

Calamity 411

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 411: Fujin Vs Three Elite Jounins!

Except for Shikaku, everyone in the council stared at Hiruzen. Though many of them didn't want an additional seat to be added to the council, since it was already done, they wanted someone who was on friendly terms with them to be appointed. As such, everyone had someone in their minds.

That was especially true for Danzo and the civilian council members.

Danzo thought, 'By making such a move, Hiruzen will displease the clans. The Hyuga and Inuzuka clans were directly opposed to this proposal. The Senju and the Aburame clan didn't vote as it would have been pointless. Even though Shikaku convinced Inoichi and Choza, they would have some complaints as well.

I can use this to increase my influence in these clans once again. I can also increase my influence in the clans who don't meet the requirements for getting on the council as well. In addition, if I can get everyone to reject Hiruzen's choice and appoint someone I can influence, then I'll be the biggest winner in this meeting. In some time, I might even be able to restart Root openly.'

On the other hand, the civilian council members saw this as an opportunity to decrease the influence of the ninja clans and increase theirs instead.

Schemes ran constantly through everyone's minds as they waited for Hiruzen to respond. Hiruzen smiled and said, "Suzuki Fujin."

Hiruzen's reply surprised everyone in the room. Hiashi asked, "Not Jiraiya?"

Many of the clan leaders had the same doubts. They had expected Hiruzen to include his own student in the council and increase his influence. More importantly, if Hiruzen chose Jiraiya, no one would oppose him for obvious reasons.

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "Jiraiya has no interest in being on the council."

He chuckled and added, "If he was, then I would have already passed my seat to him."

Danzo frowned on hearing that. However, everyone else nodded. Though Hiruzen had more experience and had led Konoha for a long time, considering his age, Jiraiya was a far better choice for Hokage. Unfortunately, he had no interest in the position and rarely stayed in the village.

The Clan Leaders began analyzing whether Fujin would be a good choice for them. Shikaku obviously agreed.

Choza had interacted with him during a few negotiation missions and had also fought alongside him. So he had a good impression.

Tsume had seen him during the Chunin Exams and had a favorable opinion of him ever since.

Though Inoichi, Hiashi and the Senju Clan leader had no interactions with him, all regarded him highly due to the ninjas of their clan who were close with Fujin.

Only Shibi didn't have much information on Fujin.

However, the civilian council members didn't share the same opinion as the Clan Leaders. In fact, apart from his bounty and his recent promotion to Elite Jounin, they didn't know anything about him.

While the Clan leaders were analyzing their gains and losses on Fujin gaining that seat, one of the civilian council members immediately opposed, "Lord Hokage, Suzuki Fujin is only 15 years old. He has no knowledge of how the council works or the duties of the council. He hasn't experienced any war and from what I know, doesn't have a lot of relationships with other ninjas. I don't think he would be a good option for this as he won't be able to represent all ninjas from outside the clans."

Another added, "I agree. In my opinion, it will be better if we choose someone who has experienced both the Second and the Third Great Ninja Wars and is looked up to by everyone."

A third member added, "I agree with them, Lord Hokage. Since this is a new post, it will be better to select someone who is more mature and responsible."

The other four agreed with him. They waited for Hiruzen's response. However, before he could speak, Homura said, "I have interacted with Suzuki Fujin earlier. He is very mature and responsible. If that alone is your concern, then you don't need to worry."

Homura thought, 'When Hiruzen gave him permission to speak during negotiations, I expected him to mess up at least a few negotiations and cause Konoha heavy losses. I was surprised that despite getting the permission, he never spoke and instead just learnt by observing us.'

Shikaku added, "I agree with Elder Homura. Fujin's maturity and ability to handle official matters is very good."

He made a small mental note, 'Well, other than his tendency to push Konoha to the brink of a war.'

Shikaku continued, "He won't have any issue integrating with our council. While it is true that he has very few connections, that is instead a good point."

As Elder Koharu pointed out, anyone selected could play favorites. However, Fujin won't have anyone to play favorites with. That is something that someone old would not be able to do."

Homura and Shikaku's words put a stop to the schemes running through the minds of the 5 civilian council members. With the two of them rebuking them so harshly, they quickly shut their mouths. Seeing them back off, Danzo frowned.

Koharu said, "Though you two have a good impression of him, 15 years old is too young to be a council member. Besides, he was just promoted to an Elite Jounin. The current three Elite Jounins who aren't from the ninja clans would have complaints if they aren't considered."

The civilian council members nodded. Most of the clan leaders also didn't say anything. Apart from Shikaku, most weren't completely aware of Fujin's capabilities. The bounty and his promotion both happened too suddenly and without much information being exposed to the public. Even Choza and Homura, despite seeing him in action, didn't know much about him.

Hiruzen was about to reply when Danzo said, "I agree with Koharu. In addition to her points, Fujin's loyalty to the village is also not completely proven. If he quits the Anbu after being a part of it for just 3 years, then it raises a lot of questions about whether he will dedicate his life to the village or not.

By comparison, the three Elite Jounins, who have sacrificed their blood for the village, are far more suitable options. I recommend Elite Jounin Katsuhiko to be selected for the new seat."

Hearing Katsuhiko's names, the 5 civilian council members nodded. One of them thought, 'Though I have someone who will be more favorable for me, pushing him to this seat will be very difficult as no one else would support me. Though Katsuhiko doesn't owe me much, he has maintained a very good relationship with all the five civilian council members and will listen to our opinion. He will be far more useful than Fujin.'

A similar thought ran through the minds of the remaining civilian council members. They understood that they would have to be united to get their way. Each of them exchanged glances. Of course, their glances weren't missed by any ninja in the room.

Though Danzo showed no expression, he was very pleased. He thought, 'Good. With these 5 and me, I already have 6 votes. Koharu should vote for me. Even if Homura doesn't vote with me, as long as two of the Clan Leaders support Katsuhiko, I will win!'

Seeing that everyone had stopped speaking, Hiruzen looked at Koharu and said, "Age isn't an issue. The four of us were taught about how council works by Lord Second when we were very young as well. By including Fujin in the council at the age of 15, Konoha will have someone who can stay in the council for the next 50 to 60 years just like us."

Hiruzen looked at Danzo and said, "As for his loyalty to the village, there is no question. Fujin's performance in the Anbu shows his unwavering loyalty to the village. If that wasn't the case, would I suggest his name? As for him leaving the Anbu, I recommended him to quit. He has already learnt all he could through the Anbu. Staying there any longer would be a waste of time and will be detrimental to his potential."

Danzo frowned upon listening to Hiruzen's words while Shikaku smirked in his mind on hearing Hiruzen lie so casually. Hiruzen looked at everyone in the room and added, "As for Fujin's strength..."

Hiruzen took a small pause and let everyone wonder what he was about to say. He continued, "Two weeks ago, he led an Anbu squad to the Land of Hot Water to eliminate rogue ninjas. He killed Biwa Juzo."

The eyes of everyone in the room apart from Shikaku and Danzo widened in shock. Apart from Hiruzen and Danzo, no one in the room had any guarantee of defeating Juzo. In fact, in one-on-one combat, most of them would have to work very hard to retreat alive.

Before their shock subsided, Hiruzen added, "After killing him, he caused Hoshigaki Kisame and Hozuki Mangetsu to fight each other and retreated safely without taking any losses. According to our intel, several Kiri Hunter nins died in that fight and Kisame's status is currently unknown."

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Chapter 412: Hiruzen's Warning

A wave of silence passed through the room. Despite being only 15 years old, Fujin's feat of killing Juzo by himself was beyond what several of the Clan Leaders and Elders could do.

Though they had various other ways by which they contributed a lot to Konoha, they all realized that they were weaker than Fujin in combat. The three Elite Jounins from non-ninja clans were obviously not comparable to Fujin in this aspect.

Danzo frowned on seeing the reactions of the clan leaders. He thought, 'Hiruzen was ready to reveal that in public? It looks like my previous assessment was wrong. Their relationship is still very close. Since Fujin doesn't have any mental scars like Kakashi, influencing him is very difficult.'

Danzo glanced across the room to see the shocked expressions on the faces of the clan leaders. He frowned and argued, "Even then..."

However, before he could make his point, he was cut off by loud laughter. The Senju Clan Leader laughed loudly and said, "This boy sure is good. I now see why Renjiro always keeps singing his praises, haha.

Killing Biwa Juzo implies that Suzuki Fujin is a rank S ninja. It's been a long time since we had a new rank S ninja join the council. I agree with Lord Hokage's choice. There is no need to discuss any further."

Danzo's frown deepened. He wanted to butt in again, but wasn't allowed to as Shikaku said, "I agree as well."

He thought, 'That boy has increased my workload so much. Once he joins the council, I'll return the favor.'

Inoichi followed and said, "I agree as well. I have heard very positive things about Fujin from some youngsters in my clan. Though he is still very young, us old-timers can help him adapt to this position."

Choza added, "I agree as well."

Tsume chuckled and said, "I had seen that brat during the Chunin exams. I still remember how hardworking and dedicated he was back then. To think that he would surpass us so quickly... He will be a good addition to the council."

Following Tsume, Hiashi and Shibi supported Hiruzen's choice as well. With all the 7 clan leaders supporting him, Hiruzen already had 8 votes in his favor. Even if the remaining 8 voted against him, they won't be able to overturn Hiruzen's decision.

One of the civilian council members spoke, "Though I was a bit sceptical at first, considering his future prospects, I believe that Lord Hokage's decision is the best. The council and our village will benefit from getting such a talented youngster among our ranks. I agree too."

The council member who spoke was against Fujin's selection. However, after realizing that he couldn't stop Fujin's selection, he immediately changed his tone.

He thought, 'Though it's a shame that I can't push someone more favorable, I shouldn't make things difficult for me. Though I don't have much of a relationship with this boy, my relationship with him isn't bad. Instead, it is just neutral. I can try to influence him by appealing to his civilian background and creating a good relationship with him. Then I'll be able to get him to vote for the stuff I want.'

The other civilian council members weren't slow. They immediately realized his thought process. All 4 of them began singing Fujin's praises and agreed with Hiruzen's choice.

Since the votes were unanimous so far and the decision was fixed, none of the three elders bothered voting. Unlike the remaining council members, Homura and Koharu saw no need to try and curry favor with Fujin. As for Danzo, voting against Fujin was completely pointless. So he didn't say anything either.

Hiruzen said, "Since everyone agrees, Fujin will be appointed to the Council to represent ninjas that aren't a part of any ninja clans."

The meeting ended and everyone except Hiruzen and Danzo left. Hiruzen was about to leave as well when Danzo said, "I know what you are trying to achieve, Hiruzen."

Hiruzen turned around and looked at Danzo curiously. Danzo said, "The Nara, Yamanaka and Akimichi clans support you blindly. By including another who will support you every time, you will have an even easier time getting your way in the council and won't even have to depend on your second vote to break any deadlocks."

Danzo was angry. By dissolving Root, Hiruzen had cut off a large part of his political power. Only after he started inducting the orphans from the Land of Water did he start seeing hopes of reviving his political influence.

However, even before he could increase his influence, Hiruzen had already increased his power. If Hiruzen made a few more moves and inducted a few more people who were loyal to him in the council, Danzo wouldn't have any method of influencing the council without getting Hiruzen onboard first,

Hiruzen could see Danzo's thoughts at a glance. He turned around and began walking while shaking his head. He said, "I don't control Fujin. If I did, he would still be in Anbu and you wouldn't have got a chance to attempt to recruit him. Besides, he shares some of your ideals when it comes to dealing with our enemies.

In fact, he is far more aggressive than what you were when you were 15. He almost reminds me of Sensei. So, you might see him supporting your policies more than mine."

Danzo was surprised by Hiruzen's words. Hiruzen chuckled and added, "Of course, if you want to control him, then that isn't possible. I don't know what you or Root did to piss him off, but I'm sure you felt his alertness and preparedness when you met him."

Danzo's expression became dark upon hearing Hiruzen's words. It hadn't been a long time since he met Fujin. He still recalled how prepared Fujin was to make a move. Despite thinking for a couple of weeks, he couldn't understand why Fujin was so alert against him.

Hiruzen continued, "Danzo, three years ago, I dissolved the Root. Though you kept a few loyal subordinates, I didn't interfere with you and even gave you a chance to rebuild the Root. However, if you even think of overstepping your boundaries again, I'll take away each and every subordinate that you have, no matter how loyal they are to you."

After warning him, Hiruzen's figure disappeared from the meeting room, leaving Danzo alone in the Council room. His expression was extremely ugly. He completely understood Hiruzen's threat.

He thought, 'Damn you, Hiruzen! If it was anyone else, no matter how strong they were, they wouldn't be able to make my Root ninjas betray me and change their allegations. My Root ninjas would rather commit suicide. But Hiruzen...

He has already inducted the majority of my former subordinates into the Anbu. Not a single one of them listens to my commands anymore. Hiruzen has changed their allegiance from me to Konoha.'

The Root ninjas that Danzo trained were indoctrinated to put the village above everything else. Even their own life could be discarded if it benefited the village. That was the basis due to which Danzo could influence so many. Danzo merely took advantage of it and made every Root ninja believe that Danzo was the only one who could lead Konoha to glory and that Hiruzen and his students were incompetent.

For Hiruzen, who could wield the Will of Fire better than anyone else, changing their allegiance back to only Konoha and not Danzo was a doable task despite the difficulties involved. The Sannins or others wouldn't have been able to do that, but Hiruzen did it extremely quickly and efficiently, leaving Danzo at a loss.

Danzo muttered, "His attitude towards enemies is comparable to Sensei? Is Hiruzen lying? If not, what all about him has Hiruzen kept hidden? Was Fujin behind some other big event other than fighting Roshi and Kitsuchi? Or did he intend to do something about those two events but was stopped by Hiruzen?"

Danzo snorted and began leaving. A couple of Root ninjas flickered behind him after he left the room. Danzo thought, 'I need to dig for more information about him. And, I need to see his attitude. With time, everything will become clear.'

Danzo decided to increase surveillance on Fujin. He also decided to go through the official documents in Konoha to dig out more information. Of course, he faced headaches towards implementing both tasks.

Spying on Fujin was very difficult. Even the bugs raised by the Aburame clan would get detected and destroyed by him. On the other hand, Shikaku had already destroyed all the paperwork that was related to any important mission Fujin had undertaken and had created a lot of fake missions that Fujin had never performed. So Danzo had a very difficult task of analyzing which of his missions were real and which were fake.

As for the person about whom the entire Konoha Council was so curious, he was lying in his bed. Exhaustion could be seen on his face.

Fujin thought, 'Damn, the training is becoming more and more chakra intensive. It will be even crazier once my control over the Wind Domain improves further. Even Hiruzen's soldier pills won't be very effective for long. Sigh, I need something better.'

Fujin closed his eyes and was about to sleep when someone rang his doorbell.

Fujin got up with an annoyed expression and wondered, 'Who is coming here to disturb me? I already told Naruto to take today's day off.'

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Chapter 413: Increased Cellular Activity!

Fujin was annoyed. He had trained extremely hard without rest for several days. He didn't want anyone to disturb him at that moment. He activated his chakra field to sense who had arrived. A frown

appeared on his face as he wondered, 'An Anbu? Did Eagle send him here or did Hiruzen? Or does Danzo still have some ideas?'

He flickered to his door and opened it. As soon as he did, the Anbu said, "Lord Hokage has asked you to visit his office immediately."

The Anbu ninja disappeared after giving Fujin the information. Fujin wondered, 'Calling me? Did something happen?'

It had been just 2 weeks since Fujin said he was taking a break. For that reason, Fujin wasn't expecting any missions from Hiruzen for some time. So he couldn't guess what Hiruzen's motive was. He flickered to the Hokage's building and appeared outside Hiruzen's office in a few seconds.

Hiruzen saw Fujin and smiled. He said, "Come in, Fujin. Take a seat."

Fujin was puzzled. He wondered, 'What's up with him? He rarely asks me to sit down. Now that I think about it, the only time I did was after Jiraiya destroyed that mine and killed several hundred Kumo ninjas. Has anything major happened recently? Was it due to my fight with Juzo and Kisame? And, why is he smiling so much?'

Confused, Fujin sat across from Hiruzen and asked, "Did something important happen recently?"

Hiruzen replied, "Yeah, though it isn't bad. What's up with you though? Why are you looking so tired?"

Fujin answered, "The Soldier Pill's effect just ran out. So I need some rest. That reminds me, the bottle of soldier pills you gave me is almost empty. Can you give me a few more bottles?"

Hiruzen furrowed his eyebrows and said, "It's already close to finishing? Fujin, though I said that it is safe if you keep a week's break in between, using them consistently isn't good for your body."

Fujin replied, "I know, but don't worry. I get my body checked and treated in the Hospital once every month. Yoshi-sensei said that it was fine. If I overexert, I'll immediately take a break."

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "That's good, but even then you shouldn't use them so frequently. When you overexert, the time you waste resting will make your progress far slower as compared to if you train slow and steady."

Fujin sighed and replied, "I know, but there is no other way. Training is so chakra intensive. Without soldier pills, I will be able to train at max a couple of hours a day."

Though Fujin understood Hiruzen's advice, he couldn't follow it. Without soldier pills, maintaining Shadow Clones to learn the seals was very difficult. Fujin would have needed several times more time to master the Four Symbols Seal. The same was the case with the Flying Thunder God Seal. As for the Wind Domain and other powerful Ninjutsus, the time needed would be even more as they required far more chakra.

Fujin looked at Hiruzen and asked, "Do you know of any methods to increase our chakra? I don't mean any temporary methods like Soldier Pills, but a permanent increase in it."

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "Artificial methods of increasing chakra have huge flaws. Your chakra reserve is already quite huge. Even I didn't have that much chakra at your age. You will exceed my current chakra reserves in less than a couple of years. And you are still very young, so it will keep increasing for quite some time."

Fujin replied, "My chakra reserves are growing very slowly."

Hiruzen said, "Your chakra reserves will obviously not increase at the same rate as when you were in the academy. However, your chakra reserves are already enormous. Even a small percentage increase will be several times more than the increase in chakra reserves you experienced in the Academy in terms of quantity.

Even if it takes 5 years for your chakra reserves to double, very few will have as much chakra as you do. 10 to 15 years later, only Jinchurikis and someone like Kisame will have higher chakra than you.

In addition, as the growth rate reduces, the quality of your chakra will improve. As will your chakra control. The amount of chakra wastage while performing jutsus will go down significantly as you practice your jutsus for years. That's why I said you don't need to do something so risky."

Hiruzen was very serious while explaining to Fujin. He thought, 'He is only 15 and has already reached rank S. In less than 5 years, he will become strong enough to be able to survive against any Kage. Strong enough to survive against me at my peak. If he is lucky, he might even reach the same level as me or even surpass me. And he can easily maintain his peak for the next 4 decades, making it extremely difficult for anyone to harm Konoha.'

Fujin, despite his inexperience, was easily able to understand Hiruzen's thoughts on seeing how serious he had become. Hiruzen's attitude made him feel depressed. He sighed internally and thought, 'Why did he get so serious? Doesn't Konoha still have Kakashi and the Sannins?'

There are several methods of increasing chakra artificially. Even I know a few that could multiply my chakra reserves by a few times. It's just that accessing and using them to do that is very difficult and my current strength isn't high enough to get some of them. Can't he just tell me what methods Konoha has developed?

With Tobirama, Danzo and Orochimaru focusing so much on research and ninjas like Hiruzen and Tsunade who reached the peak in their respective fields, there is no way that Konoha doesn't have any methods. Even though I will gain more methods in the future, having a stronger base will always be helpful. Now, how do I make him tell me?'

As for Hiruzen's advice of waiting for 10 to 15 years, Fujin didn't even consider it. The next great war will happen in less than 6 years. Fujin had a lot of plans that needed to be implemented before that war broke out. Waiting patiently and being a mediocre rank S ninja wasn't what he wanted.

Fujin thought rapidly and said, "I had read a few theories about increasing chakra reserves in the library."

A look of surprise appeared on Hiruzen's face. However, his expression changed to serious in an instant. He thought, 'I forgot that this brat loved sitting in the library for hours while using Shadow Clones! Sigh, I wanted to tell him that he has been selected to join Konoha's council. How did the discussion change to this?'

Fujin continued, "Unfortunately, they were only theories and it didn't say whether anyone successfully implemented them. So I don't want to experiment with them blindly. However, one of those theories seemed very ingenious and doable. It talked about increasing cellular activity and extracting more chakra from each cell to increase our chakra reserves. I wonder if you know more about that, Grandpa."

Hiruzen muttered softly, "Orochimaru..."

At the same time, he was relieved. He thought, 'I'm glad that nothing related to Lord First's cells is in the library. Otherwise, it would have become a major headache if Fujin read it and became fixated on it. Even though Orochimaru and Danzo had some gains in the research on his cells, they are still far too dangerous to be used.'

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "I know about it. It was done by Orochimaru and I assisted him in it."

Fujin was surprised. He thought, 'Hiruzen assisted him? Strange... Then again, he was his sensei. Perhaps Orochimaru researched this when he was very young.'

Hiruzen continued, "You aren't the only one who is troubled by the matter of chakra reserves. Many capable ninjas were concerned due to it. Even rank S ninjas wanted more of it. So, over the years, a lot of study has been done on this matter.

A lot of new theories appeared. Even though many of them were absurd and couldn't even be experimented on, a few were experimented on. Unfortunately, this is very risky. Many capable ninjas were crippled while performing those experiments. And the majority of the crippled ninjas were the ones who came up with those theories.

That is why I asked you to not think about this."

Unfortunately, Hiruzen's words didn't have the effect he wanted. Fujin's eyes widened and a look of surprise appeared on his face. He muttered, "Many were crippled... But Orochimaru became a rank S ninja, and a rather strong one at that. Does that mean that he succeeded?"

Hiruzen sighed and nodded. He answered, "Though many experiments were done on several theories, this one is the most successful in Konoha until now. However, even then, it has risks and is very difficult to implement."

Fujin became very curious. Though he knew a few methods, all of them involved strong forces of nature, many of which were beyond his understanding currently. He wasn't aware of any method that was invented by humans. He asked, "What risks and difficulties?"

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Chapter 414: Tsunade's Help

Hiruzen answered, "It has very high demands for learning. To energize the cells and increase their activity, the ninja needs to have at least rank S levels of chakra reserves. In addition, the chakra control has to be extremely high as well. So, it can be done by a very small number of ninjas."

Fujin wasn't concerned by it. Rather, he was pleased. He said, "I satisfy those requirements. What are the risks?"

Hiruzen nodded and said, "Yes, your chakra reserves and control should be sufficient. As for the risks, I will first explain the benefits as the risks are related to it. Energizing every cell in our body is actually very beneficial for us.

If used correctly, it maintains our cells in optimal condition, improving our health considerably. It improves the speed of chakra recovery, the speed at which your injuries heal and reduces the chances of getting sick. It also slows down ageing, but not by much. Ageing is difficult to calculate, but our estimates were around 3-4%.

As for the increase in chakra reserves, it varies. I'm not sure what those factors are because we didn't have enough information since the number of ninjas who met the requirements to try this was very low. Among the ones who tried this method, Danzo had the least gains as his chakra reserves increased by just 12% while Tsunade had the most gains. Her chakra reserves increased by 63%."

Fujin's eyes widened and his face lit up on hearing the benefits. They were very good. He almost became impatient to get those benefits. He thought, 'Damn! 63%? If I get a similar boost, my chakra reserves will be among the highest in the world not counting the Jinchurikis. Even half of that boost will increase it beyond Hiruzen's current chakra reserves. Hehehe, I can't wait. I'm so glad that I brought this up with Hiruzen.'

Hiruzen continued, "As for the risks, they are very simple. You get the benefits I mentioned only when you maintain the cells at an optimal level. If you want more chakra, you can overexert your cells and

draw out more chakra, be it in the middle of a battle to recover your chakra or to increase your chakra reserves even further.

If you do that, all the benefits will change into disadvantages. A large amount of cells in your body will begin dying due to overexertion. Though this won't kill you and your body will produce new cells and replace the old cells, it will have grave consequences.

A large number of dead cells will remain in your body. Though our medical ninjas can remove some of them, even our best medical ninjas can't remove all of them. Those dead cells in your body will slowly affect cells around them and slowly those cells will die as well.

Though you won't suffer immediately, it will reverse the benefits you get. Once the number of dead cells in your body surpasses a certain limit, your chakra will regenerate more slowly, your chakra reserves will increase at a slower rate, you will age faster and your body will become vulnerable to diseases as more and more dead cells accumulate in your body.

If you overexert your cells too much, then your chakra reserves could even start dropping, though they will likely still be higher than before you use this technique. You might not feel much immediately, but 15 to 20 years down the line, you'll feel the damage that this will do to your body."

Fujin's excitement died down and he became very serious. Though the benefits were good, the disadvantages were just as bad. He contemplated Hiruzen's words seriously and asked, "If I only maintain the optimal condition, won't it be just beneficial for me? As long as I don't overexert myself, I should only enjoy the benefits, right?"

Hiruzen nodded and said, "You are right. However, that is difficult to do. After all, when you are in the middle of a fight and are heavily disadvantaged, you will be very tempted to do this.

You have fought with Roshi, Kitsuchi, Juzo and Kisame. Against each of them, you could have just retreated easily. Instead, you kept fighting until retreat was the only option.

Once you get this method, you'll be tempted to fight for even longer. Over the years, it will have a detrimental effect on your body. When that happens, you will regret learning this and wasting your potential."

Hiruzen's words surprised Fujin. He thought, 'Ah, now it makes sense why he was so reluctant to tell me anything. Assuming any other method Konoha has, results in an even severe backlash, Hiruzen will be worried that I might injure myself and stop getting stronger in just one major fight.

That said, I never really overexerted myself in any fight. I have only fought within my limits and have always been ready to retreat in case something outside my expectations happens. The only instance when it got very risky was when Roshi suddenly transformed into Son Goku and maintained complete control which I didn't anticipate.

Otherwise, I have always paid more attention to my safety rather than my enemy's demise. After all, what use is it to kill an enemy if I suffer as well? It's not like killing anyone gives me a special benefit or some treasures. At max, I can steal their weapons and money.

Unfortunately, the weapons that are worth stealing are even more rare than a rank S ninja and money is useless in this world for someone who doesn't have to support a huge family, clan or organization. Besides, I can easily steal money from the corrupt Nobles.'

Fujin looked at Hiruzen and said, "You don't need to worry, Grandpa. I will give priority to retreating over overexerting myself in a fight. The only time I will overexert my cells is if my enemy is so strong that I can't retreat safely or if the village desperately needs me to do so."

Fujin immediately cursed in his mind, 'Shit, I almost forgot about saying that I will use it when the village needs me to do so. Luckily, I thought of it in the nick of time!'

Hiruzen was pleased to hear that. He nodded and said, "Good."

A smile appeared on Hiruzen's face. Fujin smiled as well. He thought, 'I have already become a rank S ninja. Though this technique will just increase my chakra and not my combat power, It'll be extremely beneficial for me when my Wind Domain reaches a good enough stage. I'll be able to sustain it much longer and can use attacks that need a lot more chakra with more freedom.

I'm also not sure how much chakra Flying Thunder God will need. Rasenshuriken will also be very pervasive in terms of the chakra needed. So even though my combat strength won't increase immediately, it will give me an amazing base to get stronger much quicker. More importantly, it might also make Ryo allow me to learn Senjutsu!'

Though he generally stayed very calm, Fujin was excited about the number of possibilities that would open up. Unfortunately, Hiruzen didn't say anything and just kept smiling. Not willing to wait any further, Fujin asked, "Grandpa, can you teach me how to increase my cellular activity?"

To Fujin's surprise, Hiruzen shook his head and answered, "I can't."

A frown appeared on Fujin's face. He immediately asked, "Why not? Didn't you say that I have met the requirements to learn this?"

Hiruzen answered, "I did. But I can't teach you how to do it because I am not capable of teaching you that."

Fujin was confused. He asked, "Didn't you say that you helped Orochimaru develop this?"

Hiruzen replied, "I did. Unfortunately, this is too complicated even for me. Even though I helped Orochimaru, I just guided him and helped him avoid some pitfalls that occurred in earlier experiments on increasing chakra reserves. The cellular activity falls under Biology which isn't my strong suit. Doing something that requires you to employ each and every cell of your body is extremely difficult. The only reason why this could be completed is due to Tsunade."

Fujin's eyes widened. He thought, 'Tsunade! That makes sense. Even though Orochimaru is an excellent researcher, his knowledge of the human body is probably far from Tsunade's. But, can Hiruzen really not teach this to me?'

Hiruzen continued, "To be able to increase cellular activity in every cell in your body, you will need Tsunade's assistance. Even I could only do so with her help. Orochimaru was the only one who became capable of doing it without her help. If I try to help you without Tsunade present, I won't be able to handle any unexpected complications that might arise. So, it is very risky and has little to no chance of success."

Fujin fell into deep thought. Ideas clashed in his brain at the speed of light. Unfortunately, he couldn't think of anything. After a couple of minutes, he sighed and muttered, "That sucks."

Hiruzen smiled on seeing Fujin's reaction. For once, he had let Fujin experience the emotional roller coaster that Fujin frequently put Hiruzen and Shikaku through. As he had guessed, Fujin's mood became very down. Hiruzen had dangled something Fujin wanted a lot in front of his eyes and had taken it away without any hope of Fujin getting it anytime soon.

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Chapter 415: Council Member Suzuki Fujin

Seeing Hiruzen's smile, Fujin cursed, 'Why is this old fox smiling? It almost feels like he is enjoying my helplessness!'

Unfortunately, there wasn't much that Fujin could do. He asked, "Is there any chance you can arrange a meeting between me and Lady Tsunade, Grandpa?"

To Fujin's disappointment, Hiruzen shook his head and said, "Unfortunately, I can't. Until a Great War breaks out, she won't return to the village. She has sacrificed too much for the village and doesn't want to be disturbed unless it's an emergency."

Fujin sighed once again. He didn't say anything and thought, 'I guess I can only wait for her to return to the village. Even though finding her shouldn't be too difficult, I have no relationship with her. So, it is highly unlikely that she will agree to help even if I track her down. I can only wait until Naruto changes her heart. That said...'

Fujin looked at Hiruzen and wondered, 'Will events really play out as I remember? Hiruzen is an entirely different league as compared to what I remember about him from the show. I don't see him playing with roof tiles when facing Orochimaru.'

That said, it is unlikely that Orochimaru is as weak as I recall either. Just like Hiruzen, he barely used any good jutsu in that fight apart from Edo Tensei. Tobirama didn't use his Flying Thunder God from what I remember while Hashirama wasn't as overbearing as he is. Even if Hashirama's strength was limited due to the Edo Tensei not being as perfect as it was during the war, he could still be far more devastating.

Besides, I myself have become a factor that others must consider. Even if they don't get the news that I killed Juzo, the bounty should show that my threat is at least comparable to Kakashi's. And I am an expert in Wind Release. In a war, just my ability to strengthen Fire jutsus will be very devastating. Not to mention, I have already created a lot of mess against Suna and Iwa...

Sigh, so many complications and calculations. No point in thinking too much about it pointlessly. I'll just see what happens and act accordingly.'

Hiruzen let out a chuckle on seeing Fujin think so deeply and said, "Don't worry so much. Even if no war happens, Tsunade will eventually return to the village. When she arrives, I will ask her to help you. Now, let's talk about why I called you here."

Fujin said, "Thank you. And yeah, I almost forgot that you called me here for some reason, haha."

Hiruzen smiled and said, "It's good to see that you are happy. This news is related to you."

Fujin raised an eyebrow and wondered, 'A news related to me? But I have been in the village all the time. Did someone I know experience something good?'

Hiruzen waited for a few seconds for some suspense to build up. Finally, he said, "Congratulations Fujin. You have been selected to join the Council of Konoha."

Fujin raised his eyebrows and wondered, 'Konoha's Council? What the hell?'

He asked, "What do you mean?"

Hiruzen asked, "You know what the Konoha Council is and who the council members are, right?"

Fujin nodded. He had studied the Council in Konoha very thoroughly. Hiruzen said, "We have decided to expand the council and add one more seat to represent ninjas who aren't from any ninja clans. I decided to appoint you to that seat and the council supported my decision."

Fujin thought, 'The council supported me? I barely know anyone in it and the council members have a lot of political influence. There is no way that they will just pass it along to someone who has no background. I guess Hiruzen played quite a few cards to make this happen.'

Still, this is good for me. Extremely good! I wanted to enter the council before that incident took place. I didn't expect that I'd be able to join it so early.'

Fujin replied, "Grandpa, I barely know any Civilian ninjas. How am I supposed to represent them?"

Hiruzen waved his hand dismissively and said, "Even though there was no such seat earlier, the council works to ensure that everyone in Konoha is looked after properly. So you don't need to worry about it. At most, your job is to ensure that the council doesn't make any decisions that will harm the interests of the civilian ninjas.

The real reason why I got you in the council is to give you sufficient power for you to be able to negotiate without any worries."

Fujin was surprised. He said, "Oh, that sounds doable. Alright, Grandpa. I will do my best for the village. Is there anything I should know about being a council member?"

Hiruzen nodded. He briefed Fujin about additional duties he would have, about how to act in several scenarios that Hiruzen expected Fujin to face and also discussed with him the political implications of his appointment to the council. Fujin asked several questions to clear his doubts which were answered patiently by Hiruzen.

The two talked for over a couple of hours. In the end, Hiruzen said, "Don't worry too much. Even if you meet with some issue that you are not sure how to handle, you can just say that you'll handle it later and talk with me about how to resolve it. If I'm not in the village, you can consult Shikaku."

Fujin nodded and said, "Alright."

He let out a yawn and said, "If that's all Grandpa, then I'll go take my nap."

Hiruzen chuckled and said, "That's all. Go take a proper rest. I'll hold another council meeting soon to introduce you to it."

Fujin nodded. He got up and began walking when he suddenly had an idea. He turned around and said, "The ninja clans get a certain number of elemental crystals allotted to them every year, while the civilian ninjas don't have access to this. If any of the civilian ninjas ask me to raise this point, what should I say?"

Hiruzen replied, "Unfortunately, the number of elemental crystals we receive is too low and is decreasing continuously. If not for the deals we made with neighbouring countries, we wouldn't have been able to sustain it. So we can't allot the Elemental Crystals to everyone. In a few years, we may need to stop supplying them to clans as well.

But, as of now, as long as a civilian ninja shows promise, I will induct them into Anbu and give them access to it. Just like you and Bunjiro. The senior ninjas will all be aware of this, so they won't bother you about this matter."

Fujin nodded and said, "Alright. I'll see you later."

He disappeared from the office. Hiruzen stared at where he was standing and wondered, 'Was his query genuine or does he want more elemental crystals for himself for some reason? Hasn't he already reached his limit of using them?'

Hiruzen thought for a bit but couldn't reach any conclusion. After a few minutes, he dropped it and returned to his work.

Fujin appeared in his house in less than a minute and thought, 'That's a shame. Though Wind Crystals no longer have much of an effect on me while Fire and Earth Crystals are too slow to absorb, I haven't tried absorbing energy from the Lightning Crystals since the Chunin Exam.

Had Hiruzen given me the crystals, I could have used the Lightning ones in secret. After all, while Hiruzen can monitor the Anbu Training Facility, he can't monitor my house. Ah, leave it. It's highly unlikely that my rate of absorbing Lightning energy will increase as it happened with Wind Crystals.

Anyway, this is quite good news. I wanted to enter the council before Akatsuki started making their moves. I thought I'd have to influence Tsunade into creating such a seat for me. By then, considering how much stronger I'd have grown, I would have been able to force my way in.

I never thought Hiruzen would solve this issue for me so early. This will make implementing that plan much easier and the backlash will be smaller as compared to if I had just joined the council and displeased some of the members due to having forced my way in.'

Fujin yawned again and rubbed his eyes. He muttered, "I really need some sleep. I'll see how this goes after the first meeting is arranged."

Fujin went to sleep. While he slept, news spread rapidly throughout Konoha. The news that a new Council Member had been appointed surprised many people. The fact that the new Council Member was supposed to represent Civilian ninjas brought joy to the vast number of Civilian ninjas in Konoha.

Though a few people were sceptical about Fujin's selection for that seat, no one said anything considering his high bounty and the fact that the Third Hokage had recommended him for the spot.

Irrespective of whether people were pleased or not, everyone was talking about the new Council Member Suzuki Fujin.

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 416: RIP Privacy

It had barely been an hour since the Sun rose. In one of the many training grounds inside Konoha, a young man was sitting with his back against a tree while breathing heavily.

As he caught his breath, Fujin thought, 'Nothing like an intense morning workout to clear up my mind. Now, what do I do about this situation?'

Due to his tiredness, Fujin hadn't thought much about getting into the council. Fujin analyzed, 'I recall thinking about creating a faction inside Konoha post the Fourth Great Ninja War taking advantage of the void created by Danzo's death and the insane number of deaths in the war. Though I had given up on it, to think I would receive a position that would allow me to do just that with ease...'

Fujin began thinking about his old idea about spreading his influence among the many orphan ninjas in Konoha and the civilian ninjas.

After a while, Fujin shook his head and decided, 'No, it is sort of pointless. Even if it is after the war, such a faction will be heavily monitored by every force in Konoha. I will have to engage in a lot of political battles for gains that won't be of any use to me.

This isn't the same as creating an organization outside Konoha. I will have full control over such an organization with little to no outside influence. I can use them to do work that would be very shady for someone in Konoha to do openly.

But a faction inside Konoha won't have such an unrestricted environment. Leave it. If I want more influence inside Konoha, I'll directly contest the post of Hokage. Though my reputation inside Konoha is far lower than Kakashi's and the Sannins' reputation, it will change in the future.

Irrespective of who the enemies are in Konoha Crush, that war will allow me to rapidly increase my reputation and influence. Once Akatsuki starts gaining fame, I can pick on their members to increase my reputation further.

My current prowess is sufficient to neutralize Hidan from the future. Once Wind Domain is ready, I can also defeat future Deidara without resorting to Lightning Release. And I still have around 5 years. That should be sufficient for me to become capable enough to kill Kakuzu, Sasori and perhaps even Kisame.

With those wins, I can easily gain the basis to fight for the Hokage seat if I want it. And that is without considering Flying Thunder God and Sage Mode. As long as I get any one of them down, it's likely that Kakashi might not even want to compete against me.

So there isn't much point in creating a faction inside Konoha. I'll just focus on increasing my influence while spending as little of my time and resources as I can.'

Having made his decision, Fujin got up and began walking to the Hokage's Building. He had already informed Naruto that he would be busy for around a week. So, Naruto hadn't visited him for training.

Fujin entered Hiruzen's office and thought, 'I wonder what office he will be giving me.'

Hiruzen saw Fujin and said, "Good, you are here."

He stopped doing his paperwork and got up from his seat. He said, "Follow me. I'll show you your office."

Fujin nodded and followed him. Within a minute, both arrived inside a room on the floor under Hiruzen's office. Fujin looked around the room. The room wasn't too small or too big and looked as if it was very recently cleaned properly.

Hiruzen said, "I had this room cleared for you yesterday. As I had said, every council member has a room inside the Hokage's Building. Of course, you don't need to show up here daily, but if you have any meetings or official work, you can get it done here."

Fujin nodded and looked around the room. His eyes focused on a few places. He asked, "Did you also put seals in the room, Grandpa?"

Hiruzen answered, "The seals here are very old. Their purpose is for secrecy and some defense. Feel free to remove them and carve newer seals. But don't overdo it. I don't want to see thousands of seals in this room."

Fujin chuckled and replied, "Alright. Don't worry, I know that this isn't my home."

Hiruzen nodded. He was nervous about Fujin doing something like what he had done with his own house. Hiruzen thought, 'Though I trust him, I don't want a room so close to my office to have thousands of seals. Even with my expertise, it is very likely that I'll miss a few seals even if I carefully inspect such a room. It's no wonder that Danzo didn't dare to step inside his house.'

Hiruzen said, "I'll leave you to handle your room. Stay here for some time. I'll assign you a couple of assistants who will come here to meet you. They will be responsible for informing you if anyone comes here to meet you when you aren't present. Though there won't be much paperwork for you, they will also help out in what little there is.

As for the council meeting that we talked about yesterday, I have arranged for one to introduce you to the council. It will be on the day after tomorrow, at 9 AM. Be there on time."

Fujin nodded and said, "Alright, I'm looking forward to it."

Hiruzen nodded and left, leaving Fujin alone in the room. Fujin stood quietly while observing the room properly for around 5 minutes. Suddenly, a mischievous smile broke out on Fujin's face.

Fujin thought, 'Hiruzen asked me to not overdo it. He said that he doesn't want thousands of seals in this room. Meaning, as long as it doesn't reach that number, it should be fine, right? Hehehe, I'll just inscribe 999 seals in this room.

Hmm, wait! He said 'thousands' with a 's'. There have to be at least 2 to make it plural. So he allowed me to inscribe 1999 seals in this room. I don't understand why he wants so many seals in a room so close to his office...

Oh well, I'll inscribe 999 seals for now. That should be more than enough. I'll leave the remaining ones for the future in case I develop any cool seals.'

With a smile plastered on his face, 8 Shadow Clones popped next to him. Within a minute, every existing seal inside the room was wiped off. In the next few minutes, 999 seals were inscribed in the room!

Of the 999 seals, only 125 seals were to prevent spying and added some defense to the room, to ensure that it could endure a couple of rank A jutsus before collapsing.

Of the remaining seals, 125 seals were made for the sole purpose of spying on others. Of course, Fujin wasn't completely unbridled. Though the seals could spy, he didn't make the seals strong enough to break through the privacy seals in the remaining rooms despite being able to.

Fujin had analyzed, 'Even though my Fuinjutsu skills are great, I shouldn't look down on others. Hiruzen will definitely notice it if I use it several times. Others might notice too. Especially if I can break through privacy seals. But as long as I don't do that, the chances of anyone discovering it will be low. Even if they do, they can't do anything.'

Since Fujin dared to do something like this, he had implemented countermeasures. After all, those were just 250 seals. Fujin's Shadow Clones inscribed 500 seals just to hide those 250 seals. All the important 250 seals were thus hidden under several levels of disguise and cover.

The only way to see them would be if someone destroyed a good portion of those 500 seals. However, even if someone did that, Fujin had inscribed another 125 seals just to destroy the spying seals. So no proof would remain.

As for the remaining 124 seals, all were useless. Fujin had just randomly put seals which made no sense and served the sole purpose of confusing the shit out of anyone who wanted to investigate the seals inside his office.

Fujin closed his eyes and sensed the seals that his clones had just inscribed. One by one, the seals began activating. In a few seconds, the majority of the seals in the room disappeared and could no longer be sensed by anyone other than Fujin.

Soon, the privacy seals were activated. The room was completely sealed. No one would be able to spy on what was happening inside the room. If anyone tried to, Fujin would be warned. If someone better than Fujin forcefully breaks through the privacy seals to spy on Fujin, Fujin will be warned of it.

Finally, the seals for spying were activated. One by one, Fujin began hearing the words spoken inside the Hokage Building. Fujin avoided any rooms with Jounins or stronger ninjas inside them so that no one would be able to realize that someone was spying on them.

The sounds Fujin heard were initially very chaotic. But under Fujin's control, he began hearing distinct voices from every room. He could freely control what he wanted to hear and what he didn't.

Finally, Fujin deactivated all the spying seals. A smile appeared on Fujin's face as observed his work with pride! He thought, 'Neither Sasori nor Deidara is right. This is ART! Hahaha! I can spy on almost everything that happens inside this building. The amusing part is that I didn't even intend to do so until a few minutes ago, hahaha.'

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Chapter 417: Hiruzen's Confusion

Fujin became serious and analyzed, 'Though my seals can spy without being detected, there is a limit. As long as I don't use them for spying, no one will notice anything odd. Even Hiruzen, with his expertise in Fuinjutsu and decades of experience, wouldn't sense them.'

But, once I use it, top ninjas should instinctively feel that something is wrong. So, I can only use it a few times before people start suspecting something is wrong.

Fortunately, my target isn't the Clan Leaders. Even though they are important, they barely know anything important happening in the village. After all, everyone is in the dark about the Uchiha Massacre. Only the four of them know about it and perhaps Shikaku might have guessed it. The rest are completely in the dark. Even if they have their guesses, it's not something I can spy on.

The ones I wanna keep an eye on are those two Elders. Once things start getting tense, I can know what schemes they are cooking by keeping an eye on them. Fortunately, I know the future events. So I won't have to use this frequently.

So, the chances of getting discovered are low. Even if they discover it, linking it back to me will be difficult. Besides, even if guess that it is me, they can't do shit to me without any proof. Their era is long over. And I have no intention of being polite and respectful with them like others.'

Though Fujin had just joined the council and didn't intend to offend everyone in it, he didn't mind doing so when the need arose. In fact, he was looking forward to it. Fujin thought, 'I found politics very tedious in my previous life and stayed far away from it. To think that I would be jumping in it at a mere age of 15 in this life... Who'd have ever thought?'

Fujin's gaze turned towards the door. A couple of seconds later, a knock was heard. Fujin said, "Come in."

Two men opened the door and entered inside. Fujin observed them. Both were in their mid-20s, had average builds and their chakra was just high enough to be considered as Chunin-level.

Just like Fujin, the two of them were also observing him. Both had complicated feelings. They both had civilian backgrounds. Both were proud of having a safe job inside the Hokage's Building. However, the boy in front of them was 10 years younger than either of them.

Yet, he had such immense power that his bounty was 50 million Ryo and he had been selected to become one of the few Council Members inside Konoha and represented the highest number of ninjas than any other Council Member apart from the Hokage and the Elders.

Though they felt that the other civilian Elite Jounins would have been better choices, neither dared to disrespect Fujin.

One guy respectfully said, "I am Haruma."

The other guy said, "I am Yasushi. Lord Hokage assigned us to assist you in your duties as a Council member."

Fujin nodded and said, "Good. This seat is mine. Feel free to take any other chair in this room. Did either of you assist any other council member before me?"

Yasushi nodded and said, "Yes. I had assisted Lord Yamanaka Inoichi before you. Haruma has been newly assigned though. So it's his first time assisting a council member."

Fujin said, "That's good. You can guide Haruma on how everything's done. Did Lord Hokage give you my information?"

Yasushi answered, "Not much apart from your name."

Fujin said, "I see."

Fujin thought for a few seconds and instructed, "I'm not sure how Inoichi handled his Council duties. As for me, I won't be in the office often. So you two will have to handle anyone who wants to meet up with me. If there are any visitors, you will make a note of who it is and send a report to my house in the evening.

I live in the house across from the 23rd Training Ground. I'll handle all the meetings on Saturday. So unless there is anything urgent, you two won't be disturbing me and just arrange for the meetings to take place on Saturday. Is that understood?"

Both Yasushi and Haruma nodded and replied, "Understood."

Fujin asked, "Is there anything else that you would like to know or discuss?"

Haruma didn't say anything but Yasushi asked Fujin a few questions about how he should act in various scenarios. Fujin patiently answered him. 15 minutes later, Fujin asked, "Anything else?"

Yasushi shook his head and answered, "No. It's just that we will have to report your work schedule to Lord Hokage."

Fujin replied, "Alright. You can do so. I'll see you later."

In front of both their eyes, Fujin's figure disappeared from the room. Sweat gathered on their faces. Haruma asked nervously, "Yasushi-senpai, did you see him leave?"

Yasushi shook his head and said, "I couldn't see him at all. He just disappeared."

Haruma sighed and exclaimed, "No wonder Lord Hokage appointed someone so young."

Yasushi chuckled and said, "Don't worry about it. How can someone whom Lord Hokage appoints be ordinary? Luckily for us, he seems very laid back. As long as we don't mess up, we won't face any difficulties on this job."

Haruma nodded with a smile on his face. For officials working in the Hokage Building, all they wanted was a boss who wouldn't purposefully make things difficult for them. Hence, both Yasushi and Haruma were happy with their new position.

Both reported to Hiruzen and informed him about Fujin's arrangements. Hiruzen asked them a few questions before dismissing them. Sitting in his office, Hiruzen analyzed, 'Just meetings on Saturday... It looks like he will not be using this position to increase his influence in the village.'

Hiruzen analyzed for a couple of minutes before letting out a sigh. He got up and began walking towards the office he assigned Fujin. As he walked, he thought, 'I have been too impatient. Though becoming a Council Member representing the civilian ninjas offers the potential to gain a very high influence in Konoha, Fujin will not do that.'

The reason is simple. He most probably doesn't know what the use of creating such an influence inside the village is. Even if he dreams of becoming the Hokage, he wouldn't know that this is the easiest way for him to create a support base.

Regardless, this isn't bad. Even if he doesn't actively try to gain influence, his influence will gradually increase in time due to the post. More importantly, his combat prowess has improved faster than my calculations. So even without this seat, his influence will increase rapidly once we enter a conflict.'

Hiruzen thought for a while and nodded to himself while thinking, 'That's right. I don't need to worry about increasing his reputation and influence anymore. Perhaps it is a good thing that he isn't actively increasing it as that could have created some internal strugg...'

Hiruzen's thoughts stopped as soon as he entered the office he had just assigned to Fujin. His expression became very dark. He looked around the room. His eyes saw dozens of seals at every glance.

He muttered to himself, 'This boy! I told him not to overdo it! I can easily sense over a hundred seals inside this room. And most of them are seals that are used to hide other seals. How many seals did this boy inscribe in this room? And how did he inscribe them so rapidly? It's been just over half an hour since I assigned him this office and I doubt he did it in front of his assistants.'

Hiruzen was speechless. Chakra concentrated in his eyes and they began glowing as he observed the seals with all his focus. 5 minutes later, he let out a sigh and stopped looking.

He thought, 'I inspected through two layers of disguise. I can't inspect any deeper without dismantling the seals. But, I don't understand this. I clearly asked Fujin not to overdo it. Why did he still inscribe so many seals and hide them under so many layers? He hasn't openly disobeyed me before this. Did he discover something?'

Hiruzen left Fujin's office while analyzing what Fujin could have discovered and returned to his office. After a few minutes, he shook his head and thought, 'I can't think of anything. Even if he discovered anything, why didn't he come and inform me instead of creating such a complicated network of seals? I'll wait until the meeting. If he doesn't talk with me until then, I'll ask him myself.'

Regardless, his ability at Fuinjutsu is remarkable. Though he is far from being the best Grandmaster in Konoha, his speed of inscribing seals might be the fastest in Konoha. Either that or he has created a ridiculous amount of Seal Imprints. But, in that case, he would be the fastest Grandmaster at creating seal imprints.'

Hiruzen stopped thinking about Fujin and got back to work. He had suffered enough headaches for a day to bother Fujin that day.

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Chapter 418: The Council Meeting

Unlike Hiruzen, Fujin didn't think much and returned to training. His thoughts were, 'Though joining the Council is advantageous for me, I need to wait a long time to reap those benefits. For now, I don't need to waste my time on any council duties. I'll just send a Shadow Clone on Saturday to handle anything I want to.'

My main focus has to be on training. Strength is the basis of everything in this world. Ignoring it and focusing on political influence will be beyond stupid. Even if I lose some reputation, it doesn't matter. With overwhelming strength, I can have my way in one way or another.'

With such thoughts, Fujin didn't bother thinking about the Council and instead focused entirely on his training.

Two days later, the Konoha Council began preparing to meet once again. This time, they will be having one additional member!

Fujin arrived in Hiruzen's office around a few minutes before the time of the meeting. Hiruzen looked at Fujin and asked, "Nervous?"

Fujin shook his head and replied, "Not really. It's just a meeting."

He chuckled and said, "If it was a fight between all the council members, then I might have been a little bit nervous."

Hiruzen chuckled as well and said, "A fight between all the council members... Now that would be a sight to see."

At the same time, he thought, 'Fortunately, he can't create a mess in the Council like he did in the Land of Wind. Still, he didn't say anything about those seals.'

Hiruzen instructed, "Meet me in the office after the meeting is over."

Fujin nodded. The two left the office and walked towards the Council Room. Since it was his first time in the Council, Hiruzen decided to introduce Fujin to the Council himself.

When the two arrived, everyone else was already present in the room. Everyone immediately looked at Fujin while Fujin observed them as well. The center of the room had a long table with 8 chairs on either side and one chair at the end of the table. On one side of the table, the 7 Clan Leaders, that is, Shikaku, Inoichi, Choza, the Senju Clan Leader, Hiashi, Shibi and Tsume, sat. On the other side were Danzo, Homura, Koharu and the 5 civilian council members.

As their eyes met, some of the members greeted Fujin with a smile.

Before anyone could say anything, Hiruzen said, "Fujin, take the empty chair."

Fujin nodded and took the seat next to Tsume. Hiruzen took his seat as well and said with a smile on his face, "Today is a joyous occasion for Konoha. By introducing a new position in the Council, we have increased the representation of the ninjas in the council to a great extent. In addition, our council also welcomes a very talented young ninja to join our ranks.

I know that several of you haven't met him yet. So I'll let you get familiar with each other."

Once again, every eye in the room focused on Fujin. Sitting next to him, Tsume said, "You brat. It has barely been 4 years since I saw you in the Chunin Exams. To think that you would join the council so soon. Congratulations."

Fujin smiled and said, "Thank you, Tsume-san."

Following Tsume, Shikaku lazily said, "Welcome to the Council."

With a smirk on his face, he added, "I'm looking forward to your performance here."

Everyone in the room was experienced at scheming. Shikaku's smirk didn't go unnoticed. Immediately everyone began thinking about the meaning behind his smirk and words. The one who analyzed it the most was none other than Danzo.

Right after Shikaku, Choza smiled at Fujin and said, "It's good to see you again, Fujin."

Fujin smiled back at Choza and nodded his head. Inoichi said, "I have heard a lot about you from Fumito. It's good to finally meet you in person. Welcome to the council."

Fujin smiled and said, "It's good to finally meet you as well, Inoichi-san."

The Senju Clan Leader looked at Fujin and said, "So you are Suzuki Fujin? It's good to finally see you. That brat Renjiro turned my hair white by telling me stories about how impressive you are. Hahaha."

Fujin looked at the Senju Clan leader. In terms of age, he looked to be older than anyone else in the room, even older than Hiruzen and the elders. His hair had long turned white and wrinkles could be seen on his face. Yet, he still seemed very lively.

Fujin smiled and said, "Renjiro-sensei frequently talked about you very fondly as well, Hiromasa-sama. It's great to see you in person."

In terms of strength, Hiromasa had long regressed. Even at his peak, he was never known to have reached rank S. If Tsunade had stayed in the village, she could have claimed his position at will. However, as the Clan Leader of his sensei, Fujin decided to treat him respectfully.

Hiromasa smiled and said, "Good. Renjiro got lucky with his students. I wish my Senju clan would have a promising youngster like you as well. Then I can finally retire and live peacefully, hahaha."

He once again broke out laughing. Fujin smiled while wondering, 'Is he genuinely saying that or is it an indirect way of inviting me into the Senju clan? I can't say for sure... The Senju clan, after the creation of the village, has been weird.'

One by one, the remaining members of the council introduced themselves to Fujin as well. The only ones who didn't were Hiruzen and the three Elders.

With the introductions out of the way, Hiruzen said, "Though this isn't the time for our biannual meeting, since we are here, we might as well deal with the issues that have arisen recently. I believe all of you have something to discuss as well."

The council meeting began officially. Fujin didn't have anything to discuss. So, he merely paid attention to the topics that were discussed. A number of issues, ranging from food and trade to border patrols and clashes with enemy squads, were discussed. However, since nothing serious, other than Juzo's death, had happened in the last month, the discussions didn't get intense.

Around 3 and a half hours later, the discussion finally came to a halt. Hiruzen said, "If there is nothing else, I will end the meeting now."

Everyone was about to get up when Danzo said, "I have noticed something that is very important for the village recently. I'm afraid that if we overlook it, our village will fall in grave danger in the future."

Danzo's words caused a few members to frown. Everyone looked at Danzo. Danzo waited for a few seconds before continuing, "I observed some of the Academy students who will be joining the final year after the vacation. What I saw was just too disappointing. Compared to a few years ago, the standard of students has dropped drastically in almost every aspect.

I looked into the reasons behind it. I noticed that the teachers in the academy have become very lax. Another possible reason is that several experienced teachers resigned a couple of years ago. As a result, the quality of teaching and discipline has dropped severely. If we continue down this path, our future generation will be handicapped."

The frowns on the faces of Clan Leaders eased. Though Danzo had spoken big words, none of them felt it to be much of an issue. Their thoughts were in line with what Hiruzen had told Fujin.

Fujin looked at Danzo and thought, 'Weird... I don't think any such change had happened in the original story. Did Danzo bring this up because his spies observed Naruto more closely because I trained him? Or would he be shut down by others and the training process will stay the same?'

Fujin was interested in observing in which direction the debate would go.

Inoichi shook his head and said, "We can't maintain full intensity all the time. Doing so will cause our village to collapse due to exhaustion. It's the same reason why so many capable teachers retired. Our village is finally in a stable position. Our ninjas deserve rest."

Danzo replied, "How can you slack off when our future generation is at stake? Even if there is exhaustion, it won't affect the academy students. We need to make the academy stricter and raise the standards of our students."

He glanced at the clan leaders and added, "I know that you have plans for your children. So I won't interfere in the Elite Classroom. However, the teaching in the other classrooms has to be made stricter. Students have to meet certain standards even to be included in the reserve forces. Otherwise, none of them will have any hope of ever becoming Chunins."

Hiashi asked, "Who in the Genin reserve force even becomes a Chunin? The number of ninjas who manage to do so is too low to matter. Any talented ninja is identified in the academy and the village makes efforts to ensure that they gain strength."

Though your words sound good, forcing teachers to concentrate on hundreds of students for decades is unrealistic. We need to give them rest so that they can overexert themselves when the village needs them to."

Every Clan Leader nodded, agreeing with Hiashi's words. The 5 civilian council members didn't have anything to do with the conversation. Fujin, Hiruzen, Homura and Koharu just observed.

Danzo looked at Hiashi and others and said in a plain tone, "If the Academy can't do it, then let the Root be restarted. I'll take in the untalented ninjas and raise them to be strong enough to become Anbu."

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Chapter 419: Fujin's Response

A frown appeared on the face of every clan leader. Not one of them wanted the Root to restart officially. Apart from the Hyuga clan, every clan had to contribute a significant amount of their talents to the Root in the past. And, no one was happy about it.

Shibi snorted and asked, "Since when did Root begin taking in untalented ninjas? Over the last few decades, more than a thousand talented ninjas were incorporated into the Root. More than half of them die during the training phase itself. And despite such losses, not a single rank S ninja came out of the Root."

Danzo argued back, "The Root's contribution to the village is unquestionable. Without Root, Konoha would have had to face the full force of all our neighbours. Even if no rank S ninja appeared in the Root, its contribution far exceeds that of any rank S ninja."

He looked at Shibi and added, "As for your words, this time I will take in the ninjas ranked last in the academy and raise them. Using your words, there won't be any loss to the village, right?"

Fujin was impressed by Danzo's words. He thought, 'Impressive indeed. In terms of words, he is as good as Hiruzen. Even if Danzo recruits only untalented ninjas at first, once his authority increases, he will immediately pounce on talented kids from the clans. I wonder how the clan leaders will oppose him.'

As he thought, Fujin's gaze turned towards Shikaku. As Fujin expected, Shikaku said, "Elder Danzo, no one in this room is a fool. So stop treating us as one. Restarting Root is out of the question. However, I can understand your concerns.

Though Root won't be started, we can make arrangements for Root instructors to teach students in the academy. We will even have the regular teachers assist Root instructors in the academy to have the optimal result."

A smile formed on Fujin's face. He thought, 'What an answer! Hehe, if all the future meetings happen like these, then they will be rather fun to attend.'

Just like Fujin, the remaining clan leaders liked the answer as well while Danzo's expression became slightly darker. Shikaku's reply showed his strong stance against restarting the Root.

At the same time, he also gave a way for Danzo to solve the issue he had raised. In addition, by saying that the academy teachers would aid the Root instructors, Shikaku ensured that they could keep an eye on what the Root instructors were doing and ensure that Danzo couldn't increase his influence.

Of course, Danzo wouldn't accept difficulty so easily. He replied, "How can that be the same? The methods of teaching in the Root and the Academy are completely different. It won't have any effect on the students."

Shikaku immediately replied, "That's not right. According to you, the reason why the academy students are lacking is because the teachers aren't good enough and are taking it easy. Since Root instructors don't share the same problem, they should be able to deliver much better results."

Danzo argued back, "They will, but they won't be able to raise them to Anbu standard by training them in the Academy. At most, they will become stronger than a normal Genin while a few will become Chunins. That will be a huge loss for the village. That is why I insist that the Root program needs to be restarted."

Shikaku was about to reply again, however Danzo stopped him. Danzo knew that an argument between the two of them would be endless and without much point. He said, "Almost all of the students who are at the bottom ranks are from civilian backgrounds. I would like to hear what the council member who represents the civilian ninjas has to say on this matter."

In an instant, everyone's eyes turned towards Fujin. Fujin, who was merely interested in watching the drama, was caught off guard. He thought, 'Eh? Me? Why does he want to hear my opinion?'

At the same time, Danzo thought, 'If I put this to vote, Hiruzen and the 7 Clan Leaders will oppose me. I can get the remaining 8 votes in my favor. Previously, Hiruzen could use his extra vote to reject my proposal. But now, it depends on Fujin. Though I don't have much hope of him voting in my favor, it will allow me to see if Hiruzen was sincere when he said that Fujin won't listen to everything he says.'

A similar thought ran through the heads of the Clan Leaders. Shikaku wasn't worried as he had interacted with Fujin several times. However, the others didn't know much about him. Since Hiruzen had

nominated Fujin, they believed that Fujin would follow Hiruzen. But, Danzo's sudden question created some doubts.

Fujin looked at Danzo and wondered, 'Is he trying to make things difficult for me because I rejected his invite? Regardless, how do I answer this question? I can't say that I just want to enjoy the drama, can I?'

Fujin fell into deep thought. His mind quickly thought about the points he should speak about and began analyzing how he should articulate them.

Danzo said once again, "What are your thoughts, Suzuki Fujin?"

Fujin casually replied, "It's a rather complicated and important matter. Give me a couple of minutes to think about it."

Fujin's reply surprised some of the council members. A smile appeared on Hiruzen's and Shikaku's faces as they were very familiar with Fujin's ways. Inoichi and the rest thought, 'To not be pressurized in such a situation and casually ask for time to think... He is impressive.'

For the next couple of minutes, everyone in the room looked at Fujin who sat calmly without looking at anyone. Finally, he looked at Danzo and said, "The point of academy students not having sufficient training is valid. I have been in contact with one of the students and the lack of proper training is rather apparent."

Fujin's words caused some of the clan leaders to frown. At the same time, Danzo became hopeful. He had expected that Fujin would directly refute him. So Fujin's words were a pleasant surprise to him.

Fujin continued, "However, I'm afraid that sending them to Root would cause a calamity in the village and will cause an existential crisis for the village.

From your earlier discussion, it seems like more than half the talented kids recruited into Root die. I'm not sure how the clans in our village are able to bear such high costs, but the civilian families in the village can't bear such costs.

After all, most families have only one or two children. If dozens, or worse hundreds, lose all or half their kids while the kids should have been studying in the academy, I'm afraid that it would cause widespread riots in the village.

As a result, no family would be willing to send their children to the academy. We would lose the main source from where our village gains new students. So while I do agree with your observations, I'm afraid that your solution would just make matters far worse very quickly."

Fujin's answer caused a smile to appear on Hiruzen's face. He thought, 'Very good answer! He used Danzo's tone and made the problem sound far worse than it was. With such an answer, the 5 civilian members can't support Danzo or they will face backlash and could get replaced.

With his answer, he not only took away the 5 votes that would have been in Danzo's favor but even turned them in his favor. I wasn't mistaken in wanting to make Fujin a negotiator and including him in the Council.'

Shikaku smiled as well and thought, 'I'm so happy that he retired from the Anbu. From his eyes, it seems like he might have some hostility with Danzo. Good, I can use him to deal with Danzo in the future and rest even more in the future.'

The remaining council members also began seeing Fujin in a new light. Other than Choza and Homura, no one expected such an answer from Fujin. Even Choza and Homura were impressed as Fujin spoke in a high-pressure environment instead of casually discussing with Hiruzen.

Danzo's expression became dark once again. He countered, "Ninjas are tools for the village. They should be prepared to sacrifice their lives for the good of the village."

Fujin replied nonchalantly, "Good luck convincing anyone how losing 50% ninjas during training is good for the village. Besides, the Academy students aren't ninjas. So I'm afraid that your logic doesn't hold true. Your methods would just give our village a bad name like the Village of the Bloody Mist. I'm sure that no one here wants our village to meet the same fate as Kirigakure."

Danzo replied, "That's completely different. Don't compare my methods to their barbarian wa..."

Finally, Hiruzen interrupted, "That's enough. Restarting Root has far more disadvantages than advantages. That is very evident from the discussion that we just had. Unless you want to put it to vote, this discussion ends here."

Danzo looked at Hiruzen but didn't say anything. He was aware that he would lose if a vote happened. So he didn't bother asking for one.

Hiruzen looked at Fujin and asked, "What are your views on how to improve the training for the students?"

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Chapter 420: Fujin Vs Danzo

Hiruzen looked at Fujin with a smile on his face. Fujin's answer had impressed him. So, instead of letting Danzo keep arguing, Hiruzen decided to see what solution Fujin would come up with.

Fujin thought for half a minute and answered, "I can understand exhaustion hitting the teachers. In the four years I was in the academy, every teacher enthusiastically helped us. Even if they weren't our assigned teachers, they still guided us if we asked them to. In addition, the exams were held in a way that promoted competition among us.

Though doing that isn't sustainable for a long time, we can just work around it. For starters, since our village is in a stable situation, the teachers don't need to pester the students and keep checking their progress frequently. Instead, we can just create a curriculum that the students will find cool and would want to learn by themselves and even compete without the interference of a teacher.

Though there will still be some who would slack off and not give their best, it will give an opportunity for the rest to improve during their basics and lay a foundation for them to get stronger in the future. Perhaps a few will get engrossed in the training and keep exploring it further.

This will allow us to see which students are serious and determined about becoming strong ninjas and check how talented they are. We could focus on such students. Even if they don't show sufficient talent to be included in the Elite batch, we could form another batch that is made of such students. The teachers guiding this batch should be as good as the Elite batches and training intensity should be kept high."

Fujin's words made the experienced ninjas in the room think. However, within a few seconds, everyone was a bit disappointed. Shibi thought, 'His previous answer was just too good. Though this answer isn't bad, it doesn't live up to the expectations.'

Danzo voiced what everyone was thinking. He said in a taunting tone, "If only we could create such a curriculum that students would enjoy and follow voluntarily instead of being forced to do so."

Fujin waved his hand dismissively and replied, "It has been nearly a century since you were in the academy. So, it is normal that you don't remember. Or perhaps those were different times."

Fujin's words amused the council. Only Danzo, Homura and Koharu cursed internally while Hiruzen felt a bit awkward as he was of the same age as them. Fujin ignored everyone and continued, "Regardless, there is no need to change the curriculum. After all, a curriculum where students would enjoy everything in it simply doesn't exist. Even if someone makes it, students will eventually find that tiresome as well.

What we need to do is just stick with the current curriculum and just add a few things that students would enjoy far more than the normal curriculum and take an interest in doing it.

For instance, there is likely no student in the academy who wouldn't like to walk up a tree or to walk and run on water. A teacher just has to introduce these to the students one by one and let them learn them by themselves without bothering to monitor or grade them. Their chakra control will improve far quicker than by only doing the Leaf Concentration exercise.

We could introduce Tree Climbing in the second year and Water Walking at the start of the third year. At the start of the fourth year, we could introduce Nature manipulation. Though the training for nature manipulation is boring, the jutsus themselves are fun. Rank E and D jutsus can be performed without needing to train in nature manipulation.

So by the time students reach their final year, the majority will have good chakra control and some basic jutsus of one or two elements. A few will work hard on nature manipulation and show good results in it. If that ignites competition among the rest, then there is a chance that even the classroom I recommended earlier might produce stronger ninjas than an Elite classroom."

Fujin's words made the ninjas in the room think. After a couple of minutes, everyone nodded. Shikaku commented, "That's a good suggestion. With minimal work from the teachers, the students would build a strong foundation for themselves."

Choza added, "True. Even though it will only make most students slightly stronger, there is a chance of a few promising talents being found who can become much stronger in the future. Even if it doesn't work, we won't lose out on anything considering how little effort we have to put in."

Everyone agreed with their words. Hiruzen looked at everyone's reaction and said, "Alright. The academy will follow these suggestions. Though we won't be able to apply it perfectly to students who are about to graduate, we will begin introducing these three steps in phases. In addition, I will also restart the mentorship program where retired ninjas and ninjas who aren't extremely active will have to mentor 5 students in their free time once a month. Does anyone have anything else to add?"

Danzo immediately said, "This isn't enough. The chances of someone becoming a Jounin through these methods are almost nil. Having stronger genins won't make any difference for Konoha in the war. To make an impact, we will need a large number of Chunins to appear out of the ninjas from normal classrooms."

Danzo looked at Fujin and said, "Though your methods seem good, just leaving it to students and hoping that they take training seriously isn't the way to train ninjas."

Fujin replied, "Forcing kids is never the way to teach children. The children will be resentful and will slack off the first chance they get. Unless you want to employ torture, but I'm afraid I can't support that."

For the best results, the two main factors are motivation and interest. No one forced me to train as much as I could. I just did so because I wanted to ensure that my village stayed safe and because there are so many fascinating techniques that intrigued me."

Danzo shook his head and said, "Just because it worked for you doesn't mean it would work for everyone else."

Fujin smiled and said, "The fact that it worked for me makes your argument void. If you want to insist on it, arrange for any of your current or former Root ninjas who were trained by Root to face me in a one-

on-one spar. I wouldn't even insist that they be the same age as me. As long as your chosen ninja defeats me, I will accept that your method is better."

Fujin's words once again caught everyone's attention. Koharu thought, 'What a devious brat! To openly say that Root still exist and challenge Danzo and the Root when Danzo can't fight back. If Danzo did, it would be admitting openly that Root still exists and everyone would be forced to dismantle the Root for good.'

Besides, Root doesn't have any rank S ninja. Even though a Root ninja might have the benefit of his skills being a secret, Fujin's skills aren't known to anyone other than Hiruzen either. So, that advantage also doesn't lie with them.'

Everyone realized the trap Fujin casually set for Danzo. Obviously, Danzo wouldn't step into it. He snorted and stopped arguing.

Fujin broke the silence and said, "It's true that my 3 basic steps won't guarantee a high number of Chunins. However, that is because my idea is based on minimal efforts from the academy so that the workload doesn't become too high. If we make some changes to the academy, then we might see better results without the teachers having to overexert themselves."

Fujin thought, 'Though this world is far more devious and cunning than my previous world, it is also ravaged by wars. As such, the school system hasn't had centuries to improve slowly. Until Tobirama started the academy in Konoha and other villages replicated it, a proper school system was basically non-existent in this world.'

Even after the academies were created, the world has been through several wars. So the academies have been solely focused on producing more ninjas to fill in the numbers. It hasn't evolved like in my previous life. I can easily apply some basic knowledge from my past life to revolutionize the academy here.'

Fujin's words intrigued the council once again. Hiruzen asked, "What changes do you suggest?"