

Out For Karma: Naruto

#Chapter 31: Life goes on (Part IV) - Read Out For Karma: Naruto Chapter 31: Life goes on (Part IV)

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Tsunade had avoided Riku for a couple months after their fateful night and morning. Not because she didn't want to see him or spend time with him but because she needed time to think. She was honest and open about it to Riku who understood and reiterated that it changed nothing for him between the two of them. He didn't expect a romantic relationship because it wouldn't work. While master and apprentice hitching themselves together wasn't rare, the age gap between Tsunade and Riku was important (not like he minded) but she was also the Hokage and had an image to maintain. He simply told her to take all the time she needed and that he'd be there whatever she needed of him. She had thought long and hard, took her time and came to the conclusion that in the end it didn't matter. She had had fun, and nothing really changed between them at all. She was fine with it. She still dressed inappropriately in the morning for breakfast (though her mind was way more teasing than before), they cuddled when she was feeling lonely and fucked when she was really frustrated, stressed or horny. The latter had only happened once so far.

What changed for Riku was his outlook on life. He had loved Karin (still did) and she didn't love him back. The world didn't stop spinning or ended as a result and just kept going. So Riku did too. Now that he had gotten his first taste of sex well, he wasn't stopping anytime soon. The first to fall had been Shizune, during one of their massage sessions. She had always believed that he wanted Karin to be his first and never pushed him since he was younger but when he learned that he had a one night stand (not naming Tsunade) he confessed that he had been stupid to think like he did when he was a shinobi and the average lifespan of one was thirty at best. She understood and didn't even try to dissuade him. No, she simply unzipped his pants as he was massaging her back while standing in front of her and gave him his very first blowjob. She had been impressed by his size but more importantly by his resilience and refractory power. Despite just finishing a night shift, Shizune powered through the tiredness and fatigue for a very good morning spent in bed getting railed to oblivion and couldn't wait for the next time.

While seeing the redhead had been difficult at first, with time it became easier. Bit by bit he distanced himself and spent more time with either Yugao or Hinata when they were free and in the village. The latter preferably when Ino wasn't present. That didn't mean his friendship with Karin was on the decline towards an end, it just meant that while not as tight as before it was less so. Or at least on his part. Karin was so busy that he

doubted she noticed. So was he in truth but he paid attention because he was the one that got his heart broken.

His training picked up greatly and he was now starting the master water, leaving only fire after it. More importantly, his Iryoken had finally become viable in combat. Now when he used it he could accelerate greatly the cellular division on the point of impact as long as the part that hit was connected to its target. Since he couldn't keep in contact because it was a hit and not a grapple, it didn't have any direct effect but many repeated hits would work. Another possibility he had was to simply turn the cells cancerous but their division's speed was normal. He was still struggling to combine the two together to truly make the Iryoken a force to reckon with. Alas, the composition of his medical chakra for each option was very different and made it both complex and difficult.

The fuinjutsu had made leaps and bonds ever since he had successfully completed what he called the BOTIB for '**Bigger On The Inside Box**'. He had given one to Hiruzen, one to Tsunade and one to Anbu's team Ro. From there he had learned much about space-time and began designing a reverse summoning tag that served as an anchor point for someone making the correct hand seals sequence. They would be teleported right on the seal no matter where they were and as long they had the chakra. Naturally, the farther away from the anchor tag the more chakra would be needed.

Regarding the time aspect he had good progress but not in the direction he wanted. So far he was able to slow the time in a barrier a little bit. It was good and gave him some experience with time manipulation but he wanted to accelerate it so it was not that great in the big picture.

"Did something happen?"

It was Hinata that asked him the question while taking a break for her lightning manipulation training. She had asked for help from Riku who she knew had mastered it, not knowing anyone who had that affinity. Kurenai would have searched someone for her but that would have been known by her clan one way or another. Riku on the other hand was a safer option.

"In what regards?" he asked, tilting his head to the side after removing his head from the book he was reading.

"I don't know. I just noticed that... well, you smile more often but at the same time you're not as intimately friendly as before?" she pondered for a moment trying to find the correct words to the feeling she had.

"Intimately friendly? Like... No, I don't have a comparison. What do you mean?"

"Like I said, I don't really know. You're friendly, yes but... less involved?"

"Hinata. I'm literally in the neck of the woods to help you practice in secret your lightning nature. How am I not involved?" he answered flatly.

"Not with me, which I'm glad about but with others it's rather flagrant now that I think about it."

"How so?"

"You're not enduring Ino being... well, Ino, anymore and just barely cares what she does. You don't rebuff her or turn her down and you're not so invested in Karin."

"I guess I grew up from the small kid that deep down inside wanted the affection of someone." he replied with a shrug, going back to his reading.

"Perhaps but I don't think that's the main reason."

Raising his head again, Riku looked at her silently for a moment. Trying to find out why she was so noisy all of the sudden but he remembered that it was Hinata.

'It's probably out of care and worry' he thought, chastising himself for ever thinking that Hinata had ulterior motives. Still that didn't mean he would spill the beans. "If I bribe you with cinnamon rolls, will you let it go?"

"You can try but you will surely be disappointed." she replied with a soft giggle.

"Not even trying to swindle me out of them?"

"No. I just have to ask and you'd give me some. That's the kind of friend you are." she replied with conviction and a disarming smile that made him stare at her for a second.

"I swear if Naruto is too dumb to ask you out I'm stealing myself a moon princess and I won't give her back. Ever."

She giggled louder and smacked his shoulder for being an idiot.

"Come on, don't avoid the subject. Is it really that bad?"

Riku sighed in surrender. *'It's not like Hinata would share what she's told in confidence.'* Deciding to give in he spoke up. "Months ago... I asked Karin out."

"Oh." was the only sound she let out at the revelation she just heard. Karin had said nothing to her about it and neither to Ino or the blonde would have told her and would have been depressed. "It didn't go well, I gather?" She ventured in an ignorant manner but she knew that Karin had dated some guy some months back. He didn't last long however.

“She said that she was too busy to entertain a romantic relationship at the moment so it wasn’t that bad of a rejection and honestly I rather took it well. What I didn’t take well was seeing her kissing some guy and walking hand in hand with him a week later.”

“Ooooh!” **That**, Hinata hadn’t known. *‘Karin that was... not nice.’*

“**That** had hurt. A lot. ”

“I can imagine.” the bluenette tried to show support. Her heart really went to him.

“I wasn’t expecting her to accept my feelings but at least to be honest with me. We were best friends! Or at least I thought we were. Anyway, I got myself pissed drunk as a result and I mean really pissed drunk, more than on my birthday when I’m challenging sensei.”

‘Ouch, must not have been a pretty sight. Poor Riku’.

“Next thing I knew I woke up naked in a room I didn’t know, next to a woman I didn’t know either and who was just as naked as I was.”

“Y-you mean...?!”

“Yep. I found my clothes scattered around the room, dressed up and left. After thinking about it for days I came to the conclusion that... It didn’t matter. Not really. Who got my V-card and who didn’t. Pointless. As a shinobi we could die at any moment during any mission because of simple stray kunai. So now, I just... don’t bother with really heavy stuff regarding people? Except with you and Yugao. The two of you, I don’t know how but you make it impossible to not involve ourselves and not care. Must be the purple or the blue in the hair.” he finished telling his tale with a jape to hide the hurt he still felt regarding Karin.

“Anko-sensei has purple hair, too.” she replied in a teasing manner, making him groan. “I’m... sorry about what Karin did, she shouldn’t have and... Perhaps you’re right about your point of view. I do find it very sad however.”

“It is. But at least... Nevermind. Back to making lightning jump. Hop Hop!” he said, clapping his hand indicating that the conversation was over and so was her break.

Riku’s mind wandered to Hinata’s last words. He agreed, truly, that it was very sad. There wasn’t much love involved and it was purely physical. But then again, he had never really known what love was in the first place. Tsunade loved him but in a strange way, the same way he loved her. They couldn’t put a label on it but it wasn’t romantic love, that was for certain. The same with Shizune it wasn’t love either. He wasn’t sure that either of them would risk everything for him.

A cute 'owie' from Hinata dragged him away from his thoughts. Closing his book he approached her and began to heal her burnt hands. Why she had chosen the most hurtful affinity to patrice after mastering her own (fire) he didn't know.

"Why lightning? You had three others to choose from, that wouldn't have hurt you should you fail the exercise."

"To strengthen the Juken. I hope that by adding lightning affinity to my strikes I would be able to hit the nerves or burn the tenketsu making my enemy unable to fight."

"Hmm. Smart." he said, still focused on the healing of her hands.

"You think so?"

"Of course. No matter how powerful an opponent, without functioning nerves they're defenseless. Any other nature affinity wouldn't enhance the Juken as much either. I find it very similar to my Iryoken. More than the regular Juken but then again I loosely based the Iryoken from the Juken."

"I wish I could heal people with the Juken the way you do with your Iryoken."

"Well... I could teach you but it's a family jutsu so I'll have to make you my wife first." he joked, raising his eyes from her hands and looking into hers. Their faces were really close and for a moment, Riku thought about kissing her. He didn't. He knew it wasn't right. Hinata was the one true friend he had left and she was madly in love with Naruto. Kissing her would just make things awkward and shatter their friendship. Furthermore, while he liked Hinata a lot (reaching third place on his list right after Tsunade and Yugao) she was way too kind and supportive to do that to her. She would feel awful and in turn he would feel awful.

'Just because my love life ended up not being a fairy tale means that I should spoil hers.'

"Ino would kill me if I did that." she giggled at his silliness.

"We will take her as our mistress then."

" 'Our' ?"

"Of course! What's mine would be yours and what's yours would be mine. So your Ino would become mine too."

"Interesting. Do you plan to add anyone else in that...'marriage of ours', darling?" she inquired, playing along with him.

"Anyone we would both agree on, love."

“Uh-huh.”

“Quite a marriage we would have, don’t you think?” he said sarcastically.

“So impersonal. Not much love between us with all the love we give to others.”

“Yeah. A recipe for disaster. Can you imagine if children are in the mix? Poor kids.”

“Ooh. already thinking of children when we haven’t got our honeymoon yet?”

“Careful Hinata. I’m really going to steal myself a moon princess at this rate.” he warned without any heat and released her healed hands.

“One word from me and you’d bring me back home.”

“Alas! Must I suffer to be rejected by all the beautiful women in the world?” he dramatically said, putting the back of his hand on his forehead and feigning heartbreak and despair. That made her laugh.

The nice playful atmosphere ended when a little bird landed on Riku’s shoulder.

“I guess this is it for a while.”

“Be careful.”

“You be careful, who’s going to heal your hands with me away?”

“I’ll manage.”

“Sure.” he replied, not believing her one bit.

Giving her a hug, he then shushined away from the forest to the Village. In no time he arrived at the Hokage Tower and inside his sensei’s office.

“You’re late.” said Tsunade.

“Late? I made my way here as soon as I received the bird.” he replied with an eyebrow raised.

“I thought you were at the manor.” she answered with a frown but let it go. “Nevermind. I have an urgent mission for you. The Land of This called us for help. They received information that their neighbour the Land of That had hired a mercenary group to conquer their country and assimilate it.”

“Mercenaries? Isn’t that the job for a chunin team?” he asked, confused.

“Usually, yes. However the mercenary group in question is composed of S-ranks missing-nin and S-rank alone.”

“S-rank missing-nin banding together? That’s new. Missing-nin of such strength usually work alone or in rare cases with subordinates less powerful than they are. Isn’t it more of a job for Anbu?”

“Yes, however I need someone that I can absolutely trust leading the mission.”

“...If I ask why, do I get an answer?”

“I need the mercenaries alive. All of them. Anbu is more attune to spying and assassinating.”

“...Okay.”

“Okay? Just like that?”

“Yes. You’re the Hokage, sensei. If you want me to go fetch S-rank nuke-nins, I’ll fetch S-rank nuke-nin. Who’s coming with me?”

“Hatake Kakashi and Yugao.”

“No offense sensei, but both of them are former Anbu. Not really specialized in capture.”

“No, but they’re the strongest on hand and that I trust too for the job. Their chances of survival are greater.”

“So the capture is really up to me then.”

“Yes.”

“Too bad. My team from the mission in the Lands of woods was perfect.”

“They’re not strong enough for that kind of opponents”

“I know but I’m not there yet either. Far from it.”

“True but your skills in fuinjutsu alone could help you narrow the gap.”

“Do we know anything else about the mission?”

“The attack is supposed to happen in four days.”

“Barely any time to get there and take a lay of the land. Alright. My teammates?”

“Exceptionally they are fitted with Special Anbu gear so they are **there**.”

“Ah! Well, I guess, I’ll wait for them at the Western Gate.”

“I’ll share the word.”

Riku bowed to her and left her office but not without some parting words from her.

“Riku, your life is more important than the mission. If you can’t capture, kill them.”

“Understood, sensei.”

With everything worth saying being said, he exited the office, closing the door behind him and made his way to the Western Gate. He didn’t have to wait long for his partners to show up.

“Mah~ So you’re the third member. Hokage-sama is sure as hell bent on the mission’s success.” Kakashi said as a greeting.

“Kakashi-san, Yugao-chan.” he greeted them and Yugao simply smiled at him.

“Finally in the big leagues, hmm?” she teased.

“That’s not my first mission as a jonin though I do admit it’s the first one where my skills will probably be pushed to the limit. I’ll try to not drag you down.”

“That’s a very pessimistic view of yourself.” Kakashi said with an eye smile.

“He’s just being polite, Taicho. He’d probably give you a run for your money now.”

“Probably.” Riku confirmed. He wasn’t sure of his victory but a spar wouldn’t go as much in favor for Kakashi as it did during his Jonin promotion. “Was Anbu generous or cheap with the gear?”

“I am afraid that’s a strictly need to know basis.”

“They were short on vambraces and Type-S, Type-B1 and Type-B2. Type-”

“Yugao!”

“Yes, Taicho?”

“He doesn’t have the clearance to-”

“Actually I do.” Riku interrupted, shocking Kakashi.

"I doubt Hokage-sama would have given you the clearance even if you're her apprentice."

"She would not and she didn't, Taicho. It was Sandaime-sama who did it when he was still wearing the hat."

"But... He was a genin at the time! Why would-"

"**You** don't have the clearance to know that, Kakashi-san."

"That's true."

Kakashi felt like his world was upside down. **He** didn't have the clearance to know? He has been the best Anbu captain and was currently the best jonin in the village and yet he didn't have the clearance for it? That was inconceivable.

"Only sensei, Sandaime-sama, Yugao-chan and Boar have the clearance. Maybe the elders and the Anbu commander?" he asked, turning to his purple haired friend who nodded. "Fortunately for you, I'm the only one with the clearance to speak about it for the simple reason that all the new toys Anbu have? I created it." Riku said as he picked his BoS from his back pouch and signaled them to follow him to the side of the Gate in a narrow alley between the village Wall and a house.

Kakashi looked questioningly at Yugao who nodded in reassurance and followed Riku. He unsealed a closet big enough for someone to go through its door and positioned it against the house's wall, which was in the shadow. He then opened the door, and invited his teammates to go inside. Yugao, while used and confused at what Riku was doing, trusted him and went inside. Kakashi was more reserved and approached slowly. His jaw went way down to the ground when he saw his former subordinate inside what looked like a big room with plenty of Anbu gear.

"How is that possible?" he said, eyeing the door for a moment then getting inside the closet, Riku following him.

"Space-time fuinjutsu."

"That's more than pretty advanced. I'm sure Jiraiya-sama is incapable of that."

"I would think that's the case. He's way more knowledgeable and skilled at actual sealing, in the literal sense, with a bit of barriers on the side. Space-time fuinjutsu is a whole other branch. Very different. Yugao-chan, did you find what you needed?"

"Yes. Taicho, catch." she said and threw two vambraces with sealed carved in the underside.

"What do the seals do?"

“Simple storage seals. Mainly used for shurifuiuns. It’s up to you to decide what you want to fill them with and in what order.” Riku answered the cyclops who replaced his normal vambraces with the new ones he got.

“What’s beyond the door?” the former Neko wondered aloud, catching the two men’s attention.

“Living quarters, bathroom included. Kitchen is behind this one.” he pointed out to another door but behind him this time.

“You got a whole small base inside a closet... I’ve seen many improbable things in my life but this... Takes the cake.” commented Kakashi. “Anbu will have a field day with those.”

“They already do. Team Ro and Alpha at least. It isn’t perfect, there is still some work to be done, like an infirmary to be added and also a time dilation effect but it’s getting there.”

““Time dilation effect?”” the former Anbu asked in clear confusion.

“The objective is one second outside is a week in here at the very least. That way an injured person comes in and comes out healthy on the spot for those outside. I’m still working on that part.”

The looks they gave him were priceless. They quickly recovered and armed themselves properly, Kakashi started asking questions.

“Alright I know about Type-X and Type-F but the others? I suppose type S is for smoke?”

“Type-S is for Smoke, yes. Type-B1 is Barrier One. It creates a small defensive barrier at the point of impact. Useful for protecting yourself by throwing it at your feet or protecting a comrade. Can stop shurikens, kunais and C-rank jutsu. Protect from explosions too if they’re not too big. Finally Type-B2 creates a bigger barrier but an offensive one. Everything locked inside can’t get out and you can add tags to it. It’s mainly for capture. The downside is that you need four of them around your target to make it work and needs a three hand seals sequence. Dog, Ox, Dragon. ”

“I’ll remember that.”

“What about those ones?” Yugo asked from a corner with a shurifuin in hands.

“Prototypes. Depending on the seal on them it’s supposed to change your chakra into one of the five natures.”

“So people not knowing a nature would be able to use it with that seal.” Kakashi stated and Riku nodded. “The versatility of a seal like that... Very clever.”

“Thank you.”

“What about those ones? Types-SM?” inquired Yugao.

“Suddenly, I find this type to be my favorite.”

“Perverted jape aside, SM is for Slow Motion.”

“... Please tell me it does what I think the name implies?”

“It creates a small barrier where the time inside is slowed down. It’s a work in progress too. I have not much control on how much time is slowed. Yet. One second could last two or could last an hour. That’s about how far I got with that.”

Kakashi observed Riku for a second and wondered how he could have been so stupid years ago. The sandaime had tried to tell him. Him, Kurenai and Asuma. They heard but didn’t listen. And now his team was scattered in the wind with only Sakura training with him when she’s not in the hospital for her medic-nin training.

Taking a deep breath, Kakashi began to fill the seals on his vambraces with Shurifuins.

Chapter 32: Life goes on (Part V)

They reached the Land of This within two days and a half. That gave them plenty of time to meet with their client and take a lay of the terrain. The country was really small and the capital was the only real city. Everything else was small villages with twenty to fifty inhabitants at most. If the Land of That wanted to conquer their neighbors they would need to take the capital. As such Kakashi and Yugao did some recon to determine the most likely entries the mercenary group would use to take over. In the meantime, Riku was placing seals all around the castle. Traps mostly. On the fourth day after the beginning of the mission, in other words on the due date of the attack, the team was ready to proceed. They were alert and prepared. Except for what the enemy did. Whoever they were, they came when the sun was high and alone through the main entrance of the city. They opened two scrolls and unsealed a hundred puppets who began attacking.

“What the heck.” Riku whispered from the top of the room the team was on.

“That’s Sasori of the sand-sand.” Kakashi announced and began to hop to the nearest rooftop in the direction of their enemy. He was followed by Riku and Yugao.

“That’s... not so bad. From what I read in the bingo book, the real danger is not the puppets but the poisons he uses. I can create an antidote with time and a sample of the poison so better not get scratched.”

“How do we proceed?” inquired Yugao.

“Type-X against the puppets. Let’s try to take as many as we can in one volley. After that... Riku, since you’re the medic and the only one who can create an antidote you’re dealing with the puppets that were not destroyed. Once done, you’re on support duty from the back. Yugao, you and I will take care of him.”

““Understood.””

“You don’t need to use your Type-X. I can clone mine with a **Shuriken Shadow Clone Jutsu**. It will be taxing but since I’m not directly fighting him.”

“The Sandaime thought it to you?” A surprised Kakashi asked.

“No. I just recreated it.”

Filling that information for later, Kakashi gave his agreement. They reached their targets pretty quickly and Riku unleashed a dozen Type-X from each hand. As soon as he did he used the jutsu and a simple dozen became a few hundreds. The small but powerful explosion took out two thirds of the small puppets army.

“You! My army!” the big burly man wearing a black coat with red clouds screamed.

The team didn’t pay attention, Yugao and Kakashi going through a breach to reach their enemy. Meanwhile Riku moved fast, kicking and punching with his super strength any puppet that he could get access to. He could have leveled the entire area but that would have destroyed the buildings and the people living in it would probably have died. While fighting he kept an eye on his teammates as much as he could. It turned out to be a good thing because he saved Kakashi just in time from the hit that he could only describe as a giant and sharp tail. The Type-B1 that landed at Kakashi’s feet had released a small barrier that had taken one hit then broke. That had been more than enough for the jonin who retreated hastily out of range. Not missing the opportunity offered by the distraction Kakashi ended up being, Yugao came from the side and cut through the tail. She was ready to strike for the main body when the severed part of the tail that had fallen into the ground, pierced her shoulder from behind. Riku cursed under his breath and accelerated the destruction of the dozen or so puppets left. Meanwhile Kakashi attacked Sasori to get his attention and allowed Yugao to retreat. For that purpose he had used a Katon jutsu in the hope of at least damaging the wood the puppet was made of. Sasori simply dodged and the wounded Yugao began to attack Kakashi.

Seeing that the situation had turned from bad to very very bad. Riku created a shadow clone to deal with the few puppets left. Throwing a set of Type-B2, he captured Yugao. Not stopping there, he rushed Sasori and made a feint, prompting the mercenary to dodge when he didn't need to and putting him in the perfect position to punch through the man (or the thing, Riku couldn't really tell at this point). He felt chakra strings hit his body but they were cut off on the spot by a Type-B thrown at his feet courtesy of Kakashi. Going through the barrier Riku landed a super punch to the being under the clock and immediately knew that Sasori would live. He had felt the hardwood break under his fist and not flesh and bones. He jumped backward a few feet when he saw something emerge from the back of 'Sasori'. A smaller person, barely taller than an average fourteen years old.

"I admit, I wasn't expecting my day to go like this. Meeting Hatake Kakashi the copy-nin and someone able to use the slug princess absurd strength... You will make fine additions to my puppet collection. The next master pieces of my art. The both of you."

The young teenage boy was naked from the waist up. It was evident to everyone present that he was not human anymore. His innards were replaced by a very long steel cable wrapped around a vertical pole. On his chest where his heart should be was a container to which Riku was sure was the last bit of his flesh to create chakra allowing him not only to control this puppet body but to simply be alive.

"I don't think capture is possible anymore, Kakashi-san."

"I don't think so either. Let's wrap it up fast."

"I agree" Sasori said and pulled from his lower back a scroll. "This is my favo-"

Kakashi threw a mix of Type-X and Type-S at their enemy from his vambraces while Riku used lightning laced Kunais targeting its 'heart'. None stopped there. The cyclops, not being a close quarter fighter, was relegated to Riku's role, support while Riku had to get closer. Yugao was the front liner but with her out of the fight Riku, a Taijutsu specialist, had to step up.

Riku's brain was in overdrive. His first priority was to finish the fight as quickly as possible to treat Yugao. He began listing all jutsus and seals that he had at his disposition to do so. He could only think of one and he wasn't sure it would have the intended effect. Not only that but it required him to actually touch Sasori's body making himself vulnerable. Deciding on a plan of action during the 1.2 seconds since he channelled lightning into his kunais, Riku created nine shadow clones with the chakra he had left. 7 were dispelled on the spot giving him back 70% of the chakra while the two still there rushed Sasori while making hand seals. Sasori who had been busy protecting himself from the small explosions and with his hands full with his scroll, wasn't able to dodge the hits from both Riku while summoning a new puppet. Not for one of them and Riku hoped it was enough. When he saw the puppet shrink onto itself and crush the weird container in the nuke-nin chest, he knew they had won. Not missing

a bit he quickly went to Yugao, he dispelled the barrier and looked at her wound. The poison was vicious and painful but thankfully not fast acting.

“Yugao-chan, I’m going to have to seal you for a bit. I can’t make an antidote here and-”

“Do it.”

Riku nodded and pulled out a special crate from his BoS and she immediately got inside. When the lid was closed and the barrier activated, Riku sealed it back in his book. Kakashi, who was done checking to see if Sasori was dead for good, witnessed what his teammate just did to the other and nearly shouted at him. He held his tongue because Riku was very good with space time jutsu and because Yugao trusted him and seemed to know that she wouldn’t die from being sealed in a storage seal.

“We need to pick Sasori’s remains for study and for the poisons he had on him.”

“Yugao?”

“Has all the time in the world. I’ll explain it once we’re inside the base.”

Kakashi nodded and began to pick up pieces of wood here and there with Riku’s help. Once everything was packed into a storage seal, they went to meet the Daimyo to tell him the mission was completed successfully. The man had expected nothing less from the Copy-nin of the leaf and the apprentice of the Hokage herself and was very happy with the results. They chose to depart instead of retreating to an inn to rest. When they reached a small cove, Riku set camp with very deadly traps then brought out his closet. Kakashi followed him inside to the infirmary.

“So, I think it’s time you tell me what you did to Yugao and Sasori.”

“Yes.” Riku replied and brought out the crate with ‘sasori’ or what was left of him, out.

“A year or two ago, I developed two jutsus. The first one was to expand organic but inert matter, like wood, the other was to shrink it back.”

“So you shrunk his wooden body and it crushed whatever was inside the container which killed him.”

“Yes.” Riku replied, pulling out the tip of the tail that had wounded his friend. “Sasori still needed flesh to be able to create chakra and move his body so what was probably inside was his heart.”

“Hmm, quite the heartbreak.”

“Quite. As for Yugao... It’s a bit complex to explain, technically her body is frozen in time inside the storage seal.”

“How come?”

“The dimension inside the seal? Some laws of nature are absent there which include time. That's why when you seal someone in there they die because they are not affected by a fundamental law of nature anymore. The crate is a sort of bubble still having time in it.”

“And since it's inside a barrier, Time is trapped. Yugao is still under the effect of Time, but since Time doesn't exist outside the barrier the time inside is frozen.”

“... Yes, that's exactly it. I spent fifteen minutes trying to explain that to the Sandaime. I didn't think you'd know about barriers and dimensions when I talked to you about space-time at the start of the mission.”

“I learned a bit about that by simply hanging around a couple of sealmasters in my youth.”

“Oh! I'd really like to meet them and discuss the topic.”

“They passed away long ago, I'm afraid.”

“A shame. In any case my expanding and shrinking jutsu, the crates and the knowledge about what's going on inside a seal is-”

“Heavily restricted under a butt load of Red tape, got it.”

Kakashi let Riku work on making an antidote and wondered how much of a prodigy in fuinjutsu the young man in front of him actually was. He remembered, the day after the second phase of the Chunin exam was over, Hiruzen talked about Anbu's success rate and more importantly survival rate going up by a wide margin thanks to Riku.

'If back then he had discovered this Time freeze effect of a storage seal, no wonder the survival rate would go up significantly. And he was barely thirteen at the time. Sensei, Kushina-san, you would have loved talking with him.'

It took Riku a bit less than one hour to be done with his work. He released Yugao from her confinement and immediately dealt with the poison while a shadow clone began to fix her wound. He was so meticulous with the healing that it wouldn't leave a noticeable scar.

“And done!” exclaimed Riku with mirth in his voice. “Do I have to kiss it to make it feel better?”

“No, thank you.” Yugo replied with a roll of her eyes but a small amused grin on her lips.

“You will feel a bit sluggish and weak for a few days, that's normal and it will pass.”

"We're resting for the rest of the day. Afterward, straight back home." Kakashi announced the plan.

While making lunch, Riku asked what could be improved inside the base. What was missing and needed to be added. Both former Anbu answered a small training area. If the base was to be used as a stakeout, a training area to just practice and keep in shape was necessary. Riku took note of that and spent the rest of the day working on it under their disbelieving eyes.

Because of Yugao's state, they took a day more to reach Konoha. As always the sight of their home was refreshing and soothing. After checking at the gate, they were in front of Tsunade in no time.

"So?"

"Primary objective was a success, Hokage-sama. Secondary objective is failure."

"What happened?"

"I got poisoned." Yugao stated.

"That's not the main reason, sensei." Riku quickly defended her from any blame.

"We battled Sasori of the red sands. He was quite the difficult opponent. He had turned almost his whole body into a puppet with probably many tricks up his sleeves and could use other puppets at the same time. His initial attack numbered a hundred of them, Hokage-sama. With our situation and our respective skills, there was no way we could have captured him. The only reason we pulled out a win is because Riku used his... shrinking jutsu on Sasori."

"The wood crushed the flesh he still needed to have, when it shrunk. Clever." she immediately realized, understanding Sasori's weakness from what Kakashi had said.

"We picked him and everything of his up for study, sensei."

"Riku sealed Yugao to give himself the time to create an antidote without the poison progressing further. Once healed we took a day to rest then went back home."

"Hm, not the best outcome but the next best thing. Alright, I'll need a more detailed report in writing. Good job, all of you."

Being dismissed the team left the office.

"Are you well enough for a completed mission celebration Yugao-chan?"

"I don't think I can drink anything alcoholic but eating something is fine. Taicho?"

“Eh, why not?”

“Any preferences? And please, not Dango Heaven! Not in the mood for Anko.” Riku quickly added, making Yugao snort.

“Yakiniku Q?”

“Hm, yes. Beef will do. Good choice, Taicho.”

They shushined there and took a table. They were not sitting for five minutes when Riku was forcefully hugged from behind by a young blonde.

“Riku!” Ino said enthusiastically, giving him a kiss on the cheek before releasing him. Yugao had an amused smile on her face at Riku’s fake one.

“Long time no see, Ino. How are you-”

“And who do you think is at fault for that? Huh? Mister ‘I’m-busy-as-hell-and-can’t-take-a-break’?” she asked with an unhappy tone and with a face that matched it.

“I... Suppose I can easily lose track of the time when I’m working.”

“Uh-huh.” she grunted in a way that meant ‘*No shit!*’

Ino wasn’t alone, her whole team was present too. They were celebrating their successful mission too and in consequence both teams ate together. Ino had sat right next to Riku rather closely. That made Riku a bit uncomfortable. She wasn’t doing anything inappropriate but the closeness had created conflicted emotions within him. On one hand he wanted to recoil, his ‘trauma’ of a 8 years old blonde tearing him down verbally was still very much there and kicking. On the other hand, he just wanted to put her sideways in his lap and kissed her with everything he got while letting his hands roam her body in very intimate places. At nearly seventeen, Yamanaka Ino was quite the bombshell and he had no doubt that she would be the most gorgeous woman of her generation along with Hinata. That disparity in feelings was what made him uncomfortable, not Ino herself. As years passed and as she and he matured and wised up, he had come to really like her perky personality. Still small doses of her was good for his heart or so he believed.

As lunch ended, everyone went their own way. Riku went straight home. He didn’t feel like training or working on seals, he did however think a bit about a mid-to long range jutsu he desperately needed if close quarter combat was not a good idea. The fight against Sasori taught him as much. Not coming with anything, he decided to summon Katsuyu and spend the rest of the day with her, as he hadn’t seen her in a while.

Chapter 33: Life goes on (Part VI)

Mad cackling could be heard from the Senju manor in the middle of the morning. Fortunately no one was in the Senju compound at this time of the day (with the exception of the one cackling) otherwise someone would have called the Military Police who would have showed up asking questions.

Riku was celebrating, letting out his mad scientist side, the complete success of his BOTIB. He had finally added the time dilation seal that was working as he wished. Time manipulation had very little secret for him to uncover now. He also added his finished reverse-summoning seal. That part had been a bit more difficult than he thought, he had to dab into blood seals to make it work. The blood contained in the seal would serve as an anchor and destination point when the correct hand seals sequence would be used. When he realized that, he hit a snag. He found no mention of such seals in the Konoha library beyond a quick summary of what they were. It was Tsunade who shared with him her grandmother's scrolls on fuinjutsu and Riku had to admit, Uzumaki Mito was a genius seal mistress. In fact the whole Uzumaki clan were geniuses at fuinjutsu if what he read on the scrolls were true. Apparently they succeeded in making seals that could summon the Shinigami himself. That was mind blowing to Riku. He couldn't understand who in their right mind would do such a thing yet he was very interested in such knowledge.

Checking that everything was in order, Riku left the manor to go and tell Tsunade about it. On the way he met Hinata, Ino and Karin walking down the street. When the blonde saw him she came rushing in and jumped him, kissing him with all she was worth under Hinata's amused look and Karin's shock.

The two blonde's relationship had begun a couple months ago when Ino had dragged her friends for a night out at the nightclub. Between a great deal of alcohol, Ino's unrelented advances and her very skimpy outfit, they had found themselves inside a bathroom booth fucking each other with everything they had. After two rounds and Ino's dress and face completely messed with Riku's cum, they escaped through the window and went back to the Senju manor where they continued their activities in Riku's bedroom. When morning came, the Yamanaka heiress was snuggling happily against her catch of the previous night, resting her head on his shoulder, Riku gently caressing the small of her back.

"This was a one time thing, wasn't it?" asked the perky blonde with a hint of sadness in her voice.

"... I wish it wasn't but it's better like that."

"Why? If you..."

*"Any guy would be happy with you, me included but I don't think I would be able to make **you** happy."*

"What do you mean?"

"I... have severe trust issues, Ino. Part of me would always wonder when the other shoe will drop."

"I don't understand."

*"You're great to be around; beautiful both inside and out, yet sometimes my mind just flashes to our days at the academy where I 'was a clanless orphan loser who just wanted to attract attention by trying to be like Sasuke-kun.' and I.. don't know, I expect you to revert to that awful and mean kid. I know you won't because you're **not** like that anymore, yet doubts are eating at me and I can't bring myself to ignore them."*

She had looked at him for a moment in silence, trying to remember her ever saying that but she couldn't. She had said so many mean things to him during those four years that it was just a blur now. She regretted them of course and cursed her younger self for being such an idiot.

"I'm sorry. For ev-"

"Oh, I forgave you long ago. Years ago. We were just kids, and kids are mean but you became... Wonderful with a capital W. I just... can't seem to let that Ino go, no matter how much I dislike her or how much I want to, just so it's only you left in my mind. It's not fair to you if we start something serious when I'm like that."

Ino took a big breath and shifted her body from Riku's side to be on top of him, straddling him. Her hands resting on his chest for maintaining some balance at first, found themselves on each side of his head.

*"Listen and listen well, you stupid. I like you, no it's beyond that, I **love** you. And now that I have you in my grasp, I'm not letting you go that easily. Not without a fight. I'm staking my claim and making you mine, no matter what and I don't care what I have to do for that to happen."*

"Ino..."

"If something serious is too much for you to handle then we'll start with something not serious. It's as simple as that, okay?"

He looked her in the eye for a moment and pondered what he wanted to do. On the one hand he had grown to really like her and avoiding her was just a defense mechanism at this point that he didn't need anymore. On the other hand, starting something with her would put an end to the fun times he had with Tsunade and Shizune. He was brought out of his thoughts when he heard her giggled.

"It's funny seeing you try to make a decision when you don't have a choice to begin with."

"Wha-"

Ino leaned forward and gave him the most loving and sensual kiss he ever had. Immediately he was hard on a rock and his toes nearly curled. When she estimated that she had the desired effect she broke the kiss.

"You. Are. Mine. and 'us'?"

'Us' is a thing now. So go ahead, have fun. Do whatever you want but always remember that we're together and that you are mine. Got it?"

Riku simply nodded, lost in her beautiful pupilless light-blue eyes. He couldn't find in himself the ability to deny her.

"Good, now let's put that log that lodged itself between my butcheeks to good use."

"Ino..."

"Now, or I swear to god I'm going to edge you for a week."

Immediately he rolled them over and in one thrust poked at the entrance of her womb.

That's how their relationship began. Ino's only change in behavior was that she was more touchy, more physical than before, as demonstrated by the french-kiss she had just given him.

"Hello, baby." she said with a 10 thousand megawatts smile.

"Hello to you too. What was that for?"

"I felt like it. Why? Are you complaining?"

"Not all."

Riku greeted Karin and Hinata, giving a hug to the former.

"It's mid morning, what are you all doing walking around the village?"

"It's Sunday, Ri-kun, we were going to enjoy our day off with a bit of shopping."

"Oh, yeah it's Sunday. Sorry I forgot, I was a bit too involved in finishing my project. And 'a bit of shopping'? With this one?" he replied pointing at Ino with his chin

“Hey! I’ll have you know I’m not a big spender! I mostly look!”

“Potayto Potahto.” was not the correct answer as he got his butt pinched. “Well, I have to visit sensei at the office, so I’ll be going. Have fun girls.”

Ino grabbed him before he could leave and whispered sensually in his ear.

“You better be free at lunch because I really want a snack and my makeup to be a total mess.”

“I’ll see what I can do.” he replied with a nod then left.

A ‘snack’ was Ino’s way of saying she wanted to suck his dick. She had discovered alongside him that she loved giving blowjobs. So much that the last time he had fuck her throat she had orgasmed so hard from the act that she squirted. Anytime she could get away with sucking his cock she would, something that Riku would never complain about. The more intimate they got, the more he really liked her. The more she became experienced too. In his opinion she was really talented and knew what she was doing. When he asked about it she answered that her mother had taught her by using bananas which made him laugh. The one dark spot of their weird relationship was the end of her friendship with Sakura. The Pinkette had already become insufferable because of Ino’s opinion on Sasuke after he defected and her new infatuation with Riku. Learning that Ino was kind of dating him had been too much for Sakura. Ino was done with this friendship and never looked back.

When he arrived at Tsunade’s office, Hisho-san signaled him he could enter and he did so. To his surprise his sensei was not alone. Jiraiya was present but also Naruto. The sun kissed blond had had a nice growth spurt and was now fully beyond 170cm tall when he used to be the shortest in the class at less than 150cm. For whatever reason, Hiruzen was present too.

“Sensei, Sandaime-sama, Jiraiya-sama, Naruto. Good to see you again. Hisho-san said that I could come in but I can return later if-”

“That won’t be necessary, Riku. We were done. Naruto, remember, Tuesday evening training ground 3.”

“I got it, Hokage-ba-” he barely dodged the paperweight she had thrown, aimed at his head and quickly got out of the office.

“What do you have for me?” Tsunade asked as Riku approached her desk. “Jiraiya stay, you’ll do your research later, you pervert.”

“Why?” answered the man, he was half way outside through the window.

“Because I’m pretty sure it’s fuinjutsu related.”

"It is." Riku confirmed looking at the man then turned back to Tsunade. "I finished it." he said with excitement and pulled out the BOTIB from his book of seals. She was suddenly very interested along with Hiruzen while Jiraiya was confused at what he was seeing.

"A closet? That's it?"

Riku opened the BOTIB and the Toad Sage's jaw hit the ground. Quickly he went around it to check if what he was seeing was true then came back to the front.

"HOLY SHIT, kid! Do you realize what you've done?"

"Of course. But space expansion is old news, like years old. The time dilation is new however."

"TIME DILA-! You're shitting me!"

"Nope. Here look."

Riku unsealed two watches from his BoS. He showed them to Jiraiya so he could check they were advancing at the same time. Then he went inside the Botib and reached the table in the middle of the room. Activating the seal there he accelerated the time ten times, right under the eyes of the others, still outside. Once done he stopped, got out and showed them his watch which was further in time.

"Fuck me! That's insane!"

"I think that's perhaps the most impressive and fascinating display of fuinjutsu that I've seen in my entire life. I don't think Mito-sama has ever done something like this or even thought about it." Hiruzen confessed.

"Actually, she wasn't that versed in space-time. She was one hell of a genius in the sealing branch, though. The ideas she had... I'm still trying to understand the far reaching application of some of them. In any case... I have one last trick to show you."

"As impressive as controlling time?" asked Tsunade who was very proud of her apprentice.

"In a way it's more."

Three pairs of eyes grew as big as saucers. Riku closed the door to the Botib and in front of them bit his thumb to draw blood, made a hand seals sequence and then slammed his hand on the ground. The result? He disappeared into a puff of smoke.

"Was that-" Tsunada began but stopped when the door to the Botib opened from the inside and Riku walked out of it with a grin.

“Reverse summoning inside the Botib. A bit of blood added into the seal is needed if someone wants to be reversed summoned but otherwise it’s the perfect hidden mobile base from Anbu and point of retreat.”

Jiraiya slowly walked toward Riku, leaned forward and poked his cheek with his finger.

“Damn, he’s real.” he whispered.

“Riku, how long does it take for you to make another botib just like that?”

“Alone? A month.”

“And just the time seal?”

“Hmm...A few days? Alone still.”

Tsunade began to think then looked at Hiruzen.

“It’s too big to restrict it to Anbu but at the same time...”

“If the other villages learned of it... We’ll have to make a special floor at the Hospital. Underground. Officially it would be for a new healing method. It won’t stop leaks but it may stop infiltration to uncover how it works.”

“Or we can simply use the security measure I put in place.” said Riku nonchalantly, rapping his nails on his chest then blowing air on them.

“I’m almost afraid to ask what kind of ‘measure’ you put on **that**, kid.”

“Blood seals. If your blood and chakra are not registered into the seal matrix inside the Botib, you can’t go through the door. If somehow, your blood and or chakra changed once inside, the gravity seals under the imposter feet increased ten fold. It does that too if the matrix detects the presence of someone not registered out of the blue. Of course, the matrix needs to be updated regularly, it wouldn’t do if a patient once out could come back inside at his leisure. Only three people have that right and they’re all in this room.”

“Why am I included?” inquired Hiruzen, knowing that Jiraiya wasn’t one of the three.

“Because should sensei be incapacitated, people will turn to you to pick up the mantle once again for a time. It takes time to add someone into the matrix with the highest level of seal clearance and we may not have it.” Riku replied and Hiruzen nodded in understanding.

Tsunade’s gears began to turn full throttle in her head. After a minute, she walked towards the wall where portraits of all the previous Hokage were hung and activated a

seal. The wall shifted, revealing a secret entrance. She went inside and quickly came back with a few scrolls in her arms.

"This... are the notes from both my uncle and Namikaze Minato about the Hiraishin."

"Tsunade!" Jiraiya shouted. Riku wasn't sure if it was in disbelief or outrage.

"He did something that neither of them even thought of doing. If someone can recreate that jutsu it's him."

"Minato's version is..."

"A result of my uncle's notes and Uzumaki fuinjutsu knowledge. Do not conveniently forget it, Jiraiya. Minato had no right to have access to either to begin with yet **we** all agreed and gave him permission because of how talented he was at fuinjutsu. That's the same situation here. That jutsu will still be restricted as the law dictates, you don't have to worry about that but Riku will be the exception, just like Minato was."

"Lots of words to not spill out that Naruto is his son." Riku commented, amused by the verbal gymnastics Tsunade did to not just say *'It's Naruto's inheritance and he will get it, don't worry.'*

The look the three older people gave him was priceless.

"That's obvious. You take the fourth's picture, add whiskers and tada!"

Tsunade took a deep breath and pinched the bridge of her nose while Jiraiya simply facepalmed. Riku took the scrolls and put them in his back pouch. He didn't know if there were storage seals in them or not and didn't want to check by sealing them inside his BoS. he also sealed back his Botib.

"I'll work on that once I finish the small projects I've been working on on the side. Should take a month at best."

"The faster you can use that jutsu the safer Konoha will be." the former Hokage just said.

"A week then. Those small projects are perhaps more important in a way." Riku said, then gave a small bow and left the office.

"My student is better than yours ~" singsang Tsunade with a smirk.

"Like hell he is!"

Hiruzen sighed then let out a chuckle at the stupidity of his students who began bickering like children, despite being in their mid-fifties, about who had the best student.

Chapter 34: Love is spreading

"Can I visit you tonight too?" Ino asked as she dusted her knees after getting up from the ground.

"Sure, you know my window is always open for you. You can also come through the front door and have dinner with Sensei and I for a change."

"I doubt that she would let me spend the night in your room afterwards. It's her home after all."

"Probably," he agreed after thinking about it. "Don't forget that Shizune and Karin are on night shift today. You'll have to wake up earlier than usual," he reminded her and she dismissed the information with a sway of the hand not caring about it.

"See you tonight, baby," she said sweetly and went for a kiss but Riku stopped her with a hand. With the other, he scooped a bit of himself on the corner of her mouth and offered it to her. Not thinking twice about it, Ino sucked on his finger and let out a very lusty moan on purpose. When she let his finger go he didn't resist the kiss this time. "You really taste great," she said and walked out the narrow and secluded alley they were in, all the while swinging her hips and making her bubble butt sway in ways that all Riku wanted was to dragged her back by her ponytail and fuck her delicious bottom. They haven't done that yet. While she was adventurous and not opposed to the act itself, Ino was a bit scared of his size in her poor butt. She knew that Riku was very interested in it though and purposefully teased him in any way she could.

'That minx!' he mused, feeling annoyed and amused at the same time.

Exiting the alley after a few minutes, he walked down the street and took the long way home, avoiding the busiest routes at this time of the day. Being the Hokage's apprentice unfortunately didn't give him special privilege for roof hopping unless it was for an urgent mission, if he was part of Anbu or if he was working for the military police. Those people were extra-vigilant and were patrolling all around the village ever since the reformation of the organization. As such Riku, like everyone else really, had to walk all the way from point A to point B on a normal occasion. That allowed him to have a chance encounter by turning a corner. For the second time today, he met Hinata, except this time she bumped into him, not really watching where she was going. Her sad face, red eyes and tears that were fighting against her will so they could fall, quickly told him that something was wrong. The 'Hey! You!' he heard coming 30 feet behind her from a MP shinobi arresting Naruto that got onto a roof was enough to make him understand what happened.

“R-Ri-kun! I-I- s-s-sorr-” she tried to apologize but was way too emotionally fragile to do it properly at the moment.

“Shh.” he simply said as he put a finger on her lips. “Come on, let’s go somewhere else.” he added and bending his knees picked Hinata up in his arms in a princess carry.

He shushined away, putting a stop to any protest Hinata may have given him and left the dense areas of the village to reach their secret training spot in the forest, near the Naka river. It took a few minutes to reach there and he stopped near a tree close to the water. Hinata let herself be led and didn’t protest when he sat down against a tree with her in his lap.

“Go on, there is only us here.”

She didn’t need to be told twice. She gripped his shirt tightly, buried her head into his chest and began to cry loudly. He put his arms around her in a fierce embrace and rocked her body gently while making small circles onto her back to comfort her. After a few minutes of letting out everything she felt (and completely wetting his shirt) her tears began to dry up. With a very red nose and a bit of an embarrassing blush, Hinata removed his head from his chest.

“I made a mess. Sorry.” she apologized looking at said mess.

“It’s just a t-shirt, Hinata. I can wash it. You’re more important than it. And more difficult to wash.” he quipped and pulled her head forward so it could rest against his shoulder. They stayed like that in silence for a time, his hand still making circles on her back. Deciding she was feeling better, Hinata leaned back against his chest to feel him more and grabbed with her hand the wrist of his arm that was holding her in place. She simply closed her eyes and enjoyed the peace, warmth and comfort she was being given. A kiss to her temple made her sigh in contentment. She didn’t know how long they stayed like that but she didn’t want it to end. The moment was broken by Riku speaking up. When she opened her eyes, she saw that the sun was setting, meaning they had spent the whole afternoon like this.

“If not for you, I would have stuck a kunai with an explosive tag into his... Well... where the sun doesn’t shine.” he said and the absurdity of it made her giggled.

“I... would like that very much but would feel really bad afterwards.”

“Oh? Not directly feeling bad but liking it first? Who perverted my kind moon princess? I’ll have a few words about tainting what should not be tainted.” he joked, making her chuckle.

“You did! You scoundrel! It’s all your fault.” she joked back.

“I’m pretty sure it’s the influence of Anko, Ino and Karin. I’m as white as snow.”

“... Perhaps.” was her only denying comment and it sounded very weak.

A comfortable silence was shared once more between the two but didn't last more than a minute before Riku broke it.

“He's a fool. I hope you know that?”

“...”

“He's never going to meet someone half as great as you are, while you'll have the first pick of any guy in the village.” he said, punctuating his words with a loving kiss on her forehead.

Hinata didn't say anything to that either. She just thought about what happened. She had gathered the self confidence and courage she had developed for the past four years and confessed her feelings to the boy she had a crush on ever since she was five. The one who she looked up to for never giving up. The one who inspired her to get stronger and not give up either. The one who she had stealthily stalked more times that she could count. That she never insulted, bad mouthed or hit and had worked hard to become strong for. Both physically and emotionally. The one who found her eyes and herself weird. The one who promised in front of everyone that he would beat her cousin for hurting her and broke said promise by losing a few minutes later. The one that had never looked her way or comforted her or cheered her up with the exception of her match against Neji. No, he did all of that for a girl who instead abused him and didn't care about him or his feelings. Not for her who did. She wanted to curse Sakura at that moment but couldn't or rather wouldn't, because she realized she already had someone doing all that in her life.

‘Uzumaki Naruto may be a fool but so am I. I’ve known for a long time but my heart couldn’t let go so I denied it but now... Once, just this once, I want to feel loved. Sorry, Ino. it’s just this once.’

Hinata turned her head and looked up at Riku, the movement alerting him and making look down as a result. Throwing caution to the wind, Hinata kissed him on the lips. It was quick. Or was supposed to be. When she tried to back away, Riku's hands held her in place and she had no choice but to keep going. When she felt his tongue seeking entrance between her lips, she naturally let it. He was gentle and slow yet passionate in how he treated hers. She almost melted at the sensation. His hand which was rubbing her lower back found itself under her jacket then her shirt then her ninja fishnet, directly touching her skin whose temperature began to rise. His other hand, which was placed on her left thigh to keep her in place, moved up toward her ass but never reached it. The sensation was overwhelming for Hinata and she let out a cute but lusty and needy moan in his mouth. The sound brought her back to reality and she suddenly pulled back more forcefully than her 'first try' from earlier.

Their faces were an inch away from each other and they could feel the other's hot breath.

"I'm sorry." she apologized, not daring to look him in the eyes.

"I remember warning you in this very place. Should Naruto be dumb to not ask you out, I would steal myself a moon princess and keep her forever."

She did remember as he said it, never really having thought about that before. Her face, which was a bit flustered from the kiss, became beat red. The words themselves but also the soft tone, full of conviction and determination, made her realize that this time it wasn't a joke. She felt the butterflies dancing in her stomach.

"W-what about I-Ino?"

"It's complicated but...She's my sun princess. And apparently, **she** is keeping **me** forever, no matter what. Who knows, maybe **you** will **keeper** forever?"

She blinked at that and began to think about his words when she felt his lips meeting her again. Reflexively, she moved forward to meet them more. It was a short kiss, his lips changing target quickly to the corner of her mouth then her jaw line then her neck. The spot right under her ear elicited a loud moan out of her. She almost verbally protested when he stopped but instead just vocally whined.

"Come on, we've having dinner at home. Ino is supposed to... visit me tonight. We'll talk with her about everything."

"I-I can't! I went b-behind-"

"Shh." he pecked her lips to make her stop talking. "We're going back to my place, have a nice dinner with sensei and then a sleepover. Ino, you and me. This is non-negotiable."

Before she could protest again he rose from the ground, still holding her in a princess carry and shushined back to Senju manor. He created two clones, once who left for parts that Hinata didn't know about, another for the bathroom to probably draw a bath for Tsunade. They went to the kitchen, where Riku put her down on the counter and began to make a simple vegetable soup. She watched him working in silence, her heart sure of her feelings for him but her mind a mess.

She couldn't understand how she could go from a broken heart and crying mess to kissing him in the span of one afternoon. She couldn't understand either how the ache in her chest, while still there, didn't hurt nearly as much and finally she couldn't understand why she did it when she knew that Ino was in love with him, how she could betray her best friend like that.

"I'm home!"

"Welcome home, sensei! In the kitchen, we have a guest!" he shouted back.

"Oh?"

Tsunade came into the room and noticed Hinata and her red eyes. On the spot she understood she'd been crying.

"Hinata! Good evening." she greeted with a warm smile.

"Hokage-sama. Thank you for-" she tried to get down the kitchen counter but Riku didn't let her.

"You stay there." he said, embarrassing her and blushing as a result. Tsunade snickered at the sight.

"Thank you for having me out of the blue."

"It's fine, Hinata."

"The bath is almost done, sensei. Dinner is in twenty minutes and we might have another guest."

"Noted." Tsunade nodded and left for the bathroom.

"Another guest?" Hinata asked, confused.

The doorbell chimed right at this moment and Riku made a kage bunshin to see who it was. Less than a minute later a very out of breath Ino came into the room and barrelled straight towards Hinata, taking her in a bear crushing hug. The poor bluenette loved the sentiment but less the sensation. She couldn't breathe after all.

"Ino, she needs to breathe." reminded her not-boyfriend.

Ino released her embrace a bit but didn't let go of Hinata. She simply leaned back to have a good look at her.

"Want me to shatter his mind? Maybe that will fix his stupidity?" she suggested and that made Hinata giggle.

"I suggested putting a kunai and explosive tag where the sun doesn't shine."

"And you were denied! Like I deny you, Ino."

"Fine! But a kunai and explosive tag sounds about right."

"Ino!" Hinata exclaimed in a chastising tone.

"Alright, alright! I won't do anything! But I'm pointing out that you're no fun!"

"Why don't you go have a girl talk in my room while I finish here? You'd be more comfortable."

"That's a great idea, baby!" She went to his side, turned his head to her and pulled him down for a heartfelt kiss, then slapped his ass, picked Hinata by the hand and dragged her out in one fell swoop.

He added the cut vegetables into the pot then added water. Using a low heat tag he let everything simmer and left for the bathroom. After knocking on the door and announcing himself he was invited to enter. He found Tsunade in the bathtub.

"I'm sorry for the impromptu guests, sensei. Hinata needed her friends and a safe environment."

"It's fine, what happened though?"

"After more than a decade of crushing on him, she confessed to Naruto and got turned down because he loves Sakura."

"The fool. Sakura is a smart and skillful girl. Pretty too but she's no Hinata." she said, shaking her head at the stupidity of it.

"Do you mind if they sleep over?"

"Nah, love those girls."

"Thank you, sensei." he said and approached her to kiss her on the cheek before leaving."

"Don't forget to use protection! I'm well aware of what Ino and you do in your room. Can't imagine what would happen with Hinata in the mix." she teased but unfortunately for her, Riku was as thick skinned as she was.

"Sensei, if I didn't use protection, the manor would have been blessed with black haired children more than three years ago." he answered back and quickly left the bathroom.

Tsunade was confused for a moment when the lights went on in her mind. She gasped loudly at what she found out.

"SHIZUNE!" *'I can't believe her! Three, wait no- Four years?! No wonder he's that good with his tongue! Oh, we're going to have a talk, Shizune. You and I.'*

Dinner was a nice affair with Hinata's eyes not red from crying anymore. Ino shared that she intended to join T&I to work with her father and the bluenette that she was going to join the medic-program. That shocked everyone, because Hinata was a Hyuga. She revealed that she didn't care what the elders said and if they had a problem with that or with her she'd just kick them down. At this point, only her father and Neji could defeat her. The elders may have been strong in their time but ever since they retired from the shinobi life they let themselves go, enjoying their privileges in the Hyuga compound. They weren't fit to fight properly anymore but the thought never occurred to them. Too arrogant and entitled. She revealed that she had been speaking with her father about the situation of their clan and where it was going and after many examples and facts, Hiashi had agreed with her view. It hadn't been that difficult, he had witnessed first hand the problem with the clan when Hizashi, his twin brother, had been branded with the cage bird seal in their youth, just because he was born a few minutes later than he was. As the Hyuga clan head he had to respect tradition and the elders had been too powerful yet to do any meaningful change but Hinata's generation was different. Her known wishes to put an end to the Main and Side branch and unite the whole clan were known to everyone. The elders had tried everything to have her removed as an heiress but she had greatly shaped into a proper and strong kunoichi since she underwent Anko's training that they couldn't use the excuse that she was too weak or meek or many other things to make her look unfit. Slowly, but surely with Neji's and Hinata's help, more and more side branch members were secretly rallying to her.

Hearing that, Riku suggested that he may be able to remove the cage bird seal and create another one to protect the byakugan without enslaving any one. It was a long shot because this kind of sealing wasn't his forte but he had Uzumaki Mito's fuinjutsu scroll and may be able to make something. Hinata was anything but hopeful and thankful for his help.

When dinner was over, Tsunade retreated to her bedroom to sleep early and gave a teasing smirk to Riku who ignored her. Ino and Hinata retreated to the bathroom while Riku used a clone to clean the dishes. He, himself, went to his room and pulled out a futon for him to sleep on, as he doubted Hinata would want to have him sleep by hers and Ino's side on the king size bed. Had it been Ino alone, she would have insisted on it. He picked a few of his shirts (T-shirts and v-neck) and boxer briefs and brought them to the bathroom.

"I brought you some changes of clothes. I'm sorry if the choice is limited but it's all I have. I'm leaving them right behind the door." he said after knocking.

"Okay, baby!" Ino shouted from the other side.

Riku left back to his room while Ino quickly opened the door and took everything before closing it. She was sporting a towel around her torso that barely covered her ass. Hinata, who had her long hair styled in a bun, had to borrow one of Tsunade's because of the size of her breasts. She would have been uncovered waist down otherwise.

"Let's see what we've got." the blonde said as she picked the clothes one by one " Just what I thought about a guy's wardrobe." she commented.

"I don't mind the shirt but... Doesn't he have... proper... You know?" Hinata asked as she had a boxer brief in her hands.

"No. Riku sleeps naked. 'More comfortable and less laundry to do.' quote, unquote."

"N-naked?"

"I prefer it that way to be honest, I love the feeling of his skin against mine. He'll wear something for you though unless..." she began and an evil smirk (in Hinata's eyes) drew on her lips. "You tell him you don't want him to."

"Ino!"

"What? He's a real eye candy, Hinata! That way you won't have to use the byakugan to take a peek."

"INO!"

"Puh-lease, Hinata. As if you didn't at least have a look."

She did. Her blush proved it.

"T-t-that's not. H-he's your b-boyfriend! I already feel bad for k-kissing him, I don't-HMM!"

She was forbidden to talk any further thanks to Ino grabbing her and kissing her right on the lips. Hinata's initial shock went away when she felt her blonde friend's tip of the tongue touch hers. She pulled back then.

"I-Ino!"

"You kissed him, I kissed you. There, we're even."

"T-that's not..."

"Come off of it Hinata. I told you I'm not mad you kissed him. He's mine, yes. I know it both in my heart and in my guts but with his issues with me, we're taking things lightly and slowly emotionally wise. As such I don't really care if you're kissing him or fucking him because at the end of it all, I'll be the one growing old by his side."

"You're not... you don't care if he sleeps with someone else?" Hinata asked in surprise.

"I do care. A bit. The knowledge that I'm not his only one hurts a bit but **I know**, Hinata. **I know**," she said with conviction. "Though if it's you, I wouldn't mind sharing. You **are** my bestie." Ino confessed and went behind Hinata to grab her firmly by her breasts after losing her towel. "But it's only sharing Hinata," she whispered in her ear. "You won't get rid of me for having him all to yourself. I'll be very very mad then," she threatened and Hinata felt a chill run down her spine.

'She's not kidding!' "I'll never take him from you, Ino. I promise but what you want... I want it too. I... realized it as I thought about what Naruto was to me and what I was to him. What I wanted from him. All my wishes, Riku answered them all. I- I love him, Ino but I don't want to fight you over him. I love you too much for that."

"I don't want to fight you either, Hinata. I love you too much too but I will if you force me," replied the blonde while kneading the bluenette's breasts. "Ours?"

"Ours." Hinata nodded after thinking about it for a while. She never thought about wanting Riku all to herself (or Naruto for that matter) ; she just wanted to be with him. If sharing with Ino was the only way for that to happen without betraying, hurting and losing her friend? She was fine with it.

"Good. Now let me have a good look at those puppies!"

"Ino!"

"What? I'm not asking you if I can suck on them despite how much I want to!" She defended and pinched Hinata's nipple that had hardened because of her breasts being roughly molested.

Hinata quickly escaped Ino's lecherous paws and got into the bath, her face all red. Ino joined her but instead of sitting next to her, sat in her lap, rested her head on her pillowy chest while she took her hand and put them on her own.

"Not as big as yours, still, I'm proud of them."

Hinata looked down at Ino's boobs and had to agree with her statement. They were beautiful. A good C-cup for size but that was not what made them look great in her opinion. With Ino's slim frame, her breasts looked a bit bigger on her. They had narrow roots but the bottom was very large. In consequence, they spilled to the side of her torso while leaving very little space between them. In comparison Hinata's were round, full at the bottom and were hanging a bit lower than normal but not sagging. Ino's nipples were not long but wide and thick and fit perfectly her 1 inch radius areolas. Hers were a bit puffy and a bit longer while her areolas were twice as big and bumpy.

"You should, they're perfect. I'm a bit jealous. Mine are big but that's it."

“Non-sense! They’re great and delicious!” Saying that, Ino turned her head, grabbed Hinata’s left boob and took it in her mouth.

“IN- Aaaah”.

The devilish blonde had begun sucking on her nipple heavily while caressing it with her tongue which shut the bluenette up on the spot. She felt Hinata’s hand at the back of her head trying to pull her back at first then push it down when Ino lightly bit, letting out another moan. She didn’t do it for long and pulled back, she wasn’t done however and pulled down Hinata’s head for a short tongue twisting kiss.

“Y-youu... S-ss-!”

“Slut? Guilty as charged but only for you and Riku. Don’t play the innocent prude though. You loved it.” she replied and switched back to her original position, leaving Hinata speechless because she did love it.

Both girls stayed like that for a while enjoying the hot water and their intimacy. When they got out, dried themselves and dressed up, Ino chose a V-neck that showed a good deal of cleavage. Since the shirt was skin tight and with Ino’s boobs, a bit of her lower abdomen was visible. The problem was with Hinata. Her’s were so big that her navel was in view of everyone.

“Well... that’s quite the sight. Make me want to kiss your navel all over.”

“I-I look-”

“Gorgeous. I’m barely holding myself back to molest and eat you. If you wanted Riku’s dick tonight, that certainly will do the trick.”

“INO!”

“I’m just saying. Look at that ass too! Damn Hinata! Is there any part of your body that is not completely sinful?”

The boxer brief Hinata had put on was stretched to the limit because of her wide hips and big toned round ass.

“M-my ass? Look at yours! The fabric is digging deep into between your buttcheeks!”

“I know!” Ino exclaimed. She turned around and slapped her ass making it jiggle. “That’s why everytime I sleep here I steal his boxers. One swing of my hips with them on and he becomes completely nuts.”

“Girls are you done?”

"We are, baby!" replied Ino as she went to open the door but was stopped by a panicked Hinata.

"I can't let him see me like this!" she whispered.

"Why?"

"B-because I'm indecent!"

"Hinata. It's alright. Take a deep breath and soldier on. You want Riku? You're going to work for it. And this..." she said, waving at Hinata up and down. "Is the way. Now take your courage with both hands and let's go."

She got away from Hinata's grasp and opened the door. In a flash she was melting against him and raping his mouth with her tongue.

"Wow." he said, a bit disoriented, then he saw Hinata inside the bathroom and his jaw dropped to the ground.

"See? I told you!" the blonde said to her bluenette friend.

"I might have some space in my stomach left for some navel." commented Riku who had quickly recovered.

Had it been the Hinata before Anko, she would have fainted on the spot long ago. This one had confidence to spare and followed Ino's advice and soldiered on. However she was so panicked, her reaction was unexpected. She rushed towards Riku and kissed him too for way longer than Ino did and when she broke it off, ran towards her room without looking back.

"What did you do?" he asked Ino not to look at her but at Hinata's retreating back.

"I'll tell you tomorrow." the blonde answered and went after their friend.

Sighing, Riku entered the bathroom for a quick shower, knowing, just knowing that he was going to have a headache before they left tomorrow morning.

Chapter 35: Baby steps

Hinata was woken up by the feeling of a beating heart accelerating slowly. She blinked her sleep away and realized she was sleeping with her head on Riku's shoulder and his arm nested between her breasts. On the other side, on Riku's other shoulder, she saw Ino's head resting too. Her blonde friend was looking down and Hinata followed her line

of sight. Her eyes landed on a big bulge moving around Riku's groin then grew big as saucers.

"Ino!" Hinata hissed in a whisper, understanding what was happening in front of her.

"Sorry, I couldn't help myself." Ino whispered back, not repentant at all. "Want to try?"

"What?!"

"I was going to suck it while you were asleep but since you're awake do you want to participate?"

"I...I'm not ready for that."

"Watch then?"

This time Hinata didn't answer immediately. She was curious. After a moment of hesitation, she nodded.

"Okay. And just so you know. We talked about us and Riku but we didn't talk about us and we will, but later. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm getting my breakfast."

"You'd have to wait for that."

Hinata froze, hearing Riku's voice. Ino didn't and he had to stop her from diving under the sheet. Pouting, she kept giving him a handjob until he put an end to that by grabbing her wrist.

"What kind of guy stops a girl wishing to blow him and giving him a handjob?!" she asked incredulously.

"This one. It's one thing when we're alone, it's another when we're not. While I do not mind getting frisky while others are watching, Hinata didn't stay for that and this sleepover is all about her."

"Ugh. Hinata, getting you in the mood wouldn't be an option by chance?" She tried in a last ditch effort.

"Sorry, Ino." replied the bluenette who changed her mind now that Riku was awake. Being a bit perverted in front of your slut of a best friend was one thing. In front of the boy you just found out you love the day before? That was a no go for her.

Ino removed her hand from the inside of Riku's boxer and let out a roar of frustration and disappointment.

“A week! A week, Hinata! A week without his log scratching my cervix! You’re damn lucky I love you more than his dick!” she yelled in complaint, making Hinata giggled while Riku rolled his eyes and shook his head. “You think that’s funny? Who do you think I’ll vent my frustration on?!”

“YEEEP!”

From her side on the bed, Ino moved forward above Riku’s body to reach Hinata and pushed her down the bed. Hands on her breasts and tongue in her mouth in one go. The victim of the sexual assault tried to protest in vain and quickly got into it.

Because he needed his morning wood to go down Riku slapped hard the blonde’s bubble butt thinking that the pain would put a stop to her shenanigans. Unfortunately for him she loved it and simply moaned in Hinata’s mouth. With no other recourse, he physically separated her from the hyuga and her cry of outrage was music to his ears. Any thoughts of everything being done and over were dashed when he became the second victim; Ino grabbing his face and kissing him just as he put her back to her side of the bed. Thankfully he was quick to react and pushed her back, the kiss lasting less than a second.

“I hate you both!” she shouted in defeat and fell face down against the mattress, her fists hitting it repeatedly while her legs batted the air and with a muffled scream.

“Come on. We will have all the time in the world later.”

“What time? It’s Monday! I start working at 9 in the flower shop and it’s nearly 8! Between breakfast and going home for a change of clothes-”

“Trust me. We have the time.” Riku repeated as he put his hand on the nap of her neck and began to caress it gently. That calmed her down and she turned her head to look at him, her eyes through locks of blonde hair promising pain if he lied to her.

Since he was in the middle of the bed, thanks to Ino and Hinata wanting him for cuddling instead of in his futon. Riku had to delicately roll over Hinata without crushing her. There was no chance he would do so with Ino, she would have found a way to get his dick. He gave a quick peck on Hinata’s lips on the way then was finally on his feet. He didn’t notice but the bluenette’s eyes were focused on his bulge. She even activated her byakugan when Riku left and she could only watch his back.

“Per~ Vert~” Ino whispered in her ear, having taken advantage of Hinata’s distraction to move closer to her. Caught red handed, Hinata deactivated her eyes and simply blushed in embarrassment. “So. It’s been twice now that we kissed.”

“That **you** kissed me, you mean.”

“Potayto, potahto. The point is...Are you alright with that?”

"... I never considered kissing a girl before or... doing things like taking her breasts in my hands. But... I didn't dislike it. I... I'm not attracted to you or girls in general but I do find you beautiful and I'm not repulsed by kissing you or more. I'm just... Neutral, I suppose?"

"Alright." Ino nodded in understanding. "Not quite the same as me. I do find you attractive, Hinata. Now we know the dynamics of... whatever relationship we have, the three of us."

"I still can't believe that... Not after... That sounds so insane but also so simple."

"Yeah. Not sure the villagers or our clans would approve though."

"I stopped caring about the people in my clan that would care about such a thing long ago, Ino."

"Easy for you to say. Hanabi can become the heiress after you. There is no one after me."

"Well, that's not really a problem if you marry him. I'll just be the concubine to the rest of the world."

"Hinata..."

"That's the best option. But it's neither here nor there."

"You're right."

"Karin was really an idiot." Hinata muttered to herself as she got out of bed.

"What do you mean?"

"I... hm." Hinata didn't know quite how to answer, she had voiced her thoughts carelessly and shouldn't have. The fact that Riku had asked Karin out and got turned down was something that he told her in confidence. He had trusted her with that and now she had to fix her mistake. "I mean, they were always together most of the time when we saw them, that she didn't make a move on him when he's a catch, was idiotic." was the truth but only half of it.

"Oh! Yes, she sure was. Speaking of her? Do we tell her? About you I mean?"

"I'd... rather not. Not that I don't trust Karin but this... this very personal. Too personal. Had you not been involved I wouldn't have told you."

"I'm glad to see that you've still got a bit of shyness in you."

Ino got out of bed and gave Hinata a peck on the lips before leaving the bedroom, the latter following. They reached the kitchen and Riku was already at work. The table was set, fruits were available and so were some pancakes. Tsunade was already there and had a knowing smirk on her face that Ino answered with her own.

"You can drop your smirk, sensei. Nothing happened." Riku said as he put down rice and grilled fish in front of the older blonde.

"Oh come on! Two young women and one young man sleeping together in the same room and nothing happened?"

"Old, regular sleeping happened."

"Unfortunately." Ino said under her breath, stabbing her pancake with her fork, something that was not missed by the Hokage.

"Should I take back your man-card?"

"Sensei, only a man can take back another man's man-card. Secondly this sleepover is not over and there are a few **hours** left before one thirsty blond needs to leave."

"Of course you would use it like that." she said flatly, hiding her amusement.

"What are you talking about?" Hinata inquired with curiosity.

"S-rank secret."

Ino tried to fish for information too but was rebuffed at each attempt, souring her mood even more. Tsunade left for her office and Shizune came in along with Karin. The raven haired beauty was completely washed out and even the normally energetic Karin was ready to crash. Her lack of sleep was usually the reason for her going to take a rest not a like of energy but today was different.

Hinata said goodbye to everyone and left. That left Riku and Ino alone, and the gorgeous lady had her arms crossed under her breasts, taping the floor with her foot and looking nastily at the guy she loved.

"It's 8h30."

Riku smiled knowingly and reached for one of her hands with his. He dragged her into one of the guest bedrooms and unsealed his Botib. He didn't let her ask any questions and dragged her inside. With no surprise, he was amused by her shocked face. Going to the table in the middle of the room, he activated the time seal.

"Now, one hour in here is one second outside." he said as he closed the door to the Botib, turned around and went for her clothes.

“You’re shitting me, right?”

“Nope. Not with S-rank secrets. I hope you like it because that’s why I’ve been busy working on it.”

“You’re serious?”

“Ino, less than ten minutes ago you were ready to ride me on the kitchen table in front of the Hokage and now you’re more interested in a seal? Are you for real?”

She blinked when she heard that then began undressing herself.

“Nuh-huh. I want to enjoy it. And by the way, the beds are that way.” he pointed to the door to the side and she didn’t waste any time rushing into it. When he arrived into the room she was already in nothing but his boxer (that she had stolen again) against his wishes. Her face and boobs were pressed against the mattress and her delicious bubble butt was raised up in the air and was shaking from left to right. Riku couldn’t resist.

Exactly 24 seconds later both blondes got out of the Botib. Riku was biting his lips trying not to laugh at a very uncomfortable Ino.

“Alright! I wasn’t ready! Happy?!” she yelled and he barely succeeded in holding a snort. “Now, will you please help? Pretty please?” she asked with a purposeful quivering lower lip. “It still hurts.”

Riku used his hands to signal ‘up’ and Ino pulled up her skirt to reveal her beaten red ass. He kneeled down and began to use the **Mystical Palm** jutsu on the very abused bubble butt, soothing the pain and healing the damage.

“What did you learn?”

“That I should know my limits.” she whined.

“And?”

“That I definitely love anal? OWIE!” she exclaimed as Riku flicked her butt. “That I should never ask you to destroy my ass and to never stop no matter what?”

“Aaaand?”

“That when you eat it for more than thirty minutes it’s for a good reason and I shouldn’t tell you to fuck it raw and that I can take it.”

“Why?”

“Because I can’t take it. **Yet.**”

“Ino.” he warned

“I will one day. You’ll see. It would work if I had you inside my asshole all day and all night for a week, I’m sure.”

“Ino.”

“We can try!”

“Why are you suddenly obsessed with it?”

“Because you can play with my pussy at the same time? Because it’s a challenge? I want you, all of you and so far I’m failing. Can’t even deepthroat you to the base.”

“Is there any space in that head of yours that’s not for sex?” he said in exasperation.

“A small part. But it’s dormant when you’re involved.”

“Of course it is.”

Riku finished healing her butt. He couldn’t believe how crazy she was. She got the *‘best pounding of her life’* quote unquote and expected to walk out of it like a fresh rose. She had been limping badly, and she couldn’t wear his boxers anymore because the cloth burned her poor butt too much.

“And done.”

“Kiss it better?” she pleaded in a small voice.

“Alright.” he said after letting out a sigh and did as she asked then brought down her skirt to cover her ass.

“It feels weird, you know? But the good kind of weird.”

“What is?”

“Being full of you. I can feel you slouching in my womb and in my ass. Doesn’t feel as great as having your cum on my face and to some extent the rest of my body but I like it.”

Riku sighed and stood up. He wasn’t quite on his feet when Ino put her arms around his neck and found herself on her tiptoes when he did.

“Kiss.” was less of a demand and more of an order.

“You sure are demanding.”

“Yes, I am but with everything I give you and let you do to **me**, I think I deserved it.”

“I don’t know about that but I won’t argue.” he leaned forward and gave her a very loving kiss.

When they broke apart, Ino had stars in her eyes. She bit her lower lip, clearly hesitating in saying something for a moment then decided to go with it.

“Do you think... You’d be ready for a date?”

That came out of the blue to Riku but in hindsight he should have seen it coming. He didn’t know what to answer. The last two months had been great with her. Great sex aside, and a lot of it, just spending time as friends with her had never felt so right. But was he ready to properly open up to her emotionally?

“I... don’t know.” he replied and the disappointment in her eyes was evident. “But I’ll try.” he added and she perked up, a beautiful smile drawing on her lips.

“Really?”

“Yes. That’s the only way to find out if I’m ready or not.”

“YESSS!!” she shouted and kissed him again, but this time she jumped on him, circling his waist with her legs. No tongue was involved, it wasn’t the point of that kiss, the point was to convey love not lust. When they separated she got back onto the ground. “You can choose the place, the time and the activity. Anything that makes you comfortable.”

“Thank you.” he genuinely replied.

He sealed his Botib back into his book of seals and Ino took his hand in hers leaving the guest room. Once outside the manor, she kissed him one last time and whispered in his ear.

“You better make it great if you want to see me in very slutty lingerie. All dark purple of course.” she teased and shushined away before he could say anything.

Riku simply shook his head and got back inside. Immediately he created 9 clones and ordered them to make more of the final Botib. He, on the other hand, began to study the Nidaime’s notes on the Hiraishin. He couldn’t deny that it was a very powerful jutsu. Nimikaze Minato killing a thousand Iwa shinobi on his own with it was more than proof enough to validate that.

He didn’t know how long he studied the scrolls but he knew it was a few hours when Karin sat beside him and let her head rest on his shoulders.

“What are you looking at?”

“I’m not sure I’m allowed to tell you.”

“Considering that I can see Uzumaki seals and that I am an Uzumaki...”

“Fair enough. What you see is the notes of the very first version of the Hiraishin.”

“Hiraishin? What’s that?”

“Ever heard of the Yondaime kicking Iwa’s ass alone during the last war?”

“Everyone heard of it. Is that it? The jutsu he used for that?”

“The precursor, created by the Nidaime.” he said and let out a sigh. He’s been reading for a while and he couldn’t make any sense of what the idiot was saying. He understood the principle. Bending space between two spatial points and almost instantly going from one to the other. Everything else however? He got nothing. Or rather he got that it shouldn’t be working. It’s like the Nidaime had tried to build a house but instead of using bricks and cement he used something else. A very poor comparison but Riku understood himself. Having enough for now, he decided to take a break. “How is your own study regarding your clan’s seals?”

“It’s going well. I can seal a lot of stuff now into a scroll or a barrier. Currently I’ve been beginning to look at contract seals. One passage in particular talked about a contract with the Shinigami.”

“Oh, yeah. I remember that passage. Your clan is completely insane for doing that. Nothing good can come out of a deal with the Shinigami.”

“I agree. But it’s still fascinating.”

“True.”

Riku closed the scrolls and stood up, Karin moving her head away from his shoulder.

“Do you have something going on right now?” she inquired.

“No, why?”

“Well, it’s been a while since we really spent time together, just the two of us.”

“It has. What do you have in mind?”

"I don't know. How about just taking a walk? That way you can tell me all about you and your girlfriend and how Hinata got caught up into the mix?" she said with a hint of bitterness and jealousy that Riku completely missed.

"Ino and I are not a couple."

"She sure acts like it."

"Because she... It's complicated." he said and they made their exit outside the manor.

"How so? You're kissing and having sex."

"But we're not dating yet. We're not in... a serious relationship, despite both of us wanting it to be."

"I don't get it."

"Ino... Ino didn't treat me very well when we were kids. She said things... that left scars. Deep scars. Scars that... well, never really closed."

"And you're... with her?"

"She's not the same person at all as she was back then but then again, if she was like that once she could be like that twice."

"So you're holding back and tasting the waters?"

"It's more than that but yes. It's not a question of love but rather trust."

"I see." She said not happy to hear that. "What about Hinata? I smelled her perfume on your pillow. Ino's too."

"Just a sleepover. I found Hinata just after lunch. She asked Naruto out and he rejected her and Hinata being Hinata-"

"She cried. What kind of idiot rejects a girl like Hinata?"

"Your clansman."

"Please don't remind me."

"Want to know the worst? He did it because he loves Sakura."

"SAKURA?! Pink bubblegum hair Sakura? That Sakura?"

"Yes."

“He’s not an idiot, he’s a retard.”

“Hey, you said it, not me. Anyway, I let her cry for a bit then It was time for dinner, so I brought her home, called for Ino and we had a big sleepover to support her. That’s it. Shame you were working the night shift that day.”

Karin didn’t seem convinced but let it drop. Instead she chose to enjoy the little bit of time she had with him.