

Out For Karma: Naruto

#Chapter 51: Humanitarian effort - Read Out For Karma: Naruto Chapter 51: Humanitarian effort

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To say that Sunagakure was a mess was an understatement. You couldn't even call it a village anymore. It was now a huge crater with not a single building standing up. Temari had left the group at the sight of her destroyed home with an expression of horror, distress and anger on her face.

"It's awful." whispered Hinata by his side.

She and Ino, because of their medical knowledge (especially Hinata), were among the medic-nins that Tsunade had dispatched. They were not the only familiar faces that had joined the Suna relief group. The rest of Team 10 had volunteered to no one's surprise. Ino was joining Riku and Shikamaru was showing support to Temari who he was dating. With Asuma and Hinata present, Team 8 came along too. While Kurenai's skills in genjutsu wouldn't be that useful, Kiba and Shino would be invaluable to help find people. Little Sarutobi Mirai, Asuma and Kurenai's two years old daughter was more than happy to spend time with her grandfather and her cousin Konohamaru. Sakura, one of the best medic-nin in Konoha was also present and with Naruto here, Kakashi had tagged along which in turn made Team Gai tagged along. In other words the whole 'Konoha eleven' as they were called was on the operation.

Riku opened his book of seals and pulled a page out of it. Separating himself from the group to have a lot of space, he put it on the ground and unsealed the huge wooden... room that Yamato had created. He deactivated the barrier covering it and Signaled Yamato to retract the wood, which he did. Thirty Konoha-nin were revealed.

"Is something wrong?" asked one of them.

"We've arrived." stated Riku.

"Already?!"

"It's been three days though to you it's only been a second."

"Man, that's neat."

Signaling everyone to gather in front of him he gave them instructions. Trackers were to go help immediately the Suna-nin in charge of finding survivors, Medic-nin where to go to the injured and to treat as many as they could while the medical tents and equipment were being installed. The shinobi who were neither of those types were to relieve the sunan-nin in charge of Security. That left Naruto who was making clones who will join the group security and the group tracking along with Kushina's clones. Riku and Kushina themselves were to put up seals

"Alright everyone, if at any moment you have a question on what you should do, ask a jonin from Suna."

Everyone scattered and Riku let out the Botib. And took from it all the materials necessary. Tents were quickly set up, the beds added. A shelf with medicines inside of it in each medic tent, while the normal ones were used for the simple rest of exhausted Shinobi or used as a mess. On Riku's orders Yamato created closed rooms inside the tents to convert them into operating rooms. Had he got the time; Riku would have just expanded the space inside but he didn't. Kushina had come up with an idea and repurposed the seals for waste in the Botib for sterilizing the operation rooms and the inside of the medical tents.

After asking for a huge wooden floor on the sand from Yamato, Riku began to draw the resurrecting seal on it. Should the person being dead still warm, it was still possible to use remnants of the chakra inside their body to bring them back. In the meantime his clones were applying a Time seal on the operating rooms and putting in place a self-creating seal for healing tags. He quickly made a new one for sterilizing the tool used for surgery or any healing in general by copying Kushina's seal. In half an hour they were ready to receive people and he sent one of his clones to warn everyone.

Patient never stopped coming and the Time seals were a godsend. People were able to rest a full eight hours of sleep in a few seconds in the outside world. While the situation was grim, seeing people at death's door entering a room and coming out ready to work and help an hour later was raising the morale greatly and gave hope to everyone. When the first resurrection happened, everyone had looked at Riku weirdly. He didn't care, he didn't have the time for that. Way too many people to save. He kept going and going without stopping and it was Kushina that forced him to take a break. She had dedicated a clone to the study to the time seal to recreate it herself. It was not perfect because it was done in haste but good enough to allow some hours of sleep to everyone that wasn't directly involved in the medical tent.

"Thank you." Riku heard from the side as he let himself fall down on the bed. Turning his head to the side he saw a dead tired Temari sitting on the edge on their own bed, ready to lay down and rest too.

"You're welcome. Konoha couldn't let their only ally in such a situation."

"I wasn't thanking Konoha, I was thanking you. If everything is going so smoothly and so many people end up surviving... That's all thanks to you and your seals. Heck! You brought back people to life! How crazy is that?!" she exclaimed and made Riku chuckled tiredly.

"I dream of being the greatest medic in the world. Death is just another challenge to overcome to reach that status. You're welcome nonetheless."

"Temari-sama!"

A Suna-nin entered in a hurry inside the makeshift barracks, panic obvious in his voice. On the spot the dirty blonde Kunoichi was on her feet. Dead tired but on her feet. Riku was listening attentively.

"What is it?"

"We have reports from scouts! It's Iwa! They're invading!"

"They what?!" she shouted in disbelief and horror.

"A force of a thousand ninjas have crossed the border with the Land of Birds. As we speak they're probably only three hours away North!"

"Damn it! We don't have the-"

"I'll take care of it." Riku said as he pushed himself up from his bed. "I'll have to take a bed from a patient under one of my Time seals to be at one hundred percent though. Who am I kidding? They'll only be waiting eight seconds, ten at best."

"That's one thousand ninjas! You're mad if-"

"It's alright I have a surprise for them, they won't cause any problem. Make sure everyone keeps doing what they are doing."

"I... But..."

"I've got this. You, make sure she rests, she can't lead if she's tired." Riku said to the Suna ninja and left the room for another one with better Time Dilation. The one he had just been using was only doubling the speed of time. Iwa would have arrived before he would be ready to fight. There was no doubt in his mind that the stone village wasn't coming here to help, not when Iwa and Suna had been bitter enemies for decades.

He went to one of the medic tents, picked a patient that was close to being released and switched places with them for ten seconds before switching back. Now fully rested he joined the command tent where a few jonin were making a plan.

"I need someone to show me on the map where they are."

"Where is-" began an uncooperative sand jonin.

"Temari is resting, she has no time to deal with Iwa. I do, however, now where are they?"

"There. They made a detour to avoid the blood worms area." Shikamaru pointed to a red zone on the map and Riku got a good look.

"Alright. I'm on this, get back to the relief effort." he announced and began to leave.

"Alone? What are you going to do?" a chunin asked.

"Take a page from my father's book."

"Oh." Kakashi let out as he looked at Riku's disappearing back. He let out a chuckle that confused and unnerved most shinobi in the tent.

"Kakashi?" Gai asked.

"Riku is going to make the second rendition of the battle of Kanabi bridge."

"Oh. Oh?! Oooooooh." Gai laughed nervously.

"Can one of you enlighten us suna-nin?" a young chunin asked, clearly too young to know.

"Riku's father is the Yondaime Hokage who killed a thousand Iwa-nin in a matter of minutes at Kanabi bridge during the Third Shinobi War. It was such a slaughter that Iwa retreated and sought for peace." he explained and left the tent to follow his former teammate.

Riku was already on the move across the sand. He shushined away as far as he could without the continuous use of the jutsu eating too much at his chakra reserves. From his calculation he stopped to rest a bit when he knew that Iwa was only a quarter an hour away. He also made preparations. He had unsealed a hundred wooden shurifuin and used the **Shuriken Shadow Clone Jutsu** to create as many clones as he could. Once the sand field was littered with them he used the bit of chakra he had left for a **Great breakthrough**

and hid the shurifuins in the sand. He sat down and began to meditate to recover his chakra a bit faster. Not like he would need much of it, what he had now despite being a little was more than enough but you never know.

"You shouldn't have come." He said when he felt two presences arriving behind him.

"We're Leaf-nins, we move in teams even when only one of us is needed for the job." the silvered hair jonin replied nonchalantly.

"Kakashi's right. We're just here in case something goes wrong. And It's not like we'll be missed for the effort. We're part of the security group to begin with." Gai added.

Riku said nothing but he appreciated the gesture and the words. That didn't stop him from feeling all alone. He was about to commit mass murder and they were not. They couldn't understand. He could choose to not go through with it of course. Kill only a few. Showed them that with the Hiraishin in play they had no chance. He couldn't take the risk however. Konoha needed to make a statement of strength and solidarity. Not just to Iwa but to every shinobi village in the Elemental Nations. Fucking with Konoha and her allies was not an option they could take lightly without being ready to pay the price. The message needed to be completely ruthless as a result.

When the Iwa troops showed themselves, he shushined right before the first line.

"Look at that! A tree hugger lost in-"

He didn't say anything more. He couldn't. Riku had teleported right beside him in a green flash and swiped the man's head with one of his hands. In less than a second the Iwa-nin's head expanded and exploded in a rain of blood, gore and brain matter.

"You shouldn't have come. Now you die."

The Iwa-nins were too shocked by what just happened to move. Both by the sudden gruesome death of one of their own and by the green flash that happened just before it. The veterans of the Third Shinobi War were reminded of a yellow flash and dread gripped their hearts. Before they could order the retreat or the all out attack, Riku was already teleporting away. So fast that he didn't even appear in their eyes. All they saw was green flashing and someone exploding. Every second three ninjas died then Riku began using shadow clones thinking it wasn't going fast enough. In 37 seconds everyone was dead with one exception. Riku had let one shinobi live.

"I'm Senju Riku. Son of Senju Tsunade and Namikaze Minato. Go back home and tell your Kage that one more move like that against Konoha or her allies and I'll personally come to wipe out your cesspool of village, like he did Uzushioakure. Got it?"

The shaking Iwa-nin nodded in fear so fast that Riku thought his neck would break.

"Go."

He didn't need to tell the defeated man twice who miraculously found strength in his legs and ran away as fast as he could. Looking around, Riku witnessed the carnage he had made with his bare hands. There was more red than brown. Body parts everywhere. He wanted to vomit. It was messy. He never could handle messy like this.

Even when he had to practice surgery he felt squishy when it looked really bad. Taking a deep breath, he channeled his chakra and all the real wooden shurifui's teleported right into his hands. Sealing them back into his BoS, he went back to Kakashi and Gai. They said nothing and just were there, waiting for him to do something.

"Let's go back." was all he said and grabbed their shoulders before teleporting them back to the camp.

He didn't say anything more. He just left them there and he went back to work as if nothing ever happened, under the two jonins' eyes.

"Kakashi."

"I know. Only sensei could help him with... this. Come on, let's report to the others."

When Riku arrived at the main medical tent, he saw a huge influx of wounded. Catching an able shinobi he was able to learn that the tracking and rescue team had found a lot of people in an underground cavern right under the village. Not all people died in the crush of Suna, there were many who were just buried with the building and some Shinobi used earth jutsu to protect everyone by going underground, the problem was that maintaining the sand away had cost lots of chakra and they were too weak to bring the people out. And that was not even considering the tones of rubble above their heads. As a result the medical staff, even with the help of Time seals were overworked and couldn't deal with everyone.

Riku resolved himself and activated his Byakugou. Using natural chakra he poured as much of it as he could into summoning Katsuyu in her biggest form.

"Ri-kun?"

"Katsuyu-chan I need your help! All those people need to be healed!" he shouted from her head.

"I'll help." were the few words the slug said as she divided into smaller slugs and began to reach people to heal them.

Riku landed softly on the ground and sat down. After using that much chakra his reserves were almost dangerously empty and he decided to take a nap here and there.

Chapter 52: Fear or Paranoia?

The final assessment of days of work was harsh. More than half the population of Suna had perished. The rest had been saved and fixed back up more for the most part. As it

stood Sunagakure was no longer one of the Big five shinobi villages. That was a heavy blow to stomach. Temari was still in charge and her leadership had maintained unity in this moment of grief and despair. She hid it well but she felt just like her country-men. Kankuro had been found dead, crushed by a ceiling that had fallen down on him and Gaara was in Akatsuki's clutches. Karin's seal on Gaara was thought to break but not unbreakable. It was only a matter of time before the Ichibi would be extracted from him and die.

With the situation as dire as it was, Temari requested asylum from Konoha. For her people. That was six thousand people, nearly half of the leaf's population. Of course it wasn't possible so she asked only for the civilians. The shinobi would make do outside the village in the meantime. She also asked for Suna to be part of any attack against Akatsuki that Konoha would launch.

With her diplomatic message in hand, Riku left with any non-essential shinobis. In other words, any tracker or member of the security group. They went straight back to Konoha in record time. Riku dismissed everyone and went to make his report to his mother. He left no details unsaid, from Suna's current situation to Iwa's very short foray into the Land of Wind. Once done he gave her the scroll containing Temari's message.

"You're dismissed." she simply said once he was done.

"Sensei?" he asked, confused.

"You're dismissed." she repeated. "You did an excellent job, now go home and rest."

"B-.." He was about to protest, wanting to talk about what they were going to do but it wasn't his place to ask. He nodded and exited Tsunade's office.

"How bad is he?"

"I don't know, Hokage-sama." Kakashi said as he entered through the window. He had been listening the whole time, waiting to make his own report. "He... seemed distressed for a moment right after, then he soldiered on. Made no mistake in his work, never raised his voice or acted or reacted violently."

"You think he pushed everything down and didn't process it?"

"Possibly. That or he processed it faster than he dealt with Iwa's forces."

Tsunade let out a long tired sigh. It was one thing to kill another shinobi in the middle of the action, in the middle of a war but what Riku did was mass slaughter. It was a whole different matter altogether. The burden was greater even more so in this case with how fast and more importantly how easy it has been for Riku to do it. Riku could completely break down or become so desensitized to killing that he would feel nothing about doing

it anymore. And zero qualms about doing an action becomes often the first solution that comes to mind. That wouldn't do. They couldn't let either happen.

"Should I force him to go see a therapist?"

"Hm... I don't think so. He'll go but I don't think it would be useful for him. Maybe even counterproductive if Inoichi is the one."

"I'm not daft, Kakashi. I won't send him to his girlfriend's overprotective father."

"Minato-sensei may be the best to deal with this."

"Maybe." she said with hesitation. "It's worth a shot. He's at the Academy. Should be on lunch break soon."

"I'll pay him a visit, Hokage-sama."

"And how are you?"

"Me?"

"You witnessed it. Don't tell me it didn't affect you."

"... It horrified me. I'm glad my sharingan was covered. It wasn't just a cut and a spray of blood then a body falling to the ground. It was body exploding everywhere. And he just... touched them. He didn't punch. He didn't kick. He didn't slice or stab. No. He touched them, for less than a second. A blink. And they all exploded in a shower of blood and gore. Half a minute, Hokage-sama. In half a minute a thousand people exploded and died. It was like... a sick festival of blood and carnage. No one should be able to do this and I'm glad that the one who can is on our side."

"Maybe you should reconsider therapy?" She tried but was turned down flat.

"Mah~That's not necessary Hokage-sama. I've got my family back and that will provide all the healing I need."

It went out the window and disappeared in a swirl of leaves only to reappear outside the Academy gate.

"Kakashi-san?"

Turning to his left to have a look he saw Iruka carrying a few dozen books.

"Iruka. How is it going?"

"Great, thank you for asking. Do you need anything? It's unusual to see you here."

"I'm waiting for Minato-sensei to have lunch together. We didn't really have the time to catch up since he came back. Too busy with Naruto, which is understandable."

"Oh! Well, you better come in because Namikaze-sama eats with the students."

"Telling them stories, I suppose."

"Yes."

Kakashi followed Iruka inside up to the teacher's lounge. He didn't have to wait long for Minato to show up to put his teaching stuff on his desk.

"Kakashi, you're back!" the man greeted with a jovial tone.

"I am and so is your family."

"That's great news! I'll go home for lunch then. How was Suna?" Kakashi felt sorry that he was about to sour his sensei's mood as they walked out the teacher's lounge.

"Bad. They're seeking asylum from us at least for the civilians but that's not the worst part."

"No?" Minato asked, stopping in his tracks with a frown on his face.

"No."

At the same time at the Senju Manor, Riku had made as many shadow clones as he could. He had them all work double time on new seals that would allow the village to be protected in case Akatsuki attacked like they did for Suna. The whole village. That means every person living in it needed to be evacuated faster than the snap of a finger. That meant dealing with the barrier. He had taken a good look at it when he went to visit the barrier department and noticed two things. One, Uzumaki Mito was truly a barrier genius, two, he could not modify the existing seal matrix itself, but he could add to it. Of course the seal to add was the Hiraishin since he wanted to bail out people. That wasn't the main problem, just a minor one. The real problem was where to relocate them? He couldn't teleport them in the wild. There were old people and babies in the mix. Even with help from others that wouldn't be a good situation for them. He backtracked a bit his thought. Yes, adding the Hiraishin to the barrier was easily doable but he also needed to put the seals on people. All people. 15 thousand of them.

'The place and space, I can create them. There are plenty of deep underground tunnels thanks to Danzo and his Root. I will have to seal every wall and expand the shit out of them. Or I could ask Yamato to make a big wooden cabin. Or multiple? No, it would be too complicated to teleport people into many different locations. They will all have to be gathered. It's not like they would stay there for long anyway. If they did then it's because Akatsuki won and they're all doomed anyway. How can I do this? How can I teleport

them all at the same time in the same place? Basics. Let's start with the basics. What do they all have in common? They're human, no, alive. They're living beings. Just like dogs and cats, so that won't do. Or may that would. The Inuzuka and their ninkens and the Aburame with their insects. They all have chakra so maybe latch the seal onto anything with chakra? No, no. Trees have chakra. But Nature chakra! That's it! I need to create a seal that would detect and teleport anything that has normal chakra and not the other. I don't need to put the seals on people themselves. The barrier would just do, it's a close space. Man that's one complex matrix seal. I'm going to need help with this. Preferably Karin or Kushina.'

"...KU!"

"Whaaa!"

Riku fell from his chair to the side at the sudden scream in his ear. Looking up he saw Minato on his feet.

"What was that for?!"

"I've been calling you for a minute and you didn't answer."

"You couldn't... I don't know, wave a hand in front of me?"

"I did. You didn't even notice."

"... Well, shit sorry." the dirty blonde said while standing up. "What do you need?"

"To talk."

"About?" he asked his father for more detail, hoping that the conversation would be quick.

"What happened with Iwa in Suna."

"I killed them all but one. What about it?" He picked up his pencil and began to write in his notebook, not really paying attention to Minato.

"You... 're not affected by what you did?" his father asked in worry.

"Nope. They were enemies of the lowest order, coming to scavenge what was left of Suna or finish the job then scavenge. I don't feel an ounce of remorse or regret about it. Sure the idea wasn't pleasant before I did it and I didn't want to do it but I needed to do my duty and so I killed them all but one to send a message. The only thing I felt was disgust at the result. I had no relation to them, they were hostile strangers and **that** made it easier. You had the same experience, no? Why are you so surprised?"

"I was sad when it was over. So many lives wasted."

"I'm not. They were not innocents, their intentions were not good. I wouldn't go and say good riddance or that they got what they deserved because I'm a shinobi too but it's just life and life goes on. It is pointless to feel sad for them when I have more important things to do."

"That's a very rational answer."

"If you wanted an emotional answer you asked the wrong son. Look..." he began and turned to look at his father. "It happened and nobody can do anything about it. What I **can** do is work so what happened to Suna doesn't happen to Konoha. It's been two weeks. It's more than enough time for Akatsuki to prepare another assault and I have to write seals to counter a Jutsu that can destroy an entire village in a blink of an eye. My emotional and mental state are secondary to the lives of the people and I will worry about and deal with that later."

The words made sense but the calm with which they were spoken worried Minato even more than he had been at the start of the conversation. He let the subject drop, not like Riku would have listened. He was already back to scribbling on his notebook. Sighing, Minato left the Botib to join his family for dinner. His down rotten expression was noticed by his wife.

"What happened?"

"I went to talk to Riku about what happened in the desert with Iwa."

"He didn't take that well, I gather?"

"If you're referring to reaping a thousand lives in a flash, he's not affected at all by it or so he says. What has him on edge is me trying to talk to him about it because I was bothering his research. He's scared of what Akatsuki did to Suna, happening to Konoha."

"I can't blame him for thinking that way. One jutsu destroyed a village the size of Konoha, Minato. **One**. Had I not been busy trying to find and save survivors, I would have had nightmares about that knowledge. And it was a human that did that, not a tailed-beast."

"Kushi-"

"Hellooooo~~"

The voice of Jiraiya coming from the entrance put a stop to the conversation the married couple were having.

"That place didn't change one bit in forty years." he said as he took a chair and sat down. "Where is the kid?"

"Naruto is cooking dinner tonight." Kushina replied.

"AH! Ramen on the menu then."

"Actually, no. It's chicken breasts with salad." Minato replied.

"He's been making an effort to eat something more nutritious than ramen."

"Good. Maybe he'll grow a few inches out of it."

"Does Tsunade know that you're here, sensei?"

"As if! If she did, she'll-"

"What?"

The toad sage froze on the spot and his face paled. He didn't dare to move hoping that his teammate's vision was based on movement.

"Hm? I will what?"

"Kick me out?" he tried.

"... I'll let it slide this time. Still, I'd like to know why you're here."

"I wanted to tell Minato and Kushina that I will be taking Naruto to Mount Myoboku to start his sage training."

"Already?!" Minato exclaimed.

"Yes. He's old enough and... well.. Training him in using the Kyubi's chakra has proven unfruitful. He can't go beyond three tails of chakra or he's overwhelmed by the fox. We tried for years but... Now don't misunderstand me, I don't blame the kid. Not one bit. I watched him try and try and try until he couldn't stand anymore. He did his best but unfortunately it's not enough. And with Itachi and Kisame paired to counter the Kyubi... I was thinking sage mode would be a good alternative to up his arsenal. Give him an edge."

"He's been working on the rasengan." Minato said.

"Adding elemental nature to it, I know."

"No, he succeeded in that. The problem is the rasengan itself and how to use it."

“What do you mean?” Tsunade asked before Jiraiya could.

“The whole point of the rasengan is to compress chakra as much as possible to greatly increase the damage it does. The normal orb is just not enough. Riku shrunk it down to a marble size and the power was devastating. Which leads to problem number two: We can’t actually use the rasengan in close quarter combat, we would only hurt ourselves. Especially with elemental affinity involved. The one incomplete wind rasengan that Naruto made...Thousands of very tiny blades swirled around so fast we could barely see them. Can you imagine what will happen to your hand if it explodes when you hold it?”

“Shredded at best, no hand at worst.” Jiraiya answered with a frown.

“The compression is not a priority, Naruto has more than enough chakra to never run out, it’s the throwing part that is.”

“Maybe taking a break from this problem would give him a fresh perspective when he comes back to it?” Kushina suggested. “Sage mode will also bolster his defense, not just his offensive power.”

“You think we should let him go?”

“Minato, Naruto is 18, he doesn’t need our permission to do anything.” she said softly to her husband before turning to Jiraiya. “I want news of my baby every day! Got it, pervert?”

“Yeah, yeah.”

Naruto chose this moment to enter the dining room with dinner in hands. So did his clones. Tsunade, seeing the Botib on the patio, sighed and went to fetch her son. The murderous look he gave her slid off her shoulders effortlessly. She didn’t care one bit if she was interrupting something. He has been away for two weeks and he will eat dinner with her. Then afterwards would be cuddle time and she was looking forward to it.

Chapter 53: Planning for the future

Tsunade was looking at the plan Riku had made and shared. It was an ambitious one, using the barrier of the village to teleport to safety the whole population. Except it needed to tweak the barrier. Nobody has done that ever. Not since it was activated. She raised her head from the plans and her eyes set on her son. He had dark circles under his eyes. They were almost black. It was obvious to her that he hadn’t had a lick of sleep ever since he had come back from Suna a week ago. The morning after his arrival

she had woken up alone when she should have done it cuddling up to him. She had not been happy that morning. Even more so when Riku had been nowhere to be found.

“After a week of disappearance, without telling anyone where you went, you come back, looking like death and you expect me to give you the go ahead to modify the village barrier?”

“Not modify. I won’t touch a single seal of it. I will add to it.”

“... And for being able to teleport every single living being to... to where, exactly?”

“Underground. Lowest level of Root’s headquarters. I have thirty clones permanently working under chakra pills to consolidate the place and expand it. It’s almost done.”

“Done? As in almost ready to welcome 25 thousand people?”

“And animals. Don’t forget the animals.”

“Right. And the animals...” she said flatly. “All so the village could survive an attack from Akatsuki.”

“Yes.”

“... No.”

“Pardon?”

“I said no. Riku, you never tested the seal with good reason since you need to test it with the barrier. I can’t let you do that. What if you made a mistake?”

“I don’t make mistakes.”

“I remember seals exploding in your face.” she countered, a vivid memory coming to mind.

“That was years ago.”

“Riku. It’s obvious you barely slept all week. As such I cannot trust in your judgment regarding the seal you made. I will have Karin, Kushina and Minato have a look at it.”

“You-”

“I will take your opinion and expertise into consideration, once you’re rested and have looked over your work with a healthy mind. Not before.” she interjected, putting her hand up to stop him from talking.

"FINE!" he snarled.

He brought out his Botib in the middle of the office and went inside. 15 seconds later he was out and looked nothing like he did previously. He looked fresh as a daisy. He sealed the Botib back and took a look at his work as if nothing happened, under Tsunade's dumbfounded eyes. She thought he would have gone home and crashed, not used the Time seal. After five minutes of silence, Riku handed back his work.

"There is no mistake, happy?"

"Not until..."

"Karin and Kushina will understand the part linked to the barrier but not the rest. The rest is above Minato's current knowledge in space-time."

"I don't care."

Riku held her gaze for a full minute before he decided to turn around and left the office without a word. He knew he wasn't going to win this argument and staying there to try to convince her was a waste of precious time. Time that could be put to better use elsewhere. He remembered a promise of a picnic with Ino and her mother and went to buy some ingredients for it. It was still early in the morning so he took his time by letting a clone cook. He had dispelled most of them when he was in the Botib leaving only a sufficient number that would work on the finishing touch on the bunker he had been working on the whole week.

He didn't know why but his feet guided him to his not so secret place with Hinata, near the Naka river. He was coming up with plans after plans on how to put up his seal matrix on the barrier behind his mother's back and without having access to the core of the barrier itself, when a pair of arms embraced him from behind. The huge but very soft and pleasant weight against his back indicated that it was Hinata.

"I've missed you." she said, getting on her toes and kissing his cheek from behind.

"I've missed you too." he replied and leaned back against her.

"Did you really?"

"...I missed the support, the calm, the tranquility, the peace and the quiet that only you know how to make me feel. Does that count?"

"Hmm... I suppose."

"Sorry. It sounded like that's what interested me in you and what I would miss. I've been so focused on the task at hand that I didn't think of anything else this past week."

"It's alright, I know what you meant. I'm fluent in your language now. You sound all rational but behind it there are lots of emotions involved."

"Does it help that I didn't think of anyone else either? Not Ino, not Karin..."

"A little bit." she replied with her index and thumb, really close together. Her badly contained amused smile told him all he needed to know about how she felt about this.

"I did think of you a lot before that."

"Oh? And what about?"

"Marriage."

That had the effect of a huge exploding tag for Hinata. Her hands gripped his clothes tighter in reflex when she heard the word. She stayed silent.

"I want you to be my wife. Not just my concubine. You deserve it. You earned it. I love you no less than Ino or Karin."

"You're serious..." she whispered in realization.

"I am, yes. I want you to be Lady Senju Hinata. I want people to look up to you and not down. And I want our little moon babies to be Senju too."

"Moon babies?"

"What else would my moon princess have for children? Toads?" he japed and she playfully frowned as she pinched him.

"I like it. 'Moon babies'. I like it a lot."

"What about being Senju Hinata?"

"As long as I'm yours and you're mine, my family name doesn't matter, Riku."

Riku turned around to have his first look at her since she arrived. As always she was utterly beautiful. Why Kami had focused so much on her, he didn't know but he was glad they did, because she was perfect in his eyes.

"I think the same." he simply said and gave her a smoldering kiss. She answered in kind and hands began to move along their bodies, answering naturally their growing desires. Soon enough they were practicing making the moon babies they dreamed of having. Right there in the open. Where any one could catch them at any moment. They didn't care though. All they cared about was conveying their love to the other and making them feel good. Riku always loved that contrast with Ino. The blonde was like a raging

fire, more focused on the pleasure and roughness of the act to show him her love. Hinata was the opposite, more focused on intimacy, on love, that led to pleasure. That didn't mean the bluenette was all vanilla and all up for slow and gentle sex. She was pretty wild when she wanted to be. It just wasn't what she liked to focus on. Both were on the other end of the extreme. Karin was down right in the middle. Sometimes more like Hinata and sometimes more like Ino.

"You really want those moon babies, don't you?" he joked and Hinata just smiled. She was too busy catching her breath, enjoying his warmth and her post orgasm bliss. "Once Akatsuki is dealt with... Let's work on them?"

"Marriage first."

"Marriage first, yes. Better be prepared because my proposal will be epic."

No matter how hard she tried, Riku stayed tight lipped and she learned nothing. After a while, they separated from each other and dressed. Riku invited her for lunch, ditching his idea of a picnic but Hinata was to eat with her sister and Kurenai, so declined. After one last kiss they went their own way.

Riku got home, picked up the lunch his clone had made and went to visit Ino. He knew she was there because Team 10 was on standby because Shikamaru had chosen to stay with Temari back in Suna to support her.

He was hoping her mother would be present too but she was not so Riku made a change of plan regarding the location and carried his girlfriend to the top of the Hokage monument. Ino loved it though eating on Tsunade's head brought up a topic of conversation that they had not discussed yet.

"So... Tsunade is your mother, huh? We never really talked about what that meant regarding your **relationship**." she broke the ice like that and Riku frowned, not sure he liked what she was implying or if he understood her implication properly.

"That she's my mother. What else-"

"That you have sex with." she cut in, done beating around the bush quite fast.

"What do you want me to say?"

"Do you still?"

"Does it matter?" he frowned even more.

"You do then."

He took a second to think about the answer he was going to give her then thought *'the hell with it'*.

"What if I do, what if I don't? It happened before we knew about us. It changes nothing."

"I'm not pointing fingers!" she quickly said. "I'm just... trying to understand where the two of you... stand with each other. It's not like you can have kids together so it's more of a social taboo than anything."

"We're not going at it like bunnies like you and I are. It's once a month at best. And for her to relieve the stress of the job. It started like that and there is love involved but not a romantic one. Even back then it wasn't."

"Okay."

"Okay?"

"Yes. She had a shitty life and if the bright spot in it now is you two together from time to time, then okay. I won't throw the first kunai at her for using sex that way when I sometimes do the same. Even less when it's with you, baby." she said and moved from her sitting position on the ground to his lap for a kiss. "That does bring up a lot of mental issues to light."

"Like my skewed sense of morality, sometimes?"

"I... wasn't talking about this, it's way too broad a subject and is it really when it's standard for shinobi? No, I was talking about being attracted to your own mom. It's not rare to develop an emotional or physical attraction to older people when a parent of the opposite sex is absent in a child's upbringing. That's why your first crush was Yugao, your first sexual experience was with Shizune and your very first time with Tsunade. All older women. You see where I'm going with this?"

"I do... Yet I'm with you and you're my age."

"I'm a few months older actually. So are Hinata and Karin." she replied with an amused smirk.

"At least now you know I won't ditch you for a younger model." he joked back.

"There is seriously something wrong with you if you go for someone younger when you are with the three prettiest women in our generation."

"Not like I could in the first place. I'm pretty sure Hinata would make me suck on her boobs while you suck my soul out of my dick and Karin got me restrained with her chain while giving me a rimjob."

“Probably, yeah.” she laughed at the mental image he put in her mind. “I can’t believe Karin is such a degenerate. And here I thought I

was the adventurous slut.”

“Yeah. She’s the one with the chains but she’s the total masochist. Go figure. That makes me think... Are the three of you...”

“Having sex?”

“Getting along well in general but if you want to be specific I won’t stop you.”

“Karin has been difficult at first but since she likes being abused, Hinata and I put her in her place and she loved it. We’re good... As for sex well... Hinata rarely if ever initiates it. It’s mostly me but she’s very receptive when I do. With Karin it’s half and half she’s either horny or I am and we don’t restrict ourselves; we act on it. It doesn’t happen often but it’s mostly when we can’t get a hold of you.”

“I’m sorry it happened a lot recently.”

“We get it. You needed to heal then there is Akatsuki that’s becoming way more active. We don’t like it but we get it.” she said and she turned herself to the side to lean her back into his chest and watch the greatest view of the village.

“Once they’re dealt with, Ino... Once they’re dealt with I... Nevermind. Telling you will spoil the surprise.” she said nothing, understanding what it was about. Ever since he put the idea of marriage on the table she’s been waiting and she wasn’t in a rush. “I want Hinata and Karin to be my wives too. I feel it’s not right for them to be concubines.”

“I agree. That would be difficult though.”

“Honestly, I was thinking of flexing my muscles. Who wants to say no to the guy that tussled with the Kyuubi with his bare hands and won?”

Ino laughed at that but gave credit to the idea. Whoever tried to say no to Riku having three wives would not end up faring well. She was sure that he would also play the card of repopulating the Senju clan quickly. The villagers were such Senju worshipers that they may end up not caring about the propriety of having more than one wife. The old generation at least and considering their culture where the elders made the decisions, it was all good in that particular case.

“Lunch break is almost over.” he noted aloud and a familiar glint that he absolutely loved shone in his girlfriend’s eyes.

“Time for dessert then.” she replied sultrily, rubbing her perfect bubble butt against his already hard member.

“Fine but I’m feeding you.”

In a flash, Ino was out of his lap and crouching. Her legs were spread and her mouth opened wide right in front of him. She loved when he was doing all the work because he was so rough that she usually had an orgasm. She knew it was weird. Hinata and Karin said as much but she was happy to be that way. She was pleasing her man and she got rewarded for it too and in more ways than one. Best of both worlds in her opinion.

He completely ruined her make-up but she didn’t care, he found her even more gorgeous that way to the point his dick never softened after his release. Ino being Ino, loved it too. After cleaning herself up she gave him a loving kiss and he brought her back to her family shop. They arrived just in time to see her mother coming back from her own lunch.

“Riku! It’s so nice to see you!” She greeted him with a smile.

“You too, Yamanaka-san.”

“Please, call me Noriko.”

“A shame you had obligations, mom. Riku came to take us for this long awaited picnic.”

“Aw!” she exclaimed in disappointment. “Had I known I wouldn’t have gone to the Allied Mother Force gathering.”

“Since Ino is keeping me around until I die, there will be many more opportunities. Don’t worry.”

“I look forward to them.” Noriko said and went inside the shop.

Riku gave Ino one last kiss and a slap to her butt before teleporting away. A happy Ino went into the shop closing the door behind her and was called out by her mother.

“You’re keeping him until the day he dies, hum?” she said with a knowing smile.

“Uh-huh. Marriage is on the table, mom. For real, not as a joke.”

“Is that you wishing or…”

“No. It’s us. HE was the one to breach the topic first though.”

“Him?” exclaimed Noriki in surprise. She was under the impression that Ino was leading the boat and was the one making the decisions. Part of her still thought he was using Ino.

"I told you he needed time to sort himself out. He did months ago and now he's not hesitating anymore. If anything he's the one pushing forward. Not like I mind, quite the contrary."

"As long as you're happy, dear."

"I am, mom. I've never been happier in my entire life than when we're together."

Ino's answer was given with the most beautiful smile a woman could have. A smile born from happiness born from true love.

Chapter 54: Tabula Rasa

Confusion.

That was what Tsunade was feeling right now. A few seconds ago she was sitting in her seat in her office slaving away doing some paperwork when she suddenly found herself elsewhere. She had fallen on her butt when she, she supposed, teleported into this new place. Place that was very spacious. Spacious enough to hold what she believed the entirety of the village's population if her eyes were not lying to her. Immediately, she understood what had happened, how and who was responsible. She was taking a big, deep breath to scream her son's name when the major clans' heads of the village made her way towards her with haste. To her shock the usually calm and composed Hyuga Hiashi was completely panicked.

"Tsunade-sama!"

"I know what happened and I know who's responsible."

"The village is gone!" the man yelled. Only then did she notice his Byakugan active.

"It's not gone, we've just been-."

"It's gone!" he insisted. "Your son is currently fighting who I believe are responsible for this! There are no buildings left standing, Hokage-sama! The whole village is just a huge crater!"

Tsunade's mind froze. She thought that Riku had just disobeyed her and tested his seal matrix and that something went perhaps wrong, not this. Not that he had just saved everyone's lives.

"Tsunade!" Hiruzen shouted as he came through the crowd of people who were quickly getting agitated and wanted answers.

“Konoha!” Tsunade shouted using a jutsu that her sensei had taught her to increase the volume of her voice. Now she had the attention of the 25 thousand people around. “The village had been attacked. My son teleported us all to this underground bunker to save our lives! Do not panic, we are safe! This is not the first time we have to bunker down. You all know what to do in such a situation! Follow the Military Police’s or the Anbu’s directives and everything will go well.”

She stopped the jutsu and she saw many shinobis move among the crowd to separate and herd them away and in small groups.

“Dragon.”

“Hokage-sama.” a kunoichi said, kneeling before Tsunade.

“Riku made this place. I trust you and the rest of Anbu would know its layout.”

“It seems to be like the inside of the Botib, Hokage—sama, so we may.”

“Good, I want Anbu to scout the whole space and secure important areas. Infirmary, kitchen and most of all the armory. Have the medical staff take control of the infirmary, regular shinobi the kitchen and Anbu the armory.”

“Yes, Hokage-sama.” replied the masked woman and she disappeared in a swirl of leaves to execute her orders.

“I hope that each member of your clan will show the civilians how to behave properly and help keep the peace.” the blonde woman said looking at the clans head and got nods of affirmation in return. “Hiashi, I want one of your clansmen to keep me apprised about what’s happening outside at all times. Shikaku, I want to know the limits of this space and its points of exit. No one is to leave until further notice.”

“We’re not going to help?” Inuzuka Tsume asked.

“No. I think at this point we’ll be more of a hindrance to Riku than anything. The enemy he’s fighting is way above most people’s level. It would only be a suicide or a hindrance to send people not strong enough. ”

“It’s six against one, Hokage-sama.” noted Hiashi, his gaze empty, focused on the fight outside. “Your son is holding himself well for now but he’s in a stalemate...”

She thought for a moment about what to do. She was worried of course, Riku was alone fighting perhaps the most dangerous and powerful shinobi in the whole Elemental Nations. One who owned the mythical Rinnegan. The very eyes of the Sage of the Sixths Paths who was allegedly considered the father of chakra and Ninjutsu. Jiraiya’s report, along with Kakashi and Yugao, of their fight in Ame had revealed a lot about the

abilities of the dojutsu if their speculations were right but that didn't mean it was all there was to it. Riku was ready for what they knew and could manage surprises but ...

"It's like the six of them share their sight. One dodged a hit from his blindspot as if he knew." Hiashi commented.

"They do, actually. That's why it's so difficult to fight them." she replied and made a decision. "Shikaku has someone find Gai, Kakashi and Yu-."

"We're here, Hokage-sama."

Turning her head, Tsunade saw the two former members of Team Yukari at attention. With them was Kushina and Karin. It was perfect for her because she wanted to know how Riku managed what he did.

"Gai?" she asked the silver haired jonin.

Kakashi, coughed a bit and very reluctantly spoke a few words.

"I feel like my youth is fading."

A loud 'WHAT!?' echoed from somewhere far back in the crowd and three seconds later the Green Beast of Konoha made his entrance in style. A big smile full of white teeth and a thumb up.

"My rival! As long as a you have the desire to protect what you hold dear, **YOUTH WILL-**"

On instinct, Tsunade leaped forward and hit the man upside down on his head to make it stop.

"Thank you, Kakashi." she said and the man waved her thanks away.

"Hokage-sama? What's happening?" inquired Gai who was rubbing the spot she had hit.

"I want you, Kakashi and Yugao to go outside and observe Riku's fight. To be ready to discover any weakness our enemy has and act accordingly. Avoid confrontation at all costs. Retreat immediately if needed. Kushina-"

"I'm ready to go and fight too. Not really the way I wanted to go back on active duty but beggar can't be chooser."

"I was going to ask you and Karin to study the barrier and the space. I want to know how Riku managed this feat and if this artificial space is stable and sturdy."

“Oh! Okay! I can do that.”

“Alright. Sensei, I’d like you to join them outside. Not to fight but to support the analysis. Your experience will be invaluable.”

“I will help.” Hiruzen replied.

Quickly everyone moved to do the tasks they have been assigned to. Koharu and Homura had moved to join Tsunade and began to plan the recovery of the village. That was the only thing they could do at the moment. They didn’t know if Riku would win but they did hope and so decided to not waste time. From Hiashi’s reports the only thing left standing of the village was the Hokage monument.

Hiruzen and company used one of the three exits Anbu had discovered and found themselves outside Konoha’s area, deep inside the forest. They all move to the top of some trees to have a clear idea of where they exactly were and were disheartened to see with their own eyes the total destruction of their own home. A huge crater into which they could vaguely discern some small parts of destroyed buildings. The sight made Hiruzen’s heart ache.

“Sandaime-sama, are you alright?” Yugao asked, having seen him winced and holding his heart in pain.

“Y-yes. My heart just took a severe blow. Our home... I know it’s just buildings and that Konoha is its people but it still hurts to see her like this.”

“We’ll rebuild, Sandaime-sama! And make her even more youthful than she ever was!”

Gai’s enthusiasm made Hiruzen feel a bit better. Signing to move into their formation, they tree hopped forward and stopped at the edge of the forest. From there, they had a great view of the fight happening down below.

Riku was doing his best to dodge and counter the five that were opposing him, the sixth staying in retreat behind the others. He was throwing shurifuijins here and there. Mainly the flashbangs and smoke ones. He also used the Hiraishin to teleport away from a hit he couldn’t avoid. Everything was made even more difficult with summons involved. Using a combination of Shadow clones and smoke he, hiraishined right behind the one that had cut off his legs back in Ame and used his super strength punch to completely shattered him onto the ground. It was just in time before he had to teleport away to avoid being caught by the hand of another attacker.

“I don’t understand. Why did he use Tsunade-sama’s super strength and not his Iryoken?”

“They’re dead bodies being controlled, Gai. The Iryoken wouldn’t have worked because the cells are not alive anymore to be able to divide.” Kakashi explained.

“Look.” Yugao pointed out to the down opponent.

“He’s being dragged to the one in the back near that... It ate it?” commented Hiruzen in surprise, looking at what looked like a huge head from a monster coming out of the ground.

Under their watchful eyes they saw the destroyed puppet walking out of the head completely healed after a few minutes. That shocked them to the core.

“No wonder the fight is still going on!” Gai exclaimed in realization.

“When Riku destroys one, the others press him and distract him so he doesn’t see the one he put down being put back together. We need to get rid of that head thing and the one beside it first.” said Kakashi.

“Be careful with the one with the long hair. The one who tried to touch Riku earlier. He has been particularly careful in teleporting away from him.” warned Yugao.

“That must be the Human Path.”

“The Human path, Sandaime-sama?” inquired Gai.

“It is said that the Sage of the Six Paths was... well controlling Six paths of life or rather the six Paths of Buddhist reincarnation. The Deva, Asura, Human, Animal, Preta and Nakara paths. The one who got... repaired is definitely the Asura path, geared for war. The one who summons beasts is the Animal paths for sure. The one that repaired the Asura path must be the Naraka path as it’s in the Naraka realm that the reincarnation process starts. “

“That leaves the Deva, Human and Preta path. How do you know which paths they are?” wondered Kakashi

“The deva path is probably the one flying. It is said that the Deva realm is the realm of bliss or the realm of the gods because its inhabitants are so far superior to humans that they are closer to deities. Since he’s looking down on others as if he was superior, it must be it. That leaves the Human and Preta path. The pretas are humanoid creatures known for their perpetual hunger and thirst they cannot satiate. They’re... some kind of ghost. The human path is... the path that is the easiest to reach enlightenment and achieve rebirth because of the infinite amount of knowledge found in the Human realm.”

“So the one taking the explosive shurifuiuns must be the Preta Path, draining the chakra off of them. No ninjutsu would work against him. And as you said, long hair is the human path... Maybe having him touch you steals your knowledge?” Kakashi thought out loud.

"I think it's something more nefarious. I don't intend to find out and neither should you." the third Hokage ordered.

"So we destroy the Nakara path and that head next to him, then retreat?"

"Yes, Gai. Although with their shared vision I doubt we will be able to ambu-"

Hiruzen stopped mid sentence when a puff of smoke appeared on the ground revealing Naruto and Jiraiya right in the middle of the fight. All eyes turned to them. Not missing the opportunity this impromptu but very welcome distraction created, he made a shadow clone and shushined right behind the Nakara Path. He made the hand seals sequence for a powerful Katon jutsu while his clone did one for a wind one. His target was turned to ash on the spot as a result of the hot inferno unleashed and that continued towards the others paths. Gai had moved a fraction of a second after Hiruzen and obliterated the big head with three gates opened.

Hiruzen's attack was absorbed by the Preta path making it defenseless against Yugao's sword. The path wasn't able to see her coming because Kakashi had thrown a flashbang shurifuin right onto the Flying Deva Path which observed from the air the whole battlefield. With him blinded, it left the Asura, the Animal and the Human path to distract. Riku took on the Asura path, kicking him dozens of feet back.

Meanwhile Naruto and Jiraiya reacted quickly. The former using a quick formed wind rasengan that he threw right in the middle of the summon and the Animal path, creating a huge smokescreen of dust and dirt. The latter elongated his hair and struck the Human Path, blocking his view.

This combination of actions out of the blue allowed the destruction of the most annoying path. With the Preta path gone, Ninjutsu was once again on the table and boy did the leaf-nins take advantage of that. A flurry of explosive shurifuins from Kakashi landed in the direction of the animal paths to keep him blind and damage the summons. Hiruzen used a combo jutsu made of Lightning and water to attack the Asura Path with Gai guarding him. Yugao joined Jiraiya in defeating the Human path. With her sword she had range over the bare handed opponent.

Naruto threw another wind rasengan that he called 'Rasenshuriken' toward the Deva path who pushed it back with an invisible jutsu that repelled it. The jinchuriki was saved just in time by Riku flashing next to him and flashing away again.

"He can't use the jutsu for at least five seconds after using it. Use that to your advantage." Riku said as he handed Naruto some defensive shurifuins.

"What about you?"

"I need a distraction. To keep me out of his mind for a few minutes."

The youngest of the brothers wanted to ask for what but understood that it wasn't the time and that he would have to adapt to whatever Riku would do.

"Alright, I can do that."

Riku nodded and threw his wooden shurifuin along flashbangs and smokes and multiplied them in very high quantities. Almost all of them were repelled but Riku had flashed away leaving Naruto to deal with the Deva Path alone.

Jiraiya left the Human path to Yugao to handle and went to deal with the Animals, supported by Hiruzen from range. Gai and Kakashi acted similarly with the Asura Path.

Back underground, Hiashi was doing commentary for Tsunade and the elders.

"Where do you think he went?" Tsunade asked her entourage. It was Shikaku that answered her.

"Probably taking down the one controlling the corpses. They must be relatively close to command them all at the same time. At least in a five to ten kilometer radius."

"That's a huge area to search!" Koharu exclaimed.

"How will Riku find them?" asked Homura.

"I don't know."

"Let's have faith in Riku. He had never disappointed so far and he won't start now. He will find the puppeteer. Let's give him time."

"I'm afraid that time is something he doesn't have Hokage-sama. They're all holding well but at the rate this is going, only Naruto and maybe Jiraiya-sama would be left with enough chakra to fight."

"... Kushina, Karin, they may need the help of your chains to-"

"WAIT!" Hiashi suddenly shouted.

He felt silent for a moment and Tsunade nearly yelled at him to speak up, out of nervousness. She thankfully didn't have to.

"He's done it. The opponents all fell down on the ground like a puppet which had its strings cut. The fight is over. We won." the Hyuuga revealed.

Some cheered and some sighed in relief. Tsunade was the latter but held herself back. She needed to appear as if everything went according to the plan. Plan that didn't exist

or involved anyone but her son. She was glad that he had disobeyed her but he would still get an earful in private.

“Alright, I want Anbu to reach for every outpost at our borders and to be vigilant. I want Jonins to lead teams of battle oriented chunins and secure Konoha’s surroundings. Yamato, make as many shadow clones as you can and feed them chakra pills. We need wood to rebuild and we’re not paying for that. That could alert our enemies of what happened today. Yes.” she said, interrupting Koharu and Homura. “They will know regardless one way or another but the longer it takes for the news to spread the better for us. I want all genins to assist builders in any way they can. For academy students in their last year to be separated in teams of three and act as messengers or transporters, moving materials where they are needed. The first building to be rebuilt should be the barrier tower. Kushina, Karin, I want a barrier operational by the end of the day.”

““Yes, Hokage-sama.””

“Once the tower is done...”

On and on she gave orders and explained the plan she had come up with the elders for the reconstructions of the village. In the meantime the villager would stay inside the bunker who had good accommodation.

When she was done, Tsunade left Shikaku in charge and exited the place for the surface. She quickly made her way to where the fight happened and found everyone taking a rest. Riku was treating everyone’s wounds.

“Good job, everyone.” she praised. “Jiraiya, Naruto, good to see you back. Your timing was impeccable. Honestly, it couldn’t have been better from what Hiashi told us.”

“Heroes always arrive right on time, Hime.” the Toad sage replied with a grin on his face and a suave tone before yelling in pain. “Can’t you be nicer?!” he shouted in complaint at Riku who was healing him.

“I don’t know? Can you not flirt with my mother?”

That made Tsunade snort and Hiruzen laugh.

“I’m afraid the sun will rise from the west before **that** happens.” commented the third Hokage making everyone laugh even Jiraiya who had a proud smile on his face.

“What happened to the puppeteer?” the Godaime asked her son.

“Alive. Sealed with his friend that was guarding him. I also removed his eyes, which I doubt are his to begin with.”

“What makes you think that?”

“Kakashi.”

“Me?”

“Your sharingan is always active because you’re not an Uchiha. Should you transplant a byakugan into a non-Hyuga it would be permanently active too I believe. So the Rinnegan which is also a dojutsu should have gone back to its normal state when I knock out the guy. It didn’t.”

“That doesn’t make sense. Nagato already had the Rinnegan when I met him when he was an orphan child in Ame.” Jiraiya revealed.

“Why does it matter in the first place?”

“It doesn’t Naruto. Not directly at least. What is bugging me is why an Uzumaki had the Rinnegan? Is it a rare kekkei genkai from the clan among others or did someone give it to him because of his large reserves of chakra? If the latter, who did? Why? And do they have more Rinnegan to give around? The last one is what is worrying me the most.” Riku explained as he finished with Jiraiya and went to Gai to heal his bruises.

That led everyone to ponder those questions in silence and brought down the mood. Not liking it one bit, Tsunade changed the topic.

“How did you put the Hiraishin matrix on the barrier when you never accessed it this past week?”

“I didn’t have access to the core of the barrier, but the barrier itself? All around Konoha. I just directly put it on it.” he replied with a grin. “Glad that I did, huh?”

“Don’t push it.” she threatened and asked for further details. “How did you know about the attack in the first place? The barrier corps said they detected nothing.”

“Luck.”

“Luck? You teleported the whole village-”

“I was in sage mode trying something new, when I sensed someone in the air just outside the barrier. A huge amount of chakra into someone dead. I barely had the time to activate the matrix and to teleport away when he launched his jutsu.”

“You really dodged a kunai from pure luck.” Naruto commented about what he heard in disbelief.

“Yep. Now, if you don’t mind. I think I’m going to take a nap, I’m beat.”

“Oh, no, no no, no, no mister! **You** are going to help Kushina and Karin put up a new barrier.”

“What?! But mom-!”

“Don’t ‘mom’ me! That’s your punishment for disobeying my- Did he just flash away on me?!” she exclaimed when her son disappeared in a green flash. “RIKU!! GET BACK HERE!!”

Her furious and annoyed yell was heard by anyone that had reached the surface. The people near her simply laugh their ass off at the situation.

Chapter 55: Proposal

Once again Konoha has weathered a storm and came out victorious. With half a dozen shadow clones of Yamato being fed chakra pills constantly and with the addition of Naruto, Karin and Kushina’s numerous shadow clones, the reconstruction of the village was a very speedy affair. At this point it was little more than a formality. It would take time for sturdy buildings made of brick to see the light of day but within a week almost half of Konoha had a home. Suna’s refugees had arrived during that time and while downtrodden at first to see that their temporary new home was destroyed too, they didn’t hesitate to help. They had been relocated inside the bunker which had free rooms until further notice. In the end everyone was united and working into rebuilding the leaf. Even retired veterans and cripples found themselves working a job that suited them. Missing a leg? You can sit down and smith nails. Everyone was giving their all and Tsunade felt a pride so great that she ended up feeling moved into speechlessness. Hiruzen understood that feeling well, having lived it twice before.

One dark spot stained everything and that was the disappearance of one Uchiha Sasuke. Riku designed the bunker and the Hiraishin matrix. He made sure to transport every prisoner into a heavily sealed area they could not escape from. Sasuke for some reason did and after investigating resulted in no leads. Just like for Deidara and Kurosaki Raiga as if all three had disappeared in thin air. Riku had tried to activate the Hiraishin placed on Sasuke’s neck (like every prisoner) but it didn’t work. There were three possible reasons for that. Either the seal was removed, which Riku doubted a lot, Sasuke was out of fire country and so out of range or he was in another dimension, completely separated from their own. Had Sasuke been inside a barrier, the seal would have worked.

It was a dark spot but not a problem in the short term. Sasuke had no eyes and couldn’t do anything without them. Even in the case of his helper giving new ones they wouldn’t be the sharingan.

Now that the leader of the Akatsuki had been caught along with his right-hand woman, Riku believed that things were over. He couldn't have been more wrong. Uzumaki Nagato interrogation by T&I revealed that while he was the leader of the organization he wasn't the sole one. Uchiha Madara was another.

Tsunade had scoffed when she heard that. The man had been killed by her grandfather more than 60 years ago so whoever it was was definitely not him. From his description and both Minato and Kushina's testimony of the night of the Kyuubi attack, it was this Madara that had ripped the fox out of Kushina. That answered how the Akatsuki members and Sasuke had disappeared in their own cells. The man was using space-time Ninjutsu to teleport and be intangible which negated any attacks directed at him. From the testimony, Riku began to think of a way to counter that ninjutsu. He wasn't too worried though. Minato had managed to defeat the man with his hiraishin so Riku was sure he could do it too with his own version. It was a minor annoyance compared to fighting against the Rinnegan.

As such the dirty blonde was planning again his marriage proposal to his second favorite blonde (the first being his mother). He had already thought of everything before the village was completely destroyed but now he was to revise everything. Except the ring. He hadn't yet got around the ring. He wanted it to be carved with a hiraishin seal, the problem was the surface available was way too small for that. After days inside his Botib trying to find a way he gave up. It just wasn't practical at all and he decided to put the seal on something else. That allowed him to work on the inside of the Botib. Until now it was the strict minimum for a mobile base but he redesigned it to make it a home away from home.

To bring forth that change he tried to expand the sub space vertically, something he had never done before. He expanded, left, right and front but never up or down from fear of breaking the Botib from the inside. He rationalized that since it could expand beyond the depth of the closet he could also expand beyond its height.

He wasn't crazy to do it himself though. He used shadow clones for that. Once he had confirmation that nothing was going wrong he actually created new space inside. Most notably a second floor with four bedrooms and two bathrooms, a pool on the first floor and also a garden. The last one has been a challenge. He had no problem procuring twenty yards square of earth. Nor did he have any problem in creating the day and night cycle. He was already doing that with the lamps. What had been difficult was putting flowers and trees. Inside the garden. The answer came to him when he began to pace around the main room. By accident he hit the corner of a table and a nature changing shurifuin had fallen onto the ground. When Riku picked it up he had a revelation. Mokuton was the combination of water and earth release. He believes that if it was possible to change the chakra nature through a seal it would also be possible to change the chakra nature of two at the same time and mix them together. The first part has not been difficult, the later has been very much so. Or at least for recreating the Mokuton. He spent an entire week in the Botib to refine with precision the amount of earth and water he needed to combine to get wood. After many tries and retries, the answer was a

ratio of 60.9 % of earth and 39.1% of water. Filling in a corner of his mind the fact that elemental kekkei genkai was not unattainable anymore and swearing he would try other combinations when he could, Riku hastily made an automated seal creating mokuton tags. As a result the garden was full of flowers and trees.

Next he began working on a big gazebo. He had to ask for help for the design and advice for its construction. The first try had been a correct endeavor and instead of making a better one, cover up the whole thing in vines, and flowers to hide the imperfection. Once done, he exited the Botib, closed and locked it and went to see his girlfriend, leaving inside clones working on dinner.

With the flower shop not a priority on the building construction list, the only place he knew where to find Ino was her rebuilt home. She was hoping she was there and if not at least her mother to tell her where she was. He wasn't expecting Yamanaka Inoichi to open the door when he knocked on it. Shocked at the unexpected surprise for a brief instant, Riku quickly regained his composure.

"Yamanaka-sama, good morning." he greeted doing his very best to not falter.

"Likewise, Senju-san. What can I do for you?" the blonde man asked with narrow eyes.

"I..." *'Shit! Think of something, quick!'* "Picnic. I wanted to invite you and your family for a picnic today at noon. The invitation had been delayed with what happened to Sunagakure and my work with the village barrier at my return. I'm a man of my word and I promised Noriko-san and Ino a picnic so here I am."

"... I'm thankful for the invitation but it's such a short-"

"Honey, Who is it?"

Riku knew at that moment that Yamanaka Noriko was going to be the best mother-in-law ever. She appeared from back inside the house and made her way to her husband. When she saw Riku standing outside, she smiled.

"Riku! How lovely to see you! Here to visit Ino? She's in her room, I'll tell her you're here."

"That's kind of you, Noriko-san but I'm actually here to invite all of you for that picnic we never had the time to enjoy, this noon. I know it's-"

"Wonderful!" She said, grabbing his arm and dragged him inside. "I've been waiting for so long! I'm glad you're finally free of your duties. Any more and I would have thought you were avoiding me."

'Not you. Your husband.' "Never! You've always been so kind, why would I avoid you? Nonsense."

“INO!” she shouted then, completely forgetting her husband at the door, and walked with him towards the bottom of the stairs. “Riku is here, dear!”

The sound of something hitting the ground then the loud and fast footsteps on the wooden floor should have been an indication to Riku to prepare himself. He missed it and as a result, when Ino got halfway down the stairs she jumped to him. He barely had the time to raise his arms and catch this girlfriend that his back impacted the floor. As usual when she did this, Ino gave him a kiss that made his toes curl. This time again, Noriko pulled her daughter off Riku with a barely contained grin.

“You really need to work on your impulse control, dear. I wonder who you got that from?”

The last part was said to her husband who had a dark look on his face. His expression changed to sheepish and a bit embarrassed and he simply looked away.

“I’m not sorry. It’s been almost two weeks since I’ve seen him!” she justified herself, Riku getting up on his feet.

“I’m sorry. I was busy working on the barrier, making sure everyone was safe and avoiding my mother.” was his own excuse.

“Why would you avoid your mother?”

“Good question, Noriko-san and well... She may have forbade me to tweak the barrier with the seal that saved everyone because it was untested. Even though I was proven to be right to do so, I still disobeyed her and bailed out when she began to chastise me for it. I think that’s what got her really upset. To be fair, I just had the fight of my life, was completely exhausted and just wanted to rest.”

“Understandable.” Inoichi commented. Plenty of times he had gotten home after work, completely exhausted and had tried to avoid his wife nagging. That was at the start of their marriage and he had learned since that it was better to take the nagging or face worse consequences later. “But ill-thought.” he quickly added when Noriko gave him a look.

“Anyway, I came to visit today to invite your whole family for that promised picnic.”

“Let’s go!”

“Ino, it’s 10am.” Her father reminded her.

“And knowing my boyfriend, it was a spur of the moment idea and hadn’t yet bought any food or cooked anything for lunch yet.” she said and took Riku’s hand in hers, dragging him outside. “We’ll be back before lunch!”

Riku could barely say a word that they were already out of her home. Once they were away from the Yamanaka clan's new compound she spoke up.

"So what's the real reason for you coming to my home?"

"You of course. I wanted to see if you were free tonight for a romantic date."

"I am." she replied with a pleased smile.

"And I panicked a bit when it was not your mother opening the door but your father. I said the first thing that came to mind."

"You're silly. My father may be the overprotective type but he's not going to hurt you or anything."

"It's a male thing, Ino. You wouldn't get it."

"Uh-uh." she replied not convinced.

"Anyway. I wanted to also tell you that you should wear your prettiest dress. And I mean prettiest for public display, not your very slutty outfit that started everything back in that club."

"You love that outfit." she said with a smirk.

"Of course I do. Have you seen yourself in it? The only thing I had in mind at the time was-

"Sex. That was the whole point."

"Not sex Ino. Breed. To make you my little slut and breed you again again and again. I even imagined you collared and on a leash."

"Ouuuh. I love that idea." she admitted and invaded his personal space really deep.

"We're totally doing that."

"Another time. Tonight is classy."

"Alright. But we're definitely going on a secret date with my slutty outfit and me collared!"

Riku smiled and nodded his agreement to the idea. She gave him a kiss and they walked to the market district that was still being rebuilt. There were enough food stores to buy everything they needed and Ino demanded that she help him cook. Sandwiches were a bit too casual despite being a picnic so Riku went for a curried rice and egg salad. Something perfect for Noriko who didn't like meat very much. She loved fish

however and Riku made simple fish-dogs. He had removed the bones of some herrings and grilled them on a stick. For dessert it was simply an apple pie. As for the drink, a good jug of Ice-Tea with a hint of lemon and mint, perfect for cooling down the body from the heat in the middle of the day.

Riku brought everyone near the Naka river. He put a huge sheet on the ground and unsealed a traditional table and pillows for everyone to sit down at. The food has been a resounding success with Ino's parents, especially the Iced-Tea. Noriko had asked for the recipe but wondered how he got the ice in this season. He simply answered her that it was a family secret. She may have understood it as a Senju secret but Ino knew better. She knew that Riku didn't really consider himself a Senju. Tsunade's son? Certainly, yes but not a Senju. So she knew that the family secret was in fact just him finding a way to make ice and that was something she would ask him later. Overall, everyone had a good time and Riku got to know his future-in-laws better while they got to know him. After a promise of doing this more often they went back home, leaving Ino and Riku alone.

"Nu-huh. Wait for tonight." Riku said as Ino began to put her hand on his inner thigh and began to caress him gently. He had grabbed her wrist to make her stop and she wasn't happy about it. "Tonight will be less wonderful if I'm not at 100%"

The blonde bombshell said nothing and relented but not without a pout. Despite how much he wanted the same thing as she did, his rock hard dick being proof of that, he held himself back. A quick peck on the lips was all he allowed himself before he left to go back home and see that everything was perfect for the coming evening and night.

He was surprised to find Minato and Kushina there. He would have thought that they would have taken one of the newly built houses for themselves. He hadn't seen the last two since the end of the fight against Nagato (Riku refused to call him Pain, that was too emo for a man in his early forties) and the first one since even before that. So far the Namikaze family were kind of... Not freeloaders but long term guests. He didn't understand why they were still living here.

"Riku!" His father exclaimed with dishes in his hands on his way to the kitchen. "It's good to see you out of your man-cave." he added while going on his way.

"I've been busy. Things won't do themselves."

"No but taking a break from time to time is important. And healthy." Kushina gave her two Ryo, coming back from the kitchen to the dining room. "Work can wait."

"It wasn't work." he replied and made his way to where he had left his Botib in the corner of the patio.

"What were you doing then?" His father asked coming back to the dining room.

“That’s a secr... Actually...” he stopped mid-sentence, an idea crossing his mind.
“Kushina-san could you do me a favor and give me your opinion on something?”

That surprised the redhead a bit. Riku rarely asked anyone for their opinion, let alone hers. She looked at her husband who was as clueless as she was and gave her a shrug of his shoulders.

“Sure. What about?”

“And why not ask me, your father?”

“Unless you had a sex change since we brought you back from the dead, your opinion is meaningless.”

“Oh. It’s a woman’s opinion you need.” the blonde man realized.

“Yes. You can come though. Just hold your tongue until tomorrow. Both of you.” asked Riku and signaled them to follow him inside the Botib.

Kushina wondered why he didn’t ask Tsunade or Shizune or any of his girlfriends instead of her but didn’t voice it. She just followed him with Minato right behind her. Both were amazed by the change inside the Botib. The whole look was very different from before. The simplistic and military style was changed to something more homely. Nothing changed regarding what was in the main room. There was still the armory in the corner, the table with the seals in the middle. The addition of the second floor baffled them.

“This way.” they heard Riku say from a door that wasn’t there before if their memories were accurate. The married couple walked towards the next room and were gobsmacked at what they were seeing. A 20m² garden spanned right in front of them. There was the most lush and green grass they have ever seen on the ground and the walls were covered with tall bushes or vines and flowers. The huge wooden gazebo covered in vines and flowers too and painted white in the middle of the garden attracted their attention more than the trees around it.

“How the hell did he do that?” Kushina whispered.

“My guess? Seals. Very complex seals.” Minato answered as they joined the dirty blonde in the gazebo.

Riku was folding a napkin carefully and putting it on a white plate. The whole table was covered by an ornery white tablecloth and with a dinner set for two sets on it.

“Wow.” Kushina said looking around “I don’t know for whom that’s for but you’re definitely going to get lucky tonight. Way past a blowjob.”

“Kushina!”

“What? It’s true! I know **You** would if you did that for me!”

“Not in front of Riku!”

“You do know that I had to see both of you naked to fix your body, right? I think I’m beyond hearing crass comments from the two of you. Besides, I have my own crass redhead.”

“That’s not- Ugh... Nevermind.”

“So if the flaky prude over here pulled a ring...” Riku began and pulled an actual ring from his breast pocket and showed it to his step-mother. “And asked you to marry him, would-.”

“Yes! On the spot!” She cut him off. “This..” she started and waved around her hand to refer to the whole garden “Shows dedication, care and lots of hard work. No one would do that for someone else if they didn’t truly love the person they did it for.”

“Who’s the lucky one?” asked Minato.

“Ino.”

“Ah! That explains the garden and the purple flowers. She will love it. I wish **my** man would do that for me. Maybe I should ask Naruto? He’s always saying he loves me.” She teased and chided her husband at the same time.

“Nuh-huh. I’m the man of your life and I’ll be the one doing that for you.”

“I don’t know about that. Naruto has technically spent more time inside Kushina-san than you ever did.” Riku joked with a deadpan face.

That made Kushina snort and laugh very loudly. To her side Minato’s face was a mix of horror and outrage. Then it changed to mischievous and he picked Kushina up to put her on his shoulder.

“I recognize a challenge when I hear one!” the married man said, walking away with a not so laughing Kushina.

“Wait! Minato, that was a joke! Not a challenge! There is no way that’s possible! So don’t try it!”

“Don’t care!”

She kept protesting as they left the garden.

Riku spent all afternoon making sure everything was perfect. When one of his clones reminded him of the time. Riku finished what he was doing and went to clean himself up. When it was time for him to dress up, he chose to wear a forest green traditional kimono at first but changed his mind knowing that Ino would go with a normal dress not a traditional one. So he just put on a white shirt and some black pants. He used the hiraishin seal he had left near her house and patted himself on the back for thinking about it; he would have been late otherwise. He arrived just as she closed the door to her home to wait outside as they had planned.

The purple dress she wore was beautiful. Not slutty or whory in any way, but it showed everything he loved about her body. Her dress straps were actually attached to a cloth collar that was closed behind her neck, leaving her shoulders completely bare and pushing up her breasts which displayed a small but deep cleavage. He nearly proposed on the spot just so he could make love to her right here and there.

“Good evening, my sun princess.” He greeted her in a soft and suave voice and with a smile on his face.

“Good evening, baby!” She greeted back with happiness and a kiss on the lips. “I hope what you planned is very distracting because I’m of a mind to bring you back to my bedroom right now.” she said, biting sensually her lower lips as she gave him a look over.

“I can say the same and... It is.” he replied mysteriously offering her his hand.

She took her without any hesitation and Riku flashed them back to his bedroom, in front of the Botib. Ino immediately frowned, not liking what she was seeing. She liked the Botib because of the Time seal but it was far from being romantic.

“You better not-”

“Trust me.” he simply said and pulled her inside.

“... You change the decoration, wow. Great.” she said flatly as she saw the changes he made.

He kept smiling at her and led her to the door of the garden. Before opening the door, he went behind her and blocked her view with one hand.

“**Riku.** You promised me the most memorable date in my entire life. So far it has been lackluster...” she began to say and Riku used his free hand to open the door from behind her. “So whatever is beyond that door better be awesome or I swear I’m going back-”

The end of her sentence died in her throat when Riku removed his hand from her eyes and she saw the garden. For the first time since he knew her, Yamanaka Ino was left

speechless and it wasn't because she was asleep (even with his dick in her mouth she 'voiced' her thoughts). He pushed her slowly inside the garden then moved to her side to take her hand and lead her to the Gazebo. She was looking all around, not really paying attention at where she was going. Her mouth opened cutely in wonder and shock refused to close.

"Ino?"

Hearing her name brought her back down to Earth. She saw Riku waiting for her to walk between the table and a chair he had pulled out so he could help her sit down. Silently and a bit dazed, she took her seat and Riku went to take his.

"Riku... That's beautiful."

"Of course. I had you in mind when I made it. How can it be anything but beautiful?" he replied with a loving smile.

Yamanaka Ino rarely blushed, she had thick skin and had heard it all before from boys and men. But Riku's words moved her, her heart skipping a beat.

"You are so getting lucky, tonight." she said with a teasing grin.

"I hope so."

A Kage bunshin came into the garden and began to serve Ino her food, then Riku. It was all her favorite food and she enjoyed it very much. They ate in silence, they didn't need to talk as they knew that any word spoken would break the magic spell of this wonderful moment. After the desert and the plates taken away. Riku stood up from his chair, a small flower pot in hand that the clone had given him. She wondered what it was about but chose to keep quiet and wait. She had been right when Riku walked to her side where he went on one knee. Moving her chair to the side a bit to face him and with her heart beating at incredible speed, she hoped. Under her very eyes, Riku stuck a small seal tag under the pot and slowly the closed purple flower began to grow and unfurl itself revealing a very intricate ring with a light blue gem on top of it, cut in a diamond shape.

"Ino, will you be my wife?" he asked with as much confidence as he could.

He had expected many things but a silent Ino suddenly tearing up and crying was not one of them. Because of that he began to panic and his heart sank in his stomach. As he made a move to stand up, Ino reached for the ring with her hand. She took it and looked at it from every angle. When she was done she looked up to Riku, tears still falling and her eyeliner running.

"Yes." she whispered then spoke louder. "Yes, I'll be your wife."

She handed him the ring with her right hand and presented her left palm facing the ground, for him to put the ring on her. Riku's heart soared from his stomach and nearly burst out of his chest when she agreed. Delicately, he put the ring on her finger and Ino kissed him with everything she had. When she pulled back she began to sob uncontrollably. Something so uncharacteristic of her.

"Hey." he said softly. "I'm getting mixed signals here, if you're unhappy to be my..."

"I'M NOT DUMMY!" she shouted in his face. Now that was the Ino he knew. "I-I'm just so moved, so happy that after years of dreaming about it, it finally happened!"

"I'm sorry it took so long to completely fall under your spell." he replied with a smile.

She just smiled back at the jape then looked at the ring on her finger. Another surge of love and happiness came to her and she went to kiss him again.

"Make love to me." she ordered but it sounded more like a plea.

"As my fiance-"

"Wife."

"As my wife wishes." Riku corrected and picked her up in a bridal style.

He exited the garden and brought her to one of the rooms on the second floor to fulfill his soon-to-be wife's command.