

Calamity 621

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 621: Hiruzen's Nightmare!

"You're late, Grandpa. I had to fight that snake just by myself! It was sooo scary!"

Hiruzen's left eyebrow twitched in annoyance. All his good feelings disappeared in the blink of an eye. He muttered to himself, 'Scary? Does this brat know what fear even means? Where are your injuries? Did Orochimaru take pity on this brat? Or did this little devil somehow manage to convince Orochimaru to give up violence and accept a beating as a punishment for leaving Konoha?'

No one was more clear about Orochimaru's strength than Hiruzen. Unlike the rest, who had come to terms with this unbelievable feat, Hiruzen still had some doubts. Knowing Fujin's nature and his cunning tongue, Hiruzen strongly suspected that Fujin caused him mental damage instead of physical damage!

He looked at Renjiro and Hoka and said, "You two, assist in clearing out that fire. I helped out a bit, but there is still a lot left."

Renjiro and Hoka nodded and left immediately. Hiruzen glanced at his guards and they followed them. With just the two of them in the room, Hiruzen said, "Now that we are alone, tell me everything that has happened since the second round started. Also, tell me why Orochimaru targeted you."

Fujin raised an eyebrow and asked, "Didn't you see it in that pe... in that crystal ball?"

'Pe...?' Hiruzen's eyebrows twitched in annoyance once again as he understood what Fujin was initially saying. He shook his head and said, "No, there were seals in the Forest of Death to stop my technique. I guess Orochimaru placed them there beforehand."

Fujin was surprised. He thought, 'Oh, so those were the seals I sensed earlier... Makes sense I suppose.'

He looked at Hiruzen and said, "Orochimaru entered the chunin exam disguised as a Kusa Genin. He didn't target me, at least not initially. His target was Kakashi's squad, or more specifically Uchiha Sasuke."

He used the Five Elements Seal on Naruto to cut off his access to Nine Tail's chakra. And he planted his curse seal on Sasuke, just like the one that is on Anko's neck."

Hiruzen's eyes widened in surprise. He muttered, "So his goal was Sasuke... That's troublesome..."

Hearing Sasuke's name, Itachi's face appeared in his mind. Remembering Itachi's sacrifice and words, Hiruzen didn't want to see his little brother suffering. Unfortunately, the situation was very complicated.

He asked, "If they were his target, why did he fight you?"

Fujin shrugged and answered, "My clone had found him and Rasa's youngest son suspicious. So, I was planning to keep an eye on the two of them. Unfortunately, Orochimaru made his move very quickly. By the time I discovered his attack, he had already placed the seal on Sasuke.

I threw Kakashi's squad to a safe place, then engaged against him and sent messengers to you so that we could eliminate Orochimaru here and solve this headache for good. Unfortunately, that bastard was too slippery and he recovered from every injury with ease..."

Hiruzen was surprised by Fujin's words. He asked, "Is it true that you injured him and forced him to retreat?"

Fujin answered, "Somewhat. I managed to injure him thrice. Once in a way that would have injured any normal ninja a lot and reduced their fighting ability sufficiently for me to kill him or her. And twice with what should have been mortal wounds. Unfortunately, he just shed his skin all three times and completely recovered each time.

Before he escaped, he had already used that technique to get rid of his injuries. As for why he escaped, that should be because he was running low on chakra and the fact that you'd be reaching our positions in a minute or two."

Even though Hiruzen nodded without showing much expression on his face, he was shocked. He thought, 'He forced Orochimaru to use that technique thrice? I never expected Fujin to be able to injure him critically even once. I only expected him to keep Orochimaru at bay and keep him occupied till I arrived...

Even though I rate Fujin's talent and skills quite highly, did I still end up underestimating Fujin's strength? Or has Orochimaru's strength digressed since he left the village? However, how could that happen?'

Hiruzen quickly said, "Describe everything in detail about your fight."

Fujin nodded. Since Orochimaru had already witnessed his abilities, there was no reason to hide it from Hiruzen. Besides, Fujin had noticed quite a few pairs of eyes observing them during the ending stages of the battle. So, it was inevitable that some of his skills, especially his Wind Domain, would be known by others. Of course, Fujin didn't mention things like his Space Time Sensing Technique or the words he spoke during the fight.

As Fujin mentioned the details, a peculiar expression appeared on Hiruzen's face. He wondered, 'Is this how he always fights? I thought he was shameless only when it comes to money and jutsus. However, he's shameless even in battle!

First, he baited Orochimaru and exploded his Shadow Clone to critically injure him. Then he attacked Orochimaru again before he could completely recover and injured him once again.

Finally, he used his Wind Domain to bait Orochimaru into using a massive Fire jutsu and defeated Orochimaru using his own attack! Even though Orochimaru had a disadvantage in terms of information, he lost due to being outplayed in tactics!

Even in my long career, the number of battles more peculiar than this that I heard of could be counted with my fingers. If this is how he always fights, I can imagine what a nightmare he'd be on the battlefield!'

Hiruzen was seriously impressed. Despite following Fujin's progress for over 6 years, this was the first time Hiruzen asked Fujin to describe his battle. Before this, he hadn't seen much of Fujin's combat prowess. The only time he witnessed Fujin fighting was during the short clash against that unlucky Suna squad that had infiltrated the Land of Fire and attacked their camp. With this new information, Hiruzen began looking at Fujin in a new light!

Hiruzen was lost in thoughts when Fujin suddenly said, "Oh right, I almost forgot! When we were fighting, I destroyed his Sword of Kusanagi!"

"You did what?" Hiruzen exclaimed in shock, nearly jumping from his chair! Hiruzen thought, 'The Sword of Kusanagi broke? Even Enma doesn't like getting hit by that sword. How did he do it?'

Fujin nodded and said, "Yeah, I managed to catch him by surprise with my Vacuum Slash jutsu."

Immediately, Fujin's expression became sad and depressed. A seal lit up on his bracer and his broken sword appeared as he said, "Unfortunately, doing so destroyed my sword as well. It has been nearly 5 years since I have been using this sword. I didn't expect it to be broken today..."

Hiruzen's left eye twitched as he said inside his mind, 'You destroyed the Sword of Kusanagi with this ordinary sword and are still complaining about it? Shit!!! Wait!!!'

Suddenly, Hiruzen had a terrible feeling. His eyes widened as he realized what it was. Unfortunately, before he could do anything about it and save himself, Fujin said, "Could you arrange for a better sword to be made for me?"

This time, I want the sword to have more chakra metal instead of using it miserly. And, it'll be best if the sword is as strong as Orochimaru's Sword of Kusanagi. If I can have a blade that is as strong and sturdy as it was, then I won't need to worry about ever losing due to having a weak sword."

Hiruzen cursed internally, 'Shit! I knew it! He was so generous with the information because he wanted a new sword from me! And what does he mean by adding Chakra metal miserly? His swords are excellent! They cost me millions of Ryo and ate into a lot of the money I won by gambling on him!

Most importantly, he asked me for pure chakra metal swords when he had just graduated from the academy. Now that he has defeated Orochimaru, which swords will he ask?'

Hiruzen was terrified to think of the answer. Knowing Fujin, he knew it'd be something that even selling both his kidneys wouldn't be enough. He quickly said, "I can arrange the top blacksmiths for you. However, you're no longer as young as you were 6 years ago. So, you'll pay for it yourself."

With a smile on his face, Hiruzen added, "Back when you graduated, I knew that your future would be bright. It was why I didn't mind the costs and got the swords for you. However, I never expected that you'd be able to deal with Orochimaru so quickly. Great job, Fujin. I'm proud of you. I'm happy that the Will of Fire burns strong within you. You are a role model for the younger generation."

Not wanting Fujin to shamelessly ask Hiruzen to pay, Hiruzen quickly changed the subject and began praising him so that Fujin would feel awkward asking the village to sponsor it. Unfortunately, Fujin had trained in shamelessness from none other than him!

Fujin smiled and said like an obedient youngster, "Thank you, Grandpa."

Hiruzen smiled thinking, 'I'm saf...'

Unfortunately, even before he could complete his thoughts, Fujin's smile changed into a helpless one as he continued, "Unfortunately, I can't afford to make a good quality sword by myself. I have been busy looking after the orphans and no longer have much time to go on missions. As a result, my funds have been drying up very quickly. I'm afraid I won't even be able to afford my current swords..."

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Chapter 622: Taking advantage of a Perilous situation!

'...'

Hiruzen was left speechless by Fujin's sorrowful words. He wondered, 'You are poor? Since when? And, what do you mean by taking care of the orphans? My Anbu ninjas look after them! I'm paying for all their expenses! You only train the ones with Kekkei Genkai and only send a clone to train them! Not to mention, you stopped going on missions long before I gave you the orphans!'

Hiruzen wanted to vent his frustration at being played around by Fujin. Unfortunately, he knew that those words couldn't be spoken aloud. He could only swallow his words and frustration. However, if Hiruzen knew that Fujin had plundered hundreds of millions of Ryo from corrupt and vile Nobles and had that money with him, how would he have reacted?

Hiruzen sighed in his trademark manner and said, "Fujin, the village finances are tight for the time being. You know it since you saw the village budget. It is difficult for me to arrange such funds."

Fujin tilted his head and immediately said, "The village will earn around 4 to 5 billion Ryo by selling the land around the Guidance Hall. Along with the other sources of income, I don't think you'll need to worry about funds for a few years at least."

'...'

Once again, Hiruzen didn't know what he should reply. After all, what Fujin said was true. Had it been anyone else, they would have tried to profit at least 500 million Ryo from that proposal. They would have let the Council Members profit by 1.5 billion Ryo and left the remaining to the village. It was how things normally happened. However, Fujin gave everything to the village.

Hiruzen sighed internally thinking, 'He's right. The village will profit heavily due to it... So the village sponsoring his sword wouldn't be improper. Especially considering that he defeated Orochimaru. However...'

He looked at Fujin and thought, 'It looks like expecting him to be completely selfless was too much. Though to be fair, he couldn't have known that he would fight Orochimaru and break his sword. I guess he just took advantage of the situation. That said, it is possible that he acted that selflessly just so that he could make me pay for his expenses in the future...'

Hiruzen became worried thinking that Fujin would keep using this reason and ask him to keep paying in the future. Fujin continued looking at Hiruzen and thought, 'Wow, he's so deep in thought. If it wasn't so fun to make him pay, I wouldn't have minded paying for it myself. Even though Hiruzen would've been suspicious about how I gained so much money, he wouldn't have looked into it and just been happy that I wasn't making him or the village pay.'

Unfortunately, I couldn't think of any jutsu I could ask from him. Otherwise, I'd have asked him for a jutsu and paid for the sword myself. The only one that comes to mind is Edo Tensei jutsu, but Hiruzen won't give it to me. The only way I could ask for it is if he survives against Orochimaru. Even then, it is highly unlikely that he'll give me that jutsu.'

Hiruzen resigned himself to the fact that he couldn't deny Fujin's request. He said, "Making a sword as good as the sword of Kusanagi is more or less impossible. I don't know any living blacksmith who could do it. Lower your requirements a bit."

Fujin thought for a bit and said, "In that case, could you make me a sword equivalent to the Blade of the Thunder Spirit which Lord Second had created? If I can get a similar sword that helps in controlling winds, it'll be very helpful to me."

Hiruzen's left eye twitched again as he angrily thought, 'Even 5 billion Ryo won't be sufficient for that!'

He immediately replied, "Unfortunately, that is even more impossible. Sensei had found the materials required to create the sword by himself. I'm not sure where and how he found those materials. Unless you have the materials that could create such a sword, no one can make one."

Fujin sighed and said, "That's a shame. Oh well, I guess we can just stick to the basics then."

Hiruzen asked, "Which means?"

Fujin replied, "A sword majorly made of chakra metal and materials that make wind chakra flow easier while making the sword as hard as they can."

Hiruzen sighed internally, 'That'll probably cost the village around 200 to 300 million Ryo... Sigh, I do so much for the village!'

Hiruzen said, "Alright, I'll see what I can do. Anyway, did you find out the reason why Orochimaru targeted Sasuke and why he did it in the Chunin Exams instead of any other time?"

Fujin shook his head and answered, "Unfortunately, he didn't say. The only thing I can say is that he wasn't here to kill the Genins. He had plenty of time to kill them and I would have a very difficult time trying to keep them alive had he targeted them during our battle. His goal should have been the curse seal he put on Sasuke. Though looking at the bloodlust he was radiating, he probably wanted to kill me as well.

Unfortunately, I don't know much about the seal on Sasuke's neck other than the fact that it looks similar to the one on Anko's neck and gives out the same sinister vibes. Since Anko didn't let me take a look at her seal, I can't guess what his intention was. You should have a much better idea than me regarding the same."

Hiruzen sighed and said, "The curse seal is one of Orochimaru's experiments. He can use it to restrain the ones who have the seal. It's like the Hyuga's Caged Bird Seal in that aspect. However, it also gives the bearers of the curse seal a power that is similar to Senjutsu, increasing their power considerably. However, using that power will create an impact on their brains, making them more subservient or dependent on Orochimaru.

The first ones on whom he put the curse seal were his three students. Not everyone can survive the curse seal. In fact, very few can. Two of his students died and only Anko survived. I and Jiraiya tried to remove her seal, but we were only able to seal it to an extent.

I guess he plans to make a move on Sasuke for some reason and wants to see whether he is strong enough to survive that curse seal."

Fujin frowned and asked, "What would he want from a mere Genin?"

Hiruzen replied, "Hard to say."

Fujin sighed and said, "Do you want me to check up on him? It'd be a shame if a Genin died under my watch. Not to mention, he'll be the leader of the Uchiha Clan in the future."

Hiruzen shook his head and said, "Let it be. Sasuke will survive the seal. Otherwise, Orochimaru wouldn't have an interest in him. However, I'm not sure whether he'd be able to control himself. Send a clone to keep an eye on Kakashi's squad after you recover your chakra."

Fujin nodded. Hiruzen continued, "I was wondering what gave Suna the confidence to make a move against us. I initially thought that he wanted to ally with other major villages. However, seeing Orochimaru's sudden movement, it is possible that they allied with him instead. We'll have to make some arrangements for the last round of the Chunin Exams."

Hiruzen's expression was very serious as he said it. Fujin nodded in agreement and said, "If they are planning to make a move during the Chunin Exams, then it'd be best if I can get my new sword before the last round begins."

Immediately, a deadpan expression appeared on Hiruzen's face. He didn't think that Fujin would take advantage of such a perilous situation. However, on thinking for the second time, Hiruzen muttered internally, 'I should have expected it...'

He sighed and said, "I'll make arrangements for the blacksmith to arrive in the village right after this round is over."

Fujin smiled and said, "Thank you, Grandpa. Do you also know a jutsu that could put a stop to Orochimaru's jutsu where he sheds his skin? Or some other jutsu that'd be effective against the snake or others like him?"

Even though Fujin didn't know which other jutsu to ask from Hiruzen, there was no reason to decline a jutsu that Hiruzen would give himself. After all, who knew which forbidden and rank S jutsus Hiruzen knew that wasn't known to anyone else?

Unfortunately, Hiruzen just stared at Fujin and replied, "Unfortunately, there aren't any such jutsus. Let me know if you come up with any."

Fujin stared suspiciously at Hiruzen, to see if he was lying. Unfortunately, Hiruzen didn't change his expression.

While the two of them were talking, Renjiro and Hoka reached the forest fire. Thanks to Hiruzen's massive jutsu, the fire had been brought under control. Over 70% of the fire was extinguished and its spread had been halted.

'Water Release: Great Waterfall jutsu!'

As soon as Renjiro reached, he spat out a massive amount of water. It dealt with a third of the remaining flames in one go. The ninjas who were working on extinguishing the forest fire were surprised. Seeing that it was Renjiro, they sighed in relief.

With Renjiro's help, they were able to extinguish the remaining flames within a few minutes.

As soon as the flames were dealt with, Anko flickered next to him and asked, "Is it true that Fujin defeated Orochimaru?"

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Chapter 623: Fame Explodes!

"Is it true that Fujin defeated Orochimaru?"

Anko's voice wasn't soft. Most of the Anbu and other ninjas who had helped extinguish the fire heard it and paid attention to Renjiro. Even though they had already heard it, they were still in disbelief. Knowing Renjiro's reputation and the fact that Fujin was his student, they wanted to hear it from him.

To their surprise, Renjiro nodded and said, "That's true. Fujin defeated Orochimaru and forced him to escape using the Reverse Summoning jutsu."

A stunned silence appeared in the burnt forest. For a few seconds, no one said anything. Due to the fire, all birds and animals had escaped or died. So, other than the breeze, no sound could be heard. Hoka looked at everyone and wondered, 'Why are they so suspicious? Is it really so hard to believe? Also, why is everyone silent?'

Among the ones present there, Hoka was the youngest at just 16 years old. He hadn't seen the horrors of the Great Ninja Wars. Nor did he know how terrifying Orochimaru was. So, he couldn't understand their emotions. However, Renjiro could clearly understand what was going through their heads. A smile appeared on his face.

"Oh my god! I still can't believe it! This means that all those rumors were true!"

"This is such amazing news! We have a ninja who could force that fucking traitor to escape!"

"Hell yeah! Since he defeated Orochimaru, Suzuki Fujin is definitely a rank S ninja! We have another rank S ninja!"

"Forget rank S, he defeated Orochimaru, the Sannin! Fujin should be extremely strong even among the rank S ninjas! He is at least in the same league as Lord Jiraiya and Lady Tsunade!"

"He might be even stronger! Even if he isn't, don't forget that he is only 16 years old! He'll keep getting stronger!"

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Hoka looked dumbfounded as the silence was broken by the excitement coursing through the experienced ninjas in front of him! Even the feared and disciplined Anbu ninjas weren't an exception. They were celebrating like ordinary citizens!

Hoka looked at Renjiro in confusion and asked, "Sensei, why are they so happy? And why are you smiling like this?"

Renjiro explained without looking at him, "For every village, a rank S ninja is someone who they could rely on to protect the village. As long as a rank S ninja exists, they wouldn't worry about their safety.

If something happens to Lord Hokage, we will have another leader available to take charge. And on the battlefield, a rank S ninja can take command of entire armies. They can roam on the battlefield with no fear of being killed.

Hence, it is a joyous occasion whenever we get a new rank S ninja.

Orochimaru became a rank S ninja over two decades ago. He was trained by none other than Lord Third. By defeating him, Fujin has established that he is one of the stronger rank S ninjas. Just like Lord Hokage and the Sannins, he is now someone who'll deter the other villages from daring to start a war against us.

If they dare to do so without considering his threat, he'll cut down through their ranks and turn the battle in a day or two. Even if they make a plan for him, they'll be forced to move forces away from

elsewhere. That will save the lives of a few hundred Konoha ninjas. So, it would be weird if they weren't so happy and excited."

Hoka was surprised. He looked at the joyous ninjas again and said, "I didn't think that it'd be such a huge deal. Now I understand."

He chuckled and said, "It looks like Fujin is a big shot now, haha."

Renjiro chuckled and said, "He definitely is. First that Guidance Hall and now this. His reputation will far exceed mine. It'll be only under the old man and the two Sannins."

Standing just a few meters from them, Anko heard all of Renjiro's words. Disbelief could still be seen on her face. Unlike the others, she knew Orochimaru very closely and had suffered due to him.

For nearly a decade, she wanted to kill Orochimaru with her hands. The fact that Orochimaru was defeated by someone far younger than her while she was still nowhere close to being able to do that was hard to digest.

Even so, a smile appeared on her face as she muttered softly, "He really did it..."

One of the Anbu Captains arrived next to Renjiro and asked, "Is it fine if we inform others about this good news or has Lord Hokage ordered to keep this news under wraps?"

Even though they were in the Anbu, they were also a part of the ninja clans in Konoha. They wanted to inform their clan about such news without any delay.

Renjiro answered, "Lord Hokage didn't say anything. It should be fine if we tell others. After all, such news can't be kept under wraps. However, it's better if we first wait for Lord Hokage's instructions..."

The Anbu Captain replied, "Alri..."

"Renjiro is right. Such news can't be covered up." Everyone immediately looked towards the source of the voice. They were surprised to see Hiruzen there.

After talking with Fujin, Hiruzen sent a Shadow Clone to move the forces around and give commands. He finally had an opportunity to completely explode Fujin's reputation. He didn't intend to let it go to waste.

A smile appeared on Hiruzen's clone as he continued, "Besides, this is extremely good news for Konoha. We have no reason to cover it up. If you want to send clones to inform others, feel free to do so. However, keep your main bodies here and get back to your duties."

Everyone nodded. A few excitedly said, "Thank you, Lord Hokage!"

They immediately made Shadow Clones and sent them to inform their respective families and clans.

Hiruzen's clone looked at his Anbu Guards and said, "You four return to the tower."

He looked at another couple of Anbu squads and said, "Gather the sensei of all the Genins together in the academy. I'll meet with them and inform them about this incident."

The Anbu ninjas nodded and quickly dispersed. Hiruzen's clone disappeared as well and moved towards the Academy at a high speed while thinking, 'If Suna is allied with Orochimaru, then I would like to see Baki's reaction.

Even if he manages to hide his emotions, this news will shock Sunagakure. It'll deter them from making a pointless move. I'll call Jiraiya back as well to deter them even more. With the three of us here, they would be forced to drop their plans and the peace wouldn't be disturbed.'

Hiruzen's clone reached the Academy. Within 15 minutes, the Anbu ninjas gathered all 26 sensei in a room in the academy. The sensei were surprised to see Hiruzen present there.

Guy asked softly in surprise, "Kakashi, do you know what this is about?"

Kakashi shook his head and said, "No idea. This is the first time I have seen something like this as well."

Kurenai looked at Asuma, who shook his head indicating that he didn't have any idea either.

Everyone looked at Hiruzen's clone curiously, wondering what this meeting was about. Seeing that everyone had appeared, Hiruzen's clone said without getting up from his chair, "An unforeseen situation happened during the second stage of the Chunin exam."

Many sensei became nervous on hearing that. The one who was the most nervous was none other than Baki. He thought, 'Shit! Don't tell me that they caught wind of our plans and dealt with the children of Lord Kazekage! We can't lose any of them!'

Hiruzen paused for a few seconds to make everyone as nervous as he could. He especially paid special attention to Baki's reactions. He continued, "Orochimaru, the rogue Sannin, infiltrated the training ground 44."

Baki relaxed internally on hearing that. However, his expression showed that he had become even more nervous. Everyone else, apart from Orochimaru's clone who had disguised as the sensei of Oto Genins, was nervous as well. After all, they weren't confident in dealing with Orochimaru. What could their young students do?

Hiruzen's clone continued, "Thankfully, before he could harm anyone, he was intercepted by the proctor of the second round, Suzuki Fujin. After an intense fight, Fujin injured Orochimaru, broke his Sword of Kusanagi and forced him to escape. None of the Genins were harmed. The exam will continue as usual."

Baki's eyes widened involuntarily. He shouted in his head, 'Suzuki Fujin defeated Orochimaru? That's impossible! How could that happen?'

Immediately, Baki felt like someone was looking at him. He cursed, 'Shit!' Baki quickly took control of his emotions.

Others weren't able to control their mouths like him. A few exclaimed loudly.

"How can that happen?"

"No way!"

"Is that true?"

They quickly controlled their emotions. After all, they were in front of the Hokage. Even Kakashi, Guy, Asuma and Kurenai were shocked and left speechless.

Elsewhere in Konoha, the clones sent by ninjas reached their respective clans and quickly rushed to their clan leaders, forcing them to stop whatever they were doing.

With a visible bump on his head, Shikaku walked with an annoyed expression and asked, "What was so important that you made my wife wake me up?"

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Chapter 624: A Change in Plan!

The clone of the Nara Anbu ninja said, "The sun hasn't even set, why are you sleeping now? Anyway, this is no time to be sleeping. Something huge has happened. Suzuki Fujin defeated Orochimaru and forced him to retreat!"

Shikaku's eyes widened. While he rated Fujin very highly just like Hiruzen, he didn't expect to hear something like this.

In the Yamanaka clan compounds, Inoichi exclaimed aloud, "What did you say?"

In the Akimichi clan compounds, Choza said, "He defeated Orochimaru? That's incredible!"

In other places, Hiashi went silent. Tsume nearly interrogated the clone who reported the news. Shibi was shocked as well. A smile appeared on Senju Hiromasa's face as he muttered, "You have trained one hell of a shinobi, Renjiro."

Every single Clan Leader was shocked by the news. They quickly reevaluated Fujin. When they heard that Fujin killed Juzo, they accepted that Fujin was stronger than them. However, they believed that they could still face him in battle and keep him at bay. After all, Fujin could barely be considered a rank S ninja. Being at the Elite Jounin level, they could fight such ninjas to a standstill. With a combination like the Ino-Shika-Cho formation, defeating Fujin should have also been possible.

However, this news caught them off guard. Despite their abilities, none of the clan leaders wanted to face someone like Orochimaru. Even if they fought together, they wouldn't have much confidence in defeating Orochimaru. They would be happy if they managed to keep him at bay and avoid their deaths. Yet, such a formidable ninja was defeated by Fujin without any help!

Of course, there was a person who was even more shocked than the clan leaders. The tiger-masked Anbu ninja's clone snuck into the Root headquarters under disguise while avoiding the eyes of the Anbu squad Hiruzen had positioned to keep an eye on the Root headquarters.

He quickly reached Danzo's office and dispelled his disguise. Danzo looked at him and asked, "Why are you in such a panic?"

The clone said, "Lord Danzo, something incredible has happened in the Forest of Death. Orochimaru infiltrated the Forest of Death after the second phase of the Exam began. He and Suzuki Fujin fought an intense battle. In the end, Orochimaru was injured and escaped using the Reverse Summoning jutsu!"

Danzo's eye widened in shock! He exclaimed in disbelief, "That's impossible! How can someone like Orochimaru be defeated by a brat? Are you sure that this news is accurate? Did Hiruzen make up a lie?"

The clone answered, "I don't think it was a lie, Lord Danzo. Several ninjas saw a massive snake, something that only Orochimaru could summon. In addition, a few Hyugas saw the ending stages of the battle. They had no doubts that what they saw was true.

Lord Hokage arrived after the battle was over. He met with Suzuki Fujin alone and seems to have confirmed that he really defeated Orochimaru. He doesn't plan to suppress this news. By now, most of the clan leaders should have learnt about this battle."

Danzo's expression became grim. He thought, 'Could it really be true? Could Fujin be really at the same level as Orochimaru? Even I can't say for sure whether I'd be able to defeat him even with Shisui's eye.

Wait! Irrespective of whether he is at that level or not, Hiruzen is planning to spread this information... A 16-year-old ninja who can defeat a Sannin... His reputation will increase to the same level as Minato's! That damned Hiruzen!

Danzo became angry. Despite all the restrictions imposed on him, he still wanted the Hokage's seat. After all, neither of the Sannins was interested in the seat. However, if Fujin gained too much fame, then he'd become the preferred choice as the Hokage. After all, Danzo was old and looked feeble, while Fujin was still very young and had a bright future ahead of him.

Everyone would want a young and heroic ninja leading them instead of someone who was long past his prime and hid in the darkness. Danzo quickly began thinking about tactics to pull down Fujin's reputation. He thought for a few minutes before a helpless expression appeared on his face.

Hiruzen had put too many restrictions on him. He had no room to make a move. Not to mention, Fujin was extremely well protected and didn't have any weaknesses for him to exploit. Whenever Danzo tried to make a move against him, it only came back to bite him in the ass! His current situation was a consequence of that as well.

In the academy, Asuma softly asked, "Kakashi, Guy, you two are close to him, right? Is he this powerful?"

Kakashi replied, "I have only been with him for a couple of missions. He is definitely strong, but I didn't think he was this strong. Guy should have a better idea since he spars with Fujin regularly."

Kakashi, Asuma and Kurenai looked at Guy. Guy said, "He is definitely very strong. He doesn't lose out to me even in Taijutsu. And, he can use Winds to improve his Taijutsu capabilities. Still, I didn't think he'd be able to defeat Orochimaru."

A wide grin appeared on Guy's face as he added loudly, "As expected of someone so youthful! In celebration of Fujin's victory, let's run 1000 laps around the village on our hands!"

Asuma and Kurenai immediately became embarrassed as the others in the room looked at them.

Hiruzen's clone ignored their antics and thought, 'Just looking at his expression, it is tough to say what is happening in Baki's head. Considering that Rasa's kids are participating, it's reasonable that he was worried. Similarly, Fujin defeating Orochimaru was a piece of shocking information. After all, they should have connected the dots by now.'

The only thing that was off was how quickly he took control of his expression. It shows that he is indeed hiding something. But I can't say for sure whether he is scheming something with Orochimaru.'

Hiruzen's clone sighed internally. The situation was too sensitive to handle. He would have loved to capture Baki and read his memories secretly, but that would immediately break the alliance between the two villages and other villages wouldn't feel comfortable sending ninjas to Konoha for Chunin Exams and other purposes. From his perspective, the backlash would be far stronger than any benefits he would get even if he discovered their plans.

Meanwhile, Baki nervously thought, 'I need to inform Lord Rasa about this development. If Fujin is strong enough to defeat Orochimaru, then our preparations aren't good enough. We may need to call off the entire plan!'

Baki was already uncomfortable with Rasa's plan. This news was the final nail in the coffin. He didn't want the Suna ninjas to die pointlessly in Konoha. If things went south, not only would they lose a few hundred elites, but they might also lose their Kage and Jinchuriki!

Orochimaru's clone looked at Hiruzen's clone and Baki and thought, 'Interesting move. It seems like Hiruzen already suspects that something fishy is happening. That is why he made someone like Fujin the proctor.'

However, the situation is bad for me no matter how I look at it. I hadn't expected Fujin to be so strong. Neither Kabuto nor Kimimaro can handle him alone. Even together, they would have a difficult time holding him back. Besides, one of them will need to hold Kakashi back. I can't dispatch both of them against Fujin...'

He fell into a thought. While he was thinking, Hiruzen's clone said, "That's all I wanted to say. The Genins weren't affected by their battle and Fujin will continue keeping an eye on the training ground. The exam will continue as usual. You guys can leave."

He gazed at Kakashi while leaving the room. Kakashi immediately got the message and softly said, "I'll meet you guys later."

Kakashi disappeared from the room. Everyone was still in shock. The room immediately emptied as the foreign sensei went to inform their respective villages. As for the sensei who were from Konoha, they rushed to tell their friends and families.

Orochimaru's clone left as well while thinking, 'There is no choice. I can't handle everything by myself. I will have to change my plans. I can't kill Rasa. Instead, I'll have to convince him to continue with the plan and increase the number of Suna ninjas in the attack.'

I'll deal with Hiruzen and have Rasa deal with Fujin. That way, we will have a temporary advantage in terms of quality. Once I kill Hiruzen, I can summon Manda and others to destroy the village.'

After realizing Fujin's strength, Orochimaru quickly made changes to his plan. Otherwise, even if he could kill Hiruzen, all Suna and Oto ninjas would be eliminated by the time he was done.

Once that happened, he wouldn't be able to destroy the village and would need to retreat. In fact, if he failed to kill Hiruzen by then, then the barrier would come under an intense assault from Konoha ninjas. If that happened, then he wouldn't even be able to kill Hiruzen. In order to succeed, he had no choice but to swallow his pride and make adjustments to his plans.

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Chapter 625: Regret!

Kakashi quickly followed Hiruzen's clone and appeared behind him. Hiruzen's clone looked at him and said, "There is something you should know..."

Kakashi's expression became serious as he learnt that Orochimaru had entered the forest to target his students. He relaxed slightly on learning that Fujin would be keeping an eye on them.

In the end, Hiruzen said, "If you want, you can move to the tower in the Forest of Death as well. You can seal Sasuke's curse seal once the second round is done."

Kakashi nodded. Danzo and the Clan Leaders were still absorbing the information they learnt. Even the two Elders had been informed and were in shock. They could hardly digest the fact that Fujin defeated Orochimaru when the messengers informed them of something equally outrageous.

"What did you say???" Danzo got up and exclaimed in disbelief. Despite having decades of experience and excellent control over his emotions, Danzo couldn't keep his cool.

The clone replied, "It's true. Every ninja who was present in the Forest of Death saw it. Orochimaru first attacked him with a massive fire jutsu. I believe it was the Majestic Destroyer Flame jutsu. However, Fujin responded with a Scorch Dragon seconds later. After he attacked Orochimaru with it and exploded it, trees within 500 meters were set ablaze!"

Danzo's expression became very serious as he wondered, 'How could he have Scorch Release? Does he have the same bloodline as Pakura? But that's impossible. As far as I could check, no one in his ancestry was even a ninja. Did he learn how to fuse Fire and Wind chakra by himself?'

A frown appeared on his face as he analyzed, 'I can accept that he is very talented in Wind Release. However, is he equally talented in Fire Release? Why isn't his Fire Release as strong as his Wind Release then? Or did he just get lucky and somehow manage to merge the two natures accurately? Or was he somehow able to replicate it from that Orphan?'

As someone who chased after power, Danzo had long attempted everything he could to increase his strength. That included attempts to fuse different elements to create Kekkei Genkai.

Unfortunately, he never succeeded despite trying for decades. He only managed to get Kekkei Genkai by implanting Sharingan and transplanting Hashirama's cells. As such, Danzo was unwilling to believe it. However, the emotion that Danzo was feeling the most wasn't disbelief. Instead, it was regret!

He sighed and thought, 'I missed out. I should have pushed harder back then. Even though Hiruzen was adamant, I could have forced him to change his mind. If only I had recruited him back then... Today, I would have someone who could fight Orochimaru as my loyal soldier! My situation in Konoha would have been completely different as well...'

Unfortunately, there was nothing Danzo could do about it as there was no way to go back in the past and change his actions. Of course, even if he could go in the past, there was no way Fujin would have joined Root.

"Fujin used Scorch Release..."

"Under normal circumstances, that would be big news. However, everyone will only discuss the fact that he defeated Orochimaru! I find it hard to believe."

Homura and Koharu were together when they received the news. Both were shocked. Koharu agreed with Homura's words and said, "Yeah, it's so difficult to believe that I can't help but think that there are some hidden details. Do you think Hiruzen is behind this?"

Homura thought for a bit and shook his head. He replied, "No, this isn't his style. What the Anbu said must be true. Of course, there are some additional details. For instance, Orochimaru wouldn't want to fight Hiruzen without any backup which might be the main reason behind his retreat. And, Orochimaru's Fire jutsu seemed to be linked with Fujin's Scorch Dragon somehow."

Koharu nodded and said, "Regardless, even with these details, this is a great achievement. All of us underestimated that kid. Perhaps only Hiruzen saw his true potential and strength. No wonder he supports him so much."

Since Fujin didn't have any background, his seat in the council should have been very unstable and full of headaches. In fact, a couple of moves had been made to cause him trouble. One of which was made by Koharu herself after Fujin openly threatened her twice in a row on the day he blew up the Root's headquarters.

However, Hiruzen had quashed those moves before Fujin even knew about them. In fact, Fujin didn't know about those moves even now. Due to his fierce backing, no one tried troubling Fujin again. After all, they didn't want Hiruzen to do the same to them.

As a result, Fujin's time in the council was very peaceful. He only had to deal with Katsuhiko and Danzo one time as Hiruzen didn't catch onto that scheme until Fujin had dealt with it.

Koharu continued, "Back then, I was confused and didn't understand why Hiruzen supported him so much. I can see it now."

Homura nodded and muttered, "Yeah. It's little wonder he dared to threaten the leaders of Kusagakure while sitting in their village."

Homura still recalled the nightmare of Fujin threatening all top officials of Kusagakure very clearly. It was the closest he came to death since his retirement.

Just like the Elders, the Clan Leaders were surprised as well.

Shikaku wondered, 'When did he learn Scorch Release? Or was it something else?'

Inoichi thought, 'This isn't good. If he has mastered a Kekkei Genkai, then he can start his own clan in the future.'

Hiashi thought the same, 'Normally, the existing clans would have acted together and applied pressure to prevent the formation of a new clan. However, how exactly do we pressure someone who can defeat Orochimaru at just 16 years of age?'

Tsume thought, 'There is no stopping him. His reputation will become as high as the Sannins. Considering his age, it might exceed them in the future. Depending on when Lord Hokage retires, he might even have a shot at the Fifth Hokage's position.'

Even though Fujin hadn't truly mastered the Scorch Release, everyone assumed that he had done so since he hadn't given the same clarification that he had given to Renjiro and Hoka. Hence, the observers just believed what they saw.

Of course, Fujin wouldn't bother clearing up their misunderstanding. If they wanted to believe it, they were free to do so. If anything, he'd welcome the free reputation boost. Besides, even though he hadn't truly mastered Scorch Release, he was very close and believed that it was just a matter of time.

In the Forest of Death, since the fire had been doused, most of the ninjas returned to the tower. Only the ones who were tasked to patrol the forest dispersed in the training ground.

As they entered the tower, Fujin could see admiration and respect in their eyes. He thought, 'Even though I'm almost out of chakra, it looks like this battle had the intended effect. With this battle and the Guidance Hall, not many would take the initiative to mess with me even without Hiruzen's backing.'

Hiruzen immediately gave new orders to the Anbu ninjas he had brought along. His Anbu Guards stayed with him while the remaining squads started taking turns to patrol the Training Ground in case Orochimaru decided to sneak in again.

Hiruzen turned to Fujin and said, "I'll return to the village for now. We still don't know what Orochimaru's real goal was. It'd be troublesome if he wanted to attract me here and have someone make a move on the village.

Renjiro, stay here with Fujin until he recovers his chakra. Kakashi will probably come to the tower soon as well. With you three here, I doubt Orochimaru would make a move even after he recovers his chakra."

Fujin nodded and said, "Sure."

Renjiro nodded as well. Hiruzen left along with his Anbu Guards, leaving just Fujin, Renjiro, Hoka and Anko in the room.

Hoka chuckled and said, "You are really something Fujin. You should have seen the reactions of the senior ninjas. All are shocked by this battle."

He glanced at Anko and teasingly said, "Anko was in disbelief the longest."

Anko immediately became annoyed at Hoka and said, "That's only natural you punk! Do you even know how terrifying Orochimaru is?"

Hoka immediately replied, "Perhaps, but doesn't that mean that Fujin is even more terrifying?"

Anko immediately became quiet. What Hoka said made sense. Before she could think of a response, Fujin said, "Don't underestimate him, Hoka. Even though I injured him a few times, he recovered to perfect health every time. I'm not sure whether it is even possible to kill someone like him. On the other hand, I don't have any such ability. The next time he fights me, I might be at a disadvantage as he now knows about my skills."

Renjiro smiled and said, "It's good to see that you're as pragmatic as ever, Fujin. What you said is true. Someone like Orochimaru should never be underestimated. Even the old man is very wary of him."

Renjiro thought, 'I was worried that he'd become overconfident after defeating Orochimaru. It's good to see that he's still the same kid as back then.'

Memories of Fujin staying far away from Mieko and Hoka during their spars appeared in Renjiro's mind. Renjiro had to work hard to get Fujin to break that fighting style. However, he was happy to see that Fujin's cautious nature never changed.

Suddenly, someone knocked on the door. An examiner entered and reported, "I have something to inform you. The first Genin squad has reached the tower!"

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Chapter 626: A Trap!

Anko's eyes widened. Due to Orochimaru's interference, she stopped thinking about the exam. She exclaimed in shock, "What? It hasn't even been 2 hours since the exam started! How could someone pass so early? Which squad is it?"

The examiner reported, "It is a squad from Sunagakure. Actually..."

He paused before continuing with a serious expression, "They reached the tower 1 hour and 46 minutes after the exam began. It is the second fastest record in all the Chunin Exams.

However, what is even more surprising is the fact that one of the Genins from that team didn't have even a speck of dust on him."

Surprise and disbelief could be heard in his voice. Anko's eyes widened once again. Her eyes quickly turned towards Fujin as she remembered that Fujin had said that their squad was suspicious as well. At the same time, she recalled, 'Wait a minute, isn't Renjiro's squad the current record holders?'

Fujin chuckled and said, "Looks like they don't intend to hide how formidable they are. Oh well, let me see what those kids are made of."

His words surprised the ones in the room. Anko asked, "Do you intend to take action against them as well? Since they haven't done anything yet, acting against them could create problems for us."

Fujin shook his head and said, "Nothing like that. I'll just be talking with them."

Anko sighed in relief while thinking, 'Due to Orochimaru's actions, we already need to inform Kusagakure about their loss. Since they are a minor village, that won't be that troublesome, but Sunagakure won't be as easy to deal with.'

The examiner asked, "Should I call them here?"

Fujin shook his head and said, "No need, I already took care of it. Return to your post. You did well informing us about this. Let us know if you notice anything else that seems odd."

The examiner nodded and left. As Fujin said, Gaara, Temari and Kankuro were walking up the tower. Unlike Gaara, both Temari and Kankuro were very tense due to what they had seen a few seconds earlier.

They had just reached the tower and were told the meaning of the words in the wall scroll when a figure made of Wind suddenly appeared and asked them to come to the top floor of the tower.

As soon as they saw the Wind figure, they understood that Fujin was in the building. Temari and Kankuro exchanged glances in shock after the figure disappeared.

Both had just one thought running through their minds, 'How is he here? Wasn't he fighting against Orochimaru? Don't tell me that he won their fight...'

Despite having seen the deadly Wind Dragon, they couldn't believe that Orochimaru failed to kill Fujin. They immediately became tense thinking about why Fujin wanted to see them. If Orochimaru had leaked any details, then the three of them would be history! As they walked up the stairs, Kankuro and Temari could only pray that Gaara didn't act impulsively.

Soon, they reached the highest floor and entered the room Fujin was in. To their surprise, they saw Fujin and Renjiro looking at a Shogi board while Hoka and Anko were observing their game as well.

Without looking at them, Fujin said, "You guys took your sweet time coming here."

The Suna trio were surprised to hear the disappointment in Fujin's voice. Temari wondered, 'He is disappointed? Why? Also, why isn't he even a bit injured? Even though Orochimaru couldn't kill him, why did he fail to injure him even a bit?'

Before they could decide how to respond, Hoka chuckled and asked, "Why are you surprised? If they were fast, they would have reached the tower over an hour ago as you speculated."

Fujin sighed and tossed him a scroll while saying, "Alright, you win. It looks like the record won't be broken after all."

Kankuro finally couldn't endure their condescending tone and asked in annoyance, "What record are you talking about?"

Hoka glanced towards the Suna Genins and said, "The record for the lowest time taken to complete the second round of the Chunin Exams. What else can we talk about?"

You guys did well. It's the second-best score. Unfortunately, you were too slow to have any shot for the record. You were over an hour late. Anyway..."

Hoka played with the scroll in his hand and said, "That's good too. Otherwise, I wouldn't have won so much from the bet, haha."

Hoka began laughing arrogantly. Both Temari and Kankuro became annoyed. They wondered, 'Were they seriously betting on us?'

Meanwhile, Anko's eyes twitched involuntarily as she thought, 'That scroll is empty. These two sure can act. If I hadn't heard their conversation, I would have thought that they were speaking the truth as well.'

Before Kankuro or Temari could express their displeasure, Fujin sighed again and muttered, "I expected the Kazekage's children to be much better."

Hoka chuckled again and said, "I already said that you overestimate others. Kids these days are too soft. Considering that they are the Kazekage's children, they'd be even softer."

Fujin shrugged and replied, "Oh well, nothing I can do. Though it's a disappointment that we won't see Lord Hokage rewarding anyone."

Temari asked, "What reward?"

Hoka answered, "Didn't you know? If someone breaks the record, Lord Hokage rewards that squad personally. The rewards are generally better than even becoming a Chunin."

Temari and Kankuro were stunned. Neither of them had heard about something so absurd. For a moment, both wondered whether what Hoka said was true. After thinking for a bit, both concluded that there was no reason for Hoka to lie.

Renjiro chuckled internally while thinking, 'Thankfully the old man isn't here. Otherwise, he might stop showing up to Chunin Exams entirely! I still vividly recall his expressions that day when Fujin asked him for a reward, hehehe.'

While his siblings were getting drawn in by the bullshit Fujin cooked up, Gaara's attention was entirely fixed on Fujin. He wondered, 'Was he the one who made me bleed that day?'

As far as Gaara could recall, that was the only time he bled. It had left a lasting impact on his young brain. For a few moments, bloodlust shot through his system and he almost attacked Fujin. Fortunately, he recalled Rasa's words and controlled himself.

Fujin sighed internally while thinking, 'What a shame...'

Even though it looked like Fujin's entire attention was on the game, in truth, he wasn't paying any attention to it. Instead, his senses were all entirely focused on Gaara. His words were actually to taunt Gaara into action. And, he was showing zero vigilance. He had nearly succeeded. Unfortunately, Gaara didn't act on his impulse.

Fujin thought, 'A shame. If he had attacked, I would have had a proper reason to act. Killing him now would have a massive impact on the future for sure. That change will likely not be good for Konoha.'

However, if I can get Shukaku, I can test my new seal. If I succeed, my power will increase by a level. Even though I'll lose a considerable amount of my advantage of knowing the future events as Gaara plays a major role in the future, the gains would more than makeup for the losses.

The only major drawback is that I'll attract Akatsuki's attention. Pain and Obito are still a bit too strong for me to deal with. However, I am not afraid of them. Even though I can't defeat them, they can't kill me either. Hell, they wouldn't want to kill me anyway due to Shukaku.

Anyway, if I can't get my hands on Shukaku, I'll have to wait for the Fourth Mizukage to die and for Isobu to be reborn. That'll take a few years...'

For years, Fujin had been careful to not affect future events beyond a certain limit. Even though he had gone overboard a few times like when he created a mess in the Land of Wind, he hadn't ever purposely tried to do something that would irreparably change the future other than the time he went after Hidan.

The reason for that was twofold. The first thing he needed to consider was his strength. If he wasn't strong enough, there was no point in attempting to do anything like that. It would have been better to stay in the background and stay alive. It was only after he became a rank S ninja that he considered this option.

The second and most important reason was that there were certain incidents from which Fujin could profit heavily. If he acted recklessly and changed the future just for the sake of it, he would lose all those opportunities.

Hence, he needed to think over a hundred times before doing something that would forever change the course of the future. He had to be sure that his gains would make up for losing all those future opportunities!

Temari was oblivious to the trap Fujin had laid for her brother and complained, "Shouldn't you give us this information before the exam began?"

Anko joined in, "Where's the fun in that? Besides, if you need motivation to finish your mission most efficiently, then you aren't suited to be Chunins."

Temari frowned. Before she could complain, Fujin said, "Anyway, I just called you guys here to inform you that the next round will start in 5 days. Until then, you have to stay inside the tower. If you leave for any reason, you'll be disqualified. Feel free to use any facilities inside the tower that you fancy while you stay here. Also, remember that fighting isn't allowed here. Now shoo shoo."

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Chapter 627: FUCK YOU DANZO!

Fujin waved his hand dismissively, shooing the three of them away like they were pests. It annoyed the three of them once again but Gaara surprisingly didn't lose his control once again. He just stared at Fujin as the three of them left the room.

As soon as the trio exited, the expression of all four Konoha ninjas became serious. Hoka activated his Byakugan. Anko muttered, "Such strong bloodlust. No wonder you found them suspicious. It's surprising to see that the Kazekage trained his youngest son to be such a ninja."

Hoka agreed, "Yeah, I thought that he would attack us for sure due to the bloodlust he was oozing. Still, his chakra network seems very weird. I haven't seen anything like that."

Renjiro chipped in, "Knowing how lousy Suna's seal for sealing their Tailed Beast is, it's no wonder that the boy's chakra network is a mess and his bloodlust is so strong."

Anko and Hoka were shocked. Anko exclaimed, "A Tailed Beast?"

Hoka asked, "You mean that he is a Jinchuriki?"

Unlike Renjiro, who knew about it thanks to his connections and rank, Hoka and Anko weren't aware that Gaara was the Jinchuriki. Both knew how terrifying the Tailed Beasts were and immediately became tense.

Renjiro nodded and said, "Yeah. I guess that's why you called them here and taunted them, right?"

Fujin nodded and answered, "More or less. I was active in Sunagakure during my Anbu days and even saw him once. From the intel I collected, he was extremely unstable and frequently lost control of the Tailed Beast inside him.

I wanted to make sure that he wouldn't lose control easily. Otherwise, he could cause a catastrophe inside the village. From the restraint he displayed, it seems like he has gotten better control of his emotions and might not be that big of a threat.

Regardless, his appearance in the Chunin Exam is very suspicious. Normally, no village allows their Jinchuriki to even go out of the village. The fact that Orochimaru made a move makes it even more fishy."

"But, wouldn't it be dangerous if he lost control here? You're low on chakra and I'm not sure if we three would be able to defeat a Tailed Beast!" Anko exclaimed anxiously.

Fujin casually replied, "It's fine. I inscribed a few seals on the tower when I learnt that he would be participating. As long as he loses control inside the tower, I can suppress and capture him."

Hoka nervously asked, "A few seals? Would that be enough?"

Anko agreed with him, "Yes, don't underestimate the Tailed Beasts. A few seals wouldn't be sufficient to deal with them. Don't forget that Lord Fourth died while sealing the Nine Tails"

Only Renjiro looked at Fujin with a weird expression and thought, 'A few seals? Does he even understand what 'a few' means? His 'few' should be a few thousand for a normal person, right? That said, I didn't sense any seals. It looks like his Fuinjutsu has gotten better.'

As Renjiro expected, Fujin replied, "Don't worry, I can stop him. Just don't rush towards him and let me handle it in case he truly lets the Tailed Beast lose."

Hoka, Renjiro and Anko nodded in agreement. None of the three wanted to fight a Tailed Beast. Anko said, "We should report this information to Lord Hokage."

To her surprise, Fujin shook his head and said, "Don't look down on him. He couldn't have guessed that Orochimaru would show up, but he should know all about that kid."

Anko calmed down on hearing that. Fujin's words made sense. However, she couldn't help but wonder, 'What is Lord Hokage thinking by allowing someone so dangerous to take the Chunin Exam?'

After they left the room and got a sufficient distance away, Kankuro couldn't hold it in anymore and cursed, "That guy is so fucking arrogant. He acts like he is some sort of senior to us when he is barely older than us."

Temari agreed and said, "Yes, he's full of himself. I wanted to ask him about the Wind jutsus but he just kept on humiliating us. That said, I'm not sure whether he is that arrogant or whether he was purposefully taunting us."

Her words surprised Kankuro and Gaara. Both immediately understood that Fujin might have been suspecting them and trying to get a reaction from them. Kankuro immediately looked at Gaara and thought, 'This is trouble. Do those old geezers really have a good plan?'

Temari continued, "Anyway, there is nothing we can do about it. Let's just stay here quietly for the next 5 days. Once Baki sensei arrives, we can ask him."

Kankuro nodded and calmed down. After all, they were deep in enemy territory. He didn't want to attract too much attention especially when someone who could force Orochimaru away was present.

While Fujin met the Suna trio, Hiruzen reached his office. He immediately dispatched a few clones and assembled the same Anbu squads that he had tasked to improve Fujin's reputation and ruin Katsuhiko's reputation after the proposal for the Guidance Hall was passed successfully. He gave them a new mission, which was to spread the news of Fujin defeating Orochimaru!

In a couple of hours, a good chunk of Konoha's population learned about the fight between Fujin and Orochimaru. The Veteran Ninjas were shocked. They knew how terrifying Orochimaru was. They quickly asked the ones in power whether it was true. A few even approached Hiruzen. After confirming it, they immediately broke into celebrations.

As for the younger ninjas and the civilians, they weren't aware of how big of an achievement it was. However, just knowing that Konoha had another rank S ninja was enough for them to be happy.

Of course, there was one person who wasn't happy. On the contrary, he was terrified! Sitting inside his home, Katsuhiko was covered in sweat. A terrified expression could be seen on Katsuhiko's face. His body was involuntarily shivering at irregular intervals.

He muttered, "Fujin defeated Orochimaru? And he forced him to retreat?"

Unlike others who found the news hard to believe, he didn't want to believe it! Terror flooded his mind and for a long time, he couldn't even think properly. His blood pressure, which had come down to manageable levels, went haywire once again.

Nearly half an hour later, he managed to gather himself and analyzed, 'He couldn't have gotten so strong out of nowhere. Meaning that he was always that strong. Even if he wasn't this strong, he would definitely have been a formidable rank S ninja when I went to him with the proposal...'

As he realized it, one word escaped his mouth, "Fuck!"

Katsuhiro shivered in rage and fear when recalling his exchanges with Fujin. When Fujin kept him waiting for nearly a couple of months, he badly wanted to rush into Fujin's house and teach him a lesson.

The only reason that he didn't do so was that anyone so impulsive would never be selected for the council. When Fujin continued belittling him, it had taken a great amount of willpower for him to control himself. However, he was glad that he managed to control his impulses. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been alive!

He cursed, 'FUCK YOU DANZO!!! You sent me to compete against someone who was as strong as fucking Orochimaru? What the fuck did I do to offend you? Youu...youuuu bastard! I will never forget this scheme of yours! I nearly died so many times! Thankfully I controlled myself, else that demonic brat would've even swallowed up my bones!'

From wanting to rip Fujin into pieces, Katsuhiro began wanting to dismember Danzo. All his resentment towards Fujin disappeared and was transferred to Danzo. In fact, if Danzo hadn't been protected by Root, he would have definitely gone there to vent his frustrations. Unknowingly, he was saved by those Root ninjas.

In the Forest of Death, things calmed down. Kurenai's team managed to reach the tower on day 1 as well. Things didn't happen much differently than in the canon other than the fact that the Genins were far more alert. Sakura planted several traps and stayed on guard to protect Naruto and Sasuke. Meanwhile, the Oto squad searched for them following Orochimaru's orders.

The next morning, the Oto squad attacked her. What they didn't know was that their actions were closely watched by a pair of eyes. With nearly a day's rest, Fujin had recovered most of his chakra. He sent a clone with 5% of his chakra to keep an eye on Naruto and Sasuke. The reason for the same was to guard against any unexpected moves from Orochimaru due to Fujin's existence.

However, this wasn't the only clone Fujin had sent. There was another Shadow Clone who was at a different location in the Forest of Death. That clone had 25% of Fujin's chakra, 5 times more than the clone watching over Naruto and Sasuke. He was keeping an eye on three unsuspecting Genins.

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Chapter 628: A New Home

Among the Genin squads Kusagakure sent to participate in the Chunin Exam, only two managed to qualify for the second round. Unfortunately for Kusagakure, one of them was the disguised Orochimaru's squad and the second squad was being watched like a hawk by Fujin's clone!

The second squad was planning what to do to get the other scroll. After planning for a bit, the two boys decided that they would go together to find other squads. They bit Karin's forearm to recover their chakra and left her alone in the deadly forest.

Fujin's clone watched the scene and analyzed, 'Hmm, from what I remember, she was attacked by a bear before being saved by Sasuke. However, Sasuke is injured right now. Those events probably happened on the third or the fourth day. It looks like these two leave her like this daily. So, I suppose that no one will attack her today. Hmm...'

He activated his Space Time Sensing Technique. As he guessed, there wasn't anyone nearby to threaten her. He muttered to himself, 'Oh well, I'll have to wait for a 'natural' event.'

Alone in the deadly forest, Karin couldn't help but feel fear. She thought, 'What should I do if someone finds and attacks me? What if I get attacked by dangerous wild animals? Or what if those awful chakras reappear? I need to hide!'

Karin quickly began to look for a place to hide in. After searching for a bit, she found a large tree with a hole in its trunk at the base. She quickly entered inside and hid in it, making her feel safer. She closed her eyes and waited patiently for her teammates to return.

It had only been around half an hour when she suddenly sensed some tremors. She opened her eyes and activated her chakra field while wondering, 'Who is it?'

As she sensed, her eyes widened. She quickly jumped out of the tree. Half a second later, a large paw hit the tree and destroyed it! Karin looked at the figure in fear and muttered, "A lion? How did it find me?"

In front of her was a 5-meter-tall lion. It stared at her ferociously, fully displaying its hunger. Karin immediately threw a few shurikens at it, but her shurikens couldn't pierce through its thick hide and only left a few scratches. Even though the lion wasn't injured, the scratches annoyed it and it rushed towards Karin.

While Karin was being attacked by the lion, Yamanaka Fumito passed very close to that place. He was on patrol and had his chakra field active in order to sense any suspicious activities. While he wasn't the best sensor by any means, he was a very good one.

Yet, despite being only 50 meters away from Karin and the lion, Fumito couldn't sense either of them! In fact, even Karin failed to sense him. It was as if she was in an alternate dimension where no one could detect her! If either of them knew that they were just 50 meters from each other, they would be shocked.

As for the reason why they couldn't sense each other? It was quite simple. In order to not be disturbed, Fujin's clone had used the Stealth Battlefield that he had developed a few months ago. Unless a Fuinjutsu Grandmaster were to arrive, no one would be able to sense its existence!

As the lion charged at Karin, she threw a few more kunai and shuriken while attempting to run. Unfortunately, her weapons barely affected the wild beast. And her speed was much slower than it. As his paw came crashing down on her, she jumped out of its way, barely dodging it.

However, there was no relief on her face as another paw slapped her like a fly and sent her crashing into a tree. The impact injured her back and arms, making her unable to move for some time. She opened her eyes and saw the ferocious beast running towards her. A few tear drops ran down her cheeks as she thought, 'Am I going to die here?'

The memories of her dead mother appeared in her mind as she tried her best to get up. She barely managed to stand up by the time the lion reached her. However, she knew that it was too late. She resigned to her fate when she suddenly heard a crackling sound.

A flash of light appeared in her eyes as a Lightning spear hit the lion! The Lightning spear hit the left side of its neck and electrocuted it. It made the lion move to its right and barely avoided hitting Karin. It crashed into another tree and fell unconscious due to the electric shocks.

Karin was surprised by the sudden change. She immediately felt relief as she was still alive. However, she quickly became vigilant and watched from where the Lightning had appeared. Her eyes quickly found a masked ninja wearing a black cloak and sitting on a branch. His eyes were staring right at her.

Before she could think what to say or do, that figure disappeared and appeared right in front of her in the blink of an eye and looked at her with curiosity. Karin could only think of one thing, 'Fast! He is very fast!'

Karin had never seen anyone move like that. She couldn't even follow his movements. What surprised her the most was that she couldn't sense him even though he was standing right in front of her. It was as if he wasn't there!

Realizing that the ninja in front of her was an expert, she quickly said, "Thank you for saving me, Sir."

Fujin's clone nonchalantly replied, "Oh, it was nothing. That said, you are a Uzumaki, right? Why are you wearing the Kusagakure headband? And, why are you alone in this deadly forest?"

His words surprised Karin. She wondered, 'How did he know that I'm an Uzumaki? And, why is he asking me this?'

She quickly answered, "Yes, I'm from the Uzumaki clan. My mother and I migrated to Kusagakure a few years ago."

Fujin's clone replied, "Hmm, migrated to Kusagakure? That was an odd choice. Anyway, you didn't answer my second question."

Karin became dejected on thinking about it and answered, "My teammates left me here and went to get another scroll for passing the Chunin Exam."

Fujin's clone thought for a bit and said, "That's rather irresponsible. You should look for good teammates. Anyway, is your mother still in Kusagakure?"

Sadness appeared on Karin's face as the question brought back her saddest memories. She barely controlled her tears and answered, "My mother died."

Fujin's clone immediately asked, "How?"

Karin could sense that the masked person wasn't happy on hearing the news. It made her feel slightly better. She was about to answer but suddenly stopped thinking, 'If I tell him, would he exploit my ability as well?'

As she thought about it, she realized, 'Why does it matter? I'm already being used for my cursed ability...'

Seeing her silent, Fujin's clone asked, "Does it have anything to do with the bite marks on your arm?"

Sadness could be heard in Fujin's voice as he spoke. It lowered Karin's guard considerably. Her eyes became wet as she answered, "My mother had the ability to heal others if they bit her. I have the same ability to. My village is at war. They bit my mother too many times and she passed away..."

As she spoke, she couldn't control her tears and a few drops rolled down her cheeks. She quickly wiped them and controlled herself as much as she could.

Fujin's clone stayed silent for a few seconds before releasing a long sigh. He muttered in a sorrowful tone, "A Shinobi without a homeland is quite tragic. What happened to your mother is an unfortunate tragedy. If you continue living there, then you might share the same fate..."

Hearing his words, Karin shivered. What he said was her worst nightmare. She lost control of her tears once again. Fujin's clone placed his hand on her head and ruffled her hair gently to calm her down.

He said, "You have a choice to make. Do you want to continue living in a place that killed your mother and is mistreating you? Or do you want to move to a place where people will value you for who you are? A place where you can change your destiny. A place where you can ensure that no one else suffers the tragedy that you and your mother did?"

His words surprised her. She wondered, 'Does such a place truly exist? Or...'

Sadness appeared in her mind once again as she asked, "Does such a place truly exist? Or do you want me just for my ability?"

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 629: Karin's Death...

"Does such a place truly exist? Or do you want me just for my ability?"

Fujin's clone could feel the tiredness in Karin's voice as she asked that question. He could feel that she had grown to resent the power that she had. Knowing her past, he could understand her emotions.

Fujin's clone shook his head and sighed. He stopped ruffling her hair and pointed his palm at her, confusing her. A green chakra appeared from his hand and entered Karin's body. It healed the injuries caused by the lion's slap and crashing into the tree. Even the bite marks on her forearms began fading away. Her chakra recovered as well.

Karin was surprised by what she was experiencing. Fujin's clone said, "Though the ability to heal others by letting them bite you is quite remarkable, any Medical ninja can do the same. Even transferring chakra isn't that difficult.

So, I don't particularly care about your ability. What I do care about is whether you are willing to work hard to ensure that others don't suffer in the same way you did. So, are you interested?"

His words surprised her once again. Realizing that she had an opportunity to escape her hell and find a new home, she couldn't help but break into tears as she answered, "Yes. Thank you."

Fujin's clone didn't disturb her this time and allowed her to let her emotions out. Karin took a couple of minutes to control herself. She said, "Even though I'm willing to follow you, I'm afraid that my village would make Konoha give me back."

Fujin's clone asked in amusement, "Who said you'll become one of Konoha's ninjas?"

He chuckled and continued, "Even though Konoha isn't as bad as Kusagakure and they have many good medical ninjas, your life in Konoha wouldn't be much different than in Kusagakure."

He didn't say the following words out loud, 'The only difference would be that instead of being forced to let others bite you, you'll do that willingly and feel pride in sacrificing your life in the same way as your mother instead of resentment.'

Karin was surprised to hear his words. She wondered, 'Where will he take me then?'

Fujin's clone continued, "You'll be joining an organization I created to help the weak people who can't defend themselves against the bandits and the rogue ninjas. It is called the Phantom Haven Society."

Karin was surprised once again. She thought, 'Is there really such an organization?'

Fujin's clone could understand her thoughts from her expression and added, "Almost everyone in this world wishes for peace. Yet, almost no one does anything to bring about that peace. That is why we call such wishful thinking the Phantom Will. Every person in my organization believes in the Phantom Will. Unlike others who merely wish it, we will put it into action. That is the goal of our Society.

Perhaps someday we'll succeed and ensure that most of the people in this world live without the fear of being attacked. Or perhaps we might fail trying. Regardless, it is the goal of our lives.

Though I don't need your healing ability, I need your commitment to this goal if you want to come with me."

Those words immediately created an impression on Karin's young and innocent mind. She began dreaming about such a future. A future where no one would be forced like her and her mother. She quickly replied, "I want such a world too."

In a gentle tone, Fujin's clone said, "Good. I didn't make the wrong judgment. Don't resist. I'll apply the Phantom Seal on you. It's the seal that every Phantom Haven member has."

Karin nodded and didn't resist, allowing Fujin's clone to apply the seal on her. A smile appeared on the clone's lips as he thought, 'Another promising ninja recruited. Making her rank S in 4 years shouldn't be an issue. She'll develop good managerial skills as well and could become the leader of this branch.

It's a shame that Haku and Kimimaro were recruited long before I graduated. Otherwise, I'd have raised a fearsome team. Oh well, there are still other promising candidates.'

Fujin's clone said, "I'll take you to the base now, but first we need to do something. We need to fake your death."

Karin asked, "Why's that?"

Fujin's clone answered, "If you go missing, Kusagakure will try to search for you. Since you will go missing in Konoha, they might also influence Konoha to search for you. Though they won't be able to find our base, they might spot you when you are outside the base for any reason. By faking your death, we'll avoid that headache."

Karin understood and nodded. She asked, "What should I do?"

Fujin asked, "Do you have another set of clothes and glasses?"

Karin nodded. Fujin said, "Good. Change into them. Give me your current clothes, your headband and your glasses. In addition, cut some of your hair and hand it to me. Give me a bit of your blood as well."

Fujin's clone handed her a syringe to draw out her blood. Karin didn't expect such a command but followed his words. She went slightly away from his sight and changed her clothes quickly after confirming with her chakra field that there was no one around her.

After getting the items, Fujin's clone created another Shadow Clone and handed those things to him.

The first Shadow clone looked at Karin and said, "Relax, we'll reach our base soon."

Karin was confused but soon very dizzy. Within seconds, she fell asleep. It was due to a Genjutsu the clone cast with the help of the chakra he inserted into her body when he healed her. As a result, she didn't suspect anything. Fujin's clone picked her up and disappeared from the Forest of Death!

The other clone immediately got to work with the items he had taken. During his time in the Anbu, Fujin had done things like these numerous times. So, it wasn't anything new for him. Not to mention, he had a massive beast lying very close to help him out.

The clone immediately got to work and began planting some evidence to make it seem like Karin died in the forest. He healed the lion and removed the traces of the Lightning shocks it experienced earlier. Even though the lion was unconscious, it hadn't taken much damage as Fujin's clone intended to use him for this purpose.

He woke the lion up and placed it under a Genjutsu. The lion immediately saw 'Karin' lying on the ground, jumped on 'her' and began eating her. Of course, what he did in actuality was just rip her clothes, crush her glasses, send her headband flying and eat some of her clothes and hair before walking away.

It left behind some bloodied clothes, hair, the shards of glasses and her headband, creating an excellent scene to explain her death. Of course, it wasn't the perfect scene by any means. He could have created a more convincing scene by planting her bones in the forest. However, he had no intention of maiming Karin. What he had planted was enough to dismiss anyone who raised suspicions.

Fujin's clone inspected the 'evidence' a couple of times before getting rid of all the seals he had used to create the Stealth Battlefield and dispelling himself.

In the tower, Fujin received the memories of his clone and thought, 'Hmm, so Karin has been successfully recruited. Good, everything went as planned. If things still happen as in canon, I wonder who Sasuke would recruit in his team now...'

He thought for a bit before concluding, 'It doesn't matter. Orochimaru should have several talented underlings for Sasuke to choose from. Itachi will still give up his life. So, that battle won't have a different result. It'll be against Killer Bee that this move of mine might have some grave consequences for him...'

Fujin remembered Sasuke being injured critically by Bee. Without a healer like Karin, he couldn't say for sure whether Sasuke would get out alive or not. However, considering that he was Indra's reincarnation, Fujin doubted that he'd be killed that easily. Regardless, he had no reason to worry about it right now.

While Fujin's other clone planted the evidence, Fujin's clone and Karin appeared around a hundred kilometers away in the vast forests of the Land of Fire. They disappeared almost instantly before appearing another hundred kilometers away. In less than a minute, Fujin's clone teleported over a dozen times and carried Karin from Konoha to the Phantom Haven Base in the Land of Rivers!

He stayed slightly away from the base and laid Karin down while thinking, 'She might get suspicious if she learnt that we just reached here in the blink of an eye. I'll let her sleep for a few hours before waking her up.'

While Karin slept in the Land of Rivers, the shockwaves of the battle on the previous day were being felt in faraway places!

Sitting in his chair, Ay loudly exclaimed, "What did you say?"

Naruto: The Wind Calamity

Chapter 630: That Dumb Snake!

In the Raikage office, Ay loudly exclaimed, "What did you say?"

Mabui repeated calmly, "Our spies sent reports stating that Orochimaru interfered in Konoha's Chunin Exams. Everyone in Konoha is saying that he was confronted and defeated by Suzuki Fujin, the Spectral Swordsman."

Ay had a hard time believing what he heard. He asked, "How accurate is this information?"

Mabui replied, "It's hard to say. None of the spies witnessed the battle. They only learnt about it as the information was rapidly spread throughout Konoha."

Ay frowned and analyzed, "Since the information spread so easily, it means that Konoha is actively spreading it. That should imply that they either couldn't keep this incident a secret or they just wanted to increase Suzuki Fujin's reputation.

There are three possibilities. The first is that they are just making up lies to increase that boy's reputation for some reason. The second is that the fight did occur, but the information they are spreading isn't accurate. And the last possibility is that he truly defeated Orochimaru.

Which of these three is it?"

A frown was visible on Ay's face as he analyzed the information. Mabui stayed silent and thought about it as well. Just like Ay, she was surprised as well. She thought, 'I knew that he was strong and expected him to give Darui a tough fight. However, if this news is true, then he could even be able to fight Raikage-sama! Considering his age, he is a terrible enemy to have.'

Ay analyzed, 'Knowing Hiruzen, he won't falsely increase the reputation of a ninja without any good reason. He is smart enough to know that if he does that, it'll bite him later. I could understand if Konoha was facing a grave threat and he wanted to deter others, but no one has made any major moves recently.

Not to mention, I already expected him to be close to Darui's strength. So it isn't as if he is promoting someone out of nowhere.

However, could he really be at the same level as Orochimaru? A 16-year-old boy defeating a Sannin... His talent might be at the same level as Minato.

If the reports are true, then even I might not be able to kill him. Since he specializes in Wind Release, I'll need to be on guard against any secret Wind jutsus he might have.

That said, one thing doesn't make much sense. How could he become so strong within a few years while staying in the background? There aren't even any wars for him to mature through them like how most from my generation did.'

As Ay analyzed, he realized that he was missing a lot of information. He looked at Mabui and asked, "Do we have any Jounin rank spies in Konoha?"

Mabui shook her head and answered, "We don't, Raikage-sama. It is very difficult to maintain high-level spies in Konoha. We only have 3 at the Chunin rank and 8 at the Genin rank. The rest are civilians."

Ay thought for a bit and said, "Send secret missions to the Chunin rank spies and ask them to inspect the place where Fujin and Orochimaru fought. It might give us a better idea about what happened.

Also, send a message to all squads deployed to find and hunt Fujin. Ask them to be on standby. Until new orders are issued no one will take any action against him. In the future, Darui won't be sent to deal with him. If we get an opportunity, I'll personally make a move!"

Knowing Hiruzen's nature, Ay predicted that even if Fujin wasn't at the same level as Orochimaru, he should be at the level to be able to survive in a fight against him. It increased the difficulty of killing Fujin to a great extent while making any such missions extremely risky. Ay saw no reason to waste the lives of Kumo ninjas meaninglessly.

Mabui nodded and replied, "I'll get to it."

She quickly got to work. While Ay and Mabui discussed Fujin, another Kage's office was quite tense. Onoki had received several reports as well. He summoned Kitsuchi and Roshi, who were reading those reports in his office with a grave expression on their faces.

While Kumo was aware that Fujin was dangerous, Iwa had experienced his strength first-hand on more than one occasion.

Kitsuchi sighed and said, "I shouldn't have missed that opportunity. He was already as strong as me back then while being far more lethal on the battlefield. Now, we won't be able to kill him unless you fight him."

Roshi nodded and added, "To be able to force Orochimaru to retreat... I didn't think he'd reach this level so quickly. If we fight again, I'm afraid our next battle might not end in the same way."

Hearing them praising the enemy, Onoki became annoyed and said, "Don't jump to conclusions yet. We still don't know how accurate this information is. That old monkey is very good at confusing everyone else."

Kitsuchi said, "That's true. However, considering that the plans we made for him are based on his strength 2 years ago, it's safe to say that they'll be more or less useless right now. If we try to kill him now, the only way would be to catch him off guard with the Dust Release or Tailed Beast Bomb. If we can't, then we'll need to sacrifice thousands of ninjas and come up with a reason for him to stay and fight. That's too difficult and costly."

Roshi added, "Not to mention, he's still only 16. If he continues growing stronger, then he might become as strong as the Third Hokage at his peak. That's a rather formidable enemy to have. Our younger generation doesn't have anyone who could go up against someone like that."

A scowl formed on Onoki's face as he cursed, "If only that damned Deidara brat didn't go rogue and join that cursed mercenary group!"

He looked at Kitsuchi and instructed, "Ensure that Kurotsuchi and Akatsuchi don't slack off in their training. Tell them about Fujin and bring out their competitive instincts. If Iwa has to stand tall for the next 50 years, both of them need to be formidable rank S ninjas!"

Kitsuchi nodded and said, "I'll focus on it immediately."

Unlike the previous times they discussed Fujin, none of them discussed a plan to eliminate Fujin. Though it could still be done, the cost of attempting it in peacetime would be extremely high. To make matters worse, they couldn't guarantee any results even if Roshi and Onoki both participated in the fight.

The two warring factions in the Land of Water also received the news. The fourth Mizukage ignored it while the memories of the Spectral Swordsman flashed in the minds of his subordinates.

In the rebel camp, Mei was reading the reports as well. A smile appeared on her face as she said, "What a splendid young man."

Memories of her meeting with Fujin appeared in her mind. Ao and other leaders in the rebel camp discussed this news in a similar manner as Ay and Onoki. The only difference was that they weren't finding ways to eliminate him as they were already in an intense war.

The minor villages received the information as well. In fact, they received it faster than the three Great Villages as the sensei of their Genins sent them the messages. Those villages had long suffered at the hands of the Spectral Swordsman and were already terrified of him. Fujin's reputation grew even more terrifying in their hearts and they decided to bury all their complaints about his previous actions.

Of course, the most tense among them was none other than Kusagakure. Ashikaga Hiroshi was still like a statue after he read the report. After a couple of minutes, he let out a sigh of relief and muttered, "It's a

good thing that we didn't accept his bait back then. If we did, then I'm afraid that Kusagakure would have been history by now!"

The memories of nearly every Kusa higher-up grabbing their weapons after Fujin gave them their third choice during the negotiation kept playing in his mind. Back then, Hiroshi thought that they might have been able to kill him at a great cost and the only reason they didn't do so was that none of the higher-ups, including him, wanted to be a sacrifice for others. However, Hiroshi now understood that the danger was much greater than he envisioned.

In the Village Hidden in Rain, Konan and Nagato receive the information as well. However, neither of them gave much importance to it. Both paid more attention to Orochimaru's movements than to Fujin's strength.

However, there was one village that attached more importance to this news than even Konoha! The Council of that village were sitting together and reading the reports sent by Baki with a grave expression on their face.

After a few minutes of silence, Tojuro angrily exclaimed, "That dumb snake! He's ruining all our plans!"