



THE SAND CASTLE... IS STRONG THOUGH. IT'S THE HOME OF THE LORD THAT SWALLOWS ALL.



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**INANE**

# NARUTO

ナルト

249: AS KAZEKAGE

THE DESERT  
COFFIN  
SMASHES  
AKATSUKI'S  
HAND.

SFX: HAND SEAL

SFX: BIRD DROPPING

GAARA OVERWHELMS...

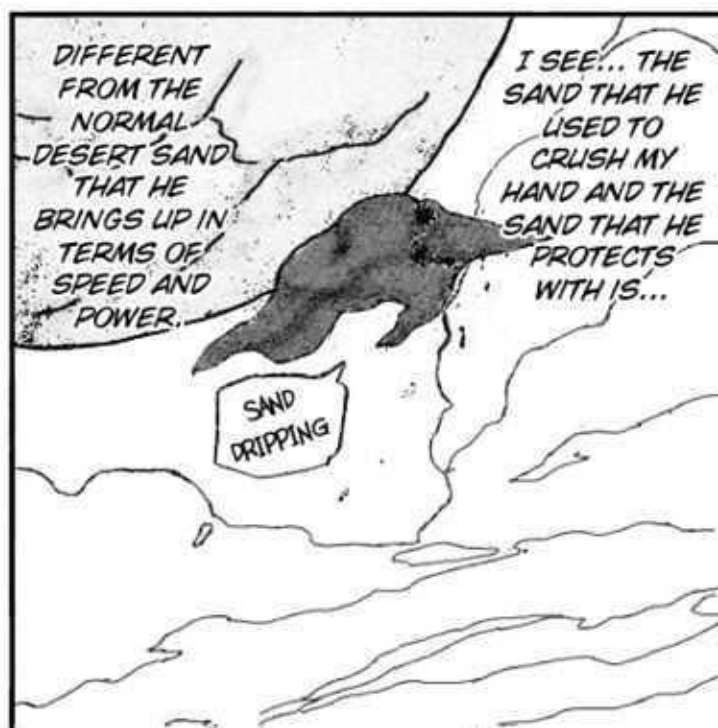
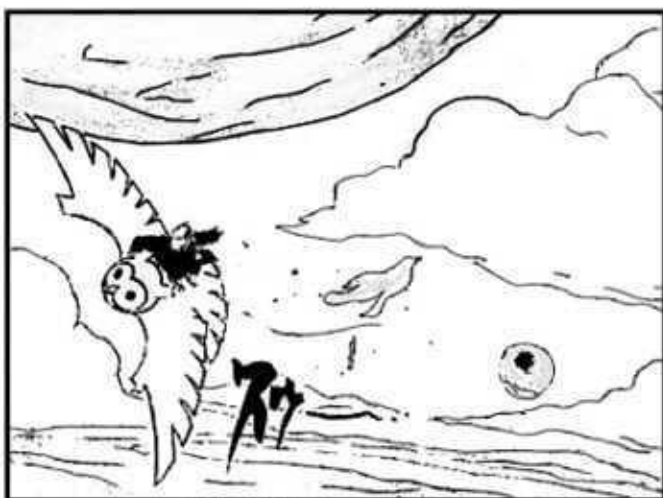
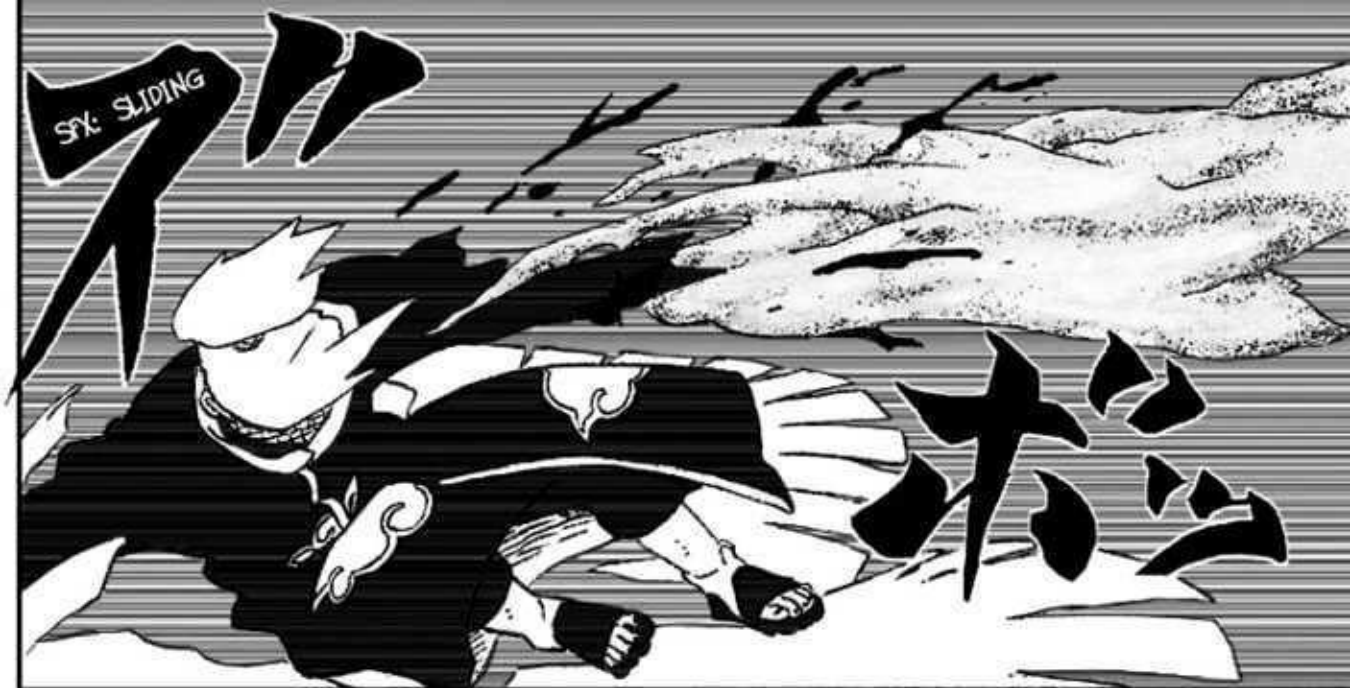


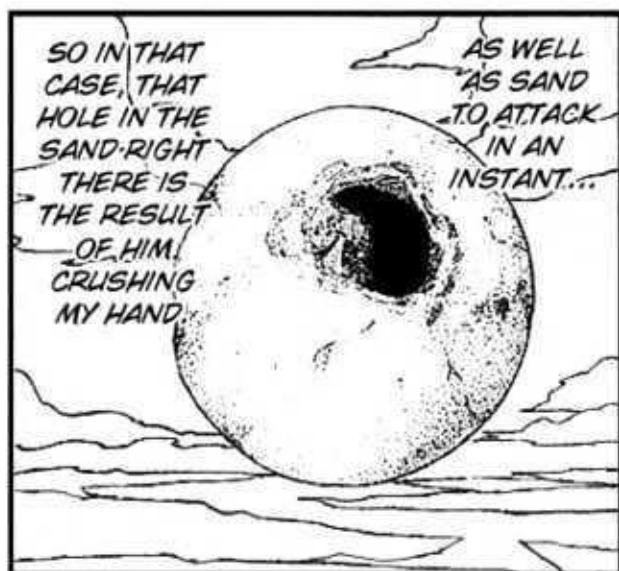
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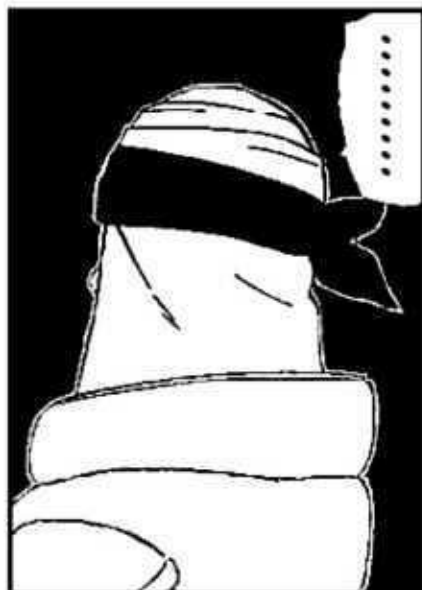
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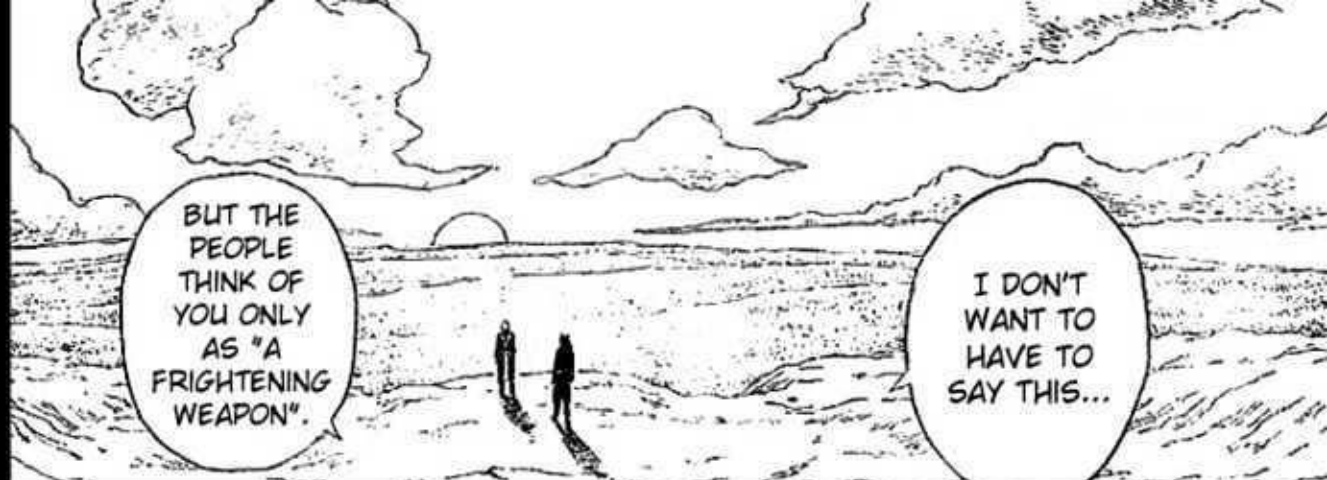












BUT THE  
PEOPLE  
THINK OF  
YOU ONLY  
AS "A  
FRIGHTENING  
WEAPON".

I DON'T  
WANT TO  
HAVE TO  
SAY THIS...



THE SUPERIORS  
DON'T THINK  
VERY MUCH OF  
YOU ANYWAY...

WHEN IT COMES  
TO YOU, THE  
MAJORITY OF  
THE VILLAGE IS  
EMBRACED WITH  
FEAR.



TO SEPARATE  
FROM US AND  
TO JUST GO  
INTO THEIR  
GANG OUTTA  
THE BLUE LIKE  
THIS... IT'LL BE  
HARD, MAN.



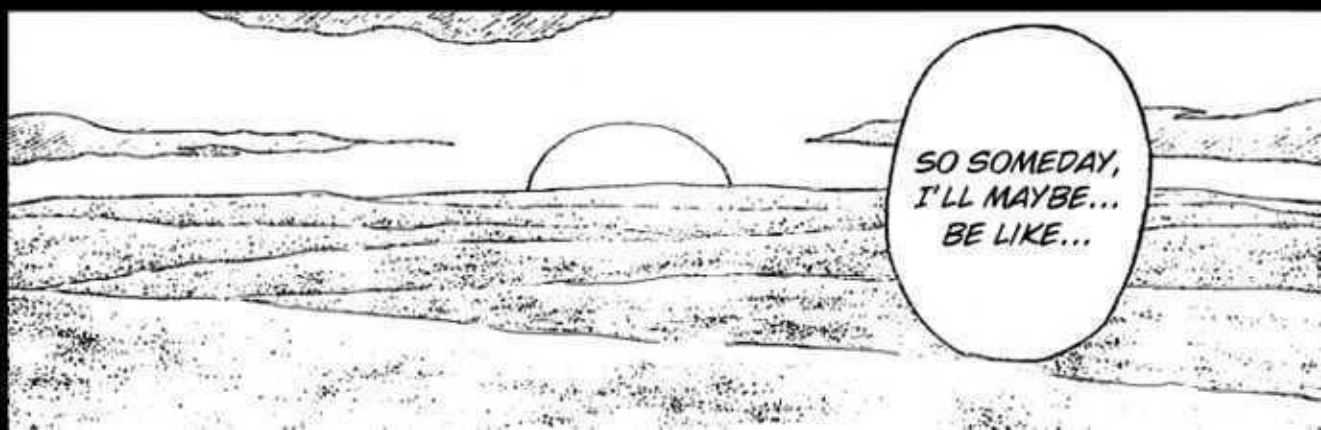
WITHOUT  
BEING A  
LONER AND  
TAKING  
THE EASY  
ROUTE...

ALL ONE  
CAN DO IS  
CREATE HIS  
OWN PATH  
THROUGH  
HARD WORK.



I KNOW...  
BUT...

BY JUST  
WAITING, I GET  
ATTACKED BY AN  
EVER GREATER  
ANGUISH.



SO SOMEDAY,  
I'LL MAYBE...  
BE LIKE...





GAARA...

TO BOND WITH  
AND LIVE FOR  
THIS VILLAGE.

SO THAT'S WHY  
I, AS ONE OF  
THE SAND'S  
SHINOBI, AIM TO  
BE KAZEKAGE.

BUT FOR HIM  
TO GO SO FAR  
AS TO SAY...

"WHAT'S THE  
DEAL WITH  
BONDS?!"

BUT UP UNTIL  
NOW... BONDS  
WITH  
OTHERS...

HAVE BEEN  
NOTHING BUT  
AN ANNOYANCE  
TO THE POINT I  
WOULD WANT  
TO KILL.

I GOT THAT  
AFTER  
SEEING  
UZUMAKI  
NARUTO.

THROUGH HARD  
WORK, I WANT TO  
BE RESPECTED BY  
EVERYONE.



THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
THAT I  
UNDERSTAND  
A LITTLE  
BETTER.

NOW





HATE,  
SADNESS,  
AND EVEN  
HAPPINESS...

TO BE ABLE  
TO SHARE IT  
WITH ANOTHER  
PERSON...



AND THEN, HE  
TAUGHT ME  
THAT YOU CAN  
CHANGE THAT  
PATH.

HE KNEW  
PAIN LIKE I  
DID.



I  
LEARNED  
THAT.

UZUMAKI  
NARUTO...

FROM  
FIGHTING  
WITH HIM...



NOT AS A  
FRIGHTENING  
WEAPON.

I WISH ONE  
DAY, THAT I  
CAN BE  
NEEDED BY  
SOMEONE.





SFX: APPEAR



HOWEVER... HE WAS STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT, IT'S JUST LIKE SASORI-DANNA SAID. I WAS UNPREPARED...

THAT'S IT, I'M GOING TO DESTROY THIS TOWN... YEAH.

TO BE STOPPED FROM BELOW WOULD PUT ME IN SUCH A BAD MOOD. THAT AND I'M TIRED OF YOUR EXPRESSIONLESS FACE.



HEHE, THE "EXPLODING CLAY" DOLL THAT I MADE OUT OF CLAY AND CHAKRA FROM THE MOUTH IN THE PALM OF MY HAND.



SFX: DROP

FROM ALL THE  
THINGS I CAN MAKE,  
MY "SPECIALITY #18"  
HAS MY HIGHEST  
LEVEL CHAKRA "C3"  
PUT INTO IT.  
ITS EXPLODING  
STRENGTH IS MY  
GREATEST ARTISTIC  
ACHIEVEMENT.



WHAT  
THE  
HELL IS  
THAT?!?!



RELEASE

YOU'RE  
TOO  
LATE!...  
YEAH



THIS IS  
BAD!!  
SPREAD  
OUT!





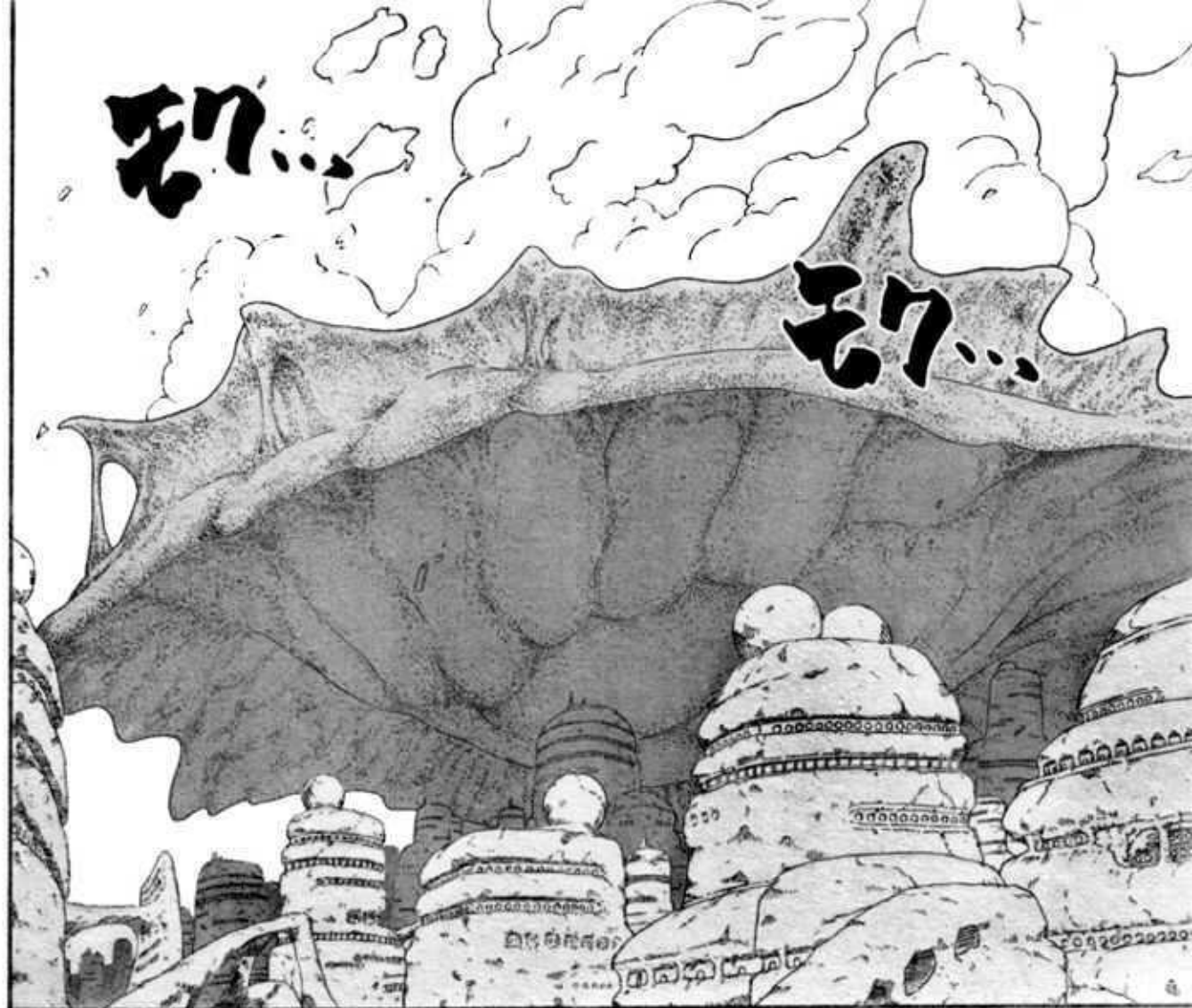
HEHE



SFX: ROCKS FALLING



SFX: BOOM



SFX: PROTECTION BARRIER



GAARA  
...



KAZEKAGE-  
SAMA'S  
SAND!!

THI...  
THIS  
IS...

WOW!!! TO  
BE ABLE TO  
CREATE A  
HUGE SHIELD  
LIKE THAT...



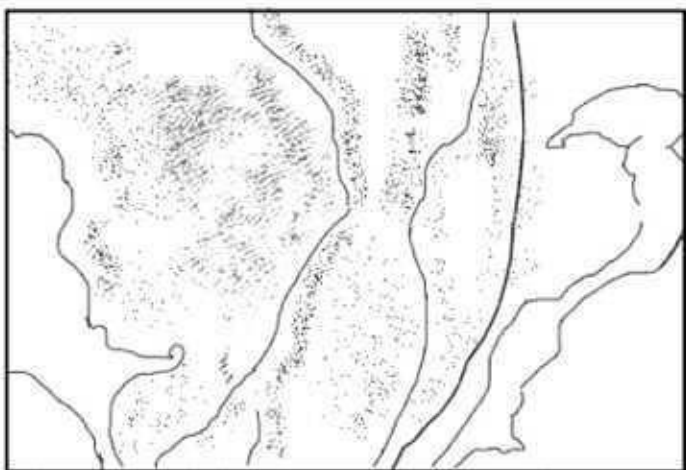
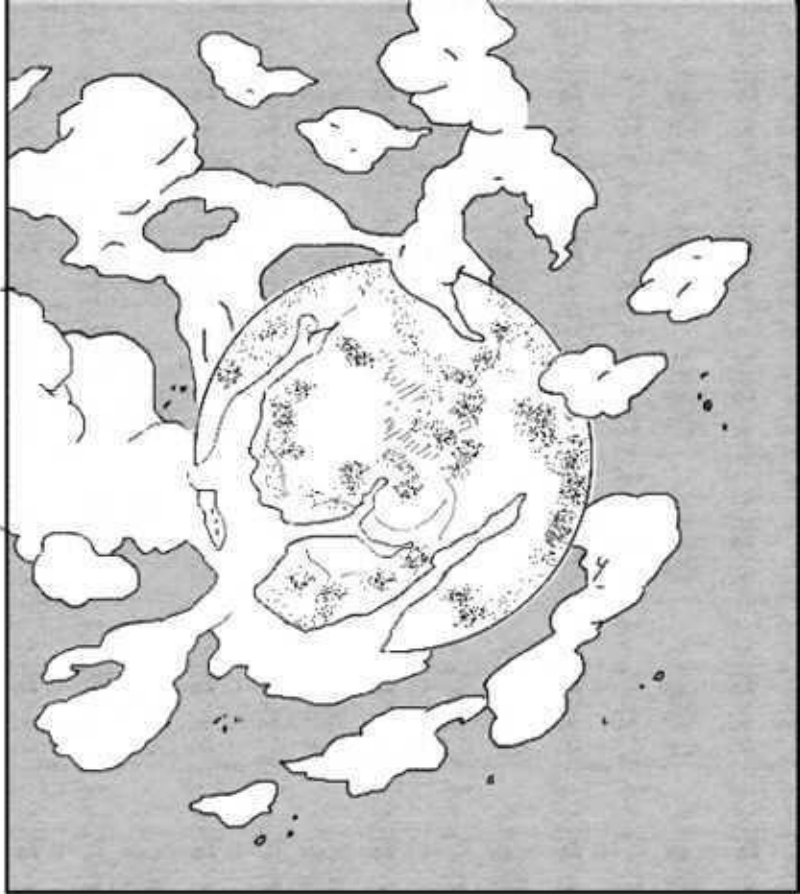


SFX: GRIN GIRO





SFX: FLAP FLAP









YOU USING  
THAT PART OF  
THE SAND TO  
GUARD WAS  
JUST BAD  
LUCK...  
YEAH.

HEHE, YOU  
INDEED SMASHED  
MY HAND BUT,  
I TOOK THAT  
CHANCE AND ATE  
SOME OF YOUR  
SAND AND PUT IT  
BACK AS MY  
"EXPLODING CLAY".

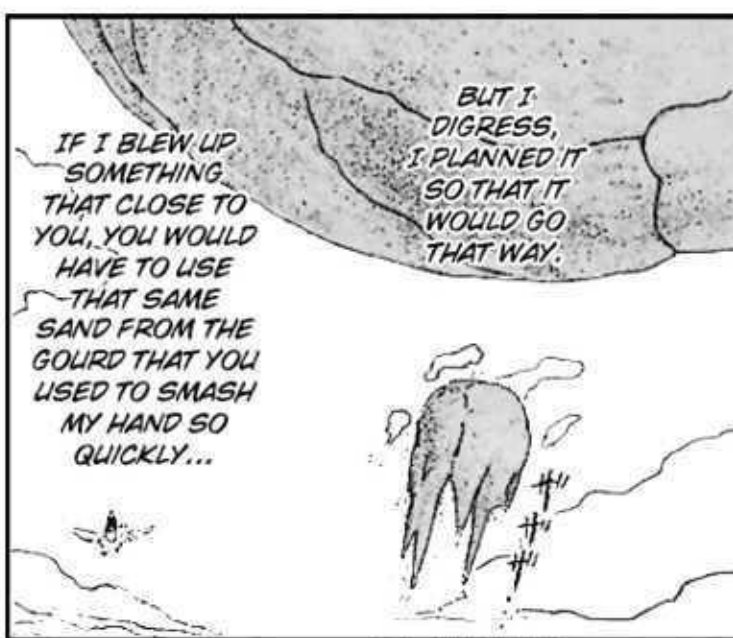


THAT'S THE  
REASON I  
USED MY  
"SPECIALTY  
#13" ON THE  
VILLAGE...  
YEAH.

SO FOR IT TO BE  
IN PRECISELY  
THE RIGHT  
SPOT FOR ME TO  
DETONATE IT,  
I HAD TO CREATE  
THAT CHANCE.

ALSO,  
THAT WAS  
MY LAST  
ATTACK  
TOO.

SFX: SAND FALLING



IF I BLEW UP  
SOMETHING  
THAT CLOSE TO  
YOU, YOU WOULD  
HAVE TO USE  
THAT SAME  
SAND FROM THE  
GOURD THAT YOU  
USED TO SMASH  
MY HAND SO  
QUICKLY...

BUT I  
DIGRESS,  
I PLANNED IT  
SO THAT IT  
WOULD GO  
THAT WAY.

SFX: SAND FALLING



SFX: BARRIER RETREATING

IT WOULD  
HAVE BEEN  
SO MUCH  
EASIER TO  
JUST LET IT  
FALL ON  
THEM.

HEH, A TYPICAL  
KAZEKAGE, TO  
USE HIS LAST BIT  
OF STRENGTH TO  
PROTECT THE  
VILLAGE.

THAT'S HOW GAARA FALLS INTO THEIR HANDS...  
WHAT IS THE FRIGHTENING "AKATSUKI"'S OBJECTIVE?!



GAARA!?!?



MY JOB HERE  
IS DONE...  
\*MISSION  
COMPLETE\*

NOT KILLING  
HIM WAS A  
BIT HARDER  
THAN I  
IMAGINED  
BUT...



NARUTO -ナルト-

NO. 249

End

NEWS OF THE KAZEKAGE'S CAPTURE  
GREATLY SHOCKS KONOHA!!  
AND, AS FOR NARUTO...!!  
NEXT, "THREAT OF WAR"!!