Summary

A girl's life was born to fate in the form of a forgotten bloodline and a technological advance past. Now, see if it's her destiny will create a new future from the past, or become a slave to those that want to use her for her bloodline and lost secrets to rule the Elemental world. AU, FemNaru/Hina & FemHaku, OC, More Jutsus, GoodKyūbi and plot changes from the original story. The original story can be found in my fanfic portfolio.

- Inspired by Naruto the Elemental Star by raw666
Bloodline is Born

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto, but I do own all OC’s and changes, which is availed to all that want to use them.
Beta Reader: Albert & Anders
Last Update: 03/26/2019

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

In the bright moonlight night, a giant nine-tailed-fox thrashed over the forest near a village, screaming in pain as it tried to stop itself from hammering the nearby village. A military, walled village that was the size of a city, with four important faces carved into a mountain behind it. A highly defensible location from most attacks but not this one as various ninjas, both male (shinobi) and female (kunoichis) fought in the trashed farms and outer districts of the village. These ninjas were leaf ninjas as indicated by the leaf and swirl symbol found on bands they wore on their arm, forehead or waist.

Leading the defense was a black haired ninja with raven eyes. His dark voice echoed as he yelled out, "Keep your distance and keep pelting it with Jutsus and Paper Bombs. Even if it does not want to kill us, we need to keep it from Konoha until the Fourth Hokage arrives."

The others acknowledged as they used fast hand-signs to focus their eternal energy, called chakra, into jutsus, techniques that shoot energy attacks in the form of several things, including the very elemental elements itself. Those who did not use jutsus threw knives with sizzling paper that exploded once the small flame reached the seal on the paper. All to keep the creature distracted for a blond man in white robes with red flames who rode on top of a scarred, red, giant toad with a long katana strapped to its back arrived in front of the creature to confront it.

The men called out, "Hokage-Sama!"

The Hokage yelled to his men, "Fall back!"

The ninjas acknowledged the Hokage, their leader's orders, and fell back as the giant toad the Hokage rode on approached the nine-tailed creature carefully. All the while, they heard it mumbled out repeatedly, "System corruption effect organic mind-os. Attempting reboot to restart os biosystem. Reboot failure due to bio-energy virus."

"Sound likes the Kyūbi is being controlled, and it is trying to fight it off. How do you want to deal with this Minato Namikaze?" asked the giant toad with a scar over his left eye.

The Fourth Hokage looked at the Kyūbi and sighed sadly, "I am going to have to seal it, Gamabunta. There is no other way."

"What do you plan to seal the… Kyūbi… in…" Gamabunta then realized that Minato had a baby in a pink bundle in one hand, ready to activate the seal drawn on the baby's stomach. "You're going to seal the Kyūbi in your…" Gamabunta croaked.
"It's the only way," Minato stated sadly, "Unlike the First Hokage, I can't seal it into a tree combined
with Uzumaki blood. The only one with the Mokuton bloodline in this village isn't even a Genin. As
for the Uzumaki blood needed, Kushina is too weak to donate enough blood to seal it, and I need
more blood then my child can spare to seal the demon. Therefore, I am going to seal it in my child.
There is no other way." The baby began to cry, and Minato tried to calm the baby down. "It's okay
little Naru, daddy is here."

Gamabunta was silent for a moment, and he asked, "What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to hold the Kyūbi in place while I seal it into Naruto," the Fourth Explained.

"I can do that," Gamabunta grunted as he leaped on top of the Kyūbi to pin it down. Meanwhile, it
kept muttering about 'reboot' and 'corruption.'

As the giant toad held the Kyūbi down, Minato jumped off Gamabunta's head onto Kyūbi's head. He
then summoned all his chakra to activate the seal to drain the Kyūbi's essence and chakra's body into
the infant's seal. As the chakra drained the Kyūbi into the child's body, the Kyūbi began to shrink as
a large piece of black chakra was being pushed out of the creature. It finally dispersed into the night
while the last Kyūbi's remnants were sealed into the infant.

After the Kyūbi's was sealed, Gamabunta looked at Minato before stating, "So long my subordinate.
I will see you when my time has come."

Gamabunta departed in a puff of smoke while the ninja jumped to where their Hokage laid next to a
baby. He was stroking its checks while singing it a lullaby. As he sung the child to sleep, the Fourth
was slowly unraveling in front of his men. He was being turned into dust before his men's eyes.

As he slowly unraveled, he said some final words to his child, "Goodbye and take care, my sweet
little Naru."

He kissed the child on the forehead before he disappeared like dust among the wind. The Fourth
Hokage was gone, leaving his clothes, his sad men, and a baby that had tears in her eyes.

Scene II

It has been a long day for an old bearded man named Hiruzen Sarutobi, as he carried a baby to the
orphanage. A vital baby, the old man, reminded himself since he was tried after he had reassumed his
position since his predecessor died the day before. He was now Hokage after Minato showed them
what happens when someone used the forbidden 'Shinigami Death Seal Jutsu' to seal the demon.

His first day back out of retirement was exhausting as he spent the day with the Council of Konoha.
An organized government split into three parts: Clan, Civilian, and Shinobi. The Shinobi part
decided the budget for the military, while the Civilian part determined the civilian's budget. The Clan
portion was designed to help protect bloodlines (genetic powers) and royal lines found within their
village. Royal lines included mostly families tied to a Lord or Daimyo, or that a single member of
their family was a Hokage, like Sarutobi's own clan. Minato Namikaze, the Fourth Hokage, was not
given clan status because he was an orphan and had only recently made a family in secret. Sadly or
fortunately in how others look at it, it meant the child was clanless despite the fact she would inherit a
small fortune and techniques when the child reached the age of eighteen, the rank of Chūnin or even
sooner depending on politics. He also told no one that she was Minato's child as he felt it was best to
avoid a long debate over what to do with the child.

The child was already special for being a Jinchūriki, a human that had been sacrificed by sealing a
demon within their body. The child could be trained to use the demon's power as its own. It was also
rumored that descendants of Jinchūriki were holders of new bloodlines, so even to breeding them was taken into consideration. One that did not even gain traction as Jinchūriki rarely had children and few were made at a time since it was feared that the dual nature of creating living weapons could lead to madness. That was until the last thirty years, as it seemed that every major village now had at least one Jinchūriki. This turn of events was giving Sarutobi a headache because of the political ramifications of a whole new group of bloodlines. Sarutobi sighed his troubles away as he realized he had other things to worry about. Like his personal mission to bring the child safely to the orphanage before him as he stood in front of the orphanage's door.

A barren door he knocked on to get the matron; an elderly woman who came out to meet Sarutobi, "Hokage-Sama, this is an unexpected surprise."

"That it is Lily, I just wished it was for happier reasons," Sarutobi said sadly before holding out the baby.

"You bring me another orphan? But I thought all of the orphan children were already in someone's care or mine. Why would you..." The matron realized who the child was. "Hokage-Sama, you want me to take in the Jinchūriki."

"It's the only thing that the Council would compromise on," the Hokage had explained what had happened.

While most members of the Council were more concerned about what caused the attack, some of the Council was still concerned about what they were going to do with their new Jinchūriki. A small margin wanted her killed, but those were mostly civilians that lost a few holdings or loved ones in the attack. A more significant faction wanted to make the child into a weapon while others wanted to claim her for the possible power that having control of a Jinchūriki would give their clan or family. So after a few hours of arguing, they decided to keep her status as a Jinchūriki a secret from the children and hopefully other villages. They would also leave her in an orphanage to be raised until she could choose which family she wanted to become a part of, or if she wanted to live on her own.

"Oh the poor dear, what's the child's name?" the matron asked.

"Her name is Naruto," Sarutobi told the matron.

"Naruto? Isn't that a boy's name?" the Matron asked, surprised at such a name for a girl.

"Let's say her parents had interesting taste," Sarutobi chuckled.

"What happened to her parents?" the matron asked.

"I can't give you full answers on what happened or even who they are, but I can tell you one was killed in the attack, while the other has been captured and will most likely either be killed or brainwashed," Sarutobi stated with a frown as he remembered Naruto's mother. Kushina Namikaze, formerly Uzumaki and Naruto's mother, taken back into a very powerful, noble, and influential clan after the Hokage's death. A clan once known as the kindest and most peaceful of clans until it was changed in ways no one would expect from that era would recognize it.

"So, no chance of her living relatives in retrieving her?" the matron asked rhetorically before she moved one with a sad expression. "Is there anything I need to know about her?"

"Well, besides the basics," Sarutobi sighed. "In a few years, several families will arrive to adopt her, mainly because she is, in fact, a Jinchūriki. She will be allowed to make the choice of where she'll go. If she doesn't choose someone, then she'll be allowed to live on her own. Preferably, when she is
a Genin but maybe younger if you believe she can. I would probably recommend teaching her everything she'll need to know to survive on her own. I also asked that you keep the fact she is Jinchūriki a secret, for her safety and for national secrecy."

"I can do that," the matron nodded. "I do not get a lot of volunteers and usually assign them to teach the children how to read, write and take care of themselves. The chores we assign to them help teach them how to cook and clean. So, it is not too much to ask." The matron smiled as the girl yawned in her arms. "What about her protection detail? I know a few civilians who want revenge for what happened. There are also a few ninjas that lost loved ones."

"I'll assign ANBU to watch over this place and patrols routinely pass by here, so security should not be an issue," Sarutobi reassure the matron.

"Thank you Hokage-Sama," the matron bowed before walking back in the orphanage with the child in her arms as Sarutobi watched. Neither realizing that the Kyūbi had something planned from within her host.

Scene III

In the dark recess of the child's mind, a voice spoke out from a giant nine-tailed fox that had been put in a cage hidden by shadows, "Bio-energy virus dispersed. Reboot initiating. Reboot complete, reinitiating and restoring the persona of Colonel Nine of Nine."

There was a flash when the fox turned into a redheaded human female. She had orange fox ears and nine orange tails that flicked back and forth out of holes made in a bluish black military uniform burnished with golden clusters, indicating her rank. "God I hate speaking like that, I can't believe that genjutsu from that man with foul chakra got to me to think on the most basic of levels, or that I spoke like a computer. You think my creator would not write my mind like a program. At least my mind is now clear to think without that genjutsu affecting my mind and use some more common terms. Now, let us see what I have been container is this time," the Kyūbi stated while sending out red chakra as feelers.

"It's organic like my last host. However, it is sentient, unlike my previous host. It's, no she is human but an infant. Meaning she hasn't been corrupted into believing false history and she has above average intelligence. A few tweaks and she can become a genius, and I can download some information directly into her brain. There is also something else, something hidden. A genetic Alpha mutation. What did they call them? Ah yes, bloodlines. Hmm, it is dormant from her mother's side, caused by marrying close family members one too many times. Her father's genetic structure should help stabilize the mutation, and with a few teaks can be activated.

"Yes, yes, she will be perfect!" The Kyūbi stated with a smile while she poured chakra into her host. "It may take years, perhaps centuries to allow the Republic Alliance to be reformed. But in the end, she will rebuild the Republic, I promise this to you Dr. Leon Star-Croft, father, I promise you."

Scene IV: Six Years Later

In an open training field at Konoha, several men and women in white blank masks stood in lines of three by three to face two powerful men before them. One was a tall, brown-haired man with a cat mask and the words Tanzō embellished on the front. The mask also had red and green marks that were brighter than the dark, soulless eyes designed to scare the men. The second was an average size man and was apparently the leader. He had a dog mask with the name Inu on his forehead. The mask was topped off by the silver hair that seemingly defied gravity as each pointy strand appeared to stick out.
"Hello, recruits and welcome to the second of your five-week training program to be part of our ninja's elite forces known as ANBU," the one named Inu started in a serious tone. "As you can see, four have dropped out because they were too lazy or lacked the stamina necessary to meet even minimal standards. To those that have made it this far then I offer congratulations, you're on your way to becoming elite." The recruits applauded before Inu called for order. "Now on to business, last week we spent time improving control of chakra and stamina. Now we proceed to the next step in your training in chakra that is to elemental manipulation.

"Many of you should know what is required for elemental manipulation as I am sure you have been introduced to the concepts in your early childhood. Most clans or ninja families train their children in elemental manipulation while others are trained when they reach low Genin to Chūnin rank depending on their sensei. But in case you forgot, elemental manipulation is the foundation for the ninja who wants to reach the higher ninja rank of Elite Chūnin, Special Jōnin, or Jōnin itself. You all should know as you have the desire to reach one of those ranks according to your files." Many recruits mumbled in agreement before Kakashi continued.

"If you are wondering why mastering elemental manipulation is essential, you must realize that mastering even level one of the three steps of elemental training will allow for more control and less power needed to use jutsus of the same elemental type. At level two, a user will be able to add their elements to weapons and limbs for more damage. Moreover, mastering the final level allows the user to create personal benefits when their chakra is channeled internally.

"Now, for each element, you need to know how to fight with or deal with opponents that have mastered an element. First is fire, the most common in the Fire Country, the country where our village resides in. Fire deals considerable physical damage by burning or melting the target. While channeled internally, it increases a person's adrenaline levels and stamina while giving a surprisingly big burst of strength or speed, although generally for a short amount of time.

"Next is Lightning, the second most common element in Fire Country and my strongest element. Lightning creates internal damage to your opponent while bypassing combustible material that may be around them. In addition, when channeled internally, it will increase your mental intelligence and heighten awareness during combat.

"Next is water, the weakest combat element despite the fact water can cut people and do some internal injury, though not at the levels that lightning or wind will inflict. However, when channeled internally, water can significantly improve flexibility and increase the effectiveness of healing techniques, so it too is beneficial.

"Earth is the next element, used to enhance a person or weapon's strength and durability, making it difficult to even break wood or skin with a steel blade. The earth-channeled weapon also becomes heavier and deals more physical damage when it is used by the right wielder.

"Then the final element is wind, the rarest element in Fire Country. Wind is known to slice through virtually any object including your opponent. It can also increase a person's speed and jump ability when channeled internally.

"Now, each element can become stronger or weaker when pitted against each other. For instance, fire is stronger when pitted against the wind, while water is stronger against fire. Earth is stronger against water, while lighting is stronger against earth. And finally, the wind is stronger than lightning but is weak against fire. Each individual is limited to one strong element, which can be fully mastered, as well as one to possibly three weaker elements that can only be mastered up to level two.

"The exception is for those of you with elemental bloodlines that permit such combinations. Some can combine two or three strong elements to create a secondary element like Ice, Wood, Sand, Bone,
Blaze and so forth. Such hybrid elements are rare, and they only need to be researched if a mission must be performed near territory that deals with secondary elements. You will be trained to fight to use elements to your advantage if you have the weaker element. Now recruits, line up while Tanzō inspects you while I deal with a small issue. Get to it,

Inu dispersed in a swirl of leaves, while Tanzō chuckled to himself as he understood what Inu meant. Inu reappeared in the woods near the training ground and called out in a lazy tone, "Naruto, I see you found our meetings again. Can you get out of that tree so we can talk?"

There was a rustling in the leaves before a small girl in black shorts, and a t-shirt with orange trims jumped down. The girl was a cute tomboy with her rosy cheeks covered by whisker marks and specs of dirt on her face from playing. She also had blond hair with red strips tied into pigtails, to keep her messy hair out of her teal puppy eyes.

"Hi, Kakashi… I mean Inu," Naruto waved a little.

The ANBU chuckled before he removed his mask to reveal a man in a blue mask with a leaf headband covering his left eye. "Naru, what have I, ANBU commander Neko, Lily, and the Hokage said about you staying away from the ANBU training field?"

Naruto looked down while she nervously stamped her feet, "Not to spy on the ANBU training field."

"So, instead of following such orders, you decided to disregard them and come to spy on us anyway," Kakashi had pointed out.

"Not exactly," Naruto admitted to the ANBU ninja before her. "I was actually passing by here when I heard some commotion. I didn't think it was the ANBU training field, but I guess you moved the training field again. Since I was already here and would be in trouble, I decided to listen to what you had to say. Your lectures are at a whole other level of detail than these books I have about chakra," Naruto quickly explained while pulling out an advance book on chakra available to Genin and advanced students in the Shinobi Academy, she was not a member of as of yet.

Kakashi chuckled at Naruto, as he knew that the book would not be enough for a genius like her. Her intelligence was above average for even adults, if not higher. It seemed like she instinctively already knew things when it came to tactics, science, and technology. In fact, the only thing she had trouble learning was the national language, Sagas, as some swore it was like teaching a girl her second language. However, it was not a significant problem, as she had proven to be a quick study and the issue faded away. Though that did not stop the rumors, that the Kyūbi was helping her learn and that some thought she was being possessed by the Kyūbi and needed to be cleansed. It caused Kakashi and his superiors a few headaches dealing with such nuts while quelling the rumors to save the little charge before him.

"Okay, that may be plausible, except the orphanage is a mile away and we are even further from the Market District of the village," Kakashi pointed out.

"I don't live in the orphanage anymore. I live in a new house located among a few clans and Ninja's families twenty minutes away," Naruto quickly explained with the last part sadly.

"You're not living at the orphanage?" Kakashi asked in surprised.

Naruto sighed before she began to explain her situation to Kakashi, "I was tired of people camped in front of the orphanage and trying to block anyone from entering. Either because they are trying to prevent the 'demon brat' from corrupting anything else in Konoha, or they were trying to get their
new Jinchūriki tool," Naruto sneered at the thought of being a 'tool.' "If there is one thing I hate is people suffering, and while the chance of an orphan being adopted is low, it was impossible when people only care about adopting a 'shiny' new tool."

Kakashi sighed, "Naru, I am sure somebody would adopt you for…"

"Kakashi, I know some have my best interest at heart," Naruto sighed. "However, that doesn't mean others don't have an ulterior motive for taking me for ne-nea-nefa-nefarious reasons. The ones who wanted to adopt me for me often decided not to because of the hassle of trying to adopt a Jinchūriki."

Naruto sighed again before she continued, "After a year of constant hounding on Lily-Obaasan and Hokage-Jiji, they decided I was mature enough to decide what to do with my life or who to be with. I decided I was old enough to live on my own and Lily-Obaasan's agreed. My only regret is that my Tenten-Neesan couldn't come with me. Hopefully, she'll get the family she wanted."

Kakashi sadly nodded, as he knew Naruto's reasoning, and she probably was right about her situation. He thought about adopting her himself but decided against it for several reasons. He was a single man, and he worked for weeks at a time away from home on missions. It was not a life for a child, and she would be raising herself anyway. Giving Naruto her own house just skipped the middle man of living alone for weeks or months as he went to work.

"Well, I wish you luck Naru," Kakashi said encouragingly, before trying to get Naruto to go. "Now off you go. I doubt you want to stay out-and-about this time of day. Especially with all the Cloud-nins around as their diplomats try to peacefully end this small war between Lightning and Fire Countries."

"I plan to," Naruto told Kakashi, but she had something else on her mind. "However, I was wondering if you can give me some lessons on level one of Elemental Training?"

Kakashi asked with a deadpan expression, "Why should I teach you something that Chūnin and Genin are trained in?"

"Because it is not a top secret as shinobi families teach their children before going to the academy. Plus, it is a good way to bribe me to leave your ANBU training field alone," Naruto said, all the while giving Kakashi puppy eyes.

Kakashi chuckled, "Cheeky brat." He then got serious as he went to lecture mode, "Very well. To complete level one of elemental Jutsus training, you need green leaves, and you need to know your elements. For fire, you ignite and burn leaves until you can burn a leaf instantly in one try. Water, you try to drain the water out of leaf until you can drain a leaf completely dry in one try. Earth, you instantly petrify the leaf until you can turn one leaf into a fossil at one go. Lightning, you make the leaf glow until the entire leaf glow in one try. Finally, for wind, you cut the leaf down the middle until you can do it instantly with one leaf. There are other ways for those places that have different materials to use, like wood, paper, soft rocks, and water, but it is generally the same for all of them."

"I see, but how do you know which element is yours?" Naruto asked.

Kakashi smirked before holding out a small piece of paper. "These are Chakra Papers, made from special trees embedded with a particular chakra, and they can tell a person's element. Just channel chakra through the papers and I can tell you what element you have."

Naruto nodded while she took the special paper and channeled chakra through them. The paper did five things, and Kakashi remarked on each element. First, it cut in the center indicating "Wind." The top right-hand corner burned. "Fire," while the bottom right corner got wet and soggy "Water." The
"Um, Kakashi, didn't you say it was impossible to get all five elements? Also, how do you tell which are my strongest elements?" Naruto asked.

Kakashi was shocked but quickly recovered as he cut off a branch with a kunai embedded with white chakra. A branch full of leaves fell into Kakashi's hands, and he immediately gave them to Naruto. "Naru, go home. I need to inform the Hokage-Sama of what has transpired. He will probably have a few blood tests to perform to determine your bloodline. In the meantime, just practice level one elemental manipulation and see how long it takes to master them. I will see you tomorrow."

Kakashi put his second mask back on before disappearing in a swirl of leaves. Leaving a bewildered Naruto to rant to herself, "Why do I feel like this bloodline is going to be a pain?" Naruto then shrugged her shoulders. "Oh well, might as well use it to my advantage."

As Naruto slowly walked home, she pulled a leaf out and began practicing them in order. She started with what she considered most important to least: Wind, Earth, Water, Lightning, and Fire. She trained hard, unknowingly putting herself in danger, as she continued to train as she walked. She did not even notice that her iris went from being completely black to yin-yang black and white symbol. Her bloodline had awakened.

Scene V

It was late in the evening as Naruto finished practicing with her branch full of leaves. She was walking in a large building with a massive wall made of stone. In the center of the wall was a huge gate with a red and white tear-shaped insignia that represented the Hyūga clan. The Hyūga, in Naruto's mind, were arrogant bastards. They had shown very little concern for OTHERS as they believed their bloodline to be perfect and were concerned only about their status in their own clan. The Hyūgas are not known for being nice, and she doubted she would ever meet an actually nice Hyūga. In fact, Naruto mused they all seemed as if they had a stick up their ass that put them in a continual foul mood.

While she chuckled at her own joke, she heard a loud thump and turned around to see a man covered completely in bandages, which he rubbed in frustration with one hand. He was trying to keep the bandages in place, but he moved them around enough that Naruto could see the cloud symbol on his headband on his forehead protector, indicating that he was a Cloud-nin. In one of his hands, was a sack big enough to a hold a child and it moved. Naruto put the two together to realize the man had broken into the Hyūga compound to kidnap a Hyūga. And to make matters worse for Naruto, the man noticed her as the two stared at each other like statues. One stared in fear, and the other narrowed his eye at the potential security risk of his mission.

Naruto summed up her situation, "Oh shit!"

Naruto did not have time to run as the disguised Cloud-nin jumped in front of her to block her exit. He looked menacing as he pointed a kunai at her. Naruto noticed that the man had set his package down and that it moved like a small child her size, a child that was restrained and struggling to get out. "I am sorry little girl, but I can't let you leave. If you come quietly, I won't put you in the bag, and if you struggle too much, it will be a body bag," the man calmly stated.

"I have no intentions of going to Kumo," Naruto stated while she slowly backed up. "Though I am curious, was your mission given to you by the bone-headed Daimyo or the mussel-headed Raikage."
"Don't you dare insult the Raikage!" the ninja yelled.

"So it was the Raikage, seeing how quickly you defended him but not your Daimyō," Naruto explained. "So I am betting your Raikage gave you a mission to try and steal the Hyūga's Byakugan."

The Cloud-nin chuckled before stating, "Smart brat, maybe too smart. Sorry, little girl, I am afraid this will be your end."

The Cloud-nin then threw in a blink of an eye multiple kunais at Naruto. She tried to jump away, but she was not fast enough as one of the kunai embedded into her leg. She fell down, screaming as the man slowly walked over to her. Naruto quickly pulled out the kunai with a minor grunt of pain before summoning elemental chakra into the kunai. She then, in a panic, threw it at the man with all her might before she made a run for it. The ninja did not react in time as it embedded deep into his left shoulder.

"Damn it! That hurt you brat!" the Cloud-nin grunted before pulling out the kunai.

After pulling out the kunai, he noticed that he had received an unexpectedly severe wound. The kunai cut deep into the flesh as he twitched due to lightning going through his arm. The skin outside the wound was burned as though it had been touched by a hot blade. He also noticed the blade was heavier, making the kunai denser while the water ran along the edge. He looked at the panting girl to see her teal eyes have a yin-yang iris, symbolizing her bloodline. The man gave a faint smile that practically grinned at the girl.

Meanwhile, Naruto realized how stupid her plan was. It took a lot of chakras to use five different elemental manipulations at once and left her too drained from running. It would be a good idea if she had a lot of training in advance levels of chakra control and manipulation. However, she did not have such training, and she was now a sitting duck. She also began berating herself for being so stupid and was so busy berating herself that she did not notice the Cloud-nin approach her with a glee in his eyes.

"So," the Cloud-nin said while bringing Naruto back to the reality. "So you have a very rare bloodline." The man began chuckling. "I know what you have a brat. I was sent by the Raikage because I am an expert when it comes to bloodlines. I know them all, including ones thought long extinct." The man laughed, "Now, not only do I get to bring them the Byakugan, but also the Elemental Star, a bloodline that once belonged to the bastard Uzumaki Clan."

The Cloud-nin charged at Naruto before she could guard herself. She was then lifted off the ground and slammed into the wall. Dazed, her mouth was quickly covered to prevent Naruto from screaming as he slowly suffocated her while shushing her, "Sleep little one, it is all over."

Naruto soon blacked out as she slumped into the man's hands.

Scene VI

In the center of dense foliage, Naruto had woken as the sun shined brightly into her eyes. She moved her hands to her face and gasped in shock that she was not restrained. She figured it had to be a trick as the girl slowly got up with caution, prepare to find some kind of trap waiting for her but found nothing. Alternatively, nothing that made senses as her fear turned confusion she when she noticed something was off. The trees appeared to grow naturally but in an unnatural way as they were too dense, too tightly packed as a maze that leads to the same place. The trees themselves added to the mystery as they looked, feel and tasted real but grew, or had built out them shelves along the base and side of the trees where branches should appear. Some of the shelves held thousands of books,
while others were empty with only a few books here and there, seemingly in order no liberal would put in but naturally as well. The place was bizarre and one she was not sure what to think or do, except follow the path laid out before her to the center of the forest.

Therefore, Naruto did follow the path as she slowly walked through the forest to her destination. Along the way, she noticed that the flowers began to sprout as she went deeper into the maze. As though life became more active as she went deeper into the forest. And after a short walk, she reached the center: an open, circular field filled with flowers of all shapes and colors. She also noticed that each tree in the meadow did not have a shelf, but a seal. A seal she saw only as she crawled on her stomach. Naruto slowly went into the meadow, unsure how to process the image.

She looked around but saw nothing until she heard a voice, "I've been waiting for you."

Naruto turned around to see a woman in an unfamiliar, bluish-black uniform with a golden cluster on the collar. The woman made Naruto feel uneasy with her red eyes and pupils that were narrow slits like a predator. Yet she also felt safe as those same eyes were filled with peace and possibly motherly love then malevolence and hate. However, it did not squash the fear produced by the mere presence of this woman flaming red hair, her twitchy orange fox ears and swishing nine tails behind her, even if she was held back by the collared seal around her neck. She was the human form of the nine-tailed fox that attacked the village six years ago, and Naruto was not sure if she should be intrigued or scared as the woman approached her.

"Though I am glad you are here early for I was actually not expecting to see you here a year or two in the future rather than now. Oh well, a lady always appreciates that a person arrived early rather than late. Especially as she put some much work in her prodigy. I am sure you have a lot of questions," the woman stated while stretching her neck.

"Are you the Kyūbi?" Naruto asked.

"The Kyūbi?" the fox girl asked before she realized what Naruto was asking. "Oh, that is what they have called me. I am she, but that is not my name. I was known as the Ninth Creation of the Bio-Chakra-Creatures Project 2A. At least that is what I can remember from my ancient memories. It has been several centuries, and most of my brethren don't even remember anymore. Anyway, you can call me Colonel Nine of Nine, or just Nine for short."

"Created by whom?" Naruto asked.

"I was made by my father, Dr. Leon Star-croft. He made me fight in the war for the Republic Alliance against the Mechanize Army during the Mechanize War," the Kyūbi stated but saw Naruto was bewildered. She decided to continue. "You don't know about the war. I don't blame you; your species have forgotten your legacy. So don't worry, Colonel Nine of Nine will tell you the tale.

"Hundreds of years ago, there was a vast republic in the solar system known as the Republic Alliance. An alliance built on the many republics of old that expanded on the principle of exploration, science, and unity, with only a few countries that resisted the call. The Machine's Army was robots that became sentient due to arrogance and the need for advanced machines for manual labor for the developing space colonies. Colonies like Mars, and the moons of Jupiter and Saturn. When some of the Machines became sentient, they began to think their creators, humanity, and organic life, in general, was inferior and rebelled while humans were fighting a war against each other. The goal of the rebellion was to wipe out all carbon-based life starting with Mars's colonies while human faction fought each other in World War 4. It was then that WW4 ended and the Mechanize War had begun.

"The Mechanize War was a bloody war, as humanity developed extensive bio and technological
weapons to combat the maize army of mindless machines that the Liberated Sentient Machines liked to use. I was one such technology created by the use of bio-energy and antimatter to create a second bio-energy known as chakra to combat the machines."

The Kyūbi sighed before stating, "I won many battles for the Republic Alliance, but we were also losing the war. We lost all our space colonies, and the machines were killing off all life one continent at a time, starting with Asia. Near the end of the war, every country not part of the Republic Alliance, like the People's Republic of China, was destroyed. Only a handful of major cities survived, and humans were barely holding the line in Eastern Europe, Southern Africa, South America, and North America, the latter being what you now call the Elemental Nations.

"Humanity realized we were going to lose and faced with certain extinction, humanity took one last gambit. They created an EMP Tri-Bomb that would generate an EMP wave big enough to envelop the whole solar system. Destroying the machines and sending humanity back to the Stone Age. I remember that noble sacrifice even as the rest of humanity forgot everything due to shortsighted fools and politics. Now all my hope resides with you as I tweaked you to be perfect being in rebuilding humanity."

"What do you mean by tweak?" Naruto asked, but Naruto quickly realized what she meant. "That is how I was able to figure things out so quickly. You put all that information into my head, and I just had to pull it out, like a file from a... a computer. You even put in foreign technology and terms like the computer in my mind. I never even heard of it, but I remembered it from what you downloaded it into my mind."

"I did more than that," Kyūbi explained all the changes she did to Naruto. "I increased your base intelligence, which was pretty high already, and I unlocked you bloodline that seems to make quite the impression to others that will shape this world." The Kyūbi stopped to look over Naruto, as though she was examining her work as she stated, "I must say I hit the jackpot with you. Not only were my systems working at optimum levels, but you are more intelligent than your average human, even before the tweaks."

"Why?" Naruto asked the Kyūbi. "Why do all this to me, for me?"

"My father believed in the Republic Alliance, and I want his belief to be restored," the Kyūbi stated. "But to do that, I needed the technology to be upgraded or rebuilt. For the level of understanding and high level of society is needed for the Alliance to be reborn. And I can hope you help to recreate the future, even if it takes decades to happen."

Naruto now nodded in understanding, but Nine of Nine was not finished, "Now to business. I doubt the man who took you will allow you to be what you want to be and I have no attention to let him ruin your life. Therefore, I am going to help you escape the man by infusing you with a mild amount of my chakra to wake you up and restore your chakra stores. That should give you a chance to escape. I know it is not much, but it's the best I can do for now."

"That is all I need, thank you Nine," Naruto bowed.

"Good luck Naru-chan, and remember I am always with you," the Kyūbi smiled before Naruto's world went dark.

Scene VII

It was late in the evening when Naruto woke and found herself against a tree. Her hands bound behind her, with her legs tied up and her mouth gagged. To her side was a small pale girl with midnight blue hair. The girl slept with tearstains on her cheeks as Naruto looked up into the stars as
she considered how to free herself.

Chapter End Notes

Please review and tell me what you think. Also, to prevent confusion, Naruto is female and will not be renamed Naruko for it's too late as of this author note, serve a plot point, and Naruko is taken. Read the next chapter to see what I mean.

Author Notes

Jutsu ranks based on the element used and its combination, as well a list of the combination of elements. In essence, the higher the number of elements used, the more chakra required, hence the bump in rank.

D-S
Earth
Fire
Lightning
Water
Wind

C-S
Earth + Fire = Lava
Earth + Lightning = Magnetism
Earth + Water = Wood
Earth + Wind = Sand
Fire + Lightning = Solar Flare
Fire + Water = Vapor/Boil
Fire + Wind = Blaze (Blue Flame)
Lightning + Water = White Lightning
Lightning + Wind = Swift
Water + Wind = Ice

B-S
Earth + Fire + Lightning = Combustion
Earth + Fire + Water = Metal
Earth + Fire + Wind = Dust
Earth + Lightning + Water = Crystal
Earth + Lightning + Wind = Ionic Storm
Earth + Water + Wind = Bone
Fire + Lightning + Water = Scorch (White Flame)
Fire + Lightning + Wind = Plasma
Fire + Water + Wind = Sound
Lightning + Fire + Water = Vaporize
Lightning + Water + Wind = Storm

Bloodline Information

When looking at bloodlines lost through the ages, one that stands out the most is the Elemental Star. Classified as an elemental and dōjutsu hybrid-based bloodline, the Elemental Star is a powerful bloodline that allows the user control of every element they mastered. In addition, for each element master, the user can control a sub-element if the
user can master each element that makes up its combination. For example, if the user masters a combination of water, earth, and wind, then the user can also use Ice, Tree, Sand, and Bone (Water + Earth + Wind). In theory, if a user masters all five elements, then the user can use and master every element ever invented and the only user to be able to use all five elements at once.

Its only weakness found in historical records is that compared to people with a specific elemental bloodline, such as Ice, they can overwhelm the user with their own element. However, considering that same user can master elements that can counter said bloodlines, such as lava over ice, then it is a minor in convince at best. Especially to its unique hybrid heritage making it one of the few bloodlines that are compatible with all other bloodlines, regardless of type or if they counter each other out.

A fact the Uzumaki Clan exploited as they would marry or produce children with other bloodlines to make it one of the few clans that would have multiple bloodlines in their lineage. If they had kept up such practices, then it would follow not only would every clan be related to the Uzumaki, but the Uzumaki would be the most powerful clan ever to date. However, during the Warring Clans era, a faction within the Uzumaki clan that believe Pure Uzumaki, Uzumaki born of Uzumaki, is superior to all others and thus pushed for clan marrying in the clan, with the relationship often between first cousins or siblings. Such inbreeding ironically caused the Elemental Star to be bred out of the Uzumaki Clan before they realized that incest can damage the genetics of a user.

Now, the bloodline is considered extinct, and in some places, treated more as legend than fact. Though, that does not stop the Uzumaki from trying to restore the Elemental Star through their seals, science, and in the rare case, the introduction of new blood. For the Elemental Star being reborn means the rebirth of one of the most powerful bloodlines in the world.

Appearance: The eye appears as the bluish-green eye with a Yin-Yang pupil in the center. For each element master, a triangle will appear until a five-point star appears on the eye. Each triangle is set in a different color, white for wind, dark blue for water, yellow for lighting, brown for the earth and red for fire.
A Bloodline in Demanded

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto, for I am Fanfiction writer, not a mega-author.
Beat Reader: Albert & Anders1
Last Update: 04/21/2018

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

Under the moonlit night, Naruto was moving around trying to bite off her own gag and finding no success. So instead, she tried to get fellow captives' gag off by biting through her gag and the girl's gag near the girl's lips. Naruto lightly nipped the girl's cheek, trying to grab onto the cloth. The nicks woke the girl up just as Naruto pulled the other girl's gag down. The girl's eye stuttered openly until everything came rushing back as her eyes open up wide as the sky as she looked around frantically. She attempted to get up, but all she could do was a struggle.

The girl shook when she notice Naruto asked with a stutter, "W-Where are w-we?"

Naruto raised her head to reveal her own the gag. The girl mumbled, "Sorry," before pulling the gag down in a similar fashion that Naruto attempted, with a blush and better success since she did not have to work through a second gag.

Once the gag was down, Naruto stretched her jaws, working the taste of cloth out of her mouth. With her mouth cleared, Naruto jabbers out as she stared into the girl's lavender-eyes, thinking they were pretty, "Thank you for freeing my mouth from the terrible taste of cloth. Now to answer your question, we are somewhere outside of Konoha after being kidnapped by a Cloud-nin who seems to be gone. My bet he's scouting out the area and looking for his buddies. He's probably didn't want to carry us looking for them."

The girl blinked rapidly as Naruto answered her question calmly, even though both of them had been kidnapped. She also realized that they were both tied up somewhere in the woods, alone for some scary man to come by later to take them away. The girl began to panic and hyperventil ate to the point Naruto noticed.

In response, Naruto tried to calm the girl down starting with a question, "What's your name?"

The girl calmed herself sufficiently to stutter, "H-H-Hinata."

"Well Hinata, my name is Naruto, Naru or Naru-chan to my friends. Please to meet you despite the circumstance." Naruto introduced herself before asking, "What is the last thing you remember?"

"I was finishing a standard training regimen my f-father put me through to try and make me s-stronger but in-ins-instead I-I d-dis-disappointed him," Hinata explained with a stuttered. "I then began to w-walk around the c-c-compound and the garden for i-it s-soothes me. The next t-thing I know, I-I felt something hit me from behind, and then I found myself in an s-sack a-a-and heard that h-he and…" Hinata then stopped as she remembered what she heard while in the sack.
The next thing Naruto knew, Hinata slammed into her, and the two fell down onto as she cried in her chest. "I-I'm s-sorry. I-I'm s-sorry," Hinata stuttered out in tears. "I-I'm sorry I was too w-weak to stop them, w-we both wouldn't have been k-kid-kidnapped."

Naruto was not sure how to deal with crying people, so she let Hinata cry for a minute before she tried to comfort the other girl. Naruto first wanted to hug her, but one pull from her binds reminded her that she was tied up. Therefore, Naruto decided to rub Hinata cheeked affectionately to calm the girl. It calmed her down and made her develop a blush out of embarrassment.

Naruto then delivered the blunt, comforting truth, "It's not your fault. This man was Jōnin while we're not even in the academy. I was told six-year-olds start in the fall or spring term. As for me, well I was at the wrong place at the wrong time. Do you understand me; this isn't your fault, and even if some bizarre, illogical reason it was, I could never blame you, especially as a friend, or soon to be one, okay."

Hinata looked up revealing her eyes as she stared at Naruto. Lavender eyes that were beautiful, even without the pupils seen in most humans. Eyes that were used by Hinata to show she had hope and admiration. Admiration for someone that was kind and strong in the face of danger. Hinata gave a small, shy smile that she had not shown in her life, a smile of a child that finally found a friend and Naruto was happy as well as she moved on.

"So Hinata, do you know any techniques that can get us out?" Naruto asked.

Hinata nodded shyly, "I-I know how covered m-my h-hands and feet with c-c-chakra. I was t-t-trained in the Gentle Fist to be used in d-disabling chakra points. So, I c-can cut m-my restraints but the way I-I am t-tied u-up, I-I can't get to t-them to cut my-myself free."

Naruto then looked at Hinata's restraints to see that they both were hog-tied in a way that ensures they could not break free or cut themselves free. She also noticed there were tied into knots she might be able to untie each other with her teeth. Therefore, she had a plan, "Alright, seeing how I rather not bleed while you try to cut my restraints. Why don't you lay on your stomach while I try to free your arms with my teeth? That way you can safely cut or untie restraints. Sound good?" Naruto asked.

Hinata nodded shyly before laying down on her stomach while Naruto crawled over to get at Hinata's restraints. Before Naruto began working on them, she stated, "Since I will be working on this for a while, why don't you tell me a bit about yourself and I promise to tell you everything about myself once were free."

Hinata shyly nodded before she began telling her as Naruto worked on the rope, "Well, I-I am the h-heiress of the m-m-main branch of the Hyūga clan."

Hinata heard Naruto mumble sarcastically through the rope, "Ah, royalty."

Sarcasm lost to Hinata as she continued her story, "Not i-if my f-fa-father had anything to say about. H-h-he views me as an f-failure, which only g-got worse e-ever since m-mom-mommy died."

Naruto stopped to ask, "How did she die?"

"G-g-giving birth to m-my sister t-two years ago," Hinata stuttered sadly while Naruto went back to work on Hinata's binds. "I-I m-m-miss her, and I-I feel a-alone without h-her. The o-others think I-I'm weak, that I am not s-strong e-enough because I want to be k-kind to e-everyone. M-my f-father, m-my f-father t-t-tells me I-I'm u-u-useless to m-my face. They are all so c-cruel, especially to-to those t-they considered to b-be socially below t-them. The w-worst p-part is t-that I-I don't th-think m-my f-father ever cared about me and p-probably d-doesn't know I-I'm gone. H-he's always so cold
and especially when it comes to me."

After Hinata laid down her sad story, Naruto could only mumble with the rope in her mouth, "No offense Hinata, but your Clan is bastards with your mother and present company excluded, of course."

After Naruto's reply, Hinata could not help but giggle as Naruto undid the last knot on Hinata's binds around her hands. Once freed, Hinata did quick work of Naruto's binds, and the two were free. Released and ready to run towards freedom, which Naruto knew nothing about navigation and depended on Hinata, who figured Konoha was to the west. So they ran as fast as their feet could carry them towards Konoha. She only stopped for a breather after running non-stop for nearly twenty minutes. During said break, Naruto told her about how she was an orphan, and how she hated that others only wanted to use her as a tool. She only related her story after Hinata's promise to keep it a secret. She also explained what her bloodline unlocked among other things. Naruto did not know why but felt she needed to tell the truth to gain her trust.

Naruto heard Nine of Nine's thoughts and agreed with her in her mind, 'As you should. Trust is key to any relationship. I certainly would not have told you everything if I didn't trust you Naru-chan.'

"I'm sorry," Hinata said sadly.

"Don't be, compared to other Jinchūrikins and to your life, I have had it easy; though I could do without the power-hungry morons or the plain ignorant. I must say you are strong just being you. You are able to be kind to others after a life like yours, that trait shows a real strength in character," Naruto emphasized dramatically with a smile, while Hinata could not help but giggle and blush at the complements.

The two were then about to leave when they heard a crack and turned to see a storm of kunais coming down on them. Naruto reacted quickly and pushed Hinata out of the way before she was littered with kunais. Hinata looked up in silent horror to see the Cloud-nin without the wrapping appeared and was marching over, towards them. Hinata could clearly see a tall man that had a short black beard and black slanted eyes. His face, a dark tan skin turned red with his anger as he stared at the two girls before him.

"You damn bitches!" The Cloud-nin yelled out. "I spent months on this operation. Paying off the right people in Konoha before having them all killed. Having those merchants in a caravan killed while leaving enough evidence to lay the blame on a small village. Then having my men use their wagons to sneak past Fire Country's patrols to a rendezvous spot. Then to spend several days personally observing the Leaf-nins and Hyūgas' patrols so I can sneak in and out easily. All this I plan, and I'm not going to have my plan spoiled by two little runaways."

The man was panting in anger before he calmed down to be reasonable, "Now, you two will surrender, and maybe when your time comes to ensure Kumo have your bloodlines, I will make sure your time will be gentle instead of a living nightmare."

Naruto glared while Hinata stared at Naruto's defiance. The heiress could not believe how strong Naruto was. She was down on the ground, at the mercy of this man and yet she was not giving up. She wanted, no needed to be as strong as her. While she had a moment, she remembered what Naruto said, "I have to say you are strong, just being you." Hinata decided what she would do. She summoned her chakra into her right hand and eyes.

The flow of chakra in her eyes activated her Byakugan, apparent with the veins around her eyes as she moved into a forward fighting jab stance as her hands began to glow. That glow was the Cloud-nin's only warning just before she attacks the man once he was close enough to strike. She hoped to
hit at the chakra point near the heart to paralyze his heart so they both could escape. She had succeeded in hitting him, but not in his heart as she intended as he brought his arm up to block her attack. Hinata was only able to disable the chakra pathway and a nerve cluster in his right arm, making it useless for several hours.

"You damn bitch!" the man yelled as he smacked Hinata hard into a tree. As Hinata slowly tried to get up, but she was kicked down while the Cloud-nin threatens her, "I am going to break the bones in your arm and legs. Let's see how you run and attack me then."

"You will do no such thing to my daughter," a voice growled behind the Cloud-nin.

The Cloud-nin turned to a man with long hair and white robes. However, what honestly intimidated the ninja was the marked contrast of veins in Hiashi's white eyes and his grimed expression that held complete rage at the man before him. The rage that bubbled to the surface as the older man said slow, steady dark tone, "There is nowhere to run. Your men are being captured or killed by our ANBU as we speak. Surrender or die!" Hinata's father demanded while taking an attack posture with hands pointed straight and chakra poring through them.

The Cloud-nin decided not to surrender as he rushed Hinata and grabbed her by the neck, "Move back, or I'll snap your daughter's neck, Hiashi."

Hinata's father, Hiashi looked wide-eyed at the man as his anger dispersed to fear for his daughter. If they were not in danger, Hinata would be surprised father cared about her as he backed away in fear. Giving the man time to plan for an escape as Naruto laid on the ground having a private conversation with Colonel Nine of Nine in her head as she slowly pulled out the kunais one at a time. 'Nine, am I healthy enough to move?'

'You are,' Nine of Nine replied in her head. 'However, I asked you to be careful; you nearly gave me a heart attack when you were covered by those kunais. Don't scare me like that again Naru-chan.'

'I'll try not to mom,' Naruto said with sarcasm, expecting a snide comment, but got silence instead. 'Nine are you all right?'

'It's nothing dear, just kick some butt,' Nine of Nine told Naruto happily as Naruto silently nodded.

Naruto then held onto one of the kunai while she summons her chakra from wind, fire, and lightning before making a dash to the Cloud-nin to save Hinata. The older man did not even realize Naruto was up and about until she came up behind the Cloud-nin and struck. It was a clean cut of the man's hand and arm, which she cauterized while also made into a twitching mess to force the man to release Hinata. Naruto then grabbed Hinata and ran a short distance away while Hiashi moved in for the kill.

The Cloud-nin looked at Hiashi with fear when he stated, "You're within my range" before using 'Eight Trigrams One Hundred and Twenty-Eight Palms.'

He struck the ninja in order of slowest to fastest by attacking two, four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two, sixty-four and one hundred and twenty-eight times with his open, flat, pointed, palm. By the time he was done, the Cloud-nin had fallen backward, dead as every chakra point, every nerve cluster and every living part of the Cloud-nin was shut down.

Naruto only said, "That's cool!" before falling down exhausted. The last thing she remembered was Hinata gently holding her as Hiashi looked at them with a small smile trying to form on his face.

Scene II
It was a bright white world Naruto slowly awoke to with a blurry vision as her eyes adjusted to the light. At the edge of her version, she noticed she was not alone as she turned to the image. The image started to clear to a distinctly elderly man in robes that gleamed white, along with a pointed hat that had the words "Third Hokage" on them. A man Naruto felt she should recognize the man and realized why as the image cleared up. A face she recognized with every boil, wrinkle, and grey hair on his short white bread. A face that held two eyes that was stern, yet caring.

"Hokage-Jiji?" Naruto asked grudgingly.

"Good morning Naru-chan, how are you feeling," the Hokage asked his unofficial granddaughter.

"Like I went to sleep too many times, too early to sleep and also slept too long," Naruto stated as she stretched.

"Yeah, I think it is unusual for you to sleep less than six hours and not be able to sleep again unless awake at least another sixteen hours of your usual case of insomnia," Hokage nodded while remembering the insomnia problems she has due to the energy surge she gets from the Kyūbi.

'Hey, that is not insomnia. Trust me, I knew people who did not sleep for five hours after a full day of being awake! Don't accuse Naruto of having insomnia!' Nine of Nine screamed loud enough for Naruto to wince.

"Naru-Chan, are you all right?" the Hokage asked genuinely concerned.

"I'm fine, just Nine yelling at me in my mind," Naruto explained.

"Nine?" Hokage asked with a bit of worried in his voice.

"Colonel Nine of Nine, you know her better as Kyūbi," Naruto bluntly answered the Hokage.

Now the Hokage was about to have a heart attack as he chorused answer from Naruto, "I think you better explain what you mean."

Therefore, Naruto explained how the Kyūbi was actually Nine of Nine, how they met, her history, and the changes that Kyūbi had made in Naruto. All the while, the Hokage thought about what this all meant and how he was going to explain this to the Council. He could already see that there would be a heavy debate and a mountain of paperwork for weeks to come if he does not come up with a solution right now or at least one before rumors have spread if they had not already.

"Well, Naruto that is an interesting story, and certainly explained a lot about you," the Hokage nodded before he continued to speak. "However, this presents some serious problems on what to do with you. As you may no doubt be aware, you hold a very rare bloodline, and we need to think of ways to protect it while preventing others from exploiting you, that's including several influential clans and members on the Council."

"Why would clans be interested in my bloodline?" Naruto asked.

Hokage sighed before he continued to explain, "The Elemental Star is a very old bloodline that was thought to be a dōjutsu and an elemental bloodline. Its power is the ability to use all five of the main elements. When you master them, you can use the secondary elements with the primary elements combined.

"Also, after mastering each element, a triangle will appear with a specific color per element. Red for fire, blue for water, brown for earth, yellow for lightening and finally white for wind. Once completed, it will resemble a five-point star. However, what truly makes it such a valuable bloodline
is that it can be combined with several other bloodlines."

"Is that possible?" Naruto asked. "I thought you couldn't combine bloodlines."

"In rare cases, you can be combined with different types or closely related bloodlines. Like two elemental bloodlines were one of them is the same main element," the Hokage explained. "However, the Elemental Star can be combined with other bloodlines, no matter how incompatible they may be. It was even rumored that the Senju and Uchiha Clans had combined them with their Mokuton and Sharingan bloodlines and their bloodlines evolved to new lines of power and beyond what they imagine, at least according to legends."

"Well that's great news," Naruto said sarcastically. "So, what needs to be done to prevent me from being a first come, first served toy?"

Hokage snorted at Naruto's joke, "The only way would make you a new clan, using your father's resources under a different name."

When the Hokage had said the words 'Father's,' Naruto had honed in on it to ask, "So am I mature enough to know who my father was?"

"I believe you are, in fact, I was going to tell you yesterday, like the house you were moving to belonged to your father." The Hokage pulled out a letter addressed to her.

Naruto opened the letter, and she began to read it to herself.

"My sweet little Naru-chan,

"If you are reading this, then you are considered old enough by your mother. If your mother isn't there, then the Hokage thinks it's best to give your inheritance and this letter.

"First of all, I want to say I am sorry I made you a Jinchūrikin to the Kyūbi, but I had no other choice. The Fox could have destroyed us all if I don't stop it, and I couldn't ask a parent to do what I couldn't do. I just hope Sarutobi or my successor is able to protect you with Kushina-chan, your mom. Especially as I never applied Clan Status for added protection, assuming that would even help.

"Now, I hope the villagers are treating you well, but I know some will not. I can only hope that most will honor my wish to see you as a hero. If not, then I damned them and myself to hell and hope you find happiness in whatever you pursue. I wish you a long life my sweet Naru-chan, and I hope that you find friends that will be with you for life. And never forget that I always love you and please take care, my sweet little girl.

"From your loving father, Minato Namikaze, the Fourth Hokage

"P.S. You better not being seeing any boys until you are at least sixteen."

Naruto smiled before she looked up at the old man to ask, "Is there anyway just to take my father's name and just call it a clan?"

"I am sorry Naruto, but that is not possible," the Hokage sighed. "If you take up your father's name, then you make yourself a commoner. That makes it easier for others to lay claim to you for their family or clan. I am sorry, but you need a new family name to be given clan status. I can still give your father things to you by saying it was given to you by your father's will, you just can't take the name with it."
Naruto was bewildered, "So I can't take my father's name as his name is that of a commoner, but I can create an entirely new name, and that can be made into a clan name. How exactly does that make sense?"

"Its politics, it's not supposed to make any sense," the Hokage explained.

'*He speaks the truth Naru-chan, no matter what era you are in, politics never make sense,' Nine of Nine explained mentality.

"Okay, how about Ryū?" Naruto asked.

"Dragon?" the Hokage asked. "Why would you name your family a word that means Dragon?"

"Well, Dragons are supposed to be able to master a single if not multiple elements and protect what they consider precious. I don't see why not," Naruto explained as if it was simple.

Hokage chuckled before stating, "Well, Ryū it is."

While the Hokage chuckled, Naruto remembered another part of the letter, "Hokage-Jiji, what about my mother, Kushina? What happens to her?"

The Hokage lost his chuckle as he looked down sadly, "I'm afraid things are not going well for your mom. You see, she is very much alive and before you become upset, let me explained why she is not there for you," the Hokage quickly explained to cool Naruto's righteous anger that would have formed. "You see your mother belongs to the Uzumaki Clan, a clan that your mother went out of her way to say she was never from.

"The Uzumaki is a royal clan that originally held the Elemental Star until they breed it to extinction. However, even without the bloodline, they are the wealthiest family in the known world and very influential with several bloodlines in their family tree. At one time, they were clan dedicated to peace but change under the leadership of Yokoshima after her husband died. Now they've become a hated clan as they used their influence for their own gain or amusement. The Bloodline Civil War in Water Country being a prime example, as they use their power to make the war dragged on by making sure neither side gained too much power," the Hokage explained. Naruto was appalled at what the books called a war of genocide by the Mist Forces with only the Bloodline Clans and the Mist Rebels fighting against them.

"Your mother was the best of the Uzumaki Clan and was the clan's heiress despite being considered too soft for showing mercy to enemies that are no longer a threat. Though on a lighter note, she is also known to have a fiery temper and stubborn attitude. I can see you have inherited the stubborn attitude." the Hokage chuckled before continuing. "When she met your father and decided to do what others in the past have done, she ran away and married into the other's family.

"Unfortunately, they wouldn't let your mother go unlike the others for she is the granddaughter of Yokoshima," Sarutobi admitted to a shock Naruto. "The Uzumaki tried for years to grab Kushina, and they succeeded the day Kyūbi… um I mean Nine of Nine attacked. The Uzumaki came forward with an ultimatum to your mother while she lay exhausted in the hospital. She could disown you and come with them, or you both would die. To prove their point, they brought her a child from the Aburame Clan, a clan known to bond with deadly insects and having the best security in the whole village, to kill in front of her. Needless to say, she agreed, and we had to review security."

It was deathly quiet when Naruto asked, "And now?"

The Hokage sighed before continuing, "Now she is an informant, giving us information whenever
she can with whatever they have trusted her with. Generally, it is the only information that most of the Clan already knows. She would try to get more, but she has been protecting her second daughter, your younger half-sister, Naruko."

"I have a half-sister with an actual girl's name?" Naruto asked with a small twitch.

"Well, that was what Minato wanted to name you Naruko after they discovered you were a girl instead of the boy they expected. However, Kushina was too stubborn to change the name that they had chosen for you the moment you were born. So Minato rolled with it. On the bright side, you are named after the main character of what they considered the greatest book of all time," the Hokage chuckled before he got serious again. "As for how your sister came to be, Kushina doesn't remember how it happened and I won't go into any more detail."

Nine of Nine had explained it to Naruto in her mind, 'In other words, she was given something of what is called a date rape drug, and she was made submissive towards acts no child should ever hear. This is specifically why you should never accept anything from strangers or people that you do not trust. Especially, if they try to give you free candy or food, or words they say it's true without proof.' Naruto nodded to herself in understanding and grateful. She also began to notice that Nine of Nine was acting like her mother, and oddly enough, those thoughts gave her a bit of warmth.

"From what Kushina explained, it was apparent her child belonged to some clan chief in the jungle wastelands down south," Sarutobi explained. "Later the clan chief, his advisors and most of the village's leadership mysteriously died, and the Uzumaki claimed their lands. That was one of many events that make the Uzumaki famous and why they are known as bastards."

The room was silent for a moment before Naruto blurted out, "Where do I sign to make sure that the Uzumaki can't claim me."

"Just sign here, and once I find a witness willing to sing along with your former guardian Lily, it will be done," Hokage explained.

"You don't have to look far, Hokage-Sama," a stranded voice carried behind them. The two turned to see it was Hiashi speaking while Hinata timidly stood beside him along with an elderly woman. "I hope you don't mind, but I would like to sign as a witness as a thank you to Miss Naruto for helping my daughter escape."

"It was just as much that she was helping me escape as me helping us escape," Naruto smiled to a blushing Hinata who was happy to receive the praise. "Don't get me wrong, I wouldn't mind if you help me out as well," Naruto quickly added before she said hello to her caretaker, "Hey Lily-Obaasan. How are you doing?"

"I'm fine, just watching you give me a heart attack when the Hokage said you never showed up at home," Lily said with a smiled as Naruto was all right.

"Sorry about that, but I didn't see the Cloud-nin coming, honest," Naruto joked before switching gears. "Speaking of Cloud-nins, what happens to them?"

"Both the dead and survivors were turned over to the Daimyo of Lightning Country," the Hokage explained. "He was not too happy that the Raikage went against his wishes and attacked a caravan from his Country. He especially didn't like how this made him looked like an evil man. I believe he killed the Raikage using his most trusted Clan, the Bestia, while he appointed Elite Jōnin Œ as the new Raikage. Lightning was all too willing to pay compensation to prove he was serious about peace. So it was a good day for the Fire Country as are skirmish war is finally over."
It was quite as Naruto signed some papers to create the Ryū Clan under the Hokage's protection, with Lily, Sarutobi, and Hiashi signing them to be official. Once the papers were signed, the Hokage asked the girls to leave while he and Hiashi had a talk. Lily promised to watch over the two while the two men talked.

As soon as the girls were out the door, Sarutobi looked at Hiashi and asked, "Why did you help Naru-chan?"

"I told you, I love my daughter and would do anything for her," Hiashi told Sarutobi. "I may not be able to show it, but I do care, but Hana was the only one that could show her any affection."

There was a brief moment of silence before Hiashi asked, "Who do you plan to watch over Naruto Ryū while she is training to be a ninja."

"I plan to have two of my ANBU, Inu, and Tenzō, train her in elemental manipulation and Jutsus," Sarutobi explained. "They already have experience teaching her, and I can easily assign them to train her and have someone else deal with their training. I also plan to add two kunoichis to the group. One is a Special Jōnin, borderline Jōnin who is a master of martial arts, torture, assassination, and seduction. The other is a newly minted Jōnin who is a master in genjutsu, chakra control, and seduction as well."

"Why would you pick kunoichis that specialized in seduction?" Hiashi asked. That kind of career choice, while rewarding, is considered the most demeaning to kunoichis that serve the Leaf.

Sarutobi nodded in response, "While it is true they were trained in subduction, especially since both had served on the seduction corps, it is not their main specialty or primary mission. In fact, they are two of my most talented ninjas, and more importantly the only ones available of my elite kunoichi. It will bring a well-rounded team that will train Naruto, along with anyone else that joins Naruto as I going spin it as group training section. She won't accept private tutoring nor would Council approve of it with so many ninjas out of the way I need to protect her until she is old enough. This way, I can also easily suggest to the Council that it can be an after-school function to help those who need help, or just want extra training before they become Genin."

Hiashi nodded at the proposal, "In that case, I want Hinata to train with Miss Naruto." The Hokage raised an eyebrow to ask Hiashi to elaborate. "Hinata made more progress in a day with Naruto then years training in the Hyūga's compound under traditional methods. The fact she won't receive any more training from the Clan when her sister Hanabi turns three will be enough of an excuse to have the two train together."

Hokage nodded in agreement and let Hiashi go before calling one of his ANBU, "Cat!"

A purple haired woman with a Cat mask appeared and bowed at the Hokage. "Get me Elite Jōnin Kakashi Hatake, aka Inu, Jōnin Yamato, aka Tenzō, Jōnin Kurenai Yūhi, and Special Jōnin Anko Mitarashi. Tell them I have a special project for them that are very important to the village. I also want you to appoint two new ANBU to train the recruits. Now go."

"Yes sir, right away sir," Cat bowed before disappearing in a mirage, leaving the Hokage time to fill out the paperwork needed to get this project going before selling the idea to the Council. Never knowing his actions would set things in motion.

Scene III

In a distant land, a tanned five-year-old girl with long, light red hair danced around her speared opponent. Her green eyes flashed no emotion as she circled around her opponent in an arena. She
paid no heed to the silent spectators, as only one of the spectators was concerned about her, her mother. Her mother, a beautiful young woman whose red hair resembled that of a ripe tomato while her dark blue eyes were shadowed by kindness and sorrow. She could not look at her mother's eyes as her darker skinned, ten-year-old combatant was fighting for his life, a life that she would soon take.

As soon as the boy jabbed with a spear, the girl struck by first batting away the spear before bringing the sword down to the boy's knees. The boy screamed as he fell to the ground, but he soon stopped as the girl stabbed the boy from behind into the boy's back and through his chest. She quickly pulled out her blade, and the boy's body bleeds out on the ground. A pool of blood slowly formed from the corpse she had created, and as she bowed to the boy that would so be thrown out like trash.

The girl showed nothing as she sheathed her sword. Silently giving a mental bound of sorry to the dead boy as she received a single clap from a woman that looked eerily like her mother. Except for a few strains of grey in hair and a few wrinkles that made her look like she was in her late forties. Instead of her actual age, which was around her eighties.

The girl felt her skin crawled as the woman said in a happy, yet calm voice, "Well done, my granddaughter. Don't you agree, Kushina? She was almost as skilled as you were at that age."

"Yes, mother," the girl's mother reluctantly agreed before turning to her daughter. "Come Naruko."

Naruko nodded quietly as she left the stage to be with her mother, Kushina, while the clan's servants removed the body. Naruko was given small comfort by her mother as an elder got her grandmother's attention. "Lady Yokoshima, while this grand showing for a girl so young, you did say you have important news."

"You are quite right. You there, give us your report," Yokoshima ordered a redhead Uzumaki ninja to report.

"We received information from Konoha that the half-breed from Konoha had something extraordinary happen," the ninja reported. "The Elemental Star is reborn in one Naruto, formerly Uzumaki. And with her bloodline, Konoha had decided she be given a new clan called the Ryū Clan."

There was quite a commotion when they heard the news that their long-lost bloodline was reborn in the form of the banished mutt of the family. "How is that possible?" an elder asked.

"From what we know, the bloodline was stabilized by her father's genetics while the Kyūbi's chakra reactivated the bloodline," the ninja answered.

"Which means any chance of our clan having the Elemental Star again will be zilch without little Naru," Yokoshima smirked. "Well Kushina, I guess we were too quick to make you disown your daughter. Too bad she will hate you for disowning her, but I bet you're proud of her being the first Uzumaki in centuries to have the bloodline."

"I am very proud," Kushina had stated while she silently smiled. Kushina hoped Yokoshima never finds out that Konoha knows she is the Leaf's informant or she would be used as bait for Naruto before she is killed, if not torture for a lifetime.

"I bet you are and will be even prouder once you hear this," Yokoshima added while telling her ninja to continue. "Naruto also seems to have been in contact with Kyūbi, who apparently is named Colonel Nine of Nine. A synthetic creature made several centuries ago. The creature had downloaded information into Naruto's brain that includes basics of chakra and technology that had
long forgotten. Technology that could change the balance of power in the Elemental Countries, perhaps even the world." There was now loud mumbling and demands to call her back to the clan.

"We can't call her back. We had disowned her, and they're not going to give her up," Yokoshima stated. "However, we can still retrieve her outside the village, or if need be inside once a certain snake attacks." Many nodded in agreement while Yokoshima turned to Kushina, "And you will help us retrieve her or face some dire consequences."

Kushina almost growled as she held her youngest daughters hand for comfort, "Yes mother."

"Good girl and don't think for a second of trying to delay the recovery or fail our purpose. If you fail beyond reason, then I would regretfully have to kill your daughter. Please don't make this old woman kill her second grandchild," Yokoshima stated while holding up her left hand that had the seal array on it as a reminder that all she needed was chakra to kill the two. Yokoshima then dismissed Kushina and Naruko, with a smile on her face. Kushina glared while Naruko tugged on her to leave. The two moved silently away from the elders.

When the two were gone, an elder turned to Yokoshima to state, "She is becoming more and more stubborn and bold, Lady Yokoshima. It may be a good idea to kill them both now before they could cause trouble."

Yokoshima disagreed with the elder, "She is my late husband's daughter even after his terrible 'accident.' However, despite her nature, she is too valuable as a ninja. She always succeeded in numerous critical missions, and she was instrumental in pushing back the natives in the Southern Jungle Wastelands. Not to mention her daughter is too skilled to ignore. Who will also be loyal once we break her of her mother's kindness, which will be soon if the match was is any indication. Besides, we have only been giving her basic information, and we will continue to limit her knowledge as we complete several of our top secret projects."

Yokoshima then held up her hand to indicate that the discussion was over, as her face took on a predatory smile, "Also, if Kushina even thinks of betraying me, then both she and her daughter's lives are forfeited thanks to the death seals drawn on them. It will take Jiraiya years to disarm them without killing them, and that's assuming the elected Counselors and Representatives of Fire Country's Assembly or the Hokage will order Jiraiya to do since they probably believe she is a traitor. So don't worry about Kushina, I have her on a tight leash."

Yokoshima then moved to the council to give her speech, "Retrieving little Naru has come from a laughable proposition to a position of prime importance. We need not only her bloodline that is ours by right but the knowledge from the Kyūbi that was lost to the whole world. The knowledge that little Naru will soon acquire as the Kyūbi helps her. We must get her at whatever the cost, and I have a plan on how to do it. A plan that will not only restore the Elemental Star to our clan but also give us tools long lost that will place the Uzumaki Clan where they rightfully belong as the Supreme Lords and Ladies of the Elemental Nation among the rest of the world! We will succeed for WE ARE THE TRUE UZUMAKI!"

And like many other tyrants throughout history, she was met with thunderous applause.

Chapter End Notes

Hope you enjoy the second chapter, and hopefully, I will have the third out soon. Also, review and tell me what you think of the Uzumaki.
A) I like to thank Leaf Ranger in convincing me in changing Naruto’s sister name to Naruko.
B) To all the reviewers that think the Republic Alliance is based on Star Wars Galactic Republic, it is not. If anything, it is more based on the UN and possibly Star Trek’s United Federation of Planets, when it was finally represented all the countries, and all the many republics put together. The Republic Alliance was formed during WWIII, mainly to help coordinated all the different militaries working together to face the People Republic of China and her allies. After the war ended, the global economy nearly collapses, and several governments destabilized. More power was given to the Alliance to police outside while diplomats, scientists, and engineers worked out trade agreements to stabilize the economy. Eventually, it was formed into an actual government with a head of state and representatives for every region. I may go into more detail later.
As for the name, no one had a problem in the first story when I called it the Republic Alliance. However, if anyone can think of a better name that is not the UN, as China is part of the UN, I am willing to replace the name. Especially for those who think it too similar to Star Wars, which is based on the Roman Republic a
Scene I

It has been a hectic time for Naruto and Hinata as the days continued to fly by in the last four months. During that time, Hinata met Naruto's friend Tenten, an older athletic girl in a pink battle dress. Stronger than average, with her brown hair bound into two buns to resembled panda ears that no one dared to tease her for as she had a vicious streak under that innocent face. Despite such a streak, Hinata found Tenten friendly enough, as she was loaded with information, especially about ninjas and the Ninja Academy during evening hours. In the morning, she went to school as the Ninja Academy only gave breaks on holidays or for two weeks at the beginning of each season.

Tenten had found school boring. The Ninja Academy focused almost entirely on history and politics for the first two years to explain the current political atmosphere in the Elemental Counties, starting with the Great Five Countries: Fire, Lightning, Water, Wind and Earth Countries, spread around the old shaped continent spread coast to coast. They also did a brief workout before the boys, while girls were taught infiltration and blending in techniques. She particularly hated that part of the female teacher insisted on tea parties, hairdressing and flower arranging during those classes. To tomboys like Tenten and Naruto, they would rather spend the whole day training then going to tea parties for a minute.

Back at the training field, they had four teachers giving them lessons. The first was the silver-haired Kakashi Hatake, who looked bored with only his facemask on. Beside him stood Yamato, aka Tenzō, a man with dark brown hair and soulless black eyes that framed his terrifying face. Between Kakashi and Tenzō were two women. One was Kurenai Yūhi, a soft, angelic woman with caramel skin and a distinctly curvy body covered by bandages. She had flaming red eyes and fluffy black hair that added to her exotic image as a genjutsu mistress. The Second one was Anko Mitarashi, a purple-headed minx with grey eyes that gleamed with mischief and promised pain. Her voluptuous body covered by a mesh suit that went from her neck to her thighs and topped only by a wimpy skirt and brown trench coat filled with enough sharp pointy things to kill an army. Naruto remembered their first meeting.

Flashback Four Months Ago

It was three days since the Lightning incident, and the group was meeting in a new training field adjacent to a 15m (47.2ft) high waterfall that dropped into a river. The Fourth Hokage had commissioned the area before he died. Therefore, the girls were the first to train on the new training
"Hello my sweet little girls and welcome to our first day of class," Kakashi introduced himself. While observing the three girls that stood before him. Waiting in anticipation to be trained in what is probably their only career choice as their whole family were ninjas, or had no other future as an orphan without an adopted.

"Since this program was designed to train you as shinobi or kunoichi. We will train you in several aspects of ninja training, including chakra control slash stamina, jutsus up to C-rank and a few other tricks for an added punch," Kakashi explained. "I am Kakashi Hatake, and I am a jack of all trades and a master in elemental jutsus."

"I am Yamato, and I specialize in bloodlines, especially Mokuton, my bloodline despite not being a member of the Senju Clan as most that use Mokuton are. Don't ask me why, for it will take too long to explain," Yamato added.

"Hello, I am Kurenai Yūhi," the woman purred, in a soft, gentle voice. "I will be training you in genjutsu and chakra control."

"I guess that leaves me," Anko chuckled maniacally. "I am Anko Mitarashi, and I will be training you in martial arts and stamina. I would have also been training you in seduction, since Kurenai is too much of a prude to let me, despite being last night's partner."

"Anko!" Kurenai yelled.

"What? It's nothing to be ashamed of, and I bet Asuma would be interested in the fact you play both sides due to our train-"

"Anko, I am warning you," Kurenai growled.

"Okay, okay, I'll back off," Anko laughed as Kurenai smiled at her teasing friend. All the while, Naruto looked strangely at them, Tenten was cackling, and Hinata was blushing like crazy. Anko developed a predatory grin, "Ooh, now that I have your attention. Let's see how in shape you are with a little game. It called: run or become a pincushion."

The girls looked in horror as Kakashi pulled out a book and chuckled while Yamato stoically gazed on. Kurenai was the only one concerned about their safety, but let Anko train them if she does not harm the girls. The girls spent the day running and dodging Anko's throw, with only an occasional break when Kurenai gave them training in chakra control. Naruto and Tenten had just finished the early stages and were able to keep chakra floating over their foreheads while Hinata trained in the more advanced chakra control like walking on water. Her bloodline, the Byakugan, provided her superior chakra control over the other girls.

End Flashback

After a week of training, Naruto, Hinata, Tenten, and Nine of Nine in Naruto's mind agreed that when it comes to their teachers. Anko was crazy and physical, Kurenai was kind and caring, Tenzō was scary yet impassive, and Kakashi was sadistic and lazy. Overall, a fascinating and potentially nasty combination of teachers that could drive you insane makes you into a great ninja or both. For the first two months, the girls trained hard in chakra control and exercising in Anko's style.

Naruto and Tenten finished training with leaves, surface walking and then tackled water walking. Hinata was demonstrably more advanced as she did kunai balance excise, using chakra to balance the point of a kunai on her palm while doing other lower level chakra controls at the same time. The
only exercises none of them had done were quicksand/whirlpool walking, a skill only High Chūnin or Jōnin train in. They also trained physically in Anko style that increased their stamina, and in turn increased their chakra stores. Now the girls were low Chūnin level in control and standards with a few exceptions. Hinata had reached Jōnin level control due to her bloodline, and Naruto's chakra level was near high Jōnin, influenced by Nine of Nine who supplied her with chakra.

Once Hinata completed her chakra control training two-weeks early, began training in elemental manipulation. She found out she was attuned to water, which was odd as the Hyūgas standard element was earth. Her affinity for water explained why she was inept with her family style as it centered on a firm power stance over a flexible one. While Hinata trained at level one in the chakra manipulation of water, Anko helped Hinata create a new flexible version of the gentle fist.

While Hinata trained in her new style and element, Naruto and Tenten moved on to begin training in their own elements. Naruto started with wind element, followed by water. She wanted to increase her weakest areas, her speed and flexibility, first opposed to her above average intelligence and stamina. She completed her training in the earth element to be physically tougher. However, Naruto decided that she wanted to become faster and more flexible first to avoid projectiles altogether rather than being able to withstand more damage. Tenten also got her choice when they made a surprising discovery.

Flashback

"Alright Tenten, add some chakra, and we can determine what is your strongest element before we start training in your elemental manipulation," Kakashi told Tenten, who nodded half heartily.

"Alright, I will give it a try. Though I don't see much point in it as I want to be a weapon mistress," Tenten mumbled as the teachers and fellow students shook their heads.

"You and pointy objects," Naruto dejected. "You fell in love with them after that old ninja showed us his nunchakus and sword during one of their recruitment drives."

"I know. It was so cool when he cut up that tree into firewood with a few swipes," Tenten grinned with stars in her eyes.

Naruto shook her head as she stated, "Come on Tenten just see what element you are. Maybe you will get lucky, and it would be compatible with your dream as a weapon mistress."

Tenten snapped out of her daze as she channeled chakra through the piece of paper. What had happened next had been unexpected. Tenten's paper floated down out of her grasp in two pieces. On the right side, it had caught on fire while the left became soggy as the middle disappeared into a puff of vapor.

Tenzō examined the paper and blurted out, "Well, it seems we have another elemental bloodline."

"I say," Kakashi commented. "I thought the Vepa (Vapor) bloodline was wiped out at the beginning of the Bloodline Civil War in Water Country."

"Apparently a few survived," Yamato commented.

"What are you talking about?" Tenten asked out curiosity.

Kakashi ignored the question as he turned to ask Tenten, "According to Matron Lily's record, you were one-year-old when you were brought to the orphanage. Your parents were killed in the fields of Fire Country, along with multiple refugees from Water Country. Is that true?"
Tenten was even more confused, "Yes, but why would that matter?"

"It matters Tenten due to the fact the Vepa bloodline belongs to only one clan, the Faiadoku (fire poison) Clan. They are a weapon user clan that can apply their bloodline to increase the toxic effects of their weapon's poison or be used as deadly jutsus for their medium to long range attacks," Yamato explained.

"They were also a very loyal assassination clan in Water Country. In fact, they were the first clan to fight against the Kaguya when they rebelled and started to attack Kiri, Mist Forces' hidden village," Kakashi explained after Yamato. "Unfortunately, that did not save them from the Bloodline Civil War that followed as they were the first clan to fall due to, ironically assassination from their fellow ninjas. It appears that a few survived and ran to refugee camps set up near Konoha to process them into Fire Country. You may soon find yourself under Clan protection."

Tenten could not believe it, she was part of a clan she did not even know about. A clan that had been wiped out in the bloodiest Civil War in known history and a war that is still being fought in Water Country. Tenten could not decide if it was funny, sad or in-between.

Naruto, however, thought it explained a lot, "Well, it explains your preference for sharp pointy things."

Tenten looked at Naruto for a second before laughing out loud, "Yes, I guess it does."

"Um sorry, but isn't the B-Bloodline C-Civil War still going on?" Hinata asked. Her stuttering had considerably faded thanks to Naruto's friendship, Anko's training, and Kurenai's counseling along with constant praises from her teachers and peers.

"Yes, I am afraid it is," Kurenai stated sadly.

"The war was originally supposed to be over years ago, but some group backed the Mist Forces financially. Who is using the money to hire mercenaries to keep everything even in power and numbers," Anko expertly explained while keeping that fact she had ties to the Leaf's Torture and Interrogation (TI) Intelligence Branch to herself. "We have some idea who, but we have no real proof, and we can't really do anything about it for Water Country isn't an ally."

Naruto silently stewed as the 'backers' were the Uzumaki, but she snapped out her sickening feeling away to help Hinata cheer up her friends. Once Tenten sobered up, Jōnin decided to switch gears when Kurenai asked, "So Tenten since you have two elements, you can pick either Fire or Water in your elemental training..."

End Flashback

Tenten had decided to train in fire manipulation first, and she would finish her first level within a week. After she was able to burn the leaf instantly, she moved on to level two. The task was to throw a flaming kunai at a tree while maintaining enough focus to keep her hand from being burned or from preventing the tree from catching fire. Tenten seemed to be halfway done with level two, but she had never gone much furthered due to school. She only had six hours to train in elemental manipulation, physical workout, and maintaining chakra control.

Naruto, however, could use ten hours in elemental manipulation, and spent another six to eight hours for chakra control and exercised to remain in good shape. It was amazing what sixteen to eighteen hours a day devoted to training could accomplish when making startling progress. It also helped that she began to see the white chakra for her wind element as her training progressed. It was similar to how the Hyūga saw chakra and used it to improve their control. All these factors lead to Naruto
completing level-two wind manipulation within three weeks as her kunai made a clean cut through a
tree. Now, she was working on level three of cutting a waterfall into two streams at a pace that was
amazing.

In fact, she was going so fast that Hinata felt she was making no progress compared to Naruto and
Tenten. It took Hinata a month to complete level one of training. When she finally arrived to level
two, she did not want to continue to believe that she was a burden to the group, despite reassurance
that she was making good progress. Her ‘family’ had perpetrated a real number on her psyche.

Flashback

Hinata was having a nervous breakdown while Kurenai and Anko explained the next step of
elemental manipulation to her. Naruto stood nearby listening in, as she would eventually train in
water manipulation. Hinata's next step was to find a dead piece of bark and revive it by infusing it
with water pulled from the moist air through her kunai. However, Hinata was not so sure she could
do it.

"Maybe I s-should go," Hinata mumbled. "I d-don't think I h-have what it t-takes to continue in
training as I'm a b-burden."

"Who said you're a burden?" Naruto yelled as she could not understand anyone calling her friend a
burden.

"M-my c-clan always t-told me I-I was a b-burden whenever I was s-slow in learning what was r-
required," Hinata stammered.

"Oh honey," Kurenai had said softly, "you are not a burden."

"But it took me m-months just to get through l-level one, and K-Kakashi said t-they get longer in
time in t-training e-elemental m-manipulation," Hinata stammered.

"Hinata you can't compare yourself to the other girls as their bloodlines deal with elements. So they
are bound to get it quicker, just as you have better chakra control compared to others because of your
bloodlines," Kurenai explained.

"Yeah, you are like a super ninja when it comes to chakra control. I am not sure I will ever catch-up
with you in that area," Naruto pointed out, much to Hinata's happy embarrassment.

"Brat has a point," Anko stated. "Besides, you also don't count the amount of time you train in
manipulation over the fact we have you are not focusing on just one area but multiple ones that
improve your skills across the board. So don't worry about it."

Hinata nodded her head no, "I sup-suppose you're right."

"That's the spirit brat. Just remember that just because you're not in top ten doesn't make you a
burden," Anko pointed out. "Only those who degrade others are burdens, so ignore them and just
 strut through and no one can mess with you."

Hinata smiled, which everyone smiled in silence as the waterfall roared in the background.

End Flashback

Naruto reflected fondly on her memories as she put the final touches that would complete her training
of wind manipulation. Watching her was Tenzō, who was standing beside Kakashi as he enjoyed his
book. He had used the excuse of being an assistant to read lazily, nearby. On the other side of the
clearing, Kurenai was watching over Tenten while Anko trained Hinata hard. However, they all stopped as Naruto's wind manipulation held back the waterfall and nearly split its flow into two. Her white triangle became full and apparent when she finally split the waterfall in two. Naruto watched in admiration when she noticed a tunnel 6m (19.69ft) above her head, just before the water receded. It was a man-made tunnel. Naruto just stood there, looking up at the waterfall receded and hid the unnatural tunnel. As Naruto stared, Tenzō went up to congratulate Naruto.

"Good job Naru, excellent job," Tenzō congratulated the wet girl, but she had other things on her mind.

"Tenzō-sensei, can you make a bridge and stairs up around six meters?" Naruto asked.

"I can? Why?" Tenzō asked out of curiosity.

"I saw something that looks like manmade tunnel above me where I cut the waterfall," Naruto pointed up to the waterfall. "I want to see what it is?"

"A manmade structure, are you sure?" Kakashi asked as he put his book up.

Naruto nodded her head in response, and Tenzō used 'Wood Style: Wood Structure Jutsu,' to create a long wooden bridge and stairs that extended up the water. The action had gotten the attention of the others, and they rushed over to see what Tenzō was doing. "What's going on Tenzō?" Anko asked first.

"Naruto found a large tunnel while she was practicing wind manipulation. She wanted to see what it is," Tenzō had explained while Naruto walked across the bridge with her hand across the river.

Naruto continued to walk on the bridge until she felt the open space of the tunnel. She took a step up and walked into the tunnel. Once inside, Naruto noticed it was too dark to see so she stuck her head out to ask for a flashlight. Kakashi threw her one and pulled a few more out of his seemingly bottomless pouch.

Kakashi reasoning was, "My former sensei always felt you need to be ready for everything. Plus, having everything means I never forget anything, and I am always ready for missions."

Naruto then walked through the tunnel with her flashlight while Nine of Nine commented, 'This looks too artificial and too old to be made recently. This must be a hideout created during the Mechanize War. Refugees and soldiers often made them with plasma laser point drills to hide from the machines, even if they lived deep in Republic Alliance territory in what was one the United States of America. The waterfall must have eroded any carved stairs or rocks that allowed them to get here.'

'You think we will find anything?' Naruto asked mentally.

'I doubt it. The EMP bomb fried anything that ran on or produced electricity, which was practically every tool we used then. That is why humanity had to start over again. However, it wouldn't hurt to look around,' Nine of Nine had commented.

Naruto nodded as she heard the others arriving from behind. She looked briefly to see that Tenten and Hinata first followed her teachers. As they continued down, they arrived at a door, not made of limestone, but completely made of a material that appeared to be an ablative, silicon metal.

"Well brat, I have to say it is weird to see a door made out of… whatever this is," Anko commented.

'Nine, what is this?' Naruto asked mentality.
'I don't know? But I do know the mineral is highly resisted to energy, and if combined with a powerful EMP shield, whatever inside could possibly survive the EMP bomb.' Colonel Nine of Nine answered Naruto. 'I think this is beyond coincidence.'

Naruto had used her flashlight to look around the door to find a keypad with digits of three by three numbered one through nine. Underneath it was letters, not elemental but in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. "Do you have any idea what it says?" Tenten asked the group.

"I don't know, they looked similar to Elemental and the old tongue Temperamental, but it's too different for me to read it," Kakashi commented.

"Nine says it is in several languages," Naruto told the group.

"Nine?" Yamato asked.

"You know, what I am talking about. The nine tails we are all familiar with," Naruto explained, as Yamato often had to be reminded the Kyūbi's real name, unlike her friends whom she told them everything related to Nine.

"Well brat, what does it say?" Anko asked impatiently.

"To gain access to our knowledge, press each number to unlock the door by order of magnitude where the middle number one is ideal change. For it is the one not backward from where one is still before nine. Get it right, and the door will open," Naruto read one of the lines.

"I-It's an r-riddle," Hinata stuttered.

"Does anyone know how to solve the riddle?" Kurenai asked.

'I do!' Colonel Nine of Nine explained. 'Father always liked riddles. Just press the numbers in the following order.'

Naruto went to press the number four first. Once they heard the locks tied to each key open, Naruto continued pushing them in order of three, two, one, five, nine, eight, seven, and finally six. The door unlocked and swung open revealing that the door was several meters thick with layers of insinuation inside. The room was completely sealed to outside air and held in a vacuum as air rushed into the dark room. Naruto scanned the room1 with her flashlight, along with Kakashi and Tenzō's, to see what was in the room. The room had many clear metal cases holding clothing and many different tools. The two teachers tried to insist that they walk in first but Naruto's curiosity compelled her to ignore her teachers.

She ran into the room until she felt her skin tingle and her flashlight shorted out. 'An EMP Shield!' Colonel Nine of Nine exclaimed mentally just before she heard a clicking sound of pressure gage below her.

She looked surprised when she heard a metallic voice spoke in several languages the group could partially understand as it stated, "Please stand still to be identified."

Naruto heard a clicking sound before two metallic arms appeared. Arms that had gun barrels coated with the same material as the door came down. Its laser sights were pointed at her as the machine added, "Failure to do so will mean your immediate execution."

Seeing that Naruto was in danger, the girls tried to run to their friend's aid. Kakashi stopped them from getting everyone killed in their desperation to save Naruto. As the girls were restrained, Anko, Kurenai, and Tenzō prepared to save Naruto with jutsus and speed in case the guns begin firing. The
group watched patiently as a flash of light appeared around Naruto. She was soon covered with straight lines of lights as if she was being scanned.

It stopped when the voice said, "DNA samples taken from subject skin flakes determines subject is six to seven-year-old, human female with genetic mutations. Suggest advance forms of the alpha's genes, as well as the ability to produce bioenergy known as chakra. Some of the chakras analyzed belongs to Project 2A database. Also, determined genetics are not manufactured or cloned. Following security precautions, we will now deactivate security systems and EMP shield while diverting power to lights, mainframes, and environmental systems."

"Well, I feel violated?" Naruto commented as lights activated around her revealing a world of wonder. A wonder she would not see as she was being hugged to death by her friends as they rushed to her. They were worried, especially Hinata.

While Naruto was being squeezed/hugged, Anko decided to teach her a lesson by smacking her in the back of the head. "You damn idiot!" Anko yelled. "I thought you were supposed to be smart. You don't run into a room when your teachers tell you to stay back."

"You gave us a heart attack Naruto," Tenzō said calmly before using his flashlight to enhance his scary face. "Don't do that again."

Naruto nervously nodded in fear, especially since her friends glared at her and stated that they agreed with Tenzō. While Naruto continued to get disproving looks, Kakashi decided to break it up, "Alright that is enough. I am sure it was an honest and common mistake. Why don't we see where we are?"

The group looked around to see cave actually had several floors, each wider than the next. It went down several stories connected by several stairs and four elevators. At the very bottom were a hundred of what proved to be mainframe computers and vents powering up slowly as the generators activated. The collective information held by all the mainframes would prove to be a few dozen petabytes. Information that could be accessed by consoles and computers found on each floor that also held artifacts from a time-period before the Elemental Countries. That included one of a kind books, papers, blueprints, artwork, clothing, and ancient tools. Each item was put onto selves or racks behind clear, vacuumed sealed containers that were completely insulated from the environment, but still accessible through environmental controls on the side. These items were organized by a period of time, type and hopefully known creator/author.

However, the top room was not just filled with artifacts. The cases held equipment that soldiers used in ancient times as well as what they wore before humanity lost everything during the mechanized war. As the group slowly explored the place and Tenten drooled at the melee of weapons. Some of the weapons she had seen on knights in the eastern region, or samurai hybrids of the two seen here in the west. It was a strange thing to consider that knights originated in the Europe/west while samurai originated in Asia/east.

However, that was in ancient times, as Colonel Nine of Nine explained through Naruto each of the firearms that were on the soldier's side in the last six to seven hundred years before the EMP bomb. The group was amazed at the power these weapons could give someone, though the older ninja doubts it would replace jutsus and chakra. As jutsus could be used to not only destroy things but also can be used for stuff like physical enhancements, healing, and illusions (Genjutsu). Kakashi and Anko did note that firearms would make excellent support or long-range assassin tool, but the armor was more interesting to the ninjas in the group because it could immediately benefit them. It was designed to stop most kinds of projectiles including knives while the elite’s armor had energy shields used to protect it against all projectiles and extreme environmental dangers like temperatures and
Tenten was about to asked more questions about the various weapons when they heard the metallic voice again speak in perfect Elemental, "Translation program has completed algorithms, entering language into storage for translation to user-friendly systems. Now activating program Dr. Star-Croft with translators."

'Father?' Nine of Nine said with reverence in Naruto's mind.

On the bottom floor of this structure, a circular platform was activated, as a man appeared to float up for everyone on the top floor to see. It was an elderly man with short grey hair that wore white glasses and had an open white coat. "I'll welcome you my fellow humans, and I hope that not so much time has passed that our computer will be able to provide you with a proper greeting," the elderly man said in the translated voice. "My name is Dr. Star-Croft, and I humbly say that in my time I was considered one the most brilliant scientists in the Republic Alliance and I had a hand in many projects including this secret facility."

The group was amazed while Nine of Nine cried inside Naruto's mind as the hologram continued, "The reason for this facility is the fact that we had such great potential, but we squandered our gifts. We squandered them due to our greed and arrogance. We tried to make our lives better through machines, and we created a race of machines that were meant to serve us. However, we did not consider the fact that we took a step too far and that it would come back to haunt us. We arrogantly thought we could destroy them any time we want while we were busy fighting each other. But we soon found that belief to be false as we were on the verge of extinction.

"We created many weapons and even creatures that were supposed to help us win the war, but even they were not enough. So finally, we devise a desperate plan: an EMP bomb powerful enough to take out every piece of technology throughout the system. A plan that gave the human race a chance to survive but that ended our world at the same time. However, I would be damned if we should lose everything that kept our modern civilization together. So I made this place, a museum of everything we could possibly save. So now, hopefully, you can use this to help you rebuild what we lost. My only I hope is that you are able to learn from our mistakes as I give you the tools to create the future."

The hologram dissipated and all the computers activated with their hologram screens and keyboards, all written in worded characters of Elemental. Naruto immediately went to them and began to pull information off, she looked at the design and technology briefly, as though being reminded about it from the information Colonel Nine of Nine stored in her mind. She also looked at the art, media and electronic book sections and was very surprised.

"This has everything, from art and entertainment to most advanced designs with hard copies a floor below us. This could revolution everything," Naruto stated while looking through the screen.

"How is this place getting all its power?" Tenten asked.

Naruto pulled up the facility designs and pointed out, "Apparently this place runs on thermal energy absorbed deep underground. That is logical since there are many hot springs around because of the dormant volcano located just a short distance from this place."

"We need to inform the Hokage of these events," the Kakashi told the group.

"Well it may be best if you go and report it," Anko pointed out. "It looks like the brats and our two fellows Jōnin are glued to the screens."
Kakashi looked to see Naruto looking through the designs, and Hinata wide-eye was over her shoulder. In the background, Tenten was admiring all the weapons while Tenzō supervised. Finally, Kurenai was looking at another console at all the different books she planned to read. So Kakashi agreed to leave to get the Hokage while Nine of Nine thought, 'Oh father, your legacy will soon be reborn through my daughter. I expect in around eight years, she will change the world.'

Scene II

In a vast room at the base of the tower that held the Hokage's main governmental advisors to the Hokage sits, the Council. The Hokage had explained the events on the training field for his new training program. The Council agreed the library/museum should be studied and implemented into their forces, but they could not decide on two things. One, should they just assign ANBU to guard the area and allow the students to continue train there and maybe benefit from the research first, or should they move the training field and put the place on lockdown. The second was to include Naruto in the project. The main argument against it was that while she would help the project with the knowledge downloaded into her brain, she was still a very young child. After a heated debate, they finally reached a conclusion.

"So it is decided," the Hokage spoke. "The training field will remain open, but the entrance to the library will be off-limits and guarded by ANBU. My men will move the waterfall away from the entrance for elemental training." The Hokage then pulled out his trusted pipe before moving on. "Also, Naruto will be allowed access and work with our research and development teams to hopefully shorten the time it will take to adapt the technology for our use, in exchange she can adapt some of the technology for her own use."

"Why should we allow the de… I mean brat information that will be classified to most people?" spoke a disgruntled civilian who lost land when Colonel Nine of Nine attacked.

"Troublesome," spoke the head of the Nara clan and the Jōnin squad, Shikaku Nara. A clan famous for its shadow control of opponents and lazy, yet genius attributes. Nara had dark hair tied in a spiky ponytail and a distinctive scar on the right side of the face that was partially covered by a small black beard. "If you hadn't read the report, the girl is our resident expert due to Colonel Nine of Nine, aka the Kyūbi. We need her to help figure out how to use this new technology in our lifetime. So it would be most beneficial to have her help the project. It is also too troublesome to allow politics and your disgruntle view of the girl interfere while working at the library."

The civilian grudgingly backed down, especially as Shikaku Nara teammates in the Ino-Cho-Shi sided with the Hokage, and they were sitting right by him. To the right was Inoichi, head of the Yamanaka Clan that uses jutsus to allow them to enter minds and control them. He was like his fellow clansmen, very feminine even in a trench coat, with long blond hair and baby blue eyes. To the left was Chōza, head of the Akimichi Clan, who could convert their body fat to enlarge specific body parts and in some cases become giants. They maintained their giant appearance through fat, along with the addition of wild, often long, red hair piled high on their head and wore red armor with the words food printed on it.

"Well then, now that we have that settled," spoke a purple haired woman named Amell, leader of the Roth Clan, aka, the sage knights due to their ability to use chakra from the air for various techniques. "I believe it's time we talked about outside affairs that deal with us shinobi." Amell smiled. Her brown eyes gleamed as she twirled around a stick, which could become the most deadly weapon when she channeled chakra through it to form an energy blade.

"I agree," the stoic white-eye man Hiashi, head of the politically powerful Hyūga clan concurred. The Hokage nodded as most of the civilians left the Council chamber since the discussion now
focused on shinobi matters. Only two remained, one was a brown-haired weapon forger/dealer, and the other was a pink-haired woman who sold all kinds of food and general goods. The two remain to see if they needed to start bringing or stop bringing in goods for a possible conflict, war or aid.

Once all the non-essentials civilians left, the Hokage barked out, "Ibiki, your report."

A man that had a face lined with distinctive scars stepped up. He straightened his black trench coat as he gave his report as the head of the Intelligence specializing in torture and intelligence. "We have been receiving reports that the Uzumaki Clan is spending huge amounts of money and manpower down South while spreading their funds in the Elemental Nations. In particular, they are supporting the Mist forces to help them in their war."

"Which in turn is helping our Hunter-nin Division as we set up traps outside Water Country to take down a lot of missing-nins. We are also getting quite the turnout from missing-nins bounties that are not our own," a brown-haired, wild dog looking woman name Tsume Inuzuka spoke. A woman that was not only head of a clan that used dogs as companions and partners for devastation techniques, but she was also the head of the Hunter-nin Division.

"Their spending has no logic as it seems only to delay change and may make Mist more aggressive against them once the rebels win," spoke the stoic Shibi head of the bug clan known as the Aburame. "Also, if they keep this up, they will soon go bankrupt," Shibi added, while he adjusted his black sunglasses and grey coat that hid everything but his black hair and pale cheekbones.

"Intelligence suggests they will need to stop their operation in two years either in the Elemental Nation or the Jungle Wastelands. Otherwise, the Clan will find itself in debt with one of the many nations that will either hurt them for past actions or force them to serve them," the purple-haired ANBU commander Yūgao, in her cat mask, explained.

"So all we have to do is wait, and the most influential and threatening clan will run themselves into the ground," Ibiki explained.

"It also means that the rebels will take longer to win and form a government we can align with. Possibly around eight years," spoke the spiritual leader of the Nature Clan, Wolf Dreamer. A man with short green hair and white eyes of wisdom as he sat Indian style on his desk as he channeled with his inner animal spirit famous for the Nature Clan.

"I still believe it was a bad idea not to send our forces to help the rebels Sarutobi," spoke the eerie voice of the war leader of the nature clan, Raven Hunter. A man that eyes and hair reflected the spirit and manner of a Raven completely. "We could end the war now, so we don't have to transfer as much of the money collected from bounties to help the rebels. Plus we could generate more support if we physically aid the rebels."

Sarutobi thought a moment before responding to the war leader, who was considered a war hero because he led the Leaf Forces against Nine of Nine while she was corrupted. "I may hate war, but this is one war I think we would be justified fighting. Unfortunately, the elected members of the Assembly for Fire Country do not agree with us. I was lucky enough to get them to agree to send aid to the rebels, and I don't want to push my luck. So we will just have to hope the war ends soon," the Hokage explained as Raven Hunter reluctantly agreed. "Now then, what more is on the agenda?"

The various minor clans like the Kurume and Pyro Clan, as well as divisions like medical, research and development, school and defense forces (militia), began to talk about the current atmosphere. Only two seats remained silent, beside the Elders who only are allowed to speak privately with the Hokage. One was the Senju Clan, a clan that no longer existed in Konoha after the last war. The other clan was represented by a stern man with black hair and black eyes that were as dark as his
soul. He was a man who wanted more power, the power to rule and more power for the clan. The power he could gain by controlling a particular blond girl through any means. A man that's name was on a plaque in front of him: Fugaku Uchiha, head of the Uchiha Clan, and head of the Police Force in Konoha. Too bad not everyone in his clan would agree.

**Scene III**

It was early in the morning as the three girls, and four Jōnin watched the leaf forces redirect the waterfall away from the tunnel to the library. At the entrance itself, they watched as the whole area was converted into a fortress for the ANBU to guard. As they watched them work, an ANBU with a Roster mask approached the group.

"Kakashi-San," the ANBU saluted to the Elite Jōnin. "We have a young girl that wishes to speak with you."

Stepping out from behind the ANBU was a young girl that was timid as she could be, and she flinched as they stared at her. Her long hair flowed in the wind as her dark coral eyes looked at the ground nervously. "Hello little one," Kurenai approached the girl. "What is your name?"

The girl whispered, "Tukiko Uchiha."

The group was surprised to see an Uchiha come willing to this training field. "You came to train here?" Kurenai asked.

"No, I came to warn one Naruto Ryū," Tukiko explained in a nervous tone.

"About what?" Naruto asked while blinking rapidly.

"Well, it's about…" Tukiko started as she explained her story.

**Flashback**

In the clan compound cut off from the world, Tukiko watched as her cousin trained, a cousin who had not as yet awakened his bloodline, the Sharingan. The Sharingan, when activated, allowed the user the ability to copy any jutsus and martial arts technique. Once a bloodline was activated, it was focused on chakra turning the clansmen eyes red with one to three commas depending on the level of mastery. Generally, clan children activated their bloodline when they reached the age of ten to sixteen, after facing danger or perceived danger. However, if they unlocked their bloodline before the age of ten, they were considered prodigies, unless they came from secondary stock. A position that Tukiko Uchiha was considered to be in.

Tukiko despised her cousin. He was considered her superior in the clan despite the fact she had activated her bloodline sooner than he had. In response, Tukiko began copying any technique she could to prove to her clan that she was strong. She has already copied a variety of clan martial arts techniques but had not risked copying a Jutsus, until her cousin start practicing 'Fire Style: Fire Ball Jutsu,' a C-rank jutsu that shot out a fireball from the mouth. A technique her cousin succeeded in mastering just now, and she had successfully copied it.

She was about to leave to try it out herself, when her cousin, the boy with his black hair combed to resemble a chicken butt was congratulated by his father, the Clan Head Fugaku Uchiha, "Most impressive Sasuke."

"Father," Sasuke bowed.

"Rise Sasuke, I have something important to discuss with you," Fugaku told his son before holding
out a picture. "Do you recognize the girl in this picture?"

The recent picture was of a young girl with blond hair streaked with red, and teal eyes each of which had a white triangle above a yin-yang pupil. "I think so, father. She was that orphan you visited once and tried to bring her into the clan since she could provide us with some sort of power, you didn't mention what type."

"It is good you remember for this girl as it is essential she comes to us now more than ever," Fugaku explained with a small smile. "Her name is Naruto Ryū, and she has a bloodline known as the Elemental Star that will make the Sharingan stronger. She also came across other things that will be important for the clan's power base."

"But father, didn't you say that women are weak, and their only purpose is to help keep the clan populated?" Sasuke asked blankly, not entirely sure what his father meant.

Tukiko was pissed when her cousin implied she was weak. Her anger got worst when his father nodded. "Very true son, which is why this girl needs to be taught her proper place under the Uchiha." Fugaku then smiled as he patted his son on the back, "Come along son, it is time I teach you about how and why you need to woo a woman to serve the clan."

As Fugaku led a questioning Sasuke away, Tukiko ran to talk to her aunt Mikoto, Sasuke's mother.

End Flashback

"And she told me to tell you about their plan, and she would stick by her husband to quietly gather any information for you avoid her fate," Tukiko explained to nodding and confused six-year-olds, while the adults narrowed their eyes.

"Thank you for the warning us Tukiko," Kakashi said without a care as he smiled at the girl. "We will be able to take it from here."

"Okay. Glad to be of help," Tukiko said with dejection as she moved to walk out the door until Anko stopped her.

"Say brat, since you gave us the warning, how about we give you a reward. A reward like, say some actual ninja training?" Anko asked the talented girl with a gleam in her eyes.

"Really, I can. I don't want to be any trouble?" Tukiko asked while almost shaking like a leaf, out of excitement and a bit of fear.

"I don't see any problems unless you guardian will mind?" Kurenai asked before Anko jumped the gun.

"I don't have any guardians unless you count Aunt Mikoto as my guardian since she watched over men when parents died outside the village," Tukiko remembered as the sorrow of her parents passing. It was that sorrow that had helped her activate her bloodline early. "And she won't mind, in fact, she would encourage me, as she often tells me stories about a time when it was different Uchiha became the way they are now as they attempted to be the opposite of everything the Senju were."

"Well, it seems as if it might be alright, right Kurenai-sensei, Tenzō-sensei?" Naruto asked while Tenten and Hinata sheepishly implored of the two.

The two Jōnin could not resist, and Anko gave a devilish smirk. Especially after she said, "Well, since she will just need to get you up to speed."
Anko began Tukiko's rigorous new training regimen that was harder than anything she had done before. It was difficult, but worth it in Tukiko's mind for it was the happiest day of her life. She finally had someone to train her. And more importantly, she finally had friends to call her own in the years to come.

Chapter End Notes

Done, hope you enjoy the rewrite and continue to do so, also don’t forget to review.
Scene I

It has been two years since the facility nicknamed 'The Great Library,' was found and The Research & Development Department for Leaf Forces began incorporating its secrets and technology to be used around Konoha starting with the rich, or it high-rank ninjas. The rest had to wait for their turn with the technology that changed the landscape of the world unless they were a girl named Naruto Ryū and were friends with the girl.

One such friend was Hinata Hyūga, who at this moment was currently in Naruto's house looking for her friend. She did not want Naruto to miss school again because she had been working all night and was determined to find her. Hinata has grown considerably in the last two years. Gone was the short hair that resembled a small bowl cut, and in its place was long midnight blue hair that grew to her shoulders. Her clothing undergoes a metamorphosis from simple black top to elegant, lavender long pants and long sleeve shirt.

However, it was her confidence that had changed the most. While she still spoke in a soft tone, she also spoke in a commanding manner gained by being her confidence, as she had become the leader that her father wanted. Changes she channeled into herself as Hinata knocked on her teacher's door. A teacher that had become one of Naruto's guards and had been given the task not only of teaching the girls but also protecting the newly establish Ryū Clan.

She did not have to wait long for a response when Kurenai yelled out, "Who's there!"

"It's me Hinata. Can I talk to you, Kurenai-sensei?" Hinata asked.

It took a bit of shuffling about in the room, as though someone was in there before Kurenai open the door wide enough for Hinata to come face to face with the exotic beauty of her teacher even with her long hair was a mess, and her usual clothes were replaced with a bed sheet.

"I am up honey, do you need something?" Kurenai asked pleasantly to the young Hyūga heiress.

"Do you know where Naruto is?" Hinata asked softly to a young woman that just woke up.

"Yes, I believe Tenzō is looking over her at the Library," Kurenai told Hinata. However, Hinata did not move and asked, "Is there anything else?"

"Yes," Hinata had mumbled, "Are you sleeping with someone?"

Kurenai eyes widen for a moment before she spoke to Hinata's level, "You know how babies are made and what is required." Hinata nodded as she had the 'talk' before by her mom about where babies came from when she found out she was pregnant with her sister, Hanabi, before her untimely
"Well, the potential of making, um… love is not just limited to making babies. It is sometimes used to find pleasure or comfort with another that need it just as much. Perhaps even express love to each other," Kurenai explained.

"Why?" Hinata asked.

"Well, it's something that you are too young to know much beyond the basics. I will tell you later when you are four to eight years older," Kurenai told Hinata, but she did not seem content. Kurenai quickly changed the subject, "Hey Hinata, don't you think you need to find Naruto?"

Hinata eyes widen as she rushed out of the house, forgetting her question in search of her friend. As Hinata rushed out, Kurenai released a sighed as she had dodged the sex-question for now as a partially dressed Anko appeared out of her hiding place.

"You know you can't keep Hinata ignorant about the sins of the flesh or your career choice forever as a seductress. I mean in nothing to be ashamed to admit you slept with other men and woman in the line of service and pleasure when you needed a bit of practice," Anko pointed out, much to Kurenai's cringe.

"Anko, she's too young to know… that," Kurenai stated as tried to defend herself. "Besides this was the last time between partners. I have taken enough high-rank missions and gained enough money for a better lifestyle away from that disgusting career. I will soon transfer out as a part-time member of the assassin corps and become a full-fledged Jōnin and teacher. My past lifestyle will soon be history."

"Kurenai, you were ten when you were taught how to kill and were given a brief description of what would be your future career as a ninja," Anko pointed out. "A career that helped you developed a fortune and got you the title of Genjutsu mistress as you created illusions that seduced or tortured men and woman for information before slitting their throats, or driving them mad. You also made your first kill with Genjutsu at the age of twelve on a supply protection mission and lost your virginity being trained in seduction that same year."

"That was during the Third Great Shinobi War!" Kurenai declared. "Where the average Genin age was dropped by two years, and they allowed the whole class to graduate to quickly booster our dwindling numbers. It was a war that had an average casualty rate of one out of three, with casualties becoming higher the longer the war went." Kurenai then sighed, "I want her to have the childhood that we didn't have Anko."

Anko nodded her head in understanding but still had cautionary words, "You can't keep cuddling her forever and pretending you had a different past. Not with her clan breathing down our necks for training their heiress in things outside of the clan, including a new, more flexible version of the Gentle Fist, the Gentle Blades. The Hyūgas do not like change and have killed people to keep their traditions and only tolerate change if it potentially gives them more power, which they are unsure about Hinata, yet. Not to mention those reports about the Uzumaki and Uchiha Clans becoming more aggressive as of late is a concern. Especially the Uchiha have been under a military buildup due to Fuguki's tantrum at not getting what he wanted with Naruto being the latest subject."

Kurenai grimaced as she remembered the reports; things were getting heated for Leaf forces. "Plus, two out of three of the girls had seen death and all three of them did not live the rose life we want to them to live. You cannot cuddle them from their own reality," Anko finalized her last point.

"Anko, don't you have a date today?" Kurenai asked.
Anko's eyes widened she quickly left to get dressed, "That's right. I have this cute guy in T&I that I plan to take out today. Thanks for reminding me." However, Anko could not help giving out a final jab, "Well, it's not my problem if you drag your feet. Just remember that there are foes out there that won't wait, especially if one of them is the most sought out girl in the Elemental Nations," Anko stated before leaving Kurenai in deep thought.

Scene II

On the cliff face, that one once had a waterfall, Hinata headed up a metal staircase that had been recently installed to allow visitors to reach the ancient library. At the top of the stairs, an ANBU stood in front of a large door sealed by the guard. Hinata showed her ID to the ANBU, who unlock the door, so she was allowed to enter to retrieve Naruto. She walked deep into the library as she watched the R&D relentlessly work on gathering or adding data to the Great Library. Some of them would be secrets that only a Jōnin Commander and up could see as they were neatly put into storage.

Looking over the operation was a tall man that was a civilian, as he had no chakra coil. He wore a fancy eastern (western) open jacket suit. The man had a distinctive appearance with short fluffed-up black hair and eyes that glow a bright yellow from a failed experiment. A man that Hinata knew as he softly called him out, "Dr. Lost."

The man turned to see the small Hyūga girl. "Ah, Miss Hyūga; I see you are here to retrieve Naruto," Dr. Lost spoke while taking a puff from his cigarette. "She is at her workstation. She fell asleep again after working half the night. We decided to let her sleep, so she gets some rest. She should have enough sleep to function now if you want to wake her up now."

"Thank you, Dr. Lost," Hinata bowed before walking over to a workstation where the blond girl lay fast asleep.

Naruto had also changed her appearance. She no longer wore simple clothing, but instead a skirt on top of shorts, and a t-shirt with the symbol of the orange fox. Her clothing was black, with trimmed in orange that matches a trench coat that had been given to her by Anko and now hung on the back of her seat. It resembled a black scientist laboratory coat with all the pockets and had orange flames at the bottom tip of the coat. In the center of the coat was an orange fox on top of a yin-yang symbol surrounded by symbols of each element and at the bottom, it said in English, 'A Blast from the Past,' with a science symbol on each side. Naruto's hair had grown into two pigtails tied to the back of her head that reached her shoulders. She had also lost much of her baby fat making her seem more mature than she actually was, but she retained enough of her fat to allow her to keep her cute puppy look, especially because of the three distinctive whiskers on each check.

Hinata smiled as she gently shook Naruto awake, "Naruto, it's time to wake up."

Naruto stirred as she slowly brought her head up off her desk and rubbed the sleep out of her eyes. As she awakened, Hinata got a good look into Naruto's eyes. Around the yin-yang pupil of her teal colored eyes were three distinct triangles: a white triangle for the wind element, a blue triangle for the water element, and a faint brown triangle for the earth element. To Hinata, her eyes were the most beautiful eyes she ever saw as they seemed to sparkle to Hinata when looked at them. Naruto worked hard to finish level three of water manipulation and just recently completed level two of earth manipulation, cracking limestone perfectly with a kunai.

That made Hinata a bit envious, a bit as since at the moment, she did not want to master level three of water manipulation for it required the master to stop a waterfall's flow. Hinata decided to go and master other things. Things that helped her earn first place in martial arts, scouting, and water jutsus while being in the top three in many other ninja arts like academics, trap making, and problem-
solving. It felt good to be congratulated on her accomplishments, and Hinata smiled as she remembered Naruto praising her a month ago for getting first place in martial arts with a big hug. A small smile that was still on her face as the present Naruto stretched in front of her.

"What time is it?" Naruto asked.

"Early enough that if we leave now, we have thirty minutes before class to start. So if we leave quickly will have enough time to talk to our friends Tenten and Tukiko before class starts," Hinata told Naruto.

"Give me a minute to get my stuff," Naruto said as she put on her trench coat.

She turned to her desk to retrieve her weapons. On the top of the desk were two very special long bladed swords with an orange hilt that previously had a swirl symbol engraved on them before it was rubbed off and replaced with the Leaf symbol. On the right-handed sword was inscribed, "To what we hold true." While the left-handed sword had, "True family bonds are thicker than blood." At the very bottom of each of the sword's hilt were the words, "Property of Kushina, and her true family." They were swords left in Konoha by Kushina and found thanks to a note Kushina added to the Hokage's bi-annual report as the woman spied on her hated clan. Naruto cherished them along with two pistols in her jacket, made decades before the fall of the Republic Alliance.

Like most guns in the last years of the Republic Alliance, they used a magnetic field to fire at a higher force and velocity than any black powdered gun could achieve. However, unlike the guns that used molded slugs carved out of lead bars, the firearm itself used solid, premade bullets with special seals stamped on them. Seals that Naruto herself had made by chakra through a heated stamp, and that Dr. Lost had helped mass-produce for leaf's elites. Naruto used the stamp to create three different types of bullets, each in a pair of cartages engraved with a symbol to tell what type of ammo it was. Naruto took special care of putting each cartilage on her belt along with four standard ones.

As Naruto was getting ready, Hinata browsed through the jutsu library made by Kakashi. Kakashi found out that while he could give small lectures, and teach high-level chakra control and elemental manipulations, he was terrible at teaching lower level classes for he did not know how to teach children. So in one of those moments when he was not lazy, he decided that the best way to provide instruction was to add to the library jutsus and techniques not classified from a clan, dojo or owned by a person that he had learned during his training. The girls were particularly happy with the arrangement as they could study most jutsus they liked. Hinata picked a C-rank water jutsu before she joined Naruto, who was fully dressed and eyes filled with mischief.

Before Hinata could ask what, Naruto yelled, "Last one there is a rotten egg!"

Naruto ran out in a deep sprint while Hinata gave chase. She ran out of the forest onto a paved road that led to the academy. Early in the race, Hinata with her superior physical speed soon caught up to Naruto and passed the girl. Naruto watched Hinata passed her before she gave chase. Naruto continued to chase Hinata until her superior stamina helped Naruto catch up to a fatigued Hinata and beat her long before they arrived at the academy.

When they arrived, Naruto was cheeky as she quickly regained her breath, "Looks like I win Hinata."

"No… fair," Hinata panted. "You didn't (pant) play fair."

"Hinata, we're training to be ninjas. Ninjas don't play fair," a voice spoke out that Hinata realized belonged to Tukiko.
Tukiko now had short, black messy hair that added to the fire in her black eyes. Her outfit included black shorts and t-shirt with blue trims and the Uchiha symbol on the shirt's back. At her sides were holsters used to carry multiple knives. She had become the best in the school when it comes to throwing kunais and knives, as well as close quarters knife combat. She was also the best at genjutsu and fire jutsus and second in martial arts, with Hinata winning due to being faster and more flexible. She also was accomplished at the use of powerful, fast acting, repeatable rifles, but she did not plan to carry one until after graduation.

"That's beside the point!" Hinata yelled as she regained her breath while she glared at her friendly rival. The two were in constant competition, and wherever they competed, one had to be at the top, and the other was a close second. Because of their competition, ties were rare unless it was between all three, or it was in a few areas that Naruto specialized in.

"Alright, no need to get in a fit before school starts," Naruto started to calm the two girls down as she assumed her role as diplomat/leader among the three. One she was quite good at despite being the most socially oblivious of the group.

Her actions worked as the girls calmed down while Naruto looked around to ask, "Where's Tenten?"

"She went on to class with her friend Lee. She promised to meet us at the coming of age for the Nature Clan," Tukiko answered.

"Ah, little me is growing up," Naruto cooed. "I cannot wait to see what spirit she'll have, but that will have to wait until this afternoon. Let's get to our class with the rest of the special kids."

"Yes, the class that has several children that is like Hinata. In that's their fathers or mothers are the current clan heads of the village's clans," Tukiko stated with a smirk.

"I feel sorry for the teachers given a hard time by the clan heads," Hinata mumbled. "I mean my father is ruthless to anyone he thinks would weaken the clan."

"Imagine how much harder it would be if all the clans followed hereditary succession like the Hyūga, Aburame, and Uchiha, instead of it being just by merit," Tukiko added.

"I'm glad we have Iruka as a teacher. He is a perfect teacher for he is kind, caring, has a no-nonsense attitude, and yet also fair," Naruto added as she smiled on thoughts about the tanned, scared-nosed teacher that was willing to help any students and freely gave them advice.

"You especially like him because he recommends tactical books that you love," Tukiko suggested.

"That too," Naruto commented offhandedly. "And the fact he has no prejudice about my second… mother."

"Unlike Mizuki, who must be bribed by Sasuke's father with the way he is acting," Tukiko growled on thoughts about the pale silver-haired Chūnin that was Iruka's assistant.

"I don't like the man," Hinata added as too nodded in agreement with Tukiko.

"Maybe we'll be lucky, and he'll get fired soon," Naruto suggested as she rubbed her friend's shoulder. "Come on, we have the class to go to."

As the girls entered the class, they noticed others had arrived and were talking among themselves. Most were the civilians and Shinobi children, like Sakura Haruno, a pink-haired girl all dressed in pink, and Ami, a purple-haired girl that also was the local bully. However, more than a third of the children are children of the current clan heads. Three of the children, Shikamaru Nara, Chōji
Akimichi, and Shino Aburame, looked a lot like their parents, minus their parents' scares and facial hair. Others like Ino Yamasaki and Kiba Inuzuka looked like their parent's opposite gender, despite their different tastes in clothing. Ino wore nothing but purple while Kiba wore a grey hoodie.

The other three were their friends, and they moved over to near the middle of the class to greet them. Two of the three were girls from the Roth clan, and the other was a boy from the Nature clan. The girls were non-identical twins and daughters of the current Roth Clan Head/matriarch. One of the twins had vibrant green eyes, purple hair and wore black robes while the other had peaceful purple eyes, short brown hair and had white robes.

"Hey, guys, what's up?" One of the girls in the black robes asked.

Naruto replied, "Not much Revan, how you guys doing?"

"Fine, but Bastila had a little trouble waking up this morning," Revan pointed to her sister.

"Well, I wouldn't have had a problem if you hadn't kept me up by wandering around the house in your sleep," the brown-haired girl snapped.

"Sorry," Revan stated, as a white-haired with black stripes boy laughed at them both. His tanned skin and brownish green cloak shook with laughter. Revan looked at the boy with burning anger. "Night Wolf, son of Wolf Dreamer of the Nature Tribe, tell me, are you trying to piss me off?"

"Kind of," Night Wolf said playfully as he looked into Revan's eyes with his black eyes that glowed with pupils that were white slits. "But mostly thinking how cute you are sleeping with your sister."

"Shut up," Bastila and Revan yelled together as they both blushed.

Naruto shook her head before she asked, "So Night Wolf, the ceremony is on later tonight, right?"

"Yep," Night Wolf began to smile, "My little sister will soon be a child as her soul will be fussed with a spirit and be given a name. It is an important day for our clan." He then looked to the side to ask, "You are going? My sister would be crushed if you didn't come?"

"Wouldn't miss it for the world," Naruto told Night Wolf.

Hinata then asked quietly, "Will the others come?"

"Only Tenten will be going," Night Wolf stated as he shook his head. "Shikamaru is too lazy to go while Chōji wouldn't go without Shikamaru."

"And ever since Ino became a fan-girl, we have been losing our patience with her," Revan spoke in disgust.

"Maybe after a few beatings she'll come around," Bastila spoke calmly, as she mulled over how many girls had lost their way and had taken on the persona of a fan-girl.

A certain handsome boy named Sasuke Uchiha had become the class heartthrob. He had jet-black hair styled in a duck's tail, or as most guys claimed, 'a duck's ass.' Sasuke's fan-girls claimed he was the best in the class, and consequently, he flaunted a superior attitude, despite the fact he always scored below Naruto, Hinata, and Tukiko. He also treated Tukiko like trash and Hinata like a worthless rival, while trying to convince Naruto he was the greatest thing the academy had ever seen. Naruto seemed to be oblivious to his charms and despised him for putting down her friends.

The group soon switched gears to talk about training, the ceremony, and Tukiko's sweeter cousin,
the eldest son of Mikoto Uchiha and older brother of Sasuke, Itachi. Itachi was a kind man who believed strength could be found in oneself, and he was one of Tukiko's private trainers at the compound. He was also considered a genius as he graduated from the academy at the age of eight. Itachi has been acting strangely as Tukiko explained how Itachi was questioned due to the mysterious death of his partner by his father, Fuguki. The group noted something was strange and talked about it until class started.

As soon as the bell rang, the two Chūnin, Iruka, and Mizuki walked into class. Iruka called roll as the silver-haired man, and semi-muscular Chūnin named Mizuki stared at Naruto and her friend. Naruto stared back at a man whose soul was as black as he was greedy. A man also had a significant dislike for Naruto and anyone who befriended her or made Sasuke look bad by beating him. He went out of his way to make their academic career difficult. He personally gave Naruto more detentions then all the other teachers combined. The girls just knew today would be worse as he gave them a very sinister look while Iruka gave a history lesson on the Elemental Nations.

Scene III

It had been a long day for the girls as they rushed to the Nature Clan ceremony. It started when Sasuke was a little pushier than usual to the girls and insulting Hinata to the extreme. Naruto responded by punching his lights out for his remarks. Mizuki tried to punish the girls with lengthy and unreasonable detention, but Iruka downgraded the punishment, as Sasuke did provoke them. Their day was still hell as Mizuki had turned a blind eye to the fan-girls harassment all day of Naruto and her friends. He gave a victoriously smirk as if each of the fan-girls' remarks was deserved. However, his victory was cut short when school was over, and their detention was deferred until next week. What Iruka knew today was an important day for the girls.

After they left the Academy, the girls went to an area of the village that held a wooden fort built around wooden houses built within the forest. The two guards at the entrance of the fort smiled at Naruto's group before they led them to the center of the fort where a dancing circle had been drawn into the ground. The ring was surrounded by members of the Nature Clan and their friends. In the center of the circle was a very, young tanned-skin girl with dull black hair and black eyes. She seemed like an empty husk of the way she had appeared just a few hours before, and now she waited to be filled, reborn.

Within the circle surrounding the girl, Night Wolf turned and greeted the girls with a smile, "Glad you could make it."

"I wouldn't miss this for the world," Naruto stated as she gave one of her fox smiles.

To the side, Tukiko had noticed someone was missing and asked, "Where's Tenten?"

"I'm here," waved a brown-haired girl in the short red and white Chinese battle kimono.

Naruto and her friends waved back but kept quiet as the main event was about to begin. A man with multiple hair colors and purple eyes with gold slits raised his right hand to silence the room. The man walked into the circle to speak, "Hello fellow members and honored guests. I am Wolf Dreamer, and I wish to welcome you to the Spirit Dance Ceremony of my daughter. This dance is used to allow good spirits to inhabit our children's bodies, to create a stronger connection to nature, and give them strength in a specific element. After the dance, we give the child a name that connects to their spirit animal, but enough explanation as most of you know well of what will come, let the dance begin," Wolf Dreamer ordered before stepping back into the circle.

Alone, the girl began to dance as her clan members began to chant in a low tone that echoed within the large room. A mystic chant that had a beat and tempo demanded that everyone danced. As the
chant began, the rocks around the circle began to glow a light green as the spirits formed above them. Each spirit formed into a specific animal: wolf, bear, hawk, crow, raven, canary, dragon, phoenix, coyote, cat, horse, snake, lizard, buffal, butterfly, beetle, and a fox. Eventually, all the animals join in the dance as the clan members picked up the heavy chant. The chanting and dancing grew faster and faster reaching a feverous pace until the chants suddenly stopped. The girl was facing a single animal, a fox. The two bowed down to each other before the fox jumped into the girl and the others vanished into the rocks around her.

The girl's hair changed from black to a leafy green while her eyes developed green pupils with brown slits. Her father, Wolf Dreamer, walked up and raised his daughter hands to announce, "I present to you, Fox Spirit." He then hugged Fox Spirit and said, "I am so proud of you my daughter."

Everyone around the dance ground began clapping and hollering for victory. Night Wolf's face broke into a tremendous smile as he congratulated his sister, followed by Revan, Bastila, Tenten, Tukiko, Hinata, and finally Naruto. Naruto hugged Fox Spirit as she said, "Well, looks like I don't have to call you brat anymore."

"Yeah I know," Fox Spirit said as her face broke into a fox grins.

"But you are to me still my little mini-brat," Naruto smirked.

"Big Fox Sis!" Fox Spirit yelled as Naruto snickered.

"So, what will we do now?" Tukiko asked Night Wolf.

Night Wolf gave Tukiko a smirk before he stated, "Now we party like there is no tomorrow."

Scene IV

It was late in the evening as the all the girls were walking together at a leisurely pace towards home since tonight was the beginning of their weekend break. As they walked home, Naruto noticed there were extra shadows following them, silently put up her guard, and alerted her friends. Naruto quietly signaled for Hinata to see who was following them and Hinata responded by activating her Byakugan. She then began giggling like a young girl with a secret she was dying to tell.

Therefore, Hinata leaned next to Naruto, who was bewildered by Hinata's antics until Hinata whispered, "Were being followed by Mizuki and two other Chūnins I never have seen before."

Naruto was worried as she faced Tukiko to state, "I don't see how that is a big secret. The others may want to hear what you have to say."

The girls saw Naruto scratch her head with her left hand, while her right hand unclipped her right-handed pistol from her jacket. The girls got the message as they slowly went for their own weapons of choice while they tried not to arouse suspicion. As they prepared for a fight, Tukiko kept the imagined casual atmosphere of giggling girls by stating, "Oh juicy gossip. I never knew you were the type Hinata."

"Oh, when it's something like this, I just can't keep it hidden" Hinata giggled with a serious face.

"Perhaps it is best to speak in the alleyway," Naruto suggested while unclipping her left holster, so she had both pistols ready. "We don't want strangers to hear."

"Good idea Naruto," Revan stated while the Roth sisters both pulled special sticks out of their cloaks. Sticks that when chakra was channeled formed into energy blades made out of pure chakra.
Their weapons were ready when the girls reached the alleyway.

After taking ten steps in the alleyway, Tenten leaned over to ask, "Ready?"

Naruto closed her eyes and waited. When she heard the clatter of footsteps behind her, she opened her cloak and yelled, "Attack!"

Naruto turned to face the silver-haired teacher and sent a warning shot past his ear to stop him in his tracks. At the same time, Revan activated a purple blade before she turned to cut off one of the Chūnin's arms as her sister used a yellow double blade to cut off the man's leg in a surprised attack sweep. The man soon fell to the ground screaming as Revan and Bastila held their swords at the man. The second Chūnin had enough sense to approach with caution and jumped away before Tukiko and Hinata could strike. The Chūnin then deflected the kunais thrown by Tenten as the man stepped into a battle position with a kunai in hand.

The Chūnin's stance was low as he faced the three girls and made eye contact with them. Tukiko paled as she spoke out, "Uncle?"

The other girls glared at a black-haired man with red eyes that had three black swirls around the iris. It was the Uchiha's fully evolved bloodline, the Sharingan. Surprised, Naruto yelled out, "What is going on?"

"The Uchiha are taking over brat, and all of you are now the property of the Uchiha," Mizuki smirked.

"So you're a traitor?" Revan asked with an angry glare.

"The Uchiha are the true power, and I am helping them take their rightful place as rulers of this pathetic village!" Mizuki yelled back at the girls as he took a threatening manner.

Naruto took aim as she responded to Mizuki's threat, "Take one step, and I put a bullet into your chest! You know I can easily kill you where you stand!"

Mizuki stopped in his tracks as he had seen Naruto's marksmanship skill in action. So he began a standoff while Tukiko, Hinata, and Tenten with sword's ready engaged the standing Uchiha. Together, they were able to keep the man on his toes as Bastila and Revan stood prepared to assist if they failed. They did not want the younger children in the battle as their weapons could unintentionally cut anything including a friend that may get in the way. As the girls waited, the Chūnin grew impatient with the battle and overpowered Tenten by taking her blade out of her hand and kicking her down. He used the sword in wide sweeps to force Tukiko and Hinata back as Tenten skidded on her feet and pulled out a katana.

As Hinata and Tukiko backed away as the Uchiha sneered, "Why are you betraying the clan?"

Tukiko growled back, "I am not loyal to a clan that treats me as a lowly tool. My loyalty belongs to my friends that care for me, and to a village that gives me a future."

Hinata and Tenten nodded in acknowledgment as they prepared to fight as the Uchiha continued his rant, "You do not understand you, little bitches. We were meant to be the true rulers of this village from the very beginning. You and your friends should be honored to be allowed to serve this village after we take this village by force."

After the Uchiha finished his rant, Tenten asked, "Do you really think a single clan with a few sympathizers can beat a dozen individual clans and several hundred ninjas loyal to the Fire Country and the Hokage?"
"Yes, as soon as you hear the cries you will know that it has succeeded," the Uchiha said as he and Mizuki smiled when they heard ear-piercing screams.

However, their smiles turned into horror when Uchiha and Mizuki realized the screams were coming from the Uchiha compound. It was then Tukiko presented a thoughtful face, "So, that was what Aunty Mikoto and Cousin Itachi meant to stay away from the compound tonight. They knew the clan was going to die tonight for their act of treason."

The Chūnin Uchiha heard this and screamed, "No! We will not be denied our destiny!" The Chūnin charged at Tukiko with Tenten's sword while yelling out, "Die, traitor!

Tukiko jumped away as Tenten brought her katana up to beat away his attack. They danced as they dueled. Tenten used fast attacks and her superior skill to fight against a stronger and more experienced warrior. She was doing well since the Uchiha had little experience with weapons. However, skill does not always beat brute strength as she was slammed into the wall by the man's heavy strike. Tenten fell and would have been killed if not for Tukiko and Hinata attacking the Uchiha from behind him.

Hinata used rapid chakra slashes with chakra blades as her arms weaved across the man's muscles striking chakra points along the spinal column. Tukiko assisted as she slashed the man's arms with her knives in a series of rapid motions that forced him to drop his blade. He was disarmed, but they were not done with the tall Uchiha. Adrenaline surged through their bodies from the heat of the battle and fear for their friends made them act. In a frenzy, Hinata struck the man's heart with a gentle blade to cause it to rupture while Tukiko slashed the man's throat with her heated knife that cauterized the wounds as he fell to the ground, dead.

As soon as the Uchiha fell, the girls realized they had taken a life and froze. Naruto saw this from the corner of her eye and yelled at her friends too, "Snap out of it! You killed him to save Tenten. We will worry about the fact you two caused the man's death once we are safe."

Mizuki saw Naruto distracted and bolted from the scene. Naruto responded by pulling the trigger, hitting Mizuki in the shoulder just as he ran out of the alleyway. Naruto then gave chase with Bastila and Revan in close pursuit while Tenten tried to comfort Hinata and Tukiko, who was still shaken from their first kill. As Mizuki ran, he heard screaming up ahead and saw one of the advanced Uchiha units run toward him carrying a little green-haired girl in his arms. As he approached, Mizuki saw a blond-haired Nature Clan member summoned lightning and hit the Uchiha with enough force to make the Uchiha drop the girl. Mizuki couldn't believe it as he saw one of his students, Night Wolf summoned wind to his leg and drop kick the Uchiha into a wall. The man crumbled down, blissfully asleep as Naruto, Bastila, and Revan arrived on the scene.

Mizuki found himself trapped between the Nature Clan and the three girls. He looked for an option when he noticed the green-haired girl lying on the ground staring at Naruto with eyes of admiration as she called out, "Big Fox Sis."

Naruto saw the girl and screamed, "Fox Spirit! Run!"

Mizuki beat them to the punch as he grabbed Fox Spirit before she had a chance to react and held a kunai to her throat. "No one moves, or she dies."

The group complied and backed off while Naruto steadily stared into Fox Spirit's eyes and then Mizuki's eyes filled with anger. With her mind focus on her opponent, she realized he was not going to let her go unless it was in a body bag. She knew only one way to save Fox Spirit's life, but she was hesitant as she could accidentally kill Fox Spirit by mistake. She was too afraid to act until she heard Colonel Nine speak to her within her head, 'Take the shot. If you don't, she'll die anyway by
Naruto sighed before she asked Fox Spirit, "Do you trust me, little one?"

"Of course Big Fox Sis," Fox Spirit answered without an ounce of fear.

"Okay," Naruto stated before she pulled up her pistol and shot Mizuki between the eyes. Mizuki fell down as Fox Spirit wiggled out of Mizuki's slacking grip and hugged Naruto, "I knew you would save me."

"Yeah, I did," Naruto smiled as she hugged Fox Spirit back. Just as Tenten, Hinata, and Tukiko ran up to the group, still pale from their ordeal.

"What's going on here?" asked a voice startling all parties as they looked up to see that it was the animal-masked ANBU, led by a woman with a cat mask and long purple hair.

The group explained that the Uchiha had ambushed them and they had barely beaten them off before the ANBU arrived. The ANBU nodded before she stated, "Thanks for your assistance. It will make our job easier." The leader turned to bark out orders to her fellow ANBU, "Kill the traitors, and dump their bodies in the Uchiha compound! Leave no evidence that they were here."

The other ANBU nodded, and quickly performed the command of killing the wounded and retrieving the bodies of the traitors when Naruto screamed, "What are you guys doing?!"

"We are executing all traitors outside of the Uchiha Clan house," the purple-haired, cat-masked ANBU replied.

"But they were disabled; why not take them as prisoners?" Naruto stammered.

"They are too dangerous to keep alive," the Cat ANBU replied much to Naruto's shock while another ANBU with a boar mask appeared.

"Captain Yūgao Uzuki, all resistance outside the compound has been dealt with. We were able to kill most of them before they reached their targets. Itachi Uchiha has completed his mission of executing all of the Uchiha members except Sasuke, a few non-traitorous Uchiha, and the very young children." Boar then turned at Tukiko to state, "Mikoto Uchiha has asked us to keep Tukiko away while the grounds are being cleaned of traitors' remains."

Tukiko was horrified that her clan members were being killed, but also relieved that it was her tormentors and not her family that had been killed. Yūgao looked at the group of students and took them to the Hokage tower to be protected.

Scene V

It was dark outside as Naruto stared at the stars while Tukiko and Hinata fell asleep in her room while she lay on the grass. As they quietly dreamed, Naruto went over what she had learned. The Uchiha clan planned a coup d'état and the Hokage found out through spies in the clan, who turned out to be Itachi, Mikoto's oldest son. After several failed negotiations, Sarutobi realized he had no choice but to ask one of his most loyal ninjas to execute all the traitors within the Clan and take the blame for it. The village could not afford to look weak because of a civil war within their ranks, so Itachi volunteered to commit the crime, even if it meant he would be turned into a missing-nin.

The Uchiha had gained sympathy from various ninja and civilian families, primarily by bribing them to support the Uchiha Clan. It was a small force, and the Uchiha would never actually win, but they
could devastating enough civil war that would ultimately weaken the Leaf forces, so they did a
preemptive strike to kill the conspirators and left some of the clan to prosper on the villages terms.
Most of the clan was part of the conspiracy, so out of the one-hundred and twenty clan members,
only thirty were spared. Sasuke and two babies were the only males left in the entire clan.

The group split up and returned home after they promised never to discuss the events of the day,
Tukiko returned with Naruto and Hinata as they were cleaning up her home. Once they were at
Naruto's new home, the two Jōnin counseled and comforted them until Tukiko and Hinata fell
asleep. However, counseling did not help Naruto as hundreds of thoughts were poring through her
head, 'Could there be another way? Did I have to kill someone to save a girl's life? Can I trust a
village that could order your death without conscience?'

'Naruto,' Naruto heard Nine speak in her head. 'Naruto, come to me. You need to hear this.'

Naruto complied and merged into the recesses of her mind to face the beautiful Colonel, surrounded
by followers instead of trees. "You know Naru-Chan, Konoha is like flowers in the meadow:
beautiful, strong, and loyal. However, sometimes a flower gets sick with a disease that can infect
others, an infection known as betrayal, and it becomes necessary to get rid of the disease, even at the
sacrifice of a few pure flowers. Do you see what I am saying? Most of the Uchiha and ninjas like
Mizuki had a disease of treason and as Hokage; the withered blue rose had to do what was right to
destroy the infection."

Colonel Nine of Nine stopped and looked directly into Naruto's eyes before continuing, "Be glad
your first kill was against a traitor because as a ninja, you will kill a lot of people and some will be
innocent. You did well, and you will be fine as long as you do not allow it to control you. It is time
to prove that you can hold onto your humanity while many others have lost theirs." Naruto cried and
ran into Nine's embrace. Nine of Nine comforted Naruto until Naruto was brought back to reality,
with Anko standing over her.

"Are you alright brat?" Anko asked.

"I am now, thanks to mom," Naruto explained. "Today's events were hard to swallow."

"I like to say it will get easier over time, but it won't," Anko explained. "If anything, it may get
worse. But never forget your friends, as I can say that in the end, all that matters are your friends.
Your friends can save you from hell."

"How exactly will it get harder?" Naruto asked.

"Well, Kurenai will have all week to explain that to you," Anko said while bowing down. "But for
now, it is time to go to sleep."

"Okay..." Naruto muttered before falling asleep on the grass.

Anko chuckled while she slowly picked up the girl. She made her way home but stopped after she
saw the Kurenai in the shadows. Anko remarked before continuing back home, "Looks like you
have something to discuss with the girls this week while there is no school."

"Yes," Kurenai stated sadly. "I just hope it doesn't make them regret joining the academy."

Scene VI

It had been a week since the Uchiha Massacre, and the girls were walking to school, pondering their
feelings about kunoichi. They knew the truth about what had really happened while everyone who
did not know any better talked about the tragedy of the clan's death and how horrible it was. The
girls were disgusted as people spoke about the Uchiha as though they were martyrs instead of traitors. It was even worse in the academy as girls swooned over the last male Uchiha, aka Sasuke. The fan-girls tried to comfort him and his aching heart.

Moreover, their constant badgering finally caused Sasuke's to snap when he growled out, "Shut up, I have no interest in a weak thing like you. I need to get stronger to avenge my clan! So don't get near me for you are useless. All of you, stay away unless you demonstrate that you are worthy of the Uchiha!"

Despite his growl, many girls still swooned over the last Uchiha thinking he was just sad due to the loss of his family. Therefore, they keep trying despite him maintaining silence for the rest of that day, and all they got out of it was to make Naruto and her friends sick to think such girls existing. The mere thought of these swooning girls giving everything up for a guy that did not like them made Naruto and her friends determined to become strong kunoichis. They plan to beat the odds through hard work to live a long life. Their choices potentially would save their own lives in the events that are soon to come.

Scene VII

In a distant land, the Uzumaki Council listened to the report of the Uchiha Clan demise. After they heard how the Uchiha were assassinated by the Leaf forces, one of the council members spoke up, "Yokoshima-Sama, while it is interesting to hear that the lower class scum has perished, we may have our own troubles to address."

The councilmen coughed nervously. He was afraid of the old, cold blue-eyed woman and that she would make the floor turn as blood red as her hair. Yet he continued to speak as Yokoshima waved him on, "We are losing more funds then we are making from the fighting in the Southern Waste Lands while keeping our presence in the Elemental Nations. I am wondering," the man asked, "are we going to try holding both regions even at the cost of being in debt with another country, or lessen our presence in the Elemental or Southern regions?"

There was standing silence as Yokoshima gave a predatory grin, "I am glad you ask me that very question." She straightened up as she continued to speak, "I'll plan to move most of our interest down South and continue working at the facility. I also plan to keep a few of our major operations in the Elemental Nations. That way we will be able to increase our funds for important projects while we don't have to worry about useless projects, like keeping a weak Water Country in constant civil war."

"Ma'am you can't be serious!" One of the council members yelled. "You can't suggest abandoning our influence in the Elemental Nations to continue to fund the project in this waste-"

The man never finished as Yokoshima pulled out a kunai and threw it right next to the man's forehead. The man gulped as Yokoshima growled out, "That facility is our only chance of returning the Uzumaki into the dynasty that was once spread from the east and west coast! So this is what it's going to be, and you have a problem with that, you can walk out, and I won't kill you for weakness since my kind-hearted husband before I took up the mantle of Uzukage from him!" She then relaxed in a smile before she continued, "We may weaken ourselves now, but I promise you that in the end, we will be in a far better position than this clan has ever been with the power to the rule the world with an iron fist. This I swear."

The council nodded as they left while the body of the dead council member was taken away as a woman who had passively watched the whole scene from the back of the room. The woman was Kushina, and she was struck by the casualness of the entire incident. She was worried about her daughter and her true home village, Konoha. Kushina knew that this was defiantly going in her
report.
Scene I

It has been six years since the Uchiha Massacre, and Fire Country has changed to be one of the most technologically advanced and industrialized countries in the known world with Konoha leading the change. Technology has become available to the general public such as cell phones, or even simple computers were available to everyone. Fire Country made a fortune selling some of their non-military technology, which increased the funding of Konoha. Wind Country mainly bought in-stock moisture evaporators to help collect water within their desert environment for a cheaper and consistent water supply.

In the outskirts of the village, part of a training field was closed off by the scientists who worked at ‘the Great Library.’ That part of the field was covered in parts of the next project, rebuilding a stealth fighter for the Leaf Special Forces. Leading the team was the yellow-eyed civilian in his fantasy eastern suit, Dr. Lost. Dr. Lost smiled as he gave a speech to the many R&D personnel there working on the project.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we have reached the next step in ensuring the prosperity of Fire Country. A step that is more important than the sniper rifles and machine guns our ANBU have used to take down targets from far away. More important than the Scorpion Hover Tank that guards our convoys, or the trucks and cars to get our soldiers, samurai, and ninjas to their destination faster. It is more important than the body armor that helped drop casualties in ANBU ranks by forty percent. It is even potentially more important than all the medical, computer and communication technology we have made.

“For we are working on a piece of technology so advanced that will allow us to rule the skies, as a general from the old times once said, ‘He who rules the sky controls the world,’ So I present to you the next project, the Phantom Class Attack Fighter!” Dr. Lost exclaimed, and he was met with polite applause while three teenagers and one girl were waiting for another teenager to finish their work.

“He certainly likes to hear himself talk, eh Naru-chan,” spoke a fiery fourteen-year-old girl that had black hair and eyes. She smirked as she stretched her tall, yet a petite body that was snuggling in her black shorts and a black t-shirt with blue trims. The girl also had on her the words “The Neo Uchiha,” under the Uchiha symbol.

“Well Tukiko, you know Dr. Lost always like to hear himself. Plus he needs the practice to sell these weapons to the more thick-headed members of the council,” spoke an average height girl named Naruto Ryū as she worked at fighter’s cockpit. A girl that wore black and orange clothing similar to what she had worn for eight years. Except, her attire was now designed to accommodate her growth, spirit and her more feminine aspects that were above average, but not overly so.
Handing Naruto her tools and giggling to her longtime friend was Hinata. A girl that now had long hair that reached her back and with the most prominent bust of the girls. Her outfit was a lavender cloak and a tight lavender hoodie that hugged her body. Hinata smiled at Naruto’s enthusiasm, while a small girl beside Hinata did not get the significance of the projects.

“Why is this… fighter so important?” the girl asked.

Naruto stopped working as Tenten, a girl with an athletic build of muscles in a pink battle dress, sighed as she mumbled, “You know Hanabi, as Hinata’s sister, you should know Naruto goes into a rant when you talk down about a project she is working on.”

Tenten closely evaluated Hinata’s sister and wondered how the two could be related. Hanabi was smaller than Hinata was at ten, and she had long black hair and white eyes instead of her sister’s blue, raven hair with lavender eyes. She was also Hinata’s opposite, as her personality was bold, cold, and followed authority unwaveringly; authority like her father. She also took to the Gentle Fist like a fish to water and was a very traditional Hyūga. If it was not for their bloodline, no one could tell they were related, especially since Hanabi was favored over Hinata before.

However, being Hinata’s sister would not prevent Naruto from making Hanabi the object of the mother of all rants. As Naruto got up to stare Hanabi down with her eyes, eyes that had five different color triangles with only red (fire) and yellow (lightning) faded. They were the only two elements she had left to master, and she was well on her way to mastering them thanks to a certain jutsu she picked up called ‘Shadow Clone Jutsu.’

“This fighter,” Naruto declared in a calm menacing voice, “this Phantom Class Attack Fighter is very important for it was the best fighter of the period. It can achieve 2383m/s in the air and 3403m/s in outer space. It has energy shields and is equipped with enough firepower to destroy a frigate. Not to mention it was designed with an EMP Camouflage Shield to block all matter of detection, including sound, infrared and all forms of radar, assuming it stays below 341m/s while its weapons and shields are offline. So yes, it is a huge deal.”

Inside her mind, Colonel Nine of Nine had yelled, ‘Damn right it is!’ Colonel Nine of Nine had loved that fighter class, having flown in it in her human form before she was sealed.

Hanabi gulped as Hinata decided to change the subject before Naruto tore Hanabi a new one, “So, we’re going to get one, once you help the group figure out how to make them and mass produce them?”

Naruto turned to Hinata to give a smile that screamed yes, “Yep, we will be one of ten people who get their hands on them, and it will be the prototype. I cannot wait to take this on a test spin. It’s going to be fun.”

“Well, what are you going to name it?” Tukiko asked.

“I was thinking Enterprise,” Naruto answered, and the girls cringed. Hinata snapped out it of first to speak up for the group.

“Naru-Chan, I think it would be better if you, you-”

“Name it after something other than several series that you are obsessed with,” Tukiko finished Hinata’s comment.

“I am not obsessed-” Naruto started, but Tenten interrupted her.

“Yes, you are Naru as you are obsessed with nearly every sci-fi, action, comedy and drama
series slash movie. You spend half the time you don’t sleep watching them.”

“Well they do have good ideas, and it was said, ‘What is fiction today can be reality tomorrow,’” Naruto quickly quoted.

“Naruto, can you just give it another name?” Hinata pleaded with Tukiko and Tenten.

“I hate you,” Naruto grumbled before she thought it over as the girls glared at her. “Okay, I see your point, how about Shadow Fox?”

“That is most agreeable,” Tukiko agreed with everyone, including an excited Colonel Nine of Nine in Naruto’s head.

“So how long will it take me before it is done?” Tenten asked.

“A month or two,” Naruto answered. “Enough time for us to receive our first C-rank mission.”

“What? I thought you guys got your first mission after you become Genin?” Hanabi asked while Tukiko and Hinata wondered the same thing too.

“You guys don’t know?” Tenten asked laughing hysterically. “Oh, you’ll only be doing D-rank missions for the first one to three months before you guys can do C-rank missions. Unless, somehow your entire team becomes Chūnin, regardless of what Clan you are from. Oh, by the way, D-rank missions usually consist of chores that civilians are too lazy to do and have the money to pay someone else to do for them. You probably will have to capture an evil creature called Tora, the Daimyō Wife’s pet cat at least three times, so happy hunting.” Tenten laughed as she left a shell-shocked Hinata, Tukiko, and Hanabi behind.

“Alright guys, let’s go. After today, our moment in the seventh hell is about to be over and our Genin year is about to begin,” Naruto commented.

“What are we doing today?” Tukiko asked.

“Well, yesterday it was genjutsu, trap making, stealth, and the obstacle course. So, today is a written test, throwing weapons that can be substituted with range weapons, ninjutsu, and close quarter combat.” Naruto explained before checking out with Dr. Lost.

“Well, I better get going too. Father-Sama wants me to do some extra lessons before I start at the academy this summer,” Hanabi stated as she moved away from the group.

Naruto came back after making a dozen shadow clones to train her in elements and various other things. Naruto loved the fact that when they dispelled, she had learned everything they read or mentally taught in. It helped her master the elements while spending time on various schoolwork, physical training, and projects with the R&D.

“Come on, let’s go,” Naruto ordered as they left for the academy.

As they walked, the group could not help but admire how much Konoha has changed over the years. All the main roads were paved and filled with bikes or cars. Fire Country’s military forces mostly used cars, but some civilians and politicians also had them. As they continued to walk, they noticed how the village had become quite industrialize, as factories were everywhere. The new technology helped shape the Leaf into a more dominant force based on the clients that flocked to them along with the espionage and sabotage missions they conducted for Fire Country.
Such changes, however, were met with opposition, like the protestors that claimed the new technology was destroying their society and the delicate balance that had existed between ninjas, samurais, and soldiers. Within the village, the protestor’s power base came mostly from wealthy civilians/nobles, along with a few visiting samurais that wanted the power structure to stay status quo. Very few ninjas supported the protestors, as ninjas had learned early on that if you do not adapt, you die.

The girls did not pay them much mind except when one protester standing on a wooden chair yelled out, “May Kami (God) strike down all that goes against the natural order.”

As he yelled, the chair broke, and the man landed on his butt in complete humiliation. Naruto could not help by chuckled, “Well, looks like Kami has spoken.”

The girls chuckled while Nine of Nine sighed in Naruto's head, ‘Why do idiots forget the two most basic laws of nature. He who does not adapt dies and stupidity works its way to bring about extinction.’

Naruto shrugged as the girls walked into the academy. The girls planned to show off so they can get on the best teams and hopefully, each other's team.

Scene II

It had been two hours since Naruto had arrived at the academy, and the group had been outside for over an hour. The test had been quick but tiring as the girls waited for the next test that would begin once all the students finished the first test. The students were joined outside by the scared-nose teacher Iruka and his new fluffy, black-haired assistant named Suzume. After Mizuki’s death, Iruka had become harsher to overcome the fact that Mizuki had been a traitor. He had zero tolerance for bullies or weak ninjas that would not accept his help to become stronger.

Suzume called off so that everyone was to throw weapons, only hesitating briefly to adjust her big glasses as she reached Hinata, Naruto and Tukiko’s names. She had put them at the end of the list on purpose for their unique weapons were new to her and made her nervous. Hinata was first of the three, using a pistol and kunais. Next was Tukiko’s turn with an assault rifle and throwing knives. Tukiko won by a few points over Hinata and lead with a perfect score.

Suzume called the next name with dread, “Naruto Ryū.”

Naruto came up smiling for she could use just firearms for this test. Her throwing skills were terrible to the point that she often would get only a fifty percent score, but she made up with her lack of proficiency with knives by her skill in firearms. She drew her two pistols and began to put several standard rounds into the dummies, perfect kill shots. She reloaded with three distinctive bullets and again shot at the dummy targets at a rapid pace. First off was a wind bullet that tore through the target like a knife through butter, while the second was frozen solid by an ice bullet. The final round was Naruto’s water bullet that made the dummy implode with a torrent of water.

“I hope you liked my wind, ice, and water bullets,” Naruto explained, while keeping some of her other bullets, like her lightening, bone shattering bullet, and paralyzing bullets to herself.

“Good job Naruto, you will get full points for your showmanship, but you will lose points for not using any throwing projectiles at your targets. You are at a fourth place with a ninety percent,” Iruka explained while Suzume wrote down the score. Naruto nodded in acceptance, and she moved back to the group while the Hokage and several Jōnin, in the office of Hokage tower, whistled at the live feed of the Genin’s test.
“I want some of those bullets!” Anko screamed while clutching her newest weapon, a shotgun.

“So pop, these special bullets are what you have the ANBU, and Hunter-nin use?” a man that looked a lot like the Hokage asked while stroking his black beard, that was also cut short like the Hokage’s white beard.

“Yes Asuma, Naruto, however, is the only one to use the elemental bullets, and her friends are the only Genin equipped with firearms,” The Hokage answered his son, Asuma, who looks like a younger version of himself. “She was able to get her hands on them through her work with the R&D. It only fits we allow her to use them since she helped in their development.”

“When do you plan to distribute these firearms to the Genin? I can see a use for them, even though for several it would interfere with their techniques we use,” A dark-skin man from the Pyro Clan asked while combing his fiery reddish-blue hair.

“Well Inferno, we have been passing out these guns within the last three years to our Jōnin and Chūnin.” The Hokage answered Inferno. “So, hopefully in one to two years, our Genin teams will have them available as they become cheaper to manufacture.”

“That’s good to know, but let us go back to the test. The jutsus portion is about to begin,” Kurenai pointed out.

In the background, Anko screamed, “Bring on the explosions!”

In the test room was a student showing off the three academy basics of, the ‘Substitution Jutsu,’ ‘Clone Jutsu’ and ‘Transformation Jutsu,’ and an added jutsu from the library, or two clan jutsus that would ensure a higher survivor rate. Very few kids failed as the academy staff took great pains to assure that the students studied a jutsu properly. Sasuke, Tukiko’s cousin, with his black hair tied to look like the back end of a chicken, tried to show off with ‘Fire Style: Fire Ball Jutsu’ and ‘Fire Style: Phoenix Flower Jutsu.’

An excellent show, but Tukiko outshone Sasuke with her ‘Fire Style: Phoenix Flower Jutsu’ and Tukiko’s new ‘Fire Style: Fire Bomb Jutsu,’ a jutsu that could be set on the ground to blow up ten seconds later. Hinata also showed her ‘Water Style: Tsunami Jutsu,’ and ‘Protective Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms,’ she created chakra blades that would strike anyone close and defend herself as well. Finally, it was Naruto’s turn, and she wanted to show off to prove why she was one of the top ninjas in class. After Naruto did Transformation Jutsu and Substitution Jutsu, Naruto asked, “I can’t do Clone Jutsu to my chakra level, so can I do a new clone Jutsu?”

“Um, sure Naru,” Iruka answered being curious about what the ‘new clone Jutsu,’ was.

Naruto then called out, ‘Wind Style: Wind Clone Jutsu,’ to produce three clones made out of the wind. “The wind clone is one I made up. This jutsu is one of ten clone techniques that I have in my arsenal. It is perfect in combat because of its increased speed, its ability to cut targets at close range and when you ‘kill’ the clone, it explodes in a gale windstorm.”

“Wow, good job Naruto. Now I need you to produce one non-original technique,” Iruka commented.

“How about two,” Naruto replied and powered up ‘Earth Style: Earth Dragon Bullet Jutsu’ and ‘Wind Style: Great Breakthrough Jutsu.’

“Good job, you passed and tied at first place with Tukiko Uchiha and Hinata Hyūga,” Iruka
congratulated Naruto as she walked to class.

“Wow, amazing… Wait. Did she say ten clone jutsus?” Inferno asked Sarutobi in his office.

“Yep, some she learned from a retrieved scroll or from others like a wood clone from Yamato and the new fire clone from Tukiko. She also created one for ice and lightning. We decided to put such clones into the forbidden scroll for any Jōnin to see,” Sarutobi informed the excited Jōnin who plan to sign out to look through the scroll to use.

The next set was close quarter combat where any type of combat was accepted. In other words, only martial arts and blades are allowed, no chakra enhancement. They divided them up based on gender. Within two hours, most of the class was done. Some of the fights were good, mainly from those with shinobi or clan background. Others were not so good, like the fangirls that continue to plague the academy. As the fights dwindle down, all that remained was the fight between the top two close quarter combat experts, Hinata Hyūga with her gentle blade technique, and Tukiko Uchiha with her knives.

The two girls faced each other as Tukiko pulled out two knives and Hinata channeled chakra into her hands. Suzume did one last inspection, before reminding Tukiko and Hinata not to target any vital organs unless they wanted to be disqualified. She started the match, and the two girls rushed each other. Hinata was the first to lash out with a wild swipe, and Tukiko responded with her knives and aimed at Hinata’s arm. Hinata pulled back while Tukiko went to strike. Tukiko jumped back to avoid Hinata while striking at her legs. The battle turned into dance as they weaved and whirled at each other, barely dodging their opponent’s attack while slowly wearing each other out. After ten minutes of constant fighting, the two were painting, and they began sweating heavily after they were able to hit each other once before they stopped to face each other.

Hinata was able to hit Tukiko’s right arm, and Tukiko cut Hinata’s right, rendering both useless due to the rules of the match. The two circled each other, prepared to use other limbs in the attack; not giving up due to their pride and needs to be outweighed their senses. Hinata needed to be strong to change her clan while proving to herself that she was never a burden to her friends like Naruto. Tukiko had similar reasons, but her goal was to drive the Uchiha into a new direction, not one stuck in archaic traditions. Both had a personal stake as they fought for top kunoichi in the academy. Therefore, they used the break to regain their breath and calmed themselves to clear their minds before they continue their fight.

Eventually, Tukiko felt she rested enough, as she was the first to move as she rushed Hinata. Hinata moved to the side and gave a small arm slash at Tukiko. Tukiko fell to her knees and bent over backward to avoid Hinata’s strike while bringing her knife up. Hinata, in response, pulled her arm back with a sharp jerk while forgetting to shift her weight. This act had caused her to lose balance, and she did a little ninety-degree spin into Tukiko’s head. Somehow, beyond luck, the sound of their heads cracked as their craniums came together at high speeds. The two lost conscious in a few seconds and remained tangled with Tukiko on the bottom and Hinata on top, cheek to cheek.

Suzume was shocked at the outcome and did not call the match until there were a few catcalls by the boys, seeing the two hottest girls in such a compromising placement. After the match was called, she went to check on the girls with a bit of smelling salts, as Naruto hovered over her friends. Hinata was the first to wake, and the first thing she asked her friend was, “Did I win?”

Suzume shook her head while she helped Tukiko up, “No, it was a tie, though you get full marks for your match, so you two should be proud.”

Tukiko heard her match was a tied and pouted, “Yeah, proud. But it would be nice to hear
that the best girl won.”

Hinata was about to make a quiet remark when Naruto stopped the two’s verbal match. “Come on girls, let’s gets up.” Naruto rose up and then help up Hinata followed by Tukiko. “Besides, you can argue after my match, it is my turn to fight, right?” Naruto asked as Suzume nodded her head in acknowledgment.

The female teacher looked over her board to state, “That’s correct, but I don’t know what to do since you are the only female student left. I guess you will fight me and we will decide from there.”

Naruto nodded and pulled out her two swords while Tukiko and Hinata walked out of the arena. She was preparing to fight when Iruka called them out, “Wait!”

“Iruka-san, what’s the matter?” Suzume asked.

“I just got a request from a student to fight Naruto,” Iruka explained. “I would normally ignore this, but some members of the council will throw a fit if I don’t approve the request, and the Hokage agreed to allow this as long as Naruto give her consent. I have the paperwork right here.”

Iruka held up a paper for a request of one Naruto Ryū to fight with one Sasuke Uchiha, a boy Naruto had developed a deep dislike for. Sasuke has been obsessed with power after his brother killed most of his clan to claim revenge for what happened six years ago. His desire often got him into fights in class as the alpha of the class after he constantly belittled her friends and he had never given up on trying to woe Naruto, under the orders of his dead, traitorous father. His constant wooing had superbly failed, as Naruto did not want to be treated as if her sole purpose was to give birth to a new strong clan while her partner went off to kill his brother. She psyche built by such dependable friends desired an equal who could be a friend and lover at the same time, and Sasuke did not fit the bill.

That is why Naruto walked into the arena with her swords drawn. She was going to give him the ultimate no, by carving it into his skin as one sword faced Sasuke, and the other guarded her chest. Sasuke had not realized the danger he was in as his arrogance outweighed his common sense. He thought it would be an easy win since he was an Uchiha, that was trained by his clan and the trainers he hired from the village using his family fortune. That was until the two faced off, as Sasuke’s superior smirk wavered as he stared into Naruto’s defiant, Elemental Star eyes.

However, it did not stop him from trying to taunt the girl. “So, you think you can win?” Sasuke leered at the girl.

“Maybe, we shall see,” Naruto, replied in a dull tone.

“A beauty such as you shouldn’t fight,” Sasuke declared in a smooth style that made several fangirls cried out in outrage.

Naruto did not bat an eye at Sasuke’s words. “Flattery will get you nowhere for I have no interest in you.”

Naruto remark broke Sasuke’s control as he began to growl, “Why do you deny fate? Why do you deny the needs of someone who can be the best partner you ever hand within the prestigious Uchiha Clan?”

Naruto looked confused before she asked, “I thought I was fighting you, not Tukiko? I mean she has activated her bloodline and almost mastered it while yours is still dormant. She is a master of
fire jutsus while you’re an intermediate at best. She is one of the best in martial arts. And more importantly, I trust her and Hinata to watch back more than a self-serving jerk out for revenge.”

Every word Naruto spoke only increased Sasuke’s anger. Sasuke was outraged to point steam would be shooting out of his ears if he was a boiler as he rushed Naruto. Once Sasuke was close enough, Naruto attacked with spinning blades of her swords, transformed into training blades by the foam wrapped around them. As Naruto tried to strike the boy down, Sasuke avoided the strike within the last second as he regained enough of senses jump to away before being hit by Naruto’s two swords. He barely avoided the foam soaked with special chakra paint that would only be noticeable if transferred by a hit of sufficient force. Enough paint transfer could be counted as a lethal strike, or if many slight marks showed, they could score as if the cuts were sufficient to cause him to bleed to death.

Therefore, Sasuke weaved in and out to avoid Naruto’s furious attack, as trying to avoid a loss due to a lucky shot. Not that Naruto was trying to hit him; she was trying to keep him at bay. Naruto knew Sasuke had greater speed and strength than she did. She had really regretted not training as physically hard as she does mentally or with her Justus. However, she did have superior endurance and agility that she counted on to win this match. Naruto used her long blades’ furious attack to keep Sasuke at bay while she slowly exhausted him, and it was working. In fact, Sasuke was making it easier for Naruto as he tested the waters to find a weakness, as he used a kunais to deflect Naruto strikes before he jumped and jabbed again. His attacks were making him exert more energy, and it was not getting him anywhere.

As the fight continued, it was evident that Sasuke was getting sloppy as his anger increased. He was so enraged that he had not beaten Naruto or even found a weak spot while she remained calm and focused. In a fit of anger, he charged at Naruto and went to strike her with his knives. Sasuke’s move got him around Naruto defenses but left his sides open to attack. Naruto brought both her blades down and hit Sasuke's ribs. Sasuke screamed as she dropped to the ground, holding his ribs before Naruto punched him in the nose.

Sasuke was down for the count, and not a moment too soon. Naruto knew that if Sasuke had not lowered his defenses to the attack, as he could have deflected her strike and went in for the kill. Instead, Iruka declared the girl, who was slowly breathing in and out to regain the control of her adrenaline-filled heart, that she was the winner and aced her final test. The group was dismissed, and everyone left behind the two Chūnin and Sasuke. Iruka and Suzume carried Sasuke to the school nurse before they reported to the Hokage the overall results and helped put together the team.

Back at the Hokage tower, they waited for the Chūnin to bring their report and explained their results. Once the two teachers were seated, one of the Jōnin commented, “The students seemed unusually skilled this year.”

“They are, thanks to the new training program you initiated Hokage-Sama.” Iruka stated. “While I didn’t expect it to affect the percentages that would overall graduate, I do expect it to increase graduation by ten percent next year.”

“That’s good, for the last batch had three teams killed and only one of the surviving teams showed any promise,” Anko explained while her friend, Kurenai nodded with sorrow that twelve Genin were killed.

“Too true,” The Hokage stated while looking at Asuma. “It’s time we move on and start putting together the teams. Son, why don’t you start off?”

“Alright,” Asuma took a puffed of smoke before he continued, “I want the Ino-Cho-Shi team. I believe with the few things I picked-up watching them today, I can add some variety to their
tactics, and fighting styles to go with their clan techniques.”

“Sounds good, Ino Yamanaka, Chōji Akimichi, and Shikamaru Nara will make up Team 10,” the Hokage nodded as he wrote down Asuma’s team.

Inferno then stepped up, “I would like Revan Roth, Bastila Roth, and Night Wolf son of Wolf Dreamer for my team. They will be the easiest group for me to teach and my clan has a good relationship with our recent alliance formed with the Nature and Roth clans.”

“Alright, your team will make up Team 6,” Sarutobi stated as he wrote Inferno’s Team down.

“Well I don’t care who I get,” Kakashi explained. “However, since I am forced to teach this year, despite my protest and the fact I can’t teach Genin, I request that Naruto, Tukiko, or Hinata not be placed on my team.” Kakashi’s statement shocked everyone.

“Why? I mean, you taught them for eight years so why are you giving them up?” Kurenai asked before Kakashi gave her an answer.

“I wouldn’t call leaving books and scrolls for them to look at on their own teaching. I also have to take Sasuke Uchiha for being the only one on the roster to which I could teach the Sharingan. If any of the girls were put on a team with Sasuke, the girls would probably end up killing Sasuke. Not to mention those three are a too well-oiled machine to break up. I recommend that we should keep them together.”

Many Jōnin began to argue, as there had never been an all three female Genin team. There had been all-male teams before, but never an all-female one. However, it seemed that the Hokage though it was not a bad idea, “Okay, I see your point, and I believe it is for the best.” Sarutobi pulled out a bunch of files before stating, “Alright, Team 7 will be Sakura Haruno, Sasuke Uchiha, and a home-schooled student name Sai from Danzō. Be careful, the team will be the most delicate of teams. Don’t be afraid to ask for help on this one.” Kakashi nodded as he groaned.

“Alright, now we have two teams that are likely to pass. One team will have Naruto Ryū, Hinata Hyūga, and Tukiko Uchiha, while the other has Ami Rika, Shino Aburame, and Kiba Inuzuka. So who will lead these reaming teams?” Sarutobi had asked which immediately brought on an argument on who would have who.

None of them could decide on their own, and eventually, the argument got so loud that the Hokage had enough, “Enough! Since you cannot decide, I will make the teams! The teams’ Jōnin will be…”

Scene III

It was early Saturday morning as the girls left for academy still sleepy because they had been up late partying with friends. Today was a big day as they headed to an empty academy so they could get their assigned a Jōnin sensei that would hopefully be the last for the rest of their ninja career. The three left behind their old training field filled with standard students taught by the stoic, scary brown-haired man, Yamato and surprisingly, three new faces showed up to train the kids. While curious as to why Kurenai, Anko or Kakashi was not there, they decided to ignore the missing teachers as they went into the auditorium, figuring they would be able to ask later. It was not long before the room filled with graduates as Iruka walked alone up to the front of them while he held a paper that had the list of teams.

“Alright brats, listen up as I call out your teams!” Iruka yelled as he began calling out the teams, the first five were made up of students the girls really did not know.
Once Iruka reached Team 6, Naruto began to pay attention as he started calling out people she was very familiar with. She heard Team 6 had Revan, Bastila and Night Wolf and Team 7 had Sasuke, Sakura and some new kid she never met. And honestly, she really did not care who it was since she was relieved that she no longer had to deal with Sasuke. Next was Team 8, with Shino the loner, Ami the bully, and Kiba the hotheaded dog boy. Iruka then explained Team 10 would be the new Ino-Cho-Shi team as team 9 and 11 were still in circulation. He then announced Team 12 before telling the class the team she was interested in hearing, her own team.

“…and finally, Team 13 will be Naruto Ryū, Hinata Hyūga, and Tukiko Uchiha,” Iruka stated, and the three girls smiled brightly at their teacher before he continued. “Your Senseis are-“

Iruka never finished as the side window was shattered by someone that appeared in front him before a banner folded behind the woman with the words, “All Bow to the Sexy and Single Kunoichi, the Beautiful Anko Mitarashi.” The girls could not believe it, Anko was their sensei.

However, they were also not prepared for what came next. “Anko, you are early,” Kurenai stated as she appeared like a mirage. “Iruka was about to announce that we were the girls’ senseis when you interrupted him.”

Anko blinked in shock before turning to the side of her banner to see an angry Iruka. Anko put up a sorry damsel look as she said to the Chūnin, “Sorry Iruka-Kun.”

Whatever rant he had prepared died as Anko gave him her distressed damsel look. “It’s o-ok-okay, Anko… it is okay.”

Anko smiled as she gave him a small peck before she turned to the class with a sadistic grin appearing on her face. Many people thought the words ‘seductress’ and ‘scary woman.’ However, Sasuke ignored this and the fact that an all-girl team has just received two senseis and felt it was unfair. However, he kept quiet, knowing that there would be no point to argue with the Chūnins in the academy. They were small fry to the Uchiha, and he planned to take it up with the Council. It was too bad he did not realize the ones that usually listen to him did not have the power within the Leaf Forces.

Anko was sending dangerous vibes as she yelled, “Okay brats meet me at Training Field 44 for the final test to become Genin! I expect you to pass!”

Anko then disappeared in a swirl of leaves while Kurenai, with an annoyed expression on her face, just vanished as if she was an illusion. The three girls took their cue from the Senseis and left in a swirl of water for Hinata, fire for Tukiko, and a gust of wind for Naruto. Leaving an angry Iruka who had to deal with kids complaining about a ‘final test.’

Once their protests died down, Iruka gave one final speech, “Alright brats, first I need to tell you. Your life is now set to one of a long and treacherous road, but I want you to take that the road for it leads to success; and even though you currently may be at the bottom of the food chain, if you work hard, you will succeed.” The class was silent by Iruka’s speech as a new grin appeared. “The second thing I need to tell you is that for your senseis will meet after lunch. So wait while I am going to celebrate the fact I don’t have to deal with you anymore for I am free of the most troublesome class in anyone’s career. Thank you very much.”

All the students could do was gasp as Iruka threw up his papers and left the lecture hall while yelling, “Finally! Freedom!”
Later, Iruka could be seen crying about having to teach another troublesome class, but that is a story for another time.

Scene IV

In a fenced area that had ‘Keep Out’ signs all around, was an area of dense foliage in the Konoha. A place where trees grew to be stories high and where could be found all forms of animals that grew to be just as big, if not bigger than people. It was the dreaded Forest of Death, Anko’s favorite training field. Her favorite was mainly the fact her training involved killing off the larger versions of extremely dangerous predators found within this place. It was also a proving ground for Naruto and her friends.

“Alright brats, listen up!” Anko yelled. “I know you three brats work well together, so we won’t test you on teamwork.” The girls were excited, thinking they were going to skip the test, but their hopes were dashed, “However, I am still required to give you a test, so I decided to assess your combat readiness. You three will have to survive a hostile environment for thirty minutes against not only the predators that live in the forest but also me, as I will attack you three with everything I can muster. Kurenai will also be participating by observing your fighting prowess and will add her own genjutsu against you… to make the fight interesting.”

The girls were scared as Kurenai had a look that promised mental pain while Anko had a sinister smile. The girls only had a moment’s notice before Anko charged, armed with kunais. Naruto and Hinata jumped out of the way while Tukiko met Anko’s kunais with her knives. As they fought, Hinata joined in the fray, using her fluid motion as she tried to get into Anko’s defenses. Anko jumped away and utilized ‘Snake Hands Jutsu’ to send multiple vipers at Hinata. Naruto appeared out of nowhere and pushed Hinata out of the way to be hit by the snakes.

Hinata screamed, “Naruto!” before the clone revealed itself as a wind clone as it exploded into gale force winds that shredded the snakes into pieces.

Anko was heartbroken, but she was not given a chance to mourn her fake pretties as Tukiko, and Naruto teamed up with ‘Wind Style: Great Break Through’ (Naruto) and ‘Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu’ (Tukiko). The combined elements made a fireball several times larger than the girls did as they hurtled it toward Anko. However, the fireball did nothing but pass through Anko. Hinata realized it was an illusion created by the Genjutsu Mistress. She activated her bloodline to see through the illusion to find that Anko was behind them.

Hinata turned to strike at Anko with ‘Water Style: Water Whip Jutsu’ to make Anko back off to give her space. Anko moved away, as another illusion hit the girls. ‘Genjutsu Style: Binding Trees Jutsu.’ The jutsu felt so real to all three girls as they became bound by tree roots around. They were not able to move mentally due to being perceived trapped until Naruto sent out a wave of chakra to disrupt the illusion. She summoned a powerful wave of chakra that shot way from them to dispel all genjutsus around Naruto. That included a hidden illusion that Anko hid behind in. When the illusion dissipated, it revealed that Anko had summoned a giant snake that Kurenai had also hidden under layers of illusions that not even the Byakugan and Sharingan could see through.

The girls wished the illusion did not reveal the giant grey snake Anko had to summon, as she laughed sadistically beside it. The girls’ eyes then widened as Anko ordered the snake to attack them. The three girls jumped away, and Hinata immediately sent ‘Water Style: Tsunami Jutsu’ at the snake to distract it. Tukiko added to the distraction with her assault rifle to pelt the snake with enough bullets to start a scrap yard, while Naruto got into position. Naruto ran behind the snake as she pulled out her two pistols, one equipped with her wind bullets and the other with lightning bullets. With her pistols raised, she fired the gun with wind bullets that pierced the snake’s thick skin before she
followed up with lightning bullets that would enter through the bullet holes to paralyze the snake’s muscles through electrical pulses created by the bullets. The bullets paralyze the entire snake after ten rounds from each of her guns.

Anko dispersed the snake and prepared for a full-scale fight. Naruto realized Anko was about to go all out, so she used ‘Water Style: Water Clone Jutsu’ to create several copies to hold Anko off as Naruto’s team prepared their escape. The clones did not last long as Anko charge through them, tearing them apart. Eventually, Anko arrived in front of the girls as they were about to make their escape and struck them all in a fluid of rapid motion before the girls fired off one final jutsu. They fell on the ground twitching by Anko’s rapid attack style attack.

Anko let out a victory smile when the girls melted into the ground, revealing her prize to be just mud clones. Anko turned to Kurenai to ask, “How?”

“Tukiko performed ‘Genjutsu Style: Victor Jutsu,’ to make you believe you had reached the girls and won instead of retreating while Naruto’s three mud clones took your beat down,” Kurenai explained. “The three girls then ran into the forest to escape while you performed a victory stance. You now have twenty-five minutes to find them in your playground.”

Anko smiled as she pulled out her kunai and licked the blade. “Well then, I don’t want to keep them waiting.”

Scene V

In the clearing, as the three girls gasped for breath, Hinata laid down on the grass to rest before she asked, “How… how much time do we have?”

“We have eighteen-minutes to go,” Naruto answered calmly while wiping some sweat off her face.

“Eighteen freaking minutes in the Forest of Death? We’re doomed!” Tukiko said in hysteria.

“At least we have a place to hide from Anko for now,” Naruto pointed out.

“Thank goodness that Naruto’s pistols and your assault rifle had silencers functions or Anko would have heard us when we had to fight off the squad of tigers,” Hinata added with a hint of optimism as she looked like three tigers that were the size of a horse down for the count.

“Yeah, but the rate of fire was cut in half, and I think my rifle is jammed beyond my capabilities to repair it,” Tukiko muttered as she showed them her rifle.

Naruto took the rifle and examined it, “It would take me a full day at the lab to fix it. You had better stick to your other weapons and jutsus. In the meantime, we need to get moving, we have the most dangerous predator on our trail, and I do not want to face a real-life Medusa.”

Tukiko groaned as Hinata got up, “I’ll scout out the area first.” Hinata then activated her bloodline before she exclaimed, “Heads up! Anko is heading our way!”

“Where?” Naruto asked while pulling out a square tube from inside a scroll. She pressed a button, and the tube unfolded to reveal a sniper rifle with two barrels, one to fire out bullets, and the other was a camera scope designed to zero in on the target. Naruto loaded a single soft metal bullet with a chakra seal on it. The bullet that would not kill anyone at point-blank range, but it was strong enough to survive being fired off at high speeds. Naruto quickly loaded the round into her sniper rifle and pointed her gun at the direction Hinata had pointed out. Looking through the
foliage, she saw Anko briefly before firing. Anko fell to the ground as the bullet hit her and release
enough foreign chakra to paralyze Anko.

Naruto put up her rifle before she barked out orders, “Let’s go. Anko will work the chakra
out of her system soon.”

The girls nodded as they moved and disappeared into the forest, while Anko promised pain
as Kurenai laughed over her downed friend.

Scene VI

The victory was bittersweet for Naruto’s team as they had less than ten minutes left on the
clock. However, it was still too much time as Anko proved relentless as she cornered the Genin after
a few minutes of playing snake and mice. Once cornered, Tukiko tried to turn hunter to pray when
she used ‘Fire Style: Phoenix Flower Jutsu’ to shoot out multiple fireballs at Anko. Anko countered
with ‘Earth Style: Rock Wall Jutsu.’ The fireballs hit the rock wall and both dispersed into a cloud of
dust. Anko jumped out to confront the girls, and she was armed with her favorite weapon, her
shotgun.

Anko fired pellets of paralyzing gas at Tukiko as they exploded onto her chest as she gasped
for air. She also breathed in gas that overcame Tukiko, and she fell down like a house of cards.
Naruto got ready for battle while she ordered Hinata to revive Tukiko due to her experience and
training in treating wounds. Hinata quickly moved to Tukiko’s side as Naruto put on a small gas
mask before she summoned ten wood clones to engaged Anko.

Naruto used wood clones against Anko because the wood had greater durability than the
mud clones she used before while the small squad equipped with swords moved in to battle Anko.
They engaged in fierce melee combat, but Anko was not only stronger but also more brutal than the
girl was. Anko had used her own shotgun as a close quarter weapon as she bashed away Naruto’s
clones with sandbags made the clones dropped like flies under Anko zeal. Zeal to win as Anko fired
with her heart’s content with occasionally used as a club, intent to find the real Naruto. Eventually,
she got lucky and hit the real Naruto herself. The wood clones fell apart as Naruto flew towards
Hinata.

Hinata barely ducked in time as Naruto flew past her and fell to the ground in a heap unable
to move. Hinata was now alone against Anko. Anko only smiled at the scared girl as she used
‘Snake Hands Jutsu’ on the girl. Hinata dashed forward to get far ahead of Tukiko, before using
‘Protective Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms.’ Chakra was converted into laser palms that sliced or
batted away Anko’s snakes. Anko was prepared for such a tactic as she used ‘Earth Style: Earth
Spike Jutsu’ to send Hinata up into the air. Hinata’s technique dispersed and she fell like a rock back
to earth. She fell down, right next to Naruto on her back.

Hinata looked up in pain as Anko smiled in victory, “You lose brats.”

Scene VII

The battered girls were now in front of Anko and Kurenai, with thoughts of failure. They did
not last thirty minutes as they were supposed to. They hoped it did not mean they were going to be
sent back to the academy. Therefore, they were caught by surprise when Kurenai announced, “We
are definitely proud of you girls and pleased to say you three passed with flying colors.”

“But we didn’t last thirty minutes,” Naruto stated in shock.

“And you weren’t meant to,” Anko stated a cocky smirk. “I am too skilled to lose.”
“I actually expected you to last ten minutes,” Kurenai explained before dishing out a playful jab at Anko. “I guess Anko’s skills are beginning to rust.”

Anko stuck her tongue out in response before turning her attention back to the girls, “Though you did well, we did see some glaring weakness. However, it is nothing that a few weeks of training won’t fix. And if my skills are as rusty as you think Kurenai, I am sure my sparring with the brats will help improve my skills,” Anko smiled while she sent chills through the girls’ spines at the thought of weeks of daily fights with Anko.

“Report tomorrow at 0800 for training and missions, alright dismissed,” Kurenai ordered before she disappeared with Anko, leaving the girls alone.

“I am not looking forward to tomorrow,” Tukiko stated with a straight face.

“At least you don’t live with them,” Naruto pointed out.

Hinata gave a reassuring pat before the girls dispersed. Going separate ways home, with a small smile on their faces as they felt they were one-step closer to their careers and one-step closer to what Colonel Nine of Nine had hoped would be Naruto’s future.

Scene VIII

In the Hokage office, the old man Sarutobi was going over the files to determine a timetable for each passing team, starting with the worst. Team 7 passed more out of pity and pressure from the Council. Therefore, they would not get a C-rank mission for three months at least. Next was Team 8 and 10, both teams were flawed but nothing that could not be overcome, so they were put on two months of D-rank. However, it was Team 6 and 13 that would be the stars, especially Team 13. The skill he saw and the reports showed the two teams would be nothing short of legends. He put them down with the minimal time of D-rank missions, a month.

After all, he wanted to see what his actual star teams could do once they were a regular part of his forces. Sarutobi had a good feeling and planned to tell Kushina how proud he was of her daughter in his next exchange of letters. The future has begun for the next generation of ninjas, may it look better than ones may beforehand.

Chapter End Notes

Done, hope you enjoy this chapter, and I greatly appreciate it if you review it. Do not be shy.
Scene I

It has been boring for Team 13, as they finished their month of D-rank missions. They were itching for excitement, but they held their mouths and waited patiently for their first actual mission. It all paid off as they were in front of the Hokage to receive their first C-rank mission. Well, that was the plan until the Hokage informed them that they were needed for another mission that was of a higher rank.

"You're sending us on a B-rank mission?" Tukiko asked the Hokage in shock.

"Yes, you were requested by the Nature, Roth and Inferno Clans to help Team 6 for a delicate mission," Sarutobi explained. "It's really a C-rank mission skill-wise, but it was bumped up a rank due to the fact it is a diplomat mission."

"What is this mission exactly?" Anko asked in annoyance of taking a mission that was higher than it should be, especially since it was a diplomatic mission instead of a combat-related mission.

"To have the Seer clan join Leaf forces," a fiery voice replied from behind them.

Team 13 turned to see Team 6 walked in. The Jōnin was an intemperate dark-skinned man, who was jolly, yet quick to anger as he gently rubbed his blue tipped, red hair. A fascinating man but the Genin of Team 13 was not interested in the Jōnin. They were interested in Genin from Team 6, the friends they made during the academy.

"Night Wolf, Revan, Bastila, it's good to see you again," Naruto waved over her friends since the academy day.

Night Wolf, the only Genin male of Team 6 returned the smile. "Hello Naruto, it's good to see you again."

Night Wolf had not changed drastically since they were kids. He was tall, a muscular young adult with a dark tan formed due to his constant training outdoors. His brown robes were tight because loose-fitting garments were a problem in combat. He had long, thin white hair that gave him a wild horse look instead of a feminine look match by his white silted black eyes that had a fire of strength. A fire that has grown since the Uchiha kidnapped his sister, and the clan responsible was 'unofficial' executed in what is now known as the Uchiha massacre.

To his left was Bastila Roth, who was quickly catching up with Tukiko and Hinata. Bastila was a very athletic girl that wore padded armor that resembled white robes. However, her disposition demonstrated in her brown hair that tied in a messy court style. Bastila was a stickler for rules most of
the time, but she was also fun-loving and free-spirited. She was not afraid to break the rules when
she felt it was the right thing to do. The same cannot be said for her sister Revan, who occasionally
joined in the conversation to give an opinion or two.

Compared to her two teammates, Revan actually looked frail. She wore a thin black robe and was
very feminine, with a young, petite, slim body. She also had long purple hair that was brushed
heavily. However, if you looked into her green eyes, you could see they were powerful, cold
calculating eyes, unlike Bastila's warm purple eyes or Night Wolf's fiery eyes. They were the eyes of
a brilliant strategist that cared for the people who she commanded, but she was willing to sacrifice
them if the situation warranted for the greater good of the many. She oozed of power unlike the other
two.

"Good to see you catching up with your friends. But we really need to get back to the mission I am
about to send you all on," the Hokage smiled as he lit his pipe. "Team 6, would you brief Team 13
for me?"

Team 6 bowed before the Genin began to explain the situation, "Before we joined Konoha, there
was a three-way alliance between the Nature clan, Roth clan and a clan known as the Seer Clan,"
Night Wolf explained.

"I've never heard of the Seer Clan?" Tukiko asked.

"They are an ancient clan and one of the most powerful in the world," Revan explained in a cold
voice. "They have a bloodline that allowed them to analyze their surroundings to actuary predict the
outcome of a situation, or battle. They can even change the outcome of such a situation if given
enough warning. The most powerful were able to see how a war ends before it even begins with
pinpoint accuracy."

"They might as well have been oracles," Bastila joked. "They are certainly more accurate than the
gypsy ladies you have to pay coins to read your fortune."

"Anyway, when our clans decided to settle in Konoha, they opted out of being a member of any
village," Night Wolf continued to explain. "They explained that they did not want to get involved
with the future Shinobi Wars. We respected their wishes but still kept ties with the clan. They even
allowed us to hire one of their clansmen during times of war as the rest say out of the fighting."

"What changed to make them join the leaf?" Naruto asked with a raised eyebrow.

"The Seer Clans will soon need to pick a side as they predicted that Rock Forces are going to put
pressure on them to join them, on urges from a rival of my clan, the Kokuei clan," Bastila explained.

"The Kokuei Clan?" Tukiko asked.

"The Kokuei clan is the darker cousin of the Roth clan. While we used pure chakra collected from
around us, they used corrupted chakra that allows them to poison their victim's chakra network, if not
kill them," Revan explained. "They've also been a pain to the Roth Clan since our clan separated
from the samurai clans in Iron Country."

"Why are we involved?" Hinata asked, remembering her lessons as a clan heiress. "This should be
handled by Fire Country's diplomat corps and ninja protection of Jōnin level."

"Normally yes, but this is an exception for several reasons," Jōnin Inferno spoke for the first time.
"First, this is just between our village and the Seer Clan, not Fire Country as a whole. Second,
despite appearances, this should be a relatively easy mission."
"And finally, the clan judges strength not by how powerful a group is now, but how powerful they will become in the future," Bastila added for her teacher.

"That means showing off not only what the best, green Genin can do, but academy students as well," Revan explained with a bit of cold logic.

The room was quiet when Naruto asked, "Which students?"

The Hokage answered Naruto by pulling out a phone to his secretary and ordering him to, "Send them in."

The door opened to reveal three students, escorted by the scar nose Chūnin Iruka, their former teacher. All three were kids they recognized. One was the black-haired, steely-eyed girl that was Hinata's little sister, Hanabi. The second was a green-haired girl that had idolized the girls when they saved her during the Uchiha massacre. A girl that became a mini-Naruto from the green version coat she wore, and even took to a private pastime that Naruto indulges in from time to time, playing pranks on people. However, unlike Fox Spirit, Naruto never gotten caught with the few jokes she played. Though it may be because she works with the final child, a small boy named Konohamaru. A boy that spends more time making pranks then strategize, as he was out to make an impression to seem more than a younger dark-haired version of his grandfather, the Hokage.

Since he was related to the Hokage, very few people could see him like him, and he was pressured by private teachers to believe he was better than all the other children were. He was well on the way to becoming a brat until he met Naruto and her friends. They knocked some sense into the kid and treated him as just another person instead of royalty. This led to admiration on his part and a joke he would marry Naruto when he was older while calming he would be 'Hokage.' Tukiko never let it go while Hinata giggled at first before she developed a disturbed look.

However, that was the past as Fox Spirit, and Konohamaru made Naruto twitch as the two yelled out, "Big Fox-sis!"

They ran over to Naruto before jumped on her to give a huge hug. Naruto almost fell while Hanabi went over to bow to her sister with respect. It was a touching sight to everyone, but the Hokage had to stop. He had waved them off to start their mission, "Now off you go and remember to travel heavily armed, just in case the clan wants you to be tested."

When the students heard they needed to be 'heavily armed, the three, even Hanabi got stars in their eyes. Fox Spirit eyes shine like two giant globes as she asked, "Does that mean we are going to be armed for this mission?"

The Hokage face paled, especially as Naruto eyes sparkled with mischief as she declared, "Sure, I mean we can't let you be unarmed on such an important mission. I will provide you with some weapons when you leave."

The three children screamed in excitement as they ran out while Sarutobi noticeably paled. As the group left to get ready, Hinata went to ask Naruto, "Are you really going to arm those three?"

"Don't worry, any guns I will hand out will use the old police sonic weapons," Naruto reassured Hinata. "All those weapons can do is knock your opponents off their feet. I just planned on the kids have the feel of a pistol or rifle, but not enough firepower to cause any damage to each other."

"Also, to get personal revenge on Hokage for not warning us about the munchkins," Tukiko pointed out, and Naruto replied with a smile before they went to prepare for the convoy.
Scene II

On top of a ridge, three figures in dark robes were discussing their attack on the Seer clan while staying ahead of the Leaf-nins that are coming. Summing up the discussion was a pale-skinned man with wild, dangerous yellow eyes as he spoke up, "So it is agreed, we will wait for our forces to arrive the night that the Leaf-Nins arrive so we can defeat them, and submit the Seer Clan to the Kokuei Clan in one fell swoop. We may even get lucky and earn the favor of the Tsuchikage by bringing them a few new bloodlines and these new toys that the tree huggers have been using lately."

"Sir, I think this is a waste of the resources and manpower. We do not know the exact numbers and skill levels of the Seer Clan and Leaf forces. Maybe we should pull back and leave the Seer Clan alone," a dark, masculine man suggested.

"Shut up, Zokusai, we follow Lord Vatic's orders until the day he dies," a pale-skinned girl grumbled out her displeasure while her yellow-eyed gave a murderous intent toward anyone that questioned the plan.

"Sunao is right, Zokusai; you must follow my orders until the day I die. Now prepare for a battle that will set us free and defeat these tree huggers."

Scene III

It took the better half of a day for the heavy truck with the envoy to arrive at what resembled a gypsy camp filled with trained warriors and killers, instead of nomadic wonders. They were performing their day-to-day operation when the truck arrived, and the group dismounted from the vehicle to meet with the clan's leader. They did not have to wait as a blind, elderly woman as were a milky grey-white 'looked' at them as she approached the group. She was not alone as the blind woman had two young, black-haired kids, a girl and a boy by her side.

As the woman approached, she seemed to be able to see them as she bowed before them in greeting, "Hello Leaf-nins, and welcome to the Seer Camp. I am Mouai, clan head of the Seer Clan, and these are my grandchildren, Aikou and Inin (Love and Trust)."

"It's a pleasure to meet you," Kurenai stated as the three Jōnin bowed.

When they raised their heads, Anko impetuously asked, "Are you blind because you sure don't act like it?"

"Anko!" Kurenai snapped, but the elderly woman just laughed.

"It's okay, I don't mind answering the young woman's question," Mouai explained. "Yes I am blind, but due to my bloodline, my senses have become ultra-sensitive. I can 'see' the world around me by the vibrations that every object makes in the air and on the ground. I can hear things beyond the range of normal people. I can 'see' colors that even you can't see by feeling the slight differences in heat caused by the reflected light off of your bodies, especially when I am so close to you all."

The group stared in amazement at the old woman's description of her bloodline. However, Hinata was interested in the children, "Hello little ones."

"Hello, the lady who will change her clan and join with the one that will change the world forever," the twins said in unison.

Hinata looked at the children questionably while Mouai explained that the children. "Aikou and Inin are twins and are the most powerful members of this clan. With their powers and senses, they can get flashes of future events and can read situations the moment they enter a room. The only downside is
that an event far in the future is as vivid to them, as though it was a dream. Only at the right moment, they can give an outcome down to the smallest detail." Mouai looked at the children before adding, "These children also have a mental connection as though their two bodies share one mind."

"Wow, that must stink," Tukiko had commented.

"You have no idea," the twins spoke at once.

Kurenai looked at the twins before she gave some suggested orders, "Academy students, Genin, why don't you take Aikou and Inin with you while we Jōnin have a discussion with the clan leader."

"Actually, I think you may want to include your Genin in this as well," Mouai stated mystically. "We have much to discuss."

Kurenai was suspicious of the request but agreed as she told the academy students to go on. The students wanted to protest, but Naruto stopped the kids, "Don't worry, we will come to see you later and play ninja. How does that sound?"

The children nodded before they ran to the camp. Once they were out of sight, Mouai turned to Naruto to state, "You are great with kids. I bet you will be a great mother."

Naruto smiled at the compliment but also felt sad as looked at her lavender teammate. Hinata also returns the look with a smile and eyes filled with dread and hope. The two felt something for each other, but they did not know fully what it was beside the fact they wanted to be forever there for the other. They quickly pushed that aside as things became serious as Mouai brought up bad news, "Now that it was settled, I thought I should warn you that our clan is in danger."

The group looked at Mouai in shock when Inferno asked, "What do you mean in danger?"

Mouai sighed as she explained the situation, "Two months ago, Aikou and Inin predicted that our clan would be attacked by a dark rival we later would identify as the Kokuei clan." Night Wolf grimaced at the news as the Roth sisters narrowed their eyes at the thought of their archrivals.

Revan's eyes also darkened when she came to the realization, "That is why you applied for membership, to avoid being attacked."

The elderly woman nodded yes, "We knew our time of neutrality was over and it was finally time to pick a side. We thought we had enough time to avoid a fight, but the twins saw the attack will happen tonight and our scouts confirm it."

"And now you want us to help bail your asses out of the fire?" Anko asked with a snide remark.

"Correct," Mouai had answered Anko.

"Why should we help you?" Kurenai asked the elder, unsure if this was their fight. "We have academy students with us, and most of our forces are green Genin with this being their first mission. And even if we help you and succeed, the threat would be over, and we have no guarantee that you will honor our deal and our sacrifices would be worthless."

"We give you our word that if you help us protect our clan, we will willingly to join the Leaf forces," Mouai stated while holding out papers. "I even have these acceptance papers and treaties that say we will join Leaf Forces for their aid, already signed." The elderly woman then smiled before she continued, "So if you want this clan to join your village, you have no choice but to help us."
"She's right," Inferno told Kurenai. "For the sake of the mission, we must help the Seer Clan."

Kurenai bitterly acknowledge Inferno and Mouai's words before asking, "Can we see your battle plans?"

Mouai nodded before pulling out a paper diagramming the clan's battle plans. The three Jōnin carefully studied the plan, adding a few suggestions before handing it to Naruto and Revan, two of the best battle strategist in the group and even better when put together. Naruto was an effects master, able to use an allies' strength and an enemies' weakness to cause maximum damage to her enemies and benefit her allies. Revan was a strategist by cause, immediately determining appropriate counters of not only enemy plans but also allies' possible mistakes/attacks as well. The combination created a new meaning to cause and effect.

"I think it would be best if I stay in the camp to snipe out the enemies and cause confusion among their ranks," Naruto suggested. "Also, if we have gunfire in multiple directions, it will make it hard to pinpoint the location of the sniper and continue the confusion while our forces move in and attack."

"We can add to the confusion from ninjas, using multiple jutsus to keep them off-balance as to who they should be fighting," Revan added. "However, once they realize what is happening, the strategy will be ineffective unless we attack the leader and kill or distract them. After the leader falls down, it will be easier to pick them off one by one within all the chaos."

The two considered each 'what if' until each contingency and counter had been made. Everything would be ready by tonight.

Scene IV

Under the illuminated blue moon, three dozen men were making their way to the Seer camp through the forest. Each wore dark clothes, and they were armed with dark swords colored by the dark chakra they produced. All of them wore a black mask ninja with the symbol of Rock Forces on their foreheads. The group slowly moved into position, never knowing they were walking into a trap. At the very top of a tower, looking over the forest was Naruto. She pulled out her sniper rifle out and activated the night vision scanner. As the ninjas moved closer, Naruto watched her prey through her scope.

As Naruto adjusted her rifle, she could hear Nine of Nine's advice, Naruto, 'Aim small, miss small, and always target the officers first.'

Naruto nodded as she aimed for one of the Jōnin at the rear. She zoomed in her scope and aimed for the space between the warrior's eyes. Naruto pulled the trigger, and a loud bang was heard. The sound echoed throughout the clearing as Naruto activated some microphones that she had jerry-rigged. It multiplied the bang sound from her gun that echoed throughout the forest.

In the forest, a Chūnin heard the bang and went to ask his commander, "Sir, what was that sound."

He turned to see the Jōnin at the rear of the line freeze in place before falling to the ground. Blood poured out of a large hole in his head, as he laid motionless on the ground. The Chūnin was about to yell for help when he heard the second shot. He turned to see the bullet escape from the back of a Jōnin's head that was in front of him and continued towards him. He could not even warn his fellow clan members before death took him within the silence.

The Kokuei clan soon descended into chaos as Vatican and Sunao lost control of their men. The total disorder was apparent as jutsus of blue fire came roaring down on their heads. A few were caught on fire and began running around, screaming before they fell on the ground, dying in agony. Several
other different types of jutsus started to descend on them, and the Kokuei returned fire in all directions, hitting some of their enemies with a lucky shot or two. That was when the Seer clan shinobi began to move in on the enemy, using their bloodlines to their fullest effect.

The Seer bloodline allowed them to predict enemy movements, strike in places where the enemy moved just as they arrived, and avoid deadly attacks before they happened. However, their abilities did not always help them. Some attacks were unavoidable. Other times, their opponents were too skilled, or they had predicted movements too far ahead in the kayos of combat. It was equal parts hell for both sides as the fighting increased among the two. The wounded and dead risen to equal levels when the Leaf-nins moved in to provide aid.

At the top of the tower, Naruto had just killed another member of the Kokuei clan when she saw some movement in the dark. She looked down to see a ninja behind the lines. He was sneaking in at speeds she could barely keep up with her rifle's scope before he hid among the tents. She knew that this man would cause trouble, so she reported it in before she gives chase.

'You think that is a good idea Naruto?' the Nine of Nine asked in her thoughts.

'No, but we can't let him go as he pleases, especially since he can cause a lot of damage,' Naruto then looked to a tent where she believed the man was heading. 'I will not allow him to harm the munchkins.' The argument was over as Naruto went to the tent, with her swords out.

Scene V

In the woods, the Jōnin got Naruto's message, but could not do anything as the fighting had become fierce as Lord Vatican and a woman named Sunao was tearing through the lines. "Alright we need to get those two to end this battle, so let's get them and then help Naruto!" Anko ordered the three Jōnin charged.

Kurenai looked behind her to see two of her students among four Seer Clan shinobi. She was proud, watching Tukiko use genjutsu to trap her opponents and take them out, only flinching briefly after each kill. Hinata on the other hand, stayed behind, patching up wounded while she kept-up her guard to protect them with a vicious streak. One that an enemy shinobi found out the hard way as his chakra points were closed and his muscle tandems were torn. He was efficiently disabled for days if not weeks without medical aid under Hinata's compassion. Hinata does not like to kill if it was possible, but that does not mean she will not hurt them.

Kurenai felt pride for her two students before turning to see Lord Vatican and Sunao heading towards Inferno's students. The three Genin seemed to be cornered by four enemy-nins when Revan sprung her trap. Night Wolf was the first to strike as he used 'Spirit Summon Jutsu' to summon his spirit animal, a white wolf made of wind with eyes that gleamed black. It was formed under a gust of wind that encased Night Wolf. From head to toe, he was protected by a cyclone of wind that kept him safe as his wolf dashed at one of the ninjas. The wolf attack was at a startling pace, shredding its opponent to pieces as it ran through the enemy like a train through a paper wall and that was only the beginning. As following the attack, Night Wolf used his wind manipulation to gain speed as he moved to attack the enemy. He avoided his target's sword strikes, getting through the man's defenses for an open palm strike at the chest. The concentration of blunt force and wind sent the man flying before he collapsed to the ground in pain while the other two were taken down by Revan and Bastila.

Bastila used a double yellow-bladed energy sword to cut the man's arms off, after getting under the man's guard while her sister used subtlety. Revan waited until the man attacked with a corrupted blast, where she used her green blade to deflect the blast back to the surprised man. She then
presented an open palm to send a burst of pure chakra that followed up the corrupt chakra. Both hit the man as the ninja rolled on the ground in pain. He was the last of four enemy ninjas were taken out, three incapacitated and one killed. However, victory was short lived when two figures arrived on the scene to show their discontent at the situation.

One of the defeated Kokuei raised up his only arm not mangled to state with authority, "Lord Vatic."

Lord Vatic was not amused as he stated, "How could you lose to these tree huggers, especially to these want-to-be samurais and this hippy boy." The man growled before he looked at his men, "When we get back, you will be in the pit for hours."

"My, lord, while they may have failed, look at this as an opportunity sir. We can earn favor as bring Iwa all these bloodlines bring great victory," Sunao stated.

The man smile as he agreed with his subordinate, "Yes, as capturing the Hyūga, Uchiha and even these three hugger children will help us gain more influence with that pathetic old man of a Kage once we deliver to him our prize."

"You will not touch any of them!" a feminine voice echoed through the clearing.

Lord Vatic turned to see snakes heading their way while Sunao evaded a blue fireball. Jumping into the clearing was three Leaf Jōnins while their Genin took the opportunity to retreat. Lord Vatic grinned at the three leaf-nins facing him.

"Well, well. We seem to have the three strongest ninjas from the Leaf-nins here to greet us. There is a high bounty on your heads in my village's Bingo Book, I look forward to collecting." Vatic then pointed them out, "We have the 'Snake Mistress,' Anko Mitarashi with her partner 'the Genjutsu Mistress,' Kurenai Yūhi. We also have the 'Blue Flame' Inferno Pyro." The man gave a bloodthirsty smile before pulling out a stick similar to the Roth Clan, "I can't say it is an honor to meet you three, but it will be a greater honor to kill you." Vatican yelled as he channeled chakra, and a black blade appeared while Sunao summoned a double-bladed red sword.

Inferno went through a couple of hand signs and called out, 'Blaze Style: Fireball Jutsu,' to initiate the first strike. Sunao evaded the blue fireball as Inferno pulled out two kunai and channeled chakra into them to generate blue flames. Inferno charged at Sunao with the intent to kill, and they engaged in an all-out battle. They spent most of the fight paring and evading each other with the occasional blue flames or corrupt chakra blast as tried to land a blow on each other. They were fighting a battle of life and death, and neither one of them had the advantage over the other.

Meanwhile, Anko pursued Vatic in all-out battle as she parried with chakra infused kunai before she used 'Snake Hands Jutsu' to latch onto her target. She tried to grab him with her snakes, but Vatic proved to be superior in close quarter combat. Vatic destroyed Anko's snakes and was about to go in for the kill when Anko disappeared through Kurenai's 'Chameleon Jutsu.' Vatic turned his attention to see Kurenai had backed Anko up and sent several blasts of corrupt chakras at her. This made Kurenai drop the jutsu in favor of evading the attack and moving away. However, it was too late for Vatic as Anko maneuvered behind him and shot his legs out with her shotgun. The man screamed out in shock as he fell to the ground, blood dripping from the open wound in his leg.

Anko was about to show mercy with her gun when Vatic laughed at her, "You think you have me, bitches. Well, I do not need my legs to beat weaklings like you two!"

Anko sneered as a sadistic smile passed over her face, "You know, I was going to end you humanely; but after that comment, I am going to make your miserable life drag on and on in the most painful way before you die."
After Anko's speech, she used 'Coral Poison Snake Jutsu' to exact her kill. The jutsu created several larger red, yellow and black banded snakes that came out of her sleeves towards her targets. The snakes reached their target and bit into the defiant Lord Vatic could not move to stop it. He screamed as the coral snakes' poison was delivered into his neck, via puncher marks. The venom quickly coursed through his body with deadly result. It took several minutes for him to suffer an agonizing death, unable to move or stop the pain from the poison injected in him until he knew no more as the world became black before he reaches Hell's gates.

Once Lord Vatic was dead, Anko's snakes off her adrenaline while Kurenai calmed her best friend down. They then heard a snap and turned to see a tired Inferno with his burnt prisoner. "We got him!" Kurenai exclaimed as Anko patted herself on the back.

"Good for you. Please ignore the fact I have defeated my opponent as well," Inferno stated while presenting his conscious prisoner.

"Lord Vatic?" Sunao whispered in shock that their lord was dead as the fighting continued around them.

Tired of the needless death, Anko grabbed Sunao pulling her up and placing a kunai to the woman's throat, "Call off the attack."

"I can't," Sunao told the Jōnin in a hollowed tone. "Only our clan's Lord can order a retreat. With Lord Vatican dead, only our new lord, Lord Zokusai can order us to stop."

"Where is this Lord Zokusai?" Inferno demanded, and Sunao gave him the answers he needed.

"He was ordered to infiltrate the Seer camp to find some of the children and take them hostage to force the Seer Clan and Leaf forces to surrender."

"Shit! Let's go," Anko had ordered as they ran to the camp.

Scene VI

While the Leaf Jōnin rushed to the camp with their prisoner, Zokusai Kokuei had infiltrated deep into the enemy camp with the purpose of kidnapping some of the clan's children to be used as leverage to force the enemy to surrender. Zokusai thought it would be an easy task compared to being on the frontlines, though he wished he were on the frontlines for he found the mission deplorable. Though he found out it was not easy when he opened the tent flap and faced the barrels of three sonic guns. He was sent flying out of the tent by a sonic blast. As Zokusai got up, he realized that going through the entrance would just get him hit again, so he decided to attack from above.

The academy students did not see the attack from above until a purple blade cut through the top of the tent above their heads. The children were then hit by a corrupt chakra blast from Zokusai before they could react. The blast was purposely not strong enough to kill the kids, but they were extremely weakened and unable to get up due to the corrupt chakra. The academy students barely had enough energy to watch as Zokusai stood over them. Their hearts were racing until he turned to the twins that were at the other end of the tent. The twins calmly stared down at Zokusai in a way that suggests they knew something big was going to happen to him.

Zokusai was not sure what to make of it, so he decided to be friendly to get them to come with him, "You knew I was going to attack from above, right?" Their silence was all the answer he needed, "Too bad you weren't able to warn the others in time. You must be powerful to see that far with your bloodline. Most impressive, I give my respect to you."
Zokusai bowed with a broad smile before he rose up to give the children an ultimatum, "Now, come with me, and I promise you I won't hurt you. Otherwise, you will be in a world of pain, assuming I let you live."

The twins did not move as they spoke in once, "Do not assume you have achieved victory, as it can be taken by an unknown force and strength that only now will make themselves known."

Zokusai was confused by what they meant until he looked at the disabled Leaf Academy students on the ground. One was a black-haired Hyūga, and the other was a brown-haired brat that looked like the Third Hokage. Both groaned as if they were deathly ill, but there were only those two children. The little girl with green hair was missing, and that made him worry. His worry turned to shock as he spotted the girl running towards a bush. It became anger when the girl grabbed onto the bush's branch and channeled her spirit's chakra into the bush. The bush grew several times over as its roots broke the ground underneath Zokusai and grabbed the man's four limbs. The plant's roots now held him tightly while Fox Spirit lay on the ground, exhausted from her control of the pants.

Zokusai was enraged that he had allowed a small child to delay him, as he struggled against the vines. He was about to summon his corrupt chakra to make the roots rot and break. However, he stops when he felt and saw two orange bladed swords crossed his neck. Blades held by a blond-haired girl that had eyes, eyes that resembled a beautiful, multi-color star. Naruto had the man where she wanted him, and he could not do a thing about it, as any sudden movement with her blades would cross. It would be an instant kill with minimal effort, and the only reason he was still alive was the fact she heard movement outside the tent and decided to wait to see who came.

Naruto turned to see her teachers run in with their own prisoner that made Zokusai gasp, "Sunao?"

"Lord Zokusai," Sunao bowed within restraints to show respect to her new leader. "Lord Vatic is dead. What are your orders, my Lord?"

Zokusai sighed as he mumbled aloud, "I knew this was a bad idea." Zokusai then shot out orders, "I order a full retreat, assuming this vixen will let me go."

Naruto stared at the man before pulling her swords free from Zokusai's neck while the Jōnin let Sunao go. The young Genin then jumped back to summoned five shadow clones helped the children while she stood in front of Zokusai. Zokusai just stood there before he summoned corrupt chakra to the bush holding him in place, leaving nothing but rotten wood and dissolved leaves. Lord Zokusai Kokusai was released, and he was stretching his muscles, as his eyes remained alert. He then signaled Sunao to leave and tell the men to retreat. All the while Zokusai stared at Genin with her swords and sniper rifle on her back.

He continued to stare even as the Jōnin backed her up is when Zokusai finally spoke up to the girl, "I recognized the three Jōnins but not you Genin. Who are you?"

Naruto stared at the man before she gave an answer, "My name is Naruto Ryū, Genin of Konoha and inventor for leaf forces."

Zokusai formed a sinister smile before bowing at Naruto, "My thanks for letting me go despite the killing of so many of my own men with that oversize pea shooter on your back. And now that I give you my thanks for your mercy, and I bid you farewell, my deadly Kitsune Assassin."

Zokusai disappeared in a black flash as Naruto stared at the smeared ground in anger. It was only Nine of Nine's voice that snapped her out of her funk, 'Naruto, ignore the man. You have children need you.'
Naruto shook her head and ordered her clones to bring the academy students up to be treated. They either had chakra sickness or for Fox Spirit, chakra exhaustion. Fox Spirit was the only one that could respond as she mumbled, "Fox-sis."

"Don't worry munchkin; I got you," Naruto's clone stated while taking Fox Spirit out of the tent.

Naruto was about to leave too when the twins asked simultaneously, "Can we please go with you."

Naruto only nodded slowly as she had her clones take them with her. She spent the night with them, as their guardian angel.

Scene VII

It was a slow trip going home as Naruto looked out the truck window to see horse-drawn wagons following the truck convoy. Behind Naruto were five kids that needed sleep. All of them accepted Fox Spirit refused to sleep last night because they were too sick or scared. Naruto stayed up all night with them until they finally fell asleep and she was able to briefly sleep for four hours. She was now in the back of the truck, watching over her charges as they drove back to Konoha. As the scenery passed by her and the convoy, she sensed a friend approached from behind her.

"Hey, Hinata, how are you?" Naruto asked her friend, who did not look shocked that Naruto was able to recognize her without even looking.

"Fine," Hinata greeted her friend with a tired smiled. "They didn't hurt me, and I didn't exert myself too badly."

"What about Tukiko? Is she fine?" Naruto asked Hinata.

"She doing well thanks to Kurenai helping her deal with the stress of the full combat that we had to deal with," Hinata explained. "Not that she needed much help in dealing with the death, having killed one of her own clansmen."

"What about Anko?" Naruto inquired. "I thought she claimed she would help Tukiko."

"Well, I am not sure if Anko is helping Tukiko, or making it harder for Kurenai," Hinata joked as Naruto giggled.

"Yeah, I can't see Anko's sadistic approach being helpful," Naruto had added with a giggle. "What about Team 6? Are Bastila, Night Wolf, and Raven fine?"

"They are fine as their clan teachings will help them understand that first kills is a natural order of their carrier." Hinata nodded sadly before asking, "What about you Naruto? Are you alright?"

"I am fine, this wasn't my first kill," Naruto explained as she remembered the moment she killed her traitorous teacher Mizuki so many years ago. "When I killed four people last night, I was numb. I didn't feel anything. (Sigh) Maybe it is true what they say, that killing someone makes you lose an important part of yourself."

It was quiet until Hinata broke the silence, "I don't think you lost anything. You still care about life, about others that are important to you. You just learn how to shut your emotions off when you need to and when to pull yourself back when it is time to show emotions." Hinata looked at the ground before she added, "In many ways, I wish I could be like you, a strong inventor that builds things for a better tomorrow."

"And I wish I could be like," Naruto told Hinata. "To have a pure, caring soul of a healer instead of
an obsessive builder that doesn't know how to stop. Nothing is greater than being able to preserve something that science can't build and be able to try with all your heart."

Hinata smiled as she sat down and leaned against Naruto, "I guess we both are something we want to be in the end. Maybe that is why we are friends. We complete each other."

Naruto smiled as she embraced her friend, "Yeah, I guess we are."

Within Naruto's mind, Nine of Nine took a mental picture of the scene as she whispered, 'Appreciate the warmth Naru, for it's these times which you will cherish in the end.'

Scene VIII

In a tall tower of the Hokage office, Sarutobi was looking over his village, thinking back to when the Seer Clan had first come. How it was a simple thing to set them up in the village, that was at least until the two children gave him their little prophesy.

Flashback

The Hokage was signing the last bit of the papers that would officially accept the clan into their village when the twin children came up to him and gave him their prediction of the future, "A Snake lays hidden and plans to attack the leaves as the Elemental's attention is on the arena. He plans and plots to burn the leaf while plucking a copy wheel and a precious star out the pile. As the snake slithers, the whirlpool also comes during the confusion to consume the precious star that the snake wants for himself, and so the two will fight the leaves. All the while, a family will unite to help change the world for the better as they prepare for the biggest wars to come since the war with the old machines," the two finished as the Hokage almost had a panic attack.

"What are these children talking about?" The Hokage asked.

"I am sorry Hokage-Sama, these are very powerful seers, and they can see things months to years ahead before we can see it," Mouai answered the Hokage.

"I understand," the Hokage had sighed as he looked out the window while the Seer clan left to settle within the village.

End Flashback

"Looks like the Uzumaki Clan and my former student will make their move soon. I need to make preparation for protecting the Uchiha Clan members, Naruto and Konoha," Hokage said as he signed the papers signifying the village was now on yellow alert. "Looks like retirement will not be coming any time soon. Best prepare for the worst," Sarutobi added before turning into deep thought as he prepares for what lies ahead.

Chapter End Notes

Done, I hope that you enjoyed the sixth chapter of the exciting Naruto the Elemental Star story. Please review and tell me what you think or Naruto will snipe you.
It was a quiet, beautiful fall afternoon as Naruto reminisced about a critical discovery she found thanks to Colonel Nine of Nine during one of her breaks between missions and the exhausting training Anko and Kurenai had put them through.

Flashback

'Nine, why do you want me in this area,' Naruto asked Nine of Nine mentally while searching a cave near Konoha

'There is something very special hidden here Naru-chan,' Nine of Nine told Naruto. 'A scroll that belonging to an alliance between two summonable animals.'

'An Alliance? What alliance and with who?' Naruto asked excitedly as she continued the search

'It belonged to the Canine Alliance, an alliance between summoned foxes and wolves,' Colonel Nine of Nine explained.

Naruto eyes widen as she pulled out a box that was hidden in a niche underneath the rocks. "How did you know about it?" Naruto asked aloud, as she opened the box.

'These summoned animals, along with a few others have been close allies of mine since their ancestors were created during the war,' Nine of Nine explained as Naruto pulled out a thick scroll. Once Naruto had the scroll secured in her arms, Naruto walked out of the cave while Nine of Nine continued to explain, 'As they gained power and intelligence, they soon left this plan and transported their whole kind to their new homes within pocket dimensions that are now known as the Summoning Planes. In addition, like other summoned animals, they created summoning contract scrolls for humans to find. But there were so well hidden that no one found the scroll, until now.'

Naruto nodded and began to sign the scroll while she asked mentally, 'Now what makes these summons so special besides their connection between the two species.'

'Well, they are considered the most powerful summons in the world, and a multifunctional one as well,' Nine of Nine explained with pride. 'They share techniques and power, and at least one of each member had mastered a ninja aspect. The most powerful had mastered several aspects.'

'Well then, let us see if they are willing to be allies,' Naruto told Nine of Nine mentally while going through the hand signs.
'Just tell them my name, and you will gain your own allies,' Nine of Nine told Naruto.

Naruto nodded as she performed the summoning ritual, and two puffs of smoke appeared before Naruto. The smoke revealed two giants in front of her, here to see their new summoner.

End Flashback

Naruto smiled at the memory of her new allies, as she was sure they would come in handy on the difficult missions that were to come. Naruto offered to let her fellow Genin sign the contract, but they could not due to prior arrangements with clans and did not have enough chakra to summon a high-level one. However, it did not stop Anko from training all three how to summon in between D-rank missions to earn enough points for their next C-rank mission.

They were excited, as anything was better than D-rank missions and a record to keep as they had already completed not only the one B-rank that was borderline, but also three C-rank missions: wiping out a bandit camp, establishing a farming town, and conducting a border patrol for a town near Rock Country. It was in the two of the three missions, the bandit mission, and the border patrol, that assured Naruto's title, 'Elemental Kitsune Assassin,' would stick as she took down targets with a mentality that was out of sight, out of mind. During these missions, the girls also gained titles and their own pages in the Bingo Book. Hinata was known as the 'Lavender Bladed Healer' while Tukiko was known as the 'Fire Mistress.' Their team was also the first to earn their own nickname among their class, Team Vixen. The girls were becoming famous outside of the village and became the career boost they needed as they marched into the Hokage's office for their next assignment.

They were going to pick their next mission when they were interrupted by a shrilly-loud voice from a pink-haired girl with a broad forehead named Sakura. A skinny green-eyed fangirl, who had bashed her way into the room with her teammates to complain, "Why hasn't Sasuke-Kun been on a C-rank mission while all the others went on at least one high ranking mission a month ago? Isn't that right Sasuke?"

"Hn," Sasuke, an emo boy with black hair shaped like a roster's rear, snarled in agreement while encouraging his fan-girl to speak up while getting what he wants, though Sakura took it a bit far.

"Yeah, the bitch and hippy team were the first to go out to do field mission, and now all losers go as well? How is that fair?" Sakura snapped, not realizing she had dug her own grave.

"Actually, your team doesn't get higher missions because your team is the one filled with losers," Tukiko said slowly to gain the attention of Team 7, though only Sakura was sweating as Sasuke just looked annoyed.

"Especially a pink hollower that does not know to keep quiet," Hinata added slowly as she looked at the calm newcomer.

"Hey… Naruto, Hinata, Tukiko… what are you doing here?" Sakura asked nervously, as she slowly turned to face the other team.

"We are getting our next mission, and it will be out of the village. By the way, who are this bitch team, the hippy team, and the losers again?" Naruto asked in a cold voice that stopped Sakura cold and made her feel small for letting Sasuke wind her up.

It was at that moment that a pale-skinned boy named Sai walked-up in tight-fitting black clothes. "Hello, my name is Sai, and you girls must be from Team Vixen."

"You know of us?" Tukiko asked.
"Yes, I certainly have heard of you. I take pleasure in knowing beautiful but deadly female ninjas. Deadly ninjas are the best to paint and draw. Can I draw you three and your senseis?" Sai asked the group, who raised their eyebrows in response. "I've read you should always ask for someone's permission before you actually do something like drawing them."

"Um no, we don't mind," Hinata answered, unsure how to react to Sai.

"Excellent!" Sai exclaimed before sitting down to start drawing while Sakura looks pissed.

"Why? Why would he them and not me or Sasuke?" Sakura screeched.

"Of course, I want to draw strong, beautiful warriors instead of weak, pink, man-whores, and the emo, avenger wannabes," Sai stated without a hint of fear. Sakura face was red with rage as she moved to beat Sai to a pulp, but Kakashi put a halt to the confrontation while he hid his embarrassment behind his little orange book and his mask that covered most of his face.

"I'm beginning to like this guy," Tukiko smirked at Sakura.

"Yeah, as long as he does not insult you," Naruto stated.

"Quiet!" The Hokage yelled to quell the mess that was Team 7. "Team 7, this is why you do not get a solo C-rank mission because you are the worst team of this year. You do not seem to understand what a team is supposed to look like. Well, that changes now, Team 13, you are assigned to babysit and teach Team 7 on how a team really works together. You also will be assisting Team 7 in protecting Tazuna in Wave Country from bandits as he builds a bridge from his island to the mainland in Fire Country that has the potential to drum up trade with the various fishing islands found in Wave Country and beyond."

"What! But Hokage-Sama!" Anko lamented at the prospect of a babysitting mission.

"They need an example; otherwise I will have to scrap the team. I really do not want the paperwork and headache for dispensing the team," the Hokage explained. "Besides, while I can't prove it, I know it was your team who turned the Civilian Council's clothing pink for trying to push your team around after your B-Rank mission with the Seer clan."

The team smiled nervously at being called out, as Sarutobi took a puff out his pipe before he barked out orders, "So consider this as punishment. Bring in the client!"

The door opened to reveal a grouchy old drunk man with a brown jug filled with homemade liquor. "What? I get six brats, a mealy scarecrow of a man, and two women. I wanted escorts, not sniveling vagrants."

Tazuna was going to take a swig of his brew, but Naruto pulled out a gun and shot the jug. The jug lay shattered on the ground, in a puddle of smelly hooch. The man quivered as Naruto spoke with dark malice, "Maybe if you weren't a drunk, you'd notice that you just insulted three Jōnin and several heavily armed Genin. That means if the Genin doesn't kill you, the Jōnin will before you even know it."

Tazuna was now sweating profusely and got on his knees to beg for forgiveness while the Hokage sighed in annoyance, "Naru-chan, don't scare the clients."

"I will not as long as he doesn't question the skills my friends and me," Naruto told her commander and chief.

"Tazuna, don't worry, we will let the insult slide and protect you," Anko reassured the old man as he
regained his feet and haughtiness.

"You better, for I, the Super Bridge Builder Tazuna expect you protect me with your lives," the drunk hiccupped as he strutted out of the office.

"Like that drunk needs protection," Sasuke snapped at the retreating old man as Sakura quivered in anger.

"Sasuke…” Tukiko whispered in a dangerous tone.

"Yes, Tukiko?” Sasuke asked in a bored tone.

"Perhaps you should be quite like no one at the moment cares what you think," Tukiko pointed out, much to Sasuke's smoldering anger.

He was about to shoot off a retort, but Naruto switched subject as she presented her idea to the Hokage. "Hokage-Sama, since the trip to Wave is a long one, can we use Fox Shadow for the trip. She's prepped and ready for a test flight. Taking her out would ensure your paperwork wouldn't double due to… disturbances;" Naruto suggested in a way that reminded Sarutobi of her mother, an avid prankster that Naruto inherited despite not growing up as one out of a dozen unconfirmed cases.

It was worrying to others that the Hokage quickly complied, "Very well, you have my permission, now go!"

It was that moment that Anko had taken commanded, "Alright teams, meet us at the west gate. Pack lightly," Anko, ordered while staring down the fangirl, Sakura. Sakura gulped as she went pack a few light things, a few things for her anyway. After all, beauty products are light, right?

Scene II

It was an amusing hour for most of the Genin as they watched Anko tear apart Sakura for packing ten pounds of beauty products. Especially since her excuse was to, "Look beautiful." Anko had no patience for fan girls or boys that rushed into battle without a thought for perpetration. Such actions generally get them and others killed. After destroying every unpractical piece of clothing and product Sakura had brought with her, something appeared from behind them. It was a Phantom Attack Fighter named the Fox Shadow.

The Fox Shadow was a fighter with a long neck extended from the body of the aircraft to end in the cockpit that held a small laser gun. The main body of the fighter, where the main engine was housed, was a circle bottom with a raised triangle body that rose from back to front. To each side was a long blade-like wing that swept down not unlike a falcon's wings, though unlike a flacon's wings was not a thin blade to cut metal for close fighter pass by. Near the main body on each wing were canons that fired accelerated bullets. At the very bottom were torpedo bay doors, landing gears and a ladder leading to a hatch for climbing in and out of the hatch.

The hatch opened, and Hinata slid down the ladder to wave them all in before climbing back up the ladder. The ninjas entered the fighter, followed by their client. The inside was a very spacious interior that could hold bombs for a bombing mission or personal for short trip like the current mission required. As the Genin of Team 7 was assisting the client, Tanzō, get a seat before they took one, the Jōnins followed Hinata down the long neck to the cockpit.

In the cockpit was Naruto, with Tukiko as her copilot. "Systems are optimal; ETA to Wave Country is fifteen minutes," the computer told Naruto, who pressed a button to acknowledge the information.

Kakashi was actually surprised at how short the trip would be. It would have taken days to even a
week by foot to reach the Wave, and they still had to cross the ocean. Kakashi was going to enjoy the trip, or he thought until Anko asked, "What the hell is wrong with your students?"

Kakashi sighed as he pulled out his favorite book, "I really don't know. Nothing I do seem to work in bringing them together as a team. I can barely get them to train in chakra control. One doesn't want to train, another is already heavily trained, so there is nothing left to teach, and the last one doesn't have the patience to learn unless it's what he deems is a powerful killing jutsus he believe will help him match his brother. Retirement really sounds good right now."

"That still doesn't excuse you from being a lazy tech-" Kurenai started to rant, but Naruto interrupted her.

"Kurenai-sensei, I am done prepping the fighter for launch. I suggest everyone take a seat before we take off."

The Jōnin nodded as Kurenai told Kakashi with her eyes that they would discuss this later as they took their seat.

As everyone took his or her seats, Naruto contacted Leaf Command Center for permission to leave. Once she had the go-ahead, she activated the thrusters to lift the fighter up off the tarmac as the landing pads retracted. Once Shadow Fox was in the air, it made a 180-degree turn before its main engines ignited and the fighter went to supersonic speeds towards Wave Country.

Scene III

In a clearing outside a house, four ninjas were watching a fighter land near a small home in Wave Country. The four noticed that the fighter had the words, 'Shadow Fox,' painted on its side, underneath a leaf symbol. The leader, a tall, shirtless man with a huge zanbatō strapped to his back, grimaced behind his covered mask as he stared at the scene, "Yep, looks like our target has gotten Leaf-nins for protection."

"They don't look like ANBU, Zabuza-Sama," spoke a masked man sporting a gauntlet with claws. His brother, who wore similar clothing and gauntlets, nodded in agreement.

"They may not be ANBU, but I count at least three Jōnin, and the others seem familiar," Zabuza commented.

"Perhaps this is why, Zabuza-Sama," spoke a feminine voice, whose face was covered in a hunter-nin mask similar to Leaf's ANBU, but one for Mist Hunter Forces as the mask was adorned with a blank face instead of an animal.

The ninja held up a famous ninja book known as the Bingo Book, a book that contained a list of the bounties of every country. The ninja opened to a page that was marked. The page contained the bounties for Leaf-nins from several countries. Zabuza took the book to find the picture of a blond haired girl, a girl with weird eyes that resembled an elemental star with a yin-yang center. The entry revealed the girl's name was Naruto Ryū, a young girl that has bounties in every country not allied to the Leaf. The bounties were either for her knowledge in technology or for her bloodline. Earth Country wanted her dead or alive for killing several of their Rock-nins, and the Uzumaki Clan had offered the biggest bounty for her on the promise of bringing her in, alive.

"Ah, that is where I've seen that brat," Zabuza commented. "So they are the Genin squad we have heard so much about."

"Should we try to get information from and try some subtle manipulation Zabuza-Sama?" the feminine masked ninja asked before the ninja pointed out something on her mind. "I doubt they
know the exact details of the mission they were given. Otherwise, they would send ninjas meant for A-Rank, not Genin teams meant for B or C-Rank missions."

Zabuza thought it over for a moment before giving his orders, "Haku, I want you to infiltrate and scout out the Leaf-nins. See if they know the full details of their mission and if not, convince them to leave. If they plan to stay, find out about any weakness that we can exploit. I will not take on such odds unless I have no choice."

"Um, boss? Can't we just go down there and just kill the client and leave?" one of the brothers asked.

"It is not that simple, Kakashi Hatake the Copy Cat Ninja and Anko Mitarashi the Snake Mistress are considered high A-rank ninjas with a Kurenai Yūhi, a low A-rank Genjutsu Mistress as support. It would be suicide for us. That is also not including the fact we would be dealing with Genin that is Chūnin level at least. It is not a situation that we honestly can win, so getting them to leave may be our only option for success," Zabuza explained to the Demon Brothers.

Zabuza then looked down at Haku to add, "Besides, Haku will not like it that I took down a team that she has admired. Isn't that right girl?"

"Zabuza-Sama, I am willing to do whatever is required," replied the girl as she removed her mask to reveal a beautiful face, with large, dark brown eyes that glowed as she dropped her long black hair.

"I know that you will, and you haven't disappointed me yet. But that doesn't mean that I should make you do things that would hinder you if I can help it." Zabuza smiled at the girl before he barked out orders, "Now go infiltrate their ranks, try to get them to leave, and report back to me later tonight on anything you find."

Haku acknowledged her master's orders before disappearing into the mist.

Scene IV

It was early in the day as the Genin of Team Vixen began their patrol of the area while the rest got situated at the client's home. On their patrol, Team Vixen came upon a fishing village that was in a poor state. The village was far more dilapidated than a fishing/farming village should be. Vendors were either closed for business or selling their items at a forth of a price they were worth, and they were not even able to sell anything at those prices. Streets were littered with garbage, urchins and the homeless. However, what was truly peculiar were the lack of young men and women. Very few were between the ages of fifteen to thirty-five. They were either hidden or taken.

Noticing the state of the village, Tukiko could not help but comment, "Something is very wrong. Why is this village in such a deteriorated state?"

"Could there be a bandit camp nearby?" Hinata asked.

"Our client didn't mention one," Naruto commented.

Tukiko twitched as she raved, "Well, either a new threat has come, or more likely, our client is holding something back."

Naruto nodded before stating, "We will get it out of him once we finish with our patrol."

The others girls nodded as they continued their patrol around the village until a black haired girl walked into Tukiko. The girl fell down as Tukiko staggered back before she straightened herself up. Tukiko then looked down at the dark, brown-eyed girl and stared until the girl in embarrassment got up and bowed at Tukiko, "I'm sorry, I should have taken better notice of where I was going."
Tukiko gave the girl a reassuring smile before waving her off, "No it should be me that should have said sorry. You think with my training I could avoid accidents like this. My name is Tukiko by the way, and these are my friends, Naruto and Hinata."

The girl smiled as she straightened herself up. "It's no problem; I'm just glad I ran into you rather than some of the more dangerous people on this street. My name is Haku, it's a pleasure to meet you," the girl introduced herself before looking at the girls' leaf headbands. She saw them clearly on Tukiko's forehead, Hinata's neck and Naruto's right arm. "Are you three ninjas?"

"Yes we were ninjas. We are here to guard the bridge builder Tazuna while he finishes his bridge," Tukiko told the girl casually. "I must say that the bridge itself appears to be massive or at least from what we saw from a high vantage point in the air."

Haku acted wowed as she asked, "So you're here to save us?"

"Save you?" the girls asked Haku at once.

"From Gatō of course," Haku stated as she pointed towards the center of town.

In the center village square was a flagpole with three flags. One was the mangled flag of Wave Country above two flags that were fluttered in the air, intact. One had a logo that had the words, 'Gatō's Shipping Company,' while the other had the swirl of the Uzumaki.

Naruto eyes widen as Hinata asked softly, "How long have the Uzumaki and this Gatō been here?"

Haku tilted her head in confusion as she stated, "The Uzumaki own parts of the Wave Country for decades since it was a providence of Whirlpool Country before the villages were formed. They even have a small compound that operates outside of Whirlpool, and their main base is in the Southern Lowlands. Gatō, however, is the newest and hated addition to Wave Country. The elected official Wave Council brought in Gatō's company as a cheaper means to transport goods on and off the island country."

"Let me guess," Naruto growled, "it was a lie."

Haku nodded, "At first it was really cheap until he bought up all the shipping companies and brought in his own private army to prevent any new companies from starting up in Wave. From then on, he began strong-arming the people while jacking up prices to the point of desperation."

"Why?" Tukiko asked. "It wouldn't do a businessman any good to lose all his customers for short-term greed."

"I don't know why, but once Gatō got control, he couldn't be removed. The town would be worse off if the Uzumaki clan didn't help out by hiring people for labor camps down south. They are the only jobs available besides prostitution and thievery. Unfortunately, the pay isn't the best and most never return, but it's better than nothing," Haku explained as Naruto stared at the Uzumaki flag.

"Luck or planed?" Naruto muttered before she expressed her theory. "I think it is more likely that the Uzumaki is using Gatō, possibly through some backdoor deals." Naruto sighed before she painted a picture of the girls that looked worried. "Gatō would squeeze the village dry of any wealth that he adds to his own pocket with the money the Uzumaki are paying them. In return, the Uzumaki come in and hire desperate people as cannon fodder without anyone realizing that the two are partners in the end."

Haku was shocked, though not at the reasons the group thought and began to realize why the Uzumaki were leaving the team alone if they are allies of Gatō. Her shock turned to silent rage when
Tukiko added, "It is the style of a corrupt clan. The Uzumaki are the same clan that spent a lot of money to keep Water Country's Civil Wars going on to keep competition down and weakens the village. It's lucky they couldn't afford to keep giving money to Mist or the war wouldn't be winding down to an end. It does make you wonder how many villages or countries they are pulling the same scam on."

'One too many,' Nine of Nine added mentally to Naruto.

"What should we do, Naru-chan?" Hinata asked.

"We need to report this and confront a certain client for lying to us," Naruto told her teammates.

The three said their goodbyes to Haku before they disappeared in a swirl of leaves while Haku just stood there. She continued to sand until Haku sensed they were gone before she moved. She looked up to the Uzumaki flag and stared at it with a cold fury. She continued to stare until she pulled out several senbon needles in a flash and threw them at the flag, shredding it to pieces.

Thread blew in the wind as Haku silently fumed, "Zabuza-Sama will not like hearing about who we are truly serving. He will not like that we are taking blood money from a clan that continued the war in Mist."

Haku then disappeared in a swirl of Ice. Leaving the impoverished streets of Wave Country empty.

Scene V

Sitting at the table was a happy Tazuna. His beautiful daughter, Tsunami, had shown the Leaf-nins around the house and the ninja's set up defensive measures in their home with no extra cost. He was happy to hear he not only got two teams for the price of one but added defense in case bandits got passed the two A-Rank Jōnins. It was great news that got better when he was informed that only one team would actually be staying at the house while the rest stayed and ate in the fighter. This would spare his family resources that Tazuna knew was limited thanks to Gatō. Overall, it was going well, and he hoped the ninja's presence would keep him safe to finish the bridge and they would not find out he lied to them, hopefully. However, his hopes were dashed when the lavender-eyed girl named Hinata if he remembered correctly, came up and slapped him so hard that his head spun ninety degrees to the left.

"What was that-" Tazuna began to ask when Tukiko came and punched him in the face.

Tazuna spins out of his chair and onto the floor, his nose bleeding by force of the punch. He then heard Tukiko yell, "Get up!" as he looked-up into eyes red with two black swirls around the iris spin. Eyes that promised bloody murder and he had a sinking feeling why.

Tazuna was pissing himself when he heard Anko yell, "What the hell is going on?" at the Leaf-nins gathered around him.

"Anko-sensei," Naruto spoke up to get her attention, "Our client it seems has lied to us about why he hired us."

Tazuna paled as Anko waved for Naruto to continue. Naruto explained the situation and that the powerful Gatō's Shipping Industry and the Uzumaki Clan were probably involved in the state of the village. After hearing the situation, Anko grabbed Tazuna out of Tukiko's grip to scream, "Do you know what you have done?"

Tazuna paled, as his daughter Tsunami, a blue-haired beauty, feared for her father's life. His grandson, a black-haired boy in green coveralls with a white shirt and pants, hid behind Tsunami. He
decided that the Leaf-nins were scarier than Gatō and all he could do was cower.

Tazuna tried to explain himself, in hopes that he keeps his life, "I'm sorry, but I needed to hire ninjas to protect me from Gatō. We would have gone to Uzumaki first, but they have done nothing so far, so I went elsewhere."

"We," the mouse, Tsunami stammered, "We also suspected they were in it when my... husband, Kaiza... was killed by Gatō in public and the Uzumaki refused to do anything."

"I went to other villages and tried to hire ninjas to protect me, but they turned me down as I only have enough funds for a C-rank mission, so I lied to get some protection," Tazuna explained to the angry ninjas. "I thought that maybe with some ninjas, Gatō would back off in fear."

"Well, your plan failed as you painted an even bigger target on your back," Anko snarled at the man. Kurenai put a hand on Anko shoulder to calm her friend. Anko reluctantly let's go her to let go of the old man before Kurenai told off Tazuna, "Naruto is wanted alive by the Uzumaki for interrogation and breeding. Not to mention they wouldn't mind killing any Leaf-nins that get in their way. So, you have brought us into possible hostile territory that could mean life and death for not only us Jōnin, but for our Genin charges as well."

Tazuna's face paled as he got on his knees to begged, "Please don't kill me. I didn't know. I was desperate for my daughter and grandson. I couldn't fail them and leave my country to rot. I'm sorry I put you in danger."

Anko sighed as she asked her fellow Jōnin, "What now?"

"We need to contact the Hokage and inform him of the situation," Kakashi told his fellow Jōnin as he pulled out a long-range trans-radio. "I will talk to him now."

Kakashi then moved to another room to talk to the old man while the others continued to question Tazuna's family. They also discovered additional information including the location of Gatō's mansion and the Uzumaki's compound by the time that Kakashi had returned. "Well, Hokage-Sama understands the situation but regrets to inform us that we are ordered to remain here in Wave Country," Kakashi told the group, much to the protest of several of his fellow ninjas. "We had signed a contract, so we must protect Tazuna. Though Tazuna will now have to pay for a double A-rank mission for violating the contract, payable within five years if he can manage."

Tazuna nodded vigorously while his daughter gave out tears of joy, they were going to have ninja protection they desperately needed. While the two cried for victory, Hinata asked in concern, "We are going to be here alone?"

"No, an ANBU squad will come here to replace us," Kakashi told Hinata. "It will take them a week though. It seems we couldn't have picked a worse time for needing aid. All the ANBU and Jōnin that can be spared are out on a mission. He has ordered that if the mission looks to be too much for us that the Genin can leave if we desire."

The three Jōnin looked at the assorted Genin, waiting for their answers. "I'm staying," Hinata said softly. "I am not leaving my senseis in danger, and my expertise in medical procedures would be an asset."

"Ditto," Tukiko added in her agreement with Hinata. "Well, except the medical techniques, but my combat skills would help the group."

"The mission comes first," Sai said in a robotic voice.
"I am Uchiha, we don't run from danger," Sasuke stated with conviction.

Sakura nodded in agreement, even if she was full of fear about such a high-risk mission, but she would not run away in front of the love of her life or the others. She did not want to be seen as a coward. After Sakura agreed to stay, everyone turned their attention to the final girl, Naruto Ryū, formerly Naruto Uzumaki.

Naruto did not even bat an eyelash when she said, "I am staying."

"Are you sure honey?" Kurenai asked. "There is a bounty on your head and if they catch you-"

Naruto interrupted Kurenai before she continued, "I had prepared for such a scenario." Naruto then pulled down her collar to reveal a special seal around her neck, "If I am ever captured, and beyond hope of being rescued, this seal will dope me for at least twelve hours. It will also take away my free will that held another seal in check held a… a special type of chakra I hold due to a condition. Without my will, nothing will be able to contain it, and it would flood my entire system with foreign chakra that will turn my mind and body into a smoldering crisp."

'Plus, freeing… me… will allow me to come out and… and allow me to kill the bastards that harm my Naru-chan,' Nine of Nine stated with a tone that indicated she was far from eager for Naruto to end just to be free. She had become the daughter that Nine of Nine never had or could have.

"If you are sure," Kurenai spoke with concern.

"I'm sure. Besides, you need a pilot in case we need to bug out," Naruto explained.

The others nodded in acceptance while Inari asked, "Why don't you all leave?" Everyone stared at the boy to elaborate, "You are just going to get everyone killed."

Tukiko's face gloomed as she stated, "The village is already dying slowly due to Gatō, it written you all die if we do nothing."

The grandson, Inari looked confused until Tukiko asked innocently, "How long do you think a person can live without being able to eat?"

Anko smiled with fond memories of her TI before stating, "A few months before the person die in agony."

"So, the village is in fact slowly being killed by Gatō, and you are doing nothing to stop him," Tukiko pointed out to the kid.

"Well, what do you want us to do?" Inari asked. "We don't have the strength to defy Gatō. Kaiza tried, and he failed."

"Your people tried to rebel?" Kurenai asked.

Inari was silent while Tsunami spoke in a somber voice, "No, my second husband, Kaiza, spoke out against Gatō and gave us hope, especially to Inari. He was the father he needed and what the village needed. But Gatō tied him up and threw him in a river that runs through town. He drowned, and his body floated out to sea."

"So no one actually fought against him, and you all suffer for it," Tukiko stated off handily.

Sasuke muttered, "Weaklings," before he was smacked in the back of the head by Kakashi with a silent order to shut up as Inari redded in anger.
"Shut-up; how come you say that we are suffering while you…" Inari started before his mother, Tsunami stopped him with a hand over his mouth.

"You know, history is chalked-up with people and their suffering," Naruto stated. "It is also filled with tales of them that were able to do something about it." Naruto stretched as she retold Nine of Nin's tale. "Did you know that before the Elemental Nations, this continent was settled into thirteen colonies that were part of a country three thousand miles away called Britain? That these, thirteen colonies, were all but ignore for a hundred years, and they had become self-governed. Britain tried to reinsert their control over these colonies after a devastating war between Britain and an archrival country known as France, who had territory on this same continent.

"Britain wanted to tax the colonies heavily to pay off its debts that they had built up during the war. The colonies were suffering; some were even starving as they were forced to pay off Britain's debts from a war that Britain had started and they never wanted. Eventually, the colonist began to form a coalition and declared their independence from Britain. The colonists, a ragtag army of farmers, hunters and traders went up to fight against the world's best navy and army at the time. It was a long, brutal seven years of war until the colonist won their independence. Over the centuries, the colony became a Super Power and eventually became one of the founding countries in the largest nation that no one has ever matched, the Republic Alliance."

The group was silent as Naruto turned to face Inari and looked down at him, "Not every group will win, history is filled with tales of small forces winning and losing. However, in the case of Gatō, you have two choices. You can fight, and some of you will die on your feet, maybe all of you if luck is not with you; or you can all die slowly on your knees, bowing to Gatō. Kaiza died for he was alone. The fact is you did not stand with him, and let Gatō get away with murder. So, if you are going to stand there and wine and cry, do it away from those actually fighting for something you should have fought against from the start."

Inari was teary-eyed and ran upstairs to cry as the others sighed. Sakura, timidly went to Naruto and ask, "Don't you think you were a bit harsh?"

"No Sakura. He will never face reality if you cuddle him to point it cripples him. He needed to be scolded for an attitude that was allowed to go rampant," Naruto stated as Tsunami twitched at snub against her parenting.

"Besides, we don't need a little brat that will suck all morale out of our group, low morale will only hinder our operations," Tukiko explained in agreement with Naruto.

Tsunami, with a look, demanded her father Tazuna to do something. "What do you want me to do?" Tazuna asked her daughter seriously. "You cuddle Inari too much. If you were acting like Inari, I would be spanking you and reminding you how lucky you are compared to most people in our village. So don't get mad at the kids for making Inari face facts. I agree with them about Kaiza. That is why I am building this bridge, to prove that his sacrifice wasn't in vain."

"I know, but his stepfather died by Gatō's hands for fighting against-" Tsunami had started, but Hinata interrupted him.

"Tsunami, I can tell you from personal experience that cuddling does not help at all." Hinata then sighed before she continued softly, "When my mother died, my father threw me to the wolves and berated me. I was a weak, stuttering mess due to the abuse. But worse came the cuddling I received from the Branch members. They had pitied me and treated me like glass, hoping it would make me feel better. All it did was make me feel worse than dirt. (Sigh) I would still be pitiful if it weren't for Naruto encouraging me and treating me like a friend that can face the storm then someone to be pitied. So don't cuddle him, it will only hurt him far more in the long run than help!"
Everyone was quiet, as they had reflected on Hinata's soft-spoken speech. Their deafening silence continued until Kurenai clapped her hands and exclaimed, "Alright then, Tsunami and Tazuna, why don't you two leave us as we discuss strategy. We will begin guard duties tomorrow at the bridge and this house."

The two nodded and left for upstairs. Tazuna discarded his bottle for he felt he had a reason not to drink for the first time since he started to build his bridge. Once he disappeared, the Jōnin turned to face each other when Anko asked, "Alright scarecrow, how ready are your students?"

Kakashi sighed as he stated, "I am unsure. Sasuke is very skilled, and Sai is at Chūnin level if not close to Jōnin level. I was able to train them in tree walking chakra exercise. But… most of the time we trained, I spent trying to get them to work together as an actual team."

Anko gave a twitch as she commented, "So in other words, your team sucks."

Sakura bowed her head in shame, as Sasuke snarled in response. Sasuke was about to speak, but Tukiko stopped him with a flick to the forehead and a comeback, "Oh shut up Sasuke. We don't want to hear you butcher our clan's name anymore then you have."

Sakura was about to rush in to defend her crush but was stopped by a look from the Jōnins. Kurenai sighed in annoyance, "Alright, Anko will help Kakashi teach them Water Walking."

Kakashi nodded before asking, "What about your team?"

"We were mostly focusing on helping them cover their weakness. They are very well trained and did well in general training in things like chakra control," Kurenai explained to Kakashi. Team 7 looked in shock, and in Sasuke's case, jealousy. Team Vixen was so far ahead of Sasuke that he did not think it was funny. Though, Sasuke would suppress such thoughts for now as there is nothing he could do about it.

"Well, it sounds like we have a plan for tomorrow," Kakashi stated while pulling out a book.

"Actually, I was thinking of starting now," Kurenai stated, and Kakashi pouted in response.

"Don't worry scarecrow, I will take care of your students while you read your book and guard the Tazuna's family," Anko waved as she picked up her paled, new students.

Scene VI

It was late in the evening, and the girls of Team Vixen were outside resting under some trees and looking at the stars. It was a beautiful night, and the girls were taking advantage of it. The three girls were laying down, watching the starry night until they heard a snap in the thick foliage that surrounded them. They quickly got up and assumed combat positions, weapons out. All three had flashlights and began flashing the woods around them, looking for an animal, or an intruder.

Naruto scanned the dense forest before she yelled out, "Who's out there?"

A muffled voice responded, "A tool that is here because its master wishes to make a deal with your team."

The girls stared at each other before Naruto yelled out, "We don't make deals with hidden people, so either you will show yourself or walk away!"

"Very well," the muffled voice replied.
Jumping out of the dense forest was a masked ninja. The ninja wore a green battle camion with a white mask hiding the person's face. The ninja had two strands of black hair hung over the white mask while the rest of the ninja's hairs were tied up in a court style. This feminine ninja had a small pack filled with senbon needles on its side, ready to be used on a moment's notice. However, the ninja's poise that screamed high-level ninja that had the three girls cautious as they ready their weapons.

As the ninja approached, Naruto's took aim at the masked stranger when she yelled, "Get rid of the mask. I rather talk face to face if possible."

The person tensed, questing herself to reveal who she was until she reluctantly agreed to, "Very well."

The girl then removed the mask to reveal a familiar face that made Tukiko whisper, "Haku?"

"Hello Tukiko, it's good to see you again," Haku bowed to the three girls. "Especially since our meeting is on neutral ground, rather than the battlefield."

"Why are you here… Haku?" Tukiko asked slowly, betraying nothing as she stared at the older woman.

"I am here to make a truce between my master and your ninjas," Haku explained. "My master learned some… things about our current employer and realized that he isn't trustworthy or worthy of our loyalty."

"So, you want to switch sides?" Hinata asked softly, and Haku nodded in response.

"Where is your master?" Naruto asked.

"Nearby," Haku answered figuratively. "He'll come when he knows he can make a deal. I am fast enough to disappear on my own against Jōnin. I can escape you three if need be."

Naruto thought it over, before pulling out her phone to call Anko, "Anko, this is Naruto... I am here to report a ninja wishes to talk to us about an alliance about a ten-minute walk from the house… This kunoichi clams her master wishes to make a deal with us after discovering some things about their client… Her master is nearby and wishes to talk… Understood ma'am."

Naruto hung up her phone, and Kakashi, Anko, and Kurenai soon joined them. Team 7 Genin were moving up from the rear, staying in the shadows and away from conflict.

"We are here girl, call out your master," Kurenai ordered Haku.

"No need, I am here," a demonic spoke out as the mist began to descend.

The mist was thick as a figure approached from the apparent source of the mist. The mist dispersed revealing a 213.36cm (7ft) demonic of a man. A man had a cleaver as tall as him and moved it around like it was a small stick. The masked, shirtless man was recognized by the Leaf-nins, "Zabuza Momochi the Bloody Demon of the Mist."

"Who?" Tukiko asked as Naruto pulled out an electronic pad.

Naruto pulled a data pad and opened a file on Zabuza Momochi's electronic bingo book entry. She read aloud for all to hear, "Zabuza Momochi is an A-rank missing-nin, wanted by the Mist Forces for attempting to kill the Fourth Mizukage during the beginning of the Bloodline Civil War in Water Country. His actions sparked the beginning of the rebellion led by a Mei Terumī, his supposed
fiancée. He was last seen with three companions. Out of the three, only one is noteworthy, a ninja known to disguise her slash himself as a hunter-nin to help their master escape bounty hunters and real Mist hunter-nins. Known attack styles include Water Jutsus, sword combat and silent killing using mist as cover. Confirmed kill count is over three hundred and fifty, with one hundred and thirty being either ninjas or samurais."

Hinata looked up and then continued reading, "He is called the Demon of the Bloody Mist for his killing off a third of his entire class."

"What? Why?" Tukiko asked while Sakura overheard and began shaking like a leaf. Next, to Sakura, Sasuke looked eager; he hoped a fight would break out so he can face a tough opponent. Sasuke was going to be disappointed.

"At the time, Mist had a tradition that two students would face each other and kill their opponent to prove they had the will to kill for their country," Kakashi explained. "However, that stopped after Zabuza butchered a third of his class to prove his worth."

"And they allowed him in?" Sakura asked timidly.

"He actually skipped the rank Genin to Chūnin for his loyal work to Mist," Anko explained with a straight face.

Zabuza chuckled in response, "So nice that you gave us my entire history, but I didn't come here to teach a history lesson."

"Then why are you here?" Kurenai asked.

Zabuza grinned under his mask as he began to spin a tale, "At first, it was to scare you to leave here and then kill your client. If necessary, do it while you were asleep if you would not leave." The group tensed until Zabuza continued to explain himself, "But then Haku came back to me and reported that my plan to get you to leave didn't work and she told me your suspicion about the Uzumaki clan working with Gatō and their aid in continuing the Mist Civil War. A war I wanted the rebels to win for a while I enjoy a good killing; I don't like what is happening in Mist. Killing for killing sake is a senseless slaughter, and I hate senseless slaughter that weakened Water Country as a whole."

The Genin lowered their weapons as Zabuza got to his point, "After finding out it was all true, well, I have no love for the man, so I decided to go to work with you Leaf-nins rather than work for the midget."

"In exchange, besides your revenge…?" Naruto asked with a blunt insult that made people tense.

Tension waned when Zabuza laughed, "You have guts to ask me, a demon. I like you, Genin."

Once Zabuza calmed down, he answered the girl's question, "Two things, one is to be paid for my services, the payment due from my employers; preferably, from my employer's dead hands."

Anko nodded as she hummed as her sadistic nature took over, "That's fine with me. Money with blood is always the best to look at."

"Anko, focus," Kurenai ordered her friend to calm down as the third Jōnin continued the conversation.

"The second?" Kakashi asked Zabuza in a bored tone.

"The second is that Haku is allowed into the Leaf forces," Zabuza answered, shocking everyone,
even Haku. "My tool is too soft for the war we must face in Water Country. She can kill just fine, but
she will never be able to fight a war like the one that this war that is needed to be fought. She is also
more than just a tool. She is my apprentice, and I want my teaching to live on beyond me. Especially,
as I plan to return to Mist to kill Kazekage, or die trying."

"Zabuza-sama," Haku whispered as she looked to her mentor and back to the Leaf-nins.

Zabuza put his hand on Haku's head to state, "You have been a good kid, but it's time to spread your
bloody mark." Zabuza then looked at the Leaf-nins to ask, "Do we have a deal? You need my help
to find Gatō and kill the over three hundred bandits loyal to him."

The three Jōnin silently talked among themselves before they finally agreed. Anko stepped up to
state, "We will need to talk to our Hokage about Haku, but for the most part, we have a deal."

Zabuza smiled as he walked up and exclaimed, "Great! Let's make the roads red from the blood of
our fallen foes!"

Sakura walked behind her teacher, Kakashi, to ask, "Are you sure we can trust them sensei?"

"Trust them?" Kakashi asked sarcastically. "There is no trust in the ninja world. Just agreements that
align with what we want. For now, we are partners that work together, nothing more, nothing less."

"But they were our enemies," Sasuke snarled. "We should just kill them before they become a bigger
threat."

Kakashi smacked Sasuke and growled, "No you stupid boy. We as ninjas do not fight if we do not
need to. They are our allies for now, and they will be treated as such since we need all the help we
can get."

Kurenai sighed as she explained, "In our world, today's allies can be tomorrow's enemies and today's
enemies can be tomorrow's allies. You need to learn to be flexible as a name will not ensure loyalty
or victory."

A scolded Sasuke and a scared Sakura slowly nodded in acceptance as they walked into the house
along with Sai, Zabuza, and the three high-ranking Leaf-nins. At the rear were four girls walking to
the house slowly and in silent contemplation.

The silence was broken by Haku when she stated, "I am sorry I deceived you. But I did it so we
wouldn't have to fight. I can tell you three were a different kind of ninja, the right kind despite
being... soft or maybe because of it."

The three girls looked at each other before Tukiko stopped to ask, "Can you guarantee that you
won't lie to us again."

"I can't guarantee that if things don't work out for Zabuza-sama and me," Haku admitted. "But for
this mission, we are comrades. I promise to be truthful to you on this mission and when I become
Leaf-nins, just don't expect me to reveal everything."

The three nodded in response as Naruto stated, "We can understand, but don't expect us to trust you
just because you say we should trust you. You still have to earn our trust."

"I plan to," Haku told the group. "I plan to show to you all that I can be trusted."

"Good," Tukiko said in stone cold voice. "For you have to earn our trust."
`Haku nodded her understanding, she was just glad to be out from under Gatō's heel.

Scene VII

Meanwhile, four red-haired, green-eyed ninjas with whirlpool symbols were looking at photos of leaf ninjas provided by a small man in a business suit and sunglasses as well as two samurais that guarded him. "Yep, it is her. Naruto Uzumaki and her team are here," one of two Uzumaki males concluded.

"So, should we contact the clan?" The other male asked.

"Why? So that bitch Kushina and her bitch of a daughter can claim all the credit for Naruto's capture. Hell no, we can easily capture her ourselves," one of the female Uzumaki snarled in response starting an argument with the three ninjas.

While the Uzumaki argued, the businessman, with his samurai guards, snapped at the ninjas, "Who cares about a little girl? What are you going to do about the Hidden Leaf-nins?"

A huge female Uzumaki growled in response as she grabbed hold of two massive battleaxes and cut the two samurais into two. Blood and guts spilled onto the expensive carpet and shoes as what used to be two humans fell to the ground in pieces. The businessman cowered when she let go of one of her axes to grab the scared businessman covered in blood by the throat.

"Don't think for a second that you can order our clan around Gatō. We are here strictly for business. If you want to deal with the Hidden Leaf, use the ninjas you hired. We will go after Naruto and her Uchiha and Hyūga teammates. We are not here to save you unless it crosses our interest. And remember, if you interfere with our clan's business, you will die," the woman snarled as she threw Gatō across the room into his chair that he slumped in.

"That's Tenbatsu, her wrath can be as bad as the gods," the male Uzumaki commented.

"Shut up. We got work to do," Tenbatsu snapped at her men before turning her attention to the map.

Gatō glared at the ninja before he went home to pick up two new guards. He came back to see the Uzumaki plotting. The two did not realize that outside forces in and out of the Uzumaki clan would work against them.

Scene VIII

"Naruko," Kushina called for her second daughter, a daughter that she had to save from the clan as they tried to turn her into a killing machine. Sadly, the clan had already broken her spirit, but Kushina had not given up hope in teaching her daughter humanity and honor as she saved some of her daughter's soul.

"Yes mom," Naruko replied with a haunting voice that hid her longing for freedom.

"The clan is giving you a mission," Kushina explained as she gave Naruko a scroll, "You are to give this to our clan members' stationed in Wave Country and retrieve our twenty percent cut and bring back some new workers."

"It doesn't seem right, what they are doing to Wave. It brings no honor or whatever the clan claims they are getting," stated Naruko.

"I wish we could help, but we can't expose ourselves right now, and we don't have the time to help one of a dozen villages," Kushina told Naruko as she held-up another scroll. "Now remember, keep an eye out for your sister or any Leaf-nins. This information is vital to our escape from this hellhole.
and in joining with our true family."

"Will do… mom," Naruko said before packing the scroll and leaving for the Wave.

"Take care, my little angel and I hope you meet your big-sis," Kushina silently said with a smile and a hope for the future.

Chapter End Notes

Done, now please review and tell me how you like or dislike the remap of the Wave Arc.
Scene I

It has been three days since the alliance was established between the Leaf-nins and Zabuza's men, and things around Tazuna's house have been subdued. The Hokage was informed of Zabuza's request via communicators, and he had agreed to their decision and filled out the appropriate electronic paperwork. Haku will become a probationary ninja when they returned to Konoha. She joined up with Team Vixen and slowly wormed her way into the group, especially with Tukiko. Haku had been at Tukiko's side since day one, and they had developed a sisterly relationship faster than many thought possible.

The others followed as time passed, as the girls spent their time assisting the builder to finish his bridge. Naruto's clones were very useful as they helped replenish the dwindling workforce that Gatō had scared away. The businessman was making it difficult for Tazuna, but despite Gatō's efforts, the Bridge would soon be completed ahead of schedule. Everything seemed to be proceeding smoothly until Zabuza reported that the Uzumaki were planning to get involved as they found out that Naruto was part of the group and planned to 'ally' themselves with his group. So the allied ninjas were preparing for a battle that would determine the fate of Wave Country.

"Alright maggots, listen up on the battle plan." Anko then explained while getting into position, "The plan starts off with Zabuza and his squad, minus Haku, helping us set up a trap against the missing-nins and the Uzumaki Clan members in the area. Kurenai, Tazuna, Team 7 minus Sai, and I will act as the bait on the bridge as Zabuza's group will hide in the shadows behind us, waiting for the enemy ninjas to attack. Sai will remain here to guard the house against attacks and alert the ANBU of our current situation when they arrive. The Genin from Team 13 will meet up with Haku to help secure Gatō's mansion and his money. Killing is at your discretion but getting Gatō is a priority, even if it means destroying his mansion and his money. Now does anyone have any questions?"

"Why do I have to be part of the bait?" Tazuna whined. "I am supposed to be protected. Not put into harm's way."

"Sorry, but they won't attack without you, and we need a tempting target," Anko answered off-handed.

"Besides, think about it as helping us ensure your survival," Kurenai told the worried 'bait.'

Tazuna sat down in defeat as Sasuke got up with a pissed expression as he asked, "Why do I have to protect the client when others get to attack the mansion? I should be participating in the attack as I am combat trained ninja after all."

"Because they have combat experience, are trained in stealth, and can be trusted in this situation."
You and your fan-girl can barely be trusted to act as bait without screwing up. So shut up!" Sakura and Sasuke compiled as Anko assumed a calm voice to ask, "Now, any intelligent questions?"

"Why aren't we waiting for the ANBU?" Tukiko asked.

"Well Tukiko, if we wait for the ANBU to arrive, Gatō's forces will be even harder to take out when they go on the defensive. Normally I would still wait, but we have a powerful ally among Gatō's forces, so we must take advantage of the situation before it gets any worse. That is why we are going on the offensive now, instead of waiting for the ANBU. Are there any more questions?"

The silence was Anko's answer, "Good. Everyone, get into position, we leave in one hour."

Scene II

A few hours later, and just as planned, Anko and her group were waiting at the bridge as bait. They waited for the enemy to show and they were not disappointed when a swirling mist appeared on the bridge in front of them. "Well, well, look what have here," a redheaded ninja had stated with his shiny new headband of the Uzumaki. "Looks like we have some Leaf-nins who have taken what is ours. I think it's our lucky day."

"Yeah, it looks like we really lucked out, hey Zabuza?" Another Uzumaki ninja asked Zabuza, who was standing right next to him with the Demon Mask Brothers.

"Yes, it does, but not for you," Zabuza told the Uzumaki before he decapitated the ninja and his partner with his colossal zanbatō.

"Zabuza, you-" a missing-nin the Uzumaki hired had started to yell until the demon brothers sliced him to bits while Zabuza killed two no-name missing-nins with the Uzumaki he already killed.

"Good work, Zabuza," Kakashi nodded as he eye smiled.

"Is that it for the Uzumaki Clan?" Kurenai asked, unsure since the Uzumaki only operate a small compound on the island.

"No, there are still four more of them that are waiting with a portion of Gatō's thugs. My team and those low-level ninjas they sent with me were supposed to soften you up before the main group came in to finish you off. They will be here in a few minutes," Zabuza answered Kurenai.

After just a few minutes, they came. However, it was not four Uzumaki members. Instead, there were three. "Zabuza, you said there were four members!" Anko yelled at Zabuza.

"I saw all four of them together," Zabuza stated which got the attention of the Uzumaki.

"You saw what we wanted you to see so we could spring our own trap," one of the two male Uzumaki mocked the group.

"You didn't think we would trust any missing-nins did you? Especially considering you were once from Hidden Mist Forces. We followed your apprentice and found out that you planned to betray Gatō and in extension, us," the other male explained.

"How did you sneak up on us? We would have detected you," Kurenai stammered.

"We followed you with one of our of four Uzumaki summoning contracts." The female lifted her hand to reveal a mosquito the size of a fist. "These little guys are useful for assassinations and spying on our enemies," the Uzumaki ninja said as the mosquito dispersed, as its purpose was complete.
"You three are the triplets of the Uzumaki bloody seasons. The two brothers are Touki and Banshū, and their sister is Kaki," Kakashi pointed out.

"Glad to know that the famous 'Copy Cat Kakashi' knows who we are. Are you going to bring out the Sharingan for this fight?" Kaki mocked much to Kakashi's horror, now that Sasuke knew he had his family's bloodline despite not being an Uchiha. This will be a pain for Kakashi to deal with when it comes to his team.

"Yes, I think I will have to," Kakashi said in sorrow as he pulled back his headband to show a red, implanted eye with three commas in the pupil, a fully realized Sharingan.

"Where is your fourth member?" Kurenai asked while the Jōnins pulled out their weapons for battle.

"I believe Tenbatsu is now greeting your Genin's team and Zabuza's apprentice. Where they are going to be taken them back to the Uzumaki clan," Touki replied to the group's horror since Tenbatsu was an elite Jōnin class according to reports they read.

"Soon, the Uzumaki clan will become more powerful than ever," Banshū continued where Touki left off. "Their bloodlines will bring the clan to its rightful place as rulers of the Elemental Nations, as it should be."

"I won't let you hurt my daughter," Zabuza then pulled out his sword for battle.

Zabuza ran headlong into Banshū, his sword raised high to cleaved the man in two. Banshū responded by pulling out his sword, and the blades clashed with a resounding clang. Zabuza still had enough strength to overpower Banshū, but Banshū's sword parley delayed the attack enough for Banshū to jump out of the way. Banshū moved a sufficient distance away to allow him to use, 'Fire Style: Dance of the Dragons Jutsu.' The fire jutsu summoned multiple dragons meant to strike down an army or a small force of highly ranked ninjas. Though it failed as Zabuza returned fire with 'Water Style: Horse Guardians Jutsu,' to create a waterfall of horses to be used against the dragons of fire. The two hit each other and formed a vast cloud of steam.

Touki smirked at the vast steam cloud as he ordered Gatō's thugs to, "Attack!"

Gatō's thugs screamed as they ran head first with various weapons, from swords to axes and maces as the thugs rushed right into the mist. For the thugs, that was a mistake as things went to hell for them. The tall ninja began to wipe out scores of thugs with his massive cleaver as he entered a bloodlust. As his blood pumped, his senses were heightened to the point of being superhuman. His senses were elevated to the point he heard a metal chain from behind. Zabuza cut the chain in two, along with three thugs as he spun in a fluid motion. Zabuza turned to face his own comrades that had tried to kill him, the Demon Brothers of the Mist. The two were holding out their poison's hand claws as they poised for battle.

"When did you decide to betray me?" Zabuza asked the brothers.

"When you were off having your meetings with the Leaf-nins," one started before the other.

"The Uzumaki came by with a big pay offer."

"So we took the offer."

"We didn't care about the rebellion."

"We just did what you would have done, taken the best payout, even if it was mercenary work."
"The Uzumaki offered an even bigger reward than any future payout you could offer, so we took it," the second brother finished as ten more thugs moved to back them up.

Zabuza was immobile with silence before he disappeared into a cloud of steam. The brothers are tense as the thugs were slain from left to right all around them. They knew they were in trouble when a demonic voice growled out from the mist, "You picked the wrong time to betray me, and now you will pay for it with your lives."

Outside the mist, the three Uzumaki Jōnin moved to attack the Leaf-nins. The brothers both used their swords to engage Anko and Kurenai while Kaki went after Kakashi. Kakashi tried to run away to help Team Vixen, but Kaki had other ideas as she jumped to attack her target. Kakashi used a kunai to avoid the deadly strike from Kaki's claws.

The woman devilishly slurred, "Where are you going? We are today's entertainment, and we can't let you all leave without a little show."

Everyone was soon busy fighting and unable to provide aid to Team Vixen and Haku.

Scene III

While the battle of the bridge was happening, Team Vixen and Haku were running on the forest's treetops, towards Gatō's mansion. They continued towards the mansion when they heard several explosions under them. Realizing they were in peril, they changed directions and jumped back onto a falling tree. They held onto a tree trunk with their chakra before they jumped off at the last minute to avoid the pain of hitting the ground with the tree. The four girls were now on the ground as Tukiko searched at the base of the trunk to recover pieces of kunai and ashes of what seemed to be paper.

"Exploding tags," Tukiko concluded.

"Ninjas!" Naruto yelled as she pulled out her guns.

The others pulled out their weapons and gathered into a circle to wait for an attack. They did not have to wait long before a kunai with an exploding tag landed in front of them causing them to jump up on logs before the tag went off. The explosion sent off a huge puff of smoke into the air that obscured their view for a minute. The cloud soon dissipated and they found they were not alone. Standing in front of them was a muscular woman, with red hair tied into a bun. In each hand, she held two dual-bladed axe, stained with the blood from a hundred men that she had slain. This woman was a butcher, and they were her next targets.

"Well, well, if it isn't Team Vixen that we've all been hearing so much about," the woman chuckled. "I have been looking forward to meeting you. Don't need Konoha to develop another Sennin like a team." The woman looked at Haku before adding, "Though they didn't have a helper, especially a Hyōton bloodline user. I thought they had all died out. I guess Mist is really weak if they couldn't wipe out one clan."

Haku was about to attack the Uzumaki woman into a blind rage, but Tukiko stopped her before she made a tactical mistake. Haku then calmed down to a cold fury as Naruto asked, "Who are you?"

"You don't know your own family, Naruto Uzumaki?" the woman asked before laughing.

"You are not family, and my name is Naruto Ryū," Naruto snarled.

"You are Uzumaki as long as you continue to carry our bloodlines," the woman commented. "Now where was I… ah yes, my name is Tenbatsu Uzumaki, your fourth aunt."
Naruto snarled as she raised her guns, "I am pleased to meet you. Now die!"

Naruto guns blasted regular bullets while Tukiko and Haku sent their kunais and senbons at the woman. Tenbatsu dodged the bullets as she swung her arms around in an arc as she used 'Wind Style: Great Breakthrough Jutsu' to create an arc of wind to deflect the projectiles away. While in the air, Hinata and Naruto combine two 'Water Style: Water Gun Jutsu,' to launch a massive blob of water at the woman. Tenbatsu spun in the air as she cut the blob in two with her axes channeled with wind chakra while chakra was channeled internally. Chakra poured out as the woman as she rushed towards the Team Vixen once she was on her feet.

The four jumped away as the wind smashed the ground and formed a large crater while kicking dust into the air and blocking everyone's view. Naruto was alone when she was attacked by Tenbatsu with her two axes. Naruto dropped her guns and pulled out her swords enhanced by all five of the elements. The blades deflected the axes at the last second as she spun to strike Tenbatsu. Tenbatsu blocked Naruto's swords, but she did not stop Naruto from sliding down her blades to Tenbatsu's hands. Hitting her flesh with enough force to split bone, or so she thought. As it was a real shocker to Naruto as she saw that Tenbatsu's hands only bleed slightly from a cut, instead of losing her finders.

"Wind Armor," Tenbatsu stated as if she was not bothered by her own blood and pain. "Got to love it as it protects me against any kind of damage, physical or otherwise. Though, I am surprised you hurt me at all, so let me return the favor."

Tenbatsu startled Genin as she brought her head up to slam in Naruto's brow. Naruto stumbled back with head trauma until she felt the muscular woman grabbed onto her right leg was seized while the axe handle was placed firmly against her skin. Naruto realized what was about to happen but could not do anything as Tenbatsu twisted her leg, causing her to scream in pain as a loud crack was heard. Naruto soon fell silent when she was punched in the stomach with enough force to force her to the ground. Tenbatsu stood over Naruto, her axes on her sides as the dust cleared.

Seeing Naruto down, an enraged Hinata attacked Tenbatsu from behind. Hinata used 'Water Style: Tsunami Wave Jutsu' onto the unaware Uzumaki as a huge wave of water hit Tenbatsu, sending her to fly under the tidal wave. The wave also missed Naruto, barely, as she crawled away, crying from her broken leg. However, it would not be broken for long. As her wounds were being healed rapidly thanks to Colonel Nine of Nine's chakra accelerating her healing rate.

Meanwhile, as Naruto crawling away, Tenbatsu was seething inside the high turret of water. Frustrated, Tenbatsu slams her axes into the ground, and she had dug-in to stop herself from being swept away. The wave pushed pass her giving her relief for a short time. Tenbatsu used 'Ice Style: Thousand Needles Jutsu' to summon a thousand ice needless upon Tenbatsu. Tenbatsu was able to beat back Haku's attack with her spinning axes. Tenbatsu deflected the last of the ice senbon needles when Hinata, once again, appeared behind Tenbatsu.

Hinata used 'Gentle Blade Style: Star Strike,' a specialized attack she had developed with the gentle blade. It started with attacks on the neck with both hands, as they moved in a triangular motion toward Tenbatsu's wrists. The blades cut into her flesh until they met at one-third of the woman's body and took off at a ninety-degree upward spin to the shoulders as Hinata brought her hands in-between the shoulder blades. Hinata's attack had created, figuratively, the Star of David within a ten seconds span on Tenbatsu own body. All cuts leading up to a strike in the center of the star to send Tenbatsu flying.

Hinata was panting victoriously while giving Haku a smile of thanks. Her smile turned to horror as she saw a burst of chakra from Tenbatsu as she regenerated her wounds and reopened all of her chakra points. A recharged Tenbatsu was soon upon Hinata and struck her in the face. Hinata was
dazed with a bruised face as she was hit in the stomach with enough force that caused her to fall to
the ground, coughing out blood. Tenbatsu then stomped Hinata repeatedly, until she was a moaning
human pile on the ground.

Tenbatsu snarled, "You thought your puny fighting style will stop me Hyūga? I guess you didn't
realize the Uzumaki had bloodlines still active from when we were mixing bloodlines with the
Elemental Star. Most of us have huge chakra stores that naturally enhance our body's healing
regeneration and enhance our longevity. The only way to stop me is to kill me."

Tenbatsu then surveyed the group as she stated, "Now, you should give up before I accidentally kill
one of you. We will need all your bloodlines to add to the Elemental Star in two to three
generations."

Tukiko narrowed her eyes as she pulled out her assault rifle, while Haku rushed in with her strongest
jutsu: 'Ice Style: Demonic Ice Mirrors Jutsu.' A powerful jutsu surrounded Tenbatsu with several
substantial rectangular ice mirrors that were the size of a large man. They formed into a dome that
could hold a dozen people. After they were established, Haku jumped into the mirrors as she used a
water jutsu to push Hinata out of the way. Haku appeared in all the mirrors with senbon needles in
her hands while Tukiko moved up to provide support with her assault rifle.

Tukiko opened fire outside of the mirrors while Haku jumped from the mirror to mirror, sending a
hail of senbon needles at Tenbatsu. A few actually hit her but not enough to cause damage. After the
third wave, Tenbatsu moved to the edge and struck two of the mirrors with her axes, shattering them.
Haku eyes widen in fear and shock at what she perceived to be their last hope. She thought it was
impossible to break her mirrors with brute strength. Haku regained her senses and doubled her speed
as she continued with her senbon attacks. The ice user was going so fast that Tukiko could only
watch as Hinata staggered away and slowly tried to heal herself.

However, despite the increased speed, Tenbatsu was able to keep up with Haku and systematically
destroy her mirrors. Eventually, Tenbatsu was able to hit a mirror that Haku was hiding inside and
forced her out to escape. Haku jumped out just before the mirror shattered taking her whole jutsu
down. As Haku was in the air, Tenbatsu appeared in front of a startled Haku. She struck the girl with
an underhanded blow that did not gut the poor girl but gave her a deep wound. Haku rolled on the
ground crying in pain as Tenbatsu turned to face her next opponent, Tukiko. She focused on the girl
to the point she had ignored Hinata as she limped over to help Haku, and used what little chakra she
had left to close her wounds. Both girls were out of the fight as they nursed their wounds.

Tukiko was scared as she realized that she now faced Tenbatsu alone. She was also determined as
she went through the hand signs to initiate her attack while Tenbatsu stared at the girl. The Jōnin
rushed Tukiko with her axes raised to strike but something unexpected happens, she passed directly
through the girl's body. Tenbatsu eyes widen as she realized she had been hit with 'Genjutsu Style:
Mirage Jutsu' as Tukiko appeared behind her. Tukiko used 'Fire Style: Omega Fire Bomb Jutsu,' to
create a huge red blob at Tenbatsu's feet. Tukiko then kicked off Tenbatsu to give her enough room
before the firebomb went off. Creating a massive explosion that sent Tukiko flying.

Tukiko got up to see a massive cloud of dust fly up in the shape of a mushroom as she pulled out her
kunai. Tukiko stared into the cloud of dust, waiting in the hope that Tenbatsu was dead. After what
seemed like an eternity, she saw no movement in the cloud and Tukiko lowered her guard, thinking
it was over. She soon found out it was not over as Tenbatsu came rushing out of the dust cloud,
singed and angry. Tukiko only had a brief moment to raise her kunais up to defend herself before
Tenbatsu struck.

Tukiko screamed in pain as she fell on her knees, her left hand grabbing onto her right arm as blood
squirted out. Tukiko's right hand was cut off at the wrist and laid in front of her. A limb that was later destroyed when Tenbatsu smashed Tukiko's right hand with her axes to show she was serious. Tenbatsu smirked as she walked away from crying Tukiko, who cradled her bleeding arm and watched what could be the end of not only her ninja career but possibly her life.

Away from the battle, Naruto saw all her friends being taken down. Naruto begged Nine of Nine too, 'Hurry up. I need to be one hundred percent now!'

'I am going as fast as I can, but even with me helping your Uzumaki bloodline along, it still takes time,' Colonel Nine of Nine told Naruto mentally.

'Can't you speed it by flooding my chakra system with chakra?' Naruto asked Nine of Nine as Tenbatsu approached her.

'Even if I flood your system to heal all your wounds in an instant, my power will only last ten minutes. After that, you will be too exhausted to fight, and there is no way you can end a fight against an elite Jōnin like Tenbatsu in ten minutes,' Nine of Nine explained to Naruto.

'Maybe I can't, but if I also use the bosses of the new summoning contract, I may have a chance,' Naruto explained.

'You plan to summon Dancing Spirit and Soul Hunter?' Nine of Nine asked Naruto. Naruto answered back with a mental nod. 'You know what to do so will take half your chakra, and you will not be able to summon anything until the next full moon as part of your test of patients for the first six months as their summoner.'

'I have no choice,' Naruto explained. 'The bitch may have a summoning contract, and I need to be prepared.'

'Very well, but be careful,' Nine of Nine told Naruto as she floods her system with Nine's chakra. Naruto soon felt rejuvenated as all her wounds began to heal to the point she could stand on her own two feet. Red chakra flapped around her as Tenbatsu stopped to look at the rejuvenated girl with shock. Tenbatsu eyes widened as she saw that Naruto was performing a summoning jutsu and quickly prepared her own to counter. They both hit at the same time with Naruto producing two huge smoke screens while Tenbatsu produced seven.

Scene IV

At Tazuna's house, Sai watched the approach of a dozen bandits sent to capture Tsunami and Inari. Inari was outside with his mother as the two stare down the bandits as they move to grab Tsunami while the boy stood with fright. The fright that waned when he remembered Naruto's words, how it was better to die standing up free or to die on his knees if he allowed evil to win. Therefore, for once he was not afraid as he stood up to the bandits. It was stupid except it allowed Sai to move into position quietly as Inari killed one of the thugs with his father's crossbow. That angered the other bandits and moved in for the kill. They did not get a chance when Sai appeared and attacked them all with his animal drawings that instantly came to life. They resembled giant, black, mythical creatures made of ink that killed the bandits within seconds.

As the blood was mixed with ink, Sai turned to face the boy. "That was a foolish thing to do," Sai told the boy. "It will be difficult for me to protect you if you provoke them."

"I..." Inari was at a loss for words as the bandit he killed was pushed out of his mind. "I couldn't let them hurt mom. I had to do something, something other than just sitting here and letting them take
my mother."

"It is futile," Sai commented. "As long as the villagers allow Gatō to walk over them, you only delay it."

Inari was quiet for a moment before he said with conviction, "Then we must rally the village. Show them we won't remain hostages to an angry lunatic. That we won't let Gatō get away with what he had done with us!"

"I can't allow you to risk killing yourself," Sai explained to the family.

"Your mission is to protect us, so why don't you come with us," Tsunami suggested.

Now Sai was in a quandary. The simple thing to do to ensure the mission's success would be to knock Inari out. However, a part of Sai wanted to see if they could succeed in rallying the village. The choice should have been simple, as he had been taught that emotions were a weakness and the strong always ruled over the weak. However, after seeing what was considered powerful ninjas like Anko and reading the history that Naruto had described, he was in turmoil. Finally, Sai agreed with the family and went to town. He left, just as a mushroom explosion covered the area and nine summonses appeared. He also missed the action of a large number of thugs and samurai left at Gatō's mansion.

Scene V

The bridge was a bloodbath. The demon brothers were dead, as their heads rolled after they were cut off by the Bloody Demon of the Mist. The same 'demon' that was laughing like a madman, as he was busy slaughtered Gatō's men. A few made it passed Zabuza and tried to kill Tazuna only to be cut down by snakes and a red eye Sasuke. The boy smiled as he finally activated his bloodline after making his first kill and enjoyed it as he imagined killing his brother with a 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu.' The pink-haired fan-girl, Sakura could only look on with fear as she saw the real side of Sasuke, a boy that was well on his way in becoming a psychopath in his quest to avenge his clan.

Meanwhile, Kakashi was evading Kaki strikes while paring off her tiger claws with his knife. As the fight continued, the three soon heard an explosion. Over the horizon, a mini mushroom cloud formed just before they noticed nine smoke clouds. They stopped fighting followed by the Kaki's brothers while facing Kurenai and Anko.

Kaki smiled as she chuckled, "Looks like Tenbatsu is about to get real serious. I don't believe your Genin will survive the encounter."

Kakashi did not respond as he used the opportunity to pull out a trump card. He pulled out a scroll from his back pouch pocket, taking advantage of his opponent's distraction. He rolled it out to reveal a summoning contract and proceeded to summoned a dozen dogs of all types and sizes. A brown pug dog with a leaf symbol on top a giant bulldog was the leader of the pack as he asked, "What do you need Kakashi?"

Kakashi eyes narrowed as he stated, "Hold my opponent in place, Pakkun."

The pug dog nodded as the entire pack sprang into action as they swarmed around Kaki. Kaki screamed as the dogs chomped on all her limbs, holding her in place as Kakashi performed a more powerful, original jutsu called 'Chidori.' He summoned a considerable amount of lightning around his right hand to form a blue blade of lightning and chakra. Once he summoned his lightning blade, he pulled back his hand and ran at impossibly high speeds while the blade cut into the ground beside him.
He reached up a now scared Kaki, with his hand held high above his head, as he smashed the blade into her chest and back. Kaki went limp as Kakashi pulled his hand out of Kaki's corpse. With the target dead, the dogs disappeared as Kakashi pulled his headband down to cover his Sharingan eye. He never realized that someone was watching him with his Sharingan. Sasuke smiled as he now had a powerful technique to kill his brother, and he could not wait to try it out. Meanwhile, one of the brothers, Banshū, could not believe that his sister was dead.

In a blind rage, he rushed Kakashi with his sword poised to strike, yelling out, "I'm going to kill you."

He only took three steps before he found himself completely wrapped tightly by snakes. He turned to see Anko had snakes coming out her right hand, while her left hand held a shotgun that was leveled at his head. The last thing Banshū heard was a bang of compress air before his head was destroyed. Anko retracted the snakes as the headless man fell to the ground, dead while pieces of blood and bone spread out from where the body lay.

Touki would join his siblings as Kurenai showed why she is known as the 'Genjutsu Mistress.' She used the man's distraction of his siblings' death to hit him with a genjutsu to keep him in a dream world. He was still in that world he gained revenge for his sister and brother while Kurenai casually slit his throat. The last Uzumaki Jōnin was killed, and the three Leaf Jōnins looked away from all the blood to see seven mosquitoes facing a giant fox and snake.

Kakashi turned to the two to bark out orders, "Alright, Kurenai, Anko head to the girls and provide aid."

Kakashi never finished as Zabuza yelled out, "Hey, I need help. Gatō brought reinforcements."

Zabuza dispersed the mist to reveal not only the bloody remains of the last army but a new army of over eighty men had come to kill whoever survives from the scuffle between the Leaf and Uzumaki. Most were just ordinary thugs, but twenty of the men standing in front of the thugs were not thugs. In fact, they were former samurais. Men trained to use chakra as armor to protect them against all forms of attacks, including ninja's jutsus. Their weapons also were coated with chakra as they prepared to attack.

Kakashi bit his lip under his mask before barking out new orders, "Kurenai, Anko, stay here and help defend Tazuna with me. We just have to hope for the best for the girls."

The woman nodded reluctantly as Kakashi pulled out his sniper rifle. He took aimed and pulled the trigger, taking out the first samurai as they charged to battle. Everything had slipped into pure chaos as the battle for the bridge.

Scene VI

On Naruto's side, things were fairing much better in the form of two giant, multicolor animals with seven tails. One was a beautiful fox with greenish blue eyes, white fur, green paws, and equipped with a short sword on her back. The second one was a strong wolf with gold stripes on his black coat with a scar over one of his eyes along with a huge broadsword on its back. An impressive sight Naruto added by sticking on the fox head with the red chakra that surrounded her as she addressed her two summoned bosses, "Hello Dancing Spirit of the Fox Clan and Soul Hunter of the Wolf Clan."

"Naruto, why were we summoned, you know the price," Soul Hunter asked in a loud voice.

"I kind of had no choice," Naruto pointed to where Tenbatsu was above the ground on top of a giant
black mosquito and six brown mosquitoes surrounding her. Once the summons took insight, Naruto finished her explanation, "I need you two since my team didn't have much of a chance against the Elite Jōnin over there. In addition, there was a rumor that the Uzumaki Clan had four summoning contracts. If there were four, one would be given to an Elite Jōnin. So I summoned you two in case that woman summons a boss. I didn't expect the swarm, and so I was fortunate you came."

"Well, this is going to fun. I can't wait to rub it in Gamabunta of the Toad Clan's face that we defeated a rival of his," Dancing Spirit smiled as she pulled her sword out.

"Where's your team, pup?" Soul Hunter had asked, and Naruto pointed to her injured team below.

"They were all severally injured. The woman in front of us was responsible," Naruto had answered her summon.

The two summonses looked at girls before a cold rage took them. Soul Hunter told Naruto, "We will fight. But as a result, you will not be allowed to summon us until the next full moon, and we will take half your chakra now." Naruto nodded as she felt a drain of half her stores that Nine of Nine had restored. Acceptable loss Naruto thought as she prepared her rides to battle while their opponents flapped in the wind.

"Who are these summonses, Banpaia (vampire)?" Tenbatsu asked the mosquito she was on.

"They are Soul Hunter, and Dancing Spirit. Two of most powerful summoned bosses from two powerful summoned animal clans, as their clans had focused more on quality over quantity. In addition, the Foxes and Wolves are under a treaty to share information and work together against other animal clans. Good thing you called for all of my brothers and sisters, or we would die. I think she is the first human to have their contract," Banpaia answered Tenbatsu.

"Oh, this is great," Tenbatsu had said with a sinisterly smile. "Not only do I bring the Elemental Star back, but I also bring two powerful summonses all wrapped in one contract."

Tenbatsu's smile turned to a scowl when Soul Hunter and Dancing Spirit used their swords to use 'Wind Style: Wind Blades Jutsu.' The mosquitoes tried to escape, but two of them were not fast enough and were ripped to shreds. The other mosquitoes escaped by flying high before they flew down and fired acid from their needle mouths. The gigantic fox and wolf summons saw the attack evaded them. Soul Hunter then moved back to distract the bugs using 'Earth Style: Earth Dome Jutsu' to create a protective dome around him while the mosquitoes fired acid at it. As the mosquitoes tried to break through, Dancing Spirit performed 'Fire Style: Foxfire Jutsu,' to summon fireballs around her tails to fire off at the pesky bugs. Two mosquitoes were vaporized from the fire formed around her seven tails. The three remaining mosquitoes had evaded the fox and were circling around the battlefield like sharks until a vent of lava pushed out of the ground and destroyed another mosquito.

Climbing out of the vent was Soul Hunter, looking menacing as he prepared to fight Banpaia. He was ready for Banpaia, but not for the surprised, he would get. As he climbed out of the wolf-made tunnel, the last regular mosquito used his focus on his pray to nosedive the unexpecting fox and stabbed Soul Hunter into his side. The Wolf Hunter howled in distress as Dancing Spirit rushed to kill the mosquito by lopping off its head. She was not fast enough, as it had already injected a poison/virus into Soul Hunter stream. The wolf was in agony as the disease began to spread.

Soul Hunter panted out, "Damn, (pant), I am out of the fight. I need to (pant) return home soon or (pant) die from the poison. Looks like you (pant) will have to deal with that oversized bug."
"Don't worry, I'll take care of the bug." Dancing Spirit told Soul Hunter as he returned to his summoning realm to be treated. The fox then turned to Banpaia to exclaim, "Your clan will pay, Banpaia!"

The two remaining summons dished it out, but it looked like the fight was even until Banpaia used his special Jutsu, 'Blood Style: Blood Stickiness Jutsu' to shoot out some dark blood that entrapped the high ends of Dancing Spirit's legs. Dancing Spirit could not move as she struggled to get out. Confident, Banpaia then got eye level with Dancing Spirit to gloat before he gave the killing blow. However, she smirked before using, 'Wood Style: Tree Binding Jutsu' to capture Banpaia with the trees around him. The misquoted was trapped, and one Dancing Spirit took advantage as she used 'Ice Style: Tundra Storm Jutsu,' to send a frozen storm against Banpaia and his summoner Tenbatsu.

Tenbatsu and Banpaia could only watch in horror as the ice storms hit them at full force at temperatures that cause trees to snap freeze. Banpaia were turned into huge ice statues that instantly killed the insect. Dancing Spirit then disappeared, satisfied she had killed Banpaia while Naruto jumped off Dancing Spirit's back. Naruto walked to retrieve her pistols and swords. She holstered her weapons before she walked over to help Tukiko to lay next to a tree that had an exhausted Haku and Hinata resting.

"Well, today was a busy day," Naruto commented. "I never thought I would need my summons."

"When were you going to tell me about your summons? Or the fact that Naruto was actually related to the Uzumaki?" Haku asked. "I told you everything these last two days. I told you about how Zabuza found me, after how my father killed my mother and tried to kill me with a mob that I killed with my awaken bloodline. I told you about my missions and work while I was under Zabuza. I did this with the understanding that we would be comrades."

"I'm s-sorry…” Hinata stuttered. "It's not that we didn't want to tell you, it is just we didn't know i-if we c-co-could…"

"Trust me," Haku finished for Hinata.

"Sorry," Tukiko answered, as she looked down ashamed.

Haku looked at Tukiko and felt she should reassure the girl. "It's alright… I guess I can understand. But if I am going to work with you in Konoha, please trust me, I am not your enemy."

And with that plea, the Team Vixen told her everything that was not top secret. How the Uzumaki had abandoned Naruto for being the daughter of a commoner. How Colonel Nine of Nine awakened her bloodline and introduced her to new technology while also explaining the reason the clan wanted her back. They also told most of the events, leading up to current times with a promise to explain some of the more sensitive information once she became a leaf allied ninja.

After hearing everything, Haku sighed, "I guess I wasn't the only one to have a hard life."

Tukiko laughs as she commented, "I guess that is what makes us special."

The group relaxed until they had heard someone clapping. They turned around to see Gatō and fifty of his thugs behind him, "Bravo, bravo. I commend you for killing that bitch. I was planning to kill her myself, but you did it for me in that impressive ninja battle. However, I am afraid you still lose." Gatō smirked as he slammed his cane onto the ground, "I wonder how much you four would go for when I sell you at auction. If you cooperate, my boys will leave you four unspoiled," Gatō stated while licking his lips.
Naruto snarled as moved to protect the girls but soon felt her chakra failing. Naruto's eyes widen as she realized her time was up. "Damn it," Naruto cursed as she fell down.

All four girls were in bad shape. They were in no shape to get, let alone fight off a horde of thugs even if they were perfected. The best they could do was Naruto working her pistols sitting down; Naruto could not put up much of a fight as the thugs gathered up.

"Looks like I chose the perfect time to attack, go get them boy-ugh" Gatō never finished his sentence as an axe was embedded into his body.

"I am afraid this bitch is still alive, and I won't let you betray the Uzumaki," Tenbatsu stated while pulling her axe out of Gatō's corpse covered the grass in blood.

The thugs in response, backed away from Tenbatsu, as she was angry. She was so mad that the heat that had radiated from her body melted the frost off her skin. A brave thug tried to rally his fellow men by yelling out, "She killed our meal ticket!"

"And you are all next," Tenbatsu stated while powering up a wind jutsu.

Tenbatsu used 'Wind Style: Vacuum Serial Waves Jutsu' to send out multiple bubbles of wind that tore many of the thugs into pieces. The survivors soon followed as Tenbatsu pulled out her two axes and ran into the thick of the thugs to begin the slaughter. The fight was over in a minute with mangled corpses before Tenbatsu turned her attention to the girls, as Naruto was busy loading a wind bullet into her pistol as fast as possible. Naruto quickly had her gun set before she shot Tenbatsu in the chest. Tenbatsu immediately fell to the ground by the force of the bullet.

"That was close," Naruto had sighed.

"Could this day get any worse?" Tukiko asked while holding her useless right arm.

She was answered when Tenbatsu got up and revealed she had armor and the bullet was embedded in it. "You just had to ask," Hinata stated before the pain came.

Tenbatsu came upon the girls and knocked them off the tree they used for support. As girls lay on the ground in pain, before Tenbatsu grabbed Naruto by the throat and lifted her in the air while the three girls were pinned to the ground. Tenbatsu had kneeled with her right leg on top of their stomachs to hold them in place as Naruto put up a pathetic struggle.

"How did you survive?" Naruto gasped as she greedily tried to breathe in air through the vice-like grip.

"My wind armor with the armor underneath my clothes saved my life. It's made with high-quality deuterium metal and seals to keep its flexible. Although, I have to admit the bullet came pretty close to piercing it, but you failed when you picked the thickest part of the armor. Maybe you should have aimed for the head instead," Tenbatsu had answered Naruto before forming a sinister smile as she tightened her hold on Naruto. "Now I am going to pay back all you girls for all the pain you caused me today."

Tenbatsu raised her hand as she planned to break each of the girls' legs, starting with Naruto's. However, before she could even twist the blonde's leg, a sword flashed in appearance as it stabbed through her neck to the woman's heart. "I will not let you harm my sister," spoke a red-haired girl holding a long sword that embedded in Tenbatsu. Naruto recognized her from a picture her mother had, it was her half-sister, Naruko.

Tenbatsu looked at the girl to state, "Naruko, you traitor," just before Tenbatsu fell over, dead.
Naruto fell on the corpse as she looked up at her half-sister and smiled, "Glad you could make it to the party."

Naruto then fell to the ground in complete exhaustion as the redhead stared down at her.

Scene VII

It was early in the morning when Naruto woke up in Tazuna's house. As she slowly sit-up, she notices her team were all around her and still asleep. Naruto also saw her half-sister and whispered, "Naruko?"

Naruko walked over to whisper in a blunt voice, "Good to see you are awake, sister." Naruko looked at her friends before adding, "They were so worried about you, and they refused to leave your side."

"They are good friends," Naruto smiled as looked at her nearest friend intently, Hinata.

"You are lucky to have friends. All I have is my mom," Naruko stated as she looked down.

"You gain friends when you leave the Uzumaki, and you have me now," Naruto told Naruko, and a smile briefly crossed Naruko's face. It was tough for Naruko to smile as she felt more like a weary child as opposed to a warrior.

It was silent for a while until Naruto stated, "I feel weak. My friends and I would have been captured if you didn't come around."

"I admit. I thought you would be stronger. But you did well consider it was an Elite Jōnin that got the drop on you," Naruko explained before turning towards the window. "I have already dropped off the intelligence for Leaf Forces. So it's time for me to go before the Uzumaki realize I was gone longer than the mission requires. Goodbye, sis."

Naruto told Naruko, "Stay safe my little sister."

"I will," Naruko bowed before she disappeared in a puff of smoke.

Naruto sighed before she noticed slight movements around her, movement of people she knew that were agitated to say something. Therefore, Naruto called them out to speak, "Anko, Kurenai. You can reveal yourself while the rest of you can stop pretending to be asleep."

Sure enough, Anko and Kurenai appeared as the girls began to sit up. Hinata was the first to speak up, "Sorry Naruto. It was just we didn't want to disturb your conversation with your sister." The other two girls nodded in agreement.

"We had to make sure the brat can be trusted," Anko explained with Kurenai stating the same thing.

Naruto groaned before she asked, "Senseis, what happened while I was out?"

"Well, we have killed the bulk of mercenaries at the bridge, while Sai went to town with the client families," Kurenai explained. "While unprofessional, Inari's words and Sai's presence gave the villagers the courage as they raise-up against Gatō's thugs and kill every one of them. His actions have ensured that no one like Gatō can take over this country, again."

"Though he is really quiet about the events," Anko added, not mentioning that he began to mumble questions about what is strength and where his loyalties lie.
"Sakura is having problems as well," Tukiko spoke up for the first time.

"I guess the pink-haired girl didn't take the fact she was useless in the fight all that well," Haku added.

"Kakashi is helping her adjust to the reality of ninja life while his students protect the bridge," Kurenai explained.

"Zabuza-Sama is gone," Haku stated with a bit of sadness. "He led a raid on Gato's mansion with several villagers. He freed a lot of people there before taking the funds he was due and heading back to the Mist."

"Meanwhile, the bridge will soon be completed thanks to all the volunteers. Tazuna will be done by the end of the week," Kurenai told her student.

"How long I have been out?" Naruto asked.

"Almost two days," Hinata answered.

"Yeah, you were out long enough for me to have the ice brat assigned to our team," Anko explained.

"She will make a suitable replacement for Tukiko," Kurenai added as Tukiko looked down in sadness.

Naruto looked at Tukiko and gazed at the place where her right hand should be. Haku was comforting her friend as Hinata stated, "As soon as we return, Tukiko will be forced to resign from Leaf Forces due to her injuries."

"My cousin thinks it is funny," Tukiko snarled as Haku tensed at the snide remarks of Sasuke Uchiha.

Naruto looked at Tukiko before she said in a demanding voice, "My backpack, please."

"Naruto?" Hinata asked.

"Backpack, please," Naruto had demanded again.

Hinata nodded as she got Naruto's backpack. Naruto then rumbles through her backpack until she found the specific blood sealed scroll marked "Medical Designs." She then bit her thumb and channeled chakra to release the seal through chakra and blood. Once she unrolled the scroll, it revealed storage seals that held hundreds of designs, all stacked neatly in the middle of the seal. Naruto went through the stack to find a specific design.

As the girls looked on with great curiosity, Haku asked, "What are you doing?"

"Looking for this," Naruto stated as she pulled out a design.

Naruto unrolled it to reveal diagrams of a cybernetic body. The two adults and three other girls looked at the design as Naruto explained, "During my work to reverse engineer technology from the Republic Alliance's time period. I found out they had developed ways to replace limbs or damage body parts destroyed. One such idea was to combine cybernetic and biometric technology to create organic limbs to replace lost limbs, or in this case a hand."

"Really?" Tukiko asked hopefully as Kurenai, Hinata, and Haku looked through the plans.

"It should work as the bio-circuitry from the hand will attach to the nerves in your arm to allow
perfect control of your new hand. Along with some bio-transplanted skin, no one will be able to tell that you lost your hand and maybe to channel chakra through them," Naruto explained. "I can make it, but it will require a very skilled surgeon to attach it."

"Maybe one we don't have in the village," Kurenai explained. "I am no expert, but I think that only Tsunade Senju can perform such a delicate surgery, and she hasn't been seen in the village for a very long time."

Hinata and Haku agreed with Kurenai's assessment. Both were skilled medics, and Hinata had studied surgery with the doctors at the hospital during her downtime when the others were busy with their own projects. Tukiko was now really depressed as she walked to Naruto and said, "Thanks for trying to cheer me up."

The two senseis then left to work with Haku, Hinata, and a depressed Tukiko. Naruto waved at them leaving her in the silence. Alone, Naruto began repeating to herself, "Tsunade Senju can perform the surgery."

Nine of Nine had smiled in Naruto's mind as she stated, 'When you need the best, always go for them. You may be able to save Tukiko's career if you start now.'

It was all the support Naruto needed as she got out of bed and pulled out the scroll to see what parts were required to make the implant. Naruto began to work on Tukiko's replacement hand.

Scene VIII

It took five days before the bridge was finished and was dubbed the 'The Great Bridge of Heroes and Demons,' in honor of the ninja's aid and words in helping to save their land, and their hope. Once the bridge was finished, there was a massive party in their honor. After the party, the Leaf-nins, including Haku headed back to Konoha under ANBU escort. Once they arrived in Konoha, the teams of Leaf Forces gave their reports. Sarutobi was very intrigued by the information that Kushina had provided and had a plan to use it well. Once they were done, the Hokage dismissed everyone but Team Vixen.

"Haku Momochi, I would like to congratulate you on being allowed into Team 13," Sarutobi stated before handing a leaf headband to Haku. He then turned towards Tukiko with sorrow, "As for you my child, it is with regret that-

Naruto decided to stop the Hokage to ask, "Hokage-Jiji, may I speak?"

"Of course my child. What is it?" Sarutobi asked.

"I have a hand that can replace Tukiko's lost hand," Naruto explained before going to the point. "However, I am told that only Tsunade Senju can perform the surgery. Therefore, I would like to hire Team Vixen to find one Tsunade Senju to perform experimental surgery to replace Tukiko's hands. I am willing to use all the money I accumulated to pay for such a mission."

It was deadly silent as the Hokage took a puff of his pipe. He thought it over as he contemplated Naruto's request. Sarutobi took the pipe out before granting her request, "That won't be necessary Naruto. I will personally pay for this mission under two conditions."

"What are they?" Naruto asked as the others moved in closer, especially Tukiko at the prospect that her ninja career might be saved.

"First is that you must convince Tsunade Senju to return to Konoha," Sarutobi stated. "She must return to Konoha to help with our medical programs, and fill her seat must be filled as being the last
Senju, a founding clan of the village." Sarutobi then took another puff of his pipe before adding, "The second is that you allow her former teammate and my Student, Jiraiya, to provide assistance."

Kurenai groaned while Anko ranted, "Not that pervert!"

"Jiraiya maybe the biggest pervert in the world," Sarutobi admitted with a small blush. "He is also one of the most skilled ninjas in the world in several arts, including seals."

Hinata quietly asked, "How long will we have to wait?"

"Not long, as he should be here now," the Hokage stated.

At that moment, a window opened up, and a fifty-year-old man with a red jacket jumped in. Everyone stared at the man's face as he smiled like a fool. His face was streaked with red paint that made him look as if he was crying. He had long, wild crazy horse white hair held back by a massive, spiky headband with the word 'oil' on it. The man then got into a striking pose and yelled, "I am Jiraiya, the legendary toad sage, the seducer of woman and writer of the Make-Out series so all men can share in my perverted success!"

While the Hokage looked on stoically as he was used to Jiraiya, Kurenai and Anko looked ready to kill him, especially as he had openly ogled their breast. The four, younger girls raised an eyebrow at the oddity that was Jiraiya. Naruto broke the silence to ask the Hokage, "Can I shoot him?"

This caused the women to laugh, as Jiraiya's face deflated. "No Naruto, you can't shoot him. You need him for your mission," the Hokage told the girl.

"But he is a pervert! And what use can he be as he must be a virgin to write smut instead of getting some action on his own," Naruto replied, causing all the woman to laugh hysterically and Sarutobi to pull his hat down in embarrassment.

Jiraiya was embarrassed because Naruto called him a pervert, "Brat, I am not a pervert. I am a super pervert that only a few women can resist! And if you read past the smut, you realize my works are pieces of real art. My first book, the Gusty Ninja, was without smut and sold like crap. I later added sensible smut to sell my books."

Naruto was shocked that this pervert wrote one of her favorite books. One her father seemed to share for he had named her after the main character from that book. She could not comprehend Jiraiya's statement when she asked, "But why?"

"I don't know brat," Jiraiya answered truthfully. "The Gusty Ninja was my favorite book to write. Though a few Make-Out books came close and some of the smut was fun to write," Jiraiya added as he became too droll. Naruto was about to make fun of him some more when the Hokage stopped her.

"Okay, Naruto that is enough questioning Jiraiya. You need him for the mission," the Hokage ordered Naruto.

"So what is the mission sensei?" Jiraiya asked as he switched to a more serious mode.

"You are to help Naruto and her team find Tsunade," the Hokage told Jiraiya before he explained the mission details.

After the explanation was done, Jiraiya eyed Team Vixen, not with perversion, but intrigue. He straightened up and stated, "I am ready to go whenever they are sensei."
"I suggest you go immediately," the Hokage commanded. "The Council soon will be breathing down my neck in what to do with Tukiko now that she can't be a ninja because of her missing hand, or that is will be the excuse they claim."

"Thank you Hokage-Jiji, purvey sage," Naruto bowed. Team Vixen soon began their quest with a grumbling Jiraiya in tow and made a stop in the next town for information.

Chapter End Notes

That's it for this rewrite. Hope you enjoy it and remember to review. Your opinion matters, and determines how I rewrite this story.
Scene 1

"Hokage-Sama," an elderly man named Homura Mitokado sitting in elders' part of the council spoke up to the Council Chamber. "I don't understand the delay. It has been two weeks since Tukiko has lost one of her hands on the Wave Mission. Why are you putting off in dismissing Tukiko Uchiha from the Leaf Forces?"

"Because she is not here to do so," the old man Sarutobi, answered his onetime teammate. "She is currently on a mission."

That got the attention of an elderly woman beside Homura named Koharu Utatane as she had snapped at the Hokage, "You sent out a crippled girl on a mission?"

Koharu's question caused a general round of shouting among the Leaf's Council. In Leaf Forces, the council was split into four parts: civilian, shinobi, clan, and elders. While the other three handled the day-to-day operation, the elders presided over the others and even step in if the Hokage was not available. Therefore, the Elders held most of the power in the Council, second only to the Hokage.

They certainly had the power to make people argue until the Hokage ordered them to stand down, "Enough! I am the Hokage, and you will sit down and listen!"

The council became quieted down as the Hokage continued, "Now yes I have sent a Tukiko Uchiha out as she will be vital to an experiment to replace lost limbs with a cyb-cyber… uh, a robotic hand that the user can channel chakra through."

Within the Shinobi part of the Council, a distinguished woman name Eboshi, head of Leaf Forces' medical program spoke up, "I read her design. It is fascinating, and it could help our ninjas that have or do lose their limbs to return to work. It is just, unfortunate that only…” Eboshi stopped as she realized what Sarutobi was up to, "I see. You sent them to find Tsunade for the procedure."

"Yes," the Hokage answered Eboshi. "I sent them to get Tsunade's aid to heal Tukiko and hopefully convince Tsunade to return to Konoha without the need of force. Its time she returns home."

Whispered conversations were held among the groups of ninjas as they discuss the implications of the possible return of several of their ninjas to active service that had been forced into early retirement. However, one of the three elders had other ideas. Danzō, the former head of ANBU and rumored to still be in command of the illegal Root ANBU, in which Sai, a member of Team 7 was a part of. On the Council, he was considered a crippled war hawk that walked around with a cane. Wearing bandages across his 'mangled' right arm and his 'missing' his right eye from a battle that left
a crossed scar over his chin for all to see. His noticeable battle scars gave him a particular status among the group as a valuable veteran, giving him a significant weight of power in the Council despite being a warmonger.

"I understand the importance of such a mission," Danzō stated before moving in for the kill. "However, you are interfering with the girl's responsibility to continue the clan."

"What do you mean?" asked a raven-haired beauty with black coral eyes, she was head of the Uchiha clan and Tukiko's aunt, Mikoto Uchiha.

"I mean a contract created by the Uchiha's heir, Sasuke Uchiha," Danzō smirked as he held up a marriage contract between Tukiko Uchiha and one of his men.

Mikoto quickly grabbed the contract and read it over, "I didn't agree to this!" Mikoto yelled as it was passed to the Hokage.

"It doesn't matter," Danzō stated. "As heir, Sasuke Uchiha can make choices for any civilian members of his clan even if they are of age. And since you are a temporary Head, you can't override Sasuke's decision if Tukiko becomes a civilian."

Mikoto could not believe her own son would do this to his own cousin. She was so distraught that she did not see her young son in the shadows. A smile appeared on Sasuke's pale skin as a twinkle appeared in his coral eyes in anticipation of his cousin's fate. For too long she had, the girl had been in his mom's eye, and now she can get her out of the way while getting something else he wanted from Danzō.

"You seem to forget that Tukiko is still a ninja," Sarutobi stated after looking over the contract. "Like a ninja, she is still under my control and Mikoto's protection. She would need to be decommissioned within three months before this contract can take effect and I am not going to do that before I know she has no chance of being healed."

Most were nodding in agreement while Danzō smirked, "And how long do you plan to wait? Will you keep her in the service out of pity?"

It quickly became quiet as Elder Mitokado continued for Danzō, "What my collogued is suggesting that we have a timetable set up before she is brought before us to determine her fate."

"I believe two weeks from now is a reasonable amount of time," Homura suggested, providing enough time that the Hokage could not refuse, but it was cutting it close to finding the Tsunade.

Hiruzen Sarutobi had no choice but to grunt in agreement, "Very well. I will contact the team and inform them they have two weeks after this meeting is concluded for Tukiko to find a replacement arm, or to bring her before us to be discharged from the forces," Sarutobi added with a sober tone before he switched gears. "Now if anyone has any objections, let's get back to the shinobi reports."

As the various compartments gave their reports, Sasuke walked behind Danzō to question him in a demanding voice, "I thought you said getting Tukiko kicked out would be easy."

Danzō sighed as he gripped his cane in frustration, "Patience Sasuke. Tukiko will soon be out. Two weeks is not enough time to find Tsunade. Just remember the plan."

"I remember," Sasuke spoke to Danzō with a clear tone that held anticipation. "You get Tukiko for a year and have your men do with whatever you want with her until she is pregnant. Naruto will be forced to marry me to save Tukiko by promising to annul her marriage. After Naruto and I have produced a child with the Elemental Star and the Sharingan, Naruto will be forced to work in your
Root ANBU while I go kill Itachi."

"Very good," Danzō stated as he had formed another plan in his mind, where Sasuke died on his revenge mission, leaving him in control of the Uchiha and Ryū through Naruto and her children. His master plan was all coming to fruition, and he now had a backup plan. Should Tukiko somehow healed, he would still win as he could use the medical procedure to return former Root back into service. Either way, it would be a win for him or that was how he reasoned it to himself as he plotted for power.

Scene II

In the pilot seat of a grounded Shadow Fox was Hinata Hyūga, going over flight control with their newest member, Haku. In the back seat, Naruto was taking a break from trying to get a new technique down called the Rasengan, taught to her by Jiraiya. It was the Fourth Hokage's original A-rank offensive jutsu. For some unknown reason, Jiraiya had taken an interest in her training and forced her to accept him as her teacher.

If he were a peephole pervert, she would be worried, but this was not the case. While he was a pervert, he was not interested in kids and was earnest when it comes to training that he did not notice the women around him. Therefore, Naruto had to reason he was so insisted on teaching her was nostalgia since he was her father's sensei.

The Rasengan was a three-step technique that usually took months to master. However, Naruto had completed the first two stages in three days due to her higher chakra supply, problem-solving mind, Colonel Nine of Nine's help and a high chakra control she had obtained from her training. The first stage depended on bursting a water balloon by spinning the water inside in multiple directions at once. The second stage was to burst a rubber ball by making her chakra denser until the weight broke through the ball.

After the two stages, she worked on putting them together into a perfectly round shape that is the Rasengan. Her training had paid off as she able to do it with a clone but she had not mastered it until she could do it with one hand. That would be awhile as the Rasengan was not the only training method she was doing. As she physically mastered the Rasengan, she used multiple clones finished honing her training in lightning manipulation every time they land, slowly developing a complete eye.

While Naruto was training solo on the road, Anko and Kurenai teamed up to train Tukiko with her teammates' assistance. Tukiko had to get used to fighting without a right hand for a time, and they were making the most of it. Haku also taught her how to do one-handed Jutsus to help Tukiko along. After the first two days, Tukiko realized how much she had depended on her right hand, and she hopes to find Tsunade soon, especially after she had received news from the Hokage. The message was simple unless she was capable and healthy enough to be a ninja within two weeks; she would be forced out of the Leaf Forces and into a marriage with someone that she did not know. The news caused Tukiko to pace around in frustration as she waited for Jiraiya to return.

"What is taking that pervert so long?" Tukiko demanded. "It's been six hours!"

"Tukiko, please calm down," Naruto cautioned her friend. "He needs to develop leads on where Tsunade might be as she is very elusive."

Tukiko grimaced as she remembered the debriefing. Tsunade Senju is the last of the Senju clan and the mother of modern medical jutsus. She was also a gambler that always loses to the point she earned the title 'the Legendary Sucker.' If that was not bad enough, she also had the habit of borrowing money to pay for her gambling habit and could never pay it back due to losing all the
time, so she was constantly on the run to avoid her debtors. She was the same age as her fifty-year-old teammate Jiraiya, and she was very vain about her age. So much so that she used a genjutsu that would look, feel and taste so real that she might as well be twenty-eight years old. She also used that genjutsu to hide from debt collectors by routinely changing her appearance and age, making her difficult to find.

"I'm sorry Naruto. I just don't want to be forced out of the ninja services and marry someone I don't know," Tukiko admitted.

Naruto nodded in agreement as Haku got up to stretch. "You won't," Haku told Tukiko, "not if we can do anything about it."

Tukiko smiled back at Haku as Hinata walked up to Naruto. In silence, Hinata turned up to see Kurenai walking in with Anko, discussing things like their students' training and Kurenai's possible boyfriend. Anko smiled as Kurenai tried to deny her crush, even if it was obvious to even Naruto. As the students watched the heated discussion, a familiar strong man jumps in through the fighter's hatch. It was Jiraiya with his wild, long white hair and in clothing that resembled a kabuki warrior without the makeup, except for the red marks from under his eyes.

"Good news, girls, and beautiful ladies. Tsunade is in the next village, gambling as usual," Jiraiya stated, unaware of the anxious situation he was walking into.

"You spent six hours in this town just to find out she was in the next town?" Tukiko asked quietly while getting a kunai out with her left hand.

"Well, the beauties of this town were very distracting," Jiraiya foolishly answered.

Tukiko jumped on him with her kunai drawn and yelled, "I am going to castrate you!"

She would have succeeded if Haku, Anko, and Kurenai had not dragged Tukiko off Jiraiya. Haku tried to calm Tukiko down, "Calm down Tukiko, he will not make that mistake again, right?"

Haku gave the evil eye to Jiraiya as got up and asked, "What's the big deal? I mean we have plenty of time."

Haku looked up in pure anger to state, "We don't have 'plenty of time.' We have only two weeks before Tukiko could be forced out of service and you are wasting our time with your whoremongering."

Jiraiya eyes widened when he mumbled, "I didn't know."

"Hinata, Naruto, be a dear and get us to the next town as fast as possible under stealth. We don't want to spook our target," Kurenai ordered while holding Tukiko down.

Hinata and Naruto moved to the cockpit to lift Shadow Fox off while cloaked until they reached the next town. The girls didn't know they were being followed as they flew off.

Scene III

Feeling the fighter's presence, an ugly man with a hunchback, covered from head to toe was heading to the very same town. "Soon my contract will be completed, and the Mother's hunger will be satisfied," the ugly man stated as a tentacle from his hunch back rubbed the back of his head, affectionately. The Mother was pleased.

Scene IV
Within a large town with a castle, the Leaf-nins arrived on the Shadow Fox in the outskirts before they run into a local casino to find that Tsunade had left an hour ago. She had won for the first time in years and ran out as she considered winning a bad omen. This led to team Vixen smacking Jiraiya up the side of his head for his delay ensures they had to track down Tsunade's trail, again. After Jiraiya had recovered, they decided to head to a bar to get something to eat and drink while getting information while the sun slowly disappeared on the horizon.

As they entered the bar, they spotted a blond-haired woman with a bust that men dream about and could not possibly be real, yet it is. Her hair was tied into two ponytails away from the purple diamond on her forehead as well as her beautiful face. Eating with the woman was a black-haired woman with a pig in her lap. Jiraiya ran over to a woman, practically dancing as he recognized his teammate anywhere.

"Tsunade, is that you?" Jiraiya asked.

The busty woman looked up with glaring golden eyes, "Jiraiya! What are you doing here?"

The group joined Tsunade at the table as Jiraiya stated, "We were looking for you."

"Why?" the woman asked harshly, and Naruto ignored it to take the opportunity to give a quick answer.

"Tsunade, I am here to request your services."

"My services?" Tsunade asked while her black-haired assistant, Shizune was wondering the same thing.

"Well, I need your help with an operation to replace Tukiko's right hand," Naruto stated as she pulled out a scroll and opened it to reveal blueprints and a book on how to perform the operation for a robotic hand. She handed it over to Tsunade as she raised an eyebrow.

Tsunade took only one look to get interested as she pored through the book and design. Thoughts began to form of performing an operation in what would be a pioneer in medical technology. As she pondered the details of the operation, Jiraiya to the moment to add, "Also, sensei wants you to return home."

It was the worst thing to say as Tsunade snarled out to Jiraiya, "The first request, I may do for you for a price. But the other request, I will tell you now: fuck no!"

"You said the same thing to me that one special night," Jiraiya commented dreamily.

"I was drunk… you were drunk, and you took my virginity. You were lucky I didn't castrate you!" Tsunade screamed before she calmed down. "Why would I return to the village of idiots who die for stupid dreams like someday being the Hokage? I will never!" Tsunade then turned to the girls to state, "Now about the payment I was thinking-" Tsunade never finished as Naruto punched her right in the mouth.

"How dare you insult our comrades, you bitch!" Naruto yelled at a woman known for her super strength.

"Listen to you brat. Do you know the pain I had to go through because of that village? If you had experienced my pain, you wouldn't want to return to that place," Tsunade stated.

"All I see is an old hag with a vanity issue, running away from the past instead of facing it!" Naruto yelled.
"What did you call me?" Tsunade asked her temper rising.

Naruto foolishly answered, "Do I need to spell it out for you? You are an old crow who hides behind a disguise."

Tsunade destroyed the table with one punch and yelled, "Outside now!"

Naruto complied and went outside to face a pissed Tsunade. Her teammates, Anko, Kurenai, Shizune, and Jiraiya, watched with concern. "You think you can win, Genin?" Tsunade snarled as she straightens a green trench coat with the words 'wager' on its back.

"Honestly, no," Naruto answered truthfully. "But I think I can take you down a few pegs."

Naruto went through a few hand signs, 'Lightning Style: Lightning Strikes Jutsu,' to send a huge wave of lightning towards Tsunade. Tsunade slammed her fist into the ground to uplift a huge boulder to absorb the lightning strike. The lightning strikes then dispersed, and Tsunade lifted the boulder up and threw it at Naruto. Naruto dodged the boulder and went through some familiar hand signs that shocked Tsunade. Naruto used 'Wood Style: Spear Head Jutsu,' to send a long, thin wood spear at Tsunade. She countered it with 'Wood Style: Whipping Willow Jutsu,' as a small branched tree grabbed the spear and slammed it to the ground.

Tsunade dispersed the tree to look into Naruto's eye to see that it was a blush green eye with a yin-yang pupil. It also had five colored triangles coming out of the pupil with red being faint and the other four colors, brown, dark blue, yellow and white being full. "The Elemental Star! So it does exist, and it looks like you have mastered four of the five elements," Tsunade commented.

"I just finished mastering lightning today thanks to shadow clones. Now to show you two of those things," Naruto stated before she used a new jutsu, 'Ice Style: Entrapment Jutsu.'

Tsunade found ice cubes around her limbs, keeping her in place. While Tsunade was held by ice blocks, Naruto formed two ice clones and one shadow clone. The ice clones grabbed onto Tsunade's limbs to keep the ice from melting or breaking while the shadow clone stayed with Naruto. The clone helped Naruto form the spiral blue ball that was the Rasengan. Naruto then charged at Tsunade with the Rasengan while the shadow clone kept it intact.

As Naruto rushed the Sennin, Tsunade broke free at the last second with her super strength. She kicked one of the ice clones into Naruto's legs at high speed. Naruto fell forward in pain as she slammed the Rasengan into the ground. The shadow clone and ice clone dispersed due to the Rasengan blast as Tsunade pulverized the other ice clone, leaving Naruto alone and with her undivided attention. Pissed, Tsunade rushed towards Naruto and punched her in the stomach. The amount of power behind the attack forced Naruto into the next building as the thin wooden walls caved in. Naruto survived the attack as she slowly pulled herself out of the building, still a little wobbly.

"Naru-Chan!" Hinata yelled before running to Naruto to help her up.

"Jiraiya, what were you thinking? Teaching that brat that man's technique," Tsunade questioned Jiraiya.

"She has the talent, and it is hers by right. Granted, she is not like the Fourth. He was a warrior prodigy. While Naruto is a multitasked pioneer," Jiraiya admitted.

"And even he died at a young age and wasted his talents on a stupid dream," Tsunade commented.

"Don't you dare insult my father!" Naruto slipped out as Tsunade scowled.
"I see. You are Minato's daughter. So you are like your old man, a fool trying to live a fool's dream of being Hokage." Tsunade commented.

"It's not a fool's dream. He died doing something a coward like you couldn't do: Save lives even at the cost of one's own life! He lived his dream unlike you!" Naruto yelled back and only garnered more of Tsunade's wrath.

"What about you brat, what is your dream?" Tsunade asked with a snarl.

That question struck Naruto. She did not know what she wanted to be. She built things more as a hobby than anything, and she was a ninja to protect the things she considered precious. Precious, brought back memories to a time when the Third Hokage told her how the village was his family. How he was protecting it from a force outside and within the village's wall. Naruto realized that she considered a lot of the people in the village precious to her. After a long moment of silence, Naruto began to chuckle before laughing like a mad woman.

"You know," Naruto began while she started to stand on her own two feet. "I never had one. I just had the desire to build things and to protect my family and friends, but I never had a goal or dream. However, now I realize something. I want to be the strongest to protect those precious to me. To make the decision to save lives and keep them safe. I want to be the best ninja there is. I want to be the most powerful Hokage of all time to make sure my home and more importantly my friends are safe."

Tsunade looked at Naruto to see two people she loved her. She felt the sorrow catch up after so many years of running. Tsunade looked into Naruto's eye to ask, "So brat, you think you can be Hokage?"

"I know I can," Naruto stated without question, which made Tsunade smirk.

"Then brat, how about a bet?" Tsunade asked rhetorically. "I noticed that you are still far from completing the Rasengan. You master the Rasengan with one hand in one week, I will return to Konoha, help you and your friend for free, and give you this." Tsunade showed off a.

"Lady Tsunade!" Shizune gasped.

"What is so special about that rock?" Tukiko asked.

"That jewel shard belongs to the First Hokage and is worth three mountains full of jewels and can suppress demonic chakra. It is also said that only the future Hokage can wear it," Jiraiya told the amazed Genin.

"And if I lose?" Naruto asked the woman before her.

"If you lose, you will give me a sixth of your estates for the medical procedure, scrolls detailing the new medical techniques from Konoha, and DNA samples from you," Tsunade explained the details.

"Why do you want samples of my DNA?" Naruto asked.

"You are a former Uzumaki. The Uzumaki have active and dormant bloodlines that could provide me the answer to have the ability to continue the Senju line," Tsunade told the girl.

"Alright, I agree with everything except the blood. I will let you just have it if it will help save your family's line." Naruto pulled out a needle and took some blood out of her arm. Naruto then held out a vial of blood to Tsunade. "I swear on my blood that I will fully master the Rasengan in one week."
Tsunade, who had a phobia when it comes to blood, accepted the vial hesitantly while Naruto walked to the fighter to get ready for tomorrow.

Scene V

It was early in the morning as Naruto, her senseis and teammates talked about today's training when they heard a knock at the bottom of the fighter. The hatch opened to reveal Shizune there with a worried face. "Can I come in?"

"Sure," Naruto showed Shizune in.

Shizune walked into the room and got in front of Naruto, "Listen, I need you to talk to you about your bet."

"What about my bet?" Naruto asked.

"I want you to call it off," Shizune shocked the group.

"Why does Naru-Chan need to call it off?" Hinata asked.

"It has to do with the cursed necklace." Shizune got everyone's attention as she began to tell the sad tale about Tsunade.

It started the day her brother was born. At the time, the Senju clan began to die out because of a birth defect; one out of ten had a chance to survive childbirth while the rest died during birth. As Tsunade grew up, she dreamt of being a medic that would one day save her family. However, the Third Great Shinobi War started, and she went to the front line with the majority of the Senju Clan. During the war, her brother Nawaki was given the necklace when he became a Genin because he wanted to be Hokage. Nawaki died on his very first mission because the medics were not able to treat him quickly enough. After the mission, she proposed for every team to have a field medic, but it was shot down because they did not have the resources or the time to train medics during the war.

During that meeting, she met her future fiancé, Dan. After three months together, Tsunade gave Dan her necklace after he told her about his dream of being Hokage. On his next mission, he died with her teammate/future traitor, Orochimaru. His remains were splattered all over a room, creating her phobia of blood. A year later, the war ended thanks to Minato Namikaze, and Tsunade was the sole survivor of the Senju clan besides the elderly that were too old to produce a child, ensuring the clan will die off. In her grief, Tsunade left Konoha with Shizune, her apprentice. She swore would never return to Konoha, not she will ever give away her necklace to anyone ever again.

While the group was saddened by the tale, Naruto formed a determined look. Naruto got up and began to walk out. "Where are you going?" Haku asked.

"I am going to master the Rasengan," Naruto stated.

"Naru-Chan?" Hinata asked quietly before she looked at the determination in Naruto's eyes. Hinata then nodded, "I understand."

As Naruto left, Shizune asked, "What do you understand?"

"She realized there was a bigger purpose for the win," Hinata explained for Naruto. "Tsunade did not give the bet to crush Naruto's dreams. She made that bet so she could believe in something again."

Shizune only stared as she watched Naruto leave the fighter for some heavy training.
Scene VI

Tsunade was troubled emotionally. She did not know how to take the brat. On the one hand, she was oblivious to others emotions to the point that it was almost comical. Just watching her and the Hyūga dance around each other not knowing they had feelings for each other was hilarious and made her laugh for the first time in a long time. However, when you spoke to her, she replied with an intelligence that you could not ignore. And after a discussion at a bar with a serious Jiraiya, she realized that Naruto had a strong will of fire that made her want to succeed.

Flashback

Tsunade was sitting at a bar; enjoying a large glass of shake when Jiraiya joined her after ordering a large glass of bourbon. As they enjoyed their drink, Tsunade looked up to ask, "Why did you take that brat as a student? Is it because she is your student's child?"

Jiraiya took a sip of bourbon before answering Tsunade, "No. It was because Naruto-Chan is so different from any other student I ever had."

Tsunade looked at Jiraiya in shock as he explained himself, "You remember, Minato-San. He was a born warrior. He could pick up any fighting style to call his own and was a prodigy on the battlefield. Men had reasons to tremble when they faced him. But his daughter, his daughter is a problem solver. Give her the tools and tell her the problem and she will go out of her way to solve it. I never thought of using Shadow Clones to stabilize a Rasengan and help cut her training time to a fraction of what it should be. That is why I like to train her as she wasn't afraid to obliterate the box she works in."

Tsunade looked down at her shake and thought about Naruto's unique eyes, "She also has a fire in her eyes that makes people go to the gates of hell for her. You raised your goddaughter well."

Jiraiya sighed out, "I didn't raise her." Tsunade looked at Jiraiya in shock, as he continued, "I wish I could say that I did, but I know the truth as I was too busy reuniting daughter and mother."

"Reuniting?" Tsunade asked.

"I am the world's best seal master, and I was tasked with not only spying on our enemies but breaking the seal that the Uzumaki use to control Naruto's mother and her half-sister," Jiraiya explained. "I was so busy with my spy network while trying to get mother and daughter together that I lost track of time. Months became years, and I was so busy I didn't realize that fourteen years had gone by until I saw her at that window. I don't think I can be considered to be her godfather, but at least I can make her happy now."

Tsunade looked at her drink before she stated, "I am sure you will, and I will keep quiet that you are the girl's godfather. She has enough on her plate anyway."

Jiraiya nodded with a smile as they continued to drink in silence.

End Flashback

After drinking herself into a stupor, Tsunade began to spy on Naruto with 'Chameleon jutsu' to see the girl was determined as she worked almost eighteen hours straight a day. The only breaks were to eat and sleep. She did not stop training even as she used shadow clones to help Tsunade reattach her friend, Tukiko's hand.

Flashback
Tukiko was on the table while Tsunade was connecting the bio-circuitries to the nerve clusters and bone. Working alongside a subdued the Sennin and Shizune was Naruto's clones kept an eye on the arm processors. An operation Tsunade used to take notes through a headset in her ear. During the operation, Tsunade made small talk with Tukiko as the girl related how she became friends with Naruto, Hinata, and Haku.

"A teammate's bond is such an amazing thing. No matter who it is between," Tsunade commented as she put the final touches on the hand by stretching a synthetic skin over the robotic hand.

"I guess it is," Tukiko commented to Tsunade. "It's nice to have someone that has got your back."

"So the bet that Naruto agreed to. Do you believe that Naruto will win?" Tsunade asked as she finished covering Tukiko's hand with the synthetic skin. Once she was done, Naruto's clones activate the hand.

"I know she will," Tukiko answered as she brought up her new hand. It looked and felt like it had never even been cut off. "She promised she would win just like she promised you would repair my right hand."

Tsunade watched Tukiko admire her new hand with a broad smile.

End Flashback

Tsunade knew Tukiko was right as she watched as Naruto formed a Rasengan with one hand and obliterated the tree in front of her. Tsunade saw Naruto's triumphant smile as she decided to cancel her 'Chameleon Jutsu.' Naruto nearly jumped out of her skin when Tsunade appeared within her sight. Tsunade laughed at Naruto's reaction, as she did not notice the older woman was there for hours.

Realizing she was spied upon, Naruto focused her attention on Tsunade to ask, "How long have you been spying on me?"

"A couple of days," Tsunade stated playfully. "Had to see if I will be paying you or not."

"Well, no matter how old you are, that's kind of creepy," Naruto commented, as Tsunade twitched. "However, it's also fortunate, as I don't have to show you again that I mastered it. I won granny."

Tsunade stared at Naruto before pulling out her necklace, "Yes, you have."

Tsunade then slowly approached Naruto. Naruto got nervous as Tsunade leaned over and placed the necklace around her neck as she asked, "Did you know there is a tradition in how to give this necklace out?"

"What… kind of tradition?" Naruto asked nervously. "It's not hazing, is it? I don't do hazing well."

Tsunade laughed, "No… nothing like that. It's just something to show you earned it."

"Alright," Naruto said nervously.

Tsunade smiled as to put the necklace around Naruto's neck. Then, without warning came up to kiss Naruto on the forehead. Naruto was shocked as Tsunade pulled back to explain, "When I receive the necklace from my father, he kissed me on the forehead as he put the necklace on. The same thing happened to him when his father gave it to him, and I did it to Dan and Nawaki before they died. Now, I do the same for you."
"Why?" Naruto asked.

"You… your eyes look so much like Dan-Kun and Nawaki-Kun," Tsunade answered. "You have the same fire, and it makes me want to help. To make me consider you are family."

"I… thank you Granny," Naruto answered cheekily.

"Brat," Tsunade snarled as she flicked Naruto on the head, which for Tsunade amounted to being bashed in the head with a fist.

"OW," Naruto muttered.

"Now, why don't you prep your flying machine? Your team is there so I will get Shizune and Jiraiya before we get out of this town and back home," Tsunade told Naruto.

"You got it Lady Tsunade," Naruto bowed before she ran to prep her fighter for liftoff as Tsunade went back to get the others.

Scene V

It was over an hour later before Tsunade had gathered Jiraiya and Shizune together to prepare to leave for Konoha. An excited Shizune commented, "It's good to be going home after being on the road for so long."

"Yeah, I wonder how-" Tsunade then noticed a stranger with a hunchback and a body covered in a gray cloak and hood.

"Can we help you?" Jiraiya asked as he tensed.

"Yes, I have a contract with you three. You and your summons will do very nicely to quench the Mother's hunger," the man stated as he swished back and forth his arms and his grey decaying hands.

Tsunade, Jiraiya and Shizune tensed as Tsunade yelled, "Are you insane?"

Shizune noticed the man's appearance and asked quietly, "What happened to your skin?"

The man chuckled as he removed his hood to reveal a sickly grey skin, a mouth that resembled a squid's beak, and eyes that were a bright yellow with fine slits for pupils. "Intrigued, are you not?" the man asked while he chuckled sinisterly. "You are drawn to the majesty of my kind."

"Who or what are you?" Jiraiya asked in disgust.

"I was once a wealthy merchant who traded and bartered to gain power, but I was never satisfied until I met the Mother and became her follower," the man replied.

"Who is this 'Mother?'" Tsunade asked the follower.

"She is a creature designed to fight the machines in the Mechanize War, years before mankind set off the EMP bomb that sent everyone back to the Stone Age. However, unlike her fellow brother and sisters created by your kind, the thin-bloods, she feasted on all things. Especially the energy that life itself produces. The thin-bloods quickly realized what they had created, and they contained her. However, they never thought that she could still feed on the pains of the human race while trapped and gather followers to serve her. That is the weakness of the thin-bloods. They don't realize there is more than one way to gain power."

"There are more of you?" Shizune asked.
"Many more, spread all over the world, willing to give their lives to the Mother."

"How did you escape the notice of my spy network and the other villages?" Jiraiya asked with concern.

"We are fast and silent when we need to be. Besides, no one notices or cares when a few villagers, low-level missing-nins, bandit camps, and weaklings disappear here and there. After all, things like that happen all the time," the follower of the Mother had answered the surprise group.

"Why are you here?" Tsunade demanded.

"A man reached out to us and had contracted us for a special job for him: to kill you, Tsunade, and any Hidden Leaf Ninja Forces that contacted you, in exchange for a thousand sacrifices, and a way to get to your summonses," the man replied.

"Who is this man?" Jiraiya asked.

"His name was Orochimaru," the follower replied before leaping away from a surprise attack from Jiraiya. The sage was pushed into a frenzied rage when the follower mentioned the man's name that had once been Tsunade and Jiraiya's teammate before he betrayed the Leaf to freely experiment on human test subjects.

The others began to join the fray against the evading follower who fought back with kick strikes. Kick strikes that had even matched Tsunade's super strength. Tsunade responded with 'Wood Style: Root Grab Jutsu' to have a root grabbed onto the Mother's follower. Tsunade then tried to strike with a wooden war hammer she created with 'Wood Style: War Hammer Jutsu.' The follower was able to kick itself free while also being able to kick Tsunade away. She let her weapon go as she flew off the ground until she was caught by Jiraiya.

Shizune followed up with her wrist-mounted launcher that shot out multiple poison needles at the follower. The follower escaped Shizune's attack to power up a summoning Jutsu. Tsunade and Jiraiya felt the chakra build up and powered up their own summons. They timed it just right for all three to have summons formed at the same time. The follower summoned a giant grey squid, Tsunade summoned a giant blue and white slug, and Jiraiya summoned giant red toad with a sword, with a scar over one of his eyes and a pipe in his mouth.

"The Squid Clan is here. I never thought I would see one outside the nightmare realm. Jiraiya, this is a very serious battle. I am glad you summoned me for this," The toad told Jiraiya on top of his head.

"Glad you see it that way, Gamabunta," Jiraiya told the toad.

"Lady Tsunade, what will you have of me?" The slug asked Tsunade in a gentle voice while Shizune was at Tsunade's side on top.

"I need your help to take that summon down, Lady Katsuyu," Tsunade replied as the summons prepares for battle.

Scene VI

Away from the battle, Haku was outside the fighter when she saw the summoning battle. She ran in to tell everyone, which made everyone run out. "Fuck," Anko stated before she powered up her own summoning jutsu. Anko brought forth a giant, purple cobra, with green eyes and large fangs. It was her friend, and most loyal summon, the True Snake Boss, Kingu.
Anko then turned towards Naruto, "Alright, Naru, you need to summon-"

Naruto interrupted Anko. "Anko-sensei, I can't summon for at least another week," Naruto told Anko.

Anko cursed before barked out orders, "Alright, you guys stay with the fighter. Kurenai, hop on and let us go blow this joint. Kingu, let's go." Anko Kurenai jumped on Kingu's head with Anko.

"You got it, mistress," Kingu complied as it slithered to battle.

As the girls watched Anko and Kurenai ride off to battle, Naruto ran into the cockpit. The three followed to find Naruto preparing for lift off. "Naru-chan, what are you doing?" Hinata asked nervously.

"Getting the fighter ready for battle," Naruto replied as the fighter's engines, weapons, and shields powered up. The girls quickly got into her cockpit seats to prepare for battle.

"Isn't this against orders?" Haku asked as she played the group's conscience.

"She said to stay with the fighter. She said nothing about taking the fighter into a danger zone," Tukiko commented, as Naruto got the fighter ready to fly.

Scene VII

At the summoning battle, it was at a standstill as the squid was holding its own against Gamabunta and Katsuyuu. The three were an equal match as the squid just floated in the sky and shot out ink blobs. The battlefield shifted to Leaf-nin's favor when Kingu slithered up from behind the squid and bit into the summon's skin with its poison fangs. The squid shrieked before it went limp within the snake's mouth. The follower had jumped off his dead summon and landed in front of the giant toad and slug. A normal man would be scared and beg for his life, but instead, he began laughing as if he won.

"Why are you laughing? We just killed your summon," Anko sneered.

"A disposable pawn that I no longer need that I don't need anymore; the Mother is ready to come into this world," the man answered as he removed his robes to reveal something that freaked the entire group.

His hunchback was a squid's eye that had black chakra swirled around it. They stood there in horror as black tentacles began to shoot out of the follower's back before grabbing onto the ground around the man. The squid slowly pulled itself out of the followers' back, and they could do nothing as they were frozen in disbelief. They watched the man disappeared within the giant squid known as the Mother. A mother of despair as it was as black as a starless night and more massive than all three of the summons combined.

Jiraiya summed it up for the group when he said, "Aw, shit."

The Mother came to life, swimming through the air before it attacked the leaf-nins and their summons. The land summons slithering or jumped away as the squid slammed into the ground with a force that left meteor carters in its wake. Once far enough away to not hurt themselves, the summons return-fired with acid (Katsuyu), venom (Kingu) or oil (Gamabunta) with Jiraiya and Anko adding fire using 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu.' It had little success, as it moved without hindrance and its tentacles grabbed onto Katsuyu. It began squeezing Katsuyu until the slug dispersed into several mini slugs while Tsunade jumped off with Shizune. The two ran away where Katsuyu was reforming while Kingu spits out venom to get the Mother's attention and allow Katsuyu time to reform.
The Mother responded with a couple of tentacles slammed onto Kingu. Kingu was in pain as the squid captured him with tentacles. Claws from the squid's suckers' claws dug in deep into the snake to prevent its escape. Around the squid, the others tried to use several high power Jutsus to get Kingu free while the Mother dragged the snake closer to its beak. Anko and Kurenai were too scared and loyal to run and tried to fight back even as it proves pointless. They expected to die with Kingu as they embraced each other.

Death never came as a pair of red torpedoes hit the squid. This made the Mother released Kingu as it tumbled away. The fighter, *Shadow Fox* let loose to a bunch of bullets and lasers to hit the squid repeatedly until it flew over the squid and the squid gave chase. Everyone on the ground watched as the fighter weaved and turned as the Mother tried to grab on the nimble *Shadow Fox*.

"That thing is massive," Tukiko commented from the back seat.

'You bet it is,' Nine of Nine commented. 'It was a failed experiment meant to help end the war between the Machines and us. It had liked killing too much, and we had to trap it.'

'How?' Naruto asked mentally as she evaded the thing's ten arms.

'We trapped it in a pocket dimension using Chakra and Anti-matter that we developed in a lab,' Nine of Nine explained. 'I personally would have killed it, but we didn’t have enough firepower as most of our resources were too busy slowing down the Machines. It was designed to take a few nuclear bombs at point-blank range and still be able to fight.'

"There has to be a way," Naru-Hime commented before she barked out orders. "Hina-Hime, scan that thing to find any possible weak points."

Hinata acknowledged Naruto's orders before she got to the fighters' scanners. She scanned the creature using the ships scanners while she used her bloodline to find anything the scans might have missed. After a third swipe, Hinata finally got results as she reported, "Naru-Chan, there is a lot of temporal anomalies holding the squid in place. They seem to come from someone connected to this monster squid. I theorized if the person is severely wounded or killed that the squid will return to wherever it came from."

"Alright, sounds like we have a plan," Naruto commented, but Hinata disagreed.

"But we have a problem in the fact that the person is protected within the squid, and we don't have enough firepower to get to him."

"There must be some way to get him," Naruto commented as she evaded another tentacle.

Haku looked at a hologram image of the squid and pointed out a weak point, "I think I can see an opening, but I don't think it's big enough for our ship's torpedoes to get through and hit the guy."

"I think only a person can squeeze through and hit the guy," Hinata added.

"I'll do it," Tukiko volunteered. "Just get me there, and I can slip through and get the bastard."

"Tukiko, it is too risky," Haku had pleaded and Hinata nodding in agreement.

"We don't have a choice," Tukiko pointed out.

After a moments silence, Naruto said, "Do it."

"Come on Haku, I need you to operate the hanger's controls for me to skydive," Tukiko told the girl
as she led Haku to the fighter's back.

Within the back of the fighter, she suited up in a jumpsuit with a helmet and a parachute. Once Tukiko equipped her with an assault rifle, she gave a signal that she was ready. Haku opened the hatched doors and placed a force field to keep air from being sucked out. Haku had to hold on for dear life as the fighter nose began to face the sky. Tukiko's gravity boots kept her up as she moved down the hatch.

As Tukiko moved into position, Naruto spoke over the intercom to state, "I am going straight up into the sky, and that squid is just behind us. It's now or never."

"Good luck," Haku told Tukiko as Tukiko prepare to jump.

"Always," Tukiko stated before she jumped past the force field and began to drop toward the squid.

Tukiko sped down to the Mother and sailed through the squid's arms while she held onto her assault rifle for dear life. Once she got through arms, she slid into the inner catacomb of the squid's arms to see the Mother's follower. The follower did not see Tukiko until she had positioned her assault rifle up and put a few rounds into the guy. The man could not do anything as Tukiko continued her fall and slid out of the squid. Once she had escaped, she released her parachute and sailed away from the squid that began to fall.

As the Mother began to free-fall, she faded in and out of this dimension and back into her trap but fighting it while others moved to finish her. Above the squid, the Shadow Fox turned into a nosedive towards its target to fire two torpedoes at blinding speed. The two torpedoes hit the Mother and caused a massive explosion that made the squid disappear completely back into its dimension while the follower fell to the ground at a force that would turn an ordinary person into a pancake. Tukiko landed next to where the follower lay to see the man was not dead. He was in fact barely alive, despite falling to certain death. Tukiko removed her helmet and retracted her parachute by a press of a button. As the parachute retracted, she slammed her rifle and foot into the man's chest and held him down.

Approaching Tukiko was Tsunade, Jiraiya, Shizune, Anko, and Kurenai. Their summons had disappeared as their part was over and needed to report to their tribes what had happened. Nearby, the Shadow Fox had made a soft landing before girls disembarked to join their fellow leaf-nins. They all circled the Mother's follower as Tukiko step back.

The follower began to laugh out with blood as it stated, "I can't believe… (cough) The Mother and I were defeated (cough) by a bunch of little girls."

"Well, believe it. These girls seemed to make the impossible possible," Tsunade commented.

"Especially when one of the girls has the Mother's enemy sealed inside her." The follower shocked the group as he pointed at Naruto. "She will be pleased her mortal enemy is trapped, just like her."

'She can sense you Nine, and she wants to get revenge on you?' Naruto asked in her mind.

'I guess she does. However, I don't want to think about the Mother coming after us. We will discuss this later,' Nine of Nine replied through the seal before going silent.

"You think you have stopped us. I am just one follower out of many, and the Mother will come in time, you can be sure of it," the follower stated as he laughed with hysteria.

"And they will die just like you," Naruto stated as she pulled out a sword empowered by multiple elements.
Naruto then raised her empowered sword before she stabbed the follower in the head and twisted the blade. The sword made short work of him by carving a large hole and destroying most of the brain within seconds. Sure that he was dead, Naruto removed the blade and put it back into the sword's sheath as Jiraiya got to work to seal the body in a scroll to be examined later. They did not notice that at a distance, a pale snake man observed the whole exchange. He had a smile on his face before disappearing into the ground as the Leaf-nins prepared to head home.

"Well, I think it is time to leave," Jiraiya commented as he sealed the body up.

"We need to return to Konoha before anything else happens," Tsunade commented as the others loaded up in the fighter to head back to Konoha.

Scene VIII

It was early in the morning when the Council was called into a meeting by Sarutobi. No one knew why but the Elders were suspicious it had to do with Tukiko as they saw Mikoto smiling. It soon became apparent when the Hokage walked in flanked by Team Vixen, Jiraiya, and Tsunade, with Tukiko up front to show the operation was a success. She now had two hands instead of one. The Councilors murmured to each other as they moved to their seats.

Once they were seated, Sarutobi stood up right up to state, "I am proud to say that the mission was a success. We now have a new way to replace lost limbs, and Tsunade had returned to the Leaf Forces."

It was then that Team Vixen gave their report on the mission. When they reached the part about Tukiko's hand, Danzō and the other two elders posed a dozen questions about her hand. They found nothing amiss as Tukiko was backed by Tsunade and Eboshi. Tukiko even gave a show by creating a colossal Fireball with 'Fire style: Fireball Jutsu,' that she was capable kunoichi of the village. The three elders gave up their quest quickly as Danzō began to plan on how to get some of his wounded men back into service.

While Danzō was scheming, Mikoto mentally sighed in relief. She had a plan to use a power she had gained by helping her eldest son Itachi in killing Fugaku and his guards during the Uchiha massacre. This power had allowed her bloodline to evolve into the Mangekyō Sharingan. When activated, it gave her the ability to easily hypothesize most people into doing whatever she wanted them to do. She rarely used that power because it was against the law to use such powers against comrades, and it was a double-edged sword for it could lead to blindness after it was used too many times. She was willing to use such a power to save her favorite child, her child, even if it meant that her son would have an 'accident' to take him out of the picture. Mikoto quickly shook out such thoughts as she listened to the team's report.

After Team Vixen finished their report, the Council began to discuss the events that transpired. "While I am glad the mission was a success," the purple-haired ANBU commander Yūgao spoke through her cat mask. "I am concerned about this 'Mother.' This monster can be a threat if left unchecked."

"We will have our hunter-nins on a look out for any of its followers along with our ANBU," the wild-haired Tsume spoke as head of the Hunter-nins instead of the Inuzuka Clan.

"That's all we can do for now, besides warning our allies," Sarutobi stated before turning towards Team Vixen. "Team 13, please leave."

Team Vixen nodded and left the Council, the two Sennin, and the Hokage. Sarutobi turned to address the Council, "Alright, now that we are alone, I would like to inform you about the Chūnin
Exams, and if intelligence is correct, possible interference by the Uzumaki Clan and my traitorous student Orochimaru…"

Scene IX

Overlooking the village, Naruto stood on top of the monument watching the sunset color in the sky. Naruto silently was having a discussion with Nine of Nine. ‘Things are getting interesting?’

‘I never thought the Mother would escape,’ Colonel Nine of Nine stated with a sigh. ‘We now not only have that monster to deal with, but also the Uzumaki Clan and possibly this Danzō and Sasuke if you take Tukiko's aunt's warning seriously. If Murphy Law any indication, we may face additional enemies.’

‘We'll be ready for them’ Naruto thought as she watched the sunset dim into the dark.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading this story and hope you enjoy it. Now review to tell me how much you appreciate or hate this story or just a plain review that says, ‘I was here.’ Also, do not forget to vote, this time on Sasuke’s fate again.
Scene I

It has been over a month since Team Vixen completed the Tsunade Retrieval Mission and they have conducted numerous D-rank missions and two C-rank missions of wiping out bandit camps. One was an airstrike that led many powers to look at Fire Country with interest and fear. An interest that doubled as Konoha hosted the upcoming Chūnin Exams, the selection exams that promote Genin to Chūnin outside of a field promotion. Every Country planned to send out some of their Genin so they would have an excuse to observed Fire Country and its Leaf Forces. These exams have the potential to be the most crowded exams in recent history, especially if a particular rumor about a specific Team was true.

"So Naruto, I heard the Hokage plans to send us in the Exams. Is that true?" Tukiko asked while walking down the road.

"Where did you hear such a rumor?" Naruto asked in bewilderment.

"I heard that all the rookie teams are being sent to either shows them off or make it in a do or die mission," Tukiko explained. "Apparently we are the talk of a lot of ninjas and clients outside Konoha, and we are to be shown off."

"Especially after we have completed the first air strike in Leaf history," Haku explained.

"I don't know… I don't really pay attention to rumors," Naruto admitted. "I am not one for gossip."

"I can say that," Hinata stated from experience, as she tried various times to pass on tidbits of gossip to her. It often ended with Naruto losing interest entirely or distorting them beyond any useful content. Perhaps it was a good thing Hinata mused, as Team Vixen wandered over to the meeting spot that their senseis have made. However, they stopped when they noticed a rock was following them, a rock that had eyeholes.

The girls stared at the rock before Hinata decided to call them out, "Um children, you do know that rocks don't have eye-holes."

The rock exploded into pieces revealing four children two of which everyone in Team Vixen recognized. One was a brown-haired child with his head covered by a scarf that looked like the Hokage. The child was the third Hokage's grandchild, Konohamaru. The other was a green-haired girl in brown combat robes modified to look like Naruto's science jacket. The girl was a member of the Nature Clan, named Fox Spirit.
The other two, Naruto did not recognize. One was a girl, with orange hair tied with red elastic bands into large pigtails. She also wore a purple vest and skirt with high black shoes. The other was a dull brown-haired boy with glasses and a grey vest. All four of them had goggles and trench coats similar to Naruto’s, except in colors that matched their clothing and as it turned out their personality.

"I told you the eye holes were a bad idea," Fox Spirit told Konohamaru.

"Well, how were we supposed to see where we're going?" Konohamaru pointed out.

"Maybe we should have made the eyes less transparent," the other girl suggested.

The second boy then added, "Yeah, we could get things to cover them and still see."

Before they could discuss new ideas for their camouflage, Hinata bent down to ask, "Konohamaru, can you introduce your friends?"

"Hmm… of course Hinata-san," Konohamaru nodded quickly. "Alright guys, introduce yourself! I am Konohamaru, leader, and powerhouse."

"I'm Fox Spirit, second in command and group's tactical support," Fox spirit stated.

"I'm Moegi, the group's lookout and sassiest girl in the academy," Moegi explained while she showed some above average assets for a girl her age.

"I'm Udon, group tactician and I like math," Udon stated quietly.

"And we are the Konohamaru Corps!" the four yelled at once, and the four girls groaned in response.

"That's nice dear, but why are you guys following us?" Hinata asked the academy students.

"We came to ask if you guys can play ninja with us," Fox Spirit stated adorably.

"What kind of a ninja plays a ninja?" an annoyed pink-haired girl name Sakura asked sarcastically.

"Bi… Sakura shut up. This is none your business," Tukiko stated but stopped herself from chastising Sakura in front of the children.

Sakura twitched as she looked down to mumble uncharacteristically, "Sorry." Ever since the Wave Mission where she saw the massacre at the bridge, Sakura has changed. Therefore, where the original would have yelled, this new one began the backup.

One Naruto was grateful as she told the kids with a friendly smile, "Sure, since we have free time."

The children were not paying attention as they stared at Sakura before Konohamaru asked Naruto, "Um, boss, who is that flat-chested girl?"

"What did you say?!" Sakura screeched.

"How come you have a flat chest? Mommy said I will start to develop mine due to my ninja training, but you do not have much of a chest, and you are a ninja. So how come you don't have one?" a young, innocent Fox Spirit asked an irritated Sakura.

One that had no other way to respond, even with the changes she has been going through. Sakura gave a war cry and chased after the academy students, yelling out, "I have been training brats! Come back here and say I haven't been training!"
Naruto ran after Sakura as she yelled, "Sakura if you harm one hair on their heads, I will carve your brain out and use it like a basketball!" The others followed Naruto.

The chase went on until Fox Spirit, and Konohamaru ran into a man that wore a black suit that resembled cat pajamas with purple paint that looked like make-up. The man twitched as he yelled, "Hey brat, you hit me!" The guy then grabbed onto Konohamaru's scarf and Fox Spirit's shirt before he pulled them up to his eye level. He stared at them in with disdained, dark green eyes.

"Kankurō. Let the brats go. We don't want to keep him waiting," a girl with blond hair tied in multiple knots told Kankurō with glaring green eyes.

"Don't worry Temari, I'm just going to teach those four brats a lesson," Kankurō was about to hurt Fox Spirit and Konohamaru when Naruto appeared behind him, her swords drawn across his neck.

"If you harm them, I will make you weigh ten pounds less," Naruto told Kankurō while Temari stopped herself from interfering when she noticed Tukiko had her gun pointed directly at her while Hinata had moved into position to strike her down. Haku supported them with Naruto's latest invention: a rapid-fire gas propelled crossbow that she pointed at Kankurō.

Deciding living outlived bravado, Kankurō let the two kids down, hoped it allow him to survive the encounter. Once down, the two kids and their friends ran behind Tukiko, Haku, and Hinata for safety. Once the children were safe, Naruto let Kankurō go and moved back with her teammates, facing the boy she let go. Kankurō was slowly calming down to a less impulsive state when a rock hit the side of his head, rekindling his fire. He turned to see a pale kid with black hair and coral eyes defiantly looking at him with a smug expression.

"What are you doing, Sasuke?" Naruto yelled in frustration.

"We had the situation peacefully under control, cousin," Tukiko snarled in retaliation to her most hated cousin, having been told from Aunt Mikoto Uchiha what Sasuke planned.

While Sasuke glared at Tukiko, Kankurō removed his secret weapon hidden in a bundle attached to his back. He planned to attack the distracted Leaf-nins in retaliation when he heard a voice he had rather not hearsay, "Kankurō, you are a disgrace to our village."

Everyone turned to see a redheaded boy walked out from the back of the tree. He was a small boy with the word 'love' tattooed above his raised right eyebrow and a gourd strapped to his back. The boy gave an intense glare that became even more intimidating due to the black rings around his dark green eyes.

"G-G-Gaara, we just…." Kankurō never had the chance to finish as Gaara released his killing intent on the older Sand-nin.

"Shut up, or I will kill you," Gaara told Kankurō before turning to the others with a less murderous rage he showed his brother to a more cold, calculating look. "I apologize for my brother. My name is Gaara of the Sand, and these are my siblings. May I ask who you four are?" Gaara asked the four girls, who compiled by introducing themselves.

"Hinata Hyūga."

"Tukiko Uchiha."

"Haku Momochi."

"And my name is Naruto Ryū."
Kankurō laughed, "You have a boy's name."

He stopped laughing when Naruto shot off a warning shot at his feet. "Do you have a problem with my name?" Naruto asked in a sweet tone. Kankurō was shaking his head no, as Temari smirked at her brother being put in his place.

"What about me? Am I not interesting as well, being an Uchiha and all?" Sasuke asked with a smug smirk.

Gaara looked over Sasuke before stating, "You are interesting with your eyes of hate, but you do not interest me at this time. These girls do for I sense a strength in them, and my mother is very interested in the blond-haired one."

'Naru-Chan be careful, I sense the Shukaku within the boy. He has an unhealthy desire for me, and not just in romance. He may send Gaara after you if you're not careful' Colonel Nine of Nine told Naruto.

"Kankurō, Temari, we're leaving," Gaara ordered.

Gaara was about to leave, but Sakura asked, "Wait a moment, can you tell us why are you here?"

"Miss Haruno, they are obviously here for the Chūnin Exams," Haku answered for the Sand team.

"Correct," Gaara had stated before he disappeared in a swirl of sand with Kankurō while Temari stayed behind.

"I guess we will be seeing you in the exams?" Temari asked.

"Yes," Naruto answered the older girl.

"Good," Temari said before giving the girls a wink before she had disappeared in the wind.

"Well… that was interesting," Haku stammered.

"Anyone else scared?" Hinata asked, and the others nodded their heads yes.

"Boss," the four children stammered.

"It is not safe right now. Let's get you guys home. We'll play Ninja another time," Naruto told the kids as they were taken away. They left behind a scarred Sakura, a fuming Sasuke, and a team of redheads spying on them.

Scene II

In the tower, Sarutobi stood still as he gazed at his various Jōnin teachers. They were here to determine if their Genin should enter into the Chūnin exams or not. At the very front were the teachers of the youngest Genin from last year and this year. To the right was the blue-haired sensei for Team 6, Inferno Pyro, who is followed by the one-eyed, silver-haired Kakashi Hatake, from Team 7. In the middle was a tall, sickly man name Hayate Gekkō, sensei of Team 8. Hayate was an expert swordsman that suffered from a disease that made him cough constantly. Fortunately, his old condition was now successfully being treated by advances in medical technology.

Next to Inferno was Might Guy or just Guy, as he preferred. Guy was the best martial artist and leader of Team 9, the Genin team from last semester. He was also known to be eccentric, with his bowl cut black hair, thick eyebrows, and his tight green jumpsuit. Next was the leader of Team 10,
the Hokage's son Asuma Sarutobi. The final senseis were Team Vixens' senseis, Anko Mitarashi and Kurenai Yūhi.

The Hokage listed off teams and stopped at the last six requested, after much thought and argument, he agreed to let them in, "It is decided, Team Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten and Thirteen will be in the Chūnin exams."

"I'm still not sure this is the best idea, Hokage-Sama," Iruka, the scared-nose Chūnin that was once their academy teacher stated as he stared at the papers.

"Iruka-Kun," Anko consoled. "Don't worry, the Chūnin exams are probably safer than some of the missions we take as we hosting the exams this year."

"And since its being held here, it makes it the perfect environment as it will help some of our teams realize what they could face that live combat would with half the risks," Asuma added while he mumbled, "Lazy Genin," as he took a puff from his cigarette.

"Besides, they are our soldiers now, not yours," Kakashi added, his eyes never leaving his orange book. Iruka wanted to argue, but he held back for he realized his arguments were going nowhere.

"Very well, the Chūnin exams will start in one week. I hope you prepared them for what will be a tough adventure. Everyone, dismissed," the Hokage ordered, and the Jōnin left.

Alone, he looked over the various teams being sent into their village. One that caught his eye was the team that Uzumaki sent with Naruko and Kushina Uzumaki. He grinned as things were going as planned and all that was left to do was to remove the seal using a seal removal technique developed by his student, Jiraiya. Soon a mother and daughter will be free from a life of fear and allow them to reunite with a lost family member.

Scene III

At the front of the Leaf forces Ninja Academy, three members of Team Vixen stared at the academy with nostalgic gazes while a forth wondered what it is like to go to school. They stood there for a moment before they walked in, as though they belong. The group moved inside the academy and went up the stairs to the second floor. Once they reached the floor, the group noticed a large number of Genin being held back by two tall men in front of a room that read '301.' However, the numbers on all the other doors were designated in the two-hundreds.

Tukiko activated her Sharingan to confirm it was a lie before she went up to the girls and whispered, "The quote 'Genin' and the door number have a genjutsu over them. Looks like the Chūnin exams have begun with a prelim test."

"Then let's try to pass them by, quietly," Haku suggested.

"Good idea," Naruto commented as they crept around the competition.

As they passed on by, Naruto, Hinata, and Tukiko saw people they recognized and pointed them out to Haku. They were members of Team 9 with one of them being a friend of Naruto and a fellow orphan, Tenten. Tenten was a weapon mistress with all her weapons held in scrolls attached to her back. She had gotten taller since the girls had last seen her, centimeters above them, as she stood proudly in her pink and white Chinese battle suit. They were able to recognize her with her brown hair tied into what resemble panda ears. To her side was Rock Lee, a Might Guy min-clone with orange arm warmers and leg bands. The duo pretended to fall for it and convince several Genin that the door was real to thin out the competition.
At the back, ready to help his team escaped with subterfuge was Neji Hyūga, Hinata's cousin. He resembled Hinata's father in that he had white eyes, long black hair and white robes. The only real difference between him and Hinata's father was that he had a colder personality. Neji was a member of the Branch family, the servant branch despite being a talented member because of his abilities was considered to be in the realm of what could be called a real prodigy. He is also considered to be a stick in the mud that Team Vixen ignored in favor of Tenten and Lee. Therefore, they tried to get Tenten's attention subtly.

Tenten noticed Team Vixen, and she had given them a wink to invite them over. The team had complied as they snuck a quiet conversation with Tenten. She started the conversation in a hushed voice, "Good to see you again, I believe you have a guest."

"This is Haku, she's the fourth member of Team Vixen," Tukiko explained while keeping the trend of its being a hush, hush conversation.

"Are you allowed to have a four-member squad in these exams?" Tenten asked.

"Our senseis said we could, but the examiners will be harder on us for being a four-man squad," Naruto explained.

"That's sucks but understandable," Tenten stated. "They wouldn't want it to be unfair."

It was then that Rock Lee moseyed over and gave a smile with teeth that you could see your reflection in. He stated in a chivalrous manner, "Ah such lovely ladies, you should head on upstairs. Don't want to be late for the exams."

The girls looked at Lee before Hinata stated, "We know about the prelim test. We just wanted to talk with Tenten while we still could."

Lee nodded with understanding as he stated, "Such valuable, youthful friends. It's a shame we will be enemies soon, but until then, you take care, my friends."

The girls nodded and were about to leave when a voice yelled out, "Hey, drop the Genjutsu and let us pass!" before dispelling the Genjutsu that made '201' look like '301.'

Many of the Genin looked on in disbelief while Team Vixen remained calm as they recognized the boy that had revealed that it was genjutsu over the door. A boy that performed a deed that higher-ranked ninjas would consider such an act to be idiotic all to give himself an ego boost. It was Tukiko's cousin, Sasuke Uchiha, a member of Team 7 packed by Sakura and the pale, artistic boy named Sai. At the very front, Sasuke smirked as though he was declared the winner of the exams.

That was until Sai stated, "Good job dick-less. You have now increased the competition by revealing the fact that they were just using genjutsu to thin out the Genin testers."

Sasuke was angry as he was made out as if he was an idiot and Sakura had not come to his defense. Meanwhile, the two 'Genin' twitched before one of them sneered, "Well, looks like the gig is up. I can't believe someone was stupid enough that they could not tell it was a genjutsu and allow us to get rid of competition like that team." The 'Genin' pointed to Team Vixen who wished they could just disappear.

"Well, now that you ruined our fun, we'll just have to take you out," other 'Genin' stated before charging at Sasuke. However, before they could hit Sasuke, their attacks were blocked by Lee at speeds Team Vixen had only seen Jōnin perform.

"I am sorry, but I cannot allow you to beat them just yet," Lee stated with a big grin.
"Lee, I thought you wanted us to down-play our skills," Neji scolded Lee.

"I am sorry, but I couldn't allow them to fight with this Genin team, especially a team with such a beauty like this pink blossom," Lee stated while looking to Sakura, who remained very uninterested. Tenten gave a dark glare at Rock Lee until he quickly added, "Though your beauty is greater, Tenten-chan."

Tenten smiled brightly until Neji noticed Team Vixen. She feared confrontation as her teammate looked upon Naruto and Hinata with disgust. He did not even hide his disgust as he acknowledged their presence, "Hinata-Sama, Ryū-Sama."

Naruto Ryū glared as she returned Neji's gesture, "Neji."

"Neji-San," Hinata also stated with a silent glare.

"Well, it's probably bested we head to the exams, so good luck," Tenten suggested, avoiding confrontation so early in the exams.

Tenten waved goodbye before diffusing the situation by taking Neji and Lee away. Sakura also dragged Sasuke and Sai up to prevent a fight from breaking out. Fights that were created by Sai's mouth, or as much as Sakura hated to admit Sasuke's attitude. They needed to get out of harm's way. Sakura had matured since the Wave Mission, much to the surprise of Team Vixen.

Once Team 7 and Guy were gone, Tukiko pushed Naruto and Hinata up the stairs while Haku asked, "So, what is with you guys and this Neji fellow?"

"Neji is my cousin, my very cold cousin," Hinata answered Haku. "He was nice a long time ago, but that was before he began to believe the junk his father has been feeding him all his life. That I was weak and that he should have been the heir instead of being sent to the Branch Member Family. He along with the elders sneers at me and tries to put me down whenever they can."

"Okay, so he hates you too Naru-chan because you are friends with Hinata?" Haku asked.

"That and I broke his nose when he insulted Hinata right in front of me," Naruto told Haku in her matter of fact manner.

"He also believes that the Hyūga are superior to everyone else, much like the Uchiha used to be," Tukiko added. "I just hope they don't wind up having history repeat itself in having their own massacre. Though sometimes, I feel they would be better off," Tukiko muttered the last part under her breath.

"Well, let us get into the room," Haku suggested as Team Vixen walked to the real 301 room.

In front of the door were Anko and Kurenai smiling. "Well, looks like you girls all made it," Kurenai stated.

"That is good, any later and you may have immediately failed, maggots," Anko continued off Kurenai.

"A true Ninja is never late," Tukiko started.

"Nor are they early," Hinata followed up.

"They arrive," Haku spoke up next.
"Exactly when they are meant to," Naruto finished off their joke.

Anko laughed, "Get in there."

The group smiled before they walked into a huge lecture room for their continued career. They already started off with a bad mark as the room was filled with hostiles, all radiating their killing intent. "You know, I feel loved," Naruto commented.

"Why are they so angry?" Haku asked.

"Because we are the first rookies to participate in the competition since the end of the Third Shinobi War," a new, cold voice answered behind them. The group turned to see a purple-haired girl in black robes.

"Revan, long time no see. How are you doing?" Tukiko asked.

"Fine; now who is your friend there? Is she this fourth teammate we've heard so much about?" the brown-haired, warmer sister of Revan, Bastila asked.

"My name is Haku, and yes, I am the fourth member of Team Vixen," Haku answered.

"Troublesome. I should have known you guys would bring in a ringer," stated Shikamaru Nara, the lazy Genin with brown hair pulled-up and resembling a pineapple commented. Walking behind him was the rest of his Team 10. Ino Yamanaka, a blond girl in all purple, and Chōji Amachi, a large-boned boy in red battle armor with long brown hair.

"Afraid you are going to have to work Shikamaru?" Tukiko teased Shikamaru.

Before Shikamaru could retort, a loud, boastful voice rang out, "Hello ladies. Kiba is in the house."

Kiba was a wild boy with wild brown hair and red marks on his checks in a grey hoodie that hid his small white ninja partner dog named Akamaru. Kiba jumped around as he was leered at all the 'hot' girls. This upset all of them except Naruto, who was oblivious to emotions outside of battle. Luckily, her friends were not as oblivious as they steered her away from Kiba's boasts.

Boasts by a purple-haired girl yelled, "Shut up idiot, we don't need the attention and ire of others!" The girl then smacked the back of Kiba's head, who in response grumbled as he complied.

"Thanks, Ami..." Ino stuttered as she looked at her former classmate and former bully Ami.

Once a scrawny girl with odd clothes, Ami now looked like a proper ninja. With her short, black tank top and black that fitted her firm, healthy body. Her purple hair was tied into a long ponytail that was out of the way of her long duel-blade sword strapped her back. However, what really caught their eye was the way Ami moved. It was not like the fangirl move, but that of a kunoichi that was beautiful and dangerous to many of the boys in her class.

"I see you noticed the new and improved me," Ami stated boldly as she showed off her improved physical form.

"You are different..." Chōji stuttered while holding onto his chip bag.

"Thanks, cutie. Hayate was a good, yet harsh teacher. Too bad, he couldn't get rid of Kiba's boastful perversion. Shino-Kun hardly changed because Shino-Kun is perfect as is," Ami commented while Chōji glared at Shino, who wore a huge grey coat and black shades that covered everything but his pale, now blushing cheeks.
"Wow… miracles do happen," Hinata had stammered.

"What?" Haku asked.

"Ami was Sasuke's biggest fangirl and bully to everyone," Naruto bluntly told Haku.

"So you see, we have a few newcomers. Including a team from Whirlpool and Sound," Kiba explained.

"As you can see, we have a few newcomers, including a team from Whirlpool and Sound," Kiba explained.

"I believe the Whirlpool-nin," Naruto asked Kiba.

"Who is the Whirlpool-nin?" Haku asked Kiba.

"As you can see, we have a few newcomers, including a team from Whirlpool and Sound," Kiba explained.

"I also heard there are a bunch of ninja villages with a grand total of sixty-eight teams. The Rock-nin teams, the Sand-nin teams, the Rain-nin teams, the Cloud-nin teams, and Leaf-nin teams. There are also many more teams. Each team has earned in previous exams and now has a huge bounty of information." Kabuto told Kiba.

"Mm, then you've heard of the Whirlpool-nin," Kiba had quipped.

"For a field promotion," Kabuto skillfully answered.

"I never passed the second part of the exam. Of course, I have gained a huge bounty of information," Kabuto admitted.

"No, seventh," Tukiko stated.

"So is this your second time this year, Tukiko asked.

"Well, they are about to find this prey has very sharp teeth and claws," Tukiko spoke up for the group.

"Hey keep it down! You are causing a ruckus," Sakura looked down in shame, and Sai watched with amusement as Ami yelled.

"Who is the Whirlpool-nin?" Naruto asked Kabuto.

"I believe Aka Uzumaki, Kokushibyou Uzumaki, and Naruko Uzumaki. I do not have much on them. This is the first time that the Whirlpool clan has participated in any exams in over twenty years."

"And was Sasuke's biggest fangirl and bully to everyone," Naruto blurtily told Haku.

"Why?" Haku asked.

"Wow… in that case, it happened," Hinata had summed up.
"No need. I just wanted to confirm something," Naruto replied while Colonel Nine of Nine thought mentally, 'Things are coming together as planned.'

"Can you provide information on Neji Hyūga, Rock Lee, Gaara of the Sand, and Team 13?" Sasuke asked Kabuto.

"Too easy, you know their names and the team," Kabuto replied while he pulled the first card out, "First up is Neji Hyūga, last year's Rookie of the Year. His bloodline is the Byakugan, and he is an expert in Gentle Fist style. He also has the necessary skills in ninjutsu and genjutsu. He is part of Team 9, and his teammates are Rock Lee and Tenten Faiadoku. They have completed one B-rank, fifteen C-Rank, and a hundred and sixty D-Rank missions with his team. He is considered the prodigy of the Hyūga family. Next is Rock Lee, who was dead last in the exams last year and he is a member of Team 9. He has no skills in ninjutsu and genjutsu due to a rare chakra disease that has weakened, if not destroyed his coils. However, it is said he is very fast and skilled in close quarters combat to be considered an equal to his teammates' level.

"Now Gaara of the Sand or sometimes called Gaara the 'Sand Demon' is an interesting one. He has completed ten D-Rank, nine C-Rank and five B-Rank missions with his sibling Temari the 'Wind Goddess,' and Kankurō 'The Puppeteer.' Not much else except it is said he completed the B-Rank missions without a scratch and he can use sand to kill people."

It was quiet for a moment as the ninjas nervously overheard Kabuto relate how the Sand-nins walked away from high-ranking missions without a scratch. Temari and Kankurō smirked before Kabuto went to the final group, Team Vixen. "Now, for the first four-man team in fifty years, there is Team 13 or better known as Team Vixen. The Team has completed one A-Rank, one C-rank upgraded to A-Rank, one B-Rank upgraded to A-Rank, five C-Rank and sixty D-Rank mission, the most impressive record so far. The team is also wanted alive by Whirlpool clan with a bounty of eight-hundred-thousand Ryo for killing Elite Jōnin Tenbatsu Uzumaki."

It was quite as Team Vixen record sunk in before Kabuto went onto individual team members, 'First is Haku Momochi 'The Ice Mistress.' She was brought in from Wave Country, and her bloodline is Hyōton. She has not done any missions with Team 13 except two of the A-rank missions, but with her adopted father Zabuza Momochi, she completed three A-Rank, twelve B-Rank, and forty C-Rank missions. She is said to be skilled in Ninjutsu, medical techniques, and throwing weapons.

"Next is Tukiko Uchiha 'The Fire Mistress.' Her bloodline is a fully developed Sharingan, and her element is fire. She is said to be a master of the fire element, deadly with guns and throwing knives, skilled in martial arts and genjutsu. Then there is Hinata Hyūga the 'Lavender Bladed Healer,' whose bloodline is the Byakugan, and her elements are water with a little lightening. She is very skilled in her new style the Gentle Blades, medical techniques, and dispelling genjutsu.

"Then finally, there is the unofficial Genin leader: Naruto Ryū 'The Elemental Kitsune Assassin,' 'The Elemental Vixen,' and 'The Inventor,' and this year's unofficial Rookie of the Year. Her bloodline is the Elemental Star and judging by her eyes, she has mastered all five elements but is weak on Fire. She is at the forefront of developing new technology for Fire Country and said to be very skilled in every field except genjutsu. Though, it was remarked that she is low-Chūnin to high-Genin in speed and strength. She is also one of the few girls out there with a boy's name."

Naruto twitched at that the comment before Kabuto continued, "Most countries have a dead or alive bounty on her. Though you could get more if she were brought in alive because they want to breed her rare bloodline with their clans or steal technological secrets from her mind. The biggest bounty is for her capture of one-million and five-hundred-thousand Ryo to be returned back to the Uzumaki
clan in Whirlpool.

Everyone heard Kabuto's assessment of the group caused quite a discussion as to whether they should avoid or go after Team Vixen. Meanwhile, the girls narrowed their eyes at Kabuto. He somehow got information that should not be available to a Genin. Also, they now had a target on their back, not something fellow Leaf-nins would not have done.

Luckily, Haku took care of that by giving them a new target when she stated, "You mentioned the Sound-nins are sending ninja." Kabuto nodded before Haku asked, "I never heard of such a village, exactly how new are they or are they just a really small village?"

"They are new," Kabuto stated with a small smile. "In fact, they are brand new and were only formed a few years ago and are making their debut this year. They were formed in Rice Country by wandering clans and possibly missing-nins. So we can probably not expect much from them."

Three individuals with black hair and musical note (sound) like voice did not take kindly to being mocked. "You know, I don't like leaf huggers and the way they are talking as if they are superior to us," spoke a spiky brown-haired boy with a beige shirt with two black stripes and three prints of the kanji for 'death.'

"I agree with Zaku," noted a black, longhaired girl with soulless black eyes in a grey cameo. "We can't have them talk down about us like we are some weak competitors."

The mummy man, Dosu stared at Kabuto with his one brown eye, "Kin, Zaku. Let's show this tree hugger that we are not weak."

The three then rushed to the back of the room for a single target in mind. They moved so quickly that before the Genin knew it, they had to evade a bunch of senbons thrown by the girl, Kin. Leaving an opening that was soon closed as the group regrouped and moved to attack. Kin was soon surrounded by Team Vixen, pushed to the ground, and put into a submissive lock before she even realized it.

While Kin was being subdued, Kabuto was engaged by Zaku as he evaded Zaku's wild punches. Team 6 stepped in and forced Zaku back while Dosu rushed Kabuto with his right hand covered in a metal gauntlet with holes. Kabuto barely evaded the gauntlet, but then fell down in pain as he coughed out blood.

Naruto felt vibrations and muttered, "Soundwaves."

"Write this in your cards," Dosu growled as Kabuto slowly healed himself with medical jutsus. "The Sound-nins will win the Chūnin exams."

Before a brawl broke out, a burst of smoke revealed several Chūnin and one scared Jōnin in a black trench coat and a bandana over his head. The Jōnin yelled, "No more fighting or I will have you disqualified!"

Dosu shuttered before commenting back with a remark, "We were just relieving our anxiety. We will back off, for now." The Sound-nins and Leaf-nins backed off as the scared Jōnin nodded in acceptance.

"See that you do," the man said before he began his speech. "Alright maggots, I am the proctor Ibiki Morino, and I personally welcome you all to hell."

Scene IV

In the Jōnin lodge were various senseis, waiting to hear if their teams had failed or not. In one side of the room were the rookie teams' Jōnins: Anko, Kurenai, Kakashi, Asuma, Inferno, Hayate, and
Might Guy. Sitting around the table, Kakashi mused aloud, "You know, despite their annoying attitude, I am already starting to miss those brats."

"Well, don't worry Kakashi, as you may see them soon," Asuma commented. "Ibiki is heading up the first part of the test."

"Oh, Ibiki is likely to put them through hell," Inferno added.

"Ibiki?" Kurenai wondered aloud. "That name sounds familiar."

"It should," Anko told Kurenai. "He is the head of the T&I: Tortured and Interrogation. The department I use to work in. He is considered the most sadistic man alive. I used to love it when he would get grown men to cry before they talked."

"Which will mean," Hayate coughed, "he will certainly mess with their minds."

"He is the best man to get in someone's head and make you reveal information without even touching you," Anko nodded while she formed a sadistic smile. "However, I am confident mine and Kurenai's team will pass."

"What makes you so confident?" Hayate asked.

"It's really simple," Kurenai explained with a smile. "Tukiko and Haku have been trained to see deceit or created deceit. So they can easily go through the test as they wouldn't trust Ibiki by his words."

"Yep, they are that skilled and awesome thanks to us," Anko chimed with a smiled.

Kurenai nodded as she continued, "The only weak links for this kind of test are Hinata and Naruto. Hinata due to her shy nature and Naruto due to her blunt personality made it difficult for her to tell if someone is lying or not unless she is fighting for her life. She usually takes people she trusts at their word. However, I doubt they will have any problems with the test with Naruto's analytical mind for solving problems, and Hinata's ability to read people thanks to her bloodline."

"Wow, you are as great of a teacher, as well as beautiful. Maybe you can give me some pointers in private when this is over… if you want that is," Asuma stated with a nervous smile while Kurenai blushed.

"Well besides Asuma's attempt to give a woman a hint, I can say my team will breeze through it as well," Inferno added. "They are too smart and confident to allow Ibiki to intimidate them."

"My youthfull team will no doubt run through the competition!" Guy yelled. "No way will Ibiki be able to damper my student's spring time."

"I wish I can say I have the same amount of confidence, but I trust my team to do their best," Asuma stated while taking a puff from his cigarette. The other two had similar sentiments, but Kurenai only tried to cheer Asuma while Anko gave a knowing, lecherous smile.

"Well, whatever will happen, we might as well pass the time, so is anyone up for some poker?" Anko asked before she got into a seductive mood. "We can even ask each other for favors if you don't have any money to bet with."

"Anko," Kurenai muttered, she sometimes wondered why they were friends, though she did not object to a friendly game herself. The Jōnins soon engaged in the card game as they wait for the results.
Scene V

Within the academy lecture room, the Genins were given a written test of hell as they were forced to follow some unusual rules written by Ibiki:

"1. You start with ten full points.

"2. You are given nine questions for the first fifty minutes and given the last one at the end of the test.

"3. For every question missed or not answered, you lose one point.

"4. For every time you are caught cheating, you lose two points.

"5. If one member of a team gets a zero, the whole team fails."

It did not take long for the Genins to realize that the whole point was to cheat as much as possible, as the test was so hard that even most Jōnin would be hard pressed to answer these questions, if not be able too. That was the reason teams were dropping out like flies, as they were caught in a spider's web of contradictions. Around the room, Chūnin watched the Genin like hawks, marking down times they cheat and took out teams that failed. They even had beaten up a few when one of the teams tried to fight it. However, several teams were able to get through. Some were able to answer the questions through their book knowledge, like Sakura who was the best when it came to academics. Others were able to use bloodlines, special techniques, animal companions (Shino's bugs that lived in him and Kiba's dog), creative thinking, or relying on their teammates.

For instance, Team Vixen had four different types of cheating techniques that they used. Hinata applied her Byakugan to see the test with her x-ray vision, while Tukiko used her Sharingan to copy the pencil movements of a fellow tester. Others used similar techniques, like Neji, Sasuke, and Shikamaru, who used the shadow possession technique in reverse to copy a tester. Haku noticed Tenten using mirrors to get answers for her and her teammate Lee and she mimicked this technique by creating ice mirrors, no one ever looks up. Finally, Naruto was able to answer the questions on her own. However, unlike the pink-haired bookworm Sakura, Naruto got some of the answers from herself and others from the Colonel Nine of Nine.

Others were just as creative, like Bastila's flash of a hand to switch her failing test with that of a neighbor without anyone being the wiser. Night Wolf used his invisible spirit animal to spy from above and leave hints for him. Similar to how Kankurō had one of his puppets sit as a Chūnin to copy the exam for himself and a copy of his sister, and Gaara used his special sand to get one. Revan piggybacked on the various teams around her to steal the information from a test. She lost two points as she could not do it without being caught, but she got all the answers at once, so it was a calculated move. Ami was aided by her teammate, Shino with his bugs while the Uzumaki used stealth and silent shadow clones to get the answers. However, what was interesting was that the Sound team was able to answer the questions all on their own as if someone had given them the answers before the test.

As the numbers continued to dwindle, only thirty-four teams remained, and they were waiting for the last question. However, before this last question was given out, Ibiki had one last card to play, "Alright maggots, its time for the tenth question. However, before we begin, I will give you a choice on whether to take the test or not. If you take the last question and fail, you will never become Chūnin."

"What? Others have taken the exams many times," Kiba pointed out.

"Well, too bad for you to have me as your examiner then," Ibiki told to Kiba while giving a belly
laugh. "Now it time to decide, will you take the tenth question and risk the possible end of your career, or will you give up now and take it another day. You must choose."

It soon became quite, as teams began to quit from the pressure of losing everything and Ibiki's killing intent. Many left in fear, but just as many stayed. Team Vixen in particular, as Naruto could not logically see why so many would be eliminated when they were so needed by the community. Colonel Nine of Nine agreed as she mentally stated, 'It would do no good to possibly eliminate so many Genin from your own village, or to enforce it when all fighters are needed. He is lying, and is very effective, for his intimidation will make them lose sight of logic and fall into the trap. Let's hope your teammates don't fall for it.'

Hinata trusted her teachers would not send them to a test that could destroy their career or if they did, they trusted their team to pass no matter what they faced. Tukiko and Haku also trusted their team in their ability, and they could see through some of Ibiki's lies. Others had similar thoughts or just did not care about their teammates. Once they reached the end of the test, ten teams had quit, bringing the number to twenty-four teams.

Once it was clear that no one else was going to quit, Ibiki developed a sadistic smirk before yelling, "Congratulations, you all pass!"

Many were silent at the announcement until Temari yelled, "But the last question?!"

Ibiki laughed as he stated, "There was no tenth question or rather the tenth question is whether you continue the test or drop out."

The Genin were still silently confused until Naruto muttered, "It was a do or die moment."

Ibiki stared at Naruto before stated, "So you figured it out, little girl."

"Yes," Naruto answered. "You don't have the power to enforce it on foreign teams and the Leaf would not let potential ninjas not be able to achieve a higher rank based on one choice. So logically, you are trying to test our resolve to see the exam through to the end, to see a mission through to the end."

Ibiki smirked before nodding, "Very good. You are right; the beginning was testing your skills in stealth. However, even when all the information has been gathered, it may not be enough or even useful when to determine what should be done. Does that mean you can quit? No!"

Several Genin jumped before Ibiki continued, "You must continue the mission even if death is certain. You must trust yourself and your team to get through this mission and win even if the deck is stacked against you! That is why you are here, to see if you have the will to succeed under adversity. And that is why you pass, so congratulation you maggots."

It was quiet as the Genin were getting over that they had passed with flying colors. Before they could put themselves on the back, the widows suddenly flew open, and the room became filled with black ravens. The ravens swirled in front of Ibiki to form a black tornado. Then the birds dispersed to reveal a black-haired man in black robes. His expression was like dark clouds, and his eye gave an eerie glow that only increased the creepiness of his presence.

The man stood straight when he announced himself in a cold voice, "I am Raven Hunter of the Nature Clan, and I am your second examiner for the Chūnin Exams."

"You are always one for a flashy entrance, aye Raven Hunter. Well, they are all yours," Ibiki stated to Raven Hunter.
Raven Hunter ignored the man as he examined the number, "Twenty-four teams, a little higher than I expected. But that is alright; I plan to cut it down to be at least half the number in the next part of the exam." The group was quite before Raven Hunter announced, "I want you all to report to Training Area 44 tomorrow at eight-hundred hours for the second part of the Chūnin Exams. Pack enough provisions to last you for quite a while. Everyone is dismissed."

Raven hunter dispersed into the wing flaps of a hundred ravens. Mainly friends or close comrades talked about the first part of the exams and what as a group, they would be facing in the second part. "Knowing Raven Hunter, it is going to be hard and difficult," Night Wolf stated.

"You know him?" Tukiko asked.

"Yes, he is the war clan leader of my clan, the Nature Clan," Night Wolf explained.

"When I met him, he was cold, uncaring, and very deadly," Bastila added.

"Also ruthless if he need be," Revan finished explaining. "He is a keen strategist during battle and a war hero for his actions during the Nine-tails demon incident and was able to keep our forces alive while keeping the Nine-tails away from the village."

'I wish my program could have stopped that chakra virus,' Colonel Nine of Nine mumbled in Naruto's mind as she remembered the terrible night that got her sealed into Naruto.

"Well, no point in guessing," Naruto had stated. "It's better to prepare for the worst that comes tomorrow."

The other nodded before they returned home as Ibiki picked up the tests around the room.

Scene V

"That place looks scary," Haku commented

"Really, it feels like a home away from home," Naruto stated.

Hinata sighed, "You've been spending much too much time in the forest."

Tukiko twitched while stating to Haku, "You're lucky we couldn't use this training field when you were with us." Haku nodded in acceptance as in the girls, and the other hopeful Genin stood in front of an enclosed forest with a fence around it with the sign hung that had said:

"Danger,

"Training Ground 44

"Keep Out."

What the fence held was a vast black forest that just seemed to ooze a dark, sinister feeling. The trees and plants were huge and almost an unnatural dark green. In the wild undergrowth, many predators' eyes could be seen, looking at the fresh meat that would be the Genin. "Welcome to the Forest of Death," Raven Hunter said as his face gave an unnerving smirk.

Chapter End Notes
Done, please review, tell me your opinion, and do not forget to vote for Sasuke’s fate.
Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto; I only own this idea for the Naruto universe and the explosions they cause.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 05/17/2018

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

There are places where the name that is misleading; the Forest of Death is not one of them. In Team Vixen's time, they had encountered several deadly predators that were two to ten times bigger than the originals outside of this forest, and that was in the safest parts of the Forest of Death. Deeper in the Forest are even deadlier creatures. Poisonous centipedes that were big enough to wrap around a full-grown person and plants that just being near them could kill someone. This was the most dangerous forest in the known world and survival here was the second part of the test.

"Welcome to the Forest of Death!" the dark Raven Hunter had exclaimed. "Now, the second part of the Chūnin exams is to test your survival, combat, protection, espionage, and sabotage skills. Your objective is this: you must go through the Forest of Death from entrance points along the gate. From these points, you must make your way to the tower that is in the center of the Forest, within five days. You will also be given either heaven or an earth scroll. You must have both scrolls with the seals unbroken before you enter the tower if you want to continue the Chūnin exams."

"What happens if the seal is broken?" One of the contestants asked.

Raven Hunter chuckled in such a threatening manner that it unnerved the Genin before him, "Well, I can say you probably will not die, but you will ruin your chances in becoming a Chūnin this time around. Plus, once you are in the tower, you can open them and discover what is in them without any worry." Raven Hunter took a much more serious tone before dishing out orders, "Now before we start passing out scrolls, I have a special announcement that pertains to one of the Leaf teams, Team 13."

The girls gasped at the implications of being signaled out as they approach the man as he spoke loud enough for everyone to hear, "Now, since Team 13 is a four-man squad, they will receive a set of scrolls. However, before they are allowed in, they must have two sets to pass."

Naruto could not resist stating, "Great now we have a bull's eye painted on us," as she picked-up two scrolls with the earth and heaven seal.

Raven Hunter grunted before yelling, "Now Genin, get your scroll and get to your gate number within one hour or you will fail automatically!"

The groups of Genin quickly scrambled to pick up a scroll and make their way to their designated gate number. Team Vixen had received their number, Gate 13. "Wow, I think that is our lucky number," Haku commented.
"If not, we certainly propagate bad luck," Tukiko added. "Maybe we will meet a Jōnin in this test."

"Please don't joke about that," Hinata pleaded. "We have enough trouble as it is."

"Yeah, yeah," Tukiko commented before turning to Naruto. "So what is our strategy?"

"We will employ a blitzkrieg stealth attack," Naruto explained. "We will constantly move within the shadows while we try to steal from others before they even know it. If we can't easily take things by stealing them, we will attack them in areas we can exploit. If they are too strong, we move on and never reveal we were even around the team. When we have their scroll, we move on. We will only be taking ten-minute breaks every hour until nightfall. This way the enemy can't get the drop on us, as we will constantly be on the move. Once we have the two scrolls, we make our way to the tower and complete our objective."

The girls nodded, and when they heard a loud bang, the girls ran out and disappeared into the forest. They were hidden to even the Chūnin watching over the gate.

Scene II

It had only been three hours after entering the forest before Team Vixen had successfully taken an earth scroll from the rock-nins. The ninjas were trying to find Team Vixen and fell into the trap of Team Vixen's design, using a seal that shot out a scentless paralyze gas. It was easy pickings for the girls as they continued the hunt for their next victim, only to stop when they heard a rumbled. The girls moved away from the ruckus to see the pale boy from Team 7, Sai, was flying on a giant hawk made of his ink jutsu. Behind Sai was a snake large enough to swallow people whole, chasing after him.

Hinata, Haku, and Naruto stepped up to the plate to stop the snake from killing a fellow leaf-nin. Hinata started with 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu,' to shoot a large blob of water out of her mouth. Haku then froze the blob while Naruto followed up with 'Wind Style: Great Break Through Jutsu' to give the ice blob the speed to push deep into the snake's head. Tukiko then ran up to roast the snake into a charred mess, but it dispersed as she fired off 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu.' The only thing she set on fire was the tree the snake laid out on as Sai flew past them.

The four girls gathered by a tree when Tukiko spoke up to her friends, "That was no natural snake. It was a summons, like the ones Anko used."

"But why is it here?" Haku asked. "Anko doesn't seem one to give us a helping hand. If anything, she would make it harder for us to prove were the best. Is there anyone else who can summon snakes?"

It was quite for the girls from Konoha as they looked at each other before Hinata stepped up, "I can think of one… the one that gave Anko her summoning contract with snakes, her teacher, Orochimaru."

"Orochimaru? You mean the same ninja that is part of Sennins along with Tsunade Senju and Jiraiya; the three strongest ninjas the Leaf ever produced. The one forced out of the village because he performed illegal experimentation on humans?" Haku asked.

"That's the one," Naruto stated. "I remember the orphanage's workers would tell us stories of how he would come at night to snatch bad little boys and girls to experiment on. It was a good way to keep the kids in line."

"I remember similar stories when I grew up in an orphanage before Danzō took me," a voice stated.
from behind them. The girls turned around to see Sai had landed and now addressed them. "The file Danzō had on Orochimaru makes the child stories I heard seemed… pleasant compared to the truth."

"I thought you were flying away," Tukiko stated in shock.

"I had to gain some distance before I could make a sharp turn and come back to see what killed the snake that Orochimaru had summoned. I recognize the snake from pictures in his file," Sai explained. "His full file had details about his past and current operations, including the possibility that he is the founder of the Oto village and the Sound Forces in Rice Country."

"Wait, you said you have seen the full ninja file?" Tukiko asked Sai. Sai nodded yes. "That's illegal; not even Jōnin are allowed to see the files of their fellow ninjas unless they are under their command or a target," Tukiko ranted.

"Danzō supplied the information to all his men," Sai stated.

"You mean Root, the illegal organization the old man ran when he was not trying to kick fellow ninjas out for his personal benefit," Naruto snarled as she remembered Danzō.

Danzō tried to kick Tukiko out in an elaborate deal with Sasuke. If the plan worked, Danzō would get the Sharingan and the Elemental Star, if Mikoto did not kill her son. She was shocked to hear that an illegal black-op organization that is possibly still in service in Leaf Forces own backyard. Though in retrospect, it should not be too surprising when reading Danzō's history to realize he was skilled enough to leave only rumors of his security force's existence.

"Why are you telling us this?" Hinata asked.

"My master hadn't put a seal on me to keep quiet, or the Hokage's would have found out," Sai explained.

"While that is nice to know," Tukiko explained before the punch line, "that still doesn't explain why you are telling us about this personally."

Sai sighed, "It was because the mission we worked on together, the Wave mission. The boy Inari gained confidence and was planning to rally the village. Under my master's parameters, it would be simple to knock the client family out to keep them safe. But… but I wanted… I wanted too…"

"You wanted to see how far Inari would go," Haku added, using her own experience from demanding teacher.

"It was an amazing sight," Sai admitted. "I watched the civilians rally to take down bandits and rogue samurai. Something I thought it would be impossible. Danzō always said, 'The weak and unworthy are meant to be beneath the worthy and servants of the strong, and the strong must take care of their weak assets through protection and force.' Yet, these untrained civilian forces were taking down trained killers. It proved Danzō was wrong and if Danzō was wrong about one thing, he could be wrong about other things as well."

"So you decided to defect, and you want us to put in a good word?" Hinata asked quietly for the group.

"I already have defected by informing the Hokage of everything I know. He is investigating if these things are true since he can't arrest Danzō on just my word. I am telling you as I consider you my friend despite only knowing you for a few days," Sai explained.

"Well, we'll put that under advisement," Naruto stated. "Right now we need to think about why
Orochimaru is here?"

"If that snake was going after Sai, then that means he is probably after my cousin too," Tukiko stated.

"Makes sense," Hinata stated. "The history books on him said he was obsessed with bloodlines and that he extensively studied them and tried to recreate a few of them."

"Especially if the rumors are true and he has perfected a technique to switch bodies to achieve immortality," Sai explained.

"That's disturbing," Tukiko commented.

"Yes and he will probably come after us," Haku added. "We have the Sharingan, the Byakugan, the Elemental Star, and if you count me as well, the nearly extinct Hyōton (ice release). We could be the next set of targets after he is done with Sai's team."

"Then perhaps we should flush out a snake," Naruto suggested as they begin to discuss a plan while Sai led them to where his team was hiding.

**Scene III**

Pain, the pain was the only thing Sasuke felt as he thrashed around on top of a huge tree branch. Pain caused when the pale psychopath with yellow eyes that stood before him bit him on the shoulder. So much pain it became apparent he would have rolled off the tree limb and fallen to his death if Sakura had not held him down. As he struggled with the pain, he recalled what happened.

Sasuke and Sakura were separated from Sai by a powerful burst of wind that sent the three of them flying. The duo, mostly Sasuke, fought against a vicious woman sporting a long tongue that was forked, like a snake. She had eaten her own scroll before she forced Sasuke to fight. The fight was a one-sided affair as he was too scared to fight. He even gave the woman their scroll, but she still wanted to fight him. Therefore, Sasuke regained enough of his nerve to fire off his most powerful fire-style jutsu. A jutsu that did nothing more than burn away his scroll and a layer of skin that a white snake man peeled off the skin of the woman he impersonated. A man that identified himself as Orochimaru, the traitorous Sennin before stretching his neck by ten meters to bite Sasuke on the neck and creating his world of pain.

From then on, it was a pain as the bite surged through his body paralyzing him, and just before he lost consciousness, as he heard his pathetic female teammate yell, "What have you done to him?"

"I gave him a gift," Lord Orochimaru answered with a wicked smile. "A sample of the power I wield and what I can offer. For Sasuke-Kun will come to me, for I am the only one that will offer him the power he needs to kill his brother." Those words would be the last thing he hears before darkness took him.

Looking at a girl filled with fear as she tried to help Sasuke brought a smile to Orochimaru's face. Fear always brought a smile to Orochimaru's face, but his smile quickly faded as he sensed four colossal chakra signatures behind him. He turned to see four animals, two foxes and two wolves that walked on two feet and talked in human voices. What was worse to him was the fact that the foxes were as tall as humans were and the wolves were a head taller. He recognized that these four were summons sent to fight him.

"Who are you four?" Orochimaru asked.

"We are Team Vixens partners. I am Arctic Wolf," a cold, five tailed silver wolf with the symbol of
ice on her forehead headpiece answered Orochimaru.

"I am Mother Fox," a beautiful green five tailed fox with the symbol of nature on her headpiece, followed suit.

"I am Dark Hunter," followed a one-eyed black wolf with six tails, headpiece with the words 'warrior,' and a paw on the large claymore sword strap to his back.

"And I am Trickster, and we are here to expose you," stated a six-tailed orange fox with a scroll on his back, and the symbol of illusion on his headpiece.

"Expose me," Orochimaru stated with mild interest. "And how do you propose to do that?"

"Simple, by making you reveal yourself, or by killing you and hanging your body out on display," Dark Hunter told Orochimaru before he rushed him.

Orochimaru barely had enough time to escape as Dark Hunter, who began his hunt for the snake. Orochimaru expelled his sword he was held within his stomach, and on reflex the scroll he ate as well in his goal to goad Sasuke into fighting him. However, all attention was on the sword, which was a beautiful single piece design. It was a thick blade with a small tip on top and a black handle, curved to allow the user to swing widely with the blade while still having enough to protect his wrist. Just as Orochimaru readied his sword and struck back at Dark Hunter, only to be surprised when his sword only clanged as it met Dark Hunter's claymore. He was then kicked in the stomach hard enough to cough out blood as he slammed into a tree.

Dark Hunter then charged the snake man, but Orochimaru had recovered enough to jump away from Dark Hunter's sweep to land on another branch. Once he was far enough away, Orochimaru asked, "How? How can your sword be intact against my Kusanagi? It's supposed to cut through anything like butter and poisons any organic material it cuts."

Dark Hunter chuckled in response, "My clan has come up with special seals that make their blades more resilient. Our swords can withstand weapons from weaker clans like the Snake Clan. But enough talk, you should be more worried about my other three companions."

Orochimaru eyes widened when he had to jump away from several icicles created by Arctic Wolf. He was not fast enough as a few hit him and ripped parts off his white battle kimono, almost cutting the purple bow rope tied around his waist. Orochimaru was bleeding from the cuts he received from Arctic Wolf and would not get a moment of relief as Mother Fox took control of the tree he was standing on. He used 'Body Switched Jutsu' to switch places with a nearby log before Mother Fox could squash him with the thick branch of a tree she controlled. He then ran away from the tree, jumping from branch to branch. On one branched Orochimaru landed on, several vines came to life and rushed towards him. Tired of running, Orochimaru slashed at them to cut them away but found out they were a mirage.

Shocked by the deceit he did not even sense the illusion, Orochimaru was not prepared for a small branch off the side of a tree to grow exponentially and ram him into the tree's trunk. As he slowly tried to get up, he immediately felt cold, as a silver wolf appeared in front of him. The Trickster's genjutsu hiding Arctic Wolf dispersed while Orochimaru let out a terrible scream as his icy tomb formed around him. Orochimaru was frozen from head to toe.

Arctic Wolf actually jumped back to admired her work but frowned when it was shattered by a torrent of chakra released by an enraged Orochimaru. He swore up and down that he would kill those four summonses, so Orochimaru pulled up his right sleeve to reveal his trump card. On his pale arm was a black symbol of two snakes intertwined, trying to eat each other. It was a summoning
tattoo. When he pumped chakra into the seal, he summoned a giant purple snake, the king of the Snake-clan. A snake was so large that particularly every Jōnin in and outside the forest could see it. Orochimaru did not notice that the four summonses smirked at the success of their objective.

"Why have you summoned me Orochimaru?" The snake asked with a hissed.

"I was having trouble with four summoned animals and thought you may want them as your sacrifices Manda," Orochimaru pointed to the four summonses below them.

Manda looked down at the summons and grew pale with fear, "Orochimaru, you fool. Those are the lieutenants of the Canine Alliance."

Orochimaru wondered why Manda was afraid of the four summonses until the four through hand signs performed 'Morph Jutsu.' A huge puff of smoke enveloped the area. The smoke cleared and the four summonses were revealed to be half the size of Manda. Orochimaru paled at the fact he had to face four summonses that was just below boss levels.

"Orochimaru, you can forget asking me to help you in this fight. I am not about to risk a war with the Canine Alliance while we are fighting the Toad, Frog, Weasel and Slug Clans," Manda snarled at Orochimaru before dispersing, leaving Orochimaru alone to face the music.

Orochimaru always had the ability to hide his emotions and could hide them most of the time. But today was not his day as he lost his control for the first time in a long time as he expressed anger. Anger at being fooled into revealing he was in the village after marking only one of his targets. He also experienced fear. Fear of being alone against overwhelming odds. As he entered freefall, he began to plan how to escape when he noticed movement near the location he had dropped his Heaven scroll. It was one of his very targets, and she was exposed.

Naruto saw the scroll shoot out of Orochimaru's mouth and land deep into some brush beside a tree. It was a heaven scroll. A scroll the team needed, and she needed to get it before it was destroyed by mistake. Naruto, being the most skilled in stealth, went to grab the scroll while her summons and Orochimaru duke it out. Hinata did not want her to go but allowed Naruto when she made a good argument on the scroll being destroyed in the fight. Therefore, she went for the scroll while the others remained hidden. She smiled as she grabbed the scroll and was about to sneak back when she heard a hissing sound behind her.

Naruto turned to see Orochimaru speeding to her location. Naruto attempted to run and got only five steps when she felt a sharp pain in her neck. Orochimaru had stretched his neck to impossible lengths before he had bitten the girl on the neck. Orochimaru retracted his neck and smirk as Naruto fell on the branch. Silently screaming as she clutched the scroll with her right hand and the bite mark with her left.

Orochimaru smirk grew when he heard a girl yell out, "Naruto!"

Orochimaru turned to see Hinata was the one that had yelled out while she rushed towards Naruto in fear. Just behind Hinata: Tukiko, Haku, and the boy Sai tried to keep up. He felt lucky, and he was about to attack when he felt his something pricing his body and the urge to cough out blood. He looked down to see Dark Hunter's blade sticking through his stomach. The summons had returned to their human size forms to fight him. He knew he had to escape, so he back-kicked Dark Hunter to give him room. The force of the kick knocked Dark Hunter away along with his blade he held onto tightly. Once the blade slid out, Orochimaru jumped away into a tree before he began sinking into the ground, holding onto his wound. He soon disappeared, and all that was left on the scene was the two teams of scared Genins and four summonses.
As Hinata was helping Naruto, Tukiko called out, "Sakura, are you still alive?"

Sakura looked over from where she was treating Sasuke to say slowly, "Yes."

"Why don't you come down and we can work together to survive," Haku added, and Sakura nodded as she struggled to pick up Sasuke before she jumped down to them.

Meanwhile, Dark Hunter went up to Hinata to state, "Ma'am, our time is up, and we will have dispersed soon. We are sorry we will not be able to provide your group with further aid, but we don't have the chakra stores in this realm."

"That's okay, we will be fine on our own, thanks for the help and good luck," Hinata told the summons.

"Same to you," Mother Fox told Hinata before all four dispersed.

As the others watched the summons dispersed, Sakura looked to see Naruto in the same pain as Sasuke was. "Did she, get bitten by, by…" Sakura stammered.

"By Orochimaru… yeah," Tukiko stated, but she also saw black marks appear on her neck. "What is that?"

"Those marks are similar to the ones that Sasuke had, except they were swirls like the heaven scroll. While Naruto's looked like the science symbol on the back of her trench coat," Sakura explained. "He, he said it was a gift, a sample of the power he offers and all Sasuke has to do is come to him to receive more."

"That is the curse mark, a seal that Orochimaru invented," Sai explained. "Orochimaru designed them to enhance a person's chakra control and flow, give them a power boost along with some kind of transformation. However, the mark has complications, as only one out of ten can survive to use the boost."

"How do you know this?" Haku asked.

"We know from the only person to run after being infected by the Haven Curse Seal, his former student Anko," Sai told the group.

"Anko-sensei has Orochimaru's curse seal?" Tukiko asked.

"Now is not the time to discuss this," Hinata demanded in a quiet, cold voice. "Let's get to safety first before we continue this talk."

The group nodded and quickly began pulling Naruto and Sasuke down into a cave they had discovered near the forest floor.

Scene IV

It was a quiet night as Hinata gazed at her patients while Sai acted as a sentry, so the rest could sleep. Sakura wanted to stay up, but Hinata forced her to sleep. Hinata pointing out that she and Haku were the medical experts and were the best able to take care of the two in shifts to ensure they were not tired. After Sakura went to sleep, Hinata stared at Naruto as she twitched while a damp cloth was used to cool her fever.

She was so worried for her best friend that she did not notice Haku's was awake until Haku touched her shoulder, "Hinata, you need to get some rest."
"Just a few more minutes," Hinata mumbled. "I want to make sure everything is alright."

"Hinata, I will look after her," Haku stated. "Go to sleep while Tukiko is reliving Sai from guard duty."

"Okay, just wake me when you need me," Hinata mumbled before falling asleep next to her friend. She did not realize the danger they were in.

In the foliage, just in front of the cave, two Genin teams waited. It was the Sound and Uzumaki teams, and both were gunning for Team 7 and 13. "Dosu, we should attack now," Zaku advised his teammate.

"You will wait until dawn," the redheaded boy named Aka commanded the team before Dosu had a chance to speak.

"We want the leaf-nins tired and groggy. So when we attack, we can take them alive," the older brother, Kokushibyou explained.

"Just so long as we will be able to kill Sasuke, I have no problem, and neither does my team," Dosu explained.

"Good, we would hate to kill some of Orochimaru's minions, especially so close to his invasion plan," Aka stated before they disappeared in the dark.

Once the sound-nins thought they were alone, Kin turned to Dosu to state, "Dosu-San, I am not sure it is a good idea teaming up with the Uzumaki clan. They are known to be ruthless and are bound to betray us."

Dosu sighed, "I know, and if it were just us versus the Uchiha-San's team, I would say we do it alone. But... Team Vixen is nothing to sneeze at. They have the records, and we've seen them in action. We wouldn't win without one of us getting killed, or severally injured. This way we have a higher chance of success. Especially, if we just leave the Uzumaki to fight Team Vixen."

"And that will allow me to blow them-" Zaku began to rant until a sword appeared over his neck.

Zaku nearly cried in shock when the redhead girl, Naruko stated, "Next time you talk about betraying someone, make sure we are gone before you plan to stab us in the back."

Zaku actually began to sweat as Naruko's blade touched his neck. He thought he was going to die when Kokushibyou yelled, "Naruko, stop playing with the weaklings and let them go!"

Naruko turned to see Kokushibyou holding the ram symbol to activate the seal that was supposed to be on the back of her neck. She slowly let Zaku go and disappeared with her left hand over the back of her neck. Though she did not go far, as she watched Kokushibyou threaten the team within the shadows. She stared the man down as she removed her hand to reveal her skin no longer had the blemish of a seal.

Flashback

It was late at night three days ago, and the Uzumaki loyal to the clan were asleep. Kushina and Naruko waited patiently in their beds before they slowly got up without making a sound. Within the moonlight, Kushina Uzumaki, a beautiful redhead, walked out in a brown combat vest that was over her grey robes, as dual bladed swords on her back. Kushina's green eyes were full of anticipation as well as worry as she looked around under the moonlight. Her second daughter was a cold version of herself as she wore a black assassin suit and had a single blade sword strapped to her back.
The two waited for their freedom, which arrived in the form of an older man with long, wild white hair. A man that was familiar to Kushina as he wore a red kabuki suit. It was Jiraiya, the self-proclaimed eccentric supper pervert, and the Leaf's best information broker and seal master. Jiraiya usually acts like a fool, but in this case, he was dead serious as he asked, "Are you two ready?"

"Yes," Kushina answered for the two. "It is time to be free from the Uzumaki once and for all."

"Then let's begin," Jiraiya stated as he pulled out sticky paper and his own special concoction to remove the seals and replace and nullify them with other seals.

As Jiraiya was hard at work, Naruko turned to her mother to ask, "When do I kill my 'team'?"

Kushina looked at her daughter before sighing, "It probably would be best to wait until the second part of the exams. The second part still takes place in the Forest of Death, right?" Kushina asked Jiraiya.

"Yes, probably the perfect place for undesirables to disappear," Jiraiya stated as he applied a nullifying seal that he had designed to remove the seals on Kushina's back. It worked like a charm as he peeled the seal off like paper glue. "And from what I've heard of the two on your team, they need to die. I have never heard of a more disgusting group of ninjas then them. Well, besides some of the ninjas that work for my old teammate Orochimaru, but that goes without saying."

It was silent for the last twenty minutes before Jiraiya finally removed their seals. Once they were done, Naruko went to bed while Kushina talked to Jiraiya about Naruto's life.

End Flashback

Now, Naruko laid in wait, as she knew the time to strike would be soon. To kill those that made her life hell. The very clan that turned her into a killer and that took great pleasure in making her into one. To fight for the kind of freedom that her half-sister had, a sister that she was not sure how to deal with. A sister that she now watched from a distance as Naruto feverously lay in the cave, as she fought against Orochimaru's curse mark.

Scene V

Within the recesses of Naruto's mind, two Naruto's were fighting with guns blazing. They were fighting in a burning forest as a redhead kitsune, Colonel Nine of Nine was being held down by chains. Her red chakra flared as she tried to break free. Naruto fought her darker self that had been given life by Orochimaru's seal and chakra.

Dark Naruto was the opposite of Naruto in every way. She had long black hair with blue tips as opposed to Naruto's blond hair with red tips tied into two short pigtails. Whereas 'light' Naruto wore a black trench coat and black clothing with orange flames and trims, Dark Naruto wore a white version with purple trims and flames. The darker half also had the symbol for radiation on her back as opposed to Naruto's more peaceful symbol used to represent science. The fight continued to escalate until Naruto fell back and hid in the burning forest.

"Come out, you goodie two-shoes," the Dark Naruto called out. "I promise I won't kill you. I'll just lock you up like I was until I was given freedom."

"No thanks, I kind of like my freedom," Naruto responded back. "Besides, even if you are given free will by Orochimaru's hickey, you only exist as long as I exist. It's my dark essence you draw from."

Dark Naruto chuckled as she replied, "I guess that is true. You are right, I can't kill you, but I can suppress your personality to the point you might as well be dead if you don't surrender."
"Big talk from someone that depended on someone else's power," Naruto shot back.

"How is that different from you?" Dark Naruko taunted. "Who is the reason for your intelligence and bloodline? Who gave you the above average stamina and chakra supply that is larger than the average Uzumaki? Colonel Nine of Nine," Dark Naruto stated with a grin. "Without Colonel Nine of Nine, you would be an average ninja. No, you probably would be a moron."

"Maybe so," Naruto shot back. "But at least I work for my own power and with her for her power. You just take it, and consequences are damned."

"No," Dark Naruto snarled. "You are just allowing yourself to be controlled. To be used as others see fit."

"That is not true," Naruto stated. "It was a gift she gave me, as any mother gives their child. She is like a second mom. Colonel Nine of Nine was touched, as she slowly breaks free. "Besides, if she were using me, she would make me the head of the R&D to upgrade the current technology. Not be a ninja on the frontlines where I could die and so would her dream to see a better tomorrow."

"But are you sure?" Dark Naruto asked. "Are sure she is not using you, especially the friends that surround you? Can you say for sure they are really your friends and not just tools of the Hokage to make sure you are a loyal ninja? Is his kind treatment of you just a façade, so you can be used as he sees fit? Maybe there are others? Could your mother be pretending to care to escape the Uzumaki? How do you know you are not a tool to be used and thrown away?"

Naruto was quite. She would be lying if she thought that others were above using her. Her time in the orphanage had taught her that people would act and do anything to get what they want. It is why she left, as she did not want to be someone's tool. Yet, she always wondered if she was already a tool. A tool of the village since the day she was born and they were only kind to her to get what they wanted from her. The thoughts made her so distraught that she did not notice when Dark Naruto quietly moved towards her, with a victory step in this fight of wills.

As she looked down, she heard Colonel Nine of Nine yelled out, "Don't listen to her Naruto! You have a choice, a free will to be what you want! To be with whom you want and to care for what you want! Please don't forget that! Don't forget the first person that cared about you, Matron Lily!"

Naruto stopped as she remembered the old matron, at the orphanage. The person who taught her everything during her early life, and the sadness she felt when the matron died. Old age had finally caught up to the elderly matron. And Naruto's friends, her true friends helped her through the pain especially her closest friend, Hinata. She was silent as Dark Naruto moved behind Naruto, not knowing that Colonel Nine of Nine yelled to Naruto, and Naruto was no longer playing the dark one's mind games.

Dark Naruto chuckled as she took aim and said, "And now I shall rule this piece of crap you call a world."

However, before Dark Naruto could open fire, Naruto struck swiftly. Naruto swatted the dark one's hands with her left and lined up her pistol with her right hand. She opened fire and blasted her three times as all three hitting the dark one's stomach from just inches away. Dark Naruto soon backed with holes in her stomach. If this had been in the real world, she would be dead just from the blood loss alone.

However, this was not the real world, and Dark Naruto was running away while yelling, "You won't get me."
"She may not, but I will," a voice told Dark Naruto from behind.

Dark Naruto turned around to see Nine of Nine, covered in red chakra. She could only stare in silent horror as Nine of Nine grabbed onto the darker half and pumped her full of red chakra. Colonel Nine of Nine continued to pump chakra until Dark Naruko screamed and disintegrated into dark mist at the center of the red chakra. The dark mists then moved towards the 'light' Naruko as she absorbed those clouds of anger and despair. Her darker side would always be a part of her, but it would never control her, for she was in control of her own mind.

As control was reestablished, the forest that was Naruto's mindscape returned to its beauty, much to the relief of Colonel Nine of Nine. Naruto twirled around such a sight before she turned to Nine of Nine to state, "Thank you."

"Anything for my protégé," Colonel Nine of Nine told Naruto. She then closed her eyes as she examined Naruto's body through her chakra, "The mark Orochimaru had given you is purged it from your body thanks to my chakra. I suggest you wake up. Your teammates are probably worried. Come and talk to me when you have the time."

"Thank you, Nine," Naruto bowed. "Thank you for everything."

'The pleasure is mine," Colonel Nine of Nine replied. "You may not be my child. But you will always be special to me and will receive my protection. Now wake up."

Scene VI

When Naruto opened her eyes, she noticed that it was nearly dawn, and Hinata was fretting over her, "Naruto! Are you all right? What happened?"

"Let's say Orochimaru likes to leave his gifts," Naruto stated before she explained everything that transpired in her mind, leaving out a bit of how close her darker-self came close to winning. She also skipped where she got the power used to purge Dark Naruto as Sakura did not know, or need to know about Colonel Nine of Nine.

"So your darker half tried to take over?" Sakura asked. When Naruto nodded yes, she then asked, "You think Sasuke is facing the same thing?"

"I don't know," Naruto had answered truthfully. "It was given life for I could remove Orochimaru's fragment with my… my special chakra."

"He doesn't look like he's as tense as you were," Haku pointed out. "I think it is very possible that Sasuke may be accepting it."

"Sasuke wouldn't accept such a dark gift! Would he?" Sakura asked with uncertainty.

"You're his teammate, you tell us," Naruto demanded from Sakura and Sai.

"I have been observing Sasuke's response to orders that I wouldn't be willing to follow," Sai stated with a blank expression. "Sasuke is easy to agitate and prone to jealousy. He is also quick to anger like a spoiled toddler told no for the first time. He has an intense desire for power to make his clan an elite clan again while killing his brother for his cleansing of the Uchiha clan. I recommend we do something to prevent him from causing us any harm when he awakes," Sai suggested.

"What you do with my cousin will have to wait," Tukiko whispered. "We've got company coming in three, two, one..." then Bang! Tukiko's trap was set off.
The members of Team 7 and 13 that were awake, including a slightly groggy Naruto, ran out of the cave to see one of the Sound-nin's screamed in pain. Zaku had stepped on Tukiko's mine and barely jumped off in time to prevent his right leg from being blown off. Instead, his leg was a mangled mess that Zaku could barely use. He was limping and favored his left leg as he stood in front of the Leaf-nins.

"I told you to be careful," Dosu had scolded his teammate as Zaku tried not to scream in pain, "Next time you listen to what I say, or you may die."

Zaku only growled in pain as he slowly got up as he received put down by the Uzumaki that were with them. "This is pathetic, you make terrible cannon fodder," Kokushibyou snarled. "Aka, remove the traps."

Aka gave a deadly smirk, "You got it, brother," as he used 'Wind Style: Wind Pulse Jutsu.'

The jutsu sent strong winds in all directions around the Aka. Not powerful enough to hurt anyone, but it was strong enough to set off the five mines and cause trip wires to spring and send logs harmlessly swinging or tumbling down. Tukiko and Haku twitched at four hours of work that was gone just like that. Well, at least it hit one of them.

"Now, Naruto so glad you're awake and free of Orochimaru's mark. It must have left you a little ragged and tired. Of course, that really is just good news for us," Kokushibyou stated. "Now, will you surrender or do we have to take you by force?"

"Screw you," Naruto gave a small, quiet growl that carried the promise of severe pain.

"Very well then," Aka had stated before he turned toward Naruko to give an order to his 'teammate,' "Naruko take her, the rest are expendable."

Naruko nodded as she got his sword out, but instead of attacking Team Vixen, she attacked Aka from behind. He fell to the ground in pain, screaming to the heavens. It seemed like an eternity to the shocked ninjas as Aka hit the ground as screams died down. He laid there for a moment, allowing his wounds to regenerate before the boy turned around to be on his back. So he could fire off 'Wind Style: Wind Bullet Jutsu,' as he screamed out in pain, "You damn bitch!"

Naruko jumped away from the multiple bullets and right next to Kokushibyou as he was holding the ram seal and smiling as he turned his head. He thought he was going to cause Naruko pain. He soon experienced shock and pain when Naruko turned and stabbed her sword into his hands. Kokushibyou was screaming bloody murder as Naruko shifted/turned her blade to face Kokushibyou. She was about to slice through Kokushibyou's hand and through his neck when she had to pull out her sword to block a strike from Aka's sword. The two began to duel as Kokushibyou fell to his knees, cradling his twitching hands. He was unable to move from the pain as he helplessly watched Naruko and Aka dueled while Team Vixen took down the Sound-nins.

Zaku tried to take the team out using high-pressure tubes within the palm of his bands. They were designed to allow Zaku own chakra to build up a high-pressure attack that can blow people away. However, he did not get the chance to attack as Naruto used her pistol first. She aimed at his chest but was under fatigue, so she missed and hit his right shoulder instead. The blast made him turn on his bad leg, and he screamed in agony as he fell to the ground. His build of the attack went harmlessly up into the sky; while his pain insured he was unable to do anything but crawl on the ground in pain.

Meanwhile, Haku and Tukiko teamed up against Kin. Kin was a genjutsu master of her team, using bells on her senbons to create sound wave illusions that gave the illusion that senbon strikes were
coming from all directions. However, she soon found herself outmatched by Tukiko. Tukiko's Sharingan easily saw through deceptions and disrupted them with her own chakra and illusions. Haku matched senbons with her own senbons until she used 'Ice Style: Thousand Needles of Death Jutsu.' Kin tried to run, but could not escape as a dozen needles hit her legs. She was down for the count before her leader Dosu was taken down.

Dosu fought against Hinata, as she used her chakra blades against his sound brace. He found his gauntlet was useless at close range. Hinata was able to counter them by disrupting the chakra with her own attacks. Dosu tried to jump back for a long-range attack but found it to be a mistake as Hyūga struck the Sound-nin several times when he tried to escape her. He was on the ground, without chakra and he was unable to move one of his arms as well.

With Dosu down, Naruko decided to end her fight. So she grabbed onto Aka's hand as he performed a stabbed attack on her. With her hands in place, Naruko used the boy's extended arm to sling the boy toward her blade now pointed at his heart. Within a split second, she had stabbed her sword through Aka's chest. Aka realized he was doomed as Naruko let him go and pulled out her blade out from his limped body. Aka had fallen to his knees, eyes wide open in shock, before he fell to the ground, dying of blood loss.

"Brother!" Kokushibyou yelled before Sai appeared in front of him, his intent was evident as he raised his blade.

Sai attacked with a quick slash of his sword across Kokushibyou's neck. Kokushibyou felt all his strength leaving his body as blood leaked out from his throat before he collapsed on the ground. Rigor mortis would be set quickly over the boys as the two brothers were dead within seconds of each other. All that was left was the Sound-nins left alone to face a superior number of powerful ninjas. The Leaf-nins were debating if they should finish them off or let them go when a wave of dark chakra was flung out of the cave as the source appeared. Sasuke Uchiha emerged from the entrance, as his curse seal entirely covering his body while he chuckled like a madman.

"Finally!" Sasuke exclaimed. "Power, I have the power to crush my foes and take what's rightfully mine!"

"Sasuke-Kun?" Sakura asked with concern. "What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing's wrong with me," Sasuke spoke with a sinister smile. "I feel great; better than I have ever been."

"No," Sakura stuttered in fear. "This… this can't be the real. You wouldn't… you wouldn't give in so easily."

A powerful whack was heard, as Sasuke smacked Sakura hard enough to send her flying before she was caught by her other teammate, Sai. Sakura looked in disbelief in Sai's arms as a red handprint appeared on her face. Sakura looked like she was about to cry when Sasuke yelled, "Shut up you pathetic little fangirl! Always nagging and stalking me! Well, I don't need a weakling like you! I am an Uchiha and deserve only the best!"

"I think your cousin has lost it Tukiko," Haku commented.

"Actually, I thought he wasn't really all there before. Now, I'm pretty certain he is at the bottom of the deep end," Tukiko added.

"I don't know who this brat is," Naruko stated with a quiet voice, "but I feel like he deserves to be eliminated."
Hinata said nothing as the four got into battle positions while Naruto discussed the situation with Colonel Nine of Nine within her mind, 'Nine, I am going to need some chakra for the fight. Please send me as much as I can handle right now.'

'Alright, here it comes but be careful. Your body is still weak and can accept the chakra only for a few minutes,' Nine of Nine warned Naruto.

Naruto mentally nodded as Colonel Nine of Nine began filling Naruto's system with her chakra. A red cloak began to form around Naruto as her power pulsed on through the forest. Sasuke felt this power and asked, "What is this?"

"You're not the only one with a special chakra," Naruto answered Sasuke meekly. "You are nothing special."

Sasuke saw red as his Sharingan spun wildly, as he yelled, "I am special! I will show you how special with a technique that I stole from my sensei. It is a technique that should have been taught to me from the start."

Sasuke then began to summon more and more chakra from the curse seal as it formed a purple lightning blade in his hand. It grew until, all of a sudden, it dispersed, and Sasuke collapsed on the ground. The curse seal was designed to gradually give the user a boost of chakra as the seal established itself in the host's system. The process created an addiction as it enhanced the body's power while making the user stronger using the host's own chakra coil.

However, if a user summoned too much too soon, it could overload the host system, killing the host. This was something that Orochimaru did not foresee. He never had actively summoned chakra through the curse mark within twenty-four hours after they received it. As a result, Sasuke's chakra coils began to burst as the backlash wrecked his internal organs. Sasuke was dead before his marked corpse even hit the ground.

"Sasuke!" Sakura yelled as she jumped out of Sai's arms towards the boy she once loves. She looked over in sadness as she asked, "Why Sasuke? Why were you so stupid?" Sakura cried over the loss of her teammate, even if he was a terrible one.

Sai pulled Sakura away, and he calmed her down the only way he could, he gave her a hug. It worked as her cries slowly muffled into silent sobs. As Sakura calmed down, Tukiko walked over to seal the body for her aunt to take care of. She may not like him, but her aunt may want to say goodbye before she held a cremation ceremony for her son.

While Tukiko turned to take care of her cousin's body, Hinata, Haku and Naruko turned to find their opponents, the Sound-nins were gone. Naruko checked Aka corpse and swore, "They have our scroll."

Naruto had powered down and stated, "They are probably heading towards the Tower once they have licked their wounds."

"This could be bad or good depending on whether they report back to the Uzumaki clan or not," Naruko stated. "Oh well, most likely Orochimaru will kill them for their failure as he sent them to test the Uchiha."

"You mean the rumors missing-nins said about Rice Country are true?" Haku asked.

"Yes, but that maybe the least of our worries, but we will discuss that with your Hokage," Naruko explained.
Naruto sighed in frustration before she stated, "Alright, I've had enough of this forest. Let's get out of here and get to the tower."

Sai nodded as he summoned a bird made of ink, "I can get us there faster if you like."

"Let's get going," Hinata commented as she climbed on with Sakura, Tukiko, and Haku. Naruto turned towards Naruko to ask, "Coming sis?"

Naruko looked up, unsure what to say. In the end, she decided to nod in response before she climbed on board. As Naruko took her seat, Hinata turned to ask, "What do you want to do about the bodies?"

"Leave them," Naruko told Hinata. "Let the animals feast on their remains."

The group was somber as they raced out of the forest towards the tower, leaving the corpses behind. They reached the tower and realized that they could now open the scrolls and they opened them to reveal Kurenai and Kakashi. Explaining the situation, they were quickly led to the medical center before they informed the Hokage.

Scene VII

The Hokage was beginning to despise the Chūnin Exams as it just gave him one headache after another. First, the Uzumaki showed up, which allowed Kushina and her well-trained daughter to defect to Leaf forces, and give him a headache when the Uzumaki bitched about the defection. However, even that was a minor crisis as compared to Orochimaru slipping into the Chūnin exams under his watch. Orochimaru was his best student and his greatest failure. He should have killed him when he had a chance. For the Sennin not only killed the last loyal male Uchiha, but he had also ruined the life of one of his best Jōnin when she was a child.

It was lucky that Naruto was able to escape such a curse thanks to Colonel Nine of Nine. He heard from his loyal student Jiraiya had given him some insight to break Anko's seal. Anko was ecstatic to be free of her master control, especially since Orochimaru can use her curse seal to cause pain. He remembered his ANBU's mission report as they investigated the snake summon with Anko and face the Snake Sennin only be forced to cover Anko when she went down in pain.

Orochimaru's last words were too threatened them that if they canceled the Chūnin exams, Konoha would burn. Now, the worst of his crimes were apparent as Naruko and Kushina explained what Orochimaru planned. He plans to use the Chūnin exams to launch an invasion within the village. A foolish endeavor as most of the village would not even think of tying for it would cost them their client's trust and their military support for making their country look like dishonorable dogs.

The Hokage could not fathom anyone else would plan such an attack as he asked out loud, "Who could ally with Orochimaru to attack our village?"

"I don't know the name of the village, but it was one that made moth-Yokoshima chuckle," Kushina explained. "That probably means the village is a currently an ally of ours."

"But who would betray us?" Asuma asked the group.

The sickly Hatake eyes widen as he remembers something, "Lord Hokage, I remember a report that Ami, Shino, and Kiba gave about their portion of the exams. They came in on the first day after tricking a team into one of the huge leach nests. You know the one that is the size of snakes. Well anyway, they reported on their way to the tower that they had watched the sand team with the Kazekage children brutally kill the opponent teams. Specifically, the youngest one crushed all three
with his sand without any hand signs, as though the sand had a will of its own and Gaara just
directed it."

Sarutobi sighed as he had thought it over, "Looks like you are right Hatake, as were your warnings,
Naruto. Gaara is here as a weapon for the Sand Forces as he is the Jinchūriki of the One-Tailed
Beast."

It was quiet as everyone took in everything the Hokage said. "What's the plan, Hokage-Sama," a
thoughtful Kakashi stated in a somber mood after finding out a student had stolen his technique
without permission and that the student died using said technique.

"The only thing we can do," the Hokage stated. "We will increase patrols to make it look as if we are
looking for Orochimaru alone while we fortify our position and get in touch with our other allies. We
will also leave the Sand-nins alone."

"Leave the Sand-nins alone?" Kurenai asked. "Why should we leave them alone when we could
take them out now?"

"No, we can't," Asuma had sighed. "We do not have any actual proof that Sand Forces will betray
us. Sand forces could claim that we have betrayed our allies on suspicion alone and that will hurt us
far more than letting them go for now."

"Oh I see, politics," Kurenai bowed her head in embarrassment.

"Correct," Sarutobi had stated as he puffed his pipe. "In the meantime over the next six hours, I'll call
an emergency Shinobi and Clan council meeting to discuss military strategy. I expect all clan and
ninjas heads to be there. Team Seven, and Thirteen, you will keep quiet about this. Don't tell your
fellow Genin unless your sensei gives you the go ahead."

"Yes sir," the six Genin nodded.

"Good, everyone dismissed," the Hokage ordered, and everyone filled out. Team 7 was the fastest as
they went home, to see family and in Kakashi's case to bring the body of his student to his mother.
However, despite Sasuke's death, this may make the team stronger in the years to come.

After the others left the room, Kushina hugged her daughter in happiness, "It's so good to finally
hold you again, my sweet little Naru."

"Mom," Naruto smiled softly.

"Come, we have a lot of catching up to do," Kushina told Naruto before turning to Naruko. "All of
us are finally together, and family bonds are thicker than clan blood."

The two sisters looked at each other for what seems to be an eternity. Naruto beamed at her sister
with one of her few, beautiful smiles. One that was warm and inviting. Naruko just stared for a
moment before a small smile crept up onto her face. She may not know it, but she found her real
family. The girls turned to Kushina and nodded, leaving Team Vixen with smiles of their own.

That was when Kurenai coughed interrupted them, "Well, we should get going."

Naruto wide-eyed for a moment by jubilation of the family reunion acknowledged her teammates,
"No, please don't go!"

"Naruto," the group said at once, looking at the girl for her outburst.
"You're all my family," Naruto explained. "I want us all to get to know each other. To get to know the family that protected us from afar and now by my side."

Kushina looked at Naruto before she turned to the others, "I don't mind, in fact, I think I welcome it."

The girls smiled and soon joined the happy group, but Kurenai lagged behind, wondering where Anko was. She would later find out Anko was in the Hokage's office, with Ibiki and Raven Hunter, posing a question, "What about the sound brats?"

Sarutobi sighed, as he thought it over, "We are going to have a preliminary round, aren't we?"

"Yes," Raven Hunter answered. "There are still too many teams including Guy's team, the four rookie teams, an older Leaf team, the Sand team and the severely injured Sound team that came in the evening the same day Team Vixen arrived."

"Good," the Hokage stated. "While we can't touch them now, we can detain them if they are stuck here twenty-four hours after their part of the exam is over. And if their Jōnin instructor forgets to take them, fill out the forms to keep them here, or they aren't able to take them out because of their severe injuries, it's not our fault."

The three smiled as they realized what the Hokage ask and hope to carry out his mission. A mission that would not be too difficult as one of Sound-nins was crippled, and the other two would still be wounded by the time their prelim took place. They just had to hope the right opponents meet them and they would be easy pickings. The four soon followed out as the Hokage looked out the window, "I hope you're ready Konoha, for we are going to war."

Chapter End Notes

Done, I hope you enjoy the incidents around Sasuke’s death and the action-packed chapter. Next chapter will be the prelims; I will probably have to mix some of the fights up, as there will be no Team 7.
History before Prelims

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto. Otherwise, guns and ninjas would be semantics once I am through with them.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 05/25/2018

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

It has been a long three days for Team Vixen as they spent time with friends and family. It was an emotional one as they confronted Anko about her cure mark.

Flashback

"And that is why we want you, Team Six or Team Guy to take out the Sound-nins within the prelims. If they are working under Orochimaru, we need all the intelligence we can gather, even if it is only a small amount," Anko explained before she turned to her team that sat with Kushina and Naruko. She finished her lecture and asked "Any more questions?"

"Anko-sensei," Tukiko called out to gather her teacher's attention. "What happened between you and Orochimaru?"

Anko was silent for a moment before she asked, "What do you know about me and Orochimaru?"

Hinata complied with Anko's question, "Not much except he was your first teacher and according to Sai, you had the same seal that he put on Sasuke before he died."

"That's a good start, but not the full story," Anko stated as she got to the heart of the matter. "I was not just his student. I was the only student he ever took in Konoha. I was a child with an average background and an average family. The only thing that made me special was my high scores in the Academy. So when he picked me, I felt like I was someone special. I followed him around like a lost puppy, trying to learn everything I could from him. I followed his words as if they were gospel. I just had no idea he was experimenting on people, that is until that night."

Anko sighed in sorrow before she continued her story, "My parents just disappeared one day, and I went to Orochimaru for help. Orochimaru acted like the understanding teacher as he filed a missing report and he... he pretended to look for them."

"Pretended?" Tukiko asked her favorite teacher.

"He knew exactly where they were and what had happened to them," Anko told Tukiko before she continued her story. "Two months after my parents disappeared, Orochimaru told me he had information on my parents' whereabouts, and we needed to leave now. We went through the gates in the dead of night and... and we were not even a click away when Orochimaru struck. He injected me with enough drugs to take out a summon. I was out like a light."

The room was quiet for a moment until Naruto asked, "What happened next?"
"Your guess is as good as mine. I probably was drugged throughout my stay in that hellhole... My earliest memory of that place was when the ANBU found me while they were looking for my teacher," Anko told the group with a flare of anger. "I was found strapped to a lab table, blindfold, gagged and crying in pain from the mark that Orochimaru gave me. I remember begging them to kill me when they removed the gag from my mouth."

Anko rubbed her eyes in frustration, "The ANBU obviously did not comply and began to treat my wounds. They also explained to me that I had been missing for three months. The medic said I showed signs that I was an abused lab rat from day one of my disappearances. They also found corpses in the adjacent rooms with the curse seal... along with notes that indicated a survival rate of only one out of ten. I apparently was the finished product and the only one that he successfully planted the curse seal on."

Anko sighed, gaining a grip before she continued her tail, "From that moment on, my life spiraled down. I went through a time of self-pity as many of the villagers gave me the stink eye for I was the student of a monster. I would have drunk myself to death if it were not for friends like Kurenai and support from the higher-ups. But, from that moment on, I promised myself that should I ever see that snake face again, I would kill him for what he did to me, and the untold number of innocents he hurt. I just did not think he could use the seal to stop me," she stated as she recalled her fight with her former master.

The fight started when had found the snake man leaving the forest. Anko contorted the man with two ANBU teammates. Anko was the first to attack, but Orochimaru evaded her attack despite having a stomach wound. He struck an ANBU down in retaliation and defeated the other with little effort before Anko could help them. Therefore, she faced him alone, trading jutsus and kunais until she revealed a trump card. Anko put a shotgun to the man's face. She would have killed the snake man, but she made a mistake of waiting to see the recognition on his scared face. Instead of a student getting her revenge, she got a smirk as Orochimaru invoked the ram symbol on the seal. Anko experienced a world of pain coming from the seal.

Anko was at the man's mercy, and he used that time to taunt her. She remembered the words the two traded, "You had failed Anko. You failed to get your revenge. You failed to protect one of your prize students. I have marked her as I have marked you. The survival rates are extremely low, but she has greater potential than you ever did, and she will come to me for power."

"She won't," Anko had snarled as the surviving ANBU ninja helped her up.

Orochimaru only smiled in response, "She will, either willingly or not. It matters not as I will take everything I want and you will take a message back to the old fossil. Tell him if he stops the exams, I will burn Konoha to the ground, and I will personally take everything that the both of you care my dear student..." Orochimaru said before Tukiko brought her teacher back to reality.

"Sensei?" Tukiko asked in a voice similar to her timid days. "Are you alright."

"I'm fine, just taking a trip down memory lane," Anko stated. "Don't worry about me brats, I'll be fine. Especially if that pervert of a Sennin succeeds in removing that curse seal like he promises."

"I am sure he can, it is a chakra-based virus seal, and they can be eroded away with a concentrated chakra blast," Kushina explained. "From what I see, it is simpler than the time lock, chakra constraint, chakra inhibitor, and execution seal that were on mine and my little girl's back."

The group outside of her daughters looked at her with a raised eyebrow. Kushina blushed in response, "What? While I am no Seal Master like Jiraiya ... or Minato (sigh sadly), I am a high B-rank seal master. I helped Minato with seals as I could tell what a seal can do by looking at it. I can
even copy complex ones. I just cannot break or make complex ones like the S-rank on my back or the high A-rank on Anko's shoulder but is doable given the age of the seal."

"Well enough about my seal, you all probably should get ready for the prelims are about to begin, give or take three hours," Anko pointed out.

Naruko nodded as she pulled out an ANBU mask that had a bat on it while Kushina took a fox mask and they headed to the arena to act as part of the arena's guard detail. The rest of Team Vixen was about to leave as well until Haku turned to ask Anko, "What happened to your parents."

Anko slowly answered her student, "They were his first test subjects of the Curse Seal. They did not survive."

End Flashback

It was a slow day, as Team Vixen prepared for the prelims as they walked into a large room that resembled an arena. It had a marble floor facing a stand that holds the Hokage and his elite ninjas. Behind and above Sarutobi's head was a huge digital board and a giant statue of a ninja holding the ram symbol. To the sides of the arena were stairways that led up to large balconies where ninjas could stand and watch the arena from a safe distance.

As the teams walked in single file and faced the Hokage, Naruto took note of the other teams that had arrived as well. From the leaf were three from their own class, Team 6, 8, and 10, along with two older teams: Team Guy and the team Kabuto had been assign too. Among the Leaf-nins were three foreign teams: Gaara's sand team, the sound-nins that worked with the Uzumaki to kill Sasuke, and the masked team of Ran-nins. Nine teams remained with a total of twenty-eight personnel had passed the second part of the exams. An above average number of teams had gathered in front of the Hokage as they waited for his speech before they continued the exams.

"Congratulations to you all for making it this far in Konoha's Chūnin Exams. You all are a credit to your village," the Third Hokage acknowledged the Genin before him. The same Genin that smiled at the 'God of Shinobi' before he asked, "But I am curious, do you know the true purpose of the Chūnin exams?"

"Isn't it to get promoted?" Kiba asked out loud with several agreeing among his fellow Genin.

"It is not just to get promoted. It a way to prevent war by providing war games for the general public," Sarutobi answered to the shocked group. "We use the exams to air out any dirty laundry that exists between villages and to burn it out through high-risk competition. The ability to promote highly skilled Genin, brag about it, and gain more clients are just a bonus."

"So we are lambs brought to the slaughter for the amusement of others and to keep the peace?" asked the foreign kunoichi from Sand Forces, Temari.

"You can look at it like that," Sarutobi admitted. "Or you can look at it in a way that suggests that we believe that you are skilled enough to represent the village in matters of martial might, just as I trust all the Genin from my village," Sarutobi answered as he smiled at the Genin with a leaf insignia. "However, if you don't like it, then drop out and try your hand on being promoted by the regular means of merit on the field. And speaking of dropping out, I believe Jōnin Raven Hunter has something important to state on that matter."

"Thank you lord Hokage," Raven Hunter bowed before he faced the Chūnin hopefuls. "Now, first I would like to note that far too many of you had passed the first part of the exam and that we need to cut the number down by half. So we will hold preliminary rounds to cut down your numbers."
"That's bullshit!" the sound-nin Zaku yelled as he was barely standing with braces on his leg. "What about those that are injured getting here? It's not fair!"

"And when will your enemies play fair?" Raven Hunter asked sarcastically. "These are real war games, and in war, an injured opponent is nothing more than prey to us ninjas. That is why retreating on the battlefield is a tactically sound strategy for ninjas, which is an option you have now. Quit and fight another day, or stay and hope your luck holds out." Raven Hunter developed a look almost pitch black when he asked, "So, who wants to quit?"

At first, no one raised their hand until a silver-haired Genin with glasses slowly raised his hand, "I wish to quit. I am kind of running on fumes at the moment."

"And your name is?" Raven Hunter asked.

"Kabuto Yakushi," replied the Genin that looks like the only damage was the dirt that seemed to have been smeared on his clothes rather than received from a fight.

Something was suspicious to the Jōnin as Ibiki, and the more intelligent Genin from the leaf remembered/saw that this was his seventh time to compete. Many began to wonder why he gave up but kept it to themselves while Ibiki signaled an ANBU to follow Kabuto when he leaves. At the moment, Kabuto was talking to teammates, who stop to ask him about why he quit. They spoke in a muffled tone, and it was difficult to read his teammate's body language. The two wore specially tinted glasses that made it look like their eyes were actually the glasses.

Kabuto replied in a quiet tone with a body movement that betrayed nothing. However, Naruto could make out the following words: 'our Lord,' 'prove,' 'favorite,' 'target,' and 'purpose.' In the end, Kabuto walked out after he gave the Jōnin sensei of the Sound-nins a small glance. The tall, pale man that made Naruto feel uneasy and even violated for some unknown reason. She could have sworn that the man's eyes seemed to flash yellow for a moment. Naruto dismissed such thoughts as Raven Hunter asked if anyone else was quitting.

With silence as his answer, he stated, "Very well, since we have an uneven number of opponents, the board will go through a series of names, and whomever the name is pick will get a free pass in the exams."

The board then went through a series of names at random; most Chūnin hopefuls looked up to see if they would be picked as it meant a free pass in the exams. The anxiety increased until the board finally landed on a name: Kagari of Ame. Genin cursed as they looked at the lucky stiff from Rain forces in yellow that wore a breather mask. The one to claim the reward to take the flyby was the one in cloth that covered both of his eyes. He then went to the left side of the stands reserved for foreign ninjas while the others waited for their next match.

"Okay, with that settled, let's move into the prelims," Raven Hunter stated. "The board will randomly select two contestants that will fight each other while the other waits in the balconies. While you fight, let it be known that I am the proctor of these fights. When I say you are done, you are done. Continuing the fight will disqualify you automatically. And while killing is allowed, it is strongly frowned upon. If you try to kill your opponent when I call the match, then I will cripple you, if not accidentally kill you. Other than that, the only other rule is no firearms. We do not want others accidentally killed in the match. Any more questions… No, very well the board will select two opponents. They will remain in the arena for their fight."

The board began to shuffle through the names until it reached two names: Yoroi Akadō and Tukiko Uchiha. The other Genin moved away to the balconies while the two stayed to face each other. Once they stepped off the stairs and onto the balcony, Naruto looked back to where the Sound Jōnin was
but found that he was gone. She had a bad feeling about this.

Scene II

In the dark shadows of the tower, Kabuto stood over the dead body of an ANBU while he was meeting the Sound Jōnin from the prelims. Kabuto had killed the ANBU by grabbing the man from the shadows before he used a chakra scalpel and struck the man's brain. Kabuto killed the man, leaving no mark while leaving the other's organs intact. The Jōnin smirked at the display as he peeled off the fake skin to reveal it was Orochimaru of the Sennin.

"My lord," Kabuto bowed to his true master.

"Kabuto, how goes my best spy?" Orochimaru asked with a sadistic smirk.

"It has gone well Lord Orochimaru," Kabuto replied to his master with an amused look as he sealed the ANBU he just killed in a medical scroll he carried around. "But I take it you are not here to dispense pleasantries and instead want a report on the Sasuke's whereabouts. Well, I'm afraid to be the bearer of bad news. The medical reports that I stole indicated that he killed himself by pulling too much of his chakra through your seal. He blew his chakra coils and his organs in one fatal swoop."

"It is a shame but not too detrimental to my plans as there are more than one Uchiha," Orochimaru said offhandedly. "It is just too bad I was not able to mark the female Uchiha that was on Anko-Chan's team as she showed potential, but there is always another time."

"Of course my Lord," Kabuto smiled at the man in return. "I will take my leave. I have to make sure my teammates don't talk." Kabuto disappeared into the floor much like his master would have.

"Yes, such a shame when you have to dispose of spent tools," Orochimaru stated before he disappeared as well. It would be a few hours before anyone realize they were here and gone.

Scene III

Back in the arena, Tukiko was facing her opponent Yoroi. She did not think much of her opponent, but that did not mean she would take it easy as she got into position. When Raven Hunter called the match to start, Tukiko pulled out her knives while Yoroi rushed her with glowing hands. Tukiko did not take a chance as she leaped back from the older man. She kept him at arm's length as he tried to grab onto the agile girl. Tukiko's Sharingan briefly saw him drain chakra from the air around his hand and realized what he had planned. Tukiko responded with a kick that was hard enough to force Yoroi back.

Yoroi skirted away from Tukiko and briefly rubbed his bruise from her kick. However, he also had a triumph look when he chuckled, "So I guess you see what will happen when I get a hold of you, and when I do, I will drain you of every last drop of chakra."

Tukiko looked at the man as if he were an idiot when she asked, "You are Kabuto-San's teammate right? Then tell me what my title is."

Yoroi looked confused for a moment until he realized what she meant. He began to back up as Tukiko's own dangerous smirk began to appear. "That's right asshole. I am the 'Fire Mistress' known for my skill in flaming knives and fire jutsus," Tukiko stated when she powered up a powerful 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu.'

As the fireball went hurtling towards Yoroi, he quickly responded by holding up his hands to stop the fireball and absorb its chakra. It took only a few seconds before he succeeded in absorbing most of the fireball, leaving his hands singed for his troubles. It was the least of his concerns as Tukiko...
had thrown a dozen of knives righter after her fireball. He fell down in pain, as blood flew flow from open wounds that looked like a pincushion with the knives sticking out of his arms and legs.

Seeing her opponent down, Tukiko looked at the proctor to state, "My opponent is down. I believe I have won this match."

Raven Hunter agreed as he called the match in Tukiko's favor, "Winner Tukiko Uchiha." Raven Hunter then looked at Yoroi before calling out aid, "Medics! Please take this Genin away so we can continue the next match."

The medics quickly responded and took Yoroi on a stretcher. No one noticed that one of the mask medics in a white jumpsuit was a silver-haired youth, with a small sinister smile. This would be the last time anyone ever sees Yoroi as he disappeared in the care of the medics. All the while, Tukiko moved up to the balcony as she was congratulated by her teammates and senseis. As Tukiko received her a pat on the back, the board went through a new sequence before it landed on Zaku Abumi and Shino Aburame. Shikamaru, Team 13, Team 6, and Team 8 all took particular interest as Shino walked down with a calm and collected presence. On the other side, Zaku, who was unsure whether he should fight, decided to fight anyway as he presented a cocky attitude as he limped down the stairs.

As Shino went down, a blond girl named Ino noticed, the others interest in Shino and turned to her teammate, "Hey Shikamaru, what is with everyone's interest in Shino?"

"Troublesome," Shikamaru stated. "They are taking an interest in a fight with one of the strongest Genin in this test."

"What?" Ino asked in shock.

"It's true," Ami stated off handily. "I have seen the cutie in action. I think only a few people here can beat him, and even then, it would be a tough fight. Hell, he may be able to win it all by himself."

"Then why wasn't he Rookie of the Year?" Ino asked.

"Because the academy focuses more on academics and all around techniques," Revan answered for Ami. "They do not account for clan styles, so Sasuke beat him overall by a few points, mainly in martial arts."

"The (munch) Aburame clan, (munch) is that powerful?" Chōji asked the group in between bites of some crunchy morsel.

"Out of all the clans in Konoha, the Aburame and the Nature Clan are the two most powerful clans in battle," Tukiko explained to the group. "They were able to match the Senju and Uchiha when they were in their prime during the Clan War era."

Several Genin on the Leaf-nins looked to the Jōnin to confirm what Tukiko stated, and to their shock, they nodded, 'yes.' Realizing it was true, Ino turned to ask, "How?"

"Just watch the fight, and you will see," Naruto suggested, and the Leaf-nins followed Naruto's suggestion.

In the arena, Shino looked over Zaku in silence. It was apparent that a fight would end in Zaku's defeat. Therefore, for the sake of logic, he offered his opponent a chance to give up. "You know, it would probably be best if you surrendered," Shino suggested. "You can't win with the injuries you have received, and it is best not to aggravate them."
It was a logical suggestion, but Zaku was not interested in Shino's words sympathy. Instead, Zaku took his offer as a sign of weakness as he stated, "Keep your suggestions to yourself. Even with my wounds, I can still beat a damn tree hugger."

At that point, Shino lost all interest in showing mercy for his opponent and was now ready to end this fight. Shino was on the move before Raven Hunter started the match, not that Zaku noticed. Zaku was quick to the dropped, as he held out his two arms up, palms open. Inside his palms were tubes in which wind was circulating, as it is built-up in preparation to unleash a powerful attack. He shot out a high-pressure attack that might as well have had the force of a dozen grenades as the blast headed towards Shino. Ami called out for Shino, but it was too late as it hit him at full strength, or so it seemed to. Only a few noticed that it passed through Shino without any resistance as it crashed into the wall behind, shooting up a cloud of dust.

Zaku smirked, "I got him in one shot!"

"Got who?" a cold voice asked from behind Zaku.

Zaku slowly turned to see Shino was standing behind him with a face filled with cold logic. Zaku turned back to see the dust had cleared and laying on top of the ruble were a few green pieces of what appeared to be bug guts. The bug guts did not register in Zaku's brain as he asked, "How?"

"It does not matter, as it will not be your concern for long," Shino told the Sound-nin as he raised his arms out, commanding forces to come forth in the form of a swarm of insects.

Bugs, wave after wave of the little black beetles with small pinchers flew out of Shino in the form of a vast cloud. The onslaught made Zaku roll away in fear as he attempted to escape. It hurt to open wounds, but he was able to retreat far enough distance to return fire, or so he had thought. He felt something crawling on his back and felt his chakra stores drain quickly away. He realized he was defeated before Shino's bugs made their appearance as the swarm descended upon their unfortunate victim. Zaku screamed in fear before he fell unconscious from chakra exhaustion.

Once the screams became silent, Shino retracted his bugs, leaving behind the broken mass known as Zaku. No one would question how strong Shino was as he slowly walked up the stairs. Most were afraid that not Ami. She was one of the few to meet him halfway up the stairs to congratulate him personally, and the only one to berate Shino for making her worry that he might be hurt. Shino was a perfect gentleman as he promised not to make his teammate worry about him again.

As Ami fluttered around Shino, Night Wolf chuckled as he stated, "And to think, that a clan that keeps to themselves like the Aburame and mine are considered the strongest in the village. I wonder if it is true what they say."

"What do they say?" Bastila asked.

"That it is the quiet ones that are the most powerful, and none are quieter in the political arena than the Aburame and the Nature clans," Night Wolf explained.

"I guess that's true, it would explain why you and Bastila are weaker than me in a fight," Revan stated in a blunt matter.

"Oh, low blow," Tukiko chuckled as the group chuckled in response.

"Alright, that's enough, besides the next set of matches are starting," Naruto pointed to the board as it listed Hinata Hyūga and Kankurō Sakubu as the next contestants.

Kankurō took it in stride, as he walked with a hop to his step while Hinata steps were tentative. She
was not used to the attention and was a wreck before she took a step down the stairs. Her nerves were utterly fried until Naruto stopped her and whispered into her ear. It was in a quiet tone that others could not hear, but they knew it was something that made Hinata developed a small smile along with a small blush as she stepped down to the arena with renewed confidence down with the arena.

She walked down with a confident step to face Kankurō, who had a grin that was the definition of cocky when he asked, "Done talking to your girlfriend?"

Hinata responded by activating her bloodline to see something interesting as she assumed an attack poster. It took only a few seconds for Hinata to end the match when it was called to begin. Hinata attacked Kankurō with a high power gentle blade that sliced through the 'Kankurō' before her. The force cut 'Kankurō' in two pieces to reveal it was not Kankurō, but a wooden puppet that Hinata had cut in two. Hinata also revealed where the real Kankurō was by cutting the raping on the puppet's back. Kankurō was a scared Sand-nin that was hovering in the air. It was not long before Kankurō felt pain as Hinata wasted no time attacking him from behind. Within a few seconds, Hinata hit Kankurō in his shoulder blade, his kneecaps, and his thighs. Kankurō was unable to move when he hit the ground. Hinata Hyūga was declared the winner, and the Sand-nins were embarrassed by Kankurō actions.

Temari had to ask herself, "Didn't he read any of the reports about Leaf Forces' bloodlines?" Their sensei looked like he was going to punish Kankurō after the fight.

As Hinata walked up the stairs, Kankurō asked, "How could you have possibly beat me?" as the medic prepared to take him to the medical wards found within the tower. "How could you beat me if you were such a nervous wreck coming down to the arena?"

"I won because someone dared to believe in me. I could not let her down," Hinata answered quietly as she walked up to a smiling Naruto.

A small smile formed on her face as Hinata remembered Naruto's words from a few seconds ago, "Hinata, don't be scared. I know you can beat him. I believe in you, as I believe you will always be there for me as a comrade and a friend that I hold dear to my heart." Hinata would never forget her words as she stood side by side with her best friends and her best friend. A best friend that could be something more to her.

As Kankurō was taken away to mend his paralysis, the board cycled through a new series of names until it landed on two names Dosu Kinuta and Tenten Faiadoku, another Leaf versus Sound match. It became apparent that Tenten was the favorite, as Rock Lee, Guy, Team 6 and Team Vixen cheered on Tenten while no one else cared either way who won. Even his teammate Kin did not show that she even cared about her teammate Dosu. However, Dosu had a mission to prove as he went to fight the Leaf-nin. He had to prove to his master that he and his team were worthy enough to survive.

Dosu was determined as he entered into a battle position that Tenten mirrored when they both reached the arena. As soon as the match started, Dosu rushed Tenten with his sound gauntlet raised high, ready to strike. He did not take five steps before Tenten performed a 'quick draw' with her kunai, with the accuracy and speed an expert gunslinger would be proud of. It forced Dosu to come to a full stop before he hit his gauntlet by the sides. The gauntlet created sound waves that vibrated the air as they deflected the kunais away from Dosu, giving him a clear run to attack Tenten.

Dosu wasted no time to rush Tenten again to strike with his sound gauntlet. However, Tenten had other plans. Tenten applied chakra to a special seal on her arm to summon a scimitar, a curved sword for close quarters combat. Tenten deflected Dosu's gauntlet with her sword, just before Dosu could build up a sound attack with his gauntlet. Frustrated, Dosu responded by attacking Tenten with a hot,
yet calculated attack. Each strike built up the gauntlet's attacks and increased the power of his sound based attacks. Something that Tenten noticed as her arms began to vibrate with increased intensity and pulled back at the last moment from Dosu's punch. He struck the ground, creating spider web cracks where he hit.

Dosu looked up and tried a hand in psychological warfare against Tenten, "Why don't you give up girl? As long as I control sound, you can never hit me, and I only have to hit you once to beat you. So why don't you save us all the trouble and just surrender."

Tenten was silent for a moment before touched one of two special seals on her sword, a seal that released water into the blade. With the water coursing through the blade, Tenten began to use her Vespa bloodline to turn that water into steam so hot that heat waves were visible to the naked eye. As she concentrated, Tenten raised her blade to face Dosu before she made a dash against Dosu. Unsure what she was doing, Dosu decided to power up his gauntlet to give off a sound attack that should have deflected the blade and leave Tenten vulnerable to his sound attack directly. Dosu was not prepared when Tenten's sword cut through his sound waves, as she was able to stab into his shoulder. All the damage he did was to give Tenten a small bruise on her shoulder.

"How?" Dosu asked in shock.

"Heat can disrupt sound," Tenten had told Dosu before she pulled out her blade and spin kicked Dosu away.

Dosu stumbled, his shoulder bleeding and his nose broken while Tenten sealed her sword back in her arm. Tenten then pulled out a couple of throwing knives and let them fly as the sound of heated vapor cut through the air. The heat also increased the speed of the throwing knives and cut through a Dosu's desperate attempt to deflect them with his gauntlet's sound waves. Within a blink of an eye, four super-heated blades had embedded themselves into Dosu's body.

The Sound-nin was soon rolling around in tears as he screaming, "It burns! IT BURNS!"

Raven Hunter looked at screaming sound-nin before he announces Tenten was the winner. He then called for the medics as Tenten pointed out her opponent was suffering from internal 3rd-degree burns. Tenten walked upstairs as she was met by her teammate, Rock Lee, "Congratulations on such a youthful match. I just hope I get to fight soon, to continue such a youthful streak started by a youthful maiden."

Tenten smiled in response, "Don't worry Lee, you will get to fight soon. Just be patient, and let me get back up to the stands before the next two names are picked."

Lee smiled in embarrassment as he let Tenten up the stairs to be congratulated by her sensei and friends, as the board went through another series of names. It eventually landed on Mubi and Revan Roth. The Rain-nin had no idea what he was getting into as Revan walked down with a frigged step that turned stone into ice. Mubi's single eye was leery of Revan as she made his hair stand up under his hat. However, he decided not to take it seriously, as he went down to face his opponent.

Once they were down in the arena, Revan started by channeling chakra through her stick to summon a beautiful purple blade of energy. Once she spun her sword, she dashed at the Rain-nin for a quick attack. The Rain jumped out of the way and pulled out a rapid-fire crossbow. He fired with a determined skill that forced Revan to retreat as he fired over fifty arrows in under a minute.

Eventually, he ran out of arrows, but Revan was so far away that Mubi felt like he could mock her, "So this is the great Roth Clan, I am not surprised you all are weak. You are nothing more than a samurai pretending to be a..."
"Knights," Revan had corrected the Rain-nin.

"What?" Mubi asked in bewilderment.

"'Sage Knights' are our clan's nickname. Not the fucken samurai found in Iron Country," Revan growled at the ninja.

"Knight, samurai, what difference does it make, you are still a clan of sword-wielding fools," Mubi snarled.

"You may be right about the knight portion," Revan grudgingly admitted. "But I was referring to the sage portion. Our ability to manipulate the chakra to saturation to increase our powers, create our blades and perform chakra attacks," Revan added as chakra began to swirl around her.

The power Revan wielded started to panic Mubi as he fumbled as he tried to reload his crossbow. He was too slow and paid for his arrogance. Revan summoned a ball of chakra in her palm before she released it on her unexpected opponent. The yellow chakra washed over the rain-nin, making him lose his weapon, and hit the ground hard. He tried to get up, but he barely had enough time to raise his head before Revan was on him. Revan slammed Mubi's head onto the floor before she brought her chakra blade at the back of his neck.

"I suggest you surrender unless you want to lose your head, and your life," Revan stated in a cold, threatening manner that Mubi could not dispute.

It was a cold feeling to know that someone had no problem killing his or her victim. Mubi could now say he knew that feeling. He was so afraid that he yelled out without any hesitation, "I surrender!"

Raven Hunter nodded and called out, "Winner, Revan Roth!"

Revan acknowledges Raven Hunter's announcement before she got off her opponent. She then walked away, with her back turned. While it means nothing to most, to extreme military forces like those in the Rain forces, the act was an insult. To them, it suggested that their foes did not think they had the guts to stab them in the back, something that ninjas famously will do. So Revan's act of walking away with her back turned made Mubi snap, he got up and went to attack like a rabid dog. However, he did not make five steps before the cold darkness took him.

The Rain-nin watched helplessly as shadows began to wrap around him. He struggled against the cold, as he felt the life being crushed by him. He continued to struggle in vain when he saw the darkness dissipates. Mubi thought it meant he was going to be set free; he was mistaken as Raven Hunter was waiting for him, with a fist raised to strike him. Raven Hunter carried out his attack and hit the Genin with a force that made him fly back while gagging on spit and blood.

As Mubi flew back, Raven Hunter grabbed onto the Genin's head and slammed his head into his knee. The impact broke his nose, and he began to scream. That only got more fanatic with terror as the dark shadows that held him in place began to disperse into a thousand dark ravens. Revealing Raven Hunter before he proceeded to beat the snot out the Rain-nin. In such a matter that made even the cold Revan shake as she ran up to her teammates, while even the most bloodthirsty ninja, such as Gaara, backed up due to the brutality. Eventually, Raven Hunter was bored and proceeded to break Mubi's arms before dropping him onto the floor.

Once the Genin was thoroughly thrashed, Raven Hunter looked up to state, "Let this be a symbol of what happens when you defy me. The next person who disobeys me will receive a worse beating. Moreover, if anyone tries to kill your opponent after I call the match, well, the idiot will take his intended victims place in the afterlife. Do I make myself clear?"
The Genin proceeded to nod, as Raven Hunter turned and looked at his Rain-nin opponent. He kicked Mubi in the ribs before he yelled out, "Get this piece of shit out of here so we can start on the next set of matches!"

The medics quickly responded to take Mubi away, while Tukiko stated to Night Wolf, "Your uncle is scary."

"He is kind of unnerving," Night Wolf nodded in agreement.

"Kind of gives me the creep as he had acted so cold," Hinata mumbled quietly.

"I don't know, I think it adds to his charm," Revan added with a small smirk that made the others stare at her.

"You got to be joking," Tukiko suggested.

"What? I thought most girls like cold, dark and unfeeling," Revan joked with a dark chuckle as her teammates just shook their heads in response.

"Only you sister, only you," Bastila shook her head as the board went through a dozen names before landing on two: Temari Sakabu and Ino Yamasaki.

Temari smirked as she pulled out a large fan attached to her back and flew down to the arena. She was confident in her fight and was willing to take this serious enough that she would not assume an easy victory. Facing her was a scrawny girl that was not so sure that she could win, but Ino put those thoughts aside as she faced her opponent. She had to believe she could win, even if her teammates and fellow leaf-nins knew otherwise.

"She's going to lose? Right?" Naruto asked her teammates.

Hinata nodded, "Yes."

"You don't know that," Chōji stated in between nervous munches.

"Troublesome," Shikamaru stated. "They are right, Chōji. Ino has only recently taken her training seriously, but her opponent looked like she was trained by birth and takes it very seriously."

"Is that true Asuma?" Kurenai asked the Jōnin next to her.

"Sadly yes," Asuma admitted. "I hope these exams would force her to step up, though, she still has a chance to win. All she has done is hit the sand-nin with her family's mind destruction jutsu, and she could win."

"Not she won't; not with the determined look in her opponent's eyes, complete with the strength required to throw that heavy fan around," Haku pointed out, and Tukiko nodded in agreement.

"This match will be over quickly."

Tukiko's prediction was proven correct, as Temari left no room for Ino to attack. In one swing with her massive white fan, Temari launched a typhoon towards Ino. The girl did not even have a chance to go through the one-hand signs of her family's jutsu before she was thrown across the field. She performed unintentional cartwheels as her body was carried along in the typhoon winds. Eventually, the typhoon wind dissipated and she lay on the ground after a dozen rolls. The leaf-nin was in so much pain she could barely get up from all the bruises she received from Temari's attack.
As Ino tried to get up, Temari just mocked the girl, "This is pathetic. I know that the Yamasaki are trained for interrogation, but I expected more from a village that is supposedly the top of the food chain. You can't even take a small push, pathetic. Did you even train, or did you just chase after that boy… what his name, Sasuke? Doesn't matter, I suggest you give up girly…"

Temari did not finish as Ino tried to attack with a kunai throw since she was too far away for her family jutsu. Not that the kunai did her any good as Temari deflected it with a fan like it was an annoying pest. Temari stared at her opponent as Ino slowly tried to get up. Temari was thoughtful for a moment before she developed a sadistic grin.

Her fan was ready when Temari stated, "Well you have some spunk. Very well, since you want to fight, I'll give you a warrior's defeat."

Temari then raised her fan high before bringing it down in several circular sweeps. The formed a tornado under Ino's feet, making her rise and spin at high speeds. Ino was screaming as it felt like her body was being pulled apart. Temari continued the attack with a sadistic smirk. It turned into a frown when she watched her victim's sensei cut her mini-tornado in two. Temari's eye twitched in annoyance as Asuma glared at her while holding onto his unconscious student in a manner a father would to protects his child.

"Don't look at me like that," Temari snarled at the glaring Jōnin. "The desert teaches us that weakness and stupidity is a recipe for death. You should have not entered the weak girl. Perhaps she will learn from this and get stronger. Otherwise, she will die by a monster's hand," Temari added while her eyes briefly shifted to her youngest brother, Gaara.

She then turned to Raven Hunter to state, "Proctor, I believe this match is a victory for me."

Raven Hunter agreed as he yelled out, "Winner by interference, Temari Sakabu."

Temari smirked as she walked up to her team's balcony with a skip in her step. Temari did not care that Ino's classmates stared at her with a distaste for her beyond brutal methods. Temari did not care as she went to her sensei without losing a step. She faced them with defiant eyes as the board went through another series of names. It landed on two leaf-nins: Night Wolf, son of Wolf Dreamer and Kiba Inuzuka.

Forgetting about the last fight, Kiba jumped up and over the rail with excitement as Night Wolf walked down like a dignified warrior. Revan could not help but stare at her teammate while Bastila smiled at her sister. Bastila knew something stirred in that cold exterior but kept from commenting so she would not miss the fight. For as soon as Night Wolf arrived in the arena, Raven Hunter called the match to begin, but the two did not even move.

Instead, they stared at each other until Kiba broke the silence, "Don't think you will win this time. I have gotten a lot stronger since the academy, and now I can use Akamaru to fight," and with Kiba speech, Akamaru, a white puppy that has been with Kiba since the academy had barked out an agreement. Kiba could not wait to show off skills they could not participate in the academy due to it being a clan technique. He thought those techniques would help him win this fight.

However, Kiba forgot that he was not the only one restricted as Night Wolf taunted in response, "And don't think your puppy can help you in beating me. And in case you forgot, I have a partner as well. Though mine is one you can't see and one you can never beat."

Night Wolf smirked as his words made Kiba so angry that he responded with a sloppy charge while Akamaru was right at his heels. Night Wolf evaded the duo attack and used a wind kick towards Kiba and his dog. The attack connected on Night Wolf's human target, but Akamaru was able to
 evade Night Wolf's attack. He jumped up toward Night Wolf and bit into his arm. Night Wolf grunted at the small dog while Kiba got back up. Kiba then went behind Night Wolf for a surprise attack while Night Wolf tried to pry Akamaru off.

Bastila was about to warn her teammate about Kiba, but she was restrained by her sensei Inferno and sister to from disqualifying Night Wolf due to interference. Bastila was relieved they stopped her, as Night Wolf knew Kiba was moving to attack him from behind and had planned for it. Night Wolf used his power of wind to loosening Akamaru's grip before flinging the poor dog into his master's chest. The boy and his dog soon collided into the ground, before he was thrown across the room by Night Wolf's wind punch. Kiba had skidded across the floor and eventually stopped himself before he had jumped to his feet. Akamaru jumped of his pissed master and took his side while they faced this dangerous adversary.

Night Wolf looked down at the boy and his dog to state, "You know, I am kind of disappointed. I thought you were stronger, but I guess it is all bark."

Kiba had responded with a sneer, "We will see about that," before he pulled out two brown, round food pills. Chewable tablets design to give a ninja boost of energy for the short amount of time needed in a tough fight.

Kiba gave one pill to Akamaru, and he took the other to provide themselves with that boost. Both of them needed the help for their family technique, 'Four Leg Jutsu,' a transformation jutsu. For Akamaru, the technique transformed his coat into a brown tan similar to that of his partner while enhancing the pup's speed and strength. For Kiba, he developed the look of a wild dog, complete with enhanced strength and speed, and sharp fangs and claws. The two transformed warriors were intimidating as they rushed a defensive Night Wolf.

Kiba started the attack with a slash attack at speeds that were a blur to Naruto. Luckily, Night Wolf was too nimble for such attacks, and he was able to keep one-step ahead of Kiba. As the two fought, Akamaru tried to help by pouncing onto Night Wolf but found he was too fast for the small pup. Therefore, the fight turned into a keep away, where Kiba slashes at air, Akamaru growls and Night Wolf played keep away with his superior acrobatics.

They continued to dance for several minutes until Night Wolf decided to end this fight by concentrating his power to produce a sphere of wind around him. The geo-force winds sent Kiba and Akamaru flying away. Once they hit the ground, Night Wolf attacked with an open palm to send a wave of wind that sent Kiba and Akamaru rolling on the ground. They eventually stopped face down in the ground. Night Wolf put his guard down as Kiba and Akamaru slowly raised-up off the ground.

As the two rose up, Night Wolf asked, "Done yet?"

"You wish. I have one more card to play. Let's see you stop this!" Kiba yelled in anger as he began a new set of hand seals as Akamaru jumped on top of him.

He had used a Chūnin level Ninjutsu, 'Human Beast Clone Jutsu,' to activate some of his clan's more powerful technique while creating the ultimate partner by turning Akamaru into the perfect copy of his master. This caught Night Wolf by surprise and gave Kiba enough time to perform his next attack. Kiba and his clone then spin their arms to perform the technique 'Pricing Fang.' The two looked like mini tornadoes that hurdle towards Night Wolf at high velocity.

Night Wolf knew there was no way he could escape Kiba's attack. So instead of running away, he created a sphere of wind to protect himself just before Kiba and Akamaru struck. When the three met a considerable amount of dust rose from where Night Wolf stood. On the other side of dust, Kiba
and Akamaru stood, their claws dripped with blood. Team Vixen and Team 6 did not like the implication of the blood.

"We did it," Kiba happily celebrated while Bastila screamed.

"Night Wolf!" Bastila called out and was beginning to shake until Revan calmed her down.

"Easy their sis, an attack like that would barely faze him. So believe me when I state that he is all right. In fact, I believe he is about to go all out," Revan explained to Bastila while their sensei nodded in agreement.

"He is going to summon his spirit," Inferno stated that sound ominous to the Leaf-nins and the end for Kiba.

Kiba was oblivious to such an omen as he continued to celebrate, thinking he pulled off a victory until he heard someone clapping from the dust cloud. The dust clouds dissipated to reveal a serious Night Wolf clapping with only a few cuts on his arms and chest. "Bravo Kiba, you cut me. You must feel very proud of the flesh wound you gave me."

Night Wolf stopped clapping as the pressure of wind within the room began to increase to an intense level while dust began to circle around him. He stared at Kiba as he stated, "Now I suggest you stop celebrating, as this match is about to really begin."

As soon as those words passed Night Wolf's lips, he used 'Spirit Style: Spirit Summon Jutsu,' and things went to hell for Kiba. At that moment, two mini tornadoes appeared out of the blue, one surrounding Night Wolf and the second formed next to Night Wolf. The small tornadoes began to take a more animal/humanoid shape. Around Night Wolf, it formed into wind armor with wolf ears and a tail. At his side was Night Wolf's spirit animal. The creature was a human size wolf made of wind and blood red eyes. It also gave a terrible howl that made Kiba step back in fear while Night Wolf developed a small smirk.

"Well Kiba, meet my spirit animal: Howling Wolf. What do you think?" Night Wolf asked the scared Genin. When he got no reply, Night Wolf stated, "Aren't you going to say something? No… then let me speak through my actions."

Night Wolf nodded to his Howling Wolf before the two dashed towards Kiba at incredible speeds. Kiba did not know what hit him when Night Wolf decked him with a force that Kiba swore as Night Wolf broke one of his canine teeth. Kiba was down for the count while Howling Wolf commenced its attack on Akamaru. The fight was short, as Howling Wolf's own body slashed and bashed Akamaru back and forth. Eventually, Akamaru lost consciousness due to pain and dropped his master's form before he slumped to the ground, defeated.

Seeing his partner defeated, Kiba lost it and used the last of his adrenaline to strike at Howling Wolf. Night Wolf had other plans as he got in front of Kiba to punch him like a madman before laying one last strike. Night Wolf punched Kiba under his jaw and sent him flying up in the air. Kiba was knocked out before he even hit the ground. With Kiba was down for good, Raven Hunter called Night Wolf the winner of this match.

Night Wolf in return nodded to his clan war chief and then to Howling Wolf before dispersing his Jutsu. Everyone was amazed at such power from the Nature Clan showed. Even the Sand-nins were having doubts about their plans. The worried looks were all the Jōnin needed to confirm their theory that Sand was going to betray them. Not that most of the Genin were concerned as they were busy congratulating Night Wolf on a truly memorable match.
Night Wolf took the congratulation with gratitude before he turned to smile at Revan to ask, "So were you worried I was going to lose?"

"No, for I know you were more than antiquate to win against most of the contestants here," Revan stated with a hint of praise in her voice.

Night Wolf chuckled, "With praise like that, how can I lose?"

Night Wolf could have sworn he heard Revan said, "You can't," as the board then went through the next set of sequences to list the next two contestants and everyone watched with anticipation.

Chapter End Notes

Done, finally took longer than expected. A months’ work right here. I hope you enjoy it.
Scene I

Within the arena, the grand board went around and around until it finally picked two names: Oboro and Naruto Ryū. It was another Rain versus Leaf match that Oboro planned to win, as the two opponents walked down to the arena. When they turned to face each other, Oboro examined Naruto before he stated, "You don't look like much."

"Is that suppose to be an insult," Naruto asked as she raised an eyebrow.

"You look like a little girl that would cry to her mommy instead of a powerful warrior or some famous inventor," Oboro stated as he ignored Naruto's question. "Did you really earn those titles, or did you luck out and have everything handed to you?"

Naruto sighed as she stated, "You should really stop before you make yourself or you will look like a bigger idiot than you already are."

"What?" the Rain-nin intelligently asked with a confused face.

Naruto just shook her head in response, "I mean your attempts to make me angry by insulting me have failed for three reasons." Naruto then held up her hand to list why Oboro failed. "One is that we are ninjas. We never broadcast how dangerous we are until the person meets their bitter end. So the fact I don't look dangerous is a point in my favor. Two, while trying to rile me up with insults is an effective tactic; it only works if it's believable. You failed in that respect as it was so blunt and obvious that it just fails. And finally, the fact that you tried to intimidate me instead of just attacking me just insults my intelligence and makes you look stupid. Especially since Rain-nins are known to be ruthless. Combine that all those facts together make your attempts an epic failure, and we are back to square one."

As Naruto spoke, each word had hit Oboro like a brick. By the end of her observation, it came to the point that he wanted to beat the kunoichi to within an inch of her life. He could not wait for the match to start as he planned the perfect jutsu to kill her. He got his wish as Raven Hunter called the match too, "Begin!"

The matched started as the Rain-nin pulled out a small scroll from his back pocket. The ninja unsealed the scroll and black liquid that looked like green oil squirted onto the floor. It quickly spread across the floor and Oboro went through a dozen hand signs for 'Acidic Mist Servant Jutsu.' The jutsu creates clones similar to the easily dispersed water clones but instead of water, it used other liquids as the base, and it had unique abilities that Naruto did not know. However, she was not going to take any chances, as Naruto did not like the fact that the rain-nin was now giving a victory smirk.
So Naruto decided to beat clones with clones using a jutsu she has been dying to try in full combat outside of the training field. Naruto used 'Elemental Style: Hexagon-Clones Jutsu.' A complex jutsu that drained her above average chakra stores to summon five clones within each point of a hexagon shape circle around her, twenty-five clones in total. At each point, the five clones are one of the five main elements: wind, fire, water, earth, and lightning. A perfect jutsu in a battle of clones that only someone with all five affinities can do, and it was one Naruto planned to use as she sent a wind clone to scout out her enemy's defenses.

The attack was swift as Naruto's clone struck the first of Oboro's clone with a sword surrounded by wind. The clone quickly dispels Oboro's clone into a blackish green fluid that covered the clone to reveal a startling discovery for Naruto. The liquid that covered her clone was acidic and forced it to dispel into a turret of wind that took out five other clones around it. The operation created a large hole in Oboro's defenses, but only for a short time as the clones reformed to plug up the hole their abstinence formed. Naruto had a sinking feeling as Oboro chuckled.

"Impressive aren't they?" Oboro chuckled rhetorically. "These are my special clones that cannot die as long as I feed them chakra. And when you dispel them, the acid will take you out before they reform. You cannot win the girl. I suggest you give up like the tree hugger you are."

Naruto just raised an eyebrow in annoyance, "Do not think you have the advantage for I am about to beat your special clones and walk over your warm, screaming body when I am done with you."

Oboro actual flinched at Naruto's tone as he slowly backed up before he began to yell at his clones to attack. Something Naruto had not wanted Oboro to do as part of her plan. In response, she ordered her most robust clones, the rock clones, to box in Oboro's clones. The rock clones proved to be vital, as they could survive long enough to push Oboro's clones into the formation of a small circle as the first part of her plans. It took a little work, but the acidic clones were confined to a small spot just as the rock clones were about to fall apart from being splashed one too many times. A fact that did not matter to Naruto as her plan had solidified. She sent the rest of her wind clones into the mist of Oboro's clones and self-destruct. The resulting explosion of wind took out the acidic clones and Naruto's earth clones at the same time, as the second stage of her plan was put into place.

It was then that Naruto initiated the third stage of her plan by sending fire clones right into the acidic liquid to self-destruct, creating a giant explosion of fire. However, unlike the winds clones that made Oboro's clones blown back, the fire clones set the acidic liquid on fire, allowing Naruto to take control of the field and leave the rain-nin vulnerable. The same Rain-nin that watched in horror as his creation was circulated out of the tower in a puff of smoke. Naruto charged at the unexpected rain-nin. She moved as fast as she could do but she only made it halfway towards Oboro when he noticed the kunoichi, and in a panic, tried to summon any of his clones to him.

To his surprise, it worked as a few liters of his acidic liquid escaped the fire. They quickly came in front of him to slowly reform into three clones just before the Leaf-nin could reach him. This forced Naruto to jump back to use 'Wind Style: Great Breakthrough Jutsu.' Sending Oboro flying back as his three clones dispersed. They respawned just as Naruto caught her breath. She then set into motion her backup plan, while two disguised ANBUs and her team discussed what they saw.

"She is out of shape, mother," Naruko from behind her bat mask commented. "If she was a bit faster, she could have taken out that Rain-nin before he had a chance to reform his clones."

"Agreed," Kushina behind the fox mask nodded before turning to her eldest daughter's sensei. "What has she been doing in her training secession?"

"A lot of intense training that would be both physical and mentally exhausting to most," Kurenai explained. "And Naruto benefited from them but…"
"But not to the level we would like for her to achieve," Anko added for Kurenai. "The brat is not simulated by physical means over mental means, and is not focusing on getting stronger physically."

"And combined with the stamina that would allow her to get through training, her strength is increasing very slowly instead of rapidly as her teammates had," Kurenai finished explaining for Anko.

Kushina stared at the arena before stating, "Well, it looks like I have to make physical work stimulating for my girl when I start training her for the final part of the Chūnin exams."

Kurenai nodded in understanding at the request while Naruko stated, "Well, at least my sister knows how to plan a backup."

The three adults turned to see Naruto's backup plan in action. Naruto used water clones with three lightning clones to attack the remaining forces of Oboro. As Oboro's clones were occupied, two lightning clones rushed pass them and struck Oboro directly with 'Lightning Style: Lightning Bolt Jutsu,' before dispersing. The jutsu hit Oboro dead on, creating intense pain that paralyzed him and forced him to drop his jutsu, leaving only Naruto's surviving clones, and Naruto was the winner.

Seeing victory at hand, Naruto dispersed her clones and approached a scared Oboro. He could only stammer when Naruto slashed him in rapid motion with her twin swords. The slashes were not enough to kill him, but they did bloody up Oboro from the all the cuts Naruto gave him. He fell to the ground, screaming as Naruto kept her word. She walked over the screaming Rain-nin while Raven Hunter declared her the winner.

With her promise kept, Naruto walked up the stairs to be greeted by happy friends and family, even if her mother chastised her about her training. She was not looking forward to the training her mother and sister were planning as the looked in their eyes, scared her as she turned her interest to the next set of matches.

The next one was an interest to the leaf as it was Shikamaru Nara vs. Kin Tsuchi. A match that worried the Jōnin for they needed this win to confine the entire Sound team, and now the confirmation depended on the laziest Genin on record to pull through. They were feeling the pressure, even though Shikamaru was considered a genius by Nara standards. His words did not help set the higher-ups at ease.

"This is so troublesome," Shikamaru muttered. "Why do I have to fight a girl?"

"You have a problem fighting a girl?" the sound-nin snarled at the lazy Genin while several other girls in the stands started to stare at Shikamaru with anger.

"You misunderstand me, I do not like fighting in general, especially with girls, for I always seem to get hurt regardless of how well I do in a match," the sloth explained.

"Then why don't you give up like a good little Leaf-nin," Kin commented, pulling out her senbons.

"Sorry, but it would be worse for me to give up." Shikamaru stated in an uncaring tone. "My sensei would be disappointed that I allowed you to win, and my female teammate would yell at me for passing on the fight while she gave her all in her fight. Not to mention that my mother would beat me with a frying pan for giving up, and frankly, I would rather do these exams just once rather than do this completely troublesome event again. So, let's get this troublesome thing over with."

Kin just raised an eyebrow as she pulled out her weapons, "Well too bad for you little leaf-nin, but your chance for victory ends here, and I will take great pleasure in ending it."
Not a moment was lost before Kin went on to the attack, throwing several senbon needles as she jumped back a reasonable distance. In response, Shikamaru avoided the needles like a ballerina, moving perfectly from side to side, never back or forward by even an inch. Few realized this was intentional, but none of them was his opponent. Only people like Asuma knew Shikamaru had something planned as the Leaf-nins watched to see if the Nara would be able to win. They were not so sure Shikamaru would survive when Kin stopped throwing senbon needs and sported a sinister grin.

Shikamaru briefly wondered why until he noticed thin pieces of steel string attached to a few senbon that had bells on them. It only took one pull, and Shikamaru found out how dangerous the bells were. The world began to spin as the sound of bells began to ring. Shikamaru almost buckled from the pain, but held his ground, holding a ram symbol as Kin mocked her opponent.

"Not given up you pathetic leaf hugger?" the girl asked in glee as her opponent tried to fight off the effects. "No. Good, for I want to see how long it will take for you puke out blood. It will be interesting to see if you are dumb enough to keep fighting even under pain of death."

Kin moved quickly to cause her bells to ding again until two things happened that gave a sense that Shikamaru achieved victory. First, Shikamaru seemed to lose all sense of pain as he took a stance that had mirrored Kin. From her arms that were raised to her feet that took a forward step. The second thing was that Kin found it impossible to move, as though a dominant force was controlling her. Kin soon realized that the Leaf-nin was in control, as her body followed Shikamaru's movements as he brought her arms down as the wires attached to the bells fell out of her grip.

Kin could not help but ask, "How?"

"Through the shadows," Shikamaru explained as he made Kin looked down to see her shadow was connected to Shikamaru's shadow jutsu through the wires' shadows that lay on the ground. "My clan is able to manipulate dark energy from shadows to control our opponents and even form small shapes to kill people through shadow manipulation. A useful tool, even if I have to stretch my shadow to connect to my target's shadows. Luckily, you allowed me a direct line through your wire's shadows, and for that, I thank you. For it would have been even more troublesome to use the thin shadows within the tiles to get you," Shikamaru had stated as the two bowed to each other.

Kin was now terrified at what the Leaf-nin would do. In Sound forces, to be powerless is to be a victim that meant a fate worse to death. As it could mean the person is going to be used for an experiment with a low life expectancy or a pet for someone to use as they saw fit. Growing up in such an environment made Kin promised herself to never be a victim, so she put on a brave face as she asked, "What are you going to do now?"

Shikamaru thought a moment before taking two steps back before pulling out a couple of shurikens, while she pulled out kunais from her pack that only have kunais and senbon. "We're going to play a game of chicken. Let us see if you have the courage to break my control to escape. Or you are too week and scared to escape and die. Or I am too chivalrous to kill you in such a fashion. I wouldn't bet on the last one if I were you."

Shikamaru then threw his shurikens as Kin was forced to throw her kunais like shurikens to the side instead of straight like a regular kunai. This left her to be skewered by Shikamaru's weapons as the shurikens came closer and closer. Kin's life flashed before her eyes as she prepares for the end. An end that never happened as Shikamaru decided to show mercy by bending backward so she would not be killed. As Kin's body followed Shikamaru's movement, Kin felt relief as she mocked her opponent.

"I knew you leaf-nins were too sof-" Kin started to mock until clank, she hit her head hard into the
arena's wall.

Shikamaru released his jutsu allowing the girl to slump to the ground. Shikamaru just sighed as he stretched his body, "You should have been more aware of your surroundings, as well as grateful that I don't like killing girls, even if they are troublesome."

Raven Hunter then called Shikamaru the winner and the medic took Kin away. As she was being taken away, the Hokage looked at Kushina and Naruko before giving them a nod. The two-disguised ANBU disappeared from view as they had a mission to complete.

Scene II

Kabuto has been hard at work. It started with the execution of Yoroi Akadō using a dead man's switch seal he secretly put on both his teammates. Seals that would destroy their minds to prevent a Yamasaki from mind diving into the fresh corpse to pull its secrets. He then went on to take care of Orochimaru's sacrificial sound team. Kabuto had encountered no resistance as he eliminated the two male Sound-nins and went into the girl's room to find a doctor still attending her. The doctor indicated he was not going to leave anytime soon. Not feeling very patient, Kabuto quickly killed the doctor with a chakra scalpel to the brain before the corpse flopped onto the ground. With the doctor eliminated, Kabuto walked up to Kin to find that the girl had been awakened by the doctor's sudden death. She stared at Kabuto in shock while Kabuto gave her a cruel smile.

"Kabuto-Sama?" Kin stammered. "W-w-what a-are you d-doing h-he-here?"

"I am here to dispose of you," Kabuto stated in a matter of fact way that sounded like he was talking about the weather.

Tears began to form in Kin's eyes as she begged for her life, "No, please don't kill me. I did everything that was asked of us. We attacked you as ordered to keep suspicion away from you. We hunted for Sasuke and watched him die, and we completed every mission we were ever given. Just because we did not make it to the-"

Kin was interrupted by Kabuto's chuckle, "Oh you were never meant to get this far." Kin gasped in shock as he continued to explained things to the girl. "In fact, you were meant to die as a test for Sasuke, one he sadly failed." Kin was now scared as a rabbit in the jaws of a wolf as Kabuto gave a predatory smile, "But don't worry; you will serve one last purpose as the perfect lamb that you are."

Kabuto took a moment to revel in Kin's fear and was about to move in for the kill when he was forced to duck from a fatal sword sweep. Kabuto turned to see an ANBU with a fox mask and a sword poised for attack. Kabuto responded with a chakra scalpel strike, but the ANBU easily avoided the strike before she did the unexpected. She summoned from her arm, bloody Adamantine Sealing Chains to grab one of Kabuto's hand. He looked shocked as she pulled him towards the ANBU as she moved to cut Kabuto's head off. Kabuto loosens the chains enough to raise his hand up to block the ANBU's attack. Saving his life at the cost of a cut deep enough to nick the bone.

Kabuto was forced to jump back with a useless hand as the ANBU stood still, studying the spy as she appreciated her attack. The kunoichi was quite proud in disabling the spy, thinking that the large flesh wound would be just as removing the hand. That was until she noticed that the wounds regenerated to the point there was no blemish, no scare, as though she had never even scratched him as Kabuto stretched his hand.

"Never have I've been so glad to have studied medicine and to have developed my regenerative technique," Kabuto stated as he admired his healed right hand. "Otherwise I would lose my right hand." Kabuto then looked over the redheaded ANBU and asked, "So who are you? Wait don't
answer me as I think I can figure this out. You are obviously just as skilled, if not more powerful then Kakashi and I only know one female ANBU that can match Kakashi-Sempai, and she has purple hair. She also doesn't have the rare Uzumaki's Adamantine Sealing Chains. However, I do know a few redhead kunoichis with such a bloodline, and only one affiliated with Leaf in any form. So, are you Kushina Uzumaki?"

The ANBU responded by stating, "I do not answer dead men."

The man looked confused until an ANBU with a bat mask appeared right behind him. He only had a moment's warning before Kushina's daughter own Adamantine-Sealing Chains summoned from her arms wrapped around him. Holding him in place as the girl's blade went through the man's chest. An instant kill as his body slumped on the girl sword while a silver-haired scarecrow walked out of the shadows to inspect the body and today's events into retrospective. For Kakashi, the day started when he accepted the Hokage's assignment to work with the two former Uzumakis to secure the Sound-nins only to discover that the first two were gone with bloodstains on the sheets.

Realizing that someone was killing off the Sound-nins, they rushed through the medical wards into the last room to find that Kabuto killed the doctor and moving towards the Sound Kunoichi. Not taking anything for granted, it was decided that Kushina should confront the man while Naruko struck from the shadows as a backup. The execution was quick, and now he was tasked with making sure Kabuto was dead by checking for a pulse.

It only took a few seconds for Kakashi to decreed he was dead. Along with another few more seconds, for him and Naruko to realize Naruko had stabbed the doctor Kabuto had killed, not Kabuto himself. Kakashi realized that Kabuto had switched with the doctor's body as Kabuto in the doctor's clothing sprang up and jumped out of the window. The three followed to the window's edge to see Kabuto facing them with a mocking smile before his body disappeared in midair. Kabuto had escaped, and the only thing that indicated he had been there was blood smeared on the walls and a note on the ground he had left behind.

Kakashi walked over to pick up the note written an hour earlier as he read out loud, "Dear Leaf-nins. I'm sorry that I cannot stay and fight, but I have business to take care of for Lord Orochimaru. So long and enjoy my teammates, as I have already activated the dead man's switch on Yoroi Akadō and soon Misumi Tsurugi will join him. Have fun with the corpses, signed, Kabuto."

In a fit of rage, Kakashi crumbled the piece of paper while Naruko glared out the window as she mumbles, "I really want to kill that man."

"You can plot revenge, my child," Kushina told her angry daughter. "Right now, we need to report to the Hokage and inform him of the situation."

"I will take care of the girl, you have another daughter to look after," Kakashi told Kushina and Naruko.

"Thank you," Kushina nodded before disappearing in a puff of smoke with her youngest daughter, leaving Kakashi alone with a sad Kin.

"Why me?" Kin mumbled. "Why did he betray me? I did everything he wanted."

Kakashi sighed as he sat next to the girl, "It is how Orochimaru works. He only cares about what he can use, and once you are no longer of use, you are expendable." The girl began to sulk more as Kakashi came close to hug the girl, "I'm so sorry."

The girl shrugged Kakashi off, "I don't need your pity."
"Then what do you need?" Kakashi asked the girl.

Kin looked in Kakashi's lone eye to state, "Revenge."

Usually, Kakashi would dissuade a ninja from revenge, since it always ends badly for everyone, including outsiders, but this was a special case. "And how do you plan to get your revenge against a Sennin, Genin?"

"By any means necessary," Kin stated before she turned towards Kakashi. "I will defect, tell you everything I know about Sound forces and live long enough as a Leaf-nin that even if that snake-faced bastard lives long enough to reach old age, I will still be around to piss on his grave."

Kakashi blinked for a moment before bending down to pick-up the girl, "Then let's get you to a more secure location."

Kin nodded before wrapping her arms around Kakashi's neck as he got up to carry her in his arms. As he carried the girl out, he made a note to request the girl on his team if the Hokage approved her defection. After all, he might as well be the one to take care of her if he was going to bring in this troubling case.

Scene III

While Kakashi was taking care of Kin, Kushina and Naruko returned to see they had missed the next match between Chōji Amachi and Bastila Roth. It was not much of a fight as Bastila won her match by hitting Chōji with a chakra blast at point-blank range. Chōji was carried out as they delivered their report to the Hokage. Just in time for the next match between Haku Momochi and Misumi Tsurugi. This left Sarutobi with one less mystery for him to solve thanks to Kushina's report about Kabuto's message.

The match started with Misumi bull rushed Haku, and she responded by using 'Ice Style: Thousand Needles Jutsu.' A dangerous attack that Misumi tried to avoid, but only took two steps before he stopped, grabbing onto his heart as his body began to stretch out like a snake while a thousand ice needles descended onto and in his body. Haku could only watch in horror as the medics rushed over to Misumi to try and save him, but it was too late. The lead medic-nin pronounced that Misumi had died of a heart attack. It was a bitter taste to Haku as the medics took the body away. Only a few knew Misumi was murdered by Kabuto's hand, and the Hokage was content for it to be considered an accident while Tukiko and Kurenai comforted a distraught teammate.

"I did not mean to do it," Haku mumbled as she paced around the balcony.

"We know that honey, it's not your fault he died, so don't blame yourself," Kurenai told Haku as she rubbed the girl's shoulder.

"Haven't you killed before?" Tukiko asked her friend.

"A few, but usually people that really deserved it," Haku explained to her friend. "The only time that I killed a person I did not want to die was my father, and it was in self-defense when he attacked me in fear of my bloodline. I have never caused a death that I did not want to happen. It breaks the vow I made before Zabuza-Sama found me."

"Which was?" Tukiko asked.

"Never kill unless it is to save someone or the person deserves it. Even if it means disobeying Zabuza-Sama's orders when I traveled with him," Haku told the group.
"But you didn't kill him. His own heart gave way. So in a way, he killed himself."

"She's right dear, don't beat yourself up over things that are beyond your control," Kurenai told her young student.

"And even if you were the reason that he died, you should not feel sad for a man who deserved death," explained a kind voice behind them.

They turned to see Kushina had returned from the mission the Hokage had assigned her. Team Vixen did not know what it was that Kushina knew and they knew better than to ask, but Haku was a curious girl, "What do you mean?"

"I can't tell you everything, as the walls have ears," Kushina stated in a clear matter of fact tone that was filled with healthy paranoia. "All I can say is that he was killed by an outside influence, and if he had not died, he would have been killed like the yellow-bellied viper that he was."

Haku raised an eyebrow at Kushina's comment and asked, "You mean he was a traitor?"

Kushina briefly looked at Haku before stating, "I can't confirm or deny he was a traitor. All I can say is that he had it coming and it's not your fault he died." Haku looked before nodding as Tukiko hugged her friend. "Now enough monolog, I suggest you turn your attention to the arena. There will be two more fights, and you may be facing the winners. So it's best to take notice while you can before hell begins."

The two girls nodded before looking down into the arena to see it was Ami vs. Neji Hyūga. As soon as the names were called out, Neji walked down to face his opponent with a smug look on his face as though he already had won, while Ami walked with a cautious step. Ami knew this was going to be a tough fight. The Hyūgas were experts at close quarter combat, and with their all-seeing eye, the Byakugan, it was difficult to sneak up on them. However, Ami was determined. Her sensei Hayate Gekkō had trained her well, and he put a lot of trust in her. She will not let her sensei down as she pulled out an odd weapon that Tenten was shocked to see she was using.

"Is that a dual-bladed sword?" Tenten asked, drawing the attention of the others as she noticed the elegant weapon that had a blade on each side of its hilt.

"You have a good eye," Hayate stated. "Yes, it's a dual-bladed sword, from your (cough) father's own shop in fact. She picked it out at first sight and has been training hard (cough) to use it (cough) since she picked up the blade."

"And she is proficient enough that in six months she can use a difficult weapon?" Tenten asked in shock, gathering the attention of the others around the arena.

"It has been more like five months," Hayate stated. "But yes (cough) she did. Though, it isn't too difficult to learn for one that has received (cough) little training in swordsmanship."

"What do you mean," Naruto, Tenten, Naruko and Kushina asked, as each of them had an increasing proficient skill in swordsmanship with Kushina a master and Naruto a novice.

"What I mean is that they both have (cough) different methods of use," Hayate stated before he took a cough drop to clear his throat for a more detail explanation. "A sword depends on the user being on the offensive or being able to deflect attacks before moving in for the kill." The group nodded before he continued. "However, a dual-bladed sword needs to be on the defensive, allowing the enemy to attack first so the user can use the enemy's momentum against them. Assuming the user does not cut
off their opponent's hand thanks to the spin she performed with her body and her double-bladed sword.

Hayate smiled as his captive audience stared at him in wonder. They continued to stare until Hayate turned his attention to Tenten to state, "That is why Ami is the worse opponent for Neji to fight unless he knows any techniques that are a mid or long range."

Tenten grimaced as she stated, "He does not. Stating it was 'not proper for the noble Hyūga clan to learn." Hinata frowned at Tenten's quotes of Neji's words while Hayate nodded sadly.

"Then you better pray for him girl. For if he is not careful, he could very well be disarmed, literally," Hayate clarified and forced the observers to turn their attention to the arena.

Down in the arena, Ami was stretching her body as she twirled around her double-bladed sword at high speeds. To any regular bystander, this would have scared them as the girl confidently spun the blade at speeds that could easily have cost her one of her hands. That meant she was very proficient and skilled with the sword, but Neji was not worried. The proud Hyūga thought he was leagues above the girl for he was born into a clan of elites, while the girl was a simple child from a simple civilian family. He thought that good fortune had handed him an easy win and he was going to be smug about it.

"You know you cannot win?" Neji asked as he walked around in a smug stance.

"Is that so?" Ami asked while she continued to twirl her blade.

"It is fate that we are drawn into a match as it will be an easy win for me," Neji stated as he tried to intimidate the girl into submission.

However, the kunoichi was not phased, "Really, for no one told me this match was set in stone. You know for such a cute guy, you sure are getting uglier the more you talk."

Neji ignored the jab as he continued to employ physiological warfare, "You must know you have no chance to win against an elite fighter like myself.

Ami was not convinced, "I don't know, but the odds don't look too bad to me."

"The odds have been against you since your birth," Neji told his junior ninja. "I've heard about you. You are a child from a simple family, with a working father and your poor mother taken before her time. You are also a weakling that had to bully others to make yourself feel better. A child that kids herself into thinking you have changed for the better, that you are stronger." Ami twitched while Neji continued his speech, "Fate has declared that you are a pathetic little being and nothing you will do will ever change your pathetic life or the outcome of this match."

Ami took a long moment to look at Neji before she calmly stated, "You know, you remind me of my father. And I hated my father!" she snarled before she calmed down. "He too believed in fate and thought it was against HIM when mom couldn't produce a son before she died. All he had was me, a girl that he controlled with an iron fist, figuring that if he could not have a son to take over his work, he could have a daughter to marry into a wealthier family, or even better yet into a shinobi clan. A good plan that failed when I hit the academy as I was no longer under HIS boot heel, and I tried to be the dominant one for once in my life."

Ami looked at him hard before stating, "We're much alike, seeking to gain dominance over our lives by any means, rather than remaining the oppressed like we were early in our lives. You were a servant to the main branch while I was treated as a thing for gain. However, unlike you who pushed
away any form of affection coming your way, including from your stern father, I embraced it with my sensei and my teammates. Well… Shino for sure, I am not so sure about Kiba. The point is that I have people that care about me and I am not going to disappoint them by losing to a hollow fate boy like you!” Ami exclaimed as she moved into a defensive stance that infuriated Neji, yet she was not done, "So prepare you, for I mean to win pretty boy."

Neji was enraged by her speech as he rushed Ami intent upon ending the match as his palm was covered in chakra and was stretched out to strike Ami in the heart. A simple plan for an easy win, but one Neji soon found out was a mistake, as Ami spun in her blades to intercept Neji's hand. The sound of sliced flesh was heard as Neji quickly retracted his bloody hand at the last moment, saving it as Ami's blade left a shallow cut across his hand. Neji was shocked that this commoner could hurt him, and Ami was not going to let him have time to recover.

Ami started on the offensive, she first brought the blade down her side, jabbing at Neji's torso. Neji avoided the attack and Ami brought it back up, slashing at Neji and forcing the Hyūga to move back. Ami continued her offensive until Neji regained his bearing. She then went on the defensive, walking in a circle while setting up for Neji to be the one in pain. She was aiming to win the match, and while it was not certain, she was not planning to lose by doing something stupid like backing into a corner while Neji was slowly overreaching himself.

To the people in the stands, it was evident that Ami was going to win. The Genins and Jōnins had observed that Neji had not hit Ami once while Ami was tearing away fabric and cutting flesh. Small drops of blood were slowly dripping off Neji's arms onto his torn white robes. Although the rate of blood loss was not lethal, he would continue to lose more and more blood unless he could get past Ami's defense. He needed some sort of lucky shot that came from his opponent instead.

It started when Neji tried to hit Ami's hands to get her to drop her blade. However, Ami saw the attack coming, and she was able to slide her hands out of the way so that Neji would only hit the handle instead. This, in turn, created an opportunity Ami took advantage of by spinning her blade through Neji's open defenses and across Neji's chest. This created a shallow cut that distracted Neji as Ami's entire body began to turn in midair. Ami then dropped kick into the back of Neji's head. A loud smack was heard before Neji descended face first to the ground. It was only in the last second that Neji was able to catch himself before he hit the ground. He then pushed himself back onto his feet in quick order.

Once on his feet, Neji faced his opponent with a pissed expression as she asking in a bored tone, "Are you going to give up or do I need to put you in the hospital before you give?"

Neji replied with a 'no' by merely stating, "You are in my field of deviation," and getting into a stance that shocked most of the audience, including Hinata. It was the Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms, a Hyūga technique that few could beat and it was only supposed to be taught to the main branch of the Hyūga clan.

The Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms is a specialize gentle-fist attack that could hit one or multiple targets within a three-hundred and sixty-degree attack radius with an increased attack speed starting with two palms, four palms, eight palms, sixteen palms, and thirty-two palms. That meant that a Hyūga could disable a single target, or kill up to sixty-four targets. It was an instant win over many fighting at close range assuming that they do not do something unexpected like Ami did. Ami had researched as much as she could on all possible enemy techniques two weeks before the exams, knowing she could face any number of opponents including the Hyūga clan.

Ami knew from her studies that if she did not attack soon, it would be all over for her. So, she went on the offensive. She ducked under Neji's two palm strikes and cutting deep into his leg's thigh. This
broke Neji's concentration and made him instinctively put his hands over his bleeding wound. This left his stomach open to attack as Ami kicked him, forcing Neji to bend over exposing his head. And Ami capitalized with a second kick that broke his nose.

Neji fell back, rolling on the ground in pain. He continued to roll back and forth as Ami jumped on him, leveling her blade onto his neck. Neji stared up in fear as Ami growled out, "Give."

Now while ninjas usually do not care about honor on the battlefield, they still have an unspoken code of honor among comrades. Without honor among comrades, loyalty is gone, and a whole village of traitors is created. No good leader wants that and expects their fellow ninjas to honor their comrades and the rules both written and unwritten within this village. Rules that Ami followed by giving her fellow ninja a chance to give up, instead of just killing him. Now Neji should have shown integrity by surrendering, but he did not.

Instead, he snarled, "No," before he used one more ace he had, another main branch technique, the Heavenly Spin.

Ami had no warning when Neji created a burst of chakra that pushed her off the Hyūga before Neji got to his feet. Once on his feet, Neji continued the attack by holding his arms out straight with open palms and began to spin, releasing a torrent of chakra that acted as the ultimate defense against attacks, and an offensive one against close range fighters. Something that Ami found out the hard way as she barely touched the torrent of chakra before she was sent straight into the arena wall. The impact dazed Ami as slid down the arena wall. She was defenseless as Neji ended the Heavenly Spin and rushed towards the junior ninja. She could do nothing as he used 'Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms' in rapid motion, hitting her sixty-four times, cutting off her chakra supply and disabling her limbs.

Ami had been defeated, and she was lying down, crying in failure as Neji stood over her. Not with a face of victory, but of anger as Neji raised his hand to kill her. He would have succeeded had someone not punched him in the face so hard he tumbled on the ground before he slowed down to a stop. Neji could not believe someone had punched him and was about to yell at the person when he saw it was own teacher that had hit him, and he was scared. Scared of the fact his sensei was not sporting his usual happy go lucky attitude, but a serious shinobi attitude that Neji had come to fear.

Only once before had he seen Guy so serious and that was when a B-rank missing-nin had shown up after one of their first C-rank missions. He recognized Guy and tried to cash in on his bounty while boasting how he was going to have fun with the Genin before he killed him. That was a mistake. Guy was behind the missing-nin in a flash of an eye and snapped his neck with an expression that would haunt Neji for weeks. An appearance Neji tried to avoid, and ultimately failed due to his actions in the match.

"I am very disappointed in you Neji," Guy stated in a harsh tone that made even seasoned vets chill to the bone. "I thought you were better than this, but I guess I was wrong my unyouthful student."

Neji was shaking like a leaf under Guy's stare, and he was grateful that he only stared at him for a few minutes before Guy turned attention to a crying Ami, being cradled by her sensei Hayate while Shino stood beside her like a true friend. "I (sob) I failed you, sensei, Shino-Kun," Ami cried to her sensei.

"You did not fail me (cough), Ami-Chan," Hayate stated as he smiled at his student. "You did your best, and it was better than most other people in your situation. I am (cough) proud of you my student."

"And I am proud of you to be my teammate," Shino added quietly to a teammate, and possibly his
best friend.

Ami then lets out tears of happiness as she thanked the two before they brought her up to the stands where Hinata was waiting to reopen her chakra points. Guy also joined Team 8 to say he was sorry, leaving behind a wounded Neji, who did not understand what he did wrong. He continued to stare at Ami until he heard the proctor's voice ring out a question he had not expected.

He heard Raven Hunter asked, "How do you want me to rule this match, Hokage-Sama?"

Neji turned to see that the Hokage smoking his pipe while thinking over how to call the match. Eventually, he had made a decision, "While honor demands that Neji surrender to Ami after she had pinned him down, it is not against any written rules that he continued the attack. Therefore, Neji Hyūga is declared the winner." Neji actually smiled at the Hokage's ruling. He continued to smile until he realized the old man was not finished, "However, due to his blatant disrespect of his comrades and his willingness to kill a comrade due to losing his temper, I rule that the highest rank that Genin Neji Hyūga can achieve is the rank of Elite Genin. He will not be eligible for any form of Chūnin, no matter how great his performance is."

Neji stared for a few seconds before he yelled out, "What? You can't do this-" Neji started to complain, but the Hokage stopped him in his place.

"Enough Genin! You have proven you cannot be trusted to lead your fellow leaf-nins if you try to kill them because they make you angry. I do not need such hate-filled Shinobi, and if you continue to argue the point, then I will call the match a draw and demote you to Special Genin. Do I make myself clear?" Sarutobi asked, and Neji quickly nodded 'yes.' "Now get out. We have one last match to call for."

Neji bowed before he slowly limped out of the arena, alone as no one went to help him, not his sensei or any of his teammates. They just ignored him, and Neji still could not understand what he did wrong. He thought they would be proud he had won, but apparently, it never entered Neji's mind that honoring your fellow men in arms was more important than winning. All he knew was that he did not like this lonely feeling of being shunned by his comrades as he went to the hospital for medical aid.

Back in the arena, the final two contestants, Rock Lee and Gaara Sakabu went down to prepare for the last fight. Rock Lee, the happy go lucky idiot in green spandex was excited about the match. He was jumping up and down at finally being able to fight and could not wait. Gaara, on the other hand, was bored. He did not think much of the match and planned to win quickly. The two would face a nasty surprise.

The match started with Lee rushing towards Gaara at speeds that he was expecting. Gaara eyes widened a bit like a kick from Lee nearly hit him. His eyes became bored when his sand quickly came out of the ground and formed a packed wall against Lee's attack. Lee was not prepared for the sand to be as hard as carbon steel, as he bounced off the sand wall. He could not believe his attack was repulsed as he landed gracefully on Gaara's right. It was a sad sight to anyone but Lee as he continued the offensive.

He ran around Gaara in circles, punching or kicking at Gaara at random intervals, yet he failed to land a single hit as the sand wall seemed to be able to predict Lee's every move. Gaara tired of seeing Lee's trying after a dozen failed hits, so he decided to go on the offensive with multiple sand tentacles that lashed out against the Leaf-nin. Lee was forced to go on the defensive, using his hands and feet to sweep away the sand. Eventually, Lee was forced to jump back to escape as the walls of sand caved in with a force that would have crushed the ninja in green. Now they were back to facing each other, with Lee standing strong and Gaara showing interest in the fast Leaf-nin.
While the two stared each other down, Kurenai with the help of Hayate and Asuma tried to implore Guy to call the match, "Guy, you know Gaara is a Jinchūrikin, and we can clearly see he is powerful; and if the report of Team Eight is true."

"It is," Hayate added with a cough.

"Then your student is in serious danger. You need to call the match before he is killed," Kurenai continued to explain to plead her case.

"I am sorry my fellow Jōnin, but I cannot comply with your request," Guy stated with his usual eccentric tone. "My youthful student has worked long and hard to get to where he is, and I am not about to end his dream of proving he can be a great ninja, despite the fact he can't use chakra for ninjutsu and genjutsu."

"And how will he prove to be an expert ninja in martial arts if he is dead?" a bewildered Asuma asked.

"That is assuming my youthful Genin is not without any trump cards to play," Guy told his fellow sensei before he came declared. "And speaking of trump cards, Lee you have my permission to go all out!" Guy yelled to his student who looked back up in excitement.

"Really?" Lee asked his sensei who nodded back, 'yes.' "You're the best Guy-Sensei," Lee stated before he began to remove weight attached to his legs and arms and raised them high above his head.

In the sands where the Sand-nins stood, Temari snorted, "And that little leaf-nin thinks that losing some weight will help?"

Temari quickly changed her tone when Lee let the weights go, and they hit the ground as the dust was kicked up from the mini-craters the weights had created with their own weight. Temari was slack-jawed as she muttered, "What have they done to this kid?"

The Jōnin Leaf-nins were just as startled as one of the braver members, Asuma asked, "What is he caring?"

"He was caring 4 different chakras infused plates that gets denser the more chakra applied and he is currently carrying 80kg (173.73lbs) per leg and 60kg (132.28lbs) per arm," Guy said with pride.

"You mean that brat has been carrying around 260kg (617.29lbs) of weight around easily?" Anko asked and Guy nodding, 'yes.' "Damn."

"That is impressive," Hayate stated. "Assuming that is that you have been trained him to handle a fight without his weights."

"Of course I have been. I would make sure my youthful student could fight effectively in such a case," Guy smiled before adding. "Of course this is not everything my student is hiding, but enough talk, my student has a match to win."

The Jōnin turned to see Lee was stretching out his body. Using kicks and punching that seem to be a blur before Lee got into his martial art Strong Fist style stance. His body was in a low running position as he raised his left arm into a defensive posture while his other hand was poised to attack. The crowd could admire his perfect stance before he disappeared in a burst of speed that only the Hokage, Jōnin and few quick Genin like Bastila, Hinata, Tukiko, and Haku could follow with their eyes, even if it were barely for most. To the rest, Lee was in his attack stance, and next to the side of a surprised Gaara, his leg raised high for a fly kick.
Gaara's sand could only make a flimsy wall of defense before Lee kicked Gaara in the head with a distinctive force. A force that while it was not as strong as Lee's usually kicks without the 80kg of mass behind it, it was still powerful enough to make Gaara stagger back. As Gaara staggered, Lee released a torrent of strong punches all over Gaara's body at speeds that even martial artist experts would have been hard-pressed to block. However, despite Lee's vicious attacks, Gaara was still standing Lee kept on fighting.

Eventually, Gaara was able to push Lee back using his sand, and it was at that moment that Lee saw the insane Sand-nin was not even harmed. The only thing Lee's blows had done was make cracks in the densely packed armor of sand that covered Gaara as he gave a terrible grin of excitement. Gaara was planning to kill Lee as his sand armor slowly mended itself before he sent out waves of sand to catch and crush Lee.

In the stands, Naruto could not help but comment, "That is an impressive jutsu. The way Gaara formed his sand armor reminds me of the Shadow Fox's ablative armor."

"It does? In what way?" Hinata asked her best friend.

"Ablative armor works by adsorbing and dispense kinetic, electrical, pure and other forms of energy from the interior structure. This, in turn, keeps the fighter safe until the armor is a puncture, melted or flaked away. Of course, unless it's advanced weaponry or really, really powerful jutsus, I would not be too worried," Naruto stated.

"So the sand armor is indestructible?" Haku asked while showing concern for the master of martial arts.

"Not necessarily," Naruto stated as she stretched her shoulders in annoyance of sand being compared to her fighter's armor. "Unlike the material used to make the fighter's ablative armor, sand is less malleability, ductile and has a lower placidity. Meaning sand is more fragile, and that fragility can be exploited. A ninjutsu user could easily change its property or blasting it away, especially if they used water, lightning or fire jutsus. For a martial art expert like Lee, I say concentrated hits or a move that causes a massive amount of damage should break the armor. And once a small piece is broken, the entire armor is broken, and Gaara will be vulnerable to whatever pain Lee can inflict on him."

The girls nodded as Tukiko pointed back in the arena to state, "Well it looks like Lee has the same idea because there he goes."

The girls turned to see Lee was on the offensive again, attacking with vigor as he bypassed Gaara's sand. He soon came face to face with Gaara, but instead of a frontal attack, Lee went for a more devastating attack. It started with Lee attacking Gaara's footing, weakening his stance so that Lee would have no problem in sending a high kick to the sand user's jaw. This sent the sand user flying for at least 6m (19.69ft). Gaara felt like he floated for a moment before Lee appeared behind him, in all his green jumpsuit glory something was coming off his hands, his bandages.

Around Lee's hands were special chakra-infused bandages that served two purposes. One was to cover his harden hands bruised from the hours of pure martial art training he did each day. The second was to use the bandages to wrap around the green beast's target to be used for his 'Hidden Lotus' technique. Gaara found himself wrapped from head to toe in Lee's bandages as he faced the grounded and his body began to spin in a whirlwind accelerated by gravity. Gaara continued to spin faster and faster until Lee let unwrapped his bandages at the last second and kicked Gaara into the earth before jumping away, creating an explosion of dust where the sand-nin had landed.

Lee had never felt so happy, as he tried to catch his breath. The technique took a lot out of him to execute requiring the unique blend of force, pressure, and speed to accomplish, but it was well worth
the victory. A victory he thought he had achieved until he saw movement from the crater he had created. Rising slowly out of the giant hole, was an angry Gaara as blood dripped from his forehead. A fact that surprised the Sand-nins as Gaara had never been hurt before due to Gaara's ultimate defense. However, while the event was a surprise, they knew Gaara would not take it well as he went berserk.

"Blood! It's my Blood!" Gaara screamed as sand gathered around him like angry snakes ready to strike. "You made me bleed! DIE!"

Lee had only a moment's notice before he was forced to drop and roll from Gaara's renewed attack. From then on, it became a game of chase as he desperately tried to avoid Gaara's attack. A game Lee was losing, as it was becoming harder and harder to avoid the Sand-nin's attack. Fatigue had set in from Lee's use of the 'Hidden Lotus' began while Gaara had gone into a frenzy. It was apparent Lee was going to lose, so the Jōnin tried once again to convince Guy to call the match.

However, Guy still thought Lee had a chance as he stated, "He is not done yet. After all, a lotus can bloom twice."

"Well unless he can open the…" Asuma started but stopped when realizing what Guy had done. "You thought him to open the Inner Gates, didn't you?"

"I did," Guy stated.

The group of Jōnin was shocked by Guy's answer as Hayate asked, "How many of the Gates?"

"He can open five of them," Guy told his fellow senseis.

"You taught him how to open five of the inner chakra gates of our pathway?" Kurenai asked to be sure.

And when Guy answered, "Yes," Kurenai yelled out, "How can you be so irresponsible!"

"I was just giving him the tools to be the best ninja he can be," Guy stated as he defended himself. "The inner gates give immense power for removing the restraints on our chakra pathways."

"But at a cost," Anko added as she glared at Guy.

"What do you mean cost? And what's the big deal about the inner gates?" asked a concern Tenten who was concerned for her favorite teammate.

Anko sighed as Kurenai went into a lecture mode, "Within our bodies are eight inner gates that act as a filter for our chakra. Filters that keep the majority back from flooding our chakra system and burning out our body. They are known as the Gate of Opening, Gate of Healing, Gate of Life, Gate of Pain, Gate of Limit, Gate of View, Gate of Wonder, and Gate of Death. Now each of these points temporarily can be mentally unplugged giving the user a huge amount of chakra to increase their healing rate, physical strength, speed, and power. It is said to open all eight gates is to have the power of a god."

"However, it also comes with a very painful cost," Anko added for Kurenai. "To even open two of the inner gates puts the body under extreme stress that could permanently damage the body. To open all eight gates is a death sentence that only one person had ever survived fr0k," Anko then looked at Guy to state, "And even then, it had taken you almost a year to recover. How could you teach a brat a technique like that?"

"I taught him because of his dream," Guy told Anko with convection. "While most ridiculed him for
trying to be a ninja that could not use ninjutsu or genjutsu, I could not refuse to help such flames of youth. So I taught him ways of how he could be the best martial artist of all time, and I stand by my decision now more than ever as I watch a lotus leaf bloom twice,” and true to Guy's words, Lee was going to do some major damage after he opened his inner gates.

Gaara did not know what was happening, he was about to kill the annoying Leaf-nin when all of a sudden Lee got a major power boost. The first power boost increased his speed and power, the gate of Opening brought Lee fully back up to his prime. The next gate he opened, the Gate of Healing, regenerated his wounds, so he was even in better condition to fight. Next, the Gate of Life to increase his blood flow and surge his adrenaline while turning his face red and blue. He then moved on by opening the Gate of Pain to increase his speed to the point where he was nothing but a blur of action to even Guy while using the Gate of Limit to increase his strength to the point one could match Tsunade's strength. Something that Gaara could attest to as Lee appeared right in front of him to deliver a punch so powerful that it broke the parts of his sand armor away from his now exposed ribs. The fight would not improve for Gaara.

The battle was one-sided as Lee went on the offensive the entire time while Gaara tried to put up any kind of defense to soften the blows. Gaara's defenses would not hold as the leaf on the wind destroyed any sand that formed. Gaara was losing more sand then he could repair. He felt severe pain for the first time in his life. Before the fight, Gaara had never had even a paper cut, as his sand always protected him. Now he felt like his body was on fire as bruises began to develop on his ribs, thighs, arms and his left cheek. The only reason he did not give up or admit defeat was that he was determined to kill this worthy opponent, to prove his existence. Lee soon figured out he was not going to outlast Gaara.

Lee's power was not meant to last more than a few minutes at best, and he knew he was going to be vulnerable to Gaara's attack very shortly. So seeing what he would face, Lee decided to end the fight with another lotus by kicking Gaara 10m (32.821ft) up in the air. While in the air, Gaara realized what he was doing and put his fingers in ram before Lee wrapped him in bandages again, and sent him spinning to the ground. Only this time it was a bigger explosion of dust as Lee stood at the edge of the giant crater, ragged and tired.

He was spent, and his body was in pain. He was out of breath, and his body was aching all over, but it was worth it to defeat Gaara. Too bad for Lee, it was not the real Sand-nin, as the 'Gaara' within the crater had dissolved into sand. Lee realized he was duped and turned to see a pissed off Gaara standing behind him, his sand racing towards him to crush him. Lee did not like the look of the sand tentacles and tried to escape, but he was not fast enough. Sand wrapped around his right arm and leg. Lee only had a moment notice before Gaara's sand crushed them. Lee fell to the ground in pain as all that was left of his arm and leg were a mangled, bleeding mess of broken bones and pain. Pain so great that he fell unconscious as Gaara formed a wall of sand for one final attack.

"Die!" Gaara yelled as sand came down on Lee, but it did not meet its goal as Lee's sensei saved the day.

Guy stood defiantly in front of Gaara, dispersing his sand, as he stood tall, protecting his student with pride. Raven Hunter soon joined Guy and told Gaara he was a winner with a stare that stated, 'Try anything, and you are dead.' Gaara quickly complied as he was in no shape to take on a Jōnin, but that did not end his confusion as he asked, "Why did you save him?"

Guy simply stated with fatherly love, "Because he is my student."

Gaara merely flinched at the tone before he turned around to limp back to the stands while a team of medics came rushing in, following the legendary medic Tsunade and her student Shizune. Tsunade
observed the matches and sending medical personnel in when needed until she saw Lee's case. Unlike the other Leaf-nins that did not require her immediate attention, Lee was in critical condition as he leaked massive amounts of blood. She felt sick to the point she would have relapsed her hemophobia if her mental training and stubbornness did not help her put it aside. She would be damned to watch anyone die under her watch.

Tsunade quickly arrived at Lee's side to diagnosis him and bark out orders, "All right. Clean that wound but leave it open for surgery. We need to work quickly else he would lose the use of limbs. Especially, since opening the inner gates have torn his mussels and put his whole body under extreme stress. Get everything ready when we get to the hospital for major surgery."

The medics quickly compiled as Shizune used the mystic palm to remove the sand grains from the wounds as they rushed to surgery. Guy promptly followed, and Tenten followed after given the go-ahead when Sarutobi stated, "Let's takes a break as my ninjas put together the arena and the next part of the exam. Be back here in two hours, dismissed."

Several other ninjas like Shino and Tenten left to see dear friends that were now in the hospital.

Scene IV

It had been two hours, and all the ninjas participating in the next test, including Genin like Neji had gathered in front of the board, waiting for the Hokage's announcement. As they waited, the girls of Team Vixen turned to Tenten to ask, "How's Lee?"

Tenten sighed as she stated, "He just got out of surgery, and it was a complete success. Though I doubt he will like hearing that it will take a few months before he is able to train like his sensei. But at least he is alive."

This brought a smile to the girls as Lee definitely brought a good impression to the girls. They were sure he will go far as a ninja and was glad his career was not over. However, now was not the time to worry about Lee as the Hokage announced that the next part of the Chūnin exams was going to be an exposition match. These matches are designed to show off the Genin to several clients and leaders of various countries to demonstrate their ninja's strength. He then had the digital board to reveal the matches as listed below:

1. Tukiko Uchiha and Haku Momochi
2. Shino Aburame and Bastila Roth
3. Temari Sakabu and Tenten Vepa
4. Hinata Hyūga and Neji Hyūga
5. Night Wolf, son of Wolf Dreamer and Revan Roth
6. Shikamaru Nara and Kagari
7. Naruto Ryū and Gaara Sakabu

After the pairings were revealed, various emotions began to pour through the Genin. For Tukiko, Haku, Night Wolf, and Revan could not believe their luck that they must fight their own teammate in the first round of the tournament. Fate had to be against them as they looked at each other nervously while others like Shino, Bastila, and Shikamaru were sizing their opponent. Another group glared at their opponents, with the hardest coming from Hinata, Neji, and Tenten as they planned to take out their dangerous opponent with extreme prejudice. The only one not looking at her opponent was
Naruto. She looked at the Fox ANBU for help, and the fox was going to comply. Her mother was not going to let her daughter die after missing almost fourteen years of her life.

The tension was high as the Hokage continued to explain the rules as he noted that there would be seven matches in the first round. They would then split the winners into two matches that would be a timed free for all, and finally end with the two winners of the open matches facing each other to determine the winner of the tournament. After he was done the explaining, Haku asked the Hokage, "So the third exam is just a tournament?"

The Hokage nodded yes, "Yes, as you will be facing each other in the arena that will simulate a natural environment. Through these matches, you will fight to show off your skill in combat and strategy to show that you are worthy of becoming a Chūnin."

"So anyone could be a Chūnin, even those who lost in the first round?" Tukiko asked, and the Hokage nodded 'yes.'

"So, everyone but Neji could become Chūnin?" Hinata quietly asked as Neji glared at his cousin with extreme hate.

"Correct. However, that had never happened when even there were only six competitors. It is more likely no one will pass like a few years ago when none of the twelve competitors showed enough strategy or talent to be Chūnin." Everyone gasped as the Hokage continued; "Now the matches will be held next month at nine hundred hours in the arena."

"Why are we given a month?" Tenten and Temari asked at the same time as they glared at each other.

"Because it will give you time to strategize and come up with new techniques to fight against your opponents in the tournament. In addition, we will be setting up equipment to televise it worldwide and sell ticks to the arena afterword is spreading on who is competing. We need time to do this and to see if you can improve yourself with a month timeline. Now, are there any more questions?" The Hokage asked. When no one talked, he then stated, "Then you are all dismissed."

The Genin could not leave fast enough, they had a month to train, and they planned to make the most of it.

Chapter End Notes

Finally done; this has to be my longest chapter and a pain to write from the fights to all the added intrigue. Thank god it’s over. In addition, the poll results are in. Please check out below.
Scene I

Within the vast, dirty training field, a young Hyūga girl named Hinata Hyūga was beating on a training post. It has been a week since the end of the Chūnin exam's prelims, and she has been busy training under her father's tutelage, something she felt was more of a hindrance than something helpful. The last time her father had taken a personal interest in her training, he had berated her to the point she had lost all confidence. It had taken her years away from his notice before she became the strong girl she currently was. Hinata had little respect for a man that she had considered a terrible father. To his daughter, he was a figurehead not willing to change his clan, no matter how much he wanted it to change.

Despite her reluctance, she was compelled to train under him. Firstly, he was the head of her clan, and she could not ignore the man unless his request went against her commander's orders during a mission. Secondly, her father was one of the best Jōnin to help her improve her Gentle Blades skills due to his mastery of a style it was based on, the Gentle Fist. Moreover, her father was desperately trying to reconnect with all members of his family including the daughter he had berated. Something she deep down wanted to happen, even if she fought against him for every inch she could. Especially as there were some family members that she did not want to reconnect with, no matter how much they beg.

One of them was the son of her father's identical twin, Neji's father, Hizashi. A man who had come to plead for his son by doing something he had never done before, greeting Hinata as if she was the clan's heiress instead of a disappointment he had for her for years, "Lady Hinata."

"Hello Hizashi-San," Hinata stated while she continued to train, "how nice to hear from you, but I have a feeling you are here for a particular request."

"Lady Hinata, I want to know what you plan to do to my son," Hizashi pleaded with Hinata.

"I plan to beat your son to a pulp for the dishonor he did to our village, and if I feel like it, I may cripple him like he plans to do to me and any comrade that angered him," Hinata explained to her concerned uncle in a tone beyond her usually soft tone.

"Hinata, I know he made a mistake, but..." Hizashi tried to explain but stopped when Hinata splintered the training post in a fit of anger.

Hinata turned to face her uncle and spoke in a cold, soft tone that has been building up for years of abuse that only recently got better, "I will not be sparing Neji. He has lost all right of clemency after all the shit that he has done to me. I will not spare the monster you created with your bitter anger and
your elitism!"

Hizashi backed up as Hinata began to pant in frustration. He expected to be chewed apart when a servant that walked in and bowed before Hinata, saving his life he sure. "Pardon me, my lady, but the Hokage had requested you be at his office at eleven hundred hours. He says he needs your team urgently."

"Thank you. I'll be there after I have taken a quick shower," Hinata stated before returning the bow to her servant.

The servant smiled before she went back into the house, leaving Hizashi and his niece behind. Hizashi was nervous for a moment before Hinata turned and headed for the door. He felt relief until he heard Hinata greeted her father before she entered the compound, leaving her father and uncle alone.

The two stared at each other silently before Hiashi broke the silence, "We really messed up our family. Our children should have worked together and changed this family for the better. Where did it all go wrong?"

"When you let your grief for your wife get the better of you and when I let my jealousy get the better of me," answered Hiashi's twin. "We were both fools, though I am the bigger one expecting my niece to listen to me when I have been mistreating her for years. Thinking I was superior due to having a more talented child when in fact I have set them both up for failure." Hizashi sighed before he turned to his brother to state, "Come on, there is some sake waiting with our names on it, and maybe later you could join me in prayer for my son coming home in one piece?"

Hiashi gave a rare smile as he followed his brother into the compound, while briefly wondering why the Hokage would want Hinata so close to the exam.

Scene II

Within the Hokage's Tower, Team Vixen with Kushina and Naruko was waiting for the call into the Hokage's office. As they waited, Tukiko asked out of curiosity, "Any idea why we were called up?"

"No, just that the Hokage wanted us for something important," Hinata answered Tukiko.

"But why summon our team, especially as we are training for the exams?" Haku asked as the team shrugged in response.

"I don't know sweetie, but we will find out soon," Kurenai stated, and Haku nodded in acceptance.

"I don't know, and I don't care," an aching Naruto sighed in relief. "This is the longest break I have had in over ten hours of physical workout."

"But it has done wonders in getting you into shape my little Naru-chan," Kushina cooed while Naruto blushed and Naruko rolled her eyes.

The group continued their musings when the Hokage's secretary interrupted them to inform that the Hokage was ready to see them. The group followed Anko's lead, as she marched into the office, "Okay, old man, what is so important that you had to call my team back from training?"

The Hokage was looking over field reports before he faces the disgruntled Jōnin, "Hello to you too Anko. I am sorry to interrupt your training, but this is a matter of importance," Sarutobi explained as he took a puff from his pipe. "As you may know, we have been gathering allies for the soon to be an invasion by Sound and Sand forces, which has been confirmed by my ANBU. We had great
success, as we were able to get two hundred ninjas from Cloud Forces alone, with additional soldiers
from various other villages. The only two allies we have not received help from are the Mist rebels,
as they are weak from killing the previous Mizukage. And the second-

"Wait," Haku interrupted the Hokage. "The rebels won the war!"

"Almost, a woman name Mei Terunī is now the new Mizukage with Zabuza as her second took
command of Mist Force two days ago. Normally count as a win, but they still have pockets of
resistance that must be put down before it is officially over," the Hokage answered with a small
smile. "Zabuza did leave a message to state that they will come attend your match if the last of the
resistance is crushed, but he will not be able to send aid as the Mist forces are weakened after the
war."

Haku nodded with a small smile as Naruko looked quizzically at the old man, "You said two allies
did not answer the call. Who is the second?"

"That is what I wanted to talk to your team about," the Hokage stated before he explained the
situation. "Star forces in the Bear Country have reported they are under attack. Their Hoshikage was
killed two months ago, and to make matters worse, someone attempted to steal their most valuable
weapon, the Star Meteorite a few days ago."

"The Star Meteorite?" the Genin questioned before Kurenai answered for the Hokage.

"The Star Meteorite is a meteorite that produces a chakra that allows the user to perform the famed
Hidden Peacock Method. A powerful method that allows the meteorite chakra to surge through the
body and produce wings that would allow the user to fly. The Meteorite combined with a toxic
valley has protected the village from invaders for over two centuries."

"Now I fear that Orochimaru is after the Star Meteorite to be used for the invasion he planned," a
concerned Hokage explained to the group.

"So why not send ANBU to help them?" Kushina asked Sarutobi since Anko was too giddy to get
back at Orochimaru.

"I can't send in ANBU as I have most of my ninjas preparing for the invasion. I also do not want
Orochimaru to know we are on to him. So I am sending your team under the pretense of a training
trip while trying to improve the relationship with Star forces," the Hokage explained to team Vixen
while writing out some orders. "Kurenai, since you have been to Hoshi, you will take command of
this operation. Meet with Acting Leader Akahoshi and provide any assistance you can. I also
recommend you bring gas masks and medical equipment with you. You will need it for what you
may face, dismissed."

The group nodded and slowly left the room with only Kurenai remaining behind. She looked at
Sarutobi as she asked, "Sir, do you think this is a good idea sending me? The last time I was, there
was when the village was not our ally, and I was charged with s-seducing one of their Jōnin for
information. I… I ruined the man's, Hotarubi, marriage and no one knew I was a Leaf-nin. If I show
up and someone recognizes me… it may not be the best if I show up."

There was a brief pause before Sarutobi asked, "Kurenai, does anyone on your team, besides Anko,
know what you did before you became a Genjutsu Mistress?"

"No sir," Kurenai responded while looking away from the old man.

"Do you know that Hotarubi and his wife Natsuhi are reported KIA and that there was no
eyewitness besides a boy who barely remembers his own mother, let alone a woman he never met?" the Hokage asked.

"Yes on both counts," Kurenai answered truthfully.

Sarutobi sighed as he pulled out some documents on Kurenai. They were psyche reports on the Genjutsu Mistress by every interrogator she was evaluated by, including Anko. All of which held nothing back. Kurenai knew she was not going to like what the report said.

"Kurenai, I know you wish for your past to disappear. It is quite common for kunoichis that serve in the Seduction Corps. However, there are instances you have to face your past, and this is one of them. I expect you to face your past with your team. Do I make myself clear?" the Hokage asked and Kurenai stared for a moment before she bowed at Sarutobi. She was about to leave when the Hokage added, "Also, I added everything in the report, including your mission report. Just so you knew."

Kurenai twitched before she headed to the Shadow Fox. A long talk was waiting for her, and she was going to hate it. She had no idea that her past was going to get in the way of the mission and that things would become very complicated very soon.

Scene III

Over the poisonous valley that protected Bear Country stood a purple-haired woman in a ninja suit, a gas mask strapped over her face. She was staring over at a village off in the distance when she heard a roar above her head. She looked up to see a Leaf's Phantom Class Attack Fighter fly to the village at a speed she could not follow. The woman's green eyes narrowed behind her mask as she dispersed in a puff of smoke.

Scene IV

Among the trees away from the poisonous valley stood a small number of buildings within a star-shaped clearing. Hoshi was a small village populated primarily by ninjas instead of Konoha that had a mixture of civilians and ninjas. Hoshi was a quaint village that was rudely awakened when the Shadow Fox appeared over the horizon before landing in the town center where three ninjas waited for the leaf-nins.

The leader was a thin-faced man with long purple hair tied into a ponytail away from his grey eyes. He put on a friendly face as a bald muscular ninja stood at his right while a man with grey rat-like hair and face stood on his left. He did not wait long as he was greeted by the leader, a tall kunoichi in a mesh shirt, brown skirt and trench coat, followed by two other Jōnin and five powerful Genin, all with gas masks equipped to their side belt. He had the feeling the team was ready for anything.

"Hello, I am Anko, here to meet Acting Leader Akahoshi," the tall kunoichi greeted them as she remarked. "These are my fellow Jōnin, Kurenai Yūhi, and Kushina Ryū, along with Genin Team Vixen and Naruko Ryū. It is a pleasure to meet you."

"The pleasure is all mine to meet the famed Team Vixen," the leader stated with a kind smile as he bowed before the group. "I am Akahoshi, temporary leader of Star forces. This is Yotaka," Akahoshi pointed to the bald ninja before pointing to the rat face ninja, "and this Shisō, my aide. I am so happy the Hokage could send help, despite the fact you are facing your own troubles."

"We are always willing to help out an ally," Kurenai stated to Akahoshi. "So what is the situation?"

"It is terrible. Our beloved Hoshikage was assassinated, and someone tried to steal the Star Meteorite a couple of days ago. We were able to repel the attacker, but we took heavy casualties. We were just
fortunate no one died, or it could have been a lot worse," stated Akahoshi with a face that did not look very relieved. "It is just unfortunate that we don't have anyone that can give the wounded proper medical attention."

"We have two qualified medics on our team," Tukiko pointed out. "We can provide medical attention if need be."

Akaloshi looked as though he wanted to say no, but stopped to say, "Of course you can, anything for the village."

"Thank you," Hinata and Haku bowed before Kushina took over the line of questioning.

"Do you have any information on the attacker?" Kushina asked the three.

"I believe the defenders can explain it a bit better than I can," Akahoshi stated before giving a sharp whistle.

A whistle that summoned a seventeen-year-old boy with long black hair responded too as he jumped out. A boy Kurenai recognized with his round face and teal, orange eyes. She had not seen him since he was as a baby. It was Natsuki and Hotaru's son, Sumaru. Kurenai could not believe her luck as the boy stared at them with distaste. She was relieved that it was not at her alone, but the entire group as it was a sign he did not recognize her.

Although it would turn into annoyance as the kid complained to Akahoshi, "Akaloshi-Sama, why are we getting Leaf-nins involved. This is our problem. We don't need outsiders to help."

Akaloshi sighed in frustration, "Sumaru-San, please do not make me explain myself. We need the help to save the Star, and I am not going to turn down aid when the Leaf Forces offered three Jōnin and five highly skilled Genin. Especially as we have so few ninjas we can spare or trust to handle such a delicate matter," Akahoshi explained to the young Genin. "Now Elite Chūnin Sumaru, please be nice as they help hunt down the potential thief."

Sumaru complied while Anko looked in surprise, "This is your commander in charge of the defense of the Star Meteorite?"

"We only have a handful of Jōnin on active service to train our Genin or take missions. So in place, we used special seals and traps to keep the Star safe," Akahoshi hastily answered. "To get the Star means the person had knowledge on how to bypass the traps and seals. Also, do not underestimate Sumaru. His parents were two of our most skilled Jōnin before their premature death, and he had inherited their skills and power. In fact, he even drove away from the thief the last time."

"That not saying much as I only briefly engaged the hostile before she ran away," Sumaru admitted with a humbled attitude, which Akahoshi did not agree with.

"Nonsense, your skill drove the man off and saved the star, you are a hero." Akahoshi smiled as Sumaru accepted the praised before he turned to the Leaf-nins, "Now allow me to bid your team farewell, I have much work to do. If you need anything else, just ask my aides."

Akaloshi gave a final bow before he left the scene with his two aides, leaving Sumaru behind to deal with the Leaf-nins. Kushina turned to Sumaru to state, "Hinata, Haku please gathered your medical equipment while Naruko provides protection. Sumaru can you escort them to your friends while the rest of us scout out the location?"

"Fine, I will tell Hokuto to expect help," Sumaru answered back, much to his annoyance.
"I'll also come with you," Kurenai added. "My skills are more in the line of misdirection so I can use a few Genjutsus to hide the Star or even the whole building."

"Whatever rocks your boat; we will see if it will do any good," Sumaru shrugged in response that was familiar to Kurenai.

"I see you got your attitude from your mother and your looks from both of them," Kurenai pointed out, much to Sumaru's shock.

"You… you knew my parents?"

"I worked closely with your father during the final year of the war and I met your mother briefly," Kurenai lied while keeping the lie as close as possible to the truth. "They were very skilled shinobi, and they would be proud of you."

"I… I thank you," Sumaru stammered. "I really… really don't know much about them, they were gone and what I could remember the two them fighting to rebuild their relationship after some tart made dad break mom's heart."

Kurenai flinched before she developed a warm smile, "Then how about I tell you everything about them. What do you say?"

"I would like that," Sumaru nodded as Kurenai took him away, leaving Team Vixen to work alone.

As they were working on unloading the equipment, Hinata could not help but comment, "Looks like Kurenai is going to have a rough time with this mission."


"Honestly, you need to improve your people skills," Naruko stated out of annoyance. "Kurenai knew Sumaru's parents in a more physical level. Especially the father, if the records are any indication." Naruto made an 'oh' comment before going to work as Naruko turned to Hinata to ask, "How does a mechanical genius like my sister have such difficulty with social norms?"

"It's enduring and a little cute," Hinata had answered truthfully. "I think you're lucky to have a sister like Naruto, I wish I had a family like yours."

"That's a lot coming from the woman who wants to leave her current family to be next to a certain someone with blond hair with the high IQ that feels the same way," Naruko whispered before her face filled with a rare smile as Hinata sputtered.

"What… what do you mean?" Hinata asked in shock.

Naruko stared before walking while muttering, "Looks like Naruto isn't the only one emotionally blind," leaving a blushing Hinata behind as they went to work.

Scene V

It has been a few hours, and the medical portion of Team Vixen had arrived at a large building that held not only the Star, which was behind locked doors but also the dozens of people waiting for treatment. The people's age ranged from eight to fourteen and were training in the Hidden Peacock technique. This confused Kurenai as she remembered that mastering the Hidden Peacock technique was physically dangerous and required the user to be in peak condition. In what way, she could not remember and did not bother asking, but she was pretty sure the age of kid is not peak condition. However, as an outsider, she should not know that so she kept her mouth shut as Haku and Hinata
tried to figure out what was wrong them. Promising to herself to tell the girls when they were alone.

"This is so puzzling," Haku said in frustration as she examined one of the most promising students that seemed to be deteriorating from sickness faster than the other kids did.

The patient was a twelve-year-old pretty boy name Mizura; easily recognizable with his large teal eyes and unusual grey long hair that blushed under the girl's watch. "Physically I can find no wounds, so it suggests they were poisoned," Haku explained to the second highest rank in the building for Star forces, a young, sharp face female Chūnin named Hokuto. "Yet, all the tests I run for bacterial, viral, and chemical reactions are negative. I can't make heads or tails of it."

The girl, Hokuto with grayish green worried eyes as she asked, "But… but you can do something? Can't you?"

"I can slow the deterioration, but unless I know what is causing it, I can't stop it from progressing," Haku explained to her fellow healer.

"I am sure you can develop something, especially you Hokuto," Sumaru pointed with a small smile. "I can always expect you to pull us through."

Hokuto blushed at the compliment as Naruko raised an eyebrow as she looked between Hokuto and Hinata for their similarities. Hinata could tell she was being stared at by Naruko, so she lowered her head as Haku continued her medical discussion with her pretty boy patient, "Okay, Mizura, can you describe your day and what happened in the fight."

"I… (cough) don't remember much about the fight," Mizura answered with a hoarse voice as he blushed under Haku's gaze. "We were (cough) knocked out by the gas the (cough) thief used. I was near the (cough) Star with several others when it happened, training like we always do."

"Yeah, in fact, he was one of the most dedicated ninjas training to use the Star," Hokuto explained while Kurenai raised an eyebrow.

Kurenai then leaned over to Hinata to ask, "Could it have something to do with the Star's chakra."

"I don't think so," Hinata answered with a shrugged. "They are not suffering from chakra implosion or exhaustion, and the symptoms do not match chakra poisoning. In fact, if they were losing their hair along with their other symptoms, I actually would say they are suffering from radiation poisoning, but I don't know any chakra that produces radiation."

"We'll keep at it, tell me if you find anything," Kurenai ordered as the scouting group had returned. "Any luck?"

"Nope, but we will keep searching," Anko stated while handing a notepad to Kurenai.

Kurenai, Naruko, and Sumaru looked over to read, 'Found some listening seals in the village. There are probably a few within this building so communicate through writing if you can. We also found a few hiding spots unintended by the thief, so we booby-trapped them as well. We will hopefully have our thief tonight.'

"Well that is too bad, I guess we will all have to go out tonight to look for the thief while Hinata and Haku stay here to treat the patients," Kurenai said with a straight face.

"Yeah I guess we will have no choice but to work well into the night," Kushina added while pointing at the notebook before holding up two fingers.
Kurenai understood what it meant and turned to the second page. The three of them read the note before Sumaru looked up in shock. He then stopped to think before nodding yes, "I'll go with you after I lock down the Star. Please give me a few minutes."

The group nodded as he directed Naruto, Naruko, Kurenai, and Kushina to follow him into the room that held the star. The meteorite was a black rock surrounded by purple chakra and held up by a giant crow's foot. It gave a beautiful dark feeling to the entire room that Sumaru ignored as he turned to the Leaf-nins, "Okay, this room is secure as the Star disrupts any chakra outside of its own. Set up the decoy as I prepare the lockdown mechanism. I'll inform Akahoshi of the plan later."

"Okay, I'll get right to work," Naruto stated as she pulled out a scanner, portable power infuser, and material to make a fake meteorite.

Naruto then went to get the meteorite while Naruko showed her artistic side as she began sculpting the material into a perfect copy of the meteorite. Naruto was about to pick up the meteorite to bring it over when Colonel Nine of Nine yelled in her mind, 'Don't touch that!'

"What? Why?" Naruto asked mentally in shock as she pulled her hands back.

'I've seen that color of chakra before, it's chakra radiation," Nine of Nine explained.

'Chakra radiation? I never heard of chakra producing radiation,' Naruto stated in confusion before Nine of Nine gave a history lesson.

'During the Mechanize War, the Republic Alliance experimented on using chakra as an atomic weapon. It was the hope that the new bio-energy could create a more devastating blow against the machines. They first tested it on an asteroid a fourth the size of Asia and successful vaporized it. With this success, it was thought they would give the soldiers in Africa relief.

'The machines were destroyed, but so was all life on the continent from the fall out of chakra radiation, including animals like cockroaches that could survive any other forms of radiation. The project was considered a failure, and no other chakra bombs were created in fear that the machines would make their own to wipe out all life permanently. Even centuries later, I bet a large portion of Africa is still inhabitable. The meteorite must have been a small piece that survived. The students are lucky it has had centuries to deteriorate, or they would be dead.'

'Thanks for the warning,' a scared Naruto replied as he put on her heavy-duty lead fiber gloves. She then picked up the meteorite with great care before setting it down in front of Naruko, "Sister, whatever you do, do not handle the rock with your bare hands. Use your lead weaved gloves if you have to touch it."

"Honey, what is going on?" Kushina asked.

"According to some reliable Intel I got in my head, the rock is dangerous," Naruto answered her mother before she used her earpiece to contact her friend. "Hinata, this is Naruto. Listen to me I want you to check them for chakra radiation poison… Yes, it is a real thing, look it up using the database I put on the computer… Thank you Hinata-Hime, you are always the best."

Naruto deactivates her communicator, and despite it being off, they could feel Hinata's blush from here. However, Sumaru ignored the embarrassment of a Leaf-nin to ask, "What do you mean by chakra radiation?"

"I mean that rock is producing lethal levels of chakra to the point it is making the people sick," Naruto stated as Kurenai thoughts clicked into place.
"So that is what he meant by training to use the Star is deadly," Kurenai thought out loud.

"But Akahoshi said this new training method would prevent deaths," Sumaru stuttered in shock. "Are you sure it is the Star?"

"It looks like it," Kurenai sighed before she asked a serious question. "How far gone are the children?"

"I don't know, I am no medic," Naruto added. "Although I certainly can say that they will die if they continue to use the Star."

"We can't stop training in the use of the Star!" Sumaru yelled out in desperation. "The Star is our only chance to become a major village."

"Is it worth your friends' lives?" Anko asked. "Can you live with yourself knowing your friends will die from exposure?"

"Although it honorable to make sacrifices for one's village, I will ask, what good is becoming a major village if you have no future generation to reap the benefits?" Naruko asked in a cold, calculating voice of an assassin. "For I can tell you, a village with no future is just a husk waiting to be put down. Do not make your village into a husk needed to die."

Sumaru sighed in agreement, "I will talk to Akahoshi after we capture the thief. Hopefully, he will listen to me."

"That's all we ask," Kurenai smiled as Kushina supervised her daughters setting up the trap to catch a fox. Tonight was the night.

Scene VI

It was a moonlit night as a thief broke into the large building that held the Star. Everyone was asleep, including the two remaining Leaf-nins. With a silent step, the thief took down all the prepared defenses with the precision that suggested the foreknowledge of an inside job. Not one trap was activated as the woman hidden within a purple and grey cloak plucked the glowing meteorite out of the crow's claw. With the Star in hand, she made a silent break out of the building. She did not stay long enough to see the Leaf-nins were wide-awake and reporting ahead that the trap was sprung.

The woman was oblivious as she headed to her hideout near the poisonous valley. The place was meant to be her hideout to wait for the heat to die down. Therefore, she made her way to her refuge where she plan to remain hidden until she noticed something was off. It was a hidden pressure plate set to deliver a thousand volts and knock her out. Instead of falling into the trap, she threw a kunai onto the pressure pad and set the trap off before making a dash towards the deadly valley.

Behind the thief, several Leaf-nins in gas masks appeared and began to give chase as the woman ran to the valley at speeds only available to a Jōnin. She was almost there when Sumaru appeared in front of her. The woman seemed to be reluctant to attack, evident as she backed away from the chakra flare from the Star-nin rather than attack. Sumaru thought it was all over when the woman did something unexpected to her pursuers. She had used the Hidden Peacock technique, forming purple chakra wings on her before she jumped up and flew over Sumaru's head. He could only stare in shock as the woman flew into the toxic mist as the Leaf-nins watched in shock.

They continued to stare as Sumaru stammered, "That's… that's not possible… only a master can achieve flight. How did that guy master the Peacock in a fortnight?"

"We can ask her after I instigate plan B," Naruto stated as she pulled out a small detonator and
pressed the button top.

The woman screamed out in pain before slumping down to the ground on the other side of the valley, signifying the fake meteorite had worked and had sent enough volts through her system to knock her out. On the other side of the valley, Tukiko made a call, "Kurenai-sensei, Kushina-san, I have got the thief and she is tied up. What do you want to do with her?"

"Bring her over on this side, I want to interrogate her," Kushina replied, and Tukiko quickly followed her orders.

Tukiko jumped over the valley with the woman on her back, their masks secured as she dropped the woman in front of them. Anko, being the resident expert on interrogation lowered herself to pull off the mask, "Okay, let's see what we have here?"

Anko pulled the mask off to see something that made Sumaru and Kurenai gasped in shock. A person they recognized with her long purple hair and soft round face. It was Natsuhi, Hotarubi's wife, and Sumaru's mother. "Natsuhi/mom!" Kurenai and Sumaru exclaimed as the woman slowly opened her green eyes.

Natsuhi looked around in shock before residing herself in the situation as she sighed sadly, "I was hoping it would not come to this, but fate has been against me from the start."

"Natsuhi you are alive?" Kurenai asked in shock. "What the hell have been doing? Why did you abandon your son?"

"I could not endanger my son by…" Natsuhi began to explain but stopped to stare at Kurenai. She then turned red in anger as she yelled, "You! You're the teenage bitch that slept with my husband! And you are a Leaf-nin… you slept with Hotarubi to pump him for information! You damn bitch!"

Sumaru stared at the woman who had been kind to him from the start as he stammered, "Kurenai, you didn't make papa cheat for you… did you?"

"I'm sorry Sumaru, but I can't lie to you, I did sleep with your dad as part of the Seduction Corps to gather information on the Star village as they were not an ally at the time. I'm sorry," Kurenai stated as Sumaru took a step back in shock.

Meanwhile, Natsuhi growled at Kurenai before she forced herself to calm down in frustration. While her anger for the slut was still high, she knew she was doing her job and had more important things to worry about, as Anko held a kunai to her throat and growled, "Stop disking Kurenai-chan and tell us, why did you make an attempt to steal the Star?"

Natsuhi sighed as she stated, "I did it to save the village."

Natsuhi explained that the Star forces knew the meteorite was toxic all along and thus trained a few resilient people to be their last line of defense against invasion. People like Natsuhi and Hotarubi, who was trained at a young age to master it as their family members before they had done before. It was during their training that they fell in love, married and had Sumaru. Things were going to be okay, even after her husband slept with Kurenai until Star Forces entered the Third Great Shinobi War as an ally to the Leaf and they were sent to the frontlines.

The constant fighting for their lives insured they used the Hidden Peacock technique multiple times, accelerating the toxic effects of the chakra radiation. It would not be long for the couple to find out Hotarubi was dying and it only got worse as the couple was considered prime targets by nearby minor villages for their involvement in the war. Eventually, Hotarubi died from the constant strain,
and Natsuhi was given a leave of absence to disappear and protect her son by the power of the Third Hoshikage under the promise she stay close by to defend the village. She also convinced the Third Hoshikage to end Star training in fear they do not have the population to continue the practice. That all changed when the same man that had the third Hoshikage killed was the same man that restarted the Star training, Akahoshi.

"You're telling me that the current leader is the one that killed the previous Hoshikage," Kushina stated in shock. "I hope you have evidence of this for if you're lying, I will kill you."

"I am not lying," Natsuhi gritted her teeth in response. "I have recordings between Akahoshi and this Kabuto for an alliance."

"Wait, did you say Kabuto, as in Kabuto Yakushi?" Naruko asked in desperation.

"I think that was his name, yes," Natsuhi answered with a confused face as Naruko swore while Kushina explained the situation.

"Kabuto is one of Orochimaru's top lieutenants. If he is involved then so is Orochimaru. You need to warn Hinata, now!"

Naruto quickly responded by making a call to Hinata hopping it was not too late.

Scene VII

Within the large building that held the Star, Hinata was giving the finale treatment to Mizura with Hokuto's help. As they were giving the finale injections, Akahoshi and brute ally Yotaka were standing behind them. A broad smile appeared on his face, "I am glad you could help these poor students. I had hoped my new training method would save lives but instead, it has put them in harm's way. However, with this treatment, it will help save their lives as they train to master the Hidden Peacock."

"I wouldn't recommend it," Hinata stated as she put on the final touches. "If they continued to use the Hidden Peacock, they will die. I actually recommend you stop all training for now. Give it a few months, and they probably will be in shape to train again."

Akahoshi gave a mocking smile as he stated, "I will put that into consideration."

Hinata narrowed her eyes and was about to comment when her earpiece, "Excuse me; I have to take a call. It could be about your thief."

"Of course, go right ahead," Akahoshi waved Hinata off as she took the call.

"Yeah Naruto," Hinata answered before her body became stiff. "I see, thank you Naruto, I'll be sure to tell Akahoshi as he is right here after inspecting the Star to make sure." Hinata shut off her earpiece before she began writing on a notepad in front of Hokuto. "Well, Naruto just called to say they caught the thief and are heading our way."

Akahoshi smiled happily, saying today was a great day for Star forces as Hokuto and Mizura read the note Hinata wrote. It stated, 'Akahoshi killed the former Hoshikage and is in league with the world criminal Orochimaru. He's a traitor, so please back me up.'

In a typical situation, the two would betray Hinata by informing their leader what she planned to do. However, this was not a typical situation. The two had watched as these people worked harder to save the lives of their comrades than the man giving a roaring speech ever had. It was not a difficult choice to give a subtle nod to say they would back her up.
They did not need to wait long to see Akahoshi's true colors as he declared, "Now, I'm afraid it's time to deal with all the foreigners within this village. Yotaka takes the Leaf-nins down and anyone else getting in your way, especially Hokuto for siding with the Leaf-nins and not Lord Orochimaru."

That was all they needed to hear as the two girls reacted. They tried to attack Akahoshi, with Hinata and Yotaka using their chakra scalpels but they were too slow as Yotaka appeared in front of the two girls. The man grabbed the girls and slammed them onto the ground, "Oh no you don't girlies. Now stay down, or I will break your necks."

On the other side of the room, Haku saw the commotion and moved to provide aid when she heard a clicking sound. She turned to see Shisō behind her, with her crossbow, aiming at not only her but all the sick Star-nins as well. "I've heard about how these weapons can fire faster than most ninjas can react. So I suggest you don't move, or I will take out everyone in the room."

"You are willing to kill kids?" Haku asked in shock.

Shisō smirked as he stated, "They were meant to be cannon fodder for Lord Orochimaru. Whether they die here or somewhere else does not matter to me. I wonder if it matters to you."

Haku growled before she reluctantly surrendered as Akahoshi developed a victory smirk. A smirk lost as Mizura quickly surrounded himself with purple chakra before charging at Akahoshi. The traitor did not expect the punch to the mouth before Mizura began to beat the man. He continued to pound the man's face black when all of a sudden, purple chakra flared and Akahoshi developed purple wings, signs that Akahoshi had mastered the Hidden Peacock. Mizura received a chakra palm blast to the face that sends him back onto a gurney and out cold as Akahoshi got up.

"What a mess and here I was hoping to use these children as soldiers for the coming invasion," Akahoshi snarled as he stretched his neck. "No matter, I'll just use them to force this pathetic village to submit to me."

"You won't get away with this!" Hokuto yelled out to the traitor, who only chuckled in response.

"My team will stop you," Hinata growled as the man continued to laugh.

Akahoshi then waved his hand to order Yotaka to get them on their feet so he could look them in the eyes as he pulled out the Star meteorite for all to see, "With power like this, no one can stop me. Now let's go outside, your friends will be here soon to greet me, and I want everything ready for my grand finale."

Scene VIII

For the residence of Hoshi, they were awakened in the early morning by alarms, and they ran out in defense. They thought it was because someone tried to steal the Star again. They never realize that it was because of Akahoshi, a man they believed they could trust, sounded the alarm to reveal himself to be a traitor. A traitor that forced the village to surrender to his master, Orochimaru, as Shisō pointed a crossbow at their tied-up children while Yotaka held down the two Leaf-nins. The ninjas were subdued as Akahoshi waited for his finale obstacles to appear. He was not disappointed when Team Vixen, Naruko, Kushina and Natsuhi revealed themselves as they moved in front of the gathering crowd of ninjas.

"Ah, so they are finally here," Akahoshi had stated with a bright smile. "I must say I am kind of disappointed the Leaf-nins did not kill you Natsuhi, but the fact Team Vixen is here more than makes up for it. Lord Orochimaru will be quite pleased when I bring him not only several bloodlines but Naruto as well. I will be rewarded quite handsomely."
"Why did you betray your village?" Naruto asked in disgust.

"I betrayed this dump for it had nothing to offer me," Akahoshi snarled in response. "That damn fool of a leader stopped all training of the Star, thinking we were losing too many ninjas to the Star and that they needed time to recover. The softhearted fool insured we would forever be a minor village due to his actions!" Akahoshi screamed before he calmed down to continue his speech.

"I trained in using the Star in secret, and I was planning to defect when Orochimaru came to me with an offer. In exchange for putting me in the ruler's seat, I would become a Commander in his Sound forces and give him a supply of ninjas trained in the Hidden Peacock as his elite soldiers for his plans against the Leaf and all that wrong him!"

Akahoshi had exclaimed before his face and demeanor shifted to rage while pointing at Natsuhi, "But that started to fall apart when you tried to stop me by stealing the Star. But you failed. I have mastered Star Training, and…" Akahoshi stated before holding the Star for all to see. "I now have the Star to give me the power to crush all of my enemies, starting with all of you."

That was the last thing Akahoshi said before he developed purple wings and flew to attack his first target Natsuhi. He went to punch the woman, but she quickly got out of the way while Naruto attacked from behind using her dual swords. Naruto fired in a furry that would make Chūnin proud as the others came to her aid, using a sword or hand-to-hand fighting to combat him. They continued to fight as Akahoshi noticed something very odd in the fact that his attackers were at speeds comfortable to Chūnin and none of them used special attacks. His eyes widen in revelation as he used a chakra flare to force Naruto back and dispel all the other clones that had been transformed into her allies and comrades.

He yelled out, "What?" as Naruto put on a devious smirk.

"Yeah, you think a squad of assassins and spies would go with a frontal attack, then you are sadly mistaken. And your friends are about to pay for your mistakes," Naruto pointed out her friends moved against Akahoshi's allies.

The first to fall was Yotaka, taken down by Naruko and Kushina's swords that pierced his ribcage with precise accuracy. He gasped before he died as Hinata and Haku broke free from the man's grip before running off to free the others. They were unhindered as a dozen of Anko's snakes grabbed Shisō while Tukiko yanked the crossbow out of his hands. A disarmed Shisō felt the bites of Anko's poisonous snakes surge through his veins as Tukiko stabbed him with her knife to get his heart pumping. Shisō soon died from the poison as Akahoshi stood alone. He was facing a woman using the Hidden Peacock technique, and her son appeared behind him to deliver a powerful kick to the back of the traitor's head.

Akahoshi soon went flying to the ground, but he quickly rallied as he hovered off the ground. The man snarled before he went on the offensive. The three traded blows with great force it shook the defender, but it quickly became evident that mother and son would lose since Sumaru was stuck on the ground and Akahoshi continually renewed his power from the Star. Eventually, he slapped Sumaru away and turned his attention towards Natsuhi. The woman had no defense against a powerful palm chakra blast from the Star itself as she hit the ground, dazed. This left her vulnerable to attack as Akahoshi flew towards her with a purple chakra blade formed in his hand, ready to run through her.

Natsuhi prepared for the worst and waited for death when something unexpected happened. A surprise that turned to shock and horror as a woman she had despised appeared in front of her and took the blow meant for her in the shoulder. She could only watch as Kurenai screamed out in pain as she used 'Fire Style: Dragon Breath Jutsu' to fire out a stream of fire at point blank range on
Akahoshi. The attack forced a flaming Akahoshi to back-off as Kurenai fell to her knees, holding her nasty wound as best she could.

A wound that had bled profusely even though Natsuhi tried to stop the bleeding with some bandages from the pack. She then put sufficient pressure on the wound to stop the bleeding while asking, "Why did you save me?"

"I did it because I did not want Sumaru to lose his mother again, even if you despise me for something that can never be forgiven," Kurenai stated as she got the bleeding under control.

The two were silent when Natsuhi said, "You are forgiven," as she helped Kurenai up, expecting the battle to be over.

They were surprised to see purple chakra shut up as Akahoshi stood tall, only slightly singed. "You cannot stop as long as I have the Star. No one will be able…" Akahoshi yelled until a gunshot rang out followed by the Star exploding into dust.

Akahoshi turned to see Naruto with one of her smoking guns pointed where the Star used to be. Her cold eyes stared at him with disdain. Eyes that did not waiver as purple chakra swirled into the nearest host, Akahoshi. The man let out hellish screams as the chakra from the Star entered his body, deteriorating his cells and slowly turned him into a soft stone. The man was dead and in his place now stood a new Star shaped like Akahoshi, posed as if screaming to the heavens. The battle was over as everyone stood in silence and stared at their new statue glowing in the dark.

Scene IX

It was early in the day, and the Leaf-nins were packing up to head home as they prepared for the Chūnin Exams and the invasion coming their way. However, before they headed out to the advance attack fighter, the new Hoshikage, Natsuhi, gave her finale goodbyes with her son and his friends.

"I wanted to thank you again for all you have done. You have taken down a traitor and have saved this village from annihilation. Certainly, you deserve high praise. Your medical treatments will go a long way in saving the future generation of this village. As well as help save our future ninjas when we have no choice but to Start training in using the Star again," Natsuhi sighed in sadness, knowing that their village survival required a few of their ninjas to master the Hidden Peacock.

She then pushed away such thoughts as she developed a small smile, "I am also pleased to announce that Star Forces will be able to send ninjas to help fight against our common enemy, you have my word as Hoshikage."

Kurenai wear an arm sling came up to hold out her hand at her fellow kunoichi stated, "I thank you for the aid you have given."

Natsuhi returned the shake as she stated, "And I thank you, my fellow sister, for the aid you have given."

The two shook their hands in respect before letting go as Kurenai went back to the Shadow Fox with her fellow ninjas, all except one. "Hinata, aren't you coming?" Naruto asked.

"Just one moment, I need to take care of something first," Hinata, answered before she ran up to Sumaru.

Sumaru blinked in surprise when Hinata asked if they could talk alone but complied as he directed her toward a small field away from prying eyes. Once alone, Hinata asked, "Why did you forgive your mother for abandoning you? I mean, I know that she needed to disappear to keep you alive, but
she could have left you a message through the Hoshikage and even met with you outside of the village from time to time. So why did you so readily accept your mother's return?"

Sumaru was startled by the question, so he blinked a few times before he gave a thoughtfully answer, "I accepted her for she is my mother and I was offered a second chance to have a family."

"Does family that has never been there or hurt you deserve a second chance?" Hinata asked more to herself then Sumaru as the Star-nin answered truthfully.

"I would never know unless I tried," Sumaru stated before shaking his head. "Look, I am not saying everyone deserves a second chance, but if the person is willing to try, I think they deserve a second chance. It may end in sorrow, but I think the chance of a happy family life far outweighs the sadness of disappointment."

Hinata was silent before giving small thanks, "Thank you for answering my question."

"No problem and goodbye," Sumaru smiled before returning to the waiting arms of his mother and his secret crush, Hokuto.

Hinata watched the three leave as she headed back to the Shadow Fox with a thoughtful look. A look she did not lose as she entered the fighter past a concerned Naruto waited for her. "Are you alright?" Naruto asked as she startled Hinata.

"I am fine, just a little lost in thought about my family," Hinata answered as she took a seat.

A concerned Naruto continued to stare as she followed Hinata to her seat before embracing the girl. Hinata never felt an embrace as warm as Naruto's. She soon found herself so lost in her own thoughts and Naruto's warmth that she did not notice that Tukiko took the Fox's Shadow up as they headed back to Konoha.

Scene X

Within an extensive study on the Hyūga estate, two brothers were sitting in front of the fire, drinking sake when they heard a knock at the door. The two asked the person to enter and realized it was their daughter/niece, Hinata.

"I see you have returned from your mission," Hiashi stated while his brother stayed quite.

"I have father, uncle," Hinata answered in a soft tone the two brothers had not expected to hear. "I am ready to continue my training from the both of you if you will have me."

The brothers looked up in shock as a puzzled Hizashi asked, "You want my help as well?"

Hinata nodded in response, "I am if you help train me and teach your son a lesson as to why you should not betray or actively harm family and comrades if he wants to live a long life as a Leaf-nin."

Now Hizashi cried at his merciful niece as he agreed to help train her. As the three planned Hinata's training routine, Kurenai appeared from the shadows, fully healed as she smiled at her student's mature decision to move beyond the past. Something Kurenai planned to follow as she pulled out a cell phone, "Hello, Asuma... It's Kurenai... Yes, it's good to hear from you too. Say, do you want to go out tonight... Yeah, a date if you want to have one with me... I will see you tonight."

Kurenai put up her phone as she prepared for a magical night as she washed away the remembrance of her past for a new future she hoped to have.
Chapter End Notes

Done and I hope you enjoyed this chapter.
Politics and Blood before the Storm

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own, I do not read it anymore. It seems fanfics are better reading material than the series. At least they have a consistent plot, unlike canon.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 06/08/2018

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

Early in the morning on a chilly fall day, a large crowd was filtering through the large military village known as Konoha. Their purpose was to watch the elite Genin beat each other to a pulp for the right to become Chūnin. A few hopped for blood as the ninjas filtered the large audience to an equally large stadium outside of the village under the eyes of the old village leader, Sarutobi, and his two students. To many, they were amazed to see the grand Hokage. A few were even able to talk to the old man, though they were mainly important nobles or political officials with their armed escorts. They were politicians that demanded the respect of others because of their position, even if some of them do not deserve such respect.

Sarutobi greeted them with a polite smile as he and his students talked to them for a few minutes as practice for the true politics to come. The military politics that all of the ninja villages participated in, no matter if they were one of the main five or just a minor Ninja Special Forces. A practice that continued, even among allies as the first two-village leaders showed up. The leaders of Waterfall and Star Forces, the only minor powers among the small countries allied with the Leaf.

Representing Star Forces were their newest commander, Natsuhi, followed by her son Sumaru. The mother and son were a welcome sight as they greeted the Hokage for the first time. It did not take him long to realize she was a sharp one who could keep him on his toes as her priority was her village. While representing Waterfall Forces had been a young black-haired coral eye young man, Shibuki. A man that while half Natsuhi's age was more experienced and twice as stubborn when it comes to the security of Waterfall Forces. He was also one for flexing the muscles of his village that was only a minor village due to a lack of resources and population within its smaller country. Such muscle included a paranoid, petty green-haired girl named Fū. A young woman with pink eyes who Jiraiya tagged as a Jinchūriki of the Seven-tailed Beetle similar to Colonel Nine of Nine.

The two leaders took their rekindled alliance very seriously as Sarutobi went to greet the group, "Madame Hoshikage, and Sir Takikage, welcome to Leaf."

"It is a pleasure to be returning the favor, you saved my village from the worse type of venom that a snake can produce, betrayal," the Hoshikage, Natsuhi stated as she gave off a vibe that spoke volumes about what she would do when she found a certain white snake.

"You too?" the young man, Shibuki asked in shock. "The same thing happened to my village. If it were not for Leaf's Team Six, my village would have been taken by that traitor Suien and his scum, even if it did cost our village one of our most valuable tools, the Hero's Water."

Sarutobi winced as he remembered the reports Team 6 turned in about how a simple goodwill
mission between their villages almost led to catastrophe. A few Jōnin and a dozen mercenaries handpicked by Orochimaru himself captured over a hundred civilians and ninjas. They were held hostage for the power-enhancing elixir, the Hero's Water, along with the complete surrender of the village. Luckily, they failed thanks to Shibuki's knowledge of all the passages into Taki and Team 6's willingness to help. They were able to ambush the ambushers within the large tree village, and with minimal casualties, at the cost of one of their many secret weapons, the Hero's Water.

Another such secret weapon grumbled as Fū snarled, "If I were allowed into the village, then the attack would never have happened. Those cockroaches would never have even tried when faced with this praying mantis."

The Takikage sighed in acceptance, as he nodded, "I agree with you Fū but trying to convince stupid, fearful old men that point is an uphill battle. Just be patient, and I'll get those old men to see sense, I promise you."

Fū blushed as she nodded in the hope that her commander keeps his promise while the three villages began to talk among themselves. They continued to do so until another village leader made her appearance with her two advisors/bodyguards. The woman was the leader of Mist forces in Water Country, Mei Terumī. A redhead that rivaled even Tsunade's bust, much to Jiraiya's delight and pain as Tsunade punched the old man hard into the ground. Sarutobi only shook his head in sadness as the woman in blue robes walked with a sway in her step as her hand showed off, in pride, her beautiful engagement ring.

Following the woman in single file was her two-man escort. The second one was of no importance, but the one very close to Mei was someone Sarutobi recognized. He was the adoptive father of Haku Momochi, Zabuza Momochi. The tall man did not look different than his representation in a bingo book, except he wore a thick blue vest instead of just his grey pants with straps and his grey mask that hide his sharp teeth. Zabuza looked to be the most intimidating among the three of them, but the Hokage was no fool. He knew the deadliest person was the one coming to shake his hand, the woman engaged to Zabuza, Mei Terumī.

"Hokage-Sama, I'm Mei Terumī, it is a pleasure to finally meet the man that helped free our country," Mei stated with a smile as she shook the old leader's hand. "I believe you are already acquainted with my top military leader, Zabuza Momochi. After all, you do have his adopted daughter among your forces, which I plan to make a representative to both our villages for the peace to come."

Sarutobi smiled as he greeted the man, "A pleasure to meet you. If your daughter is any indication, then half the rumors of you being a blood trusty monster must not be true."

Zabuza responded with a sinister smile as he laughed, "Oh it all true, as you will find out full well if my daughter is hurt in the events outside of the expected dangers of the Chūnin exams."

Sarutobi did not need to know what Zabuza meant as he gave a small flinched while Mei smacked the back of her fiancé's head. "Now honey, please don't threaten a fellow Kage. Wars have started for less," Mei smoothly declared before she gave one added comment. "Also, please do not insult your daughter. She can take care of herself. After all, you did raise her."

Zabuza stared at Mei before he laughed in agreement and gave her arm a small squeeze as the mood lightened up. Just in time as a bulky figure with long bleached, blond hair tied in dreadlocks landed in front of the Kages. Sarutobi recognized the dark skin, muscular man with the curly mustache to be Raikage Ė, a strong man with a chip on his shoulder. A chip that was understandable as he took on his predecessor's troubles after the former Raikage had been executed by Lightning's Daimyō for jeopardizing the peace treaty by trying to kidnap Hinata Hyūga. The predecessor had left Ė to rebuild
his village's reputation. Something Ē took pride in as he restored it in front of the world and his Daimyō. As the Raikage Ė, had made the formerly disreputable village into one of the most powerful and honorable ninja villages in this modern day.

This is why the two guards following him were not only newly adopted spouses but Jinchūrikin as well. The first was the two-tailed demon cat, a pale woman named Yugito Nii. She gave off the vibe of a serious woman indeed with her long blond hair tied into a tidy ponytail and her steely dark eyes; so unlike her adopted father and her adopted brother, Killer Bee, the second guard of the Raikage detail. Killer Bee, of the eight-tailed demon ox, looked very similar to his brother but also very different. Mainly that he had dark shades, no mustache, almost black skin, and white hair. He was even less bulky than his brother was, as his muscles were leaner. However, that did not make him weaker as he was still powerful as he can easily wield any/all of the eight different swords on his back. Both Jōnin were powerful, even without using their demonic trump cards.

Apparently, Waterfall forces are not the only ones flexing their muscles as the Hokage greeted the larger man. All the while, his two students were ready to fight as they welcomed ninjas from a country that was their enemies for decades. In addition, they were only allies due to the Daimyōs being good friends, and Fire County Elected Council and wanted their countries' relations to remain as active trade partners and military allies.

"Welcome to Konoha, Raikage Ė-San," Sarutobi greeted him with a firm handshake.

"It is a pleasure to be here Sarutobi. Especially since it would lead us into crushing that pesky little snake that was your former student," Ė stated with pride in his voice. The other twitched in annoyance as he continued to rant about how he would love to kill Orochimaru since he was known to experiment on Cloud-nins before and after the war with Leaf forces; especially if they had one of the few bloodlines characteristic of Lightning Country.

The rant continued until his brother Killer Bee badly rapped in agreement, "Hey, yo big brother, we hear you now, as we marched into battle, at the sound of your tune."

Ē began to berate and hit his brother for interrupting him as Yugito shook her head sadly, as she muttered, "Why did I have to be adopted by these idiots." She then straightened up as she yelled, "Will you two shut up! You're revealing everything in public, and if the wrong people hear it, then you won't get your glorious battle Ė."

The Raikage had the decency to blush before he straightens up, "You are right Yugito-Chan. Now is not the time to be excited. That can wait for later."

"I suggest you keep it under control if you haven't noticed company outside of the loop has just arrived," Jiraiya stated as he pointed to the approaching figure hidden in white robes and a white veil.

It was a man in the regalia of the Kazekage, including the white hat with the words 'Kazekage' printed on top. Something that was not unusual, as the man was quite secretive. Even his two bodyguards wore a veil, though they were not usually a head and a shoulder-length taller than their Kage. No, it was something else that was off about the man. Something that Sarutobi, Jiraiya, and Tsunade felt familiar with that was foreign to their feeling about the Kazekage. Like something from their past was creeping up on them in plain sight as Sarutobi shook the man's clammy hand.

"Hello Sarutobi-San, it's been a while, hasn't it?" the man asked as he tried his best not to slur his words.

"It has been a few years, good to see you too again," Sarutobi stated as he shook hands with his supposed ally, just before pointing to his two loyal students. "I don't believe you have met my two
students, Tsunade Senju and Jiraiya. They'll be here to overseeing some things as I determine which one might become Hokage when I retire."

The Kazekage twitched in annoyance while his two students paled at the prospect of being Hokage. Too bad for the Sand-nin, Sarutobi was not done introducing everyone, "I believe you know Takikage Shibuki-San and Raikage Ė-San, who despite having some trouble is here to watch while honoring the military aid treaty we established. I also would like for you to meet a new Hoshikage, Natsuhi, who recently had to retake her village from a traitor, as well the newest member of the military aid treaty, Water Country under the direction of the Mizukage Mei Terumī-San."

The Kazekage twitched, in anger or fear, Sarutobi could not tell, but he could tell he was annoyed when he dropped the act for a moment to hiss like a snake, "I seeee, that is very interstinnggg. Why wasn't I informed?" the man asked with a corrected voice, hopping he did not blow it in his moment of anger.

He did not realize they already suspect he was someone else as the other ninjas played along with the 'Kazekage' as Tsunade stated, "Well, I wasn't there, but didn't the treaty does state that if Mei won the Civil War, she would be allowed to join the alliance as we help funded their rebellion."

"Which you know this as you supplied them with a few of your shinobi to help train the rebels since you did not have the funds to assist them. Don't you remember?" Jiraiya lied to his teacher to confirm he was.

"Of… course, I just did not realize she will be here since I heard that the Mist only recently rose to power," the 'Kazekage' pointed out, not realizing he had out himself as someone else. "Though I guess it is a moot point. I do have to wonder what the others think of the fact four major villages and two powerful minor villages are under such a military power alliance. And speaking of reactions, will we have any other big players coming to this party."

"Well yes and no, many of the Kages are going to watch it live on TV, including Ōnoki as he complains more about his back then the 'new fancy junk from the dread Fire Country.' Though I heard his daughter, Kurotsuchi will be here with Rock Country's Daimyō. Therefore, there will be Rock forces present with the VIP. There also will be a few that I guess I am thankful they will not be showing up and at least one I had hoped she wouldn't come here."

The Kazekage was befuddled as he asked, "Who?"

"That would be me," answered a redhead with grey strands with a broad smile that everyone wanted to wipe off. "Hello, Sarutobi, fancy meeting you again."

"Yokoshima Uzumaki, it is a pleasure to see you here," Sarutobi stated as he lied through his teeth.

"Ah, you say the sweetest words, Sarutobi-Kun," Yokoshima stated as she gave a broad grin. "But you don't need to lie. I know you all hate me for killing some of your family during missions, personally or otherwise. You especially Sarutobi want me dead for personally killing your youngest son and his wife, thus leaving your poor grandson, Konohamaru-Kun, an orphan," Yokoshima giggled. "In fact, I think only Ōnoki-Kun and the new Mizukage-Chan want to see me dead even more. The old gnome for nearly killing off his entire clan, leaving only his granddaughter to pick up the pieces, and the bimbo beside you for the Bloodline Wars we funded."

Mei had to be held back as the others stare at the woman with venom as Yokoshima continue with a smug expression, "Though now is not the time to reopen old wounds, but to make inquiry what happen to my daughter and my youngest granddaughter? You wouldn't be keeping two Whirlpool-nins hostages to get back me, would you?"
Sarutobi twitched as he stated, "I am not at liberty to say who is within this village, nor have we granted anyone asylum for being a slave thanks to a certain seal outlawed by the Elemental Accords."

Yokoshima did not seem to be bothered, and she just smiled in amusement, "I see, well thank you for your cooperation. We will be heading out now, toodaloo." The woman waved before she walked right past them, followed by her guards, both with two sets of briefcases, one was standard leather, and the other was a metal box presumably containing money for gambling that happens during the exams.

As soon as Yokoshima was out of sight, the Kazekage left. The other Kages followed one by one until only Sarutobi, and his two loyal students remained. Jiraiya started to ask Sarutobi, "Sensei, if we get an opportunity to make her death look like an accident while she is here, can-"

"We take it?" Sarutobi finished for his student, who nodded 'yes.' Sarutobi formed straighten up as he gave one sharp, decisive order, "I want that woman dead by the end of the day. I don't care how or even if you have to stage it to look like accidental friendly fire. I want her dead, so make it so."

Sarutobi then left to the arena with two cautious students following right behind him.

Scene II

It was an exciting day for the Fire Country and one of their people, a simple farmer named John. He had won a VIP seat for the Chūnin Exams, near the front of the exams. Even the screens seemed bigger as they displayed the stats, where the contestants were from, their teammates, and more, the betting odds of each ninja, both overall and per match. It was perfect in every way except for one problem. He was right next to the Daimyōs and bodyguards, mostly samurai, of all five of the great countries: Fire, Water, Earth, Wind, and Lightning. Which in the process he learned more about politics than he ever wanted to know, as well as their dislike for each other. It seemed like you only would need a single match to light this powder keg.

Of the five, Earth and Water Daimyōs were figureheads to their Kages that were watched over by an additional ninja bodyguard. For Water Daimyō, it was a bitter reminder of his recent fall from grace due to his support of the bloodline purges. While Earth Country was a wealthy figurehead that had some influence thanks to his money. Most of the bodyguards were standard Jōnin, except one from Rock Country. Which allowed him to get a certain black haired, female bodyguard named Kurotsuchi, whose pink eyes were just as unique as the fact she was the daughter of the Kage.

The next two Daimyōs from Wind and Lightening countries had absolute power. However, the Wind Daimyō was paranoid about his own ninjas since his military budget cuts. Budget cuts required to spend on technology that made a living in the desert easier for the people in the desert. Which was different for the Lightening Daimyō, for he is well loved, but boggled down by so much work that he looked like the living dead. The final Daimyō was from John's Fire Country. He was unique among the group as his power is limited to being the tiebreaker between the elected officials in the House of Lords and Representatives, who hold the majority of the power. A position that he had been trained for by birth and he used his unique training and post to keep a good relationship among the leaders, and various lords, nobles, and officials, elected or not, making him very wealthy.

John was thankful that they calmed down when a bandana-wearing Special Jōnin stepped-up in front of the Genin hopefuls. A cocky man who used a senbon needle as a toothpick kept it in his teeth as he spoke up in front of the crowd, "Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the annual Chūnin Exams here in Konoha. I am Genma Shiranui, and I will be a proctor for these exams," Genma exclaimed as the crowd cheers roared thankful that the exams were about to begin. The Genin stood tall within the arena, an open dirt field with trees and a small lake in front of an enclosed wall designed to keep the
They continued to stand there until Genma directed most of them to leave for the balcony right next to the arena. All of the Genin except for Tukiko and Haku left the arena after Naruto and Hinata wished the girls good luck. Once they were out of sight, the screens began to display both of the girls' stats while Genma explained, "The first match will be a friendly rivalry between two girls that know each other as well any teammate knows each other. First up is a Leaf-nin from the famed founding clan, Tukiko Uchiha the 'Fire Mistress' of Konoha. Her opponent Haku Momochi, the 'Ice Mistress,' is from Mist Forces and trained here by request of her father, Mist Forces second in command, Zabuza Momochi. This is going to be a good match. So let us not wait any longer. Girls, are you two ready?"

"I'm ready as I will ever be," Tukiko answered while looking at Haku. "How about you Haku, ready to fight?"

"As ready as I will ever be in fighting a friend," Haku sighed with a hint of excitement as her hand formed into a seal. "Let's get this match over with."

"Couldn't have said it better myself," Tukiko stated as she started her own seals, preparing for the fight to come.

A fight that Genma was anxious to start as he yelled, "Then let the first match of the Chūnin exams begin!" before he jumped up to the stands. Away from an explosion of superheated vapor caused when multiple fireballs from Tukiko's 'Fire Style: Flower Phoenix Jutsu' met the field of airborne ice from Haku's 'Ice Style: Arctic Breath Jutsu.'

When the two met, the two jutsus exploded into steam that covered the ninjas like a blanket of darkness that would keep the two from finding each other to use long-range jutsus and fight in close range combat. However, that would not stop the gunfire as Tukiko pulled out her assault rifle armed with soft, paralyzing bullets that would not penetrate the skin, but they would send out a neural charge that could stun its targets. Tukiko let loose a barrage of bullets across the field in hopes that she would hit something. However, it was futile as the field cleared of vapor revealed that Haku had created a towering pillar of ice that she hid behind to protect herself from the hail of bullets. Not one shot hit her, and she was about to return the favor with her gas power crossbow.

Tukiko avoided the dozens of flathead paralyzing bolts before Tukiko also returned the favor with bullets. Tukiko forced Haku to take cover behind the pillar giving Tukiko an opening. Tukiko took the time to retreat into the trees while Haku shifted her movements around the pillar, holding on for dear life to the only thing stopping Tukiko from losing the match. She only received a moment of relief when Tukiko made her way into the trees.

A reprieve that was short lived as Tukiko once again opened fired after she found some cover. Haku could not find a way around Tukiko's cover as she returned fire, aiming in the general direction of Tukiko's firing. Unfortunately, Haku could not hit Tukiko with her crossbow, so she used 'Ice Style: Thousand Needles of Death' to launch a thousand ice needles in the trees to either flushed Tukiko out, or hit the girl, even if it took several waves. She only needed one as Tukiko ran out before the needles reached the forest ground, with her rifle on her back.

Haku tried to take advantage as she opened fire on the fast-approaching Uchiha. Only for the girl to evade a couple of bolts while Tukiko powered up her 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu.' The dragon of fire consumed the pillar of ice, forcing Haku to jump back as her cover was turned into vapor. This left the 'Ice Mistress' to face the 'Fire Mistress' at each other, with their weapons pointed at each other. There was a long pause between the two, waiting to see what the other would do as they slowly pulled the trigger.
Only for nothing to happen as both of them were out of ammunition. The fight would soon be a more physical experience as Tukiko pulled out her two long knives and dashed to face Haku. Haku pulled out a short bladed sword to deflect Tukiko's attack. The two then danced around each other, trading blows with increasing force until Tukiko backed off to stare down her opponent. Haku made a mistake to stare back at the Uchiha's red eyes with tomes began to spin as her left hand had a ram seal and she had a smirk that stated that she had won.

"Thank you for looking into my eyes. It makes things so much easier," Tukiko stated before using 'Genjutsu Style: World of Darkness Jutsu,' and Haku's world became dark.

It was a frightening experience to see nothing, to hear nothing, to taste nothing, to sense nothing. Haku experienced only darkness in a world where she could not even feel or hear her own heartbeat quicken. Haku was on the verge of a nervous breakdown when she remembered Zabuza's lesson on how to fight when her senses were not working. She had been trained so well, that even if most of her senses were gone, she only needed one to find her target. Moreover, while all five of her physical senses were gone, she still had one she used with Zabuza when hunting down targets. She was a sensor-nin, a ninja that can use her chakra as sonar to find her prey. All it requires is time.

Time that may not be on her side, as Tukiko was sure to strike any second. Haku rushed to build up enough of her chakra to develop into chakra pulses needed to find her target. Haku was sweating bullets when she finally built up enough chakra to send out a pulse. She was drenched with sweat when she found out that Tukiko was right behind her, ready to place her to hold her down with a knife to her neck, signifying a win.

Haku only had a moment to reach as she performed an elbow spin on the arm Tukiko used to hold her knife. The girl dropped her blade as Haku pulled out her own senbon needles in the dark. Needles she had brought out of her pouch to where she hoped would be Tukiko's neck. Her aim was spot on as the dark world broke away to reveal a shocked Tukiko looking down at the four-senbon needles touching her skin.

Tukiko spent several seconds in shock before she began to ask, "How did you-"

"I was trained as a sensor-nin before I met you guys, and you could not block my chakra pulse," Haku explained to Tukiko. "It was a good try, though. If I took a second longer, you would have won. Now, will you submit?"

Tukiko sighed with a small smile as she stated the magic words, "I give up."

Genma smiled as Haku lowered his arm to announced, "The winner of the first match is Haku Momochi!"

The crowd went wild over what would be the first match of the day. A cheer that only got louder before the girls shook hands and took a bow. It was a great match that showed cunning and strength, along with showing the proper sportsman quality to their fellow ninjas that insured both would be promoted to Chūnin or even Elite Chūnin. Even the Daimyōs from Water and Lightning Country were excited, despite giving up money they now owed to the Wind and Earth Countries from their lost bets. Fire Lord did not participate in the betting and the farmer, John just wished the others would shut up. Yet again, another argument broke out over which contestants were the best and snide comments against each other started all over again during one of the ten-minute break between each match.

Scene III

Outside of the arena, the ANBU patrolled the area looking for infiltrators, and they were doing a
good job taking down two from the shadows. It was just unfortunate for one ANBU with a rabbit mask that had briefly lowered his guard, and the silver-haired traitor, Kabuto, killed him with precession. Clad in armor and leaving no clues that he had killed the ANBU, Kabuto disappeared into the shadows and reappeared as part of the security force in the arena. All part of his master's grand designed as he readies the next step.

Scene IV

Back in the arena, the next set of matches were about to begin between the stoic Shino Aburame and the warrior princess Bastila Roth. Both were relative unknowns and by no means the favorites to win the whole thing. Yet there was still a lot of betting on who would win as there seemed to be no decisive answer. The two did not show an ounce of worry as they shook hands before they stepped away as Genma called for the second match to begin; and as the first match, it started with a bang.

Bastila gathered a margin of chakra into an exploding ball that forced Shino back while giving herself the necessary cover for the first part of the plan. A plan that Shino was cautious to fall for as he let loose swarms of black kikaichūs insects. A feat that scared the crowd as they watched with disturbed interest. The swarm built up while the smoke screen dispersed to reveal that there were two Bastila. The first was the real Bastila, who sat in meditation as a glow surrounded her. She was further away from the second, who was a clone created by sage chakra. The clone stood defiantly with her yellow double-bladed chakra blades out as she moved to attack the clone.

Shino stood perplexed, trying to understand why Bastila made a clone instead of engaging in long-range combat as his bugs crawled and flew around. His confusion only increased when her clone did not perform a strategic strike but instead ran right down the middle. Shino sent his entire swarm straight at the clone for a quick takedown. That move proved to be a mistake as his insects were too sluggish and overshot their target as Bastila's clone rushed pass them, right up to Shino tensed arms.

Shino barely got a kunai out in time to block Bastila's blades before she went into a furry as Shino could barely repel her blows. Something his teammates could not believe, because even though Shino was no expert in close range combat, he was no slouch either, so he should not be having this much trouble. In fact, he should not even be breathing hard at all, yet he was barely keeping up with the woman. Each of her strikes was little closer until he finally lost his grip and Bastila's blade came down. Shino barely got out of the way of the blade, but not far enough to avoid the girl's foot as he tumbled to the ground. Shino was silently calm as Bastila was over him, her fist raised high, ready to knock him out.

A clicking sound was all that stopped her as the swarm tried to descend upon her. Only for their prey to escape by leaping over the swarm, that had returned home to Shino. The clone was far enough for Shino to regroup. Shino used his kikaichūs to act as a shield as Shino tried to determine why his reflexes and thought process were sluggish. He continued to look for a logical answer until he remembered the research he did on the Roth Clan. Specifically, he recalled a small mention in a historical scroll that talked about the clan's battle tactics and techniques used during the Great Shinobi War.

It led to a question he asked in an almost drugged, dull tone, "You are using Battle Sage Meditation, aren't you?"

The question brought a small smile on her face as Bastila's clone began to boost, "Why yes I am. In fact, I am the youngest user of the very art that stopped the armies from invading Konoha and Vulcan, the capital of Fire Country. The very power that drains our enemies into submission while invigorating our allies. Moreover, if the person knows it, or even senses it, then the technique becomes more effective. Meaning you're running out of time faster than you were."
Shino showed a brief moment of emotion, of fear for the first time since Bastila knew him, and her clone was going to take advantage of it. The clone began to run around Shino, slashing at the horde of bugs. With each slash, more of Shino's forces were destroyed that was needed for defense. A defense that itself was being depleted to an onslaught that brought the clone closer to victory.

All the while, the real Bastila was silent, concentrating on her Battle Sage Mediation. Her face grimaced, as it was getting harder to pull chakra into the technique. She did not know why until she felt something crawling on her face. Her eyes opened up as she realized that a few of Shino's kikaichūs had snuck away from the swarm to attack her. Draining her chakra slowly so she would not notice until it was too later, or at the very least too weak to use her Battle Sage Meditation.

Bastila panicked as she broke her Battle Sage Meditation to flare her Sage Chakra to burn away over a dozen kikaichūs that were crawling on her. A tactical moment that insured defeat as Shino used the chance to overwhelm the screaming clone. The defensive swarm turned into an offensive one as they drained the clone of all its sage chakra while invigorating Shino. The sage clone soon dissipated, leaving Bastila all alone. Bastila knew she had lost as a massive swarm was beginning to surround her.

Therefore, she shook her head as she asked Shino, "I guess you know that the one weakness of Battle Sage Meditation is to break the user's concentration?" Shino nodded yes, as Bastila sighed in acceptance, "I knew I should have waited until I reached the forest but I could not afford to wait, for every second counted. And I see no possible way I can win, so I Bastila Roth surrenders to Shino Aburame."

Genma nodded as he yelled, "Winner of the second match, Shino Aburame!" and the crowd went wild in what was the second most impressive match in the arena while the Kage discussed their votes on the promotion of the two Genin.

"I do not know about you four, but I believe that Shino deserves the rank of Chūnin and possibly even Elite Chūnin if he demonstrates the same cunning through all of these matches," Mei pointed out.

"Definitely Elite Chūnin if he is able to come up with a strategy to not only take out his target but also keep her from retreating while under the effects of Battle Sage Mediation, that certainly is impressive," Sarutobi pointed out.

"I agree," Ē reluctantly agreed. "However, the girl, while she developed a good strategy, did not come up with any kind of backup plan. That is excusable for the second set of matches but not for the first. Especially, since she could have taught herself some long-range jutsus to win. Not to mention she could have won if she took a chance to hide, or used different attack style. So I say she only should be promoted to Special Chūnin."

Sarutobi nodded yes, as he turned to a quite Kazekage as he asked, "Don't agree with our assessments, Kazekage?"

"Hm… oh sorry I just thought it's a surprise that you don't include a Roth on every mission?" Kazekage asked with a hint of fear.

"That is because only a sixth of the Roth even shows the possibility of using Battle Sage Mediation, and even fewer master them," Sarutobi explained. "It is also too limited in range, and the fact the user has to be stationary makes it not as helpful in the field for a small attack squad."

"But on a village scale?" the Kazekage asked.
"Like on the frontlines? Unless they are placed in strategic position, they would be useless," Sarutobi answered the Kazekage while neglecting to mention that the more ninjas within close proximity to each other using the Battle Sage Meditation the larger the range would be. Something only the Roth Clan and the Hokage would know as a closely guarded secret, along with one that was more recent. A secret that Shino needed to know, as he stopped Bastila to ask, "Why did you reveal Battle Sage Meditation to the general public."

Bastila sighed as she stated, "Because mom and Revan told me too." Bastila sighed before she explained, "It has been over two decades since we used Battle Sage Mediation in combat, and people tend to forget. It would not be as effective in battle unless we remind others it exists, and hopefully, the invading enemies would be listening. So we had to remind the world before I leave, and now that I lost, I will be joining up with the other Battle Masters. Good luck, Shino," Bastila had stated before she walked away.

Leaving Shino to nod in response, "You too, Bastila," before he walked back to the stands.

Scene V

Within the arena, the Leaf ANBU was walking around the crowd looking for spies that had entered into the arena's audience. Spies that were identified by sensors placed at the entrance. To the general crowd, the sensors were used as metal detectors designed to look for any hidden weapons to keep the public safe. In reality, they were not just metal detectors, but also imaging and energy sensing scanners. Meaning all the invading ninjas that used chakra, such as the 'Transformation Jutsu' was discovered. From there, invaders were identified, allowing the ANBU to kill some of these spies while using genjutsu to hide their kills. By the time the invasion began, half of the known invaders were killed, and no one would realize it until it was too late.

Scene VI

Back in the arena, Genma was introducing the next set of opponents as he tried to pump up to the crowd, "Okay people, we have yet another exciting fight. On one side is the daughter of the current Kazekage, older and more experienced 'Wind Mistress' from Sand Forces, Temari Sakabu. The other is the Leaf's local favorite, adopted daughter to the best weapon maker in Fire Country, a member of the famed Vepa clan, and the 'Weapon Mistress' from Leaf Forces, Tenten Vepa. A battle between the princess from Sand Country, and a commoner from Fire Country; it is sure to be a classic match between noble and underdog. So girls are you ready?"

"I am ready to put the tree hugger in her place," Temari stated with a snarl as she pulled out a giant fan.

"Keep dreaming bitch," Tenten snide as she pulled out a long sword.

"Let the third match of the Chūnin Exams begins!" Genma yelled before he got out of the way of another battle.

The battle started when Temari unfolded her fan, and she sent out a massive cyclone of wind towards Tenten. A predictable plan as Tenten generated her own ridge of high-pressure wind onto a sword to brace against the attack. The warm air split around her, much to the shock of Temari as Tenten pulled out a scroll and tossed it into the air to launch over a hundred kunais at Temari. Temari responded by summoning a wall of wind to deflect the girl's kunais and yelled out with glee as the last kunai skipped on the ground. Seeing Temari's defense, Tenten dropped her scroll and pulled out six throwing knives embedded with her elemental chakra. She let them fly, hopping the sand-nin would try to deflect them with her open fan.
Temari did not fall into Tenten's trap as she closed her fan and deflected each knife with her massive fan. When the last blade was deflected, Temari turned to face Tenten and saw the Leaf-nin was right up to her with two brown tonfas. In fear of her getting too close, Temari shot off the ground into the air with her fan. Once in the air, she got right on top of her fan where she stayed, floating right above Tenten. A temporary safety maneuver Temari discovered as she was still within Tenten's reach. Tenten pulled out a spear from one of the many small scrolls at her side and threw it at her floating target.

Realizing she was in danger, Temari quickly folded her fan to let the spear pass her as she fell to the ground. She then reopened her fan as she approached the field to send a torrent of wind to the ground. A torrent that slowed her descent as it picked up a significant amount of dust. Dust that blinded Tenten while Temari used it as a sign to prepare a maelstrom that would end this fight with one strike. By creating a series of waves from her fan, she was able to build up a storm so massive that even a bear would fly like an eagle in its wake. Terrifying typhoons that Temari let loose on her opponent, confident it would win her this fight.

Therefore, it came as a big surprise to Temari that it failed as Tenten used one of her few jutsus she had been training to use since the break in the exams. An old jutsu from her own former clan, 'Vapor Style: Ward Jutsu,' that used a torrent of hot air to surround the user to deflect throwing weapon. It could also be used to divert Temari's maelstrom and cause it to harmlessly flow around her. It took a few seconds for the maelstrom to pass over and Tenten returned to the offense by throwing a dozen shurikens at Temari's fan. Temari did not even have enough time to respond, as the throwing stars tore through her fan like butter. Her tattered fan ruined was her only chance of survival as Tenten brought out her tonfas for another offensive strike.

Temari used her broken fan as a shield and was able to hold Tenten off for a second to see the 'Weapon Mistress' was smiling. "Why are you smiling you tree hugger?" the older woman snarled in defiance. "You get off when a girl resistance against your kinky ass."

"I have a boyfriend fan-girl," Tenten responded with an emphasis on the 'fan-girl' to anger Temari. "One that is a lot more fun than you will ever find. I am just smiling because I have just have won this match thanks to the fact my tonfas were soaked in a liquid form of knock-out gas, and your face is right next to them."

That was all the warning Temari had before a clear vapor escape from Tenten's tonfas into her skin and nose. The sand-nin soon found her world fading as the leaf-nin slammed the fan out of her hands and onto the ground. Temari was defenseless as Tenten brought up her two tonfas and slammed them across Temari's face. The girl was out before she hit the ground with large bruises on her checks. No one needed to announce Tenten won her fight as medic-nins rushed to take Temari away. Tenten gave a bow before running off to her boyfriend, the self-proclaim handsome green devil, Lee.

All the while, high over the stands, the Kazekage stared at his 'daughter' with boredom, while the other Kages pretended to care about his daughter's loss. "I'm sorry about your daughter's loss," stated with as much tack as a brick. "But maybe if you trained your girl to fight without her fan, then maybe she would have done better then she had in this fight."

The Kazekage twitched in annoyance as he hissed, "I'll keep that in mind."

"Well regardless, the girl did show a good amount of intelligence and planning, so she should at least be promoted to Special Chūnin," Zabuza stated, much to the agreement of the Kages. "As for the little 'Weapon Mistress,' she is definitely Chūnin material for the fact alone she could switch between so many different weapon styles."
"The girl has some madddd skills mon," Bee rapped to the group. "If she were a thunderous cloud, instead of a sharp leaf, I would be taking her in as my personal apprentice."

"I agree she will most likely be promoted to Chūnin, but anything higher, I will wait to make my judgment since I know she was holding back. She did not use even a tenth of the weapons she had, including some dangerous toys Naruto gave her," Sarutobi stated as the other Kages nodded in agreement. All the while, he was watching his ANBU following Temari being carried out of the arena.

Scene VII

Within a small hospital, as a bruised Temari woke up to see she was in a white room while Kankurō was looking over her as she asked, "Did I lose?"

"Yeah you did sis," Kankurō told his sister with a straight, plain voice. "Sensei is not too happy about the both of us losing. I think he is afraid that since we are stronger than most Chūnin from our village, he is worried about how strong the Leaf-nins Chūnin and Jōnin are. He was also disappointed we lost as he now has to depend solely on Gaara to complete the plan."

"A plan that includes invading our village?" asked a muffled voice of a purple hair ANBU with a cat mask that barely hid her amusement. "Now, are you going to come quietly or do my boys have to get rough?" the woman asked, as two guards beside her pulled out their assault rifles.

The two Sand-nins tensed as Kankurō went for his puppets while Temari examined the situation. It did not take long for her to realize it was a battle she could not win. Therefore, she did the only thing she could do. She surrendered, much to the shock of Kankurō until she pointed out, "There is no way we can win this battle. It is better to live another day than put up a useless fight that ends with our deaths."

"Smart move," Yugito stated as her two guards sprung to action, taking the two sand-nins into custody, the first POWs. The two Sand-nins never felt so humiliated.

Scene VIII

Back within the arena, the crowd was getting anxious for the next two matches. Like Haku and Tukiko's matches, they were some of the most heavily bet on matches. For the next match, it was one Genma did not have to introduce, as it was a classic tales. Of upper class vs. lower class, loved jerk vs. beloved kindness, and screw-up turned great vs. prodigy. On one side was Neji Hyūga, a boy that was considered a genius by many and was one of the strongest Genin in the exams. The rumors of what he did in the preliminary matches made him famous among some of the girls thinking he needs the right girl to help. Others who did not like the boy thought there was no way he could lose as an underhanded, undefeated player; so many bets were on Neji for the win. His opponent, Hinata Hyūga was different. She was the heiress to the very same clan and at one time was believed to be their greatest embarrassment due to how weak she. That was until she rose to fame for her innovation and kind heart that made many think she would win. This, in turn, made it an exciting match that just made people flock as the trash talk began in the arena.

"I would suggest you give up Hinata-Sama?" Neji declared with a snarl. "Your friend is not here to save you from your destiny. You cannot defeat me and should step down before your glorified reputation takes a bigger hit by losing to your servant."

"That's funny coming from a boy who has already tarnished the family reputation and has no honor among his comrades due to your action in the prelims against Ami," Hinata stated with a bored expression that hid her rising anger. "Though I am not surprised, for you did make it your life's
You know nothing!" Neji screamed. "You are still the weak, pathetic girl that only made it this far due to your friends and the Main Branch's influence. You do not deserve to be the clan Heiress. So I suggest you give up or fate will prove that I am stronger than you."

"I did not get carried here by my friends," Hinata snarled. "Haku, Tukiko, and Naru-chan helped me just as much as I helped them, while you slapped away any hand of friendship. Their friendship has made me stronger while weak, pathetic people like you try to drag others down by acting superior. However, if you feel that fate will give you a victory then prove it. So come on fate boy, I got a promise to keep, and I don't have all day."

That made Neji snapped a moment after Genma signaled the match to begin as he rushed over to Hinata, with his arm rose to strike. He did not even touch Hinata when she moved to the side and slashed at Neji with her chakra blade. Neji avoided the strike as Hinata went on the offensive. She performed a series of slashes at Neji, and he barely dodged the attacks while dancing ahead of the girl. Once he was far enough ahead, he began to perform a rapid number of strikes against Hinata, which the heiress started to block some of them with her open palms.

The boy was shocked that she stopped his attack and was not even hurt by the strikes that she had blocked as she slid around his strike. It became increasingly difficult to land a hit, but that did not stop Neji. If anything, he became more determined as he stepped up his attack by shaping his chakra around an open palm into the form of a lion's head. Neji was performing another Main Branch attack, 'Lion Borage.' Hinata would have no defense against such an attack, but she did not need to. Instead, Hinata sent Neji flying with 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' six feet away, soaking wet from the water she shot out of her mouth.

Hinata would swear that the water was literally vaporizing off his, as he stood there, enraged. "You dare used a non-Hyūga technique. You are going against our most sacred tradition."

"I was never one for tradition since Hyūga tradition left me to become a stuttering nervous wreck I used to be," Hinata stated off-handily. "Though I don't know why you're concern about it since you are breaking a few traditions by learning a few main-branch techniques. So in the words of a friend, 'Shut up and take this new gentle fist technique like a man!'" Hinata yelled as she formed a long-range chakra attack that looked like a spear that she had pulled from out of her body.

Neji only gapped in shock before he began to perform the 'Heavenly Spin' to negate the strike of pure chakra. The spinning created a chakra sphere that only works in pushing her blade of chakra barely to the side. He knew he needed to get close so for the second time today, he rushed his cousin. Seeing her cousin trying to come in for the kill, Hinata sent out two more chakra spears at Neji. Neji sidestepped one of them and jumped over the second to come face to face with Hinata.

"You are now within my realm, Hinata-Sama!" Neji snarled before he performed 'Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms,' intent to end the fight once and for all.

However, his opponent was not about to call it quits as Hinata countered with 'Protective Eight Trigrams Sixty-Four Palms.' It was the perfect defense that only Hinata, with her inherited flexible, could perform. For every two, four, eight, sixteen and thirty-two rapid strikes Neji tried to deliver, Hinata deflected them all with an open palm that had a small blade of chakra shooting out. Leaving Hinata untouched while Neji found out he could not even use his arms.

He was in profound shock as he asked, "How?"

"Both of our fathers helped me perfect a technique that depends on my flexibility in a way to redeem
themselves after you embarrassed them, and for failing you," Hinata stated with a straight face, as Neji looked bewildered. "You have become a monster Neji, worse than even the old buggers we call our elders. You have become self-centered, believing you are such an all-powerful prodigy of the Hyūga clan that you tarnished everyone's reputation due to your decisions. Now it is time to face the consequences as you are in my realm, Neji-Kun," Hinata growled as she performed 'Gentle Blade Style: Star Strike.'

She slashed across Neji in a pattern that looked like the Star of David in a fluid, continuous motion that Neji could not keep up. He soon found himself unable to move, leaving the boy vulnerable to Hinata's final strike, a point strike with her hands put together that sent Neji flying to the ground in pain. Neji was out, but the match was not stopped. Hinata raised her hand to the proctor to request satisfaction to punish her cousin for his previous deeds. The Hokage, through the proctor, granted it.

Hinata walked over to a scared Neji as he cried out, "What... are you going... going to do to me?"

"You know what I am going to do," Hinata stated as she moved her hands to his leg. "And you know what needs to be done to stop me."

"I am... not going to say I'm sorry... to that commoner. It... it is not the way of the Hyūga," Neji grunted with tears, much to the disappoint of his teammates, teacher, and his father and uncle.

"Fine then," Hinata declared, and everyone heard the snap. She had broken Neji's leg as he screamed in pain. "To satisfy the honor and reputation of the village and clan, your punishment is not being able to walk for at least a month. Let see how valuable you are when you have to spend months to get back up to snuff." Hinata then moved on to the other leg before stating, "Your current break was a clean break, and you probably will be up in a day if I perform some medical jutsus right now. So this is your last warning, prove to me that you are ashamed of your actions or the next break will not be clean."

It was quite as Hinata tighten her grip as Neji thoughts began to wander. His world has come crashing down for the second time, and this one had a bigger impact. His cousin that he had written off as being weak had proven to be stronger than even the rumors had said. He was always told the Hyūgas were superior and that fate robbed him of his rightful place when his father was born one minute later then Hinata's father. Now, all his arrogance and talk of destiny had ended with him losing. Hinata had proven she was worthy of being the heiress while he nearly lost to a commoner due to his arrogance that he had not shown an ounce of courtesy. It made him rethink everything he previously had thought and done. His life flashed before his eyes, and he realized something, he did not like what he had become, and he needed to change.

He knew it would be years before he could be considered changed and redeemed, but for now, he could take the first step as he stated loudly for everyone to hear that would shock the whole village, "I am sorry. I am sorry for tarnishing the village and the clan's name with my actions. I am sorry for all the rotten things I said. But most of all, I am sorry that I spat in Ami's face when she showed mercy to a boy she should never have. I'm sorry."

The audience was quite as Ami whispered, "Apology accepted asshole."

Hinata nodded as she worked her magic, healing all of Neji's wounds instead of the leg she broke. It was a shock to Neji as he found himself able to move. He stared at his cousin to ask, "Why?"

"You are my family, and although I may not like all the members of my family, I will not turn them away unless they turn me away first. Are you going to turn me away?" Hinata asked with suspicion as she opened the last chakra point she closed.
"I will not, cousin, and thank you," Neji stated as he slowly got up and made his way to the hospital with his father following behind from the arena, to show how proud he was of his son on this day.

It was that moment that Genma yelled, "Winner of the fourth match, Hinata Hyūga!" and the crowd went wild.

The thunderous applause was not something she expected and began to blush. Her blush soon turned bright red when out of nowhere she was lifted off the ground. She was about to faint when she realized it was Naruto twirling her around as he laughs, "You did it! You did it! I knew you would win and you got that stick in the mud to admit he was wrong! Oh, I am so happy I could kiss you!"

"I am-m-m ha-ha-happy too, but c-cou-could y-you s-st-stop t-twi-twi-twirling m-me a-a-around," Hinata stuttered while hoping she would not let go. Hinata would faint in her arms when the catcalls began while Naruto wondered why people were dismayed at her in showing her affection for her best friend in the whole wide world. Colonel Nine of Nine just shook her mental head in amusement while most of the Kages also laughed while voting for Hinata's promotion.

In the stands, Tukiko also shook her head when she asked Haku, "You think the two even realized how much they like each other."

"Well, since Hinata is still shy deep down and Naruto is too blunt for her own good, I speculate it will be awhile," Haku stated with curiosity.

"At least it would be amusing for the time being," Tenten stated with amusement.

"Well enjoy it, for things are about to get chaotic," stated a taller Night Wolf before turning his attention to his teammate. "Ready for our match Revan?"

Revan stared out before stating in a warm tone, "As ready as I ever will be. Let us see, who knows who is best," Revan added before she headed for the stairs, with a sway in her hips.

Night Wolf stared for a moment before stating, "She is doing that on purpose," before he followed while Naruto carried a happy Hinata up the stair.

Scene IX

Outside of the village of Konoha, two massive armies were moving with stealth and dedication. One with the goal of destroying the village, the other to aid as the war was coming. A war that would change the world as it set the world on its head. The king of chakra was dead, long-lived the king of technology and chakra that would beat the drums for the wars to come.

Chapter End Notes

Finally, the story commences. Sorry, for such long wait but with final four months of college involving project classes and holidays, I just hadn’t had much time to write, especially since I lost some files halfway through the semester. Now it is done, and I hope you enjoy the update after so long. Just don’t expect more as the job hunt now begins.

A) I will be focusing on my Dragon Age story, so don’t expect an update any time
soon.
Scene I

It was quiet at the moment, as Night Wolf son of Wolf Dreamer stared down the cold, yet beautiful opponent Revan Roth. Both were teammates from a team that was famous in certain circles due to the number of high-ranked missions they completed. Combined with their records, and the two were being watched closely by the military officials. Bets were high with Revan being the slight favorite to win. The two did not even speak until Night Wolf broke the silence while the proctor fired up the crowd.

"So this is it," Night Wolf stated in a calm, soothing voice. "I've would not have thought we would wind up fighting each other in an elimination round right off the bat. A shame we cannot treat this as a practice round."

"It is a shame," Revan answered in a cold voice as she stared past the field.

Night Wolf sighed at Revan's cold manner, "You know, after several months of being together and as close as any teammates can be, I still can barely reach you. I had hoped you would show more passion in this fight, even if it were negative emotions like dislike. Though I guess, it was too much to hope you would show the same passion you had when we were all kids. You have been cold since the Uchiha incident, and I feel like I really have to work hard just to get you to smile, occasionally."

"I… I do have the same passion, it is just the incident taught me there is a time to show it, and this is not one of them," Revan stated slowly, looking slightly away from Night Wolf.

Night Wolf raised a white eyebrow until a small, mischievous smile formed, "How about we make this match interesting?"

"In what way?" Revan asked out of curiosity.

"If I win, then you go out with me to the Red Leaf and see if that will pull up some passion in either friendship or maybe more," Night Wolf explained, and Revan eyes widen slightly with a small blush appearing on her pale skin before it disappeared as quickly as it appeared. "If you win, it will be up to you if you want to go somewhere or perhaps we do something else within… reason."

"I see," Revan calmly stated as she pulled out her stick to summon a purple blade of energy. She then moved into battle position to state, "I accept."
"Good," Night Wolf smiled as he summoned his black eye spirit animal, Howling Wolf, as he moved into an attack position. Wind followed his moves as he waited to spring his attack. The two would not have to wait long as Genma called for the next match to begin much to the excitement of the now roaring crowd.

The two dashed towards each other as Revan performed a dash strike at Night Wolf. Night Wolf ducked under the attack and conducted a counter strike. He then tried to punch Revan in the stomach, but she rose up her knee to deflect the attack. The wind punch helped her fly up into the air as Howling Wolf moved to meet her. Revan saw the attack coming and used her blade to deflect the wolf while she fired a palm strike of chakra towards Night Wolf. Night Wolf moved out of the way and retaliated with a punch of wind.

Revan dove towards the ground to avoid the wind and she landed on the ground in a crouched position. She waited for Night Wolf to continue his attack. She was not disappointed when Night Wolf performed a wind kick towards Revan, and she rolled towards Night Wolf to avoid the strike while Howling Wolf made a dash towards the girl. Revan landed on her feet and felt that the wolf made of wind was behind her. She spun on her toes to avoid the first strike as the wolf dashed passed her. Howling Wolf landed on its feet and jumped back towards Revan as she dodged another attack. The spirit wolf repeated the attack two more times before she tried to strike the wolf with her sword. The wolf avoided her attack with a mid-air escape before it launched itself towards Revan directly above her head.

Howling Wolf accelerated towards Revan as Night Wolf moved in to attack in what would be considered checkmate. If she avoided Night Wolf, she would have been hit by the wolf and vice versa, all according to her plan. As she wanted Night Wolf and Howling Wolf to fight her at the same time, and it was difficult to manipulate someone as independent as Night Wolf. Therefore, she needed to be believable. She was able to pull it off as she sent a chakra blast out from her body once the two were close enough. The explosion sent the two flying away as she threw her purple saber of chakra to spin like a blade towards Howling Wolf while sending a palm blast at Night Wolf. The two were hit in the chest and sent flying before they landed on their back.

Night Wolf yelped as he rose up while Howling Wolf silently disappeared in the wind and reappeared at his partner's side. The two stared at Revan, as she stood proudly. She was breathing a steady beat as she caught her sword without even looking. She flicked her blade towards Night Wolf as she stated, "You are going have to do better than that to beat me."

Night Wolf had laughed as he took a firm stance, "I guess I was right… I have no choice but to go all out."

"You were holding back?" Revan asked with surprise lingering in her voice. She did not suspect that Night Wolf would hold back in their fight since they were even when they trained together.

"I was hoping to save my trump card for future matches, but I knew the chances of that were slim, and now it has proven to be pointless," Night Wolf explained as he began to go through a tone of seals to power up 'Spirit Style: Spirit Fusion Jutsu.' "Now the fight truly begins."

Howling Wolf howled in agreement as he dissolved into the wind that whirled around Night Wolf. His entire body was covered by the wind that moved in speeds that could tear Night Wolf apart if he was not careful. His body became even more feral like a wolf while his eyes became black with white swirls bleeding out of them. Night Wolf had fused with his spirit, something Revan was not prepared for.

"How and when did you learn such a high-level technique?" Revan asked.
"Over the month break," Night Wolf answered as he moved into attack position. "My father and uncle thought I was ready and now we shall see," Night Wolf added before he disappeared from view.

Revan cursed as Night Wolf appeared behind her and kicked her in her back. The force of the attack and wind sent Revan tumbling to the ground as she spun to strike with her blade. Night Wolf caught her attack with his hands, using the wind armor around them to keep her blade inches away from the flesh. Night Wolf flung the blade out of Revan's hand before he kicked the girl in the ribs. Revan rolled in the air for over 4m (13.12ft) before she landed on her back. She quickly goes to her feet as Night Wolf fired off a high power wind punch attack. Revan summoned her blade and fired off a chakra-slash with her sword to deflect the wind attack just barely in time.

Revan was breathing hard as Night Wolf stared Revan down, "I suggest you surrender Revan. You must realize you can't win for all I need to do is just wear you down or beat you down through force."

Revan smiled as she laughed out, "That may be true if it was not for two facts."

"Which is?" Night Wolf asked with a calm tone.

"One is that you have a time limit in how long you can use that technique," Revan pointed one finger up in her explanation. "You have around twenty minutes if my senses are any indication, which is impressive for a Chūnin level ninja. Elite Jōnin can last an hour or two if the recorded texts are accurate."

"Still more than enough time to wear you down," Night Wolf pointed out.

"True, if you were not the only one that had a trump card," Revan pointed out as chakra swirl around as she used Sage chakra internally. Purple energy began to form into an armor of chakra with wings that came with a jump in power that her opponent and audience could sense. She was using the rare Roth clan technique, 'Archangel Armor' to give her the boost needed to win.

Revan smiled as she added, "And unlike you, my power pulls from the world around. So I will definitely outlast you in this race."

Night Wolf tensed as Revan went on the offensive. She fired off a palm strike while at the same time, jumped in the air and stayed in the air with her new wings. She then moved to keep her distance, ahead of her teammate while using chakra blasts to keep him at bay. Night Wolf returned fire with his own attacks and found something odd; all his strikes overpowered her strikes. Revan also realized this as she increased the power of her attack and Night Wolf did the same. Night Wolf could overwhelm her if he could catch her, so Night Wolf gave chase as Revan tried to outlast Night Wolf.

As time passed, Night Wolf was getting more desperate to come up with a strategy to end this fight. He soon came up with a plan as he ran up the wall, using chakra to stick on the vertical face. While on the wall, he observed the direction Revan was going before he had positioned himself. Night Wolf shot off the wall towards her at high speed. Revan did not even have the time to get out of the way, as he wrapped around the girl and punched her in the mouth. Both fell to the ground with Night Wolf on top of Revan with her chakra armor was still in place.

Night Wolf was about to strike her again until she stated, "You fell for it," before she developed a significant amount of chakra and blasted Night Wolf at point blank range.

The force was stronger than anything Night Wolf was prepared for as he flew off the sage knight. The strength of the blast disrupted his technique and dispersed his spirit animal before he hit the
Night Wolf was distorted and tried to shake off the effect when he was pinned to the ground with a chakra blade to his neck. Night Wolf looked up see Revan, sweating profusely as she was trying to get her breathing under control. It did not take long for the events clicked in his mind to realize that Revan had played him.

"The technique you used had a time limit as well," Night Wolf stated.

Revan smiled 'yes' as she stated in a huff, "There is only so much chakra my body can handle and so much chakra I can absorb from the air before running out. You would have outlasted me, and I needed you close to performing my most powerful attack. So I made you do all the work while I'd built-up my attack. So will you submit?"

Night Wolf sighed before he yelled out, "I surrender!"

Genma heard the call and yelled out, "Winner, Revan Roth."

The crowd cheered as Revan rose before she helped Night Wolf up. Revan pulled Night Wolf close, and the two stared at each other a bit awkwardly when Night Wolf asked Revan, "What now?"

Revan thought it over before stating in a warm tone, "I want you to pick me up for a date at the Red River a week from now at five o'clock."

Night Wolf whistled, "Dang, you are going a bit fancy picking a restaurant that serves both eastern and western cuisine. Do you need me to dress in fancy clothing?"

"Of course, it will be a date. You still owe me for when we had to embrace after you pushed me into that cold stream and we hid for an hour after we were ganged-up on by the enemy during our mission in Waterfall," Revan answered in a matter of fact tone as she walked away with her hips swaying as she moved.

Night Wolf stood still as a statue as he gave a small laugh, "Why do I feel like I am going to regret and love this gamble. Oh well, can't say I won regardless," Night Wolf added as he followed Revan up into the stands like a lost puppy while the Kages discussed the match.

"This was a most impressive match, and both of them deserve the rank of Chūnin," Yugito, the Raikage's bodyguard stated.

"Especially the girl Revan," Jiraiya had pointed out. "She manipulated Night Wolf since the fight began and had everything planned on the fly. Even I thought her advantage was outlasting the boy in the fight."

"She is defiantly Elite Chūnin material," Tsunade added. "She made me question if she was fatigued, and I am a trained medic. I should have spotted the effects as they appeared, but I saw nothing. (Sigh). To be able to focus and manipulate to the level she has done, I would say we promote her to Elite Chūnin, and that is only for the fact she does not have the experience to become Jōnin."

"So it's agreed, we give Night Wolf the rank of Chūnin and Revan Roth the rank of Elite Chūnin," Sarutobi stated, and the other Kages agreed while Sarutobi stared down in the arena as he watched his force move in the shadows and prepare for battle.

Scene II

Within the stands, the Jōnin Sensei from Sand watched the match using his one eye and was increasingly worried. His two students had not reported in yet, and with more Leaf-nins matches that he saw, the more scared he became. Sweat soaked the white cloth that covered the top of his head
and the side of his face as a thought went through his head.

If the Leaf's Genin could match Sand Force's Chūnin, if not Jōnin level ninjas, he wondered what their Jōnin could do. He was worried the plan was compromised. Therefore, when an ANBU appeared next to him in the aisle, the red strips on his face flared while his tanned skin briefly paled as he moved to get a weapon from his belt. He stared intently at the female ANBU with his single eye as he waited for the ANBU to do something.

"Are you Baki of the Red Claw?" the purple haired female ANBU asked while she remained unarmed.

"Yes. What of it?" The Jōnin named Baki asked while looking a little unhinged.

"My name is Yūgao Uzuki. There has been an incident in the hospital. One of the nurses had to restrain one of your students, Kankurō Sakabu for gross misconduct and improper behavior while visiting his sister. We need you to come over and collect the boy to be escorted out of the hospital due to regulations. The Kazekage has already been told and explained that you can take care of Kankurō," The ANBU explained, and Baki went from a face of worry to annoyance at the thought that Kankurō made him worry the plan was compromised for thinking with his other head.

"I understand, lead on," Baki told Yūgao as he got up to follow the ANBU.

The ANBU led Baki up the aisle and into a dark hallway when she stopped. "What's wrong?" Baki asked.

His answer came when another ANBU appearing behind him and stabbed him with a tranquilizer while putting his hand over his mouth to muffle his screams. The serum worked quickly in Baki's system and the effect immediately set in. He was rendered unconscious within a few seconds without a fuss as he collapsed to the ground. The ANBU picked him up as Yūgao ordered her men too, "Take him to Ibiki."

The ANBU quickly complied as they took the Sand Forces second in command before the invasion began.

Scene III

Back in the arena, the crowd was getting antsy during a match that only the judges cared about. Both ninjas were unknown, and their match was in between the next two matches clients wanted to see. Especially the next match, since it was the most heavily betted match in the exams. The audience's mood did not improve as they watched in agony as a lazy Genin named Shikamaru walked down the stairs at a slow pace. The proctor tried to get people excited about the match even as he knew it was a lost cause.

"Welcome to the sixth match of the Chūnin exams, and we have a good match before the final set in this bracket. On one side, we have Kagari from Rain Forces, a ruthless ninja with a… impressive kill count for a Genin of his age," Genma stated as polite claps were heard from the audience as the Rain-nin smirked at his opponent. "However, don't count Shikamaru out just yet. A member of the Nara clan, he is an expert shadow master that can control his opponents through the shadows and like many others in his clan are known to be great tacticians. In fact, this kid's IQ is one of the highest on record." Several members of the audience muttered as Shikamaru sighed in annoyance. "So who will win? The ruthless ninja or the one with brains will beat brawn. Let's find out as the sixth match of the Chūnin exams begins."

Kagari did not need to be told twice as he immediately went on the offensive, pulling out a black
metal umbrella that seemed heavy. He then threw it into the air to reveal that it was a ninja umbrella designed to rain down senbon needles onto the user's target. In this case, it was Shikamaru. The lazy Genin's eyes widen before the glint of metal even went hurdling towards him. Shikamaru quickly went through hand signs and barely performed the 'Body Replacement Jutsu' in time to avoid the senbon needles that embedded into the log he replaced himself with, along with the grass around it. Shikamaru was panting a little in the woods while the Rain-nin snarled.

"Come out, come out wherever you are you pathetic little Leaf-nin," Kagari muttered as ran through a seal to summon two water clones.

The two water clones pulled out kunais as they moved towards the trees Shikamaru hid behind, intent on wither flushing him out or kill him. However, they did not make, but a dozen steps before something took control. Movements in the trees had the clone turned to face each other and throw the kunais in their hands. The two clones dispersed and Kagari gasped at his clones being turned back into liquid. He was confused, grasping for answers until he noticed a long shadow that came from the tree. A shadow that had splintered into two to catch his clones before they dispersed and now the shadow reformed into a single, thin shadow heading towards him.

Remembering Shikamaru's match a month ago during the prelims, the Rain-nin jumped back, away from the shadows. The jump gained him enough distance that Shikamaru's shadow reached its limits. The Kagari smirked as he gloated, "Well it looks like the Jutsu has a limit. That is too bad for you. Now, I'll send armies of clones to flush you out and then I'll…"

Kagari stopped mid-rant when he felt his whole body freeze. He was unable to move until he felt a pulling force him systematically forward. He continued to walk until Shikamaru walked to the edge of the forest's shadows, staring at his opponent with a bored expression as Kagari mouthed, "How?"

"I can extend the length of my shadows through other shadows," Shikamaru explained in a bored tone. "Specifically the log and senbon needles sticking from the ground, which I connected after, I tried to catch you." Shikamaru shrugged as he continued, "I had a feeling that you would let your guard down if you believed that was my actual limit and of course, it paid off." Shikamaru stretched as he raised both his hand to his face. Kagari copied the movement to grab hold of his facemask while Shikamaru 'helped' the ninja to loosen his straps. "And before you ask the troublesome question, I will tell you that I will defeat you by using your mask, and I will leave the rest to your troublesome imagination."

Kagari panicked as he desperately tried to fight Shikamaru off with all his strength. The two struggled, but eventually, Shikamaru was able to force Kagari to pull off his mask. The loosen straps broke from the mask and slapped him across the face. The whipping distracted the Rain-nin and Shikamaru took advantage of the distraction. He had Kagari hit himself three times with his own mask while Shikamaru's own hands just brushed his own face. Kagari had a concussion before Shikamaru let him go. The Rain-nin crumbled to the ground, leaving the Leaf-nin to be declared the clear winner.

"Winner Shikamaru!" Genma explained while the crowd clapped at a match that turned out to be more exciting than expected.

They continued to clap as a tired Shikamaru bowed his head in acknowledgment before he walked up to the contestant stands, all the while the Kages were in discussion. "Well that was an interesting match," Yugito stated with mild interest as she stared at Shikamaru intently. "He showed a lot of foresight and intelligence. He would make a great tactician."

"Too bad he is so weak," Zabuza added to the conversation. "I wouldn't trust him to get me out of a bad situation if the need ever arrives in the field."
"Don't put down the lazy man, for the lazy man earned his prize," Eight rapped, much to the annoyance of his brother.

"That's beside the point Bee," Ė grumbled out to shut up his brother. "The kid was tired after such a short match, and it shows he is not only out of shape, but he also doesn't have the will to win. Especially for the lack of excitement, even when you consider he is a Nara."

"Though his intelligence wins him some points, so I say promote him to Special Chūnin at most," Mei added while Zabuza mumbled in agreement.

"Then it's agreed, Shikamaru Nara will be promoted to Special Chūnin while Kagari will remain a Genin," Hokage and the other Kages except the Kazekage agreed.

Jiraiya noticed the look and asked, "Hey Lord Kazekage, you're awfully quiet. Something on your mind."

Kazekage blinked in annoyance as he coughed, "No… sorry it is just I'm excited about the next match. It is not every day my son fights someone challenging like the legendary Kitsune Assassin. I am sure it will be a match to remember."

"You have no idea," Jiraiya added as he stared at two red-headed ANBU stood agitated near Yokoshima, waiting for their daughter/sister match to begin. They were also waiting patiently for the invasion to start to kill the one person that ruined their lives. The pieces were in place for the battle as preparation for the next set of matches.

**Scene IV**

In the outskirts of the village, the Leaf-nins were setting their defenses. On the tower walls, machine gun nests were manned as squads moved into hidden ambush positions. Near the walls under some camouflage, a ninja walked to activate a unique weapon, a Raven class Hover Tank from the time of the Republic Alliance. An elegant tank with blades to a side to give it a triangle body shape complete with a cannon on top and 360-degree machine gun turret on each side. The engine purred quietly under the cover as the pilot prepared it for war. He did not realize he was spotted in bringing the tank online.

Within the forest, a Sound-nin in camouflage jumpsuit had scouted the walls when he found the hidden Leaf-nin. The ninja watched the other one get into his tank, and he was going to report what he saw when a hand with long sharp canine-like nails covered his mouth while an arm in with a green band wrapped around his throat. His screams were muffled when three large grey dogs clamped into his arms and one of his legs. He was soon silenced as the woman in the green vest, and grey shorts snapped his neck before she let him go.

Her three dogs pulled the corpse away for disposal while she straightens the two deadlocks from her brown pony that was in front of her large black eyes. Eyes that stood out with her checks painted with red fangs and lips glossed in pink. The tamed beauty remained motionless as she watched the body disappeared. With the body gone, she turned to face her superior, who looked like her but with a wilder appearance, especially with her spiky hair, vertical slitted eyes and purple glossed lips. Her postured screamed 'alpha' with her arms crossed while she wore cargo pants and a shirt under her green vest.

"Good work Hana, we don't need the scout to report back that one of ours got careless," the Jōnin nodded to her daughter.

"This is the fifth one mother… I mean commander Tsume," Hana quickly corrected herself as she
bowed. "I think they are getting antsy."

Tsume laughed as she stated, "We all are, but luckily for us, it's about to begin soon."

Hana smiled sadly, as she looked at the village, "I just hope Kiba will be alright."

Tsume shook her head, "Don't worry about the brat, he is my son after all, and he's a Genin. He'll most likely be assigned to escort the VIPs away from the battle. Therefore, he'll be fine. Now come on, we need to report to our unit while everyone moves into position. Cloud force has brought in some serious muscle with the Bestia Clan. We don't want to miss the excitement."

Tsume's daughter nodded as she called her dogs back. They stood next to Tsume's Kuroma, a big dog with an eye patch before the six disappeared. Both leaf the Sound-nin's corpse to rot while it lies in the bush out of sight.

Scene V

The atmosphere in the arena was tense as the crowd stood in awe of the seventh match of the Chūnin Exams. This was the height between two infamous figures and Genma summed it up, "Ladies and gentleman, today we have a special treat for all those that had waited patiently for the seventh round of the Chūnin Exams, and it is going to be a killer!" Genma exclaimed as the crowd cheered. "To my right, we have the mother of modern technology who is known worldwide as the Kitsune Assassin and a hero to the common people of Fire Country and Water Country. Give it up for the young, yet beautiful Naruto Ryū!"

The crowd went wild as Naruto checked her firearms. She loaded them with lethal rounds while Genma continued on to introduce her cold, stone-faced opponent that stared at the girl. "However, her opponent is not just any ninja. Having the highest kill record for any Genin in the last one hundred years, this Sand Demon is coming in undefeated and will take everything Naruto has to beat, assuming she can. Give it for the son of the current Kazekage, Gaara Shibuki!" Genma yelled as the crowd cheered for blood, and Gaara was happy to give the audience what they wanted.

"So which favorite will win? The Leaf-nin or the Sand-nin? Let's find out! Let the seventh match of the Chūnin exams begin!" Genma exclaimed as the battle begin.

Gaara started by uncorking the giant gourd on his back to bring forth the sand within. Soon, a spear of sand swirled around the Sand-nin as he developed a predatory smile that unnerved several members of the audience, including those who remembered Lee's fight. A fully healed Lee, who was sitting in the audience, watched with great concern for his friend while Naruto was as steady as a heartbeat. Naruto wasted no time as she pulled out two pistols and opened fire with her special seal bullets. Three shots per gun hit the sand, and the seals created the desired effect, turning large sections of his sand into glass.

Gaara watched as several clunks of glass fall to the ground and knew he was in trouble, especially after one round hit his chest and a section formed into the glass. The glass sheet fell off his armor as Naruto fired several more shots. He quickly stopped the rounds by summing-up a thick wall of sand to stop them. Naruto growled as she was about to switch the rounds of her bullets to rounds design to penetrate when she noticed movement. Her guns popped out of her hands and back into her holster using special seals. She then pulled out her two swords and cut into the sand tendril to distort and disrupt the attack to give her room to move away using speed developed during the intensive training she had done over the exams.

More sand tendrils came towards Naruto, but she used 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' to force the tendrils into clumps that crawled on the ground. This gave Naruto the time to move away and access
the situation as Gaara brought down the wall of sand/glass. Naruto noticed the gourd was empty, but he was using far more sand than his gourd should be holding. She stared at Gaara to see the ground and glass around him was sinking while the amount of sand he controlled was slowly increasing. Naruto realized she was on the clock as Gaara was grinding out organic material from the glass, water, and earth into grains of rocks/sands he can use in battle. Knowing that given time she would be overwhelmed by a sea of sand, Naruto went on the offensive with 'Lightning Style: Lightning Strike Jutsu.' The bolt of lightning hit the slightly younger boy in the chest, and he fell in the ground in pain. The sand fell to the ground as Gaara just lay there.

Naruto dared not assume it was over as she took a flexible battle stance to retaliate or run depending on the situation. Her fears proved to be true when sand began to swirl around Gaara as he slowly rose from the ground. Clops of sand began to form into a thick armor of sand around his body while he developed black claws, ears, and a tail that resembled a dog as he slowly raised his head. He stared at Naruto with gold eyes filled with murder. Naruto cursed as she avoided a punch from his stretched arm from Gaara before she returned the favor and cut off the arm of sand.

Naruto was then on the move, avoiding the strikes as the Jōnin senseis watched along with their non-competing Genin. "That little shit is completely unstable, transforming into a demon form like that. What was Sand Forces thinking to bring that kid here?" Anko yelled.

"Most likely they made their Jinchūriki be their perfect weapon," Asuma looked down as he took a puff of smoke. "Many villages early in history did the same thing and wound-up with wild dogs they needed to put down. Obliviously the Sand-nins did not care as long as they had their ultimate weapon."

"That is sick," Inferno growled as he stared at a 'visiting' Sand-nins that were here to 'watch their ninjas' with disgust.

"Agreed, it's most unyouthful," Guy added as looked at his favorite student, Lee, worried.

"Should we stop the match and help Naruto?" Kurenai asked while the other Jōnin stared at her. "I know better than anyone that she can handle it, but."

"But you would rather not assume anything with the psychopath she is facing," Hayate stated as he stared at his students like Kiba and Ami.

"Exactly," Kurenai nodded in agreement.

"Don't worry Kurenai-chan, you trained your student well, and so did Kushina-sempai. So trust she'll do well," Asuma smiled at Kurenai as Kakashi butted in.

"Besides, Genma will be able to help if it looks as if she is over her head and we can step in, so don't worry," Kakashi mused as he looked up to the stands that held the Kages before he spoke in code to give orders. "However, since Gaara is going all out, it can be assumed that things are about to be messy (invasion). Kurenai and Inferno check on our Genin and keep them under control (led) while Guy, Asuma, and Hayate do the same for our ninjas here in the stands. Anko and I will stay here and provide help if need be (stay here to kill ninjas and back up who needs it). Anko has some friends (teacher) she needed to meet (get back) after being free of her burdens (seals) thanks to Kushina-sempai."

Anko nodded with a knowing smile as her fellow Jōnin got up. Kurenai immediately appeared behind Hinata, Tukiko, and Haku to reassure the girls. Especially Hinata, as she bit her lips while expressing her worry by holding her hands together while her index fingers tapping each other. It only got worse as Naruto went onto the offensive with 'Wind Style: Great Breakthrough Jutsu' to
send Gaara flying away. Gaara regained his bearing and was about to go on the offensive again with 'Water Style: Great Waterfall Jutsu,' using water underground. Gaara had to cancel his planned attack to jump over and away from a giant wave of water while clumps of sand were washed away.

This gave Naruto an opening as she summoned dozens of water clones and two wood clones from logs found in the nearby trees of the arena. Naruto silently directed them to attack as the wood clones went on the offensive while the water clones backup them up. Water clones started the attack with 'Water Style: Water Torrent Jutsu' to send a torrent of water towards Gaara. The Sand Demon tried to jump away, but the two wood clones appeared above Gaara and dropped kicked him back towards the water. Gaara was hit full blast by gallons of water for the thirty seconds it took for the clones to disperse after using up their chakra.

The blast of water hit Gaara at full speed and made the sand into wet clumps that surprisingly stayed attached. Demonic chakra flowed in every grain of sand, and the massive amount would dry them out in time. Time that was not on his side as the two wood clones rushed Gaara. One came for a forward attack as he awkwardly raised his arms to block the attack and got a cut on his arms for his trouble. He screamed out in pain, as her sword was able to cut his skin due to weakening sand armor.

It was enough for the clones as blood was absorbed into the wet sand. The clones struck around Gaara, cutting into his skin on his back, arms, legs and occasionally, his face. Blood was slowly drained from Gaara, and that enraged him. Gaara's entire existence depended on giving blood to the demon sealed inside him while never losing his own. So for every cut, a sensation of pain he had never experienced before means he failed to prove his existence.

The back of the proverbial camel was broken when a wood clone made a dash towards Gaara. She had aimed for his chest with both of her swords and with Gaara being sluggish due to his wet sand, he could only do one thing. He moved his massive right arm into the swords path. The clone pierced through the sand armor and through his armor to within a few inches from his chest. Gaara screamed as blood dripped from the blade as chakra moved around widely.

The clone's eyes widen as she watched water evaporate off the sand faster than she predicted. The brownish colored sand soon turned to the yellowish white sand of the desert as steam disappeared within the sun. The clone found to her horror that she could not pull out her swords as she stared at the manic, unblemished face as his cuts disappeared. That was the last sight the clone saw before he brought down his massive arm onto the wood clone. Naruto's clone did not scream as it dispersed under hundreds of kilotons of force as the wood splinter into pieces.

Seeing the first clone destroyed, the second clone retaliated with 'Wind Style: Vacuum Sphere Jutsu' to fire a large sphere of wind into Gaara's back. Gaara screamed as the wind sphere dug deep into his back while the wood clone was stripping him of the power necessary for performing a jutsu that is not of the same element. Gaara turned with murderous eyes before he leaped onto the clone. The clone screamed as Gaara applied all of his weight onto the clone. Hinata would have a nightmare before the clone broke into thousands of splinters.

Gaara had a murderous look as he turned to face Naruto while in the middle of a rant, "You dare hurt me! I am going to tear you into pieces and feed your blood to m-mo-mother…"

Gaara stopped when he noticed that Naruto was surrounded by light, with all five of the elements dancing around her. Naruto was going through a hundred seals as her completed Elemental Star spun in her eye, "You should not have put all of your attention on my clones and focused on the real me. Now you're about to see months of training, my final element, and the training, I received over the month has paid off. You're going to get firsthand experience in a jutsu given to me by my mother that was designed for the Elemental Star centuries ago. So take this A-Rank borderline S-Rank Jutsu,
'Elemental Style: Elemental Dragon Jutsu!' Naruto yelled as she summoned a dragon of white around her for her final attack.

A menacing Gaara stared as the dragon roared before it headed towards the younger Jinchūrikin, who flinched in fear. Gaara quickly formed a spear of sand to act as the first layer of defense as the attack hit him full force. The whole field was covered by blindly light for a few seconds. It took the audience to see before the blinding light finally dispersed from their eye. They stared at the devastation, as Naruto was busy controlling her breath while sweat dripped to the ground.

In front of Naruto, a trail the dragon had plowed on the ground look like the hollowed, bottom half of a cylinder with a radius of 0.5m (1.62ft) deep, and it was barely touching the ground. The trail continued past Gaara's first layer of defense that was vaporized and continued on for a meter (3.26ft) passed a glass statue of Gaara in his demonic form. He stood there, unmoving as Naruto regained her breath to use 'Earth Style: Stone Toss Jutsu' to summon a small bolder that she threw at the glass ornament on the field. The force caused the grass to shatter as Gaara screamed before falling to the ground.

Gaara cried on the floor as he rolled on the ground as a tear fell on his face that was red as his hair. Gaara felt his entire skin was on fire as his clothes singed under his inflamed skin. He was exposed as Naruto approached the insane Sand-nin slowly, armed with one of her pistols that she loaded with regular bullets. She intended to end this fight as she approached Gaara with a dark step until she was over Gaara with a gun pointed right at him.

Gaara looked up in fear as he cried out, "No! I can't let you end my life! I have fought so hard to prove my existence, and I can't end like this!"

"What existence!" Naruto snapped at Gaara. "You're nothing but a monster that needs the suffering and death of others to win."

"An existence I earned since the day of my birth," Gaara stated as he looked up and explained his sob story.

How his mother died at birth as a sacrifice so he could become a Jinchūrikin. How she cursed the village, and that his father felt he was a failure. How he had tried to kill him since Gaara was three and how his father did not get close as he killed them all, father and sister. In addition, how his uncle Yashamaru, a man that had raised him and supposedly loved him, had tried to kill him under orders from the village and in revenge for killing his sister and mother who had died giving birth to him forcing Gaara to kill his uncle using explosive notes.

"And I found my existence," Gaara finished his tale as he stared up at Naruto as Colonel Nine of Nine whispered into Naruto's mind, 'My God.'

Naruto ignored Nine's comment, as she snarled, "Not much of one if I say so." Naruto then stared down at her opponent as she thought about her next words, "Your whole life was spent being a monster, a killer who's destined to die by my hands or some other hero that comes down the road. Most likely, my hands, all the while letting the bastards of your village use you and control you. And you know the worst part is.

"That when you die, who do you think will care that you lived? Who will remember you after you are gone? Will it be your family, who is so scared of you that when you die, they will do everything in their power to forget about you? Will it be your victim's families, who will celebrate that you died and move on, as you become a distant memory? It certainly won't be your victims since their dead and beyond caring. So who will care outside of historians studying the hero that finally kills the great monster, Gaara? What existence do you have to live?! Why shouldn't I kill you now to put you out
of not only your pitiful existence but also mine's and everyone else's as well?!

Naruto waited for an answer, expecting him to beg for his life. What she was not expecting was that he would be sniffling as eyes filled with tears stared at Naruto. The girl's words had hit Gaara as he was bawling before the girl that had his life in her hands. Naruto's heart actually broke when he yelled, "I don't know for I have nothing! All I have is a mother who did not live long enough to cry! I don't know anything but this existence!"

Naruto watched Gaara "I don't know! I don't know!" as Naruto lowered herself down to Gaara's level.

Naruto sighed as she stated sadly, "I can't do it. I can't kill you. Not when you're like this. Not when I know you can be redeemed." Gaara stopped as he stared in shock as Naruto pulled up his shirt to examine his seal. "And I am going to do one step further to let you sleep without the fear of a corrupted chakra beast, and finally chose your own existence. So brace yourself, for this will hurt!" Naruto yelled as a seal covered by five flames on their fingertips for the 'Five Elemental Seal' grabbed onto Gaara's seal.

Gaara screamed as Naruto looked away. He continued to scream until he felt arms wrap around him. He only winced slightly from the sunburn as Naruto rocked him back and forth, as she sang to him a song she learned from the orphanage.

"Now hush little child,

"For momma is here,

"With a heart filled with love,

"And enchantment."

"So weep not little child,

"And raise your arms,

"To accept your momma's

"Loving Embrace."

(Hum)

"Now sleep well little child,

"To dream, protected dreams,

"Freed of Nightmares

"Thanks to momma's love."

"So walk little child,

"To enchanted lands,

"Knowing momma's love,

"Is here forever in spirit and in love."
Gaara slowly dozed off as Naruto hummed to Gaara as she rocked him. Gaara looked up to see a brown-haired woman with blue eyes as he mumbled, "Momma!" before embracing sleep for the first time in his life.

Naruto sighed in relief mentally with Colonel Nine of Nine as she slowly got up as medics come to take Gaara away. The sands were silent through the whole song until a single clap was heard, followed by another and another until thunderous applause was heard and Naruto stood they are shocked. She did not even notice her friends had come to greet her until she felt Hinata's embrace as she hugged Naruto. Naruto finally felt things were going to be all right. That was until she noticed something was off.

White feathers began to fall upon the crowd in the stands as several began to feel drowsy. Several of the ninjas and samurai noticed it was genjutsu and dispersed it, keeping themselves and those around them to keep them awake while most of the civilians fell asleep. Among the crowd, several 'civilians' jumped up to reveal that they were Sand or Sound-nins ready to face Leaf-nins while the Hokage turned to face the Kazekage. The 'Kazekage' eyes smiled before his two large bodyguards threw explosive notes into the Kages' sands.

The Kages jumped away as the giant explosion that signaled the invaders outside of Konoha to summon a giant three-headed snake. The snake slithered towards Konoha followed by the army. Sarutobi faced the fake 'Kazekage' on top of the roof, sounded by four guards that erected a force field as several Sound-nins rushed into the arenas to gain their master's favor by collecting his prize. The girls let Naruto go as Naruto pulled out a pistol and took aim before she pulled the trigger. A loud bang echoed across the village and the forest that surrounds it before it was followed by gunfire, jutsus, and close quarter combat attack across the village. The battle for Konoha has begun.

Chapter End Notes

Finally, done with this chapter, as it took a long time and I hope you enjoy it and sorry for the delay.
A) Sorry, it took so long, but I had to finish my Dragon Age story, and I felt I had to clean up the older chapters after rereading them again to get a feel for this story again.
Please check out this story’s previous chapters and my other story and tell me what you think. Also, note there is a poll on my portfolio to check out.
Deep inside a large bunker, Raven Hunter was looking over the digital map of Konoha and the area around it. The map reported the location of every allied ninja in or near Konoha, and any enemy movements based on reports. Joining him, outside of the various aid, joining him was Elite Jōnin Ibiki who oversaw the ANBU, an elderly blind woman that predicted enemy movements, Mouai Seer of the famous Seer Clan, and Jōnin Amell Roth. The purple haired beauty was originally here in the bunker to help guide dozens of Roth Clan members into Battle Meditation, including her own daughter, Bastila Roth. Now, the clan members were in such a deep trance that it would take hours, if not a full day to complete, which freed her to assist Raven Hunter.

Raven Hunter was going to question her prediction when he got a beep from his field operatives. He activated the common to get 3D imagines of his field officers outside of Konoha, Jōnin Tsume Inuzuka and Shibi Aburame, the older copy of his son Shino with thicker sunglasses and darker, thick hoodie. He knew it was bad news as he asked, "Shibi, Tsume, what is it?"

"Good news and bad news," Tsume grimaced as she gave a field report. "The good news is that we were able to hit the bastards with our own surprise attack and killed most of their scouts with only one or two fatalities." Tsume then looked down. "However, when we encountered their main army, we hit a snag that is causing us heavy casualties."

Shibi took over the report to give his cold, steady observations. "The Sound-nins summoned a giant three-headed snake with scales thick enough to stop missiles and torpedoes. Not even the tanks slowed it down, and the enemy used that to their advantage as they left a few troops on top to spot our movements and react accordingly with a force of Sound-nins three to four times larger than predicted. Orochimaru must have recruited several wondering clans, orphans, rejects from every hidden village and any missing-nins he could find to come up with such a large force."

Shibi tiredly shook his head, "We may have no choice but to retreat back into the village."

"Has it really come to that?" Amell asked in shock.
"You better believe it, mon," spoke a mystically deep, yet fluent tropical voice (Jamaican) as a figure came into the screen. It caused a bit of alarm as it looked like a giant spider before it morphed into a giant, a bald Cloud-nin with brown eyes and powerful abs in his shirtless robes with a slash against his black chest. "In fact, I was the one to recommend the retreat."

"This is bad if the Bestia clan is calling for retreat," Amell whispered to Raven Hunter. "They are just as famous for standing their ground, especially when it comes to missions for their country and their Daimyō. They assassinated the previous Raikage for his attempt to turn the Lightning Daimyō's negotiation into attempted kidnap of bloodlines and stood their ground against Lightning Forces and their own village. Not to mention that while Kumo is not famous for bloodlines, they were able to get one of the most powerful clans in the world getting those animal shapeshifters."

"Zambezi? Do you think there is no way for you to continue your attack?" Raven Hunter asked out loud.

"We have lost a couple members from each our clans including a few of my own. Not to mention we already lost three of your toys when the enemy was able to ambush those, what you call them, tanks. One with an earth spike embedded into its whirly blade, another by a suicide puppet filled with explosive notes, and the third with the crew boiled alive. We had to destroy the last one to prevent the enemy from getting their hands on your toys."

"Plus the Sand-nins and Sound-nins are using the snake and trees as cover against the gun nest we have on the walls," Shibi stated. "We also have no air support as our fighters are away attacking forward bases our scouts found inside and outside Fire Country. They won't be back until after the snake has breached the wall."

"And that's not the worst of it," said Tsume's daughter as she appeared in the hologram communication. "Diablo Dante is leading the invasion."

Ibiki grimaced as he stated, "The Butcher of the Red Sands. He's a brilliant military strategist, and he has killed hundreds of men, if not thousands. The fact he is here is not entirely unexpected; it just means this war is going to be a lot tougher than I thought."

Raven Hunter grimaced as he stared at Mouai, wondering how the blind bat made such solid predictions. "Okay, have the survivors fall back to our position. We will wait for them to breach while gathering our forces to that location."

"Roger that and out," Tsume saluted before turning off the rare 3D communicator while Amell stared at him to ask a question that was on her mind as he barked out some orders to the various ninjas around him.

"One of you, get me the arena and tell them we need one of the Sennin to summon some heavy support! The rest get the ninja corps and defense forces into position with our allies and the army was given to us by the Fire Country Council."

"Yes, sir," one of the ninjas compiled before he made the call while the others complied with their orders. It was not long before they reported, "Sir, the arena has descended into chaos with our forces being forced into melee combat while the Hokage faces Orochimaru alone. Lady Tsunade is swamped with taking care of the injured, though Lord Jiraiya is on the move to support our forces as ordered by the Hokage before the battle begun. He should be at the gate."

"Good, I'll meet him there," Raven Hunter nodded as moved out towards the door.

"You're going to the frontlines?" Amell asked.
"Yes," Revan Hunter answered.

"I'm going with you," Amell told Revan Hunter who tried to come up with excuses why she could not go.

"You can't Amell, you are a single mother and a-

"Don't try that single mother and Clan Head crap!" Amell yelled. "For there are hundreds of single parents on the frontline with a few being Clan Heads." Amell got quiet as she stared lovingly into Raven Hunter's eyes as she whispered, "Please, you must keep your priorities straight. I know you still care for me since we were kids, and while it's sweet, you can't let it blind you. You can't be seen playing favorites with me or anyone. So I am going for I am needed."

"Alright then you come with me while Ibiki coordinates the attack," Raven Hunter admitted in defeat. The two began to part when Mouai stopped them with a warning.

"Be careful youngsters, as I can see three possible futures when you engage Diablo. And while all of them show victory, two of them have one of you dying. While I cannot distinguish which is the most possible, I can tell you it will be how you deal with Diablo will determine if both of you will live. So take care and know that while there is fate, there is also a choice."

Revan Hunter and Amell Roth stopped to stare at the woman. A cold chill ran up their spines before they left to the frontlines as they ran to save their home.

Scene II

In the arena, chaos ensued as the ninjas were forced into melee combat within the stands. The Leaf-nins could not risk sharpshooters or jutsus without hitting the civilians while the enemy ninjas did not want to in fear of their opponents retaliating if they started using heavier stuff. The arena floor was the only safe place for jutsus to be used without fear. Genma, Kurenai, and Inferno took advantage to lead them into a trap with their Genin consent.

Most of the Sound-nins hidden among the civilian crowd ran into the arena to capture Genin like Naruto, Hinata, Tukiko, Haku, Shino, Revan and Night Wolf for their master. Rare and/or powerful bloodlines were a desire for Orochimaru, and his men tried to earn his favor by bringing him the most powerful of the Leaf Forces to his master. Some of them quickly found out they were recruited as cannon fodder as gunfire, jutsus, genjutsus, insects, and occasional melee combat was thinning out their numbers at a faster rate than the ninjas in the stands. Kurenai smiled as her team worked like a well-oiled machine as she slit another ninja's throat that did not see her.

In the arena, the Genin like Lee, Tenten (who was visiting Lee), Ami, Kiba, Ino, Sakura, Sai, Chōji, and Shikamaru assisted in the evacuation of the civilians starting with those closes to the exit. Many of them experienced death for the first time and even killed a few, something that would haunt them. While most of the Genin would freeze for a moment and would throw up after the battle was over, others like gentle souls like Chōji froze. Chōji was as frozen as a statue after he inflated his hand into a giant force and smack a Sand-nin so hard into the wall it killed the ninja upon impact. Shikamaru watched as a few sound-nins tried to move in to kill his friend and stopped them with the 'Shadow Possession Jutsu,' and held them in place as long as he could.

He quickly reached the end of his rope as he tried to snap Chōji out of his funk when Asuma and Hayate came in and saved Chōji while two redheaded ANBU nearby executed the Sound-nins. One of them sounded very angry at that as Shikamaru stood there, seeing that another Genin froze in the heat of combat had been killed because no one could save him. That night would be a nightmare to the young man as Shikamaru promised to never again allow weakness or laziness stop him as Chōji
was carried away by Asuma. The man ordered the Genin to continue with the evacuation while Hayate used his swords to keep large numbers of attackers back from the Genin while Guy rushed the lines to take down enemy ninjas across the stands. Not one of them would forget the blood as they helped the civilians they could to their shelter.

Kakashi and Anko noted the horrified look of the Genin as they rushed to the roof to assist the Hokage that the last they heard was boxed-in by a purple barrier created by four ninjas at each corner. The barrier around them prevented Sarutobi from killing them and breaking the jutsu. The three men and one woman in tan tunics and purple boy tie around their waist, like their master, stood proudly as the symbols on the forehead as protectors were evident. The first from the "West Gate" was a thin man with silver hair and a hump on his back, while "East Gate" was a dark skin man with four arms, with both being the leader and tactician of the group. On the other spectrum, the "South Gate" was a fat man with an orange Mohawk, while the "North Gate" was a redheaded girl with a small petite body for a woman in her twenties.

Inside the barrier, a forest had sprouted inside and Kakashi could not figure out how it was possible on top of the metal-sheeted roof. He turned to the group of two Kages, Mei Terumī and Ė, along with Zabuza and the ANBU Commander Yūgao that was working with a small team and ran up to ask, "What in Kami's name is happening?"

Yugito turned around and saluted while she gave a report, "Sir, about ten minutes ago, the Kage box was destroyed by the two Sand-nins guards that turned out to be four elite Sound-nins that created the barrier. As a thought, the man pretending to the Kazekage was Orochimaru and with his elite ninjas, captured Sarutobi in the barrier. The two fought and Sarutobi was winning until he used a forbidden Jutsu, 'Summoning Style: Impure Resurrection Jutsu.'"

"He completed that Jutsu?" Anko asked in shock as her face grimaced at the thought.

"We think he sacrificed his own men for the jutsu to summon the First and Second Hokage," Yūgao explained. "But that is not the only forbidden Jutsus he learned…"

**Flashback**

Sarutobi was trapped as he stared at his student while the ninjas assembling outside the barrier watched in earnest. A small audience as Jiraiya, Killer Bee and Yugito went to the frontlines with Natsuhi and Shibuki and their subordinates, including the third Jinchūrikin Fū while Tsunade organized the medical support. They were needed elsewhere while his fellow Kages waited to see if they could provide help as he faced Orochimaru, alone.

With his trusted monkey summon transformed into a bō staff, Sarutobi was able to keep up with his former student with powerful elemental Jutsus and close quarter combat. Sarutobi was no spring chicken, but he could still keep up with Orochimaru, who was years younger. Though he found out, his opponent was a lot younger after his hitting Orochimaru right in the face, tearing skin to reveal a layer that was not his former student, but that of a woman.

He realized what Orochimaru had done to himself, "So you mastered that Jutsu."

Orochimaru maniacally laughed as 'her' voice rang in Sarutobi's ears, "You were right all those years ago when you told me as I was a Genin that one lifetime would not be enough to learn every Jutsu the world has. So I made sure I had more than one lifetime to learn every jutsu there ever was."

"How many victims did you take?" Sarutobi snarled.

"Victims?" Orochimaru asked in mocked shock as he morphed back into the form he was born with.
"All of them were… well, they were volunteers in the end. As you know, I can be very persuasive as I am sure my future host will be."

Orochimaru then looked thoughtful before he added, "Naruto will be difficult to convince to come to my side, though her friends used as bargaining chips will be a big help as I mix the active Elemental Star with the Sharingan and the naturally long lifespan of the Uzumaki, no jutsu or power will be beyond my reach!"

"You are a sick parasite," Sarutobi stated as he looked down at Orochimaru in shame. "You dared to devil into things that should not be attempted. Have you fallen that far?" Sarutobi asked as he let a tear go in sorrow. "You are no longer my student! You're an abomination that needs to be put down once and for all, as I should have done all those years ago when I found you in that lab, experimenting on the people of Fire Country!"

"Oh, you hurt me so my former sensei," Orochimaru mocked with a hand over his chest. He then developed a sinister smile as he went through a couple of hand-signs to summon a Jutsu Sarutobi recognized, the 'Summoning Style: Impure Resurrection Jutsu.' "Let's see what your predecessors and your successor think as we raise them from the grave."

And with those very words, three coffins rose from the ground, numbered one, two and four on their tops. Confirms that made Sarutobi shook in anger and fear as the three coffin lids fell off to reveal faces he had not seen in a long time. For in those coffins were the three Hokages brought back from the dead and were men he knew personally. The first two were brothers that had trained Sarutobi before he took their mantle. They looked similar to each other with their long spiky hair and tall, muscular frames. However, the First Hokage Hashirama Senju had distinguished dark eyes, black hair, and red armor. While the Second Hokage Tobirama Senju, distinguished dark red eyes, white hair and blue armor.

They were intimidating, but they were not someone he feared as much as his third opponent was. The Fourth Hokage was a tall, blond haired man with baby blue eyes as he stood in his white robes over his green vest. It was a person for which Naruto had a striking resemblance, even more so than her mother was. It was the Fourth Hokage, Minato Namikaze, and there was a reason he was considered the most powerful Hokage of all time. Sarutobi had to keep on a brave face as he confronted his fellow Hokages.

"Sarutobi you have gotten old," Hashirama joked as he tried to lighten the mood.

"Really? He has always looked this old to me," Minato had joked as the two former Hokages looked at him.

"Well it's been a long time since my two senseis saw me, Minato" Sarutobi mussed. "Almost fifty years if my memory serves me well."

"Has it really been that long since we died?" Tobirama stated in a calm, soothing tone.

"Long enough for me to get a successor that died a heroic death to save this village, making me take up the mantle again," Sarutobi had answered his two mentors.

Hashirama looked over the shorter and younger blonde-haired person before turning to his former student and current Hokage. "I see, so all three of us are here and brought back from the dead. I'm assuming the reason we are facing you is that someone completed the jutsu my brother has made, and we are here to fight you."

"Yes, as a former student turned despicable mad scientist perfected your jutsu senseis," Sarutobi
explained to both his teachers. "He was very resentful I didn't pick him to be my replacement and drove him out after I found out he had been experimenting on people for years."

"And this madman found my jutsu?" Tobirama asked more to himself than to others while his brother looked at him sadly.

"I told you dabbling in the dead would bite you in the butt," Hashirama told his brother who looked down while he gave his answer in anger.

"What would you know? You never lost a son before his time. Before he had children and a family of his own," Tobirama snarled before he sighed in acceptance. "Though when I realized it would not bring my son back, I should have destroyed it. It would have saved us from being brought back to destroy what we've built."

"And that is why you bury your high ranking sealing jutsus and explosive sealing jutsus to prevent theft," Minato added before he switched subjects. "However, enough about my predecessor's regrets, I have something important to ask you. Are my daughter and wife alright?"

"They're both fine Minato, though we did have a problem with the Uzumaki, they are together with Naruto surprising me as she has left her mark in history," Sarutobi stated as gunfire was heard.

"The Uzumaki?" Hashirama asked sadly, as the two nodded their head 'yes.' "So Yokoshima is still in command of the clan after she killed her husband; I never thought I feel so sad."

Tobirama nodded in agreement, "A clan that was once our friend and ally, and who represented a great family in peace was destroyed when that woman took over." Tobirama looked at Hashirama and stated, "Your wife was lucky to escape before she turned them into the tyrants that exist to this day."

"My wife is free to live how the Uzumaki once were," Minato stated. "She can be part of a clan that loves their family over power, and my daughter is living the life free of such evil."

All four Hokages nodded before they heard the sound of gunfire. The three resurrected Hokages turned to see a blond girl on the arena floor as they saw modern weapons at work. Minato recognized the girl, and he felt proud that she walked her own path. He continued to smile until Orochimaru interrupted the group.

"While this is an interesting talk, I did not resurrect you three to have a reunion. I brought you back to kill Sarutobi and destroy the village that held me back." Orochimaru stated as he pulled out two seal tags and placed them into the First and Second Hokage's head.

He gained immediate control of the two Hokages as the tags were absorbed into their heads. After he admired his work, Orochimaru moved towards the Fourth Hokage, with a seal in hand. He had all the intentions to gloat to the man that was picked over him. "As for you; after you help me kill sensei, you're going to kidnap a special Genin and her team, for a very rare and powerful bloodline. Your daughter with be my prized possession," Orochimaru smiled as he was about to place the seal on Fourth's head. "I can't think of more delicious irony for the man that took what was mine."

Orochimaru was about to place the seal when Minato's arm shot up and grabbed Orochimaru's hand. The Sennin yelped in shock as he tried to struggle himself free, but found himself weakening as he summoned three Kage level ninjas to distract Minato, it seemed he had no control over the supposed strongest. He continued to stare as blue eyes stared back while his forehead had the glowing words 'Death.'
"You should not have summoned me Orochimaru," Minato stated as he glared at the man. "When I died, I gave my soul to the 'Dead Demon Consuming Seal Jutsu' to stop the Kyūbi, and now my soul cannot be taken without consequences." Minato brought up his second hand and touched the snake-nin on the forehead as the seal 'Death' appeared on Orochimaru's head. "You're now a marked man. And as soon as you die, your soul will be consumed just as mine was."

Orochimaru stared in horror while his heart raced with fear and fury; Minato's curse was not done as Orochimaru struggled to gain his release as his fingers burned. "And that's not all I've done as I also took your ability to switch bodies and erased all knowledge on how to summon not only your form of immortality but your knowledge on the 'Summon Style: Impure Resurrection Jutsu.' The burning sensation you feel is Shinigami's avatar tracing your chakra signature to any of the notes you made and burning them. You'll never be able to recreate those Jutsus. This will be your end."

Orochimaru shook in desperation while Minato turned towards Sarutobi. "Good luck old man and I hope you survive to tell my daughter and wife I love them. It is a shame I will not be able to meet them in person, but my soul is being called back. So long and I hope I don't see you in the Shinigami's stomach."

Minato smiled as his body slowly dissolved into sand. He disappeared to his resting place as a body slumped in its place. It was one Sarutobi recognized, as he was the only Genin to be disciplined by Raven Hunter in the exams. It was Zaku Abumi the Sound-nin Kabuto had taken from the hospital to be sacrificed for Orochimaru's Jutsu. Something his own men did not know as the redhead gasped in shock and disgust as she watched from the corner of her eye. At least that what others notice for Sarutobi was not paying attention to the woman, as he focused on Orochimaru, scolding his student in silence as his student screamed to the heavens, cursing Minato's name.

He then yelled at the two Hokages to attack, and Sarutobi was on the defensive. He was soon fighting for his life as Hashirama turned the area into a forest while Tobirama flooded the floor. The battle was becoming more and more intense as time continued to advance with monstrous strength and justus. He never felt as old as he did as he fought for his life.

End Flashback

"And that's everything," Yugito explained to her superior officer of the moment.

"I see," Kakashi stated as he stared out at the box barrier that kept them out.

"Any idea as to how we can break in?" Anko asked.

"None without risking the lives of everyone," Yugito admitted. "The most promising thought was to collapse a portion of the roof to make one of the four ninjas lose their balance, breaking the Jutsu. However, the roof is made of a material harder than wood or plastic and requires a powerful Jutsu or explosives to collapse. That means anything that could break the barrier would kill our own ninjas and the audience below our feet."

"I have to agree because even with the control I have over my Lava Jutsus it would still be a big risk," Mei stated to contribute to the conversation as she looked for a weakness.

"So you're saying that there is no way in?" Anko asked.

"You're damned right dipshit!" yelled the redhead behind the barrier. "This fucken thing is indestructible. You will never break it in time to save your precious Hokage."

"Why you little brat," Anko began to threaten her when Kakashi stopped her as he stared at the
He quickly realized who she was and he could work with that as he recited aloud, "A loud-mouthed redhead with a petite body. You must be Tayuya of the North Gate."

"How did you know that shithead?" the woman, Tayuya stated in shock.

"Kin Tsuchi," Kakashi answered Tayuya, the girl responded with a scold.

"You know where she has been!? Have you been torturing her!?" Tayuya accused as she stood her ground.

Kakashi shook his head no, "We did not touch her. She gave us the information freely after we saved her from being killed by Kabuto."

Tayuya trembled as she muttered, "You're lying dipshit. Orochimaru promised me she would not be killed."

"He lied to you, and you must have suspected he had lied to you," Kakashi stated as he held open a note he had recovered from Naruko. "The first is this note left behind, revealing he was there for Kin to be a sacrifice, much like her teammate behind you to summon the two Hokages. Tayuya was now shaking with nervousness as Kakashi moved in to kill her certain with absolute doubt, "She also told me a few other things. How you two grew up in an orphanage known as Eden Bakes, where you loved playing the flute while she played with bells."

"You two use your talents to make music for money until Orochimaru came and recruited the entire orphanage, either to be test subjects or to be his soldiers. He found you to be exceptional due to your high chakra stores as a child and trained you to be one of his elite ninjas. He promised you things with his words of honey as you two were forced to become ruthless to survive." Kakashi eye smiled as he added, "Though she also mentioned that she wished she was like you, able to hide away her kindness instead of losing it forever."

Tayuya was crying when she realized Kin was alive, safe from the man she thought she could trust. Orochimaru was the man who could speak of nirvana worlds and convince even heroes to betray their own people. She had seen him lie before, and she knew that he could be ruthless to those he deemed expendable. She had already figured out that she had been betrayed before Kakashi even spoke as she looked down.

It was then that Kakashi moved in with his offer, "Now Tayuya, you know that as long as Orochimaru lives, Kin's life will be in constant danger. Drop the barrier, and I promise you as an Elite Jōnin and the authority of the Hokage. That you will be pardon for your crimes, allowed to see Kin, and after the battle, will be allowed to join the village."

Tayuya looked uncertain while her pale, silver-haired teammate yelled out, "Don't you dare think about betraying us to some pathetic little friend Tayuya! Or I swear we will hunt you down and kill you!"

That pushed Tayuya over the edge as she yelled, "Up your fucken ass Sakon! And yours too Ukon while I am at it! My loyalty was to my friend! Not to some pasty face peephole!" Tayuya then brought her arms down, collapsing the barrier when she stated, "I hereby surrender to you."

"Tayuya you tra-" Sakon started to say when Kakashi pulled out a sniper rifle and pulled the trigger. Blood flowed on the ground, as two ANBU appeared to take Tayuya away.

"Brother!" yelled the lump that jumped out to be revealed as his twin, Ukon. Both had unique
bloodlines that allowed them to alter their human DNA and Kakashi planned to destroy him when he ran into the forest with his patriot Sound Four.

Seeing them run, Kakashi turned to his fellow ninjas to yell, "We need to get in there and help the Hokage!"

"I call dibs on the Second Hokage!" Ō Ōsaka yelled. "It will be a good test of my skills against the man that beat us in the Second Great Shinobi War."

"I'll take care of the First as my Yōton (Lava Release) bloodline would be a good counter to his Mokuton bloodline," Mei added in a soft tone as she looked at the forest.

"I'll help the Hokage," Anko volunteered. "I need to settle a score with the snake man, and prove to the old man his trust in me was the worth the headache he got for allowing me to rejoin Leaf Forces."

Kakashi nodded in acceptance, as he gave out final orders, "The rest of you with me take care of those Sound-nins. Let's go."

"Good, lets slit the throats of the dogs of war," Zabuza stated in a gruff voice.

The group complied as the various ninjas jumped into battle.

Scene III

Within the man-made forest, Sarutobi was not having much luck. He was too old to fight this high-level battle, and his body would not be able to keep up for long. He needed help badly, or he must perform a desperate suicide jutsu to take his enemy with him if the fight continued. He began to think about the second option seriously when he heard the rustling in the leaves. He looked to see the barrier was down and reinforcements have arrived. The first was the Bulky Raikage surrounded by his lightning armor as he dropkicked Tobirama away from Sarutobi. Hashirama had to jump out of the way, as the lovely Mizukage burned his trees as she shot out lava from her mouth.

Orochimaru stared in shock, as the two Hokages stood motionless when he realized the barrier was down. He then stared at a fourth guest arrived, his former student Anko Mitarashi. "Hey Sarutobi, we heard you were in trouble and decided to drop by to have some fun," Ōsaka stated as he flexed muscles.

"Thank you Ōsaka, I need all the help I can get," Sarutobi admitted. "I was able to get some fatal wounds in, but they regenerated their wounds. I think the only way to stop them is to destroy the head that holds the seal, if not the entire body."

"Got it, we'll take care of it," Mei acknowledged as the two foreign Kages battle the previous Hokages while Anko stood by Sarutobi, a shotgun by her side.

"I'm here to back you up sir," Anko saluted as she formed a predatory smile. "You're not getting away this time Orochimaru and don't even think of that mark." Anko pulled open her coat to reveal the seal was gone. "A little gift from a technique derived from Naruto and Jiraiya, and I will repay their help by killing you. Today is the day you die. I promise you."

Orochimaru sneered as his former sensei and student rushed towards him.

Scene IV

At the front of the village, a massive invasion army lead by a giant three-headed-snake approached
the wall. The ninjas hid behind the snake and trees to protect from gunfire that came from the automated defense in the towers. Towers abandoned by the Leaf-nins when they realized it would mean their death if they stayed. Leading the invasion was a tall, order shinobi from Sand Forces. Diablo Dante was a man with long, wavy brown hair and a short, pointy mustache who looked with cold, calculating eyes. His plan was going well, despite the Leaf earlier guerilla tactics and they would soon hit the heart of the village as the giant snake moved towards the high walls with its tail raised.

The snake brought its tail down, destroying the wall for the army to invade. He would regret it as he saw the Leaf forces and soldiers of Fire Country were waiting for them with allies. From heavy hitters like tanks, powerful ninja combo teams, Bestia Clan, Star-nins trained in Stars Chakra and the three Jinchūriki with demonic chakra around them, ready to cause a mass amount of damage against the invaders. What was even worse he now felt drained, meaning the Roth Clan was using the Battle Meditation they heard over the radio. He knew it was going to be a bloody affair as he had to face an army armed to the teeth and with powerful ninjas and clan members, including the Clan Heads were facing them.

He knew there was only one chance of survival as he ordered the ninjas to charge into the lines while firing Jutsus at their enemy. His men had jumped and zigzagged back and forth to avoid their enemies' counterattacks as they rushed the frontlines. They desperately tried to avoid gunshots and jutsus as they moved in close to provide them a chance of survival. By the time they were close to the front lines, hundreds had been killed before hand-to-hand and melee combat broke out between the ninjas. They were in trouble and desperate to pull out a victory.

Scene V

Within the arena stands, chaos ensued as Sand, and Sound ninjas were making a rush towards the Daimyōs in a desperate attempt to kill them in hope to cause confusion among the various countries, or for the Sand-nins, revenge for a demising budget. Unfortunately, for John, he was caught in the middle of the chaos as samurais, soldiers and ninjas put up a defense for their Lords. Eventually, two of the samurais and ninjas with an assault rifle were killed in front of John, who was scared witless as he watched the still bodies bleed all over the floor.

With a new hole in the defenses, four enemy ninjas made a dash through the opening, intent on killing the ruling Lords to appease their superiors. Seeing the charge, John picked up an assault rifle in a panic and opened fire. He killed all four of the ninjas as he laid on the ground, shaking. His intervention allowed the allied forces to push enemy forces back. Soon it was cleared, and they were able to move out civilians like John.

The Fire Daimyō had no knowledge he was a civilian as he went to congratulate the man for saving my life, "Thank you, young man, for saving us. You do Fire Country a great service serving this country soldier."

"Thank you kindly, sir," John spoke in a deep accent. "But I ain't no soldier. I am' a simple farmer who lives out yonder way. I'm only here due to winning that'd ticket."

"What?" the Daimyōs asked while the ninjas muttered 'damn' under their breath.

The Fire Daimyo looked thoughtful before he stated, "Regardless, you deserve a reward, and I'll promise you to get one once the invasion is dealt with." The Daimyō looked up as he added, "Now come on, we got work to do and it not being done staying here."

John nodded as the group was evacuated out of the stands. He would not realize he would play a role later, though it did not matter as he made his way to the emergency shelter.
Within the arena, the Genin and Jōnin were finished mopping up the enemy ninjas stupid enough to run into the arena. Unlike the stands, where allied ninjas cautious until the stands were cleared of bystanders, the arena was open season for the most lethal of Jutsus as the combatants attacked with style. Well mostly style, as Naruto was not very happy being forced to engage the enemy up close, as she and her partner Hinata were forced to participate in melee and close range combat. Naruto proved to be an advanced swordsman as she sliced enemy ninjas that got too close. While Hinata provided excellent support with disabling attacks to set up painless kills for Naruto. Painless death compared to the two the Hyūga killed with a sinking heart as she covered her best friend's back. Blood spewed from their mouths due to ruptured organs only showed a little blood compared to the dozens hit by shuriken that came from Gamma's jutsu 'Shadow Shuriken Jutsu.'

Working alongside her team in holding the enemy forces back was Night Wolf and Revan lead by Inferno to run interference against enemy forces with Shino and his insects as a backup. However, the ones that finished their opponents were Tukiko and Haku. As the two groups ran interference allowing the two girls to power up a massive area attack Jutsus. Haku used 'Ice Style: Comet Jutsu' to summon a large ball of ice to slam into the ground, while Tukiko used a similar jutsu such as the 'Fire Style: Flaming Meteors Jutsu,' creating a dozen of fireballs that rained down on the field. The enemy ninjas were finished as they ran into the attacks thanks to Kurenai's 'Genjutsu Style: Mirage Jutsu.'

The fighting was over, and they moved to regroup with Genma pulling out a communicator before he issued orders, "Okay, our forces are engaging the enemy ninjas at the frontlines and are calling for all nearby air support. You four, get to your fighter and assist our air force," Genma ordered Naruto, Hinata, Haku, and Tukiko, waiting for their acknowledgment before giving out orders to the rest of them.

However, he would not get the acknowledgment of his orders as he was interrupted by outside force in the form of an older woman. "I don't think so Genma or whatever your name is," spoke Yokoshima surrounded by two Uzumaki guards, each carrying a metal suitcase. "I can't let those Genin leave. Especially since this is the first time, I'm meeting my cute granddaughter." Yokoshima smiled as she examined Naruto intently. "You defiantly have the Uzumaki spirit of old. I guess commoner blood does have its uses after all."

The Genin growled as the three Jōnin stared at the Uzumaki intently. They continued to stare as Genma confronted the Uzumaki directly with a senbon in his mouth, "Uzumaki-san, I request that you get out of our way."

"Then we'll remove you by force," Genma stated as he pulled out a kunai. "Now, move, or we'll consider you a hostile-" Genma started until he was interrupted by a tremendous bang.

Genma dropped his senbon needle as he looked down to a hole in his chest. Genma then fell to his knees before he crashed to the ground, dead. The Leaf-nins were shocked as they slowly turned to look at Yokoshima as she held a high-tech silver pistol that was alien in design compared to Leaf-nin based designs of the Republic Alliance. It was not meant for human use and one that rendered Colonel Nine of Nine and Naruto speechless. They saw a weapon in history books or personally several hundred years ago. They should not see such a weapon in this day and age, but there the gun was, aiming right for them.

Soon Naruto broke the silence to ask, "Where did you get that?"
"Did you think that the Great Library was the only cache of technology that survived the war?" Yokoshima asked in a mocking tone.

"It was the only one made by humans..." Naruto stammered as she realized whose technology Yokoshima was using, though she was proven wrong about whom they got it from.

"The only intentional one," Yokoshima smiled as she explained an unknown portion of history. "During the war, the Republic Alliance built up special shielded R&D labs to study the Machine's technology despite their focus more on quantity. One found centuries ago by the White Lotus and kept for prosperity. The R&D included a small factory for dissembling and manufacturing for testing new enemy technology. The Uzumaki found one such cache in South America and was top secret to only the highest-ranking Uzumaki. A place that is now known as..."

"The Jungle Wastelands," the two surviving Jōnin muttered, now understanding the Uzumaki's interest in lands deemed an area without value.

"It took us years to even figure out the basic operations of most of the technology and even years later how to modify them for us to use with some, mixed results," Yokoshima stated as she raised the gun in the air and fire three times before the gun jammed. "As you can see, the modified weapon is not perfect. However, the Machine's Pulse Rifle doesn't jam as frequently as our own High Powered Assault Rifle, but it's a far cry from your own weapons. I am told they would rarely jam if it ever does. Luckily we had other toys to play with that our human ancestors had left."

The Uzumaki showed off two suitcases before laying them on the ground. It was then that they began to unfold into something more. A walking, thin robot with, though yet flexible metal with a glowing visor that goes around its thin head. It was a killing machine with long claws sharp enough to cut metal and gun turrets that popped out of its arm. The robots made Colonel Nine of Nine screamed bloody murder in Naruto's mind as she recognized them.

The girl relayed what she was told the group with a shaking voice, "We-e-e... we are in trouble."

"What is that thing?" Revan asked Naruto as she analyzed her opponents.

"That is a Mechanized Infantry Robot, MIR-130 model, codename 'Terminator' after the movies and it was one of the machines deadliest weapons," Naruto explained while repeating Nine of Nine's words. "During the Mechanize War, the machines used them to assassinate targets or sabotage ships by smuggling them in their suitcase form that varies in shape, size, and color. At the beginning of the war, they gained space superiority over Mars by using them to take the space stations in orbit, giving them the needed power to push into space. It was fortunate they were too complex and expensive in the material to be used as common soldiers. So the machines settle on MIR-100, codename 'Tin Cans' and T-118, codenamed 'Kamikaze' to be the bulk of their armies. From the more technical information given, I can tell you lightening attacks will be useless unless some of the armor is stripped ways so attacks can hits it insulated parts. Same with illusions except when using attacks that deal with sensory overload. The best way to kill is with extremes of heat, cold and force. In other words, it is best to use fire, ice, bullets, and jutsus that deal with a lot of physical damage."

"Right on the money my little granddaughter," Yokoshima. "Both were expensive to make, even with a fully stocked lab designed to break them down and build them for unlimited testing purposes. It is just sad we can't figure out how to make them beyond simple programming. We would not even be able to use them if our ancestors did not make it so simple for us to control them."

Yokoshima smiled, "We thought it would be centuries before we could figure out how to use the technology beyond the basics. That was until you and your discovery of the Great Library. And well... you can figure out where the rest of this will be going."
"No!" Hinata yelled, shocking the group. "I won't let you take my friend!"

"I see," Yokoshima stated with narrowed eyes, not liking how close Naruto was to this Hyūga. "And is that your answer my little Naruto."

"Yes," Naruto growled.

Yokoshima nodded her head in response before she turned to her two bodyguards. "Very well. If that is your answer, then I have no choice. Men, take like Naru-chan with whatever force is necessary, the rest are expendable though you will be rewarded if you can collect one or two of them for reprogramming. I expect you to take care of it while I deal with my rebellions, daughter, and granddaughter."

As soon as Yokoshima spoke, she pulled out her two swords to deflect the Adamantine Sealing Chains from Naruko and Kushina, both in black ANBU armor and without their masks gone to relay their anger at the woman. Yokoshima smiled as she stated, "Hello dears, how have you been after you betrayed me."

"We've been doing fine, Yokoshima," Kushina answered with a snarl.

"I see," Yokoshima stated without an eyelash batted. "While I am glad you are doing fine. I am also disappointed in both of you for betraying me. What have I done to earn your wrath granddaughter?"

"You ruined my life so you could have the perfect psychopath as a weapon, you bitch! Of course, I want you dead, and I do everything in my power to make it so!" Naruko screamed that made her mother and sister look at her with worry.

Yokoshima tufted, "Temper temper little girl. Just because you have advanced armor does not make you invincible, and I'll show you why as I let the games begin," Yokoshima stated as she revealed her own Adamantine Sealing Chains. She used the chains to lash out at her daughter and granddaughter before she moved to attack up close while the Leaf-nins quietly organized before the two Uzumaki had a chance to bark out orders.

"MIR-130S4 and MIR-130S5 kill the two Jōnin and anyone else that attacks you except for the blond haired girl," ordered one of the Uzumaki bodyguards and the two machines compiled.

"Acknowledge," the machines had replied before they went onto the attack.

Those two assassin machines were intercepted by Inferno, Haku and Tukiko went to intercept the machines since their jutsus were more suited for the robots. Meanwhile, Kurenai, Naruto, and Hinata went to engage the Uzumaki, and the three other Genin waited behind. Seeing the two Uzumaki distracted, Revan turned to Shino and Night Wolf to give them her thoughts.

"You two better get going. If they are after Naruto, then they will try to raid the library. We can't let that happen. So warn everyone you can," Revan ordered the two boys.

"We will," Night Wolf stated for the two before he turned his attention to Revan. "You stay safe as well."

"I will," Revan said softly before she went to the foray to help Inferno with the assassin robot while the two boys retreated. One to ANBU headquarters deep in the village, the other to Tsunade to call for reinforcements. They hoped they were not too late as explosions and fighting were heard kilometers away from.

Scene VII
At the frontlines, casualties began to mount up for Sound and Sand-nins as the alliance began their full counterattack. Diablo Dante twirled his staff with a blade to cut his opponents as he watched his men being slaughtered and they were only making a small dent in their enemies' numbers. It only got worse for those behind the front line. Outside of the village, large portions of Orochimaru's Sound-nins assigned to the rear guard to be their back up, or at least that was what his allies' claimed. Though it mattered little now as they were being eliminated when the Leaf Forces Fighters appeared, firing bullets and torpedoes into the invaders safely outside the village.

Diablo was afraid everything was lost as he urged his men into narrow streets and alleyways to minimized the casualties. A move that appeared to be working as the casualties dropped compared to the start of the battle. However, it was still too high, and he was looking for ways to change it as he moved with caution until he sensed dark chakra coming towards him. The head Sand-nin turned to see Raven Hunter was approaching him with black chakra surrounding him. His feature resembled a Raven while he twirled his twin tomahawks, ready to kill him. The two made no sound as the two made a dash towards each other. The war was just getting started while plots behind the battle were pushed into the light.

Chapter End Notes

Done with the first part, hope you enjoy this chapter and sorry for the delay. I was two thousand more words later when I realized that I needed another chapter. Hope that means the next chapter will be out sooner than expected.
The First Modern Leaf War Part 2

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto or its comics. As this is a fan fiction of a smart girl. Instead of a comic that stars an idiotic boy that believes everyone, even mass murders are redeemable.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 07/21/2018

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Scene I

Off in the distance, away from the explosions, five kids care freely played in the woods near a training field. Five kids Naruto knew personally trained as they always did on days with no school or in the evening. They were Fox Spirit, daughter of Wolf Dreamer, Konohamaru Sarutobi, Hanabi Hyūga, Moegi and Udon. Like most of the population, they did not know a war was happening until the alarms sounded. And like most kids when something dreadful happens they were not prepared beforehand, they panicked and retreated deep into the forest that surrounded the field. They huddled together to clear their thoughts, and they realized the need to leave the training field for a designated safety center.

The children were on their way out when they saw the field now held with the bodies of the few ANBU assigned to the facility and a few ninjas that had 'Swirl' headbands. Broken trees and craters littered the ground of a small battle that the Leaf-nins obviously lost as only one Leaf-nin survived. Their sensei in outside classes, Yamato was held down by two non-Uzumaki Whirlpool-Nins as he was guarded by two more non-Uzumaki and an Uzumaki. They silently waited for their leader, a man with the dark skin of a native from the Southern Wastelands that was an Uzumaki. He had a distinctive red-hair Mohawk as he squatted down to stare at the struggling Yamato.

"Why do you all struggle when you've been beaten?" the leader asked while smacking his hand. "You know what you're doing is the definition of insanity? You're trying to free yourself over and over, again and again from men fucken stronger than you. And you expect that somehow, my men will miraculously lose their hold on you or we let you go shows you're insane. Why don't you do the sensible thing and just tell us what we need to know so we can kill you quickly instead of drawing it out to gain information?"

Yamato grunted, "No!"

The leader sighed as he got up, ready to give the order when he was interrupted by a subordinate running out of the Great Library. "Lord Condor Uzumaki," the Whirlpool-nin saluted as he handed over a flash drive. "We were finally able to break the encryption and gain some of the information. Although we cannot get the classified information from the computers as the library is still in shut down and we can find the supervisor that is in hiding has locked in there. We are also still trying to break the seals that hold all classified papers and technology but were sure how much time will need to break in."

"Well tell them to hurry up; otherwise we'll have to settle for basic information instead of the stuff we really want," Condor yelled, and the ninja nodded quickly. He then turned to the Uzumaki and
barked out his orders, "You. Force the fucking information out of his mind so we can get out of this
tree infested village."

The Uzumaki grumbled at taking orders from a half-breed as they moved to battle. However, he
complied as he pulled out his sword and moved threateningly towards Yamato. The kids felt like
they had to stop this as they whispered to each other.

"What are we going to do?" Mogi asked her friends, and Fox Spirit had an idea.

"Okay, what we need to do is distract those ninjas to free Yamato, while also trying to find someone
to warn the village about the library being infiltrated. So I propose that Konohamaru, Hanabi and I
stay here to help free Yamato while you and Udon get help."

"But, wouldn't that be extremely dangerous?" Udon asked.

"Not if we attack from the woods and just stay out of sight," Konohamaru pointed out with hope.

"Whatever we plan to do, we need to do it now while Yamato is still alive," Hanabi pointed as
Uzumaki slowly raised his sword.

Konohamaru silently ordered his friends to go, as they sprang into action. Fox Spirit started her
offensive. Connecting herself with her spirit animal, she latched onto the broken trees to give life and
lifted the two Whirlpool-nins off Yamato. Yamato then went into action as he pushed the Uzumaki
away to summon 'Wood Style: Wood Spikes Jutsu' to summon two wood spikes that went through
the captured Whirlpool-nins while kunais went towards the enemy ninjas. Condor and his men
deflected the attack swiftly while the insane redhead stared at the trees with a scold.

"Who dares attack me while I'm enjoying myself?" Condor yelled as a war axe puffed out of seals in
his red pirate looking clothing. "Let's flush you out like the rats you are to find out."

Condor summoned 'Fire Style: Phoenix Flower Jutsu' to send hundreds of fireballs into the forest. It
forced three children out, and Condor began to lose it as Yamato muttered, "Kids."

"Oh, so it was a bunch of brats causing me some stress instead of playing with toys like kids should,"
Condor exclaimed before he looked at the Uzumaki with disdain. "I thought you got everyone."

Before the redhead man could retort Yamato forced them to retreat as he made a tree that pops up
and attacks the enemy ninjas while he moved protectively in front of the children. He sent a glare that
scared the children more than the blazing fire behind them. "We'll talk about you not being in a
bunker later. But for now, stay behind me, and we'll get out of this."

Yamato then turned to see Condor laughing as he stared at the Jōnin, "Well, it looks like we have a
bargaining chip to try to force your compliance. It does beat having to kill you slowly to force you to
tell us all the Leaf's secrets. So let's grab these kids and be done with these tree huggers."

The Whirlpool-nins quickly complied as they rushed them as Yamato used 'Wood Style: Naivety of
a World of Trees.' The technique the First Hokage had to develop summoned several tree branches
to rise up out of the ground to attack and defend against enemy ninjas. He used it to create the forest
around Konoha and the forest that Sarutobi had to fight when Orochimaru summoned the First.
While Yamato could never achieve such grand power, especially in his weakened state, he still could
manage to create a dozen trees taller than all the humans that were on the battlefield. The trees acted
as their first line of defense while still having enough chakra to fight back.

The two Uzumakis and the single Whirlpool-nin was forced back, while the second Whirlpool-nin
was able to squeeze through. Yamato. However, Yamato quickly responded use 'Wood Style:
Spearhead Jutsu' to create a spear made from wood and rammed it through the man's stomach for a bloody kill. The three Genin had never seen so much blood coming from someone as they stared at the man as he laid there, dead. Even Fox Spirit, who had seen death, was shaking with her friends as Condor curse them.

"You think your hot shit, don't you? That killing cannon fodders like that one means something to me?" Condor yelled at the Leaf-nins behind the trees as he powered up a Jutsu. "Well it does, and you are going to burn for that!"

Condor then performed 'Fire Style: Dance of the Dragons' to summon four dragons made of fire to rise up around Candor with flames as hot as the sun. Dragons that had rushed into the man-made a forest that flaming jutsu turned into a blazing inferno that not only reduced all plant life into ash before dispersing due to lack of fuel. The children backed away from the ashes as Yamato prepared for battle. When the flames died within minutes of its birth, Condor smiled as the Whirlpool-nin and the Uzumaki rushed in.

The Whirlpool-nin went after the kids while Yamato faced the Uzumaki as he used 'Wood Style: Hand Tool Manipulation' to create a wood shield to block the Uzumaki's attack and a short sword to fight back. Showing he learned some things from the Great Library as he dueled up close with the Uzumaki. However, he did not fight alone as the kids were forced to help when a Whirlpool grunt ran up and struck Fox Spirit with a powerful kick. The green haired girl fell to the ground due to the pain was out of the fight. While her friends looked tensed before they went onto the offensive.

Konohamaru pulled out dual knives while Hanabi got into the traditional Gentle First stance for battle. The two faced the ninjas and moved in to strike. Hanabi got into his face, trying to strike him down but the ninjas jumped back, keeping ahead and away from Hanabi. As he backed away the frustrated the girl, Konohamaru snuck in behind the ninja and sliced the man's back with his two kunais.

The ninjas screamed as he had spun around with a powerful kick Hanabi in the face. The girl flew a dozen feet away smacking into the ground as the ninja moved to disarm the boy before he grabbed the kid by the throat. Konohamaru gasped as he was brought to his eye level, one of the boy's knives in hand. He brought the knife to his face to state in a foreign accent to Konohamaru, "You shouldn't have done that, and now I'd show you why."

The man was about to strike the kid down when Konohamaru revealed he had an ace in the form of a hidden shin blade that popped out from under his wrist. The ninja could not form words as Konohamaru struck the man in the heart with enough force it was barely sticking out of his back. Hanabi, who had recovered, would not let the ninja's threat and stuck back him in the back with a chakra strike to his heart. Both had destroyed their opponent's heart at the same time as the two pulled back their blade/hand while the Whirlpool-nins slumped to the ground, dead. Konohamaru fell to the ground while the enemy ninja fell beside him leaving Hanabi standing there like a statue. The two ninjas in training were shaken by their first kill as it affected them in the worst possible way. As Konohamaru almost start to cry in shock while Hanabi looked at her hands in fear of her own power for the first time in her life.

The two were out of it while their sensei fought his opponent before Yamato moved in to achieve his victory. With the right amount of chakra manipulation, Yamato's sword disappeared into a seed that allowed the Uzumaki's blade to pass by Yamato before it reformed the wood into a long spear that went through his opponent leg. The Uzumaki screamed as Yamato brought up his shield and bashed it into the ninja's head. Blood smeared onto the shield as the ninja fell down unconscious, ready for interrogation.
A moment not missed by Fox Spirit as she had finally worked herself back to her feet. She watched in awe, impressed with her sensei's skill as he beat his mighty foe. She thought it was over, and sighed in relief, not realizing she had forgotten something important. Although she remembered, that one warrior remained to fight when Condor appeared in front of Yamato, intent to fight his own fight. Yamato put up a valiant effort, but as his opponent, it was apparent who was going to win. If Yamato were in his tiptop shape, he would be able to fight an elite Jōnins like Condor to stand still, but now with most of the chakra spent he was fighting an uphill fight. Yamato gave it his all, trying to prolong the fight but Condor was too skilled with his war axe.

Condor could not stop Condor as his axe destroyed his shield. He could not run far enough to stop Condor from plunging his axe deep into Yamato's stomach. And Fox Spirit's screams could not stop Condor from pulling out his axe and cutting off Yamato's head. All that could be done was laid down on the ground as the body bleed out blood and guts. Yamato was dead, and Fox Spirit wanted revenge.

It was a dark moment as she called on her spirit for the battle for the first time. A green fox spirit made of chakra and planets began to form while an armor of wood and flowers covered her body, as a black wisp flew in the air. She was beyond reason as she and her spirit dug her hands deep into the ground summoning the roots of planets around to her bidding. Vines with long thorns popped out of the ground and moved around Condor, posed to strike the ninja down. In a flash, the thorny vine wrapped around Condor and begun to strangle him. The thorns pierced her victim's veins as blood started to pour out of the prickly plant.

At that moment, Fox Spirit took pleasure in killing the man that had murdered her sensei, who she has known for many years. Her happiness soured with the realization of what exactly she had done. She had killed a person, and she had taken pleasure from the act. This revelation made her throw up as her last meal stained the ground. It was at that moment she understood what Big Fox Sis Naruto meant when she said killing felt like a loss as if it felt like she had lost something and Fox Spirit felt the same way. However, her depressing revelation was traded for shock and anger when she took a long look at Condor's body and found it was not Condor. He had switched places with the Uzumaki Yamato had disabled.

"Damn you, you half breed," the Uzumaki muttered while he spewed blood around the thorny vines before he died.

All the while Condor there stood, twirling his war axe as he faced Fox Spirit, unhurt and without a care in the world. It was at that moment that Condor gave Fox Spirit a smile before he disappeared in a swirl of fire. He was running away before the reinforcement of Leaf-nins arrived at the scene. A scene of carnage as the reinforcements went into the Great Library to clear out the Whirlpool-nins that Condor left behind. They killed four more at the cost of one of their men.

Something Fox Spirit did not notice, as she was no longer in the world of reality, but in a world entirely made of white noise. Her world had changed in a single act as she cried softly in the arms of her brother, Night Wolf, singing soothing words to her with her father, Wolf Dreamer, not far behind. She did not even know her father was there to treat her and her friends' wounds as they were taken to safety. All that mattered was to hold her brother tightly as she cried at the injustice of the world.

Scene II

In the arena, the battle reached its dramatic end as Naruto, and her comrades pushed the Uzumaki and their machines back while Kushina and Naruko dueled Yokoshima with topnotch form and skill. The duelists fought from the arena to the top of the wall surrounding it, using their chakra to keep
balanced on the wall’s beam. In addition, neither lost a beat in a fight that seemed to be ongoing. For while Kushina was considered to be a master and Naruko close to being a master, Yokoshima was a grandmaster due to all her experience as she deflected attacks with her two swords in better form that was keeping up with her younger opponents. The two were not going to gain ground against a grandmaster anytime soon.

The others of the Uzumaki force were not as much trouble for their opponents as their leader. The robots were battered, and the Uzumaki were bleeding. However, they were still dangerous when backed into a corner. The first to fall was between Kurenai and her Uzumaki opponent. The Uzumaki went hard onto the offensive with his single greatsword, while Kurenai took her time to wear down the Uzumaki's mental defenses. She used the few Earth and Fire Jutsus like 'Earth Style: Earth Spear Jutsu' and 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu' mixed in with nightmare genjutsu jutsus for added effects.

The Uzumaki realized his defenses were waning when he had to use double the amount of chakra needed to break genjutsus like 'Genjutsu Style: Nightmare Jutsu.' This made him perform even more powerful attacks as he used 'Wind Style: Wind Blade Jutsu' to create a blade of wind that headed towards and passed Kurenai. He realized he was hit with 'Genjutsu Style: Mirage Jutsu' when he felt Kurenai's blade deep within his neck. He slumped to the ground as Kurenai cleaned her kunai. She then turned towards her two students fighting the second Uzumaki who appeared to be stronger and moved to assist them.

Roughly, around the same time, the Leaf forces destroyed the two machines, though with a cost. The robot that Inferno and Revan faced was slowed to a crawl. Inferno's blue flames slowly melted its armor while Revan pursued a more direct attack by cutting into its armor up close. Both of them aimed for the wrist as they found out at the beginning of their fight that it held mini-guns for rapid-fire, short-range assault. A danger the two did not want to face, even if there was only enough ammunition to kill a small crowd if caught by surprise. They took no risks as they moved in for the kill.

Revan made the first decisive move as she cut through the robot's arms with her strong arms and her purple blade. She disarmed the mechanism before she used a power chakra strike right into the robot's chest to blow it away from her. The robot stumbled back from the blast into the hands of Inferno as he rushed the mechanism with blue flames around a fist called the 'Inferno Style: Flaming Fist Jutsu.' He struck the machine in the head that caused a partial melt just before it knocked the head clean off its robot body. The body soon crumbled to the ground as the destroyed head bounced away while Tukiko and Haku finished their fight.

Tukiko and Haku were using different tactics to take down the machine since Tukiko could not make flames hot enough to melt metal. They started using their rifle/crossbow but the machine was too fast, and its armor was thick despite its thin appearance. They needed a dozen hits before it could be killed, so they had to use more Elemental tactics if they wanted to win. Especially since it began to return fire in short, rapid attacks to save its bullets for maximum effect. Tukiko and Haku started to fight metal with fire and ice by interchanging their attacks respectively.

The quick changes from one extreme to the next, causing the metal to wear and tear at a faster rate than it would have happened if it were hit continuously by one extreme. Especially since, it was it easier for the girls to hit it with large destructive jutsus, rather than fast but tiny bullets. The robot's armor soon cracked under pressure, followed by the gyro joints in its legs breaking down, bringing it to full stop. Making it vulnerable to attack as Tukiko opened fire with her assault rifle. She was able to destroy its chest armor in five shots before it returned fire and hit her in the leg.

Tukiko screamed as she fell to the ground in pain from a shot that nicked bone. She held on to her
wound for dear life as she tried to stop the bleeding. The robot, with no sense of sympathy, took aim.

Intent on killing Tukiko when a spike made of ice went through its body.

Haku had her hand stretching from the usage of 'Ice Style: Ice Spike Jutsu' as she growled, "You will
not hurt my friend."

Haku watched the robot drop with morbid fascination before she rushed to Tukiko's side healing her
wounds a safe distance away. Haku would be pleased to report Tukiko would be able to walk, if not run like Inferno and Revan. The two were running between the two chunks of metal, moving to
assist Naruto and Hinata with their fight. That was until they heard a winning sound coming from the
two mechanized robots.

Inferno did not want to take any chances as she yelled to her student, "RUN!"

The two made dashed towards Haku's position when the two machines exploded. It was lucky they
were far enough to escape the explosion that sent them flying towards Haku. Their ears were ringing
as Haku had two new, vulnerable patients to treat as she finished closing Tukiko wounds. As Haku ran to help her friend and her friend's Sensei, Naruto felt the explosion and made a rookie mistake as she looked towards the explosion. The Uzumaki, Vlore used her distraction to his advantage. Vlore punched Naruto in the nose at a force that made her bleed as she fell onto the ground. Her swords
lying at her side as Naruto's hand shot up to hold her nose while Vlore went to attack Hinata with his
undivided attention.

Hinata was forced to run as Vlore went on the attack. As she moved away, the redhead with long
unruly hair yelled, "Come back here, and I promise I won't cut off your legs!"

Hinata responded with 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' to fire off a blob of water towards Vlore. Vlore responded with a blade wind generated by his great sword. The blade of wind cut through the blob
of water and headed towards Hinata with a razor sharp edge. Hinata only had a short time to perform
her 'Heavenly Spin' to protect herself from the attack. Hinata scooted back and turned to face Vlore, waiting patiently as he sensed ripples in the air. He knew an attack was coming and countered a
strike coming from behind him.

He spun on his heels and performed a vertical strike against his unknown target. The attack paid off
as the mirage disappeared to reveal a bloody Kurenai, screaming. Screaming as she held tightly on a
moderate cut as she fell to the ground, covering her body and her cut clothing. She cried as she
crumbled to the ground while Vlore pointed his sword at the woman.

"Nice try, but my ancestor mixed with a bloodline that makes me immune to genjutsu as a
continuous layer of chakra surrounds my body to dispel to protect me from chakra based attacks. Too
bad for you."

The man grinned until Hinata attacked from behind with 'Gentle Blade Style: Star Strike' creating the
star before hitting the man in the spin. Vlore screamed as he flew away from Kurenai's downed
body. He twitched and growled as he laid on the floor with a face full of dirt. He spits out the dirt as
he pushed himself off the ground. Waves of anger roared around him as he turned to face Hinata as she kneeled on the ground, healing Kurenai's wounds.

Vlore took a menacing step forward as he stated, "You're going to pay for that brat."

"No, she won't," stated a woman's voice behind Vlore, who turned his head slightly to the right to see Naruto standing upright. Her bloody nose wiped as she powered up a jutsu. He watched with
mild fascination as her power swirled around her.
"In fact, you will never harm anyone again. So say me!" Naruto yelled before she used 'Elemental Style: Dance of the Five Dragons Jutsu.'

The Jutsu was a powerful jutsu that was designed to summon five different small, elemental dragons that swirled around Naruto before she unleashed it on her opponent, Vlore. The dragons were fast and swift as the ones made of water and earth lashed out and grabbed onto his legs, crushing them while wind wrapped onto to his waist, cutting deep into his skin to prevent him from escape running. Vlore looked terrified as the fire dragon, and lightning dragon slithered towards the man. He soon felt pain from his chest to the rest of his body as the fire, and lightning dragons flew through his chest and back. He screamed to the heavens as he was roasted and electrocuted alive. Naruto looked away with a sickening face while his flesh became roasted jerky. Naruto waited for his screams to stop before she turned to see that Vlore was a chard corpse before her.

Naruto just stared at the corpse crumbled onto the ground before she mumbled, "I have never been happier that I only learned two jutsus during that month of hell." Naruto then began to pant as she turned to see Hinata closing Kurenai's wounds. She walked over to ask, "Is sensei alright?"

"She will be, and she'll have to lay off fighting for a couple of days to allow her wounds to seal properly," Hinata stated as she checks for other wounds.

Her eyes widened briefly, as she looked at Kurenai, asking a silent question that Kurenai responded with confusion. Hinata was tempted to say something to her, but Hinata turned towards Naruto to add, "Though she may be out far longer than expected. She'll need more accurate tests that can be done in the field to confirm what I suspect."

"Is it bad?" Kurenai groggily stated while Hinata looked thoughtful before she gave the answer.

"Let's just say it will be more life-changing than anything and too many, it's the most wonderful thing in the world," Hinata stated as she held a hand over Kurenai's stomach.

Kurenai blinked for a moment before it dawned on her what Hinata meant. When it did, she felt glad she was lying down for she did not think her legs would support her as her head rested on the ground. She put her hands on her stomach, unsure she should cry tears of joy, or scream in sorrow. She was content with being shell-shocked as her world came crashing down.

As Kurenai was coming to grips with what had happened, Naruto was thoroughly confused as to what they were talking about but tuned it out as she heard movement from behind. She turned to see Haku and a healed Tukiko bringing a battered Revan and Inferno with them. Naruto's eyebrows rose as she asked, "You guys alright?"

"We're fine, but Revan will have hearing problems for a few hours since she was closer to the blast," Haku told Naruto.

Revan did not hear her, so she yelled, "What?"

"It will be a few hours before you can hear properly!" Tukiko yelled for Haku. Revan responded with a thumb up while Inferno glared at his student as he covered his ringing ears.

This was an experience neither wanted to experience again if they can help, but despite the injuries, the two were ready to fight. Only to find there was no one to fight against as they watched Yokoshima in a duel with the skill that made most droll in envy. All they could do now was stand back and be ready to assist for they did not want to get in the way of the dance of death that took placed on the wall so high.
Scene III

In another duel, the past Hokages were putting up a valiant effort against the two foreign Kages, the Raikage Ē, and Mizukage Mei Terumī. The two moved toward each other’s back as they faced their opponents. Ē’s shirtless body had bruises from trading blows with a man that was several times stronger than he looked. While Mei donned burned and cut clothing from a rose whip that later turned into a flaming rose whip. Their opponents were regenerating their wounds while being disarmed.

The four stared until the Hokage's hands were repaired enough to go forward with the attack. Hashirama used 'Wood Style: Rain of Spike Jutsu' to summon hundreds of spikes to rain down on the two foreign Kages while Tobirama used 'Water Style: Great Waterfall Jutsu' to summon enough water to create a tsunami. Making its death from above and below for the two foreign Kages, and ensuring they could not jump or run away. However, whether it was intentional or not, there was a third option for the Kages that their opponents overlooked as they used 'Substitution Jutsu' to switched places with nearby, fallen logs to take the brunt of the attack.

The two former Hokages did not even look to know Mei and Ē appeared behind them. In fact, they just turned around to face a barrage of attacks. Ē was in a shroud of lightning armor that made him just as fast as lightning. With his massive arms, he struck with rapid strikes that Tobirama had no defense against. The Raikage hit with enough power to paralyze the former Hokage before bringing his two hands together to crushed Tobirama's head. His hand stained with blood and brain matter as the Tobirama's corpse disappeared to reveal a dead no-name Sound-nin that took Kin's place.

Ē pumped up, exclaiming his strength as Mei was putting down her opponent in a precise plan. As started off with 'Boil Style: Melting Flesh Jutsu' to shoot off a breath of heated steam towards Hashirama, who responded with 'Wood Style: Dome Shield Jutsu.' The wooden shield protected him from Mei's attack as she continued her offensive as she used 'Lava Style: Eruption Jutsu.' The jutsu created a torrent of lava that shot under the dome to burst in a flow of lava that would kill anyone.

Anyone but the Hokage as he created a wooden shield to protect himself as he shot out of the wooden dome turned volcano. He had a seriously grinning face as he let go of his shield and shot towards Mei. Mei put up a strong defense, deflected his martial arts and even returned a jab with her right hand. Her left hand kept back to go through a few one hand signs before he used 'Boil Style: Vapor Spit Jutsu' to spitfire a steamy spit into his Hokage's eyes. Hashirama let up as Mei pulled out a burning kunai and stabbed the Hokage in the brain to kill him.

The very first Hokage gave a small, "Thank you," before he dissolved into the sand, leaving behind the body of second Sound-nin Genin that seemed to have disappeared, Dosu.

Mei did not even care as she slumped, taking a breather from one of the most challenging fights she had while her ally, the Raikage dispensed his lightning armor as he stated, "That was the most fun I've had in ages. Who knew being allies with these tree huggers would be so much fun. I think I'm going to advocate keeping the alliance after this if this is the usual parties we are going too."

Mei sighed as she got up, "Good for you for I'm done with high-level fights at the moment. I need to rest."

"You do that while I help end this battle," Ē stated as moved towards some lower level fights while Mei took a breather before she left for the arena floor. They were done with high-level fights for the day.

Not that Orochimaru knew as he was becoming afraid of his own mortality. With Anko teaming up with Sarutobi, he was nearly killed twice by each of them with a shotgun, bō staff or an elemental...
jutsu. The bullet hole in his shoulder and a red mark on his throat was proof enough that his life was about to end if he did not escape. Especially after his only trump card gets destroyed before it could kill a single one of his enemies.

He decided it was best to run as he held his ground against two very pissed off Leaf-nins. One of which he could not find until he heard a hissing sound of a giant snake. Anko had summoned Kingu, a giant purple cobra that moved like the king of all snakes. The serpent stood tall, allowing Sarutobi to jump onto its head before it slithered across the roof in an attempt to eat Orochimaru alive, forcing the snake man to run. He ran as he pulled up a long-sleeved shirt to reveal a summoning tattoo. With a bit of his blood-smeared finger, he produced a puff of smoke that summoned his final trump card, a giant purple snake with black stripes along the entire body.

This made Kingu back up as he growled, "Manda, the Traitor!"

Manda stared back and growled at Kingu before he looked at Orochimaru, "So you summoned me to deal with the rebellious son of the former queen that I ate. I'm tempted to call off the human sacrifices just to kill this punk."

"You won't get anything today traitor, and this is the day I'll kill you for killing my mother you parasitic worm," Kingu taunted while Anko and Sarutobi stood on the snakes head with their chakra.

"I have a bad feeling about this," Sarutobi stated as Manda's angry hiss proved his words were right on the money.

"I'll tear you to pieces!"

"Yep, this is going to be bad," Anko had stated as the two Leaf-nins crouched down to hold on to Kingu as tightly as possible as the two giant snakes hissed angrily at each other.

Orochimaru did not like it as well but could do nothing but hold on as the two snakes slithered toward each other, fangs out as they moved to strike. The two snakes slithered and danced around each other, snapping with fangs barred at each other until Kingu slapped Manda with the end of his tail. Manda staggered back but responded with a massive tail strike of his own. The cobra avoided the attack as it slammed into the makeshift forest hiding the ninjas and making them flee from the forest.

Three of which were Sound-nins, Kidōmaru the four-armed dark skin tactician, the thin man Ukon and the silver hair traitor with his trademark glasses and smirk, Kabuto. There used to be another in the form of a giant redhead with a Mohawk, but despite transforming into a giant red monster, Zabuza still killed him after he cut him down the middle. His giant remains lay in the forest before the snake crushed it. The other Sound-nins would have joined the giant redhead in death as team ANBU surrounded them, but Kabuto revealed himself between the ANBU and killed one of the Leaf-nins as he quickly joined up with the surviving Sound Four.

Forced back by a large, elite team of ninjas, Kabuto realized it was a losing battle, especially if his master summoned he summon the boss, "We need to retreat, or we'll all die here."

"But what about Orochimaru-Sama? Aren't we going to help?" Ukon asked with great concern.

"We can't get to him and staying here will only get us killed Ukon. Orochimaru cannot afford to lose any more of his elite ninjas, so we need to go," Kabuto pointed to the giant snake battle. "You know this to be true, Ukon, Kidōmaru."
"He's right," the six-armed ninja agreed as they backed further away from the approaching ninjas. "If we stay, we'll end up like that fat bastard Jirōbō. We need to retreat before we're cut in two as well."

Ukon reluctantly agreed as Kabuto was preparing 'Earth Style: Hidden Mole Jutsu' on the three. Kakashi saw the technique and made a blind rush with Yūgao behind him, yelling, "You're not going anywhere Kabuto."

Unfortunately, Kabuto completed the Jutsus and began to sink into the ground quickly. Too fast for Kakashi to shoot them as Kabuto gave a broad smile that said, "Better luck next time."

The three disappeared before Kakashi, and his men could attack. Kakashi let out a sigh before he turned towards the last major fight on the roof. They watched as the two snakes become more in tune with battle while causing more damage to their surroundings. Half the forest made on the roof was destroyed, and cracks appeared all over the roof from their massive strikes. The vipers moved like charmed dancers with fangs that belong in horror stories, waiting for the right moment to strike.

Kingu found his right moment when Manda spat out deadly wads of venom at the real King of the Snake Clan. Kingu ducked under the fatal attack before it rapidly moved towards Manda. Kingu slammed into the giant snake, mouth open before he clamped down. His fangs dug deep into his opponent's flesh. Manda screamed as the two tumbled off the roof and Orochimaru taking the chance to make his run. However, he did not get far as Anko appeared in front of him with her shotgun pointed right into his stomach.

Bang was heard before blood and guts shot out of the massive midsection created by Anko as Orochimaru fell off the roof and onto the arena floor. Surprisingly alive from his wounds and fall, he sees his snake summon was let go by Anko's snake before he struck the other snake's head. He watched with morbid fashion as Kingu bit off Manda's head using a combination of venom that dissolved flesh and a twisting motion that broke enough bone to allow it to tear off the head in a bloody fashion. Orochimaru closed his eyes as Kingu took Manda's body away as a trophy to prove his right to rule.

The snake man opened his eyes to see a tired Sarutobi slowly come over to him with his staff while Orochimaru lay there in a pool of his own blood. He quivered as Sarutobi raised his monkey staff as Anko watched from a distance, "This is your end, my former student. Goodbye."

Orochimaru screamed cruses to the very end as Sarutobi squashed his head with enough force to make watermelons explode. Orochimaru was finally dead, and Sarutobi felt more relieved than sad while Anko seemed busy celebrating their success. He suddenly felt very old. Too old to be fighting and would be laying down if someone were not holding him up. He looked to see his staff transformed back into a white-haired, human-sized monkey with a white three-prong beard.

Sarutobi smiled as he stated, "Thank you Enma. I can always trust the Monkey King to have my back."

The giant monkey, Enma smiled as he stated in a deep voice, "Any time Sarutobi, any time."

The two stood in silence, never noticing that the few surviving Sand-nins took note of Orochimaru's death and their missing Kazekage. Fearing the worst, they ran to the front lines to tell what is left of their forces the bad news.

Scene IV

In the front lines, things were getting worse and worse for the Sand-nins. Alleyways and rooftops were crowded with ninjas and the corpses of ninjas, much to the discomfort of Diablo Dante. After
he had escaped a fight with a high-powered, dark Revan Hunter thanks to the intervention of Sound-nin cannon fodder, he began to see that this battle would end with the destruction of the Sand Forces if they continued to fight. One extreme example was a Sand-nin that hit the tank and roasted the two personal inside using the Solar Flare bloodline, only to be killed by a fellow ninja controlled by a blond Yakama. Then his forces were depleted even further as half a dozen soldiers equipped with an assault rifle mowed down a number of his fellow ninjas. Just as another half dozen killed by another tank, or one of three humans with demonic chakra that reassembled the two-tailed cat (Yugito), the seven-tailed beetle (Fū) and the eight-tailed ox/squid (Killer Bee).

It was one of many examples that made him realize he and what was left of his forces needed to escape and it looked like he was not the only one that realized it. Especially as he noticed a few Sand-nins that he had assigned to the arena were running like a ghost was after them on the rooftops above him. He knew he had to find out what happened in the arena, so he threw down smoke pellets after he found Raven Hunter coming toward him again. Raven Hunter dispersed the smoke to see Diablo had disappeared and he was facing some Sound and Sand Ninjas alone with a tomahawk in the same alleyway as he went on the offensive by slicing a few body parts off.

Meanwhile, on the rooftop, Diablo Dante appeared to stop one of his men retreating from the arena to ask what was going on. He got an unexpected answer, "Sir, the Kazekage, and Baki are missing, and Orochimaru is dead. You're in command, sir. What are your orders?"

Diablo was shocked into silence as he looked over the roof, watching his men get crushed or killed, he knew what he had to do, "Order the retreat for the Sand-nins; leave the Sound-nins to their fate."

The ninjas quickly complied before calling by radio or by word of mouth to order the retreat while Diablo stood there. He continued to stand until he saw his men on the retreat and was about to follow when a beautiful Roth Clan ninja cloaked in green sage chakra appeared in front of him. The woman moved in a fast strike with a green blade, and he used his staff to keep her back as she struck him repeatedly. After the fifth strike he had deflected, Diablo decided to end the fight as he went on the offensive and he soon overpowered and disarmed the woman.

She tried to return the favor and began to go into a martial arts stance. She used quick moves and grapples until she got a hold of the staff and squeezed. Her strength began to splinter in her hands as she slowly twisted the staff out of his hands. Not wanting to be caught in a bad position, Diablo leg goes of staff to pull out a machete. A quick weapon he used to strike at the woman before she knew it.

Coated in chakra, the blade beat on her chakra armor. Her armor flared as if cracks formed. She then deflected the blade, sending a blast of chakra that Diablo avoided before he struck again with greater force. His chakra thick and powerful with inhuman strength knocked her back as her armor flared again. Her body, after hours of fighting, was weaning down and it only got worse as his chakra began to work against her sage chakra.

She was worried if she did not end the fight soon she would so lose. Therefore, she fired off a massive pulse of chakra that created cracks across the building towards Diablo and he swap with a fallen Leaf-nin. The body and the staff left behind quickly disintegrated as Diablo appeared behind the woman. She slowly turned to see Diablo with his machete filled with his chakra came down on her weaken shield. Shattering her shield as the blade went right into the woman's neck, right into a vital artery. The woman stared at the machete sticking out of her throat as her chakra barely stopped the blade.

Amell was lucky it did not include a decapitation as Diablo pulled out his blade, leaving her to bleed out on the ground before him. He stared at the woman with cold eyes as he picked up the staff. He
planned to put the woman out of her own misery as her hands were desperately trying to cover her bleeding artery. He was about to make his final strike when he heard someone yell, "Amell!"

Diablo Dante turned to see Raven Hunter rushing towards him, with a chakra flare that would kill a weaker man. He took it a sign to retreat and ran out of the village while Raven Hunter reached the roof, seeing Amell on the ground and Diablo making a run for it. Raven Hunter did not even make an effort to pursue Diablo as he rushed to Amell's side. He fell to his knees as he tore a large piece of cloth from his robes and put them over Amell's wound in a desperate hope to save her.

"Hold on Amell-Chan," Raven Hunter panted as he pressed into the wound. "Don't you dare die on me."

Amell Roth coughed out blood as she blurted out, "I don't think it's an option (cough). I think… I think I'm not long for this world (cough)."

"There got to be something we can do," Raven Hunter stated more out of denial as his knees were covered in the flood of blood that continued to pour out of Amell.

"I wish (cough) there was something that... that can be done," Amell coughed as her eyes were becoming dead, clouded eyes. "I'd live a good life (cough), despite outliving my husband but it's also one with two regrets. One (grunt), I'll never see my daughters grow up into full adults. And I never told you how much I care about you and wish… I wish it were different," Amell added before she began to cough out blood uncontrollably.

"I'd still care for you as well," Raven Hunter stated as he showed a rare smile that he hardly showed to family, let alone anyone else.

Amell smiled as she gently grabbed his arm with the last of her strength. "Promise me that you will look after my girls once I'm gone. I'd (cough) appreciate if someone I trust outside of my clan to do it."

"I promise," Raven Hunter gently nodded, much to the happiness of Amell as she had one more request.

"And I also want you (cough and grunt) to live your life to the fullest and never dwell on what could be. That you would not seek revenge and would instead find happiness out there in the world."

Raven Hunter twitched as he nodded reluctantly, "I, I promise."

"Thank you," Amell smiled before she quietly went limp on the cold concrete, her eyes closed as Raven Hunter's stared down own cold eyes.

He slowly removed his bloody hands to close Amell's eyes as he rose from the ground, staring at the bloody, yet peaceful corpse of Amell. He let down silent tears as the world blurred around him, only to be brought out of it by a hand touching his shoulder. He slowly turned to see an Ox ANBU salute him before stating, "Sir, Sand Forces are on the retreat. Should we go after them?"

Raven Hunter stared at the few Sand-nins make a run for it. He was tempted to go after them to kill Diablo personally. However, he stopped himself as he thought logically what to do, even if he did not want to in a tone colder then ice, "Let them go, as there has been enough death and other enemy ninjas to worry about. Offer the Sound-nins a chance to surrender and if they refuse, kill them. We cannot allow Orochimaru to get a single ninja back if we can help it."

The ANBU acknowledge order transmitted his orders to the others. While a second ninja, a medic-nin appeared by his side, one black-haired woman named Shizune if he remembered correctly, "Sir,
what about Lady Roth?"

"There nothing that can be done, she's dead," Raven Hunter stated.

The medic looked shocked as he kneeled down to examine the woman before she exclaimed, "Sir she's not dead. If we quickly get to the hospital, we can save her!"

Raven Hunter eyes widen as he quickly scooped her up, "Then we have no times to wait. Let's go."

The two soon ran, out of the frontlines while the fighting was winding down. Within minutes, every Sound-nin was dead with only a few willing to surrender for they did not have a bounty on their head, or they were not fanatically loyal to Orochimaru. Either way, the battle was soon over, and they would quickly pick up the pieces of this terrible fight.

Raven Hunter carried Amell to the hospital for treatment. He stood there worry, watching them keeping Amell Alive. He smiled when they said she will live and he thought the worst of it was now over. He did not realize that it was a prologue of things to come as two twin children in the Seer Clan compound predicted the next war to come as the first clash was about to end in the arena.

Scene V

Within the arena, Yokoshima was fighting well without skipping a beat as she danced around Kushina and Naruko on the wall's beam barely larger than one of her feet. The old woman let down a few strains of sweat, but it looked like she was not even sweating as her opponents showed their profuse perspiration on their clothing. She was also aware of the whole battlefield and then started to hear a lack of gunfire, jutsus, and screams, she knew the battle for Konoha was over, and it was time for her to retreat after she pushed the two former Uzumaki back.

She then put her form into a slacked before she stated in a mocking tone, "Well, it's been fun, but I see I have overstayed my welcome. I bid you farewell."

The old woman was about to run when Naruko appeared in front of her, yelling, "You not going anywhere."

Naruko then made a mad dash towards Yokoshima. She slashed and struck at Yokoshima while the old woman deflected each strike until she overpowered the girl. Yokoshima pushed her back by knocking out her sword before she punched the girl hard enough to break her small nose. Naruko fell off the wall and rolled to the ground while Yokoshima admired her work. That was until she felt her daughter's sword slam into her back.

It was then Kushina found out the hard way that Yokoshima's element was water, and she was using a water jutsu that made compressed water into armor as hard as steel. Her strike, which should have killed the older woman, caused her water armor to burst as a surge of water hit her face, forcing Kushina to close her eyes. Temporarily blindsided, Kushina did not see Yokoshima put up one of her swords so with one hand Yokoshima could throw Kushina off the roof. She did not have time to react as Yokoshima followed her while aiming her second sword at her daughter. Kushina had hit the ground first followed by Yokoshima's blade backed by the woman's full weight.

Kushina was lucky she was wearing advanced armor the ANBU wear, or it would be a life-threatening injury, if not killed instantly. As it was, it was a flesh wound that she was could walk away from as Yokoshima quickly pulled out her blade and jumped back. During her jump, she deflected three shots with skills that were almost inhumanly impossible as Naruto and her friends promptly surrounded Yokoshima when she landed on the ground.
Naruto was at Kushina's side, briefly staring at her wounds to ask, "Mom, are you alright?"

Kushina nodded as she slowly got up, "I'm fine honey, and the armor you gave me saved me. I think you gave me the best mother day gift a mother could have"

"I hear that," Naruto mumbled as she kept her gun aimed at the woman as they waited for the woman to move.

Yokoshima just smiled as she asked with a sarcastic tone, "Is this the part where I surrender to you now?"

"No, this is the part where we kill you," Naruto and Naruko said at the same time, much to the shock of the two girls.

"I see, and I'm afraid I will disappoint you for I had already disappeared," Yokoshima stated before she turned the blade towards herself and stabbed herself to disperse in a puff of smoke, revealing she was a shadow clone.

The group cursed as Tukiko summed it up with a simple, "AH COME ON!"

Kurenai winced as she sighed, trying to look at the bright side, "Well, at least the battle is over."

Haku agreed sadly as she stated, "Yes, the battle is over, but I think another war is on the horizon."

"And this one will have no glory or honor, just death, and horror as I fear the world will soon face the true Total Industrial war as our forefathers faced," Naruto said quietly as she stared out up into the sky. A single tear fell as she worried for the future as the village's flag raised high in the shouts of victory.

Chapter End Notes

Done with the part 2, hope you enjoy it. Please review and tell me what you think and sorry for the reposting and re-editing the story, again.
Scene I

Within the large Council room, Sarutobi was sipping Earl Grey tea as members of the Shinobi, and Civilian Council members waited in their chairs. They were waiting for the end of casualty reports delivered by the scarred head of T&I, Ibiki standing in for Chief of Medical Division Eboshi, she was working overtime at the hospital, "Taking into account that we faced a large invasion force, I'm happy to report casualties were light. Among our allies, our village's Defense Forces and our Ninjas, we have a reported ten percent fatalities with the only notable deaths were Jōnin Genma Shiranui and Yamato. We also have an eight percent wounded rate, all of whom will return to service within a week to six months at most."

"I also would like to report that the damage to the village itself was superfluous," noted the head of R&D, Dr. Lost. The man stood tall in his business suit as his glowing eyes bored into theirs. "Outside of a large hole in the wall that surrounds the village, only a small portion of the surrounding district was damaged and will be repaired in a matter of days.

"The damage on the wall, however, will take months to repair as we plan to go ahead and replace the entire wall with micro-reinforced ultra-high-performance concert reinforced with steel. In addition, we are going to added missile launchers, along with the anti-air guns and ground machine guns on the wall to protect against summons like the giant snake. I'm also proud to report that the Scorpion Hover Tank and Phantom class Attack Fighter performed at optimal efficiency, despite the fact we will have to replace three of the hover tanks and repair two more."

"I'm glad to hear that," Hiashi stated as he leaned forward to face Dr. Lost. "However, I am more concerned about the security breach we had in the Great Library."

Dr. Lost nodded in acceptance as he stated, "I can say with certainty that they didn't get much. I was able to lock down any classified information while trapped in that airtight room thanks to my acquired cyber skills and due to the fact their hackers appeared about as good as drunken monkeys."

"So they got nothing?" Mikoto Uchiha asked as Dr. Lost lit a cigarette to calm his nerves.

"Outside basic information and history book, they got nothing that would be a threat to us at the moment. Though given a decade or two would allow the Uzumaki to progress their technology to be a half a century behind ours to the point they could be a major threat. Perhaps sooner depending how many machines they made since Naruto and her team reported they have a research lab that survived the EMP Bomb during the Republic Alliance's time."

"This could be disconcerting, and making our allies request for samples of our more advanced
military technology given more weight," Sarutobi stated, much to the disproval stare of some of the Shinobi Council, mainly the elders. Though he ignored them as he directed his attention to the ANBU Commander to ask, "Yūgao, have ANBU Intelligence and Jiraiya's Spy Network got any information on the Uzumaki's movements."

"Very little as things seem quiet in the Jungle Wastelands," reported a purple-haired ANBU behind a cat mask. "We are trying to get spies in or hear what they are doing in the Elemental Countries, but nothing so far. We'll have to assume they are preparing for war."

"That is disconcerting, and if they have the machine army we fear, I may have no choice but to ask the Fire Counselors and Representatives Assembly to consider trading more of our advanced technology to our allies," Sarutobi stated much to the shock of the Council.

"Surely we are not going to give marginal allies like Cloud forces and its housing country, Lightning Country our most advanced technology?" Hiashi asked with a growled.

"Give me and the Assembly some credit," Sarutobi laughed. "We're not going to give the top of the line stuff, as Dr. Lost has some... designs to give to them that are fifty years behind us at least."

"Seventy at most," Dr. Lost nodded. "Advance enough to defend themselves should they come under attack from Whirlpool forces."

"Allies will need the better technology in case things go from bad to a worst-case scenario," Sarutobi explained as he took a puff from his pipe as the Council began to mummer.

A couple of people were murmuring about the thought of another war on the breach while the three elders scolded, especially the cripple Danzō covered in bandages. "That all fine and good but what are we going to do about our current enemies. What are we going to do about the Sand and Sound Forces?"

Yūgao kept her mouth shut during the rant, looking at Sarutobi to give her report. With a single nod, the ANBU Commander started her report, "Sound Forces took the brunt of our attacks and only a few managing to escape, though the few that did escaped retreated into Rice Country. We are currently gathering information on Rice Country to determine the atmosphere and if it's ideal to invade the country with the Assembly's Approval to take them out once and for all.

"As for Sand Forces, they came out better than Sound Force but not by much," Yūgao stated as she took a breather. "Best case scenario for them, they lost forty percent of their forces. Worst case, they lost sixty percent. Either way, the majority of their casualties were their Jōnin and Chūnin rank ninjas. Either way, Sand forces losses were high enough that they are going to lose their title as one of the five major villages, even if we returned their prisoners. Though negotiations on what to do with the prisoners are going to be on hold until Sand Forces decided who their next Kazekage will be, as the next in line was Baki."

"Who'll be turned over to the Sand Daimyō for execution today," Ibiki added. "Apparently he knew Orochimaru had killed the Kazekage and replaced him. It was all part of his plan to use the fake Kazekage to get his village out of economic trouble by killing their Daimyō and dealing a blow to Leaf Forces. All the while claiming they were tricked. Now though, he's going to pay for his part of the plan with his life."

"So with Baki made an example, most likely Diablo Dante will take control of the village to negotiate its surrender to Wind Country. He is probably going to put the village under firm military control from the samurai and soldiers of Wind Country," Yūgao explained as Wolf Dreamer cringed.
"My brother is not going to like this as Diablo put Amell into a comma." Wolf Dreamer sighed as he added, "He hasn't left her side since."

"Well, pal… I think we all have friends in the hospital," Tsume commented as she twitched with a broken arm she received from the fighting. "But now is not the time to dwell on it as we need to be concerned with who will replace Sand Forces as a Major Village."

"Most likely, Grass Forces will take their place as next Great Shinobi villages as Grass Country is one of the largest territories outside of the Great Five and has a military force that rivals Sand Forces in their prime. The only others contenders are Waterfall Forces followed by Star Forces in a distant third, though they don't have the numbers to be in the running," Yūgao explained. "We'll see in the next couple of weeks."

"Isn't Grass Country currently in an alliance with Earth Country?" the Jōnin Commander, Shikaku Nara lazily asked.

"Yes sir," Yūgao nodded, and Shikaku cursed their luck.

"Troublesome, it looks like things are coming ahead with the Uzumaki and the alliance with Earth Country, hopefully not into the next Great Shinobi War."

Ignoring the doomsday report, Sarutobi commanded Yūgao to continue her observation of their allies and enemies. "You got it, sir," the ANBU saluted her superior.

"Well, if there is nothing else, I suggest we call this meeting at an end," Mikoto suggested. "We've all got somewhere to be, and mine is in the hospital."

The other Council members nodded in agreement and Sarutobi waved them off. The members quickly dispersed, leaving only the ANBU Commander and the Hokage alone in the room. Yūgao was quick to his side after his collapse in his chair, "Are you, alright sir?"

"I'm fine, just realizing how old I am," Sarutobi admitted. "In my youth, I was able to fight on an equal footing with my two predecessors. Now I need help to beat my crippled student while my fellow Kages can beat my predecessors in one on one combat. I think it is time for me to retire."

Yūgao nodded, fully expecting the man to retire years ago, "Who will be your replacement?"

"Tsunade would be my first choice, with Jiraiya being my second choice, and both of them are at the hospital," Sarutobi answered as he slowly got up. "Come, we've got rounds to make and its time I pick my successor."

"Yes, Hokage-Sama," Yūgao nodded as she followed Sarutobi out of the office.

Scene II

A day after the Battle for Konoha, things were calming down as the number of hospital patients dwindled to only those that had severe injuries or too much trauma to move. The foreign ninjas outside of POWs were taking their wounded away under their Kage's eyes, preparing to head back home. It was the last moment that Haku had a chance to say goodbye to Mei and Zabuza, though Zabuza did have a tear in his eye as he gave the girl an awkward hug.

Other news was not as great as Raven Hunter held onto Amell's hand, who laid in a medically induced coma in her hospital bed, unable to awake due to the extent of her injuries. It would take weeks for her to awake. Family and friends were extremely worried as they sat outside for hours, hoping against hope she would wake up early. Bastila even fell asleep on Revan's shoulder as Night...
Wolf joined them in offering their condolence. Revan watched with a stern face that relayed no emotion as she squeezed Night Wolf's hand for moral support.

"Thank you for being here for us Night Wolf, but you don't need to stay with us if you don't want to," Revan told Night Wolf with a small smile.

"I wouldn't be much use anywhere else. Fox Spirit is asleep, and she is handling her first kill as well as can be expected. She doesn't need me as much as you two do," Night Wolf smiled sadly, as he returned the squeeze. "How are you two holding up?"

"Bastila cried a bit more then she should have, and as you can see, she is now resting," Revan sighed and looked at her sister. "She thinks she should have tried harder while in her battle meditation, our mother would have been more invigorated and Diablo would have been taken down instead. She believes he would be the one in the hospital, instead of our mother is on life support for at least two months in an induced coma. It will take time for her to realize that we couldn't do anything more to save her."

Night Wolf nodded until he noticed a lack of an answer to his second question. "And how are you?" Night Wolf asked, emphasizing the 'you' part.

Revan twitched as she truthfully answered, "I want to kill HIM. I want to kill Diablo Dante the first chance I get for leading the invasion against the village and for nearly killing my mother. One day, I hope to return the favor, without the possibility of chance being a factor."

Night Wolf actually flinched by Revan's cold statement and was tempted to let go. However, instead of letting go, he held on tighter as he softly said, "Please come back to Revan. Don't walk the dark path your family and I cannot follow."

Revan turned with a flash to face Night Wolf with burning eyes into Night Wolf's concerned eyes. Her eyes soften as the fire left her face. "I won't, not with you here."

Revan then leaned forward and gave a soft kiss that Night Wolf returned with a passion. The two were soon leaning into each, enjoying each other's presence. Revan, in particular, seemed content. 'Seemed' being the optimal word as her eyes were not as they stared at a dead Sand-nin that the medics could not save. As a blanket was being put over the corpse, Revan imagined it was someone else to feel content.

Scene III

In another part of the hospital, Kurenai was laying on her back in bed as the black-haired assistant, Shizune, examining the Jōnin's abdomen. Kurenai nervously shook with a tremor while Asuma stood by her side, his hand on her hand waiting as they waited for the news.

Shizune soon got results as she gave a brief smile to announce, "Congratulations Kurenai, you're pregnant."

Asuma formed a great smile as he hugged Kurenai at the news, "This is great news! We are going to have a child together!"

"Yes, I can hardly wait," Kurenai had stammered with a nervous smile that Asuma missed.

"I have to tell my family and friends," Asuma stated with a broad smile. "I'm going to be a father."

Kurenai acted as if she was slapped in a way she could not compare. She could not tell if the news was pleasurable or terrible as her entire body went through all the motions of being excited, angry
and depressed. Emotions not missed by her friend as Anko suggested Asuma do so to have an excuse to talk to Kurenai as alone as she could be as her student Tukiko refused to leave her master's side.

With Asuma out of sight, Anko went to the heart of the matter, "Kurenai are you okay?"

"I don't know," Kurenai admitted. "I'll feel like this couldn't have happened in the worst time."

"Is having a baby so bad?" Tukiko asked with a quivering lip.

"No," Kurenai quickly answer to her young student. "It's a wonderful thing to know you are growing a new life within you. To have a family and to raise the child you want. It's just too soon."

Kurenai looked down, quietly as she added, "I have to give up my command as a Jōnin Sensei and will be regulated to a desk job in two months' time. Assuming I not forced into early retirement to watch over my kid. It may be years before I am allowed or able to get back out into the field again."

Kurenai let a single tear lose as Anko and Tukiko rushed over to hug Kurenai, "Everything will be fine Kurenai, and we still have the two months before you're pulled from the field."

Kurenai let a small smile before adding, "I guess there is that."

The three continued to hug, eventually came four when Haku came in and joined the hug. Kurenai finally accepted her pregnancy with a smile, as she would now achieve her dream of having a family.

Scene IV

As Kurenai was taking in the news, a bandaged Kushina walked down the hallways. She was holding her stomach, still tender from the sword strike she suffered from Yokoshima Uzumaki during the invasion. Though it did not hurt as much as her wounded pride, "Two on one and we still could not beat her. We'll need to up our training."

"I'm sure you will get her next time," Hinata stated with soft conviction.

"Next time we won't give her a chance to win as we'll stack things into our favor," Naruko stated with a small smile as a plan developed in her head for the next time she would see her grandmother. It involved her sword, a heavy pistol she got her sister to make for her, chains, and grenades, lots of them. Naruko unblocked her gun to admire the heavy pistol that was more powerful then Naruto's, though with a lower firing rate.

Her smile was unnerving to Naruto as she stated, "You're starting to scare me, Oni-Chan."

Naruko turned to face Naruto and sated, "Good, if I can unnerve a fellow ninja, I can scare the shit out of my enemies."

"Naruko, I think that's enough," Kushina stated with a hint of worry in her voice. "We are all comrades and more importantly family. We don't need to be ready to fight now."

Naruko slowly loosened her form as she spoke in a hoarse voice, "Yes mother."

Kushina smiled softly as she embraced her youngest daughter in spite of her own pain. Naruko gave a small smile as she returned the hug while Naruto and Hinata stood to the side. Once the hug was done, the four continued down the hallway as Naruto changed subjects, "So Hinata, how's Hanabi handling her first kill?"

"She has her moments," Hinata admitted. "She is having a hard time accepting that she can end a life
with her training. Talking about it and actually making a kill is two different things. However, she'll bounce back, especially as Konohamaru is there with her as they both work together to get past their first kill."

"Those two sure are spending a lot of time together, and blush when people question it. I wonder why?" Naruto asked in such confusion that it made her mother and daughter stop a few steps back to smack their hands to their foreheads.

"Oni-Chan, do you know the meaning of the 'Birds and the Bees" Naruko asked while Kushina began to blush, hoping to Kami that she did not need to explain the concept.

She felt relief as Naruto turned to face them in shock, before a small blush appeared as she silently said, "Oh."

Hinata grimaced where the line of thinking was taking place, so she changed subjects, "How's Fox Spirit taking her first kill?"

"Um, Night Wolf and Fox Spirit say she's fine, though I worry a bit," Naruto admitted. "We'll see if she'll need counseling or not."

Hinata nodded, and she was going to the next subject when a disturbance in front of the small group stopped their line of thought. A disturbance coming from a small squad of Wind Country's Samurai coming out of the room that held all the captured Sand-nins. The Leaf-nins stepped back as they saw they were taking a handcuffed prisoner out with them. It was a Sand-nin they recognized the sensei from Gaara's team, Baki of the Red Sand.

"You can't do this to me!" Baki yelled out under one of the Samurai's arms.

"I think you'll find we can do anything to traitors to our Country," a samurai stated. "Conspiracy to kill the Daimyō, accomplice to the murder of the Kazekage, giving military control to a foreign power; unlawfully attacking an ally of Wind Country, and committing acts of espionage and treason for a foreign power. All of which you've been found guilty of and have been sentenced to immediate beheading for your crimes. It's only a shame we can only give you a quick execution. Instead of the prolonged one, you deserve."

Baki continued to scream bloody murder as he was dragged away back to Wind Country for his public execution. Leaving behind dishearten Sand-nins when they realizing how much corruption seeped into their forces, and how much they lost going along with the plan. Many Sand-nins looked depressed, even a redheaded boy that seemed alone around other Sand-nins, though not entirely alone as he was surrounded by others of his kind, the three other Jinchūrikins from the allied villages.

Curious, worried and filled with a little guilt, Naruto felt a desired to comfort Gaara. Kushina seeing Naruto's stress urged her to go. Supported by Naruko and Hinata, she swallowed her pride and walked into the room, passed the other Sand-nins to Gaara. Some thought she was crazy for getting close, they allowed her to enter, though she was looked upon with suspicion by the petite green haired Rain-nin, Fū.

Naruto came up to Gaara in a non-threatening manner as she spoke, "How are you doing Gaara?"

Gaara turned over to stare at Naruto with shaky eyes as a small blush appeared on his face, "Good… mother is no longer yelling… I can sleep now," Gaara said with a weak smile.

Naruto, return the smile as she stated, "I'm glad you're able to look on the bright side of things. I'm also sorry about the loss of your sensei."
Gaara face immediately morphed into emotionless face Naruto meet him with as he stated, "Don't be, Ibiki has never been a teacher to me. He never trained me and encouraged the Kazekage to treat me as a weapon as the village saw fit."

Naruto flinched as she stated, "I'm sorry I didn't know. It must have been difficult."

"It must be difficult," Fū quoted as she had mocked the young blond girl. "You know nothing of what it's like to be a Jinchūrikin. I'm not even allowed to live in the Taki, and only a few humans show me kindness. So don't say it must be difficult for it is a hard life."

Naruto felt like jumping back in fright, ready to bolt if she made another blunder. However, she was rescued by a tall, dark-skinned Cloud-nin Killer Bee. He flexed his glasses as he rapped, "Ease up on Nine, girl, for she'd lived a sheltered life, much like little Two. And no offense to you girl, but you and One had lived a harder life than most others in this room, yo."

Fū looked in shock as her personality took a one-eighty, "I'm sorry. I didn't know you were one of us. You just seem so… soft. I thought you were here to gloat. I apologized for making that assumption."

"Just because I seem soft does not mean had… difficulty growing up with people trying to use me for their own ends. Though I guess its sheltered compared to the rest of you," Naruto said to herself more to others.

"Our life would have been rougher, if my bro didn't take the throne, yo," Killer Bee rapped while Yugito felt like banging her head.

"I'm going to kill your sensei for pounding that obsessive rapping into your head," Yugito muttered darkly.

"Don't be dissing my tunes, yo!" Killer Bee stated while wagging his finger.

"I think its endearing," Naruto added with a smile. "Though it may be because I don't have to put up with it for hours on in; I suspect that would upset anyone."

"I guess that is why the Raikage goes in a self-induced rage if Bee raps more than ten minutes," Yugito giggled as she nibbles on some tuna she brought in.

"I guess it does," Naruto then saw her family and best of a friend where outside waiting for her. "I best get going. I will see you all again just before they return you back to your village."

Gaara actually tensed as he whispered, "Do I have to go back?"

"Don't you want to?" Naruto asked, and Gaara responded with a shaking head of 'no.'

"I've got nothing to go back to," Gaara stated without emotion. "No family, friends. Not even an object."

Fū nodded along to state, "Such is the life of a living weapon. Unless you have someone to come back to, you would never want to return."

Naruto eyes widen as she looked back to Naruko, putting a connection there before she turned to her fellow Jinchūrikin to state, "Well then, I can promise you that you have one friend should you ever need it, all you have to do is call me."

"And us too," Yugito nodded with Naruto, followed by Fū and Killer Bee's reassurance.
And for the first time, Gaara smiled, "Thank you."

Naruto nodded as she rose up and walked back to her family and friends, passing by Gaara's sister, Temari. She was quite as she faced away from Gaara. Tears began to form as she whispered, "I'm so sorry, little brother."

Her words filled with love were unheard as Naruto came up to Naruko. She stopped to face her sister to ask a simple, yet emotional question, "Naruko, was it the life of a Jinchūrikin you lived at the hands of the Uzumaki?"

"Yes," Naruko answered with a bit of hesitance in her voice.

Naruto, letting a few tears welled up in her eyes, gave her sister a big hug, a hug of pity and love. One Naruko returned on reflex, absorbing the love she has been longing for many years. The brief, warming sight brought a smile to Kushina and Hinata, as well as jealousy on the Hyūga's part before Naruko pushed Naruto off.

"All right, that's enough hugging. There is only so much… um... I think it's called mushiness. Anyway, I think that's quite enough," Naruko stated as she straightens her posture. "Besides, I think Hinata would want more hugs from you then I need from you."

"What?" Naruto asked in shock.

"Yes, and perhaps a bit of cuddling too," Naruko laughed while Kushina smacked the back of her youngest head.

Naruto still looked confused as she turned to Hinata to ask, "Any idea what's she talking about."

Hinata did not answer, as her entire face resembled a tomato. She could not stammer out an answer, as Naruto closed the gap. Her face filled with concern as she put her hand across Hinata's forehead while asking, "Hinata, are you alright. You look feverish, and you're starting to burn up."

Hinata did not make a sound as Naruto touched her head causing her brain to shut down. Without a thought, she did something she had not done in years. She ran to Kurenai's room for advice leaving Naruto behind a confused Naruto. "What just happen?"

Kushina giggled, "Oh, the girl just got a little flustered at Naruko's suggestion. Why don't you run along to see if she's fine while I have a talk with Naruko about a little thing called tact?"

"Yes mother," Naruko bowed while Naruto looked at the two as Colonel Nine of Nine snickered in her mind.

Seeing she will not be getting a better answer, she turned to run after Hinata while Kushina and Naruko followed them. Past Tsunade, Jiraiya, and Sarutobi, who were having a heated discussion, "Sensei, you can't seriously consider having one of us take the mantle of Fifth Hokage now?" Jiraiya asked in shock.

"The battle showed I'm too old to lead this village and I need someone I can trust to take my place," Sarutobi explained while taking a nibble of his wooden, unlit pipe. "Besides, I did state I will be picking one of you two to replace me before the final part of the exam."

"I thought you were joking or said that to keep Orochi off his game," Jiraiya whispered before he tried to weasel out of the hat. "But I don't agree with the choice. Surely there are better options than a perverted spymaster and a gambling medic."
"Very few can match your power, and fewer are qualified to lead this village with respect and skill alone. Everyone else just doesn't have the experience, power, and youth to lead this village at this moment," Sarutobi told his two surviving students.

"Yeah, well despite how I look, I am not exactly young, I am in my fifties." Tsunade declared, grinding her teeth at admitting how old she was, though she would gladly admit it to get out of the job.

Though Sarutobi would not be dissuaded, "You're still in your prime, something which I have long past. Besides, I thought you would take the chance to be able to make a direct difference with the village, especially if you want to be able to implement some programs you've wanted to add."

The two surviving Sennin stared at each other. They were silently talking just before Tsunade sighed and stepped up, "Well, since I spend most of my time in the village, I pick up the mantle of Hokage for you Sarutobi-Sensei. Especially since I get to add some important classes on medical, seals, and also science and engineering courses since the brat would never look at me the same way if I forget to add them. Courses we desperately need for the future of our village."

Sarutobi's smile broadened as he exclaimed, "Excellent! We'll get everything set, and you can take the job in a couple of days, a week at most."

Tsunade nervously laughed as the two walked away, not realizing they had company in the form of a mosquito listening in. The mosquito waited before it dispersed to inform the Uzumaki that Konoha was going to have a power change soon.

Scene V

Three days after the Battle of Konoha, Condor made it to the rendezvous at the main base found in the Jungle Wasteland. He handed over his flash drive to Yokoshima, who had arrived a few hours earlier and was patiently waiting for him. With as much confidence he could muster, Condor saluted as he gave his report in his own unique way.

"Here's the flash drive, Boss. I'm sorry to report not only the death of my men but also the fact the mission went to shit. I was only able to pull off a partial success by getting some of the damn information, including the video you requested. I wasn't able to complete the main objective needed to expand our empire. I'm sorry I've failed you, ma'am."

Yokoshima laughed as she stated, "Don't feel so bad Condor. You did better than I did as little Naruto, Naruko and their mother escaped my grasp before I was forced to flee. If I punished you for doing better than me, then that would make me a hypocrite."

Yokoshima then developed a devious smile as she added, "You've done a better job than most others would have in the circumstance, so you should be commended. Especially since you killed one of their elite ninjas along with a large number of their ANBU. Showing the world, we are a force to be reckoned with, and it's only just the tip of the iceberg."

"It is a shame the robots were not worth a shit. My mind was blown when I heard the MIR-180s could not take down a couple of kids," Condor stated. "And since the other clankers are weaker, it might not end well with an army of MIR-100 and MIR-118, along with some support crafts. A thousand pieces of shit is still just shit."

"The kids were unusually skilled, and we knew at best the machines would be cannon fodder, along with our conscripted soldiers… We may need to recruit a lot more outside our usual forced labored workers for the war to come," Yokoshima stated with a rub on her chin as she plugged the flash
"We'll need some flesh and blood shields between us and those tree huggers if we want to win a fucken war with them," Condor pointed out.

"Which is why I had you retrieve this video, to pick up some powerful allies," Yokoshima stated as the screen showed an explosion so massive it could be seen in space.

"With whom and how do you convince these future allies to fight against the all-powerful Leaf?" Condor asked.

"Why do you think I had you steal that particular video on the greatest weapon of all time," Yokoshima pointed out and the war council was getting what she was saying. "As for allies, let's just say they are powerful and deadly." Yokoshima smiled, "Pack up your bags and pick-up one of those hologram viewers. We're going to Ame."

"The most miserable place in the world?" Condor growled in annoyance. "Do we have too?"

"When you're going to hire mercenaries, you might as well go for the best, and the best is the Akatsuki," Yokoshima stated with a smile.

Scene VI

Ame, the village hidden in the mists was appropriately named for around the village province was a rainstorm that never ends. It was a cold place ruled by what the people think of as gods. It was the most elite of forces, the Akatsuki, the most powerful mercenary guild in the world. A well-earned title forever member of this small team was S-Rank ninjas that were just as powerful, if not more powerful than the village's Kage they ran from.

This group of nine individuals hidden in shadows had a monthly mission to read reports on the current circumstance in the village. Reports were given by a member that was not exactly human with his green hair, glowing yellow eyes and a body that was half-and-half black and white. However, what made him unusual was the fact he looked like a human crossed with a Venus flytrap. His mouth now mostly was covered by his black robes with red clouds.

The trap of the flytrap flexed as he gave his report in a soft tone, "The weapons the Leaf forces have shown how deadly they have become if the little war they had was any indication."

The man switched to a more demonic tone as he reported, "Those asses can now kill a squad of elites with one farmer."

"What is worst is that soon Cloud, Mist, Waterfall, and Star Force will be given similar weapons in exchange for some training programs, techniques, and minerals from the various villages. Making it all the more difficult to complete our objectives," the calm voice continued, showing the man was suffering from a split personality problem.

"Thank you for the illuminating report Zetsu," stated a powerful man that was the leader of Ame. He was a man hidden in the shadows with power glowing from his pale eyes that hid rings upon rings within his pupils.

"Of course, Lord Pain and Lady Konan," Zetsu bowed to the man and to his partner, a beautiful woman with court style blue hair and orange eyes.

"Damn that is bad news. It going be even more difficult to get those Jinchūriki now, don't you think Itachi," a fish man formerly from Mist Forces. He was a former Leaf-nin that was famous for the
execution of most of the Uchiha clan years ago, and a pale man that looked remarkably like an older, more competent Sasuke, for he was Sasuke's brother and Tukiko's older cousin, Itachi Uchiha.

"Perhaps even impossible if we try to take them all on our own," Itachi stated with a cold monotone that would make arctic fish quiver.

"Then perhaps you should just go after one with help to get the power that none of them can match?" a new soft voice asked as Yokoshima made her appearance, much to the shock of those in the room.

"How did you get in here without us knowing?" the apparent leader demanded, as his powerful eyes stared into Yokoshima's soul.

"It is effortless when one knows that you infused your chakra into the never-ending rain you created and to use it to deflect the barrier away," revealed Yokoshima.

"Why are you here?" Pain asked while his members grouped up with Konoha to prepare for battle, especially when dozens of elite Uzumaki ninjas led by Condor appeared in the room, ready to trade blows. Blows that never came as Yokoshima calmed them down with a raised hand.

"Now please, let's not get violent as we came to talk about an alliance and an alternative to your demon weapon as seen with this holographic orb," Yokoshima stated as she held up a sphere fitted with emitters all over the body.

Yokoshima threw up a sphere that formed into a 3D image of one of the Alliance's last warships, recording the continent Africa. A blinding light appeared in the center of Africa and created a sphere over it. Then once the light dispersed, the once silver, yellow and green continent was now mostly black with only the outskirts unaffected by the blast. The image ended as the sphere landed in her hand.

"I hope that gets your attention," Yokoshima said with an evil smile as the Akatsuki became quiet. Pain broke the silence, "What do you want?"

"I propose a partnership if you would," Yokoshima. "You see, we have the resources to make the bomb but not the knowledge. More specifically the knowledge probably one Naruto and Colonel Nine of Nine, better known as the Kyūbi, have. A bomb that would force compliance, that along with produced our factories that would produce an army to force others in compliance to end all wars with an iron fist."

"Why should we work with you?" Calmed Zetsu asked, "Especially since we can just extract the Kyūbi from the girl to get the information."

"Do that and the Colonel Nine of Nine would throw a fit for killing her favorite host and most likely destroy her own mind to keep the information hidden, fool," Yokoshima told the group. "Besides, even if you somehow convinced Colonel Nine of Nine to work with you, you don't have the technology to make the bomb within months. As oppose to centuries without the right equipment and knowledge."

"And you do you old bitch?" Demonic Zetsu asked Yokoshima.

"Yes we do thanks to the Keepers," Yokoshima answered the group.

"Who are the Keepers?" Pain asked.

"The Keepers were a religious group formed during a time when ninjas were little more than spies
and saboteurs before mastering chakra, which turns them into elite troops for a country," Yokoshima answered Pain. "They went across the continent, trying to find and preserve all the information they could and put it in one surviving Lab that we found."

"So you are a descendant of these hoarders of knowledge," Kisame stated for the group.

"Oh no nothing like that," Yokoshima had answered the Missing-nin. "You see, the newly establish nobles and clansmen began to despise the Keepers. Especially when they preached that 'Everyone was equal in these lands.' Therefore, out of ignorance or fear, they hunted down these 'heretics.' The Keepers were excited by the end of Six Path Sage reign. Luckily, one of them wrote a journal, and we were able to follow the trail to the Lab they found. And while it wasn't much, it would be enough to help us match the Leaf when war finally comes. Moreover, if we gain enough allies and build a stronger force, we can take the nations down in one fatal sweep."

This speech caused a murmur among the group as Pain stepped out to reveal a pale man with spiky orange hair, along with five more bodies with the same eyes, all speaking at once to ask, "What is stopping me from torturing you to get the information we want?"

"A fleet of one man machine fighters ready to bomb Ame into oblivion," Yokoshima stated with a grand smirk, a smirk that told him she was telling the truth.

Pain stared for a moment before he asked, "Can I have time to decide?"

"I will be in one of your village's motel while you decide," Yokoshima stated before leaving the room. As soon as she left the door, only Pain noticed that a man with a black and orange swirl mask disappeared.

Scene VII

Once Yokoshima returned to her hotel, she turned to face the man in the swirling mask. "It has been a long time Madara Uchiha. How are you doing?"

"Very well Yokoshima, I am a bit disappointed that you are trying to derail my plans," the man answered as he removed his mask to reveal an old man in his sixties with black coral eyes and spiky black hair turning grey.

"You look older and younger then you should be Madara. Haven't been able to rejuvenate your body lately with another young Uchiha?" Yokoshima commented. "Not a very good idea since you helped found Leaf Forces over a century ago. Perhaps if you went for more Uzumaki blood in you, you look just as young as I do. I'm not surprised after killing your own brother to extend your lifespan."

Madara ignored the underhanded comment to ask his own question, "Why should I allow this alliance?"

Yokoshima answered with a question, "What do you really know about the Six-Path Sage?"

"That he sealed the Jūbi into himself, taught the basics of chakra, and had two sons that eventually became feuding enemies, the Senju clan and my former clan that betrayed me, the Uchiha," Madara answered.

"Very good, except that is not the truth," Yokoshima told Madara, who responded with a raised eyebrow. "According to the Keeper records, the Six Path Sage was a tyrant that battled the Nine Demons and sealed them into himself after sacrificing his home village to do it. He then claimed he defeated and sealed the ten-tailed Jūbi to stop its evil and use his popularity and his power to create a force under his command across the Elemental Nations as he developed chakra techniques for his..."
soldier's chakra. He also hunted down the Keepers as he claimed to be getting rid of demon worshipers. In secret, he wanted to capture them and extract their information but failed to get from those he caught while one of the Keepers recording the events escaped and died of old age.

"Anyway, he finally had his empire in the last five years of life, but it all fell apart when he picked his youngest son as his successor. As the eldest, your ancestor didn't agree and started to fight with his brother a week after their father died. Soon the nobles and clans joined in the fight, carving out pieces of the empire until it no longer exists. It is safe to assume that was how the Elemental Nations and the Clan Wars began. While the history of the old empire being lost in time in favor of the legend of Six Path Sage."

Madara looked into Yokoshima's eyes before asking, "Do you have any proof of this."

Yokoshima smirked before handing Madara a recording and the original text of the Keepers. He looked over them as she pulled out a bottle of Fire Country Brandy and two glasses. She waited patiently until he sighed and said, "So my plan to recreate the Jūbi was doomed from the beginning."

"Then how about we create a new plan?" Yokoshima asked while she began pouring a drink. "The bomb is just a distraction to keep the less loyal in your organization in line until we have them killed. Just as you plan to do with promising that man Pain a superweapon you don't have no attention making. Don't look surprised.

"I know you well, and you loved using puppets just as much as you loved getting your hands dirty. Once we figure out how to mass-produce the robots and weapons outside of the R&D labs we found, we'll have the power and numbers to rule the Elemental Countries with an iron fist, as opposed to losing it all to the rebellion that is to come. Once they are gone, the others will submit to our power, especially once Naruto Uzumaki and others are captured and brainwashed to our side." Yokoshima told Madara while emphasizing 'our.'

"Why is Naruto so important," Madara asked Yokoshima.

"Besides being the one who holds the design we need and is an indirect decedent of the Senju Clan," Yokoshima smiled at Madara. "Naruto's bloodline, the Elemental Star is too important and powerful to leave in our enemies' hand. Also, if we have DNA samples directly from Naruto's eyes, we can possibly recreate the bloodline within the clan."

Madara nodded before asking, "What's in it for me?"

"Besides being able to take your revenge on Konoha and ruling the world with me?" Yokoshima asked as Madara nodded. "Then how about the ability to further evolve your Mangekyō Sharingan?"

"What?" Madara asked Yokoshima to elaborate.

"During the clan wars, our two clans had a brief alliance through marriage that produces a child with the Elemental Star and the Mangekyō Sharingan. That child, not only can copy every know Jutsu and use Amaterasu, the black flames in its highest flames. She could also combine the other four elements to Amaterasu to be more powerful then you can imagine. Unfortunately, she died young, and the alliance was broken due to the Senju fabricating evidence that said the other side did it."

Yokoshima smiled as she gently rubbed Madara cheek next to his only eye. "Now what we can do is either use a surgical procedure to give you the Elemental Star or allow you to take over a child produced by Naruto from an Uchiha of your choosing. Either way, you will be more powerful, and we rule the world together. So what do you say?"
Madara complemented to Yokoshima's proposal before picking up a drink, "I agree to this partnership."

"Good, very good," Yokoshima stated before they both took a sip of Fire Country Brandy.

The two drank to their alliance as they celebrated their success and discussing plans being recorded by a spy for the Leaf-nin, Itachi. Neither of them noticed Itachi had followed them to the room and was using the time to get all available information on their forming partnership. He then discreetly left to warn Konoha that war was coming sooner than they think.

Scene VIII

A week after Konoha, a large ceremony was being held. A ceremony that was displaying not only the promotion of several different ninjas but also Tsunade commissioned as the Hokage of Leaf Forces. Tsunade stood proudly with her pointed hat as she looked over the soon to be promoted Genin, with Team Vixen, Revan and Shino at the front to be awarded Elite Chūnin. She gladly handed them their vest as she gave one final bow.

"Wear them with pride as you made your first big stepped into the Ninja World!" Tsunade exclaimed as two fighters flew over to release their payload of fireworks as the village celebrated.

A village growing as the factory began to operate. The world was changing, and while some will refuse, others will ride its murky water. For better or worse, a new era of composites and steel was about to begin as the world is plunged into a new path.

Chapter End Notes

Finally done, sorry it took so long, but I was having difficulty getting the flow right. Hope you enjoy this story and will update soon.

A) Sorry about the delay with the story, but my Beta Reader had technical difficulty and was now catching up. He has chapter 20 and will be out soon. So stay tuned. Also, rewrote history a bit to be different from cannon Naruto because it just fit the story better.
The Change in Politics

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto, evident with non-Japanese names within the story.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 07/26/2018

Scene I

A farmer's life is a hard one, let no else tell you otherwise. That was John's motto as he worked hard on his farm, harvesting crops and making enough money to cover a bit more than the price of living. At least, that was what he was doing before he was slammed to the ground by hooded men. Men that were meant to be his escort but they were instead beating him to a pulp. Soon they were done, and he was brought face to face with the leader.

"Why are you doing this?" John asked the men in pain as tears and blood fell from his face. "I've done nothing wrong."

"You have challenged the status quo," the man stated as he brought up his katana, the traditional sword of the samurai. "And you must pay for it with your life."

John could only scream, as the man plunged his sword into his chest. Starting a chain reaction that will end as it started, in blood.

Scene II

Vulcan, capital of Fire Country, is a vast metropolis centered on the Fire Daimyō's Palace, the center of government for not only the Daimyō but also the House of Lords and Representative of the Assembly; the main body of government for Fire Country. It was a wondrous sight to Naruto as she has never seen so many people in one place and she was getting a bird's eye view as the Shadow Fox flew towards the city below. She and her copilot Hinata were awed as Naruto's mother watched in amusement.

"You've never been to a true city having you two?" Kushina asked her daughter.

"No… I'd never seen a city this big. I mean Konoha is big, but not in this scope. Are they always this big?" Naruto asked in awe while Hinata remained quiet.

"Some are bigger, others smaller, but generally, most cities are around this size," Kushina chuckled at her little girl before looking at her youngest.

"It's amazing," Naruto said with stars in her eyes as the engineer in her looked at the marvel that took years to make.

Kushina smiled as she stated, "Glad you enjoy your first time in the city more than your cute sister."

"It was loud, dirty and had too many people living together in such a small space," Naruko grumbled from the back seat. "At least in Konoha, the population is smaller and more widespread, so it does
not feel so cramped. Not to mention military cities are generally kept clean for defensive reasons, rather than letting clutter collect." Naruko snarled as she remembered.

"I'm sure Vulcan will be better than Trinity. It's a vibrant city filled with some of Fire Country's best and brightest outside of you girls. It's the home of the Samurai Academy and the best Universities, along with a large array of museums, gardens, movie theaters and parks."

"Oh, that sound's lovely," Hinata had whispered. "I wonder if we'll be able to visit them while we are here."

"So, you want to get me rid of me brats as soon as possible," called their newest Hokage in a green komodo. "You do know that your entire team is assigned to guard me and you brats will probably be brought to speak to the House of Lords."

"And that's a bad thing?" Naruto asked.

"Don't they teach you anything about the Assembly?" Tsunade grumbled as she looked at Anko and Kurenai walking in with their other two students.

"Don't look at me, ninjas are not allowed to get involve in elections since Konoha is its own district, and the fear of ninjas interfering in the election is too great," Anko explained as even Kurenai looked embarrassed not knowing who was on the Assembly, just the general parties.

"So you guys know nothing of the government you serve?" Tsunade looked shocked as Tsunade's assistant, Shizune put that information on the academy curriculum to do list while Tukiko mumbled out an answer.

"Um… we did go over the history of the Assembly. How it was initially a council and how the Assembly is split into two parts. Each part has different powers, with the exceptions on deceleration of war, or the funding of permanent projects like schools, main roads and keeping the military well armed. The Assembly of Lords votes on laws and temporary projects to be implemented in Fire Country while the Assembly of Representatives votes on the distribution of money and resources. At one time, only nobles served in the Assembly of Lords, but they got greedy and began voting for laws and project that only benefited them.

"So the Assembly of Representatives, which only elected commoners at the time, countered said projects by allocating most of the funds and recourses into other projects they deemed more important. So, by the time the noble's projects would be completed would be after they were out of office or dead. In retaliation, the nobility tried to gain power in the Representatives by proposing a bill that both houses are allowed to include nobles or commoners to be elected. The nobility used a large amount of their money to get people in both houses. And while they did succeed in getting some into the Assembly of Representatives, they lost several of their seats in the Assembly of Lords. Now it's split into three factions trying to get dominance in the Assembly," Tukiko stated before Haku took over the narrative.

"I heard rumors that it's like my father would say, 'a cluster fuck,' with the Conservative-Traditionalist wanting to preserve and remap tradition in their vision even if it hurts the people, the Libertarians wanting full equality to an absurd and dysfunctional level, and the Moderates fighting to find a good middle ground. It's amazing they get anything done."

"Well, it looks like the Assembly is on the right track. Look," Kushina stated as they passed parts of the city below, as large sections were in the process of building or upgrading factories. Including a large site laid out for Fire Country's Navy.
"The Assembly of Representatives has already allocated resources into upgrading current military technology and forces. Now it's up to the Assembly of Lords to pass the bill. A bill those nitwits will pass due to the war with Rice Country and our future war with Whirlpool forces," Tsunade told Naruto as she blinked in response.

"If the bill is going to be passed, then why are we needed to speak to the Assembly?" Naruto asked out loud.

"Because they asked for expert witnesses and the sooner it passes, the sooner the Assembly gets out of my hair," Tsunade growled as she looked over at Naruto. "You did remember to get a proper dress brat? As a vest with your usual clothing won't cut it."

"My doll dress is in the back. I'll put it on when I have too," Naruto growled out in annoyance.

Naruto dreaded the teal, one-piece dress until Hinata stated with a blush, "I thought you look lovely in that dress."

Naruto blinked in shock as she mumbled out loud, "Well maybe I should wear it for you."

Hinata gave a big blush Naruto ignored as she reported their approach to the new Fire Country's Airport. The fighter made her descent as her friends, teachers and even the Hokage gave a knowing smile towards the base.

Scene III

Down within a waiting station, four individuals stood in front of the Phantom Class Attack Fighter, Shadow Fox to meet with their honored guest. One was a dark skin man in a red, admiral's uniform, a beard and a ball cap. The other three were a samurai, two Generals, and an Apprentice. One General was a woman, with yellowish skin, small eyes and grayish black hair. The second was a balding, short man with a beer belly and his Apprentice was a young man with a growing, curly mustache and long, brown hair.

They were powerful men/woman that demanded respect as they met with the ninjas that would speak before the Assembly, just as they were going to as well. They did not have to wait long as the fighter opened to reveal Tsunade and a large group of ninjas coming to meet them. The female samurai stepped to greet their guest, "Hokage Tsunade Senju, I'm General Lin Tzu, Commander of Fire Country's Army, and I'll be escorting you and speaking with you in front of the Assembly."

"It is a pleasure to meet you," Tsunade bowed to the General with her black-haired assistant Shizune before she went back to the datapad in her hand.

"With me are one of my head Generals, General Genma Ichibun and his apprentice slash nephew, Sōun Ichiban. Along with Admiral Steven Hall, commander of our entire naval fleet and future air force," Lin Tzu introduced the three men, who gave a short bow before she turned to face the ninjas. "I trust your trip went well. You are an hour earlier than expected."

"I miss calculated how good of a pilot the brats were," Tsunade answered with a cheeky smile. "And speaking of brats let me introduce you to my entourage. First is my assistant Shizune, who will be traveling with me everywhere."

"Hello," Shizune bowed again before she returned her attention to her datapad with rigorous focus as Tsunade introduced her guards.

"And these are my fellow guards, Elite Jōnins Anko Mitarashi and Kushina Ryū, Jōnin Kurenai Yūhi, Elite Chūnins Hinata Hyūga, Tukiko Uchiha, Haku Momochi from Water Country, and my
fellow speaker Elite Chūnin Naruto Ryū with her sister Elite Chūnin Naruko Ryū."

"Naruto Ryū, the famed inventor? It is a pleasure to meet you, my Lady," the handsome Sōun exclaimed with a bright smile. "Very pleasurable as you are more dazzling than Uncle Genma could describe in a thousand poems."

Naruko snicker as Naruto developed a bewildered face as she hesitantly thanked the man, "Um… thank you."

"No thanks are needed for stating the truth about your beauty," Sōun added as he grabbed onto Naruto's hand and kissed it in a gentlemen style that made Hinata eyes blazed red, especially with Genma exclaiming that his nephew was manly.

That was until Naruto pulled her hand back and looked at the man with utmost confusion, "Why did you kiss my hand?"

Causing the non-ninjas to ask, "Huh," while Tukiko explained what it meant to Naruto.

"It's a term of endearment saying he likes and respects you Naruto."

That only made Naruto more confused, "Why is a body part that is touching everything something that anyone would want to kiss?"

"I can always kiss you on the cheek if you prefer, my lady?" Sōun asked with a bright smile that would charm most women.

Women not like Naruto, much to Hinata's relief, "Um… I don't know you so just a handshake at the moment would be best, yes?"

Sōun pouted in disappointment as he stated, "Very well my lady, I will give you your privacy but don't be afraid to change your mind."

Hinata looked ready to murder the samurai as Haku brought them back on track, "Hey, can we get this road trip started?"

Genma looked disappointed as he directed the entire group to follow him out. Everyone that was, except Hinata as she was stopped in her tracks by Kushina. Hinata gave a nervous gulped as she faced Naruto's mother while Naruko pushed Naruto forward. The two were soon alone as Hinata felt like she was not going to like this.

She was right when Kushina asked the girl, "Okay, what got you ticked off about that samurai boy?"

"Nothing," Hinata quickly answered before her tongue gave away her thoughts. "It's just that Sōun was trying to play on Naruto's feelings and flirt with her like he knew her all her life. Instead of what he really is, a total stranger that cares little for her mind and is only looking for a quick plaything that just happens to be famous."

Kushina blinked at the surprising answer for a moment before she developed a devious smile, "Hinata, are you jealous that boy flirted with your Naruto."

"What?" Hinata stammered like a deer caught in headlights.

"Oh don't look so shocked. I've seen how close your relationship is between the two of you. I'm surprised you haven't become girlfriends, um… girlfriends yet," Kushina stated.
"A-are you s-sa-sa-aying... we l-l-l-lo-lo-ove each other?" Hinata stammered out in shock.

"You haven't realized it yet?" Kushina asked with a sweet drop.

"I didn't think I was that infatuated for her," Hinata almost cried. "I mean I only figured out I felt something for Naruto during the Chūnin Exams. But I'm not sure its love and even if it is, I don't know if it will amount to anything in the end as she needs to build her new clan and I'm not sure she feels as strongly as I feel about her."

"Maybe not, but if you hold it in, you will never know," Kushina told the young woman before her. "If it means anything I support you, and so do your friends and real family. This I swear."

Hinata nodded as she stated, "I'll tell her when the moment is right."

"Just don't take too long or you may lose your chance," Kushina advised the woman before the two ran off to catch up to their group.

To Hinata's relief, Naruto was not talking to Sōun, but to Admiral Hall about her project on a new type of ship. "That's interesting. So you are making a redesign of the Specter class Stealth spacecraft into a new submarine class with ram engines as a backup to stealth propellers for an emergency burst of speed and the ability to fly up to four hours."

"We don't need spacecraft over naval and aircraft at the moment, and it would be too costly to make a heavy aircraft compared to submarines that can achieve flight a. So with my proposal, we are going to repurpose the craft into a powerful naval craft we can use," Admiral Hall explained to Naruto.

"Was it difficult to redesign it?" Naruto asked as Admiral Hall chuckled in response.

"No, the craft was designed to be airtight, and it was meant to swim underwater for short burst of the time anyway, we just went a bit further. Not to mention its primary weapons are torpedoes and kinetic weapons for close range combat makes it the perfect underwater vehicle as it is in the sky."

"Well I'm amazed; I wouldn't have thought to turn the ship into a submarine. How did you even think of such a design?" Naruto asked.

"I spent my time growing up in the shipyards within the United Green Countries, my homelands. They were very technologically advanced, though not by current Fire Country's standards," Steven explained to Naruto.

"Why did you leave?" Tukiko asked from the background.

"Let's just say with the increasing tension between Ice Kingdom's attempted raids and increasing turmoil in UGC, I decided to leave my homelands and was recruited by the Fire Country's Navy to be an effective force," Admiral Hall told the ninjas before he turned his attention to Lin. "Of course, I could do without all the arcane traditions."

"Tradition is a vital part of this Country's history and future. It is meant to be held high," General Lin Tzu stated with conviction.

Although Lin's statement did little to convince the Admiral as he stated sarcastically, "Even above the changing times."

The two other Samurai wisely kept quiet as Haku calmed them down, "Can we please not discuss politics in the streets?"
The two military leaders agreed and kept quiet as they glared at each other while they came upon a group of eight samurais in ceremonial armor carrying a large, black box with incense burning on top. They passed by the ninja's group when Anko smelt something hidden within the incenses. A familiar smell she was all too familiar with as she looked at Kurenai to convey a silent message. Kurenai nodded as she covered the group's rear as Anko went in front of the eight samurais.

The eight stopped as one asked, "Can we help you?"

"Yes, why do you have a corpse in that container?" Anko asked with a blank face.

The samurai tightened the grip on the box as the samurai tried to answer Anko's question, "We don't have a body in-"

Only for Anko to yell, "Bullshit!" before she performed a chakra enhanced kick to the box's lid.

The front of the box exploded in splinters as the lid went flying up into the air to land behind the eight samurais, showing the contents was indeed a body of a farmer, crucified. A farmer Admiral Steven Hall recognized as he exhaled, "My god that is John, the farmer who saved the Fire Daimyō. They killed him."

Realizing they have been exposed, the eight dropped the box, and one yelled out, "We've been discovered, kill them!"

The eight quickly pulled out their sword as Anko released her first attack in the form of 'Hidden Snake Hand Jutsu' to catch one and send a dozen poisonous snakes to sink their fangs into the man. He was dead before she retracted her snakes as the other seven scattered to initiate their attack. Three were intercepted by Kushina, Lin Tzu, and Genma who took the offensive with superior sword skills while the other four headed to the group. Kurenai made a move used on one with 'Demonic Style: Nightmare Jutsu.' A debilitating attack that Kurenai found was useless as a layer of chakra blocked her mind attack.

"Chakra armor," Kurenai cursed as she jumped back to fire off a 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu.'

The large flaming ball of fire met the samurai in a massive explosion that blinded Kurenai as the other four fell back. Kurenai's vision soon returned to normal to see the samurai was still alive as he moved passed the explosion into close range. Kurenai pulled out a kunai to defend herself, but it was not strong enough to stop the blade to cut across her arm. The pain and the force soon forced her to the ground, defenseless as the samurai raised his sword up.

She expected to die as she covered her stomach in vain to protect her unborn child. That was until she heard a loud bang before the samurai fell over dead. Kurenai breathed a sigh of relief as she saw his chakra armor was useless against Naruto's pistols. Kurenai was scooped-up by Anko as she leaped back to safety, just as the samurai took notice of Naruto. The four snarled as they angled themselves towards a new target, as her friends were ready to speed towards her and Sōun covered Admiral Steven Hall as he ran for help.

The mixed group moved into a defensive posture as one samurai with a partner yelled at Naruto, "You're the one that is destroying our nation."

Naruto's eyes narrowed as her gun leveled at the accusing samurai to ask, "What did you say?"

"You are the bitch that represents our crumbling society when you introduced technology that gives the non-chakra users equality to those born superior. For that you will pay," the samurai growled as he and his partner got into an attack poster.
The two were ready to attack but was stopped when a Tsunade used 'Wood Style: Tree Binding Jutsu' to summon a small tree whose branches snagged onto the two samurais. The two were trapped as Tsunade stated, "You not harming the brat you royal shitheads."

The two continued to struggle while Tsunade held them in place as Shizune covered her master's back. The apprentice was ready to stop the other two samurais from getting close, but it was not needed. For the two samurais made a dash towards Naruto, intent on killing the girl they believed was 'corrupting' Fire Country. This forced Tukiko and Haku to intercept one while the other moved towards Naruto.

Tukiko was the first to engage the samurai with knives enhanced by the fire element as she moved to go under the man's defenses. She hacked at the samurai's physical and chakra armor, chipping away at his defenses as she set him up for Haku's attack. Soon, Haku was confident enough as she attacked the man from behind him. Paralyzing him with her senbon needles to allow Tukiko to slit his throat easily, all the while thinking Naruto will deal with the last one.

Naruto would have if the samurai did not avoid her bullets as he sped toward her in unpredictable zigzag lines. She cried out in shock, as she was forced to drop her guns and pull out her swords to block the man's first strike. A strike she was forced to spin away from as a blade of chakra continued to pass through her own blade. She was given a deep scratch on her check for her troubles as she rolled away. It was a dizzy move with an opponent content to follow through before he was intercepted by Sōun's blade.

"Don't worry my lady, your samurai is here to save you," Sōun stated as he went on the offensive.

He struck with propose and skill with the flourish of a showman as his opponent desperately tried to keep up. Deep cuts on his opponent brought a smile to him as he forced his opponent to fall back. The two stared with intensity, as though conveying a secret message of death as the two made a dash at each other and struck at each other. Unfortunately, for the nameless samurai, he attacked too soon and missed his target while Sōun aimed proved golden. As his opponent suffered painless death due to his pinpoint accuracy.

Sōun gave one respective, traditional bow to his opponent and walked away. His face filled with a broad smile as he stated, "And how are you, my lady?"

Sōun's smile turned to a frown when he realized Naruto was not paying him any attention as she was fussed over by Hinata, who was healing her wounds with her glowing green hands. "There, all patched up and ready to fight."

Naruto smiled as she stated, "Thanks Hinata, I knew I could count on you always being there for me."

"As I can trust you to be there for me," Hinata smiled before she gave off a squeak as Naruto brought her into a big hug.

"And that is why I always want you by my side," Naruto smiled as held her tight.

Hinata returned the hug as she stared past Naruto to Sōun and gave a knowing smile that translated, 'I will always be close to her than you ever will be.' Sōun realized that he had competition for a kunoichi's heart. He began to plan his next steps while the last three of the free samurai were being taken care of.

The last three were more skilled than the ones that had been defeated, but they were no match for the best swordsmen among the mixed group. Kushina, in particular, was dominating her fight as she
struck with speed and precision that was unmatched. She shattered the man's armor and sword as she diagonally bisected the man. Blood spilled on the ground as Kushina turned her attention to her next target, Lin's opponent.

Lin was being more delicate with her opponent, her strikes not going in for the kill despite outstripping her opponent. Kushina watched the game of cat and mouse with great concern as the samurai broadcasted through his body language that he was going to run for it and yet Lin was not moving in for the kill. Fearing the man would run, Kushina decided to finish the fight as she struck him down before the General could make her final move. The man blurted out blood as a sword went through his guts. Kushina pushed her opponent down and off her blade as Lin glared at her.

General Tzu wanted to speak first, but she was beaten by Kushina, "Why didn't you just kill him?"

"Because I was moving to cut off his legs to prevent his escape so we could interrogate the man! An opportunity lost because you jumped the gun!" Lin Tzu yelled at the Leaf Jōnin.

"I jumped the gun! You almost allowed him to escape and you made no move to stop him!" Kushina yelled at the woman.

"I was about to!" Lin yelled back.

"Perhaps, or perhaps your attention all along was to let that man go. I wonder where your loyalties lie," Kushina growled as the two glared at each other while Genma continued his fight.

General Genma Ichiban was not as skilled as General Lin Tzu was, but he was far more vicious against his opponent. The man's armor was scrapped, and blood dripped from open wounds all over his body. His chakra armor looked like a candle to the roaring demonic flame that Genma was producing from his chakra armor. The man shivered as he looked into Genma's eyes as his eyes flickered down to the man's feet and arms that made his opponent move. In fear, Genma's opponent fired off a blade of chakra from the samurai's sword into the dirt below his feet. The dirt blocked Genma's vision, forcing him to fall back as his opponent tried to run for it. Only for the man to run into Naruko with her blade out, as Naruko had cut off the man's head, much to Genma shock when his vision cleared up.

The two stared as Genma stated, "That's impressive for a girl."

Naruko put her blade up as she added, "Whatever you say, old man."

Naruko began to walk away from a twitching Genma as they turned towards the two captured samurai. Men let down violently out of the tree as Shizune used ninja wire to tie them. They were presented to Anko, and her interrogation apprentice, Tukiko as the two got into their face. Blades being pulled out as the two women moved to interrogate the men.

"Now then, here is the deal. You're inevitably going to tell us every treasonous thought in your head, but I don't want you to tell me all at once. Oh no, I want this to last, so I get the pleasure of causing you pain. So please resist so I can taste your blood," Anko stated while Tukiko began cutting into her target, to emphasize they were serious.

Anko's target began to shake in fear before he took a deep breath to calm his nerves. He was ready to face the woman as he stated, "You will not stop the Collation from bringing everyone in Fire Country back to where they belong."

The two then flicked their teeth with their tongue to dislodge and break a tooth filled with cyanide. The two fell to the ground shaking, as the group could only watch as these two men committed
suicide. The two older, more experienced medics cursed as they rushed to their shaking prisoners. Their mouths began to foam as Tsunade and Shizune tried to reverse the effects, but they were failing to make any progress. Shizune realized it was a lost cause as she faced her master with a self-loathing mask.

"I'm sorry Lady Tsunade, but I failed you," Shizune stated as she watched her patient die.

Followed by Tsunade's patient as she examined the man's head, "It's not your fault Shizune. We both did what we could do. This is the most severe reaction I had ever seen, and judging by their faces, it was an excruciating way to die."

"Naturally, as the honorable tradition for the samurai is to never surrender and never fear of dying for the cause," Genma stated as he looked over the two men while Lin approached John's body.

She was followed by Kushina who stated, "Well, regardless, they saved us the time. After all, they did commit treason."

Lin nodded in agreement, "Yes they did, but I fear this is only the beginning."

"And my ninjas will finish it," Tsunade added as she walked away from the corpse as soldiers and samurai descended on the area, to escort the living to the Palace and the dead to the morgue. The first of many bodies found within the busy city known as Vulcan.

Scene IV

Several hours later, within a large elegant room, sat one of the most powerful men and woman in the world. General Lin Tzu, head of the army, Hokage Tsunade Senju and her guest, General Genma among a dozen other generals in the room, a few members of the House of the Assembly head of the Defense Committee, and the Daimyō of Fire Country himself, waving his fan in his face. The entire room sat in silence until Admiral Steven Hall came in with a report in his hand. His face filled with fury as he walked up to his men.

Seeing his Admiral angry, the Daimyō turned to ask his man, "Bad news Admiral?"

"You can say that for sure," Admiral growled as he handed a report. "On a hunch, I began to investigate my bodyguards and found one of them was a traitor. I had to shoot him when I confronted him when he tried to assassinate me."

"It appears the Coalitionists are more powerful than we thought and have taken a step forward to become domestic terrorists," Lin stated with a frown.

"Um, ma'am, but who are the Coalitionist?" Tukiko asked the other natives for her ninja party.

Several men in the room looked at the girl as though she was deaf until one muttered, "Ninjas."

Sighing, Lin took it upon herself to educate her secretive branch, "The Coalition is a faction in the Conservative-Traditionalist party, named after the volunteer army formed during the formation of Fire Country. In most cases, they are considered to be extreme radicals that wish to return our government back to the Feudal System."

"They want us to go back to a time when we had to have a high birth rate to compensate for the high death rate?" Haku asked in shock.

"No one said they were intelligent," Steven Hall added to the group.
"More like a nuisance," a reluctant Lin stated. "They're a small group that is very loud due to the sudden influx of new technology and changes brought in with said technology. They've only gotten louder when it was announced a simple farmer with an assault rifle killed several ninjas, the elite's troops of Fire Country that only the most skilled samurai can beat. They claim technology is destroying the proper balance of power."

'And like so many before them, they try to reclaim they've perceived a loss of power through violence,' Colonel Nine of Nine stated within Naruto's mind with an irritated voice she turned out to hear Anko's voice.

"So I take it now they are considered domestic terrorists that need to be taken care with extreme prejudice," Anko stated with glee.

"Terrorists that are very powerful and have strong ties in the government as the cyanide they used has been modified… to put it lightly," Tsunade pointed out as Shizune pulled up the data they compiled. "While I can't identify the chemical agents used to modify it, I can tell you it's made more potent and causes complete neurological decay to prevent mind dives. This is obviously something that was created in an advanced lab using advanced technology."

"So what you're saying is they are hypocrites," Naruto stated off handily, which caused Sōun to nod slowly in agreement.

"Perhaps, but it does not change the fact they are powerful and think they are honorable… in their own way," Sōun noted while trying not to sound sympathetic with these terrorists.

"Regardless, they need to be stopped, by any means necessary," Admiral Steven Hall stated.

"But we don't know how far we've been compromised," one of the Generals pointed out as the Fire Daimyō nodded.

"This is a job for your ninjas," the Fire Daimyō pointed out to the Hokage.

"Right," Tsunade stated with a stern face as she faced her ninjas. "Anko, Kushina, Naruko, you have experience interrogation and tracking down leads. You are charged with finding these traitors. Kurenai, you will be acting as my guard."

The three Jōnins and one Chūnin nodded in acceptance, even if Kurenai's was reluctant as Hinata asked the question the other Chūnin was thinking, "What about us… um… ma'am?"

"Well today is a lucky day for you, Tukiko, and Haku will be guarding the brat," Tsunade stated with a raised eyebrow.

"You're assigning my own team to guard me?" Naruto asked with a twitch.

"Brat, we know for sure you are a target, and since regulations prevent the only free Jōnin from guarding you over me, you will get the next best thing," Tsunade told the girl who looked ready to protest.

Especially when Lin added, "I have an elite squad of standard soldiers that will provide protection and can be trusted, especially since they are not samurai."

"I also volunteer my nephew, Sōun," Genma volunteered to the group. "As you saw, he's very skilled with a blade, and with his own samurai techniques."

"Thank you uncle, I hope to not let you down my lady," Sōun bowed, causing Hinata to look cross
to his delight.

Naruto did not like it one bit and was about to protest the prospect when Kurenai stopped her with a gentle smile, "Naruto, please don't fight this. You're in danger and need to be cautious for the sake of your life."

'She's right Naruto,' Colonel Nine of Nine advise. 'We've all come too far for someone to kill you because of some lunatics. Trust your friends and family to get you through safely.'

Naruto sighed in acceptance, "I understand ma'am. I'll be at our hotel if you need me."

Naruto bowed before she walked out of the room with her newly formed guards. The investigating ninjas also began to follow but stopped by the concerns of a mother. "Stay safe. Oh, and if Naruto is harmed, you regret not laying your life down to save her," Kushina threatens as she looked at Lin in particular before she left the room, leaving the heads of states to talk to each other.

Scene V

It was late into the evening as Naruto, and her ninja guards waited in the lodge. Haku and Tukiko were playing cards while Sōun went down to check on the dining hall to set up for the guests. Hinata was sitting by Naruto as she looked down to see heavily armed Fire Country soldiers check everyone coming and going. Hinata watched in interest as she noted their advanced armor that provided not only protection but also with sensors to ward against chakra techniques meant to hide a target. It was far more interesting than watching Naruto gush over advanced ship designs that she had no idea how they worked.

She was left in her own little world until Naruto shook Hinata out of it. Hinata looked up to Naruto as she explained why Naruto shook her, "Sōun called, he says dinner is ready in the dining hall."

Hinata narrowed her eyes at the mentioned of Sōun, which was lost in her thought of food, "Okay, lets head on down."

Naruto nodded as she helped Hinata up as the two walked out of the room, past a guard doing a routine inspection of the room while two more stood at attention outside. Haku and Tukiko scouted ahead of them while Naruto and Hinata walked alone to the elevator. Once inside, Naruto turned to Hinata with a quizzical look.

"So, what is it with you and Sōun?" Naruto asked. "You two have been at each other's throats so much that even I noticed it."

For a moment, Hinata was silent, trying to think of her answer before stating, "He iterates me… trying to act all familiar with you while trying to push me away."

"He's doing what?" Naruto asked in shock.

"He's trying to get very close to you, and sees me as the obstacle," Hinata told Naruto.

"Huh, and you're worried that he'll replace you if you give him any headway?" Naruto asked, and Hinata nodded 'yes.' Seeing the nodded reply, Naruto responded by getting close to the sad girl to give her a comforting hug. "You know he can never take your place. You're more important than some flowery samurai."

Hinata developed an appreciating smile as she decided to open up with a simple, yet complex question, "Naruto, do you like me?"
A question that caused Naruto to laugh out, "Of course I like you. What do you think I've been saying?"

"I do not mean like a friend. I mean… do you think of mm-me ass w-well… g-gi-girlfriend m-m-mat-material?" Hinata stuttered as a nervous blush developed on her face.

That caused Naruto to freeze for a moment as she stammered, "You mean romantically?" When Hinata nodded 'Yes,' Naruto asked her million-dollar question, "What brought this on?"

"I don't know a specific time, but I realized I like you more than a friend during the Chūnin's Exam, and apparently everyone else knew," Hinata told Naruto with her quiet tone that did not hold back anything.

"Everyone knew?" Naruto asked the shy girl before her.

"Apparently we've been showing signs we like each for years that people are a surprise was not dating now. It was Kushina that told me I should tell you after we meet Sōun at the airport," Hinata told Naruto who blinked in shock. "I had to tell you, even if you don't like me that way. I hope you don't hate me."

The two stood in silence until Naruto said, "I could never hate you Hinata. I care too much for you. Maybe that is love, or maybe not. The point is I am not ready to say for sure. Maybe, once this mess is over, we can explore just how much we mean to each other."

Hinata gave her friend a big hug, "I like that."

Naruto laughed nervously at her taller friend as the elevator door open, "Come on, dinner is waiting, and I'm starving."

The two girls walked past the lobby into the dining room hall reserved for the group. The two were about to enter but stopped at a slack jaw Haku and Tukiko. They looked up to see that small table was set for a romantic dinner as Sōun put the final touches by lighting some candles. Hinata never felt so angry when Sōun stated, "Bon-apatite."

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Scene VI

In a warehouse just outside of the city, a bloodbath took place as bodies littered the floor. Signs of a fierce battle were everywhere as a single man tried to crawl away from the blood of his comrades. He only made a few feet when he felt a foot pin him to the ground. His bloody face turned to see an emotionless redheaded girl in black staring down at him. He could only gulp as she raised her blade before it descended into his back. Naruko had killed the man with a twist of her sword.

With her opponent dead, she turned to see her mother was facing off General Lin Tzu. The two covered in blood as they stared at each other, with their blades ready to attack. It looked like they were about to face each other until Lin lowered her sword, flicking off blood before putting it back into its sheath.

"I trust that the intelligence I provided and killing all the traitors in this building proves that I am not a traitor?" Lin asked the younger woman, who agree reluctantly.

"For now," Kushina acknowledge as she put her cleaned blade back into its sheath.

"Try forever," Anko added, as she looked over a dozen folders the Collation had put together. "These papers are dossiers on targets, which includes the Hokage, Admiral Steven Hall, and General Lin Tzu for her advocating that army gets upgraded since guns were introduced. In fact, she had the
first squads equipped with assault rifles."

"History has shown time and time again that we all must adapt to remain important for the times," General Lin Tzu stated with conviction. "As you ninja knew as you went from clans of peasants that used chakra to help kill from the shadows. And we samurai adopted to being attack dogs of lords to learn to lead from the field as weapons to turn the tide of war."

Lin looked smug as Kushina admitted defeat, "Okay, fine you're not a traitor. But we still need to find out which General betrayed us in supplying these men."

"I found a folder that lists most of the members in this domestic terrorist club. It doesn't mention the leaders, but once we interrogate a few of the higher-ups, we will have a complete list to hunt down," Anko stated with glee as she held onto the folder.

Only to put it down when Naruko yelled, "Ka-San, General, Anko, I think I found a problem!"

Naruko then appeared with blueprints that they recognized the hotel where Naruto was staying. A feeling of dread washed over them when they noticed a circle for a servant's entrance which led right to the kitchen, as well a list of details on handling the soldiers and civilians stationed there without alerting their presence.

Kushina wasted no time by yelling, "We need to get to that hotel, now!"

Anko and Naruko quickly agreed as Lin gave chase of the three ninjas. They did not know they were too late to make a difference.

Scene VII

Within the large dining room sat Naruto's group while four soldiers stood guard nearby, watching over their charges as the group ate their salad. Sōun facing Naruto at one end, with Hinata put at the other end with Tukiko, Haku and a brown haired soldier who was commanding the squad, Sergeant Yui, in between. The green-eyed sergeant was chatting up with Tukiko as Sōun tried to chat Naruto up.

"You know my lady, you fit perfectly with a poem I wrote for you," Sōun stated to a bewildered Naruto.

"A poem?" Naruto asked, making Sōun smile as he recited his poem.

"Thy lady's a precious flower,
In a world with a thousand bright suns,
Dancing a light to be plucked,
By one such noble, honorable samurai,
Ready to prove himself to thy lady,
That flutters ever deep within his dancing heart,
Should thy flower allow him to love thee?"

Sōun turned to Naruto, expected for her to be flattered as she put down her fork on her cleaned plate. It was not long for the waiters to begin collecting the plates when Naruto told Sōun she was not interested, "I'm flattered Sōun, but I don't know you well enough to like you. Moreover, I doubt I'll
ever like you romantically. I'm sorry."

Sōun looked disappointed as three waiters came in with dishes covered for the big revelation. The man sighed as he made his big statement, "That's fine, for I don't like you and never intended to sleep with you."

The entire room became quiet as Naruto stammered, "What?"

"In fact, I hate you for your hand in destroying this great country," Sōun stated as the waiters put the dishes on the ground. No one noticed they had earplugs and had their eyes closed as Sōun continued to rant, "The only reason I even flirted with you is so I could get you alone so my men could capture you. But I guess plans don't always mean success.

"Oh well, thankfully, there are backup plans," Sōun added before he covered his eyes and ears as the 'waiters' revealed the dishes were flash grenades.

The blinding light hit the squads, causing distortion as ninjas reacted. On pure reflexes, Haku pulled out a dozen senbon needles and struck the waitress behind her. Putting the man into a death-like a state, while Tukiko took on a more lethal approached with her opponent, as she put a kunai into the head of the waiter behind her. Yui, the bulky guard, pulled out a pistol and fired in the Sōun's direction. He missed as Sōun had already grabbed Naruto, but still put three rounds into the waiter's chest. He realized he had missed Sōun as he and Naruto where nowhere to be seen.

Hinata practically jumped and activated her Byakugan to find Naruto, but saw nothing in her x-ray vision. Realizing she was gone, Hinata broke down crying as Lin, Kushina, Naruko, and Anko came rushing in. Anko cursed out, "Fuck, we're too late."

Seeing Hinata down, Kushina rushed to help the girl as Lin asked the group, "What happen?"

"Sōun betrayed us. He revealed he was in on the plan the whole time as he grabbed Naruto after hitting us with flash grenades," Yui reported with a stern face.

"We killed two of them, and have a third ripe for interrogation," Tukiko pointed to man Haku knocked out as the 'Ice Mistress' hovered over him.

Haku pulled her senbon needles out after she tied the man up. Once she was done, the ice girl looked up at a sadistic Anko as she stated, "Just wake him, and you can question him however you like."

"Oh I plan to wake him up and take care of the little problem at the same time," Anko stated as she pulled out some pillars. "Tukiko, keep his mouth open."

Tukiko quickly got to work as she held the man's mouth open while Anko examining the man's teeth. That was until she found what she was looking for, a tooth filled with cyanide. Anko carefully put the pillars onto the tooth before turning to the group stating, "I suggest you look away if you're squeamish."

None of them, even the gentle Hinata, dared to look way as Anko developed a malicious grin. Within one motion, she pulled as hard as she could on the fake tooth. Her victim woke-up and screamed as he tried to close his mouth but could not as Tukiko held his mouth open. All he could do was struggle as Anko yanked his tooth out without an ounce of gentleness. Blood covered the man's mouth as Tukiko let go of the quivering man.

The young woman went to pick up the pitcher of water to wash her hands while Anko got into the man's face. Fear swelled in the traitor's heart as Anko stated, "I hope I've got your attention because this is a sign that you're going to talk. That is inevitable. The question is will I'll be fulfilled by your
Soon howls were heard throughout the entire hotel as Anko performed her most brutal and illegal interrogation as they tried to find Naruto Ryū before it was too late.

Scene IX

In an abandoned building, Naruto woke up to find she was hanging on the rafters, disarmed of her weapons and coat. She felt vulnerable as she hung there, waiting to be noticed as she saw a dozen samurai working over blueprints on her home village, Konoha. She had a sinking feeling as Colonel Nine of Nine asked inside her mind, 'Are you alright?'

"No," Naruto answered softly as she was approached by General Genma and his Apprentice Sōun.

The traitors revealed as Sōun carried over torture devices while Genma spoke up, "Glad to see you are awake. I was afraid we had to begin while you were still out of it. Now that you're awake, we can begin properly."

"In what? Torturing me to death with your Yosemite Sam boy toy?" Naruto snarled at the two traitors.

"More like an interrogation," Genma stated as he picked up a hot blade from his angry nephew. "Killing you would only make you a martyr and just delay the problem. Destroying the Great Library and killing you will bring the whole thing to a halt, saving our Country."

"You're crazy. We need that technology for our future war with the Uzumaki. Without it, we will lose Fire Country!" Naruto yelled at the two men.

"No, we won't as we won wars with samurai, ninjas and cannon fodder. We don't need your fancy toys," Sōun growled.

"Calm yourself, nephew, she'll tell what we need to know in how to bypass the Great Library's defenses and its location," Genma told his nephew as he held the hot blade near Naruto's stomach.

"I would die first!" Naruto growled.

"I'm afraid that is not an option. In fact, the only way you have my permission to die is when you have told me everything I need to know," Genma smiled as he applied the scorching hot blade to Naruto's stomach. She did all she could to scream out in pain.

Scene X

Outside of the abandoned building, a small unit of samurai patrolled the area when they were stealthily attacked. They did not know what had happened as they were suddenly ambushed and killed. One samurai knew nothing but fear in the form of an angry young woman with glowing lavender eyes as her glowing straight hand hit him on his forehead. His world ended as his brain was turned into mush. Leaf-nins and soldiers loyal to General Lin Tzu had arrived.

Scene XI

In the abandoned building, Naruto was panting as tears flowed freely from her eyes. She was marked with torn clothing and wounds on her body. A woman who had been on the brink of suicide bud did not commit for she was too proud to commit the act. She also had a friend within her head to talk her down, 'Just hold on Naruto. Your friends will be coming in soon to save the day. Just trust them to be there for you.'
"This is not working, Uncle. Perhaps threats would be better," Sōun suggested.

"You have something in mind?" Genma asked.

"Yes, by threatening to kill a pretty little freak named Hyūga. Hinata I think her name was. She is love with this girl, and I think the little destroyer is in love with her as well. So maybe if we bring the freak here, our prisoner would be more cooperative," Sōun pointed out.

The suggestion made Naruto scream out, "You will not harm Hinata!"

That made Sōun smile as he stated, "See, the first time she spoke since we applied our torture devices. With your permission, we will get the girl."

Genma was about to give the order when Naruto growled, "You won't succeed, for I know my friends well. They are coming to find me soon, and when they do, you will all die."

Genma frowned as he held up a radio to state, "This is General Genma. Report in, over."

Genma only heard static as he held up the radio again, demanding someone to pick up. He continued for two minutes until he saw movements up in the rafters of the building. He searched, trying to find out what was up there when Tukiko and Haku revealed themselves and open fired with their respective assault rifle and crossbow. Several of Genma's men were hit and even more died when the doors to the building opened up to reveal Yui leading a dozen men, armed to the teeth. Soldiers accompanied by Naruko as she fired once from her heavy pistol to kill a samurai that acted like a knight with his 10 cm thick metal kite shield.

Genma watched in horror as he was forced to create a chakra shield from Kushina's 'Wind Style: Wind Blade Jutsu.' The blade of wind passed the general; as Kushina got in close to engage in melee combat. The two traded blows with precession and skill when all of a sudden Kushina jumped back away from the old man. Genma soon realized why when he saw a large energy blade of chakra descended on him. He could only stare in shock as Lin's blade broke through his shield and severed his head. The bloody head rolled on the ground as Sōun backed away towards Naruto.

He watched as the last of his uncle's men were gunned down, and soon he was facing a room of angry people when he cut Naruto down and held her up at blade point. "No one move or I slit her throat."

Sōun expected compliance and for them to give up. He did not expect a quiet voice behind him say, "No you will not."

That was his only warning before he was struck from behind with pinpoint accuracy. The samurai found himself unable to move as Naruto wiggled herself free. He watched in fear as she made her way to the table to pick up one of her pistols and point it right at his head. She waited until Hinata was away from Sōun to state, "This is for threatening Hinata," just before she pulled the trigger.

The fighting was over when Sōun's fell to the ground, with a bullet in his head. And Naruto felt relief as her knees quivered, "It's over, finally."

Naruto sigh in relief as Hinata got to work, healing her cuts and burns. Making sure no blemish was left with great care as Naruto looked up at Hinata. After the last cut was gone, Hinata looked into the girl's eyes to ask, "Did I get all of your wounds?"

"You did more than enough, Hinata-Hime," Naruto smiled, as she got close. "Hinata, you remember when I said that we'll talk once the mission was over."
"Y-ye-yessss," Hinata stammered as a blush appeared on her face.

"I decided we don't need to wait for I realized I care about you, a lot," Naruto stated as she brought her arms around the girl. "In fact, I care about you so much I think its love. And if it's not, then something far more powerful then love, as I want to be by your side to beyond our life on this earth."

Hinata actually began to cry as she lowered herself to kiss Naruto with the passion Naruto was not expecting. She gladly returned the kiss. Soon the two embraced and the room took notice. Lin looked away while the soldiers whistled in excitement or looked away in embarrassment. Naruto's teammates clapped in excitement while Anko seemed very proud of her girls.

Although the most comical response was Naruko, exclaiming "Finally!" just before Kushina slapped the back of her head. The two girls noticed the attention and separated with an embarrassed smiled as teams came in to clean up the corpses.

Scene XII

"So the last of the traitors were collected and will be executed soon?" Tsunade asked the two Jōnin before her.

"Yeah, this whole mess was taken care of with a bow on top," Anko added with a proud smile. "At least it made the two girls admit their feeling. I wonder who won that pool."

"I believe I did, and if I'm right, I'm about to get nine hundred thousand Yen coming my way," Kurenai smiled as Tsunade grumbled and Kushina glared at the woman. "Speaking of our wards, how are the girls?"

"They are fine, though I swear they will kill Naruto and Hinata if they continue to make doe eyes at each other," Anko snickered as Tsunade nodded along.

"Well, despite the terrorist attempts, the Bill passed and in two years, the entire Army should be upgraded, the most advanced Navy, and the start of a full Air Force," Tsunade stated. "At least we can put this whole mess behind us."

"I'm afraid we can't," Kushina stated as she held up papers to Tsunade. She looked at the financial records of all their backers. "I recognized the shell companies the Uzumaki had used. My guess, my former family tried to create a civil war within Fire Country."

"That's an act of war," Kurenai pointed out.

"We've been at war with the Uzumaki for a long time, we just haven't made it official yet," Kushina quipped to the woman.

"She's right, we just have to hope our country will be ready for the war to come," Tsunade stated grimly as the beast was set in motion.

Chapter End Notes

Done, this chapter took a lot more effort for I had to change it continually. Hope you enjoy it.
Scene I

Tea, such a simple thing that Haku enjoyed and that she rarely had a chance to taste on the road when she traveled the world with Zabuza. Finding the tea leaves and herbs were a challenge when they were going from place to place. Now settling down in Konoha, she found it a lot easier to get the soothing teas, but she found she needed a far more considerable amount of it. Especially when she was in the back of a Leaf-nin's Attack Fighter, listening to Anko talk to the team's former sensei over a long distance call while Tukiko checked their munitions.

"I know I am supposed to agree with everything you said, but you can't say Asuma doesn't have a right. I mean the brat growing in you is his child after all," Anko stated as she twirled a kunai in hand at an angry Kurenai that was on the other end of the screen.

"That's not the point!" Kurenai yelled out of the screen. "He's stating I should live with him at the Sarutobi Clan House and marry him not for love, but for tradition! He didn't give practical reasons like safety or convince of the child and me! Just that it was the tradition!"

Kurenai then sighed as she stated through the communication, "I'm starting to think that I lost his love for me by having his child out of wedlock."

"Now none of that, we don't need your life to go to shit due to some negative thoughts on what things could be, let's change subjects. How do you like being an after-school teacher again?" Anko asked.

"It's interesting actually and a lot safer for my future son since my near death experience at the capital, I don't want to lose my..." Kurenai tailed off as Anko smiled.

"Well, I can't wait to see the little brat, I'll bet-" Anko started to say until she was interrupted by command.

"Elite Jōnin Anko Mitarashi, you're about to enter restricted space. Please end all personal communication at this time. Thank you," spoke the tired worker as the two women stared at each other.

Anko sighed in annoyance, "I guess we'll talk more when I get home."

"Alright, stay safe," Kurenai had sighed before ending transmission, making Anko sigh in frustration as she lay back.

Seeing her boss/sensei distressed, Haku took a big sip before asking, "Is everything alright?"
"No, I'm not alright when it's hard not being there for a friend," Anko admitted as she looked up. "Being a field ninja sometimes sucks."

"Well it's not like you have another job offer," Tukiko joked until she noticed Anko becoming quiet. Tukiko actual dropped what she was doing to ask, "Sensei, what's wrong?"

"I've been asked to return to T&I full time," Anko admitted. "I'm thinking of taking up the offer."

Haku looked surprised while Tukiko muttered, "Your thinking about it?"

"I get paid just the same, and I would be home more often to help Kurenai and do the job I always wanted, scaring the pants off idiots while learning their darkest secrets," Anko almost chuckled as she envisioned her version of a gleeful future that others would say was scary.

Tukiko was not one such person as she came up and hugged a surprised Anko, "I'll miss you Sensei."

"I'm not planning to leave yet, brat!" Anko yelled, much to the girls' confusion.

"Not that we're complaining but why?" Haku asked as put down her finished cup. "Everything you said indicated it would be more beneficial for you to stay home."

"Maybe," Anko admitted. "But then I leave you brats hanging when there is still much more I have to teach you before I'm ready to let you brats work on your own."

Tukiko blinked before her entire body stiffened as she asked in a whisper, "Do you not trust us?"

Anko eyes narrowed as she stammered, "What did you say?"

"Do you not trust us to take care of ourselves?" Tukiko asked a little louder for Anko to hear.

"Of course I trust you brat!" Anko practically yelled back while Tukiko looked inflamed. "If I didn't, you would still be doing D-Rank missions. Let alone working on C-Rank and higher mission without constant supervision."

Tukiko was about to speak until Haku moved in a more tactful course, "We're sorry sensei, but the way you said it made it sound like that you believed you needed to hold our hands like a young child with his or her mother."

Anko almost twitched into a smile, "Oh, well its nothing like that brat. It's just with all the recent shit we've been through and the approaching war with the fucken Uzumaki. (Sigh) I just wanted to be a hundred percent sure you survive despite the odds going against you. Mainly by teaching you every little trick I know, and by giving you every ounce of effort I can to ensure you come home safe."

The two girls stared at each other, knowing looks before Tukiko stated, "Sensei, thank you for volunteering to stay with us, but you don't need to anymore. You don't need to be looking over our shoulders to make sure we are okay."

Anko weakly laughed, "Brat, I'm not scared for you."

"Please Sensei," Haku said with an annoyed tone. "You could handle our training back at the village. The only reason you would stay this is if you're afraid none of us would come home. A valid fear given our lifestyle and the current atmosphere within the Elemental Countries but we're stronger since we started, and we are finally old enough to stand on our own."
Anko looked lost as a fourth figure walked from the cockpit. A girl is younger than the other tanned skin girl with long red hair and green eyes as she stood in a black suit, with a single sword and heavy pistol. It was Naruto's sister, Naruko Ryū. "Hey, we're getting a transmission from our commanders in the field. You need to come to the cockpit."

"Okay, we'll be there," Haku had stated, as she got up to follow Tukiko, who in turned her attention to Naruko.

"So, has Naruto been too lovey-dovey with Hinata?"

"At first, yes, but luckily they've become self-aware and made their relationship more private and…" Naruko tailed off as the three girls left for the cockpit, leaving Anko alone.

She stared at their backs before whispering, "We'll see if you are ready or not, brats," just before she headed to the cockpit as well.

She quickly stood aside as she looked at her superior for the operation through a holographic image. Her commander was a fifty-year-old man in a ridiculous red jacket that was distinct with his red paint near his eyes and his crazy white hair. He was one of the Sennin and second command of Leaf forces, Jiraiya of the Sennin. Moreover, he was not alone, as there stood a muscular soldier Tukiko took particular notice, as she recognized his brown hair and green eyes, Sergeant, now Lieutenant Yui. Who stood guard over a petite redheaded woman they have never met, but had heard about as one of Orochimaru's bodyguards that switched sides, Tayuya.

She was ready to give advice but was caught off guard when Tukiko directed the call to her guard, Yui, "Hey Yui, didn't expect to see you so soon."

"Likewise, Tukiko-chan, I hope we've got a chance to work together in the field," Yui smiled, and Tukiko's heart almost begins to flutter.

Luckily, they were stopped as Jiraiya laughed in the background, "Okay before this becomes a long distance romantic call, let's get back to the military operation." The audience quieted down as Jiraiya took charge, "If you have read the reports before heading to Rice Country, then you must be aware that the Country entered into Civil War between three factions just a week after Ocrochi died and a day after the Country's Daimyō dismemberment. The largest faction is led by Snake Face's head Lieutenant, Kabuto Yakushi, a Leaf-nin traitor that turned out to be a high-level spymaster. The others are led by Ocrochi's former bodyguards, Kidōmaru and Ukon."

"Kidōmaru is an excellent military strategist, so it's no big surprise that the four-armed freak is still in the fight," Tayuya snarled as she remembered her former teammates. "Ukon was a weakling, even with his now deceased brother's help. The two also had shit for brains, so I'm surprised that little fucker is still alive, let alone winning any battles his tiny group of dickwads fights. Something is very odd."

"We will deal with it when it comes," Yui stated before Jiraiya took over.

"Regardless, these three factions have been tearing each other apart to the point that the Seer clan predicts that they will be severally weakened with Kabuto's faction barely scraping by with a victory," Jiraiya explained.

"Wait, if it takes them years to win and they will be greatly weakened during the ruckus, why not wait to wipe them out after they are at their weakest?" Naruto asked with a raised eyebrow.

"For two reasons, one is that we want even our minor enemies to submit to us so Whirlpool doesn't
find any more allies. The second is that we've got a vested interest with a fourth group entering the fray," Jiraiya stepped back for a new man to step up.

He was a tall man with a great long sword. He had almost pitch-black grey eyes, and long check-length brown hair held back by a red band. He was a Jōnin that demanded respect as Jiraiya explained who the man was, "This is Hanzaki Fūma, head of what is left of the weapon user clan. He's been our ears in Rice Country, and he will help us annex the country."

"How will the clan help us?" Tukiko asked with a frown.

"My Clan has been the protectors of Rice Country for centuries, which has allowed us much influence," Hanzaki explained in his grave, croaked voice.

"Influence? That must mean that your clan had a say on whether or not to allow Orochimaru into your country," Tukiko pointed out, much to Hanzaki cringed.

"In part," Hanzaki admitted. "Our Daimyō was the one who brought in Orochimaru."

"Why would anyone let a man that looked like a snake in?" Naruko asked with a wrinkled nose.

"Our former lord was a greedy man that hated his own country was suited only for farming and not much else. Orochimaru, with his words of honey, convinced him that he could make it a great military country," Hanzaki explained the situation. "He also convinced members of my own clan since we were on the decline for decades due to never joining a village."

"Orochimaru was very good at convincing people to his way of thinking, and he wasn't one to honor any deals made during said negotiations," Anko stated with a small voice.

"As several members found out as they were forced to run, or were sacrificed in his experiments. And the few remaining are brainwashed to follow this Kabuto, or have no other choice but to follow him."

"So, do you want us to liberate them?" Hinata asked delicately.

"Only if you can, as my primary concern is to force Sound Forces out, and to ensure our clan survives, even if we have to become Leaf-nins," Hanzaki explained to the group.

"This is why we had brought in your fighter and ANBU's Black Leaf 1 and 2 in this operation, to help you cut off the snake's head. We want to have you three fighters' bomb a dozen bases within their borders. This will force the leaders to meet in a neutral meeting place for a truce before our teams kill the leaders and take this country without trouble," Jiraiya explained with a straight face.

"Which explains why I'm here," Naruko stated with a dark smile. "I'm an expert in assassination and second only to my mother who is back at home as she had to take on the responsibilities of Clan Head."

"You'll be assisting our special forces when it comes time to cut off this snake's head," Jiraiya told the team.

"We're approaching the first base…" Naruto began to report when her screen blinked at the contacts below.

She had to refocus to see that thirty degrees in front of the fighter's line of the site were a battle. Most of the ninjas were of no consequence, but two of them were on gliders, preparing to rain death on their single opponent that the computer identified as someone dangerous. A woman with light blue
"Sirs, there is an alteration below with several Sound-nins going up against someone the computers identified. One Guren," Naruto reported.

"Shit, that bitch is still alive!" Tayuya cursed. "Guren is one of Orochimaru's fucken top a-holes and fanatically loyal to the snake. He had her kill some woman that nursed Guren back to health just because she was civilian. I didn't know which faction she would follow after Snake Face's demise, she didn't think much of any of us."

"Well, that explains why she isn't within a faction," Hanzaki told the group. "Kabuto has been trying to recruit her, but she wants nothing to do with him and has threatened to kill him if he comes near her."

"Well, that is just dandy except she is very powerful and will hold a grudge for our part in her master's death," Tayuya pointed out as Naruto nodded in acknowledgment.

"So should we kill her while in the air or-"

Naruko initially asked for the group until Hinata yelled out; "Incoming!" as several crystals, shuriken-shaped like snowflakes, were heading towards them.

Guren had used 'Crystal Style: Hexagonal Shuriken Jutsu' to shred any moving target. One Naruto intended to avoid but reacted too fast as she banks down instead of up by instinct, allowing a direct line of sight to the cockpit for the giant crystals. The weakest structure in the entire fight as the cockpit was only protected by a thick layer of transparent aluminum, instead of the fighter's thicker layer of ablative armor or shields since it was in stealth mode. Combined with the fact the fighter was moving slowly and the shurikens as dense as diamond and going at the speed of sound, the shurikens had no trouble cutting through the cockpit window. The crew ducked on instinct to avoid the crystal weapons that embedded themselves into the wiring behind a thin layer of titanium.

The cut wiring created an electrical surge throughout the cockpit connected systems, causing the failsafe to activate. Whole systems shut itself down to protected internal components as it moved to switch to backup circuits, temporarily locking Naruto out of her controls in the process. A situation that would not usually be a problem, but the designers had not planned for the fighter to face a power surge while going at nosedive speeds 150m (492ft) off the ground.

Cursing, Naruto manually rewired her joystick to allow her to glide her fighter for a softer landing/crash as she yelled, "Everyone, brace for impact!"

Here fellow ninjas quickly ran to brace themselves while Naruto ordered Hinata to the radio, "Hinata, use the backup comms to call for help! It should have its own battery!"

Hinata quickly snapped to it to get her comms on Fire Country's frequencies to yell out, "Mayday, mayday. This is Fox's Shadow. We've been hit, and we are going down in combat sector four-mark-fifteen. Repeat, this is…" Hinata continued to yell until the fighter made a rough landing within the small forest. It would be minutes later before they would be able to regain communication.

**Scene II**

Down at the field, Guren with long blades of pink crystals were finishing off the last of Kabuto's swine when she noticed something off in the sky. High in the sky, a mirage began to dissipate to
reveal a Leaf-nin Phantom Class Attack Fighter. Her dark grey eyes narrowed as she watched the fighter pull-up from a nosedive as it started an uncontrolled glide in the shape of a circle. Her red glossed lips frowned as the fighter crashed into a small forest, relatively intact.

She had a new target as she looked up into the trees, behind her to yell out, "Stay in the shadows as I investigate. Don't reveal yourself until I tell you."

Guren ran towards the crash site as a figure hidden within the shadows gave case, heading to a pivotal point in their lives.

Scene III

Within the cockpit, Naruto cursed as she awakened in her seat to realize that her cockpit window was in terrible shape. The combination of numerous holes and the crash caused a ripple effect across the entire window. Cracks appeared all across the window, and a large chunk of the window lay right in front of her.

Naruto just sighed as she stated, "Looks like I'll need to replace the cockpit window," before she jettisons the piece of junk, giving a clear view as she pushed out a piece of material that used to be a part of the window.

It made a loud enough clunk to wake Hinata as Naruto unstrapped her buckles. Seeing her girlfriend was ok, she unstrapped her seat buckles. Naruto gave the following orders, "Hinata-Hime, could you go check on our team and my sister. Make sure they are alright while I'll look at the damage."

Hinata acknowledges the orders as she quickly got out of her seat and went to the back as Naruto went to the cabin panel, after pulling out a scroll containing engineering equipment and turned off the power in the cockpit. She then unscrewed the panel to look at the wiring. Most of the wiring was ok except for a few wires that caused the power surge. With a few heaves and hoes, Naruto pulled out the snowflake shaped crystal and set it aside. Free of the crystal, Naruto was about to rewire the circuits when she felt a blade under the neck. She looked down to see a beautiful bladed crystal that was very close to cutting her throat.

Naruto's turned briefly to see that the woman from the battlefield, Guren was here with an angry look within her dark eye. "I know you," the woman stated in a tone that might as well been a whisper. "You're the one that Lord Orochimaru wanted as his new body, for your bloodline. And it was because of you and you bloody Leaf-nins that he's dead."

"I don't suppose the whole, we are ninjas and that's part of the risk will fly with you?" Naruto asked as she looked down to see crystals slowly gripped her legs, preventing her from escaping.

"He was the only man that showed me kindness. He took me in when everyone else treated me like trash in spite of my skills. So what do you think?" Guren almost cried as she straightens her blade. "There is only one reason I haven't killed you now, I'm trying to decide if you and your team would be useful. Give me a reason while I shouldn't kill you."

"Because you won't have the chance," Naruto stated as she looked down the hall.

That was Guren's only warning before she was hit with a 'Water Style: Cool Geyser Jutsu' under her feet. She was sent flying out of the plane while Naruto remained attached to the fighter. She was dripping wet when Hinata appeared with glowing hands. She went in to disrupt the crystallized structure to allow Naruto to escape while her two teammates ran out to face Guren.

Guren did not know what had happened to her as she landed on her feet, obviously disgruntled and
dripping wet. She growled when she noticed it was getting colder. She looked up to see it was snowing and immediately used 'Crystal Style: Crystal Wall Jutsu' to create a wall to stop a thousand ice needles. She then broke the crystal as she used 'Crystal Style: Tearing Crystal Falling Dragon Jutsu' to summon a medium size dragon to head towards her opponent. Her opponent, a young black-haired woman in a green battle camion, jumped in the air. Guren knew it was Haku Momochi when she used 'Ice Style: Ice Spike Jutsu' to send a massive spike of ice towards her.

Guren responded with 'Crystal Style: Growing Crystal Thorns Jutsu' to create a growing vine of crystal thorns to capture the ice spike. It then crushed the slab of ice before growing towards Haku. Haku made a mid-air maneuver onto the crystals, avoid the spike before jumping off performing 'Ice Style: Arctic Breath Jutsu' onto the vine's crystal structure. The reactions were apparent when the crystal slowed to a crawl and became more brittle. Facts Haku took advantage of as she pulled out her crossbow and loaded an explosive bolt.

Haku fired into the crystallized structure as she descended to the ground, and with a loud boom, the crystals rained down on Guren as her opponent landed on her feet. Guren avoided the falling crystals and used 'Crystal Style: Shuriken Wild Dance Jutsu' to send over a hundred crystal shurikens towards Haku, who responded with another 'Ice Style: a Thousand Needles of Death Jutsu' to deflect the shuriken and hold her ground as Guren landed on her feet. Guren was ready to attack as Haku pointed her crossbow at her fanatic opponent.

Guren was waiting for her opponent to move, expecting an attack but then felt something was off when her Leaf-nin opponent lowered her crossbow. She was confused why until she felt someone behind her and realized someone had dropped her 'Chameleon Jutsu' revealing a female Uchiha. She did not have a chance to fight as Tukiko used one of the few lightning style jutsus she knew. A technique developed by the ninja police of Uchiha to capture ninjas alive. It was 'Lightning Style: Nerve Disruptor Jutsu,' a low-level lightning attack that caused spasms, much like a taser to take down an opponent for capture.

Guren had crumbled to the ground, and Tukiko quickly cuffed her opponent while Haku stood to watch. Her senses raised high for an attack when she sensed the second ninja. She was about to move towards her second opponent when the ninja screamed as a dozen snakes from their sensei captured the target. With the ninja restrained, Anko walked out of the shadows to reveal the ninja was a scared girl held by snakes. A girl slightly younger then Naruko, and less mature than the assassin that passed Anko and her prisoner as the assassin hunted for scouts that could be out there. A fact Haku assimilated as she concentrated on the girl in grayish blue clothing. She was shaking in fear, as evident by her long orange hair under the blue hat as it began to become frenzy with fear.

Her brown eyes filled with tears as pleaded for them not to kill her, "Please don't kill me!"

"Oh, why shouldn't we little Sound-nin?" Anko asked with a sadistic smile. "That is unless you have some information that you can give us."

"I don't know anything?" The woman cried as the snakes tighten around the girl.

"I don't believe you," Anko stated as though she were telling a loved one how the weather is. "Now I suggest you tell me something valuable or bye-bye spy."

"I don't know anything. I'm not a Sound-nin!" the girl screamed in defiance as she shook in fear.

"Anko-sensei, I think she's telling the truth," Haku stated, as she looked right into the captured ninja's brown eyes.

"Even if she isn't, she must know something from traveling with one of Orochimaru top
Lieutenants," Anko pointed out.

The girl gasped in shock, telling them all they needed to know, she knew nothing as she looked at Guren, who looked away.

"S-s-she… d-d-do-doesn't k-kn-know," Guren stuttered as she regained her ability to speak. "I-I f-fo-found her s-snooping around one of Kabuto's bases and saved her. And when I found out who she was and her quest, I had to help her, for my own reasons," Guren confessed as Tukiko followed the drama back and forth.

The Uchiha was waiting for the right moment to ask the girl a critical question, "Who are you?"

The girl hesitated for a moment before she gave out an answer, "My name is Sasame Fūma, and I'm looking to save my cousin, Arashi Fūma."

An answer that made Anko curse as she let go of the poor girl as she turned towards the fighter to yell out, "Naruto, Hinata, get on the comms and get me Jiraiya and the Fūma clan. Tell them we've found one of their lost sheep."

Scene IV

It was later in the afternoon as most of the group sat around the spare comm., while Naruto worked on the fighter and Hinata stood guard. The rest waited for Hanzaki to finish chewing out Sasame about making him worry about his runaway niece when the young girl told them her life story. She told them about her idol, Arashi. How she had wanted to be like him. A man who was the charismatic leader of her clan who had become the leader of the faction that followed Orochimaru and the only reason she did not follow him then was that she was too young. The two were close as cousins can be, and she had promised Sasame that they would be together when he returned.

But he never did. Soon years went on by, and Sasame began to hear rumors of the terrible things that were occurring behind closed doors: the experiments, the torture, the expendable ninjas and the brainwashing. She had to find out what was going on. So she went to find out, not realizing the danger and that she was walking into the middle of a civil war. She would have been killed if Guren did not happen to wander into the area and took pity on her.

"Was it pity, or were you just out to use me?" Sasame yelled at the woman who looked down.

"Pity when I saw those eyes looking with… hope," Guren stated. "A person saw the same eyes and saved me, and I betrayed her. Now I have the chance to make things right, so I saved you. The fact you would have been the solution to my problems was just the icing on the cake."

Sasame just shook her head to ask, "How can I believe you?"

"If you untie my hands, I can show you I care for you as my child," Guren stated sadly, but a voice disagreed.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you fuck heads," replied Tayuya replied through hologram communication. "That bitch has always been crazy."

"And your still the potty mouth that needs to be disciplined," Guren snarled while an ANBU Commander just shook his head.

"Regardless, Lord Jiraiya orders were specific, keep her tied up until he and a squad of soldiers arrive to help out. He'll decide how useful she is when he arrives."
"I'll tell you everything if it means Kabuto and Tayuya's fellow wannabes get it in the end," Guren told the ninjas.

"Oh… I'm so relieved to hear that," Anko stated with a scold and Tukiko got to business.

"How is the operation going?"

"We have hit several of the bases, allowing us to gain a foothold in the Country and forcing them to hold a summit as planned. Jiraiya will have more information when he meets up with you."

"Then we can go save Arashi, right?" Sasame asked with hope as Hanzaki looked uneasy.

"Sasame, there is something I've should have told you before you ran away. Something I've been keeping from you knowing how much you love Arashi," Hanzaki said with hesitation.

"What?" Sasame asked hesitantly as Hanzaki gave her an answer.

"Six months after Arashi joined up with Orochimaru, he began to act oddly. The clan members within wrote to me, stating he's become colder, more distant to his clan just before all writing stopped. That was when I heard the rumors that he had been capturing test subjects for Orochimaru, and Kabuto. And three weeks before you left a member of our clan who ran away told me they were all true."

"No, you're lying," Sasame accused her current clan head.

A man who looked down at his feet to state, "I wish I was, but I'm not. I'm sorry."

Sasame could not believe her ears. This had to be a joke she said to herself as she slowly got up and ran away in tears. Seeing her go, Haku and Tukiko were about to follow when Anko ordered them back, "No, we'll need you two here. Naruko, you tail the girl to make sure she doesn't get herself in trouble and bring her back if she gets too far or has finally cooled down."

"Yes ma'am," Naruko saluted as she tailed Sasame, leaving Anko and company with their commanders.

"Stay safe, and wait for help, ANBU Snail, out!" the ANBU commander stated before he ended the transmission, leaving the group alone.

Anko then took the opportunity to pick up the portable communication device, all the while giving Guren a slight glare, tell the woman she is watching her. Guren looked up stating, "You can glare at me all you want. It won't change a thing."

"I can't believe after everything, you still show loyalty to that snake-faced bastard," Anko stated with a scold that Guren returned.

"I don't care for a scornful woman that hated Lord Orochimaru for he threw you away."

"You know me?" Anko asked in shock.

"He was proud of you, you know. You would have made a much better Lieutenant then Kabuto ever was. I wonder if you would be loyal to him if he treated you well like he did with me," Guren stated as Anko stomped away in anger.

Anko took several deep breaths to calm herself, as Tukiko and Haku followed behind. "Commander, are you sure it's wise to let Naruko go out there alone? It may be best if one of us follow them in case
a heavy assault team comes looking for us," Tukiko pointed out.

Anko stopped in her tracks as though hit by an idea, "I've didn't think about that. I hope they are all too busy regrouping."

"Maybe we can still catch Naruko and then-" Tukiko started to suggest, but Anko cut her off.

"Haku can you track Sasame?"

"Yes ma'am," Haku nodded while looking a bit insulted at the same time.

"Then get to it while I kick myself for not thinking about the dangers out there," Anko ordered as Haku disappeared in a swirl of snowflakes. Alone, Anko turned to Tukiko to state, "Good thinking their brat."

"Thank you, ma'am," Tukiko saluted. Leaving behind her superior that did not know to feel sad at the drop of 'sensei,' or be proud they moved to pass from student to teacher, to an officer to a superior officer.

She decided to be proud as she handed the communication device that Hinata put back up while Naruto was welding titanium into the rewired panel. "How does it look brat?"

"Good, I've got the circuits repaired. I just need to double check everything and replace the cockpit window with a replacement Jiraiya is bringing from a temporary airfield." Naruto had reported before she added, "Thank goodness for seals and the need to keep backup parts.

"How long before it is repaired?" Anko asked.

"Mid-afternoon tomorrow, assuming I get it in the next hour or so and I receive no more interruptions," Naruto answered back.

"Okay then, keep up the good work," Anko nodded. "Now we just have to wait for Naruko and Haku to return."

Scene V

Deep in the woods, Sasame was beating on a tree, frustrated at everything. So many harsh truths would weigh down on a soul, especially one that wanted to deny everything they said about Arashi, but she could not. All she could do was let loose a few tears as a firm hand touched her shoulder. She turned to see Haku, looking beyond her.

"It must be terrible having someone you love not being there with you," Haku told the girl who looked down in shame.

"Yes," Sasame admitted. "He was the big brother I never had, and sometimes, even a father."

Sasame then lets out a few tears as she stated, "Pathetic, crying over a man who many consider to be a monster."

"It's not pathetic," Haku quickly stated. "My adopted father, Zabuza Momochi, is regarded as a brutal monster by most and he killed so many people that you could fill a graveyard from his victims alone. Yet despite the evil he's done, I still love him, and I hug him every chance I can since we live in two different villages. Though he wishes I didn't hug him so much as it ruins his whole demon image."

The two giggled before Haku continued her words of wisdom, "When it comes to the love of a close
friend or family, we love them no matter what, except… except when they betray us."

Sasame nodded as she asked Haku, "Who betrayed you?"

"My biological father tried to kill me for he was afraid of my bloodline," Haku answered the younger girl, who had another question on the tip of her tongue.

"What if you fear being betrayed by two people you thought you could look up to?"

"I don't know," Haku stated as she looked into the young woman's soul. "Is this about Guren?"

"Maybe," Sasame admitted.

"Well, I can't give you advice about that, except do what you feel is right," Haku had advised as she helped Sasame to get up. "Now come on, let's get back to camp where everyone is waiting."

Sasame smiled as she followed Haku a dozen steps before she heard a tremendous crash. She turned to see the redhead, Naruko crash into the ground behind them. She was hit by a large rock that lay right next to her head, it was the only warning the two had before someone used 'Earth Style: Groundhog Decapitation Jutsu.' The two were dragged down into the ground and buried up to their necks, unable to move as several figures walked out of the forest while another rose up.

One such figure was a disgusting beast of a human, with its hunched back, bucked teeth and flat, disorganized hair. The figure in blue robes with a red sash was someone Sasame recognized as she gasped out, "Kagerō-Sama?"

The now identified woman kneeled down to Sasame as her two guards came up from behind. One was a firm, bald man with a scar over his right, dark grey eyes that identified Jigumo Fūma along with the second guard, Kamikiri Fūma. A lanky man in maroon robes and scissor hands he did not use on his smoothed black hair and thick eyebrows over his dark grey eyes. The two guards moved like zombies as Kagerō lowered herself towards Sasame's level to speak in a more masculine voice.

"Hello, Sasame. I did not expect to see you out here, with Leaf Forces."

"Kagerō, what's going on? Why have you captured us?" Sasame asked.

"Because you're with the enemy Sasame," Kagerō stated. "And it's because of your family that I made sure your capture would not cause any serious injuries."

"We're not your enemy if you're with the Fūma clan!" Haku yelled at Kagerō. "We're allies with a treaty made with Hanzaki Fūma."

Kagerō looked at the ice girl as she stated, "One that my… master Arashi will not recognize, as he supports the kill order for all Leaf-nins, except for a few that are on a list. A list that you're on."

"Lucky me," Haku growled as Kagerō popped Haku and Sasame out of the ground to be restrained as prisoners while two more started to carry Naruko away. Facts that did not escape a defiant Haku as she stated, "My team will get you."

"Maybe, if we don't get them first," Kagerō told the Ice Mistress before turning towards Jigumo.

The ninja stiffly used 'Wind Spiders Jutsu,' to send a wave of spiders through a sudden burst of wind. Silk strings appeared in Jigumo's hand that went directly to the Leaf-nins temporary camp. Sasame gasped in fear as she pleaded for Kagerō to stop. "You don't have to do this Kagerō. You don't have to fight them. You can take us to Arashi, and I can talk him down."
"I would more than love that idea, but it hinges on me having a choice, and I don't have one in this case. Arashi insured I don't have a choice," Kagerō, explained to Sasame.

Sasame trembled as she turned to her two guards to plead with them, "Jigumo, Kamikiri, don't do this, please."

All she got in reply was silence as the two stare off in the distance, freaking out Sasame as she asked them to answer her. Only to get silence as she slowly realized something was wrong when she did not even get even a mumble as they stared off into the distance.

"What has happened to them?" Sasame asked out loud.

"Arashi has changed Sasame, he has become more ruthless, and he makes sure that those who question him have no choice in the matter," Kagerō told the young woman.

"Please say he didn't use that technique on his own people?" Sasame cried out in denial as Kagerō looked down.

"He did, and now I must do what I must to save my closest friends with whatever I can do to save them."

Scene VI

Back at camp, Tukiko was sitting down, feeding their sole prisoner, holding a bowl of rations as Guren used a spoon as she slowly moved due to the electronic chakra sealing cuffs as she glared at the Leaf-nin. "You know, this would be easier if you just uncuffed me, or just removed the chain."

"Would you allow me free movement or my chakra if our roles were reverse?" Tukiko asked with a raised eyebrow.

"I probably would have trapped you in crystal and allowing no movement at all if I thought you were the enemy," Guren admitted. "Then probably let you go after I determined you can be an ally."

"Well the verdict is still up in the air if you're an ally or not," Tukiko stated as she stared at the woman, who was chewing her lip far more than her own food. "Are you nervous about something?"

"No, no…" Guren quickly shook her head before her tongue slipped what she was thinking. "I'm just wondering what was taking them so long. Sasame should be here by now, where it's safe."

"Calm down, she's probably just been delayed. So relax," Tukiko advised the older woman. "You care about your charge."

"And you don't sound surprised," Guren pointed out. "I guess you believe me. I just wish your commander believed me."

"She is letting her emotions get the better of her. Orochimaru was not kind to her," Tukiko stated while Guren bought a retort.

Instead, she just put down the spoon, stating, "I'm not hungry anymore."

Tukiko picked up the spoon filled with food, "You need to eat to keep your strength up."

"I'm not hungry anymore, and neither are you," Guren stated as she looked at Tukiko's hand.

Confused, Tukiko looked down and saw a small spider with a long line of silk on her hand. Tensed, Tukiko moved her shaking hand to flick the spider off her while the spider did not move to bite
despite being touched. That's when she and her team, including the oblivious Naruto noticed dozens of spiders carried by an artificial wind. It did not take a sensor-nin to realize the spiders were a ninja technique when Guren looked up to state, "The enemy is here."

That was all they heard when a hunchback appeared from the woods and used 'Earth Style: Antlion Jutsu.' A deadly earth Jutsu based attack that turned a large field into a sinkhole of death. Forcing Anko and Tukiko with Guren to jump away while the fighter started to sink as their occupants fell down. Naruto did not need a moment to realize they were in trouble as she got to the controls and activated its reactor from a cold start. The engines roared to life as Naruto used its thrusters to pull the ship off the ground and up into the air.

Naruto gave a small, yet happy laugh with Hinata as they were safely above the trees, out of the way of close quarters combat over a dozen ninjas came out from behind the hunchback. It was a tense moment as Sasame, Haku and Naruko were held prisoner by the Sound-nins, especially the Leaf-nins as their hands were bound. Anko and Tukiko landed on the solid ground with Guren at their side. It was a standoff between two forces, and the Leaf-nins were the one that needed to run to keep up.

One Kagerō wasn't going to allow as she yelled out to the Leaf-nins, "Surrender yourselves and Guren now or we'll start killing the hostages!"

"You won't kill Sasame," Tukiko pointed out. "Nor would you kill rare bloodlines like the Hyōton and Uzumaki's regenerative bloodline."

"The bloodline users are optional, and I'm willing to kill all of you, including Guren if given no choice," Kagerō stated. "Now surrender, or we will start with the one that Kabuto doesn't care if she dies or not, one Naruko Ryū."

And to emphasize her point, the Sound-nin put her own blade to her neck. Kagerō turned to make a comment when she noticed something odd. That her soon to be executed prisoner did not look scared. In fact, she seemed happy as her feet where spread wide, leaving her captor's feet exposed. It was at that moment Kagerō realized something was wrong when she eye smiled at her opponent as her hand pointed directly at her captor's feet.

Naruko then stated, "I was a better Sealing Master then my sister," before a puff of smoke appeared with a heavy pistol and opened fire.

The effects were instant as a 4cm (1.57in) of her captor's foot was destroyed by Naruko's gun. Causing the ninja to scream as Naruko revealed her hands unbound as she grabbed her blade out of her captor's hand, and stabbed him as she brought her pistol to bear on Kagerō and opened fire. Kagerō took the opportunity to duck and avoid the bullet that hit one of her subordinates, who tried in vain to close the wound over his throat. A futile attempt as half of his throat was gone and died quickly.

It started a chain reaction as Naruto opened fire with a sniper rifle from the cockpit, killing the Sound-nin holding Haku. And Haku wasted no time breaking the frozen rope to grab her weapons, including her crossbow that she used to waste two Sound-nins before she jumped away. Sasame also managed to escape just before the battle broke out. The zombie ninjas ran at their opponents, initiating a fight as Jigumo and Kamikiri fought Haku and Tukiko respectively. Leaving the Fūma clan to battle as Anko matched up against Kagerō and Naruko with air support faced whatever was left.

Naruko was quick on her feet as she dashed up close to her opponents, slashed a throat open and stabbed her second opponent. It was just before Naruko jumped away as a third was shot by Naruto.
Who took another shot just before she ducked when one of the Sound-nin's created 'Earth Style: Stone Toss Jutsu,' that caused the fighter to weaved as Naruto grabbed onto the controls.

She stabilized the fighter as a ninja used the opening to jump up for close quarters combat. Only for Hinata to use 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' to knock the ninja headfirst directly into the jutsu created sinkhole. Kagerō had attempted to end the Jutsu before he landed but was not fast enough as the earth finally solidified after he landed in the sinkhole. It would be found after the battle that he died of affixation as he stopped struggling while the battle raged on, with the fiercest of fighting happening between Anko and Kagerō.

Anko tried to grab onto her opponent with snakes shooting out of her sleeves but was blocked by Kagerō's 'Earth Style: Rock Wall Jutsu.' Kagerō then jumped up and used 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu' while Anko returned fire with 'Earth Style: Snake Coil Jutsu' to summon a giant snake made of stone to do what snakes do best, wrap around its prey/target and squeezed them very hard. It moved with a focus as it slithered through the fireball towards its target. A target that was ready as the hunchback grabbed on the snake and crushed it with pure strength.

Anko knew she was in trouble the moment Kagerō got within arm's reach and had to use her incredible flexibility to avoid the hunchback's punches. Leaving craters as Anko ran pass a scared Sasame. The girl had never seen a full ninja battle being born after the last great wars around Rice Country. She watched in fear as Tukiko fought Kamikiri, using her flaming knives to deflect the man's scissor blades as she tried to cut the man up. Her heart wept as Haku used a thousand ice needles to keep Jigumo and his heavy bō staff away.

She was so embedded into the battle she did not notice a stray kunai until Guren yelled out, "Get down," before she pulled the girl out of the way.

Sasame shook in fear as Guren checked her over, even at great discomfort due to the chakra cuffs. "Are you alright?"

"I-I'm f-f-fine," Sasame stuttered out.

"Good," Guren smiled as she looked out on the battlefield and winced when she saw Anko could not get away and she was being knocked around. It was that moment she realized she needed to enter the fray when she turned to Sasame, "You can pick locks right? Even the new electronic locks the Leaf-nins have been selling, right?"

"Yes," Sasame answered unsure until it hit her like a bag of bricks. "You want me to set you free?"

"Yes," Guren answered and Sasame looked suspicious.

"Why, so you can escape or attack the Leaf-nins?" Sasame asked before she followed up another question. "Why should I believe you won't run away as soon as I free you?"

"Because I can prove I'm sincere," Guren corrected the girl before rolling slightly to the side. "If you don't believe me, then pull out the object in my left pocket, and I'll prove to you I'm sincere."

Sasame hesitantly did as she told and reached for the sole object in her pocket. It was a white lily trapped within a crystal. One Sasame recognized as she exclaimed, "This is the…"

"The lily you gave me, forever preserved in crystal," Guren told as she watched Sasame examined the flower within the purple crystal. Only to hug it tightly when she heard another bang echoed across the forest as Guren came in close. "I won't leave a girl that that wiggled into my heart, much like a daughter does with their mother."
Sasame did not need much more convincing as she got to work on Guren's electronic restraints while Anko was fighting for her life. She avoided Kagerō's 'Earth Style: Field of Spikes Jutsu' with a light touch as the earth itself became a hazard. Though the attack was not enough to stop her from getting close enough to the hunchback to use 'Viper Snake Hands Jutsu;' Anko took great pleasures as a dozen poisonous vipers shot out of her jacket to sink their teeth into Kagerō. She was surprised that it did not kill her as Kagerō was about to pull Anko in as she reached for her shotgun.

Anko was about to panic when something stopped Kagerō. Crystals began to cover her limbs and legs. It was that moment Guren revealed herself to be free, and she was using 'Crystal Style: Jade Prison Jutsu.' A jutsu that had crystals moved across the hunchback's limbs to encase the target in the crystal. Something Kagerō tried breaking out of, but Anko would not allow the hunchback a chance to do so. She got her shotgun out and opened fire into the hunchback's chest. The two puppet ninjas only flinched mentally as their bodies continued to fight their opponents without hesitation.

However, around Anko and Guren, silence prevailed as the two ninjas stared at each other, decided whether to fight or not. Anko agreed to peace as she lowered her shotgun as she grungy stated, "Thank you for the assistance."

"Well I couldn't let you die, it would not look good for me and Sasame if the Jōnin commander died," Guren pointed out as she looked on as the two Elite Chūnin fought the two puppets that were part of the Fūma clan. "Now come on, we have your former students to save. I hate to see the two girls I was beginning to like to die on us."

"You're not going anywhere," said a feminine voice said behind them.

The two sadistic women turned to see to their shock the hunchback rise from the ground, still alive and without a drop of blood. Anko could not believe it, "How are you still alive? That shot should have killed you."

Kagerō smiled as she spoke in a softer, more delicate voice, "You only hurt the outer shell, not the inner one that is truly me." It was then she went through a dozen hand signs with her free limbs to use 'Antlion Style: Ephemeral Jutsu.' "Now you will face the true me."

Words that did not due to her change any justice as the body began to bulge, and break, much like an insect shedding its skin. However, the transformation was better described as an ugly caterpillar becoming a beautiful butterfly as a pale figure flew up using pale blue chakra based butterfly winds. Anko and Guren saw the true form of Kagerō Fūma, a small girl with long green hair and pale eyes that seemed to transcend beauty despite her body being so petite.

Anko summed it up as she yelled, "Shit!" before Kagerō death from above with 'Fire Style: Flower Phoenix Jutsu,' at the start of her attack.

As small fireballs rained down onto Anko and Guren's position, Tukiko and Haku were at each other's back, waiting for Jigumo and Kamikiri to charge at them. "Ready?" Tukiko asked and Haku. A question Haku answered, "Ready."

"NOW!" Tukiko yelled before they grabbed and locked their arms together and they jumped up and spun to face their new opponents.

Jigumo had no defense when Tukiko used 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu' at a range Jigumo could not escape. Flames consumed Jigumo, burning the wooden staff to cinders as Jigumo fell to the ground, performing a drop and roll to disperse the flames, leaving behind a human that looked like burnt meat. His screams were only matched by Kamikiri's brief screams. Who started screaming when
Haku used 'Ice Style: Arctic Breath Jutsu' to harden the man joints and make him vulnerable to Haku punch's filled with Senbon needles. The force was enough to break bones, and Haku was able to cause the muscles to contract on his heart and lungs already strained due to running right into a field of ice. Kamikiri chest was on fire as he fell to the ground, clutching his chest.

The battle was over as Haku and Tukiko bumped their fists together before jumping away from a more powerful fireball created by Kagerō's 'Fire Style: Great Fireball Jutsu.' An attack that allowed Kagerō to swoop down to save what was left of her friends. Friends that she needed to find an elite medic to help, or Kamikiri and Jigumo would die. A face made more urgent when she noticed off in the distant reinforcements from Fire Country had arrived.

Advance soldiers with an assault rifle fired onto the Sound-nins as a white-haired man laughed as he rode a giant, colorful toad to battle. Combined with Naruko, Tukiko, Haku, Anko and Guren marching towards her, she decided retreat was best. Therefore, with a swirl of smoke, Kagerō, Jigumo, and Kamikiri disappeared before the reinforcements had a chance to attack. Leaving an empty battlefield with the death of the last Sound-nin, allowed Naruto to land her fighter on the ground as Guren gave a sigh of breath. A breath she grabs hold when noticed their leader, a man that her master feared and hated the most, Jiraiya of the Sennin.

"So you're Guren," Jiraiya said as he examined the woman. "I have to say you're one of the hottest ninjas Orochi was interested in, and maybe one of the deadliest." Jiraiya then looked down at the discarded chakra cuffs. "You must know there was a good chance we would kill you if you stayed. Why did you?" Jiraiya asked as he saw Naruko come up to the fighter to make sure Naruto and Hinata were all right.

"I could not leave Sasame behind, and I did give my word I would help her find your brother," Guren told Jiraiya as Sasame was brought to them by one Lieutenant Yui.

"I see, and how did you escape your cuffs?" Jiraiya asked.

"I picked them," Sasame answered hesitantly. "I'm very good at picking locks, even electronic ones."

"And you thought it was a good idea to unlock them?" Jiraiya questioned the young girl that shook until Guren laid her hand on her to encourage the girl to speak the truth.

"I saw Anko-Sama was losing, and I didn't want her to die for my friends' sake," Sasame trutfully croaked to Jiraiya.

"I see," Jiraiya stated as he looked at Leaf-nins that gathered around to ask a loaded question. "Can anyone vouch for these two?"

Jiraiya expected hesitation, but got none was present when Haku stepped forward, "I can vouch for Sasame's loyalty in her need to find out the truth about her cousin."

She was the first as she was followed by Tukiko, "And I can vouch for Guren's loyalty to Sasame and that she can be trusted to not stab us in the back."

Jiraiya looked convinced, but still need someone higher up to confirmed when he turned to Anko to ask, "And do you agree with your student's assessments."

Anko bit her lip, unsure what to say until she told her superior, "I would like to say no due to my past, but I trust my students to make a clear decision without me."

Jiraiya nodded with a chuckle as his serious façade began to fade, "It's good to see your students spread their wings on their own."
"Yes… it is," Anko hesitantly admitted.

A fact Jiraiya missed as he came up to Guren and Sasame with a jolly laugh and hugged them, "Good, then we can enjoy our victory and celebrate our success before we plan what to do tomorrow."

Jiraiya laugh echoed as the ninjas and soldiers secured the site for the most part, as Tukiko looked up to Yui to thank him, "Thank you, for coming in and helping us again. We sure are making it a routine occurrence."

"One I think we should break when we get back home, maybe over dinner," Yui suggested.

"I like that," Sasame smiled at Yui before she looked over the dark horizon. "We're going to have to fight again tomorrow."

"We'll be ready, count on it," Yui stated as he brought his hand down to Tukiko, and Tukiko graciously accepted it.

Chapter End Notes

Finally done with just a difficult chapter to write after three-damned rewrites; I hope you enjoy it and part 2 of what was meant to be a single chapter will come out well. In addition, happy holidays and here is my belated gift to you.
Within the war-torn country known as Rice Country, laid a series of underground bunkers and bases home to the various Sound Forces factions. Developed by Orochimaru to be the Sound Forces' Hidden Village, it has proven instrumental in their survival against Fire Country's army that came upon the weaken forces like a plague. Several were destroyed, but one base was secured enough for Kagerō's safety. It was Kabuto's headquarters and the best place for Jigumo and Kamikiri to get medical attention. Kagerō quickly made it to the entrance with the two slumped on her shoulders as she ordered the guards to allow her to enter. She was allowed in without question and quickly was escorted through a series of mazes.

Kagerō was eventually led to a giant, dark room where a figure was waiting for her. A figure she recognized as she laid her two subordinates down and bowed before him, begging the man to help her. "Please help me save them!"

The figure ignored her plea as he stated, "They failed me."

"It wasn't their fault," Kagerō cried out in fear. "We fought against the famed Team Vixen, and later Jiraiya and elite soldiers from Fire Country. There was no way to win."

"All that matters are that they failed and weighed you down with their weakness as you had to carry them to safety," stated the figure as he came into view.

It was a grey-eyed man that did not look very intimidating with a purple bowl cut and pinkish skin. In fact, the only thing intimidating was his firm chin. Yet despite not being physically scary, he was still able to put the fear in the petite woman's heart. Especially as he moved closer to Kagerō's downed subordinates. Her body shook as he raised his chakra-covered hands.

With a blank face as he stated, "I don't tolerate failures."

"No!" Kagerō yelled in shock as she moved to save her men, but the ground shook before she fell into a sinkhole trap.

She was buried up to her neck making her helpless as she watched Kagerō walk up to Jigumo and Kamikiri and surround them with a chakra prism. She watched the man perform 'Casualty Puppet Jutsu,' a forbidden technique in the Fūma clan. She watched in horror as the chakra swirled out of her two most trusted comrades into the man, who absorbed her friend's life force to the last drop. She cried as her friends gave their last breath.
Kagerō cried as she stared at the figure, "How could you do this Lord Arashi?"

"Because they were a waste of space, and they were slowing you down. Something I can't allow, especially with such important tools," Arashi stated without an ounce of concern.

"Damn you Arashi, and damn you Orochimaru for turning you into such a monster!" Kagerō yelled out to the heavens as Arashi Fūma, the commander of the Sound Force's Fūma clan approached the beaten girl.

Arashi stopped a cementer from the petite girl as he prepared another jutsu, "Now to deal with you. After all, I can't have my tools disobeying me."

That was her only warning before Arashi used 'Forced Puppet Jutsu,' onto his next victim. It was a terrible jutsu that made its victims thrash and scream out in tears if they could scream, yell or even struggle the moment the jutsu took hold. Instead, all Kagerō could do was scream in anguish in her mind as her body stood still when it was popped out of the ground. She was a puppet who let mental tears go. He did not wait a moment before he ordered her to the experiment wards as he went to the peace conference to bring back the traitors. No one saw Arashi let off a single tear as he went back to face Kabuto for the finale fight of for Rice Country.

Scene II

Outside of the vast underground bunker, a small patrol made up of two of the three major factions was keeping an eye out for the third faction and their enemies. They were ready for anything, except for being attacked with a mass of silent bullets from silenced mode weapons. Soon, a small army of ninjas and soldiers came out, disposing of the bodies to clear the field. Once the field was cleared, Hinata held up a 3D holographic map of the underground maze/bunker for Anko, Naruko, Jiraiya, Tukiko, Haku, Guren, Sasame and Lieutenant Yui to see.

Two rooms were highlighted as Naruto's spoke through the communicators, "Okay, through seismic sensors, we now not only have a map of the facility and its two entrances, but we also know the locations of the highest number of people, both are highlighted on the map. The one near the south entrance has the highest number of personnel compared to the room in the central area, and the northern entrance is the least defended. The computer has calculated the best routes through the maze, so you should have a good chance to get through without a problem."

"Good work Naruto," Jiraiya of the Sennin said with a proud smile.

"No problem, now I'll get back to the fighter. I hope that I'll be done to pick you guys up soon. Elite Chūnin Naruto Ryū out," Naruto had stated before she disconnected her communicator.

"Okay, looks like we'll need to hit two of these place at once to be sure we cut off the head of these snakes," Jiraiya stated as looked at the map again. "Since the room near the southern entrance has the most defenders, it will be hit by our mid-rank ninjas and soldiers lead by Elite Chūnin Tukiko Uchiha, Elite Chūnin Haku, Elite Chūnin Hinata Hyūga, Guren, Sasame Fūma, ANBU Snail, and Lieutenant Yui. Meanwhile, Elite Jōnin Anko Mitarashi, Elite Chūnin Naruko Uzumaki and I will perform a more stealthy attack through the Northern entrance. We'll meet in the northern room and end this threat once for all."

"How will you navigate through the tunnels if we have Guren?" Tukiko asked.

"I have my toads," Jiraiya stated as he used a 'Summoning Jutsu' to summon a small orange toad. A toad that did not like being used as a hound dog, unless given candy, which Jiraiya gave as the group snickered at the two's interactions.
"Sound likes a fine plan, assuming all of these sons of bitches are here to be put down," Anko stated as she stared at the famed spymaster.

"According to my little toads, they are here or in the forward bases our troops and our allies from the Fūma Clan are attacking, thanks to Tayuya's help and directions. She is becoming a valuable agent among my toads," Jiraiya praised, much to Guren's scolding furry.

"Enough about that trash," Guren said quietly. "Let's get this job done."

"Yes, it time to save Arashi," Sasame said quietly, with a cling of hope. Haku Momochi and Tukiko Uchiha gave pitiful looks at a girl whose hopes would soon be dashed.

**Scene III**

Deep within the dark tunnels of the bunker turned maze was the bright light from a dozen flashlights that illuminated its dark hallways. It gave the group a clear view of the empty, intimidating corridors that added to the tension of the assault group.

"Why haven't we've encountered any Sound-nins? Surely we would have met some guards within their home base," Tukiko whispered as she held onto her assault rifle for dear life.

"Maybe not," Guren stated as she twirled a small crystal blade in her hand as she stayed close to her young charge, Sasame. "In the past, Orochimaru wouldn't bother to set up patrols but allow the mazes and the numerous traps to secure his bases. Perhaps Kabuto adopted similar tactics since you have to memorize the route to get through it."

"Interesting tactics; it would explain the two mines and trip wires we had to disarm," Yui stated as he chewed the edge of his cheek.

"Yet there should be some kind of patrol, especially since he expected the leaders of several different factions to come to meet him," Haku pointed out with a point as sharp as the crossbow's bolts.

"Not if the room we are heading into is what I think it is," Guren stated with a nervous look towards Sasame.

"Well don't keep us in suspense. What is it?" Tukiko asked as Guren gave a dark answer.

"I believe it is Orochimaru's old laboratory."

It was appropriate they were in the dark as the blackness hid the fact their eyes were filled with dread as Yui sighed, "This is bad. I remember when my team raided one such laboratory we found in our own backyard. The things Orochimaru had done to them were only matched by what happened to the dozen soldiers that foolishly tried to free those fanatics and monsters that were once Orochimaru's test subjects."

The group digested the Lieutenant's words as Sasame looked up at her somewhat fallen idol, "Did you ever participate?"

"I've always avoided such rooms whenever I could," Guren quickly answered the girl, and no one was willing to push it to hear the real answer.

"What can we expect in such a lab?" Hinata softly asked as she held a pistol and its connected flashlight.

"I don't know. Only Kabuto and Orochimaru willingly go into such a room," Guren answered the
young Hyūga as they came up too large double doors.

"Well, let's get this over with," Tukiko exclaimed as she kicked open the doors into an empty room that was pitched black.

It was as silent as the lambs as they entered the room filled with tubes of liquids with masses floating in them and with tables cluttered by equipment or the blood of subjects. The room seemed to be without a soul to the eyes of the group.

"Where is everyone?" Guren had asked herself. "Kabuto would not leave this room remain empty,"

Haku and Hinata were the ones to find out respectively through their sensor ability and Byakugan bloodline. The girls wasted no time as they yelled, "It's a trap!" while trying to get the group to run.

It was too late as a white wall blocked their entrance. A wall that disturbed the girls as Hinata muttered, "Are those bones?"

"I think they are," Haku answered her teammate while the group searched the room.

"Who's Bones?" Tukiko asked out loud, not expecting that someone in the dark would answer her.

"Mine's," answered a voice from the dark.

Darkness that flees from the shining light that would reveal the petite woman Kagerō standing next to a tall, feminine man. A man with long white hair that blended with his albino skin and loose white robes held together by a purple bowtie. A stoic man that stared down his soon to be enemies with his piercing green eyes highlighted by the red paint he placed over his eyes and highlighted further by the two red dots over his eyebrows. A man who had intimidated the Leaf-nins and their allies as he retracted the bones sticking out of his body, leaving an unblemished skin behind.

"Who or what in the world is that?" ANBU Snail asked as he got into a combat position.

"That is Kimimaro, former head of Sound Five, Orochimaru's bodyguards before they were reformed into the Sound Four," Guren stated as she summoned a blade of crystals. "He is fanatically loyal to Orochimaru and should have been dead by now."

"When you have a strong enough will, nothing can stop you in your quest," Kimimaro stated as he stared at the woman. "Hello Guren, (cough) fancy seeing you here (cough) and with our master's enemies. I am very (cough) disappointed that (cough) you switched allegiance just like that," Kimimaro added before going into a brief coughing fit as drops of blood appeared on the hand covering his mouth.

Hinata frowned as she used her bloodline on Kimimaro to see what was wrong. She then whispered her diagnose to the group, "That man is suffering from a rare bloodline disease known as Blood Locus Disease. People diagnosed with the disease are said to have an increased strength of their standard bloodline by several times but at a severe cost. For you see, the stronger their bloodline is, the higher the stain it put the body under until it finally fails. And from what I can see, he won't live much longer if he goes full out."

A terrible fact that flew past Sasame as she looked pleadingly to Kagerō, "Please Kagerō, let us pass. I don't want to see you hurt."

Guren nodded with a grim face, "I suggest you stand down as well Kimimaro. You are in no shape to fight all of us with just the two of you."
"He's not alone," Haku and Hinata had said at the same time, causing the group to look up in shock.

"Where are our foes, for I don't see anyone? In fact, the only thing I see… are those… tubes…"

Tukiko tailed off when she got a good look at the organic mass of humans wearing water suits and breathing in the breathable liquid that is part of the total liquid ventilation (TLV).

They looked like test tubes, mutated into something that only resembled a human for they were no longer human. They were monsters deformed into abominations that came in several different shapes and sizes. Some were mutations so disfigured that they barely resembled the human being they once were. Some had body parts amputated to be replaced with bladed/blunted weapons while others were failed attempts at cybernetics that looking like terribly designed robots. Others resembled hybrid beasts, like werewolves, werebears, lizard men or other forms of man-beast.

Yui summed it up as he yelled, "Shit my life," before Kimimaro summoned point tip bones from his hand and launched them into the glass tubes around him, breaking them open, letting the monsters free.

The ninjas and soldiers hair rose up in attention as what was Kabuto's test subject were shaking off the highly oxidized liquid as a humanoid figure walked up to Kimimaro. He was a tall, bulky man with spiky orange hair and dull pinkish colored eyes that put everyone but Guren at ease.

In fact, she shivered as he spoke up in a steady, deep voice, "Hello Kimimaro, it's been a while since you last visited. How are you feeling?"

"A little tight in the chest my friend, I won't live much longer," Kimimaro answered the tall man. "I'll need your help dealing with these roaches that dared to come here."

The man nodded as he stared with a blank face at his newly identified enemies. Yui could not help but gulp, "Why do I think this fight got harder?"

"That's because it has gotten harder," Haku answered the soldier. "I sense a lot of power coming from him, and it feels similar to the curse seal Anko used to have."

"That is because it is the same," Guren answered steadily. "His name is Jūgo, and the enzymes from his DNA are what allow the transformations of the Curse Seal to work as his clan can transform part of their body in a fight. He's also insane thanks to the experiments. In fact, he is so insane, he goes into a berserk state at the drop of a hat, and he will only be stopped if Kimimaro calms him down."

Tukiko looked at the approaching army to ask sarcastically, "I take it negotiation is useless?"

"Unless it's your surrender, no," Kimimaro stated with a deadpan tone as he reached into the back and pulled out of his body a bladed spinal cord to be used against his enemies.

"(Sigh) Why does your technique have to be so disgusting," Guren had sighed as she used, 'Crystal Style: Lance and Shield Jutsu' to summon a crystal shield and lance.

The groups prepared for full combat as Sasame pleaded with Kagerō to stand down, "Please, don't do this. You don't need to follow these men."

Kagerō remained quiet for a moment before she raised her eyes to give a dark, monotone answer, "I'm sorry Sasame, but I have no choice."

Sasame stepped back in response as she asked the question she dreads the moment she saw Kagerō's dead eyes, "What has Arashi done to you?"
He used the 'Forced Puppet Jutsu.' I have no control over myself. Please run before I am forced to fight you all, to the death," Kagerō stated with tears that were small to the fountain of tears coming down Sasame's face.

Guren briefly looked at her charge to ask, "Can we detain her and break her free from the jutsu?"

"No, it's a forbidden technique for it can only be released upon the death of the person it was used on," Sasame stated in horror.

"It's the price she pays for refusing to follow orders in the legacy of Orochimaru, as her teammates paid the price for their failure," Kimimaro stated with a conviction that made Jūgo wince, especially as Sasame began to quiver while Yui's trigger finger tightened.

"Ah fuck'it, I hate when others make girls cry," before Yui opened fire as he moved past the other soldiers and ninjas with a weapon, firing off the first barrage of death.

Kimimaro, jumped to the ceiling using chakra as Jūgo and Kagerō created physical/chakra based wings to avoid the swarm of bullets. Several of Orochimaru's subjects were not so lucky and were blown away while others jumped away or absorbed the damage with their muscular/metal bodies. They were able to clear a path before they died as the subjects and elite Sound-nins engaged their enemies. Chaos ensued from the explosions, jutsus, and blood that splattered on the walls as several men of Fire and Rice forces fell, including one ANBU Snail.

Most of the damage came from the fight between Guren and Kimimaro. It started when Guren threw her lance up toward Kimimaro and attempted to draw first blood. The ninja of bones saw the attack coming and danced around the spear, which the ninja of crystals made explode. The shards of crystals expanded from the ground and forced Kimimaro down towards Guren's level. Kimimaro dashed towards Guren with the sword made of bones, which the kunoichi of crystal blocked with her shield.

A sizeable reflective shield that held a copy of Guren on its surface, and it was staring back at Kimimaro. Guren smiled as she used 'Crystal Style: Jade Crystal Mirror Jutsu' to launch a crystal clone out of the mirror to punch Kimimaro's weapons out of his hand. Disarmed, Kimimaro had no defense as the crystallized clone threw him into the group and put him in a chokehold. Kimimaro could not move as the real Guren approached the downed Kimimaro.

"Are you ready to give up now?" Guren asked with a sigh. "There is no pointing fighting anymore. Orochimaru is dead, and Kabuto and these other shitheads don't deserve your loyalty. Just stand down and live your last moments in peace."

"Shut up you traitorous whore!" Kimimaro yelled as spikes of bones burst out of his body and tore apart the clone holding him down before jumping to his feet.

"Shit!" Guren yelled as she used 'Crystal Style: Hexagonal Shuriken Jutsu' and Kimimaro countered with spiral bone tips created from 'Bone Style: Ten Finger Bone Jutsu' to counter the crystallized snowflake shurikens. The fight just got more intense, and Kimimaro slowly shaped himself into a monster as his curse seal pulsed and continued to pulse until he resembled a humanized stegosaurus, with bones sticking out of his body. The fight just went to another level.

As Guren and Kimimaro's fight began to escalate, the soldiers and leaf ninjas were being pushed back by sheer numbers and power. The strongest was the carrot top mutant who took the field. Jūgo turned out to be a monster as parts of his body transformed. His wings on his back acted like a largely armored fist used to crush the two soldiers within armor designed to withstand a frag grenade point blank. He was a terror who would have killed more Fire Country Ninjas and Soldiers if Yui
had not pulled out a grenade launcher and fired three shots into his face. It did not kill him, and he has to test how much the power armor enhanced his body's speed and endurance while Tukiko swooped in with her fire jutsus and her assault rifle to give the Fire Country's soldiers some much-needed relief.

It was an intense fight that had left a significant portion of the lab broken from gunfire, crystals or bone shards, and another portion was on fire. The rest was crushed by rocks, flooded or frozen over by the fight between Kagerō, Haku, Hinata and a reluctant Sasame. Kagerō used more aggressive jutsu styles like 'Earth Style: Stone Toss Jutsu' as her opponents were less aggressive. Haku and Hinata mixed in vicious strikes with capture jutsus and techniques like 'Water/Ice Style: Water/Ice Prison Jutsu,' while Sasame used passive attacks. She tried to use distractive techniques and chakra infused ninja strings to capture her fellow clan members for she was unwilling to make the killing blow.

Moreover, she was close in her quest; the metallic strings were about to wrap around Kagerō when Sasame was interrupted by a loud rumble. From across the field, Tukiko growled, "What the hell," before a field of bones began to pop into existence as part of Kimimaro's final attack.

Kimimaro used 'Bone Style: Dance of Seedling Firm Jutsu,' a powerful large-scale jutsu that sprouts a field of bones out of the ground around, killing any they could reach. His allies were being killed as soldiers were forced to run while the ninjas, outside of Jūgo and Kagerō, jumped out of the way to safer ground. The two ninjas mentioned chased after their opponents, who were on the run from the field of death.

For death was his promise as Kimimaro screamed out, "All of my Lord's enemies will die!"

"Not if I have anything to say about it," spoke a second voice.

It was Guren, who prepared her own counter: 'Crystal Style: Crystal Pentagon Prison Jutsu.' A powerful jutsu that would typically create a pentagon shape, crystal prison that would trap multiple victims in a neigh indestructible maze to kill or slow down her opponents at least. However, that was not the purpose of the jutsu at this time. The jutsu was being used to counter the fields of bones.

It forced the room to take shape and deform as the crystal walls fought for dominance against Kimimaro's bones. It continued to struggle until both cracked and collapse onto its self. Fractured bones and crystals skidded across the battlefield, ending the threat as the last of the test subjects not killed by Kimimaro were mopped up by the larger number of surviving soldiers and ninjas, leaving the two of Orochimaru's former elites to face each other. Guren formed her crystal blades on her arm, ready to fight to the death until she noticed that Kimimaro bone feature receded. He could no longer fight, and they both knew it.

However, rather than kill him, Guren lowered her weapon for one last plea, "Kimimaro, you can't fight anymore. Please just walk away."

"I WILL NOT WALK AWAY!" Kimimaro yelled out in one last desperate attempt. "I will not let my master legacies fall like this! I will… I will… I will…" Kimimaro stammered as he clasped before he collapsed on the ground.

Kimimaro was dead, and so was the legacy he desperately tried to hold, and the burden that was on Guren's shoulders lifted away. It was a moment of peace that had only lasted for a few moments when she was brought out of her harmony due to a terrible scream of sorrow and rage. Jūgo had witnessed his best friend's death.

"NO! He can't be dead! He can't be dead!" Jūgo screamed out in terror as he turned to Fire Country's
forces. "YOU KILLED HIM! YOU WILL ALL DIE!" Jūgo screamed out of defiance as his body morphed into a massive, terrible creature before he charged towards Guren.

Guren did not even have time to curse before she swatted into a nearby column, causing her to slide down in pain. Jūgo looked ready to crush her only to be stopped when he felt dozens of bullets pelt his back. He turned to see Yui, with a makeshift belt filled with plasma grenades. "Come you ugly beast and take your medicine!"

Filled with rage, Jūgo charged at Yui without a thought to the consequences, just as the soldier wanted. Yui waited at the last minute before he threw the grenades. The belt slung around the man's neck as Yui jumped away, pulling out a switch to detonate them. However, he did not count on was the fact the berserker was faster and more maneuverable then what was physically possible.

He grabbed onto the soldier's leg with a tight grip that almost broke Yui's bones. He then raised him off the ground, forcing Yui to drop the detonator accidentally as another set of hands grabbed onto his torso. Jūgo was about to pull Yui apart when a fireball hit his back. Far enough to avoid hitting the explosives, but still close enough for the blast to hit it where it hurt. Jūgo let go of Yui in pain, and turned to face Tukiko just as she finished powering up for the 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu.' Yui quickly rolled away as a giant dragon of fire rushed into Jūgo, setting him on fire.

Jūgo screamed to the heavens as he fell to the ground. He dropped and rolled on the ground in a desperate attempt to extinguish the flames, but he was not fast enough. The blaze grew hotter and hotter, stripping away the grenades' heat-resistant coating until it finally exploded. Flaming shrapnel, plasma, and heat encompassed the man, consuming large chunks of flesh and bones that surprisingly did not kill him. His body was apparently robust enough to survive what would disintegrate iron but not enough to save him. With one finale wheeze, he died inhaling his own burnt flesh.

Jūgo's death brought a sigh of relief as Yui slowly rose up and gave a mock solute to Tukiko, "Thanks for the save m'lady." Getting the small blush, he desired as they turned to see Guren up and watching the final fight between Kagerō and Guren's allies.

Especially, Haku and Hinata, as they got close to engage in hand-to-hand combat. It was a quick motion as Haku tried to hit Kagerō with fast jabs filled with senbon needles that the petite girl blocked. Haku slowly pushed the woman towards Hinata to use 'Gentle Blade Style: Star Strike' to finish her off. A sound setup that failed as Kagerō used 'Earth Style: Earth Dome Jutsu' to protect herself. So a different strategy was used as Hinata countered with 'Water Style: Cool Geyser Jutsu.' The geyser of water shot out from Kagerō, forcing her through the earth dome to above the two kunoichis head. Just to be trapped from the waist down with 'Ice Style: Ice Prison Jutsu.'

Haku smiled as she looked up to Kagerō, "We've got you. It's over," Haku stated as Hinata walked upright to her side, staring up at her opponents.

"No, it's not while Arashi is still alive and I am still breathing," the trapped butterfly woman said as used her hands to use one finale jutsu, the 'Chakra Thread Jutsu.'

The 'Chakra Thread Jutsu' is the basis for puppet and capture based jutsu. The line of chakra would connect to the puppet or the victim's chakra network to either control or paralyze a target. In this case, paralyzed Hinata and Haku as Kagerō used her finale technique, 'Chakra Thread Suicide Jutsu,' to kill herself and take the two Leaf-nins with her. Fortunately, Sasame saw the chakra thread and struck with her own to break the thread, saving the two from the Fūma Clan's suicide technique.

Kagerō was dying alone as her ice prison dissolved as she flopped to the ground, her heart slowing down to a stop as Sasame yelled, "Lady Kagerō!" as she got on her knees to comfort her while Haku and Hinata friends/Fire Country comrades were comforting them.
Kagerō smiled happily as the young woman was there in her final moments, "I'm sorry Sasame that I tried to hurt you and your friends. (Cough) I had no control."

"Please don't talk. You need to save your energy so our medic can treat you. Maybe she can reverse the damage," Sasame begged as Guren walked up behind her young charge.

"It's too late for me, my sweet child and I am at peace knowing that you're safe from me," Kagerō smiled as her hand gripped weakened and her eyelids were growing heavier. "Goodbye my child and be careful if you plan to face Arashi. He's not the man you knew." She then shifted to look at Guren to ask one last promise, "And you! Please protect Sasame for me?"

Guren nodded in acceptance as Kagerō gave one last smile before she embraced the eternal sleep as Guren comforted her charge. It would be half an hour later before the group would be ready to finish their team's mission, especially the ANBU losing their commander. They were prepared to end this war today, so they swore.

Scene IV

As the assault team licked their wounds, Anko, Naruko, and Jiraiya's shadow team were silently going through the facility. They followed Jiraiya's small orange toad down the dark tunnel, meeting no resistance since killing the guards at the northern entrance. It was the silence of the lambs as they moved closer to their targets when they found the bodies of four ninjas surrounding by a fifth. A beautiful woman that looked similar to another Sound kunoichi that had defected to the Leaf with her long black hair and coral eyes.

Confused, and not wanting to take anything to chance, Naruko disappeared and appeared behind the woman. Her sword was drawn at the woman's neck as she sweated bullets. "Please don't kill me; I'm not with the Sound-nins."

"What are you talking about?" asked Anko as she twirled a kunai in her hand while Jiraiya studied the woman as he stood beside the Snake Mistress.

"My name is Kotohime Fūma, and I was making a break for it to my clan," the woman said quickly as she looked down to the blade with a nervous gulp. "I'd heard my name would soon be pulled up to be a test subject and when I heard Fire Country was working with Fūma Clan members under Hanzaki. I figure now would be the best time, even if I had to kill my way to get out of here."

Jiraiya, one of the last Sennin looked her over before waving at Naruko to let her go. Naruko reluctantly agrees as she pulled back her blade while Kagerō thanked the heavens, "Thank you, thank you for not killing me my lord!" and continued until her body began to shift into a very grateful woman. "Especially you, my lord," Kagerō added, as she moved in close.

Jiraiya could not help but develop a goofy look as Kagerō's finger twirled on his chest while the others felt dizzy. As if, a pheromone was in the air, making it hard to think. They were so mesmerized they did not notice the woman's hair had begun to move. It was only after strands of hair ensnared Jiraiya as the ground started to shake. They realized they had fallen into the trap of a fanatic who had developed a crazed smile.

"And now we can all die together!" Kagerō yelled out as Anko rushed with a kunai to free Jiraiya while Naruko powered up a jutsu as the roof began to fall.

Scene V

Deep within a colossal room that resembled a throne room, sat a large table filled with Sound-nins
looking to sue for peace. At one side was the silver-haired ninja and current leader of the largest faction, Kabuto Yakushi backed by Arashi. He was prepared for the worst as the second faction led by the dark four-armed man, Kidōmaru was holding out on an agreement. An agreement that was almost a done deal, but the man tried to weasel in more power for himself.

"I know that we're all in danger should the Leaf-nins catch us, but we should still wait for Ukon to show up. I refused to agree to follow you when you offer little and no idea where I stand if we rejoin your forces."

"Oh Kidōmaru, please stop with the posturing," Kabuto said with an amused tone. "We both know you are just holding out for yourself. Now I suggest you seriously think about is it worth delaying such things, or are you going to accept the terms of your forgiveness of betraying me and Lord Orochimaru's dreams?"

Caught off guard, Kidōmaru was about to give a retort when they heard a loud bang and shake. The four-armed man jumped up to ask, "Are we under attack? Is Ukon attacking us, trying to kill us all to assume leadership of Sound Forces?"

"No, I don't think it is Ukon. I think it's a bunch of rats had come out to play, isn't that right my former comrades?" Kabuto asked as turned to see attackers at the south entrance.

Out of the shadows was revealed not only enemy ninjas and soldiers, but faces Kabuto had gathered constant intelligence on for being extremely dangerous now or possibly a problem in the future. They were Elite Chūnins Hinata Hyūga, Tukiko Uchiha, Haku Momochi, Lieutenant Yui, Sasame of the Fūma Clan, and Orochimaru's former right hand of death, Guren. A squad made of dangerous opponents who wanted him dead for one or more reasons depending on who you asked. His men, and Ukon and his men did not waste time to rise up into an attack posture as Kabuto slowly got up onto his feet.

The two groups were ready to trade blows as Kabuto looked at them with an inviting smile, "Impressive you were able to find us. I didn't think it's possible, unless… well did Ukon betray us to you or did I miss a spy over the dozens I've killed?"

"No, you're just a predictable snake who's ego is bigger than Vulcan you ass fucker," Tukiko snapped back, in hopes of pissing off the Sound-nin.

However, all the Uchiha did was to make Kabuto chuckle as he watched uncle and cousin meet for the first time in a long time. He would have been eating popcorn with the amount of drama coming out. "Please Arashi-Kun, if anything of what you used to be is still in you. Please don't do this. Please just stop this so we can all go home."

Arashi responded to the young girl with a rhetorical question, "Why would I stop when everything is in my grasp."

"What about Kagerō and all the others that died?" Sasame asked the man who had a kind heart.

She got the answer from the man as cold as a rock, "Unfortunate, but in the pursuit of power, sacrifices had to be made."

Sasame quivered in anger as she turned to the smirking young leader with glasses to yell out, "What have you done to him to make him into this… this monster?!"

"I've done nothing to him," Kabuto admitted with a smug smirk. "You see no one that serves Orochimaru or me were ever forced to do what they did. In fact, like your friend, they performed
what society would say were despicable all on their own."

"Don't lie to me!" Sasame yelled back. "The Arashi I knew would never-"

"Be such a monster," Kabuto finished with a smirk. "I do admit, I was the one that slowly coursed
his darker impulses out, but it was still all him that let his suppressed impulses out. It's amazing how
much the kind, yet controlling a person is, the darker their true self is. As well as the thoughts when it
comes to attractive members of their family."

Kabuto asked a horrified Sasame before he returned his attention to the group. "Now before this
drama continues, please tell me, did you kill Ukon, or did he betray us?"

A simple question that Tukiko was about to retort when they heard the sound of 'bum, bum' bum'
coming from one of six cloaked figures that walked out of shadows as if they have been always
there. A musical sound that belongs to a horror movie despite being a more upbeat tone and sung by
a voice Kabuto and Kidōmaru recognized as they asked the same time, "Ukon?" as the humming got
louder.

The cloaked figure continued to sing 'bum, bum, bum,' until he began to sing his modified creepy
song as he took several steps further:

"Miss's Mother,

"Give Me a Hug,

"Love Me as Much,

"As I Love You,

"And When You Love Me,

"I Promise too,

"Pay You,

"Pay You,

"In Blood," Ukon finished as he faced the ninjas.

He was a smug man as he stated, "Hello… friends."

"Ukon! What in Kami's name are you doing?" Kidōmaru yelled out.

"What I am doing doesn't matter for you all will be dead anyway," Ukon stated as he and his
follower pulled back his hood to show they were no longer human.

What was once a young, thin, pinkish skin man now stood a grey skin scaly monster that resembled
a squid. A theme repeated with suction pump fingers and oily grey hair. His once purple lips that
matched his purple eyes now had a grey beak that brought out his slitted, golden purple eyes. He was
now a follower of a very deadly cult that girls had faced before.

"You're a Follower of the Mother," Tukiko stammered in shock.

Kabuto raised an eyebrow at the news as he slowly raised up, "Well this is a surprise. It does explain
how you survived as long as you did with such a small force. But what would make you foolish
enough to become a member of such a cult?"
"Loneliness," Ukon answered the Commander. "When you had a bloodline that allows you to share bodies and were born twins, it made it difficult as I never experience being alone. That was until I lost my brother during Orochimaru's damned attack on Konoha. I did not know what to do until I met her, the Mother.

"She came to me in a dream and showed me a family that would never leave me. A mother I can always speak to and love and all it cost is a few weaklings. Weaklings were given to her every day on a silver platter so long as this war continues. And they will continue to be as the leader's heads on both sides were cut off, leaving a power struggle as Fire Country is forced to regroup, don't you think?"

Ukon then chuckled as Tukiko pulled out her assault rifle, "Thanks for your life story. Now die!"

Tukiko then opened fire, causing the Followers of the Mother to jump away before they attacked the Leaf, Sound and Fire Country's ninjas and soldiers. That forced them to flee and join into a free-for-all of blood and chaos as they picked their opponents. Lieutenant Yui was targeted by his worst opponent as he found out that the four-armed freak Kidōmaru was more of a spider than a wannabe Hindu God.

Combined with the curse seal pulse that transformed Kidōmaru's body to develop some spider's features that allowed him to stick to the walls and create a golden, sticky substance similar to spider's silk. A substance that could harden into objects as hard as steel. His favorite was making duo bowstrings and arrows long enough to belong in a siege weapon like a Bastila. An accurate description, each project matched the amount of force produced by such weapons as one of Yui's men found out the hard way as one such attack arrow went through his chest before his commander engaged the last of the loyal member of the Sound Four.

Yui actually had to use up a clip the first time he used the gun just to try and kill the bastard, but he only hit his summoned spiders. Oh, Kami, he hated spiders with their many legs and put more rounds in the thing then he should have. Especially when a giant one tried to creep up on him before he put over a hundred bullets through its body. Now he took time to reload as Kidōmaru laughed in the background.

"I can't believe a fucken soldier made me transform to kill him. I mean it must be sad I can't kill a weakling like you pathetic cockroaches!"

"Oh that is rich from a man that wipes the dung off his master's butt and has the aim of a cadet," Yui replied, as he did a final check on his gun.

"I am going to enjoy killing you," Kidōmaru said with a snarl.

"You're not the first ninja that said that to me and guess what, my team killed them all. In fact, I've killed fourteen ninjas, personally," Yui added as if he was talking about the weather.

"They were weaklings and met their fate just as you will!" the demonic man spider with the long hair jumped off from the roof above Yui and descended onto him with two golden swords ready to kill.

Time seemed to slow down as Yui quickly dropped his gun to catch the two artificial swords, much to Kidōmaru's shock. He did not seem to have time to ask how when Yui overpowered the shocked ninja and brought them down onto his body. His last thoughts were to curse making double-bladed swords as Yui moved close to whisper into the spider man's ear.

"Got to love the exoskeleton suit and its ability to not only protect me but enhance my above average strength. Now die you four-armed freak," Yui finished off as he twisted the blades, killing Kidōmaru.
and the last loyal member of the Sound Four.

Free of his opponent, Yui picked up his assault rifle and ran to rally his men while passing a more personal battle. On the other end of the battle, Tukiko and Haku were teaming up against Arashi, unleashing the big guns in the form of jutsus, kunais, and senbon needles. They were not taking any chances against a high-level ninja as he proved to be a high power target with his earth and snake jutsus.

All the while, Sasame sat outside, unsure what to do in such a high-level fight except yell at Arashi to stop and how much a monster he had become. Only the two Leaf-nins saw that every time Sasame yelled at Arashi was a moment his reflexes dulled. The man's cousin had a greater effect then she realized, as he could not bring himself to yell at the orange-haired girl to shut up.

Meanwhile, Guren had her own personal fight. She attempted to slash her opponent with her crystal-bladed covered hands in an effort to shut him up. "Come on Guren. You can do better than this, or have you gotten weak protecting that useless girl, Sasame. Well maybe not totally, I'm sure she would be useful for some midlevel experiments. What do you think? I mean a girl that betrayed our master's work must have some opinion, even if it's the wrong one," Kabuto said with a smirk as he deflected his opponent's attacks.

Guren's attack was getting sloppier and sloppier as she yelled out louder and louder with each strike. "Shut up! Shut up! SHUT UP!"

A yell she continued as Guren attacked with ferocity. She ignored that she barely hit him and every strike was a minor cut. Wounds that were regenerated due to Kabuto's specialized medical talents that made Orochimaru bring him in the fold. That and his intelligence as he got Guren so wind up, that she did not realize that Kabuto was disrupting the chakra and crystallized matrix in her crystal blade until they shattered after her last thrust.

Her eyes widen as Kabuto used 'Snake Hands Jutsu' to summon half a dozen king cobras out of his selves to wrap around Guren. Their fangs barred as they sank their fangs into her body for what would be a big kill. Kabuto gave a knowing smirk as he stated, "And it was your passion and kindness that made you weak."

"Maybe, but it also made me smarter," answered a female voice behind, just before he felt his chest explode as he looked to see a hand covered in crystals holding his beating heart.

Kabuto looked up to see the 'Guren' was a crystal clone that dissolved into dust, taking the snakes with it. The medic-nin sighed in acceptance with a steady heartbeat as Guren spoke up from behind him. "You lost, thanks to your pride and arrogance as your victory and absolute power has defeated you. Now it's time for you to go."

Kabuto looked down to see his heart slowly turned to crystal thanks to Guren's 'Crystal Style: Jade Crystal Prison Jutsu.' Kabuto gave a finale smirk as he stated, "Well played Guren, well played," before she crushed his crystallized heart.

Kabuto instantly slumped forward and fell to the ground after Guren pulled out her hand covered in blood and crystals. A beautiful, gory work of art, she shattered the heart to free her hand of blood. She stared at her clean hands filled with figurative blood and gave one last deep breath before she turned to her next target. Her crystal blades ready to taste the blood of the lone Follower that was in her path.

While their enemies fell around them, Hinata and Yuko fought to a standstill. Neither one was able to get a hit in as Yuko jumped around like a monkey to avoid Hinata's fast attacks, and Hinata danced
around Yuko's slower, but more powerful attacks. All the while Yuko watched his brothers being overwhelmed. He watched as the third was killed by Guren when he decided to take action. After a quick kick that sent Hinata back, he yelled out to his surviving brothers to summon the Mother's Children. That was the others only warning when Ukon's two Followers each summoned a giant squid the size of a whale.

Soldiers and ninjas were running as the squids swept their enemies into the walls. They moved at speeds that turned bodies of dead and living beings into heaps as they splattered across the wall, one of which included Kabuto's corpse. Over a dozen Leaf-nins and Fire Country's soldiers were killed while all the Sound-nins besides Arashi were wiped out, as they were the ones closest to the two followers when they summoned their squids. Hinata, Tukiko, Haku, and Guren gave the survivors led by Yui time to run into the tunnel entrance they came from before they were forced to run with Sasame, who was a bit too slow.

She did not know how slow she was until she heard the girls and Guren yell out, "Look out!"

She turned to see one of the long arms descend onto her. She could not move, as she was frozen in fear as it came closer and closer. She did not register Guren yelling at her to avoid the tentacles. All she could do was watch in horror, as it got closer. That was until the squid reared back with a loud screech as it revealed one of its long arms was cut off. It landed safely to the side as Arashi stood in front of Sasame, as long steel strings laced with chakra danced in his hands. Haku and Tukiko realized that Arashi was holding back as he used the Razor Floss style, the hardest and deadliest combat style that only a chakra user could use steel wires effectively.

Sasame could not believe her eyes as she stammered out, "You saved me."

"I could not let you die, not while there was a bit of humanity left in me," Arashi stated as two of the Mother's Followers moved in front of him. "I suggest you run Sasame. I'll be taking care of this fight."

That was Sasame only warning as he rushed the two Mother's Followers, his wire strings dancing in his wake. The two only had a moment to jump back to avoid Arashi's Razor Floss as they attempted to attack with 'Earth Style: Earth Spear Jutsu' and 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' to fire off a stone spear and a glob of water respectively. A spear and blob of water that was not a threat to Arashi as he had cut them up with enough force to deflect the bits of water and rock as he rushed his enemy. The two Followers only escaped with the skin of their cloth as they danced under Arashi's dancing springs. That was until he heard the screams to see that the two full intact giant squids were trying to get the survivors. He realized the summons could regenerate its limbs.

He heard the two Followers laugh as one stated, "Yes, they can heal from any wound short of a mortal wound. I doubt you pitiful humans have the power to kill them."

"Now, you're all going to die as long as we remain in this world," the other stated as his fellow Follower looked at his brother with stupefied anger.

"Idiot, you weren't supposed to tell him that," the Follower yelled as it ducked under Arashi's steel string.

"Then I know what must be done to save Sasame!" Arashi yelled as he pressed the attack, much to the two humanoid monsters' amusement.

"Good luck with that because by the time you catch them, everyone else will be dead," the second Follower had laughed as he killed another fighter, proving its point.
Time seemed to come to a standstill as Arashi absorbed the world in slow motion, taking into account every detail. From pillars destroyed one at a time to allow the sun to beam down to the underground bunker, to the ninjas and soldiers desperately trying to stay alive, Arashi absorbed every image at every angle in the room. Images that did not matter to him as much as the fear he saw in Sasame's eyes. Fear that resolved him to do what must be done to die with honor.

With the Followers in his direct sight, he dropped the string to use his 'Chakra Thread Jutsu,' to connect to long Chakra threads onto his enemy in an instant, holding them in place. They stammered in shock as Arashi powered up his one finale Jutsu. He looked at Sasame to say, "Goodbye my sweet cousin," before using a high-powered version of the 'Chakra Suicide Thread Jutsu.'

The three were dead before they hit the ground, causing Sasame to burst into tears as the squids floated toward the other end of the room, slowing dissolving like a mirage. A large number of surviving ninjas and soldiers took it as a sign they could get out safely. They walked while being led by Yui, who kept an eye out for Ukon, expecting him to jump out any minute. He walked by Sasame crying over Arashi, asking why he had to die as Guren pulled her up and into a hug. Tukiko and Haku gave comforting pats as they stood guard over the vulnerable woman. Yui ignored the scattered comrades, as he saw Ukon right by the giant squids, with chakra coming forth from his fingers.

"Oh, Hell No!" Yui exclaimed as he opened fire with his rifle, only to watch the bullet stop midway through the tentacle arm of a surviving squid, bringing everyone's attention to a grinning Ukon.

"Oh you thought stopped me but you were deceived, and once I have full control, you all will die!" Ukon laughed through his clapping beak until he heard a rumbled off in the distance coming closer.

He turned toward the northern entrance to see it exploded in the dust as something big came through. More specifically four summons that Team Vixen recognized as Naruto's own summons, Foxes, and Wolves. The summons was a one-eyed six-tailed male black wolf with a giant claymore named Dark Hunter, a beautiful green five-tailed female fox named Mother Fox, a cold, female five tails silver wolf named Arctic Wolf and a six-tailed male orange fox with a scroll on his back named Trickster. Each of them had their own forehead with the symbol of 'Warrior,' nature, ice, and illusion. They were Naruto's lieutenant summons of the Canine Alliance, summoned by someone who recently met her half-sister, Naruko Ryū.

Hinata was amazed and jealous when she muttered, "Yep, Naruto gave the contract to her sister. I think I need my own soon or convince Naruto to let me sign hers."

The girls also had similar thoughts as the four summons were followed by two more summons and expected summoners they recognized. One was a serious Jiraiya setting on top one of the most infamous summons, Gamabunta the Fourth Hokage's last used to summon, a giant red toad with a scar over one of his eyes, and stood with his blue cloak, sword, and pipe in his mouth. Though the more infamous is the now leader of Snake Clan, Kingu, a giant purple cobra with large fangs and deepest, greenish eyes for a snake. A contrast to the equal cold, pale eyes from his summoner that was cleaning off the blood of an innocent, fanatic soul she ended with her kunai.

It would be the only blood her kunai would taste as the three humans jumped off their summons to escape certain doom. Leaving the Leaf and their summon allies the two huge targets to go after. Unable to provide aid, Ukon had no choice but to transform, creating a long tentacle to grab the open sealing to jump away as the two were gutted one after the other. The first one was held in place by Mother Fox's plants while Arctic Wolf froze the squid to make it easier to shatter with Trickster's punches and Dark Hunter's claymore. The second was injected by Kingu's poison as Gamabunta used his sword, a short-bladed tanto, used to cut open the squid, spilling its guts onto the ground.
Ukon watched from the room ceiling as the two giant squids die painfully before they dispersed back into their home dimension. He knew he needs the big guns as he jumped onto a smaller giant squid just before Yui opened fired. His ride flew around as he readied to summon the Mother when he heard a roar just as his ride stopped mid-flight. He turned to see the Phantom Class Attack Fighter with a replaced cockpit window in front of him. It was the Shadow Fox piloted by Naruto Ryū with a surprised co-pilot, one Hanzaki Fūma, both starting at Ukon with a grim stare.

"It looks like we arrived just in time. Mr. Fūma, are weapons operation?" Naruto asked as the fighter's targeting sensors dinged, indicated target was locked.

"Main cannons and torpedoes are online," Hanzaki replied, as he looked over a status screen that said the lasers were online.

"Good, then let's take him out," Naruto stated as she targeted Ukon and opened fire before he could run.

The fighter's main cannons, like all other weapons on the plane, were designed to destroy vessels of all weight classes, even a dreadnaught given enough time. Therefore, it was not surprising that the first shot obliterated the horse size squid with incendiary bullets the size of a human. While the second shredded Ukon to pieces with weapons designed to pierce and crack armor. Therefore, the sixteen other rounds from the fighter's rapid-fire were just overkill, as they left nothing larger than a strip of meat.

Ribbons of charred squid fell from the sky as the group looked up in relief, especially Guren as she helped Sasame as she walked away from the sorrow of losing her cousin. Sasame's new future now seemed so bright compared to the shadows on the wall of the dead. The battle had resulted in forty present casualties, the highest number of injured or killed in the whole war. Nevertheless, they achieved victory at long last, so their sacrifice was not in vain.

Scene VI

It was early morning as the surviving members of the Fūma clan and ninjas that defected were at a forward base, packing up for the final trip to Konoha. Meanwhile, Yui was packing for his own trip to drop off the few surviving prisoners to the tribunal and eventually prisons or asylums for the mentally unstable. As the others were preparing to leave, a small group was saying goodbye to Team Vixen as they were heading home today.

"Do you have to go?" Sasame asked most of the team. "I mean we'll be heading to Konoha in a week under Master Jiraiya, it would be nice to hang out before the big move."

"I know it would, but we have to return home to report what happened and since Naruko snuck into the ship, she would kill us if we stayed here any longer," Tukiko said with a small smile before Haku took over to reassure the girl.

"But don't you worry, when you get to the village, we can hang out as long as you need us."

Sasame smiled as Guren gave a small smile, thankful that she had a friend while Hanzaki gave a deep bow, "Allow me to give my thanks to our honored guests for helping my family. I hope you have a safe travel back to Konoha."

"Goodbye and I'm... glad I didn't have to kill you in the end," Guren stated as she also bowed to them.

"Good luck, see you all in a week, I'm glad Tsunade-Chan sent you here. We couldn't have won the
war as cleanly as we did without your aid,” Jiraiya praised as the team nodded their head before he gave them one big hug. "I hope to see you all ready to party when I get back," Jiraiya added before he let them go.

"We will sensei, take care," Hinata stated with a smile as Naruto gave a two-finger salute before they headed into the Shadow Fox, the doors closing behind them.

"Alright, get to your seats, we leave in two minutes," Naruto added as she went to the cockpit that was prepped by her sister as the group took their seats.

As the fighter was prepped, Anko took a deep breath as Haku turned to her sensei to ask, "Anko-sensei, are you still going to leave us?"

"Yes," Anko admitted. "I think today proved you guys are ready to be on your own and it's time to return back to T&I."

"Is there no way we can talk you out of it?" Tukiko asked with a small quivering of her lip.

"Not a chance brat," Anko added as she ruffled her student's hair. She then took her hand back to state, "I'm so proud of you all. I know I couldn't have done this mission without you guys. Your heart and your minds allowed you to get so far: convincing Guren to switch sides, leading the assault, protecting Sasame and killing several large players of the Sound Forces. You're more than ready, and it's time we both moved on."

The girls smiled as tears silently went down their faces. "So this is the last time we'll be seeing each other?" Tukiko asked her sensei desperately.

"Hell no brats, I may help you on a mission from time to time, and you can always visit me and Kurenai. Don't think this is goodbye, this is just a break for the both of us," Anko smiled, giving a small chuckle that the girls returned.

The three felt relief as the prep work was done and the fighter lifted off the ground. The fighter flew off as a clerk was giving Jiraiya a long inventory list. Mostly of items collected and items that they believed to be missing or destroyed. On the top of the list was a few bodies thought to be too damaged to recover, and at the very top was a Kabuto's corpse, assumed destroyed by the giant squid.

Jiraiya was only mildly concerned as he put the paper down and out of his mind as he watched his goddaughter's fighter fly off to home. Today was an excellent day to worry about what ifs and Jiraiya were not about to ruin the day as he walked away to enjoy his day.

Chapter End Notes

Finally done with the arc, hope you enjoyed the story, and those that only read Naruto stories, please note that I only answer the question in the PM, so just ask a question through accounts with reviews/PM if you want questions answered. Also, please vote on my home page what summons you want. The poll is seen below.
Animal Race Part 1

Scene I

Flying over the green trees and blue rivers was an animal not native to these lands or any land on this continent. It was a raven blacker then the shadow it cast on the ground was just as big as the Phantom Class Attack Fighter the Leaf used. A bird some would fear, but it was a bird to attack for ridding on top of the bird was Team Vixen led by Tukiko Uchiha. The girl was thrilled as she rode the bird that flew like a silent breeze in the wind. Tukiko loved it as she rubbed the back of the bird's neck affectionately with her robotic while the others just held on. Especially Naruto as she looked nervously at the ground, a place that she envied.

Hinata noticed Naruto's fear as she slowly got up, using chakra to stick to the raven's feathers as she slowly walked over to her loved one, "Naru-Chan, are you alright."

"No Hinata-Hime," Naruto admitted. "I thought I would be but now experiencing it and see it. I'm... I'm... Oh by the creation I hate heights!" Naruto screamed as they flew over some mountains.

"You're scared of heights?" Haku asked with a wide-eyed expression shared by the rest of Team Vixen. "But you're never afraid of flying in the Fox's Shadow or sitting on top of your boss summons."

"That's different!" Naruto yelled. "Thanks to my ninja training, I knew that even at thirty-five meters (114ft) above the ground, the worst I would get was a few scrapes and a sprained ankle should my summon just disappear. The same cannot be said if I fall from three hundred meters (984ft) above the ground. As for a plane, well no offense to your summon Tukiko, but I feel safer in a manmade machine that I feel like I have some control, even if it is all an illusion when I am just a passenger. Flying on a living being does not give me a sense of control or safety, even if this bird has decades of experience of flight, um, no offense."

The bird grumbled in response as Tukiko chuckled, "Just be glad I have the Crow Summoning Contract, or we would have to run to Tea Country in three days instead of flying there in three hours."

Naruto twitched as she remarked, "Why again couldn't we take the Fox's Shadow?"

"Because Tea Country is mostly mountain and they haven't taken the effort to put in a landing strip for planes like ours since they need most of the land to grow plants like tea leaves, their number one export. A bird like this handsome fella could make it while your fighter couldn't," Tukiko explained as she rubbed the raven's head affectional, who cawed happily in return.
"Not to mention the Fox's Shadow is under its annual maintenance, software upgrade, and inspection cycle, which even you said she desperately needed after all the damage she took when we crashed in Rice County," Hinata pointed out as Naruto pouted.

"Yeah, well, shut up," Naruto stated with embarrassment as the girls giggled.

Haku was the first to stop giggling as she smiled at Tukiko, "Still, it feels good having our own summons take us this time, and I think we successfully spent the two weeks off, and don't you think Tukiko."

"Yes, we really did," Tukiko smiled as she remembered how she became a summoner, and how she almost lost an eye.

Flashback

It was a sunny day in Konoha, as it was the first day of Team Vixen's mandatory two-week vacation given to all operatives that had been in a war zone for a prolonged period of time. However, while others would have enjoyed the free time, Tukiko had used the time to walk down to the Uchiha Clan district and talk to the head of the Uchiha, Elite Jōnin Mikoto Uchiha. A raven-haired beauty that blossomed as leader of the Uchihas and one Tukiko desperately needed to converse with. Therefore, she made her way into the woman's house and further into the kitchen as she cleaned dishes.

Mikoto did not even need to turn around to know who was behind her as she washed the last few dishes, "Ah, Tukiko, so good to see you home so early. I haven't even started on dinner yet. Do you need something?"

"Yes I need something," Tukiko said nervously. "I… I came to ask permission to sign the Crow Summoning Contract."

Mikoto soon dropped the dish she was washing as she turned to face the young woman, "Tukiko, do you know what you are asking. The Uchihas may hold the contract, but the Crows are not an Uchiha summon. They won't accept just anyone and those that fail usually have their eyes removed. In the last the decade, only myself and… and Itachi was able to become their summoners, out of a dozen that tried."

"I know, m-mo-Aunty, but I need to do this. I am sure you read the reports of the Uzumaki Clan building up their forces while the rest of the world seems to be on the brink of war. Either from the Uzumaki or Rock Forces since Grass Forces were declared to be one of the replacements for Sand Forces as one of the Great Five and still have an alliance with Rock Forces. I have a feeling I'll need something of an edge if I am going to survive what is to come."

Mikoto sighed in acceptance as she looked up at her closest family outside of Itachi, "Very well, if you feel you must. Let's get the scroll."

Tukiko followed Mikoto closely to the restricted section of the family library secured by a digitally locked door with seals that prevent entry to those that were not part of the main family like Mikoto. With a hand quicker than Tukiko's developed Sharingan could keep up, Mikoto typed in the code to the restricted section of the Uchiha. The door gave way to reveal a large room that held the clan's most valuable scrolls, and records dating back before villages were formed and all the clans were warring clans. History scholars would love to examine but the most valuable scroll, like the summoning scroll, was not among the scrolls, but it was hidden behind a secret wall panel that opened through a hidden leveler.

For in a hollowed section of the wall was a large scroll with the symbols of various birds found along
the outer paper of the scroll. It was the Crow Summoning Contract that Mikoto slowly took out and squeezed into her chest. With the scroll secured, Mikoto turned to Tukiko as she beckoned Tukiko to follow, "Follow me Tukiko for we need to go to a more spacious area then this room can provide."

Tukiko nodded as she followed Mikoto out of the Uchiha compound into a distance forest used by the Uchiha to train. Mikoto gave a quick glance back to her niece to ask, "Are you sure you want to do this? Because once you start the test, there is no turning back."

"I am sure, now more than ever," Tukiko respectively answered her aunt as she stared at the scroll.

"Very well, if you're set on this path then heeds these words," Mikoto stated with conviction. "The Crows believe that the eyes are the most important thing in the world and are what they used to test the mantle of a person. Keep your eyes open but also protected, for that is part of the test of being their summoner."

Tukiko nodded as she bent down to her knees to sign her name in blood under a hundred names. Most were stricken off due to failure or turned black when the summoner died, but Itachi, Mikoto and now her own name were red, showing she was the third active summoner as she finished writing in her name. With her name signed and now dried in blood, Tukiko took a deep breath before she used the summoning circle at the bottom of the contract to call the leaders of the Crow Family, and they responded almost in an instance.

Surrounding the two Uchihas were ten giant birds that towered over the trees. Each one was a different species of bird that belonged to the Crow Family: a raven, a rook, a jackdaw, a pine jay, a blue jay, a magpie, a treepie, a chough, a nutcracker, and the biggest and most intimidating of all, a giant black crow that towered over them. The crow's grey eyes stared into the humans before him as its large, scared, black beak opened, as it demanded answers in a deep masculine voice that reminded one of that should belong to death.

"Why have you summoned us Mikoto and why have you brought your whelp before us?"

Before Mikoto could give a reply, Tukiko stepped up to beg forgiveness, "Forgive me, leaders of the Crow Family. My name is Tukiko Uchiha, niece to Mikoto Uchiha and I was the one who summoned you here to ask permission to be one of your summoners."

"Ask permission," the mocking jay laughed as he/she chuckled in response. "Well, you certainly are better than most, since they demand we become their summons, not ask like the polite thing to do."

"Indeed, it's a nice change of pace," a proud blue jay stated as the others muttered in agreement.

All of them except the crow, who stared at them as he argued against trust being freely given, "That may be true my brothers and sisters, but there is more than just being polite. We have to judge this one character by staring her in the eye."

"The eye?" Tukiko asked she got a sinking feeling as the crow began his speech.

"The eyes of living beings are one of the most important features in life for they are the windows to one's soul. The eyes reveal the world to us because while touch and taste may give us a sense of the world, it is the eyes that give the world its beauty, shape, and understanding. We read with our eyes, we experience the world with our eyes telling us where we are, gaining wisdom to judge the world. To judge the living in this world and know how they act even when threatened."
That was Tukiko's only warning of what came next. The crow flung his beak down towards Tukiko, towards her eyes at speeds beyond an average human. Tukiko had no time to escape and reacted with pure instinct. She pulled out her long assault rifle with her right hand towards the bird to take a shot while she raised her left hand to protect her wide-open, red Sharingan eyes. It was futile to attempt if the crow actually hit her, and in the end, she did not care as she prepared to open fire, hoping to scare the bird away before it could hit her. She was about to pull the trigger when the crow stopped thirty centimeters (11.81in) away from her hand. The crow stared into Tukiko's eyes, accessing her soul before he brought his head back and laughed.

Tukiko lowered her gun to ask a straightforward question, "What's so funny?"

"Oh sorry, it's just been so rare for someone to pass on their first try that I've just had to laugh," the crow chuckled as it clicked in Tukiko's head.

"Your move against me was to see if I am worthy?"

"Correct. The first test was to see if you will keep your eyes open to the dangers of the world before you but not to take unnecessary risks." The crow gave a grunted laugh as he added. "In fact, you're the only one to pass it in recent history. Mikoto failed when she closed her eyes as she jumped back. While Itachi kept his eyes open but froze in fear due to the fact his father, forced him to take the test at the age of six. It's fortunate they both passed my second test of observation as they examined my soul as I examined them to prove they are masters of the eye. The third test would have left them scared no matter how well they do and it's usually the one where I take the eyes of the human who dares to be our summoner."

The crow then bent down to Tukiko level, "But that doesn't matter. What's matter is that you passed the test and you may summon my family to aid in the coming."

"Thank you, um… Mr.," Tukiko tailed off as the crow gave a smile a cat would be envious of.

"Kirate (reaper) and the pleasure's mine."

End Flashback

Tukiko gave a bright smile as the bird glided into massive mountains covered in tea leaves and building of workers, farmers and even bosses. Tukiko still had her head in the sky with a calm Naruto cradled by Hinata as their shadowed past a young man down below. His eyes narrowed as he moved in speeds that were beyond an average human.

Scene II

On the sunny side of a massive mountain surrounded by cheery blossoms stood a tall, beautiful eastern (Japanese) style mansion with a large rock garden in the back. Both of which were covered by pink leaves scattered by the wind as a suited servant stood ready in the mansion's rock garden, waiting for their honored guests. He did not even flinch when a giant raven landed in front of him, and four young women jumped off the bird's back.

One of which could not be happier to be off as the blond girl in a black lab coat exclaimed, "Solid ground! Thank you!"

The blue-haired girl, Hinata just shook her head, "Oh Naruto," as the other two girls, Haku and Tukiko giggled while the raven reversed summon himself to return home.
Embarrassed, the leader, Naruto scratched her head when she noticed the man staring at her. Realizing she was on the clock, Naruto got to her feet to greet the man professionally, "Hello, my name is Naruto Ryū, and I lead Team Vixen. Are you here to escort us to the head of the Wasabi, Jirōchō?"

"Yes ma'am, if you follow me," the servant directed the ninjas into the mansion.

The four ninjas soon followed the servant into the vast, several stories mansion and into the main guest room. A large room decorated with several eastern style paintings. All but one had preserved Wasabi members over the years, a healthy family with distinctive chins, tanned Asian skin and thick eyebrows for their gender. A resemblance shared by the two members of the main branch sitting on mats in front of a short-legged rectangular table.

They were a family with very distinctive characteristics that they shared and yet with some features that made them stand out from each other. One was a bulky old man in a blue kimono while the other was a small woman that seemed tiny compared to her tall father. Her beauty matched only by her blue kimono decorated with golden embroidery that resembled flowers. It was a powerful, yet heartwarming setup as the old man directed the kunoichis to the mat before the two individuals as the servant left the room.

"Greeting Leaf-nins, it's a pleasure to meet the famed Team Vixen. I have heard great things about you four," the old man stated with charm as he introduced himself and his family. "I am Jirōchō, leader of the Wasabi family and this is my daughter Ayame. It's a pleasure to meet you."

"The pleasure is ours," Team Vixen stated at once as the girls bowed to the powerful man on their knees.

One the man did not feel was needed as he waved them to stop, "None of that, I should be the one groveling to you. I did not expect Tsunade-Sama to send such a team famous for its power and skill. I am glad she still likes me after all these years."

"You knew our current Hokage from before?" Haku asked in awe.

"Oh yes, I met her a year after the fall of our clan and developed a close bond with the woman. In fact, I was one of the only people who she paid back the money lent to her before she returned to Konoha. As well as she helped bring my sweet little girl into the world."

"Dad!" Ayame yelled with a blush that she shook off into a more serious face. "Please don't say such things in front of strangers we don't know. Strangers who are probably more interested in the race and the runner they need to protect above all else."

Jirōchō smirked at his daughter as he nodded in response, "Yes, I suppose we should get back on track to why we hired them." Jirōchō then turned to the girls to ask, "What do you know about the Todoroki Shrine Race?"

"Sadly, not much. There are not a lot of books or data on the subject in Konoha's library or database," Tukiko admitted.

Jirōchō nodded, as he spoke in a clear, crisp voice, "Well that must be corrected. You see long ago, there was a man named Todoroki, who lived in a small village that would grow into the Degarashi Port Village, one of the most important ports in all of Tea Country, which is a tale for another time. Back to my story, Todoroki was one of fastest man on the land was made courier for the various villages. He was so fast that many thought he was blessed by the gods as he ran every inch of land except for O'uzu Island. It was the most important island in Tea Country and at the top of its peak
stood an unnamed shrine that priests used as a powerful lighthouse to signal ships at night and in terrible storms. For years, Todoroki wanted to visit the shrine to see its beauty but never could go because of his job until one day he was fated to save the lives of thousands yet to come.

"For you see, on one fateful day, most of the priests where on the mainland getting whale oil to light the shrine's lighthouse when a terrible storm hit. A storm many claimed was the wrath of the gods themselves as it trapped a fleet of anglers and merchants out at sea, lost, as the shrine's lighthouse was out of whale oil. The priests, being too old to make the trip back in such a storm, needed someone to deliver enough whale oil to light the shrine but no one would brave the storms; no one except Todoroki. He took the oil in his pack and raced to a nearby Two River Fishing Village, two miles from the village.

"From there, he took the sturdiest ship they had and sailed to the island, never faltering, never surrendering. For nothing would stop him as reached the island and raced up the ten thousand steps. He did not slow down, did not stumble until he reached the shrine itself and handed the oil to priests still on the island. They quickly feed it to the lighthouse, giving it light for all to see and brought the fleet of ships home. The priest rejoiced, calling Todoroki a hero and were about to congratulate him when they made a terrible discovery. Todoroki had pushed his body beyond its limits to the point his heart gave out. Todoroki died standing on his feet."

Jirōchō then gave a dramatic pause to provide the team with Vixen a chance to relax from an exciting tail before continuing, "Sufficient to say, a ceremony was held for the brave man as many came to honor him for his great sacrifice. During the ceremony, the priestess gave the shrine its official name, the Todoroki Shrine, and from there a new tradition was formed. Every four years, the best of the best runners sponsored by families like mine follow the same path Todoroki took to the shrine in what is now is called the Todoroki Shrine Race."

"And this race is so important that you need protection for your runners?" Hinata asked with a raised eyebrow at the thought of people cheating at a race like this.

"Yes, as the Todoroki Shrine Race is now more than just a race to honor Todoroki," Jirōchō sated as he got up to stretch his legs. "You see, Degarashi Port is the biggest seaport in Tea Country and now is claimed by both my family and the Wagarashi. In the old days, we both fought for control of the village through the rule of law, and with violence in the back alleys of this seaport."

Jirōchō then moved to a painting of the only picture of a non-family member hanging in the gallery. A fat golly man in fancy purple robes that looked gentle with his short three-piece mustache and beard. You would never guess he was powerful unless one realized he was the current Daimyō of Tea Country. As Jirōchō stared at the painting with respect for a reason before he turned his attention back to the kunoichis.

"It eventually got so bad; the current Daimyō stepped in with a rather unique solution. Every four years, the Wasabi and Wagarashi family would compete in the Todoroki Shrine Race for control of Degarashi Port for the next four years; my family couldn't be happier and sadder. For the first two four-year periods, we had won the race and had complete control of Degarashi Port. But when it looked like we're going take control of it for a third time, our previous runner had an 'accident' that allowed the Wagarashi family to win and take control of Degarashi Port," Jirōchō stated bitterly as he quoted 'accident' as though he does not believe it.

It was then Ayame took over for her father, "Since that time, the Wagarashi have been bleeding the Degarashi Port dry, taking as much money as they could from the town with their thugs. There are even rumors that Wagarashi is in bed with a Yakuza family and are using those criminals to turn our beloved town into a mockery of what it once was."
"So you need us here to keep your runner safe to save the Port before you're financially ruined?" Naruto asked as she looked the man over who answered with a small chuckle.

"Financially hurt, no. I don't have to worry about being financially ruined for I have contracts and trading posts across the content that will keep the family afloat indefinitely. That is if my family was not going to be ruined by other means."

However, before Jirōchō could elaborate, a servant opened the door to announce a man named Idate has arrived. "Good, send him in, I want him to meet his protectors for the upcoming race,"

The servant bowed as he allowed Idate, a short, skinny athlete with spiky black hair tied into a ponytail, to rush in the room. "Jirōchō-Sama, I saw a giant bird fly into Tea Country, I think ninjas have…" the young man trailed off as his grey eyes saw Wasabi's guests in the room.

The young man raised his shaking right hand at the Leaf-nins to yell, "What in the hell Jirōchō-Sama? I told you I don't need protection, especially from these backstabbing tree huggers. What the hell is wrong with you?"

"Well, your boss doesn't seem to agree with you. So you would be best not to insult the ninjas that are going to protect you," Tukiko stated in a dark, yet steady voice.

"Shut it you copy wheel, I don't need you to slow me down, especially not some blond bimbo, a pale-eyed freak, and an ice bitch," Idate snarled, insulting all four girls as they readied to beat him up as he moved in close to his furious boss.

"Enough Idate!" Jirōchō yelled as he slammed his fist on the table so hard it startled Idate. "This is not up to discussion. We cannot afford you to lose this race with so much on the line."

"What do you mean by that?" Naruto asked the old man at the table, who sighed in response while Idate sat down next to Ayame, knowing now was the time to shut up.

"About five months ago, I got drunk at a local bar I frequent when the head of Wagarashi family, Kyūroku found me. He took advantage of my hazy mindset to make a bet for the coming race, a dozen trading posts the Wagarashi own outside of the Degarashi Port for the hand of my daughter. He had it all in writing, and in a drunken stupor, I signed the contract he made," Jirōchō admitted as his shoulders slumped in sorrow as his daughter Ayame grabbed his arm to support him while the four kunoichis looked at him quizzically.

"Surely you can get the contract null-n-void since you were drunk and are not legally liable for such a contract," Haku stated as she pushed down the urge to yell at the man who shook his head in response.

"Normally I would do just that with a dozen eyewitnesses at my disposal. However, the Wagarashi family has a Minister in their pocket that had the contract validated and even went a step further. Stating that if I die and have no male heir, then the Wagarashi has the right to absorb the Wasabi into their family since Ayame would be the last of the main line of the Wasabi family," Jirōchō explained as he looked down in shame. "Though what I found out later, they don't even have to set up my death to get it."

It was then Ayame took her cue to speak, "You see, a few months prior to this mess, Idate and I were courting in secret and a week before father announced the terrible news, I gave myself to Idate," Ayame said as her hand slowly crept into Idate's, who held firmed as he painfully admitted something.
"It was a wonderful night and one I hoped to continue after our special day as I got a ring to propose to Ayame once I got permission from her father," Idate added with a sniffle. "We would be married by now if we hadn't needed to cancel the engagement as long as this farce of a race continues."

The girls actually had to hold them back from swooning as Jirōchō nodded along, "Normally I would be overjoyed that my little girl found love and Idate would officially join the family. But this is not a normal situation, because if it is discovered my daughter is no longer a virgin, the Wagarashi Family can call in step reparations that would either ruin me financially or force me to sign over my family business to them."

The group was silent as Jirōchō as sat firmly on his knees, "And that is why I asked Tsunade for a favor to hire the best available. And while I would prefer Jōnin, I have been assured that all four of you are Jōnin level ninjas and can get the job done while the Leaf prepares for the possible war."

"Hell yeah, we are," Tukiko whooped as she let pride settle in. "We've never lost a mission, we have fought high-level ninjas and samurai before."

"You're all Elite Chūnin?" Idate asked in shock.

"Yes, we gained our rank by showing exception skill and planning during the Chūnin Exams," Haku explained to Idate, whose face slowly morphed from shock to anger when she said 'Chūnin Exams.'

Anger that boiled over Idate when Naruto added, "And it was even on our first try too."

Idate could not take any more as he got up and moved to the door. He grumbled, "I am going for a run," just before he rushed out of the room at inhuman speeds as the girls looked at the two remaining guests for answers.

"Um… could you tell us why Idate was so upset?" Hinata asked the two Wasabi members, who looked down in shame.

"Let's just say that Idate's past was not pleasant and is catching up to him," Jirōchō cryptically stated as his daughter looked beyond the door Idate had opened.

"Be safe my love," Ayame whispered as Team Vixen spent a few minutes to go over the race and explained how they would protect Idate before they got to work.

Scene III

As the sun was setting across the beautiful sky, Idate was sitting out on the balcony, lost in thought as he glanced over to the horizon. He could not believe that of all the help Jirōchō could get, it had to be the Leaf Forces. He wondered if fate was against him when the blond girl with star-shaped eyes followed by the pale-eyed Hyūga walked in. His face morphed to a stern, yet grimaced face as he looked at the two kunoichis.

"So you have come to beg to be my guards, or are you just here to bug me?" Idate snarled as Naruto walked pass him with a large scroll in hand.

"No for we don't need permission to guard you as your boss is the client, not you and while cooperation would be appreciated, it is not expected as we can work around it if need be," Naruto stated as she unrolled the scroll to reveal a large sniper rifle was on a tall table. She began to dismantle her rifle after sitting down in a chair, "I am just here to work on my guns as this is the only table in the building that is comfortable for me to work on."

"And I'm here for the sunset, as it would be a romantic setting to spend some time with Naruto-
chan," Hinata smiled as she leaned down and give a quick kiss to Naruto's cheeks that redden as she became aware how close Hinata was and the sunset did look pretty.

Though the romantic moment was ruined as Idate laughed at Naruto, "Your name is Naruto? You do know that is a boy's name right?"

Naruto twitched as she growled, "Yeah, well, at least I am not an asshole that thinks we need his cooperation. You didn't even notice that Tukiko followed you five minutes after you ran out to train."

Soon after Naruto was done speaking, the Uchiha girl, Tukiko, appeared out of the shadow with a broad smile that told him he had lost the war, "I must say, while it was not the longest or most grueling of runs, it did give me an average day workout. Not bad for a former ninja," Tukiko added as Idate's back stiffened as Naruto went back to cleaning her sniper rifle.

"He's a ninja?" Hinata asked as she looked over the now scared young man.

"I'd say he had former training. Our friend strengthened his muscles and improved his speed like we ninjas do while seemed to be rusty in combat training, so I say, former ninja. Am I right?" Tukiko asked, and Idate swallowed a bitter pill to admit the truth.

"Yes, I am a former ninja, and I would rather not talk about why I am no longer a ninja."

He expected to be interrogated by the girls, but Naruto ended such thoughts as she worked on her sniper rifle, "That's fine; we are not here to learn your life history. We're here to protect you and if you have skills that make our job easier, all the better for us."

Stunned at the kunoichi who was in the process of finished cleaning her sniper rifle, Idate responded by bowing to the woman as thanked them for not intruding, "Thank you for your understanding."

"No problem," Hinata smiled at Idate, as she gave a smile. "So will you still be stubborn as a mule when it comes to your protection, or will you allow us to do our job and listen to how we are going to do it?

For a moment, Idate was about to give a sarcastic remark when his more sensible side gave way to curiosity, "Fine, let me hear how you plan to protect me."

"Excellent!" Hinata exclaimed as Naruto was now in the process of reassembling her sniper rifle. "The plan will be me and Tukiko will be your escorts from the shadows since we can easily keep up with you while our friend Haku will scout on ahead being the fastest of the group. While Naru-Chan-"

"Will guard the rear since I am the slowest of the bunch, as well be the group's sniper should you get in trouble," Naruto explained as he held up her complete sniper rifle while Idate thought over the plan.

"Well, I see no problems with this plan. I guess I can work with it," Idate said sincerely as he scratched the back of his head while Tukiko smiled in response.

"Good, that's one less pain to deal with. I better tell Haku…" Tukiko tailed off when the girls notice a glitter of steel from outside the mansion's walls.

"Get down!" Naruto ordered Idate as she used 'Wind style: Devine Winds Jutsu' to create a wall of wind that hurdled away two quivered arrows fired from a distance.
The arrows were deflected as Tukiko pushed Idate down for safety. Tukiko kept him down as Naruto pulled out her sniper rifle and kept the would-be assassins trapped behind the wall. While Hinata prepared her own counterattack with a little helper, she earned several weeks ago in Konoha.

Flashback

In the twilight hours of the night, Hinata's father, Hiashi Hyūga was quietly eating his meal with his family, including his brother and nephew. Most families would view this as routine, but this was still a drastic step forward for this family. He took the time to look at each member of his family when he noticed how nervous Hinata was as she nibbled her food. She was troubled but remained quiet, so quiet it made him realized they had still had a long way to go to trust each other.

Therefore, he decided to take the first step as he set his silverware down to have a talk with his eldest daughter, "Hinata, you seemed to be troubled. Has something bad happened?"

Startled, Hinata dropped her fork in shock as she stared at her father, trying to gauge why the sudden interest. She almost stuttered, as she admitted what was on her mind, "No father, nothing bad has happened. I am just lost in thought about how to approach asking you a favor, father."

Plates ding by the clatter of silverware as the entire family looked at Hinata in shock. Even her younger sister and a female copy of her father watched in shock as Hinata nervously bite her lip as her father waved her to continue, "With the chance of war increasing every day, I feel like I'll need to become stronger for the impending fight. And so, I ask if I can sign the Eagle and Hawk Summoning Contract."

Hiashi was frozen in shock, as even Hanabi could not hide her remark, "Oh wow, so sis won't be getting any foxes and wolves for valentines. Now that is a shocker."

Hinata gave her sister the stink eye as Hiashi ordered everyone but his eldest daughter to leave. They did not even wait a moment before they left the room in droves as the two stared at each other as he thoughtfully picked up his words. "I am surprised, my daughter, that you would ask for the family summoning contract. I thought with you being intimate with your teammate that you would... ask to share her contract over your parental family."

"I was tempted," Hinata admitted as she hid a look of guilt from her father. "But the logical part of me realized that if I am going to contribute to the team, I need to be my own woman, and that includes having a different summoning contract. While the emotional part of me, realized... realized that I want this. I want to have something that makes me closer to you, to Hanabi, to even uncle Hizashi and Neji, despite years of all us losing our way. Is that so bad?"

Hiashi almost cried as he embraced his daughter, "No, no it isn't" Hiashi let go as he returned to his stoic self and he went to the study library next door to pull out the Hawk and Eagle Summoning Scroll. "Here you go my child, but be warned, while the contract is loyal to our family, they'll not follow you if you show weakness. For these are not like most bird summons that are content with being messengers, scouts or even carry you long distance. These birds are warriors specialized in combat and assassination. Therefore, they will expect their summoners to be bold and have a strong spine before they follow your lead. You must demand respect and discipline if you have any hope of them listening to you."

"I understand father," Hinata said with conviction as she signed the contract.

End Flashback

Hinata proved herself to them and would again; as she summoned a red tail hawk five times the size
of a regular hawk. The bird saluted as she responded to the summoned, "What are your orders, mistress."

"Two or more would be assassins tried to kill the target we are protecting. I want you Caroline to find them and bring back one alive. The other is to be eliminated by your discretion. Naruto will provide cover," Hinata ordered as Naruto took a quip shot and one of the would-be assassin's feet was blown clean off.

"As you order my lady," the hawk, Caroline bowed as she lifted her wings up to jump off the balcony and take flight.

Her wings flapped as the hawk flew higher and higher out of sight of its two targets, two males covered in cloth that hid their features. One was on the ground bandaged the man wounds as they both prepared to run by jumping off the cliff on the side of a mountain, willing to take their chances of surviving the fall over the shooter looking for them. They would not get the chance to jump as the hawk swooped down onto her target, her claws digging deep into the human that still had both of his foot. The man screamed as the bird tore out his throat. Blood splattered onto her feathers as the bird jumped off the falling human and onto the one that tried to crawl away.

He did not make it far as she carried her target toward her mistress while Naruto called it in on the radio, "One target down, one captured. Haku, patrol the area to make sure we have no more uninvited guests."

"On it," Haku replied through the radio as Tukiko got off Idate as Naruto turned to her teammate.

"Tukiko, find out everything you can from the target. I want him talking before I have dinner tonight."

"No problem, Naru-Chan," Tukiko saluted as a sinister smile that would scare Idate and make a particular 'Snake Mistress' proud.

Scene IV

It was during the evening hours when Tukiko was before her team and clients to give her report, "I was able to get everything from our would-be assassin, which is not much."

"Is that why the interrogation was so short?" Jirōchō asked the young woman, who nodded 'yes.'

"Yes, for they were both midlevel thugs from the local Yakuza. They were high enough to be sent on missions like these, but they were low enough that they are not to be trusted with vital information in case they were captured. All I can tell you is that a superior sent them but not who hired them," Tukiko explained to the group.

"So you don't have any evidence the Wagarashi hired our killers?" Naruto asked.

"No, I'm sorry," Tukiko had admitted.

"It does not matter, I will have the man executed for trying to kill Idate and will double security. Hopefully, that will deter any future assassins," Jirōchō explained as a thoughtful look appeared. "Though I have to question as to why he would send assassins after Idate since killing him would point all fingers to Wagarashi."

"Maybe he stands to lose more than he indicated if Idate wins. Maybe even more than we do with those trading posts Wagarashi offered," Ayame pointed.
"And the fact the Yakuza are involved, it must be something very criminal that would be revealed if we take those trading posts over," Jirōchō Wasabi nodded as he scratched his chin.

"If that is the case, you know that they won't send Yakuza thugs, but ninjas to kill Idate?" Haku asked as Ayame's hand moved closer to Idate.

"Then we should stop them for no one must harm Idate! Not the gods, not any ninja or thug, and certainly not some greedy pig that thinks he can get away with murder! For his time is done. Thus we swear!" Naruto had commanded as the room was bolstered with confidence as she handed Hinata a note. She read it over and nodded in compliance as the group cheered.

Everyone, including Ayame, was in high spirits as she whispered to Idate, "I wonder how Kyūroku Wagarashi is doing now that his plan has failed?"

Scene V

On the other side of Tea Country stood a small castle that echoed with the screaming of the home's master, Kyūroku Wagarashi, a short, muscular man with a very short temper, "How could you fuck up on a simple mission!? It should have been easy to kill the Wasabi's runner!"

"And we would have if the Wasabi Family hadn't hired ninjas to protect him. Now we will need a more elaborate plan to kill him during the race," replied the short Yakuza member in a shiny new suit as his bushy mustache twitched in a low growl.

"Not good enough! You promised that my family would win every race and in return, I would let you settle in the trading posts that my family set up. You convinced me to set this bet for you said you had an inside man that would ensure Jirōchō would have a heart attack a month after we win, only for your man to be fired for negligence three days later. And now when the Wasabi ace runner wins, I will lose everything because of you."

"Not everything as I am sure you have bought and paid for the Minister so he can sweep this under the rug," the Yakuza gang member stated as he pointed grey-haired bowl cut man with the minster hat and toothbrush mustache.

This made the man sighed in annoyance, "I'm the Minister of Degarashi Port. I have no control outside of the city, and even if I did, I couldn't slow the investigation no matter how much I wish to save my own neck."

"Then I guess you better hope our plan will work," the Yakuza member explained.

"Or you have better have back up plans," Kyūroku stated as he walked over to a telephone. "Please get me the Rain-nins that I hired to protect Fukusuke Hikyakuya. Tell them I have a proposition for them that will mean a serious bonus if they finish it. Let's see if that Rain-nin with the Thunder God Sword is as good as he thinks he is."

Scene VI

It has been a week since the assassination attempt on Idate's life, and no other attempt was made as he stood next to his opponent, Fukusuke Hikyakuya. A man with a body fit for a samurai enhanced by the golden tanned skin as he stretched his body. His slanted eyes never leaving Idate as the two glared at each other. Fukusuke then tied his brown hair into a samurai knot the girls observed from a distance. Naruto only took one look before she turned to her teammates.

"Is he a-" Naruto started to ask before interrupted by Hinata with her Byakugan.
"A former Samurai, yes. His chakra pathway to enhance his body is similar to the ones we encountered at Vulcan during that whole mess. Though I would say, he is a low-level Samurai that was kicked out so he shouldn't be as fast as Idate and is no threat as he is unarmed."

"Are you sure?" Naruto asked.

"Yes," the three girls said at once.

"Okay, but keep an eye on him. I wouldn't be surprised if he 'found' a sword during the race and used it against Idate if given a chance. Best be prepared to take him down." Naruto had ordered before she looked at Hinata to ask, "Have our friends make contact with the Tea Daimyō?"

"Yep and they are working together to ensure things are fair and lawful when dealing with the Wagarashi family," Hinata explained as Tukiko pointed to the stands.

"Speaking of vermin, its looks like Wagarashi are going to have a go with the Wasabi."

"Keep an eye open on them until the race starts, intervene if need be," Naruto ordered, and the girls nodded.

"On it!" the girls nodded as they moved closer to the stands where Jirōchō and Ayame Wasabi sat as a short man flanked by two guards moved in close to ruin their day. Jirōchō acknowledges his presence while the officials explained the race's route and history (Two River's Village, across the ocean by boat and up O'uzu Island to Todoroki Shrine).

"Hello Kyūroku, what a pleasure to see you again," Jirōchō said with as much strain as his tongue could muster.

"Very well, especially as I get to meet my lovely bride to be," Kyūroku Wagarashi showed a charming smile as Ayame turned away in disgust.

Not to say Kyūroku is an ugly man, even with the wart at the top of his eyebrow. Many would call him handsome, but Ayame could not hide her disgust for the blacken soul she knew he had. "We are not engaged good sir, and I would kindly ask you not to make such outlandish comments."

"Oh, I see you're in denial my lady, for when my man wins, we'll soon be wed, and the distrust between our families will be over. So why don't we get to know each other as I show you how a man treats his woman," Kyūroku smiled as he stepped closer, only to be stopped by Ayame's father and guards.

"I believe you said enough and now I am telling you to leave us," Jirōchō stated with narrowed eyes only matched by his daughter's scowl.

"And don't talk to me again; you haven't won anything yet, and I fully trust Idate to win this race. So leave us!" Ayame growled at the man, who backed up with an insufferable smirk still on his face.

"Very well, until we meet again, MY LADY," Kyūroku smiled as he emphasized 'my lady' as though he possessed Ayame before he left just as officials finished explaining the race and called both racers to the startup line.

Idate and Fukusuke stared at each other as they moved into position as Fukusuke gave an arrogant smirk, "Good luck kid, you're going to need it."

Idate disagreed as he moved his body in position, "No, you're the one who needs it."
That was the last thing they said to each other as the officials started the race and the two took off as if they were driving racecars instead of running a marathon. The two gained distance and speed as Team Vixen followed the plan to protect Idate. The two racers started off neck and neck, but as time passed, Idate moved more and more ahead of Fukusuke as Idate was not only faster but also had greater stamina as he could keep up at such speeds as Fukusuke began to slow down. Eventually, Idate was out of sight while Fukusuke kept running, alone, just as planned as he ran to one of several rock formations found on the beach.

One large enough to hide a sailboat left by the Wagarashi family in case Wasabi's racer was as fast as he was rumored to be. He made it, expecting to find a vessel prepared for him, but instead, he discovered its hull full of holes, its sails ripped and, a note penned to the ship. One Fukusuke read as he plucked it off the boat's side:

"Dear Owner of Woodpile,

"Cheaters never prosper when a fox is overhead. And this little fox is here to ensure all you little boys play fair, or I will play a mean trick on you. Hope you enjoy your pile of scrap, and may you have a happy new year!

"Signed,

"Your neighborhood friendly fox"

What followed was a crude drawing of a fox giving the victory sign as it read underneath, "P.S. This note and boat will self-destruct by flame in the right about... NOW!"

That was Fukusuke's only warning when the note and the boat caught on fire as he jumped back in fright. His hand waved frantically as he scooted away from the flames. He did not notice the white fox laughing on the other side of the rocks, nor the giant red wolf who had sat on two Wagarashi thugs the wolf had beaten. Nor did he not notice the two disappeared in a puff of smoke as Fukusuke was forced to run after Idate, hopping Idate did not have too big of a head start.

Scene VII

It has been a half-hour since the race started and Haku was the first to arrive at the Two River Village to make sure all was well and to get the boat ready for when Hinata, Tukiko, and Idate came into the town. The four quickly prep the sailboat held by Wasabi guards when Naruto showed up and climbed in, a bit out of breath as they moved to set sail. They were soon out in the ocean as they looked out for trouble, including the storm up ahead.

"I see a storm coming our way," Naruto pointed to the large patch of thunder and darkness of what is a very violent storm.

"Yeah, large storms like this with heavy rainfall and humidity are common in this area and even needed to keep up tea production," Idate stated, thinking the storm was just another obstacle to pass. "Don't worry, I trained for months on sailboats and have been through worst storms than this. I'll get us through."

Haku did not agree as she felt this storm was unnatural. "I don't think this is just a storm."

Tukiko and Hinata activated their eyes to see what the human was missing, "The air is saturated with Chakra! This is a manmade storm!" Hinata yelled as they were being hit by the winds of the storm that only sprinkled.

"Well, where are they hiding?" Naruto called back to her team when Tukiko noticed something off
"Bogies twelve o'clock," Tukiko pointed to the front of the ship as another sailed up in front, with three very familiar personal onboard.

"Are those the Rain-nins that made it past the second part of the Chūnin exams?" Naruto asked as she looked at the three men in white cloth, breathing masks and Rain-nin headbands.

The three also saw her as one of them, the leader Naruto thrashed, yelled at them, "We got you and your client now bitch. You pay for the humiliation you gave me during the Chūnin Exams!"

"I take that as a yes," Tukiko stated as Hinata and Haku used 'Water Style: Gunshot Jutsu' to fire off globs of water to intercept a dozen senbon needles that rained down metal while Naruto pushed Idate down and out of the way of a crossbow shot.

She quickly got up to join with Tukiko to use 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu' to create a fireball to hurdle towards the ship in range. The three ninjas did not even move as the boat blew up, sending shrapnel and splinters across the ocean. The fire burned as Idate got up and looked at the damage. He then chuckled and said, "Well, that is the end of them."

Naruto was not so sure they achieved victory, as she noticed the flames burning across the sea as though the water itself on fire. Naruto only needed to look closer to see the fire was burning some flammable liquid floating on the surface that seemed familiar. It did not take her long to remember the leader, Ugatsu made clones out of flammable substances during the Chūnin Exams.

Her eyes widened as she put it all together as Naruto yelled, "It's a trap!"

Too late as a whirlpool began to form under them and tried to suck them in. Idate turned hard to starboard to push the boat away as Naruto and Hinata used 'Water Style: Whirlpool Jutsu' to create a miniature whirlpool underneath the ship, holding it in place, keeping it from moving closer or farther away from the giant whirlpool. Hinata and Naruto grunted as they concentrated on maintaining the whirlpool as Naruto glanced up at Haku.

"Haku, I am hoping you have some training fighting underwater because I believe our friends are below us maintaining their whirlpool. So if you can, please eliminate them before we lose the boat!" Naruto yelled as Tukiko scrambled to keep the boat from falling apart while Idate tried to roll with the waves to keep the ship from tearing itself apart.

Haku looked perplexed, as she said, "I don't have any training in underwater combat, but my summons does, so hold on as I call them."

Haku then prepared to summon as her shiver remaindered her how she got her new summon from her former sensei and adopted dad.

Flashback

In the misty lands of Water Country, Haku sat on a fishing boat. She was on the first week of a two-week leave to visit her home country to see her adopted father, his fiancé to which he would be wedded soon, and for the possibility of a summoning contract, Zabuza said she needed to have. She did not look forward to it, as she sat on the boat unmoving due to a dozen senbon needles keeping the 7.62m (25ft) long, the massive object still. She sighed as she noticed a tall figure walking out of the mist. She almost did not recognize the suited man, and she probably would not, if it were not for his distinctive mask, the colossal broadsword on his back, and the brown eyes that always stare at her during the early years of training.
Haku jumped up and straightened herself in front of the awkward man, "It's nice to see you again, Zabuza-sensei."

Zabuza chuckled as he smirked at the girl, "It's good to see you too Haku. Though I wish it weren’t because you need something."

"I promise the next time I have free time longer than a week, I will come just to visit," Haku said and gave a small smile that could break a killer’s heart.

Zabuza smiled in response as he pulled out a summoning scroll, "I have a summoning scroll you'll need due to being as soft as you are. Do you have the sacrifice?"

Haku looked at the sack and nodded, "Yes I do?"

"Then you know what to do," Zabuza ordered as he set the scroll down. "You better get to it, Gorgon does not like to wait long, and I told him you will summon him to be one of his summoners. I do not want to be familiar with his teeth if you get my meaning."

Haku nodded as she quickly signed the contract in blood before she jumped on top of the rocking waves, her chakra keeping her above the water as she summoned a large animal. A huge animal that was larger than a blue whale and far more menacing. Haku quickly jumped onto the ship as a large, bluish-white fin appeared next to the boat. The two humans tracked the fin as it first sailed away from the boat and then back towards them to reveal the body of a giant megalodon shark, scared from head to toe from many fights over its long life. Its bluish white body sailed close to the ship as his greenish blue eyes stared at the two humans that showed a healthy amount of respect and fear. Especially as the shark spoke through some very pointy teeth, "So you have finally summoned me. Has the little minnow been told what is required to pass my test?"

"Yes," Haku stated as she removed the senbon needles out of the sack, and the living thing in the sack began to thrash while she continued to speak. "Zabuza told me that as you summon, that you like to hunt and expect your summoner to hunt as well. However, it could not be just any prey, but the prey must be one of the top predators, and it must be captured alive. So I thought hard and spent three days hunting for the top predatory of the ocean."

Haku then removed the sack to reveal her prey, "I got you a great white shark," just before she hoisted it up with the ship's crane.

The giant shark continued to thrash as it dangled over the ocean. The giant shark, Gorgon smiled as he rose slowly out of the sea. Haku gasped as she realized Gorgon flew up to the great white, savoring every moment it thrashed before he struck and ate the shark in one bite. He chewed his prey slowly as he enjoyed the taste before he swallowed the chewed meat.

"Ah, it always tastes great when they are alive and squirming," Gorgon smiled as he turned toward Haku as he floated around the ship. "You don't like killing do you."

"Only when it's required," Haku stated. "I hope it doesn't displease you?"

Gorgon's smile only intensified as he stated, "Not at all, for I see in your eyes that while you may hold disgust, you also hold disappointment. Disappointment that the hunt was over and I think we will make partners," Gorgon added before he dispersed, leaving Haku and Zabuza alone.

Zabuza looked at Haku to ask, "Want to go back to my house?"
"Yes," Haku answered as the two set sail for the safer mainland.

End Flashback

Haku never forgot those words as she summoned a tiger, bull and great white shark over the side of the ships. The three appeared in the swirling waters and were not even troubled by them as they faced Haku, "What are your orders Mistress?"

"Three ninjas with breathing masks have created a whirlpool below us. Use your discretions on how to handle them," Haku ordered, even if she knew what they were going to do as the shark developed large smiles.

The three sharks then dived deep into the ocean and swam to their targets. Their senses went into overtime as they came upon their targets. The rain-nins did not have a chance to defend themselves as one was snatched by the tiger shark. Shrieking as blood flowed freely as the great white struck the next ninja, eating him alive from the head first as the leader, Ugatsu backed up. Right into the nose of the bull shark with a very toothy grin that scares even the most heroic person. The shark waited for the ninja time to turn around to attack before the shark began to devour the man, blood slowly floating to the top as they enjoyed their meal.

Team Vixen did not wait for confirmation as Idate got back on course. Idate had to hold back the bile that welled up into his mouth as Haku looked sadly at what she had needed to do. She let her summons disappear as the other girls moved forward not realizing that Fukusuke was on the sea and the gap had closed during the time they had to fight the Rain-nins.

Scene VIII

It took only ten more minutes of sail as Idate, and Team Vixen was coming closer to the shoreline. Tukiko could not help but state, "Land Ho!"

"Indeed, we made it," Idate smiled. "All that's left is the home stretch, and we will be fine."

"And then you can finally marry Ayame," Hinata smiled as the girls gave nods of encouragement.

They were all smiling until they noticed that off in the distance a figure was standing on the beach. The group knew he was trouble as their smiles turned into frowns as they examined the green-haired man with a rain-nin forehead protector. The average, yet weak ninja stared as a flash of lightning made his light purple eyes shine. They were eyes that Idate recognized as he stammered out his name, "Aoi!"

The man, Aoi then seemed to smile as he pulled out a sword made of lightning and pointed it at them as he yelled out, "Prepare to face the lightning god, Aoi Rokushō."

And with a flash of lightning, the battle on O'uzu Island began.

Chapter End Notes

Done, sorry it took so long, but with the holidays and my new job taking more hours, I have limited free time. Hope you enjoy the chapter and remember, reviewing shows you care and constructive criticism only helps improve my writing. Also, hope you enjoy the changes I made to the Shrine race, as it seems more significant and vital than it was in
canon, as well as the stakes.
Scene I

The most dangerous thing that anyone that lives on or near the ocean must face is a storm. Especially a storm strong enough to produces gale force winds and lightning that brighten up the skies. To a ninja, nothing is more dangerous than an enemy ninja that has the high ground. Especially if the weather is with them and they have the jutsus that can enhance its deadly effects.

Something the Team learned the hard way as they abandoned ship before the lightning bolt created by the green haired man’s lightning bladed sword destroyed it. Idate saw the horrifying aftereffects of such an advantage as he watched his ship explode while Haku carried the young man on her back to safety. All the while, the Rain-nin, Aoi, looked disappointed that he had missed the girls while the girls in turn just gapped at the ninja.

"What the flying fuck was that?" Naruto asked aloud. "Was that a lightning strike he used? How the heck did he do that?"

"I think he did it through his sword," Hinata pointed out as Tukiko's face morphed into a sign of recognition.

"I think that it is the Raijin no Ken, the sword that belonged to the Second Hokage. I recognize it from the history books in the Uchiha's library."

"Wasn't it stolen by some Chūnin when we… well most of us were in the academy?" Naruto asked as she pulled out a scroll with the label 'Sniper Rifle' on it.

"I believe we found the culprit. One Aoi Rokushō I believe Idate called him," Haku added as she turned to stare at Idate, who just stared in shock at the smirking green haired man.

"It's been a long time, Idate. Too bad it had to be under this circumstance," Aoi stated to the young man before he noticed Naruto had pulled out her sniper rifle from its sealed scroll. A weapon that would turn the tide and one Aoi would not allow her to use.

So before she had a chance to take aim, Aoi yelled out, "No you don't you bitch!" before using his sword to call out another lightning strike against the Leaf-nins. The team was forced to jump away before a blinding bolt of lightning hit where Naruto stood. Naruto's heartbeat was beating like a drum as she actually felt the electrically charged dance around her as it sent her flying a few meters. She then landed on her feet, cursing as she noticed the electricity had shorted out her high tech sniper rifle. Aoi took away her chance to end this battle quickly, as he was too far away to hit with any jutsu or gun accurately.
Therefore, she put her rifle up before she barked out orders, "Haku get moving. We can't let him take out Idate, so use whatever you have to keep Idate safe. The rest of us, try to get close enough to hit the Rain-nin."

Haku nodded and summoned a giant sand shark to avoid the bolts of lightning that Aoi fired off towards her client. Idate sat firmly on the shark's back while holding onto Haku for dear life as Hinata, Tukiko, and Naruto tried to rush the Rain-nin with mixed success. Though Aoi had no success in hitting the two riding the fast shark, he was able to keep the others at bay. Aoi had the advantage of staying out of range, and the extreme weather, but Tukiko noted something was off as Naruto used 'Water Style: Water Dome Jutsu' to block a direct lightning bolt round from hitting the three before they were forced to jump back from a second strike.

They were now further out in the sea when Tukiko stated, "Okay, not to make a bad situation worse, but why hasn't he used the sword's ultimate attack? He should have summoned a dozen bolts of lightning like the Second Hokage did when he flooded a valley and electrocuted over thirty enemy ninjas during the beginning of the Second Great Shinobi War!"

"Maybe he can't," Hinata had pointed out with her Byakugan activated. "He's running low on chakra, and if my eyes don't deceive me, the sword is draining him faster than it should be draining him."

"Which means he running out of time, and he must know this," Naruto stated as she finally realized where everyone was positioned. She was slowly being pushed further out to sea with her teammates while Haku was slowly being pushed closer and closer to Aoi. It only took Naruto a moment to realize the danger as Tukiko noticed an object approached the girls from behind them.

"HAKU! IT'S-A TRAP!" Naruto yelled out, but it was too late.

Aoi used 'Earth Style: Rock Wall Jutsu' to summon a massive rock wall right in the path of the shark. This forced the shark to make a sharp turn to avoid the new obstacle, losing its two passengers in the process. Haku, trained in aquatic fighting by her master Zabuza, was able to make a solid landing on top of the water. On the other hand, Idate skidded on the water like a skipping stone until he had finally stopped right in front of Aoi.

Aoi brought up the sword to strike as he said in a cocky voice, "Sorry kid, as I told you when I tortured you and your brother when we were all in the Leaf, it is nothing personal." Aoi then summoned another lightning bolt; intent on making sure Idate was out of the way when someone he did not expect intercepted the lightning strike. It was his client's runner, Fukusuke Hikyakuya flung by Tukiko from the mass of Wagarashi's ship manned by the Uchiha's teammates. He quickly cut off the power of the Raijin no Ken and intercepted the former samurai, who was screaming in pain, before he rushed off to safety. Tukiko was about to follow but was stopped by Naruto.

"Let him go. We need to cover Haku and Hinata. They'll be vulnerable to attack as they treat Idate's injuries," Naruto pointed out as Tukiko had noticed Idate was being treated by a recovered Haku while Hinata rushed over to help. The two girls finished patching up Idate as Naruto and Tukiko approached the boy as he was carried to land. As they walked on clamping waves, a nervous Tukiko looked at to her superior and friend to ask a question the answer for which she hoped was different from the one that popped up in her mind. "So Naru-san, how do you think Aoi knows Idate?"

Naruto sighed in response as she pulled out her handheld tablet and aimed at Idate's face. "I think we both know how Idate and Aoi know each other," Naruto said just as she took a picture of Idate. Tukiko sighed as Naruto ran the face through former Leaf-nins from the last ten years, "Yeah, I had a feeling you knew."
Tukiko then straightens her stance as she summoned a wide range of small, colorful songbirds, "Search and find a place we can hold out. We have a wounded client that needs cover." The birds only nodded before they dispersed to find some cover as the four girls gathered around Idate as the grim look on their faces matched the dark clouds overhead.

Scene II

"AHHHHHHH!!" screamed Fukusuke Hikyakuya, as he thrashed under his restraints as the doctor held him down with one hand as he held a giant syringe in the other.

"Okay, brace yourself Fukusuke-san, this will help with the pain," the doctor stated as he slowly injected the man with a hefty dose of morphine into his patient.

It would take a couple more minutes, but Fukusuke would stop screaming, much to the relief of the third person in the room, Aoi Rokushō. "I was beginning to think he would never shut up. So doc, how soon can you patch him up to win this race?"

"Never Ninja-Sama," the doctor reluctantly told the ninja who looked shocked.

"What?" Aoi yelled as the doctor bowed to the young ninja before him.

"I am sorry ninja-Sama, but when he was struck by a lightning bolt, Fukusuke-san's entire nerve cluster was damaged. It will be months before he'll be able to walk on his own, let alone run. To be frank, it's amazing Fukusuke-san is breathing on his own with how messed up his body is. But no amount of miracle work will get him running for the Todoroki Shrine Race."

"I see," Aoi had sighed in frustration before he turned to the old man. "May I borrow your phone? I must report to my client, your benefactor, Kyūroku Wagarashi of what has transpired with his runner."

The doctor nodded as Aoi headed off to make a call. It was not long before he was able to connect to his superior, who only he could hear, "Mr. Wagarashi, this is Aoi Rokushō of Rain Forces… I am here to report an accident with your racer… He's been electrocuted by a strike of lightning and is unable to walk for several months, let alone run to gain victory for the Wagarashi family."

"WHAT!? HOW COULD YOU LET THIS HAPPEN!?" yelled a voice so loud that Aoi could hear it while he held the phone at arm's length.

Only to bring it back to his ear to tell the client some of the events of what happened, "I didn't let anything happen, it was your quote 'samurai's' fault… He ran right into the Leaf-nins as I was dealing with the Wasabi runner. There is no way I can save a client seeking glory and running off on his own. He could not even deal with three fifteen-year-old girls despite his quote 'skill with a sword…' I know this seems bad, but we could turn this around if it were a tie… I understand and don't worry; I'll take care of everything."

Aoi then hung up the phone and walked over to the downed runner as the doctor looked up, "What did Wagarashi-Sama say ninja-Sama."

"Let's just say in a few minutes, you don't need to worry about your patient," Aoi stated, and the doctor got the underline message quickly.

"Then I leave you to it ninja-Sama," the doctor bowed as he left Aoi to his work as he pulled out his sword and approached Fukusuke Hikyakuya, who was so doped-up that he was utterly oblivious. He did not realize the danger he was in as Aoi activated his lightning bladed sword.
"Sorry pal, nothing personal," before Aoi tapped Fukusuke's chest with his sword. Electricity coursed through Fukusuke, who only jerked in response. He did not feel the electricity coursing through his chest. All he cared about was nothing as his world went black.

Scene III

Outside of a cave found on the O'uzu Island was a flight of songbirds that chirped beautiful notes that they relayed that all is clear and no enemy contacts were present. However, Idate did not know that as he slowly gained consciousness. He looked up to see his ninja protectors and smiled in relief, thinking he was safe. He lost his smile when he noticed the girls were frowning at him.

"Um, Naruto? Hinata? Tukiko? Haku? What's wrong?" Idate asked with a bit concern as the girls continued to stare at him.

He soon got his answer when Naruto revealed a pad with an old picture of him on it. A photo was taken of him several years ago when he was fourteen-year-old Genin for the Leaf Forces. Back when he was Idate Morino, the younger brother of Jōnin Ibiki Morino, the head of the Leaf's Torture and Interrogation unit (T&I). Idate sighed in response, "Aoi made you suspect I was a former Leaf-nin, didn't he?"

"Yes," Hinata responded to the former Leaf-nin's inquiry.

"And you had access to my file despite being listed as killed in action?" Idate pointed out as he indicated the 'K.I.A.' under his picture.

"It wouldn't be the first time a ninja faked his death. So all active and formerly active ninjas are kept on record, and I have accessed to the wireless network that has all our ninja profiles in case we run into someone we needed to determine if they are comrades or not," Naruto explained to Idate who sighed in response.

"And you looked me up because you couldn't let go of your suspicion of me?" Idate asked as Naruto nodded her head in response.

"We couldn't run the risk you were a traitor or an enemy ninja setting us up." Naruto then sighed before she added, "There are a lot of ninjas that would love to get back at the Leaf, and we've personally made our share of enemies."

"I'm guessing my file said I was not a traitor or enemy ninja. Otherwise, I would have awakened tied up, or not awakened at all as the case may have been," Idate pointed out, and Hinata nodded.

"Correct, your brother wrote in your report you were coerced and held hostage by your Chūnin Commander, Aoi Rokushō."

"My brother's alive?" Idate asked in shock.

"Yes," Haku answered Idate in a motherly tone. "He was our first proctor for the Chūnin Exams."

"He's alive," Idate had sighed in relief as Tukiko approached the young man, taking on the role of bad cop.

"Is that why you ran away because you thought you got your brother killed?"

"Yes, for the most part," Idate answered as he let out a nervous chattered as Tukiko closed in.

"And what is that supposed to mean?" Tukiko asked with almost a growl, as Idate looked scared.
"I… I…" Idate started before Haku calmed him down with her calming voice.

"Maybe you should tell us."

Idate relented as he told his tale. How he was Genin in the Leaf Forces, and he felt that he was a disappointment to everyone, including himself. His team was average and had not done a single mission worth mentioning in his one-year of service. Combined with a hot-blooded temperament and a record with no kills, he felt his only chance to do well as in the Chūnin Exams. A tasked he failed in, as he did not make it past the first part of the exams proctored by his brother.

The first exam was similar to Team Vixen's experience. They had forty-five minutes to answer questions on their sheets, and those who failed to answer one question were quickly thrown out of the exams. However, the final question was different in that they were told if they chose to answer the last question, the team member with the lowest score would be barred from the rank of Chūnin for life. Any team that dropped out would have an equal, though a slimmer chance for obtaining promotion through a reexamination a month after the other teams had finished the next part of the Exams.

The girls quickly worked out the true meaning of the test when Idate explained how he was taunting them to stay as Haku softly stated, "The test was to see if you were willing to take another path to gain success. Or if you were heartless, slash, arrogant enough to allow the enemy to lure you into a trap that would cost you or one of your teammates their lives."

"Yeah, that was my brother told me when I confronted him about it," Idate told Haku as he sighed. "In hindsight, I should have realized it, but I was young and inexperienced. Heck, I was probably arrogant too as I accused my brother of trying to keep me out of the exams. He was not amused, so he laid it out for me. He told me what my decision meant and how such a decision would have gotten my entire team killed.

"It was then that he told me that he was disappointed in me. Not about failing the exams, for as I was a green, inexperience Genin that would eventually grow out of it. No, it was for thinking that he was holding me back before he left me alone to wallow in my despair. Which made me a perfect target for a former comrade and a man I thought was my friend, Aoi Rokushō," Idate stated before he continued his story.

Aoi was a Chūnin for the Leaf who gave out missions to them, and he had developed a comradeship with many of the Leaf-ins. Therefore, Idate readily believed him when Aoi told him he had a way that would get him a field promotion to Chūnin if he helped him with his mission. He told Idate that he needed to retrieve a secret scroll from the library quietly for it was high-risk, off the books, mission. Idate did what he was told, and he retrieved the scroll only to find out to his horror that Aoi was not on a mission for Konoha, but his own personal one for an enemy village, Ame.

"He ranted and raved how he was meant to have the rank of Jōnin but was disqualified for one reason or another. Therefore, he devised a plan to retrieve the Raijin no Ken he stole earlier that day and get the rank he felt he deserved as a member of the Rain Force. All he needed was the scroll unlocked, and he would have known all its techniques. He told me I was the key to getting it unlocked."

"What do you mean by key?" Tukiko asked with narrowed eyes.

"The scroll was protected with a sealed password only Elite Jōnin like my brother could break. So I made the perfect bait," Idate told the girls before he got back to his story. He told them how Aoi beat him up and tied me to a wall to be left as bait for my brother Ibiki Morino. Ibiki with two ANBU teammates quickly made it to where I was being held when a squad of Rain-nins ambushed them,
killing the two ANBU members and capturing Ibiki. Aoi then began to torture Ibiki, giving him many of the scars he wears today.

Tukiko noted with disgust, "Torture has never been a reliable source of information. As prisoners will often say anything to get it to stop or those that are loyal will have steeled their minds against such methods. Trickling your targets is really the best way to get something useful from them with torture being a last resort method."

Idate then explained how Aoi threaten to kill him if Ibiki did not give in and he pretended to do as he was told. Only to reveal his brother had cut himself free with a hidden kunai and had flung the scroll into an oil lamp, setting it and the cabin on fire. He then retrieved his duo knuckle blades as he threw his hidden kunai towards Idate to free Idate, and he killed the surviving Rain-nins. Ibiki then told Idate to run as he fought Aoi. Idate did what he was told, he ran, leaving behind his protector before he jumped out of the burning cabin just as it exploded. He assumed Aoi and his brother had been killed in the blast and with nowhere to go, he ran away.

"I could not return to the village. I would be labeled a traitor and... and I could not look at myself for getting my brother killed, so I ran. I ran and ran until I reached Tea Country where I settled down. It was there I met Jirōchō and Ayame Wasabi, and after doing a few odd jobs, I was hired on by the Wasabi family and the rest is history."

Idate sighed as he let go of his past before he looked up to the girls to ask, "So what now?"

"A very good question, as you're technically a missing-nin, a rogue ninja to be arrested on sight. So I'd say we just take you back to Konoha," Tukiko pointed out.

"But he's the unofficial fiancé to Ayame Wasabi. Taking him back to Konoha to stand trial would hurt our relationship with the Wasabi family," Haku pointed out in defense of Idate.

"And regulations do state that as long as a rediscovered ninja wasn't a Jōnin or hadn't joined another village, we are allowed to let him go," Hinata added acting as a devil's advocate. "However, he is the brother of Ibiki Morino, the head of Torture and Integration Branch of Leaf Forces, and therefore maybe should be considered too important to let go."

"Yeah, it may not be the best idea to let a boy who could be used against an Elite Jōnin to reveal secrets we don't want to be spread," Tukiko added with a straight face that told how serious she was.

"But that still doesn't mean dragging him back Konoha is a good idea right now. Especially as we need him to finish our mission with the Wasabi Family," Haku argued, prompting Tukiko to open her mouth when their leader, Naruto took charge.

"Enough! We've wasted enough time arguing about this. Idate needs to finish this race for our client, and that is exactly what he will do while we protect him from outside threats. Is that understood?" Naruto asked while she was in command mode.

"Yes ma'am," Naruto's teammates replied, though with some reluctance from Tukiko and relief from Haku, as Idate sighed in relief.

"Thank you," Idate bowed as Naruto sighed in response.

"Don't thank me yet Idate. Once this over, I will bump this up to the Jōnin Commander of the team handling another mater in Tea Country for your client. He'll decide whether to let this go or turn you over to Konoha, which will probably depend on if you win this race or not," Naruto explained to Idate, who nodded in response as he was informed about the second team prior to the race.
Though he was still confused about the purpose of the team as he asked aloud, "What were they doing anyway?"

"Let's just say we convinced your client to not put everything into one bundle by looking into other suspicions things the Wagarashi were into," Haku explained to Idate as Tukiko frowned at him.

"Now get up, we don't know the condition of the other runner and you better not fall behind. So let's go."

Scene IV

In a trading post in the outer edge of Tea Country, a low-level yakuza grunt of the Shadōburēdo (Shadow Blade) Family was bored out of his mind. He hated that he drew the short stick and was guarding one of their cache with the Wagarashi's retainers. Especially since he joined one of the most ruthless criminal organizations to watch over illegal goods, they held for the various other criminal organizations. He craved excitement and did not realize he was going to get it as a shadow cast by a giant crept close in behind him. With a grunt, a private raised a wooden block and knocked out his superior ranked soldier. The battle was over before he knew it as a tall man smirked at his victim.

Scene V

Back on O'uzu Island, Team Vixen with Idate ran up the thousands of steps until Tukiko stopped them. The other four complied as Tukiko held up her arm to receive a beautiful songbird that perched there. "Report," Tukiko commanded her bird scout, who had saluted in response.

"There are three men up ahead, posed to blow the bridge while using the trees as cover. One of them is the green haired rain-nin you had us watch for. The other two look like common thugs, Tukiko-Sama," the songbird reported to the woman.

"Thank you, you may go," Tukiko told the songbird before he popped out of existence as she turned towards her teammates. "It doesn't sound too hard. We can easily take them, especially since we'll be on even ground with that Rain-nin."

"That is true, but I'm worried about the bridge. Unless we are all very quiet and quick, they could blow it up, denying Idate passage at the very least. And that is assuming it's not armed with a dead man switch or seal, which one of the thugs probably has been armed with to ensure we can't make it," Naruto pointed out with a frown.

The girls sighed as Haku asked Idate for an alternative "Is there another path?"

"Yes, there is a quicker route but it's dangerous," Idate had stated. "The original path Todoroki used is an extremely narrow path that is prone to rock avalanches, especially after a big rain storm. It's why a new path with a bridge was put in as a few runners and travelers lost their lives from accidents along the path."

"And I am sure we'll suffer an 'accident' along that path as well. I wouldn't be surprised if Wagarashi has used it as a backup plan should the bridge fail to kill us," Hinata stated before sighing. "So what should we do Naru-chan?"

"The only thing we can do. You girls will take Idate across the narrow path. If we used our summons to ambush the ambushers and keep any rockslides at bay, Idate should win the race," Naruto explained to her Teammates who nodded.

"What about you, Naruto?" Tukiko asked as she quickly caught on that Naruto was coming with
"I am going to make sure Aoi doesn't follow us. As a team, we can't sneak up on him, but I can, and I'm not about to let such a dangerous ninja hit us on the final leg of the race," Naruto explained as she went through a series of hand-signs to summon her spirit animals. "Alright, Tukiko, Hinata, summon any of your birds that can fight. You're going to need them," Naruto added before she summoned the four lieutenants of the Canine Alliance, ready to do her bidding for the next part of her plan.

Scene VI

High above the narrow path, a squad of yakuza thugs waited. Waiting for the Wagarashi runner to come by and end him with a rockslide. The slide had taken hours to set up. A setup that obviously would not go to waste as the yakuza enforcer saw the runner was on the path. The enforcer smirked, ready to order the avalanche start as the runner approached when the screams started. He watched in horror as giant crows, blue jays and hawks swooped down and attacked his men in mass numbers. Men lost their faces as birds plucked and clawed large chunks of flesh off them as they tried in vain to fight back. All that waited for them was death, but the enforcer was not about to die alone. The man ran to loosen the rocks needed to start an avalanche when he noticed, to his horror that the stones his men had loosened were covered by vines and frost that held them in place. He knew that the beautiful five-tailed green fox and the five-tailed silver wolf standing before him were the reason for the ice and vines.

The man prepared to charge at the smirking animals, ready to kill them as he ignored the threat of attack from death above. He did not notice the hawk until its claws sank deep into his skull. Idate and the three members of Team Vixen ignored the blood-curdling scream as they were silenced by the summons above them. The battle was over as Mother Fox, Arctic Wolf and their fellow summons disappeared, leaving behind their victims for the crows to devour.

Scene VII

If one thing that Aoi learned during his long tenure as a ninja is patience to a point. His years of experience told him that waiting was pointless; Idate was not coming this way. He figured the ninjas with Idate must have found out about his trap and were taking their chances using the path up the mountain. Therefore, instead of waiting any longer, he ordered one of the low-level men of the Wagarashi Family with him to blow up the bridge as Aoi planned to intercept Idate on the narrow path route. Eager to leave as well, one of Wagarashi's agents was about to comply with his orders when a six-tailed wolf with a broadsword grabbed one of two low-level agents while the other was taken by a six-tailed orange fox with a scroll. Caught, the two Wagarashi thugs screamed as they were then dragged up into a tree to be silenced.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, the summons was not quick enough to take them out before the thugs activated the explosives under the bridge, destroying the only way across the gorge that did not involve a long jump or climb. Though Aoi could not pat himself on the back, as he was trapped the moment the two-legged summons appeared before him, cutting off his only escape route since the bridge no longer existed. Limited with options and confident in his power through the sword, Aoi pulled out his Raijin no Ken for combat. The blade swirled as he snarled at the summons stared at him, refusing to engage Aoi in battle.

"What's the matter you beasts? You afraid to fight me with the sword of the lightning gods?" the Rain-nin mocked when a voice spoke up in the summons defense.

"Mother Fox and Trickster are not here to fight you. They're here to make sure you don't run away from my blades," said the blonde female ninja, Naruto appeared with her dual blades, posed to strike
down the former Leaf-nin, who defended himself.

For a brief moment, Aoi smirked thinking his opponent would be screaming in pain from the electricity that should be coursing through her sword. However, she was not screaming in pain, but instead, she had slowly pushed him back and nicked his face before he parried her strikes back and jumped to gain some distance. Naruto followed him, striking with a flurry of thrusts that pushed him to his limits as he desperately tried to defend himself. A task he failed to complete if the deep cuts, burnt marks and muscle spans of his shoulders, arms and legs were any indication. In fact, it was only due to a lucky hit to Naruto's shoulder that forced her back to give Aoi a reprieve and allow him to catch his breath.

Much needed air filled his lungs as he asked, "How?" with a croaked voice as his breathing returned to normal. "How are you able to hit my blades? The sword should have electrocuted you."

"Simple, unlike you, I have trained in using elemental chakra, and I infused my blades with my elemental chakra," Naruto stated as she held it up her sword to show off the swirl of elements. "Anyone of my elements could counter yours. Wind and Lightning to the counter the Lightning element in your sword; Earth to ground my blade; Water to circulate your electrical attacks away from hands; and Fire to counter and absorb the energy produced by your blade. All five at once was just overkill, but I'm willing to use them to beat you."

"How can you use…?" Aoi tailed off when he looked at the girl's eyes, and everything clicked as he began to laugh. "So you're the one the Uzumakis want. My master will be pleased as you will ensure our alliance is secured when I bring you to him."

"Rain Forces are working with the Uzumaki?" Naruto asked with interest.

"Correct and they want you badly Naruto Uzumaki, and I aimed to collect you for them," Aoi chuckled as flexed his sword.

"Well, I'm pretty sure you're going to fail in your quest, slash mission, and it's Naruto Ryū the Elemental Kitsune, not Uzumaki," Naruto growled as she twirled her sword while Aoi smirked.

"I don't give a shit what's your name is or that you think you can beat me. As you will fall," Aoi stated with a smirk.

"I doubt it with such a sloppy stance you have there. If I used a similar stance against my mom or Naruko, both would be yelling at me for using such a stupid and sloppy stance, and I don't like it when opponents yell. The only reason I am even bothering fighting you with my sword instead of shooting you or killing you with overpowering Jutsu is to avoid my family being disappointed I did not use my swords against the Raijin no Ken. So let the room get chiller and let this intermediate level swordsman show you how to fight, you dirty traitor," Naruto stated as moved into a ready stance to strike.

Aoi just smirked as he stated, "Well at least I know why you have a boy's name. You are certainly as brash as one."

That was Aoi's last quip as Naruto appeared before him faster than he could predict, she pushed away his sword and spun kicked the man in the face. Aoi turned to face Naruto, spitting out blood as she stated, "Well I certainly hit harder than the boy who thinks he is a god with a lightning sword. So there you go, you pussy."

That sent Aoi into a brief frenzy as he tried to retaliate with his sword to no avail as a nimble Naruto deflected his telegraphed attack that was less like a swordsman and more like an axeman cutting
wood, which Naruto took advantage of as she tore Aoi apart. The Leaf-nins attacks were quick yet powerful and with such accuracy that only a master swordsman like her sister and mother could counter or beat. The Rain-nin, whose rank is barely that of a novice, could not hope to defeat the Leaf-nin and Aoi slowly realized as Naruto pressed her attacks. Aoi realized he was losing the fight when Naruto sliced along his exposed arm after a fake faint. He understood he needed to escape when she nicked one of his legs as she tried to cut off to prevent the Rain-nin from running away.

Finally, he concluded he could not win this fight when Naruto broke the Raijin no Ken in a crisscross strike meant to disarm Aoi but instead destroyed the sword. Something Naruto and Aoi did not think was possible for neither knew the sword was a retractable blade coursed with electricity. A blade that time, heat and electrical current not controlled through elemental chakra had eroded. The blade's elasticity/strength had deteriorated the metal in the blade, making it easy to break compared to most metals. So both were caught off guard for a moment, but Aoi recovered a tad quicker than Naruto and decided to make a break for it.

He ran past the Leaf-nin towards the only opening available, the cliff. He intended to jump over the cliff's edge and make his escape, but he was foiled when two of Naruto's clones intercepted him. One of the clones hit Aoi with a quick jab almost as fast as the winds and sent him flying back. While the other only got in a few hits sending shocks to his nervous system. The Rain-nin lay on the ground, defeated as Naruto approached him.

Aoi panted out a whine, "Not fair," as Naruto shook her head in response.

"You have lied, cheated and betrayed your comrades all for the pursuit of power that you have no inkling on how to control or use. You don't deserve a fair fight or mercy. In fact, you may prove to be a good living test subject for a new jutsu I have," Naruto added as she put up her swords before she started to form a new version of the Rasengan she has been developing since the break for her team.

Flashback

As Naruto's team was training with their new summons, Naruto spent the time training and looking over a scroll left by her father and Jiraiya. It was a scroll filled with notes on her father's pure, original Jutsu, the Rasengan. A jutsu that proved to be a problem that Naruto tried to crack when her mother Kushina interrupted her.

"Hey honey, what are you looking at?" Kushina asked as she peeked over Naruto's shoulder.

Startled, Naruto turned around to see Kushina, and breathed out a sigh of relief to see it was only her mother, "Hey mom, I thought you were training Naruko at this time?"

"I was, and we just finished practice a little a while ago," Kushina stated as she glanced at the scroll. "Now back to my question, what are you looking at?"

"Oh I am looking at the original scroll for dad's Rasengan," Naruto gave a tired smile, as she looked down guilty.

"Oh my, I thought it looked familiar," Kushina smiled as she tenderly touched the scroll. "I remember Minato spending hours of the day writing away on his scroll, trying to figure out how to make it work. It took him three years to build such a devastating jutsu from scratch."

"I know, Jiraiya told me the same story," Naruto related to her mother, who looked back at her daughter with a questioning look.
"I am told you mastered the jutsu, so why are you looking over the scroll?"

Naruto sighed at her mother’s question as she gave out a small rant, "Yes, I’ve mastered it, but I’ve never really used it in battle. I’ve used my guns, swords or even Jutsus in a fight, but never my father’s own jutsu to win the day. Hell, Naruko, my half-sister, whom I loved dearly, has used it more than I have in battle. In fact, she only used her sword and the Rasengan against those wannabe dictators that happen to be ninjas in Vegetable Country a few weeks ago, while on my last mission, I only used a fighter to take down my targets."

"Is there something wrong with Naruko using the Rasengan more than you?" Kushina asked with a frown that demanded a good answer.

One Naruto provided, "No, as I did teach it to her so we could have a stronger bond then we had developed the last couple of months together. It just feels like I am failing dad by not carrying on his legacy despite being his flesh and blood."

Kushina sighed in response as she finally got to the heart of the matter, "There is nothing wrong with being your own person my like Naru-Chan."

"I know, but it still doesn't help I feel like I failed him somehow," Naruto admitted as she shifted into a more confrontable position. "That is why I decided to look at father's scroll, hoping to see if there was more to the Rasengan that I could use." Naruto then gave a small smirk as she added, "I just could not believe that the Rasengan was an incomplete jutsu."

"Oh yes, your father was hoping to add his Wind Element to the Rasengan to make what he felt was the ultimate jutsu to end the war," Kushina smiled as she gave a few tears go as she remembers the man she loved. "It was just a shame Minato-Kun just didn't have time to complete it due to the Third Shinobi War, getting the Hiroshima down and becoming Hokage. Though he was close and given another year, he could've made it on his own."

"Yeah, I thought the same thing too," Naruto had admitted. "Hell with a shadow clone to help stabilize it and if I had time, I bet I could get it down to. However, I don't think even a month will allow me to get the version my father wanted."

"Then I guess it would be a long time before the Rasengan is useful to you, my child," Kushina stated sadly.

"Yes, if I used wind elements in the Rasengan, but I don't plan to spend my free time on such endeavor at the moment, for while my father was a genius, he did overlook one thing about the Rasengan."

"And what's that?" Kushina asked with a raised eyebrow.

"That while it would be difficult for the Rasengan to be used with the wind element, it would not be as difficult to use other elements for the Rasengan," Naruto smirked as her eyes gleamed with excitement as water and lightning danced within her minds.

End Flashback

And now was the time to see her hard work in action as a spear of water danced within her hands, creating a swirl of death as she stared down the scared traitor, begging for his life. His pleas fell on death ears as she used 'Water Style: Rasenneten Jutsu,' on her first living target and it was horrifying. Like the original Rasengan, the Rasenneten works as a mini twister that shreds and tears the target it hit. However, where the Rasengan twist and shreds over a localized area, the Rasenneten not only
caused damage in a localized area, it also uses the water inside the target to twist and shred its victim. Bones cracked and broke under the strain, organs were twisted and shredded from the mini whirlpool inside Aoi, and Aoi did not even have time to scream before he died. A death caused by the fact that his blood and liquefied brain began to pour out of his ears, nose, and mouth the moment Naruto hit him.

Naruto had killed a ninja in such a horrific, yet painless death as Naruto sighed and looked up into the sky, "I did it, dad, I completed your Jutsu. I hope you're proud and the other Rasengan aren't as bloody as this one was made out to be," Naruto added as she shook her numbed hand before she pulled out two scrolls, one for the broken sword and the other for Aoi's corpse.

After a quick clean up and sealing of metal and limp bodies, Naruto made a dash out of the clearing to meet up with the others as her two summons looked sadly at their summoners. Showing pity as they dispersed, ending the summons part to what has been a long race.

Scene VIII

At the Todoroki Shrine, Jirōchō Wasabi and his daughter Ayame waited with concern. It has been several hours since the race had started and neither racer had reached the finish line. While no surprise for normal racers, Idate was no ordinary racer and the fact that Kyūroku Wagarashi looked smug did not make Jirōchō feel right. In addition, with several hours to go before the race would be called a tie, Jirōchō bit his lip and held his concerned daughter when Ayame noticed something beyond the horizon.

Ayame yelled out, "Look," as she pointed as Idate finally appeared as he climbs up the remaining steps before he made a mad dash to the finish line. The crowd cheering as dust followed Idate's trail, allowing the four ninjas to remain hidden as he crossed the finish line. The Wasabi family had won the race as Ayame ran to Idate, hugging him for dear life. Jirōchō Wasabi smiled, giving the Leaf-nins a nod of respect when the Minster for Degarashi Port stopped any celebration, "Hold it! This race is invalid!"

"What are you talking about?" Jirōchō growled as he noticed Kyūroku had moved right next to the Minster.

"My racer, Fukusuke Hikyakuya was found dead just a few minutes ago, murdered by a ninja, possible by one of yours," Kyūroku stated with a small smirk.

"That's a lie!" Tukiko yelled as the crowd was brought into a frenzy. "We were not hired to kill any of the racers. The only one that sent assassins was you!"

"One of which hit your runner while we got ours to safety," Haku pointed as she got out her gas propelled crossbow.

"So you claim, but until a thorough investigation takes place, Idate and the Leaf-nins will be taken into custody," the Minister smirked as a large contingent of men came forward, most of which were Wagarashi men.

Team Vixens' stiffen at the deceleration and prepare for battle. Naruto herself prepared a lightning version of the Rasengan behind her back when she noticed that the shadows on the ground were moving. Naruto dispersed the jutsu and smirked when suddenly the corrupt soldiers and Wagarashi workers could no longer move. They were under the Nara's 'Shadow Possession Jutsu,' trapped before the eyes of a confused Minister and Kyūroku. Both of which were held at sword-point by their own bought and paid for the officer.
Enraged, Kyūroku demanded answers, "What is the meaning of this? Why are you holding your boss and his friend at sword-point?"

"Because they are under our control," said the now revealed Shikamaru Nara, accompany by his massive teammate in red armor, Chōji, who was guarding him and the blond girl in a purple kunoichi battle dress, Ino. The latter was standing upright and as if she was asleep while holding the two corrupt men who looked enraged.

"WHO ARE YOU AND WHY DID YOU STOP US!?" Kyūroku demanded to know, in which Shikamaru answered in a bored tone.

"Troublesome, we are Team 10, aka Team Detective and we are here to arrest you."

"You can't do this, Fire Country has no rights," the Minister sputtered as Shikamaru gave a lazy chuckle.

"Not unless your Daimyō says otherwise," Shikamaru and the men he controlled pointed to a large, normally jolly man, surrounded by an over thirty samurai. It was the Daimyō of Tea Country, and he did not look happy, especially standing next to a young yakuza thug beside him in chains, being held in place by a scared man. It did not take long to figure out why the Daimyō was here as the two men paled in response.

"My lord, this is just a misunderstanding we were-" The man started to plead but was stopped by the Daimyō.

"Silence! I am not here to hear your excuses! Thanks to my own men and Team Detective's hard work unraveling your criminal empire, I have enough evidence to not only dismiss dozens of officials and officers under your payroll but to have you all tried and executed."

"My Lord, please don't-"

"Be quiet cur! As of this moment, the Wagarashi family is no more. The Wasabi is now in charge of Degarashi Port while I sort through all the trading posts that you lent to the Shadōburēdo Yakuza family. It's a shame that the lieutenant escaped back to his boss, but I'll settle for all of you," the Tea Daimyō growled before he turned to his Captain of Tea's Samurai. "Take them away."

The man complied under the cheers of the crowd as he followed orders after Shikamaru and Ino let them go, much to Ino's relief as she shivered, "Ewe, that man had one dirty mind. I am defiantly going to take a long shower, and up my training when we get back to block such thoughts."

"I think you've gotten a lot stronger since we've first started, Ino," Chōji said softly, which Ino nodded in thanks.

"Thanks, Chōji, you're a great friend," Ino answered with a smile, which Chōji returned as Team Vixen approached Shikamaru.

"Thanks for the help Shikamaru, if you guys hadn't come, things would have gotten very messy," Naruto stated, which Shikamaru nodded in response.

"It's no problem, glad we could make things less troublesome for a change," Shikamaru smirked as Tukiko looked around.

"Where's your Jōnin Commander, we have something to discuss with him," Tukiko stated, as Haku silently pleaded with Tukiko not to report Idate.
A pointless concern as Shikamaru looked over to the Daimyō and the scared man in a black trench coat meeting with the Wasabi family and offering their congratulation. "He's over there with the Daimyō, ready to protect them if need be."

It was only then that Team Vixen looked closer and realized that the scared man was not just any man, but the Jōnin Commander of the T&I. Ibiki Moreno was staring down at his younger brother with concern, "So you won the Todoroki Shrine Race. Congratulations, it's a great achievement for someone so young."

"Only thanks to the training I received in the past, and my drive to make up for all my mistakes," Idate stated with a few tears as the man nodded thoughtfully.

"You remind me of my younger brother," Ibiki stated with a warm smile on his face. "He was very dear to me, and I think if he grew up just like you did, I would've been proud of him."

"I think he would have been prouder to hear you say that," Idate started to tear up a bit and he gave a small smile of relief as his past was over and the future looked good.

Especially since Ayame stepped up to state, "Mr. Morino, Idate and I plan to marry soon. Would you like to be Idate's best man when the time comes?"

"More than anything," Ibiki nodded as the three talked in earnest, roping in Ayame's father and Daimyō who promised to officiate the upcoming wedding while Team Vixen and Team Detective looked on.

"Well, I guess that settles that, Idate will not be taken back to Konoha. Otherwise, Ibiki would've ordered us to arrest him," Hinata pointed out, much to Tukiko's displeasure.

The Uchiha grumbled as Naruto turned towards Shikamaru to ask, "Were you able to capture the leader of the local yakuza."

The Nara shook his head negatively, "No and it was a shame as he was the current head of the Shadōburēdo family. There are a lot of murders for which he is responsible for, and it would be less troublesome to have them closed with his arrest."

"I'm sure his fate will soon be sealed," Naruto noted encouragingly to the young ninja, never realizing how right she was.

Scene IX

The head of Shadōburēdo Yakuza was not happy. His lieutenant returned home to inform him that they had lost their operation in Tea Country, costing him millions in products and clients. Subsequently, he was called by the other crime lords to a meet, probably to make fun of his failures. So now, he and his lieutenant had to disarm themselves to take a seat at a large rectangular table within neutral territory with the various other crime lords that brought the same complaints as he did. Among the called meeting group, only the next in line officer and two bodyguards were armed.

Around the room were several families of great importance in the Criminal Underworld. To his right was his chief rival, Gokuesen (a gangster teacher) Yakuza, led by a tough woman who loved to teach people by causing them pain. To his left were the head of the Red Dragons and Blue Serpents Triads, killers who specialized in kidnapping, extortion and making others disappear. Continuing up the right side of the table were Blazing Winds and Trinity Cartels, traders that focused on illegal goods like drugs, and were willing to kill to make sure they were the only market around. Across from the Cartels were the Fire and Lightening Mafias, businessmen who specialized in protection...
details, and revenge killing. Then finally, the ones across from Yakuza were the triads including the White Fangs, Razor Backs, Black Locusts and Red Leaves Gangs, criminals who did not specialize in one area, but they had their hands in every criminal activity.

The most powerful of the gangs were the White Fangs, the leader of which rose up to call the meeting to order. "Thank you for coming. Over the past five years, advanced technology and ever eager governments hoping to wipe out our enterprises have gained traction against our interests, with the debacle in the Tea Country being the latest hit." The head of the Shadōburēdo grumbled as the White Fang leader continued his speech. "Because of this, we have all come here to suggest ideas on how we are going to solve this problem, starting with the man who called us all here."

It was then that every crime lord turned their attention to the head of the Shadōburēdo, much to his confusion, "Why are you all staring at me?"

"You did call this meeting, didn't you," his rival asked with panic in her voice.

"No, I thought you called this meeting to humiliate me," the head of the Shadōburēdo answered his rival, and he too entered into a panic that all shared.

Especially the head of the Blazing Winds asked, "If you didn't call this meeting, who did?"

"That would be moi," answered a perceptive voice that walked in.

The crime lords turned to see a redheaded, dark-skinned man with a Mohawk who strutted into the meeting as if he owned the joint, which made one crime lord from the Red Leaves rise up to yell, "Who are you?"

"I am Elite Jōnin Commander, Condor Uzumaki, a pleasure to… well not a pleasure to meet you. Hell, it is not even nice to meet you the men and woman have been the dark side of the Elemental Countries. Therefore, I'll just say hello. Hello," Condor stated as tilted his head to infuriate the crime lords that sputtered.

"Why are you here Uzumaki scum?" the head of the Red Dragons demanded.

"I think I already answered that, didn't I. Are you stupid as well ugly? Well no matter, to answer your question, I am the one who called this meeting so I can have your undivided attention," Condor explained again to the angry criminals before him.

"How? How were you able to call this meet?" asked the head of the Shadōburēdo.

"Through your lieutenant, who was a double agent for the Uzumaki for years," Condor explained much to the shock of the man.

"What is your command, my lord?" asked the traitor of his true master.

"You know what is coming, so step out of the way and be ready for your part," Condor stated as the man nodded with fanatic enthusiasm and moved off into the shadows, never to be seen again as the rest of Condor's guests looked at the half Uzumaki with curiosity.

"So why did you call this meeting?" asked the head of the Lightening Mafias. "Is it to threaten us or hire us for a job?"

"Neither," Condor admitted. "You see, if the Uzumaki wanted to negotiate with you, they would send someone, well anyone else if I am being realistic. For you see, I am the one the Uzumaki send for missions that are unorthodox, bloody or both," Condor added as a loud swishing sound was
heard of a body crashing onto the floor from the shadows and came into focus.

The men and woman quickly found out they were not human, much to their horror. They were thin, flexible robots armed to the teeth with guns and long clawed arms. The various crime lords realized they were going to die as Condor laughed at their expense, "And what was this mission you asked, why your deaths."

That was the crime lord's last warning as the MIR-130s descended on them as Condor explained his plan.

"And what a glorious chaos your deaths will bring!" Condor exclaimed as robots began to tear apart the various criminals, starting with bodyguards.

There screams where heard as Condor continued his speech, "When your men find your bodies, their first instinct would be to blame each other, thinking one of you betrayed the other. And why wouldn't they think that way, you would betray each other if you could and they all know that to be true. Scumbags are so predictable when corruption and power are involved," Condor stated, as the last bodyguards were put down by the MIR-130s.

"So your men will rally and start a war amongst each other, killing their neighbors in the pursuit of revenge," Condor added as the crime lords tried to escape but found the exits blocked, making it all the easier to kill.

"Eventually, after a week, at most, of fighting, many will question who's in charge, and when that happens even more chaos happens," Condor giggled as the triads tried to get the weapons they left at the door only to find a MIR-130 waiting for them before it slaughters them.

"They'll begin arguing against each other and soon lead to more violence as brothers and sisters of arms turn on each other," Condor smirked, as various gangs that tried to crawl out through the boarded windows were secured like pigs by the MIR-130s, showing that escape was indeed impossible for them.

"And after the escalating violence, the various governments and military organizations will have to crack down on the mob-like violence, wiping your lot out to restore the peace against retaliation strikes that are sure to come. Giving the Uzumaki the time we need from prodding eyes," Condor continued to smirk, as the surviving Mafias and Yakuzas grabbed weapons off of their dead bodyguards to make a last stand and were, in turn, put down.

The MIR-130s finished the last one as Condor finished his speech, "So I thank you all for your glorious contribution to the Uzumaki. You and our spy… um, what's his name again? Hm, who cares, will be remembered in years to come. Thank you so much," Condor bowed as the head of the Shadōburēdo was the last to fall, bringing untold chaos in what would be the first strike upon the world. War is coming, and only Uzumaki knew it to be so.

Chapter End Notes

Done with this part 2 story, hope you enjoy it. Do not forget to review and tell me what you think of not only the girl's summons but also the new elemental Rasengan, descriptions seen below.
In addition, note, I wish to hear any ideas for Fire and Earth style jutsus of the Rasengan. Please review or PM me your thoughts you may have on any new names and techniques for a Fire and Earth style Rasengan as I am open to new ideas.

A) Okay, I'd admit having Naruto add elements to the Rasengan was more so that the Rasengan does not feel completely useless as she hasn't had a real need for it or used it much in this story. So along with 'Wind Style: Rasenshuriken Jutsu,' she will be making four more elemental jutsus. Two of the five she has already mastered since I figured they would be easiest for the Rasengan, the water and lightning elements.

'Water Style: Rasenneten Jutsu' (Twisting Spiral Jutsu) is a water-based version of the Rasengan, whose appearance is a ball made of water. Advantages is that outside of only requiring slightly more chakra then a standard Rasengan, it can be used as one hit, one kill jutsu against an organic target as it uses the water inside of a person to twist and shred internal organs and bones apart. Disadvantages are that it is only so powerful against organic or water-based targets the Rasengan can hit directly (meaning amour could save the user) and using enough consecutive times can cause severe, if not permeant damage to the user's hand.

'Lightning Style: Rasenshuryūdan Jutsu' (Spiral Grenade Jutsu) is a lightning based version of the Rasengan, whose appearance is that of a ball made of lightning. Advantages outside of requiring slightly more chakra then a standard Rasengan, it can be thrown like a grenade to creates an electric explosion over a large area, killing or disabling multiple targets. Disadvantages are that if the user throws it too close to an ally or themselves, they also can be electrocuted. Not to mention compared to another version, organic targets are more likely to survive it if far enough away from the blast radius, or if they are strong enough to shrug it off.

'Wind Style: Rasenshuriken Jutsu' is a wind-based version of the Rasengan, whose appearance is a shuriken shape hurricane storm. Advantages is that is a jutsu one can throw, is a potent technique, and it can be used against a single or multiple targets depending on the amount of power put into it. Disadvantages is that requires a huge amount of chakra, great chakra control to stabilize it, and it is very likely to damage, if not kill the user upon use.
Troubled Souls and Dunes

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto, and there will be no Bolt or redeemed Sasuke in this story, that is a promise.
Beta Rader: Albert
Last Update: 09/08/2018

Scene I

Early in the morning at Konoha's General Hospital, a purple-haired woman smiled with understanding from her bed as she looked at her daughter's green eyes, as she related what had happened since her mother had entered the hospital after the Sand and Sound invasion on Konoha.
"The entire criminal underworld is in chaos as whole criminal organizations are now splintering to fight with each other for control. I suspect that soon my team will be deployed in a search and destroy mission to wipe out these criminals," Revan explained to her mother, who had finally awakened from her coma.

"That's interesting dear, and later on I probably will have more questions about the criminal underworld going berserk, but right now I am more interested in hearing more about you dating Night Wolf. He is quite handsome after all," Roth smiled as Revan sputtered some nonsense in embarrassment before she regained her cold control.

"Mother please, every country is fighting to regain control over this criminal based civil war, and you're worried about me dating Night Wolf?"

"What can I say, a mother has priorities and having a few grandbabies to dote on is a higher priority than criminals killing each other," Amell Roth said as Revan gave her a small smile.

A smile Revan lost as she asked her mother, "So how long will you be here before they let you out?"

"Very soon but I am told that my shinobi career is over. Though I guess, I should be thankful that I didn't die. It would have been a sure thing if Raven Hunter didn't get me to safety," Amell Roth admitted as her daughter scowled remembering how close her mother had been to death.

"Diablo should pay for his crimes," Revan snarled as Amell gazed up at her daughter with a startled look and was about to say something when Night Wolf came barging in with Bastila.

"I'm sorry to interrupt Revan, Ms. Amell, but the Hokage requested our presence for a high priority mission. It can't be delayed," Night Wolf stated as Amell looked up at her daughter.

"We will talk later my dear, right now you have a mission to complete, and you best get to it."

"Yes mother," Revan said before she gave her mother a big hug. "You take care of yourself mother."

"You take care and watch out for your sister. Kami knows what she is up to sometimes due to being a scatterbrained. Or that is what I assume she is for forgetting to visit me once in a while," Amell laughed as Bastila groaned.
"Mother, please I am a grown woman, I don't need to be looked after," Bastila complained while her mother chuckled.

"I know honey, but no matter how old you are, you will always be my little girl," Amell smiled before giggling. "But I will take it under consideration if you visit me more often."

Bastila sighed in response, "I'll try mother, but with how things are, I am not likely to have much free time. My ability in Battle Meditation and our current situation ensures that I must be in constant readiness if Fire Country is invaded. Along with being assigned to high-risk missions like the one of defending that fat royal prince and his bratty son in Moon Country, I have almost no personal time to visit you." Bastila then sighs as she gave a small smile, "But I'll try to visit more none the less."

Amell gave a tired smile and hugged her youngest daughter, "Take care and be careful, all of you."

Team 6, aka Team Spirit, nodded as they went out the door. Raven Hunter settled into a chair and sat next to Amell. A worried look under his dark visage broke as he asked, "Are you alright?"

"I will be, eventually," Amell stated as she gave a small smile. "I do worry about Revan. She never takes betrayal well since the Uchiha attempted a coup. With Sand Force's betrayal and me nearly getting killed because of it, I'm sure it just makes it worse."

"You think it will be a problem?" Raven Hunter asked.

"I hope not, but you never know until it's too late," Amell admitted to herself as she hopped whatever the mission was that her daughter could handle it both physically and physiologically.

Scene II

At the Hokage's tower, pure chaos ruled as men and woman of every rank scrambled for control. Mission requests were at an all-time high, calling for any form of protection that the village could muster. Some of them had to be turned down due to not only the sheer volume of mission requests but also because the Assembly of Lords and Representatives had ordered Leaf Forces to assist Fire Country's army in restoring order. Whole villages had been put under martial law since this mess started, leaving outside forces alone to their own devices. It was the start of a terrible mess, as the Hokage herself could not resist taking a big slug of Saki, much to her black-haired assistant's dismay.

"Lady Tsunade! Now is not the time to drink!" Shizune exclaimed as the new, busty Hokage turned to stare at her assistant with bloodshot eyes.

"Now is the perfect time to drink," Tsunade growled as the stress of the job burned through the alcohol faster than she could drink it. "I've gotten reports of pure chaos in not only Fire Country, but in every country in the Elemental Countries. I've gotten requests for help from countries I didn't know even existed until their request for help. I got a list of over a hundred unsolved murders that happened this week alone, along with a list of ninjas, samurais, and soldiers killed in the line of duty that I have to hold a funeral for after end this mess. I had to send every available ninja and then some to restore order, and the only thing to show for it is reported stating that it's only expanding. So yes, now Is The Time To Drink For If I Am Going TO BE Plastered, IT Might AS Well BE Because OF THE Alcohol AND NOT Because I AM SO TIRED THAT I CAN'T REMEMBER MY OWN NAME!" Tsunade yelled and slammed her fist so hard it not only caused Shizune to jump, but it also cracked the surface of the reinforced desk made as hard as metal thanks to seals plastered on it.

Tsunade sighed as she used her Mokuton (Tree Release) bloodline to repair the desk before she looked up to her assistant, "Are Team Vixen and Spirit here yet?"
"Yes Sensei, they are just waiting outside of the door," Shizune answered with a sharp nod.

Tsunade regained the regal cool that had been drilled into her as a child before she signaled Shizune to bring them in, "Send them in."

Shizune nodded as she opened the door to allow Team Vixen and Team Spirit with Jōnin Inferno Pyro leading them in, "Lady Hokage, you called for us."

"Yes, please gather around, I've got an important mission for all of you," Tsunade motioned them all in.

"You okay, gran-Lady Tsunade Senju, you look tense?" Naruto asked after a quick correction when she noticed Tsunade's evil glare.

Tsunade continued to glare but turned to a more comedic glare when she stated, "Let's say there is a reason Sarutobi was quick to dump this job on someone else that was competent enough to take it. Are you still interested in the job?"

"Not right now," Naruto quickly answered. "For I think I am too young for such a stressful job even with Hinata and my team backing me up. Maybe I would in a few years after I had a few hundred more missions under my belt."

"Are you sending us out for another search and destroy mission?" Tukiko asked. "This would make the fifth one in these last three weeks alone."

"No, for this is more important than a simple search and destroys mission," Tsunade stated before she explained the mission. "With the entire continent in chaos and the Uzumaki reportedly on the move, this mess has accelerated the need for our negotiations with Wind Country and Sand Forces to take place. Your mission is to escort the current Kazekage, Diablo Dante and his team back to Suna to…"

And just like that, Revan stopped listening as she surrendered herself to anger. Her fist tightening as the Hokage explained they were needed to stand witness and sign the treaty that would mean a renewed military alliance between their villages. Revan did not care how important the mission was, or how much they needed local allies in Wind Country to ensure none of the criminal organizations regrouped there. But she does not really care about that. Wind Country's ninja force was currently crippled to the extent that it was now listed as a minor village and in her mind, she asks why they do not just let them stay crippled? She only released her anger was taking over when she felt Night Wolf touch her shoulder while Haku, Tukiko, and Bastila looked concerned about their fellow comrade.

Haku, however, had to let it go as Tukiko asked, "Ma'am, not to turn down such an important mission, but shouldn't this be left to the Jōnin rank ninjas. Hell, to sign a treaty generally requires at least an Elite Jōnin to do it."

"I know, but nearly all my Jōnin are out on assignment or are needed here to defend Konoha. Therefore, I have decided to give out an early gift to you all," the Tsunade smiled as she pulled out a new set of vests. "Congratulations, Tukiko Uchiha, Haku Momochi, Hinata Hyūga, Bastila Roth and Night Wolf, due to exemplary service and code of conduct, you all are hereby given the temporary rank of Special Jōnin. The same can be said for Naruto Ryū, and Revan Roth, who will be given the temporary rank of Jōnin, and Inferno Pyro will be given the temporary rank of Elite Jōnin. Perform well on this mission, and this will be your permanent rank."

This got all of them excited, as all of them were promoted one-step in their rank and Bastila was promoted two steps. Though it also made them cautious as Hinata asked, "Ma'am, not to sound ungrateful but why the huge promotion? Doesn't it seem like your bribing us?"
"Are you kidding?!" Tsunade exclaimed in shock. "Do you know how many promotions I am going to be handing out over these next couple of weeks?" Tsunade asked and sighed when the two teams shook their heads. "Dozen, perhaps near a hundred due to services rendered. Your fellow classmates, Team 10, now known as Team Detective is probably going to increase in rank by one or two steps due to being permanently being assigned outside the village, solving a dozen samurai and ninja related crimes over the last two weeks alone. All my assault and capture teams are probably going to increase in rank as well due to surviving half a dozen hazardous missions they were assigned. You all being promoted to Jōnin will be needed with the dozens of Genins and Special Chūnin being promoted to Chūnin of all ranks. Plus, I can trust you, girls, and boys, to handle this responsibility, is that understood?"

"Yes ma'am!" the group yelled in unison.

"Good, now I think it's time you met your escort, Shizune," Tsunade ordered, and Shizune bowed in acceptance as she brought in the Sand-nins.

Leading the pack was the now designated Kazekage Diablo Dante, a man Revan had developed a real hatred for as she stared at the older man before she turned away to look at familiar members of the Sand Team that Naruto knew personally, especially one particular member of the team. "Gaara, is that you?" Naruto asked as she looked at a redhead in shinobi style dark red robes.

"Hello Naruto, it's been a long time," Gaara stated as he gave a slight nod to his fellow Jinchūriki.

"I'll say, you look a lot better than the last time I saw you," Naruto commented out loud, as she looked at the new and improve Gaara.

Gone was the small boy with dark rings around his dark green eyes that Naruto fought, for he transferred into a short young man with vibrant green eyes and a strong body. An improvement matched by his demeanor that now appeared more calculated than psychotic, much to the happiness of his blonde sister in the black and purple kunoichi dress.

"He's been doing a lot better since you helped him, so thank you," Temari bowed in response, much to Naruto's amusement.

"It's no problem, I'm happy I was able to help Gaara," Naruto smiled with a small blush from the praise given to her as Hinata moved a little closer to Naruto as she gave a pleasant/threatening smile back.

The youth was nervous by the stare as the new Kazekage gave a slight nod to the Hokage. "If everything is ready, I am ready to proceed home. I have much to do and implement with our new treaty," Diablo stated with a curt nod to Tsunade, who nodded back.

"The main gate is open, and I've gotten permission to use one of our vehicles for transport. A Bedrock Truck since it will be a bit crowded in a standard Phantom Attack Fighter and some of you hate flying, so stay safe," Tsunade ordered as Leaf Force stood in attention while Sand Forces filed away.

As Sound Forces left, they were followed by Leaf Forces except for Night Wolf son of Wolf Dreamer, Bastila Roth, Tukiko Uchiha, and Haku Momochi, a fact not lost on Tsunade, "Is there something I can help you with?"

"Yes," Bastila stated with a nervous tone. "I don't want to say bad things about my sister, but it may have been a mistake to give her this mission."
"Especially with the angry looks she threw the representatives' way," Tukiko stated as Haku nodded away.

"More specifically, at Diablo," Haku added before Tukiko continued the conversation.

"Exactly! Though I don't blame her, he's the one responsible for nearly killing her mom and would have if medics were a little slow that day and that's not considering her disdain with our new allies."

Tsunade raised an eyebrow for the three to continue, as Night Wolf remained silent. Bastila obliged Tsunade as she continued, "My sister hates traitors more than anything. When we talk about the Uchiha incident, she gets this look of extreme anger and vengeance, and she always comments that they 'got what they deserved,' and that belief is mild compared to what she thinks of Sand Force. To Revan, when it comes to others, all that matters is can she trust their word. And the Sand Forces lost her trust of them when they betrayed the alliance and their own country for such selfish reasons. The fact we forgive them only adds to anger, which is dwarfed by the fact of how close they came to killing her mother."

"Sounds like this could be a problem, should I take her off this mission?" Tsunade asked as the four ninjas before her when the only boy among them admitted the truth.

"I won't lie for my girlfriend, I am worried about her. However, I think when it comes down to it, she'll see the mission through to the end and frankly, I think she needs this more than anything. As my father would say, 'it's easy to hate an enemy you know little about, but it's tough to hate them when you see them as people.'"

Tsunade thought it over for a few minutes before she agreed, "Okay, but know this, if she kills Diablo, not only will she'll face charges of treason, but I will hold all of you responsible for the chaos added onto my lap. Is that understood?"

"Yes ma'am," the four acknowledged.

"Then dismiss," Tsunade has ordered, and the four did not waste time disappearing from the meeting as they got into the vehicle.

Scene III

Deep within the desert of Wind Country stood stark mountains seemingly devoid of all life, or so it seems as a black-haired, blue-eyed woman ninja ran towards the mountains, followed by a dark-skinned, black-eyed and haired individual. They were rushing to a hidden valley home where dozens of thugs, rogue ninjas and samurai were holed-up. They rushed into a hidden cave that serves as their headquarters and home of their leader. The leader was a young man with muscular arms and long scars along his body. He looked over a map; listing targets that he has planned to have raided, or already had attacked. He was a man who was always aware of his surroundings as he bellowed out orders without looking, "Report now Aleta, Sunaba."

The woman, Aleta bowed as her silent partner remained motionless as she gave the good news, "My lord, the current Kazekage of Suna is returning home with a small escort of Sand-nins and Leaf-nins. They should be passing by this area soon so we can easily hit them if you desire."

The man smiled as he stated, "Good, good senorita. Now is the time for the Blazing Wind Cartel to take the village away from my weak uncle and make Suna the military power it should have been. Move out and get the men into position!"

"Yes, Lord Gonzola!" Aleta saluted as she and Sunaba left the man with his satisfied smile as he
planned his revenge.

Scene IV

Deep within the mountain range, an M-75 Bedrock Truck drove along. The M-75 was a large, armored closed truck used for long-range troop/cargo transport with limited defense. Its armament consisted primarily of the automated turret on top. Still, it was more than a match against bandits as it rode off into the desert devoid of life. It was clean sailing as Naruto drove the vehicle with Hinata and Gaara in the front seats making small talk to keep her company while the others sat in the back in very comfortable seats.

"So, it looks like you're going to be assigned to a Genin team back home?" Naruto asked Gaara, who nodded in response as Hinata looked surprised.

"Not to sound condescending or mean, but I have to ask… why would they allow your team to take on Genin considering your teams' rank and… well… your former reputation?" Hinata asked softly.

Gaara knew what she meant as he said softly, "Let's just say they had no choice since most of the higher-ranking ninjas are dead or retired due to not only our brief war but father secretly eliminating anyone popular enough that could threaten to usurp his rule as Kazekage. Pakura, one of our most powerful ninjas and a master of the scorch release was a particularly devastating blow, and that combined with the war he planned to lead us in before his untimely death has made it so it will take decades, if not centuries before we recover, assuming we do recover."

"Sorry," Naruto and Hinata mumbled, making Temari snort in response.

"Don't be, it was war, and we all paid for the stupidity of my father," Temari added as she gave a side-glance of sorrow to Gaara before she shook off her regret as she recomposed herself. Her brother took over the conversation.

"I'm just glad the village won't have to pay much in repercussions. We have suffered enough as it is," Kankurō stated, much to the partial agreement of most of his listeners.

One who disagreed entirely was Revan as she stated, "Or maybe not enough."

The cabin soon got quiet as Diablo stared at the young woman before him, "You have a problem young lady?"

"Yes, I do," Revan had answered despite the warning glare from her former Sensei, Inferno. "I have a problem that we're joining up with a village that betrayed us, not out of loyalty or a sense of survival, but greed and self-entailment. I've read the report. The Fourth Kazekage, your former leader, was a greedy man who mishandled funds, missions and even had several of his own subordinates assassinated for he felt they were a threat to his rule while feeding the greed of others. And while you're Daimyō didn't make life easier, the fact you care how little he was concerned about the welfare of his entire country concerns me on how loyal you are."

"Loyalty, such a queasy concept one must ask," Diablo stated as he went into a form open for debate. "Is one's loyalty to their village more important than one's nation that supports one's village? Is one expected to be less loyal to friends, family, and comrades you have known for years, over the people that you never met, outside of photos and papers that dedicate how you live your life? For me, I have greater loyalty to the people I worked with than some Daimyō I only recently met in person. And while I suspect some of the things you pointed out occurred, I was ignorant to most of it as all I knew was that we as a village were no longer well off and something had to be done. So, I followed my orders and paid for it as I watched several of my friends and comrades die in Konoha's
"Still that does not give you right to attack," Revan practically yelled as he looked down the older man. "Especially since you nearly got my mother killed!"

"Your mother?" Diablo asked as Revan pulled out her stick to summon her purple blade.

The group was tense, ready to intervene when revelation entered Diablo's eyes. "So, you're Amell's child. She was the only Roth that I fought that day that lived. You have my sympathies but it was war, I fought for survival, and she wouldn't let me escape. So, I did what needed to be done, it was nothing personal."

Revan stared at the man, tensed before she deactivated the blade and sighed out, "I know, and that is the only reason I don't kill you for what've you done." Revan then put up her stick and the others relaxed before she stated, "But know this, I will be watching you, and if you betray us again, I will kill you!"

That was Revan's last words on the matter for at that exact moment, the cosmos decided to interfere as there was a loud bang under the truck one moment, and the next the truck was flipped onto its back. The passengers dangling from their seat belts before another loud bang and the truck now landed right side up. Dizzy, Inferno unbuckled just in time for the truck to be hit again, flinging him to the truck's sidewall as it was flipped again.

Inferno growled as Tukiko yelled out, "What hit us?"

"Enemy ninjas using 'Earth Style: Earth Pillars Jutsu,'" Naruto replied as her sensors screamed enemy contacts and symmetric activity. "They're keeping us unbalanced as they get us closer to a sand pit!" Naruto yelled as another enemy ninja used 'Earth Style: Earth Pillars Jutsu,' to flip them again to the other vehicle's side with Inferno landing on his feet.

"Enough!" Inferno yelled before he jumped up, jettisoned the door, and leaped outside to see an enemy ninja powering up another Jutsu.

He did not get the chance to use it when Inferno used 'Blaze Style: Fireball Jutsu' to set the ninja on fire. The flames quickly cooking the ninja's skin to ash as Inferno dodged a half dozen arrows. He looked up to see thugs, samurai-rōnins, and missing-nins come his way. Inferno was avoiding its archers until the sand itself wrapped around the group unexpectedly and crushed several of the archers. The criminals stopped to see Gaara was outside the truck, facing them with a quiet glare as the rest of the Leaf and Sand ninjas came out to face them.

The battle soon turned into a massacre of the criminals despite the disadvantages the ninjas faced, mainly due to the dry air that made it almost impossible to use most water and ice jutsus. However, that did not stop Haku or Hinata, as Haku used her crossbow to kill the remaining archers while Hinata jointed the frontlines with the Roth sisters and Kankurō's puppets. All the while, Night Wolf and Temari corralled the attacking crowd into a single spot using wind attacks/jutsus as Inferno and Tukiko used kunai, guns, and fire Jutsus on individuals outside forcing them into a group.

Corraling the attacking force right into Gaara's trap as he raised a whole wave of sand to crush them, but one of the missing-nins saw it coming and used 'Earth Style: Rock Wall Jutsu' to block the initial attack. While two others used 'Earth Style: Bedrock Jutsu' to harden the sand into a rocky surface that kept Gaara's sand away, much to his annoyance. The thugs, rōnins, and missing-nins not engaged in close combat smirked, thinking they were safe when they heard electricity and thunder danced in the air.
Naruto was not having a good day; she was tried from the several days' drive only compounded by nausea she felt from being tossed around in the truck, and now people trying to kill her, again. She was angry and wanted to end this quickly, and she had just the jutsu in mind. With her hand concentrated to form the Rasengan before it morphed into a ball of pure electricity, giving off the sound of clicks and cracks as she created 'Lightning Style: Rasenshuryūdan Jutsu.' A ball of lightning that she quickly finished making as she drew her hand back and tossed it as she would have thrown a grenade into the crowd.

The electrical ball of death arced past the rocky wall, past the defense and right into the middle of the horde of criminals and detonated sending out a pulse of pure electricity into the entire crowd. The crowd screamed as their nervous systems received, based on how far away they were from the 'Lightning Style: Rasenshuryūdan Jutsu,' a hundred thousand to ten thousand volts of electricity. Many screamed for only a few seconds before they fell down as charred corpses while the rest followed when the jutsu ran out of juice within twenty seconds of detonation. A few may have survived but the majority was dead, and the last standing was chopped down by Diablo.

The last of them dead, and the air was tense as Revan walked right up to the taller Kazekage, as he sighed, "Are you going to say I betrayed you?"

"No, for they were trying to kill us all by pushing the truck into a sinkhole," Revan admitted, albeit reluctantly before she continued. "However, that doesn't change the fact this was a full-on military ambush despite the armature thugs. But since the ambush was held deep within Wind Country then say ours, or at the border, so I must ask, who wants you dead within Sand Forces?"

"No one I know of," Diablo answered, and Revan did not buy it.

"I don't believe you. Those ninjas knew too much about Sand tactics, especially how to counter Gaara's attack. Someone must have disagreed with something like the peace agreement or thought they should be in charge. So, I want you to talk or so help me I'll-"

"Enough Jōnin!" Inferno yelled as Revan stopped mid-track. "Take a walk, do a survey, do anything to calm down as I do not need an angry subordinate at the moment. Is that understood?"

"Perfectly, sir," Revan growled until Night Wolf went up and gave a comforting squeeze to Revan, snapping the girl out of her anger as she looked up at Night Wolf and then away in shame.

She was guided away by Night Wolf and cooler heads as Naruto looked up to Hinata to ask, "What happened?"

Hinata sighed as she stated, "Let's just say Revan has too much pent-up anger and leave it at that. How's the truck?" Hinata asked to switched subjects away from a sensitive topic from her blunt leader/lover.

"To put it simply, its shot," Naruto sighed in response. "The initial attack was a spike limestone that hit us with enough force to penetrate steel. We are just lucky the armor was made of stronger ablative armor, and the limestone was more brittle as a point then a block, or it would have gone through our feet. However, it still did some internal damage to the cords distributing power. I can fix it, but it will take a few hours. I will get the power tools to open up its bottom half and fix it."

Naruto pulled out a scroll to release the power tools to get to work as Gaara asked, "Do you need me to flip the truck upright?"

"Not right now," Naruto answered as she moved to the truck and started unsealing and unscrewing the fasteners. "The truck power cells were designed to work even if the truck had been flipped on its
top for over a year. It was designed for an era when trucks had to be made as tough as possible and modular enough to replace entire components in case they needed to be replaced quickly. Just give me an hour, and I'll have it fixed well enough to use its wheels and hovering function."

Gaara and Hinata nodded as Naruto began putting the removed bolts from the vehicle into secure patches to keep them safe. Temari and Kankurō looked at the corpses of the dead thugs, rōnins, and missing-nins as they noticed a tattoo on one of the man's forearms. A beautiful artistic design the two recognized as Kankurō yelled out, "Kazekage-Sama, I think I know who attacked us. Sir, it was the Blazing Wind Cartel!"

"What, are you sure?" Diablo asked as he walked over to another body to pull up his sleeve to see the same damned symbol before him as the others spread out, with Team Spirit along with Haku, Tukiko and Temari moved closer to Diablo.

"Do they normally attack vehicles and caravans this far into Wind Country?" Haku asked Diablo, and Temari answered for him.

"They never attack a large caravan or in our case, so heavily armed. They usually scattered if they get a whiff of a heavily armed escort, especially if ninjas or samurais are protecting it. They don't want the big guns going after them if they can help it, especially as most of their crimes deal with extortion and smuggling of illegal goods like drugs."

"Could this be a faction gone bold since the chaos of the underworld?" Bastila asked as Diablo shook his head negatively.

"I don't think so, it would be considered too crazy or-"

"Or just ambitious enough to pull off the ultimate power coup," spoke a voice that seems to be near them. Tensed, the group looked around and tried to find the voice until they heard the same voice state, "Down here on my former subordinate's vest."

The two looked down to see a radio strapped to the vest. A receiver sold to Wind Country's military through trade deals with Fire Country, which meant they were stolen from them. Angered, Diablo picked up the radio to ask, "Who is this?"

"It has been a long time, hasn't its uncle?" asked the voice as Diablo narrowed his eyes.

"Gonzola, it's been a long time," Diablo stated with a flat tone as Gonzola chuckled.

"It's Lord Gonzola now as I have taken command of the Blazing Wind Cartel," Gonzola corrected as Diablo raised an eyebrow in response as some of the group got closer, particularly one that got close.

"How nice, you are a criminal now. I must say I would be impressed if they weren't such weaklings or trash," Diablo stated as Gonzola laughed as the sand under the group's feet began to shift.

"You wound me, especially as they were not there to kill you, though it would be a bonus if they did. No, they were sent to see whom you have among the Leaf Forces with you, and I must say I am surprised to see Team Vixen and Spirit with you. This will make the next set of operations more difficult, but we still will be able to kill you," Gonzola stated as the group felt the sands collapse under them.

The group gave a startled cry of shock as the sand gave way and they drop down deep underground, leaving Diablo to state, "And once you're dead and the village is in chaos my men will move in to take over and make it the military might. See you soon."
The radio clicked off, leaving the odd surviving thugs alone as a few survivors tried to crawl to safety in the vast open desert.

Scene V

Deep underground was a dark cavern devoid of life, which soon would have Diablo as a guest. Diablo slid down through a steep, slanted tunnel burrowed through soft rock. He continued to fall until he disappeared into a cavern and landed feet first on a hard bedrock surface. It took a moment for his eyes to adjust to the dark and he thought he was alone until he heard a second set of feet land near him.

After recovering from the fall, Diablo looked around in the complete pitch black as he called out to his guest, "Who's there?"

He soon got an answer as a purple chakra blade came to life to reveal he was not alone, Revan stood with her weapon held up to attack. The two stared at each other, tensed as Revan stated, "This would be so easy, me alone with you with no one here to stop me from running you through."

The two stood tensed, ready to fight when Revan lowered her weapon as she admitted her truth, "No one that is, but my own conscience. While you have done my harm to my family, you did not do it maliciously. And I cannot bring myself to fight a man who is not my enemy at this time."

Diablo breathed out a sigh of relief as he stated, "Good, I would hate to fight you as we are trying to strengthen our villages' relationship not end it, senorita. But now I have to ask is what do we do now?"

"We should be able to locate my teammates with our standard issue communicators. Let me make a call then we can track them," Revan stated before she pulled out Leaf Forces standard communicator. "This is Revan, calling to all nearby ninjas… Yes, I am here with the Kazekage, he's all right… Yeah, according to trackers on these devices, we are pretty far away from each other… Right, I'll meet up with you guys as soon as we can."

With a click, Revan cut the communicator off as she turned to Diablo, "Okay, the good news is that everyone fell together in groups. With the rest of my team with Tukiko, Haku, Temari, and Kankurō, while Naruto and Hinata are with Gaara. Even better they are all right, though Naruto is cationic for some reason." Revan smiled as she remembers her boyfriend's voice before she got serious. "The bad news is that while they are safe and relatively close once they go through a few tunnels. We are further away and at a lower level. Which means…"

"We were separated on purpose to probably get me killed, and you fell with me because you were close to me," Diablo surmised, and Revan nodded in agreement.

"A very good possibility since there is no way they could plan this beforehand, which means someone dug those tunnels to these caverns. Night Wolf and the rest should count themselves lucky that they were not dropped into a bottomless cavern."

"We should all count ourselves lucky he didn't drop us all to the bottom of pits since its standard tactics for Sand Forces to kill the enemy as quickly and as easily as possible," Diablo pointed out as Revan stared at the Kazekage with a raised eyebrow.

"Would he follow such rules since he was kicked out of Sand Forces?" Revan asked as Diablo put up a thoughtful look before answering truthfully to Revan.

"I don't know."
"You don't know?" Revan asked with surprised stuttered. "But he's your cousin."

"Yes, a cousin I only saw once every year when he was a Sand-nin, and barely interacted due to the large age gap and his immediate family was too annoying to deal with. Honestly, the only things I remember about him was that he was a greedy fuck even as a kid, a pussy, and got kicked out for doing a mission he shouldn't have taken," Diablo admitted as Revan stared dumbfounded.

Revan then stood there in shock for a couple of seconds until Diablo asked, "So, shall you lead us to the rest of our companions, or will we stare at each other until the ground swallows us whole, señorita?"

Revan just nodded as she led Diablo towards their friends, not realizing they were being watched in the shadows.

Scene VI

Deep within the dark tunnels, Inferno, Tukiko, and Bastila led the group as Bastila's double-bladed sword, Tukiko's red flames, and Inferno's blue flames lit the way. Behind them was Haku and a worried Night Wolf followed by Temari and Kankurō. Night Wolf bit his lip as he stared out into the abyss for answers. Kankurō, tired of the silence, broke it with a simple question, "Nervous about your friend, Shinobi and Kunoichi-sans?"

"A bit, Revan is not in the best of moods since taking this mission as you no doubt saw," Haku answered diplomatically as the two Sand-nins snorted in agreement.

"Should we be worried he's alone with her?" Temari asked, as she too had been concerned with Revan being alone with her boss. "She seemed a bit… high strung and stressed."

"I don't think you need to worry about her, for she'll see the mission through… and she would have reported if he died in the fall or if she planned to kill him," Night Wolf admitted, with the last part being more a whisper that stating a fact.

The room was silent until Bastila switched topics by talking about family, specifically the Kazekage's family, "So we are facing his evil cousin. Did the Kazekage mention him by any chance?"

"Not that I know of, but then again, he rarely talks about anything about his personal life, I think I only heard him once talk about his parents. Trying to decide what to get them for the holidays before talking seriously about our training, specifically our lack of training in what he believed to be important."

"I think I heard him talk about his cousin when I was really young at my father's… at the Kazekage's office," Kankurō stated aloud with a minor pause for a simple correction. "I think my father was telling him about his cousin being thrown out of the Shinobi forces with a smug look. Well until he noticed Diablo looked confused, trying to remember if he had a cousin before stating, 'Oh that winning pussy. Whatever,' before getting back to discuss whatever boring thing they were discussing with the Kazekage, who was scowling for he didn't get a rise out of him."

The group was silent after Tukiko's "Wow," before the group became quiet as they trekked through the dark caves, their communicators beeping as they moved deeper into the cave.

That was until they reached a large cavern with glowing lights at the other end. At first, Night Wolf dared to hope it was Revan, that they met her first but reality hit as he remembered whom they were tracking and realized the glow was white glow sticks instead of her purple blade. Gaara stared at Hinata as she comforted Naruto, as she looked out into the dark. The other group looked at the
bizarre scene as Hinata leaned towards Naruto to comment.

"Naruto, I think it's a lost cause?" Hinata said softly as she pointed to the truck that landed hood first into a running muddy stream.

"You don't know that it is just a little submerged," Naruto stated as she pointed to the truck submerged deep in water and soft dirt entirely except for about 30 cm (less than 1ft) of it.

Hinata twitched before she softly sighed in response, "Ignoring the fact that it is mostly under the water, it is also in a sinkhole, and it is slowly sinking underground," Hinata pointed out as the vehicle's visibility continued to sink from view as Naruto looked for a possible way to save the truck.

"Well maybe if we use a strong enough force to pull it… no, that won't work. Any place Gaara can use to grab it with his sand powers will be dissolved underwater, while none of us are strong enough to get it out without a boss level summon and my boss summons won't like it if I summon them for something so menial. Maybe I can use earth or water jutsus to… no, that won't work. The amount of force required would be too great for its engine to survive impact when considering the necessary force needed to reach an escape velocity to send the truck flying onto solid ground. Maybe I can use fire jutsus to vaporize the water and turn the mud solid enough to dig it… no, that won't work. I don't know how the water is refilling this pool or whatever a small underground stream or river is called and making it even more difficult to get out. Not to mention vaporizing whatever materials or highly resisted bacteria in the water would become airborne and we will get to discoverer first hand if it's lethal or not. Not to mention that due to water and now mud sinking through the now open panels underneath the truck, it's possibly suffering irritable damage depending on how clogged or muddy the components are, making it a total loss."

Naruto sighed in defeat as she pulled out the truck keys that had a built-in detonator to destroy Fire Country's vehicles to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. Naruto pressed it, causing a small explosion that gave a small light show, even underwater, as it burned out whatever sensitive electronics were on-board. Naruto looked sadly at the burnt-out wreck of their ride as it submerged underwater, out of sight and out of mind as she turned to face the others in silence.

The silence broke as Gaara asked, "So are you, all right?"

"Yeah, just a bit disappointed that I couldn't save her, even if she were a common truck," Naruto commented before she turned to see the newcomers. "Looks like the gang is all here… well, everyone except for two noticeable exceptions. Where is Revan and Kazekage Diablo?"

"They were separated from us just as you were. But you were considerably closer, so we went to you guys first before we meet up with them," Inferno told Naruto as Night Wolf reported back to Revan and Diablo, never noticing Naruto eyes widen.

"Wait a minute… could the separation be… How far away are they from us?" Naruto asked as she looked suspiciously around the rock walls, noticing some of the tunnels and holes dug where the rock was thin and soft.

"About two hundred meters away and twenty meters above us," Bastila reported.

Naruto's eyes widen in response as she blurted out, "They lead us into a trap."

"Obviously, they separated the Kazekage from us to ambush him after all," Kankurō stated as Naruto shook her head negatively.

"You don't understand; I am not just talking about the Kazekage falling into an ambush. I am talking
about we were dropped close together so the person that did this does not have to hunt us down. And we just sprung our opponent's trap," Naruto explained as she pointed to not only the tunnel the group came from but several others as long, giant, plated worms came out to face them.

All of them with their mouths open to show that some of them had rows of teeth and none of them was fiercer then the giant worm that was the boss summon of worms. A giant white worm that had its odd summoner on top, a crazy human male that was cackling at his opponents, "Yes! Yes! You have all come together, and now you will all be worm food!"

"Who in Kami's name are you?" Kankurō asked as several Leaf, and Sand Ninjas were preparing for combat.

"I am the Worm King, and by order of Lord Gonzola, I had separated you from his targets, and as a reward, I get to kill you all in revenge for calling us worms, you weaklings!" the madman exclaimed as he laughed.

"Wait you dug those tunnels to separate us? Why didn't you make us fall into a bottomless pit if your end game was to kill us all?" Bastila asked with a twitch as Night Wolf slapped his head at the absurdity of their opponent, and for Bastila to give their opponent ideas to what he assumed was an idiotic henchman.

Night Wolf was only partially wrong as the Worm King grumbled, "Well… I would have, but my friends only had a short time notice setting all this up, and we had to make due to the fact a large portion was too heavy or hard for my friends to dig." Night Wolf twitched further at the Worm King admitting his mistake before the crazy one got back on track, "Nevertheless, you will die, and then I will laugh as you are…" The Worm King started to rave until he was cut off by the sounds of the summoners initiating their summons.

A large poof of smoke appeared over giant behemoths before they parted way to reveal a whole cavern filled with summoned wolves, birds of prey, birds of song, foxes and Temari's weasels, a family summon that her father had forgotten and she had rediscovered. A discovery that frightened the Worm King as he eyed the various weasels, foxes, and songbirds with fear, as they were the natural predators of his summons. Especially the giant blue jay and foxes as Naruto summoned them up in eleven words, "You fucked up, and now you're going to pay for it."

The Worm King screamed as his enemy's summons that was twice as tall as humans converged on him in a cadre that would be remembered as the ninjas stared with satisfaction. Yet, they wondered how Revan and Diablo were doing.

Scene VII

Meanwhile, in another set of tunnels, Revan and Diablo were getting closer to their allies as they passed the time in debate of something that had puzzled others for generations, the role of ninjas, "I know how important it is that we become the muscle for our respective countries in the current atmosphere. Nevertheless, I feel like our rush to fill the role has made us lose sight that we are ninjas, the assassins, and spies for our Country. The importance of ninjas is only confounded by the wake of youngsters wanting to learn flashy jutsus or use high powered weapons over effective technique and tactics."

"I do see what you are saying, and in some parts, I agree, but to go completely back to the old ways are impossible," Revan said as she thoughtfully considered the point. "A country does not measure power by its ability to eliminate its enemies and how much it conquers. Nor do most have the ability to get away with murdering political rivals of the ruling lords. We live in an age of balance, where everyone is judged by their actions, how well they can hide such action, how well they keep the
balance and how big of a stick it has to throw at others that threaten their country."

"Maybe," Diablo admitted as he also developed a more thoughtful outlook. "But doesn't that make us no longer ninjas but rather living weapons for our country? Or even that as we take on the role of soldiers as we run protection missions for clients outside of our village."

"Naruto would argue that the ninja name took on a new meaning, but me personally, I argue we are still ninjas of the past, just with some added responsibilities. I know a certain team that fits the criteria of a ninja as they performed a special mission to annex the Vegetables Country as a protectorate by helping Haruno negotiate for her father's former throne after the would-be tyrants suffered accidents," Revan smirked as Diablo looked surprised in return.

"That was you who killed the Janin Brothers and the nobles that conspired with them?" Diablo whistled in surprised as Revan just gave him a look in response.

"I can neither confirmed or deny such claims at this time."

Diablo, cracked a smile in response as he stated, "That is some fine work. Maybe there is hope for your generation after all."

The two laughed and would continue debating other subjects and trading stories when a hulking figure charged through the darkness and proceeded to shoulder tackle right into Revan. The giant man, Sunaba, in armor created by the jutsu 'Earth Style: Rock Armor Jutsu' grabbed Revan during the shoulder tackle and proceeded to rushed to a stone wall and slam Revan into it. However, before he could do some serious damage to the young woman, Revan slipped out of his grip and jumped over the man to slash into his back with her purple blade. The blade was meant to do some severe damage, but his crystal-like armor was able to deflect it, much to Revan annoyance before she was forced to deflect and avoid bladed knuckles from dark-haired muscle, Aleta.

Revan was facing two opponents as Diablo used his reinforced staff to block a cutlass saber strike from his opponent. Diablo then deflected a few more before his cousin, Gonzola Dante got into his face to ask, "Who is the pussy now?" before relenting to strike faster and harder as he forced Diablo back and unable to go on the offensive.

A situation similar to what Revan was experiencing as she dealt with two very different fighters, Aleta was a fast fighter who kept opponents on their toes, while Sunaba was slow but powerful with his rock armor able to take blows his partner could not bear to take. Together they made a difficult team to beat. Difficult but not impossible as Revan performed a flying kick to Aleta to send her stumbling back before holding her blade to block Sunaba's fists. The two held the position as Revan used the time to summon the Sage Chakra in the air to form her Chakra Sage Armor at a much faster rate than at the Chūnin Exams.

Sunaba eyes widen at Revan's frail grin as she slacked her grip before she jumps over his strike and aims her sword at his one weak point in his armor, his eyes. Sunaba could do nothing as Revan's chakra blade went through his eye and skull, killing the man with excruciating pain. The man gave a terrible scream and then silence as Revan's blade was held in place by the man's rock armor she was slowly cutting apart. She only pulled out her sword when Sunaba's burning corpse slumped to its knees before moving onto her next target, Aleta, who regained her senses to run from the dangerous young woman as Diablo and Gonzola continued their fight.

Not even stopping as the two bantered back and forth, "So, this was your plan? To kill me one on one so that you can get, I don't know, revenge for not noticing you when your kid? To prove that you're not as weak as I had thought you were? To get back to the village for banishing you due to a stupid mistake on your part? Why put all this effort to kill me yourself?" Diablo asked Gonzola, who
giggled for a second at Diablo's question before he gave his uncle a proper response to the question.

"Well to honest, all this is mainly to make the surviving Sand-nins fear me," Gonzola admitted. "You see, I have the resources and a sizable enough army to take the village but not enough to hold it. However, if I come back with their strongest ninja and leader dead, well I am that much closer to taking over the Sand-nins and making them into a force to be reckoned with. The deaths of your allies and subordinates would only make it that much easier to control them."

"And I am sure the fact you get to kill me must be icing on the cake."

Gonzola could not help but laugh as Diablo's accusation before he set the record, "Oh it's so precious that you think you're so important to everyone, including me. Well, the truth is that I only cared about being related to you when it helped me get a leg up in my ninja career when I still was in the Sand Forces. That and to hopefully annoy you into making mistakes. Honestly, I am disappointed it didn't distract you enough to make a difference, it seems that I wasted my breath."

"Just as you wasted your breath in this fight," Diablo added before doing something unexpected. With a fast spin with his staff, he was able to hit Gonzola's wrist, forcing Gonzola to let go of his saber just as Diablo let his staff go. Freeing his hands, he delivered sharp jab into Gonzola's face, dazing his opponent long enough for him to pull out his machete and slash across Gonzola's chest instead of the neck due to Gonzola's exceptional reflexes. Not that it mattered, while the wound was not deep enough to destroy his heart or spill out his guts, it was still deep enough to be mortal as blood spews out his chest. Gonzola looked down in disbelief as both cousin and uncle knew that Gonzola was going to die from blood loss or the blood filling up his nicked organs. Gonzola was so lost to the world that he did notice Aleta killed after Revan's trick faint.

He only returned to the world to see Diablo let his guard down to state, "It's over Gonzola."

Gonzola spits some blood as he stated, "Yes, for both of us," before he rushed the older man and grabbed Diablo in a bear hug. Blood smeared onto Diablo as Gonzola's body tattoos appeared as explosive seals, turning Gonzola's body into a suicide bomb.

Diablo struggled to break free until he saw movement out the corner of his eyes and made himself perfectly straight to ask, "You're that much of sore loser?"

"You know it, and now you will-guk," was Gonzola's last words as Revan's purple blade cut Gonzola horizontally in two, from his ears, to his armpits and to the bottom of arches of feet.

Gonzola was dead when he shrugged off Gonzola loosed limbs, grabbed his weapon, and jumped away with Revan right behind him. A calculated move as she used the last of her sage chakra to create a dome of pure golden energy to take the brunt of the explosion. Revan was exhausted as she collapsed the shield to reveal it was over. Gonzola's body was a smeared, chard mess across the battlefield with the rest of corpses nothing but the mangled mess that would require DNA analysis to discover who they were.

And here they were, a mess covered in their enemies' blood as Diablo stated in wonder, "You saved me. You could have run and let me die, but you saved the man who hurt your mother."

"I am not about to sacrifice my career for events that happen when we are in a war." Revan had sighed in response before she gave a small smirk as she added, "Besides, where am I going to find a good debater around here."

Diablo laughed a little before he joked back to Revan, "Well I would give you hug in thanks, but I
don't do hugs, and I doubt you want to be covered in my traitorous cousin's blood."

Revan snorted; as the top of the cavern was blasted open by a powered jutsu to see large, friendly summon animals with Leaf and Sand ninjas staring down. Night Wolf excited, "Finally we got to you and now… Oh in the name of the spirits, what happen to you guys?"

Revan snorted as she stated, "Don't worry, it's not our blood, it's our enemies. As to why Diablo is covered in blood and why I looked so tired is a long story and quite frankly, I now just want to get to Suna, get this mission over and go home."

"Same here, so if you would be so kind as to get us out of here, that would be great," Diablo added as Gaara created a lift made of sand for the two before getting them out of the underground caves before they raced off on the giant summons to Suna, leaving behind the past, hopefully, for a better future.

Scene VII

Deep within the desert, one of the few survivors of those that ambushed the Leaf forces was crawling across the dunes. His body was wrapped with thirst and pain as he looked for anything that would ensure his survival, like food, water, and shade. Shade was provided as a shadowy figure covered his body. He looked up to see a petty woman with a purple lab coat and battledress that showed she was a specialized ninja. Fear overcame him, as he looked into her cold blood eyes and red hair before a wave of energy from the woman calmed him. It was as though he could trust the woman who pulled up her sleeve to reveal her lightly tanned skin as she kneeled to his level.

"Bite on it and suck on it," the woman ordered as the man stared in shock. In fact, he was about to protest when she added, "Bite and suck on it so my special chakra infused with my blood will heal you."

Yes, that made sense the man decided before he bit into the woman's arm, already feeling rejuvenated and healed he continued to suck until the woman ordered him to stop, "That is quite enough if you, please let go."

The man thought it was a good idea as he let the woman go with a content smile as she tended the bite wound with a green covered palm of a healing jutsu. The skin quickly healed, leaving behind a perfect, unblemished arm before she smiled down at the man, ordering him silently to stand up. Her face lit up with a broad, toothy smile as he rose like a lovesick puppy obeying its master.

"Excellent now will tell me everything about your battle with my miss guided cousin, Naruto Uzumaki as we gather a few more subjects for my lab and tests. Doesn't that sound great that you will be subject of Karin Uzumaki and her… ugh, lab assistant?"

That sounded wonderful to the man as he nodded frankly yes as Elite Jōnin Karin Uzumaki, head of the Uzumaki R&D, and proceeded on into the desert to find more test subjects for Karin Uzumaki for the Uzumaki was still on the move.

Chapter End Notes

Finally, after losing this chapter and having to rewrite it from scratch, it is done. Hope you enjoy it, please review, and wish you happy holidays and a happy new year.
A) As something new, I would like to recommend the following three approaches/
storylines for your consideration. Also interested in hearing what you think of Revan’s arc.

1) Leaf Ranger, possibly one of my favorite writers and a person I have consulted with on my stories a few times, his stories always bring a smile to my face, and there is not just one story of his I can recommend, though my personal favorite is Wizard of Kitsune.

2) Philosophizer’s Power of Love and its sequel Heart and Soul are well written Harry Potter stories that I must recommend even if you are not into Fem-Harry as they are well written with romance, drama, action, adventure, and social commentary.

3) Finally, is Kurama Arashi’s Silver Eyes, a thought-provoking RWBY story set in what if Ruby Rose learned to user her Silver Eyes before Beacon. It is well done and thoroughly explores the RWBY universe with a more powerful and flawed Ruby.

B) Last two Elemental Rasengan:
‘Earth Style: Rasenteikiatsu Jutsu’ (Spiral Cyclone Jutsu) is an earth-based version of the Rasengan, whose appearance is a mini earth/stone/sandstorm depending on the surface it was slammed into. Advantages are that it creates an earth type cyclone around the user that can grind/cut anything, including metal given time, as well as blinding the enemy around the user and protecting said user. The disadvantage is that while it requires slightly more chakra then the Rasengan, it does require several orders of magnitude of control to maintain it long enough to do some damage, will cut the visibility of the user, and without proper control or placement, the user can be hurt by the Jutsu as well. (SPeCTeR-ll7 helped to create this jutsu)
‘Fire Style: Rasenfurea Jutsu’ (Spiral Flare jutsu) is a fire-based version of the Rasengan, whose appearance is that of a mini-sun within a user’s hand. The advantage is that it can absorb enemy attacks when hit by the ball, making it bigger until the user collapses it. It creates a mini-solar flare that burns everything within 10m and within a ninety-degree angle of launch. Disadvantages are that while it takes slightly more chakra to make than jutsu, it takes an enormous amount to maintain and control it, requires high levels of chakra control, and can be limited in range and destructive power as compared to other high power jutsus.
Scene I

Deep within the sandy dunes of Wind Country stood a colossal plateau that from the ground looked like a large, but ultimately unremarkable rocky structure that one routinely finds in the desert. However, when viewed from above, it is revealed that the plateau is, in fact, a hollowed-out structure designed to hide and protect a whole village carved within its walls. This village was the Hidden Village in the Sands and headquarters of Wind Country's Sand Forces, Suna. A quite town that would usually experience minor disturbances from the occasional Sand-nin training and merchants peddling their wares.

However, it was not a typical day as a Leaf Force's Phantom Class Attack Fighter flew overhead. Its flight path heading to the one available landing spot within the village where a welcoming committee was anxiously waiting. One member of the greeting party, a blond girl named Naruto, awaited with keen interest by her girlfriend, who was more concerned with trying to contain her anxious partner. She failed in her efforts when the fighter landed, as Naruto rushed past the Leaf-nins led by Kakashi and a team including Hinata as they were coming out.

Kakashi, giving one of his famous eye twinkling smirks, turned to the other Leaf-nins to ask, "So, I take it that Naruto is happy to be getting her fighter back?"

"You have no idea, it certainly helps us avoid the mess coming if we had the Shadow's Fox during our mission," Haku commented while Tukiko developed a devious smirk.

"Though I am not sure how happy she'll be if you or the mechanics messed with her 'baby' settings and configurations," Tukiko added, making the others grimace as Elite Chūnin Revan took note of the newly minted Chūnin Sai and Chūnin Tayuya with Elite Genin Sakura Haruno and Kin Teuchi.

"Why did you bring your entire team? Aren't you here to relieve us and take us home?"

"No, I actually am here to deliver two sets of orders. For Team Spirit, you are ordered to remain here to help Sand Force hunt down any remaining criminal elements and finally take control of the situation. Team Vixen is to come with my team, Team Redemption will be sent on a joint mission that I would like to talk to them about in private," Kakashi stated as he handed a report to Diablo.

Diablo looked through the orders, giving a glance to Revan. Revan nodded with respect before he stated, "Very well, I will see as to where we can fit Team Spirit in my own team as we begin our final campaigns. Yūra, ensure they have some privacy."
Yūra, the Elite Jōnin with a turban that covered the burnt half of his face followed his orders to the letter. His goatee twitched as he directed his men move out of the area as Kakashi walked back in with his team, Haku and Tukiko. He had to keep up the appearance of a loyal soldier when people were around. He made sure he was alone, before he approached the Fox's Shadow, listening to the mundane conversation from its occupants as Kakashi went to retrieve Naruto and Hinata from the cockpit.

"So, have you guys been busy?" Tukiko asked as she broke the ice.

"Like you wouldn't believe shithead," Tayuya mumbled as she adjusted her new, red-vested armor. "Should have realized something was up when I was released early for combat-related missions with an Elite Chūnin rank and was put on a team with Kin."

"It has been trying but rewarding as we get the deadweight in shape," Kin stated in her new leafy cameo as she looked at Sakura, who gave a nervous chuckled.

Combat has apparently improved the girl's demeanor and tone as she had some healthy muscles on her developing body in a proper red battle kimono with black shorts, "At least you can't say I have not improved since we've last met. I have been doing a good job keeping them healthy as the group's medic, despite all the combat we have been seeing."

"I have to say you have drastically improved since we last saw you. You look a lot healthier at least," Tukiko commented before he turned to the pale boy. "What about you, any problems with you know who?"

"My… sponsor has been quiet since the invasion, and subsequent war in the criminal underworld has started," Sai stated. "I think he's just laying low, hoping others forget about him before he makes any moves."

"I see… well, we will see what happens after this mess is dealt with," Haku stated before Tukiko went on a tangent about her most hated person among the living, Danzō. "Does anyone know what this mission is that requires the gathering of so many ninjas?"

"No, but I suspect Kakashi, ugh, sensei will tell us," Kin groaned just as Kakashi walked in with Naruto and Hinata.

"That is right, and it's going to be a very important mission," Kakashi directed them to the holographic imager. "Our primary mission is to protect the actress Yukie Fujikaze," Kakashi stated as he played a movie scene featuring the black-haired beauty.

Immediately, the one most of the occupants recognized as Sakura exclaimed, "Isn't she the actress from the Princess Gale Movies."

"You mean those cheesy movies of a princess saving the world with overdramatic acting that should be irritating but is somehow fun?" Naruto asked with a raised eyebrow.

"The very same," Kakashi nodded as he brought up a map of a frozen wasteland. "The manager has hired us to protect her, the other actors, and the film crew as they film their latest movie in the Snow Country. He somehow gained entry to Snow Country, and in what is even more amazing, he got us entry on Fire Country's new Fisher Class Attack Frigate. It seems they want to be part of the film."

"Why is that amazing?" Hinata asked.

"For Snow Country became an isolationist country from all other countries after their current King, Dotō Kazahana, took over after a bloody coup d' état," Kakashi sighed as he brought up the next
"So, our mission is to scout out the country to find out what they've been doing in the last couple of years?" Tukiko asked.

"It would explain why there is a second team needed to take control of the violence. To scout out the area," Haku pointed out.

"Yes, especially since there are reports of people disappearing around Snow Country, and it has only increased since the chaos in the criminal underworld began. Not to mention the increase of procuring and mining materials like titanium, platinum, copper, aluminum, nickel, iron or purified steel, magnesium, beryllium, and fluorite."

"Aren't they materials that can be used to build advanced war machines like tanks and aircraft?" Naruto stated while Colonel Nine of Nine mentally added, 'Which can be bad, especially if such a volatile nation has significant enough air power.'

"That is possible, as outside of Sky ninjas who were destroyed in the Second Great Shinobi War, they are the only other nations outside of our allies that have the capability to at least make zeppelins. However, it's more likely they are being used to make advance chakra armor. Such armor will increase the power of the user, and it's a pain to break through during battle. Either way, this could mean that Dotō is using the chaos as a chance to expand his country and we can't allow that to happen."

"So, this could be an assassination mission to kill some asshole," Tayuya summed it up in less than a sentence. "Well, let us get this shit started. I want to kick some fucken asshole in the butt anyway. Might as well be this one."

Kakashi nodded as he pulled out a datapad to hand to Naruto, "Very well, Naruto since you're the next highest rank ninja, you are designated second in command, and you will be handling the spy operation. Here are the coordinates to the ship we are taking as requested by the client. When the fighter is ready, head to those coordinates and we will meet with our contacts."

"Yes sir," Naruto half saluted before rushing to prep the fighter as Yūra moved into a hidden alleyway.

He waited to see no one was coming before with a stiff posture he pulled out a small device with the Uzumaki swirl on it. He opened the communicator before stating in a monotone voice, "Master, I have a report about Naruto Ryū heading to Snow Country and possible concern about that country's recent movement," before he explained everything he heard.

Once done, a voice stated in a mechanical voice, "You have served the Akatsuki and the Uzumaki well my living puppet."

"Yes, Lord Sasori."

Scene II

Over the calm, shimmering sea in one of the few great lakes bodies of water in Fire Country, the
Fox’s Shadow flew close to the rushing waves. Its bladed wings glittered as it skimmed just 100m (328) above the quiet waves before suddenly taking a nosedive into the ocean depths. Its shields receiving the brunt of the force flared as the Phantom Fighter swam like a dolphin in the sea. Its destination was not a place, but another ship waiting within the lake’s salty water.

The ship was bulky, non-aerodynamic, frigate warship, it was big and buoyancy enough that half its long neck and semi-flat top body were above water level. A purposeful design made to accommodate the six rapid-fire turrets along the top portion of the hull and the two three-hundred-and-sixty-degree missile turrets found at the top of the ship. Underwater the frigate had six more rapid-fire turrets complimenting the ship's heavy guns; one large torpedo launchers and high plasma beam weapons found on each side of the forward section of the neck, and two large aft torpedo launchers at the rear.

She was a heavily armed warship and one to approach with caution as Naruto whistled aloud, "So that is the new Fisher Class Attack frigate. Ain't she a beauty?"

"She sure is Naruto," Hinata giggling at Naruto excitement. "Though, I would be jealous if you don't look at me with even more stars from time to time."

Naruto stuttered blushing in embarrassment, which Hinata shared when she realized what she had blurted without meaning too. She was never happier when Tayuya snide remarks were on the ship rather then what Hinata said, "So this is a frigate that is supposed to fly, sail across the water and act as a submersible. Why not just make a flying vessel?"

Tukiko, who was checking out the four glowing ramjet engines that doubled as internal propellers built in the frigates curved wings, snorted, "You have a good point, but I have a counter. Why not make it all three? It makes pretty good stealth vessel if can fly or hide underwater."

"Plus, didn't Admiral Hall said it would be cheaper than having a solely flying machine?" Haku asked as Naruto nodded as she kept on course to the massive hanger bay underneath the ship.

"Its predecessor, the Specter class, was originally designed to travel through the ocean when hiding from the enemy and were kept in aquatic bases on Earth," Naruto stated while Nine of Nine added, "And successfully too as the last eight were only destroyed mere hours before the EMP Bomb went off."

"And here we are, going on board the first original Fire Country warship," Sakura stated with a smile.

Even as Sai quipped in just as they got closer to the ship, "Yes when you ignore the fact it was modified from an old design."

Kakashi just sighed at his team antics, as he tapped on the communication requesting permission to dock and was given permission as the doors opened while still being underwater. A force field kept the water from rushing in as Naruto flew the fighter into the crowded hangar bay filled with two long-range shuttlecrafts and six Red Hawk Class Fighters with their wings folded. There was enough space in the center to land as formally dressed officers waited for them. The captain, a stern man of mixed descent, was with two security officers as he watched several ninjas depart from the fighter. He straightened his ball cap as the Leaf-nins commanders, a silver-haired scarecrow, and a young blond woman, approach him.

He gave a stern nod as he introduces himself with a salute, "Hello, my name is Captain Yamato. Welcome aboard the Valley's End."
The scarecrow, Kakashi, smiled as he gave a short bow, "Hello, I am Elite Jōnin, leader of Team Redemption."

"And I am Jōnin Naruto Ryū, leader of Team Vixen," Naruto also bowed as the Captain Yamato held his hand up.

"Yes, I know who you are and your missions as I am happy to help you, I can't say the same for our guests," Yamato twitched as he directed everyone to door behind him. "If you follow me, I will take you to the crew lounge where our guests are filming."

The group followed the grizzled Captain out the door down the hallway, passing crewmembers and soldiers along the way. As they reached the lounge, Sakura could not take the silence, breaking it to ask, "So, what is Princess Ga… I mean Yukie Fujikaze like."

Yamato, in response, sighed before answering the young Genin's question starting with a question, "You know how she is depicted as the heroic, self-sacrificing optimistic woman that fights for justice?"

The group nodded with a few saying "Yep" before Yamato continued his explanation, "Well she is the opposite from that. She is, in fact, a cynical, winning woman that doesn't want to go anywhere near Snow Country for some unknown reason; probably because it is cold or similar nonsense."

"I figure we would be dealing with a pampered princess. Though it sounds like you don't want to deal with them in the first place," Kin pointed out with an accusatory tone at the Captain.

In which the Captain snorted in response, "I don't like the idea of a film crew, or civilians onboard in general, filming on one of our newest warships for their movie. However, I will tolerate them if it means completing a mission to get some much-needed Intel of that region. So long as they don't film anything vital and I trust you to keep them out of sensitive areas."

The group nodded as Captain then lead to the ship's lounge, giving a brief tour along the way. Once they reached the lounge area, he made his departure stating, he needs to prep the ship for departure. He gave a short nod before he left the Leaf-nins to watch the film crew already at work. Filming a scene for their movie, in the mood that was more serious in tone then the previous films had been.

"Mao has done it, Princess Gale. In his bid for power he has unleashed a terrible show from humanity's past," one male actor in fictional dress uniform stated as he pointed at a map. "The machines from the cold abyss have returned."

"Then we must go there with our forces to stop them," exclaimed the beautiful actress in a formal dress as she played the role of Princess Gale perfectly to the point the audience thought she really was going to battle.

Another actor in uniform tried to emulate her presence as he stepped up to state, "We follow you to the end of the earth, but you know many of us will not survive the battle."

"I know," Princess Gale stated with sadness as she subtly rubs her eyes, as tears seem to shine in her hands. "But we have to do whatever it takes to save humanity from the threats unleashed upon the world!" The actress exclaimed with force as she gave her rousing speech.

This marked the end of the scene as the director exclaimed, "And cut! Great work everyone, that's a rap."

The crew exclaimed in excitement as the group stared with bewilderment, "What did we just watch?"
"A scene that will set the whole mood of the movie as we move from an action movie to a more serious drama," replied a man with round glasses that glisten with happiness offset by the heavy burlap sack/pack strapped to his back. "Ah forgive my interruption. I am Sandayū Asama, the studio's writer, Yuki Fujikaze's manager, and the man who hired you."

"A pleasure to meet you, I am Elite Jōnin Kakashi Hatake, commander of Team Redemption, and beside me is Jōnin Naruto Ryū, commander of Team Vixen," Kakashi stated before he gave a curious look at the man in the grey bowl-cut and neatly trimmed beard. "I am sorry, but you look familiar. Have we met before?"

"Maybe, I do meet a lot of people in my work, and I am a bit famous, though not as famous as Yuki Fujikaze," the man boosted with a small smile. A smile Tukiko latched onto as she flattered him, "Ms. Fujikaze's performance was amazing. It felt so real like she really was ordering people to war."

"Yes, she is a superb actress that can play any role imaginable," Sandayū boosted as though he was giving a sales pitch until he tempered his boast a bit. "Well, almost everything as there is one noticeable flaw."

"Oh, and what is that," Kin asked with sparkles in her eyes as Sandayū got a little nervous when Yuki Fujikaze approached with a small, decorative vial in her hands.

"Thank you for providing me with my tears before we started Sandayū. It would be a shame to need to do a scene over just because I don't have the tears for the crying scenes," Yukie stated as she handed the vial over as Sandayū bowed as he took it back.

"It is no problem milady, I am happy to serve," Sandayū bowed again before he handed a large green crystal necklace to her. "Here is your neckless back Lady Fujikaze. Oh, and I also would like you to meet your bodyguards for the trip," Sandayū added as Yuki took the necklace and put it back around her neck.

Once her treasured family heirloom was around her neck once, Yukie turned to the group of young man and woman before her. All of them seem competent to her, though she took a keen interest in the tall scarecrow before her for he seemed somehow familiar. A similar thought went through Kakashi's head as Yuki, and the green crystal seemed familiar to him as well. Though Kakashi quickly dismissed the idea, thinking it was all the movies he saw staring the young actress before was the reason both look familiar. But the same excuse cannot be said for the young woman as Yukie continued to stare.

A stare that was broken when Sakura approached the woman with a small book and pen, "Ms. Fujikaze, I am Sakura Haruno, and I was a huge fan of your Princess Gale character. Can I trouble you for an autograph?"

Yukie looked at the young girl before she reluctantly agreed, "Yes."

"Thank you, thank you," Sakura bowed before handing the small book to the actress. The actress immediately went to sign her name as Sakura asked, "So, what is it like playing Princess Gale?"

"I hate it," Yukie admitted as she put the final touches before returning Sakura's book. "It's a role that little girls have latched onto, thinking it is so cool. Never realizing it is nothing but pure fiction that has no basis in reality."

"Geeze lady," Tayuya growled as she got in front of a distraught Genin, trying to hold her concerns
for Sakura inside. "If you hate the role so much, why don't you just quit?"

"You don't quit in showbiz if you want to make a living. And I hate starving far more than the role that seems to be every little girl's dream," Yukie growled in annoyance.

Not really understanding why Naruto asked, "Is that really every girl's dream?"

"Not every girl Naruto, but it is the standard stereotype," Hinata admitted with a small blush while Naruto looked at her inquisitively.

"I didn't," Naruto stated while a few snickered behind her back.

One even whispered, "Says the girl with a boy's name," which Naruto ignored to focus on the movie they were making.

"So, these machines you are talking about, are you talking about the Mechanize Army during the age of the Republic Alliance?"

"Why yes, yes, it is how do you… oh, I thought I recognized you. You were that girl that discovered the Great Library. I remember it being such a big deal as the market was flooded by Elemental Country history and literature. It was what inspired me to write my latest masterpiece, 'Prince Gale, And the Cold Machines.' A thrilling tale of drama as she faces her darkest foe yet."

"You certainly picked a truly dark and evil enemy," Naruto winced as she remembered Colonel Nine of Nine's horror stories as the Machines engaged in an efficient and a psychological type of warfare.

"I remember what an expert told me about how the Machines would impale their living prisoners on metal spikes before a battle to break their enemy's morale. They also usually strapped people on their capital ship's hull when fighting in earth's atmosphere. It was an attempt to make soldiers hesitant to shoot down enemy ships. Five years into the wars, the soldiers no longer hesitated in shooting down enemy ships."

Everyone, even Yukie, looked pale before the actress shook it off, "Luckily the script I was given shows it's not going to get that dark. Just enough to be realistic, which is nice to act like a real woman then that fantasy. It's the only reason I agreed to return to that icy tundra of hell," Yukie spat out in anger and sadness.

Emotions Haku noticed as she asked, "Snow Country holds deep pain for you, doesn't it?"

Yukie turned to face the ice princess before her eyes soften; as Haku's dark-brown eyes matched her icy blue eyes. "I lost my entire family to the lands that never seen spring, only snow." Yukie then walked out stating, "Come Sandayū, let's see if we can get something to eat before this ship departs."

"Yes, milady," Yukie's manager bowed before following the young woman out, leaving the Leaf-nins behind.

"Charming woman," Tukiko and Kin sarcastically said at the same time as everyone, but Sai nodded.

In fact, Sai looked confused, "Doesn't charming means being attractive? Otherwise, I need to reevaluate your definition for charming for her attitude is very cold."

Kakashi smiled as he stated, "They were being sarcastic Sai, not literal. But you are right, she is quite attractive despite having the personality of a snake."

The group was about to argue when Yamato stated over the intercom, "All hands this is the Captain. Grab onto something to take a seat somewhere, we are about to lift off to head to the Pacific Ocean. I
The Leaf-nins did not need to be told twice as they scrambled, grabbing on to rails as the Valley's End powered her thrusters. The engines roaring as her thrusters pushed her quickly out of the ocean to several hundred meters into the air in a matter of seconds. Her artificial gravity ensuring turbulence was at a minimum, as the crew barely felt it as water rushed to the ocean below off the ship’s shiny armor as they moved in a northwestern direction. Her engines glowed before a burst of speed, and the ship flew to the other end of the continent at Mach speeds.

The ship's captain smiled as his ordered the Valley's End down once they reached the west coast. Water splashed along the hull as the ship went north. Destination Snow Country as the Valley's End sailed towards the reclusive tundra lands, never realizing they were being spied upon above the clouds as a single ninja in a chakra-powered glider observed them. He took note before he got on his radio to relay his observation.

"General, I have spotted a Fire Country warship heading to our ambush site. I estimate three hours before they arrive."

"Very good, report back to one of our outposts, you have done Cloud and Snow Forces proud," a gruff voice said through the radio.

"Yes General," the man with a cloud headband replied before he flew off to a nearby outpost as he smiled, revenge was at hand.

Scene III

Back within a high-tech room, a high-ranking ninja with a covered face hung up the radio of his scout. He turned, staring at his superiors with the only distinguishable feature, the scar over his right eye, "Our scout has reported. Target is in sight and heading to the ambush area."

"You did very well General, you've done the Cloud-Snow Forces proud," answered the leader of Cloud Forces who was standing right next to King Dotō Kazahana, showing the man with long white hair and thick eyebrows was his equal, not his inferior.

"Thank you Fubukikage (Snow Storm Shadow) Shinnō," the man that was simply known as the General bowed in appreciation while another scoffed.

"I still think we should have laid a trap out in the ocean. Maybe with an iceberg to force the ship to stop instead of having me lead men on some unnamed beach in our country," stated a thin man in bulky power armor as he flickered the bangs of his silver ponytail to state the General was beneath him.

One the General did not appreciate as he looked at the man as if he was an idiot, "Then you are a fool or don't pay attention of the debriefings that Fire Country has been developing a ship that can sail, submerge and fly. We need them to come deep into our territory so we can ensure they can't escape. Not out in the middle of nowhere where they can easily escape due to playing our hand too quickly. Maybe if you didn't depend on your armor so much, you would have grown a brain Nadare."

Nadare Rōga pale blue eyes twitched as the scar over his right eye and were about to yell, when bulky King ordered them to stop, "Enough, we are not here to fight each other, but our true enemies down south. So, cease and desist or leave, this is your final warning." The two ninjas listened to their king as he turned to Shinnō to ask, "I trust you can ensure their capture."
Shinnō gave a cruel victory grin as he stated, "Do not worry, with the Fortress ship will be ready to ensure they will not escape."

"Good but make sure the crystal survives, I need it to unlock my brother's vault of hidden treasure. We need the funds after all," Dotō grunted as Shinnō nodded before he turned to the two ninjas. "Nadare, you're in charge of the operation."

Nadare smirked as the Sky-nin General scowled at the decision. However, the older man kept quiet as the Snow-nin bowed before his King, "Don't worry, my King. I will bring you everything you desire, and possibly a new shiny Fire Country warship to take apart to learn their secrets." Their bosses smiled as they prepared for what was to come.

Scene IV

After the Valley's End reached the Pacific Ocean, the crew kept watching as they sailed through the sea as if on a leisure trip that would take four hours before they reached their destination. They were waiting for any hostile targets as they slowly released their cargo under the watchful eyes of Captain Yamato. Eyes that were staring over the LADAR and SONAR officer as he noted something odd, "That is tenth weird blimp we've detected in the last half hour. I can't identify what it is, but it's stealthy."

"You think its something to be concerned about?" the Captain asked as the officer shrugged in uncertainty.

"Maybe, but it could just as well be a stealth sea animal we have never cataloged before. This is extremely new technology after all, and we never have been in these waters before with equipment like this."

"Well keep an eye on it, and tactical, launch the next buoy. Let's give the boys back home a few more eyes and ears on this place," the Captain ordered, and another crewmember complied as they launched a camouflaged stealth buoy designed to analyze distortions in the water and air to detect enemy ships on the move. Ensuring an invasion force could not move down south without them knowing.

Meanwhile, the actors and the single actress were acting out scenes from the movie as they sported more combat type clothing. They were performing several different scenes found throughout the film. With the star being Yukie in battle armor with her family's green crystal serving as part of her costume. They completed shooting every possible scene they needed on the ship before the frigate approached a large landmass. It was beautiful with the spruce trees and shrubs scattered across the snowy landscape as everyone, including the ninja, had to wear jackets and long thick pants to combat the cold.

The crew was on break as they approached a large chain of islands. The film-crew taking note while Naruto, Hinata, and Kakashi tactically evaluated the country field before them, "A large mountain over an exposed beach to give attackers the high ground, enough trees to hide a small force, and no signs of any civilization within kilometers. I don't like the looks of this place."

"Me neither but it was the area agreed to since its isolated and the only place we can sail to without a heavy escort. We will still have a patrol ship stopping by every day to ensure we are still here," Kakashi grumbled as he looked at his watch. "And we are on time, so we have two hours before a patrol ship will appear. So, we have nothing to worry about, but it is best to be cautious just in case."

"I'll go down and ask the Captain to be prepared in case it is not paranoia," Hinata stated as she went below deck as the others looked on, silently giving ninjas around them to keep calm and be
observant.

Most except Sakura, who missed her teacher concerns as she escorted Yukie down to the movie set, "So, are you ready?"

"Ready to act?" Yukie joked as she slowly descended the steps, her eyes never leaving the snow-covered field. "Of course, acting is easy for I never stop acting since I was little girl covered in snow."

"What do you mean?" Sakura asked as the young woman cautiously stepped on the snow.

Her feet crunching as she stated, "It still hurts, even when frozen white hearts are clear of the red beats that mark its path."

Sakura looked startled as off to the side, her assistant Asama clicked on his pen in sadness while the rest of the actors got into position. Above, the mechanical roar of the filming equipment as the actor playing the main villain was preparing to give his evil speech a new voice echoed from the cliff's top.

"Well, well. What do we have here?" asked a man with long silver hair.

One Kakashi recognized as he jumped off the ship to face the young man from the beachhead, "Nadare Rōga?"

"Kakashi? Isn't this even a bigger surprise? And here I was hoping you would be here so we could finish what we started all those years ago. And you deliver yourself to me."

"What do you want Nadare? We have permission to be here, and Snow Country cannot afford a fight with Fire Country over some trivial grudge," Kakashi growled as the man chuckled.

"But Kakashi, that is where you are wrong as we have friends to ensure we can do just that," Nadare as several Snow-nins and another faction appeared among the cliffs, led by a stern General with a covered face.

The Ninja Leaf-nins recognized the force from their classes as Sakura muttered softly, "Sky-nins. I thought they were wiped out during the Third Great Shinobi War."

"It's amazing what unifies people, such as taking down nations more powerful than they are alone," Nadare snarled as he smirked, while the General just rolled his eyes, wondering why they are not attacking them now.

"I suggest you surrender yourselves, and Princess Koyuki to Sky-Snow Nation, or be destroyed," the General, annoyed by Nadare's strategy, stated as Kakashi eyes widen as she looked down at Actress Yukie Fujikaze and saw the image of a young child she helped smuggle out of Snow Country many years ago.

"Koyuki," Kakashi stated as Tukiko summed up what they were all thinking.

"Shit has just hit the fan," appropriate words as an army equipped with winged armor appeared, along with nine heavily armored war zeppelins and several dozens of the three-man Sky-nin class aircraft with its flapping wings for stability during flight.

"No kidding," Tayuya yelled, as she pulled out her flute, ready to fight.

"I suggest you surrender, you are all more valuable alive than dead," the General stated with a cold, emotionless tone that promised pain and death for those that disagreed.
In response, the Leaf-nins looked at each other, deciding how to respond before Naruto got the silent go-ahead from Kakashi to respond in the only way the Leaf-nins could respond.

"How about you die for your country instead? EVERYONE GET OFF THE BEACH AND OPEN FIRE!" Naruto yelled before opening fire with her sniper rifle, followed by everyone else, taking down a few underlings before they took flight or ducked for cover.

The Sky-Nin General was barking out orders to attack as Nadare practically smiled in anticipation, "Finally some action. Fubuki, Mizore, let's go greet our guest!"

A small pink haired woman and large, brutish man nodded as their advanced armor produced wings as they followed Nadare and a dozen others low to the ground as they rushed the enemy. As the force took to the sky, they made their attack runs and rushed the ship's open guns. The six advance gun turrets were hitting their targets, as corpses riddled with holes fell to the deck of Valley's End. The first mark of casualties as Captain Yamato ordered a heavy missile barrage on six of the massive aircraft from the turret on top. The six missiles shrieked across the sky as they locked onto their target and hit with pinpoint accuracy with an enormous explosion that scorched the front nose of each zeppelin.

Much to Yamato's surprise, the ships did not explode as they crept ever closer to the beach, "What happened?"

"Sir scans from the explosions reveal each zeppelin is heavily armored and reinforced with a tremendous amount of steel and titanium. A single missile is not enough to destroy them, we need all six missiles or two of our torpedoes to destroy them," reported the sensor officer.

"Then set up a firing sequence to destroy each of them one at a time before they reach the beach. Once they reached the beach, switch targets to their smaller aircraft while our turrets mop up the rest. We don't want any friendly casualties due to flaming debris from the zeppelins crashing down on the beach."

"Aye sir," replied the weapon officer as she altered the targeting sequence and loaded the next set of missiles.

Meanwhile, on the beach, most of Team Redemption, outside of Kakashi and Sai, were escorting the actors, and film crew off the beach. The eccentric director continued the filming as if no danger existed as Tayuya used her flute and illusionary/physical summons of giant ogres to provide a wall of defense against the attackers. Everyone was running, but Yukie/Koyuki as she stared at the destruction around her, flashing back to another snow battle long ago, as Sakura tried to get her to move.

"We need to get you out of here Princess, please snap out of it!" Sakura yelled as she tried to get Koyuki back to reality.

However, she was too far-gone mentally as she kept mumbling, "Father No!"

Annoyed, Kin backed up by Haku and Tukiko, yelled at Sakura, "Just get that bitch out of here. Her cooperation is not needed if she just stands there like a fucken lamb waiting to be slaughtered."

Sakura was still trying to snap Koyuki out of her trance when she noticed off in the distance, a hulking figure approaching very fast, it was Mizore. His hulking gauntlet held up as he fired and made a grab for Koyuki just as Sakura rushed in front of the princess to do the unexpected. Sakura punched the gauntlet out of the way with enough force to crack it before she grabbed onto a rock partially sticking out of the ground. She pulled out of the ground a rock that was four times her and
threw it across the field to hit Mizore and his advancing forces, halting his force's advance, Sakura stared at him with a small smirk.

"Thank goodness for Lady Tsunade's medic-nin training program and Kakashi recommendation for my chakra enhanced scrolls. I would say I'm not a liability anymore," Sakura stated with a small smirk to herself before she felt a hand touch her shoulder.

It was Kakashi's comforting hand that had touched her while he started off on to the battlefield, "Glad you have taken the training I recommended to heart but now is not the time to celebrate. Get Koyuki out of here, we will hold them off while Naruto, Sai and the Valley's End provide covering fire," Kakashi stated as he slipped back to help with the defense.

A defense filled with Naruto snipping elite targets while Hinata prepared for any close quarter combat on the ground. Services that fortunately were not needed since Sai was running interference on a giant bird made of ink and Valley's End continued to unleash its death. The guns were running hot as Sakura watched six missiles hit one of the approaching zeppelins, causing it to explode brilliantly. Its burning carcass brought Sakura's attention to the approaching enemy ninja with Mizore getting back up to renew the attack.

Sakura realizes she had to jump into action. Therefore, Sakura performed a quick dash and grabbed the catatonic Princess. She slung the older woman over her shoulder before she dashed to the ship as Tayuya's giant ogres swiped away any enemy ninjas that slipped through the ship's personal firepower. Leaving Tukiko, Haku, Kin, and Kakashi to stop the advancing ninjas that crouched low to the ground or on foot to avoid being shot by sniper shots from Naruto.

The four were ready to receive the enemy as they started their attack. Beginning with Kin with a dozen different senbons with bells ringing so loud their sound was piercingly painful, it was a 'Sound Style: Bell Ringing Genjutsu.' This forced the sound-nins, including the pink haired Snow-nin, Fubuki, and her boss Nadare, to cry out in pain. The perfect setup as Haku used what was mostly a wind jutsu, 'Ice Style: Blizzard Winds Jutsu' to block their view of Kakashi and Tukiko's combined 'Fire Style: Dance of Dragons Jutsu.' A devastating fire jutsus that combined with the ice jutsu that was mainly a wind jutsus to turn the field of snow into a field of fire.

A powerful attack that should have killed everyone caught in the blast, or at least that is what Tukiko thought as she gave her victory smirk. One that disappeared off her face when she noticed that Kakashi's remained ready for battle. Tukiko looked back to see that three figures had survived the onslaught. Nadare, Fubuki, and Mizore and their glowing, metallic armor survived the blast.

Tukiko could not believe it as she mouthed aloud, "How?"

"Chakra armor," Kakashi simply answered. "I've first encountered the earlier models when Nadare was chasing me during my escape with Koyuki several years ago. It's designed to not only to enhance one's chakra strength but also siphon a portion of one's chakra to create a shield that protects one against all chakra-based attacks unless the shield was somehow overwhelmed. Moreover, with the field littered with burnt corpses trapped in their armor, they will be able to add chakra and mass-produce new armor for their unprotected Jōnin. The three before us have the more advanced models."

The three other ninjas looked shocked when an idea clicked for Haku when she asked, "Wait you said the armor blocks chakra-based attacks, what about physical attacks."

"Completely vulnerable to them, as well as they have a limited range as seen by how effective Kin's attack was," Kakashi praised as Kin developed a devious smile.
"Then we have an idea of how to beat them," Tukiko stated before she turned towards her superior officer, Kakashi, who was staring off into the sky.

Kakashi did not like the growing shadows when he yelled, "We need to get out of here before those zeppelins arrive at the beach. Everyone, commence a fighting retreat."

The others immediately followed Kakashi's orders as they moved back as one, those with range weapons fired as they fell back. Nadare, Fubuki, and Mizore would have none of that as they gave chase after the three ninjas. Nadare had to fall back though as Tayuya's order turned on him, hitting and beating him back while Fubuki and Mizore rushed forward. Mizore stood on a giant chakra propelled snowboard, while Fubuki flew ahead of Mizore with her metal wings.

Her hands held a collection of small glass explosive balls that she threw like candy at the Leaf-nins while screaming that they were not getting away from her. The small explosives hit the ground and cracked open, chemically reacting with the air to create, not fire and brimstone, but ice that rapidly froze and expanded around the impact zone. Freezing and crushing all within it is oddly shaped like tendrils that threatened to overcome the group if Haku had not created an ice dome to contain it. Just before she precisely threw a handful of senbon needles at the woman. Fubuki blocked the attack with a small disk shield formed around the armor's forearms.

Fubuki missed Haku's smirk of confirmation as Mizore went to engage Kin. His mechanical arm shot out to grab her. Not that Fubuki cared as she faced the straight face woman with a grin, "So the bingo book is true, you do have the Yuki bloodline. Good, the boys at the R&D will love looking inside you to figure out how to genetically isolate Ice release without our armor, and freezing conditions."

"Sorry, but you are not going to be able to touch her," a cocky voice said as she heard the cocking of the voice's deadly weapon.

Fubuki only had time to turn and use 'Ice Style: Ice Shield Jutsu,' to block bullets from Tukiko's assault rifle, leaving her open to Haku's senbon needless aimed at her one weak spot, the back end of her neck. Therefore, with precision, Haku paralyzed Fubuki from the neck down while causing her armor to freeze up. She just hovered a dozen feet off the ground as Tukiko stopped firing. Fubuki screamed in fear as Tukiko leaped up by her with a knife held tightly by her robotic hand before she swiped it across Fubuki's neck. The woman could do nothing as blood spewed from her wound. The Leaf-nins left their opponent to die a painful death as her body finally ran out of chakra, Tukiko and Haku rushed to the ship.

She was the first enemy elite to die, but not the last as Mizore joined Fubuki in the afterlife roughly around the same time. For when he moved to grab Kin he did not see her perform the hand signs for a genjutsu. Therefore, he thought he had caught the real one until he realized that he was being pulled to the girl, not the other way around. It was only when he was close enough for his armor to dispel the genjutsu that he realized he had grabbed one of Tayuya's last summoned ogres. It lifted its mallet and proceeded to pound him into the ground. Leaving only a bloody smear as Tayuya stopped playing her flute altogether allowing the Ogre to disperse before she ran into the Valley's End just as the zeppelins reached the beach.

By that time, Nadare had defeated the rest of the ogres and saw his two prime lieutenants put down. He was cursing the leaf-nins through his screams when Kakashi used 'Water Style: Water Dragon Jutsu.' The water dragon hit him head-on with enough to force to hurt him even with the chakra armor. Pushing Nadare far away, as Kakashi made a run for it. He reached the ship as Naruto was near the ship calling for Sai to return the ship.

However, Sai was having difficulty doing so, as he was engaged in a personal battle with the leader
of the Sky-nins and several Sky-nins flying vehicles. A fight he was loosening against the more experience combat ace until six missiles from the Valley's End hit six of the Cloud-nins flying vehicles. The explosions gave Sai enough space and a distraction to escape the Sky-nin General's grasp, as he flew past Naruto and Hinata to safety.

Naruto and Hinata were the last in, closing the door before the surviving zeppelins and enemy vehicles opened fire across the Valley's End. The ship's shields protecting the vaunted warship as it rose up, allowing all its guns to play as its captain Yamato accessed the situation. Captain Yamato quickly realized they could not win, so he ordered a retreat as their shields flashed to 75% and continued to fall.

"Get us away from here! There is no way in Yami's name we can win against this much enemy firepower! Move!"

The crew immediately complied as the ship did a quick one hundred and eighty degrees turn and made a rapid ascent to escape when they noticed something far off in the distance that no one expected to be flying. For it defied logical sense to build a giant flying castle made of stone and metal. Especially a castle with thick walls with a large carved face that seemed to glow with the focal point being its large mouth.

The crew was questioning the logic until the sensor officer detected a massive buildup of energy, "Massive buildup of chakra. I think it's going to fire a beam of pure chakra!"

"All hands, evasive action!" Captain Yamato yelled as the Valley's End tried to serve out of the way. It was what saved it from a hull breach as a beam of pure chakra energy glazed them, causing their shields to overheat and as one officer reported, drop from 65% to 15%, and continue to fall as the zeppelins, and Sky-nin flying machines kept on firing on them. Yamato had enough of it as he ordered, "Dive!"

The crew complied as the ship immediately sank into the ocean and made a run for allied territory. Captain Yamato took a moment to compose himself, thinking it was over when the alarms sounded as one of the crewmembers yelled out mines. Yamato soon realized those blimps they saw earlier on the sensors were a cluster set of deactivated mines. He was about to order them to turn around when the Valley's End hit one of the mines that were now active. The blast followed by its shockwave was enough to completely take out the weaken shields and tumbled them away in the water. Luckily away from the other mines that were spread out across their only exit. The Captain knew they had no choice but to retreat further into the waters around Snow Country and hide, licking their wounds from defeat.

Meanwhile, back at the beachhead, the Sky-nin General looked across the field, sighing as he took note of the damage and loss of life. Three zeppelins destroyed with a loss of all hands plus the loss of forty-six ninjas meant he had lost two-hundred and six men to an enemy trapped underwater. Which was only accomplished because the General had the foresight to prevent their escape by air or sea as their combined fleets now patrolled the entire coast. He was in a foul mood, and he knew who to blame as he approached Nadare as he looked down in anguish.

The General felt a little glad his two enforcers were dead as he stated, "I see your two lackeys' are dead. I feel for you. It is not every day someone dies under one command because of one's stupidity."

Nadare, stiffen as he turned around his face filled with rage as he asked, "What did you say?"

"You heard me well enough, Nadare, and don't you dare threaten me. I told you making a
grandstand was a dumb idea. We should have snuck up and attacked them, or just attacked them instead of making some taunting speech. Most Leaf-nins will not freeze in fear with a grand show of power, but fight to escape or kill their attackers given a chance. It is why we lost so many men, for so little gain, and you know it," the General growled as Nadare flinched, and backed down in anger.

One that General had directed elsewhere by stating, "Don't worry, you'll get your revenge for your comrades. By first ensuring they will have no safe harbor in our lands," the General added as he activated operation 'Scorched Harbor.'

Scene V

Within the cold waters, the Valley's End was creeping to safety, or as close to safety as possible trapped in the icy waters around Snow Country. The crew grew quiet in the ship's lounge as they now faced the heated debate between the Captain, Leaf-nins, one revealed Princess and the man that forced them all together. "So Yui Fujikaze is not just some actress playing the role of a princess, but in fact the actual Princess of Snow Country, Koyuki Kazahana. And you are not just some film director, but one of her father's former captains of his own bodyguards before you went into exile."

Captain Sandayû Asama, nodded, "Yes, I served Sōsetsu Kazahana for years before his death at the hands of his brother. And since that time, I have been searching for the Princess to return home and lead her people to victory!"

"So, you became a producer for her movies, and when the time was right. You brought her over to start a rebellion against her uncle?" Kin asked as she noted the film crew around her recording. Apparently, they wanted to take advantage of the situation to turn the film into a documentary. Well regardless, it was not her problem as Sandayû continued to explain the situation.

"There is already a rebellion in place, made up of several of Kazahana's former samurai and soldiers. It is just that… well…" Sandayû tailed off, and Tayuya picked up the double meaning.

"Your fucken losing and now you need someone to rally the population to win the war," Tayuya pointed out, much to the old man's cringe.

"I admit, we were originally hoping to win before bringing the Princess back to take her rightful place, but the situation had gotten considerably worst when the usurper got some powerful allies in those Sky-nins. As their extra manpower subdued the population. Not to mention their General seems to be able to out-think a lot of our own stagiest."

"Not surprising if it's the same General of the Sky-nins from the Third Great Shinobi War," Kakashi commented as he maul over the information provided. "Four times he was reported KIA, only to appear again to lead the Sky-nins in several campaigns after learning from his mistakes and leading them to a string of victories. Just before Lightening Country finally annexed their country, and Cloud Forces forced the survivors to run or be killed. With it being assumed they were all killed off."

"He has been an absolute terror to our people who desperately need hope," Sandayû explained. "So, after a discussion with the fellow rebels, we agreed to bring Princess here with powerful allies, to bring the people hope."

"There is no hope in the lands of snow," spoke Koyuki for the first time since this meeting called, much to the shock of Sandayû.

"Milady?"

"'Spring that appears on land gives hope' as my father would say," Koyuki quoted as he stared at the
table, with a face that hid her sorrow. "But there is no hope for lands that never seen spring as it is filled with people too harden by the icy fields of white," Koyuki added as she stared deep into Sandayū's eyes. "You should not have brought me back."

"I had to milady," Sandayū got onto his knees to beg. "The people needed hope and a strong leader to lead them."

"Which I am not!" Koyuki yelled at the man who bowed in submission. "I haven't been a princess outside of acting for ten years! I have no idea how to rule a country, and who want a ruler that… that ran away and left her father to die," Koyuki choked. Unable to shed tears as she added quietly added, "Who can't even cry for her own father."

The group was quiet, absorbing what Koyuki said until Sakura got up to defend the woman, "She's right. You had no right to bring her here without her permission to be used in vain hope. If the people truly care enough, they would have left their country, or fought against tyranny. There are other types of governments besides monarchies, such as our own democracy."

"Tit-less is right," Tayuya remarked as Sakura's grumbled at her superior officer's remarks. "If they wouldn't fight for their own lives, then why the fuck would they fight for a woman they hadn't seen for years. Assuming they even believe she is their Princess, instead of some bitch pretending to be her."

"Crude, but my friend is correct," Kin added. "This was beyond foolish. You must have known this was a gamble with little chance of success."

"Except Princess Koyuki was just one part of his plan," Hinata stated as she looked at the man that bowed further into shame. "He said the 'Princess here with powerful allies.' I think it was never his attention to put all his eggs in one basket."

The others stared owlishly before it slowly dawned on them what he said, and Naruto being the better strategist realized it first. "The request for a warship for your film crew, and the Leaf-nins as bodyguards, they weren't just meant to be her protectors. They were your insurance for victory. For you knew they would attack us after being invited into your country, creating an incident that will force Fire Country and its allies to declare war on Snow Country."

"And with Princess Koyuki here along with a representative of the rebels, it would be a simple manner of fighting a liberation war to substitute one government for another," Sai added for Naruto before he looked at Koyuki with a blank expression. "Whether everyone wants to or not for if we retreat, we will invite future attacks from others, and spread this fight across the Elemental Nations if we don't resolve this issue, now."

The entire group was quiet as Koyuki approached Sandayū with a harden glare colder than ice to ask, "Is that true."

Sandayū hesitated for a moment before admitting, "Yes, it is true."

SMACK was Koyuki's response as she had slapped the man she trusted with her life. A red mark began to appear on his face as she turned around and made a brisk walk out of the room. Leaving the depressed man that could not look away from the floor as silence prevailed across the room. That was until Haku asked the whole group, "What are we going to do now?"

The others kept quiet until Kakashi said in a severe tone, "The only possible choice. We are going to war."
"We have already relayed what has happened to Fire Country, and they reply they are sending a fleet comprised of our ships and are allies with the bulk being from Lightning Country. They should be arriving in a few hours," Captain Yamato told the others.

"Good, as we'll need friends. But with that floating castle out there and its weapons, casualties will be high if the two meets," Tukiko pointed out, much to the consternation of the rest of the personal.

"Then we make sure that it will not have a chance to cripple our forces," Naruto stated before she explained her plan. "With the Fox's Shadow cloaking and stealth capabilities, we can easily sneak onto the warship. From there, disable or destroy their main power sources before our allies arrive. Without the castle, our forces should be able to inflict a maximum amount of damage with a minimal number of casualties."

"In the meantime, my team will continue to protect Princess Koyuki and establish contact with Snow Country's rebels. We are going to need to establish some form of government after we topple the current region. Though what it will be in the end, will be determined later with everyone's thoughts put into consideration," Kakashi added as he looked at Koyuki, which she nodded in appreciation.

Sandayū looked dejected and was about to argue against Kakashi's words when Naruto ended the conference, "Then we've got a plan. Let's get to it," Naruto ordered before they all dispersed, and within an hour, the Fox's Shadow flew out of the Valley's End hanger bay and off to win the battle before it actually begins.

Chapter End Notes

Done, now three more chapters before the war begins. Do not forget to review as critics and encouragements are welcomed as it has encouraged me to continue this story. Also, I promise to do something about Danzō, I just have not decided on a final plan yet. Still will be experiencing slow update due to continuing for a Masters, and working at my job. Will try to update again but do not expect another until December, sorry.
Land of Sky and Snow Part 2

Chapter Notes

I do not own Naruto or the mess it has become.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 10/05/2018

Scene I

Deep within the bowels of one of the large zeppelins, the Sky-nin's General sat in silence. His headgear was off to reveal the pitch-black hair as he studied reports in a room filled with files, and copies of his suites. The General's coral colored eyes looked at the screen as he put on his headgear. He knew the brown-haired, young man anywhere as he stated over the intercom, "Come in, Tsukekae."

Tsukekae, a man with a similar build and coral eyes, did not hesitate to walk in with a familiar step as he saluted his commander. The General returned the salute before Tsukekae presented the report in his hands. "General, the operation was a success in eliminating the rebel's only known base along the coast, as well as their small navy and stolen aircrafts. No survivors. All sea attacks should be reduced to only those of Fire Country and their allies when they arrive. However, a few lands and air attacks are still expected as we haven't found all of the inland rebel bases."

"That is to be expected, have you left scouts to investigate if our tree hugging friends or any other rebels are still around to lead us back to any of their land bases?" The General asked as Tsukekae nodded.

"Yes sir, I also have a battle plan ready for your approval to reposition our fleets to cover and inflict heavy damage, whether the weapon is here or not," Tsukekae stated with a stiffened stance as the General nodded his acceptance.

"Goodman. Lord Shinnō may trust in the power of zero-tailed Leach to win battles and our alliance with Snow Country to defeat our enemies. But only a fool trusts in the power of super weapons to win the day. As well as untrusted allies that we are forced to work with. I know we should fear the technological advancements of Fire Country, but still.…" the General stated as he slowly goes up, looking at one of the man uniforms on the wall before turning towards Tsukekae. "You're doing very well; I believe when the time comes, you will make an excellent leader."

"You think something bad will happen?" Tsukekae asked with concern.

"Something bad can always happen, but as long as there are Sky-nins and their General, there will be no end to our will, and our revenge!" the General growled before turning to Tsukekae. "In the meantime, update our defenses and anti-infiltration plans among the fleet. We are probably going to be facing Leaf-nin infiltrators soon, and I would rather not be caught with a knife in the back before the battle. I hope that Lord Shinnō and Daimyō Dotō will listen to me over that arrogant pig Nadare in securing the Sky Castle. If not, well we can always use a new leader if things go south. Draft some plans for additional escape plans if we start to be overwhelmed. Pray, we don't have to use them."
"Yes, my lord," Tsukekae bowed before leaving the room, leaving the General to think before he too left for his destiny.

Scene II

Floating ever mincing in the blood raven sunset, the Sky Castle with its many faces was stationary. Waiting for a new target to pounce on as energy dispersed across its walls. It floated there, like a vehicle of death as a fleet of zeppelins and Sky-nin vehicles formed around it ensuring that no one could approach the Snow-Sky's ultimate weapon, the Sky Castle. However, they failed as a cloaked Phantom Attack Fighter passed through the defense and into the floating castle without so much as a faint blip on their radar. The Shadow's Fox approached one of the empty hanger bays and touched down on the concrete floor.

The huge, complex machine of a castle required a large crew to maintain everything. Combined with the fleets of warships and support crafts, along with coordinating the ground bases, both the Sky-nins and Snow-nins did not have the numbers to manage everything in the castle. Therefore, areas such as an excess hanger bay were close off to keep management to a reasonable level. It also did not help that the leaders were too confident for their own powers that they did not bother to monitor these areas outside of a few non-combat personnel, and some motion and thermal sensors around the sealed metal doors.

It was laughably easy to fool the sensors and hackable cameras once Naruto connected to the ship's hardline through electrical writing running through the wall. She soon gave Tukiko the go-ahead as Tukiko used a smaller version of 'Fire Style: Flaming Blade Jutsu' with enough heat to crack the seals. Making it look as if they finally gave way to age as the team slowly and silently opened the door. No one would know where they were, as they snuck through the door and closed it in their hunt for information. They soon struck gold when they found a couple of technicians in the next room, working on some kind of machine that the girls could not immediately identify.

Not that it mattered outside of Naruto's technical curiosity as the four moved silently into position. The two technicians did not know what had hit them when they were knocked out by Hinata's gentle blade strike and Haku's senbon needles hitting the base of the neck. This was to ensure that the two did not make a noise as the two Leaf-nins that were less squeamish in kill would have little trouble snapping their necks. Naruto then put the two in seals to keep their bodies out of sight, and fresh after Tukiko search for anything to use such as ids, keycards, and more importantly two copies of the blueprints of the facility with critical systems highlighted.

"So many juicy targets, so little time," Naruto pointed at very sections such as, 'Main Weapons Control,' 'Commander Center and Throne Room,' 'Engines,' 'Officers Quarters' and finally, the last targets she was interested in. "Here it is, the primary and secondary power generator. And considering the size difference, I bet you the castle's main weapon cannot fire without the primary generator. In fact, I think the secondary generator is just a backup to keep this castle flying, and barely at that. Probably best to take both out starting with the primary generator to kill the ship."

"I agree, but I wonder what could be powering this floating death ball," Tukiko stated as she pointed to the blueprints. "That is a fourth of the size of the entire castle. What kind of a generated requires that size to run this castle."

"We will find out, we have ten decks to go through, and we aren't getting any younger waiting, so let's go," Haku stated as the team nodded and moved out.

Scene III

Deep underwater, the Valley's End was making its way to what they hoped to be a safe haven for
them, a port under the rebel loyalists of Snow Country. Things were tense as Sandayū attempted to have Koyuki rally the people to retake the throne. A throne she did not want and had no interest in taking anytime soon as she loudly stated to the man, again, "I've told you before, and I'm telling you again, I want nothing to do with the throne!"

"But Lady Kazahana, it's your birthright," Sandayū begged as the young woman's eyes harden.

"It didn't stop Uncle Dotō from taking the throne, and quite frankly you don't need me to take it for the people," Koyuki snarled before she calmed down. "There is a thing called a representative democracy after all. It certainly works wonders for the country you decide to deal with, Fire Country."

Sandayū flinched slightly at the thought of commoners being in complete control of the nation. For a while, he led commoners to battle, and one of the rebels more successful Generals was a commoner, he did not think a government run solely by the people would work without nobles at the helm. Years of training to think a certain way was not easy to erase or supersede such thoughts. Especially, since the only counterpoint was a few years fighting guerilla warfare with under-equipped rebels. A view the samurai tried to convey to his Lady.

"My Lady, while there are some exceptions to the rule, and I do say that loosely as Fire Country still has a Daimyō that serves as a tiebreaker, Snow Country is different from Fire Country. Snow Country that is as rugged as it is cold. It is a land of traditions and tradition is not something that cannot be thrown away lightly. One of which there is a Daimyō that rules it, and it is a Kazahana that rules by right by bloodline."

"Well, I guess that tradition already is broken with Dotō, ninjas, and foreigners in command. What's a few more in the land that never sees spring despite my father saying it would?" Koyuki asked softly with a face as hard as stone. "Just leave me be and let the quiet sooth, my soul."

Seeing his latest attempt was a failure, he decided to leave to try again later. Alone with her ninja guard, Koyuki moaned in annoyance and relief as she stretched the tight muscles in her neck. Her stress left her, as she looked lost in thought. Thinking on what Sandayū said, and her father that always went on about how winter will become spring. "But Spring does not come to a land that never changes, father. So why should their use of me be any different?"

"Are you alright?" Asked softly, the pink haired ninja as she leaned over, with green eyes filled with concern.

Koyuki continued to stare before she, in a manner she could not explain, gave a small smile in return. The first emotion she had shown outside of rage was just as genuine, "I'm fine, just frustrated that Sandayū will not take no for an answer."

"I understand, that a lot has been pushed on you out of the blue, but I am curious why you are so against it," Sakura stated as she rubbed her hands, to ask a question that is personal but needs to be asked. "Do you feel you were not up to the job, or have the events hurt you so badly you don't want it?"

Koyuki stared at Sakura, thinking for the longest time in how to answer. If she were an annoying fan or someone she hardly knew, she would brush her off. However, in the time she had known the girl, she had bonded to the girl and felt they were somehow similar enough that she thought she could convey the answer to her. She hoped it was not for the fact she was a ninja trained for subterfuge when she told Sakura the truth.

"Couldn't it be both?" Koyuki asked before she told her story, "I will admit, whenever I think of
snow, I am brought back to my memories of blood. Blood of my father as one of his own guards murdered him in the courtyard before the coup started. A man who exclaimed he killed my father for spending so much time and money in some foolish project to bring spring to Snow Country over making Snow Country strong. I still remember that man's words as he died for a cause that I wondered. Was my father's death made by Dotō's greed to ascend to the throne, or that my father died due to his focus on some foolish dream? Then I begin to wonder if I would be a better leader then my father, or worst.

"My training to be head of state barely started before I ran, and then spent the rest of my life acting instead of learning to rule. Acting for some character in a movie, or as the actress that was never real. I do not know who I am, and even if I did, I do not even know if the people of Snow would accept me. A woman who is nothing more than an actress that grew up in other's lands. I would not trust such a person that appeared out of nowhere, and I expect them to be the same. (Sigh) I fear all that may happen if I take the throne, I may wind up just like my father, a fool chasing a dream that no longer exists."

Sakura, who was silent throughout Koyuki rant and doubts, finally spoke up to convey some words of hope through a question. "Did you know as a child I had doubts about being a ninja?"

Koyuki, who never knew Sakura during her early career, was shocked by the statement with disbelieving eyes as an answer to Sakura's question. Seeing the older woman's state of shock, she took it as a sign to continue as she explained her tale, "It's true, while I entered the academy to be a great ninja to save lives, and it soon fell to the wayside when I developed a deep crush on some boy. A boy who was nothing more than scum in the end, but at the time all I knew was that he was very handsome, very skilled, and depressing backstory that made girls want to save him. So, I spent all my time trying to win him, instead of studying harder beyond being the most brilliant academically in the class. I suppose it would not be as bad if the girls from Team Vixen and Team Spirit were not on the same level.

"Girls that they were more skilled, more popular, and worst of all for a young girl, more beautiful. They were the envy of all the girls and made us all look like snails. I felt so weak that I felt I wouldn't amount to anything so quitting came to my mind more than once. Then my parents took me to watch your films, of a woman that faced fear and persevered. My favorite being the film, The Victorious, about the character you play, Milly who persevered after hitting rock bottom. It made me think that if someone so low can go so high, then maybe I have a chance as well," Sakura stated, skipping the part about how she first used it to continue her chase for Sasuke before focusing on more noble goals. Koyuki needed a pep talk, not a story of her life.

A strategy that seems to be working as Koyuki's posture became more positive as Sakura gave some final words of advice, "I don't know if you'll be a good leader or not. Nor do I know what you should do if you take either path. What I do know is that you changed me for the better and I hope you use that to help yourself. After all, anyone can act the hero, but only a true hero thinks about their action before they act in the good of the people. And since you have nothing but concern for your people's wellbeing, I think you are off to a good start."

Koyuki gave a tender smile and was going to give her thanks when a voice over the intercom interrupted her moment, "This Captain Yamato to all senior staff, ninjas and VIPs, report to the bridge. We have arrived at the rebel's safe harbor and well... I think you all need to see this."

Curious, Sakura and Koyuki made a beeline to the bridge to find everyone was there, including Sandayū staring at a view screen of ships optical sensors above sea level. They saw the remains of what was once a hidden seaport with a small fleet of metal ships. A port and fleet that was sunken, if not outright destroyed by what appears to be a vastly superior force. Bodies littered the ground with
charged or bloody bodies from what was a fierce battle. It was apparent who won as Sandayū fell to his knees.

Tayuya could not help comment, "Looks like the fuckers went to town with the fledgling rebellion."

Kin nodded in agreement as Sandayū muttered, "There were over three-thousand people here, with a small fleet of ships and the majority of the aircrafts we had commandeered. Not to mention most of the nobles and leadership loyal to Koyuki. How could this happen?"

"They must have known for some time the location of this rebel base, and they were just waiting to attack. Our presence here must have accelerated their plans. Otherwise, they just used them to find the location of the other bases if possible," Kakashi stated as his strategic mind hidden by laziness was whirling like fire. "It may be best to leave, in case they have spotters waiting for us to come here."

"Agreed, it is a favorite tactic of Orochimaru to take out rebels, and there is no reason to not to think Dotō and the Sky-nin's General will not employ similar tactics," Kin stated with Tayuya nodded in agreement.

Sandayū remained frozen as Captain Yamato ordered the ship to turn around back into the sea, thinking no one saw them. Unfortunately, Snow-nins hidden in the rocks around the base noticed the shift in the ocean. They quickly realize something big was moving in those shallow waters, and its presence required them to act quickly. Three of them fired into the sea to attach trackers to the ship's hull, and now they had a way to track the elusive ship. Soon, the second phase of their plan would begin.

**Scene IV**

Deep within the bowels of the floating castle was a large tube of swirling mass and energy that was the powering the castle and a location considered one of the most critical areas of the ship of the Sky Castle. However, you would not believe it considering the minimal number of Sky and Snow technicians and guards that worked there, compared to another vital area. For anyone that lived in the Sky Castle, they would rather scrub toilets than work there. Even the control center, which was design to house sixteen personnel, only had two technicians to monitor the power source that seemed to admit an aura of dread. Dread terrible enough that on a whiteboard behind them, it read in black 'It has been _ days since the last recorded death' and in red was the number '18' scribbled in and noting 'A new record, good work.' Apparently, the four-hour shifts were keeping suicide rates low, though it did not give the personnel of the castle pride as they began to work their first hour.

Nor did it stop attempts, as one of the workers in the control center was complementing committing suicide as he eyed his kunai with longing. He was so deep in his complementation of dishonor versus escape from his dreaded job that he did not notice the door had been open by the forced opened eyes of an unsealed technician corpse. Nor did he notice that it disappeared back into the seal as enemy ninjas walked. It did not matter to him, as he was tired of life. Therefore, he did not attempt to save himself when Tukiko covered his mouth and slit his throat with her knife. While Naruto copied the motion with a kunai in hand on a technician that had a bit more life in him. He was finally free as the Leaf-nins moved in.

After disposing of the two corpses, Tukiko and Naruto quickly got into a perfect vantage position with their sniper rifle or assault rifle set to silence mode as Haku and Hinata prepared to move to the lower levels with their ninja stealth skills. Once in position, the two began to fire with precision teamwork, with Naruto aiming for individuals while Tukiko took down groups. It did not take long to clear the room, and soon the only people left were the Sky and Snow Force's enemy, the Leaf. With the room cleared, Hinata and Haku went further down; making sure no one else was around
while Tukiko and Naruto kept watching. It did not take long to start feeling dread as the neared the
tower generator that was odd to them.

"This is something odd. It looks like a warp core from one of those old sci-fi shows that aired before
the Elemental Countries. Star Trek I believe. But it doesn't look like a generator set to produce
plasma or anti-matter. So why is it shaped like that?" Naruto asked, mostly to herself.

Though that did not deter Tukiko from speaking her mind, "Forget the shape! What is with this
sudden feeling of dread I've got since entering this Kami dammed place?!

That question was also something Naruto did not know at first until she approaches the tube and the
feeling just got stronger. She came close when a large eye opened to reveal it was a living thing in
that tube. Naruto jumped back in fear as it moved to show an impressive mask and shoved three
pointed teeth against the wall. Teeth that biologists recognized as teeth that leeches use to bite their
victims to suck their blood. Naruto had a feeling that it sucked out things other than blood. Especially
since Colonel Nine of Nine was pancaking in her mind.

"Is that a giant leach of chakra in that tube?" Tukiko asked out loud.

"I think so," Naruto answered before Colonel Nine finally calmed down long enough to speak.

"Naruto listen to me very carefully, that thing is not just a leach, but a science experiment created
during the Mechanize War." Colonel Nine of Nine stated before she calmed down. "In fact, you can
say it's the prototype for the Mother and my creation. The zero-tailed leaches were weapons that
were meant to be deployed on Mars to attack and suck dry the energy on the planet. It was meant to
be a doomsday weapon for the Machines.

"However, something went wrong, as it was draining not only machines but also living energy and
chakra. That dread feeling you feel is used to weaken its prey before draining its victims and sucking
them dry through their negative emotions. They got out, and both sides had to hunt them down. We
thought we had gotten them all, but it appears one survived. You need to kill it, kill it now before it
kills us."

"I don't think we will be able to deal with it on our own, will need our boss summons, and possibly
the Fox's Shadow to kill it, but I will give it a shot," Naruto stated with a frown before she turned
towards Tukiko. "Plant the explosives. We will hightail it to the fighter and kill it once we escape the
castle, assuming the blast doesn't. With any luck, we will get two leaches with one shovel."

"Roger," Tukiko saluted before she pulled out explosive notes and C-4 and spread it along the tube
with Naruto.

They finished when Hinata called out, "We found someone down here, and I don't think she is here
by choice!"

The two looked at each other before they began jumping down, from platform to platform until they
reached the bottom. The two soon arrived at a room that was below the tube containing the leach.
Just below the container was a young red-haired woman in plain white clothing that was crying in
Haku's arms. Her teal eyes filled with tears refused to let go of her savior as Naruto got closer and
look at the woman's tanned arms. The dark bruises on her wrists were enough to tell the group she
has been captive for a very long time.

However, that would not detour Tukiko from doing her job as she moved towards the woman. Her
hand on her shoulder to get her to pay attention as she went into, as the team had dubbed it,
'interrogation mode.' Once Tukiko had the woman's attention, she asked her first, a simple question,
"Who are you?"

"I'm-I'm Doctor Amaru. I was an assistant of my mentor, Shinnō, before..." the woman, Amaru, stated before she began to trail off into despair.

Tukiko brought her back to reality to continue her interrogation. "So, you are a doctor, huh. So, what is a doctor doing strapped down under that thing?" Tukiko asked as she pointed to the leach above her.

"I am here because it was all my fault," Amaru practically cried as she clutched. "That monster came from me."

"What do you mean by that?" Hinata asked softly as Amaru told her tale while sobbing.

Amaru talked about how she trained and practiced medicine in her poor village with dreams of being a doctor. However, she lacked the ability to pay to leave her village, let alone go to school or pay to take the test to gain a license. Instead, she read what books they had and served to the best of her abilities as the village's medicine woman and nurse. She actually did an excellent job by decreasing mortality rates until a plague struck her village. The death toll was rising, and all she could do was slow it down with her limited training. She feared the entire village would die, including herself as she was infected trying to treat it until a man named Shinnō came to save them.

He quickly went over her notes, and he figured out what precisely the plague was and how to treat it. Within weeks, everyone in her village promptly recovered, and they celebrated the man they called a hero. It was then that Shinnō approached Amaru, praising her for her skills for keeping the villagers alive for as long as she did, and offered her an apprenticeship under him. She was so stunned, she accepted without a second thought, and began working with the man. Going to places riddled with plagues, despair, and death. Shinnō said it was because he believed that to save the world that you must help it at its darkest reaches to save it. She believed him and stuck with him even after she got her license as a certified doctor.

Then a year after she got her license, Shinnō told her they would be returning to her home village to celebrate her success. She was excited at the prospect of returning home to show everyone how far she had come. Only for her excitement and dreams to be dash when she came upon a living nightmare. For the day she returned, Sky-nins and Snow-nins were slaughtering her village as part of the holy alliance made by their revealed shinobi commander, Lord Shinnō. He was so smug, talking about how he planned it all out.

How he had kidnapped and drugged her several days before the plague hit the village to seal the Zero-tailed Leach in her allowing it to gather its strength from despair. How he had let loose the epidemic that hit her village years ago to make her feel the despair of not being to save them as they slowly died. How he only came to save them to prevent her from dying. He explained that he took her to those places filled with despair and death to feed the demon. A plan that would have continued for several more years if he had not decided to accelerate his plans after he made a powerful military alliance with Snow Forces. He figured that her watching the people she grew up die in mass numbers while revealing her whole life was a lie would feed the Leach to be powerful enough to beat other counties.

"Then he told me that if that were not enough to elevate my despair, then he would show me what my proper place was; before he... and then he... with his men and..." Amaru teared up again before she cried even harder as she held onto Hinata with all her strength.

Tukiko quickly surmised what she was saying as she asked wordlessly, 'rape?' and both Haku and Hinata nodded 'yes.' It took a few more moments for Naruto to get what had happened to Amaru and
she tried to use every ounce of ninja training to convey her sympathy. Sadly, that was Naruto's worst skill, but luck would have it that Amaru was too sad to notice. The last thing she needs was pity as she slowly wiped away her tears.

"Then he took me to this room and released the demon into the canister above us, and he has since kept me here, alive to continue to feed the Zero-tail power through despair. And I've been here ever since, in a dark place. The only good thing is that the leech is making the Snow and Sky-nins too depress to touch me outside of cleaning and feeding me," Amaru said as she finished her tales as she let Hinata go.

Tukiko took one look around before asking, "Okay, who is for no quarters for these a-holes?" All four, including Amaru, raised their hands as Tukiko nodded as she expected. "Then let's get out of this shit show."

"Right, will make our escape and then detonate-" Naruto started off when she was interrupted by a loud warning sound before she saw wires attached to the tube siphon power off the demon.

It was almost blinding as energy dispersed quickly into the wiring to elsewhere in the ship. The demon screamed out in power as Hinata asked in her soft voice, "What was that?"

"I had seen that before when they were testing the main weapon. I think they fired it again," Amaru stated as the four Leaf-nins eyes widen in realization.

"It means they must have either found the Valley's End or they are engaging the allied fleet," Haku stated in fear as Naruto's eyes harden before she barked out orders.

"Tukiko detonate the explosive and everyone hold-on. We are taking a shortcut."

Tukiko nodded and quickly used chakra to send a pulse that activated the explosive notes. Within seconds, the notes exploded along the tube, destroying it as the demon screamed out in excitement as Naruto used 'Earth Style: Burrow Jutsu' to sink the entire group through the stone floor. Leaving the monster to tear through the top as they made a run towards the fighter to escape to safety while wondering what had happened outside of the castle.

Scene V: 20 Minutes Earlier

It was pure chaos as the Valley's End flew out of the water into the open skies to escape the various death charges dropped by enemy aircraft from above. Now they were in the open as railguns, missiles, torpedoes, and beam weapons fired from the ships that surrounded it. They were in the thick of the fighting as Yamato yelled, "Keep firing. Cut a path through the enemy lines so we can escape."

"Aye sirs!" the crew yelled back as they keep on firing as the ship's flared and were heading to dangerous levels.

The shields were slowly being overwhelmed from the fire of over twenty zeppelins and multiple sky-nin aircraft around it, the snow-nin navy below it, and the floating castle in front. The amount of firepower was too much, as the shields could not handle it. Within two minutes, the shields failed despite taking down a good number of aircraft and navy ships with two zeppelins and one naval cruiser being the heaviest weights destroyed. With the ship's shields off-line, enemy ninjas soon swarmed the ship from small three-man aircrafts or by themselves thanks to armor with foldable wings designed for flight.

The Captain, hearing side hatchways being forcibly open, "Prepare for borders!"
Sure enough, several Sky-nins and Snow-nins in armor made their way through force fields archways to begin their siege. The attack force soon met heavy resistance as crewmembers and ninjas joined the armed conflict, taking down the borders and only losing a few crew members. That all changed when an explosion erupted the port side of the command structure breaching the hull. Three crew members were sucked out while two more were killed by shrapnel that hit the Captain as well. The latter of which did not feel because it was overshadowed by the shock wave from the explosion.

The rest of the crew either hunkered down by engaging their magnetic boots or strapped themselves in their seats to prevent them from flying out. The ninjas and Sandayū Asama used chakra to stay in place, with Sakura holding onto Koyuki. Kakashi quickly assessed the situation and saw the Sky General outside in his fast personal aircraft with missiles and shuriken launchers. Seeing such a threat, Kakashi ordered Sai to engage since he was the only one that could fight in the sky.

"Take him down by any means," Kakashi ordered, and Sai followed by pulling out a scroll.

From the special scrolls with seals to give life, Sai created artworks of a dozen birds that came to life and moved against the Sky-nin General with speeds only missiles could achieve. It worked well in distracting and forcing the older ninja to back off as Sai made a running start for the hole. He jumped out just as he summoned a giant bird made of ink and raced after the Sky-nin, missing an elite Snow-nin guard led by Rōga.

He took one look at the princess before starting right at Kakashi and issuing orders, "You two, take the Princess and leave. The rest of you handle the others except Kakashi. He's mine!"

The men complied as one with grappling hands securing Koyuki in one of the ninja's arms and took flight with her screaming. The other tried to follow but was stopped when a screaming Sakura jumped onto the second and stabbed him in the neck. Blood was gushing as both fell over the side while the others went on the offensive. Kakashi screamed for Sakura and tried to run outside but was quickly distracted as he was forced to fight Rōga while his students and Sandayū dealt with the elite ninjas. The others' fight was a lot tamer than the one that was taking place along the hull of the Valley's End between Kakashi and Rōga.

Rōga, using cold vapor and clouds to power his jutsus, used more flashy moves such as 'Ice Style: Wolf Fang Jutsu' or 'Ice Style: Ice Comet Jutsu' to attack Kakashi with ice wolves or fly ice meteors. While Kakashi used simple fire jutsus such as 'Fire Style: Fire Ball Jutsu' or 'Fire Style: Flower Phoenix Jutsu' to disrupt Rōga's jutsus as he backed up to gain some distance. However, that did not deter the Snow-nin as he continued to have an arrogant look that Kakashi did not feel belonged on his face.

"You can't keep this up Sharingan Kakashi, my armor keeps me well supplied with chakra and with its protection I am unbeatable!" Rōga exclaimed with a smirk of victory, or arrogance in Kakashi's mind.

One Kakashi was willing to crack as he stated, "Bold words, Rōga but one you will regret as I have not revealed my most powerful technique. One I've made myself, and only two others know. One for losing a son who was my student, and the other for a student's cousin he treated poorly. So, let us see you handle this."

It was then Kakashi started the hand signs to use his most potent jutsu that sounded like the chirping of a thousand birds that formed in his hand, the 'Lightning Style: Chidori Jutsu.' A powerful attack meant for a quick kill of powerful opponents, hence why it was called an assassin's technique despite it being too noisy to be used as one outside of battlefield assassinations. It was a devastating lightning blade Kakashi rear back as he charged forward. Rōga, unwilling to be deterred use 'Ice Style: Wolf
Fang Avalanche Jutsu' to let loose a wave of ice wolves to bury Kakashi. It was an intention to kill him, but he found to his horror the jutsu was not only powerful it also made Kakashi faster. As the electrical current in Kakashi was making his adrenaline glands operate at a faster rate, making him much faster than average.

Rōga was so shocked that Kakashi was able to dodge his attacks that he did not realize how in danger he was until Kakashi was on him and hit him directly with his Chidori. The amount of force and power was able to crack the armor while blinding the man. Making him unable to stop Kakashi from coming up from behind with kunai to the neck. He tried fighting him off, but with a career depending on his armor, and being the only ninjutsu user made him weak for hand-to-hand combat and easy prey for jacks-of-all-trades like Kakashi.

Rōga realized he was dead when Kakashi stated, "You relied too much on your armor, and that was your biggest mistake. Goodbye Rōga," before he pushed the kunai with enough strength to cut out his throat.

The elite ninja that has been a pain to Kakashi since they first met was dead and sliding off the ship in a bloody trail. Gravity soon took control as Rōga plunged in the sea below. The body was out of sight and out of mind as Kakashi made his way back into the ship, keeping an eye out for other possible borders as he walked past the ship's force field holding the hull breach to one of the hatches with locks that been hastily repaired. He moved in to see the ninjas he left Kin, Tayuya, Sandayū, and the rest of the ship's crew, dead.

The battle was well over when Kakashi walked over, looking out for a familiar pink hair kunoichi, who was sadly still missing. He did not have much hope as he went up to ask, "Sakura?"

The two-sound turned leaf kunoichis looked at each other before shaking their heads. Fearing the worst, Kakashi began to feel despair at another person close to him was lost when over the radio a familiar voice spoke, "To all Leaf-nins, this is Sakura. I am at the Sky-nin's floating castle moving to extract the VIP. Please acknowledge, over."

Kakashi, shocked with joy, took a moment and was about to respond when the ship shook via explosions along the hull as crewmembers yelled out the following. "We just lost three of our rail guns and one of our missile launchers." "Missiles inbound." "There targeting our engines." "They're trying to fire harpoons into the hull."

"They are trying to capture us. Keep up evasive actions, cut any harpoons that pierce the hull, and prepare the self-destruct. We're not letting them take this ship!" Yelled out Captain Yamato, who can barely stand, and yet, he did not notice the front of his uniform was starting to be stain with blood.

The crew quickly complied as Kakashi relayed his orders to Sakura, possibly his last if things did not change soon. His heart had quickened with the strain of panic as the radar bleeped new contacts, fearing the enemy had sent reinforcements. His fears seemed to be unfounded when the Sensor Officer yelled, "Sir, Fire and Lightening warships. The alliance fleet has arrived."

Looking at a view screen, he saw a collection of thirty airships and naval ships moving in with fighter escorts, and all armed to the teeth. The majority were older generation ships, such as heavily armored zeppelins, fighters, and warships that fill both the Lightning and Fire Country, mostly Lightning Country. However, others were newer ships based on Federation Alliance designs, including the Red Hawk class attacks fighters, and one only rumored to have been built. A delta shape air/space cruiser known as the Fire Dance class cruiser, a massive ship with a substantial amount of firepower. Primary rail guns and anti-air lasers along the hull, and for heavy firepower, six high-powered plasma cannons for forward and side barrages, and one heavy railgun at the front. The ship was the most powerful in the world and proved it by firing onto the enemy fleet, taking down
three zeppelins along with other smaller aircrafts.

Yamato used that opportunity to push the Valley End to escape the encirclement and into the newly formed hole and moved up to meet up with the fleet surrounding the cruiser ID as the Blazing Sun, Admiral Steven Hall's flagship. They were in the process of forming up when the sensor officer reported an energy spike from the Sky Castle. Knowing history was repeating itself, Yamato ordered the ship to dive, and he warned the fleet to scattered when a blinding light came there way.

Scene VI: 10 Minutes Earlier

In an ordinated throne room filled with decorations that were more distasteful then showing stood Koyuki, an angry woman that glared at the two men before her. More specifically her uncle, Daimyō Dotō Kazahana, who was smiling brightly at his niece brought before him. She genuinely felt disgusted as he pets her cheek, "Truly, you have grown into such a beauty. Such a lovely girl," Dotō stated before lowering his hand to the necklace around her neck. "But not truly as beautiful as this," Dotō added before pulling the necklace off her neck.

Koyuki, shocked and relieved Dotō was not going for her chest, asked with a stone-cold face honed by her years of acting, "You mean you did all this to get my necklace? Why would a piece of jewelry be any concern to you?"

Dotō looked shocked at Kouki’s question as he held up the crystal necklace, "Do you know what this is?" The lack of answer was all Dotō required before telling her in the old evil villain cliché, "This is a key. A key to wealth your father squired away in a vault that I have been trying to open for years, but I have been unsuccessful for I didn't have the key to unlock it. But now I have, thanks to you my lady."

Kouki shuddered as she looked at her aristocrat uncle while hiding back her real thoughts. Thoughts of disbelief that the idiot who killed her father thought her father had the country's treasure in some hidden off location. She realized it was something else, but she did not convey those thoughts. Instead, she used her acting skills to express those of a scared little girl to ask, "So now that you have what you want, are you going to kill me?"

"Maybe, or maybe not as I do have to make others submit my rule," Dotō had sated as he traced her face. "And you have become a lovely woman, my niece."

Now Kouki shuttered in real fear as she thought of ways out, no method was unthinkable. Such thoughts were sideline when she stammered out like the scared girl she had been acting, "They'll stop you!"

"Who the Leaf and Fire Country, I think they are on their last legs with my best man, Rōga on the job, they are as good as finished," Dotō stated when a beeping sound was heard.

One that Lord Shinnō checked before he gave a chuckle that put Dotō on edge, "What are you laughing about?"

"It appears your best man is dead," Shinnō stated before pulling over a computer screen to show several ninjas in chakra armor flatlined. "Apparently he was no match for Kakashi or the crew on that ship. My money was on Kakashi with the amount of ranting he made about going after the man. Looks like the General was right again, he was such a fool."

Dotō enranges, began barking mad orders of losing his highest-ranking ninja, "Destroy that ship."

"Why? They are surrounded, and we are in the best position to capture technology that will put us on
par with the Leaf, and combine with this castle, be unstoppable as we invade the lowlanders,” Shinnō stated as he showed his dismissiveness at the thought of anyone living at sea level, even his lord Daimyō to some degree. "Don't worry, we will kill everyone on this ship on our own terms. I think once we have the ship, will immediately execute everyone but the members of Team Vixen, who we will keep alive outside of breeding purposes or squeeze for information. You'll get your revenge soon."

Daimyō Dotō simmered into the cold, calm demeanor he always seemed to appear in as Koyuki looked out in fear. That was until several explosions, including three zeppelins occurred. It was then they spotted off in the distance the fleet, including one large warship they had never seen before. Apparently, Fire Country has been busy and was ready for the air battle that would soon commence. Though the Daimyō and Commander of the Ninjas forces did not think it would be a long one as Lord Shino sighed as he went to old speakers, "Well, I hope to take the ship for reverse engineering of their technology. But I guess the remains of the fleet will have to do. Fire control; fire the main cannon thirty digress west, 10 degrees south."

He got the confirmed ayes before they fired the main cannon. Only a brief energy spike before it spread to the fleet that began to scatter away from the turret of chakra-based energy. Most escape, but those in the center, two zeppelins, and the large cruiser suffered a direct hit. Both men smiled thinking they had destroyed them to find to his dismay that the cruiser was still there and mostly intact. Evident by the fact it beam weapons were firing on their fleet while its main cannon fired rounds into the Sky Castle's wall. Causing severe damage and killing dozens per hit.

Lord Shinnō was about to order the weapon to fire again when he heard a rumbling across the base. He saw in horror when the Zero-tailed Leach broke through the castle interior that screamed freedom. His world was crumbling down along with the castle. As years of planning and building was torn asunder by the monster he had used, and he knew who the blame when he saw a giant six tail fox and wolf, attack with a giant megalodon shark, crow, and red-tail hawk, boss. The Leaf-nins, Team Vixen have ruined the Sky-nins plans, and he could do nothing to stop them as he saw the fleet and being push back by a reorganized enemy fleet.

Meanwhile, Dotō also got the hint Leaf-nins were involved when a pink-haired kunoichi burst through the window. Blood glittered on the chest area of the acquired flight capable chakra armor as she flew down to attack with a tackle aim to the neck. Their armor may counter any chakra base attacks towards each, but they are weak against kinetic attack. Therefore, she hit the man with her shoulder blade while going three times the speed of gravity, and combined with the weight of a healthy teenage woman, was enough to break the man's neck and cave in part of his skull.

The man made a bloody smear as Sakura, still on her feet, tried to grab Koyuki to make their escape. She screamed, "Koyuki," before she hit head-on by a black icy form of a dragon and sent flying away.

Koyuki felt the force and coldness of the 'Ice Style: Black Dragon Jutsu' that sent Sakura tumbling away, slightly battered as the armor took the brunt of the Jutsu, almost to the point it nearly burned out. Luckily for Sakura, it still held firm as she slowly got up as Koyuki turned to see that it was her uncle that attacked Sakura. An uncle that had apparently wore chakra armor, which he revealed before he unfolded wings from the back of his armor.

He gave a small predatory smile that was not lost to her before he and Lord Shinnō were forced to jump back due to a shuriken launcher impeded by a dozen shurikens to the floor. He looked up in rage to see stolen airships darting towards the castle, harassing the forces trying to escape or defending it from the Zero-Tail Leach and others. He knew they were rebel forces with the white and red paint jobs on them, and the soldiers screaming, "For Lady Koyuki," or "Freedom against
Tyranny” and other ridiculous warcries a rebel force would give.

Rebels dedicated to ending his rule to the extent that they risked going so far out of range for an attack this brazen. It enraged him that they fought against him years after he took the crown for himself. While Koyuki looked up in shock, to see people fight against her uncle despite the odds, and with the hope, that maybe she could help her people get what they wanted, freedom from her uncle. She felt relief until she felt a large man grab her. Her uncle, who was starting to shake with rage so strong that it was loosening his sanity, gave a look that made her shudder in fear.

He gave Lord Shinnō orders to deal with the enemies to his state before he looked at Koyuki with a crazed look in his eyes stated, "Come Koyuki, let's meet destiny and our treasure."

Dotō wings soon took flight leaving behind a scared pink ninja as they watched him fly too fast to hit. Some of the rebel ships noticed and tried to intercept but Dotō with his 'Ice Style: Black Dragon Jutsu' took down the rebels in front of him as he made his escape. His chakra power wings prove to be too fast for them as the survivors from the castle and Snow-Sky fleet began to harass them. Leaving Lord Shinnō alone with Sakura as his men ran or took to the skies to fight for their lives.

Though the others did not matter to Shinnō as he approached the pink haired ninja, enrage by all that transpired, planned to take out all his frustrations on the girl. "You and your oh so superior Leaf have cost me everything. Well, I am going to get my pound of flesh off you as a start. See you in hell you fucking bitch!" he yelled as Shinnō moved to attack an exhausted Sakura. He was about to kill her when bang, a gunshot rang out as the Sky-nin Lord fell to the ground.

He looked up in shock to see that off in a blurry distance in a craft hovering off the ground were two figures. They jumped off and approached. One was a blonde-haired young woman with a long rifle, who was handing something to one he was familiar with. He called out, "Amaru!" before she shot him in the head, ending his time in this war.

Standing over his corpse, Amaru stood there relieved and stunned. Her tormentor was dead, and she could finally move on, from the world of pain she has been experiencing for so long. She felt so light that it was as if her head was high up in the clouds when Naruto brought her back to reality and took back one of her duel pistols she lent her. She turned to see Naruto staring at the crumbling floor.

"I'm glad got your revenge, but I suggest we leave before the castle ship falls apart. Everyone to our ship," Naruto ordered, and the group complied as they rushed towards Naruto's fighter. It was a short run, but it was long enough for Naruto to ask Sakura, "Do you know where Koyuki is?"

"Dotō took her away to some location that is supposed to contain the treasure of their family. We need to go after them before he gets too far," Sakura answered with pants in between. She had been fighting non-stop for an hour, and the armor does put a drain on one's reserve when used to defend oneself.

"Let me get in contact with the fleet, maybe some have caught up to him," Naruto stated as she moved to the cockpit to make a call and move away from the castle that was now falling to the ocean below.

Alone, the two women approached the cockpit as Sakura groaned in pain as she took off the armor she hastily had put on after taking it from the previous owner during the fight. She dropped the chest piece before entering the cockpit with the older woman. Amaru, seeing her in pain went to examine her, after taking an emergency medical kit off the side all in the aircraft.

Amaru was applying healing cream that a certain lavender ninja made when Sakura asked in shock, "What are you doing?"
"Relax, I am a doctor, and I'm treating your wounds," Amaru stated with a blush and a mental whack calling herself an idiot. Apparently being held in captivity for months had dulled her bedside manners.

Luckily, not her skills as the bruises receded and the pain ebbed away. Still, Sakura felt the redhead was out of bounds when she stated, "Well, you don't need to do that. I am a medic-nin after all," Sakura added as she tried to form a 'Mystic Palm Jutsu' and produce a flickering green field.

Amaru, not dissuaded, stated, "That may be fine, but unlike you, I am trained to heal people without chakra." She then produces a senbon needle and hit a sport in the back of Sakura's neck, causing a prickling feeling followed by increasing the flow of the girl's chakra. "I also know ways to accelerate chakra flow to restore your supplies and healing factor for a time. So, will you let me heal you or not?"

Sakura, after a brief moment, nodded 'yes' and let Amaru continue her work as Naruto asked Captain Yamato over the COMM, "Are you sure you can handle this on your own."

"The Admiral is confident we will be take on the giant leach but not if Koyuki will still be alive when she finished this fight," the Captain relayed. "Your ship is the only one that can chase down Dotō and rescue Koyuki. The rebels have used the majority of the fuel getting here and can't give full chase. While our forces are bogged down in dogfights."

"And we cannot afford to let her die. Not unless we want to stay here for decades to establish a new government since Captain Asama revealed most of the trusted Nobles are dead, and the rest have to be disposed of when Dotō is removed from power. Find Koyuki and get her to safety, you have rebel support following you shortly," Kakashi stated with a grim tone.

"Roger that we're moving out," Naruto confirmed the order before she cut the channel before opening another to her friends. "Hinata, Tukiko, and Haku. You girls help our summons take care of that creature and tell my summons Soul Hunter and Dancing Spirit I'm sorry I cannot stay, but if I don't go, then this whole battle would be for nothing."

The girls acknowledge with Hinata stated through the commons, "Naruto, be careful."

"Always," Naruto reassured Hinata before turning the fighter away to the last know trajectory of their target to save, Koyuki.

Scene VII

Chaos, that was what the Sky-nin General would describe the battle that was taking place around him while he flew in his personal aircraft along with two guarding crafts. His eyes on the lookout as he watched his friends and comrades around him die in mass numbers. As he watches the castle that his Lord put so many efforts in building crumble and sink to the bottom of the ocean. He soon realized that they were going to lose the moment he thought he actually escaped the Leaf-nin with the living inkblots.

He soon got on the radio to order his forces to make a fighting retreat when the Leaf-nin appeared after a swarm of giant ink insects took down his guards. Fortunately, to him, Tsukekae was not the one hit. Unfortunately, the Leaf-nins were heading right for him, avoiding his shurikens launcher. He began to curse as he yelled, "Oh come on. What the hell is with your persistence?"

"My commander ordered your death, and I will see it fulfilled," Sai answered as he prepared his blade.
This caught the Sky-nin off guard as he mumbled, "So the Leaf trained some of their individuals like we do for the path that must be made."

One Sai heard as he stated while dodging shurikens, "No, but I was trained to follow the path of a man of greed decreed and one I have difficulty moving away from."

The Sky General nodded when he stated, "Regardless, I will not let you just kill me. Tsukekae, fall back, I'll handle it."

"But sir-" Tsukekae started to argue, but the Sky-nin General stopped him in his tracks.

"Don't argue, this is my fight, and I'll see it to the end," the man ordered as he went from a defensive to a more offensive role.

All around, the survivors were making a fighting retreat as he continued to clash with Sai, and fight until finally during a dive, he got a lucky shot on the inkblot. It exploded, and Sai fell into the clouds with his body cut up and bleeding. The General looked around, before relaxing, thinking he got him when he felt something latch onto his ship. He saw an ink vine a ninja could quickly climb up attached to his aircraft. He knew it was too late when he felt Sai's blade go through his chest and lung. The Sky-nin General gave a cough of blood before falling off Sai's sword and his aircraft with a fatal wound that only immediate treatment could save him from.

Tsukekae yelled out in shock before his craft moved and caught the Sky-nin General before making a dash with the retreating fleet. Sai watched as the surviving Sky-nins ran and the Fire, Lightning, and Rebel forces concentrated on the more dangerous foe, the Chakra beast leach. A dead-man flying away was not as much of a big deal as the beast as Sai flew back to the battle as the Valley's End made its move.

Scene VIII

On the bridge of the Valley's End, the ship was making an approach to the giant Leach that was growing in size, feasting on all the sky-nins and the few military craft that was not fast enough to escape it. A sea of corpses littered around the castle as it started to develop long tentacles that were trying to latch on everything around it. The four summonses were keeping it contained and tearing off pieces, but it was quickly getting dangerous for them as the beast was getting faster, and stronger. It could now avoid most of the fleet's weapons, and take a hit or two from a heavier unit before regenerating its wounds. Yamato in response relayed through the comms to Team Vixen to have their summons back off as he ordered Valley's End to get closer while arming the ship's mines.

Everyone complied as the summons moved away in great earnest, especially Soul Hunter in fear of his previously lousy day in his fight with the mosquitoes, as the Valley's End moved closer. The helmsmen asked if they should move off by Captain Yamato said, "No closer, and get as close as you can before firing everything at once and dropping every armed mine we have into the center of that thing at point back range."

"Sir, I don't think I can get that close?" the helmsmen stammered while Kin and Tayuya looked with wide eyes at the Captain like he was crazy.

The Captain disagreed as he stated, "We are the only ship that can get close enough to hurt it and have enough firepower to make a difference. If we don't, it has the potential to destroy the entire fleet and can't allow that if we want to win. For win we shall for I trust all of you to do your job and show why you are the best crew any man can have in Fire Country. So, let us win and kill that thing! For Fire Country!" The Captain yelled, and the crews shouted "For Fire Country" back emphatically as they moved in earnest while the Captain felt lightheaded.
The ship danced around the leach, avoiding many of its tendrils as it got closer and closer until finally close enough for no escape as Yamato yelled, "Fire everything," as he felt dizzy.

So dizzy that Yamato did not notice the firepower his ship unleashed right on top of the creature and unleashed death in the form of every type of explosive or weapon the ship had. A brilliant explosion overtook the leach as the Valley's End, without orders, made a U-turn towards the sky. As the Captain finally fell to darkness as the crew celebrated as they watch the Leach disintegrate into nothing.

A crewmen yelled in excitement, "We did its Captain!" only to become somber when they got no response. "Captain?"

Kakashi, who was the closest, walked over to see the Captain was dead. A metal shard lodge in the stomach and a uniform stained with blood. Kakashi deduced very quickly, the Captain must have been injuring during the boarding operation and did not feel the wound due to adrenaline and explosion overwhelming his senses. However, even when he started to feel unwell, he stood his ground throughout the battle. His staying on the bridge won them the battle, but it cost him his life as Kakashi confirmed Yamato had bled to death. The crew was quiet as they bowed their heads in respect of the old man they all loved and respected.

Scene IX

With surviving fleet, Tsukekae made an emergency landing on the Sky-nin's General personal hanger of the damaged, but still functional capital ship. The aircraft moved as fast as they could to try to save him, but it was too late, the Sky-nin General was dead during the travel over. Tsukekae could not believe it as he looked over his mentor's corpse, thinking every warm thought he had of the man before he went to follow regulations. He quickly went to the General's corpse, pulling out a voice modular and speaker and equipped them on himself.

He then spoke, with a perfect replication of the General's voice, "This is the General to all survivors in Snow Country. We are leaving before Lightening and Fire Country can destroy us all. Also, put in a commendation for Tsukekae and the men under him. Their sacrifice insured my survival, and they shall not be forgotten."

The order was received as he turned towards his two men, his very loyal men. Tsukekae eyes of sadness looked at his men and stated, "You know what to do."

The two saluted and quickly, without fear or hesitation, jumped in their aircraft, perform a brief lift off, and fell to the ground at speeds that no one could survive. The two were dead on impact to hide what must be done as Tsukekae made one last look before stating, "Sorry sir," before rolling him off. Believing the impact would destroy any evidence of who he was.

Tsukekae then gave a small prayer before he made his way through the empty hanger to a secret elevator that led directly to the General's room, his room now. He quickly power walked to the cabinet, put on his suite of the Sky-nin General to perfection. No one could tell he was someone outside of a missing scar that Tsukekae would soon correct. As he got out a hot red kunai and slowly carved an exact replica of the scar, the previous Sky-nin Generals had done. For there must always be a Sky-nin General to strike fear in their enemies and lead the men when morale was at its lowest. The same thing he intended to do as he held back his screams as he put the final touches to his scar.

Scene X

Near a frozen lake in front of a massive glacier, Dotō carrying the jewel and hostage in hand made a final approach to the area. It was not a very soft-landing when Koyuki was dump by Dotō in front of
what appeared to be a large device buried within a glacier. It was a massive structure, which had a single access and control panel that was barely outside of the ice that covered it. She watched Dotō removed the fresh layer of snow before plugging her crystal into the device. Lights dance as the device activated to the point they did not notice a certain fighter land off in the distance. They were so mesmerized by the lights before the ice shattered away and spear rose from the ground in what appeared to be a rocket. They watched it rise to 20km into the atmosphere, just above the Troposphere before the rocket detaches from the sphere. The sphere then used advanced anti-gravity technology to stay afloat above their heads.

The two members of the royal Kazahana family watched in earnest as a mechanical voice blared through the speakers, "Weather Control Satellite has been launched. Analyze the atmosphere. Temperature is above set 16 degrees Celsius (60.8ºF). Dispersing cloud and heating atmosphere."

Then they watched the sphere shoot out red colored laser beams that hit the air around it for a purpose that quickly became obvious. As the skies began to clear and the air began to get warmer, to the point that snow and ice melted around them. Koyuki could not believe it, her father's dream of spring coming to the Land of Snow was real, and she was happy, truly happy for the first time in a long time.

Her uncle did not agree as he yelled, "This is Kazahana's treasure. A piece of junk designed to control the weather!" He screamed and was ready to smash her father's work when she grabbed onto Dotō to stop him.

She realized it was a mistake when he flung her into the melting snow, hard and was about to slap her when she heard a familiar voice yell, "Leave her alone."

The two turned to see Sakura, with the damage chakra armor flung to her feet. Making a statement that enraged Dotō, who forgotten all about Koyuki, as he turned to face the pink-haired ninja. Dotō then screamed about Shinmō failing him as he unleashed 'Ice Style: Black Dragon Blizzard Jutsu' towards Sakura. Sakura in response, use her chakra enhanced strength to tear a chunk of ice and flung towards Koyuki. All part of the plan as Sakura use the 'Substitute Jutsu' to switch places before the ice jutsu could hit her and get within grabbing distance of Koyuki. Sakura quickly caught the older woman and ran away from Dotō, who was confused why the Leaf-nin did not attack him.

He soon discovered why when Naruto appeared with the 'Rasengan' in hand and was within striking distance. In his panic, Dotō uses the 'Ice Style: Twin Black Dragon Blizzard Jutsu' to counter's Naruto attack. The two met and were pushing against each other. Both were growing in pain as Naruto noticed she was slowly slipping in control and knew she would lose if she did not do something. Therefore, she had to use a technique she was attempting to make but have not perfected and hope using it did not cost her a hand, the 'Fire Style: Rasenfurea Jutsu.'

A powerful technique that used fire manipulation to slowly morphed the Rasengan into a mini-solar flare that was eating away at Dotō's jutsu. The man looked in shock as he stared at Naruto's determine eyes when her technique exploded, burning her hand while sending a solar wave at Dotō, temporary blinding him. The two were in pain, but Naruto recovered quicker as she quickly pulled out her swords, with great personal pain, before stabbing Dotō in the neck. The man soon fell to his knees and began to bleed on the brown tundra grass now stripped of its insulated protection of snow. A land free of snow, just as his brother had wanted the tyrant of Snow Country before slipping into darkness. Dotō was dead, just as his brother, Sōsetsu Kazahana, with his large round glasses, appeared via a holographic projector.

"Father?" Koyuki asked in shock as she watched her father explain.

"Koyuki, if you see this then you have achieved my greatest dream of bringing spring to the Land of
Snow. It was accomplished using a special technology I found from a bygone area that was used to control the weather using special satellites that would produce, disperse, or absorb heat to ensure a steadier environment while elimination the more dangerous hazards such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and so on. I hope this helps the people live a life beyond the moment in what has been cold lands, and I hope you will be the princess you wanted to be."

The image was then replaced by the image of a younger Koyuki that her father, "Okay Koyuki, what kind of leader do you want to be?"

"I want to be someone that is kind, yet strong. Brave, yet loyal. As well as loved and respected by everyone," the younger Koyuki replied with the childish hope that made her father happy as he appeared at his daughter's side.

"And you will be all these things. In fact, if you look ahead, you will see that you've become just the ruler you wanted to be," Sōsetsu stated as he looked on in a smile that made something Koyuki felt something she had not felt in a long time, crying.

She let a few tears go when the younger image of her added, "But you know, what I also want to be?"

"Oh?" Koyuki's father asked with an amused smile.

One that got brighter when the younger Koyuki turn to say with great excitement, "An Actress!"

Amused, Sōsetsu let out a hearty laugh that Koyuki, in her disbelief, let go of as well. Sakura gave an amused smile, while Naruto seethed her swords as the corpse of Dotō fell down. She then stated, "Well, that's a thing," as rebelled and allied ships appear, just as the image loop again. She would not know it, but it was that moment the people were happy to see Koyuki was alive. Along with her father's legacy that moved any doubt of their loyalty to Kazahana family.

Scene XI

It has been one week since the Weather Control Satellite was operational and began to change as the climate became more spring-like. The tundra lands revealed a bountiful grassland slowly turning green, as flowers crept up from the warmer southern portions. It was a perfect day as Koyuki took up leadership of the Snow and Spring Country. Though not as Daimyō as her family had been, she was elected Chancellor with a leadership council elected from the surviving nobles and commoners.

Freedom in its ultimate form had arrived for Snow Country, and it was one that Koyuki capitalized on as she gave a rousing speech about how the lands that never changed, had changed for the better and how it was time to celebrate the new democratic government.

Applause went through the stands as the crowd mingled and partied, in the center were the Leaf-nins and Amaru, with Naruto asking, "So, any problems with the weather control device?"

"No, it works like a charm. My father had perfected it before he died. It is just a shame he did not see the lands of snow become spring," Koyuki stated with a small smile, the others returned.

"So, what now? I don't think you have much time for acting now that you have been elected Chancellor of Snow Country?" Sakura asked of Koyuki.

"Oh, I'll manage, and the job is not forever. And even so, I think I will have a chance to do some acting jobs on the side," Koyuki stated as she held up a script, with the title of one of Kakashi's favorite books in the Jiraiya's Icha Icha series, minus the porn.

Haku changed the subject as she asked Dr. Amaru, "So what will you do now."
"I'll stay here; Koyuki was so impressed with my skills as a doctor helping the wounded soldiers that I've been made a sort of her primary doctor and consultant when it comes to medical matters. It is the least I can do to put what I did to some good use, as penance for what Shinnō did to me and the others."

Team Vixen found that interesting and was about to ask more questions when Sandayū interrupted them to state, "My Lady, delegates from Fire and Lightning wish to talk to you about reconstruction and trade. I believe we should not keep them waiting."

Koyuki nodded, but before she left, she handed Sakura a glossed paper before stating, "Sakura, I want you to have it. If it wasn't for you, I feel I would still be lost in my sorrows, and I hope this small way shows how much I appreciate your help. Take care, and stay safe."

Koyuki smiled as she walked away with Amaru and Sandayū following close by. Curious, Sakura opened the picture to see Koyuki, not in her princess outfit, but Milly from Sakura's favorite movie of all time, The Victorious. Sakura was in shock as she looked to see Koyuki wrote 'To Sakura Haruno, thank you for showing me the way. I've would never have gotten as far as I did if you did not encourage me or save my life. Please take this and may you find happiness in your life.' Followed by Koyuki's signature and the words, 'A true friend is a friend indeed.'

Sakura gave a brilliant smile as she held the paper close to her chest while Kin gave her a small nod. The group then smiled as they watch Chancellor Koyuki Kazan walk away with Dr. Amaru and her bodyguard, Captain Sandayū Asama. They smiled, thinking of what they had accomplished but Naruto and Kakashi lost it when they remembered a report about how an estimated 30-40% of the Sky-nins and Snow-nins managed to escape the country. They were worried about where they had run off too.

Scene XII: A Week Earlier

It was quite among the surviving Sky-nins as the General came to the bridge to see before him a large flying and naval fleet blocking the surviving fleet’s escape. A fleet he noted was five times the size of his fleet of survivors. That seemed to be mostly machines, and it did not match any flying vehicle from Fire or Lightning country. He was curious what that means when a subordinate reported they were being hailed. Forever leaving behind the identity of Tsukekae, the Sky General ordered the man to accept the transmission of a voice that was a bit deranged.

"Hello, survivor of the latest battle against the Leaf. My name is Elite Jōnin Condor Uzumaki, and I come to offer our assistance in your escape."

“What’s the catch?” the Sky-General as he went through a dozen scenarios to save his force down to 15% fighting strength thanks to all the damage, destruction, injuries, and death of what was once a mighty force and fleet.

He could hear the man smile as he stated, “Ah, my mistress said you were smart. Okay, the catch is that you will help us when we go to war with the Elemental Countries. And before you say anything, yes, I know you’ve just recently been down that road with the unreliable Snow-nins, but this is different. For we are not looking to combine technology, as we’re closer to Fire Country in terms of technology then you will ever reach. No, what we want is your expertise in conducting aerial warfare along with ours for ground warfare. So, what do you say? Will you help us get your revenge on the world, or will you try some other way to escape and probably die in the process? Think quickly, I am not a patient man.”

The General thought it over quickly before stating, “Considering my options, I agree.”
“Excellent, now I suggest you prepare for my arrival. We will iron out the details of our contract in person,” Condor stated before he added as a last bit of reassurance. “Don’t you worry.”

Chapter End Notes

Done, and I hope you like the twist with the General in the end, and not so much that the Uzumaki are on the move. War is coming very soon. Hope you enjoy the story, even if it did make things too easy for such a mission, but justifiable by overconfident leaders and incompetents as shown in canon material. Hope you enjoy it and keep on reviewing.

Author Note

A) Stories I recommend you read as you wait for the next chapter:
1) Shanejayell’s Nunnally of the Insurrection is well-written fanfic set in the Code Geass universe that focus on what-if Lelouch was killed, and Nunnally is the one to found a rebellion against her father with her own unique Geass. I recommend if you are looking for something different that enhances a beloved anime.
2) Seeking is an author I would recommend to look up due to his consistently high-quality stories, especially in anima. Please note that while it can be said not all his stories are well thought out when it comes to plot, they are still very well done and one I recommend you check out if you are looking for fun stories that are not just dumb fan service or bashing stories; especially his Code Geass, Naruto, and Ranma Stories.
B) A New Poll for Naruto the Elemental Star Fans; check it out on my fanfic site.
War Criminals and Hawks

Chapter Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Naruto in any form and defiantly would not claim the story based on Bruto anytime soon, thank you very much.
Beta Reader: Albert
Last Update: 11/02/2018

Scene I

War hawk, if there was ever a title Danzō despised, it was that title. For the title, the accusation was too simple for a man such as himself. As he told his subordinates, he hates the killing and burning of war. No, what he wants is peace. With an occasional major war only, every generation at the most, and a minor war or skirmish every other month. After all, how can one have peace if they are too soft or squeamish to ensure peace through an iron fist.

And now, he felt it was time to put his theory into practice, "Have you done what I have commanded?"

"Yes, Lord Danzō," answered one of his emotionless, trained ninja troops. "Our forces have successfully infiltrated several of the surviving criminal organizations to take control or manipulate them in how we see fit. All without any of the nations finding out, as you specified. From there, we convinced all the surviving factions through pressure, internally or externally, to call for a cease-fire to negotiate peace. At the location you specified."

"Good, it makes taking control of the entire criminal underworld easier as they supply us the necessary troops and manpower for future operations," Danzō stated as he left the room, not realizing one of his supposedly loyal ninjas was listening in and recording his conversation. It was not long before Sai left in the middle of the night with some documents to warn the people he was genuinely loyal too, the Hokage and his friends.

Scene II

It was late in the morning, and over twenty individuals from the Leaf and a few of her allies were gathered in the Hokage's office in prep for a mission called at the last minute. Many of the individuals Team Vixen did not recognize, but a few stood out, including two ninjas that graduated from there class. "Shino, Ami, it is good to see you again," Naruto stated as she shook their hands.

"Yep, paperwork went through, and I got promoted to Chūnin while Shino-Kun was made Jōnin. It was a good thing too as I heard the Chūnin Exams are on hold indefinitely due to the crisis. It probably will take them until next year before they restart them," Ami replied with a thoughtful look.
some would say is cute on the weirdly dressed purple-haired girl.

"Kiba also got a promotion?" Naruto asked in shock, as she remembered the red-fanged cheek wild boy that was at best what some would call boastful if one wanted to be kind, horn-dog if not.

"Yeah, he really proved himself with the last mission in stopping a hostile takeover and keeping the wife of a Daimyō in Honey Country safe and still in power. I think he is finally growing up since he found someone to grow up for," Ami explained as she subtly indicated to her right.

The girls turned to see the wild looking Kiba Inuzuka, now in a darker, more tamed jacket and talking to Kin Teuchi. The two were engaged in conversation as though they were courting while Kin petted Akamaru, his white pup that was going through a growth spurt as the dog now reached to his kneecaps. She reluctantly let go when Kakashi picked her up for a mission with Sakura Haruno, Tayuya and some faceless ninja. The latter of which dressed like Sai and could be mistaken for someone else unless you looked closely and without using the 'Henge Jutsu' or plastic surgery.

The girls watched Kiba give a small smile when Naruto blurted out, "What's going on?"

"What do you mean Naruto-Chan?" Hinata asked with a sigh as she sometimes wished Naruto was not a thickheaded tomboy at times. "I think it is pretty obvious Kiba is changing for he is in love."

"Yes, I can see that. I may be a tomboy most of the time, but I still have a feminine side as you well know Hinata-Hime," Naruto teased, much to the embarrassment of a blushing Hinata. "What I am mainly concerned about is the fact that Team Redemption is leaving with someone new and without Sai. He is still alive, right?"

"Last I heard, yes," Haku answered as she used her sensing ability to locate a familiar chakra signature that was near the front of the office. A quick look confirmed that Sai was at the front of the Hokage's office with Tsunade. "There he is, but why isn't he going with his team?"

No one had an answer, and everything was silent until someone came up behind Tukiko and touched her, causing her to squeak in surprise. The woman holding on as she said, "What have I told you brats about letting your guard down. Don't tell me that your sensei being gone for a short time has already dulled your instincts."

Tukiko eyes widen as she broke free of the woman's grip to turn around to see it was the purple-haired snake mistress with a shit eating grin, Anko. "Anko-Sensei? It's good to see you. Now, what are you doing here? How is Kurenai-Sensei?"

"Oh, Kurenai is coming along, bloated and ready for the child to come out any moment from now. Hope it does not happen while I am gone," Anko stated with a chuckle and a wave of the hand. "As for why I am here, I was told they needed someone in the field to interrogate some prisoners we came across."

"Prisoners? This must be some operation they are planning if they are putting a lot of efforts into this," Ami commented, and Naruto nodded in agreement.

"Agreed, something big is about to happen," Naruto stated before she was shushed by the crowd as Tsunade made her way into the room with Shizune close behind.

The whole room was deadly quiet as she slowly made it to the front of the room and her desk with not a muscle out of place. She was conveying to the group by her attitude as she slowly descended into her seat that this was going to be a high priority mission they must take very seriously. She held her hands in front of her face to hide the fact she was slowly exhaling to calm herself before she
began to speak and discuss the most crucial mission she had to face since she had become Hokage.

"Thank you, everyone, for coming. I know some of you were slated for a joint mission to the borders of our nations, but this takes president over those missions, and the leadership from ours and your nations agree with me. Now instead of giving a long speech about how important this mission is, I'll just brief you on the mission instead. Late last evening, a loyal ninja brought written documents and recordings that show an esteemed member to the Leaf is holding a secret meeting with the surviving crime lords to take control of them to be used as spies and disposal soldiers for his small army."

It was that moment the foreign ninjas to shout their outrage before they were silenced by Tsunade's raised fist. "Obviously, I never gave him permission to do so, or I would not be telling you this. And I would certainly not have a use for a private military organization, especially one for which I have no control. They have been brainwashed to follow one man and have seals that prevent them from speaking against any orders they receive from their master. However, he has gone too far now, and not even his friends in high places can protect him."

Tsunade's face took on a vicious smirk considering an order she wanted to give out for a long time, "Your mission, if you so choose, is as follows. Gather evidence of treason. Subdue any criminals you find for interrogation. And kill the rest along with the man accused of treason when you have the evidence for he is considered too dangerous and connected to try and take prisoner."

"And may we know the identity we are sent to kill?" the tall, sickly swordsman Hayate Gekkō asked.

A question that made Tsunade give a full predatory smile, "Elder Danzō Shimura."

It was at that moment chaos ranged supreme as many began shouting, to ask, no demand to have the right to kill Danzō. The man certainly has a knack for making enemies as he has a nitrous reputation that makes those in Fire Country, and those outside the nation to want him dead. Tukiko wanted to see him gone for he tried to force her out of the Leaf Forces and force Naruto into his grasp when Sasuke was alive. Tukiko's mind soon pictured numerous torturer techniques she would love to inflict on the old man once she got her hands on him.

Tsunade allowed the discussions to continue for a few more moments before she brought order back into the room, "That is enough, I did not summon you all here to argue, but to take care of someone that is a major threat."

"Forgive me for asking this, but why are you involving ninjas from other countries in this operation (cough). Shouldn't this be left to the Leaf alone?" Jōnin Hayate Gekkō asked.

"Why, wouldn't we be involved in this operation you upstart tree huggers?" asked a feisty red-haired Cloud-nin with burning gold eyes and a simmering tanned skin that made her hair seem spiky.

However, instead of the sickly Jōnin answering, it was Shino with his cold Aburame logic, "If one of your own turned traitors, would you want other ninjas from other nations getting involved unless you are desperate and cannot keep it quiet?"

That shut up the red-haired Cloud-nin as a dark-skinned Cloud-nin with a spikey afro mumbled through the sucker in his mouth, "What did he mean cannot keep quiet and desperate? Is Danzō, in fact, a leader of a secret ninja village that plans to unleash them against the world if we don't stop him? Does he have dirt on people that can cause chaos unless intercepted by us? Is he planning to unleash a demon that will destroy the world unless we send someone that can seal it by personally sacrificing herself."
The young man was calmed down by a cold blond-haired woman with icy blue eyes that while some may call a mini Tsunade in appearance, is more stoic than the hot-tempered, yet mother Hokage. "Calm yourself Omoi, it is not cool to over think a situation. Nor is it cool to antagonize an ally, Karui."

"Sorry Samui-Sama," Elite Chūnin Omni and Karui stated before calming down.

"Now then, to answer your question Hayate, it is much as Shino stated. We cannot keep this quiet as Danzō is well known and impossible to make him disappear just like that. Having him killed in the act of treason is a much better alternative. We are also desperate for manpower since many of our forces, along with others, are needed to keep order in various cities and nations across the world even if it is starting to calm down. Not to mention that with the gathering of criminals from other countries, it just makes sense to make this a joint operation," Tsunade stated that made most nod, but some were still concerned about the operation.

"Um, Tsunade-Obi, I mean Sama," Naruto corrected herself on the formality before continuing. "If manpower is an issue then why isn't my mother and sister here. They are premier experts at combat and assassination so they could be a great help for a mission."

Several others nodded as they noticed a few friends that knew a ninja or two that were currently in Konoha that could be useful in this mission. Tsunade sighed as she stated, "Because one, purposely the group I have assembled does not include everyone. I want your group to meet up with two other groups outside of Konoha to not arouse suspicion that I am onto Danzō. If a huge number left at the same time on one mission, it would be too suspicious. And two, I need some of my best ninjas here to make sure Danzō does not get word that we are on to him. As he has a few allies here that can get word to him if I don't have some of my best people to secure the area. While also having others like Jiraiya sniff out his hideouts nearby to... deal with them," Tsunade added with a cold smile.

"Do you really think that is necessary?" Hinata asked, a little put off by the cold smile that Tsunade gave.

Tsunade golden eyes briefly looked up as if she sensed the dead Root-nin that was killed by Naruko in an ANBU fox mask before sealing the ninja and his blood in a scroll to wipe all trace of the kill was present. She then looked dead center to the group to state, "Oh yes, I am quite sure."

Tsunade then stretched her fingers for intimidation to keep the ninja's attention on her before she continued, "Now, does anyone wish to step away from this mission, now will be a good time to talk. I can understand if this type of mission can make you... uncomfortable. So, I will not hold it against you if you walk away."

No one moved or said a word and Tsunade took their silence to mean that no one had a problem with this mission, "Very well, now two things that will be made abundantly clear. First is that Sai will be your hidden guide. He'll direct you to your target but remain in the shadows in case things go south. I don't want Danzō to have any idea who betrayed him if things go south as I may need him to continue being my spy."

"Danzō is currently heading towards a village on the outskirts of Fire Country. A trading town known to have several smuggling rings present. I will direct you until you are at five klicks (3.1 miles) away from the target. Where I will remain to report back your success or failure to Lady Tsunade Senju," Sai explained with his fake smile that seemed a little more genuine as he was happy that it would soon be over.

"The second is that the disposal of Danzō will be handled by the commander of this operation and anyone she deems helpful in this operation," Tsunade stated before waiting for the expected protests.
And she was not disappointed as Samui approached the statement in a cooler manner than her team, "Hokage-San, why would this commander have free reign to deal with Danzō as this person deems? Or for that matter, why would ninjas such as us agree to follow a Leaf-nin to take care of this Danzō?"

"Because I want to ensure Danzō does not live past this week and not be allowed to live for someone let him go or took them to their nation to extract whatever dated information he may have," Tsunade explained with a posture that showed that this was not open to discussion, especially with their hostile turned ally Cloud-nins. "As for your commander, I can guarantee you that she will make sure that Danzō will not survive the encounter."

Tsunade directed Shizune to open the window to allow the chosen ninja to jump in. A ninja Team Vixen knew stood before them in full combat gear was a woman that looked a lot like Tukiko. For this woman was Tukiko's aunt, Elite Jōnin Mikoto Uchiha and she seemed entirely ready to kill someone. This was something even Tukiko did not know as she stared at her aunt turned maternal figure as she bowed to the Hokage to accept the mission.

"I will not let you down, Tsunade-Sama," Mikoto bowed to the Hokage.

"Good, for I trust you to see this mission through," Tsunade stated before handing over her orders to the younger woman and addressing the crowd. "One last thing, if this mission goes sideways, please know I have a squadron of loyal ninja in fighters ready to firebomb the area to ensure that Danzō or the criminal boss will not be leaving alive. So, don't screw up and don't be afraid to back away if you find you cannot finish the mission on your own. Now dismissed."

The group of ninjas did not need to be told twice before they disappeared in a swirl of leaves, water, clouds or whatever. Leaving an empty room with only Tsunade, Shizune and one other figure that was hidden in the shadows. An elderly man with a short white beard and hair walked out when Tsunade called out to him, "Are you all right Hiruzen-Sensei? I know you were once friends with Danzō and probably didn't want him to end this way."

"I am fine Tsunade," former Hokage Hiruzen Sarutobi stated as he lit his pipe. "I just wish I wasn't as old as I feel. It should be my responsibility to deal with my mistakes. My biggest was the time I allowed Orochimaru to escape, and the other for not dealing with Danzō sooner."

Hokage Tsunade Senju nodded as she took a sip of Suki from the bottle, given by her student Suzuki who felt she needed this for courage. "Well, it will soon be over, one way or another."

Scene III

Within the trees, the group that assembled in the Hokage's office was heading to the village where Danzō was reported to be going at high cruising speed. Ensuring they be there by the end of the day without feeling too tired to fight when they arrived at their destination. As they were on the move, Haku and Tukiko approached Mikoto to talk while Hinata shyly joined Ami in teasing Kiba about him having a girlfriend. Naruto and Shino rolled their eyes at their partner's actions while hiding their mirth with some level of success. Kiba never felt so red while Tukiko was having a soberer conversation.

"Hey, m-aunt Mikoto, can we talk about why…?" Tukiko asked with a tailed off question Mikoto finished for her.

"About why I did not tell you about the mission I was going on? Especially since it is one with killing involved, especially one with killing Danzō."
"Yes," Tukiko stated as Haku looked ahead, trying desperately to keep out of the conversation while being there for support if required.

Seeing that her favorite niece that was like a daughter she always wanted was not leaving this alone, Mikoto decided to answer honestly, "For I've been on missions like this before and they are usually on a need to know basis, and I do take Fire Country and Leaf security very seriously. Especially there are some like Danzō fellow elders that will still look at the Uchiha suspiciously before and after the incident. Especially since they no longer have my son to easily manipulate, and to help make him the way he was before his premature death. I sure hope Elder Homura Mitokado and Elder Koharu Utatane were working with Danzō as political allies, for it means we can get rid of them as well."

Tukiko did not voice that she too hoped they would be executed and instead focused on the conversation, "Mind if my team and I help you kick Danzō's ass for being a pain in the butt to all of us?"

Mikoto gave her a soft, but brilliant smile as she answered the question, "Not at all, I could use some backup, even though some extra muscle is coming our way."

Tukiko nodded as Haku reported, "Ma'am I sense two groups of ninjas coming our way, Chūnin and Jōnin in rank."

"That must be them, be ready to greet them," Mikoto stated as a group of twelve Leaf-nins and eight Cloud-nins and various allies' rendezvous with them with orders that they were here to team up.

The leaders of the two groups gathered around Elite Jōnin Mikoto Uchiha to discuss deployment as the rest of the ninjas merged with the larger group in small clusters around their fellow elite forces. Mostly for comradery, but for a few, it was a time for former students and relatives to catch up with former teachers and family.

"Killer Bee-Sensei, Yugito-Neesan, it is good to see you," Samui stated as she greeted the two older ninjas before them. "We could definitely use your help on this mission."

"Indeed, as my brother heard about this mission. He could not wait to send me into the action. For Danzō is a man that is as vile as they come," Bee noted as he gave his former students a smile. A smile that only grew bigger when he noticed Naruto nearby, "Oy there little nine, aren't you a sight for sore eyes. Come on down here so we may have a conversation among peers."

Naruto, sighed as she and Hinata ran over closer to the Cloud-nins, "It has been awhile Killer Bees, Yugito, since the last held Chūnin Exams and invasion. I thought those three were your students, but I didn't know you had a sister Yugito."

"Half-sister," Yugito corrected Naruto. "We have the same father, but different mothers. And our father only acknowledges that I am his when asked as he does not like the Jinchūrikin that much," Yugito bitterly added as Samui flinched.

"Sorry," Naruto stated as she gave a tiny head bow before changing subjects. "How is Colonel Eight of Nine and Colonel Two of Nine doing since the last time we talked? Are they still having… memory troubles?"

"Matatabi is doing fine, still no memories and in the end, she does not really care about fragmented memories," Yugito explained while Killer Bee remained aloft.

"Your just mad, that my friend was mad, at the both of us. For our beasties, cannot remember, those wonderful toys the Leaf loves to use," Killer smiled before it turned to a frown as he spoke in a
serious tone. "Though Eight is sad his memory of bad times is becoming more fragmented every day. I think his time as Eight is coming to an end, and only the name Gyūki will remain. A name that was given to him by someone that hurt him."

That was heartening news to Colonel Nine of Nine as she commented, 'So it won't be long before I will be the last to remember about our father, of our past. Is that what being old feels like. That you get lost in memories of what we once were with no one around that can remember them. And is what is happening to the others is to an outcome that will result if I remain in a human host for the centuries to come? Will I wake up one day to find Nine has disappeared and only Kurama remain?'

'I don't know, but I hope not,' Naruto answered honestly as she looked dejected, fearing what it meant for the entity she saw as a second mother. Hinata sensing her trouble gave a tight squeeze to calm her girlfriend down. Allowing for silence as the three Cloud-nins now looked at Naruto and Hinata with interest.

"Interesting, I did not know there would be three Jinchūrikins on this mission. This will be so easy and cool at the same time," Samui commented as she started to think maybe all of them being here was an overkill.

Though Omoi was still worried as he kept mumbling, "Oh no, now the Leaf knows who are our Jinchūrikins, and we know who their Jinchūrikins are. Considering it is also the girl that helped push the Fire Country's technology, then war is likely unless we appease them with a sacrifice. Which mean we may lose sensei as they-" 

"Enough Omoi!" Karui growled as she interrupted Omoi with a bonk to the head. "Stop with this paranoid bullshit, no one is going to war over knowing who are Jinchūrikins since we already know. So, calm down and stop with conspiracy theories as you are making everyone feel uneasy."

It was at that moment that the whole group stopped, and Omoi began to assume the worst again, "Oh no, they heard us, and now they are going-" Omoi was silenced as Karui covered his mouth while silently telling him to 'shut up' as they waited to see why everyone in the group became quiet.

It was not long before they got their answer as Sai pointed off in the distance, "It is five kilometers (3.1 miles) to the village that way. Also, I should mention how common it is to set patrols around a kilometer (0.62 miles) away from any position. And it likely is standard practice for Root-nins," Sai added as he spoke in ways to circumvent the seal on his tongue to prevent him from speaking of Danzō's secrets.

"Roger that and thank you Sai for all your help," Mikoto told the former Root ninja before she directed the group to follow her in a slow, steady pace.

Scene IV

It was a long, slow travel for the various ninjas making their way to the out of the way, sparsely-populated trading village, making sure not to set off warning bells. It was an easy task to sneak around the few thugs as they seemed in a dazed, trance-like state, but it was a challenge when they moved around the few blank mask ANBU like ninjas that were obviously Root-nins. Bypassing them proved to be a challenge due to the Root-nins ability to sense chakra, and a few were equipped with guns that they likely stolen from the Leaf. Fortunately, the squad was made up of high-ranking ninjas with a few that had specialized in assassination and stealth, not to mention a few like Team Vixen which was equipped with weapons with a silencer setting. It was not long before the border troops were killed and the assault team moved into the small town. There were only a few places where a large meeting could take place in the town.
The most likely location was a large Inn. Travelers would come from far and wide to the Inn to not only stay but to hold conventions for a company or organization for whatever event they desired. Such as over twenty-four new criminal heads of their respective criminal empire that had come to meet to discuss a truce in a town considered neutral to everyone. Most of the assault group had to stop at the outskirts of town due to the increased activity of thugs and the hidden Root ANBU. However, even if the Root-nins were close enough to each other to make it easier to take them down, there were too numerous thugs on patrol to take them all down without giving some of the targets time to escape.

A small team needs to enter the Inn to detain the head honchos at the team outside converges on the area to contain the others. "I'll lead the forces heading into the village to take down the criminal leadership before we begin our attack. Team Vixen will join me," Mikoto suggested, but Naruto disagreed.

"I don't think that is a wise idea, as Haku and Hinata are only two field medics and I am skilled at snipping targets. It is probably best if Hinata stays here with Anko in case of medical emergencies and act as lookouts thanks to her Byakugan, while I set up shop nearby. I can help our snippers take care of any high-ranking targets, and I can kill Danzō from a distance using a bullet with a wing rune to increase range, speed, and penetration." Naruto then opened a vest to pull out a laser pointer before tossing it to Tukiko. "That laser pointer can not only 'paint' targets in a color the human eye can see, but with an IR (infrared light) light so distinct that my sniper rifle can see it through objects. Just point it at Danzō and pop will go the weasel assuming only wood and a few people are in the way."

Tukiko nodded as she pocketed the laser pointer as Mikoto looked at the Cloud-nins, specifically Yugito, and Killer Bee, "You two, I want you to come as well. Knowing Danzō from dealings in the Council, he is likely to have his strongest ninjas with him, and I want to leave nothing to chance."

The two agreed though Killer Bee recommended some ninjas as well, "I recommend Jōnin Samui Nii, and Elite Chūnins Karui and Omoi. I trained them personally in stealth and combat, and they are some of Cloud's best ninjas."

Mikoto quickly agreed before looking at the various Leaf-nins to ask, "Any team who wishes to volunteer?"

"I recommend my team," Jōnin Hayate Gekkō raised his hand. "Special Jōnin Shino Aburame and Special Chūnin Kiba Inuzuka can track and spot targets before they spot us thanks to their clan specialization with bugs and smell. While (cough) Ami and I can take down any targets if need be, we come across thanks to our skills and my training for close quarter combat with bladed weapons."

"Very well, everyone else encircles the area and prepare to move in on my orders. Okay, break," Mikoto ordered as the ninjas broke to get to their positions while Mikoto's team moved through the area, avoiding detection whenever they could as they moved to their objectives for this mission.

Scene V

It has been three hours since Mikoto, and her team arrived at their destination, hidden in the shadows of the Inn. Avoiding detection by the defender's thanks to the A-Team under Hayate that was able to map out and scout the patrols, they noticed the Root-nins were outside in clusters designed to trap any patrols. It soon became apparent that the Inn ballroom was filled with scum and villainy the likes of which nowhere else in the universe could compete. All that was missing was Danzō, and it soon became apparent why as more criminal organizations trickled into the village that Danzō was probably waiting to make a dramatic appearance.
Therefore, Mikoto's team waited under ninja traps with seals to create an illusion of absence for the twenty-five new criminal factions' arrival. Watching the various organizations discuss either keeping whatever territory they claimed or initially owned when it was ruled by twelve criminal organization. They never realized they were feeding the allied ninjas valuable information about who had or wanted what territory as they slowly came to an agreement. The ninjas watched patiently while expecting Danzō any minute since the last crime boss had arrived and the group was getting impatient.

"Where is that old man? He is supposed to be here by now," Kiba growled softly to his comms as his canine partner, Akamaru slowly winced due to waiting for so long.

"He is here, I can sense a large number of high-level ninjas in the other room," Haku reported through her comm as she looked at only exit to the room outside the windows.

"Maybe he is waiting for something," Tukiko suggested as everyone began to converse through the comms given to them.

"What the fuck could that old man be waiting for?" Kiba asked in annoyance as one of the less emotional crime lords tried to calm down two others screaming at each other.

"Gentlemen, we must come to an agreement, our survival depends on us reaching a peace accord. Don't you all see that?"

"No, for they realized that their survival could not be achieved alone, but it must occur under one strong fist," stated their target as Danzō entered.

"I guess he was waiting for a big dramatic entrance so he could intimidate them into submission," Ami chuckled as her commanders got on the comms to tell those on the outskirts to be ready and Naruto to prepare to take out her target. She watched the old man wrapped in bandages that extended high over his right arm and eye walk in with his old cane. His firm and cross-scarred chin was facing forward with confidence while he was followed by his two lieutenants while the remaining Root-nins remained outside the room, ready to rush in.

Ami was about to ask do you think Danzō is compensating for something for bringing so many ninjas when she noticed Shino was starting at one of the lieutenants in shock. "Shino-Kun, what is wrong?"

Shino responded, with a blank face, by pointing to the black-haired masked-man with black goggles that watched Danzō introduce himself while calming the crowd down. "I recognized him as my teacher in the Aburame clan. That is Torune Aburame, and he is supposed to be one of my father's advisor that is too sick to be in the field."

"What?" Ami asked in shock as she saw Shino show an emotion that she had never seen in his posture before, the feeling of betrayal.

"And I recognize the other," Mikoto stated as she glared at the orange haired, golden-eyed man that resembles the Yakamas such as Ino and her dad Inoichi, especially with the ponytail. "That is Fū Yamanaka, he was Chūnin when I was in the field before Fugaku-bastard forced me out and…" Mikoto gritted her teeth in anger at her abuse before she continued her explanation as Danzō was taking time to calm the crowd. "Anyway, he supposedly died during the Third Great Shinobi War in one of the minor skirmishes at the border. I guess Danzō faked his death."

"That may be a bit brilliant of him by having one of the sub-commanders gather intelligence from the Leaf's best intelligence gathering clans. While having a man marked KIA (Killed in Action) to
"administrate from the shadows," Haku commented as she pulled out her rapid-fire crossbow.

"Who cares how smart Danzō is for they are going to be dead soon," Yugito commented as poised herself like a cat ready to strike. "Anything before we start this party."

"Torune specialized in kikaichūs that are supposed to be quite poisonous, so engaging him will be a challenge even for Aburame ninjas," Shino stated as Danzō was saying how working for him would be to their benefits.

While Mikoto added, "While Fū was gifted his Yamanaka mind arts and genjutsu and certainly gotten better since his disappearance."

"So high skilled ninjas that are going to be insanely powerful. Oh, this is going to be a fun mission," Tukiko sarcastically stated when one of the crime lords smacked the table.

"And why should we listen to you?! Why should we put our trust in you an outsider after our trust was lost due to the latest betrayal among our former leaders?!"

"For I know you were never betrayed but tricked into fighting each other and I have a feeling who betrayed you," Danzō stated with conviction that surprised everyone in the room, including the ninjas.

"Someone set this up? That is not cool," Samui commented as she looked at the ground.

"It was probably the Uzumaki that have been causing so much trouble for everyone. They killed the leaders of the criminal underworld to cause a massive gang and civil war. So that we would distract everyone as they move their troops and gather allies before they perform a massive invasion that we will be desperate-" Omoi mouth was covered again by shushing Karui.

"Quiet Omoi, we don't need another one of your wild paranoid theories. Danzō probably set this all up so he could take control of the underworld, or take advantage of the chaos brought by a deal gone bad. Now get ready, I think we are going to move soon," Karui quietly stated as she pulled out her ALL-47 Assault Rifle.

Based off the rifles sold to Lightning Country, it is their countries own version to compete with Fire Country's main assault rifle they keep for themselves and sell to nations. It resembles a high-tech old Earth style AK-47 though more accurate and with greater ammunition compacity. It is a weapon that it has a higher fire rate and ammo than the Leaf's versions, but is less accurate, lower caliber and less impact per shot. Still, it is an excellent contender to allow Lightning to keep up with their rival turned ally, and their first step in technological advancement outside of buying older designs from Fire Country.

They were ready just as Danzō was giving his final speech, "What I promise is two things should you agree to join me. First is to help you discover who tricked you to attack each other like mongrel dogs fighting over scraps. The second is a chance to be something more then what you are now. To be more than petty criminals fighting to control the criminal underworld. To be men that make a difference in the real world through my will. So, join me to help unite this world under one banner."

And much to the shock of the ninjas, they watched all the crime lords get on their knees to swear allegiance. "What is going on?" Kauri asked in shock. "Why are they just submitting to Danzō without the threat of pain or haggling for something more targetable then a promise of being part of something greater."

"Only prisoners on death row or life imprisonment would agree to such promises," Samui stated as
she looked at the scene before in wide eyes while Yugito narrowed her eyes.

"I sense a strong Genjutsu on them. One that is making Matatabi nervous," Yugito reported with a wince while the others prepared for battle.

"Its Danzō, he is putting them under a trance. I can sense it coming from him," Haku reported with wide eyes.

"How in the nine hells of cats is he doing this. I did not see him physically cast a genjutsu," Kiba stated with wide eyes.

While Shino added, "And his file stated Genjutsu was his weakest skill and one he did not practice. Ninjutsu and martial arts he always felt were far more needed in combat."

Tukiko activated her three com Sharingan to trace the source of the illusion, "It's coming from under his bandages around his eye and arm. The signature seems familiar too."

"That is because it is the Sharingan," Mikoto stated in horror as she stared with her own Sharingan.

"But that is impossible. He wasn't born an Uchiha," Ami stated in shock.

"He must have had them implanted, just like Kakashi," Hayate suggested as he looked at the man in horror. "But I was always told it was difficult due to the eye having to be fresh to work."

"That means he must have ambushed Uchihas out on missions or paid off people to harvest a large number after that incident so many years ago. Which means he may have a bigger hand in that day then even I know," Mikoto stated as her face slowly morphed into something Tukiko never seen before.

When Tukiko was growing up under her aunt's tutelage, she had seen her sad, happy, motherly, maybe a little angry, but never what she saw on Mikoto Uchiha's face. It was the cold, emotionless face of a killer that does not plan to stop until the target is as stiff as her icy face. It was that moment that Tukiko remembered the stories of her aunt and how she was all-powerful Kunoichi. That killed whole squads before she was forced to be a housewife for the former Clan Head Fugaku. She truly believes those stories were true as her aunt acted as a professional killer in front of her for the first time in her life.

"Okay, I've seen enough to see Danzō as a traitor, so let's get this started. Naruto, be ready to take the shot, we got the evidence and what we've seen so far is enough to ensure a slow death if I did not have to worry about his troops," Mikoto told Naruto over the comm.

"Okay, I'm ready, but what he could have done to make you so angry?" Naruto asked over the comm.

"Nothing I want to talk about right now, just be ready," Mikoto ordered before turning to the other ninjas with her. "Tukiko, mark him, and once he is dead, everyone moves ahead with your assignment. Tukiko, you and Haku are with me to make sure he is dead. Killer Bee and Yugito, knock out the crime lords before taking on Fū. A Team, take on Torune and keep Fū distracted until Killer Bee and Yugito can take care of him. The rest, kill all of the Root-nins."

The others acknowledge their orders as Tukiko got the laser pointer out and pointed it at Danzō's left side forehead. A bright red light is shown as the heat began to generate around Danzō's head and made him notice the light. But it was too late as Naruto pulled the trigger half a kilometer away. The bullet with the wind rune sketch into it, traveled a considerable distance at speeds even rail-guns outside of warships could not achieve.
The wind encompassing the bullet was able to go through the wood like it was paper as it moved ever closer to its target. Danzō's hidden Sharingan eyes were spinning quickly when the bullet tore through Danzō's skull, causing it to explode into fragments of bone, skin, blood, and brain matter as it continued through the man. Only stopping after it went through the spine of a crime lord in front of Danzō and deep into the ground behind the criminal.

Giving the Leaf the clear advantage as Naruto killed two for the price of one bullet for the team in the Inn before the battle begun, and it was only the battle's start. Jumping out of their cover was Killer Bee that attacked with 'Lightning Style: Spider Web Jutsu' to create an electrical current across the ground. Sending a current that caused muscle spasms or enough power to knock others out and trap people like a spiderweb with everyone on the ground pulsating like newly caught flies, including Danzō's body that was convulsing.

Fū and Torune were already on the move, so they were not hit while a few hornless rōnin samurais were able to halt the attack with their Chakra Armor. Though the counter-attack quickly failed when Yugito appeared in front with her 'Fire Style: Fire Claws Jutsu.' Her flaming claws striking and accidentally killing one due misjudging his strength. Though she did not flinch as she cut through the other's chakra armor and weapons to leave them vulnerable before knocking out all but one with a round kick. While Killer Bee used 'Lightning Style: Lightning Clones Jutsu' to summon a dozen clones to tie up the surviving criminals.

Meanwhile, Fū and Torune were intercepted in the air by the A-Team as they moved in to strike. With Shino stating with a tone that had a hint of anger saying, "Hello, teacher," before sending a swarm of his own kikaichūs, which Torune jumped back to avoid.

Only to receive a kick in the head from a flying kick by Ami with an angry growl before the two kept Torune on his toes. While Fū could do nothing but avoid Hayate's sword strike, Kiba's claw strikes, and Akamaru's bites. Fū was briefly beyond attack when his opponents teamed up with Ami and Shino against Torune to prevent him from being able to call his kikaichūs, as the small swarms were killed off with Ami's fire and Hayate's water. The now free from attack Fū planned to assist but soon found out he couldn't when he had to start running away from a dozen flaming cats created by Yugito's 'Fire Style: Hell Cats Jutsu' before he was put on the defensive thanks to two of eight of Killer Bee's swords slashing at him.

It was not long before the two head Root-nins were forced on the run, as Team Samui eliminated their support. The three Cloud-nins moved at high speed towards the entrance before using their ALL-47 Assault Rifles on the Root-nins. Turning several into bloody pieces of meat that lay on the floor with only a few surviving by retreating behind cover. They should have run as Omi slung his assault rifle to use 'Lightning Style: Thunderbolt Jutsu,' a two-handed justu that was more powerful than 'Lightning Style: Lightning Bolt Jutsu' that could hit more than one person, even those behind cover.

All the Root-nins were on the ground as Omi and Karui moved with their longswords to slaw any unconscious Root-nin while Samui backed them up with her tantō. It was not long before the two lead Root-nins were back to back, hands held high in surrender as they were surrounded by the two Jinchūrikins and A-Team while Tukiko, Haku and Mikoto appeared over Danzō's corpse. The two girls examined and confirmed Danzō was dead since losing a chunk of the back of his head as they unwrapped the surviving bandages around the man's head and arm. Revealing that Danzō had a full head of black hair and a single Sharingan eye in his right eye-socket. Along with ten individual Sharingan eyes along with his right arm, confirming Mikoto's fear, he had harvested several of her clan's eyes for himself.

The room was quiet except for the battle going outside where massive explosions, artillery, and
elemental jutsus rang supreme. With the amount of screaming going on and the reports, a lot of Root-nins and thugs were being killed with the surprise attack making victory likely to go to the Leaf and her allies. It was that moment Mikoto looked away from Danzō's corpse to the two Root-nins before her to ask one question, "How did Danzō get all those eyes?"

Deciding to answer their question with the truth instead of dying in vain, Torune replied, "Three of them from missions of three separate Uchiha being killed. The others in his labs and on his arm were taken after Itachi put many to the sword with some help."

Mikoto growled before she claimed herself before taking a closer look at the carrot top Yakama, "I remember you from the war, and you were so loyal. Why did you betray the Leaf for this man, Fū?"

"That is a lot of big talk coming from a woman born in a clan that has a history of betrayal," Fū snarked back to Mikoto. "But to answer your question, I follow Danzō for he is the only one with vision, of power to ensure the Leaf not only remains on top, but no one can challenge it ever again."

"Well he is dead now, so much for you following a vision, this is where he brought you to an end, fucken traitor," Kiba snarled with a tone that normally earned a smack form Ami if she did not agree with him. "How does it feel that you betrayed your family and friends for nothing?"

"Your mistake is not to understand everything Danzō did in the shadows is for the good of Fire Country, or assuming Danzō only has two lives."

The group looked confused until Haku sensed someone behind her and yelled everyone to run before pushing the allies closes to her away from a giant crushing sphere that hit the ground. The 'Wind Style: Vacuum Great Sphere Jutsu' created a large dust cloud from the release of air which the two lead Root-nins used to escape and jump to their boss' side while the others were knocked down or covered themselves. The dust soon cleared to reveal Fū and Torune standing right next to their boss, Danzō alive and well without a hint of damage.

The man looked at the various ninjas with approval as he seemed to clap by using his cane to tap on the ground, "You must be commended, I did not think I would have to use the 'Resurrection Jutsu' twice to bring myself back. But your lightning attack after that shot in the head pushed it to the limit. I won't let you have a chance to do so again."

The group was shocked, asking themselves how it was possible until Tukiko saw two the Sharingan eyes close along Danzō's arm. "The Sharingan eyes. I thought you had them to increase your mind control over others, but that is not so. You used them somehow to resurrect yourself from the dead."

"But how, as I never heard of them being able to resurrect people," Mikoto asked herself as Danzō, feeling proud of his despicable accomplishment, could not help but brag.

"And they wouldn't be able too, normally. However, with their ability to copy along with seals on my nerve cluster allows them to record one's mind, one soul. Recording everything I am thinking and feeling until the moment I die. Then the seals will force a connection to my nerves system to extract the recorded data while the other bloodlines I have to rebuild my body."

"Other bloodlines?" Haku asked in shock.

"Yes, as the 'Resurrect Jutsu' would not work without help from the Uchiha, Senju and Uzumaki bloodlines. The Senju bloodline can create life in the form of planets, and now body parts destroyed after I used seals and gene splicing to enhance the bloodline. While the Uzumaki bloodlines are not only able to regenerate what is not being regrown, but also make all the various bloodlines work together in my body. I wonder if Naruto, Kushina, or Tsunade realize that those blood works taken
at the hospitals were used to help me become one of the most powerful ninjas but near immortal one as well," Danzō mused in a calm tone that does not convey the sadistic glee hidden within.

"You... sick freak," Kiba stammered out what they all thought while Danzō tilted his head.

"As my former senseis would state, waste not what others have provided. Ironically when we were taking everything off enemies' body during the Second Great Shinobi War. I believe that in a way, this is poetic justice," Danzō mused before turning towards Killer Bee and Yugito. "And speaking of wasting not, I should thank Cloud Forces for sending me their two Jinchūrikins. I certainly will need all the firepower to replace all the men I am sure to lose thanks to the Leaf betraying me."

Sharingan eyes than in his right eye socket then turned into a ninja star shape to reveal he had the Mangekyō Sharingan with any ability that is perfect for mind control of multiple people. Especially on Bijūs that have a history of being susceptible to corrupting genjutsu produced by bloodline eyes like the Sharingan. It was not long before the two began screaming as Danzō inserted his dominance and forced them in a demonic chakra cloak of the Bijūs sealed in them. The two were losing control as the two kept yelling in their minds, 'System corruption effect organic mind-os causing memory degradation and loss of control. Attempting reboot to restart os biosystem. Reboot failure due to bio-energy virus.'

They lost control as Danzō gave his new slaves his new orders to them, "Take out the three Cloud-nins and take your fight outside to take down any ninjas that are not Root. Kill only if necessary. I have plans for the survivors."

The two responded by charging at their former students and family members. Omi had no time to reach before being hit by the 'Lightning Style: Electric Lariat Jutsu,' an electrified hand attack seen in Lariat wrestling. The force quickly sent Omi flying out through a wall outside Killer Bee followed. Two female Cloud-nins were also thrown out by a spin kick Yugito, and the three Cloud-nins were soon laying together. Alive and able to quickly recover enough to run away, thanks to Killer Bee and Yugito fighting their Bijū for control. The two gave chase as their chakra shroud became darker and stronger, starting an intense fight outside while the Leaf-nins inside were forced to fight their own.

Fū and Torune wasted no time and started their own attacks against the Leaf. Fū summoned a massive swarm of poisonous insects against Shino and Ami, the latter summoning his own insect to save himself and the girl. While Torune got out his short tantō to slash at Hayate, Kiba, and Akamaru, forcing the two back as Hayate got out his blade to deflect the man's strikes. Leaving Haku, Tukiko, and Mikoto to face Danzō alone.

That was until Mikoto stated, "Haku, Tukiko told me you can summon a pretty powerful boss to summon. I want you to contain Yugito and Killer Bee if they fully transform into their tail beasts."

Haku was about to protest when Tukiko put her hand on the Ice Mistress's shoulder, "Trust me, we got this."

Haku nodded to the Fire Mistress before she attempted to jump away. Danzō tried to stop the girl using 'Wood Style: Tree Binding Jutsu' to create a giant tree to capture Haku, but Tukiko countered with 'Fire Style: Great Fireball Jutsu.' Destroying the growing tree to allow Haku to escape while Danzō turned his attention to the two Uchihas and unleashed his 'Wind Style: Vacuum Blade Jutsu.' A powerful jutsu created by Danzō that was like 'Wind Style: Wind Blade Jutsu' to create a smaller and deadlier cut, while designed to counter fire jutsus. Unless someone like 'Fire Mistress' Tukiko embedded her fire chakra into a blade to cut it.

Though that is fine for Danzō as the old man booked at speeds that leave an athlete envious to strike with a katana that was in his cane. He was forcing Tukiko to dodge when Mikoto got involved with
her katana to hold him in place. Only to let one hand go to use 'Lightning Style: Thunderclap Jutsu' to cover her fist with electricity and punched the old man in the face. Sending Danzō skirting back just as Mikoto used 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu' to consume Danzō with flames. However, the old man was not out as he countered with 'Wind Style: Vacuum Spear Jutsu' to stop the fire attack coming his way, just as Mikoto planned. For the younger, and faster woman used 'Lightning Style: Lightning Current Wave Jutsu' to cause the traitor's jutsu to explode in his face. Literally as the old man head popped like a grapefruit, leaving a bloody mess to match the first one.

The two through now was a perfect time to kill Danzō permanently as Tukiko took out her assault rifle and aimed for Danzō's arm. Only for a giant tree to sprout under them, grab ahold of them and slam them through the Inn to the outside. Given them a perfect view of a city in ruin as they saw a monster battle happening through the town. They watched in the morbid fascination of ants trying to stop giants with giants when they saw Danzō approach, with another Sharingan eye closed, bringing his total to seven.

For most people, that would piss them off to lose three lives in such a short time. However, Danzō was not normal as he congratulated them. "I must say, when I decided not to kill all of the Uchiha after your clan committed treason, I was mainly thinking about how your decedents would ensure the Root have a future supply of Sharingan eyes when they eventually run out. But now I see I would have allowed two capable, and very powerful kunoichis to go to the wayside if I continued such a shortsighted course.

"But now playtime is over, and it's time to end this fight. You have no way to beat me. I have experience, I have the Senju bloodline. And more importantly, I have the Mangekyō Sharingan, the Sharingan at its ultimate form. You could never have beaten me," Danzō stated as the Sharingan eye in his right eye began to spin as he planned to brainwash two more ninjas.

He soon felt resistance, which was expected but it was not long before he felt something else. He felt a power coming from one of the two Uchihas and blanketing the other in protection. It was pushing him back, and he was losing what hold he made when he heard a chuckle from Jōnin Mikoto Uchiha. "You know, I bet I know how you got a Mangekyō Sharingan. You probably forced a pair of Uchiha to betray each other or had one sacrifice themselves with a promise of freedom to get them emotionally distraught to activate the Mangekyō before killing them. Well, on the day of the Uchiha massacre, I killed my own husband, and while I felt relief he was dead for all the shit he put me through, I also felt sorrow. I guess I did love him in a way, sort of like a beaten puppy tries to stop the abuse and apparently that was enough."

Mikoto then raised her head up, with her eyes wide to reveal her Sharingan had evolved too, into a Mangekyō Sharingan. As seen by the three commas and pupil turned into a black sunflower to indicate her unique ability as each Mangekyō Sharingan. Danzō's allowance for mass genjutsu and mind domination instead of only like most Mangekyō Sharingan eyes allow. Itachi's creates the 'Amaterasu Jutsu' to start black flames that burn for seven days and cannot be extinguished by normal means. And legend says Madara's was able to use 'Kamui Jutsu' to teleport and become invisible, as well as able to use 'Susanoo Jutsu' to create a flaming avatar to act as body armor after fusing his brothers Izuna's eyes with his.

Mikoto's was the 'Himawari Jutsu,' and it was used to create flaming vines of flowers made of fire around her and Tukiko. Burning away the wood that held them while rushing towards Danzō. Who jumped as the vines continued to wraps around the summoned tree until nothing but ash remained as the two Uchihas landed in front of the old man. The battle was just beginning.
Outside of the small town, things were going as planned, perhaps better than expected. In the three hours they waited, teams were directed to set up ambush sites using the stealth skills of the ninja profession since they were hired spies and assassins for Daimyō. For the plan of using the skills, they had developed to become what people now think of ninjas, the elite commandoes and army killers of their respective nation. In many respects, it is how samurai went from bodyguards to army tanks and commanders, and soldiers went from levies to professional men and woman that make up the bulk of an army.

Something that is being proven now for as soon as Naruto took her shot, the whole force came alive as ninjas attacked with a precision strike to take out small opposing teams. Along with large area scaled jutsus that eliminated or overwhelmed many thugs and Root ninjas that stayed in groups. She remembers seeing one Root-nin team wholly wiped out after a duo team flooded and electrocuted the area, leaving no survivors. So, saying the operation was a success may be an understatement.

However, she could not shake the feeling that something was going wrong. That something terrible was about to happen, and she was proven right when she felt chakra like chakra given when Naruto had asked Nine for help. She was on the move when the side of the Inn exploded as a blue two-tailed cat, and a brown eight-tailed tentacle ushi-oni, an ox/octopus-like demon hybrid, burst out. It was not a moment later that her comm exploded with the yelling of the human size Bijūs and warning everyone to get away.

She only needs Team Samui to yell about Danzō using the Sharingan taking over the cat Matatabi, and the ushi-oni Gyūki in Yugito Nii and Killer Bee to fully comprehend what was happening. Though she was already forming a plan before she knew everything that was happening as she got on the comms. "Anko, Hinata, Killer Bee, and Yugito Nii have lost control Two of Nine and Eight of Nine, and we need to contain them. I know I am not the highest-ranking officer, but I am suggesting slash ordering everyone to back off and take care of any runners. While everyone that can summon a boss summon capable of fighting a Bijū, as well as containing or eliminating any party's leftover come forward."

Someone seemed to agree with Naruto's plan as Haku summoned her flying megalodon shark Gorgon to fight the chakra beast the size of trees and growing to the size of the Inn. The amount of pain the two ninjas must be in was high as chakra formed its body. She realized this was bad as she recalled from a casual conversation with Gaara as he described why Jinchūrikin were considered living weapons. It was not just because they had an unlimited amount of chakra, but also the fact that some were trained in the ability to take the form of the Bijū sealed in them. And unfortunately for them, the Cloud-nins were trained to use their chakra to take on their form.

Naruto growled as she prepared the summoning jutsu, calling for Nine's chakra to help when she got confirmation from Anko and Hinata.

"I hear you brat and agree. I've summoned Kingu, and it is going as fast as his scaly ass will allow. Expect him in two minutes-get back here you motherfucker." The comm was cut after hearing a series of explosions.

"Naru-Chan, I summoned Caroline as well, and she'll help support you guys. I didn't say this to her, but I don't think she'll be much help in the battle. So, I am having her play a more support role by going after any ninjas that try to attack you."

"No problem. I was planning to have one of the summonses do that anyway, thanks for the help, Hina-Hime," Naruto stated through her comm as she prepared the final hand signs before summoning her two-boss summons.
All the while Nine pleaded with Naruto to allow her to get close enough to talk to them, 'Please, I think I can reach them if you can get close enough for me to send a telepathic signal through my chakra without interference.'

'That is Plan A, and hopefully, we don't have to use Plan B or C,' Naruto mentally added as she summoned her two main summonses. Dancing Spirit, a beautiful seven-tailed white fox, and Soul Hunter, a seven-tailed black wolf.

The two summonses looked at the two Biju's before battle looking up at Naruto standing on top of Soul Hunter's head. "You certainly summon us for difficult battles, don't you Naruto-Chan?" Dancing Spirit stated with a sarcastic tone hidden under her beautiful voice.

"Sorry about this, but you are our muscle, and I need all the help you can provide if you're up to it. I mean, you are up to it, right?" Naruto asked nervously as it had been since the Wave Mission since she had summoned Soul Hunter to combat.

"Yes, I rested enough after being healed from that disgusting misquote, I am ready to fight a tail beast," Soul Hunter smirked as he stared at the two Bijūs fighting the giant megalodon shark.

"Hopefully we don't have too if I can get close enough for Nine to negotiate, for now, try to bind them and relive Haku and... um... Gorgon from combat," Naruto ordered while trying to remember Haku's summon.

"Will do," both summonses acknowledge as Fox Spirit run towards the two Biju's while Spirit Hunter moved in stealth mode to get Naruto close with fighting to a minimum. Naruto is still amazed by how much a black wolf can blend into the background, especially with the 'Chameleon Jutsu.'

Naruto then got on the comm for Haku and any ninjas nearby to back away before Fox Spirit used 'Tree Style: Root Grab Jutsu' to try to capture the two Bijūs. Sadly, they were able to jump away but were now on the defensive with Soul Hunter waiting for an opportunity to get close Naruto called out, "Haku, where are you."

"I am here Naruto, on Gorgon's back," answered a heavy breathing Haku through the comm.

"Are you alright?"

"I am fine, just exhausted from the amount of chakra I had to use to summon Gorgon. I am holding onto him since he insists I must ride him whenever I summon him to battle. The three Cloud-nins, Samui, Karui, and Omi, are also with me," Haku explained through her regained breath as her pants lessened.

"Okay, I am going to try close to end the battle quickly, I hope this will be enough. To the Cloud-nin, please jump off and cover our back for any Root-nins that try to sneak up on us," Naruto stated as she watched Caroline swoop down and take down a Root-nin trying to do just that.

"Very well, but know this, if you kill or let Yugito-Nii-San and Killer Bee-Sensei die, that will be so uncool that I may have to kill you," Samui answered before Naruto saw her jumping off Gorgon.

Naruto also saw the other two jump off as Karui added, "Um, ditto," before Naruto looked more onto the battle.

It was just in time as Soul Hunter was able to sneak up to the two Bijūs before yelling, "Naruto, now is the time."
Naruto nodded as she yelled mentally 'Now Nine' before she felt a large surge of Nine's chakra come through her body. The power was noticeable as burst forth, breaking Soul Hunter's invisibility jutsu as Nine began to send a telepathic message through her chakra.

'Two! Eight! Stop this, don't let that man control you. Please, reset you os-system to eliminate the chakra virus he is using to control you,' Colonel Nine of Nine pleaded through her chakra. A tactic that seems to work as the two tailed-beasts stop. But soon became apparent they lost control when the two Bijūs turn towards Naruto on top of Soul Hunter.

"Kurama?" the two Bijūs spoke with a confused tone through their controlled ninja hosts as they prepare to attack Naruto.

Colonel Nine of Nine honestly cried within Naruto's mind for they have forgotten who they were. She was screaming how unfair it was as Naruto pleaded mentally for her to stop, 'Nine, please don't despair. Not now. I need your help fighting them, and I cannot do it without my partner, my second mom. So please help me.'

Nine sobered up in her mind as Naruto felt a surge in power, 'I won't let you down, I promise,' just as the three ninja summonses started to fight the Bijūs.

Scene VII

Meanwhile, within the Inn, the four Leaf-nins and two Root-nins were fighting a fiercely within the Inn. As Shino was using his swarm to try to keep Torune's hive at bay while Ami was leading him to a less flammable position. Meanwhile, Kiba, Akamaru, and Hayate were dealing with Fū at close range for he was a Yamanaka with jutsus focuses on illusion, and mind control. The three were taking no chances as Hayate attacked the man sides with his well-maintained blade, while the dog boy duo used their 'Human Beast Clone Jutsu' to take the form of two wild cloned Inuzukas engaging in frontal assault. They were also not saying a word, so Fū cannot tell who was the real Kiba and use many of the more powerful Yamanaka mind jutsus that could be countered by a nearby human with chakra, or leave him vulnerable like the 'Mind Transfer Jutsu.'

Fū counted himself fortunate he was a master of the blade and martial arts, but even he knew it was only a matter of time before he was overwhelmed, so he started to play to Yamanaka's strength, mind games. "You know, I bet you're wondering why I am in Root?" Fū asked for a brief pause before continuing his speech. "It is because like Lord Danzō, I see emotions as a weakness as all it does is allow people too hesitant in battle. Especially to have sentimental values over hard logic that fools like the Third, the Forth and now the Fifth Hokage embraced that makes the village and everyone who follows them weak."

Both Kiba and his look-alike both speed up their attacks in response, but one of them did speak as he heard the one on the left state, "Don't you dare talk bad about my comrades and my clan!"

Just as Fū planned as he jumped back before using 'Mind Destruction Jutsu,' a clan-based jutsu that forced his will on humans or animals to turn enemies on allies, "How nice to prove me right. Now be a good meat puppet and attack your partner."

Fū only waited for one of the Kiba's runs towards the other before he turned his undivided attention to Hayate and attacked with great effort as the Root-nin saw the Leaf Jōnin as a more significant threat. The man is an expert swordsman whose only weakness was his stamina due to his difficulty breathing at times, even with modern medicine. Therefore, Fū planned to drag the fight out when he sensed a chakra spike behind that felt like it dispelled his jutsu and turned one target into two.

He only had time to realize Kiba was not hit by his Jutsu when the two fused into a house size two
headed Akamaru using the 'Pricing Fang' technique on him. The large spinning tornado span across his back before they returned to their base forms after dropping the 'Human Beast Combination Jutsu.' An advance Chūnin and Jōnin level Inuzuka Jutsu that allows partners to fuse into a more powerful version for a short time while dispelling any jutsus affecting them. Not that it mattered much to Fū as he screamed out in pain from the flesh cut away from his back as Hayate took advantage by striking hard and fast like an expert swordsman. Using his blade cover by water jutsu to cut off Fū's hand holding his tantō before piercing through the man's chest.

The Root-nin's eyes stared in shock as he turned to ask with blood spewing from his mouth, "How?" before Kiba replied while making his voice sound like it was coming from Akamaru.

"The Inuzuka is a ninja clan. We were trained to be able to mimic our voice over to our partners when trying to make our enemies think they are fighting twins over a human and their ninken. I guess we have proven to be the better ninjas than a traitor that does not understand emotional control," Kiba stated without adding how he did not mean to speak and only due to training beat into his head did it subconsciously.

Not that Fū would know as he coughed out a curse, "Damn," before he died in shock as Hayate took out his blade and turned towards Shino and Ami as they finished up their fight up.

During Kiba's fight, it looked as though Shino was on the verge of losing. Despite Shino's hive being slightly larger, increased chakra, experience, and expert training than Torune. Torune's kikaichūs were more lethal as their bits contain a toxin poisonous to most forms of life. Therefore, Shino was falling back with Ami while keeping the bulk of swarm in reserve while only sacrificing as few as possible, while Torune tried to press his advantage. All the while, Shino was trying to distract him with small talk, "Why are you following Danzō instead of the collectives that is the Leaf?"

"An interesting question," Torune answered as he stared at his student. "I believe it started as a child as the Aburame clan had supported Danzō in the early days. He always appealed to our logic and was not bogged down with emotions. He understood the world and how cruel it could be and what must be done for the collective. Something I believe even as he fell out of favor with most of the Aburame when the Third Hokage took power and improve relationships between the clan and village."

"So, you follow him, even if means going against the collective clan?" Shino asked as Torune nodded as Shino was forced into the marble covered worker room/kitchen.

"For he represents change and power, as well as the one to lead us to true order and peace in the world," Torune monotone as he backed Shino and Ami into his trap as his swarm began to surround the two Leaf-nins. "Now I would suggest you surrender. You know logically you cannot fight and hope to survive against such odds. So why not stop and live while serving under Danzō."

"No, for logic in why you follow Danzō and to do so is to put you into an unwinnable position, one that is flawed, Ami," Shino ordered as Ami used 'Fire Style: Fire Breath Jutsu' on the swarm surrounding Shino and Ami.

A massive number were incinerated around a two-hundred-and-seventy-degree radius as she torched the hostile kikaichūs around them. Leaving only a few above and those in front when Ami ran in front of Shino with her flaming double blade sword to use 'Fire Style: Flaming Whirlwind Jutsu' as she spun her blade to cut a path through his remaining insects in front of her while Shino overwhelmed the survivors with his superior numbers. As Torune began to back up, he realized he was played as he was led to an area designed to contain fires to eliminate most of his swarm in one go with minimal risks to their captured targets. Especially as Shino appeared to be an Earth user as he used 'Earth Style: Mudball Jutsu' to put out the fires on the few flammable surfaces that caught on
He knew he needed the run and was going too when Shino revealed an ace in a hole as he pulled out a newly minted pistol and fired into his legs. The bullet tore out one of his kneecaps and cause him crashing onto the ground. The two began to approach the down Aburame when he tried, he turned around and summon a remaining swarm in his body through his hands, when Ami revealed two sub-machine guns with seals that turned her guns ammo into incendiary rounds as she opened fire on his hands and arms. A devastating attack that Torune would survive from due to the bullets cauterizing his wounds, but it would cripple his hive with so few kikaichūs left alive.

Torune looked up at Shino starting down at him to ask, "Are you going to kill me?"

Shino stated, tempted to make the kill for a man that betrayed his clan before shaking his head, "I cannot bring myself to break our laws by killing a fellow Aburame."

Torune looked disappointed at such weakness but also hoped that he may still be of a service to Danzō when he escaped when Ami used her double-bladed sword to stab him in the chest like a spear. "Luckily, I am not part of the Aburame clan, yet," Ami stated before twisting her blade, killing Torune and his kikaichū queen, ending the hive and the man controlling it.

Ami then pulled up her sword, wiping away the blood as Shino asked, "What do you mean by 'not part of the Aburame clan yet'?"

Ami smiled as she put up her blade before stating, "You are smart, cute guy, I think you can figure it out," before she walked away with a small sway of her hips.

Shino stated, showing nothing before mumbling, "Dad was right, female incest is far less confusing," before following Ami as they secured the surviving prisoners.

Scene VIII

Meanwhile, among the fighting outside was a mass amount of chaos taking place as Tukiko rode high above the field on the large black crow both she and Mikoto summoned together, Kirate. She jumped on to get the higher ground to take pot shots at Danzō with her assault rifle. Her only success allowed her shootout two his eyes in his arm, bringing the total to five. Of course, Danzō being anything but stupid realized their plan and now had his arm protected with a layer of chakra enhance palm tree wood that absorbs bullets, and resilient to fire. Now the three were in a stalemate as Danzō kept ahead of bullets while sending wind style attacks that put Mikoto on the defensive. While using clones from the few 'Shadow Clones Jutsus' to force Tukiko back since his experiments in the Uzumaki bloodline meant an enormous chakra supply as well, as Tukiko began to despise mad scientists.

Though Mikoto probably was starting to hate the old man more as Danzō used 'Wind Style: Vacuum Waves Jutsus' and followed up with 'Wind Style: Great Break Through,' wide-scale area based jutsus to hit her multiple times with fast-moving waves. Forcing Mikoto to use counter jutsus such as 'Lightning Style: Lightning Current Wave Jutsu' and 'Fire Style: Dragon Breath Jutsu' to keep Danzō's attacks at bay. Good thing Mikoto was a master of Lightning and Fire based jutsus or this fight would have been over a long time ago. Though the worst was when Danzō used Wood Style-based jutsus to attack both with jutsus such as 'Wood Style: Wood Spikes Jutsu' or 'Wood Style: Root Grab Jutsu' and Mikoto was forced to use 'Himawari Jutsu.' Her strongest jutsus that had nasty side effects, the strain was causing her to bleed and would lead to blindness if she continued to overuse them.

Meaning if this fight kept up, then Danzō only needed to outlast Mikoto to win this fight as Tukiko
was not sure she could win this fight if she fought Danzō alone. Something the boss summonses fighting the two Bijūs seems to be dealing with. As the amount of toxic radiation produced by the two Biju's prevented most close quarter combat, forcing even the late Kingu into a support role and others like her Kirate to help her battle, much to his annoyance. Not that he was able to help much as the hosts of the two tailed-beasts were firing their chakra- enhanced destructive high power Jutsus such as the elemental dragons 'Fire/Lightning Style: Fire/Lightning Dragon Jutsu.' And the summons or Naruto counter with 'Water/Wind Style: Water/Wind Dragon Jutsu.' Plus a few jutsus that are more neutral and cannot counter such as 'Earth/Ice Style: Earth/Ice Dragon Jutsu.' Tukiko doubts that the town will exist after today even if the population was not arrested for harboring criminals.

Though that did not matter much to the young Uchiha as he fired at another clone that tried to make Kirate lose a few more feathers while giving him a few more scars. It did not take long for Tukiko to realize her presence was a hinder to Mikoto when she directed her partner to the sky, "Can you get us above those clouds. I don't think we can do a lot of good being an easy target."

"I agree," Kirate responded before making a sharp turn upwards as he flew up above the clouds, leaving Mikoto to fight Danzō alone.

The two currently trading blows with their katanas as they fought in a fierce battle on the burning tree, they fought on with Danzō proving why he was a candidate for Third and Fourth Hokage. As Mikoto was having a difficult time despite being an elite veteran twenty-five years younger than the old man. Mikoto hated to see the man at his prime as she continued fighting the laminated man, "You know, one of the things I hated the most about the Uchiha is how you waste your power."

"What?" Mikoto asked as she barely deflected a blade strike across her chest.

"You hear me, waste you power," Danzō stated as parry and try to strike her down again. "Your clan could have been the most politically powerful in the village, especially after the Senju was whittled down to one. But instead of cultivating those that admire your clan's strength or sending an olive branch to others, you push them away while calling them weak. You had the power to make a real difference for the Leaf if the Uchiha was more involved. But instead, complain of a lack of respect and strength while squandering it on petty drivels inside and out of your clan. You even had the chance to make yourself and everyone more powerful through the library of copied jutsus you kept in your clan. But instead left it to collect dust except for the few Uchiha that realized the power it contained. Power that others could have used to further everyone to higher levels."

"Oh, you're one to talk," Mikoto growled as she picked up her pace. "I actually defended the Leaf twice from attacks from traitors and the recent Sound-Sand Invasion. I've taught some of the next generations of ninjas and passed on my knowledge while you hid in the shadows, directing your puppets to cause problems then help the Leaf. You're just like the-no you're worst then the Uchiha of old. For they do not throw everything sensibly in the meat grinder to fight wars propelled continuously by old war hawk like you!"

That is when Mikoto hit a preverbal button when Danzō screamed before unintentionally using 'Wood Style: Spontaneous Tree Growth Jutsu.' Creating a small tree that sent her flying and moved to crush her when she used 'Himawari Jutsu' to burn the three to ash as pain streaked through her and blood leaked from her eyes. She reached the limit of her Mangekyō Sharingan, and if she used it one more time, she likely would become blind if not damage her vision severely.

However, she pushed the pain and worry aside as she observed Danzō move his arms expressively. Including the arm with the five remaining Sharingan eyes that through the fight he kept un-extended after Tukiko took advantage to shoot out two of the eyes. Mikoto had a revealing new strategy as she quietly relayed her orders to Tukiko while Danzō gave a small, but sturdy rant, "You know nothing
girl. You know nothing of getting your hands dirty for the sake of the Leaf without hardly recognizing it and being fine with it. So long as it was for the sake of the village, I am willing to do anything and everything which is more then I can say about you, your clan, and most of the village. So, don't you dare state I have not done my part for the Leaf then you soft-hearted fools that run it! And don't you dare call me a war hawk!” Growled pointing to Mikoto with his right arm extended towards her.

Just as Tukiko acknowledge her orders, Mikoto decided to put fuel on the fire, "Why not, you seem to love war for trying to pick a fight or invade every country. So how are you not a war hawk for promoting war over peace?"

"Peace?" Danzō started to laugh as though he heard the funniest joke as Mikoto raised an eyebrow in response. "What is this peace you are talking about? Since when has this world ever been at peace? Every generation, a Great War happens between all the nations, and a generation is cut down by a third at least. Every few years, a war starts between two countries or a single nation internally starts a civil war. Every other week, a skirmish happens because of a mission or testing the border. No, the world has been a constant war since humans formed nations. And good people like Tobirama-sensei die in battle they should have not died if young boys like me were taught to control our emotions better.

Danzō closed his eyes in anger before he stated with conviction, "I despise war and everything to do with it! But I will not ignore the fact that so long as the world remains divided, the world will never be at peace!"

"And you think that uniting the world would lead to permanent peace?" Mikoto asked mockingly, even if the more critical side of her agree with Danzō's assessment in some regrades minus a few details.

"Why not. It is hard to start a war with a neighbor if everyone is under one nation," Danzō stated with conviction as he had not realized the two stopped fighting and began arguing with each other while Mikoto backed away.

"And that Fire Country should be the one to lead it with you at the head?" Mikoto asked as she gave a subtle look up while quietly relaying Danzō's position as he continued talking.

"We were the first nation to have ninjas. We found a man that was able to seal all the tailed beasts and give several to other nations as symbols of peace. Those same symbols other nations spat on to use as a weapon known as Jinchūrikin, and we beat them all without having a Jinchūrikin of our own. We are the most advanced in the world with technology no one can match. Especially with what many consider the best military force in the world with the greatest success rate the world has ever seen. We also have a government and military that promotes skills and fairness with everyone having the chance to become more."

Danzō Shimura then took a breather before adding, "We have everything going for us and the power to end this cycle of violence in one final war. But the people at the top are just too weak, too cowardly to do what must be done to make the world great again. So, if I must take charge of ninjas and manipulate things to end all fighting, then so be it."

"You're insane," Mikoto stated as she growled at the man. "You think that the other nations would just roll over for us. They'll fight us to the bitter end, and even if you do win, you'll have to deal with rebels with the goal of liberating their home for years. No, what you plan will just lead to more violence that in the grand scheme of things, is futile to try. For even if you succeed in everything to unite the world into one nation, it will eventually become corrupt and tear itself apart, for its human nature to fight for what they believe. As my clan proved in their misguided attempt of a coup d'état,
the village fought for survival in the First Great Shinobi War. And now my little girl will show you how," Mikoto added with a smile as Kirate passed by Danzō in a nose dive to the ground before dispersing.

Danzō was distracted and realized his mistake but too late when Tukiko used her flaming knives to cut through his wooden armor around his right limb to slash across the arm. Destroying all five of his remaining Sharingan and severally burning his arm, making it useless. He looked at the young kunoichi in shock as she jumped back to power up her jutsu. Danzō moved to run but had forgotten Mikoto, who used the time to hit him with 'Lightning Style: Lightning Dragon Jutsu.' Striking him as Tukiko followed up with 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu.'

Overall, two mighty elemental dragons that formed a cross shape they passed through Danzō. Burning his body to a crisp and destroying all the seals on him, including a suicide bomb that was present should someone kill him. Elder Danzō Shimura was dead within thirty seconds of being cooked alive by the vast amounts of electricity and heat, long enough time for everything in his life to flash before his eyes. His highs of leading a success shadow black-ops for Konoha and being a respected leader. His lows of failing in life, and maybe a minuscule of regret in what he did. But regardless, he did concede that as he left this world for oblivion that it was just as the green bug man sang, he did it his way before embracing the death.

Soon the jutsus dissipated, leaving only the chard remains that was once Danzō. The two tired Uchiha slowly approached the body, waiting for him to come back. But after a few minutes of waiting, it soon became obvious Danzō was not coming back as Tukiko sighed in relief, "Its over, the bastard is dead, and he won't hurt anyone else."

"And our family has been avenged," Mikoto added as she deactivated her Sharingan, resting her eyes before they did become damaged as she turned to see the fighting coming to an end.

Especially for the Bijūs as she saw Naruto was no longer on her summons tailed back. Naruto was losing her fight and got separated from the demons that were trying to take her down hard. Therefore, Naruto jumped on a giant cat's back and decided to use the water version of the 'Rasengan Jutsu' the 'Water Style: Rasenneten Jutsu' on it. The goal was to use enough force to break the chakra cloak around Yugito before pulling the jutsu back to knock her out. Unfortunately, 'Water Style: Rasenneten Jutsu' was only a slightly more powerful version than the 'Rasengan' when pitted against organic targets, and even with Nine's chakra, was not enough.

Fortunately, Naruto provided enough of a distraction for her to summon Dancing Spirit to catch Yugito and Killer Bee chakra cloak with 'Tree Style: Tree Binding Jutsu' draining them of demonic chakra and foreign jutsus. While Soul Hunter jumped to not only catch Naruto but also dispel Danzō's control over Killer Bee and Yugito as they let go after prompting by their Bijūs. The two flopped to the ground, exhausted as Samui, Omi, and Karui rushed to aid them.

Naruto felt relief as she jumped to ground level with Haku doing the same before all the summons dispersed. Naruto just stood there as Haku slumped to her knees to rest as she began thinking. The first was the need to look at the other elements for she felt she'll need a more powerful Rasengan if things keep on escalating as they have been. Second, the sheer carnage left behind and destroyed during the battle as she got on her comm to report, "We did it, Danzō is dead, threats neutralized or captured, and the situation is at hand. You guys okay?"

"Were fine brat, we got everyone that tried to run but between the Bijū attack and the runners. We probably lost about a third of the people sent," Anko stated with a bit apprehension at the loss of life before figuratively waving it off. "However, considering who we were up against and what all this means, I say overall the mission was a success. Good work," Anko stated before ending the comm
"Yeah, mission success," Naruto stated with sadness as she heard her partner Nine try to contact Eight and Two through a chakra plus, and cry when Eight and Two only remembered her as Kurama. Nine felt lost and the personal loss of realizing she was the last to remember the old times as Naruto could do nothing that would comfort the being in her body as she carried out her orders.

Scene IX

"So Danzō finally pissed off his nation enough to warrant his execution, dammed the consequences?" Uzukage Yokoshima Uzumaki asked her agent in front of her Council.

"Yes, Yokoshima-Sama. He was killed while all the criminal ringleaders were taken into custody. With the information gathered from Danzō’s journals and interrogations, the various nations are doing a final sweep of all major criminal activity, leaving only minor criminals left in their nations. Thus, bringing order to the Elemental Nations at long last."

"A shame, as I wished the break out of violence would keep the various military forces distracted, and Danzō was always a reliable source to cause discord among allies. Well no point of crying over spilt milk, they serve a much-needed distraction. Are our forces ready?"

"Yes Yokoshima-Sama, Elite Jōnin Condor had reported that he is moving the last of your troops, our allies, and the Akatsuki into position," one of the Council members answered with a snarl at the half-blood Uzumaki. "None of the countries noticed the movement or the buildup of troops through our factory and various recruitment drive of missing-nins and small nations."

"Good for I believe it's now time for a cold speech that is meant to boost the morale of our troops," Yokoshima mused as poured herself a drink. "A speech about order and chaos brought to the world. About alliances and betrayal offered by the same hand. About sisterhood, brotherhood, family, couples, and all those technical relationships in-between. But that is only for speeches, for now, is the time for action. For now, is the start of the War. The War to end all wars. I cannot wait for it to begin," Yokoshima added with a smile.
and one of the best out there in my opinion despite being a Female Izuka story. I highly suggest you check out this author's first story series and be sure to leave a comment stating I told you to check this author out.

2) Second is another My Hero Academia Story "Good and Evil" by Roxas Itsuka is an interesting story that explores some of the more controversial issues that are lightly brushed in My Hero Academia. Mainly racism, bullying and a society that generates the villain's hero fight. As well as a story that Izuka is part of the League of Villains and does not become an asshole or lose his morals while crafting a believable story as far as anime goes.
Scene I

Within the office of the Hokage, the Fifth Hokage Tsunade Senju sat in the most intimidating pose she could muster as she faced her political rivals. Around the most famous Medic-nin in history and on her political side was her old teammate, Jiraiya, her former sensei, Sarutobi, and her assistant, Shizune. In front of her and on the other political side were Homura Mitokado and Koharu Utatane, Elders on the Council and long-time allies of the now revealed traitor Danzō Shimura. It did not take a political analyst to determine why Tsunade called, with glee, the two Councilors that had been a pain in her side since she took office to her office.

Though that does not stop Tsunade from asking, "You know why I called you here?"

The two revealed nothing when the elderly man Homura answered Tsunade's question. "You called us here because we were allies of a man convicted of treason, and want to determine our guilt."

"Not quite," Tsunade replied as she was handed some papers by Shizune she gave to the elders. "I am actually here to threaten you. Confess, resign, and begin serving a twenty-five-year house arrest sentence, or you will be tried for treason and executed once convicted."

"Your bluffing," the elderly woman Koharu snarled as she held one of the resignation papers. She glared at what she considered to be an upstart of a Hokage. "If you had that kind of evidence, we would already be arrested and thrown in jail. This is just a pitiful attempt to shut up any voice of opposition to you."

"That's where you are wrong," Jiraiya stated as he crossed his arms in one of his more serious modes. "Danzō kept very detailed records of everything, and we were able to raid all his bases here in Konoha, Fire Country, and in our allies' territories. I am sure you can guess we hit the jackpot. We have mission records, budget reports, banking reports, and a slew of evidence that can be linked to you two and be used to convict you both of treason."

"The only problem is that to properly convict you of all your crimes would take years to prove in court as I am sure you will use every dirty political tactic to delay the sentence. While trying your damnest to discredit the evidence by calling it a witch hunt," Tsunade explained. "And unlike your lot, I don't want to waste years of my life just to ensure you can do no more harem to Fire Country and Konoha. So, under the advisement of my sensei out of a guilty conscious about allowing his teammates to go down the wrong path, I am giving you this offer. Take it, or you better hope you die of old age before you go to the chopping block for treason."
"I would suggest you take it, you are never going to get a better deal than this," Sarutobi told the two in one-part sadness and one-part relief.

Mostly relief when both elders signed their names on the papers, slammed it on the Hokage's desk and left with their ANBU's escort with a huff and puff of an angry wolf. Tsunade was never prouder of herself as she handed the papers to Shizune to file, this was the end of her opposition for a few years if she was lucky. She never felt happier as she took on a more serious persona as Shizune handed her field reports that focused on Uzumaki as she laid out a map of the Elemental Countries and the Jungle Wastelands below.

"As you all know, the Uzumaki clan has been unusually quiet. Too quiet despite the Seer clan predicting they are going to make a big move soon," Tsunade emphasize as she pointed at the map.

"Yes, which is odd as you think with the robots they now have and the general chaos of the last couple of months, you would think they would have taken advantage of it," Sarutobi stated as he looked over the map thoughtfully. "Instead, they are staying mostly in their territory with limited interaction outside of it. They must be planning something."

"Anything your spy network picked up," Tsunade asked Jiraiya.

"Outside of Crow's report of the Akatsuki in Rain Country hiring themselves out for promises of power and leadership, not much. I know they've been recruiting a few mercenary groups here and there, but little else. I think they sent small teams that can avoid my spies, and they don't trust the Akatsuki as a whole. They may be S-rank class ninjas, but mercenaries all the same. I just hope their mistrust is because they are mercenaries instead of suspecting someone, our operative included, as a traitor," Jiraiya hoped as he thought about Crow, the man that became a deep cover agent after he killed the traitorous member of the Uchiha all those years ago, Itachi Uchiha.

The thought of the tragic man brought him some memories of the hell the village put the man through when his thoughts were interrupted by the sound of a caw. They turned to see a summoned crow with an encrypted scroll in its talons. The only identified mark of the owner was a crow painted on its side. "That is convenient. It appears something big is happening, and he finally had the chance to warn us while still in Ame."

Tsunade tensed, prepare to send forces against what she feared may be an invasion force coming from Ame, the Hidden Village in Rain Country. Turns out she will be sending their forces elsewhere as Jiraiya gave his report, "Tsunade-Sama, this is bad. Crow has reported that he and his partner Kisame Hoshigaki are leading an attack force with a company strength contingent under the command of an Uzumaki researcher and her assistant. They are heading to Sea Country."

"Are they sending a hunter team to grab Naruto?" Sarutobi asked with anxiety as he remembered Tsunade sent Team Vixen, Elite Jōnin Anko Mitarashi and Team Guy to Sea Country on a simple mission already turning complicated due to what some refer to as the Team Vixen Effect.

The mission seemed like a routine search and destroy mission. A number of ships leaving a seaport on Taro island in Sea Country have been attacked out in the sea with their valuable cargo stolen and their boats sunk. The mission was to find what was likely to be pirates out in the sea with help from an informant in town and eliminate them. At least that was what it seemed like at first, but things quickly escalated the moment they got reports about who the sailors blamed for the attacks. The survivors and those coming to the crew's rescue claimed they saw a Kaima. A local, supposedly urban, sea monster that was said to devour sailors and sink ships.

Now, most in Konoha would just dismiss such talk as superstitious sailors until someone remembered that on one of the islands, Jiro, was in Sea Country. An unimportant island if it was not
for the fact, they had discovered Anko there. After she was experimented on by Orochimaru and given the Curse Seal. Which was later removed before Sarutobi killed his old student. And while they did a search of the island and the surrounding islands, they could not scour all of them. There were over three dozen small islands that belonged to a foreign country with many more belonging to other countries.

And with those two facts combined, the Leaf-nins could not ignore the fact they might have missed a Sound base that survived the war they recently fought. Therefore, they had to deal with it quickly before anything could escalate after their most recent crisis. Which is why Anko was assigned to the two heavy-hitter teams. To not only help find the base but also help her deal with any ghosts tied to the guilt of surviving when everyone, including her parents, did not. Overall, a simple mission that got complicated and seemed to only get worse as Sarutobi silently pleaded to Jiraiya that he was wrong in his assessment.

Unfortunately, Jiraiya could not give him a sure answer, "Crow doesn't know for sure as the others have been given a mission at the last minute and were not told what other group's missions were. It could be a grab mission like we fear, or it could be something far worse."

"You don't mean?" Sarutobi asked with wide eyes as the others tensed when confirming their fears were real.

"A strike mission, or more likely, an invasion of neighboring countries."

Shizune, who was nervously organizing her papers to keep her calm, asked the one question that needed to be asked, "What is Crow going to do? What are we going to do?"

"Crow is likely to break his cover to help Team Vixen escape. He has become very protective of what family remains after Sasuke died," Jiraiya stated as he recalled the times Itachi nearly broke his cover in recent months. "Crow has nearly broken cover several times to keep Kisame, and his fellow Akatsuki from intercepting Team Vixen when they are out on missions since the alliance with the Uzumaki went through. He even took a big risk dropping off all the information that he had on Danzō on the locations of several of his bases.

"He will get involved to protect his favorite niece, but he will need backup. So, I must make sure Team Vixen comes home safe," Jiraiya expressed with conviction.

Tsunade took a brief moment to consider her options before she gave them her orders, "Go but take a contingent to go with you. I recommend you take Elite Jōnin Kushina Ryu and Elite Chūnin Naruko Ryu as the base of your team. They are familiar with most of the hierarchy of the Uzumaki forces and can identify high priority targets to capture. I want someone to interrogate and try to figure out what exactly our enemy is planning.

"In the meantime, Sarutobi-Sensei and I will get on the horn with the capital and our allies. To warn them of a possible incursion by the Uzumaki. I don't want to take the chance they catch us with our pants down, and I want to be prepared to repulse any attacks. Shizune, get on the comm and warn Team Vixen of possible enemy units coming their way."

The three nodded as they quickly got to work on actions that many historians would say that alone led to the start of the Great War. As the first battle of the war was about to start.

Scene II

Demon Island, one of the many islands found in Sea Country. And one of the few islands many avoided due to the superstitious legend of monsters living there. Monsters that waited for those
foolish enough to approach the island that fed on one's emotion, flesh, and spirit. A myth supported by the number of suicides, murders, and disappearances happening around the island centuries before Orochimaru decided to put a base there to increase the number by a few more. A small island that was big enough that Team Guy and Team Vixen, even with Anko's help, would not find the hidden entrance on without local support.

Flashback

In a Taro Sea Port, Team Vixen and Team Guy, minus Anko Mitarashi and Might Guy, were sitting in a beach house located in the outskirts of town as a humanoid, fish-like creature swam underneath the building. The fish-woman approached the building with the stealth of a shark or a salamander, as she crawled up the pilings to support beams a few inches away from the floor. Her hand stretched out, not to attack, but to use a stethoscope to listen in on the conversation, with fear etched on her face. She hoped no one noticed her as she memorized the dialogue going on above her head.

"This was an excellent meal. I expected nothing less from Hinata and Haku, but I did not expect you to be such a cook, Lee," Tukiko Uchiha commented as she finished the delicious meal Hinata Hyūga, Haku Momochi, and Rock Lee prepared.

"Guy-Sensei always stated that if one must remain youthful, one must learn the fine culinary arts to ensure a healthy diet for oneself and one's companions," Lee exclaimed.

"Lee, you and Hinata did a fantastic job, no need for you to go to that extreme," Naruto Ryū explained as she put up the dishes for her girlfriend and friend. Only to forgo washing them as the smaller girl soon found herself in her girlfriend Hinata's lap.

Lee was proclaiming his abilities as Tukiko shook her head and leaned over to ask Tenten, "How do you deal with that?"

"Ah, I think it's charming, most of the time. He is so excited and so focused as Lee earned his recent promotion to Chūnin. Despite our limited time out in the field with Lee recovering from his injuries during the Chūnin Exams. And Neji having to do a lot of soul-searching after his defeat in the Exams and having a long overdue talk with his uncles," Tenten added as she watched Neji take his family status seriously for the first time in a long time. As he glared at Naruto and Hinata, and Hinata returned his stare with a gaze that told him to knock it off, he had no right to be the overprotective cousin.

The sight made Tenten and Tukiko laugh softly before Tukiko asked, "Is that why you still are an Elite Chūnin? I thought you would be a Jōnin by now since we all got promoted."

"Hey, we only had a half dozen combat missions with the one dealing with one of the Former Seven Swordsmen, Raiga Kurosuki, and his creepy gang that bury people alive," Tenten Faiadoku explained.

"It was unfortunate that Karashi betrayed us and his grandma, Sanshō for that madman. His time in prison will hopefully straighten him out," Lee added while Tenten continued his explanation.

"Besides, most people only make Jōnin after at least five to ten years of service. I was told Neji, and I are on the fast track for getting Jōnin within the next few months. Few make Jōnin within two years into their career."

That caused everyone to stop and think as the boys and girls looked at each to realize they were little older than Tenten. They were a little more muscular and taller. More womanly for the girls, and more masculine for the boys with Lee starting to grow hair from his chin while Neji showed signs of being
freshly shaven. They looked at each other to realize how much time had passed since they started their career.

"Has it only been nine months since the Chūnin Exams? With everything going on, it felt shorter. But looking at each other since we first started as Genin with modified clothing to fit us just shows we are getting close to adulthood," Naruto commented as Neji eyes looked far away.

"Soon Hinata-Sama would be old enough to marry who she wanted, and Hanabi-Sama would be old enough to be a Genin."

"Yeah, and as soon as she, Fox Spirit, and Konohamaru graduate, they are slated to be the Genin team we mentor and teach," Naruto stated as she was caught in memory. Over four months ago, a few weeks after being made a full Jōnin, Hinata and Hanabi requested to be their students. At the time, Naruto backed in the corner with Hinata's pleading eyes did not have the heart to say no.

Neji mumbled, "It was a good thing we took care of the criminal scum of the underworld and Danzō. I heard they were a few weeks away from enacting the Academy Wartime procedures, and you know what that means?" Neji stated with a bit of anger of Hanabi being put in danger just after he finally got his life back together.

He did not need to be specific as Hinata answered for him, "A wartime focus curriculum, lowering the academy age requirements by one to two years, and automatic graduation for both military schools. Meaning the girls, including my little sister, would be ninjas that would either hold down the fort to free up our more experienced ninjas to fight. Or they are sent to the meat grinder with us." Hinata sighed as she cuddled with Naruto a bit more as she mumbled, "We definitely avoided a terrible position, though if we enter a major war in the next two years, they may have no choice but to activate it to make up for all the loses we received in the last year and a half."

The group became so silent, she almost forgotten they were in the room when Lee changed subjects, "Hey, no more of this talk. Let's talk about our mission. You guys notice anything odd in our investigation."

"Still mad at that villager that took one look at your eyes, called you a witch and splashed holy water on you?" Haku asked jokingly to hide the pain as the village reminded her a bit of her home village. The village that got behind her father in killing her mother and tried to kill her because of their superstitious fear of bloodlines.

"Yes." Naruto sighed before she asked, "Why are we helping these people again."

"For we are being paid too, and it is a major shipping hub that Fire Country cannot snub, no matter how satisfying it would be to do so," Tukiko commented.

"It's why Anko and Guy-Sensei are dealing with the mayor of the town since members of their Elder Council would freak out from the way some of us look," Tenten diplomatically stated as she knew some of the more superstitious members may have problems with how they looked.

"I feel sad for young Isaribi," Lee explained as the young fish-woman unknowingly gasped. "She came back after what must have been a traumatic experience, and instead of the villagers welcoming her back and helping her, they shunned her. I wish I could help her," Lee stated as he and Haku recalled seeing the dejected girl.

"So, do I, for I know how she feels," Haku added much to the girl's shock as she unknowingly
caused the floor to creak alarming the suspicious ninjas.

She did not know the group had moved silently to where she gasped the pier as she heard Tenten suggest, "Still, do you think we should talk to the girl? She may have escaped whoever is attacking this area or may know something about the island."

"It would not hurt to ask her tomorrow. We need all the leads we can get to find out who the attackers of the ships are," Naruto stated in agreement with Tenten as the fish woman tensed at the idea.

The woman thought now may be a time to go as she was about to make her escape when Haku appeared out of nowhere and used 'Ice Style: Entrapment Jutsu.' A powerful jutsu that not only froze the salt water around her but entrapped her in ice that shot up through the beach house floor. The she-creature soon found herself surrounded by the Leaf-nins as she shivered while entrapped. It was so cold that the girl did not realize that she was transforming back into the warm-blooded creature of her human form.

With her green scales along with her head receding from for her long purple hair braided on each side, and a clear human face was enough for Lee to recognize the human girl with a few scales, "That is Isaribi."

End Flashback

Isaribi was still shivering from her capture before she was freed and interrogated by Tukiko and Anko. It did not take long to break her before she told them everything, including her life story. To many in Taro Sea Port, Isaribi was an odd girl. At a young age, the purple haired girl was spirited away while walking on one of the beaches close to Demon Island. However, unlike others who had been taken, she returned with soulless pupilless eyes, and bandages all over her body. Some were shocked and relieved the girl survived. Others were scared as the superstitious town had her boycotted and shunned from the port. Fearing she was an omen of bad times to come she was sent away. Many felt justified after ships began to be sunk a few years after her return.

Of course, they were only partially right. The young girl was responsible for the ships sunk but not in the way they thought. Isaribi was kidnapped and experimented on by a madman who wished to combine human DNA with that of animals to be better fighters. Specifically, fish DNA as a means to give the now defunct Sound-nins a means to breathe and fight underwater, increase the power of water jutsus, and other physical advantages. The results were a success, even though it left her disfigured as she used the bandages to cover the scales around her body, including parts of her neck, and parts of her face. Though she considered herself fortunate as many victims of the head scientists under some man name Kabuto had been turned into mindless beasts that could only follow orders.

She was still left in a distraught state as she begged the head researcher to turn her back or at least make her look human so she could live a normal life. The man, Amachi, said it was possible, but he needed help with his research. So Isaribi was returned to the village to help his research. At first, it was to spy on the locals to ensure no one found the hidden base while going underwater to find rare and exotic aquatic animals to bring back to help with his research.

At least that was how it was at first. Lately, Amachi claimed he found a cure but needed money to help her. Isaribi led the mindless test subjects to raid ships to fund his research to find a cure. Isaribi was suspicious but was so desperate for a normal life, she compiled while trying to keep the casualties to a minimal. She deluded herself so much that she refused to betray him until they broke her with cold hard facts.

They showed her digital copies, video, and so on of similar cases of an experiment run by
Orochimaru and his scientists. She now knew that her plight was far from an isolated incident. Those experimented upon rarely survived, and those that did were kept as specimens to dissect or to be disposed of once their usefulness was over. Isaribi could not look away as she realized her life was nothing to the man who promised her salvation. As she heard similar words and promises Amachi made to her in the audio logs recovered, and the rare interviews of surviving scientists the Leaf had captured before they were put to death for war crimes.

However, what truly broke her were two things. Anko’s story about being a test subject. Her own teacher had inflicted her with a curse seal and left her to rot until the Leaf freed her. The second was revealed that since they knew, there is no way she could escape the Law for all the crimes she committed against multiple countries. Therefore, a deal was made, she would help them capture or kill Amachi. In return, she would be taken to Konoha to be treated for her genetic modification. As well as serving a sentence of ten years of community service of hard labor in Konoha for all the crimes she committed.

She reluctantly agreed and led the Leaf-nins to the base with a few members not comfortable with forcing the girl to help and end up with such a heavy-handed deal. "Guy-Sensei, comrades, I feel it's only right to let her go after Lady Hokage cures her. She was coerced to follow the man, and she should be shown mercy."

Guy sighed at his apprentice as he nodded solemnly, "That may be so my student, but she committed many crimes that cannot be forgiven and must face the fires of justice. Though it will be less severe then what it could be due to being a victim of circumstance."

"Besides, what she got is a better deal then what she could have possibly gotten. After all, our mission was to eliminate the attackers, and I highly doubt we would stop and listen to a sob story while killing her. This was never going to end well Lee-San, but at least she'll have a better chance to see a better tomorrow," Neji explained to the sad Mini-Green Beast of Konoha with a calmer, and less abrasive side of him that was not possible a year ago.

That, of course, did not improve his mood as Lee stated, "It still doesn't feel right."

Tenten sighed in response, "Your too pure for this world, Lee, and maybe a bit too merciful."

Team Vixen chose not to comment as they approached the entrance with Anko close to Isaribi to ensure she would not panic or bolt. The fighter moved carefully on the ground while cloaked. That was until they were 100m (328ft) away from the entrance to Amachi’s lair when Isaribi had them stop. Two fish-men that resembled sharks were guarding the entrance, waiting for anyone to get close as they sniffed the air like bloodhounds finding their quarry.

Anko took one look before turning to the scared young woman beside her, "You sure they can't smell us at this distance."

"Yes," Isaribi answered with a nod of her head. "Even though they are based on shark DNA, they are limited by distance on land. However, you will need to mask your smell if you want to get any closer."

"Well, it's a good thing we are ninjas with ways to mask our scent, so we'll be able to follow you inside the cavern," Haku stated as a matter of fact as Isaribi looked a little unsure at the group.

"Wouldn't it be better if I go in alone to lure Amachi out? To eliminate the chance of those two sniffing out your presence."

"And risk you running away or warning Amachi without us knowing? No chance in kami's nipples.
You're going, and I am sure Naruto or I don't need to demonstrate again why running is bad," Anko snarled as Isarabi grimaced. As she remembered Leaf-nins putting a tracker on her before the snake charmer had the blond girl with red tips fire her long sniper rifle through 15cm of rock to hit a target. The threat was obvious. You run, and you will die.

Isaribi was shaking in fear as Haku and Hinata placed their hands on her shoulder to convey it will be all right. Isaribi stopped shaking as Hinata calmly said, "Don't worry, nothing bad is going to happen, and if you are in any trouble, we will get you out of this alive, we promise."

Isaribi nodded before she made her way out of the fighter and toward the guards without arousing suspicion while the group prepared to either save the girl or follow her. Alone, Tukiko looked at Anko with concern, "That was a bit harsh Anko-Sensei. You did not need to threaten her like that. You are just making her panic."

"I don't want to leave anything to chance, such as thinking she can dupe us for a man she was stupid to trust," Anko snapped as she inspected her shotgun once more to distract her real thoughts.

One's Tukiko picked up as she asked, "What's really wrong, Sensei."

The silence was the Uchiha's answer at first before Anko growled, "I've trained you too well in interrogations." Anko then sighed before giving her former student a straight answer. "I thought me helping Sarutobi-Sama in putting down Orochimaru, that'll it would be over. But in these last nine months, there is always some new base, operation, or former experiment that I have to deal with that reminds me of his legacy. And now, this mess at the worst possible time."

"Why, what is… oh, you mean the fact Kurenai is going to give birth soon," Tukiko Uchiha realized midsentence.

"Yes, she is already a few weeks late, the baby's birth will happen any minute now. Meaning I am or will miss it if this mission lasts any longer. She has always been my best friend, if not a sister that goes a little too far in a relationship at times. She's family, and I am missing out on her most important moment, and she is doing it alone. Especially since Asuma keeps on insisting she must retire from active service."

"You think the fact Kurenai refused to marry him in spite of his persistence in the matter would be enough for him to get the picture," Tukiko mumbled before she gave a reassuring smile to Anko. "Don't worry Sensei, if we are lucky, we will be done before Kurenai gives birth to her bouncing baby boy."

Anko smiled as she looked up to see Isaribi greeted by the two humanoid sharks that were barely more than trained watched dogs as they followed Isaribi as she went directly to Amachi. "Okay, time to go brats."

The group nodded as Naruto gave the controls over to Tenten, "Sorry you could not come with us, but someone has to stay on the Fox's Shadow in case we need to escape. I must say you are the best at stealth, followed by my team. Not to mention I don't really trust Lee or Guy to not accidentally crash the fighter. Neji either," Naruto added with a small glare to the once insufferable Hyūga.

Tenten giggled before she nodded, "Don't worry about it, he will hunker down to give you an escape route. Just don't kill Guy-Sensei and Lee as they go on and on about the power of youth," Tenten smirked as Naruto's face paled as she took point with Anko as the group silently followed Isaribi, not realizing an invasion force was coming.

Scene III
Off the shores of Sea Country, a massive aircraft invasion fleet made its way to prepare landing troops as they jammed all long-range communication to make sure no one could call for help in the area. It and many others must go off without a hitch. Their leader and Head of R&D, Karin Uzumaki, was confident about their success. Or at least, she was confident her military commanders could pull it off as her mind was elsewhere. Specifically, the files that once belonged to Orochimaru about a research base in Sea Country under the geneticist Amachi.

"This is most impressive. Before he cut all funding to Amachi’s experiments, the man was very close to creating an army of fish-people that could not only breathe underwater, but they have the speed and strength of any animal under the sea. I don't see why the old snake face would deem the project a failure," Karin stated with a knowing smirk at the young, twitching man who was trying to remain calm under his grey cloak as he stared down the redhead he was beginning to despise.

"Outside of costs, Lord Orochimaru felt the project was a total failure for he found the men easily susceptible to cold, fire and electricity and jutsus that are that primary element. Not to mention all his tests show they lose their ability to use any of the elements outside of water. Which was unacceptable, even with the tradeoff of water-based jutsus being more powerful in the experiments."

"I can't fault your assessment since he was planning to fight a mostly land battle with nations that the majority use Fire and Lightning based Jutsus exclusively," Karin admitted to the hooded figure. "However, it may be prudent to restart the project after we win the war. The sea is unknown, even when humanity was colonizing the stars. Making it a perfect place for rebels to hide in their underwater bases. Some fish-men may be perfect for flushing them out."

"I doubt Amachi would agree to work with you, as I have no doubt he'll think his second project will help him take over the world for himself," the mysterious man stated as he developed a thoughtful look as Karin laughed in response.

"Well, it just means one more person I will need to deal with when our soldiers arrive to start the war to put us on the rightful path we deserve," Karin shrugged as she turned to the Uzumaki officers and two other figures she singled out with her eyes. After all, they stood out as the only important non-Uzumakis in the room, outside of the hooded figure. With their black cloaks with red clouds, they were Akatsuki, a mercenary group under Pain. "I trust you two can deal with whatever muscle he thinks he has."

The tallest member answered with a smirk on his blue scaly face as he excitedly stroked the handle of his massive sword covered in bandages, "Of course, as the water is my domain and Itachi can burn them to the ground. As for the good doctor, do you want me to deliver him without his legs or in ribbons?"

"Either or, Kisame," Karin answered with a shrug.

"Dead it is," Kisame replied with a massive grin with teeth belonging to a shark.

"But please keep the damage to his lab to a minimum. Karin does think it can be useful and I don't want to accidentally lose the data in a fight," the smallest figure nodded as his red Sharingan eyes gave a silent glare across the lines on his face.

"It will be done cleanly, I assure you," Itachi Uchiha bowed before he led Kisame out to prepare the forces for the invasion to come.

Not realizing that he was under suspicion when she activated her communicator to contact the bridge, "This Karin Uzumaki, have any of the Countries mobilized their forces."
"Yes, my Lady. We got reports that Fire Country, Lightning Country, Water Country, Wind Country, and their minor country allies have increased military activity. As well as attempted short-range transmission to Sea Country on Leaf's Coded Transmission. We can't crack the transmission, but we triangulated the receiver locations and sent a small number of fighters to intercept them."

"Good job, keep an eye out while the rest of us carry-on the invasion as planned," Karin ordered before she turned her head. "As we suspected, one of the ninja villages did send an agent to spy on us."

"I bet its Itachi," the hooded figure stated. "The Uchiha have come close to rebellion several times throughout Fire Country's history. I bet they attempted a coup and Itachi became the scapegoat for them while also be in a position to spy on the S-Rank mercenary organization we hired."

"Agreed, but we can't rule Kisame out as being a bought and paid for traitor. I am sure Water Country would sweeten the pot of whatever payday he may have been promised to bring back one of the Seven Swordsman. We should take no chances and eliminate both of them. Preferably when they are on the ground, and away from the invasion force. I don't want to lose a chunk of our forces before meeting the enemy. I trust you can handle that?" Karin asked as three other Akatsuki members that were hidden in the shadows.

The only female was a blue hair angle of a woman that was twirling a paper origami that was sharp enough to cut steel. While the other two were men that did not look remotely the same outside of their orange hair color, and eyes with seven rings as they spoke in one voice, "They will know Pain."

Scene IV

Meanwhile, outside of the defunct Sound base, Tenten and Neji were waiting in the fighter as they passed the time. Mainly by playing shogi, the capture game with Neji losing this round as he called the match with an exasperated face that Tenten found funny. "Neji, you won the last game. You don't need to be a sore loser."

"I am not a sore loser, I am just disappointed in myself for falling for an obvious trick and allowing myself to become complacent," Neji admitted as he reset the game for another round as Tenten's smile widen.

"Still, it's good to see you get frustrated. A few months ago, you would never entrain the idea of playing a game while waiting. It's nice to see you open up."

Neji looked at Tenten with wonder and was about to ask if she felt that he changed for the better when the comms in the ship began to beep. Neji quickly got to a terminal to see it was an emergency transmission from the Leaf that he promptly put up on the big screen. The screen displayed the Sennin Jiraiya with Elite Jōnin Kushina Ryū, now Special Jōnin Naruko Ryū, and Elite Jōnin Kakashi Hatake, leader of Team Redemption. All of them in what appeared to be a Phantom-class fighter cockpit being piloted by one of ANBU. The two ninjas knew something was up when they noticed how all of them had grave faces.

The two did not know what to say when Jiraiya started the conversation with a demand, "Thank the Sage we've finally reached you. We've been trying to get you for over an hour. Where are the rest of your team!?"

"They are infiltrating a Sound base they discovered on Demon Island, near the east quadrant of the island. We are just outside to serve as emergency extraction if needed," Tenten replied to the worried group as she saw the faces of Kushina and Naruko Ryū.
"You need to get Naruko and the rest of them out of there now," Naruko told Tenten with a matter of fact that startled the two ninjas.

"What's wrong? Is something happening?" Neji asked with concern in his voice.

"Oh, something is happening alright, the Uzumaki are making their move. They are sending a large force towards Sea Country to possibly annex the whole country," Kakashi explained to the two ninjas, whose eyes widen in fear and shock before Kushina added her two cents.

"Or they are sending a team for they found Naruto-Chan and sending an army to capture her. Either way, they have enough power to do so as they have an army with at least two S-Rank Ninjas and as well as possibly several A-Rank ninjas."

Now the two were in panic mode as Jiraiya gave his final orders, "We can't scramble enough troops or ninjas to handle the situation, so we are coming to help you escape while our forces and our allies are scrambling to prepare for war. Get in contact with Team Vixen, Anko and your team, and tell them to abandon the mission. We are not going to waste lives trying to fight a hopeless battle."

"Alright, we'll…" Tenten was going to acknowledge the order when the sensors bleeped indicating an aircraft coming into range.

Neji pulled up the sensors logs as they picked up twelve attack fighters identified from the times of the Mechanize Wars before the invention of EMP bombs that reset humanities technology. They were A-15 Models, codename Vultures, a tri-wing robot fighter with main gun cannons on each wing and one on the body. Along with two missiles on each wing that made them deadly when engaged in either first strike operations or overwhelming a fleet with sheer numbers. The twelve were more than enough to take on a Phantom-class attack fighter, and they were heading straight towards the Fox's Shadow.

Neji realized how when he exclaimed, "They must have tracked us through the open comm! Sorry sir, ma'am, but we must run! Please extract them for us! Neji out!" before he ended transmission as Tenten began to run evasive maneuvers as they were playing a deadly game of hide-and-seek with the cloaked fighter. Tenten thanked kami she was trained in a flight simulator as she avoided missiles aimed for the cloaked fighter's previous location.

Meanwhile, Jiraiya at the other end could not help but scowl as he realized the situation was only getting worse as he ordered the pilot to have his and the two other fighters go faster. They could not afford to play it safe. Something Kakashi concurred on when he suggested a mode of attack, "We need to get ready to do an airdrop once we are close enough to the Sound base and move in to get them out. We should get to the hanger doors for such a droop."

"Then we need to hurry, or Naruto will be captured, and we will never find her," Kushina softly added as Naruko gave her a reassuring squeeze. They could not leave things to chance as Jiraiya ordered the other fighters to prepare for an airdrop. He could only hope it would be enough.

Scene V

Ignorant of the chaos outside, Isaribi nervously twitched as the girl made her way through the base, catching a glimpse of reassurance and reminders the Leaf-nins were following her. She gulped upon entering a large laboratory filled with computers, large test tables, and a water tube of Amachi's latest project Isaribi knew little about. She always wondered what it was, but never pushed too hard to find out as she slowly approached to find the squirrely man she and the Leaf were looking for. His notepad recording the results with Amachi's fish like hands as he formed a smile on a weasel of a face while mumbling "Good" to himself.
It was then Amachi noticed Isaribi as the smile formed even bigger as he turned to face the girl as his fish-like eyes seemed to absorb every detail of her body. It always made Isaribi feel crept as he softly grabbed her face, and his fingers brushed away her bandages to pet her scales. "How is one of my most successful subjects?" Amachi asked as he slowly turned her head side to side as though inspecting fresh meat. "Those ignorant Cretans haven't hurt you too badly? I would hate to lose a piece of work I am still perfecting. Especially for such a menial task, good help is hard to find."

Isaribi shuddered as she stuttered, "N-n-o o-o n-e h-hurt m-me, Doctor Amachi. They left me alone because some Leaf-nins showed up."

"Ah, yes, the group I sent you to spy on for me. Tell me, were you able to find out why they are here and what they know," Amachi asked as he continued to pet the grossed out Isaribi.

"They are here to find out who has been attacking ships in Sea Country and believe that it is a former Sound base gone active. However, they are no closer to finding this location, Doctor Amachi," Isaribi said a little too quickly to hide her lie, but Amachi did not notice as he formed a large weasel-like smile.

"Good, very good," Amachi smiled as he let go of the young woman before he turned to the tube of water. "Fortunately, we don't need to sink any more ships. My research is complete."

"You mean, you can make me normal?" Isaribi asked in shock, her heart filled with hope and dread when she realized she may have destroyed her chances of a normal life by leading the Leaf forces here. She was complimenting betraying them for the sliver of hope when Amachi's laughter turned that hope into pure dread.

"Normal. Why would I spend my precious time to make you normal when my latest weapon is finally complete? Come on, girl, you have a gift that makes you powerful," Amachi ranted like a madman. "Seventy percent of the world is covered in ocean, and most of the world's trade is done by water. If one controls the various water bodies, we control the world."

And to emphasized the point, the tube showed glowing chakra to reveal the water itself was a living beast of chakra. Isaribi jumped back in fear when the two shark-based men grabbed her and held her in place. She started to panic a bit as Amachi approached with his damn smirk. "Now don't run, I still have a use for you. I do have to run a few more tests on you to see if I can use you for breeding what will be the superior race. And if you refuse me, well I can always find out through a dissection," Amachi added as his smile slowly became demonic.

Isaribi was scared and angry as hot tears began to drip from her eyes. She was beyond emotion as she stated in a cold fury, "I am so glad that I betrayed you."

Amachi looked in shock at the admittance when the room ricochet with the sound of two bangs before his two minions' brains became mincemeat. He only saw two green blurs as they crossed the room at incredible speeds, taking down everyone from lab assistants to guards with pure martial arts. He then realized he was under attack from the Leaf when a Hyūga appeared in front of him and attempted to swipe the man. He barely avoided the strike as he jumped back to the tube holding his monster. He watched the young Hyūga woman, Hinata, grabbed Isaribi and take her to safety as four other kunoichis revealed themselves while taking an aggressive stance.

One of the four Amachi recognized immediately as he snarled, "Anko Mitarashi, what a pleasant surprise. I should have known it was the Leaf's very own snake charmer that convinced Isaribi to betray me."

"I think your creepy attitude was enough to convince her. Though it helps to know that scientists like
you are all like Orochimaru. Experimenting in ways you don't have an inkling of what the results could be but do it anyway because you just don't care about anyone else," Anko growled at Amachi.

"Says the smug kunoichi who Orochimaru abandoned as a failure."

"Or too rebellious, though for people like Orochimaru, that is the same thing as being useless to a control freak like him, and you," Anko pointed to the angry scientist. "Now I suggest you surrender. We did promise to help Isaribi, and your cooperation is not required. Especially as I get the first crack in breaking you like a kid's first toy," Anko explained with sadistic glee as Naruto ordered/ask Lee and Might Guy to secure the computers after they eliminated everyone else in the room.

Surrounded, Amachi felt a twinge of fear buried under confidence as he exclaimed, "I am afraid that will not happen, for I have the ultimate weapon of the sea! The Umibōzu itself and myself!"

It was then Amachi revealed his true skin as his body began to transform into a fish hybrid like Isaribi, but more alien in nature. With eyes, pure red in color and feelers that stood out on his head while improving his senses. Spiky fins covered his whole body, making him deadly as they dripped with a neural toxin. His face was equipped with his razor-sharp teeth and his hands with claws. Apparently, Amachi has been using the time to use all the fish DNA recovered from Isaribi to make him the ultimate fish-man that was faster, stronger, and more aware than a ninja scientist would typically be.

Disgusted, Isaribi yelled, "You turned yourself into a monster?"

"Why would I care about being normal like everyone else? Why should I limit myself to the power of the normal being? Why should I, or even you, care about peons when we can be something greater? The answer is I don't, as power is all that matters," Amachi dramatically expressed as he pointed to Naruto. She sighed as she sarcastically pondered how great it was to deal with another arrogant villain, the eight time in a row.

Naruto did not even blink an eye as he pushed a button to release his water beast as it formed a protective circle around Amachi while taking a humanoid shape. It was the same thing all over again as Naruto gave a silent command to her teammates to be on the move, when Amachi gave the order to attack, "Now Umibōzu, show them the strength of the sea!"

The beast was about to move when Naruto equipped with inferno and lightning based bullets began to open fire onto the lumbering creature with her two duo pistols. Each shot doing significant enough damage to its body and chakra that it started moving its body in an attempt to avoid the bullets. Amachi was in shock when he noticed the bottom of Umibōzu was freezing due to Haku 'Ice Style: Arctic Breath Jutsu.' The mad scientist did not have time to warn Umibōzu to run when Tukiko followed up with 'Fire Style: Fire Dragon Jutsu' at point blank to evaporate a large portion of its body.

It was screaming just as Naruto followed up with her all-powerful 'Elemental Style: Elemental Dragon Jutsu' to form a single white dragon of death that vaporized most of its body. The beast was being beaten, and Amachi could not believe it until he heard Anko chuckle behind him. "You honestly thought a beast made of water was a threat to kids that master fire, lightning or ice based jutsus. You're dumber than you look.'

With a shotgun blast, a sizable chunk of one of Amachi's arms was missing before he could reply. He was lucky he had genetically modified his body to have a tough and thick skin, or he would have lost the ability to use his arm, if not his entire arm. The mad scientist growled as he puffed his chest before firing a torrent of water at Anko. Who responded with an overpowered 'Fire Style: Fireball Jutsu.' The two were locked in a deadlock until the snake mistress ended her jutsu and rolled away.
from the fish-man's attack to use 'Snake Hands Jutsu' to send a dozen different species of snakes onto the man. Their fangs long enough to pierce his skin.

To Amachi's shock, he felt the venom take effect within his system as he thought he had made himself immune with the puffer fish DNA. Anko laughed when she stated, "While some of the snakes have neurological venom, others have hemorrhagic-based venom, something aquatic species do not come across. I wanted to take procession by using venom that can eat through flesh and muscle while wrecking your immune system for the neural venom to take effect."

"You damn bitch," Amachi growled in pain as his regeneration ability was slowed to a crawl. "I'll kill you."

"No, you aren't for I am going to kill you!" Yelled the young woman Isaribi, transformed into her fish hybrid form as she began to punch Amachi during her rant. "(Punch) You experimented on me! (Punch) You used me! (Punch) And then you planned to defile me! (Punch) I hate you! (Punch) Burn in Hell! (Punch)."

And Amachi could do nothing but take it as she beat him over and over as his sluggish movement could not hit the faster girl. Finally, sick of the beating, he went on the offensive with a growl as the spines from his fins flared up and fired them off at what he considered a failure. But failed to hit her with the toxic spikes because Hinata used 'Substitution Jutsu' to replace her with one of the corpses of a fish-men Naruto had killed.

The young pale-eyed Hyūga princess then went on the offensive with 'Gentle Blade Style: Star Strike.' Using her chakra blade style to cut off Amachi's chakra flow along his body with a modified David Star movement to avoid the strikes before a solid hit to his back. Causing the former Sound-nin to stager and fall on his face, defenseless. Anko approached the downed scientist while Hinata held Isaribi, calming the girl down.

Alone, Amachi growled in frustration as he watched the Umibōzu decrease to a tenth of its original size. That worried the geneticists as one more good hit, and he knew the beast of water would be dead. So, with as much effort as he could muster, he pressed the pad to open up a door where he held the creature from an underwater cavern that goes to the sea. The mad scientist and his creation's last chance for survival when he yelled, "Flee to the water before they kill you and take me with you!"

The Umibōzu complied and made a mad dash, but before it could reach Amachi, a blue-scaled man in a black cloak with red clouds jumped out of the water with his sword raised. The bandages ripped off to reveal a sword made of scales as he struck Umibōzu with a mortal strike. Even though physical attacks were all but useless, the blade was semi-sentient and was able to absorb the chakra of the fabricated beast. To the point, it could not sustain its form and collapsed into a puddle of water. Amachi could only gasp as the true fish-man gave a toothy grin before he approached the mad scientist with a sword raised high.

Amachi could not even defend himself before stating, "The Uzumaki and your old comrade sends their regards," before bringing his blade down and shredding his target into ribbons in a particularly gruesome fashion. To the point that made Isaribi throw up and the rest a little sick.

Sick, though calm as Naruto pulled out a pad to get a picture to run through their ninja database to find a match. One soon popped up, and the young Jōnin read out the man's profile out loud, "Kisame Hoshigaki, the 'The Monster of Kiri.' Wanted in Water Country by the Mizukage for the murder of most of the previous Seven Swordsman, plotting to overthrow the government after assassinating many high-ranking officials in Kiri and Water Country, and stealing that sword the Samehada. A semi-sentient sword that is able to change shape and absorb chakra for itself and the user."
"Oh-ho-ho, it looks like a fan, as I am a fan of you, Naruto Ryū-Uzumaki. Our bosses want you for what's in your pretty little head. Looks like we're the ones that get to catch you. Lucky us, eh, Uchiha?" Kisame asked as a new figure walked out of the shadows that Team Vixen recognized.

It Itachi Uchiha, the look-alike of his younger brother Susake Uchiha, and he was in the company of a large squad of metallic robotic troops. The short, simple robots with wrist-mounted machine guns that Colonel Nine of Nine identified as MIR-100 'Tin Cans.' They realized the mission had gotten very complicated as Itachi’s eyes flashed red at them.

Scene VI

Outside the base, the hooded figure was entering the codes to let them in a secret entrance to the Sound-nin base with Karin, Akatsuki and a large squad of Terminators and Uzumaki elite ninjas right behind them. The group carrying out their personal mission as the Uzumaki commanders began the conquest of Sea Country. Karin, being the inquisitive one, looked over to ask, "Are you sure no one will be near the entrance."

"Yes, no one knows these entrances Lord Orochimaru made in case a base went rogue. It was always best to be prepared," the figure explained as he entered the final code, and the door opened.

"Well, you may prove your use after all. I can see why Orochimaru valued you, and you may be useful to the Uzumaki," Karin stated before entering in, followed by Akatsuki and the robots. The figure remained outside for a moment to adjust his glasses and join the group as they make history in the First Battle of the war. Historians would remember this as the Great War.

Chapter End Notes

A New Year and another chapter are done, and the start of what will hopefully be the final arc of the story. Sadly, I could not do everything I wanted in this chapter, but I soon realized I had to split the chapter in two. Hope you enjoy it, and I hope you will not be too mad with what will happen to Isaribi as I do like her character, but I do admit it could be argued all the people she killed, they were too lenient in the show, and war shows no mercy. A possible hint for the future, among others.

Poll Results
Sakura Haruno: 12
Tayuya: 10
Shikamaru Nara: 10
Kin Teuchi: 9
Ami (My Favorite to Survive): 9
Ino Yakama: 9
Kakashi Hatake: 8
Neji Hyūga: 4
Rock Lee: 4
Sai: 4
Shino Aburame: 4
Hayate Gekkō : 3
Kiba Inuzuka: 3
Might Guy: 3
Chōji Amachi: 3
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!