

Calamity 201

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 201: Hiruzen's Arrangements

In the Hokage Office, Hiruzen, Danzo, Koharu and Homura sat. Everyone had a serious look on their face. They had been up all night ensuring that the village stays calm.

Homura said with a sigh, "Itachi stopped the coup. What are you planning to announce to the village, Hiruzen?"

Koharu said, "We will also have to build a new police force. And we have to come up with a reasonable explanation to give to the clan leaders and the council."

Hiruzen replied, "I have thought about it. But first..."

He looked at Danzo and said, "I hadn't issued the mission to Itachi. So effectively right now, the Root will be disbanded. The Root ninjas will be placed under my command in the Anbu."

This news surprised Koharu and Homura. They looked at Danzo. They wanted to oppose but realized why Hiruzen took this step. After all, Danzo had overstepped his boundaries too much. However, they didn't want the Root to be dissolved. Both looked into each other's eyes, tactically agreeing to ask Hiruzen to cut Danzo some slack. However, their short gaze didn't escape Hiruzen's eyes.

Danzo began arguing, "Hiruzen..."

However, Hiruzen cut him off right away and firmly said, "No more discussion. My decision is final. You still remember who the Hokage is, right?"

As he spoke, his chakra began exerting pressure on the entire room. Danzo, Homura and Koharu immediately felt an intense pressure bearing down on their old bodies. Breathing became tougher for them as they looked at Hiruzen.

The Anbu who were on guard outside the room also felt an intense chakra. They looked towards the room with sweat gathering behind their masks. They didn't know what was happening in the room but their minds, which were in chaos due to the unimaginable massacre the night before, calmed down. All had the same thought, 'As long as we have Lord Hokage, we have no reason to worry.'

In the room, the elders analyzed whether they should resist Hiruzen's chakra. After all, Hiruzen hadn't displayed his full power. If they decided to, they could counter the current pressure. However, Homura and Koharu decided against it. If they did, Hiruzen would just overpower them. Homura and Koharu were reminded of the massive difference between their strength and authority when compared to Hiruzen.

Homura said, "Alright."

Koharu also nodded. Hiruzen stopped exerting his chakra. The pressure in the room was slowly lifted.

Hiruzen said, "Uchiha Sasuke has woken up. He talked about his interaction with Itachi. Itachi claimed that he did this to test his power. We will report that to the village and the council. Though some clan leaders will realize that something is off and might even figure out the truth, I doubt they would speak of it."

Everyone in the room understood that Hiruzen was speaking of Shikaku. He continued, "As for the police force, establishing a new one will require a lot of work and manpower. Also, the common people were upset at how the Uchiha policed them. So I have decided to abolish it too. Instead, the Anbu will take up that responsibility."

Koharu said, "Even with the Root, the Anbu won't have a lot of manpower. Are you planning to expand the Anbu?"

Hiruzen nodded, "In a month and a half after the flames of this event settle down, I'll recruit more chunins into the Anbu. The Uchiha clan had the highest number of Jounins and Elite Jounins. We will have to invest a lot of resources into the existing chunins and raise them to the Jounin rank as soon as we can. Even if we don't promote them officially, we have to ensure that they have Jounin-level fighting capabilities."

Homura asked, "What about the other villages? Though preventing the Coup has conserved our strength, other villages may have some evil ideas as we have lost the Uchiha clan."

Hiruzen replied, "Suna is still weak and Kiri is involved in their internal battles. They aren't in a position to do anything. The only concerns are Iwa and Kumo. But, they are wary of each other. So they won't make a move eit..."

Danzo interrupted him, "I disagree. Kumo must have already begun making plans to take advantage of us. Have you forgotten what they did after Orochimaru left? Let me keep the control on Root and I will ensure that they can never start anything."

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "Even if they do, they will only probe us. As long as we respond according to what they do, we should be fine. Besides, instead of getting greedy for our lands, they would be more concerned about a rogue S rank ninja who could massacre the entire Uchiha clan. By the time anyone is ready to make a move, we would already have defenses in place to deter them."

The group discussed and debated a lot of other issues before they began talking about the remaining Uchiha children.

Hiruzen said, "Itachi requested that they would be looked after properly and be integrated properly into the village so that this event never has to be repeated. He also hoped that the surviving Uchis would be well trained."

Koharu said, "Well, we first have to move them out of the Uchiha compound. Letting them live there will just bring back the nightmares."

Homura nodded and said, "We will also have to ensure their safety. Otherwise another incident like the Hyuga one could happen."

Hiruzen nodded and said, "I thought about this issue. I have decided to have 4 Anbu squads keep a watch on them at all times."

The elders were surprised. Koharu said, "4? 16 Anbu ninjas for just 35 children? That's a huge waste of our manpower, Hiruzen."

Hiruzen replied, "It is. But it's the least we can do for Itachi after what he has sacrificed for the village."

Koharu immediately stopped speaking. Compared to what Itachi had done, 4 Anbu squads were really not worth mentioning. Hiruzen continued, "I will move them to their old clan compound so that they won't be on the outskirts of the village and have an easier time navigating to the academy."

In addition, I will employ some civilians permanently to look after them until they graduate. I'll also hire some retired ninjas to train them properly. Considering the trauma that they went through, it is likely that most of them will awaken the Sharingan. So with proper training, in two decades, at least half of them will become Jounins."

The elders were satisfied by Hiruzen's arrangements. They ended the meeting and got to work.

In Fujin's house, Teru asked, "Do you two want to continue as a team?"

Hoka and Fujin were silent. After some time, Hoka said, "No. Mieko completed our team with her skills with Fire Release and Genjutsu. We could find someone who is good at Fire jutsus but finding someone who is also good at Genjutsu will be very difficult."

Fujin nodded in agreement.

Hoka sighed and continued, "Not to mention, we will miss her if we stay in the same team. It could affect our concentration on the mission and be bad for us."

Teru said, "Yeah, I had the same worry."

He looked at Hoka and Fujin and said, "I was a bit sceptical of the team when you approached me, Fujin. But I joined as it seemed like a fun idea. I am glad that I agreed that day. It's unfortunate that it ended this way. Who would have imagined something like this would happen?"

Fujin and Hoka sighed and nodded, "Yeah."

The three said goodbyes. All three were sad. Fujin sighed, 'No point in being dejected and wasting time. After all, it was my decision to not interfere. It's time to get back to training. And time to take the next step.'

He entered his basement to continue his training.

In the afternoon, Hiruzen made an announcement. The entire blame was put on Itachi's head. His image was painted as a bloodthirsty lunatic. Following the announcement, they participated in the council meeting.

3 days after the massacre, a funeral was held for the deceased Uchiha clan members. All the Uchiha orphans had woken up and were present. All of them were crying. The entire place was filled with their cries. And with all the Uchihas dead, they didn't have any relatives to comfort them.

A lot of other ninjas also showed up. Fujin, Hoka, Teru and Renjiro were also present. So were all the Academy teachers. Renjiro looked very sad. Fujin observed the Uchiha orphans. Unsurprisingly, other than Sasuke, he didn't recognize anyone.

After the ceremony and mourning, everyone began leaving. Only a few stayed back. Renjiro, Fujin and Hoka stood in silence in front of Mieko's grave, paying their last respect to her.

After some time, Renjiro broke the silence. Fujin and Hoka could feel the sadness in his voice. He said, "I never spoke about this with you. Before you, I had trained another group of Academy students."

Fujin and Hoka listened to his words carefully.

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Renjiro continued, "They weren't as talented as you three. But they were very cheerful and worked hard. After two years of training under me, they were all promoted to chunins. I was very proud and fond of them.

Unfortunately, at the start of the third great ninja war, the army they were a part of was ambushed by an elite army of Kumogakure led by the current Raikage and the Jinchuriki of Eight Tailed Beast. The entire army was annihilated with no survivors. We never even got their dead bodies back."

He stayed silent for some time. Fujin and Hoka didn't disturb him. He continued, "In the war, I was deployed on the coastline the entire time. So I never had any opportunity to seek justice for them. Even if I did, I doubt I'd be able to take revenge on a future Kage and a perfect Jinchuriki. The sorrow made me determined to never take another squad of fresh genins as students. Until lord Hokage forced me to train you guys.

Seeing your talent, I was convinced that as long as you three grew up safely, there won't be many who could kill you. At worst, you will always be able to abandon the mission and escape."

He stopped talking for a minute before sighing, "However, I never imagined that my student would die in the village rather than on the battlefield."

He placed his hands on Fujin's and Hoka's heads and said gently, "Ensure that you two stay safe and alive. Don't make me attend the funerals of all the students I trained."

Fujin and Hoka said, "Yes Sensei."

Renjiro had a sad smile on his face. He left, leaving Fujin and Hoka alone. Both stood in front of Mieko's grave silently for some time. After a few minutes, Hoka asked, "Do you have any plans, Fujin?"

Fujin shook his head and said, "No. I just plan to focus a lot on training. The next time something like this happens, I hope to have the power to make a difference."

Hoka heard him. He didn't understand how Fujin could have made a difference in this matter. But he understood why Fujin wanted to become stronger. He said, "Let's both train Fujin. I want to hunt down Uchiha Itachi!"

His words shocked Fujin, who immediately looked at him. Though he was very serious a moment ago, he couldn't help but think, 'Shit, Renjiro will lose another student!'

He eliminated that thought from his head and said, "He slaughtered his entire clan. I went on a mission with Mieko earlier and saw how strong the Jounins in their clan were. I doubt we both together could beat one. And yet Itachi, who is only 1 year older than us, killed the entire clan!"

Hoka frowned. He thought and said, "He let the power go into his head. As long as he doesn't keep getting stronger and we keep training, we will eventually catch up with him. Then we can make a move."

Once again, Hoka surprised Fujin. This time it was the conviction with which he spoke. Fujin looked into his eyes and stared at him. However, Hoka's gaze didn't falter. Fujin smiled and said, "Yeah, eventually we will be stronger."

He raised his fist and said, "Three years."

Hoka was confused.

Fujin continued, "I will gain the Jounin rank officially in three years and challenge sensei to a fight. I know you have never managed to beat me. If you want to hunt Itachi, beat me when we meet after 3 years."

This time Hoka was surprised by Fujin's confidence. Hoka smiled and bumped Fujin's fist. Both left in different directions. Fujin smiled thinking, 'If he stays true to the decision he made today, Hoka will get strong. Very strong. I wonder what an S rank Hyuga would be like. But regardless, chasing after Itachi is suicide.

Not to mention his own prowess, there will also be Kisame or Juzo with him. And with Zetsu monitoring everything, Obito too could get involved. So it's best that I don't let Hoka seek a pointless death. After all, Mieko is already dead and it isn't really Itachi's fault. If anyone has to be blamed, then it would be Obito, the village elders and the Uchiha clan higher-ups.'

Fujin walked to his home. His little chat with Hoka motivated him to increase his training intensity significantly. He entered the basement and decided, 'My body is sufficiently trained to resist and endure electric shocks. It's time to train Lightning Transformation jutsu.'

Fujin clenched his fists. Immediately lightning covered his entire body. The long time that he had spent training his body with the burst jutsu helped him to generate lightning and flow it through his body without making any hand signs.

Fujin took a step forward. In a blink of an eye, he reached the walls of the basement. He immediately focused chakra on his feet and exerted force on the ground to stop himself from crashing into the wall! When he stopped, the wall was only an inch from his nose!

He thought, 'Shit. If I wasn't already used to travelling at high speeds, this would have ended badly. This jutsu's speed is good but it doesn't provide any control. No wonder the scroll said that the only way to move freely with this is to use obstacles like trees or rocks to change direction.

And though the speed this jutsu provides is high, it isn't as fast as flickering when it comes to travelling and also takes a lot more chakra than it. However, on the plus side, in a battlefield that doesn't have a lot of space, this jutsu will be quite strong. Especially if the fight is inside a cave or if the battle situation doesn't allow me to move away long distances using flicker.'

Having analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of the jutsu, Fujin began training it.

Six hours later, Fujin was standing with his back to the wall. He observed all the pillars in the basement. In addition to the pillars, there were 6 mannequins in the basement. Lightning began flowing through Fujin's body. He bent at his knees slightly and disappeared from his spot.

In the basement, lightning could be seen bouncing between pillars. Fujin suddenly appeared before one of the pillars. His left fist was clenched. Chakra had been concentrated on the fist. Fujin punched the mannequin.

The force of Fujin's punch caused the mannequin to explode! Chunks of metal got launched across the room and crashed into the pillars and the wall. Due to the seals Fujin had inscribed on the pillars and walls, the metal pieces bounced back without damaging them. A smile could be seen on Fujin's face.

He analyzed, 'Senju Taijutsu style along with this jutsu is a very powerful combination. I doubt many would survive this unharmed.'

However, his smile faded as he concluded, 'Unfortunately, this is the limit of this jutsu. No matter how much I try, I can't keep this jutsu on continuously. After I attack once, all the lightning flowing in my body disappears. I tried generating more lightning, but even that didn't work.'

It looks like this is the limitation of Lightning Transformation jutsu. Sigh, I thought I could match Raikage's speed aspect with this jutsu. Though it's understandable as it is only a rank D jutsu. So either Hiruzen or whoever tried to copy the Raikage only reached this level of efficiency or they are hiding what they achieved and only put a subpar version in the Academy.'

Fujin stopped practicing and went to the Meditation room. He sat in meditation to analyze whether he could modify the jutsu to ensure that it stays on for a long time as long as he continues pouring in chakra.

After an hour, Fujin let out a sigh. He concluded, 'No. The limitation is due to the way the chakra is manipulated. If I have to go past it, I'll have to change the way chakra flows. Unfortunately, I have no experience in this.'

I am not sure if I could do something like this even with Wind jutsus. Even if I start experimenting, I'll probably need years of experimentation until I get lucky and find the right way. It's not worth it. I will just have to stick with this until I find a more advanced version or become an expert in Lightning element to create my own jutsus.'

Fujin decided to rest for the day. The next day, Fujin began training the Electric Skin jutsu. Fujin weaved the hand signs. An electric layer formed along his skin. Fujin observed, 'Hmm, it doesn't boost me physically like the Lightning Transformation jutsu. But if anyone hits me, then the attacker will get zapped just like in the Burst and Lightning Transformation jutsu. Alright, let's see how this works.'

He began making hand signs.

'Lightning Release: Lightning Beam jutsu'

A beam of Lightning was released from Fujin's hands. It hit a mannequin head-on and destroyed it. Fujin analyzed, 'Looks like the power of my jutsu has increased by almost 50%. I guess the Jashinist Priest that Miei and I fought used this to increase the power of his Lightning jutsu before he went on a rampage during the final clash.'

If I can use this without any hand signs every time before I use a Lightning jutsu, it could be considered as me permanently boosting the power of my Lightning jutsus. Hmm, yeah, I should do that. While I am training, I'll use this jutsu every time before using a Lightning jutsu. Over time, I will be able to do this instinctively and without wasting any time.'

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Chapter 203: Telescope Technique Vs Seals

Fujin was happy with the progress he was making. He decided, 'I should take a few months off and learn all the jutsus that I decided to learn. After all, I completed a lot of missions in the last month. Combined with my team disbanding, it shouldn't raise any eyebrows.'

Having made a decision, Fujin began making hand signs.

'Lightning Release: False Darkness Jutsu'

He stretched his arms forward. Lightning was launched from his palms. Fujin aimed it at a mannequin. However, right before the jutsu hit it, Fujin changed its direction. It barely missed the mannequin.

Fujin analyzed, 'Hmm, this jutsu's power output is much weaker than Lightning Beam. But, with training, I'll be able to maneuver this jutsu more freely. So in a usual battle, False Darkness will be much more effective. Lightning Beam, on the other hand, will be more effective when used on a stationary object, an immobilized enemy or when I want to use it to confront an enemy's jutsu head-on.'

Fujin continued training False Darkness jutsu until he ran out of chakra. For the next 2 days, he trained the jutsu until he could perform it seamlessly.

Fujin weaved the same hand signs and performed the jutsu. He aimed the lightning at a mannequin. Right before he hit it, he changed its direction to another mannequin. He repeated it once again and changed its direction to 3rd mannequin and scored a direct hit.

Fujin smiled while breathing heavily. He concluded, 'Shit, it isn't easy to train 2 rank B jutsus at the same time! It puts a lot of strain on my chakra reserves. Lightning jutsus use a lot more chakra than Wind jutsus. Still, it looks like this jutsu is down. Though I haven't reduced the hand signs required, it's fine.

Reducing or even eliminating hand signs will require months of training. I can do that slowly over a few years.

Anyways, it's time to practice the next jutsu.'

Fujin weaved hand signs. Lightning appeared on his body. After a second, the lightning changed its shape. It began taking the shape of needles. However, suddenly they collapse. The lightning on his body dispersed as well.

Fujin frowned, 'This jutsu is tough.'

He kept trying. On his 14th try, he finally managed to make the Lightning on his body change shape to needles. His body had dozens of Lightning needles pointing away from him. He made another hand sign. Immediately, all the Lightning needles were launched. They travelled around 5 meters before dispersing into the air.

Fujin sighed, 'This jutsu is tough. Though I guess the difficulty makes sense. After all, it isn't simple like just generating and launching Lightning. The scroll said that hundreds or even thousands of small needles can be formed. And they can be launched for around 40 meters around the user. In addition, the user can also control the part of the body on which the needles are formed. This way, the user can avoid hitting allies.'

Fujin kept training the Electric Needle Spread jutsu.

Five days later, Hiruzen was sitting at his desk going through the paperwork. The Uchiha massacre had increased his workload numerous times. He had to check files on every dead Uchiha ninja, classify them as dead and analyze any impact their death might have. He had been working on it for over a week.

With a sigh, he closed one file and handed it to his assistant. His assistant handed him the next file. The file was titled, 'Uchiha Mieko'.

Hiruzen opened and read all her data. He analyzed, 'She didn't have much contact outside her clan. Just her Genin squad. Renjiro should be fine. He is used to dealing with such events.'

He looked at his assistant and asked, "Takao, have Hoka or Fujin taken any missions after the incident?"

Takao grabbed some files and began checking.

Hiruzen looked at Mieko's file again and wondered, 'Why did Fujin leave Tamotsu's squad and form one with his teammates and classmates?'

Hiruzen said, "Also check on Tamotsu's file and see what he is doing."

Takao said, "Yes Hokage-sama."

While Takao was taking a look at the files, Hiruzen decided, 'I wonder how that greedy kid is doing. Hoka has his parents to look after him. So he should be fine. But Fujin is an orphan. I don't think he understands how to deal with a loss.'

Hiruzen looked into the crystal ball on his table and channeled his chakra into it. Soon, a picture appeared on the crystal ball. It was Fujin's house.

A peculiar expression appeared on Hiruzen's face as he thought, 'I heard Takao say that Fujin's house was too extravagant. I now see why he said so. Even my house isn't as big as his!'

He focused on the crystal ball to peer into Fujin's house. However, Hiruzen was surprised, 'My Telescope jutsu can't look into his house? Did he hire a SealMaster to inscribe anti-spy seals? No, I have specifically instructed every SealMaster to not inscribe seals that stop my jutsu.

Only a few with authority like the clan leaders or strong ninjas can go around it and get those seals on their houses. So how did Fujin manage to convince a SealMaster to inscribe such this seal on his house?'

Hiruzen was intrigued. A smile formed on his face. Fujin's shamelessness and his talent in Wind Nature Manipulation had already impressed Hiruzen. So did Fujin's performance against Kaminari. He didn't expect Fujin to surprise him once again so soon.

He concentrated on the crystal ball. Soon, the seals that were inscribed on his house began appearing in the crystal ball. Every seal was glowing lightly in different colors. The walls of Fujin's house began fading in darkness, only leaving the seals visible in the crystal ball.

Hiruzen had a smile on his face at the start. However, soon his smile faded away. Half a minute later, shock could be seen on his face.

Takao found the information and approached Hiruzen. He said, "Hokage-sama..."

However, he stopped talking when he noticed the shock on Hiruzen's face. The Uchiha massacre had put him on edge. Seeing Hiruzen shocked worried him. He quickly asked, "Did something happen, Hokage-sama?"

Hiruzen snapped out of it and shook his head. He said, "No, everything is alright. Report what you found."

Takao didn't understand why Hiruzen said no. But it wasn't his job to enquire about that. He began reporting, "Fujin and Hoka haven't taken any mission post the incident. They had created a team with Uchiha Mieko and Senju Teru. Senju Teru has returned to his old team. So I believe their team has disbanded.

I have some additional information regarding Fujin. Apparently, there is a record of him using Training Ground 23 every day when he wasn't out of the village on Mission. But for the last 10 days, he hasn't used the training ground."

Hiruzen narrowed his eyes on hearing that. He thought, 'I guess losing his team member did hit him hard. Unfortunately, this is a part of being a ninja. It'll be a shame if he loses his interest in being a ninja due to this.'

Takao continued, "As for Tamotsu, their last mission was tougher than the estimated rank B. One of their team members got injured. They seem to have taken a break after that mission."

Hiruzen said, "Alright. Send a messenger to Tamotsu. Ask him to visit me at the earliest."

Takoe replied, "I will get it done, Hokage-sama."

He left the room.

Hiruzen turned his attention to the crystal ball. He thought, 'Which crazy person inscribed over 2,500 seals on his house? It's as if every seal in the library under rank A is inscribed on his house! No wonder I couldn't peer into it. Should I ask Fujin about it?'

He thought for a bit and concluded, 'No. He may get offended or on guard if he learns that I was trying to spy on him. Worse, he might accuse me of violating his right to privacy and ask for some compensation from me. I'll ask Renjiro when he gets back from the mission.'

Later that day, Fujin was visited by Tamotsu. Fujin was surprised. He stopped his training and greeted him.

Tamotsu entered his house and said, "Hey, how have you been Fujin?"

Fujin replied, "I am alright Tamotsu. How is Katsumi?"

Tamotsu said, "He has recovered well. We are planning to start taking missions again. I came here to see whether you are interested in returning to the team."

Fujin was surprised. He thought, 'It hasn't been 3 months since we took a break. Did Hiruzen ask every team that is available to take missions?'

He looked at Tamotsu and said, "I would love to but I have been on missions continuously for the last month and a half. So I am planning to take a few months off. I'll rejoin the team when I am ready."

Tamotsu watched Fujin carefully as he spoke. He got a bit worried as he recalled his conversation with Hiruzen. Hiruzen was worried that Fujin was depressed and hence wanted Tamotsu to take him along with him on missions to distract him and revive his interest in training.

Tamotsu said, "Fujin, I am aware that you might be hurt due to losing a teammate. However, the best way to deal with situations like this is by interacting with others. If you stay alone and keep thinking about it, you'll be more depressed."

Fujin was confused. He thought, 'What the hell? He is worried about me? If so, why did he take 10 days to visit me? No, I don't think I ever told him that I formed a team with Mieko and others.'

Tamotsu continued, "Come with us for this mission. If you still think that you need rest, you can take it after this mission."

Fujin thought for a bit. But he couldn't find a reasonable excuse to say no. He agreed. Tamotsu smiled and said, "Good. Come to the mission center tomorrow morning."

Fujin nodded. Tamotsu took his leave.

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Chapter 204: A Chakra Metal Mine

Fujin looked at Tamotsu's back as he analyzed, 'This definitely doesn't sound like Tamotsu. Someone must have given him the information and asked to make me go on a mission. But who?'

Fujin thought for a bit and concluded, 'It's either Renjiro or Hiruzen. Most likely the latter. Oh well. This team doesn't do missions continuously. I should still have plenty of time to train. And I can always ask for breaks when I need more time to train.'

Anyways, I have to give credit to Hiruzen. From the way Tamotsu spoke, it looks like he thought that I didn't train. So Hiruzen probably knows that I didn't visit the training ground recently. He probably thought that I had stopped training. Though I am a bit talented, I doubt he has the time to keep tabs on me considering the amount of work this massacre should have put on him. So it's safe to assume that he is looking for everyone who is affected and checking on everyone.

Still, this should be a lesson for me. While the decision to only train Lightning jutsus wasn't bad, deciding against training in the open raised some suspicion. Had I continued with my morning exercises, Hiruzen might not have paid any attention to me and left me alone. I'll have to keep this in mind when I take any action in the future.'

Concluding his thoughts, Fujin returned to the basement. He made hand signs.

'Lightning Release: Electric Needle Spread jutsu'

Lightning appeared on his skin and immediately transformed into small needles. There were around 125 Lightning needles on Fujin's body. He made another hand sign. The needles were immediately launched outwards for 20 meters.

Fujin nodded, 'This is much better than when I started. Though the number of needles can get higher, I don't have much use for them. What I need more is to increase the distance to which these needles go. And, I also have to work on generating needles on only one part of my body. Otherwise, the chakra cost of this jutsu will be needlessly high.'

The next day, Fujin showed up outside the Mission Center. Tamotsu, Katsumi, Ryota, Tadashi and his dog Kenta were already there. Tamotsu went in to accept the mission while others decided to catch up. Most of the conversation was centered around Katsumi recovering from the injuries.

Tamotsu returned and said, "I accepted a mission in the Land of Hot Water. A noble has made some discoveries in the territory under his command. He wants us to provide protection and help with the inspection. There will likely not be any fighting, but he issued the mission as a precaution. We may have to stay there for a few weeks."

Tadashi said, "A relaxed mission to get us started. Nice pick Tamotsu!"

Tamotsu nodded as he thought, 'Yeah. If Fujin is distracted, then his life would be at risk if we take a difficult mission.'

The squad moved out and began rushing towards the Hidden Hot Springs Village. After a day and a half's travel, the squad finally reached and entered the village.

As they were walking, Fujin couldn't help but notice the ridiculous number of hot spring baths in the village.

Ryota noticed Fujin's gaze and chuckled. He asked, "First time here? I too was surprised by the high number of hot springs in this village on my first visit. The village truly lives up to its name, haha."

Fujin replied, "I entered this country multiple times, but this is my first visit to this village. I did expect a high number of hot springs, but this is a bit too much. How do these shops even stay in business if so many exist? Wouldn't they keep undercutting each others' prices?"

Tamotsu answered, "The Daimyo has issued a minimum price for using the hot spring baths. Every bathhouse has to abide by it. This way they don't go into a loss."

Fujin muttered, "It's still too much. After all, if customers don't visit them, they will still have losses."

Tamotsu nodded, "Yeah, many bathhouses do shut down. That said, most of the bathhouses are sponsored by rich nobles who want to have the entire bathhouse to themselves when they come here for vacation. This is why you see so many of them."

Fujin thought for a bit and said, "That makes more sense."

However, he couldn't help but think, 'A certain pervert must be visiting this village all the time.'

As they were talking, they reached a mansion. Tamotsu interacted with the guard and introduced himself. Soon, the Konoha ninjas were guided inside. They were led to a room where only a middle-aged man was sitting.

The man saw them and quickly greeted them, "Welcome to the Hidden Hot Springs Village friends from Konoha. Have a seat. I am Matsushita Yusuke. I issued the mission."

Tamotsu nodded and sat opposite him. Yusuke looked at his servants who brought them here. The servants bowed and left them alone. When the doors were shut, Tamotsu asked, "So, what is our mission? The mission statement wasn't very clear."

Yusuke said, "That is because I wanted to keep this mission as secretive as I could."

Tamotsu became a bit serious on hearing that. The other Konoha ninjas were intrigued as well.

Yusuke picked a map and laid it on the table in front of him. It was a map of the Land of Hot Water. There was a small piece of land marked on the map.

Yusuke said, "This province is under my command. It is around 150 kilometers to the east of this village. One of my workers, who were farming, came across something interesting. I hired an expert to check and I think that we have discovered a mine."

Tamotsu was very alert. This matter seemed very serious. He asked, "What sort of mine is it?"

Yusuke answered, "We will need to conduct a detailed exploration to be sure. Our preliminary exploration indicated that this mine includes rare and precious metals."

Tamotsu calmed down. He thought, 'Though precious metal mines can earn a lot of money, they won't attract too much attention.'

However, Yusuke said, "And I suspect that the mine might have some chakra metal reserves as well."

His words shocked everyone in the room. Chakra metal was extremely precious in this world.

Tamotsu muttered with a grim face, "Why didn't you issue an S rank mission?"

Yusuke said, "I am not sure that it is indeed the case. We may have just gotten lucky during the preliminary exploration. So I don't want to attract a lot of attention. I have talked with our Daimyo. If this mine does have chakra metal reserves, then we will give Konoha the mining rights. We will also give Konoha the first preference while selling it.

So your mission consists of two parts. Firstly, I want your team to ensure that no bandits interfere with the mining process and that no information is leaked out. We haven't allowed the information to leak out, so unless we are very unlucky, rogue ninjas won't interfere with the process. As for the 2nd part, I

also want you to contact the Hokage secretly and ask him to send out more squads here as soon as we confirm that the mine has chakra metal reserves."

Tamotsu analyzed the situation, 'This mission can be very risky. If the details get leaked, then we may invite a lot of trouble. But, if the mission is successful, the village will have huge profits. It would help out the village a lot. Especially after such a disastrous loss, this news can improve our morale.'

Tamotsu made a decision and said, "Alright, we will take the mission. I'll send a message to Hokage-sama. But have your exploration team work very rapidly."

Yusuke nodded, "Yes, I'll have them work as fast as they can."

They began discussing the specifics of the mission, the explorers and other factors.

After the discussion was completed, Yusuke smiled and said, "You must be tired from a long trip. I'll arrange dinner for you. You can rest here for the night and go for the mission tomorrow."

Tamotsu smiled and said, "Thank You."

They got up and left. After having dinner, the Konoha ninjas gathered in a room. Tamotsu said, "Ryota, write an encoded message to Hokage-sama. I'll send it to him. Write everything that was discussed with Yusuke."

Ryota said, "On it."

He began writing on a scroll. Tamotsu said, "I wanted to take an easier mission to end our break but this one can go bad. Unfortunately, saying no isn't an option as this can help our village a lot. We will stay on our guard the entire time while protecting that area. However, if we spot enemy ninjas, be it rogue or of any other village, in numbers that we can't take on coming towards the mine, we will escape. Is that understood?"

Everyone nodded. Tamotsu said, "Good. Take a good rest tonight. We will have to be on full alert from tomorrow onwards."

Everyone went to their beds to get a nap. Tamotsu stayed with Ryota until he was done. He borrowed a messenger Hawk from Yusuke and sent the message to Hiruzen.

The next morning, the Konoha group set off.

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Chapter 205: A Deadly Trap

Fujin and his team were running towards Yusuke's province. Since it was to the east of the Hidden Hot Springs Village, it was close to the border of the Land of Frost where their squad had done their previous mission. After a couple of hours of running, they reached close to Yusuke's province.

Since they were close, Tamotsu began instructing his squad, "Yusuke's exploration team has already established a base. We will meet up with them and decide on a plan to continue. Katsumi, you will set up a perimeter around the entire area with your bugs. I want to know about everyone who enters and leaves the area. It will be tough, but I want you to maintain it all the time."

Katsumi replied, "Alright. I'll get it done."

Tamotsu looked at Tadashi and said, "You and Kenta will keep patrolling the area. Remember every worker's scent when we reach there. If later on you smell any new scents, alert me immediately."

Tadashi replied with a grin, "Don't worry, we got it! Right, Kenta?"

Kenta barked in agreement.

Tamotsu nodded and said, "Ryota, Fujin and I will stay on standby. If you two find something off, then you will pass on the message to us and tell us what you think will be the appropriate action to take."

Everyone nodded. Tamotsu was about to say more when all the Konoha ninjas suddenly stopped and jumped backwards. They landed on a branch and saw dozens of kunais raining down in front of them. All 5 frowned.

In the next second, 20 silhouettes appeared from behind the trees. The Konoha ninjas were surrounded. As they saw their headbands, everyone's faces grew grim.

Fujin muttered, "I couldn't sense them until now. They are all at Chunin and Jounin levels."

Tadashi said softly, "They have disguised their scent to smell similar to the trees."

Fujin said, "At least 30 more ninjas are forming a 2nd perimeter. And a few more are probably still hiding."

Everyone's faces grew grim. One of the ninjas who were surrounding them spoke in a teasing tone, "I wonder why Konoha ninjas are rushing so hurriedly towards the Land of Frost."

Tamotsu said, "We have a mission in this country. Why have you Kumogakure ninjas encircling us?"

The Kumogakure ninja said, "If your mission is to explore that chakra metal mine, then I have unfortunate news for you. Kumogakure has decided to take control over the mine."

His words angered everyone except Fujin. Fujin's mind was busy calculating whether they could avoid a confrontation or at least ensure a safe escape. However, he noticed the other 19 Kumo ninjas getting ready to attack. He could feel bloodlust from some of them. The more he calculated, the more he realized how dire the situation was. In the end, he just had one thought, 'Shit!'

Tamotsu quickly analyzed the situation. He didn't want to give up the mission, but success against such huge numbers was impossible. He said, "Alright. We'll withdraw."

However, the Kumo ninjas didn't move. The guy speaking had an evil smirk on his face as he said, "If we let you go, Konoha will send a larger squad to confront us. Unfortunately, you have to DIE!"

He immediately jumped forward to attack. The other 19 Kumo ninjas also attacked. In addition, a few Kumo ninjas kept hiding in the forest and observed the fight.

Tamotsu shouted, "Stay together! Protect each other and focus on retreating!"

He knew that their chances of survival weren't great. He wanted to use teamwork to break through and run away.

The Kumo ninjas all attacked Konoha ninjas with shurikens. They had launched so many shurikens that dodging them all would be impossible.

Ryota shouted, "Careful, those shurikens are charged with Lightning!"

The Kumo ninjas smirked on hearing that.

Despite knowing, the Konoha ninjas wouldn't be able to dodge due to the high number of shurikens. As long as the shurikens hit them or even their weapons, their body will be paralyzed for a few seconds. Even if they barely managed to avoid the shurikens, their bodies will still feel the electric charge and slow them down momentarily. This would be enough time for Kumo ninjas to win the battle.

Chakra gathered on Fujin's palm. He said, "Ignore them, focus on making a breakthrough."

His team decided to trust him and began moving back in the direction of the Hidden Hot Springs Village.

The chakra on Fujin's hands transformed into the wind. A gentle breeze began flowing through the area. All the shurikens were redirected by the wind and stayed away from them. They passed the Konoha ninjas from a safe distance and instead moved towards the Kumo ninjas.

The smirk on Kumo ninjas' faces suddenly disappeared. All took evasive maneuvers. A few grabbed swords and flowed lightning chakra through them and used them to block or deflect the shurikens.

Taking advantage of the small opening, Tamotsu instructed, "Tadashi, create an opening. Ryota and I will assist you. Katsumi and Fujin, focus on defense."

Tadashi and Kenta stepped forward.

'Man-Beast Ultimate Taijutsu: Fang Over Fang'

Both began spinning around rapidly and doubled up on one of the Kumo ninjas. Ryota and Tamotsu followed him. Their goal was to stop the ninjas next to the one Tadashi targeted from interfering. As long as Tadashi injured that ninja, the Konoha ninjas could get out of the encirclement. Fujin grabbed a sword in his right hand while thousands of bugs began appearing around Katsumi.

With Tadashi leading the attack and others aiding him and protecting each other, the Konoha ninjas finally felt some chances of success.

However, as Tadashi reached close to that ninja, he suddenly grinned. He made a hand sign while saying, "You couldn't have chosen a worse opponent to break through."

'Lightning Release: Gyroscope jutsu'

His chakra suddenly spiked and two rings of Lightning appeared around him and began spinning around him at very high speeds. Fujin's eyes widened as he sensed the immensely destructive power in those Lightning rings, 'His chakra suddenly increased a lot! He had suppressed his Chakra earlier to pretend to be a Chunin. But, he is a full-fledged Jounin!'

Unfortunately, he didn't have any time to warn. Tadashi and Kenta directly hit the Lightning Rings. The jutsu was so powerful that their attack was immediately stopped. Both screamed in pain as their bodies were zapped by Lightning!

Ryota and Tamotsu were shocked. They began moving towards Tadashi. However, they were blocked by the Kumo ninjas they were trying to block earlier. Two Kumo ninjas attacked each of them and stalled them successfully.

Fujin and Katsumi wanted to help, however, they were helpless. Four Kumo ninjas weaved hand signs at the same time Tadashi and Kenta were hit by the Lightning rings.

'Lightning Release: False Darkness jutsu'

Four lightning spears were headed at them from the back. Fujin immediately shot Air Bullets at 3 of the incoming attacks. The Air bullets pierced through the lightning spears and dispersed the jutsu. Katsumi controlled his bugs to stop the last attack. The Lightning directly hit those bugs. Hundreds of bugs died, but they managed to stop the jutsu.

However, despite stopping the jutsus, their situation grew grimmer. While Tadashi and Kenta were being zapped and others were stalled, two Kumo ninjas flickered next to Tadashi and Kenta.

Fujin and Katsumi turned around to continue their escape. However, they were shocked. One Kumo ninja stabbed his sword through Kenta's neck in front of them. Tadashi watched in horror as Kenta whimpered and howled in pain and collapsed on the sword. After a moment of disbelief, his eyes turned red in rage. He looked at the Kumo ninja in front of him and shouted, "Motherfucker! I will kill you all!"

His body was still being zapped. However, he gritted his teeth and moved despite the pain. He formed a claw with his right hand. His nails grew long and became very sharp. His hand transformed and looked very muscular and savage. He attacked the ninja who had formed the Lightning rings that trapped him and Kenta with his claw aiming to crush his skull!

Unfortunately, he was highly outmatched and his body was still slow due to the shocks he had to endure. The Kumo ninja moved to the side and dodged his attack with ease. He grabbed his sword and pierced Tadashi's heart in one smooth motion. Tadashi's eyes were wide open. He couldn't believe how easily he and his partner were killed.

The Konoha ninjas wanted to help. However, they were all tied down. They didn't have any opportunity to save Tadashi. They could only watch helplessly as a teammate died in front of them.

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Chapter 206: Counterattack

Fujin hadn't been with this group for long. Even though he didn't like to lose a teammate here, his focus was still on escaping. His mind was rapidly calculating ways to escape from his horrible situation. However, the other 3 had been with Tadashi for years. Their eyes grew red in rage!

Tamotsu yelled while weaving hand signs, "Since you want to kill us, I'll take as many of you with me as I can!"

'Fire Release: Burning Ash'

He spewed a stream of chakra-infused ash from his mouth. It spread in all directions but had a small space at the center where the four Konoha ninjas stood.

The Kumo ninjas tried approaching but moved away immediately on seeing the flammable ash spreading in the area. A few launched Lightning and Water jutsus into it. However, in the next second, Tamotsu lit a fire in the ash and the entire smokescreen blew up!

The explosion cancelled out every jutsu aimed at them. Two Kumo ninjas were just outside the range of the explosion. They were hit with stones and sticks, causing some injuries.

The Kumo ninjas were preparing for another round of attack when suddenly, the fire caused by the explosion increased threefold in size and intensity and began spreading out at a rapid speed! Fujin had released an Infinite Breakthrough jutsu in all directions causing the Fire to spread rapidly.

The Kumo ninjas weren't expecting that. All 20 ninjas were too close to perform any jutsu or run away. They were hit by the fire. The ones who were hiding in the forest quickly retreated or used defensive jutsus.

Kumogakure advisor Hari, who was hidden in the forest, muttered, "They have a strong Wind user. Be careful of him."

The three who were with him nodded. They didn't expect the Konoha ninjas to hit back so fiercely.

At the center, where there was no fire, Tamotsu said, "We will use the chaos caused by this Fire to escape."

Ryota opposed, "But Tadashi..."

Tamotsu cut him off, "Tadashi wouldn't want us to follow him so soon. We will live and take our revenge another day. Hokage-sama will surely create a unit to take back the mine."

Ryota unwillingly nodded.

Fujin said, "It won't be easy. There are at least 30 more ninjas out there. And I can feel that a few more are hiding in my chakra field."

Tamotsu said, "We will give them another Fire-Wind combination jutsu. Hopefully, that will deter them."

Fujin nodded. He thought, 'I hope that will work. Unfortunately, I have a bad feeling about this. Some of the chakras I sensed are much stronger than any of us.'

Screams of pain could be heard as the fire burned their flesh. 8 Kumo ninjas couldn't endure and collapsed. They would soon be cooked inside out and meet their death. The other 12 quickly escaped from the fire and began dousing the fire burning them. Though they survived and weren't fatally injured, they wouldn't be able to fight properly anymore. They were in terrible pain from having their flesh burnt. Many of their delicate organs like eyes and ears were damaged as well.

The other Kumo ninjas were disturbed by seeing this sight. The situation changed too abruptly. One second they had a complete advantage, while in the next second their whole 20-man unit was defeated!

Finding the exact moment, Tamotsu said, "Now!"

All four flickered instantly. They were planning to use this chaos to escape. Once they managed to get out of the encirclement, the Kumo ninjas wouldn't want to chase them through the lands of another country.

Unfortunately, Kumo had plenty of sensors among their numbers. As soon as the Konoha ninjas left, one sensor shouted, "They are coming here!"

The sensors among other groups sensed them as well and began moving towards them. Though there were 30 ninjas in the 2nd perimeter, they were spread in all directions to ensure that the Konoha ninjas couldn't escape. The place where the Konoha ninjas were headed only had 6 Kumo ninjas.

The leader of that 6 ninja squad noticed them approaching. He calculated, 'We only have to stall them for a few seconds. Then others will catch up and they will be in a helpless situation once again.'

The Konoha ninjas also knew about it. Tamotsu weaved hand signs rapidly. Fujin noticed his hand signs and timed his jutsu perfectly.

'Fire Release: Fire Wave jutsu'

'Wind Release: Infinite Breakthrough jutsu'

The jutsus combined. Extremely hot air moved rapidly towards the Kumo ninjas.

Two ninjas stepped forward while waving hand signs.

'Water Release: Water Wall jutsu'

'Earth Release: Earth Wall jutsu'

Two walls appeared in front of them. The Fire-Wind combination jutsu easily broke through the water wall. Evaporated water formed a smokescreen in the area. However, the Earth Wall stood firm. The jutsu hit it and began moving around the Earth Wall. Though the Kumo ninjas were barely safe behind it, they were trapped as the forest around them was burning.

The Konoha ninjas didn't mind the result. They avoided the fire and escaped in a different direction. Unfortunately, the Kumo ninjas didn't allow them to escape so easily.

Four ropes made of Lightning suddenly appeared through the fire they had caused. They moved at a rapid speed and didn't allow Konoha ninjas to use any jutsus. They had to split up to dodge. Unfortunately, the Lightning ropes also changed directions to chase them.

Fujin noticed the rope coming towards him. Chakra flowed through his sword as he slashed at it. The Wind element chakra flowing along his sword easily neutralized the jutsu. However, he quickly turned around and looked behind. Two jets of water were heading at him.

Katsumi once again sacrificed some of his bugs once again to stop the lightning whip.

Ryota slammed his hands on the ground. A small rock shield appeared in front of him. The Lightning rope hit the shield. However, instead of piercing through or damaging the shield, the lightning was directed into the ground.

Lastly, Tamotsu just kept hiding behind trees until the lightning rope ran out of power.

The group wanted to run away once again. Unfortunately, the remaining Kumo ninjas had begun to catch up.

Ryota was about to move towards Tamotsu. However, two hands appeared from the ground and grabbed his legs. He looked down as the Kumo ninja said, "Got you!"

He began dragging Ryota underground. Ryota quickly made a hand sign and touched the ground. The ground suddenly became harder, trapping the Kumo ninja underground. Soon, spears began forming underground. A few pierced into his body. The Kumo ninja was horrified!

At that instant, a lightning spear flew towards Ryota. Ryota's attention was drawn towards it. However, it was too late for him to move. Fortunately, a shield of bugs appeared in front of him to block the Lightning spear.

However, the lightning spear changed direction and hit the ground. Ryota's earth jutsu was dispelled and the ground softened. The Kumo ninja, who was under the ground, quickly escaped.

Katsumi and Ryota looked at the attacker, who was a woman. She was tall, fair-skinned with a curvaceous figure and had a stoic, aloof expression on her face. She has blue eyes and straight, shoulder-length blonde hair cut in an asymmetrical bob style.

At the same time, Fujin and Tamotsu were attacked as well. Right after Tamotsu neutralized the Lightning Whip, he heard a voice behind him, "You are very good."

Tamotsu quickly turned around. However, an intense light was emitted at him blinding his eyes. Tamotsu closed his eyes and grabbed a kunai. However, instead of fighting, he flickered away.

Unfortunately, his opponent was faster than him. C flickered as well and launched Lightning at Tamotsu. Due to having his eyes blinded, Tamotsu couldn't observe the jutsu properly. The lightning hit his body causing him immense pain. He barely managed to open his eyes to see another attack heading towards him. At the last moment, he snapped out of the lightning shocks and dodged C's attack.

He wanted to counterattack, however, 5 more Kumo ninjas appeared and surrounded him. He fell into a desperate struggle!

Fujin too was attacked at the same time. When he dodged the lightning whip, he was the closest to the fire they had set up. Two jets of water were heading straight at him. Fujin created and fired two vacuum bullets. Both hit the water jets and pierced through them.

Fujin sensed, 'They are trying to break out of the fire and join the fight.'

He opened his mouth and exhaled strong winds at the fire in front of him. The fire was instantly magnified and became chaotic! The Kumo ninjas who were planning to break through were scared by the sight. Immediately an Earth dome formed around them to protect them from the firestorm.

Fujin was planning to take this opportunity to run away. Unfortunately, another attack was headed towards him. He turned his head to the right. His eyes widened as he saw a python made of black lightning heading towards him. He immediately flickered while cursing, 'Motherfucking Darui!'

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Chapter 207: Fighting with his Full Power!

Right when Fujin flickered, the black lightning python also changed direction and chased after Fujin. Unfortunately, it was much faster than Fujin. Fujin thought, 'Running would be pointless.'

He concentrated chakra into his left palm and quickly charged it with Wind chakra. He stopped moving and raised his left palm. The black lightning python quickly reached him and hit his palm. Fujin was pushed behind along the ground but the chakra on his hand stopped most of the jutsu. However, some lightning still hit his palm and electrocuted him. Fortunately, Fujin had already trained in the Lightning element. He could endure those shocks without affecting his ability to fight.

Darui was surprised by Fujin's action. He thought, 'This kid is impressive. We didn't plan on participating in this fight. Unfortunately, they killed 8 and injured 12 more ninjas. Boss will be very pissed at us if we let any more die.'

After a few seconds, the lightning python ran out of chakra and lightning and collapsed. Fujin clenched his fist to crush the lightning python in his palm.

At that instant, two more Kumo ninjas arrived around Fujin. Fujin could sense a dozen more getting close. One of the two ninjas appeared in front of Fujin. He swung his sword vertically, wanting to hack Fujin into two. The other ninja appeared behind Fujin, on his right side and attacked Fujin with a sword as well.

Fujin immediately punched the sword in front of him with his left fist. The chakra he had concentrated in his palm to block the Lightning Python still existed. And due to being zapped, his fist was charged with Darui's black lightning!

At the same time, he swung the sword in his right hand to clash with the enemy's sword. Both Kumo ninjas timed their attacks perfectly. They clashed with Fujin at the same time.

Fujin's left fist hit the sword's edge. The Kumo ninja grinned expecting Fujin's fist to be split open. However, his eyes widened as he heard a cracking noise. His steel sword had cracked! In front of his eyes, he saw his sword being broken into pieces.

Fujin's fist continued moving forward and punched the ninja in his stomach. The ninja's eyes popped out as he felt the full impact of a chakra and lightning-enhanced punch. The punch wrecked his internal organs and sent him flying. He spat out a lot of blood as he flew backwards and lost consciousness.

At the same time when Fujin's fist met the sword, his sword clashed with the enemy's sword behind him. Fujin's sword cut through the enemy's sword like a hot knife cuts through butter.

At the same time that Fujin punched the enemy in front of him, his sword cut the enemy behind him in two!

A frown formed on Darui's face as he saw another one of his subordinates die. He was waving hand signs when Fujin countered his opponents.

'Lightning Release: Black Panther'

He released black lightning in the form of a Panther which reached Fujin almost instantly. Fujin had sensed Darui building up his chakra. He saw the black panther rush towards him. Having experienced the black python, Fujin didn't bother dodging. Instead, he gathered chakra in his mouth and throat.

Right when the black panther was only a few meters away from him, Fujin opened his mouth and launched his strongest jutsu.

'Wind Release: Vacuum Cannon jutsu'

The Vacuum Cannon hit the black panther head-on. Darui's eyes widened as he saw his jutsu being pierced through with utmost ease! The black panther began dissipating. Though some of it still continued towards Fujin, he dodged easily.

Darui immediately moved out of the way while observing the jutsu. The Vacuum Cannon reached his position and continued forward destroying every tree in its path!

Darui instantly recognized, 'Wind Vacuum Technique! Someone other than Danzo learnt this technique in Konoha? And it's a strong jutsu as well. No wonder my jutsu was overpowered so easily.'

Six ninjas were running towards Fujin and planning to attack him together. However, they saw the trail of destruction Fujin's jutsu left in its path and were left tongue-tied by it! They immediately stopped

approaching Fujin and looked at Darui for instructions. They didn't want to be at the receiving end of such a jutsu.

Darui became very serious. He said, "Leave him to me."

He grabbed his giant sword and moved towards Fujin. Fujin moved as well such that Darui and the other Kumo ninjas were in a straight line.

'Wind Release: Air Bullet jutsu'

He fired a dozen air bullets at Darui. Darui dodged them with ease and attacked Fujin with his sword. Lightning could be seen flowing along his sword. Fujin attacked back with his sword. The metal swords produce a loud sound.

At the same time, the Kumo ninjas who were behind Darui were caught off guard. They saw a dozen air bullets heading their way and scurried out of the way! However, some were still hit. Many of them had small cuts due to the bullets. The unluckiest one had a hole in his right arm.

Fujin and Darui both flowed chakra through their swords. However, Fujin was surprised. He expected to have an advantage due to the Wind element. However, Darui had poured a lot more chakra into his sword as compared to Fujin. So his sword stayed intact. He applied force.

Though Fujin's physique was very good, Darui was much stronger than him. He was pushed back. His face became grim on realizing how outmatched he was.

In an instant, a vacuum bullet formed in his mouth and was launched at Darui. Darui noticed it and immediately got out of the way and attacked Fujin once again with his sword.

Fujin defended himself but was getting overpowered. He frowned, 'His chakra and strength are both stronger than mine. I can't engage him in head-on combat. I have to resort to short clashes and hope that one of my bullets injure him.'

Fujin used the force of Darui's sword to move away from him. Darui attacked even more aggressively. However, instead of countering him with his strength, Fujin began parrying his attacks and using air and vacuum bullets to attack Darui. Darui dodged them all, but Fujin had two goals with his attacks. He would not only aim the bullets at Darui but would also send a few towards the Kumo ninjas watching the fight.

One of the Kumo ninjas began cursing, "Damn kid! He is aiming to injure us all!"

Another said, "We should move away. He is trying to distract Darui. We will be sinners if Darui gets wounded because of us. We will disperse in different directions and surround him from a distance so that he won't be able to escape."

Everyone nodded and dispersed.

Darui relaxed when he saw his allies leave. He looked at Fujin and analyzed while fighting, 'This kid is good. Though he is weaker than me, a single mistake could cost me my life.'

Darui continued attacking with his sword, but he also began using Lightning jutsu. Fujin dodged or countered his jutsus with Wind jutsus and both entered into a fierce fight. The other Kumo ninjas kept an eye on the battle from a distance.

While Fujin was engaged in a fierce clash, Ryota and Katsumi were dominated by Samui. Even together, they weren't a match for her. To make matters worse, other Kumo ninjas joined the fight. Ryota and Katsumi's faces became grim.

Katsumi struggled to make a decision as he fought. In a minute, both he and Ryota had numerous injuries on their bodies. He sighed and said, "Ryota, escape."

Ryota was stunned, "What do you mean?"

Katsumi said, "Your Earth jutsus aren't of much help. I'll buy time by stalling them with my bugs and join you later."

Ryota knew that there was no way for Katsumi to return alive.

He wanted to argue, however, the Kumo ninjas pressed on the attack once more. Tens of thousands of bugs appeared from Katsumi's body. He shouted, "Leave!"

The bugs immediately went on the attack. Ryota unwillingly decided to make a run. Knowing what fate awaited Katsumi, he didn't dare to look back. Unfortunately, while he was running, he was suddenly attacked by shurikens. He dodged immediately. Two Kumo ninjas appeared and attacked him.

Ryota moved back and slammed his hands on the ground. A bunch of spears appeared from the ground and attacked the Kumo ninjas. However, the two ninjas used Lightning jutsus to counter his move. The three entered into a fierce fight with Ryota trying his best to escape.

Samui looked at the bugs and said, "They may be poisonous. Don't let them bite you. Hit him with Fire and Lightning jutsus."

The Kumo ninjas around her nodded and attacked from a distance. Katsumi tried his best. He used all sorts of bugs. Some were resistant to Lightning, some were incredibly poisonous. He defended himself with defensive bugs while trying to use the poisonous bugs to bite the Kumo ninjas.

However, the Kumo ninjas didn't let a single bug bite them. They bombarded Katsumi with Lightning and Fire jutsus along with explosive tags. Katsumi's bugs began dying by the thousands.

In a couple of minutes, most of his bugs died. Katsumi watched with a grim and sad face. Like Kenta was a partner for Tadashi, his bugs were a partner for him. He sighed, 'I tried a lot to escape. Unfortunately, there is no way out. I am completely surrounded. It looks like I'll be joining you soon Tadashi.'

A few seconds later, a flash of Lightning appeared in Katsumi's eyes. Samui appeared in front of him and cut his head off with one swing of her blade. Katsumi became the second Konoha ninja to die here!

However, despite his death, his bugs still kept attacking. Samui instructed, "Deal with the bugs. I'll help the others."

She left and moved towards Ryota. Ryota was still fighting the two Kumo ninjas. He had managed to escape a couple of times, but they caught up to him again.

During the fight, one of the Kumo ninjas landed a kick on Ryota's abdomen and sent him rolling. Ryota immediately got on his feet, however, he felt someone was behind him. He quickly turned around and was shocked to see Samui.

His throat dried up. His hands began shaking. He asked in a trembling voice, "Where is Katsumi?"

Samui replied in just one word, "Dead."

Ryota's mind was in disbelief and rage. However, before he could do anything he felt pain in his abdomen. He looked down to see a sword piercing out of his abdomen. One of the two ninjas he was fighting took the opportunity of his distraction and stabbed his sword into his back. Ryota heard a sadistic laugh as the ninja said, "Don't worry. All your friends and family will join you soon."

Suddenly, rage appeared on Ryota's face. He didn't speak a single word and just made the confrontation hand sign. Samui's eyes widened. She jumped back immediately while shouting, "Move away from him!"

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Chapter 208: Crazy Suicide Bombers!

The Kumo ninjas were confused. In the next moment, Ryota's body exploded! The ninja who had stabbed his back didn't have any time to move. His body took the entire brunt of the explosion. The other Kumo ninja was a bit far away. He moved a bit but he too was caught in the explosion.

When the dust settled, Samui saw a very gore picture. Ryota's body was blown into pieces. The ninja that stabbed him had no flesh on the front side of his body. His face, chest, abdomen and other parts were completely exposed. He fell down dead. The last Kumo ninja was crying in pain. His body was on fire.

Samui immediately doused the fire and began helping him. At the same time, she was shocked at how decisive Ryota was.

Ryota knew that despite Katsumi buying him some time, escape would be very difficult. He recalled Fujin saying that there were more than 30 ninjas still encircling them. And all of them were at least as strong as Ryota himself was.

So in the time between him leaving Katsumi behind and the 2 Kumo ninjas attacking him, Ryota had stuck 20 Explosive tags on various parts of his body and on the inside part of his clothes. When he saw Samui, he knew that his death was inevitable. So he decided to die in a way that would hurt his killers the most.

If he knew that his last move killed a chunin from Kumo and ended the career of another Kumo chunin, he'd probably smile.

As Samui applied some first aid to the injured ninja, her face was very grim. She thought, 'We had planned to kill the Konoha squad while taking no casualties. At most, we concluded that some might take a few minor injuries. However, 8 of our ninjas died in the initial counterattack while 12 got injured. Now 1 more is dead and another is critically injured. I hope that the remaining two Konoha ninjas don't manage to kill anyone.'

Soon, another Kumo ninja arrived on the spot. He was shocked to see the gore. Before he could say anything, Samui instructed, "Apply first aid to him. I'll send a medical ninja over here to help you."

The ninja nodded and got to work. Samui left to ensure that the remaining two Konoha ninjas don't mess up anything.

Fujin and Darui were still in a fierce fight. Darui was much stronger than Fujin, however, Fujin had managed to fight back without getting injured. In fact, he had made more killer attacks during their fight than Darui. As he fought while multitasking, a smile appeared on his face.

Fujin had never been a fan of taking risks. He always chose the easy way out and won his battles efficiently. So he had never experienced such a battle. A battle where one wrong move would end his life. Where one misstep could maim him.

Between the 2nd and the 3rd phases of the Chunin exam, Renjiro tried to simulate such an experience for Fujin. However, Fujin always knew that his life wasn't in danger against Renjiro. So he viewed it more as a pain in the ass rather than experiencing any thrill.

However, in this deadly fight, all his senses worked beyond what Fujin had ever experienced. Every single move he made was flawless. The battle made his blood boil in excitement. His movements kept improving as the fight moved on. Fujin felt that he was getting faster and faster. However, it was just his body moving more efficiently. Fujin was surprised, 'I expected to hate the situation I am in. I never expected that I would instead find it enjoyable.'

Darui was surprised when he saw the smile on Fujin's face. He had seen such a smile very few times in his life. He sighed in his mind, 'Another battle freak! Great!'

The smile reminded Darui of a few people who he had seen in his life who loved to fight without caring about anything else. Instead of fear, they would fight like a maniac. One of those few people was the current leader of Kumogakure.

Despite being weaker in strength, Fujin managed to hold on against Darui without getting a single injury. However, though he had a smile on his face, he didn't lose himself in the battle. He analyzed, 'My chakra reserves are almost empty. I only have a little more than a quarter. I won't last much longer in such an intense battle!'

Unfortunately, despite performing well, Fujin never found any opportunity to escape from Darui. Fujin's chakra field was active as he analyzed, 'I need to find a way to get rid of the ninjas watching the fight. If I try to escape, they will attack and I'll be pincered between Darui and whoever attacks. It'll only result in me dying faster.'

Just like Fujin, Tamotsu was also engaged in fierce fighting. He was completely outmatched by his enemies as well. However, while Fujin managed to ensure that he didn't get injured and kept the other Kumo ninjas at bay, Tamotsu was ganged up on by 7 Kumogakure ninjas in addition to C.

Injuries piled on his body. He had lost his left eye. His right arm was completely burnt from intense lightning shocks. Over a hundred small cuts were visible on his body. He was pretty much on his last legs.

Tamotsu looked at the Kumo ninjas and realized, 'This is the end for me... But, if I am going to die, I'll take at least a few of them with me!'

He began making hand signs. However, at the next moment, a kick landed on his abdomen. He was sent flying away. He flipped in the air and managed to land on his feet. The kick disrupted his hand signs. However, he landed a few meters away from every Kumo ninja. Realizing the opportunity, he immediately flickered away!

The Kumo ninjas followed him in a hurry. And a chase began. Unfortunately for Tamotsu, he was very exhausted and injured. His speed was much lesser as compared to Kumo ninjas.

C took out a giant Shuriken and threw it at Tamotsu. Due to his tiredness, Tamotsu didn't notice it. He stepped on a branch and jumped aiming to get away. Just when he jumped, the shuriken hit his left thigh and cut clean through it.

Tamotsu felt the pain and looked down at his left leg in horror. He lost his footing and crashed down. As he fell down, he saw Fujin and Darui fighting in front of his eyes. Both Fujin and Darui also saw him and were surprised. They stopped fighting for a moment. Fujin immediately flickered and appeared next to Tamotsu. Unfortunately, he had already lost consciousness!

Soon, C and the Kumo ninjas with him also arrived. Samui as well appeared next to Darui at this moment. The Kumo ninjas were surprised to see that Fujin was unharmed. Fujin's expression became grim. His already bad situation had taken a turn for the worse.

He thought, 'Shit! Darui was already out of my league. And I am sure that C and Samui are both stronger than me. Not to mention the 15 others that are along with these 3. Now, what the fuck should I do?'

Fujin's brain calculated all possible options at the speed of light. Fortunately for him, Kumo ninjas didn't attack him right away.

C asked Darui, "How is he still alive?"

Darui shrugged and said, "The kid is strong. I couldn't injure him."

The Kumo ninjas who just arrived were surprised. Darui was very reputed in the Land of Lightning. The fact that a kid much younger than him could last so long was shocking.

C observed Fujin who was crouching down next to Tamotsu while observing all the Kumo ninjas. C shook his head and said, "The kid has almost exhausted his chakra. Let's fini..."

However, Darui interrupted by asking, "What is your name?"

Fujin looked at him but didn't answer. Darui didn't mind that and continued, "You have exhausted most of your chakra. Though you are still unharmed, if you fight, your death is the only possibility. Surrender now. In the future, your Hokage could make a deal with the Raikage to get you back."

Fujin didn't reply. He thought, 'Though his words are honest, becoming a prisoner would be the stupidest move. I'll have no control if Kumogakure decides to torture, maim or kill me. Not to mention, hoping for Hiruzen to rescue me would be beyond stupid. That old fox might show that he is a very emotional person, but there are layers of deception hidden under his thick skin!'

Seeing that Fujin didn't respond, C said, "Since you don't want to surrender, you'll have to..."

However, as he spoke, Fujin's frown disappeared. Instead, a smirk appeared on Fujin's face. Soon, that smirk turned into a wide grin. The Kumogakure ninjas were surprised. One of them asked, "Did he lose his mind?"

For the first time, Fujin spoke, "You know, I was always very afraid of risking my life. I always decided to take the easier way out and do my job efficiently. However, fighting you has made me experience a thrill that I never imagined!

Darui, though you may not have heard of me, I have heard of you. Doesn't the Raikage think of you as his second right hand?"

Fujin's grin grew wider. It grew so wide that it looked as though his face might split into two. His grin crept out some of the Kumo ninjas surrounding him.

Fujin continued, "Though I will die, taking down 18 Kumogakure ninjas including the Raikage's right hand with me would make me a hero in Konoha. Hahahahaha!"

Samui's eyes widened on hearing that. She had already seen a crazy Konoha ninja. However, before she could act, the seals on Fujin's bracers lit. In the blink of an eye, 400 explosive tags appeared around Fujin and formed a sphere around him. They completely blocked Fujin from the line of sight of the Kumogakure ninjas. However, they could still hear Fujin's laughter!

The Kumogakure ninjas immediately became grim. They decided to move away. However, even before they could move, a breeze flew from inside the sphere made of Explosive tags. The winds made the explosive paper tags spread throughout the area. Kumo ninjas were horrified to see hundreds of Explosive tags heading towards them!

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 209: Schemes & Hidden Dangers

The Kumo ninjas were horrified at the sight of hundreds of Explosive tags coming at them. Many Kumo ninjas began running away. A few escaped underground.

Darui, C, Samui and another Jounin had grim faces. They immediately made hand signs and cast a Lightning net in front of them. A few Explosive tags hit the Lightning net and were disabled. However, soon the explosive tags began exploding just before touching the lightning net. The lightning net was damaged by the explosion. The Kumo jounins increased the amount of chakra they poured into the Lightning net to repair it and make it hold on.

However, the number of Explosive tags was too high. The Lightning net was soon ripped apart. The Kumo ninjas immediately escaped into the ground. As soon as they did, the explosions covered the entire place!

A loud sound could be heard for miles around the spot where the explosion occurred. Trees, branches and stones were sent flying by the explosion. A smokescreen of dust, soil and smoke spread for hundreds of meters. A massive Fire lit up and spread through the forest at a rapid speed. The smoke raised due to the forest fire could be seen from all the nearby villages.

After a couple of minutes of the explosion, a head popped out of the ground. It was Darui. Soon, C, Samui and the other Jounin appeared out of the ground. All their faces had been covered in dust. Soon, 8 more Kumo ninjas also crawled out of the ground or ran back towards where Darui was.

C couldn't help but mutter, "What a crazy guy. Who carries so many explosive tags with them?"

The other Kumo ninjas were cursing Fujin too.

Darui looked at C and said, "Sense the position of others."

C nodded and began sensing. He led the other Kumo ninjas to where the missing Kumo ninjas were and began treating them one by one.

Meanwhile, Darui and Samui began checking what happened to Fujin. Samui said, "I should have warned you. Another one of them killed himself the same way."

Darui said, "It's not your fault. There was barely any time. Besides, considering the number of Explosive tags he had, we can say that he always planned to die in this way."

They arrived at the spot where Fujin and Tamotsu were before the explosion went off. They didn't find anything interesting at first. However, soon a shock appeared on their face.

Samui said, "There is nothing here."

Darui nodded, "Yeah, even though the explosions were powerful, at least their blood and bones should have remained here."

Samui said, "This means that he escaped. No, they escaped!"

Anger formed on Samui's face. Kumo had taken a lot of casualties in this confrontation. By comparison, Konoha only lost 3 ninjas.

Soon, a man arrived at their location along with 7 ninjas. He was Hari. He had watched the fight between Fujin and Darui but had to escape in a hurry when he saw the explosive tags. Hari asked, "Who was that lunatic brat?"

Darui replied, "He never told his name."

Hari asked, "Is he dead?"

Darui said, "Most likely not. He was standing here before the explosives went off but there are no signs of blood or remains. He probably escaped just before the explosions went off."

Hari frowned. He analyzed for a minute before saying, "When we saw those Explosive tags, it attracted all our attention. He must have flickered right before the tags exploded. And he carried the other Konoha ninja with him."

Samui said, "We need to hunt him. I'll form a squad and go after him."

However, Hari shook his head and said, "No, it's already been around 5 minutes since the explosive tags exploded. He should have escaped a long distance."

Samui countered, "His chakra was depleted and he is carrying an injured ninja with him."

Hari replied, "It's fine. Though I didn't expect us to have such a heavy loss, the goal of this mission is to see what action Konoha takes after knowing that we took a mine that should have been under their control. I planned to leak the information later, but this is fine too. That youngster will report what happened here to the Hokage and do that task for me. For now, assist C in saving and healing all the injured ninjas."

Darui and Samui nodded and began helping C. After a few hours, they healed all the injured ninjas and tallied their losses. In all, 14 ninjas died during the fighting, 3 were critically injured and wouldn't be able to continue being a ninja and 13 were lightly injured. All the dead and critically injured ninjas were of the Chunin rank.

Hari sighed on knowing the losses as he realized, 'My plan was to cause losses to Konoha and see their reaction to it. However, on the first step of my plan, we faced a setback. Now there will be voices of opposition in Kumogakure on starting a war with Konoha.'

After all, just a small clash caused us so many losses. Everyone will be worried about how many losses we will suffer when we face the full might of Konoha. Still, Lord Raikage should be able to push forward for war if he wishes to.'

Far away from the Kumo ninjas who were healing their wounds, Fujin was running across the Land of Hot Springs. In his hand, he was holding Tamotsu. The wound on his left thigh was cauterized and bandaged while the other wounds were just bandaged so that blood won't fall from his wounds.

A few hours ago -

When Fujin was surrounded by 400 Explosive tags, he exhaled a gentle wind that guided all the explosive tags towards the Kumo ninjas. At the same time, he created a Wind clone to control the explosive tags and grabbed Tamotsu by the back of his neck and used Wind Instantaneous Body jutsu to flicker a long distance away. He repeated the jutsu a few times to end up miles away from the spot of the explosion.

He turned around to see the massive smoke rising into the skies from that spot as he thought, 'I have one spiked shield and one normal shield in my forearm bracers. In addition, I have put both my swords in there as well. But I couldn't come up with any good ideas on what to store in the remaining 4 seals. Luckily I filled them up with Explosive tags just in case I needed them.

I still have 200 more tags. If they chase after me, I'll use them to scare those Kumo ninjas off. But first...'

He took out a bottle and put a few soldier pills in his mouth. He made a hand sign and a shadow clone appeared next to him. He picked up Tamotsu and all 3 began escaping again. As they were running, the shadow clone burned the wound on his left leg so that the bleeding would stop. He also applied some bandages to his smaller wounds.

Fujin ran, flickered, and used Wind and Earth Instantaneous Body jutsus for over an hour before taking a break. He was very exhausted. His clone bandaged Tamotsu properly and dispelled itself.

Fujin looked at the unconscious Tamotsu as he thought, 'I had initially thought of escaping by myself. Carrying him is a big burden. But, the last time Kumo did a foul play, Hiruzen sacrificed Hizashi to avoid a war. If Kumo cried foul again and Hiruzen decided to compromise once more, I would have been the one to be sacrificed if I returned alone.'

A frown appeared on Fujin's face. During the escape, this thought troubled him a lot. He analyzed, 'The thought of going rogue has appeared in my mind several times in the last hour. But, though I am strong, without Konoha's resources and library, my future path will be highly restricted if I go rogue.'

Not to mention, I might be hunted by both Konoha and Kumo. And if by chance I survive and get stronger, Akatsuki might show up asking me to join them. Sigh, what a mess.'

His eyes wandered towards Tamotsu, 'He has lost his left leg. So his career as a ninja is pretty much over. If Hiruzen decides to sacrifice someone, sacrificing him would make much more sense than sacrificing a promising youngster. The only issue with this line of thought is that Tamotsu is from the Sarutobi clan. If Hiruzen has a soft spot for his clan and isn't willing to sacrifice them, my head will be on the chopping block.'

Fujin sat in meditation as he decided on his next actions. After a few minutes, he opened his eyes and decided, 'I will go back to Konoha. Despite losing the Uchiha clan, Konoha's strength should be stronger than 4-5 years ago. So it's unlikely that Hiruzen will take the same step. Even if he decides to compromise, he will first offer the chakra metal mine to Kumogakure. And that should be more precious than the head of any ninja. Also, I doubt Kumogakure would want the head of a young ninja over a chakra metal mine.'

However, if Hiruzen does decide to put up the same question in front of me as Hizashi, I'll act sad but determined and ask for some time and escape from Konoha during that time. Though it will be very risky, the alternative isn't risk-free either.'

Having rested, Fujin stood up and looked at the sky while thinking, 'Hiruzen, you better not disappoint me this time.'

He picked up Tamotsu and began his journey once more. He had figured that the Kumo ninjas weren't chasing him or were too slow. So he moved at a consistent speed to ensure that his body doesn't get tired once again. He moved for hours and finally sighed in relief as he stepped into the Land of Fire.

Chapter 210: A Demand for Fujin's Head!

It was a normal boring day for Yamanaka Hiroto. He had just finished patrolling and was wasting his time in the Patrol camp while chatting with Hyuga Jun. However, he suddenly stopped and spread his chakra field. It spread for 500 meters but he couldn't sense anything.

Hyuga Jun asked, "Did you sense something?"

Yamanaka Hiroto replied, "I can't sense anyone. But someone just sensed our camp. Check with your Byakugan."

Jun immediately activated his Byakugan.

Hiroto asked, "Who is it?"

A frown formed on Jun's face as he replied, "It's one of our ninjas. And he is carrying another who is very injured. He is around 1 kilometer to the east."

Fujin had roughly memorized the locations of Patrol camps from his previous missions. After arriving in the vicinity, he spread his chakra field to sense any ninjas in the vicinity. On sensing 7 ninjas in one place, Fujin flickered towards them.

In a minute, he appeared before Hiroto and Jun. Hiroto quickly said, "Identify yourself."

Fujin replied, "Suzuki Fujin. You can ask questions later. My teammate got very injured during the mission. Do you have a medic?"

Jun nodded and said, "Alright, follow me."

He quickly led Fujin into the camp and knocked on a door. He said, "Emiko, we have a very injured person. Come quickly."

Emiko immediately opened the door. She was the medical ninja in the camp. She was surprised when she saw Tamotsu's condition. She quickly laid him on a bed and began healing him.

While Emiko treated Tamotsu, Jun and Hiroto interrogated Fujin. They were suspicious of Fujin because Fujin didn't have a single injury on him despite his teammate being so injured. He asked for Fujin's ID number and other standard questions to confirm that Fujin was indeed a ninja from Konoha.

Finally, he asked, "Where is your remaining team?"

Fujin put up a sad face and said, "They are all dead."

Hiroto had expected such a result. He thought, 'I guess that he is safe because of the sacrifices of his teammates.'

He sighed and patted Fujin's shoulder and said, "It's fine. Sometimes missions go wrong."

Fujin nodded.

Emiko took around 20 minutes to heal Tamotsu. She left her room and approached Fujin and ask, "Are you injured as well?"

Fujin shook his head, "No, I am fine."

Emiko nodded and left to keep an eye on Tamotsu.

After an hour, Tamotsu gained consciousness. He quickly got up and sat up straight. However, his injuries made him grunt in pain. He looked around himself and was surprised that he was still alive.

Emiko stopped him from moving much and quickly asked him how he was feeling. Tamotsu answered her questions. When he was done, he asked, "How did I get here? And where are my teammates?"

The medical ninja sighed and said, "Your teammate Fujin brought you here. I'll call him."

She left the room to call Fujin. However, she was impressed by Tamotsu, 'Despite losing his left leg, his first thought was the wellbeing of his team.'

Meanwhile, Tamotsu was surprised that Fujin was able to escape along with him. However, recalling Tadashi and imagining the fates of Ryota and Katsumi, tears began rolling down his cheeks. He quickly wiped them off thinking, 'I shouldn't appear weak in front of Fujin. I'll have lots of time to grieve for them later.'

Soon, Fujin arrived in the room where Tamotsu was resting. He could see the wetness in Tamotsu's eyes due to the tears he was holding back.

Tamotsu looked at Fujin and said, "I am glad that you are safe Fujin."

Fujin nodded and looked at his cut leg. He asked, "How are you?"

Tamotsu saw his sight and said sorrowfully, "I'll be fine."

After half a minute of silence, he asked, "Do you know what happened to Katsumi and Ryota?"

Fujin shook his head and answered, "No. I didn't see either of them after we split up. I only saw you and managed to barely escape."

Tamotsu was shivering on hearing Fujin's answer. With the last ray of hope, he asked, "You are a sensor. Did you sense them?"

Fujin sighed and replied, "No. I was attacked by a ninja called Darui. He was much stronger than me. We flickered many times during the fight and were a long distance away from where we were ambushed. So I couldn't sense them."

Tamotsu sighed and stayed silent for a few minutes. No one spoke. Finally, the sorrowful expression disappeared from Tamotsu's face and instead, he looked determined. He asked, "Fujin, how long have I been unconscious?"

Fujin was surprised to see the sudden change in attitude. He answered, "Around 10 hours. I reached this camp around an hour ago."

Tamotsu looked at his leg and said, "I'll be a burden if I come along with you. Fujin, run towards Konoha as fast as you can and inform Lord Hokage what happened."

He looked at Fujin and said with determination, "This is a very important mission for our village Fujin. I'll leave it in your hands."

Fujin realized, 'I see. He wants revenge. That said, knowing Hiruzen, it's highly unlikely that he will choose violence. Unfortunately, those 3 won't ever get justice. Though I guess, we already had our revenge as at least 9 of them are dead.'

Fujin said, "Alright. I'll go quickly. You take care of yourself Tamotsu."

Tamotsu nodded and said, "Don't worry about me. I'll be fine."

Fujin could see that despite his determined expression, Tamotsu was having a hard time controlling his sorrow. He was holding back just to not demoralize Fujin.

Fujin immediately left. A few minutes later, Tamotsu broke down in tears.

Fujin rapidly moved across the Land of Fire. On the way, he couldn't help but sigh, 'Poor guy was trying so hard to control his tears. I wonder how many such instances occur daily in this world. How many squads meet their end due to a mission going wrong? I kinda had it lucky so far. Unfortunately, it looks like my luck ran out today.'

I need better means to escape from such situations. This time I was lucky that Tamotsu crashed into my battlefield and Darui decided to not finish me off immediately and instead gave me the option to surrender. I didn't even have a chance to escape until then. I don't want to depend on luck next time as not everyone will be merciful like Darui.'

While moving, Fujin analyzed the options available to him. The first jutsu that came to his mind was obviously the Flying Thunder God. However, he rejected it, 'No, Hiruzen said that I'll have to be a Grandmaster at Fuinjutsu before being allowed to learn it. Right now I could barely even be considered a Master. Becoming Grandmaster will require a lot more time. Not to mention, I'll need the Jounin rank to be able to access the seals kept in Section A of the library.'

Fujin analyzed more but couldn't think of any idea other than the one he had at the back of his mind. Fujin sighed, 'I guess that's the only available option. Unfortunately, even that is very risky. I still need some time to be ready for it. That said, if Hiruzen decides against my well-being, I should take that risk. It might allow me to escape from Konoha very easily.'

While Fujin was moving at full speed through the forests in the land of Fire, a message was sent back to Kumogakure to the 4th Raikage. The coded scroll was decoded and the translated message was sent to A.

A opened the scroll and began reading. Soon, anger appeared on his face. He raised his arm and smashed his table into two while yelling, "What the hell are these guys doing?"

Mabui had seen A do such acts hundreds of times. She wasn't affected and calmly asked, "What happened, Lord Raikage?"

A handed her the scroll and said in disappointment, "They ambushed 5 Konoha ninjas with 58 ninjas and still lost 13 ninjas and had many more injured. Not to mention, they still let 2 Konoha ninjas escape!"

Mabui was surprised by what A said. She wondered, 'Which strong squad did they encounter to have such losses?'

She quickly checked the scroll to see who the Konoha ninjas were. She was surprised once again. She asked in confusion, "Who is Tamotsu?"

A looked at her and said, "It's your job to tell me."

She felt awkward hearing A's reply. She stopped reading the scroll, handed it back to A and quickly excused herself and checked their records.

Mabui returned after a few minutes and said, "Tamotsu is an Elite Chunin in Konoha. He was promoted to the Chunin rank after the 3rd Great Ninja War. But, his record isn't stellar enough to produce such a result."

A said, "It wasn't his doing. Hari said that a young ninja was able to hold his own against Darui and is an expert in Wind Manipulation. He was the main reason for the casualties. Find who this brat is as they didn't know his identity."

Mabui thought for a bit and said, "In the chunin exam that happened before the last one in Konoha, the champion was an orphan who specialized in Wind manipulation. It was when the Kiri rebels had participated in the Chunin exam. Other than him, I haven't heard of any young ninja who specializes in Wind Manipulation from Konoha."

A thought for a bit and instructed, "Find his name and pass it to the negotiators. Send the negotiators that we have prepared to Konoha and ask for heads of Tamotsu and that brat. Also, send a message to Darui and call him, C and Samui back. And, don't let this news leak."

Mabui nodded and left the office.