

## Calamity 341

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 341: Patience!

After entering the Land of Waterfall, Kitsuchi kept a major chunk of the ninjas he trained with himself and distributed the remaining along with more Iwa ninjas around the Ito family's territory. They immediately began their plan of creating unrest in the territory by kidnapping civilians.

At the same time, Kitsuchi summoned his best spy. Sho appeared in front of him and asked, "What are your commands for me, Kitsuchi-sama?"

Kitsuchi said, "I want you to infiltrate the Ito family's main town. Keep an eye on the ninjas coming in and out of the town."

Sho nodded and asked, "Alright. Is there anything, in particular, I should keep track of?"

Kitsuchi nodded and answered, "Yes. I'm looking for a Konoha ninja named Suzuki Fujin."

Kitsuchi showed Fujin's appearance from the Bingo book and added, "He is now in the Anbu and generally wears Hawk or Turtle masks. The last time he moved, his teammates were a blond Yamanaka ninja, a long-purple-haired kunoichi who uses a sword, both likely in their early twenties. And the last member was probably around the same age as Fujin.

If a squad that is similar in appearance shows up, then you have to inform me right away."

Kitsuchi handed him 40 seals of 5 types. The seals were specifically made by the Fuinjutsu Grandmaster sent by Onoki to assist Kitsuchi. He picked up the first seal and said, "If you recognize Fujin's squad, then crush this seal. I will understand the message."

He pointed at the other four seals and said, "This seal is if an Elite Jounin from Konoha arrives instead. This seal is for any other Konoha squads. And the last seal is for considerable reinforcements being sent by Takigakure. Like at least more than 20 ninjas. And the last seal is to inform us about when Konoha's squad quit their mission and leave. Are the instructions clear?"

Sho took the seals and said, "I will do my best, Kitsuchi-sama."

Kitsuchi smiled and said, "Good luck. Don't engage in any battles with them though. We won't be able to provide much aid."

Sho nodded and took his leave. A few days later, he entered the Ito family town under disguise. Around a week after entering, Sho convinced that servant to work for him. When the previous Anbu squad from Konoha arrived, he quickly crushed the appropriate seal to inform Kitsuchi.

When the Anbu squad went to investigate the villages with the missing population, Kitsuchi checked them and confirmed that they weren't Fujin's squad. Due to the seals, the Anbu squad never suspected anyone spying on them while they were inspecting the village.

Kitsuchi waited patiently for a month until the Konoha Anbu retreated and began the attacks after they left to force Konoha to send an even stronger squad. Luckily for him, Fujin's squad was the next one to be sent.

When Sho learnt about the appearance of Fujin's squad, he immediately crushed the seal to inform Kitsuchi. As soon as he received the message, Kitsuchi was thrilled. His six-month-long effort and patience were finally rewarded. He cooperated with the Fuinjutsu Grandmaster to create the perfect trap for him.

He redistributed his forces, calling back the majority of the ninjas that he had trained to counter Fujin. Once the distribution was done, they did multiple attacks at the same time to force the Ito family to split up their forces, so that Fujin's squad would have little to no reinforcements and thus prevent any unforeseen circumstances from occurring.

When Fujin reached the village with just his squad, his tactic succeeded. The only part of the plan that didn't succeed was that Fujin didn't step into the village. Kitsuchi didn't manage to find out about Fujin's expertise in Fuinjutsu and thus revealed a flaw at the last step. Despite that, Fujin was in a very bad position in Kitsuchi's eyes. So his plan could be considered a complete success.

As he continued building up his chakra, Kitsuchi said, "Surrender. Otherwise, you and your teammates will have no means of survival."

Yugao, Fumito and Bunjiro became very tense. However, to Kitsuchi's surprise, Fujin chuckled and said, "I recall Roshi saying something similar. Still, what a good scheme! Formation Sixty Six!"

As soon as they heard that, chakra gathered at the feet of the Four Konoha Anbu and Fujin's clones. All jumped high into the air. Almost instantly, Kitsuchi slammed his hands on the ground.

'Earth Release: Opening Earth Rising Excavation jutsu'

A large mound appeared under the Konoha ninjas and a huge blast of force was released at them. Fujin looked down at the attack and thought, 'I thought that this attack could only be used to target the ones hiding underground. To think that he would use this against us. If we were hit directly, even I might have been blown apart even if I used Iron Skin jutsu!'

Fortunately, Kitsuchi couldn't hide the high amount of chakra built up for this jutsu, giving Fujin plenty of time to plan a counterattack. Fujin's clones all made the same hand seal. At the same time, Wind moved blasted around their bodies and helped them move in such that they were vertically above each other with the four Konoha ninjas at the top.

Immediately, 4 layers of barrier appeared. A frown formed on Kitsuchi's face as he noticed the barrier. The frown became worse as he noticed a large amount of chakra Fujin was building up. He thought, 'Such proficiency with the barrier. But it won't help him much in this situation. All barriers can be destroyed. He will eventually run out of chakra. The bigger issue is the chakra he is building up. What is he planning?'

The blast force due to Kitsuchi's jutsu hit the first barrier. It crumbled instantly. The clone dispelled itself before the attack hit him. The 2nd barrier endured the impact for a couple of seconds before crumbling as well. The second clone dispelled itself as well. Finally, the attack hit the third barrier. Multiple cracks appeared on the barrier but it held on.

Seeing that Kitsuchi's attack was stopped, the remaining Iwa ninjas weaved hand signs.

'Earth Release: Stone Pistol jutsu'

All the Iwa ninjas shot small stones at the barrier. As they travelled up in the air, their size increased until they could be considered boulders.

However, Fujin wasn't concerned about the attack. He bit his thumb and thought, 'It was great that I didn't expose this against Roshi. Otherwise, I'm afraid that Onoki might have shown up to kill me.'

'Summoning jutsu'

Just like how Kitsuchi patiently waited for Fujin, Fujin had been patiently hiding his trump cards as well. Very few knew about his summon or his mastery of Fuinjutsu and barriers. Not a single person was aware that he could use Lightning jutsus. Those were the trump cards he saved when a day like this arrived!

The Summoning jutsu directly consumed nearly 35% of Fujin's chakra! The stones shot by the Iwa ninjas crashed into the 3rd Barrier and crushed it as well but the clone safely moved above the last barrier. Despite there being only one more barrier, the Iwa ninjas didn't rejoice. A loud jagged roar was heard throughout the region for multiple kilometers!

A massive silhouette of a Winged Sabertooth appeared above the large barrier. He spread his wings wide and stared at the Iwa ninjas below as the Konoha ninjas landed on his back. The Iwa ninjas gulped as they felt a menacing stare.

Kitsuchi was shocked. He thought, 'What the hell? He has a flying summon?'

Up in the sky, the beast said grumpily, "Took you three long years to summon me?"

Fujin chuckled and said, "Kurogane, everyone below is an enemy. So feel free to go on a rampage. But be careful. They spit out rocks at a high speed."

Kurogane said, "Alright. I had always heard about how humans are very innovative and skillful. I hope they live up to it."

Fujin smirked. All three of Ryo's children were unique. The youngest, Goro, had a mischievous personality and loved pranking and having fun. The middle one, Kaito, loved flying and spent most of his time sailing over the vast world. And his oldest, Kurogane, was a battle maniac. He regularly sought strong foes and entered into bloody duels or wars. It was the reason why his body was covered in fearsome scars!

Kitsuchi thought, 'Shit, my plan didn't consider his ability to fly! If he decides to fly away, there isn't much I can do.'

Kitsuchi's expression became very ugly. Fujin had rarely shown his summon to anyone. So even in Konoha, very few knew what his summon was. In fact, even Renjiro, Hoka and Teru, the three people closest to him didn't know what his summon was. So there was no way for Iwa to get this information.

Despite the unfavorable circumstances, some hope appeared in Kitsuchi's eyes. He analyzed, 'I expected him to fly away with the help of his summon. But surprisingly, they are hovering in the same area. If he decides to stay and fight, I might have some opportunity. But it is still very low.'

An opponent who could fly and attack from a range was very annoying to deal with. But Kitsuchi had trained the ninjas in survival. So he had some confidence in fighting against Fujin.

As he planned his counterattack, the last barrier disappeared and the two clones began falling to the ground. At the same time, nature chakra gathered in Kurogane's wings as he flapped them. A very strong windstorm, multiple times stronger than Fujin's Infinite Breakthrough jutsu, was released towards the ground.

Kurogane perfectly controlled the winds so that they wouldn't hit the two clones. As soon as the winds passed the clones, they got in action as well.

'Fire Release: Searing Migraine jutsu'

Both exhaled a massive amount of fire into those strong winds. Iwa ninjas looked up as hellfire rained down on them!

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## Chapter 342: Annoyance!

A squad of four Takigakure ninjas were rushing towards the Ito family's town. One said, "Captain, what do you think is happening in this territory? It's been nearly four months since the first missing case was reported. And despite sending so many ninjas, they have still failed."

The captain of the squad replied, "It's difficult to say. The situation is very serious and peculiar. If the Ito family doesn't resolve this soon, then they might be overthrown."

The ninja was surprised. He asked, "Is it that serious? After all, only some civilians went missing."

The captain answered, "That is why no serious action has been taken until now. However, as the number of missing cases keeps rising, everyone will become very serious. After all, what's the use of a ninja village if it can't protect its citizens? Everyone will begin migrating to other countries. So it is a critical period for the Ito fam..."

He suddenly stopped speaking. All four ninjas stared in the Western direction. Their eyes opened wide and their throats dried as they saw a massive firestorm raining down from the skies!

One of the ninjas bulked and muttered in terror, "What the hell is happening there?"

Another gulped and commented, "This... this looks like Armageddon!"

The captain said, "I don't know. But we need to get away and go to the town very quickly. If something like this falls on the town, the entire town will be destroyed!"

They immediately ran away. Unlike them, Iwa ninjas didn't have the option to run away. Kitsuchi rapidly made hand seals and shouted, "Take cover!"

Hearing his command, every Iwa ninja who wasn't close to him went underground. Kitsuchi slammed his palms on the ground. A gigantic dome rose from the ground and covered him and the ninjas around him.

The firestorm finally impacted the ground. In an instant, all vegetation in the vicinity was destroyed. The fire spread in the surrounding areas and soon a massive forest fire would spread in the Land of Waterfall.

The sharp winds released by Kurogane impacted the ground and the dome. The dome and the ground were instantly covered in long scars. However, the dome held on and the sharp winds couldn't dig into the ground.

The attack, which the Taki ninjas believed would destroy an entire town, ended up not injuring even a single Iwa ninja!

Fujin observed from the sky, 'Normally, digging into the ground against me is suicide. But everyone who went underground is at least 40 meters deep into the ground. I can't penetrate that deep. They know how deep my attacks can penetrate.'

Sigh, this is why I like keeping my abilities a secret. Fighting is infinitely easier when the enemy doesn't know what to expect from me. Still, though hiding deep underground counters me to an extent, they are trapped there as I can attack when they try to come up.'

Unfortunately, there was no way for Fujin to hide his exposed secrets once again. In fact, after this battle, even more of his secrets would be exposed. Iwagakure might even spread them around, so even the other hidden villages might become aware of his capabilities.

While Fujin was observing, Kurogane said, "Killing them won't be easy. Fujin, support me."

Fujin didn't need to be told twice. He immediately riled his chakra up and said, "My clones will provide you with ground support. Take advantage of the openings."

Fujin's clones landed on the ground. At the same time, Fujin shot a Vacuum Cannon at the top of the dome Kitsuchi had created. At the same time, Kurogane opened his mouth and exhaled Wind Breath at the same spot.

Within the dome, some sensors said, "They are attacking the dome from the top. Be ready to defend yourselves..."

Before they completed saying, the Vacuum Cannon hit the top of the dome. It penetrated the dome with ease, leaving a gigantic hole. Kitsuchi, who was standing at the center of the dome, immediately moved out of the way while hardening his body. He weaved a hand seal.

'Earth Release: Fist Rock jutsu'

The Vacuum Cannon hit the ground and created a 25-meter-deep hole in the ground. Mere fractions of a second later, Kurogane's Wind Breath arrived at the opening created by the Vacuum Cannon. At the same time, Kistuchi's right arm turned into rock and he punched towards the hole, aiming to block the opening. He shouted, "Be careful! We don't know what that summon can do!"

The ninjas nodded and all instinctively hardened their bodies with the Iron Skin jutsu as well. They didn't want to escape underground as they knew that coming back up and joining the battle would be a challenge.

Kurogane's Wind Breath, which travelled like a beam, suddenly dispersed into all directions, filling up the inside of the dome. A second later, Kitsuchi's Rock Fist hit the hole and blocked the attack.

Seeing the winds, most Iwa ninjas quickly used more defensive jutsus. Numerous walls of varied shapes appeared in the dome. However, three ninjas were slower by a few milliseconds.

The Wind Breath hit them. Despite being covered by the Iron Skin jutsu, hundreds of small cuts appeared on their bodies! Blood began sprinkling from their bodies like a fountain.

The surrounding Iwa ninjas watched in horror as their bodies were turned into minced meat in mere seconds!

At the same time, Kitsuchi's Rock Fist was rapidly being eroded. He thought in shock, 'Such terrifying affinity to the wind nature! And the ability to fly. Shit, he will be a menace in the next war! Probably only the old man Onoki and the two Jinchurikis can force him to retreat.'

The Iwa ninjas didn't have any time to grieve for their fallen comrades. They sensed the dome getting damaged. Thanks to their long training, they all knew what was coming.



At the next moment, 36 newer and smaller holes appeared in the dome as Fujin and his two clones shot a dozen Vacuum Bullets each at the dome. The Iwa ninjas quickly took evasive actions. Thanks to being exposed to Han's blinding speed, they were all able to dodge the attacks despite the low distance between them.

At the same time, Kitsuchi weaved more hand seals and slammed his hands on the ground. The dome began transforming into spears. In a second, hundreds of pointed Earth Spears were launched in all directions at a very high speed.

Fujin's clones immediately raised an Earth Wall to protect themselves. Despite being a couple of hundred meters above in the sky, Kurogane was under attack as well. He immediately flapped his wings again.

Hundreds of Wind blades were launched from his wings. They hit the incoming spears and knocked them back to the ground. A few continued down towards the Iwagakure ninjas who quickly moved out of the way, allowing the wind blades to hit the ground without harming anyone and raising a dust cover.

A frown formed on Fujin's face as he analyzed, 'This is getting annoying. Why does everyone have to be so nimble and evasive?'

Though Fujin had fought against enemies while being outnumbered vastly, he had never been troubled so much by them. In most cases, he could use the weaker ninjas to create a handicap for the truly strong enemy ninjas. The losses would instantly make their hearts bleed and make them reluctant to continue the fight. For the first time, he truly had to experience what it was like to be outnumbered helplessly.

He turned his eyes towards the ninjas hiding underground and thought, 'Even them. Instead of coming up to the surface, they are staying that deep and moving towards the village. Once they enter the barrier, I might not be able to harm them.'

Kitsuchi had established strict protocols and procedures to be followed while fighting Fujin in order to keep his losses to a minimum. Anyone who escaped underground had to retreat back to the village and then rejoin the battle instead of coming up normally. Though it would take more time, it was better than dying needlessly in Kitsuchi's opinion.

Fujin observed the situation while analyzing, 'What should I do? I knew that killing Kitsuchi wouldn't be possible, but I wanted to eliminate these ninjas that were specially trained to deal with me. But, is there any point in doing so if it is so difficult? After all, Kurogane's summoning has a time limit. And I can't sustain my chakra for a very long time either.'

As Fujin was planning, his clones moved towards the Iwa ninjas who were with Kitsuchi. Sensing an opportunity, Kurogane dove down. Fujin quickly ate a Soldier Pill and said, "Kurogane, focus on safety first. It's fine if we can't kill many, but ensure that you can fly us away from here."

He quickly instructed his teammates, "If you see an opportunity, use your long-range jutsus, especially your Lightning release Fumito, to kill or injure them. But don't fall off Kurogane. It will be very difficult to save you if you do."

Fujin's teammates ate the soldier pills as well and nodded. They all knew that survival would be impossible if they were to fall off. Kitsuchi saw Kurogane dive down and thought, 'Finally, I can have an opportunity. But if he is diving towards us, he must be very confident in his close-range fighting abilities.'

The long-range battle would soon end and instead, a mid and close-range battle would begin!

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Chapter 343: An Intense Clash!

Fujin's clones approached the Iwa ninjas from opposite directions. Wind chakra flowed through both their swords and at the same time, they puffed up their cheeks, preparing the Vacuum Bullets. The two Elite Jounins immediately faced each clone.

Though this was the first time Fujin and Kurogane were fighting together, both had practiced several times. He knew what the clones were about to do. He quickly closed in on the Iwa ninjas from the top while gathering wind energy in his mouth.

At the same time, Fujin created another Shadow Clone. The clone looked towards the village with the missing people.

'Wind Release: Instantaneous Body jutsu'

He disappeared from Kurogane's back and appeared right on top of the Iwa ninjas who were travelling towards the village through the underground.

At the same moment, the two Shadow Clones swung their swords, releasing two long wind slashes along with accompanying winds, sandwiching the Iwa ninjas between them. The Elite Jounins slammed their hands on the ground and shouted, "Their cheeks are puffed. Keep an eye out for the Vacuum Bullets!"

The wind slashes hit the walls, leaving a large scar at their centers, but the wall withstood the attacks. A second later, dozens of Vacuum Bullets pierced through the walls.

At the same time, Kurogane opened his mouth wide. Kitsuchi's eyes widened as he noticed 8 spheres of wind in Kurogane's large mouth. Kitsuchi shouted, "Keep an eye on the sky as well!"

In an instant, he fired them at the Iwa ninjas who were dodging the Vacuum Bullet. Kitsuchi had a very ugly expression. Though Fujin was frustrated by the Iwa ninjas' consistency in dodging his deadly attacks, Kitsuchi was equally frustrated with Fujin's tactics, if not more.

He rapidly weaved hand signs as he thought, 'First those deadly vacuum jutsus. And now a three-directional attack! My ninjas are barely even able to dodge the Vacuum Bullets by paying full attention to him. But now, not only do they have to dodge attacks from the front, but they also have to keep an eye on their back while also keeping an eye on the skies!

Not to mention, just like his Vacuum jutsus, the perverse attack of his summon also cuts through Iron Skin jutsu!

The attack from multiple directions finally made the Iwa ninjas struggle. They dodged the Vacuum Bullets coming from the front and quickly twisted their necks to look at the attacks coming from behind. Fortunately, they could sense Fujin's Vacuum Bullets and Kurogane's Air Bullets moving rapidly through their chakra fields. Unfortunately, they had very little time and space to maneuver their bodies.

They moved their bodies in a manner that allowed them to save their vitals and avoid any lethal injuries. A few Vacuum Bullets grazed past the hardened arms and legs of the Iwa ninjas, leaving a few deep scars. However, to make matters worse, the large Air Bullets fired by Kurogane maneuvered as well and targeted 8 Iwa ninjas.

In the nick of time, 8 inclined walls appeared from the ground, providing a cover for those ninjas. Unfortunately, Kitsuchi couldn't accurately calculate the directions in which they would dodge nor was he aware that the Air Bullets could maneuver in the air. He ended up miscalculating for two ninjas, both of whom were engulfed by the Air Bullets. The ninjas could only hope that their Iron Skin jutsus protected them.

Though the Winged Sabertooths called the attack as Air Bullets, that was only due to their large size. In terms of size, they were thrice as large as Fujin's Vacuum Cannon.

Despite their comrades being hit, the Iwa ninjas, who weren't under attack, ignored it and counterattacked. Six ninjas each, led by an Elite Jounin, rushed to intercept the two Shadow Clones. The remaining shot Stone Pellet jutsu at Kurogane who had come much closer to the ground. Only Kitsuchi kept an eye on the two ninjas that were hit, as his eyes turned red.

On Kurogane's back, Yugao and Bunjiro immediately used defensive jutsus while Kurogane flew out of the way. The Iwa ninjas continued their attack but were met by Fumito and Fujin's counterattack.

Fujin shot Vacuum Bullets at the Iwa ninjas through the incoming stone pellets while Fumito weaved hand signs.

'Lightning Release: False Darkness jutsu'

He launched multiple spears of Lightning, forcing some of the Iwa ninjas to dodge. However, he controlled the jutsu and chased after the Iwa ninjas, forcing them to use a few defensive jutsus while evading.

Meanwhile, Kitsuchi was surprised. He looked at the two ninjas who were hit by Kurogane's attack. Despite taking the full hit, only a few scars appeared on their hardened skin. He thought, 'So this attack isn't as powerful as the previous one? I was afraid that they would be shredded into pieces as well.'

He turned his attention towards Kurogane who was still being attacked and analyzed, 'So far I have seen 3 attacks from him. The first one is where he flaps his wings and generates a windstorm. Though that attack is strong, it can't break through our wall defenses. Though considering their momentum, they might still harm us despite the Iron Skin jutsu.'

The second is the beam he shot earlier. It gets stopped by walls as well, but Iron Skin jutsu doesn't protect against it. And the giant balls of wind look to be his weakest attack.'

Kitsuchi looked at Fujin on Kurogane's back and thought, 'Though killing him right now is very difficult, I should collect all the information I can about him. It will be useful if we plan another trap or if he makes a move against Iwa in the future.'

Kurogane also noticed that the Iwa ninjas weren't harmed badly by the attack. He analyzed, 'These guys have a tough body. It's almost similar to those tortoises in the Northern Lakes. Unfortunately, I haven't yet completely mastered infusing Nature energy into the Air Bullets like I can with the Wind Breath. And the amount we can infuse in the Windstorm created by flapping wings is very low.

It looks like Wind Breath will be the only method I can kill them with. But, it takes a lot of chakra and nature energy. I can concentrate that much nature energy into that attack only 3 more times.'

Closer to the village, Fujin's Shadow Clone placed his palms on the ground. He converted 80% of his chakra to supercharge his jutsu.

'Wind Release: Geyser Creation jutsu'

Numerous cracks appeared around the clone, forming a web-like appearance. The cracks spread up to 50 meters under the ground. The Iwa ninjas, who were travelling underground, were surprised by the sudden change. They all instinctively used Iron Skin jutsu to protect themselves.

A second later, sharp winds ran through all the cracks, hitting the Iwa ninjas. As they endured the sharp hits, they thought, 'Thankfully we mastered this jutsu. Otherwise, all of us might have died!'

None of them had expected to be in danger despite staying so deep underground. Fujin's clone took a few heavy breaths as his chakra became very low. He thought, 'Time to end this!'

On the other side of the battlefield, Kurogane once again shot multiple Air Bullets at the Iwa ninjas. He followed it up by flapping his wings and launching a windstorm at the Iwa ninjas.

Kitsuchi ignored the bullets as they didn't pose many challenges and could be dodged. He slammed his hands on the ground. Multiple rocks of large size were launched into the air, blocking the way of the sharp wind slashes within the wind storm.

The wind slashes hit the rocks and sent them flying towards the Iwa ninjas. However, the rocks neutralized their sharpness and eliminated their threat towards the Iwa ninjas. Though the rocks were still coming at them, they were far easier to dodge than the unpredictable wind slashes in the wind storm.

However, Kurogane didn't mind this result. Seeing that all the Iwa ninjas other than Kitsuchi were focused on dodging the rocks, he immediately sped up and appeared right on top of him. He raised his massive front foot. In an instant, a massive amount of Wind chakra gathered, engulfing his leg.

Kitsuchi's eyes widened as he noticed wind chakra gathering on his paw. He immediately weaved a hand seal.

'Earth Release: Rock Fist jutsu'

His right arm was covered by rocks which kept increasing its size. He moved backwards as he punched towards the incoming paw. The paw and the rock fist clashed!

In an instant, Kitsuchi was dragged backwards due to the force of the paw. The rock fist kept crumbling at the point of impact. Kitsuchi thought, 'Such physical might! Thankfully I moved backwards. Otherwise, I could have been crushed under this enormous paw!'

Kurogane's paw almost entirely crushed the rock fist. Knowing that he couldn't hold on, Kitsuchi flickered backwards. However, his eyes widened as he saw a figure flicker even faster towards him.

Noticing the opportunity, Fujin flickered towards Kitsuchi, his sword overflowing with Wind chakra!

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Chapter 344: A Close Call

Under the ground, the Iwa ninjas were hit by extremely sharp winds. Despite their defenses, a few cracks appeared on their hardened skin. Wanting to take advantage of the momentary distraction, Fujin's clone entered the ground.

However, the Iwa ninjas were aware of the danger they would face if Fujin's clone got close to them. A few ninjas immediately sensed the clone's location and weaved hand signs.

'Earth Release: Spear Trap jutsu'

In an instant, the surface walls of the entire crack that Fujin's clone was travelling through began transforming. Hundreds of spears appeared from both walls, leaving no space for a normal-sized person to move through. In addition, the walls themselves began moving closer to each other!

The clone frowned and immediately hardened his skin using the Iron Skin jutsu. He thought, 'I wanted to go closer and try using Vacuum jutsu underground. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like I can do that. My main body calculated correctly. That is why I was given so little chakra.'

Dozens of spears hit his hardened body and were stopped. But Fujin's clone wouldn't be able to travel normally. He weaved a hand seal and thought, 'Oh well. Time to do what I was created for.'

A thousand Explosion Tags appeared around him. A breeze appeared, carrying the explosion tags into all the cracks created by the Geyser Creation jutsu! Some also flew where the Iwagakure ninjas were. Their eyes widened. Without the need for any command, everyone took evasive actions focusing just on their own survival!

Kitsuchi saw Fujin flicker towards him and noticed his sword as well. Rock engulfed his right arm once again as he sent a punch at Fujin. The remaining Iwa ninjas, other than the ones engaged by the clones, also noticed the attack and immediately sprung into action.

Fujin observed the incoming Rock Fist, sidestepped it and shot a Vacuum Bullet at Kitsuchi. Kitsuchi barely managed to move to his right to dodge the attack. Fujin used that time to move around the Rock Fist and appeared on Kitsuchi's left!

Kitsuchi's left arm also started transforming into Rock, but he frowned and thought, 'Shit, there is not enough time!'

He immediately used Iron Skin jutsu to cover his body. Suddenly, two Iwa ninjas appeared next to Fujin, attracting his attention. At the same time, the remaining Iwa ninjas also launched jutsus at Kurogane and Fujin.

Fujin observed some lightning sparks on their bodies and thought, 'Lightning transformation jutsu... I will only get one attack.'

He immediately puffed his cheeks, preparing a few Vacuum Bullets and ignored the two ninjas who appeared using the Lightning jutsu and slashed his sword at Kitsuchi.

The two Iwa Jounins slashed their kunai at Fujin. However, before they could hit him, two large Air Bullets shot by Kurogane hit them at point blank! Since they were using enhancement from Lightning jutsus to enhance their speed, neither could use the Iron Skin jutsu. Numerous cuts appeared on both their bodies as both were sent flying to their deaths. The threat to Fujin was temporarily alleviated.

At the same time, Yugao, Fumito and Bunjiro used defensive jutsus to protect Kurogane from the incoming attacks. Kurogane flapped his wings as well and generated additional winds to knock off some of the attacks. However, due to being attacked by over 30 ninjas, their defenses were easily overwhelmed.

Fujin slashed his sword horizontally at Kitsuchi who kept moving backwards but wasn't in a position to dodge. He tried blocking with the Rock Fist on his left arm. However, Fujin cut through the partially formed Rock Fist and his sword landed on Kitsuchi's chest.

The Iwa Ninjas watched with their eyes widened as a long cut appeared on Kitsuchi's hardened chest! Kitsuchi gritted his teeth and endured the pain. He thought, 'This attack won't kill me. But if he uses Vacuum Bullets from such close range...'

Until now, Iwa ninjas took advantage of their large numbers and specialized training. They didn't provide Fujin or his clones with any opportunity to focus on and overwhelm a single ninja and ensured that they aided each other to reduce his danger. However, at such close range, Kitsuchi wouldn't be able to dodge a dozen or more Vacuum Bullets even if he saw them.



Fortunately for Kitsuchi, Fujin disappeared from his spot, leaving behind an afterimage. As soon as he disappeared, multiple stone pellets pierced through the afterimage. Fujin appeared on top of Kurogane and shot the Vacuum Bullets at the jutsus launched at Kurogane. The Vacuum Bullets pierced through stone pellets, spears and other jutsus that they hadn't managed to defend against, successfully stopping them.

As soon as he felt Fujin on his back, Kurogane flew up in the sky once again and muttered, "They are good. Those attacks would have injured me to an extent."

Fujin replied, "Yeah. Be careful."

He thought, 'Though I could have landed a fatal blow on Kitsuchi, I would have been hit as well. Though I might have been able to defend against, if Kurogane got injured and was forced to return, then these three would have been goners.'

Kitsuchi also looked at Fujin who had gone back into the sky. He stopped using his Iron Skin jutsu. A sword slash was visible cutting across his chest. He felt a lot of pain in his rib cage. One of the Iwa Jounins, who could use Medical Ninjutsu, flickered next to him and said, "I will heal you."

However, Kitsuchi replied, "No need. I can still fight. Look out for attacks for now."

He looked at Fujin and thought, 'He could have landed a deadly attack on me. Even if I had survived, the injuries could have permanently decreased my capabilities. Fortunately, he wanted to save his teammates and his summon.'

It looks like he isn't as heartless as Gin thought. Had he been like Danzo, he would have accepted the loss of three Anbu ninjas for the chance of killing or maiming me. Konoha would have heavily benefitted as a result.'

Fujin, of course, knew that. However, he didn't see the point of doing that. He thought, 'Sacrificing my teammates to kill Kitsuchi would have been more beneficial for the village from the point of view of other ninjas. But, I know that the next Great War won't be fought between the villages.'

So I have no benefit to gain from killing or maiming him. Unlike Suna, Iwa won't be going to war against Konoha. Instead, we would lose a capable commander. And the drawbacks could be worse. After all, right Onoki only wants me dead due to my potential. But if I kill his son-in-law, then it would be personal. Though I could run away from him, it's better to not have a needless headache.

That is why I didn't try to hack his arm and instead just cut through the rock fist to leave a scar on his body. This should be enough to force Iwagakure to think multiple times before trying to pull off another stunt like this. They would be far less likely to send someone like Kitsuchi after me if it meant that they could lose them. As for Onoki and the two Jinchurikis, they won't move so easily.'

His eyes turned towards the village as he thought, 'Regardless, it should be about time!'

At the very next moment, a loud explosion rocked the entire place! The ground trembled, forcing the Iwa ninjas to turn their attention towards the source of the explosion. Fujin's clones, his teammates and Kurogane were surprised as well. However, the clones instantly received the memories and noticed an opportunity. For the first time since their clash began, the Iwa ninjas weren't focused entirely on them.

They wasted no time in shooting multiple Vacuum Bullets. The Elite Jounins immediately noticed and shouted, "Pay attention."

They got out of the way and counterattacked. Unfortunately, the short distraction was all Fujin's clones needed. Despite their quick reflexes, one clone managed to kill 4 and the other managed to kill 3 Jounins. Both clones were very low on chakra due to the intense combat. They didn't even attempt dodging the counterattacks and were dispelled.

At the same time, Fujin built up his chakra and instructed, "Kurogane, fly over there. You three support me."

The trio understood Fujin's intentions.

'Wind Release: Infinite Breakthrough jutsu'

'Fire Release: Great Fireball jutsu'

'Wind Release: Air Bullets jutsu'

'Wind Release: Wind Dragon jutsu'

Fujin exhaled strong and sharp winds at the Iwa ninjas below him. Yugao launched the fireball in the winds he generated, turning the windstorm into a firestorm! Bunjiro and Fumito added more attacks into the Wind to make life difficult for the Iwa ninjas.

The lethal combination attack forced the Iwagakure ninjas to use defensive moves. At the same time, they were on their guard. They had just seen 7 of their comrades die because they dropped their guard for a second. They didn't want to fall prey to Fujin's Vacuum bullets again.

However, their eyes soon widened. Instead of sensing Fujin's attacks, they sensed him moving away at a rapid speed. Kurogane flew towards the area where the blast had taken place and reached it in a few seconds. Kitsuchi understood Fujin's intentions and had an ugly expression.

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Chapter 345: A Bluff!

Kitsuchi had an ugly expression as he sensed where Fujin was heading. He thought, 'There are at least 40 ninjas there. We can't lose them all.'

He looked at the storm that was obstructing them and commanded loudly, "We will move underground and chase them. If they return to attack us, we will escape deeper and move towards the village. If they don't, then we will return to the surface after getting out of range of the storm and chase."

Immediately, all the Iwa ninjas followed him. Despite his quick thinking, Kitsuchi was much slower than Kurogane who reached the location in merely a couple of seconds. Fujin looked down and sensed, 'Oh, there are 44 trapped here due to the explosion. But they won't be trapped for long. In fact, 13 have already escaped even deeper and are moving towards the village...'

The simultaneous explosion from 1000 explosion tags had blown up the ground and transformed it into the soil. More than 60% of this soil was blown into the air while the remaining stayed in the depression that the explosion created, burying the Iwa ninjas within.

However, thanks to Iron Skin jutsu and using the ground itself as cover, none of the Iwa ninjas were critically injured. And despite being buried, they weren't in any danger. They just needed slightly extra time to move through the soft soil. But, in high-speed intense combat, time was a luxury.

Without wasting any time, Kurogane once again infused a massive amount of Sage chakra in his breath and shot a beam towards the location where he sensed the maximum number of Iwa ninjas. Fujin was even faster. He shot a dozen Vacuum Bullets where the soil cover was the thinnest.

Since more than half the soil was blown away, the defense provided was reduced by more than 50%. In addition, the loose soil provided far lesser resistance than hard ground. Fujin's teammates just stayed alert, prepared to defend in case they were attacked. They didn't have any jutsus to pierce that deeply into the ground despite the weakened defenses.

The Vacuum Bullets pierced into the soil. Kurogane's Wind Breath also hit the soil and moved straight through it, pushing the soil out of its way and creating a large hole. The Iwa ninjas sensed Fujin's and Kurogane's attacks and tried to move. However, they couldn't move as freely under the ground as they could above it.

Of the 12 Vacuum bullets, 7 pierced into the hearts of the Iwa ninjas. The remaining 5 ninjas managed to avoid taking a fatal blow but were still left with a hole in their body.

The Wind Breath directly hit 5 Iwa ninjas that were in the path. All 5 were obliterated on the spot. Fujin created another dozen Vacuum Bullets and shot them at the 5 injured Iwa ninjas and another 7 ninjas who were escaping. He thought, 'Finally some easy kills. I was so sick of them dodging every attack!'

Meanwhile, Kurogane changed the direction of the beam towards the Iwa ninjas in the vicinity. He managed to kill another 3 when he and all the Konoha ninjas looked to their right, towards the village. A strange bird made of rocks flew from inside the barrier and moved towards Kurogane.

The Konoha ninjas and Kurogane were shocked. Fujin immediately made a hand seal while Kurogane flapped his wings and began soaring into the sky. Fumito muttered, "Such high chakra!"

The rocky bird tried to give chase but was too slow. As soon as the distance began growing larger, the rocky bird pointed its wing tips towards Kurogane and began glowing. In the next moment, it exploded!

Fujin immediately pointed his hand forward. A barrier appeared under them, shielding Kurogane. Thanks to their quick response, the distance was quite large. Despite the massive explosion, only a small impact was felt on the barrier. But Fujin didn't let his guard down and kept pouring more chakra into the barrier.

As he expected, two rock spears crashed into the barrier at tremendous speed! They were the rock spears inside the rocky bird's wings which it had pointed at Kurogane before detonating. They created multiple cracks in the barrier before losing their power and crumbling into the soil as they fell to the ground. The Konoha ninjas were finally relieved as Kurogane continued rising in the air.

Bunjiro looked towards the village below and asked in shock, "What was that?"

Fujin replied, "Explosion Release Kekkei Genkai."

He wondered, 'That didn't seem like Deidara. Besides, he should be younger than me by a year. It looks like there are others with this Kekkei Genkai in Iwa. But who and how strong is the one hiding inside the barrier?'

The intensity of the chakra in the jutsu had surprised Fujin. His first thought was that the attacker might be as strong as Kitsuchi. His eyes glowed as he observed the village but wasn't able to gather anything. He asked, "Kurogane, can you sense anything inside that barrier?"

Kurogane tried sensing using Nature's energy. However, he shook his head as well and said, "No. I can't sense anything. I didn't even notice that barrier earlier. What do you want to do?"

Fujin calculated, 'I still don't know who is inside the village. Considering that they didn't come out to help, I assumed that they aren't strong or confident enough to finish me off. But this attack was strong. Even flying on Kurogane won't guarantee our safety. Should I test out who it is and why that ninja hasn't revealed himself?'

Fujin thought for a few seconds and decided, 'Leave it... It's not worth the risk. My chakra is already very low. And creating another opportunity to kill them easily will be difficult. Not to mention, if the ninja hiding inside the barrier is as strong as Kitsuchi, then even my life would be at risk.'

He said, "Let's retreat. We have killed enough today."

Kurogane agreed with Fujin's decision and his teammates didn't object either. Fujin pointed Kurogane in the direction of the Ito family's town as he flew away.

On the ground, Kitsuchi's group arrived a couple of seconds after the Rocky bird exploded. Kitsuchi sighed and muttered, 'Old man Yoshiki was forced to make a move...'

Inside the barrier, an old man was on his knees, coughing heavily. He had a very pale face. It was the same old man who warned Kitsuchi about Fujin's attainments in Fuinjutsu. He thought, 'Fortunately, my bluff worked! I poured almost my entire chakra into the jutsu and would not be able to perform another any time soon. If he had stayed, then we could have faced more losses.'

A younger man supported him and asked, "Are you fine, master?"

Yoshiki caught his breath and said, "I am fine, Makoto. It's just that I used too much chakra in that jutsu. Looks like my old bones won't support me much."

Makoto sighed. Yoshiki was 76 years old. Though he was an Elite Jounin in his prime, his prime was far behind him. Of course, he was still highly respected. The reason was that he was among the only 3 Fuinjutsu Grandmasters in Iwagakure. As for Makoto, he was one of the SealMaster that Yoshiki was guiding.

Makoto looked into the sky and saw that Kurogane was flying away. He asked, "Why did you scare him away? Now we can't kill him."

Yoshiki got up and shook his head. He said, "The battle was lost even before we started. Kitsuchi wasn't aware of his summon nor did he know about his expertise in Fuinjutsu. So killing him today wasn't possible. He would have just continued attacking until he ran out of chakra and then escaped. The only thing that would happen is that more of our ninjas would have died."

Makoto had a complicated expression. He was being guided to become the next Fuinjutsu Grandmaster in Iwagakure. Though he wasn't anywhere close to reaching it, his future prospects were very good. But, to know that someone 7 years younger than him from an enemy country was not only strong enough to

fight against one of Iwa's strongest ninjas but also better than him in his speciality was a bitter pill for him to swallow.

He muttered, "But isn't he just 14?"

Yoshiki sighed and nodded. He said, "In every generation, Konoha produces many such talents. Two decades ago, it was the 3 Sannins. A decade ago it was the Fourth Hokage. And now they have the Copy Ninja, Konoha's Green Beast and this youngster, the Spectral Swordsman.

Not to mention, I heard that the children of their clan leaders will be graduating from the academy in little more than a year. Once they do, Konoha would likely gain even more elites in another 4 to 5 years even if they don't reach the same level as these three."

Makoto didn't have any response. He could just sigh helplessly.

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Chapter 346: A Clash with no Winners!

Outside the barrier, Kitsuchi began checking in on the ninjas who were caught in the explosion. He thought, 'I thought I could make him let his guard down and kill him in one blow. But it looks like Yoshiki disagreed with my analysis. Makes sense considering the massive losses we took. I miscalculated badly in this fight.'

Not a single ninja was alive in the pit dug up by the explosion. The reason was that whoever was alive quickly escaped after the rocky bird forced the Konoha ninjas away. They entered the village before appearing back on the surface.

Everyone had minor injuries due to the Geyser Creation jutsu and the explosion tags. Only three had critical injuries.

One ninja had a hole in his right thigh, another was missing his left arm and the third had a huge chunk of flesh and bones missing on the right side of his chest.

Fujin's last attack managed to kill the 5 injured ninjas while killing two more and injuring 3. Two ninjas managed to get deep enough into the ground just in time. The medical ninjas hiding inside the barrier quickly began healing the injured ninjas.

In a few minutes, Kitsuchi and the rest dug out the Iwa ninjas that had been killed underground. They found 16 dead bodies that had one or more holes in them. There were 3 more spots where blood and minced flesh and bones had mixed, forming a gory sight. The Iwa ninjas understood that a ninja died at each spot. The worst was that spot that Kurogane had targeted first. The sight of the gore made even the most experienced ninjas nauseated!

Kitsuchi stood still realizing the losses they took. The Iwa ninjas around him had solemn expressions. They had trained intensely for months to kill Fujin. However, after encountering him, nothing good happened. Not only did Fujin manage to escape uninjured but a lot of Iwa ninjas died!

Kitsuchi asked everyone to gather the remains of the fallen Iwa ninjas and went inside the barrier. He met up with Yoshiki. Yoshiki looked at him and said, "It's fine. You didn't have all the information. You won't experience such a failure the next time."

Kitsuchi sighed and said, "There might not be a next time. His summon can fly at a high speed. We can't trap him even if we know about this information unless Lord Tsuchikage makes a move himself. Not to mention, Konoha will be very careful next time."

Yoshiki didn't say anything. He agreed with Kitsuchi's analysis and only said those words to lift his spirits.

Kitsuchi glanced at the village once and said, "Make preparations to leave. We will destroy all the seals and evidence that might be linked to us. We will retreat after everyone is healed."

Yoshiki nodded and looked at his students. Everyone nodded and got to work. A few seconds later, an Elite Jounin approached Kitsuchi and Yoshiki and said in a grim tone, "We have tallied our losses."

Kitsuchi, Yoshiki and a few ninjas around them had dejected expressions. The ninja said, "We found 36 dead bodies. 34 of them were killed by Fujin and 2 by his summon."



A hint of anger could be felt in his voice as he said, "And there are a few more ninjas whose bodies were minced by that beast's attack. We tallied the missing ninjas and calculated that the place with the largest amount of blood and flesh should have had 5 ninjas. So 11 more ninjas should be dead. We lost 47 capable Jounins in this clash!"

He clenched his fists very tightly as he finished speaking. The nails dug into his palms, making them bleed! He wasn't alone. The remaining Iwa ninjas couldn't believe the losses they took in that fight! Almost half the ninjas that participated in the attack had died! And they didn't kill or maim even one Konoha ninja!

Kitsuchi gritted his teeth. He thought, 'I wanted to use this opportunity to train a special Elite army unit. But 47 are dead and another is handicapped. To think that I would lose 40% of the ninjas I trained in one blow! Damn it!'

He hated Fujin a lot at this moment. However, he couldn't do anything but sigh. He wasn't stupid enough to make a move that would cause Iwagakure more losses.

He thought, 'Along with losing so many ninjas, we will also face the consequences of our earlier actions. Just like the Land of Grass, the Land of Waterfall will hate Iwagakure as well and would closely align with Konoha.

With the Land of Rain having Hanzo and Suna being allied with Konoha, Konoha has completely secured their western borders. And Kiri is embroiled in a civil war. At this rate, only Kumo would be in a position to attack Konoha. Of course, that is if Suna doesn't betray Konoha.'

He looked towards the direction of the Land of Wind and thought, 'I never imagined that after being humiliated so badly in the last war, Sunagakure would become the kingmaker in the next war!'

Kitsuchi was surprised by the conclusion he reached. However, he stopped thinking about the future and turned his attention to the present. He ensured that all the injured ninjas were being treated and the dead bodies were properly stored in seals to be brought back.

After storing the dead again, Kitsuchi looked at the scrolls in his heart with a heavy heart. He wondered, '47 lives just to gain information on a fourteen-year-old ninja who is very close to becoming a fearsome rank S ninja in the future. Is it worth it?'

Kitsuchi couldn't say for sure.

Though the Iwagakure ninjas were upset that they had losses while Konoha didn't, Fujin wasn't pleased by the result either. In fact, he was even more upset than Kitsuchi. Kitsuchi at least gained knowledge about the skills Fujin kept hidden until then. But Fujin had no gains at all.

While this wasn't the first time he had to run away from a fight, it was the first time that Fujin was so disgusted by a fight.

He thought, 'This feeling is almost as bad as when I had to escape from Darui. Though my life isn't under any threat this time, it feels like I was paraded naked in front of an entire city. Bastards knew almost every move I would make in advance!

Fortunately, Roshi didn't see Goro, or else I might have been in grave danger. At the very least, these three would have died. Though I am not very attached to them, I don't want to develop a reputation for being someone who runs while his teammates are killed. Though I could live with such a reputation, it will create a lot of inconveniences for me in Konoha.'

While Fujin wasn't too concerned about his reputation unlike some others, he understood the importance of maintaining a good reputation. He still had a lot of more important knowledge and resources that he wanted from Konoha.

If he had a good reputation, Hiruzen would not make it very difficult for him to get it. But if he had a bad reputation, then getting them from Hiruzen would become very difficult. Not to mention, he was no longer as young as he was during his Academy or Genin days. Trying to use his 'innocence' to get rewards from Hiruzen would no longer work.

Fujin sighed internally thinking, 'But now, they know almost everything about me. The only thing that is definitely a secret is my Lightning Release. One of my clones even used the Wind Style Genjutsu. I can only hope that no one figures it out.

Though I did manage to kill many Jounins, that doesn't give me any benefit. If anything, it might make Iwagakure want to kill me even more. I'd prefer keeping my skills a secret rather than killing some ninjas that don't pose me any direct threat.'

If it wasn't for the fact that Fujin had already exposed his secrets, he wouldn't have bothered to even kill them. But since they were, he was forced to make use of those secrets to make Iwa suffer some losses. If he hadn't, then he would have been the only one to experience losses and Iwa would have come after him again after making even more preparations and a better plan.

Just like Fujin, his teammates were also silent and in thought. During the entire battle, forget about killing, they hadn't even managed to injure one ninja!

Bunjiro thought, 'I felt that I was getting stronger. But every single one of them was stronger than me. I didn't think that I would still be so weak!'

Fumito and Yugao had similar thoughts. They knew how ridiculously fast Fujin was and that he could have escaped if he was by himself. They thought, 'We were the reason why Fujin didn't escape and had to fight against such terrible odds. Though things turned out well this time, it might not always be the case.'

At the same time, all three thought, 'We need to become stronger. We need some time off so that we can train and catch up with Captain.'

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Chapter 347: Ito Family Crisis!

Kurogane noticed the gloomy mood on his back and was annoyed by it. He muttered to himself, 'I'd rather fight those ninjas than keep getting this depressed feeling from my back.'

He snapped them out of their thoughts by asking, "How far do you want me to carry you, Fujin? You know that I don't like flying for a long time."

Fujin answered, "We have to pass by a town which should be very close. After reaching it, just fly South for an hour. You can drop us in the Land of Fire. Our chakra is very exhausted. I'd prefer to not have any more surprises."

Kurogane replied, "Alright. You'll have to guide me though. I have no idea about the geography here."

Fujin nodded. Fujin's words surprised Yugao. She asked, "Are we not going back to the town?"

Fujin shook his head and replied, "No. The enemy is stronger than us. Staying in this country is very risky. If there is any other such force here or they decide to chase us to this town, then we could be in danger.

The seals in the village were made by a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster and they have someone who can create that strong explosion. So they have multiple means of trapping us in the city or even destroying the mansion when we might be resting. So it's not worth it."

None of his subordinates disagreed and they continued moving forward.

Since no one was bothering him, Fujin began thinking about the situation again. He thought, 'What's done is done. There is no point in getting upset over it. I need to analyze why I fell into such a mess in the first place and how Iwagakure knew I would be sent here. I need to calm my mind as being annoyed won't help me analyze it properly.'

He began meditating. A few minutes later, they reached above the town. Fujin created a Shadow Clone who jumped off Kurogane. As for Kurogane, he changed direction and began flying towards the Land of Fire.

The town was still in panic. It had only been an hour since they had heard about the incidents. Though the Ito family tried to calm the public down, it wasn't very effective. While the Ito family was thinking about what methods they should use to quell the panic, their guards noticed something in the air. Their eyes widened as they noticed someone falling down.

Fujin's clone used Assassin's rush in short bursts to slow down his fall. When he reached close to the ground, he exhaled a forceful but harmless Infinite Breakthrough jutsu on the ground to slow down his fall and landed on his feet.

Though the guards were surprised, they immediately recognized his attire. However, they weren't sure if it was him or an enemy under disguise. Fujin's clone didn't bother talking with them. He flickered and appeared inside the mansion, next to Ito Yuya. The guards were surprised and hurriedly ran inside to inform them what they had witnessed.

Yuya was taken aback by Fujin's sudden appearance. Fujin's clone said, "I have important information. Call another meeting instantly."

Yuya frowned and wondered, 'Why did he come back so quickly? More importantly, is it him or someone else disguising as him?'

He quickly asked, "Why did you come back so quickly? And how can I be sure if you aren't someone else in disguise and want to gather our family and kill us at the same time?"

Fujin's clone wasn't surprised by the questions. The Anbu frequently faced such issues. He said in a plain voice, "You sent most of the ninjas in this town out. If I wanted to kill you and your entire family, then no one could stop me."

Yuya was intimidated by his words. Fortunately, the clone didn't continue threatening him and said, "But I don't have much time. If you want to listen to it yourself, then that's fine as well. As for what you do after is none of my business."

The one behind the recent incidents is Iwagakure."

Yuya's eyes widened. He said loudly in disbelief, "How can that be? Why would a major village do something like this?"

Fujin's clone answered, "No idea. We didn't talk much. The village with the missing people is covered with seals by a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster. The village itself had around a hundred Iwa ninjas. Maybe more if they stayed hidden. And they are led by the Third Tsuchikage's son-in-law, Kitsuchi."

Yuya's heart became increasingly heavier as Fujin's clone provided more information. Though the Ito family was the most dominant family in the territory, they were no match for a behemoth like Iwagakure. Just thinking about one hundred Iwa ninjas led by Kitsuchi made his knees weak.

Fujin's clone added, "We clashed but were forced to retreat. They would likely not make a move for a few hours, but I am not sure what they will do afterwards. Since their cover was blown, there are two possibilities."

The first possibility and the one you might prefer is that they will retreat back to the Land of Stone. The second is that they might try to speed up whatever they were planning. It might involve an attack on this town."

Yuya's mind went blank for a few seconds. The information was too much for him to handle. However, as an experienced politician, he gathered himself quickly. He bowed and pleaded, "Please help us defend the town."

Fujin's clone shook his head and said, "The amount of Iwa forces is enough to start a war. This matter is something that Takigakure needs to handle. As someone from Konoha, I can't be involved lightly in this matter. Slowing them down and providing you with sufficient time is the most I can do."

My squad is already heading back. I'll report the details to Lord Hokage and he will make a decision on Konoha's further involvement. In the meantime, you should coordinate with Takigakure and take appropriate measures."

Yuya immediately understood his mistake. He realized, 'If the Konoha ninjas get involved, then this could result in a war between Konoha and Iwagakure fought in the Land of Waterfall. Our country will be one to suffer the most. I can't make such a decision. It will have to be made by Takigakure.'

He replied, "Alright. Thank You for your suggestions. We will act hurriedly."

Fujin's clone nodded and replied, "Good luck."

He dispelled himself. Yuya thought, 'So he was just a clone.'

He immediately gathered the important members of his family and informed them about Fujin's words. The entire Ito family was terrified. Thankfully, while the meeting for taking place, the ninjas from Takigakure, who were terrified by the flames raining down, reached the town.

They quickly met up with the Ito family and informed them about what they had witnessed. The Ito family was shocked once again. Yuya wondered, 'Is that what the Konoha ninja meant by slowing them down? Who was he to be capable of doing something so crazy?'

Though Konoha was known for having ninjas with very good fire affinity, it was the first time they had heard about something like this. The fact that a single jutsu could burn down the town they were proud of was a bitter pill to swallow.

The Ito family informed the Taki ninjas about what Fujin had informed them, shocking the Taki ninjas. After discussing it for a bit, they quickly formed a plan. They quickly sent messenger birds to Takigakure. In less than 15 minutes, the entire Ito family quietly departed from the town and went into hiding.

Fujin and his squad were still flying on Kurogane. Fujin had calmed down. He analyzed, 'I need to start from the very basic question. How did Iwagakure know I would be sent here?'

He thought of many possible answers, 'My first thought was that someone from Konoha leaked my movements. Possibly someone like Danzo... But it doesn't seem very practical now that I think about it. After all, Iwa had started this mess around 4 months ago.

There is no way Danzo could have known that I would be sent here. Unless he or someone else influenced Eagle to send me on this mission. Still, the chances of this are low. I haven't irked Danzo or any other ninja in power as of yet. But even though unlikely, I will need to check on this. I don't want to leave myself vulnerable to someone scheming against me in the dark.

Other than that, there is only one possibility. Iwagakure somehow predicted that I would be dispatched here... Or at least, they betted that I might be dispatched here. Maybe they hoped I'd be dispatched but were willing to trap any Elite Jounin who might have been dispatched here from Konoha. A good scheme indeed.'

Fujin felt a chill as he realized how much Iwa had planned and how much effort they were willing to take to eliminate him.

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Chapter 348: Becoming Stale!

Fujin analyzed, 'They should have started planning right after I clashed with Roshi. These ninjas should be trained with the help of Roshi so that they can anticipate my attacks and movements and take preventive measures to avoid being killed by me.

Training a hundred ninjas just to kill me... What a freaking overkill! I'm not even an Elite Jounin officially! Though it might not be just for me. The skills they develop will help them survive tough battles against others as well.

With such a good trap, there were only 3 ways for me to counterattack. The one that I used was my summon. Another way was using Lightning release. But I don't think it would be as effective as Kurogane. Though my Lightning Release is good, it is a far cry compared to my Wind Release. The last method was Wind Style Genjutsu. The three skills they didn't know about.

Of course, the simplest option was to just run away with Wind Instantaneous Body jutsu. Had I been alone like I was in the Land of Wind, I'd have directly left. The plan would have been nullified without much effort. So despite being in a difficult spot, my life wouldn't have been in any danger had I abandoned these 3.

I guess since I disappeared using Reverse Summoning jutsu, Roshi and the rest don't know about my skill with that jutsu. They should have some speculations, which is why that barrier was probably placed around the village. But they should be unaware of the specifics.

Regardless, this makes my life incredibly difficult. If they provide this training for more ninjas then all my future confrontations with Iwa will prove to be a challenge. And what if they provide my information and the training plan to other villages?

If that happens, then there will be special forces in all major villages just to counter me. Maybe others might come up with even better tactics in the future and create even more devious traps for me.'

Fujin sighed at that thought. He began analyzing why the trap was so successful against him. He thought, 'The main reason why I fell in such a position is my actions after I clashed with Roshi is that most of my skills were exposed in that fight. So I knew that Iwa would have a lot of information on me. Despite that, I made no effort to upgrade my skills or learn newer ones. Due to this reason, Iwa's plan was so effective.

In another way of speaking, my power has become stale... Though I can't be entirely blamed for that as I spent most of my time on Fuinjutsu, it still left a flaw. A flaw that I was aware of but didn't act on as I never expected anyone to make use of it.



After all, if the information about a ninja is available, no matter how strong that ninja is and how well-rounded his abilities are, this world has enough smart and intuitive ninjas to come up with ways of defeating that.

Though the performance of these Iwa ninjas against me can be considered remarkable, it isn't even comparable to Shikamaru defeating Hidan. The two were leagues apart in strength and abilities.

And Hidan was still someone with a lot of weaknesses. Even someone with no visible weaknesses like the 3rd Raikage was defeated by Naruto's clone after he received information from Eight Tails.

Another example of this can be the Uchiha's Sussano. Though most ninjas will be very alarmed by that jutsu, for me, it's the least threatening of all the Mangekyou abilities that I know of. After all, it is very exhaustive to maintain a Sussano. I can easily run away when it is activated and return when it is deactivated during the fight, making it useless. Of course, that is if it is used with normal Mangekyou.

Since others can be dealt with after getting enough information, I too am vulnerable despite my high speed and the penetrative power of the Vacuum jutsu. While it still isn't something that could kill me, if I stay complacent, it is only a matter of time. I will have to start working on those ideas that I have.

Sigh, I'm so close to becoming a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster. It would have been great if I could have achieved that before being made to work on this. But delaying this any longer will be more harmful than the gains from Fuinjutsu. After all, though I have the ideas, it would probably take me over a year to successfully master them. Then I can get rid of this vulnerability.'

Fujin had reached a satisfactory conclusion when his eyes suddenly widened. He realized, 'No. That is not correct. Even if I create a new fighting style, even that can be countered when information about it gets known.

What I need to do is keep working on it consistently and keep upgrading it. My speed of developing new styles needs to be faster than my enemy's speed of countering my fighting style. Only then I can truly avoid such scenarios.

This will have to continue until my strength reaches a perverse level like Hashirama and Madara or I develop and learn jutsus that can't be countered. Like the Flying Thunder God and perhaps the Blood jutsus of the Jashin Grand Priest. Sage Mode would also help but Ryu is still unwilling to teach me.

Regardless, I need to start working on my Ninjutsu once again.'

Having made up his mind, Fujin stopped analyzing further and rested. Kurogane carried the Konoha ninjas into the Land of Fire and dropped them before returning to Mount Muteki. Fujin's squad continued moving towards Konoha at a high speed.

A couple of hours later, Takigakure received messages from the messenger birds. As he read the details in the scrolls, Shibuki's expression became very grim. He cursed, 'This is bad... Very bad!! We can't fight Iwagakure right now.'

One of his advisors said angrily, "Lord Shibuki, this is unacceptable. We have to respond to this provocation. Please give us permission to lead our troops and force the Iwagakure ninjas out of our country!"

Shibuki looked at him and retorted, "Fight against Iwa? Are you crazy? Didn't you read that the Konoha Anbu Captain reported that Kitsuchi and a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster were there? What if they fight back instead of retreating?"

His reply had everyone in the room looking at him with a deadpan expression. They all had the same thought, 'As expected.'

Shibuki ignored those looks and instructed, "Send the highest priority message to the Hokage. Request him to dispatch an army towards our borders. Once they are in position, we will dispatch our forces to confront Iwagakure. If they retreat, then it is for the best. Otherwise, Konoha will be allowed to enter and we will ally against Iwa."

Everyone nodded and got to work. After leaving the room, one of the advisors sighed and muttered, "He is so cowardly."

Another nodded and said, "Yeah. He reminds me of his father in all other aspects. But in terms of courage, he is the complete opposite. The time needed to dispatch our forces and have them confront Iwa would have been sufficient for the Konoha ninjas to arrive."

He sighed as well and said, "Leave it. He is still a very good leader."

Everyone nodded and began working.

Thanks to Shibuki's inaction, Kitsuchi gained valuable time. In the village where they were staying, the Iwa ninjas who weren't injured placed the people back in their homes. The people were still asleep due to Genjutsu. Similar actions happened in the other villages with missing people.

Thanks to Yoshiaki's Fuinjutsu, he had kept all the people in those villages in underground basements, hidden from the eyes of anyone who tried to inspect the villages. They deployed some ninjas in those villages to ensure that the villagers could be kept under Genjutsu and not die of thirst or hunger.

As for other people they had randomly kidnapped, Iwa didn't have any choice but to kill and bury them silently. Though they sent a considerable force, they couldn't handle so many people properly. So keeping them alive would have created some chances of their operation being exposed.

After moving the villagers, the Iwa ninjas destroyed the underground basements and filled them up using Earth Release jutsus while the SealMasters destroyed all the seals. They removed every trace of their involvement. After confirming that no evidence was left, all the Iwa ninjas in the Land of Waterfall began stealthily moving towards the village where Kitsuchi was at.

Though Fujin inflicted a lot of damage on the ninjas that attacked him, the remaining Iwa forces didn't have any casualties. Kitsuchi waited until everyone had returned to the village and then retreated to the Land of Stone along with everyone else. Only Sho was left back to continue spying.

Konoha :

It was late at night. Hiruzen had wrapped up all his work and was sleeping peacefully at his home when his sleep was disturbed. An Anbu woke him up and handed him the high-priority message scroll!

Hiruzen opened the scroll and began reading. His eyes immediately widened before going back to their usual size. He said, "Call Shikaku to my office."

The Anbu nodded and flickered away.

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 349: Request for a Vacation

Shikaku grumpily walked towards Hiruzen's office. He muttered, "It has just been a couple of months since the situation with Suna cooled down and I could sleep comfortably. Don't tell me that they have become active again."

He reached the office and asked, "What's the situation this time?"

Hiruzen tossed him the scroll and said, "Take a look."

Shikaku began reading. He muttered in dissatisfaction, "What does Iwa want in that country?"

Hiruzen said, "To send that many ninjas, for so long, and take action against so many civilians. It looks like they were looking for something. Or planning something huge in that country."

Shikaku nodded. He added, "It's tough to say exactly though. With those actions, they could annex the western half of the Land of Waterfall. But it won't benefit them much. After all, Takigakure itself would have been safe and that's where the forces of that country are accumulated. And hurting a buffer country between our villages will cost them diplomatically. So overall it would be a loss.

I have a feeling that they were searching for something or someone. Which Anbu squad did you send?"

Hiruzen replied, "Fujin's squad."

Shikaku became mildly annoyed on hearing Fujin's name. He muttered, "Nothing good happens when that brat is involved. Our relationship with Suna is still brittle. And Kumo is eyeing us like Wolves. If he provokes a war with Iwa, then we will be in a tough spot when hostilities begin."

Hiruzen sighed and said, "Even if he doesn't our situation won't be any different. We have always had to face all four villages. Regardless, Fujin has calmed down a bit since he clashed with Roshi. Let's wait for him to arrive. In the meantime, start deciding who we should send to the border."

Shikaku nodded. Fortunately, they didn't have to wait for long. A few minutes after Hiruzen and Shikaku met, Fujin and his squad arrived in Konoha. Since they had eaten soldier pills, they travelled non-stop until they reached the village.

After entering, Fujin said, "It's nighttime. Lord Hokage should be asleep. You guys can go to your homes. I'll report the mission to him."

His teammates nodded. But before he could leave, Yugao said, "Captain, I thought a lot during our journey here and have a request."

Fujin stopped and turned around. He asked, "What request?"

Yugao said, "During this mission, every one of the enemies was as strong as me. I couldn't do anything to help you. I want a few months' break to train so that I won't be a burden the next time."

Fujin was surprised by her request. Before he could speak, Bunjiro said, "I have the same request."

Fumito added, "Same here."

Fujin said, "The enemy was strong this time. Even if you get stronger, there will still be someone stronger than you. So don't be too discouraged. But alright. Taking time off to train is good. I was thinking about it as well. I'll discuss with Lord Hokage to see if I can get a training vacation for our team."

Yugao said, "Thank You, Captain."

Fujin nodded and flickered away. His team stayed in the same spot for a few seconds. Fumito chuckled and said in a self-mocking tone, "We were completely useless during this mission."

Bunjiro didn't know what to say. Yugao sighed and said, "They were probably all Jounins. If not for his summon, we would have died there. And could have dragged him with us as well."

Fumito said, "They had a few chances to deal fatal blows to us during the initial phase of the battle. But for some reason, they didn't. Thinking about it, I believe they wanted to keep us alive so that he would be forced to stay and defend us."

Yugao nodded. She had realized it as well. That was the main reason she asked for a break. Bunjiro's eyes widened. He thought, 'I was wondering about that as well. I never imagined that this would be the reason!'

Fumito said, "Anyways, we have managed to return in one piece. Let's train so that we won't feel this way again. Good luck to both of you."

Yugao and Bunjiro wished him luck as well and went their separate ways. Fujin was unaware of their conversation. As he approached the Hokage building, he thought, 'If they train seriously for a few months, Yugao and Fumito will quickly get promoted to Anbu Captain. Though Bunjiro wouldn't, his strength will reach close to this rank as well.'

That's good. I'll convince Hiruzen to give us a long break. After the break, I'll recommend Yugao and Fumito for the Anbu rank and quit the Anbu using that opportunity as my team will be dissolved. Hmm?'

Fujin focused his attention towards the Hokage office and sensed two chakras. He wondered, 'What are these two doing awake at this hour? Did Taki send a message? Anyway, this is good. I won't have to wait for an Anbu Guard to go and wake him up.'

He quickly went to the office. An Anbu Guard appeared and asked, "Tortoise, what are you doing here at this hour?"

Fujin answered, "Here to meet Lord Hokage."

The Anbu Guard said, "He is having a secret meeting."

Fujin replied, "I'm pretty sure the discussion inside is regarding my mission. Regardless, this is a high priority."

The Anbu Guard said, "Alright. Go ahead."

They had interacted on several occasions. So, he knew that Fujin had a great relationship with Hiruzen.

Hiruzen and Shikaku immediately looked at Fujin, who entered the room. Fujin closed the door, looked at the scroll on Hiruzen's table and asked, "Did Takigakure send a request for reinforcements?"

Hiruzen nodded, "Something like that. But there isn't much information here. Report what happened."

Fujin nodded and said, "It was probably a trap. After we reached the town, the attacks stopped once again like what happened when we sent a squad earlier. But a few days later, a big incident occurred and everyone in one of the villages went missing.

When we went to investigate, I realized that the village was covered in seals that were extremely difficult to detect. I believe that they had a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster hiding in the village. Though we avoided the trap, we were attacked by the Iwa ninjas hiding inside the barrier."

Fujin took a pause. Shikaku looked at him and thought, 'Why do I get the feeling that what he says next will be very troublesome?'

Fujin continued, "The attackers were led by Kitsuchi."

Hiruzen and Shikaku weren't surprised as his name was mentioned in the scroll sent by Takigakure. But what Fujin said next shocked them. He added, "Along with him were 96 other ninjas, every single one at the Jounin level."

Shikaku asked in disbelief, "They moved 96 Jounins along with an S ranked ninja and a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster there?"

Rank S ninjas making a move was very common. After all, they could move freely throughout the world and very few would be willing to oppose them. Just from Konoha, Jiraiya and Tsunade would frequently be heard about roaming randomly in the smaller countries.

Hundreds of ninjas moving also happened frequently. Not too long ago, all the major villages were moving over a thousand ninjas each around their countries due to the volatile conditions. But a hundred Jounins moving together was extremely rare. Even during wars, that would be a rare occurrence.

Fujin nodded. Shikaku asked, "What was their goal?"

Fujin answered, "I am not sure, but my best guess is they wanted to kill me."

Shikaku and Hiruzen were surprised again. Hiruzen asked, "Why do you say that?"

Fujin answered in a serious tone, "Kitsuchi recognized my real identity. And every single one of those Jounins was trained to counter me. They all were quick on their feet and could use Iron Skin jutsu quickly, which protected them against most of my Wind Jutsus.

In addition, they were very on guard against my Wind Vacuum Techniques. They would observe the slight changes in my body and take preemptive measures to assist in dodging my attack. They also had a few chances to deal a lethal blow to my teammates, but refrained from doing so to keep me from running away.

If it wasn't for the fact that they didn't know about my Fuinjutsu skills and my summon, I would have been in deep trouble."

Hiruzen and Shikaku went silent on hearing that. Both realized how serious the matter was. After a while, Shikaku asked, "How did they know you would be sent there?"

Fujin replied, "I was hoping you'd find out. If the locations of Anbu ninjas are getting leaked, then we will be facing a lot of trouble. Even more so if they have some degree of control over who gets dispatched on some missions."



Neither Hiruzen nor Shikaku opposed him. Both could see the Anbu squads getting picked one by one by enemies if that was the case. Hiruzen said seriously, "I will look into this matter. If someone is leaking information, then that person would be eliminated."

Fujin nodded. Just like Fujin, Hiruzen's first thought was Danzo as well. But he couldn't think of any reason for Danzo to do that.

Shikaku asked, "What happened after that?"

Fujin continued, "Well, I summoned my summon and began attacking from the air. After a long difficult fight, I managed to kill 47 ninjas and a few more were injured. But someone hiding inside the village attacked us with Explosion Release Kekkei Genkai.

The power behind the explosion made it look like it was another S ranked ninja. But I'm suspicious as that ninja never showed himself. I decided that it was too risky to continue and withdrew along with my team.

Once again, Shikaku was left speechless. He wondered, 'Did they set a trap for him or offer him their heads?'

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 350: Konoha makes a move!

Shikaku asked, "You killed 47 Jounins who were trained to counter you?"

Fujin replied, "Well, they didn't have any defense against my Vacuum jutsus. So I had to create opportunities to make them drop their guard momentarily or make a slight mistake. Though difficult, I managed to do that a few times and managed to kill a few of them. But I didn't manage to kill many.

Thankfully they made a big mistake towards the end of the battle that allowed me to kill more than 20 in one go. It's probably what forced the Explosion Kekkei Genkai ninja to act."

Shikaku didn't know how to respond. He thought, 'Killing 47 Jounins is a huge achievement. But there isn't even a single bit of joy in his voice or a sense of achievement in his expression. Instead, he sounds like he was the one who lost 47 Jounins.'

Unlike Fujin, who was very frustrated over his skills being countered, Shikaku and Hiruzen weren't worried about it. After all, Hiruzen was probably the most all-round ninja in the world. He had no weakness and he could freely switch to any fighting style to counter his opponent.

As for Shikaku, his opponent's intelligence was the last thing he worried about. He could make numerous strategies on the battlefield to counter whatever plan the enemy came up with. So neither shared Fujin's vulnerabilities. Though they understood his position, from their point of view, it was just a natural obstacle that any top-level ninja would have to overcome.

Hiruzen thought, 'If Fujin can overcome this by himself, he will become a force to reckon with. If not, then I will have to provide him with more jutsus to ensure that he doesn't stay susceptible to such tactics. But if I have to do that, then his future prospects won't be as bright as I expect. He will still become a rank S ninja but won't reach the same heights as me or Minato.'

Hiruzen said, "You did great. Take a break. We will be sending an army to reinforce Takigakure."

Fujin said, "Thank you. I have a request though."

Hiruzen said, "Speak."

Fujin said, "I was hoping to get a long vacation. This mission was difficult for my team. But on the positive side, it has motivated them a lot. They all want a break to train and get stronger. I want a break as well to avoid being vulnerable to such traps."

Shikaku's face became dark. He thought, 'This brat! He keeps increasing my workload and then asks for a vacation in front of my face?'

Hiruzen wasn't a stranger to this request. Fujin had asked for vacation several times in the past. He thought, 'Though I refused his requests in the past and kept him busy with missions, it won't look good

to reject this time. Plus, this incident should motivate him to train more instead of just meditating in the training rooms. And I'm curious to see how he breaks through his current situation.'

He asked, "How long of a vacation do you want?"

Fujin replied, "Preferably 6 months."

Hiruzen replied, "That's too long. I'll give your squad a 3-month vacation. But, if the situation in the Land of Waterfall worsens, you will be called back to duty."

Fujin replied, "Alright. I'll convey the message to my team."

Hiruzen was puzzled. He thought, 'That's it? He didn't argue for more?'

Meanwhile, Fujin thought, 'That's good. I didn't think he'd agree so easily. I'd have been happy with one and a half months' break. 3 months should be plenty for what I have planned.'

Before leaving, Fujin asked for another favor. He said, "I have one more request."

Hiruzen said, "Speak."

Fujin asked, "Do we have any soldier pills that could aid in training longer? I have tried using the best ones available for Anbu, but they aren't sustainable for long-term use. And, the chakra they provide is very less at my level."

Fujin hadn't used soldier pills to train for a long time. The only time he used them without much restraint was during his academy days. Back then, since his chakra was much lower, he would need lower quality soldier pills. They wouldn't cause much strain on his body.

In addition, as a student, he wouldn't be called suddenly for any missions that could pose a danger to his life. So he wasn't worried about the time when the collective exhaustion would hit him and would force him to rest for a few days.

But the normal soldier pills didn't have much effect on him anymore. With the crazy amount of chakra some of his jutsus needed, even the highest quality of soldier pills available to him didn't provide him with much help in training. And despite that, the exhaustion it would cause was greater than ever.

So Fujin had been reluctant to use them to train. Since he wasn't in a hurry and felt that he still had plenty of time before the important incidents took place, he hadn't bothered to look for other means. But the trap set by Iwagakure created a sense of urgency in him.

Hiruzen replied, "No soldier pill is sustainable for long-term use. They are meant to be used only in war to help you fight for a longer time."

He opened his drawer, grabbed a bottle and tossed it at Fujin. He said, "These pills are specially made for me. The amount of chakra they provide is several times what the Anbu use. In addition, it works for two additional days.

But, the exhaustion it causes is very bad as well. Don't train for a day after the exhaustion hits. And don't consume another pill for a week after you recover from the exhaustion."

Fujin observed the pills in the bottle and said, "Thank you, Grandpa. I'll see you later."

He left the room, leaving Hiruzen and Shikaku alone. Shikaku asked, "Was it safe to give him that pill?"

Hiruzen replied, "It's fine. He trains a lot but takes good care of not overexerting himself. He also has some expertise in medical ninjutsu and regularly gets himself checked by Yoshi and Isamu. As long as these pills don't land in Guy's hands, we won't have any issues."

Shikaku replied, "True. His training is just too much."

Shikaku glanced at Hiruzen and asked, "By the way, can I get a vacati..."

Before he could complete his question, Hiruzen interrupted and said, "No, get to work."

Shikaku let out a sigh and got back to work. He wrote a reply to Takigakure and sent it to them through the same messenger bird. While the bird travelled, the two of them worked through the night.

After leaving the office, Fujin wondered, 'So, what should I do now?'

As he had eaten the soldier pill, Fujin wouldn't be able to sleep for another 2 and a half days. He thought, 'Though my chakra isn't completely exhausted, it is still very low. It will take around 8 to 10 hours to recover. Until then, I can't train or create a lot of clones for Fuinjutsu. Looks like I only have one choice.'

Fujin went straight to the Wind Training Room and began meditating. As he meditated, he thought, 'The Wind Crystals barely have any effect on me anymore. Though thousands of small, minute improvements could still create some qualitative change, the process will be very slow and might need decades.'

I don't need to waste my time in these rooms anymore. Though there is no harm in coming here when I have to meditate for any reason.'

Fujin eliminated all thoughts from his mind and began meditating earnestly. The energy from the Wind Crystal began dissipating rapidly.

By noon, Shikaku had assembled 250 ninjas. Around 60 were Jounins while the rest were Chunins. Once again, the leadership was given to Kakashi.

Kakashi stood in front of the small army and muttered, "Aren't we doing this too frequently?"

Guy, who was standing close to him, said, "Yeah and we don't even fight anyone. We just move around until the situation diffuses itself."

Kakashi sighed. He wasn't a big fan of war. But since Hiruzen wanted to nurture him, he had been assigning Kakashi to all such leadership roles. Due to frequently leading hundreds of ninjas and in addition to his reputation, almost everyone in Konoha had begun seeing Kakashi as the leader of the next generation.

Under Kakashi's orders, the Konoha forces began moving towards the Land of Waterfall. An hour later, the messenger bird reached Takigakure. Shibuki received the message and called for another meeting.

He informed the council, "Konoha said that they will send out 250 ninjas this noon. Meaning that they should have already left. In addition, they will dispatch 500 more ninjas tomorrow."

One of his advisors said, "Konoha is quick as always. The first force should arrive at our borders by tomorrow morning. So they will be in a position to reinforce us quickly after our clashes begin."

Shibuki asked, "How is our preparation?"

Another advisor answered, "We have prepared all our ninjas. All 2000 ninjas are available and are awaiting orders."

Shibuki thought for a bit and said, "If we move now and run into Iwagakure's trap, then we will suffer a lot before the Konoha forces arrive. We will wait for a bit more to prevent any needless casualties."

At midnight, you will lead half our forces towards the Ito family's territories. We will use the cover of the night to sneak attack any enemy forces in our territory. The remaining half will stay back and defend the village in case this is some sort of distraction."

Everyone agreed with his decision and began making preparations.