

Calamity 121

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 121: Desperate Defense

The Earth Dragon's explosion sent cracks through the hardened rock. But the ground also absorbed the impact of the blast. So the Rock dome stayed intact. However, at the next moment, a Vacuum bullet hit the Rock dome and penetrated it.

Junji, who was pouring his chakra into the Rock dome, immediately noticed it and moved to his right. He was always on alert for another sneak attack. However, he didn't have much time to move. Though he dodged, the bullet created a deep cut in his upper left arm as it passed.

Junji winced but he had no time to worry about the pain. While dodging the Vacuum bullet, he couldn't supply chakra to the Rock dome anymore. Renjiro's clone noticed it and slammed his hands on the ground again.

'Earth Release : Earth Flow Divide jutsu'

The ground under the Rock dome immediately began splitting apart. Realizing the danger, Junji created an opening in his Rock dome and moved out. The ground under the rock dome kept splitting apart. It split for 10 meters when the entire Rock dome collapsed inside it.

As soon as Junji moved out, a Vacuum bullet and an Earth spear attacked him. But he managed to dodge them both. Fujin concluded, 'Looks like killing him with a long-range attack is not possible.'

Fujin and Renjiro's clone weren't the only ones who targeted Junji as soon as he left the dome. Hoka and Mieko also got into action. They flickered in front of him.

Mieko immediately threw a few shurikens, while Hoka ran forward to block his chakra points. Junji immediately dodged the shurikens. Hoka used that opportunity to close the distance between them and attack him.

Junji blocked Hoka's attacks while analyzing, 'How did these brats get here? Did they defeat our chunins? Or did they get reinforcements who freed them up? I am getting worried about Doi. I need to break free quickly!'

Junji had his back against the wall. Realizing that he would not be able to break free by staying on defense, he decided to go on the attack. He started with Hoka who was fighting him.

Unfortunately for him, the enemy's attack was too intense. He tried to gain an advantage against Hoka, but Hoka's Taijutsu was as good as his! Additionally, he had to keep an eye out for Mieko's shurikens, Fujin's Vacuum bullets and Renjiro's long-range jutsus.

With Hoka fighting in close range, Vacuum Bullet became too dangerous to use. While it did apply pressure on Junji, Fujin concluded that it won't create much of an effect. So Fujin flickered and joined Mieko and Hoka as well.

Junji noticed Fujin and thought, 'So it was him. Looks like there are no reinforcements. But does this mean that all 3 of them won their fights?'

His face grew grim as he concluded, 'We underestimated them. This mission is now a total disaster!'

Fujin stayed behind Hoka and made a few hand signs. Junji kept a close eye on Fujin.

Renjiro's clone observed his students and analyzed, 'All 3 of them are here. So all four of the enemy chunins should be dead.'

He smiled, 'I never thought that I would be the slowest to deal with my opponents. My main body seems to still be in a deadlock.'

Renjiro's clone stayed behind and just observed his students. Just his presence alone created a lot of pressure on Junji. He wanted his students to get the experience of fighting against an experienced Jounin. After all, missions tend to go bad frequently. The next time, he wouldn't be around to keep an eye on them.

Hoka kept engaging Junji in hand-to-hand combat. Mieko used her Shurikens to make openings for Hoka. While Fujin used his air bullets to not allow Junji any retreat.

Junji's expression was grim, 'These brats are strong. Three of them together can take me on. And they aren't allowing me any opportunity to use any Ninjutsu! And that clone is still staring at me.

But with these brats here, he won't use any large-scale ninjutsu. But, I need to save some chakra to deal with the clone and to escape. And I still have to check on Doi!'

Though a lot of thoughts were running through Junji's mind, they didn't affect his combat. The fight remained in a deadlock for the next 5 minutes.

During these 5 minutes, Junji gave multiple opportunities for Fujin and Mieko to jump into close combat. However, all those openings were traps. Neither Fujin nor Mieko jumped in and stayed behind Hoka and provided mid-range support.

Junji's situation kept getting worse. Though he wasn't seriously injured, he had a lot of close calls. There were a lot of small cuts on his body. It was only a matter of time before one attack hit him fatally. Even more pressing was that his chakra was decreasing. And Renjiro's clone was observing him carefully.

Understanding that maintaining the situation would be unfavorable for him, he decided to go on the attack.

As Junji decided, a shuriken came flying at him. He tilted his head and avoided it. Right after, Hoka attacked with his gentle fist style. Junji began moving backwards to avoid Hoka. However, 2 air bullets were shot behind him and one was directed at him.

Not having any opportunity to use any Ninjutsu to defend, Junji had to move forward towards Hoka to avoid the bullets. Hoka aimed his palm at Junji's chest. Junji used his left hand to deflect Hoka's attack by hitting him on his wrist.

Junji followed it up with a strong kick with his right leg targeting Hoka's left side. Hoka blocked the kick with his left forearm. However, the force of that kick sent Hoka to his right for a few meters.

Junji immediately ignored Hoka and moved towards Fujin and Mieko thinking, 'These kids didn't attack even when I provided openings. So their Taijutsu must be weak!'

Seeing Junji run towards him, Fujin's eyes widened. He shouted, "CRAP!" and immediately ran to his left leaving Mieko alone to face him.

Seeing one of the two kids run away, Junji smirked. He thought, 'As I thought. They were both hiding behind that Hyuga brat. So they specialize in mid and long-range combat and are bad at Taijutsu. I'll kill this girl before that Hyuga brat comes to her help and then kill the one who ran away as well.'

Mieko scoffed internally at Fujin's antics. She threw the shurikens in her hands at Junji and grabbed a kunai. Junji dodged the shurikens and grabbed his own kunai and attacked Mieko.

Mieko blocked his kunai with her own and kicked his abdomen almost at the same time. Junji was shocked, 'She isn't bad at Taijutsu!'

At that moment, Hoka began running towards him from his rear while Mieko attacked from the front. Junji's face grew grim as he grabbed another kunai.

He blocked Mieko's attacks and was about to look at Hoka when he suddenly felt something on his right. He looked to see that the kid who ran away was attacking him with a sword. Fujin attacked him as if he wanted to cut his body vertically in two.

Realizing the danger, he increased the force on the kunai that was blocking Mieko and sent her flying backwards. Almost immediately, he raised the kunai in his other hand to block the sword and sent a kick at Hoka who was just behind him.

The sword clashed with the kunai and the kick met 2 outstretched fingers. Junji grunted as he felt Hoka disabling a chakra point in his feet. However, soon his eyes widened as he saw the sword cutting through his kunai and coming down at his head.

He pushed his feet on Hoka's fingers and used them to jump away from him so that he could dodge the sword. His body began moving towards Fujin's right. The sword, which was aimed at the center of Junji's head, barely missed it. However, it hit him on the shoulder and severed his right arm!

Fujin looked at his opponent in surprise, 'He used Hoka's attack to propel himself away from my sword swing! It's incredible that he is still alive!'

Hoka and Mieko was surprised as well that Fujin didn't manage to kill him. However, all 3 instantly attacked him once again. Hoka moved around Fujin's sword to attack Junji. Fujin too moved towards him and swung his sword again at Junji.

Junji, who had landed just 2 feet away from Fujin, was in shock! His right arm was severed and his right foot hurt. He looked at Fujin's sword fearfully and moved backwards while grunting in pain. However, Mieko was right behind him and stabbed a kunai in his back.

Blood came out of Junji's mouth as he stopped himself and swung his left fist behind himself to hit Mieko. However, both Hoka and Fujin had reached him. Fujin stabbed his sword into Junji's heart while Hoka jabbed his two fingers into Junji's throat.

Junji looked at Hoka and Fujin in disbelief. When he entered the Land of Fire, he never thought that he'd be killed by ninjas one-third his age!

Mimasuya Junji, a veteran Jounin of the Village Hidden in the Mist, fell in battle!

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Chapter 122: The Hiding Spot

Seeing Junji breathe his last breath, Fujin withdrew his sword and said, "He was tough!"

Hoka and Mieko also withdrew their attacks and nodded. Junji's body fell to the ground. Hoka said, "Yes. For so long, despite getting attacked so much, he never allowed me to hit any of his chakra points!"

Mieko nodded. She was about to say something when her eyes fell on Fujin. She instantly became annoyed and asked, "Why do you keep running away and sneak attacking?"

Fujin shrugged and replied, "It's fun."

Hoka and Mieko's faces immediately became dark.

Renjiro's clone flickered in. He looked at his three students proudly and praised them, "Great work! Though he was a bit exhausted after fighting me, you three managed to kill a full-fledged Jounin!"

All three looked at him. Hoka asked, "Should we reinforce you Sensei?"

Before the clone could answer, they heard from behind, "No need."

Immediately the three turned around to see Renjiro. Renjiro finally managed to kill his opponent. He sealed his body and was coming to help his clone when the trio killed Junji.

Renjiro's clone dispelled himself. Renjiro received all his memories.

He looked at his students and said, "Good work. Did you store their bodies?"

His students all shook their heads. Renjiro said, "Store their bodies and assemble back here within 2 minutes. Fujin, bring Hotaka as well. Also, don't steal their belongings. For missions that particularly state to kill some ninjas, you shouldn't steal their belongings as they may have something that the village needs. Also, their belongings could have traps."

The trio nodded and flickered. They went to their own battlefields and sealed the dead bodies in the scrolls. Fujin flickered towards Hotaka and looked at him. Both he and his dog were wrapped in multiple bandages.

Hotaka looked at Fujin and asked, "Is it over?"

Fujin nodded, "All enemies are dead."

Hotaka was surprised. He thought, 'I just asked for formality! They managed to kill a team of 6 ninjas who we couldn't pin down for days in just 30 minutes!'

While Hotaka was lost in his thoughts, Fujin sealed Doi's body in a scroll. He asked, "Can you move?"

Hotaka got up and replied, "Yes. None of my injuries was serious."

Fujin nodded and said, "Alright. Sensei has asked us to assemble. Follow me."

Within a couple of minutes, everyone was assembled where Renjiro was within a couple of minutes. Renjiro had sealed Junji's body.

Renjiro looked at everyone and said, "Report your status."

Mieko replied, "No injury. Chakra around 15%."

Hoka said, "No injury. Chakra around 25%."

Fujin said, "No injury. Chakra around 40%."

Hotaka wasn't aware of the protocol in Team Renjiro. However, on hearing the three chunins, he understood and said, "Minor injuries. Chakra around 35%."

Renjiro nodded and said, "Get ready. We will be attacking the 2nd team from Kiri as well."

The trio were surprised. Fujin asked, "Sensei, wouldn't it be better to rest and recover our chakra first?"

Both Mieko and Hoka agreed with Fujin but didn't say anything.

Renjiro answered, "Normally yes. But our enemies would run away. And we are in the land of fire, so our reinforcements will be coming soon. Unfortunately, we can't wait for them."

Without explaining the exact details, Renjiro flickered. His students immediately followed him. Hotaka was dumbfounded once again at how suddenly they disappeared! He immediately followed their scents.

Renjiro arrived at the place where the pond that the Kiri ninjas were hiding in was. Fujin, Mieko, and Hoka reached there soon after. Hotaka was the last one to reach. They were standing on the opposite end of the pond.

Mieko asked, "Why are we back here sensei?"

Renjiro smiled and asked, "When multiple parties are hunting you, what do you think is the best place to hide?"

The four fell into thought. Hotaka had a few guesses, but he didn't answer as he assumed that the question was meant for Renjiro's students.

After a minute, Mieko answered, "At a place where no one will expect you to."

Fujin and Hoka gave her a deadpan expressions. Hoka taunted, "Good way to state the obvious."

Renjiro chuckled and said, "Well, she isn't wrong. In this scenario, where they were hunted by one stronger squad which was, in turn, being hunted by multiple other squads, the best place to hide is near the 1st squad that was hunting them."

Hearing that the eyes of all 3 students widened. They immediately activated their sensory skills. However, they didn't sense anyone nearby.

Renjiro continued, "It is ingenious. The ones that are hunting them would never imagine them to be so close. And since this is their hiding spot, it would mean that they are confident about hiding here from others. So they would be hidden from everyone.

Even in the scenario where the hiding spot of the ones who are hunting them gets exposed. The other party would attack them and not think that there is another squad hiding here."

Fujin asked, "So, how did you sense them, sensei?"

Renjiro chuckled and said, "I am very sensitive to earth and water nature. When I used the Rampart of Flowing Soil jutsu, I sensed another underground cave that would be perfect for hiding. And since the patrol teams didn't manage to find them again, it became easy to guess who was hiding there."

Renjiro began making hand signs but Fujin said, "Wait a bit, sensei. I sense a few chakra signatures to our left."

Hoka activated his Byakugan. Renjiro stopped and asked, "How many?"

Fujin answered, "Four chunin level... Another 3 are coming here as well. All 7 are at chunin level."

Hoka added, "All are from our Patrol teams."

Renjiro waited. Soon 7 chunins reached them. On reaching, one of them said, "We heard a lot of noise coming from this area. So we came to reinforce you."

Renjiro nodded and answered, "One of the Kiri squads has been dealt with. We will now deal with the other. Three of you wait here with us. The remaining four go and hide. Hotaka, go with them."

They nodded. The first patrol team of four dispersed in different directions and hid themselves. So did Hotaka. The remaining 3 waited with Renjiro's team wondering what he was up to.

Renjiro made a few hand signs and slammed his hands on the ground and said softly, "Earth Release : Thousand Needles jutsu."

A half hour ago :

Sakai Chou and her squad suddenly felt tremors inside the underground cave they were hiding in! Unlike Kazuki's squad, this squad was relatively younger. Only Chou was in her thirties. The remaining three members were in their late teens.

Chou looked at her squad members and said, "Looks like Kazuki and others have been discovered by the Konoha shinobis. Don't try to sense them."

Her squad nodded. Mino Masuyo, who was a special Jounin, asked, "Chou-sama, wouldn't it be better if we help those Konoha shinobi? That way, we can eliminate that squad from the Mizukage faction."

Terumi Honzo, a chunin in this 4-man squad, added, "It may even help us create a good relationship with Konoha. With those guys dead and Konoha being friendly, we will be able to return without any obstruction."

However, Chou shook her head. She said, "We don't know if the Konoha team is strong enough to kill them. If they aren't and Kazuki and others end up escaping, then we will be in a tough spot."

That's not even considering that the Konoha shinobis might consider us enemies too and we may end up helping Kazuki escape. We will be in a much tougher spot."

Masuyo asked softly, "But your niece recently fought in the Konoha's chunin exams. I heard she reached finals as well. Can't we say that to at least enter into talks with Konoha?"

Chou answered, "I had thought about this too. But ultimately, Konoha didn't agree to help us. Even if I say that I am afraid Konoha will ask us to surrender and take us as prisoners. They might let us go later due to what you said, but things won't be under our control."

The expressions of everyone grew grim upon hearing Chou. After some time, their last member who was a chunin, Kenkyusha Shunji said, "What if we just take this opportunity to run away?"

Chou replied, "If they were able to find Kazuki's squad who were hiding so well, we will be exposed as soon as we leave this hideout. Don't worry so much. I don't think they will find our spot. So we will try to leave silently after a few days."

Having no choice, they just waited in the hideout. After the first tremor, nothing else was felt in the hideout, so they assumed that the fighting spot moved.

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Chapter 123: Sneak Attacks

After half an hour, Chou and Masuyo suddenly got alert. Hundreds of small needle-like spikes suddenly began forming on the cave walls. Understanding the danger, they both immediately made hand signs.

'Water Sphere Barrier jutsu'

'Water Sphere Barrier jutsu'

Immediately, two layers of water dome barrier surrounded them. The outer layer was formed by Chou while the inner layer was formed by Masuyo. Some water also flowed on the ground inside the dome. Hundreds of rock needles rained on the two barriers.

Many needles managed to pierce through both barriers. Honzo and Shunji stepped in front of Chou and Masuyo and defended with kunais. They managed to deflect most but a few needles still stabbed all of them. However, none were fatal injuries.

Chou and Masuyo desperately poured more chakra into their jutsus. Honzo and Shunji too made hand signs. Honzo slammed his hands on the ground. Four Rock shields appeared around them.

Shunji, on the other hand, released a spark that hit Masuyo's water sphere barrier. Electricity began flowing through it. The electric current slowed down most of the needles that pierced through the first barrier and hit the second barrier, making them harmless.

The four Kiri ninjas were finally relieved for a moment. However, at that very instant, a stone spear silently and quickly rose through the ground under Terumi Honzo. His attention was focused on the needle rain and didn't notice the spear under him. The spear pierced his lower body, pierced through him, and exited through his head!

He yelled in pain, but couldn't move. That startled his three teammates who turned to see him. They were horrified! Their teammate's body was skewered with an earth spear!

Chou immediately yelled, "JUMP and run to the exit!"

Both Masuyo and Shunji jumped along with Chou. Earth spears formed under them as well and began moving towards them rapidly. All 3 kicked at the side of the spear to propel themselves towards the exit.

Chou made a few hand signs, 'Water Prison Jutsu'

A water sphere encased all 3 of them as they left the protection of the double-layered Water Sphere jutsu.

As they left the underground, the water sphere kept getting pelted with rock needles. A few pierced through, but their speed was greatly reduced due to the water. They managed to defend themselves with a kunai as they got out.

When they left the hideout, Fujin, Hoka, and Mieko sensed them. Sensing them rushing out, Fujin made a few hand signs and prepared Vacuum Bullet jutsu while thinking, 'Three people. One has Jounin level chakra. One is chunin level and the last might be an Elite chunin. Jounins are tough to kill, I'll target the Elite Chunin.'

Soon, Sakai Chou led them out of the underground. They appeared around 20 meters from where Renjiro and the rest were standing. As soon as they appeared, Fujin shot a Vacuum Bullet at Masuyo.

Though they were in a lot of peril, Chou's water prison jutsu provided them with a sense of security. So despite expecting an attack as soon as they left, they expected themselves to at least put up a fight.

However, right after leaving the underground, a Vacuum Bullet hit the Water Prison. It pierced into it with extreme ease and hit Masuyo's heart accurately! She fell down dead with her eyes wide in disbelief!

Chou and Shunji were shocked again. First Honzo was killed unexpectedly and now Masuyo. Even worse was the fact that Masuyo was their only sensor. Leaving the Land of Fire safely without her aid would be extremely difficult.

Without giving them any time to grieve, Mieko, Hoka, and the other 3 chunins moved to attack them. Chou immediately spat out a lot of water, forming a water wall between them. The Water Wall stopped them.

They were about to move around the wall, when Chou yelled loudly, "STOP. We surrender. We don't want to fight against Konoha!"

Hearing that, the 5 of them stopped. The Water Wall soon collapsed into the water. Before Renjiro could say anything, Chou spoke, "We were hunted by our Mizukage despite not committing any crime. While escaping, we accidentally entered the Land of Fire. We have no intention of fighting against you."

Renjiro knew about the situation in the Land of Water. He nodded and asked, "Alright. But why didn't you surrender earlier?"

Chou answered, "We were afraid of being accused of being from the same group as the ones who were attacking us."

Renjiro thought for a bit and said, "Okay. Turn around and raise your arms in the air. We will be arresting you for trespassing into the Land of Fire. If you're innocent, then Lord Hokage will meet you and make further decisions."

Chou felt a bit odd by that command. This was her first time hearing something like this.

Chou and Shunji turned around and raised their arms. As soon as they did it, Renjiro made a hand sign and slammed his hands on the ground.

However, even before he slammed his hands, Chou grabbed Shunji and jumped. Immediately thick earth spears appeared below them. Fujin, Hoka, and Mieko smirked.

Fujin immediately fired another Vacuum bullet at Shunji while he was in the air. Mieko threw a few shurikens on both while Hoka attacked Chou with Vacuum Palm.

Chou's main attention was on Renjiro and Fujin. As soon as Fujin shot the Vacuum Bullet, she pulled Shunji out of the way. However, the vacuum bullet was very fast. It sliced through the side of his abdomen and left a deep cut.

While pulling Shunji, she herself got pulled towards him. This ensured that the Vacuum palm didn't hit her heart. However, it still hit her right lung. She coughed blood while blocking Mieko's shurikens.

On landing on the ground, she looked viciously at Renjiro and yelled, "Renjiro you bastard! Why did you attack us?"

Renjiro snorted and replied, "Good job hiding your killing intent. Unfortunately, I can see your desire to kill us in your eyes."

Renjiro suddenly became angry and shouted, "DO YOU THINK YOU CAN FOOL ME?"

As he shouted, he unleashed his killing intent. Shunji flinched on feeling it! Of course, Renjiro's anger was fake. He only talked so as to provide his students with enough time to prepare for another round of attack.

None of his 3 students missed it. Fujin made hand signs for Air Bullet jutsu and flickered towards Chou and Shunji. Hoka and Mieko too flickered.

Fujin suddenly appeared to their left and shot 5 Air Bullets at Shunji and 2 at Chou. At such a close range, Chou couldn't perform ninjutsu in time to defend. While Shunji was still affected by Renjiro's killing intent.

Chou immediately moved backwards and dragged Shunji with her. She dodged both bullets, but Shunji couldn't dodge 2 of them. One of them pierced his left thigh and the other pierced his right lung.

Not giving them any opportunity to catch their breaths, Hoka appeared behind Chou and took his stance.

'Eight Trigrams : 16 Palms'

He attacked her. At the same time, Mieko flickered in front of them and threw multiple shurikens at Shunji in close range. The other three chunins realized that they were being slow and came forward to attack too.

Chou looked at Hoka with a grim face. He had already managed to hit her once. If he did again, then she would become an easy kill for Renjiro.

She diverted all her attention to him and blocked his palms, not allowing even one to hit her.

However, Shunji, who was injured, couldn't resist much. He got hit by multiple shurikens.

After blocking Hoka, Chou pushed him behind and looked at Shunji. Unfortunately, what she saw didn't bring her any comfort. 5 shurikens were embedded in his body.

Worse, Fujin was just next to him and swinging his sword at his neck. Chou's expression became fierce. She decided, 'You want to kill him? Alright, kill him. But I will skin all three of you!'

She made a hand sign. Hoka and Mieko were about to press on their attack when they saw Fujin's chakra flowing through his sword. They immediately moved backwards.

The three chunins who were running towards them stopped on seeing them retreat. Chou also noticed it. But like the 3 chunins, she assumed that they were retreating due to her preparing a jutsu.

With just one target in front of her, Chou blew hot corrosive steam at both Fujin and Shunji.

'Boil Release : Solid Fog Jutsu'

At the same time, Fujin's sword reached Shunji's neck and cut off his head. Chou watched with anger in her eyes. She wanted Fujin to scream in pain from that jutsu.

However, her eyes widened. After Fujin cut Shunji's head, a flying sword slash formed in the air and rushed towards her. The flying slash was accompanied by winds that dispersed the steam. Chou recognized that it looked like the way Samurais attacked.

She immediately jumped. However, the distance between them was too small. The slash hit her legs slightly above her knees. Both her legs were severed! The winds around the slash created cuts all over her thighs and abdomen!

Chou watched her severed legs with wide eyes! She couldn't believe how easily she got defeated!

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Chapter 124: Overkill

Hoka and Mieko looked into each other's eyes. Though Fujin severed her legs, Chou was still alive. Their competitive spirits rose and both wanted the killing hit. They immediately moved towards Chou.

Mieko attacked with shurikens and kunais with Explosion Tags while Hoka attacked with Vacuum Palm. Fujin noticed both his teammates and attacked too. He swung his sword vertically, sending a flying slash aiming at splitting her in two vertically.

Renjiro, who was looking at his students with pride, was suddenly dumbfounded! He thought in his mind, 'She has already lost her legs. We can capture her and get information from her. Why do you want to kill her so badly?'

The 8 other chunins who were looking were also dumbfounded at how aggressive the 3 kids were. Chou also watched with wide eyes. She may have lost her team and her legs, but she didn't want to die.

She made a few hand signs quickly. She encased herself within the Water Prison jutsu.

Hoka's attack reached first. It pierced into the Water Prison. But Chou moved backwards within the water prison and the attack passed harmlessly through the water prison.

Mieko's attacks hit next. The shurikens were blocked by the water, but the explosion created some disturbances. However, the Water Prison jutsu still held.

Fujin's slash arrived last. It easily cut the water prison in two. However, Chou moved to one side of the water prison to avoid getting hit. The winds accompanying the slash were also dulled by the water.

However, the slash finally dispelled the water prison jutsu. Chou fell on the ground in a bad way. Despite her horrible state, she still got up with the help of her hands. Fujin, Hoka, and Mieko were about to make a move when Renjiro flickered right behind her.

He hit the back of her head and knocked her unconscious. He looked at his students and said, "If you can take them hostage, in a convenient situation, do that. Don't go for the kill just for being competitive!"

That immediately made his students feel embarrassed! They didn't reply and moved forward. The 5 chunins who were hiding also came out as the fight was over.

The 7 chunins who arrived later felt a bit embarrassed as they didn't contribute anything. Most of the work was done by kids less than half their age. Only Hotaka smiled thinking, 'Now they will know how I felt!'

They all observed Chou. She was lying unconscious on her frontside. Her legs were severed. They were bleeding a lot. There were many cuts on her thighs and abdomen. Her clothes were almost non-existent.

Renjiro opened a scroll and summoned a seal from it. He put the seal on Chou's back and made a hand sign. The seal immediately spread on her entire body.

Fujin looked at it and asked, "Is this Chakra Suppression Seal?"

Renjiro nodded and said, "Yes. When she wakes up, she won't be able to access her chakra until I or a Seal Master removes it."

Fujin saw Chou's chakra getting sealed while thinking, 'I thought only Jiraiya made these for Naruto... I guess he just made an advanced one as normal ones might not work on Jinchurikis.'

Renjiro looked at the patrol teams and asked, "Are any of you a medical ninja?"

A ninja stepped forward and said, "Yes, I can use Mystical Palm jutsu."

Renjiro moved aside and said, "Stop her bleeding."

The medical ninja moved forward and used Mystical Palm jutsu on her wounds. Since there were a lot of cuts on her body, he needed quite some time to heal her. After stopping the bleeding, he bandaged her body.

While he was healing her, Mieko asked Renjiro, "Sensei, since we aren't injured, we can undertake the next part of the mission too, right?"

Hoka and Fujin immediately looked at Renjiro. Renjiro nodded and said, "Yes. We will take a rest tomorrow to recover our chakra. Then we will move towards the Land of Hot Water on the day after tomorrow."

Mieko grinned on hearing that. Most Chunins never get to go on a Rank A mission. However, she would have 3 under her belt! Hoka and Fujin smiled as well. Fighting against real ninjas was a lot more fun as compared to bandits.

Renjiro looked at his happy students and said, "For now, store their bodies."

They nodded and stored the bodies of the 3 dead ninjas. After storing, they handed all the scrolls to Renjiro, who stored them all in one single scroll.

After the medical ninja was done healing Chou, Renjiro asked, "How long will she be out?"

The medical ninja thought for a bit and replied, "She has lost a lot of blood. She will be out for at least a few hours."

Renjiro thought for a bit and said, "Alright. Carry her to the command outpost. We will come along with you."

He nodded and lifted Chou and put her on his back.

The 12 Konoha ninjas ran back towards the outpost where they met Akimichi Seiichi. On reaching the outpost, Renjiro looked at one of the chunins and said, "Call Seiichi back here."

The chunin nodded and left.

Renjiro looked at the Medical ninja who was carrying Chou and said, "Restrain her to a chair. And Gag her so that she doesn't try to kill herself by biting her tongue."

The medical ninja nodded and entered the outpost. After a few minutes, Seiichi returned to the outpost as well along with 3 other ninjas.

Seiichi looked at Renjiro thinking, 'Why are they back so quickly?'

He looked at Renjiro and asked, "Did you find any of them?"

Renjiro nodded and replied, "Yes. Both intruding squads have been dealt with. The one with the 6 members is all dead. And we took the commanding jounin from the 2nd squad as a prisoner. The remaining are dead."

Seiichi was shocked on hearing that! An Inuzuka chunin standing behind him blurted in disbelief, "No Way! We have been hunting them for over 2 days and didn't manage to do anything at all! How did you neutralize them in under 2 hours?"

Renjiro and his students glared at the chunin who said that. Realizing his mistake, he quickly said, "Apologies, I didn't mean that."

Renjiro ignored him. Seiichi looked at his subordinate and thought, 'What he said was improper. Except, I was going to say the same thing! I can understand Renjiro annihilating one squad. But how were both neutralized so soon?'

Renjiro smirked noticing his former teammate's expression. He handed him a scroll and said, "It contains the dead bodies of those 9 ninjas. The last one is restrained inside."

Seiichi sighed and took the scroll. He said in a defeated tone, "Even at this age you continue to surprise me."

Renjiro laughed and replied, "Well, in this case, it was mostly my students. Anyways, my students are tired. Can you make sleeping arrangements for them?"

Seiichi nodded and looked at one of his subordinates. The subordinate immediately made sleeping arrangements for the trio. Fujin, Hoka, and Mieko all ate a few ration bars and fell asleep. They had rushed a long distance and fought 2 battles on the same day!

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Chapter 125: Exploring the Patrol Outpost

While his students went to sleep, Renjiro decided to catch up with his old friend. He and Seiichi chatted for a long while recalling their old memories and sharing their new ones.

After chatting, Renjiro made a report and attached it to a messenger Hawk. The Hawk flew towards Konoha.

After a long sleep, the trio woke up. They freshened up and met up with Renjiro who was having breakfast with Seiichi.

Seiichi looked at them and said, "Come join in."

Having learnt a lot about them from Renjiro, Seiichi had a much better impression of them. The trio didn't engage in any formalities and joined them.

However, on seeing the food on the table, all three had the same thought, 'How the heck is this a breakfast!' The entire table was filled with roasted meat.

Fujin grabbed one slice and ate it. His expression immediately changed, 'Fuck! This is so good!'

He ignored everyone and began eating rapidly!

Hoka and Mieko looked at Fujin and grabbed a bite too. They too began eating quickly but paid attention to their manners.

Seiichi laughed lightly on seeing them all eat quickly and said, "No need to hurry. The food isn't going to run away."

All three nodded. Seiichi smiled on seeing them nod obediently. However, soon he was speechless. All three kids ignored his advice and kept eating at the same speed. Renjiro chuckled at Seiichi's reaction.

Fujin meanwhile thought, 'An Akimichi saying the food won't run away... As if anyone would believe that.'

After eating, Fujin asked, "What do we do today, Sensei?"

Renjiro replied, "Just rest. Take a tour of the patrol outposts and go on patrols if you get bored. It'll be helpful if in the future you get posted for patrol duties. Don't waste your chakra though. We need to leave tomorrow morning."

Fujin replied, "Oh, alright Sensei."

He thought, 'I never thought about the ninjas who are out for patrol. I wonder how many ninjas are deployed like this.'

After thinking a bit, he concluded, 'Probably not a lot considering the vast number of bandits in this country. The job seems boring, though it could be a good way to explore this country.'

Seiichi called for Hotaka, who arrived soon. He said, "Since you guys fought together yesterday, I'll leave you guys under his care. Hotaka, show them the outpost and how patrol teams work."

Hotaka replied, "Sure Seiichi-sama."

He looked at the trio and said, "Come with me."

Fujin, Mieko, and Hoka followed him.

As Hotaka showed them around, Hiruzen read the report sent by Renjiro. A worry formed on his face as he analyzed, 'The Civil war inside Kiri is spilling into other countries. There might be more such incidents in the future. I should deploy some Anbu squads along the coastline.'

He looked at an Anbu ninja hiding in his office. Realizing that the Hokage needed him, he appeared in front of Hiruzen. Hiruzen commanded, "Call Hound and his Anbu squad."

The Anbu ninja nodded and flickered.

Hotaka led the trio around the patrol outpost. He said, "This is the command outpost for Konoha's eastern borders. This is why it is so big and well-maintained. There are many smaller outposts all over the country. But they only have the basic facilities."

Fujin thought, 'No wonder. This outpost is big. I only expected there to be one house at max.'

Hotaka showed them around the important locations in the outpost and introduced them to some of his friends. In the end, they climbed on a watchtower.

On reaching the top, the trio admired the scenery around them. The houses in the outpost were arranged symmetrically. And it was surrounded by lush green forests. To add to it, the Sun had just begun rising. So rays of sunlight traveled right above the trees.

Fujin, Mieko, and Hoka felt incredible calmness on seeing this sight. Fujin thought, 'What a sight! Perhaps, after the whole Kaguya mess is over, I should tour this world. I wonder what exists in this world apart from the hidden villages.'

Seeing the three kids lost in the scenery, Hotaka smiled and didn't say anything.

After some time, they stopped looking at it. Mieko said, "I didn't think we would get to see such a beautiful sight in a Patrol outpost."

Hoka added, "Yeah, this feels wonderful."

Fujin nodded.

Hotaka laughed and said, "Such sceneries are the main reason why most here have taken patrolling tasks. Beautiful scenery, freedom from daily worries at home and lax responsibilities are the plus points of this job. Situations like yesterday are rare in peacetime. Usually, we just go on routine patrols without finding any disturbances."

Fujin looked at Hotaka and wondered, 'So how did so many ninja cross into the Land of Fire during our last mission? Did the patrol teams just do a terrible job or were some of them bribed? Hmm, there is another possibility. Did Konoha purposefully let them in so that they could be annihilated without any opportunity to run?'

Hoka asked Hotaka, "Can you take us to patrol?"

Hoka wanted to know as many of his seniors and elders from the Hyuga clan often undertook Patrol missions.

Hotaka nodded, "Sure. Let's go."

He jumped off the watchtower. Hoka, Mieko and Fujin followed him. They left the outpost and entered the forests. And ran on tree branches at moderate speeds.

Hotaka said, "I am just taking you on a random patrolling mission. Usually, all Patrol teams have set routes that they have to patrol daily. And there are a few teams that patrol randomly to guard against someone who might know our patrol routes and uses that to avoid us."

Hoka said, "That's smart. That will make hiding very difficult!"

Hotaka nodded and added, "In addition, every Patrol team has one ninja from Inuzuka, Hyuga, or Aburame clans. So our range is much larger and any intruder has to consider all aspects if they want to hide from us."

The trio nodded. They were aware of the specialities of each clan. Hotaka took them on a 2-hour long patrol. Fujin and Hoka used their abilities to help Hotaka on the patrol mission. But they didn't find anything out of the ordinary. They returned back to the outpost.

Not having anything to do, they spent their remaining day meditating. During lunch and breakfast, they interacted with others in the outpost.

In the evening, an Anbu squad entered the outpost! They entered the main building. Renjiro and Seiichi were playing shogi. They both turned to see 4 Anbu ninjas.

The leader of the 4 had silver hair and wore a Kitsune mask. Both realized who the Anbu captain was.

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Chapter 126: Interrogation

Kakashi looked at the two Jounins and stepped forward. He handed them a letter and said, "The Hokage has assigned us the mission to escort the prisoner and carry the dead bodies back to Konoha."

Renjiro and Seiichi nodded. Renjiro took out a scroll and handed it to Kakashi and said, "The bodies of the 9 dead ones are in this scroll."

Kakashi took the scroll and stored it properly. Seiichi got up and said, "Follow me. I'll take you to the prisoner."

Kakashi and his squad followed Seiichi and Renjiro. They entered a small room. At the center of this room was a chair. A woman was sitting in it. Her arms were tied to the arms of the chair. Her legs were missing. A gag was stuffed in her mouth. Her head had dropped down.

She was being watched by 2 chunins. One of them was a medical ninja.

Renjiro said, "We investigated her a bit. Her name is Chou and she is a Jounin from the Sakai clan. She can use the boil release."

Seiichi added, "We injected her with anesthesia, but her body is very resistant to it. She wakes up after 2 hours and has to be injected again."

Kakashi nodded and said, "That won't be an issue. Can you wake her up?"

The medical ninja stepped forward and began waking up.

He looked at one of his squad members and said, "Ferret, put her to sleep."

After some time, Chou woke up. She looked at Renjiro and the Anbu ninjas. A terrified look appeared in her eyes. Itachi, who was the Anbu with the codename Ferret, stepped in front of her and looked into her eyes.

Chou looked at the Anbu in front of her as his eyes turned red. Itachi cast a Genjutsu on her, making her fall into a deep sleep.

Itachi stepped back and said, "It's done. She won't wake up for a day."

Kakashi nodded. He looked at Renjiro and said, "We will be taking her. Thank You for completing the mission. There are further orders from Lord Hokage. Her capture shouldn't be talked about."

Discuss with everyone who knows that she has been captured and tell them to not talk about it to anyone. If they have already spoken to others or anyone knows about her capture, then chat with them as well and impose a gagging order. Lord Hokage has said that this is very important."

Seiichi replied, "My men haven't met with anyone else. But, probably, everyone in the outpost knows about her. I will talk with them and impose a gagging order about this."

Kakashi nodded and said, "Thank You."

One of Kakashi's Anbu subordinates untied Chou and carried her. Kakashi and his squad took their leave and left for Konoha.

Fujin and his teammates would remain ignorant about the terrible fate awaiting the Jounin captured by them. They slept peacefully as Chou was carried to Konoha.

They woke up early the next morning and assembled with Renjiro. Seiichi got up early as well to bid farewell to them. He said, "See you later Renjiro. Stop by here while returning to Konoha."

Renjiro nodded, "Sure. We could use a good sleep."

Seiichi looked at the kids and smiled, "Take care all of you. Come back safely."

Mieko replied, "Don't worry, we will complete the mission in no time."

Fujin nodded and added, "Just make that roasted meat again when we are back!"

Seiichi sweatdropped thinking, 'These three ate half my share yesterday!'

He smiled and said, "I'll be sure to hunt some wild beasts for you guys."

They said goodbyes and left for the Land of Hot Water.

While Team Renjiro was headed to the Land of Hot Water, Kakashi and his squad returned to Konoha. They imprisoned her in the T&I department. Ibiki waited with them in the prison.

Understanding the importance, Hiruzen himself showed up. Seeing Hiruzen, all four Anbu respectfully greeted him, "Lord Hokage."

Hiruzen nodded and looked at Chou. He looked at Itachi and said, "Wake her up from the Genjutsu and place her under a new one. I want to interrogate her."

At that time, another person entered the prison. He was an old man. His right arm was concealed within and hanging inside his black robe. His right eye was bandaged.

Hiruzen looked at him and asked, "Danzo, why are you here?"

Danzo looked at Chou and said, "I heard about taking a prisoner from Kiri. Continue your interrogation, I will discuss it with you later."

Hiruzen nodded and looked at Itachi. Itachi stepped forward and dispelled the genjutsu. Chou woke up and looked up. However, Itachi put her in another Genjutsu. After she fell into the Genjutsu, Itachi removed the gag stuffed in her mouth.

He looked at Hiruzen and said, "You can ask her questions, Lord Hokage."

Hiruzen looked at Ibiki and said, "Ask her about why they entered the Land of Fire."

Ibiki nodded and asked Chou, "Why did your squad enter the Land of Fire?"

Chou answered, "My team was on a mission in the Land of Water. Unfortunately, we were discovered by a squad from Mizukage's faction. They chased us relentlessly. We clashed a few times and were injured. The chase brought us close to the Land of Fire and we entered it hoping to find a good hiding place till they left us. I didn't think they would chase us inside the Land of Fire as well."

Ibiki noted what she said. He asked, "What was your mission?"

Chou answered, "We got information that the Karatachi family had documents and maps that showed where all the ninjas in the Mizukage faction were deployed. Since the family head of Karatachi was in a battle, we got a mission to steal those documents."

The mission parameters surprised everyone in the room. Danzo immediately wanted to get his hands on those documents.

Ibiki asked, "Did you complete the mission?"

Chou answered, "Yes, we stole the documents successfully."

Ibiki asked, "Where are those documents?"

Chou answered, "Since we were being chased, we hid them in a secure location in the Land of Water."

Ibiki asked, "Will anyone be collecting those documents?"

Chou answered, "There is one ninja who checks that spot frequently. By now, it would have been collected and reached the hands of the Sakai clan patriarch."

Ibiki asked her where the secure location was and noted it down.

Ibiki asked, "Did you see the locations where the forces of the Mizukage faction are located?"

Chou answered, "No."

After asking, he looked at Hiruzen. Hiruzen said, "Ask her about the situation of the Sakai clan, other bloodline clans and the current state of the conflict. Also, ask her about their current hideouts and where the clans are located."

Danzo added, "Also ask her if they have hidden some family members in safe locations."

Ibiki nodded and began questioning. He ended up questioning Chou for over three hours. Konoha got information about the locations of bloodline clans, locations of some of their secret hideouts, the number of ninjas they had, the losses they faced, the losses they inflicted upon the Mizukage faction, skills and weaknesses of their strongest fighters and some other miscellaneous information.

While the information she provided wasn't complete, she ended up providing a lot of valuable information to Konoha. The rebel faction of Kirigakure would have never imagined that their mission to steal information from the Mizukage faction would result in their secrets getting exposed to Konoha!

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Chapter 127: Horrible Fate!

After getting all the information, Chou was restrained again. Hiruzen looked at the Anbu squad and Ibiki and said, "Good work. Don't tell anyone about her being taken as captive to anyone."

They nodded and left the prison. While leaving, Itachi's face was grim. Though no one noticed it under his mask. Or rather, no one apart from Hiruzen and Danzo, who observed him carefully.

Understanding the disastrous consequences of civil war made him realize the catastrophe that would fall on Konoha if the Uchiha clan were to rebel. It planted a seed to avoid a civil war at all costs inside his heart!

As he left, both Hiruzen and Danzo exchanged eye contact. Danzo understood why Hokage had assigned the squad Itachi was in on this mission. They didn't speak about Itachi as no words needed to be spoken.

Danzo looked at Hiruzen and said, "She provided a lot of information. We need to cross-check with the information provided by our spies to confirm that there were no traps hidden in the information."

Hiruzen nodded and replied, "Send a Root ninja who has the information to my office. I will have him cross-check our information with an Anbu ninja."

Danzo nodded. He looked at Hiruzen, who seemed to be in thought. Danzo asked, "What are you thinking about?"

Hiruzen looked at him and replied, "Do you remember the proposal that we received from the rebel faction before the Chunin exams?"

Danzo nodded.

Hiruzen continued, "I thought it was weird that the Terumi clan patriarch reached out to us. Now, it seems like it was the idea of Terumi Mei. She has the bloodline of both, Terumi as well as Sakai clans, and is able to use two Kekkei Genkai! Looks like she will be the next leader in Kiri."

Danzo replied, "Yes, it was likely her. Two Kekkei Genkai in the same person isn't threatening if they don't train well. But her leadership skills and charisma are good as well. She might become a threat. We should eliminate her."

Hiruzen shook his head and replied, "The Fourth Mizukage is a perfect Jinchuriki. He will be difficult to defeat. Let them exhaust each others' potential. Konoha doesn't need to involve itself and suffer any losses. After the civil war ends, we will talk with the winner."

Danzo wanted to argue, but Hiruzen had made a good point. With the losses Kiri had taken due to the civil war, Kiri would be in no position to participate in a war for over a decade at least.

Hiruzen looked at Danzo and felt something odd. Knowing Danzo, he predicted that he would have started a debate there. He asked, "Why are you here? It wouldn't be just for the information, right?"

Danzo looked at Chou and said, "I want Sakai Chou."

Hiruzen looked at Danzo in confusion. However, in less than a second, his eyes widened.

He declined, "No."

However, this time Danzo would not relent. This was the true reason why he visited the prison. He said, "Hiruzen, there are only 2 clans that have Kekkei Genkai in Konoha. And one of them is about to rebel."

With the Senju being unable to produce any Wood Kekkei Genkai ninja, we need to recruit other Kekkei Genkai into our village. And they have to be loyal to Konoha.

If we don't strengthen ourselves, then every time we have a weak moment, an incident similar to the Hyuga incident will keep repeating. Now that our forces are getting stabilized, we need to do everything to make ourselves stronger."

Danzo's argument struck a chord in Hiruzen's heart. The Hyuga incident hurt him a lot. The weak state of Konoha had made him indecisive and reluctant. And that cost Konoha an innocent life.

Danzo didn't speak anymore. He knew Hiruzen very well. Hiruzen thought for a few minutes and said, "If the other villages were to realize, they might attack Konoha together."

Danzo scoffed and replied, "In every war, we keep getting attacked by all four villages. So it doesn't make a difference. Also, I will induct the kids into the Root. So they won't be exposed to the world. Even inside Konoha, no one will know their origin."

Besides, awakening Kekkei Genkai is difficult. Very few awaken it. If someone awakens, we will expose the first one who awakens and say that he created the Kekkei Genkai by combining Fire and Water natures. If anyone awakens it after him, we will hide that person inside the Root."

If Fujin was to hear this conversation, he'd be shocked. After all, he thought that a Kekkei Genkai can only be inherited through the bloodline. Without it, there was no way to be able to use a Kekkei Genkai. After all, even talented ninjas who had mastered all elements like Hiruzen and Kakashi never learnt any Kekkei Genkai.

Hiruzen sighed. He thought, 'He has done thorough preparation. I don't think I can win this debate. So, what to do?'

He thought for a bit and finally looked at Sakai Chou. He sighed, 'She is already a waste. If we release her, she will hate Konoha with all her heart and use all her influence to make her clan take an anti-Konoha stance. If the bloodline clans win, our relationship will be sour.'

Looking at Hiruzen, Danzo understood what he was thinking. He said, "The way ahead will be to deny meeting the squad from the rebel faction. We will deny knowing their existence. Remove their mentions from the reports. If the bloodline faction wins in Kiri and asks us about it, we will feign ignorance and push the blame on the Mizukage faction.

Since the squad from the Mizukage faction died at the hands of Konoha ninjas, we can even claim that we took revenge for the bloodline faction. So we will be able to use this incident to better our relations. However, for that to happen, she needs to disappear."

Hiruzen sighed again and agreed, "Alright. But ensure that no information about her leaks out. And all the progress has to be reported to me in secret."

Danzo nodded. He was about to leave when he had a thought. He stopped and asked, "Hiruzen, which team was assigned this mission? They were very thorough!"

Danzo had rushed here in a hurry. So he wasn't aware which squad had undertaken this mission.

Hiruzen answered, "It was Senju Renjiro and his students."

Danzo's left eye widened. But it returned to normal quickly. He said, "They are efficient. I want to induct them into the Root."

Hiruzen raised his left eyebrow and looked at Danzo. However, he couldn't figure out anything from his poker face. Hiruzen replied, "One of his students is a Hyuga. They are not suitable for the Root. Another is an Uchiha who is arrogant even by their standards. Good luck convincing her into joining the Root."

Danzo scoffed in displeasure. However, that was an act. He was interested in the Wind user.

While speaking, Hiruzen realized that Danzo's target should be Fujin. The others were just spoken as a distraction.

Hiruzen continued, "The third one is a civilian orphan. He could have been inducted into the Root. Fortunately or unfortunately, it's too late."

Danzo, who was hopeful about getting Fujin, felt like Hiruzen had played with him. He asked, "Why is it late? He isn't even a teenager yet. While it's true that the Root mostly inducts 5-6 years old kids, we can still recruit older ones."

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "That boy is too headstrong. He wouldn't agree to have any seal put on him. He won't be a good match for the Root. Besides, I already have plans for him."

Danzo raised his left eyebrow and asked, "What plans?"

Hiruzen smirked and answered, "I will be inducting him into the Anbu and training him to be a negotiator for Konoha."

Danzo had a lot of thoughts about what Hiruzen might say. However, this one left him dumbfounded!

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Chapter 128: Dodged a Bullet

Danzo stared at Hiruzen. After half a minute, he said, "Hiruzen, the role of negotiator is for senior members in the village. Experience is important. What do you mean by sending someone who hasn't even entered his teens to represent Konoha during negotiations?"

Hiruzen chuckled and replied, "Our current negotiators are either too soft or too strict. While we do find a middle ground, we usually get the short end of the stick."

Danzo scoffed and accused, "It's your fault for being so soft. Don't accuse the rest of us."

Hiruzen shook his head and replied, "And your methods are way too harsh. We would be at war all the time if your ideas are followed. And of course, I won't send someone inexperienced to do the final negotiations for us.

He will be among the 1st round of negotiators. And his task will be to annoy them just enough that the negotiations still stay on the table and we will have an advantage when we negotiate later."

Danzo was surprised by Hiruzen's words and confidence. He wondered, 'What exactly did Hiruzen see in that boy?'

Hiruzen looked at Danzo and thought, 'On second thought, the prospect of sending Fujin to the Root would be hilarious. Danzo tends to make promises while recruiting. If Fujin does enter the Root, I wonder how often he will ask Danzo for a new jutsu.'

Danzo was about to say something, when Hiruzen interrupted, "Leave it. He is off the table. His talent would be wasted in the Root."

Seeing Hiruzen being stubborn, Danzo nodded and left. If Fujin was to learn about this conversation, he would sigh in relief and comment, 'Phew! Barely dodged the bullet!'

That said, even without Hiruzen denying it, Fujin wouldn't have entered the Root. While Danzo led the Root and was very influential, he couldn't force anyone to join. He resorted to patriotism, offering rewards, blackmailing with closed ones, or lying in order to recruit existing ninjas to the Root. However, neither of these 4 tactics would have worked on Fujin.

While leaving, Danzo thought, 'That didn't go as expected. I didn't expect Hiruzen to be so stubborn about an orphan. Doesn't matter. I was only slightly interested in him due to his potential in Wind nature manipulation. There's no point in wasting more effort on him.'

Danzo left and didn't think about Fujin again. Years later, he would hear about Fujin's exploits in the battlefields. In one such battle, Fujin's fame would explode throughout the ninja world. That battle would make Danzo regret not trying hard enough to recruit him. And the biggest regret would be when he dies by the hands of the orphan he attached no importance to!

Team Renjiro ran at full speed for around 7 hours. The borders of the Land of Hot Water were close to where the hideout was. While the Hot Spring Hidden Village was quite far away, the town that they were headed to was in the southern part of the Land of Hot Water. Hence, it was much closer to them.

After 7 hours, they entered Niigata town. On entering, Fujin commented, "We entered into another country and then into their 2nd biggest town and still haven't encountered even 1 ninja! Do they not have ninjas? Or are they too lazy to patrol?"

Renjiro chuckled and answered, "Only the 5 big hidden villages maintain frequent patrols. Even among the 5 big villages, Kiri and Suna don't do regular patrols due to the harsh terrain. In smaller villages, only the VIPs have good protection. If common people are in danger, then they issue missions to villages like ours."

Fujin thought for a bit. He put up a sad face and said, "I see. But in that case, the lives of the common people here are very vulnerable. They have no protection. Any rogue ninja can kill them and run away. If he hides well, then they won't even get justice."

Renjiro looked at Fujin for a few seconds. He sighed and replied, "Unfortunately, that is the world we live in. There is nothing we can do."

Fujin showed a sad face and didn't reply. Renjiro thought, 'Though he is greedy, Fujin has a good heart.'

At the same time, Fujin thought, 'I don't think I can get any more jutsus from Renjiro. But improving my image even more would be beneficial. It might be of help if I need something from Tsunade in the future. She is of the same clan after all.'

Mieko and Hoka watched Fujin and Renjiro. They began thinking about the sad state of affairs in the smaller villages as well.

They began walking towards the center of the town. Renjiro said, "Well, no need to be entirely down. Though there isn't much protection, the major towns have a garrison. Perhaps, every town might have a garrison in the future. That would provide a good degree of protection to them."

Fujin nodded and said, "Yeah, that could be a good start."

They reached the center of the town. A mansion stood there. On seeing them, a watchman immediately invited them in while his partner ran inside to inform someone.

The Watchman said, "Welcome. Tokuhei-sama has been expecting you."

Renjiro nodded and followed him inside the mansion.

On entering, a large man appeared in front of them! He was 7 feet 5 inches in height and was very fat. Seeing him, the same thought ran through the minds of Fujin, Mieko, and Hoka, 'Did an Akimichi migrate here? He is huge even by their standards!'

Behind him, four more people were standing.

Takeshita Tokuhei smiled and said, "Senju Renjiro, I have heard a lot about you."

Renjiro smiled and replied, "Takeshita Tokuhei, I have heard about you too."

Tokuhei said, "We were expecting you to arrive a bit sooner."

Renjiro replied, "We had some troubles too. So we were delayed."

Tokuhei nodded and looked at the kids behind Renjiro. He frowned and thought, 'The mission didn't mention any strict timelines. So I can't bug him more about it. But the mission focused more on the strength of the ninjas. Renjiro is strong, but why did they send kids?'

Renjiro looked at him and understood what he was thinking. But he didn't comment. Explaining the strength of the ninjas who undertook the mission wasn't a requirement. Completing the mission was all that mattered.

Tokuhei knew that Renjiro understood his frown. But since he didn't provide any explanation, he decided to drop it while thinking, 'My own squad should be enough to kill those rogue ninjas.'

Unfortunately, the Daimyo was worried about any losses we might suffer and hence issued a mission to Konoha. If they are weak, they will die.'

Renjiro asked, "What are the details of those rogue ninjas? Also, where are they currently at?"

Tokuhei looked at a subordinate. Takeshita Shunso stepped forward. He said, "Until now, we have detected 13 rogue ninjas. We have calculated that there are 2 more. All of them are ninjas from the land of water. Among the 13 ninjas, there are 3 Jounins and 10 Chunins.

Their leader is Kubota Mitsuzuka. He is a veteran Jounin. The others under his command are experienced too. Some of them are ninjas who were assigned under him in the Third Great Ninja War.

We haven't found their base. But looking at their movements, we have calculated their base to be near the coastline towards the South-East direction."

Renjiro analyzed the information and said, "Good work. We won't have to waste time to find them."

Tokuhei said, "Renjiro, while we do know their approximate location, we don't know their exact location."

Renjiro replied, "Don't worry. Leave that to us. We will take a break today. Tomorrow, at 4 AM, we will leave. Have your team be prepared."

Tokuhei wanted to leave immediately. But he understood that they had traveled a long distance. He nodded and said, "Alright. Shunso, arrange for their resting area."

Shunso led them to the arranged rooms. After he left, Fujin, Mieko, and Hoka stared at Renjiro. They wanted answers.

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Chapter 129: Joint Mission

Renjiro looked at his students' faces and chuckled.

Mieko was annoyed. She asked, "Why are they coming with us too?"

Renjiro answered, "It's a joint mission. You didn't expect to take on more than a dozen ninjas with just us four, did you?"

A scowl formed on Mieko's face. Hoka sighed and said, "It would have been fun to fight them ourselves."

Fujin said, "Apart from that big guy who has a lot of chakra, the others don't seem that strong. So we should be getting more opportunities to fight than you think."

Hoka smiled and said, "That's more like it!"

Renjiro was speechless at his students once again. He thought, 'Did they just hope that their allies fail in completing the mission just so that they get to fight more?'

He let out a cough to attract their attention and said, "Take a rest for the day. You need to be in top condition tomorrow morning."

The trio nodded. Fujin asked, "Sensei, when you take the rank S missions, do you perform them alone or do you go with a team?"

Renjiro was surprised by the question. He answered, "Depends on the mission. For example, in missions like these that include elimination, I have a team. We need members to find them and to ensure that none of them run away."

Fujin heard the reply and thought, 'That makes sense. I guess the solo missions could contain protecting someone secretly or an assassination mission.'

He looked at Renjiro and asked, "Sensei, do you have information regarding Tokuhei and Mitsuzuka?"

Renjiro answered, "I checked Tokuhei's information before taking this mission. He is a veteran Jounin and was one of the commanders of the Village Hidden in Hot Springs in the previous war.

But there isn't much of a record of him fighting. His job was to ensure that they don't get caught in between our and Kumo's clashes. Apart from that, he is known for his Earth Release and high physical strength.

As for Mitsuzuka, he specializes in Water Release like most Kiri ninjas. And he is quick on his feet. I fought him a couple of times in the previous war."

Renjiro looked at Fujin and chuckled, "His fighting style is actually quite similar to yours. Though he knows a few rank A jutsus, he prefers to indulge in hit-and-run tactics and fights from a long range."

Mieko and Hoka's faces scowled on hearing that. Both snorted and looked at Fujin. Fujin wondered, "Oh, I wonder how I would fare against him!"

Mieko and Hoka were about to protest. They didn't want Fujin to fight the enemy leader while they dealt with scrubs. However, Renjiro spoke first.

Renjiro's face got serious as he spoke, "He will be my target. I am confident that I can win against him, but you three need to stay on guard. If he manages to slip a water clone away, he will attack you in the back when you are in midst of battle. So keep your guard up all the time."

The three recognized the seriousness in Renjiro's voice. They nodded their heads immediately.

Renjiro added, "Just like the last fight, there won't be any weaklings among them. And unlike last time, we won't have the advantage of being in home territory. Also, don't chase them if they manage to escape into the sea. Neither of you three is trained in how to fight a battle in the sea."

They agreed. The Kiri ninjas had fought in seas all their life. While they could fight on water, they would be at a disadvantage against Kiri ninjas. Especially as only Hoka had some affinity to the Water element.

The trio asked for more information from Renjiro. Renjiro provided the information he knew as well as warned them about several things they should pay attention to. They also decided on some strategies to follow during the mission. After discussing, they spent the rest of the day doing light warm-ups and meditation.

While Team Renjiro was discussing, Tokuhei and his subordinates were discussing as well. While Shunso was showing Team Renjiro the rooms, Tokuhei's subordinates began expressing their displeasure.

Seo Shusaku said, "We asked Konoha for strong reinforcements. Why did they send little brats?"

Etsuko Nakamura added, "Yes. These brats could get in our way when we fight. If they let their opponents getaway, we could end up getting ambushed. Tokuhei-sama, we need to consider this joint mission carefully!"

Tokuhei heard them. He began analyzing the actions of Konoha. Seeing that he was lost in thoughts, Nakamura called him out again, "Tokuhei-sama?"

Tokuhei looked at him. He replied, "Let's not jump to conclusions. Konoha has an excellent track record of completing missions. So they might have some plans for sending those kids."

His subordinates gave him a weird look. Shusaku said, "Do you really think that those kids will be any useful?"

Tokuhei shrugged his hands. He answered, "If they weren't, why would Konoha send them? And Renjiro wasn't bothered when I looked at them skeptically.

Besides, we wanted to complete this mission on our own anyways. So their strength doesn't matter much. In fact, if we perform far better than Konoha's squad, then I can persuade the Daimyo to increase funding to build a proper ninja force in our country. If we manage to do that, then we won't have to depend on Konoha."

The eyes of his subordinates widened! Shusaku said, "That's a great plan Tokuhei-sama!"

Tokuhei nodded and said, "So give your all to this mission. As long as we outperform Renjiro's squad, we will be able to get some benefits from the Daimyo."

They waited for Shunso to return. When he did, they discussed their strategy and tactics for the next day.

The next day, at 3:45 AM, Renjiro's and Tokuhei's squads gathered in the mansion. Fujin, Hoka, and Mieko observed Tokuhei's squad. In addition to the four they saw the day before, there were 3 more chunin level ninjas in his squad!

Along with their own squad, they now had 12 ninjas! Fujin observed them and thought, 'As long as we manage to kill a few Kiri ninjas in the initial sneak attack, we should outnumber them. So this might be an easy mission as well.'

Tokuhei looked at Renjiro and smiled. He asked, "Renjiro, did you guys rest well?"

Renjiro nodded and replied, "We did. Are you guys prepared?"

Tokuhei nodded.

Renjiro looked at Shunso and asked, "Have you marked the locations on the map?"

Shunso nodded and laid a map on the floor.

Everyone observed the map carefully. The towns and villages in the Land of Hot Water were marked on the map. And a location was marked on the Southeastern coastline.

Shunso pointed at the map saying, "This is our current location. According to what we have calculated, their base is around here. Which is around 40 kilometers from our location."

Renjiro nodded. He looked at the map once again and then said, "Alright, let's move. We will hit them before the Sun rises."

Some of Tokuhei's subordinates frowned upon hearing that. Shusaku said, "I have something to say."

Renjiro looked at him.

Tokuhei said, "Go ahead."

Shusaku said, "Though we have calculated their current location, we still have to be careful about any traps they may have set up. So we need to proceed slowly and carefully. It would be preferable to attack when the sun rises."

Renjiro shook his head and replied, "Don't worry about the traps. We will take care of them. Let's move."

Without waiting for their reply, Renjiro turned around and began leaving the mansion. His students followed him while secretly laughing. Shusaku was mad at having his suggestion dismissed so lightly. However, Tokuhei looked at him and shook his head. Soon, they too followed Renjiro.

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 130: Pre-Dawn Raid!

The entire group exited the town of Niigata stealthily. Even if those rogue Kiri ninjas had any spies in the town, they wouldn't notice them leaving.

After leaving, they traveled at a fast speed. They cover the initial 30 kilometers very quickly. The Yugakure ninjas, who were looking down on the kids, had solemn faces. They were finding it difficult to keep up with them. It was a big blow to their pride.

Renjiro looked at their expressions and chuckled. In his experiences, it was always better for actions to do the talking than explaining with words.

They traveled the last 10 kilometers with caution. Hoka and Mieko used their Doujutsus to check for traps and enemies. Fujin didn't use his chakra field. If the enemy had any sensor, then they would sense Fujin's chakra field and give away their surprise factor. Hoka's Byakugan had no such disadvantage.

They reached close to 1 kilometer of the calculated spot, when Hoka said, "Stop!"

Everyone stopped and looked at him. Hoka moved towards the left as others followed him. After traveling about 100 meters, he stopped. Others stopped behind him. The area in front of Hoka was dyed red in blood!

Shunso asked, "Did they have a fight here?"

Tokuhei bent down and picked up a long hair from the blood. He observed it and said, "Unlikely. They were probably just hunting wild animals. Looks like they got a bear."

Fujin observed Tokuhei and thought, 'He's able to guess an animal just from a hair that is dyed in blood?'

Mieko activated her Sharingan and observed the surroundings. After some time, she said, "Found a trail!"

Renjiro said, "Good work. Take the lead. Also, keep an eye out for traps. Hoka, you keep an eye on traps too. And keep an eye for their base as well. Everyone else, don't make unnecessary noise or movements."

Everyone nodded. Tokuhei commented, "It's very handy to have both the Byakugan and Sharingan in the same squad."

Renjiro nodded. They proceeded ahead carefully.

Mieko's Sharingan observed every detail of the surroundings carefully. She picked up the slightest clues. She observed their trail perfectly. Surprisingly, they didn't encounter any traps.

As they kept walking, they left the forest and entered the beach! Mieko frowned. She said, "The trail leads into the sea!"

Renjiro and Tokuhei both frowned. If the base of the rogue Kiri nins was in the sea, then fighting them would get very tricky.

Shunso spoke, "I don't think that their base would be out in the sea. The nearest island from here is around 32 kilometers away. Traveling from that base would be very time-consuming."

Everyone looked at Shunso as he spoke. Shunso continued, "So either their base is nearby or every one of them is a strong Jounin who can travel at twice the speeds of a chunin!"

Tokuhei immediately shook his head, "There's no way that they are all Jounins. Kiri would be shaken if that many Jounins go rogue."

Renjiro said, "There are two possibilities. One is that they have a temporary base here and a permanent one on an island. Or, they just travel on shallow waters instead of moving through the forest to prevent any trail."

Tokuhei nodded and said, "Yes. I believe the 2nd one will be the case. They are rogue ninjas after all. They will be afraid of being hunted down."

Renjiro nodded. He too believed the same. He said, "Let's go back to the trees. We will move along the coast while Hoka checks for any possible bases."

Tokuhei agreed as he thought, 'The Hyuga can look up to 1000 meters. From the edge of the forest, he will be able to check for hundreds of meters into the sea. If their base is truly not here, then we will have no choice but to set up an ambush and wait for them.'

The group went back into the forest. Seeing their initial trail, the group decided to go in the same direction. After moving for slightly over a kilometer, Hoka stopped.

He said, "Found them! They are staying inside a cave on a hill about a kilometer ahead."

Shunso grinned, "They think that they are very smart."

Fujin wondered, 'If they are hiding in a cave, will Renjiro try to kill them all?'

Hoka said, "There are two ninjas guarding the entrance to the cave."

Renjiro said, "Keep moving ahead. I'll kill them both. Fujin, don't attack."

Fujin nodded while thinking, 'My Wind Vacuum Bullet is good for assassinating. But once it hits, it will alert even a sleeping person due to the trail of destruction it leaves.'

As they moved ahead, Hoka said, "Other than the 2 guards, there are 14 more Ninjas inside. 3 seem to be at the Jounin level. Rest are at the Chunin level. They are all sleeping."

Renjiro said, "Don't check on them anymore."

Hoka didn't understand. He was about to look away from them when he suddenly noticed one of them getting up suddenly. He said, "One of the Jounin level ninjas just woke up."

Renjiro frowned. He said, "Some ninjas instinctively feel when someone looks at them. Though they can't sense the Byakugan, they can feel that something is wrong. Keep that in mind."

After saying that, he suddenly flickered ahead! Instantly, Hoka, Fujin and Mieko also flickered. The Yugakure ninjas, who were alongside them, were dumbfounded!

Shusaku exclaimed, "What the fuck?"

A scowl formed on Tokuhei's face. He said, "Keep up."

He made a few hand signs and flickered as well. Others soon followed him.

Inside the cave, Kubota Mitsuzuka was sleeping. However, when Hoka observed him, his eyes suddenly opened up. He immediately got up and checked his surroundings.

On seeing that no one was around, he thought, 'What the fuck? I swear that someone was fucking looking at me!'

Thoughts ran inside his mind at the speed of light! He immediately came to the conclusion, 'Fucking Hyuga! Those cowards should have issued a mission to Konoha!'

He got up and gathered Chakra on his right foot and stamped his foot on the ground. A wave passed through the ground. It was harmless, but everyone inside the cave felt it. All the 13 rogue ninjas woke up.

Mitsuzuka flickered towards one of the two Jounins. On arriving, he shouted, "Fumimaro! Quickly check our surroundings!"

At the same time, the other rogue ninjas also began arriving at their location.

Kabota Mitsuzuka moved very rapidly. However, there was someone who moved even faster!

Renjiro flickered thrice in quick succession and reached just around 150 meters from the guards. On reaching here, he noticed that there were a few traps set close to the cave. However, he didn't pay any attention to them. He stepped on the ground and disappeared inside it.

A second later, eight earth spears formed under the two unsuspecting guards and pierced them! The guards were shocked! However, even before they could let out a scream, Renjiro appeared from the ground and beheaded them in one smooth action.

As soon as he beheaded them, Hoka, Mieke and Fujin appeared behind him. While they were running, Hoka noticed the traps. Mieke took the lead to avoid them and the other two followed her.

On reaching, they noticed the cave. It was a small hill that was as tall as a 3-storey building. There was a giant cave mouth at the bottom which split into a few paths. This hill was around 200 meters from the beach. The rogue ninjas chose this spot so that they won't be visible to anyone who scouts for them from the sea, but still be close to the sea if they needed to escape.

As soon as they stepped there, they felt a groundwave passing under their feet. Hoka checked the inside of the cave. He frowned and said, "Everyone is up."

Renjiro made a hand sign and said, "I figured."

Fujin, Hoka and Mieko watched their sensei as he built up a massive amount of chakra!

Behind Team Renjiro, the Yugakure ninjas were following. However, without the Byakugan or the Sharingan, they couldn't identify all the traps.

Tokuhei was the first one to notice the traps. He shouted, "WAIT! There are traps ahead!"

However, they were flickering rapidly. 3 of their ninjas ended up activating traps. Immediately, hundreds of needles rained down on them! Tokuhei frowned and made a few hand signs.

Inside the cave, Fumimaro spread his chakra field. Fujin felt his chakra field as it expanded past the cave. He quickly said, "They sensed us!"

Fumimaro immediately sensed the huge chakra built up by Renjiro. He yelled, "CRAP! They are right outside the cave and are about to attack us!"

All the former Kiri nins immediately had grim looks on their faces. Ever since they went rogue, they never had to fight against a proper Ninja squad. The Mizukage faction was too busy fighting the rebels. They didn't have the time to pay any attention to them.

Renjiro put his palms on the walls of the hill!

'Earth Release : Mountain Destroyer jutsu!'