

'My heart...!' Kakuzu staggered backward a step, blood and threads spraying out in a grotesque display as his body shuddered violently.

"That was your first heart!"

Kakuzu's eyes trembled for a split second in realization. *'He knows!'*

Immediately his hands moved and latched on to Dragon's right hand and neck. Threads exploded out of his body and wrapped around his enemy's body securing him in place. "You! Since you took my heart, I'll just have to settle for yours!"

Dragon smirked hearing that. "Good luck with that."

The next moment his body turned to mud. The undead fighter of Akatsuki was shocked at the turn of events. *'An earth clone substitution? When did he-'*

Before he could contemplate on it further, multiple paper bombs appeared out of Dragon's mud clone.

Kakuzu's eyes widened and he immediately tried to distance himself from his prisoner turned bomb.

BOOM!!

A strong explosion went off and the area was once again filled with smoke and dust. Suddenly out of the mayhem Kakuzu appeared. His clothes were burned in a few places but other than that there was no indication that the explosion did him any damage.

Just then, a mask bearing the symbol for the Fire appeared out of his body and crumbled to the ground. Kakuzu looked down to the side and saw the cracked mask and clenched his fists in anger.

'Not even 30 seconds into this fight and he already destroyed one of my hearts? I severely underestimated him.'

At that moment Dragon appeared a short distance away, his cold eyes meeting Kakuzu's stunned gaze. "Did you really think I wouldn't anticipate your attack?"

Kakuzu snarled, threads erupting and twisting from his body as he steadied himself. "You... How did you...?"

Dragon's voice was ice-cold. "You're strong. And clever. But that cleverness also makes you predictable. I told you before," Dragon hissed, *"you're in my way!"*

The remaining hearts pulsed angrily beneath Kakuzu's stitched flesh, each still pumping chakra into his damaged body. But losing one heart was already a severe disadvantage.

“Aaarrhh! You fucking bastard. I can't move! I'm gonna fucking kill you!” A painful scream drew Kakuzu's attention.

Dragon heard the threats and let out an audible sigh. “Even blown to bits, he's still talking tough. I really should try to find the secrets of his immortality one day.”

The former ninja of the Hidden Waterfall village glanced to his left and saw his partner in over a dozen pieces all over the battlefield. Kakuzu was quickly analysing everything that had happened since the moment they saw their enemy. *‘He took out Hidan first. He must have known about his ability...’*

The missing nin glanced at Dragon and revised his assessment. *‘No. He knows more than just our abilities. He knows about our personality. Our fighting style and our mannerisms. He attacked with kunais in a way that Hidan could easily defend against. But that was a ruse. Hidan let his guard down and he immediately increased the speed of those blades and took out his senses.’*

“Kakuzu! Help me buddy!” Hidan's screams didn't make the man move from his spot. *‘He then took him out of the fight completely with that explosion. He also correctly predicted what I would do. His battle senses are sharp. His speed is incredible and I didn't even sense his substitution jutsu. His use of Wind and Earth chakra natures are exceptional.’*

“Just stay quiet Hidan. Getting yourself taken out like that was your own fault.” Kakuzu spoke without mercy as he stared at Dragon.

“How could you be so cold hearted Kakuzu... Buddy! Old pal. Help me. Please. I'm in a lot of pain right now.”

Kakuzu ignored Hidan's plea and was staring at Dragon. *‘Even if I wanted to help you, I doubt he'd just let me... What's he waiting for? Why hasn't he continued with his attack on me yet?’*

Dragon meanwhile was internally surprised hearing Hidan's reply. *‘He can hear him? The wounds in his ears are already regenerating?’*

“Kakuzu, you bastard! Stop ignoring me!”

Dragon meanwhile was reviewing the new memories he got from the shadow clones dispelled on the other battlefield. His creator was currently giving him new orders.

With Daichi's Group: A short while ago.

Jiraiya gazed upward, his expression grim as dark clouds rapidly gathered, obscuring the pale moonlight. “We've lingered long enough,” Jiraiya said firmly, breaking the stunned silence. His eyes swept across Kakashi, Tobirama, and finally rested upon Daichi. “That

jutsu of yours will have drawn every sensor ninja within a hundred miles. We need to leave immediately.”

Kakashi nodded in agreement and looked at his student. “He’s right. We have to regroup with Shizune right now. That was one giant beacon. The Hidden Stone’s going to send scouts as soon as they can. We can’t afford another fight, not now.” Around him, the scorched earth still sizzled, small wisps of steam were rising from fractured rocks.

Tobirama glanced briefly at the horizon. He knelt down and touched the ground with two fingers. His sharp senses picked up distant chakra signatures. “The Hidden Stone shinobi are already mobilizing. Reinforcements will arrive soon.”

Daichi exhaled slowly. He nodded as he looked at everyone. “Hey. No arguments from me. Let’s get the hell out of here.” Daichi agreed, pushing aside the lingering adrenaline. *‘We need to secure sensei and vanish.’*

They started toward the place Shizune and Tsunade were waiting. Half-broken boulders and patches of churned mud lined their path. It was proof to the scale of Daichi’s earlier rampage.

Jiraiya's eyes narrowed slightly as he observed the massive craters, his expression growing distant. *‘When was the last time I saw such a devastated battlefield? The third world war? That battle at Rain village?’*

He glanced at the only Genin in the group. *‘You got one hell of a student, Tsunade. He’s gotten a lot stronger than I ever thought possible.’*

As they moved, Kakashi hovered near Daichi’s shoulder, eyeing him with a mix of concern and respect. *‘He nearly overshadowed Orochimaru in destructive capacity. How many others can say that? The village just got a new powerful Sannin level ninja. If... No. Once his strength becomes known, it’ll certainly cause a ripple across the nations.’*

His introspection was interrupted as they reached Shizune and Tsunade. The shadow clone that Daichi had left guarding them stood quietly, watching vigilantly. Seeing the original group approach, the clone met Daichi’s eyes with a silent nod and dispelled itself into smoke.

Shizune looked up anxiously as they arrived, clearly relieved to see them all still alive. “You’re all okay!” she breathed, tension leaving her shoulders. Her hands trembled slightly, still resting protectively near Tsunade's form.

“Is it really over?” She asked just to make sure. She saw a small smile on Daichi’s face, and realized the outcome: Orochimaru was gone.

She looked down at Tsunade's pale features, smoothing out the frayed edges of a cloak that covered her teacher. "Thank you, Daichi." she breathed to the group, tears in the corners of her eyes. *'We survived... We actually survived.'*

"Don't mention it... She's going to be alright you know." Daichi assured gently, kneeling beside Tsunade and quickly inspecting her condition. "She's stable now. But we need to move immediately."

Just as he finished speaking, a gentle puff of white smoke appeared next to Tsunade. Everyone tensed instinctively until the familiar small, slug-like form of Katsuyu materialized. She was no larger than a human arm. Her gentle presence immediately soothed some of the tension in the air. Katsuyu quickly crawled atop Tsunade's unconscious form, worry emanating from her usually calm voice.

"Lady Tsunade..." Katsuyu's voice trembled slightly. "I've been trying to reach you for some time, but something kept blocking our connection."

Jiraiya frowned deeply, his expression darkening. "Orochimaru prepared countermeasures against summoning contracts. He had the entire area rigged to block outside summons and reverse summoning." He sighed. "Now that he's gone, it makes sense the jutsu lost its hold..."

Katsuyu gave a small nod, or as much as a slug could manage. "I'm relieved you were able to save her... But she seems to be in a dire state."

"She'll be alright, Katsuyu. We got two of the best medics right here." Jiraiya spoke with a smile as he tried to reassure the small slug.

"Yes, I can feel her vital signs stabilizing," Katsuyu replied softly, calming slightly. "But she's still vulnerable. Please, we must get her somewhere safe immediately."

Tobirama stepped forward decisively, his eyes sharp and commanding. "Sarutobi prepared a medical facility deep beneath the Hokage Tower for precisely this scenario. She can recover there."

Daichi hesitated momentarily, glancing down at Tsunade's weakened form. He spoke quietly but firmly, "I don't want people to see her like this. So weak and vulnerable."

"I assure you, Daichi, it's discreet," Tobirama reassured him calmly. "No one other than the necessary medics, guards and Hiruzen himself know of this place. She will have absolute privacy."

Daichi nodded slowly, convinced by Tobirama's confident tone. "Alright. Can you teleport all of us in one go?"

Tobirama frowned slightly, quickly assessing his chakra reserves. "Not everyone in one go. Not for such a long distance. But if you're able to spare some chakra, I can make it happen."

Without hesitation, Daichi stepped closer and placed his palm against Tobirama's shoulder. Instantly, his seal glowed brighter and powerful chakra flowed steadily from Daichi into the Second Hokage.

Seals spread across his body and Tobirama felt a surge of energy course through him. He felt his chakra increase dramatically and it shocked him. *'So much chakra. No wonder he was able to use all those high intensity techniques without any problems... But how was he able to store so much in just a few years?'*

Jiraiya looked at the seals spreading on the Second Hokage's body and was surprised. *'So that jutsu also works on reanimation bodies huh. Interesting.'*

Kakashi watched quietly. *'He's grown so proficient at giving chakra. Another skill beyond typical Genin or Chunin scope.'*

As Daichi continued to transfer chakra, he subtly activated his secret communication array jutsu. It required minimal focus. *"Dragon. Do you copy?"*

Instantly, the calm, steady voice of his shadow clone resonated back through the mental connection. *"Loud and clear. I got the memories but still, Is everything alright on your side?"*

"We're done here. I need you to move immediately. Get to my current location quickly. Once we leave, destroy all traces of Orochimaru's base and any evidence of our presence here. Leave nothing behind."

Dragon, who had just taken out Hidan's eyes and ears and destroyed one of Kakuzu's hearts, paused his fight. *"Yes, boss. Soon as I'm done with these two clowns, I'll get over there."* Then he severed the mental link, returning focus to the battle.

Daichi then focused his mind toward the second clone, who had been maintaining a careful disguise as Kimimaro within Orochimaru's base in the Land of Sound. *"It's time. Take out all remaining guards and anyone important. Retrieve everything valuable or significant that we might've overlooked initially. Clear the base completely."*

The disguised clone responded instantly. *"I'll get it done. And I have an idea. I'll leave some traces of Dragon for all those snooping around."*

Daichi mentally nodded. *"Do it."* He confirmed, cutting the communication just as Tobirama placed his hand atop Daichi's wrist. "Enough," he murmured. "That's more than sufficient for a multi-person teleport."

Jiraiya turned to Kakashi and Shizune. "Everyone ready?"

“Yeah.” Kakashi agreed firmly.

The Toad sage carefully Tsunade in his arms, gently holding her body for transportation. Shizune stayed close, her hands steadying her unconscious mentor protectively.

Jiraiya turned his attention back to Tobirama, giving the signal. “Whenever you’re ready, Lord Second.”

Tobirama gave a sharp nod, confirming their readiness. He placed both hands on Jiraiya and Daichi’s shoulders while Kakashi and Shizune placed their hands on Tobirama’s.

“Hold tight,” Tobirama instructed calmly. The next instant, chakra surged through them, folding the fabric of space itself.

In a heartbeat, the group consisting of Daichi, Kakashi, Jiraiya, Tobirama, Shizune and an unconscious Tsunade and Katsuyu, vanished without a trace, leaving behind only silence.

The Leaf ninjas had vanished from the Land of Earth.

Author’s Note:--