side all along the meeting) regarding her concerns, but the Hokage smiled (the ever shining smile) and promised he'll clear things with Kiri. The meeting was adjourned after he asked the Senju girl to accompany the Uzumaki to their respective guest houses. He wanted them to feel the warm welcome and hospitality from Konoha just as he and his group were treated way back in Uzushio.

"Let's go Mito...Mito?" The guests left the room once again, Morito carried a large scroll (the one from their village and the scroll is human size) ready to follow Toka outside the Hokage building together with their members when he noticed how his twin sister was observing the Hokage peeking from the half-closed door.

Mito has a worried expression, watching as the Kage plopped his hands over his head, staring on a blank scroll on his desk. His expression was far from what he showed them on their meeting. He's frowning (which it was the first time she saw him on such state) and looking very problematic. The Mito gently close the door after closing her eyes with deep thoughts in her mind.

"Mito, If I were you, I will refrain from giving the Hokage that look."

Morito sighed.

His twin sister spun her heels "What look?" and horribly stared at her twin brother.

"That." Morito smirked, putting the giant scroll at his back "People here might accuse you in plotting to kidnap their Hokage." he added and to walked away, Mito blushed and panicked at her brother's comment.

"We are twins after all." Again, Morito turn around and smirked, this time he gave her a very mocking smirk and she knows the meaning of it
"Morito-niisama!"

He loves teasing his sister.

-xXx-

He's in a hurry, he doesn't want to keep things unsettled before dawn. He sent two hawk flying in the sky, sending a very important message to the Mizukage. After that, he rushed at the Senju compound to dump the things he used from their journey. Though he can ask someone to do things for him, Hashirama personally wanted to bring his armor and weapons back to their room plus, he's not the kind of man who's fond of asking a small favor like carrying his personal things to his place. He just lived a simple, normal life and though he's the Hokage, he doesn't want to be treated like an aristocrat.

Some Senju members noticed how much in a hurry their leader was when he left the compound once again after changing his clothes (normal clothes without Hokage robes, dark blue trousers and white long sleeve top). Hashirama didn't fail to ask (or plead, describing Hashirama's way) one Senju woman to bring Senju styled tempura dish at their home, the woman patted the Hokage's shoulder, begging him not to kneel before her.

Tobirama loves tempura.

The older Senju knows his brother won't go at his office for ages after their argument and after he cooled his head, their home will be the only place for him to rest.

Hurriedly, after thanking the woman, he spun his heels going south of the village where the Uchiha clan resides.

Two middle aged Senjus watched his departing figure, one was the woman he asked to cook tempura which was holding a watering can to water her flowers in a small garden, another was her husband who was holding pile of woods (placing the large woods on his back again because after he greeted Hashirama he needs to put those down). Both threw a meaningful glance at each other.

"Hashirama-sama cannot wait til morning huh?"

"I thought he was going to ask me to pick some of our flowers"

"As his present?"

"What more, idiot. Just what you did to get me!" the wife continued on watering the flowers and chuckled.

The Senju people remained quiet on what they had observed on their leader mainly because many of them didn't want to react negatively nor positively on such matters.

Little did Hashirama knows about all of these small talking inside their compound.

-xXx-

The Hawk landed gracefully on a shinobi's arms and sending it to fly again after getting the scroll inside the bottle it carried.

A smug appeared on his face while reading the entire contents of the scroll. The message contains a request for the Mizukage to have a conversation personally with the Hokage with respect of their declaration of war, signed by Hashirama Senju the Hokage.
Using a boil release jutsu, he destroyed the scroll as if it never existed and in one throw of a hand, killed the second hawk that contained the same message using a destructive technique.

"That's for you, Senju Hashirama and Uchiha Madara."
"I'm home!"

The boy announced sliding the fusuma, kicking his shoes on the rack in the side. He pouted when no one answered.

"Meow." He was greeted by three cats instead; one was white, other was black and the smallest one was an orange tabby cat.

"Yin, Yang, Orenjiko are you guys hungry?" Izuna knelt down and cuddled the three cats simultaneously on his arms. He went to their kitchen and found a plate of Inarizushi on their table. His stomach protested in hunger and the cats fell down in the floor but landed gracefully wagging their tails and meowing altogether.

"Okay! Okay! we're all gonna eat this." The boy divided the Inarizushi but didn't forget to save some for his sister. He wondered who made the sushi, he knows his sister don't know how to make those. Madara was never a good cook but knows a few meal to prepare, as a matter of fact, she mastered a recipe. Izuna just wanted his sister preparing his food but not her cooking and she was pretty aware of it. That was why they both needed someone to cook foods for them. They were shinobi and their training time must not be lessen by learning how to cook, more especially when they have some relatives who are willing to serve them.

Izuna was glad he can take a break from eating egg recipes for awhile.

The cats and the boy started eating.

"Orenjiko why?" he asked the little orange fat cat, it doesn't seem so happy in the sushi. It keep on wagging its tail watching the other two cats happily eating their meal.

"You don't have your appetite?" Izuna asked worriedly "Oh come on, neechan is busy so don't wait for her to come back very soon." the tabby cat was very fond of Madara and eating only if she's the one who prepares its food. It so happen when the Uchiha leader was out of the village, the cat got sick and got thin that Izuna needs to perform a force feeding to keep it alive.

The young Uchiha stroked Orenjiko's head, the cat purr sweetly. After he finished his meal he went on his room to clean his things and himself. He grunted while cleaning his injuries from their training. The boy just finished his jutsu training together with other Uchiha. They didn't have to be easy battling him because Izuna was as talented as Madara. Just like his sister, he awakened the sharingan at an early age of 10 making him the youngest known Uchiha to awaken it so far (Madara got hers at 13). Since then, Izuna was also considered a genius. Their clansmen bets that someday he'll be powerful than Madara.

"Oww, tch." another low guttural sound coming from the boy while aiding himself while cleaning his bleeding knee. He mumbled several mantra before and after he put the ointment. That hurts.

There were no major injuries or whatsoever, nothing deadly or the likes and Izuna was proud of it.
Who wouldn't? after you beat those uncles bigger and more experienced than you.

Suddenly, he heard that the main fusuma opened and closed rapidly and it was clear that someone entered their home. The next thing he heard are loud steps coming closer to his room, and then the steps entered the next room just beside his. Izuna peeked on a small opening from his door and there he found his sister who just arrived.

But something was wrong about her

"Izuna!" The fiercest Uchiha called, Izuna was so alarmed that he lost his balance and fall to his knee. A short, squeaking sound was made by him (because of his wound on his knee that hit the floor) but managed to cover his mouth and silently prayed the ache to be gone soon.

"Neechan?" he was right, something's been bothering his sister. He knew his sister is the scariest thing on earth when she's in a bad mood. The younger Uchiha showed himself.

Madara stared at him for awhile, her chakra appeared to despise every living thing on the world except him.

"What's wrong neechan?" he asked, the older one was holding an Uchiha scroll and behind her was a large backpack containing her things, weapons and some scrolls.

"I'd be away for awhile." she explained, staring at her brother. Izuna was shocked, he got a feeling that whatever his sister's up to, it was far from good.

"Where? Why?" those were the only question he was able to ask since Madara was already on her way outside. She wore her battle armor and was armed by her gunbai, that alone was enough for the kid to assume that she'll likely go to a fight.

"...and do not go outside the village, not after I get back. Understood?" she commanded.

"But neechan,"

"Izuna." the Uchiha head pressed

"Understood." he reluctantly said. Despite being a prodigy, Izuna was a pacifist by nature and he didn't like the idea of his sister going on battles. Particularly with the Senju in the past since he knows Madara was never been defeated by any other clans except the Senju head, Hashirama.

Madara was a step closer outside when a man came.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

Izuna's mouth left hanging for a moment, perfect timing. He was about to sprung his foot in stopping his sister and face her rage the moment the Hokage showed up.

The Uchiha didn't answer right away but glared at him and swung the gunbai placing it at her back.

"Keeping things FAIRLY." she said, copying his words from earlier.

Hashirama sensed her battle ready chakra and in an instant became wary of it. He doesn't have plans on having hand-to-hand combat against her, not now and not anymore.

"I will not allow you to leave." Hashirama spoke, his Hokage manners brings forth. But Madara was not pleased by it, moreover, she's really getting tired of his habit of stopping her every actions. Why was that man always following her around? It was probably a bad timing to reason with the
"I'm not asking for your permission!" she countered.

"Then, I'm not letting you." The brown-haired man retorted, with all the seriousness in his face.

"Will you just please stop following me around and mind your own business?!" She said twitching her eyebrows, hoping the man will just leave before she finally lost all of her patience and create ruckus on their residence.

"I already send a message to Kiri."

"Hashirama just get out of my way!"

"Lets make things clear to avoid the war! I cant do it without your help."

"You said you will settle EVERYTHING without MY HELP!"

"I never said such things!"

"You said 'I' you never said 'we' "

Izuna stared at the two, he almost forgot to breathe. Those two fought endless combats before but this time, he's witnessing a never-before-scene of their verbal fights. He knows that it would take a pig to fly to the moon before winning squabbles in opposition with his sister. No one did an outstanding job inside their clan and have the guts to debate against her.

"I'll kill those traitors!"

"I will not let you!"

Their voices rang around the compound making the Uchihas to peek from their windows. Both of them stopped realizing it was unwise to declare each others notion outside where everybody watches them.

"Madara, let us talk." Hashirama's voice lowered that's when the Uchiha marched inside their home. Izuna ran away on his room, he was dead nervous of his sister's top notch yell but was silently applauding Hashirama for being able to break their seemingly endless verbal fight.

The kid slowly pulled his toes on silent as possible going to where the founders were. Edgily, he eavesdrop on the two figures inside the home's one of four meeting rooms.

"What the hell do you want now? I told you to do your thing while I do mine!" Madara said while she moved his head as if banging in every directions, her unruly, ebony hair shook.

Izuna on the other hand trembled in fear, it's a sign of Madara going berserk soon.

"I want to explain what I said earlier, Madara, people dont want war. We created this village because we don't want it either am I correct?" Hashirama explained with his hands waving on his sides.

Izuna was nodding at the back of the fusuma.

"Yet they declared war on our village after I warned them! Im just protecting what we have and you don't listen to me!"
Izuna fell back, so Kiri declared a war?

"That is why I will never allow you to go. I already send my message to their Mizukage and will personally talk to him to clear things with them."

Madara stared at him suspiciously, "What if they betrayed us? those fools are traitors! I killed many of them because..." she cut off when a very unsightly memory flowed on her mind. It was when she thought about the Hozuki clan, a clan residing at Kiri wouldn't stop attacking their camp back on her father's final year. The time where Tajima and her were betrayed by Hozuki clan resulting a great loss for the Uchiha. Many of her relatives died in that battle and their great loss at most was Tajima losing his sight.

"Because?" Hashirama waited while the girl stare on the floor.

"Nothing."

The Senju felt a disturbance, hoping she'd finally understand his point.

"Madara, the warring states period is long gone." He held patted her shoulder to calm her down. They have the same past and the ghost of the warring state keeps haunting them every time a battle occurs and this was what Hashirama wanted to erase on her memories. The hate, sadness, sorrow and loss.

All he ever wanted is for her good. He knows warning the Kiri than talking to them was almost the same in Madara's belief but Hashirama needs to settle numbers of problems in and outside the village and losing his second-in-command, his best friend, will not do any good.

Madara was still. Hashirama looked at her with a promise in his eyes to trust him, that he'll change everything. That he will surely convince the Mizukage in pulling the declaration.

"Fine." she surly said.

Hashirama smiled as she slaps away his hand touching her shoulders.

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The boy carried orenjiko in his arms while still spying on the room. The man was now alone since Madara left him and proceeded on her bedroom. Izuna slid the fusuma to enter. He's sitting on a couch and turned his face to meet the boy's gaze. He smiled cheerfully after seeing Orenjiko in Izuna's arms.

"Aiko-chan!" the Hokage chirped like a little girl, Izuna frowned at him.

"He have the same features with his sister..." The Senju commented in a whisper like manner.

"He's Orenjiko, neechan hated that name." Izuna then witnessed a sulking Hokage moments after.

"So it's true, it's your hobby to sulk." the young Uchiha said, pouting. The Senju lifted up his head.

"...except that I never see Madara pouting." Hashirama continued.

"What?" The surprised boy looked as if the Hokage was going insane.

"Ha Ha Ha! nothing, nothing." he laughed and stood up.

"You were listening the whole time aren't you? Izuna-kun." placing his hand over his hips with a
smile plastered on his face on which Izuna wanted to scream at him.

Placing 'kun' after his name brings shivers on Izuna's spine though he didn't know why. He just don't want the man to call him that even if he's the Hokage. He's not fond of him and don't care about him either. The truth was, he despised him a long time ago for beating his sister and considered Madara's enemy as his enemy too. But the main reason of his bitterness was because Hashirama happened to be the murderer of their eldest sibling.

But Izuna is a clever boy, he's now fully aware of things and changes happened after the Senju and Uchiha truce.

After his eavesdropping on their conversation, Izuna was now finally digesting Hashirama's words as 'the warring states period was long gone' the kid is pretty surprised of the Senju's statement hitting him hard and he knows it was the same with Madara.

"I'm not here to have a talk with you." then he 'hnn-ed', the older of two control himself from laughing.

Uchihas.

"I just wanted to thank you." the boy looked over his shoulders, Hashirama doesn't know whether Izuna was talking to him or the cat.

The Hokage tilted his head like a child would do.

"Thank...you...for... stopping her." Izuna tried his best to say it, he blushed when a glint of smile coming from the tall man appeared.

"I don't want her to fight anymore..that's all." he pouted again and pressed the fat cat over his chest (Orenjiko just stared vividly at Hashirama's face, a very well behaved cat)

The Senju was happy, her brother was a peace maker just as she described her to him.

"Especially you!" Izuna added angrily, the older one closed his eyes and smiled more.

"We will never fight again, there will be no wars as long as this village lives." He promised to the young Uchiha, it was literally giving a promise to a child.

Izuna turned his back to the kage and the boy left with a smile and a relief.

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Uchiha Madara was again alone with the weirdest man in her eyes.

"What makes you stay here and wait for me?" She asked in a forced civil manner "I thought we were done talking."

Hashirama snickered, Madara shot an instant glare at him in doing a dubious thing.

"You still owe me one question." he said sheepishly, the Uchiha just wanted to punch him after he blatantly defeats her on their argument.

"Then what the hell is it?" she asked, annoyed. Placing her gunbai and other weapons on the rack, displayed on the meeting room..

She was facing the wall arranging her things.
"It's been a month, Mara."

She stopped. The way he say her name sends shivers to her nape. The girl was holding a katana blade and was in the process of placing it on its shelf when a larger hand held it and continue to place it back. Their fingers gently brushed each others, Madara turned around and stepped to give a space between them.

She sat on the couch while he grinned joyfully eyeing on her.

"What do you want?!" The Uchiha hated the scene, she knows it'll just end in some childish arguments or worst, his teasing. And the word teasing doesn't have a room in her, not after some village just declared war against theirs.

"How are you?" Hashirama asked (wearing his fabulous oh-so-sunny demeanor, Madara just wanted to end the day)

She heaved a mighty sigh, he's really an idiot. A stupid, moron, idiot Senju in her opinion.

"Fine, I'm fine not long after your brother declared me to be dead." and then crossed her legs.

"I apologize for it." Hashirama sat on the nearer couch beside hers

"Don't be. He just acted normally according to standards. But your brother needs to learn in respecting someone who is higher and older than him."

She said coolly. Not really minding Tobirama's actions but was upset by his brash attitude towards her.

Hashirama chuckled "But you and Tobirama are at the same age."

They talked as if they never fought deadly battles before, as if they never had verbal fights few moments ago.

As if they didn't tried to kill each other in the past.

(or maybe it's only on Madara's part)

"Wait a second..." Hashirama put his hand over his chin, like he got an idea or something.

"Oh, you and Mito have the same age!" He announced.

"Mito?" Madara asked suspiciously.

"Yes, and you'll meet her soon."

"Her?" The Uchiha moved herself in a relaxed position as she tapered her sight of him. He never said another girl's name before except her name and Toka Senju, his secretary.

"You saw the group with me when I got back? they are the Uzumaki from Uzushio, they are here to help us from collecting the bijuus. Mito is the only girl on the group and she's also the granddaughter of Ashina, their clan leader."

Unbeknownst to Hashirama, Madara was slicing his words like she's detecting a crucial, vital part of his story.

"And you also know her age?" she uttered, Hashirama failed to notice the sarcasm though.
"She's a childhood friend from Uzushio, she and his brother Morito. Did I tell you about Uzumaki are distant relatives of us Senju?" the Hokage asked trying to recall everything he said to her.

"You did." Madara simply replied "Childhood what?" she repeated, confirming if ever she misheard him a bit.

"Childhood friend, just like you and I." Hashirama said with so much happiness declaring it would be fun if the four of them will go out sometimes our even the five of them with Tobirama (after he settle another tough and hostile verbal fights with his brother soon) or maybe they can also add Toka making them six, the thought of them having parties and talking made him super excited (he almost forgot the bijuus and the declaration of war).

Just like you and I

Madara stood up.

"Mara?"

"You better leave now."

It's already dark outside, the Hokage spent too much of his golden time being the leader of the village in the Uchiha home.

Hashirama was hesitant because of the way Madara pushed him out the door was in his opinion, kind of rush.

"Is there anything wrong?"

"Just get out already."

He have the urge to sulk again but stopped in doing so after she shot an annoyed gaze at him.

When he was fully outside, Madara shut the door close.

Hashirama stiffened, noticing how the Uchiha were frightening hiding themselves after he caught them peeking from windows.

Senju and Uchiha were like water and oil but both have the same habit on spying on their respective leaders

Specially when those two are together.
Mito and Madara

A white-haired man entered a local tavern outside their village. There are other places in Konoha that can ease him out but this time, he chose to mix his anger with alcohol. He didn't really know at first where to go nor how to release his frustrations. Whether to bluster or punch a wall, scream, shout just to be freed by all the negative feelings he's feeling.

"Three bottles of sake."

He said as he ordered to a barman. Other customers (the not so busy ones) were already shooting glances at his direction the moment he stepped in, probably knowing who he is. After that, it doesn't really matter. The local tavern was located outside the village but not too far away from it. They knew Tobirama as the 'Hokage's brother' or the 'Younger Senju' as Hashirama was known to be the 'Senju leader' and the Hokage.

The red-eyed man's behavior maybe far from his brother - that childish, charismatic and always wearing a smile man that all people looked up to, but despite of their differences, Tobirama was really responsible and faithful to his duties.

Maybe he was just a shadow of his older brother, always bested by him since they were little. He can still remember when Hashirama and their father argued - probably their worst argument ever, that Butsuma announced Tobirama as his successor and not Hashirama on the their faces. But not long before Butsuma died, he voluntarily decided to step down and bring back Hashirama's right to be the Senju leader. He very well knew, Hashirama was and always be the best among them. He never felt any jealousy about it anyway for he love his older brother same as their other brothers - now late brothers.

He respect Hashirama and cared deeply for him. That was why he can never, ever allow something or someone ruin his reputations.

The albino started to drink. One glass after another. He was never a hard drinker unlike his brother, although he drinks occasionally but he prefers a half glass of wine over some sake. Little by little the sake has it effect on him.

Despite him wearing a stoic face all the times, he cared deeply to the village and on its inhabitants. They are all like a family to him. And even though he usually argue a lot on his Hokage brother, telling him what to do instead of what the latter really wants, or ordering him what he need and must do, it's all because he wanted the best for the village, the village which was his brother's dream.

He drank a full glass.

The best sensory shinobi as they call him, still cannot find a very good nor good reason. Still, on his tipsy stage, cannot find why Hashirama was bewitched by her.

Speaking of good looks - hands down, even Tobirama can see it. The Uchiha is gifted by a lot of good looks though her hair can rival a nest. Fom her face, her majestic eyes and long eyelashes to a tall slender frame. He have to agree that if Madara was not born to be an Uchiha or she didn't had to be Madara, maybe he's on a battle against his brother by winning her heart.

Tobirama drank again, this time its directly from the second bottle and wonder what the hell was he thinking.
Of power - this is a much self explanatory on his part. She got the 'goddess of shinobi' title while his brother remained to be the undefeated shinobi. Wondering how did the Uchiha manage to raise a female child surpassing male shinobis up to that level. His older brother might be really into powerful female type but for him, a girl of that kind was not the one his brother needs. Hashirama was already powerful, why the need to have someone who always picking up senseless fights over who's the stronger between them? Who was prideful and violent just as he knows this witch.

He sighed heavily.

For him, he can see things than his older brother for the latter's mind was always been cloudy whenever that girl walks in front of him.

He drank another full glass after remembering what happened before his day got so dark that he wanted the feelings to be gone.

Tobirama was humiliated. In front of those red headed visitors, in front of their people and most of all in front of her. Her, who was the sole reason why - of all the people, his brother did the thing to embarrass him by not hearing him out before that witch who stole his brother's reasoning - not just his heart, dammit.

How could his brother do that to him? he never listen to him before her so what's new about that? but to him, that moment was the least he imagined to happen. Really? It was crystal clear - that Uchiha girl was the reason why they're soon to be facing a war.

The village where they poured their blood on its establishment, to keep it safe, to maintain peace, and all of a sudden declared to be a war zone by some other village who in fact hold grudges against one of its inhabitants - no, she's not just an 'inhabitant' but a founder. A second leader as the people know her, Hokage's second in command.

Someone who must protect the village and the villagers, not someone who will drag them into danger.

"Damn it!" he snarled, holding a tight grip on a glass. Not really pointing the words to someone but his eyes were fixated to the wooden table.

Why was his brother listening to that witch all the time? The Hokage failed see things clearly. Why on all of the people...or rather, why her?! A girl who was heartless, ready to kill for the sake of her damned clan and most of all, a girl who killed their father.

Then he remembered that time again, Hashirama and him were indeed broken when their father died. The older one showed great sorrow, teared a bit and was lonely yet wanted to be alone. While him on the other part, the one who had more bonds with their father, sobbed uncontrollably in hearing he died on his last battle.

But his sorrow was instantly mixed up with a full blown madness in learning who killed their father - it was Uchiha Madara, the most powerful Uchiha and his brother's 'ex' bestfriend.

Hashirama didn't say a word after hearing the truth of his father's killer but Tobirama swore a pledge at that exact moment to avenge Butsuma's death.

Tobirama drank his third bottle.

The truth was he was angered by Hashirama's nonchalant reaction of the horrid news about the person behind their father's death. He maybe younger than him but the younger Senju always, always know it – no matter how much the older one denied it nor cover it, he can never fool him
on the obvious thing – of Hashirama liking this bloody girl.

Seriously? How long had he likes her? Her - the one who killed their father?! The one who wants their clan to be wiped out. And the reality, she and his brother we're rivals before! Look at the irony of it, look at how horrible is it! what a shame. The idea was just absurd.

Tobirama stood despite his heavy eyes and drunken state.

His brother needs a woman, a dutiful one. Someone who can preserve peace, not destroy it! Someone who can lead his brother to a much brighter future, but she? She's just darkness. A caring, thoughtful woman on his side not someone who was ready to slash anybody for the sake of her golden pride. Plain and simple, she's not the one Hashirama needs!

He made a decision. Everything was clear now.

That there is NO logical reason for his brother liking that Uchiha and that he can never, ever find any reason for it to be appropriate.

He needs to find a more suitable - or the better - near perfect one for his brother. He whispered on himself that someday, Hashirama would thank him for the idea for not letting him hauled to a danger named Uchiha Madara.

-xXx-

Toka was on her way on the guest house to fetch the two Uzumaki just as the Hokage asked her to do that morning. She knocked on a door and was greeted by a young man with a high ponytail wearing a white trousers and green kimono style upper garment.

"Good morning, I am Toka Senju, Hashirama-sama's assistant and I am here to-"

Before the Senju woman continue her introductory address, a young lady (also with the red hair same as the young man) shove her brother and greet her in delight.

"Hi! I am Uzumaki Mito, it's nice to meet you!"

Toka only gawked at the high spirited gal who was now holding her hands, shaking it.

"Oh.."

"Mito!" Morito rolled his eyes and sighed, knowing how excited his sister on everything when they arrived at Konoha.

The Senju lady cleared her throat "Hashirama-sama wanted to meet the two of you in his office." trying to be formal as possible.

"Well then.." Morito answered and shoot a meaningful glance at Mito who just came back on her quietness after hearing Toka's message from the Hokage.

On their way to the Hokage's office, the Uzumaki girl keeps turning her head around.

"Is that Hashi-" then Morito glared at her, a simple reminder to address the Senju leader properly according to his position.

The Uzumaki already noticed the rock on their arrival at the village but as a curious girl, she wanted to know the reason behind it.
Toka took a notice of Mito's question and did the pleasure of informing about the Hokage's face carved on a big rock facing the village.

"It was Hashirama-sama's idea. He said it is a symbol that the Hokage would always watch over the village."

Morito nodded but deep inside of him; "Same old Hashirama eh? never runs out of ideas."

"Does it mean all the other Hokage-to-be will be added on that rock in the future?" the Uzumaki asked again, her curiosity was transparent.

"Yes, Mito-san." the Senju replied.

"That's great! a kind of legacy thingy isn't it?" She turned around again to fully view the big-ass-Hokage-rock with Hashirama on it. She admired the view, but moreover the idea behind it and of course, the person behind the idea.

"Simply amazing."

Toka smiled and nodded at her statement then glanced at the Uzumaki girl, realizing that Mito was the very first person who call Hashirama's idea 'great'. In all honesty, when their Senju leader announced the idea, she really thought that was kind of...weird.

There were people who took a notice at the two visitors, where Morito smiled at them when on the other hand, Mito just poured every human being she came across with her joyful greetings.

Her brother wants to plop a hand on his face and made an apologetic smile to Toka, the Senju was kindly amused by Mito's character.

When they arrived at the office door they already heard the Hokage's voice. A hint that there was another person that he was talking with at the moment. Morito only blinked before Toka finally pulled the door open wide for them to enter.

Mito looked closely at the two figures - the Hokage, which was not really surprising if he's already there because it was his office. The other one was the same girl on yesterday's affair - the raven haired girl with the long spiky layered hair, sitting on a chair in front of the Hokage's table. The Uzumaki was quite bemused of Hashirama's smile while staring at the 'other' girl's face. The Hokage's chin was resting over his hand while leaning on the table while the onyx eyed girl was kind of story telling about something like 'renovations'.

It was like minutes had passed but in reality it's just a mere seconds. Hashirama was always been a happy person, always smiling and laughing even at the little things. A carefree person he is - actually yesterday was the first time she had a chance to see a glint of his stress which happened after they left the room (that she purposely let herself to be the last person to get out after his twin brother).

But his smile - just now, was kind of different. And by means of different she meant it to be more than his usual self.

Before she realized everything or to think why was he smiling like that, the nonchalant girl who was sitting beside his table took a notice of their arrival, turning her head at their direction. Hashirama jerked standing up greeting them.

"Goodmorning! How was your first night?" the Hokage asked, the Uchiha shot her eyes at him.
"The climate here is very cool, we had a relaxing rest. Thanks to you Hokage-sama." Morito answered then glanced at his twin sister who just became mute after entering the office.

"How are you Mito?" Hashirama asked the Uzumaki lady, her eyes widened as she was about to answer him, pulling herself to stay calm.

"It was great, Hokage-sama." Mito was puzzled of her choice of word to describe their first night stay but she didn't want to give the Hokage a wrong impression so she came up on using the word that fits his idea of a rock with a Hokage face instead, it was not that bad though.

Meanwhile, Hashirama sensed a pair of eyes directly towards him.

"I'm really glad you did like it." Hashirama grinned at them "By the way, I like you to meet my co-founder."

The two Uzumaki changed their attention to the girl who was now standing up after Hashirama's introduction.

"Uchiha Madara, my second-in-command, co-founder of Konoha and the Uchiha leader."

Madara nodded at the visitors.

"This is Uzumaki Morito." the Senju man said as he is directing a hand at Morito.

"He will be the captain of their group." the redhead guy bowed slightly at his introduction.

"...and this is."

"I suppose you are Mito."

Befuddled, impressed, surprised or shocked - you name it. Before Hashirama continue his introduction for Mito, he was taken aback by the rarest natural (unnatural at this point) occurrence of Madara remembering her name. He was well aware that he did mention her once, and by means of word 'once' and knowing Uchiha Madara - she only bother to remember someone's name, more so she's only capable of doing it when she considered the person as a worthy opponent - in wars to be specific.

And he himself was included.

By the looks of it, Mito was also surprised of hearing Madara already knows her.

"Yes, Madara-sama." she bowed deeply at the co-founder, the serious-faced Uchiha nodded at her then looked back at Hashirama who just collected himself after a few moments.

After the 'introductions', Toka informed them that the function room (located inside the office) was ready. They sat on their respective seats around an oval shaped table; Hashirama on the center chair (as always), Madara on his right side while the left side chair remained empty. Beside the empty chair was Toka who just sighed lowly after turning her head at the unoccupied seat, beside Toka was Morito then Mito.

Madara was the only person on the right side of the oval table.

The Hokage leads the meeting with Toka's assistance of the papers, the other three people - including Madara listened at Hashirama's report of the whole process in capturing the bijuus, the strategies, the techniques to be use and also the trainings, the part where Madara had some twisted
reaction between tapping her foot or glaring at Hashirama while he said 'Madara will discuss the battle tactics soon'.

The Uchiha then was torn between kicking him in the foot while they're seated or to remain calm so she can deal with him later.

Morito just observed on whatever his witnessing, Toka did her job as a secretary and Mito...

Mito practically blushed after Hashirama acknowledge her as the one who create fuinjutsu in sealing the bijuus. He praised her skills as an Uzumaki prodigy and thanked her over and over. For her, it was like a normal accomplishment if the praise was not from Hashirama. Morito felt proud of his twin sister. As of now she's already a full pledged sealing expert declared by their grandfather Ashina.

A very talented kunoichi - that's how Hashirama described her in the meeting.

Hence, Madara started to look out of the window, in door, in table, and even on the floor when Hashirama started throwing the Uzumaki lots of compliments.

Compliments.

For another girl.

In front of her.

*What in the deuce are you thinking?*

"Madara?"

*Does it matter?*

"Madara?" The Senju repeated. Madara twitched an eyebrow after his hand made a contact on her arm.

"What?!" she hissed, loud enough for the others to startle. Hashirama only blink in confusion.

"Can you please repeat your question, Hashirama." the Uchiha asked trying very hard to ask the question normally as if she didn't 'almost yell' at the Hokage's face.

She can only curse herself for letting some silly and unimportant things interrupt her focus. Hashirama cleared his throat before speaking again after scanning the three other people with them in his peripheral vision.

"What can you say about it?"

With that - Madara, just as she always wear a mask of indifference and a nonchalant reaction - felt like she wanted to evaporate on the spot due to confusion of his question. The truth was, she never understood a thing on what Hashirama just said because she was busy on her 'thoughts'. And she do not get this 'it' part at all.

*What the hell.*

If she answered on a negative fashion, she'll be bothered if ever the question was for the sake of the village and this negativity will affect her reputation - same goes for the Uchiha. Madara stared for like a couple of seconds to Hashirama - with a blank face albeit, with a whirlwind of 'what ifs'.
"I think..." she stuttered "...It's fine with me"

Damn, what was it all about anyway.

"Great! Thank you very much to all of you, the meeting is adjourned." Hashirama announced grinning at the Uchiha.

Madara suddenly felt answering in a positive fashion didn't help her either after seeing that eat-shitting grin on his face.

-xXx-

"I WILL WHAT?!"

After Toka closed the door ever so lightly, she heard some of the usual sound that cracked inside.

"Mara, you agreed on it, right?"

The Senju girl let an audible, deep breath. The scene (and the shriek) was really getting old. At some point she wondered if ever the two founders never got tired of arguing and debating every single freaking day of their lives. They fought, and fought, and fought deadly battles, bloody combats, from morning til the next morning and now this - bickering, after their truce on a new found village. That's just tiring, to fight on the same person over and over again.

But Toka, just like the other Senju was not blind to not see what could Hashirama cannot.

They have overly different personalities, like north and south, yet they continue to be together (as leaders) on a same village.

After she escorted the twins going back to the guest house, Mito thanked her warmly. She finally concluded that Mito has the same aura as Hashirama. It was so obvious that the Uzumaki girl was easy to befriend with same goes to her brother Morito.

While on her way, the Senju girl considered on what if Madara was the same as Mito.

Her idea could be spell d-e-a-t-h if she shared it to someone in the village but surely enough she's not that stupid to tell about her thoughts.

Just what if Madara - the ever so stern, strict and 'hard' girl is as cheery, kind, and warm as Uzumaki Mito.

She chuckled at her own idea comparing it to armageddon.

But Toka sincerely pondered, if that's the case Hashirama's life would be easy.

Her foot stopped after sensing a glint of a person's swaying movements from above at her direction - at the entrance of the Senju compound.

Tobirama - without a doubt, drunk, used his teleportation jutsu and unfortunately landed in front Toka just right before she stepped on the pavement.

"Tobirama-sama!"

-xXx-
"I can't believe you made a decision without my approval!"

"I asked you and you said it was fine with you."

"Hell to the NO, Hashirama."

"Everyone heard you."

"And you really think I could TRAIN them?"

"Why not? You are a better strategist than me Mara."

"Then why don't you ask your brother instead!"

A slam was heard on the table. They were on the usual stuff again- arguments. The reason? Hashirama's question way back on their meeting was if it is fine with her to TRAIN the Uzumaki before the mission: 'capturing bijuus'.

Hashirama leaned back on his seat watching while the protesting Uchiha slammed his table by her fist in an attempt to pass the responsibility to his brother. It's not that Madara was escaping from a responsibility - far from that. Her point was she doesn't want to get involved with those Uzumaki, meeting them was fine, but training them? it's another story.

"Hashirama," she pressed "do I look some sort of a good teacher to you?" she glowered, Hashirama massaged the back of his neck.

"I cannot do that." he said, seemingly displeased the way Madara reacted "You have more battle experiences than Tobirama.". The way Hashirama said it was kind of sad, remembering his younger brother did not come home last night.

But then, it was pretty obvious and Hashirama failed to understand her. She was more versatile than the younger Senju so he did not expect her to ask that question. The Hokage realized she's just escaping from the responsibility - no, the whole Uzumaki training issue.

"I wouldn't even contemplate on such thing." Madara mumbled.

Hashirama stood up "But I do trust you!"

"Then what about them?" the Uchiha countered.

The Senju was on the verge of getting tired of their argument, but when she blinked, hey long eyelashes swayed in a motion that captivates him.

Hashirama gulped "I do trust you, they trust me so they will trust you too." he said fully admiring the view that was in front him.

Silence reigned and with that, Madara made a wry smirk.

"What if I don't trust them?"

His eyes widened at her question, well she never expect some kind of return.

He opened his mouth but there were no words came, that's like a bulls eye. For Madara to question the Uzumaki clan's trustworthiness. Hashirama remained shocked that he did not get the chance to retort an answer.
Madara left him as the end of their argument - just as she always do.
Envy

He was worn out that day. Tons of paper works came late in the afternoon and all were required to be done before dawn. So to speak, he rushed the urgent works all by himself. On another note, he was also the Senju leader and he have other things to do aside from running the village as the Hokage. Tough job, for a tough man like him. Albeit he was strong person but he has only one mind and body. Hashirama was tired mentally - to the full extent. Not to mention his latest dispute with the Uchiha.

He sighed remembering how she smashed his idea to lead in training the Uzumaki. The Uchiha leader was an exclusive person so it's no surprise that somehow, she will turn down the given task but Hashirama did not expect her to have a problem with the Uzumaki. They were tranquil and harmless people, needless to say that they are relatives with the Senju and he witnessed how they run the Uzushio. Though he was well aware that Madara always have a trust issue, that if a non-Uchiha person have to visit their home, you will need to pass an extreme evaluation from the other Uchiha before you can talk to their head. Ultimately, he wanted her to have a new company. The way he can see it, it seems his bestfriend doesn't have other persons in her life. She was too enclosed by her Uchiha clan and Hashirama wanted to expand her world just like he wanted his friends to be her friends too.

Unfortunately, she doesn't see it that way and they ended up getting in an argument again. And much more unfortunate for him to have additional headache when he got home.

"You never sided with me!" His drunken brother snarled or more like accused him. His arms over the Hokage's shoulder while gently putting him on his bed.

If not because of Toka's helping hand, the younger Senju would have crawl in order to get home or worse, he wouldn't reach it at all. Hashirama thanked her for taking good care of his wasted brother before he arrived and apologized at the same time. Toka had been honest to inform him about Tobirama's hurtful feelings about what happened last day as he mumbled several times how he hated his older brother's actions in hearing the Uchiha lad more than him and worrying that if the brothers could not settle the issue sooner, it will greatly affects the both of them. Hashirama smiled at Toka after a promise that he will take care of the issue and Tobirama himself, thankful that even though the younger one has an ego bigger than him, there was someone who greatly cares on his well being.

"Tobirama, you are drunk." Hashirama said, totally ignoring Tobirama's rants as he put a cup of coffee on the mini table beside the bed. "Drink this so that you..."

"Oh didn't you hear me? or maybe you did but you do not want to, anyway what's new about that. All you wanted to hear is that crazy Uchiha!" Tobirama rolled his eyes, shuffled his hair away from his face as he continue on his ramblings. Hashirama chose to remain calm for he knows he holds the responsibility why his brother was acting this way.

"Tobi, I am sorry if I offended you in my actions earlier, but please let's talk further if you are...on the right state of mind and not now." he gently patted his brother's shoulder, keeping a sincere eye contact but Tobirama was unimpressed.

"I am not drunk!" all of a sudden he stood up and continued to fulminate. He even made several hand motions as he protest, Hashirama did not made a single step back but was calm enough to hold his brother as he maintained his balance while the younger one murmured words of
disappointments. Hashirama's patience, originally for three younger brothers - now two late brothers, was solely left for Tobirama's tendencies to burst like a magma.

"I am not asking for an apology coming from you!" Tobirama pushed him away and it made a wide gap between them. Hashirama was surprised by his actions. They've never been on a huge physical fight before and he silently hopes they would never have one at this moment.

"You are so blinded by her that you cannot see her flaws!" he pointed a finger at the older Senju, it was obvious who he was stating. The older one started to take Tobirama's talking seriously but keeping in mind that it was partly the alcohol's fault.

"Blinded?" Hashirama was befuddled.

"For once brother, I cannot believe you have fallen for a girl who killed your own father!"

Hashirama gulped hardly and this time did not take it lightly.

"Open your eyes and you will see how much of a shi-"

"That's enough Tobirama!" he grabbed his younger brother's furred collar pulling him closer to him, Hashirama was pretty exhausted from arguing with people close on him. But when Tobirama brings out something offending or a very sensitive topic of Madara murdering their father, he tried - but failed to compress his reaction.

"Not because you are on this state you can talk and push me away like I am something random to you, I am your older brother! And please, I am forbidding you in pulling that issue out again." He was dead serious on how he dropped the his last statements. They were face to face, Tobirama gritted his teeth and again was triggered to go against his brother's will. He was more angry than ever and he refused to listen on his pleas.

"See! You sided again with that Uchiha again!"

"I am not siding nor I'm siding on one of you, Tobirama." The Hokage have the urge to massage his temple, surely a drunken version of his brother was the hardest to converse. But this topic with Madara was so intolerable to his ears, what's more, he just wanted to end his before it gets worst and to have the longest rest ever right after he have a double headache.

Much to his shock, Tobirama pulled his collar closer, eyes burning with accusations. He hated her, not his brother. But seeing his brother will do anything in favor of the Uchiha, much to his dismay hurts him the most.

"She killed father!" he shouted, Hashirama was a patient man but for the first time, returned the favor of pushing his brother away on his bed in a forceful manner that cause Tobirama to plopped down on the said bed as he was heavily tipsy that he cannot think nor move straight. He was drunk but Hashirama was beyond losing his patience plainly because of Tobirama's current childishness and fatigue.

"I killed one of her siblings! so don't talk like we are the only victims of the past, Tobirama, you are the one who never listen to me!" He breathed out, the younger one groggily moved his head after bumping it to his bed watching while his brother tensed on their feud. The older one plopped a hand on his head at his action.

Hashirama feel sorry for his younger brother. He can remember how he mourned over their father's death. The second child of Butsuma Senju was the closest one to him. But at the same time, the thoughts of stealing the life of Madara's eldest brother haunted his memories whenever he
remembers their father's death. No matter how much he convinced himself, it was not even, not at the slightest.

"...sorry."

He whispered before leaving his brother's room in peace.

-xXx-

"Neechan?"

"Hmm?"

"Is there a problem?"

"Nothing."

"Then...would you sit?"

"Why would I?"

Izuna sighed. He was currently studying a scroll after a silly low class mission of fetching a sheep from a not so far away village. She was continuously waltzing for about a minute already since she entered their home and the kid find it very disturbing.

"Fine." Madara then sat at the tatami floor beside a wall after noticing the observance of her brother and their pets while she walks from left to right over and over. Orenjiko sat on her lap wanting to be pet by her. It was her favorite though she equally loves the other two but the orange fat cat was the most affectionate to her and it always ended up on sleeping with her or sleeping on top her at night.

Uchiha Madara was on a shitty mood once again, but this time she cannot figure exactly why and how it happened. What's more upsetting her was that she cannot find the word on how she felt during the time of their meeting with the Uzumaki twins. Hearing how Hashirama complimented the Uzumaki girl was like the most irritating sound she heard and for once, she was having trouble on why the heck those thoughts entered her mind.

Why on earth would she was rather confused and annoyed (or maybe both at the time being). On another thing, how dare that Senju assigned her to a task he knew so damn well she would not take, like training an unknown group of men sounded crazy, knowing her exclusiveness and persona. And in the name of Neko-kami, what were her thoughts back then? Madara rolled her eyes and 'hnn-ed' while caressing Orenjiko's head - which shows how contradicting her facial reaction and actions at the same time. Izuna observed his sister, was it really hard to understand girls? that's a question that popped in his mind, but then realized his sister was beyond ordinary girl - far from that - and probably farthest from that.

"Did Hokage-san do something again?" Izuna innocently asked and was now reading a book, Madara stared deeply at her brother with a puzzling yet claiming an unreadable expression.

"What makes you ask that?" She asked back, the truth was she was alarmed how her little brother found out the reason why she's having her bad mood of the night.

"Isn't he the always reason why you are upset?" It was true on Madara's behalf, but still, it was quite surprising how her kid brother knew it so well.
"...but I think he's kind, maybe you are just being hard with him at times, neechan." Izuna continued turning a single page on his book, his eyes fixated on it. Madara was taken aback and was now confused on her own brother's statements. By golly, he used to address Hashirama as 'Your Enemy' (when talking to her) or 'The Enemy Leader' or simply 'That Senju' but now he was addressing him as something highly and mighty as "Hokage-san", calling "Hokage" would be acceptable and just fine though still surprising, but putting "-san" is another big thing. Madara narrowed her eyes, her kid brother talks like the older one now.

"How could you say so?" The Uchiha girl wanted to growl at first, but Izuna was right. She did not protest when he describe him as 'kind', it was true that Hashirama was always a kind person and she wanted to knock her head in thinking things once again that maybe she should have not do, like remembering how patient the Senju was in handling her mood swings.

Stop..just stop thinking about it...

"I don't know but I can feel it when I talked to him."

-xXx-

It was probably one of his worst day. A verbal fight against Madara and his brother at the same day. Hashirama was inexplicably exhausted and that all he wanted to do is to have the longest rest but no, there he was, walking around at dawn time with his Hokage robes, barely noticing the greetings of his villagers. Also, thinking about the possibilities of choosing between Madara and Tobirama on whom-to-get-okay first addend his headache. Why can't the girl agree on him easily without disagreements involved and why can't his brother understand his decisions?

Blinded, that's how Tobirama described him. Hashirama was not afraid to admit that Madara was a special person in his life. He is the strongest shinobi but the sad part was that he was a coward to admit his feelings directly to her. They have been enemies from the start as others knew it, but for him, the real 'start' of their connections was when he met her on the river plainly as Madara and him as Hashirama. There was no Senju and Uchiha surnames involved, just them being themselves.

The Hokage sat on a bench near his office. How he hoped those time can be rewinded and maintained. They have unfavorable past,probably the worst past for someone who claimed to be best of friends. But Hashirama doesn't want to get stuck on that ugly past, he wanted to move on and he wanted her to move on. A year ago after starting the village he have high hopes to be more open to the elusive girl about his feelings but still, every time he planned it was disapproved by Tobirama, saying things how awkward and unacceptable of him to trust the girl that much were enough to discontinue.

"Hashirama-san?" a familiar female voice returned him up from his thoughts, the Hokage smiled at her.

"Mito, where have you been?" He forced a tone that would not let her know how he feels at the present time being but his eyes betrayed him.

"I just bought some mushroom soup for dinner and I'm on the way back to the guest house." Mito answered, without failing to notice that Hashirama needed someone to talk to, she was sensible enough to ask the obvious.

"Are you okay? you look troubled." there was a glint of concern coming from the Uzumaki, the Hokage did the denial thing of telling he was just tired and that's all, though he knows she will surely caught him lying. He was fully aware of how much of a bad liar he is.
"I will be fine, thank you for asking Mito." It was like he answered her of a 'no Im not okay' but played his words perfectly not to boldly appear like that. Mito's concern grew more, thinking the man might wanted to be alone this time she decided to take her leave and respect him by avoiding to answer her directly.

"I hope you will soon, Hashirama-san, my apologies for interrupting you. I will take my leave then." she politely made an apologetic smile and bowed at the kage then slowly turned around.

"...Mito?" Hashirama called, Mito stopped and turn around to face him.

"Yes, Hashirama-san?"

"Can you...stay here with me?"

He just wanted someone to talk to and he saw Mito as the perfect one at the right time to hear him out. Mito blinked at his invitation to sit with him on the same bench but gladly (and giddy-ly) accepted it. They talked about random things from different elemental jutsus to their respective village climates - almost all of the stuff. Hashirama found it easier to communicate with someone like her - someone who was willing to listen to him even on the simplest topic. Mito was more than happy to have a bonding like this with him and without them knowing it, they were laughing their ass off.

"Did you just say mushroom soup?"

"Yes,why?"

"It's my favorite!"

"Do you want some?"

"Then thanks in advance!" they both laughed, his chest became lighter after their chatting. Hashirama made a toothy grin at her. Funny how a small act like that would make her heart pound on miles per second.

"Oh, I remember, I am a man of my words." Hashirama suddenly held her paper bag (which contains the ingredients for mushroom soup) by his left hand then held Mito's left hand by his right.

"Hashirama-san?" Mito was bewildered by his actions.

"Let me take you to my favorite place in the village."

-xXx-

She didn't know why she went outside, walking around at the center of the village at 6 o'clock in the afternoon. Usually, it was the time for her to arrange her Uchiha paper works and finish them off. A brief girly chuckle caught her attention coming from a group of teenage girls on the park. It was clear what's their topic all about - the usual. Madara mentally grunted after hearing them swoon over how handsome a certain man is, she glared daggers at them, can't they talk about anything useful instead?. *Useless little freaks,* she thought. On the other side were a group of male shinobis who stole glances at the group of girls. Madara did not find it amusing but it caught her attention. By the looks of it, the male shinobis were talking about the girls too.

The Uchiha has decided to observe them. She's almost at the same age of the teen age girls. It was unbelievable but the image of her joining the group of girls came through her mind - that is IF she
was born as an ordinary person.

But she was not and she would never- she was born as an Uchiha shinobi and its leader. The goddess of shinobi as they knew her, fought so many clans and killed hundreds, men and women even children. There was no way in this world that someone will classify her by the likes of these persons.

"Faggots." she mumbled while walking away.

A sudden thought attacked her and that was Izuna's voice ringing on her head, crap this day that she's thinking the most random thing starting in the morning.

Maybe she was just hard at him at times, maybe she did overreact a bit, or maybe she was just paranoid or maybe, maybe...

"Bullcrap!" She hissed at no one in particular but the villagers that were passing by were so shocked that they made a wide gap on where she walks and where the villagers passes by. Her face became paler as she bowed her head to mutter a quite sorry at the villagers.

What are you doing, what am I doing, what is this shit all about?

She was behaving far from her usual self since the start of this day. Madara disliked it very much. She now hated herself for not being able to control emotions of getting upset so easily.

It was all this Senju's fault.

Oh, how she wanted to scream at him badly for making her feel like this. Even though she still cannot look for an appropriate reason and why she would. The Uchiha was itching to punch something to ease her out but then beginning to think again. Maybe if she tried to make excuses how she behaved when they argued it will give her peace and all will be normal again, like her normal self and logically speaking. Does the word excuses makes up for it? or maybe she would just try to make amends with the Senju everything will be fine.

Making amends almost equate on accepting that it was her fault and it was also unbearable for her like she wanted to vomit on the thought of it. But if it's the only thing that will bring her sanity again...

-xXx-

The two ended up on the Hokage mountains over Hashirama's giant stone face. Watching over the village lights from above and the stars at night made the solemn place alive.

"Thank you for bringing me here, Hashirama-san." Mito thanked him with a flush of red on her face, she was seated on a chair made by Hashirama's every reliable wood jutsu.

"You are welcome, I just wanted to fulfill my promise to you way back in our talk on the bridge."

Back to Uzushio, Mito and Morito talked how it was their favorite spot on the village. Reason why they bring Hashirama on the bridge when they were little. That was when Hashirama promised to bring the two of them too on his favorite spot soon after they arrived Konoha.

"Why is it that this is your favorite spot?" Mito asked curiously, the view from above was spectacular but there was no special about it. Just a very high place looking around the village, that's all. The redhead wanted to know the reason behind how it ended up being his favorite place, considering Konoha was huge in size and there was a lot more from it, like a forest a waterfall or
maybe a marvelous garden. For she knows him, he was always fascinated by nature and this mountain top was far from his standards.

Hashirama was back on his quiet mood, clearly recalling some events on his life and smiled - a genuine smile. It was the 'truest' smile, not a forced one nor a toothy grin but Mito can see and feel how blissful he was behind that smile.

"It's because this place is where I made a promise that I will create this village with someone."

The Uzumaki smiled and contented at his answer, it was a great feeling and a giddy one that a powerful shinobi like him can be sentimental and emotional given that his abilities can rule the world.

"Is this someone your brother?" she asked again, Hashirama chuckled.

"Funny that he wasn't, even though we're close, Tobirama did not see the possibility to create a village like I did. It was with Madara."

Mito was taken aback. He really speak the Uchiha's name with passion, with an emotion. It was different, very different. Then her curiosity kicked again, Uzumaki Mito collected her courage to ask him - one thing that she's afraid of hearing the answer though it was nearly confirmed but she wanted to hear it coming from him.

"Can I ask you something?" her eyes were stuck on the view below but her thoughts were somewhere else. She knew his answer would either hurt her or crush her but still, he was something important to her and she would respect that. Hashirama turn his head at her waiting for her question.

"What is Madara-sama to you?"

Her question puts flame through his mind, soul and body. What is she to him? Mito, of all the people asked. Tobirama already knows what the Uchiha was to his life, no need to confirm that though he never got the courage to ask him straight to the point about it. Hashirama was bemused, wishing he can be straightforward and good with words as Mito did.

"She is the-

"The playmate he had when he was a 13 year old kid getting tired of the foolish war-torn era and was glad he was not the only one."

Both of them turn their head at the direction where the voice came. Mito was perplexed but Hashirama almost had his eyeballs out as he watched Madara's figure appear.

The sharingan user did not hear their entire conversation, the only thing she have heard of was Mito's last question to Hashirama. Madara's thoughts in order as she walked; damn this Senju for bringing this bitch on 'their' place, damn this bitch for asking the stupidest question and the third and most of all...

Damn all the Senju in the planet because their leader might had carry this Mito bridal style in order for her to be in this top of the mountain. Heck, there was no other way she could be on this place without a shinobi's help!

"Mara..." Hashirama whispered.

"Sorry for any disturbances, I'm just here to actually report that the Uchiha renovations is done.
Anyway, I got to go now. Enjoy." She bid a very sarcastic tone then waved a hand at the two. Biting her lower lip and her eyebrows met when she turned around leaving them, her fists curled into a ball. There was a burning anger deep beneath her.

Envy, she was envious by this Uzumaki Mito and she was now prepared to show her who is Uchiha Madara and what an Uchiha was capable of.
"Madara wait!"

She has no qualms to stop on her tracks, not until the man chase after her and tap her from behind. That was when she felt a burning sensation of punching the life out of him that will absolutely send him flying off from the cliff.

She never felt anything like that before, the feeling alienated her wholeness like it almost blurred her vision. She landed a forced deadpan look to Hashirama before shooing his palm away on her.

"WHAT?"

Oh, how it sounded so obviously angry on how she asked.

The Senju raised both of his brows without a single thought on how she struggles on composing her violence.

"Can we talk?"

"FOR WHAT?"

"About the...wait, are you mad?"

"SHOULD I BE MAD?"

"But...you are,"

"I AM NOT MAD."

They were standing less than a meter from each other yet the boiling Uchiha was talking loudly as if making a battle cry. Hashirama was confused, he didn't know if it was because their argument before or because of different things. He observed the girl's facial expression and would've sworn he almost saw a steam coming from her nose, she was mad and her face betrayed her.

"Is there a problem?" He asked, skeptical at first but there was no other way to know what in the sage's name her problem was.

"ARE YOU FREAKING DEAF?"

"Mara?"

"I SAID I AM NOT MAD!" She said stepping closer, he stepped back.

"Then why are you shouting at me?"

"BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO YOU"

"So, you're mad?" Hashirama has the bothered and confused face combined. Just why can't be the Uchiha be direct to him.

Madara sighed, suppressing whatever emotion she needs to pull. All she ever wanted was to be gone on that place yet the Senju man, a.k.a the reason she had been out of herself blocked her way.
"Well, I just wanted to tell you that our renovations is done and that's all, now you can go back to your DATE and enjoy whatever business you're having with HER."

Hashirama's eyes were boldly shocked at Madara's respond, she 'hnn-ed' and smirked in an instant while observing the now stunned Hokage. He blushed, stuttered and shook his head multiple times.

"Wha- we are not having a DATE!"

"There is no need for you to explain anything at all, seeing how you flatter HER was enough."

The Uchiha tapped the ultra baffled Senju in the arm, Hashirama doesn't know how to answer as if he was struck by a lightning, whether to go in a defensive-mode-jutsu. Was she implying that he has 'something' with Mito? Well, she just did. Does Hashirama wanted to call an urgent meeting with the Uchiha to clear things? Yes, he does.

And before his non-existent romantic admiration for the Uzumaki arose;

"Wait- No- Its- What- MadarathatisnotwhatImeanabout her!"

"Hokage-san?"

Mito's arriving figure sent shivers to Hashirama's spine, hoping she didn't heard anything about Madara 's accusations of him 'liking' her. Before the Uzumaki stepped closer on where the two founders were (and before Madara chose to activates her sharingan ) she left the astounded Hokage in his spot.

The Senju was stuck between chasing after the Uchiha again or to wait for the appearing Uzumaki.

And from that moment, he had to choose.

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He knows he acted the wrong way at that time.

Fully aware of his own drunkenness last night, he heaved a mighty sigh before entering his brother's office. After leaving his duties and some paper works for two days as the Hokage's right-hand man, he knows he have many things to settle. Firstly, he badly needs to make reconciliation with his big brother. No, he will not apologize for bashing a certain Uchiha girl and for saying crude things about her – not that. He will apologize for hurting the tender, soft, overly dramatic and sensitive brother's feelings – that's all. Secondly, he needed to make sure his paper works and other things to do will be neatly and fittingly done before this day ended.

Of course there will be no 'thirdly' for apologizing to Madara – this was Tobirama Senju we were talking about.

He spotted the Hokage at his seat doing a day to day activity of a village leader.

Hashirama paid full attention on his younger brother seeing how he pinned his vision at him. They were in awkward silence in less than a minute before the albino broke it and started.

"I am sorry about last night, brother." He finally said and quickly avoid his brother's gaze. Tobirama cursed himself under his breath for being sounded so guiltily, yet he was. Showing weakness on moments like this was his weakness.

Surprisingly, Hashirama jumped out on his chair to hug his only brother left.
"What the hell brother!"

"I was the one who must say sorry to you, Tobirama." The older one hugged the young one like a teddy bear.

"Okay, just get off me, brother." The white haired man rolled his eyes. Every time they've got a big argument regardless of whose fault it was, Hashirama was always like this. Pinning his nose under the younger Senju's neck like a child, claiming the entire fault in the world like mad. Tobirama patted his back, wondering why in his 21 years of being alive he never got used on his big brother's idiocy.

"I apologize for being an insensitive brother to you." Hashirama said as if crying and sniffing like a child. Tobirama became more conscious of thinking that they are on the Hokage's office and there might be another person who will walk inside. He slowly pushed the older Senju back before he blows his nose on his collar.

"I really do hope we're fine by now."

"Yes, of course, but this doesn't mean that I will not be anymore against her. I am only apologizing for my behavior to you, not to her."

Hashirama said and handed the scroll to the sitting man and the albino quickly read the content.

"In Yugakure?"

The letter says the kiri fixed a rendezvous point at Yugakure to meet Hashirama about their 'misunderstanding'. Kiri was located at the eastern part of Konoha while Yugakure, or the 'village hidden in hot water' as it namesake, was located at the northern part of Konoha.

"Yes, well maybe it's because they wanted us to assume they truly want peace with Konoha."

As someone who knows politics, Tobirama understood clearly the good point in meeting on a different locale, especially if the issue was a complex one. But the far location of the rendezvous bothered him a little.

"Isn't it too far? I mean from Kiri to Yugakure they will have a long week of journey."

"I was just about to ask it on the letter I sent but I as you can read, they wanted to have the talk as soon as possible. Look Tobirama, it is us who made a fault to them in the first place so-"

"Oh stop that will you?! It is not us, it's just Madara who killed their village hero, this is why we are on this situation in the first place!"

Then he closed the scroll and put it back on Hashirama's desk, and angrily shot a glance at his elder brother, but then seeing the Hokage's stance going in front of him, he can already predict he will have another round of long debate and hearing words like how Madara was a vital part of the village.
"Fine! I am not saying anything ever again, just please do not bombard me how I should rather blame you saving that girl's name again for sending her to that peace talk because I wouldn't. You can forget the issue and I do believe it's a good move to agree on that scroll."

Tobirama rolled his eyes as if agreeing on his elder brother was mandatory, Hashirama just sighed but smiled.

"Thank you, my little brother"

Another person entered the room, both Senju gazed at the door. Talking about someone who exempts knocking before entering, it was none other than Madara.

The said girl have papers on her hands, totally ignoring Tobirama's presence. She didn't even bat an eye after seeing the albino inside. Meanwhile, Hashirama had a series of flashback and mentally panicked remembering what happened on the cliff.

"Guess my business here is finished, I'll just go and do my papers, see you later brother." and with that, Tobirama made his exit, wanting to at least save his day from ruining again. Although he already left their issue, he still doesn't want to spend the same place with the Uchiha.

He walked passed Madara and finally leave the two founders.

"Here."

Hashirama looked steadily at the papers which Madara put on his desk, still didn't know what to say first after a series of flashbacks about last night.

"I completed the information on that report, all you need to do is to sign that and it's done. You can check it if you want."

"Uh, Madara?"

"I adjusted the budget in financial column by the way."

"About last night.."

"We used some spare funds from our clan that's why."

"Mito and I practically went on our cliff because-

"THAT'S ENOUGH! JUST SIGN THE DAMN REPORT ALREADY SO I CAN GET OUT OF HERE NOW!"

The Uchiha changed her state from collected to a scary one. Hashirama held his breath, the poor Hokage didn't had the chance to continue his statement once again. But he doesn't want to aggravate the issue of 'he and Uzumaki Mito had a date on the cliff last night'.

"But its not a DATE!"

"Ah, just the two of you there?"

"We were just talking!" he argued as he literally stood up trying to get his point.

"And what about you carry her? Let me guess, bridal style, you jerk!"

The Senju was caught off guard and was loss for words, the Uchiha turned around and on her way
of leaving him.

And then all of a sudden, a realization hit him.

Do they really need to argue if he had a date with the redhead girl? Why are they arguing about that? Why would Madara pick fights on a certain topic?

"Why are you mad about that?"

Hashirama asked simply, not with an angry tone but with an innocent one. On the other hand, all of her energy was almost out of her body realizing the same thing.

Why?

Saying things like she's not mad or the likes would fail this time. Hashirama maybe stupid in her eyes at times, the dork, but he's intelligent to know that she was denying the fact that she's indeed mad at the moment.

"It's because people might misinterpret your closeness to that girl, that's all!"

_I really don't know why I made it sound like I am protecting your prestige this time._

_I hate you._

Hashirama blinked, trying to process Madara's response.

"No worries Mara, Mito and I were childhood friends remember? And also I think villager wouldn't put malice over my friendship with her." there goes Hashirama's usual sunny mood that irked the Uchiha in an instant.

"It's because you don't think like them, seriously? Have you read their minds for you to conclude it?"

"No but, they didn't put malice over my friendship with you, right?" Hashirama had a nervous smile. Madara was the one who's at loss for words this time.

_I freaking hate this idiot_

"Also, it's not a date, I promise" she was slightly surprised by the sadness in his eyes the way he said it. They knew each other for a long time and minus the tragic confrontation in the river (in Madara's knowledge) he never lied to her, more importantly not on the silliest things of life.

"Heh, I really don't care if the two of you are dating or not, it's all about the Hokage reputation, I don't want the people look down on the position that I will handle in the future."

The Senju was struck of her line and there was a vibrating effect on his chest after hearing Madara saying she doesn't really care at all. Overall Hashirama was hurt but then, he can't blame her.

He's just a friend to her.

Hashirama shrugged at her last statements and didn't take it too personal and proceeded to sign the report Madara wrote for it to be finalized. Knowing how meticulous and perfectionist the Uchiha was, he knows there was no error on it, so he just look on the page where he needed to sign.

After that he handed the copy of the report to her.
"Thanks." a cold thank you from the girl then she turned around again.

"Madara!" Hashirama called after a few steps away of the Uchiha

"What?"

"C-can we eat somewhere..together?" He said scratching his temple.

The raven haired girl scrutinized the Hokage, narrowing her eyes at him.

"You have workloads to do!"

"It's a part of my workload! Here I am going to discuss this to you." Hashirama smiled a toothy grin and held a scroll from Kiri.

"What is that?" he gained Madara's attention using the scroll, the Senju was glad by that.

"About the village." Hashirama playfully smirked bouncing the scroll over his hands, he knows the Uchiha's curiosity always heightened up when it comes to the village concerns.

"Let me read it."

"I am going to reveal this if and only if, you will have a date with me tonight."

"What?!!"
"I can't believe this."

She was on her way back to her clan's compound, muttering words of disappointments. The truth was, Hashirama must consider himself lucky that the Uchiha have many documents to deal this day. Otherwise, he will be spending his day trying to outrun Madara's threats, chasing him around his office desk.

"That scroll better have good news or he'll regret I said 'yes' on that." she hissed lowly after opening the door of her office inside the Uchiha headquarters, just beside their home which was the main house.

She refused to call the dreaded event that will about to happen soon with the right term for it.

"Madara-sama, Sadao-san wanted to give this to you."

Jiro came in with a message from Sadao and handed it out to her.

The message says: Lack of water supply in western side, fruits and vegetable seeds shortage and bakery needs.

"You can file this." Madara gave him the copy of the finished report that Hashirama signed. If Hashirama have Tobirama, Jiro stands as her right hand man, though it wasn't official but the man was almost a shadow of her when it comes in running the clan. Uchiha Jiro is a 22 year old man with a very Uchiha features of onyx eyes, pale white skin and yes, a handsome face.

Villagers ever wondered how the Uchihas remained to be as pleasing as that.

"Have you seen Izuna?" She asked while doing some of the clan's concerns in her table.

"I have seen him going out after you went to the Hokage." Jiro replied, staring at her.

"He must be playing with those Inuzuka brats again." Madara said coldly, the other Uchiha just snickered.

"Your brother is quite sociable isn't he?" He commented, having a casual talk with their leader was a very rare moment and he's beginning to have plenty of those these past few weeks since he stayed as her right hand man when Madara acted as the Hokage-in-charge of the village for a month.

"Yeah." She agreed, putting a hand under her chin looking outside the window. Jiro stared blankly at her appealing face.

"What?" Madara batted her eyes at the dumbfounded Jiro that was red as tomato, he felt like punching himself after getting caught red handed.

"N..Nothing Madara-sama!" he looked away shyly.

In fact, she always caught him peering at her. It's just she didn't think of his action that much, but now she's beginning to think what was this man's problem with her. Jiro as far as she knew was a loyal companion, a trusted clan member, to the fact that the two of them were second degree cousins. But he was also the second best Uchiha member. If weren't by their past as childhood playmates and cousins, she would have thought that he might be plotting to dethrone her of being...
the clan leader, but no. Madara trusted this man just as she trusted a certain Senju.

Ironically, one person from their rival clan can be a comparison in the level of trust she's giving on Jiro.

-xXx-

"This is Morito, the captain of their group and this is Mito, she formulated the seal for capturing the bijuus."

"I am Tobirama, my brother's right hand man."

Both men exchanged handshakes after Hashirama addressed each other respectively. Mito stands on her brother's side remaining a smile as she bowed slightly at the white-skinned and white-haired Senju.

All the while, the Hokage with the help of Toka discussed several things that Tobirama missed including how the trainings of the Uzumaki will undergo with the supervision of Madara. The albino gasped on his discontentment mentally while sohiting meaningful glances at his older brother. Hashirama scoffed and proceeded on explaining how the fujinjutsu that Mito created will work.

Morito and Tobirama had a small talk about the different types of fuinjutsu on which Hashirama found amusing because his little brother seemed to be very curious of it. Meanwhile, he and Mito are having an awkward silence even though the two of them were just together last night.

"I hope Madara-sama and our group will have a good training time." the Uzumaki girl said with a smile, breaking the uncomfortable silence between them. Hashirama quickly noticed it and felt embarrassed. It was not that he don't want to talk to her, it's just he don't know what to say. Though he was sure she never heard a thing about Madara's accusations but still, Hashirama found it hard not to be awkward when it comes to Mito after that.

The Hokage was a very talkative man, he talks and talks and talk to every living creature no matter how small or big, men or women, young or old yet now, he was like a mute person in their silence.

"This is so terrible of me! What if Mito thinks she did something bad?"

"Ha ha ha! don't worry Mito, I'm sure she will….enjoy your company." He said with a drop of sweat on his forehead and a laugh that doesn't seem to be normal from him.

After Morito said it will be better for them to leave after the meeting was adjourned for him to be able to discuss matters with their group, the twins left the office.

Tobirama faced his brother, narrowing eyes that could rival daggers. Hashirama sighed.

"I know what you're going to say."

"Why Madara? You could just assigned me to train them!"

"I have different task for you and about Madara, she's more of a strategist than you, even better than me."

"Brother but how could you-"

"Tobirama, I know you are a genius," He patted his brother's shoulder "It's just I know how she is
capable in doing the training."

"Did you see how she trained her men? I mean the Uchihas!" Then after some realizations. "Wait, so that's your plan?" Tobirama asked.

"Yes, Madara is a very strict leader which the Uzumakis never had, they're not a battle type of shinobis and apparently they lack some discipline in training and you know how Uchihas were trained – by Madara."

Hashirama explained, aside from the reason of giving Madara the task to the Uzumaki for her to get some socialization outside her clan, he knew the fact that the Uchihas were trained from hardship and best of discipline.

"But she might kill them all!" Tobirama exhaled, shoving the imaginations of Madara killing all the Uzumaki group because 'they lack the strength' or 'discipline' that doesn't qualify her out of the world standards.

"She wont do that." Hashirama said in a demanding tone, Tobirama scoffed and rolled his eyes.

"Fine, then she won't kill the Uzumaki, OUR RELATIVES, I really hope so!" He said with unbelievable expression and unconvinced tone "But mind if you can tell me about my task?"

"You will manage the village for awhile until I get back, or until Madara get back."

The younger Senju had wide eyes, him? Running the village? But that was something only his brother and the Uchiha always do. Yes, he was the Hokage's right-hand man, but he never had the experience in running the village all by himself.

"Me? You mean I will be the okage for the mean time? While you and that girl is outside the village?" he asked with a tension in his voice.

"Yes." Hashirama answered simply, while arranging some of his books in the shelf.

"Did you ask her permission about this?, bet she will have some violent reactions about me running your village, brother." Tobirama said as he sits on the hokage chair playfully with folded arms over chest and nodding while eyes closed, sounding very sarcastic on his point.

"Not yet, but I don't think she'll have a problem on that and I am the hokage, she's still the second in power to me, that wouldn't change even though I appoint you as my substitute for a short period of time."

Hashirama gazed at his brother, silently hoping the younger one would stop saying things about the Uchiha which left him uncomfortable to talk with him. Tobirama quickly sensed this and smirked.

"Okay, I trust you." He said with a surrendering hands just to give peace on his brother.

A knock was heard on the door when Hashirama spoke to whoever was it to come in.

"Good thing he knows how to knock unlike his sister."

Tobirama was not bothered of the young Uchiha's presence. The truth was, he never hated the boy unlike his sister. They never had some bonding nor he can remember the time he spoke to him.

"How may I help you, Izuna-kun?" Hashirama asked turning a gaze at Izuna.

The young Uchiha handed him another report concerning the missing sheep mission which Izuna
Tobirama once asked him why Hashirama gives the boy such imbecile tasks considering how Izuna was a prodigy and he can make more useful missions than the one he constantly gives the boy. Whereas Hashirama said it was because of Madara's 'rules' of Izuna to only receive non-deadly missions.

Hashirama granted his co-founder' command in fear of putting her only brother's life in danger. He cannot afford sending Izuna at risk because he knows how much the kid means to her.

Izuna means the world to Madara.

"I'm off now." The younger Senju said, of course he can stand Izuna's presence than Madara's. But his departure has nothing to do with the boy.

"Time to get my work going."

"Aren't you so busy lately?" Hashirama asked half jokingly while reading Izuna's report but he really do want Tobirama to get out in his office since Izuna arrived. As expected to Madara's brother, his papers were neat and clearly done.

"Yeah..Uh, see you brother."

Hashirama raised an eyebrow while watching his brother's back as he exit the room. Wondering why he's faltering in his words. He knows Tobirama very well, fully aware that there was something behind his 'busy schedule'.

"This is very good! well done Izuna-kun!" he said in a cheery manner watching Izuna's emotionless expression.

"Thank you," Izuna replied coldly avoiding to be sarcastic because he really thinks that asking him to look for a dumb missing sheep was offending his abilities.

"Is there another mission for me?, so I can go now." the Uchiha asked.

"Very straight to the point avoiding long talks, just like his sister." Hashirama silently grumbled.

"As of now..." he started, leaning more closely to Izuna between the table.

"There is something I wanted to ask to you..and uh," he continued, Izuna was confused.

"How do I say this.."

"Just ask?" Izuna said while making a space between the table and his chair, uncomfortable in the way Hashirama was making different facial expressions.

"What does your sister wants to eat?" Hashirama spilled out nervously and grinned.

He knows Madara since he's 13, they shared time together, skipped rocks together, played together and train together. They eventually ate together but it was nothing but a pack lunch and definitely or maybe its not her favorite food at all.

Izuna only stared in complete confusion.

-xXx-
She swore those damn papers, not because it was too difficult to handle but because the old geezer was asking much lately. It was no secret in the clan that Sadao and her didn't jive well. Mainly due to the reason of Sadao never liked Madara to be the leader, they preferred a male leader. Hence, Izuna was still very young to lead them. Madara hated the old man since then, she never liked him anyways. If not because of their blood relation and him being the wisest in the clan she already put him on his final resting place. It was like he's complaining and fault finding in her every decisions.

"That old hag!" Madara grunted while rolling out some scrolls. She was peacefully inside her Uchiha office alone since Jiro had taken a break. Madara refused to go with him because, well, she expected Hashirama to come later on - to have an event that she persistently avoiding to give a proper name.

Someone barged in and made a barbaric push at the door.

"Mara!" Hashirama called and grinning widely after making an eye contact to the girl. Thankfully, he changed his clothes before going to her. Those Hokage garbs were a sore in her eyes especially the hat.

"Hashirama, why are you here?" Madara asked as she was alarmed the way Hashirama summoned himself at the door of her office.

"Er, I'm here to, you know? fetching you." He said simply.

"I'm still working on my clan's needs." She replied, burying herself on the seat.

"But Madara, we will have a-"

"Later, and why didn't you knock before entering my place? This is my private office!" she barked.

"But you weren't knocking on my office too." Hashirama replied offended and almost sulking.

"Oh? May I say to you that the Hokage's office is also my office since we are equal in the truce, therefore my Uchiha office and your Senju office are two different things." Madara said as a matter of fact-ly raising an eyebrow at Hashirama, she didn't care if he's already sulking.

Suddenly, Jiro arrived with a glass of water on his hand. He was surprised to see the Hokage inside but then gives him a proper greeting before proceeding to Madara.

"Thank you, Jiro." Madara thanked her right hand man. Hashirama pouted on this and stared at the other man's action towards his best friend. He wasn't very fond of him after observing Jiro's unusual stares at Madara.

"Madara, it's already 5 o'clock!" No doubt Hashirama was starting to act like a kid this time, but the scene of Madara talking with this particular guy was unbearable in his sight.

"Hashirama," The raven haired girl forced not to roll her eyes, surely she wanted to yell at him for being so impatient to wait for her until she did some business but even in many times of scolding him, she still gives respect to Hashirama as the hokage and doesn't want to embarrass the Senju in front of other people. The only time she have the freedom to murder him was when they were alone, but not this time.

Madara turned to Jiro again and discuss the plan to improve their bakery needs through planting and seeding when the Hokage interrupted again.

"Mara, I thought we will have a da-"
"Okay! Fine! Fine! we will go." Madara cut him off, exasperated, before one of her associate finds out that her, Uchiha Madara and him, Senju Hashirama will have a date for tonight.

Also saving herself for hearing the dreaded word – date.

They left the room after she explained to have a meeting with the Hokage to Jiro.

-xxx-

Hashirama considered Izuna as an angel saving him from a lot of stress. Giving him the knowledge that her favorite food was Inarizushi.

"Inarizushi and some lemon tea, she'll love that." after that, the kid already realized what the man was up to.

"Take care of my sister." his final words before leaving his office.

"What a sweet lovely boy he is. If only Tobirama was like that, very supportive!" Hashirama cried on himself silently while walking outside the village. Madara spurned to dine with him where villagers can see them alone.

"Are you listening?" Madara asked suspiciously.

"Ah! of course, so where do you want to eat?" Hashirama asked excitedly, this was the night he'd been waiting for his whole life.

"That was my question." The girl sighed simply, the Senju apologized.

"Never mind, let's look for a tea shop it's getting cold."

"Yes! A tea shop is a great idea." Hashirama agreed he doesn't want to ruin Madara's mood so soon.

Hashirama suggested a tea shop he knows five kilometers from the village. The place was finer than Madara's expectations, she assumed a small plain looking tea shop just like the others. The shop, or the tea house as Madara referred it because it's much bigger than a traditional tea shop was made of shoji windows and sliding doors made of wooden lattice. Its tatami mats were consisted of a combination of green and white colors.

"We happened to drop by here I think thrice already." Hashirama started the casual conversation he almost never had with her because their normal talks if not due to business were nothing but arguments.

"We?" She asked looking at the direction of the arriving waitress.

"Tobirama and I." He answered, looking to the menu book that the waitress handed to them. He also paid attention to Madara's gaze at the server as she stands waiting for their order.

"Oh it's you, sir!" The waitress remembered Hashirama's face. She's probably younger than him and Madara, a teenager with long blonde hair and a pretty face but small in stature.

"Just dropping by again to your lovely shop! I mean, tea house." He had a small chit chat with the girl which Madara find disturbing, the blonde waitress blushed multiple times when Hashirama complimented how great tasting their foods and teas were. The Uchiha flashed glint of annoyance to the girl's presence with a calculating look. Hashirama quickly noticed this and proceeded to have
Two cups of lemon teas and Inarizushi for me and my date please." Hashirama said confidently and was rewarded by the 'look' courtesy of Madara for saying the 'cursed word'. The waitress, goggled-eyed, looked closely at Madara and realized she was a girl. It was not surprising for someone without knowing them to mistook her as a man, what kind of girl does wear something like a man's robe and was dark colored.

Madara ever wondered if Hashirama would be pissed if she sliced the girl in half for giving her an offending look.

The waitress turn around after taking their orders, her face cannot be read.

"Who is she?" Madara asked.

"You mean Akina?" He answered coolly "She's the daughter of the owner of this shop. I heard their family originated from Taki but life had been difficult there so eventually, they build this shop as their business." Hashirama continued, he really does spontaneous interviews with everyone he met.

"You know too much about her." Madara commented hiding the nuisance in her tone.

"We had a good time the first time Tobirama and I visited the place." he answered.

"Good time?" Madara repeated, digging in a much more detail.

"A long talk, I guess?" He said back, getting edgy of how Madara shoot angry glances at Akina's direction.

These past few days, he's beginning to worry in her random temper. It was not usual to see her in such mood. Specifically on how she reacted on Mito, he almost had a heart attack for accusing him going on a date with the Uzumaki. Mito was just a friend for him, always will and always be, and now her reaction was roughly the same on Akina. Hashirama was baffled; she never reacted that way to other girls before moreover with Toka.

"Anyway, how's the Uchiha clan?" He asked with the agendum of diverting the topic before it gets worse.

Madara sighed that could have translated how she was terribly pissed of how much a dick Sadao is. From his constant complaints to the history of the old Uchiha never liked her attitude. Hashirama only listened, he knew Sadao in professional terms like speaking with him when there's a situation that he needs to, but mostly and all of the time it was Madara whom he talks to about the clan since she's the clan head. The Senju didn't know other details and what's behind Madara and Sadao's negative relationship mainly because Uchihas were very secretive and it was the first time she spoke about the man. Truthfully, he thought all of them were in very good terms due to their strong blood relations.

"He never wanted my life to be easy, he hated it, he's a stupid old hag seriously if not because of my clanmates I would have killed him eons ago, ten times using different weapons." Hashirama gulped heavily, his best friend would really do that based on the amount of hate she have for the old man if there's a chance.

"Why do you hate him that much?" He asked, that time another waitress delivered their orders; it was not Akina but a different one. Hashirama worried for awhile if ever the blonde was traumatized by Madara's glares. No normal person can withstand those majestic onyx eyes, in his
"He's a close relative to my father, since my father died he wanted another Uchiha to lead the clan in oppose to me." The Uchiha head replied, sipping her cup of tea.

"But why?" the Senju was now beginning to get really curious on her story.

"He said I was the cursed child and at some point will be the doom of this world." Madara stated, Hashirama blinked and didn't know what to say.

"That's weird." His only response, biting a piece of Inarizushi from his plate.

"He's that pathetic, mind you." She replied back, Hashirama sniffled a laugh.

They stayed until they are the only customers left on the tea house. The food was great and the tea is just fine in Madara's opinion. Hashirama was thankful for Rikudo-sennin above (and Izuna in Konoha) by that. She really did like the Inarizushi regardless of how and where it was made.

The Senju pulled out a scroll inside his robes and gave it to her.

"As promised!" he grinned, Hashirama was more than happy to spend a long time with her. In addition to his happiness was they were alone in the place which gave them more privacy. Madara took the scroll, carefully opening it reading the entire content.

"In Yugakure?"

Hashirama sighed, he cannot believe how Madara's expression resembled on Tobirama's after reading the letter.

"You and Tobirama had the same reviews." he sulked "I thought you'd be happy at least."

"Don't get me wrong here Hashirama, this is a good news and a making of your promise to me in trusting you to settle things but I know those men." Madara explained trying to figure out why would the Kiri people chose Yugakure as a rendezvous point.

"Who are you going with?"

"I planned my group in composed of three other men, Yugakure is a neutral village I don't think we have anything to worry about."

Madara trusted him and also his decisions and of course his abilities to charm every people around him. He's more of use in making arrangements and reconciliations unlike her, she's well known for being an unwelcoming, cold human. But she preferred it that way, it makes her feel in power and more reserved. She does not giving a damn what other people think about her.

"Is this all you want to talk with me?" she asked like already knowing what's the next big step inside Hashirama's sleeves. The brown skinned man laughed nervously.

"About the Uzumaki training,"

"Fine, I'll take it." she answered, Hashirama was in pure shock.

"REALLY?!" he screamed, almost standing.

"Just a little reward for your efforts in keeping the village safe and also ...for the treat." Madara simpered, she can be really nice sometimes, thanks to her favorite dish.
"But they better behave at their best or they detest my training methods for the rest of their lives." and had an evil smirk across her face which Hashirama always finds scarier than death.

"Hahaha! They'll be good don't worry." He said scratching the back of his head, silently praying that his distant relatives would make it alive before the capturing bijuu operations started.

Hashirama can tell by the odds given the situation that he did an outstanding job in taking her out. After all, they didn't had a debate just to get her train the Uzushio people. A sly smile showed up in his face while viewing the best scenery of his life.

His heartbeat raced when a snap of thought hits him.

"Should I say it?"

"What are you thinking?" she asked, curious in her friend of being suddenly silent, normally Hashirama would talk continuously and she would be the one to scold him to stop telling long stories and just make it short.

"It's nothing." Hashirama shook his head removing his eyes from the Uchiha to the table. Sometimes their closeness gives strain to their bond. It's like she can read his mind just like his next move in battle.

"Liar, just tell me what is bothering you." Madara compelled, then she wasted few minutes in forcing the Senju in what's keeping his mouth shut.

The Uchiha was soon to have an outburst like the old days when Hashirama laughed.

"You know me so well, I mean you can read my mind do you?"

Never did he imagine that admitting his deeper feelings would be this hard. He knows he cannot have another chance like this, another moment like this, is it the right time? Would it be right for him to say it?

"You idiot, of course I know what you are, we are...friends."

"I hope you can read my feelings too."

She was cut off by his bizarre statement. She was clueless, thinking what does the man meant by that. They fell in an uncomfortable silence, both were looking down the table waiting for each other to speak again. It was Hashirama who tried to continue. The great shinobi of the Senju clan had been in numerous combats before, none of these can be compared on how much of tension he's having right at this moment. He didn't know confessions would be chakra exhausting in his part.

This was the hardest battle he had faced, ever – by declaring his feelings.

He can almost hear a heart pounding inside his chest.

"Excuse me sir, we are closing."

Both heads were turned after the waitress informed them on the shop's closing time. Hashirama apologized politely leaving his anxiety behind, though it was clear the waitress did an outstanding ruin-the-moment timing.

Hashirama put a hand on his pocket looking for something all over his robes and was gobsmacked.

"Are you kidding me? Where is it?!!"
Madara observed as the Senju almost roll himself and flips the table looking for whatever is it with his face pale as a blank sheet of paper.

"Hashirama?" The Uchiha was bothered by the fact that the waitress was waiting patiently for their bill.

The tan man (now paler than his usual color) cannot look straight in her eyes and was really nervous.

"Uh, Madara... I don't know how to say this... but,"

"What?" The black haired girl tilted her head, questioning Hashirama's fidgety.

The Hokage exhaled and inhale some air before giving her his most embarrassing line, ever.

"I... I think I left my wallet in my office!"

-xXx-

They left the shop soon after, in the end, after all his hardship and tension and dilemmas to ask this girl out, Madara paid the bill of their VERY FIRST date.

"I'm sorry, I really am!" said by Hashirama who just cursed himself over and over in his mind.

"I'm such a fool! am I really that naive to forgot my wallet on this very important occasion?" he felt as if he wanted to summon a very tall tree and hang himself on top of it. Or maybe asked Tobirama to drown him on his jutsu when he gets home.

He was very excited to go out on his office that he left his own wallet.

"It's fine." said by Madara disinterestedly.

"Oh great, I paid my first ever date with the stupid dork! and what more? I accepted to train those noobs, I know I cannot take back my words anymore, whatever, he'll pay for this. This is why I don't like being nice at all." she grumbled under her breath.

Repaying her from the bill wouldn't change the fact that she was the one who paid their first date so Hashirama double face palmed on his original idea.

"I promise I will double everything on the second one!"

Second one?

"Hn, whatever."

After all, she didn't dismiss Hashirama's offer of a second date.

They went on their separate ways after entering the village (It was Madara's idea and before they finally goes their own way Hashirama insisted on taking her home but the Uchiha glared at him saying she doesn't want her people to conclude that they were together for a couple of hours or so she's getting tired of his drama and shit).

He was still bothered on what happened but before Hashirama crossed his path on the Senju compound he was greeted by Tobirama.

"Where have you been? you will have an important meeting tomorrow and your coming home this
late?" The younger Senju scolded, folding arms over his chest.

Hashirama paid no attention to his brother's scolding.

"Yeah, I think I'm tired now." He simply answered, not wanting to hear more of his little brother's reprimands.

"Then you better rest. But where have you been?" Tobirama asked again, suspicious of his brother's lateness. Usually before a day of a mission Hashirama was always getting all of his equipment and stuffs readying for the journey, so it was atypical of him now.

"Tobirama,"

"Huh?"

"Have you seen my wallet?"

-xXx-

The Uchiha entered their place in the dead of the night, whispering curses and irritation but still, she can't deny the fact that even though he was a dork in her eyes, she really did enjoy her time with Hashirama.

"Hn, can't believe I enjoyed it." a smug showed up on her face. That Senju was the only person she knew who will exert an effort to be with her for longer period of hours. It was no biggie, since they were children they do hang out a lot but this time, it was something she can say 'on a different level' than their normal past hang outs.

"Oi, Madara~" A jovial but Madara found pestilential voice called, Yoko Uchiha, Jiro's younger sister and Madara's royal pain in the butt.

"Here we go again." The taller girl rolled her eyes, hoping to kami that Yoko will be gone soon, she doesn't want another choking event and waste some of her strength to strangle the smaller teenage girl.

"What's up?" The sardonic girl asked, hands behind her back grinning stupidly at their leader's bored face.

Yoko was the only one in their mighty and glorious Uchiha clan that doesn't put an honorific at her and it was unquestionable. Their relationship was a complex one, the younger Uchiha girl loves to put her on a shitty mood every time they came across each other.

Although it was not their original treating. They used to be playmates when they were young.

"Look, I'm not in the mood to play with your shits. I am tired."

The older Uchiha put a determined tone on the last part. Emphasizing each syllable to warn Yoko and also saving another headache to come.

"Hmm~" Yoko jumped around her, she didn't move although every inch of her wanted to kick the other girl away so she can finally rest.

"Seriously, what do you want?" Madara asked in an ultra bored tone, she just wanted to end this day, have a warm bath before going to sleep so in the morning she will be in a full condition to stomach Hashirama's order in training the Uzumakis.
And she's sure as heck it will be the most boring mission she have ever got.

"How's your date huh?"

On an instant, Madara's bored stance became a total opposite of it. Her eyes surprised and flinched the moment Yoko dropped her words.

"How did you know about it?!"

"EH? what do you mean?"

Yoko had the same expression as hers.

"How careless of me!"

Madara knew it, Yoko was just playing her words again. The short haired Uchiha girl has no knowledge about that at all, Madara surmise it's because Yoko saw Hashirama and her together walking around inside Konoha area and then there's nothing more. She and Hashirama were not that dumb to figure out if someone was watching the two of them having a secret date outside, sensory wise.

Profounding her well collected state, Madara goes back in her mask of indifference.

"There is no way in hell that would happen."

"Awww c'mon Madara! why do you have to be that serious?"

"This bastard..

"I am not..that... defensive." Madara stuttered, feeling like she wanted to pull a hair on someone's head disbelieving she almost fell on that trap.

"I didn't tell you are defensive! I said you are serious, Madara." Yoko has now the intrigued look, smiling sheepishly at Madara, she wanted to jump around the taller just to piss her more.

"What now?" the shorter girl was enjoying this even when she didn't know what really happened to the baffled Uchiha Madara. The last time she faced her, Madara choked her to death on joking about Hashirama being her boyfriend. Luckily Jiro was there and caught his flying sister out on the Uchiha office window.

"Neechan!"

Izuna ran going to his older sister. That's the only time Madara got the chance to avoid Yoko. The other girl laughed as Madara walked pass to her with a blank and serious face.

"She never learned anything huh."

Izuna commented as they walk away from Yoko.

"Hnn, I don't have a time to deal with her"

"Would you beat her again if I didn't came?" Izuna asked worriedly, not wanting the choking incident to happen again. He never liked Madara to get involved in any trouble.

"Definitely." he answered, the boy sighed.
"You can just avoid her, neechan."

She didn't hear Izuna's advice due to the thoughts of 'Yoko will be the last person to know about that' and that she must be more cautious around the other girl's presence.

"What a pain in the ass bitch." she hissed

"Neechan?"

"Hmm?"

"How's your date?"

-xXx-

That morning, the Hokage office was crowded composed of the whole Uzumaki group, Hashirama and his three other hand picked men for their trek to Yugakure, Tobirama and Toka.

And of course, Uchiha Madara, who glared daggers at the Hokage right after declaring his younger brother to be the in-charge of the village while they're away.

She knew it would be beneficial if Hashirama would assign someone to look over the village while the two of them (who usually exchange roles as Hokage from time to time) were both outside Konoha. But for her, the idea of Tobirama ruling their village deserves an eye roll. The Uchiha didn't like it very much, she's beginning to throw curses at her mind during Hashirama's short advice (or you can call it 'uplifting speech before everyone's mission). When everyone left after the Senju was done, Madara stood there looking away at him.

"What do think Mara? This figurine is great as a peace offering-gift for them! I hope they like it!"

Hashirama proudly said while polishing his handmade wood sculpt for the Kiri.

"Hnn,"

"Don't you like it?"

"Since when my idea matters to you?!" The Uchiha hissed.

The Senju flinched at her reaction but definitely got the point why she's acting that way.

"Is it because of Tobirama?" he begrudgingly asked.

"No Hashirama, it's not because of that. It's not because of you assigning him as the in-charge without my knowledge, of course it's not because of that!" She said with a sarcasm thicker than oatmeal.

"I am sorry about that, it's just...hard for me to leave the village without someone keeping it safe and stable." He said in apologetic tone and walked nearly at the girl.

"Our village is already stable. Giving a title to your brother as Hokage for three days? that's just dumb."

"But Madara-"

"Enough of this. The only bearable thing on this scenario is that he will be the in-charge for a very short period of time, but if ever we we're both away from longer period I will definitely make
someone's head roll to the ground assuming you never ask me about it."

Hashirama gulped at the comment but realized she accepted his decision.

"Make sure you will be here here after three days." Madara grimly demanded as she still loathe Hashirama's scheme.

"Sure I will! Ha ha ha" he laughed tensely. A very serious Madara was just scary as hell.

"You better be." she added then walks away.

"Where are you going?" Hashirama dumbly asked, the Uchiha raised an eyebrow upon this.

"On our respective units, we have missions to do have you forgotten?"

"Madara, but what do you think about the figurine?"

One of Madara's handpicked men walks in, it was Jiro.

"Pardon my interruptions, Madara-sama we are ready."

"What a great interruption."

Hashirama was cut off by this. The other man's presence gives him a calamity-like feeling of jealousy to think he had huge amount of time standing, listening and interacting with Madara. And to think they will travel together brings him another worrying thoughts.

He just wanted to have more time with her before their departure.

"I'll be going now."

"Madara! wait."

"What? the earlier we depart the earlier we'll be home."

"No I just wanna ask you something!"

"If it's about the stupid figurine, its good. Can I go now?"

"No, I mean we can hang out again right?" he whispered.

Her eyes turned to slits and growled lowly.

"What the hell are you asking me about when we have more important things to do?!"

"Isn't that important?"

Hashirama turned into depression at her statement, the girl shrugged and proceeded with Jiro.

"Be here after three days,idiot."

Before Madara finally closed the door, he saw a ray of hope catching the inaudible movements of her lips dropping a hint so it would be safe away from the Uchiha guy's ears.

"Just make sure to bring your wallet next time."

He didn't care if it was a smirk or a smile, for him it was the latter.
It was the shortest smile he ever saw and he thinks it only lasted for two seconds before the door clicked.

But that doesn't matter to him.

-xXx-

Hashirama Senju was a happy man.

Three other men that was hand picked by him are behind whispering different reactions at the Hokage's energetic stance. He almost look stupid in their eyes as he appreciated every 'new' flowers and trees along the way, saying those are beautiful, the sky was beautiful, the weather was perfect, everything was lovely etc etc.. He even hummed an unknown song or music as he leap on huge trees.

"Next time I will tell her everything, everything!" he thought excitedly. Making a promise on his own about the long time devotion on his heart to finally spill it soon after they get back to the village.

No matter how much he was held back by his cowardice to admit it.

Disregarding Tobirama's resentful reactions to it.

Screw it all.

Because he was happy. He was happy.

On the first day, he remained on that behavior, as if he drank a barrel of caffeine or chocolates. Akio, a Senju member who is on his team reminded the other two from a different clan that Hashirama normally acts jovially. Tori who was an Uchiha was fazed while Daiki from Sarutobi clan just laughed.

Overall they are having a good trip on their way. There were no suspicious occurrences, no threats, no smell of danger. Everything was fine but everyone of them are cautious.

The peace talk will be held soon after they arrived at Yugakure on the second day.

Even Tori can tell it will be a successful peace talk basing on the tranquility of their journey.

But he was wrong.

They were all wrong.

"Now strike!" a voice called loudly from a distance.
Clock ticking slowly with the silence all over the corners of the room. The only sound he can hear aside from it was his breathing. Tobirama tossed another pile of folders on the vacant space of the table. Stretching his back and straightening his posture heaving a tired sigh. He still haven't made any progress on his personal project and that makes his load doubled.

He was having a little sympathy on his older brother in staying on a boring place with a lot of work to do. Being a Hokage was not just a job, it was a tough job.

Despite all of this, office works and all the things that involved analysis and philosophical ideas suits him well. While doing his assigned work, a simple thought dawned him. What if he became the Hokage? what if he's the one who face a gazillion of papers on a daily basis, handling different cases of different people's dilemmas, arranging everything inside and outside the village.

He wondered.

Will he be capable and effective just like Hashirama and Madara's leadership?

Tobirama snickered at the thought, what was he thinking?. That would never happen. But why was he thinking of something like that?. He quickly shoved the idea, him being the Hokage? really.

Of course, based on his level of intellect and skills, he would definitely do an outstanding job being the Hokage. But never did he imagine that a single contemplation would hit him.

"Nah, this is my thing, but I have different 'wants' to do."

"Tobirama-sama! terrible news!" A shinobi messenger bawled. It was so stress-fully quiet when he barged in. The man stuttered, spilling single syllable bits by bits. Tobirama stands, carefully motivating him to speak on a normal language.

"Ki...Kiri-gakure!"

"What do you mean?"

"Tobirama-sama!" Suddenly, Toka jumped in the scene with a much detailed news.

"We are being attacked!"

He groaned with unbelievable expression and with Toka's information it was all crystal clear, they had been betrayed.

"Alarm everyone in the village, call every head of shinobi clans. Toka, use some of our Senju men in delivering the news."

"How dare they ignore my brother's peaceful message..but what happened to Hashirama's group?"

"But how about the Uchiha clan? Both Madara-sama and her assistant are not in the village." Toka sked, the albino Senju bit his lower lip. He needed to analyze the situation. The possibility of misunderstanding between them and Kiri was high also the possibility of his brother's peril state.

As the Hokage-in-charge, he has to think quick in giving orders to his people. But deciding which act must do, he still has a lot to learn. Yet unlike the era of warring states, they now have a lot of people to protect mainly composed of civilians or non-shinobi people.
"What happened to you brother? Damn I need to think about this, the village needs an immediate response from me! Hashirama.."

"Nevermind, I will personally talk to the Uchihas about this. I leave the rest to both of you."

Toka and the messenger swiftly left the room. It was an emergency, a bloody emergency. Konoha was just a year older and even they have numerous shinobi clan residents Tobirama doesn't think the village was ready for war.

He instantly flew using his unfinished teleportation jutsu in the Uchiha compound and was not surprised to see that almost all of them were already out of their homes. Looked like they knew he will eventually visit their humble place. As expected to another war veteran clan, they sensed the danger before it broke itself.

It was one of the rarest moments of his life to took a step inside the Uchiha place. Tobirama slowly and forcibly, calmly deal with those calculating eyes. It was no secret that he still doubt the Uchihas more especially their leader. But this was not a time to ponder on his great abhor to their former rival clan.

"I wanted to talk to your in-charge."

They stared at him as if a tiger looks on its prey, all of them held the same look on their faces like he said something offending, Tobirama felt he was being dissected from head to toe.

"Okay, of course, what do I expect from the rabid-dogs." He hushed at the back of his mind. Uchiha really are very hard to deal with.

"I am."

An old man with a cane stepped forward. Tobirama was glad by an answer after a few offending glares.

"Sadao-san, is it?"

"Tobirama-san, I can give you our best fighting shinobis. How many of us do you need?"

"Firstly, I will try to talk to whoever bastard he is leading the whole pack of Kiri men and if didn't work we have no choice but to defend the village and fight."

Sadao nodded, faced his clansmen and started to call random names for Tobirama.

"Is Izuna here?" the old man asked.

"Wait," Tobirama halted, sensing Sadao's proposal. "Madaras younger brother? I don't think he must participate on this. He's still a kid."

"Ohoho, come on, this kid is better than most of your Senju men." Sadao bluntly said, Tobirama was irked by that. How dare him compare a young Uchiha to an adult Senju!

Izuna calmly stepped forward. The boy strikingly resemble his elder sister and they almost have the majestic eyes. A true heir's pair of onyx eyes that cannot be compared to others.

Sadao picked twenty Uchiha men and women including Izuna and transferred them for Tobirama purpose.

-XX-
"They're lame."

The Uchiha man huskily said, Madara breathe in and out with eyes closed and couldn't agree more on Jiro's remark.

"Wow I'm impressed, this is Senju's relatives really?" and there goes her dark humor.

Power and strength wise, Madara literally fought the Senju clan before over and over more so with its leader and she cannot understand why the hell this Uzumaki was a total opposite of them.

The first part of the training included a test of stamina on which they were quite impressive. As an Uzumaki they were well known with a remarkable endurance, Madara's expectations was a bit satisfied by this. The second part was the fighting strategy, she ordered them to get a partner to spar with so she can see how each other of them fight.

And it was far from good.

"Enough,"

The Uchiha girl mentally landed a hand over her head, but she was Uchiha Madara so instead she sighed annoyingly with a glare that would make anyone run. Scanning the group of noobs around she observe each and everyone of them, all with a questioning look. She walked around them, arms folded over her chest.

"You are all sore in my eyes!" Madara shouted, Jiro on the other side whispered something like "Oh no here it is." and made an awkward flinch. He knew it will come soon.

"My apologies, Madara-sama. But this is how we fight."

Morito, the leader of the group stepped in front in behalf of his clansmen.

"Surely, you don't think you can help Hashirama by that stupid fighting skills."

Other Uzumaki were unhappy by her disrespectful remarks. Morito waved a hand, telling them to calm down after sensing their anger. So it was not just a talk of the town, this girl standing a few steps from him was the least someone can expect to be easily in dealing with. When he first saw her, he cannot believe that a girl with a face of an angel can be the she-devil that everyone was talking about in the battlefield. Now he started wondering how did Hashirama came to befriend someone like her.

"I do believe we are on this training because of that." Morito said back as defense.

"This faggot." Madara swore in silence, she hated his freaking guts. She hated them as a whole as well. She can feel it must be worse if his bitch sister was with them. Lucky for her to deal for at least one irritating Uzumaki.

When Hashirama explained that Mito will still need to arrange the jutsu all by herself so she will not come with them, Madara didn't even let him finish and walked out the door. Thankful that she wouldn't see that girl's face for the meantime.

"Ah, yes." She answered with an evil smirk on her beautiful face. The wicked smile - Jiro turned around and went on an empty spot near the trees - a safer place indeed.

"Then, lets start with the real training."
Madara activated her sharingan.

-xXx-

"Hey Izuna-kuuun~!" Yoko caught up with the boy while walking. The young girl was one Sadao's personal choice to fight the village attackers. Izuna just stared as she put her arm over his shoulder like they were close. The boy was always keeping his distant to Yoko because his older sister doesn't have a good relationship with her. Though he can always hear from his Uchiha senpais that the two girls were playmates when they were still a kid. Even so, Izuna did not tried to ask Madara what happened between the two of them because she doesn't seem to care at the other girl at all.

"Where do you think is he going to take us?" Yoko whispered talking about Tobirama. They were near the village exit, wearing battle outfits, their weapons on their side and back. Izuna tried his best not to roll his eyes. First, he doesn't think she was that dumb, it was obvious they are going out to escort the Hokage-in-charge and face the enemies. Izuna thought she was just making a topic so he will speak with her.

"Out of the village," the boy answered simply.

"Geez, you're just like your sister! a boy with few words huh, Izuna-kun?" she teased and shuffled his hair.

"Uhg."

The silent boy was irked by this. He was really sensitive when it comes to his hair. He 'tsk-ed' while glaring daggers at Yoko (who, mind you, still grabbing half of his small frame).

"Aww, look at that cute pout!" She hugged him tightly almost choking the younger Uchiha to death.

"Eeeekkk!"

Izuna silently hoped his sister took him on her trip, just as he always wanted to be with her.

After a while an adult shinobi approached them assigning Yoko to a different team. The girl went away disinterestedly, while Izuna observed his surroundings. Different teams with different clans are formed on a group of a three man cell.

"What could it be?" Izuna pondered.

"Izuna," an albino man with the red eyes spoke "...you are going to be on my team."

"Okay."

Distinct teams have their separate routes to look for the attackers. Their first move was to ensure the safety of the villagers so Tobirama gathered shinobis in order to defend the village at all cost. Secondly, he need to stabilize the enemy's motive in attacking them. He wanted to make sure that this isn't a misunderstanding hence, if the kiri failed to hear him out then they cannot waste another minute but to fight head-on until Hashirama or Madara returned. Still, he was bothered by his brother's status.

His team was composed with Izuna and a Yamanaka. Tobirama was aware of the boy's capabilities and his sharingan may come in handy. But he was also aware of Madara's overprotective-ness to her younger brother. Hashirama once stated that no matter what happens, it was the best thing to keep the boy in a much safer mission, all because he was the only brother left for Madara. This was
why Hashirama always give him easier missions, but Tobirama was different, he sees the boy as a future asset and quite thankful that it seems Izuna was a bit different to Madara.

He was the greatest sensory type ninja of their time and he can already sense the kid as someone worthy of his trust.

"Well, after all he is on my team. The witch must not overreact on this."

The Senju said at the back of his mind while they are traveling faster than lightning looking for the enemies.

A black smoke appeared on their trek, that was when they stopped and readied themselves. Izuna quickly activated his sharingan, the Yamanaka calculated how much enemies do they have as of now using their clan's mind technique.

"There's at least five of them." the Yamanaka confirmed.

Tobirama put his arms on his sides and stood casually "I wanted to talk to your leader about this." he spoke.

But they were answered by crystal shurikens instead. "It's no use." Izuna said while dodging the shurikens with his katana. "They already made up their mind to destroy us." he continued.

The Senju halted and realized the same, but still wanted everything to be clear before making a decision.

"I thought my brother talked to your village? what's with this?"

Alas, two men appeared before them.

One with a giant sword on his back and a scary scar on his face. While the other one clearly looks like a samurai or a rounin holding a needle-like sword.

"Ahhh, look, Senju Tobirama." the rounin said, mockingly greeted Tobirama.

The Senju calmly looked on his and his partner's eyes. The seven ninja swords men of the mist, no doubt. They were high calibre shinobis and deadly opponents. They were a newly formed group yet their name was reaching every side of the world due to their widespread destruction and one of a kind weapons.

"Answer me, what is the meaning of-" he demanded, but before he even finish his line, the one with the giant sword charged at him. The rounin swung his needle-like sword or the Nuibari at both Izuna and the Yamanaka.

"Hmm? an Uchiha..."

Tobirama looked at Izuna's direction while facing his own enemy. Little by little an understanding was growing on his mind.

"Is it because?" He remembers, the hero whom Madara killed was one of them. Revenge.

That was when he realized tagging along Izuna in his team was a very bad idea.

-xXx-

"Strike!"
Giant boulders started to come out from above as they were passing through a misty valley. Hashirama summoned a giant wooden hands to protect his companions.

"Hokage-sama, they are from Kiri!" Daiki shouted.

The past few minutes he was the happiest person in the world, planning about everything to do with a certain girl once he comes back to the village. Now there he was, placing three giant boulders upon the palm of his wooden jutsu and was completely baffled by the situation.

Over twenty men all with black and blue clothing surprised them. They were outnumbered. Tori, Akio and Daiki starts to fight the shinobi enemies while Hashirama started to stomp the shinobis using the mokuton.

"Oi," A large jackfruit-like weapon hits the huge hands wood jutsu covering the Hokage.

"Samehada likes you a lot."

"What? it's draining my chakra..."

"Haven't you heard of them?"

"I think Madara told me about it." the long haired Senju rested his chin on his hands still sleepy, he yawned "Ah, yes she did."

Tobirama sighed, "Well, she travels a lot so I'm sure she did. But I just hope she wouldn't mess with them." the younger Senju continued, placing their breakfast on the table. They were orphaned and raised only by their father so both of them knows how to cook, but Tobirama was a much good cook than Hashirama so he usually prepare their food. It was an early morning discussion between brothers. Long before Madara happened to murder one of the seven swordsmen.

Hashirama flinched nervously looking straight to Tobirama's eyes with a surprised expression "HUH?"

"They're dangerous." he started to brew some tea "It's not that we cannot fight them or win against them, but it's better to avoid the likes of them."

"Aren't they're working for Kiri? I thought they are peace loving people too!" Hashirama chirped like a kid

"What did she tell you about them then?"

"Uhmm, something like..." Hashirama held his chin while he thinks "shitty persons?"

"What a nice description, is that her favorite word?"

Hashirama then started to eat

He realized that it was the group who are doing the dirty job for Kiri - the seven ninja swordsmen. From the attacker's weapon - the samehada, its primary use was to absorb chakra. Hashirama did understood the situation.

They have been betrayed.

Never did he imagined that Kiri wouldn't hesitate to make a traitorous move against them. All he
wanted was peace between their villages but what he doesn't understand was their level of resentment to the point of plotting to dispose Konoha's leader.

They were serious, indeed.

Hashirama waved his hands as the mokuton 'hand' pushed away the samehada wielder.

"My, my, Senjus are really gifted with chakras." the wielder of samehada, Fuguki Suikazan said.

"What is the meaning of this? people of Kirigakure.." the Hokage demanded, while observing his surrounding. They are now surrounded by a large number of Kiri shinobis. His subordinates taking a defense position.

"Hnnnn? Kirigakure doesn't share any information to an enemy, but if you wanted to know the reason.."

Fuguki started to attack him again swinging the samehada, Hashirama charged another mokuton vines to him but it just drain some of his chakra. He grabbed his sword and started clashing it with Fuguki's weapon.

"We are 'clearing' our way." The huge, fat man spoke with an evil smirk across his face.

The two clashed for about some seconds until Hashirama got an upper hand, not until some shinobis joined their fight.

"Shit, he's strong. so this is the power of Senju Hashirama." Fuguki snarled after receiving a strong blow from the Hokage.

"All I have to do is to make him drop that sword, keeping him apart from the samehada will definitely finish this fight."

Hashirama calculated the enemies. Tori, Akio and Daiki having their own fights against the attackers. From the looks of it, Fuguki’s troops aren't composed of a very good combatants, they are just great in numbers. It was also quite obvious they were just buying them some time, talking about delaying something.

"It can't be..."

His eyes came in bewilderment on the realization "Are they trying to keep me away from the village? Is that it? The far rendezvous point...the..damn it! Tobirama..."

Turning his head where they came from, Fuguki used this chance to take a strike on him.

"The village is-"

"Your village be gone now, so are you! DIE!"

-xXx-

"Izuna!"

"Yes!"

Both of them blasted their signature jutsus: the suiton and the katon on two different sides.

"Crap."
The scar-face man did his best to avoid Izuna's attack but the side of his arms was hit by it. While the rounin summoned a smoke jutsu covering himself on Tobirama's attack.

"That Uchiha kid who looks like one bastard took my interest."

"Oi Juzo, we are spending a little too much time here, might as well finish them off?"

"Fool! can't you see that we are having a hard time here? besides the Senju isn't half bad."

Izuna assaulted Juzo, the one with big sword. A sword that possessed a unique power, it is said to have the ability to reform itself using the iron harvested from the blood of its victims. The Kubikiribōchō, or the executioner's blade.

"Do me a favor and let me do my hobby with this little kid." Juzo said to his rounin partner, jumping away making Izuna chase him. Tobirama stepped going after them when the rounin blocked him.

"I am your enemy."

"Bloody blood, you Uchihas really do look alike eh? As a matter of fact you kinda reminds me of a very beautiful disaster." Juzo said mockingly licking the blood on his blade, particularly the Yamanaka's blood. Tobirama and Izuna weren't sure if the guy was dead after Juzo cut his arms and fell from the trees. The albino failed to save him even if he's fast and this was why he can't let Izuna face the two dangerous enemies all by himself.

Beautiful disaster. Speaking of which or more like a 'who', Izuna being a smart boy he already knew that it was his sister these guys were after. It that's the case, he cannot let anyone touch and do harm his beloved sister. For all his life he was taken good care by her, since they were little she acted as the mother to him, teaching him everything and always thinking about his safety. He loves her more than his clan, more than his own life, even more than the village. If there was only one person in this world who could stay by her side even the world turns against her, it will be him, her only brother left.

Izuna glared at Juzo, his eyes can pierce the shit out of him.

"I will never let you hurt my neechan!"

"Juzo Biwa, the wielder of executioner's blade. He's a man of brutality, I trust that little guy's strength but I dont think its a good idea to leave him fight that pyscho."

Tobirama contemplated as he dodge the rounin's attack. The man with the needle-like sword is getting annoyed on how fast he was keeping away his sword. He jumped going in front of the Senju, wailing his sword to pierce him.

"Now," Tobirama make a hand seals.

"What the-"

"Flying thunder god slash!"

He performed a technique combining the use of a bladed weapon and space-time ninjutsu, one of his trademark attacks as a result of studying different types of jutsus inside his library.

"Farewell." He whispers coldly after kicking the extremely injured body of his enemy.
He then now decided to rush at Izuna and Juzo's whereabouts, he got some serious injuries from the fight but non of it are really deadly so he just continued on his way and didn't take a time to heal his wounds.

But a feeling of nervousness hits him as he goes deeper and deeper into the forest.

There were no exchange of clashes.

No particular fire jutsu.

There was no noise.

Everything was quiet.

Tobirama's heart raced "Of course, he killed that psycho" gulping heavily "right? RIGHT?" convincing himself.

Everything was all right.

Izuna just won and kill the guy.

And then after that they will search for the missing Yamanaka who just fell from above, going home to the village to protect it.

Everything is-

"Izuna?"

His eyeballs almost escaped from its socket seeing a hateful glow at the executioner's blade.

"Oh, you're kind of...late."

He watched in horror as the young Uchiha's head lays on one of the two circle cutouts of the sword.

-xXx-

It was all dark and weary and the 'real training' just ended. Madara single-handedly performs a tajjutsu only battle within the Uzumaki, of course, she had beaten them all out.

"Uhhhg, I think I'll have a muscle pain for all year long~"

"That's all for today, you can now have your rest." Jiro said casually. Their group continued to build their tents and build campfires. The Uzumaki were extra powerless compared to the Senju but what amazes him is the fact that they can withstand Madara's attacks (without having a broken arm, legs or head after receiving her punches that could literally send anyone flying) for longer period of hours. Jiro smiled at the thought and was quite happy that it ended soon.

"Madara-sama?" He looked intently at her, looking as if in a deep thought.

She was gazing at the stars above, sighing before turning a heard to Jiro.

"What is it that I'm feeling?" She felt like there was something going on but cannot figure why or what it was.

"You better rest now, Madara-sama. I know you're tired and uh, I can take over you tomorrow if you want.."
He then plopped a hand over his mouth realizing he said a bit too much. Knowing her and her pride, she doesn't usually accept someone to take over her duties. Jiro readied himself, maybe she was irritated by him now.

"I'm fine Jiro, maybe I just..."

The Uchiha guy mentally 'woah' at the reaction he just saw. A mellow Madara-sama, this must be a dream. She was kind of thinking something beyond the training.

"I was thinking that maybe I just took Izuna with us, those noobs bores me so much for a spar." She said walking past him. He sighed, thanking Rikudō sennin above. "She's just missing her brother."

Madara slowed, looking at the direction where Konoha was.
She's been eager to find a secluded place since morning that day. It was one of the rarest moments that she, a jovial person has taken an interest on quietness. All because of her salient mission. She walks to a forested area inside the village with an uneasiness remembering her twin brother's advice:

"Don't do anything reckless Mito."

She stepped on the grass silently while scanning the surroundings. Mito just hope no one was going to pass-by on the place.

"Finally, a quiet place!" she mumbled excitedly, Mito started to unfold the scrolls she was carrying on her arms for quite a time especially the giant scroll that was resting on her back.

"Now for the things I will need," After spreading out the giant scroll and the other scrolls with her, she stare above looking at the apple tree. "Apple tree." she smiled and blushed simultaneously, remembering how she and Hashirama first met 'again' for the first time after fifteen years.

"That will do."

The Uzumaki held up a smaller scroll and made a seal using only one hand, raising her right middle and pointing finger aiming at her target.

"It must work, It must!"

Wind started to blow after making some hand seals, she then turned to the giant scroll and placed the smaller ones that were now floating beside it.

"Please, just please."

Mito chanted, letters coming from the smaller ones burst out from the scroll becoming a huge reddish chakra wall which resemble the Uzumaki logo, the whirlpool. After surrounding the tree of the 'whirlpool' chakra, the diamond mark on her forehead - the Strength of a hundred seal starts to glow. A seal which was reputed to be the pinnacle of chakra control. Her grandfather Ashina formulated it and hence also have the same mark on his forehead.

A massive amount of force erupted from the main scroll, took down at least ten trees and put it inside. Mito knelt down, sweat rolling down her face.

"Oh my, I overdid it!" Nervous and confused if she's going to celebrate for the jutsu's success or feeling sorry for the trees. She did it, totally did it. Her jutsu worked.

"The next time I'll do this, things will be different." A worried look on her face showed. Her thinking is right, a mighty creature cannot be compared to a dozen of trees but then she must succeed on it-they must. Perhaps, the girl's smile came back "But I know you're there so its gonna be fine." Mito begin to fold her scrolls.

"Hashirama-san."

She can't help but to think about the Hokage every time. Since they met 'again' after a long time, the renowned man got stuck in her head that sometimes it became too obvious more especially to Morito. Sometimes she wondered what was it, the feelings was just there and every time
Hashirama talk to her it seems Mito was having a hard time looking at him - without blushing.

"Uhm, this is embarrassing." She sighed, this was not the time to day dream on a man who was out of her league. Out of her league? what makes her say that?. Well, they are distant blood relatives, they share some cultural aspects in life, they both want peace, he was nice to her (but he is nice to everybody, oh well) they are good friends, childhood playmates, they were both happy people, Senju and Uzumaki have strong ties, therefore he's not so out of her league, right? right?.

He's hokage, she's one of the best kunoichi in her village. The Uzumaki lady thinks all of this, bits by bits.

Mito chortled, face fully red as tomato imagining things she must not.

"Mito-san,"
"Y-yes?"

A Konoha shinobi patrol, a Senju approached her. Baffled on the girl's face not long after he arrived and the 'missing trees'.

"An emergency occurred this afternoon, Tobirama-sama asked us to gather all the people on the safe place."

"What? what happened?" Mito hurriedly asked, putting a hand over her chest.

"The village is under attack by an unknown enemies, we must go, Mito-san."

-xXx-

It all happened like a lightning strike.

"H-how.." 

His abdomen bleed after it was pierced roughly by Hashirama's sword. The Senju glared with an eye of someone who will exterminate anyone who threatened his beloved village and its people. Fuguki dropped the samehada and coughed blood after falling down.

"Dont you dare, don't you ever dare to harm our village." He warned in a very serious tone, holding the now bloody sword and pointing it to his enemy.

Daiki and the others jumped in the scene holding their weapons ready to defend their Kage from the upcoming batch of shinobis.

"Hokage-sama, they're too many!"

Hashirama prepared to a battle ready position "Everyone, get ready."

-xXx-

The sun was still not yet rising when she ordered each and everyone to complete a definite task: that was getting a sparring partner and beat each other forcefully with one goal. The winner will eat, the loser will have to look for something to eat at the jungle beneath the other side of their camp. Madara's way of teaching was of rigid discipline and always with a goal. She's always setting up the 'goal' to be as cruel as possible. Her rules are strict and up to the point where no one can break it. Otherwise all of them will not eat the entire day.
Of course, the Uchihas were trained the same way. This was why on the past, every time an Uchiha was held as captive by an enemies they rather die on a noble death or carry an extricate pain than to expose vital information of their clan. Different clans have different rules but for the record, Uchiha holds the most agonizing training.

While she busied herself watching her 'students', Jiro eyed upon the single hawk flying on a distant.

The hawk landed gracefully on his arms with a message scroll. Jiro opened it and read the entire content before giving it to the busy Uchiha leader.

"What the hell."

The Uchiha guy was like he was stoned by a boulder and before he realized it, Madara was already standing beside him.

"What is it?" She asked and there, was a shocked face of an Uchiha guy.

"Its...Madara-sama," Jiro was deeply troubled.

"Hand it to me."

"But Madara-sama, this is just.." Jiro put his hands behind him hiding the scroll.

"Jiro, give it to me." She demanded suspiciously.

"Madara-sama," Again, Jiro tried to hide the message. Nevertheless he was torn between giving it up or hand it to the girl because he can't tell how should he handle the situation.

"JUST give it to me, Jiro." Madara pressed her words, glaring at the man who was acting unnatural.

There was a single sweat on Jiro's head before he reluctantly handed the message scroll to her.

And after she reads it:

"Madara-sama, I think Izuna-kun will be fine. He's strong and-"  

Jiro panicked as he watched Madara almost flew in an instant with intense anger in her eyes, dark chakra surround her, totally forgetting to act 'cool' and level headed.

"Shit."

The Uchiha guy gave an order to Morito to take charge of the whole group saying there's an emergency in the village and they needed to get back immediately.

-xXx-

He and his group were like a fireballs entering the village, Hashirama ultimately wanted to see his brother first.

"Hokage-sama! Hokage-sama! You're back!" A konoha shinobi called, grateful that their real leader was back.

It was obvious on the shinobi's face and the village's aura that they were either scared and anxious. Everyone were evacuated so there were no civilians roaming around when Hashirama got back, it was a relief for him knowing Tobirama took care of the civilians first - the people who can protect
themselves the least. The next thing Hashirama checked was to ask his brother's where bouts.

"He collected a three man cell from random clans to negotiate with the attacker's leader." a random shinobi explained.

Another relief for the Hokage but at the same time worried about his brother. Tobirama did a reliable and wise moves in taking good care of the village. He's an intelligent shinobi. But for now, all he have to do was to guard the village where he's needed the most and wait for Tobirama to come back. He ordered another batch of shinobi to go find the other Senju's group.

"Hashirama-san?" The Uzumaki lady appears running going to him with the shinobi who found her on the forested area of the village.

"Mito?"

"What is happening?" She asked worriedly, the Senju put his hands on her shoulders. "Don't worry Mito, everything will be alright, but as of now you and the others must go in a much secured place. I will keep everyone safe as long as I'm alive so you don't have to worry."

She gazed at the tall man's face that gives her hopes and comfort despite the danger that might come anytime soon. She noticed a dirt on his armor, knowing that he came across to a fight before getting back to the village.

"Are you alright?" A concern coming from the Uzumaki, Hashirama smiled optimistically.

"Yes, thank you for asking Mito."

His aura, his smile, his strength as a person, his leadership, his kindness, everything about him was undeniably great. He's a sunshine, no - he was the sun himself. Mito held her breath for a while, she should be worried but this man in front of her flushed her fears out.

All using his smile.

His smile.

"Did the news already reached Madara?" he asked another shinobi

Madara. Of course, as always.

Morito her brother is with the Uchiha but they are on a different place so Mito doesn't worry that much on him but knowing his brother might already knew the news, she's so sure that he will definitely worry on her.

"Yes Hokage-sama, the Uchihas delivered a report to their leader."

Suddenly, an appearing shadow caught their attention. Two men's silhouette are coming on the entrance of the village, the other walks slower than the other.

"Tobirama!" Hashirama called, thankful on his brother's arrival. He frowned a bit seeing scars and blood all over his body. The older one run to him with Mito behind him.

"Let me check you-" Before he even put a hand on his brother, Tobirama fell down on his knees but Hashirama caught him. "Hold on Tobirama," He performed a healing jutsu.

"B-brother,"
"No, dont talk. You did an outstanding job Tobirama, now let me heal you."

"No, listen,"

"Hashirama-san let me share some chakra for Tobirama-san." said by the fretting Mito who was kind of shock on how much blood was on Tobirama's. Uzumaki rarely ever see situations like this considering she's living on a peaceful village. Wars and fighting were never a normal thing for a normal lady like her. She was about to share some chakra on him when he politely declined and thank the Uzumaki on the offer of lending a hand. The albino held his brother's arms, staring with an unreadable eyes.

"I made a mistake." He grunted, the Hokage was bewildered by his facial expression. As if this was something unforgivable, something so big that he cannot carry it. Mito and him were quiet for a while, waiting for Tobirama to speak again.

-xXx-

She knew she must face the damn old hag first and maybe killing him eternally would bring her peace. But she wanted and need to know the whole scenario and see her brother. An unlucky shinobi came across to the fuming Uchiha asking and at the same time cursing on what happened and where the hell were the civilians. The shinobi gave her a brief, direct to the point honest answers.

"Those traitors betrayed us! They'll pay I swear." The next thing she asked was her brother.

"I heard Izuna was assigned to Tobirama-sama's group." The shinobi nervously answered, the fact that Madara was so intense right brought all his fears up to his head - plus her sharingan was active.

"Tobirama?" she don't know what to feel exactly after knowing Izuna fought along with Tobirama.

Madara then looked for Tobirama, they all said he came back on the village just three hours ago before her. Also Hashirama came back and it was a good thing. She will deal with Sadao later after fetching her little brother.

She went directly to the Hokage office.

But it was empty.

Madara's heartbeat instantly becomes faster. If Hashirama was on the village then why was he not in his office? They said the brothers were 'together' and if Izuna was with the younger Senju then eventually he was with them,right? But Madara halted to a sudden realization.

The shinobi's faces when she asked them about Izuna.

And also, they never said him to be with the Senju brothers.

The Uchiha exited the room. Cold, suppressing nervousness struck her.

The village was surrounded by an extremely cautious aura. There were several shinobi guarding the borders of Konooha securing every corners. But Madara only paid a little to no attention to them nor the civilians, all she wanted to know was her brother's whereabouts. She marched to the entrance of the Senju compound, the next place she can only think of where Hashirama might be.

A man walk coming from the gates as if greeting her. Hers and his eyes met casually. But while she was gazing on those dark orbs that was usually high on spirits and hopes, those idiotic dreams
that was very much annoying her to the bone. That man, her friend, she can read him very well. As much as their fighting styles, jutsus and all.

"Madara," Hashirama spoke calmly. Madara paused, locking her activated sharingan to the Senju in an illegible and calculating look.

"I want to see your brother." Hashirama gulped, her voice menacing and commanding.

"He's with my brother, right?" The Uchiha continued her tracks quickly entering the gates, but right before fully infiltrating the compound she was stopped by Hashirama.

"What?"

"Mara, there is something we need to talk."

The girl snapped vigorously breaking away from Hashirama's hands.

"TOBIRAMA!"

"Madara, please," the Senju beseeched and again, stop her from entering their place.

From the moment she saw Hashirama, she already knew. She can read Hashirama very well and he's so bad in hiding facial expressions and intentions. And as a person who trained with him and fought for a long period of time, there was no need for such elaborations and cheap talk. Most of all, she wasn't dumb to fail in reading the situation.

"I SWEAR IF YOU DON'T FACE ME!"

Her rage reverberated in the compound while the Senju carefully dragged her out. It was like a tug of war. Madara continued to scream and swear simultaneously while Hashirama was having a hard time holding her.

Hashirama hated it. He hates the freaking pain of being unable to do something on her loss. Watching as she poured emotions next to him was unforgivable.

Unforgivable. The peace he had promised to her, where was it? Where was the peace that he keeps on chasing since they're just a kid.

As the two struggle like mad with Hashirama stopping her movements and Madara forcibly wanting to wreck a havoc. She launched a wild punch directly at the Senju's face which made a little gap between them.

"Don't you fucking dare to stop me you fool!" the Uchiha snarled furiously. There wasn't a single mark of calmness in her chakra, heart and mind. The Senju did expect all of these but he didn't mind if she blew him into pieces right now, if it's the only thing that can satisfy her hatred.

Hashirama stood straight to face her with his abused left cheek. In an instant, he received a kick in his abdomen sending him a few meters away from her.

If this was the only thing he can do for her. Hence, he did expected something like this after Tobirama said what really happened to Izuna.

The Senju spewed some blood after landing on the ground. Now that he got her attention all he need to do was to endure all of it. At least saving his little brother taking his place and accepting his fault.
For the girl he loves.

"I HATE YOU!"

The Uchiha performed several taijutsu on which she's very proficient that violently shook the Hokage all over the place. A pain emerged like an avalanche pouring it out up to the last bit of her breathing. Hashirama's defense was down and he didn't plan to shield himself either. He accepted all of it, every inch of her punch, yelling, kick and even breaking some of his joints.

If it's the only thing he can do for her.

After a minute of violating the Hokage, Madara glared at him. Questioning herself deep down beneath her mind on why these things happened. She was lost, she was on a very dark never ending pit, she's empty and broken. Her heart sank together with her soul and she didn't know where to find the pieces again or if there were still 'pieces' of it to begin with. Izuna's life - her world was snatched away from her. Izuna was her inspiration for teaming up with this idiot in creating the village but now that he's gone, her goals have been tainted with blood.

If the person who keeps you on going with your life was gone, how would you handle such a thing?

Hashirama moved step by step reaching her, keeping his balance.

"Why?" Madara asked herself.

Suddenly, she felt an arms around her. An embrace coming from the man she almost murdered. Her 'bestfriend' and now the only person she knew her very well. The last one closest to her. The truth was she really don't care if he died right now, but she also don't know if killing him would cease her agony.

"I'm sorry, Madara." He whispered. After all, that is all he can say to her.

She slumped on her knees and so did Hashirama. For the first time he watched as the uncontrollable tears came running from her eyes. It's the first time for him to see her like that but he didn't mind. He will do the same if it was Tobirama who died. After that, Madara was loss for words.

But the great pain and abhor continued.
Echoing voices wearily filled his ears from the different directions around the oval shaped table. Gathered altogether were the leaders of different shinobi clans to discuss the incident about Kirigakure dispute. There were seven ninja clans residing at Konoha namely: Senju, Uchiha, Hatake, Sarutobi, Yamanaka, Hyuga and the Nara clan. Addition to them were the non-shinobi villagers who were living peacefully and chose to rely their safety to the village's strength. Many of them became suspicious of the status of their welfare after the ruckus. It was reported as a misunderstanding, hence, the clan leaders were in doubt of this and demanded a reliable contingency for the village's safety.

"We all thought the issue with them was already dismissed." the Hatake leader stated with a tone of disappointment.

"Care to explain the situation, Hokage-san?" the Yamanaka asked calmly "After all I lost numbers of my men in action."

"This is what we get for putting the safety to a rabid girl! and where is she? don't tell me she's going to put this all to our shoulders!" the Hyuga criticized.

Hashirama purposely kept quiet for a while listening to his co-leaders sentiments and rants. He cannot blame them, it was their right to know the real state of the attack but also he cannot just blab about the truth that it might be an act of revenge, most importantly if it was about her.

"My, my," Sasuke Sarutobi who was just sitting in front of the fuming Hyuga sighed "It isn't wise to talk about Uchiha-san just because she's not here."

Hyuga Eiji grunted and rolled his eyes, surely he was one of the people who dislike Madara the most.

"I heard her little brother died, right? Hashirama-san." Sasuke divulged, he was known as the closest man to both Hashirama and Tobirama. The Sarutobi clan have a long time friendship with the Senju, this was why they were also one of the first clans to join Konoha when it was formed.

Hashirama nodded quietly in reply to Sasuke.

"What? do not give me that! Yamanaka-san and most of us here have plenty of men who either died or injured and were missing because of that attack. We do not have to waste such precious time in mourning, we must act diligently at all cost! the sooner the better. We endured more of it during the warring state for all I care! so please, somebody tell her to attend this meeting and be done-"

Suddenly, the chair that Hashirama was sitting in screeched on the floor. His palms touching the table while his head lowered as he stood up facing them. He knew about the Hyuga and the Uchiha's past. Both of them are dojutsu users and inexplicably talented in combat. It was also said that they were distant relatives, however the two clans doesn't have much liking to each other.

Hashirama remembered the time when he and Madara were talking about the settlement of Hyugas in Konoha, they almost had a fight about it but nevertheless he got her to agree. The Uchihas always looked down upon the Hyugas, calling them trying hard copy cat and that they will always be the second best, maybe one of the reason Eiji is hard on her. Though he can understand the Hyuga's impatient to the Uchiha leader, he cannot withstand hearing something about a dainty
topic of her late brother.

The five clan leaders only locked their eyes to the Hokage waiting him to speak, say something, his orders, actions or some sorts. He's been disturbingly quiet for a long while from the start of the meeting and was plainly observing them.

Sarutobi Sasuke lit his pipe tobacco and started to smoke, the Hatake and Nara leaders stared at each other, the Yamanaka remained calm and the Hyuga looked at him suspiciously.

"Yes, most of us here lost some men, but not all of us here are whining about that no? Hyuga-san."

Eiji stood up straight, he wanted to smack the laid-back dude seating in front of him when the rational side of his brain kicked in. Hyugas are like royalty, they always think of themselves as high and mighty.

The Nara coughed audibly signaling the two opposing forces to calm down. Being the oldest and wisest clan leader among them, he was most of the time seen acting as the one to stop any negative notion and quarrels between the other leaders. Most of the time it was the Senju leader and the Uchiha that are often binded by his shadow technique not because of a serious life threatening argument but just because of Hashirama's habit to crack a joke on a solemn discussion that always end up irritating Madara and the two will chase each other around the oval table. Five of them were either face palming their forehead or waiting for the Nara to do something about the young leaders. Though they all agreed that those two, even they were the most powerful ones, they were also too young and still on the stage of their lives of bickering about anything. The Senju wanted to talk about matters happily while the Uchiha have some trouble controlling her temper which doesn't match at all. But this time, it was between the temperamental Hyuga and the Sarutobi.

"I think it is a shame to Nara-san's part if he uses the shadow binding technique to both of you. You're already too old for that." The Hatake muttered reminding the two to act according to their age especially on Eiji's part. Sasuke puffed a smoke directly hitting the Hyuga's nose.

"This bastard!" Eiji snarled.

"Silence! can't you see that our Hokage here is having a hard time. Why are we putting it all to him when obviously we are also a part of this village? This is not the time to play the blame game, this is the time for us to get our brains together and think on a solution. Condemning each other will not solve anything." the oldest man snapped.

"But-" Eiji was about to reason.

"I apologize, my fellow clan leaders," for the first time since the beginning to the meeting, Hashirama spoke.

"Apparently, the Kirigakure sent us a false message on maintaining a peace treaty between Kiri and Konoha but they betrayed us. I was also the one who sent a request to talk about it in person that's why I left the village at my brother's utmost care while me and Madara are away doing our respective mission." Hashirama declared before the Hyuga have the chance to speak again.

"Please!" the Shodai bowed his head so low that he hit the wooden table. An act where Tobirama used to lecture him for hours, this man doesn't really care about his high status being the Hokage as long as it's for the village concern. An act whereas Madara always strangling and shaking him saying she will overthrow him once he lowered himself again.

"I need your help, so I'm sorry." Hashirama pleaded.
The Yamanaka, Hatake and Nara all looked at him, the Hyuga huffed and Sasuke wanted to pull his hair.

After the brief commotion, an unspoken understand between each and everyone's differences prevailed until the meeting went smoothly.

-xXx-

Yoko was on her way getting back to the village once her mission was done. Her team captain commanded them to get back as soon as possible and that's how the patrolling mission ended for that day. The young Uchiha girl observe dthe village surroundings, there were no people roaming around except shinobi patrols.

"Excuse me senpai, have you seen the boy with me earlier?" Yoko asked a shinobi guard casually.

"Hmm? ah, no I haven't."

"Okay~ thanks senpai!" She then decided to look for the boy herself but after a few minutes of strolling the village, the captain assigned to the guards announced that everyone are inside making Yoko ask herself if she did missed someone entering.

"Maybe he's already at the compound?" She hopped and hopped going to the Uchiha compound, carelessly paying attention to the situation of the village. For her, as long as she's following the orders everything will be alright. It was always her topmost priority in life to enjoy it regardless its difficulty.

"Hey,"

Her mood changed soon after she saw a black smoke coming from inside the Uchiha complex. A house was burning wildly in her vivid eyes. Yoko ran in high speed, she now realized she have a lot of things to know about this day.

"What is happening?!" She asked no one in particular, just in case they could answer her randomly to explain everything in one go. The Uchihas were scattered everywhere outside their houses, men and women particularly the strong ones have an activated sharingan.

"Wha!" This only added a 'what' question in her mind.

She was standing between her clan mates circling around a burning home - the home of Sadao Uchiha, their oldest member.

"Madara-sama, I'm begging you!" hearing her older brother's pleas, she can already assume who did it on Sadao's home.

Yoko looked down, frustration drew across her face. Even though she's not looking, she can hear the thump and whack that the people who were trying to stop Madara received. Bodies flying everywhere as she cursed and swore threatening to kill them all if they stop her.

That moment she understood the situation, there's no need for elaboration anymore. She can tell what in the world just happened based on Madara's actions.

"Izuna-kun..."

A long minute of hateful silence suffuse goes after. Sadao's home was toasted, Madara was nowhere in sight, she didn't had the chance to witness where she'd go after *murdering* the place.
Yoko decided to leave and went on her way brewing some thoughts in her mind. Putting both hands on her side pocket, she stared at the horizon for a while.

“This is gonna be a long night.”

-xxx-

She walked aimlessly on the home she once knew. Madara threw so much pain in every corner earlier that day but the feelings didn't go any lesser. Hate was a feeling that wasn't anew to her, since the day she was born it was all over her life. Nightmares from her childhood doesn't surprise her either, every time she wakes up the haunting memories of killings and deaths was always there. Even now for a year living on the village she established with him, it never went away. But she accepted it, the fact that she can never re-write the past was an acceptable reason for her to move on.

But did she really moved on?

For long, she knew she's strong, versatile fighter, a leader of their clan and as a clan leader she always maintain a stone-like figure even at times they're calling her a heartless person, a cold unreadable girl. Even if at the hardest times she rarely ever show emotions in battles she never loses hope. Always the one who make strategic decisions for her group. Strong willed, hard headed, they all say.

Little did they knew about her one and only weakness - her brother.

The pitch black inside of their home was an epitome of her agony. Madara always restrain her true feelings, wearing a mask of indifference every time she face her people. But the mask shattered in a million pieces only because of her weakness, that one person who can make her weak from the inside through the outside of her being.

The strong girl was now alone leaving the world behind. Gazing upon Izuna's room. She gulped before entering, silently hoping she can still live after seeing the empty space.

"Neechan! you're back, how's the mission?"

Madara imagined her little brother would say while in reality she was just greeted by nothing but an empty room. The feelings burst within her, the girl slumped heavily on the wall lacking any form of strength to keep her balance.

"I...Izuna." stuttering, tears filled her face once more.

The immeasurable loneliness aggravated the Uchiha. She was strong and she knew it, all of them knew it, but not this time.

"Neechan, I know you're tired."

She closed her eyes, hoping it will be gone soon. Madara can still hear Izuna's voice ringing in her head. That was the usual thing he says after she went on a mission.

But now, there was nothing like that anymore. No more Izuna, the little brother she loved the most, the one who can understand her without saying a thing, the child who keeps reminding her not to get in any fight. The kind-hearted brother, the one she always talk to when everything seems ugly.

No more.
Madara screamed as she slowly force her feet to get in Izuna's bed. The child's smell still lingered on it and that made her heartache more.

A minute of long anguish that she can never show anyone in the world. She's clearly on her weakest state. But deep inside, that pain fueled an immeasurable form of hate and power combined. She crumpled Izuna's bed, buried her face filled with tears to it. She felt unloved, abandoned, betrayed and all the negative emotions. The Uchiha did not care on how many minutes or hours she's just there mourning over her loss.

It was the longest night of her life.

-xXx-

The Shodai have a different picture on what needs to be done than his co-leaders. But this was not the time for his personal interests, no matter how much he wanted to check her. Different opinions were tackled in the meeting. In the end, it was the Yamanaka and Nara's joint ideas which was the best move to do. The village will be still under patrol for several days while a messenger will still try to talk to Kirigakure, just in case if the seven swords man more likely to moved on their own without Kiri's permission. However, if they proved that the attack was intentional, it was the utmost time to speak with the the other villages particularly the Hidden Clouds since they were the only ally to Konoha presently and that they will have no choice but to step on a different approach, probably by means of declaring a war with Kiri. Hashirama agreed but still pondering of a more peaceful negotiations, if still possible.

After the meeting Hashirama cues to Sarutobi to stay a little longer after the others made an exit.

"Thank you, about earlier." Hashirama said in respond to Sasuke's defend for Madara from the Hyuga. The Hokage have nothing against with the Hyuga but being him and his relationship with Madara, he wanted to thank the other clan leader in vindicating the Uchiha. Besides, it was rare for someone to defend the her.

"Hm, don't sweat it. Those two eye-jutsu users bickering are too much to handle at times." the older of the two said. "It is natural for someone to mourn over the loss of a blood relative, I believe." he added before puffing another smoke from his tobacco.

Hashirama nodded with grief on his eyes. Sasuke noticed the Hokage's bothered aura all the way of their meeting and did not hesitate to pin point it, as a friend and as someone who was older than him.

"Hashirama, you should stay still on your position especially when facing a problem."

"Ah,sorry about that." the Hokage replied apologetically. The Sarutobi take a look at Hashirama's eyes and he can tell that the other man was utterly perplexed. He knows about the Senju's bond with the Uchiha leader so there wasno need for him to clarify things on why Hashirama was acting like that.

"I also wanted to use this time in warning you." Sasuke said as he stare at Hashirama's bafflement with a serious tone.

"Don't forget to take a good look on Uchiha-san, who knows what she's gonna do after."

The Sarutobi advised or more likely 'warned' Hashirama. The taller man gaped at the other, he was well aware of it yet he didn't took it as something like a threat. Madara was an ally to the village, one of its two founders and his friend, but now that Sasuke pointed out the clearer picture he knew
that it was likely not to be taken lightly.

"Tell Tobirama he owed me a lot of sake." Sasuke casually said before leaving the Hokage office. Tobirama surprisingly have a good friendship with the Sarutobi even he's more of a reserve person when the latter was an easy-going drunkard and a chain smoker. It was not surprising that Sasuke developed a bond with Hashirama since the two were almost alike in their personalities, they were both easy to befriended and were fond of alcoholic beverages.

"I guess it's time to heighten up our guards." the Sarutobi whispered on himself after he left the office.

The man isn't considerably intelligent compared to the other leaders but he's at his best in sensing danger. There was one time he talked about an old doctrines about the Uchiha to Tobirama on their drinking session, all without an intention to put additional tension between his friend's already existing dislikeness to the Uchiha clan.

The Curse of hatred.

At first Tobirama wasn't really interested but when he started to talk about how the Uchihas love and hate and at the same time, the ultimate source of their hate as well. But he decided to listen on Sasuke's concern. The Sarutobi once accidentally heard Hashirama and Madara's daily petty arguments and commented how they greatly resembles the old doctrines of contradicting each other and how they fight like husband and wife, that was when Tobirama scowled and ignore his blabs so he cannot clearly remember if Tobirama still remember their talk.

Being a part of Konoha, he was devoted to protect it and its villagers, just like the other clan leaders.

Hashirama went back to the Senju compound after he commanded the patrol groups' schedule and doing some Hokage tasks.

"Look at you! you look worse than me now!" Tobirama scolded his older brother after letting himself violated by the Uchiha, Hashirama shrugged. They were on the kitchen and the older one was wiping away the dirt on his face courtesy of Madara's beating.

"And you had a meeting with that face! I bet Sasuke teased you after!" the younger one rolled his eyes, then realization daunted him "It's all because of me." with a saddened expression on his eyes.

"Tobirama,"

"Apoloizing wouldn't make anything good between us,don't you agree brother? I will not be surprised if she took my head the next morning," the younger Senju stated with nothing but grief.

"This is why I'm asking you to stay inside the compound for the meantime." Hashirama replied with the same expression.

"It's all my fault!" Tobirama snarled, he was still blaming himself over Izuna's death. "I was so close, so close! dammit!"

A grim expression came across the both of them. Solemnity over the bitter truth that they cannot do anything for the young Uchiha to survive. But the regrets has drawn to Tobirama more.

"Hokage-san, it's us." It was Toka's voice.

The older Senju turned his gaze at the door to open it for their visitors. Toka together with the
Uzumaki twins were instructed by the Hokage to visit their home that night. Hashirama briefly explained to his brother that the reason why he asked them to come was for him to hear their discussion on which Tobirama just nodded and listened.

The Shodai tackled basic things about the postponement of their training and the whole capturing bijuus mission concerning the unexpected attack from the enemy. Morito as the captain of the Uzumaki understood this and made it clear that if anything happens they will do everything necessary to help the Senju and the whole Konoha. Hashirama was glad by that and thanked him.

"We will get back to our mission after the patrolling ends, probably after a week if we confirmed everything from Kirigakure." Hashirama spoke.

"No problem, Hokage-san." Morito answered.

After their brief conversation, Tobirama asked Morito about the sealing techniques they will perform during the capturing of the bijuus where Morito willingly expound, Toka and Mito were having casual talks which he did heard but did not totally paid attention to. The two girls are becoming closer since the day they met and it was a good thing. Hashirama excused himself for a while letting everyone to have their time and also allowing himself to be alone.

He went to the veranda and begin to ponder different things but more precisely, he thinks about Madara.

Almost an hour later of overthinking, he tried and tried to convince himself onto the village safety at first but whenever he was doing it an image of Madara brings forth. How he badly wanted to check on her, to see her, to comfort her. No matter how he knows damn well enough that she'll not hesitate to stab him if he tried to.

Hashirama took a good long look at his arms bowing slightly, the arms that cradled the broken Uchiha. The way she glared at him, she beats him, and for the very first time he saw her crying. She looked shattered, a broken angel in front of him. All of these events bother his whole freaking day to no end that he cannot concentrate anymore as if he wasn't the Senju Hashirama that everyone knows. He wanted to make her happy but ended up making her life more miserable than before. Tobirama wasn't the one at fault here, he just acted as a leader trying to defend the village. He begin to think that if he was the one on the village at that time then maybe it never happened, Izuna had not die.

But it was all too late. Regrets change nothing.

He swears trying to control himself in following Tobirama's advise in not seeing Madara for the meantime. Not because the younger Senju doesn't want him to see her but because he believed it was not the right time for them to meet again.

"Hokage-san,"

A female voice broke his solemnity, Hashirama turned to the owner of the voice.

The girl seemed so nervous delivering her words but when she found the strength to speak about it she almost tremble and it was hard for her to maintain a gaze with him.

"Your...your wounds,"

"Oh these! haha, do not worry about these Mito it will go away in no time!" He again faked a grinning smile while scratching the back of his head.
Suddenly, the girl made an angry face and scold him "Do not try to act like that!"

Hashirama was surprised by the girl's sudden outburst to him. "Mi- Mito?"

"Please, for your own sake Hokage-san, do not act like you're completely fine when in reality you're not. As I am saying, I'm talking about your inside wounds and I am completely aware of your regenerative ability so do not try hard to hide it."

The man was in awe by what she said. It was like Mito was the only person who can read his feelings right now. Yes she was right, he was just trying hard to cover the truth of him not being fine at all but it was because he needs to act like that, otherwise his people will be demoralized if he displayed his true feelings.

"I'm sorry,Mito. But as a leader I have to remain strong as possible."

"I know that, but you're still a human capable of feelings, of being hurt. I know you are strong, Madara-sama is strong too but the both of you are still humans. That's why she was...crying right?"

She saw everything from afar, her heart sank watching her beating him up but there was no way she could stop the rampaging girl. When she saw how the man cover the other girl with his embrace, a part of Mito almost died. But there she was, telling uplifting words to the Hokage, trying to be useful as usual and to help him - the man she adore. Although she's fully aware he might not feel the same way to her, at least she's making something for good for his well being.

Hashirama sniffled a laugh, finding it funny and weird that Mito scolded him for the first time. A feeling of shame but at the same time thankful that he has a friend like her.

"I will try my best not to hide it." Hashirama gave now a sincere apologetic smile.

"Please do not ask me not to worry anymore,because..." Mito stop half way on her statement, realizing she'd gone too far "Oh, nothing!"

"What is it?" Hashirama asked in complete confusion.

"I.. I must go,sorry Hokage-san!" the girl bowed and panicky turned around to leave not long before Hashirama held her arm which stopped her.

Mito blushed and was fully aware of that so she slowly faced the smiling Hokage behind and gazed upon his hold. But he can tell his smile was genuine than before.

"I'll walk you home, okay?" He said just to show how grateful he was to the Uzumaki. Her kindness and concern seems to soothe him. It was a great help to him, to know there was someone who can decipher his inner thoughts and feelings. Mito didn't had a chance to reply on the Hokage's invitation when he grinned at her.

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A messenger shinobi placed a scroll report containing the latest situation of different patrol groups that he sent during almost a week of observation. They haven't heard of the attackers since then and the growing suspicions of Kiri's movements were heightened up. Hashirama picked up and read the report, Tobirama immediately approached him.

"As they say, a calm before the storm?" Tobirama asked.

"They still haven't answering any of our messages. Merely denying the fact they don't have
connections with the seven swords men." Hashirama stated.

"What kind of fool do they take us for?" the white haired snarled "That's it, I am done. Brother, make up your mind now. We must act according to plan so let's declare a war against them." he continued as the younger Senju faced his brother in front of his desk.

"Iwa is with us we know it! they will back us up."

Hashirama closed his eyes, declaring war against another powerful village hasn't crossed his vocabularies since the founding of Konoha. It was impressive and at the same time foolish that a man like him have to keep his pacifist side kicking for the rest of the days.

"I believe that our village isn't ready for war." the Hokage replied calmly. Tobirama bit his lips in annoyance, why can't his brother see the exact view that he can see.

"So what? come on brother! you are the most powerful shinobi, we have the strong ones inside our village. You have me here too as well!" Tobirama argued, he still can't believe that his brother was rejecting his advice.

"Tobirama," Hashirama stood up calmly "I am doing this for the greater good of all the villagers, besides, not everyone here can fight and protect themselves."

"And you are saying that we must wait until they betray us again?" Tobirama argued back with a hint of disgust emphasizing the last word.

"We'll stick to the plan, seven days of observation, seven days." the Hokage pressed.

"Is it because of Madara?" the albino guessed or more likely throw the obvious.

The shodai was on his way out of his office but was soon stopped by Tobirama's question. He remained silent for a while until the other one blabs another barrage of words which wasnot so pleasing on his ears.

"What the hell brother? you're still waiting for her to come out and help you with these decisions, honestly, you can do this without her and I don't think she can be any of help right now, especially when she has to mourn over... Izuna...and.." he lowered his tone when he mentioned Izuna and have to cut his words right away, the Uchiha's name still bothers him and countless dreams of the boy's death still haunt him as he sleeps. It was never easy for Tobirama too as Hashirama noticed it.

"...and you have me here! so don't forget that!" Then he quickly turned his vision to the window away from his older brother's direction. Tobirama just wanted to say that aside from the Uchiha, his brother have another person who will be at his side and willing to give advises.

Hashirama gave a simple smile "I know that, brother." and turn around to see his now pouting embarrassed not-so-little brother "I am going to made up my mind when the time is right, one week." the Hokage stood firmly on his decision, an order which no one can counter not even his hot headed brother.

"Well, fine!" Tobirama agreed sarcastically knowing he cannot do anything on his brother's resolution with the tone of a commanding king and of a great leader. Besides, he was getting really tired of convincing him to finally give Kiri what they want - a war.

"So where are you going?, finally seeing her?" he asked changing the topic."I believe this is not the right time for that-"
"Tobirama," Hashirama countered with tension and irritation. Surely he knows his brother's concern on different things revolving him but sometimes the younger one seems to be a bit too nosy. He swears Tobirama got it from their father, a trait that he cannot sometimes deal with.

"I'm going to see the Uzumaki twins." Hashirama explained as he sigh, hoping it will finally shut his brother's mouth.

"Oh I see." Tobirama was appeased. "About the unknown bijuu near the Bones?"

"Yes." Hashirama replied "I was thinking it might the one tail, Shukaku."

"A hunch? well, you captured the Four Tails successfully. There is nothing to worry about on that monster."

"Tobirama, the bijuu's number of tails doesn't define their level of strength." the older one said as a-matter-of-factly. Sounding as if teaching another lecture to his brother. However, the white haired just rolled his eyes.

"Then what does the number of tails stand for then? any symbolic meaning?"

Hashirama chuckled "You really like to over analyze things,brother." It's true that Tobirama wanted to overthink things while on the other hand Hashirama was the opposite. However, even him doesn't know what does the count of bijuu's tails meant. But as a versatile shinobi he already learned not to underestimate the opponent just because of archaic rumors.

"Whatever, I'm just curious."

"You are curious in everything." the Hokage continued on his way.

"Only in those that matters." he countered and then an idea hits him.

Tobirama folded his arms over chest as he sat on Hashirama's desk. The Hokage continued his way on the door when suddenly, a slip of words from Tobirama's mouth and a tone, a sly tone that he almost never use before froze him again.

"Lady Mito was a nice girl."

The white haired had a cunning smile that was so out of his personality while touching his chin. Hashirama quickly gazed at his brother and sent his eyebrows up in confusion. He never heard him praise a girl before, of course back in the days he would say that a girl was cute or beautiful but that was that. He never said a girl was 'nice' which was so new to him right now. Tobirama was hard to please and because of his confusion it took him several seconds to analyze what he meant.

Maybe Tobirama was interested with Mito? but after another moment of him smiling like an idiot with a meaning behind it, Hashirama got it.

Tobirama wasindeed teasing him. No wonder, the white haired brat must have saw him and Mito talking over their veranda way back on the Senju's compound. He didn't know where did his brother got the idea of teasing him when in fact they just actually talked. Nevertheless Hashirama brushed if off.

"Yes, she's a nice friend." After that, Hashirama quickly paced to finally get out on his office before any controversial talk started.

"Damn, Tobirama what the hell are you thinking?" Once that he was out on his office, Hashirama
goes on his way to the Uzumaki's place. After getting an intelligence report of a wandering unknown bijuu near the Forest of Bones, he have to arrange an operation to finally test Mito's sealing technique, a first step to their ultimate goal.

But then after a mere seconds, his thoughts were again flooded by her. Four days since the incident and it was like forever of him not being able to see her nor talk to her. But it was all thanks to this sort of a spy-like Uchiha that he can know Madara's actions on a daily basis.

"Hello, Hokage-san~!"

Yoko greeted in a sing sang tone whereas the Hokage greeted back "Yoko-chan."

The two walked side by side with the other villagers as Yoko reported her special mission to the Hokage.

"Status: still not going outside after burning Sadao-san's house. We are all afraid to walk near her home. Her cats are inside too, I guess." Yoko said casually.

"Do you think she's eating?"

"You mean the cats?" Yoko asked dumbly, Hashirama have to control in placing a poker face.

"I mean... Madara." he said confused and worriedly.

"Hmm, beats me. But I don't think she ate the cats so don't worry."

It was hard to know if Yoko Uchiha was an airhead or just a literal person. She was way too honest of her opinions and one can label him of being an idiot and a genius at the same time. It just so happen that she bursted in on his office one day asking for a mission, Hashirama having a headache that day cannot think of any than to ask her to take care of the Uchiha compound, Yoko did not accept it and understood it as 'cleaning the whole Uchiha compound' so she asked if she can provide information about their leader's whereabouts instead. He was in pure shock but thinks of it as a good idea, at least he can have someone to give an intel about Madara.

"Is there anything more, Yoko-chan?" Hashirama wondered in a bit why he agreed on her offer of giving him useful information. Seriously, he can assign it to a different person but knowing Yoko might be the only Uchiha in the world who would do such thing: to spy on Madara no less, the girl surely love to live a dangerous life so simply stick to her.

"Hmm~" the girl whistled as she think.

"There is something I really wanted to ask you, Hokage-san."

The shodai and the young Uchiha faced each other. By the looks of it, Hashirama can tell that whatever Yoko wanted to ask was something serious that she requested to have a good amount of his time and a more private place for them to talk.

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Two days later:

The brothers together with their allies prepared for the capture of the wandering bijuu near the Forest of Bones. Hashirama planned and ordered an operation with the Uzumaki group to be held on that morning that day. As an SOP for the village's safety and also the usual thing that must always do, the Hokage assigned his brother once again to be in charge of the village and promised
Mito played his fingers nervously while her older twin brother makes a final touch of the plan with the Hokage. She asw presently standing outside the Hokage office waiting for the two to get outside. She already knew the plan and Mito seriously studied it especially on the part that she will perform her jutsu. The whole plan consist of finding the bijuu and identifying it and then Hashirama and his men will find the best way to capture it. The Hokage will play a critical role of weakening the bijuu until she can move to seal it while Morito and the others protect her.

"She analyzed it very well, there is no need to worry," Morito said confidently "However, I was just thinking of any ugly possibilities..." He knows his abilities were nonsense if compared to the Senjus, Uzumakis are never a battle type of shinobis to begin with. Even though Morito believes on what they can do the outcome will always be a complete mystery.

The Senju tapped the Uzumaki's armor on his shoulder "If this operation failed, I'm assuring you that I will protect Mito with all my might if that is what's bothering you. It is also a priority to keep everyone safe, there is no need for any sacrifices."

"I am positive about the sealing, it's just I'm worrying over my sister's safety. She's not a battle-type shinobi, but if it's you then I must be changing my mind now." Morito smiled at the Hokage. Realizing there wasa nothing to fret anymore, the Hokage no less assured his sister safety.

"I know this is too much to ask, but please take care of my sister if I ever I disappoint the plan."

"I will."

"Brother, everyone is ready." Tobirama announced, the two nodded at him.

"I know you'll be fine so good luck." the younger whispered on his brother.

"Tobirama," Hashirama spoke before going out on the room being followed by Morito "If ever something happened, just wait for my return but if the situation would not allow you to do such thing go and ask Sarutobi for help."

His worries cannot be concealed not when the Hokage needs to be away yet again. Needless to say Tobirama knows exactly what he's pointing out.

"I understand." Tobirama replied monotonously but grew a concern after catching a glimpse on his brother's face. "What's with him?"

"We'll be back before dawn." then Hashirama paced going out on his office.

"Don't forget what I said."

Afterwards, Hashirama's with the Uzumaki went to on their mission. Their group are only composed of two clans mainly Senju and Uzumaki in a total of twenty people including him and the twins.

"The Bones is not that far from Konoha at approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour at full speed but there was no need for us to hurry. I want us to devise more strategies along the way for I can understand that your training time was terminated on its scheduled timeline." the Hokage said on his men with a dead serious tone. Everyone agreed at him.

She knew that in times like this they can see her as someone who take a mission seriously, as a leader and as a hokage but Mito can see a deeper reason of his act. Nevertheless she still find him
amazing no matter on what mood he's on, whether on the usually sunny spirit or even if at a times like this on a dead serious mode.

Mito can only hope for everything to fall in the right place together and to succeed on capturing the bijuu not just for them but especially for him.

"What are you going to do if..."

The voice in his head was cut off soon as they heard a gigantic steps nearby the shore along their way. They are travelling for a mere 30 minutes right now and no less near the Forest of Bones where the bijuu was spotted. Does his estimation was incorrect?.

"Mito, stay behind us" Morito ordered where Mito followed quickly carrying the large scroll in her arms.

"Everyone, get ready!" Hashirama announced.

A loud steps incoming made the shinobis flew to protect themselves in case there was an attack coming from the bijuu. The Hokage was right - it was the one tailed Shukaku.

"Something's off..." Mito concluded as she hid behind her brother's back on a high tree.

"What is it?" her brother asked.

Hashirama summoned himself in front of the Ichibi while the others are backing him up. "Now is the time, let us do our best to knock it out, weakening it is our goal." huge vines came after his words crawling upon the beast's behemoth-like body. The back ups used plenty of chains to wrap on its body.

"Quick! AHHH!"

But the Ichibi resisted plummeting its tail towards them. Luckily, Hashirama was just in time to catch them using his wood release.

"Hokage-sama!" shouted by Mito who was obviously nervous on what was happening after a ruckus of smoke and dust appeared below where the Senjus are trying to put down the Ichibi.

The one tail continues to frail non-stop and looks like he is running away from them.

"Why is it running away instead of fighting?"

Those are Mito's thoughts. They are well aware of its destructive capacities hence it doesn't seem like it want to fight.

"Mokuton Hijutsu: Jukai Kotan!" (lit: deep forest creation)

Immediately, there grew a dense trees around the forest that even the younger trees suddenly build up. The Hokage's jutsu covered the wailing One tail until it can no longer react negatively on their favor.

"Mito,now!" Hashirama ordered as the time to test Mito's sealing jutsu especially made for the tailed beast has come. Morito and the other Uzumaki circulate around the now caged on Hashirama's jutsu Ichibi. They perform a hand seal as a starting ceremony for the sealing until Mito landed gracefully at the center with the large scroll on her back where the One Tail stiffed.

"Be careful Mito..." Morito muttered at her back.
The Ichibi shrieked a nerve racking sound upon sighting the read head female is going near him. Mito didn't flinch in spite of the fact that she's trembling inside readying herself to finally put it inside the specially made giant scroll. She did the hand seals quickly, Hashirama watched over guarding the whole sealing operation, he tightened the wood jutsu's grip and the same goes for the Uzumaki that are helping Mito below.

"Tiger, Ram, Ox, Bird, Ram" Soon as the seals were completed, an adamantine chains appears at her back creating a large circular grid with different kanji and a bright yellow light. "Beast Sealing Technique!"

An intense bright light from the the circular grid where she put the scroll slowly pulled the beast. The Ichibi rattles and screamed so loud that the forest shook and the wind created a demonic sound on the entire field.

"Uhg,-!" Mito stepped back crossing her arms to protect herself from any harm.

"Mito!" Morito called worriedly

"Stay back there Nii-sama, the One tail needed to be stopped" she replied "I can do this."

Mito strengthen the adamantine chain's chakra force to pull it down. Her incredible stamina was performing well.

"Look out!" Because of the beast's agitation, large chunks of woods and the tree itself flew from different direction. The Senju group protected the Uzumaki from any harm or any disturbances of the sealing.

"Oh no.." She breathed seeing a whole body of tree falling above her.

"Mito!"

The Hokage swung his wood release protecting her "Are you alright, Mito?"

"Hokage-san.." She stopped herself to be enticed by those dark, kind eyes but failed.

"It is dangerous here and I suppose the beast is slowly overpowered by the seal. Let's go."

Hashirama held Mito on her waist to carry her and before she can say anything she found herself on a much safer place multiple meters away from where the others gradually put her down while the dumbfounded girl stated at him in embarrassment, delight and only the sage knows what else she felt. Veneration, although the word was a bit understatement on what Mito has for the Hokage. A strong, respectable and admirable man stood before her. For a moment she was nervous but then she turned out to be calm when he held her.

Their comrades combined all their might to weaken the Ichibi and not long after it finally succumb to the scroll. The Hokage's powerful wood release combined with Mito's adamantine chains and the chakra of the rest were the formula for their success.

"It's so easy all because of you, thank you Hokage-san."

"Ah, no! it was because of your jutsu and our team work." He smiled.

Morito took the scroll and rolled it before finally put a chain as its lock.

-xXx-
The operation was a clear success but Hashirama was still unsure of the reason why the bijuu leaves its reported place. Everyone was happy on the result, Senjus and Uzumakis were still talking about what happen and they were all thankful of the zero casualties. Despite the ruckus, only few of them got injured. It was all thanks to the Hokage, without him, they wouldn't succeed in the first place and without Mito's sealing technique, they wouldn't have anything to keep the beast.

"We still don't know how long it will stay on the scroll for this is just a testing stage on our mission. However, I am thankful to all the Uzumaki who participated in the operation and to you, Mito, I owe this all to you."

Morito fought himself to chuckle or tease his sister on Hashirama's small speech of gratitude due to its apparent misfit on the situation.

"Thank you for protecting me back then, Hashirama-san...I mean Hokage-sama! I'm sorry!" Mito bowed on her 'mistake' on addressing him, it was so obvious she was carried away by his speech delivery.

Hashirama walked on her side "It doesn't matter, you can call by my name," he whispered.

"But!-"

"Ha ha! it's up to you." He laughed at her shocked reaction and she smiled back.

After a few seconds of his 'fake' laugh, Mito's attention was caught by his sudden change of demeanor that he tried to hide quickly after turning around at them. She then figured he was still trying to hide his true feelings.

"We are now going back to Konoha." he announced.

"Hokage-sama, Hokage-sama!"

His squad stared perplexed at the running lone Konoha shinobi. Hashirama himself was honestly surprised by his sudden appearance too. Judging from his pale complexion and was almost out of breath he can conclude the shinobi was about to deliver some bad news.

"What happened?" The Hokage directly asked already pronouncing a terrible news.

"Madara-sama, she attacked our enemies!"

That alone was enough for Hashirama to pack his things and be disturbed while remembering what Yoko did asked him two days ago.

"I have to go."

-xXx-

Hashirama abandoned his squad after hearing the news about Madara creating havoc in the Southern Valley. Of course he didn't forget to order them to go in Konoha without him no matter how much Mito pleads him to take even just two or three men with him just to make sure his safety. Hashirama thanked her but refused in doing so and after that he left the leadership to Morito.

"Madara, what are you planning?" his heart raced still thinking of the young Uchiha's question.

*What are you going to do if ever she betrays you?*

Hashirama arrived on the scene.
There he saw the sanguinary surrounding like a crimson painting with oozing dire of mischief. Dead bodies left and right, heck, he can tell there are also lifeless shinobis at the top of the trees. There were almost a hundred of pitiful enemies who lost their lives obviously on a battle. Swamped by these, there stand the person who he can tell was the cause of this scenario. Wearing an all so familiar red and black armor, those long and dark hair. She looked like a goddess of death than of a goddess of shinobi this time together with her gunbai and the chakra covering her arrived on the scene.

"Madara..." Hashirama said under his breath, not exactly knowing what to feel. He slowly took a step going to where she is.

On an instant, their eyes met. She still have an activated sharingan, below her feet is another dead body where she stepped going to him. Hashirama paused realizing something strange to her tomoe's abstract shape. It was definitely not the simple sharingan anymore.

"Mangekyou sharingan." she said with a blank face, the Hokage was surprised on the freezing coldness in her voice.

It was followed by a powerful genjutsu with a sole purpose of showing him what exactly happened before he arrived on the place. How she killed the enemies, how she murdered them, behead them, her wrath and pain it was so dark and gory but Hashirama just stood there trying to understand the reason why would she show him those things.

"Madara, why are you showing me these?" he asked after the genjutsu, it was understandable that he didn't even flinched moments after the jutsu, the warring states made them both immune to savages. But Hashirama know better than anyone else that Madara showing him those was not normal.

The Uchiha simpered and laughs at it.

The Hokage only watched her with wide eyes along with an unlikely pair of confusion and admiration. Her chakra, her actions, her smile - a devilish one came to his senses.

A warning.

"Hashirama..." the Hokage stood in silence, it was highly unthinkable that even in moments like this he still cannot help but to notice how mesmerizing her uncanny laugh was, same goes for an eerie beauty of a seemingly possessed girl.

"Do you think I became stronger?"

Suddenly, he felt a strong thrust of katana over his left shoulders. Spilling blood followed onto a shocked Hokage's face. A blazing glare comes from the goddess of death.
Two figures stood motionless below the glaring crestfallen sky. Drops of blood came rushing down from the taller figure as he grip his injured shoulder, shocked at the person who caused it.

Her eyes red as fire.

"Madara...why?"

She launched a second attack using taijutsu but this time, he evade it. Hashirama jumped backwards only to find the Uchiha already breathed fire coming to his direction.

"Katon: Gouka Mekkyaku!" the Uchiha fired one of her signature jutsu. The Hokage didn't have a choice but to defend himself and used one hand to summon a wood release. Hashirama created a wood of dome to shell himself from the majestic fire release, but the shield cracked moments after his relocation.

"Just like the old times." Her lips curved yet again into a dangerous smile, Madara pulled the gunbai at her back. "In moments like this I can feel that I am alive." she continued.

"What's the meaning of this?!" Hashirama glowered, his face is an epitome of despair demanding an acceptable reason of her to attack. But he knows better than anyone else why she must be doing this.

Unfortunately for him that the Uchiha traversed faster than he blinks "Because I hate all of you!" she yelled back, her face was just inches closer to him, gunbai ready to smash him down. Hashirama's eyes turned to slits and releases an earth jutsu in combination of wood to pull Madara down to stop her movements. His jutsu restrained her body for a while when she used an all new genjutsu on him.

"Really?" The girl teased "how pathetic of you trying to stop me instead of fighting me. I will not fall for it. You used that a hundreds of times already since we were children!" the Uchiha warned dodging Hashirama's plan in restraining her. His sword clashed through her gunbai. They stared at each other.

"Madara please, let us talk!"

"For what?"

"It's only a matter of time and we can still do something about Kirigakure!"

"Talk?" she glared. "that ridiculous thing cannot bring my brother back!" Madara screamed and goes an all out attack on Hashirama. The man did not move a single act of returning the favor but is merely doing his best to dodge. But then upon realizing it will not do him any good, the Hokage decided to go against her hand for her have to drop the weapon.

"Dammit Hashirama, how many times I have to tell you..." the Uchiha jumped back clearly reading the Senju's stance.

"I'm not going to fall for you games."

"Do you think this is what Izuna wants you to do?" Hashirama asked as he can already feel her anger towards him.
"This is what I want to do!"

"To betray us?"

Madara only stared at him blankly.

"To betray...me?" He asked again, this time clutching his bloody arm. "Madara, we've been through all the hardships in building the village! Please do not tell me it has all come to this!"

"There is no such place for me in that village anymore!" she hissed. "No, never did I feel I belonged in that nettlesome place!" the raven haired girl said with pure bitterness. Just by reminiscing the elders' wary stares at her way back on Hashirama's delegation as Hokage when they created it filled her heart with anger to no end. Those fool who did not believe in her, who keeps very suspicious to her, who never trusted her.

"That's not true!" Hashirama protested. "you have me, I am with you all the time."

"Enough!" Madara grips her sword on the left and gunbai on the right hand "You don't fit to be Hokage Hashirama, if not because of your imprudent decisions my brother would have still live! it's your fault, if only I..."

Hashirama charged forward much to her surprise.

"If only I became the Hokage instead of you!" Madara plunged the katana directly on his already wounded arm, Hashirama gasped while trying to reach her other hand. Blood splattered all over him.

"What are you trying to do, running to your own death?" the Uchiha mocked with an obvious annoyance in her face. She cannot believe he can be this stupid by not predicting her moves. Madara knows he could just evade the simple tactic yet he didn't. She wonders if Hashirama is trying to pull something on his sleeves in the next seconds.

But then, Hashirama, non other than the most powerful shinobi known in their era - the very First Hokage, looked so tragic with katana shoved inside his shoulder, kneeling down before the Uchiha glaring down at him.

Before it registered that he wasn't trying to attack her at all, she felt a bloodied hand over the tight grip of her sword touching hers.

It was followed by silence. All they can hear was the swift breeze soon as they stopped shifting. The Uchiha scowled at the sight of it, her mouth opened and wanted to kick him away. How ugly, being weak is the most disgusting trait for the Uchiha. More especially if she knows that the man in front of her was never weak to begin with.

"What are you plotting?" Madara asked suspiciously waiting for the man's revelation. She is clearly having the upper hand but what annoys her is the thought of him taking it as a whim.

"I'll give you everything." He said, the girl's eyes slightly grew upon hearing it.

"Just not this, I cannot give you a fight you want" He slowly looks up, eyeing her unreadable face. The Senju stared at her like a human prays to their Kami as if she is a goddess holding his dear life.

"My death cannot bring Izuna back but I know you'll just say 'the world works that way'. Madara, I'm begging you please do not turn your back at our hardships! do not turn your back at me. I cannot do this alone, without you then it's all meaningless. The village, my dream, peace, Konoha's future, its all important to me but you-"
Hashirama cut off his sentence and slowly stood, pulling out her Katana to his harmed arm, looking eye to eye to the Uchiha.

"You are the most important to me!"

The girl's mouth left hanging, hearing his words but before her thoughts vanished through the thin air, she spilled words that he cannot counter.

"Fine, then prove it" Madara said in a mocking tone then on a split second, it turns to a wry smile.

"Make me the Hokage." she demanded.

-xXx-

The Uzumaki group proceeded on their way back to Konoha leaded by Morito who was holding the giant scroll on his back. He felt a strange feeling from the scroll and immediately ordered everyone to stay out of his way.

"Morito niisama?" Mito asked, bemused.

"Stay back! The scroll-" Morito warned and tried to resist the enormous power coming from the scroll but before he knew it, he saw sent flying by a massive force and the group altogether were caught off guard. The Ichibi summoned itself from the scroll causing massive chaos throughout the forest, wagging its tail on a circular motion, creating a sand storm. Ichibi's power was out of control.

Mito found herself keeping an eye contact with the monster, it was glaring at her as if telling her 'go to hell'. Her body froze from the moment their eyes met.

"Protect Mito!" Morito screamed and did his best to shield her from the Ichibi's attack, the same goes with the others. Everyone was terrified and knew from the start that they cannot win against the monster. The Ichibi howled and slammed everyone who attacked him to the ground with full force. It all happened in a nick of time that they almost had no time to react. Obviously, it was targeting Mito because she was the one who put the Ichibi inside the scroll.

"You're a dangerous one." The beast surprisingly spoke, towering in front of a helpless Mito. "Mito!"

She's a shinobi and was well aware that there will be a time when a mission is more important than the shinobis. She might look like a weakling who can't defend herself against a monstrous beast, but deep inside of her is a burning desire to save everyone away from danger.

"The scroll!" Mito run as fast as she can. Being scared won't help and save people. "I must return the Ichibi!"

Just when she was about to pick the scroll from the ground, the Ichibi raised its huge claws, aiming to destroy her. A huge shadow from the beast's form caught her attention and Mito looked above with bewildered eyes. Few seconds - that's all she'd got until its claw crushed her. Mito performed the sealing technique once again.

But it was a second late..

"Mito!"

The last thing she saw was her twin brother jumping to save her from death.
It was a disaster.

Everything that happened few days ago was a chain of unfortunate events. The village luckily remained peaceful somehow. That is to say, there wasn't a single attack since the last time the Hokage went on a mission. But the brewing disturbance in the air around Konoha was obvious.

"We we're about to return to Konoha when the Ichibi escaped from the scroll. We did everything but it was too powerful, we didn't had a chance against it. Lady Mito tried to return it in the scroll but…" The Uzumaki shinobi paused in his report to the hokage.

The room was filled by a somber air. Tobirama, who was standing beside his older brother, has his one hand over his chin. He mildly shook his head sideways and sighed. The albino then glanced at the Hokage, sitting and listening eagerly on the shinobi.

"..Morito-sama saved his sister, resulting his death." the shinobi continued with grief.

Hashirama nodded and slowly stand up from his seat. He have multitude of troubles to face -that's the only thing he can be sure of.

"How is Mito?" Hashirama asked concernedly. Tobirama from his side can feel the guilt seeping through his brother's flesh. After he returned to the village, Hashirama was immediately informed of what happened to Morito and his group. He was supposed to check Mito on that same day, but was stopped upon seeing Madara's glaring eyes. They went back together in Konoha after a brief clash. He couldn't tell exactly what stopped him at that time, but there was something behind those onyx eyes that told him not to go. The only thing he can be sure of is; Madara doesn't like the idea of him getting close with the Uzumaki woman. Hashirama, however, remained clueless of the real reason.

"She's still in shock." the Uzumaki shinobi replied sadly.

"I see," Hashirama mumbled. "thank you for your time."

After that, the shinobi bowed and left.

"Could you tell me why you left the group?" Tobirama asked in a slightly accusing tone. It was not because he's putting the blame to his brother, but because he feels that there was something going on since Hashirama and Madara were together when they got back in the village. And not just that, his brother has a deep wound and grimy - a clear indication that he got into a fight. Tobirama was aware of his brother's strength and there was no hecking way that an ordinary shinobi did such a thing unless it was someone who can take a par with him. Someone who is powerful enough. And to top it all, Madara herself looked like she was from a battle because of the blood in her armor and it didn't look like the blood was hers. Tobirama had a hunch but didn't spit it out right on that moment.

Hashirama was silent and ignored his brother's question as he made an excuse to visit Mito. But Tobirama did not take any of that.

"Brother," the younger Senju growled, stopping the hokage's steps. "I am asking you."

The Hokage knows that telling him the truth will only fuel the tension between the Uchiha and his brother and so he chose not to tell about Madara's bidding. Hashirama wanted nothing but Madara to stay in the village and his brother,well, he knows too well that Tobirama would not mind the Uchiha leaving the village anytime. Telling the albino about Madara's wish to make her hokage in
exchange of staying in Konoha will only infuriates Tobirama to no end and thus, giving Hashirama another round of headache. He already have shitons of stress to deal with and the last thing he would ask for was to face another one.

But Tobirama is smart and there is no way he will allow him to leave without him spilling the beans.

"Tobirama," Hashirama said after a minute of silence. He then slowly turn around to face his brother. "I would like to ask you for one thing, just one." realizing he was left with no other choice, Hashirama decided to speak with him.

The younger Senju raised an eyebrow but nevertheless nodded. "Well, what is this?" he asked, curiously.

"I want you to remain calm as I am explaining why I left the Uzumakis." the older one said as he stepped closer to Tobirama.

"...Alright?" Tobirama said back but deep inside, bracing himself for anything that might whack the life out of him.

And oh, how he was so right about that.

Hashirama explained everything that happened to Tobirama. He did it calmly as if discussing the weather. Although he can hear the man in front of him gritting his teeth in annoyance. After he was done, Tobirama breathes in and out heavily.

"What," his red eyes flickered and widened. "What the actual fuck?!" Tobirama growled, louder than before.

"You promised to remain calm." Hashirama reminded him.

"How can I get my shit together?! Tobirama shrieked, he's acting like he was Madara, Hashirama massaged the bridge of his nose.

"She asked you to be hokage for her to stay in the village?!"

"Calm down,"

"And your answer? Please don't tell me you said 'yes'?" Tobirama's eyes widened even more, he looked like he won't hesitate to commit harakiri if ever Hashirama nodded with regards to his question.

"I told her to give me time." Hashirama replied.

"Give you time?! For the love of Sage, brother!" Tobirama wailed. "Well, knowing you, you will surely give her everything including the whole village that you worked to hard for!" he accused.

"Tobirama, she worked so hard for our village too!" Hashirama countered, now with an elevated tone.

"I don't care!" Tobirama said back. "Brother, she caused this war. Don't you understand?" he pressed, trying to show his brother a clear picture of their situation with his hands motioning like delivering a speech.

Tobirama readied to barrage him with words when a knock on the door caught their attention.
"Hokage-sama, it's me." It was Toka.

"Come in." Hashirama said anxiously while the other Senju sighed in resignation.

"Hokage-sama there is…" Toka paused upon sensing the tension between the brothers. She had known them for years and she can tell that there's an uproar soon as she stepped inside. She blinked and clear her throat before continuing, eyeing at Tobirama. ". . . a message from Uzushio."

The Senju brothers looked at each other. Toka handed the letter to Hashirama and briskly excused herself and left. Tobirama remained in the room, looking outside from the windows as Hashirama read the contents of the scroll.

"What does it says?" the albino inquired. When he didn't get a reply coming from the Hokage, he turned around to repeat the question, only to find the man with a sunless face while holding the letter.

Few days ago, Uzushio received a threat coming from Kiri for helping Konoha. They were left with no other choice but to pull out their troops. The Konoha badly needs their help especially now. However, following the events after Morito's death, Hashirama knew that they have every right to pull out their assistance on capturing the bijujus. But doing so will put the village on risk and shame.

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Later, Hashirama arranged an urgent meeting together with the clan heads. Tobirama is also present in the meeting room.

"We can't let the Uzumaki pull their assistance, not in this time!" the Yamanaka demanded.

"They do have their reason, which is why we're here. Can we do something about this?" the Hatake asked.

"I think the right thing to say is 'we must do something about this.'" the ever so wise Nara commented.

The Sarutobi glanced at the brainstorming Hokage, sitting at center of the long, oval table before joining the conversation. "This is a bit rough, but I think the first thing we should deal with is the enemy, which is Kiri."

Everybody's heads snapped at Sasuke's direction as if he said the most idiotic thing to do. Hashirama was surprised but waited for his reason whereas Tobirama gawked at their friend's resolution.

"E-excuse me? I thought we're talking about how to negotiate with them peacefully." Eiji Hyuga confirmed with a hint of sarcasm.

"I never said we will cut their heads, Hyuga-san." the Sarutobi scorned back.

The two had a brief glaring competition until Hashirama cleared his throat to interrupt. He cannot allow them to start another childish argument. The problem needs action - a solution, not another additional petty fight.

"Please elaborate, Sasuke." Hashirama finally said.

The Sarutobi shifted his eyes to the Hokage while the Hyuga raised his eyebrow and folded his
arm over chest as he waited for some elaboration.

"Clearly.." he paused and observed everyone's faces. "The Kiri is against us and I think it will be better if we do something about it, peacefully or not, we should use whatever method we can or else they will keep on getting in our way."

Silence filled the room. Just in case he will add more details.

"Are you saying we should attack them?" Hashirama asked calmly, despite being confused on what Sarutobi was implying.

"For once, I agree."

Everyone's head turned to the owner of the voice. Tobirama immediately looked offended despite not saying or doing anything. The Hyuga huffed, now this someone is way more nerve-wracking than the Sarutobi. Hashirama's eyes widened in surprise as Madara waltzed inside the room.

"M-mara.." he mumbled. Hashirama's heartbeat skipped.

Madara scanned the surrounding and simply smirked after noticing that everyone was flabbergasted upon her arrival. She casually walked towards the younger Senju's seat like a primadonna, leaned down and whispered:

"I believe that's my seat, Senju."

Tobirama sweats and gulps at her words. The truth is, he thought he was going to get decapitated the moment she stepped in the room. Wordlessly, Tobirama raised from his - no - Madara's seat and walked to the opposite side where Sarutobi is seated. When the Uchiha leader sat beside the Hokage, she squinted at everyone in the room.

"Is there a problem?" She asked in a derisive tone and turned her head to Hashirama who was still shocked by her sudden appearance.

"N-no, of course you are a part of the meeting." the Hokage answered, hiding the tension in his voice.

"Then why the hell I was not invited?" Madara asked again, flatly.

The air in the room shifted. The clan heads started glancing at each other but more specifically to the Hokage and his second-in command.

"It's..." Hashirama stuttered. A flashback of their encounter few days ago blurred his thought.

"We all thought you're still mourning." Hyuga replied and it was a very bad idea.

Madara snapped her head at the man. "I am not talking to you, blind man."

Awkward silence followed after that. Tobirama can only suppress himself from butting in unless he wanted to take a burn coming from the Uchiha. And not just him, literally everyone controlled themselves in retorting especially the Hyuga. This time, just this time, he decided to let his brother handle her.

It was impressive how a single woman's presence can make the strongest men have second thoughts of going against her.

"As I was saying," Madara continued and crossed her legs. "I agree on your idea, Sarutobi. The
Kiri made up their minds to be our enemies and we should give them what they want - war." she stated.

"But Madara-san, it will also risk our allies' safety.." The Nara argued.

"And the village!" the Hatake added hastily.

The Uchiha looked at them. "Then tell me a better plan." she said in a challenging tone.

"Madara, I think it will be better if we first convince the Uzumaki to stay for a little longer until we settle everything with Kiri." Hashirama said.

Madara looked at him. Hashirama stared back and immediately felt the rigidity in her eyes. It was as if he said something ridiculous and it was clear on how she's giving him 'the look'.

Discussing with her like nothing happened was tormenting. Things would be much easier if they talk one on one. But here they are, in the middle of a meeting with the other clan heads and they are supposed to be composed as possible - especially on the Hokage's part - which is the hardest thing to do in Hashirama's case.

"Oh right," Madara rolled her eyes. "Yes, let's protect everyone including the outsiders when we cannot even protect the whole damn village, sure let's add more problem to the problem!" she mocked.

"Madara, we need to think of a solution that will assure everyone's safety." Hashirama replied.

"And that's how you think, I do not." Madara retorted.

Hashirama breathes in slowly. Arguing with the Uchiha won't solve their problem. Moreover, his problem personally with her.

The others, except Tobirama who was massaging his temple with his eyes closed and trying his very best not to say anything against the girl, were awkwardly looking at the ceiling, on the table and to the void except the quarrelling founders . The Hokage noticed it and straightened up on his seat. Madara, however, didn't give a shit.

"If you may allow me to say something." The Nara spoke amidst the silence.

"Yes please, my apologies." Hashirama replied.

"How do we plan to convince the Uzumaki troops to stay here?" the old man asked.

Hashirama's eyes flickered "...I will try to talk with Mito about that…"

On an instant, Madara's onyx eyes become sharper. She glared at Hashirama from one moment and looked away.

The meeting settled down with the Nara advising to take the Hokage's side. He said everything with utmost care with all due respect to the Uchiha and Sarutobi's suggestion. Sarutobi said it was fine with him. But Madara never said a word after the decision to make the Uzumaki troops stay in Konoha to continue their part in capturing the bijuus was finalized. She felt that everyone was against her, yet again.

"Please stay here." Hashirama held Madara's arm soon after he dismissed everyone and goes back to their respective duties. Tobirama faltered upon seeing his brother stopping the Uchiha from
walking away but decided to get outside nonetheless.

When everyone is gone, Madara slapped away his hand and glares. "Don't touch me again." she warned.

"Madara, I need you." he whispered.

"Need me for what?" she snapped, confused.

"What I mean is-" he was cut off when she waved a hand.

"If you are going to ask me to play a part in convincing those outsiders to stay here then you can go fuck yourself, Hashirama." she hissed.

"No, listen to what I'm saying!" Hashirama demanded, but unfortunately, Madara didn't listen and turned around to take her leave.

"We don't have anything to talk about other than my bidding." She stated with finality in her voice. "I'm serious, Hashirama. Make your decision as soon as possible or I'll lose my patience." Madara said and then left afterwards.

Hashirama closed his eyes.

_Make me the Hokage._

He's well aware of the fact that making her the Hokage at this time is the worst idea. Well, it was never a problem with him to begin with, until everything falls apart and she returned to a wrathful being. Once he pass the title to her, she will definitely launch an all-out war against Kiri which will kill thousand of innocent people from both sides. As a leader and as a man who lived during the warring times, Hashirama doesn't want his village to experience that anymore. It was a hard decision to think of, added by his personal feelings for her.

The choice is his to decide.

The village or Madara?
The following days had been stressful for Hashirama. He did his usual business as the Hokage from monitoring the village's progress to solving even the most menial matter. He had so many things to do, so many things to solve, yet he found himself staring into a document full of details but his thoughts were definitely somewhere else.

He was alone in his office when a low knock from the door forced him to get back in reality.

"Hokage-sama," It was Touka's voice. "We have a visitor."

Curiously, he tilted his head and think for a moment if he ever he was scheduled to meet with someone today. "Alright," he stands. "Who is it?"

"Uzumaki Ashina-sama from Uzushiogakure."

Hashirama was surprised and at the same time, he was strained. He was just about to send a letter to the Uzumaki leader with regards on their current dilemma and Morito's fate when Ashina had decided to come. His throat dried as the old man appeared behind the door together with Touka.

"It's been a while, Hokage-san." Ashina greeted calmly. Hashirama could not find the right words to say. Apologize? Definitely, considering what happened to his grandson.

"Ashina-sama, I..I'm sorry, I have failed you." He said with nothing but sincerity in his eyes. Ashina nodded, fully understanding the air around Hashirama.

Touka after sensing what was happening, excused herself and left. She did not forget to remind Hashirama to call her for any assistance on which the Hokage gave a curt smile as she leaves.

"I know what you're thinking, but worry not for I am not here to put a blame on you. We are shinobis and we are expected to die in one way or another. Morito is no exception and I am really proud of him." The old Uzumaki stated, his soft eyes that were mixed with pride and sorrow slowly closed, reminiscing his last memories with his grandson.

Hashirama on the other hand was out of words. Of course he knows it. Being a man who grew up around cold blood, he hated it, the inescapable life of a shinobi. One of the reason why he wanted to build the village was to prevent unnecessary deaths and bloodshed, and that is why it frustrates him whenever he fail to protect his people. But Morito was not just another member of his people, he was his childhood friend, a close blood relative and it makes things worse.

"However," Ashina continued. "I hope you understand our situation."

"Ashina-sama, please have a seat." Hashirama understood what the old man meant by that and how that decision will greatly affect Konoha's condition. He gathered his thoughts and sat again on the Hokage seat while Ashina sat on a chair in front of his table.

"Please," Hashirama begged. "I am really sorry for what happened. It was my fault and yes, I completely understand the situation of Uzushio. I wanted to apologize for everything, I dragged you into this mess, I should be the one to blame."

"Hokage-sama-"

"But Ashina-san, please do consider this." Hashirama sighed, he looked like he was about to drop
something that the Uzumaki won't be able to resist yet in fact he had nothing to offer. He bit the side of his cheek, the incident had pushed them to their limits. He is a leader and it is his responsibility to do everything and anything for the sake of his beloved village.

"Give me another chance, don't pull Mito and the others just yet, please, I'm begging you. Let us keep our village together if that is the only thing your people will continue helping Konoha. We'll do everything in our power to protect Uzushio, you have my word. Just please-"

"Hashirama," Ashina raised a hand, asking him to pause. "I get it, calm down." The Uzumaki said and sigh, getting tensed of all the words Hashirama had been sputtering.

"Personally, I still do want to continue the support we've been giving you. Things do happen, accidents and unexpected events are normal and I do not blame you for anything and anyone's death." Ashina cleared and Hashirama had a small light of hope not until the old man's eyebrows furrowed worriedly.

"It is our people that is stopping me to continue. Most of us are not battle type shinobis and you are aware of that. The percentage of us surviving an enemy attack is severely low." He explained.

"That is why I am offering you a full protection. Konoha and Uzushio can make a perfect combination. I am confident that we won't fail to protect your village." The Hokage answered almost abruptly.

Ashina stared into the young Hokage's eyes and nodded "I know that, that's what we wanted the most. Protection coming from a strong village. But I am a leader, Hokage-san, and I should listen to my people." he said sadly and bowed his head. "We cannot risk the whole village's safety."

They paused for a brief moment until Hashirama broke it off.

"Is there any other option?" he asked in the middle of quietude, the look that he gave to Ashina was desperate. The old man wanted to help but he cannot decide it alone. He had to consider his people's thoughts as well.

"Anything, to give your people an assurance that Konoha won't break its pact to protect them. I am sure there is." Hashirama's desperation was obvious since the start of their conversation and it made the old man pity him. Ashina looked at him straight in the eyes with a little hesitation to continue.

"Well, there is…"

"Tell me!" Hashirama stands, his palms meeting the flat, wooden surface of his table. "Anything, I will do anything."

The old man paused as his eyes wandered. Hashirama became confused at Ashina's uncertainty. Judging from the way the Uzumaki avoided his eyes, this solution might be something hard for him to give. Regardless, he decided to take the risk. If this was the only way to save his precious village.

"Marital union." Ashina mumbled hesitantly.

"Eh?" Hashirama flinched, his confusion sky rocketed the moment he realized its meaning.

Marriage was the oldest and most likely the strongest bond that's being used to strengthen unification of families and villages alike. Hashirama was taken aback and blinked. The old man had expected his reaction beforehand. He did not want the Hokage to cross the line of desperation
but there was also nothing he can do about it. Especially if he's begging too much, vowing to do anything on his power for them to stay.

"It's the only way," Ashina said. "To convince the people of Uzushio."

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Tobirama coughed loudly as the rice got stuck in his throat. His usually calm demeanor was utterly destroyed upon his brother's words. He was simply having his dinner when the older arrived from his office. The albino grabbed a glass of water and quickly drank it.

"E-excuse me?" he said, after gulping the whole glass, his red eyes wide as a saucer. "Marriage?! You?!" he screeched.

Hashirama who was standing in front of their kitchen table still with his Hokage robes rolled his eyes.

"Listen,"

"No, no," Tobirama shook his heads and hands. "You listen."

"Tobirama, you know I can't." he was cut off by Tobirama wagging his pointing finger.

"Stop right there, brother. He said it's the only way." the younger Senju firmly stated.

"But I...I can't do it!" Hashirama whined.

"You told him you will do anything and now this?" Tobirama argued. "What's gotten into you? You finally have the offer and if you ask me, it's a win-win situation. You will marry Uzumaki Mito, the village will have an immortal bond with Uzushio, problem solved. Case closed!"

Hashirama stared at him "I cannot marry her! This is just...too much. Also, we have no feelings for each other."

Tobirama rolled his eyes, his hands on his waist. "Since when did feelings matter on arranged marriages? C'mon brother, even our parents dealt with that."

"But I don't want to!" Hashirama barked.

"And who should do it? Me?!" the younger one hissed. "You are the strongest man alive."

They stared for awhile as Hashirama's thoughts was all over the room.

"Actually, it was the right thing to do." Tobirama continued. "Your influence is a guarantee to the people of Uzushio. Besides, they are our blood relatives. I cannot see a negative side on that."

"Well, I do." exasperated, Hashirama spun his heels towards to exit of the kitchen when Tobirama called him out.

"Is there a particular reason why you're saying no to this?" the younger Senju asked, suspicion was obvious in his tone. His brother halted, not saying a word. Of course he had known, he knows why his brother was adamantly rejecting to marry a different woman. Tobirama clicked his tongue and stared keenly at his brother's back.

"You're so selfish, brother." he said, bitterly.
It hit Hashirama hard.

The village was always on the top of his priority list. But Hashirama have his personal desires. He bowed his head as Tobirama's words struck him. He was right, to put his personal feelings get in the way in a surefire benefit and safety of the village equates on him being selfish. He had nothing to argue with that for it's the truth.

And it left him powerless.

-xxx-

Hashirama was alone in his room. The only sound he can hear was his own breathing but his mind was nowhere silent as his thoughts. Deep within him was a scattered what ifs and multitudes of questions without clear answers. He was known as the strongest man, the god of shinobi, but tonight, he's no one but a man with critical dilemma. An ordinary human being. It was the hardest decision he had ever encountered.

He closed his eyes and wiped his face with his hands. Hashirama groaned, his whole situation just became worse.

Well, at the very least, it was not. He still had the choice so he can stop the Uzumaki troops from pulling out the mission. It was the main problem and Ashina already told him about the only thing that can stop them from leaving. However, the solution was not what he had expected.

Hashirama realized that going on a war, killing your opponents, planning how to defeat the enemies on a battle was way easier than battling against your emotions and personal reason. Sacrificing yourself for the sake of your own village, the people who entrusted their lives and fate into your hands was a Hokage's responsibility and he is the Hokage, the only one entitled to do it. Stress creeping through his body and mind, he felt vulnerable. Powerless against a choice he had to make or else he'll lose everything they had started.

Hashirama stands after he decided to let it out from his chest.

-xxx-

The cold breeze around the Uchiha compound did not bother him. He considered being out of his mind (which he is) upon finding himself in front of a familiar house.

"What are you doing here?" Madara asked suspiciously as Hashirama stood at the entryway after she sensed his presence all the way going to the compound. She was wearing a light colored kimono. Her messy hair tied in a side ponytail. It was late at night and clearly, the woman was about to get some sleep when the Senju arrived.

"I uh, my feet directed me here so…"

The Uchiha turn around, giving no craps about what Hashirama was saying.

"Madara, wait!" Hashirama ran forward and managed to hold the door before she finally close it.

"What?"

"I need to talk to you."

She raised an eyebrow. "About?"
"Something's been bothering me so-"

"Five seconds." Madara said hastily.

"No, I need ...more time."

Madara glared but nevertheless allowed him to enter her house. As they get inside, she remained cautious of him and kept her distance away from the Senju. Hashirama sensed it but said nothing. She had been distant since Izuna died and it was understandable. However, he cannot stand it. The strain in their relationship after the unfortunate incidents, the thought of her being like that for the rest of their lives was killing him. The thought of not being able to get close to her like before was painful than any other wound he had ever received in his life.

"Finally got your answer?" Madara asked, her back facing him. "Are you going to make m-"

"Mara," he called softly, Madara slowly turn her head on her side. "I am here for a different reason."

Teeth gritting in irritation because why can't the man just give her what she wants? Was giving her the title Hokage too much even after losing the most important person to her? Sure, Hashirama gave his all for the village, but her, she gave everything and even lost it.

"Then get out." She growled and marched leaving him when Hashirama swiftly held her wrist.

"Please," he begged "listen to me."

Madara halted, her back facing Hashirama. They fell on an uncomfortable silence for a moment until the Senju slowly pulled her wrist and instantly, he was met by glare coming from the Uchiha. Instinctively, Hashirama prepared himself to take a shout or a slap but neither one of them muttered a single syllable nor move an inch. He can feel her anger, disappointment and adamant determination to retaliate. Their distance also allowed him to have a clear look of her face. Despite the scowl and the absence of femininity due to her day to day garb, Madara was truly beautiful. And the only he wished, the only thing he desired since the day they met on the river was to put a smile on her face. On which he ultimately fail every time he try.

Hashirama felt useless. The known god of shinobi, the most powerful man in and out of Konoha felt he was a failure. From the outside, people see him as a very successful man. Everyone loves him, adores him, follows him, respect him. He achieved his dream to build a village of his own and leads it. Konoha was a promising village and sooner or later, it will bloom into a prosperous village under his leadership. That was never a question considering the support he gets from the other powerful clans that willingly joined them. He's a man on top. That's how most of the people saw him. A happy, successful man.

But he was not.

"Everyone thought I have everything." he started, breaking the stillness between them. Madara tilted her head at his words, confusion takes over when Hashirama started to pull her wrist again. She was caught off guard, eyes so wide she almost consider jumping in surprise. Before she realized, they were standing face to face that they can feel each other's breath. Madara stepped back, only to be stopped by Hashirama upon putting his strong arm around her waist while his other hand was holding her wrist.

"What are you-"
"..that I am happy, that I am strong." he continued with urgency. His eyes locked into hers and that's when Madara realized that Hashirama was acting different.

The Senju Hashirama that she met on the river years ago was a stupid bowl cut haired boy, her friend that became her enemy, her rival in power that made a promise to build a village with her. The Senju Hashirama that she agreed to make a pact with was the boy that he met on the river, the same person from her childhood. The Hokage, her unbeatable opponent. But this, was the first time she had heard him use a different tone. His eyes alone was enough to force her to listen once and for all. She could not explain it, she could not understand it.

"What are you talking about?!" she snapped, forcing to maintain an intolerable eye contact with the man. It felt awkward, it felt unreal, it was...indescribable that even a genius Uchiha like her cannot fathom what was happening. Not even a sharingan can foresee what's on his mind.

Hashirama gulped, the tense was killing him. His heartbeat never calm down since grabbing her waist. His mind was currently in chaos, he do not know where to begin, he'll probably blab some nonsense tonight but at the very least he had been honest with himself, honest with her. To finally let it out of his mind and heart.

"But I failed you, so many times. I'm sorry."

"..."

Madara fell silent. From one moment she thought she had misheard him but at the same time, from their close proximity, there was no way it's possible. Hashirama apologized and she can feel that it was from the bottom of his heart. He was always an honest man, but this time, his honesty was mixed with a different vibe. Something... that terrifies her.

"Cut it out and just give me what I want!" She pulled her wrist forcefully to escape Hashirama's grip. "I lost everything. Someone who had never lost everything cannot understand what I'm feeling. Don't give me that crap."

Hashirama looked at her dead in the eyes and she would never admit it but brought shivers into her spine.

"Go," Madara commanded. "Before I drag you out, get out." once again, she tried to leave but deep inside, Hashirama's actions worries her.

"Ten years years ago," Hashirama said and once again, she faced her back at him. "I've met the only person who never laugh at my stupid dream. To build and run a village. Both of us were tired of the neverending war, we desired peace." He continued.

Madara paused and listened.

"I was so happy, so happy that someone agreed with me when no one else did before." Hashirama smiled at their memories. "And with that I said to myself, I will make that person the happiest girl ever, by building our village. I will protect her happiness even if it cost mine."

The Uchiha turn around with a confused reaction. "What's with this all of a sudden?" she asked.

"Madara, I care for you, since we were children. Since the day I met you, you're still my precious friend."

Madara opened her mouth but does not know what to say.
Hashirama exhaled and stepped forward. The air around them was far from when he had arrived.

It's now or never.

"My feelings had changed from since then," He continued.

The Uchiha stood still as she look at him.

"I'm in love with you." Hashirama whispered.

"What?" she snapped.

"I love you, Madara."

Three words were enough to stop her mind from functioning. Madara gaped like a fish that came out from the water as she process Hashirama's words. She searched his eyes in hope to find something that could explain what's going on.

"What?" she repeated, almost a hiss. "You love me?"

"Yes, since.." he was cut off when she angrily stomped her feet towards him.

"Are you," she bit her lower lip and shook head.

"ARE YOU FUCKING KIDDING ME?! AFTER ALL I'VE BEEN THROUGH? SACRIFICE ANYTHING FOR MY HAPPINESS EVEN IF COSTS YOURS? BULLSHIT! HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU EVER STOLE MY HAPPINESS INSTEAD, HUH HASHIRAMA?! DON'T YOU REMEMBER?" She lashed out, not caring if the whole compound heard her yelling. Anger, bitterness, surprise, it was all over her face. Hashirama did nothing, said nothing, as if he had expected it.

"YOU STOLE THE HOKAGE SEAT FROM ME, YOU AND YOUR FILTHY BROTHER STOLE IZUNA FROM ME, WHAT ELSE?! WHAT ELSE DO YOU WANT TO TAKE?! AND HERE YOU SAY, YOU- YOU LOVE ME?!!" she shouted at the top of her lungs. If some random clan mate bothered to peek in her house, she won't hesitate to gouge their eyes out.

Madara swipe her hair annoyingly. The urge to strangle him was getting strong each and every passing second. But somehow, there was a little voice inside her mind that was saying her to do the opposite of what she wants to do.

"I'm sorry," Hashirama muttered after a brief silence. Disarrayed mind, desperation and hopelessness were what pushed him. But he did not regret it. His only regrets was failing her in so many things, no more, no less.

The Senju's downcast gaze suddenly troubled her. He quietly turn around to leave and said nothing anymore. He confessed what he had to and it was the only reason why he came in the first place.

Madara was left dumbfounded, when Hashirama was gone, she lets out a breath she had no idea she's been holding. Few moments later, guilt flooded in her. She could it deny to anyone but she definitely cannot lie to herself. Madara subconsciously held her chest.

"Why am I hurting?"

At that time, Hashirama was left with a confirmation. He threw his head upward to see the starless sky. He smiled bitterly at his own pathetic self.
“She could never love me.”

Tears started to fell from his eyes.
Desiderium

Pain and suffering were something she's so used to have in her life. Growing in a constant war, losing her siblings and mother at such a young age, underwent a rigid training to be mold as the best, the successor of her father - Uchiha Madara became numb to pain.

Physically.

Unfortunately, emotions wasn't something one can go numb about. As long as you're alive, you are bound to have it.

She rarely feels compassion, that was a well-known fact. The ruthless goddess of shinobi, the feared leader of the noble Uchiha clan. Just one look from her in the battlefield was enough to paralyze her opponents.

Her eyes fluttered open feeling an indescribable, unfamiliar feeling. Madara was greeted by a cold, somber morning. Normally, she would start the day right ahead but this time, it was different. She stayed in her bed motionless for some minutes more. Her body felt heavy and no she doesn't feel sick or anything. It was more of..something's off about her.

She felt empty.

"I love you, Madara."

Subconsciously, she gripped the bedsheet tightly and gritted her teeth remembering what she heard last night.

"Lies, all lies." she said, bitterly. How could she believe those words coming from the man who was her rival for such a long time? Someone who stole her dreams, who constantly defeated her. She felt anger seeping through her, that was right, she's supposed to feel that way. However, there was something hidden beneath her emotions. Yet she ignored it, her mind was too clouded by hatred to listen to that little voice within her.

A voice begging to see the other side which is the truth.

It was way too early but she already hated the day.

"Madara!"

Her mind was too busy when she heard an annoying voice demanding to show herself in an instant. Madara grunted as she identified the voice of her clansmen. There were plenty of them waiting outside for their clan leader. Without wasting another second, the Uchiha summoned herself in the front door and there she was greeted by the unfriendly stares of her blood relatives.

"What do you want." she asked disinterestedly, as if she's already tired for the day when in truth it was just starting.

"We demand that you should..." the Uchiha man gulped before continuing after feeling intimidated upon meeting her sharp eyes. Truthfully, he considered backing out since the girl looked pissed and their request will surely piss her off even more and who knows, she might also skin them alive after hearing them out.

"You should come with us, in the headquarters." the man said with a tone of indignation.
Madara looked at him straight in the eyes blankly. Unbothered by the fact that 10 of her men decided to come altogether in front of her house, demanding her to come with them.

"Then meet me in my office at noon, whatever it is."

She was about to close the door when another Uchiha stepped forward. He got the air of the typical Uchiha, stone cold and confident. The man obviously did not like the way she answered to them and over all, her clansmen did not really like nor trust her to begin with. She was well aware of that, that was why Madara always have her guard up whenever she interacts with them.

It was hard, not to be well respected by most of her family members yet all she wants was to protect them.

"We need to discuss the future of the Uchiha clan." the other man spoke.

"I already told you, discuss it with me in my office at noon." she retorted.

"This cannot wait!" the man demanded. "You should get off your high horse and listen to us!"

Madara squinted at the man in front of her and then scan the others behind him warily.

"Get off my high horse? What are you talking about when I am the head of this clan." she replied with pure confidence. She lifted up her chin to remind them of who she is.

"You don't have to rub it in out faces, Madara. Because today that leadership of yours will end!" the man activated his sharingan and the other's chakra turned into battle ready. Madara remained calm.

She had anticipated it. Her actions on the recent events trigger the Uchihas to dethrone their clan leader. One of the main reason why she demanded the Hokage seat from Hashirama was because of this. Sooner or later, she knows that her clansmen will turn their backs on her and the only thing she can do about it was to have the full control of Konoha.

They no longer trust her. Her brashness and attitude weren't something they look for a clan head. Sure, Madara was a smart girl and to top it all she's very powerful but there are things they considered to say she's not the best person to lead the clan. Even most of them chose Hashirama during the Hokage election, much to her disappointment. And this time, it no longer surprise her, that they will yet again betray her.

"How foolish." She mumbled, her anger had completely turned into full fledged hatred. Following the death of Izuna, Madara had seen what she believe was the truth : She had no place in the village anymore.

"Mangekyou Sharingan."

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The silence was supposed to give them solace but instead it was the opposite. Mito was seated beside her grandfather Ashina. Together with them around the long, oval table was the Hokage. She tensed as none of them utter a single syllable since entering the room. Mito knows what is going on and the reason why they were having a meeting in the first place.

Ashina breathes in and out slowly to ease the tension that was all over them. Being the oldest man in the room, he felt responsible and decided to take the responsibility once and for all.
"Mito," he started "Hashirama," and shifted his line of sight at Hashirama who was looking like he haven't sleep for days.

The old man noticed the bloodshot eyes of the Senju. He was thinking that their discussion last day had made him sleepless, well in fact he was only half right about it.

"I need your answers."

With that, Mito crumpled her skirt over her lap. She do not want to be the first one to answer right away but she cannot also lie to herself.

When Ashina talked to her about the death of her twin brother, Mito cried out like she did right after witnessing the tragedy. She was in shock for days but she had no choice but to be strong. She reminded herself that she's a shinobi and so was her brother. After that, Ashina explained the situation of their village Uzushio and how they were threatened by the enemy of Konoha. Despite what happened, Mito still wanted to continue giving support to Konoha and even asked her grandfather to convince their people.

Uzumaki and Senju are blood relatives and it was common and less of an issue for them to be betrothed. Both sides were fully aware of the fact that marriage was the strongest form of bond they can use to solve issues between their people. In this case it wasn't just the strongest tool, it was also the only tool they have.

Mito bit her lower lip and glanced at the Hokage shyly. She cannot look at him directly and remained to slightly bow her head. The Uzumaki felt she wanted to bury herself when Hashirama smiled at her, a smile that possessed countless of meanings yet genuine happiness was not a part of it.

"What can you say, Mito?" The Hokage asked simply and it made the girl blinked several times. He was asking her - her opinion on the matter, when in fact it was supposed to be him to answer whether he's going to marry her or not because...because...well obviously, her answer was clear as a bright sky.

She likes him.

No, she loves him.

To marry Senju Hashirama was a dream come true. Personal desires aside, it will bring many advantages to their villages and of course the most important part, she will be forever by his side - the man of her dreams. But Mito also knows that there will be a major disadvantage upon marrying him.

He's in love with another woman.

Mito was a kind girl, she always wanted to help those in need. Just like Hashirama, she wanted the best for her people. After Morito died, she was left with the responsibility to take charge of the mission which was to capture the bijuus. But to take that responsibility, she must first face the problem that hinder them in fulfilling that task.

She collected her thoughts before speaking and looked straightly in Hashirama's eyes. She immediately noticed the emptiness in those dark orbs but for the meantime, Mito chose to speak what's on her mind first.

"I am a representative of our village. For generations, Uzumaki are hiding away from many enemies. Our people remained unskilled in combat for the reason that we chose to run and hide
rather than fight. I want the best for them and so I want them to get stronger. After what happened to my brother I understood now how shinobis should act. If we did this, there would be a guarantee that our people will get an equal status as Konoha shinobis. I myself also wanted to help your nation because I am your friend. In behalf of my brother, I want to continue the mission."

Hashirama nodded in response.

"I will...marry you." Mito said as she tried her best not to stutter. Yes, she's definitely going to marry him despite the knowledge that the man is in love with another woman. If that's the only way to help her people and if that's the only way to help him.

Ashina only stare at her and then back at Hashirama. The old Uzumaki waited patiently on the Senju's answer.

It felt like forever. Another round of silence filled the room. Mito and Ashina waited and both feel strained. Hashirama bowed for a moment and lifted up his head to look at Mito's eyes.

"A week from now, I will step down as the Hokage and give the position to Madara."

The Uzumakis gave him their most surprised look. None of them could speak the question 'why' as both were too shock and confused on Hashirama's words. Ashina gaped and Mito had a worried face.

"And then after that," A pause and it made the Uzumakis tensed even more.

"I will marry you, Mito."

-xxx-

"My foolish clansmen," Madara mocked the fallen man beneath her feet as she stepped mercilessly on his face. Her Mangekyou Sharingan rolling while her vision turn to see the defeated Uchihas scattered in front of her house. They weren't dead or at least not yet, but they were crawling on the ground as if begging for a goddess' mercy. She had beaten the crap out of them using a new set of eyes which she gained right after Izuna died. They were feeble against the Mangekyou sharingan, they were totally powerless against it.

Madara smiled triumphantly and clicked her tongue, turn around to enter the house to change her outfit and then went outside again. She left the helpless Uchihas behind.

"I cannot wait anymore." Madara departed as she decided to set things on her own. If the situation gets worse and more of her people go against her, she will ultimately lose the clan leadership. Everything that her father works hard for their family will be lost and she won't allow that kind of disgrace. With Izuna gone, Madara is now the sole responsible to take care of what her parents built. Her pride was just too high to accept defeat, she cannot lose the leadership she had worked so hard for despite the criticism of her elders.

Minutes later, she arrived the front door of the Hokage office. Upon entering, she found herself alone as the office was empty. The Hokage seat where Hashirama sits was empty around the mountain of paper works over the table. She approached the seat and stared at it for a moment.

The Hokage seat, once she's the Hokage she can end everything.

"I love you."

"Dammit." Madara hissed at herself and shook her head. She wanted to erase that voice but
unfortunately she will need to face that man in order to get what she wants. This was no time for a trivial things. In this critical moment, the future of her own clan was at stake. Once she's the Hokage, it will end.

She will crush the Kirigakure using the Konoha forces and finally take avenge for her brother. She will show who did they messed up with. Madara cannot wait for that day, the day Kiri will fall in their knees with their broken bodies and destroyed future. She vowed to crush them all.

"What do you think, Mito."

A faint voice coming from the closed meeting room in the right caught her attention. It was almost inaudible but the quietude of the office room allowed her to hear the faintest conversation coming from the inside. Madara raised an eyebrow and her thoughts of vengeance vanished for a moment, she carefully approached the meeting room's door while making sure that her chakra was hidden. She heard Hashirama's voice and judging from what he said, that Uzumaki Mito was also inside.

Madara felt a burning desire to barge in but decided to eavesdrop for a while just in case there are things Hashirama was hiding from her knowledge. First of all, she understand that the Uzumaki was in Konoha for a reason and having a meeting with the Hokage from time to time was vital. But still, why does she feel a feeling akin to anger whenever she sees Hashirama with this girl? What was she angry about? Just knowing that this Uzumaki bitch was with Hashirama in one room made her feel she wanted to combust the whole office with her jutsu.

She was almost consumed by her violent thoughts when the girl inside spoke.

The next things she heard astound her.

Madara was stunned. She froze in the spot after hearing what Mito was talking about. The Uzumaki went on a long talk about her clan and village's needs and the Uchiha's immediate reaction was why was she talking about that. Mito's last words answered her unspoken question.

"I will...marry you."

Madara's gasped and she quickly put a hand over her mouth. Her eyes widened in surprise and her confusion rose on another level.

"Marry him? Who the fuck does she think she is?!" She said at the back of her mind. Madara almost forgot the reason why she came in the Hokage's office in the first place. She trembled not in fear but in rage. Sighing, she analyze what was going on inside.

Basing on the facts she heard and her intuitions, the meeting was about solving the issue between retaining the Uzumaki troops in Konoha. Madara cannot think about anything other than 'arranged marriage' basing on what Mito said.

She held her breath, waiting and waiting for Hashirama's response. The Uchiha stepped closer and put her ear at the door, what the fuck, if someone saw her doing this shameful act she will not bat an eye to behead them. She felt what she's doing was a disgrace but Madara was eager to listen more and hear Hashirama's decision.

"A week from now, I will step down as the Hokage and give the position to Madara."

Madara gulped, it was all what she wanted. She was supposed to feel happy about it yet her reaction was dull. Isn't it what she wants? Isn't it the reason why she came on his office? Seeking vengeance and power, glory and control over Kirigakure and Konoha respectively, this was it.
And yet...

"And then after that," A pause, it made her clench her fist.

"I will marry you, Mito."

-xxx-

Tobirama was staring too much at his older brother. Leaning on the wall, watching Hashirama waltz sideways, he felt nauseated by watching him.

"What's the matter," the albino asked while pressing his pointing finger on his head. "Regretting your decision?"

Hashirama sighed and plopped down to sit on the couch. He pressed his head using both hands.

"I did the right thing, didn't I?" the older Senju said, it was more of he's convincing himself that he did the right thing rather than he was asking Tobirama if he did the right thing.

Tobirama did not answer for he knows he better listen instead of saying anything.

"I've hurt her so many times before yet I claim to love her." Hashirama stated and again, it was more of he's speaking to himself rather than with his brother.

"To give her the Hokage seat, it will make her happy."

"And then after that what, she will declare a war against Kiri." Tobirama said like it was a well known fact.

"Just as what Sasuke said, they will keep on getting in our way but with Madara's leadership and Uzumaki's support we will stand a chance. Although I wanted to stay away from war, but with our current situation, it might be impossible."

Tobirama sighed and nodded. Whilst he opposed Hashirama's decision to give up the Hokage seat to Madara, he also trust that his brother won't just stand and watch the Uchiha burn everything they worked hard for which was to attain peace and he himself won't blindly follow that girl's order even she became the Hokage. They cannot allow someone to destroy the village reputation, not as long as they live.

"And so we're having both, Madara as the Hokage and you marrying lady Mito." Tobirama said calmly.

He can see how his brother looked so loss, so empty and helpless. Tobirama wanted to ignore those facts. Uzumaki Mito was a nice lady, she's beautiful, compassionate and have the attributes of a perfect woman, he's sure that she will be a good wife to his brother. She's the exact opposite of that one person his brother was so crazy about. Madara and Mito were like day and night and it was unfair to compare the two.

Yet, Tobirama felt guilty from whatever reason as he saw how it made Hashirama unhappy.

"How about you." the younger Senju asked quietly as if he's reluctant to ask it.

"Me?" Hashirama chuckled, a coping mechanism. "I just want to make her happy and to save our people, that's why I'm going to..."

"But you obviously doesn't want to do it."
Hashirama looked at his brother confused. Yesterday, he was the one who keep on telling him, forcing him on the marriage and now it was like Tobirama was telling him to re-think his decision. The Hokage's eyebrow twitched, what does his younger brother really want?

"You look unhappy, that's what I'm saying." Tobirama continued and avoided his brother's eyes. He does not want him to think that he's having second thoughts about convincing him on the marriage.

"Madara can never love me, I cannot make her happy, I just..." Hashirama's own words pained himself greatly yet it was what he thought was the truth. "I don't deserve her."

"..."

Tobirama remained standing and slowly he return his gaze towards his brother. Just by seeing him, he can tell how much Hashirama hated his own decision, hated the situation. As his brother and the only person aside from Toka that stay on his side for such a long time, he witnessed how Hashirama was willing to sacrifice even himself for the purpose of making a certain Uchiha happy. Tobirama admits that he hated Madara and the Uchiha in general. They were just a bunch of rabid dogs who were so thirsty for battles. He was absolutely certain that the only reason why his brother wanted to keep them around was because of Madara and that was why Tobirama resented her.

But they are brothers and as a brother he wanted Hashirama's happiness. Whenever he thinks that this Uchiha girl was the source of his older brother's happiness, it made him sick to his stomach because he cannot accept that fact. But whenever Hashirama smiles because of this girl, Tobirama can almost forgive her on all the things she did wrong in the past to them. She was like a poison that Hashirama would willingly drink, bad for himself but cannot get enough of her.

The fact that he sacrificed himself for her sake yet again was a foolproof that Hashirama loves her more than anyone else in the world.

"Tomorrow, I will tell her about this." Hashirama said, bowing his head. Tobirama only stared at him in silence.

"Hokage-sama!"

A female voice erupted from the outside of the brothers' house. Hashirama immediately recognized who it was while Tobirama opened the door.

He was met by a dark haired girl, an Uchiha.

"Yoko?" Hashirama approached her as Tobirama stepped aside.

Yoko was out of breath holding her knees with both hands. She looked troubled as if someone was after her life. Seeing an Uchiha entering a Senju compound was something to be bothered about.

"Help, help," The young Uchiha stuttered.

"What's the matter?" the Hokage asked, puzzled.

"It's about Madara."

Hashirama's composure suddenly became alerted after hearing that name.

"She, she will attack Kirigakure on her own! Help her!"
"What?!" the brothers said in unison before glancing at each other.

"Tell me what happened for her to decide things on her own!" the Hokage held Yoko's shoulders and demanded.

"I don't know!" Yoko retorted, still gasping for air. "Earlier, a lot of my clansmen went on her house and asked her to come with them. It was no secret that they were plotting to take the clan leadership away from her. Our elders no longer trust her after it has came to their knowledge that she was the root cause of Kirigakure's actions. They also aren't fond of her so..."

"But why would she go to Kiri on her own?! This is outrageous." Tobirama whined

"I'm going." Hashirama turn around to take his armor and weapons.

"But brother-"

"Take care of the village for a while, Tobirama. I won't let her alone in this, it will put not just the village at risk but also her.

Without wasting another second, Hashirama departed the village alone despite Tobirama's ramblings. Before he completely vanished in their sight, the albino said that once he failed to return in 24 hours, he will follow him.

"Madara, what are you doing?!"

-xxx-

When he told her he loves her, she almost believed it, no - she definitely believed it. Madara finally acknowledged that little voice within her only for that voice to be buried in the deepest, darkest part of her soul.

"I will marry you, Mito."

What a fucking joke.

She turned to an embodiment of rage. Her mind was filled by hatred. She's going to destroy them - Kirigakure first and then the Konoha. She doesn't give a damn if she's alone in all of this, surely there will still be people around the Uchiha clan that will remain on her side just like Jiro. It doesn't matter if they're little in number, for she knows she's powerful enough to crush her enemies.

And then after that..

"I'm going to kill you, Hashirama!"
After All

After his brother departed, Tobirama remained standing with folded arms over his chest outside their home while eyeing cautiously on the girl in front of him.

"What?" Yoko straightened up after noticing the Senju. She wasn't oblivious of the fact that the man despises their clan. It was all over his facade and there was no denying it. And his overall negative interaction towards Madara proved it the most.

"Tell me, you Uchihas are plotting something isn't it?" the man said warily.

Yoko's eyes broadened at the question.

"Excuse me? Are you accusing us?"

Tobirama breathes out slowly and looked at her from head to toe.

Yoko wanted to scorn the man but she was inside the Senju compound and it will be a very bad idea to do in such place. Senjus was their mortal enemies and it was a well known fact that even after the truce, both sides found it awkward to go inside their respective compounds. It wasn't prohibited but everyone in the village agreed that it was really out of place.

"I won't be wasting my time here warning the Hokage about Madara's actions if that's the case." she stated with eyes squinted as if daring Tobirama to prove that she was against them or the village.

"So how did you know about Madara's plans to destroy Kiri?" Tobirama asked again in a more accusing tone.

The man was a keen observer, as expected to the best sensory type shinobi in their era. He should consider establishing an interrogating business as it will no doubt flourish. His personality and skills matched that kind of job.

"It wasn't that hard to deduce, that is, if you know Madara." Yoko retorted.

"And so you know her very well?" Tobirama asked again, raising another eyebrow.

The Uchiha mimicked him by folding her arms over her chest which the Senju took as a mockery.

"I do, we were friends you know. Even before your brother." she answered back, proudly.

"Oh?" he snides. Not fully believing her words. For all Tobirama knows, Madara has no real friend except maybe his brother. It was not surprising that an imperious woman like her doesn't have many friends. He can't count on how many times he'd been wondering what exactly Hashirama sees on her.

"Yes." Suddenly, Yoko's facade turned gloomy as if she was remembering an ugly memory from the past. Tobirama noticed the change of the Uchiha's demeanor upon saying Madara was her friend but said nothing about it. Well, what could he possibly know about them? He knows nothing and he doesn't have the time to be interested in matters concerning the Uchihas.

"Say, would you be happy if he were to kill her?"

"What?" Tobirama staggered at the sudden question. Where did this came from and what's this
Uchiha wanted to tell exactly?

"Would you feel satisfied if Hokage-san killed Madara?"

The Senju stared at her, analyzing his own thoughts.

"I once asked him about this, that what if she betrayed him. Just how much is he willing to do. The village or Madara-

"How dare you to compare that witch and the village!" Tobirama snarled, disgusted at the comparison Yoko has made. His nose wrinkled at the very thought that his brother would be willing to give up everything for the sake of that girl.

Promptly upon a realization, his face turned blank as if seeing the picture clearly. Frankly speaking, he never thought of his brother killing the Uchiha because well, Hashirama could've done that in the past for countless of times but this was the first time he realized that the situation in the past and the present greatly changed. He wasn't so sure anymore but if that's the case, if his brother was left no other choice but to kill her in order to maintain the peace between the two villages, it will undoubtedly leave Hashirama devastated.

The image of his brother losing his mind appears on Tobirama's mind.

"Wait,"

Yoko watched as her thought process sinks in the Senju's mind. She shook head head and sighed.

"Hokage-san might have no other choice this time. It's all up to him on what to choose now."

-xxx-

The dark blue sky amidst the sunset matched the color of her hair while the vermilion sky reminds her of blood. The rustles of trees from the cold breeze reminds her of the battles she'd been through. Soon as the sun freely set in the horizon, the darkness rises and the stars started to appear.

She had known what to expect right after she left the pathetic village that brought nothing but pain in her life. Madara stopped midway in her tracks after sensing the familiar chakra that was following her. That chakra that was too fast and strong. She hated it.

"Madara!" The Senju called.

Her gunbai placed in her back, she wore a full battle armor.

"You're here." she smirked, facing her back at him.

Hashirama was bothered, her chakra was way more hostile than ever. He had faced her on countless battles before but this time, he felt that he was going to face a different Uchiha Madara.

"Stop this," he said earnestly.

"I've already lost hope."

A strong wind passed by, the full moon showed itself and the only sound they can hear was the rustling of leaves from the forest. They were in the middle of the valley, a place that was so familiar to both of them but neither one of them realized that fact at the moment.

Hashirama was confused, he wanted to tell her that there was no use of attacking Kiri since they
can do it once she is the Hokage. He's going to give the seat, he should've have just told her and now's the time.

"You don't have to do this anymore," He started, arms motioning as if delivering a speech, hoping to change her mind. "I am giving you the Hokage seat. I realized that it was all too late for us to keep the peace intact. Too many people already died from both sides. As the Hokage, I wanted the best for my people, I don't want them to experience what you and I experienced. A life full of war. But I know now that a little sacrifice is needed to attain peace. That is why I've decided that I'm leaving everything in your care. Also, I settled the issue about the Uzumakis, they'll continue to assist us. There's nothing to worry about anymore."

Hashirama expressed, hoping her to hear him out. He failed to look at her straight in the eyes when she uttered the thing regarding the Uzumakis. A little sacrifice was needed, he thought. And he was definitely talking about himself with that.

Madara smiled as she closed her eyes, he thought everything will be fine until she dropped her next words.

"Pathetic."

He had expected that she would change her mind after what he said but she didn't. In fact, it was as if it made things worse. He heard her chuckle before dropping a word.

"That's not what I am aiming for anymore." she said, coldly with unreadable, dangerous eyes staring at the Senju.

"What do you mean?" he asked. "But isn't this what you wanted?"

"And do you think I can trust you?"

"I've never lied to you."

Madara frowned, the air around her became dim as the night.

"You liar!" she growled, reaching for the gunbai at her back. Hashirama blinked in surprise, trying to think what went wrong in the whole situation.

"Madara--"

"Confessing that you love me yet marrying another woman, you fucking liar." She snarled and that was it.

The earth beneath them crumbled soon as the Uchiha assaulted the Senju. Violent chakra streaming down the area while the two most powerful forces clash. One was attacking and the other was desperately trying to defend himself. Due to her attacks, Hashirama was left no other choice but to summon his wood jutsu to protect his life.

"I can explain! Madara what I said was the truth!"

"Lies!"

Madara activated the Mangekyou sharingan.

"I will never ever believe in you again!"

Her rage continues and it created tremors around the vicinity. Hashirama can tell she was dead
serious into pulverizing him.

Once again, he pleaded, trying to stop her. "Believe in me! I have a reason-"

"ENOUGH OF YOUR LIES!"

Madara performed the majestic fire jutsu hand seals and shoot it at Hashirama's direction.

How could it all end up to this?

It wasn't supposed to be like this.

As usual, Hashirama survived the attack after summoning a massive wood jutsu to shield himself.

"Madara, I'm begging you," he said, eyes with a pleading look. The desperation was too much in his voice, yet it was all for naught because in a span of a millisecond, Madara attacked him again. A sword lunging to cut his head. Hashirama used a kunai to dodge it but it already grazed his throat. They went on and on and on, attacks after attacks. Everytime he tried to reach her and open his mouth to say something, he aggravates her more. Her hatred was seeping throughout the vicinity and her chakra caused tremors. Hashirama knows that the worst is yet to come once it continues.

He had to stop her.

An opening let him grab both of her arms. The title best shinobi of their era wasn't something he earned for nothing. Hashirama forcefully twist Madara's arms for her to drop the weapons. Madara shrieked with her eyes red as blood as the Mangekyou sharingan rolled. She glared at him and the hatred in her eyes penetrated in his very soul.

"I'll fucking kill you!" She bellowed. "And then after that, I will destroy your miserable village!"

"Stop this;"

"Once you are gone, I will be the strongest shinobi in this era!" she grimaced as the two of them struggled momentarily with Hashirama preventing her movements and Madara forcing to retaliate.

Hashirama knew that if she ever succeeded, it will definitely bring devastation on the village they worked so hard to built and he doubt that if he ever die, Tobirama would be enough to stop her. At the very least, he knows what the future will bring once her fury continues.

Her words was like a dagger directly assaulting his heart. It was as if everything they had since they were children were gone. Twin blazing scarlet eyes mocked him, the most painful part was he cannot see any hope in her eyes. She was hopeless, hopeless about the world they live in, hopeless in the entire future. She looks as empty as him but in the most dreadful way. His heart sank realizing it was all too late for them yet he doesn't want to acknowledge it, he doesn't want to give her up for the sake of his village. There was absolutely something he can do, he wanted to believe he was right about it but was he?

*How far will you go for Konoha?* Hashirama remembers the time Yoko asked him a threatening question.

Are you willing to kill her for the sake of your village? The girl continues.

"I would never do that!" he replied, flabbergasted by the question that was thrown to him. Confused, he glared at the Uchiha unsure of what's the reason behind it.
"But what if it's the only way to save Konoha? Madara is a power-hungry individual and Izuna was her life. When he died, it was like her life was taken away from her. I could say she's the real danger and not your enemy village, how long are you going to ignore that fact, Hokage-san?" Yoko stated calmly, It was quite shocking that an airhead looking girl like her was saying all of this.

Hashirama was stupefied. Yoko was only stating facts. He himself could not argue with that but there was no way, no way, he would kill the girl he loves.

After recalling those moments, Hashirama was struck by the bitter reality that talking about the issue was different from facing it. Yet his resolve remained.

"This will be the end." she warned, a wry smile plastered on her face. Hashirama knew from that exact moment that this will be their last fight. Her words, her actions and her chakra was saying that there was no way he could avoid to clash with her. No matter how much he wants to.

Madara was freed from his grip and their battle continues.

-xxx-

Almost a day had passed and the battle still continues. Her rage and his astounding strength wrecked the vast valley. For every time Hashirama tried to talk and explain as they dealt with each other's attacks, Madara refused to listen and only responded with a murderous glare and bitter words. Her words pained him greatly than any physical wound. A wound so deep that even his top notch healing jutsu would be useless.

It was one hell of a fight and both were at their limits. They panted heavily with blood and sweat sticking out. Jagged armor and heavy eyelids. Their indestructible chakra was beginning to fade but it was clear that one of them had the upper hand.

Amidst the havoc under the captivating twilight, Hashirama hunched putting with his hands on his kneecaps. Slowly, he raised his head and breathes out, watching the magnitude of destruction they brought in the place. His face dreary as he look above.

"Why,"

The Hokage sighed but his eyes still fixated at the sky.

"Why won't you just kill me?"

Hashirama closed his eyes and after a minute of silence, he answered.

"Why should I?" he said in a whisper.

Away from him was Madara, on bended knees. It doesn't take a genius to assume that she has no chakra left anymore. Using mangekyou sharingan for such a long period was truly chakra draining even for a powerful shinobi like her.

"I lost." her gloved hand touching the ground. The Uchiha bowed her head, wanting nothing but an end to her miserable fate. She chuckled laughing at her own self.

"I've lost to you for so many of times. Yet you always refuse to kill me. You're a cruel one, Hashirama. Do you enjoy watching me losing to you over and over?" she said, not really looking for an answer. But rather she was questioning for one last time why would life be unfair.
"Does it matter," Hashirama spoke, in a rough way. He was so worn out to control his emotions and so it spilled finally.

"Does it matter if one could win or lost? Does it matter to be the strongest?" he asked again, now looking at the Uchiha straight in the eyes.

"Heh," eyes on the ground, a smirk appeared on her lips. "It matters to me."

"That is why you've lost!" for the first time, Hashirama snapped at her.

Madara was indeed surprised by this yet like him, she was worn out to react appropriately. She was confused and defeated. She felt like an utter loser, no, she was definitely a loser at this point.

"Kill me." she mumbled, but Hashirama did not fail to hear it. "I'd rather die than live knowing that I'm nothing but a loser."

Hashirama's heart sank, yet again. Hearing those words from the person he loves was agonizing. He can only wish to take her pain away or at least ease it a bit. But even him played a part on bringing hell to her life.

His eyes softened as he looked at her. "Mara, I can never-"

Even on his weakest state, he didn't fail no sense the incoming threat. Hashirama quickly scanned the area and on the higher ground, he saw the enemy shinobis circling around them.

There were hundreds of Kiri shinobis descending from above.

At this point, one thing was for sure; he will have a hard time if they ever attack them right now. But before anything, Hashirama waited and waited for something to happen and kept his eyes between Madara and their uninvited guests. He was also quick to realize that it was either both of them were too focused on each other to notice the Kiri shinobis' presence or they were skilled enough to hide their chakras from him and Madara's senses.

He can only guess that they waited patiently until one of them collapsed and soon will approach them once they had no strength to fight anymore. Even as their enemy, Hashirama mentally applauds the dirty little trick. It was like they planned this all along.

"Hokage-sama," a Kiri shinobi called from afar. "We received your letter of peace negotiation."

Judging from the shinobi's tone, their presence wasn't merely asking for some bloody battle. Hashirama relaxed a bit but never let his guard down.

"I see," Hashirama answered, loud enough for the shinobi standing on the higher ground to hear. "Then, what is this all about?" he asked, lifting an eyebrow.

"I am here to deliver an agreement from the Mizukage."

"Agreement?" the Hokage dipped his head on his side looking above. All the while, Madara was listening to the whole conversation with glaring onyx eyes with the absence of sharingan.

"What exactly is this agreement you're talking about?" Hashirama asked, if anything, this so called agreement would solve all his problems but at the same time, he's looking forward that whatever it is, coming from the Mizukage himself might not be an easy thing to give.

And how he was so right about that.
"Hand Uchiha Madara to us and we will leave everything in peace. In addition to this is the payment of the destruction that our rebel assassins, the seven swordsmen that had caused your village."

Hashirama's mood turned sour and Madara who was slumping on the dirt gritted her teeth. These fools. Do they honestly think he will freely give her to them? As far as he's concern, they will surely give her the slowest and most painful death.

"Hashirama," The Uchiha said in a husky voice. "Do it."

His eyes shifted to her.

"I'd rather die in your hands rather than on these lowly idiots."

Hashirama did not answer, instead he just stared at her with a blank face. Admittedly, he's too tired in all of this.

"Just do it!" she yelled, he closed his eyes and clenched his fist.

"We demand an answer right now." The Kiri shinobi said, unaware of the conversation of the two.

"If this is what you want," Hashirama spoke. His voice was deep and empty.

Madara lets out small smile on her lips, already accepting her fate on his hands. She failed in so many things in life yet she never wanted to accept it. But after doing everything in her power and still wasn't able to claim the victory, Madara, for the first time felt it really was the end. The only thing she can be proud of was that she gave up fighting.

At least...

It wasn't that bad...

She closed her eyes, already anticipating a quick death from Hashirama's hands. Her best friend whom she shared a dream, the then stupid looking bowl cut boy whom she met during her childhood. She admits, it wasn't that bad after all.

"I won't let you have her." Hashirama growled, glaring daggers on his true opponents. Madara's eyes fluttered wide open and saw Hashirama activating his sage mode.

"Senpo Mokuton: Shin Susenju!"

The ground was shaken once again when a giant statue with thousand hands emerged from below. The kiri shinobis were appalled. They were crushed like flies in an instant but Hashirama's low chakra greatly affects the jutsu.

"You fool!" Madara struggled to stand up and wobbled as she gets up. "What the hell is wrong with you, you could've use that chakra to-"

"To kill you?" Hashirama continued.

"I would never do such thing, Madara."

-xxx-

Raindrops poured down the earth as if the sky was crying from the battle that stole hundreds of lives.
"I hate you, you know that?! You're the most stupid person I've ever met! What a fool wasting your chakra like that!"

Madara's voice reverberated inside the deep forest. Hashirama's long arm wrapped around her shoulders.

"Ma...ra"

"Stop talking!" Madara glowered.

She sighed exasperatedly and halted. Both of them barely have energy left in their bodies particularly Hashirama who used a huge amount of his own life force to summon a jutsu that requires a great amount of chakra. Both of them knows, especially the Senju himself that it would definitely kill him instantly if not because of Madara interrupting.

The Uchiha stared at her reflection in the river they passed by and closed her eyes at the realization,

"No, Im the stupid one here." She said at the back of her mind.

Everything flipped upside down. Her thoughts were shuffled and even herself cannot believe what she did. She can still feel the anger, the hatred, her hopelessness for her pitiful life and the world they live in. She already envisioned herself in the afterlife, joining Izuna and the rest of her family in heaven or hell if such places exists.

Madara glanced at the form beside her, the man she's been carrying for an hour.

Her mind was screaming bloody murder, detestation, abomination, betrayal - yet her heart was telling her to do the opposite. She continued in her tracks, small but quick steps until finding a secluded cave not far from them.

Pure luck for her or the man beside her, she can't tell.

Madara not-so-carefully put Hashirama down soon as they entered the cave. She let out a gasp of pain from the weight of dragging a man twice her weight and plopped down next to him.

Hashirama slowly opened his eyes and turn to move his head towards the Uchiha's direction.

"Thank you." he muttered.

"For what," she replied harshly. "For trying to kill you and destroy your village?"

Hashirama only looked at her vividly.

Both of them were on their weakest, making their chakra and presence unnoticeable from the remaining enemy shinobis, if ever some of them survived Hashirama's destructive jutsu, that is.

The silence between them was broken by the Senju's chuckle. He, of course earned a glare coming from the Uchiha.

"What's funny?" she asked.

Hashirama leaned on a rock on his back. "You can't kill me."

Madara gritted her teeth, her eyes turned into slits. But her eyes softened its gaze as she bowed her head. He was right and she cannot argue with that. She had lost so many battles against him and
there was no counter argument with that.

"No," Hashirama spoke again. "You don't want to kill me."

"What?!!" she snapped.

The Hokage was still staring at her onyx eyes.

"You had the chance but you didn't. You saved me. You just don't want to acknowledge it, Madara, but you never wanted to kill me even you can."

"What the hell are you-"

She was smacked by the realization that there was a fine line between 'she wanted to kill him' and 'she can kill him' and Hashirama proved that he was right about it.

"You were just blinded by your hatred towards me but I know deep inside of you that you are a kind person." he continued.

"Shut up,"

"Admit it."

"Shut up!" she yelled, her voice reverberated inside the cave.

"I lost because you are stronger than me, that's just it. Don't fucking assume what I feel. You have no idea how I really feel nor I think!"

Hashirama paused but kept his eyes on her.

"Do you want to know the real difference between us?"

Madara stiffened, although her face looked annoyed and tired just like him.

"I should've known," Hashirama started in a raspy voice, weak as his body. "We're like water and oil, always clashing even on trivial matters. But I believe we could make something great if we're together and from that we made the village. You and me, because that's what we want. Freedom, peace, a home that we never had. I wanted it all because of you."

For the first time in their argument, Madara did not interject what he's saying. She just continued to listen while avoiding his gaze.

"And you asked me ...to kill you?" Hashirama's voice cracked as he was on the brink of tears and was only trying to hold it. The pain and loneliness that he was hiding away from her for so long. Madara was silent the entire time. Around the sound of raindrops, the cold and dark place above the mercy of twilight.

"I am strong because I acknowledge what I feel, and if this feeling I have for you is what one can say my weakness, then so be it."

Madara froze on the spot like she was smacked by something so impactful. Her eyes dilated after being struck by his words.

They may be both powerful, yes she cannot win against him in terms of raw strength but she can easily surpass his intelligence. There were many ways that she can think of to defeat him but if was all out of hatred and lust of power, and by that, her judgement was always clouded. She doesn't
acknowledge her weakness while he embraced it. His weakness was a part of him that he can never let go. For this 'weakness' was also his strength.

It was her.

Madara swallowed her pride, finding it ironic that the one with a pair of eyes that can see invisible things clearly than anyone was the blind one all along.

Suddenly, Hashirama started to cough violently. He placed a hand over his mouth as blood gushed out from it. His vision blurred and lost his balance.

"Hashirama!"

Madara was startled and immediately caught him. His breathing became shallow and she can feel that he's getting weaker and weaker. He was badly injured and his last remaining chakra good enough to survive was drained after he activated the sage mode.

But he don't regret it.

"Mara,"

"Don't talk, just...take a rest." she said with a tone of obvious worry.

He can't help but to smile despite his condition. Seeing Madara's furrowed eyebrows not because of annoyance but because of worrying was a rarity.

"It's been a while since I heard that tone....of yours.."

Madara looked at him straight in the eyes, they were face to face.

"When you stupidly went head on with my fire jutsu during our sparring match?"

"Yes." Hashirama answered weakly.

The Uchiha bit the side of her cheeks as the memories from their childhood filled her mind.

"Stupid idiot." she mumbled. "I hate you."

"I love you."

She flinched, eyes widened at the sudden declaration. And before she can argue with him again, Hashirama put his arms around her.

"If that's the last thing I could say to you, please believe it."

She was locked by his embrace, her face buried on his shoulder blades.

"I'm sorry that I ....have to sacrifice my feelings for you....but please...remember that even if I end up marrying another woman... you'll always be..."

Hashirama was cut off when she hugged him back, wrapping her arms around him was like a dream.

"Don't talk," she said and with that, Hashirama closed his eyes, listening only to the sound of rain, alone with the most important person in his life.
"Hashirama," she whispered, and after a long pause in a dead silence,

"I'm sorry….for everything."
Roughly ten years ago-

"Mara?"

"Hmm?"

"What did you write in the time capsule?"

They were lying in a grassfield around plenty of colorful flowers after a tiring training. The young Uchiha raised her back and huffed while the Senju boy shifted his attention from the blue sky above to his friend.

"I already told you, wait for ten years and you will know."

"But it was too long~~" Hashirama whined as if it wasn't his idea for them to make a time capsule.

"You're the one who made that rule!" Madara reminded him.

It was a good day, the weather was warm but the wind coming from the mountainous part of the forest was cool. The birds chirped loudly in the background and the trees around shielded them against too much sunlight. Hashirama closed his eyes, listening on the relaxing sound of nature. It was so peaceful and to top it all, he was with her.

"I want to be with you, always."

"What?"

Hashirama grinned while lying flatly on the ground.

"That's what I wrote!" he raised his back to meet her gaze. Madara's onyx eyes widened. A faint blush started to appear in her face.

"Why did you tell me about it already?!" she scolded, he laughed.

"What's wrong with it?"

Madara glared at him with reddened face which he founds adorable. Hashirama once asked her if she ever wore a kimono before where Madara replied with a cold gaze and a loud 'YES,WHY?' He wanted to tell her that he hopes to see her wearing one but Hashirama hesitated. Especially when she started complaining how it was straining her movements saying "I cannot kick while wearing that stupid dress, I don't like it!" he wonders if ever she will act more ladylike in the future.

"Well, you already spoil me the contents so what's the use of it?" Madara raised her thin eyebrow.

"You haven't tell me about yours, right?" the boy smiled brightly as a sunshine, the girl shrugged. He stared at his friend with a shit-eating grin as if telling her to say what she wrote in the ridiculous time capsule.
"As if I'm telling you and also stop looking at me like that!"

"Why?"

"It's annoying, uncomfortable." She answered with her eyes looking at everywhere except his gaze.

Hashirama blinked wondering why Madara was acting strange, she usually do not complain on the way he look at her. She also looked like a nervous wreck.

"Are you sick, Mara?" Hashirama asked concernedly, tilting his head on his side while taking a good look on her face.

"Why?"

"Your face...it's red." The boy placed a hand on her cheek to check her temperature but he was rewarded by a growl.

"Don't touch me! I'm not blushing!" Madara screeched, Hashirama flinched.

"I never said you're blu...wait, you're blushing?"

She opened her mouth in an attempt to defend herself to no avail. Hashirama burst into laughter. Madara's cheeks turned red as tomato in embarrassment realizing she accidentally admitted that she was blushing. They rolled in the field and the place was soon filled with laughter, giggles and echoing voices as she jumped to stop him from laughing at her.

"Stop laughing Hashirama!" her high pitched voice echoed.

Hashirama continued to chortle with Madara on top of him. She was pinning him to the ground with a sulky expression and still furiously ashamed of herself.

"I can't help it, you're adorable." The boy said in between laughs. "But why are you blushing?"

"I am not!" The girl responded with a pout as her dark, messy hair flew softly in the air. Her face however has betrayed her words.

"Does it have anything to do with our time capsule?" The boy guessed innocently.

Madara shrieked, flailing her arms sideways and addition to this, she blushed even more. Hashirama was deeply baffled.

"I hate you!" She leapt making a distance between them. Madara turn her back at him while mumbling incoherent words.

Hashirama sniggered but got worried later on. Especially when it was the first time he had seen Madara sulking. It was like she was taken aback by something that he failed to figure out.

In all honestly, who on earth would be mad if someone wanted to always spend their time with them? Hashirama's eyebrows furrowed as he thinks, is she mad because he said what he wrote in the capsule? Or is she mad about what he wrote in it? What is the truth?

"Mara?"

"Shut up."

"Okay, I'm sorry."
Hashirama sighed in surrender. He reached to touch a strand of her hair, a habit that he had grown fond of whenever she refused to talk with him. She did not move an inch, even though he was sure that she can feel his fingers on it.

"What?" Madara asked in a rather more composed manner, much to his surprise. Although the hint of irritation was still in her voice. She tends to lose her temper easily but it doesn't take too long for her to calm down again. They have been meeting for months now and they never separate with unsettled arguments within a day.

Sometimes he wonder why girls are so hard to read especially the likes of her. He doesn't know if the other girls in their clan are like that since he doesn't really spend time with other Senju around his age except maybe with Toka who happened to be very close to him and his brothers.

Suddenly, Madara jerked to stand up and face him. Her lips were shut in a thin line and it was as if she wanted to tell him something but chose not to. Yet her eyes spoke a thousand words.

"Wait for it, you idiot!"

-xxx-

He pried his eyes soon as he woke up. It took several seconds for him to remember what happened before he went on a deep slumber. Still on his torn, ragged armor, Hashirama tried to sit up. He can still feel the weakness of his body and even though his wounds were slowly healing - thanks to the Senju genes, his chakra hasn't fully recovered yet. His eyes then wandered outside where he saw the lush green surrounding outside the cave. They were in the middle of a forest and neither one of them knows exactly where they are, but it wasn't the thing he was so concerned about.

"Madara?"

He called after finding himself alone in the dark. There was no one but him in the place. Hashirama gathered a strength to stand up. Balancing himself with his hand on the wall, he managed to reach the mouth of the cave. He covered the half of his face as his vision adjusts on the sunlight. The rain was gone and he can smell the earthy scent that it left.

Hashirama concentrated and listened to the sound of nature while channeling his chakra in an attempt to track her presence. Out of curiosity, he decided to take a stroll until he reached a river.

"This place…"

The riverbank was too familiar and although the entire place greatly change over the years, there was no doubt that it was the place where they first met.

He can still remember that day, meeting a cute girl skipping rocks. He unknowingly smiles at the thought of remembering everything since that fateful day. But ever since, he knew that she was far different from any other girl.

Hashirama sits beside a tree and watched the mesmerizing reflection of the sunlight from the water as he reminisce on the past. As he sat down, his vision was struck by something - a reflection coming from a shiny object not far away from him. He peered until he saw a part of a transparent bottle with half of its body buried. He hasn't took an interest to check it out until he remembered something.

The Senju approached the bottle and blinked at its familiarity. He slowly pulled it up, revealing
that it was one of the bottle they buried years ago. Given that it was sitting on the west part of the river, the bottle was Madara's.

He can practically hear her voice whining once she found him holding her bottle. Hashirama removed the wooden lid and pulled the paper outside to read it.

"Hashirama,"

The Senju almost dropped the bottle. He instantly turn around to face the owner of the voice.

Madara frowned and raised her eyebrows before approaching him.

"I was looking for-"

She paused upon seeing the bottle on his hand.

"-you..." she continued, reluctantly. Her face became pale as a blank sheet of paper. The Uchiha then gazed at him then back at the bottle.

"Give me that." she breathed nervously, and in the blink of an eye, the air between them shifted greatly.

"Why would I?" Hashirama grinned, the usual childish grin whenever he tries to tease her. Without further ado, Madara marched forward to grasp the bottle away from his hands.

"Hashirama!"

They banter with the Senju refusing to give it. He secured the thing on his back while laughing giddily. All the while, Madara was blushing furiously, attempting to either grab the damned bottle or force Hashirama to drop it.

"Do you remember when you said you will let me know the contents of this bottle after ten years?" Hashirama teased. Madara glared at him gritting her teeth. But then lets out a sigh of defeat.

Madara shifted her vision on her side.

"Why are you so secretive about this?" The Senju asked.

"And why are you so eager to know it?! It was made by a twelve year old girl!"

Hashirama gaped and then laughed again at how she looked troubled. Their exchange was indeed funny given that they almost kill themselves on their fight yesterday. Draining all their energies, destroying an entire valley using their massive forces, and now bantering like twelve year olds.

"I'm always curious about anything when it comes to you. That's why, I want to know."

"But it won't matter anymore! Since you'll be spending the rest of your live with that Uzumaki bitch!"

Both of them was surprise at her words. Hashirama was baffled and Madara wanted the ground to eat her alive for saying such things.

"What do you mean?" he wondered.

"Just..forget it." she answered in a calm but shaky voice.
Hashirama stepped forward and gave her the bottle. Madara looked at it, confused.

"I want you to read it for me." he said and then she snapped again.

"What the hell?! Are you trying to embarass me with myself!" she bellowed and looked mortified at the very thought of her reading it in front of him.

Hashirama sighed. "Then, just let me read it in silence?"

Madara stared at him for a while before looking away.

He smiled and proceeded to pull out the paper. It changed from its original pure white color to brownish due to the time it spent being buried into the soil. Even the crystal bottle faded its transparency. Hashirama carefully unfolded the piece of paper and reads it.

Hashirama,

I'm pretty sure that while you are reading this, you already know that I am an Uchiha, a member of your rival clan. Frankly speaking, I don't know if we are still friends once the time comes when we are supposed to read this together. Our life as shinobis are full of uncertainties but I just want you to know...

He glanced at her before continuing.

I wish I can live my life with you by my side.

-Uchiha Madara

Their eyes met in an awkward silence. Madara could not take it anymore and turn around to leave. Not until Hashirama held her wrist.

"Tell me," he began, "Do you still feel the same way?"

"Let go of me." she stammered. "I already told you, it won't matter anymore."

"Why didn't you tell me?" he asked.

"Tell you what?!" she grumbled and turn to face him again angrily. "Tell you how much I hate that woman? Tell you how much I was hurt when I heard you're willing to marry her?! For fucks sake Hashirama! My life is a messy hell to begin with and you're expecting me to suddenly admit everything to you?! To talk about my feelings when my reputation is slowly dying?! Everything that's important to me is fading away from my very eyes including you!"

"Mara...are you,"

"How dare you!" she screamed and breathes out to calm down. "I..did't know what to do, what to feel, I was in rage and want to destroy everything including you. I feel so alone after I heard you saying that." She bowed down and wiped the tears clogging her eyes. At this point, she wasn't sure if she hated herself more than him for saying it out loud.

Hashirama was too stunned to even react at the sudden revelation.

"But I know," she spoke in a cracked voice. "That it's all too late."

"Look at me," Hashirama pulled her carefully and slowly lifted up her face.
"And tell me everything you feel about me,"

"I hate…” she began as they stared each other longingly.

Hashirama gazed, in hopes of finding the truth in her eyes. He waited, and waited patiently for her to continue until Madara let the words slip out without thinking.

"That I...love...you."

Madara bit her lower lip, feeling the surging regret after her confession and slapped his hand away from her face.

"Forget it," She chided and stepped backwards.

Swiftly as she let her guard down, Hashirama grabbed her arm and gently held the back of her neck to press his lips against hers.

In a fleeting moment that seems to last forever, just the two of them alone in the middle of the place where they first met. Where they first talk, where they always spar during their childhood, where they knew each other and where they also went on their separate ways.

And now, it has an all new different memory.

A place where they both accepted their true feelings.

Hashirama parted his lips away from her slowly.

"How could I simply forget it?" he said with and placed both of his hands into her cheeks affectionately. "When that's the thing I desired the most to hear?"

Madara was still dumbstruck to respond properly and remained rooted in the ground with her eyes glued at him.

Hashirama felt he was the happiest man in the world - no, he was undoubtedly the happiest man at the moment, and last thing he could care about was everything around them because the only thing that matters to him was her.

-xxx-

"Tobirama-sama," Toka arrived with an apologetic face. "We haven't recovered anything from the dead bodies and the area that could tell about the Hokage's whereabouts."

Tobirama stood in silence. They had reached the place where the devastating fight had occurred. His eyes wandered with a frown. As expected from the two most powerful shinobis, they wrecked the whole area. The valleys vanished from map as if it never existed. He shook his head and sigh. It has been 24 hours since his brother's departure from the village and just like what he said, he went to follow him once Hashirama failed to return in time. He knew how his brother was powerful but Tobirama cannot disregard the possibilities that something terrible happened to him when he can no longer sense his chakra. Together with him were a couple of Konoha shinobis. Aside from worrying about his brother, what added to his concern was the unexpected view of lifeless bodies from their enemy village. But keeping it aside, Tobirama prioritize to look for his missing brother.

The thought of the Uchiha possibly killing his brother has made his blood boil.

"I swear," he mumbled. "I will kill that woman with my bare hands." Tobirama clenched his fists
"Tobirama-sama!" A konoha shinobi pointed his finger on a certain direction.

A silhouette on a misty forest far from them was slowly approaching. The shinobis waited and readied just in case it was something they need to fight. Tobirama watched at the appearing form.

"Wait," he stepped forward to look at it closely.

As it gets nearer he noticed that there were two shadows, indicating it was actually two people. He held his breath on what he saw.

His brother had his arm around the Uchiha's shoulder, walking side by side.

"You're damn heavy." Madara complained for the fifth time along their way. Hashirama sniggered, looking afar.

"I'm sorry Mara, but this is the only thing I know so it won't be too suspicious." he replied.

"Heh," she rolled her eyes. "By tricking your brother that I helped you eliminate those Kirigakure buffoons, he wouldn't buy this shit." she declared like her statement was foolproof.

It was Hashirama's idea. He knows that sooner or later, Tobirama will follow and look for him. He was also well aware that once they found them, the first person Tobirama will blame for his condition was none other than Madara, and by that he needed to think of a convincing scenario that will clear things. He had enough of dilemmas since yesterday and the last thing he want to deal with was a clash between his brother and Madara, especially now.

"Besides, I'm too weak." he smirked.

"Oh yeah? I can drop you any minute and prove that you're lying!" she warned.

His hands motioned in surrender. The truth was, he was enjoying their close contact but of course, it was half truth that his consciousness was waning. He still needs proper medication and rest after a long fight.

"Brother!" Tobirama called, rushing at full speed towards them together with Toka. Hashirama smiled weakly at his brother.

"What happened?!" the younger Senju demanded and turn his head at the Uchiha.

"Things happened, Tobirama. But as for now, we need to get back in Konoha. I'll tell you more later." The older Senju replied.

Sure, he wanted to know the details, but seeing his brother in a bad shape was what made him save his queries for later and decided to follow his order. He held his brother's free arm and put it around his shoulders.

"I can do this alone." Tobirama looked at Madara. Her eyebrows slightly twitched upon their eye contact.

"It's alright, Mara." Hashirama assured and she remove herself away from him without saying anything.

The group return to Konoha in peace with occasional scolding coming from the younger Senju to
his older brother while the others particularly Madara kept quiet. But Tobirama did not fail to observe the perplexing exchange of eye contact between Hashirama and Madara.

_What's up with these two?_

Tobirama can see that there was something hidden beneath those glances, but what confused him was that it wasn't the kind of look coming from two people who almost exterminate each other. Seeing how his brother was supported by the Uchiha was already confusing and he can only wonder what really happened before they found them. He made a mental note to make Hashirama spill everything out.

By the time they reached Konoha, a small group of shinobi together with Mito were waiting for them at the gates.

"Hokage-san!" the redhead spun her heels towards them.

Madara's mood drastically changed and went from glowering at Mito to walking away from the group. It's not like she belonged with them anyway.

The Uzumaki gazed at the Hokage worriedly.

"Don't worry about me, Mito." Hashirama casually said, then his eyes met with Madara's.

The medics arrived to give them first aid yet the Uchiha refused and keeps on saying she doesn't need it. But the truth was it was only an excuse for her not to stay on the same place with Mito and Tobirama. She cannot stand it and would rather endure the physical pain of her wounds than seeing their faces.

"Madara," Hashirama called before the medics escorted him on the hospital. Tobirama was still standing beside him and Mito in front of them.

The said woman barely move her head to face him.

"I'll see you later." he said. It confused the hell out of the people around them more specifically Mito and Tobirama.

Madara only nodded in response before walking away.

-xxx-

Tobirama cleared his throat and folded his arms, leaned on the wall of the hospital room watching at his brother lying in the bed. Mito just left few moments ago and the albino witnessed how she was so concern about his brother. He can see how lucky Hashirama is once he marry her. She's the type of woman who submits to a man and take care of her family. Although he still want her to stay since he cannot look for Hashirama all day long because he had so much things to do, Tobirama essentially want to hear the whole story behind whatsoever happened the day before.

"Alright," the younger Senju started. "Tell me everything about it. And no, I don't believe she wasn't a part of the reason why you end up in that condition." Tobirama stated with his eyes turning into glare.

"Madara was right, you wouldn't buy it." Hashirama had a sly smile.

"Brother," it was almost a growl coming from Tobirama but soon, his annoyance that was quickly transforming to anger came to a halt when Hashirama's face and tone changed.
"I need to tell you about something."

Chapter End Notes

The first part of this chapter was from "Chapter 3: Their Past" where they agreed to make a time capsule. Funfact: the story including the title "Blinded" came from the song "Blind" by Lifehouse. I suggest you listen to it! (It's my all time favorite song, btw HAHA)
You what?"

Tobirama had an incredulous look. It wasn't a hiss or anything in the form of anger nor irritation- just plainly, pure confusion. He blinked several times at his brother before elaborating the question.

"You're having second thoughts on your marriage?"

Hashirama avoided his eyes. He can foresee an incoming bazillion of questions from his brother. But before Tobirama opened his mouth, the older Senju raised a hand for him to stop.

"It's because of Madara."

Tobirama tilted his head as if he had misheard him. "Im sorry, what?" the intonation of his voice was starting to elevate.

Hashirama knows that lying to him was pointless. There was no reason for him to hide the truth. Anyhow, Tobirama always know that she was a very special person to him. His feelings for his childhood friend was always there, no matter how much Tobirama doesn't want to acknowledge it.

The albino's eyebrows met. Yes he knows, he knows that he loves her - for the love of Sage, anyone who doesn't know it must have been blind all along. It was too obvious, heck even the villagers' pets must have known. But Tobirama also knows that the love was not reciprocated.

Or so he thought.

Instead of raising his voice for a barrage of words (or whats or whys), he waited not so patiently on Hashirama's elaboration.

"We sacrificed too much, both of us, for establishing the village. But this, that, to sacrifice our own feelings for each other was just…"

"Hold on a second," Tobirama spoke hastily. "Your own feelings for each other?"

Hashirama stared at him blankly unsure if he should continue, unsure if he should say it. Would he believe it? Of all the people? Tobirama? Definitely NOT. But it was needed and so he dropped it like a bomb.

"She loves me." The older Senju said, audibly enough for the words to be heard clearly by Tobirama.

He didn't flinch.

He didn't react.

For some seconds, that's it.

Until,

"SHE WHAT?" Tobirama looked at him as though Hashirama just said the joke of the century. He
started to consider that maybe the Uchiha casted an infinite genjutsu on his brother. He observed him but saw nothing but the injuries and bandages around his recovering body. Hashirama's face was blank, he felt lost but at the same time….happy?

"How so?" the younger Senju asked again.

"She told me."

"And you believed her?!"

"Tobirama," Hashirama halted his brother before the topic gets worse. He sighed, trying to get a hold of himself and explain it. Surely his brother won't believe it and he doesn't intend him to believe it at all. He just wanted him to know that that was his reason. And no, he has no plan to drill everything on Tobirama's mind especially what happened between them on the river.

Uchihas were always be their nemesis no matter how much his older brother deny it. They were still the clan who rivaled them for so many years. The mere fact that Madara was the one who killed their father was enough reason for Tobirama to hate her and in addition to his was her being the leader of this clan. The clan of hatred.

He wanted to say something against his brother's declaration or whatever he calls it. Of course, he himself cannot deny that even him have second thoughts of Hashirama marrying the Uzumaki lady because that...well... he doesn't love her and a marriage without love is doomed to fail at some point. But it he didn't, then Konoha is bound to descend in a pitiful state.

Tobirama was sure that the one of the many reasons why Hashirama agreed on marrying Mito was because he knows that Madara doesn't love him. That the love he had for her was plainly one sided. She give zero fucks about him. End of story. Until that maybe, somewhere along their fight (or so Tobirama assumed, not that he would like to hear the story anymore because his brother's face was enough for him not to ask more about it) maybe, she admitted that the feelings are mutual.

If not because of witnessing how she carried him around her shoulders and knowing that if she didn't, his brother might have not survived his injuries and the loss of massive amount of chakra - Tobirama will no way in hell believe it. He admitted that the act surprised him greatly. That after all the shit they've been through, Madara did help his brother.

"Tobirama, I'm.. I don't know what to do," Hashirama confessed and he honestly looked so lost than before.

Well damn.

It would be much easier, at least, that's what Tobirama thought if Hashirama's love for the Uchiha was one sided. But now, knowing that she feels the same (he's really not going to dig more about this as he wasn't prepared at all) everything will be different.

Tobirama was in a daze. He looked confused just like his brother. Clearly, he has no idea what to say about things like this. He was never involved in this kind of situation before so how could he help him? About love and marriage? Heck, he has no idea how romantic love feels or works. All he could say about it was, it can twist someone's mind, change someone's mood or better yet took someone's own life or future based on what he saw from Hashirama, as he stayed beside him for the longest time.

"What about the village," the younger Senju subconsciously. For some reason, he could not
ridicule his brother or the Uchiha about…this or their "feelings".

Hashirama did not answer.

He swore to do anything in his power to protect the village at any cost. He begged to Ashina that he will do anything just so they continue their help for Konoha. He agreed or rather, was forced to agree because it was the only way, their only chance to save the village, his village - with Madara. Also because he knows that she can never love him back, yet a day later, he was proved to be wrong because she feels the same way about him, and now that he knows it, how could he possibly agree on marrying a different woman, his childhood friend, a person that he has no feelings at all and only sees her as a friend.

What else could possibly stop them from living the life they want…?

There was,

The village that they built.

-xxx-

She shut the door close and let out a breath she didn't know she was holding for who knows how long.

The room was dim and the furnitures scattered everywhere. Looks like her cats did some evil when she was away. Madara plopped down wearily in the floor and remove her armor, throwing it away and clean it later. The next thing she did was to crawl and get the first aid kit in her drawer just beside the bed. Her injuries wasn't that serious - not at all, since the Senju avoided to hit vital parts that would send her in a grave condition.

She hated it. His gentleness even when they were fighting.

She was purposely trying to push him to attack her without holding back but she ended up exhausted instead. While cleaning her wounds, Madara paused and subconsciously touched her lips.

A recollection of their kiss invaded her thoughts. It was brief but she can still clearly remember how it felt.

She groaned thinking about it, and started fooling herself; that maybe she was just tired or out of her mind when she said those ridiculous things. But maybe it was all that she wanted to say for so long - that her hatred and all the negative feelings she had was blocking its way for her to finally acknowledge it.

Madara shook her head trying to cease her musing. Her forefathers will surely curse her and roll in their graves. How could she allow such thing? Uchihas are supposed to hate the Senju yet she befriends one, helped one, loved one.

...Enough of this!...

She reminded herself angrily. Love? How many times that disgusting thing ruined her? She loved her clan but they turn their backs on her, she loved Izuna but his life was taken away leaving her alone wallowing in a world where no one was willing to believe in her, cherish her, accepts her.

And then she remembered there was one.
Hashirama.

Hashirama who was a betrothed man, fated to get married so he can save the village, their village.

Madara realized she just made her life even more miserable.

-xxx-

He entered a cold, dark room hidden inside the village's forest.

Tobirama Senju was a man that would not hesitate to get his hands dirty when it comes to saving what's precious to him. All his life, he remained beside his brother, to guide him and take care of him. Maybe he's the younger one between them, but he clearly was the more logical one while the other was too idealistic for his own good. Tobirama knows that Hashirama needs him, may it be a whip to direct his path straight whenever he strays. That task was passed onto him since their father died.

But one thing he could never change about his brother's flaw was his undying feelings for a certain Uchiha. He tried many times to open his eyes, they argued and argued and argued a lot because of her. That there was no way and point to continue loving someone that only brought him pain. Someone who was so driven by hatred.

Yet finally, after trying for so many years, it has come to his realization that he cannot change how his brother feels.

Tobirama weaved some signs and a stone box hidden inside a brick wall slowly emerged. He opened it and took the scroll inside.

...I never thought I would come up in this kind of resolution...

Edo tensei no jutsu. Not even Hashirama knows that he was secretly creating a jutsu that will bring the dead back. Judging him and his morals, he will forbid him from continuing it and then scold him from head to toe for doing it without his knowledge. The jutsu seemed likely to do more harm than good but in Tobirama's eyes, a dirty trick like this would bring them positive results - only if it was in good hands.

The jutsu however was still incomplete and it would be dangerous to fully rely on it. But if it was the only thing he can do to help as their situation demanded him to risk, Tobirama would like to try.

-xxx-

"What gives?"

Madara never thought that a day where Tobirama would like to talk to her would come.

The Uchiha went to the Hokage's office so early in the morning after calling an emergency meeting together with all of the clan heads that resides in Konoha. Hashirama was incapacitated and it was an SOP for her to substitute. As it so happened, Tobirama was the first one to appear, being the Senju clan's representative and the village's official as the Hokage's adviser.

"I would like to try a new jutsu."

Tobirama gathered every guts to talk to her. It was difficult, really, to talk with Madara as if nothing happened between them. As if he didn't play an important role for her brother's demise. As
if she wasn't the one who killed his father. The Senju knew better that the first thing she would like
was to choke him to death. But this was not the time to bring out each other's bitterness - that was
the last thing the village needs at this very moment. It was a time for them to set aside their
differences, just this time, and work together to defend Konoha.

Madara looked at him disinterestedly. She wondered why all of a sudden, this Senju was talking on
something he wants to do. When did he ever considered asking her for permission? Is he asking her
permission anyway? And would she, of all the people, care about it? For all she knows, he can do
whatever the hell he wants. He just needs to be useful, that's it.

"How does this concerns me?" the Uchiha sat on the Hokage seat.

"You're the Hokage-in-charge, of course this concerns you." Tobirama stated trying to be calm as
possible.

Her expression changed from unconcerned to slightly surprised at the bold statement. Tobirama?
Finally acknowledging her? Wait.

"I think...this might help." Tobirama stuttered upon continuing. He was on the verge of taking back
what he just said but reminded himself over and over and this was for the village.

"Madara-sama!" Toka came hurriedly inside the room.

Both Madara and Tobirama wore the expression that they had expected a bad news coming ahead
of time.

They weren't in the wrong with this.

Hashirama's refusal to surrender Madara to Kiri triggered the other village to declare a war against
Konoha.

The meeting started soon as the other clan heads arrived. And unlike their many other assemblies,
they were very eager to maintain the spirit of unity inside the room. The absence of arguments and
bickering was something new. They tackled different strategies from war experiences. As it was
Tobirama's turn to discuss his plan, everyone was shocked on his invention.

It was no question that they were outnumbered. But with the use of Edo tensei no jutsu, they can
somehow manage to fight them head on. The clan heads particularly the Hyuga and Inuzuka had
their moments of doubt but it was backed up by the rest. Madara did not say a word whether she's
fine with it or not, avoiding any possible scenario that would bring out conflict. Just this time,she
let the majority of the clan heads to decide.

"Tobirama, may I have a word later?" Sasuke Sarutobi asked before he leaves, Tobirama
immediately nodded in response.

The conference ended and the only people left in the room were Madara and Tobirama.

"Why didn't you invite the Uzumaki on the meeting?" the Senju asked and he was rewarded with a
sharp, calculating look from the Uchiha.

"This is a matter between Konoha and Kiri, they have nothing to do with it." Madara replied with
apparent irritation in her tone.

"Still, they could help."
Madara glared at him, her patience was thinning due to his presence. She just wanted him to leave and do her job as Hokage-in charge for fucks sake, but no, the man remained and continued to annoy her.

She took a deep breath and convinced herself that today's not the day that she will slaughter the annoying polar bear. She still has to run the village until Hashirama returned.

"Hnn, a jutsu that will summon a zombie huh? I bet hashirama doesn't know about this wicked technique of yours." Madara said in an attempt to change the subject. Because dammit why just the man don't leave her in peace!

"It doesn't matter if he knows or not. Let us focus on more important tasks." Tobirama spun his heel to avoid the question and also to save himself from the Uchiha's chagrin.

Madara rolled her eyes but was also relieved that the Senju finally leave her alone.

Later, she decided to go to the hospital. Madara still hesitated to pay him a visit but the little voice within her was what pushed her to continue anyway. But before knocking on his room, her mood went south upon hearing the Uzumaki girl's voice from inside. Hearing the two of them talking with each other deeply infuriated her.

"...Thank you, Mito..."

She heard Hashirama thanking the Uzumaki.

Anger, sorrow, hatred, jealousy, self pity.

She still have so much things to do for her own clan. Madara cursed under her breath, if only she went straight home then she could save herself from getting disappointed. Although 'disappointed' was an understatement. It was a stupid idea to even think about visiting the damned fool when it was made clear that he doesn't need her presence at all, given that Mito was already there for him. And the mere fact that they will one day get married.

Madara wasted no time and face her back at the door before she demolish it. She was about to march outside the hospital when she was stopped by someone.

"What's up, Madara?"

"Yoko…"

The two female Uchiha walked side by side, strolling around the village. She didn't know how it happened until they stopped in a park near the exit gate.

"It's been a while since you and I talk like normal people." Yoko started.

"We're not talking." there goes Madara's quick response.

"Aw c'mon Madara, we were friends!"

Madara huffed and clicked her tongue. She was absolutely sure that she wanted to be alone. Everything tires her if not piss her to an extent. The war, Tobirama, Hashirama and now the Uzumaki bitch. But for some unknown reason, she did not dismiss the idea of being with Yoko.

They were childhood friends, way before she met Hashirama. But after her brothers died leaving her to be the only available successor of their clan, Yoko and her started to grow apart. She spend
her childhood under a strict supervision of her father and elders for a special training everyday. The only person she could talk with was Izuna, who was still very young to understand the things around her. Among many other days that she sneaked outside the Uchiha camp after an argument with her father, she went to a far away river and there she met Hashirama.

"Why didn't you visit him?" the younger of the two asked. Madara side eyed, unsure if she should answer.

"Why should I?"

Her words were wrapped in irritation and loneliness but Yoko focused on the latter.

"The Madara I know do anything in her power to get what she wants."

A soft breeze passed by and it made her relax. Madara sighed, it was so unlike of her to spoke in an apprehensive manner. But she was just so tired of it.

"I did everything and failed." The older one answered as she clenched her fists.

"But clearly, you don't have to do anything and yet you've got him."

She faced Yoko with a narrow eyes but her words affected her. "You know nothing!"

Yoko winced and then chuckled.

"Well, I obviously do!" she replied proudly. Madara stood up to leave despite Yoko's request for her to stay.

Madara grumbled curses along her way. She stopped and looked above to see the somber sky.

…..After this, I'm leaving everything behind...

-xxx-

And so it began.

The war between Konoha and Kirigakure broke few days later. With the absence of the seven swordsmen, it was much easier for them to infiltrate their camps. But it was not a surefire sign that they can win easily against Kiri.

"Madara,"

They were about to leave the village when Tobirama approached her. The younger Senju just got back from his brother for additional commands. Hashirama was the Hokage and his instructions were needed before they act even Madara, the second-in command, was around.

All the while, the Uchiha refused to talk with him and continuously boss Tobirama to communicate with the Hokage. He has no problem with it or whatsoever, but everytime he visits his older brother, Hashirama constantly ask why wouldn't she pay him a visit whereas the other would just shrug and proceed to talk with matters concerning the village.

She looked over her shoulders and saw the younger Senju handing a familiar pebble to her.

"You…." Madara faced him suspiciously then her attention turned on the pebble on his hand.

The pebble, the one they used for stone skipping. She remembered the time when she fully
believed that Hashirama betrayed her and chose his clan over their friendship, the reason why she grew to hate him. Since then, she had a hard time trusting anyone especially Hashirama.

"He never betrayed you." Tobirama whispered as he passed by. Madara was left speechless clutching the pebble with the words 'it's a trap, leave!' etched in the stone.

"Why, you?!!" anger erupted once again from the Uchiha, sharingan rolling as she faced his back. How dare him to hide the truth after all these years?! If only he told her about it earlier then all of her doubts might have been vanished. But even so, she knows that it won't change a bit about their clan's rivalry back then. That even though she knew that Hashirama wanted to warn her, everything will end up with them going in their separate ways.

Yet still, to know that he never betrayed her despite their situation…

"I hated you, you are from the clan that killed my brothers and to make matters worse you killed our father. But my brother, he never saw you as an enemy, but a victim of the cruel fate of the old shinobi system." Tobirama paused and glanced at the fuming Uchiha who seemed to calm down a bit.

"Just like Izuna and I,"

"How dare you drag my brother's name into this!"

"You won't believe me and you will never forgive me, I know."

For once, Madara wavered to strike him.

"But I'm sorry, I never wanted a child like him to die like my younger brothers."

She can tell how sincere he was upon delivering his apology. Tobirama continued on his way to the battlefield and Madara was left with additional thoughts about her past decisions.

-xxx-

The battle between the two villages left a remarkable victory on Konoha's side. The front line leaded by Tobirama succeeded in baiting and using the Edo tensei jutsu against the Kirigakure shinobi. Albeit it was an unfinished jutsu, he managed to control it with the help of the other clans.

Tobirama was hailed as a genius and a savior of the village even after the jutsu was branded as forbidden. Of course, little did everyone knew how Hashirama scolded him about creating the jutsu, just as he expected. After that, he praised his younger brother and told him not to use it ever again. Tobirama agreed, realizing the dangers once it falls to the wrong hands.

Kirigakure on the other hand faced a coup d'état from its inhabitants that eventually leaded to its change of leader.

"I feel bad for them." said by Tobirama who was leaning beside the window.

"You feel bad for our enemies?" asked by Hashirama who was packing his things, preparing to leave the hospital.

"Yeah," Tobirama answered lazily. "If only we surrender that Uchiha, the war didn't happen."

Hashirama laughed out loud. "You had the chance when I was weak and asleep but you didn't."

The younger Senju pouted and looked away. "It's because,tch...nevermind."
"Because?" Hashirama walked beside his brother with a grin on his face.

"My stupid older brother loves that girl so much."

Hashirama's eyes widened and then a gentle smile formed in his lips.

"Thank you, Tobirama."

"Heh! Don't thank me." he blushed and glared at his brother. "Anyway, are you sure you're fine now?"

He asked, changing the subject.

"Of course!" Hashirama grinned, happy that finally, his brother has came to an understand him.

"We will have to work harder starting now."

"What do you mean?" The white haired asked concernedly. It was like Hashirama said it in a different sense. Something like a connotation that they were going to deal with another problem. Although Tobirama raised an eyebrow, his brother seemed to take it lightly.

Hashirama gazed outside the window with a smile.

-xxx-

Her raven hair flew softly in the air. Around her were bushes and trees in the middle of an open field in the outskirts of the village.

"Izuna…"

Madara visited Izuna's grave in Konoha cemetery. Her eyes downcast as she stared at her brother's gravestone for one last time.

Tonight, she decided to leave the village.

The only reason why she agreed to create the village with Hashirama was because of Izuna. With him now gone, there was no other place she belonged. In addition to this, Madara was sure that the villagers will choose Tobirama over her when the time Hashirama stepped down as a Hokage comes, following the incidents on the war in opposition with Kiri. Her own clan doesn't trust her to lead them in a much more brighter future, although there were still some of them that believes in her, it's simply not enough.

Madara turn around to take her leave.

But along her way, she halted upon facing a redhead - Uzumaki Mito.

Chapter End Notes

BTW, the small hint that Edo tensei would play a role in the story is in Chapter 17: Strike, though I'm not sure if someone noticed it because it's so subtle.
The complexity of the air between them intensified in each and every passing seconds. It was strange that neither one of them avoided the other's gaze.

Not until Madara broke it off.

"Tch."

Silence engulfed the place. They were near the outskirt of the village in a narrow path away from the populous central.

"Madara-sama," the Uchiha's intimidating presence made her tense. As Madara was passing by, she stopped midway upon being called by Mito.

The redhead was clasping her silk dress anxiously. What was she supposed to say? Why did she ever call the other girl in the first place? Oh crap.

"What are you doing here?" The ravenhead asked in a deep voice. "Aren't you supposed to be with Hashirama?" Madara muttered without trying to conceal the bitterness she felt while saying those words. And then she kept on evoking herself that it will be the last day she could see the Uzumaki and the rest of the village. Good for her.

Several footsteps was heard following her question. Madara turn her head at the exit gates of Konoha only to see the bunch of Uzumaki shinobi together with the village's leader.

"What's the meaning of this?" The Uchiha hissed and seized Mito's arm to face her.

Mito did not flinch much to Madara's surprise. Anyone that was far weaker9 who had been grasped by her would definitely scream in terror with the exception of this particular redhead.

"We are leaving." Mito said in a frighteningly calm demeanor.

But wasn't she supposed to get married to the stupid Hokage - the reason why she wanted to leave everything behind, no, absolutely not! Of course it was just one of the many reasons why she wanted to abandon this place. To let him go and make him forget her and ultimately save herself from feeling less than she already was. She had to bring her honor back, somewhere, someday, but away from Konoha, away from all the painful memories when she lost Izuna, away from him.

Before Madara could mutter another word, her confusion rose another notch when Mito placed a hand over hers and also took the other one.

"Please take care of him."

Mito stayed beside the Hokage throughout his recovery period in the hospital. As a friend and as someone who was available enough to be Hashirama's companion for the time being.

"Mito,"
Hashirama started with uneasiness and slowly told her about his troubles. Mito must be one of the most understanding person he had ever met eagerly listened to him up to the very end.

"I understand." the Uzumaki answered with a nod.

"..Thank you, Mito..." Hashirama held her hand. "You will find someone better than me, trust me." he said with a wink.

Mito appreciates his kindness. Truly he was gentle even in things that should break someone's heart. From that, she learned that love equates in sacrifice. There was no point of them getting married even if it meant to save the village because she can tell from Hashirama's eyes that with Madara, they would overcome everything, despite the hardship. He was willing to go in hell with the Uchiha if that would made them together.

And it was a proven fact.

Madara was bemused as she stared at the Uzumaki's eyes. All she saw was a sincere plea to take care of the man they both love.

As Mito and the rest of the Uzumaki passed by and continue to traverse on their journey going back to Uzushio, the Uchiha spun her heels.

"Uzumaki!" she called and Mito who was facing her back at her stopped in her tracks.

"You don't have to tell me what to do...." Madara said and bit the side of her cheek.

"I'm glad." Mito responded beaming at her.

She watched at the group's departing figure along the sunset in the horizon.

-xxx-

It was already dark when she reached her home. Mito's words re-winded in her mind over and over. She was lost in thoughts when she noticed that her clansmen were particularly looking at her. But she was not up to beat someone into pulp so Madara chose to ignore them, knowing that they were probably asking why she was still the clan head after everything. She had made up her mind to leave the damned village, if they only know, but fate must have wanted her to suffer more now that she's having second thoughts.

Madara paused sensing a familiar presence nearby.

And oh, of all the people she had to deal at the end of a confusing day.

Hashirama stood, obviously waiting for her arrival with hands on his back. He smiled at her gingerly upon meeting her gaze. There was an awkward tranquility and honestly, she doesn't know what to say or do after seeing him.

The Senju waltzed going to her as she promptly avoided his eyes and annoying smug.

"You've never visited me."

"Oh?" there goes her argumentative tone. "Why would I do that when someone's already looking over you?"

"Madara,"
The Uchiha wagged a finger on his face. "Don't mention it."

He had a hunch that she already knows about what he was going to say.

"What's gotten into you? How are you going to capture the bijuus without the Uzumaki's help?! You should've think about it thoroughly before making a decision!" she reproached. Hashirama remained still with a visible happiness all over his face.

"...and who do you think you are, forbidding ME to lead the front line?!"

Hashirama snorted at this. He as the Hokage gave an order to make her stay near the village - the last line, during the war. Madara of course was hesitant to follow him but left her no other choice since she was the only one who can watch over the village as the others were on their way to the battlefield.

But the major reason why he forbids it was because he knows that Madara's injuries from their last fight hasn't completely healed yet and knowing her and her pride, she would not let a chance slip if to clash with their enemies. Also, Kirigakure would prey on her once she's on the front line. And given that he wasn't able to join the battle, he simply could not let her do any rash decision that might harm her.

"Cut that annoying smile!" she wanted to punch the lights out of him.

Hashirama sighed and made one step forward before revealing what's behind him.

He could tell how she was surprised when he handed out a bouquet of white and pink cosmos. Madara's throat dried as her eyes darted from the flowers to his face.

"I believe we should talk about something else." Hashirama spoke and that was enough to shut her up.

Madara took the bouquet from his hands. She can't help but to smell the relaxing faint fragrance of the cosmos. Granted, the flowers were indeed beautiful.

"You liked it?" Hashirama asked as though she's a kid.

"Hmph."

Ah, so that was why her clansmen were looking at her like there was something she should look forward to?! Those idiots.

He controlled a half suppressed laugh before Madara decided to murder him in front of her home. For a moment, she looked like an innocent kid and the next she's the feared goddess of shinobi that everyone knows. Hashirama admired her face even more. The change of her expression was like an art. He can't remember the time he realized he fell for her but one thing was for sure.

He will never stop loving her.

-xxx-

Days have passed.

As they said, there was no easy way for broken hearts to heal. Going back from what they were was not without of challenge. The disagreements and childish banters were still present but before they realized, the test of time has made their bond even stronger.
With the help of Hashirama, she slowly work to gain back her clan's trust. Time and time again, he keeps on telling her how she should ignore Sadao, the man she despises the most. Madara wanted nothing but to eradicate the old geezer from her way of leading the Uchiha clan but she was lucky enough to have the Hokage behind and get a hold of herself.

*Weeks and eventually, months have passed.*

The freezing temperature dropped even more as they were on their way on the outskirt of Yukigakure or the land of snow. It was a peaceful and modern village compared to any other places in the continent whereas the Hokage and his second-in command did not let the chance to have a diplomatic meeting with its head. They were lucky to have been invited, Yukigakure was known to be a very exclusive village and they rarely entertain outsiders. However, after hearing the news that spreaded all over the region about, Konoha's victory over Kiri, the daimyo took a great interest to build a friendship with its powerful leaders. Yukigakure lacks support in military forces, a perfect opportunity for them to strengthen their village's pillars once they built a connection with a rising powerful nation.

"They will just use us," Madara blurted out while huddling the thick, dark colored and hooded wool coat. The snow below their feet was thick and the snow storm looks like it won't stop anytime soon. "I can't believe I let you agreed on that!"

Hashirama, who was chilling as well, squinted his eyes to see the way clearly. The weather was a total nightmare especially when he grew up in a warmer place. He can feel his jaw locking that he cannot even speak anymore.

He wonders where Madara was getting the strength to complain despite the tormenting temperature. Since they left Yukigakure, all she did was to rant about how the other village will just toy them, use them for their own benefit and the likes. Well, the Uchiha surely got an unlimited power to fulminate anyone.

Regardless, Hashirama was enjoying their time together. It didn't matter if she's in a foul mood, for him, it was way better than them trying to kill one another like in the past.

"For the love of Sage, how does those people live in such climate?!" she whimpered. "No wonder why no one wants to be allies with them. Like, imagine visiting this place on a monthly or weekly basis, such a pain!" She continued and then squinted at the Hokage. "Meanwhile, there's you."

"But Mara, it is a great opportunity for us to make more allies as possible."

Konoha just faced a war and even though they won with lesser casualties, thanks to Tobirama's Edo tensei no jutsu, they could not just be contented on what they have. For the sake of the village's continuous safety, they have to make their military force stronger. Besides, more allies means more back up once the capturing of bijuus operation resumed.

"Yeah, whatever." she replied realizing it. Hashirama could feel the guilt feeling on the Uchiha.

The horizon seems to be a never ending snow hill. Hashirama's gloved hands searched for the map in his pockets while Madara hugged herself.

"We should rest first, it would be dangerous for us to continue." Hashirama suggested and Madara agreed instantly.

-xxx-

"But Madara! It's so cold outside!" This time, it was Hashirama who was complaining.
"I said NO."

Their predicament - or rather, her predicament:

An hour had passed after sauntering the snowy hill amidst the blizzard, the duo found a lone inn outside Yugakure. To their surprise, it was a decent inn with lots of rooms and people. They even have an onsen in Hashirama's delight. However, they have one problem:

"We only have one room available, sir." The old woman who's also the caretaker of the inn said.

Reason for the Uchiha to stiffened in an instant as if she was electrocuted. Hashirama did not fail to see the funny reaction in her face and controlled himself from laughing out loud at her comically growing onyx eyes that was so out of her character.

However, they cannot stay outside the inn either.

"But Madara! It's so cold outside!"

"I said NO."

Hashirama followed her making her way outside the inn. Soon as she slid the door open, Madara was greeted by a bone-chilling wind that could almost cut her skin. The Uchiha growled internally and turn to face Hashirama behind.

He gently place his hands on her arms. "Why are you so against this?"

"Are you fucking serious? Is this even a question?!" she yelled at him, with her face red-as-tomato. Madara crossed her arms and huffed.

First of all, he knows why exactly why she doesn't want to share a room with him. But what he cannot understand was why she doesn't trust him enough not to do... nasty things once the two of them were alone.

Hashirama sighed and raised his hands in surrender.

"I won't do anything." he said.

"I promise."

Madara gulped and resigned after a few seconds intense thinking. Well, she have no other choice does she?

They took the last room available for the night as agreed. But before that, Hashirama had to haul Madara (albeit carefully) in their room after the inn keeper mistook her as a man. The Uchiha wanted to show the poor lady how her eyes were malfunctioning but the Senju pleaded her to just let it go.

"You're laughing are you," there goes a warning in the form of question coming from Madara.

"Of course not!" Hashirama faked a cough with a snigger after opening the door.

The room was decorated in a simple color combination of black and white. From the bed to the furniture up to the floor and the ceiling. She find it appealing, but her eyes particularly focused on the bed.
"The bed won't eat you, Mara."

"Shut up!"

The thoughts of her sharing a bed with a man that once her mortal enemy caved in her mind. If life was a joke then definitely theirs was the worst.

Finally, they both removed the heavy and thick clothes and hang it on the rack beside the door. Hashirama worked to fire the fireplace for additional heat as Madara change her clothes in the comfort room.

She saw a fancy box sitting near the faucet. It was a small, square-shaped box that has a note on its lid. Curiously, she took the small paper with a note 'please enjoy your stay here!'

"Oh, it's just a greeting." she said to herself. Madara then opened the box revealing its contents and had the shock of her life.

Her onyx eyes grew until it reached it maximum size as she saw a set of condoms inside the box. Madara choked and gasped before taking the whole box and dumping it straight in the garbage can.

When she went outside, now wearing a new set of clothes, Hashirama glanced at her and frowned upon noticing her pale face.

"Mara, are you alright?" he asked worriedly.

"I'm..I'm.." she stuttered, did she just stutter?! oh she did stutter.

Hashirama stood up to check her temperature. He put a hand over her forehead but found that she was rather fine. Madara on the other hand jerked upon meeting his gaze. The Senju tilted his head in his side to see her face.

"I'm fine, just...cold." she gulped nervously.

He smiled and gestured to sit in front of the fireplace which she does, without a word.

Hashirama sat beside her moments later after he, too, had a change of clothes. (She silently hoped he didn't saw the abominable plastic stuff she threw in the garbage can)

"I'm cold." Hashirama complained.

"You already got the thick blanket for yourself!"

"But I'm still cold." he replied, sounding childish.

"Want me to use katon no jutsu on you?"

Hashirama chuckled.

There was only one blanket for them to share and the Hokage purposely wrapped it on himself for the Uchiha to snuggle to him. Talk about his promise of not to do anything nasty. Madara side eyed, staring as if she's going to combust knowing what he's up to. He smiled and enveloped the other half of the blanket around her arms and together they were sitting side by side with the presence of the heat from the fireplace.

"If I only knew your weakness is a cold weather, I should've throw a giant ice on you back then." Madara said.
"You really want to kill me back then?" Hashirama retorted playfully.

"Hnn."

He put his strong arm around her and she leaned.

"Who would have thought that a war could gain us an ally." she commented with regards to their diplomatic mission in Yukigakure.

"Well, I've met you because of a war." Hashirama smelled her crown.

"What do you mean by that?"

"Hmm, let's see." he paused for a few seconds before continuing while caressing the strands of her wavy hair. "That sometimes bad decisions make good results?"

"So I'm the epitome of a bad decision, is what you're saying." The Uchiha stated abruptly.

"That's not-"

"Hashirama,"

The Senju held his breath and waited for her to continue.

"When did you...know that you love me?" she asked with utmost curiosity. She dropped the last few words softly and Hashirama found it amusing of her to ask such a thing.

The fire reflected her pale skin. Brown, chocolate eyes meeting onyx ones. Hashirama pondered for a while, he really cannot tell when or how it started. All he knew what it just happened. Love was after all, the most complicated thing in the world.

"When I still find you beautiful even when you're glaring at me." he answered confidently.

However, Madara showed discontentment.

"That's stupid."

Hashirama sulked in an instant and the next thing, she kept on telling how he should work on that weakness of being a sensitive prick.

"What would you say if I ask you the same thing?" he pouted.

Madara froze, realizing it was a bad idea to ask in the first place now that it back fired.

But the Uchiha won't let herself lose. She looked at him straight in the eyes and said;

"Hnn, when I decided to stick with you even after everything that happened."

Hashirama grinned in delight and pulled her for an embrace.

"Thank you." he whispered in her ear.

"Are you an idiot?" she said with a smirk and cupped his face.

"I should be the one thanking you for staying by my side when everyone else were leaving."

Hashirama was stunned at her statement. His emotions made him want to pull her closer but he
respected her enough to control himself from doing anything more. Madara felt that he hesitated to move closer, knowing that she would not like it if he took advantage of the situation.

To his surprise, Madara pulled him closer and leaned for a kiss. His eyes fluttered open at disbelief. It wasn't their first kiss anymore, nor the second or the third. But it was the first time that she made the first move. Hashirama felt that the world was spinning, his heartbeat raced, he wanted nothing but her. It was like the flames from the fireplace entered his chest from the sensation he was feeling.

He put his other arm at the back of her waist and Madara reclined as the kiss deepens. It wasn't as sloppy as the first ones but it was sensual. Hashirama put her down gently over the thick blanket above the tatami mat. She put a hand on the back of his head and the other on his shoulder. He placed butterfly kisses on her neck which left her breathless. Madara's skin was soft, although her hands have callouses for being a shinobi, but her skin covered with garments was pristine. Hashirama realized how lucky he was for having both the most powerful and most beautiful woman in the world.

"Why are you smiling?" she asked in between laughs.

"I'm just happy." he answered, admiring the view in front of him. "Mara,"

"Hmm?"

Hashirama leaned to continue what they're doing but the door slid open wide much to their surprise.

Both of them turn their heads on the inn keeper with her eyeballs almost leaving its sockets. The woman made a squeaking duck-like sound upon seeing them on the most awkward positions. Hashirama was on top of Madara.

The blood in her head seemed to abandon her as Madara's face became paler than she saw the condoms earlier.

"Ever heard of the word 'knock'?!" the Uchiha growled, Hashirama cleared his throat and slowly lifted up himself to sit beside his furious girlfriend who also jumped to position herself in a more decent stance.

"My, my, my a-a-apologies! I was just going to deliver your f-f-f-food, I'm really sorry!" the panic-stricken woman explained, trembling in fear from the ravenhead's glare. Hashirama interrupted and took the food from the woman. He thanked her and apologized from what she saw whereas she kept on repeating that it was her fault.

Madara groaned in exasperation and soon, the inn keeper finally excused herself.

"You know what, we should bloody tell her that I am a woman!"

Madara bellowed and Hashirama couldn't agree more.

-xxx-

As they were nearing Konoha, they talked about the other villages' kages.

"I personally like the Tsuchikage." Hashirama said.
"Ah, that small geezer huh."

Then, upon remembering something, Hashirama twitched his eyebrows.

"Mara, can I ask you something?"

"Go ahead."

"Remember when I sent you in Iwa?"

Madara had a sour expression. Of course she did. She could not forget how they mistrust her.

"I mean, when you said you are a Senju."

The Uchiha muttered something like a curse before facing him.

"I did that so they can trust me, if I told them I am an Uchiha who would believe I was there for some peace treaty." she explained with a forced deadpan look. Hashirama shoot her a meaningful look while walking.

Both of them were so thankful that they were far away from the torturous climate of the land of snow. At last, the smell of nature was present again. Madara marched forward before her boyfriend thought of something to tease her again.

"Hey Hashirama, let's return to the village quickly! I don't want to hear your brother complaining about his prolonged substitution." She sprinted while muttering words of disappointment and disapproval about Tobirama but Hashirama knows that it means no harm.

For he's aware of the fact that she did forgave his brother and that Tobirama, in return did the same long ago.

"What are you waiting for?!" she yelled.

Hashirama blinked and smiled watching her back from a far.

"Wait for me!" and then he chased after her.

They walked side by side quietly.

"Mara?"

"Hmm?"

"Let's get married."

Chapter End Notes

The title of this chapter "Cosmos" came from the cosmos flower meaning or hanakotoba: "the joys that love and life can bring" which was shown in this chapter. At last! after making them suffer for so long I managed to write a happy chapter for them
Konohagakure no Sato.

To many, it was a simple yet promising village that resides in the land of fire. But for its inhabitants, it was a proof that dreams can be a reality. It has been roughly three years ago since its establishment and Konoha continued to prosper notwithstanding the unexpected trials. From the era of the warring states, it was made possible to establish a village where everyone can live happily despite each other's differences. Of course, everything would not be possible without the man behind it, Senju Hashirama and his co-founder, Uchiha Madara.

The village had grown following its dispute with Kirigakure no Sato a year ago. With the help of his brother and second-in command, the Hokage gathered many allies to strengthen the ties between villages. And with more and more people following his ideologies, Konoha's population eventually grew to the point that they will be needing a land expansion for supplementary resources to maintain the village's needs.

Tobirama gripped the armrest anxiously. He breathed out slowly, assuring each and everyone in the room to relax and apologetically asked for their patience. The fire daimyo only nodded, unbothered by the fact that they've been waiting for more than twenty minutes for a certain man to come. Apparently, the convocation won't start without this man. They were on the daimyo's residence few kilometers away from Konoha. The room was composed of the higher-ups and the white-haired Senju was starting to lose his patience following the last twenty minutes of waiting.

"If you'll excuse me, gentlemen." Tobirama excused himself for a while. Around him were the murmuring officials of the land of fire. Some were having their own meeting discussing political affairs and some were gossiping about their aristocratic daily lives. Neither of it all mattered to him. The younger Senju's forbearance about his brother's tardiness on a very important meeting had him wired.

He marched going outside when suddenly, the door flew open followed by the appearance of the Hokage.

Hashirama was met by Tobirama's scrutinizing eyes.

"What took you so long?!" the younger of two fumed lowly, hiding it from the officials' earshot. He stared watching the completely out of breath Hokage at the doors' opening.

Meanwhile, all eyes were turned onto him. The great Hokage of the flourishing village stiffened, cleared his throat and straightened his posture upon meeting the officials' gazes as if everything in was okay.

"I deeply apologize, my fellow gentlemen, for letting you wait for.." he then glanced at Tobirama who was half glaring and half trying to be cool.

"Twenty minutes." Tobirama whispered with eyes shut, but his words registered to Hashirama's ears as a growl. He knew very well that the younger Senju was only controlling himself because, well, they're on a meeting and it would be improper if he scold his older brother like a child.

Hashirama smiled apologetically at the fire daimyo who simply nodded at him in return. The old man has a liking for Hashirama and he fully believed on his skill as a leader and as a shinobi. The Hokage was a very charismatic man. He can charm even the hardest person to deal with - Uchiha
Madara, his co-founder was the living truth of this skill.

As he went on his assigned seat, Tobirama was watching him and noticed that there was something ridiculously wrong.

His red-eyes that were normally narrow grew at the realization that Hashirama badly needed a comb. And oh, was that the same Hokage clothes from yesterday? Was that a faint smell of alcohol? Tobirama cannot quite confirm but it looks like...it looks like...Hashirama hadn't sleep at all.

"Shall we start?" The fire daimyo asked and all the other officials including a sleep deprived Hokage nodded in response.

The discussion went from the main objective of land expansion and additional resources which they tackled pretty briefly since the daimyo was all yes on Hashirama's proposals which was also co-authored by Madara few weeks ago. Later, the topic went to a more complicated one which was the on-going big project of capturing the bijuus. Currently, Hashirama's team with the help of other ninja villages, captured eight bijuus. With only one bijuu remaining left the question: how are they going to seal it?

It's been a year since their fight against Kirigakure which caused a drift between Konoha and Uzushio. Now that everything has settled down, Hashirama was confident to suggest that he can try to talk with the current head of Uzumaki clan - Uzumaki Mito. Tobirama made an awkward facial reaction upon hearing this which Hashirama did not fail to notice despite his obvious drowsiness throughout the meeting. The younger Senju covered his mouth and faked a cough. Hashirama side-eyed at him and continued on his plans and future proposals.

Hashirama knew that his brother was reminding him of something.

The meeting ended with a success followed by Hashirama's knack to slam his head over the table with regards with his lateness. Honestly, the fire daimyo and the other officials were getting used on the act. Tobirama of course subtly stood behind him and pulled his hair to snap him out.

After that, the brothers went back to Konoha and along their way, Tobirama interrogated him. He breathed in and out deeply before speaking when Hashirama immediately answered his question from earlier.

"I was with Sasuke last night."

Oh.

The younger of the two rolled his eyes - so that's why. He's aware that a night with his brother and Sarutobi Sasuke would only mean one thing - an absolute hang over a day after.

"You have a very important meeting today and you still went out for a drink!" Tobirama growled followed by a sigh. Sometimes he wanted to cry out for their father from the afterlife why did he even left him with a headache of a brother that was older than him but thinks like a child sometimes. He continued to scold his brother to be more proper and careful the next time. That he should not take the daimyo's trust for granted and kept on telling him that his actions were a reflection of his village.

"Take your responsibility seriously!" Tobirama ended his ramblings with a groan hoping it would go down in his older brother's thick head. All the while, Hashirama was sulking and pouting beside a nearby tree.
The god of shinobi, ladies and gentleman.

Sometimes Tobirama wondered if there was an end to this - this, by means of constantly reminding his brother how to act properly without tarnishing the village's image.

But just like any other moment of sulking, Hashirama's mood turned 180 degrees as he rose and put his arms akimbo while laughing boisterously like a maniac.

"Don't worry Tobi! At least we succeeded on our today's task." He winked. Tobirama realized his lectures were all in vain and sighed exasperatedly.

They arrived on the Hokage office near afternoon.

"Where did you sleep?" Tobirama asked curiously with his arms folded over his chest. "You did not come home last night." He did not fail to see how Hashirama stiffened at the question.

"Here, well...uh, long story." Hashirama answered nervously while massaging his temples.

"Long story." Tobirama repeated waiting for an elaboration. It wasn't rare for Hashirama to fell asleep in his office given that most of the time, the documents keeps on filling up ever since the village continued to prosper.

Hashirama plopped down on his seat still massaging his temples. The hangover was clearly affecting him.

"Wait," the younger Senju waved a hand. "Were you flat out drunk last night?" The answer was obvious, the only reason why Hashirama slept in his office and was late for his morning meeting was because he was too drunk to even go home. But this was not the issue. Tobirama knows that Hashirama's alcohol tolerance was the highest among their clan and to think that Senju were known to be alcoholics, he could only wonder how did Hashirama end up getting wasted.

"To put it simply, yes." Hashirama answered after a long silence. He decided to use his healing jutsu on his throbbing head. A green chakra appears from his palms.

"How so?"

Hashirama's nose wrinkled, he really didn't want to tell the whole story on how did he end up inebriated last night. But knowing Tobirama and his annoying motherly instinct that surpassed even those of true mothers, there was no way to hide it.

"We gambled."

Oh.

Tobirama rolled his eyes for the second time of the day. Hashirama and gambling were the worst combination, after all. He concluded that it has something to do with the result of last night's affair and considering his brother have a terrible luck in any form of bet.

"I can't understand how you're so fond of it when you have never won a gamble before." he casually said while lifting a pile of documents from the floor to the table.

Meanwhile, Hashirama looked away.

"I surmise you cannot work today but you can always ask your second-in command to do the rest of these paperworks. I heard she has arrived from her mission, you should call her."
Hashirama turned pale and quickly glanced at Tobirama.

"I...I don't think she can do it, either." Hashirama replied jittery.

"Why not?"

He could practically hear Hashirama's thumping chest.

Her head was pulsating the moment she woke up.

Madara groaned as she positioned herself sideways on the couch of her guestroom. The Uchiha tried so hard to get up but her vision was spinning and so she decided to rest before standing up again.

"I will kill him."

She could still taste the bitter alcohol at the back of her throat. Ah, dammit, she's beginning to question her decision in joining that ridiculous game last night. Her regrets, however, ascended to high heavens when she felt a card between her gloved hand.

Uhg

Her facade was nothing but an utter dismay. Madara dropped the Botan card from their Hanafuda game - a card game that she wasn't so familiar about but managed to learn it in one night, thanks to her sharingan.

She can clearly remember what happened before the incident and wanted to bury herself alive upon recalling what exactly did she gamble with that Senju last night.

"I can't believe that idiot beat me to it! A thing he's terrible at!" she whimpered, covering her face using both hands.

Later, she decided to pay Yoko a visit.

The younger Uchiha was watering the plants on her backyard when Madara suddenly showed up which made her jump as though she saw a wandering ghost. It wasn't unusual for the Uchiha head to visit her every now and then since they started to rekindle their long lost friendship.

"You look wasted."

She scowled at her and muttered the most sarcastic 'oh thank you' ever. They were inside Yoko's room as Madara's requested for them to get inside. Judging from the older Uchiha's face, what she's about to tell her was something so cursed.

Madara started it from the moment she arrived Konoha from a personal mission that she didn't really explained because it wasn't the highlight of the story. Then she went to the part where she looked for Hashirama, who, at that time was sitting inside an Izakaya together with his Sarutobi friend. Hashirama was already drunk by the time she arrived and oh, if only the sharingan can erase her memory on how Hashirama embarrassingly announced to everyone inside the bar that the rumours about them dating was true! Madara wanted to smack the hell out of him but was kind of proud about her self-control that she did not.

Hashirama was awfully losing a gamble, over and over. She also get to the point where she shook
him furiously and tell her he wasn't using the village's funds whereas Sasuke had to calm her down. The Uchiha of course did not hesitate to ridicule the Sarutobi who by that time was also having a hard time in stopping the enthusiastic Hokage. There were plenty of people inside the Izakaya and Madara did not want to make a scene of dragging Hashirama out - the Hokage of Konoha no less, even if she can.

And before Hashirama humiliates himself (and herself as well) more, Madara sat in front of him and decided to have a duel with the Senju but unlike in the past where they were either slashing each others' weapons, this was a different kind of battle.

Hashirama excitedly handed out the cards to Madara and she began by using her sharingan to learn the game he'd been playing for who knows how long before she got there.

"Mara, place your bet~!" Hashirama gestured his hands disgracefully at the wooden bowl on his left which was on her right side.

"Dammit."

Madara despise wasting her money on a silly betting game so she instead asked him on whatever the hell does he wants her to bet with an exception of her hard-earned money (Uchihas were known misers)

The drunkage pondered for a while as the woman was itching to grab him in the throat. Oh, the embarrassment and shame to be forced to sit and gamble with this dork!

"Aha!"

In a lightbulb moment, Hashirama grinned mischievously and clapped his hands before telling her;

"If I win, you will wear a kimono on the next time we go out!"

"WHAT."

That was a thing they've been arguing for so long because most of the people they encounter always mistook her as a man due to the way she dresses. Hashirama once commented that she would look good in pastel-colored kimonos which Madara immediately rebuked insisting that it's too "feminine".

Who would have thought that even on his drunken state, Hashirama would still insist on such a thing.

"Hnn," Madara smirked, fully believing that the Senju's luck in gambling was nonexistent and thus won't give him what he's dreaming of -a.k.a her wearing a kimono. He's hopeless when it comes to this kind of thing and so she confidently agreed.

"Deal."

"Yay!"

Of course she did not forgot to tell him that he will raise from his seat and go home once she wins - which was the result she's expecting.

She then told the Sarutobi that he can go home and that his wife must've been tired of waiting for him all night . Sasuke was hesitant at first but eventually let her do her thing after receiving the infamous Uchiha glare that Hashirama talked before (and according to his friend, it should not be
"Sharingan is not allowed~" Hashirama said in a sing-sang tone followed by a hic, the damned Senju surely drank a lot. Madara's gloved fist turned into ball, this should be stopped immediately. Whenever one of their cards loses, they should drink a full glass of sake. What the fuck, Madara thought, why wasn't she informed about this mechanics?! She didn't backed away, however, she was confident that Hashirama has no luck on gambling at all. But soon, she found some of her cards losing and so she was obligated to drink a glass of sake, Hashirama (who was getting redder as the time goes by) pinched her cheeks and keeps on telling how much he loves her- okay, this was the part where Yoko laughed her head off until she lose her breath, stomach aching from the madness that she's been hearing. Madara ignored it and continued until the climax of the heinous event.

She could not believe she had lost. She lost a gamble on the worst gambler!

Sometimes she wanted to believe in what Sadao had told her before - that she was cursed.

Hashirama practically stood up and joyfully jumped into her, he reeked of alcohol and so was her. Unlike him, her alcohol tolerance was severely low, she hated the taste of it yet Madara bargained to drink, not that she liked it! just to send his ass home on which she failed.

Or not.

Because soon as he came to touch her, Hashirama collapsed and lost consciousness forcing Madara to literally carry him around.

"I freaking hate you!"

"You damned Senju!"

"Why am I in this relationship again?!"

Madara had been sputtering nonstop while dragging Hashirama in the dead of the night. She silently hope to see Tobirama along their way so she can throw the annoying drunkard off her. Unfortunately, that never came until she decided to drop him on his office - a safer place for him to spend the night since the Senju compound was farther deemed that she herself was having trouble in keepin up her pace. The sake was hitting her tremendously and not to mention that she just arrived from a week-long journey, she was tired and the first thing she dealt with was the wasted Senju.

The Uchiha took the office key from Hashirama's pockets to open it and hauled the sleeping man beside her to the only couch inside the meeting room. She carefully dropped him and heaved a deep sigh stretching her sore shoulders from his weight. It reminded her of the last time she carried him and subconsciously smiled at the thought.

That day when she confessed on this oaf.

"Ma..da...ra?" Hashirama mumbled reaching for her arm with closed eyes. She took it as sleep-talking but more like 'drunk-talking while sleeping'.

"Do you...like me?" he continued, words slurred and weak.

She sat beside the sleeping figure and stared at him.
"I'm literally dating you for a year, what do you think." Madara grunted.

When the man did not talk further but instead started to snore, she sighed and decided to leave.

But before just right when she reached for the door knob, he mumbled again.

"Why won't you….marry me?"

The question had struck her harder than it should. Madara glanced softly at the snoring Hokage for one last time before going home.

-xxx-

Yoko nodded with closed eyes after hearing the full story. She cannot count how many times she'd been asking Madara about Hashirama's proposal. It's been a year and the man haven't received an answer, not even a yes or a no.

Madara always responded with an exasperated "I have my own reasons!" whereas Yoko can tell it might be because of their clan's traditions. It would be way easier it she's an average Uchiha clan member but no, she was no less the head of the clan and it would be considered taboo once she married someone from outside the family. But Yoko knows that Madara doesn't really abide every law, heck she even befriended and later on established a relationship with someone from their rival clan, and that left her wondering why was Madara keep on stalling?

"And you're here because?" Yoko asked deliberately, knowing Madara, there must be a real reason why she's telling her these.

"I need your help." Her voice cracked upon dropping the last two words. Yoko can't tell if that was because of the alcohol she consumed last night or because she's nervous on asking her this particular favor.

"But what 'help' exactly?" Yoko stared at the other Uchiha with careful eyes. Going back on Madara's story, there wasn't a single thing she should be asking from her except for…

"I lost the bet, were you even listening?!" Madara growled.

Yoko stumbled upon the realization and after several seconds, she jumped out off her bed followed by a shrill of excitement that could alarm the whole compound. Madara had to pin her down and cover her mouth otherwise their clanmates would think she's homiciding her cousin.

Kimono.

Hashirama was on his daily duty as a Hokage doing endless of paperworks. He paused and sigh after finishing a document, setting it beside his table. His gaze landed on the cherry blossom bonsai sitting beside the windows. Its petals were in full bloom given that they're in the middle of spring. He smiled, remembering that it was the very first gift he received from her and it was also spring at that time.

A knock from the door broke his recollections. He had expected Toka to appear from the back of the door like the usual, but after giving an authorization to enter, Uchiha Yoko marched inside instead and was smiling.
"Hi Hokage-san,"

"Yoko-chan." He greeted back.

He developed a sort of friendship with Yoko ever since she helped in so many things regarding Madara. She claimed to be the very first friend of the Uchiha head and made it clear that it wasn't him. Hashirama didn't argue about it, him being the first real friend or not, he knows that it's a good thing Madara have another person she considers a friend and he was really glad by that.

The Hokage scrambled on his feet, there could be only one reason for Yoko to summon herself.

"I have a message from Madara."

Panic started to flood in him. "I-Is she still mad?" he asked nervously. He can faintly remember what happened two days prior. One afternoon when Sarutobi Sasuke casually strolled to his office and asked him to hang out. It was a lowkey day and Madara was out of the village for her personal mission so he doesn't really have anything to do at that time. And despite coming to an understanding, they seldom have time to see each other with their busy schedules. Madara was frequently out of the village due to her active participation in battle missions. Tobirama once commented that it looks like she was the one wearing the pants in their relationship given that Hashirama always wait for her return.

"She said she wanted to see you."

Oh-ow.

There was something that spelt trouble in the way Yoko delivered it, at least, for Hashirama's standards. Because it was atypical of her to invite him.

"Tell me she's not that mad." Hashirama was apprehended.

Yoko controlled herself from giggling and forced an impassive face.

"Beside Konoha library, 3pm - she said." Yoko spun her heels and spared one glance above her shoulder.

"...oh and, you better prepare." she winked, dropping ambiguity.

Yoko knows that he would take it in a negative fashion and she wanted to enjoy his suffering. Uchihas and their sadism tendencies.

Just as expected, the innuendo worked wonders and Hashirama sprung from his seat after finishing his chore and directly went outside. His heartbeat raced and anxiety rose from all the negative thoughts.

"Brother?" Tobirama saw him passing by as he was carrying scrolls with different colors. "You're early today."

"Yeah, yeah." Hashirama replied curtly, his younger brother noticed the rigidity of his tone while walking briskly.

"Where are you going?" Tobirama asked again, keeping his pace just behind Hashirama.

"At the library."
"Ah, me too, will return these scrolls from the librarian." Tobirama's reply however was unheard by the man he's talking with because Hashirama's mind was scattered all over the place and he wasn't really paying attention to his younger brother.

They continued walking going to the same place, the albino talked about the progress of his jutsus, he even made it clear that what he's doing now was not about the edo tensei anymore on which Hashirama just replied with short and quick 'alright, alright' and that's when Tobirama confirmed that there was definitely something going on.

"Seriously, brother, what is happening?"

Hashirama halted and exhaled before facing his brother.

"Tobirama! What should I do?" He cried like a little orphan (they're orphan though but not little anymore)

The said man almost dropped his scrolls to the ground from Hashirama's tight grip. It was as if he's going to kneel or cry or maybe both from the way he clings to him.

"Okay, okay, what did you do this time?" Tobirama asked, judging Hashirama and the way he begged for an advice, it looks like he made something idiotic (yet again) It doesn't take a genius to conclude that it was because of Madara due to the fact that she was the sole person who can evoke a face like that to his brother (minus the time one of Hashirama's bonsais died where he mourned for weeks)

"I told you about when I got drunk, right?" Hashirama asked.

"Mh-hm." Tobirama nodded.

"The thing is, Madara refused to see me after that."

"I know that."

Tobirama sighed. Sometimes he wondered why does he waste his time for listening to his older brother's silly stories but reminded himself that it's purely because no one else other than him would. In times like this, he can't help but miss their late siblings. Itama and Kawarama always loved to listen to Hashirama's tales, no matter how unbelievably foolish it was.

"And now, she wanted to see me." Hashirama shuddered and was literally trembling in fear. The albino was confused, what was so wrong about that?

Meanwhile Tobirama sensed that someone was watching them. Soon, his peripheral vision caught an incoming figure.

"Tobirama! What if she's still mad at me?!" Hashirama lamented and made a dramatic hand motions as if the world was ending soon.

"Brother,"

"What if she say-"

"Hey, brother,"

".Hashirama, I can't stand your ape-looking buddy and your moronic love for gambling-" Hashirama said it mimicking the way Madara curses and criticize Sarutobi Sasuke's fashion taste
because honestly, what's with those thick furs around his chest and how many gorillas did he tweaked to make his clothes. She even said Tobirama surely got that sick fashion from their friend.

"Brother!"

"WHAT IF SHE BROKE UP WITH ME?!"

Tobirama put a hand on the terror-stricken Hokage and growled.

"SENJU HASHIRAMA!" It was one of the rarest time that Tobirama call him by his full name. He does it only whenever he wanted Hashirama's undivided attention though.

Hashirama blinked following his brother's vision. He noticed how Tobirama's eyes were growing and the color of his face was fading.

"It's..It's.." Tobirama faltered with furrowed eyebrows. Hashirama cannot tell whether he's constipated or in awe.

When Hashirama turn his head on the side, he felt his heart lurch and his tan face somewhere in between ashen pale or grey. A shockwave of feelings as he gazed at the most enchanting woman he had seen in his entire life bursted. Did the time stopped? Definitely, did his heartbeat stopped? Almost.

He gathered all of his Senju strength and rubbed his eyes using the back of his hands before saying;

"I'm sorry, who are you?"

Tobirama can't believe what he just heard. Forget Itama and Kawarama, he will edo tensei his brain that committed suicide the moment Hashirama asked the obvious. For once, he agreed with Madara - his brother was really stupid.

But instead of answering like a normal person, the beautiful woman in question grabbed the Hokage's ear and pulled it until they're on eye level.

"You idiot, it's me!"

There was only one woman who could say and do such thing to him.

Hashirama fell into his knees.

"M-Madara?" he stuttered, eyes almost leaving its sockets, staring up at her.

"Hnn,"

And that voice and 'hnn' were enough for him to turn into a statue.

Standing in front of him was Madara wearing a pastel-colored homongi kimono. Its hue was mostly composed of white and pink with extravagant print of peach blossoms from the hem downwards. It perfectly matched her aesthetic painted face. Her hair was tied in a loose bun with a striking red ribbon that flows up to her waist.

Oh my Sage.

Hashirama felt like his jaw hit the floor on how wide he gaped. The title goddess of shinobi perfectly defined her since the day she became notorious on the battlefield. In his eyes, Madara had always been stunning. Her beauty was incomparable just like her intellect and skills. That's why it
should not surprise him once she transformed herself into a kimono-wearing maiden, but jokes on him, Hashirama was wonderstruck, unable to move or react.

Tobirama (who was also glued in his spot for the last few seconds) found his voice back and coughed awkwardly in the background.

"Well, guess I'll see you around, brother." The white-haired Senju straightened up, still with the scrolls around his arms and glimpsed at the Uchiha whose eyebrows were twitching in annoyance (he concluded that it was because of his presence which she didn't expect)

"I'll be going now, Neesan." Tobirama said mockingly and simpered.

Madara was about to whack him when her rational side of brain kicked in. She calmed down after remembering that she was wearing a kimono and punching him might tarnish the exquisite garment that she and Yoko argued for hours. Neesan, the way he said it brought shivers to her spine. No, there will be no other person who can call her 'big sister' other than Izuna!

The two of them were left alone soon as Tobirama was out of their sight.

Konoha library was the only place in the entire village which she believes doesn't have much people. But much to her dismay, Hashirama was with his younger brother. Madara hesitated to reveal herself at first but knowing that Tobirama already sensed her (the best sensory type shinobi, oh well) she grunted and then decided to take it all on Hashirama.

"You bloody told him!" she accused, raising her fists.

"Tobirama won't let me live in peace not until I told him how I end up getting wasted! Madara please," Hashirama had a hard time reasoning with the mortified Uchiha

The thought of Tobirama knowing that she joined his disappointment of a brother on gambling and drinking instead of stopping him brought her cold sweat. What would happen to her dignified reputation?

"Whatever! Just make sure to keep his mouth shut!" she grumbled.

Few village had seen them somewhere along their way outside Konoha, on which Madara was quite thankful. Their relationship was an open secret. No one talks about it publicly but it was understood. People doesn't flinch anymore whenever Hashirama tried to touch her hair, hold her hand or even pull her close. Madara however still refuse to go out with him around the village because according to her, they should be viewed as the 'founders and leaders of the village' not as a couple. Hashirama understand that there should be a thin line between their personal matters and the village although he usually sulk whenever she slapped his hand away from her.

"Madara,"

The said woman snapped her head to meet his eyes. Hashirama cannot stop smiling from the moment she saw her.

"What?"

"You're, uh." Hashirama scratched his head and blushed furiously. He can't think of an absolute word to describe her and it left him speechless.
Madara looked at him deadpan. "You finally got what you want."

"Yes," he chuckled, still blushing. Truthfully, he wasn't really looking forward for her to do it. He was drunk at that time and alcohol was partly to blame for him to expose his heart's desire. But whether she did it or not, he won't force it. Yet the Uchiha took it from her heart and swallowed some of her pride so she can make true to her words.

"You're lucky I am a woman of my words." She said half-jokingly.

"Indeed I am lucky." Hashirama glimpsed at her face once again, yes he's really lucky. A bursting determination that he won't make this day to waste came up.

"Hnn, so where are we going now, Mr. Can't-take-his-eyes-off me?" She asked teasingly and flashed a conceited face.

"How about on the place where we had our first date?" he answered with such energy.

"The one where you forgot your wallet? Not bad." Hashirama sulked. "T-that's what you first thought on our first date?!

"Well yes." she replied cooly Hashirama sulked more.

"Stand up Hashirama! Let's get going before I get tired of wearing this heavy-ass mantle."

When they arrived on the tea...house, as per Madara's term, they noticed how the place improved for the past year. It expanded twice its original size and became fancier with brand new furniture.

"Hello there, Akina." Hashirama greeted the blonde waitress while cleaning one of the tables.

"Oh! it's been a long while,sir," Akina's eyes shifted from Hashirama to the beautiful woman beside him. Madara felt uncomfortable at they way the waitress was looking at her.

Hashirama had a brief idle talk with Akina while taking their orders. The good natured lady asked what took them so long to return where Hashirama agreed that they should visit more often.

When their orders arrived, Madara asked about his latest meeting with the daimyo (Hashirama avoided the little details that might ruin her day, like how late he was and went to the daimyo's house with a hair that could rival a wet rat and Tobirama scolded that he could've at least comb it given that he haven't take a bath and breakfast just to make it on time)

"So you're going back to Uzushio?" Madara tried to be unnerved but Hashirama knows better.

"I don't think so, I'll send Tobirama as my representative."

"Why?" she smirked mockingly. "Don't you want to visit Uzumaki Mito?" and placed a hand over her pretty face.

"Madara," Hashirama meant to cease her, he really doesn't like it when she brings out a past drama especially about things that they should never talk about again. That past incident pained them both and it should be forgotten - something that Hashirama kept on telling her on which she always counter argue on how he almost marry that woman. Past is past, according to him but 'past is a part of present' according to her. They were total opposites in so many things yet both decided to stay together.

"Hmph."
He found it funny that her grumpy face didn't match her captivating beauty. Hashirama placed a hand over hers and he was instantly rewarded by a scowl.

"Let's not talk about politics for the mean time, shall we? I wanted us to enjoy this moment." he smiled. He can literally count the times they spend time together and doesn't want to ruin it.

Madara glanced upward and said;"Fine."

And he was right, setting aside the topic of politics brought them on a lighter mood. Hashirama did want to ask about her latest mission but the Uchiha's mood will surely drop and so he saved it for later.

While walking back to the village, Madara suggested going to Hokage rock, where Hashirama teased her that she won't be able to climb due to her kimono. Madara scoffed and proceeded to try. "...

"Uhg, stupid dress."

The Uchiha was determined to show him that she can but was obviously getting anxious in accidentally destroying the dress . The Senju chortled with his hands covering his mouth.

"Stop standing behind me Hashirama! Or else I cannot concentrate!" she was ashamed of the lie herself but also too stubborn to admit defeat.

As she stepped forward, she felt a pair of arms pulling her and was caught off guard, falling right into his arms.

"What are you doing?! Put me down!"

Laughter with faint sound of slaps filled the air with Hashirama insisting to carry her. Madara soon gave up unless she wanted to deface the kimono.

"We're here!" Hashirama announced giddly upon reaching the top of Hokage rock which was also the giant rock version of his face.

"Can you not shout? People might hear you." she warned. ".and put me down."

"But Mara-"

"Hashirama, put me down."

"But-"

"Put. me . down"

The Hokage unleashed the three-year old version of him and pouted.

"No kiss?"

Madara sighed, why does this Senju get all the things he wants? But she won't allow it again this time. He better pay the price of making her wear the kimono.

"Hashirama." she said with indignation and that was enough for him to put her down gently.

"That was the first time I carried you!" he tittered with his booming voice.
"I simply do not want to ruin this kimono that Yoko and I looked for hours." she scorned.

Judging at how delicate and graceful the dress was, he assumed that there was someone who helped her in choosing it, for there was no way Madara picked it for herself. Hashirama nevertheless knew whom to thank after.

"I grew up without a mother and was raised by my father with three brothers, so I never experienced a very feminine life. She's the closest to sister that I have now." Growing up to be the future clan leader despite being a female was one of the hardest thing to do. She spent her childhood life on training grounds and battlefield when children at her age back then were helping their mothers on household chores. Madara reminisced on her past remembering the last time she last wore a kimono. It probably was during the forgotten time when her mother was still alive.

She cannot even remember her face anymore.

Hashirama can feel the yearning in her tone.

"Since the day I lost Izuna, I always thought I'm all alone."

He did not fail to see the miniscule change in her facial expression. Sadness and anger combined.

"That's why I brought that guy the most painful way to die." she said bitterly.

Hashirama only listened in silence as it was unusual for her to speak about the things that upset her. Most of the times she only whine through actions. Just recently, Konoha received a lead on one of the seven swordsmen whereabouts, specifically the guy who killed Izuna. Madara was quick to resolve it alone and went on a solo mission which he did not try to stop, for it was the one thing that he couldn't.

She savored every moment upon killing the person who stole her brother's life. Putting him in the highest form of her genjutsu until he took his own life. So much for the bastard's luck that he experienced Uchiha Madara's genjutsu before death, the only person in the world who could rival the god of shinobi.

"Madara,"

"But it didn't return Izuna's life back." Sorrow and regret invaded her.

Hashirama's gaze softened and dipped his head in sympathy. He, too, had those same thoughts when his brothers died. Revenge changes nothing and only satisfy someone's ego.

"Yet after that, I feel free. Free from the burden of thinking that the person who killed my brother was still alive."

He smiled and took her hand. Hashirama can still remember the last conversation he had with Izuna.

Take care of my sister.

"Izuna-kun once told me to take care of you."

She looked at him with a somber face.

"That's what I'm going to do for the rest of my life!" he winked and grinned to make her feel at ease.
Madara snickered. "We never settled things like that. How could you take care of me when you have so much things to do? Besides, I can take care of myself just fine. I don't need you to pamper me."

Her statement ultimately send him into depression mode. The Uchiha's ego was just as big as his love for her. But moments later, he heard her chuckling saying something he did not expected to hear that day. 

"You're the one who needs me so I decided that I should just marry you."

Hashirama craned his neck from sulking to the woman beside him. Eyes wide as a saucer, his voice clearly abandoned him.

"I said I'm marrying you."

It took them a long pause with Hashirama just staring at her with unbelievable face. Madara's eyes turned to annoyed slits. "Well because I realized that you're so careless and needs me to organize many things in your life! But seriously, the next time I deal with your gambling I won't hesitate to summon susanoo."

Her threats were left unheard because the Senju had turn into a stone, and moments later he sniffed like something got stuck in his nose.

"Hashi-, what, why are you crying?!"

"I'm...I'm just happy." Hashirama wiped the tears in his eyes. For a man who can literally stomp everyone, he's way too soft. Tears of happiness burst from a man who waited for so long.

"You are always happy, dammit!" Madara felt ashamed of the situation and looked away. She knows how long he waited and him getting emotional was understandable considering Hashirama got a soft, dramatic heart, an opposite of his extreme abilities.

The Senju cuddled her from behind.

"Will you ever stop standing behind me?!" she snarled, avoiding to look at him and pinned her eyes watching the village from above.

Hashirama's face suddenly turned frightened after a long minute of Madara telling him to stop being so dramatic.

"Madara, I don't know how to tell you this..." He was petrified, expecting she might take back her words. "But I haven't bought a ring for you yet!"

She sighed, after knowing him for a long time,nothing could surprise her anymore.

"That's not necessary, you idiot."

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_Months later:_

Tobirama entered Hokage's office after a long journey from Uzushio. Together with him were a small troop of Uzumaki shinobi. He handed out the scroll to his older brother.

"This contains the seals we need for the bijuus. Lady Mito was generous enough to lend us a
handful of her students. They are sealing experts.” He gestured to the people behind him. A group of young males and females greeted the shodai with utmost respect. Hashirama stood up and greet them back one by one and hoped to enjoy their stay in the village.

"Thank you, Tobirama. You must be so tired now."

"Overall, I'm fine. It's just...Uzushio was farther than I expected. The guys here are probably as tired as me now." the Uzumakis smiled shyly at them.

"Then it's time to give them some rest." The shodai announced, at the same time, Toka entered as she was tasked to guide their guests.

"Must be a good feeling that there is someone taking care of you after a tiring day." Tobirama said with amused tone. It's been a month since he last saw his brother and admitted that he kinda missed their exchange of witty remarks in addition to his scoldings that lessened greatly, thanks to a certain Uchiha. At least now, he got someone to school his brother, he wasn't alone in that job anymore.

The younger Senju snapped his head towards Toka and squinted upon noticing her new hairstyle.

"It suits you." he commented.

Toka squinted back and tilted her head in confusion. Her hair grew longer and longer over the years. The first time she received a compliment from him was back in the day she delayed to take her monthly hair trim and ever since, she lost the interest to cut it.

Hashirama smothered a laugh from behind. "Well, why don't you take someone out, so in the future someone will also look after you." his gaze turned to Toka.

All of them forgot the presence of the young Uzumakis who was chuckling at the shodai's suggestion. Tobirama reddened and so did Toka, scrambling at her feet to guide their guests outside the office.

"Tobirama-sama," She called before closing the door.

"Y-yes?" the white-haired Senju almost freaked out.

"Thank you." Toba bowed and finally left the brothers alone.

Hashirama's rambunctious laughter filled the office upon seeing how his younger brother reacted. It was all over his face - over the years, he took a liking for Toka.

"Not funny, brother!" he glowered.

Hashirama first discovered Toka's feelings towards his brother few years ago. With the three of them being childhood friends, he could relate with them on some level except that they were both Senjus.

"Trust me, the two of you will work." Hashirama winked as he made his way outside, leaving his brother in peace. "I'm going home now and you should, too, later."

Tobirama clicked his tongue but smiled. "She won't try to kill me or boss me around, so yes maybe."

"You got me there." Hashirma gestured a finger gun.

He then left his younger brother, the Nidaime Hokage in his office.
It was all like a dream.

Gazing up to the Hokage rock where they talked about building the village together brought memories back in his childhood. The smiles of the villagers passing by everyday kept him going, believing and continuing to work harder even after passing the title Hokage to Tobirama. Hashirama still participate actively in running the village as the founder. Although this time, he have more time to focus on plenty of things.

Together they had lost and gained, sacrifices that resulted in blood and tears - which he will never allow to be for naught.

He stopped in front of a humble house located just beside the Uchiha compound. He entered the house - their home, and was greeted by three cats simultaneously meowing at him. He stood silently, watching the woman who just walked from the kitchen holding a book - a cook book. Being a shinobi never required someone to be a good cook but being a wife clearly does.

"What are you waiting for? The dinner's ready."

Even her still actively participates in missions from time to time, reason for him to miss seeing her in an apron with her hair in a high ponytail, looking so ladylike - a view that was reserved only for him.

Hashirama smiled lovingly, everything was worth it.

"I'm home."

"Welcome home."

-END-

"Blinded"

aifos99/curiouscat99

My good friend commissioned me this marvelous piece as a gift for everyone who managed to read until the ending. A scene from Chapter 25.

Thank you very much for reading!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!