



NARUTO

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Masashi Kishimoto volume

19



岸本齊史

Naruto has been going for four years already. And, if I do say so myself, I think I've worked pretty hard... So I thought to myself, feeling pretty good about it out on the porch. I'll keep giving it my best in year five!

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2003



Author/artist Masashi Kishimoto was born in 1974 in rural Okayama Prefecture, Japan. After spending time in art college, he won the Hop Step Award for new manga artists with his manga **Karakuri** (Mechanism). Kishimoto decided to base his next story on traditional Japanese culture. His first version of **Naruto**, drawn in 1997, was a one-shot story about fox spirits; his final version, which debuted in **Weekly Shonen Jump** in 1999, quickly became the most popular ninja manga in Japan.



NARUTO VOL. 19
SHONEN JUMP Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

Translation/Kyoko Shapiro, HC Language Solutions, Inc.
English Adaptation/Ian Reid, HC Language Solutions, Inc.
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Design/Yvonne Cai
Editor/Joel Enos

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PARENTAL ADVISORY

NARUTO is rated T for Teen and is recommended for ages 13 and up. This volume contains realistic and fantasy violence.

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SHONEN JUMP MANGA EDITION

NARUTO

VOL. 19
SUCCESSOR

STORY AND ART BY
MASASHI KISHIMOTO

CHARACTERS

Sasuke

サスケ

Naruto

ナレト

Sakura

サクラ

大蛇丸

Orochimaru

Kabuto

カブト



自来也 Jiraiya

シズネ
Shizune

綱手
Tsunade

Twelve years ago a destructive nine-tailed fox spirit attacked the ninja village of Konohagakure. The Hokage, or village champion, defeated the fox by sealing its soul into the body of a baby boy. Now that boy, Uzumaki Naruto, has grown up to be a ninja-in-training, learning the art of ninjutsu with his teammates Sakura and Sasuke.

Naruto and company take on the Chūnin Selection Exams but suffer a sudden attack from Orochimaru in the Forest of Death. Orochimaru leaves a curse mark on Sasuke's body and vanishes, only to return during the final round to launch *Operation Destroy Konoha!* While Naruto battles Gaara, the Third Hokage falls to Orochimaru.

Jiraiya, taking Naruto along for training, sets out on a journey to find the Fifth Hokage, Tsunade. Meanwhile, Orochimaru makes Tsunade a proposition: in exchange for healing his arms, he would revive her deceased loved ones. As Tsunade struggles to decide, Jiraiya and Naruto arrive on the scene. What will Tsunade choose...?!

The Story So Far:



NARUTO

VOL. 19
SUCCESSOR

CONTENTS

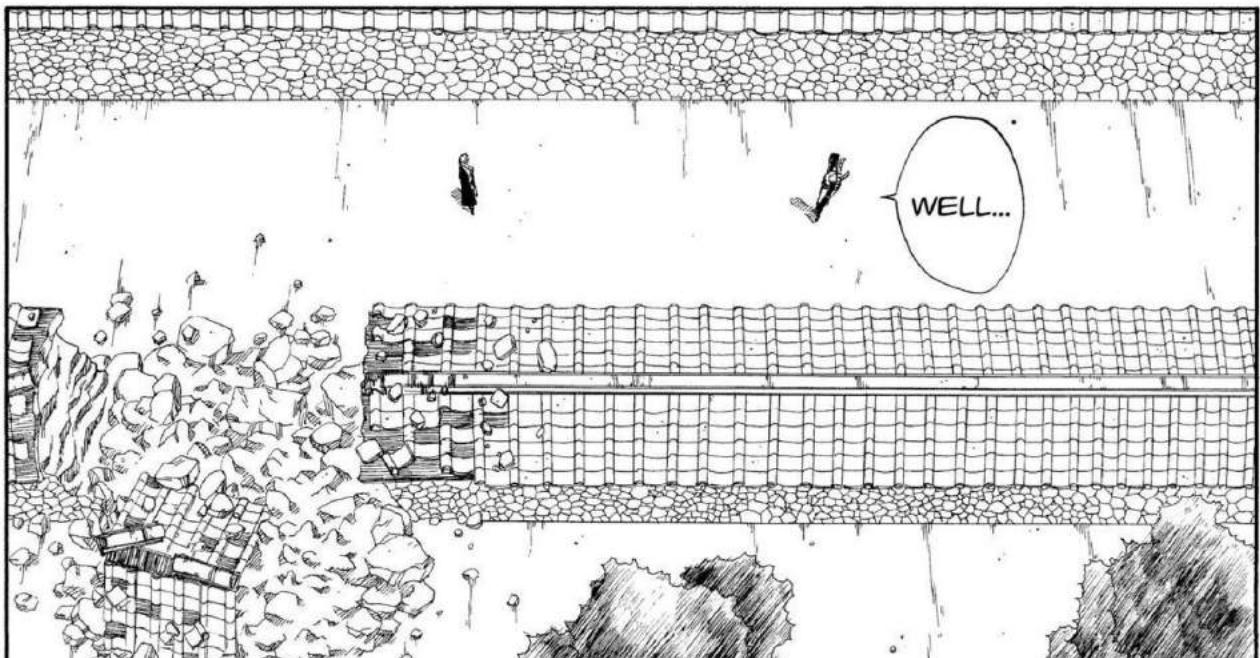
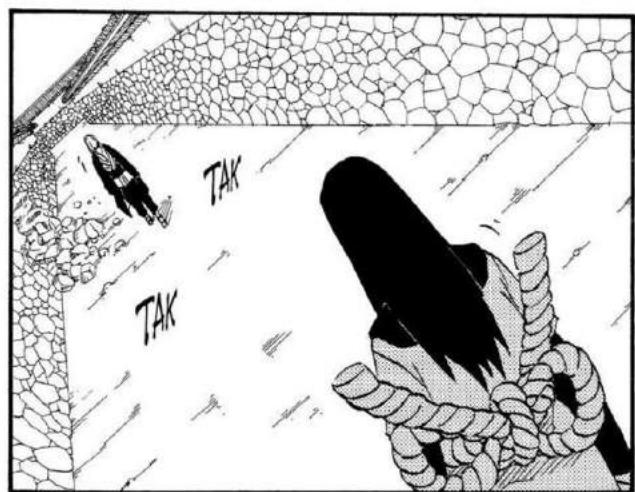
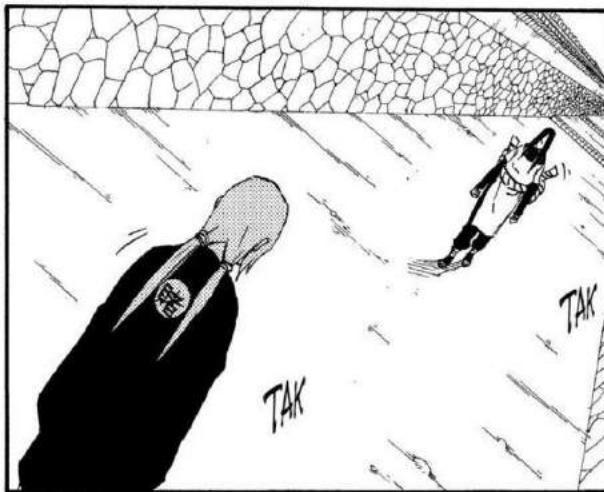


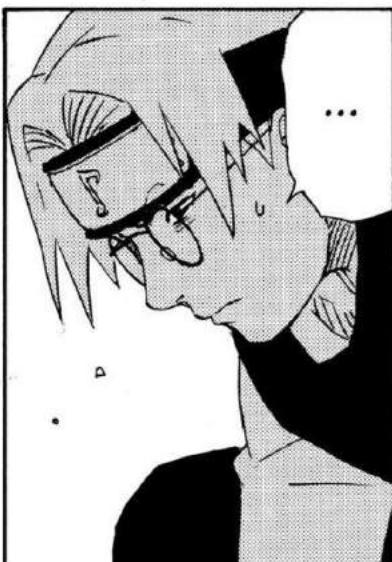
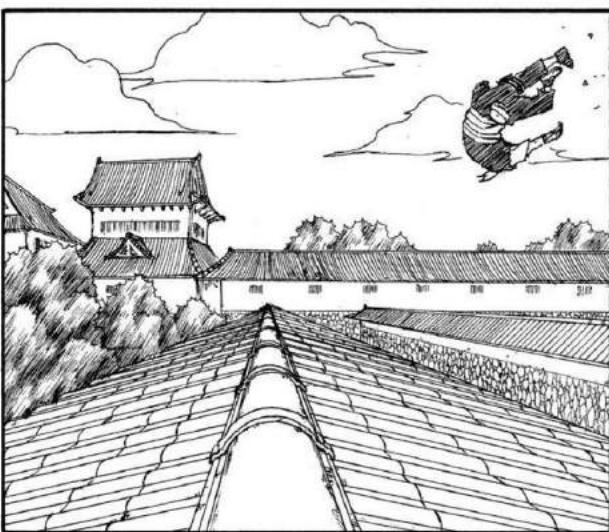
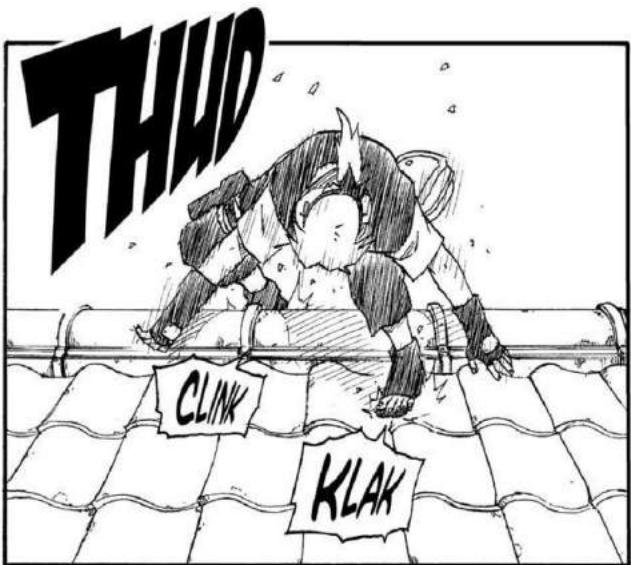
NUMBER 163: UNDECAYED...!!	7
NUMBER 164: MEDICAL SPECIALISTS!!	27
NUMBER 165: NARUTO ATTACKS!!	47
NUMBER 166: SHINOBI SKILLS...!!	67
NUMBER 167: AS PROMISED...!!	87
NUMBER 168: ONCE MORE	107
NUMBER 169: RISKING EVERYTHING...!!	127
NUMBER 170: DEADLOCK!!!	147
NUMBER 171: SUCCESSOR	167

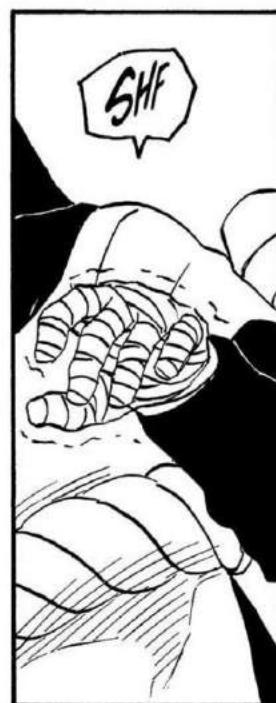
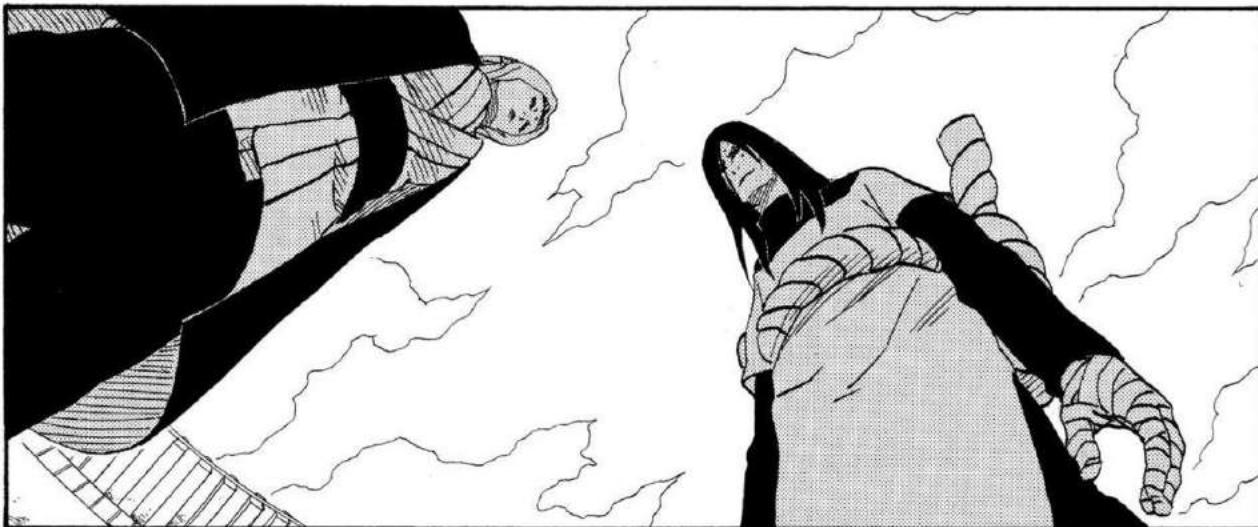
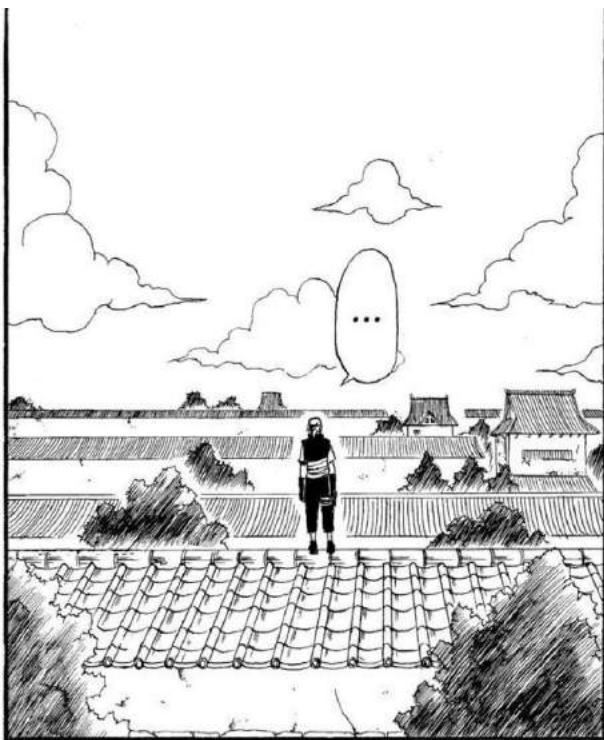


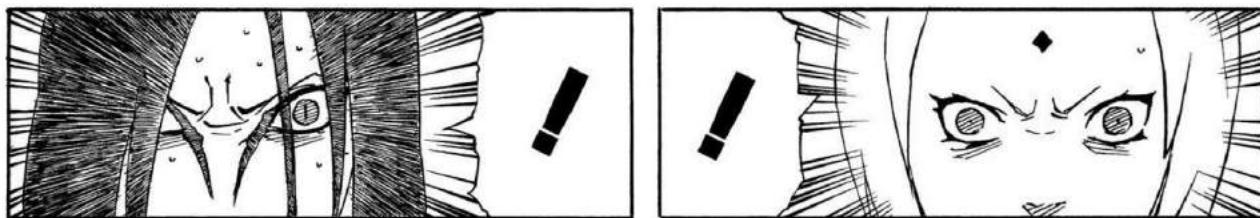
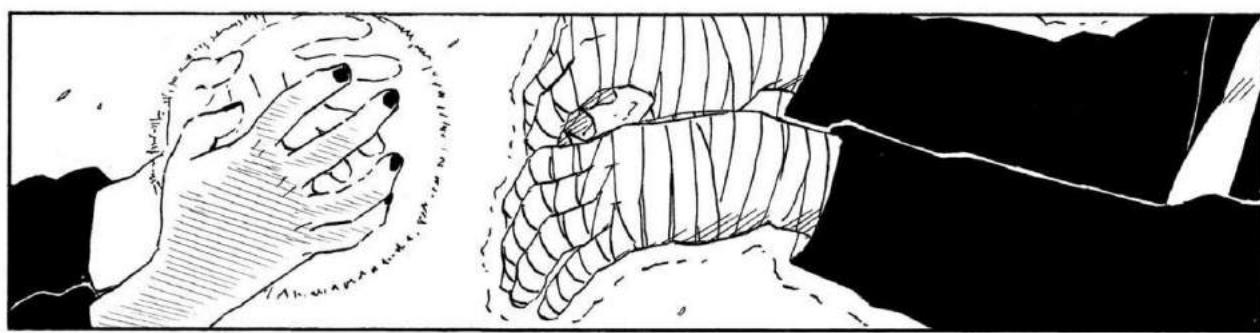
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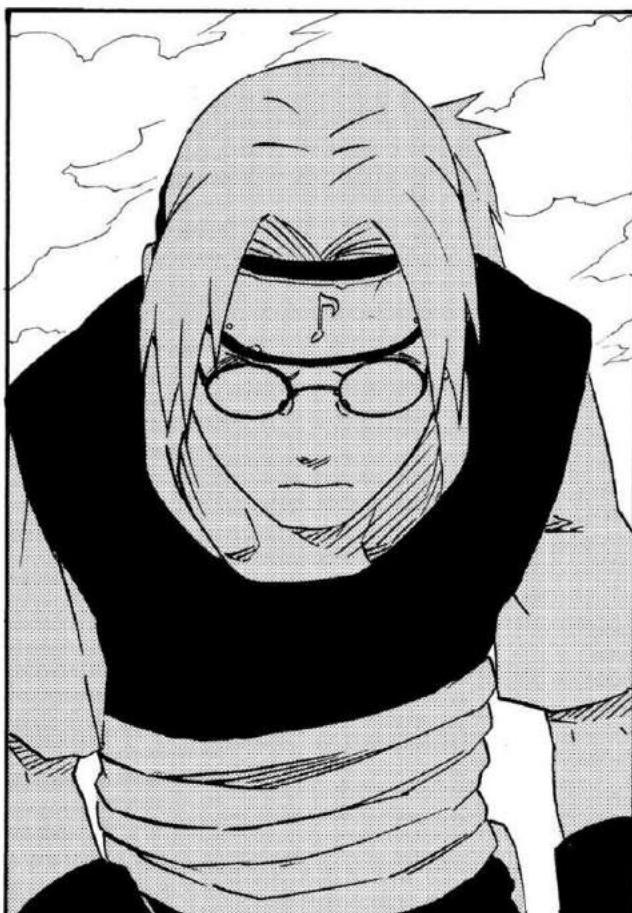


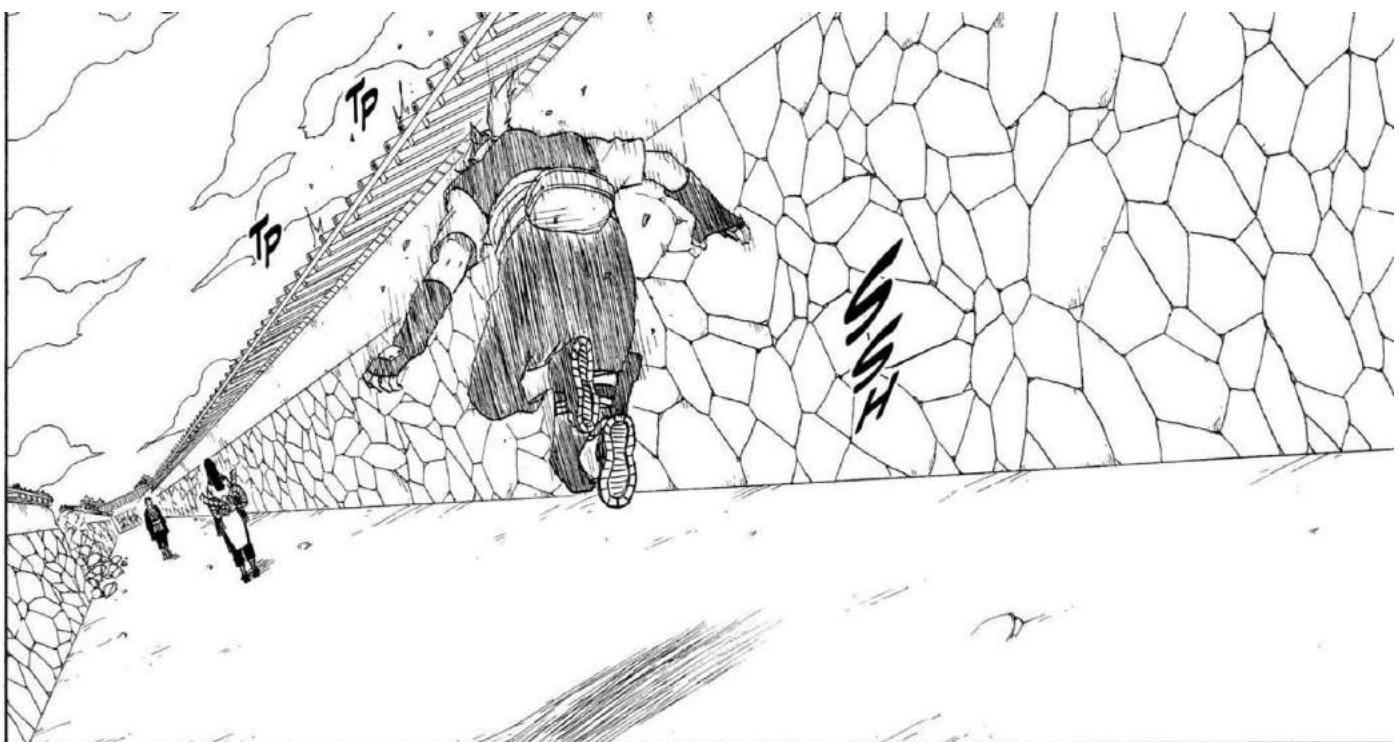


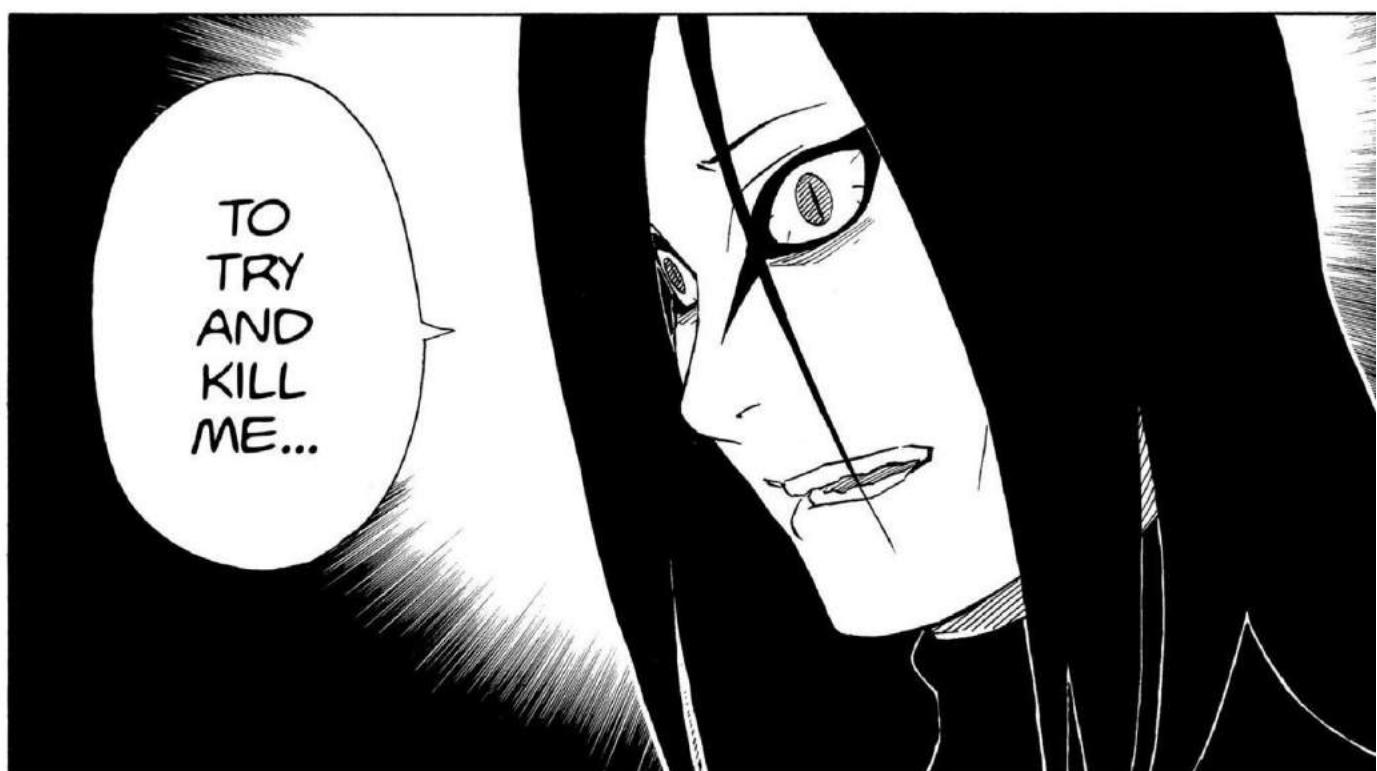
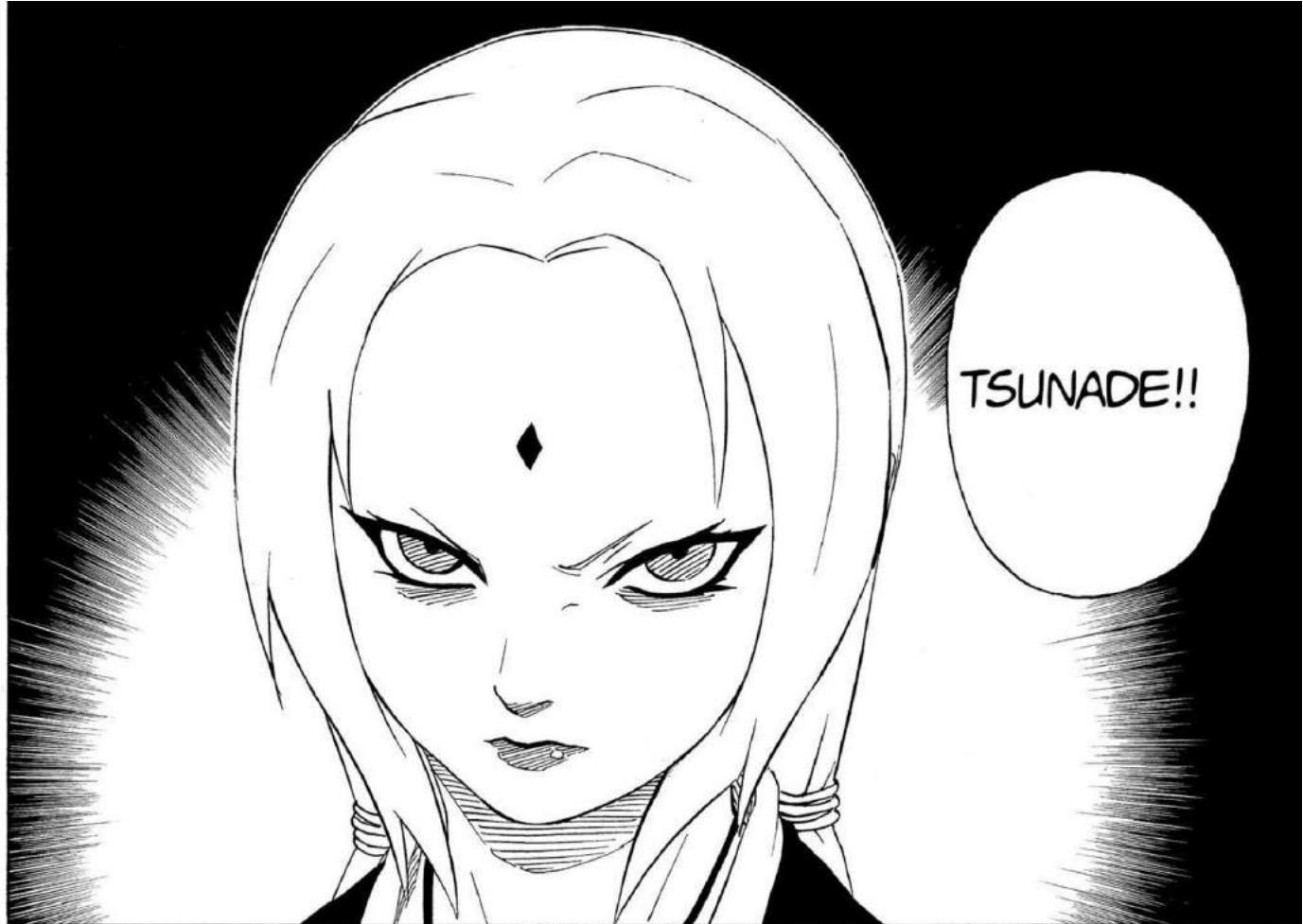


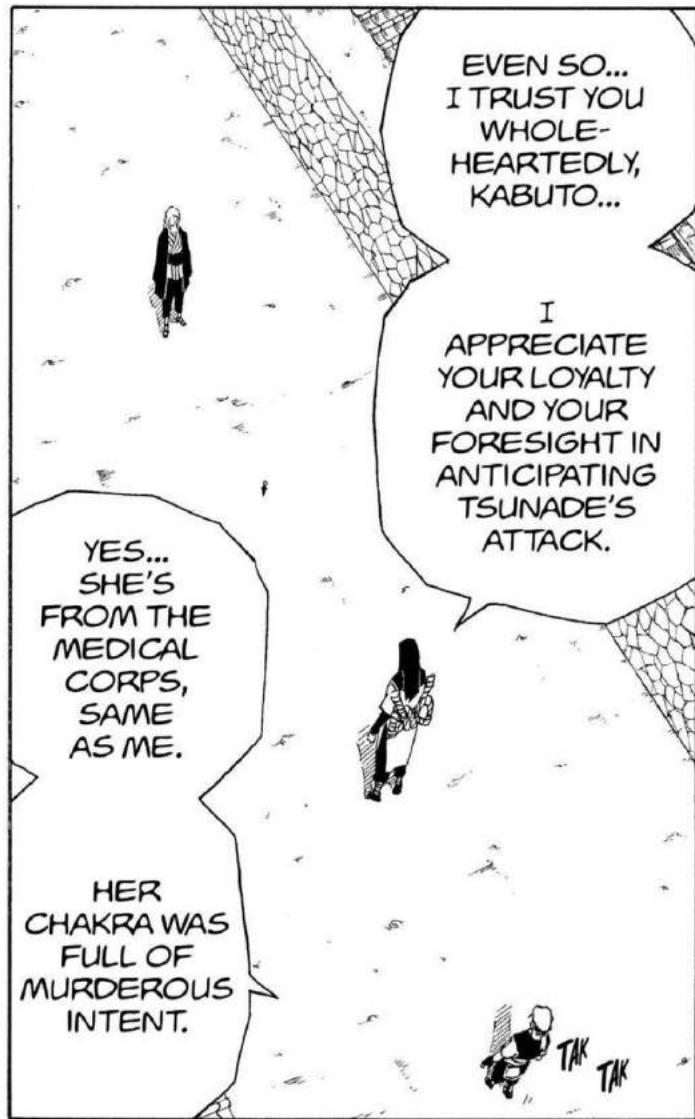


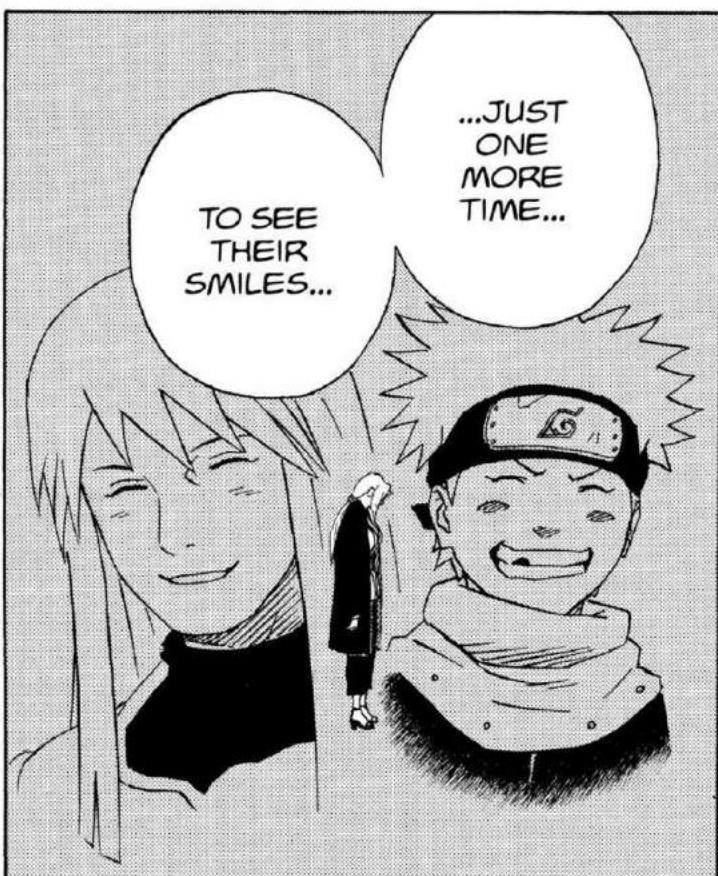
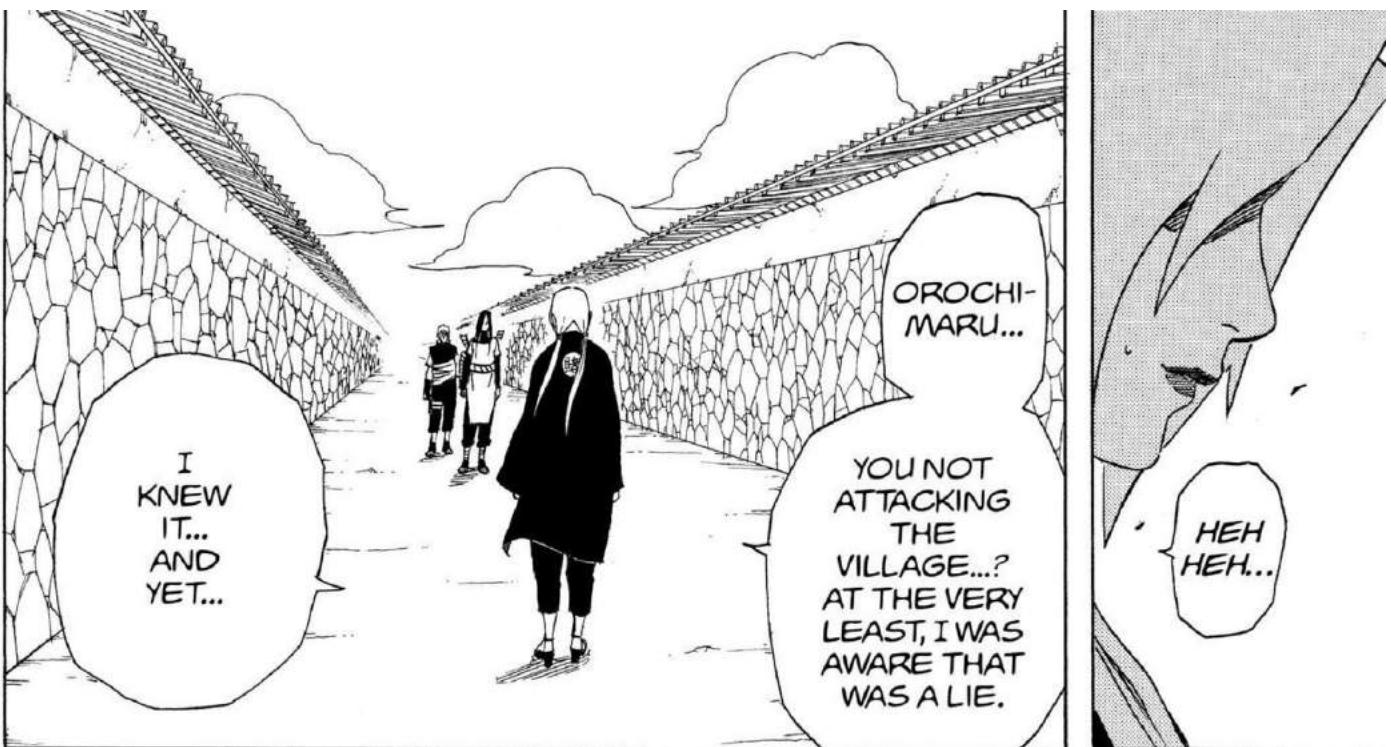




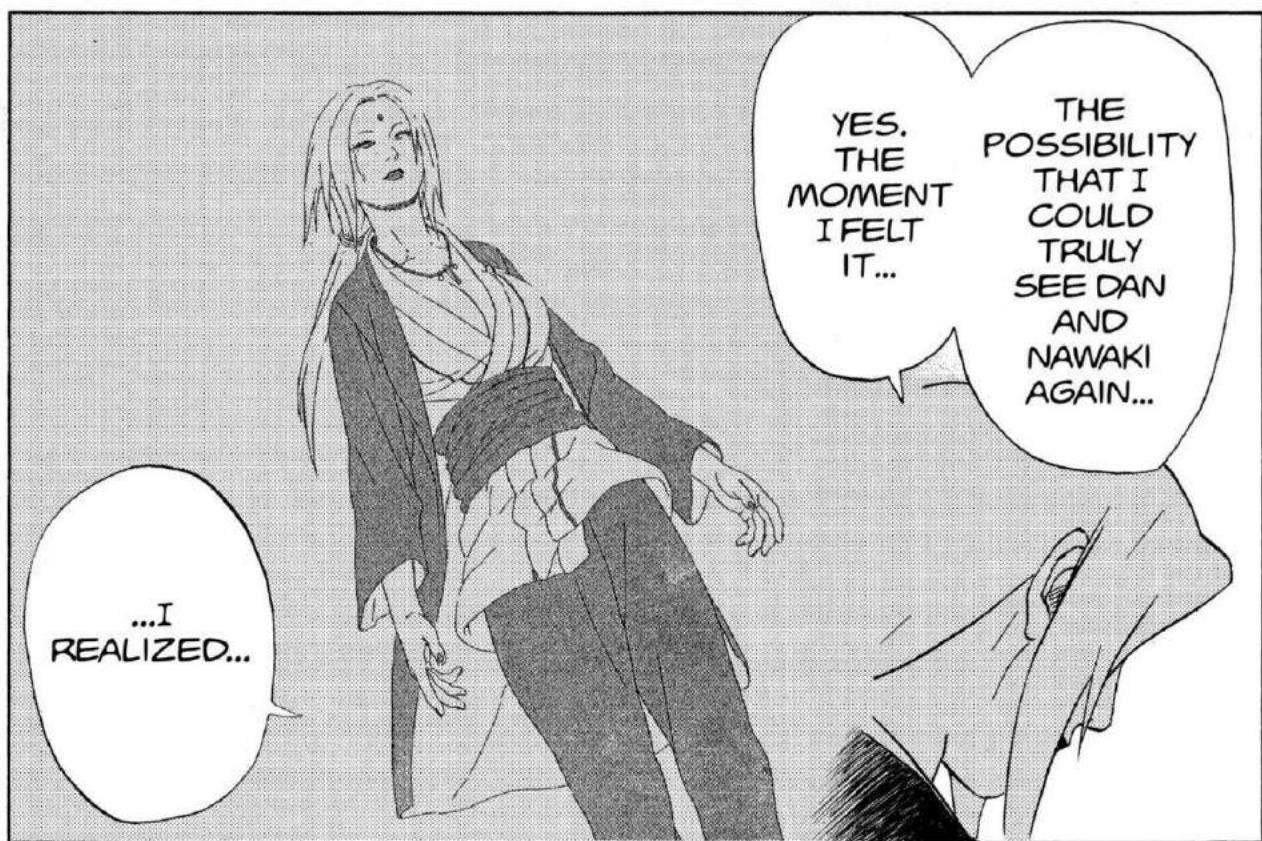
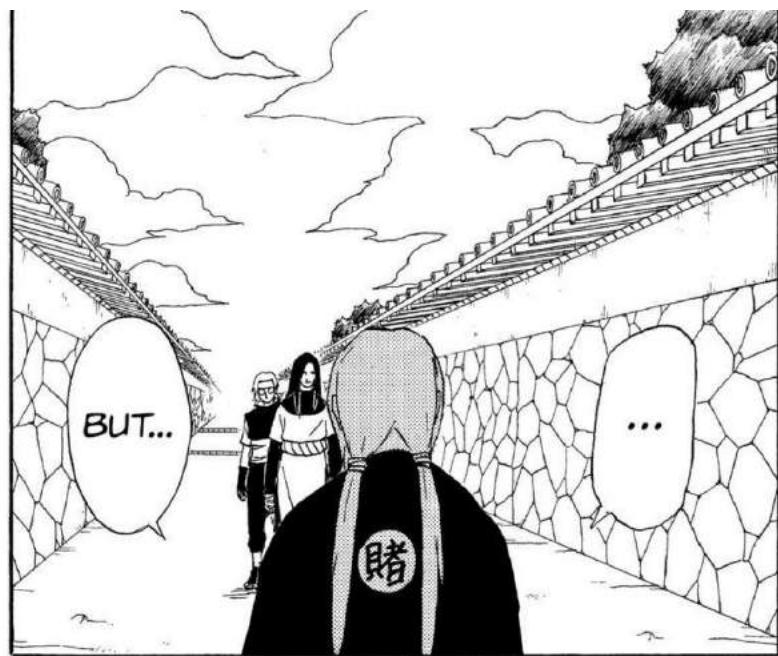


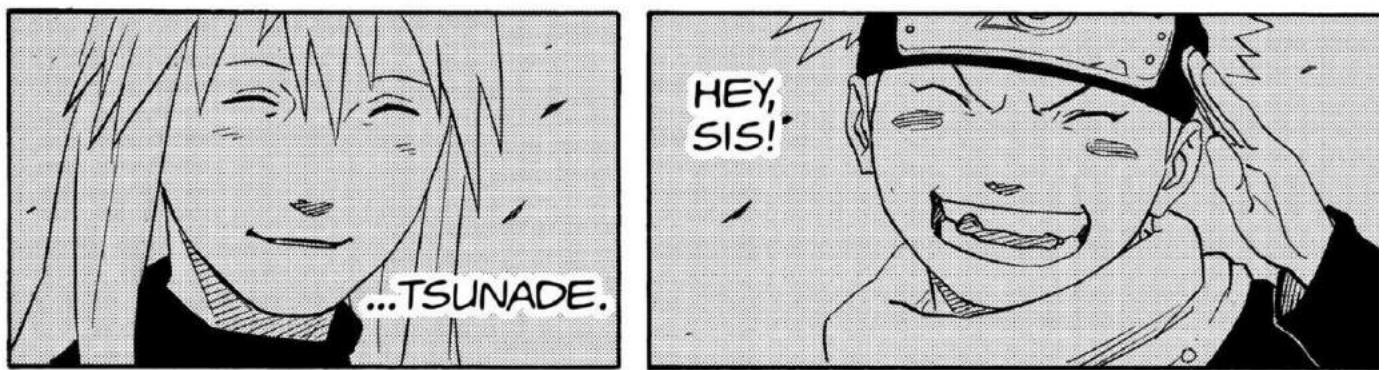
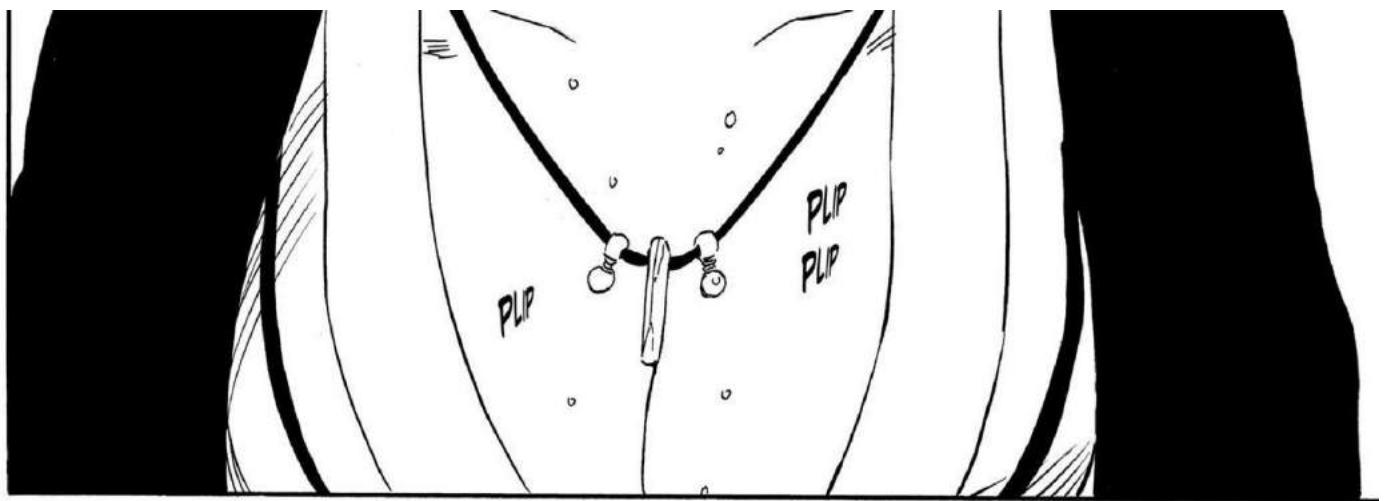






READ
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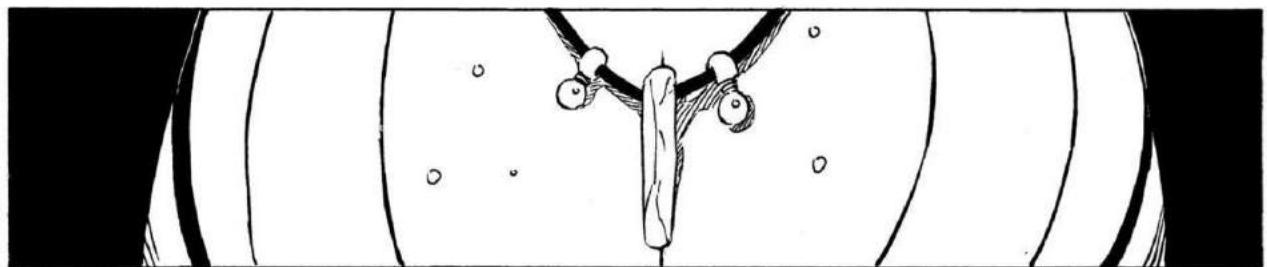
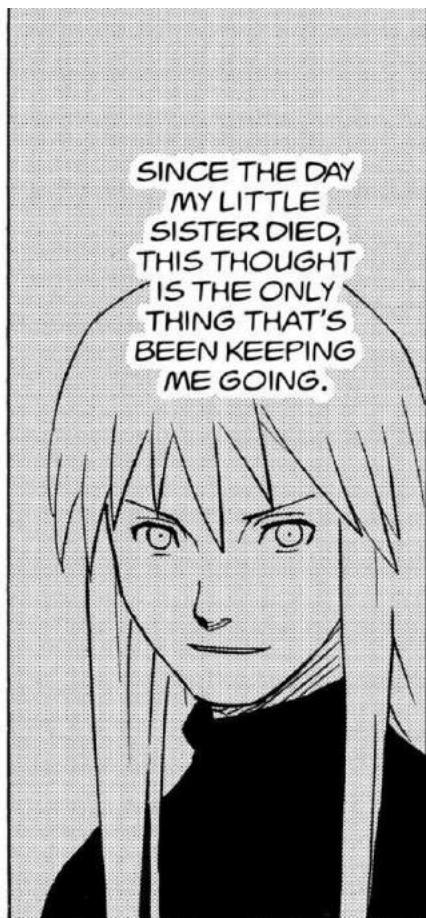




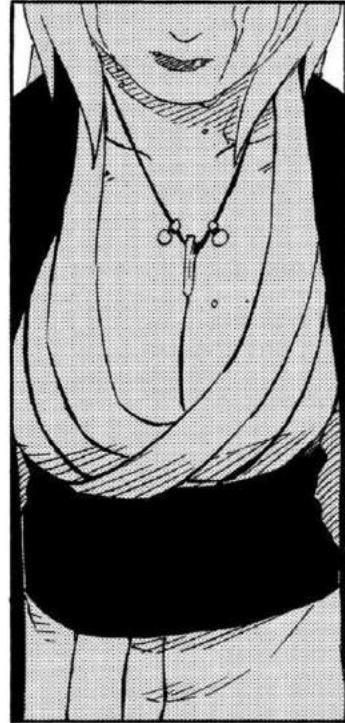
SINCE THE DAY
MY LITTLE
SISTER DIED,
THIS THOUGHT
IS THE ONLY
THING THAT'S
BEEN KEEPING
ME GOING.

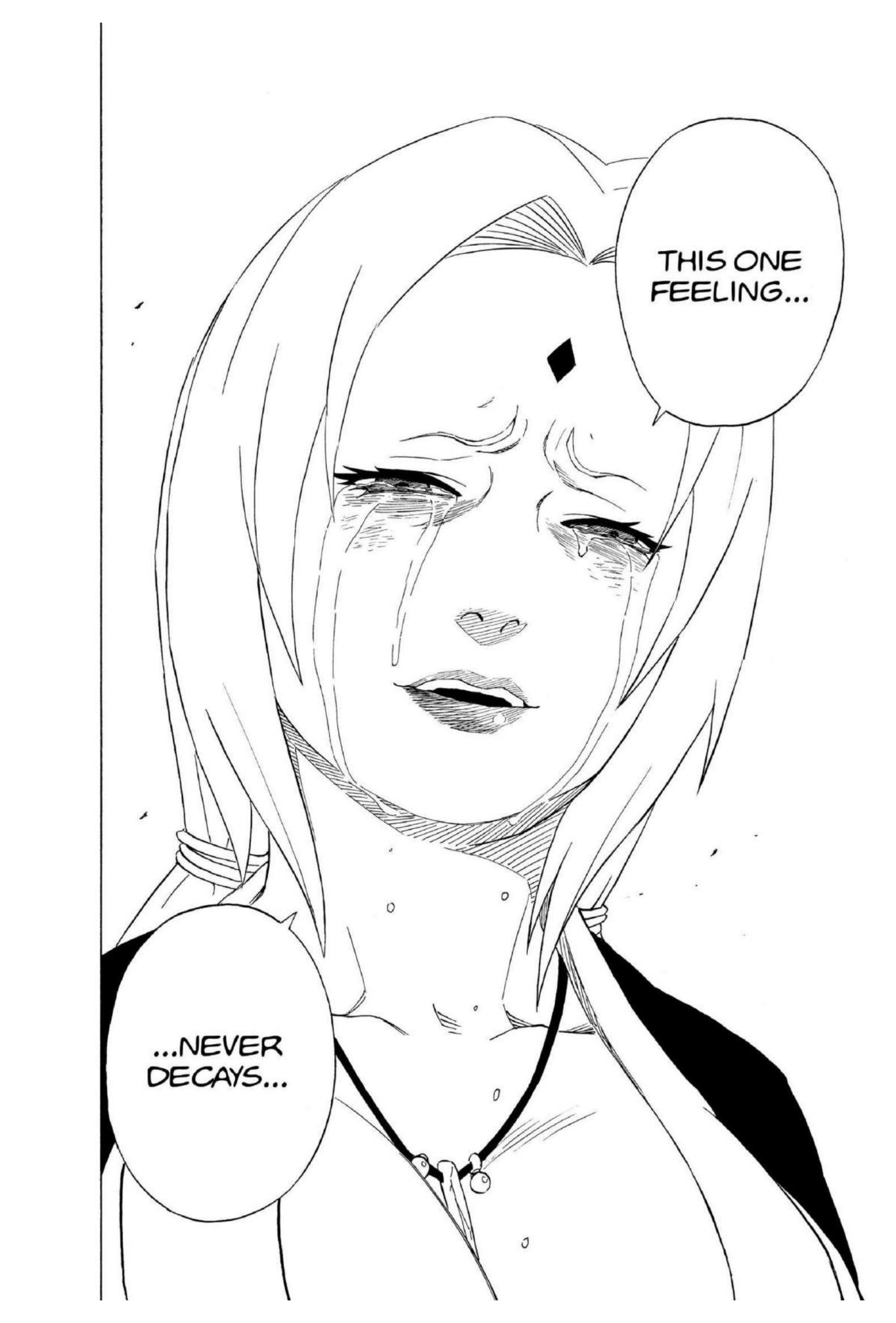
'CUZ UNLIKE
YOU I WANT
THAT TITLE
SOMEDAY...!

I'M GONNA
BE STRONG
LIKE GRANDPA
AND ONE DAY
BE GRANTED
THE TITLE OF
HOKAGE.



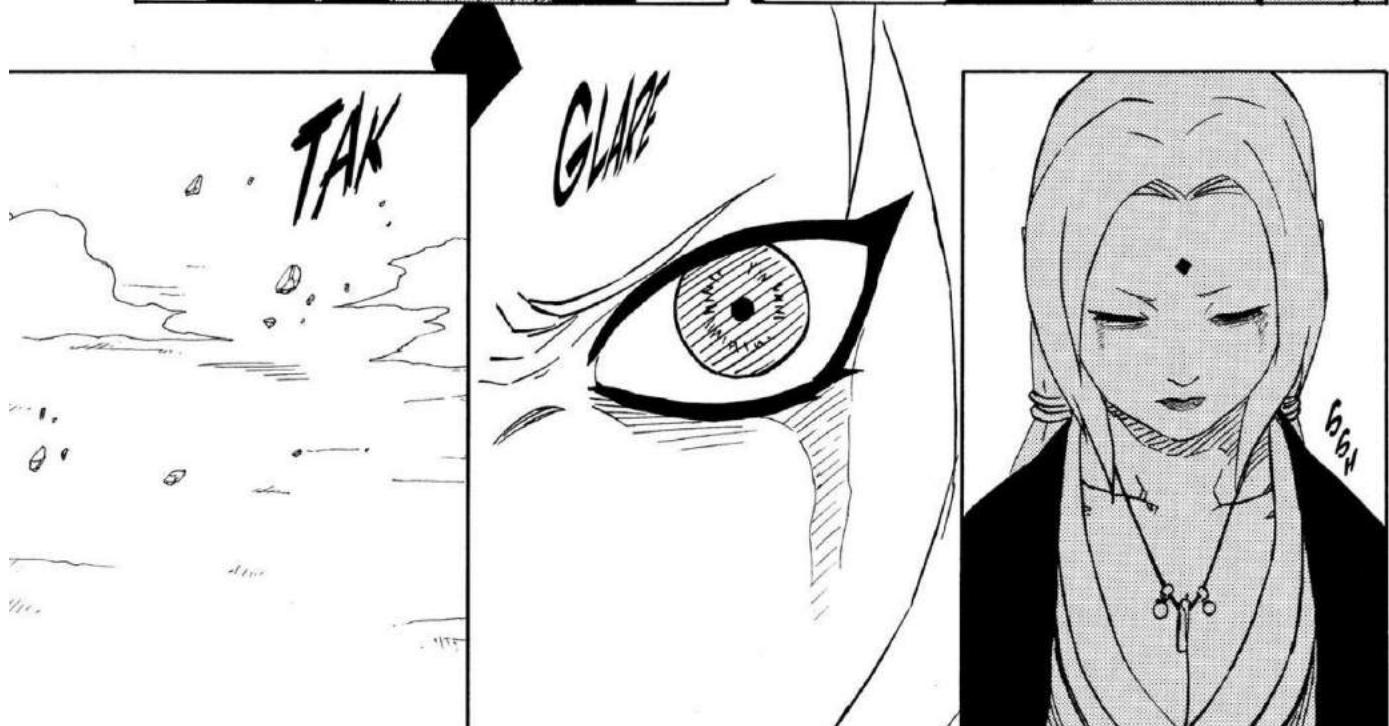
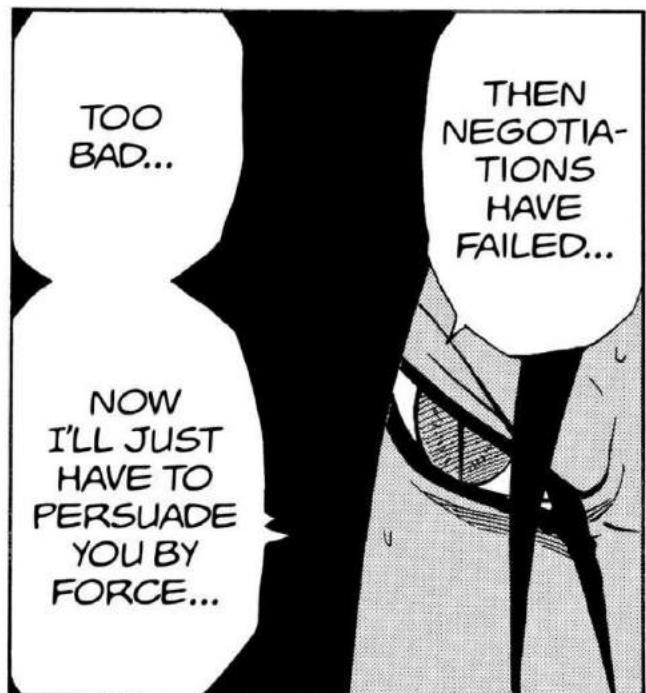
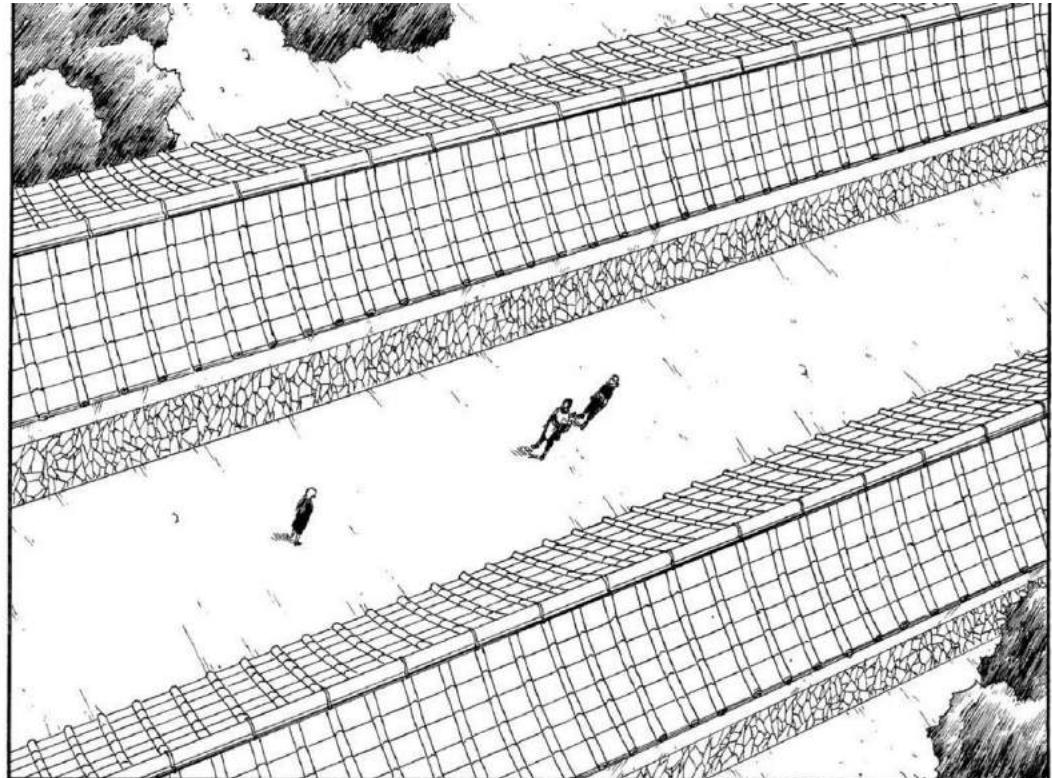
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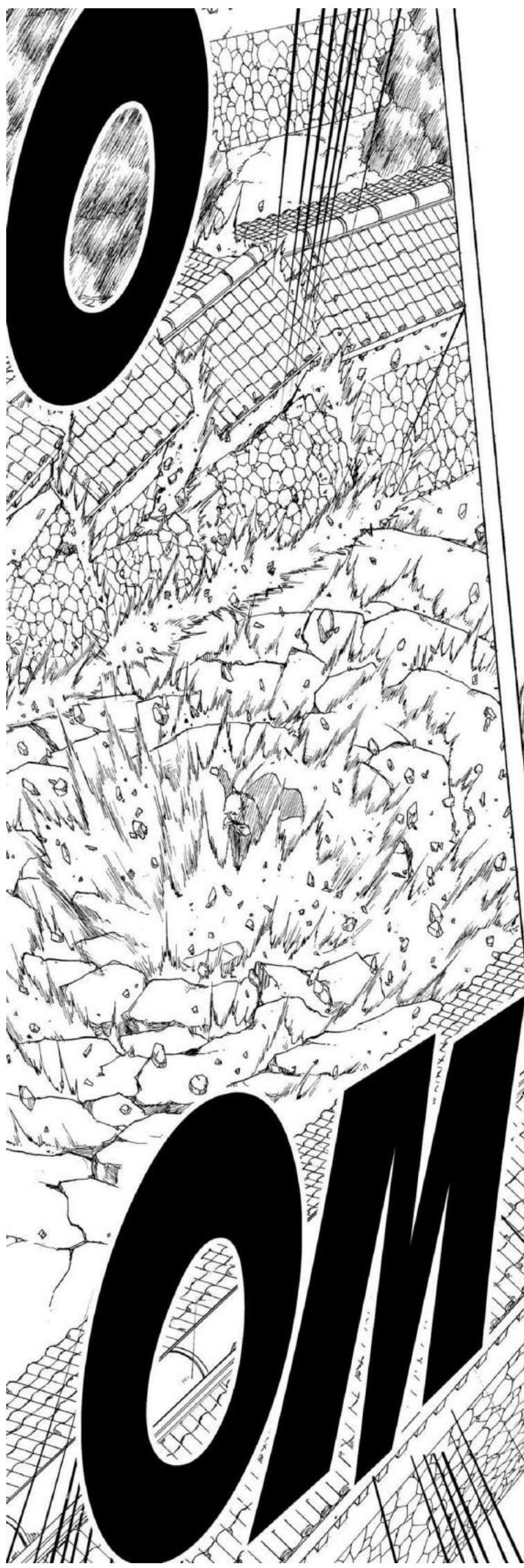


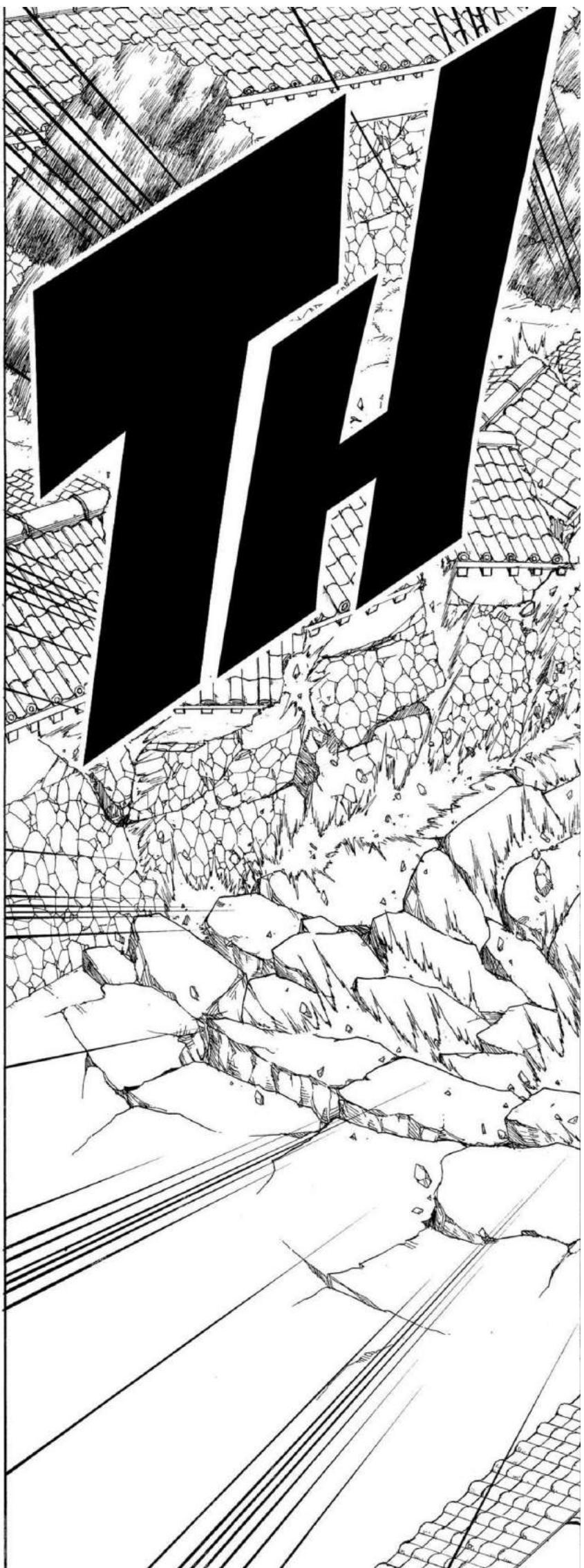


THIS ONE
FEELING...

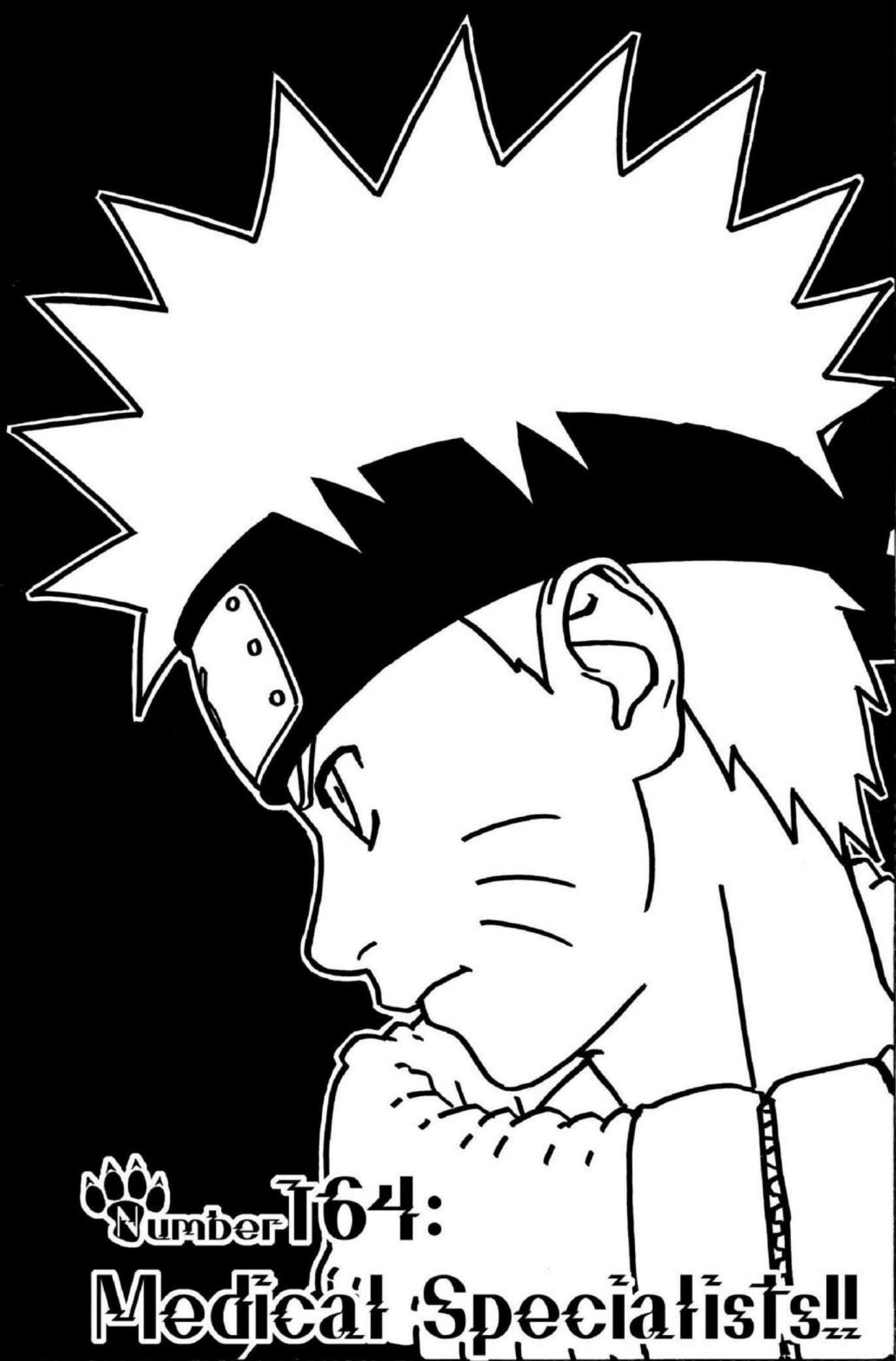
...NEVER
DECAYS...



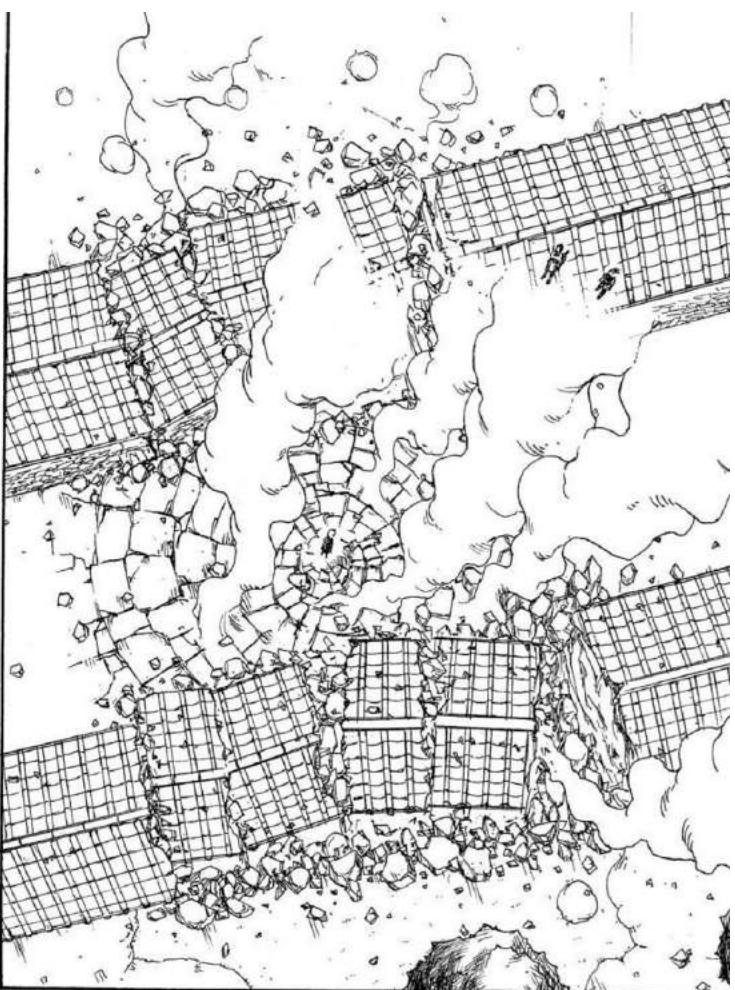








Number 164:
Medical Specialists!!



I'LL
KILL YOU
RIGHT
HERE,
RIGHT
NOW!!

YOU
WORTH-
LESS
SCUM...

I CAN
SEE
THAT.

CRASH
ONE
BLOW
AND
YOU'RE
FINISHED.

TAK

LEAP

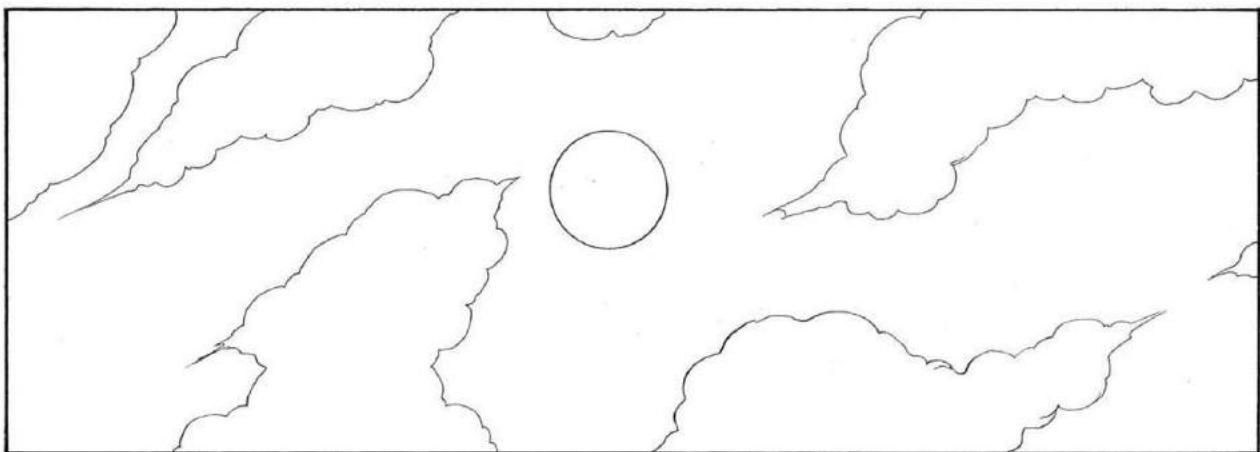
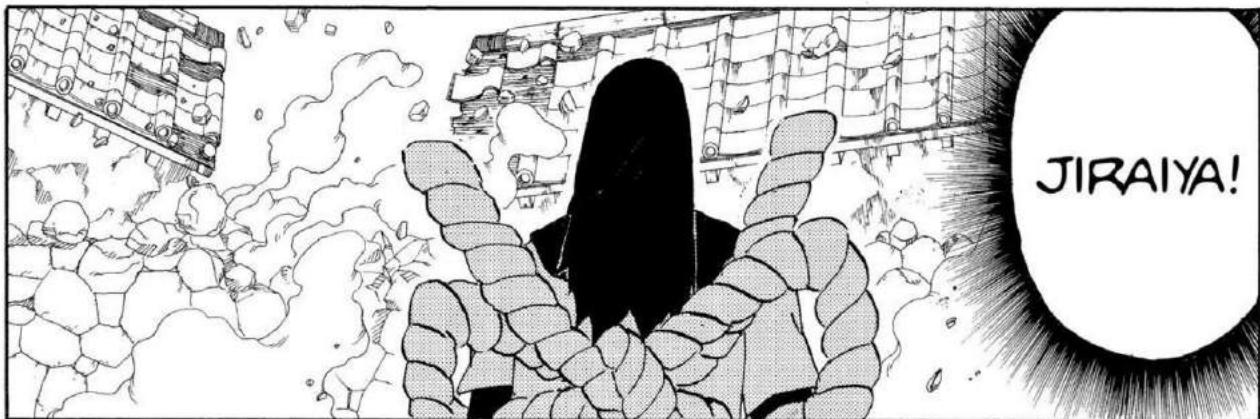
I SAW
SOMEONE
WITH
TSUNADE'S
COMPANION
WE SHOULD
BE WARY
OF...

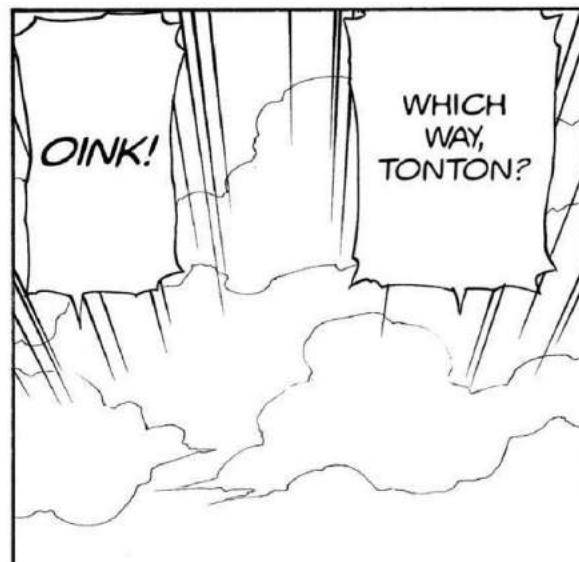
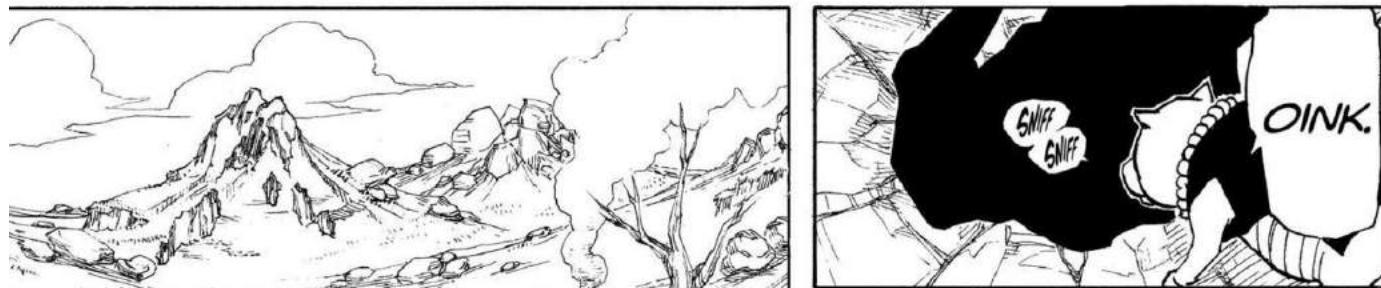
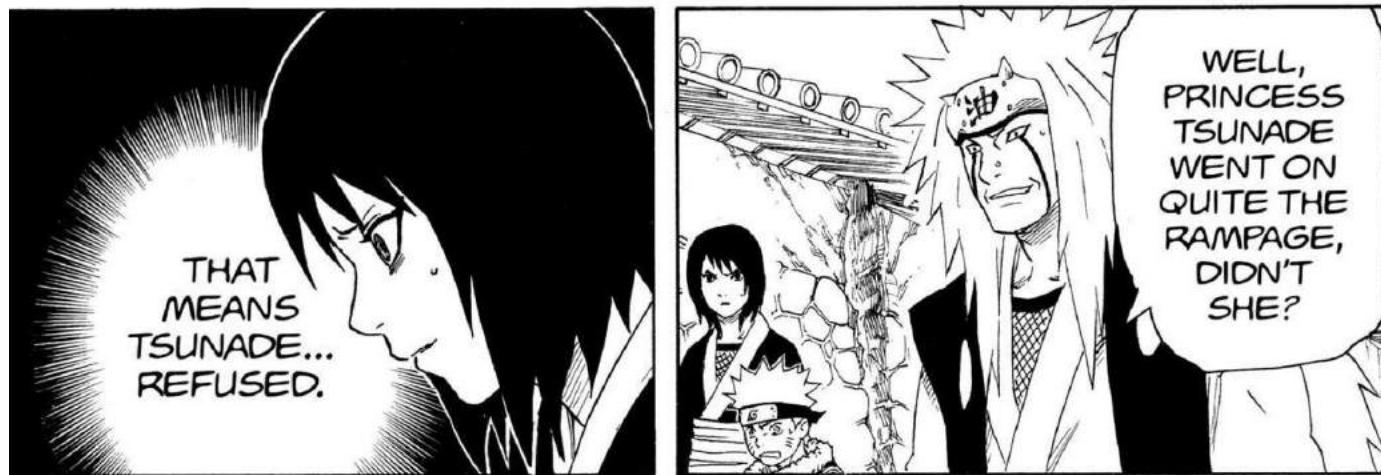
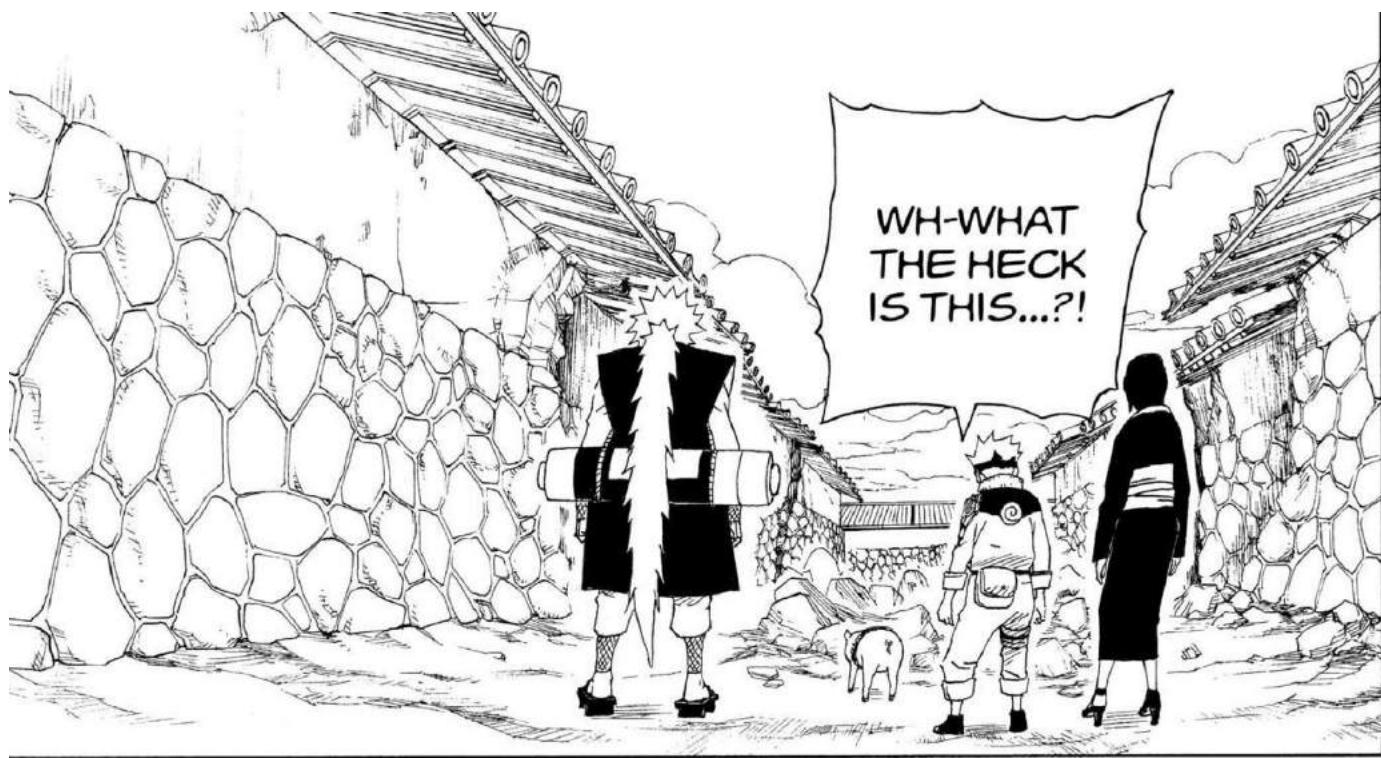
I THINK
WE'D
BETTER.

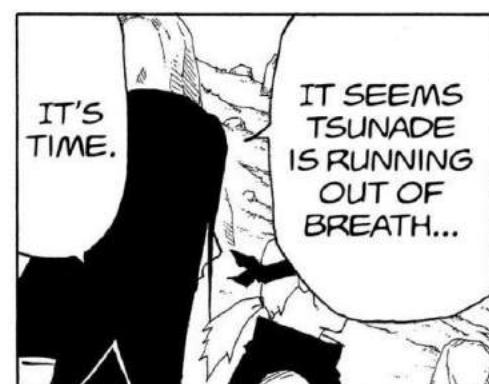
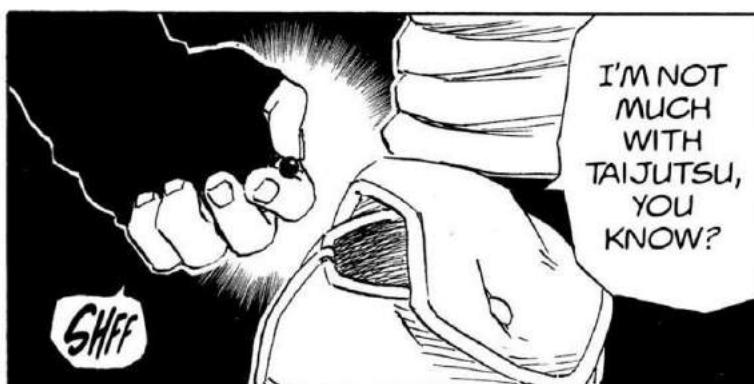
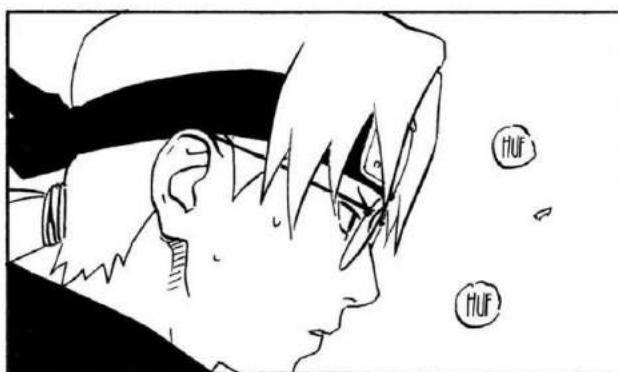
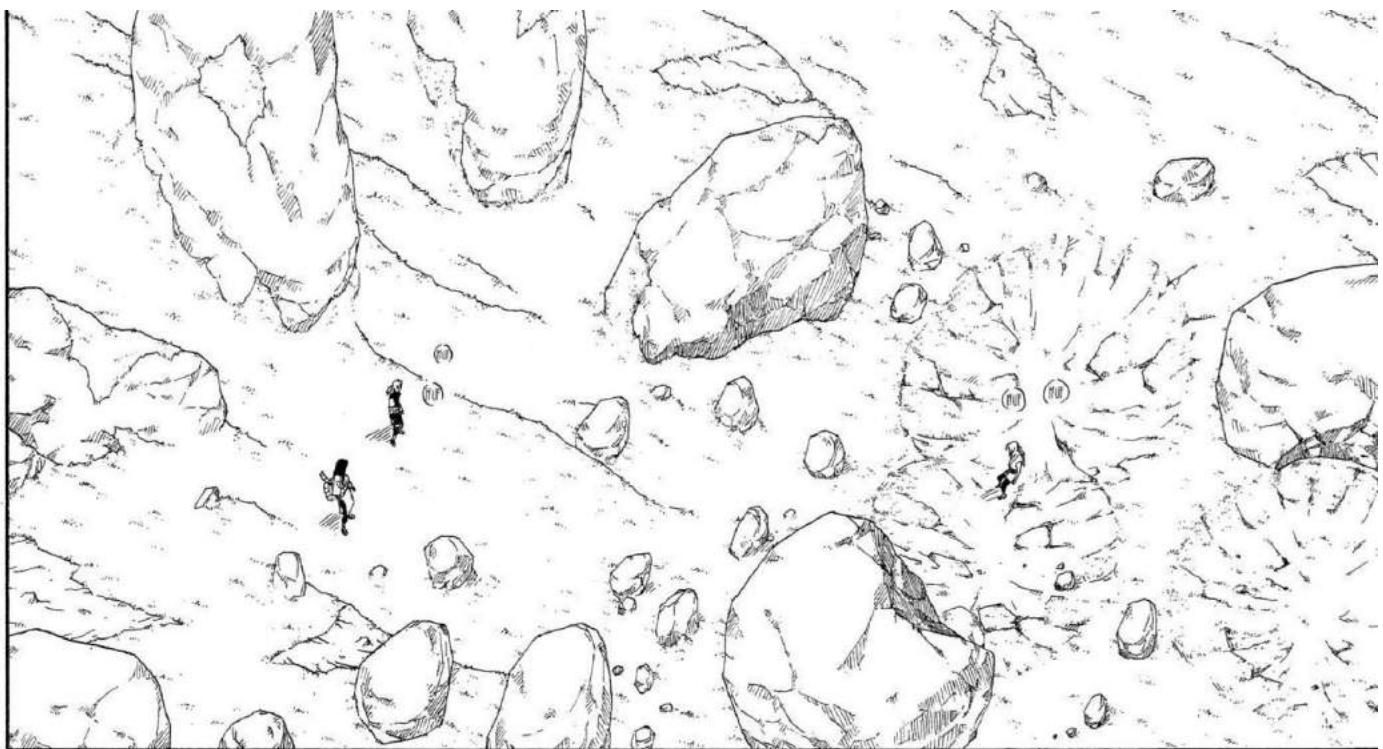
THINKING
OF
MOVING?

IT'S A
BIT TIGHT
HERE FOR
A BATTLE.

WHO?

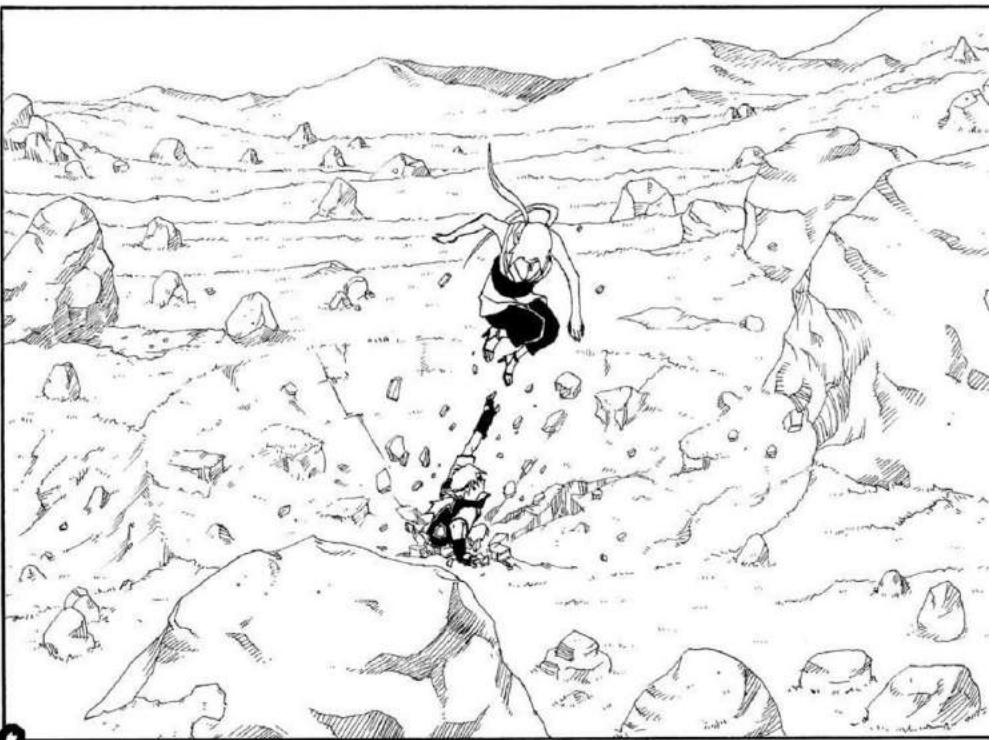


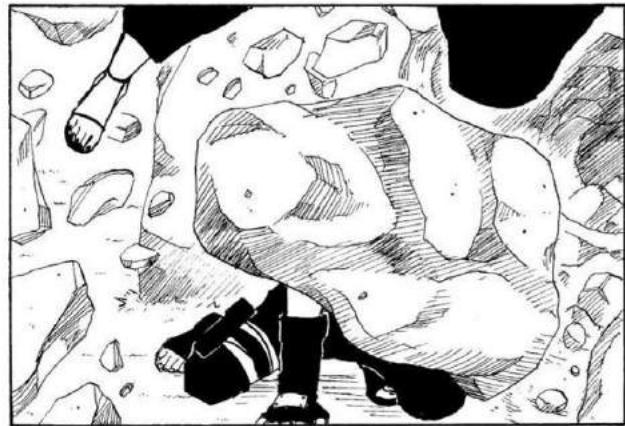


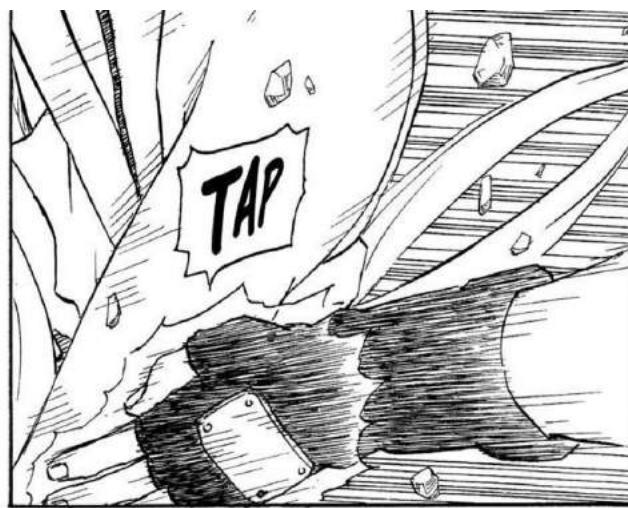


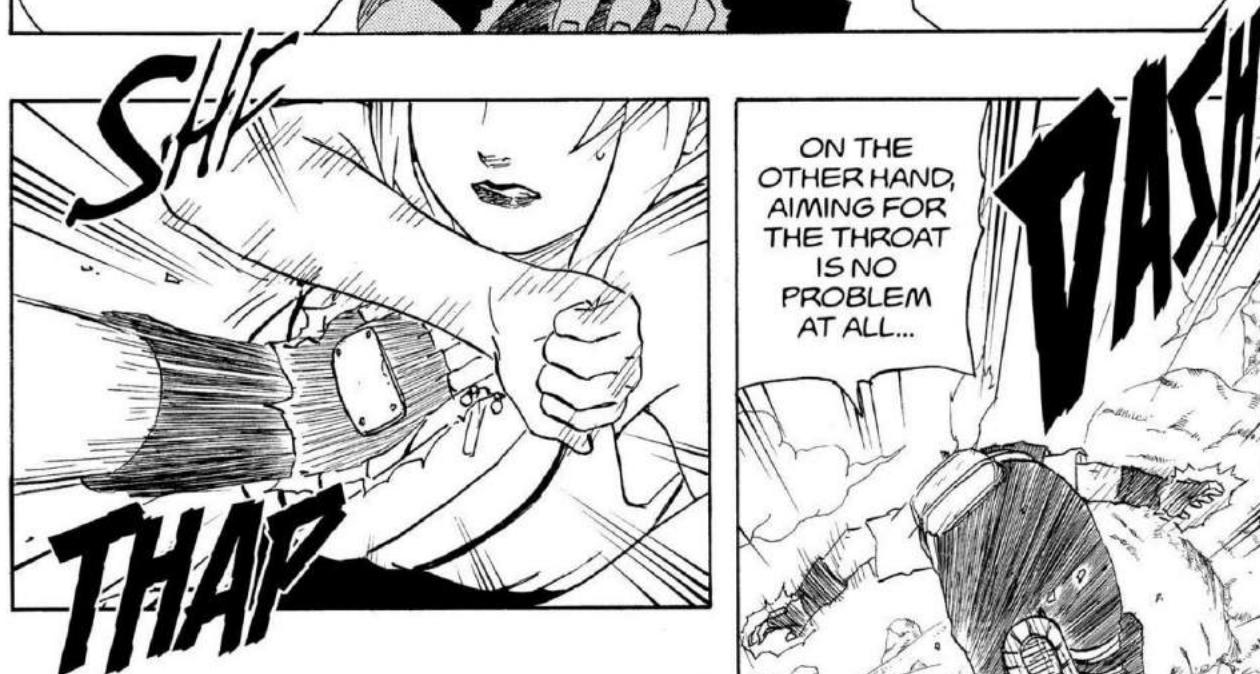
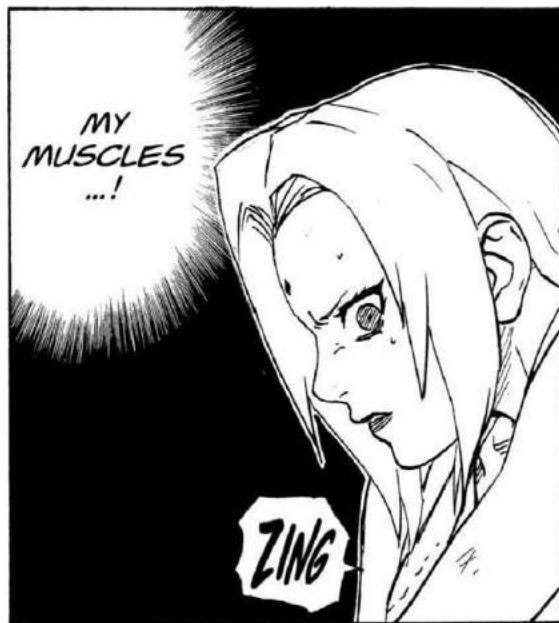
READ
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WAY









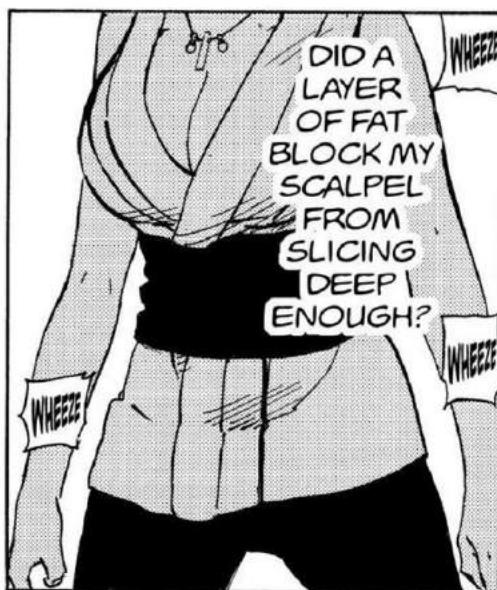




SLUMP

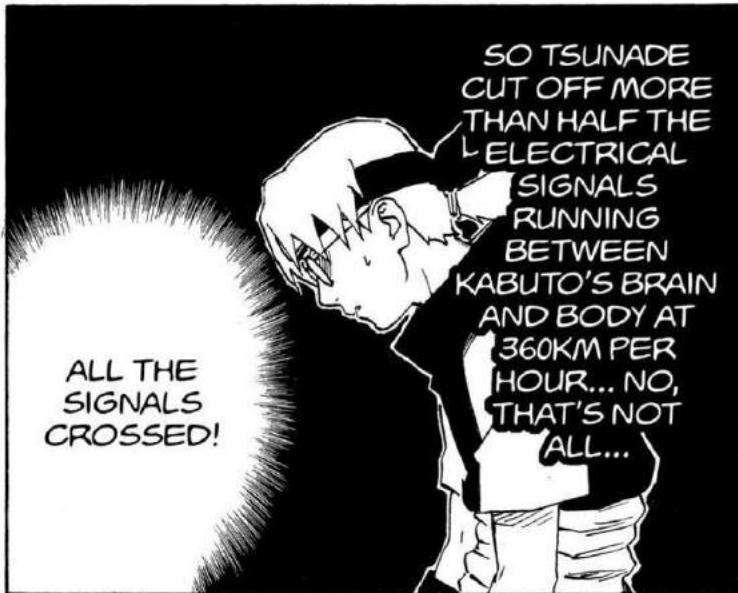
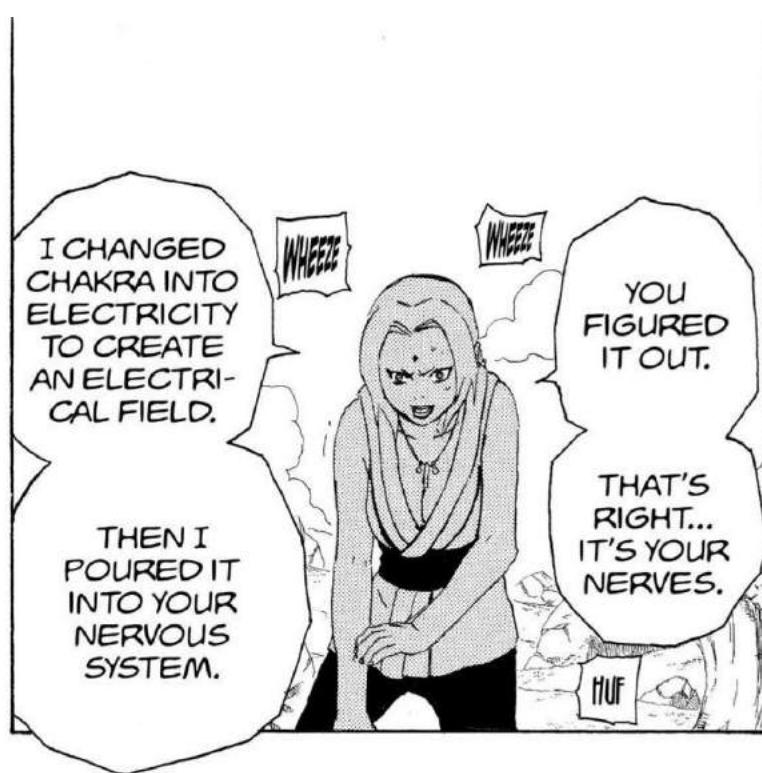
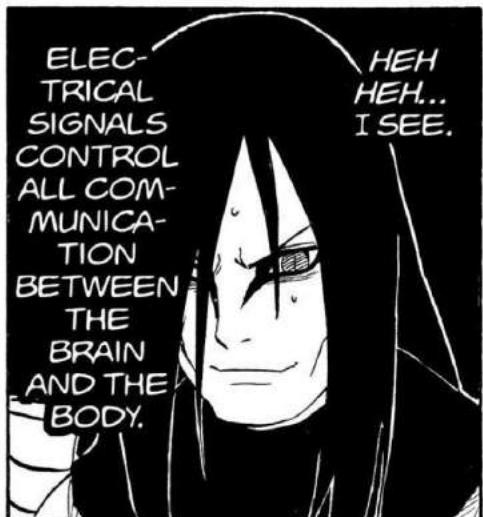
HACK



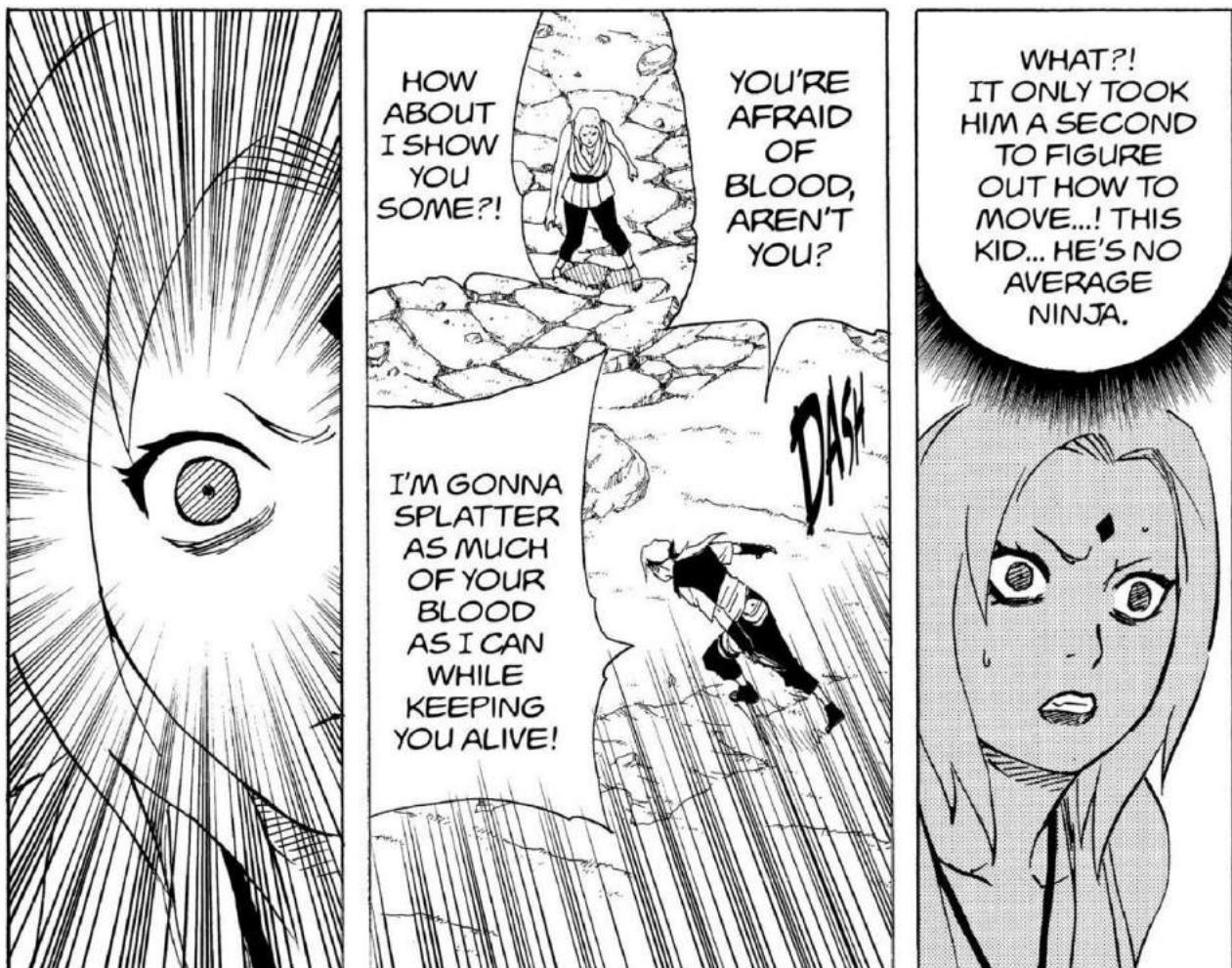
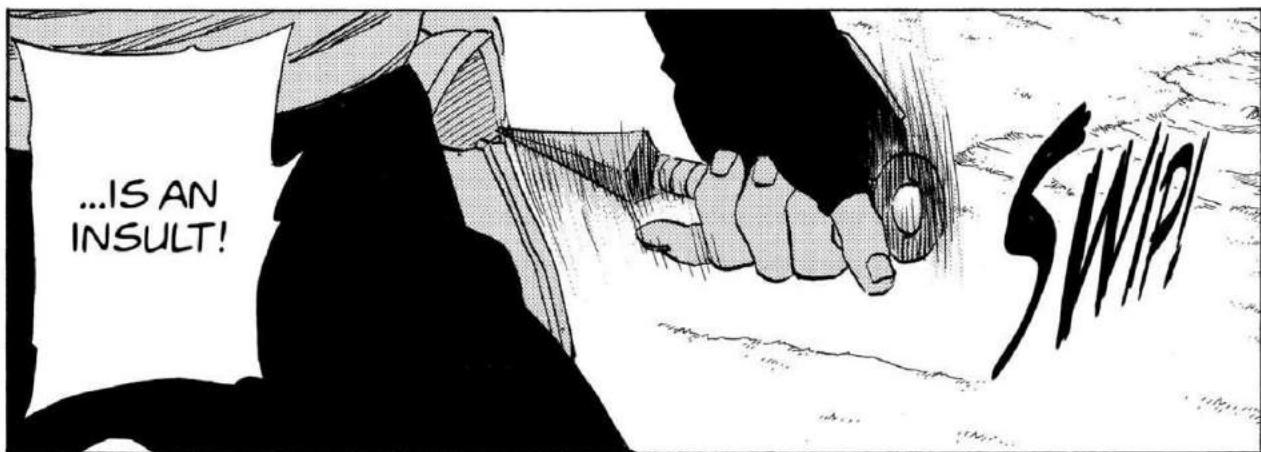




READ
THIS WAY









WELL,
WELL.
LOOKING
AS
MORBID
AS
EVER...



IT'S
BEEN A
WHILE.





THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 30: NO. 1

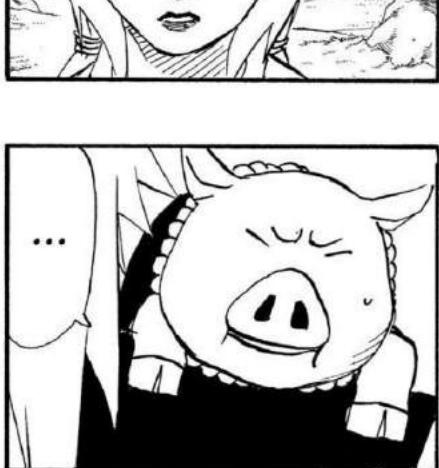
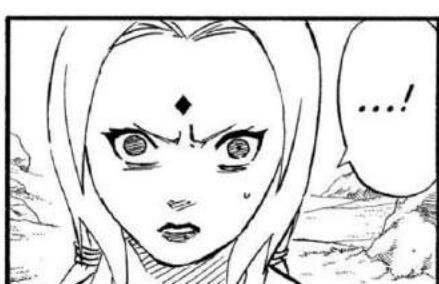
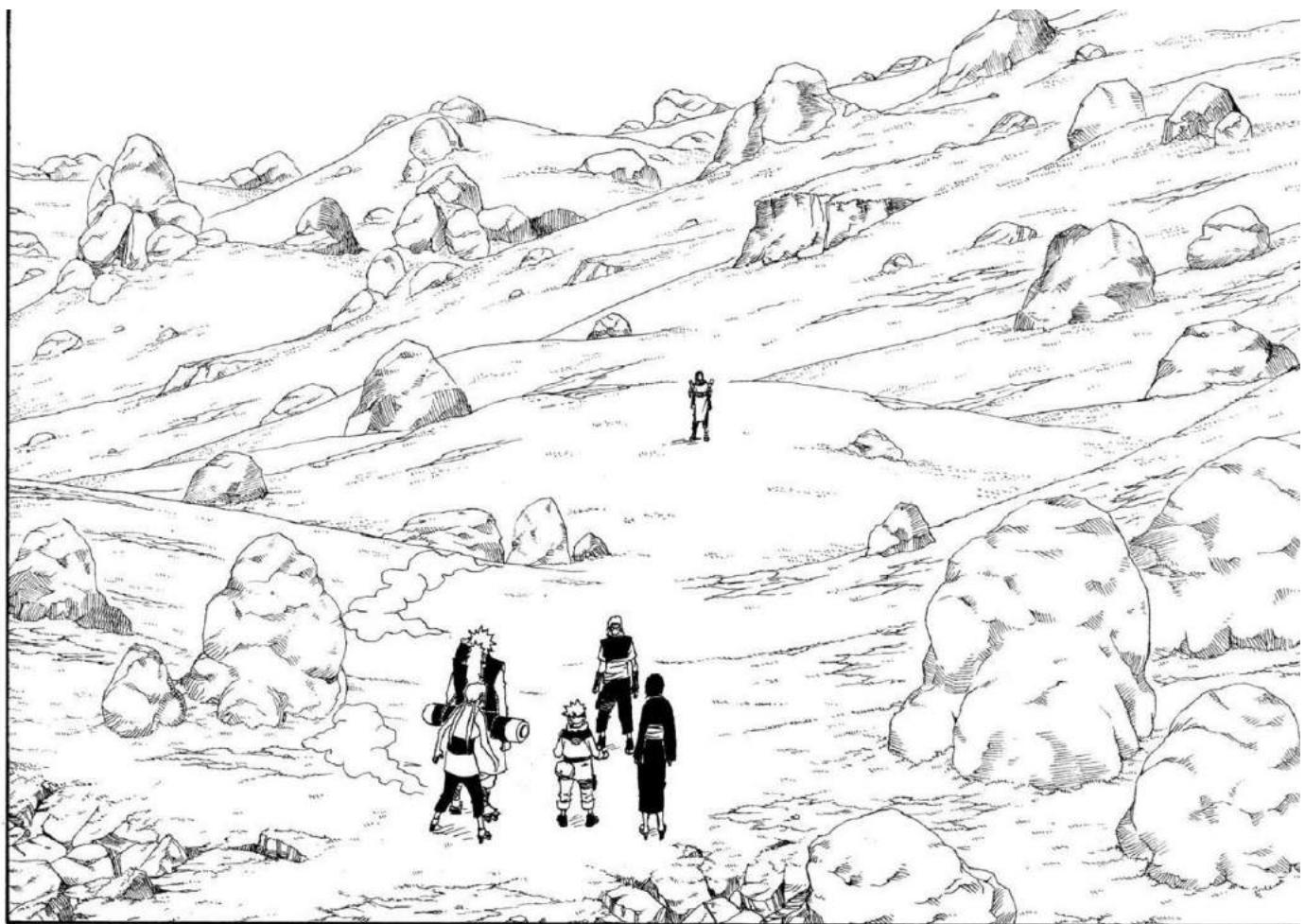
THIS TIME MY STORY IS ABOUT MY DARK AND DEPRESSING YOUNGER DAYS... I WAS A FOURTH YEAR COLLEGE STUDENT AND GRADUATION WAS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER. STILL, I HAD MADE NO PROGRESS AT ALL TOWARD BECOMING A MANGA ARTIST. I FELT DOWN ALL THE TIME... I HAD BEEN DRAWING THINGS LIKE BOYS' ACTION AND STUFF, BUT NO MATTER WHAT I DREW IT ALWAYS CAME OUT LOOKING DULL AND TYPICAL. EVERYTHING WAS TOTALLY, UNIFORMLY REJECTED. LOOKING BACK ON THOSE DAYS NOW, I'D SAY THAT THEY WERE PROBABLY THE MOST DIFFICULT OF MY LIFE. CHANGING YOURSELF EVEN A LITTLE REQUIRES MUCH MORE EFFORT THAN YOU THINK... TRANSFORMING MYSELF FROM A YOUNG MAN WHO JUST ADORED MANGA INTO A PROFESSIONAL MANGA ARTIST... THAT WAS A MASSIVE CHANGE FOR ME AND IT REQUIRED AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF ENERGY.

HAVING DREAMT ABOUT BECOMING A MANGA ARTIST, I FELT A LITTLE TRIUMPHANT AFTER RECEIVING A MANGA AWARD. I FELT AS THOUGH I HAD COME CLOSER TO BECOMING A PRO. I HAD NO INTENTION OF SHOWING OFF MY AWARD, AND I DON'T THINK THAT I DID. HOWEVER, DEEP DOWN I WAS THINKING, "WELL, I CAN RELAX A BIT NOW. AFTER ALL, I'VE WON AN AWARD."

BUT EVEN NOW I SOMETIMES THINK THAT WAS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE OF MY LIFE. LIKE I SAID, CHANGING ONESELF TAKES A LOT OF ENERGY. BUT MY RECEIVING THAT AWARD DIDN'T MEAN THAT I HAD CHANGED THROUGH MY OWN EFFORTS; IT WAS JUST AN ILLUSION THAT MADE IT LOOK THAT WAY. AT OUR FIRST MEETING, MY EDITOR MR. YAHAGI GAVE ME A WORD OF ADVICE: "IT'S AFTER YOU WIN AN AWARD THAT THE HARD PART COMES...." OVER TIME I CAME TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HE MEANT.

I THINK NOW THAT WINNING AWARDS OR NOT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER VERY MUCH. WINNING AN AWARD DOESN'T MAKE YOU A PRO. YOU'RE ONLY A STEP UP FROM BEING JUST A MANGA LOVER. A TRUE PRO IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT THING. I KNOW THAT NOW. BUT THAT IS A TRAP THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE JUST BEGUN THEIR CAREERS AS MANGA ARTISTS TEND TO GET CAUGHT IN. I'M NO EXCEPTION, AND IT TOOK ME A TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF TIME AND EFFORT TO GET OUT OF THAT TRAP... BUT THAT'S A STORY I'LL CONTINUE ANOTHER TIME... BOY...THAT'S A DISMAL STORY...





READ
THIS
WAY



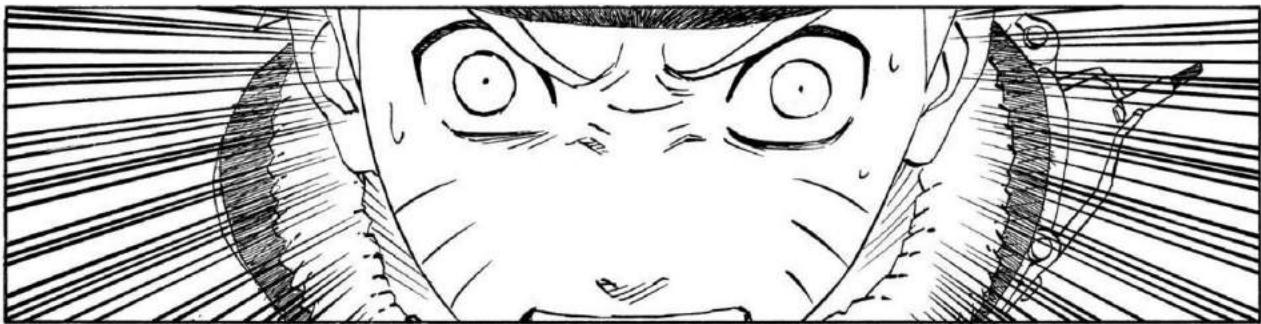














I'LL
HIT 'EM
FROM
THE RIGHT
WHERE
HE CAN'T
GUARD!



YES!



TAK



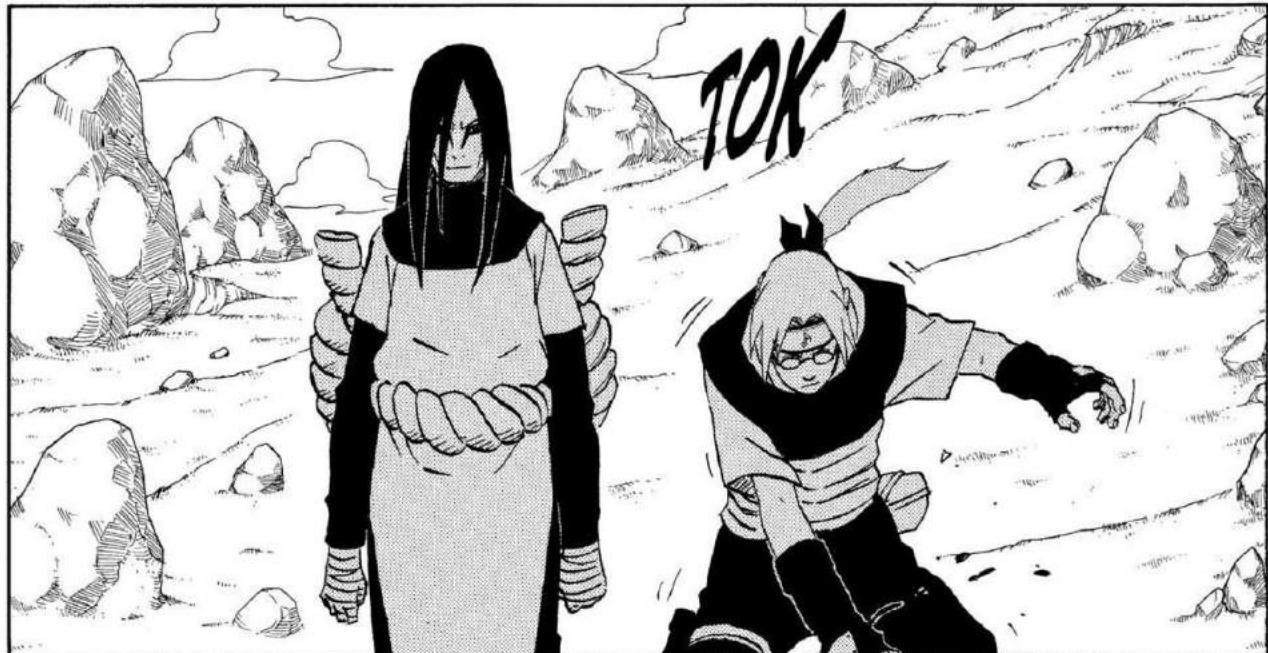
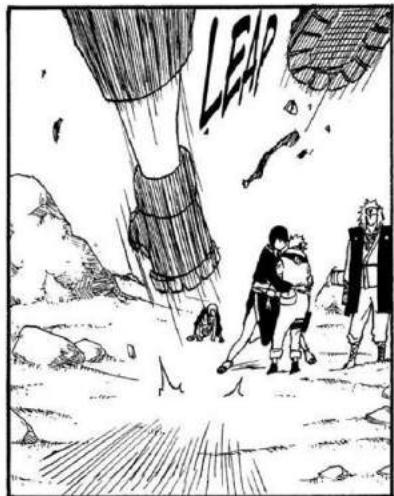
HUH?

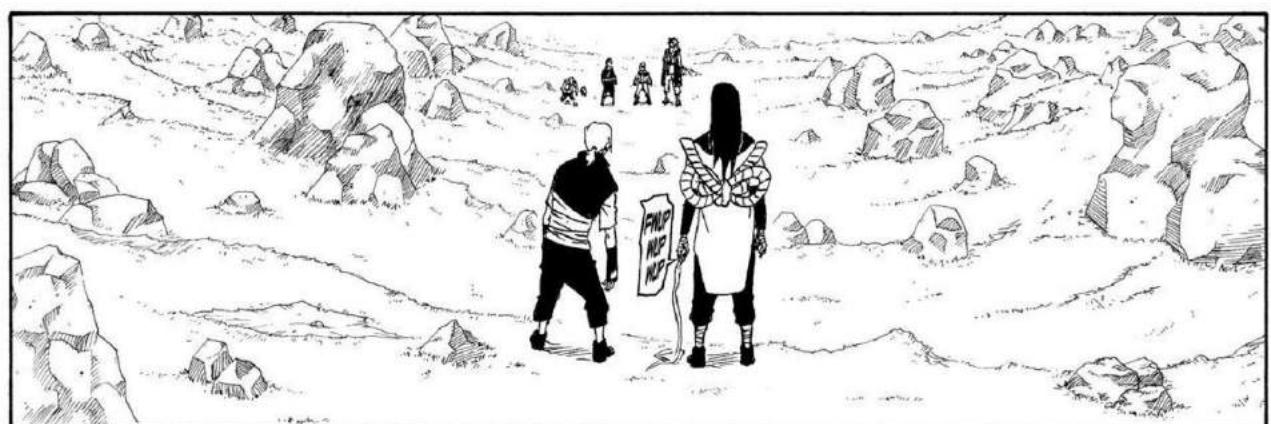
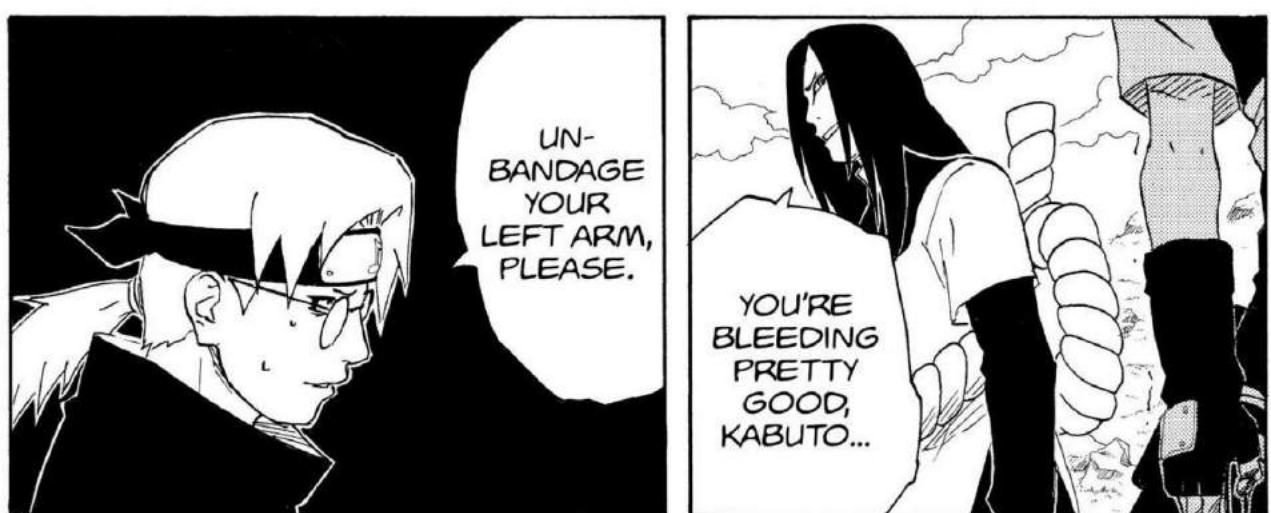
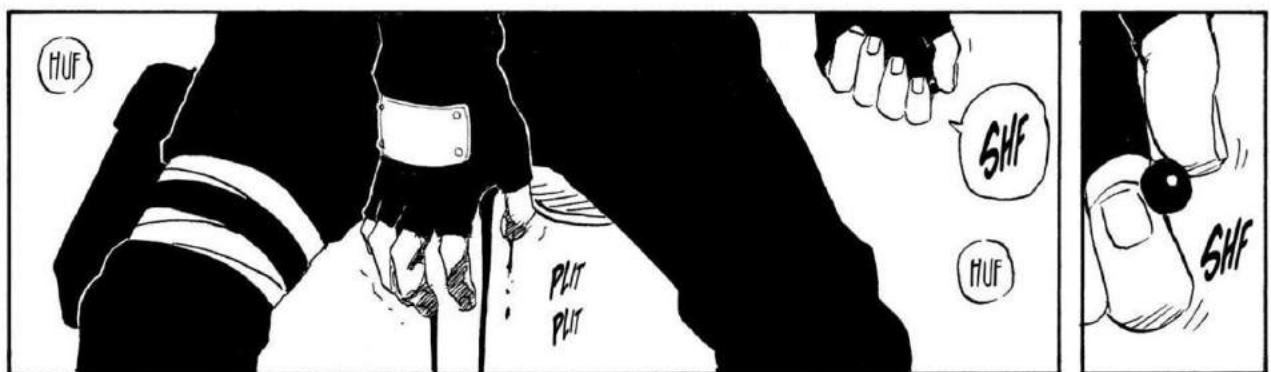


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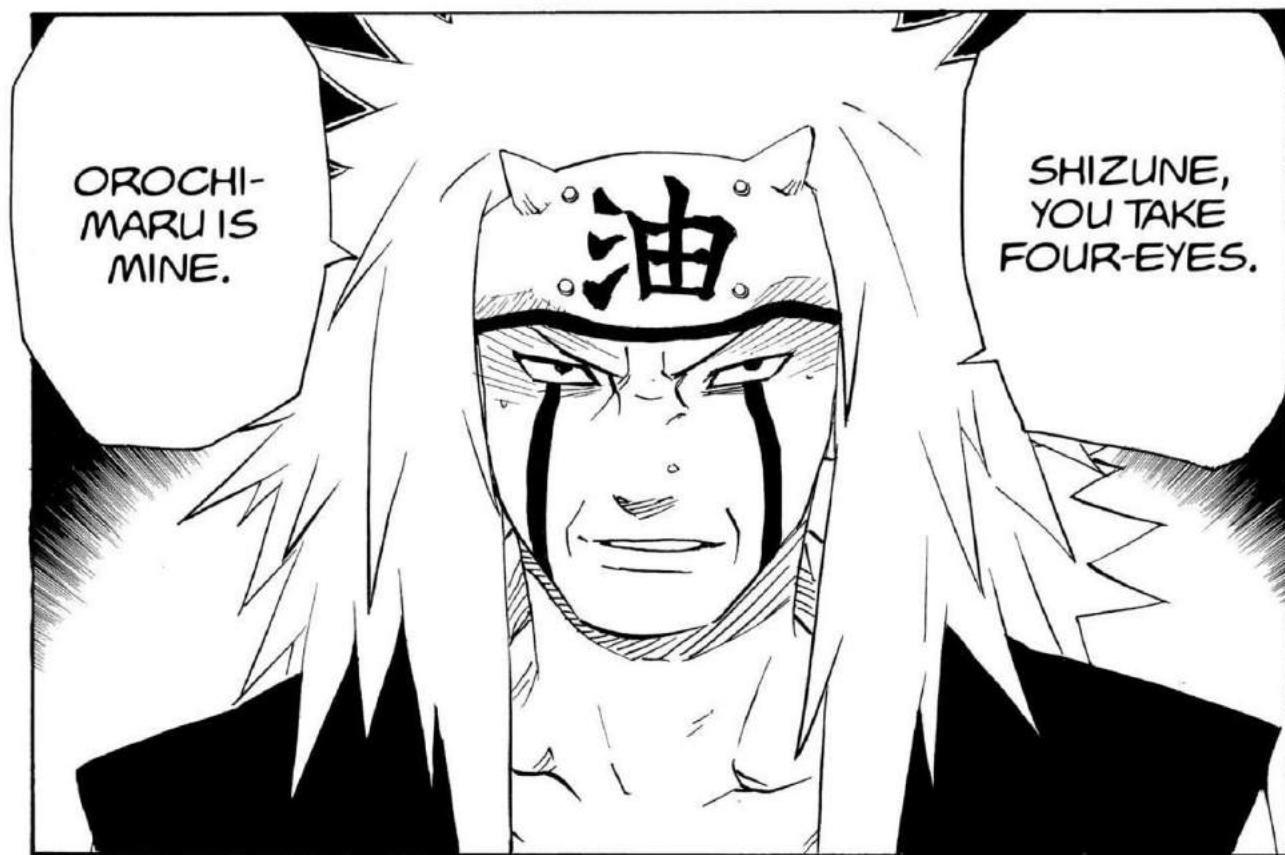
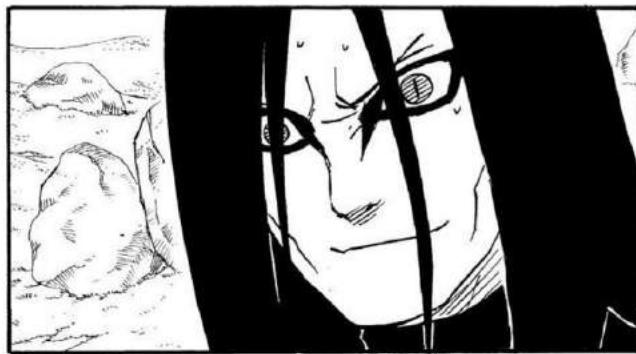


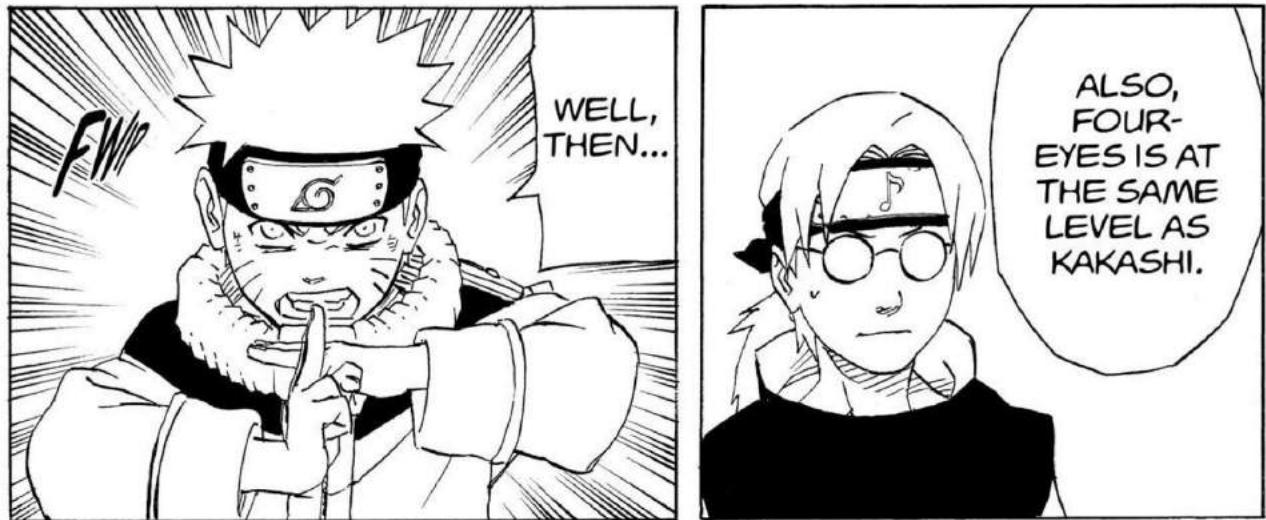


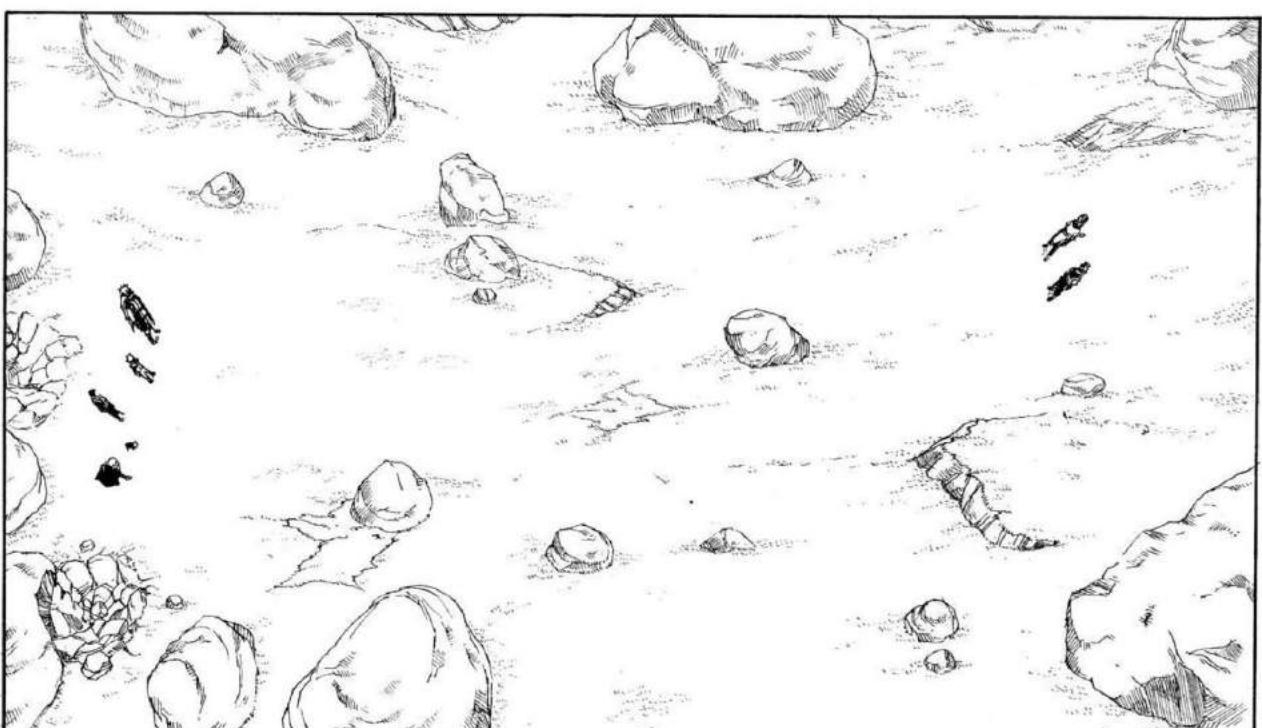




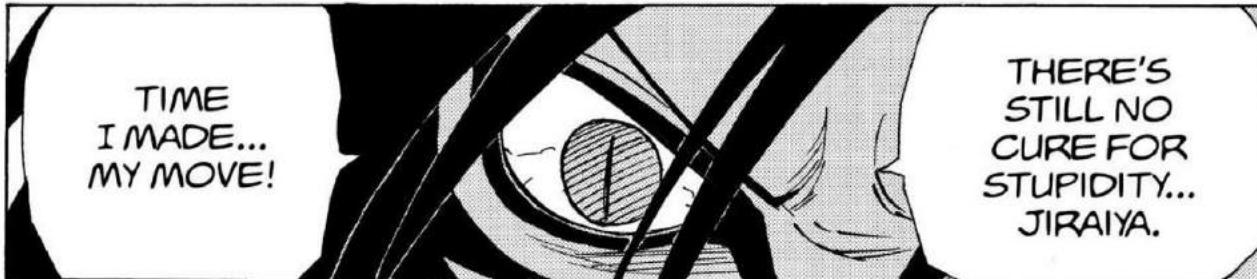
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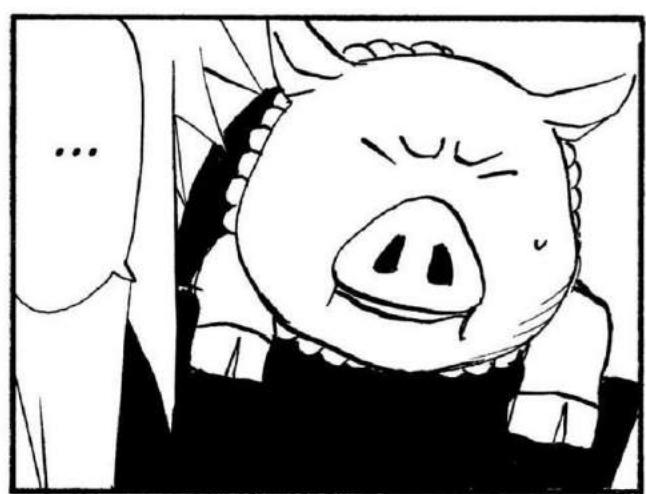




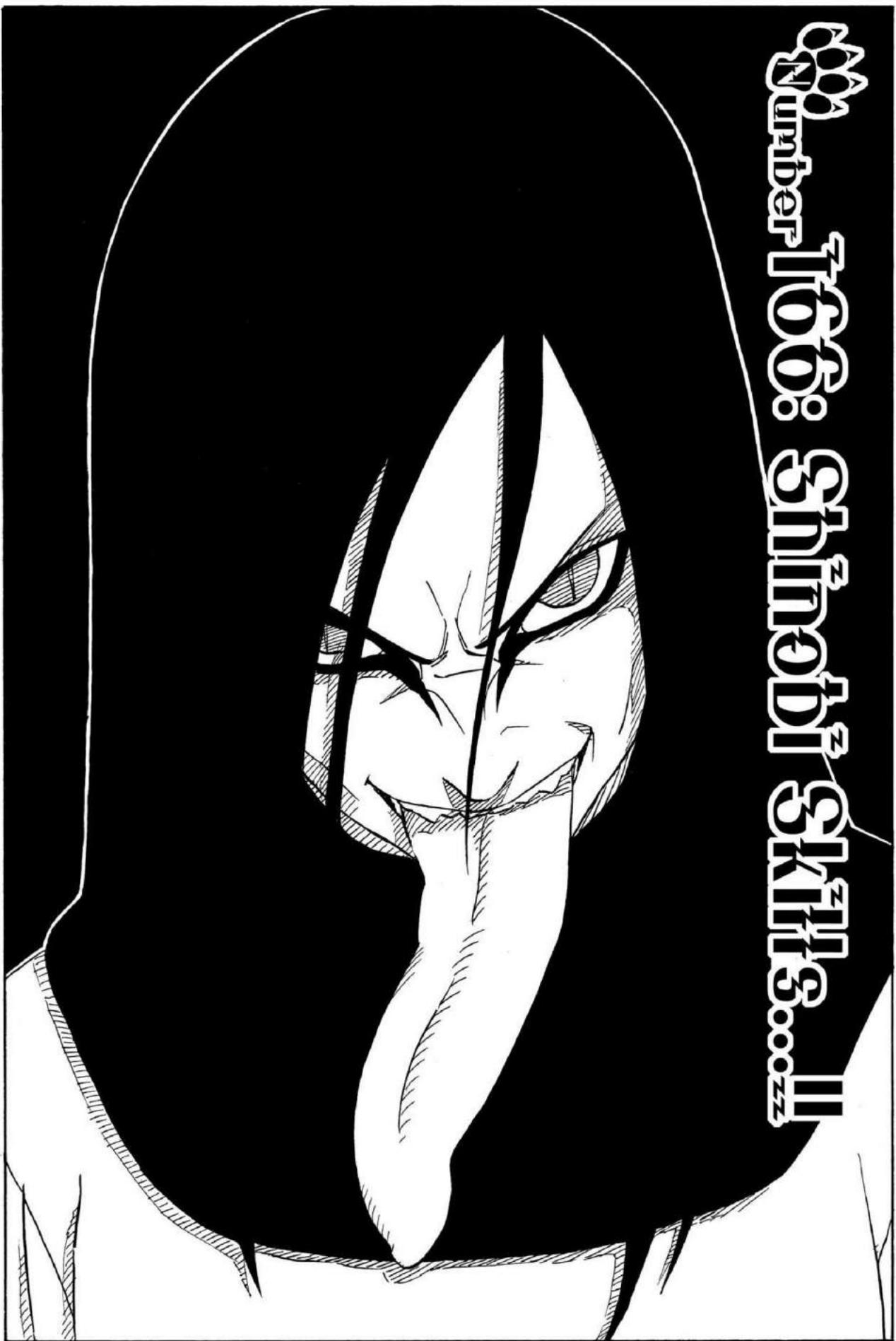




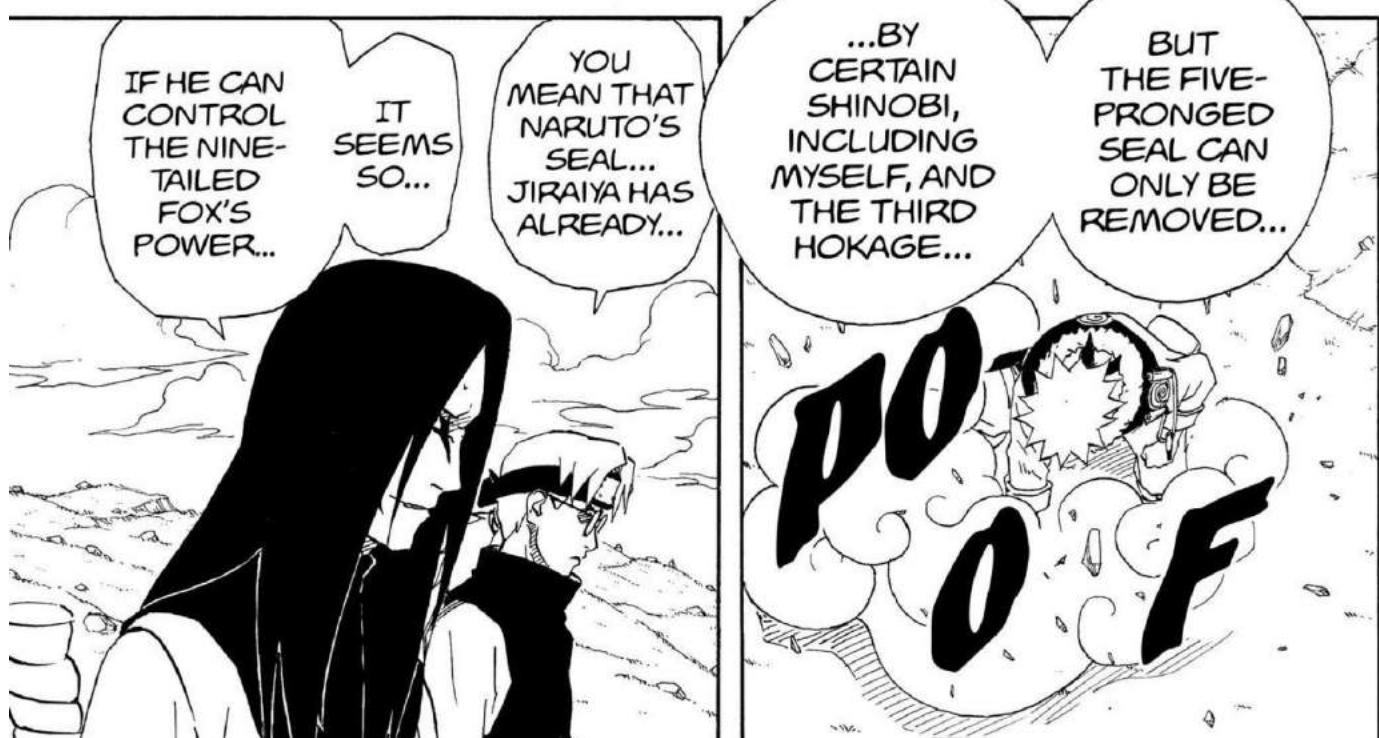
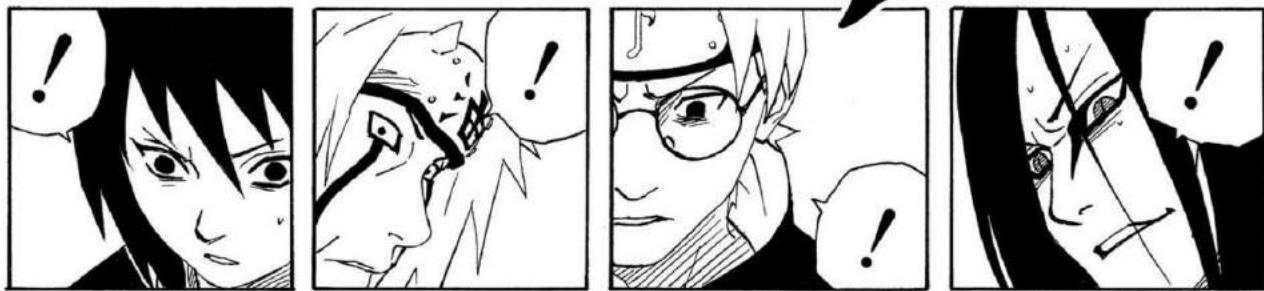
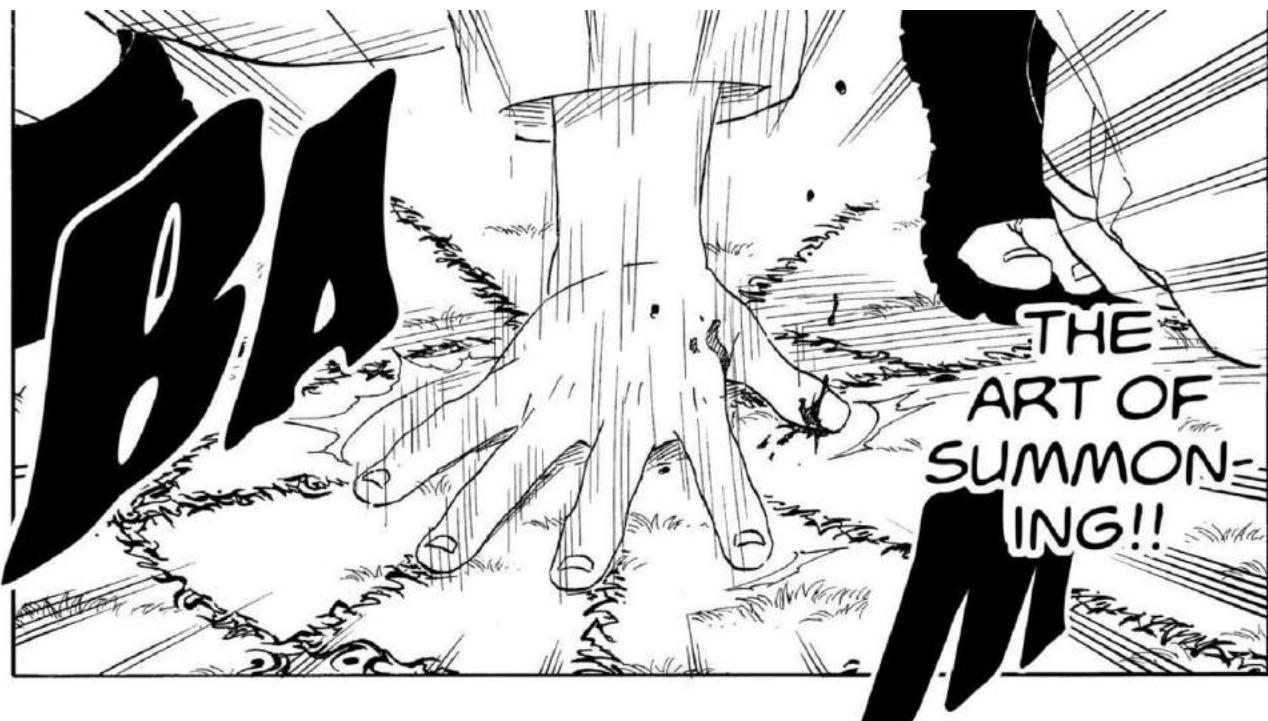


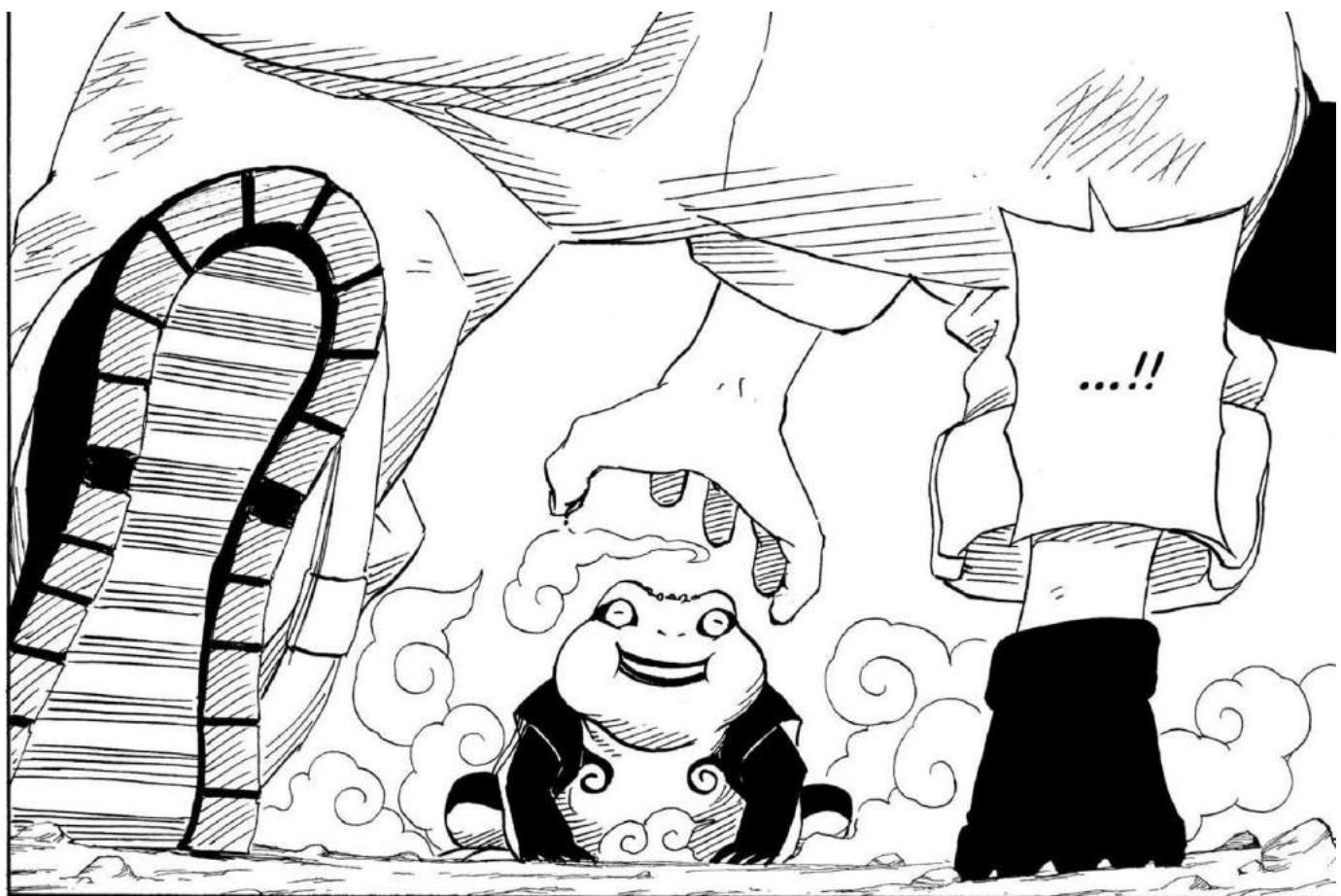


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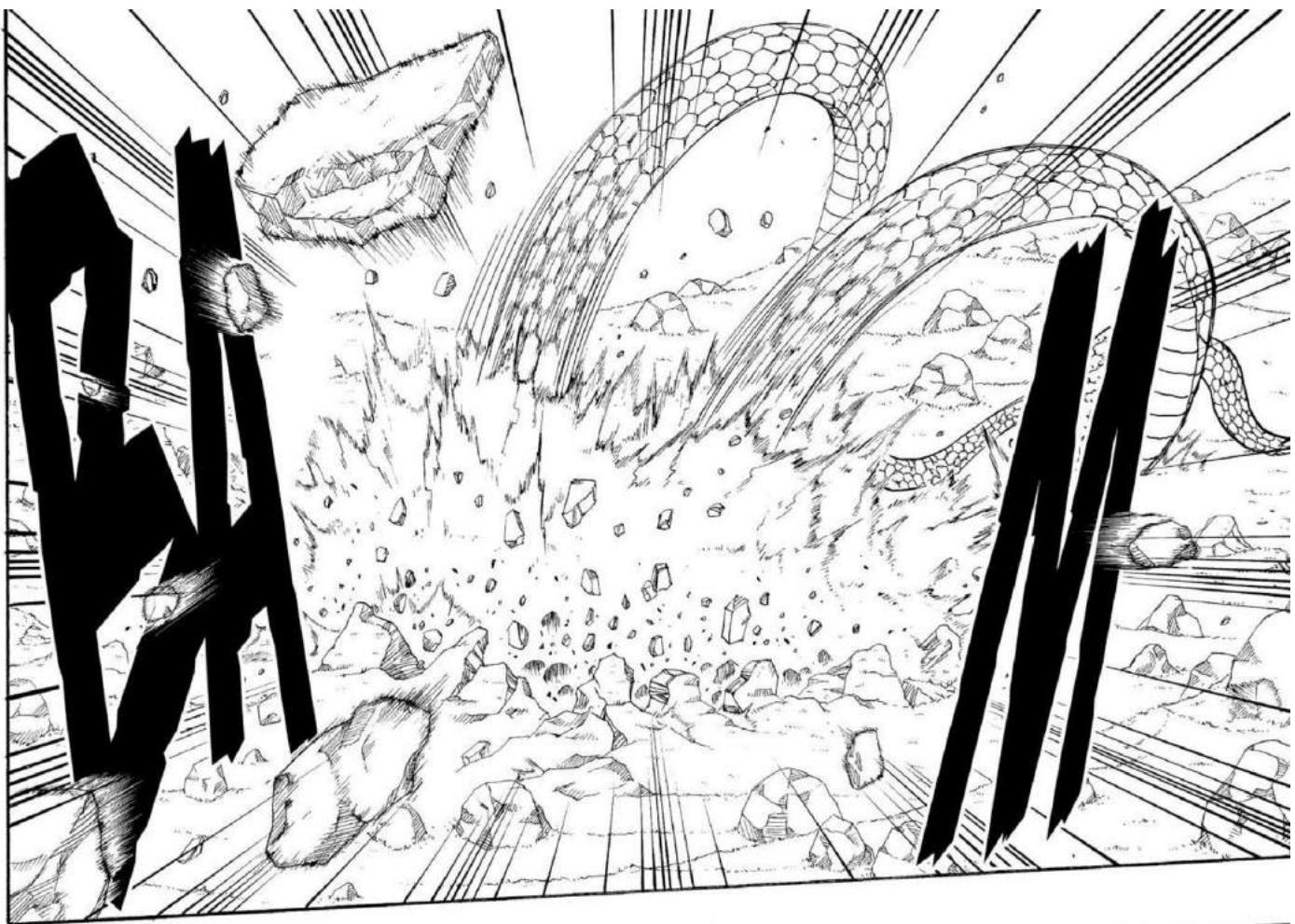




HE NEVER
HAD MUCH
TALENT AS
A SHINOBI
ANYWAY...



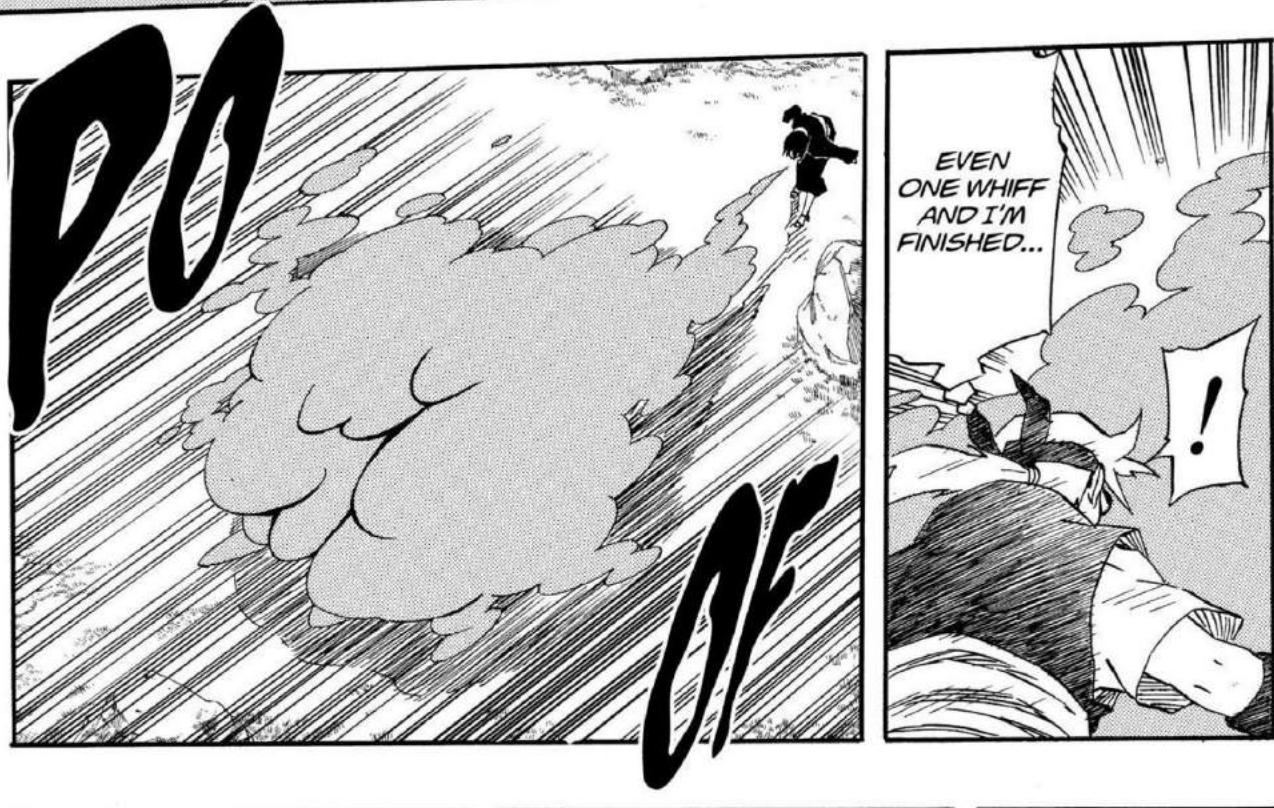
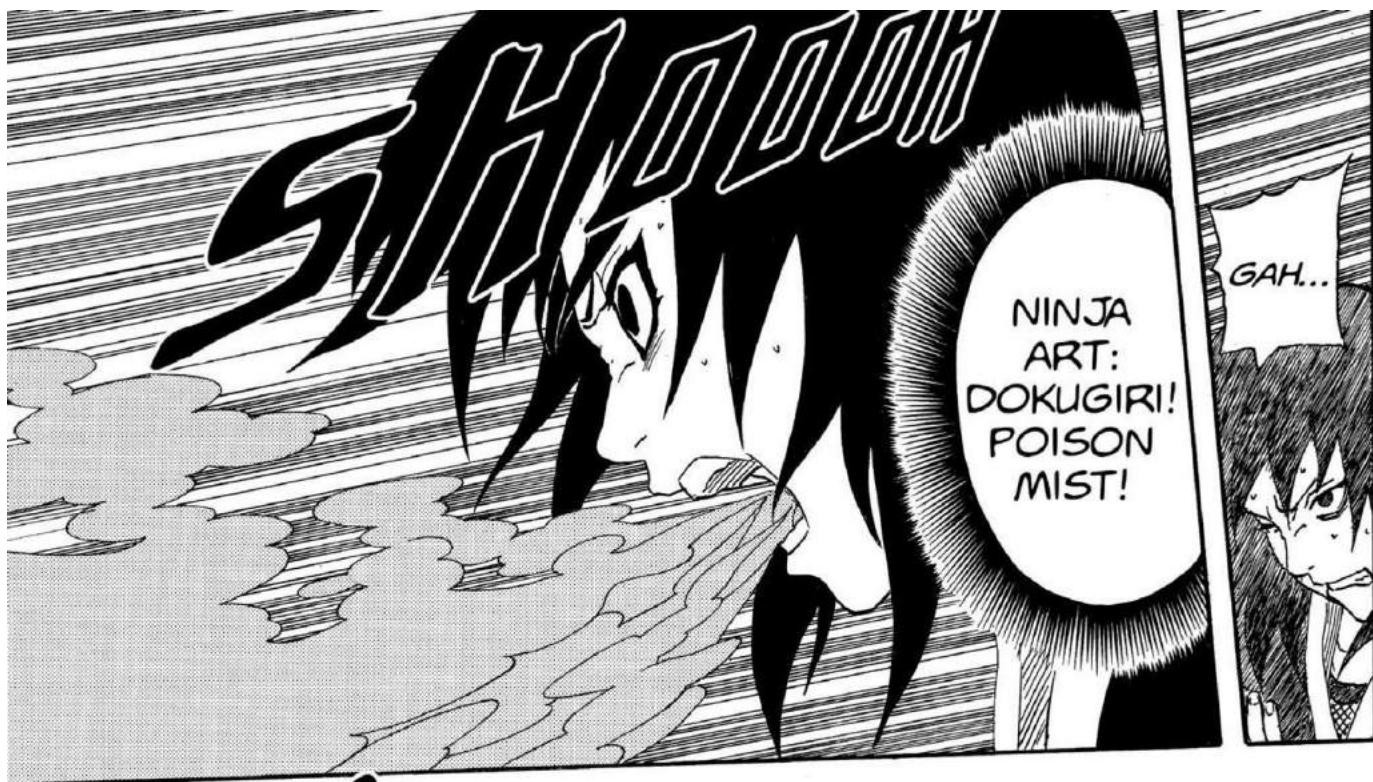


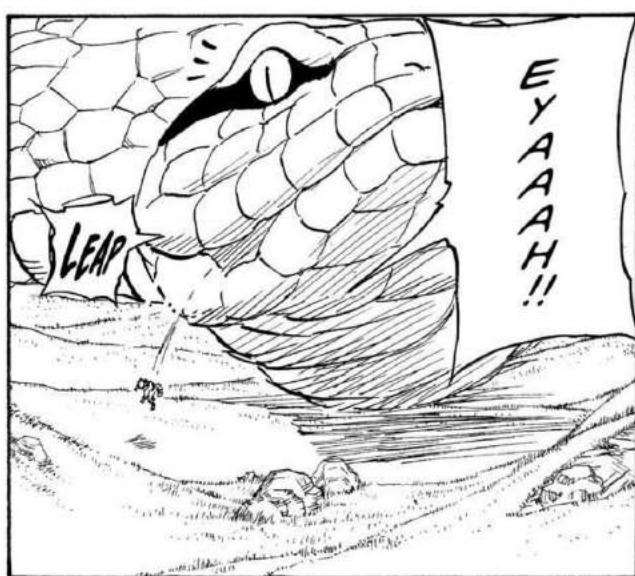
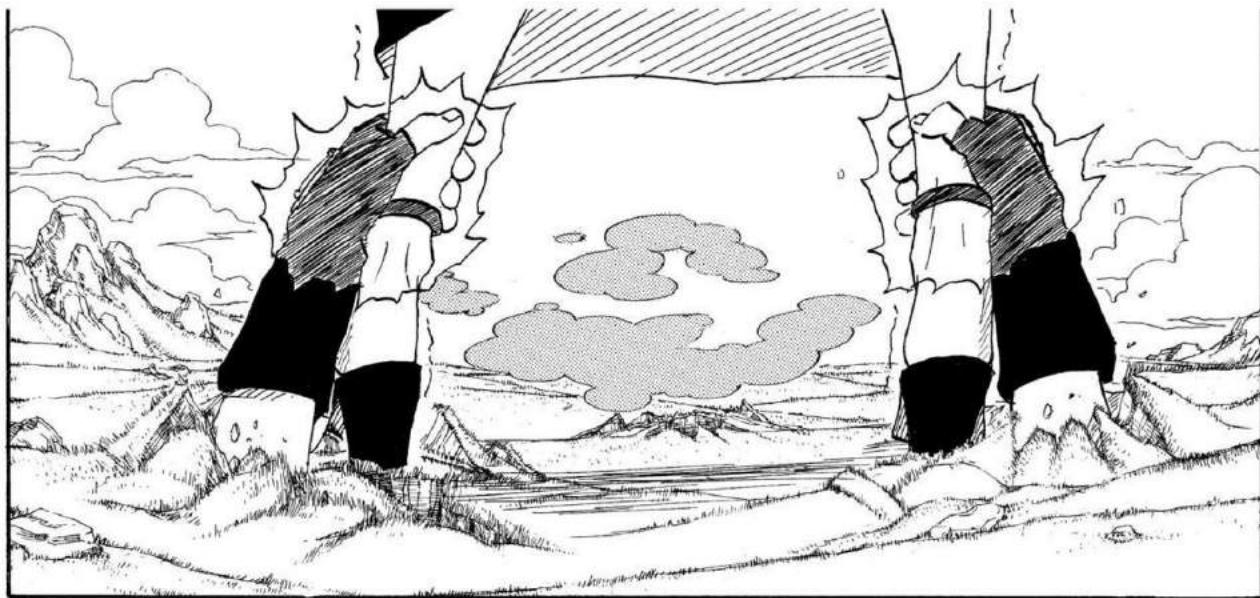


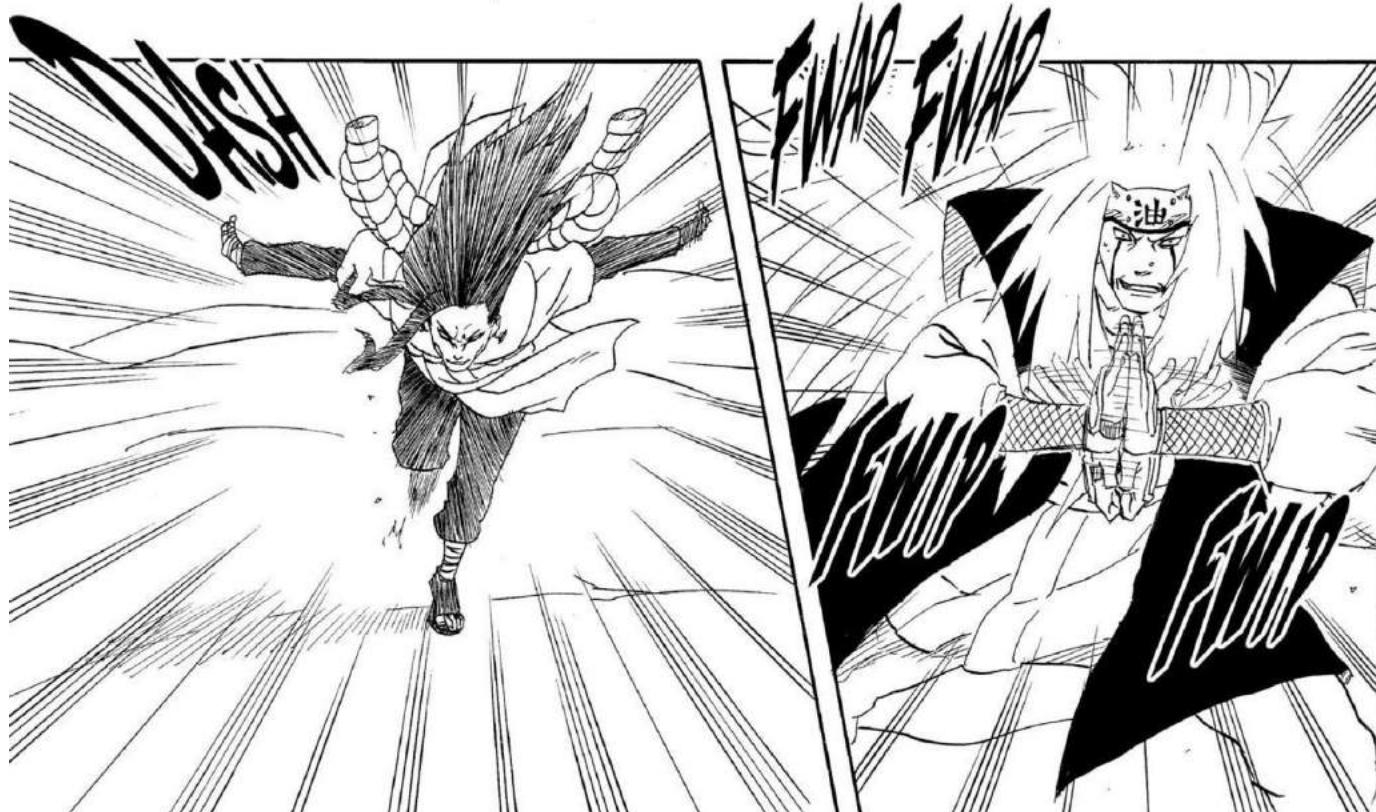
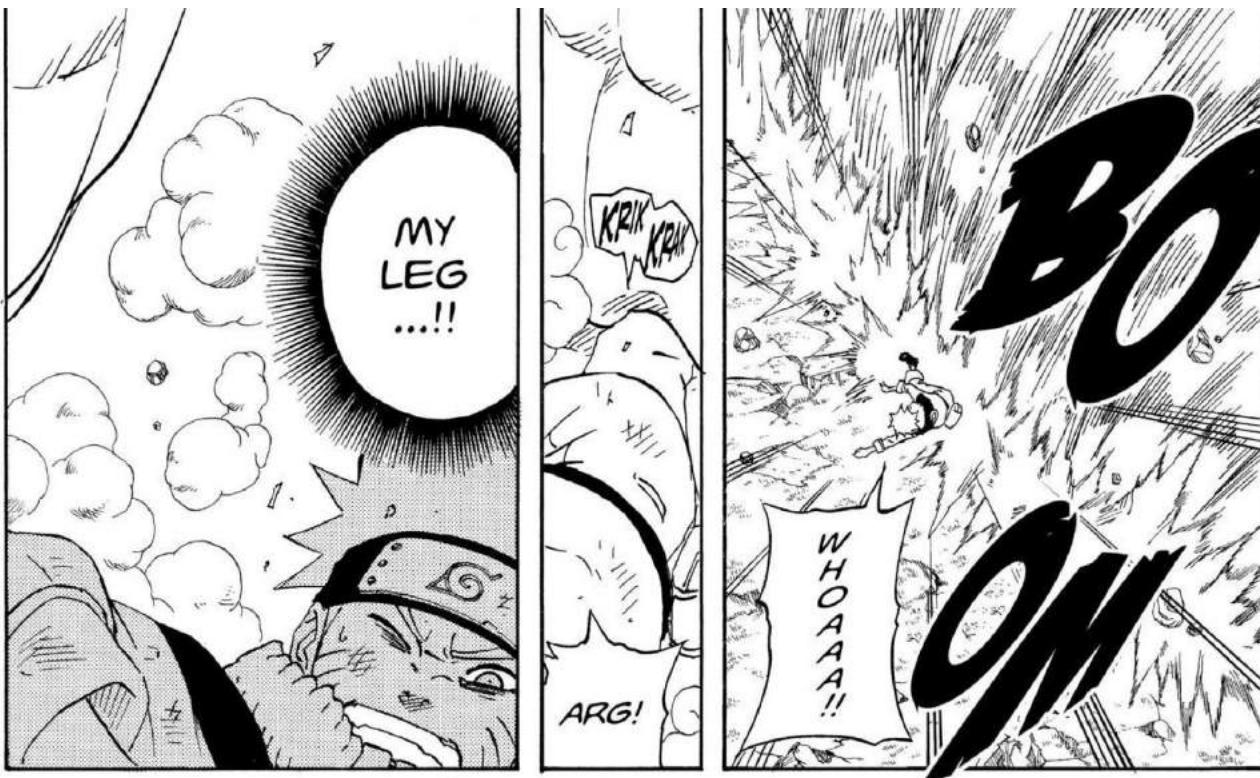
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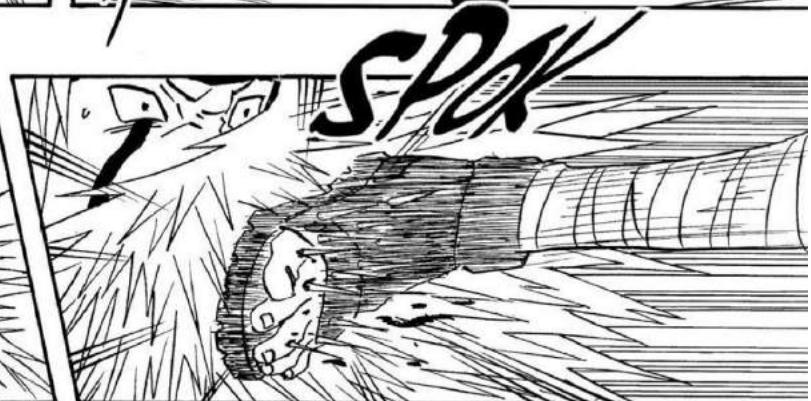




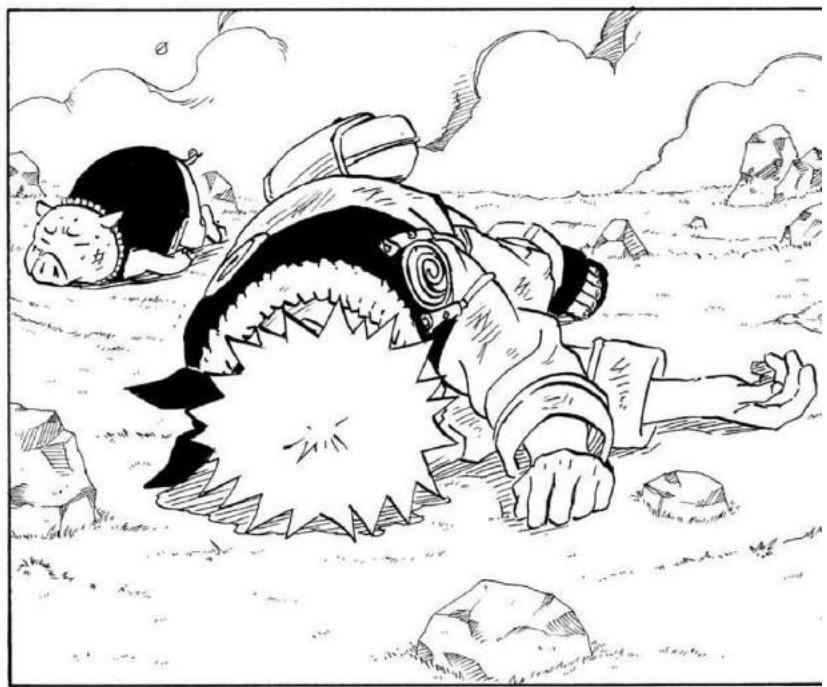


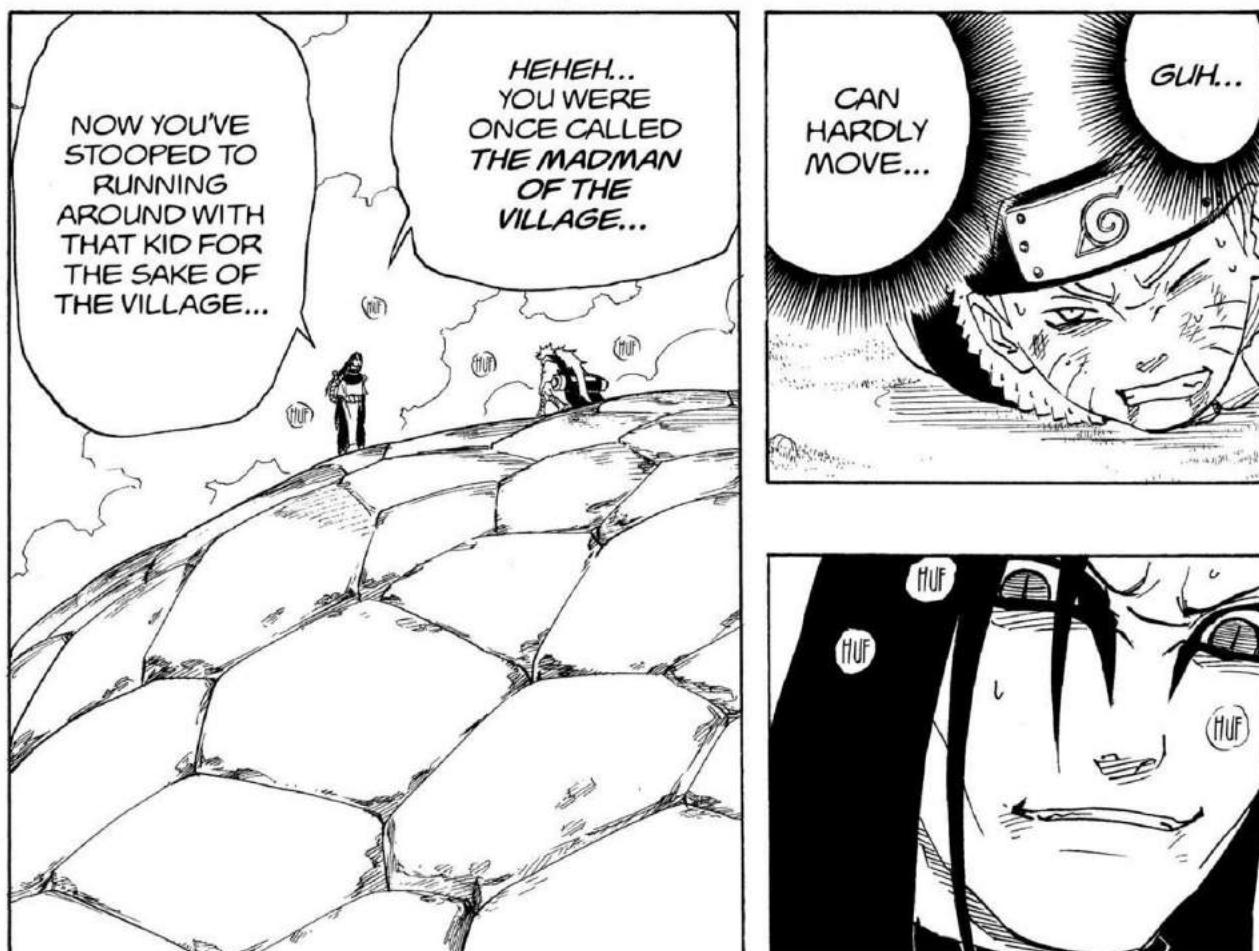
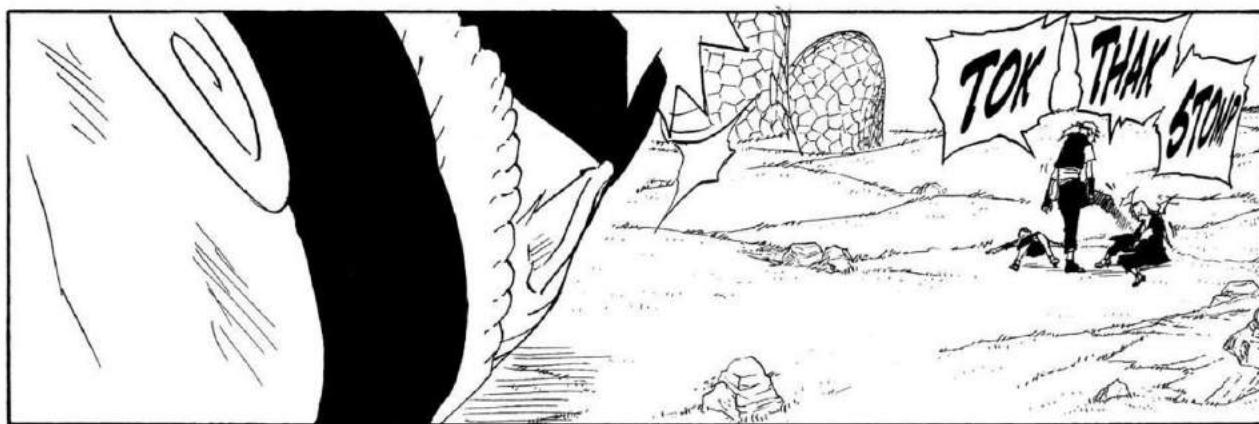


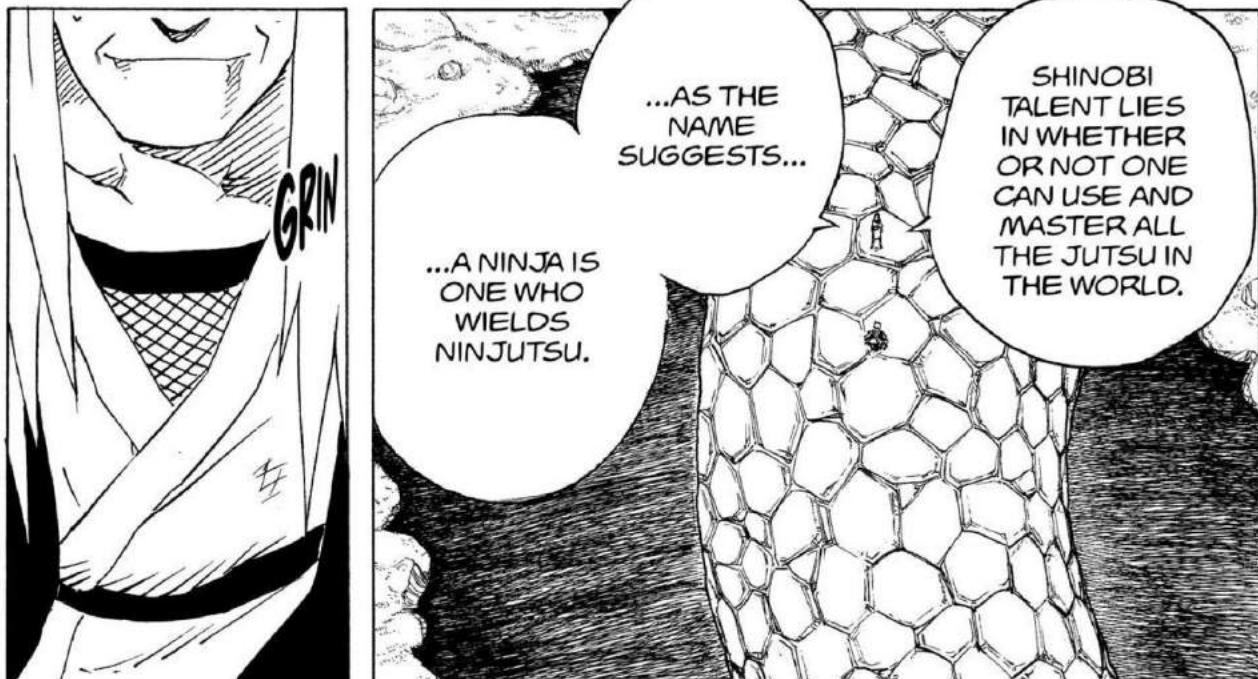
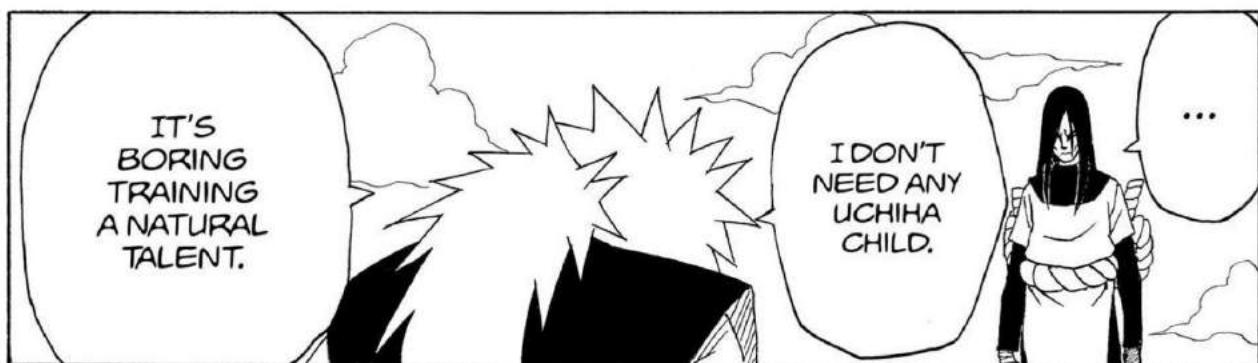
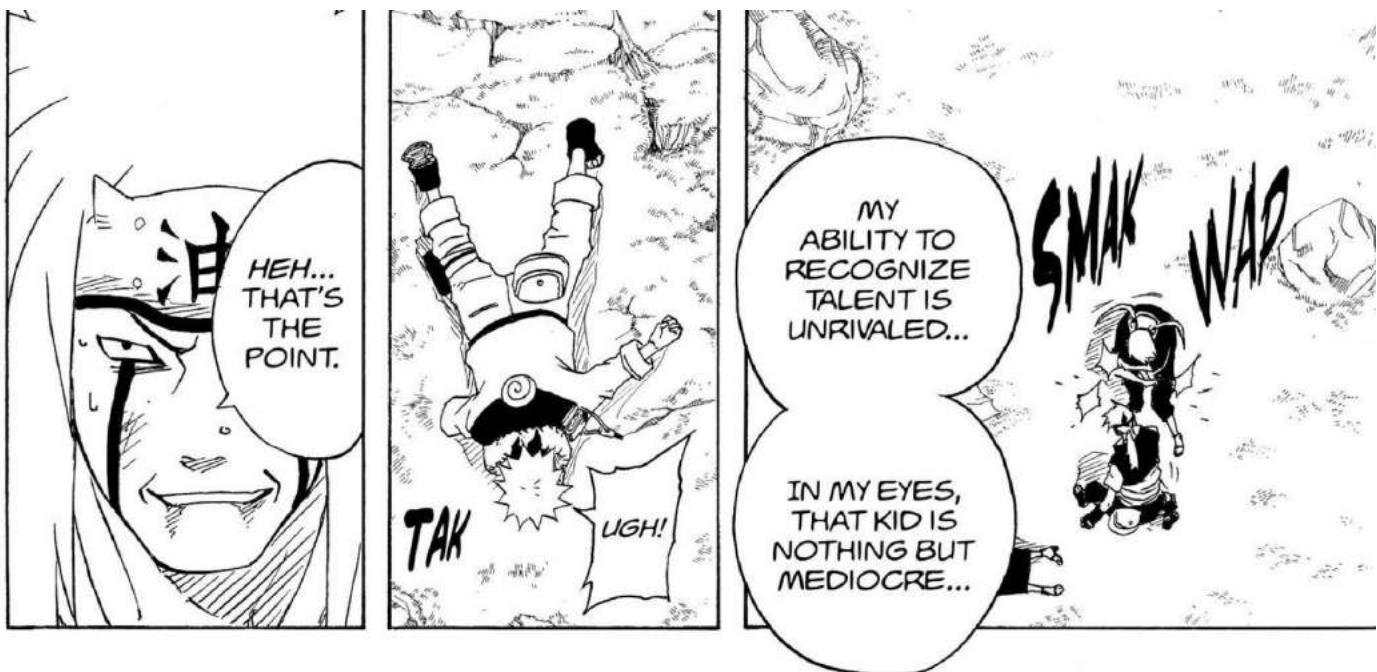


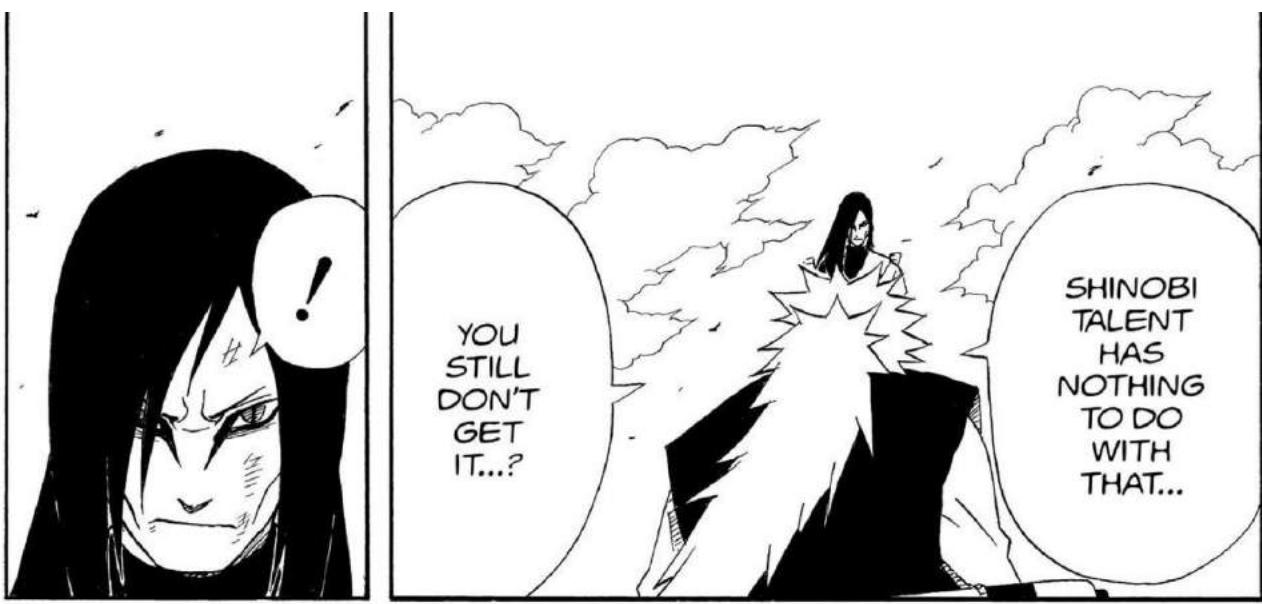






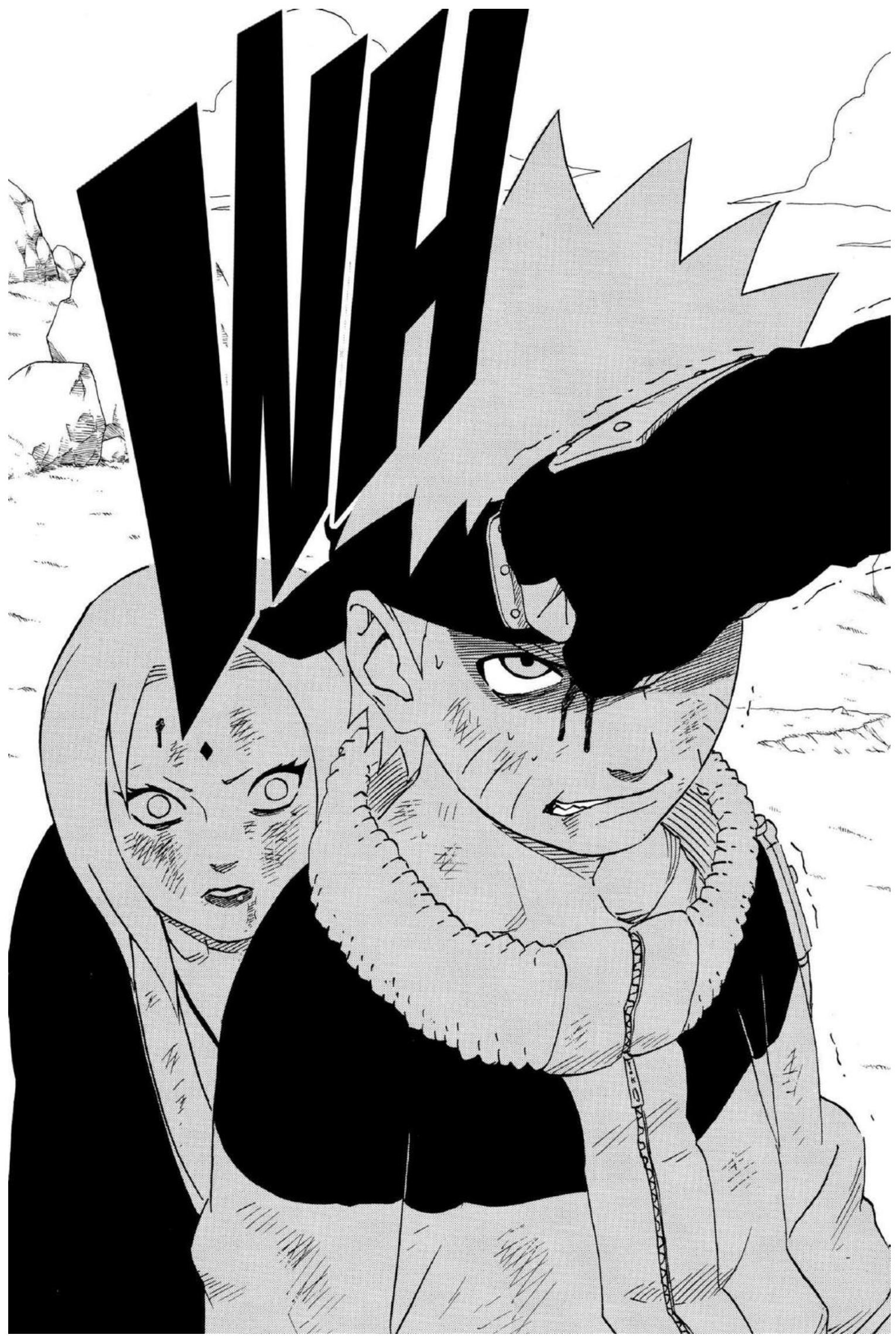








...HAVING
THE
GUTS TO
NEVER
GIVE UP.



THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 30: NO. 2

IN THE PREVIOUS STORY, I SAID THAT I WAS CAUGHT IN A TRAP. THIS TRAP WAS A STRONG ONE AND SO ONCE TRAPPED, I COULDN'T ESCAPE FROM IT EASILY.

AFTER WINNING AN AWARD, MY THOUGHTS WERE: "BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL WON'T BE FAR OFF NOW THAT I'VE WON AN AWARD WITH MY WORK. I'LL JUST REARRANGE MY AWARD-WINNING MANGA 'KARAKURI' AND CREATE ANOTHER STORY." IN THIS LIGHTHEARTED STATE OF MIND, I CONTINUED WRITING ANOTHER MANGA. BUT, AS I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED, MY WORK WAS CONSISTENTLY TURNED DOWN. I SPENT A YEAR MUCKING AROUND WITH THE STORY, SETTING AND CHARACTERS IN VAIN. AROUND THIS TIME, I BEGAN TO DOUBT MY TALENT AND ABILITY AND BEGAN TO THINK THAT I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO BECOME A MANGA ARTIST AFTER ALL.

MEANWHILE, MOST OF MY FRIENDS STARTED JOB-HUNTING AND GETTING JOBS. I, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS DETERMINED TO BECOME A MANGA ARTIST AFTER GRADUATING, AND DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT GETTING OTHER JOBS AT ALL. SURE ENOUGH, I WAS A LITTLE SCARED... AFTER ALL, THIS WAS A PERIOD WHEN I DOUBTED WHETHER I COULD EVEN BECOME A MANGA ARTIST. BUT CREATING AN ESCAPE ROUTE WOULD HAVE MEANT ACKNOWLEDGING TO MYSELF THAT I COULD NEVER DO IT.

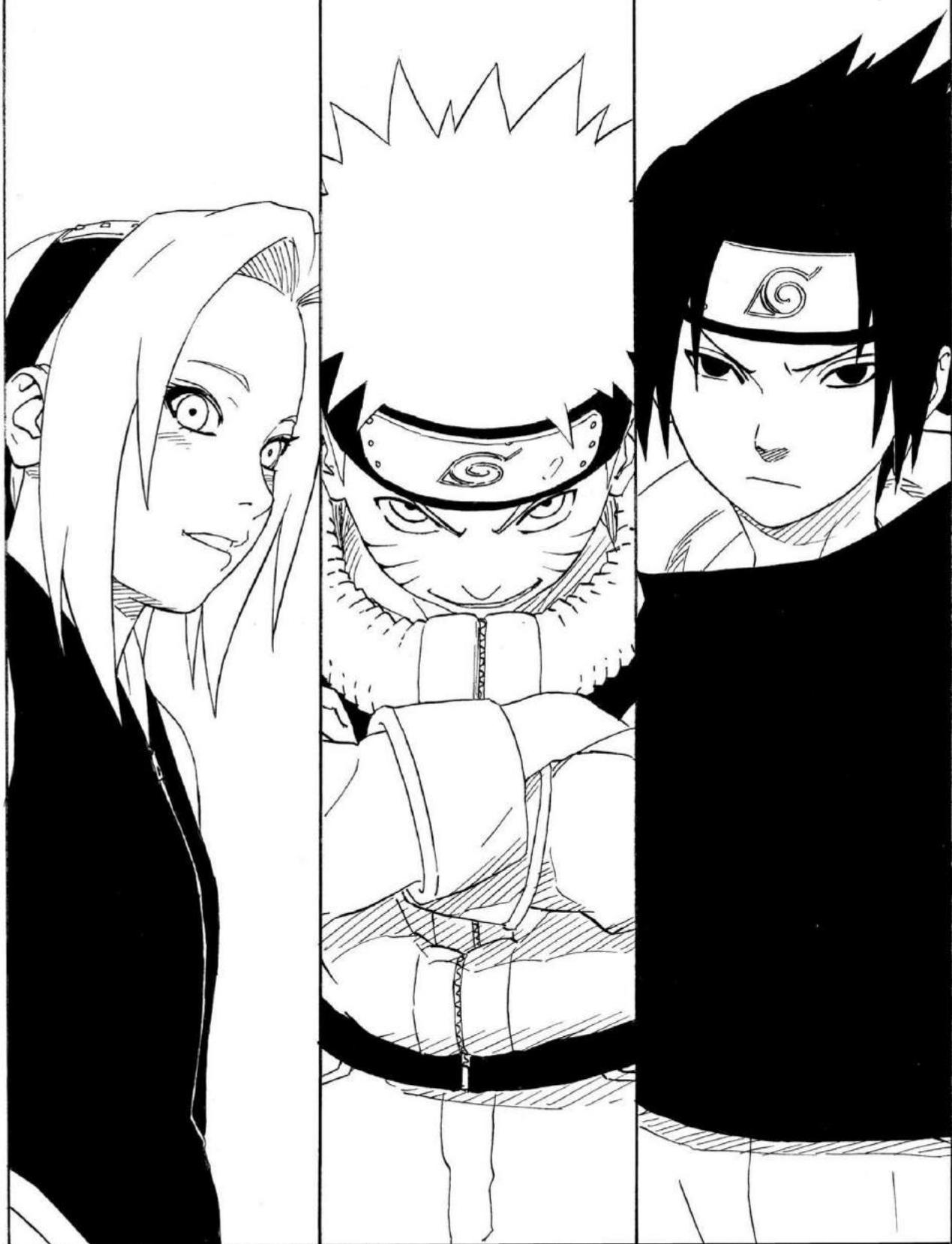
I WAS IMPATIENT AND WENT ROUND AND ROUND IN CIRCLES AND GOT NOWHERE. I CREATED DRAFTS DESPERATELY WANTING TO FEEL LIKE A PRO. ALL REJECTS.

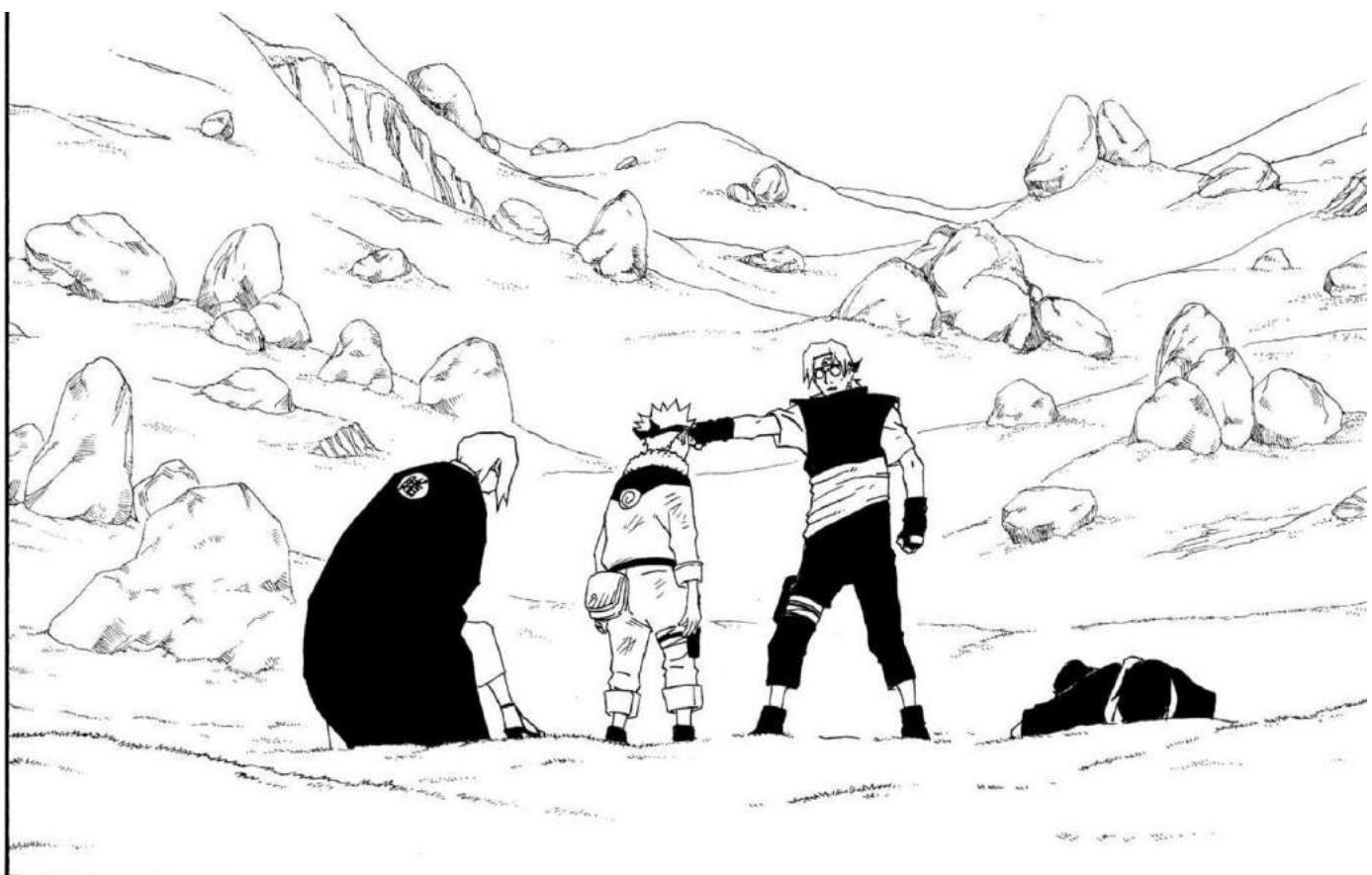
IN THE END, I WOUND UP GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE HAVING ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING.

MY PARENTS HAD SPENT A LOT OF MONEY SENDING ME TO COLLEGE AND I OWE THEM A LOT, AND NOT JUST FOR THAT. YET I DID NOTHING TO GET ANY OTHER JOB AND JUST KEPT TELLING MY PARENTS THAT I WOULD BECOME A MANGA ARTIST AS THOUGH I WERE IN A DREAM... MY PARENTS WERE STRICT IN RAISING ME AND SO I WAS PREPARED FOR A SCOLDING. ON THE CONTRARY, HOWEVER, THEY SUPPORTED MY UNREALISTIC DREAMS. ONE DAY MY PARENTS AND MY YOUNGER BROTHER WERE TALKING ABOUT HOW TO MAKE MONEY FOR HIS COLLEGE TUITION. MY BROTHER SAID TO ME "WE COULD HAVE BOUGHT A FERRARI WITH THE MONEY SPENT ON YOUR EDUCATION!" THEN I REALIZED HOW MUCH MONEY IT HAD COST THEM SENDING ME TO COLLEGE... WHEN I RECALLED MY COLLEGE DAYS ALWAYS PLAYING MAHJONG WITH MY FRIENDS, I REALIZED HOW STUPID I HAD BEEN AND FELT ANGRY WITH MYSELF. AROUND THIS TIME, MY FATHER STOPPED BY TO TALK OVER HIS IDEAS OF A NEW MANGA STORY AND CHARACTERS. WHILE LISTENING TO HIS MOSTLY UNINTERESTING IDEAS, I REALIZED THAT I HAD TO BECOME A MANGA ARTIST SOON AND PUT MY PARENTS AT EASE. THINGS COULDN'T STAY THE WAY THEY WERE. TO BE CONTINUED... IT'S SOOOO DEPRESSING...

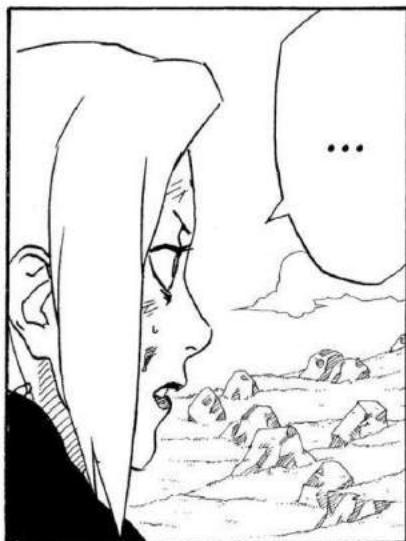
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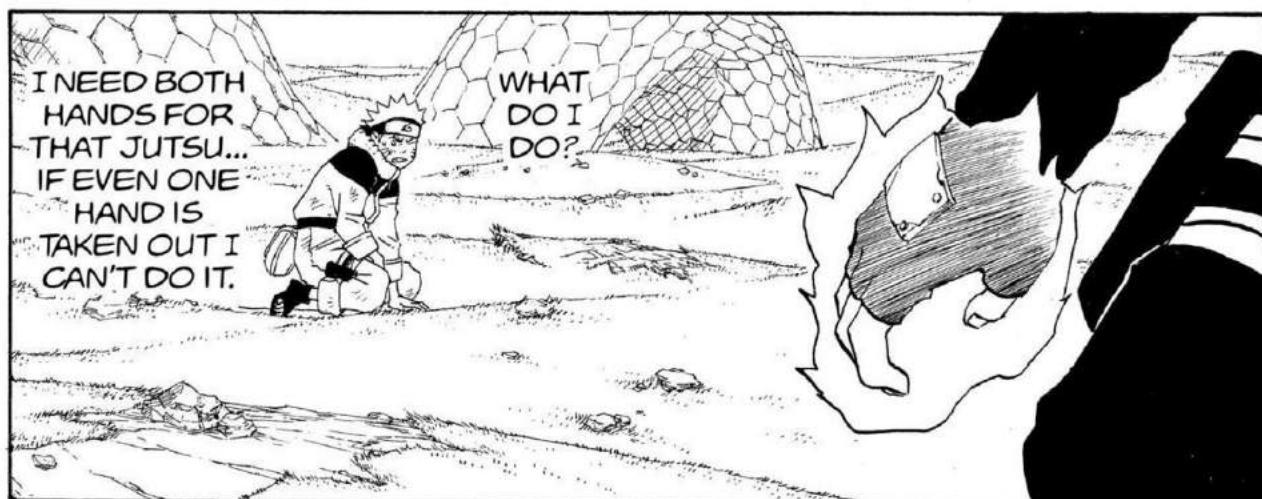
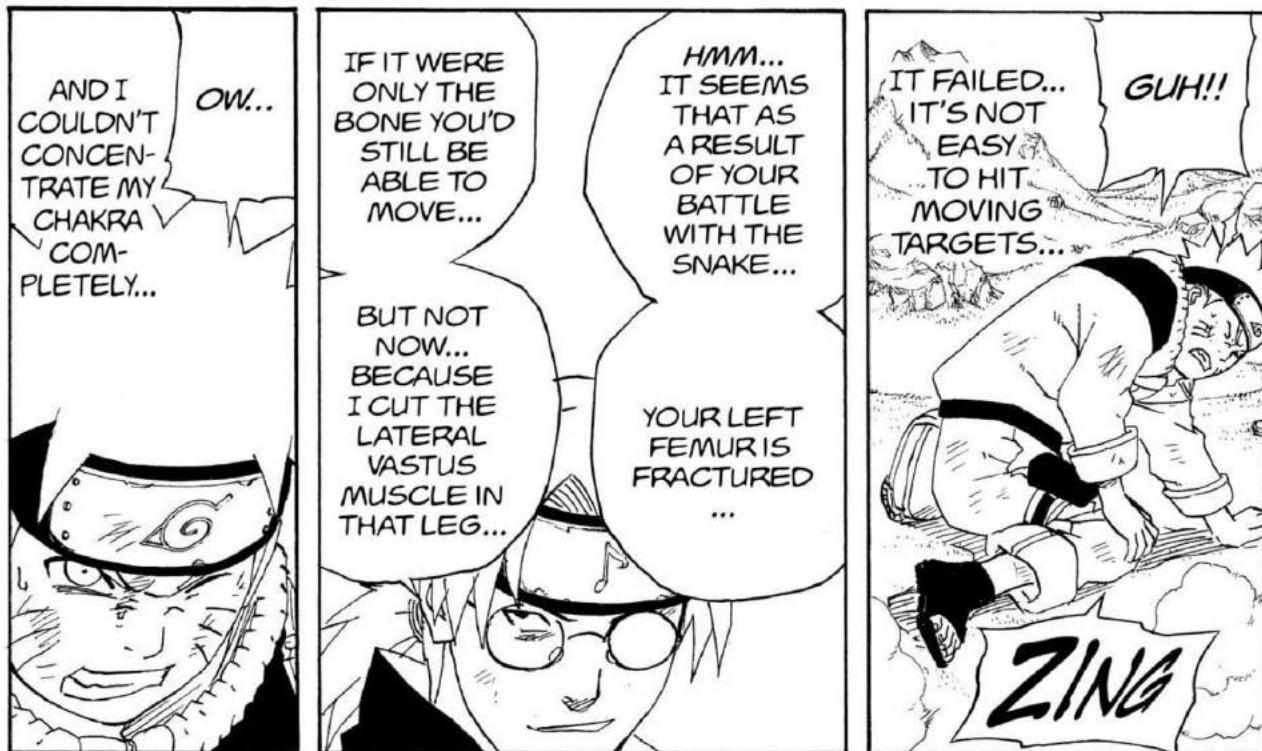
As Promised...!!

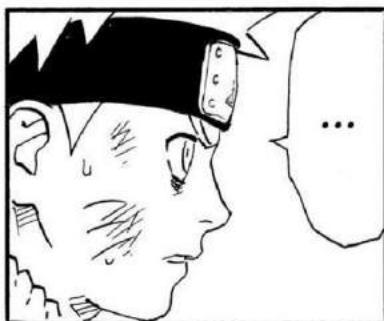








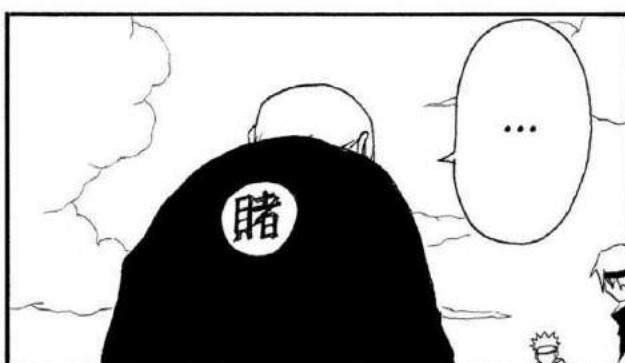




NARUTO...
REMEMBER
WHAT YOU
SAID WITH
SUCH
BRAVADO AT
THE FIRST
TEST OF
THE CHŪNIN
EXAM...



NEVER
UNDER-
ESTIMATE
ME...
I DON'T
QUIT, AND
I WON'T
RUN...

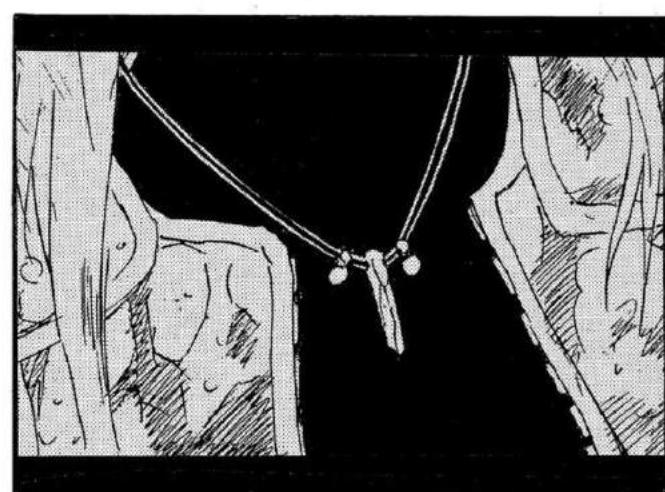
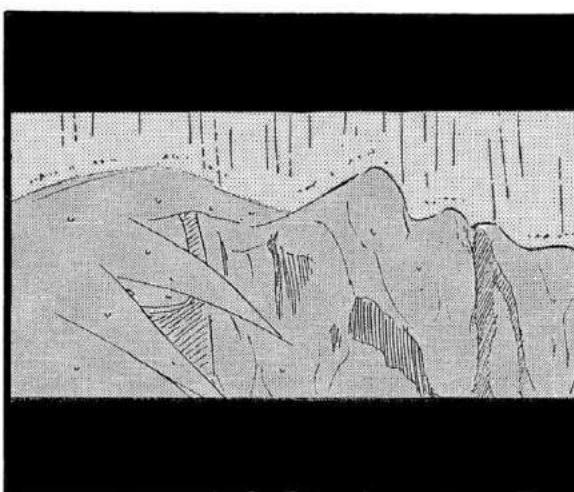
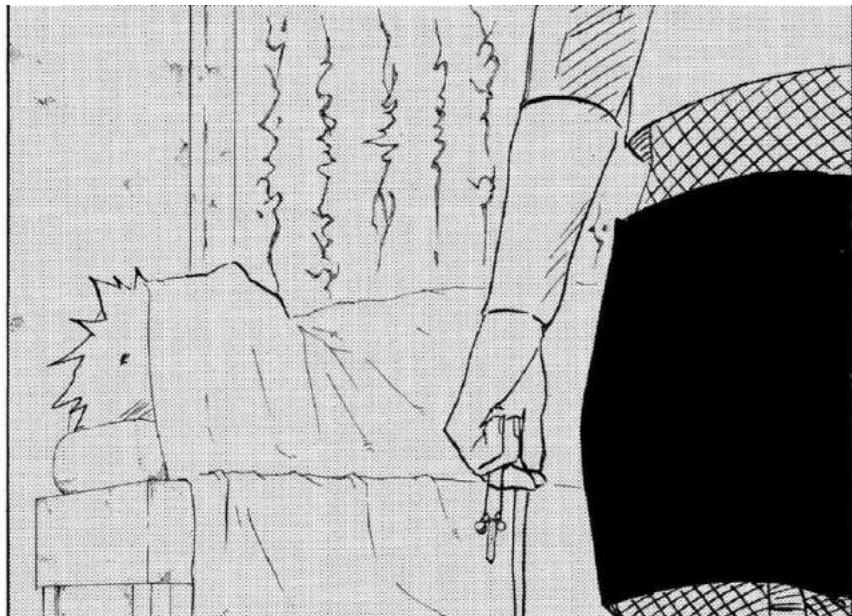
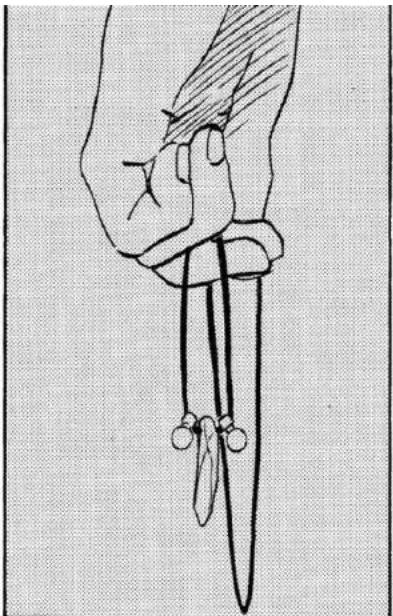


EVEN
NOW...

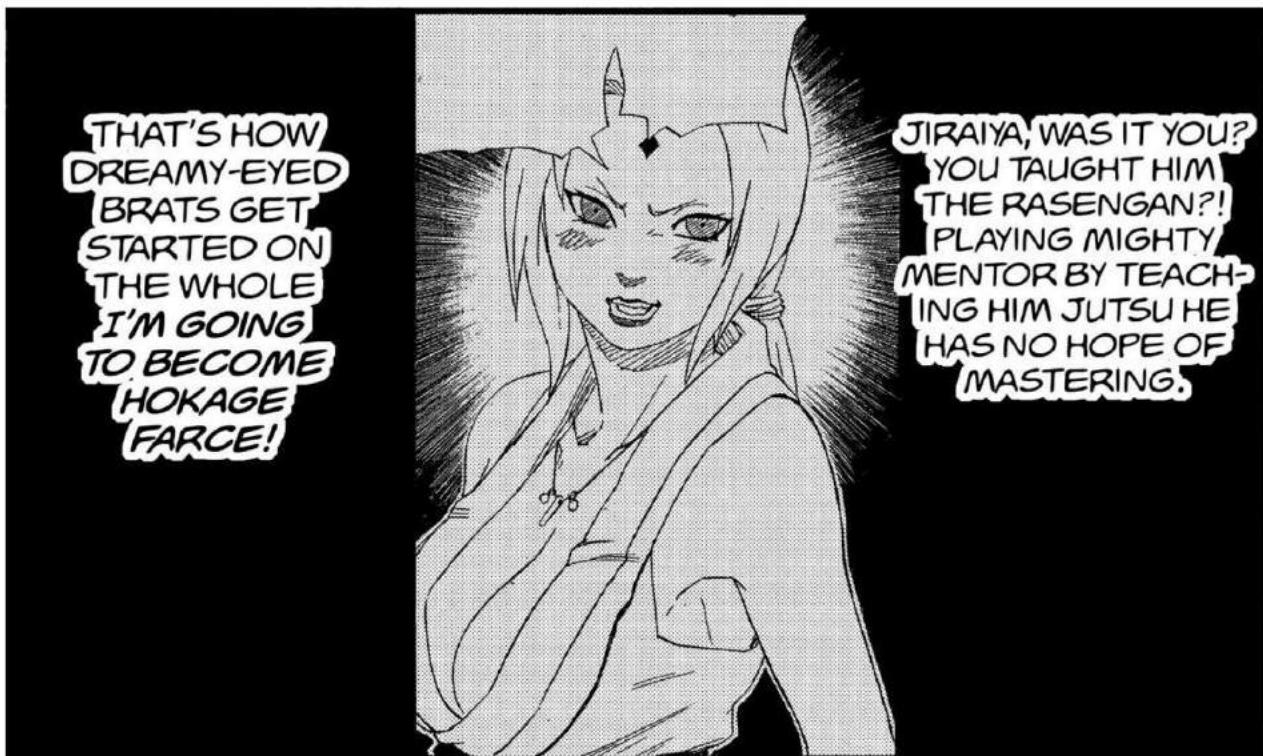


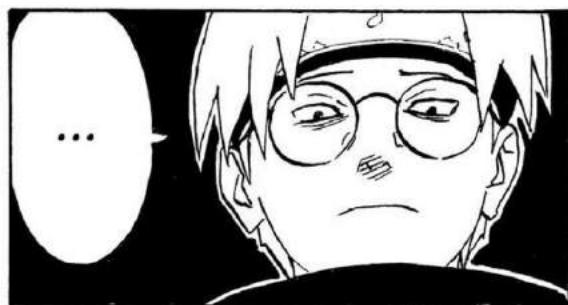
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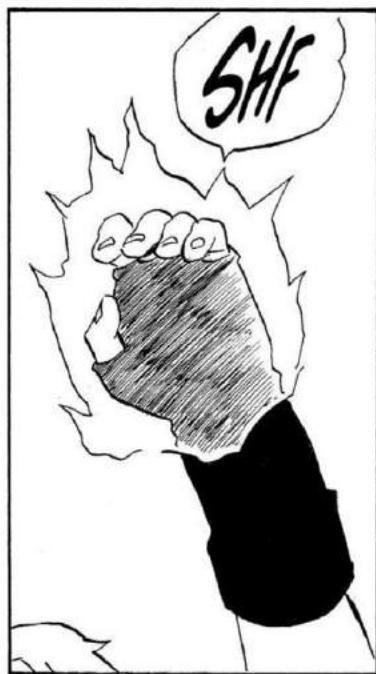


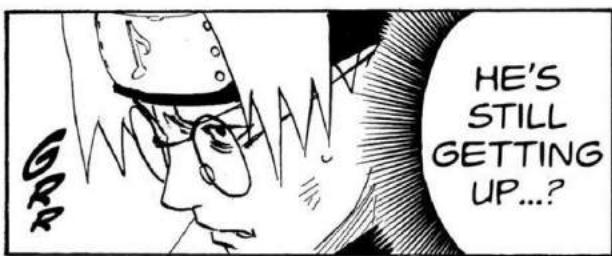
READ THIS WAY





READ
THIS
WAY





NARUTO...
DON'T!!

STAGGER

DON'T
PROTECT
ME...

SHING

DREAMS
AND
EVERY-
THING
ELSE IS
GONE!!

IF YOU
DIE...
EVERY-
THING...

...WILL
GET YOU
KILLED!!

I TOLD
YOU, THAT
KIND OF
STUBBORN-
NESS...

SHF

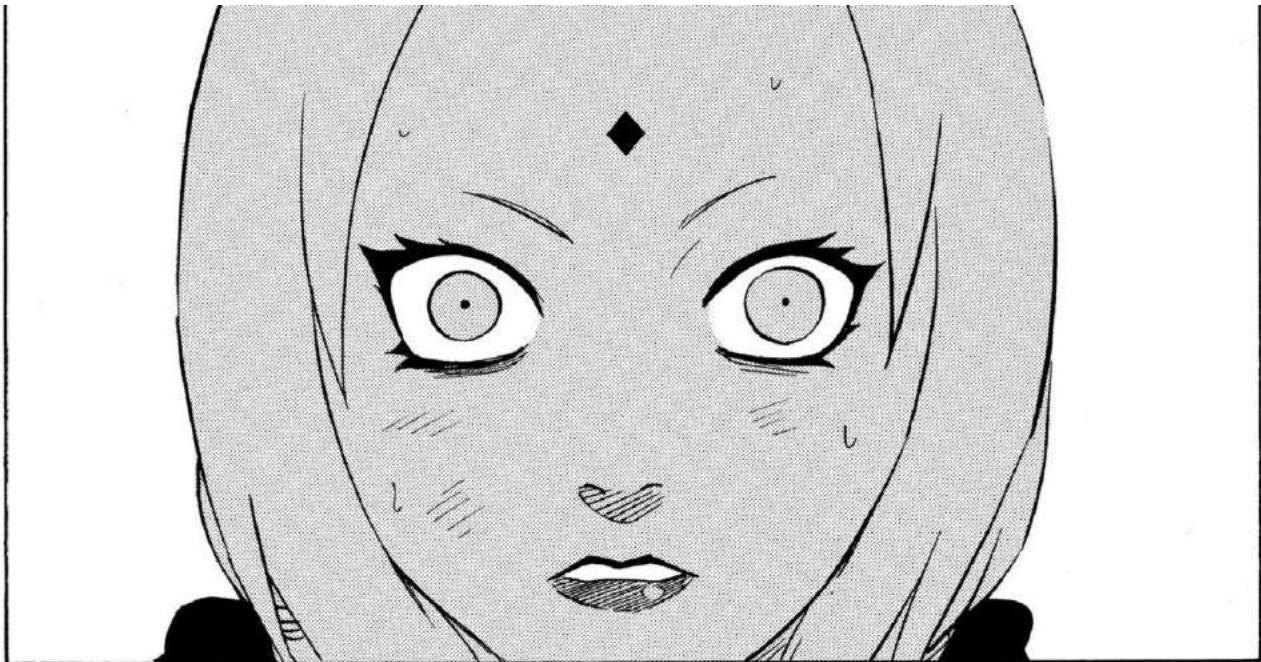
RUN!

GET
OUT
OF THE
WAY!!

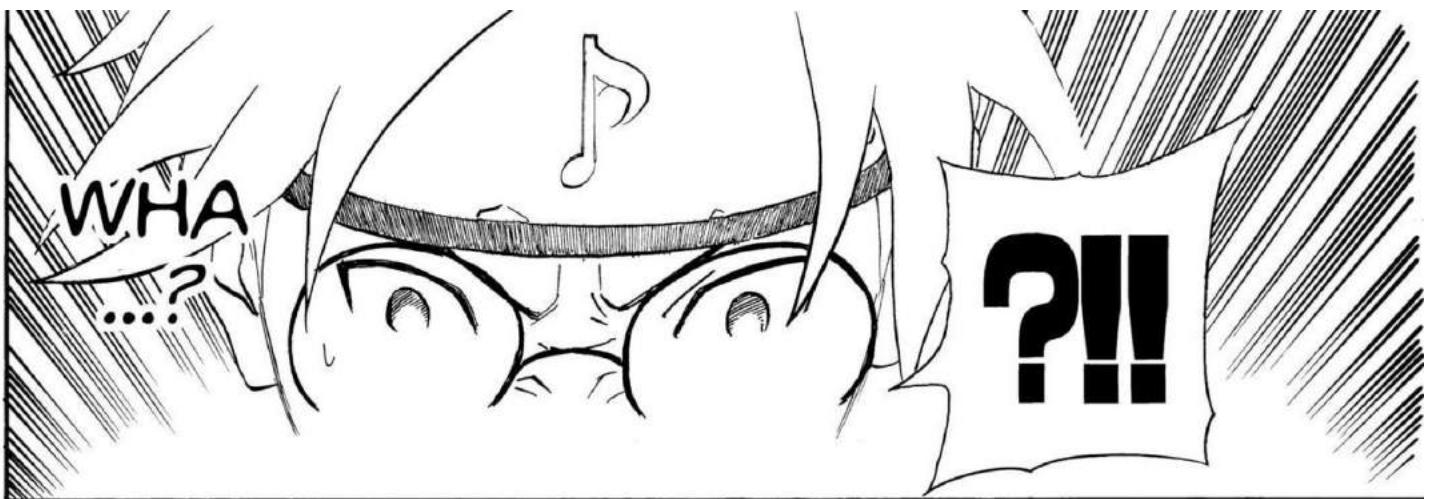
...HEH
...IT'S
OKAY...



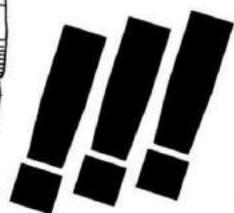




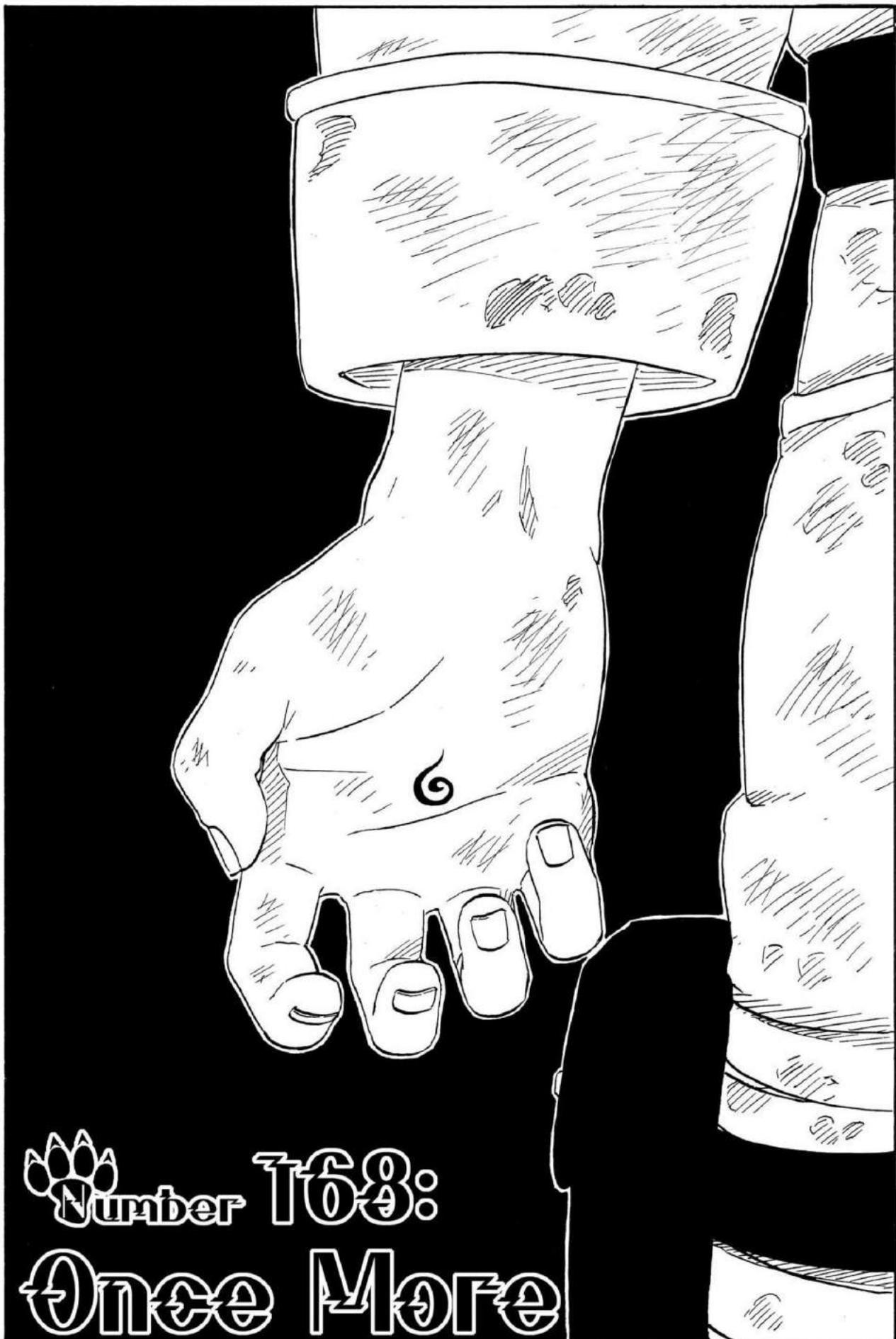




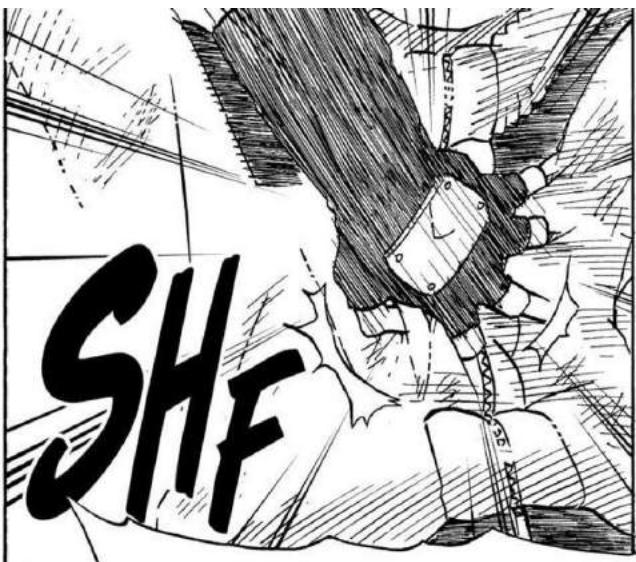
IT... IT
CAN'T
BE...







Number 163:
Once More

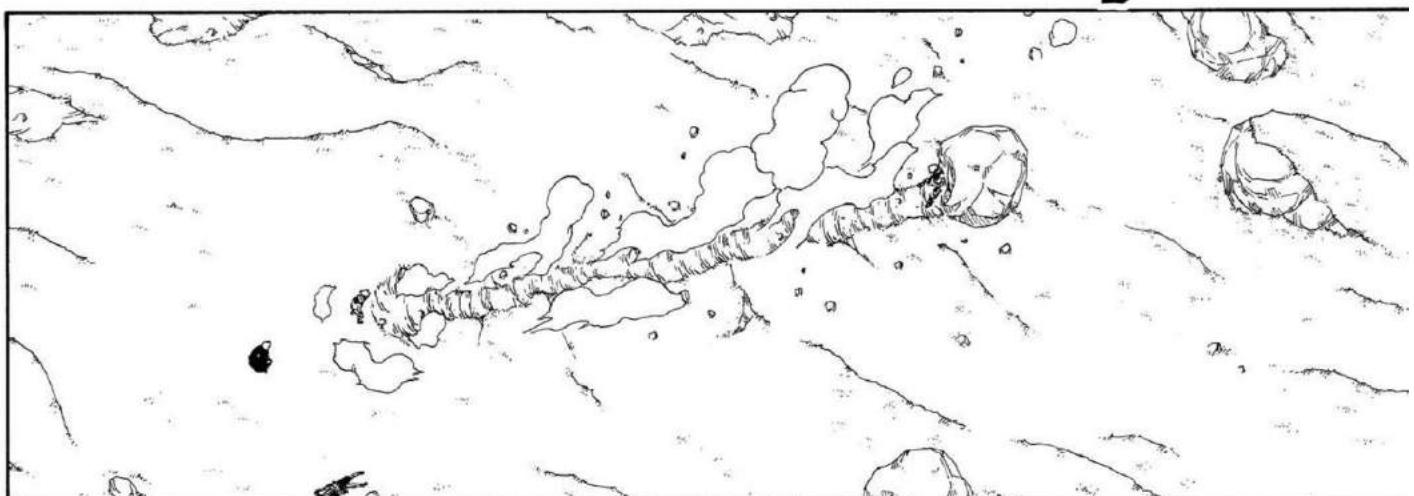
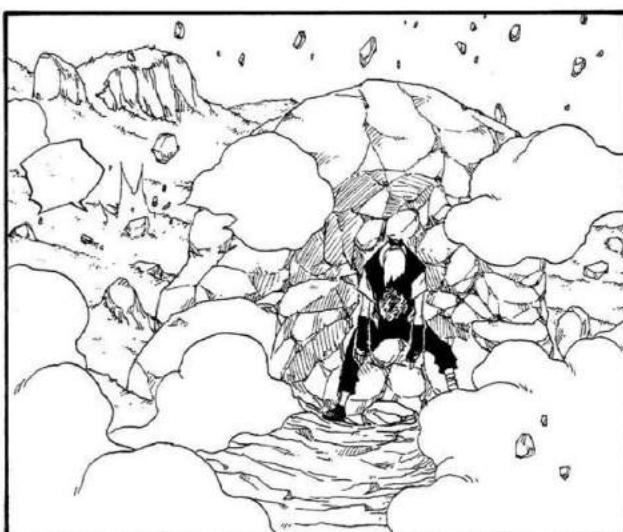


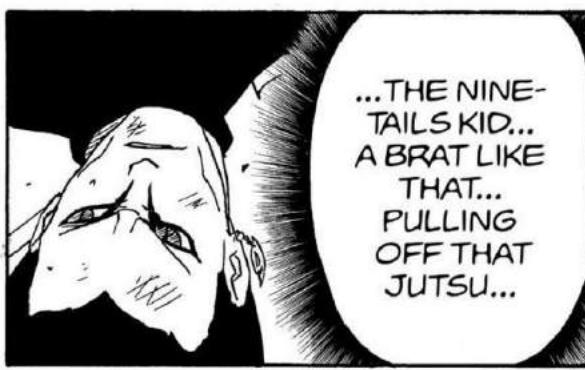
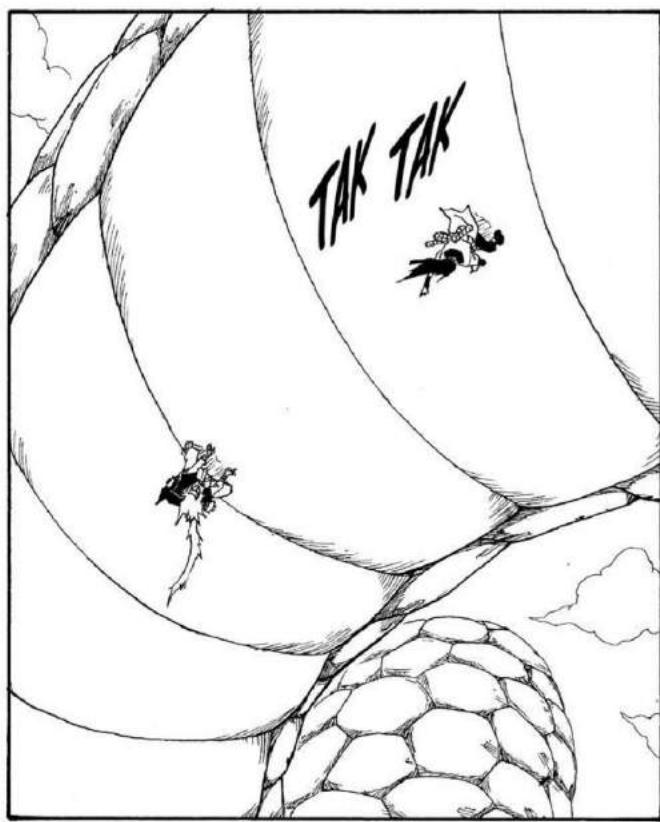
EYAH!!

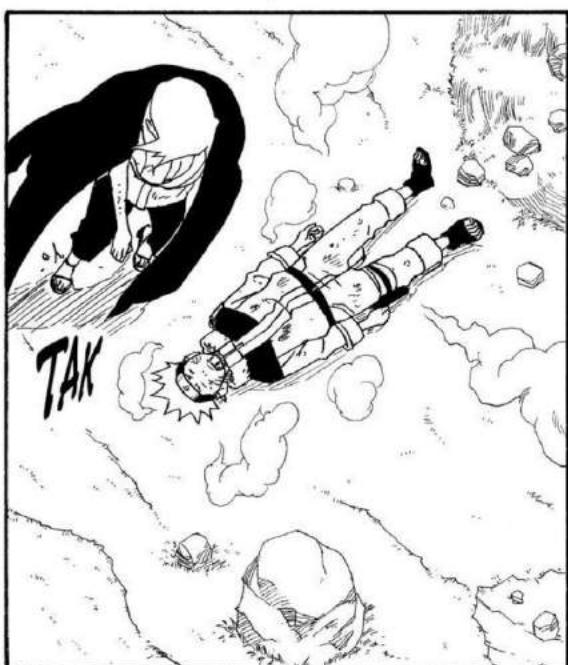


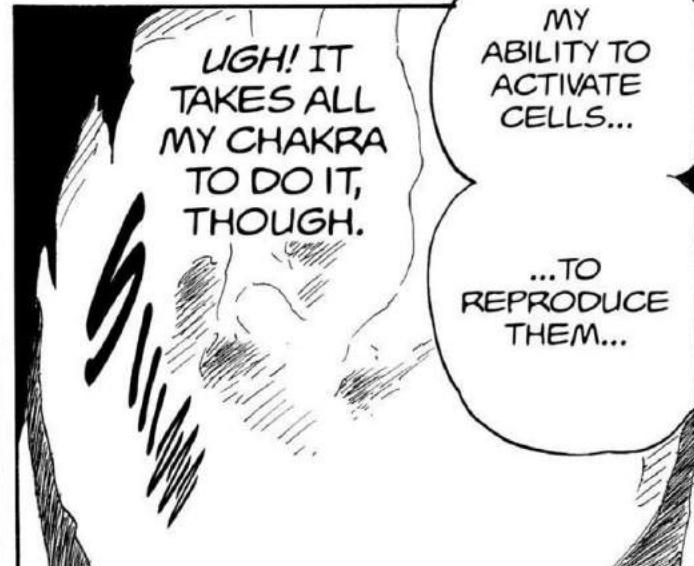
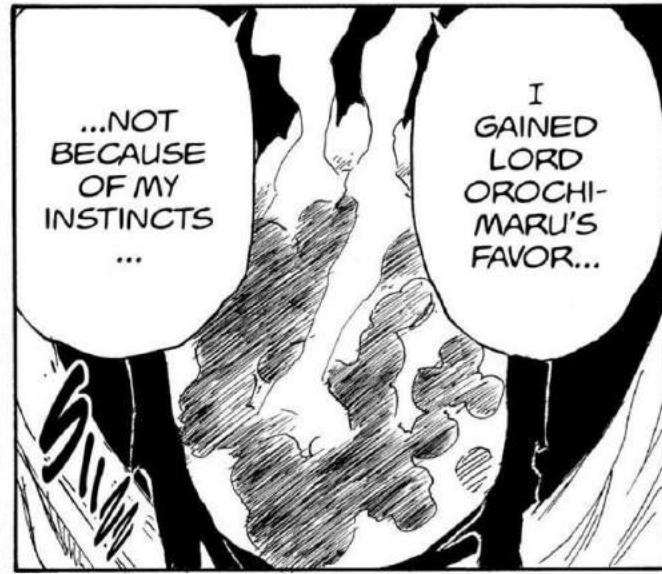


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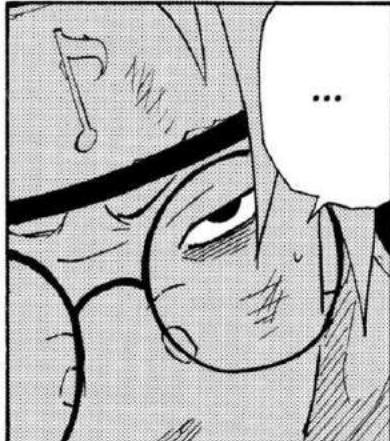


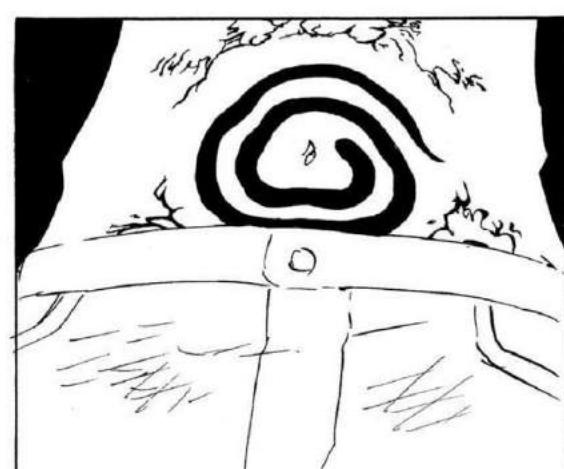
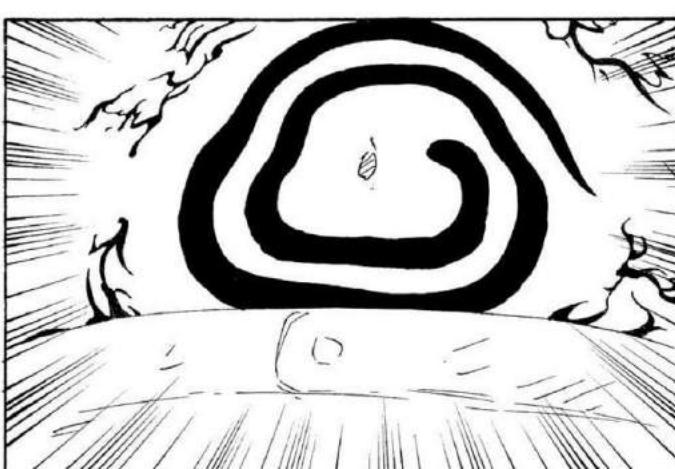
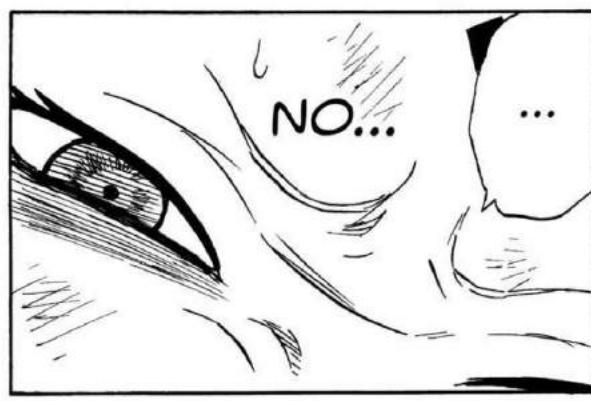
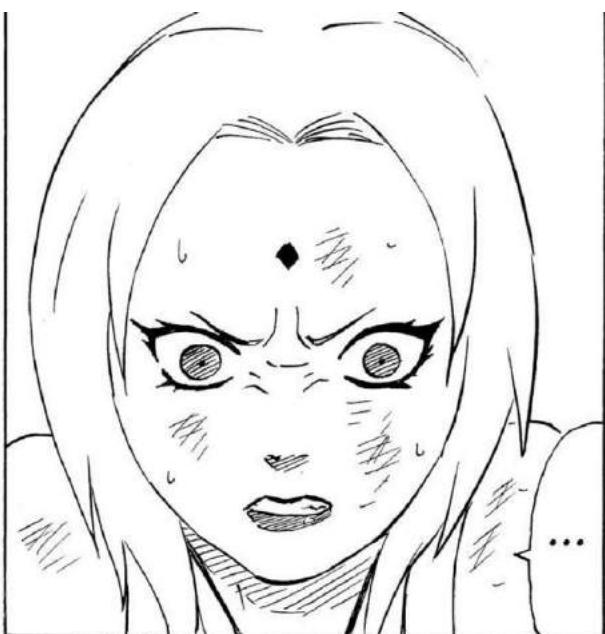


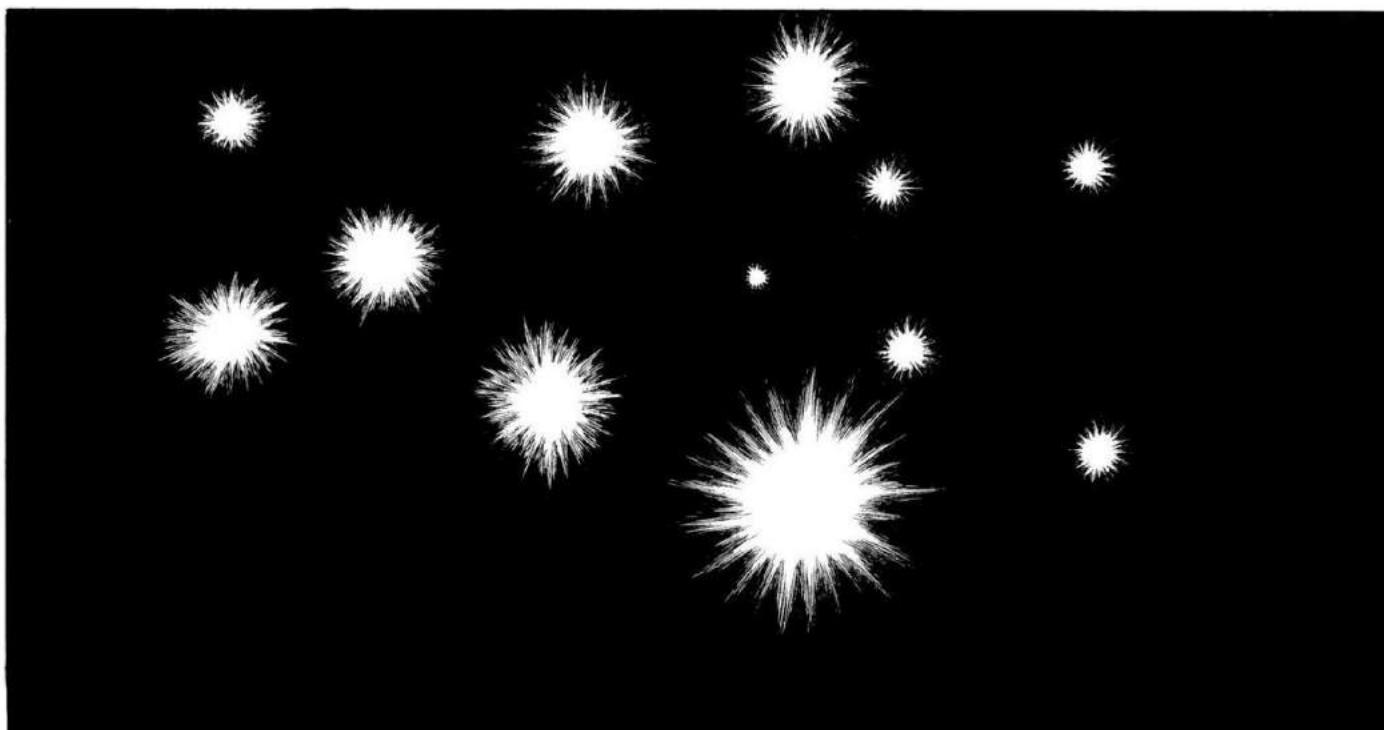
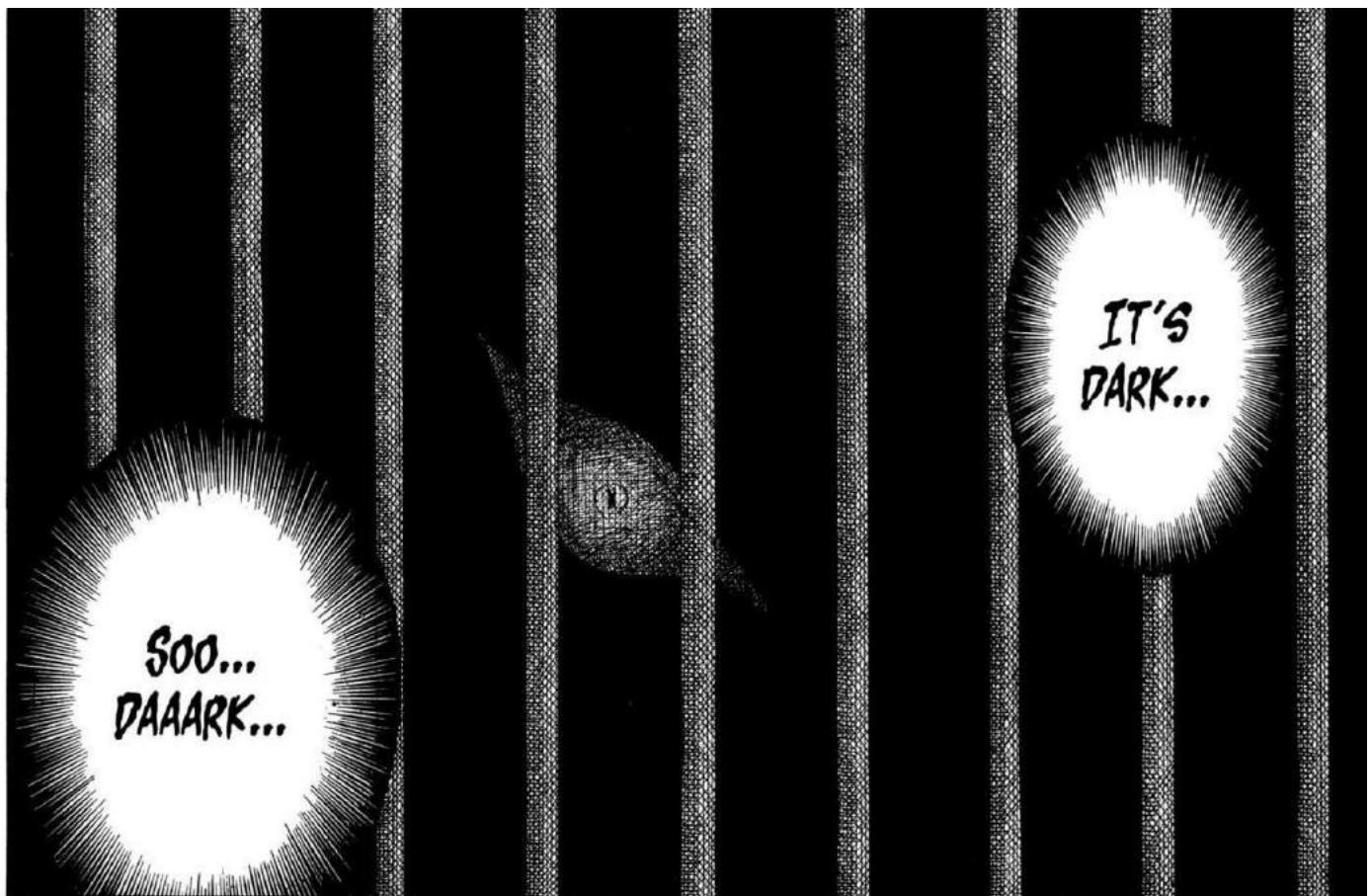


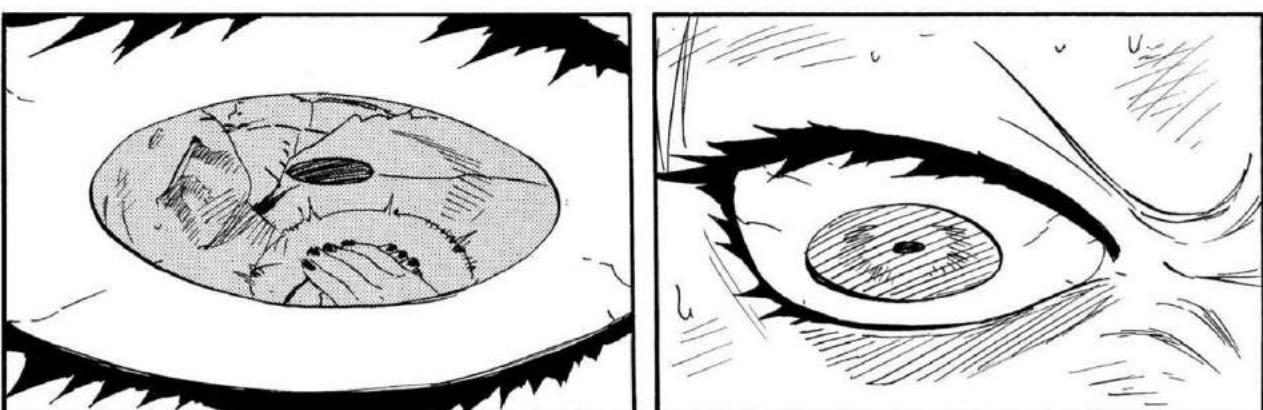
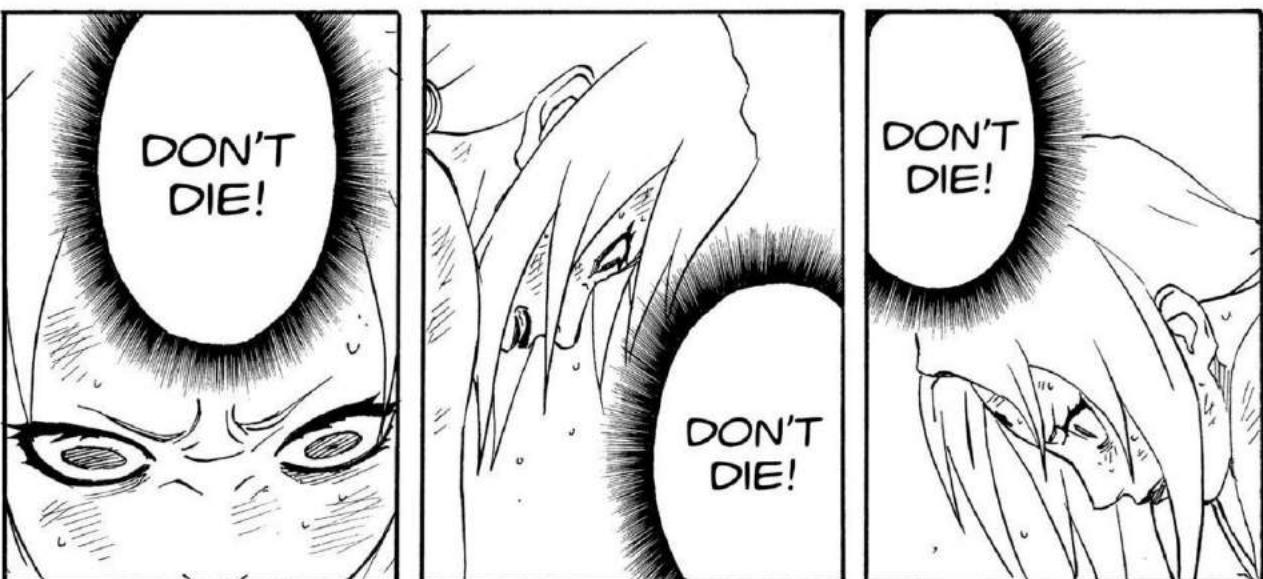
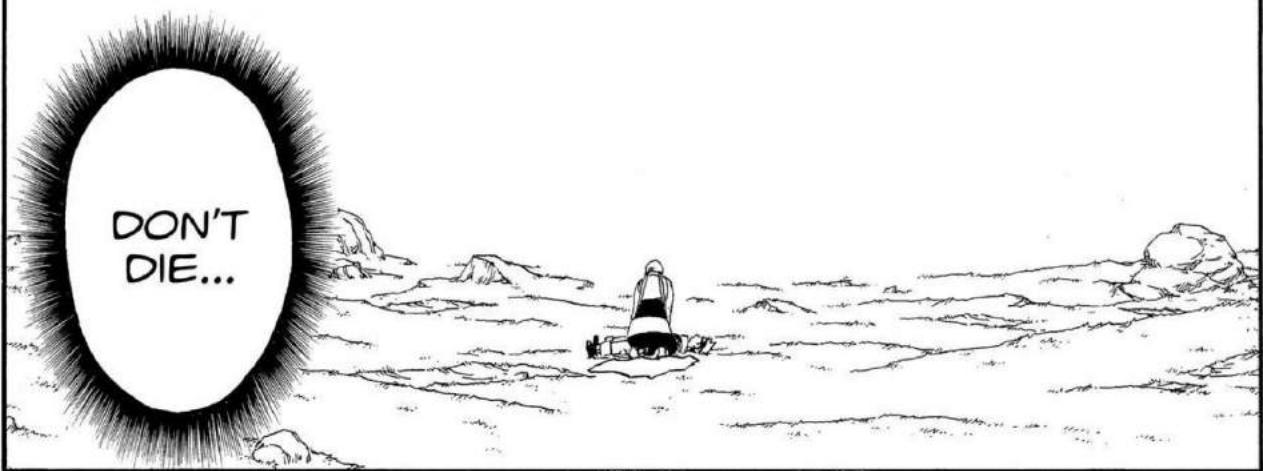
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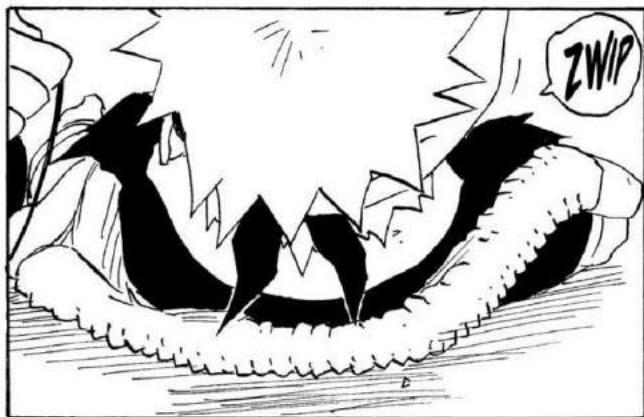
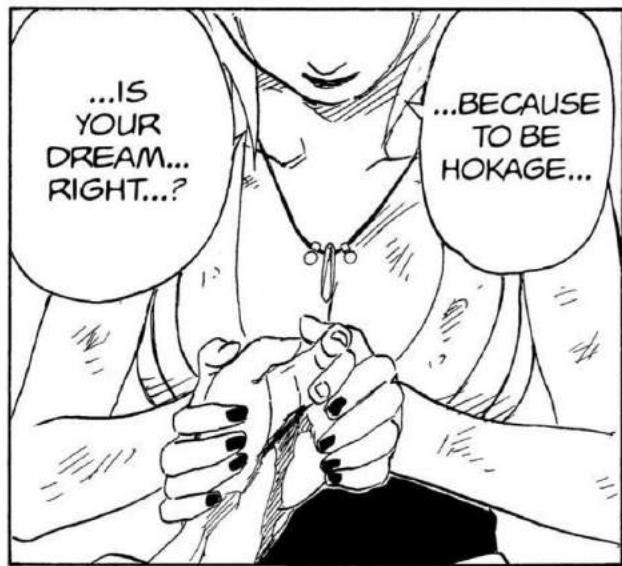






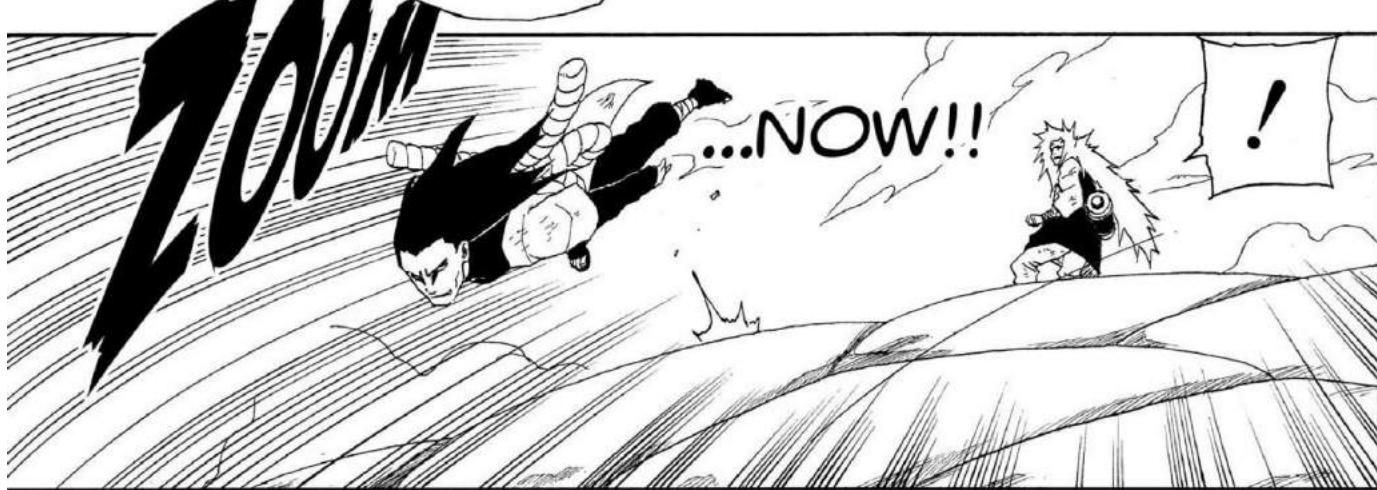
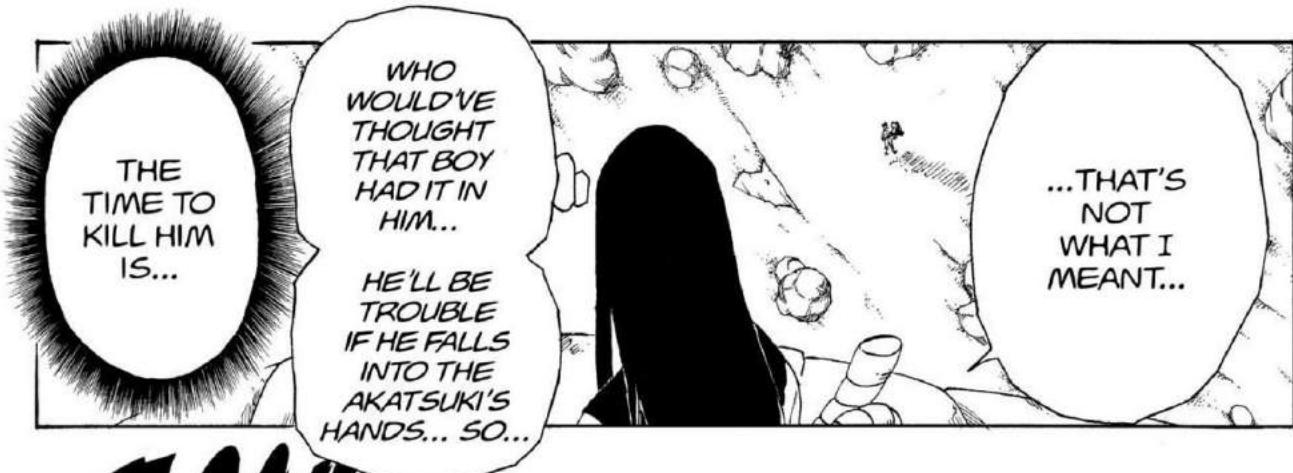
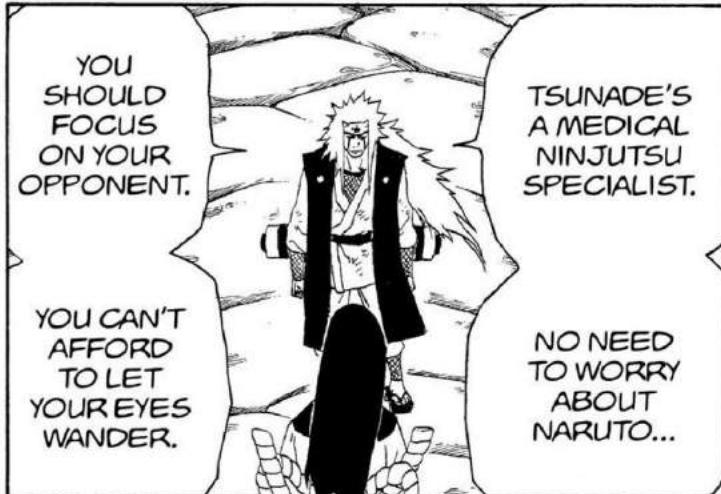


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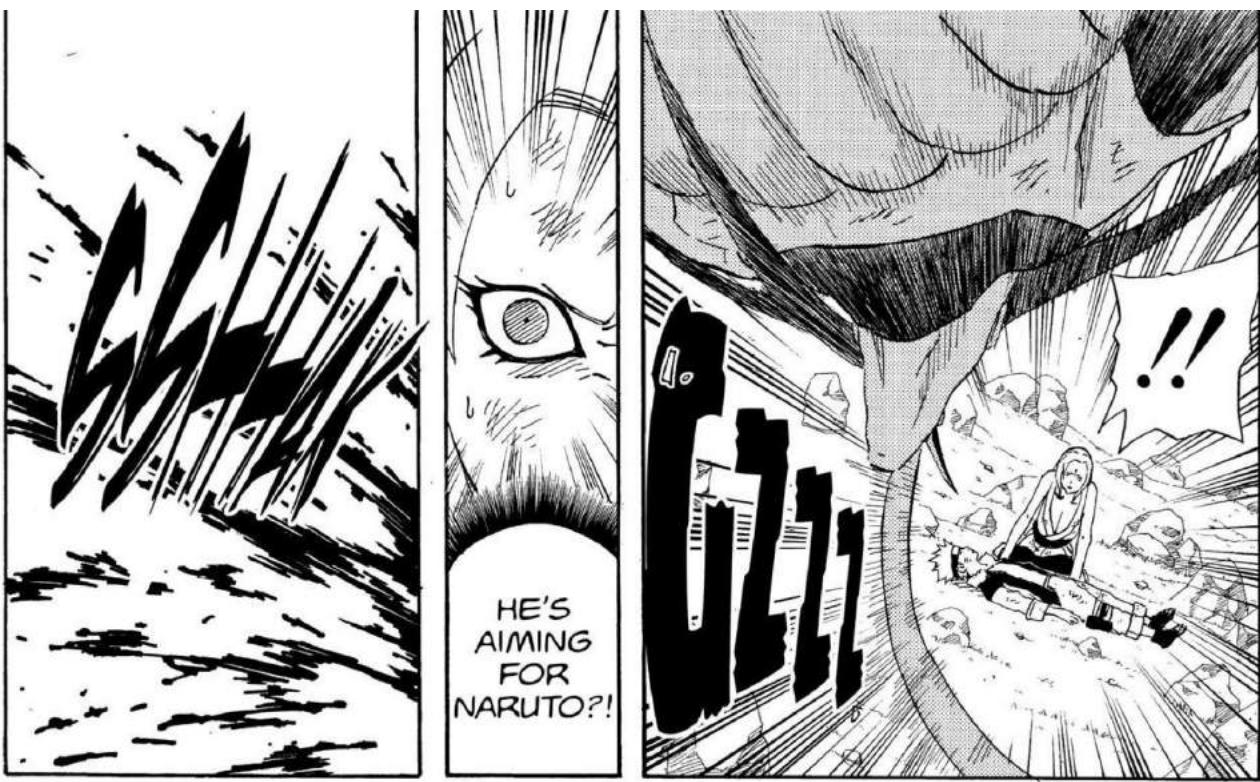




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THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 30: NO.3

BECOMING A MANGA ARTIST IS NOT SOMETHING ONE DOES TO SATISFY THEIR PARENTS OR FOR MONEY. BUT AS LONG AS ONE AIMS TO BE A MANGA ARTIST, VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES ARE BOUND TO ARISE ALONG THE WAY. IN THE END, MAKING THESE THINGS GO SMOOTHLY WAS SOMETHING I DID FOR MYSELF... IN OTHER WORDS, IT WAS A PART OF MY BECOMING A MANGA ARTIST.

TO THAT END, I REALIZED THAT MY LIFE COULDN'T CONTINUE GOING THE WAY IT HAD BEEN.

I DECIDED TO GO BACK TO BASICS AND THOROUGHLY RESTUDY MANGA FROM THE BEGINNING.

FIRST, I BEGAN WITH THE FOLLOWING QUESTION: WHAT IS A STORY? THEN I LOOKED UP THE MEANINGS OF ALL MANGA-RELATED TERMS, ASKING MYSELF: WHAT DOES THEME REALLY MEAN? WHAT DO EPISODE, STRUCTURE, CHARACTERS AND DIRECTION MEAN? I STUDIED THEM AND TRIED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THOSE WORDS MEANT AND HOW TO USE THEM.

WHAT I ACTUALLY DID WAS VISIT LIBRARIES AND STUDY THE THINGS NECESSARY TO CREATE A STORY, SUCH AS HOW TO WRITE A STORY, MAKING SCENARIO SYNOPSSES, MISLEADING, HOOK TECHNIQUES, CATCH, THREE-ACT STRUCTURE, SET-UP ORDER, HOW TO CREATE AND DISPLAY CHARACTERS, THEIR ROLES, STORY PATTERNS, AND SO ON... THESE THINGS I LEARNED BY READING HOW-TO BOOKS ON SCRIPTWRITING AND BECOMING A WRITER.

I ACTUALLY WATCHED THE MOVIES USED AS EXAMPLES IN THOSE BOOKS TO LEARN DIRECTING TECHNIQUES, CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND STORY STRUCTURE. I ALSO READ SUSPENSE NOVELS TO STUDY METHODS OF LEADING AND HOLDING, TECHNIQUES OF DELIBERATELY NOT USING NOUNS, AND MISLEADING TECHNIQUES NECESSARY TO MAKE THE STORY ENTERTAINING. IN SHORT, I LEARNED HOW TO WRITE A STORY BY READING BOOKS.

...BUT I COULDN'T ACQUIRE THESE TECHNIQUES JUST BY READING. SO I WATCHED LOTS OF MOVIES TO FIND HOW, AND IN WHICH SCENES, THE TECHNIQUES INTRODUCED IN THOSE BOOKS WERE ACTUALLY USED AND I WROTE THEM DOWN IN NOTEBOOKS AND STOCKPILED THEM. THEN I SET ABOUT DEVELOPING THIS MATERIAL AND THUS MADE THE TECHNIQUES MY OWN.

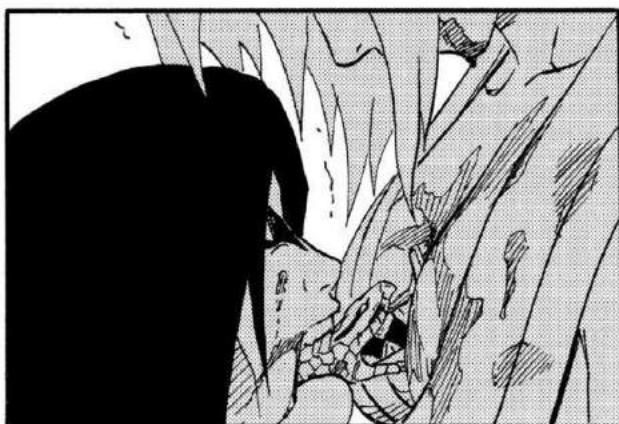
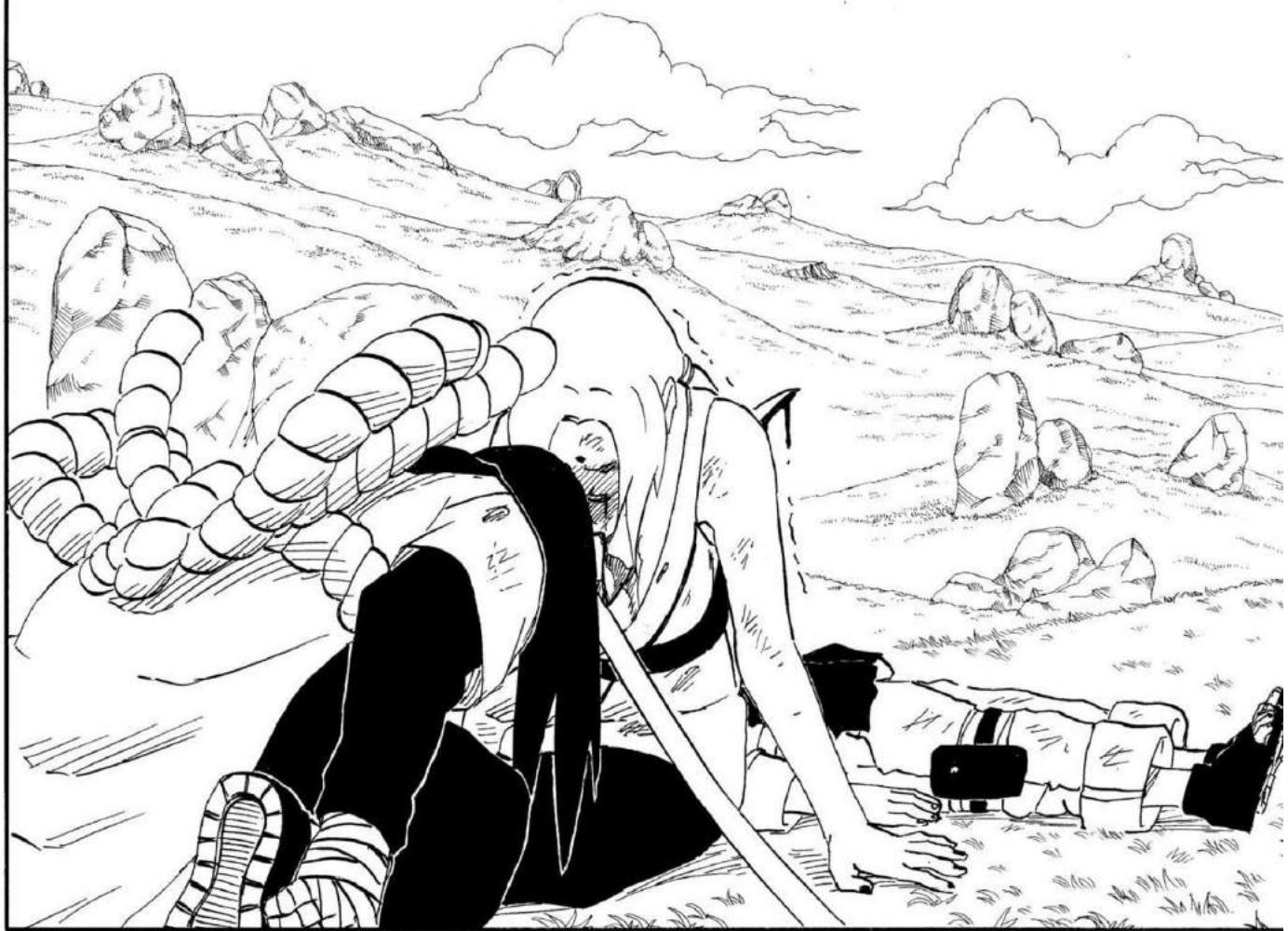
I WROTE OUT EACH LINE OF PULP FICTION TO STUDY CHARACTERS AND STORY STRUCTURE. I READ NOVELS WRITTEN BY DAZAI OSAMU TO LEARN HOW TO TREAT THEME, AND DISCOVERED SOME PATTERNS. I SUNK MY TEETH INTO WHATEVER I THOUGHT OF AS ENTERTAINMENT AND SEARCHED FOR ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS, "WHAT'S INTERESTING?" AND "HOW IS IT INTERESTING?" I WOKE UP IN THE MORNING AND VISITED LIBRARIES, BOOKSTORES AND VIDEO STORES... I SPENT EVERY DAY LIKE THAT FOR TWO YEARS AFTER GRADUATING COLLEGE.

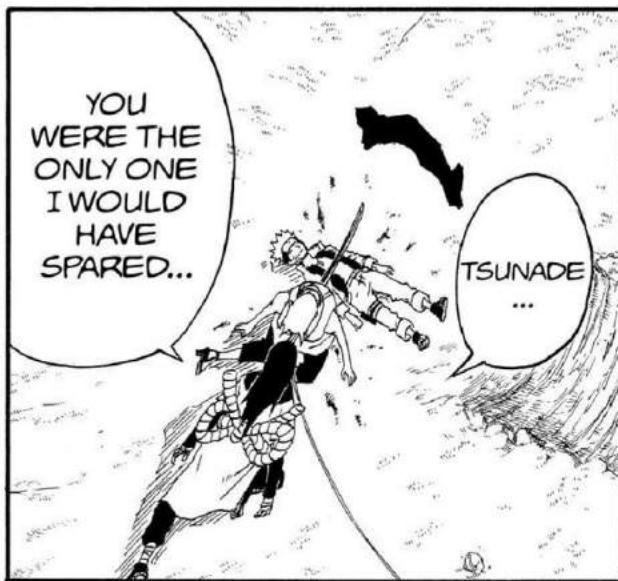
I DIDN'T MAKE MANY STORYBOARDS DURING THAT TIME. BUT IT APPEARED THAT MY FIRST VERSION OF NARUTO, A ONE-SHOT MANGA I WROTE SOON AFTER STARTING THIS RESEARCH, SOMEHOW GAINED POPULARITY IN AKAMARU JUMP, ROUGH WORK THOUGH IT WAS.

TO BE CONTINUED. SEE, THE STORY'S GETTING BRIGHTER, RIGHT?

Number 169:

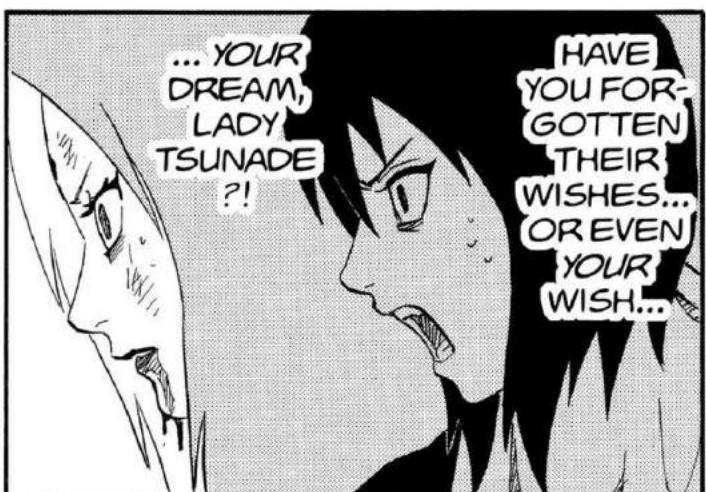
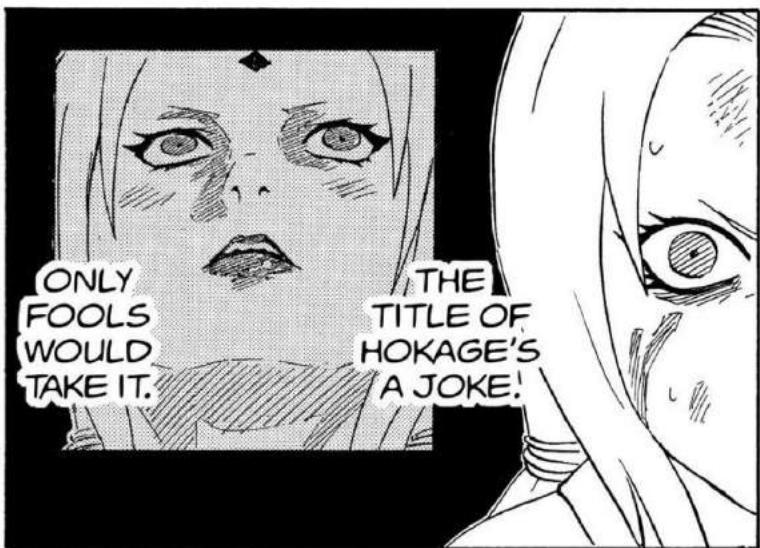




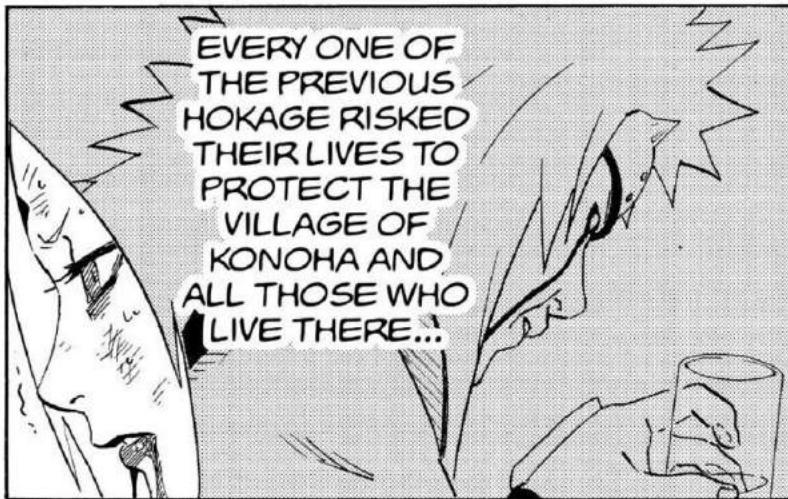


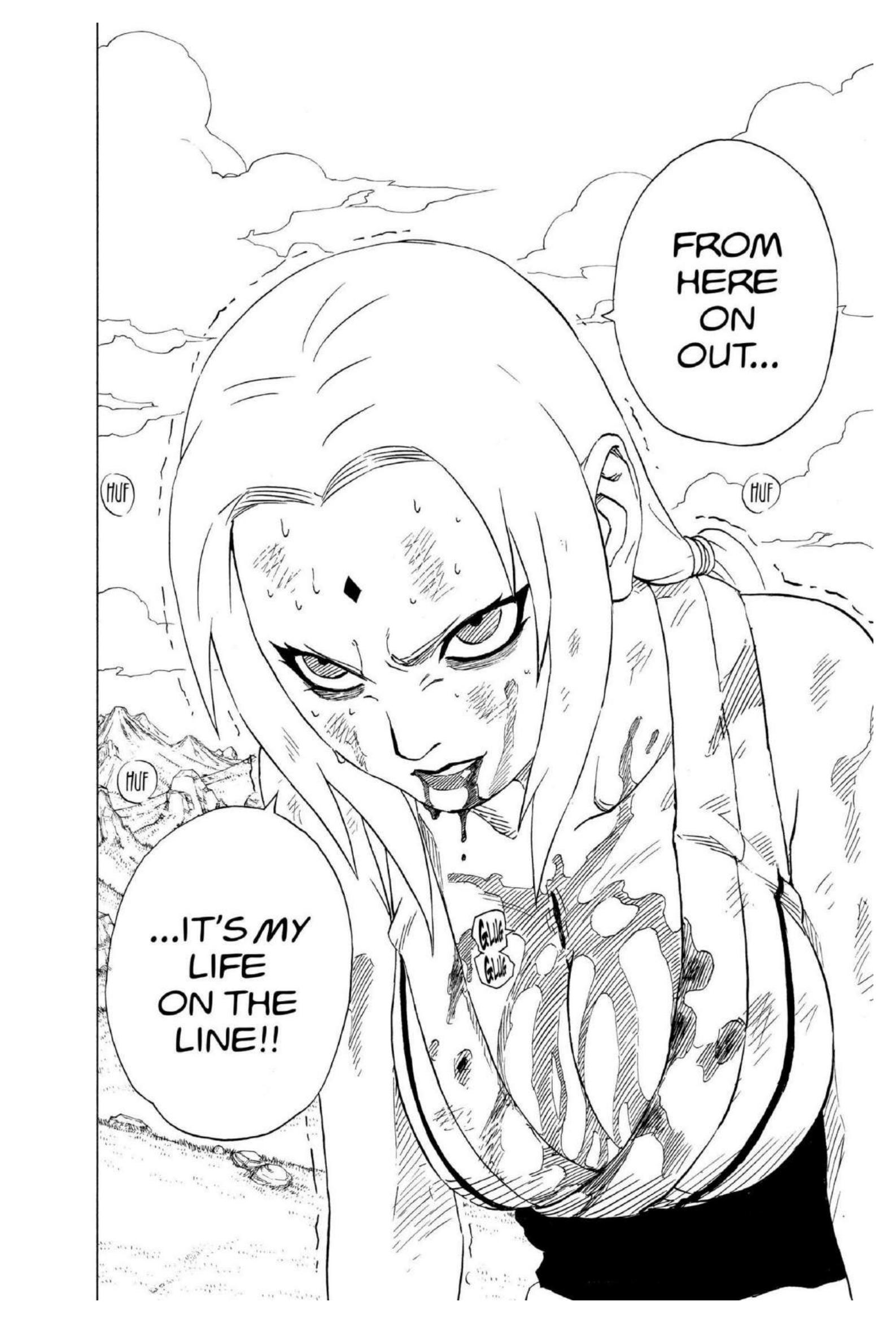






READ
THIS
WAY





FROM
HERE
ON
OUT...

HUF

HUF

HUF

...IT'S MY
LIFE
ON THE
LINE!!

GULL
GULL

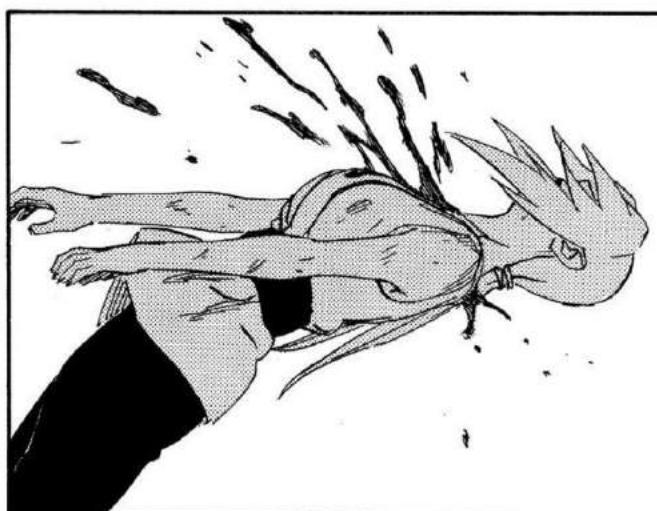
THEN I
AGREE IT
SHOULD
BE
WIPED
OUT
ACCORD-
INGLY!!

WAH...
SURE, IF
YOUR LIFE
IS WORTH
NOTHING
MORE
THAN THIS
LITTLE
BRAT...!

SSH

!





MAKE
IT IN
TIME!!

UUNGH...

AND THAT
LEAVES...
NARUTO.

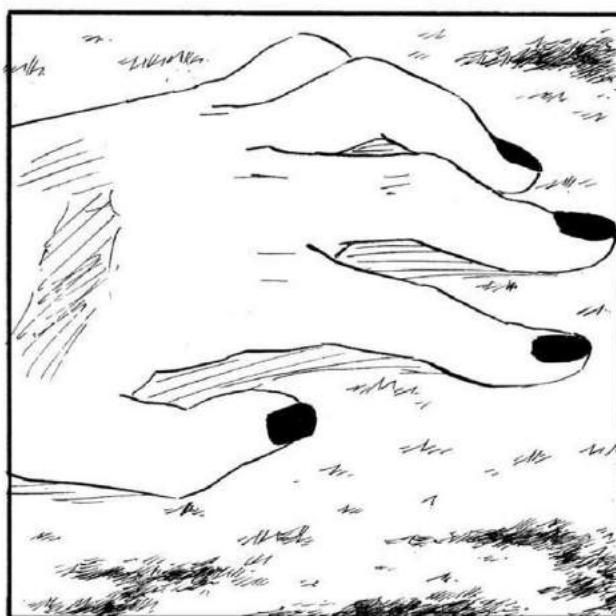
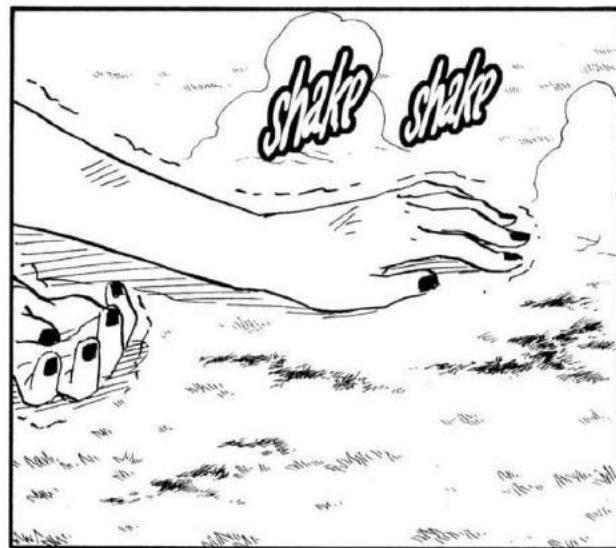
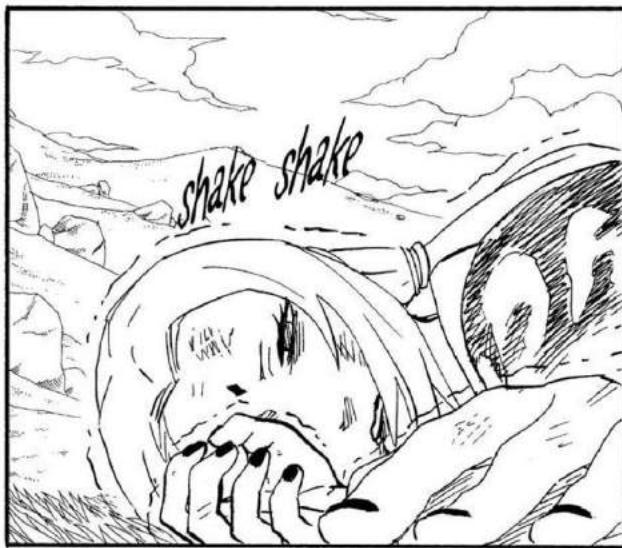
LADY
TSUNADE!!

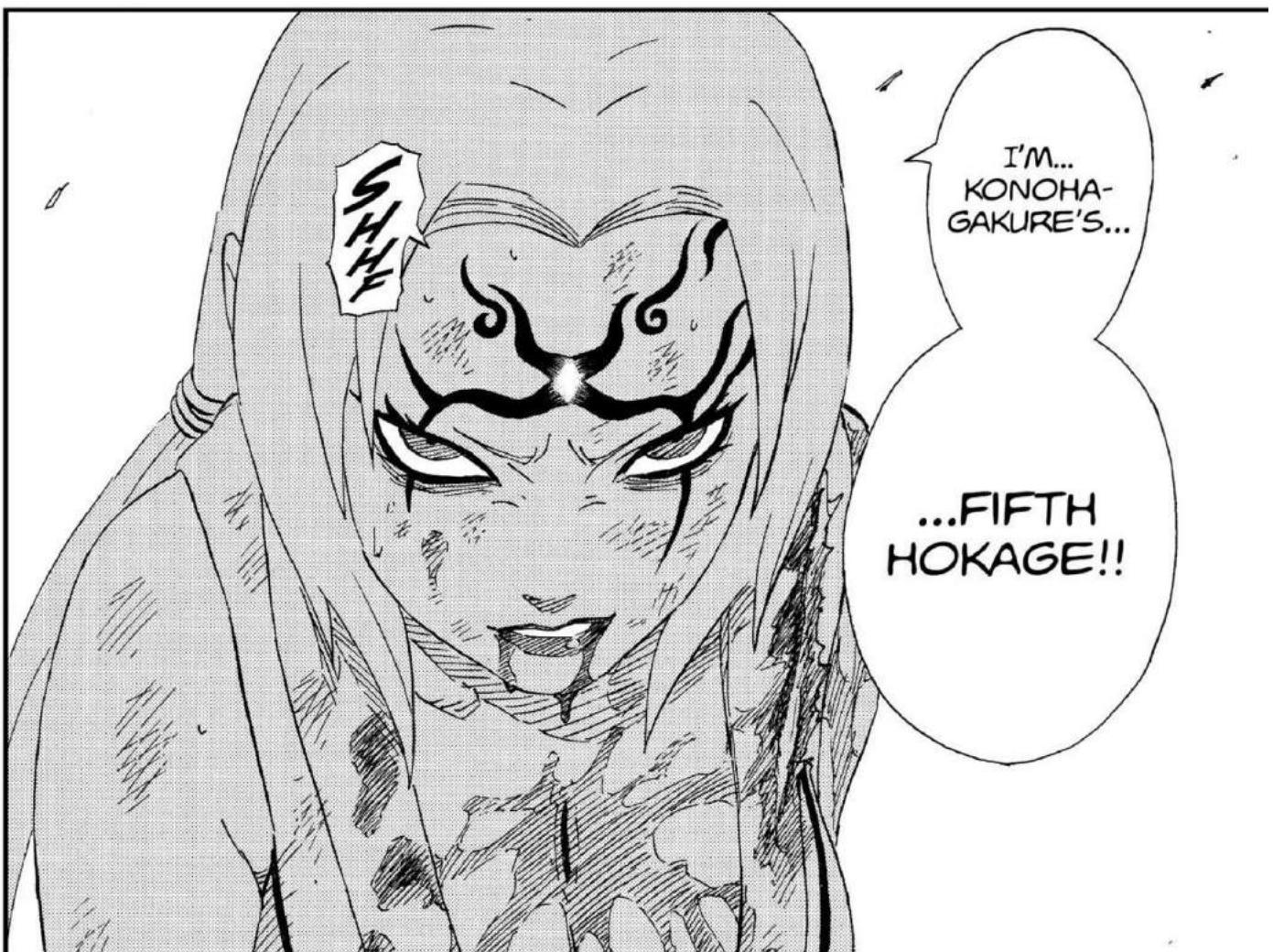
TAK
TAK





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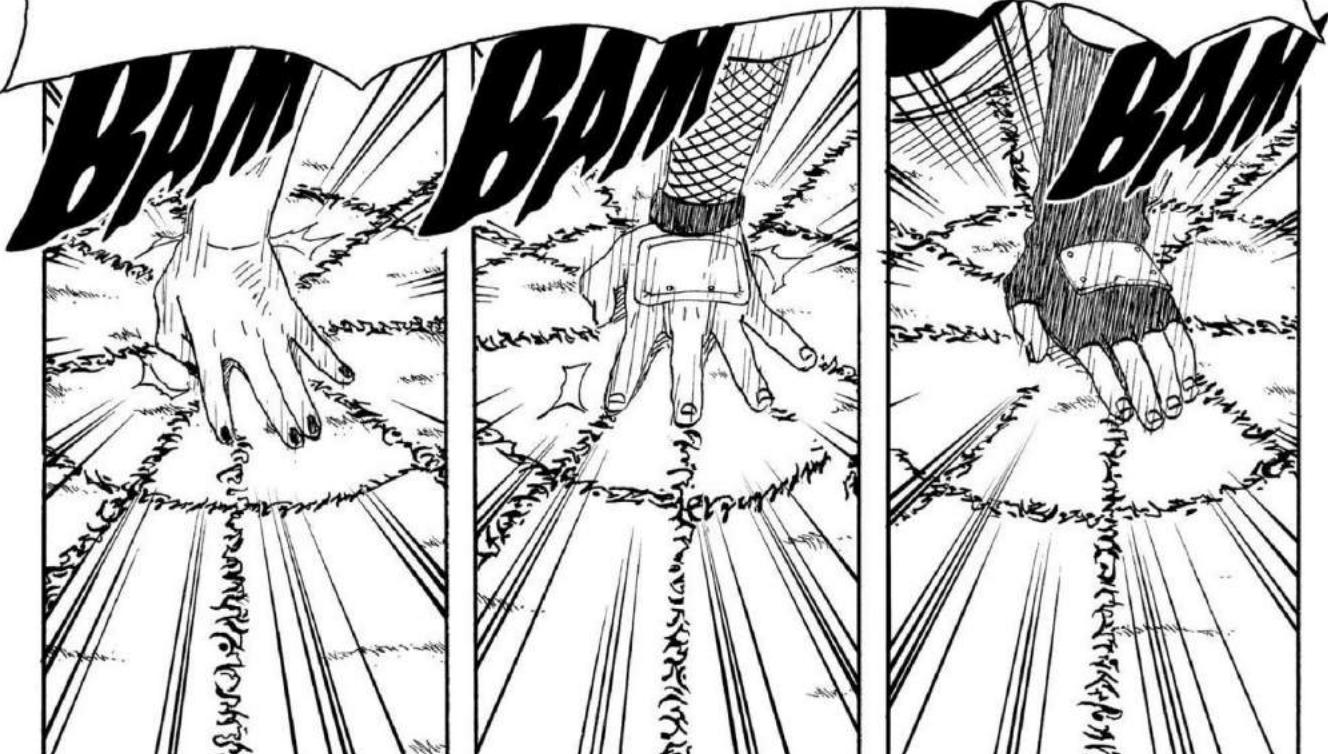


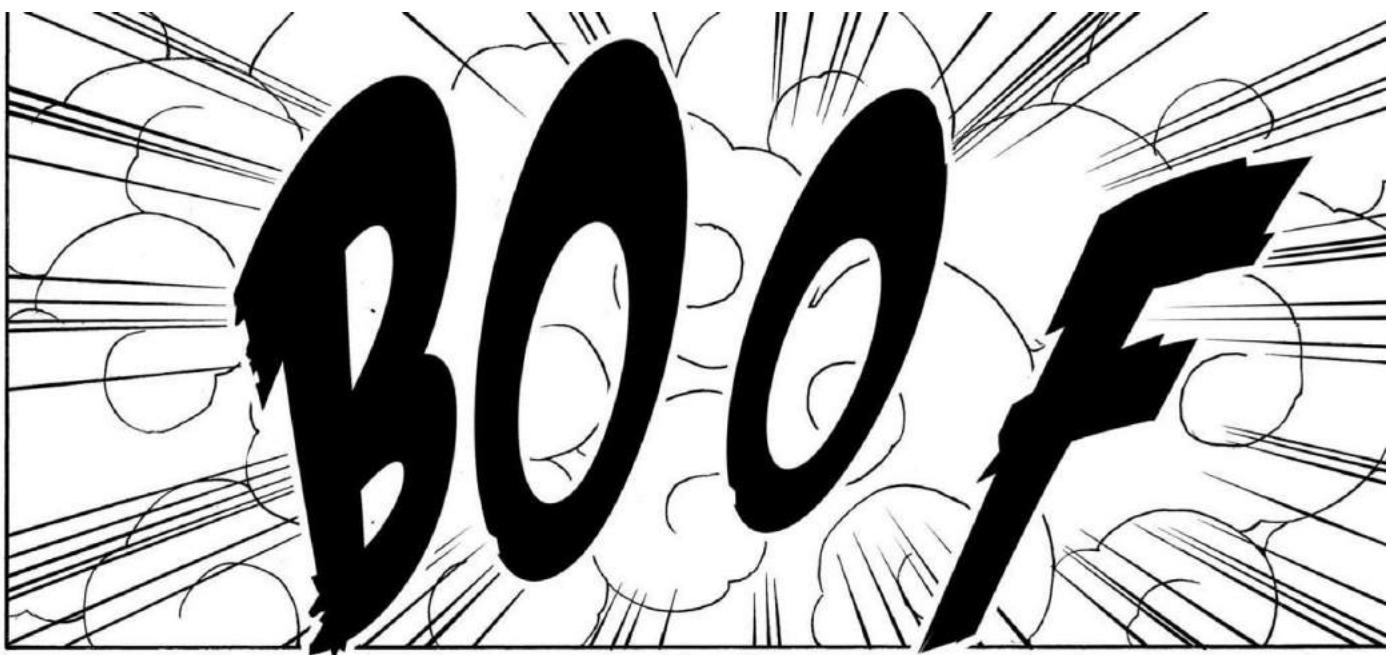


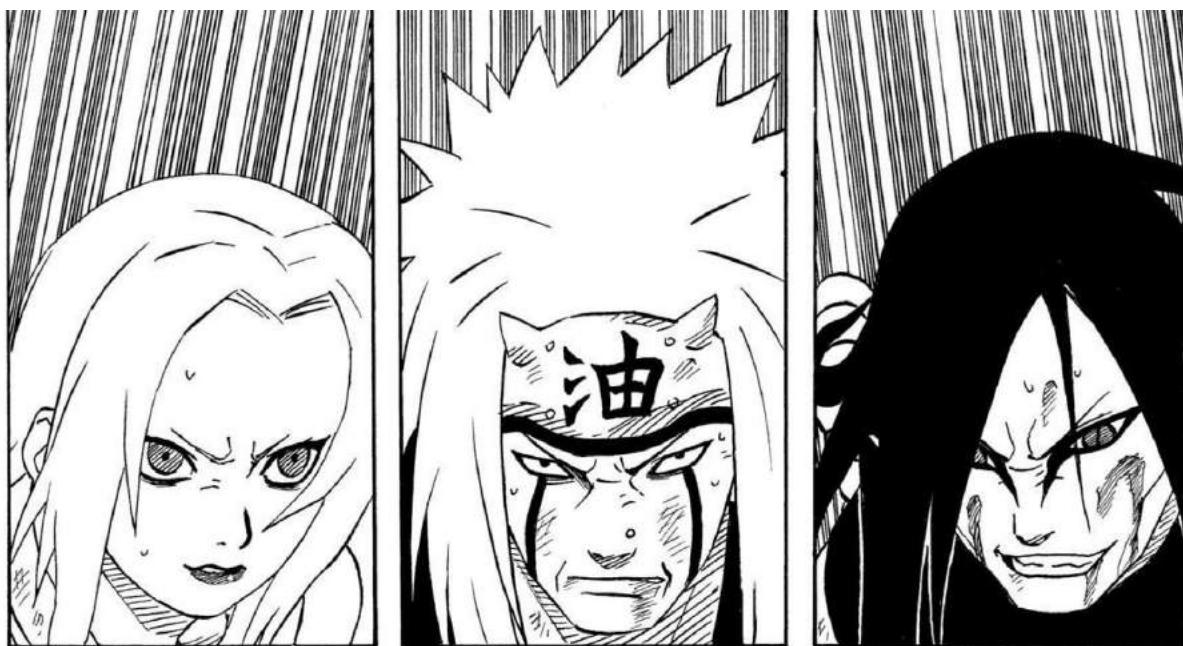
READ
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KUCHIYOSE NO JUTSU! THE ART OF SUMMONING!!





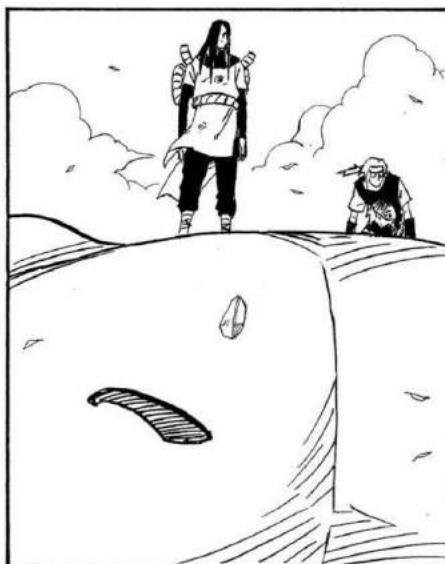
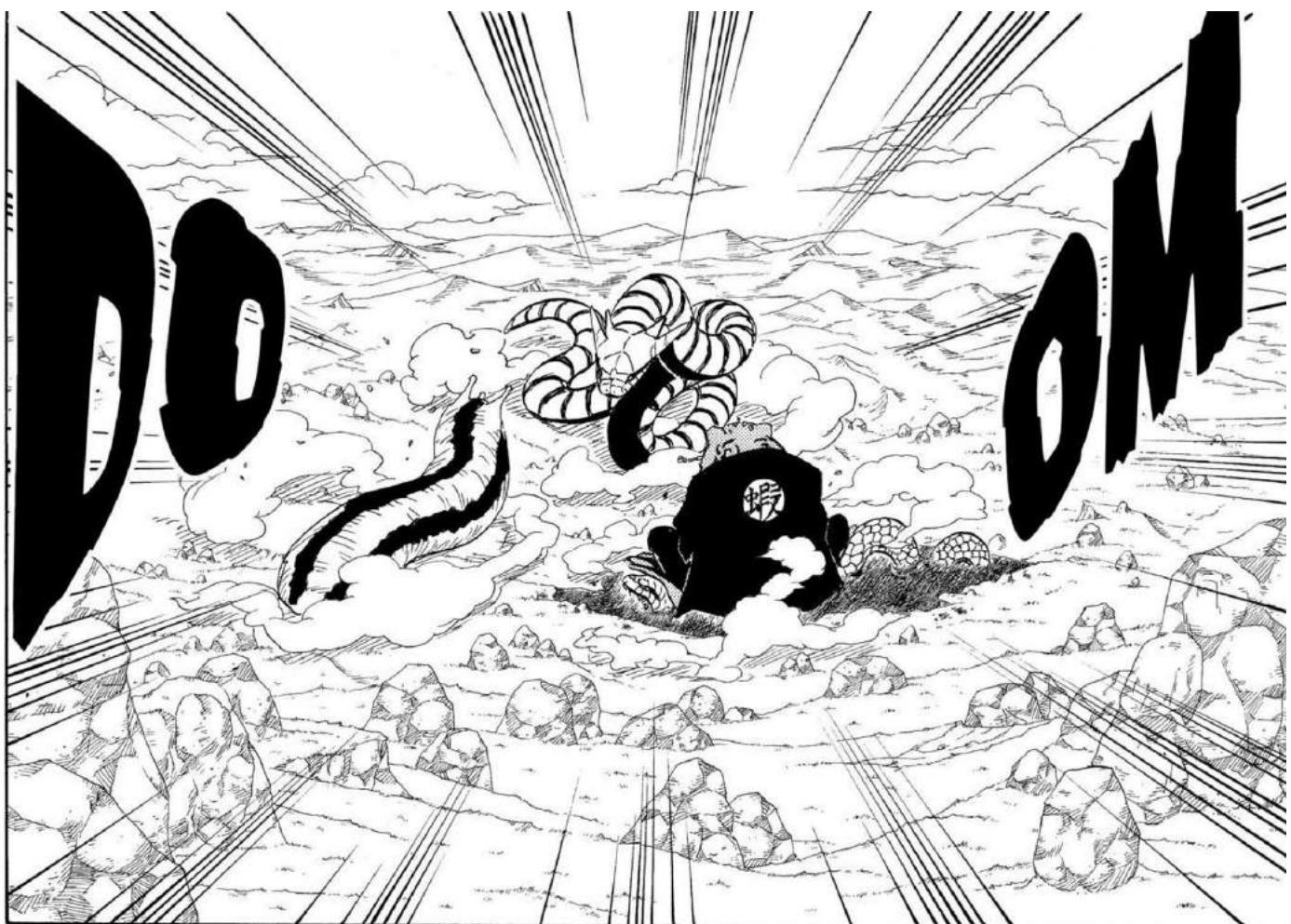




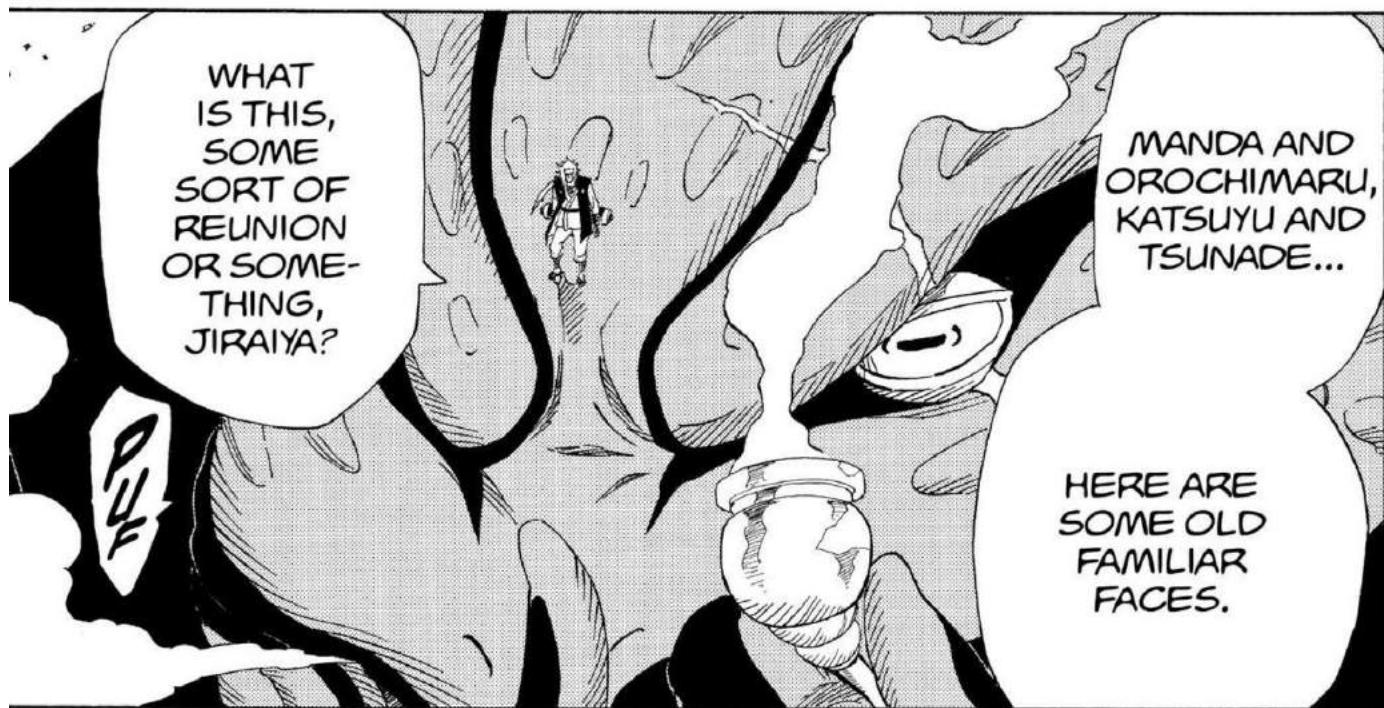
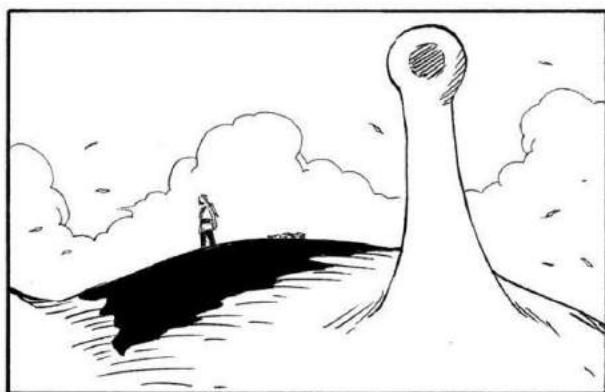
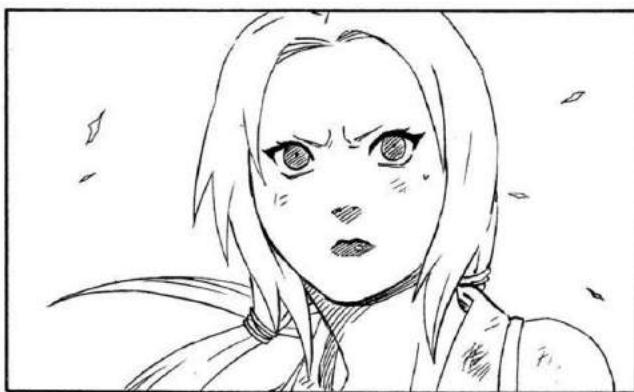
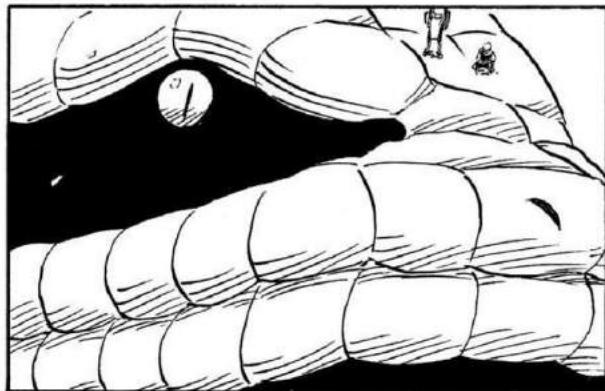
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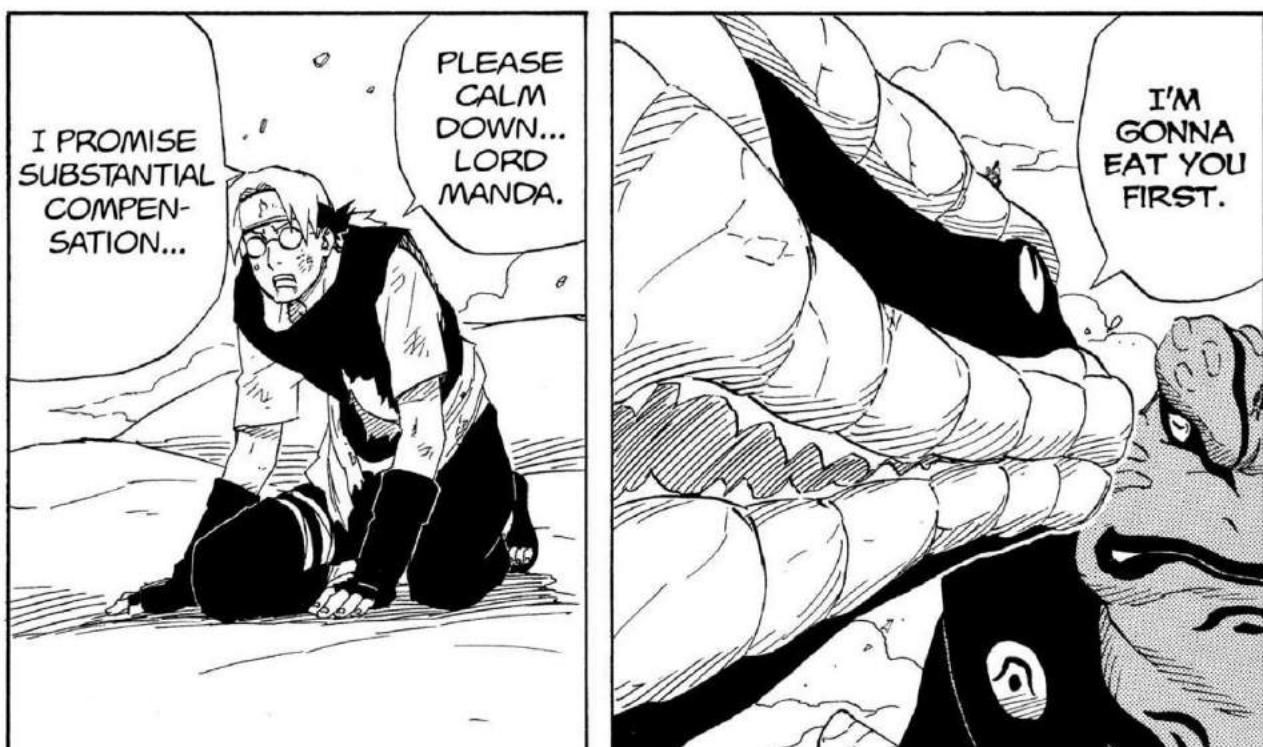
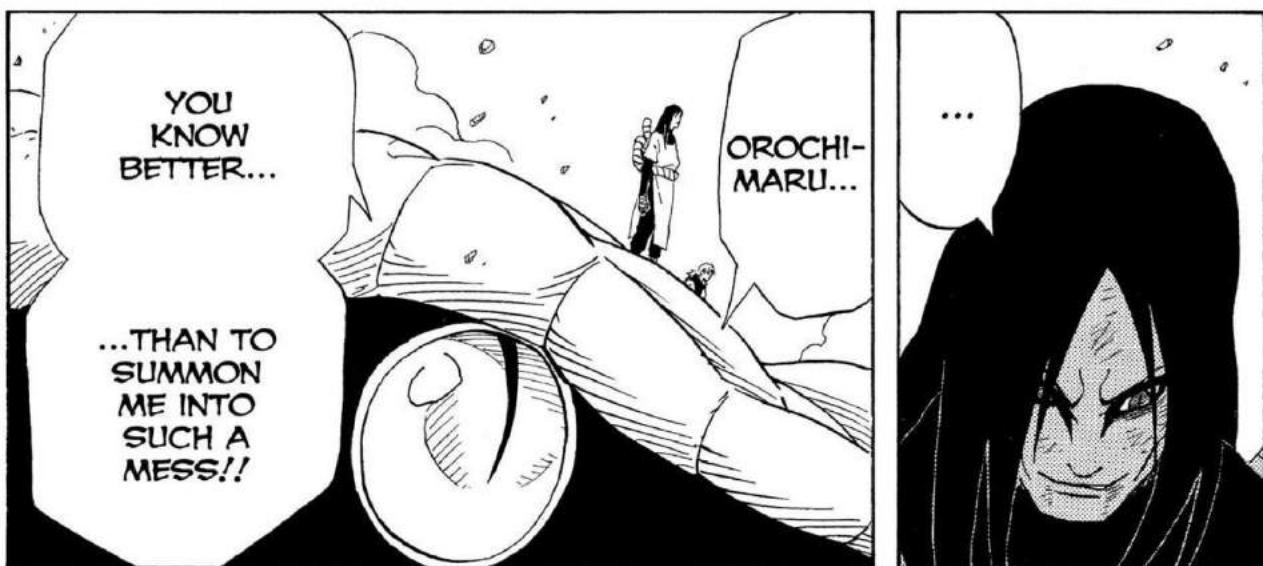
Deadlock III



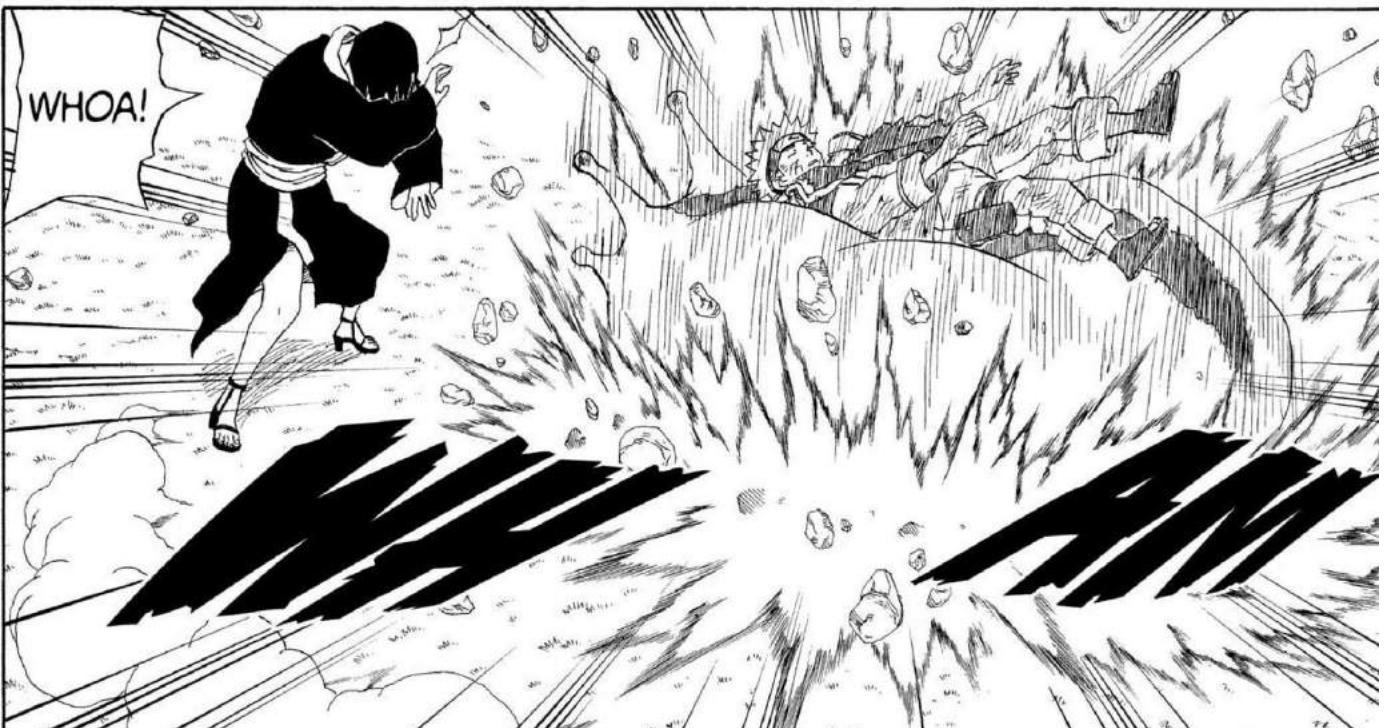


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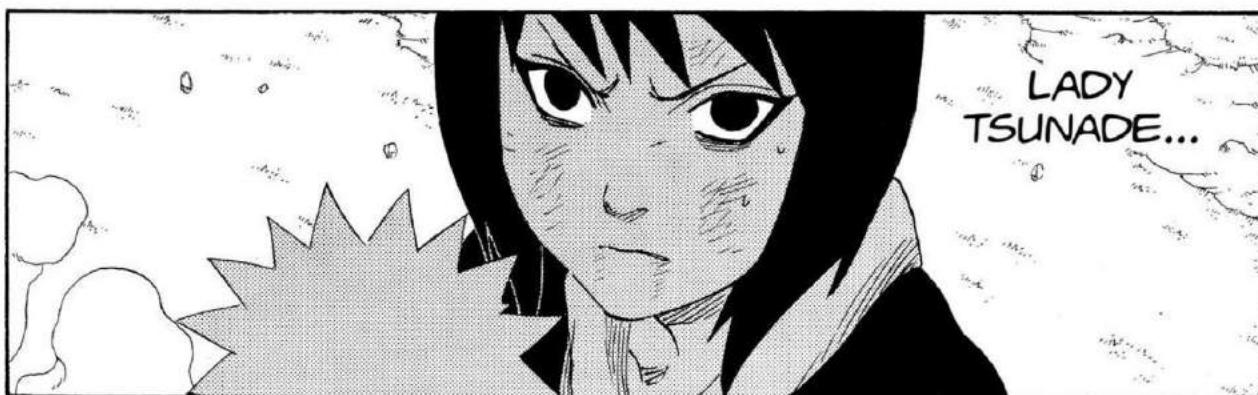


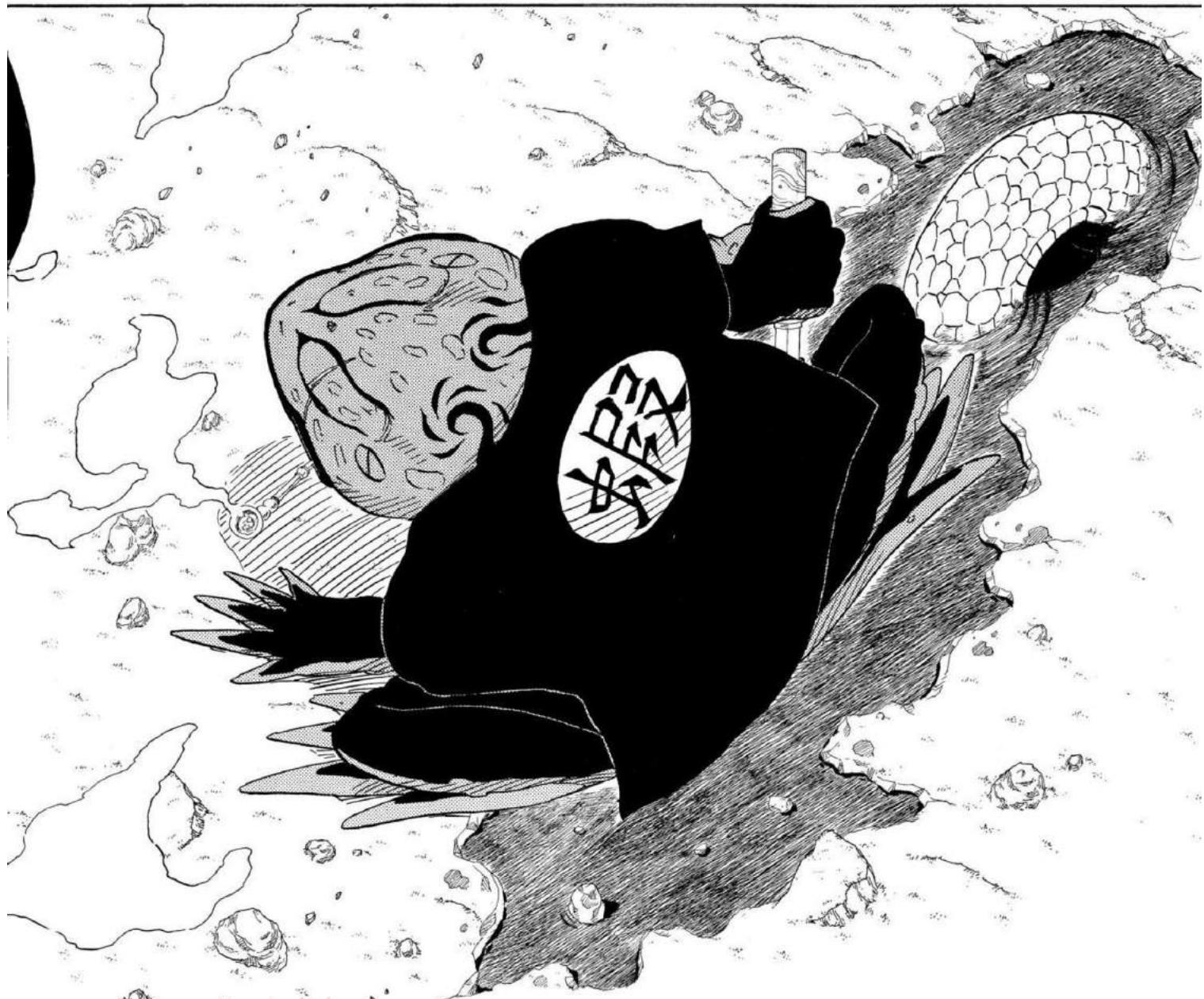
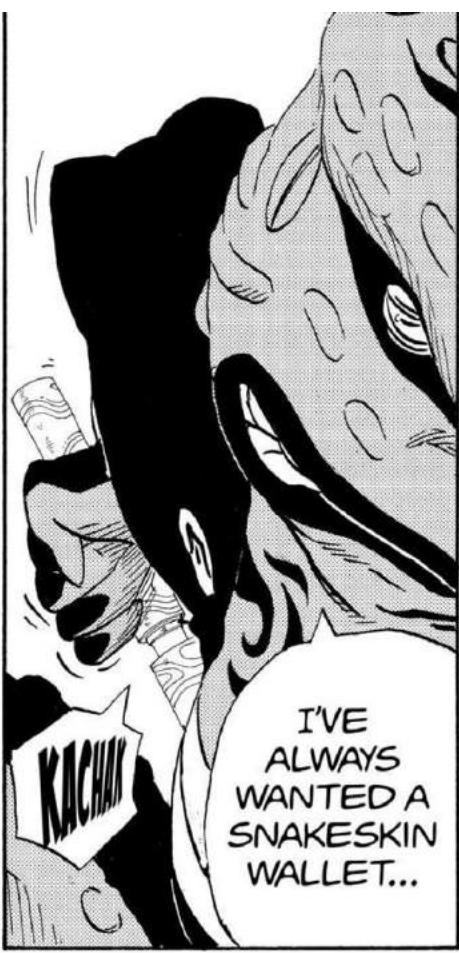
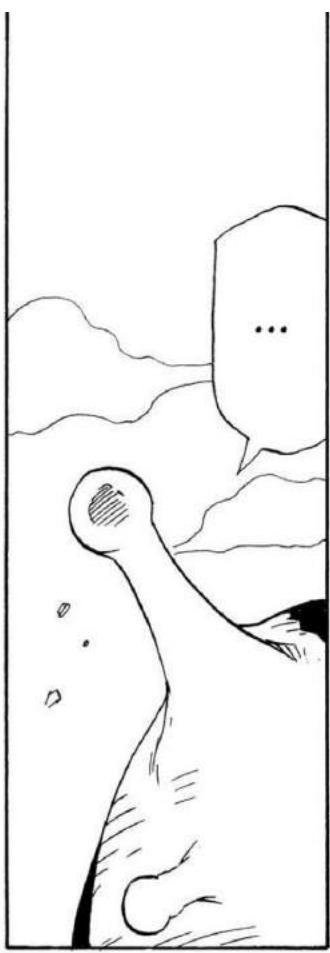


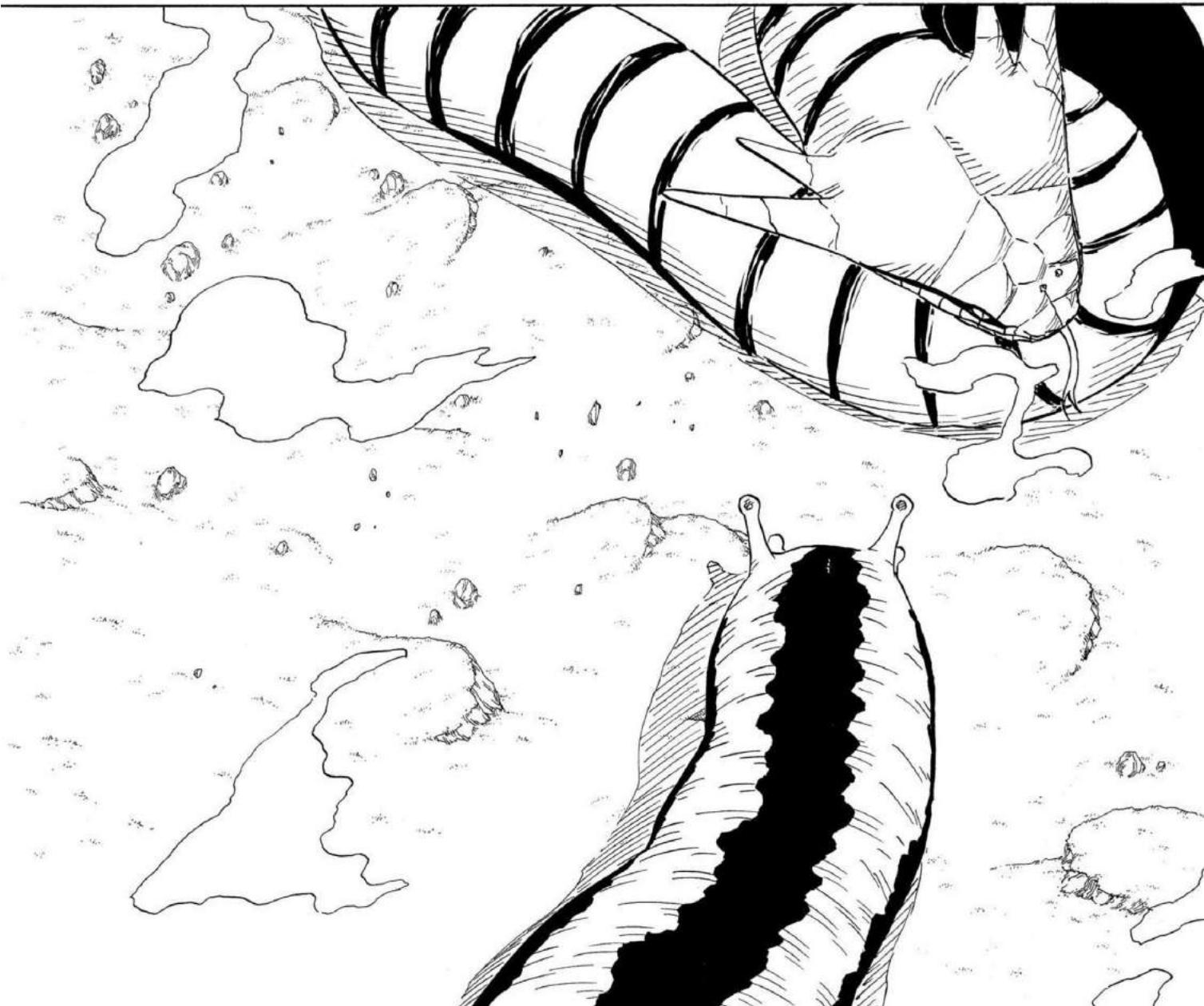


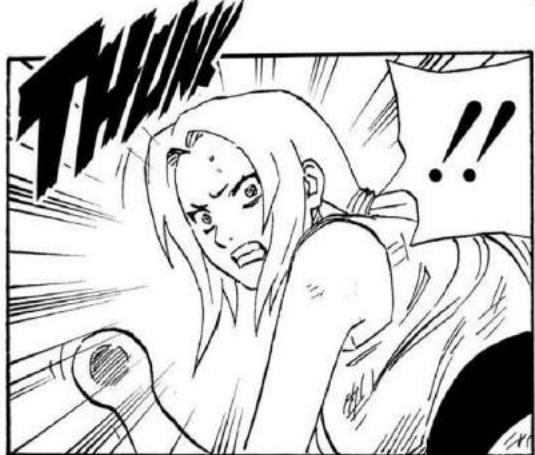
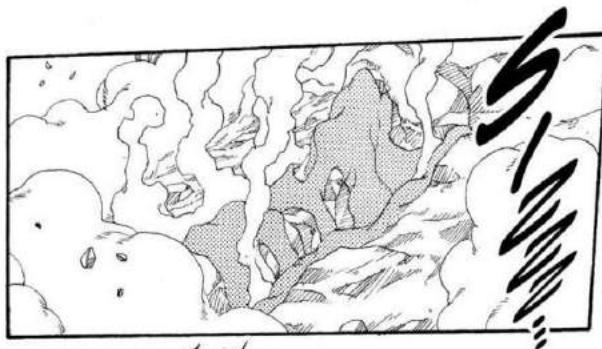
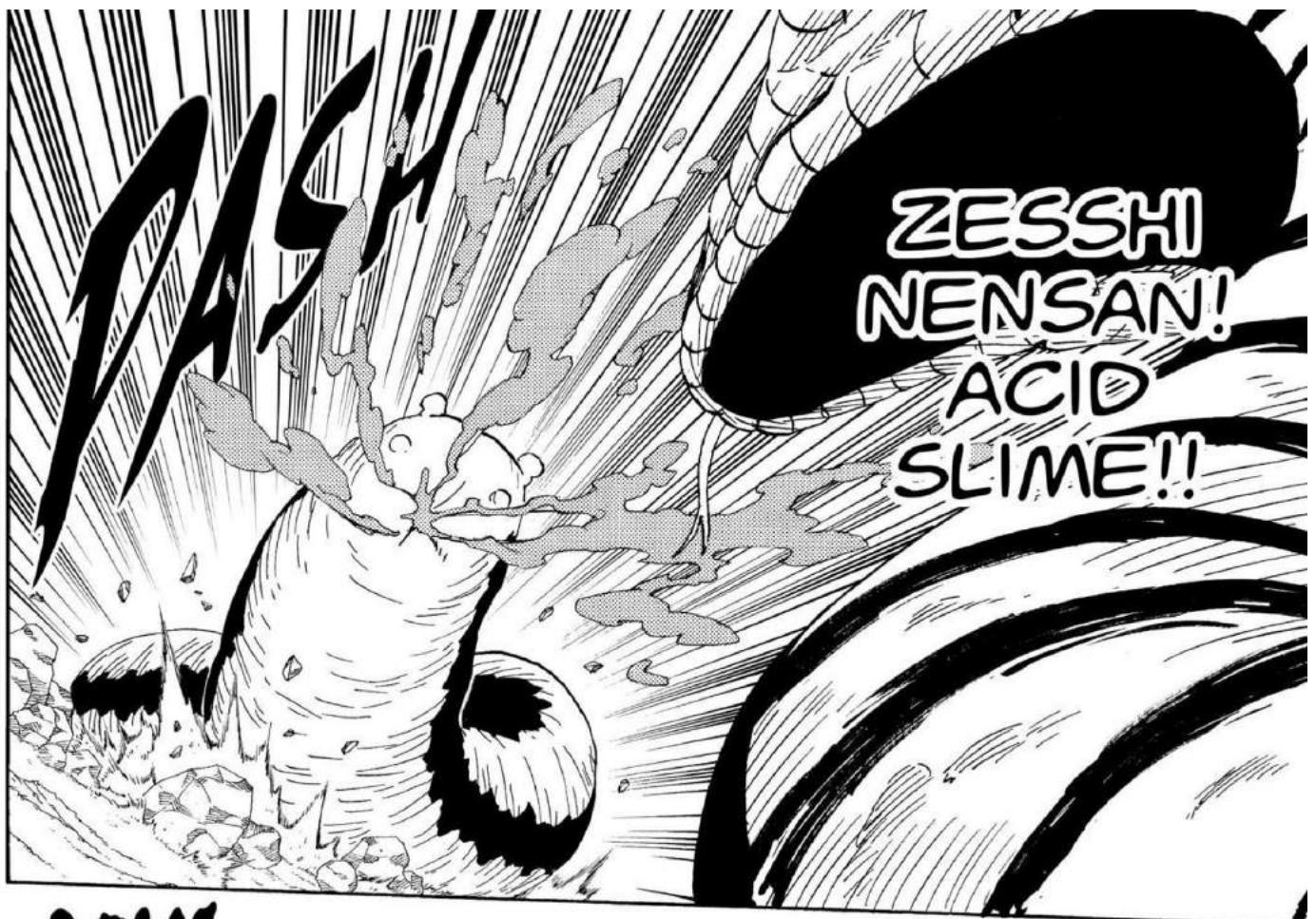


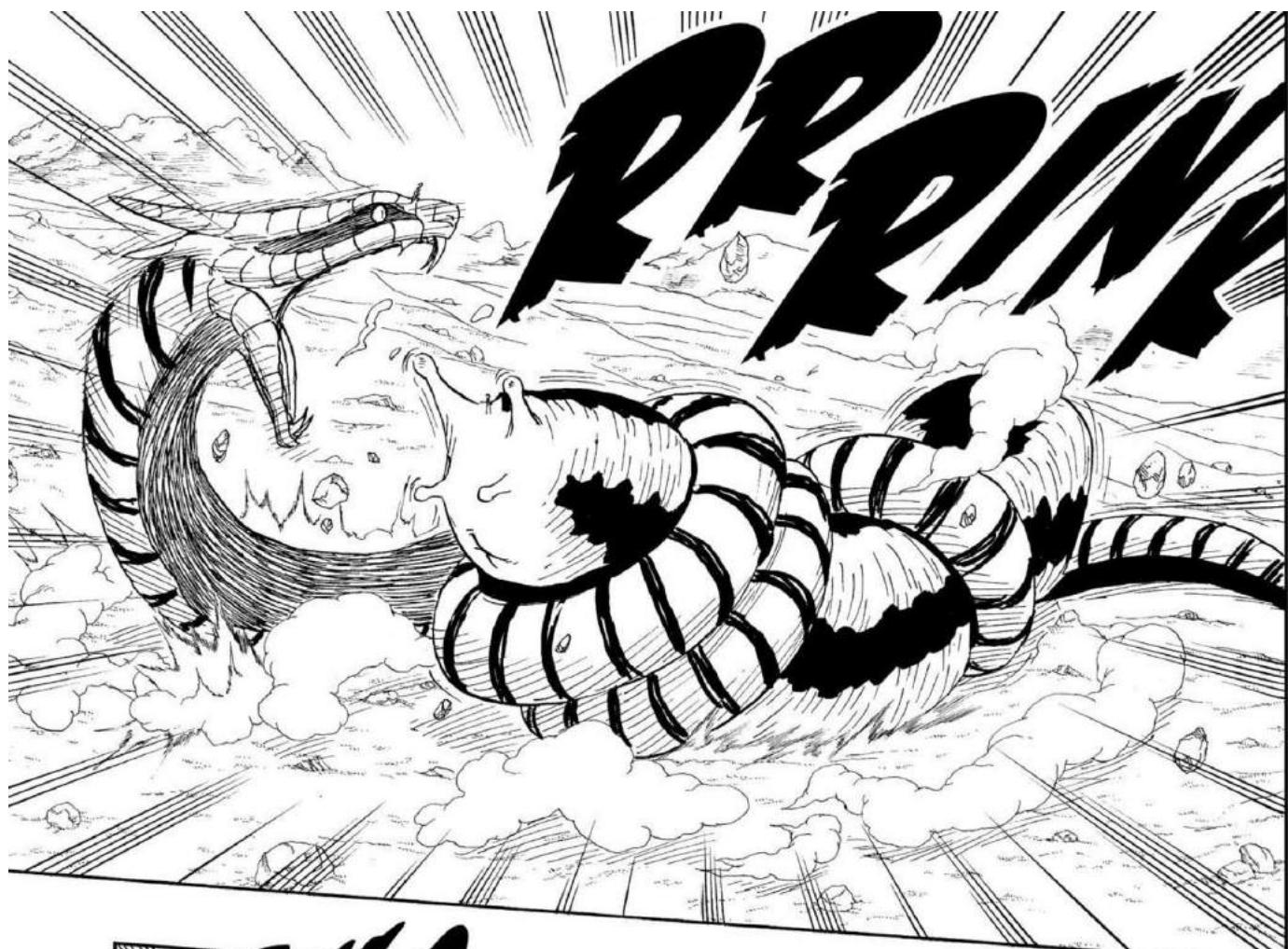
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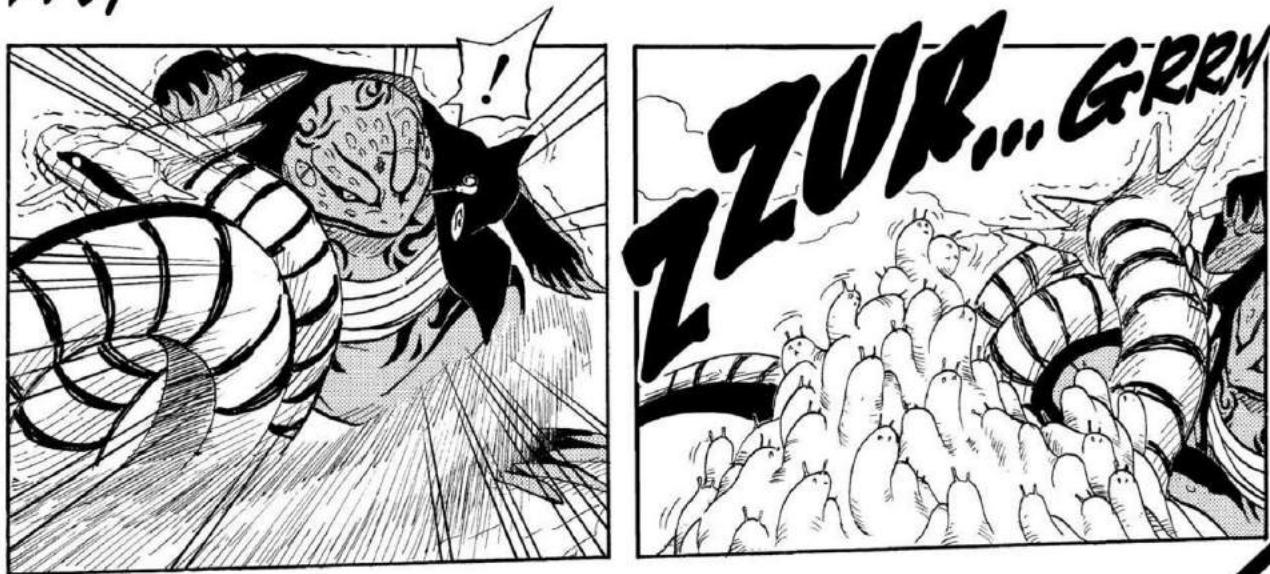
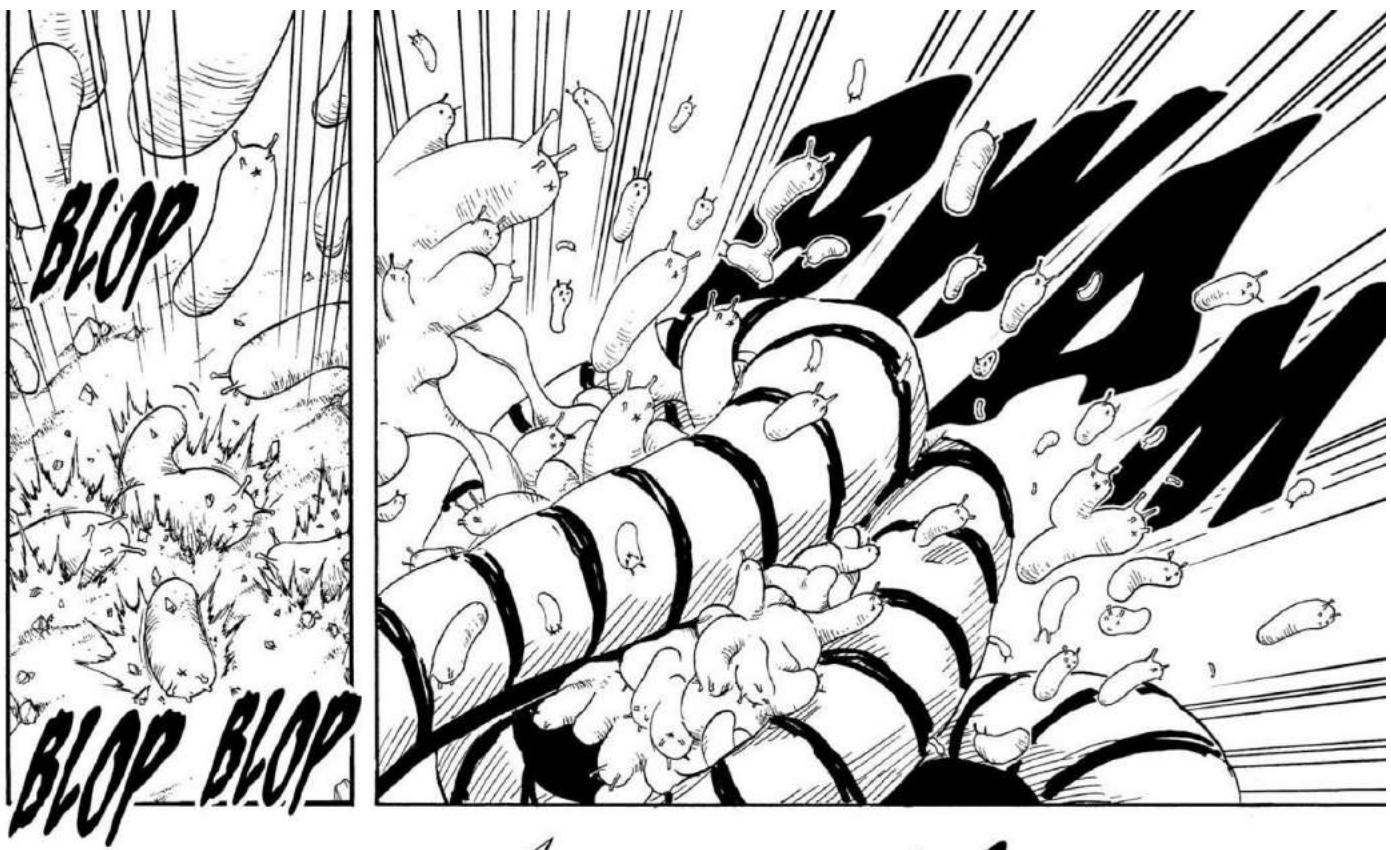




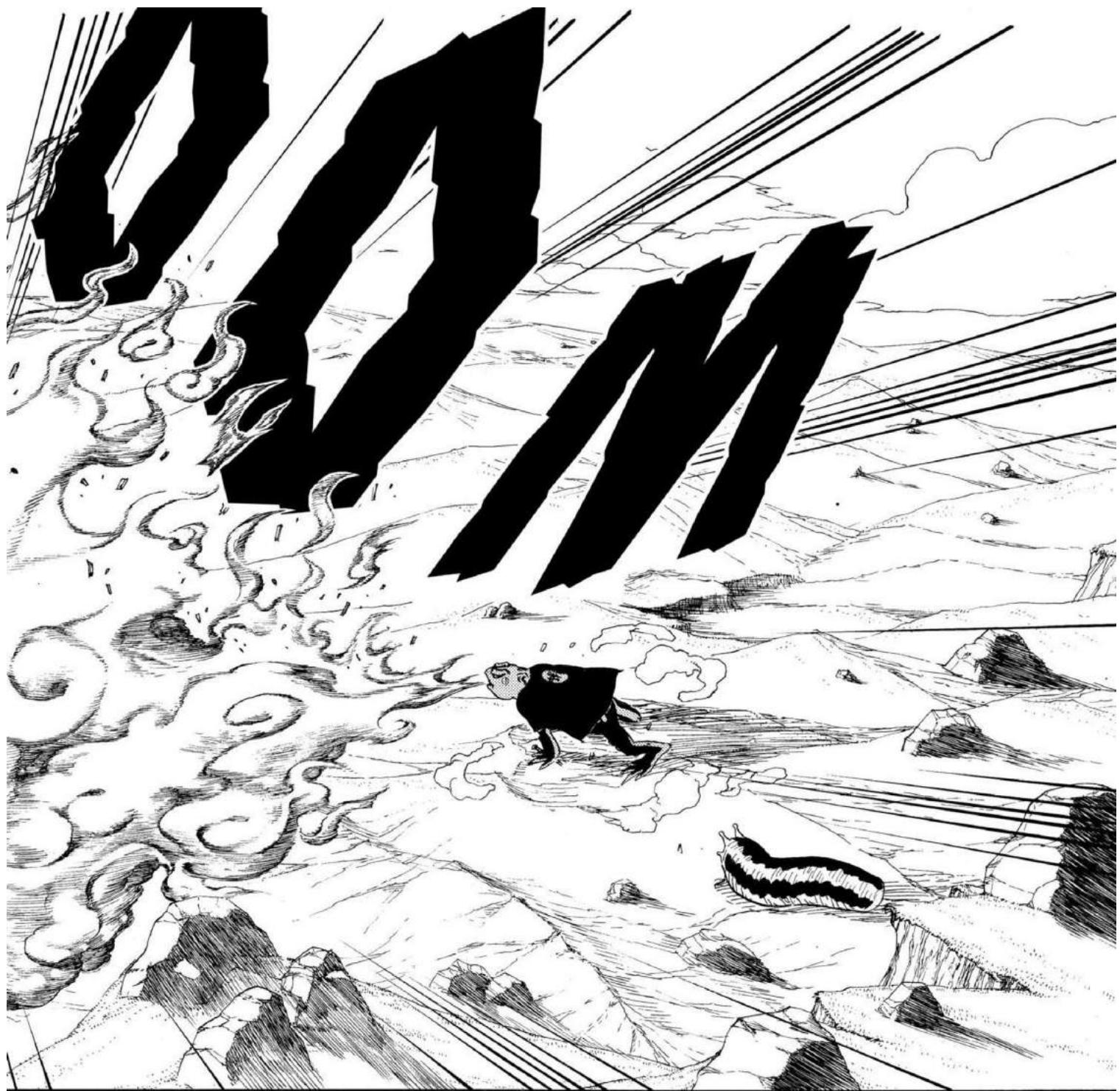






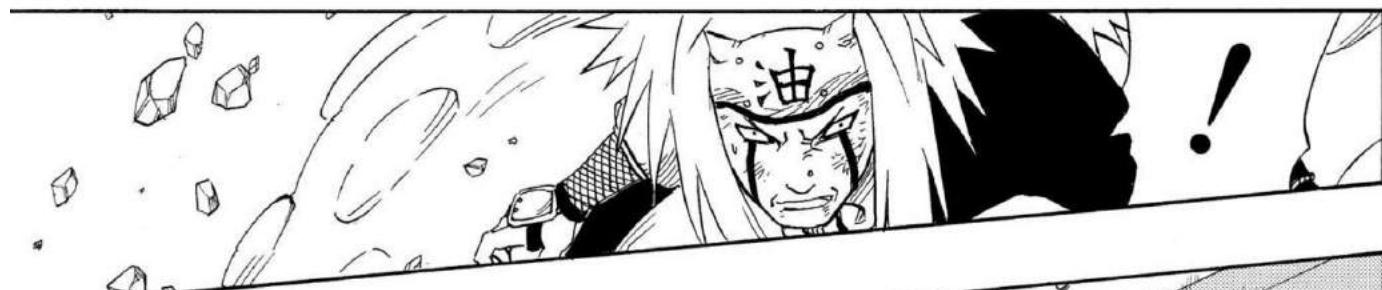


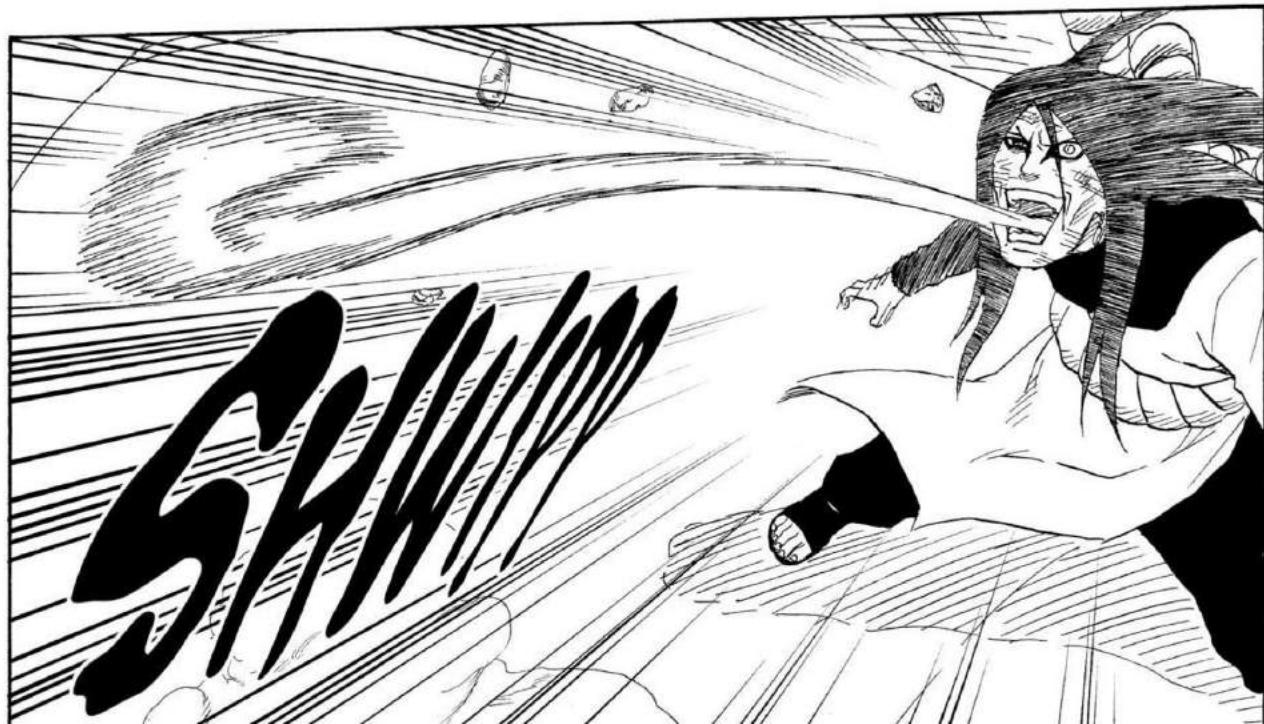


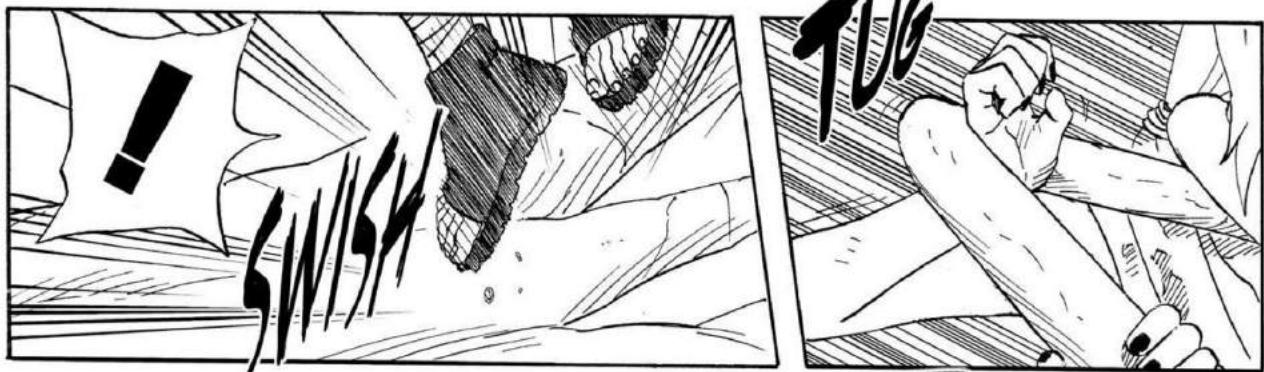












THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 30: NO.4

DURING THE TWO LONG AND BITTER YEARS AFTER COLLEGE, WHICH WERE STILL ENJOYABLE BECAUSE I COULD FEEL MYSELF IMPROVING, I ORGANIZED MY OWN METHOD OF MANGA WRITING IN A NOTEBOOK. THIS IS THE TOP SECRET KISHIMOTO MASASHI NOTEBOOK. IT'S A MASTER PLAN I CAN'T SHOW ANYBODY!

IN THESE TWO YEARS, I GAINED A LOT OF CONFIDENCE. SO, WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY I SET ABOUT WRITING MANGA USING MY CONFIDENTIAL NOTEBOOK. MY THEME WAS BASEBALL! AND THE TITLE WAS YAKYU-OH, BASEBALL KING!

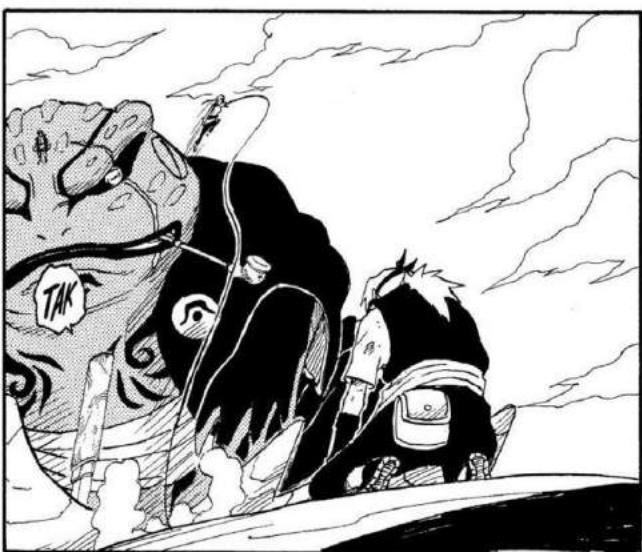
AFTER A SHORT TIME, I FINISHED THE SCRIPT AND SHOWED IT TO MY EDITOR, MR. YAHAGI. "IT'S INTERESTING, BUT...I THINK IT'S A BIT DARK," HE SAID. "BUT I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD WRITE THIS STYLE OF MANGA... YOU'VE IMPROVED." I WAS DELIGHTED TO HEAR THOSE WORDS. ALTHOUGH YAKYU-OH PASSED MR. YAHAGI'S CHECK, A HIGHER COMMITTEE DECIDED THAT THE CONTENT WAS TOO SERIOUS FOR A BOYS' MAGAZINE... IN SHORT, IT WAS TURNED DOWN.

STILL, YAKYU-OH WAS MY TURNING POINT. THOUGH IT WAS NOT PUBLISHED, MR. YAHAGI SAID, "INTERESTING! THIS MANGA IS DEFINITELY INTERESTING! IT WOULD'VE BEEN TOTALLY FINE FOR A YOUNG ADULT MAGAZINE..." THIS MANGA WAS THE FIRST WORK OF MINE TO RECEIVE SUBSTANTIAL PRAISE FROM MR. YAHAGI. I FELT MY TWO YEARS OF WORK HAD SURE PAID OFF.

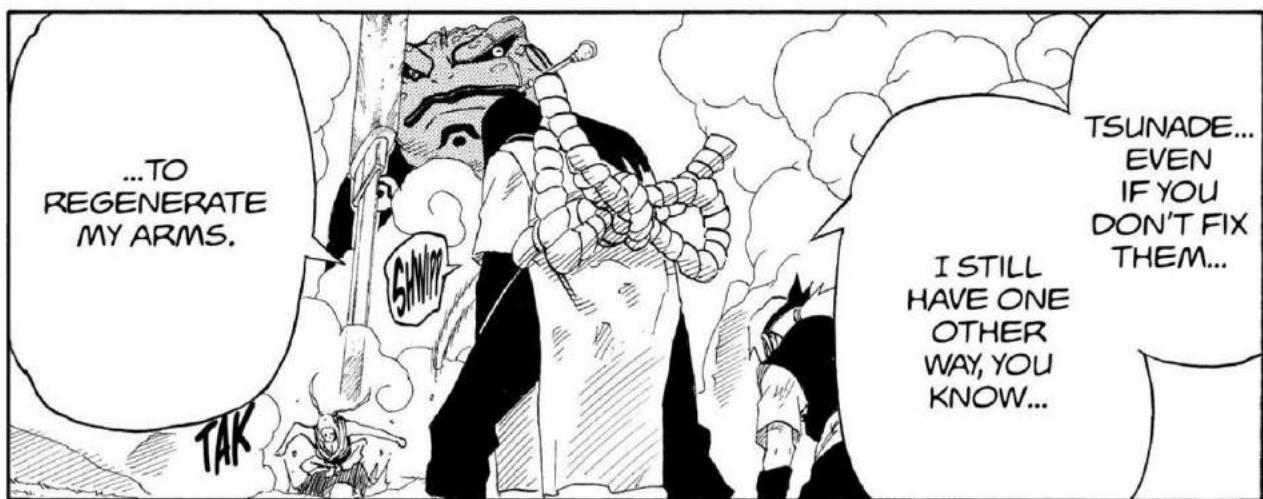
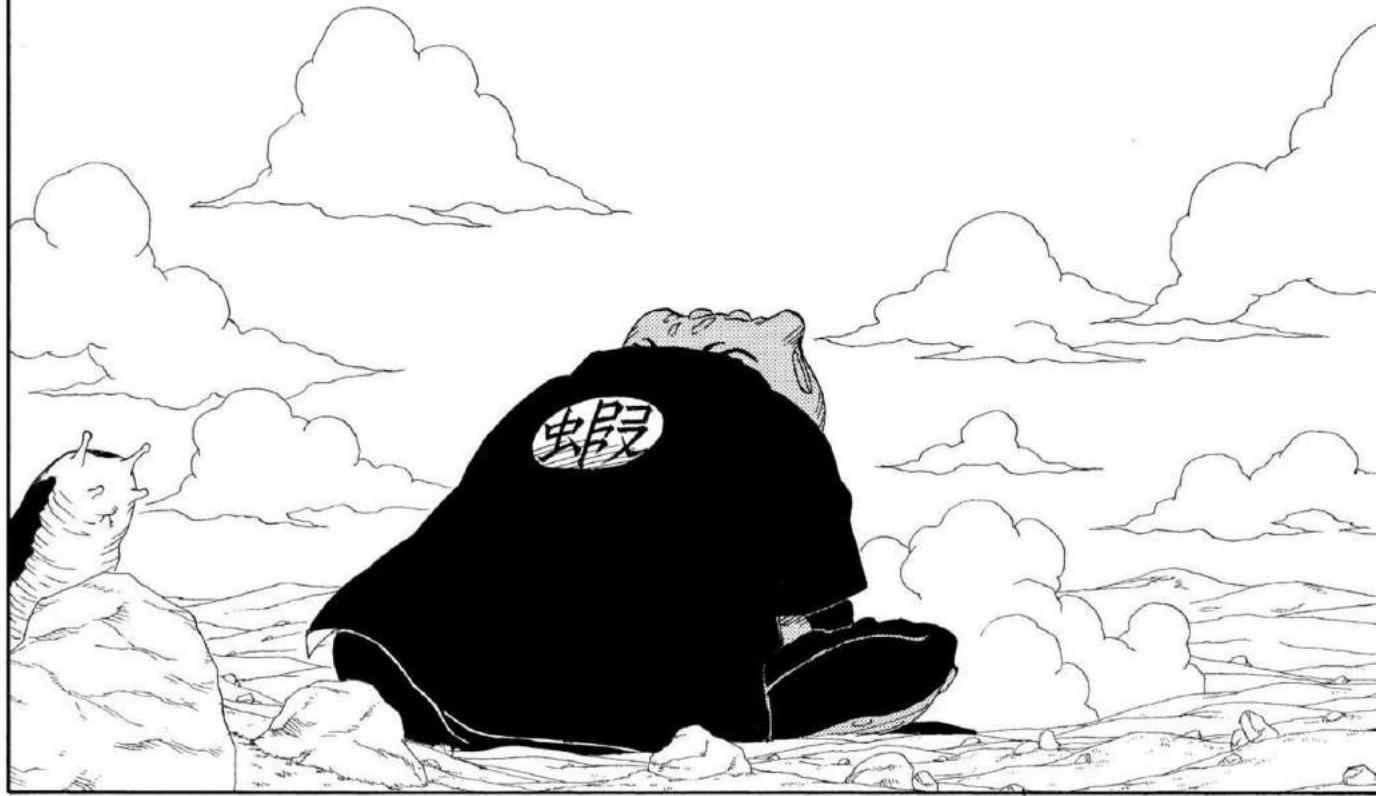
FOUR MONTHS LATER, I WROTE A MANGA SCRIPT FOR ANOTHER BOYS' MAGAZINE AND SHOWED IT TO MR. YAHAGI. MR. YAHAGI SAID, "IT'S PERFECT! SOME MINOR PARTS WILL HAVE TO BE REVISED, THOUGH!" IN THOSE TWO YEARS, I WAS ABLE TO CHANGE MYSELF A LITTLE BIT. WHAT'S MORE, I MANAGED TO START A SERIES WITH THAT STORYBOARD.

Number 177: Successor

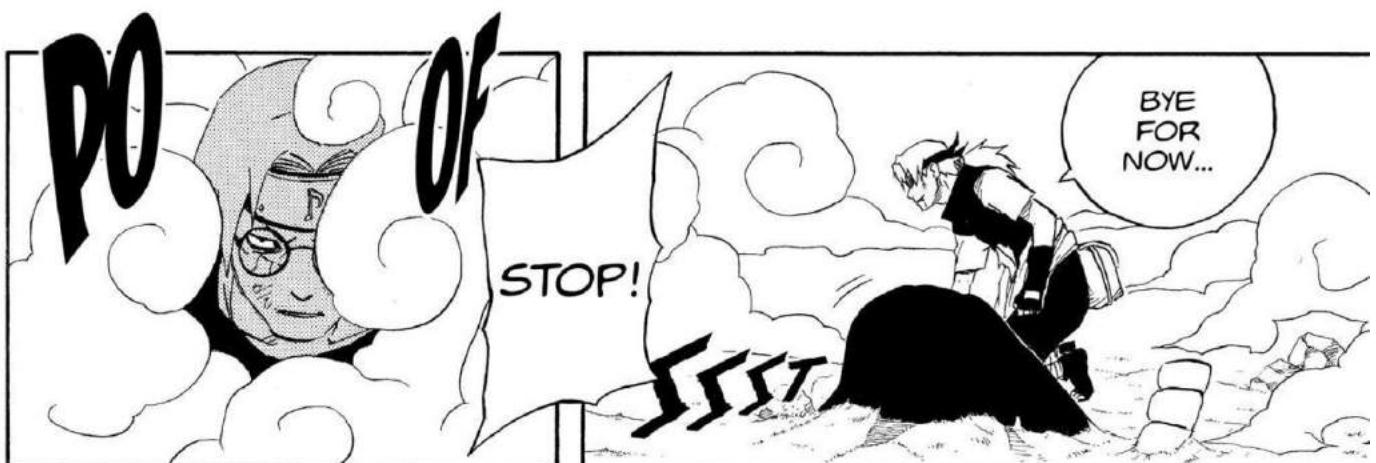




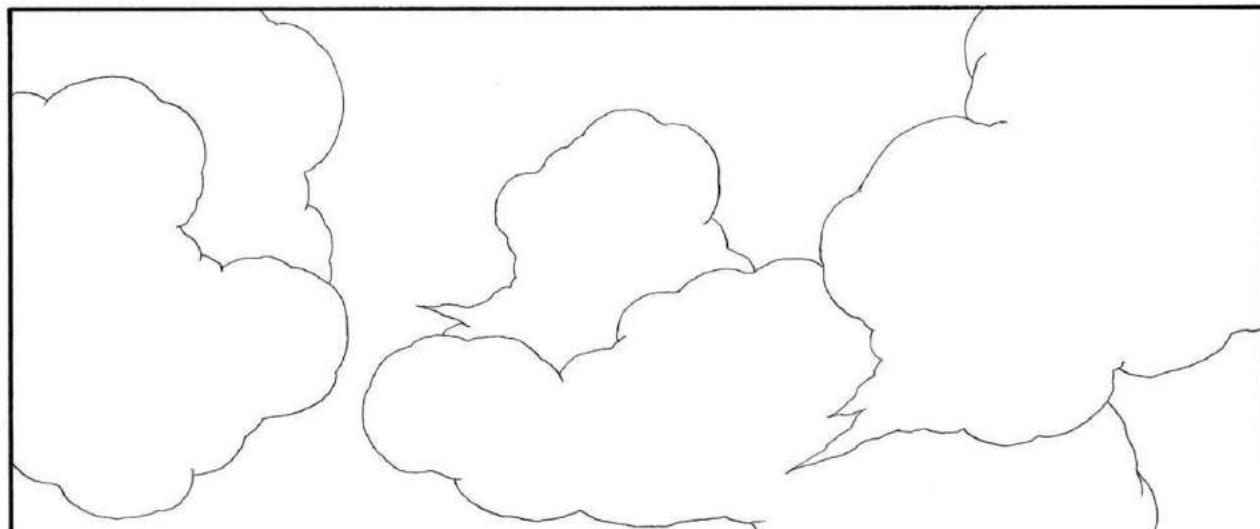
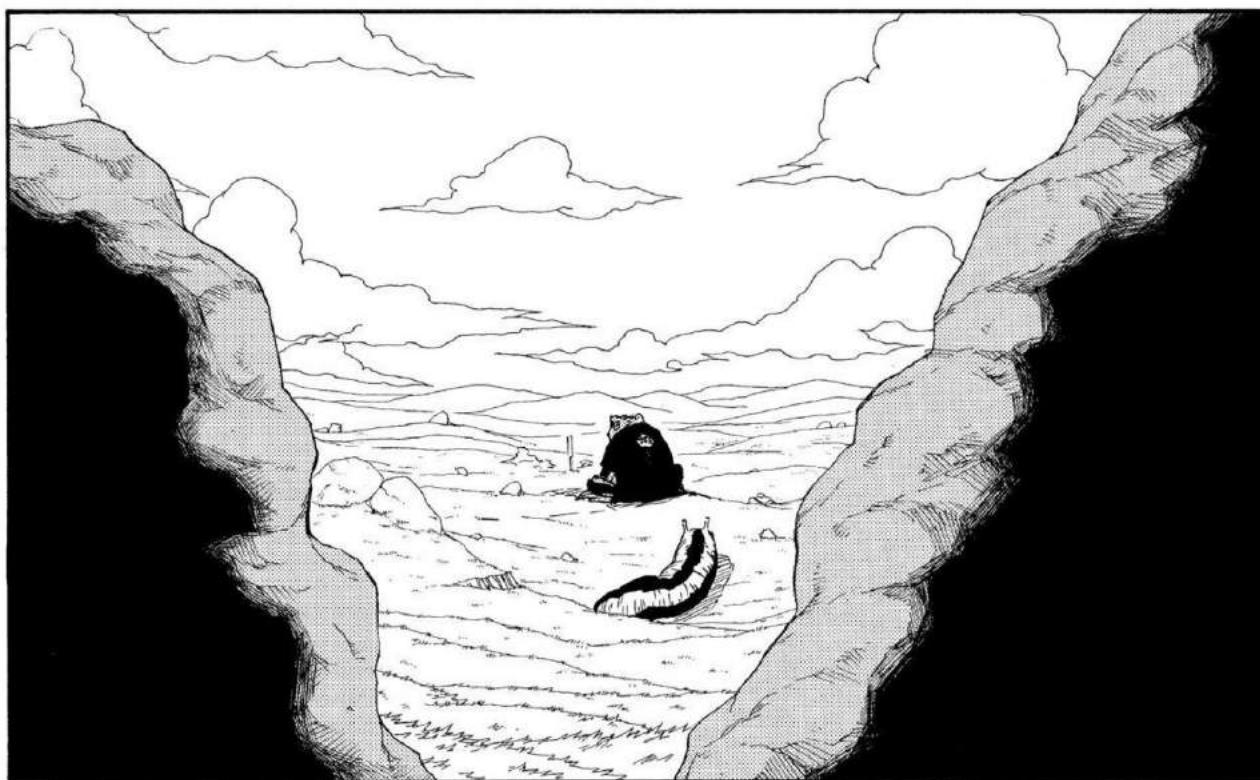
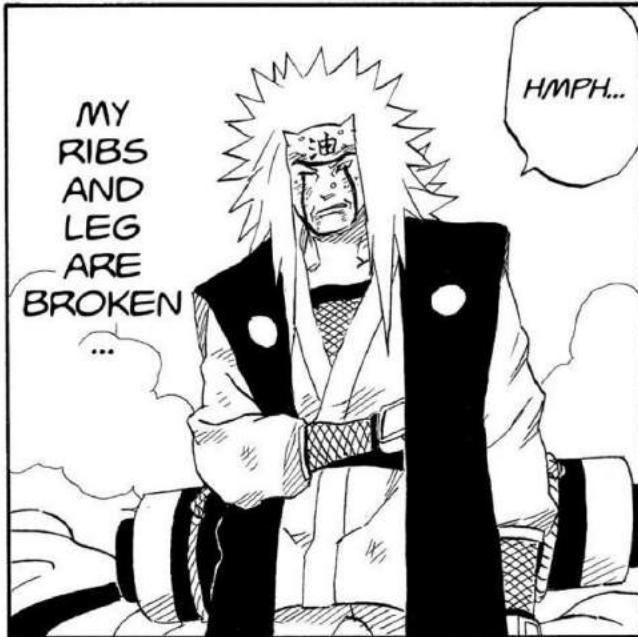
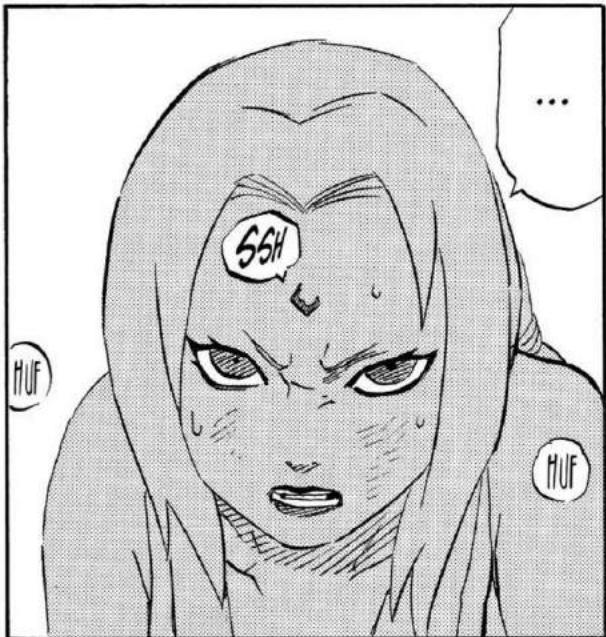








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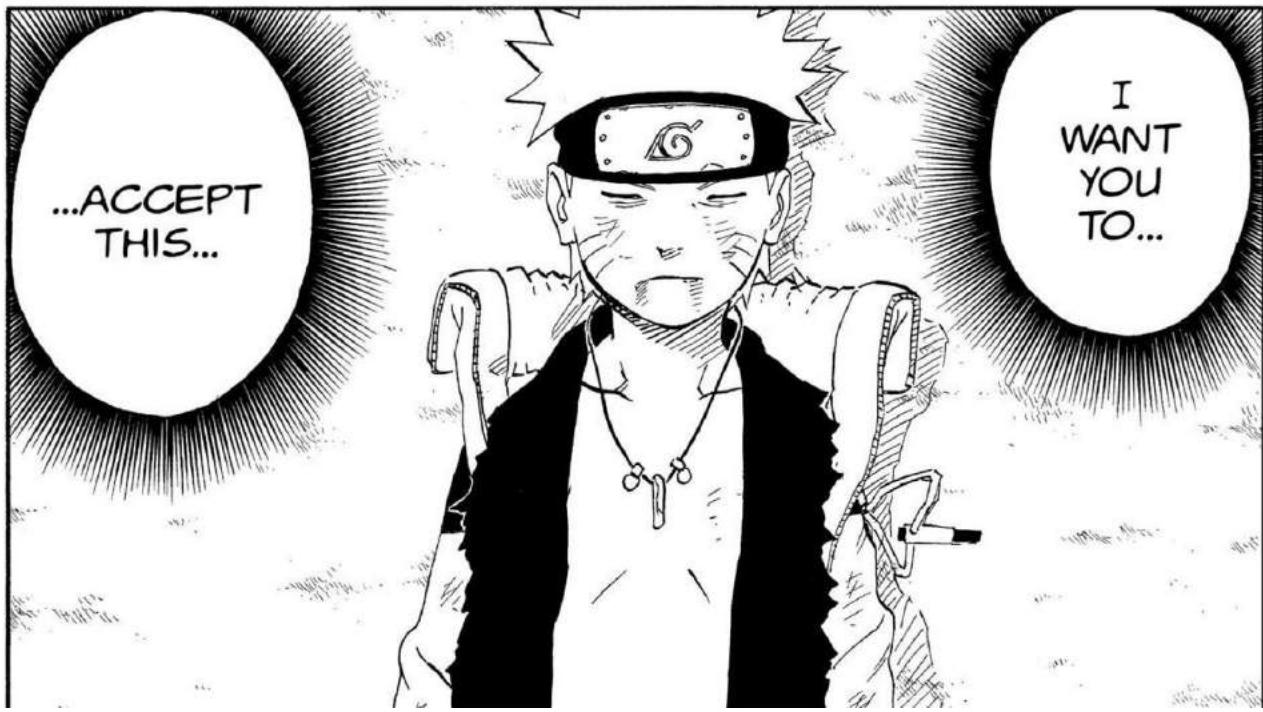
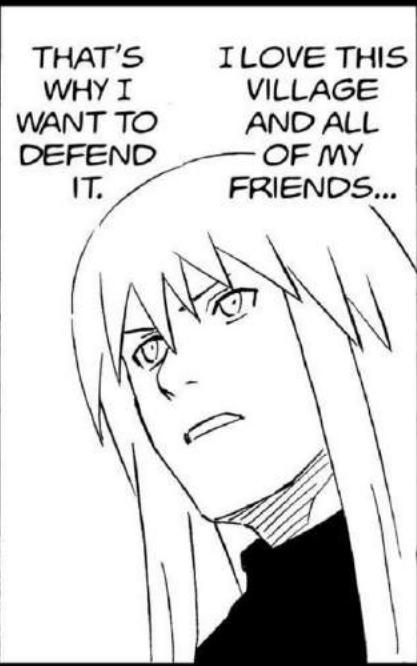


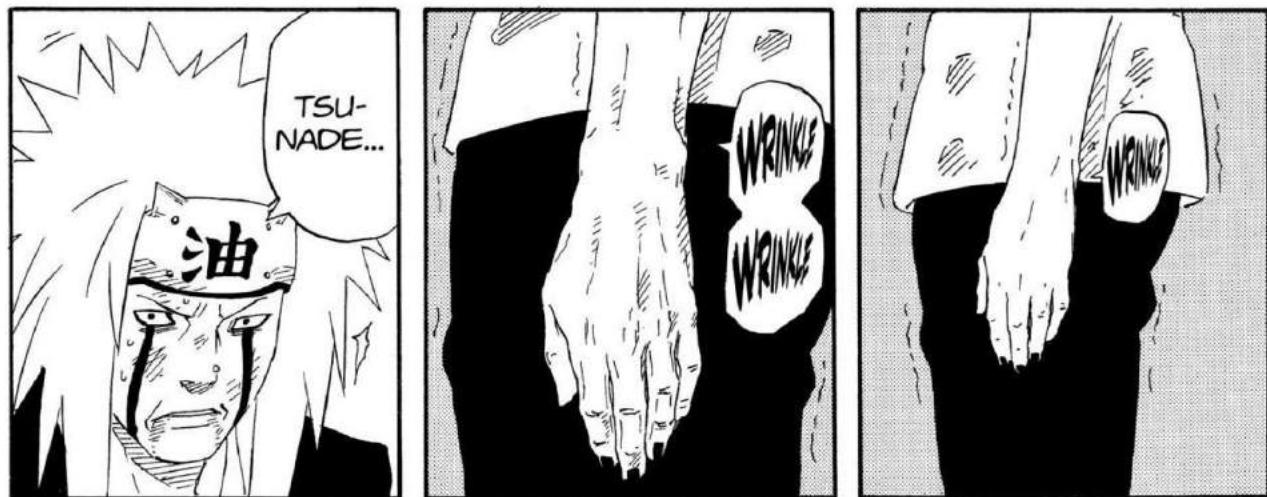
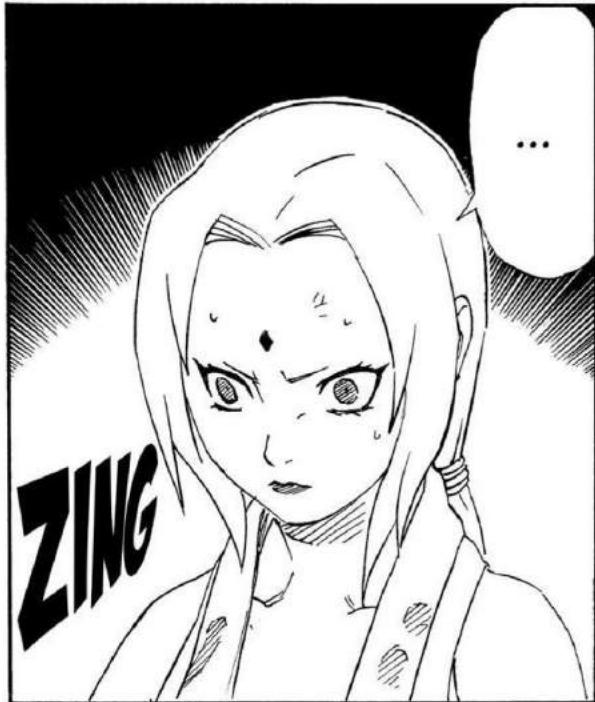
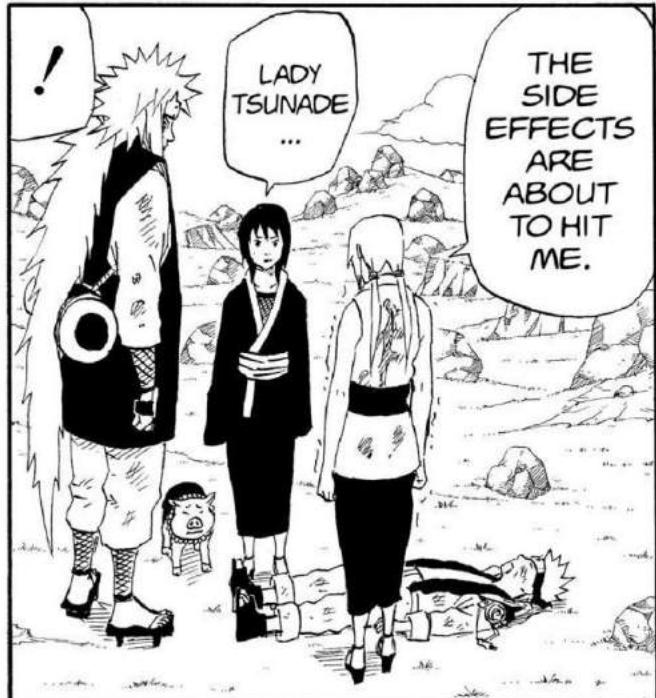


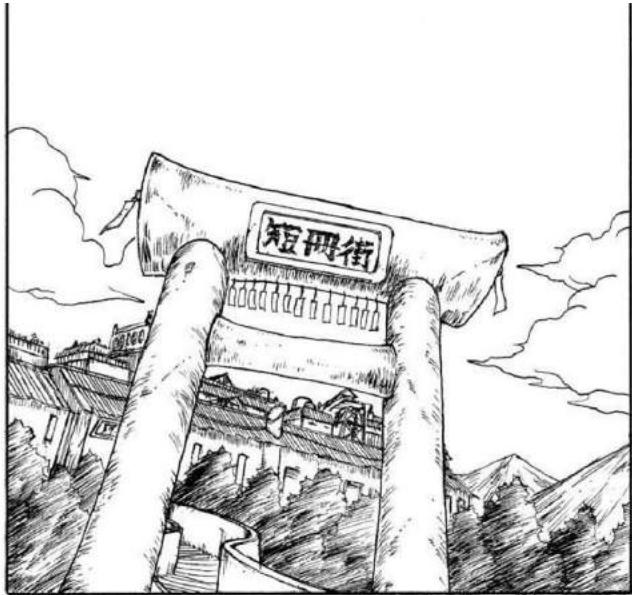


GIVE ME THREE DAYS, AND I'LL MASTER THIS JUTSU FOR YOU!!

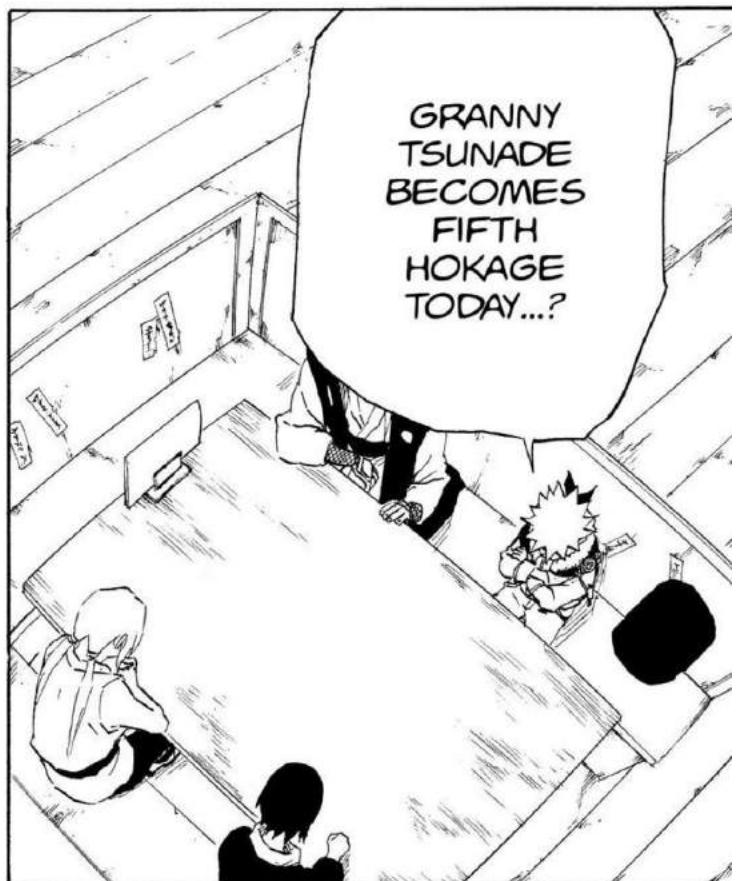
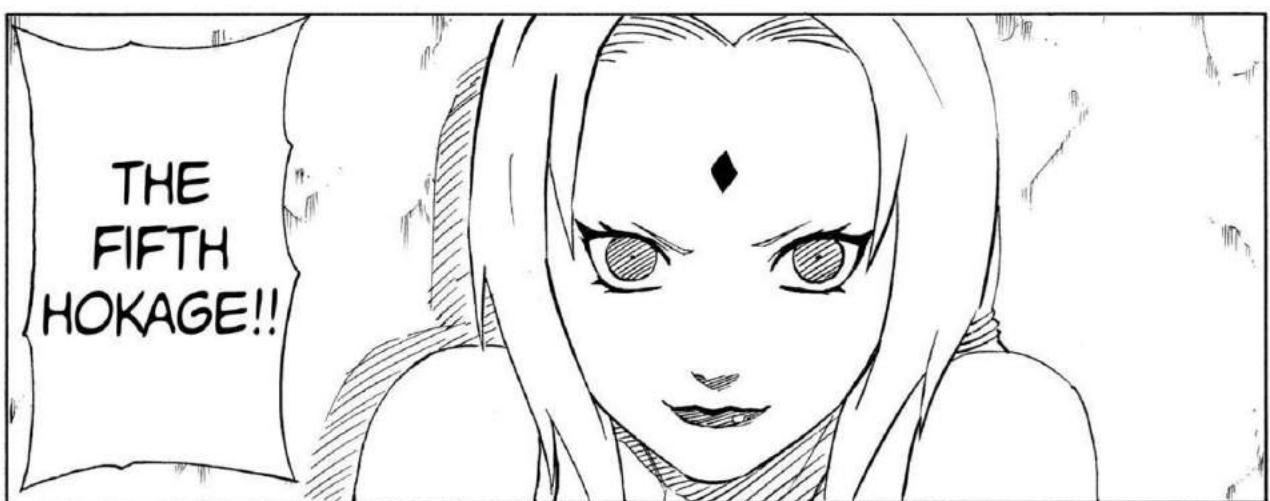


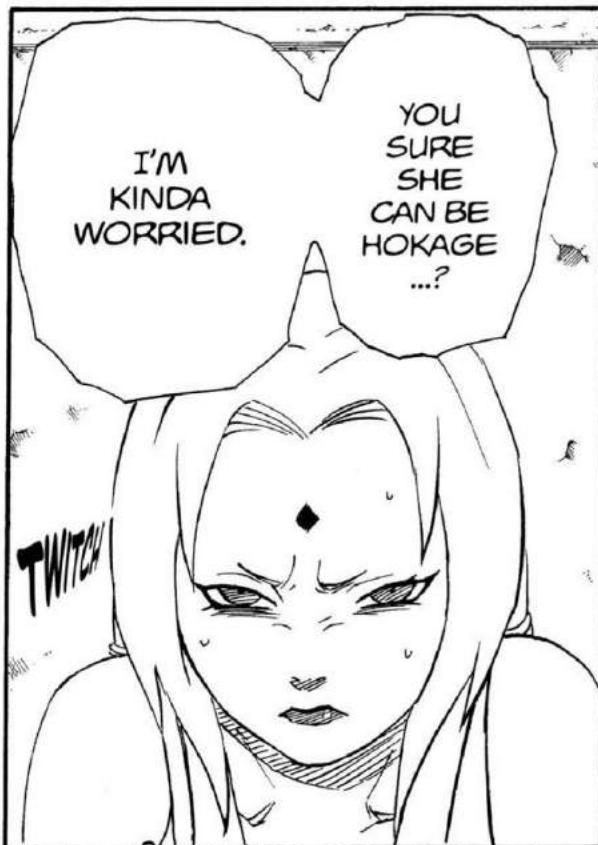






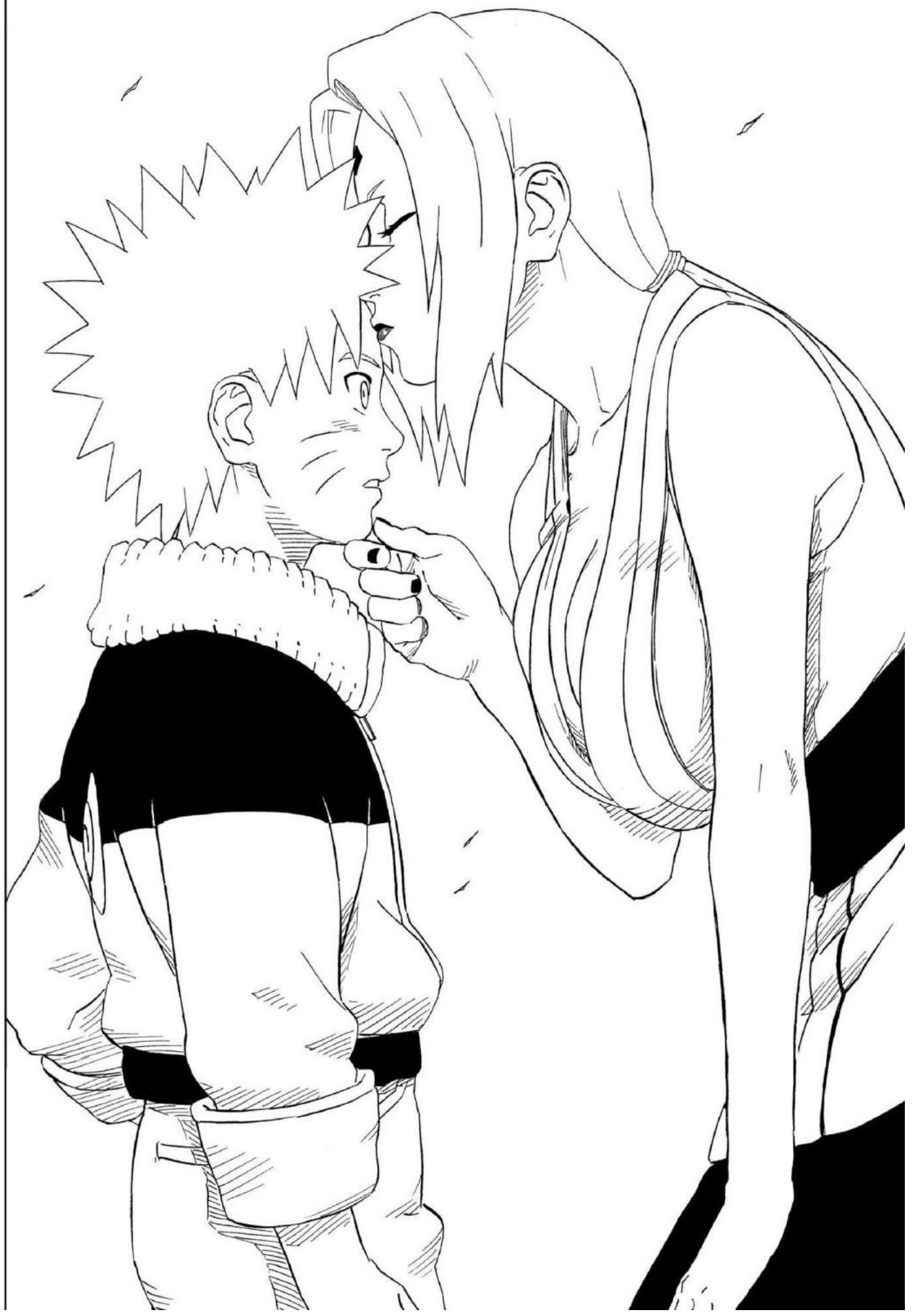
(SIGN: TANZAKU)



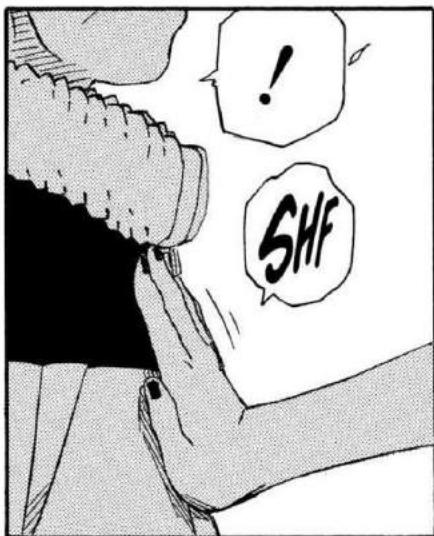








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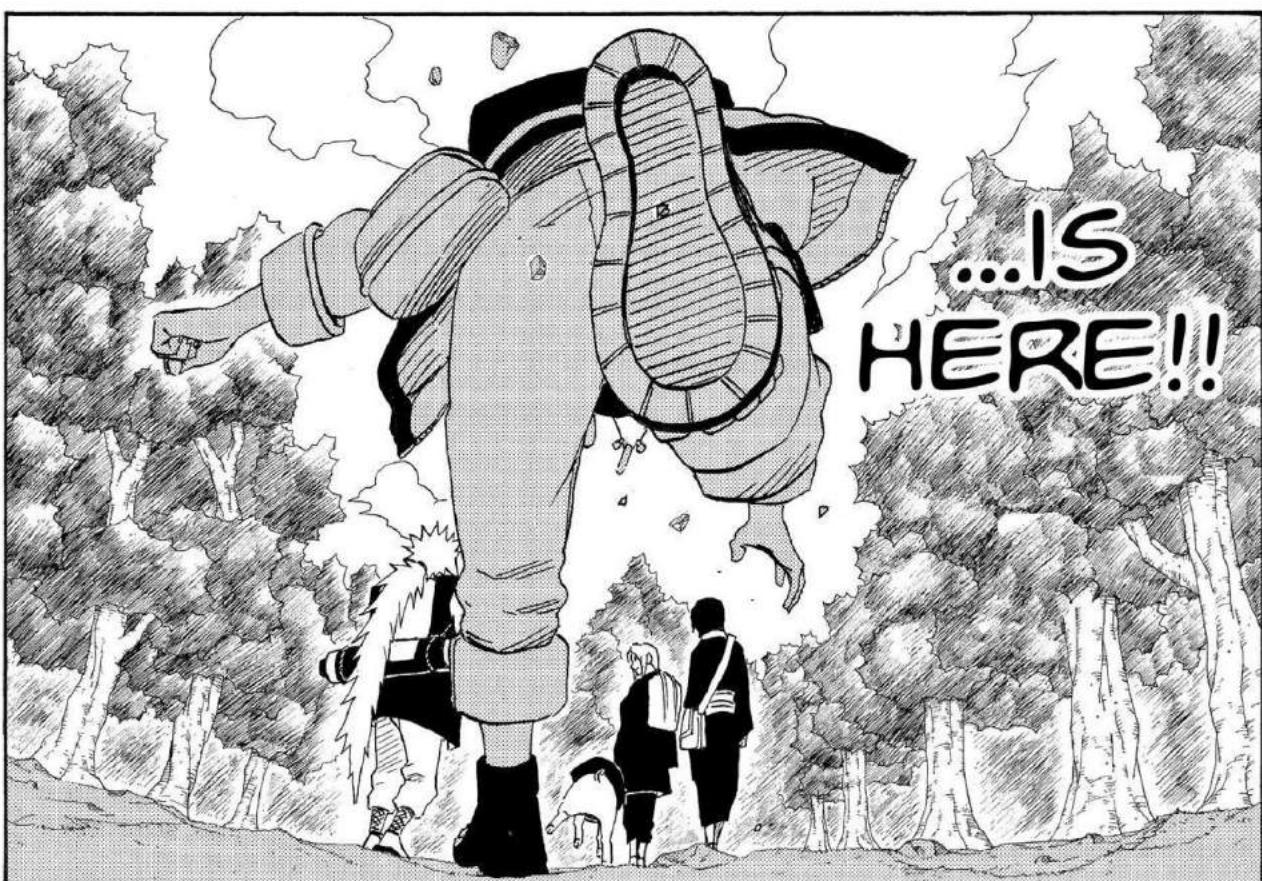
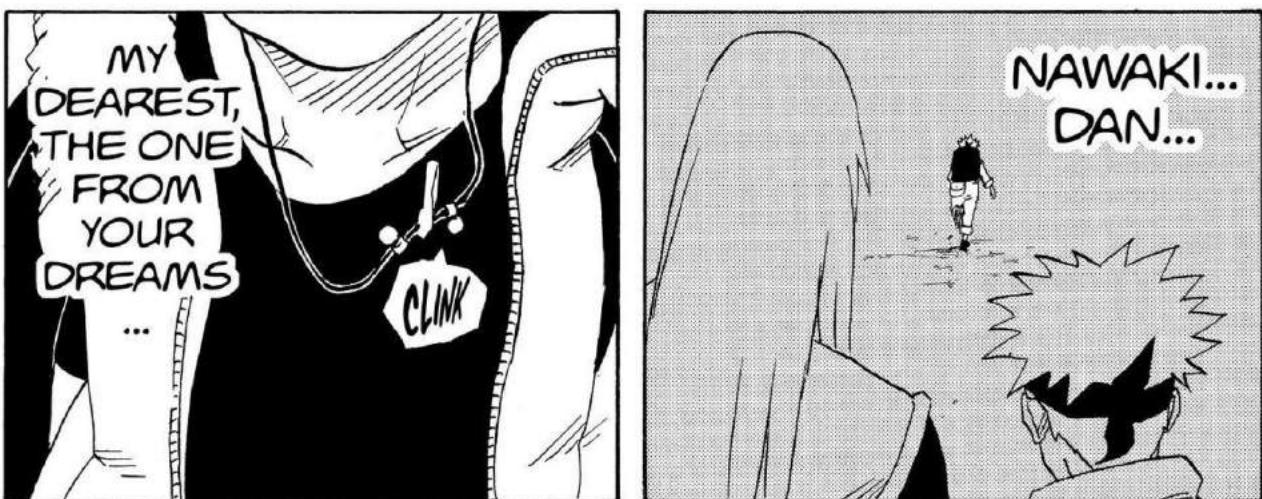


AND...
A GREAT
HOKAGE,
TOO.

BECOME
A GOOD
MAN,
OKAY...?







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