

Calamity 171

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 171: A New Team

After removing all traces of the poison, the bugs left the dead body and returned to Katsumi. Ryota had finished applying the first aid and he sealed Korenaga's body in a scroll.

Ryota said, "He is sure to have a good bounty."

Fujin picked up the chakra sword and said, "I don't think it would compare with this sword though."

He began flowing his chakra through the sword and changed its nature to wind. He was surprised, 'Wow! So smooth! I thought my swords were good. This one is probably better than the one Hiruzen asked to be made for me!'

Noticing that Fujin's attention was on the sword, Tamotsu coughed and said, "That's our mission requirement Fujin."

Fujin looked back and chuckled, "I know, just saying. Haha"

He thought, 'Oh well, if I need such a sword in the future and I can't get it any other way, I can just steal this sword from that old guy. It's not like he would ever use it anyways.'

Since Katsumi and Tamotsu were injured, they decided not to hunt that last rogue ninja. The group began returning. Katsumi couldn't walk properly, so he rode on Kenta.

They return the chakra sword to Konda Kunio. Understanding the difficulty of the mission, Kunio increased the mission ranking from B to A and increased the mission rewards to 2 million Ryo. He handed them the book that had theories and research on learning the Ice Kekkei Genkai and made the arrangements to help them claim the bounties.

He also invited their medical ninjas to treat Katsumi and Tamotsu. Tamotsu's wound healed properly. They bandaged his arm. It would leave 2 scars on his arm, but he didn't mind it.

Katsumi's injuries, however, were serious. He was wounded down to the bone. They healed him as well as they could. The healer said, "That's as much as we could do. Your village has the best healers. So I would recommend you to get treated by them as well. Also, I would recommend you take a few months break."

Katsumi nodded and thanked them. They rested in the Land of Frost for some time. In this period, they went through the Ice Release book.

Fujin was the first one to read. He analyzed, 'Hmm, this book is good. It contains research of over a dozen ninjas. And still, none of them managed to create the Ice element. Kinda shows how tough creating a Kekkei Genkai will be. Though I don't have the Water affinity needed for the Ice element, this book could give some insights if I try to create Scorch or Magnet elements.'

The others read the book as well. Only Ryota and Tamotsu were interested in a Kekkei Genkai and neither had the Wind or the Water element. So after reading carefully, the book was given to Fujin for keeping.

After resting for a couple of days, they began moving back to Konoha. Their speed was a bit slower as they had to ensure that Katsumi didn't strain his leg. He rode on Kenta the entire journey.

He was admitted to Konoha's hospital after returning. The group decided to meet after 2 days in the hospital.

Fujin continued his training to improve his control over the Lightning element.

He brought some fruits and visited the hospital at the decided time. Others had already gathered.

Fujin placed the fruits on the table next to Katsumi and asked, "How is your leg?"

He said, "It has been treated properly. Unfortunately, I have to rest for a couple of months for the damage to the bones to be healed and for the bone to become strong once again."

Fujin replied, "Oh, that's bad. I'm glad that there are no permanent injuries though. Take a good break."

Katsumi nodded.

Tamotsu said, "I have something to discuss."

The entire team looked at him.

Tamotsu said, "We have been taking missions continuously for quite a long time. I was thinking that it would be best for our team to take a few months off. I was thinking about a 3-month long break."

The group was surprised. Tadashi asked, "3 whole months?"

Tamotsu nodded. He said, "Along with missions, it's also important to build up your strength. Take these 3 months to train newer skills or master the old ones further. In that time, Katsumi will also get healed, so we won't have any issues with team composition. Also, we do need a break from the missions."

The group began analyzing. Ryota, Tadashi and Katsumi were thinking about the things they could learn in the 3 months. Meanwhile, Fujin thought, 'Seriously? Another 3 months break? I didn't think completing 50 rank B missions would be so challenging!'

As no one spoke anything, Tamotsu said, "The last mission gave all of us 2.5 million Ryo. So we shouldn't have any monetary issues. Once we get stronger, we could try to do tougher missions more frequently. A substantial increase in strength could improve your chances to become Elite Chunins or even a Special Jounin."

The prospect of promotion excited them slightly. They agreed. Tamotsu looked at Fujin who hadn't said anything yet. He said, "Fujin, your strength is already very high. Perhaps if we had you in the team that faced Korenaga, we might have killed him without taking any injuries. And I understand that you may want to take multiple rank B missions to reach close to the 50 missions mark."

Fujin nodded. Tamotsu continued, "If you want to, you can form or join other teams in this time period. But we would love it if you join us again after 3 months. But we would understand if you don't."

Fujin smiled and said, "You are thinking too much Tamotsu. I'll be back in this team."

Tamotsu and others smiled. The group talked for a bit before leaving. Fujin thought, 'Now I have to find a new team again... Though this may not be all bad. I should try to form a new team. A younger team that would want to take continuous missions. That way, we could reach the 50 mission criteria soon.'

If I get promoted to Elite Chunin, my sword and sensor skills would get me promoted to Special Jounin rank too. Then I could join teams that do rank A or even rank S missions.

Still, doing more missions would mean getting less time for training... What to do?

Fujin analyzed his situation. In the end, he almost pulled his hair as he couldn't decide. He thought, 'Ugh! This is so fucking confusing. Missions give me combat experience that no amount of training would provide me. On the other hand, training will increase my strength and skills which would be useful for missions! Fuck it. I'll first master the control over the Lightning element. Then I'll try forming the team and doing a month or two of non-stop missions.'

For the next 10 days, Fujin devoted the majority of his time to mastering his control over the lightning element. He practiced with 10 Shadow clones at all times.

Finally, he sighed in relief, 'Finally done! I can freely control the electric current from 10 milliAmpere to 10.5 Amperes. I can also control Voltage from 200 Volts to 840 thousand Volts. Time to head for missions.'

He left his basement. He was about to send clones when he heard his doorbell. He opened the door to see Miko. His eyes involuntarily twitched as he thought, 'I was just about to send a clone to her.'

He waved his hand and asked, "What's up?"

Mieko entered his house and asked, "Do you have any missions lined up?"

Fujin shook his head and said, "No, my team just took a break."

Her eyes sparkled. She said, "Great! I am recommending you to my team."

Fujin observed her carefully. He asked, "What do you mean?"

She said, "I was assigned to a team that is planning to undertake a rank A mission. Unfortunately, the member that specializes in Wind jutsus is injured. And we need a replacement to take that mission. So I recommended you to my team. Come with me."

Fujin locked his home and followed her. He asked, "They just agreed?"

She sighed and said, "No, I had to convince them a lot. The injured guy is a Jounin. But, they couldn't find any other option. So they had to accept my recommendation."

Fujin nodded. He knew that Wind users were too rare in Konoha. Not a single clan specialized in the Wind element.

He said, "Actually, I was about to look for you too."

She looked back at him and asked, "Why?"

He said, "My team has taken a 3-month long break. I was thinking about forming a team with you, Teru and Hoka to undertake rank B missions continuously. We could undertake 15-20 rank B missions in around 2 months. It would help us secure the Elite Chunin Promotion quicker."

Mieko's eyes widened. She asked, "15-20 rank B missions in 2 months? I only do 3 every month."

Fujin nodded and said, "Most rank B missions are very easy. We could focus on doing missions that take less time to complete and are easier. Unless the mission gets upgraded to rank A, we should be able to complete it with ease.

Once we get the Elite Chunin promotion, the promotion to Special Jounin wouldn't be far. So we can start taking rank A and even S missions."

The thought of undertaking rank S missions excited Mieko. She said, "Alright. Let's do it after this mission!"

Fujin smiled and said, "Great. I'll try to convince Hoka and Teru after this mission."

Mieko said, "I'll join you."

Fujin said, "That will be helpful."

The two reached the Uchiha compound. Mieko led Fujin to a house where her team was gathered.

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Chapter 172: Missing Children

As soon as Fujin entered the room, he saw 6 Uchihas looking at him. He thought, 'Ugh, I forgot that her squad is an all-Uchiha squad! I hope that it doesn't attract any unwanted attention.'

Among the 6 Uchihas, 3 seemed to be in their 30s, two in their 20s and the last one was just a year older than Fujin.

One of them said, "So this is Fujin? Not bad, his chakra is quite high for his age."

Fujin wondered, 'Hmm, he can tell chakra without using his eyes or sensing?'

Mieko said, "Yes, Uncle Akihiko."

She looked at Fujin and said, "Fujin, this is Uncle Akihiko. Just like sensei, he is an Elite Jounin too. He will be heading this mission."

Fujin nodded and respectfully said, "Pleased to meet you, Akihiko-san."

Uchiha Akihiko smiled and said, "No need to be formal Fujin. You can call me Uncle as well."

Fujin replied with a smile, "Alright Uncle Akihiko."

While he was speaking, he thought, 'Not bad. I was afraid that all of them would be arrogant to the core.'

At that moment, the Uchiha, who was slightly older than Fujin, scoffed and said, "Mieko, are you sure that he is strong? We don't want any slackers joining us. Besides, can he really replace Uncle Tienosuke?"

Fujin looked at him and thought, 'Nevermind. I concluded too soon.'

Mieko rebuked him, "Shunko, you can't even defeat me. Fujin is even stronger than me."

Akihiko calmed the kids down, "Calm down. Shunko, learn to work with your teammates. And Mieko, don't insult your teammates. Fujin, don't mind Shunko."

Fujin nodded. There wasn't much change in his expression, but he was surprised, 'Who'd have thought that she would admit that she was weaker than me.'

Akihiko asked, "Mieko, you and Fujin can do the Fire-Wind combination jutsu, right?"

Mieko and Fujin nodded. Akihiko said, "Alright. Tienosuke could do the Fire-Wind combination jutsu with all 3 of us. But, that was due to us taking missions together for years. We won't be able to reach the same efficiency with Fujin in this little time. So this combination jutsu will be left to you guys."

Mieko grinned and replied, "Don't worry, we got it."

Akihiko said, "The mission is an emergency. It is a rank A mission issued by Kusagakure. Over a hundred kids younger than the age of six have suddenly gone missing and all their attempts at investigation have failed. Instead, some of the search teams have gone missing as well. Our mission is to investigate this event and rescue those kids.

We will leave the village in 30 minutes. Gather your supplies and weapons and meet at the village gate as soon as you can."

Everyone nodded and left. Mieko looked at Fujin and guessed, "You are carrying all the supplies that you need."

Fujin nodded, "Yup. What about you?"

Mieko grinned and said, "Same here. Let's race to the gate."

She flickered before Fujin could reply. Fujin sighed and flickered as well. He very quickly caught up with Mieko and commented softly, "Why do you arrange a competition that you have no chance of winning."

He overtook Mieko but didn't create a huge difference between them. Mieko snorted at his confidence. She tried hard to catch up, but Fujin's physique as well as the mastery of Body Flicker jutsu was better than hers.

Fujin reached the Village Gate. However, he wasn't the first one there. Akihiko and the other two older Uchihas were already at the gate. Mieko reached a few seconds after Fujin.

The three senior Uchihas saw them. One of them smirked and said, "Looks like both of you lost the race."

Mieko was annoyed by his smirk and taunt. But at the same time, she was happy that Fujin lost too. So she didn't complain and looked at Fujin with a smirk. Fujin shrugged his hands and asked, "Aren't you too old to be racing with preteens, mister?"

His smirk immediately fell, while the other two laughed at his expense. Mieko introduced them, "Fujin, he is Uncle Masaru. He likes teasing young kids. And he is Uncle Sora."

Masaru immediately said in embarrassment, "Hey, don't speak nonsense!"

Meanwhile, Fujin wondered, 'Is this entire world filled with pedos?'

Mieko laughed at his reaction. Akihiko said, "Don't mind him, Fujin. He is very competitive and playful. Anyways, are you two ready? We will be moving at a full speed. We will only rest once before reaching Kusa."

Both Mieko and Fujin nodded. In 5 minutes, the remaining 3 members arrived. The 8-member squad left immediately at full speed. They travelled without resting until they reached the border between Konoha and Kusa. They took a break at a border patrol camp in the Land of Fire so that all could rest at the same time without any worries about external threats.

The next morning, they continued their journey and reached Kusagakure a few hours after noon. On reaching, Fujin thought, 'I don't recall much about Kusagakure. I only remember Karin and her mother. I wonder if there are any others of significance from this village.'

Fujin slowed down as they neared the gate, but the others didn't. Fujin was confused and increased his pace. A couple of guards guarded the village gate. They noticed a few ninjas moving towards them at high speed and got alert. They were already on edge due to the cases of missing kids.

Akihiko and Sora activated their Sharingans.

'Sharingan Genjutsu'

Both guards were placed under a Genjutsu. They collapsed.

Fujin was speechless! He thought, 'What the fuck? And I thought that this guy was normal!'

Akihiko said, "Masaru, stay here with the kids and interrogate them. Others, follow me."

Akihiko, Sora and two others went inside the village. Masaru, Fujin, Mieko and Shunko stayed back.

Masara said, "I will release the Genjutsu on them. Mieko and Shinko, you cast a new Genjutsu on them and interrogate them. I will observe."

They nodded and stepped forward. Masaru made a hand sign and released the Genjutsu. The guards woke up but were confused. Mieko and Shunko casted new Genjutsu on them. They asked basic questions and some tricky questions. Unfortunately, the guards didn't know anything. They were innocent.

Their actions were noticed by the villagers. Seeing their guards being subdued caused panic among the villagers. A few ninjas stepped forward. But Masaru said, "We have been assigned the mission to recover the missing children. This is a part of the mission. Stay back."

Hearing that, the ninjas didn't come very close. However, they stayed in their position and observed the actions of Konoha ninjas. Many of them were unhappy. A few thought, 'The Uchiha clan! They are so fucking arrogant!'

Under normal circumstances, they would have lashed out. But the missing children had put them on an edge. They gritted their teeth and endured the humiliation.

While the interrogation was on, Akihiko's group entered the central building in the village. They were quickly led to the room hosting the leader of Kusagakure and the Daimyo.

The current leader of Kusagakure was Ashikaga Hiroshi. He said, "Welcome to Kusagakure, Uchiha Akihiko. I am glad that you arrived so quickly."

Akihiko nodded and said, "It is an emergency after all. Can you brief me on all the details of this mission? We will begin investigations immediately."

Hiroshi nodded and said, "Until now, 176 kids have been reported missing. There isn't anything common between these children other than the fact that they are aged between 2 and 6. Around 12 went missing from this village itself. The remaining went missing from civilian villages across this country."

He led down a map on the table. The map had locations of villages and the number of children missing from each village. In all, they went missing from 7 more villages. And all these 7 villages were the villages closest to Kusagakure.

Akihiko observed the map and asked, "Where did you investigate and what were the results of it?"

Hiroshi answered, "We didn't find anything."

He began marking locations on the map and said, "We have investigated all these areas but didn't find any clues. Instead, in this location, we lost 3 Rescue teams! We send a huge force to investigate it, but didn't find anything. It's as if they have disappeared from the face of the Earth."

Akihiko and the other Uchihas frowned. This case was very tricky. They didn't say anything and kept observing the map to see if they could decipher any patterns. Hiroshi and the Daimyo didn't disturb them.

After a few minutes, a knock was heard on the door. Without waiting for any response, the door was opened and a man stepped in. He said, "Lord Daimyo, Lord Hiroshi, there are Ko..."

As he was speaking, his eyes went to the Konoha ninjas in the room. He instantly stopped talking. Hiroshi was confused. He said, "Keep going."

The man said, "The guards on the gate are being interrogated by a few Konoha ninjas."

Before Hiroshi could say anything, Akihiko said without taking his eyes off the map, "Don't worry, they are my subordinates."

Hiroshi was speechless. He asked, "What do you mean don't worry?"

Akihiko said, "The children went missing from your village. No one is more suspicious than the guards. Don't worry, we won't ask for any personal or confidential information. But they have to be interrogated. I hope you can bring me the other guards as well to interrogate."

Akihiko's tough stance intimidated Hiroshi. He said, "Alright."

He commanded the man who delivered the message to gather the remaining guards.

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Chapter 173: A Difficult Task

Akihiko's group couldn't find anything substantial on the map. They took the map and decided on a few locations to investigate. They also checked a file containing information about all the missing children but didn't find anything else.

They first interrogated all the guards, but all guards were innocent. So the Konoha group left the village.

The guards were very dissatisfied with being treated in such a manner. Hiroshi said, "I apologize for what just happened. But, I hope that you guys understand the severity of the situation and the concerns of the Konoha team. They came here less than 2 days after issuing the mission and left without even resting. So, I hope that you forgive them."

Hearing that, the faces of the guards softened a bit. They all noticed that the Konoha ninjas seemed tired from travelling and still didn't take any rest.

Elsewhere, Fujin's team was moving rapidly. Shunko asked, "We have no clues at all! How are we going to investigate?"

Masaru answered, "Almost a couple hundred children have gone missing. No matter how good the kidnappers are, they will leave some clues behind. We just have to search until we find one."

Akihiko nodded, "We will start where the 3 rescue squads went missing. That place should have the highest chance of finding clues. If we don't, then we will investigate every missing child."

Sora added, "We should start investigating the children who went missing more recently. After all, due to having so much success, they would get overconfident and leave some clues behind."

Akihiko nodded. Fujin also agreed with the analysis. He wondered, 'Exactly who would kidnap young children in this world? If they had Kekkei Genkai, then Kumo would have been the suspect. But these are just normal kids... Is someone planning on creating a Root-like organization and hence kidnapped these kids?'

Fujin analyzed the possibility and concluded, 'Yeah, that could be the case. Kusa's military isn't strong. They got hit by both Konoha and Iwa in the 2nd and 3rd Great Ninja wars. So creating a secret force here would be convenient. And they could keep kidnapping more children in the future to increase their numbers.'

But, which force would that be? I don't recall any major player from Kusa in Naruto. Unless they were discovered and destroyed or they never got enough strength to be relevant.

Another point to consider is, should I use such a tactic while trying to build my force in the future?'

Fujin analyzed the feasibility of his idea. After some time, he decided, 'Taking in young kids and training them would require at least half a decade for them to be worth anything. It will be too much effort for little reward and very difficult to do without proper organization.'

More importantly, this act is completely morally bankrupt. While I am not morally upright and don't mind doing some evil stuff, kidnapping young kids and making life miserable for them is too much for me. Especially without any huge benefits. Not to mention, if I were to get caught in this act, I would certainly be hunted and killed.

So not worth doing it. Especially considering the vast number of kids whose lives are already hell in this world. I would be better off just recruiting them. After all, those kids would genuinely admire and respect me and would be willing to work their hardest to get out of that terrible life.'

As Fujin was deep in thought, Mieko looked at him and asked softly, "Hey, what are you thinking?"

Fujin looked at her and answered, "I was thinking about which scums would kidnap little kids and separate them from their parents. Unfortunately, I couldn't get to any conclusion."

Mieko sighed, "Yeah, there are terrible people everywhere. If we find them, I will be torturing the shit out of them!"

Fujin chuckled at her anger. He said, "Now that I think about it, it's been quite a few months since I went on a killing spree."

Mieko looked at him with a deadpan expression and said, "You kill very quickly and efficiently. They feel no pain at all and die in an instant. Leave them to me. I have a new Genjutsu that I want to test!"

A sadistic grin appeared on her face. Fujin said, "I think you would be a perfect fit in the T&I department of Konoha."

Mieko looked at him and said, "The Uchiha Police force has our own T&I department. Though we don't use it much as we mostly police the common citizens."

Fujin said, "Oh, I didn't know that."

Akihiko announced, "Stay on alert. We are reaching that location."

Everyone raised their alertness to the max.

Akihiko stopped. Others stopped behind him. The area was covered with huge grass that was up to 5 feet tall. However, it was the same as everything around it. The only distinguishing factor was a few spears planted around the area to mark it.

Akihiko said, "Kusagakure nins planted this area with spears to mark where the rescue teams went missing."

Mieko said, "The grass is very tall in this country. It will be difficult to investigate properly."

Akihiko smirked and said, "Yes. And hence, it will also be difficult to cover up any traces left. Everyone except Fujin, use your Sharingans to find clues."

All Uchihas activated their Sharingans and began investigating. Though no one said anything, it left Fujin standing alone awkwardly. He saw Shunko looking at him with a smirk aiming at belittling him. Mieko too looked back at Fujin and grinned to tease him.

Fujin looked back with amusement thinking, 'Why are you so excited about doing manual labour?'

He took out a scroll. Both Mieko and Shunko watched with curiosity. He opened it and summoned an instant noodle cup, a thermos bottle containing hot water and a couple of chopsticks. He opened the instant noodle cup, poured water and stirred it slightly and waited for a couple of minutes.

Now Mieko and Shunko had dark faces. Both complained in their minds, 'Why does he get to eat while we have to work? Heck, I haven't eaten anything since the morning!'

They tried ignoring Fujin. But, the smell of noodles began spreading. Fujin thought, 'I'm glad that I bought so many instant noodles from the Land of Noodles.'

He began eating. While eating, he kept his eyes on the Uchihas who were working hard in the grasslands.

Shunko immediately complained out loud, "Hey you! Why are you eating while we are working?"

Fujin looked at him and slurped the noodles. He pointed at his eye and calmly said, "I don't have the Sharingan eye. You do. Good luck with searching."

Shunko was irritated at that response. He yelled, "WHY YOU??"

However, Akihiko interrupted him, "Shunko, get back to work."

A scowl formed on his face. But he didn't dare to disobey Akihiko. He looked at Fujin grudgingly and got back to work.

Fujin wondered, 'Mieko was very arrogant too when I met her. If not for Renjiro and perhaps me, she would have remained that arrogant. I wonder if Itachi was just fed up with all the arrogant pricks around him and decided to pull the plug.'

The group kept searching for a few minutes when Sora said, "There are some footmarks here."

Everyone immediately appeared next to him. Fujin wondered, 'Where are these footmarks?'

However, Akihiko said, "Good work."

They began following the footmarks. Fujin followed, thinking, 'The investigative powers of Sharingan are impressive. Even after focusing Chakra in my eyes, I can't see anything at all.'

They walked for around 40 meters before stopping. All Uchihas frowned.

Masaru said, "The footsteps have ended here."

Shunko asked, "But how? How could they stop here?"

Akihiko said, "They walked from there until here. From here, they travelled through other means. They either went through under the ground, flew above it or teleported."

Sora made a hand sign and disappeared underground.

Mieko asked, "How will we track them if they flew or teleported?"

Akihiko said, "We can't. We will have to find a new clue."

Sora appeared from the ground and said, "There are no traces underground."

Akihiko said, "Looks like they are using Reverse Summoning. No wonder there were no clues to be found."

Fujin asked, "How will we find them if they reverse summon themselves? If we assume that they kidnapped the children by reverse summoning too, then there won't be any clues at all."

Mieko and Shunko too had the same query.

Akihiko answered, "Yes. There won't be any clues while they escape. However, there will be clues of them entering the village and reaching the kids."

Fujin thought and replied, "That makes sense. Except that there are probably hundreds of people who enter and leave the villages on a daily basis. Unless they entered the village through illegal routes, it would be very difficult to trace them."

Masaru smirked and said, "Don't underestimate our eyes kiddo. Just stay back and observe the magic."

Akihiko said, "Enough talking, this place is a dead end. Let's go to the villages and check."

The group began moving quickly towards the nearest village.

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Chapter 174: The Impossible Trail

While moving, Akihiko observed the map. He said, "This village is Tsumagoi. It was the 5th village to have its children kidnapped. We will separate into 3 groups. I, Sora and Masaru will lead each group. Mieko, Fujin, you two will come with me. Genji and Shunko will be with Masaru. Haru, you will work with Sora."

Everyone nodded. Akihiko continued, "We will visit the homes of the missing kids one by one and see from where they went missing. We will investigate that location and check any trails from that location until we find the right one."

The group moved at full speed and reached the village in less than an hour. They met up with the Village Chief and divided into the 3 groups. Each group had an official from the village leading them.

Mieko and Fujin followed Akihiko. They reached a small home. The official knocked on the door. In a few seconds, a middle-aged woman opened the door. Fujin could observe that her health didn't seem very good. Inside the house, he could see a middle-aged man and 2 old people.

She said in a weak voice, "Kaito-sama. Is there any news about my daughter?"

Kaito was the official who had joined the group. He said, "We are working all the time. We will find them soon. These Konoha ninjas have arrived here to look for them. Please cooperate with them."

The woman looked at Akihiko. Akihiko asked, "Can you tell me where you last saw your daughter?"

The lady said, "She had gone out to play with her friends. They all went missing!"

She began sobbing.

Akihiko asked, "Can you lead me to the playground?"

The woman nodded. Her husband came out and said, "I'll also come with you."

Akihiko nodded.

The group headed to the playground. On reaching, they saw that the playground had been sealed and barricaded. Kaito said, "We restricted entry to the playground after the kids went missing."

Akihiko asked, "Did all children who were playing in this playground go missing?"

Kaito answered, "No. Only 6 children went missing from this playground. More children were playing here, but they didn't notice anything. In total, 23 children went missing from the village. In addition to these 6, 11 more were playing in other playgrounds before going missing."

Akihiko nodded and said, "Mieko, check the playground for footsteps with me. Fujin, use your sensor skills to see if you can find anything odd."

Mieko nodded and entered the playground alongside Akihiko. Meanwhile, Fujin wondered, 'Did he just give me a useless task just to make me feel included?'

He spread his chakra field and observed by focusing the chakra in his eyes but couldn't find anything. Since it was pointless, he stopped wasting his chakra and just waited for Akihiko and Mieko to find something.

Akihiko and Mieko had their Sharingans active the entire time. They looked at the entire playground to observe the footprints. Most of the footprints had already been messed up due to the winds and the investigation carried out by Kusagakure ninjas. However, their Sharingans could still notice the footprints.

After searching for around 10 minutes, both Akihiko and Mieko arrived at the same end of the playground. Akihiko looked back and called everyone. Fujin, Kaito and the kid's parents walked towards him.

Akihiko looked at the parents and said, "You guys can go home. I will try my best to find your daughter and bring her back safely."

The woman broke down again, while her husband thanked him and left with her. Akihiko said, "There are many footprints leaving the playground. Most of them are at normal exits. However, this area isn't

someplace where anyone would leave the playground normally. There are footprints of 6 small kids and 2 adults here. And someone has tried to hide them with Wind jutsu."

As he said, he looked at Kaito. Kaito immediately said, "I'm sure that no one from our village would do it. It is probably the kidnappers."

Akihiko nodded and made a shadow clone. He said, "Fujin, stay here with my clone."

Fujin nodded. Akihiko, Mieko and Kaito followed the footprints.

Akihiko's clone said, "We will ensure that no one disturbs the playground. If anyone comes here unintentionally, make them turn back. If anyone tries to create trouble, then you have permission to kill. Though if you can avoid killing, then just knock him unconscious for us to interrogate."

Fujin nodded. Akihiko and Mieko kept following the footmarks. They walked for around 200 meters before stopping. The place where they stopped was completely isolated. There were no homes in this area, it was completely covered by trees and had no roads in it. Hence, the villagers would never walk through here.

Mieko said, "The footprints end here. Instead, more footprints are coming from other directions."

Akihiko nodded and said, "Yes. 21 of those footprints are of young kids. 8 of adults."

Mieko frowned and said, "Assuming that they brought all the kidnapped kids here, why are 2 footprints missing?"

Akihiko replied, "Perhaps the kidnappers were carrying them. After all, some of the kidnapped kids are just over 2 years old."

Kaito interrupted them and asked, "Were all the kidnapped kids brought here?"

Akihiko nodded and said, "Most likely."

He asked in excitement and hope, "So can you track them from here?"

Unfortunately, his hopes would be dashed. Akihiko said, "It isn't that easy. Though there are many footmarks coming to this place, there are very few that go away. None of the kids walked away from here. So it will be difficult to trace them."

Kaito frowned but didn't say anything.

Mieko asked, "What now, Uncle?"

Akihiko said, "Let's wait for Sora and Masaru to arrive here. We will try to backtrack the footprints to see how they arrived here. We can be more sure of the result if all 3 teams reach the same conclusion."

Mieko nodded.

They waited. After around 15 minutes, Sora's team arrived. Masaru's team arrived a few minutes later. All 3 teams had reached the same conclusion.

Akihiko said, "Let's trace these 8 footprints and see where they come from. It will be easy if some of them are from this village. Else, we will be out on a long trail."

Sora and Masaru nodded.

All 3 teams began tracing the footprints. Akihiko and Mieko soon returned to the playground where Fujin was. Akihiko's clone dispelled itself. Akihiko and Mieko followed the trail of the footprints in the playground. Fujin followed behind.

Soon, they left the playground. They walked through the streets. At some point, the footprints split in two directions. Akihiko made a clone to trail the other footprint, but soon, they met again. After trailing everything, they reached the village gate.

Mieko sighed, "We will have to search in the wild!"

Akihiko nodded, "And we can't even rest. Otherwise, we might lose the trail."

Fujin thought, 'Wow, I never thought that I would be the slacker in the team. That said, it doesn't feel bad. To just relax and even eat while others do all the hard work, haha. And they can't even complain.'

Masaru and Sora's teams also reached the gate. They too sighed at the amount of work they would have to do. Akihiko looked at the officials and said, "We found a trail, so we will investigate it. See to it that no one in the village damages the trails that we saw."

They nodded. The Konoha ninjas left the village. All of them ate a soldier pill. The Uchihas ate it as using the Sharingan continuously was eating up their chakra. While Fujin ate it as they won't be waiting for any breaks.

As they were moving, Shunko complained, "It is very difficult keeping a track of the trail in this grassland!"

Masaru replied, "Yes. And finding a new trail is even more difficult. We couldn't find any proper trail to backtrack in the previous location. That is why, once you find a proper trail, don't let it go to waste."

Shunko nodded helplessly.

The task was already difficult due to the grassland. It was made even more difficult by the use of Wind and Earth elements to hide the footprints. And all other clues were eliminated by the kidnappers. There was no scent to use, just microscopic footprints that were difficult even for the Sharingan to see.

The group trailed the footprints for over 14 hours! Finally, they reached the end. The footprints went towards a mountain. There was a small village being built on one side of the mountain. It looked to be built very recently.

Additionally, the mountain had a huge cave. The mouth of the cave was 10 meters wide and 15 meters high. The Sharingan observed the chakra signatures inside the cave. Fujin too saw them. Masaru said, "That's one big cave!"

Shunko wondered, "Who are these people? And are the kidnapped children here?"

Akihiko answered, "Most likely. I'm guessing that they are imprisoned somewhere inside the cave. Don't engage in combat and stay hidden until we find the kids.

As they were speaking, a group of people exited the cave. The Konoha ninjas stopped talking and observed. They were already hidden properly and hence weren't worried that they would be noticed. However, Fujin's eyes widened as he saw those people.

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Chapter 175: Jashin

7 people exited the cave. All had weird symbols on their faces and wore robes. One of them said, "We need to find around 175 children to complete the ritual. If we don't bring them here in time, then Zankoku sama will skin us alive!"

Another said, "But how can we do that? All villages in this country are on high alert. It's impossible to kidnap more of them."

The man standing in the center said, "In that case, we just need to go to the neighbouring countries and kidnap 175 children before they become alert."

However, the other members weren't entirely convinced. They said, "But reverse summoning over long distances will need a lot more chakra. It will be very difficult."

However, the man insisted, "There is no other way. We will kidnap children from the Land of Waterfall. We will focus on the villages close to the border area. So the distance won't be much larger."

As they were discussing, Fujin's mind was busy analyzing as well, 'Though I don't recall Hidan's tattoos well, their tattoos make me think of the marks that would appear on Hidan after he licked someone's

blood. Safe to say that these guys are followers of Jashin. But, what the heck are they doing here? Wasn't Hidan from the Land of Hot Water?

Also, why do they already have those marks? Aren't they useless unless they stand in that diagram made from blood?

No, I don't think these guys are as strong as Hidan. Otherwise, their group would be too strong. I guess that they have just made the tattoos manually and they don't have the same mastery of whatever this craft is as Hidan.

Still, why are there so many Jashin followers? I thought Hidan was the only one. Or perhaps one of very few. That said, except for the one in the center, their chakra seems quite low. So I guess they just got wiped out before Hidan completed his ritual. Perhaps in this mission itself.

Another point to consider is, wasn't Konoha completely unaware of the existence of Jashin? Shouldn't this mission have made them aware of the existence of Jashin or at least his followers and their rituals? So did they not report this mission accurately or will Konoha be aware of them?'

Fujin thought for a bit and concluded, 'No, a religion that engages in kidnapping and sacrificing staying secret for so long in a world full of ninjas is unlikely. It's more probable that all 5 villages are aware of them. Just that either they didn't consider Jashin to be much of a threat or Jashinists managed to hide or escape from them.

There is also the matter of Orochimaru. He is exploring ways to attain immortality. So did he also experiment with Jashin? Hmm, that's one research I'd like to see. After all, though Hidan was weak, there wouldn't be any ninja who wouldn't want his survivability. Though Orochimaru left the Akatsuki before Hidan joined it, he should still be aware of Jashins. At the very least, he should become aware of them after Hidan joins the Akatsuki.

Oh well, I will consider this later. There is no point in thinking about this for now.'

As he was analyzing, Fujin saw them talk. Unfortunately, the distance between them was too high. So he couldn't hear anything. However, the same wasn't the case with his teammates. Each one of them understood the entire conversation by reading their lips. Shunko and Mieko frowned. Anger could be seen on their faces.

Shunko asked softly, "Can we kill them, Uncle?"

Akihiko replied, "Not yet. The kids should be alive. Our main mission is to ensure that the kidnapped kids are safe. Don't attack anyone impulsively."

Shunko nodded unwillingly.

Akihiko said, "The tents have 17 people. They are probably from this group. In addition to these 7, there are 20 more patrolling around the village and the mountain. However, my Sharingans can't observe any chakra inside the mountain. It looks like they have a seal master."

Sora said, "Unless this group is backed by one of the 5 villages, their mastery of Fuinjutsu shouldn't be too high. I'll deal with the seals. But, I will need some time. And my actions could be noticed by the ones outside that cave."

Fujin looked at Sora and thought, 'Is he a SealMaster? Or do those broken eyes also neutralize Fuinjutsu?'

Akihiko began analyzing a plan. Fujin said, "I could assassinate the ones under Elite Chunin levels silently."

However, Akihiko shook his head and said, "No, there is no guarantee of assassinating silently when dealing with ninjas. Just one miscalculation will blow up our cover."

He looked at Sora and said, "Sora, you take a look at the Seals and begin neutralizing it. Haru and Genji would go with you. For now, move under the ground so that your cover isn't blown."

They nodded and made a few hand signs and disappeared under the ground.

Akihiko said, "The guy in the center of the group is at Jounin level. And there is another Jounin-level opponent in the central tent. Fujin, how confident are you in assassinating at a quick speed?"

Fujin replied, "I can launch a dozen Air Bullets at the same time and accurately. Unless the enemy's reaction speed is very fast, they will die."

Akihiko said, "That's good. "

He observed the Jashin worshippers entering the central tent. Inside the tent, there was a big circular table. And there were 6 people, 1 of whom was the Jounin-level ninja that Akihiko had talked about. The others were at Chunin levels.

As they entered the tent, the Jounin-level ninja in the tent asked, "Datsuron, is there any command from the Grand Priest?"

Datsuron was the Jounin from the 7 kidnappers who had left the cave. He stood on the other side of the table, nodded and said, "Yes. We have to kidnap 175 more kids between the ages of 2 and 6, Yasuhiro."

Yasuhiro frowned. He understood the difficulty of the task. He looked at his followers in the tent. His followers understood that he needed some privacy to discuss something important. All but 2 left the tent. Datsuron too did the same. His followers also left the tent. So only Yasuhiro, Datsuron and 4 chunins were in the tent.

Yasuhiro said, "We need to discuss from which villages we should kidnap more children. And also need to consider how many people we will need to successfully reverse summon from that distance."

Datsuron nodded. He was about to speak when suddenly he felt something. He quickly turned around and looked behind.

A minute ago, when the majority of the chunins left the tent, Akihiko decisively said, "We will move through the ground and enter the tent from below. Fujin, use your Air Bullets on the 4 chunins in the tent. Leave the Jounins to me and Masaru. Mieko and Shunko, you two follow as well. If Fujin fails to kill his opponents, you two would step in. Don't allow them to make a lot of noise and alert others."

Everyone nodded and moved through the ground. Chakra glowed in Fujin's eyes as he noticed that the chunins were standing on opposite sides behind the Jounins.

He thought, 'I could target them all with Air bullets, but the ones who are away from me will have more time to see and dodge. If they do dodge it, my air bullets will pierce through the walls of the tent and alert others. So I will have to aim such that my bullets pass through the roof of the tent instead. That way, no one will be alerted.'

He made a shadow clone. Fujin's clone got in position under the 2 chunins standing behind Yasuhiro while Fujin got in position under the chunins behind Datsuron. Masaru stayed next to Fujin's clone while Akihiko stayed next to Fujin. At the same time, both used Air Bullet jutsu.

The chunins never saw the attack coming. All 4 were hit successfully. The air bullets pierced through their body and went through the roof of the tent.

At the same time, Masaru and Akihiko also made their moves. They left the ground and attacked Yasuhiro and Datsuron respectively. Yasuhiro and Datsuron both turned around quickly. However, they were disturbed by the sight of their followers being killed so suddenly.

They saw Akihiko and Masaru and became ready to fight. However, their eyes met with the three tomoe Sharingans. Both instantly fell into Genjutsu. They stopped struggling and stood still.

Fujin observed that and thought, 'I always knew how strong the Sharingan is. But seeing two Jounins fall under the Genjutsu so easily with just 3 tomoe Sharingans is still so shocking.'

Meanwhile, Akihiko and Masaru looked at Fujin and thought, 'Despite all the praises she had, Mieko probably still underestimated this kid. Killing 4 chunins in an instant at the mere age of 11. Very few could claim to have such an ability at that age.'

Mieko and Shunko left the ground. Shunko was shocked at how efficient Fujin was.

Akihiko said, "Good work, Fujin."

He looked at Masaru, who nodded and made a hand sign. The ground in the tent began moving. The bodies of the dead chunins and any blood in the tent began moving inside the ground and new soil was excavated out. Soon, all signs of them were buried under the ground.

Akihiko looked around and said, "There are still some blood drops on the tent. We won't be able to use this tent."

Masaru nodded.

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Chapter 176: The Uchiha Way?

Fujin, Akihiko and Masaru had moved very quickly and silently. The 7 chunins who had left the tent didn't hear anything suspicious from the tent. They did hear some noise when the 4 chunins fell to the ground, but it didn't alert them much as they guessed that their leaders were frustrated by the difficulty of the next mission.

Inside the tent, Akihiko looked at Datsuron and asked, "Who are you?"

Datsuron answered, "I am Datsuron, a follower of Lord Jashin."

Akihiko asked, "Who is lord Jashin?"

As Datsuron answered, pride could be felt in his voice, "He is the god who we worship. He will save humanity!"

His reply surprised the Konoha ninjas. They all looked at him like he was an idiot!

Mieko asked, "Is he being serious?"

Shunko exclaimed, "Did he kidnap hundreds of children for a fake god?"

Akihiko sighed and said, "There are lunatics like him all over the world."

He asked, "Tell me how many people you have with you and their power levels."

Datsuron said, "We are led by Zankoku. He is the Grand Priest and is organizing a ritual for Lord Jashin. He has 7 Priests under him including me. Each Priest has 3 to 7 devotees under them and every devotee has 3 to 7 servants serving them.

A Priest is as powerful as a Jounin, a Devotee is as powerful as a Chunin whereas Servants can go up against Genins.

In total, we have 37 devotees and 140 servants."

The number alarmed the Konoha ninjas. Masaru muttered, "7 Jounins, 36 Chunins and 140 Genins. They are as strong as a normal ninja clan."

The others nodded. This mission could no longer be classified as a rank A mission.

Fujin thought, 'Two consecutive missions getting upgraded to the next rank. I wonder if this one would result in casualties as well. I need to be on guard.'

Akihiko asked, "How strong is the Grand Priest?"

Datsuron said, "I am not aware of his strength."

Akihiko frowned. Fujin said, "If we assume that he is as strong as an Elite Jounin, then this mission would be very difficult."

For once, Mieko and Shunto didn't disagree with Fujin.

Akihiko sighed and said, "If I knew that this mission would be so difficult, I wouldn't have brought you kids along. Sadly, we have no choice but to act. Stay on guard."

He looked at Fujin, Mieko and Shunko and said, "You are still very young. So you aren't aware of how the Uchiha clan operates in the missions. See how the events play out carefully. Especially Mieko and Shunko. In the future, you will have to lead Uchiha squads into missions."

Both nodded obediently. Fujin too heard carefully and thought, 'I am intrigued. I hope he puts up a good show.'

Akihiko asked Datsuron, "Are the children you kidnapped still alive?"

He answered, "Yes."

Akihiko asked, "Where are they?"

Datsuron answered, "They have been imprisoned in the cave."

Akihiko asked, "Why did you kidnap them?"

Datsuron answered, "Zankoku-sama is conducting a ritual. For this ritual to be successful, we have to offer young kids to Lord Jashin. If he is successful, he will receive the blessing of Lord Jashin."

His answer angered Mieko and Shunko. Masaru and Akihiko looked composed. Fujin analyzed, 'Blessings of Jashin? Is this ritual the one that granted Hidan his immortality? Did he also have to kill hundreds of young kids or did he use a different method?'

Akihiko continued asking, "When will the children be sacrificed?"

Datsuron answered, "Zankoku-sama still needs another 175 children as sacrifices for his ritual to be successful. All sacrifices will have to be done at the same time."

Hearing that, the Konoha ninjas sighed in relief. Fujin said, "That means that they won't hurt the children. Instead, they would do everything they can to keep them safe."

Akihiko nodded, "Yes. We have time. The only worry will be if this Zankoku realized our threat and decides to kill the children before escaping."

That possibility put some pressure on them again. However, with the knowledge that the children will be safe, they knew that they can proceed with the mission without taking undue pressure or risks.

Akihiko looked at Datsuron and commanded, "Leave the tent. Make your remaining 4 followers follow you into an empty tent. And make them sit next to each other with their eyes closed."

Datsuron followed his instructions and left.

Akihiko looked at Fujin and said, "Fujin, follow me."

He disappeared underground and followed Datsuron. Fujin followed him.

Datsuron left the cave and looked at his followers and said, "Follow me."

The 4 devotees that had arrived out of the cave with him followed him. One of them asked, "Where are we going? And what happened to th..."

However, Datsuron harshly said, "Just follow me!"

His tone surprised the devotees. They thought, 'Normally he is very cordial with us. Did he get into an argument with Yasuhiro-sama for his mood to become so bad?'

Not wanting to upset him, they followed him silently. Datsuron soon entered an empty tent. His 4 devotees followed. Datsuron looked at them and said, "Sit down in a meditative position. Close your eyes and listen to what I have to say."

They nodded and followed his instructions. As soon as they sat and closed their eyes, Fujin launched Air bullets at everyone's hearts and brains. Not expecting any such attack, all 4 were hit. They all died without making a sound.

Fujin and Akihiko appeared from under the ground. Akihiko made a hand sign that buried all the dead bodies.

Fujin looked at Akihiko. His thoughts became heavy as he thought, 'His tactic... Don't tell me...'

Elsewhere, Masaru looked at Yasuhiro and instructed him the same. He followed Yasuhiro along with Mieko and Shunko through the ground. They used the same tactic. However, since Fujin wasn't with them, they had to cut their heads off from behind. They were able to do it successfully.

Akihiko looked at Fujin and said, "Transform into one of the devotees."

Fujin nodded and transformed. Akihiko checked his transformation and transformed into another devotee.

He looked at Datsuron and said, 'Lead us into the tents of others.'

Datsuron obeyed and left the tent as Fujin and Akihiko followed him.

Masaru too used the same tactic. In no time, all the remaining 11 people in various tents were dead. The two teams met. Masaru said, "Now we just have to deal with those 20 who are patrolling."

Akihiko nodded and asked Datsuron, "Can you call them back a few at a time?"

Datsuron replied, "No. Yasuhiro is responsible for Patrol teams."

Masaru asked Yasuhiro. He said, "Our patrol teams move in pairs. I can call them all back one by one."

Masaru said, "Do it."

Yasuhiro immediately began recalling the patrol teams one by one. The patrol teams were made exclusively of servants. They were all very weak. The Konoha ninjas killed them all without giving them any chance to alert anyone.

With all but the two Priests dead, they moved towards Sora who was analyzing the seals. Sora noticed them coming. Despite the disguise, he could recognize their chakra easily. He left the underground. Haru and Genji also followed him.

Sora said, "The cave has 120 seals inscribed in it. I will need some time to disarm them one by one without alerting their SealMaster."

Akihiko said, "We have these two under our control and they are ranked very high. So it may be better to just disguise as their followers and go in."

However, Sora shook his head and said, "No, one of the seals is an identification seal. The tattoos on their body act as an identity card for the seal. We won't be able to replicate it with the Transformation jutsu. Also, some of the seals are inscribed in a combination. So entering without disarming them could be lethal."

Akihiko frowned. He asked Datsuron, "How frequently do you guys travel in and out of the cave?"

He answered, "Everyone inside the cave is very busy with the ritual. So they don't come out frequently. I and Yasuhiro were responsible for deciding our targets and making the necessary preparations. Tomorrow, two more Priests, their Devotees and their Servants would leave the cave. One of them is responsible for combat, while the other specializes in reverse summoning. We would have left tomorrow for the next round of kidnapping."

Akihiko looked at Sora. Sora said, "That should be enough time. It's already evening. So we can assume that we would have around 10 hours at the very least. It should be more than enough for me to get rid of the seals."

Akihiko nodded and said, "Alright. We are already in enemy territory. So we can't rest. In case they decide to come out in large numbers for some reason, we will be in a tough spot if half of us are sleeping. So eat your food pills. We will stay up until the children are secured."

Everyone nodded and ate their food pills. Fujin asked Sora, "Can I observe you while you deal with the seals?"

Sora was surprised by the request. He asked, "Are you interested in Fuinjutsu?"

Fujin nodded. Sora said, "Alright. You can follow me."

Akihiko said, "In that case, we will leave the task of protecting Sora from any sneak attacks to you Fujin. The rest of us will keep an eye on the cave entrance."

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Chapter 177: The Battlefield!

Everyone nodded. Except for Fujin and Sora, the others took positions that would allow them to keep an eye on the cave entrance and help them in ambushing the enemy. Akihiko and Masaru also interrogated Yasuhiro and Datsuron about the interior of the cave. They drew up a rough map and also marked where the children were imprisoned. They also learnt that the SealMaster was a Priest as well. And he would never leave the cave.

Meanwhile, Sora began releasing the seals that he had observed and put fake seals in their place instead so that the SealMaster inside the cave wouldn't be alerted. Fujin followed him and observed his work properly. He was surprised.

Fujin thought, 'Wow! His mastery of the seals is way beyond mine! No wonder he was so confident. I wonder if he is a Grandmaster in Fuinjutsu.'

Fujin observed him very carefully. Though Sora used some seals that Fujin didn't know, most of the seals he used were the ones that Fujin knew or had read in the library. Though the seals were similar, Sora used many different methods to use the seals. What intrigued Fujin the most is how he placed fake seals and the speed at which he made them. The fake seal was placed almost instantly. Fujin's knowledge about seals grew every minute.

Sora noticed Fujin observing him. He thought, 'Looks like he is intrigued by the seals. Unfortunately, Fuinjutsu is very boring. He will be bored in some time.'

However, to his surprise, Fujin didn't lose his concentration for hours. In the end, he couldn't resist but ask, "Fujin, are you interested in becoming a SealMaster?"

Fujin nodded and said, "Yes. I have studied some seals from the Library. Though I am still a long way from becoming a SealMaster."

If it was earlier, Fujin would have never exposed his skill with the seals. However, after inscribing his home in ten times more seals than what the Jashinists inscribed on their base, it was only a matter of time before his skills became known. So he didn't bother hiding it actively anymore.

Sora was surprised. He thought, 'Now it makes sense why he has been observing my actions with so much concentration.'

He said, "That's good. If you have any questions, you may ask me."

Fujin immediately thanked him, "Thank You, Uncle Sora."

Fujin was aware that an opportunity to ask queries to someone as skilled as Sora in Fuinjutsu would be very rare. Fujin asked him for every doubt that he had. Surprisingly, Sora answered every question patiently while doing his job. This continued until 4:30 AM when Sora was finally done.

The group soon gathered together. Sora said, "The seals won't alert them of our presence any longer. We can enter the cave. I also added some seals that would help us deal with any more seals they might have inscribed inside the cave. So I would be able to neutralize them in much less time."

Akihiko nodded and said, "Good work. But, let's wait here for now. The two groups who would leave the cave will become suspicious if they don't find anyone here. So we will kill them first. Set up a battlefield here. I want them trapped outside the cave and also ensure that they won't be able to send any messages outside. One of them specializes in Reverse Summoning. So shut that down as well."

Sora smirked and said, "Alright."

He immediately got to work. He began inscribing seals in front of the cave entrance. Once they were done, he inscribed seals all around the place. There were seals to block sounds, chakra, light, etc., seals to create an illusion for anyone who'd watch from outside to prevent any suspicion, and seals that prevented summoning and reverse summoning.

In addition, he also created barriers to surround the entire place. It included a barrier on the ground to prevent any Earth element users from escaping underground. He also sealed the escape to the sky by creating another barrier to prevent anyone from sending messenger birds or messages through any such means.

In half an hour, Sora had inscribed seals in the area between the cave and the tents. Fujin watched thinking, 'Fuck! This is like those battlefield killer moves I read in novels! Stepping into this area and engaging in a battle with him would almost be a death sentence! Unless the enemy is significantly stronger than him, there is no way to get out. Worst case, he can still trap them here temporarily.'

Fujin immediately made a decision, 'I want it! But not this one. It is too slow. Once I reach the Grandmaster level, I'll create a Battlefield that I can deploy in seconds! It will be my hunting ground!'

With his work done, Sora approached Akihiko and said, "It's done."

Masaru smiled and said, "Let's kill those bastards."

Other than Akihiko, Masaru and Fujin, the other four weren't aware of what was happening.

Mieko asked, "What exactly did you do, Uncle Sora?"

Sora said, "I have inscribed seals in order to create the perfect ambush spot. Once they leave the cave, they will be trapped. We will be able to kill them all."

The four were impressed.

Akihiko said, "But we will kill them as soon as we can. No wasting time. I am having a bad feeling about this God of theirs. Sora, tell everyone their spots. And keep Fujin and Mieko together. They will begin the ambush."

Sora nodded. He assigned positions to stand for everyone. Once everyone was in place, he said, "As long as you are standing at the assigned spots, the enemy won't be able to see, hear or sense you. Of course, when you attack, they can guess from where the attack is coming."

He looked at Mieko and Fujin and said, "I will put up a barrier against the cave entrance once everyone leaves. Once you see the barrier, you can attack."

They both nodded and stayed in their position. Their position was directly next to the entrance. Once the barrier was up, they would launch their jutsu. Everyone else was standing in such spots that they wouldn't get in the line of fire. They waited patiently for the Jashinists to leave the cave.

They waited for half an hour, then an hour, then 2 hours! However, no one left the cave. Mieko was very annoyed. She complained, "When will those lazy asses come out of the cave?"

Fujin sighed and said, "They aren't gonna come faster if you keep yelling."

Mieko's shoulder dropped. She muttered, "Maybe they would if I left this stupid battlefield."

Fujin looked at her and wondered what Sora would think if he heard what Mieko said. Thanks to the seals in their spot, other than them, the others didn't hear what they were speaking. So he alone had to hear her complaints!

Finally, at around 7:30 AM, some people began appearing from the cave. All Konoha ninjas readied themselves for a battle. They watched carefully as the Jashinists were leaving the cave.

In all, 35 people left the cave. 2 of them were Priests, 9 were devotees and 24 were servants. As they left the cave, they entered Sora's battlefield. However, not a single person felt anything strange. Some left in silence, some were chatting casually and a few were excited about kidnapping more children and separating them from their parents. They talked as if it would be the greatest offering to their God.

Sora and Akihiko paid close attention to the entrance of the cave. Their Sharingans observed as deep into the entrance as they could. As soon as the last person entered the battlefield, Akihiko nodded. Sora made a hand sign and a barrier sealed them, cutting all access to the outside world.

Fujin and Mieko saw it. Both immediately built up a huge chakra!

'Wind Release: Infinite Breakthrough Jutsu'

'Fire Release: Majestic Destroyer Flame'

Mieko converted a quarter of her chakra into fire and expelled it from her mouth. The Jashinists weren't expecting any attack. Suddenly feeling the heat on their back shocked them. They turned around to see a Sea of Flames heading at them!

However, the very next moment, a massive wind hit the sea of flames. It made the fire burn even more fiercely and made it spread out. In addition, the winds themselves were extremely sharp! The wide range of the jutsu meant that none of them would be able to dodge it.

The Jashinists who were closer to the cave had no chance of resisting. They were burned alive! Luckily for the two Priests, they were among the first ones to leave the cave. They immediately made hand signs to use defensive moves.

One of them used the Water Prison jutsu to protect himself, while the other slammed his hands on the ground to use Earth Wall jutsu. Some of the devotees also tried using jutsus. 3 tried escaping underground, 4 decided to hide behind their priests while 2 panicked and couldn't do anything.

Unfortunately, the attempt to pour chakra into the ground to raise an Earth Wall by the Priest was blocked by the barrier. The 3 devotees who tried to escape underground were also blocked!

They were shocked. They looked ahead to see dozens of servants being engulfed by the fire. The priest looked at his fellow Priest and immediately jumped into his Water Prison. The other priest allowed him in.

The Fire finally engulfed them. The Priests sighed in relief when the fire didn't penetrate the Water Prison. However, all of a sudden a huge cut appeared on the Water Prison. It entered half a foot into the prison. The Priests, who had just put their guard down, immediately began pouring their chakra into the Water Prison.

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Chapter 178: That's Just Pathetic!

The fire died after around a minute. The Priest finally stopped the Water Prison jutsu. They looked around them and were stunned. It looked like a picture from hell! All their servants were dead. The stench of their dead bodies burning lingered in the air. 6 of their Devotees were dead as well. The remaining 3 had terrifying burns on their bodies.

Fujin looked at their expressions. He could see the fear on their faces. He sighed and thought, 'In a world like this, I can understand people being cruel. After all, there are so many wars, so many evil schemes and thousands of people with superpowers. There will be people who have horrible pasts. There will be people who are ambitious. However, if you are cruel to ones weaker than you, then you should be prepared for the same happening to you when you meet someone stronger. These guys are cruel to those civilians and children but are terrified while facing us. Now that's just pathetic.'

The Jashinists were usually the ones who looked at others in contempt. However, if they could hear the contempt Fujin had for them, they might die just of shame.

The remaining Jashinists noticed Fujin and Mieko who had left their spots earlier. One of the devotees yelled, "WHO ARE Y...?"

However, even before they completed their question, a kunai pierced through the hearts of each of the remaining devotees.

At the same time, Akihiko and Masaru flickered in front of the two Priests and cast a Genjutsu on them. Despite being on alert due to the crazy Ambush, they weren't on guard against the Sharingan. Both immediately fell under their Genjutsu. The ambush battle was won in less than a couple of minutes!

Except for Akihiko, Sora and Masaru, the others were surprised at how quickly the fight was over.

Mieko exclaimed, "They were defeated so quickly!"

Fujin thought, 'I was right. The utility of this battlefield is crazy. I have to make one too.'

Masaru smirked and said, "That's the magic of Sora's battlefield. The enemies always get caught off guard. And against the Fire-Wind combo, only Water or Earth jutsus could protect them. But, the barrier blocks most of the Earth jutsus. So it leaves just one element to defend within a fraction of a second."

Akihiko looked at Fujin and Mieko and said, "Your combination jutsu is very good. It pretty much finished the fight."

After praising them, Akihiko and Masaru began interrogating the Priests. Fujin looked at Mieko and asked, "Which jutsu did you use? It was much stronger than your Fireball or Fire Dragon jutsu."

Mieko smirked and answered, "This is one of the strongest jutsus of my clan. It is called Majestic Destroyer Flame jutsu!"

Fujin was surprised. He thought, 'No wonder that felt slightly similar. It's the one Madara used against the ninja army. I thought it'd be rank A or S jutsu. Then again, the scale of her jutsu is probably not even a tenth of what Madara did in the war even with my aid and yet she looks so exhausted.'

Mieko looked at Fujin who was in his thoughts and said, "What are you thinking?"

Fujin replied, "Nothing. Your jutsu is very strong. And it combines perfectly with my Infinite Breakthrough jutsu. It is much better than when we used the Great Breakthrough alongside Fireball or our elemental dragon jutsus."

Mieko nodded and said, "Yes, it spreads like a sea. That's why the combination got stronger."

Fujin looked at her and said, "Yeah, but it also drains a lot of your chakra."

Mieko said, "Yeah. I lost a quarter of my chakra. Though it'll be fine as the soldier pill should regenerate my chakra soon."

Fujin nodded. His chakra was already recovering.

Akihiko and Masaru interrogated the priests similar to how they interrogated the other two. The information they received was the same.

Masaru said, "We won't get any new information from them."

Akihiko nodded, "Yeah."

He grabbed a tanto and swiped it horizontally. The head of the Priest he was interrogating flew in the air. Fujin observed carefully, thinking, 'I wonder if he'd get up like Hidan.'

Masaru asked, "Why did you kill him? Won't it be convenient to use them?"

Akihiko shook his head and said, "They are supposed to leave today. If we use them to infiltrate the cave, it will raise suspicions. And since it will cause suspicion, it's better to just use the Transformation jutsu. Besides, controlling Jounins costs a lot of chakra."

Masaru said, "Alright."

He killed the other priest.

Datsuron and Yasuhiro were also beheaded.

Fujin was surprised. He wondered, 'I was sure that they would use them to infiltrate. Was my analysis wrong? Anyways, at the very least, none of them has Hidan's immortality. I wonder if the Grand Priest would be any different.'

Akihiko laid a map on the ground and said, "Take a close look at this."

Everyone gathered around the map. This was the map of the interior of the cave that he made after interrogating Datsuron and Yasuhiro.

Shunko commented, "This cave is huge."

Akihiko nodded. He said, "The cave has 3 layers and has a lot of room on each layer. The lowest layer is the one where the Grand Priest is making the arrangements for the ritual. All the remaining 3 Priests, including the SealMaster, are helping him. The children are kept at that level too."

Fujin asked, "Will we directly infiltrate into the lowest layer? Or will we kill off the devotees and Servants on the layers above?"

Akihiko answered, "Though their numbers sounded high, their fighting power is quite weak. The Priests aren't as strong as us Jounins, while the devotees and servants are very weak compared to any of us. A good Fire-Wind combination jutsu can wipe them all out. So I am not worried about their interference.

We will focus on moving to the lowest level after making some preparations. The major issue is that all the children aren't kept together. As you can see, at the lowest layer, there is one central room and 5 rooms surrounding it, forming a perfect Pentagon around the center room. The children have been divided into these 5 rooms equally.

Sora, you and Haru will be responsible for keeping the kids safe when we reach the lowest level. You two will have to make shadow clones so that you can cover all 5 rooms. Others will help me in defeating the enemy."

Everyone nodded. Akihiko made a hand sign and disappeared underground. Others followed him. They entered the mountain. The group skipped the first layer and entered the second layer without any obstacles. However, the lowest layer was protected by some more seals.

Sora said, "I will need around 10 minutes to resolve them."

Akihiko replied, "Take your time. Just don't alert them. Haru, stay with him. Others come with me."

The group split into two once again. After moving some distance, Akihiko stopped and looked straight ahead at a cavern. He said, "According to the intel, the devotees of the SealMaster stay in this cavern. And, he is the only Priest that has 7 Devotees."

Shunko asked, "Should we kill them?"

Akihiko said, "No, they are useful to us alive."

He looked at the three chunins and said, "Keep an eye on the entrance. If someone enters, let them come in and kill them silently."

The three chunins nodded.

Deep in the cavern, 3 men were eating breakfast. However, their meal looked to be a lot for a morning breakfast.

One of them said, "The work has been so high lately. We had to stay up all night."

Another sighed and replied, "Yeah, and we have to get back to work by noon. I hope Zankoku-sama's ritual gets completed soon."

As they were talking, they saw a few silhouettes. They quickly looked at them and recognized them instantly. They stood up immediately and asked, "Datsuron-sama, why are you here?"

In front of them, Datsuron stood along with 2 of his devotees. All three wondered what they were doing in this part of the base. But, suddenly the eyes of Datsuron and his devotees turned red. The three weren't able to take their eyes off them and fell into a Genjutsu.

Masaru smirked, "Easy as always."

Akihiko nodded. The Uchihas cast more Genjutsu and left.

The group moved around the cave. They put 5 devotees and 12 servants under Genjutsu before returning back to where Sora was. Sora said, "I can deactivate the seals now."

Akihiko said, "Wait a few minutes."

Sora knew what Akihiko was planning. He nodded.

Soon, 3 devotees suddenly moved from the 2nd layer into the lowest layer of the cave. Due to the seals, there were no physical guards present anywhere in the cave. After entering the lowest level, they went towards the SealMaster.

Akihiko said, "Deactivate the seals without letting him catch on."

Sora deactivated the seals and placed fake seals in place. Immediately, all 8 of them headed to the lowest level while still staying underground. Sora and Haru split off from the group and headed to where the children were kept. The others headed towards the grand priest.

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Chapter 179: A Blood Dome?

In the central room at the lowest level of the cave, the Grand Priest was meditating at the center of the cave. The Grand Priest was from the same generation as Konoha's Legendary Sannins. His body was extremely muscular. However, he had numerous sword scars and burn scars all over his body. Even his face had two huge sword scars forming an X on his face. In addition, his left cheek had a burn scar that covered it entirely.

The room was quite unique as well. There was a circle dug into the ground that surrounded the entire room. It was about 3 inches deep and 6 inches wide. 5 straight lines were dug from this circle into the 5 rooms that surrounded the central room with the same depth and width. In addition, an equilateral triangle was dug such that it was inscribed in the circle. There were also 7 pillars in the room. They were all equidistant from where the Grand Priest was meditating.

Most importantly, blood flowed through the circle and the triangle. In addition, the ground and the walls were covered with mysterious symbols. The devotees and the servants were working on drawing even more symbols as the Priests supervised.

On one of the pillars, an old man sat. He had a long white beard that extended up to his abdomen. However, in contrast to his beard, his head was as bald as a desert landscape. Like the Grand Priest, he too had a few sword scars on his body. However, unlike him, the old man's body was very fragile. He wore a clean silver robe and observed everyone around him while stroking his beard.

He thought, 'The preparations for the ritual are almost over. Soon, we will only be missing the children. Once Datsuron and the rest bring the children, we will add the blood of the children from the 5 rooms to this room and begin the ritual. Then we can begin the ritual.'

The old man, who thought about killing 375 children with no remorse or pity, was the one who had placed seals in the cave. As he was observing everyone's work, he noticed 3 devotees approaching him. He looked at them and asked, "Why aren't you three resting?"

One of the three devotees laughed awkwardly and said, "Isamu-sama, the ritual is so close to completion. We were excited and couldn't sleep. So we decided to help complete all the preparations before sleeping."

The old man looked at them and thought, 'Not bad. Unlike the other priests, all my devotees are extremely dedicated to Lord Jashin!'

He said, "Good, with your help, the work should be done in the next three hours. Aid your fellow devotees."

The trio nodded and went past his pillar towards other devotees. Everyone continued working as normal. However, they were ignorant about the calamity that was about to befall them.

The Konoha ninjas were hiding in the walls of the room. Fujin concentrated chakra in his eyes while others had their Sharingan activated. They were waiting for Sora and Haru. In a few minutes, Sora set up barriers to isolate the rooms that held the kids from the central room.

As soon as the barrier was up, Fujin and Mieko built up their chakra and exited the cave walls. Their entrance instantly attracted dozens of eyes. All the 3 Priests looked at them too. The Grand Priest also opened his eyes.

However, before anyone could act, their eyes could only see a firestorm. Fujin and Mieko both used their respective jutsus.

'Fire Release: Majestic Destroyer Flame'

'Wind Release: Infinite Breakthrough Jutsu'

The combination jutsu threatened to consume everyone in the circular room. The sudden attack caused a lot of panic. Many tried making a jutsu, but the short time meant that most couldn't. Only two people managed to act in time.

Isamu made a hand seal. Immediately, a barrier appeared across the room. It divided the room into two, with Mieko and Fujin on one side and all the Priests and the Grand Priest on the other side.

The Grand Priest Zankoku was the other one to act. He controlled the blood in the room to rise up and act as a barrier. However, the short time meant that he couldn't infuse much chakra into the blood to make the barrier sturdy.

Fujin's winds blasted through the blood barriers. The Firestorm hit Isamu's barrier and was halted. However, all the Jashinists on their side of the Barrier were burnt alive. Many painful screams could be heard in the fire. Their screams unnerved the Jashinists. The kidnapped children also heard the screams and began crying.

All the devotees and servants who were alive gathered around their Priests. Everyone took out their weapons. Only Isamu's devotees were all alive as they were working behind him. The other two Priests lost half of their subordinates.

Isamu said loudly, "It looks like the rats from the Land of Grass have found our hideout. Don't panic! This is our base. They will be sacrificed to Lord Jashin."

However, Zankoku looked menacingly at Isamu and asked, "How did you not know that there are intruders in our hideout, Isamu?"

Zankoku's menacing tone frightened him. He looked back at him and said, "Zankoku-sama, I am not sure how they infiltrated so deep without alerting me. I had inscribed all the seals properly."

He truly didn't understand how they infiltrated the hideout without triggering a single seal. After all, he had inscribed over a hundred seals in the cave!

Zankoku said, "Let us first deal with these insects. Then I'll take care of you."

Isamu's expression was grim. He focused his eyes beyond the barrier. A Firestorm was still raging in that part of the room. He thought, 'How the fuck did these rats appear here? I need to finish them off personally. Otherwise, I might be the unlucky person to suffer Zankoku-sama's wrath!'

He made a hand sign intending to activate the seals that he had placed in the room. However, at that time, two swords pierced through his body!

This sequence of actions shocked all the Jashinists. They looked at Isamu with a stunned expressions. Even Zankoku was shocked. He initially suspected that Isamu had betrayed them. But now Isamu was betrayed by his own devotees!

Isamu's face was full of disbelief. He turned his head around and looked at his two devotees. He asked, "W..

H....Y...?"

He died without understanding why his obedient devotees killed him.

The remaining 5 devotees of Isamu were the ones who had the highest impact other than Isamu himself. They looked at their fellow devotees in rage and disbelief. One of them yelled, "Why did you kill our Priest?"

One of the killers shouted, "This perverted old leecher killed my mother!"

The other one shouted, "He killed my friends. He is as sick as that pedophile Jashin!"

Their words shocked everyone. They were filled with rage. Zankoku shouted, "How dare you commit blasphemy?"

Akihiko saw these interactions and smirked. He thought, 'It's so easy to rile them up.'

Their small argument caused a distraction. Zankoku was about to kill them when he heard a cracking sound. He looked to see that the barrier that Isamu had erected was getting broken. Without Isamu providing chakra to it, the barrier could no longer hold the combination jutsu back.

A frown formed on his face as he made a hand sign. All the blood around him rose and formed a dome with him at the center. The dome also covered the other two priests and their subordinates. However, the subordinates of Isamu were left without any protection.

With Isamu dead, his devotees understood that they wouldn't get any help from Zankoku. They looked at Isamu's killers in anger while making hand signs to use a jutsu to protect themselves. However, the two who killed Isamu began attacking the devotees who were making hand signs. This enraged them even more.

They shouted, "You killed our Priest and now you two want to eliminate us too?"

In a rage, 4 devotees attacked the two 'traitors'. The two traitors resisted. They were about to engage in an all-out fight when 2 kunais pierced the back of two of those devotees. They turned around to see one of their fellow devotees killing them.

They exclaimed, "You too?"

At that instant, the barrier finally broke! The firestorm hit the blood dome and the subordinates of Isamu. All of Isamu's subordinates were burned alive like the others who had already died. However, the blood dome stayed strong. Fujin and Mieko's combination jutsu wasn't able to pierce through it at all.

Fujin thought, 'This is new. He is using the blood that was flowing in the room like a Water element user would use water. I wonder if all water affinity ninjas can do this or is this something different? Also, his chakra is very strange. I have never sensed a chakra like his. It's quite high but is unstable. And it gives a different feeling as compared to normal chakra.'

From within the blood dome, Zankoku too observed Fujin and Mieko.

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Chapter 180: A Bloody Battle

Zankoku observed the two kids as he thought, 'Hidden Leaf headbands... And that girl is an Uchiha. There should be more. No wonder that old buffoon's followers betrayed him.'

As he was analyzing, Zankoku immediately looked at the ground below. He muttered, "As I thought."

Wanting to take advantage of the combination jutsu, Akihiko and the rest decided to do another surprise attack from the underground. However, due to having meditated in this room for several days and due to the preparations he had made for the ritual, Zankoku noticed a few ninjas infiltrating from the ground.

He focused chakra on his right leg. His leg was covered in a red aura. He raised his right leg and slammed it down with all his power. He decided, 'It's impossible to conduct the ritual here. They will keep coming like flies no matter how many I defeat. But, I am definitely killing these fuckers who destroyed my ritual!'

He shouted, "Escape the cave!"

Zankoku kicked down at the center of the cave. Cracks began appearing. They expanded without slowing down. A shockwave was also sent into the ground towards Akihiko and company. They all were hit by the shockwave.

Fujin and Mieko watched as the cracks moved towards them. Both flickered and entered into the walls at the same time and used Earth Instantaneous Body jutsu to escape the collapsing cave. Akihiko and the rest were hit by the shockwave but weren't much injured. They too employed means to escape the cave.

As the cracks spread, they also reached the 5 rooms where the children were held. Sora and Haru and their clones watched with grim faces. Sora had only created one barrier to stop any random attacks from entering there. Fujin and Mieko's combination jutsu hit all the barriers that he had created. But, this barrier won't protect the kids if the entire cave was collapsing!

Sora, Haru and the kids noticed as the ground began cracking. The children immediately began crying loudly. Sora and his clones desperately made hand signs. After making hand signs, they slammed their hands on the floor. A barrier appeared along the floor, barely protecting the kids from any harm.

However, at that time, the walls had begun cracking. Haru and his clones immediately placed their hands on the walls and poured Earth chakra into the walls to strengthen them slightly and prevent them from collapsing. Sora and his clones used this window of time to create more barriers.

They first made a barrier along the ceiling to prevent any rocks from falling on the kids. They followed by creating more barriers to protect the children from all sides and ensure that the floor and the ceiling were connected properly.

Right when the last barrier was erected, the entire cave collapsed! Fortunately, due to the barriers, the children were safe. Sora and Haru were breathing heavily. But a smile could be seen on their faces. The kids were safe. However, despite being safe, the kids were still wailing loudly. After all, the experience was very scary.

Sora and Haru looked at them. Haru and his clone made a hand sign. They cast genjutsu on all the children and made them fall asleep.

When the kids fell asleep, he and his clones all fell to the ground. Sora looked at him and said, "You have lost a lot of your chakra."

Haru replied while breathing heavily, "Yeah, I poured almost all my chakra into the walls."

Sora said, "Yeah, good job. If you hadn't, I wouldn't have managed to complete the barriers in time. Anyways, take a rest. The soldier pills should begin recovering our chakra, but we won't be able to participate in the fight above. We will ensure that the kids stay safe."

Haru nodded and sat in a meditative pose. Sora too joined him. While meditating, he thought, 'That chakra spike just before the impact was different. I guess there is more depth to this god after all. That said, he will be no match against the Sharingan. This mission is over.'

Fujin and Mieko were the first ones to leave the cave and appear outside. They saw as the Mountain in front of them crumbled.

Fujin said, "That guy is much stronger than I expected."

Mieko nodded, "Yeah, his chakra is almost as high as Sensei. And it doesn't seem humane!"

Fujin agreed, "Yeah, his chakra makes me feel sick. I wonder why that is."

At that time, Akihiko and his group emerged from the underground. There were no casualties in their group. A few seconds later, the Jashinists also began appearing. Every Jashinists who was at the lowest level survived. However, in the above layers, all the servants died. Only the 7 devotees made it out alive. Their group now contained 1 Grand Priest, 2 Priests, 8 devotees and 20 servants

Akihiko looked at the Jashinists and said, "Mieko, save your chakra. Fujin, give me a big one."

Without a word, Fujin used another Infinite Breakthrough jutsu at the Jashinists. Akihiko followed by expelling a huge amount of fire into Fujin's jutsu. Though their combination wasn't as good as Fujin and Mieko's, it was still very threatening. The wide range meant that it couldn't be dodged.

Zankoku snorted, "How many times will you use the same trick?"

He joined his hands together, almost as if he was praying. His chakra suddenly spiked! A few gallons of blood appeared from the ground and began floating in the air.

'Bloody Shield jutsu!'

'Bloody Death jutsu!'

The blood immediately took the form of a large screen to block the incoming jutsu. The Konoha ninjas thought that would be it. However, small needle heads formed on the surface of the screen. Thousands of needles made of blood were launched at the Konoha ninjas.

Fujin expected the firestorm to deflect all the blood needles. However, they just pierced through the firestorm with ease without changing directions. Masaru stepped forward and slammed his hands on the ground.

'Earth Wall Jutsu'

A giant Earth Wall appeared in front of the group. However, the blood needles pierced through them as well. The Konoha ninjas were surprised. Fujin immediately flickered out of the way. So did the rest except Shunko. He was slow to react. His eyes saw the Wall being penetrated, but his body was slow to react. His sharingans watched the dense blood needles coming at him and he barely moved to dodge the attack.

A bunch of blood needles scratched his body, leaving him with 10-12 cuts.

Fujin wondered, 'What the heck is with this blood? It's almost as penetrative as my Wind Vacuum Technique jutsus!'

A similar thought ran through the minds of the Uchihis as well. The jutsu was very lethal. Akihiko quickly scanned Shunko with his Sharingan. The wounds on him weren't lethal. He looked at Zankoku and had a bad feeling. A huge grin could be seen on Zankoku's face as he made the Seal of Confrontation with his left hand.

Akihiko followed his gaze and looked at Shunko. His eyes widened as he saw the chakra gathering on the spots where the cuts had appeared. He yelled, "Shunko, move away!"

Shunko didn't understand why he said so but still jumped backwards. Unfortunately, 12 explosions took place on his body at the same time! His loud shriek could be heard! Akihiko immediately flickered next to him but stayed at arm's length. He created a shadow clone to check on him.

The Jashinists smirked at seeing their leader handling the enemies by themselves. Their morale was raised. They all got on the attack. However, even before they could get on the attack, Fujin, Masaru and Mieko got on the attack. They didn't know what had happened with Shunko. So they stayed clear of all blood controlled by Zankoku.

Fujin attacked them with the Air Bullet jutsu from a range, while Masaru and Mieko used Phoenix Sage Fire Jutsu. Their aim was to restrict the movement and kill off the weaker enemies.

Unlike the earlier instance, this wasn't a large-scale jutsu. So Zankoku didn't waste his chakra to put up a huge defense. Without his help, the Servants were sitting ducks for the Konoha ninjas. 12 Servants died in this attack. The Devotees and Priests were safe, but their jutsus were disturbed.

Akihiko and Genji looked at Shunko in this short window of time. They examined his injuries. Fortunately, his life wasn't in danger. He was still conscious.

Akihiko said, "It looks like when he was cut, some of the blood that guy controlled was left on Shunko's body. Only that blood exploded. That's why the injuries aren't lethal."

Genji nodded. He agreed with the analysis.

Akihiko said, "Carry him away from here. He is in no condition to fight."

Genji nodded, "Alright, I'll take care of him."

He carried Shunko and flickered away.

Akihiko looked at Zankoku with a serious look on his face as he wondered, 'What the heck is his jutsu? I thought he controlled external blood similar to Water. But this looked more like the explosion release than a variant of Water release.'

He noticed Fujin, Mieko and Masaru keeping the enemy busy and decided, 'It doesn't matter. This farce has gone on too long. Time to end this battle!'