Unspoken

by AestheticAcoustic

Summary

Being forced into a partnership with someone so unpleasant was pretty much the worst situation imaginable. They hated it. At first. As the two grow more comfortable with one another a bond is formed that soon evolves into something neither could have imagined. Is it just lust, or something more?

Indirect rape of a nameless shinobi in a later chapter, using Hidan's curse ability.

Notes

After watching Episode 457, I had to write something. I've always loved Kakuzu/Hidan but I've never written anything with them before. How silly of me. So here's something that was supposed to be short that turned into something very long.
‘I can’t believe I agreed to this.’

The thought was mutual between them, but they’d never know. Neither was willing to share and both were too busy avoiding eye contact by staring straight ahead at the path stretching through the forest.

Kakuzu wondered if he could have done something differently. Perhaps put up more of a fight, demanding they dispose of their target like originally planned? But, he hadn’t. He’d been silent. They’d recruited the brat and now…

Hidan wondered if he could have done something differently. It was three on one, a tough fight, but he was immortal, so surely he could have won. Even if one of the three was basically immortal too. Perhaps he could have cut his losses and ran instead. But, he hadn’t. He’d stayed. He’d agreed to join them and now…

They glanced at one another and both scowled.

‘I hate this guy.’

The village was busy, to say the least. People were hustling up and down the streets, some with destinations in mind, others just to be out and about. That wasn’t surprising. It was a sunny afternoon, hardly a cloud in the sky. The duo slipped through the crowd relatively unhindered.

“Oi, I’m hungry.” Hidan spoke up when the smell of cooked meat hit his nose.

“Then buy yourself something to eat.” Came his partner’s deep, rumbling voice. Kakuzu did not look at him when he replied.

“You gonna stop so I fucking can?”

Kakuzu halted in his tracks. His fists clenched and he growled softly. “You are really irritating.” It made him regret killing his other, slightly less irritating partners.

“Ask me if I give a shit.” Hidan sneered. Without giving Kakuzu a chance to reply, he pointed toward a stand where two people were grilling meat. It was sizzling and popping on the grill, right along side some vegetables. “I want that.”

“No.” Kakuzu stated with a slight snap and began walking again.

“What?! Why the fuck not?!” Hidan’s fists clenched as he stomped behind his new partner.

“Too expensive.”

“I have my own fucking money!”

“But, once you run out you’ll have to dip into Akatsuki funds or earn more. So you’re going to save it.”

Hidan growled, “Fine. I’m still hungry though. What do you suggest?” His voice was strained, his anger still apparent.

Kakuzu didn’t reply. He led Hidan to a cheaper shop and stopped there. He gestured toward it,
indicating he believed this place was perfectly reasonable.

Hidan did not agree. “I’m not eating this cheap shit!” He stomped his foot. “It’s disgusting!”

Kakuzu dropped his arm. “Then go buy whatever you want. Once you’re out of money, you won’t have a choice. I control the Akatsuki’s funds and I don’t tolerate frivolous spending.”

Hidan’s face turned red in rage. With snarl, he turned on his heel and stormed back toward the more expensive stand. “Then I’m buying what I want while I still fucking can! You cheap fucking bastard!”

By nightfall they were standing in the lobby of an inn. Hidan waited with his arms crossed as Kakuzu bought two rooms. He quirked an eyebrow. “And here I thought you were too cheap for two rooms.”

“I am not going to share a room with you.” Kakuzu looked at him from the corner of his eye as he took the keys. He didn’t yet trust the other man enough. What if he tried to kill him in his sleep? He wouldn’t put it past the lunatic.

“Tch, good.” Hidan held a hand out, palm up, “I don’t wanna share one with you either, fuckhead.”

Kakuzu said nothing as he dropped a key into Hidan’s open palm. They walked upstairs together and didn’t say anything as they went into separate rooms for the night.

Hidan dropped his scythe by the bed and shrugged off his robe with a sigh. Briefly, he glanced at the window and wondered if he should take off, get back out on his own. But, they’d already made it clear what happened to defectors in the Akatsuki. Escape was no longer an option if he didn’t want to be hunted down.

How annoying.

In the other room, Kakuzu was furious. With a snarl, he slammed his fist into the wall, leaving a sizeable hole. The entitlement that his new partner oozed got all over him and under his skin. Already he was sick of the man and it had hardly been twenty-four hours since they’d been forced together as a team.

This wasn’t going to end well, he was certain.

Their first target was some S-ranked Nin that Hidan couldn’t care less about turning in for a bounty. He demanded he be allowed to take the man down himself. Surprisingly, Kakuzu let him, though Hidan suspected it was because his partner was secretly hoping he’d lose. Fat chance!

The Nin underestimated him, everyone did, and Hidan won with little effort. The sweet sensation of death washed over him, causing him to fall to his knees in ecstasy.

It was short-lived.

“Let’s go.” Kakuzu barked and made a move to grab the body.

“NO!” Hidan pointed the retractable spear at him threateningly, “Leave it! I have to finish my ritual and pray!”

“What.” Kakuzu’s voice held contempt.

“You heard me. I’m not done with my ritual. We aren’t going anywhere until I’m done!”
“That’s the stupidest thing I’ve ever heard.”

“I don’t care.” Hidan glared, “Touch him and we’re going to have a fucking fight. I killed your fucking bounty, the least you can do is let me finish my ritual.”

There was a long, heavy silence. Their eyes bore into one another, each full of hatred. Neither moved for several tense seconds.

Finally, the tension snapped when Kakuzu moved faster than the eye could perceive, embedding a kunai in Hidan’s skull with a quick flick of his wrist. The scream of pain was no surprise, but he did momentarily forget his partner’s immortality.

Hidan fell onto his back. “THAT HURT!!” He tore the kunai out, jumped to his feet, and sent it right back. Sadly, he wasn’t faster. Kakuzu knocked it away with little effort. In the next second Hidan was running at him, scythe poised to strike. His moves were painfully predictable, however. Kakuzu merely hardened his skin and easily caught the scythe as it swung at him.

“You fucking asshole,” Hidan snarled at him, “I just want to do my fucking ritual!” He tried to pull his scythe away, but it didn’t budge.

Kakuzu glared. “It will take too long. I don’t want to wait around.”

“You don’t know that!! You’ve never watched me perform it!”

“I know it will. Everything you do is slow.”

“FUCK YOU!” Hidan took him by surprise when he kicked him in the stomach. It made Kakuzu grunt in pain and release the scythe. Hidan attempted to swing it again, but Kakuzu knocked it away and punched him in the face. It sent him to the ground, where he landed on his side facing away. Surprisingly, he stayed.

Kakuzu scoffed and stepped toward him, “Every time you step out of place I’m going to put you back in it, so-”

His words were cut off when his feet were kicked out from under him. He hit the ground, bracing himself with his elbow. He saw only a blur of white as Hidan flipped around with the kunai in hand and slashed at his face. There was no time to react. He felt it slice his cheek, cutting through the mask to draw blood.

In the blink of an eye he was on his feet again. Hidan was already in his circle, the kunai clenched in his fist and an unreadable expression on his face.

“Don’t. You. Dare,” Kakuzu hissed. He readied himself to attack.

He never had to.

Hidan threw the bloody kunai to the ground between them in a gesture of truce. His voice was calm as he spoke, no hint of the usual obnoxious tone that got under Kakuzu’s skin. “I joined under the promise that I would get to continue sacrificing to Jashin. I’m assuming you joined because they promised you could continue killing for bounties, right? You obviously do it for the love of money, not because it’s our mission.” He pointed at the dead man several feet away, “You got your bounty. I want my ritual. That’s only fucking fair. So what if you have to wait an extra five fucking minutes? We got all the time in the world, don’t we?”

A pause.
They stared at one another; Hidan determined and Kakuzu stoic. The older man didn’t want to admit it, but he supposed his partner was… kind of right. Everyone who joined did so for their own reasons and under the knowledge that they would still be free to pursue their own goals. Kakuzu didn’t particularly want to wait, but what was the harm, exactly? They weren’t getting any older. At least, he basically wasn’t.

“Fine.” He spoke evenly, “Just hurry up.”

Seconds later he was seated on a stump, passing the time by reading his bingo book and glancing at Hidan performing his strange ritual. It was equally annoying and fascinating, but he’d never admit to that second one.
Teamwork

Monetary gain and worldly possessions weren’t exactly pleasing to Jashin, but damnit Hidan wished he’d saved up more money before joining this organization. It took only days to run out, leaving him at the mercy of his oh-so-generous partner.

“Kakuzu.” His tone was pleasant. He didn’t want to sound demanding, otherwise he wouldn’t get what he wanted. Despite the tone, Kakuzu didn’t turn around. He continued to face the road ahead, walking without so much as a falter. Hidan decided to continue. “I’m really hungry.”

“Too bad.”

Hidan glared, his lips pulling back in a scowl that bared his teeth. Still, he kept calm. “Can we grab something before we leave town?”

“No. Our target is on the move and we have to keep up.”

Hidan gritted his teeth, but kept his rage from his voice. “We haven’t had breakfast. Can’t we grab something to eat on the way?”

“You didn’t have breakfast because you slept in. That’s your fault. We’re not stopping.”

This time, Hidan couldn’t hide his rage. “I’m fucking starving you asshole!” he yelled, drawing the attention of a few townspeople nearby.

“Too bad.” Came Kakuzu’s calm reply. “You’re immortal, aren’t you? You’ll be fine.”

“No I won’t!” He spat, “I can die of malnutrition, you ass! Let me fucking eat something!”

Finally, Kakuzu looked over his shoulder at him. “You can? So you’re not completely immortal then…”

“Okay, yes, you got me! Fuck! Just gimme some money-”

Kakuzu tossed something at him, and Hidan fumbled with it for a moment. He gripped it finally, and found it was a sack of coins.

“You’re useless if you’re too weak to fight.” Kakuzu stated, “Hurry up and find something and meet me at the gate. I’m not going to wait long. I will leave you behind-”

“Okay, whatever, thanks!” Hidan hurried off with the money. He already knew what he wanted to eat and right where it was. This would hardly take five minutes.

Kakuzu paused briefly to watch him run off. With a roll of his eyes, he faced the road again and kept walking. “Brat.”

The single target they’d been pursuing turned into six. All were exceptionally skilled, which was a tad inconvenient for the new partners, who weren’t yet used to fighting together.

Kakuzu was hot on the tail of two of them, chasing them through a thick forest. He was forced to an abrupt halt when he nearly collided with his idiot partner, who was chasing another shinobi while recklessly swinging his scythe.

“Hidan!!” Kakuzu snarled, “Stay out of my way!!”
“You stay out of mine!” Hidan snapped back as he darted by. He continued chasing the other chaotically through the treetops.

Kakuzu quickly caught up to the two he was hunting and easily dispatched them. The first he snagged around the neck with a strong hand, squeezing hard enough to break the bone. The second he grabbed with his other hand and slammed him into a tree.

Easy as that.

Four left, but he couldn’t listen for them very well with Hidan’s cackling echoing through the forest. What a pain.

Another target suddenly appeared from leaves and threw a kunai at him. Kakuzu hardened his arm, blocked it, and was immediately enveloped in smoke. With an angry growl he jumped out of the smoke and sailed through the trees. He caught up with the running man and was hit with another smoke-producing kunai. This time, however, he dodged it and darted at the startled enemy. The man let out a scream when he was grabbed, but it was cut short when Kakuzu drove a kunai of his own into the man’s chest.

Sadly, the man disappeared into a puff of smoke. Nothing but a decoy. Damnit.

There was silence and he knew something was off. His suspicions were confirmed when the silence was shattered by a scream.

“KAKUZUUUUU!!”

Great.

With an annoyed sigh, Kakuzu took off, heading toward the sound of cursing and detailed threats of bodily harm and death toward the enemies. When he finally located Hidan, he wasn’t fully prepared for what he saw, so he found himself frozen in place, staring in a mix of shock and fascination.

“Don’t just stand there you goddamn prick!!” Hidan’s head shouted at him, “Fucking help me goddamnit!! This fucking hurts!!”

Despite the harsh words, Kakuzu opted to just take a moment to really absorb this. Hidan’s body was lying a few feet away, just outside a half-complete Jashin circle -or whatever the fuck that bullshit was- on the ground. Somehow, he was impressed but saddened at the same time. “So… you can survive decapitation.” It seemed it would indeed be very hard to kill his annoying partner.

“NO FUCKING SHIT! HELP ME, THIS HURTS!!”

“What do you expect me to-?” His snarky reply was interrupted when three kunai struck the ground between them and exploded into a thick cloud of smoke.

A trap. He really should have seen that coming.

The cloud was too large to easily escape. Before he could even think about how to get out of it, a fist collided with his face, taking him off guard and making him stumble backward. He hadn’t heard the man approach over Hidan’s cursing. His partner was clearly more of a liability than anything.

A second punch came toward him, but he caught it this time. Through the smoke he could barely make out a face covered by a gas mask. He aimed his fist toward it, but the other dodged and was gone.
A sudden pain in his back made him cry out. He jerked his head around in time to see a katana vanish into the smoke. His eyes were beginning to burn from the cloud and his breathing was already ragid. He needed out and he needed his fucking partner quiet.

With nearly no visibility left, he ran toward the sound of Hidan’s obnoxious voice. He found his head within seconds and grabbed it by the hair. This, of course, made Hidan pitch an even louder fit. Ignoring that, he kept running and soon found his body. He scooped that up, made it out of the smoke, and took off through the trees. “Be quiet!” He finally snapped at Hidan, “You’ll lead them right to us!”

“You’re pulling my hair!”

“I said shut up!!”

Once he’d put a favorable distance between them and the cloud of smoke, he stopped and knelt. He sat Hidan’s body upright against a tree then lifted his head to look at him. “How did this happen?”

“They fucking ambushed me! Fuck you!” Hidan spat, “Just fucking fix me! You’re fulla stitchy-shit, right? So stitch me back together!”

“Do you really think you’re in a situation that you can give me orders?” Kakuzu quirked an eyebrow, “Perhaps I should leave you headless and see how long you last like that. Maybe I’ll bury both pieces and get a new partner who’s less of an annoyance.”

Hidan’s lips were a thin line. His rage was evident, but he knew better than to snap. When Kakuzu made threats, he tended to carry them out. Hidan forced a sweet smile, “I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m just frustrated. This hurts a lot. Will you please sew my head back to my body, Kakuzu? I’d appreciate it.”

“That’s better.” Kakuzu put Hidan’s head on his body and carefully adjusted, trying to line everything up correctly. Not because he cared, but because he knew Hidan would complain if he didn’t. Once everything looked right, he allowed a single tendril to slip out of his arm and slowly begin reattaching Hidan’s head to his body.

The younger man groaned softly, “Ow, that hurts...!”

“Quit complaining. It’s this or being a head the rest of your life. I’m not carrying you around either.”

“Ugh.” Hidan gritted his teeth and said nothing more.

Within a few moments the job was done. Kakuzu stood and stepped back. In truth, he wasn’t sure it would work, but when it did he found he was again impressed by Hidan’s immortality. His healing ability was phenomenal.

Hidan stood and stretched, “Finally! Fuck, that was awful!”

“Be more careful and it won’t happen again.”

“Fuck you!” Hidan flipped him off, “Like you did any better! They fucking tricked you!”

“Shut up.” He glared.

Hidan dropped his arm and looked toward the plume of smoke in the sky, “I need to go get my scythe so I can cut them up. They’ll pay for cutting my head off, dammit!”
“Our teamwork is too atrocious to be effective. They work well together. We don’t. We need a better plan than running in blind.”

“So??” He spun around and through his arms open, “What does it matter?? We’re fucking immortal!”

“We aren’t. We have weaknesses. They could lop your head off again and if they destroy all my hearts I can’t sew you back together, can I?”

Hidan’s face fell and his arms dropped. He considered the information with a frown. “What the hell are we supposed to do then? There’s no time for team-building exercises. Those are stupid anyway.”

“Let’s just try to stick together for now. We’ll work on our teamwork with fewer skilled enemies.” He began unbuttoning his cloak, “I have a better idea for this situation anyway…”

Hidan gave him a skeptical look, “Are you going to scare them off with nudity? Because I’ll leave too. Don’t test me.”

“Shut up.” Kakuzu dropped the cloak and leaned forward. The masks covering his back began moving, writhing, wrestling to break free.

Hidan watched in awe. They hadn’t been a team for long and he had yet to see what Kakuzu could do. The secretive prick wouldn’t just show him. This was not what Hidan had expected, though he wasn’t entirely sure what he would have expected anyway.

The masks burst free. They took shape and stood in a row. Their bodies were made of the same tendrils that seemed to fill Kakuzu and they were constantly writhing.

Amazing.

“You’re a fucking war machine!” Hidan smiled excitedly, “These are amazing!”

“Most people are horrified.” Kakuzu noted as he straightened. His back sealed itself together again.

“I’m not most people, I am?” He walked over to one and stuck his hand in it, feeling it writhe.

“Neat.”

“Stop that.”

Hidan pulled his hand out, but was still grinning, “You’re a little bit cooler than I originally thought. Only a little though. What do these things do?”

“They each have an elemental attack corresponding to their chakra.”

“Oh, yeah? Like, long range…?” Hidan tilted his head, contemplating.

“Yes. They do a lot of damage to a wide area. Now, come on. We need to get back before they decide to leave.” Kakuzu headed back through the trees, his masks and Hidan right behind him.

They arrived back in their previous location within a short time. Hidan’s scythe was lying where he’d dropped it and the air was clear and silent.

“You know,” Hidan spoke softly as they stood on a branch overlooking it, “They’ve done that ambush shit twice now.”

“This is obviously a trick.” Kakuzu agreed, “If you jump down there, they’ll jump you.”
“I’m gonna do it.”

“What?!” Kakuzu hissed, “Are you stupid or deaf?”

“I have an idea.” Hidan smirked, “I’m gonna jump down there, they’ll probably ambush me all at once, like they fucking did before, and you’re gonna throw everything those masks have at them.”

Kakuzu paused, thinking. That was a great idea. Get them all in one place and take them out. “So you’re going to play bait… Won’t you get hurt too? I can’t aim through smoke.”

“Oh, yeah, it’s gonna hurt like hell.” Hidan nodded solemnly, “But, it’ll be worth it to fucking kill those assholes. So, don’t fuck it up!”

Kakuzu scoffed, “Just get down there then.”

Without another word, Hidan lept out of the tree and hit the ground, snatching his scythe as he did so. It was barely in his hand a split second when four kunai came from the trees and were embedded in the ground in a large square around him. Smoke filled the air the next second and Hidan covered his neck to make sure they didn’t decapitate him again. That would be the worst.

As predicted, all four jumped into the smoke cloud, each wearing a gas mask so they could see and breathe. Well, those weren’t going to help them much this time.

The four living masks surrounded the cloud from the trees and each released a powerful elemental attack aimed directly at the center. The ensuing explosion was a bit larger than Kakuzu had predicted. He had to quickly dart several trees away to stay out of the radius.

When it settled, he jumped down from the tree and brought the masks back into his body. There was no way any of the shinobi had survived that, and he doubted a little that Hidan had. He had to wait a few moments for the smoke from the attack to clear before he could walk onto the scorched earth.

Yep, all four shinobi were lying dead on the ground, their bodies badly scorched and damaged. In the middle of them was Hidan, laying on his stomach, still clutching his scythe, his body burnt so badly it was nearly unrecognizable. Only a few pieces of his Akatsuki cloak remained, which was how Kakuzu knew it was even him.

Poor kid. Kakuzu felt a tiny bit bad for him. Too stupid and cocky for his own good. It was a shame, really. His near-immortality could have been a very powerful gift, had he used it correctly. Kakuzu was about to move on and try to locate the target’s body in the mess, when he noticed Hidan moving. His blackened skin was slowly turning pale again and his elbows were lifting. By the time his skin looked semi-normal again, save for a lot of redness, he was pushing himself up on his knees.

Kakuzu was in awe.

“Ow…” Hidan groaned, “That fucking hurt…” He sat on his legs and looked around himself slowly. His eyes found Kakuzu. “Did we get ‘em all?”

The older man nodded, “Yeah, we did.”

Hidan grunted and slowly climbed to his feet, using his scythe for support. Once he was standing, he threw his arms in the air, “WOOO! SUCK MY DICK YOU ASSHOLES!!” He cackled as he flipped off the corpses, “Fuck you!! Fuck you! Fuck you! And fuck you! We’re the best fucking team in the Akatsuki!”

“That’s saying a bit much.” Kakuzu mused as he examined the bodies.
“We could be though!” Hidan dropped his arms and watched Kakuzu search for their target. “With practise, we’d be unbeatable, don’t you think?”

Kakuzu hummed and looked at him, “Maybe.”

“Definitely!” Hidan nodded. He could already picture it; him and shithead easily using their abilities to wipe out opponents in the most destructive ways possible. Jashin would be pleased!

“We’ll worry about that later.” Kakuzu dismissed, “There are other things to worry about at the moment…” He found the body of their target and picked him up. Too unrecognizable to take to a bounty station, sadly, but at least they could tell Pein the man was dead. He dropped the body. “Let’s head to town and find a decent inn. You need to wash the smell of burnt flesh off and get new clothes.”

“Hm, yeah…” Hidan looked down at himself with a frown. His cloak was taters on the ground and his pants weren’t much better. A shower, a meal, and a comfortable bed would be nice.

“Come on.” Kakuzu walked away, “Let’s get my cloak, then find an inn. I’ll contact Pein from there.”

“Sweet.” Hidan followed obediently, easily keeping pace with the larger man.

The inn was nicer than some of the others Kakuzu had forced them to stay in. Hidan looked around the clean lobby and nodded in appreciation. “Not bad.” The furniture looked pricey and the whole area was nicely decorated. He was a little surprised his scrooge of a partner would choose some place like this…

Very suspicious….

At the counter, Kakuzu requested a single room with two beds, and was met with strange looks from the woman behind the counter. More accurately, she was giving Hidan a weary look and glancing between them.

“Rough mission.” Kakuzu explained. “Once he’s had a shower and new clothes, I promise he won’t look as much like a heathen.”

She chuckled slightly and seemed to be put at ease. She handed him two room keys and took his payment.

It was almost painful for him to part with the money, but it had to be done. He took the keys to Hidan and handed him one, “Here. Let’s go.”

“Fuck yeah! I can’t wait to clean up!” Hidan followed him down the hall. They both stopped in front of room 13. Kakuzu unlocked it, making Hidan frown and look down at the key in his hand. 13. “Um-?”

“We’re sharing a room.” He opened the door and stepped inside.

“What?!” Hidan snapped, “Why??”

“This place wasn’t cheap. I’m not buying two rooms.”

“You- but- Privacy!”

“We’re both grown men, aren’t we?” Kakuzu looked at him, “Shut the door when you shower. I
don’t care if we sleep in the same room, but I don’t want to see you naked.” He trusted his partner enough now to share a room, which was going to help on cost. One room was always cheaper than two.

“You’re a fucker.” Hidan grumbled as he finally entered the room, “I take back all the nice shit I said about you earlier.”

“What nice shit?”

“Fuck you.” He quickly flipped him off. “I’m taking a shower.”

“Good. I’m going to contact Pein about our target and getting you some clothes.”

“Yeah, you fucking do that.” He entered the bathroom and slammed the door.

Kakuzu scoffed. ‘What a child.’

There were fresh clothes waiting for Hidan as soon as he was out of the shower. He changed into them in the bathroom and finally stepped out fully clothed again. He saw Kakuzu sitting on one of the beds of their shared (ugh) hotel room, reading a book. His cloak was off, resting instead over a desk chair, along with his hood and mask. The sight was a bit of a shock. Hidan hadn’t seen him without the head coverings yet, but it made sense Kakuzu would remove them here.

His hair was long and black and he had a strong jawline. There was more stitching on his face, unsurprisingly. It laced across his cheeks, giving him a glasgow smile. It was eerie, but at the same time… Well, Hidan knew his tastes were a little skewed, so he wasn’t very surprised to realize he thought they were attractive. Something about the blatant imperfection, the disfigurement, was intriguing to him in many ways. Even without them Kakuzu would be very handsome, in his opinion. Maybe if he didn’t hate the guy he’d try to sleep with him.

He didn’t realize he was staring, but Kakuzu knew immediately.

“What?” The larger man snapped impatiently without looking up from his book.

The question startled Hidan slightly, as his mind had wandered off a little from the present. He didn’t do well under pressure, and was a little ashamed when an insult fell out of his mouth rather than any kind of compliment. “Nice face, fuckface.”

“As eloquent as always.” Kakuzu mused and turned the page.

“Er-” Hidan faltered, “What I meant was, you look cool.”

Kakuzu finally looked up with an expression of annoyance and disbelief.

“What?” Hida snapped this time, throwing his arms up in exasperation as he did so, “I can’t fucking think the stitches look cool??”

“I never said that.”

“Then what, huh?? I can’t throw you a fucking compliment once in awhile without that shitty look??”

“I never said anything. Why are you suddenly being so defensive?”

Hidan let his arms fall and huffed, “Fuck you.” He crossed his arms, “I’m hungry.”
Kakuzu put his book down and grabbed a small pouch off the table by the bed. He tossed it at Hidan, who easily caught it. “Go get us something to eat. There’s enough in there to buy a semi-decent meal for us both.”

Hidan opened the pouch and found plenty of coins. With a slight frown he looked at Kakuzu again, “Why are you being so nice to me all the sudden?”

Kakuzu’s face remained stoic as he spoke. “It’s become glaringly obvious that you won’t be as easy to get rid of as my other partners. So, we should try to get along. I’m doing my best to be pleasant. I expect you’ll do the same. We don’t want to be miserable the whole time, do we?”

A soft grumble was Hidan’s reply. He snatched his key off the desk. “Whatever, fuckface. Be back.”

“Don’t get lost, dumbass.” Kakuzu called as Hidan headed for the door.

The other merely flipped him off as he left.

A single lamp was the only light as night fell. Kakuzu used it to read while he waited patiently for Hidan to finish a prayer. He could hear the man quietly muttering to himself on his bed, holding his pendant against his lips as he did so. Kakuzu couldn’t really make out the words, but he could tell it was repetitive, and that alone made the sound almost entrancing.

After several minutes, Hidan finally lowered the pendant. “Alright, I’m done.”

“Great.” Kakuzu closed his book and sat it aside. They both settled into their beds and he turned off the lamp.

Sleep came easily. It had been a long day, after all. But, sometime in the middle of the night, Kakuzu was awakened by noises. Hidan’s voice uttering soft curses and growls. Green eyes snapped open and looked across the short distance to the other bed. His partner was tossing and turning and breathing heavily. “Hidan?” Kakuzu called in a loud whisper.

A whine.

“Hidan.” Louder this time.

Hidan flipped over and it became very apparent that he was sleeping. His eyes were closed but his face was scrunched up, as if in pain.

“Hidan, wake up.” Kakuzu snapped at him. He was not going to tolerate sleep talking or nightmares.

Hidan shuddered and curled into himself. “Burns…” He whispered in a breathless tone.

Kakuzu sighed heavily. His voice was stern when he spoke. “Hidan. You’re dreaming. Wake up.”

Hidan’s face twisted into one of confusion for a moment, then his whole body relaxed. His breathing evened out and the noises stopped. He hadn’t woken up, but he’d heard Kakuzu enough that it ended the nightmare.

With a roll of his eyes, Kakuzu shifted into a more comfortable position and went back to sleep.

Hidan was awakened abruptly by someone yanking his pillow out from under his head and slamming him in the face with it. “OW!” He scrambled to sit up and sent a dirty glare at his partner, “What the fuck was that for??”
“Get up.” Kakuzu snapped, “You’re not going to sleep in and make us late again.” He was already dressed and ready to leave.

“You could have woken me up a little nicer!” Hidan complained angrily as he got out of bed.

Kakuzu didn’t reply. The truth was he had tried shaking Hidan at first and calling his name, but the man was a heavy sleeper. Besides, a pillow to the face had worked and been very satisfying. That would definitely be happening again in the future. In the meantime, he merely stood aside and waited for Hidan to properly dress.

The younger man stumbled around some as he tried to put on his pants. His mind was still foggy with sleep and the bed still looked so enticing… But, crawling back into it would only earn him some kind of physical harm. Ugh. “When are we going back to two rooms?” He asked once he got his pants up and buttoned.

“We’re not. A single room is cheaper.”

“UUUUGH.” He rolled his eyes dramatically, “God, you’re so cheap it’s the worst!”

“There are better things to spend money on than an extra room we don’t need.”

“Whatever!” Hidan threw his hands in the air in exasperation, “At least it’s two fucking beds I guess! Shit!”

Kakuzu sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose, “Please, just finish getting ready so we can go.” Barely 8am and his patience was already wearing thin.

Hidan huffed and stormed off to the bathroom.
Nightmare

The thick forest was silent. The wind didn’t stir and even the animals stayed far away, though Kakuzu had noticed some time ago that that was commonplace when Hidan was around. Insects didn’t come near, pets in village streets scattered, and anything wild vacated the area within minutes. No living creature had ever avoided Kakuzu like that, so he had to assume it was Hidan’s presence doing it. Perhaps they could sense how unnatural he was… or how annoying. Either way, they always kept their distance from the pair.

Once he finished the chapter he closed his book and put it away. Standing with a heavy sigh, he walked over to Hidan and stood over him.

Hidan’s eyes were closed as if sleeping, but the blood covering the scene just made him look dead. His circle was smeared and spattered with it, as was his flawless skin. Kakuzu had always liked Hidan’s skin. It looked soft to the touch, almost delicate even, perhaps like a fine porcelain doll. That illusion was shattered, of course, every time Hidan opened his mouth.

Kakuzu nudge him with his foot. “Your ritual is done. Get up.”

His pretty face scrunched in irritation, “I can’t bask in the afterglow of a flawless ceremony?”

“You’ve been ‘basking’ for ten minutes. Let’s get to town. I’m hungry.”

“Oh!” Hidan suddenly climbed to his feet, “I’m starving!”

Kakuzu hoisted the dead body over his shoulder. “We have to get this to a bounty station first-”

“AAWWW-”

“Shut up! There’s one by the next village. It’s practically on our way.” Kakuzu snapped as he walked past his partner.

“Oh, good.” Hidan grabbed his scythe and followed. “I really am starving. What do you have against breakfast, exactly?”

“It’s not my fault you’re too picky and won’t eat what I buy.”

“Fuck you! Buy what I like!”

Kakuzu didn’t respond. That was often the best way to deal with Hidan’s tantrums. Replying to him only got a snarkier reply in return, causing a spiral until words weren’t enough anymore and fists were thrown. Silence begot silence though, so that was the best road to take. Even if it pissed Hidan off a little, the alternative would be worse.

After several minutes of silence, Hidan spoke up. “Hey, how come you’re so obsessed with money anyway?”

“Personality,” Kakuzu stated without a hint of any further answer. “Why are you so obsessed with murdering everything you see?”

“I had a bad childhood. Beatings, yelling, all that.” Hidan said nonchalantly.

“Really?” He couldn’t help but look at him in very slight concern.
“No,” Hidan grinned at him, “It’s all personality. You looked a little worried though. You wanna talk about that?”

“You’re a real piece of shit, you know that?” Kakuzu growled.

“Yeah, I know,” Hidan laughed.

“Your village was Yugakure, correct? Isn’t it peaceful?”

“It is now! It didn’t used to be! I was raised to be a shinobi, but my village went to shit so I fucking left.” He frowned in distaste. “I wasn’t going to run some fucking tourist trap of a shop. I just wanna kill people.”

“And Jashin lets you do that…”

“Yup!” He nodded. “It’s pretty great. You should convert.”

“I don’t think so.”

“Suit yourself. You’re from Takigakure. How was that?”

“I don’t want to talk about it.”

“No?” He gestured to Kakuzu’s wrists, “I see some tats. You do some time in prison?”

“I said I don’t want to talk about it,” Kakuzu growled.

“Yeesh, alright, alright, shit. Touchy subject,” Hidan put his hands up in a sign of defeat. “You’re so secretive. It’s super shitty. You should tell your partner things.”

“I’ll tell you to go fuck yourself. How does that sound?”

Hidan glared at him, “You’re a prick.”

The room wasn’t exactly spacious and it wasn’t very well decorated either. Four blank walls, a simple wooden floor, and no other furniture save for two beds, a small table in the short space between them, and a desk. The bathroom didn’t even have much of a counter, just a few inches of space on each side of the sink. It wasn’t much at all, but Kakuzu was comfortable with it. It was cheap and much better than sleeping on the ground, though he would have been accepting of that too.

With the last chapter finished, he finally put the book away. In the morning he’d buy a new one to read on their journey. It helped pass the time, and he loved to read anyway.

To his left lay Hidan, already passed out. The only light in the room shone from the lamp on the table between the beds. The sun had gone down hours ago. The light reflected off the pale skin of Hidan’s back, making it look almost eerie. The man was dressed only his underwear and was resting atop the sheets in the exact same position he’d collapsed onto the bed in an hour ago. On his stomach, face buried in the pillow.

Already, he was beginning to twitch. A soft whine was muffled by the pillow and his fists clenched. When his breathing picked up, it became obvious that he was having a hard time breathing around the pillow.

Kakuzu sighed. How many nights now had they been rooming together? More than he could care to count. The nightmares were nightly and he hadn’t brought it up to Hidan yet. It wasn’t really his
business why Hidan had nightmares, and he told himself he didn’t care either, but it did wake him sometimes and that alone was to make him decide that he should ask about it in the morning.

Until then though, he didn’t need the noise waking him. With a groan he climbed to his feet and stood in the small space between the two beds. His hand gripped Hidan’s arm and lifted him up. It was no chore to flip him onto his back so he could breathe. Hidan didn’t wake, but being moved did seem to startle him some. He groaned and struggled against Kakuzu’s grip until he was released. He rolled onto his other side and muttered about darkness.

“Hidan.” Kakuzu’s voice was low, but firm. “It’s a dream. You’re fine.”

That did the trick. It always did. Hidan visibly relaxed and the noises stopped. Why it worked Kakuzu wasn’t sure, but as long as it always did he didn’t really care why.

He climbed back into bed, turned off the lamp, and settled in.

“Do you know that you have nightmares?” Kakuzu asked bluntly. The two were seated on their beds, shirtless, with bowls of ramen between their crossed legs.

Hidan lowered his chopsticks and frowned, “What the fuck prompted that?”

“You talk in your sleep. Toss and turn a lot.”

“Really? Pretty often?”

“Almost every night now.”

“Huh…” He stared at the wall, not really looking at it, “I know I have them sometimes. Didn’t know it was that often. I usually don’t remember my dreams. Why don’t you wake me up? It annoys you, right?”

“I usually just snap at you and you mellow. Why do you have nightmares?”

Hidan looked at him contemplatively, tilting his head slightly. “Don’t you have nightmares?” He asked in a quiet voice.

It was Kakuzu’s turn to stare. “Sometimes,” he said softly after a pause.

Hidan nodded. His eyes fell to his noodles and he twirled them with his chopsticks. “I love killing people, but I think it still fucks you up a little, you know? Even if you like it… Maybe not-dying does too. Like, your body expects you to die when you get a critical injury, but since you don’t, it fucks things up in your head…” His shoulders rolled with a shrug, “I dunno. Just a thought.”

“Maybe. That’s the only reason I could think of for someone like you to have nightmares.”

“Damn if that ain’t true.” Hidan grinned before taking a bite of his meal.

Kakuzu did the same and they fell into a comfortable silence.

“Be more careful or you’ll get killed.” The words played over and over in his head. No, he didn’t believe for a second he would actually die, but he couldn’t help but think maybe he should have heeded Kakuzu’s words a little better, because this was going to hurt.

Hidan watched the top of the waterfall get smaller and smaller. Boy, it had been kind of dumb to let that shinobi back him against a cliff. Lesson learned; pay attention to your surroundings. Whenever
he eventually hit the ground and got back up, he was going to scale the cliff and kick that guy’s ass, assuming Kakuzu hadn’t done it already.

Nah, his partner was otherwise preoccupied. There were like twelve shinobi up there. Kakuzu was taking them on all alone now… Outnumbered…

This was worse than the time he’d had his arms lobbed off. At least Kakuzu was able to quickly reattach them. Damn, he really should have been more careful. They were a deadly team, unbeatable in fact, but apart they had weaknesses and neither liked those exposed. They weren’t supposed to get separated like this.

Something long and black shot over the cliff, heading right for him. When he realized it was Kakuzu’s arm, he laughed and threw his arms out, “WOOO!” It grabbed his leg and not a second later he was being very quickly pulled back up.

At the top of the cliff it released him and he landed on his feet with his scythe poised and ready to fight.

“What have I told you about being careful?!” Kakuzu snapped from his right.

“Yeah, yeah, I know. Looks like you’ve been doing fine without me though,” Hidan gave him a cocky look, but his smile faltered when he really took in the scene.

It was the two of them, plus Kakuzu’s masks, their backs against the cliff, against the eight shinobi left. Those numbers weren’t intimidating for the two of them, especially considering Kakuzu’s multiple hearts and what he could do with them, but Hidan took note that one of the masks was nothing more than a puddle on the ground.

“What the fuck happened to-?”

“They destroyed a heart.” Kakuzu stated with his eyes on the enemy, “They’re tougher than they look. Be careful.”

What was this feeling? Guilt? Fear? Hidan didn’t like it. It felt bad. Kakuzu rarely lost hearts but Hidan knew it was painful and a big deal. He tried to cover his guilt with a jab, “Looks like you’re the one who needs to be careful!” He slapped the cocky grin back on his face, “I really hate helping you get new hearts, so try not to lose another one!”

With that, he took off toward the enemy. He ran right at the center most one, readying his scythe for a strike. But, he had no intention of hitting them. It was only a ruise to keep their attention on him.

Six of them darted off, but two readied themselves for him. They never saw the masked black figure land silently behind them. Hidan didn’t stop, even as flames erupted from the mask’s mouth, as any indication of hesitance could tip off a shinobi to a trick.

Flames engulfed all three of them.

Kakuzu took off after the running shinobi, his water and wind masks following behind him. They soon split up, chasing different targets through the trees. The two shinobi Kakuzu was after split, leaving him with a single enemy to take down.

Through the trees he could hear the sound of his masks attacking and soon Hidan’s cackling joined. His partner was back on his feet again already. Good.

The man suddenly stopped and turned around, launching at him with a blade in hand. Kakuzu
dodged, landing on his feet on the ground, and the man followed. He took another swing, but Kakuzu knocked the blade out of his hand.

They fought hand-to-hand, exchanging hard blows at a pace faster than the eye could keep up with. Finally, Kakuzu proved the victor. A hard jab to the side of the neck snapped the bone and the shinobi dropped to the ground.

“Hmph.” He straightened, “Pathetic.”

He didn’t hear the other shinobi coming up behind him until it was too late. In a panic, he whirled around just in time to see Hidan land between them and take the hit. A ball of wind wrapping the shinobi’s hand easily burst through Hidan’s chest, decimating a massive amount of his torso. No ordinary person could have survived it, much less remained conscious or continued fighting, but Hidan managed all three just fine. He stood his ground firmly against the attack, stopping the shinobi completely with his arm rammed all the way through Hidan’s torso to the shoulder. The ball of wind died in his hand.

Hidan let out a painful cough, spitting up a torrent of blood with it. The shinobi was too horrified to move, giving Hidan time to pull out a kunai and drive it into the man’s throat. He slashed the throat wide open and stumbled slightly when the corpse dropped. He had to lean forward to let the arm slide out of the gaping hole in his chest.

“Goddamnit!” He cursed, “That fucking hurt! I wanted to use him for my ritual, but this shit’ll take too long to heal! There would have been no point!” He turned around to shoot Kakuzu a glare, “What the fuck?? You tell me to be careful, then you go pulling that shit?! Watch your damn back!” The hole in his chest was wide enough to look through. Blood soaked Hidan’s pants and ran down his chin and neck. It was splattered all over him, covering burn-reddened skin.

Such a sight should only be seen on a corpse.

“How did you take the hit for me?” Kakuzu asked calmly.

Hidan’s glare gave way to a look of slight confusion. “Why did I-? I’ll tell ya why!” He put his hands on his hips, “It’s because I love you, obviously! Yeah, I’m just so fucking in love with you! Let’s go settle down together and start a fucking family!!”

Kakuzu sighed heavily at the thick sarcasm.

Hidan leaned forward and spoke as if scolding a child, “Because you weren’t watching your back, asswipe! Which one of us can really take a hit, hm?? Not you! You’ll lose a fucking heart, then I’ll have to hear about it! I can take a hit.” He straightened and lifted his head proudly, “Look at this. You think you would have walked away from this so easily?? Nope! But, I can! Taking the hit for you now just saves me the trouble of helping you find another heart later! I think that’s a fair trade.” He nodded in affirmation of his own statement. A perfectly sensible reason. He didn’t need to add the part about how he genuinely just didn’t want Kakuzu to have to take the hit. It would hurt and he already felt a little bad about earlier.

In all honesty, he just didn’t want to see his partner in pain. That was odd considering how violent some of their arguments could get. He was very protective of his partner though - his friend, perhaps? - and the thought of anyone else bringing him pain made Hidan’s chest hurt.

Why? He couldn’t fathom. He’d never been so concerned for another person before. He sure as shit wasn’t going to admit it though.
“Don’t do it again.” Kakuzu said sternly, “We act as a team. We watch out for each other, not-”

“I was watching out for you!” Hidan spat, “You think I did this for fun?! It hurts! I just didn’t want you to have to…” His sentence trailed off as his breathing became heavier and his head lighter. “I… I need to sit a minute…” He fell on his ass, panting, “Goddamn… This hurts…”

Kakuzu paused a moment and wondered where Hidan had been going with his rant, but he opted not to ask. He knelt beside him. “It looks pretty bad. Are you sure you’ll heal from it?”

“Aw, yeah, it’ll be fine.” Hidan nodded, “He just really fucked shit up… My lungs aren’t really working… I hate feeling like… I’m suffocating.”

Kakuzu hummed and stood. “I was beginning to wonder if you were human at all.”

Hidan looked up at him in confusion, “Huh?”

“You so easily walk away from everything thrown at you. You can talk with your head off, walk with your spine demolished, continue to fight with gaping holes… It makes no sense how.”

“I’m immortal.”

“It still makes no sense. Just because you can recover from an injury doesn’t mean you should be able to carry on with it like it’s nothing. There’s a hole in your chest large enough to stick my head into. You’re missing vital organs. A heart, stomach, liver, most of your lungs and ribs. A normal person would drop dead instantly, you’re still able to stand, fight, and carry on a conversation… That makes no sense…”

All Hidan could do was shrug. He didn’t know either.

Kakuzu stared at him a while longer, then looked off into the forest. His masks were slowly returning to them, walking at a leisurely pace. “I assume all the other shinobi are dead?”

“Think so. I killed a couple, saw your masks get a few… I tried to get you a heart, but-” Hidan shrugged, “Just didn’t work out.”

“That’s fine.” His masks returned to his back and he took a seat in the grass by his partner. “We can rest here for a while.”

“Awesome,” Hidan flopped on his back and rested his hands on what remained of his abdomen. He closed his eyes and made himself as comfortable as possible.

Kakuzu stared at him, then looked off into the forest again. “….Thanks for taking the hit for me. Don’t do it again.”

“Why not?”

“Because I said so.”

“You my mom now?”

“Tch… Because we need to be a team and look out for each other, but we can’t do it at the expense of ourselves. If I die, you might be in trouble, just like if you’re incapacitated and go down, I might be in trouble. We have to be two, and it has to stay that way…” His eyes fell to him again, “So quit running off at the start of a fight. We stand together or we could fall together.”

Hidan frowned and opened his eyes to look at Kakuzu. “Are you really that worried that we could
be stopped?"

There was a pause in which Kakuzu merely gazed at him. Their eyes met, lingered. Kakuzu looked away first. There were a lot of thoughts swirling in his head. It was tough to string them together into something he thought Hidan would accept. “No one is truly immortal. I can die. You can die. Together, we lessen the chance of that happening.”

Hidan wasn’t worried about it, but he could understand Kakuzu’s point. “Alright… Alright… I’ll stop getting carried away so easily. We kick more ass as a team anyway.”

“Best team in the Akatsuki, right?”

“Hell yeah!” Hidan grinned at him, “No one’ll beat us if we stick together.” He shut his eyes again and decided it would be best to rest for a while so his body could repair itself easier.

Kakuzu’s gaze fell on him again, examining Hidan’s lithe body. Blood, muscle, organs, smooth skin, a nice form. He took it all in silently while Hidan wasn’t paying attention. It amazed him how durable Hidan’s body was. It could take such a beating and keep going with no problem. Was that thanks to whatever jutsu gave him immortality, or did Hidan simply have an incredibly high pain tolerance? Perhaps it was something to do with adrenaline? Was it possible for the body to produce so much that it gave the illusion of immortality, or at least allowed for an immortal to get back up after such a hit?

There were a lot of questions and very few answers. Sometimes he fantasized about discovering the limits of Hidan’s immortality himself, but those fantasies sometimes led elsewhere, to thoughts he was too ashamed of to speak out loud. He didn’t like to entertain them, but once in awhile he did. Was the line between pain and pleasure more or less defined for Hidan? What level of pain or pleasure would finally make him scream or cry? Did he prefer it self-inflicted, or would he enjoy someone else providing him pain and pleasure?

Kakuzu shook that line of thought off. No sense letting his mind wander in that direction right now. Perhaps when he was alone, but not with the object of his slight obsession laying next to him.

Silently, he pulled out a book. Reading would pass the time and take his mind off the lewd things it wanted to flow toward. He read intently, only pausing every few minutes to glance at his partner and check his healing progress.
River

Sunset. Hues of red and purple and pink mixed and mingled, streaked across the sky like paint on a canvas. Creatures were settling in for the night, bringing a hush to the forest, at least until the nocturnal creatures awoke. It was peaceful, serene.

The path through the forest was winding and overgrown. It wasn’t a main path by any means, since wanted criminals like them often had to keep to the lesser-traveled routes. It was gnarly and uneven, making the trek that much more cumbersome.

“How much longer ‘til we get to the next village-?” Hidan stumbled over a root and let out a frustrated growl. The day hadn’t really gone as well as he would have liked. They’d been attacked by a small band of ninja’s who’d gotten in over their heads. A minor inconvenience at best and great sacrifice material. But, now he was covered in blood. It was sticky and he wanted a hot shower as soon as possible.

“A few hours.” Kakuzu informed.

“Ugh. So it’ll be like midnight by the time we get there?”

“Something like that.”

“Ugh.”

Kakuzu paused and turned to him. “We could camp out here if you’d rather.” Sleeping out in the open wasn’t ideal. They both had high bounties and people hunting them for it. An inn gave them a roof and four walls, shelter, safety. A forest gave them nothing but shadows for foes to hide in. But, they’d been walking all day, had a rough mission to deal with, and it was still quite a distance to the closest inn. There was little choice.

Hidan took a glance at their surroundings and sighed. “I’m really tired…” Exhausted, in fact. Fuck the shower, he just wanted to sleep.

“Come on.” Kakuzu left the beaten path and headed through the thick brush. Hidan followed as they worked their way to a shallow river.

“How’d you know this was here?” Hidan inquired as he stood by the edge.

“I could hear it. Couldn’t you?” He quirked an eyebrow at him.

Hidan shrugged, “I don’t listen that hard, man. That’s your job.”

“One day, you’re going to-”

“Get myself killed. I know, I know.” Hidan said with a roll of his eyes. As if he hadn’t heard that lecture a hundred times now.

Kakuzu ignored his snotty tone. “Wash off. I don’t want to hear you bitching in the morning.” He sat down in the grass and made himself comfortable against a tree. It was a decently warm night so he decided not to bother with a fire. It would only attract attention anyway.

“Mm, sure.” Hidan cast him a smirk as he kicked off his shoes. “You just wanna see me naked right?”
The older man glared. “Act your goddamn age.”

“Maybe I am! You don’t know my age!” Hidan laughed. He put his scythe down, tossed his cloak aside, and worked on his pants next.

Kakuzu watched silently. He wasn’t exactly surprised that Hidan was so willing to strip nude in front of him. The man really had no shame. That wasn’t a bad thing though, not when his body was so flawless. His impressive regenerative abilities left him without a single scar. His skin was pale, smooth. Kakuzu wanted to run his hands across it just to see what that was like. His own was nothing like that. It was dark and rough. He did like the way their skin tones contrasted though.

Hidan could feel Kakuzu’s eyes on him. The earlier flirtation hadn’t been a joke, or maybe it had been a little more than one. It had been something like a year now that they’d been partners and he could feel the tension between them building every day. He wanted to break it, wanted Kakuzu to break him, wanted to know what it would be like to be taken by someone bigger and stronger. Would Kakuzu be rough with him, or was he actually gentle in bed? Hidan hoped it was the former.

He had wondered for a while now what those stitches really felt like. Ever since he’d seen his partner shirtless, saw a dozen lines criss-crossing his body, he wanted to know what it would be like to run his hands across them, to slip his fingers between them, to press his whole body close and feel them all over. Would he feel them on his lips if they kissed? On the backs of his thighs if they fucked? Did Kakuzu have any on his dick? What would that feel like? So many questions he didn’t have the courage to ask. But, he was trying to drop hints. Little flirtations every now and again that could be taken as jokes but were far from it.

So far, Kakuzu hadn’t taken the bait. Hidan was not easily deterred.

He turned to him, giving him a nice view. “Are you getting in too?”

“No.” Kakuzu responded without missing a beat. “I’d prefer at least one of us be ready in case we’re attacked. I have no desire to fight nude.” He wasn’t stupid. He could tell what Hidan was doing. He wasn’t going to give in to temptation so easily though. Their relationship needed to remain professional, nothing more. Even if he wanted to do certain things to the immortal -test his limits, find his line between pain and pleasure, push as many boundaries as he could just to see if he could break him- he wouldn’t, and he wouldn’t be flustered by Hidan’s blatant flirtations.

“Just gonna watch me, right? You’re a bigger pervert than I thought.” Hidan grinned.

Kakuzu pinched the bridge of his nose, “For the love of God, just get on with it. I will throw you in myself.”

Hidan laughed. “You’re such a poor sp-” He stepped into the water and immediately recoiled, “It’s cold!”

“How unfortunate for you.” Kakuzu couldn’t help a smug grin.

“Fuck you!” He stepped in and grumbled as he walked out several paces. It wasn’t icy, but it was cold enough to be uncomfortable. Boy, that hot shower sounded nice again. With a groan he sat down on his knees, sinking into the water up to his hips. Blood washed down the stream. Kakuzu’s eyes were still on him. Taking water in cupped hands, Hidan began washing off the rest of the blood on his chest, neck, and speckled across his jaw. It would have been easier in the shower, but this would have to do.

Kakuzu watched silently as Hidan washed away blood. He splashed and rubbed. Water ran down
his back and chest and mixed with the river. Hidan poured water over his head and scrubbed at his hair. It was no longer neat and perfectly styled like usual. It was messy, loose, with pieces falling over Hidan’s eyes that he quickly brushed away with hardly any thought.

Kakuzu had to uncross his legs and clench them together instead.

Once Hidan was satisfied with his cleanliness, he left the river. He stepped, dripping, back onto shore. “What? No fire?” He scoffed at Kakuzu and stood beside him.

“You’ll dry on your own.”

“You’re a prick,” Hidan grumbled. He fell to his knees in the grass and flopped onto his side. Rolling over, he spread out on his back and looked up at the sky. It felt chilly, but he’d warm up again once he was dry and clothed.

Silence. The sun was lower on the horizon. Colors reflected across the shimmering water; clouds of a hundred different pastel hues before a sky of deep blue. They moved across it slowly, driven by a wind too far above to be felt on the ground.

Hidan broke the silence. “There was a sunset like this the first time… the first time I killed someone.”

Kakuzu’s attention was on him immediately. “You remember your first kill?”

“You don’t?”

“Not so vividly anymore. I’m older than I look.”

Hidan hummed and laced his fingers together over his chest. “Yeah, I remember. I was fifteen. I just joined the church. Told them I was eighteen. No one questioned it. There was this guy, Mitsuo, who was about twenty, had been with the church a few years. He was kind of a big guy, seemed pretty tough. My type, it turns out. I guess I’ve always had a thing for older guys too. Who knows. We kinda hit it off. We were both pretty devout, very loyal, enjoyed what we learned. We never dated, but… I had a crush on him. He had one on me too.

“Well, some of the elders noticed and they didn’t really like it. Jashin wants death and destruction, not romance. I always thought that was kinda dumb, but whatever. I wasn’t willing to question it back then. I think they made a lot of shit up, but I had to go with it. Now that I’m away though, I practise based on the texts, not on what they taught. They can suck it.

“Anyway, so elder Takeshi took the two of us out one evening to ‘talk.’ We headed into the forest a long way from the church. Told us the other elders weren’t happy with us and we had to be punished, then he gave us both a kunai. We could kill each other or ourselves, but if both of us walked away we couldn’t go back to the church.

“I think Mitsuo had a harder time with it than I did. I could see it on his face. He was in the church by choice and I think his feelings for me were pretty strong. He was older, so, you know, he probably felt more. I was fifteen though. It was just a crush. My parents booted me out for being too difficult to deal with so I didn’t have anywhere to go. My mind was made up when the kunai was handed to me. I slit Mitsuo’s throat. I watched him Suffocate on his own blood. Elder Takeshi took me back to the church and I was praised for my actions.”

A heavy silence fell over them.

“... Why are you telling me this?” Kakuzu eventually asked.
Hidan shrugged. “I dunno. You’re the one who said we should be bonding, right? Well, I ain’t got nice stories to bond over, so you’re getting whatever shit I remember.”

Kakuzu hummed. “Sorry for your loss.”

“I see him in my nightmares sometimes. Sometimes I wonder what my life would be like if I hadn’t killed him. I don’t think I’d be better off though. I wouldn’t be immortal, I wouldn’t have met you, I probably wouldn’t even still be with him. I don’t regret what I did.”

“You’ve never seemed the type to have regrets.”

“I try hard not to. Can’t change the past.” He sat up. Feeling dry, he decided it was time to put his clothes back on. “You ever have a crush on anyone?” He asked as he grabbed his pants.

Kakuzu watched him, thinking it over. “One or two in my youth. It’s been a very long time.”

“Gonna share?”

“I don’t remember much. There was Emiko and she was the prettiest girl in my class, but that’s about all I remember of her. She was on a different squad so we didn’t get to speak very often. Toshi was in the class below but was transferred up. He was very quiet, but equally intelligent. We never had a conversation, I just admired his technique.”

Hidan buttoned his pants with a grin. “A boy and a girl, huh? Bisexual?”

“Whatever you want to call it.”

“Cool, cool.” He plopped down in the grass again to put his shoes on. “I’ve only ever liked guys. Never been with one though.”

“Jashin doesn’t allow sex?”

“No, he does, I was just too busy. Plus, I kind of feared if I had sex with anyone the elders might make me kill them again. I liked most of the congregation, so I didn’t want to have to. I only wanted to kill non-believers.”

“Ah. So sex but no romance. I’m assuming premarital sex isn’t a sin then.”

Hidan grinned at him, “Nope. Sex is just sex. Why? You interested?”

“I never said that. I was merely asking questions.”

Hidan finished with his shoes and fell on his back again. “Didn’t deny it either.”

Kakuzu didn’t reply. He shrugged his cloak off and carefully folded it up. He scooted down and sat it in the grass, using as a pillow once he laid down.

Hidan mimicked him, but merely waded his up rather than folding it. He tucked it behind his head and rolled onto his side.

The last stretch of sunlight receded over the horizon. A shroud of darkness settled over the forest, weakly illuminated by dim moonlight. It made Hidan’s skin appear to glow.

Kakuzu stared at his back for several long moments. When Hidan’s breathing finally evened out, indicating he was asleep, Kakuzu faced the stars and closed his eyes.
"Why did you kill me?!!?" Mitsuo snarled, his face twisted in fury and pain. There was a defined red line across his neck and his shirt was soaked with blood.

"I didn’t have a choice," Hidan spoke with a trembling voice, "I had nowhere to go. I couldn’t be kicked out."

"I loved you! We could have been something!"

"No, we couldn’t! I never loved you! It was a crush!" He put his hands over his ears, trying to block out an awful howling wind that seemed to be growing louder and louder.

"We could have spent our lives together!" Mitsuo lurched forward and grabbed his wrists, yanking his hands off his ears.

"I was fifteen!" Hidan spat. He kicked him in the stomach and tried to pull his wrists away, but it didn’t work. He was fifteen again, facing off against a man who was much stronger than him. He was pushed to the ground, his wrists pressed against grass on either side of his head. The wind picked up, shaking the trees violently.

"I LOVED YOU!" Mitsuo’s voice was demonic, his eyes glazed over with black, "YOU KILLED ME!"

"GET OFF!" Hidan struggled and kicked at him. His heart was hammering, clenched by fear. He squeezed his eyes shut.

"Hidan. You’re dreaming."

His eyes snapped open. The wind was silent. It was a sunny day. Mitsuo was gone and Kakuzu was standing beside him. He offered his hand, "Get up. We have places to be. Your damn rituals are always making us late."

Hidan’s eyes opened. It was dark and chilly. He felt something settle over him and didn’t move until he heard his partner roll over. He looked down at the cloak draped over him. It wasn’t his own, that was still under his head. It was Kakuzu’s. His scent was strong on it. Hidan breathed it in, strangely comforted by it.

As quietly as possible, he rolled over. His eyes met with Kakuzu’s back. No cloak draped over him and his arm under his head as a pillow. His breathing was deep, as if he was already asleep again. Hidan stared silently, thinking.

There was a terrible urge to touch and he wasn’t good at resisting urges.

Eventually, he slowly reached out. His fingers slipped between two masks. The tips barely brushed skin and threads before he froze. Still. Silent. Kakuzu didn’t stir. Hidan let his fingers trace the stitching slowly, carefully. He followed a curving line of them between masks, running over each thread, each bump, each section of taut skin. They were warm and sleek against his fingers. How would they feel against his body? His lips? His tongue? His thighs?

"Go to sleep, Hidan."

The sudden, deep rumble of Kakuzu’s voice made Hidan jerk his hand away in shock. He quickly rolled over again and curled up under the cloak. Caught red-handed. How humiliating.

Sunlight in his face made Hidan grimace and open his eyes. It was morning, roughly 9am if the sun was any indication. That was later than he expected. With a groan, he sat up. Kakuzu’s cloak slipped
down his body. His partner wasn’t lying beside him.

Instead, Kakuzu was sitting mere feet away at the edge of the stream. His shirt, mask, and hood were off. His hair was loose over his back and he was hunched over the water, washing his face.

Hidan watched him for a while, admiring the movement of his muscles. The same muscles he wanted to run his hands over. With a sigh he rubbed sleep from his eyes. “Thanks for lending me your cloak.” He said softly.

“You looked cold.” Kakuzu stated without turning around. He dipped his hands in the water, then rubbed his face.

“Thanks for letting me sleep in a little too.”

“I figured you’d need the rest. You were dreaming about Mitsuo, right?”

Hidan faltered. “Er, yeah. How’d you know?”

Kakuzu flicked water off his hands, quoting, “I never loved you. I was fifteen.”

The pale man turned red and covered his eyes with one hand. “God, that’s embarrassing. I should start fucking taping my mouth shut before I go to sleep.”

Kakuzu laughed softly and stood.

Hidan’s eyes went wide. “Did you just laugh??”

“Your embarrassment is funny.” He stated as walked over and sat down beside him.


They made eye contact. Held it. Green and pink gazes soft but unwavering. The world fell away around them and time seemed to stand still.

Hidan broke first. He smirked and rested his cheek in his hand, “This is the part where you kiss me.”

Kakuzu grimaced and his face tinted red.

“Aw, are you blushing??”

With a growl, Kakuzu snatched his shirt and yanked it on. “Get up. It’s time to go. And give me my fucking cloak back.”

Hidan laughed and tossed him his garment, “You’re a barrel of laughs, man.”

“Fuck you.” Kakuzu pulled his hood and mask on, then stood. Hidan did the same. They pulled their cloaks on in near unison.

“Can we get breakfast as soon as we get to the village? I was thinking something with pork.” Hidan inquired. He snatched up his scythe and let it rest over his shoulder.

“That sounds fine. We’ll be hungry after the walk anyway.” Kakuzu led the way back to the trail and they continued their trek.
"It’s so hot!" Hidan complained loudly with his shoulders slumped and his face pointed upward, "I hate it here!" Sweat was rolling down his chest and the wind that blew by was a relief but it was hardly helping the heat.

"Shut up!" Kakuzu snapped. In his cloak, hood, and mask, he too was sweltering. The sun was beating down on them. Summer wasn’t the best time to be doing this mission, especially not with someone who complained as much as Hidan.

"I want to leeaavvee!"

"We’re almost to Suna-"

"It’s so hoooott!"

"SHUT UP!" Kakuzu jerked his head around and shot Hidan a hard glare, "Pick up your feet instead of dragging them and we’ll get there faster!"

"Fuck you." Hidan grumbled, but began lifting his feet.

They made it to Sunagakure shortly before sunset. It was significantly cooler in the city thanks to the shade of it’s numerous buildings.

"Oh, thank Jashin!" Hidan praised, "This is so much better! I thought I was going to die out there!"

"Can you die of heat exhaustion?" Kakuzu asked as he searched for an inn. It would be painfully cold at night here in the desert, so he would rather sleep inside than out.

"No, but I would rather die than suffer through it."

Kakuzu merely hummed. He noted that there seemed to be quite a few people here… Far more than he expected to see. And were those banners? Booths? Uh oh. “I think the Summer Festival must be starting soon…”

“Sweet. I like festivals. Lots of food.”

“We may not be able to find a room.”

“What?”

Kakuzu quickened his pace, “Hurry up. We’re not sleeping outside here. I don’t want to listen to you complain anymore.”

“Right behind you!”

The sixth hotel they entered was easily one of the nicer ones. Hidan was surprised Kakuzu even wanted to step foot in it. Perhaps he really was that desperate to find a place.

“We have one room left.” The woman behind the counter informed with a pleasant smile. “It’s a single bed on the top floor.”
A single bed? Kakuzu wasn’t sure how he felt about that. “How much is it for one night?” He asked anyway. They were low on options.

When she read the price Hidan thought Kakuzu might have had five heart attacks. They were sleeping outside tonight, he was certain. He’d already resigned himself to his freezing fate. Maybe they could use Kakuzu’s fire mask to keep a warm blaze going all night, though that would draw attention...

“We’ll take it.” Kakuzu finally said and pulled out his wallet.

“What?!” Hidan gasped, “Really?!” A warm hotel room for the night?? Could he be so lucky??

“We aren’t sleeping outside in the desert. It gets too cold. With how little clothing you like to wear, we can’t be sure you won’t freeze to death.” Kakuzu explained as he paid.

“That’s true!” Hidan laughed. He didn’t care if that was a jab at him, as long as it got him a room for the night Kakuzu could throw little insults all he wanted.

The received two keys for their room and headed upstairs together. Five floors later they finally entered.

It was spacious, clean, and very well-decorated. The single bed was easily large enough for them both with plenty of space between them. There was an elegant desk with a comfortable chair, a nightstand on either side of the bed, and a tall wardrobe to hang clothing in. Even the bathroom was nice. It’s shower was large and clean and there was a great deal of counter space.

“Daaaang. This place is nice as fuck.” Hidan noted as he looked around the room. He headed for the window on the other side and gazed out at the village.

“Explains the expense.” Kakuzu grumbled as he kick the door shut. He shrugged his cloak off and laid it over the chair.

Hidan looked over his shoulder at him, then at the bed, “One bed. Does this mean you’re gonna get a single bed every time from now on?”

“I don’t think so.” Kakuzu stated with a slight huff. “I like my personal space.”

Hidan turned around and leaned against the window ledge, smirking, “You mean you don’t wanna cuddle with me?”

Kakuzu glared, “Must you always make some fucking comment?”

Hidan laughed, but quickly settled down. “In all seriousness, thanks for getting us this room… I didn’t want to sleep outside.”

“Me neither. Do you want the shower first?”

“Hell yes!” Hidan shoved himself away from the wall and quickly yanked off his cloak. It was tossed over the chair atop Kakuzu’s as he entered the bathroom.

Despite the space between them, Kakuzu couldn’t sleep. He could only stare. There was very little light in the room, but thanks to the periodical explosions of fireworks outside -which he’d been told by someone in the lobby would continue all night- he could see the smooth curves of Hidan’s back. The younger man was already asleep. He was very good at passing out as soon as his head hit the pillow. Kakuzu wasn’t quite as lucky. Recently, his mind had became too jumbled to allow him to
fall asleep as easily as he once could.

His thoughts mostly swirled around his partner. Hidan annoyed him, sometimes so much so that he wanted to strangle him, but… they were a great team, weren’t they? Unbeatable. They had a strange chemistry that somehow worked despite their numerous arguments. It was crazy how they could go from at each other’s throats to at each other’s side in the blink of an eye. Perhaps that’s what friendship was?

But, what he felt wasn’t quite friendship. He wasn’t sure what it was. If he thought about it he could probably figure it out, but he was afraid of that. People like them weren’t supposed to feel things for each other. It was a dangerous line of work. Getting attached was stupid.

Then again, they were basically immortal, so was there really any harm?

Hidan groaned and arched his back. A nightmare. He growled and kicked one foot. “Fuck off…” He muttered and flipped over. His face was scrunched in what looked like an angry expression.

The urge to touch him had been present for a while. With separate beds it was easy to ignore. Sharing one? Not so much. Hidan was a very heavy sleeper though… So surely he wouldn’t notice…

Ignoring common sense and the little voice telling him this wasn’t a good idea, Kakuzu found himself reaching out. “Hidan.” He spoke softly as his fingers brushed his partner’s cheek, “It’s just a dream. You’re fine.” Hidan relaxed and Kakuzu cupped his serene face. His skin was as smooth as it looked and his cheek was soft beneath Kakuzu’s thumb. His lips were slightly parted as he took deep breaths. He wanted to kiss them, but knew better.

“I think I’m in trouble, Hidan.” Kakuzu confessed softly. It had been decades since he felt anything for anyone. He wasn’t sure anymore how to handle it.

Hidan’s face twisted in confusion. With a soft groan his eyes opened, “Wha-?”

Kakuzu jerked his hand away in shock. “You’re awake?”

“Huh? Oh, yeah…” Hidan mumbled tiredly. Exhausted though he was, he was certain he’d seen Kakuzu pulling his hand back. The sensation he’d felt in his dream had come from the waking world. How interesting. He rolled onto his stomach and propped himself up on his elbows. “Did my nightmares wake you up?”

“No.” Kakuzu replied. He noted how tired Hidan looked and sounded. How had he woken up like that? Perhaps he’d heard his voice?

“The fireworks keeping you up?”

“No.”

“My dashing good looks?”

“I will push you out of this bed.”

Hidan laughed softly. “Noted. Just can’t sleep?”

“Mm.”

Hidan rubbed his face tiredly, “Mkay, okay. Wanna go walk around for a while? That used to help
me when I couldn’t.”

“We?”

“We’re a team. Never separate, right? Your words, ass face.” Hidan grinned tiredly.

Kakuzu let out a small laugh. “I guess I did say that. You look very tired though.”

“Nah.” Hidan waved it off, “Just a clever- a clever rouse-” His sentence was interrupted by a yawn.

He finally sat up and rubbed his face again. “I’m good. I’m good. Let’s go walk around. I bet the

festival is pretty cool.”

Kakuzu hummed and sat up as well, “If you’re so dead-set on it-”

“Yup!” He hopped out of bed and stumbled, catching himself on the wall. “Tripped. Just tripped.”

His tired mind was dizzy, but he wanted to go walk with Kakuzu. Weirdly enough, any time spent

with Kakuzu was enjoyable to some degree, even when they were bickering.

“If you say so.” Kakuzu climbed out of bed as well.

The two dressed and left the inn together. Hidan’s exhaustion was smacked away by the bitter cold.

Perhaps this hadn’t been the best idea, but he wasn’t going to change his mind or let Kakuzu know

of his regret. The last thing he needed at the moment was an ‘I told you so.’

The street was lit with colorful glowing lamps. People were out despite the late hour and cold

temperature. The festival ran all night and all day, allowing people to enjoy it no matter what time

they wanted to be out, or how they felt about the cold or heat. Impressive, in Hidan’s opinion.

“Hungry?” Kakuzu asked him as they strolled past booths and vendors selling a variety of trinkets.

“I could eat.”

They made their way to a small restaurant that was still open and serving several customers. A booth

in the corner became theirs and soon each had a steaming bowl of noodles before him. Hidan

yawned and rubbed his face again before he took his first bite.

“Are you sure you don’t know why you have nightmares?” Kakuzu suddenly asked. He poked at his

noodles for a moment, then decided it would be fine to eat here. He pulled his mask down enough to

eat.

Hidan shrugged and finished his bite. “If I knew, I’d tell ya. I think I’m just fucked up. Are you ever

going to tell me anything about you? Where you came from? Why you joined Akatsuki?”

Kakuzu huffed and tapped lightly at the bowl with his chopsticks while he gathered his thoughts. It

wasn’t that his past was a secret, he just didn’t like talking about it. Bad memories that left a bad taste

in his mouth. But, Hidan was going to find out sooner or later, and he’d rather give him the

information now than have to answer questions about it later. “I was given the task of eliminating the

very first Hokage. A task I failed. I was greeted with scorn upon returning alive. It’s more honorable

to die in battle than live to fight another day. I was imprisoned for it,” he showed Hidan the rings on

his wrists; tattoos that marked prisoners, “but I’m sure even you could guess that much.”

“Hey!”

“Anyway, I broke out, killed the elders, learned this forbidden jutsu, and took their hearts. Some
years later I joined Akatsuki. That’s the jist of it.”
“I don’t get more detail?”

“No.”

“That’s mean… Wait, how old does that make you?”

“I stopped counting a long time ago. I’d guess around 90.”

“Daaamn. You’re the oldest person I know.”

“How old are you?” Kakuzu asked with a quirked brow. Hidan looked young to him, but not underage.

Hidan grinned proudly, “Old enough to fuck!”

“Charming…” Kakuzu grunted, “and unspecific.”

“Twenty.”

“That’s about what I’d guessed.”

“Really?” Hidan tilted his head back, “People say I look old for my age. I think it’s the hair.”

“Possibly.” He picked up several noodles and ate them all in a single bite.

Hidan prodded his meal with a tired frown. “When I joined the Jashin faith and lied about my age, they welcomed me and gave me some pretty adult duties. I never told them how old I really was since I was afraid they’d kick me out or something. I don’t think they would have, but I worried about it. After my village went to shit I kind of didn’t have anywhere else to go aside from the church, so I always did my best to follow the rules there and be devout. Even though the praying sucks.”

“If you don’t like the praying, why don’t you abandon it?”

“I can’t drop it. I don’t want to.”

“You’re always complaining about it.”

“Doesn’t matter. It’s my faith. I’m sticking with it.”

Kakuzu wanted to argue, but they’d been together long enough now that he didn’t see the point. Hidan wouldn’t budge on it and trying to pry deeper into his reasoning yielded dodged questions and no results.

They fell into silence and finished their small meals that way. Kakuzu paid and they left shortly after.

The sky exploded with colors, casting an array of lights that chased away the darkness of night, but only temporarily. They were brightest shortly after they burst, then fizzled out as the little sparks fluttered toward the ground, leaving the village in night’s embrace again.

The fireworks reflected in Hidan’s eyes, and his pale skin was the perfect canvas to display all the colors, Kakuzu noted. From the corner of his eye he stared, letting his gaze trace the smooth outline of Hidan’s jaw. The shadows cast on him shifted from soft to harsh with the changing light, giving him the appearance of an Ethereal God. His eyes were half-lidded and he was hugging himself tightly.
“I can tell that you’re cold and tired.” Kakuzu stated, turning to him slightly, “Why did you come with me? Go back to the inn and go to sleep.”

“We had this discussion. We don’t stay separated for long. That’s how we’re the best team, remember?” Hidan’s tired eyes glanced at him, then looked back at the fireworks. “Besides, this is basically a date, right? I wouldn’t wanna ditch that.”

Kakuzu ignored the comment and watched the sky. Just when he was about to suggest they both head back, Hidan spoke again.

“I felt your hand on my face earlier.”

Every one of Kakuzu’s hearts skipped a beat. He didn’t respond.

“Things have been kinda weird between us lately, huh?” Hidan mused with a tilt of his head. “I know you’ve noticed it too. I see the way you stare.”

Silence. Kakuzu didn’t reply. He didn’t know what to say to that.

“Lust is a real bitch, huh?” Hidan let out a soft laugh.

This time Kakuzu hummed.

“I wonder if any of the other teams have ever fucked?”

The question was so ridiculous that Kakuzu couldn’t stop a bark of laughter. “I doubt it.”

Hidan chuckled, “Yeah, it does seem kinda crazy.”

Kakuzu stood and offered Hidan his hand, “Come on. You’re exhausted and it’s cold. Let's go to bed.”

Hidan took his hand and let Kakuzu pull him to his feet. When Kakuzu tried to pull his hand away, Hidan gripped it tighter, refusing to release it. “Warm.” He said simply.

Kakuzu contemplated yanking his hand away, but didn’t. It was dark, there weren’t very many people out, and there couldn’t be much harm in it anyway.

They walked back to the inn hand-in-hand. Their room was just as they’d left it and significantly warmer than the icy air outside. Kakuzu finally pulled his hand away from Hidan’s. He removed his cloak, mask, and hood, tossing them all onto a table, and sat down on the edge of the bed to get his shoes off.

Hidan hurriedly removed his cloak and kicked off his shoes. He climbed onto the bed behind Kakuzu and crawled over to him. His arms wrapped around him and he pressed his chest to his back. The masks poked him, but he hardly cared as he let his chin rest on Kakuzu’s shoulder. The stitches felt odd against his skin. He liked it.

“What’re you doing?” Kakuzu grunted with a frown when Hidan hugged him from behind.

“Why don’t we warm each other up?” Hidan suggested in a purr.

A heavy sigh was Kakuzu’s response. He got his shoes off and looked at his partner from the corner of his eyes, “Hidan, let go.”

“No,” Hidan said firmly. “I know this is driving you crazy too. This weird sexual tension. Let’s
“Eloquent.” Kakuzu grunted. He stood, tearing himself from Hidan’s grasp, and turned to him. “I’m not willing to make our partnership any more strained than it already is.”

“How is it strained?!” Hidan protested, throwing his arms open, “So what if we fucking argue all the time?! We’re the best fucking team ever! It’s only strained because there’s sexual tension! We fuck and get it over with and there won’t be any!”

“Hidan,” Kakuzu sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose, “I don’t care. We’re not doing that. It’ll go away on it’s own. You’re just tired. You don’t know what you’re saying.”

“Yes, I do! Being tired just finally gives me the fucking guts to say what I’ve been hinting at for a long time!”

Kakuzu merely stared at him. Truthfully, he was in the same boat. The thought of nailing Hidan had been an enticing one for several months now, but he always pushed it to the back of his mind, trying his hardest to ignore it and Hidan’s flirtations. Just saying “no” was easy, actually meaning it was harder, and having to say it over and over might be impossible. Even if he didn’t cave tonight, he knew he would eventually if Hidan kept prying.

The pale man sighed in frustration, “Your fucking face is impossible to read, even without your goddamn mask on.”

“I’m thinking,” Kakuzu growled, “but I suppose you wouldn’t really know what that’s like, would you?”

“Fuck you- me. Fuck me.” He suddenly grabbed the hem of Kakuzu’s pants and yanked him closer. “Come on. We both want it. It never has to leave this room. No one has to know. We never have to speak of it again. Let’s just do it. It’ll be our secret.”

“I don’t really like having to keep secrets.”

“Too bad.” Hidan climbed off the bed and fell to his knees on the floor. His nimble fingers easily opened Kakuzu’s fly and tugged his pants down.

His cock was half-flaccid. Hidan wrapped his hand around it and began slowly stroking.

Punching Hidan in the face was an option, but not one Kakuzu wanted to take. It was impossible to keep saying no to such an offer. It had been years since he’d last had sex and although it wasn’t something he thought about very often anymore, it was still an urge he had and one he’d like to satisfy. Hidan was offering himself for the task. How could he turn down something they both wanted?

Once his cock had hardened, Hidan couldn’t help but feel a tad intimidated. It was long, thick, and solid. He squeezed and stroked it, marveling at the feel. This would definitely be inside him in a few minutes. The question was how well he could take it.

Leaning in, he flicked his tongue across the head. It tasted like sweat and skin and he didn’t like it. He ran his tongue slowly up the underside then took the head in his mouth. Closing his eyes, he sucked and stroked the length.

Kakuzu watched through half-lidded eyes. He tangled his fingers in Hidan’s hair. When Hidan began bobbing, Kakuzu decided to be a little mean.

Hidan swallowed several inches, but couldn’t fit the rest down his throat. Too thick. But, he wasn’t
given any choice when Kakuzu suddenly pushed his face against his abdomen, forcing every inch down his throat. Hidan gagged around it, struggling to breathe. It stretched his throat painfully. He pushed on Kakuzu’s hips and dug his fingers into the skin there.

When Kakuzu finally pulled him back by his hair, Hidan coughed and took deep breaths. “What the fuck is wrong with you?!?” He snapped. “That hurt!”

“How about we change the game?” Kakuzu stated nonchalantly.

Hidan glared. “You’re a prick.” Despite his annoyance, his hand stroked the length slowly. Maybe he’d kind of enjoyed being forced to take it all like that, enjoyed the subjugation, but he wasn’t comfortable saying as much out loud. His tongue rubbed the underside of the head, then his lips closed around it once more. Both hands rested on Kakuzu’s hips. His eyes squeezed shut from discomfort as he swallowed as much as he could. He pushed for more, but found it difficult without more practice. He groaned around it and squeezed Kakuzu’s hips.

Kakuzu sensed what he wanted. He shoved him down a second time, felt Hidan choke on his cock, but this time Hidan didn’t try to get away. He swallowed around the intrusion and rubbed his tongue against it. Kakuzu groaned. With a firm grip on Hidan’s hair to keep him in place, he began gently thrusting. Sliding his cock out until he felt lips brush the edge of the head, then back in again until those same lips pressed against his abdomen. Hidan’s throat tightened each time, his body’s natural instincts trying to fight back, but Hidan still didn’t try to stop him. He made little noises, gagging and choking, but stayed completely still, letting Kakuzu face-fuck him to his heart’s content.

Finally, Kakuzu forced his cock as deep as it would go and held it there. It took several seconds, but Hidan began twitching, his body struggling for air. His throat spasmed and gagged in its desperation.

“Look at me,” Kakuzu growled.

Two brilliant pink eyes flicked open and looked up at him. They were cringing, watering, begging.

“You’re very persuasive, you know that?”

Hidan swallowed and groaned, sending pleasant vibrations through his cock.

Feeling victorious, Kakuzu finally pulled his cock out of his mouth. Hidan coughed and gasped for air. “Get on the bed,” Kakuzu commanded.

Hidan smirked and obeyed.

Their clothing hit the floor. Kakuzu checked a drawer looking for lotion, but was surprised to find a small bottle of lubricant. The owners of the inn clearly knew what many of their patrons were up to. He took it out of the drawer and climbed on the bed.

Hidan was waiting impatiently, his legs spread and cock at attention. “Come on, come on,” he bucked his hips, “Hurry up. Fuck me.”

“Learn some patience.” Kakuzu poured a small glob on his fingers.

“I’ll learn it when I’m dead. Hurry the fuck up.”

Kakuzu scoffed. He leaned over Hidan and slipped his fingers between his cheeks. A single, thick digit prodded his entrance teasingly. It slipped inside without a problem and sank to the knuckle.

Hidan tensed. “You don’t have to do that. Just stick your dick in me.”
“I want to.” The larger man stated. He added a second finger and thrust slowly.

“Goddamn tease.” Hidan muttered bitterly. His eyes shut and he focused on relaxing.

Kakuzu ignored him, concentrating instead on preparing him. Not because he cared or anything. His fingers rubbed Hidan’s prostate, making the man whimper and his legs draw in. Kakuzu snaked a hand between them and grabbed Hidan’s cock. He stroked it slowly. “See? This has it’s perks.”

“Shut up,” Hidan snapped. His fingers clenched the sheets. The sensations were nice, sure, but they weren’t quite what he wanted. He craved more; something real and hard and passionate and fulfilling. He wanted to see fireworks, and not just the ones exploding outside their window. He was sure Kakuzu could do that. The man was muscular and liked to take charge, exactly the kind of man Hidan wanted on top of him. “Just hurry up.”

With a roll of his eyes, Kakuzu withdrew his hands. There was no sense trying to take anything slow with Hidan. Rushing into stupid things was his specialty, even though he tended to ‘rush’ obnoxiously slowly. Kakuzu poured more lube into his hand and hissed softly when he began spreading the cold substance on his cock.

Hidan waited impatiently, his eyes wide with excitement. “Come on, come on…” He whispered.

“Patience,” Kakuzu grumbled as he cleaned his hand.

“No! Hurry up!”

A growl was his response. Kakuzu grabbed Hidan’s legs underneath his knees and pushed them against his chest.

Hidan grunted, “Uncomfortable-”

“Too bad.” His thick cock settled between Hidan’s cheeks, teasingly rubbing his entrance.

When Hidan’s eyes fell on it again his confidence drained. A look of mild regret made it’s home on his face.

“Scared?” Kakuzu teased. He knew his dick could be intimidating. It was long and thick, with a good curve to it.

“No! It’s just big. It’ll hurt.”

“It wouldn’t if you’d have let me-”

“Shut up and stick it in already, you old fuck!” Like Hell he was going to listen to an ‘I told you so’ in this damn position. Should he have let Kakuzu actually prep him? Maybe. Was he going to admit to that? Nope.

Kakuzu didn’t hesitate to give Hidan what he was asking for. He let go of Hidan’s leg with one hand and lined himself up. With a single thrust he forced every inch inside, stretching his younger partner to his limits. It was hot inside him and so tight it made Kakuzu’s legs feel weak.

The sudden, massive intrusion knocked the wind out of Hidan’s lungs. His whole body clenched and he could only stare wide-eyed and breathless for several seconds. Throbs of pain made him cringe and grip the sheets tightly. “Fuck,” he gasped and took several shaky breaths.

Kakuzu grabbed his leg again and pushed himself a little deeper, drawing a whimper from his
“Does it hurt?” By the way Hidan’s legs were trembling, he already knew the answer.

“Yeah…”

“Having second thoughts?”

“No…”

“Good. Let me know when you’re ready.”

Hidan closed his eyes and breathed deeply, willing his tensed body to relax. “I didn’t think it would feel like this,” he whispered.

“What? Haven’t you ever-?” Oh no. He’d completely forgotten.

“No. I was too busy being a good Jashinist to worry about this shit. This is my first time with anyone, remember?” He opened his eyes, staring up at his partner.

Kakuzu stared back at him in silence. Was he touched or horrified that Hidan had given him his virginity?

“What?” Hidan snapped, face twisting with anger, “Don’t fucking give me that look! We’ve been over this! It’s just sex! It’s not a big deal! You’re the first person I’ve ever bounty hunted with, or watched fireworks with, or mundane shit like that and we aren’t making a big deal out of it! This is meaningless!”

“Alright, alright, I get it.”

“Then get on with it. Goddamn, man.” He shifted his hips, pushing against him. It still ached, but he felt ready. He wanted it. Besides, he kind of liked the pain.

“If you’re sure.”

“Yes. Go.”

Well, he couldn’t argue with that. Or, more accurately, he didn’t want to. With a firm grip on Hidan’s legs, he began thrusting.

“Ah-!” Hidan gasped when he began moving. His legs pushed against Kakuzu’s hands and he shifted uncomfortably. But, he adjusted to the sensation within seconds and his body finally relaxed and accepted it completely. Pleasure washed over him; each deep thrust forcing a whine or whimper from his throat. The sounds were a tad embarrassing, but he couldn’t stop them.

The bed creaked noisily as Kakuzu’s thrust picked up speed. Everything about Hidan felt incredible, from the tightness of his entrance to the softness of his skin. Green eyes gazed down at the gorgeous man, taking in his expression of pleasure and watching for discomfort. Kakuzu was eager to learn if Hidan liked pain in bed, but he didn’t want to outright hurt him and start a fuss. The alluring noises flowing from Hidan’s throat were spurring him on and he didn’t want those to stop. He didn’t want this to stop. They were already beginning to glisten with sweat and he was just getting started.

They made eye contact. Neither broke it. Lust-darkened green gazed into lust-darkened pink. Hidan’s pale skin was flushed red, his hair was a mess, his brows were knitted together, and his mouth was agape to allow a symphony of pleasured vocalizations to flow freely. Disheveled. He looked nothing like the clean, well-groomed man Kakuzu knew as his partner. No, this mess of a person who could only speak in whimpers was much sexier.
“Kakuzu…” Hidan panted the name, breathless. “Harder…” The demand was a growl.

Kakuzu obliged, of course. Who wouldn't when asked with such need? He leaned in, thrusting harder. Their skin slapped together noisily and Hidan’s voice grew louder.

“More…!” His tone was bordering on desperate.

Kakuzu quickly released his legs and grabbed his hips instead. He lifted them higher, allowing him to thrust into him more easily. From the new angle he was able to increase his speed, and by pulling Hidan’s hips against him he added some power to the thrusts.

“A-ah-!” Hidan gripped Kakuzu's wrists and squeezed tightly. “Shitohshit!”

“You like it?” Kakuzu panted.

“Uh-hn yeah,” He squeezed his eyes shut and wrapped his legs around Kakuzu's waist. “Come on, come on… Fuck me…!”

The request made Kakuzu groan with desire. He leaned over his lover, bringing their faces close together. “I want to hurt you.”

“Then fucking do it,” Hidan snarled at him.

The kiss was sudden and harsh. Kakuzu slammed his mouth against Hidan’s, taking his breath away. When his thrusts became brutal, Hidan dug his nails into his arms, clawing at them. He struggled to get away, to break the kiss, but Kakuzu had him trapped.

Eventually, he had to break it to get air. Hidan's cries were immediate.

“FUCKFUCKFUCKOHFUCK!!” His back arched and his nails raked down Kakuzu's arms.

“You like that, you whore?” Kakuzu growled.

“Kakuzu-!” He gasped. His body suddenly stiffened and a wail was ripped from his throat. His seed spilled between them as intense pleasure unlike any other he’d ever experienced before washed over him.

Kakuzu was enthralled. Hidan's tight body got tighter, his reddened skin turned redder, and somehow, somehow, he was suddenly the most beautiful creature in existence. Wild and messy and unobtainable in his perfection. Pinned against the bed below him, this would be the only time Kakuzu knew he’d ever have complete control over him. The only time he could look upon him like this unashamed and unafraid of the consequences.

The moment was fleeting, this entire act was as well, so Kakuzu did his best to draw it out, take it in, commit it to memory, so on lonely nights he could think back to this exact, amazing, perfect moment and bask in it all over again.

Orgasm left Hidan shaking and his body sensitive. His arms wrapped around Kakuzu's neck and hugged him tightly. With his face buried against the man’s shoulder, his pathetic whimpers and cries were muffled. The pleasure pelting him was so intense it was nearly painful, forcing white spots into his vision, but he was in love with it. It was Heaven and Hell simultaneously and he didn't care which side he ultimately ended up on as long as this didn’t end.

All good things came to an end, however. This was no different, and in fact it was one of life's most fleeting yet consistent and sought after moments. This physical connection formed between two
human beings who desired the pleasure and passion associated with it. It wasn't something for everyone, but for some it was everything, and in the throes of it time often lost all meaning.

The pleasure began to intensify. Kakuzu knew he was close. “Can I finish inside you?” He asked in a single breath. There was a tremor to his voice that he hoped Hidan hadn't caught.

“Yes! Please!” Hidan whimpered, “Please come inside me! Please!” Such a thing had always seemed disgusting to him, but suddenly he needed to feel it, needed it know what it was like.

Kakuzu had intended to draw it longer, but Hidan made that impossible. His words, his tone, his desperation, they compiled into a perfect storm of desire that was too much to take. He came with a loud moan, which he was startled to hear come out of him. His body tensed, his breath hitched, and all he could manage were a few hard thrusts before hips just wouldn't move.

Hidan was again left breathless as he felt his lover’s seed fill him. It was cold and thick and the force and quantity of it made his toes curl. He whimpered at the sensation. It wasn't unpleasant. He liked it, in fact. It was as if Kakuzu had laid a claim on him, marking him as his own. That was probably a silly thing to like considering how much they disliked each other, but he did feel a certain closeness to his partner. Some kind of twisted bond that allowed them to fight viciously but work together flawlessly with very little buffer in-between.

Some called that fighting like a married couple. He’d always thought that was stupid though. He liked to think their personalities just clashed and complimented each other simultaneously. Maybe they were made to work together.

They were both left panting and trembling. Hidan’s arms slid off, flopping uselessly onto the bed. His eyes slid shut. Exhaustion.

Kakuzu pushed himself up on weakened arms and couldn’t help but stare down at the man beneath him. Fireworks were still bursting outside, casting their colorful glow into the room, across Hidan’s bare skin, atop his heaving chest. Again, Kakuzu was reminded of a God. A beautiful, untouchable, flawless God. Hidan basically was a God, one of war and destruction that would one day bring humanity to its knees. An unstoppable, untamable, chaotic force, that Kakuzu had somehow conquered.

No. He hadn’t. Hidan had conquered him. Drew him in, broke his will to say no, and took everything he had to offer. Kakuzu hadn’t bested the God, he’d merely given him what he wanted.

That should have been terrifying. It wasn’t. It was impressive, humbling, enticing.

Kakuzu reached down and ran his fingers through Hidan’s soft hair. It was damp with sweat. “How was your first time?”

Hidan opened his eyes. “Fucking amazing,” he grinned tiredly, “I see why people do it all the time. Damn.”

“Good.” Kakuzu put his hand back on Hidan’s hip. “We’ve made a bit of a mess.”

“Ugh. I’m way too exhausted to get up…”

“That’s fine. Rest. I’ll clean us up.”

“Thanks, man. You’re a real fuckin’ pal.”

Kakuzu hummed. He gently pulled out, drawing a soft whine from Hidan as he did so.
Unsurprisingly, fluids leaked out once the intrusion was gone. He slowly lowered Hidan’s legs and finally climbed off the bed.

Hidan shuddered when he felt semen leaking from him. Now that the fun was over, he didn’t care for the sensation. His body was sore too from being in such a strange position for so long. Muscles he never used were burning from being strained. Still, the aftermath was certainly worth it.

Kakuzu returned moments later with a damp rag. He cleaned them both up, then tossed it in the sink to deal with later. When he returned again he found Hidan curled up above the blankets, already asleep. With a sigh, he yanked the blanket out from underneath him, which didn’t wake him, then pushed him toward his side of the bed. Finally, he shut off the light and crawled in next to him. He pulled the blanket over them both and laid down. Facing away, he shut his eyes, and fell asleep moments later.

Kakuzu woke up to an empty bed. Never before had Hidan gotten up earlier than him, so his first thought was that the man had somehow been kidnapped in his sleep. Realizing that was stupid, his second thought was that Hidan had snuck out and taken off for good. Both thoughts made him physically ill to consider.

Upon sitting up he realized the shower was on. He climbed out of bed, put on pants, and headed to the bathroom. The door was open. He stepped inside and found Hidan standing under the warm spray, washing his hair. The water glided beautifully down his flawless form.

Hidan noticed him immediately. “Oh, hey. I’m almost done.”

“What’re you doing up so early?” He crossed his arms and leaned against the door frame.

“I had a bad dream. I woke up and didn’t wanna fall back into it. I figured you’d be up soon enough anyway.” He finished scrubbing his hair and began rinsing it.

“You had a nightmare? You usually wake me when you do.”

“I think you were sleeping pretty hard. No biggie.”

“Mm. You aren’t tired?”

“Eh. I’ll be pretty tired later, I figure.”

“I don’t think either of us slept well. I’m going to buy this room another night.”

“Isn’t it a bit pricey for you?”

“Yes, but the festival is still going. There might not be any other rooms. We still have a few errands to run and I want to leave Suna as early in the morning as possible so we’re not caught in the desert after dark.”

“Ah, smart. So,” he cocked a hip, resting his hand on it, and smirked “are you just gonna stand there and stare at me while I shower or are you gonna join me?”

Kakuzu scoffed and stepped out of the bathroom. He leaned against the wall by the door and waited with crossed arms. He heard the water stop and Hidan step out to dry off. “Your dream,” he called, “it must have been pretty bad. Do you remember it?”

“Why do you care?”
“I’m trying to make conversation, you piece of shit.”

“Dang, hostile much.” There was a fluttering as Hidan dried with a heavy towel. “Yeah, I remember it.”

“Do you want to talk about it?”

Silence.

Kakuzu grimaced. Sometimes, it felt like he was the only one in this partnership trying to form some kind of bond. Not a deep one, just a friendly one, to show he cared. They were going to be spending a very long time together, after all, and he didn’t want to spend that time with someone he didn’t get along with.

But, he knew that wasn’t entirely true. Hidan cared and he showed it in his own ways. Teasing insults meant to break tension, bad jokes to bring comfort, and taking hits in battle despite Kakuzu clearly stating several times now not to do that.

There was something between them, some kind of comradery, but it was awkward and tense and he didn’t really know why or how to fix it. It just was what it was and it had kind of become a comfort in its own way. They could count on each other for help, someone to yell at, some form of comfort, and a punching bag. Strange.

Hidan stepped out of the bathroom with the towel around his waist and gave him a skeptical look. “Are you being awkward because of last night?”

“I just thought talking about it might help with your nightmares.”

“Hm.” He looked Kakuzu up and down. “We were in a fight with several enemies. Everything was going like it usually does and we were kicking ass. They separated us though and cut my head off. Threw me in a deep hole and buried me. It was real dark… I was waiting for you to come get me, but you never did… I don’t know how, but I knew you were dead…” His gaze fell to the floor, distant.

Without thinking about it, Kakuzu let his crossed arms drop and reached out to take Hidan’s hand. They were both surprised by the act, but neither jerked away. “That’s unpleasant. I’m sorry you remember it so clearly.” Kakuzu said gently.

Hidan gazed down at their hands. With a slight shift he laced their fingers together. “I remember most of my nightmares, actually…” He admitted in a soft tone. “They’re not that awful and they don’t really affect me. They’re just bad dreams. They can’t hurt you. Nothing to stress about. But… Just when they’re getting real bad, I always hear your voice telling me it’s just a dream. You’re always suddenly just there and everything’s okay again. At first I didn’t really get why that was such a comfort. You’re kind of an ass after all and we don’t always get along… But, I thought about it, I realized why you can always snap me out of it. You never lie to me. Never. You’re always brutally honest, whether I like it or not. I can trust you. So, when you tell me it’s a dream, I know it is, and I snap right out of it. Your voice wasn’t there this time though, you were asleep, so I didn’t snap out of it, and I think maybe that’s what made it worse. I didn’t hear your voice, so in my mind you were dead…”

Kakuzu squeezed his hand. “I’m sorry.”

Hidan shrugged. “It’s fine. It was just a dream.”

“How do you feel?”

“That’s not what I meant.”

“Wh- Er? With- with my hands?”

Kakuzu sighed, “Nevermind.”

“You’re fucking weird.” Hidan stated with a nod. He looked down at their hands again. “This is fucking weird…”

“You don’t like it?”

“I do. It’s just weird. Two cold-blooded killers, body counts in the triple digits, wanted men who’ve forsaken their villages and become feared in most regions, just… chillin’, holding hands. You know, like ya do.”

Kakuzu hummed. “I suppose when you look at it like that…”

“Not that I could blame you though. I mean, look at me!” Hidan proclaimed and pressed a hand to his face, “I’m gorgeous! Of course you’d want to touch my hand! Anyone would kill for the chance!”

Hidan was good at breaking tension, whether he knew it or not, and Kakuzu appreciated that, but sometimes he went a little overboard. “Sometimes I want to strangle you.” Kakuzu said honestly. Only sometimes did he want his partner dead, which was an improvement from other partners and the early days of their own partnership. Most of the time he didn’t want Hidan dead. Most of the time he wanted him right beside him.

“Hey now, save it for the bedroom,” Hidan teased.

“Fine. I do look forward to fucking you again.”

“Wait, really?” His cocky grin fell.

“Mhm.”

“Oh, good, I have some stuff I wanna try!” He lit up again. His free hand reached out and tugged lightly at the stitches on Kakuzu’s chest.

The larger man frowned and yanked his hand away as he stepped back, “No.”


“That’s weird.”

“It’s kinky!”

“It’s weird.”

“Don’t kinkshame me!”

Kakuzu merely sighed.

When he’d said he planned on fucking Hidan again, he hadn’t really thought it would be so soon. But, why not? They were sharing a bed. Might as well. No harm in it, even though they had to get
up early the next morning.

Hidan’s back glistened with sweat, each drop reflecting the light of the lamp on the table. His face was pressed against the bed, brow knitted together from the nearly painful pleasure and mouth agape to voice his appreciation. Each hard thrust drew another noise; a whimper, a moan, a yelp. A symphony of lust and adoration.

Above him, Kakuzu pressed down on his shoulders, keeping him firmly in place. His thrusts were hard, fast, merciless. The goal was to make Hidan scream, but he wasn’t quite there yet. That wouldn’t do. He pushed harder on Hidan’s shoulders and angled his thrusts differently.

It did the trick.

Hidan’s body suddenly tensed and he began writhing, his back arching and flexing from pleasure. “Kakuzu…” A breathless gasp, “Please…! Please!” His voice grew louder as the thrusts grew harder. “Please please please please!!”

Kakuzu leaned down, keeping his brutal pace as he did so, “Please what?”

“Please let me come! Please!!!”

Below them, several thick tendrils were wrapped tightly around Hidan’s cock, preventing him from reaching orgasm.

“Why should I?”

“Goddammit please you piece of shit!! Please let me come!” His words were mostly spoken in whimpers. His hands clenched the sheets tighter, dragging them downward.

Kakuzu growled at the insult. His pace was interrupted so he could slam his cock into Hidan with enough force to bruise him. “Don’t. Call. Me. That. Again.” Each word was emphasized with a thrust.

They knocked the wind out of Hidan and brought tears to his eyes. “FUCK!” He finally gasped when Kakuzu stopped.

“Let that be a lesson.” He tangled a hand in Hidan’s hair, pushing his head down, and resumed his pace.

“Fucking fucker!” Hidan moaned, “Goddammit that hurt!”

“I think you like it when I hurt you like this.”

“I fucking love it! Please let me come! Pleasepleaseplease!” He was practically wailing.

Kakuzu smirked. He’d been right about the line between pain and pleasure being blurred for Hidan. That was quite handy, considering how rough Kakuzu liked to get in bed. “I’ll let you finish when I goddamn well please. Keep begging though. I like it.”

His demand was met, surprisingly. Hidan pleaded for more, to be allowed to finish, to be hurt. His tone was nearly a sob, his desperation evident in it, and Kakuzu just didn’t have the heart to deny him any longer.

The tendrils released his cock and not a moment later Hidan came. His voice failed him, the only sounds harsh whimpers, as his body tensed then trembled all over. It squeezed Kakuzu tightly,
making him groan at the increased pleasure. His pace picked up, prolonging Hidan’s incredible orgasm.

Eventually, Hidan’s voice returned, and he could only moan and whimper as Kakuzu continued to fuck his worn, over sensitive body. Every thrust hurt, both due to actual pain from the sheer force and from a pleasure so overwhelming it became painful, and all he could do was take it. He loved every second.

Several minutes later Kakuzu finally finished. He buried his cock deep inside his partner, gripping his hair tightly as he blew his load inside him. A guttural moan rose from his throat and a shiver ran down his spine. The pleasure was indescribable. The best orgasm he’d ever had. It was amazing what a difference it could make to have a sexual partner who liked how rough he wanted to be.

Once he finally came down he let out a relaxing sigh. His hand untangled from Hidan's hair and both gripped his gorgeous hips. “You alright?” He found himself asking gently.

Hidan groaned and didn't move. “So fucking good. Holy shit. I can’t believe how much I fucking love this.”

“Glad I could satisfy you.” Kakuzu smirked and rubbed his hips soothingly. Slowly, he withdrew his cock from his lover’s entrance. With it gone his seed leaked out. Hidan’s ass was red from the thrusting and trying to bruise. If Hidan wasn’t complaining though then he didn’t care.

A damp cloth was used to clean up. Most of the mess was easily wiped away with it, but Hidan’s cum stains on the sheets would have to be washed out by the staff. The pale man was already curled up under the covers, half asleep. Kakuzu slipped in beside him and got comfortable.

“We still have to get up early?” Hidan mumbled.

“Yes.”

“Damn. Will you carry me?”

“No.”

“Double damn. Oh well.” He yawned and rolled over, facing away from his partner. “Night, fuckface.”

“Night, dipshit.” Kakuzu closed his eyes and soon fell into a restful sleep.

Chapter End Notes

The story isn't over yet (only about half-way there, actually). Stick around, and leave a review if you like the story so far please.
The village was quiet, quaint. It was warm and breezy out, which Kakuzu was thankful for. The mild weather would keep Hidan’s complaining to a minimum. Sasori and Deidara walked up from the south to the ramen stand where Kakuzu and Hidan were already waiting.

“Finally,” Hidan barked when they arrived, “We’ve been waiting forever!”

“Five minutes.” Kakuzu corrected calmly.

“We’re never late,” Deidara stated with a frown, “You were just too early, nm.”

Hidan opened his mouth to give an equally snarky reply to that, but Kakuzu spoke over him. “You said you had an informant you wanted us to meet?”

From the hunched over figure beside Deidara, Sasori’s voice arose. “Yes. She lives down the road. Follow us.”

Three began walking, but Hidan didn’t budge. “Woah, woah, woah! I’m not goin’ anywhere! We walked for hours and I’m starving!” He held a hand out expectantly, “Give me some money, fuckface.”

Kakuzu opened his cloak enough to slip his hand inside. He pulled out a bag of money and tossed it to his partner without a word.

Hidan caught it with a grin, “Sweet! Have fun on your boring-ass stroll.”

“Deidara, stay with him.” Sasori said.

“What??” Deidara balked, “Why??”

“Because I said so.”

Deidara growled softly and hung his head. Sulking, he walked back to Hidan.

“Aw, lighten up, blondie!” Hidan laughed, “Tell you what, as an apology for the other day, I’ll use Kakuzu’s money to buy you a bite to eat!”

“No thanks.” Deidara glared.

“Psh, suit yourself.”

The group separated. One pair sat down at the ramen stand while the other headed down the road toward houses.

Hidan ordered Shoyu ramen with chicken for himself and put money on the counter. “You sure I can’t buy you something?”

“I’m sure, nm.”

“How long will they be gone, you think?”

Deidara shrugged, “It’s about a five minute walk from here.”
“Good to know.”

A bowl of ramen was set in front of him minutes later and he happily dug in.

The walk was mostly silent. Neither Kakuzu nor Sasori were especially chatty men. They were comfortable with silence so there was no need to break it.

Halfway to their destination, however, Sasori spoke up. “Hidan doesn’t respect you. It’s unlike you not to beat it into him.”

The statement made Kakuzu’s eye twitch. He spoke evenly, “Hidan respects me in his own way. Attempting to force him to show it in any other way would only breed contempt.”

“Are you sure? Without mutual respect in some way, teams fall apart.”

“Perhaps you and Deidara should work on that then.” He couldn’t keep a slightly biting tone from his voice.

Sasori was silent for several seconds. “You’re a strange man, Kakuzu,” he said finally.

“I don’t really care what you or anyone else thinks about me.”

“Then why did you get so defensive?”

Kakuzu didn’t reply.

“It’s because I insulted Hidan, isn’t it? You care more about how I view him than how I view you?”

“You’ve always had a habit of being more perceptive than I cared for. Mind your own business, Sasori, or I’ll break you.” Kakuzu warned. He always carried out his threats.

Sasori hummed and they remained silent for the rest of the trip. He led Kakuzu to a small house hidden behind taller ones. It was slightly crooked and looked older than the others. Sasori knocked on the door. Seconds later, it opened.

A tall, thin woman with long, grey hair answered. She was wearing a long dress that was probably worth more than any bounty Kakuzu had ever hunted. Without a word, she stepped aside and allowed them in.

The house was cramped and didn’t look lived-in. Kakuzu guessed this was more of a meeting place than a home, especially for this woman. She led them into the foyer and sat down on a chair that was clean of dust, unlike the rest of the place.

Sasori and Kakuzu elected to remain standing.

“This is the man I told you about.” Sasori said. “Kakuzu, this is Madam Satchiko. She has a mission and I figured you would be most interested in it.”

She picked up a briefcase from the floor beside her chair and sat it in her lap, but didn’t open it. “Inside is 50 million ryo. It’s all yours if you can retrieve something for me.”

The price was stunning. The mission had to be nearly impossible then, correct? “I assume this won’t be easy, but I’m sure my partner and I can handle it. What are we retrieving?”

“A family heirloom.” She explained, “Many years ago, my family dwelled in the Land of Snow. When it was taken over by Doto, we fled to the Land of Fire, abandoning our home and almost
everything in it. Sadly, we left something behind that is irreplaceable. A small chest, no larger than my hand, containing something my family desperately wants back. The chest still sits in a family shrine at the top of the tallest mountain in the land. It’s become treacherous since Doto took over. Others have tried and failed to scale the mountain, but I won’t cease offering my high reward to those willing to try.”

Kakuzu was practically on cloud nine. Such a high reward for something as simple as fetching a silly trinket? Easy. “Consider it done. My partner and I will have no trouble retrieving it.”

A small smile tugged at her lips. “I sincerely hope so. I’m growing a little weary of sending people to their deaths.”

Kakuzu almost laughed. “That won’t be a problem this time.”

The two left shortly after. The walk back was no different than the walk there. Silence, broken by Sasori. “Does Hidan still try to convert you to his religion?”

“Daily.”

“Does he still hound you about being greedy?”

“Sometimes.”

“And you’re sure he respects you?”

“Yes. Worry about your own damn partner and I’ll worry about mine.” Kakuzu snapped. His patience was wearing thin.

They returned to silence.

Hidan checked the clock. Ten minutes. They’d be back soon. He pushed his empty bowl away and raised his hand, getting the server’s attention. “Can I get a bowl of Shio with liver sashimi?”

“Sure!” The man nodded and went to cooking.

Deidara gave Hidan a funny look. “Really? Another bowl?”

Hidan merely shrugged.

Within a few minutes the two returned and a hot bowl of ramen was set on the table. Deidara stood and went to Sasori’s side, “Did the meeting go okay?”

“Yes, everything went smoothly.”

Kakuzu took Deidara’s seat at the table. Wordlessly, he pulled his mask down and picked up the waiting bowl of ramen.

“Told you long enough!” Hidan complained. He pushed the satchel of money toward him. “I thought maybe old age had caught up with you.”

“Funny.” Kakuzu grunted. He pocketed the money before taking his first bite. It was his favorite kind of ramen, but that wasn’t a surprise.

Hidan turned to Sasori. “I assume we’re getting sent on some shitty errand run?”

Sasori and Deidara glanced at one another, then looked back at him in silence.
“... What?” Hidan snapped.

Kakuzu swallowed. “We’re getting an artifact from the top of a mountain. I’ll fill you in later.”

“Ugh, sounds shitty.”

“It’s going to be cold too.”

“That’s even worse!!” Hidan’s head dropped to the table in frustration.

“I’ll get you a coat or something.”

“Uff, thanks.” His voice was muffled by wood.

Kakuzu looked at Sasori and Deidara. Sasori’s expression was unreadable, as always, making Kakuzu suddenly understand why Hidan got so annoyed at him for the same thing. Deidara’s expression was a mix of confusion and frustration.

“What?” Kakuzu growled, “Don’t you two have somewhere to be? We don’t like having company.”

“Yeah!” Hidan suddenly lifted his head and gave them a glare, “Get the fuck outta here! I’m sick of lookin’ at ya!”

Deidara growled softly. “You’re a real pain in the-”

Sasori turned away, “That’s enough. Let’s go.”

Deidara shot Hidan a glare, but followed without another word. Once they were outside, he turned to his partner. “What the heck was that about, nm? I thought they hated each other.”

“I suppose even the most adverse of partners can get used to one another.” Sasori mused.

“Didn’t see it happening with those two though, nm.” Deidara muttered.

Hidan turned around in his seat so he faced Kakuzu again. “I fucking hate those guys.”

“You hate everyone.” Kakuzu said before taking another bite.

Hidan hummed and rested his chin in his palm. He watched Kakuzu for a moment, taking in his handsome features. “Almost everyone.”

Kakuzu chewed and swallowed. He gazed at Hidan. “Me too.” He said after a pause, then took another bite.

Hidan grinned and said nothing more. They fell into a comfortable silence.

Heat. So much heat. It was sweltering, burning, overwhelming. His skin was on fire, his core threatening to burst. An inferno was trying to tear him apart from the inside out and he loved it. Loved the pain. Loved the pleasure. Loved the suffocating heat threatening to burn him alive.

Strong hands gripped his hips so tightly he thought they might snap. He was pulled down, invaded deeper. It felt as if he might be torn apart from the inside out. Every thrust was a punishment and a reward. Hidan was hardly doing any of the work, despite straddling his lover. Hard thrusts sent him upward, gravity and a strong grip forced him straight back down. With every slam of Kakuzu’s hips came a throb of pleasure so intense it ached. His hands gripped Kakuzu’s shoulders to keep himself upright.
Kakuzu was enthralled by the sight above him. Hidan’s brows were knitted together, his eyes squeezed shut, hair a mess, and his mouth hanging open. Panting, moaning, and soft whispers of his name fell from pink lips, all nearly drowned out by the slap of skin meeting skin. He didn’t have to thrust especially hard to make the thrusts painful. By pulling Hidan down, he doubled the power. A very handy trick.

“Kakuzu… Kakuzu… Fuck… Fuck- Fuck-!” Hidan’s breath hitched. His legs squeezed Kakuzu’s hips and his body stiffened. The heat inside finally reached it’s peak, causing his core to burst. With a guttural moan he came, spilling his seed on Kakuzu’s chest. His body twitched and trembled, his moans reduced to whimpers.

Kakuzu wasn’t far behind. He finished inside, his cool seed filling Hidan and chasing away the flames. Hidan was left panting, shaking, his hands pressing against Kakuzu’s chest and his head hanging in exhaustion. They were both covered in sweat and the bed was a wreck of messy, damp sheets.

Hands left Hidan’s hips and slid up his body. They cupped his face, lifting it gently. “Are you okay?” Kakuzu’s deep voice reverberated through his core.

“Yeah.” Hidan panted. He opened his eyes. Below him, Kakuzu looked equally exhausted and satisfied. His hair was splayed across the pillow and Hidan had to resist the urge to run his fingers through it. “I can’t feel my fucking legs…”

Kakuzu laughed softly, a rare sound, and pulled Hidan down, “Pitiful creature.”

“Please pity me.” Hidan grinned.

Their lips met. The kiss was wet, sloppy, deep. Hidan broke it first. “Ugh, we’re so gross.” He sat up and looked down at them. His fluids were on Kakuzu’s chest, and Kakuzu’s were already leaking out of Hidan’s hole. “I can’t even get up without making a bigger mess!” He complained, “What the fuck!”

Kakuzu suddenly shoved him off and sat up. “You complain too damn much.”

Hidan hit the bed with a grunt and didn’t get up. “Oh, fuck you. Grumpy ass.”

Kakuzu climbed out of bed and went to the bathroom. A speedy shower rid him of all the sticky filth on his body. After drying off, he dampened a rag. Upon leaving the bathroom he found Hidan curled up and already trying to fall asleep. He threw the rag in in Hidan’s face, waking him forcefully.

“Hey!” Hidan snapped. He clutched the rag angrily. “Prick.” He cleaned himself off, then threw the rag to the floor.

Kakuzu climbed into bed behind him, turning off the light as he did so. He rolled over and tried to pull Hidan closer.

“No! No no!” Hidan tore himself away, “It’s too hot for that shit! Don’t touch me!”

The words made Kakuzu growl. “You always say that.”

“What do you care?” Hidan grumbled and settled into a comfortable position.

Kakuzu didn’t reply. He rolled away and shut his eyes, doing his best to ignore the pain in his chest.
Frigid

The air was quiet, empty. No birds, no wind, no leaves, just the soft crunching of feet through snow. Not even a peep of complaint from a certain someone. Good. Kakuzu had spent good money to make sure he didn't have to listen to “I’m cold!” the entire trek.

Hidan’s cloak was buttoned up, but beneath it was a well-made winter jacket keeping him nice and toasty. On his feet were thick boots and under his pants was a thin layer of fabric that locked in heat. It was below zero outside, but he couldn’t be cozier.

“Thanks for the winter gear.” Hidan spoke, breaking the silence. “It’s nice as shit.”

“You’re welcome.”

“You wouldn’t’a bought something like this for any other partners, huh?”

“No.”

Hidan gave him a smug look, “It’s cuz you liiike mee.”

“I like not hearing you complain.”

“Mhmmm. Suuure.” He slipped an arm around one of Kakuzu’s, “It’s cool. I know you’re way into me.”

“Be quiet. I was enjoying the silence.”

Hidan chuckled, but didn’t speak again.

Kakuzu was almost disappointed. He enjoyed the silence, yes, but he liked it even better when Hidan was being pleasant. His voice was lovely when it wasn’t angry or obnoxious. When Hidan was happy or talking about something he liked, his voice was a lovely tone that was easy on the ears. Kakuzu could listen to it for hours.

He’d never tell anyone that.

Hidan’s fingers traced the stitching under Kakuzu’s cloak. He wasn’t wearing any extra layers. The cold didn’t really get to him. Normally, such affections outside of their hotel room would bother him, but the area around them was wide open with nothing but snow for miles. No one could sneak up and see anything, so he elected to just let Hidan have his fun. The man was rarely affectionate anyway, even in private, so Kakuzu had to enjoy the few moments when they happened.

He’d never tell anyone that either.

Hidan nuzzled his shoulder.

“You’re feeling abnormally affectionate today. Did you do something?”

“What, a guy can’t show a little love to a partner he doesn’t hate?”

“You don’t unless you want something or are trying to get out of trouble.”

“That ain’t true...”
“You know it is. When have I lied to you?”

Hidan growled and suddenly tore himself away. “You’re a fucking prick.”

“I was just being honest. I thought you liked-”

“Go fuck yourself.” He crossed his arms.

Kakuzu looked at him, “What did you want-”

“Shut up. Enjoy the silence.” Hidan stared straight ahead.

Kakuzu stared at him a moment longer, then faced the snow-covered path ahead.

The inn was nothing special. Clean, but not fancy or well-decorated. Kakuzu stepped up to the counter and waited patiently until a middle-aged man stepped out of an office. “Welcome,” The man greeted with a smile, “A room for two?”

“Single bed, please.” Kakuzu stated as he pulled out his wallet.

“Two beds!” Hidan snapped from just behind him. His arms were still crossed and he still wasn’t looking at Kakuzu.

The man behind the counter hesitated, “Um-”

“Just one bed.” Kakuzu insisted. “It’s cheaper.”

“Two beds or I’m fucking finding somewhere else to sleep!”

Kakuzu sighed. “Two beds.”

The man scribbled the information down on paper with a pitying frown. “There’s a flower shop down the street. You might stop by.” He said quietly so only Kakuzu could hear.

He didn’t respond. Flowers were a waste of time and money. He paid the man and took both keys, but didn’t bother handing one to Hidan. They went down the hall and entered a decently-sized room with two beds. It was almost a jarring sight. They hadn’t bought a room with two beds in months.

Hidan passed him and flopped onto the closest bed. He tucked his hands behind his head and closed his eyes.

“We’re not staying. We have a mission.”

“Have fun with that.”

“The trek is dangerous. We have to do it together, combine our strengths. I’m not going alone.”

“Guess you’re not going at all then.”

Kakuzu growled softly and kicked the door shut. “What the Hell is your problem?”

“I don’t have one. Do you?”

“Yes, you’re-”

“Sucks for you.”
Another low growl. Kakuzu clenched his fists, fighting the urge to punch his partner. Taking a deep, calming breath, he stepped over to the bed and loom over Hidan. “Why are you mad at me?”

A single pink eye cracked open, “You’re smart. Figure it out.”

“Stop being childish and tell me.”

“Child-!?” Hidan suddenly flew off the bed and stood before Kakuzu with his shoulders squared. “Fuck you! Fuck your ugly fucking face! Fucking piece of shit!”

“Colorful, but-”

“You think I don’t have fucking feelings?!” Hidan interrupted him, his words full of venom, “You think I’m just some goddamn psychopath, completely incapable of fucking giving a fucking shit about another goddamn person!? You think I can’t show you affection because I fucking want to!? You think I need a goddamn ulterior motive for fucking everything!? I’ve put up with your shit for two fucking years and you think I don’t care about you even the tiniest goddamn bit?!”

There was a void in the room. No words were spoken. The silence was filled by Hidan’s soft pants. There was fire in his eyes and rage in his features. Not the usual, short-fused rage either. This was deeper, a fire burning at his core that was fighting to escape.

Kakuzu chose his words carefully. “I… suppose… I misread your intentions.”

“Oh?? You fucking suppose??”

“I thought perhaps you picked certain arguments or showed certain affections in order to get sex.”

Hidan gritted his teeth. “Really. That’s what you fucking thought?”

Kakuzu couldn’t stop himself from getting angry. “Can you really blame me? You never let me hold you after sex and you barely show any affection otherwise! I assumed you felt nothing!”

“What are you talking about?! I’m always fucking thinking of you! I get extra food for you when you run errands! I take hits for you! I let you do whatever you want to me! How is that not affection?”

“Because you never let me hold you!”

“Maybe sometimes I don’t wanna be held!”

“You never want to!”

“What does it matter?! I let you fuck me! Isn’t that enough!?”

Kakuzu’s fists were clenched and shaking. “The fact that you have to ask that is a major part of our problem.”

Hidan scoffed. “Whatever. Let’s just go get this stupid fucking box.” He shoved past him and stomped to the door. They left together but didn’t speak to one another.

The mountain was steep, icy, rocky, windy, and barren. All things Hidan usually complained about, but he’d kept completely silent the entire trek. Most of the journey involved climbing straight up massive cliffs of rock and jagged branches sticking out from cracks. Not impossible for two Akatsuki members, but still tough.
Almost an hour in they finally reached a flattened area. Both were relieved to get to what they believed was the top. Once they actually got to it and stood upright, however, their spirits dropped. The snow-covered flat led on a mile through thick forest, then ended where another tall ridge jutted straight up toward the sky. They couldn’t see the top through the clouds.

Hidan finally cracked. “Are you SERIOUS?!” His voice echoed. “WE’RE STILL NOT THERE?!!”

“They said it was nearly impossible. I’m not surprised we-”

Hidan pointed at him, “This is your fault! You’re always fucking dragging me along on these stupid fucking missions! I hate them!! I hate you!!”

_I hate you._ The words hurt. Kakuzu felt them in each heart, the pain an intense ache that made him angry.

It was impossible to tell who struck first. They were just suddenly at each other’s throats. Kakuzu pinned Hidan to the ground and attempted to break his neck. Out of nowhere the scythe slammed into him, knocking him off. He barely dodged it as the blade zipped by his face. His arm loosened and extended, fist breaking Hidan’s nose, and a second later Hidan’s foot returned the favor.

They scrambled to their feet and jumped away. The white snow and Hidan’s equally pale, beautiful face was marred by red.

They made a move to go at it again, but both sensed too late that they were no longer alone. There was no time to recover their broken team as the other launched an assault. Hidan was hit in the shoulder with an arrow attached to a long chord. He screamed in surprise when he was yanked to the ground and dragged toward the cliff edge.

“HIDAN!” Kakuzu had no time to run after his partner. Pain erupted through his back and he stumbled and fell. He felt one heart die, a painful experience, and another quickly shift to take it’s place as his main. The shinobi who’d attacked him quickly disappeared again.

On all fours, Kakuzu allowed the three remaining hearts to leave and take form, tearing his cloak apart. Lightning, wind, and fire were left. He liked using water or earth as his own whenever possible, and he still had water in him. As he pushed himself to his feet, wind took off over the cliff to chase Hidan.

The immortal hit numerous rocks on his way down, breaking several bones and knocking out the arrow. He finally caught himself about half way down. The sounds of his cursing echoed across the cliffs. He scrambling to pull himself onto the rock. Thankfully, he didn’t have to. When he saw the wind mask heading for him, he smiled and let go of the rock. The mask caught him mid air and they flew back up to the top of the cliff.

He landed on his feet and found shinobi waiting for him. Several nin dressed in all white with their faces hidden, all bearing protectors with the Hidden Cloud symbol on them. One ran at him, but he put his scythe up to block. Unfortunately, that seemed to be what they wanted. Their hands hit the bar, gripping it, and began pushing him back toward the cliff.

He didn’t try to pull away, however. Instead, he grabbed the shinobi’s arm. Despite the earlier fighting, he knew Kakuzu would still have his back.

The wind mask dove down and unleashed a powerful blast at his back. The masked nin all ran, except for the one he’d grabbed, who was trapped. The blast destroyed them both.
Kakuzu was trapped between three shinobi while his masks dealt with several others. He couldn’t count how many had ambushed them, but he knew they were skilled and seemed to already have an idea about his and his partner’s abilities.

“Keep them separated!” The command rang clear in the air, but from where he couldn’t tell. They were at a disadvantage. The enemy knew them but they didn’t know their enemy.

Knowing this, he made sure to stay aware of everything happening behind him. When one attempted another sneak attack, he grabbed them with a loose arm and flung them over his head. They slammed into another shinobi, killing them both.

Hidan recovered quickly and got to his feet. His winter gear was in tatters. Kakuzu wasn’t going to be happy about that, he was certain, but they’d save that argument for later. He spotted Kakuzu surrounded by shinobi and ran across the snow to get to him.

“Keep them separated!” The command echoed from the thick forest.

Four shinobi dropped from seemingly nowhere to block his path. Without hesitation he swung the scythe at them. At close range, two were injured severely enough he figured they would die soon without medical attention, but a third caught the scythe with a long blade. With a hard swing, they yanked Hidan's scythe right out of his hands. It sailed several feet, then planted itself in the ground near the cliff.

The two remaining enemies attempted to stab him, but the cord on his waist pulled him away and to the scythe. He landed, grabbed it, but suddenly they were on him again. They couldn’t get close enough for a physical attack without him just standing against the hit and throwing it right back. Instead, they unleashed a torrent of flames.

A mass of black landed in front of him at the last second, which Hidan instantly recognized as the wind mask, but all that did was send him and it off together. A horrid scream rose from it as they fell and it turned to liquid, raining down on him. It had saved him from burning at the expense of itself, meaning Kakuzu was down a heart.

“Goddammit!” With a furious yell he threw his scythe toward the top of the cliff. It embedded itself between two large rocks and stuck. The cord went taut and the next second he was rocketing back up. Doing a flip, he grabbed his scythe as the momentum swung him past it, then landed on his feet at the top. “You can’t keep me down that easily, fuckers!” He proclaimed. Without a moment’s pause he ran for the forest, knowing they’d continue trying to knock him off the mountain.

Kakuzu easily dodged yet another kunai sent at his head. He knew they were attempting to distract him from a more serious attack, but he wouldn’t let them. Most of the attacks were coming from his front, meaning they were drawing his attention and defenses there, but it was no chore to keep aware of his surroundings. When an attack finally came at his back, he blocked it with ease. His hand was around the enemy’s neck instantly, squeezing the life out of them.

They were two steps ahead though. From out of nowhere a stronger blade pierced his chest, destroying his heart. He dropped the shinobi and fell to his knees. Within seconds the lightning mask was by his side and reabsorbing into him.

Three hearts down. Just him and the fire mask left. He’d killed six shinobi alone already and he was certain more than that were dead, but they seemed to just keep coming. Either that, or there were a few highly skilled ones left making it seem like their numbers were greater. Either way, Kakuzu knew the two of them were in trouble like this. They needed to be together.
“HIDAN!!” Kakuzu’s voice echoed.

A blade barely missed Hidan’s face as he darted out of a tree. He hit the ground and rolled to his feet. The urge to charge the enemy again was strong, but the need to return to his partner’s side was stronger. Love or hate, he wasn’t about to abandon the other man.

As he tried to make his escape, he was blocked by another shinobi. The blade swung at him wasn’t as long as the others, or so he thought. When he jerked out of the way, there was a split second in which his eye caught light reflecting off of a three inch crystal tip. It was practically invisible, until it was stained red with the blood of his throat. He choked, grabbed his neck, and stumbled backward.

Thankfully, it hadn’t been deep enough to remove his head.


This time, his head rolled.

“GODDAMNIT!!” Hidan yelled as his body dropped. Panic set in. What the fuck was he going to do now? Where was Kakuzu? Was he okay?

The two shinobi stood over him. With their head covers and masks, he couldn’t tell the difference between them or any of the others. An army of clones.

“Should we smash it?” The one on the left, who’d dealt the first blow, asked. Their voice was androgynous.

The other’s wasn’t any better. “No. Take his head to-”

The fire mask jumped from the trees above and engulfed all three of them in flames.

Three more masked nin lay dead at Kakuzu’s feet. The attacks were slowing. There couldn’t be many more left. They came like flies and died just the same, but now that their numbers were thin they weren’t as eager to jump into certain death.

This was made very clear when a single shinobi jumped down from a tree several feet from him. This one was wearing a blue sash that Kakuzu hadn’t seen before, meaning they had remained hidden the entire battle. The blade clutched in their hand was long and wide. Most of it seemed to be made up of some kind of crystal, making it nearly invisible in the snowy terrain. Impressive.

“I assume you’re the one in charge?” Kakuzu spoke calmly.

“You could say that. Thanks for thinning the herd. Means a bigger cut of the bounty for the rest of us.” Their voice was deep, grating. A male, he assumed. The masked man raised the sword, pointing it at him, “You and your partner are worth a pretty penny. We’ve been watching you for a while, taking in your tactics, your strengths, your weaknesses….”

“That’s why you’ve separated us.” Kakuzu noted grimly.

“You’re fine on your own, but your partner is rash, and when he’s in danger your feelings outweigh your logic. You’ve thrown away a few hearts to spare him a severe injury. He’s hardly any better, taking serious blows for you. Together you’re strong but you’re each other’s weaknesses too. We just used that to our advantage.”
Kakuzu saw red. With a fist raised he charged the enemy.

When the smoke cleared the fire mask landed beside Hidan and grabbed his head. As he was lifted, he saw the charred remains of the two shinobi who’d beheaded him. “Ha!” He laughed, “Fuck you!” The masked beast took him back to his body and flipped it over. Carefully, it lined up his neck. Tendrils sprang from its writhing black body and laced through Hidan’s neck rapidly. The sewing job wasn’t as tidy as Kakuzu’s, but it got the job done.

“Thanks,” Hidan grunted as he sat up and rubbed his neck. Ah, it felt good to be whole again.

A soft clatter made him look to the left. His eyes widened and he grabbed his scythe. “Watch out-!” He tried to warn the mask, but the bomb went off before the creature even noticed it was there. The explosion incinerated it and sent Hidan tumbling through the forest, snapping small branches and trees as he went.

He finally stopped when he hit a large trunk and landed on his ass. He hunched over in pain and tightened his grip on his scythe. “Ugh… Fuckers…” Another heart destroyed. How many was Kakuzu down? How many left? Was he okay?

Before he could force himself to stand, another shinobi was suddenly darting out of the trees at him, blade poised to take off his head. He slid his body down, practically laying in the cold snow, and cringed when the sword struck bark above him, barely missing. Using his feet he kicked the legs out from under the shinobi. When they hit the ground, he lifted his scythe and struck down with all the force he could muster. All three blades penetrated through flesh to the ground.

The white outfit turned red across the torso and the mask, where the shinobi was spitting up blood. With nowhere for it to go, it was drowning them. In seconds, they were dead.

Hidan pulled himself to his feet with the end of his scythe and yanked it out of the body. He was bloody and his clothing was virtually gone, with only most of his pants remaining. So much for that winter gear. He looked around, listening for his partner. “Kakuzu?” He called.

The sound of fighting gained his attention. Without hesitation, he ran toward it. “Kakuzu!”

The remaining shinobi was strong, but the speed was the main problem. Without the ability to harden his skin any longer, Kakuzu could only dodge and block so much. Each hard strike wore away at his arms and he could hardly get a hit in.

The man jabbed the sword at his chest, but missed when Kakuzu jumped backward. Unfortunately, it wasn’t quite enough. With a quick jutsu, the crystal on the end suddenly lengthened. The hit wasn’t directly on his heart, but it pierced his torso close enough to it that he knew he was as good as dead. The crystal retracted and he dropped to the ground.

The shinobi lowered his blade. “Finally.” He stepped closer, “You were the toughest opponent we’d ever faced. I’ve never seen such a killing machine in my life. You and your partner’s bounties will be well-worth the trouble.”

Kakuzu grunted and tried to sit up, but the trauma made that impossible. His body simply didn’t want to. How did Hidan always manage to keep going after such brutal injuries? How could his body defy logic and continue fighting?

As if summoned, Hidan suddenly burst from the trees, scythe in the beginning of a swing.

The shocked shinobi barely had time to get out of the way. The longest blade barely caught him, tearing through the fabric of his shirt to skin, but no further. “Shit!” He quickly retreated to regroup.
Hidan stopped his assault as soon as the other was gone. He spun around, a look of horror and disbelief on his face. “Kakuzu?!” He fell to his knees beside his partner. “Fuck- Are you-?!”

“My last heart’s damaged. It’s dying.” Kakuzu explained through the pain.

“I’m sorry- this- this is my fault—” Hidan stammered.

“No, it’s mine.” Kakuzu spoke gently. His voice was weak, trembling. “You were right. I thought you incapable of feeling for me what I did for you, and I assumed I was right because you didn’t show me affection in the same way I did you. I was hurt and I picked a fight over nothing. I’m sorry, Hidan.”

Hidan stared down at him with wide, glassy eyes. When he suddenly shook his head, it snapped him out of his slight stupor. A cocky grin appeared, but it didn’t reach his eyes. “Shut up, old man. Don’t talk like you’re dying. We don’t have time for that.” He leaned down, resting their chests together and burying his head in Kakuzu’s shoulder. “Just take my heart. It’s all yours anyway.”

Kakuzu faltered, shocked by the proclamation, “I- What if it kills you?”

“It won’t. You know that. I’m not forgiving you until you give me a better apology than that, fuckface, so if you want to rest peacefully you’d better do it.”

A small smile tugged at Kakuzu’s lips. Finally, he had definitive proof that Hidan felt something for him. Was it anything like what he felt for the other man? He couldn’t be positive, but he had hope. “This is going to be uncomfortable for you.”

“I don’t care.”

A mass of black shot out of Kakuzu’s chest and penetrated Hidan’s skin. They burrowed deep inside his chest and wrapped around his heart. Some pulled, others fused with the organ, adapting it to its new body.

Hidan grunted and pushed himself up. His heart was ripped from his body as he did so, leaving a gaping hole in his chest. As he stood his heart disappeared, absorbing into Kakuzu’s body. Hidan straightened, standing beside his partner while the heart was taking root.

Kakuzu grunted as he pushed himself up on his elbows. His body ached all over and the heart was still adjusting, but he could move again. Looking up, he saw in the snow-covered forest the same being he’d seen illuminated by fireworks. A God. Drenched in blood, clothes in tatters, hair wild, and wounds unnoticed. A God of war, of death, of destruction. An uncontrollable and unstoppable force of nature.

Kakuzu didn’t believe in such things, in Gods or higher beings or some greater power, but looking at Hidan… Hidan could make a believer of him.

Two shinobi jumped down from a tree as Hidan was lifting his scythe. They readied themselves for an attack, fully expecting it out of the rash man, but it never came. Hidan refused to attack first, refused to leave his partner’s side, refused to step even a foot away. No, the enemy would have to come at him and he would slaughter them when they did.

The blades on his scythe were meant to be removable, but he very rarely did so. The weapon was perfect for what he usually wanted it for; drawing blood. Today, however, he wasn’t interested in that. It was too risky to even attempt a ritual anymore. With enough force and the right twist, he was able to remove the last two blades and let them fall to the ground. The scythe was shorter and the remaining blade wasn’t as long as the others, but the scythe was lighter. It would swing much faster,
making it several times more deadly.

Upon seeing Hidan hold his ground rather than attack, the two shinobi glanced at one another nervously. They hadn’t prepared for a change of strategy. They hadn’t thought Hidan capable of going on defense.

“You’re gonna have to tear through me to get to him!” Hidan snarled, “Why don’t you fucking try it!?”

They hesitated, then drew long blades. The nearly-invisible tips glinted in the sunlight streaming through the trees. They ran at him in unison, their blades poised to strike.

Hidan often caught grief for being stupid, but he could analyze a situation. He could think ahead if he tried. Rarely did he care to, since the consequences of failure were so very small to him. But, failure here could mean the end of his partner and himself. He needed a strategy and he’d already thought of one. They expected him to either take the hit or strike, which would then leave him open for a counter attack. It was unlikely they knew how to account for the change to his weapon though.

When they got close enough, to within range of where his scythe would normally reach, he swung, purposefully holding back so his weapon moved at the same speed it had before removing the extra weight. It worked. They halted for a second, then kept coming. In a second, he twisted his wrist, flipping the blade so that it pointed toward them, then brought it back at twice the speed.

The curved blade sank into the first shinobi’s gut, killing them almost instantly, but the second caught the end and was knocked aside with a gaping wound.

Kakuzu finally climbed to his feet. “You continue to impress me, Hidan.” He commented.

Hidan straightened and cast him a cocky grin, “Thanks. You aren’t so bad either, old man. Guess you can teach an old dog new tricks once in awhile.”

“Very funny.” Kakuzu raised his arm, aiming it at the remaining shinobi getting to their feet. The threads loosened and his arm shot at them. His fist went through their chest, ripping out their heart and killing them. He brought it back and let the tendrils pull it inside his chest. It was doubtful it would take, but it couldn’t hurt to try.

A sound behind them made both spin around. The head shinobi with the blue sash was already out of the trees and running at them. Hidan didn’t hesitate to dart at him. His new speed took the shinobi by surprise, making him falter. Hidan swung the scythe, blade pointed backward, and the blunt end collided with the side of the shinobi’s skull, sending him to the ground. He didn’t move, but the white of his hood stained red.

“Knocked his ass out!” Hidan laughed. “I don’t know how many of these freaks we managed to slaughter, but I was hoping to take this one alive…” He looked at Kakuzu, “I know you want his heart, but do you mind if I torture him a little first?”

Kakuzu stared down at the unconscious man for several seconds. This man and his gang had nearly torn them apart. The torture Hidan had in mind was too good for him. Finally, he turned to Hidan, “Do you remember that thing you wanted to try that I was so against?”

“Tch, which one?” Hidan teased playfully.

“You know the one.”

Hidan thought on it a moment, then a devious grin spread across his face. “Oh, I think I know the
one. You wanna do it now though?” He gestured to the snow around them.

“We can’t continue up the mountain in our current conditions.” Kakuzu explained. “Let’s take him back to the inn with us. We’ll do it there.”

Hidan shuddered in anticipation.
They walked into the lobby in tatters. The trek and the fight had left their clothes worse for wear. Kakuzu managed to mend his for the most part, but Hidan’s had been unsalvageable. They would have to buy him more.

The unconscious shinobi was slung over Kakuzu’s shoulder. When they entered the lobby, the man behind the counter gave them a horrified look. Kakuzu didn’t bat an eye as they walked past him. “Keep your mouth shut and we’ll leave a bonus for you.”

The man nodded grimly and looked away.

Their room was how they left it; untouched save for a slight wrinkle in the sheets of one bed. Kakuzu carried the man to the desk chair and sat him in it. “Lock the door and push the bed against it.” He instructed Hidan.

Hidan did so, then pushed the other bed against the wall, clearing a large area. He rested his scythe against the same wall and practically tore his pants off, tossing them aside.

Kakuzu undressed the shinobi down to his underwear, figuring some of the clothing might fit Hidan, then tied him to the chair with threads. As an extra precaution, he laced several through flesh, binding his hands and legs together. Lastly, he sewed his mouth shut. His screams would draw too much attention and Kakuzu did not want to be interrupted.

While Kakuzu was securing the shinobi, Hidan slit his hand open and dropped to his knees. His blood stained the wood floor as he smeared it in a large circle. Once he was done with the triangle in the middle he stood again. “Why are you still dressed?? Hurry up!” he barked at Kakuzu.

Kakuzu gave him an annoyed look as he removed a kunai from its pouch. He flicked it across the shinobi’s shoulder, getting blood on the blade. “Here.” He offered it to Hidan.

Hidan took it with a grimace, which quickly turned into a grin. He pressed his tongue to the blade and ran it up slowly, keeping eye contact with his partner the whole time. His tongue flicked the end, then he swallowed the blood. His skin turned black and white.

“Where you seriously trying to seduce me by licking a bloody kunai?” Kakuzu dead-panned.

“Shut the fuck up, I know you like it. Fucking undress, asswipe.” Hidan spun around and walked into the circle.

Kakuzu took a moment to look him over. His body was flawless. Angular yet smooth to the touch. He loved seeing it completely bare and had a hundred times now, but never before had he seen Hidan nude in his curse form. It was an interesting sight. Hidan was still bloody, but his wounds were gone. Now more than ever he looked like a God of Death. The Grim Reaper himself. A demonic, destructive, denizen of Hell that had crawled through the Earth’s crust to get to the land of the living and bring it to it’s knees.

He did a good job of it too.

Kakuzu shook himself out of his slight daze and quietly undressed. His clothing was laid carefully over the desk. When he turned back around, he found Hidan sitting crossed-legged on the floor in the circle, a manic smile on his face and a bottle of lube and his retractable spear sitting nearby.
“You look like a lunatic.” Kakuzu commented.

“I am! Hurry up and get over here!”

“Patience.” He shifted to stand in front of the unconscious shinobi. He grabbed the man’s mask from the table and tied it over his eyes so he couldn’t see. What they were about to do was depraved enough. They didn’t need him to see it too.

“You have such a nice ass.” Hidan commented almost dreamily, “I barely get to see it though. Walk around naked more.”

“You do that enough for us both.”

“Don’t talk like you don’t love it. I see how you look at me. You can have me anytime, you know? I’d never say no to you.”

“I don’t like to make those sort of assumptions. I’m not very into non-consensual sex.”

A wry grin made it’s home on Hidan’s face. “What do you call this then?”

Kakuzu paused, gazing down at the shinobi in thought. This man had nearly ended them, would have turned them both in for bounties, could have separated them forever, and almost doomed Hidan to die a slow, painful death as a head. Kakuzu could barely stand to think about it. The shinobi deserved this, he reasoned. It was a brutal punishment. Hidan had been begging to try it for months and only now had Kakuzu been willing to inflict it on someone. “Revenge.” He said finally. That’s what this was. Brutal, twisted revenge.

He slapped the shinobi across the face in order to wake him. The sound of skin hitting skin was jarring. Hidan jolted, still grinning. “Ooooh, ouch.” He laughed. The action did what it was meant to. The man groaned and tried to lean forward, but the threads stopped him. He groaned again and lifted his head, then went still and silent.

“You know what’s happening, don’t you?” Kakuzu said with a growl in his tone. “That was the closest anyone’s ever come to defeating us. We learned from it, and so will you.”

The man began to struggle, pulling hard against his restraints. Nothing budged. The threads were strong and numerous, preventing his escape.

“Don’t bother. Hidan’s curse is already in effect. There’s no escape from death.” He stepped away.

Hidan perked up when he saw Kakuzu coming toward him. Immediately, he flopped onto his back, causing a loud ‘thud’ on the wooden floor, and spread his legs. “Finally! Hurry up! Come on come on!” He wiggled his hips excitedly.

Kakuzu knelt between his spread legs and took a moment to gaze down at him. In his curse form, Hidan looked like a madman, and Kakuzu knew him to be one. Was he stupid for falling for someone like that? He supposed he couldn’t really help it, so the logical thing to do was not dwell, but that often proved easier said than done. Without a word, he grabbed the lube, popped it open, and poured a glob in his palm.

“I want you to really fuck me up, okay?” Hidan said as Kakuzu spread lube on his cock. “Break my bones, tear up my body real good- oh! You should stab me with some of those weird fucking thread things! I’d love it! Damn- just- be real rough with me, okay? Like don’t hold back anything. Goddamn I want this to hurt so fucking bad-“
“Hidan.” Kakuzu interrupted, his eyes locked with his partner’s, “Are you even human?”

Hidan fell silent, blinking at him. “Wh-what?” His brows drew together in confusion.

“Are you human? No human loves pain to this extent, I-”

“I don’t love pain. Not that much. I like it when you get really rough with me, and I like inflicting it on others, but outside of sex and my curse I don’t like it.”

“But why do you like it at all?”

Hidan briefly frowned. “Because Lord Jashin commands it be inflicted on others. We share the pain.”

“So you do whatever your God commands, even if you don’t like it?”

“No. I do whatever the fuck I want, and about half the time I do what Jashin wants. But, do you know what I really want right fucking now??”

Kakuzu sighed, sensing Hidan’s irritation, “To get on with it.”

“I want you to rape me. I want you to be so fucking brutal- I know it sounds awful and I know you don’t like me to- I’m just- Arg!” He snarled and suddenly sat up. With fury in his eyes he pointed an accusing finger at the shinobi, “I want him to fucking hurt! He tried to tear us apart! You almost-! Gaauurg!” He slammed his fists on the floor repeatedly, “I CAN’T FUCKING STAND IT! I HATE HIM!” He looked up at Kakuzu. “I want him to fucking suffer! I want this to be Hell! I want to feel the fucking agony we inflict and I want to know he’s dead!” The fire in his eyes flared briefly, then disappeared. His shoulders slumped and he suddenly looked pleading. His hands pressed against Kakuzu’s chest, feeling his single heartbeat. “I want revenge too.” His hands slid upward, cupping his face.

Kakuzu mirrored his actions. He pressed a hand to Hidan’s chest, felt the beating of a brand new heart, then gently cupped his face. “I care about you.” He said softly.

“I care about you too.” Hidan replied in a tender voice.

Kakuzu leaned in. They kissed. Gentle, loving. When it was broken they gave at one another with soft smiles. No words needed to be exchanged. They understood perfectly what was about to happen. Hidan let his hands fall and offered no resistance.

Kakuzu grabbed his throat and slammed him to the ground. He pressed down, cutting off his air and keeping him in place. Hidan’s hands gripped his arm tightly, but they weren’t pushing him away. He hiked up one of Hidan’s legs, Hidan pulled the other in himself, and with a single hard thrust he was buried inside him. Tight, hot. Hidan’s back arched, eyes went wide. He didn’t make a sound, but behind them the shinobi screamed, the noise muffled by his sewn-shut lips.

The chair tipped, hit the floor, and the man struggled violently. Irritated by the noise, Kakuzu released Hidan’s neck and grabbed his arms. He pinned them to the floor and with a hard squeeze to the middle he snapped them both. Hidan gasped sharply, his eyes losing focus, and the shinobi let out another scream. Kakuzu’s hands moved to the upper arms. Squeezed. A gasp. A scream. Hidan’s arms stayed limp.

To the legs next. Lower and upper broken. Hidan moaned, his eyes half-lidded. The shinobi’s screams weakened. The chair stopped moving. Hidan was hard. Tendrils wrapped around it, making sure he didn’t finish too soon.
“You say you don’t like pain, but you get off on this, don’t you?” Kakuzu growled. One hand wrapped around Hidan’s neck. “You’re a little pain slut, aren’t you?”

Hidan whimpered. His eyes focused on Kakuzu again. Pleading. ‘Please hurt me.’

Who could say no to a look like that?

Kakuzu put him on his side, pressing his legs together, and pushed his head against the floor. The thrusting didn’t start slow like it normally did. It was hard, violent. There was blood, screaming. Hidan clawed at the floor. His words were pained whimpers and half-sobs of praises and curses. Pain and pleasure were etched in his features, evidenced by the twisting and writhing of his body. When tendrils pierced the flesh of his back he arched and cried out. Kakuzu grabbed his throat to silence him. He forced his body to twist so the backs of his shoulders touched the floor and he could push down on his neck. The position looked back-breaking and the expression of agony on Hidan’s face made Kakuzu falter. His thrusts weakened and he loosened his grip.

Hidan’s expression turned furious. He grabbed Kakuzu’s wrist, snarling, “Harder!”

It seemed he’d been wrong to think he’d gone too far. Perhaps that wasn’t even possible. He squeezed Hidan’s neck and began brutally thrusting again. The pace was taxing, this wouldn’t last long, but he was going to make every second count. With his free hand he grabbed Hidan’s spear. His rapid thrusts made aiming difficult, but he did his best to trace a line through every section of white until they were all red, leaving only the white on Hidan’s face. More tendrils slipped inside him, making zigzag patterns under and through his skin.

The pain was overwhelming, searing, will-breaking. The agony was all-consuming. Even the most hardened shinobi would beg for death’s sweet embrace. Hidan wasn’t like that though. He welcomed the torment, begged to be consumed by it, pleaded for his partner to inflict it without mercy. Asking for another person to provide him pain wasn’t something he was experienced with or had ever been comfortable with before.

Kakuzu was different though. Hidan trusted him. Trusted him to have his back, to stay by his side, to treat him as an equal. Despite asking Kakuzu to rape him, that wasn’t what this was. This was controlled, carefully orchestrated, requested. Hidan knew if he changed his mind, if he simply said ‘stop,’ it would end. Kakuzu would stop, would care for him, would apologize for going too far. That made all the difference, really. That single bit of knowledge alone, that complete and utter trust shared between them, was what made this possible in the first place. Why Hidan was completely comfortable giving himself to Kakuzu, comfortable telling the man to do whatever he pleased to his body, comfortable to beg to be tortured. Because he knew, despite giving Kakuzu control, Hidan still had plenty of it himself.

So, even though this was so violent he thought his hips were going to break, so merciless he could hardly think about anything but the red hot pain coursing through every fiber of his being, and so cruel he would always see Kakuzu a little differently from now on, there was no fear. Kakuzu would stop if commanded and their partnership wouldn’t suffer from this. Hidan trusted him more than he’d never trusted anyone else.

That was probably the most frightening thing about this, really.

Once Kakuzu was finished with his torture, he dropped the spear and let go of Hidan’s neck.

“PLEASE!” Hidan was begging immediately, “PLEASE LET ME COME! GOD, PLEASE!” His words were sobs and his whole body was shaking. Damaged muscles barely wanted to obey and the searing pain made him wonder if Kakuzu wasn’t actually burning him.
The words weren’t especially pleasing to Kakuzu. So, Hidan would want to achieve orgasm from this. Would that cause the shinobi to do the same? Kakuzu hated the thought. He wouldn’t give him the satisfaction. He had a better idea.

“Soon.” Kakuzu growled. He stopped, pulled out, and lifted Hidan by his arm. The man was limp, only able to whimper. Grabbing a leg, Kakuzu suddenly flipped him, slamming his face and chest on the wood floor. Again, Kakuzu feared he’d gone a bit far, but Hidan pushed himself up on his elbows and looked over his shoulder at him. Blood leaked from his broken nose, darkened eyes half-lidded. ‘Don’t you dare stop!’

Kakuzu grabbed his hips, entering him again. He was rewarded with a wanton moan. He forced Hidan’s shoulders to the floor and gripped his hair, holding his head against the wood. His thrusts made Hidan’s back arch inward painfully. More threads slithered forth from his body and penetrated Hidan’s, leaving white-hot trails of pain between muscle and skin, caressing him in places he’d never been touched. His body tensed, tightened, squeezed. Heavenly.

A symphony of sultry sounds rose from Hidan’s throat with each barbaric thrust, while tears of overwhelming pleasure and pain leaking from his eyes in thin streams. “FUCK FUCK FUCK OH FUCK YES YES YES YES YES!” His nails raked the floor. The pain was raw, exquisite. Knowing he was sharing it with the man who’d nearly torn them apart made it even better. There was a sick satisfaction in knowing exactly how much agony the man was in right at this moment, knowing the blinding pain made every muscle, every cell, every atom beg for the mercy of death.

Kakuzu grabbed the spear again. His orgasm was fast approaching. “Should I let you come now?” He asked over Hidan’s screams.

“YES! PLEASE! PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE GOD PLEASE!”

Pressure built. He was nearing the brink. Positioning the spear over Hidan’s heart, he released his cock from the threads. Hidan’s breath hitched, he tensed, went still and silent as he stood right on the line, about to fall. Kakuzu rammed the spear through his back, tearing through his heart, killing the shinobi and allowing Hidan to experience his death alongside orgasm. Still gripping the spear, Kakuzu used it to ground himself as a wave of pleasure washed over him. Vaguely, he could hear Hidan wail, but his senses were overwhelmed by his own orgasm. Buried deep inside, he filled his lover, marking him as his own. A guttural moan rose from his throat.

The room went still, the only sounds their soft panting. Slowly, the tendrils withdrew from Hidan’s worn body, making him tremble. Kakuzu yanked the spear out, forcing a whimper from Hidan, and dropped it. Blood covered the floor, splattering from the middle and reaching every corner. A huge mess that he didn’t want to clean up.

Hidan’s skin faded back to it’s usual pale tone. Lines of red were left where white used to be. His body was trembling, healing, aching. Kakuzu ran his hands up his back, gently massaging sore muscles. Hidan groaned softly at the touch, eyes closed, and laid still as Kakuzu rubbed his shoulders.

Eventually, Kakuzu’s hands slid down his back again, dragging trails of blood. They resembled damaged, red wings, the color a harsh contrast to Hidan’s pale skin. A fallen angel. “Angel of Death.” Kakuzu muttered without thinking.

Tired eyes opened, fixing him with a side-ways gaze. Hidan grinned. “You’re really fixated on the idea that I’m not human, aren’t you?” He grunted as he pushed himself up on his elbows. His head was hanging. Kakuzu couldn’t see his face. His voice was soft. “Sometimes, I wonder too.” He turned his head, offering a cocky smile. “Now why don’t you pull your dick out of my ass and we
take a shower together? I’m fucking gross.”

Kakuzu merely hummed. He slipped out of Hidan and stood, then tried to help Hidan to his feet but he was already getting up on wobbly legs. Kakuzu’s cum leaked out of him and ran down his legs. He was bloody and his hair was a mess. An alluring sight.

“Damn,” He breathed, “You really fucked me up.”

“That’s what you wanted.”

Hidan smirked at him, “Fuck yeah it was.” His legs stilled and he headed toward the bathroom, leaving a trail of blood and semen.

Kakuzu walked over to the shinobi and knelt beside him. The man was still, bloody, dead. Kakuzu pulled off the mask covering his eyes. They were open, empty. He’d suffered and that was immensely satisfying.

The hiss of the shower made him stand. He left the man in favor of joining Hidan. When he entered the bathroom he found his partner already standing under the spray, facing the wall and leaning against it. The water hit his lower back, rinsing away blood and semen from his legs. One hand was between his cheeks, rubbing away cum that was still leaking from him. Kakuzu walked over. Without a word, he he reached in. The water was still cold. He ran one hand down Hidan’s back and brushed away Hidan’s hand. Two thick fingers slipped inside his partner, making him gasp.

“You really like toying with me, don’t you?” Hidan smirked at him, his head resting against the tile wall.

Kakuzu hummed. He spread his fingers, opening the hole so water could more easily rinse away the cum still inside. Hidan groaned, his eyes closing and legs starting to buckle. The water was warming up. Kakuzu couldn’t help a grin. “I don’t hear you complaining.”

“Mm, I could never complain when you touch me.”

The grin fell. “You do when I hold you.”

Hidan opened his eyes, face falling. He pushed Kakuzu’s hand away and straightened. “Join me.” He requested, stepping aside to make room.

Kakuzu obeyed. The warm water washed away evidence of their dirty deed. Hidan’s arms wrapped around his neck, pulling him down for a kiss. Kakuzu’s arms circled his waist and pulled him close. They pressed together, two melding into one, hearts hammering in unison.

Hidan broke the kiss. Pink gazed into green. He was apprehensive, almost fearful, his mouth hanging open for words that didn’t want to be spoken. Finally, he forced them out. “This… this isn’t just sex anymore, is it?”

“No.” Kakuzu replied softly. “It’s been more than that for a while.”

Hidan nodded. “Yeah, I noticed… I, um… I…” His face twisted into one of frustration. He stepped back and pushed Kakuzu away. He was looking everywhere but at his partner and he couldn’t seem to stop rubbing his arms and shoulders.

“What is it, Hidan?” Kakuzu found himself asking. “I won’t judge you. You know that. We have our differences, but—”
“I know, I know!” Hidan interrupted. “I- I don’t mind when you hold me. I like it. But, I wasn’t raised to be held. Jashin taught me to bask in pain and inflict it on others. I learned about anatomy and torture techniques…. Never how to show physical affection. I just… don’t really know what to do with myself…” His eyes fell to the floor, guilty, “And… I guess I was scared that if I let you hold me I’d be punished somehow. I know that’s stupid. I don’t know how to explain it. And, I was afraid I’d start to like you too much and it would end badly. We’d both get hurt. I guess that’s already kind of happened though… I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to hurt you. I just didn’t know how to deal with it.” His shoulders slumped in defeat.

Kakuzu gently grabbed his shoulders and pulled him closer. “I forgive you. I wasn’t exactly fair to you either. You do a lot to show you care, and I shouldn’t have assumed you didn’t care just because you were afraid to be held. I know you’re scared. I guess I am too. This is dangerous. But, we work well together. I don’t want to stop and try to go back to just being partners. It wouldn’t work.” He pressed a kiss to Hidan’s hairline.

Hidan let out a soft chuckle. “No way.” He reached up and held Kakuzu’s face, “I forgive you too, prick.”

“Moron.” Kakuzu smiled softly.

Just like that, things were back to normal.

They washed each other clean of blood. Kakuzu took it slow, running his hands all over Hidan’s body, paying special attention to his back. The macabre wings washed away, but he continued caressing anyway. His hands massaged Hidan’s shoulders, drawing soft moans of appreciation, and slowly worked his neck. His partner was completely relaxed under his touch. He let the water rinse the soap away, then poured shampoo on his head.

“Oi!” Hidan protested, “I can wash my own hair!”

“I want to.” Kakuzu said. Ignoring his partner’s grumbles, he lathered and massaged it into his scalp. When Hidan’s shoulders went lax, he knew he was doing fine. He took a little longer than necessary to work it in before finally rinsing it out.

“Am I clean enough for you now?” Hidan teased with a lopsided grin. “Is it my turn to do you yet?”

Kakuzu kissed his temple and handed him the rag.

Hidan wasn’t as slow or sensual. He was eager to touch, to explore. His hands groped and caressed, fingers slipping between stitching to clean every single inch. They’d explored one another’s bodies a hundred times, but this was different. Intimate. Hidan wasn’t used to intimate. It was frightening, but thrilling and alluring at the same time. He tried to mimic what Kakuzu did for him. Clean him of blood, wash his hair, run his hands through the long tresses like he’d always wanted to. It felt right.

When they were both clean, Kakuzu shut off the water. They stepped out, dried, and left the bathroom. Their good moods plummeted.

Everything was a bloody mess, but the body was gone. Zetsu had probably eaten it already.

“What the fuck are we gonna do about this??” Hidan groaned.

Kakuzu looked around, thinking. “We’ll clean the blood tomorrow. We also have to replenish my hearts, get new clothes, and get the chest from the top of the mountain.”

Hidan groaned again, shoulders slumping.
“Let’s worry about it tomorrow. The sun’s down. We’re done doing anything tonight.” He led his partner to the bed against the wall, carefully stepping around blood, and sat down on it.

“Sounds good to me.” Hidan said as he followed. He abandoned his towel on the floor and crawled into bed.

Kakuzu did the same and made himself comfortable. He detached his arm in order to turn off the light across the room. The other bed was still against the door, but that was also a problem for tomorrow. When the lights went off he pulled blankets over them. He was slightly surprised when he felt Hidan’s hand on his shoulder.

“Can I, um… lay my head on you, or whatever?” His voice was hesitant, unsure if his request was the right thing to say.

“Or whatever?” Kakuzu teased.

“Fuck you.”

Kakuzu laughed softly and pulled him close. He rested on his back and guided Hidan to rest on his chest. “Comfortable?”

Hidan hummed and nuzzled his shoulder. “Very.” His fingers brushed the stitches on Kakuzu’s chest, tracing them affectionately.

Kakuzu pressed a kiss to his hair and squeezed his shoulders. His skin was smooth beneath his hand as he rubbed his back.

It didn’t take long for Hidan to pass out. It never did. His fingers stopped moving, his breathing deepened, and his body relaxed, turning into dead weight. Asleep in less than two minutes.

Kakuzu used his free hand to gently take Hidan’s that was resting on his chest. It was barely smaller than his own. There were no callouses despite it wielding a heavy weapon daily. Hidan’s healing kept his body in pristine condition. No disease, no scars, no imperfections of any kind. His hands were soft, but strong. These were the same hands that had killed a countless number of shinobi. The same hands that had been at Kakuzu’s throat more than a few times. The same hands that had injured him more than he could remember. The same hands that had killed him once, before they’d even known each other’s names.

That first fight had taught him a valuable lesson: Never underestimate an opponent, no matter how incompetent they might seem. If he hadn’t had five hearts he would have died, and it had taken Hidan less than a minute to secure that victory. Many shinobi fell before him just as quickly. They underestimated him. His boisterous nature, cocky attitude, and overconfident personality made him seem less threatening than he really was. All it took was a single drop of blood though and the battle was basically over. Another victory for the God of death.

Hidan had called him a war machine once, but Kakuzu knew who the real war machine was. It was the smaller man, currently pressed against his chest and snoring softly. The one that whined about the weather and pitched a fit when he wasn’t allowed to kill someone and turned into an unbearable child if he didn’t get to eat whatever he was craving at the time. Hidan was the war machine, the God of death and destruction, the immortal Hell-bent on killing everyone in his way.

And somehow, somehow, Kakuzu had won his affections.

Sunlight streamed in through cracks in curtains. It warmed Hidan’s back, but the tingling sensation wasn’t what caused him to stir. It was the light caress of fingers running through his hair and the
shifting of weight on the bed. He groaned and slowly opened his eyes.

Kakuzu was sitting on the edge of the bed, watching him silently. He was fully dressed, his features hidden behind a mask and hood.

Hidan grinned tiredly. “Always touching me so gently these days,” he teased.

“Would you prefer I treat you like you’re used to?”

“Hm-?” Hidan barely finished a confused hum before he was smacked in the face by a bouquet of flowers. “Ack!” He sputtered and scrambled to get away.

Kakuzu practically shoved the flowers into his hand. “Here,” he grunted. They were a bit disheveled from colliding with Hidan’s face, but still quite nice. An array of colorful flowers, each hand-picked based on their deeper meaning. Hanakotoba, the language of flowers. A pink rose for trust, violet for honesty, zinnia for loyalty, bluebell for gratitude, and a red rose because it was early and he hadn’t been thinking clearly.

That was his excuse and he would stick to it. Maybe Hidan wouldn’t even notice anyway.

The flowers confused the younger man, “The fuck’re these for?” He examined them with a frown.

Kakuzu stood and faced his partner. “My formal apology.”

Hidan’s expression softened and he regarded the flowers more thoughtfully. He doubted Kakuzu had grabbed some flowers at random and called it good. Kakuzu wasn’t like that. Flowers had only been in his studies for use as poisons, but Hidan knew the language well enough to understand this. The pink rose wasn’t a surprise and the bluebell and zinnia made sense, he supposed. The red rose would have been shrugged off as a shitty joke but the violet suggested it wasn’t. He knew what the red rose meant.

He never would have expected Kakuzu to confess something like this via flowers, but he was always full of surprises.

Hidan scoffed and plucked the red rose out of the bouquet. “I already forgave you, cuntwad.” He stood. “I don’t even like flowers. You know that. Don’t know why you wasted the money.” He tossed the flowers onto the bed, but kept the rose against his chest.

A soft huff of air, a small laugh perhaps, rushed from Kakuzu’s nose. “Leave them for the maid then.”

“I will. I’ll keep this one though.” He lifted the rose to his nose, “I like the color. Reminds me of blood.”

Kakuzu hummed. It didn’t take words of affirmation for him to know Hidan caught the meaning and reciprocated. Good. That made things less awkward. He tugged down his mask as he leaned in. Their lips met in a deep kiss that they both melted into. When it was broken, Kakuzu quickly lifted his mask again and tossed a bag onto the bed. “I bought clothes for you too. I was going to have you try the shinobi’s on, but…”

Hidan frowned, “Yeah I don’t wanna wear that fucker’s clothes.”

“I figured that would be your response.” He gestured to the bag, “Get dressed. We’re going to try the mountain again.”
Hidan sat the rose down and pulled clothing from the bag. “Don’t you need more hearts?”

“We’ll see if we find some on the way. I want this over with.”

The sky was a vibrant blue, unmarked by clouds because they were basically standing on them. The sun reflected across the expanse of white, creating a prism of colors that extended as far as the eye could see. The wind ruffled Hidan’s hair and their cloaks and shifted the clouds, creating an ever-changing sea of rainbows.

Hidan brought the rose to his lips, letting the delicate petals brush them. The smell was weaker up here, but it was still sweet. “I dreamed about this last night.”

Beside him, Kakuzu’s gaze shifted from the clouds to his partner’s face. “About this?”

“Mm. I had a dream instead of a nightmare. We were up above the clouds. Everything was gold and white…” Pink eyes gazed moments longer on the ethereal sight, before they were torn away. Behind him was the temple; tall, once regal, and nearly in ruin. It sat at the very top of the mountain. The path leading up to it was no more, meaning they’d had to scale the side of the mountain to get to it. Not worth the work, in his opinion, but he wasn’t the one who’d accepted the mission. “The temple was in better shape in my dream though. Bigger and prettier too. Kinda sad to see a temple like this.”

Kakuzu’s gaze didn’t stray from his face for several seconds. He liked the calm, almost serene look on it. Finally, he turned around. “Let’s get in there and find the chest. Be careful though.”

Snow crunched under their feet and wisps of clouds swirled as they walked through them to the temple.

“You’re the one who should be careful.” Hidan informed with an air of superiority, “Heathens like you usually catch fire when they enter a holy place.”

“You’re one to talk. This place is hardly holy anymore anyway.”

They had to duck to enter. The inside was lit by the sun filtering through holes. Streams of warm light led them down a slanting hallway that connected numerous smaller chambers to one large one on the end. They entered it.

It was in a bad state; pillars fallen, roof partially collapsed, water resting in any bowl’d surface, icicles hanging from the ceiling and dripping. In it’s prime it had been grand though. The pillars were made of smooth stone and many had intricate patterns carved in them. The floor, or what could be seen of it, was once a glittering gold with Jade stone set in large circular patterns. The walls were similar, many bearing depictions of deities and nature.

Kakuzu spotted a shelf built into the back wall holding a number of expensive treasures. It was partially blocked by pillars, but he was certain the chest would be on it. He pointed to it, “We should check there first. We have to move some of this debris to get to it though. We have to be careful or the whole place could fall.”

Hidan hummed and stepped up behind him. He examined the pile of stone rubble with a thoughtful expression. “I could probably walk across it. I’m lighter than you.”

“Seems risky.”

“Well I won’t die if something falls on me.”

“I’d have to dig you out though.”
Hidan rolled his eyes. He put his scythe on the ground and jumped up on a large piece of roof, “Whatever. Wait here, I’ll see how far I can get.” Slowly, he began walking across the treacherous debris, stepping from one large chunk to the next. Some were still, some wobbled, and a few shifted so much he feared he would end up needing to be dug out.

Thankfully, everything held. He made it to the back of the room and carefully rested on a crooked pillar so he could lean over enough to get a good look at the shelf.

Sitting near the middle, teetering on the very edge, was a small, ornate chest. It was made of gold with emerald accents. Seemed like the one they wanted. Reaching in, he carefully placed the rose on the shelf, then took the chest. He held it tightly as he carefully made his way back.

“Why did you leave the rose?” Kakuzu asked when Hidan landed back on solid ground before him.

Hidan shrugged. “Felt right.” He wasn’t going to explain himself any further than that. With a smile, he held up the chest, “Got this stupid box though! This fucking trip wasn’t for nothing!”

Kakuzu took it from him and tucked it safely away. “Let’s get off this God-forsaken mountain and collect our reward.”
Warmth. After days in the biting cold it was a welcome change. Hidan ditched his extra layers as soon as possible, letting Kakuzu pawn them off to get some of their money back. He shrugged his cloak off as well and let his scythe drag along behind him. Shirtless, he was able to soak up plenty of warm rays of sunlight.

“This is the beeeest,” he groaned as they walked along an open road. “Hold on, I wanna take my pants off too so my legs can get some sun.”

Beside him, Kakuzu spoke sternly. “Leave your damn clothes on, Hidan. Have some shame.”

Hidan cast him a smirk, “That wasn’t what you were saying last night.”

Kakuzu sighed heavily.

A small village came into view moments later. Hidan slipped his cloak back on and fixed his scythe to his back. When they entered, people moved out of their way. They walked the short distance to a familiar ramen stand and were surprised to see even more familiar faces.

Standing outside the stand were Deidara, Sasori, Kisame, and Itachi.

“What the fuck is this?!” Hidan gestured to the group, “Too many fucking people is what it is! Half of you need to leave.”

Kisame laughed, “Ha! You’re a funny guy, Hidan.”

“What’s wasn’t a joke! Leave!”

Kisame merely laughed again.

Kakuzu spoke to Sasori, “I have the box. Shall we meet with your informant again?”

“Of course,” Sasori nodded. He turned to Deidara, “Wait here.”

“Yeah, yeah…” Deidara muttered and crossed his arms with a frown.

Kakuzu pulled out a small bag of money and tossed it to Hidan, “Buy us something to eat at the inn. Don’t buy shit for anyone else.”

“What, you don’t trust me?” Hidan grinned at him.

“I will punch you.” Kakuzu gave him a stern look, then turned away. He and Sasori left together.
Hidan looked at the three left. Itachi was staring off into space silently, as always. Hidan didn’t speak to him much. He was weird. Deidara was looking away from Itachi with his arms crossed in an angry pout. It was well known that he hated Itachi, so that made sense. Kisame was standing between them and smiling at Hidan. Unsurprising.

“What’re you fuckers doing here anyway?” Hidan asked with a grimace. Too many people. He didn’t love having so much company. Kakuzu’s presence easily squashed his loneliness, so any more people was just a damn crowd.

“Itachi and I were passing through nearby and we ran into Deidara and Sasori.” Kisame answered. “They said they were meeting you guys so we figured we’d tag along to say hey. We also heard you and Kakuzu were-”

Deidara gasped and began smacking at his torso him, “SSSHHHH! Sssshhhh! Shut up!!”

“-being real sweet to each other the other day and we wanted to see that.” Kisame finished without missing a beat. Deidara’s punches had no effect.

Hidan’s face tinted red, whether from embarrassment or anger it wasn’t clear. “What?! Who- Did Deidara tell you that? What’s your problem, Deidara?”

Deidara glared and crossed his arms again, “None of your business, nm.”

Hidan’s eyes narrowed. “Are you still mad at me? Shit, dude, forgive and forget.”

Deidara clenched his fists, arms straight at his sides and fury in his eyes, “You said I used my jutsu for sex!”

Hidan shrugged nonchalantly, “You have mouths in the palms of your hands. I just assumed you’d use them to give excellent handjobs. Shit, I’d do it. I didn’t mean to offend you.”

“You fucking-!” Deidara snarled.

Kisame grabbed the back of his cloak to hold him back. “Alright, alright, let’s all relax.” He pulled Deidara back, putting some space between the two. “Hidan, maybe you should apologize.”

Hidan rolled his eyes and crossed his arms. “Sorry you misunderstood my compliment.”

“Hidan, come on, man.”

“That’s the best you’re gonna get,” he said as he shook his head.

Kisame sighed. “Fine. Deidara, just leave it. You know how he is.”

Deidara growled and turned away.

Hidan rolled his eyes, then headed into the ramen stand.

The house was no different from the last time they had been inside. The same dust settled over the same furniture, all in the same spots. Madam Satchiko had happily welcomed them in, her eyes sparkling with joy. They were taken to the same room as before, where a case of money was waiting on the coffee table.

“You have the chest?” Satchiko asked.

Kakuzu reached into his cloak and pulled out the ornate chest. He offered it to her, and she took it
gently in both hands.

“Oh, my…” She sat down in her chair and held it delicately in her lap. “It’s been a very long time…” She reached up and opened the locket on her necklace. From inside she took a key. There was a soft ‘click’ as it unlocked the chest.

Kakuzu had been eager to know what was inside. For such a bounty he’d guessed it was something very valuable. He’d half considered breaking the chest open to see what it was, but that was a gamble. If it was worth more than the reward then they’d make off with quite a bit of money, but if it was worthless there was the risk that they might not be rewarded for having busted the chest open, so they’d be out even more money. It wasn’t a risk he had been willing to take.

He’d made the right call.

From inside she pulled out an old, worn-out forehead protector. The band was torn mostly to pieces and the metal part was small. Clearly, it was a very old model. She smiled affectionately at it, running her thumbs gently over the Hidden Snow symbol on front. “It was my great grandfather’s. He gave it to my great grandmother as a proposal, back when it was the most valuable thing either of them had. He left the shinobi lifestyle for her and went into trade. He was able to overtake his competition very quickly. That’s how we have our fortune now. It’s worthless monetarily, but in sentimental value -in what it means to me and my family- it’s priceless.”

Kakuzu was unimpressed. All that for a fucking forehead protector?? How incredibly stupid. At least he was making money off this nonsense.

“If you don’t mind, I’d like to take my money and go,” he stated, “My partner gets into trouble if I leave him alone too long.”

She chuckled softly and tucked the forehead protector back into the chest. She locked it and put it aside. Standing, she took the case from the table and opened it. “It’s all there, I promise. Thank you for retrieving the chest.” She closed the briefcase and handed it to him.

“Thank you for the money.” Kakuzu took it from her and let it rest at his side.

They left shortly thereafter.

“I assume the mission was as tough as she made it out to be.” Sasori spoke as they walked.

“The mountain itself was doable, though very taxing. Not a problem for immortals. Our main issue was a group of shinobi who ambushed us part of the way up.” Kakuzu explained.

“Tough battle?”

“I nearly died.”

“How did Hidan take that?”

Kakuzu didn’t care for the teasing tone. “He got very serious very fast. If he’d be that focused all the time I would never have to lift a finger in battle. He’s a very tough opponent when he isn't screwing around.”

“He seems the type to screw around a lot.”

“That has its advantages.” Kakuzu protested, “Opponents underestimate him and he takes advantage of that.”
Sasori made a noise like a laugh. “Are you getting defensive of him again?”

Kakuzu shot him a glare. “If I thought Pein wouldn’t punish me for it, I’d kill you.”

“The feeling is mutual.”

They arrived at the ramen stand a few minutes later. The other four were seated at the bar inside. Deidara, Kisame, Hidan, then Itachi. Hidan turned around as soon as they entered. “Finally!” He hopped off his seat, bringing a bag of to-go boxes with him. “You got the money, right?”

Kakuzu hummed and showed him the briefcase.

“Great! I’d sure be pissed if we did all that work for fucking nothing. Even if it was just for fucking money.”

“Money is-”

“I don’t give a shit!” Hidan interrupted. “Let’s get out of here, you greedy prick.”

Kakuzu didn’t protest. They made to leave together, but Kisame stopped them.

“Hold on. Let’s at least try to patch things up first. Hidan, don’t you think you and Deidara should make up?”

Hidan crossed his arms, “Hell no!”

Kakuzu looked at him. “What did you do?”

The shorter man huffed, “Deidara’s still mad that I complimented his jutsu for it’s usefulness in the bedroom.”

Kakuzu withheld a laugh. “Just apologize. I don’t want to have this argument every time we have to meet with them.”

“No way! He shouldn’t have taken it wrong!”

Kakuzu nudged him with his elbow, “Hidan, apologize.”

Hidan frowned, hunched his shoulders as if trying to pout, then sighed and let them fall. It seemed he wasn’t going to get out of this. “Sorry I offended you, Deidara.”

Deidara’s eyes narrowed. “Fuck you-”

“Deidara,” Sasori hissed.

“Deidara,” the blond huffed. “Fine. I accept your apology, nm.”

Kisame was grinning. “See? Wasn’t that easy?”

Sasori scoffed. “This is exactly why we shouldn’t be letting children into this organization. Let’s go, Deidara. We have somewhere to be.” He shuffled out of the shop.

“Yes, Sasori-Danna.” Deidara mumbled and followed him out.

The rest did the same. Kakuzu and Hidan headed toward an inn and the remaining two followed.

“Where the fuck are you two going?” Hidan asked as they walked.
“To the inn,” Kisame informed, “We’re headed north tomorrow so we’re just going to stay here for the night.”


They arrived at an inn decorated with plants. Greenery in various shapes and sizes hung from the ceiling, sat happily in pots by furniture, and were sprouting from planters built into the walls. At the front counter, Kisame requested a room with two beds, and Kakuzu didn’t hesitate to request a room with a single bed.

Kisame smirked, “So you two are a thing then?”

Neither Hidan nor Kakuzu acknowledged it. They all took their keys and headed upstairs. Unsurprisingly, they ended up with rooms right next to each other.

Kisame stood by while Kakuzu and Itachi were unlocking doors. “Come on, just tell me.” He said to Kakuzu, “Are you guys fucking or are you just being cheap?”

Kakuzu opened the door and let Hidan enter first. “It’s certainly one of those.” He stepped inside and slammed the door before Kisame could ask anymore questions.

“Why is everyone in this fucking organization so goddamn nosy??” Hidan lamented as he put the food on the desk. He draped his cloak over the chair, then opened the bag and pulled out two boxes. Taking one and a pair of chopsticks, he plopped down on the bed and sat cross-legged to eat.

Kakuzu did the same, losing the hood and mask as well, and sat right beside him. Their knees rested together comfortably. “You can’t say much. You’re the world’s worst about being in other people’s business.”

Hidan laughed, “True. Speaking of that, did you find out what was in the chest?”

“Just some old forehead protector. A sentimental item. It was used to propose when it was the most valuable thing some old man had.”

“Seriously?!” Hidan practically yelled, “All that work for some worthless hunk of metal??”

“It wasn’t worthless to her, so we got good money for it.” He gestured toward the briefcase resting by the door with Hidan’s scythe.

Hidan grumbled and ate angrily. All that trouble for a goddamn forehead protector? Easily the stupidest thing he’d heard all day. Some people were just too fucking rich and delusional.

Kakuzu ate more calmly and it came as no surprise to him when Hidan finished first. The younger man tossed his trash and Kakuzu didn’t protest when he shifted closer. Hidan wrapped an arm around one of Kakuzu’s and rested his head on his shoulder. He ran his fingers across stitches, caressing and picking at them absent-mindedly. The sensations were neither pleasant nor unpleasant, but Kakuzu enjoyed them. He loved it when Hidan showed any kind of physical affection.

When he finally finished his meal he tossed the remains in the trash bin with Hidan’s. He turned his head, burying his face in silver hair. He kissed Hidan’s head and let the man’s scent wash over him. After even the most tiring day, it always brought him comfort.

Hidan didn’t react. He was staring off into space, his fingers moving of their own accord across lines of stitches on Kakuzu’s arm.
“Thinking hard?” Kakuzu asked softly.

It took a second for Hidan to react. “Hm?” He looked up at him, “Oh. Yeah, kinda.” He grinned and kissed Kakuzu’s shoulder, then rested his chin on it. “I was just thinking… I never noticed before, but Kisame’s a big guy. Even bigger than you.”

Kakuzu’s mood soured in an instant. A deep frown adorned his face and his eyes were narrowed.

Hidan’s grin didn’t falter. “How do you feel about Kisame? Any interest there?”

Slowly, Kakuzu wrapped a hand around Hidan’s neck, squeezing gently. “I swear, if you ask for a threesome, I will choke the shit out of you.”

“Mm.” Hidan purred, eyes hooded, “How about I just say ‘please’ and you choke me anyway?”

Kakuzu shoved him down, pinning him to the bed. Their lips met, hard and messy and painful. His hand left Hidan’s throat, rested instead with his other on pale hips, and his lips followed them south. Hot, wet kisses caressed Hidan’s jaw and throat and chest, each one leaving a mark of suction or teeth.

“Kakuzu…” His name fell from Hidan’s lips in a breathless whisper. His name would be the only name he’d ever allow Hidan to speak in such a way. The only name he’d whimper, moan, or cry. Not Kisame’s or anyone else’s.

“Kakuzu…” Again, louder. Hidan pulled at Kakuzu’s shoulders, until the man finally relented.

Kakuzu hovered over his lover, looking down at him expectantly. Hidan’s hands cupped his face almost tenderly, pulling him down.

“Kisame’s got nothing on you…” Hidan reassured gently. “A few months ago I might have pushed for a threesome, but… I think I only wanna be with you.”

Relief. Kakuzu leaned down, letting their lips brush together lightly. “Good.”

Hidan closed the distance, pulling him into a deep kiss. His hands tangled in Kakuzu’s hair and his chest rose to meet his. He broke the kiss first. His face and chest were flushed with red. “Subjugate me?” The request was a purr, his eyes dark with lust.

Kakuzu smirked. He climbed off the bed and stood. “Clothes off.” He commanded as he pulled his shirt over his head.

Hidan kicked his shoes off and practically tore off his pants. They hit the floor, soon becoming a pile with Kakuzu’s garments.

“On your knees,” Kakuzu commanded next, pointing at his feet. “You know what I want.”

Hidan hit the floor a second later, resting on spread knees. There was a wide grin on his face as he looked up at Kakuzu. His hand wrapped around the large organ nearly brushing his face and stroked it slowly. The taste of salt was strong on his tongue as it slid across the tip, but he’d long since gotten used to it, had grown to love it. His lips wrapped around the head and sucked gently while his hand continued stroking the long shaft. Slowly, he swallowed. Inch by inch, until the head pressed against the back of his throat. Reflex made him want to gag, but with practise he’d gotten over that.

He released what remained of the shaft and put his hands behind his back. One of Kakuzu’s hands tangled in his hair. The other extended, dropping to the floor behind him. Several tendrils wrapped
around his wrists, keeping them firmly in place. Three thick fingers forced their way inside his exposed entrance at the same time that every inch of Kakuzu’s massive cock was shoved down his throat. This time, Hidan couldn’t stop his entire body from tensing. A load groan was muffled by the intrusion.

“Look at me.” Kakuzu’s voice was stern.

Pink eyes flicked upward, catching green’s gaze and holding it. Fingers and hips began thrusting at the same time. Every movement hurt somewhere, caused his body to respond with a burning pain. Behind it was a weak throb of pleasure, just enough to make his vision blurry. His toes curled and his eyes watered. Between his legs his hard member was bobbing and leaking and aching, but it went ignored.

Hidan was in Heaven.

Fingers dug into his prostate, forcing a guttural moan from him that sent vibrations through Kakuzu’s member. The larger man groaned and pressed harder. Hidan’s eyes lost focus and his legs drew in.

Kakuzu’s grip on his hair tightened. Slow thrusts turned quick and sharp. Hidan’s throat was tight around his cock. It vibrated with vocalizations of pleasure, tightened with every deep thrust, and sucked hard with every swallow.

Pink eyes squeezed shut against the rough assault. Hidan concentrated on not passing out from lack of oxygen. The pain and pleasure from both ends was almost enough to bring him to orgasm, but not quite. He knew Kakuzu was doing that on purpose too. That shithead.

Kakuzu’s eyes slipped shut in bliss. His own orgasm was fast approaching and he was doing nothing to try to stave it off. Rather, he began forcing Hidan’s head to bob with his thrusts, making them that much faster and harder. Face-fucking the younger man was one of his favorite activities, as he got to enjoy all the perks of sex with him with the added bonus of using his cock to block any stupid comments.

As orgasm finally washed over him, his thrusts slowed. He erupted first in Hidan’s mouth, then rammed his cock down Hidan’s throat as far as he could and held it there. As expected, Hidan began choking, his body doing it’s best to stop the thick load forcing its way into his stomach.

“Swallow it,” Kakuzu growled, keeping Hidan’s face firmly in place.

Hidan coughed around his dick, but forced his throat to accept. He swallowed several times, taking everything Kakuzu had to offer. Finally, Kakuzu’s grip on his hair loosened. His cock was withdrawn and Hidan pulled precious air into his burning lungs. He was left panting as fingers withdrew and the tendrils released his arms. They were practically numb, but perfectly usable. Without hesitation, he grabbed Kakuzu’s dick and held it steady.

They made eye contact. Didn’t break it as Hidan slowly licked the head, then drew it into his mouth again. He sucked on the head and swirled his tongue around the tip. The quivering in Kakuzu’s legs was his victory.

Kakuzu was barely standing, but tried to keep composed. He stroked Hidan’s hair affectionately. “You’re gorgeous,” he commented softly.

Hidan grinned and sucked hard as he pulled the head out of his mouth. He noted that Kakuzu’s knees nearly buckled, but the man stayed standing. Darn. He was helped to his feet, his legs trembling slightly as well, and wrapped his arms around Kakuzu’s neck. Kakuzu’s arms circled his
waist, pulling him close. “You’re the hottest guy I ever met,” Hidan said with a grin, “and you’re all mine.” He leaned in, silently asking for a kiss.

Kakuzu closed the distance. He could taste himself on Hidan but he’d stopped caring months ago. His arms tightened, pressing their bodies so close together they were practically one. He always loved the thought. Loved when he was buried deep inside the younger man, their lips and limbs so intertwined that they were practically a single being, basking in overwhelming pleasure together.

They parted and he kissed Hidan’s jaw before releasing him. “On the bed,” he pointed to it, “on your back, hands behind.”

Hidan smirked and practically flopped onto the bed. He pulled his arms behind him again, making his back arch uncomfortably, and drew his knees up with his legs spread wide. He knew the drill by now.

Kakuzu crawled atop him and took a moment to gaze down at his prey. Hidan’s hair was a mess, skin flushed, chest rising and falling with soft pants, eyes dark with lust but glittering with excitement. Kakuzu kissed the grin off his face and squeezed his hips until he heard Hidan groan in pain. When he withdrew his hands there were dark red marks in their place.

His right hand slid up Hidan’s chest and wrapped tightly around his neck. Squeezing, cutting off air. The stitches on his forearm unraveled. Tendrils slithered forth, slipping between Hidan and the bed and wrapping tightly around his arms to keep them in place.

Lips left lips and met skin. Jaw, throat, collar, chest, ribs, stomach, abdomen. Leaving a trail of saliva and shallow bites in their wake. Kakuzu was able to keep his right hand around Hidan’s throat and prop himself up with his right elbow. They were always finding new advantages to this jutsu.

Tendrils spilled from Kakuzu’s shoulders and wrapped firmly around Hidan’s ankles and just above his knees. They went taut, keeping his legs spread wide. Three fingers of his left hand forced their way inside Hidan’s entrance. The man tried to moan and draw his knees in, but failed in both those acts.

Kakuzu kissed Hidan’s inner thighs almost tenderly. Teasing the poor man was one of his favorite methods of torture. Hidan wanted everything fast and hard. It was amusing to force him to slow down. That was probably more painful for him than any real physical pain ever could be.

Kakuzu’s lips slowly worked their way in, until they pressed lightly against the base of Hidan’s cock. It was standing tall, flushed pink from strain. Hidan was already so aroused that this wouldn’t last much longer. Kakuzu found it amusing. He kissed slowly up to the head, then took it in his mouth. He didn’t have much trouble swallowing every inch, while at the same time digging his fingers into Hidan’s prostate.

As expected, Hidan arched and his legs tried hard to draw in, but the tendrils prevented that. Kakuzu learned his lesson about Hidan’s legs the first time he pulled this trick and they’d clamped down on his head like a vice. Now, he always kept them restrained to avoid the headache.

He began bobbing slowly while sucking hard. Rather than thrusting his fingers, he simply rubbed circles in Hidan’s prostate with enough pressure it would make most men scream in agony. If Hidan could scream at the moment though, it would be in ecstasy.

As expected, it took next to no time for him to finish. Hidan’s body tensed, his back arched, and his toes curled. When orgasm finally washed over him his body shook with it. Kakuzu hummed around his cock and swallowed the cum that filled his mouth and throat. Even when it ceased he continued
sucking and probing until Hidan was struggling to get away, tears running down his cheeks. Only then did Kakuzu relent.

He sat up, untangling Hidan from his hold. Knowing Hidan wouldn’t quite have the strength, Kakuzu pulled his arms out from behind him with the tendrils and gently let them rest beside him. Kakuzu loomed over him, admiring.

Hidan’s neck was dark purple. His face and chest were red, and there were dark red lines on his arms and legs. Eyes half-lidded and unfocused, skin glistening with sweat, chest heaving as his lungs once again had to desperately clutch at oxygen.

A God. One worn from battle but not quite defeated.

When Kakuzu gently cupped Hidan’s cheek, pink eyes finally focused on him. Lips that were parted to breathe turned upward in an open-mouthed grin. Lazily, Hidan raised his arms and draped them over Kakuzu’s neck. “Mmm, you always torture me just the right amount.”

Kakuzu laid down beside him. His head came to rest on Hidan’s chest. In his ear he could hear the rapid thumping of Hidan’s single heart. Slowly, it returned to a normal rhythm. Hidan’s fingers were in his hair, running through it slowly, then toying with it lazily.

Despite how painful and violent their sex could be, the aftermath was often like this. Calm, serene. Bloody war followed by gentle peace. It wasn’t something Kakuzu ever believed possible, and it stirred something in him he wasn’t sure how to express. Everything about Hidan, about their relationship, stirred something in him. Rage, happiness, everything in between, and something else so unfamiliar that it scared him. There was a name for it, he could put the feeling into a concept and into words, but fear held his tongue captive. Perhaps one day he’d force the words out, but for the time being they were both comfortable with the silence in their place.

Hidan twirled a section of Kakuzu’s long hair and tucked it between his nose and upper lip. “Hm,” he hummed in thought, “You should grow a beard. I bet that’d be hot.”

Kakuzu looked up at him and let his slight amusement at Hidan’s antics play on his face. “It grows out straight. I don’t like it. So, no.”

“Hm. Maybe I should.” Hidan smirked as if that was such a slick idea.

“You’d look like an old man,” Kakuzu teased.

“Fuck you! I could trim it, make it look suave.” He brushed the end of the section of hair against his lips while trying to picture himself with facial hair. Perhaps a pointed moustache and goatee?

“A suave old man, then.”

“You’re a prick.” Hidan frowned and tossed the hair back into its place. “When are we gonna shower? I’m sweaty.”

“When you want.”

Hidan whined, “I’m too tired to moooove.”

“How unfortunate for you. I’m perfectly happy staying like this all night.”

Hidan huffed. He turned his head and nuzzled Kakuzu’s hair. It tickled his nose, but put a smile on his face. He took a deep breath. The scent instantly washed away his annoyance. He closed his eyes
and let his fingers play with the long strands. “It’s a shame we couldn’t have loud sex,” he said softly.

Kakuzu hummed. “You don’t want them to know about us, do you?”

“I don’t care if they do.”

Kakuzu’s brows furrowed and he looked up at him, “You don’t? I thought their curiosity annoyed you.”

Hidan opened his eyes with a frown, “Yeah, them being nosy is annoying as fuck ‘cuz it ain’t really their business and I don’t wanna tell them ours, but I don’t care if they actually know. I’m not ashamed of us.”

Kakuzu sat up, propping himself on his elbow. “We’re actually something, aren’t we?” He’d known that, of course, but somehow this felt different. It had never really been a secret to begin with, but he’d assumed it wasn’t something they were going to share with their associates.

Actually, that was basically a secret, wasn’t it?

There was an amused look on Hidan’s face. “‘Something?’ Uh, yeah, old man, it’s called ‘boyfriends.’ I know you’re a little out of the loop on today’s lingo and all, but come on. What did they call it in your day? ‘Going steady’ or some shit? We’re that. Dipshit.”

“I really want to punch you sometimes,” Kakuzu dead-panned.

Hidan laughed and wrapped his arms around Kakuzu’s neck, “So grumpy.”

Kakuzu pressed a kiss to the corner of his mouth. “We had an easy day. I’m up for another round. Shall we make it loud?”

Hidan’s eyes lit up, “Fuck yes! Give me everything you got! Don’t go easy on me!”

“I don’t intend to.” Kakuzu sealed their lips together in a bruising kiss. Threads snaked out of his seams and coiled tightly around Hidan’s body.

As black returned to it’s den, red took it’s place. Lines of dark ruby marred Hidan’s body where pitch black had once clutched in a vice-like grip. They criss-crossed his torso, circled his arms and legs, and on his milky white thighs left valley’s of purple. Kakuzu loved those horrid marks blemishing Hidan’s perfect skin and leaving a temporary reminder of their sinful act.

He pushed himself off Hidan and loomed over him instead. They were both breathless and exhausted, but undeniably satisfied. Below him, Hidan was a panting, trembling mess. His body, the distressed muscles, were not quite under his control at the moment. They twitched and quivered, trying to regain feeling and blood flow.


Hidan grinned, “Couldn’t be better.”

“You were quite loud.” It was practically a badge of honor for Kakuzu.

“You were amazing. I can’t wait to see the looks on their fucking faces tomorrow,” Hidan snickered. An awkward situation was on the horizon and he couldn’t wait to bask in it.
Kakuzu placed a soft kiss on his cheek. “Try not to make too much of a scene.”

“I do what I want.” Hidan managed a quick kiss on the lips just as Kakuzu was sitting up.

“Mm. You always do.” Kakuzu muttered. Lifting Hidan’s legs, he carefully pulled out. Hidan hissed and tensed as he did so, unsurprisingly, and fluids leaked from him. “Rest. I’ll come get you when the shower is hot,” Kakuzu gently lowered his legs and climbed off the bed.

“Thanks! You’re so good to me!” Hidan called in a nearly sweet tone.

Kakuzu’s legs quivered when he stood. He had to keep a hand on the edge of the bed until they stillled. They were barely holding him up as he walked to the bathroom. He turned the water on and leaned against the wall to wait. All five hearts were still pounding, but were slowly calming.

The rhythmic sound of running water had his mind drifting. As usual, his thoughts swirled around Hidan, as they always did when he had these moments to himself. Their compatibility as partners was unquestionable. Their abilities meshed perfectly to make them a deadly team, their physical forms complimented each other nicely in the bedroom, and though their personalities tended to clash, they did so in a way that Kakuzu could almost call chemistry. They’d become comfortable with one another. Their fights were less about actually hurting each other and more about blowing off steam or testing their own abilities. They were both immortal -more or less- so an extended life was feasible. They could spend it together with little fear of the other dying early.

Was that what he wanted though? What both of them did? Something permanent?

Kakuzu was jarred from his thoughts by Hidan’s voice calling from the other room, “Hey, fuckface, the water hot yet?”

He quickly checked, then flipped the faucet to the shower. “Yes, it’s hot.”

“Finally,” Hidan muttered as he got up. On weakened legs he managed to make it to the bathroom. Kakuzu stepped in first and Hidan followed. The younger man held his face under the spray and washed sweat away, then ran his hands through his hair. He shook water off when he shifted out from underneath it. Hot water ran down his back, washing away the fluids leaking from him. He looked down at himself and grinned. “I kinda look like you now, huh?” There were still lines of red cutting across his body.

Wordlessly, Kakuzu shoved him out of the way so he could wash.

Hidan laughed and leaned against the wall. “Grump. I like the way you look.”

“I know you do.” Kakuzu replied as he washed his hair.

“I know you like the way I look too,” Hidan’s voice was teasing. “You stare all the fucking time. Do you like it better when I’m all marked up like this? Or when I’m flawless?”

The larger man didn’t respond immediately. He rinsed his hair and gave Hidan an even look. “I like it when you’re flawless. It makes you look pure. I like marking you up, claiming you, destroying that purity. I like that, no matter what I do to you, by the time we have sex again you’re back to being a blank slate for me to leave marks all over. I like it when you’re all marked up. It means I did that. I own you.”

The explanation and the intensity in Kakuzu’s eyes made Hidan shiver. “Damn, dude, you’re gonna make me hard again.” A cocky grin made it’s home on his face, “Sounds to me like someone has a
few kinks.”

Kakuzu’s eyes narrowed, “Irrelevant.”

“Haha, no it’s not!” Hidan laughed, “You’re always ripping on me for being into kinky shit, but you
like tying me up and you like leaving marks and ruining my ‘purity!’ Sounds like some kinks to me!”

“Shut your mouth before I sew it shut.” He stepped out from under the spray and leaned against the
wall, “Wash off. We should be asleep by now.”

“Aw, are you embarrassed?” Hidan continued to tease. He stepped under the water and washed his
hair, “No worries, old man, I know all this sex stuff is a sensitive topic for you old people, but I’ll
walk you through it.”

“You were a virgin when we met.” Kakuzu stated without missing a beat.

Fury filled Hidan’s eyes. “BY CHOICE! FUCK YOU!” He turned away in a huff and hurriedly
washed himself.

Kakuzu watched him silently, amused. Another thing they had in common; a short fuse. Thankfully,
their immortality prevented them from killing each other when their anger finally burst. They were
rarely at each other’s throats anymore though. Aside from the occasional fight and the frequent
arguments, they got along well.

Again, that strange emotion surfaced. The one he didn’t want to speak out loud for fear of a negative
reaction, but at the same time one that was demanding to be acknowledged. It was a painful tug-of-
war that he wanted no part of, and wondered if Hidan was experiencing as well.

There was only one way to find out, right? He had to suppress the fear and speak those words.
Otherwise, he’d never know for sure. The slap of rejection would be less painful than this constant
anxiety, and acceptance would end all of that entirely.

Tentatively, Kakuzu reached out and placed his hand on Hidan’s hip. The younger man looked over
his shoulder, then grinned and turned around. He dropped the rag he’d been using to wash himself
with, and draped his arms over Kakuzu’s shoulders, keeping them straight. His fingers laced
themselves together behind Kakuzu’s head as the older man’s hands rested on Hidan’s waist.

Hidan tilted his head, watching him contemplatively. “I can tell you’re thinking hard about
something,” he said softly, “When you’re over thinking something, your eyebrows scrunch together
just enough to make a crease. What’s up?”

Kakuzu’s gaze traced Hidan’s face, taking in every detail. Strong jaw, smooth skin, a perfect nose
despite the number of times it had been broken. Physically, Hidan was flawless. Why would a God
want anything to do with such a flawed being as Kakuzu? It boggled the mind.

He tossed that thought aside and took a breath. A swell of courage finally pushed his fear away. He
forced himself to speak. “Hidan, I…”

The words died before they reached his lips, stuck instead in his throat, forming a lump. Three tiny
words that hardly meant a thing on their own, but could be woven together to form a concept so
grand that it could be either euphoric or terrifying. In that moment, those three little words were the
latter. They were thick and heavy, impossible for his heart to lift through his throat to his mouth.
They sat like a weight, trying to pull his weakened knees to the ground like they did the light-hearted
mood in the room. Never before in his life had he been too afraid to speak.
Hidan’s eyes were on him, searching his face expectantly. They both knew that, between them, Kakuzu was always the one who knew exactly what he wanted to say and how to say it. He didn’t fumble with his words; they were clear, concise, and often cutting. So, even an idiot could put the pieces together and figure out the gravity of this situation.

That cocky, shit-eating grin made it’s way onto Hidan’s face. The very one Kakuzu found simultaneously endearing and infuriating. The younger man leaned forward, his voice holding a hint of teasing, “It’s okay, old man, I’d leave me speechless too.”

Kakuzu was unamused. “You’re so dense.”

A soft chuckle made Hidan’s shoulders tremble. “I’m not that dense.” Their lips brushed, eyes hooded. “You don’t have to say it,” Hidan breathed, “I know.” He closed the distance.

The kiss was deep, passionate. Kakuzu’s legs weakened and he had to wrap his arms around Hidan’s waist tightly so he didn’t crumble. Hidan’s arms hugged his neck, temporarily deepening the kiss, then they loosened and two hands cupped Kakuzu’s face. Thumbs caressed the stitching as the kiss was finally broken.

Their breaths mingled. Their foreheads rested together. Green met pink. Their gazes didn’t stray. Time seemed to fade away. Warm water washed over them and splattered into the tub in a soothing rhythm.

Hidan spoke first. “What’re we going to do after the Akatsuki?” His thumbs continued tracing the stitches on Kakuzu’s cheeks. He loved the feel of them, the familiarity.

Kakuzu’s eyebrows drew in, “What do you mean?”

“It can’t last forever, right? Chances are we’re going to outlive everyone in it. It’ll probably fall apart in another few years. What do we do after? When we’re not partners anymore?” Logically, he figured they’d stick together for a while at least, but… what if they didn’t? What if Kakuzu jumped at the chance to be rid of him? It was unlikely, given how hard Kakuzu had fought for this relationship to mean something, but it was still a fear that played in the back of Hidan’s mind. He couldn’t take being abandoned all over again.

The question was stunning. Kakuzu hadn’t believed Hidan could or would think so far ahead, wonder about his own future or their future together. It gave him hope for said future together. It seemed his fears over whether or not Hidan felt as strongly about this relationship as he did were unjustified.

With a soft smile and a light chuckle, he replied, “We’ll always be partners. Whether we’re in Akatsuki or not doesn’t change that.”

Hidan was beaming. “Good! Because you can’t get rid of me that easily.”

“I wouldn’t want to anyway.” Kakuzu cupped his cheek and leaned in for another kiss.

Mornings were always quiet. Kakuzu always enjoyed the peace while it lasted. Once Hidan was up the silence was shattered, and that could get taxing no matter how much he liked the younger man. So, Kakuzu always took his time, getting ready and letting Hidan sleep a while longer so he could get these few moments to himself.

He was brushing his hair, preparing to put it up in his hood for the day, while Hidan was passed out in the bed. Kakuzu was already dressed and nearly ready to go. Distantly, he heard a door open and shut.
Hidan's head suddenly raised, “Is that Kisame and Itachi leaving?”

Kakuzu didn't look away from the mirror, “Probably. Any useful shinobi would be up already, and you’re-”

Hidan was out of bed and running to their door. He threw it open, exposing his nude form to the hallway and the two men standing in it. Smirking, Hidan leaned against the doorframe and crossed his arms. “Any more questions, fuckers?”

Itachi wouldn't look at him, and Kisame had briefly stared at his chest before turning away. His face darkened. “Er, no, man. We heard enough last night.”

Ah, victory. It was sweet. “You know, if you’d minded your own business we wouldn’t be in this predicament right now. This is your own fault for being fucking nosy.”

Kakuzu stopped what he was doing and leaned out of the bathroom. “Hidan,” he said sternly, “get in here and close the damn door! No one else needs to see you naked!”

Hidan waved him off, “Excuse him. See, he’s the jealous type, which is great because the sex is-”

His words were cut off by Kakuzu's hand on his mouth, pulling him back inside. Kakuzu stepped into the doorway. “Good luck on your mission. Next time we meet, don’t ask questions you aren’t prepared to know the answer to.” With that, he slammed the door.

Hidan was cackling, “Did you see the looks on their faces!?” It was even better than he could have hoped for! They had been so uncomfortable!

Kakuzu turned to him with a frown and gestured to his clothes. “Get dressed, goddamnit. We have somewhere to be. The two-tail isn't going to catch itself.”
Fucking canon though. Like seriously wtf. We ain’t doin’ that shit. This is fanfiction we can make up a better ending than that canon bs. So here’s the better ending BECAUSE THEY DESERVE IT

As soon as the first hit had landed, Kakuzu knew they were in trouble. Part of him had thought perhaps they could get out of it, but just in case they didn’t, he hatched a plan. Hidan’s heart was still in his gut, left resting unattached from anything else. It was hardy; capable of remaining fresh for several days if need be. That made it invaluable, so he replaced it with others with more useful chakra affinities, but kept it stored for future use.

When Kakashi destroyed his earth heart, he hooked Hidan’s up. But, he knew using it would be stupid. He’d get angry and keep fighting no matter what and such a thing could prove to be his downfall if the enemy was strong enough. These brats were out for revenge and that was a powerful driving force. Pure rage couldn’t top it.

So, when he fell, he let Hidan’s heart go. It slipped underground with a mass of tendrils. A part of Kakuzu would stay alive, even if he was ultimately defeated. When the group eventually separated the two of them, he knew he’d made the right call early on. This body might not make it out of the fight. He was accepting of that, though he still gave the fight his all.

It did not end in his favor.

Dying hurt, it turned out. He didn’t understand why Hidan liked it.

Being defeated by a bunch of brats was insulting, to say the least. Once his body died his consciousness did not return until the mass with Hidan’s heart in it latched onto another living thing. His body was totaled, using it was out of the question, so a new one had to be acquired. The first living thing it latched onto? A vulture. Not the most ideal form permanently, but the perfect one temporarily. It did require some adjusting. It didn’t feel anything like a human body and the heart was too large for it, causing other organs to be squished. That hurt, but he could tolerate it for the few hours he might be stuck in this form.

First things first; locate Hidan.

Flying was not as easy as it looked. It took him a few tries to get off the ground, but eventually he managed to get himself into the sky. When he was high enough, he could see the leaf nins who’d defeated him. They weren’t his main concern though. Hidan was. He flew in the direction Shikamaru had taken him.

Pain pain pain pain pain. This was agony. This was Hell. His neck burned and his eyes stung and his teeth ached and his head was throbbing and he was certain his nose was broken. The worst thing though was the darkness.

Pitch black. Suffocating. His heart would be pounding with fear if his body wasn’t in pieces. He
wanted to take a deep, reassuring breath, but that required lungs. Opening his mouth would be stupid anyway. Dirt would get in. Disgusting.

The silence was maddening. The ringing in his ears was painful, but he dared not try to make a sound to relieve it. His thoughts were like screams stuck inside his own head.

‘How am I getting out of this? Is Kakuzu okay? How long until he digs me out? Can he get away from those shinobi? What if he needs me? What if he dies? How long will it take me to die here?’

There was nothing Hidan could do to fix his situation. Nothing he could do to save himself or his partner. He could only wait in painful solitude, hoping and praying that Kakuzu won and rescued him.

Shikamaru was leaving a vast forest with other shinobi. Kakuzu flew over and did his best to retrace where they’d come from. It didn’t take long to find a balding spot in the forest where the leaves had been burnt. He flew down, landed, and knew he was in the right place. There was a freshly buried hole and scorch marks all around it.

Poor Hidan. Being buried alive was his worst nightmare. He wasn’t going to fare well down there.

‘Have to get him out as soon as possible.’

Easier said than done. The vulture couldn’t do jack shit. He needed a human body, fast.

Taking flight again, he memorized the location and flew in the opposite direction of the group that had defeated them. No sense trying to tangle with them like this. He needed weaker prey.

He found it in the form of three shinobi around Hidan’s age traveling on the edge of the forest. Two women and a tall man with broad shoulders. All three bore forehead protectors with Konoha’s symbol on them. Perfect.

He swooped down and flew into the face of the tallest one, who screamed in surprise. It took no time for his tendrils to sink in and tear his chest open enough for the heart to slip inside. The man fell to the ground in pain, while the vulture fell over dead.

“Shoichi!” One of the girls screamed.

The foreign heart quickly took over, consuming the host heart along with it’s body. The whites of his eyes turned a rusted brown. In seconds the host’s mind was gone, replaced with a new consciousness. Fists clenched and unclenched, body stiffened, muscles moved and stretched as Kakuzu adjusted to his new form. It was a little different from his old one; taller, less muscle, but certainly more comfortable than the bird. The height was nice and he could build muscle easily enough.

Finally, he felt acclimated and his body relaxed. He opened his eyes and found them to be slightly better than his old ones. Or, perhaps that was just his imagination due to the bird’s eyes having been so different.

The two girls with him stared in horror. It would be a mistake to leave witnesses. He wanted out of this clean. The others thought him dead and it would stay that way.

His hands were around their throats in an instant, squeezing, cutting off air and sound. Tendrils tore through his arms and sank into their chests. In moments, he absorbed two more hearts. His arms stitched themselves together and he released the girls. They dropped in a bloody heap on the ground.
New body secured and witnesses dead. The next step was to retrieve a few things from ground zero. Saving Hidan would have to wait until after dark to be safe, even though he hated leaving him there that long. Would he be okay? Surely.

Abandoning the bodies, Kakuzu took off toward the crooked forest where they’d fallen.

Everything was where he left it, save for his body. Kakuzu found his forehead protector where he’d torn it off, his cloak not far away, and the briefcase safely hidden away. He ripped off the Leaf forehead protector and threw it to the ground, replacing it with his own. He snatched the briefcase of money.

Next stop, the closest village that wasn’t Konoha.

Hours. Hours hours hours hours. How many hours had he been trapped here? Had it even been hours or had it been days? Weeks? Longer?

The physical pain was nothing now, not in comparison to the emotional turmoil. His head wasn’t attached to anything, but he could feel the stabbing agony of his broken heart.

There were only two possibilities for why he was still stuck here: Kakuzu was either dead or had abandoned him.

Perhaps they had underestimated those Leaf shinobi. Maybe they had gotten the upper hand and defeated Kakuzu. Since the two of them had been separated, that was feasible, but unlikely in Hidan’s mind. Kakuzu was incredibly resilient. There was no way a bunch of brats could take him down. It would take at least a small army.

So, perhaps he’d won. Maybe he took the rest out with no trouble, replaced his lost hearts with theirs, and turned the bodies in for the money. Kakuzu had always made idle threats about getting rid of Hidan, but he’d assumed they were just bland jokes since they both knew well that he couldn’t get rid of Hidan, so he’d never taken those threats seriously. Maybe he should have. Maybe Kakuzu was happy to be rid of him. Maybe whatever they had actually meant nothing to him. Maybe it had only been a clever ruse to make sure the two of them got along and to get sex. Maybe he liked the silence more than Hidan’s companionship.

Maybe it didn’t matter. Alive or dead, if Kakuzu was coming for him he would have by now, right? So he wasn’t coming at all.

That knowledge hurt more than any physical pain he’d ever suffered.

The money in the case, though a hefty sum, was all they had left. There was no way to dip into Akatsuki funds anymore. So, he had to be careful how he spent it. A cheap inn and a small meal were as much as he would be buying for the moment. He stored the case of money in the room and left the tiny, unremarkable village.

The sun had already been setting when he found the village, so by the time he left it was dark. Perfect for sneaking around undetected.

Once he got to the edge of the forest, he made himself comfortably hidden in a tree just outside of it. There was no way he was going in. Any shinobi worth anything could tell it was protected. Sneaking in with the vulture had been harmless, but going in as a person would only bring trouble. He was supposed to be dead.

Thankfully, he had an alternative.
Two hearts moved, shifting to leave his body and take room in his forearms. They detached from his body and dove down from the tree. When they hit the ground they disappeared beneath it. Kakuzu had become very sensitive to Hidan’s chakra signature, and, though weak, he could sense it some distance away. Closing his eyes, he concentrated on getting to it.

A shuffling brought Hidan’s mind out of despair, his ears latching onto the sound in a desperate attempt to hear anything but the agonizing silence. At first he thought it must have been insects, come to finally devour him, before remembering that insects and animals alike tended to avoid him like the plague.

Then, he felt something long and thin wrap around his face. Fear gripped him. What the fuck was touching him?? He felt it pulling, could hear it searching through the dirt all around, and realization finally hit him.

Threads. It had to be Kakuzu.

He could have laughed, could have cried, could have screamed. The relief was overwhelming.

Being pulled through the ground was unpleasant, but he was happy to feel a new pain. It felt like forever until he was finally pulled to the surface. It was too dark to see much, but by the light of the moon he could tell he was just off a path leading around the forest. The rest of his body surfaced and the threads began putting him back together.

A shinobi jumped down from a tree nearby and walked over. Hidan’s heart dropped.

That wasn’t Kakuzu.

Despair made his throat feel thick. He shut his eyes, pretending to be unconscious. There was no fucking way he was sticking around for whatever this guy wanted. As soon as his body was fixed, he’d kill him and go find Kakuzu.

Though he didn’t know it, Kakuzu was standing over him, letting the moonlight show him his partner’s state. It was rough; blood all over, severely damaged bones and inner organs, bruises and wounds that hadn’t healed because they weren’t connected to the head. They’d begin to heal once they were reconnected though, right? He believed so.

He fell to his knees beside Hidan as his threads were finishing. His arms reattached themselves. He leaned over him, reaching toward his face, “Hidan-”

Hidan grabbed his wrist and flipped him, causing Kakuzu to let out a cry of pain as he landed on his back. Hidan was suddenly on top of him straddling his waist, had already yanked a kunai out of Kakuzu’s pants, and was driving it toward his face.

Kakuzu caught his wrist, but was horrified to find that they were an even match in Hidan’s weakened state. It took all his strength to hold Hidan back. This body wasn’t as muscular as his old one. Hidan was stronger than him. Shit, he’d have to fix that fast.

“How did you do that?!”

“I don’t know you!” Hidan spat. The glow of the moon reflected in his eyes enough for Kakuzu to see the fury, the madness, the pain and confusion.

“It’s Kakuzu!” He tried a second time, but to no avail. After being trapped underground for several hours, his greatest nightmare, Hidan was no longer thinking clearly.
“LIAR!” Hidan’s left hand wrapped around his neck, pushing down. Kakuzu grabbed it’s wrist out of instinct. Hidan tore his right hand away and drove the kunai down again.

“I bought you flowers!” Kakuzu choked out. It was the only thing he could think of that might get Hidan’s attention. The only proof he could offer that he was Kakuzu and not some random shinobi who knew the same forbidden jutsu.

Hidan froze, confusion etched on his face. His grip loosened. Kakuzu was able to push his hand off his neck.

“I bought you flowers.” Kakuzu spoke calmly, “I bought them to apologize for hurting you. You kept the red rose but left it in a temple. We’ve watched fireworks together, and that same night we had sex for the first time. It was your very first time.”

The anger in Hidan’s eyes was gone. They were wide - fear, sorrow, confusion. “Kakuzu?” His voice was weak, his pain and exhaustion finally evident. The kunai fell out of his hand.

Kakuzu sat up, “I’m sorry it took me so long, I-” His words were cut off when Hidan violently shoved him back down.

“FUCK YOU!” Hidan yelled with clenched fists, “FUCKING FUCK YOU, YOU FUCKING ASSHOLE! PIECE OF FUCKING SHIT!!” He fell silent and pressed his palms against his eyes with gritted teeth.

Kakuzu was angry, of course. No one liked being shoved. But, he took a deep breath, calming himself, and sat up again. He could feel Hidan trembling and could tell by his soft gasps he was on the verge of tears. How could he blame him though? Being buried alive was the closest to death Hidan had ever come. Having all his hearts smashed like that was one of numerous times Kakuzu had brushed death. He knew by now how to deal with it. Plus, he’d been out here working on getting Hidan out. He’d had a mission after his most recent brush and that helped take his mind off of it. Hidan had merely been trapped in the dark, waiting for death without knowing if he’d be rescued. Any shinobi might cry under such stress and despair.

Gently, he wrapped his arms around him. “It’s okay to cry. I don’t blame you.”

“I’m not crying.” Hidan snapped, though his voice betrayed him, “You took too long and I got dirt in my eyes! That’s all!”

“Alright. I understand.” Kakuzu hugged him tightly and decided to just leave the poor man alone about it.

Hidan’s shoulders began to shake and he couldn’t stop the soft sobs. Pain, anger, sorrow, all of those emotions were commonplace to him and he’d stopped crying over them a long time ago. No tears were shed for the physical agony he often put himself through.

This wasn’t any of those things though. Relief, joy, he’d never known positive emotions could break him like this, or anyone for that matter. He’d heard of people crying tears of joy but assumed that was some hyperbolic joke. It wasn’t, it turned out, if the tears he couldn’t hold back were any indication. He felt weak for it, but he knew Kakuzu wouldn’t judge him nor would he tell anyone else about this.

He took a deep breath, inhaling Kakuzu’s scent. It wasn’t Kakuzu’s though. “You don’t smell like you,” he said softly over a small sob. The realization made his heart lurch and an emptiness settle in his chest. It felt as if he’d lost something he couldn’t possibly replace.
“I’m sorry. I had to get a new body. Mine was destroyed.” Kakuzu explained with a hint of guilt. It had crossed his mind that Hidan wouldn’t like his new body. Hidan had been quite infatuated with the old one, would he still stick around now that this one was his option?

“I’m just glad you’re alive. And, that you came back for me.” He slipped his arms around Kakuzu’s torso and squeezed tightly.


Hidan sniffled and straightened. He cupped Kakuzu’s face, letting his thumbs run over smooth skin. “Thanks.” He’d needed to hear that, but he suspected Kakuzu already knew as much. “Are your stitches going to come back?”

“Eventually. As I tear pieces apart in battle, they’ll stitch back together.” Kakuzu explained. He gazed up at his partner, admiring his gorgeous face.

Hidan nodded and wiped at his eyes. “Can we go somewhere else? It’s fucking cold out here.”

“Of course.” With some effort, Kakuzu was able to stand and bring Hidan up with him. He was over a head taller than him now, which came was quite a shock to them both.

“What the fuck!” Hidan snapped, “You just had to have more fucking height on me, didn’t you? As if the four inches you had wasn’t fucking enough.”

Kakuzu’s eyes narrowed, “Shut up. It was the first body I found. You like it anyway, I know you do.”

Hidan grinned, “I kinda do.”

Kakuzu took off his top and offered it to Hidan. “Here. I bought a room in a small village not far from here. Your knees are wobbling. Can you walk to it?”

Hidan put the shirt on. It was long on him, so it covered him enough that he didn’t feel as exposed. He looked down at his legs and found that they were indeed shaking. “Uh… I think so. I’m just a little weak from being in pieces for so long…”

“Alright. If you get tired, I can carry you.”

“Nah, I’ll be okay. My body will heal up pretty fast.”

Kakuzu put a hand on his back to help steady him. “If you insist.”

As soon as they entered the room, Hidan collapsed, landing hard on his hands and knees. Startled, Kakuzu immediately tried to help him up. “Are you alright??”

“I’m good.” Hidan grabbed his arm and let Kakuzu pull him to his feet. “I’m just so fucking tired and super hungry…”

“Why don’t you rest in the bathtub and I’ll find us something to eat?” Kakuzu suggested, “You’re covered in dirt.”

“Yeah, no shit,” Hidan grumbled as he tore the shirt off and tossed it aside. He made it to the bathroom on shaking legs and finally settled into the tub. He groaned as sore muscles began to relax. His eyes slipped shut and he rested his head against the wall.

Kakuzu knelt by the tub and turned the water on. He held his hand beneath it until it was warm, then
plugged the drain. He turned to Hidan and let his eyes wander.

His body was mangled, bloody, and bruised, the stitches doing the most to keep everything in place. His hair was a mess and hanging in his face. His whole body was trembling from the massive amount of trauma it was trying to hard to recover him. It was the most vulnerable and damaged Kakuzu had ever seen Hidan. Tenderly, he reached down and brushed some hair out of his face.

Pink eyes opened tiredly and gazed up at him. They searched his face, taking in the new features. Younger, less muscle, less angular face, fewer creases caused by excessive scowling, taller, thicker and shorter hair, a distinct lack of stitching, and, of course, the eyes. “Your eyes are blue now.” Hidan noted softly.

Kakuzu stared at him. “Are you okay with this body?” He asked after a short pause.

“Yeah… I’ll get used to it.”

“The good news is, because the jutsu was so ingrained in me and my chakra, this body will take on some of my traits. Not enough to make me look exactly like I used to, but enough that I think it will make you happy.”

Hidan grinned, “Really? That’s awesome! I always liked the way you looked, but you looking different now isn’t a deal breaker… As long as you still got a big dick, it’s fine by me!”

Kakuzu let out a breath that could have been a laugh. “As subtle as ever I see. I haven’t exactly checked that for myself, so we’ll have to wait and see.”

Hidan laughed softly, but didn’t respond. He was exhausted and found it difficult to be very playful at the moment, even if he was overjoyed to be with his partner again. The extensive physical injuries had taken their toll.

Kakuzu watched the tub fill. When it touched Hidan’s knees, he shut the water off. The room was silent until he broke it. “Did you really think I would abandon you?”

Hidan grimaced and shrugged weakly. “I dunno… It was a fear… I figured, you know… everyone else I ever liked was either taken from me or ditched me, why wouldn’t you? My best talent is driving people away.” He was obnoxious and he knew it, but he honestly couldn’t help it. It was like he couldn’t stop himself from saying dumb shit, even when he was fully aware he was doing it.

Kakuzu was stunned by the admission. Hidan had always struck him as independent, not lonely, but obviously he hid it well behind a wall of curses, insults, and overconfidence. It had fooled even him, one of the most perceptive members in the Akatsuki, until he got to know Hidan better. Even then, he’d never imagined Hidan to think such a thing about himself.

Considering what little bits about himself Hidan had mentioned though, about how he’d grown up and the decisions he’d made to get him here, it kind of made sense.

Briefly, he entertained the thought. What if he did abandon Hidan? Leaving him would mean freedom. Freedom from responsibilities, freedom from attachment, freedom from annoyance. The world would be his, without anyone holding him back or telling him what to do or constantly complaining or… looking out for him, or bringing him out of a foul mood with a smile and a laugh, or kissing him until he felt weak in the knees, or giving him stupid little compliments, or singing just to try to get on his nerves, which never even worked because he loved the sound of Hidan’s voice. He loved his laugh and his stupid jokes and his cocky smile and his brilliant eyes and his gorgeous face and the way he knew how to throw a teasing insult in just the right way that it was more of a
comfort than an offense…

Life without that wasn’t freedom, it was Hell.

Tenderly, Kakuzu reached out and cupped Hidan’s face. “I would never abandon you, Hidan.” He said urgently.

Hidan smiled softly and nuzzled Kakuzu’s hand. He cupped it with his own, letting his fingers trace the new ones caressing his cheek. “I know.” Kakuzu never lied to him, he had no reason to believe he would about this. “Thanks.”

Kakuzu leaned in. He kissed him deeply, putting feelings behind it that he was too afraid to express with words. Hidan returned it just as eagerly. Their pain, their joy, their sorrow, relief, longing, desperation, it was all mutual between them, reverberating through the kiss and settling in their chests. Maybe words didn’t need to be used to express what they felt. Their bond was strong, even in the face of death, and allowed them to communicate in a way no one else could possibly understand. Maybe that was enough.

When Kakuzu returned to the room he had a bag of rice and natto in one hand and a container of miso soup in the other. The room was as he left it, complete with the hissing of water. He’d turned the shower on before he left and drained the tub so Hidan could clean himself more easily. Kakuzu left the food on the desk and walked into the bathroom.

The spray of water had washed away the dirt and blood. There was a serene smile on Hidan’s face as he sat leaning against the wall, eyes closed, legs curled against his body, arms across his chest, hands on his shoulders, and fingers caressing stitches. Black threads covered most of his body, making him look like some sort of horrid patchwork doll.

“Enjoying yourself?” Kakuzu inquired.

“Mhm,” Hidan hummed. “Feels like you…”

“Glad you like them. Do you feel well enough to eat?”

“You bet I do.” He opened his eyes and turned off the shower. “Help me out?”

Wordlessly, Kakuzu grabbed a towel and draped it over the younger man, then helped him to his feet. This time, Hidan’s legs didn’t tremble at all. He carefully stepped out and Kakuzu helped him dry off.

They sat on the bed together, both naked because why not. Kakuzu ate quietly, watching Hidan ingest his soup. Since Hidan was still mostly in pieces, held only together by thread, Kakuzu had decided a liquid meal might be better than anything solid. Who knew how in-tact his organs were at this point. Hidan seemed to have no trouble ingesting it though.

He put the bowl down and licked his lips. “That was awesome. Thanks.”

“Mm,” Kakuzu hummed. He finished his meal and tossed the trash into a bin.

“What’re we gonna do now? Contact Pein?” Hidan gave him an inquiring look.

“No,” Kakuzu said sternly, “As far as anyone knows, we’re dead or out of commission. I want to keep it that way.”
Hidan quirked an eyebrow at him. “What the fuck does that mean? We’re out of a job if we don’t—”

“I know that,” he interrupted, “I no longer wish to work for the Akatsuki. We have an opportunity to disappear without repercussions and we’re taking it. We’re going to head to the mountains together and lay low for a while… Play it safe. I’m sick of these fucking missions.”

Hidan was grinning, absolutely giddy about this plan. “Yeah? I thought you liked bounty hunting.”

“I do, but I don’t like sharing the money I earn from it. Not with most people, anyway. We’ll continue to bounty hunt. I have a bingo book to finish.”

“Nice.”

“Speaking of hiding out, I found your forehead protector and mine.” He gestured to the desk, where the items sat. “We should swap them. I’ll wear yours and you wear mine. That makes us a little more unidentifiable.”

“What the fuck are you talking about? That doesn’t do shit!”

“Shut up and do it,” Kakuzu snapped. He wasn’t willing to explain it any further.

Hidan gave him an annoyed look, then grinned, “Oh, I get it. Is this your way of proposing to me? Are we going to settle down together? Raise a family? Grow old and bitch about kids these days and how ours never visit anymore? Sit in rocking chairs on our porch of our crumbling old house?”

“Fuck you,” Kakuzu’s eyes narrowed.

Hidan laughed loudly, “So touchy! You know I’m only joking! I don’t even like kids! I sure as shit couldn’t imagine your grumpy ass raising any either!” Just the mental image of Kakuzu trying to handle a child was enough to send him into a fit of laughter.

Kakuzu stared at his cackling partner, contemplating. Those unspoken words popped into his head again, and with them came a swell of courage. If there was any perfect moment to speak them, this was it. “Hidan,” He spoke sternly once he’d made up his mind, “I’m only going to say this once, so pay attention.”

Hidan stopped laughing and quirked an eyebrow at him. He leaned in to make sure he caught whatever Kakuzu was about to say, since it seemed very important.

“I love you.” Kakuzu stated plainly without so much as batting an eye. Calm on the outside, but inside his hearts were hammering and he felt light-headed.

Hidan stared for several seconds, then grinned lopsidedly, “Only gonna say it once, huh?”

“Only once.”

“Hmph. That had better be the only lie you ever tell me.” He leaned over and rested their foreheads together. “I love you too, fuckface.” He cupped Kakuzu’s face and pressed their lips together.

The kiss was the softest they’d ever shared. It was sweet, loving, and lacked any of the lust their kisses usually contained. It made Kakuzu melt and Hidan’s head feel light. He wrapped his arms around his lover’s neck and pulled him close. They ended up falling onto the bed together. The kiss was broken by Hidan’s giddy snickering.

Kakuzu couldn’t help an affectionate smile. Without a word, he reached over and turned off the
lamp, plunging them both into darkness. They settled in together; Kakuzu on his back, arm draped over Hidan’s shoulders, Hidan’s head on his chest.

With his ear pressed against Kakuzu’s chest, Hidan could hear the soft thumping of four different heartbeats. The sound of the multiple organs brought him comfort and kept the nightmares at bay. His fingers caressed the stitching on Kakuzu’s torso, the sensation putting him at ease.

“You better put on some muscle,” he stated in a teasing tone, “How are you going to subjugate me in bed if I’m stronger than you?”

“I’ll work on it. Go to sleep.” Kakuzu replied. He was exhausted and ready to just pass out.

Hidan chuckled and kissed his chest. The scent that enveloped him was not the one he knew, but it was one he’d grow to love. It was Kakuzu’s and that was really all that mattered.

It was warm, but breezy. The shade of trees kept the heat at bay. Kakuzu stood beneath one just outside of the small village. He leaned against the trunk with his arms crossed, waiting patiently. His mouth and nose were covered with a thin mask to help protect his identity, since it was possible someone might recognize this body, and Hidan’s forehead protector was around his neck. Absentmindedly, he reached up and rubbed the unfamiliar grooves in the cold metal.

Approaching footsteps made him turn.

Hidan walked up with a bag slung over one shoulder. Inside it was his scythe -broken down into pieces and hidden away- along with some extra supplies for their long trip so they wouldn’t have to pop into villages too frequently, and the rest of the cash. He was wearing unremarkable attire to help blend in, a blue bandana over his hair to better hide it, and Kakuzu’s forehead protector around his neck. Some strands of pale hair were poking out of the front of the bandana and partially hanging in his face, but he didn’t seem to notice or care.

“Tch, you’ve got a fucking mask on,” Hidan rolled his eyes. He reached up and tugged on Kakuzu’s sleeve.

Kakuzu’s eyes narrowed, “Shut up, you ignorant little child.” His arms uncrossed and relaxed at his sides.

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Hidan’s hand slid down his arm and touched his hand. “Grumpy old fuck,” he teased with a grin. Their fingers laced together.

Kakuzu led the way, though they walked side-by-side. Shade and sunlight passed over them as they headed southwest.

“Where, exactly, are we going?” Hidan inquired.

“To the Land of Mountains, like I said.”
“Yeah, I know that, I meant where specifically. Asshole.”

“I don’t know. We’ll hunt some bounties on the way, save up some money, and try to find a place in the mountains to lay low for a few years, at least until the Akatsuki disbands. We don’t need them coming after us.”

Hidan smirked, “So we’re settling down in the mountains together? Just the two of us?”

“Yes, and there’s no need to be a little shit about it.”

“I’m not, I just think-” His smile fell, “Wait, how am I supposed to do my rituals and bring destruction living in the fucking mountains!? I can’t properly worship Jashin like that!”

Kakuzu sighed, his shoulders slumping. Did he really want to spend the rest of his life with someone who so easily got on his nerves?

What a dumb question. Hidan was much more than that. Of course he wanted to spend his life with him.

“Don’t worry,” he reassured, “I’m sure there will be travelers you can slaughter, and we’ll roam a little and hunt a few bounties. I’ll let you kill them all, even if your damn ritual is a waste of time.” It was the least he could do. Hidan loved to kill, so why shouldn’t Kakuzu let him do all the work?

Hidan considered it, then nodded, “Fine. I guess that’ll work. For now.” Jashin wouldn’t be happy about it, but it was only for a few years, right? Right. Hidan grinned and stopped in his tracks.

Kakuzu got three more steps before he had to stop. Hidan was currently stronger, meaning he couldn’t possibly pull the man along. Instead, he had to step backward as Hidan pulled him closer. Wordlessly, he turned to him with a mildly irritated look.

Hidan reached up and tugged down his mask. The height difference was something he’d have to get used to, and he wasn’t quite sure if he loved it or hated it (he’d suggested cutting out some chunks from Kakuzu’s legs to shorten them, but Kakuzu had not been keen on that idea). When he leaned up, Kakuzu had to lean down and meet him halfway. Their lips connected.

Irritation faded away, replaced by a deep affection.

They parted. Kakuzu pulled his mask back into place and they began walking again, still hand-in-hand, toward The Land of Mountains.

Chapter End Notes

We’ve reached the end. You know, this story was never meant to be this long. It was literally just a few short segments at first, not meant to have much detail to them at all… but they just grew and grew and soon I knew it couldn’t be just one chapter or even two. It became fucking ten. I sincerely hope you’ve enjoyed reading them! Thank you for the wonderful reviews. They really fueled me to lengthen this thing even more. I don’t think I’ll do the epilogue since I don’t have any good ideas for it, but maybe I’ll put up another story idea I’ve been toying with. Will it be as long as this? I hope not because it’s not even a good idea but whatever we’ll see.

Thanks again and I love you all!
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!