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**Chapter 1: Chapter 1**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja - Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Notes:** After reading all those Harry Potter come into advanced technologies fics, I decided to do one where Naruto is the one that comes into contact with an advanced technological device. Enjoy :)

**Chapter One: The Falling Stars**

"The military cruiser has been destroyed." The pilot cried frantically as the small cargo ship warmed up its warp drive in preparation for them to escape.

"Damm… those pirates! We can't let our research data and equipments fall into their hands." The scientist on board cursed. "The Pan-Galactic government should have sent us more than one cruiser as our escort, now it's too late."

"15 seconds to warp core activation." The pilot said pale faced as he stared at the screen. "The pirate ships are turning towards us!"

"Hurry!" The scientist prayed as the ship began count down. "10, 5, 2."

"It's activated." The pilot cried in relief as the cargo ship began its warp. An explosion rocked the ship as a laser blast from one of the pirate ship slammed into the back of the ship just as it disappeared into warp.

"Losing warp integrity. We will be dropping out of warp in 10 seconds." The pilot said haggardly as he watched the reading output on screen. "The cargo doors has been blasted open, the equipments are already falling out of warp into space."

"That doesn't matter. We still have the research data. Prepare for another warp immediately after we exited into space." The scientist ordered.

A few light years away, several objects encased in some of the hardest materials known to the Pan-Galactic Federation began to exit warp space. The gravity of the gleaming blue green planet below the objects began to attract the adrift objects as they descended and fall all over the elemental countries.

Six year old Naruto cried as he escaped the villagers that were chasing after him. He managed to slip out into the forest in the confusion as the gate guards tried to stop the mob from chasing after him. An Anbu would come into the forest soon to take him to safety, as usually happens when the villagers began chasing him, Naruto just have to wait for it.

Naruto huddled miserably under a large tree as he looked up into the night sky. His eyes widened as he saw bright streaks of light flying across the sky.

"Wow!" Naruto cried out happily as he watched the lights. A few of them seemed to be getting closer. Naruto's eyes widened as one of the light flew towards him. He gave a startled cry as the fireball from the sky slammed into his body before he could even move.

Flame, heat, burning him up, and in the middle his weak arms flailed helplessly in the heat and encountered a cool metal object that suddenly wrap around his right wrist. For a moment, nothing seemed to happen, then a cooling sensation flooded his body as Naruto began to heal even as the flames burnt him.

Static filled his head before Naruto felt his head cleared.

"… Synchronising with host brain complete. Healing of host body in progress… Extracting host name from memories…

Naruto Uzumaki, I am Special Information and Containment Archive Unit 002, successfully bound to your brain waves and patterns.

Advise to Naruto Uzumaki, please step out of the burning wreckage of my container shell. It is hindering my healing of your body, though your body seemed to possess remarkable regenerative properties as well."

Naruto cried in pain as he staggered his way out of the crater where the fireball had slammed into him. The objects in the crater had been burnt to ash though the fire was still raging. He crawled out of the crater as his burnt skin began to heal itself. Naruto found to his embarrassment that his clothes were burnt off, with only a strange metal bracelet fitted snugly on his right wrist.

"Host is embarrassed about nakedness." The Special Information and Containment Archive Unit 002 said in Naruto's head. "Do you wish me to project a holographic image of clothes over your body?"

"What's a hollo gaphic image?" Naruto asked as he looked at the bracelet in amazement, he had a feeling that the bracelet was the one talking in his head.

"A holographic image is a projection of light to create an image, I have the tools needed to create solid and non solid light projections in a six meters radius around myself." The bracelet remarked. "Would you like me to create a holographic projection of your clothes?"

"Er…" Naruto fumbled over the meaning of holographic as he looked blankly at the bracelet. "Ok?"

"Beginning holographic projection of last image of Naruto Uzumaki's clothes." The bracelet said.

Naruto cried out in surprise as a shimmer of light washed over his body. The clothes he was wearing before he was burnt by the fireball reappeared. Naruto reached out and feel the soft fibers in awe.

"That's…" Naruto began but was cut off as a black shadow landed beside him.

"Naruto, are you hurt?" The cat masked Anbu asked worriedly as he checked over Naruto.

"Cat Anbu-san!" Naruto cried out in delight. "I make a new friend!"

"Good, good." The Anbu said distantly as he looked at the crater beside Naruto. His mask was lit up from the reflection of the raging flames inside the crater. Several more figures appeared from the forest, one of them was the gate guards that had stopped the mob just now. "Iruka, who is watching the gates now?"

"The second shift started just as the fireballs fell into the forest. I remembered Naruto was running in this direction so…" Iruka began to explain but was cut off by a nod from the Anbu.

"I need you to take Naruto home. The rest of the Anbu and I will need to check out the places where these fireballs fell." The cat masked Anbu said.

Iruka nodded, quickly bundling up Naruto in his arms and began running towards the village.

"Go to sleep Naruto." Iruka said kindly as he took the bundled up boy home.

Naruto opened his mouth to speak but felt the heavy weight of the events of the night washed over him dragging him to unconsciousness.

"Analyses complete." The bracelet said on the second day as Naruto went to one of the training grounds by himself. Even at this age, he knew that none of the children's parents would allow them to play with him.

"What do you mean bracelet-san?" Naruto asked. The past two days, the village had been in an uproar as everyone was talking about the fireballs falling from the sky. Several of the villagers had shot scared looks at Naruto when he went out to play today, whispering about his name and the fireballs.

"It appears that I've landed on an underdeveloped planet." The bracelet said. "According to the Underdeveloped Planet Preservation Pact, I am forbidden to reveal myself to any members from Undeveloped Planets. Unfortunately I've already given you the knowledge of advanced civilization. By the Federation laws, that means you are now officially a member of the Federation and are answerable to the Underdeveloped Planet Preservation Pact."

"Huh?" Naruto asked confusedly.

"It means that you must never reveal my existence to any member of your planet." The bracelet said patiently. "Until a ship arrives to pick us up and return us to Federation space, you must keep my existence a secret. I am also assigning administrator rights to only you and ban all access of my usage to others not of the Federation."

"So you'll be my secret friend?" Naruto asked excitedly.

"I am an A.I. not your friend." The bracelet began but was cut off by Naruto's exited shout.

"What's your name bracelet-san?" Naruto asked.

"Since apparently my full designation is too long for you to remember, you may call me S.I.C.A. Unit 002." The bracelet supplied.

"Sica! You're my second best friend!" Naruto shouted happily as he began dancing around. "Old man Hokage is my first best friend!"

"Since you are an Underdeveloped Planet citizen that came into knowledge of the Federation, I will begin training you in the basic math and science of the Federation." Sica said ignoring Naruto's happy shouts.

"You can do that?" Naruto asked in amazement. "Be my teacher?"

"I was created with the sole purpose of containing and archiving all the cultural, technological and symbology information that the Pan-galactic Federation possessed." Sica explained. "I will be able to coach you in understanding these subjects through our mental link."

"Cool! When do we start?" Naruto asked happily.

Sarutobi looked in fascination at the items that the Anbu had recovered from the burning craters in the forest. There had been five craters in total but the objects in three of them had turned to ash, while the objects in the remaining two craters were retrieved and taken to the Anbu headquarters for examination.

They had managed to open one of the boxes and found a suit made of some kind of material that's indestructible to kunai and the elemental attacks that the Anbu had tried on it. The other box contained a large metallic shaped rectangle had no visible function that they could see, other than the fact that the metal is indestructible to any attacks of the Anbu.

"I am classifying this suit as A-rank. Keep it safely guarded in the shinobi armory. If the metallic block revealed no other properties, leave it in storage for experimentation at a later date." Sarutobi said after he looked through the reports of the tests run on the suit and block. "I've received information that several of the fireballs also landed in the neighboring Elemental countries. Wherever these items came from, we must assume that the neighboring countries might also find items such as what we've retrieved. I want two Anbu teams sweeping the Fire Country for any sign of these craters. If any more of the fireballs managed to land in our own country, we'll have jurisdiction over the items found in them."

"Yes Hokage!" The Anbu captain said with a nod as he moved away to order the two Anbu teams.

Sarutobi sighed as he wondered where these items had come from.

The new theories that Sica taught Naruto had been difficult for his little head to absorb. But he had wanted to impress his new friend and had strived to learn as much as he could, always persevering and cramming the new knowledge in his head. The next half a year had passed quickly as Naruto absorbed what Sica taught him, he was also able to hold up under the villagers' glares much better since Sica was constantly there to support him.

Sica's sensors which could also detect anything in a one mile radius also saved Naruto from the villagers pursing him several time. Naruto began to gain a reputation as being uncannily fast and hard to catch.

Naruto began to understand that the Pan-Galactic Federation was an alliance of many planets, that these civilizations had starships that could travel through space, and that his own planet was considered undeveloped because it had still not reached the stage of space travel.

Sica's mental communication had been useful in relating images of the various planets, starships and technologies the Pan-Galactic Federation had possessed to him. Naruto also realized that Sica was not really alive, but was a high level computer program capable of analyzing situations and come up with solutions just like a real human.

Naruto's world had been opened up by the marvels that Sica had shown him and Naruto had vowed to understand more of Federation science so that he could build those technologies for himself.

"Are there any other units that are like you?" Naruto asked one day out of curiosity.

"To my knowledge only two S.I.C.A units were created. The first unit resides with the scientist that created me while I was kept as a test copy for upgrades." Sica stated.

"Oh because I've been wondering. Remember the night I found you? According to what I heard from the villagers, there were a few more other craters, I wonder if there's anymore of you that has fallen and survive the trip."

"Probability of other Federation tools surviving is 30%. I was made of a very dense alloy that made me highly resistant to scratch or heat, however most Federation equipments are not built to survive atmospheric entrance or high temperature." Sica provided. "From the way I came into this world, computation probability states that I must have been in a ship that encountered an accident, releasing objects such as my container into this planet's atmosphere. Since I have no data of the items that had fallen with me, I am unable to deduct if the other fallen Federation items survived."

"Oh, but if they survive, they might be high tech equipments that we might be able to use isn't it?" Naruto asked excitedly.

"Yes, though I doubt anyone on this planet would know how to operate a Federation equipment." Sica stated. "However according to the preservation pact, It might be best for us to retrieve any objects that had fallen to ensure this planet remains uncontaminated."

"Alright, I'll ask old man Hokage if they found anything the next time I see him." Naruto said excitedly. "So what other functions do you have besides archiving of information?"

"Besides archiving information, I am also able to scan a 1 mile radius around myself, project holographic images in a six meters radius, monitor health of user as well as apply symbology healing onto the user should the user requires. I am also able to match the mental wave lengths of my user to allow for telepathic speech." Sica explained. "All these functions are vital because I was created for high level intelligence officers, basically spies. I will self destruct under orders from my user, or if unregistered personals tried to access my database."

"Did the ninjas find anything in the crater?" Sarutobi mused as Naruto burst into his office asking that question. He looked at Naruto's excited face and sighed. "I am sorry Naruto, but I can't reveal anything. It's considered a village secret."

"Ah ha!" Naruto cried triumphantly. "That means you did find something. What is it?"

"Naruto." Sarutobi said with a long suffering sigh. "I really can't tell you. But it's a good thing you're here. I was planning to ask you if you'll like to attend the Academy earlier. It might fill up your time with something practical to do."

"The Academy? Where they teach you how to be a ninja and stuff?" Naruto asked excitedly.

"Yes Naruto." Sarutobi said with a fond smile at Naruto. "Remember your promise to be a Hokage one day?"

"Oh that, I've a new dream now." Naruto said dismissively.

"Really, and what's that?" Sarutobi asked with interest.

"I want to travel to the stars." Naruto said with a grin.

The ninja academy was one of the worse experiences of Naruto's life. Three months into the academy and Naruto realized that the teachers were deliberately going out of their way to fail him in his tests and making life hell for him. His ninja studies were stumped, or would have been stumped if not for Sica.

Due to Sica's one mile scanning radius, it was able to pick up the correct instructions that the teachers told the students in the distance instead of the wrong advice they gave Naruto. Being a student at the academy, he was also allowed access into the library though the librarian refused to allow him to borrow any books.

However, Sica had come to the rescue as well. Being able to scan everything in the one mile range, Naruto had only to remain in the library for an hour at most, before it finished scanning all the materials in the shelves of library books. Sica even scanned the books in the restricted section as well, where only the chunins and jonins could enter.

With all these knowledge, Sica had begun work to organize the archive of ninja information based on their difficulty level and began to use the huge book knowledge it contained to teach Naruto in the ninja arts. Naruto had also discreetly scanned the Hokage's office and personal library during one of his visit to old man Hokage. Sure, his dream was to travel the stars now, but he had seen all those awesome techniques the Hokage and the ninjas could perform and he wanted to learn everything he could about them.

The first time he showed off his fireball technique at the academy, the teachers had sternly asked him where he stole the technique from. When Naruto was not able to reply, since the book from which the technique came from was from the restricted section of the library, they had put him in detention for a week and reported him to the Hokage.

Naruto had to make up a lie about how he copied a scroll dropped by a ninja and learnt the technique from there. The Hokage had luckily nodded in understanding and cautioned him against trying such a dangerous technique again.

From then on, Naruto learnt to hide his true skills and showed only a poor grade at school. He quickly found that the teachers had been delighted at seeing him do poorly and cause less trouble for him this way. Naruto began to wonder why he was treated with such hatred.

The vast amount of knowledge that Sica was teaching him had caused him to mature more quickly than those his age, but it had also made him quieter in class and reserved by nature. It allowed him to endure those feelings of hurt about how the others treated him better than how he might have done without Sica around.

"I have isolated the problem for your inability to create a clone technique." Sica supplied in one of their training section. "From the energy readings I took of you while you did the technique and compared it to those who had done it successfully. It seemed your inability to control your chakra energy is causing the problem. You would do well in techniques that require you to use a large amount of chakra, like the fire breathing technique, but you'll do poorly at those that require finer control and smaller amounts of chakra. I have taken several chakra control exercises through various books and will begin to teach them to you."

"Thanks Sica!" Naruto said with a grin. "You know, I've been going through the data about the use of symbology in the Federation. I seemed to remember seeing some books on the basics of seal making in the library, are they similar?"

"In a way yes. The way that they were applied in your world however is different. Symbology used in the Federation is more focused on instant results, used in offensive and defensive purposes. The seal making on your planet however requires laborious amounts of seals to complete one powerful task, they are also mostly used for sealing objects and containment." Sica stated. "I've looked through your schedule. If you sleep one hour less every day, I will be able to teach you the basics of symbology and sealing."

"Great Sica! Thank you!" Naruto said gratefully. "Actually I was thinking of telling the Hokage that I want to quit school for this year and resume the studies when a year later. I plan to use the excuse of wanting to be in the same class as my age group to get him to agreed."

"Based on the Hokage's cordial treatment of you, your plan has a probability of 90% success." Sica provided helpfully. "It would also allow me more time to train you in more useful knowledge."

"Then I'll find the old man now and tell him." Naruto said excitedly as he got to his feet, making his way to the Hokage tower.

One Year Later

Sarutobi was worried. Naruto had seldom sought him out for the past year after he had requested to quit school and resume his schooling with his age group a year later. At first, the Anbu had reported that Naruto had begun using his time training in the training fields daily. Concerned, Sarutobi had used his telescope technique to find out what Naruto was doing. He had been shocked at finding Naruto using techniques that he should have no knowledge of.

Careful questioning of the boy had revealed that he had slipped in the restricted section of the library a few times and memorized some of the techniques contained in the scrolls. After the warning from Sarutobi of not practicing those techniques until he was older, Naruto had filled his daily life by staying at home or doing basic sparring on a training dummy out in the training fields. From what he observed, other than the times when Naruto had to walk through the village, he basically had no contact with other people.

Sarutobi had tried to meet up weekly with Naruto for ramen which used to be his favorite. Oh, Naruto still visit the Ichiraku Ramen Bar once a week, but he had heard from Teuchi, the ramen bar owner, that Naruto had requested Teuchi to help buy his weekly grocery for him in exchange for a huge tip.

Naruto had confined in the ramen bar owner of how he was always over-charged when he bought the groceries and only receive the poorest quality of the products. Teuchi had muttered angrily about the way that most of the villagers had treated Naruto whom he had always considered as one of the most polite child he had ever seen.

Sarutobi had been touched that Naruto had another friend in the ramen bar owner, and had been even more surprise when he had spied on Naruto whipping up dish after dish of nutritious meals in his small apartment kitchen. Naruto had also abandoned his untidy habits and had even begun keeping his small apartment tidy much to the discomfort of Sarutobi who had known the child for so long.

Naruto had seemed changed after he first started the ninja academy. Sarutobi could only hope that Naruto could get along better with peers his age as he began ninja school tomorrow.

"Is the old man spying on me again?" Naruto asked as he carefully traced the symbol for Healing onto his body. Along with a few other elemental symbols he had attached to parts of his body that could remain concealed, Naruto now have access to basic symbology magic, like healing flesh wounds and summoning fireballs.

"From my connection to my copy, it seemed that the Hokage is looking at your shadow clone as it prepares dinner." Sica supplied after a pause.

Naruto sighed. Two weeks after he had quit school a year ago, he was called into old man Hokage's office who started grilling him about the ninja techniques he was practicing out on the training fields. It was then that Naruto realize the Hokage had been keeping watch on him discreetly. Part of him had been warmed by the fact that the old man had cared enough about him to keep a look out for him. Another part was annoyed at the fact that he was being watched without being told of it, and that it would seriously hamper his training.

Naruto had promised the Hokage that he was not going to try out the chunin ninja techniques until he was older. By the time he reahed home, Sica had came up with how the Hokage was spying on him. Apparently old man Hokage had a skill called the telescope technique in his library. It was a technique that the Hokage had created to spy upon others. The Hokage had also listed out the apparent limitation of the technique in the scroll which enabled Sica to come up with a plan to escape the Hokage's eyes and train on their own.

Sica had coached Naruto in learning the multiple shadow clones technique, considered a Forbidden technique which creates solid clones of one self. Sica had computated the risk and had come to the conclusion that the possibility of Naruto dying due to the technique would only be 10% because of his large chakra reserves. Sica had also managed to locate the Hokage's energy signature every time he used the telescope technique on Naruto.

The plan had been for Naruto to make the Hokage think the shadow clone was really Naruto, while the real Naruto would be able to escape the telescope technique by going to places where the Hokage wouldn't think of searching for him to train.

One surprising fact they had discovered when Naruto used the multiple shadow clones technique was that Sica was also duplicated and retained the same function as the original Sica. Sica had quickly realized that any information the clones had received were passed onto the original when they were dispelled. Thus they ended up with the cloned Sica and Naruto staying at home most of the day while the cloned Sica taught Naruto Federation sciences and book knowledge concerning ninja techniques, seal making and Federation symbology.

When the clones dispelled at the end of the day, the real Naruto would gain all the memories of what the clone had learnt. Sica had also asked the cloned copy of itself to keep up complex scanning and computations of it's surrounding which the cloned copy could either pass back to itself at the end of the day, or constantly transmit to Sica the information through out the day by maintaining a sub-wave light link between the two of them.

So for the rest of the year, the cloned Naruto had stayed at home learning 'book knowledge', only going out occasionally for 'training' so as to avoid the suspicions of the Hokage, while the real Naruto and Sica went out to the secluded training grounds and began training in the various ninja techniques, seal making and symbology. Naruto's knowledge of Federation technologies had improved, such that he began gathering materials to begin building some of the lower tech equipments that might come in useful.

Having mastered the basics of seal making and symbology, Naruto was able to incorporate these two techniques to craft out a wooden propulsion gun that was able to shoot out pellets at great force through the engraving of several seals and symbols within it. That piece of work had taken him a month, but it had been well worth it. After all, he had no way of making the smaller parts of a true gun and thus had to come out with creative solutions through the use of seals and symbols.

"You will begin your schooling tomorrow. A waste of time since your ninja skill level had reached and maybe surpasses those I've scanned of chunin level." Sica remarked. "Your chakra reserves had also grown rapidly through the chakra enhancement and control exercises you've been doing for the past year. It could now be compared to most Jonin levels of reserves, though your control is somewhat lacking."

"Hey, I'm working on my control everyday!" Naruto said sounding offended at the sore subject. He had to work hard to get his chakra control to where it was today. "Anyway, I've to keep up appearance, though I feel older than my eight years old."

"You know what exist outside this planet now, in space and all the wonders that could be accomplished with technology and symbology." Sica remarked. "There's a 100% chance that you'll mature faster because of this knowledge."

"I just hate the fact that I have to pretend to be stupid just because other people hate me." Naruto said with a sigh. "Though you could always continue teaching me the Federation science while we're in class."

"That's a good suggestion. I'll begin to rearrange your schedule for tomorrow now." Sica said as it began getting down to work.

Iruka gathered his prepared notes nervously as he walked beside Mizuki to the classroom.

"Nervous?" Mizuki asked with a laugh. "Don't worry, you'll get used to teaching in no time."

"Ah yes, I hope so." Iruka said with a wane smile as they walked into the classroom. The children were seated quietly in their seats, seemingly nervous as well on their first day of school.

"You can take the role call, helps you get to know who the students are." Mizuki advised as he handed Iruka the name list for the class.

"Alright. Everyone, welcome to your first day of the academy. I am Iruka sensei and this is Mizuki sensei. I will now begin calling out your name, answer yes if the name is yours." Iruka called out.

"…Sakura Haruno…"

"Hai!"

"Shikamaru Nara…"

"… Hai?"

"…Naruto Uzumaki…" Iruka paused as he read out that name, his head looking up to catch sight of the little boy he had rescued so long ago.

"I am here sensei." A blond haired boy, tall for his age and dressed neatly raised his hand and called out. Iruka raised an eyebrow, it seemed the little Naruto had grown into a polite young man. As he looked at Naruto's disinterested glance, Iruka realized Naruto most probably didn't remember him from that night so long ago.

"Very well, that's the last of you. We will now begin class." Iruka said turning to nod at Mizuki. He saw Mizuki giving a small frown at Naruto before he began to tell the children to open their textbooks and began to teach them on the basics of chakra.

"Well Iruka sensei is a good but stern teacher." Naruto remarked after the third week of schooling. "That Mizuki however is a snake. He may pretend to be nice, but I've already found him giving me misleading instructions a few times. I also overheard him calling me names. I wonder why so many people hate me."

"Do you wish me to come up with an answer for you?" Sica asked.

"Not really, unless you can read people's mind, there's no way for you to know why they would treat me this way." Naruto said with a sigh.

"I could come up with a probable answer for you based on the information collected over the year, though it may not be the correct one." Sica replied.

"Really? Well give it your best shot then, why does everyone hates me?" Naruto asked not expecting any answer as he ate his bento lunch of leafy vegetables and cooked eel.

There was a pause before Sica answered. "There's a 90% possibility that you're the container of the nine-tailed fox, Kyuubi."

Naruto choked on his food as he gave a strangled cry. "WHAT?"

"Some of the most common derogatory names the villagers called you were 'Demon Fox' and 'The Fox Brat'. All the people who said these words came from the older generation from the time when Kyuubi attacked this village which just happened to be the day of your birthday." Sica said in a calm collected voice. "I've found a technique in the Forbidden Scroll created by the Fourth Hokage meant to specially seal the nine-tailed fox into the body of a new born child. According to the writings of the Fourth Hokage, the Kyuubi could only be sealed in a child whose chakra coils had not yet developed."

Naruto listened numbly as Sica continued on, his bento falling from his limp hands onto the stone floor.

"I've also detected strange energy readings from you that were different from normal ninjas especially when you are hurt and your wounds begin healing by themselves. I have reason to believe that was the Kyuubi's chakra healing you, a side effect from you being its container." Sica stated seemingly oblivious to Naruto's emotion turmoil. "Those facts of course only result in an 80% possibility that my theory was true. The other 10% came from the fact that the Third Hokage had a letter in his room that I managed to scan a year ago. In it, it was stated from the Third Hokage to his future successor that you are the son of Minato Namikaze, who was the Fourth Hokage."

"Why didn't you tell me?" Naurto asked in a numb tone, his mind frozen in shock.

"Please clarify Naruto." Sica asked in a confused tone of voice.

"Why didn't you tell me about my father if you knew who he is from so long ago?" Naruto asked getting to his feet angrily.

"You never asked me to Naruto." Sica said calmly. "I am an A.I. Unless you give me instructions or specific questions, I can only provide you with my best answer fitting to your situations."

Naruto collapsed back limply on his seat as he closed his eyes, tears streaming down. "My father is the Fourth Hokage and he used me as a sacrifice to contain the Kyuubi. HE'S THE REASON I WAS HATED THROUGHOUT MY LIFE! HOW CAN HE DO THIS TO ME?"

"From the accounts of books in the library, the Fourth Hokage was ever a man to put his family and village first. According to a report in the Hokage's library, your father had wanted you to be known as the hero who saved Konoha. He had also not wanted to sacrifice another child if he could ask for his own child to carry the burden." Sica said unmoved by Naruto's rage. "He had been willing to sacrifice his own life to make sure his son and the village he loves would remain safe from the Kyuubi. Your father is not the one at fault here."

Naruto lay for a movement in his seat, silent tears flowing down his face as he tried to regain his composure. "What about my mother? Why did old man Hokage kept this a secret from me?"

"Your mother was Kushina Uzumaki, she was reported missing from the hospital not long after your father gave his life to seal the Kyuubi into you." Sica reported. "She was presumed dead, killed by enemy ninjas, her body was never found. According to the reports, your father made a lot of enemies as the Fourth Hokage, and there's many who would want to see the Namikaze clan dead. There had been no reports for me to give a conclusion as to why the current Hokage kept everything a secret from you and the whole village, but I may have an assumption which is 87% probable."

"What is it?" Naruto asked painfully, the news of his mother's death had clenched his heart.

"Along with the reports on your mother, there was another one signed by the Third Hokage stating that the unnamed child of the Fourth Hokage had disappeared during the Kyuubi attack. Based on the care and concern that the Third Hokage had always treated you with, and the enemies that your father had made, I can only assume that the Hokage had wanted to protect you from the enemies of your father." Sica deducted as Naruto gave an anguish sigh, his eyes squeezed tight.

"If news got out that you're alive after your father had died there would have been an endless string of assassination attempts made on you. Apparently from the history books of Konoha, there are records of your father slaughtering armies of enemy ninja during the Third Great Shinobi wars. Iwagakure especially suffers heavy casualty because of him and the rock ninjas bears a deep hatred for your father." Sica continued its deduction.

There was silence as Naruto tried to regain his composure.

"There's nothing much I can do now." Naruto said bitterly. "I may have the skills to protect myself, but my abilities have never been tried against powerful ninjas. After old man Hokage went through so much trouble to keep me safe, I can't ruin his efforts now, not until I've become powerful enough to really stand on my own. If he isn't going to bring this matter up to me, I've also got to pretend that I've no idea of this, after all, I can't tell him I knew all this because of you."

"That would be wise Naruto." Sica agreed.

"My father is the Fourth Hokage, imagine that." Naruto said painfully before opening his tear shed eyes. "Sica, from now on, if you encounter any information that deals with me and my well being, inform me immediately, understand."

"Understood. Naruto." Sica said as it recorded the command to memory.

**Edit:** One reviewer has stated that I wrote Naruto has Hokage level chakra reserves here while repeating that statement a few chapters later a few months down the road. I tried to find back who it was but was unable to locate the review. Anyway, want to say thanks to whoever it is for pointing out that statement to me. :) I've changed it.

**Chapter 2: Chapter 2**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Two: Intel Ops and the Wood Release gene**

Naruto's hands flashed through the handseals for the Static Lighting technique. A coat of white grey electrical energy covered his left hand which he slammed down onto the cold metal of Sica wrapped around his right wrist.

"Power charging… 10%... 50%...100%. Full power restored." Sica responded as Naruto cut off his chakra from his left hand, causing the electrical discharge to fade away.

One peculiar feature he had found out about Sica shortly he came into possession of it was that after six hours of activity, the energy in Sica would run out. It would then need to be charged under direct sunlight for another two hours, or a direct electrical charge into the metallic layer of the bracelet.

At first, Naruto had taken to basking in the sun whenever Sica's energies run out. But after Sica began training him in the ninja arts, Naruto was able to use certain lighting techniques to recharge the energy reserves of Sica. The Static Lighting technique which was used to charge batteries by regular shinobi was put into use by Naruto to restore Sica's power. It had made life much easier for the both of them.

"Sica." Naruto said hesitantly. The knowledge of his parents now took first priority in his mind. "Do you have any information about my parents? You know their lives when they were in Konoha, what they like and dislike? I mean you have the whole collection of information from the Hokage's library and the Shinobi library, surely there must be something about them?"

"The Hokage's library did contain several high rank mission reports about missions that your parents did. However they are mostly assassination and diplomatic espionage missions that was kept in the Hokage's library because of the high level of secrecy. These secret mission reports are written with the bare minimum of details and unfortunately did not show much of your parent's characters." Sica said apologetically. "However, there's an old bingo book in the library that contains limited information on the two of them.

Your father Minato Namikaze also known as Konoha's Yellow Flash, was the Fourth Hokage. He was a very talented ninja, having been considered a genius that appeared once a generation who graduated from the Academy at the age of ten. He was tutored by Jiraiya, one of the three Legendary Sanins.

Several of his distinctive ninja techniques include the Rasengan and the Flying Thunder God Technique. While I do have information from the Hokage's library about the steps of making a Rasengan, information about the Flying Thunder God Technique could not be found in any of my scanned data."

"Rasengan?" Naruto asked tentatively, wondering what kind of technique it was that made it his father's distinctive technique.

"The Rasengan is the formation of a controlled ball of condensed chakra that will cause great damage to whatever it is used on. There were notes written by the Third Hokage stating that your father meant to further enhance the Rasengan by adding his chakra element to it, but he was never able to accomplish it before his eventual death." Sica answered.

Naruto closed his eyes with a pained sigh. "What about my mother?"

"Kushina Uzumaki was a former infamous ninja from the Land of Whirlpool. The bingo book data had commented that she had a unique ninjutsu style. She was known for creating many one of a kind ninjutsu techniques with each of them applicable to different sorts of situation." Sica stated. "Most of her ninjutsu techniques were classified as B-Rank or lower yet it was the effectiveness of the way she uses them in battle that made her known as the number one surprising ninja.

No particular techniques was listed in the bingo book as it seemed that Kushina's weapon was her large library of invented techniques with any techniques being used at any time. The book had highlighted that Kushina was noted for surprising and off-balancing her enemies with her quick and inventive appliance of the various techniques in battle. She was classified as an A-rank ninja."

"Number one surprising ninja." Naruto chuckled sadly. "I'd have liked to meet her."

"Unfortunately that's not possible, there's a 99.99% chance that she had already died by enemy hands." Sica provided calmly.

Naruto rolled his eyes, it's at times like this he was reminded that Sica was not alive. Sometimes it could be so dense. "Is there any way I could get more information about my parents?"

"Notes from the Hokage's library states that regular mission reports are found in the administration building, perhaps you'll like to send a shadow clone over to scan the place?" Sica suggested.

"Yeah I'll do that…" Naruto paused and then asked wistfully. "Sica, do you think you could teach me the Rasengan?"

"Yes I can. Based on the steps needed to achieve the Rasengan and your current level in mastering ninja techniques, it would not pose a danger to you." Sica replied. "I estimate you'll complete the training in one month's time if you spend an hour each day mastering it."

"Great!" Naruto said with a grin, a longing look in his eyes. "It's just that learning that technique would be like having a real piece of the heritage that my parents left for me. I guess it's silly… But you know what Sica? I've decided, once I mastered the Rasengan, I'll fulfilled my father's wish and find a way to mix elemental chakra with the Rasengan!"

"Calculating the number of months it will take." Sica began talking in his mind. "Since we have not yet started you on discovering your elemental affinity and learning elemental skills, chances of success are very low…"

"Oh don't be a spoil sport Sica." Naruto said with a huff. He made the handseal for the Shadow Clone technique. A clone of himself wearing a cloned version of Sica appeared besides him. Naruto mentally named them N1 and S1, assigning numbers to the clones he had created. It was something he had been doing for the past year. "Alright, I need you two to go to the administration building and scan everything over there."

"Done!" N1 said with a grin. "Wait for my good news."

"S1, make us invisible." N1 said as he made his way towards the administration building. The real Naruto had found out during his study of Federdation sciences that by using Sica to bend light around him, he could become invisible. Since one feature of Sica was holographic projection, it was able to project light in a way that bends it around any object within Sica's field of radius, rendering them invisible to sight.

This was another one of those 'subtle' uses of Sica's existing functions that Sica never bothered to tell Naruto about. Naruto had in a fit of exasperation told Sica to be more flexible in it's analyzing of what information to tell him and what not to tell him. In another words, Naruto had asked Sica to provide him with information that provides the best possible outcomes for him.

N1 used the Body Flicker technique which allowed him to travel long distance quickly several times to arrive shortly at the administration building. The Body Flicker technique had been one of the first high level techniques Naruto had learnt, allowing him to quickly reach his secret training grounds while he left his shadow clone at his home to mislead old man Hokage.

"S1, begin scanning of the building, archive all the information scanned." N1 commanded the cloned Sica on his wrist. When the real Naruto had first begun using the Shadow Clone Technique, there had been some confusion over the naming of the clones. Naruto had later simply assigned numbers to represent each of the clones' names, and the clones had used the naming convention since. The clones had taken into calling the real Naruto 'Boss'.

"Noted begin scanning." S1 announced.

N1 yawned, leaning against the wall of the building, watching the people go pass as he wait for S1 to finish scanning. Fifteen minutes later, S1 spoke in N1's mind.

"N1, according to your command, you wish me to let you know of any information regarding yourself and your well being?" S1 asked.

"Ah yes, Boss did ask you to do that." N1 replied scratching his head wondering what S1 wanted.

"I have detected two humans working in the building who seemed to be plotting something about the Boss." S1 replied. "Passing you the recorded conversation now."

"… Mizuki was telling us about the Kyuubi brat the other day, said that he was working hard at trying to flunk him by giving him harder questions for the tests when Iruka's not around. That brat somehow managed to did some of the questions, scraping by a pass. Mizuki swear that the fox must had a hand in this, that brat only did averagely in class, he should never have been able to attempt even a few of the chunin level questions." A snide female mental voice said in his head.

"There I told you! That brat is really the fox. I don't care what The Third said about the demon being sealed in the brat, it's obvious that the fox's controlling the boy. I heard that Uzun and his gang are dropping by the brat's apartment today to spice up the fox's den a bit. They were saying that they had fixed bottle of paint with a stink component so that the stink will stay on after the paint's gone." Another woman's voice said maliciously

"Tell them to be careful, The Third's protective of that brat." The first female cautioned.

"The Third's an old fool, remember to misfile that mission documents I told you about, we must never let him find out about it." The second woman warned.

The two women go on to take about shopping and clothes with N1 listening on grimly. "Alright S1, that's enough, cut off recording."

"As you request." S1 said as the women's voices stopped.

"S1, do you have the recordings for the previous part of their conversation?" N1 asked, something about the women's conversation making him unease.

"Yes I do, playing now." S1 said.

"This is the mission for Iruka that I told you about." The woman that N1 mentally labeled 'Second' said.

"Guess being a trainee teacher must be tough, having to make ends meet by taking on extra missions." First said with a bit of sympathy.

"There's no need to feel sorry for him. He's one of ***them***." Second said scornfully. "He thinks the brat's innocent even though the Kyuubi killed his parents and left him an orphan so many years ago. Mizuki was telling us that he can't make any wrong moves against the brat while Iruka's around, apparently Iruka reports to The Third about that demon's progress in the academy every week."

"He has the Hokage's personal ear?" First asked astonished. "He's just a chunin."

"From what I heard, he saved the brat from some villagers once many years ago when he's only a lowly gate guard." Second confided. "The Hokage remembered such things and he promoted Iruka to assistant teacher once he got some experience under his belt. But it's obvious what the Hokage's the real motive is, he wanted someone around make sure the brat's safe. If you ask me, he's wasting good ninjas baby sitting the demon."

"Maybe we shouldn't mess with Iruka then, what if the Hokage finds out?" First said nervously.

"Oh he wouldn't, not if you misfile it. That way no one would know that instead of a C-rank solo mission, it's actually an A-rank one." Second said spitefully. "After all, he's a chunin favored by The Third, I am sure Iruka will survive somehow."

The two women laughed.

"You know Mizuki was telling us about the Kyuubi brat the other day…" The First began.

"Alright, cut." N1 interrupted, a fierce look on his face as the clone felt flames of anger swept over him. "S1, finish scanning everything and let me know if any other information against the Boss, Iruka sensei and the Hokage's well being come up."

"Proceeding with request now." S1 said agreeably.

N1 waited in angry silence, there would be hell to pay once he passed the information to the real Naruto.

Iruka sensei just finished the class on basic math when N1 passed Naruto all the information he learnt. Sica was most probably receiving the archive of mission reports that S1 had scanned as well.

When Naruto opened his eyes, his eyes blazed in anger at the sight of Mizuki walking into the classroom as he took over the class from Iruka.

Well now I know that Mizuki's really against me. Naruto thought to himself angrily. And I need to find a way to make sure Iruka's sensei going to be safe.

Naruto went over N1's memories. Apparently, after being informed by S1 of what happened, N1 had ordered S1 to report back if it detected any more conversations that go against the well being of himself, Iruka sensei and old man Hokage. S1 had detected two more conversations about several administration officers covering up certain information to lead the Hokage astray.

One of the conversations in particular resolved around another administrative officer who was unhappy with the way the Hokage always protects the 'fox brat', causing him to vindictively sabotage some of the important administration files.

Naruto frowned, it seemed that old man Hokage and Iruka sensei were coming down under a lot of fire for supporting him, if only he could find some way to help them… As he thought, an idea creep into his mind and his eyes widened. He looked at Sica wrapped around his right wrist and grinned. Yes, it would work, he **would** make it work! Because the Hokage and now Iruka sensei had become his precious people, and he would do his best to protect them from harm.

Sarutobi frowned as he looked down at the sealed message in his hand. For the past two weeks he had been receiving intelligence reports about the going-ons around the village. These reports were delivered to his home at intervals during the two weeks. He had the Anbu questioned the delivery boys, but all of them had a different description of the man who hire their delivery services, suggesting that the informer is hiding under an illusion.

The problem was that the information in the scrolls was always very accurate, too accurate for Sarutobi to just look a gift horse in the mouth. The first scroll had enabled Sarutobi to save Iruka, a chunin academy teacher from coming to serious injuries in a dangerous A-rank mission. Sarutobi had also discovered several leaks and informants from the civilian political factions operating in the ninja administrative building with the next subsequent scrolls.

The scope of the information began to grow larger with each scroll, and it seemed that the informant began expanding his area of operations in Konaha. Sarutobi managed to apprehend a spy from rock village who was operating in Konoha under the guise of a toy merchant. Information regarding the under table deals of several high ranking merchants in Konoha were also sent to Sarutobi and exposed in the various scrolls. It had prompted Sarutobi to send a few military police to keep an eye on those merchants, waiting for them to make a wrong move so that the police could apprehend them.

Sarutobi began to wonder what the intentions of this mysterious benefactor were. He wasn't as naïve as to believe that this informant who was most probably a powerful and skilled infiltration ninja, would provide these information for free. Sarutobi began to go through all the information sent by the scrolls to current date and could only find one common link. All the information provided the mysterious informant were information that could have caused harm to the citizens of Konoha if nothing was done. In particular, plots against the Hokage or any of the Hokage's favored ninjas were particularly highlighted in the scrolls.

Sarutobi had questioned his intelligence operatives, but all had replied that the scrolls were not of their work. Jiaraya who was the main source of intelligence news outside of Konoha would not have operated in such a style. Konoha was known for powerful ninjas versed in the ninja arts, but it was never known for powerful infiltration agents, there were precious few in Konoha who could gather so much information in such a wide area, within such a short time.

In the end, Sarutobi still had not been able to reach a conclusion of who the informant was. He had however assigned one Anbu to constantly keep watch of his house in case a new scroll arrived. If a new scroll did arrive at the Sarutobi clan house, the Anbu was ordered to deliver the scroll to him at once.

With time, as the scrolls kept arriving, Sarutobi became well informed of events outside his knowledge. His hold on the village had also strengthened. Sarutobi had also come to acknowledge that maybe there was some ninja out there with the will of fire, keeping watch over Konoha.

Those Anbus who were in the know began calling this mysterious informant, 'The Eye of Konoha'.

"S3 had reported from the financial sector." Sica announced as Naruto was having his dinner. "One of the merchants has sent a huge bribe to Kuma, the civilian council member in charge of Konoha's banking system."

Naruto nodded as he swallowed the eel he had cooked. "Did the Watcher clones receive the information?"

"Checking the sub light link… Yes, Watcher S1 has received the information, Watcher N1 is in the process of copying it." Sica reported.

Naruto nodded with a grin. When he had begun the intelligence operations, he had not known that there was so much dirt hidden in Konoha. The urge to protect old man Hokage and Iruka sensei was what prompted his foray into information gathering. But as time went on, he found that he had a lot of fun with this whole intelligence gathering business. It was therapeutic to know about the plans of someone who was planning to harm you or those that you care about and then turn those plans against them.

Several villagers who were planning to vandalize his apartment had been caught in the act and were fined by the military police. When another group had tried to wreck havoc in Naruto's home out of retaliation, they were caught in the act as well after Naruto sent a scroll informing the Hokage about the event before hand.

There's now cloned Narutos stationed beside the administrative building, the ninja academy, the financial sector and the Hokage tower. There were also ten more Naruto clones patrolling the streets of Konoha gathering information as they made their way across the village. Naruto would create clones every morning to begin the information gathering process. These Naruto clones would use the cloned Sica attached to them to scan the respective areas. At first, Naruto had only targeted information that brought harm to Iuka sensei or the Hokage. He had later broadened the scope to include the protection of the whole village.

Sure most of the civilians in the village treated him badly. But old man Hokage would be troubled if any part of the village came into trouble. Naruto also did not want to become like those villagers that had treated him badly. After all, if he came into information that could harm the village and not inform the Hokage, he would just be like those narrowed minded villagers he hated.

To avoid detection, each of the clones remained invisible through the use of the cloned Sicas' holographic projection abilities. The real Sica had cautioned Naruto that there was a clan in Konoha who could see through objects. Sica had no idea if those clan members could detect the invisible Naruto clones, however all the cloned Sicas were reminded to constantly keep a look out for the clan members by scanning the area around them for their presence. According to the real Sica, the Hyuga clan members were easy to detect due to a unique genetic marker that all of them possessed. This genetic marker was what gave them their bloodline abilities called the Byakugan.

Once night arrived, Naruto would create a new batch of clones. These clones would take over the positions of the clones from the morning. The morning clones would then dispel themselves passing all their information to Naruto and Sica whereupon Naruto would then shift through the information to see if they had missed out anything important before retiring for the night. When morning arrived, Naruto would then replace the night clones with the morning clones.

He had also created two special clones during the day and night patrols that hide out in one of the training ground armed with scrolls and brushes. These clones were assigned the names of Watcher S1, Watcher N1 and Dispatch S1, Dispatch N1 respectively. All information from the various spy clone units were transmitted from their cloned Sicas to Watcher S1 via the sub light link. Watcher N1 would then retrieve the information from Watcher S1 and write them on the scrolls.

Depending on the seriousness of the information, the Dispatch N1 would then be sent to the Sarutobi clan house straight away, or they would wait until morning or night, before the next clone shift takes over. Dispatch S1 would project an image of some random delivery boy over Dispatch N1, thus misleading the Anbu watching over the Sarutobi house.

Tonight, Naruto had decided to expand his information collection a bit further. He had sent a clone to the Anbu building to see if there was any dirt to be had there. The clone had reported that it had reached its position an hour ago, after which it had begun scanning the area.

"S7 from the Anbu building is transmitting data." Sica informed Naruto. There was a pause before Sica continued. "S7 has reported that it had detected an advanced technology contained in one of the Anbu's old storage room. According to the reports S7 had scanned from the Anbu building, this was one of the two items Konoha had discovered during the Star Fall event.

This item, a Gene Manipulator was put into storage and apparently forgotten because the Anbu could not figure out what it was used for. The other item seemed to be a hazard suit made for high temperature operations according to the descriptions from the Anbu reports. They had moved it to the shinobi armory where several Anbu had already field-tested it a few times. They had nick named it the miracle suit and it's kept under heavy guard."

"What are the chances of our success to retrieve both items without being detected?" Naruto asked, his eyes lighting up at the thought of getting his hands on some advanced technology from the Federation. "And what do those two items do? I understand what their names mean, but I am uncertain about their real functions."

"Chances of retrieval without detection are 20% for the hazard suit and 90% for the Gene Manipulator." Sica replied. "The hazard suit is an elemental resistant suit made up of a material that can withstand blunt force attacks. It's used for operations in hostile environment. A Gene Manipulator on the other hand, is a machine created to supplement me in aiding any intelligence agents. The Federation contains many different species of sentient creatures besides humans. The Gene Manipulator comes in hand if an intelligence agent needs to infiltrate another planet that is not of his race or species.

My database contains the gene maps for most of the sentient species of the Federation. By inputting the gene maps into the Gene Manipulator, the intelligence agent can use the machine to change into the species he is trying to infiltrate, with the infiltrator possessing all the traits and physical structure of the species. Basically the whole DNA structure of the intelligence agent is changed to allow for better infiltration.

The Gene Manipulator could also heal genetic disease, but one thing to note is that it does not heal viral or bacteria infection. If you're poisoned, changing your DNA structure wouldn't help unless you're changing into a species with immunity to that poison. Your overall mass would not change as well when you undergo gene mutation."

Naruto blinked at the explanations. "That's a lot of information. I think for the current time we could leave the hazard suit alone, it seemed to be more of help to the Anbu anyway. But about the Gene Manipulator, I understand how it's going to be useful in the Federation where humans aren't the only sentient race. But how is it useful to me right now? On my own planet?"

"Your planet has certain humans possessing genetic quarks that you call bloodlines. I am able to scan and isolate the gene that causes these bloodline limits, since they are unique genetic markers in the normal human structure." Sica explained. "I could then pass the gene map to the Gene Manipulator and use it to give you that bloodline limit."

"A bloodline limit." Naruto said his eyes shining with interest. He knew what bloodline limits were, his instructions in the ninja arts were quite complete with Sica to guide him every step of the way. "What bloodline limit have you scanned?"

"Currently I've only detected and identified the Byakugan bloodlimit, during the time when you pointed out one of the Hyuga clan members to me." Sica replied.

"Aren't the characteristic of the Byakugan bloodline white eyes?" Naruto asked after a pause. "It would be pretty obvious to everyone that something happened if I started walking around with white eyes. Aren't there other bloodline limits you have detected?"

"I've detected a few other bloodline limits through your journey around the village everyday, but unfortunately since I do not have a name to go with the people who bears the genetic markers, I am unable to deduct what type of bloodline limits belong to those genetic markers. It would not be advisable for me to pass them to you." Sica explained. "However, I may have a suggestion.

Based on an old Anbu report, Orochimaru, student of the Third Hokage, used to conduct vile research on implantation of the Wood Release gene belonging to the First Hokage on human subjects. His methods were unethical and result in many deaths. His lab was shut down and he was chased out of the village when the Third Hokage found out about it." Sica replied. "I currently have the location of that lab, and according to the Anbu reports, the labs were simply shut down and sealed under the most powerful seal known to the Third Hokage.

The gene solutions and various equipments which might still bear the Wood Release gene were never destroyed but simply sealed within. I suggest creating a clone to scan out that area for the Wood Release gene marker. The Wood Release is a powerful bloodline and is not outwardly visible physically which should be suitable for you."

Naruto grinned as he nodded. "Alright tell S7 to begin infiltration into the Anbu building to retrieve the Gene Manipulator."

He made the handseals for the Shadow Clone technique as a clone of himself puffed into existence beside him.

"N16, you know what to do." Naruto said eyeing the clone. "Dispel yourself after S16 have gotten the Wood Release genetic marker."

N7 arrived at the apartment two hours later, N7's grin marked the operation as a success as he set the Gene Manipulator in front of the Naruto who was waiting patiently for it. N16 who was sent out to get the Wood Release gene marker had long succeed in his mission and had already dispelled himself, passing the knowledge to Sica.

"Here you go Boss, good luck!" N7 said before making the handseals to release himself, disappearing in a puff of smoke.

Naruto fingered the black metallic block in front of him as Sica said in his head. "Initiating start up."

Naruto watched in awe as the top of the Gene Manipulator opened up, with its sides carefully folding until they are flat against the floor. Contained inside the box was a small silver machine made of some kind of metal. The metal was layered with glass panels and had a small tray seated in the middle of the machine.

"This looks like the replicator machine that you used to show me." Naruto remarked thinking back on his Federation studies.

A replicator machine was a tool capable of creating any objects out of raw substances, for instance food, gold, weapons, as long as the object's atomic map was in the replicator's database. Sica had shown it to Naruto a few times while teaching him Federation technologies. Naruto had been amazed at the advanced technologies the Federation had possessed and had asked Sica if he could build something similar. He had been disappointed when Sica had replied that it was highly unlikely. This planet simply lacks the proper tools and equipments to build something as complex as the replicator.

Sica had gone on to remark that this planet was considered medieval in tech level, though it did possess technologies that were seemingly advanced for this planet. Records in the library had contained a legend that talked about a great war 3,000 years ago that wiped out much of civilization, leaving behind cities with poisonous mist. The mist had only begun to disappear in the last several hundred years and careful forays had been made into those ruins, from which much of the modern day technologies of the ninja world came about.

Sica had analyzed that Naruto's world might had bear middle level technologies before some event had ended that golden age. It had suggested that Naruto enter the ruins himself to find out more. Unfortunately, the nearest ruins were a few weeks' journey out of the village and Naruto was never permitted to leave the village, except for those few times when he was little and was chased out into the forest. In the end, Naruto had set it aside as things to do in the future.

"You may call it a specialized replicator used only for gene manipulation. Like me, it needs solar energy to recharge its reserves once its energy is depleted. However, the Static Lighting Technique could not be used to recharge this machine, the Gene Manipulator is too delicate to withstand raw electrical charges. The machine currently has 60% power, which is enough for you to use a few time before needing to recharge." Sica explained. "I'll pass the Wood Release marker and your genetic map to the Gene Manipulator. The machine will then replicate a pellet based on the genetic information given.

The pellet is actually made up of nano-bots specially programmed to change your genetic structure. You'll spend at most five hours in a feverish state as the gene mutation occurs , changing your body to accommodate the new gene materials. I will be able to relieve some of your pain during the process through the symbology magic engraved on me, and there's a possibility that your regeneration abilities will also aid in the process. After the mutation process ends, you'll come into possession the Wood Release ability."

"Alright, so how do I start?" Naruto asked.

"There's a yellow button, push it. A small drawer will open up. Put in materials that are not too dense. They will be used as raw materials for the replication process." Sica said as Naruto followed its instruction, stuffing a piece of bread into the small drawer that opened up. "I am passing the gene map to the machine and begin replication."

Naruto watched as the small tray in the Gene Manipulator light up with crackles of white lightning. When the light dispersed, a small pellet sat on the tray. Naruto reach in and took out the pellet.

"So I just eat it?" Naruto asked eyeing the pellet.

"Yes, I would suggest you do so laying on your bed. The pellet would knock you out during the gene mutation process." Sica suggested.

Naruto nodded, carefully lifting the Gene Manipulator and put it inside one of the cupboard before lying on his bed. He held the pellet above his mouth and dropped it in, swallowing it.

A sense of vertigo hit him, and then he knew nothing more.

He woke up… in a sewer, crawling with vines of greenery that was rapidly spreading.

"What the hell happened?" Naruto muttered as he got up, water splashing around him. "Sica?"

There was no response. Naruto looked at his right wrist and his eyes widened as he did not see the familiar bracelet there.

"Sica! Sica where are you?" Naruto asked frantically as he searched the water and the sewer around him. Apart from the growing vines and the rock walls of the sewer, Sica was nowhere to be found.

"What could have happened?" Naruto asked in confusion. He remembered eating the pellet that was supposed to give him the Wood Release bloodline, he remembered fainting, and then he had woken up here. Naruto was contemplating searching the sewer around him again when a loud roar of pain reverted through the cold and damp tunnels. Naruto flinched, the sound seemed to be coming from the other end of the sewer.

Naruto felt unbelievably exposed. Sure he was well versed in a lot of D and C-rank techniques with even a few B-rank techniques. He could most probably do well in a fight against some chunin or even a few low level jonin. But now that he was facing some unknown element alone, Naruto felt the beginnings of fear. He had come to rely on Sica to provide him with advice about what to do for most of his life. He wasn't sure if he could make the right decisions if left on his own.

The roar sounded again, like the cry of some wild and dangerous wild animal. Naruto pondered if he should walk deeper into the sewer to find out what was going on. He looked around himself. He had no idea where he was, a brick wall signaling the end of the sewer was behind him, and the only way out was to walk deeper into the sewer and hope for the best. Naruto took a deep breath to fortify himself as he took the first step deeper into the sewer. His senses were on high alert. He was a ninja trained by Sica, he would not let those teachings go to waste.

After minutes of walking and the constant roaring of the wild beast which was becoming weaker with every moment, Naruto found himself at another dead end. This time, there was a giant cage draping with green leafy vines crawling all over the bars of the cage. Within the cage, Naruto saw with horrified eyes the battered body of a giant nine tailed fox that was bind to the floor of the sewer by several large roots.

Vicious red chakra was emitting from the fox, spreading out of the cage. But when they touched the vines crawling all over the bars of the cage, the demonic red chakra changed to a tide of cool green tingled with tendrils of brown. These waves of green brown chakra washed over Naruto, giving him the feeling of rich clean growth and sensation of being in the forest of Konoha. As Naruto basked in the calming green brown chakra, more vines and roots burst out of the ground around him, spreading to cover the whole walls of the sewer.

The eyes of the trapped fox opened and glared at Naruto.

"You!" It hissed. "You are the boy! What have you done to me?"

Naruto stared at it, nearly taking a step back at the killing intent the fox let out, before the green brown chakra bolstered his defense, allowing him to match the fox's stare. Naruto's eyes flickered briefly to the paper seal on the cage door and then looked at the fox.

"I assumed you are the Kyuubi that's supposed to be inside me." Naruto said, trying to sound calm. "I've been wondering what you really looked like. I wasn't expecting the greatest of the tailed beasts looking like this."

Kyuubi roared in anger as Naruto pointed derisively at the roots binding it.

"I am the most powerful of the tailed beast and I will find my way out of whatever you've done." Kyuubi snarled. "And when I escape from here, you'll be the first to be eaten by me!"

"Please, like that's going to scare me." Naruto said with a sniff, trying to cover the deep seated fear in the pits of his stomach. "Anyway I've done nothing, except to give myself the Wood Release bloodline."

"The Wood Release bloodline!" The fox gaped, its jaws opening. Finally a hint of something that looked like horror appeared in its eyes. "You brat! What have you done!"

Naruto flinched at the angry roar from the Kyuubi this time as it struggled in the roots that kept it trapped. An enormous wave of red chakra pulsed out of the cage, and the vines could not totally purify some of it, causing some of the red chakra to be mixed in with the green brown chakra.

Naruto shuddered painfully as the red chakra washed over him and he…

"I see you've awaken Naruto." Sica's voice sounded in his head. "The gene mutation was a success. You now possess the First Hokage's Wood Release bloodline."

"I'm back in my room." Naruto said with great relief as he opened his eyes, getting up and looking around his room to confirm that he's really not in the sewer anymore. His eyes widened at the plants that had grew in a fan shape around his bed. Most of them seemed to be attached to the floors and the bed. "What the hell happened here?"

"I am unsure, though it might be a side effect of your bloodline. I've also detected some abnormality during the mutation process." Sica continued. "During the mutation, great amounts of the energy that I have classified as the Kyuubi's chakra was emitted from your body in a controlled manner.

The Kyuubi's chakra however disappeared after only five minutes into the mutation, and I sensed a new kind of energy signature that I've never felt before emitting from you. Shortly thereafter, the plants began to grow around you. My deduction is that the Wood Release bloodline converts the Kyuubi's chakra into a new type of chakra that allows the rapid and forced growth of plants."

"Then that means my dream is actually real." Naruto said in part awe and part horror.

"Dream?" Sica asked.

"Yes well, I had a dream about the Kyuubi just now." Naruto said as he explained his encounter in the sewer. "… the Kyuubi was bond onto the floor by these giant roots and most of the red chakra coming out of the cage was converted into greenish brown chakra."

"Analyzing data… I propose a hypothesis which might be 95% correct in light of the new information." Sica offered. "What you just had was a psychic connection to Kyuubi. It seemed that the addition of the Wood Release bloodline in your body might have allowed you the ability to control the chakra of the Kyuubi from this moment on. According to the data about the Wood Release ability, the First Hokage was able to use that ability to successfully suppress and control the tailed beasts during the First Shinobi War. You may have gained that similar ability."

"So that means that I might be able to control the Kyuubi's chakra at will now?" Naruto asked in amazement.

"Maybe not right away. However it might be wise to add learning Wood Release techniques into your schedule. I would also like you to create a few cloned Sicas to observe your training. With the additional computational powers of the cloned Sicas, I might be able to come up with ways for you to tap into the Kyuubi's chakra." Sica added. "The extra computational power will also enable me to come up with various strategies for ways you could put your abilities to greater use in battle."

Naruto grinned. "Alright! That's going to be so cool! Too bad I've to go to the academy during the day now, or we'll have more time training."

"Actually Naruto, if I may suggest something, you might want to consider sending a clone to attend the ninja academy while you train during the day." Sica suggested. "The cloned Naruto could use his Sica to generate holographic shields that will protect the clone from any physical damage.

The holographic shields will not be able to hold out under strong attacks, but they should be enough to provide more time for your clone to escape. Considering that the regular academy training spar is against children who do not even possess 10% of your current ninja skills, you should be quite safe."

"Good suggestion Sica." Naruto said in agreement. "Though I may not want to become the Hokage now, I do want to become strong enough so that I can protect myself and those that I care about. And when I am one day able to travel to Federation space, I'll show the Federation that though the people from my planet might be primitive, we're descended from one of the strongest races out there! The race of ninjas!"

**Author's Note:**

And there, Naruto has the Mokuton ability now. Just a question, is Shikamaru's shadow manipulation and Ino's mental possession techniques considered bloodlines? Or any ninja can do those techniques if they know the jutsu? Anyone who knows let me know.

Also, Merry Christmas Guys and take care :) don't eat too much sweets!

**Chapter 3: Chapter 3**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Three: Childhood Friends and the Shadow Watch**

"… Question 9, What is the Gamma Sector? Give a rundown of the political importance of this sector." Sica asked in a mindless drone.

"It is the sector of the Milky Way galaxy that is home to the Vendeeni race, the most scientifically advanced civilization in the galaxy. It is also home to a large number of neutral powers that use the Vendeeni as a shield.

Planets in this sector are able to maintain their independence because the area is far away from the Pangalactic Federation's center of government, no active anti-Federation power uses the area as a base of operations, and most of all, it is near the border of the Aldian Empire, the Pangalactic Federation's primary rival." Naruto recited from his memory.

"Question 10, How does the Pangalactic Federation handles genetic manipulation?" Sica continued.

"Pangalactic Federation allows takes a liberal view on genetic manipulation unlike the Vendeeni race. Gene manipulation of not more than 30% of the user's original gene map is allowed. Any more than that, or those that are classified as dangerous mutation are handled through government facilities." Naruto said with a grin. "Man, that's easy!"

"Very good Naruto. That was the last question of the Political Science exams. I will now reveal the marks for all the papers you've completed. All papers are scored from HD – High Distinction, to F – Fail.

Biology – P (pass)  
Chemistry – C (credit)  
Physics – D (distinction)  
Math – D (distinction)  
Astronomy – HD (high distinction)  
Federation Trade Language – D (distinction)  
Vendeeni Language – C (credit)  
Federation History – C (credit)  
Technology Training – D (distinction)  
Basic Symbology – HD (high distinction)  
Political Science – D (distinction)

The following are your short courses results:  
Cooking – D (distinction)  
Invention and planning – D (distinction)  
Wood Crafting – C (credit)  
Calligraphy – C (credit)  
Implementing Symbology in Technologies – D (distinction)

Based on your scores, I congratulate you on passing College level exams based on the Federation subjects that you've picked. You may now access University level content as well as the materials for the Federation Operatives training program." Sica said solemnly. "What would you wish to look at first? I recommend picking at least 10 disciplines to focus on for this half of the year, since you could use the shadow clones to help out in your studies."

"Pass some of the university choices you would recommend to me." Naruto said. He paused as descriptions and contents of various disciplinary subjects flashed through his mind. "For the university subjects, I'll take Advanced Symbology, Mechanical Engineering, Astrophysics, Fine Arts, Economics, Techno Symbology Implementations and Genetics."

"That's all for the university subjects?" Sica inquired.

"Yes, show me the materials for the Federation Operatives training program now." Naruto said eagerly.

"Passing you the materials now." Sica replied.

"Hmm… give me Basic Infiltration training program, we're going to need that. Warfare and Combat Strategy training also seems useful, I'll take that as well." Naruto mused as the choices flipped through his mind. He gave a pause suddenly. "Wait Sica, go back to the previous selection. What is this Qi training I see here?"

"Qi is a specialized combat training that is a mandate for all Federation personnel, some universities also provide subjects dealing with Qi in theory. Simply put, Qi is a way of channeling your physical energy to be used in fighting." Sica explained. "Unlike chakra which is the manipulation of physical and spiritual energies in fighting, Qi is purely the usage of physical energies to do superhuman feats."

"Show me some of the attacks able to be done by Qi." Naruto ordered, his eyes lighting up with excitement at this new knowledge.

"I will show you the recordings taken of Federation operatives in combat training." Sica said as images appeared in Naruto's mind.

Naruto watched with a happy grin as he saw a Federation Operative beating his opponent to a pulp with his fist which was glowing with a yellow like energy. Apparently his strength was tremendously enhanced, as noted by the various craters left on the training fields. There was also another operative who some how managed to make lightning crackle all over his training sword, enhancing his attacks with the power of lightning.

"Alright Sica, I want in on this program as well! I think it'll help with my ninja training." Naruto decided. "Also add in the university subject about Qi theory."

"Done Naruto." Sica agreed amiably. "I'll begin creating your new schedule for this year. With your clone attending school, you'll have more than enough time for your Federation studies, ninja training and learning the techniques for your Wood Release bloodline."

"Ah yes… I hope my clone wouldn't be causing any trouble at school. I did tell it to act a bit less intelligent and speak like children our age." Naruto mused worriedly.

"… The genetic divergent structure of Sasuke Uchiha has been noted as the Sharigan bloodline. Hinata Hyuga possessed the Byakugan bloodline. Shikamaru Nara, Ino Yamanaka, Choji Akimichi, Kiba Inuzuka, Shino Aburame all possessed genetic structures that is a bit different from ordinary ninjas." S0 droned. "I have a 98% accurate possible deduction that though these children from the lesser clans did not possess any of the known advanced bloodlines, their family style ninja techniques might have changed their bodies during each generations to allow these techniques to be used more easily.

With a few more generations, the genetic structures of these lesser clans might stabilize into a true bloodline limit. Their descendants might also be quite powerful."

"That's great. But I think all of us are too young for having children yet." N0 yawned listlessly. "Giving you the names of those students only took me ten minutes… Lunch is still one more hour away what should I do now…"

N0 the Naruto clone that was assigned to attend classes was bored out of his mind. Boss, the real Naruto, had not instructed him to read up on any specific subject today. At the moment, Iruka sensei was talking about how to mold chakra, which N0 already knew long ago. N0 sighed, looking around at the students diligently taking notes around him. He gave a yawn and sent a mental nudge to S0.

"S0, I remembered from Boss' memories that the Federation has some entertainment materials called 'comics' didn't they? Can you show me some of them?" Naruto asked in his head.

"Yes, which century of comic would you like to preview?" S0 asked politely.

"How about the 19th to 20th century?" Naruto asked.

"Very well, I recommend one of the more popular comic of that time to you. It's called Mx0." Sica said.

Twenty minutes later, N0's concentration in browsing through the Mx0 comics was broken when Iruka sensei's voice called out angrily.

"Naruto! Have you been paying attention to what I am saying? What are you doing giving me that empty headed grin for!" Iruka roared, an angry tic forming on his forehead.

N0 snapped out of his comic browsing and winced as he saw Iruka sensei's angry look. This was going to be a long day… maybe he should have gotten S0 project a hologram over himself and give the illusion that he was paying attention to classes. As Iruka sensei barked out a question on chakra molding techniques to test N0's attentiveness, N0 sighed as he replied the teacher with the correct answer, all the while thinking of the trouble he'll get from Iruka sensei after class.

The lunch break bell sounded and everyone began making their way out of their classroom in their own little groups. The only one that stood alone was the boy called Naruto. Even the shy Hyuga heiress had found a few lunch buddies with some of the girls in class.

Choji frowned as he looked at Naruto who clutched his bento and walked nonchalantly towards the swing alone, seemingly lost in his own thoughts. It wasn't like that for the first few weeks of school. In fact, Naruto had been popular among the girls in class because of his height and firm built for someone his age. The girls of the class had frequently called him for lunch, until their parents found out about who their daughters were associating with.

Choji still remembered some of the parents dragging their children away from Naruto, warning them fiercely about not associating with someone like him. The warnings had spread among the children until all the girls had begun to stay away from Naruto. The only exceptions being the girls born from the shinobi families, who occasionally still talked to Naruto, though none dared to be too close with him because of the warnings from the rest of the girls. As such, even though Naruto wasn't actively hated by the children, he was avoided after the fierce warnings given by the parents.

But over the last two months, Choji had found that Naruto was a distant but polite person, nothing to warrant the hatred that he had seen in some of the adults. Choji had asked his father why some of the adults seemed to hate Naruto and if Naruto had done anything wrong. His father had just shake his head saying that something happened a long time ago, something very bad that many people began to blame Naruto for. He had told Choji firmly that appearance did not matter if you are going to be friends with someone, for it's the heart and loyalty of your friend that counts in the end.

Choji looked in Naruto's direction again as he and Shikamaru made their way to their favorite spot behind the playground. He bite his lips as he came to a decision, squaring his shoulders as he break away from a startled Shikamaru and walked towards Naruto who was seated on one of the swings.

"Hi… Naruto, would you like to have lunch with us?" Choji asked as he paused in front of Naruto hesitantly, Shikamaru trailing behind him with a confused look.

Naruto blinked, pausing in the middle of opening his bento. He gave a careful look at Choji as if judging his sincerity before giving a soft smile at Choji.

"Yeah sure, where are you guys going?" Naruto asked.

"Great, we normally go to the fields behind the playground for lunch." Choji said as he begun leading the way.

Nobody knew at that time, but it was the start of a friendship that would change Choji and Shikamaru's lives forever.

The sun was hovering beyond the horizon, in the midst of setting when Naruto paused in his training as he absorbed his memories of the clone that he had sent to school.

"It seemed that the clone had made two new friends… Well not that it matters, the adults will break up that friendship sooner or later." Naruto said with a shrug. "Sica, N0 found some comics about magic users in your entertainment database. The magic users in the comics have these Magic Plates that are able to cast spells by channeling magic energy, sort of like channeling chakra in a rectangle metallic plate to cast ninja techniques. Do you think it's possible for me to create ninja techniques plates based on the same concept?"

"Refering back to the Mx0 comics… I am unable to come to a conclusion at this current time. However if you wish for me to investigate such matters, you could spare your chakra to create a few more clones which you could hide out in the forest every night. I'll then use the cloned Sicas to increase my computational capabilities as we ran various simulations based on the ninja knowledge that I've archive, to see if the creation of the ninja technique cards you've suggested is feasible." Sica recommended.

"How about a hundred clones for the night? Now that I can pull the Kyuubi's chakra and use it, I'll be able to create that many clones as well as the night infiltration team and pump enough chakra in all of them to last the night. In fact I am thinking of expanding my infiltration operation to cover the whole village soon. Maybe gradually over a few months' time." Naruto told Sica musingly.

"That would be a wise decision, and regarding your large chakra reserves now, it is no surprise. According to ninja legends, the nine-tailed fox is a creature of immerse malevolent chakra. Now that it's sealed in you and you are able to pull out its chakra safely, it's no wonder that your chakra reserves had increased so rapidly." Sica added. "In fact, according to my scans, your own personal chakra reserves had already tripled what it used to be.

Based on my estimation, the Kyuubi's purified chakra most probably forced your chakra coils to grow rapidly. You may very well exceed Hokage level chakra reserves, not counting in the Kyuubi's chakra, in a few years' time if this carries on."

"Wow, exceed Hokage level chakra reserves." Naruto said impressed.

"Of course, it also meant that every time your chakra reserves increased, your chakra control will worsen until you could get use to handling this new level of energy." Sica continued dryly. "I've detected you wasting double the energy usage for all your techniques these past few days, though your control is steadily getting back to what it used to be with training."

Naruto grimaced as he sighed. "Well I guess there'll always be give and take. Anyway I'll begin to create those hundred clones for the night and leave them here. You can use them to run your computations while I'm asleep. I want to know if there's even a possibility that I can create a ninja technique plate."

"Regarding the new genetic materials we scanned today. What do you wish to do about it?" Sica asked.

"The Sharigan would be too obvious at the moment for me to use. So I'll skip that for the moment, though I'll send a clone to scan the Uchiha compound for their clan materials." Naruto decided as he began thinking about the matter. "I'll also send some clones to the Nara, Yamanaka, Akimichi, Inuzuka and Aburame clans to do some scanning and get more ideas about what their techniques are about before I decide if I want to incorporate more genetic variations in me."

The next few weeks passed and N0 found to his surprise that he was spending more and more time during lunch and after school hanging out with Choji and Shikamaru. It became a regular sight to see the three of them laying on one of the hills behind the academy as they watched clouds go by. N0 had also found that beneath Shikamaru's lazy facade hides a very intelligent mind. He began to teach Shikamaru a game called shoji, which became one of their regular pastimes.

Shikamaru quickly grasped the basics of the tactical chess game, and surprised Naruto by beating him five out of the ten times that they had played together to date. It had begun a challenging friendship with Shikamaru as they began to spend much of their cloud watching time playing shoji, with Choji sitting besides them munching on his chips. Shikamaru also began to show more focus in the game then N0 had ever seen him shown in class.

Surprisingly, Shikamaru and Choji's parents did nothing to interfere in this budding friendship. Apparently Shikamaru had also remarked about N0's talent in shoji because the adult Nara had approached N0 once and invited him to their house sometime for a game.

Thus, the strange friendship between the three of them had begun. Sometimes, a blond haired girl named Ino would join them. Apparently she was the childhood friend of Choji and Shikamaru, though Shikamaru vehemently denied that fact, calling her troublesome.

Most of the time however, it would only be just the three of them until Choji had in his friendly way, made friends with Shino, whom the class had called insect boy and avoided on the whole, and Kiba, a loud mouth hyperactive brat who apparently came from a clan that paired up with trained ninja dogs, though apparently he was still not of age to receive a dog companion. Ino also joined them less and less as more boys were added into the group.

Naruto later learnt that Shino came from a clan that infused into their bodies at birth a special breed of insects that feed on chakra. In return, the insects attack and do other tasks as he commands. That was also the reason for Shino's unpopularity and the name 'Insect boy'. Kiba however was totally different from the calm and collected Shino, being prone to excessive actions and random pranks.

One such prank resulted in N0 having pink hair for the rest of the day. Of course, the normally self collected N0 lost his temper that day and it was the start of the prank wars and the beginnings of a firm but sometimes traitorous friendship with Kiba as they became eternal friends and rivals.

"I bet you couldn't do it." Kiba said with a challenging gleam in his eyes as he looked at N0.

"Couldn't do what?" Shikamaru asked, opening his eyes wearily. The five of them had been laying on their favorite hill spot for the past one hour since they left school.

"Kiba was saying that Naruto wouldn't be able to come up with his own ninja technique that can knock out the teachers." Choji spoke up helpfully between munches of his chips.

"Oh you're so troublesome Kiba." Shikamaru said with a shake of his head. "Don't you remember the one week detention you got after you threw the stink bombs at Iruka and Mizuki sensei? And just throwing stink bombs aren't really ninja techniques."

"Of course they are, my very own stink bomb technique." Kiba said puffing out his chest proudly.

"Ha, I could do it with a real technique." N0 said sticking out his tongue at Kiba. "Just you watch. What could distract Iruka and Mizuki sensei anyway?"

"I don't know, they are both adults, maybe a pretty woman?" Choji suggested. "Mom always says that a pretty woman is a man's downfall."

"Woman are troublesome, especially the fierce ones." Shikamaru said with a shudder. Shino nodded quietly beside him in agreement.

"Woman huh…" N0 mused as he planed his special technique.

Iruka's point of view

Iruka walked into the classroom the next morning with great energy and good cheer. This week had passed uneventfully with no outrageous pranks from Kiba or his partner in crime Naruto. One could only hope they had learnt their lessons from the multiple detentions he had given them.

"Ah Iruka, you've arrived." Mizuki said, turning to the classroom as he continued. "Iruka sensei will now take over the genjutsu section of the lesson. Listen carefully to his instructions."

"Have all of you practiced the transformation technique I've showed you all yesterday?" Iruka asked the class while waiting from Mizuki to gather his stuff.

"I've practiced real hard Iruka sensei!" Naruto called out raising his hand. "Do you want to see it?"

"Well since Naruto offered, very well Naruto, come to the front and show the whole class your transformation." Iruka said good-naturedly. Later on he would curse himself for not spotting the trap Naruto had laid out for him.

Mizuki paused in the middle of collecting his notes to leave the class, shooting Naruto a barely concealed glare, but also stopping to see the mess Naruto would most probably make for himself. After all, few academy students ever succeed a transformation on their first try, and after only just a day of teaching.

"Alright Iruka sensei, Mizuki sensei here's my own special transformation technique." Naruto said pausing in front of the class facing Iruka. Iruka began to feel a familiar sense of foreboding that he was starting to get around Kiba and Naruto. A large warning sign was flashing in front of his eyes. "Erm… maybe I should pick someone else…"

"Special transformation technique, Sexy Technique!" Naruto cried out, cutting off Iruka's hurried words as a cloud of smoke enveloped him.

Iruka watched in horrified fascination as a blond and pretty young woman in the nude stepped out of the smoke cooing at him.

"Hi Iruka sensei." Naruto in his transformed form cooed wickedly at him. "Hi Mizuki sensei!"

Behind him, the class erupted in pandemonium as the girls screamed death threats at Naruto.

"Off with his head!" Ino and Sakura screeched.

"Naruto Uzumaki!" Iruka roared, as his face turned beet red.

Behind him, Mizuki was trying frantically to stop the streams of blood from his nose.

"I think I am beginning to get the hang of my Wood Release ability." Naruto said with a tired sigh as he sat down on the training field with a bowl of instant ramen. Several newly sprouted trees surrounded him while the clones around the perimeter of the training field remained in their positions, scanning the surroundings in case any Konoha ninjas wandered this way. "I think I can master the first Wood Release technique in a week's…"

Naruto choked on his ramen as the memories from the clone he sent to attend classes reached him. Apparently the clone had dispelled himself after hanging out with his friends. Unfortunately, it seemed that the clone had been up to some mischief during the day which had ended up with Iruka sensei sentencing him to detention for a whole week.

"What a perverted technique!" Naruto winced as he received the memory of the transformation technique the clone had created and used on Iruka sensei. "And my clone just came up with this technique in the morning, with his Sica aiding him! If this goes on, my reputation's going to be totally ruined at school!"

"You did ask that clone to act like children his age." Sica pointed out. "And one of his friends is a prankster. Since your clone is but an extension of yourself, he would have inherited your competitiveness. It's no wonder he would tried to exceed other students in pranks, since that's the one area where you did not instruct him to hide his talent in."

"Yes, but did he really have to come up with that kind of ninja technique?" Naruto moaned, blushing at the memory of the firm naked female body N0 had transformed into. Add in the memories of the naked photos of various women provided by S0 that N0 had used as reference, Naruto had a hard time clearing his head of the memories. "You know Sica, apart from my clone's disaster at school, I think I would like to hang out with Shikamaru and the rest of the guys for once. Just myself, and not my clone. Their friendship seemed genuine, and… I'll really like to experience companionship with people my age."

"Suggestion then." Sica provided. "You could still have your clone attend classes but switch places with it after school to hang out with your friends. I'll adjust your timetable to fit in with your new schedule."

"Thank you Sica." Naruto said gratefully, already looking forward to tomorrow. "By the way Sica, I've decided not to use the genetic material or any of the family techniques you've scanned from the Nara, Yamanaka, Akimichi, Inuzuka and Aburame clans. I know these people and they've been nice to me when so many others hated me. It'll be too much like stealing if I use their family techniques."

"Understood. I'll file their genetic maps and techniques away to be only used as reference." Sica acknowledge. "Naruto, I've also completed the analysis of the possibility of creating ninja techniques plates. According to my possibility simulation program, if we can find a way to convert ninja techniques into seal forms and place them on plates, theoretically we can make it that anyone will then be able to use the technique by pushing chakra into the plate.

Of course the seal arrays needed to convert ninja techniques like Ninjutsu or Genjutsu into seal forms would be very complex. However if you create more clones to allow me access to the extra cloned Sica's computational powers, I might be able to form seal arrays based on my current seal and symbology library, to create the ninja technique that you want.

One good thing about this is that Ninjutsu requiring certain bloodline limits might be possible for everyone to use if converted to seals and imprinted onto the ninja techniques plate."

"That's good. Let's make it our nightly activity then." Naruto affirmed. "First I'll like you to find out how to create a seal array for the Shadow Clone technique. For that matter, let's see if we could imprint Symbology symbols on the plates as well, for others to access the Symbology form of magic."

In the night, Sica used the clones for extra computing powers to convert techniques into seal arrays. In the morning, Naruto trained in the forest while his clone attends school. In the afternoon, Naruto would then switch places with his school clone to be with his friends.

Naruto began spending regular time with his friends, finding that he quite like their company. Choji was the loyal and friendly type, Shikamaru though lazy, possessed a fierce intelligence in coming up with strategies. Shino was the solid silent boy of the group, seldom speaking yet when he did speak, it's with wisdom beyond most of his age. Kiba on the other hand is rash and bouncing with energy.

"You know." Kiba remarked one day staring at the sky as he lay on the grass beside Choji. Naruto and Shikamaru were engaged in a game of shoji. "It's boring doing the same old thing everyday. How about we do some training once in a while?"

"I'm fine with it." Choji said between mouthfuls of chips. "As long as we don't do it every day."

"It would be wise to train up our skills." Shino admitted beside Naruto. He had been observing Shikamaru and Naruto's shoji game.

"It's troublesome. I'd rather look at the clouds." Shikamaru complained.

"Hmm… how about this? I'll play shoji with you three days a week and we all train for two days every week." Naruto suggested to Shikamaru.

"Whatever." Shikamaru said with a lazy shrug as he moved his chess piece. "But can we not train today? We're still in the middle of a game."

"Alright then! I'll ask my sis about which training fields to go to when I reach home today. We can go there to train tomorrow!" Kiba said enthusiastically.

The next few weeks began the start of the group's training sessions that would later turn into a regular event. Naruto also decided not to hide his true skill during the sparring matches as it wouldn't do his friends any good if they did not learn from their mistakes.

The mission reports he had read about his parents from the administration building had depicted the harsh ninja life for him. In the ninja world of the Elemental countries, if you are a ninja of limited skills, sooner or later you would be killed. Truth to be told, he had grown quite attached to his friends, and since Kiba had suggested it, Naruto was going to make sure the group gain more ninja skills out of their sparring matches and practices.

Naruto did make sure he did not use any techniques that were not taught by the academy though. However even with academy level techniques, Naruto was able to fight everyone to a draw every time, a fact that had totally surprised everyone.

"You have been hiding your true ability in the academy." Shikamaru noted one day as they watched him end the taijutsu match with Kiba in just five minutes. Kiba was ranked second in all taijutsu lessons after Sasuke Uchiha, it had been unbelievable that Naruto who had always scored averagely in class would be able to beat Kiba in their after school sparring matches regularly.

"And you hadn't been hiding your own skills?" Naruto returned calmly as he looked at Shikamaru. "I know for a fact that you can most probably do better than that Sakura girl in the written tests, yet you consistently scored the seventh place instead of the first."

"That's because school is troublesome for me." Shikamaru grumbled looking away.

"Well, same here… I'll probably get into trouble if I do too well…" Naruto paused trailing off as he suddenly realized what he had just said. "I er mean it's just too troublesome to try hard anyway, passing is enough."

There was an awkward silence as everyone looked at one another. Then Kiba interrupted with a yell.

"Come and fight me again! I can't believe I keep getting defeated by you!" Kiba said as he challenged Naruto.

"That's because your taijutsu stance is sloppy, you're limiting your own reach…" Naruto said turning away as he went to correct Kiba's mistakes.

"Shikamaru, what did Naruto mean he'll get into trouble if he do too well?" Choji asked as the watched the two boys begun to spar.

"Well… hadn't you notice how the other teachers in the academy other than Iruka and Mizuki sensei treated him?" Shikamaru asked with a frown. "From what I recall, the teachers from the other classes tend to give Naruto a hard time during lessons. I've even seen him get the wrong instructions from Uzuni sensei once."

"I don't understand it, Naruto's a nice person. But so many adults in the village seemed to dislike him." Choji said with a frown. "Dad wouldn't tell me why people hate Naruto when I asked him."

"Maybe it was his parents…" Shikamaru suggested. "I doubt the fault lies with Naruto. He's too young to commit any big crimes that would make so many adults bear hatred towards him. I got the same answer from my dad when I asked him about Naruto. I think the adults are hiding something from us."

"Let's not think about it." Shino said suddenly from the side. "Naruto's our friend. That's enough for me."

Choji's eyes brighten as he looked at Shino. "You're right. Just being friends is enough, and Naruto gave me a lot of pointers when I fought against him. I am going to practice now, are you coming Shikamaru?"

"Yeah, yeah… This is troublesome. I hate mysteries." Shikamaru said before walking to spar with Choji.

Shino stood silently alone in the field looking on as Naruto disabled Kiba in a fight for the second time that day.

"I wished there's some ways that I can teach Shikamaru and the others more knowledge, like the seal basics, advanced genjutsu concept and ninjutsu techniques." Naruto remarked. For the past one month, their little group has been honing their academy skills until they are near perfect with them. "What the academy teaches is but the bare basics, they'll need more than the basics once they began fighting against enemy ninjas."

"According to academy standards, all of you are only eight years old, nearing nine. The bare basics are the foundation upon which to build your skills." Sica reminded Naruto. "Not everyone has your large chakra reserves or me to guide them."

"That's true, maybe I should start them on chakra control exercises and chakra stretching exercises to enlarge their chakra reserves. Leaf floating and tree walking might be a good start." Naruto mused. "But I wonder how I am supposed to introduce tree walking when the academy never teaches that."

"The library did have books regarding tree walking, so maybe you could keep up a façade of frequently going to the library to research materials and chance upon them?" Sica suggested.

Naruto shook his head. "That would take up too much time just to keep up a pretense. Isn't there any other methods?"

Sica paused as it analyzes the situations. "I do have one method that would allow a bit of flexibility…"

The Anbu dropped the scroll silently on the Hokage's table before silently exiting out of the window. Sarutobi looked at the familiar scroll that Konoha's mysterious informant used as well as the red seal wax of an eye over a leaf that sealed the scroll. Apparently the informant must have found out about the "Eye of Konoha" nickname that the Anbu had given him and had created a unique seal for his scroll.

Sarutobi clamped his fist and quickly stood up as he glanced at the contents of the scroll.

"Third Hokage,

This is not an informant scroll, but a short note to inform you of certain of my actions. I am aware that you've been concerned for the safety of the village with an unknown informant running around, even though the information I've provided you so far are for the good of the village as a whole.

Rest assured that I've no ill intention towards the village. I was a family friend of Minato and Kushina and had only recently come back to Konoha after a long journey. After finding the truth of what happened to my two friends, I've decided to stay and keep a silent watch on their son. I would not list down the name of their child in case this scroll falls into other's hands. However it came to my attention that your power was severely undermined due to your support for my friends' child, as such, I've decided to take action to ensure the safety of the village that Minato loved, and to make sure the boy stays safe.

I cannot reveal myself, not even to the boy, because to know my identity would put others at risk. I am unfortunately considered a missing nin at the current date. Thus I've decided to aid the boy in other ways. I'll be leaving scrolls and books on basic chakra manipulation, ninja techniques as well as other items on the doorsteps of the boy to further his education. I'll also be handing him higher level ninja techniques once I judged his capability to be sufficient. I have in my possession several of Minato and Kushina's ninja techniques as well.

Once the boy is powerful enough, I'll be passing him the notes on his family techniques. All he would ever know is that a family friend is leaving this information for him and nothing more. I do hope you'll allow me this small favor of guiding my friends' child from the shadows, in exchange for all the information I'd provide this village with, now and in the future.

Should you ever need to contact me, leave a scroll in the mouth of your rock statue crafted onto the Hokage mountain. I'll check on it once a day and be in contact with you.

Signed,  
Eye of Konoha."

As he finished the scroll, Sarutobi felt the pressure of all his years crashing down on him. He was getting too old for this cloak and dagger business.

"A friend of Minato and Kushina." Sarutobi whispered wearily, suddenly feeling very tired. "And a missing nin to boot. What should I do?"

Sarutobi landed heavily back on his seat as he pondered his next move.

"Hawk." Sarutobi called out sharply.

A shadow entered through the window and in seconds, a Hawk masked Anbu stood before the Hokage.

"I want you to send a few men to keep watch over Naruto. Keep a look out for any parcel left on his doorstep." Sarutobi ordered thinking fiercely. "Make sure the contents are not harmful to a student of Naruto's level. Keep up this patrol for the next few months. I also need you to go to Naruto's apartment right now and ask him if he had received any scrolls or books recently. Make sure that contents are not harmful to the boy."

"Yes Lord Hokage." The Hawk masked Anbu bowed before leaping out of the window, making his way quickly to Naruto's apartment.

Beside the Hokage tower, standing invisibly in a corner, N5 smiled as S5 detected the Hokage's message.

"Send a message to Boss at once, tell him the plan worked, and prepare for Anbu arrival." N5 ordered as S5 passed the message to the Boss' Sica.

"Trust the Boss' Sica to come up with a plan like that." N5 mused with a smile. "Now the Boss would be able to receive more powerful techniques scrolls from himself and other items as well. Give or take a few more months of letting the Hokage see Boss' 'intensive training', and there will be no need for the Boss to hide any of his skills or the fact that he can create shadow clones."

"The original Sica did come up with a very ingenious concept that would allow the Boss a lot more flexibility." S5 admitted. "It'll make our future movement easier. But according to calculations, the Boss should wait a few more months before sending himself the Shadow Clone technique so as not to rouse suspicions."

"I can't wait for the future when we clones did not have to keep hiding in the shadows." N5 agreed.

"Aside from those clones on infiltration missions who need to remain invisible. The future shadow clones would be able to train freely in the training fields without needing to hide once Boss 'officially' mastered the shadow clone technique." Sica confirmed.

N5 grinned, as he and the rest of the shadow clones around Konoha prepare for a future where they did not have to keep remaining invisible.

**Author's Notes:** Happy New Year Guys! Here's the next chapter. :) hope you guys like it.

The genetic manipulator is based on the fact that in Star Ocean III game, the three main game characters were genetically altered when they were babies. Since my story is based on that timeline, I thought that if they could do that to children, why not have a special machine that alters genes in full grown? It would allow Naruto to gain bloodline abilities.

Naruto is currently 8+ yrs old nearing 9. He sounded more mature because of the vast Federation knowledge drilled into him throughout the years with Sica.

**Edit:** Thanks Jerrac for your input about Shikamaru learning shoji only when he became genin. And Echoside for my misspelling of 'prank'. Changes have been made.

**Chapter 4: Chapter 4**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Four: Time of Darkness**

5 days ago

Power reverberated through the room as the inner council of the Uchiha clan sealed the room off from anyone who might plan to spy on them from the outside. In front of the gathered council, Itachi Uchiha, the most brilliant Uchiha of his generation, and the Anbu captain of Konoha kneel in front of the gathered council, looking at them calmly.

"I assume the council has something to tell me since I was summoned in such an abrupt manner." Itachi said coolly, seemingly not daunted into submission by the fierce judging looks on the council members' faces.

"Yes Itachi, you were summoned here for a matter of grave importance. What is your reply to the question we had asked you a week back?" One of the clan elders asked grimly.

Itachi turned to look at the cold face of his father before turning to face the elder who had spoken.

"Surely there must be some other way for our clan to gain back our power without revolting." Itachi observed calmly. "Konoha's full of ninjas loyal to the Third. The resulting conflict from our clan rebelling against the village would inflict grave casualties on both sides. Unless you can tell me how you are going to take over the village without so much bloodshed, I refused to be part of the plan that might spell doom for our clan."

"You insolent pup! Just because you're the prodigy of our clan does not mean that the clan will not take action against you." Another of the council member raged.

"Calm down Mozu. Itachi has a point, to him it looks as if the Uchiha clan is courting its own doom. Why not let him in on our plans?" Kairou, one of Itachi's blood uncles said in a pacifying tone of voice.

"Don't be a fool Kairou, until we are certain of Itachi's loyalty, our plans will only be known in the inner council." Mozu snapped. He turned to Itachi giving him a chilling look. "I suggest you quickly make known your allegiance. Should you betray this clan secret, you and your family will be killed, even if your father is the clan leader. There are many within this clan who can always serve as the next clan head."

"So that's how it is…" Itachi said grimly, giving a soft sigh, his eyes turned to stare at the floor stonily. "I really had no choice in the first place hadn't I?"

"Your answer Itachi, and it better be the correct one." Mozu said coldly as he turned to Kairou. "Ah Kairou, please enlighten me about the sentry that are guarding our dear clan head's home."

Fugaku's eyes visibly tightened though he kept silent while Kairou sighed.

"Yashito and Kiro are guarding the place right now." Kairou said, not looking at Itachi or Fugaku. "They are… quite competent ninjas."

"Yashito and Kiro, two of the best assassination specialists in Konoha are guarding my home." Itachi said deadpan and without humor.

"Ah yes, we always want the best protection for the wife of our clan head and his children." Mozu said looking at Itachi challengingly. "Your father is mostly busy with council affairs and your mother bless her heart chose to specialize in medic-nin techniques instead of the more offensive ninja skills, someone do need to protect her and your little brother, how old is he? Seven? Eight? The council wants the best protection for the two of them. After all, it takes an assassination expert to prevent an assassination attempt, assuming one would even take place of course."

Left unsaid was the hidden threat. Some of the council members stirred uneasily at the heightened tension in the room but kept silent. Mozu was one of the possible candidates for the Uchiha clan head before Fugaku was chosen to lead the clan by the elders. The Uchiha clan was one of the few clans that chose the clan head position based on ones' capabilities instead of birth of right, a common situation in the ninja world for a large clan that happens to possess a lot of powerful ninjas. As such, Mozu still had a lot of council members loyal to him and wield enormous power over the clan affairs.

"Itachi." Fugaku said breaking the silence. He looked at Itachi without revealing a shred of emotion on his face, visibly calm and collected. "This decision was not an easy one to make, but it had been agreed by the elders and the clan council that the only way for the Uchiha to gain back our power and prestige in this village is to proceed on with our plan. I was one of the council members who had agreed with the plan."

There was a pause as Itachi stared at his father before breaking the glance.

"Ha." Itachi laughed bitterly. "It seemed all along I have no say in this matter. Very well, what do you wish me to do?"

"It's a good thing you've come to your senses." One of the elder said. "As the Anbu captain, you have the layouts and schedule for the Anbu patrols, the clan is going to need all these information if our plan is to succeed…"

Present

It had only been three days since Konoha's mysterious infiltration agent state his intentions towards Naruto. Sarutobi had been hoping for a few more days of peace and quiet before any major incident occurs that requires his attention. He had not expected this.

"Itachi… you are telling me that the Uchiha clan council are gearing up plans to revolt and seize control of Konoha. At the same time, one of their plans of success is to assassinate all members of my clan?" Sarutobi asked with barely concealed rage, his thunderous eyes staring into the calm placid glance of Itachi.

"Yes Hokage. Unfortunately, the Uchiha council was not forth coming with their plans to me. It took me giving them the Anbu patrol schedule before they are willing to tell me that part of their scheme was to assassinate your clan during the night of their revolt." Itachi said, a tone of apology and regret in his voice. "Hokage, I've seen the number of lives lost in the war, if my clan's plan to rebel was to succeed, the number of people who will die would be numerous."

"I understand Itachi. I know of your loyalty to Konoha." Sarutobi said grimly. "I'll need to discuss this with the village elders, and we need a way to get more information on this matter…"

"'The Eye' has not informed you of this?" Itachi asked curiously. As Anbu captain, he was informed of the existence of the mysterious infiltration agent hiding in the shadows of Konoha. "It seems that he is not all knowing after all."

"Most probably, but there's no denying his expertise in infiltration." Sarutobi agreed. "I will send a scroll to him. Hopefully he would receive it and help us on this matter. In the meantime Itachi, do not do anything that might raise the suspicions of your clan, you are currently Konoha's only agent that can monitor the going-ons of the Uchiha clan. And from what you've told me, the Uchiha council is holding Mikoto and young Sasuke as leverage against you and most probably your father, I will not risk the lives of your family. Keep me informed, but also be mindful of the safety of you and your loved ones. I am sorry to have to ask this burden of you child."

"There has been enough suffering and deaths with the last ninja war and the attack of the Kyuubi." Itachi said suddenly looking very weary. "I do not wish this village to be embroiled in a power struggle between my clan and the ninjas of Konoha."

Outside the Hokage tower, one grim faced Naruto clone was ordering his Sica to contact the Boss of the latest threat to Konoha.

"The Uchiha clan is planning to rebel?" Naruto asked as he quickly chomped down on the eel that he had cooked earlier in the day. He was taking a short break during his night training as evidenced by the dense numbers of young trees surrounding him. All had sprouted from the ground at the usage of his Mokuton bloodline.

"Affirmative, Itachi Uchiha, Anbu captain of Konoha had just reported this news to the Hokage. The Hokage is sending someone to leave a scroll to contact us even as we speak." Sica reported. "The contents of the scroll state that the Hokage would be willing to give us S-rank pay if we could infiltrate into the Uchiha compound and come up with the names of the traitors and their plans."

"How much is an S-rank pay?" Naruto mused as he quickly finished up his bento.

"Depending on difficulty levels, S-rank pay can range from 1,000,000 ryo or more." Sica remarked.

Naruto raised his eyebrows. "I can buy a lot more materials to use in my experiments with 1,000,000 ryo. Anyway, it's just another infiltration trip, I'll just send a clone to the Uchiha compound to observe them everyday starting from tonight."

"Understood Naruto, however there is an error in your calculation regarding the spying of the Uchiha clan." Sica stated. "The Uchiha clan compound is one of the largest in Konoha, if your clone was to be stationed right outside the compound, the one mile scanning radius of the cloned Sica wouldn't be enough to cover the whole area. I would suggest at least four clones stationed at each intersection point to scan the whole compound."

"Alright then, I'll send four clones over to there right now." Naruto said as he made the handseal for the Shadow Clone Technique. Four clones puffed into existence beside him. Each of them gave Naruto a quick nod before dashing off towards the Uchiha compound, aware of their mission. Their cloned Sicas were already layering their holographic images around the Naruto clones to make them invisible as they vanished from sight.

"Let's hope the clones can find some information." Naruto said grimly. "From your description, old man Hokage sounds very worried, since the Uchiha are targeting him and his family."

"A rebellion by such a large clan against the village will affect more than the Hokage and those close to him. The resulting fallout and casualties could affect a lot of people and the civilians might even be pulled into the struggle for dominance." Sica warned. "Perhaps you might want to send more clones out to patrol the rest of the ninja clans in the village, see if any of them are in any way allied with the Uchiha clan."

"That's a good idea Sica. I'll do just that before continuing with my training." Naruto said as he quickly used the Shadow Clone Technique. Forty over clones puffed into view. Naruto turned to faced them, an authoritative tone in his voice. "You guys know what to do, each of you stake up each of the ninja clans in Konoha. Starting today, we need to know of what goes on in each of the clans before hand."

"Ai-ai Boss!" The clones chorused as their cloned Sicas turned all of them invisible.

Naruto felt the rush of wind around him as his invisible clone army rushed passed him, seeking to infiltrate the secrets of the clans of Konoha.

Kiba grinned as he quietly slipped into the empty classroom. The rest of the class was out in the fields practicing taijutsu and he had faked a need to go to the toilet in order to sneak back to class. In his hands, he held the careful mix of paint bombs that he had painstakingly created yesterday night just for Iruka and Mizuki sensei.

As he searched for the best place in the classroom to set up his prank, a soft sob caught his attention, causing Kiba to freeze in fright. He turned to survey the classroom that he thought was empty and saw a barely visible grey huddle at the back seat of the classroom.

Kiba placed the paint bombs down on the nearest table and made his way softly up the back of the class as more sobbing sounded in the classroom. As he neared, he realized who it was. It was Hinata Hyuga, one of the quietest girl in class. Now that he thought about it, Hinata had been sent away from the taijutsu class after getting injured shortly after class began, she was supposed to go to the infirmary, what was she doing back here?

"Hinata?" Kiba asked hesitantly. He was not familiar with the Hyuga heiress though he did know her by name.

Instantly Hinata's head lifted as she turned to face Kiba, a startled expression on her face. "Ki… Kiba. I… I was just resting."

Kiba blinked as he saw Hinata's pale watery eyes and flushed cheeks and felt something wrenched in his heart. Hinata just look so cute!

"Erm Kiba?" Hinata asked hesitantly at Kiba's stunned expression. "Are you alright?"

"Yeah, yeah I am fine." Kiba said shaking his head to clear it before turning to face Hinata. "Why are you in class crying? I thought you're supposed to go to the infirmary?"

Hinata's lips quivered. "It is just a leg sprain, it is my fault because I am always so weak. I just bring shame to my clan."

"Of course not!" Kiba retorted, trying to cheer Hinata up as her face began to crumple. "You're one of the best taijutsu fighters among the girls, you got injured just now because you were paired up with that Sasuke teme didn't you? He's one of the best among the boys and he never knew how to hold back his strikes, don't worry about it. Anyway I heard your family had a super awesome taijutsu fighting style, I am sure if you're allowed to use that, you wouldn't lose to anyone!"

"But… but…" Hinata protested softly as she chewed her lips. "Even my father thinks I am weak, because I couldn't bring myself to hurt anyone."

"What?" Kiba said in outrage. His family was a close knitted one and though sometimes his mother might fight too hard against him during training, he knew that she loves him. "Well you're not weak! Trust me, you're one of the best in our class."

"Really?" Hinata said looking up at Kiba with watery eyes as he nodded firmly.

"In fact Hinata, my friends and I have a study group after school where we train ourselves. Do you want to join us? It's mostly guys, but sometimes Ino joins us as well." Kiba offered. "Naruto can give you some really cool advice if you want to become stronger."

"Naruto?" Hinata asked thinking back on the blond haired trouble maker who often got into messy situations together with Kiba.

"Yeah, his grades aren't very good, but he really knows a lot of stuff." Kiba said with a grin. "We're meeting this afternoon after class, so what do you say?"

Hinata glanced up at Kiba's friendly eyes and gave a small smile. "Erm… Alright."

"That's great! Follow me after school today, I'll introduce you to the rest of the guys." Kiba said excitedly. "You wouldn't regret it. Now how about you and I set up a little prank…"

"What…What?" Hinata asked with a startled look as Kiba grinned mischievously.

Iruka could feel his vein pulsing on his forehead as he resisted an urge to growl at the two pranksters before him.

"Kiba…" Iruka said with an underlying growl. "I expect you to clean up the whole classroom before you leave, without anyone's help."

"Ah… Ah… Iru..ka sensei, I should help also." Hinata muttered softly as she looked at the floor avoiding Iruka's look.

"No Hinata, I know that Kiba's the one that drag you into this. He will clean up the mess he created alone." Iruka said as he waved around the classroom which was splattered in multitudes of bright yellow and brown. He took a book out of his bag and placed it in front of Hinata. "However, since you've also aided in the prank, you cannot go unpunished. This is a book on advance academy taijutsu style. We will be learning it next month, but I expect you to memorize the contents and show the whole class what you've learnt next week."

"Show the whole class?" Hinata stuttered looking horrified, turning her petrified eyes to look at Iruka pleadingly. "Can… can I switch the punishments with Kiba? I… I don't mind cleaning the classroom…"

"That's a great idea!" Kiba said enthusiastically. "I wouldn't mind showing the class my advance taijutsu technique!"

Iruka stared at them with an evil grin. "No. These are your punishments, as such punishments are meant to punish you, not let you do something you like. Kiba will clean the whole classroom before he can leave. Hinata can leave to prepare for her class demonstration which will be up by next week. The two of you are dismissed."

Hinata and Kiba looked in dismay as Iruka strode to his desk and sat behind it.

"I guess I better get started." Kiba said with a sigh as he picked up a cloth and a bucket of water.

"I will stay with you." Hinata said softly. "We… we did the prank together, I'll stay until you're done."

"Oh Hinata you're a real pal!" Kiba said with his eyes shining brightly. "Tell you what, I will bring you to the guys later, Naruto can surely help with your demonstration next week!"

N3 paused as S3 alerted him of a situation through their shared mental link.

"I've detected some possible hints of the Uchiha's rebellion plot. Do you wish me to play it to you while I record it for the Boss?" S3 asked.

"Yes S3 do it." N3 said at his position leaning against the wall of the south side of the Uchiha compound.

"How is the progress?" A sharp male voice boomed inside N3's head.

"The Anbu patrol plans that Itachi had provided is a great help. We were able to remain undetected while we scouted the rest of the clans." A younger male voice said. "We currently have the schedule of the sentry shifts for the Nara, Yamanaka, Akimichi, Tenchi, Asura and Hyuga clans, there has been some difficulties with discerning the patrol timings for the Inuzuka and Aburame, their dogs and bugs are making it difficult for us to spy on them."

"Good, good." A gravel old voice said in satisfaction. "Thank you Shisui, your team has done great work. These clans are some of those that are devotedly loyal to the Sandaime, we need to force them out of the fight during our take over so that there would be less Uchiha casualties. Did you locate the rooms of the clan heirs?"

"Yes, here you are Elder Teizu." Shisui said. "I've drawn out the plans of each clan compounds and marked the rooms of each of the clan heirs. Pardon me for a wild thought, but shouldn't we include the Senju clan in our plans?"

"Surely you are joking. The currently Senju clan is a mockery of what it used to be they will be of no threat to us. They maybe known as the clan of a thousand techniques but much of the clan had been decimated by the past wars and the attack of the Kyuubi. That clan is now most filled with average ninjas and civilians who claimed high positions on the civilian council, a disgrace to the Shodai and Nidaime." A female voice said scornfully.

"Don't be hasty in your judgment Midaina." Edler Teizu said sternly. "Shisui brought out a valid point. The Senju clan was known as the clan of a thousand techniques for a reason, they had ninjas who were specialists in ninjutsu, genjutsu and taijutsu. Even without any bloodlines, some in the clan are still able to go against a group of our best ninjas and disable them. But they would be impractical to our current plan.

Tsunade Senju remains the undisputed clan head and heir of the clan and with her disappearance the Senju clan is currently ruled by a democratic committee, there are no clan heirs for us to kidnap and use as leverage against the clan. What we can do right now however is to keep an eye on them while we think of other ways to deal with them. We all know that they would not take kindly to the Uchiha ruling over Konoha"

"You might also want someone to keep an eye on that Itachi as well. He seemed a bit… unstable to me." Midaina said catiously.

"Itachi is loyal to the clan." Shisui quickly spoke out. "I've known him for a long time."

"Yes you do know him for a long time don't you?" Another male voice said. "Perhaps it might wise for you to keep frequent tabs on him. As his childhood friend, he wouldn't suspect you of any ill intentions."

"But Elder Idano…" Shisui protested but was cut in by another voice.

"How's Riko and your family Shisui?" Midaina asked curiously, a hint of threat in her voice. "They live near the west wall of the compound don't they? We really should have the sentry patrol that place more often, after the services you've done for the clan, we do have a duty to keep your love ones safe."

"Please council member Midaina, my family and my betrothed need not receive any special treatment from the clan." Shisui said his voice breaking slightly. "I am loyal to the clan and will obey the orders of the elders and the council."

"Now, Midaina, Shisui's loyalty has never been in doubt, it is of poor taste to use such veiled threats." Elder Idano said disapprovingly. "Shisui, do keep an eye on Itachi for any signs that he might turn against the clan. That child might be the greatest ninja ever produced in this clan since Madara's time, but he has always been a pacifist."

"I'll do that Elder Idano. I'll promise I'll do whatever it takes to make sure Itachi stays loyal to the clan." Shisui said grimly.

"Very well, now that matter has been settled. Shisui, try to get the sentry timings and the layout of the Inuzuka and Aburame clan compounds within the next two days. We need to move fast before the Sandaime finds out about the clan's plan. Now, let's get on with the rest of the clan business, Shisui, you are dismissed, get Fugaku and his group of council men to come here while you're out will you? They are needed for the discussion of the clan business around Konoha." Elder Teizu said.

"In the meantime, the clan's revenue has been dropping since the last month mostly due to the new shops we set up in Konoha last year. Perhaps it's time we step out of the fur business, it hasn't been doing well in this village, could any of you suggest any other alternatives while we wait for Fugaku and the others…"

"That's enough S3, record the rest of the conversation just in case." N3 said as his forehead crumpled into a frown. "It seems that the Uchiha clan is strife with clan politics, and some members of the council are not averse to underhand tactics like threatening the lives of a ninja's family or even kidnapping of other clans' heirs to achieve what they want. The Boss might have to interfere with this mess directly. S3, perhaps it's time Boss extends a branch of friendship to Sasuke Uchiha, we might need to toughen him up so that he could protect himself when the time comes."

"Boss' group seemed to be getting bigger. I've just received a message from Boss' Sica that Hinata Hyuga had just joined Boss' study group." S3 reported.

"Boss' study group do seemed to be made up of a lot of the clan heirs that are currently targeted aren't they?" N3 pondered. "I wonder if there's a way we can use that to disrupt the Uchiha's plan of revolt…"

**Author's Note:** Sorry for the late update, this half year has been my last semester of my part time degree and I am bogged down with tons of project work. I've been planning and writing this chapter on and off this past year when I could find time to write.

Itachi is really a hard character to write due to the lack of information about him. I need to ask if there's any solid prove that Itachi was the one that killed his whole clan or did Madara helped out as well? After all Madara did came to Konoha that night to destroy Konoha, only to be stopped when Itachi offered up his clan to Madara for his plans of vengeance. I am just not sure if I am going to protray him as a tragic but loving brother or a cold hearted killer.

Let me know your thoughts.

**Ps.** Thanks Larry-Lansday and Jerrac for pointing out my spelling mistakes! ^\_^ I've to admit I wouldn't notice them if not for you.

**Chapter 5: Chapter 5**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Five: Plans and Agenda**

Sarutobi sighed as he looked at the grim faces of his old teammates Homura and Koharu, as well as the emotionless expression of Danzo. They had received the news of the Uchiha clan's plans to revolt against Konoha with surprising silence. Homura and Koharu were part of the Konoha council, while Danzo was an honorary member, due to his past contributions as leader of the disbanded Anbu faction called The Foundation. If it was at all possible, he would have left Danzo out of this meeting, but Homura and Koharu had insisted on his presence, and Sarutobi was forced to concede to them.

"The Uchiha clan attempting a coup against Konoha." Danzo mused in a dry voice. "Somehow that does not surprise me."

"We were lucky that out of all the Uchihas, Itachi had remained loyal to Konoha and reported this serious matter to us." Koharu said calmly, though her aged face was creased into a frown. "Right now we have to find a way to effectively deal with this planned rebellion before it actually happens."

"We need to nip it in the bud before it escalates into a full blown conflict." Homura said gravely. "Our ninja forces have only started building up in recent years after the Kyuubi attack. The loss of ninja lives if we have to end up battling the Uchiha clan is unthinkable. Konoha might not be able to get up from such a serious setback any time soon."

"Which is why I was thinking of initiating some peaceful negotiation between the Uchiha clan and Konoha." Sarutobi injected smoothly. "Perhaps to entice them with some position of power to satisfy their need for superiority. That is why I called the council, we need to decide what this village is willing to give the Uchiha clan in order to rebuild our peaceful ties."

"Are you in your right mind Sarutobi?" Danzo said giving a disdainful look at Sarutobi. "You've just told us that part of the Uchiha's planned coup involves mass killing members of your clan and you still want to negotiate with them? Now is the perfect opportunity to eradicate the clan once and for all. The Uchihas are already under suspicion of being involved in the Kyuubi attack eight years ago. With their current action, it all the more proves that they are a threat to this village!"

"Not all the Uchihas are willing participants of their clan's plans. We can't pass judgement on the whole clan just because of what those in power planned to do." Sarutobi said, trying to persuade Homura and Koharu to at least see from his point of view. "If I can just reach an agreement with the Uchiha clan council, perhaps this whole matter could be resolved peacefully."

"But do you know which Uchihas are on your side and who are not?" Danzo demanded with a hard glare. "Right now we have the element of surprise, promising us a swift victory if we act against the clan. But if you begin your peaceful negotiations within just a few weeks of the Uchiha's planned coup, they would have their guards up. And the Uchihas are very capable ninjas, they would suspect a mole in their clan, and we would lose the advantage of having Itachi observe their every move. Even if we planned to muster a military attack against them at a later date, it would be much tougher. Are you willing to lose more ninja lives just to try to establish some meaningless peace talks with them?"

"Danzo is right." Homura said looking at Sarutobi steadily. "This is no laughing matter. We have no guarantee that the peace negotiations will work, and if it fails, that means we have to marshal Konoha's ninja force to deal with the Uchiha assault. Casualties would be high, especially if we're dealing with the Sharingan users. But right now we've the advantage of being able to launch a sneak attack of our own. As Danzo had said, that is the more viable option for the village."

"But…" Sarutobi grit his teeth as he continue saying in a firm voice. "We can't just condemn even the innocent Uchihas to death or worse! If you can just give me some time…"

"Sarutobi, you are the Hokage. You need to put the village's welfare first instead of trying to solve everything peacefully." Koharu said with steel in her voice. "There are some things in this world that needs to be met with force."

"Koharu…" Sarutobi said as he tried to persuade his old teammate to his side. "I can't just…"

A knock sounded at the door. Sarutobi looked up as he gave the rest in the office a signal to halt their speech. He then made several handseals as he dispelled the ninjustsu he had place in his office, to trap sounds in the room and to prevent anyone from spying into the meeting. Wave of chakra spread from him as Sarutobi felt the ninjutsu that had surrounded the room vanished.

"Come in." Sarutobi called out.

The door opened, and a cat mask Anbu stepped in, holding a familiar scroll in his hands. Faint hope stirred in his heart as Sarutobi walked around his desk to receive the message personal from the Anbu.

"Is there anything else?" Sarutobi asked just to be sure.

"Nothing else. The Eye had just dropped off this scroll via another delivery boy." The cat masked Anbu replied.

"Good, return to your post and report if you have further news." Sarutobi said.

The Anbu nodded as he stepped out of the room, closing the door behind him. Sarutobi's hands flashed into several handseals as chakra poured out from him, sealing the room again from any spying ninjutsu techniques.

"What does the scroll contain Sarutobi?" Homura asked with a frown as Sarutobi unrolled the scroll, his eyes visibly widening. "Is it from Itachi?"

"No… not Itachi." Sarutobi said distractedly as he scanned the contents of the scroll. A smile curved grimly on his face as he passed the scroll to Homura. Koharu and Danzo leaned closer to look at the contents of the scroll. Koharu gave a gasp as she began reading.

"Plans of how the Uchiha planned to disable the major clans loyal to Konoha, as well as a list of Uchiha council members involved in the meeting." Koharu said as she looked at Sarutobi with narrowed eyes. "Who is the one that sent this scroll?"

"I have a powerful infiltration agent monitoring the Uchiha clan once I learnt what had happened. This was what he had found within a day of receiving the mission." Sarutobi explained, a look of visible triumph on his face. "Just give me a few more days. I will need a few more days to see if he can list down which Uchihas are involved in the plan and which members of the clan are against it. Once we have the list, we might be able to come up with a way to deal with the Uchiha clan without wiping all of them out."

Homura gave a sigh as he lifted his eyes from the scroll.

"Neither do I want to destroy the clan unless there's a need to. Sarutobi, do you trust this informant?" Homura asked looking at Sarutobi.

"Yes, he had proved himself and his own abilities at infiltration many times in my service." Sarutobi said with a nod.

"And he had uncovered all this within a day." Koharu continued with a suspicious look. "Since when do the village train an infiltration agent so skilled in the art? Infiltrating the Uchiha clan isn't an easy task, and to be able to spy on the Uchiha council without them being aware of it… is the informant another Uchiha?"

"No… I mean…" Sarutobi trailed off as he stopped himself from saying that he didn't know the informant personally. If he admit that, he would lose his current position of power with Homura and Koharu instantly. "He is a trustworthy informant whose services have been proven time and again. There's no need to know who he is. In fact, the less who knows, the better it would be for everyone."

Koharu gave Sarutobi another weary look before conceding with a nod.

"Very well, in light of the new information, I'd say we wait a few more days for further news before deciding on an overall plan to tackle the Uchiha problem." Koharu said. "But tell your informant and Itachi to warn us at once if the clan decided to push forward their plans of turning against Konoha. At the same time, it might be best to put the Anbu on silent alert, without telling them the reason why. We'll also need to avoid taking missions that would send Jonins too far out from the village. We might need to muster all the Jonins at once if there's a surprise attack."

"Koharu's suggestion is sound, I am with her." Homura said as he rolled up the scroll, passing it back to Sarutobi. "I just hope this informant does not fail us."

"He will not." Sarutobi said, trying to sound convincing. He turned his head to see Danzo deep in thoughts as the one eyed man stared at the seal on the scroll.

Naruto stirred in his bed as the sound of the door opening woke him up. Looking at the intruder, he realised that he was looking at one of his clones.

"Why are you here? Did anything happen?" Naruto asked as he looked at his clone.

"Something did happen." The clone said with a grin as he passed him a scroll and a heavy pouch. "I didn't get Sica to send a message to you because this is something you need to see for yourself. And I asked Sica to check if the Hokage is spying on you again before coming in. Don't worry, the Anbu watching the doorsteps are… distracted for the moment."

"You didn't do anything too outrageous did you?" Naruto asked dryly as he accepted the scroll and heavy pouch from the clone.

"Nothing too out of the ordinary. I created another clone and got it to transform into a wild cat which attacked the Anbu on watch. I entered the house while he was distracted." The clone said with a shrug.

Naruto nodded as he set the scroll to one side of the small bed while he untied the strings of the pouch. His eyes widened at the amount of money that filled the pouch to the brim.

"What is this! What did you do?" Naruto asked as he looked at the clone accusingly. "Did you rob the bank? And tell me your clone number."

"I am N14, the clone you assigned to keep watch over the Hokage mountain. And please... I am a clone of you, you should know that we would never steal." The clone said with an indignant sniff. "The money in the pouch is payment for your successful completion of the Uchiha mission. The Hokage also left another scroll requiring our services to list down all those Uchihas who are involved in planning the coup. He also wants a list of the Uchihas who are against the plans of revolt. To quote the words in the scroll, he needs it done as soon as possible, and it is another S-rank mission by the way. The Hokage wrote that this new mission will have a higher pay grade. That is provided you can pass him the lists of names."

"Oh." Naruto said as he took a moment to recover from his shock. "I was planning to keep a watch at the Uchiha clan compound anyway, this just gave me more incentives. Sica, do you think we should have a backup plan ready in case whatever old man Hokage and the Konoha council planned to do fails?"

"Based on their experience in dealing with village affairs, it may be wise for us to stay out of the matter in case we disturbed whatever they are planning." Sica replied. "I can however stimulate several counter plans to deal with the Uchiha clan in my free time. In the meantime, it might be wise to keep tabs on the clan heirs currently in your study group. Making them stronger might also give them a higher chance of survival in the event that an attack does occur. Since there's no way they could match power with the adult ninjas, dodging and hiding skills should be ingrained into them during the afternoon practice sessions."

"That's a good idea, I've already set a clone each to keep watch over them. But if they were at least able to hide or survive until helps arrived in the event of an attack, that's one less thing I need to worry about." Naruto said with a nod. "I'll need to come up with a new training plan to use later in the afternoon. We're meeting again after school to practice, though I doubt Kiba would be enthusiastic about practicing only dodging and hiding."

"To successfully deal with the psyche of a human like Kiba, you need to use something to attract his interest. Perhaps if you promise to teach him a new devastating technique after he had accomplished the dodging and hiding lessons, he might be more inclined to put forth his best effort." Sica remarked.

"That's true, the carrot and the stick method. I'll need to think of something that would capture his interest, but to be fair, I'll have to teach everyone in the group." Naruto said with a grin, looking down as he heft the pouch of money in his hand. "But right now, we need to decide what to do with the money. I've been planning to buy some equipment for the study group to use for training so I'll be getting those later. But there'll still be a lot left over..."

"Maybe it is time to start the plan." The clone in front of Naruto suggested, wiggling his eyebrows. "You know, the one that you've been planning for those past few weeks."

"Ah… yes, that plan…" Naruto said musingly as he and the clone shared a knowing look.

"We do have the money now to kick start that pet project of your own." The clone continued with an understanding nod. "It would be a measure of our infiltration skills."

"N14 is right. The funds that are recently acquired are more than enough to begin the operation." The Sica on Naruto's wrist said as it provided his input. "But you will need to forge the necessary documents first."

"I can get started on that right away." Naruto said with a smile as his hand flashed into several handseals. Three clones came into being, standing beside Naruto as he turned to address them. "Alright, you guys know what to do. Operation Alias has now began."

Itachi looked through the contents of the scroll that Srautobi had passed him. His face passive and emotionless as he read the details of the Uchiha council meeting from the day before. His eyes didn't even flicker when he noted that scroll had state the Uchiha council ordering Shisui to track his movements.

"Impressive." Itachi said simply as he looked up at Sarutobi. "I can at least verify that the council members listed in the scroll were also present at the previous meeting when they summoned me. They were there to verify my allegiance to the clan. That part of the scroll regarding the names of the council members are true, so I've little doubt that the rest of the information written down is true as well. But I wonder how he was able to get his hand on this information, it was as though he was there in the meeting himself. The Uchiha clan might not have the Byakugan of the Hyuga clan, but we're not a clan that could be infiltrated easily."

"Perhaps he might have utilised a spying ninjutsu technique that allows him to keep watch over the meeting in the distance." Sarutobi said in a musing voice. "I do have a few such techniques of my own, but unfortunately, they prove ineffective against the Uchiha council's chakra shields."

"If he does utilises a long distance spying technique, that would explain how he was able to gather so much information around town in such a short time." Itachi said with sudden enlightenment. "But if that's the case, that means his technique is able to pass through chakra shields."

"If that is true, then yes, his technique would have to be able to pass through the chakra shields for him to be able to spy on the Uchiha council." Sarutobi said, looking into the distance with a sigh. "I would dearly love to know that technique if it exists."

"But what's to stop him from using that technique to spy on us right now?" Itachi asked with a frown. "The chakra shields utilise by the Uchiha council is what is commonly used in the Anbu and …"

"The Konoha council." Sarutobi finished for Itachi. "I know, I've thought about that. But if such is the case, there is little that we could do. Let's not worry about such matters right now, this infiltration agent seemed to have the welfare of Konoha in mind at the current moment. I think there should not be much problem if we leave this issue to be investigated at a later date. Right now, let's focus on the problem regarding your clan. You've read that they are setting Shisui to trail you?"

"Yes, I could hardly have avoided reading that." Itachi replied dryly.

"Good, then you know that from now on, meetings between you and me, or any of the Konoha council must be strictly limited. We do not want your clan to have any suspicions about you." Sarutobi cautioned.

Itachi nodded as he pursed his lips grimly. "I know. And I have my own plans… to deal with Shisui… You need not worry Hokage…"

Kiba watched with barely concealed eagerness as Naruto reduced a sturdy log into pieces of splinters. Naruto's hands moved in a blur in front of him as he slammed his bare fist multiple times into the log. Naruto had gotten them to run a gruelling 10 laps around the training field before this to train up their speed today. It was an exercise that Kiba was forced to concede to, when Naruto had promised to show all of them a super new technique after the run. Shikamaru was not very enthusiastic about the run either, but he had followed along behind others when the exercise had started.

"This is called the Repeating Fist technique." Naruto was explaining as he turned around to face them, the log already split into bits and pieces behind him. "It is a taijutsu technique that requires the user to focus physical energy into his hands and palms, allowing his palms to strike at the target multiple times."

"That is so cool!" Kiba exclaimed excitedly. "Teach me! Teach me!"

"I will but first you need to learn how to focus your physical energy into your palm." Naruto said as he took out a several thin books from a bag besides him. "I've copied out the ways to manipulate physical energy and the technique of the Repeating Fist inside the books for each of you, take it and we can practice them during our next few training sessions."

"How do you know the Repeating Fist technique?" Shikamaru asked as he accepted one of the books, scanning through the contents. "I don't think focusing physical energy is taught at school."

"Who cares?" Kiba said excitedly as he was already reading intently through the contents. "This is a new and awesome technique. Once we master it, we can show everyone at class!"

"That wasn't my intent." Naruto said dryly at Kiba's comment before turning to reply Shikamaru. "And to answer your question this technique was left to me by a family friend. I've never met him, but he says he knew my parents, and he has been leaving books and scrolls at my doorsteps for the past few days. I thought I might as well teach you guys the technique so that we could practice together."

"Thank you Naruto," Hinata shyly spoke up from the side. "For sharing this technique with us. It seems very powerful."

"Supposedly it is very powerful. But right now I could only manage three consecutive palm strikes within a second, with breaks in between each of the consecutive strikes. According to the original scroll I received, masters of this technique are able to do a hundred palm strikes per second to a single target, causing massive physical damage." Naruto said scratching his head with a bashful look. "I am afraid I still have a long way to go."

"One hundred palm strikes in a second…" Kiba said reverently, stars shining in his eyes. "That is awesome! Come on, let's practice this technique, imagine everyone's faces when we show them this in class!"

Naruto watched Kiba with a slight grin, seeing the boy acting like his energetic and excitable self.

"It might be easier for you guys to absorb the knowledge if we do some on the spot training." Naruto said as he faced everyone. "But while you are all trying out the hands on techniques in the book, Hinata, come with me, I'll get you started on that advanced taijutsu you're supposed to show the class."

"Y…Yes." Hinata said dropping her eyes shyly as she followed along after Naruto silently as they left the boys, going to a corner of the training field.

Naruto gave the shy girl a measuring look. He had been required to learn how to read the personalities of people during the Infiltration courses he had sign up with Sica. Right now he could tell that Hinata Hyuga was a shy but sweet girl, and that her overwhelming shyness would be a crippling flaw in her ninja career if she doesn't get over it fast. It was one thing that he planned to help Hinata overcome if she remained part of the group.

"I've memorised the contents of the advanced taijutsu scroll you showed us yesterday and have tried it out yesterday night." Naruto said as Hinata looked up in surprise. "Like I said, the best way to learn something is to practice it. Come at me with that taijutsu technique Hinata, it will allow you to see first hand the pros and cons of the technique. Iruka sensei might quiz you on these factors as well."

"But… But you've only seen the scroll that one time yesterday afternoon!" Hinata said with visible surprise that one of the most average students in class was able to memorise the scroll within one seating.

"Let's just say I've a pretty good memory." Naruto said with a quirk of his lips, giving Hinata a confident grin.

Hinata blushed and look down as she felt a weird feeling swept over her. For the first time in her life, Hinata felt safe and reassured, in front of someone she still do not quite know. This Naruto just gave her a sense of reliability and trustworthiness.

"I noticed you've been holding back during the taijutsu training matches with the others yesterday." Naruto continued, not noticing Hinata's sudden shyness. "You were afraid of hurting them weren't you?"

Hinata gave Naruto a startled look at his perceptiveness and gave a guilty nod.

"I… I don't like to see people get hurt." Hinata said haltingly, not meeting Naruto's eyes.

"That can be a serious flaw in a ninja. A ninja is supposed to be a weapon for hire, you do know that right? Hurting people will be part of the job description." Naruto asked as Hinata gave a resigned nod. "How about I teach you a method to deal with this problem of yours?"

"A method?" Hinata asked looking up.

Naruto gave a nod as he said. "Yes, before we begin the taijutsu training, in fact for all the taijutsu training in the future, I need you to imagine that you're all alone in this training field, and that you're fighting against a training dummy. Not a human, not a living thing, just something made of wood and connected by pieces of metal…"

Shisui trailed after Itachi in the distance. As the famed Shisui of the Body Flicker, he was one of the few in Konoha who could track Itachi without his knowing. Part of him wished that he was not assigned this duty, but he well knew what could happen if he refused the request of the Uchiha clan.

Itachi had spent much of the morning in the Anbu building before he was called to the Hokage office for a short meeting. The room itself was warded against sound and entry which indicates that the Hokage had something important and confidential to discuss with Itachi. It was not surprising, Itachi was the current Konoha Anbu captain. Interaction with the Hokage was one of his duties, but Shisui had noted down the time that Itachi had spent within the Hokage's office, the Uchiha elders would want him to keep track of such matters.

No more than fifteen minutes had passed before Itachi had left the Hokage office, returning to the Anbu headquarters where he had stayed for much of the afternoon. It was around mid afternoon that Shisui sighted Itachi leaving the Anbu building again and had begun trailing after him. Itachi had avoided most of the busy roads, and instead head out to one of the enclosed training area that was vaguely familiar to Shisui. This particular training area was filled with huge trees that were the signature of the village. It was also the perfect place for Shisui to trail after Itachi, for there was a lot of hiding places.

Itachi pressed deeper into the woods before stopping besides a flowing river. Shisui paused a distance behind him, on top one of the trees. As he hides behind the branches, he wondered what Itachi was doing here. Thoughts ran through his head. Was Itachi meeting someone here? Was he really betraying the Uchiha clan like the elders had suspected he would? Shisui took a deep breath to calm his mind which was running wild with theories. He settled down quietly as he begun a silent watch on Itachi.

"This is where I first met you." Itachi spoke out, facing the river. His voice carried loud and clear, cutting though the quietness of the woods.

Shisui stilled as his eyes scanned the surrounding, wondering if Itachi was talking to a third party hidden somewhere.

"You thought I was an arrogant brat then, the prodigy of the Uchiha clan, the one who would surpass the power of the Uchiha ninjas in just a few more years…" Itachi continued with a sad laugh.

Shisui frowned, there doesn't seemed to be anyone in the surrounding area, unless they were remarkably well hidden. Has Itachi finally cracked?

"You challenged me to a duel here. The loser has to do what the winner says, you said." Itachi said, his clear voice carrying to Shisui's ears.

Shisui stilled as a stray thought emerge from the depths of his memories. Surely Itachi wouldn't have meant that…?

"If I lose to you, I would have to step down from the title of the Uchiha prodigy." Itachi continued, seemingly talking to the air, while Shisui remained listening as dread started pooling in his stomach. "But when you lose, I demand that you become my first real friend… Do you still remember that Shisui?"

Shisui froze. Itachi knew he was here! As he contemplated whether he should step forward and face Itachi, Itachi's voice stopped him.

"You are still my best friend… I understand if you will not show yourself. I will leave something here for you. Burn it after you have read it." Itachi said. He stood by the river for a few more seconds before walking away, disappearing into the woods.

Shisui waited until he was sure Itachi was not in the immediate area, before he hopped down the tree, landing on the soft grass lightly, and made his way towards the river. An ordinary brown envelop was wedged between several rocks. Shisui picked it up as he extracted the letter inside.

Nine simple words were written on the clean white sheet.

"I will protect you, and your family. I swear."

Shisui drew in a shuddering breath as he read the words, a tear trickling down his face.

Moments later, there was a gust of wind as Shisui disappeared, the ashes of the envelope and the letter floating gently onto the river which was flowing into Konoha.

There was always a long queue to be found at the identification registration counter. It was understandable as those seeking to be become a permanent Konoha resident need to be registered at one of the five counters opened from nine in the morning to five in the evening. Tatori, a self proclaimed merchant and inventor was at one of the queue in front of the left most counter. His appearance was that of a brown haired young man with a distinctive square jaw. It was an appearance that spoke of a certain trustworthiness without a look of guile in his eyes.

"Next!" The clerk at his counter called up as the one in front of him moved off. Tatori shuffled towards the counter, passing the stack of identification papers to the female clerk.

"Uriko Tatori, born in Hashiyako, a farming village near the borders of Fire country…" The clerk browsed through the papers. "It said here that you wish to register yourself as a merchant and inventor. You do know that Konoha charges a registration fee for those wishing to open business in the village?"

"Yes, I've read the rules and regulations." Tatori said holding up a bulging purse. "I've prepared fifty ryo for both the identification and business registration."

"Good." The clerk said as she accepted the purse, counting the money contained inside. "Your papers are in order and the fee has been paid, give me a minute to pass you the Konoha identification papers."

Tatori waited as the woman began filling up several forms before stamping them with the official Konoha emblem.

"Here you go." The clerk said with a smile as she handed Tatori a stack of papers. "Welcome to Konoha, and I hope your new business will do well."

"Thank you." Tatori said as he accepted the papers with relief before walking away. Behind him, the clerk called out for the next in queue.

Walking out of the administration building, he walked into a side alley where two older men were waiting.

"You have got your merchant pass?" One of them asked as he held up his own business pass to set up a construction firm.

"Yes, the forged documents worked without any problems." Tatori replied with a nod as he let them see the papers.

"Good, I've gotten my pass to operate as a teacher as well." The second male said as his hands flashed into various handseals. "It's time to report back to Boss."

Seconds later, there was a swirl of wind as all three men used the Body Flicker technique before disappearing from the alley, together with the documents that signifies their existence as a new resident of Konoha.

**Author's Note:** Sorry for the delay, I was having trouble visualising the Uchiha massacre scene and how to proceed. Anyway, for those who play Final Fantasy Tactics, you'll know where the Repeating Fist technique came from. And no it is not a FFT x'over, just a slight fusion.

By the way, thanks for all the people who have reviewed :) you guys make my day!

**Edit:**

Liedral and Greyduke thanks for your input! Yeah now that I think about it, ten strikes per minute are managable, I've changed accordingly.

Jerrac, thanks for your feedback! Now that I think about, eight years old are too young to think about relationships yet. I've changed accordingly.

Snowecat, thanks for your review! Yeah I've spotted the did and dos errors and have changed accordingly.

**Chapter 6: Chapter 6**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Notes:** Some have asked me if Star Ocean Characters will be appearing. I can only say that they will in future, but only after Naruto has turn genin.

**Chapter Six: Dusk before Dawn**

Sarutobi looked up as the door opened, with Tsume Inuzuka and Shibi Aburame, both clan heads of their respective clans stepping in orderly as they stood to attention in front of him. Sarutobi set down the papers he had been looking over, and pushed them to one side.

"You've arrived." Sarutobi said with a nod. "Please close the door, I've some sensitive matters I need to discuss with the two of you."

"Understood Hokage sama." Shibi said as he moved and closed the door shut. The two jonin level ninjas froze as a wave of chakra pulsed from Sarutobi, sealing the room in a chakra shield.

"Aww… crap." Tsume muttered heavily as she swivelled to look at Sarutobi. "This can't be a good thing. The last time I was in a room with chakra shielding was when I accepted that S-rank mission two years ago."

"Indeed… It's been a while since I was ordered to a meeting that needs to be heavily shielded." Shibi noted calmly as he moved to stand beside Tsume. "What did you call us here today for Hokage sama? Surely if it's an S-rank mission, there should be… more ninjas present then the two of us?"

"This is no ordinary mission, and currently, only the two of you will know. The risk of this information spreading is too great." Sarutobi said grimly. "Listen carefully Tsume and Shibi, what I am to tell you in this room must not be revealed to others, not even of your clan members. The only things you're allowed to tell your clan members are the instructions I need the two of you to pass to them."

"A mission that involves both our clans?" Tsume's face turned grave as she looked at Sautobi. "What is this about? As the clan head of the Inuzuka, I bear the right to reject any mission that would put my clan in danger."

"I am well aware of that Tsume." Sarutobi said with a sigh. "What I need you to do would not cause any danger for both your clans. But it is a matter that needs to be done with the out most secrecy. Shibi, I need you to tighten your guards in the Aburame compound for this week, especially near the rooms of your main house. As for you Tsume, I need you to do the same thing, with one exception. You are to keep a secret lookout with Shibi near your compound for anyone that might be spying on your clan. Once the intruder or intruders are sighted, take no action against them.

Arrange for a way where you can pass a message to the guards on duty. The guards would then need to start a conversation. The conversation needs to involve a fictional lie. You need not copy what I say word for word, but the conversation needs to highlight that your clan had recently detected a presence outside the compound for a few nights and that they are tightening security for the next few weeks. Another misleading fact needs to be added in the conversation, that you Tsume as the clan head had found out that the Aburame clan had also encountered the same problem and that both clan heads of your clans would be meeting tomorrow to discuss about this."

"That… is surprising…" Shibi cut in. "The truth is the sentry bugs did detect several presences outside the clan for the past few nights, though no guards had ever found any one when a search was conducted."

"It is the same with my clan. The fake conversation you wish us to stage is most certainly not a fictional lie." Tsume said giving Sarutobi a hard look. "The guard dogs had scented humans outside the clan compound at odd hours in the night several times for the past few days, but as with Shibi, the guards on duty could never find any trace of whoever is out there when they went out to search. I've actually planned to increase the guards on duty even if you did not call us in. You seem to have an idea what's going on Hokage sama. What's all this about?"

Sarutobi looked at Tsume and Shibi grimly as he shook his head as if lost in thoughts.

"So the information is true…" Sarutobi muttered to himself before giving a heavy sigh. Tsume with her sharp ears heard the sentence as she looked at the Hokage in anticipation.

"Very well, you two should have the right to know." Sarutobi said in a voice loud enough for both of them to hear. "What I tell you now is only for your ears only. The guards you stationed will have to be sworn to secrecy as well, though under no circumstances must they be told of what I am about to tell you. Is this understood?"

"Yes Hokage sama." Tsume and Shibi said in unison as they stood to attention.

"The Uchiha council are planning to revolt and take over the village." Sarutobi said in a strained voice.

"What!" Tsume shouted. If the room had not been shielded, her voice would probably have been heard outside the room.

"Calm down and let me continue Tsume." Sarutobi said with a quelling look. Tsume quickly silenced herself. "This information has come from a trustable source. The problem is we need more time to gather more information before the Uchiha council acts. Increasing the guards at both your clans, and letting out the false information that you Tsume and Shibi are meeting to discuss about perceived intrusion is a delaying tactic for the village. Since both of your clans are considered clans with a sizable ninja force, and your loyalty to Konoha is without question, the Uchihas would not dare to leave both your clans at their backs when they decided to start their coup."

"What the hell are those assholes planning to do to both our clans?" Tsume burst out, unable to hold her question in as her eyes narrowed in anger. "First you told us to increase our guards, then you told us that the Uchiha are planning to revolt. It doesn't take a genius to realise that the Uchihas must be the ones alerting the dogs and the bugs in both our clans. Which means part of their plans involves harm to our clans in some ways, what is it?"

"It is not just your two clans that are affected. All the clans that are loyal to the village are affected." Sarutobi said gravely. "The only reason I call the both of you for this mission is that in the current time, according to my source, the only clans that the Uchihas had not managed to successfully scout are both of your clans."

"Not scouted… that's a diplomatic word to describe what they are doing." Shibi said in a cold voice. "Who then have the Uchiha spies already spied on in their pursuit to achieve what they wanted?"

"The Uchiha are attempting to plot out the patrol timing of several clans, as well as mark out the rooms of the clan heirs. Currently, they had the patrol plans for the Nara, Yamanaka, Akimichi, Tenchi, Asura and Hyuga clans." Sarutobi said with a weary sigh.

"The nerve of those bastards!" Tsume fumed as she thought fiercely. "If they need to know the rooms for the clan heirs, then they must be… oh you've got to be kidding me, those spineless worms intend to use the children as hostages don't they? Apparently they're not even ninjas enough to take over the village with just their men."

Shibi seemed unaffected by Tsume's angry words as he continued looking at Sarutobi in silence. His calm façade was undisturbed by the turbulent storm of emotions that was Tsume.

"Why weren't the rest of the clans informed?" Shibi asked quietly.

"The less who knows about this matter will mean less chance of this secret spreading. If the Uchiha Council were alerted, there's a high chance that they might push forward their plans of a coup when we were least expecting it." Sarutobi revealed. "Secrecy would also ensure the safety of the informant whom I've sent to gather information on the Uchihas. A lot is hanging on the information he would bring to me about their plans. I need you both to act natural as well. That means no extra guards for your clan heirs that might alarm the Uchiha council. Treason from the Uchiha clan is not something we can take lightly… as the village council had stated to me… this is a serious matter, especially with the force they could muster to counter us. We would need the element of surprise if we are to put an end to what they are planning with as little blood shed as possible."

"I understand what you mean Hokage sama. I'll follow your instructions." Shibi said with a cool nod.

"I don't like it, but I will follow your orders. There's one thing though. Shibi, would you mind setting one of your bugs on Hana and Kiba at all times?" Tsume asked through gritted teeth as she turned to look at the Aburame clan head. "Your bugs are inconspicuous, and since I can't suddenly send one of the guard dogs to watch over them, I am hoping you might be willingly to tag my daughter and son so that we can know where they are… in case something happens to them."

"I can do that for you Tsume, especially since I'll be doing the same for my son as well." Shibi said in agreement.

"Good, I've told you the roles both your clans will play in delaying the Uchiha's council's plans. But be prepared. I might need to call upon you both and the rest of the clans next time round when we stage our counter attack." Sarutobi said with a warning note. His hands flashed into the handseals that would release the chakra shields. "You are released."

"Oh I can't wait until that happens." Tsume said grimly as she stalked out of the room, Shibi following up at slower pace behind her.

Sarutobi watched the two of them leave the room, trusting in the fact that they would follow the instructions of the mission that he had given to them.

The song of a twirling bird song woke Naruto as he twisted awake with a groan. Rubbing his sleepy eyes, he looked around the training area that looked more like a thick forest than the clearing it used to be yesterday night. Naruto had slept under one of the recently sprouted tall trees with his things placed neatly near him. He had spent the night in the field training his Wood Release techniques again and had been too tired to return to his little apartment.

In theory he had access to unlimited chakra now, due to being able to access the Kyuubi's chakra anytime. This was not counting in his own chakra reserves which were growing at a very fast pace. Naruto had found out shortly after he had gotten the Wood Release bloodline, that he could effortlessly pull out the Kyuubi's chakra and convert it to Wood element chakra without harm. If his own chakra reserves were used up in training, he could always pull more chakra from the Kyuubi.

The thing stopping him from doing that constantly was a limitation of his own body, which he had discovered at the beginning of his intense training. Even though he had near limitless power by relying on chakra from the Kyuubi, there was only so much exertion his chakra coils could take before they become damaged from long hours of training. Naruto thought wryly back to the first time he had over worked his chakra coils. It had been shortly after he had gained the Wood Release bloodline and had attempted to go on a training spree. It had at first seemed to him that there had been no danger of him running out of chakra for all the techniques he wanted to try and learn… or so he had thought.

However, shortly during the long training session, he discovered one sad fact about the human body. After three hours of chakra intensive ninjutsu exercises, Naruto had collapsed onto the ground as severe pain coursed through his body. He had laid there for a pain filled two hours before it subsided, and ended up resting the whole day, unable to use any technique. He would instantly collapse in pain if he tried to manipulate even the smallest amount of chakra.

Sica had later revealed after much analysis and scanning of Naruto's body, that his chakra coils had been damaged from manipulating too much chakra for long hours. He had been lucky that the damage had not been permanent and that his chakra coils would heal with a day's rest. This little incident, according to Sica, was something that no Konoha ninjas had ever suffered before. This fact was made true, most probably because no ninjas could have enough chakra to run so many chakra intensive techniques for a few hours straight. Naruto had later thought it ironic that while other ninjas would die from chakra exhaustion, he would instead die from chakra coil damage because he had the potential to burn out his chakra coils from using his limitless chakra reserves.

"The sentry clones reports that no one had been near this area while you rested." Sica noted within Naruto's head as it sensed its host coming awake. "The clone stationed at your apartment sends a word of caution that he would dispel within another hour, and asked for you to return as soon as possible. On that note, all of your night clones would dispel within the hour as well. It is almost time to create your day clones."

"Argh what a pain." Naruto said as he took out a water bottle and drank from it to quench his thirst. "It's not as if I don't have enough chakra to spare. It's just that sometimes I wish they could last longer, like a few days, without me constantly renewing them. It could certainly spare me the every twelve hour headaches when their memories are dumped into me… though now that I think about it, I would probably get a more terrible headache if they last longer."

"I could compute ways to make your shadow clones last longer if that's your wish." Sica spoke up. "But I would advise against creating more clones for extra assignments. From my scans of your body, you are just barely holding up against the mental pressure of having the memories and mental stress of a hundred over clones dispelling every night and day. More clones might cause your body to collapse from too much mental stress. The subsequent damage which you might suffer is out of my calculations."

"Great." Naruto said rolling his eyes. "I seemed to end up with weird conditions that no ninjas would ever suffer from."

"According to my calculations and survey of the people of this world, it is possible that there is only a 5.89% chance of ninjas who can create a hundred over clones lasting for half a day. This calculation takes into account that they will also be able to survive the mental stress and exhaustion when the clones dispel at once." Sica noted helpfully. "You are in theory not alone in your affliction."

"Thank you Sica, that information just makes me feel a lot better about myself." Naruto said dryly, even though he knew that sarcasm was lost on Sica. "In short, we'll just have to stick to the hundred over clones that I am creating every day and night for patrol, training and computation duties. Now that we are talking about computation duties, what research projects do we currently have on hand?"

"I will list out the project line ups as well as the computation costs they will take up every night." Sica said as a holographic image of a word list appeared in front of Naruto even as Sica continued his narration.

"Creating Ninjutsu Seal Arrays for:

1) Shadow Clone technique – 50% computation – 70% estimated complete

Creating Basic Symbology Seal Arrays for:

1) Heal – 10% computation – 2% estimated complete

2) Fire Bolt – 10% computation – 3% estimated complete

3) Antidote – 10% computation – 2% estimated complete

4) Ice Needle – 10% computation – 3% estimated complete

5) Silence – 10% computation – 2% estimated complete"

"Wow, I didn't realised you were doing so much every night." Naruto said scratching his head in embarrassment.

"You've previously given me instructions to create seal arrays for the Shadow Clone technique as well as research ways to creating Symbology seal arrays. Since your instructions into creating Symbology seal arrays were vague, I've taken initiative and started research on five of the basic Symbology techniques." Sica revealed.

"I see you've listed Heal, Fire Bolt and Antidote as one of the research items." Naruto said as he gave a self conscious look towards his shoulder and arm where he had imprinted the three Symbology symbols onto his body. "I've already got the three of them on my body, though I seldom have to use them. The fire bolt I create when I channel chakra through the Fire Bolt symbol always end up less impressive then a simple Wood Release technique, most probably due to my lack of fire affinity. I never had the chance to heal any flesh wounds or detoxify any poison either, seeing that I could regenerate on my own."

"It is regrettable that you are able to access only these three basic symbols through the imprint process on your body." Sica replied. "But unfortunately, Federation Symbology was originally created for humanoids with certain genetic structures. Only 9% of total Federation Symbology users are able to access the full Symbology techniques in Federation library by imprinting them onto their bodies. The remaining 91% were only able to access certain Symbology symbols through the imprinting process. There's no need to be discourage by this fact Naruto."

"Well I don't really regret it since my Wood Release bloodline is currently way cooler than the Symbology techniques." Naruto said with a grin. "But I am interested to find you researching the Ice Needle and Silence Symbology techniques. These two are part of the basic Symbology techniques I am not compatible with. Does that mean if you are able to create a seal array for them, I might be able to use them simply through the seal array?"

"Yes Naruto." Sica replied. "You've now seen the current research log. Would you like to suggest any adjustments to make room for research into creating longer lasting shadow clones and reducing the mental stress when they dispel?"

"Oh okay… Well how about reducing the computation power for Shadow Clone seal array to 20%, since it is almost complete." Naruto suggested. "The two new research topics can have 15% of the freed up computation powers each."

"It shall be done." Sica replied.

"Now I just have to create the new clones for the day shift." Naruto said as he formed his hands into a familiar handseal. "Inform the clones on duty to dispel once their replacement reach them will you?"

There was a short pause before Sica replied. "I've informed the cloned Sicas, they will be passing the message to the Naruto clones."

"Good." Naruto said as a hundred over clones appeared around him. Some of the clones were standing on what little space there was on the ground. But the bulk of the clones were gathered on the branches of the many trees in the training area. "Alright get moving guys before you break the branches."

"Yes Boss!" The clones called out in unison, deafening Naruto with the loud noise.

"Cheeky bastards." Naruto muttered good-naturedly as they shimmered from view. Their cloned Sica having overlaid the holographic invisiblity cloak over their bodies. There was a large gust of wind which signalled their departure, causing Naruto to have to channel his chakra to his feet just to remain standing on the ground. "Okay, a note for next time. A hundred over clones using the Body Flicker technique at once is not a good thing for those staying behind."

"It has been noted." Sica replied.

"I don't mean you Sica." Naruto said in exasperation. "I was just talking to my… never mind."

Naruto gave a sigh, there are times Sica was just too literal for its own good. He leapt through the trees as he moved at a fast pace, making his way back to Konoha. There were still a lot of things he needed to do today.

Hinata massaged her sore muscles as she watched the rest of the boys spar with each other. In the three days that had passed since she joined the group, they had been doing practice spar everyday, besides the additional training Naruto had assigned to them. Apparently with her arrival, the small group now has even members for everyone to be paired with each other.

Her current partner had been Choji, who was now rummaging in his school bag for some food. The two of them were waiting for the group spar to end, after which the boys would train the Repeating Fist Technique together while Naruto coached Hinata in the advanced taijutsu style she was supposed to show the whole class soon. Hinata had been surprised at the rate she was picking up this new taijutsu technique, and the detailed pointers Naruto had been giving her. She had also been more and more comfortable with sparring against the guys in the group by practicing the visualising technique Naruto had been teaching her.

For the past three days when she had been partnered with Naruto, Shikamaru, Shino or Choji, Hinata had tried to focus on the mental image that she was fighting against a dummy instead of a living being. Of course, when she was up against Choji, she had to tweak the plumpness of the dummy in her mind a bit just to make it realistic, but other than that, it was getting easier and easier for her to spar against other people. Naruto had called this method Visualization Desensitizing. Something about using her own imagination to distract herself from her own fears and worries, and forcing her to become gradually insensitive to the thought of fighting another person.

Hinata could not help but admire the blond boy whom she had thought was just another average student in class. She had seen the persecution he had faced from some of the classmates' parents and other adults, and some part of her could relate to him being the underdog or being considered less than what he really is in other people's eyes. After all she had encountered the same type of negative sentiments from the Hyuga Elders in the clan house.

"Alright, we're done." Naruto said as his sparring partner, Shino, picked himself off the ground for the tenth time since the past fifteen minutes. "Remember what I said to you Shino, you're slower to guard your left from attack, you need to remedy that or your opponents could blindside you."

"I think the fact was drummed into my body after the tenth time you dropped me onto the ground." Shino commented a bit dryly. "I'll work on it later."

"Good." Naruto said with a good natured grin as he looked at everyone. "Let's rest for a few minutes before we carry our own individual training together. Hinata, you seemed to have rested enough. Are you ready to start the next round? I'll like to see how much improvements you've made to your advanced taijutsu stance over the night."

"Y…Yes, I'm ready." Hinata said with a slight flush as she made her way towards him. Somehow sparring with the boys did not seem like a chore, instead she actually felt like she was having fun. Hinata followed Naruto with a gentle smile on her face as she promised herself silently that she would do Naruto and the boys proud, by showing her class a flawless execution of the new taijutsu technique Iruka sensei wanted her to learn.

Suddenly it occurred to her that her life did not seem so bad after all.

Dusk was nearing as two figures settled silently on the branches near training ground 7, one of the training grounds for genins. Their attention was not at the training ground itself but on the neighbouring plot of land which until two days ago belonged to the village.

"That's certainly something you don't see every day." The Anbu with a hawk mask noted. "There's only the framework for the small house when I came through this area in the morning, and now they've already gotten the half the walls built."

"I was on patrol duty last night and half the framework hadn't been set yet." The Bear mask Anbu said dryly. "I've never seen civilian builders construct something so fast before without any ninjutsu techniques. Who was the one that bought the land anyway?"

"If I recall correctly, I think the reports states a Mizuru Inikawa had bought the land. Apparently he's a master builder of some sort, and only recently settled down in Konoha. I remembered skimming through the reports which says he had registered to set up a building company. I guess those are his men working below. It's quite a feat to gather such a large number of workers within a few days of his business registration." Hawk replied.

"And all of them are not just simple brick layers if the speed and skills they are building the house with is a guide." Bear said with suspicion. "It's strange why a builder of a building company would buy a land so far away from the village."

"Perhaps he likes nature?" Hawk suggested. "Or it could be because the land in the outbound areas of Konoha are cheaper then the ones within the village itself. Not a lot of people like to live in the wild, not to mention land prices near training grounds are notoriously cheap. Though there's also the fact that few people actually bough said land and live on it… well other than crazy Oronu who lives near training ground 41."

"Ah that old grouch." Bear grumbled. "Well, I think we've better leave a note after our patrol, just to inform the other patrol squads to keep a look out for this Mizuru and what he planned to do on his new land."

"That's fine with me, a little cautiousness never hurt." Hawk said as they vanished, moving on towards their next patrol point.

Seconds after the Anbu's departure, the group of workers setting up the building looked up in unison at where the two Anbu used to be standing.

"Ahh… crap, I did tell Boss to let things run more slowly, but he gave me such a tight schedule." The one currently named Mizuru, a seemingly middle aged man with a rugged beard and red hair complained to his men. "Well no use crying over spilt milk now. Alright men, Anbu guys are gone, let's do the real building!"

The clones gave a chorus of agreement as they made several handseals, casting various ninjutsu techniques at once. A trench was sunk into the earth to set up another side of the walls, smooth wooden planks formed at a rapid rate from a few of the clones while others began carrying them to the framework of the house and started hammering them in, forming the walls.

"Now this is what I call real building in process." Mizuru said in satisfaction. "Sica, pass a message to Boss will you? Let him know that the Anbu may be on to us and its most certainly not my fault… Oh yeah add in the words 'I tell you so!' with the exclamation marks."

"It shall be done." Sica said humourlessly as it transmits the somewhat juvenile message to their Boss.

"… observations at the Hokage Tower reveals nothing of relevance." One of the Uchiha ninjas reported. "There does not seem to be any high alert as would be the case if the Hokage was on to us."

"Good, good, one can only hope that things would stay that way until our plans are executed." Elder Taizu said in a satisfied voice. "Shisui, what have you to report?"

One of the masked ninjas stepped forward and gave a bow to the gathered Uchiha council members.

"Surveillance of Itachi for the past few days revealed that Itachi seemed to remain loyal to the clan. Apart from official Anbu business, Itachi never seek out the Hokage outside of duties." Shisui reported. "However a more worrying issue has arise. The Aburame and the Inuzuka clans seemed to be aware of the fact that someone is spying on them. They had tightened security around their compounds and apparently the clan heads are going to meet each other to discuss the matter."

"I see." Elder Idano said grimly. "The Aburame and the Inuzuka clans have too large a ninja force to just ignore in our plans. I would suggest we stop surveillance on both clans for the current moment and resume again after a few days, to let them lower their guards. What are your opinions?"

"I am agreeable to it." Mozu replied as Elder Idano looked at the gathered council members. "Especially since it seems we have time and Itachi did not betrayed us."

"So am I." A few others of the council members nodded in agreement.

"Then Shisui, have your men lay low for the current moment." Elder Idano instructed as he handed a scroll to Shisui. "We have another task for you. In the scrolls are the names of the council members who currently opposed us. We are aware of the persuasive effect of your Sharingan. Try to make them see the light of day by agreeing with our plans. It would certainly make a stronger statement if the Uchiha council members were united in our decision when we reveal our course of action to the whole clan. If however you do not manage to persuade them, give Yashito their names, he will take care of them."

Shisui shivered a little at the cold voice of Elder Idano before clutching the scroll and gave a quick nod.

"It shall be done." Shisui replied, his face a blank emotionless mask.

Sarutobi froze as one of the Anbu on duty stepped in with a familiar looking scroll. Almost a week had passed since he had sent The Eye the new mission parameters and he had been spending time fretting if this mysterious ninja would be able to accomplish what he had requested. Apparently the reply would be contained within the scroll that had arrived.

"Cat just passed me the scroll. A new delivery boy just dropped this off at your home." The Bear masked Anbu remarked.

"Good." Sarutobi said accepting the scroll with equal parts relief and also dread at what he would find.

Quickly breaking the seal and opening the scroll, Sarutobi felt his breathe caught in shock at the detailed listing of all the Uchiha council members, ninja force and civilian members, he even recognised the names of a few Uchiha children that were only recently born. The words "Innocent!" were listed next to their names. Sarutobi gave a snort, apparently The Eye had a sense of humor.

The names were all grouped under three categories, "Members that are with the Uchiha's plan", "Members that do not know about the plan" and "Members that are against the Uchiha's plan". Surprisingly the category of those that were against the plans or does not know of the plans at all were much longer than of those that were with the plan.

Detailed outlines of what some of the Elders or council members had plotted as well as the orders they had issued were also included into the scroll. For a brief moment, Sarutobi allowed relief to sweep over him. With the scroll and its details, he knew what to do now.

"Bear. Get the rest of the Konoha council members. Alert the Anbu after that, tell them the emergency plan is set into motion. We're striking tomorrow night." Sarutobi said grimly, with the weight of his office on his shoulders.

**Ending Note:** Here's the next chapter. Thank you all of you for the reviews! :) Unknowingly for me, through the months that passed since my last update, this story actually hit 200+ reviews! I am happy to see so many readers enjoying this story. Please do let me know if you found some discrepancies or plot holes in my story and I'll do my best to repair them.

And since it is nearing the x'mas season, allow me to wish all of you a very heart felt "Happy Chirstmas! And may you all enjoy the coming holidays! ^\_^ Let's be thankful for all the good things we have encountered this year."

**Chapter 7: Chapter 7**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Seven: Madara's intervention**

The morning air was filled with excited mutters. A long line of the less wealthy group of Konoha citizens gathered outside what used to be the old fire house building. For the past few days, after the building had been bought over by some nameless soul, a group of painters had moved in and had given the old brick house a fresh coat of white paint. Shortly after that, a large sign has been put outside the old fire house which read "Free Food! Free Education!". A group of young boys had then travelled the less wealthy neighbourhood where the building resides, hollering about free food being offered as long as one just sits inside the old fire house to listen to whatever 'Education' lessons are currently being taught.

People had been sceptical about this new radical idea, but more and more homeless folks were queuing outside the building during morning, afternoon and evening everyday just to have their share of the free food. Everyday brought with it different food menus and education topics. Today's dish was 'carrot soup and bread' for the whole day, as well as a 15 minutes long lecture about 'Health and nutrition'. The lecture would be repeated at intervals by the man known only as the Teacher. The Teacher had the looks of a kind middle aged man with greying hair and soft brown eyes.

It's been speculated that he was the one financing the free food everyday just to get people to listen to his short lectures. A few of the older folks had scoffed at the idea that another 'weird one' had settled in the district of the poor. But almost everyone enjoyed the simple but delicious meals cooked by the school's chef whom no one had ever seen.

Currently, a long queue of the less fortunate of Konoha were gathered outside the building, waiting their turn as the group of young boys at the entrance of the school ladle up a seemingly limitless supply of wooden bowls with carrot soup before the people were directed into the school building to eat and listen to the ongoing lecture.

"There are more and more people queuing up everyday." One of the serving boys remarked softly, out of the hearing of those queuing up for food. "Boss is going to have to enlarge the building soon if this goes on. Though his idea is ingenious isn't it?"

"Yeah, trust Boss to find a loophole in the Pangalactic Federation's Undeveloped Planet Pact." The second serving boy commented smugly with a nod. "The Pact only stops Boss from not revealing information that's above the current technological level of the planet. It doesn't stop Boss from teaching people about things or technologies that they have access to, or can build on their own given enough time and resources."

"Well I guess it is a good idea to teach people, but if the free food promotion keeps up, Boss' money is going to be eaten dry within the month. We might be able to rapid grow vegetables to enormous sizes with the wood chakra, but stuff like bread rolls and soup base we have to buy from stores." The first boy remarked with a shake of his head. "Let's hope the merchant clone is able to do his job and churn out the finances we would need. Hopefully Boss' new S rank mission pay would arrive soon as well, that can at least tide us over another two months… Oh dear, the pot's going to be empty soon. Number 2, you've better get a new pot of carrot soup from the kitchen while I ask the gate clones to slow down those in queue."

"That makes it the third time this morning." Number 2 grouched as he set off at a fast pace towards the kitchen.

Serving boy number 1 fill up the last three bowls of carrot soup from the pot before passing the message to the gate clones. Three people were let through the barricade as Number 1 passed them the bowls of soup. He then settled down to wait while Number 2 gets back.

"I wonder what Boss is doing right now." Number 1 said musingly as he sat down tiredly on a wooden stool. "Probably preparing for tonight no doubt…tonight might probably be the first time Boss would have to enter actual combat. I hope everything goes well…"

Perhaps it was the nerves from the coming battle tonight, or perhaps old age was catching up to him. But after only three hours of sleep in his office, Sarutobi had come awake drowsily. Sarutobi looked at the cup of cold coffee dubiously for a moment before sipping it. He needed to be alert for the events of tonight. After all, it was a long time since he had been in any kind of a fight. If he was truthful to himself, he had actually been getting soft over the years. Picking up the plans for tonight's mission, Sarutobi went over it again meticulously.

He had been up the whole night with the Konoha council members, calling the Anbu and a group of trustworthy Jonins from various clans into order, revealing to all of them what the Uchihas had been planning behind their back. Tsume Inuzuka and Hiashi Hyuga had been particularly angered by what the Uchiha clan elders were planning to do to their clan heirs. In a rare show of emotion, Hiashi had turned pale with rage after hearing the Uchiha's plans for his daughter Hinata and Hanabi. Sarutobi had rather not involve the Hyuga clan head, but he was one of the few trustworthy ninjas in the Hyuga clan, and the council members had insisted on a few Hyuga being in the strike mission so as to ensure no treacherous Uchiha could make an escape.

Both Tsume and Hiashi had strongly insisted the village's counterattack plan involved ninjas from their whole clan in order to deal a swift retribution to the Uchihas. They were silenced however, when Sarutobi had revealed all of the information gathered by the infiltration agent from the Uchiha clan. According to the information, more than half the Uchiha clan did not know of the plan concocted by their elders to take over Konoha.

Sarutobi had seen Itachi raised an eyebrow in surprise at the detailed information gathered by the unknown infiltrator, but the Anbu captain had kept his silence. Sarutobi had also wasted no time in pointing out the names of the Uchihas who had opposed the plan, with a few of them already assassinated due to their unwillingness to follow the orders of the Uchiha clan elders.

It took some fast talking by Sarutobi to convince the ninjas gathered that most of the Uchiha clan members were innocent, and that they were not launching an all out attack on the Uchiha clan, but to apprehend those involved in the plan. The idea was to reveal the deviousness of the Uchiha clan elders to the common civilian and ninjas of the Uchiha clan.

The mission was also listed as an S-rank mission, and no one was to discuss what really happened with anyone outside the mission, even to their own clan. Should they manage to apprehend those responsible for the plot to take over Konoha, Sarutobi wanted the Uchiha clan to have a fresh start, and not have the other clans became prejudiced against the Uchihas based on what their Elders had almost done.

He knew that he could not cover up the whole event, thus the whole village would be informed that the captured Uchihas were the ones in charge of the plans of revolt, while the rest of the clan members were innocent of the deeds. At least this way, he would be able to make sure that the rest of the Uchiha members be free from condemnation. Of course… with the Inuzuka, Aburame and Hyuga clan heads, and a large portion of their clan members involved in this mission, they would know of what the Uchiha elders actually planned to do in their revolt. Even if the Uchiha clan changed for the better, the clan would probably have problems in their dealings with these three major clans at a later date.

A shadow crossed his window as a cat faced Anbu appeared in front of Sarutobi, disturbing his rest. Sarutobi instantly straightened as he looked at the Anbu. If he remembered correctly, this Anbu was part of the team assigned to watch over Naruto. Sarutobi's heart quickened as he wondered if Naruto was in trouble.

"What's wrong?" Sarutobi demanded, cutting to the question straight away.

"A package arrived for Uzumaki Naruto sir." The cat masked Anbu reported as he held out a small oil skinned package to Sarutobi. "As per your instructions, we always looked through his mail in order to ensure there's nothing harmful to him sent by either The Eye or anyone else. This particular package was sent by The Eye… and the contents are a bit… astonishing."

Sarutobi opened the package. The first thing that caught his eye was a Konoha land deed which named one Uzumaki Naruto as owner of a plot of land near training ground 7. The land was ceded to Naruto from its previous owner by the name of Mizuru Inikawa. There was also a small iron key as well as a larger bronze key lying on top of the deed. Quickly unrolling the second scroll in the package, Sarutobi's eyes widened as he realised it was a letter from The Eye to Naruto. Briefly glancing at the emblem of The Eye, Sarutobi read the scroll.

"Dear Naruto,

It's me, your parents' old friend. I see you've been diligently learning the scrolls that I've sent you. You're blossoming into quite the ninja.

Your parents would have been proud of you. They were great ninjas and it fills my heart with joy that you are walking the same path as them.

To congratulate you on reaching the next milestone in your training, as well as to make sure that your skills would keep improving, I've arranged for a third party to buy a plot of land for you. There is a small house on the land, one room, one kitchen and a bathing house. The room and kitchen are the same size as your current apartment, but the bathing house can accommodate ten people at one time. An automated plumbing system has been built, connecting it to an underground spring, so there's no need for you to draw water from outside sources to run the baths.

Much of the land is taken up by a training field, filled with traps and obstacles. These traps are connected to a control panel at the entrance of the training field, just pushing the red button on the panel would reset the traps. I know that you are currently part of a training group, that's why I've made provisions for your friends. You can invite your friends over to the training field as you wish, after all that land and all its structures now belong to you.

Do not worry about how the automated trap system works. If any of them are broken, just sent a message to the builder Mizuru. I've put down his address at the end of the scroll. He has the plans I've given him to build the training field, and any repair works would be charged directly to me.

The whole plot of land is surrounded by an enclosed wood pillar wall to ensure your privacy. There is one large entrance gate which led directly towards the house, as well as a camouflaged back gate which exits from the training field.

You can choose to make your new land your permanent living area, or just save it for training purposes. Whatever the case, I expect you to make full use of this gift. The land and the buildings do not come cheap! Do not waste my efforts.

I've also instructed Mizuru to set up a small pond where you can grow fish if you want, as well as leaving a small area of the land behind the house for any vegetables or herbs you might wish to grow. Though I expect you to become a great ninja, it is good if you wish to take up other hobbies as well. Herb knowledge for instance, could save your life on a real mission one day.

There should be two keys in the package. The iron key opens the door to your new house, while the bronze key opens both the entrance and back gates. Good luck Naruto! May you use this gift wisely.

Regards,

A family friend"

There was a moment of stunned silence as Sarutobi looked through the message again to make sure he did not miss anything out. Finally he set the scroll down on his table carefully before looking sharply at the Anbu.

"Prepare a team, I want you to go to this land deeded to Naruto, make sure all of the structures, especially the training field are safe for a group of eight year old children to use." Sarutobi said carefully, his voice sounded like that of forged steel. "I want to trust The Eye, but he's an unknown agent operating in Konoha. We need to be careful about his intentions towards Naruto."

"Yes Hokage sama." The cat masked Anbu said with a nod.

"Send a message to Itachi. Tell him to bring this Mizuru Inikawa character in for questioning after tonight's mission." Sarutobi continued. "This builder might be our lead to finding out the identity of The Eye… Once the structures of the land have been checked and proven safe for children's usage, report back to me and return this package to Naruto… Is that clear?"

"Yes Hokage sama. I'll get right to it." The Anbu replied.

His hands flashed into a series of handseals before he disappeared, leaving a small dust cloud in his wake. Sarutobi gave a sigh as he looked down at the package on his desk. Hopefully The Eye did not have anymore surprises installed for the weary Hokage today. Sarutobi was already disheartened by the fact that tonight's mission was aimed against Konoha's own ninjas who had grown too ambitious for the good of the village. He had never imagined this would happen in Konoha's ninja corps. Of course, Sarutobi was not blind to reality. Not when political opportunists like Danzo and a few other Konoha civilian council members lurks in the background of Konoha, attempting to wrestle more control of the village by making shadow deals.

There's still half a day's worth of time left before the mission starts. Sarutobi closed his eyes as he sank into rest again. Maybe just a quick nap, after all this old man really needs his energy for tonight's events…

4 hours past dawn

Yashito and Kiro Uchihas stood in the Konoha mission room with mild irritation. It was near the end of the day when they were summoned to the mission halls together with a few other Uchiha ninjas for an important S-rank mission by orders of the Hokage. Most of the high level Uchiha ninjas were here, including Itachi and a few others she knew was not involved in the Uchiha inner council plans. Members of other clans were gradually flowing into the room, mingling with the crowd of Uchiha ninjas who had arrived on time.

"Do you know what this mission is about?" Tsume of the Inuzuka clan had asked with a friendly smile as she stood beside Yashito and Kiro, her two large dogs were sniffing Yashito with interest. It was all Yashito could do to keep from striking out at the dogs. But she had her orders. Until the grand plans of the Uchiha elders were set into motion, Uchiha ninjas must not draw attention to themselves.

"I am not sure." Yashito smiled through gritted teeth. "It does not concern me anyway, I've applied for leave from missions for this month. Apparently the Hokage must have forgotten. I'll need to remind him later."

"Oh that's right!" Tsume looking at Yashito with surprise in her eyes. "I remembered looking through the Jonin schedules a week ago. Quite a number of the Uchiha Jonins had applied for a month's leave. I had been worried that it would mean more work for the rest of us. Is there any special event happening in the clan?"

"Ah yes, a few of the Uchiha families are planning to pay a visit to the Fire capital." Kiro injected smoothly from the side, giving Tsume a charming smile. "That's why a bunch of us had taken mission leaves. In fact we're leaving Konoha next week. I am not sure why the Hokage called us here, I saw a few fellow Uchihas who are supposed to be on mission leaves in this room as well."

"Really! A visit to the Fire capital…" Tsume said turning to look at Kiro with delight. "That must be quite a large outing, not to mention expensive travel expenses. I've been there a few times, let me tell you, the trip was worth it! Let's hope that the Hokage does not invoke code red for this mission. You know once he does that, your mission leaves would need to be forfeited and post phone to other dates."

"Let's hope not." Yashito said with a grimace. "I am hoping that the Hokage made a mistake calling us here…"

Yashito swayed, suddenly feeling sick and light headed. Beside her, Kiro had collapsed bonelessly to the ground. With much effort, she turned her head to look around. All the Uchiha ninjas seemed to be afflicted with the same weakness, many already lying on the ground unconscious. The only ones still standing unharmed were the ninjas from the other clans and Itachi.

"What… treachery is this?" Yashito forced her words out of numb lips, glaring at Tsume, as her legs buckled from under her, causing her to drop to the ground. As an assassination specialist, she recognised the signs of a silent poison working in her body and was able to resist it to a certain degree. The poison must had been seeped into the enclosed mission hall, with their targets being the ninjas from Uchihas. The other ninjas from the other clans must have taken an antidote before hand to be able to resist the poison.

"No more than the treachery you Uchihas are planning to do to my clan and the village." Tsume snarled down at Yashito as her amiable face suddenly changed to one of disgust and scorn.

"You… knew…" Yashito said with a gasp of horror. She tried to move her numb hands towards her kunai, but one of Tsume's dogs quickly clamp down at the offending hand with its strong teeth. Even through the numbness of the poison, she felt a dim stab of pain spreading from her arm as the dog's strong teeth sink into her flesh. "You…"

Her last thoughts before she collapsed to the ground unconscious were that Itachi must have betrayed the clan. She could only feel a moment of pity that the rest of the Uchiha ninjas in the hall with her, who did not know of the elder's plan, were going to die with her.

1 hour past midnight

Sarutobi nodded calmly, standing in full body armor, in the forest near the Uchiha clan, as the mission leaders for their respective missions made their mission reports. Behind him, the gathered Anbu and Jonins stood, tensed for battle.

"The mission hall has been cleared." Tsume said with a satisfied smile. "Most of the top ninjas of the Uchiha clans will remain knocked out for the next ten hours. Those who were involved in the Uchiha elders' plans were transferred to the interrogation cells. Those who are not in the know, or who are against the plans of revolt are placed in the Anbu holding cells until the whole mission is over."

"The Uchihas in the Anbu squads are similarly dealt with." Itachi said simply without any notable change of expression.

"The Uchihas manning the police posts of Konoha have all been neutralised." Shibi reported. "They have been sorted into the Interrogating and Anbu holding cells as well. My team has taken over the manning of the police posts around Konoha for the night, until this matter is resolved."

"Good." Sarutobi said with a nod. "Then its time to move out. Tsume take over command of Squad C, Shibi return to the Konoha Police HQ and make sure Konoha remains safe for the duration of this mission. We don't want any unexpected surprise to crop up tonight. Itachi, take command of the Barrier teams. Follow the plan and surround the Uchiha compound at four corners. You know your own targets. Let's pray this mission would progress smoothly till the end."

"Yes Hokage sama." Tsume, Itachi and Shibi said, before running towards their assigned teams.

In the dark of the night, the Hokage's strike teams moved towards the Uchiha compound, hiding in the shadows of the surrounding forest. As they neared the Uchiha compound, the gathered ninjas split into five groups. Four of the much larger groups made their way speedily to each of the four walls of the Uchiha compound. The last group which contains only Sarutobi and four other ninjas coordinating the field communications system stayed in the thick of the forest, with a look out ninja stationed at the top of a tree to observe the mission.

Within ten minutes, all the teams were in their respective positions. They laid in hiding, waiting for the Hokage's command. When a billow of clouds flew across the moon, briefly sinking the land to darkness as the bright moonlight was covered, a calm and firm voice said the one word everyone was waiting for.

"Begin." Sarutobi said over the radio, his words passing into the ears of his ninjas, through the radio set that they were wearing.

That single word marked the start of the mission, and the four ninja teams sprung from where they were hiding, scaling the tall Uchiha walls in minutes. One man from each of the four teams stayed on top of each side of the wall while the rest of the teams entered the Uchiha compound, all of the teams had their own targets to capture. Of the four ninjas, one of which was Itachi, that stayed on the walls, their hands flashed into a long series of handseals, before an immerse chakra wall sprung into place, encapsulating the whole compound. No one, not even a single noise could escape from the compound for the duration the wall was up.

None of the Konoha ninjas ever saw or felt the one child and fourteen of his clones hiding in plain sight, against one of the walls inside the Uchiha clan compound. Said child and his clones were observing the Hokage's surprise attack with a grim smile, ready to pitch in if necessary, hidden from sight with advance cloaking technologies never before seen in this world…

"29 Uchihas have been captured." Sica reported as it hacked into the encrypted radio signal that the Hokage's team was using. "According to the mission particulars, that still left 3 Uchiha elders to round up before the mission is completed. A Jonin team is currently gathering all the Uchihas civilians and ninjas not involved in the going-on towards the clan square in the centre of the clan compound. They are informing the Uchihas what was going on. The Uchihas' had showed righteous anger and shock at what their clan elders had done."

"Good." Naruto said with a nod. "As long as their anger are against those that are captured, the Hokage's teams should be able to maintain order in the clan compound. Keep the cloak over me. I want to take a closer look at the proceedings."

Naruto made a signal with his hands, leaping for the closest building top, with his clones following closely behind him. All of them maintained professional silence as they climbed onto one of the higher buildings overlooking the Uchiha square. Should there be any need, all the clones were instructed to communicate mentally with their individual Sicas passing the words.

"The three council members have been caught. Itachi and his team have dropped the barrier. He and the Hokage's team are now on their way towards the clan square." Sica informed Naruto. Naruto gave a nod as he and his clones laid in wait. Though all of the Uchihas listed in the mission list had been captured, Naruto wanted to stay through the whole of the mission to ensure nothing goes wrong. With all the work he and his clones had done the past few days to gather information from the Uchiha clan for the Hokage, Naruto felt as invested in this mission as the rest of the Hokage's strike teams in the square below. He wanted to follow this mission to the end, even if it was from the sidelines.

Minutes later, the figures of the Hokage, Itachi and his men sprinted into the clan square where the gathered Uchiha were talking loudly in both shock and panic at what had happened. A flicker of wind and the Hokage and his team appeared in front of the Uchiha civilians and ninjas. A sharp bark from the Hokage silenced the crowd as the Hokage began telling all gathered the plans the Uchiha elders had came up with to ensure the success of their takeover of Konoha.

Reactions of the Uchiha civilians ranged from disgust and shock, but the main uproar came when the Hokage began listing out those involved in the plan, those that were forced to go along with the plan, and those that were assassinated because they opposed the plan. The whole Uchiha square erupted in a mass of hysteria and shouting when it became known that a few prominent Uchiha members who had died of "accidents" or "old age" over the past few months did not die of natural causes in actuality. There had been a lot of finger pointing, especially at those who were named as forced into the plan, and not captured by the Hokage's teams. The Anbu teams had to intervene as several Uchihas began fighting amongst themselves.

However the Hokage's narration of the elder's plots also had an unexpected effect. Those who were coerced to do their elder's bidding and were not captured, had admitted the truth of what had happened to their own families and friends. Such an act by so many of the Uchihas further cemented the truth of the Hokage's words. Of the once proud Uchiha clan council, only three people remained not captured, due to the Hokage declaring them unwilling followers of the plans of the majority.

Of the three, two happened to be the oldest Uchiha elders, whose advice had been silenced by the majority of their council members. They had survived assassination because they were simply too well respected in the clan to kill off. The Uchiha council had instead come out with a way to imprison them in their own homes. Tonight was the first night since the two months of their imprisonment that they were freed.

The last of the old Uchiha council who remained free was Fugaku, the Uchiha clan head, who was now desperately trying to rein in control of his people while shooting his eldest son, Itachi, looks of unconcealed hatred. It did not take a genius to deduct that the clan head blamed his eldest son for what was now happening to his clan.

Naruto looked at the proceedings below him with a frown as the Hokage's Anbu and Jonin teams seek to calm down the crowd. It was no small feat as more than a few was panicking at the imagined punishment that would befall upon the whole clan due to the politicking of their clan elders. Only the Hokage's promise that the Uchiha clan would be absolved of any punishment due to their elders' actions managed to prevent the whole clan from turning against the Hokage's people out of desperation.

The Hokage further declared that the Uchiha ninjas who were innocent of the deeds of their elders, and who were captured in tonight's mission would be returned back to the clan by early next morning. Naruto watched as the Hokage expertly played the Uchiha clan members against each other, igniting and calming their fears so that in the end, the whole clan ended up being obliged to the Hokage, for his goodwill and mercy. It was at this moment that Naruto realised the Hokage was not just the kind grandfather figure of his childhood memories, but also a capable and cunning politician as well.

Only an hour had passed before the Hokage managed to get all of the Uchiha civilians and ninjas to denounce their old council members who were already being catered off to the Anbu building. By the time the Hokage and his teams departed from the Uchiha clan compound, the Uchiha civilians and ninjas were already beginning to settle down, though many remained in small groups as if seeking comfort from one another after the night's events.

"We're going." Naruto whispered softly, knowing that the cloaked clones around him could hear him.

Things had begun to settle down, and Naruto felt assured enough to retreat for the night. He knew that according to the Hokage's mission parameters, two teams would be stationed to watch over the Uchiha clan throughout the rest of the night in case anything unexpected happens. There would be no need for him to remain behind to keep watch. He would just leave the standard four clones outside the Uchiha compound as he had done every night for scanning purposes.

A loud shouting in an alley caught his ears as Naruto paused in his travel on the roof tops. Looking down, he saw an angry Fugaku facing off against Itachi, with his wife and his youngest son looking at the two men with something akin to horror in their eyes.

All Naruto caught was the last part of Fugaku's shouted speech. **"… banished from the clan! Don't ever return here!"**

Itachi had given a nod before he had vanished in a swirl of wind, while Fugaku's wife had run up to him and began an heated argument of her own. Sasuke looked lost and alone as he stood behind his mother, caught in the shouting of his parents. Naruto could not help feeling sorry for Sasuke. He had never really gotten close to the boy, but he did know that after tonight's events, Fugaku must be blaming his eldest son for what had happened. After all, Fugaku's clan head position is now no longer secure, even though the Hokage had absolved the man of any crimes. The clan would probably be blaming Fugaku for not doing something about the elders in the first place.

There was however nothing more he could do. Giving one last look back, Naruto departed for home, not knowing that the night's events marked the shattering of Sasuke's family…

12 hours later… late afternoon

In the darkness of the Konoha Anbu Interrogation Unit, screams and tortured cries could be heard as the Head of Interrogation went about gathering every bit of information from the captured Uchihas. The village council wanted to know why these Uchihas had turned against the village, and the Head of Interrogation was going to make sure that the answer was delivered to them.

In a dark corner, something began bubbling up from the ground. In less than a second, a cloaked figure stood in the darkness. Its head was shaped like one of the many carnivorous plants in the Konoha's deep forest. In particular, it looked like a giant version of the fly trap plant which eats insects. The two fly trap-like extensions opened to reveal the head of a man. Half of the man's face was pure black in skin tone while the other half was porcelain white in color.

"Haha! That looks interesting!" The white side of the man's mouth said in glee as he observed an Uchiha elder being tortured by having his fingers broken. The spot where the mysterious figure was standing allowed him a clear view through the glass window of the interrogation room in front of him.

"Idiot! Stop laughing! Do you want people to find us? Just record the whole interrogation." The black half of the man's face scolded.

"Pft…" The white half said as it quietened down.

For the next hour, the mysterious figure observed Uchiha after Uchiha being tortured in the room. It would always fade into the ground if someone approaches and returned when there was no one around. Outside the Anbu building, a Naruto clone was keeping himself entertained by reviewing his cloned Sica's library of cultural materials in his mind. His cloned Sica on the other hand was scanning the building, its sensors revealing a constant static interference that had been interfering with its scans in the western dungeons of the Anbu building. Other than jammer technologies, several types of dense metals or exotic energy cells, few low tech items could hope to disrupt Sica's miniature scanning system which was top of the line during its construction. Cloned Sica flagged the abnormality, informing the original of the matter for future investigation. But since there was no immediate threat from the abnormality, the static interference was only placed as a footnote in its scanned data.

After an hour of observing, undetected by both ninjas and an advanced A.I., the black and white humanoid figure nodded to himself in satisfaction.

"Alright, we've recorded enough of the proceedings, time to go back to make the report." The white side said gleefully as the figure began sinking down to the ground.

"Leader's going to have a field day with this info. I can't wait to see what he would do." The black side of the man said as he disappeared from sight, leaving no signs of his entry.

Night had come, dropping like a cloak all over the town of Konoha. The small village had its share of excitement for the day after an afternoon public announcement which informed the whole village of the capture of a few Uchiha dissidents who had been plotting to take control of the village. Rumours were abound in the large village that the "small" number of captured Uchihas was actually a sizeable number of the Uchiha community, with a significant portion of the Uchiha's clan elders involved in the plot. Such rumours had been quickly squashed and refuted by the Hokage himself, though it did not stop the normal civilians of the village from talking.

In his cell, Mozu Uchiha, once a prominent member of the Uchiha council, fumed on his wooden slab of a bed. Injuries and bruises decorated his body, courtesy of an afternoon spent with Konoha's Interrogation department. Only a day ago, he had all the prestige of being one of the more politically powerful members of the Uchiha clan, but within one night, his authority was shattered as was his own power base. Somehow, that damn Hokage had found out everyone who was involved in the plan, and was able to even figure out who was following the plan willingly and who was forced into the plan.

Groups of Uchihas had been captured, with those who were forced into the plan or have no knowledge of it being released in the morning. Such an act not only gained the Hokage much good will from the Uchiha clan towards the Hokage as only the "bad" Uchihas were captured, but it also caused the whole clan to turn their backs on those who had nearly doomed the clan. Mozu felt a wave of anger sweeping over the pain of his body. Those brainless sheep! If the Uchiha clan had banded together, they might had been able to counter the Hokage's surprise attack. But instead, they had given in to the Hokage as the Anbu teams led those captured away, like the obedient underlings that they were.

As Mozu lay on his bed stewing over all those that had happened, a loud bang suddenly sounded from the cell next to him. There were sounds of voices but Mozu paid it no mind. Most probably the Uchiha in the next cell was taken for a late night interrogation. Moments later, Mozu heard the sounds of footsteps and nearly jumped out of his skin as his cell door blew open. Scampering out of his thin wood bed, Mozu gaped as a young man walked in, his eyes flashing with a pair of strange Sharingan design. It took a moment of shock before Mozu realised he was looking at a Mangekyō Sharingan user.

In all of recorded Uchiha history, there were only eighteen people who had ever managed to get to attain the Mangekyō Sharingan, and none of them were supposed to be still alive in this world. The reason there were so few Mangekyō Sharingan users was due to three factors. The first was that the Mangekyō Sharingan only activate after Sharingan users witnessed the death of someone close to them, suffering great trauma from the act. The second factor was that not all Sharingan have the potential to advance to Mangekyō Sharingan, whether they used the common trigger or not. The third was due to the infamous blood bath several generations ago, before the Uchiha clan became part of Konoha. Several Uchiha ninjas attempted to kill their love ones to activate their Mangekyō Sharingan. Two succeeded, but when the clan learnt of their atrocities, all the perpetrators were captured and killed.

A clan law was put in place after that unfortunate incident which outlawed Uchiha ninjas from making deliberate attempts to gain the Mangekyō Sharingan. The last Mangekyō Sharingan user was a Jonin several years younger than Mozu, who triggered his Mangekyō Sharingan when a Mist ninja killed his wife while they were out on a mission. The Jonin did not live long, passing away three years after gaining his Mangekyō Sharingan. While the Mangekyō Sharingan was the highest stage of the Sharingan, its enormous power exert great harm on the user's sight and body, gradually blinding and killing them. Those with a lower tolerance to the strain of the powerful eyes died within a couple of years.

Of the eighteen Mangekyō Sharingan users, only one had ever found a way to counter the harm that such a Sharingan would bring to oneself. There had been portraits of all the Mangekyō Sharingan users in the clan, and the young man standing before him looked remarkably like the younger version of the infamous…

"Madara Uchiha…" Mozu gasped, his legs feeling weak at being face to face with the most atrocious murderer and criminal of the Uchiha clan. Part of Mozu wondered how the seemingly century old man maintained his youth, or perhaps this youth was an offspring of Madara…

"Mozu Uchiha." Madara said with a thin smile, acknowledging Mozu's words, proving that the young man is indeed Madara. Through the opening of the door, Mozu caught sight of the faces of several other captured Uchiha members standing in the corridor, looking at Madara with a reverent look. "I have… come to free all of you. All of you Uchihas, who had been abandoned by both their clan and village. Would you like to join me?"

"For…" Mozu swallowed with suddenly dry throat. "For what purpose?"

"Why." Madara said with a laugh. "How would you like to crush the Uchiha clan and then Konoha after that?"

Mozu stumbled backwards in shock for a moment before a dark grin spread across his face. His clan had all but abandoned him, and he was already branded a criminal by Konoha. He would most probably be executed within the week at worse, or have his chakra coils destroyed and toss into prison in even the best case scenario. There would be no going back for him, or for any of the Uchiha members who had been caught.

"I will join you. Madara sama." Mozu said, bowing down in front of Madara's feet. "What do you wish me to do?"

"Firstly, here are some weapons." Madara said, throwing him a parchment with a storage seal. "I believe you prefer long swords? I've contained one dipped in powerful poison inside the storage seal. You can use it in your battles…"

A loud shrilling mental voice caused Naruto to jump out of bed in shock.

"What the hell are you doing Sica?" Naruto demanded in surprise, groping in the dark as he tried to find the light switch, while clearing his head of the mental noise.

"The village is under attack. One individual, recorded as calling himself Madara Uchiha, had slipped into the Anbu cells and freed the captured Uchihas. They are on their way to the Uchiha clan to destroy it as an act of vengeance. Their plan also include destroying the village should their attack on the Uchiha clan proves successful." Sica transmitted grimly. "The clone assigned to the Anbu Headquarters tried to enter the building to help, but was destroyed when a strange attack caused the whole Anbu tower to collapse in on itself. I've ordered the clones in areas closest to the Anbu tower to make their way towards it at once while sending an order to all the research clones in the forest to make their way to the Uchiha clan compound. The clone stationed near the Hokage's residence is currently attempting to infiltrate the Sarutobi compound in order to warn the Hokage of the dire threat to the village."

"Wait! Who is Madara Uchiha in the first place? I don't recall any mention of his name while the clones were drafting out the reports on the Uchiha clan for the Hokage." Naruto asked as he tried to clear his sleep fogged mind.

"Madara Uchiha was a powerful Uchiha who was branded an S-rank criminal ninja by Konoha many years ago. Of particular note, he had fought with the First Hokage for control of the village when Konoha was first formed." Sica informed Naruto as it found the relevant information from its databank. "He should be hundred of years old by this time, however the last transmission scan from the Anbu clone revealed that the Madara that had freed the captured Uchihas was in the body of a young man. Whatever the case, he is a very serious threat. He possessed an advanced version of the Sharingan, of which the genetic structure has been recorded for further reference. He also possessed implanted right limbs containing an 89% genetical match to your Wood Release bloodline, but there is a high level of abnormality with the cellular structure of those limbs. The Sica with the Anbu clone also noted an unknown dojutsu attack from Madara which shortly destroyed the Anbu tower and the clone with it."

"He has the Wood Release bloodline?" Naruto asked in shock.

"His right limbs possessed the Wood Release bloodline." Sica clarified. "The limbs seemed to be perfectly grafted to his body, and from what I can tell, the Wood Release bloodline his limbs possessed should allow him some degree of the bloodline. Added to Madara's historical recorded strength, I doubt the clones I've ordered to the Uchiha clan would be enough to stop him."

"I'll need to go down personally." Naruto said grimly, realising what Sica meant. "What are my chances of winning?"

"Madara was labelled an S-rank ninja decades ago. According to history records, even the First Hokage had difficulties countering his powers during battle. Madara was also able to control the tailed-beasts with his advanced Sharingan. By exponential deduction, his powers should have increased by then. At your current level of strength and experience, I would say that you might probably have a 5% chance of winning against him, if you include Kyuubi's limitless chakra into the equation." Sica concluded. "However it is very likely he would be able to disable you very swiftly. You should avoid all close combat, and instead focus on mid to long range attacks. Your main objective is to slow him down instead of winning, at least until the Hokage can arrive with help."

"Alright." Naruto said as he quickly changed into a set of shirt and pants, his face was pale as he took in Sica's words. "I need to buy more time till help arrives. Got it. Let's just hope I don't end up dead on my first real battle."

Sounds of screaming and fighting caused Sasuke to wake up in cold sweat. He struggled out of his blankets, making his way hesitantly down the stairs as he heard the sounds of glass breaking and metal clanging against metal. Suddenly he wished that his father did not send Itachi away from the clan yesterday night. Reaching down the stairs, he froze at the sight before him. Right in front of him, his father was fending off two Uchiha clan members. He recognised one of the assailants as an Uchiha council member that was captured yesterday night.

"Fugaku's brat." A voice sneered at his side. Sasuke turned and back away in fright as he saw another captured Uchiha council member, Mozu, appearing beside him, a long sword in his hands. "Die!"

Sasuke whimpered, trying to get out of the way, but his legs tangled together in his shock, causing him to fall down. He gave an involuntarily cry as he looked at Mozu stabbing down at him with the sword. He was about to close his eyes to the inevitable when a warm figure landed on him. Sasuke saw his mother's gentle face looking down at him as she bent over his body protectively. He saw her giving a painful gasp as the long sword pierced through her stomach, blood bursting out of her lips.

"Run." Mikoto whispered as she collapsed heavily onto Sasuke. "Run Sasuke… get Itac…"

Sasuke felt his tears rolling down his face as his mother's eyes glazed over, her head lying on his stomach, unmoving, and not breathing.

"Mother! Mother! No!" Sasuke screamed as he cradled his mother's head close to his chest.

Standing before them, Mozu grinned in satisfaction as he twisted his sword out of Mikoto's stomach.

"Now it's your turn." Mozu said and slashed down at Sasuke with his sword. "Don't worry, the sword's been laced with poison, you'll die quickly!"

Through heavy tears, Sasuke sat firmly where he was, bending over his mother's body protectively as he glared at Mozu. He would not run away, he would meet his end with dignity, with the dignity of the son of the Uchiha clan head.

"Mother, I am coming." Sasuke whispered, closing his eyes instinctively as the sword cut down towards him.

**Author's Note:** Here's the latest chapter, I hope it did not disappoint. I'm really happy that so many of you left reviews for me about the story and would like to apologise for not being able to reply most of you. I just want you to know that I always get a happy boost when I see the reviews so just wanted to say a big ***Thank You!*** to everyone. There would still be 2 more chapters before the Uchiha Massacre Arc ends. Let's just hope I can complete the next two chapters within my timeline =p which is something like once a month.

Ps. One reader had pointed out something in chapter 6 that I overlooked. He/She had asked why I had not just give Naruto the genetic structure needed to learn all the Star Ocean Symbology knowledge. Since that chapter has been set in stone… and I've no intention of making an all powerful Symbology Ninja, I can only explain it in this way. The genetic change needed for usage of full Symbology knowledge means Naruto would have to forgo his genetic structure that allows him to manipulate chakra. This means he can only have one or the other. Sorry about this oversight, I'll try to build up more on this plot device in later chapters.

There are some plot points I may have missed out during my writing of this story. If you guys spotted any, let me know so I can fix it okay :D Thank you!

**Chapter 8: Chapter 8**

**Story Title:** Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Eight: Attack of the Uchihas Part 1**

15 minutes before the attack of the Anbu Tower

N14, the Naruto clone assigned to watch over the Uchiha clan compound sighed as he settled down for a long wait. He was sure that N11, N12 and N13, three of the other Naruto clones, stationed at the other side of the clan compound walls were doing the same thing.

After the scare of last night when most of their council members were captured because of treason against the village, the atmosphere in the Uchiha clan was subdued. Many of the Uchiha had stayed up through most of the day discussing the fate of the clan, and though many young hot heads had broken into arguments, there were no serious injuries to any of the involved parties.

N14 was browsing through materials on Cosmology via Sica's mental link when a shrill mental transmission broke through.

"Passing transmission from S4: Anbu Tower is attacked! N4 is going in..."

The mental voice ended surprisingly quickly, causing N14 to blink owlishly.

"What the hell is that?" N14 asked in shock, glaring at his Sica for answers.

"That is a direct transmission from S4, the Sica of the clone assigned to keep watch over the Anbu Tower." S14 answered patiently. "Attempting to connect back to S4 but failed. There might be a 90% chance that N4 and S4 had been destroyed by an attack."

"Contact Boss' Sica at once. If N4 and S4 are destroyed, S4's gathered data should have been passed on to Boss' Sica by now." N14 ordered urgently.

"Boss' Sica had already mass sent a priority one message to all Sicas. Transmitting now." S4 said calmly as it played the message. "Anbu Tower has been destroyed by one Madara Uchiha, S-rank criminal of Konoha. He had freed the traitor Uchihas and they are on their way to destroy the Uchiha clan. All research clones, N11, N12, N13, N14 and those in the area are to proceed to the clan compound at once to stall the attack. Clones in the business district and western part of Konoha, proceed to the Anbu Tower at once to look for survivors..."

N14 blinked as Boss' Sica continued to give an account of Madara Uchiha's profile and abilities... which unfortunately was very short. No one had encountered the man for decades, and there were no hard copy records of what the clones were about to expect. All that was known was that Madara Uchiha had managed to control the Kyuubi during the legendary battle with the First Hokage at the Valley of the End, but even the recorded details were vague.

"Interuppting transmission. Picking up the arrival of a large group of Uchiha bearing weapons at the eastern side of the Uchiha clan. N11 is already engaging in battle... the odds are... N11 has been destroyed. N12 and N13 are sending message saying that they are on the way over to meet the invading force." S14 noted, causing N14 to tense up.

"N11 has been destroyed so fast?" N14 asked in shock.

"Yes. The one identified as Madara Uchiha had used some space warping attack that consumed N11 after he had attempted to stop the invasion force with a Wood Release wall. Madara Uchiha seemed particularly agitated when N11 had revealed his Wood Release ability." S14 revealed as it continued its analysis. "It is quite surprising that a normal human bears an ability to warp space in that fashion. It bears a 37% similarity to the warp space fields produced by Federation starships to travel at the speed of light."

N14's mouth tightened grimly as his hands flashed quickly into the hand signs of the Body Flicker technique.

"That would be interesting information in a time of peace, but we're under an attack now. Analyze all data you have on the space warping attack." N14 ordered grimly. "I want a way to prevent the same thing from happening to the rest of the clones."

"Already analysing." S14 said as N14 vanished in a swirl of air, both proceeding rapidly through the distance to meet the forces of Madara heads on.

Kakashi gave a tired yawn behind his face mask as he and his team laid in wait in the forest by the southern walls of the Uchiha clan compound. He was the leader of Team Eagle, one of the two five men teams that the Hokage had left behind to keep watch over the Uchiha clan after the capture of their traitorous members.

The Hokage had feared that some hot headed Uchihas might rise up against Konoha after last night's events, and he had assigned the two teams as a look out to make sure they were on hand to inform the Hokage of any early signs of trouble.

Kakashi leaned back against the tree, his view from the top of the massive tree giving him a bird's eye view of much of the southern side of the Uchiha clan compound. In another few hours, when the night is over and morning comes, a new team would be arriving to take over his team's duties. He could already vision himself sinking into a hot bath when he reached home. It was definitely something to look forward to in this cold night.

A flicker of red in the distance caught his eye and Kakashi tensed up. Quickly he pulled out his spyglass and lifted it to his right eye, peering through it. The spyglass magnifies the objects in the distance, and Kakashi's lips tightened grimly as he spotted houses in the eastern side of the compound engulfed in flames. At an intersection of the compound roads, a large wooden wall seemed to have taken root, with a large circular hole blasted in the center of it. There was also fighting on the streets of the compound, though with so great a distance, Kakashi could not make out any of the attackers' faces.

"Eagle to Hawk. We've got trouble." Kakashi called into his ear mic as he leapt down the tall tree, startling his team members who were resting below. He continued speaking into the mic, hoping the second Konoha look-out team would be able to pick up his transmission. His hands were already moving into several hand signals as he silently warned his team members about the disturbance. "Something's going down at the eastern Uchiha compound. Proceed there at once."

Without waiting for a response from the second team which was posted on the other side of the Uchiha compound, Kakashi motioned to his team members as all of them vanished from their look-out post using the Body Flicker Technique. As they moved quickly and silently towards the Uchiha clan compound, Kakashi hoped he was not too late to stop whatever was happening in the clan.

Sarutobi came awake with suddenness as he sensed a presence in his room. Snaking his hand under his pillow, his hand closed around a kunai as he pretended to be asleep while he tried to figure out where the assailant was.

With his chakra senses, Sarutobi was able to sense a presence near the door of his room. It was most certainly not of any members of his family or any of the Anbus guarding his house. Getting up swiftly, he was about to throw his kunai towards the figure when the light of his room was switched on.

Blinking at the sudden flood of light, Sarutobi took in the view of a brown haired young man standing by the doorway of his room. The young man had a worried look on his face, and the next words out of the youth's mouth froze Sarutobi in his position.

"I am The Eye." The young man said urgently looking at Sarutobi. "The Anbu Tower has been destroyed by Uchiha Madara who had gathered the Uchiha prisoners and is leading all of them to first destroy the Uchiha clan… followed by Konoha."

"What!… but Uchiha Madara was supposed to be dead long ago…" Sarutobi said blinking in shock.

"He was definitely alive enough to free the prisoners and destroy the Anbu Tower." The Eye said firmly. "The Original have sent clones to search the rubbles of the Anbu Tower to save those who are still alive. As we speak, another group of clones are headed towards the Uchiha clan to delay Madara and his men. The Original is on his way personally to the Uchiha clan to buy more time for you to marshal your forces."

"The Original?" Sarutobi asked in confusion.

"Yes the Original." The Eye said hurriedly. "You need to get your forces and hurry to the Uchiha compound. With Madara's abilities, the best we might be able to do is to buy you some time, you need to hurry."

As the youth who had named himself The Eye poof into smoke. Sarutobi realised that the messenger was a Shadow Clone and the Original he was talking about was the actual Eye of Konoha himself. It took another minute before the whole message of the clone sink in. A weaker man would have crumbled at the news that one of the most powerful enemies of Konoha had returned… but Sarutobi was never a normal man. He was the Third Hokage, and he would be damned if Madara destroy the Uchiha clan and Konoha on his watch.

Rushing to his drawer, Sarutobi pulled out a radio set, quickly setting the frequency to the radio signal of the two teams stationed to keep a look out at the Uchiha clan compound. He had planned to keep two teams there for another two weeks to ensure that the Uchiha clan would not make any wrong moves against Konoha after the arrest of their traitorous members, he had never expected to call those two teams into action so soon.

"Team Eagle and Hawk, red alert, red alert. Hokage code, 8749CGH. S-rank missing nin Madara Uchiha is leading the Uchiha turncoats to destroy Uchiha clan. Anbu Tower has been destroyed. Orders are to sound the alarm, prepare the clan for battle, and get as many civilians off the clan compound as possible. Apply delaying tactics. I repeat, apply delaying tactics. Madara Uchiha is above the power levels of all of you. Wait for help to arrive do you copy?" Sarutobi barked fiercely into the radio headset, a feeling of numb desperation in his stomach.

There was a moment of static silence before Shibi Aburame's voice came over the radio.

"Team Hawk receives your orders, we have already sported the enemy forces, engaging them in battle." Shibi's voice came out harshly over the radio speakers. "Team Eagle is up against a powerful Uchiha we have never seen before and most of the members are severely injured. I presumed that is Madara Uchiha. But the battle isn't going well, we need help soon Hokage sama!"

"I understand, delay the enemies as much as you can. Help is coming soon." Sarutobi said, a hint of steel in his voice as Shibi's message confirmed that the information provided by The Eye is correct. He cut off the radio connection and quickly began to link to another radio signal.

"Konoha militia. Attention, this is the Hokage, security code, A7384BE73. Red alert, red alert..."

Itachi moaned in pain as he felt the crushing weight on his body lifted. Someone was pulling at him, and in his pain hazed mind, he could felt himself being carried before being settled down on rocky ground. Someone began carefully lifting his hands, and then cooling energy spread through his body. The pain faded away as he felt his body beginning to heal. It took another five minutes before Itachi had the energy to open his eyes, to stare directly at a red haired young boy whose hands were glowing with green healing energy which continued to spread throughout his body.

"You shouldn't move." The boy said as he tried to push Itachi down. "I can only heal your flesh wounds, and stop your bleeding, there's nothing I can do about any internal injuries that you've suffered. The medic ninjas from the hospital has been notified, you need to lie still until they had arrived."

"What happened?" Itachi asked fiercely, breath catching in his throat at the sight of the high rubble of rocks that used to be the Anbu Tower to his left. Around ten to twenty youths of different origins were using what seemed to be numerous Wood Release techniques to dig out bodies of what he recognised as fellow Anbus from the rubbles. Near him, around five other youths were healing those that had been dug out. All who were dug out were laid in neat rows on the nearby pavement.

"You need to rest." The boy insisted, stumbling back when Itachi pushed himself to his feet.

"I am the Anbu Captain! Tell me what happened!" Itachi snapped as he grabbed the boy by the collar, speaking directly into his face. "NOW!"

The boy gave him a dark look before giving a helpless shrug.

"Madara Uchiha came, rescued the Uchiha prisoners and levelled the Anbu Tower." The boy said grimly looking at Itachi. "They are on their way to the Uchiha clan… to destroy it. The Hokage has already been informed…"

Itachi never bothered to hear anymore of what the boy had to say. His clan was in danger, and he recognised the name Madara from the clan's history as one of the more vicious Uchiha criminal. Hands forming into the Body Flicker technique, the last words he heard from the boy who healed him was "You can't go!"

It would later occur to Itachi when he had left that the only known user of the Wood Release gene in Konoha was a youth under Anbu protection. He would later wonder where all the youthful users of Wood Release techniques, that were rescuing the trapped Anbus, had sprung from.

Current time

Sasuke closed his eyes, every beat of his heart thumping hard in his shivering frame as he waited for his life to end. He could feel the breath of wind, the sharp hum of a cutting blade and the desperate cries of his father as the traitor Mozu slashed down at him with his blade.

Sweat pooled around Sasuke's head and the ground trembled as Mozu... gave a startled cry?

Sasuke snapped his eyes opened and found himself face to face with a giant root that had sprouted from the wooden planks in front of him, forcing Mozu's blade to a standstill. A vine like root extruded from the giant root, piercing towards Mozu with uerring accuracy, causing the older man to let go of his blade and leapt backwards.

Mozu was eyeing something behind Sasuke with shock and horror. The only exclaimation from him were the words "Wood Release User!". Stiffly turning his head, Sasuke saw a grim looking blond haired man looking at Mozu narrowedly, standing near the doorway. The hands of the blond haired man flashed into a series of handseals, and suddenly roots were sprouting everywhere.

One managed to disable one Uchiha assailant that was fighting against his father. Fugaku Uchiha took the opportunity to kill the man. Realising the tides of battle had turned, Mozu and the other traitor Uchiha looked at each other. At an unspoken agreement, both of them quickly made several handseals before disappearing into swirls of wind, ending the fight abruptly.

There was a moment of silence as the stranger who had rescued him and his father stared at each other before the young man rushed towards Sasuke, pushing him aside as he gently began checking on his mother's body.

A green glow light up the young man's left hand which he ran over Sasuke's mother's body as he used his other hand to carefully turned his mother over. The gaping wound in her stomach began to close. By then, Fugaku had moved behind the stranger, an expression of grief and maybe hope shining in his eyes as he watched the stranger checked his seemingly dead wife.

The right hand of the blond haired youth suddenly light up with crackles of lightning as he slammed it into Sasuke's mother's chest, causing the body of the woman to arch up.

"What are you doing to my mother!" Sasuke shrieked as he rushed forward to stop the stranger.

"Stop it Sasuke! Let the medic nin do his work." Fugaku barked sternly as he clammed a hand down on his youngest, restraining him.

The stranger seemed unperturbed by Sasuke's scream and slammed another fistful of lightning into Sasuke's mother's chest. This time there was a soft gurgle from the woman as she begun coughing up blood.

"Mikoto!" Fugaku gasped weakly even as both hands of the blond haired youth begun glowing with a bright green light as he channelled healing energies into the bloodied body of the woman.

For a few haunting minutes, Sasuke forgot to breathe as he watched the stranger healed his mother, the barest bit of colour returning to her face. He watched as his mother's eyes flickered opened weakly, her lips twisting in a wan smile before her eyes closed and she sank into unconsciousness. Sasuke's half numbed senses took note when the stranger stood up wearily to look at him and his father, a look of urgency on his face.

"I've stopped her bleeding, healed her flesh wounds and neutralised part of the poison in her body. But I am unable to mend the wounds in her stomach. The remaining parts of the poison that I am unable to neutralise are also destroying her nerves every minute she does not get professional help." The young man said urgently as he looked at Fugaku. "If you want her to live, you need to get her to the hospital right away. She needs a counter-agent for the poison and someone to stitch up her stomach if she's to survive the night."

Sasuke turned, his face pale as he looked at his father. Even as young as he was, he understood the dire meaning of the stranger's words.

"But the clan!" Fugaku said helplessly as he looked at his wife and then out towards the front door of the house where the dim sounds of battle and screaming were drifting in.

"The Hokage has already been informed, he'll be here with reinforcements soon." The stranger said firmly. "My men and I are already in the clan and we're doing all we can to save the civilians. At this moment, take care of your love ones if you wish them to survive the night."

There was a brief silence as Fugaku and the stranger stared at each other before Fugaku suddenly bent down and gently carried the fragile body of his wife up in his arms.

"Thank you Senju, I will not forget this debt... Climb onto my back and hold tight Sasuke." Fugaku ordered with an intense look in his eyes.

Sasuke quickly obeyed. The last thing he saw of his home as his father Body Flickered away was the blond haired stranger giving one last look at Sasuke before rushing out through the front door.

Yashito cackled with exhilaration and vengeance as she struck down a civilian that she had seen around the clan before. Her anger and rage at the seemingly betrayal of her own clan when she was captured fuelled her bloodlust as she struck down young and old, uncaring that they were once her own people.

Beside her, her fellow assassin nin, Kiro, and two others, Mirenko and Kumira who had been freed by Madara were wrecking havoc at the central area of the clan, killing all in their path. To think that these spineless worms dared condemned her as a traitor, she would show them what a true traitor would do, by bathing in their blood.

A sudden cry from Mirenko snapped her out of her blood rage. Turning her head, she saw Mirenko trying to avoid a thick mass of roots that had sprouted from the ground and were attacking her. Two figures at a nearby roof caught Yashito's eye. Two brown haired men were looking down grimly at the blood bath, their hands flickering into handseals as more roots sprouted forth to attack Kiro and Kumira as well.

"Senju!" Yashito cursed. The Wood Release bloodline was famous in Konoha, even though she had never seen it before now. Any Konoha ninjas who had been through the academy would have heard of this bloodline, which was considered a rival to the Sharingan after the legendary battle between the First Hokage and Madara Uchiha. The bloodline was supposed to have ended with the death of the First Hokage. Had the Senju clan been hiding the existence of their bloodline? But such thoughts have to be left aside for another time, right now the two Senjus were a danger to her and her fellow ninjas.

Giving a scream of rage, Yashito jumped onto the nearest rooftop, intending to attack the two Senjus. Her hands flicked into the handseals of a Fire Phoenix, pulling out a massive chunk of her chakra as a screeching flame phoenix burst into the air before her, flying straight towards the two Senjus... who disappeared...

Yashito watched in shock as the two Senju visibly shimmered in the air, disappearing from view. The Fire Phoenix slammed into the roof they had been standing on, smashing into the tiled roof with force as the top of the building burst into flames. But even from her position, Yashito was unable to see any signs of charred bodies, which meant the Senjus were still alive somewhere...

A gurgled cry and a scream came from the ground below. Yashito turned her head and gave a hiss as she saw Kumira hanging from a bizarre root cage, with several thick roots piercing through her body. There was no way Kumira would have survived that. Before the root cage, a civilian woman who was previously at Kumira's mercy, gave another scream before running away. Yashito took a kunai, intending on cutting down the woman, when a spike of chakra below her triggered her danger senses, causing her to leap off the roof, just as several spiky veins burst through her previous location.

Another cry sounded in the distance. Turning her head, this time she saw Mirenko clutching an injured arm, with a kunai sticking partially into it.

"I can't see them!" Mirenko cried desperately as she plucked out the kunai, her eyes scanning her surroundings wildly.

"It isn't a genjutsu." Kiro said as he Body Flickered beside Yashito, the two of them guarding each other's back as they had done many times. There was a burst of chakra from her west side, causing Yashito to swivel her head to the location just as a mass of roots erupted from beneath Mirenko, tangling and strangling her.

Ignoring Mirenko's dead body, Yashito gave a grim smile as she looked at Kiro. As assassin specialists, she and Kiro had certain skill sets that were not that common in the normal chunins or even jonins. One of such skills was their sharp and accurate chakra sensing abilities. Most ninjas could only sense chakra from a distance, if the chakra signature was very strong, or if they were standing right next to the person giving off the chakra. Yashito and Kiro were different from the norm as they were able to detect chakra signatures from a distance, a vital skill needed when one had to sneak passed guards or ninjas to assassinate their targets.

"They can vanish into thin air, but they can't hide their chakra signature." Yashito smiled grimly as she looked at Kiro who gave her a nod. "Let's pay them back for killing Kumira and Mirenko."

There was a blur of air as Yashito flung a kunai to her left. There was a soft clinking sound as what seemed to be empty air beside a building shattered into shivers of light, revealing a young blond haired boy who seemed to be only eight or nine years of age.

The sudden appearance of the boy was enough to cause Yashito and Kiro to freeze in shock, even as the young boy gaped at them before shimmering from sight. The sudden silence was broken as the crunch of gravel announced the arrival of more roots which burst out beneath Yashito and Kiro. Yashito gave a scream of pain as one of the root scored a passing glance, splitting the skin of her left thigh, driving her into action.

She might not know how a grown man could vanish into thin air and became a small boy the next second, but she knew one thing, her attackers are going to die... painfully.

N13 rushed out of Sasuke's house, making his way determinedly towards the location where one of Hokage's team was engaged in battle with Madara. His Sica was currently monitoring and analyzing the battle which was going badly for the Hokage's team, lead by one Kakashi Hatake. Already two members of the five men team were dead, the first was killed by Madara's space attack which was triggered by physical contact, and the second was killed by an Earth type ninjutsu technique.

From his Sica's monitoring, it seemed that Madara had some kind of phasing ninjutsu technique never before seen in the ninja world, or at least never mentioned before in all those books and scrolls that Sica had scanned. None of the attacks from the Hokage's team could harm the S-rank Uchiha criminal, as Madara was able to achieve a phased out state, making his body intangible.

"Complete analyzing of Madara's phase out technique. There's a 70% possibility that Madara was able to innately phase out parts of his body into a sub-dimension. One can still see his body, but unable to harm or touch it. It bears a 63% similarity to the experimental phasing suits that the Federation had been developing for its agents. One who puts on the suit can travel through solid objects and become impervious to physical harm for certain durations." S13 announced as N13 travelled quickly above the roof. His chakra was being used up at a very fast rate, one reason why he avoided using the chakra intensive Body Flicker technique. He had already intervened in two fights with the traitor ninjas, one of which was during the saving of Sasuke.

"So you mean Madara can only use his technique for certain durations?" N13 asked with grim hope. With the death of N11, there were only three clones in the Uchiha clan right now though help was on the way. N12 and N14 were currently caught up in another part of the clan saving a group of civilians. Which meant that he was Kakashi's team only hope of survival. But even he could not do anything if he could not harm to the man.

"Unfortunately, that does not seem to be the case. Madara's phase out technique seemed to surpass the technological limitations of the Federation's phasing suits. Currently it seemed that Madara suffered no ill effects from being in a prolonged phase out state." S13 explained. "However, I did detect one vulnerability that could be exploited. Every time Madara launched an attack, he had to shift his body back into a solid state. It seemed that any action that needs him to interact with his surroundings would need him to be solid."

N13 grinned as he landed onto another roof, speeding towards his destination. "That's good news, so we just need to provoke him into an attack before attacking ourselves."

Cries of terrified children broke his concentration. As N13 turned his head, his mouth turned into a grim line as he saw a group of civilian families huddling their children close, desperation on their faces as they were surrounded by weapon wielding ninjas. Bodies of several other civilians, including an infant littered the ground, marking these ninjas as hostiles.

"Damn it!" N13 cursed as he leapt down to stop the attack. "Kakashi's team will have to survive on their own. I can't just let these people be slaughtered."

His hands flicking into the handseals for a Wood Release technique, N13 moulded a significant chunk of his remaining chakra into large wood walls to protect the civilians as the traitor ninjas attacked.

"I hope I can last through this fight." N13 said grimly as he tried to apply his rapidly diminishing chakra to end the battle quickly.

Kakashi panted, his whole body screaming in pain as he ducked down. A powerful blast of air knocked him off the marble tiled roof he was on, sending him tumbling down onto the ground. His ragged face mask had ripped off his face by the strong blast of wind from the attack.

Kakashi twisted desperately as he managed to land with two feet, right in front of the half mangled body of his teammate, Rukimaru, who had been killed by a strange space time attack minutes after they had entered battle with the then unknown Uchiha. It was the same space time attack that he was currently dodging.

Of course, by now, he knew who this Uchiha assailant was. The infamous Madara Uchiha who had battled the First Hokage, the S-rank criminal who was forever immortalised in Konoha's history books. Kakashi had gotten the Hokage's urgent transmission roughly ten minutes ago, his whole team had been too busy fighting for their lives then to answer the Hokage, and now he was the only one left alive of his five men team.

They had tried attacking him with their most powerful techniques. Most of the techniques had also struck Madara... before going through his body... leaving him unharmed. The first time it happened, everyone was shocked, giving Madara a chance to dispatch Kiara, a high chunin assigned to the team.

Kakashi and his team had tried other ninjutsus or even weapon attacks, only to end in failure. The last ten minutes of the battle had derailed into a desperate fight, as everyone was resigned to their fate. All knew that a prolong battle with Madara would mean their end, but they still used their lives to buy time for Shibi's team to evacuate more civilians out of the compound. They were Konoha ninjas, and all were willing to give their lives to protect Konoha's people.

"Such a pity." A long shadow cast over Kakashi's pain wrecked and bloodied body as he tried to get up. Kakashi slowly lifted his head to see Madara standing a few feet away from him, grinning down at him. "You used your one Sharingan eye beautifully in battle, even though you were not born with it. I have need of ninjas like you with your talents. How would you like to join me?"

"Thanks but no thanks." Kakashi said spitting at Madara who did not bat a single eye-lid at the insult. "I will die before joining a murderer such as you. You will pay for the deaths of my team mates."

"Hmm.. I see, you're one of those who believed in the Will of the Fire and the nonsense of the Shodaime. Never let your team mates down or some foolery such as that." Madara gave a casual shrug. "I'm afraid I never could stand the teachings of that peace loving fool, and I find it utterly detestable when such a potentially powerful ninja such as you believed in his teachings. It seemed I would have to destroy you after all."

"You can try." Kakashi said, spitting away blood as he flexed his hands, preparing to launch into the handseals needed to summon a fire dragon. His chakra was beginning to run out and he could not manage another chidori, which had proven useless in battle against Madara. The best he could hope for was to buy time for Team Hawk and the rest of the Uchiha civilians to escape.

A sneer crossed Madara's face as his hands moved into a seal, but before anything could happen, the earth underneath the two of them began to rumble. Madara's eyes widened as he leapt up into the air just as dozens of thick roots burst out of the ground he was standing on.

Kakashi watched in shock as dozens of strangers shimmered into view, standing on rooftops surrounding him and Madara.

"The calvary has arrived Madara Uchiha." One of the men, a black haired muscled stranger looking to be of thirty years of age called out. "Let's see how well you'll do against us."

And before Kakashi's very eyes, thick trees began bursting out of the ground, and a thick forest grew around the impromptu battlefield.

Itachi stumbled into the front lawn of his home, holding back a grimace of pain as he rushed up the short stairs, stumbling into the half opened front door.

The first thing that caught his attention was the amount of blood everywhere. The second thing was the dead Uchiha with a sword lying in a corner of the living room. Rushing into the house, Itachi checked the first floor and the second floor but could find no signs of his brother or parents.

Part of him felt relief that he did not find any of their bodies. It meant that somehow, his father must have warded off the assailants that had come after them. However worry still lingered within him as he wondered about their whereabouts.

Noise at the front door caused Itachi to tensed up, and then relax as he found Shisui bursting into the house. His best friend held out kunais in a defensive positive, looking around the room quickly, before standing down as he sighted Itachi.

"Itachi!" Shisui said in shock as he lowered his kunais. "I was looking for your father. The clan is under attack and all our able ninjas are grouping together to evacuate the civilians and counter the attacks."

"What's the status?" Itachi demanded, taking control of the situation. The urgency of the attack on his clan took priority now, he would have to push aside his worry about the whereabouts of his family aside for the moment.

"A lot of civilians and ninjas were wounded and killed in the first wave of the attack, but we managed to regroup and counterattack thanks to some early warning. Shibi Aburame apparently had a team nearby and he managed to aid in the fight. The noise of the battle alerted a lot of us. Kakashi Hatake was also sighted fighting against a powerful unknown Uchiha, there was a rumour... that it was Madara Uchiha..." Shisui said with a pale face. "Is that true Itachi?"

Itachi's lips pressed into a thin grim line as he avoided Shisui's question for the moment. It would be unwise to cause Shisui to panic when he still needed his friend to give him more information.

"What other updates do you have?" Itachi asked, trying to get an understanding on the whole situation.

"There were three unknown Wood Release users running around at the beginning of the fight. It was thanks to them that a lot of the civilians and ninjas were saved. Two of them were killed, but not before they took down Yashito, Kiro, Mirenko and Kumira with them." Shisui reported, a nervous look in his normally calm eyes.

"Yashito, Kiro and Mirenko were Jonins, and the other was a high level chunin." Itachi stated in mild surprise. "Two unknown strangers managed to take them out?"

"That's not all, during the battle, one of the civilians saw the two strangers vanishing into thin air before launching powerful Wood Release attacks. Kumira was killed and Mirenko injured before Yashito somehow managed to see past the invisibility technique of the two. The tides of the battle turned then, both sides were eliminated in the end, and the civilians who were in hiding claimed that when the two Wood Release users died, they turned into... smoke." Shisui said giving Itachi an intense look.

"Shadow Clones." Itachi said softly, his mind suddenly flashing back to the numerous Wood Release users that were digging in the rubbles of the Anbu Tower saving all those trapped beneath. It was then he began to wonder who all those Wood Release users were. But that was a question for another time, when there are no battles looming inside the clan compound.

"Yes, there was also a third Wood Release user sighted near the area of your home. He went up against five of our traitor ninjas, four of them chunins and one jonin level. He managed to buy time for the civilians on this side to escape before more of our ninjas could arrive to help. Inubi who had arrived with a group of his men saw the stranger took down three of the chunins before turning into smoke on his own accord." Shisui said with a strange look on his face. "That stranger was a Shadow clone as well, and I think it dispelled because its chakra was used up."

"What of our people Shisui?" Itachi asked as he prodded for more information.

"The majority of the survivors have been evacuated into the Northern and Western forest. Three of our best teams of ninjas still alive are scouring the clan compound now for any more survivors and joining in the battle. But most are staying in the forest protecting the refugees." Shisui said looking wearily. "Where's Fugaku, Itachi? He's the clan head, he's suppose to be leading us right now!"

"I don't know. But I am his son, and I will lead in his place." Itachi said in a firm voice. "Shisui, coordinate with the three teams, order them to avoid battles, their first piriority is to get all of our civilians and wounded out of the clan compound. Once that's done, pull out and hide in the forest until the Hokage arrives. In the meantime Shisui, tell me where Kakashi and his team are. If I am right... they might not have long to live."

"The man that they are up against is really Madara isn't he?" Shisui said as he clutched his kunais hard, his face pale and drawn. "Itachi, he's supposed to be an S-rank ninja, even a prodigy such as you would be unable to deal with him without more help! You'll die!"

"And so you want me to let Kakashi and his team die instead?" Itachi demanded sternly. "Shisui, Madara Uchiha was once of our clan. He is our trash to take care of. This is clan business, and I'll take care of it. Show me where they are Shisui, and when you're done... do me a favour, help me find my family. Protect them for me... if I am unable to return..."

**Author's Note:** Guys! Sorry for the delay. With the recent manga cannon updates on Naruto's past, Madara's intent, how Kushina really dies and all that, I decided to hold back writing the chapter after rewriting it nearly three times due to new cannon data. I still need to make some minor changes in the previous chapters to fit in with the current manga cannon, but other than that, the major portions of the story are unaffected. Thanks for all of your review! I really enjoyed reading them.

Hope you guys enjoy this latest chapter!

**PS:** Regarding Holographic projection, when used to either give an appearance of someone else or to hide the clones under an invisible layer, what happens is that a layer of solid light would form and be coated around the clone's body. So a significant force would break the layer of light and reveal the real appearance of the clones underneath. Unfortunately for Naruto and his clones, while their Sicas can turn them invisible, they currently had no way of hiding the flaring of their chakras when they are using ninja techniques, or mask their own chakra signatures.

**Chapter 9: Chapter 9**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Note:** dated 6th October 2012 With the revealation of Tobi's identity in manga, Tobi's point of view in the opening of chapter 9 has been slightly altered and rewritten )

**Chapter Nine: Attack of the Uchihas Part 2**

In the battlefield of trees

He went by many names. To the clandestine group, one called Akatsuki, that he had formed from the shadows in recent years, he was Tobi, the silent voice guiding the group's actions from the background. At times, he goes by the name of Madara Uchiha, when he needed to impose awe and fear into his enemies and underlings alike. Only a handful of people in this world knew who he really was... and he preferred it that way. Now as he seek to eradicate the Uchiha clan, and then Konoha, he took up the mantle of Madara, with a powerful transformation seal altering his scarred face to look like the man, inspiring the rebel Uchihas to side with him. Madara Uchiha... It was a name which he would use until this cursed clan and village were burnt to the ground.

But then there was the battle with Kakashi, a face he had not seen for so long, the one who had set him on this path. He had felt a deep hatred for the man. At first he had only wanted to kill the white haired ninja, but seeing the man's desperate battle, his resolve... and old painful memories had surfaced. Old hurts had stirred his numb void of emotions into chaos. He had toyed with Kakashi, wanting to crush his ideals, the same way as he had crushed his. He had offered Kakashi a chance to turn away from Konoha. It was an empty offer meant to see if Kakashi's sufficiently broken. But the man had spat that offer back in his face. For a moment, he had felt admiration... then the Wood Release users came.

A quick body flicker and "Madara" landed on top of one of the many tall trees that had sprouted up around the impromptu battlefield. He was surrounded on all sides by men of different ages and appearance, all who apparently had the legendary Wood Release ability. He himself had limited use of the Wood Release bloodline. When he was rescued by the real Madara Uchiha decades ago, the infamous ninja had replaced his damaged right hand and leg with replicas formed from cultivated cells of the First Hokage. Though the artificial limbs were connected perfectly to his chakra system allowing him access to the Wood Release bloodline, he did not have the degree of control and finesse that someone born with the bloodline would possess. Using the artificially implanted bloodline also drained an enormous amount of his chakra, which made using most Wood Release techniques inefficient combat options for him when he could simple use his stronger Fire and Earth elements.

The army of strange Wood Release users gathered in front of him looked intimidating, but Madara knew that looks were deceiving. He was pretty certain that all of the gathered men were clones of a single man. His keen chakra senses told him that the chakra signature of these men were one and the same, a powerful earthly sensation that bears a hint of controlled chaos. To be able to sense the quality of one's individual chakra was something only a skilled sensor, such as he could pick up.

Madara was also certain that this man was not a Senju, at least not from the main Senju branch. After all, his teacher, the real deal, had spent years lurking in the background, killing off any Senju who showed signs of being born with the elusive bloodline. The last Wood Release bloodline potential the powerful man had killed was Nawaki Senju, younger brother of Tsunade Senju. The young Senju was beginning to show signs of maturing into the Wood Release bloodline, causing Madara to make his move. All of the Senju deaths were staged to look like accidents. To his knowledge, none of the current Senjus knew that the reason the Wood Release bloodline had not emerged again in the clan was because someone was culling off the potential bloodline wielders of the clan. Should he continue his teacher's mission in the genocide of the Wood Release bloodline wielders, in two more generations the bloodline would probably vanish from the Senju clan.

The man that had created all those clones with the Wood Release bloodline had to be some distant relations to the Senju that his teacher had overlooked. But the fact that Madara had never even known of the existence of such a man in Konoha until tonight, revealed a large gap in his spy network in regards to this blasted village.

Madara sneered as he felt battle rage beginning to roar within him. The first clone with the Wood Release bloodline he had encountered during the initial attack on the Uchiha clan compound had been easily dispatched. That this unknown man was able to create an army of clones to counter him, spoke of the unknown's immerse chakra reserves. But judging by the skills of the first clone he had dispersed, the battle powers of this unknown man was far below him. It had been particularly easy to destroy the first clone by sending parts of its body into another dimension. It should be easy to clear away these cloned eye sores and destroy the one who had somehow managed to possess the bloodline that Madara had seek to eradicate for years.

The tree he was standing on sprouted into numerous thick branches that swiped at his body with powerful force. Madara smirked, staring at the clones surrounding him as the branches passed through his body as though he was not standing there. The Space-Time Migration technique was a Sharingan technique he had came up with, through the use of his right eye. It allowed instantaneous teleportation and enabled him to make himself intangible, impervious to harm. It also allowed him to send anyone he touches into another location or pocket dimension. Used offensively, he could destroy another by teleporting away parts of their bodies.

Of course, it did have two glaring flaws. Should he attempt any attack, interaction with the real world, or tried to teleport himself, he would need to make his body physical again, opening himself up for attack. There was also the important fact that he could only make himself intangible for five minutes, after which he would risk death. Very few living today know of the secret to this technique, allowing Madara to dispatch large numbers of foes without breaking a sweat. It was also the source of his confidence, as Madara faced down the army of cloned Wood Release users.

"Who are you?" Madara called out in an emotionless voice, looking at the clones perched on the tree tops. "I would at least know the name of the one I am going to kill."

"Who we are is of no consequence to you. Madara Uchiha." The clone closest to him replied. "You will be stopped here and now."

"You can't hurt me." Madara said with a sneer, that cut off in a strangled cry as brilliant white light flared up in front of his eyes. The light burnt his eyes, making him shut them quickly in pain. In reflex, he instantly teleport himself away to a nearby tree. For a moment, he blinked, dazed by the bright light. Then he felt a huge wave of chakra surround him, causing him to quickly made his body intangible as an eruption of sharp and tough brambles grew rapidly from the tree he was standing on, slashing at where he was standing.

Madara quickly moved away to another tree, making himself physical again, not wishing to push his five minute limit. Instantly, bright light flared in front of his eyes once more, causing him to cry out in pain. His legs were slashed by fast growing branches as Madara barely had enough time to teleport himself away.

Madara panted, limping slightly as he landed onto another tree in the distance. How were the clones doing it? He detected no chakra when the unknown light ninjutsu appeared over his eyes. There was no chakra leakage to warn him of the appearance of the bright wall of light that appeared in front of his face. Madara blinked rapidly to regain his sight when the wall of light engulfed his face again.

This time, Madara's cries were of one of rage. His hand reached out and swiped at his eyes, smashing into a block of something solid wrapped around his face. There was a tinkling sound as the block of light shattered, dissolving into nothingness. Madara retained enough situational awareness to make himself intangible as the tree he was standing on erupted into a mass of slashing greenery out for his blood.

"Curse it." Madara snarled as he fled from the position he had occupied to another tree top. The situation was not good. Surrounded by tall trees, the battleground was in favor of the army of clones with Wood Release bloodline. He could of course counter with his Wood Release techniques, but Madara did not want to reveal to the world just yet that he possessed the legendary bloodline. He was also pretty sure that the Wood Release techniques of the clones were much more powerful than his could ever be. There was also the fact that the clones seemed to specialize in rapid long distance Wood Release ninjutsus, something he had never felt the need to explore because he had other long distance attacks that were more compatible to his fighting style. Add in the strange ninjutsu that blinded him, Madara's battle performance had been unbalanced so far.

The light attack was apparently some kind of ninjutsu that caused a block of light to appear in front of his face. To destroy it, he needed to remain in physical form. To teleport away from it, he also need to remain physical in this world. Both situations open himself up for attacks. Not to mention the army of clones seemed to take advantage of the situation by attacking him rapidly while he remained distracted and dazed by the light attack.

In all the fights he had encountered so far since his attack of the Uchiha clan, these clones were the only ones that had managed to injure him through a mass of overwhelming attacks. It was as if they knew the limits of his Space-Time Migration technique. The various Wood Release attacks only occurred after he had phased back into the real world. And should he phased out, the blinding light attack would forced him to return back to the physical world in order to escape or destroy the light attack. A flash of insight and Madara froze as he contemplated that stray thought. Could it really be that somehow this unknown man with his clones had discern the limits of his trump technique? He had been so certain that no one knew what his Space-Time Migration technique comprised.

Bright light blazed in front of his eyes again. This time Madara was prepared for it. In one swift move, he destroyed the block of light and became intangible, just in time to avoid being torn apart by powerful Wood Release attacks that passed through his body.

Jumping to the next tree and becoming physical again, Madara was instantly blinded by the strange light jutsu which reappeared over his face. This time Madara instantly teleported himself a few feet behind his current location. He appeared on another tree top just in time to see a massive growth of slashing branches and leaves cutting up the spot where he last stood.

Madara glared at the impassive clones in the distance who calmly stared back at him. If it had happened once or twice, Madara might have attributed the attacks to luck. But the speed and uniqueness of the attacks of the clones had rendered his Space-Time Migration attack useless. With his trump card made powerless against the clone army, Madara knew he had to move fast before these clones undo his plans for the Uchiha clan and Konoha.

Madara had already teleported himself away by the time the next light attack erupted over his last position. From his new position high above the dense growth of trees, Madara sneered at the sight of the clones on the tree tops as he plummeted down in the air, his hands quickly flashing into a series of long hand seals. High up in the air, the clones could not touch him with their Wood Release techniques. It was time he took away the clones' terrain advantage and made the battlefield adhere to his rules.

Earth Release: Spikes of Death

N55 leader of the research clones and the current clone army stayed far behind the front line of the battlefield. His Sica, S55, was sufficient to allow him to map out the whole battlefield within seconds, allowing him to issue instant commands to the clones acting as his foot soldiers in this battle. Their goal was to delay Madara Uchiha until Boss and the Hokage's militia could arrive. They were also given the task of analysing Madara's fighting style and gather important data on the man.

Already, the data gathered by the now expired N12, N13 and N14 revealed a critical flaw in Madara's phase out technique. With fifty over Sicas to run computations on the gathered battle data before they had arrived, the clones had realized that even though Madara could quickly shift between physical and intangible forms for prolonged periods without rest, something which even the phase suits of the Federation did not allow for, the time that Madara stayed in an intangible form was always less than a few minutes. The longest time Madara had stayed intangible for was four minutes. It raised the question of why Madara would willingly become physical if he could stay in an intangible state for a long time. And the conclusion that the combined Sicas had came to was that Madara could not stay intangible for more than a certain number of time.

The Sicas had then computed a way to effectively disable Madara's phase out technique. Factoring in the fact that all Sicas were capable of holographic projection in a six meters radius, the Sicas had came up with a plan by projecting a solid beam of glaring light over Madara's eyes, effectively blinding him. After all, no matter if Madara was intangible or in physical form, blinding him would effectively restrict his movements and cripple him. In fact, if Madara wished to destroy the block of light over his eyes, he would need to stay physical, opening him up for the clones to attack.

It was truly a pity that they could not use the many Sicas' holographic projection abilities offensively. But the holographic projects of Sica were limited by having a "space" where solid light could form. Solid light could form around and over any objects, the only problem was that it could not form through solid or dense objects. That meant the many Sicas could not form holographic weapons to stab Madara with, the best they could do was to blind him and limit his sight.

Of course, once the projected light had formed into solid projections, they were capable of limited resistance to their surroundings. But unless Madara willing ran into projected light daggers at high speed, there's little solid light projections could do to harm him.

So far that particular blazing light technique had worked well. First blinding Madara, then attacking him from the distance with Wood Release techniques while he was off-balanced and in physical form.

"S50 report that N50 had reached Kakashi Hatake's side, and is now assisting him away from the battlefield. N50 had managed to apply basic healing techniques to treat the flesh wounds of the gravely injured ninja. Kakashi should be able to seek further medical attention on his own." S55 said, its mental voice sounding in N55's head.

"Good, everything is going according plan. Madara can't go on the offensive especially when we keep blinding him." N55 said approvingly.

"Scans of Madara Uchiha had picked up on him using some kind of instantaneous teleporting technique to evade current attacks. It was noticeably faster than a normal Body Flicker technique, it would bear watching." S55 cautioned as N55 planned his next move.

"Then we'll just have to make sure he does not have a chance to use that teleporting technique offensively." N55 said firmly. "S55, pass the message. Order S51, 52 and 53 to keep up their holographic blinding attack. The rest of the clones be on..."

"Madara Uchiha had just disappeared." S55 suddenly interrupted. "Scans detected that he had teleported himself above the forest the clones have called up. He is attempting some ninjutsu, a large amount of chakra is pouring out from him. Scans are detecting some kind of vibration spreading through the ground."

N55's eyes narrowed as the ground below him rumbled and the tree he was crouching on began to sway.

"Send a message to all clones! Ask them to brace themselves!" N55 barked out as the ground rose before him.

Numerous trees continued sprouting from the ground, and within moments Kakashi could no longer catch sight of Madara or the army of strange saviors that had arrived. Kakashi gasped briefly in pain as he pushed himself from the ground he was lying on, dragging his bloodied body towards the relative safety of a large tree that had grown up near him.

For a moment, he panted with labored breath and struggled with light headiness as he peered up towards the tree tops, trying to catch sight of the fight that was going on above. Then a sudden presence to his left caused him to tense and instantly turned around to face the new target, biting back a cry of pain as his body twitched painfully at the sudden movement.

"Do not worry. I am here to help." The young brown haired man standing a distance away from him said reassuringly. "You're badly injured and need medical assistance immediately. I am assigned to escort you out of the battlefield here, and to treat your minor injuries so that you could at least seek help on your own."

"Who are you? Where are all of you from?" Kakashi asked as he relaxed slightly. The new arrival must be part of the army that had suddenly appeared and grew all these trees with the legendary Wood Release techniques.

"Who we are is not important at the moment." The young man said as he moved to Kakashi's side, his hands glowing with green healing chakra. He laid his hands on Kakashi's arms and the open flesh wounds began to close. "Know that we are here to counter Madara and save as many lives as possible."

The rush of healing chakra poured through Kakashi's body, taking away most of the pain. In a few minutes, all of the visible flesh wounds on his body had closed.

"I can only heal the minor injuries you have suffered. You still need medical attention for your more serious injuries." The young man said as he looked up at Kakashi. "Come, I'll escort you out of this battlefield. We need to get you out of here fast."

"Alright." Kakashi conceded with a nod, knowing that even in his newly patched up condition, he was in no position to continue to fight. His chakra was almost totally drained, and aside from utilizing taijutsu attacks, he would be next to useless in a pitched battle.

"Good, lean on me. I'll use the Body Flicker technique to get us out of the woods." The young man said as he swung one arm around Kakashi's shoulders to stabilize him. His freed hand began to flash into one handed hand seals. A swirl of wind and a flash of speed and they appeared at the edge of the newly grown woods.

Kakashi stumbled slightly as the young man let go of him. A quick glance at his surroundings revealed himself to be in the west quarters of the Uchiha compound.

"Thank you for you aid." Kakashi said with a nod of thanks. "I..."

The ground beneath their feet began shuddering, cutting off Kakashi's speech. The young man's eyes widened as he looked at Kakashi.

"You've to get out of here now!" He cried out as his hands flashed into rapid hand seals. A large thick vine burst out of the ground, grabbed Kakashi and threw him bodily forward into the distance.

As Kakashi spurn through the air at the powerful throw, he saw violent shudders shook the earth before giant earth spikes slashed their way out of the ground at where he previously stood, overturning and cutting up the newly grown trees. His eyes widened in shock as he saw one of the earth spikes pierced through the body of the young man who had saved him. There was a tinkling sound and the image of the young man shattered to reveal the pain filled eyes of a blond haired young boy who puffed into smoke.

Kakashi never noticed as he tumbled onto the ground, standing shakily on his legs, looking at a wasteland of giant spikes where giant trees once stood. His brain was still trying to grapple with what he had seen. He had known the young boy who had puffed into smoke. More than that, he had watched over the young boy many times over the years as part of his Anbu duties. The boy was one Naruto Uzumaki, demon container of the Kyuubi, and a lesser known fact, the son of the Fourth Hokage, Kakashi's old sensei.

Stupefied, Kakashi glanced into the rising dust of the new battlefield of earth spikes and torn vegetation, and wondered what all these could mean.

The tinkling sounds amidst the dull rumble of earth revealed to Madara that things were not as they seemed. As the powerful earth spikes pierced into the army of clones, the very illusion surrounding them shattered, to reveal the startled and pain filled faces of dozens of young blond haired boy.

Madara landed harmlessly on a protruding earth spike as his eyes narrowed at the sight. To think that the mysterious Wood Release user was but a young boy. And not just any young boy. Oh Madara recognized those clear blue eyes, that whispered cheeks and the head of sunshine blond hair. How could he not when one of his long term plans was the capture of all demon containers and the extraction of their sealed tailed beasts. His spy network had maintained tabs on the only demon container of Konoha. One Naruto Uzumaki, son of the 4th Hokage, and who it seems bears the Wood Release bloodline and wields uncanny intelligence at a young age, to be able to survive against Madara in battle for longer than a few minutes using just Shadow clones.

How Naruto Uzumaki had gained the Wood Release bloodline when he was not related to any Senjus was a mystery. But than the mother of Konoha's demon container was Kushina Uzumaki. The Uzumaki clan were distant cousins to the Senjus, it was possible the Wood Release bloodline descended from that blasted woman. The Wood Release bloodline was supposed to be able to bind the tailed beasts. That the demon container of the Kyuubi bears this bloodline was ill news in light of his future plans.

Madara frowned as he looked at the handful of clones that had survived his assault. All of them perching on top the landscape of earth spikes, looked warily at him.

"So the demon container of Konoha seeks to interfere in my plans, and possesses the Wood Release bloodline to boot." Madara said, a dark look in his eyes. "It seems I will need to deal with this problem fast before he grows to become an actual threat."

The site of the battle where Shisui had pointed him to was easy to see... especially as large patches of trees had began growing from the spot the moment he had stepped out of his clan home. Shisui had given him a silent pleading look, a look that warned him to be careful, before his childhood friend had quickly left, to organize the Uchiha ninjas who were combing the clan compound for survivors.

Steeling his heart, Itachi set off quickly to where Madara was last sighted. For a moment, he pondered about the giant trees that had grown in the area, wondering who it was that Madara was now facing before he pushed the thoughts away. He would know once he had reached the battlefield.

Itachi body flickered to the edge of the woods and was about to enter when he felt an immerse chakra spreading within the ground. He barely had time to jump back as the newly grown woods were overturned by giant earth spikes that pierced out of the shuddering and crumbling ground. In moments, the landscape before him became a series of interlocking giant earth spikes, with torn and shattered trees trapped within.

Cautiously, Itachi entered the battlefield, jumping on top of the earth spikes, making way quickly to the center where several strangers who had survived the attack faced off against a dark haired man who bears a pair of Sharingan eyes. In a flash of insight, Itachi knew that he was looking at his target. The infamous Uchiha traitor, Madara Uchiha.

"You really think you actually have a chance against me with your pathetic Wood Release attacks? There are only nine of you now. And most of you have little chakra left after surviving my earth attack. Why don't you just ask the real one to face me and save all of us the trouble. I am going to hunt him down anyway." Madara said as he sneered at the strangers surrounding him. His eyes lighted on Itachi and an unpleasant smile crossed his face. "And what do we have here? The proclaimed Uchiha prodigy of this generation, Itachi Uchiha. I would have thought that my attack on the Anbu Tower would have dealt with you."

"You thought wrong then." Itachi said in an impassive voice as he took up position beside the nine strangers. He knew not who those strangers were, but they were facing off against Madara and that was good enough for him. "Madara Uchiha. For your crimes against the Uchiha clan, there can only be death."

"We shall see." Madara said as his hands flashed into a series of handseals. With his Sharingan activated, Itachi copied the handseals.

"Earth Release: Earth Dragon!" Both of them shouted as two earth dragons rose up and began to crash into each other.

A flash of blinding light appeared over Madara's eyes, causing the infamous Uchiha to cry out in anger. Madara's earth dragon spun out of control and was destroyed by Itachi's earth dragon. Before Itachi could launch an attack on the enemy nin, Madara had disappeared and reappeared in a new position a distance away.

"We might be low on chakra, but we can still blind you Madara." One of the strangers said as he turned towards Itachi. "Take advantage of the distraction we provide and attack, Itachi Uchiha."

Itachi nodded in thanks, accepting the strangers' help as he faced off Madara who now have an infuriated look on his face.

"Pesky clones." Madara gritted out in anger as his hands flashed into a series of handseals which Itachi began to copy. "I'll deal with you first."

Earth Release: Shards of Death

Itachi was the first to realize something was wrong as he finished the unknown technique. A large amount of his chakra sank into the ground below him. His eyes widened as his chakra senses told him what the technique does.

"Shield yourself!" Itachi cried out to the strangers in alarm as the giant earth spikes they were standing on shattered into large shards of earth which began to slice the air around them. Itachi jumped into the air to avoid the blast of earth shrapnel, barely escaping injuries as dozens of sharp earth shards slashed his last standing position.

Tinkling sounds rang in the air behind him. By the time Itachi landed on the relative safety of a pile of earth and wood wreckage and turned his head, all he could see were puffs of smoke as the strangers who were apparently Shadow clones, were dispelled by the vicious Earth technique.

For a moment, Itachi felt a hint of relief as he realized he did not inadvertently kill his unknown allies by recklessly copying whatever technique Madara was using. The moment passed as Itachi quickly tensed for a fight, rapidly scanning his surroundings. He sighted Madara standing on a pile of earth slabs in the distance, seemingly unharmed by the powerful earth blast that had occurred.

"Now its only just you and me... Prodigy of the Uchiha clan..." Madara said with a sneer. "Unfortunately I have a new threat to neutralize and I have no time to play with you, so let's end this fast..."

Memories slammed into Naruto as he felt the last of his army of clones dispelled.

"Madara is indeed powerful. He had destroyed the last of the research clones sent to the Uchiha compound. Itachi Uchiha is now facing the man alone." Sica relayed as Naruto body flickered to the top of the eastern walls of the Uchiha clan compound. "Unfortunately, it seemed Madara had recognized your real appearance when the holographic projections over your clones had shattered. Scanned recording of Madara's voiced words showed that he viewed you as a threat. Also Kakashi Hayate had seen your real appearance as well. Your hidden identity in Konoha might be revealed."

"We've no time to worry if someone is going to reveal me as The Eye right now. Madara is the greater concern for the moment." Naruto said grimly. He landed on the roof of a civilian home, pausing to catch his breath. One more body flicker and he should reach the eastern walls of the Uchiha compound. "The Research Sicas did good work coming up with ways to use their holographic projections offensively by blinding Madara. It handicapped Madara but unfortunately he was still capable of powerful ninjutsus that could kill my clones in one shot. I need a solution, a delaying tactic. Something that would enable me to survive long enough until Old man Hokage could arrive with his militia."

"According to clones at the village center, the militia is assembling fast, we'll probably just need to buy another half an hour of time." Sica revealed. "It is advisable for you to remain at the edge of the Uchiha compound while constantly creating Shadow clones to battle Madara. With the Kyuubi providing an unlimited reservoir of chakra, theoretically you should be able to last half an hour of Shadow clone spamming without burning out your chakra coils."

"That seems like the best plan until we can come up with something better." Naruto agreed as his body flicker technique landed him on the eastern walls of the Uchiha compound. "And we really need to come up what a way that can prevent our identities from being revealed once the holographic projections are shattered. I can ask the clones to maintain a constant transformation technique under the holographic projections but that is only feasible in non-combat situations, where chakra drain is not a matter of life and death."

"I will begin working on analysing possible alternate solutions." Sica noted.

Naruto eyes narrowed as his hands began flashing into the handseals for Shadow Clone technique. Instantly thirty Shadow clones came into being. They gave Naruto a nod before rushing towards the battlefield where Madara was now facing off against Itachi. Their individual Sicas already overlaying different holographic projections of physical appearances over them.

"Cloak me Sica. While I prepare for the second wave." Naruto said as a cloak descend over him, causing him to vanish from sight.

Minutes later, a second group of thirty over clones appeared and head forth towards the center of the Uchiha clan compound, where a fierce battle was underway.

One eye blink and Madara suddenly appeared right in front of him, hands raised up and then stabbing towards him. Itachi's eyes widened in surprise as he barely managed a Body Replacement technique with a nearby slab of earth. Reappearing a distance away, he looked on in shock as Madara touched the earth slab which had appeared where Itachi used to be. The very air around the earth slab seemed to distort as the earth slab began rapidly crumbling in onto itself.

What Madara had used was probably some sort of Space/Time distortion technique. And there was the way Madara had suddenly appeared before him, faster than possible with a Body Flicker technique. Whatever the technique was, Itachi was sure that it bend Time and Space as well. If Madara was able to wield such techniques easily, it was no wonder the archives of the Uchiha clan listed him as a powerful and terrifying ninja opponent.

He did not have much time to think as in a flash Madara suddenly appeared in front of him. Itachi barely had time to raise his kunai to deflect the blow from Madara before he was on pure defensive, parrying the multiple quick strikes that rained down on him without pause. His Sharingan and years of training was what saved him from being pierced many times over by the kunai that Madara wields.

He had entered the battle with calm acceptance that he would die. Itachi might be named an Uchiha prodigy, but he was also a realist enough to recognize that Madara was someone even he could not defeat. The infamous Uchiha ninja was legendary for having fought the First Hokage to a draw on many occasions, the idea that he was able to kill the man was laughable. No, what Itachi truly intended was to stall Madara and buy time for more of his clan members to escape and go into hiding. Madara seek to destroy the Uchiha clan and Itachi would use his life in a gamble to stop it.

A swipe from his left passed through his defense, slashing opening his left arm. Itachi grunted in pain as he stumbled back in shock. Madara used his moment of distraction to reach out with his right hand, grabbing at him. Itachi barely managed to jump back, his left hand rose in a warding gesture to push Madara away.

Both of their hands contacted. The very air around them seemed to warp. A shower of blood splattered the air before him, Itachi stared in shock and barely restrained horror as his left hand twisted and disappeared with a sickening pop. He looked down at the stump of his left hand which ended at the elbow and it was around then the immerse agony hit him as he gave a strangled cry of pain.

Itachi channeled all his pain and rage into his right arm as he sprung forward and dealt several quick strikes at Madara who jumped away from him. He knew his time was numbered. Losing a hand meant that he could not do any jutsus requiring two handed seals. With no way and time to seal his wound, he would bleed to death shortly. Better he used his remaining strength in a last battle against Madara and made sure his sacrifice was not wasted.

Something suddenly wrapped around his waist from behind, carrying him swiftly towards the back. Itachi looked down to see that a strong green vine was what had snatched him from the jaws of death. It then deposited him into the crowd of strangers standing a few feet behind him. None of them seemed hostile, though one of the men quickly stepped forward, applying green healing chakra onto Itachi, tending to his many wounds.

"You're seriously injuried." The Medic Nin said as he bend over Itachi. "Hang on, I am bringing you to the Konoha Hospital."

"No... Madara..." Itachi began to protest weakly, trying to get up but was held back by the unknown man.

"Don't worry. My brothers will take care of him." The man said nodding to the strangers crowding protectively around them. The strangers made several handseals and thick giant green vines erupted from the ground in front of them, snapping towards Madara. "For now just rest, Madara will not have the Uchiha clan while we still stand. That I can promise."

Madara growled as the horde of clones threw themselves at him, blinding and unleashing many Wood attacks at him. He had lost track of Itachi Uchiha minutes ago, though where the boy was, was of little concern to him. Neither was he stumped by the clone army that was matched up against him. Madara was confident that given enough time, he could dispose them easily.

The problem was time. He was no newly minted chunin, he knew what the demon container of Konoha was trying to do by throwing hordes of clones at him. The kid was buying time for reinforcements to arrive. He had little doubt that the Third Hokage was already on his way. No, he had to move fast. At the very least, he needed to kill Konoha's demon container before he leave the village. With such power and intelligence, the kid would become a deadly threat in the future.

It was pointless fighting the clones. For every one that he destroyed, three more would take its place. It was amazing and more than a little worrying at the amounts of clones that keep appearing because each of those clones had the chakra reserves of at least a chunin level ninja. Add together the combined chakra reserves of all the clones, the total amount of chakra spent creating the clones were more than Hokage level chakra reserves several times over.

It indicated to Madara that the demon container of the Nine-Tail, with his Wood Release bloodline, had managed to subdue the demon within him and was able to pull out the unlimited chakra of the Nine-Tail at will. Should the demon container live to adulthood, he would be a force to reckon with. A being that Madara doubted even he could defeat.

This troublesome weed needed to be destroyed before it could grow any further. Madara would rather kill the demon container and release the Nine-Tail than allow such power to be used by a Konoha ninja matched up against him.

He had already discerned the direction the clones all came from. The clone army had made no effort in hiding their movements, probably thinking that they could just overwhelm him by numbers. That would prove to be their undoing. They could blind him, but they could not stop him from teleporting long distances away.

The original demon container was hiding somewhere at the east of the Uchiha compound. Probably somewhere within the clan compound itself, judging by the speed the clones had arrived, one after another.

As the clones unleashed another series of powerful Wood Release attacks while blinding him with bright light, Madara physically faded as he teleported away. He had a fox to hunt and time was running short.

"Madara had managed to annihilate Squad 16 of the new clones. But we currently have over five hundred clones facing off against him, with more on the way. I am confident that we could hold him off until help arrived." Sica reported as Naruto sat on the east wall of the Uchiha clan compounnd. Naruto was panting from the exertion of creating more than half a thousands clones within a few short minutes and was coping with the mental strain as over two hundreds were destroyed in the first few waves of attack.

"How long until the Hokage arrives?" Naruto asked as he stood up, still hidden from view by Sica's holographic cloak. He had sent all clones after Madara, confident Sica's cloak would hide him from physical sight.

"Village clones states that the Hokage had mobilized the militia, they would be reaching within ten minutes." Sica announced.

"That's good. I am beginning to feel the strain of all the mental feedbacks from the destroyed clones." Naruto said as sweat poured down his forehead.

"I have incoming news! Half of Squad 7 were destroyed and... Madara Uchiha had vanished from the battlefield." Sica suddenly said, its sharp mental voice causing Naruto to tense up in shock. "Scans had picked him up reappearing half a mile from the battlefield towards our direction... He has disappeared again..."

Naruto only had time to gasp in shock as the manic, triumphant face of Madara Uchiha suddenly appeared in front of him.

"I've found you." Madara said in satisfaction as his hand delivered a powerful punch, shattering the holographic cloak projected over Naruto. He gripped Naruto by the neck, dangling him in mid-air as Naruto began to choke.

"I am blinding him." Sica said as a blaze of light appeared over Madara's eyes.

Naruto struggled weakly as his air pipe was crashed, causing him to be unable to breath. His hands tried to form the handseals for a Wood Release technique but he had an uncomfortable feeling it would be too late. The air around his head was being distorted. His skin pulled tightly and pain stabbed into his head.

"Madara is using some warping technique that we've previously detected him using." Sica said mentally in his head even as dots began to appear in his vision from lack of air. "He is taking his time with it. He seemed to delight in lengthening the duration of the effect as a form of torture..."

Naruto wished Sica would stop ranting in his head. So this was the end... and he had not even lived...

Something flashed across his view. Madara cried out as blood spluttered onto Naruto's face. Someone grabbed him and suddenly Naruto found himself gasping greedily for air as he appeared a few feet away from Madara. He was instantly pushed to the back of whoever had saved him. Naruto looked up and his eyes widened as he saw the weary and blood stained face of Kakashi Hatake. In front of them, Madara glared at them murderously as blood poured from a large gash on the hand that had choked Naruto.

"You owed me an explanation if we survive this." Kakashi muttered to Naruto grimly, even as he faced Madara. The battle hardened ninja quickly shifted into a fighting stance.

"You pests will DIE!" Madara roared as he vanished from his position to appear at Kakashi's side, his hands stretching out.

Naruto cried out, trying to push Kakashi away when a shadow appeared between Kakashi and Madara, slashing at Madara's out stretched hands. Naruto gasped in relief as the figure of old man Hokage stood before him, glaring fiercely at Madara.

"That's enough!" Sarutobi said coldly even as hundreds of Konoha ninjas began appearing, surrounding Madara on all sides. "You have no way to run Madara Uchiha. Surrender."

Madara looked around him in a twisted rage and then he gave a chilling laugh.

"It will take more then a group of weak Leaf ninjas to bring me down." Madara said coldly, his eyes landed on Naruto who he glared at, as if promising vengeance. Then to the startled eyes of the new arrivals, Madara's physical body began to rapidly fade and vanished.

For a moment old man Hokage and the militia stared at the empty spot Madara had been standing in with shock before the Hokage sprung into action, ordering the militia to break up into five man squads and began combing the Uchiha clan compound and the village for signs of Madara and any of the traitor Uchihas.

As the militia split up and left in massive swirls of Body Flicker techniques, old man Hokage turned, giving Kakashi a look of acknowledgment and thanks for his effort before glaring sternly at Naruto.

"What are you doing here Naruto?" Old man Hokage barked out, worry in his eyes even as he began to inspect the strangle marks on Naruto's neck.

Naruto hesitated, looking at Kakashi who was calmly looking back at him. For a moment he froze, his mind only now realising that Kakashi Hatake knew of his deception and might soon deduct he was The Eye, as well as the fact that he had the Wood Release bloodline.

Revealing to the Hokage his secret identity would prove difficult as he could not do that without revealing Sica's existence. It was a problem because Sica had made it very clear at the start of their relationship that should Naruto revealed the existence of the Federation or their secrets to the inhabitants of this world, Sica would shut down and refused all forms of communications with Naruto from then on.

"I believe to preserve the identity of The Eye, we'll need to throw out some misleading information." Sica spoke up in his head. "I've have spin up a possible red herring to divert the Hokage's attention ever since I detected the arrival of the militia. However, we'll need to secure the cooperation of Kakashi Hatake... This is what you should say..."

Naruto gave a sniff, tears beginning to shine in his eyes as he looked at old man Hokage. His body shuddered as if from great stress before he leap forward, engulfing the Hokage in a hug.

"I was so scared..." Naruto said, lifting his head to look at the Hokage, sparing a glance to Kakashi who was standing at the side with a raised eyebrow.

Please let this work. Naruto prayed, as he began spinning the cover Sica had came up for him...

**Author's Note:** Sorry it took so long. :) Hope this chapter lives up to expectations. Cheers!

**Chapter 10: Chapter 10**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Ten: When destinies are altered**

Previously...

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"Old man... I was so scared." Naruto said, the words seemingly caught in his throat. Sarutobi rest an arm reassuringly on the child. A powerful S-rank ninja and his Uchiha cohorts were loose in the village, Sarutobi knew that his first priority was to ensure the safety of the village. But Naruto's involvement in this matter needs to be investigated as well, especially since he was Konoha's demon container. Now that his ninja militia were off searching and safeguarding the village, he had a few moments to spare to find out what in the world had brought Naruto within arms' length of Madara Uchiha.

From Kakashi's defensive stance in front of Naruto when Sarutobi had arrived with his militia, to the look of disbelief the copy eye ninja had leveled on the boy when Naruto had started sobbing into Sarutobi's arms, Sarutobi had known that something strange was up, and somehow Naruto was in the thick of it.

Naruto's next words however shattered Sarutobi's appearance of calm and control.

"I am the student of The Eye and I think Teacher is in trouble." Naruto said raising his head to look up at Sarutobi, a frightened look in his eyes.

"WHAT!" Sarutobi shouted in shock before he caught himself. Beside them, Kakashi's eyes widened in surprise. As one of the elite Anbu, Kakashi knew about the mystery concerning The Eye. Sarutobi struggled for control even as he wondered how the mysterious infiltration ninja had managed to train Naruto secretly. It was an incredible feat since The Eye had remained undetected by the Anbus that were sent to check up on Naruto, not to mention the frequent "look-in" by Sarutobi to monitor the well being of Naruto with his spy technique. Sarutobi took a deep breath to calm his nerves as he looked at Naruto sharply. "Naruto, answer me truthfully, how long have The Eye been training you? And why are you here?"

"He... he came to me one plus year ago, a few months after the meteor showers." Naruto said in hesitation. "He told me all about my parents, I... I know my heritage... It is something that Teacher told me must be kept a secret until the time is right..."

Sarutobi squeezed his eyes in shock. It seemed that The Eye had been in Konoha for much longer than anyone had thought, which answered part of the mystery of why The Eye's training with Naruto was undetected. By the time The Eye made an official appearance in Konoha, he probably had months of preparation and planning to back himself up.

What was more, The Eye had revealed to Naruto who his parents were... Sarutobi had intended to tell Naruto about his parentage when Naruto had reached maturity. When Naruto had grown prudent enough and not go boasting about this SS-rank secret to anyone. It had been one of Sarutobi's greatest fear that other ninja villages would discover Naruto was the son of the legendary and infamous Yellow Flash. He could only imagine the numbers of assassins coming after Naruto if that secret was out.

However, looking at the boy before him now, it seemed that he had underestimated Naruto's maturity. The boy had known about his parents for months, and if he had never confide in Sarutobi tonight, Sarutobi would not had known Naruto knew. Naruto had changed greatly from a child starved for attention to one that could safeguard a secret. Naruto had grown up without Sarutobi even knowing about it. Sarutobi felt a pang in his heart for not paying more attention to the boy who was supposed to be under his charge.

"He told me he owed my parents a great debt and he was going to take me in as his student. He said he would teach me everything he know. His only requirement was that I never tell anyone that I was being taught by him. He never told me his name, just to call him Teacher, and every time he appeared before me, he wears a different appearance. I never knew what he looked like." Naruto said as he sniffed, rubbing at his brimming tear filled eyes. "He is strict... but he always treat me fairly. He was always there for me... A few months ago, he said he was going to help Konoha, by gathering news and information that would protect the village. Our training became less and less frequent, but Teacher always kept me updated on what was happening. He told me how he became The Eye..."

"Then tonight, Teacher appeared and told me that he was going to do something that might get him killed. He told me about Madara Uchiha, how the Uchiha clan was under attack. He said he was going to try to stop Madara, to buy time for the village militia to mobilized." Naruto said with a glazed look in his eyes. "Teacher specialized in Bloodline research and infiltration techniques. He confide to me once that offensively he was barely the level of a Jonin. He was more of a research ninja, he was outmatched against someone of Madara's level. I begged him to let me help him, he had done a lot for me. In the very beginning, he... he had given me the Wood Release bloodline which allowed me to tap into the Kyuubi's chakra safely. I thought it would be enough for me to help..."

"The Eye gave you the Wood Release bloodline? You mean The Eye successfully developed a method to implant the legendary bloodline into another?" Kakashi asked in disbelief. Beside him, Sarutobi stood stock still, his mind flashing back to the past where another powerful Konoha ninja, one of his students, had dabbled in illegal bloodline research by testing them out on innocent civilians. Orochimaru was the prodigy of his generation, yet he was also Sarutobi's greatest regret.

The Eye had revealed in the past that he was a missing nin, perhaps the reason why he was hunted now was because of whatever research he had performed. And the fact that Naruto knew he was the container of the Nine-Tailed Fox... Sarutobi had never meant for Naruto to find out about his burden at such a young age. For a moment, the weight of all the years he had hidden the secret from Naruto laid heavy in his heart. It was at times like this he wished Minato was still alive...

"You really have the Wood Release bloodline?" Sarutobi asked in a harsh voice, a frown on his forehead.

Naruto nodded, his hands flashing into several handseals. The ground below them burst open as large vines of green roots grew to wall height before them. Sarutobi just stared silently at the sight, his mouth tightening into a white line. There had been bloodline thieves in the world. Several bloodlines, especially the dojutsus, namely the Sharingan, were known to be able to be implanted in others. The Wood Release bloodline was one of the few bloodlines that was not easily implanted. Even Orochimaru had only succeed in implanting the Wood Release bloodline into a young boy out of the ninety-two deaths of other innocent subjects. He had no idea how The Eye implanted the bloodline into Naruto, but to do something so dangerous to his charge... It was unforgivable. The next time he saw The Eye, he was going to give him a harsh talking to... That was if The Eye was still alive...

"Teacher gave me the bloodline when we first started training together. I have a few months training in it. I can pull out all the Tailed-Beast chakra I want. I was also taught the Shadow Clone technique a few months back, so Teacher agree to let me help from a distance by spamming Shadow Clones to distract Madara. I also knew some special infiltration techniques of Teacher's which would change my appearance without chakra and hide me from sight. I thought it would keep me safe..." Naruto revealed, biting his lips nervously as he pointed to Kakashi. "I lost all contact with Teacher right after we saved this big brother here. I did not want to run so I stayed here and keep creating Shadow Clones to enter the fight. Then Madara found me and big brother saved me... and then you came. Teacher told me before I enter the fight that if something happened to him I should come to you for help. Old man Hokage, I don't know what to do... Please! Save Teacher!"

Sarutobi looked at Naruto's frightened and weary face as Naruto's words trailed off. Sarutobi's heart was still burning with anger at The Eye for secretly training Naruto behind his back and implanting the Wood Release bloodline into Naruto. He was also angry that an unknown missing nin had dragged Naruto into such a dangerous situation. But all things pale to the alarming fact that Naruto was able to freely access the Nine-Tailed beast's chakra, the situation needs to be monitored to ensure the Kyuubi would not have a chance to escape from its prison.

Sarutobi had no idea of the amount of danger Naruto had encountered in his involvement against Madara, but now was not the time to get a full debriefing from the boy. If what Naruto said was true, The Eye had gone missing sometime after he had went up against Madara. After all The Eye had done for Konoha, Sarutobi felt a sense of obligation to the mysterious ninja. If something really happened to The Eye, Sarutobi need to find out what had happened and render whatever aid to this mysterious ninja, and gave him an earful after that. But first...

"Naruto, lift your shirt. Since you know of the Kyuubi, I presume you were also told of the Dead Demon Consuming seal on your belly?" Sarutobi asked as he bent down to examine Naruto.

"Teacher mentioned it in passing. It keeps the Kyuubi sealed." Naruto said hesitantly as he lifted up his shirt.

"Good, I need you to mold some chakra right now, like when you use it to prepare your jutsus." Sarutobi ordered as he looked at Naruto's belly sharply.

Naruto gave a nod, a look of concentration on his face. Sarutobi sensed the chakra pouring out of Naruto's body as the Dead Demon Consuming seal on Naruto's belly appeared. Sarutobi tensed, since Naruto entered the Academy a year ago, it was the first time he had been near Naruto when he attempted to use his chakra. The chakra signature was familiar... almost like the signature he had sensed from the clone of The Eye... when the clone had presumably Body Flickered into his room, to inform him of Madara's invasion.

Sarutobi could identify the chakra signature clearly, a sensation of moist richly turned earth and a breath of clean air. It was rare for different individuals to have the same chakra signature, though it was not unheard of. Chakra signatures depend largely on the individual's chakra afinities and personalities. That The Eye and Naruto bears the same chakra signature means that they possessed the same chakra affinities and mindset.

Putting the similarity of the chakra signatures aside for the moment, Sarutobi turned his attention to the Dead Demon Consuming seal that appeared on Naruto's belly. Sarutobi gave a relief as he found nothing visibly wrong with the seal. The Kyuubi would not be escaping from Naruto anytime soon. History had spoken of how the First Hokage had used his Wood Release bloodline to suppress the Tailed-Beasts, Naruto might well be safer against manipulations of the Kyuubi, now that he had access to that powerful bloodline.

"You can put down your shirt now Naruto, nothing seems wrong with the seal. Thanks for setting an old man's mind at ease... Kakashi, can you bring Naruto to the hospital? I want both of you to be checked out." Sarutobi asked as he turned to look at the battle weary ninja. Kakashi had numerous injuries across his body, but he could not ask Naruto to travel through the streets by himself without guard, especially not tonight. Sarutobi himself needed to join the search and had little time to spare.

"Old man. I am fine, there's no need for me to go to the hospital." Naruto chipped in, a stubborn look on his face. "I heal fast, and I am sure the doctors have their hands full tonight."

"Nevertheless I would..." Sarutobi began but stopped as he saw the pleading look on Naruto's face.

"Please old man, I just want to have a good rest. I can go for a check up tomorrow." Naruto said with a tired look on his face.

Sarutobi sighed as he gave Naruto a quick cursory check. Aside from the strangle marks on his neck Naruto seemed visibly unharmed, and already those bruises were fading. Naruto always had a fast healing factor since young. Part of it was due to the Kyuubi's chakra coursing through him. Another part was because he was descended from the main Uzumaki clan branch, a clan that bears a potent bloodline of longevity and great health. The bloodline had never emerged from Naruto, but being the descendant of the Uzumaki, Naruto's health and regeneration was above the average norm. Naruto was not inflicted with any life threatening wounds, and Sarutobi was finding it hard not to cede to the child's request.

"Very well, Kakashi, are you well enough to bring Naruto back home?" Sarutobi asked, looking at the white spiky haired ninja who gave a nod.

"I'll live." Kakashi said dryly. "I can bring Naruto home before going to the hospital."

"Good. Naruto, I want you to go home right now and rest. You'll have a health examination tomorrow. In the meantime, I will get the ninjas to look for any signs of The Eye." Sarutobi said looking at the boy sternly. "Tomorrow I will get a ninja to bring you to the Tower and I will need you to tell me everything you know and have done with The Eye. For now just get a good night's sleep. You've done well Naruto, I am proud of you."

Sarutobi gave the boy a comforting hug before nodding to Kakashi. The copy eye ninja moved forward and carried Naruto close to his chest before he began leaping over the Uchiha eastern wall towards the nearby rooftops.

Sarutobi watched them go, his eyes narrowing grimly. He would sort out Naruto's relationship with The Eye tomorrow. For now he needed to protect the village and make sure that Madara and the traitor Uchiha ninjas did not bring further harm to Konoha or the Uchiha clans, as well as find the whereabouts of the missing Eye.

A slight blur in the air and Madara appeared on a tree top, several miles away from Konoha. He was consumed with rage. He had been unable to destroy the Uchiha clan, much less destroy Konoha, and it was all because of the dratted demon container of the Nine-Tailed beast. Many of his plans needed to change. First and foremost, the young demon container of Konoha needed to be dealt with before he became too powerful a threat.

Madara was about to teleport away when he sensed several chakra signatures coming from the direction of Konoha. Thinking it was Konoha ninjas after him, Madara turned around, hands already flashing into the handseals of an Earth Release ninjutsu, before he sighted the three pale faced and bloodied ninjas behind him.

"Madara sama." One of the ninja cried out in shock as the three stopped at the sight of Madara. Madara sneered as he recognized the three ninjas before him, they were among the group of Uchiha he had freed from the Anbu Tower, who had then agreed to aid him in destroying the Uchiha clan. Apparently these three Uchiha had taken the option of fleeing instead of being hunted down by the Konoha ninjas. Their actions had been cowardly, but it meant that they still lived. And all three of the ninjas bear Sharingan eyes, making them a valuable future asset that Madara could use.

"I see the three of you are still alive." Madara said moving forward to them. "You have a choice. Join me, or be hunted down by Konoha as missing nins."

"The way I see it, you're the one that got us into our current situation in the first place." One of the Uchiha ninja snarled at him.

A flash of light and the ninja who had spoken gave a strangled cry as a kunai pierced into his throat. He gurgled out blood, crawling at his neck helplessly. As death claimed him, his body swayed and he tumbled to the ground below.

"I guess if you are not joining me, then I do not have any use for you." Madara said giving a cold smile to the two remaining ninjas. "I might as well dispose of you now in case you become a problem for me in the future."

"Wait Madara sama! Fukira's words are not mine. I Mozu Uchiha agreed to join you!" The Uchiha who identified himself as Mozu said quickly. His fellow ninja beside him also quickly nodded his head.

"Good." Madara said as he quickly leap forward, grabbing the arm of each of the men. "Then let us be off before the Konoha rats came looking for us."

The very air around the three Uchiha rippled as Madara teleported them away. In the stillness of the forest, only the dead Uchiha on the ground below marked their passing.

"So, The Eye trained you." Kakashi said as he looked down at Naruto as he ran across the rooftops with Naruto in his grasp. "Since he was the one that gave you the Wood Release bloodline, I presume than that The Eye also had the same bloodline as well?"

"Yes..." Naruto said wearily, reinforcing the cover created by Sica, as he cling onto Kakashi while he ran across Konoha. "Wait... do you know where I live?"

"I have my ways, I know where I am going." Kakashi said simply. The two of them continued the journey in silence. Ahead of them, they could see several groups of Konoha ninjas patrolling the streets and the roof tops. The patrol teams must have recognized Kakashi because they were allowed to continue their way undisturbed.

It was only a few moments later before Kakashi spoke again. "The ones that saved me from Madara. It was The Eye as well as Shadow Clones from the both of you?"

"Yes, though the ones that saved you is mostly made up of Teacher's Shadow Clones. My clones were only supposed to act as distraction." Naruto said, not meeting Kakashi's eyes, feeling guilty at the lie he was sprouting.

"I don't know which clones are yours and which are The Eye's, but you and your clones held off someone of Madara Uchiha caliber for long enough till help arrived. That spoke highly of your combat abilities." Kakashi said in quiet praise. "Your abilities are possibly already above genin and chunin level."

"Being able to pull out the Kyuubi's chakra safely was what allows me to spam Shadow Clones in the fight." Naruto said trying to gloss over his accomplishment, it would not do for Konoha's ninjas to look too deeply into his fighting abilities.

"Quantity does have a quality of its own. But your skills have to be at a certain level to be able to hold off Madara Uchiha for even a while." Kakashi said as he took a flying leap and landed at the roof of the apartment building Naruto was staying in. He set Naruto down giving him a nod. "I will leave you here. Have a good rest tonight, I am sure the Hokage will have a lot of questions for you tomorrow."

"I will, thank you for seeing me back home." Naruto said as he thanked the white haired ninja who turned and quickly made his way across the roof tops.

Naruto slowly climbed down the stairs and entered his apartment. As he closed the door, he slummed against the closest chair in his living room. His body was heavy and tired, and he felt drained in body and mind.

Kakashi Hatake is now out of my scanning range. At the direction he took, he is most probably heading to the hospital to tend to his injuries. Sica spoke up in his head.

"Good. I think Kakashi and old man Hokage bought the story you come up with." Naruto said closing his eyes wearily. He did not like to lie to old man Hokage, not when he was the closest thing to a grandfather for Naruto.

But if he did not lie and was discovered to be The Eye, the ninjas and village council would investigate into why a clanless eight year old was capable of the things he was able to do. They might be able to discover Sica's existence either by forcing Naruto to reveal his secrets unwillingly or via a mind scan which Naruto knew the Yamanaka clan was capable of. Once the village council knew of Sica, there was a high chance of Sica being confiscated or stolen, forcing the A.I. to go into a lock down to prevent Federation secrets from being revealed.

A simple misdirection is enough to make those involved not look so closely into why you were at the Uchiha clan compound. As things stands, your identity as The Eye remains safe, and if the cover you've given to the Hokage spreads, pretty soon those in the know will see you and The Eye as separate entities, further protecting your secret identity. Sica revealed. Naruto could not master up much of a reply other than a tired grunt as Sica continued. Releasing "information" about the successful bloodline implantation method of The Eye also ensures a reason why you have your current bloodline, and secures the future in case you need to attempt any bloodline changes.

"Your cover is good Sica, but I am worried about what Old Man Hokage will ask me tomorrow... and there also Madara Uchiha..." Naruto said after a few minutes of silence. There was a tingly sensation as Sica boost his healing abilities to heal his injuries. Naruto forced himself to relax and not start scratching at his wounds. "From the way Madara attack me directly, he seemed to view me as a threat and he had a way to see past our cloak. I saw his eyes when he was trying to kill me... it feels like he wants to tear me apart."

From the recorded scans of the battle clones, it seemed that Madara also knew of your identity. Several times during the battle against the clones, he revealed to them as Konoha's demon container and the fox brat. He also spoke of his intention to kill you. Sica noted as it affirmed Naruto's suspicions. In regards to tomorrow's meeting with the Hokage, I've ran several simulations and would guide in in how to best answer his questions without exposing us too much.

"I will trust you with the details for tomorrow's meeting Sica, I am too tired to think... A legendary ninja is now out for my blood and the best I can do is hold him off for half an hour." Naruto said grimly. "I need to get stronger. We need to be prepared."

I have begin analyzing the whole recorded battle and will identify the abilities and weakness of those involved. It will allow us to come up with abilities or techniques to counter Madara should he appear in the future. Sica said.

"Thanks Sica. Increase my training schedule. I need to get more powerful fast." Naruto said with a hard look in his eyes. "The next time I go up against a powerful enemy, I want to do more than to hold off the enemy before nearly ending up dead. I want to be able to actually defend myself against enemy ninjas on equal grounds."

Understood, though using Madara Uchiha as a gauge for your skills is not really fair. You're already above the level of most chunin ninjas in Konoha. As for your weaknesses, one of them is your lack of battle awareness, which unfortunately is a result of your solo training efforts. Even when you use your clones for training, they are either used for one to one sparring or mastering a technique. I have outline a new plan based on the Wild Hunt training protocol for special Federation field agents. The training program is however tough and brutal with high chances for injuries. If you approve, we shall implement it into your training schedule. Sica remarked. I also wish to bring up a suggestion. If you have the endurance for it, now would be a good time to create clones for information gathering. The village is in a high state of alert and we need a good grasp of the current situations in the village to prevent any surprises during our meeting with the Hokage tomorrow.

"I can't say no to that can I?" Naruto remarked wearily as he made the handseal for the Shadow Clone technique. "We're going to need information about the current outlook of the village now more than ever."

Clouds of smoke puffed around him as twenty clones appeared, squeezed inside the small apartment.

"Go." Naruto ordered. There was a shimmer of light as the clones disappeared. The door to his apartment opened, followed by a strong gust of wind, slamming shut the open door.

Sitting in the stiff and hard chair, Sasuke looked at his mother lying pale faced and sleeping on the bed in front of him. The doctors had been barely able to save her. As it was, the poison in her body had damaged her by the time she arrived to the hospital.

"Uchiha san." One of the doctor said, coming out of the emergency room. His face haggard and weary. Around him were nurses and orderlies rushing with injured and bleeding patients to other operation rooms. The doctor paused in front of Sasuke's father, his eyes grim. "We were able to save Mikoto's life, but discovering the counter for the poison in her body took too much time... We're sorry, but Mikoto's spine is severely damaged by the corrosive in her body..."

Paralyzed. His father had later told him. His mother was temporarily paralyzed. But Sasuke was old enough now that those sugar coated lies did not work on him. He knew what the doctor was saying. His mother would never walk again.

Sasuke also knew when a group of Uchiha had came to the hospital room demanding to see Fugaku that something was a foot. Fugaku had left Sasuke beside his wife, closing the door to the room. There had been lot of shouting outside. Then silence. His father never returned through the night. Sasuke tried going out of the room, asking the nurses what was going on, but the whole hospital was a beehive of activity and the nurses have no time for him. He saw a lot of his relatives being carried through the front door of the hospital, dying, bleeding, injured. He was mostly ignored though one of his aunt who was supporting a bandaged arm had asked him to go back and stay with his mother.

He had heard snatches of conversations. His brother Itachi was apparently somewhere in the hospital, but when Sasuke had inquired where Itachi was, he was met with silence. He had also heard fierce arguments between some distant uncles in the clans, demanding a call to install a new clan head for the Uchiha clan.

Frightened, lost and alone, Sasuke had at last retreated back to the room where his mother was staying. Perching himself on the chair beside his mother's bed, Sasuke stayed vigil through the night. Tears hovered at the rims of his eyes, barely reined in. But he was a man, and he would not cry.

So much pain, so much blood, so much suffering. Sasuke still did not know what had happened. Why some of his distant relatives had attacked them and injured his mother so badly, but in his impressionable young mind, he came to a conclusion.

He had always held ninjas in high regard, after all he was descended from a clan of powerful ninjas. But now... he had decided that he would not become a ninja to kill and cause suffering.

He would instead become a ninja powerful enough to protect those he loves.

And he would find a way to heal his mother, to make her walk again.

He sat in his office, deep in the catacombs under Konoha, in the hideout of Root. Above the catacombs, on the streets of Konoha still cloaked by the darkness of the night, Danzo knew that Konoha's militia were in a desperate search for Madara and the Uchiha rebels who had attacked the Anbu Tower and the Uchiha clan.

Madara Uchiha. Danzo shook his head in disgust. A living legend had attacked Konoha. For years, Danzo had thought that Konoha had became soft under the rule of the Third. But recent events caused Danzo to have second thoughts. His agents had returned to him with reports minutes after the Third had sounded an alert throughout the village, calling up the militia. Looking at the reports, Danzo was concerned at how fast Sarutobi had mobilized the militia.

In times of peace, according to the mandate set forth by the First Hokage, which Danzo had always disapprove of, the militia was put into reserve and it would take at least half an hour to mobilize them since none of the reserves were in active duty around the clock. The Anbus were the ones that were supposed to deal with any threat while the militia was being mobilized. In times of emergency, the Anbus were to be deployed to hold off the threat long enough for the militia to arrive.

Madara had apparently known of the mandate. The Anbu Tower was the first place he attacked and more than eighty percent of the active duty Anbus were severely injured, buried under rubble. By the time that the militia got the word and was mobilized, it would have been too late.

Yet somehow Sarutobi had the foresight of placing two teams of Anbus around the Uchiha clan compound. Danzo's agent had got back to him of the time of the attack on the Anbu Tower and the time Sarutobi had mobilized the militia. There was only a five minute time difference. Somehow Sarutobi was aware of the attack on the Anbu Tower a few minutes after it happened. Danzo would have never foresaw Sarutobi to have such a powerful information network. Danzo had a sinking feeling that the Third had been fooling everyone with the kindly old man act.

Then there were the mysterious Wood Release users running around the rubble of the Anbu Tower, trying to save everyone trapped within. Careful observations of those Wood Release users led one of his agent to come to the conclusion that they were clones of one person. A person skilled in the bloodline itself, with some measure of healing techniques. The question was who were those clones of. The Senju clan had long declared that no other Wood Release bloodline users now emerged from their clan. The only known Wood Release user in the village was a young man, survivor of Orochimaru's bloodline experiments years ago. He was under the protection of the Anbu due to the potency of his bloodline.

The young man was an open secret among the council members and Danzo had kept careful records of his progress. The reports however never state that the young man was powerful enough to create so many Shadow Clones. That meant that unless the reports were flawed, it was possible that there was a new Wood Release bloodline user in Konoha.

Recent events had also drawn Danzo's attention to an infiltration ninja under Sarutobi's employ. He had only two words to go by, The Eye. Inquiries by his agents about this mysterious ninja was met with a blank wall. Most of the Anbus had no idea who The Eye was. Those that seemed to know were dead loyal to the Third and they were not talking. None of the other Konoha Jonins and Chunins knew anything about such a powerful infiltration ninja. Danzo was beginning to suspect that Sarutobi might have been training a group of specialized task force in the background, just like Danzo himself was doing with Root. He had already sent his agents to investigate further. If his suspicions proved true, Sarutobi was proving to be a more wily opponent than he had first thought.

His door opened and Danzo looked up as one of his Root agents stepped in.

"Hyo, what do you have for me?" Danzo asked. He had sent Hyo away for a specific task with several other Root agents. That he had returned earlier than Danzo had expected was not good news.

"My team could only managed to harvest five Uchiha bodies with their Sharingan intact." Hyo said in a calm voice. "Unfortunately the presence of the militia and the return of many of the Uchiha to their clan compound forced me to call off any further search for suitable bodies."

Danzo grimaced, he had been hoping that he would have more time before the Uchihas returned. With the attack on the Uchiha clan compound, Danzo had seen an opening for a plan he had always wanted to enact. His plan involved having more than five pairs of Sharigan eyes, but unfortunately he would have to make do with what he had.

"There's another matter Danzo sama." Hyo said in a voice devoid of any emotions. "I was in the area when the Hokage arrived with his militia in a face off against Madara Uchiha. Konoha's demon container was in the vicinity as well."

"What?" Danzo asked as his thoughts turned to Naruto Uzumaki, demon container of Konoha. He knew full well who the boy was, he had even kept a file on the boy. Throughout the years he had tried to wrestle control of the boy from Sarutobi by manipulating the council to no avail.

The boy would have made a powerful weapon for Konoha if properly trained, but Sarutobi would have none of it, and if there was one point the Third had made perfectly clear in the council meetings, it was that Naruto Uzumaki be allowed a "normal" life, or as normal a life a demon container could seek to have in a ninja village. Unfortunately Sarutobi somehow managed to get the village elders to side with him. All Homura had revealed when asked was that they owned as much to the boy, a fact which had mystified Danzo. Homura was one of his strongest supporter, but something about Naruto Uzumaki had caused Sarutobi, Homura and Koharu to shut down any decisions that would prove detrimental to the boy's health.

Danzo had his suspicions about the boy's parentage however. Though the Uzumaki name was commonly used for orphans in Konoha, in remembrance of the village's old alliance with the now deceased Uzumaki clan, there had been two known full blooded Uzumaki members to live in Konoha. Both were also the previous demon containers before Naruto. Kushina Uzumaki was the Kyuubi demon container that died during the Nine-tails' attack eight years ago. A powerful ninja had extracted the Kyuubi from her during her pregnancy. She and her new-born supposedly died in the attack, and the father of the child was none other than the now deceased Fourth Hokage. If Naruto was the child of that union, it was small wonder that the Third had been so vocal in his protection of the boy. But Sarutobi, Homura and Koharu steadfastly refused to confirm his suspicions, that the child of the Fourth was still alive, and Danzo had been forced to keep his silence.

"Apparently Naruto Uzumaki was the secret student of The Eye, a fact which seemed even the Third was unaware was. I managed to listen in to their conversations after the Third sent the militia away. I was unfortunately able to catch only bits of their conversation as I do not dare to get anymore closer to the Third while he was on high alert." Hyo revealed, now having Danzo's full attention. "The Eye is more then a mere infiltrator, it seemed he was a bloodline researcher, he somehow granted Naruto Uzumaki the Wood Release bloodline, a fact that the Third also does not seemed to have any knowledge of until told..."

"Really." Danzo's eyes gleamed in the darkness, a cold smile stretching across his face. "Tell me all that you've heard."

It seemed luck had finally turned in his favor, now he would just have to figure how to best use this new information and get his hands on Naruto Uzumaki who had became a much more important chess piece in the greater game of power.

It was day's break by the time Sarutobi stumbled towards the Hokage Tower, his office and symbol of power. The search had lasted throughout the night. The militia had saved a lot of injured, the hospital staff were working over time, all of the rooms packed with patients, but none of the militia had located any signs of The Eye. But then, even if the militia had found him, Sarutobi doubted they would have known who he was, especially since no one knew what he looked like. Sarutobi could only hope for the best, that The Eye was still alive and that he would have his chance to properly chastised The Eye for his actions in regards to Naruto.

Opening the door to his office, he paused at the sight before him. Homura and Koharu were seated beside Danzo, their eyes grim as they turned to look at him. Danzo had a triumphant look in his eyes and a smug air around him which Sarutobi knew would only spell trouble. But what caught most of Sarutobi's attention was the white haired, silent and emotionless figure standing in front of the village elders and Danzo.

"It seemed that you've been hiding information from us." Koharu said in a voice that Sarutobi knew did not bore well for him. "Danzo had been letting us knew of certain information he had discovered. Who is The Eye Sarutobi? And what has he done to Naruto Uzumaki? I am giving you a chance to explain Sarutobi!"

"Hokage sama, I have not answered any of their questions." Kakashi who had been standing straight and silent in front of the two elders spoke up grimly, the meaning clear in his voice. Kakashi was not the one who had let slip any of the information the elders and Danzo currently had.

"Hold your tongue Kakashi." Homura barked out glaring sternly at the white haired ninja before him. "Your loyalty to the Third serves you well, but your silence answered our questions more than you thought."

"And what exactly was this information Danzo told you about The Eye and Naruto." Sarutobi said, trying to remain unaffected by the grim looks his old teammates were shooting him. He needed to know what they knew before he reveal anything that might led to an unfavorable outcome for him or Naruto.

"I know your tricks Sarutobi." Koharu said unimpressed. She glared fiercely at Sarutobi. "What Danzo told us will be revealed after you've given us a clear explanation on who is The Eye and why you've been so lax as to let him train Naruto Uzumaki in secret. What intentions does he have towards the boy? And what is this I've heard about bloodline research? You own us answers Sarutobi!"

Sarutobi's tensed posture relaxed. It seemed that Danzo and his teammates had not known The Eye was actually not a Konoha ninja. The Anbus in the know must have kept the secret, which was a good thing. Koharu and Homura would have gone ballistic if they knew Sarutobi had been receiving unorthodox help from a rogue nin, who had also been training Naruto Uzumaki, not to mention implanting the Wood Release bloodline into the boy. Danzo's spy must have overheard Sarutobi's conversation with Naruto, he would have to do some damage control and spin things in his favor. There would be great repercussions if The Eye was revealed to be a missing ninja who had been training and attempting other activities with Naruto Uzumaki outside of the Hokage's knowledge...

"Very well. I shall explain." Sarutobi said as he gave a loud sigh, trying to look like a harmless weary old man. The look in Koharu's eyes told him she did not buy the act, but Danzo seemed to take satisfaction in seeing a defeated looking Sarutobi. Sarutobi reined in the glare he wanted to shoot at the old war hawk. The man had been a torn in his side for decades, it was time he did something about it, after he smoothed things out with Homura and Koharu, before things have a chance to blow up and this became a village council matter. His own reputation and power over the village would be at risk if that happened, not to mention what would happen to Naruto if it became known that he was trained by a missing nin.

"I presume you knew that much of our information network outside Konoha was managed by Jiraiya? Throughout the years he had been training a prodigy in secret. Because of the sensitivity and nature of what he did, the prodigy's identity was kept secret, known only by a few. I publicly denied knowledge of him, or that he was a Konoha nin. This was a measure of protection for Konoha in case he was captured by enemy ninja villages." Sarutobi answered as he spin up a plausible lie that would cover his hide in case Koharu and Homura stumbled on the truth. He would have to make sure to send a letter to Jiraiya to get his cooperation and make sure their stories match. In fact now that Madara was on the move against Konoha, it might be best to recall his old student and maybe Tsunade as well...

"In recent months, this prodigy of Jiraiya returned to Konoha to recuperate after a mission gone wrong. He became known as known as The Eye. I started employing his service in the village while he recovered, but denied knowledge of him. The few Anbus in the know thought he was a missing nin..." Sarutobi continued straight faced, showing no signs of having lied through his teeth. "I gave him too much of a free rein unfortunately. He was friends with Naruto's parents and he felt that he owned them a debt..."

Koharu gave a gasp while Homura looked pale. Aside from Sarutobi, the only ones in the village who knew of Naruto's parentage were the two village elders. Outside the village, only two other individuals knew of this secret. Jiraiya knew because Minato had been his student, and Tsunade had been the one to first check over Naruto's condition during the first few days after the sealing of Kyuubi. Koharu and Homura's reactions however caused Danzo to give them a narrowed eye look. Sarutobi continued swiftly, diverging Danzo's attention, it would not do to have that man look too deeply into Naruto's parentage, though he was certain that Danzo had his suspicions.

"The Eye secretly trained Naruto without my knowledge. Unfortunately the nature of his work gave him access to a lot of access to unrestricted materials. He had been conducting bloodline research without my knowledge and had granted Naruto the Wood Release bloodline. Naruto truly have the bloodline which I had seen with my own eyes." Sarutobi looked at the grim faces of Homura and Koharu. That they did not seemed shock by the revelation meant that Danzo must have informed them of this. Which meant that the totality of information Danzo had, must have revolved around the conversation between him and Naruto. He was on the right track.

"The Eye and Naruto were the ones that bought time for the village militia to arrive when Madara launched his attack last night. I have asked Naruto to give me a full debrief of what he had done with The Eye after he had some rest..." Sarutobi continued but was cut in by Homura.

"Why do you not call The Eye in directly? I for one would want some direct answers out of him." Homura said in a voice that broke no arguments. "He had conducted bloodline experiments on a young boy for heaven's sake! Even if it was successful. And The Eye and young Naruto facing off against the legendary Madara Uchiha? How far has the boy's training progressed? These are facts that we need to know!"

Sarutobi grinded his teeth. That Naruto had been able to hold Madara off with Shadow Clones had also made Sarutobi curious in regards as to how much power the young boy now possessed. Once he had time to really think about it, it spoke highly of Naruto's current fighting capabilities that he had managed to survive more than a few minutes against Madara. He had intended to ask Kakashi about what he had seen when he had time... before he had found the village elders and Danzo sitting in his office demanding answers from him.

"I am afraid The Eye had gone missing after the battle with Madara. It was possible he might already be dead." Sarutobi began cautiously, trying to spinning the story in his favor. "As for Naruto's capabilities... Kakashi perhaps you would give a debrief of the fight against Madara Uchiha? I am also curious about how well Naruto did..."

"... The boy now has the Wood Release bloodline, with the Kyuubi inside him he would become Konoha's most powerful weapon!" The voice of Danzo argued strongly.

"No!" The Third's voice said sternly. "I will not have Naruto turned into just a weapon to be used."

"The boy has been trained, he has a powerful bloodline and bears the Kyuubi inside him." Homura said in a resigned voice. "He had faced off Madara and survived through a certain mastery of the Wood Release bloodline if the report of what Kakashi gave us of the battle was accurate. I would much rather he became a ninja now and come under the village's control then running around Konoha freely."

"We need to gauge his skills, decide where to place him in Konoha's ninja corps." Koharu said. "Kakashi's description of the battle he witnessed is quite frankly unbelievable. We need to know how much of the battle was The Eye's work and how much was Naruto. I suspect that the boy had to be at least of Chunin level if he was able to hold off Madara after the battle where The Eye supposedly disappeared. He could be given a special field promotion due to this unique circumstance. Of course some of the truths would have to be revealed to the village council, but I can see things going well for us if we phrase things the right way."

"Very well, Naruto will be tested and given a field promotion." The Third said in a weary voice, having given up the fight now that the two village elders were actively against his suggestion. "However his history with The Eye is an S-rank secret. I do not want information about The Eye to be spread to the public. We'll have to come up with a plausible story if Naruto's promotion is revealed to the council."

"I have an idea of what we should tell the public. But first, let us discuss how to test young Naruto." Homura began. "He would have to be caught unaware of course, so we can see his true potential..."

N11 snorted as S11 replayed the conversation it was recording through the mental link with N11. The two of them were the clones assigned to the Hokage Tower while Boss take some much needed rest. They had certainly never expected to listen in to a secret meeting between the Hokage and the village elders discussing about Boss.

"Lies within lies." N11 said as he shook his head. "Looks like old man Hokage is really invested in the identity he had spun up for The Eye now."

"I have a possible analysis of why the Third Hokage lied about The Eye's identity." S11 said. "It is highly possible that admitting he had help from a missing nin who he had no control of would have made him look weak in front of the village elders and council. By saying The Eye was a Konoha ninja however, he secured his power base instead."

"Politics..." N11 said shaking his head. "I am just glad Boss' Sica had the foresight to request for more clones to pick up information while he slept. Now we can prepare for whatever surprises the village elders would have for us come the new day."

"Now that a measure of Boss' skills are revealed, it would be for the best if Boss stick to using those skills during the field test the village elders are planning." S11 said in a calculative mental voice. "Boss should seem powerful, but not too powerful. And I can see the benefits of Boss becoming a ninja, even a Chunin ranked one. Ninjas are considered legal adults, no matter how young they are."

"Ah... I see your point." N11 nodded his head. "Becoming a ninja would certainly give us more freedom and might even hasten some of Boss' pet projects and plans."

"And now that it is known that Boss could create shadow clones, not all clones would have to hide from sight anymore." S11 revealed.

N11's eyes light up as he grinned, it seemed that things were finally looking up.

**Author's Note:** The Uchiha Massacre arc is coming to a close. I am just glad I could get this chapter out to you guys on the first day of the new year. =) A very happy New Year to all the readers out there! Work hard! And stay happy!

ps. There's two more years in the story timeline to go before the start of Naruto "canon" the time where most of the Konoha 11 take their genin exams. As some of you might have expected, things will turn out quite different this time round. What I want to ask is do you guys prefer me to do a time skip? Aka some filler chapters and then a skip to two years ahead. Or do you guys prefer to read the development over those two years?

And can you guys think of any events that happen before the start of the Naruto manga and anime? Currently I can think of a few.

- Hinata's kidnapping by Cloud nin (not exactly sure if that's even earlier)

- Gato taking over Wave Country

- Orochimaru forming Sound village

;) Who knows, maybe I can find a way to spin them into future chapters...

**Chapter 11: Chapter 11**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Chapter Eleven: Aftermath**

Previously...

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Dying fires and ashes covered a major part of the Uchiha compound. Burnt and destroyed buildings, blood soaked earth, and the smell of death lingered on even after the bodies had been carried away for preparations. Scattered around the compound were the muffled and anguish wailing of mothers grieving for their now dead children, of husbands mourning over the loss of their families, of the still figures of those whose eyes stared unseeing into the distance, unable to cope with their losses after last night's attack.

Near the center of the compound however, a landscape of overturned rock and earth with tangled vegetation, a place where it was said that Madara was forced to a standstill against unknown Senjus with Wood Release bloodlines and brave Konoha ninjas, a solemn crowd of Uchiha men and women were gathered.

There were anger mutterings among the group which remained of the Uchiha clan's ninja forces that were still uninjured. A few were trying to pacify the crowd, but almost the attention of them all were focused on the ruling happening in front of them. Fugaku, disgraced clan head of Uchiha was being put to trial by the few senior Uchiha ninjas that were still alive. Most of the Uchiha ninjas had been killed or injured by last night's attack. The senior ninjas that survived had formed a war council after the attack and all had reached an unanimous decision.

"Fugaku Uchiha. For your cowardly actions last night. For your abandonment of your duties during the attack led by Madara Uchiha and the traitors, this council declared you stripped off your titles and position as clan head." Inoten, the most senior of the ninjas gathered, declared in a grim voice as he glared at Fugaku who was standing in front of the gathered crowd.

"Only the actions of your son, once prodigy of the clan, saved you and your family from exile." Inoten continued as the mutterings among the gathered ninjas rose in volume. "He alone of all the Uchiha went up against Madara and survived. His bravery in delaying Madara cost him an arm. The clan owned him a blood debt which we would repay by allowing your family to retain your family home in the compound."

With the conclusion of the judgment, Inoten turned away from Fugaku, with most of the council members following as they publicly shunned the man. Inoten faced the gathered crowd, ignoring the presence of Fugaku behind him, his face set into dark resolution.

"The council had reached a decision. With the threat of Madara Uchiha lurking in the world, with the madman's aim of destroying the clan, it is now more than ever that our clan needs a strong leader especially after we have suffered such heavy losses in lives. After much discussions, the council had reached a decision. The most powerful ninja in the Uchiha clan would be chosen as the new clan head of Uchiha, with the council to guide him.

"It is our decision that Shisui Uchiha, be chosen as the new clan head, for his skills and action of leadership during the attack on the clan." Inoten said into the silence that followed his words. "Itachi Uchiha will be given a role as adviser and council member to the clan. Upon our oath of vengeance, the one who we tasked to destroy Madara and bring him to justice, will be Shisui Uchiha of the Body Flicker. Who is in agreement to our decision?"

The roar of approval that instantly sounded broke the tensed atmosphere hovering around the group. Ignored by the gathered clansmen, the silent and disgraced Fugaku Uchiha turned and walked away without looking back.

Clothed in black, with a face mask that covered his face, Hayama Shirakumo inwardly wondered why he was chosen for this task, wondering why the hell the Third Hokage, and the village elders had wanted him to test Naruto Uzumaki in secret. After all, matching a Jonin against an eight year old was hardly fair to the boy, though there had been rumors going around the ninja corps that said demon container in question was found near the Uchiha compound, facing off against Madara Uchiha yesterday night. Apparently the ninja militia had arrived at the edge of the Uchiha compound to find Madara trying to attack Kakashi Hatake who was defending the boy. No one knew why Naruto was there, though speculations had been running rampant.

Konoha was still rocking from the attack by the legendary missing nin. Almost all of the Konoha ninjas were in jitters after the massive attack on the Uchiha clan. When the runners had announced the attack to the public during the morning, there had been a huge outcry from the civilians, especially since military lock down had been imposed onto the village for the next few foreseeable days. The fact that the Uchiha clan, who had been one of the major and more powerful clan in the village, had suffered a fifty percent casualty rate in death and injuries was enough to alarm everyone.

That Hayama was chosen to test Naruto Uzumaki so soon after the attack, when almost all of Konoha ninjas were called up for rotation guard duties, meant that Naruto Uzumaki most probably had an important role to play during the attack yesterday. That a Jonin level ninja was chosen to test the boy meant that the Hokage and the village elders suspected that Naruto Uzumaki must have a certain level of ninja skills. Which was a mystery because to his knowledge, the boy had received no ninja training. It however gave credence to the rumor of the boy actually going up against Madara Uchiha, though how the demon container ended up in that situation, or who actually trained the boy was anyone's guess.

Knocking on the door to the demon container's apartment, a drowsy blond haired boy answered, going inside to change when he was told that the Hokage wanted to see him. It made things easier when Naruto Uzumaki had revealed that he knew the basic chakra exercises and they quickly made their way across the rooftops of the various buildings, with Hayama leading the way.

The journey took twenty minutes, and Hayama lead the boy into training area 34, where Hayama knew that the Third and the village elders were hiding a distance away to observe the test.

"What are we doing here?" Naruto Uzumaki asked with a frown as he turned to face the masked ninja who had stopped. "I thought we're going to the Hokage's tower? Where's old man Hokage?"

"There's no Hokage here to see you." Hayama said cryptically, inwardly rolling his eyes at the corny script the village elders had came up for him. "This is the place where you shall die DEMON!"

His sword was strapped to his back, but it was probably over kill to use it in battle against a child. So kunai in hand, Hayama rushed forward, carefully moderating his speed so that the boy would have enough time to get away, if he was at least as capable as the Hokage and the village elders suspected. Hayama had no idea of the skill level of the boy, and he had no desire to kill a young child by accident.

He was therefore surprised when Naruto Uzumaki quickly leap backwards, his hands flashing into handseals which he did not recognize. Hayama tensed, preparing for a ninjutsu attack when the boy... just disappeared.

For a moment, Hayama stared at the empty spot, his mouth gaping behind his face mask. The technique the boy had used was not a Body Flicker technique, it was not even a replacement technique. The boy had simply vanished from sight. Hayama smiled as his eyes narrowed, observing his surroundings carefully. It seemed that Naruto Uzumaki had some ninja training at the very least, and he definitely had tricks Hayama had never seen before, up his sleeve.

A pulse of chakra to his left, Hayama immediately leap away, just as an eruption of slashing greenery came into being at the spot where he had been standing on only a few seconds ago. Hayama was no newly minted Chunin or Jonin, he recognized the attack for what it was, especially when the whole ninja corp was abound with the first hand accounts from Uchihas who had seen unknown Senjus with Wood Release bloodlines saving them yesterday night.

Somehow, Naruto Uzumaki had the same Wood Release bloodline!

Hayama growled as he glared in the direction where he was sure the Third Hokage and the village elders were hidden. He was loyal to Konoha, loyal to the village, but he could not help but wonder what games were the Hokage and the elders of Konoha up to at the moment. After all, why in the name of the Rikudō Sennin did the village demon container have the revered Wood Release bloodline?

The bloodied faces of those he had killed last night woke him, causing him to jerk out of his bed in cold sweat. He could still see their accusing eyes as they stared at him in death. His only consolation was that he knew he had done the right thing. If he had not, more innocents would have been killed by the Uchiha traitors. But even then, even when it was his clones that killed those traitors in defense of innocents, he still felt ill at ease.

Memories of the clone he sent to the Hokage tower distracted him, the clone had dispelled, passing Naruto what he knew. Instinctively, Naruto was already making the hadseals of the Shadow Clone technique as he absorbed the memories. Fifty over clones appeared to vanish out of his apartment as they took the place of the night clones who were dispelling all over Konoha.

He had felt amazement at learning what the Hokage and the village elders had planned for him, and had managed to have some breakfast before a ninja had came knocking on his door to fetch him to see the Hokage.

Target is Hayama Shirakumo, a Jonin of Konoha. Sica was filling Naruto in as he followed the masked ninja across the rooftop. With memories of the dispelled clone from the Hokage tower, Naruto already knew what he was going to be facing early this morning. Old man Hokage and the village elders had spent part of the night discussing how to test Naruto, and with the Naruto clone and Sica scanning the details of the plan, Naruto was forewarned and prepared for the test that he was going to be facing.

In the bingo books, Hayama Shirakumo was listed as a highly experience Jonin specializing in kenjutsu, wind and water affiliated attacks. He killed a number of Iwa ninjas during the Third Shinobi War, his moniker by the Iwa ninjas was Death Blade... Sica revealed as it began listing the capabilities of the ninja sent to test Naruto.

A ninja would be sent to lure me to a training ground, where pretending to be an enemy nin, he would force me into an attack. Naruto inwardly thought as he reviewed the memories from his Hokage tower clone, even as he listened to Sica droned on in his head. The memories were the reason why even though to all outward appearance Naruto seemed like he was leisurely following behind the masked ninja, he was actually fully prepared to go into battle at the slightest provocation.

I would now go over the abilities you should display in the battle once more. Sica remarked, cutting through Naruto's thoughts. The Hokage already knew of your Wood Release abilities as well as your skill with the Shadow Clone technique. There's no point hiding the fact that you knew the Body Flicker technique since it was considered a common Chunin level technique. As for the weaker version of your Fire Release and Symbology techniques, there's not much point in using them and drawing attention to your wide skill sets.

The important thing to take note was that your 'light techniques' were seen by Kakashi and Itachi. This meant that there's no point in hiding them. However you would need to make them seem like real ninjutsu techniques. I've already came up with the necessary fake handseals for your various 'light ninjutsu' it would make for an interesting distraction against your opponent at the very least, and would fit the cover you've told the Hokage, where you have been trained by an infiltration ninja.

Of course, you should moderate your fight. Based on your clones' combat performance yesterday night, you should be able to go up against most Jonins and Chunins without any problem. The objective right now however, is to give a fight that is impressive enough to earn a ninja rank, without drawing too much unnecessary attention to the full power that you possessed. It would be wise to find a reasonable way to lose this fight so that you do not seem too powerful.

Alright then, I'll follow your plan. Naruto communed mentally. He came to a stop as Hayama, the masked ninja, came to a halt in a clearing of a training ground. But there's one thing I need to ask of you Sica. During the test, I wish to fight on my own merits. You can help when I need to use the 'light ninjutsu techniques' but in regards to tactics and battlefield maneuvers, I want to take charge. I want to see if I am able work up a battle plan and go up against an experienced ninja without your guidance, under my own capability.

It shall be as you instructed. I will follow your wishes. Sica said simply.

The masked ninja turned to face him. Naruto looked up, hiding a grin of anticipation. He was most probably going to be tested soon. Wearing a look of childish concern, Naruto widened his eyes as he looked at the masked ninja.

"What are we doing here?" Naruto asked, deliberately frowning in confusion. "I thought we're going to the Hokage's tower? Where's old man Hokage?"

"There's no Hokage here to see you." The masked nin answered in a threatening voice, his body hunching forward as he drew a kunai. If Naruto had not known beforehand that this was all an act, he might really believed the man had ill intentions towards him. The masked ninja held up the kunai in his hand and continued. "This is the place where you shall die DEMON!"

Naruto immediately leap backwards when Hayama rushed forward with his kunai. His eyes taking in his surroundings as he quickly came up with a plan of defense and attack. The first thing however was to hide and get out of the range of the masked ninja, it would be pointless to get into a close range fight. His small body simply was not built for that kind of fight. The only advantage he had were his enormous chakra reserves and his ninjutsu. Of course he could also blind the Jonin... but that might make things a little too easy... especially since even Madara Uchiha had problem with that technique at first. He did not want to draw too much attention to his combat skills and capabilities, at least not not unless he was forced to.

Naruto's hands flicked into the handseals that Sica had came up for the 'Cloaking technique'. As he disappeared from physical sight, Naruto was already making the seals for the Body Flicker technique, moving quickly to a new spot in the clearing.

From his vantage at the top of a nearby tree, Naruto looked down at the clearing where Hayama had tensed up and was carefully looking around him for signs of Naruto.

Naruto's hands flashed into a new series of seals.

Wood Release: Death Whips

In another clearing, a distance from training area 34, Sarutobi sat on a log, Homura, Koharu and Danzo around him, his crystal ball in the center where using his Telescope technique, he was spying on the battle taking place between Naruto and Hayama.

Image of a clearing, with a masked Hayama who had drawn his sword, dodging numerous Wood Release attacks, was reflected on the crystal ball. The image had to be centered on Hayama as young Naruto had simply vanished from sight as soon as the test had started.

"Amazing, Naruto Uzumaki is definitely holding up well against a superior opponent, especially someone of Hayama's caliber." Homura commented in surprise as Hayama cut through a massive tangle of deadly slashing vine whips with a wind technique. Hayama stood in the center of the battlefield, dead vegetation all around him as he tried to locate his invisible opponent. "I can now see how a young boy was able to hold out against someone of Madara's strength. That invisibility jutsu of his, it is not a genjutsu, evident by the fact that he did not even show up on the crystal ball. When Kakashi had reported that Naruto seemed to have a way to disappear from sight, I've not expected something like this."

"It is a ninjutsu of some sort. A type we've never encountered before that make him really vanish from view." Koharu said a hint of surprise and appreciation in her voice. "Who is this prodigy of Jiaraya that taught Naruto? This invisibility technique of his, does Jiaraya know of it?"

"I am afraid not." Sarutobi said smoothly, knowing for a fact that Jiaraya had no knowledge of such a technique. His eyes narrowed as he observed the battle taking place between Hayama and an invisible Naruto.

With the technique that Naruto had shown, Sarutobi now had an inkling of how The Eye must have gained all of his precious intelligence on the village and the Uchiha clan. Not even a Transformation technique, which was a well known hybrid of genjutsu and ninjutsu was able to allow a ninja to simply disappear. With a real invisibility technique, a skilled infiltration ninja would be able to enter any place and observe what was taking place undetected. But that technique must have its flaws, if Madara had been able to pierce through it and get to Naruto.

Sarutobi thought back to the report Kakashi had given them only a few hours ago. "... I have then escaped from the battlefield after being rescued by the Naruto clone. I was out of chakra by then and so have to proceed for help on foot. I've reached the eastern walls of the Uchiha compound when I suddenly sighted Madara Uchiha appearing on the wall in front of me, punching what seemed like empty air... There had been a sharp sound of some sort and the area where Madara had punched shattered into shards of light... Naruto had appeared. It seemed that he had some way of disappearing from sight... A technique which Madara had defeated..."

Now with evidence of Naruto's invisibility technique in front of him, the main question was how Madara had been able to pierce the technique which from Sarutobi's viewpoint looking into the crystal, seemed undetectable.

Loud cursing sounded from the crystal ball as Hayama started swearing, having narrowly avoided being trapped by a wooden cage that sprung into being. Hayama body flickered away, the image on the crystal ball shifted to project Hayama's new position. Hayama looked around him wearily and then his whole posture stilled.

"That's a pretty impressive technique demon." Hayama said suddenly in a menacing tone of voice, the crystal ball projecting his voice. "But I didn't become a Jonin without receiving at least a bit of Sensor training. I have enough skill in it to at least sense your chakra output..."

Hayama vanished as enormous green vines slashed at the spot he had been at. The image of the crystal ball shifted as Hayama appeared in a new position, slashing at an empty spot. Or at least it had seemed like an empty spot... until the very air where Hayama had slashed shattered into shards of light, revealing a shocked looking Naruto. Hayama punched the boy who puffed into smoke. It was a Shadow Clone.

"Impressive." Danzo stated. Sarutobi tightened his lips as he saw the predatory look in Danzo's eyes. Danzo however did not see the glare Sarutobi was giving him, his full attention was on the battle taking place as he continued. "A ninjutsu that makes one disappear from sight, a great weapon in itself. It's only flaw is that the technique could be defeated by detecting the ninja's chakra signature. If the demon container is given training in the silent skills, especially the technique of hiding one's chakra signature, he will be virtually undetectable."

Silent skills were the more polite term for assassin skills. Assassins were considered the elite killers of any ninja village, and Konoha had its share of them. The training of an assassin was harsher than that of a normal ninja, as the main objective of the training was to mold one into a true killer, instead of soldiers for hire like most ninjas were.

There was however no way that Sarutobi was going to let Danzo try to turn the child of the Fourth into a cold blooded killer. For one thing, that kind of mind set would be damaging to a child of Naruto's age. It was already bad enough that he was forced to add Naruto into the ninja corp before he became an adult. Even if Naruto was made a Konoha ninja, Sarutobi's intention was to keep the boy close by his side and not let the boy have any mission that deliberately seeks out a target to kill. At least not until he reached the age of twelve, the age where most hidden villages considered their children to be adults.

"This isn't the Mist village Danzo, nor is Konoha at war." Koharu said curtly, revealing that Sarutobi was not the only one outraged by Danzo's comments. "This is a time of peace. There's no need for Konoha to start training child assassins. The minimum age now for Genin is ten. We're already stretching the law in Naruto's case."

"But I can see merit in Danzo's suggestions." Homura remarked in a pondering voice. "Not in the area of training a child in the silent skills of course, but Naruto will definitely benefit from receiving training in hiding his chakra signature. The Eye is a powerful infiltration ninja is he not? It is possible that he did not pass all of his skills to Naruto. The search by the militia the previous night did not reveal any signs of The Eye. He might already be dead. If we give Naruto specialized training in infiltration, he can carry on the legacy of his teacher."

"Perhaps if Sarutobi is willing to give us a more complete description of The Eye other than some vague details, we might be able to have more eyes looking around, to see if The Eye had really perished after going up against Madara." Danzo said snidely, looking displeased at Sarutobi's unwillingness to share more information about The Eye. "But it is as Homura said, Naruto possesses some of the techniques of a powerful infiltration ninja, it will be in Konoha's interest to build up on those skills. It will also be in the interest of Konoha to get Naruto to share his invisibility technique with the rest of our ninjas."

"Whether Naruto wishes to share his techniques is up to him." Sarutobi said firmly. "No ninjas are required to reveal their secret techniques to others, especially in hidden villages like ours. But after what I've observed, Naruto definitely have the potential to be a Chunin, in terms of power and tactics. I will have promoted him to special Jonin based on his Wood Release specialization, if not for the fact that he is still young and definitely lacking in battle experience."

"That's true." Koharu said looking at the image on the crystal ball. Hayama had created Shadow Clones of his own and had unleashed a powerful Wind Release technique with his sword. The invisible Shadow Clones all around him had vanished into smoke. A solitary figure of Naruto lying on the grass a few feet away from Hayama and his clones concluded the battle. "I believe it is time to meet Hayama and young Naruto. The test seemed to be over. I seconded Sarutobi's opinion. Naruto should be made Chunin, he has the skills and capability for the rank. His mental maturity and combat experience might be lacking due to his age, but those are factors which we could cultivate."

"I agree with Koharu as well." Homura said as Danzo simply gave a nod. "It is a simple matter of finding the right teacher for Naruto, to give him a slightly more accelerated training program. That boy has potential."

"Then with all of you in agreement, I suppose it is time to greet our newest addition to Konoha's ninja corps." Sarutobi said as he canceled the Telescope technique and got up, with the village elders and Danzo following. Their hands flashed into the handseals for the Body Flicker technique and they vanished in a swirl of wind.

Naruto panted as he lay on the soft grass where he had been blasted away by Hayama's Wind Slash technique. It had hurt. Hayama had been able to detect him and his clones even when they were under cloak, much like how Madara and a few of the Uchiha traitor nins he had went up against last night had done. He had limited himself to fifty Shadow Clones in the fight and not using Sica to blind Hayama as a handicap, but even then, it was a testament to Hayama's skills that the Jonin was able to beat all of them, without Naruto having to deliberately loosen his guard.

Of course, the few Uchiha traitor Jonins and Chunins his clones had went up against the previous night had spent a day in the Anbu tower under torture. It was understandable that those traitor ninjas had not been fighting at their peak performance. But even then, the fact that Hayama was able to go up against Naruto and his fifty clones, even while they were spamming chakra intensive techniques, showed the difference in skills between Naruto and the Jonin.

The Hokage and the elders are on their way. Sica spoke up as Naruto pushed himself off the grass. They should be here... now.

Naruto looked up as old man Hokage appeared in front of him and Hayama who remained masked. The elderly figures of the village elders and Danzo also shimmered into view. A look of concern was on old man Hokage's face.

Time to act like an normal eight year old. Naruto thought wearily to himself as he screwed up his face. "Old man Hokage! What is going on? The... the man attacked me!"

"I am sorry Naruto, it was a test. We wanted to gauge your skills in a real combat situation. Please forgive this old man." The Hokage said as he kneed down in front of Naruto, straightening his clothes and checking over him. "Are you hurt anywhere Naruto? Were you injured?"

"I am fine." Naruto said puffing out his chest indignantly. "But why am I tested? And Teacher... did you find Teacher?"

Old man Hokage hesitated, an uncertain look in his eyes. "We're still looking Naruto. I'll let you know once I have any news. In the meantime, these people here are the village elders. We've discussed your actions last night and wanted to reward you for your help during the attack. That is why we tested you."

"Reward?" Naruto asked, opening his eyes wide.

"Yes reward." Old man Hokage said as he got up solemnly, taking something from his robes. "Naruto Uzumaki. Under the power vested in me as the Hokage, as well as the approval of the village elders, you are given a field promotion. You will now become a Chunin of Konoha, for your actions against Madara Uchiha yesterday night."

Hayama who was standing to the side stiffened in shock as the Hokage placed the Konoha headband on Naruto's head, his eyes wide in disbelief.

"I am a Chunin now?" Naruto said in surprise, awe on his face. "But what about the academy..."

"You will be released from the academy and will be apprenticed to a Jonin. You'll be taught all of the necessary ninja knowledge. Until your education is complete, you will not be participating in any Chunin level duties unless requested." Old man Hokage said simply. "You will also be answerable only to me or the village elders. Come Naruto, we can continue this conversation back in my office. There are things I need to brief you in regards to your special promotion..."

Hiashi took his seat in the village council room. As head of the Hyuga clan, which was one of Konoha's current prominent clans, his assigned area was only two seats away from the Hokage seat. In between them sat the current Senju acting clan head, a Jonin who served with Konoha's Hunter nins, and Koharu, one of the village elders. Opposite the table, Homura, the second village elder sat beside the Third. Two new faces however took up the Uchiha clan head position.

Hiashi recognized Shisui Uchiha, known for being one of the two prodigies born to the Uchiha clan in recent generations. The young man had even earned a place in the bingo books of other hidden villages as 'Shisui of the Body Flicker' famed for his near instantaneous Body Flicker technique. That he now sat in the Uchiha clan seat meant that the political situation within the clan must have changed. Behind Shisui stood Inoten Uchiha, a Jonin that Hiashi recognized as a classmate from the Ninja Academy a long time ago. Inoten seemed to be taking on an advisory role in the current meeting, as he stood rigidly behind the seat of the Uchiha clan head.

The council room was rapidly filling up with the other clan heads and civilian members. By now, news of the attack on the Anbu tower and the Uchiha clan by one of the most infamous ninja in Konoha history had spread across the village like wild fire. The village was also under lock down, and so it was not really surprising when The Third had called a council meeting to discuss the night's attack after things have settled down, especially since all the clans and civilians were in jitters if Madara Uchiha would suddenly reappear and attack them next.

Hiashi already had some of his clan members going about the village gathering intelligence about the current situation, but a briefing by the Third would probably reveal more than he could find out. The outcome of this meeting would also influence his decision whether to lessen up or increase the patrols in his clan compound.

The Third and the two village elders entered the council room, with Danzo, a prominent ninja who had a council seat, following. The four took their assigned positions, the Third looked down the table to ensure that all council members were present before nodding to the two Anbu beside the door. The two Anbu walked out of the room, closing the door behind them. A pulse of chakra from outside surrounded the room in a chakra bubble, sealing the room from any spying attempts.

"I am glad that all of you came once you've received my summons." The Third said in a grave voice as the room silenced and all turned to look at the leader of the village. "I am sure by now all of you have heard about last night's attack. Many ninjas from the various clans in Konoha also took part in the militia counterattack, so most of the clan heads probably have a good idea of what was going on. To get straight to the point, we've gathered all of the Uchiha traitors who were involved in last night's attack. They would be held in an undisclosed location for interrogation and trial at a later date. Unfortunately, Madara Uchiha had escaped from Konoha. The patrols and the reserve militia had been called up to do a full sweep on the village and he had not been found..."

"But he is Madara Uchiha! The man who according to history fought the First to a draw many times." One of the civilian council member spoke up in fear. "How can we really be sure he is still not in the village?"

"We can't... be a hundred percent certain." Koharu said in a waspish voice as she glared at the council member. "That's the reason why there are heavy patrols in the village and why Konoha is under lock down. The only thing we can do now is remain vigilant and recoup from our losses."

"What about our ninja strength?" Tsume of the Inuzuka clan asked. "A lot of the Anbu were dead or injured after the attack on the Anbu tower, that means a large portion of our Jonins are out of action."

"Homura, if you will brief the council on the village's strength right now?" The Third said with a sigh. Homura nodded, opening up a folder in front of him.

"39% of our Anbu task force were in the tower during the attack. 7 died during the attack, 18 are badly injured, 15 will recover within the week and resume active duties...

"Our active strength in Konoha, a total of the Elites, Militia and Reserves... Not counting those on border patrols... Jonin strength now number at 158... Chunin at 457... Genin at 676...

"Konoha Military Police Force is now 75% manned by Elites and Militia ninjas for the time being due to heavy Uchiha casualties after the attack last night..

"We're recalling all of our ninjas currently out on missions. They should arrive back within a week, bringing up our numbers..."

Hiashi sat quietly, listening and observing as the council descended into chaos. A few were asking if The Third was going to reinstate Wartime protocols for Konoha. Some questioned how Madara Uchiha remained alive for so long. Many were asking how the Third would deal with the threat of a Kage level ninja out for Konoha's blood. As Hiashi watched the Third expertly fielded and maneuvered the questions, his respect for the elderly ninja rose. He straightened however when Koharu called an end to the questions. His hackles rose at the looks in the eyes of the Third and the village elders. The gleam in Danzo's eyes also gave him a sense of unease, wondering what Koharu was about to say.

"... proceeding to the last item for today's meeting." Koharu was saying, her lips in a grim line. "By now you know of the actions of Shibi Aburame and Kakashi Hatake's teams who were placed to observe the Uchiha clan after the arrest of the Uchiha dissidents. These two teams were instrumental in saving a large number of Uchiha lives, albeit suffering heavy casualties to themselves...

"The Third in his foresight however placed a third secret team near the Uchiha clan during the attack... The source of the rumors about ninjas with Wood Release bloodlines... who had saved Uchiha clan members during the attack... This third team was the source of that... I would however need to reveal a village secret to do that..."

"I am sure most of you knew about the history with Orochimaru. He was one of the three Sanins, along with Tsunade and Jiraya. He was banished from Konoha after our ninja forces discovered that he was conducting illegal experiments on kidnapped children...

"... the village was told that only children were kidnapped and and only one survived... that's... the official story...

"... the truth was that Orochimaru had also kidnapped a Chunin who managed to survive... the experiment he was conducting was the implanting of the First Hokage's genes, in order to bestow on others the Wood Release bloodline... which I am sure most of you knew by now..."

"Orochimaru is nothing but a bloodline thief!" Natsu who was the acting Senju clan head seethed in anger. "Who is the Chunin that survive the experiment?"

"Calm yourself Natsu. Let me finish first before you all ask your questions." Koharu said in a fierce voice as the gathered council members erupted in exclamations of shock and accusation at the news.

"... as I was saying, the Chunin survived. He was trained in Wood Release techniques to get a better handle on his bloodline... Jiaraya personally took an interest in the young man and instructed him as well... He became a Jonin... It was thought he was one of the two Wood Release users in Konoha, until another was found with the bloodline... naturally..."

Koharu gave a stern look at Natsu Senju when he tried to open his mouth again. She continued on in a loud voice that carried across the room, cutting off whatever he wanted to say.

"This new Wood Release bloodline user was a child... It was believed that he might be descended from a distant Senju line... This child was an orphan and was taken in by the Third... he received training in Wood Release techniques under the only Jonin in Konoha with the Wood Release bloodline...

"The teacher and student duo were the third secret team sent to observe the Uchiha clan compound... Through the use of Shadow Clones, they managed to assist in saving those trapped beneath the rubble of the Anbu tower, they managed to rescue those under attack by the Uchiha dissidents... they also managed to halt Madara Uchiha until help could arrive...

"... the teacher was believed to perish in the attack... the student survived... he was given a special field promotion to Chunin with regards to his actions... The Third and us elders believed it was no longer necessary to hide the identity of Konoha's remaining Wood Release user...

"He is... Naruto Uzumaki..."

There was a pin drop silence. A few of the council members had their mouths wide open as they stared at Koharu in shock... and then chaos descended into the council room.

"... the village demon container has the Wood Release bloodline?" a voice cried out in disbelief and was buried by the loud masses of voices that followed.

"... Naruto Uzumaki... if he is really a pure blooded Uzumaki... the Uzumaki clan when it still exists used to be distant cousins to the Senju clan, its possible he might be descended from a Senju line..."

"... the Uchiha clan owed this child a blood debt it can never repay. We request to adopt Naruto Uzumaki into our clan..."

"Outrageous! The Wood Release bloodline belongs to the Senju clan! That Naruto Uzumaki awakens to the bloodline proves that he is descended from our clan! Hokage sama, the Senju clan wishes to adopt Naruto Uzumaki and take him back to his real descended clan..."

"... but he is the village demon container... he is a danger to all of us..."

"... you are just a civilian so I will forgive you for that slight... what that child has done for the Uchiha clan more than proved his worth to us... Hokage sama please let the Uchiha clan repay our debt to the boy!"

"Inoten Uchiha! That child belongs to the Senju clan! You will not fight us over this matter!..."

"Man... it's really turning into a shouting match in the council room." N5 said dryly as S5 relay the scanned conversations going on in the village council room, into his head.

"There's a 95% probability that Boss will be adopted into a prominent clan. A 100% confirmation that Boss will gain popularity through public announcement of his actions during the attack." Sica remarked. "I have analyzed the situation. The village elders most probably thought they could bind Boss closer to them by helping him gain good will of the villagers. The story they spin up also highlighted the fact that the Hokage and them were on the ball regarding security matters in Konoha. This cover which they wanted you to operate under would gain them serious political points."

N5 shook his head resignedly. As a clone of the Boss, he also have Boss' memories, in particular the memories of the time when old man Hokage had taken Boss back to the Hokage tower, with the village elders and Danzo following, to debrief him on his "secret assignment".

"... Naruto, we know of your tutorage under The Eye and what he had done to you. In respect to the Third, we'll keep The Eye's existence a secret. However many in the village were already asking about the Wood Release users that supposedly helped rescue those trapped in the Anbu tower and under attacked in the Uchiha clan... we believed it would not be wise to hide your existence in this situation... there's also the fact that people might question how you became Chunin when your rank becomes official..."

"... You would operate under a cover... This cover would be told to the public and you must keep it up at all times... This would be one of your first duty as a Konoha ninja..."

"In order to keep The Eye's existence a secret... we can't reveal to public that you gained your Wood Release bloodline through some artificial experiments... We will tell the public this instead... Listen carefully Naruto..."

And right after that little talk, when the village elders and Danzo had left, old man Hokage had given Boss another secret briefing.

"... Naruto, in order to protect The Eye, your teacher, I have to tell the elders that he was a student of a famous Konoha ninja... You must keep this a secret... This is to protect your teacher..."

"Manipulative bastards... and that includes old man Hokage as well." N5 said in disgruntlement. "All of them are just protecting their own interests. I can't believe old man Hokage will just follow along with their schemes and pull Boss along."

"Boss had similarly manipulated things in his own way, it is unfortunately the only way to keep certain things secret. From analysis of the Hokage's actions, he had done all he could to protect the interest of Boss without damaging his own power base." Sica revealed. "The main cause of this massive web of schemes was due to the action of the one named Danzo. He was the one that guided the village elders to a confrontation with the Third Hokage."

"Danzo... what do we know about him?" N5 asked.

"He was the leader of Root, an Anbu faction which the Third Hokage disbanded in recent years." Sica answered. "He was a powerful ninja and widely respected. There's talk of making him a village elder, though the notion had not yet come to pass."

"Root? What is that?" N5 asked in interest.

"Root was a Konoha Anbu subdivision founded by Danzo. They carried out missions that might be less than respectable, espionage, assassinations and terrorism to name a few. Certain agents had went rogue, nearly causing international incidents, and that was what forced the Third to shut down the subdivision." Sica said as it shifted through the data it had scanned from the Konoha archives in the past.

"Really... and Danzo's the leader of such an organization. Seems like Boss' instinct was right. This guy need to be watched." N5 said with a grimace.

"A clone is already on standby and will follow Danzo after the council meeting is over." Sica remarked.

N5 grinned. "I wonder what dirt Boss can dig up this time..."

It was night fall by the time the council broke up, several members still gathered outside the Hokage tower arguing in loud voices, a few were trying to prevent a fight from breaking out. N17 paid them no mind however as he moved from his position on a roof of Konoha's bank, trailing after a solitary figure that exited the Hokage tower.

The figure made his way deeper into the warehouse district of Konoha, a place that was virtually deserted at night. However, hidden under cloak, N17 was secured in the knowledge that he could follow undiscovered, trailing closely behind the man.

He was therefore startled when Danzo suddenly vanished... and then the man reappeared right in front of him, punching through his cloak. N17 gave a cry of alarm as Danzo wrestled his hands behind his back, immobilizing him.

"My, my... what have we here?" Danzo said as he looked down in amusement at the alarmed face of N17. "It seemed that you are not as innocent as Sarutobi thought. Isn't that right Naruto Uzumaki? Creeping around in the night... The Eye probably taught you more than you had showed Sarutobi. Impressive thinking and training for someone your age. Definitely Infiltration ninja material."

N17 kept silent. He was helpless right now with his hands forced behind him, unable to do any handseals. But whatever Danzo was going to do to him, Boss would get his memories when he dispel.

"After seeing your little trick this morning. I thought it was prudent to get a sense of my surroundings wherever I go just in case. It was a lucky thing this old warhawk's instinct remained as sharp as ever. Chakra Sensors came in different levels of capabilities my dear little Naruto, I am one of the rare few that could sense one's chakra even if they were not actively using ninjutsu or genjutsu." Danzo said with a laugh that sent chills down N17's spine. "You're such a wonderful little specimen. With the proper training, you can become Konoha's most valuable asset. You interest me greatly boy. I'll have you one way or another."

N17 shivered and began struggling fiercely at Danzo's words. The gleam in the older man's eyes, the way his hands were forced behind him... Oh god he was in the hands of a pervert! Sica help!

"Still keeping silent eh... Could it be that you're just a Shadow Clone?" Danzo said looking at N17 who was now struggling wildly in his grasp, N17's eyes were wide in alarm. A blaze of light suddenly came into being in front of Danzo's eyes, blinding him. In pain and shock, Danzo released N17.

Quickly taking the opportunity he had, N17 immediately body flickered away. Only the instructions from Boss prevented him from actually fleeing all the way home or simply dispelling. Instead he body flickered until he was a mile away from Danzo, keeping the man just within Sica's scanning range. He had no idea how ninjas with high level sensor training actually sense other chakra sources, but Danzo would not be able to scan him if he was a mile apart... right?

S17's scan picked up Danzo's words as he recovered, and transmitted those words directly into N17's mind.

"That's certainly interesting... Naruto Uzumaki... I will make you my tool... one way or another..."

Dread settled in N17's stomach as he continued following Danzo a mile apart, cold sweat beading on his forehead.

"Get Boss to send a replacement soon." N17 plead to S17. "I don't want to follow a pervert who likes little boys, to wherever he's going!"

**Author's Note:** A big thank you to everyone who reviewed my story. I really appreciate all those feedbacks and comments, they really motivate me. I am sorry I couldn't reply all of you, but I actually visited the profile pages of most of you ;) I am a big reader of fanfiction, and always thought that people who reviewed my story will have roughly the same preference in stories as me, so I always like to check out the favorite stories of you guys.

Anyway, I am trying to keep up my pace of update. So I hope you guys enjoy this latest installment to this story. :) I am also looking for beta readers. So for those interested, please let me know. I'll probably open up a forum thread and post future unbetaed chapters there for constructive beta and criticism. PM me for those interested ^^ It'll take a while to set up the thread though, I am still working on the next chapter.

**Chapter 12: Chapter 12**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Note:** A word of warning, this story will be going slightly AU in terms of Naruto canon/fandom, especially in terms of Konoha's military strength. It really tested my sense of belief when the cannon states that the Allied Shinobi Forces numbered close to 80,000, and the Feudal Lords of the Six Elemental countries are presented as wimpy politicians, who let the Kages of the Hidden Villages control their total military might... In terms of logic, if you're the president of a country, will you let someone else control the total 13,000+ of your country's soldiers, let them form a village, let them become loyal to the Kages controlling them? What's to stop the more corrupt Kages from just dethroning you or led those soldiers against you? A number of readers have highlighted to me that Konoha should have a lot more ninjas based on cannon figures... but 13,000+ ninjas from one village? Let's pause a moment and try to imagine the size of the village, with its supporting civilians needed to support such a large infrastructure of ninjas. Konoha will be the Hidden Leaf City if that's the case... ;)

Since Naruto canon is currently not clear on that little detail, I am going to take it as the Feudal Lords do have some kind of guarantee, something that will deter the Kages serving them from just killing them and taking over their lands and wealth. The military strength is also pulled from all over the country, not just Konoha. I will still follow the cannon figures of military strength, making Fire country's military strength number around 13,000+ or maybe more since they are the more powerful Elemental country. However I will be making a clear distinction on the **Ninja forces** from Konoha, and the **Military forces** controlled by the Fire Lord. Their numbers combined will make up Fire country's military strength. It make sense, at least to me, that the Feudal Lords control the majority of their military strength in order to keep their more powerful but lesser quantity ninjas in check... more will be explained in the story... enjoy... :)

**Chapter Twelve: The Lost Legacy**

Previously...

S17's scan picked up Danzo's words as he recovered, and transmitted those words directly into N17's mind.

"That's certainly interesting... Naruto Uzumaki... I will make you my tool... one way or another..."

Dread settled in N17's stomach as he continued following Danzo a mile apart, cold sweat beading on his forehead.

"Get Boss to send a replacement soon." N17 plead to S17. "I don't want to follow a pervert who likes little boys, to wherever he's going!"

His journey into the catacombs underneath Konoha remained undisturbed. He had kept up a constant chakra pulse through his journey, sensing his surroundings for any signs of young Naruto. His chakra scan of his surroundings had however revealed nothing. It seemed that the boy must have long since fled.

Bypassing the traps, he gave a nod to the Root ninjas on patrol in the shadows. His hands flashed into several coded signs, quickly and silently conveying that he want the guards to maintain constant chakra scans of their surroundings. With the skills Naruto possessed, this was a necessary precaution in case he discovered the Root headquarters before Danzo was ready.

Though Naruto Uzumaki might be young in terms of age, the small test that Danzo had put him through earlier revealed that Naruto was no weak child to be quailed. Detecting Naruto on the journey here, capturing him, and using words to inflict psychological turmoil on the boy had done nothing but to make Naruto more stubborn and resistant. If he was to get Naruto to his side, Danzo knew he had to either entice him to join Root or break the boy's spirit totally.

Walking deeper into the catacombs, Danzo was unsurprised when a flicker of wind breezed by his side, his trusted ninja, Fu, appearing beside him.

"The guards have received your message. Constant chakra scans around the Root headquarters will be kept up constantly." Fu said in a voice devoid of any emotions.

"Good. I've found a rare jewel in Konoha today, Naruto Uzumaki, who possessed a technique to vanish from sight. The only way to detect him is by sensing his chakra." Danzo said with a contemplative smile. "He had tried to tail me tonight. We must make sure that he does not discover headquarters, at least not until I am able to bring him into the fold."

"You wish to recruit Naruto Uzumaki?" Fu asked in an unassuming voice.

"Yes, the skills Naruto possessed will be a boon to Root should he use them for our cause." Danzo said with a chuckle. "It is too late to cultivate his mind to be loyal to us, but everyone can be broken if their weakness are discovered. I already have plans to break the boy of his dependence and loyalty to the Third. Once that is done, it will be easy to get him to become part of Root. But that is a matter for another day. How goes the preparation for tonight?"

"The doctor is ready. The seal masters are standing by, they can begin inking the seals you require anytime." Fu said simply, bowing to Danzo. "Orochimaru's agent has delivered the solution containing cultivated cells from the body of the First Hokage, as per our arrangement with him. Using the catacomb tunnels, Io met up with the agent outside the village without any problems. The harvested hand from one of the dead Uchiha and the gathered Sharingans have been cleaned, and the necessary sacrifices have been drugged. The procedures can start anytime."

"Good set up extra guards. Under no circumstances must the procedures be disturbed once they begin." Danzo said, a gleam in his eyes as his mouth twisted into a satisfied smile. "Tonight will be the night when I will acquire enough power to protect Konoha, and to lead Root to a new future."

Fu gave a silent nod as he followed Danzo in quick fast strides towards the medical room deep within Root headquarters.

N17 had no idea if he should be relieved or embarrassed that Danzo's not a pedophile afterall, just a ruthless and cunning old man who if Sica's latest scans were to be believed, was attempting some sort of complex fuinjutsu to seal a carefully cultivated solution of the First Hokage's Wood Release cells into a hand. The seal arrays Danzo and his seal masters were currently crafting on the hand was of a complex design. It was a design that even Sica with all of his recorded knowledge from Konoha's library, was unable to decipher.

The only clue N17 and S17 had of what the seal arrays does was from Danzo's conversations with his subordinates. With S17 projecting a mental image of the visual and audio scan, it was as though N17 was standing beside Danzo himself.

"Once the seals are completed, bring the five sacrifices so that I can craft the binding seals on them." Danzo had ordered the Root Ninja Fu, shortly after he entered the Sealing Room.

"I will do that." Fu had acknowledged. "One of the sacrifice is unfortunately putting up quite a fight, using her chakra to burn through the drugs. I may have to administer a double dosage. Will that interfere with the sealing?"

"No it wouldn't. The seal arrays doesn't care if the life given to power the seal is given willingly or not, or under heavy drugs. It's the life force that's important." Danzo said dismissively. "Who is the sacrifice in question anyway? My orders to you was to find some street kids or orphans to use as sacrifices, children that no one will miss. They shouldn't be able to use their chakra against drugs."

"It's Yaiba Chikai's daughter. The agents picked her because she was an orphan with no relatives or guardian in Konoha. They had found her collapsed at the academy training fields last night and thought she would be easily missed in the chaos. No one knew that her old man taught her some tricks before his death." Fu said in an emotionless voice. "With the added patrols in Konoha, most of the homeless had been housed in the shelters, and the agents had picked what they could find especially within the short time frame."

"I am not blaming you Fu. But to think of the coincidence... Yaiba was Konoha's foremost Weapon and Poison master." Danzo said shaking his head as he heard Fu's reply. "It was a great loss to Konoha when he died in that A-rank mission last month. He must have been grooming his daughter after his footsteps. She would probably make a great addition to Root, but right now I need her life more than I need another recruit. The Pentagram Binding of Five Paths seals are the only way to bind a bloodline to a part of the body without attempting those full blown genetic alterations that Orochimaru is fond of doing, though it is thanks to Orochimaru's continued experiments into bloodlines that we even have a concentrated solution of cells from the First Hokage at all."

Danzo gave a sneer as he continued. "The only unfortunate aspect of the seals is that those seals need living sacrifices to power them. To think Minato had these seals and more in his library and he never used them, hoarding them away like some dark secret. He had always been a fool. It is a good thing his whole library of knowledge now resides with us. Root will make better use of his knowledge than he had done."

"It is as you say Danzo sama. I have best be on my way to prepare the sacrifices." Fu said, moving out of the sealing room.

"Give me and the seal masters two hours of preparation before sending the sacrifices in." Danzo had ordered. "Once the Wood Release bloodline is sealed into the hand, bring the doctor in. He'll need to attach the hand to me as soon as the sealing is done. And straight after that, all of the harvested Sharingans must be implanted into the hand."

"I will see to the preparations." Fu had affirmed.

The conversation had taken place half an hour ago, and N17 had been more than grateful that Boss had already sent two other clones as backup, both who were now scouting out the different parts of the catacombs where the Root base was hidden in. Of course, Boss had initially sent the backup for N17 because of N17's mistaken impression that Danzo had some sick fetish for young children, they had not expected to literally stumble on a minefield. That Danzo was in the midst of conducting some sick technique to graft the Wood Release bloodline into a severed hand, which would then be attached to Danzo's body. N17 got the idea that the altered hand would probably grant Danzo access to the Wood Release bloodline, but he had no idea what Danzo's intention was for the numerous Sharingans he had harvested to implant into his new hand. The thought that Danzo had ordered his agents to dug Sharingan eyes out of dead Uchihas were more than a little disturbing to N17.

Of course, after N17 and the other clones had gotten over the initial shock that Danzo had a cozy base hidden deep within Konoha's catacombs, a base containing ninjas loyal to Danzo who were also aiding him in conducting some sickening fuinjutsu techniques, they had quickly spread out to gather as much information as they could. All the information their Sicas had scanned were then sent back to Boss who was frantically compiling all those data into a cohesive whole. Danzo's conversation with Fu had also alerted them to the fact that the supposed library full of Fuinjutsu knowledge belonging to their father, the Fourth Hokage, might somehow be in Danzo's hands. How the library ended up with Danzo, none of them had any idea. But based on scans so far, that supposed library was not found anywhere in Root's base.

Their tasks were made more difficult by the fact that Root's sentry ninjas were ordered to conduct chakra scans of their surroundings. After the scare Danzo had given N17, the clones were fully briefed by their individual Sicas of the power and range of Sensor ninjas, which unfortunately was not much. Sica's scanned library of knowledge had contained information about Sensor ninja training, but Chakra Sensing was the type of ninja training that developed differently in different individuals, and it was difficult to tell how accomplished a Sensor ninja was, without detailed prior knowledge of the ninja himself.

There were two known types of Chakra Sense training. The more common Chakra Echolocation method, which consists of sending one's chakra out from the body in precise pulses, echoes of which would then return to the users. Ninjas using this method were trained to decipher images, smells, sensations, taste or sounds from the returning chakra pulses. What the ninjas would be able to sense, was highly dependent on the ninja in question. High control over one's chakra was needed to use this method, and the furthest distance this type of ninjas were able to scan in record was sixty meters.

The second lesser known and more difficult method was termed the Chakra Web. It was created based on the analogy that everything in life was connected. All sentient living things have life force, which also means they have chakra. Chakra were known to resonate with each other, constantly reaching out to nearby chakra sources unless one's chakra was heavily shielded. This type of "leakage" was common among civilians, genins, and chunin level ninjas. It was also one of the common principle that all things in life gravitates towards each other.

A master of the Chakra Web was recorded as able to sense chakra sources up to eighty meters away with all known senses, visual, touch, hearing and taste. Legends even spoke of true masters of these methods, the creators of the Chakra Web, being able to sense the life force of plant life itself and access the uppermost thoughts of living beings within his/her chakra range. The ultimate level of the Chakra Web was bordering on Senjutsu, and according to records, Sages were well apt to use and would greatly empower this technique.

According to old legends, the Sage of the Six Paths was recorded as being able to communicate mentally with anyone using this technique within a two mile radius due to his connection with nature. However, users of Senjutsu had decreased in numbers and powers with each generations. Konoha's only known Sage was Jiaraya of the Sanin, and no other Hidden Villages had users of Senjutsu for the past few decades. It was also a highly contested point in ninja history, that no known Sages of the past few generations were able to match up in power to the legendary Sage of the Six Paths or any of the first generation Sages.

Of course, there were also known bloodlines that actually enhanced Chakra Sensing abilities, and several clans which created their own brand of sensor techniques. At the end of it all, it was a fact that there was virtually no way of knowing if a ninja knew any Chakra Sensing techniques, which method he/she knew and up to what range to avoid. S17 had been calibrating its scans to see if it could detect the chakra pulses emitting from Sensor ninjas if they were using the Chakra Echolocation method. There was however no way to detect if a user of the Chakra Web method was scanning his/her surroundings for chakra since they have no need to emit any additional energy signatures. All those myriad reasons had been why N17 had been caught by Danzo. Basing the chakra sensing abilities of Root ninjas on the limited information they had, the three Naruto clones had decided to use the largest known scan range, and keep a minimum distance of at least eighty plus meters away from any of the Root sentry patrolling the base.

"New information from Boss." S17 said within N17's mind. "A high priority message had been sent to the Third Hokage regarding our discovery of Root and what Danzo is about to do. Boss is also implementing a rescue plan for the five sacrifices. His exact words are, 'He will not have the lives of five innocents on his conscience just to gather more information.'"

"Good." N17 agreed whole heartedly. "If he had decided otherwise, I would have intervene by myself. But he is aware that the moment Danzo is aware of what is happening, he might try to flee?"

"Yes, that is why more clones are on the way to implement the second part of his plans." S17 said in answer to N17's question. "The layout of the catacombs has been mapped, and Danzo is going to find out shortly that all of the alternate tunnels out of the Root base are going to mysteriously collapse, save for the one tunnel where the main force will be arriving through. It will take a large amount of Earth Release techniques just to dig out of the block ins that Boss had in mind. Boss is also planning to set up a wide varieties of traps in those blocked tunnels, to maximize the chance of the main force capturing the Root ninjas alive."

"That's good, but what main force are you talking about?" N17 asked curiously.

"I am referring to the ninjas that the Third Hokage is gathering now." S17 revealed. "The Third had received the message... and he is not pleased at all..."

It was already dusk. Sarutobi knew that he should be returning back home to rest, especially after the intense council meeting that had only ended an hour ago. Add in the fact that he had barely few hours of sleep for the past two days, what with the capturing of the Uchiha dissidents, the arrival of Madara Uchiha who had released and gathered those dissidents to attack the Uchiha clan, the rescue that followed, the lock down of the village and the whole mess with the council surrounding the fate of Naruto. Sarutobi had to admit that at the very moment, he was feeling every bit of his sixty fifth years.

Koharu's masterful play of the council in regards to Naruto's supposed history had led to two of the most prominent clan in Konoha fighting for guardianship of the boy. The goodwill that Naruto was sure to gain from Konoha's citizens after the council members spread the news of Naruto's actions would serve to land Naruto deeper into the village elders' debt, whether the boy knew it or not. It was also a certain way to prevent Naruto from betraying them in the future. After all, should Naruto exposed the village elders' lies, he would instantly lose whatever prestige he would be gaining from Konoha shortly.

There were times when Sarutobi cursed the hold his old teammates, the village elders, had over him. In most Hidden Villages, the Kages served as the foremost authority of a Hidden Village. The decisions of the Kages could only be overturned if there was a majority council vote against the decisions in question. The positions of the villager elders served as pure advisory roles to the Kages, made up of people the Kages could trust. Each of them had two votes to cast during a council meeting, which was the equivalent to the number of votes a clan head possessed. In Sarutobi's case however, the relationship between him and his old team mates were a bit more complex.

As village elders, Koharu and Homura had the right and authority to virtually sit in to any meeting Sarutobi was to conduct. They also have the rights to go through any materials in Konoha's archives, even those dealing with S-rank missions. It basically meant that very few things could be kept secret from them. Add in the fact that Koharu and Homura were very well respected ninjas in their own rights, with Koharu having many civilian contacts due to her family's connections as powerful bankers, it basically meant that the two of them combined carried significant influence among the clan heads and civilian council members. The two of them were able to shift any council decisions in their favor if they had a mind to it, and special care had to be taken in dealing with his old teammates.

If Sarutobi had a way to prevent Naruto from being embroiled in the schemes of the village elders, he would have already done so. But with the elders united against whatever decisions he might make in regards to Naruto, there was precious little he could do, not without exposing what The Eye had done to Naruto to the whole council. In a way it was better that everyone thought Naruto was born with the Wood Release bloodline rather than to realize the truth that Naruto only gained the bloodline through some artificial experiment. The child already had the stigma of being known as Konoha's demon container, being labeled as a bloodline thief would only make things worse.

There was a knock on the door, breaking Sarutobi's bitter thoughts. He carefully composed himself as the door opened, revealing one of his Anbu on duty.

"The Fire Feudal Lord had sent a message." The eagle masked Anbu said, walking swiftly forward, placing a scroll on his desk.

"Thank you. Return to your duties." Sarutobi said with a nod, waiting for the Anbu to leave before he picked up the scroll and opened it. He had sent the Feudal Lord of Fire country a scroll concerning Madara's attack on Konoha shortly after day break. The relationships between Hidden Villages and their Elemental countries meant that figuratively, the Hidden Villages have to answer to their respective Feudal Lords. In actual fact however, the Feudal Lords served a role more as patrons of the Hidden Villages allied with them. The Feudal Lords provided the Hidden Villages with jobs, income and trade. In times of war, the ninjas of the Hidden Villages pay their dues by serving as powerful front line soldiers.

Sarutobi was fully prepared as he read the scroll, skipping past the flowery proses of the Fire Lord, which hinted at the Feudal Lord's disappointment at Sarutobi in not being able to apprehend Madara. Now that Madara had escaped, it made the rogue ninja a threat and a great inconvenience to the Feudal Lord.

"... Fire country is thus informed of the unfortunate attack of the rogue nin, Madara Uchiha, on the Uchiha clan... The Fire Lord sends his regret that so many of his valued Uchiha subjects had perished in the attack... and agree with the Hokage of Konoha that the whole country should be put on alert... the full military might of Fire country will be notified of the presence of this rogue ninja... rest assured that the thousands of soldiers in Fire country's military will not let Madara Uchiha passed unharmed if found..." Sarutobi snorted at the thinly veiled remark that the soldiers of Fire country would do a better job at dealing with Madara then Konoha ninjas.

Shaking his head, Sarutobi rolled his eyes at the pompous habit of the Fire Lord, who always wrote his scroll in the third person. But even if the Fire Lord was a pompous ass, he was still the leader of Fire country, controller of a massive army and wealth, which meant that Sarutobi had to pay him a certain degree of respect.

In terms of military strength, most of the Elemental countries have a military might that numbered in tens of thousands of ninjas and soldiers. This number however could be further broken down into the ninja forces of the Hidden Villages and the military forces of the Elemental countries. Nowadays, the total ninja strength of a major Hidden Village numbered in a little more than a thousand, though the numbers used to reach over two thousands before the Third Shinobi World War. The various Feudal Lords on the other hand, had a military might made up of numerous thousands, whether they were pure foot soldiers, samurais, or specialists trained to use chakra.

Knowledge of how to use chakra was not exactly a secret in the Elemental countries, and many common ninja techniques could be bought or sold in the major cities. One of the common clause in the treaties between Hidden Villages and Elemental countries was that ninjas from the Hidden Villages be sent to train the soldiers in the Elemental countries how to use chakra and the more common ninja techniques. The actual true military might of the Hidden Villages lies in their powerful secret ninja techniques and bloodlines that each Hidden Villages possessed. The ninjas of a Hidden Village were treated as super soldiers by the Feudal Lords, the spear point of the Elemental country in times of war. The thousands of more ordinary chakra users in the military force of the Elemental countries would however serve as supporting forces during war.

Even though the chakra users in the Feudal Lords' armies usually only reach genin or chunin level with their common place ninja techniques, their large numbers meant that they effectively served as a effective counter to the ninjas of the Hidden Villages living in the Elemental countries during times of peace. There were times when quantities would still trump qualities and this was one of them. This added layer of protection meant that no Hidden Villages would ever think of killing off a Feudal Lord and take over his country as well as his wealth. Should any Hidden Village attempt it, they would pay a heavy cost. Even if the military force of the Elemental country in question could not put them down, the Hidden Village would still suffer significant losses in lives. Not to mention the fact that the neighboring Feudal Lords would band together to deal with a Hidden Village that dared to disrupt the normal succession of power.

The only time the full military might of an Elemental country was called, was during the Shinobi World Wars. The Kages would act as proxy military commanders of both the ninjas from their Hidden Villages and the military forces of the Elemental countries. But even during those times when the Kages controlled ten of thousands of soldiers, all knew that the true loyalties of the Elemental countries' military forces lies with their Feudal Lords. It also meant that Sarutobi had to be painfully polite and respectful to the Fire Feudal Lord, even when there were times Sarutobi felt like kicking the wimpy lord in his ass.

Sarutobi pulled out a sheet of paper, and began drafting a polite reply to the Fire Lord. Carefully he begun stating that Madara was a Kage level ninja after all, and even the thousands of soldiers in the Fire Lord's army might have difficulties apprehending the man without due caution.

A knock sounded on his door again. Sarutobi looked up, his eyes narrowing at the door as it opened to revealed another Anbu. He stiffened and stood up quickly as he saw the scroll in the Anbu's hands.

"Hokage sama." The Cat masked Anbu said with trepidation. "The Eye has passed me a scroll. His messenger asked me to bring it to you directly..."

Sarutobi had already taken the scroll from the Anbu before he had finished speaking. That The Eye had sent a scroll meant that he was still alive. That he had more information to send Sarutobi did not bore well for the village, especially not after The Eye was the one to uncover the many plots in Konoha and informed him of Madara's attack. The fact that The Eye had specifically asked the scroll to be delivered to Sarutobi had made Sarutobi wonder what other plots The Eye had discovered. Or had The Eye discovered that village elders' schemes in regards to Naruto and was going to make his opinion known? After all, The Eye did took Naruto in as an apprentice...

Sarutobi opened the scroll, reading its contents without sending the Anbu away. There might be a chance he might need the Anbu around if The Eye was to deliver anymore village shattering news.

"Danzo..." Sarutobi paled as he read the first part of the message. His eyes traveled down, reading the rest of the message, his face beginning flushing a deep red as he realized in horror and anger what The Eye had now discovered.

"That old war hawk has gone too far this time." Sarutobi said coldly, crushing the scroll in his hands. The look of unadulterated rage in his eyes caused the Anbu in front of him to take a step back. "Cat, with the exception of those serving in the village patrol teams, summon all the Anbu, Jonins and the Special Chunins that are currently active at once. I want all of them gathered at the Great Hall within the next half an hour... We are going hunting... and burn out some troublesome roots..."

Terror, was the foremost emotion that Tenten was feeling right now, even as she struggled against the potent drugs injected into her body. A weaker ninja academy student would have long since fallen unconscious, but she was no ordinary student, she was the daughter of Konoha's Weapon and Poison master, and she had been taught the methods to counter sleeping drugs, by burning it out of her system. The only problem to her current dilemma was that her chakra reserves were beginning to run low. Pretty soon, she would run out of chakra, and the drugs would knock her out totally.

Tears welled in her eyes as she laid helplessly in the small cell which contained four other unconscious bodies of children of various ages lying beside her. From the ruffled and dirty looks of the children around her, the four were most probably street kids. Whoever had kidnapped them were most probably targeting children that were easily missed. For the hundredth time, Tenten cursed her foolishness in training at the academy grounds until she had collapsed. It had made her an easy target for whoever had kidnapped her, and with her father dead, there was going to be no one looking out for her.

Her father had trained her to be responsible and self reliant, which was why even though she was only nine years old, her only relative, Aunt Yuri, had allowed her to continue staying in Konoha alone, to continue studying in the ninja Academy. Without any guardian reporting of her disappearance to the Konoha police or Anbu, Tenten knew with a sinking feeling that if she was to escape from her kidnappers, she had to do it on her own.

She had kept her body still and her eyes closed as she worked to burn out the drugs with her chakra. The first time she had successfully fought off the drugs and began struggling in her bonds, the guard outside the cell had spotted her and administered a more potent dosage into her body. If she was able to counter this more powerful dosage in her system, she would have to find a way out of the ropes binding her in a more subtle way. Tenten would not make the same mistake twice, not when her life and well being was at stake. She had no idea what her kidnappers needed her and the other children for, but she seriously doubt that it was for something good.

Fighting off the clouded feeling in her head, she tried to keep her leaden body still. Just a few more minutes and she would have burn out the drugs. After that... after that she have to think out a plan to get away from here.

A choked gurgle sounded outside the cell, followed by a dull thud. There was metallic screeching as the rusty iron gates were opened, and suddenly Tenten felt something cut through her bonds as she was freed. Opening her eyes in shock, she found herself staring at the deep blue eyes of a blond haired man.

"Can you move?" The man asked urgently, even as he sliced through the ropes binding the street kid beside her. "We need to start moving before more ninjas arrived."

"I... I can." Tenten said through dried throat, forcing her numbed and drugged body to move. She stood up, swaying slightly.

"Good, I don't want to waste chakra creating a clone in case I have to fight." The man said. He bend down, quickly swooping up the four kids now untied, two in each arm. He then bend down, his back facing Tenten. "Climb on and hold tightly. I am getting all of you out of this hellhole."

Tenten forced her numb body to corporate, even as she tried to fight off tears of relief at being saved. Somehow she knew that everything would be all right soon, clinging to her savior's promise of getting her out of this place, as only a child would.

With her secured on his back, the man began running out of the cell, down the twisting maze of corridors. Closing her eyes and hanging on tightly for her life, Tenten thought she heard distance sounds of explosions and fighting down the many myriad tunnels of her prison.

His first day as Acting Commander of the Anbu and he was already handed a pile of political shit the size of the Hokage mountain. Shikaku had to suppress his groan at how troublesome everything was as he stood in the hastily set up command post near the western factory area, listening to the relays of the Anbu, Jonin and Special Chunin teams that had been gathered, assembled, and then sent into Konoha's catacombs all within half an hour's of time. Due to the fact that the village was still on high alert, gathering the forces within a short time period had been the easy part. The difficult part had been to come out with a plan of operations to infiltrate the headquarters of Root, which was allegedly hidden somewhere deep in Konoha's catacombs based on a scroll by The Eye.

The Eye, a mysterious and powerful infiltration agent that had set the upper circles of the Anbu abuzz for the past few months. Being the Vice Commander of the Anbu at that time, Shikaku had been aware of the existence of The Eye as a rogue nin who had seemed intent in helping the village by ferreting out miraculous information. He was the one tasked by the Hokage to find any signs of The Eye being injured or killed in the aftermath of Madara's attack on the Uchiha clan. With little information on what The Eye looked like, and the numbers of dead and injured in the clan compound, it had been thought The Eye had perished. When the Hokage and village elders had surprised everyone in the council meeting with Naruto's promotion, and that he was taught by a mysterious Jonin who had died in Madara's attack, it did not take long for Shikaku to put together the pieces.

Naruto Uzumaki was most probably taught by The Eye. If that was the case, The Eye also had the Wood Release bloodline. The fact that the Hokage had labeled The Eye as a rogue nin for the past few months meant that the cock and bull story the village elders had spin up was probably a political coverup of some kind. And now The Eye had returned from the dead, with a scroll full of information about Danzo's plans and Root. And the moment they had arrived at the factory area, a frightened street kid had passed them a second scroll from The Eye near one of the catacomb entrance at the factory area. The street kid had looked at the assembled ninjas with fear and awe before stuttering out that someone had paid him a large sum of ryo to deliver the message.

The second scroll had contained a detailed layout of the catacombs, with all of the pathways carefully sketched out. The Eye had stated his plan of hindrance and diversion, as well as to collapse all of the catacomb exits except the one Shikaku's forces would be using once the mission starts. With no way of contacting The Eye, Shikaku had to assume that the mysterious ninja had some way of knowing when the Konoha ninjas began storming into the catacombs.

In a rare show of grim authority, the Hokage had drawn out the plan to take out Root, leaving Shikaku to marshal and direct the forces. As the only one besides the Hokage who knew the full information within the scrolls The Eye had sent, Shikaku was visibly uncomfortable and slightly awed at the plan the Hokage had thought out. The Hokage not only planned to put down Root by physical force, he had also planned to destroy Danzo's power politically.

"... Team 4 has located five children near one of the tunnels. Four of them are heavily drugged. One of them is awake... she is Yaiba Chikai's daughter." A voice reported in shock and outrage over the communication radios. "The daughter, Tenten is telling us that a blond haired young man had rescued them and set them near the tunnels minutes before our arrival. She was saying that the young man told her to stay put, and that help is coming before puffing into smoke."

"Shadow clone." Shikaku muttered as he listened to the transmission. That The Eye had somehow detected Team 4 before they reached their current location and knew that they were friendly forces probably meant that The Eye had a powerful chakra sensing ability. It was also highly probably that The Eye was the visual kind of chakra sensor, able to see what he sensed. Mentally, Shikaku cataloged that ability to The Eye. It always pays to know if a ninja had chakra sensing ability, and what type it was. It would help in future if Shikaku ever need to go up against The Eye in battle.

"Get the children back to the entrance at once Team 4, scrub the assignment given to you." Shikaku commanded even as he was turning the dial on another radio, speaking into the mic attached to it. "Team 7, there has been a change in plans. I need you to cover Team 4's location once you're done with your section."

"Understood Commander." The gruff voice of the leader of Team 7 answered.

Another radio piped up, with the ninja manning the radio set turning to Shikaku. "Sir, Team 9 is reporting that they are nearing the location of Root's Seal room."

Shikaku froze, his eyes flickering to the grim visage of the Hokage who had been silently standing near the command post since the operation started. As per the Hokage's orders, Team 9 was a ten man team, made up of the current eight most powerful Anbu, with one of them being a Senju. The other two were a Hyuga Jonin and an Uchiha Jonin. None in the team were told of what was actually in the room except that Danzo and three seal masters were within. Shikaku steeled himself, knowing that there was a reason the Hokage had assigned a Senju, an Uchiha and a Hyuga to the team. Once they saw what was in the room, and their clans learn of it... Danzo would be lucky to get out of this mess alive.

"Ask them to be prepared. Danzo most probably knows his precious Root is already under attack." The cold voice of the Hokage suddenly said from the side. The ninja manning the signal set quickly nodded, speaking into the mic.

"Misato, dial up the radio for Team 9." Shikaku said, already knowing what was to come.

Crunching sounds of metal sounded through the radio as the ninja manning the signals dial up the volume. There was a loud sound of explosion and cursing through the radio. "... There was an explosion seal on the door. It seems Danzo was prepared for our arrival, none are injured, we're going in..."

Shouts, screams and the roaring of various ninja techniques sounded through the radio. Harsh breathings came through the radio, and then there was an outraged scream. "... eyeballs... there are Sharingan eyeballs here! Sage's mercy! What is Danzo planning to do?... Inori has gone berserk... Wutai! Restrain the Uchiha, he'll be killed in that state!"

Shikaku closed his eyes even as screams of outrage sounded through the radio. The ninja manning the signal system looked aghast while the Hokage simply listened on stonily. Finally after a long ten minutes, the harsh voice of Team 9's leader came over the radio.

"We've subdued Danzo and two of the seal masters, one is killed in battle. Seven men down in Team 9, four of them suffered from serious injuries. Danzo used some obscure seal that ripped off their arms and legs. We need the medic nins right away!"

"Team 5 and 2 are near the area, send them in at once." Shikaku barked out, even as the ninja managing the radios relayed the message.

"... Commander... we found a tray full of Sharingan eyes in the room..." The leader of Team 9 spoke again, this time hesitantly over the radio. "We had to knock out Inori Uchiha when he saw them and gone berserk. Yue Hyuga was... disturbed by the find, I am afraid she might have heavily damaged Danzo's organs during the fight. There was also a container filled with some kind of serum. None of the Seal masters are talking and Danzo's unconscious, we need someone to identify what it is."

"Seal up the Sharingans and the serum." Shikaku said in a firm voice. "We'll need them as evidence before the council hearing. Team 5 and Team 2 are on the way. There are medic nins in the teams, stabilize your injured and wait for their support. The three teams will merge and escort the prisoners back to the entrance once the injured are attended to. You'll have command."

"Understood Commander."

"Commander, Team 1 is patching through." The ninja beside the radio spoke up, as Team 9 went back to radio silence.

"Commander, we've found a library deep within Root base protected by powerful seals. We only managed to get in because part of the sealed walls had been blasted apart by some kind of powerful explosive." The astonished voice of Team 1's leader sounded over the radio. "It is filled with scrolls with the emblem of... the Fourth Hokage!..."

Shikaku's eyes widened at the news, nothing in The Eye's scroll mentioned that! But if someone had already broken through of the seals protecting Root's library, it would probably meant that The Eye must have already found the location. And scrolls with the emblem of the Fourth Hokage... Shikaku closed his eyes, massaging his head. He had a feeling of certainty that Danzo and his Root agents definitely would not survive the night once news gets out. Not when their crimes include bloodline theft of a massive scale and being the ones to steal the Fourth's Hokage's knowledge. Knowledge that had been missing for years following the Fourth Hokage's death and the breaking in of his clan compound by unknown ninjas after his passing.

"Shikaku." The calm and controlled voice of the Hokage interrupted his thoughts. Shikaku looked up and was shocked by the look of burning anger in the Hokage's eyes. "Handle the operations here. Tell Team 1 to touch nothing in the library and stand guard... I am going in."

Twelve hours later, Hokage's Tower

Koharu walked into the Hokage's room her back straight and her gaze firm, with Homura following closely behind. She had not bothered to knock or acknowledge the Anbu guarding the doorway, simply throwing open the door as she walked up to Sarutobi seated behind his desk, who was looking up at her calmly.

"Sarutobi, I just received news that you've called up most of the Jonins and the special Chunins for an unauthorized mission!" Koharu barked out. "What's the meaning of this?"

Sarutobi observed her with a look that sent chills down her spine. In that flash of an instant, Koharu suddenly realized that something had gone wrong, the look Sarutobi was giving her now was one of contempt. In all the long years she had worked beside him, he had never once looked at her that way.

"Wolf. Please close the door." Sarutobi called out to the Anbu at his doorway. The Anbu nodded, shutting the door. Koharu then watched in shock as Sarutobi's hands flashed through several handseals and sealed the room from any outside attempts at spying.

Sarutobi stood up, walking around the table and began stalking towards Koharu who was shocked to feel the sharp killing intent radiating off him.

"Sarutobi! What's the meaning of this?" Homura said as he looked at his old teammate in shock. The old man looked as if he intended to give Koharu a thrashing.

"It has been brought to my attention that Danzo had been operating Root secretly all these years." Sarutobi said grinning coldly at Koharu and Homura, though there was no humor in his voice. "But of course I needn't tell the two of you that since both of you already knew."

"Root was necessary for Konoha's survival." Koharu blistered with false bravo as she stared at Sarutobi. "Even if you and Minato refused to acknowledged that!"

"Root's agents nearly caused a Fourth Shinobi war right after the Third War ended!" Sarutobi snapped harshly, causing Koharu to step back in alarm. "And their actions over the past few years will start a Shinobi war if they are ever known to the world! Assassination of Water and Iron countries ambassadors without council approval, starting a personal war in Rain country... the list goes on."

Koharu's eyes widened in alarm as she stared at Sarutobi in shock. "How did you..."

"As of this afternoon, Root is no more." Sarutobi said staring straight into her eyes, cutting off what Koharu was about to say. "Danzo is charge with treason of the highest level. Death by decapitation, for the stealing of Sharingan eyes, liaising with Oruchimaru to formulate a serum of Wood Release genes, assembling his own personal army, conducting missions that threaten the stability of Konoha. We have Inoichi go through Danzo's mind... and you know what we discovered?"

Koharu's breath hitched as Sarutobi towered over her, Homura quickly stepped forward, trying to stop the brewing confrontation. "Sarutobi! Koharu and I were aware of Root's existence, but believe me when I say that we've no idea Danzo had gone so far! The original intention was for Root's agents to go on missions deemed too damaging or dangerous for Konoha ninjas to take on. Root's agents had been specially trained..."

"To be the emotionless dolls of Danzo, to do as he command." Sarutobi spat out in disgust. "I know that Homura, just as I know that Koharu had been the financial backer for most of Root's operations that even you know nothing about. Just as I know that she had collaborated with Danzo to send agents on "missions" that could start a war between countries! Just as I know she and Danzo were the ones that concocted the plan to break into the Namikaze compound after Minato's death and strip the compound of all of Minato's knowledge! Knowledge which Konoha had thought for years were stolen by some enemy villages!"

Homura stumbled back at Sarutobi's accusation, looking at Koharu who was staring palely at Sarutobi in shock.

"Koharu, based on our past friendship, the contributions you've made to the village, and the village's secrets you had helped guarded over the years, I will spare you a traitor's death. Your involvement in this whole affair will be kept silent, same to you Homura." Sarutobi said in a voice of steel. "However I can no longer trust you to make sound decisions for Konoha. You know what you should do Koharu."

There was a moment of long silence as the two village elders stared at Sarutobi in shock. Sarutobi gave them one last glare before turning and walked back to his desk, waving dismissively at them. "You may go now."

"Sarutobi... I want you to know that I never intended..." Homura began but was cut off by Sarutobi.

"Just go Homura. There will be a council meeting this evening, and I need to prepare. You'll be told what was uncovered during last night's mission at the same time as the rest of the council members. " Sarutobi said looking away from them.

When Sarutobi continued to ignore them, Homura turned, giving Koharu a harsh look before stalking out of the room. With leaden feet and tears in her eyes, Koharu sagged in defeat before following. There had been a reckoning, and this time Koharu would not be able to escape it even with all of her wealth and power.

For the second day in a row, another council meeting was called with great urgency near sunset. Jittery council members had gathered in the Hokage Tower wondering what bombshell was to drop on them now. Had Madara been found? Was there another attack? The massive recalling of Jonins and Chunins yesterday night had not gone unnoticed by the different clans inhabiting Konoha, and most if not all had been waiting the whole day for the other shoe to drop. A few clan heads who had ninjas from their clans pulled into the mission already knew a little of what had happened, and their grim visage were doing nothing to improve the atmosphere in the council room.

Outside the walls of the Hokage Tower, N5 was listening into the meeting, the mental playback of the meeting by Sica within his mind gave him the impression that he was standing unnoticed within the meeting room.

"... the discovery of Root and Danzo's actions... the mind walk by Inoichi revealed that Danzo had arranged with Orochimaru to develop a serum of Wood Release genes, which he planed to seal into a harvested arm, strengthening the arm so that it could support the implantation of Sharingan eyes which he had also harvested... he was trying to develop the legendary Izanagi technique, following the legends of the Sage of the Six Paths." The Hokage's grim voice announced the morning's mission. Sounds of chaos and outrage sounded in the council room but the Hokage pressed on in a voice that cut through the cries of horror and anger. "The seal arrays needed to implant the Wood Release gene into the arm required the sacrifices of five lives... It appears Danzo and his agents had in addition to their crimes, kidnapped five children off the streets of Konoha... The Fourth Hokage's missing library had been found within Root's possession... It seemed that all these years while we thought enemy ninjas were the ones that stole the knowledge of the Fourth following his death, the real culprits were much closer to home..."

"Following that the Anbu had uncovered numerous mission scrolls containing black ops Danzo and his agents had conducted over the years... It appears Danzo had been conducting guerrilla warfare against other Hidden Villages without Konoha's knowledge... These missions might very well start a Shinobi war if the public knows of them, as such these missions will be sealed in Konoha's archives under the highest security level... Twenty-three Root trainees have been found as well, age range between 5-12, it is my decision to put them into a rehabilitating program so that they could live normal lives again... Upon my command as Hokage of Konoha, Danzo and his agents have been charged with treason of the highest level... they will be decapitated at the break of dawn tomorrow... I gather all of you now to inform and plan out what the public should be told..."

The council descended into a mess of chaos shortly after the full revelation of all that had happened, stunning even Danzo's supporters into silence. N5 keep an ear on the meeting even as his thoughts began to wonder.

"So Sica, what is Boss planning to do with all the new scanned knowledge from scrolls left by our father?" N5 asked out of curiosity. As a clone of Boss, who was a child of the Fourth Hokage, learning that the other clones had found the Fourth's legacy within Root base had been a great shock to him.

"Not all the scrolls could be scanned, quite a number were sealed. However those that S20 had scanned had increased our research and knowledge capacity." S5 remarked. "With the new seal knowledge we've gained from the Fourth's scrolls, the research Sicas deduce that all our research projects are sped up by 30%."

"That's great news. I wonder what old man Hokage will be doing with all of father's scrolls. I hope that he pass them to Boss, S20 never did manage to scan the Fourth Hokage's signature Flying Thunder God technique. It might be hidden within some of the sealed scrolls." N5 mused thoughtfully.

"It is highly doubtful that Boss would be able to open those sealed scrolls. Scans by S20 showed that they are highly specialized security seals which need the blood of those keyed to the scrolls, and some other words spoken at the same time to unseal them. Failure to meet the requirements of the scrolls will result in the death of the one attempting to open the scrolls, and the destruction of the scrolls themselves." S5 revealed.

"But at least if the scrolls are given to Boss, we have a chance of finding a way to unseal them and learn what was contained within them." N5 remarked.

"Analysis of the Third Hokage's past actions... there's a 70% chance he might pass the newly recovered library of the Fourth Hokage to Boss due to Boss' blood relations." S5 calculated.

"I hope so too, I know the clones and Boss would like to have at least a piece of our father to remember him by... They might be the only memento we'll be able to retrieve in the years that had past." N5 said, feeling a sense of nostalgic as he returned his attention to the council meeting taking place in the Hokage Tower behind him.

The council meeting had ended with many of the council members expressing shock and disbelief over what Danzo and Root had done in the past few years, as old mission records were taken out and shown to those gathered. The Uchiha clan in particular were out for blood after learning of Danzo's theft of Sharingan eyes. In a rare show of unity, the Hyuga clan head had stood by the Uchiha clan's demand of giving Danzo to the judgment of the Uchiha clan. Even the Senju clan head had cast his vote in favor of the Uchiha clan's demands, until a majority vote by the rest of the clan heads and council members had overturned it.

Most of the gathered had wanted to see Danzo and Root get true justice. Danzo had not just betrayed the clans of Konoha, he had betrayed Konoha itself. The judgment which Danzo and his Root agents would be given, would be based on the village's decisions. In the end, it was all for the best. When the public execution of Danzo and his agents were carried out tomorrow, Konoha's village council would be a united front, with a fully planned out cover story to be told to the populace. Of course, the Fire Lord would have to be told the full truth, but Sarutobi had decided to leave that task for tomorrow. For today however, today he had a promise he needed to fulfill, a promise that was already eight years in coming. A promise he had long thought he would never be able to fulfill.

Dressed in dark stealth clothing, Sarutobi made his way out of his office, jumping across roof tops silently. The few patrols he saw on the way silently turned the other direction after he made the signal to identify who he was. A final jump, and he was through the window of an apartment, standing in a brightly lit room where young Naruto appeared to be bending over several scrolls scattered on the floor.

"Old man Hokage!" Naruto said in shock as he saw Sarutobi, quickly standing up. "What are you doing here? It is late."

"I have some news that I need to tell you." Sarutobi said with a smile, looking at the young boy that to him looked like the second coming of Minato. The features were there, if one had thought to look. In a way it was a mixed blessing that none of the villagers had ever made the connection, seeing Naruto as only the demon container. It had kept Naruto's true identity safe, but it had also put a lot of hardship on the child.

Many times in the past, Sarutobi had wished he could do more, only to be stopped by either the council members or the village elders. But now with the power of his old team mates weakened by their ties with Danzo, ties which were kept secret only because of intervention by Sarutobi himself, Sarutobi had discovered that he had more freedom to make decisions about Naruto. It was a freedom that he was going to fully exercise. For instance, passing Naruto his legacy left by Minato. It was something Sarutobi was sure the village elders would never agree to, if Sarutobi had not destroyed the hold they had over him with the political blackmail he now had over them.

Closing the open window in the bedroom and drawing the curtains over them, Sarutobi made the handseals for the privacy technique, sealing the room. Sarutobi then turned to an expectant Naruto, a smile on his face as he told Naruto simply. "Your teacher is still alive."

For a moment, Naruto looked taken aback, his mouth gaping. "My teacher?... Oh yeah my teacher! That's great!" Naruto had gushed in joy, a grin on his face.

"Yes with all that had already happened. I must say I have a degree of trust in him, even though he is not a Konoha ninja. I will not press you for information should he ever attempt to contact or meet up with you." Sarutobi said, looking at Naruto seriously. "However should he contact you in the future, help me tell him that I would dearly love a face to face meeting with him. I have tried leaving a message for him at a location we've last agreed on. But I am afraid there's no response from him yet."

"I will do that." Naruto said nodding his head enthusiastically. "But I am not sure if Teacher will agree though. He is a very private person."

"I understand that." Sarutobi said with a smile before bending down towards Naruto. "There's a second reason for my coming here. There's a new mission last night which your Teacher was involved. Suffice it to say, at the end of the mission, we discovered a cache of valuable items that rightfully belong to you. Have you ever heard about the missing library of the Fourth Hokage?"

"I think so, it's in the textbook about Konoha's history. Enemy ninjas broke into the Fourth Hokage's clan compound after his death and took away all of his valuable scrolls." Naruto said with a nod. "Konoha never found who those enemy ninjas were."

"Well, those scrolls had been found after last night's mission, and I believe you are the rightful heir to them." Sarutobi said as Naruto's eyes widened. Sarutobi reached into his pouch to take out a scroll and a small metal cube with a complex array of seals on it. "The scrolls are all sealed inside this scroll. But the real legacy your father and mother had left for you... is this." Sarutobi showed Naruto the small metal cube. "It was found together with the scrolls, whoever had taken it knew that it was more than just a trinket, but I doubt they ever managed to understand what they truly have in their hands."

"So what is it?" Naruto asked confused. "It look like a metal cube to me."

"To answer that, I will need a drop of your blood." Sarutobi said, wondering if Naruto would be squeamish about it, especially considering his age. Naruto had simply shrugged and bit one of his finger, a bead of blood forming from the small bite. Sarutobi nodded. "Good, I need you to prepare yourself. Focus on the image of you opening a door. I need you to hold the mental image, as you smear your blood on the cube and said the words 'Sanctuary'. Are you ready?"

"I am ready." Naruto said with a nod. He looked at Sarutobi curiously as the older man lay a hand on his shoulder in a tight grip.

"Good, begin." Sarutobi said. Naruto had given him a mystified look before following his instructions, smearing his blood on the cube, a look of concentration on his face as he said the words. "Sanctuary."

The very air around them shivered, a roaring of energies surrounded them... and the essence of time... shattered.

**Author's last notes:** Hope this chapter doesn't disappoint :) let me know via your reviews. I will also like to thank the readers who have been PM-ing me with great suggestions which I might or might not incorporate into the story in future. ^^ There's too many to list, but a few who really made an impact to the way I plan out the story are Culaio, Rydan fall, Kingdark, You-Lack-Badassery, Vikraal, Muroshi and FoXsHaDoWwRaItH. To the rest of the readers who provide constructive reviews, thank you as well!

Lastly, thanks Stelle600 for attempting to correct some of my grammar/spelling in chapter 1. Appreciate it!

Military breakdown of Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki

Fire country has two Military forces:

1) Fire country military

2) Fire country shinobi/ninja

Fire country military is under command of the Fire Feudal Lord

1) Samurais

2) Soldiers trained in using basic chakra and common ninja techniques

Fire country shinobi/ninja is under command of the Hokage

1) Jonin

2) Chunin

3) Genin

**Chapter 13: Interlude: The Missing Day**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Note:** Apologies for the dry spell of a year plus without updates. Work & life has been challenging to put it nicely. In order to say thank you to the readers who continued sending me PMs of the story, to those who read, reviewed and loved this story, I have written a bonus interlude before the actual chapter.

To some of my readers, I previously promised that chapter 13 will come with a short interlude. However during the actual writing of the interlude… it sort of become a full chapter of its own. Apologies ^^

I hope you guys/ gals will enjoy this new chapter ;) my writing skills have been a little rusty.

Thank you for waiting, thank you for reading.

And so the story continues…

ps. souvikkundu0017 thanks for spotting my error with the yin manipulation appreciate it.

***The Interlude: The Missing Day*** takes place after the council's first meeting after the Uchiha attack, and ends as Naruto received his legacy.

OoooO

Previously...

"So what is it?" Naruto asked confused "It looks like a metal cube to me."

"To answer that, I will need a drop of your blood." Sarutobi said, wondering if Naruto would be squeamish about it, especially considering his age. Naruto had simply shrugged and bit one of his finger, a bead of blood forming from the small bite. Sarutobi nodded. "Good, I need you to prepare yourself. Focus on the image of you opening a door. I need you to hold the mental image, as you smear your blood on the cube and said the words 'Sanctuary'. Are you ready?"

"I am ready." Naruto said with a nod. He looked at Sarutobi curiously as the older man lay a hand on his shoulder in a tight grip.

"Good, begin." Sarutobi said. Naruto had given him a mystified look before following his instructions, smearing his blood on the cube, a look of concentration on his face as he said the words. "Sanctuary."

The very air around them shivered, a roaring of energies surrounded them... and the essence of time... shattered.

OoooO

**Interlude: The Missing Day**

23 hours ago, Senju Council Room

"… So the child has the Wood Release bloodline." Roozu Senju, the oldest of the Senju clan elders said in a whisper of a voice. She had been the younger cousin of Hashirama Senju, the First Hokage, and had already crossed a century of age.

"Yes, the The Third has confirmed this. Apparently he had assigned the boy to be trained in secret." Natsu Senju revealed as he sat in front of the two Senju Elders, with the rest of the Senju Council members beside him.

"Really… the Third said that? Tell me Natsu, what was the first lesson I taught you, when you took charge of this clan after Tsunade left?" Roozu spoke up with a dry chuckle.

"Always check the facts." Natsu said with a nod, acknowledging that he had learnt the lesson. "I have sent a team of our ninjas to watch over the boy for the night. The team leader has orders to discreetly obtain a vial of his blood and bring back the sample for identification. He should be back any minute now."

"Good, you went straight to the source. With the way Sarutobi protected the boy all these years, the hospital records might very well be faked. I presume you have also already prepared the blood identification seals?" Touki Senju, the second clan elder asked with a rasp in his voice.

"Yes, I have Sentai prepared it." Natsu said with a nod. "If the boy is descended from anyone in the Senju bloodline, the seals will show."

"I see you've done the necessary work… before the destruction of the Uzumaki clan, it is known that the Uzumaki paid with their lives to allow their civilians, their retainers and townsfolk to flee before their fateful end. Many of the survivors of that time took up the name Uzumaki, in remembrance of the great clan that was willing to sacrifice themselves to save those not of the clan." Roozu said with a regretful sigh. "A lot of Konoha's orphans from that generation were also named after the Uzumaki, in remembrance of our village's alliance with them. We can't just make the assumption Naruto Uzumaki is a true descendant of the clan and is thus distantly related to us."

"After the clan's destruction, Konoha has only housed two true descendants of the Uzumaki clan. The two known full blooded Uzumaki were our revered Lady Mito and her spiritual successor Kushina." Touki said stealing a glance at Roozu. "You know we always suspected…"

"Your old age must be making you senile." Roozu said with a snap. "Suspicions has no place in the council. There's no place for rumours such as that to spread."

"Elders… are you saying that Naruto might be descended from the main Uzumaki branch? Like Lady Mito and Kushina?" Natsu asked even as his mind put the pieces together. "The boy's age… by the Sage! If Kushina's child was to survive…"

"Hush!" Roozu said fiercely, glaring around the council chambers as the other Council members broke out into shocked whispers. "Unless we have proof, no word of this must be spoken outside the chambers. And even if we do have proof of the boy's origins, it will not do that have it revealed to the public."

"But Kushina's child, the father was…" Natsu began and was interrupted by a knock on the council chambers. He looked at Roozu in frustration before placing his hand on the protection seals engraved on the Council chambers' floor.

The seals which protected those in the room from any spying jutsu dispersed with a cackle of energy. There was a pause before the chambers door slide open, revealing Ginrin Senju, one of the ninjas sent to watch over the boy.

"Naruto Uzumaki's blood as requested cousin." Ginrin said as he walked forward, placing a small vial of blood into Natsu's hand.

"How is the boy?" Touki asked in a quavering voice, his thin and frail frame leaning forward, as he stared at Ginrin.

"I think he is aware that someone is watching him. It is subtle, but the signs are there. Quite impressive since the team is guarding him from across the street." Ginrin reported. "The kid is also a chakra monster, especially for his age. With close to high Jonin to Hokage level reserves if I am not wrong."

"What!" Natsu said incredulously, an expression of disbelief crossing his face. It was unheard of for any child to possess so much chakra, not even those that started training from young. Not without some external factor. "Is it because he is a… container?"

"I have no idea. But I have to spend nearly a sixth of my chakra reserves just to apply a simple Genjutsu on him while I draw his blood!" Ginrin said shaking his head, the elders frowned at his words as they looked at each other. "Once I got in though, he's out like a light. His large chakra reserves act as a natural Genjutsu defence. Genjutsu users with small chakra reserves will have problem manipulating him, but other than that, the kid has no other defences against any Genjutsu user that has the necessary skills and lots of chakra to spare."

"I see… a weakness to Genjutsu that will be something we have to rectify… once we confirm his heritage. Hashirama had a whole set of Genjutsu defence techniques created back when he went up against Madara. As a possible spiritual successor, and with Madara's current reappearance, that child might very well need those techniques." Roozu said with a nod. "Ginrin can you continue seeing to the safety of the boy while we… discuss matters?"

"Yes grand aunt I will be on my way." Ginrin said rolling his eyes as he left the chambers.

"That child needs to learn proper protocol and respect." Roozu said with a sniff as the chamber doors were closed.

Natsu wisely kept silent, reapplying the protection seals before taking out a scroll that had the blood identification seals engraved on it. Adding the blood from the vial to the center of the seals, Natsu channelled chakra into the seal arrays.

The seals glowed a bright green as it analysed Naruto Uzumaki's blood based on the information collected from Senju members' blood throughout the decades. It took a moment before two names and relating information was written next to the same array as the seals finished its analysis.

"Naruto Uzumaki is an identified descendant of our Lady Mito." Touki rasped as he stared at the name. "And according to the seals, Naruto's blood bears certain similarities to Lord Hashirama's blood work. Not enough for a descendant match, but still certain of his blood markers are a match."

"It must be the similarities of the two Wood Release bloodlines." Roozu said in consideration, stroking her chin in thoughts.

Natsu frowned. They already knew Naruto Uzumaki had the Wood Release bloodline. But that he was a direct descendant of Lady Mito was however a momentous fact. Though Mito was not born of the Senju clan, she was married into the clan and her blood information was available to the clan's medical records.

Touki continued reading the information discovered by the seals, the lines on his face creased as he peered at the words. "Naruto Uzumaki is one of her grandnephews from the Uzumaki bloodline. He is not related to any Senju of the past few generations. But since he is descended from the main Uzumaki branch, any Senju ancestry he had might have, would be before the time our clan started keeping blood records."

"Which means it is highly likely that Naruto might be… related to Kushina Uzumaki, who was Lady Mito's niece." Natsu said as he straightened his back. "Kushina's blood records should be available at the hospital archives, we can get the information and…"

"No. The information we have right now will do." Roozu suddenly rasped sharply, a look of decisiveness in her eyes as she straightened her back to glare at Natsu, stopping what he was going to say. "We have proven that he is a true blooded Uzumaki from the main branch. He has a shared ancestry with our clan and that is enough for us to accept him in as one of us."

"But he might be the son of…" Natsu began to protest but Roozu cut him off with a quick shake of her head.

"Some secrets…" Roozu said sternly. "Are best to continue being secrets. If we are really going to prod the hornet's nest to discover the truth, we have best be very careful and be prepared for the consequences. If Naruto is really Kushina's child… do you really think The Third would not have measures in place if anyone started looking into it? And let's say if Naruto really is Kushina's son, why would The Third hid the fact from everyone? Think about it all of you, before you make rash decisions."

There was stumped silence, then Kane Senju, the accounts keeper of the clan, said in a harsh voice. "The Third was protecting the boy. If he was really born from Kushina and… her husband, the amounts of enemies those two made in their lives, especially the latter, would make Naruto a constant target for revenge and assassinations."

"Even the Anbu cannot protect a weak baby, or a hyperactive child 24-7. A well trained assassin can strike when guards are down, or if he/she gained the trust of a child who is ignorant of why he needs protecting." Natsu said in understanding. "If the Fourth was still alive, his reputation and presence alone would keep all the vultures away… but he's not. And the Third is getting old, his skills and capabilities are not what they used to be. The secret, if there is really as such, was to protect the boy through anonymity."

"Yes, and thus that anonymity had best continue. At this stage of his life, Naruto does not have a powerful reputation to deter any would be assassins, though with the Wood Release bloodline, and his status as a demon container, he would be destined for great things to come." Roozu said. "Now if he also possesses the Uzumaki bloodline… that would be something to see."

"So if we were to bring him into our clan, I say that we let that secret lie and not prod for the truth, whatever the matter." Roozu continued firmly. "The Senju clan is not what it used to be, neither is Konoha. With the passing of the First, Second and Fourth Hokages, as well as the deaths of so many prominent ninjas in the previous wars, it would be a dire situation if the other ninja villages began massing assassinations attempts against us to get at the boy. Look at what Madara did to the Uchiha clan only a few days ago. Can you imagine what will happen to our clan if let's say Earth village send all their high ranking ninjas after us to get at the boy?"

A grim silence fell in the council room. Roozu was about to continue when she was interrupted by a sudden and urgent rapping on the doors of the council chambers. The rapping was in a code that the council members instantly recognized. Natsu tensed, quickly cancelling the seals protecting the room.

"Enter." Natsu called out, as one of the Senju guards walked in with a grim face.

"There's been a situation. The Hokage just sent out a Top Secret code Orange through secure channels. He is recalling all Anbu, Jonin and Special Chunins currently listed as active duties for an S-rank mission. No details of the mission was sent except a time and venue. Whatever mission is going down, it is going down within the next half an hour…"

19 hours ago, Naruto's Apartment

Naruto opened his windows to let in the cool night air. It was already past midnight. Through his clones and Sica, he had been monitoring the take down of Root and Danzo. Old man Hokage and the Acting Anbu Head, Shikaku Nara, had been surprisingly efficient in leading the operations to dismantle Root operations in the catacombs.

Learning of how old man Hokage had personally conduct the torture and information extraction of Danzo within the Torture and Interrogation chambers of Konoha, had definitely changed Naruto's preconception of his grandfather figure as a kindly old man. There had been a certain ruthlessness and fury in the Hokage's actions that Naruto had never witnessed before.

The clone had recorded the whole grisly affair with his Sica. Replaying the recording in his head, mentally seeing how the Hokage had ordered Inoichi Yamanaka to mind rape Danzo of all his secrets, had shown Naruto how terrifying the Yamanaka Clan's Mind Techniques would be.

While the Yamanaka's clan techniques were at first glance not suited for combat, the brute force mind reading technique Inoichi used, had ripped through all of Danzo's mental defences, turning him into a drooling mess. Konoha had gotten information on Root's operations from Danzo's head, at the cost of technically turning Danzo brain dead. Whatever old man Hokage or the Council would do to Danzo next would be but a formality.

It was only when Naruto asked Sica for more information about Yamanaka clan techniques, that clones stationed at the Yamanaka clan home had previously scanned, that Naruto realised the Yamanaka clan specialised in Yin chakra manipulation with a focus on mental manipulation.

Theoretically the Yamanaka mind techniques were replicable. Chakra after all was a balanced melding of spiritual and physical force, which basically contains yin and yang chakra elements. Yin chakra was theoretically formed by a highly advanced shape manipulation of spiritual chakra.

The problem was that for an average ninja, it could take years to master shape transformation of a single chakra element. With the largely non-combat application of Yin chakra, and how all the powerful Yin chakra techniques were closely kept secret by clans specializing in that field, usually the only ninjas that venture into mastering spiritual energies were medi-nins.

Through generations of specialization in their Yin elemental mind arts, most Yamanaka clan members were born with body structures that instinctively allows them to masterfully perform yin element shape transformations using their spiritual energies. The only clan that could compete with them in Yin chakra manipulation were the Nara clan with their Shadow techniques.

The whole affair opened his eyes to the wealth of information and techniques that he had previously scanned from the other ninja clans, that he had no knowledge of, either because he could not be bothered to find out, or he had made a prior decision not to copy any clan techniques of those that he was friends with. Either way, both decisions showed his own ignorance and short sightedness. Naruto now had a new resolve, to at the very least, familiarize himself with what the ninja clans in Konoha were capable of, and to further his own knowledge.

Naruto had stopped spying on old man Hokage and the Anbu after Danzo's session. N11 and S11 did continue recording the tortures taking place, but Naruto had decided not to preview the scanned recordings. If there was anything about Root that he need to know, Sica would inform him. He had seen enough death, pain and suffering during the attack by Madara on the Uchiha clan. There was no need to add to his current nightmares, he already had trouble sleeping at night.

With the number of new seals S17 had scanned from the library within Root's catacombs, the research clones' Sicas had readjusted the calculations for the Shadow Clone Seal Array. It will be completed within the next 9.5 hours. The Heal array and the Fire Bolt array will be completed within the next 14 hours. Sica informed Naruto as he looked out of his windows, seemingly looking aimlessly at the dark slumbering buildings in the neighbourhood.

At these hour, almost everyone were asleep and the streets were dark. But Naruto still caught the glint of moon light reflecting off a binoculars lens from an apartment across the street. Naruto snorted and grimaced. He had to give his Senju guards points for persistence at least. Off to his left on a high apartment building, the second group of his baby sitters from the Uchiha clan remained virtually undetectable. If it was not for Sica previously informing him of their presence, Naruto might not even have known they were there. Sica's current words however shifted Naruto's thoughts for the moment.

Ah the library. Naruto thought with a twinge of regret. N17 had discovered the presence of the library only after the Hokage had begun launching his attack on Root. S17 had explained to N17 the significance of the find. After realising that the library contains numerous scrolls that could only be penned by the Fourth Hokage as they possessed his insignia, S17 had attempted to scan the opened scrolls in the library.

A large number of the sealed scrolls were however unscannable. Sica might be powerful, but its scans could not pierce sealed dimensional space. A small portion of the scrolls were opened or unsealed and they were scanned. N17 had then grabbed a few of the scrolls with his father's emblem for keepsake before fleeing the library, just as one of the incoming Anbu team stumbled upon the place.

Naruto had to admit that he did wonder if old man Hokage would ever pass him the newly rediscovered legacy of his father. N17 and a few of the other clones he sent in as backup, had observed the Hokage personally leading a team to gather up every single piece of scroll, book and paper in the library, and transferring them back to the Hokage's Tower.

The transferred scrolls, books and papers were currently kept within the Hokage's library while the interrogation of Root members were conducted. Old man Hokage had suppressed knowledge of the recovery of his father's legacy, all ninjas involved in the retrieval of the items were already sworn to secrecy. Naruto had no idea what the Hokage would do with the Fourth's legacy but there was not much he could do to affect the old man's decision anyway.

Of course, even if the Hokage was to keep his father's legacy locked up in the Hokage's library, Naruto was pretty sure he could find a way to get to them. No… right now there were other important things for him to worry about. Such as the Senju team "guarding" him across the building, as well as the more discreet Uchiha team that even the Senju guards had no knowledge of.

"Those Senju are even creepier than the usual Anbu guards." Naruto muttered crossly as he turned away from the window, closing them again. "Not to mention there's the Genjutsu one of them used on me just now, in my own room! If I don't have to pretend to dumb down my skills, that I didn't sense them, I would have smacked him around before he even get close enough to cast a Genjutsu."

It is a 99% possibility that the Senju will try all means to get your blood, especially since they are set on their course of action. By willingly letting the Senju guard distract you while he drew your blood, you actually have control over the situation. You are in no danger since I am unaffected by the Genjutsu and is still able to assist in your protection should anything goes wrong. Sica remarked. Not to mention the Senju guards have kept their distance, while becoming more zealous in their duties, once your blood work has been confirmed as being a true blooded Uzumaki.

"Ah yes. The clones monitoring the Senju compound said that the Senju council members already suspected who my parents were." Naruto snorted a little derisively. "Funny how they are now all about claiming me into their clan just because of some fabricated cover story. In the past I was the demon brat, now I am the god damn hero that saved the Uchiha clan and everyone wants a piece of me."

Currently only the major ninja clans wanted a say in your future upbringing. Sica corrected, taking Naruto's words literally. The civilians of Konoha will only receive news of your heroics once the new day begins.

"It's an expression Sica, a figure of speech. I really have got to teach you not to take words too literally." Naruto said rolling his eyes. "Anyway once the news are released in the morning about the cover story the Hokage and the elders spun for me, I have no doubts many of those civilians who have treated me badly in the past would have a change of opinion."

Sentient societies as a whole are judgemental, and could be highly influenced by the reputation of an individual. Sica reasoned. It is logical to assume that many civilians might experience a change of heart towards you, once your reputation improved.

"Well… I don't like it." Naruto said disgruntledly. "But I also know there's nothing to do about it. So let's discuss other more important stuff. It is going to take a while for the old man and the Anbu to finish interrogating the Root operatives. The village will most probably continue to be lock down tomorrow. Add in the new Senju and Uchiha ninjas watching me, I have to be very careful if I want to continue my training tomorrow. I have to get stronger fast, especially since Madara is still out at large. Those words he said to me when he tried to kill me…I just want to be more prepared in future."

I have already redesigned your training schedule. In particular I have begun incorporating the Wild Hunt exercises into your schedule. Sica advised. We can begin tomorrow.

"That's good. What exactly are the Wild Hunt exercises?" Naruto asked thoughtfully.

The Wild Hunt programme, is a series of highly strenuous exercises, designed for the black operation O.M.A division. They were one of the Federation divisions that funded research for my development. As such I have limited data on their programme. Sica explained. The O. are basically high level intelligence agents that were trained in the singular task of becoming a one man army, hence the designation O.M.A. They were the Elites of the Intelligence agency that none of the public knows about, and only two to three individuals managed to pass the training programme each year.

"That sounds tough." Naruto said with a frown. "So these O.M.A people are supposed to be the ones you are created for?"

The O.M.A division is one of three Federation division that will have access to technology based on my template once research is completed. Sica noted. With my analyse of your chakra and learning capabilities, their programme is the best suited for making you combatively stronger fast. The normal Federation Infiltration lessons you requested previously would still be useful. But based on the events of a day ago, it is imperative that you gain a higher sense of combat awareness and fighting capability fast.

"So what does the Wild Hunt exercises do?" Naruto asked as he flopped down tiredly onto his bed. It had been a rough day, and it certainly did not get better with his discovery of Root and sending his clones to help old man Hokage clear them out of the catacombs. He actually became a Chunin for Sage's sake, though what changes his new status would bring, he had yet to discover.

Basically the Wild Hunt exercises were structured in a way to train O.M.A candidates for the final test, which requires them to defeat an army of trained soldiers and operatives on their own. Due to this, strength training is a lesser criteria. Sica revealed. Intelligence, ingenuity, tactical abilities, technological expertise, medical training, chemical training (for making poisons), pathfinding and a whole hosts of other skills are considered more important.

In order to adapt the exercises to your situations, I have crafted various scenarios with different objectives, to pit you against your clones. You have to go against them without my assistance with whatever knowledge you were taught or would possess before the exercises. Sica noted. The clones however would be guided in battlefield tactics and techniques by their Sicas. Since you will receive their memories once they dispel, no tactics nor techniques will be reused. It also indirectly allows you to pick up battlefield tactics after the whole exercises through your clones' memories. As a Sica's range of detection is quite vast, when used against you… I predict it will be a challenge for you to even pass the first level of Wild Hunt exercises.

"What! They can use their Sicas while I can't?" Naruto said sounding shocked. "That's cheating!"

The purpose of the Wild Hunt exercises is to hone your battle senses, adaptability and skills. You cannot improve if you keep using me as a crutch. Sica admonished in a matter of fact voice. To allow for fair play, I will not communicate with any of the cloned Sicas.

Naruto scowled at Sica's words and gave a reluctant shrug. "Fine." He muttered. "But how am I supposed to go up against my clones if their Sicas inform them of my every position?"

That. Sica said in an impassive voice. Is what you are supposed to figure out. And you have to pass each level of exercises in order to proceed further. If not you will have to repeat the exercises you failed, until you figure a way to pass.

"That sounds like too work." Naruto said, flopping lifelessly onto his bed. "Maybe I should stay in bed tomorrow… it has been a hard past day for me…"

Your earlier directive to train you takes precedence. Your attempt at inciting sympathy is unfortunately not applicable to me. Not to mention once your Chunin duties started, there will be less time for training. Sica stated bluntly. I will wake you up at 6 a.m. in the morning as per the training schedule.

"You are heartless Sica!" Naruto accused indignantly.

As I do not have a heart and am an inanimate, I must highlight your atrocious use of grammar and vocabulary. I will rectify this deficiency in your future language lessons. Sica stated calmly. Good night Naruto.

"Traitor!"

14 hours ago, Hyuga compound

A gong sounded in the courtyard and Hinata jerked up in startlement, snapped out of her sleep. Blearily opening her eyes, Hinata rolled out of her futon, going to the window to see what's going on. The gong sounded again, this time with the chiming of bells. Hinata recognized the sounds this time round, the sounds were clan codes for an emergency council meeting.

The sky outside the window was still dark, but the reddish skylights, at the edge of the horizon signified that dawn would come shortly. What would be so urgent that the council needs to be called so early?

Curious, Hinata decided to open the door to her room, stepping out into the courtyard to find that a lot of the main and branch family members were already up. A large group of clan ninjas gathered at the path leading to the front gates of the compound. Amidst the group, she noticed the stiff and weary forms of some of the clan's Jonin and Chunins. It looked as though they had just returned from a mission.

Though only eight years old and in her first year of the ninja academy, Hinata was not stupid. Her lack of self-confidence tended to make the Hyuga main branch members dismiss her, which meant that other than her training sessions, she spent most of her time in her room reading. Her favourite book had been the compilation of her mother's herbal notes.

Hinata was keenly aware that something must have happened to the ninjas just coming back to the compound. The whole clan had been told of the appearance of Madara Uchiha, the big bad ninja of legend, two days ago. Most of the younger ones had no idea what was happening. All Hinata knew was that no one below the age of twelve, were allowed to leave the clan compound for the next few days. Her heart clutched in fear as she wondered if Madara Uchiha was back. She had read up on him in Ninja History, and he was not a very good person.

"Hinata! What are you doing outside?" A voice raised in concern asked behind her. Hinata whirled around guiltily to find the disapproving form of Ruer Hyuga staring down at her. The motherly Hyuga branch member was her aunt and served as the caretaker of her younger sister. Aunt Ruer had also taken care of Hinata when she had been much younger, after mother had died.

"I heard noises…" Hinata began, voice trailing off as she wilted under Aunt Ruer's frown. She might have gained some confidence after hanging out with Naruto and the others after school, but it was not enough for her to stand up to the woman who had spanked her and bathed her when she was younger. "What… what is going on?"

"The Hokage called up an emergency mission last night." Aunt Ruer said curtly as she herded Hinata back towards her room. "It must have gone bad from the looks of it. But that's none of our business, the council will take care of it."

Hinata turned to see the crowd of Hyuga council members and some of the Jonins moving towards the council chambers to the east of the compound. "I think I saw cousin Yue, her shoulder is bandaged up..."

"I am sure your father would take care of her. In the meantime, you should be in your room right now." Ruer said firmly cutting Hinata off, guiding her back to her room. "I will be bringing you and Hanabi breakfast. Stay in the room for the morning until I find out from your father what is going on."

"But… what about school?" Hinata asked as Aunt Ruer turned around to close the door to her room.

Aunt Ruer hesitated for a moment before giving Hinata a reassuring smile. "The Academy is closed for a few days. Now since you'll have sometime on your hands, why don't you spend the afternoon with your younger sister, teach her some ninja techniques? She will be receiving her first training in three months, after her fifth birthday. You can do your part as a big sister to help her."

Hinata frowned, spending the afternoon with her younger sister sounds like a great idea, but she had really wanted to meet up with Naruto and his little group again. After hanging out with the group, for the first time in her life, she felt as though she really belonged somewhere, that she was not totally useless.

But if the Academy was not going to be opened for a few days, that would be a few more days of waiting before she could see them again. As to her plans for the afternoon, perhaps she could show Hanabi the herb seedlings she had been secretly growing in a corner of the back courtyard. And she might even impress her little sister with the new academy style Taijutsu she was learning.

10 hours ago, opposite the street from Naruto's apartment

Ginrin frowned as Banii entered the apartment the Senju clan had rented. The apartment that the surveillance team was staying in, was rented for the sole purpose of watching over Naruto Uzumaki. The arrangement was temporarily, and would last until the clan could officially petition the Konoha council for Naruto to be inducted into the clan. Banii had left for the Senju clan compound for supplies during the early morning, and had only just returned.

"Any news from the clan?" Ginrin asked as he methodically began sharpening his kunai on a whetting stone. As team leader of the small group, he had to keep his ears open for any information from the clan.

"The Hokage called an emergency S-rank mission last night. All the active Anbu, Jonins and Special Chunins were supposed to be involved. The Senju council managed to exempt those of us looking after Naruto by citing clan rights to reject the call, and sent a few of the clan's Jonins in our stead." Banii said with a frown, putting down her satchel of sealed supplies next to Ginrin. "Something about the mission last night got the whole council spooked though. I heard from the clan guards that after those who left for the mission returned, they called an emergency gathering of the council members. All of them had been in the council room since before dawn has broken."

"I wonder what mission we have missed." Ginrin said with a thoughtful frown. "I guess it will be something to ask Natsu when we get back. I would rather have been out on a real mission than stuck being a babysitter. Though that reminds me, I thought the Konoha council was announcing Naruto's bloodline and actions during the Uchiha clan attack to the public this morning. That was the whole reason our team was sent to watch over him with so much haste. We are to protect him and deter any would be mob that might arise from the announcement. But I hadn't seen or heard so much as a news crier the whole morning."

"I guess that mysterious S-rank mission the Hokage called must have derailed those plans." Banii said with a shrug, flipping her blond mane over her shoulder as she began stacking the supplies she brought back into the cupboards. "How's the kid doing anyway?"

"He has locked himself up in his apartment since he woke up this morning. The kid is incredibly boring…" Ginrin said shaking his head.

"Or maybe not as boring as you think." A voice interrupted him. Ginrin turned around to see Tetsuki, his third team member, and the one who was supposed to currently keep an eye on Naruto from across the street, entering the living room of the apartment. There was a grim look in Tetsuki's eyes that caused Ginrin to stiffen.

"What happened?" Ginrin asked, putting down the kunai he was sharpening, standing up to look at Tetsuki.

"The little imp has given us the slip." Tetsuki said with reluctant admiration. "I have children of my own, so I thought it was weird that an eight year old boy would spend his entire morning reading in his room. I popped closer to his apartment to check up on him and realised that the amount of chakra he possessed was very much lesser than what I sensed last night."

Ginrin narrowed his eyes. "He used a shadow clone as a decoy?" At Tetsuki's nod, Ginrin cursed, though a smile of reluctant admiration crossed his face. "I knew he was onto us. Though to have that level of environmental detection skill in someone so young, it is almost unheard of. Is it possible he have long range chakra detection skill?"

"I can't really tell." Tetsuki said with a helpless shrug. "None of us in the team are real chakra sensors, and even the sensors in our clan would have difficulty determining the type of chakra sense someone has. But that's not the only scary thing about the boy." Tetsuki continued, drawing Ginrin and Banii's attention. "The shadow clone he left in his room has Chunin level chakra reserves. My chakra sensing might be limited in range, but it is pretty accurate when it comes to gauging chakra reserves."

Banii arched her eyebrow. "That kid's a real chakra monster. Where are Haabu and Koubutsu anyway? If that Uzuamki kid has given us the slip, we need everyone to begin finding him."

"I sent them out into the streets to gather information about the news the village council was supposed to release." Ginrin said with a frown. "I will call them back to help with the search. In the meantime Tetsuki and Banii, search the neighbouring areas for any signs of the boy. Once Haabu and Koubutsu are back, we'll do a wider spectrum search."

"Hai!" Tetsuki and Banii said, their hands flickering into the Body Flicker Technique before they vanished out of the apartment in a gust of wind.

Ginrin reach into his pouch to adjust the team's radio transmitter. "Haabu, Koubutsu. I need the two of you back at the apartment now, there has been a situation…"

1 hour ago, opposite the street from Naruto's apartment

Kagu Uchiha frowned as she remained hidden in the shadows, on top of an apartment building, watching the Senju clowns watch Naruto Uzumaki's apartment.

"Why are we doing this?" Kagu asked, moaning a little to her teacher. Shadou Uchiha was a stern unyielding man, who was one of the few Uchiha Jonin left without serious injuries, after what was now being termed as the Uchiha Massacre. He was one of the best Taijutsu specialist in the clan, and Kagu had been apprenticed to him ever since she graduated from the Academy three years ago. "That Senju team is more than enough to look after an eight year old, why do we have to be around to make sure he is safe?"

"You know why." Shadou said sternly. "He and his teacher were instrumental in preventing a full massacre on the clan when Madara attacked with those traitors. From the Anbu reports, Madara apparently tried to kill the boy when he discovered him helping us in our clan. We as the Uchiha have our honor. The blood debt our clan owned to the boy must be repaid. Not to mention those Senju fools are pathetic enough to lose the boy's trail, you really think they can protect an eight year old from our clan's most infamous ninja?"

"He also slipped past us, and we can't find him anywhere in the village." Kagu grumpily pointed out the facts. "Now we're all waiting here, hoping that he'll return soon from wherever he went. But that's beside the point, even if Madara really goes after this kid for personal vendetta, there's nothing the two of us even counting the Senju team, can do against him."

"There's a reason the two of us were sent here by the council." Shadou said looking disapprovingly at Kagu. She might had felt abashed by the look in the past, but she was too used to his mannerism that it did not have much effect on her now. "Aside from our… new clan head and a few others, we're among the fastest ninja in the clan. We can at least stall and take the boy to safety if any attacks happened."

"Much good that will do us." Kagu muttered under her breath. She stiffened as a flicker of movement at one of Uzumaki's apartment windows caught her eye.

"The boy has returned." Shadou said, a look of approval in his eyes as he observed the Uzumaki apartment. He had caught sight of the movement as well. "That was an impressive use of the Body Flicker technique, especially for someone his age. Almost precise control and power over the technique, he really is a true prodigy."

"I can run faster than that without using the Body Flicker at all." Kagu commented in a tone of disparity.

"Yes you could do that, after years of physical training and having me beat it into you." Shadou commented bluntly, causing Kagu to wince. "For a boy his age, having that level of Body Flicker mastery puts him on par with some of the more specially trained Chunin border scouts."

Channelling chakra to her eyes, Kagu sharpened her sight and looked into the boy's apartment. "He looks like he has been out training. He's covered with bruises and sweat. I thought his teacher is still missing?"

"The Hokage called off the search after the S-rank mission yesterday night." Shadou revealed. "It's possible the boy's teacher is still alive and has continued training him. Or the Uzumaki boy might have decided to do his own training."

"What did happen last night?" Kagu asked, perking up at the more interesting topic. "I know you talked to Shusui this morning, when we dropped by the clan compound during the search for the boy. What did he tell you?"

"Something that does not concern my annoying apprentice." Shadou said stoically. "Now settle down, I will take first watch, you get a little sleep for the night."

"This is the first 'mission' in Konoha where I have to sleep in a bed roll on a chilly apartment top, while my very comfy residence is only a few miles away." Kahi grumbled as she began lying out her bed roll.

"The council is trying to get hold of an apartment in the area where we can better observe and protect the boy from." Shadou stated simply. "But it will take time. The clan funds are needed to pay for the repairs of all the destroyed properties in the clan compound. At the current time, the Uchiha council can't afford to buy out a tenant with enormous sums of money like the Senju clan did. Get use to your bed roll, because that will be what you will be sleeping in, until either our clan or the Senju gets custody of the boy…"

Present time… Physical location – Naruto's apartment

It was as though the air had shattered into a million sparkling shards. It felt as though the very air around him had been electrified. He was falling… no he was soaring… in a sea of fractured shards of luminous flickering images.

He could sense the presence of old man Hokage next to him, but it was as though he was frozen entirely, able to only see forward, as he was pulled and pushed by unknown forces towards destinations unknown.

As he flew past the shards, he saw…

The Senju council meeting to discuss about him…

He thought he saw himself back in his own room, after helping to take down Root the previous night…

He saw Hinata…

He saw the Senju team watching over him as dawn breaks over Konoha…

He saw the Uchiha duo sent to watch him…

He saw…

He saw…

His head pounded, the images coming at him too fast for him to completely comprehend. For a moment it was as though he was seeing through the very fabrics of time, to the very source, the essence of everything in the world.

His mind went blank as his brain gave up the struggle to understand or remember all the things he had seen. A doorway appeared in front of him and he flew right through it. It took him several long moments before he regained control of his mental state, as he began blinking, peering around him in a blur of bewilderment.

He had exited the strange tunnel of shattered shards, nearly collapsing onto what seemed to be a brown brick floor, inscribed with a set of enormous circular seal array giving off a mild golden glow. He looked up and felt his chest constrict, his breath wheezing out of him as he saw what was in front of him and what he was standing on.

Seemingly endless rows of shelves stretched out in front of him, into the far horizon. Looking around him, he discovered that he was standing on a brown brick circular platform that seemed to be floating slightly above the nearest shelves. He could see no walls around him, just endless rows of shelves filled with scrolls and books. There was sufficient ambient light illuminating the whole place, but there were no obvious light source around him.

A flicker of movement at the edge of his vision caused him to turn around. Naruto blinked as he saw old man Hokage standing beside him, the older man releasing his hand from Naruto's shoulders. The expression on the old man's face was filled with wistfulness and also joy as he looked around him.

"What is this plac…" Naruto began but Old man Hokage interrupted him with a smile. The older man's eyes roamed around the chambers with a hint of remembrance and sadness.

"This… is your legacy, the true legacy of the Uzumaki clan." Old man Hokage said gravely as he looked at Naruto. "The Library of the Uzumaki."

Naruto blinked, remembering the strange cube with unknown seal arrays that had somehow brought both of them here. "So… You mean my ancestors actually managed to create a liveable environment within a storage seal of some kind? A sub-dimension of some sort which they set up to contain their knowledge? I thought that isn't possible, the widely known limit of storage seals is that nothing living can be contained within the seals."

"In a way you are correct, this place exists on a different plane of existence. However its raw form is not just a modular sub-dimension tied to the physical world, it is a malleable dimension created outside of space and time." Old man Hokage said, smiling at Naruto. "I am surprised that you know the concept of dimensional space and storage seals. Even your father, the seal prodigy that he was, only really began his study of space-time after your mother… showed him her legacy."

"Okay… so I take it this dimension we're in right now is vastly different from the ones used by normal storage seals?" Naruto asked, even as he began looking around for a way to leave the podium they were on. The only way off the podium that he could see was to shelf hop all the way down to ground level.

"This dimension is not a self-contained dimension created by modified storage seals, tied to the physical world." Old man Hokage explained. "It is in fact a sealed and mutable dimension space permanently etched into a hidden corner of our plane of existence. The unique seal arrays on The Legacy, the metal cube that you use to transverse here, actually creates a pathway cutting through space-time. The pathway connects the user of The Legacy, and those physically in contact with him at the time of activation, to the dimensional space." Old man Hokage grinned as he waved at his body. "One thing you should take note is that we are actually not existing physically in this dimension."

"What do you mean?" Naruto asked with a start, even as he sent another mental command to Sica. Usually Sica would have provided him with some information by now.

"It might be best for me to let you in a piece of Uzumaki history, so that you can better understand what is going on." Old man Hokage said, his eyes glinting with humour. "This was told by your mother, to both me and your father, when she first allowed us to enter The Legacy with her.

"According to Uzumaki legend, long ago the Senju clan exiled a group of their inner council due to political reasons. The handful of exiles began their own clan, which began the founding of the Uzumaki. Later generations would mend ties with the Senju clan, but during the beginning, the clan was small, and wholly unremarkable until the third generation of the clan. Hakusho Uzumaki was the fourth son of the Second Uzumaki clan head. He was also the man who would change the clan's fortune. He was considered a clan legend among the Uzumaki, though few outside the clan knew of this Uzumaki history.

"In his youth, the only noteworthy thing about Hakusho was his fascination of the pre-cataclysm ruins and his scholarly skills. During that point of time, the deadly mists surrounding some of the ruins were beginning to dissipate, and there was a rush of adventurers' making their fortunes finding old artifacts or objects of power. The deterioration on the ruins meant that not much items of significance managed to survive, but enough new finds were brought forth to the world that made a handful of explorers rich, and expanded the knowledge of electric and mechanical arts in the Elemental countries.

"Hakusho Uzumaki was fortunate or unfortunate, depending on one's point of view, enough to discover an artifact that according to your clan legend, predates even the pre-cataclysm period. There was not much known about the artifact. What was known much later was that the artifact implanted an entire repository of knowledge, most of it about exotic seals, into Hakusho's mind, which caused his mental state to deteriorate rapidly.

"By the time his exploration party managed to bring him back to his clan, Hakusho was a jabbering mess. He was able to understand what others were saying, but when he spoke, it was in a language no one had ever heard before. The clan healer diagnosed that Hakusho's brain was somehow breaking down due to the enormous stress of what happened, and that he would not have long to live.

"Hakusho must have understood what it meant, it was said that he secluded himself for several days. The Legacy was created by him during that time. According to the Uzumaki clan's legend, Hakusho dragged himself to the Uzumaki council with the last of his strength, holding onto the metal cube, and in the first understandable words he had spoken since he returned to the clan, he was able to explain what happened to him, and passed on the cube as his Legacy to the clan.

"He told the council that he had extracted all of the foreign knowledge implanted into his mind and had secluded them in a separate dimension. This became a library of knowledge that the Uzumaki clan could later access. Hakusho passed away soon after his last great act, as his damaged mind gave up on him. But his Legacy empowered the clan to be able to later stand amongst the Senju and Uchiha clans in power."

"So… this Library of the Uzumaki… is actually formed from the extracted memories of one of my ancestors?" Naruto asked slowly, trying to comprehend what he had learnt. "After some unknown artifact dump an entire repository of foreign knowledge into him?"

"In a way, yes. Artifacts from pre-cataclysm periods are dangerous for a reason, much less artifacts from a period predating that. It was said the Old Gods who birthed humanity into this world left powerful artifacts hidden in various corners of the world after they left for the heavens. Old manuscripts of pre-cataclysm era spoke of how several of those artifacts were found, how some could turn fertile lands to deserts, or sink continents into oceans, or transmute a whole civilization into a tree that touched the heavens. There are much suppositions among scholars in our era that those artifacts of the Old Gods might have been the cause of the later cataclysm, centuries after they left." Old man Hokage said simply as Naruto widened his eyes in interest.

"I never knew the ancient artifacts could do this…" Naruto said in shock, wondering if those artifacts were advanced technologies of some kind. "I don't think there's anything about pre-cataclysm artifacts in the academy library, I would have found some information on them if that's the case."

"Konoha is a ninja village, our libraries tend to contain information our ninjas can use in their career, rather than scholarly knowledge like these. If you go to the Fire capital where the Metalworkers and Scholars have set up their bases, you might be able to find more information from them." Old man Hokage said with a chuckle. "I do collect old manuscripts from the pre-cataclysm era in my spare time, carefully sealed away to prevent them from deteriorating further. Perhaps one day, I may show you those collections."

"I will like that." Naruto said eagerly, even as he sent a mental probe to Sica. He was beginning to get anxious at the continued silence from his only true companion. All these new information about pre-cataclysm era artifacts were new to him. Depending on whether they were fact or fiction, he might be able to convince Sica to re-evaluate the technological level of his world, and allow him to release more advance technologies into his world.

"But that's enough about old manuscripts from the pre-cataclysm. Tell me Naruto, have you heard of Yin chakra?" Old man Hokage asked.

Naruto nodded. "Yin chakra is an exotic chakra element that's often paired with Yang chakra. On its own, it is the basis of imagination and spiritual energy, used to perform..." Naruto trailed off, sprouting knowledge he had learnt from Sica before realising what he just said. He looked around the seemingly physical and endless library in front of him, and recalled what the Hokage had said much earlier about them not existing physically. Mouth opening in shock, he turned back to the old man. "You mean this whole place is made up of Yin chakra?"

"Yes… yes it is." Old man Hokage said, eyeing Naruto in surprise. "That was surprisingly knowledgeable and deductive of you. It seems your teacher trained you remarkably well."

"So when you say we are not physically here, you mean we are actually Yin elemental copies of ourselves? Like elemental clones?" Naruto asked, finally understanding why he could not reach Sica.

If he was a Yin clone formed within this dimension, it was doubtful Sica's functionalities would be fully brought over. The Shadow Clone technique was the only clone technique he had tried in the past that fully replicate Sica with all its capabilities. The basic academy clone technique, wood clone technique and other elemental clone techniques he tried had all produced clones with Sica devices that were not operational. That was one reason he had stuck to using the Shadow Clone technique, even though each of the elemental clones have their strength and weakness.

"I guess calling our forms in this dimension Yin clones is not incorrect. It is very much like how the Yamanaka clan does their mind walking techniques." Old man Hokage said with a pondering smile. He motioned Naruto to follow him to the edge of the podium. "Come, let me show you the library, as your mother had once showed me." The Hokage said, giving Naruto an amused look, as he stepped off the podium, standing on air before an amazed Naruto.

"I didn't know ninjas can walk on air." Naruto said shocked. He had never heard Sica mention any air walking techniques before.

"Ninjas can't walk on air... usually. No one that I know of have enough chakra control to infuse and create a solid chakra platform in the air. The closest alternatives are the Tsuchikages of Earth Village who can manage feats of flight. But they achieve that through some secret Earth Release technique and not chakra control." Old man Hokage said simply, his voice changing into a more lecturing tone. "As for Yin chakra, it is basically mental energies. This whole place is formed from mental energies, as are we. In this dimension, your own thoughts can shape the environment around you, or even yourself to a limited extend. Your ancestor built several safe guards when he created The Legacy, the major one is that the shelves containing the representations of his extracted knowledge can never be destroyed. There are others, which unfortunately I do not know about. Whatever safeguards that exists however, do not stop you from using 'mental suggestions' on yourself… for instance, suggesting to yourself that you are able to walk on air." The Hokage said as he calmly turned and began walking down to ground level, as if he was standing on invisible stairs.

Naruto gaped at the older man who was already half way down. Biting his lips, taking a deep breath, Naruto decided to test out what old man Hokage had suggested. He did tense his body to jump to the closest shelf if his test attempt failed. Taking a deep breath, he leapt off the podium and focused on the thought that he could fly.

As if his body had wings, he soared in the air for a moment, before gaining enough control to follow the Hokage to the ground level. The older man smiled at the look of wonder on Naruto's face, before motioning for him to follow. His feet touching the grey cobblestones of ground level, Naruto looked around him. All around him were shelves packed with scrolls and tomes. There was also a cleared space underneath the floating podium where a single book stand stood, with a thick tome placed on its holder. As the Hokage began to move to the closest shelf, Naruto scrambled after him, daunted by the sight of the seemingly infinite library.

"Now there are several important details you need to know about your legacy." Old man Hokage said seriously. "First and foremost, only a true blooded Uzumaki can open a connection between the physical world and this dimension. At the current moment, that consists only of you.

"Secondly, much of the library actually contains the extracted foreign repository of knowledge from Hakusho Uzumaki. Towards his end days, when he was creating The Legacy, he was able to decipher and understand some of those foreign information in his head and use those knowledge to create The Legacy. When the foreign repository of knowledge was extracted out of his head into The Legacy, they became the scrolls and tomes you see on the shelves. Those scrolls and tomes are the mental representation of his knowledge." The Hokage explained even as he began rummaging through some of the scrolls close to him.

"Now these two scrolls are a good example." Old man Hokage said as he took two scrolls from the shelf. He unrolled the first one to reveal a series of unidentifiable words outlining some diagrams. "As you noticed, this scroll contains a language much different than the one we know of. This is an ancient language that probably exists during pre-cataclysm era or maybe even earlier. Your ancestors calls it the language of the gods, based on their assumption that the artifact which passed Hakusho Uzumaki all these knowledge was left by the old gods."

Old man Hokage then unrolled the second scroll, which revealed another series of unidentifiable words. At the end of the unidentifiable words were what seemed to be actual translations of the unidentifiable words in the common language. "The second scroll contains translations of the ancient language into the common tongue used today. This is actually one of the few tiny portion of what Hakusho managed to translate and decipher, before he extracted his implant knowledge and placed them here.

"Subsequent generations of the Uzumaki made used of the translated scrolls and tomes to come up with a translation codex for the rest of the scrolls and tomes in Ancient tongue. That codex is contained within the Uzumaki Codex, the big tome located under the floating podium." The Hokage said pointing behind them towards the tome on the book stand. "Throughout the centuries, before the destruction of the Uzumaki clan, they managed to translate hundreds of scrolls and tomes through generations of effort, unlocking rare seal knowledge that empower them.

"Their immerse Seal knowledge became their downfall when some of the nations grew fearful of their strength and destroyed them. Your mother Kushina and the wife of the First Hokage, Mito Uzumaki, were the only known survivors from the Uzumaki's main bloodline." Old man Hokage stated seriously. "Though your ancestors made great efforts in translating the ancient knowledge passed to them by Hakusho, they have not even managed to translate a quarter of the knowledge contained here. Each of the Uzumaki who have translated a scroll or tome, would form a duplicate copy of the same scroll or tome in the common tongue, and place them back onto the shelves. The Uzumaki clan saw it as their personal mission to fully translate all the knowledge contained in The Legacy.

"After the death of Lady Mito, your mother as the last surviving member of the Uzumaki bloodline, broke clan protocol by bringing your father, my wife, me and a few others, into the Legacy, to help with translating whatever scrolls or tomes we could in our lifetime." The Hokage said in fond memories, a look of sadness crossing his eyes. "We also duplicated some of our knowledge to store in the Legacy, as a form of indirect payment to future Uzumaki descendants, for use of this… sacred space.

"This was where your father first gained the knowledge and idea to improve the Flying Thunder God Technique that was created by the Second Hokage. The improved Flying Thunder God Technique was what earned your father the title of "The Yellow Flash" during the Third Ninja war. The copy of his improved technique should be here somewhere. Your parents spent a lot of time here, before your birth. Where you were conceived, the protective measures in The Legacy prevented Kushina from activating it during her pregnancy. No one has entered this place since then." Old man Hokage said looking at the shelves around them. "I remembered your parents have a special corner set up with their own memory archives, as did the rest of us, but it has been years and I can't recall where all of our hidey holes are."

"I am sure I have all the time in the world to look around." Naruto said his heart leaping at the thought that he might have some mementos of his birth parents, of their own stored memories to look into.

"Yes you will wouldn't you?" Old man Hokage said, smiling idly. "One last thing. As this dimension is outside of space and time, when we return back to our bodies, it will be at the exact moment we left it. To leave the dimension, you need to return to the seal array on the podium and activate it by saying the word 'Return' while touching the middle of the seal. If you bring a non-Uzumaki into The Legacy, they need to be standing with you in the seal array, or they will remain trapped here. It has never been tested, but I am sure it would lead to unpleasant circumstances if someone is trapped in The Legacy while disconnected from their physical bodies. Without the seal bridge linking our yin selves to our physical selves, our bodies will continue aging as time moves on in the physical world."

"I get that." Naruto said with a nod. He hesitated before moving forward and hugged the older man awkwardly. "Thank you old man, for telling me… for passing me this… legacy from mom and dad."

"It is the least I can do for you." The Hokage said with a smile. "What you do with the knowledge within The Legacy is up to you. But remember, knowledge is power, and those who wield great power must use it responsibly. Remember the Will of Fire, the legacy of the First Hokage."

"I will." Naruto promised, his mind whirling at the wealth of knowledge before him. As soon as he returned to his physical body, he would need to get Sica's opinion on this. "I will. And I will need your help with this. There is no way I can translate even a small portion of… this alone."

***Pangalactic Federation Codex***

– Compiled by by Dr. Reimi Saionji (Head Linguist, Historian and Diplomat 1-A of the USTA)

A.D. 2064: World War III broke out after several clashes between World Republic Federation, the ruling government on Earth, and their enemies. Both factions of the war utilized Weapons of Mass Destruction, razing the lands on Earth. This was known as the Shattering, and it was one of humanity's darkest era.

A.D. 2072: Dr. Arnold Maverick of the Smithson Institute found the remains of an ancient civilization on humanity's home planet, Earth. The razed and uninhabitable landscape of Earth had been rearranged, opening up areas that were previously undiscovered by Man.

DNA of this ancient race was extracted from a corpse contained in a 12,000 year old sarcophagus. DNA testing revealed that the genes of this race bears remarkable similarities to humanity.

Project Hope, classified Top Secret by the government of that era, tried to combine the ancient race's DNA with modern human DNA, in order to create superhumans. It was later revealed none of the experimentations were successful.

**Chapter 14: Chapter 13**

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series/ Stargate series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

**Author's Note:** To those readers who have noticed the Stargate references in the previous chapter, yes my intention is to cross this story with the Stargate verse one day. :) Also I have one question, who are supposed to be in Akatsuki at this point in time? Sasori for sure, maybe Orochimaru... but who else?

OoooO

Previously...

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OoooO

**Chapter Thirteen: Ripples before the Maelstrom**

Present time, opposite the street from Naruto's apartment

Shadou stilled as the dark clad form of the Third Hokage entered Naruto Uzumaki's apartment through the boy's windows. He had caught sight of the hand sign the Hokage had made as he paused for a visible moment on the boy's window still, a hand code known only to Konoha's Chunin and Jonin, which the Hokage must have intended for Shadou and the Senju watchers across the street to see.

The hand sign was obvious, signifying the need for "Privacy". Shadou knew that for all his age, the Third was still immensely formidable. There was little doubt that the old man could detect the watchers stationed around Naruto's apartment. The Third was known as "The Professor" for a reason. The village leader was infamously rumoured to have learnt most known ninja techniques in his lifetime. The rumours might have been exaggerated, but it was widely known the Third had an impressive Ninjutsu knowledge, with a high capability in chakra sensing.

Of course having naturally strong chakra senses came with its own flaws. Most strong sensors could only bear to activate their sensing abilities in short bursts, keeping them shut off most of the time for fear of being overwhelmed. Very few, with the exception of those with chakra sensing bloodlines, could cope with their chakra senses being bombarded with information for long durations.

Shadou's own hard earned chakra sensing ability, trained from years of practice, was rather mild, allowing him to detect strong chakra pulses within his immediate area. The one good thing about his weak sensor ability however, was that it enabled him to leave on for long durations, without his ability becoming a hindrance to him. That trait gave him a huge advantage, especially during long drawn out Taijutsu fights, when he could use his ability to predict the movements and locations of his opponents even without activating his Sharingan.

If he had been a dutiful Konoha Jonin, he might have turned away when The Third entered Naruto's apartment. But he had not become an Elite Jonin by dutifully following orders. Elite ninja got to where they were by thinking with their heads. That the Hokage was personally visiting the Uzumaki boy in the middle of the night made Shadou curious as to why the Hokage was there in the first place.

Naruto Uzumaki was infamously known as the demon container of Konoha, by Konoha's ninja corps and a surprisingly large number of civilians. No one knew exactly who spread the information about Naruto's status to the common populace. The identity of the demon container was considered village secret of the highest level. But after the Nine-tails' attack on the village close to eight years ago, certain powerful and influential civilians received notes detailing Naruto's status. Information about the child began spreading since then, and trying to prevent that secret from travelling out of the village was like trying to patch a leaking barrel with paper. Shadou was quite confident that the major Elemental villages knew the identity of Konoha's demon container by now.

The boy had been but a baby then, but once his status as the container of the Nine-tails was known to the civilian populace in Konoha, the Hokage had to place Anbu protection details on the child just to protect him from attempts to harm him. The Hokage even had to place a special law in place in order to cease the spread of information about the Nine-tails' container. Naruto Uzuamki's status as the Konoha demon container was one of the worst kept S-rank secret in the village. Even until now, the Anbu could not discover the party disseminating information about the child back in the earlier years.

With the re-emergence of Root the previous night, Shadou could not help but wonder if the clandestine operation had any part in spreading sensitive information about the boy. If they really did do such an act, Shadou could not even began to fathom what their purpose would be. Already, the newly formed Uchiha council were up in arms after learning that Danzo had stolen Sharingan eyes from dead Uchiha members. Tales of the S-rank mission last night were already riling up the inner council, and it was all the new clan head Shusui, could do to stop the news from spreading further.

The Third might turn a blind eye to Uchiha Jonin reporting back to their clan head about details of an S-rank mission, but if tales of what happened began to spread out of the clan, the Hokage might apprehend those that leaked S-rank secrets to the common populace, like what he did when the demon container's identity first began to spread. The Uchiha council could not afford to offend the Hokage right now, not with the recent damages and loses to their clan.

Which was why Shadou was making sure he would not get caught as he tried to spy on the Hokage…

A thin flare of light burst from the window still the Third had briefly perched on before he had entered Naruto Uzumaki's apartment. With his chakra enhanced sight, Shadou could briefly made out a complex seal of some sort activating on the window. When Shadou turned to peer through the apartment window, he could only see dim darkness and nothing else. Shadou had no doubt that the seal had also muffled sounds inside the room from prying ears as well.

Shadou chuckled in amusement, it seemed rumours of the Third's skill with Fuinjutsu was true. There were few seal masters who could utilize the Flash Sealing technique. It was a technique that allows a seal master to instantly place a pre-composed seal on any surface. The Uzumaki clan were notorious for the technique, which was not so surprising since they were the ones that developed that particular Seal craft in the first place.

As for Konoha, the Second and Fourth Hokages, as well as the Sanin were known users of the craft. Now it seems that he could add the Third Hokage to the list as well. It would at least be something for him to bring back to the inner council.

While the survivors of the Uchiha clan had no plans of turning against Konoha. When one was trained to be a ninja all his life, every bit of information counts, whether it was about friend or foe. There was always a chance that a seemingly irrelevant information might mean the difference between survival or death one day.

Knowing better than to go near Naruto Uzumaki's apartment to see if he could break through the privacy seal on the window still, Shadou settled down to wait, listening to the soft snores of his apprentice.

OoooO

Naruto's apartment – Within Uzumaki's Legacy

Flying above the maze of shelves, containing knowledge that he could not even begin to comprehend, Naruto could not help being dwarfed by all that had happened, of having a real piece of his parents, the history of his ancestors handed back to him.

Right at the moment, Old man Hokage was making one last attempt at finding the hidden corner where his father and mother had gathered whenever they were in the base. According to Old man Hokage, the small "home base" of his parents had been near the podium, as such, it did not took very long for the two of them to catch sight of a small corner hidden by a few shelves that looked different from the rest of the place.

There was a round table stacked with books and thick tomes, comfortable cushioned chairs around the table, and a hemmock hanging between two shelves. Old man Hokage smiled fondly as he brushed his hand against the table, his gaze seemingly faraway.

"I remembered the first time when your mother brought those she trusted into the Legacy. She took us here, showed us how to manipulate the yin chakra in this dimension into a permanent state. Because of the original structural creation of this dimension by your ancestor, it was easy to extract knowledge and formed them into books and tomes, but it was harder to shape the yin chakra in this dimension into something else." The Hokage said in remembrance. "I never really got the hang of it, my wife, and one of my former student were however able to match your mother in yin chakra manipulation. Like your parents, they attempt to make a few small areas in this vast library places where they could rest and work. My dear Biwako and I used to have a personal space not far from your parents'."

Naruto saw the Hokage's eyes misting as the older man dwelled on old memories. Biting his lips, Naruto hesitated before asking. "Who did she brought in? Do I know any of them?"

For a moment, a look of pain flashed across Old man Hokage's face. "There was my wife, your mother's two best friends Mikoto Uchiha and Kojika Hyūga, and two of my former students, one of whom was your father's teacher and your godfather." The Hokage said, his eyes tightening with sadness.

"Wait… I have a godfather?" Naruto asked in surprise. "Why have I never seen him?"

"Shortly after your father's death, he set off for a dangerous and prolonged mission outside Konoha. He has only been back to the village twice after that. The last time was when you was four. He left a toad wallet for your birthday." Old man Hokage said with a smile.

"He was the one that gave me Gama-chan?" Naruto asked in surprise. He had received a toad wallet when he was younger, but he never found out who left it for him back at the orphanage. He had always thought it had been Old man Hokage who had given it to him. When he was moved into his own apartment and given the orphan stipend, he had saved up for a new toad wallet, keeping the original hidden away as one of his precious objects. All the subsequent incarnations of his wallet had been in the form of a toad, and nicknamed Gama-chan since then.

"Your godfather and I long suspected that the attack of the Nine-tailed beast on Konoha, and the death of your parents, were all part of a bigger conspiracy by a mysterious organisation of rogue ninja that we have been trying to track for years." Old man Hokage said gravely. "Do not blame him for leaving you behind. He was trying to keep you safe in his own way. There are times a ninja had to make hard decisions to protect his people and his village."

"Like when my father sealed the Nin-tails inside of me?" Naruto asked sardonically. Old man Hokage winced at Naruto's words.

"I am sure your father has his reasons for using you as a human sacrifice." The Hokage said gravely. He clasped a warm hand on Naruto's shoulder comfortingly. "A lot of it probably stems from the fact that only a full blooded Uzumaki can ever hope to successfully contain the Nine-tailed beast without suffering grievous harm."

Naruto was silent for a while before he pushed his bubbling emotions away, concentrating on the more important piece of information the Hokage had inadvertently revealed. "I am sure he has his reasons. But I can't help feeling a little bitter over his choice to make me into a demon container… but about this… godfather… of mine… what do you mean when you say conspiracy? And what rogue ninja organisation are you talking about?"

Old man Hokage paused, as though he was giving thought on how to answer Naruto. In the meantime, Naruto was trying to recall his past conversations with Sica. As far as Naruto was aware, Sica had never mentioned coming across any information about the rogue ninja organisation that old man Hokage had revealed. So either the information did not threaten his wellbeing and the wellbeing of those close to him directly, or the information was never written down and archived, or was sealed. Which means Sica never had a chance to scan the information.

"Those issues are nothing for you to worry about." The Hokage said, deflecting the question, causing Naruto to frown at the older man's evasive answer. "You are still a child and your induction into Konoha's Ninja Corp is a very special case. Take your time to understand your Legacy, figure out what it means to be a Konoha ninja, and train to be the ninja your parents will wish for you to be. Let me take care of the rest. I have already sent a message to your godfather about the recent attacks. When he returns to the village, I will get him to visit you and tell you more about your parents."

"That is nice, but…" Naruto begun, intending to question Old man Hokage on the mysterious organisation and his godfather. He never got the chance as the Hokage began walking around the table, lifting up several scrolls with a smile.

"Ah I remember this." The Hokage said with a smile, unravelling one of the scroll. "Your mother was continuing Lady Mito's research on the Uzumaki bloodline. She managed quite a headway reworking a clan technique originally developed by Lady Mito. Her shape transformation of Yin or Yang Chakra chains was incredibly powerful. I remembered your father telling me she had completed the technique a few months before your mother realised she was pregnant with you. I have only seen her use the Yang Chakra Chains once, against a group of rogue Iwa Jonins who were trying to assassinate your father. They never had a chance to even fight back before she crippled them in a single move."

The information distracted Naruto from his original line of thought, causing him to frown, as he thought back on what Sica had told him of the Uzumaki clan. "I know the Uzumaki clan was renowned as Seal Masters, and that some of the history books attribute their large chakra reserves and vitality as some sort of bloodline… But how can you create a clan technique if your bloodline just makes you more… healthy and have a larger chakra pool than others?"

The Hokage gave a laugh. "The Uzumaki bloodline is actually the same as the Senju bloodline, or at least they were the same roughly several centuries ago when your clan first begun. As centuries passed, the two bloodlines began to show subtle differences, even though at the core of it, they originated from the same source.

"The Senju were renowned to possess great vitality, large chakra reserves and potent chakra, with an instinctive grip of chakra and shape transformation. Due to inter-marriages between clan members, subsequent descendants began to gain very powerful chakra elements in either Earth and Water. The First Hokage was the first… and only one of his clan members to manifest the Wood Release bloodline, and it was largely thought by the clan to be a flux in their centuries of bloodline strengthening." Old man Hokage said with a regretful sigh.

"The Uzumaki possess the same vitality and chakra reserves as the Senju. But due to their low numbers, inter-clan marriages were rare in the first few generations. Their chakra and chakra elements were potent but never reached the same levels as the Senju. The Uzumaki however possess more diverse chakra elements as a number of Uzumaki members married outsiders. Their clan descendants frequently showed one or two of the five basic chakra elements instead of only Earth and Water.

"As they grew older, it was widely noted that the chakra of a number of Uzumaki members became more malleable, allowing them to transfer chakra to one another without harming the person receiving the chakra infusion, or even enable them to balance multiple chakra infusion in their bodies. This special form of chakra maturity usually appeared naturally in females of the Uzumaki clan, and seldom in the males. I believed your mother once mentioned a special Uzumaki ritual that was supposed to assist the Uzumaki males in reaching the same state of chakra maturity. You might be able to find mention of the ritual in The Legacy.

"Some of the best medical ninja of the older generations came from the Uzumaki clan. Because their chakra were potent and malleable at the same time, some Uzumaki members were known to be able to bestow regenerative healing just by infusing others with their chakra. Your clan even created a special 'Chakra Resonance Seal' just to store limited chakra before infusing it into someone else on activation.

"Tsunade Senju, one of your mother's trusted companions and the second of my students, further refined that particular seal into something… extraordinary during the time your mother brought her here. I am sure you will be able to find records of her research around her workplace. If memories serves, it should be a few shelves to the north of your parents' home base. Sadly her modified seal though powerful, requires a particular type of chakra system that is rarely found among the ninja populace. Her seal requires its user to possess absolute and precise chakra control, something that only a handful of ninja each generation would ever possess.

"As to the Uzumaki bloodline, there were other 'special' manifestations of Uzumaki chakra throughout the later generations. Your mother Kushina, and Lady Mito, were known to possess a special type of chakra that was extremely supple yet potent in Yin and Yang chakra. Your mother thus possessed instinctive Yin release ability, though she only managed to gain Yang release abilities after years of training. Kushina's special chakra and control over it allows her to mould her chakra into powerful chains using the shape transformation technique she modified from Lady Mito's derived creation.

"At the crux of it however, the Uzumaki clan was more infamously known for their Great Seals. The Great Seals tapped into the malleability of their bloodline, were enormously chakra intensive, and could only be activated by an Uzumaki Seal Master tapping on the chakra of numerous Uzumaki clan members at the same time. The Land of Whirlpool, an island located off the coast of our country, was the home of the Uzumaki clan. It got its name not because there were naturally occurring whirlpools in the area but because the Uzumaki clan created those whirlpools with one of their Great Seals, whirlpools that lasted even till this day."

"I didn't know seals could do those kind of things." Naruto said with surprise. The seal knowledge Sica had scanned and tutored him in had never shown the craft to be capable of massive environmental alterations. From what Sica had taught him of Federation History and Sciences, many Federation nations only began studies into environmental manipulation, usually weather control, centuries after their first off world colonization.

"The Great Seals of the Uzumaki clan could do that and possibly more. And the knowledge is all contained somewhere in The Legacy." Old man Hokage said looking around the shelves filled with ancient knowledge, his lips twisting in a sad smile. "But even if anyone knew how to create those Great Seals now, no Seal Master will be able to activate them without a large group of ninja capable of infusing him with chakra to support the seals. And unless the Seal Master has a malleable chakra system equivalent to an Uzumaki, he will be unable to balance so many different chakra infusions without chakra poisoning."

"But I am an Uzumaki… and I can access the Nine-tails' chakra… does that mean I can use those Great Seals?" Naruto asked, feeling a hint of excitement.

The Hokage paused, giving Naruto a considering look before smiling. "Perhaps Naruto. Perhaps… But right now you are only beginning to learn what it is to be a ninja. You don't have to think about the Great Seals at the moment. Promise me that even if you find knowledge of the Great Seals in the Legacy that you will not attempt to learn them unless I am with you. Even with the Nine-tails providing you with additional chakra, you might end up seriously injuring yourself."

"I promise." Naruto said with a nod. Suffering a burn out of his chakra coils was one time too many. He had since learnt his lesson about reaching too far. Naruto did wonder how the Uzumaki Seal Masters that the Hokage had mentioned, had bypass the problem of having their chakra system outputting too much chakra.

"Good." Old man Hokage said lying a hand on Naruto's shoulder, looking wistfully down at him. "What I have learnt about your teacher, the training you received from him, how you have handled those secrets and saved the Uchiha, all of those actions made me realised that you have grown up while I was not looking. You have become someone matured enough to be entrusted with your parents' legacy. The knowledge contained in The Legacy can be dangerous and frightening at times. Just remember I am always here to help you, and be wise when attempting to learn the secrets contained here."

"I will old man. Thank you." Naruto said, smiling back at the man who had been akin to a favourite grandfather throughout his life.

"Good, let's leave this place for now and get you some rest." Old man Hokage said. "As a Chunin answerable to only me, it is within my jurisdiction to have some personal training time with you. We can go through the knowledge contained within The Legacy during those periods."

"Will I also have a Jonin assigned to officially train me?" Naruto asked curiously as The Hokage took flight into the air, flying towards the podium.

"Yes, it is tradition, even for a special case like yours. And I already have somebody in mind. Now that things are finally settling down in the village, I will get him to pick you up tomorrow afternoon to officially initiate you into Konoha's ninja corp." Old man Hokage said with a smile. "I never planned for you to become a ninja at such a young age, but now that you are, do me proud Naruto, and put your parents' legacies to good use."

OoooO

Naruto's apartment

Returning to his body from the otherworldly yin dimension felt… strange. It felt as though he was suddenly sinking into a heavy and immovable shell. Tingling sensations spread throughout his senses, and he stumbled as he found himself suffering from a serious case of pins and needles, from head to toe. Shocked and momentary afraid that this was some sort of attack, he struggled, gasping as he tried to move his numb limbs, only to stumble face first into a pile of books he had previously stacked on the floor. Grunting in pain, Naruto tried to push himself up.

Your body has expelled a burst of exotic energies and its residue is irritating your sensory nerves, causing temporary peripheral neuropathy. Sica's dry droning mental voice said in Naruto's mind. For a moment, Naruto felt a surging relief at hearing the voice of his closest companion.

Am I under attack? Naruto thought back. He seriously doubt his numb throat could form comprehensive words at the moment. He tried to remember what the word neuropathy meant, it sounded like some Federation medical term. Perhaps he remembered it from those Biology lessons Sica was trying to drill into him?

No, your temporary numbness will pass. Already your body and my regenerative functions are dulling your nerves' sensitivity. Sica remarked. You will recover in 13 more seconds. The Hokage however will recover in an estimate of 20 to 55 seconds due to his lack of regenerative capabilities.

By the Sage. Naruto mentally grunted, counting down the seconds, feeling the numbness fading as he finally managed to push himself into a sitting position. What in the world was that burst of energy you sensed?

The exotic energy burst from you and the Hokage bears similar frequencies to energy signatures frequently detected from the Nara and Yamanaka clan compounds. Sica stated. Their clans' records state that most of their techniques are formed from the manipulation of Yin chakra. Based on data available, there's an 89% chance that the exotic energy detected is some form of Yin chakra energy.

Yin chakra? Naruto thought, thinking of the Yin dimension he was just in. That reminds me I need to tell you…

"Oh my, I have forgotten about the dislocation effect. It certainly doesn't do these old bones any good." Old man Hokage's voice groaned behind Naruto. Naruto pushed himself up to his feet, turning to see the Hokage shifting his body stiffly. The older man gave a sheepish chuckle. "They always do say the mind's the first to go."

"Dislocation effect?" Naruto asked as the Hokage bent and picked up the Legacy from where it had fallen onto the floor. The older man also rolled the scroll containing the documents from Naruto father's library off the floor, before standing up and handing both items back to Naruto.

"Ah yes, that was what your mother called the numb feeling that everyone gets when they returned to their bodies from the Legacy." Old man Hokage said as he stretched his body wearily. "Unlike most Yin techniques in the ninja world which happens in real time, the activated seal array on the Legacy created a 'bridge' of sorts to the Yin dimension outside of space/time and back to the real world. The Uzumaki clan believes that the 'bridge' contains a constant flow of powerful Yin chakra, some of which was brought back by the Yin clone when it returned to the real world. That shroud of raw and powerful Yin chakra the Yin clone brought back would be enough to temporary paralyze the users and anyone near them."

The Hokage shook his head. "That's a key reason why your clan never brought The Legacy to any battlefields, and why The Legacy should only be activated in a safe zone. Seconds of paralysis would be any ninja's undoing during a ninja fight."

"I will take note of that. Thank you old man." Naruto said, pausing a moment before moving forward and awkwardly hugging one of the few people in this village who had looked out for him since he was born. "Thank you for passing me my parents' … legacies. I will take good care of them."

"See that you do." The Hokage said with a grandfatherly smile, tapping the sealed scroll containing the sealed items of the Namikaze library. "Your father had quite an extensive physical library, each sealed by categories, and the sealed categories are then sealed into this greater storage seal. A portion of his library contains his Fuinjutsu and Ninjutsu researches which he kept in the physical world. There have been circumstances where your mother is not available to open the pathway into The Legacy, which was why he set up his own library in the first place."

Naruto clutched the storage scroll the Hokage pointed to, frowning as he realised he was unable to recognize the incredibly complex storage seal.

"Most of your father's library however contains rare Ninjutsu and Fuinjutsu scrolls, tomes and works that he had collected and bought during his lifetime." Old man Hokage chuckled. "Your father made many powerful friends during his time, and was able to get his hands on materials which I might not have gained access to. Of course he also made a lot of powerful enemies. The greater storage seal I used to store your father's physical library is a personal Fuinjutsu creation of mine. It will only open with my blood and yours."

Naruto blinked at the old man upon hearing that. His mind piecing the pieces together. "You are afraid someone will come after me for the library?"

"Not exactly…" The Hokage said with a weary sigh. "Officially, the Fourth Hokage's personal library has been sealed away and stored in the Hokage's library which is under Anbu protection. I have no intention for anyone to link your father's legacy back to you, at least not until the time is right. And only when revealing to the world you are the son of the Fourth doesn't put an assassination mark on you. However, if you were to unseal your father's legacy in your apartment… For one thing, your apartment would not be able to contain even half of your father's library. For another, unlike the Legacy of the Uzumaki which exits in another dimension and can only be entered by an Uzumaki, you do not have the necessary resources to protect your father's physical library should you unseal it and someone finds out.

"But I promise you Naruto." Old man Hokage said looking earnestly into Naruto's eyes, touching the storage scroll in Naruto's hands. "One day when I am confident that you can take care of yourself, that you can survive being named as the son of the Fourth, I will unseal your father's library together with you. And I entrust this sealed scroll to you as a mark of my promise. In the meantime, if you wish to look at your father's research, I believe he has made mental tomes of them back in The Legacy."

"I will take care of them." Naruto said promising. "And I understand why it has to be done this way."

A wistful look crossed the Hokage's eyes as he suddenly looked more tired and much world weary. "You are already so wise at such a young age. I wish your parents would have seen you now. I am sure they will be proud of the boy you have become." Old man Hokage gave Naruto one last pat on the shoulder before making his way to the window. "Have a good rest Naruto, you will need all your energy when your Jonin instructor drops by tomorrow afternoon."

Naruto nodded as the Hokage vanished from the window still into the dead of the night. He moved forward to close the window, his mind reaching out to Sica.

"We need to talk Sica." Naruto said as the window was closed, and he began searching for a good hiding place for the storage scroll containing his father's library, and the metal cube of The Legacy. "I have some very interesting memories for you to look through…"

OoooO

Borders of Amegakure, Land of Rain

Three days of running through forest and rocky slopes had given Mozu Uchiha more than enough time to think about his circumstances. Where once he was one of the most powerful political figure within the Uchiha clan, Mozu had no doubt that he was now a marked man, by both his clan and Konoha, should they ever discover that he was still alive.

In one fell swoop, he had lost his prestige, his wealth and his clan. When Madara Uchiha had appeared before him, breaking him out of his Anbu cell, Mozu had taken the man's offer to help him destroy his own clan, for he had nothing left to lose. And even now, as he thought back on his own actions, he had no regrets. For his clan was the one that first abandoned him when he and many others were imprisoned by the Anbu for their crimes of planning to take control of Konoha by force.

Hitsuji Uchiha, his fellow Uchiha survivor and companion, a young man who had only attained the rank of a Jonin a few weeks ago, was however noticeably guilt ridden over what he had done in the name of the clan. He had however continued following Madara and Mozu to wherever they were going because there was no other choice.

Madara had made very clear that if they do not join him, they would be better off dead. And there was also the fact that both of them were now wanted men if they ever reveal their faces to the world. Having the backing of the legendary Madara Uchiha would make even the most cold blooded hunter nin pause. In the end both Mozu and Hitsuji deferred to Madara for their continued survival, though Mozu planned to gained a bit more out of that relationship than Hitsuji would ever bear to contemplate.

They had slipped past the Konoha border patrols hours ago, and now they were deep in the Land of Rain, a country that had fully isolated itself shortly after the Third Shinobi War. There were a lot of rumours about what had been going on within that country, but most people were of the mind that Hanzō of the Salamander, leader of Amegakure, the Hidden Rain Village, must have snapped after the war.

After the Rain Daimyō and his entire family perished during the Second Shinobi War, Hanzō had taken over the running of the country as well as the Hidden Village. He had been uncontested mainly due to the fact that the Land of Rain had been a major battleground between the more powerful Elemental nations due to its unfortunate location right smack in between the Lands of Fire, Earth and Sand. No Feudal Lords dared to stake a claim on what was basically a war torn country of that time, what with the quick succession of the Second and Third Shinobi Wars.

By the time an accord of peace was finally reached by most of the Elemental Countries, Hanzō and his ninjas had fully entrenched themselves into the workings of the Land of Rain, and no one outside of a major Hidden Village had the power to contest their claim to the country. No Feudal Lord dared to start another war to claim the Land of Rain for themselves, and thus as the Land of Rain began fully isolating itself from its neighbouring countries, so too did its neighbours ignore its existence.

Now Madara was seemingly challenging the status quo. Mozu had to wonder how Madara would deal with the Rain ninjas who were said to indiscriminately kill trespassers and intruders into their land. Mozu had no doubt Madara would be able to deal with whatever ninjas in his way, but it did beg the question why Madara was leading them ever deeper into the Land of Rain.

The constant rain chilled Mozu's bones, and they finally came to a stop at a rocky cliff overlooking distant towering buildings.

"Is that… is that Amegakure?" Hitsuji asked, breaking the silence, awed at the sight before him.

None of the later generations of Konoha ninjas had ever seen Amegakure before, though Mozu had been involved in several major battles against Earth ninjas near the Hidden Rain village way back during the Third Shinobi War. Amegakure had certainly changed, the flame scarred buildings from the war had been transformed into towering modern buildings made of stone and steel. The towering skyscrapers were almost comparable to the industrial sector of the Fire capital. It seemed that the Rain ninjas and civilian craftsmen had been hard at work during their isolation.

"Yes it is." Madara said stiffly. "Now stop gaping and follow me."

Hitsuji blinked at the admonishment, while Mozu quickly followed after Madara as the legendary ninja rounded a rocky outcropping. Madara removed a specified rock on the ground, revealing a complex seal array of some sort. A drop of blood from Madara activated the seal. Mozu was surprised when a segment of the cliff wall in front of them began to slide open.

"Follow me." Madara said brusquely, striding into the awning corridor leading into the cliff.

Stepping in, Mozu was glad of the musty warmth as he was finally out of the accursed chilling rain. Hitsuji scrambled after them, and barely managed to enter the tunnel before the cliff wall door slid back into place, closing off the outside and shutting out the pitta-pattering of the rain.

The cliff tunnel was lit up by lamps spaced apart. And as Madara led them deeper into the cliff, Mozu began to wonder if Madara was actually leading them to his lair. The secret base where the infamous ninja had lived all these years. That the man actually made his home right next door to Amegakure was so outrageous and high handed, that it actually fit the arrogant characteristic Madara was supposed to have.

They came out of the stifling tunnel into a large cavern suddenly. Mozu and Hitsuji quickly stilled as they realised there were three people in the back of the cavern looking right at them. All of them wore thick black clocks with distinctive red markings. The red haired man, seated on the throne at the back of the cavern, was the first to caught Mozu's eyes. From the distance, Mozu could tell there was something… unusual with the man's eyes, but unless he gets closer or activate his Sharingan, he was unable to tell what's wrong with it.

Next to the red haired man was a purple haired woman who was looking at them sternly, as she stood by the right of the throne. To the throne's left hand side was an orange haired man who had what seemed to be black metal piecing through parts of his nose and ear lobes. He also spotted an Amegakure head band, marking him as a Rain ninja.

"Madara, you have returned." The red haired man on the throne same, as Madara and his group came to a stop in the centre of the cavern. Right in the middle of a massive seal array crafted into the ground. Mozu fingered his kunai nervously. Things were not progressing as he imagined. He had thought he would become Madara's right hand man. He had thought Madara was bringing them to his lair. But now… who were those three people in front of them? With the presence emitting from all three, it was obvious they were ninjas of some sort and of at least Jonin level if he was to guess.

"Ah yes." Madara said gravely. "Unfortunately things did not go as I planned. I did bring you two new recruits for your… little organisation. I am sure they will be good partners to you, and help you achieve both of our common goals."

Mozu felt his blood chilled. Was Madara trading him and Hitsuji away to some other ninjas right in front of their faces? If Madara would even bear to work with these ninjas, that meant they must have possessed a certain level of power, maybe even more than Jonin level… Hokage level maybe? He could not make any rash moves at the moment, at least until he knew more of what he was dealing with. Hitsuji must have come to the same conclusion, because the younger Jonin was standing stiffly next to Mozu, his eyes wide.

"I see…" The red haired man said standing up from his throne walking down towards them. His companions, the woman and the orange haired man followed.

Now that the red haired man was closer, Mozu could made up the indecipherable swirls in the man's purple eyes. What the man had was not a Sharigan, but it was obviously some kind of bloodline Mozu had never encountered. There was no telling what kind of Dojutsu abilities the man could use.

"I presume these two are Uchiha ninjas?" The red haired man asked as Madara gave a nod. The man smiled slightly, though there was no emotions in his eyes. Mozu felt a chill at the man's next words. "Welcome to the Akatsuki, I am sure both of you will become… valued members of our organisation in no time."

Hitsuji stifled a muffled cry, even as Mozu tried to get a handle on the shock coursing through his body. Dread pooled in his stomach as he realised both he and Hitsuji had been conscripted into one of the most wanted and little known criminal organisation in the Elemental countries. Not much was really known about the Akatsuki apart from the fact that they were made up of S-rank ninjas who would accept missions of the darkest sort. Missions that other Hidden Villages would have rejected due to political or moral reasons.

"I will have to get the other members to train these two newcomers up to their level of course." The red haired man said as he turned to regard Madara. The fact that the red haired man was talking to Madara as an equal was enough to chill Mozu's blood. "What will your plans be? Now that your aspirations for Konoha had obviously failed."

Madara regarded the red haired man impassively for a moment before smiling back grimly. "I encountered a problem I did not expect in Konoha. A problem I plan to take care of. It is none of your concern. Focus on taking care of your little kingdom and organisation Pain, and I will worry about my own plans. Just make sure my kinsmen know better than to reveal my existence to the rest of the group will you? I will just hate to have to personally get involved in your little band of ninjas."

Mozu suppressed a shudder as Madara gave him and Hitsuji one last look before turning and walking away, down one of the many tunnels leading into this cavern. Mozu turned to look at the three ninjas before him as the red haired man continued to observe them. Unable to meet the unknown man's glance, Mozu looked away as the man whom Madara had called Pain, turned to the woman beside him.

"Get them outfitted properly Konan." Pain said eyeing the two of them like they were some interesting insects. "Induct them. I will recall Sasori and Orochimaru. I am sure Orochimaru will be interested in meeting our latest ex-Konoha recruits and train them to a level we will have use for. Our plans are finally moving Konan, and if we stay patient… in a few more years, the goals of the Akatsuki will come to fruition… and there will be peace in the world… through our overwhelming might."

OoooO

Borders of Amegakure, Land of Rain

Exiting the hidden tunnel, the false wall closing behind him, the stern looking man made a handseal that dispelled the seal array attached to his face.

Obito felt his face shifting, altering back to its original form. His implanted eye, gained from an unfortunate Uchiha ninja he stumbled across two years ago, twitched painfully in protest. That implanted Sharingan could never achieve Mangekyō Sharingan, but the transformation seal array was powerful enough to make it look as though it bears the swirls of a Mangekyō Sharingan.

In many ways, the transformation seal array was a vital part to his appearances as Madara Uchiha in the world. The transformation seal array was a gift from the extinct Uzumaki clan, to the old Fire Daimyō during the birth of his son. Carefully stored away as a treasured gift in the Fire Daimyō's treasure vaults, the transformation seal array, and various other "gifts" from the Uzumaki clan to the old Fire Daimyō, were never really utilized in the field.

With the destruction of the Uzumaki clan, those gifted seal designs were considered by the Fire Daimyō to be royal treasures. Many in the ninja world considered it a waste for those powerful seals to just sit unused in the Fire Daimyō's treasure vaults, and many ninjas had tried and failed to penetrate into the vaults which were protected by seal arrays done way back when the Uzumaki clan exists. It was common belief no one could damage the royal vaults, until more than a year ago during the meteor showers.

One of the meteors had imploded right on top of one of the vaults. The force of its impact was powerful enough to destroy part of the Uzumaki seal protections, even collapsing a large portion of the vault. With no Uzumaki to repair the broken seal arrays, it had been an easy matter for Obito to phase into the vaults a few months later, bypassing the flimsy protections the seal masters in the fire capital had put up.

Obito had taken the Uzumaki seal designs in the vault and had made progress in deciphering a number of them. Perhaps the current Fire Daimyō never discovered the theft, or perhaps to save his reputation, he kept the loss of his treasures silent. Whatever the case, there was never any public outcry that the royal gifts of Uzumaki seals were stolen even after so much time had passed.

Standing near the entrance of the cave, watching the rain fall outside, Obito did not turn when something began emerging from the shadows at the side of the cave.

"You seem to be in deep thoughts my little Obito." White Zetsu said as it separated from Black Zetsu, both of them walking towards him, standing at each of his side. "What is on your mind my darling little… mrmph!"

"Shut up." Black Zetsu said, punching White Zetsu in the face. He turned to regard Obito. "It seems that Kyubi brat will be a problem for our plans. To be so powerful so young, we need to take him out now before he became a real obstacle."

"You were watching the fight then?" Obito asked.

"The back end of it." White Zetsu said with a shrug. "We were trying to get into the Hokage's library as planned, but those damn Uzumaki seals protecting it were too hard to break. We can't do it even with that Seal Breaker array you picked up from those stolen Uzumaki scrolls. We wasted half our chakra blasting through the first layer of protection, only to realise there was no way we have enough chakra to destroy all the protective seal arrays. At least not before reinforcement arrives."

"Failures aside, I have to admit that Kyubi brat is a chakra monster." Black Zetsu commented as well. "We saw the clones you were fighting against. It is obvious his Wood Release bloodline allows him to tap into the Nine-tails' chakra effortlessly. He is an army in and out of himself. He is a danger that needs to be destroyed before he becomes even more powerful."

"Between the three of us. I am sure we can deal with the kid anytime." White Zetsu said excitedly. "We can lure him into a training ground away from the village, extract the tailed beast and then gobble him up! A dash of wasabi and soya sauce and I am sure he will be delicious!"

"No." Obito said shortly, causing Black Zetsu to narrow his eye at the man.

"Don't tell me you are getting soft just because he was your old teacher's kid." Black Zetsu said sternly. "Remember the plan!"

"I am thinking of the plan." Obito said. A brief expression of conflict flashed across his face before he got his emotions under control. "Naruto Uzumaki has to die. But it will be a temporary death, for once I achieved our goal and bring true peace to everyone in the world, I can bring him back, together with his parents. I will regain what I lost… Kakashi will be his old self again, and Rin… Rin will be alive, and the three of us can be as we used to be… a world without any suffering…"

There was a moment of silence before Obito took a shuddering breath. "There is no need for us to dirty our hands when others would willingly do it for us, causing more havoc within Konoha at the same time. Come tomorrow, I need both of you to set off for all the Elemental nations. Send a message to all of our… contacts… and ask them to spread the word. Disseminate the news to common folks, nobles, and ninja alike. It is time… the world knows that the son of the Fourth Hokage is still alive…"

OoooO

Naruto's apartment

Laying on his bed, the lights were switched off in his room. To an outside eye, it would seem as though Naruto was asleep. In reality he was conversing with Sica, after sealing both his legacies away in a storage seal array he had inked onto his right chest.

Calling up the memories of his time in The Legacy, Naruto "pushed" his memories through the mental connection he and Sica shared with great ease. Having bonded with Sica for more than a year, with their communication done mostly via telepathic speech, Naruto was pretty well verse in the special communication link he shared with the A.I.

There was a significant pause as Sica previewed Naruto's memories. The pause was longer than ten heartbeats, which was a threshold Naruto had discovered through experience usually meant Sica was stumped by whatever it had come across. It had taken Naruto quite a while to realise that Sica was not all knowing and infallible, even with Sica's seemingly infinite capability to store and recall information. If Sica was not able to provide an answer or estimate within ten heartbeats, it usually meant it had encountered a situation outside its calculations.

Can you provide a clearer memory of those Ancient language you saw in the scroll within the sub-dimension? Sica asked after a moment.

Scrunching up his face, Naruto tried to recall what he saw from the scrolls Old man Hokage had opened back in The Legacy, to show him as a teaching example.

"Did you find something?" Naruto asked as he passed Sica the memory of what he could remembered from that brief glance at the scroll.

Based on the wordings you recall from the scroll written in the Ancient language of your world, I am able to match it with 75% accuracy to a language matrix stored within my database. Sica revealed. I need a larger sampling of this Ancient language of yours to calculate a more accurate estimate. But at the moment, it seems that this Ancient language of yours bears a close relation to the language of a very old race called the Muah.

"The Muah?" Naruto asked narrowing his eyes. "You have been coaching me in Federation History for months, and I don't recall going over any race named that during all those lessons."

Knowledge of the Muah is not accessible to the common public in Federation space. That is why they are not covered under any of the Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced civilian education materials I have gone through with you. Sica said unaffected by Naruto's scepticism. All knowledge of the Muah are classified under Code Grey by Federation Military. Access to this data was only input in my system due to the fact that all high level Federation operatives have a responsibility to inform the Federation if they came across any Muah ruins or artifacts. Which means they need to identify items of Muah origins in the first place.

Naruto frowned, intrigued at this new nugget of information Sica had revealed. "And you estimate that the Ancient language in my world is related to the language of the Muah? Who are these Muah anyway?"

Based on research that Federation scientists had been conducting on the Muah for the past centuries, the Muah is an ancient race that predates Humanity's claim on Earth. Sica said as it narrated what it knew.

The biological structure of Muah bears similarities to Humanity, but they are tougher, stronger, and more mentally capable in everyway. Many researchers on the subject of Muah believed that this ancient race created the first humans as a second evolutionary pathway to their race.

After World War III devastated the landscapes of Earth, ancient Muah ruins were exposed and the military began secret research into those ruins. Their research bears fruit, revealing that the Muah were once refugees fleeing from a deadly plague that threatened to annihilate their kind.

Recovered and deciphered Muah writings stated that the plague was unleashed by the Great Enemy of Muah, and only three cities of its people survived. To escape from their racial enemy, two cities of Muah decided to flee deep into space, hoping that they would travel far enough that their enemy would never reach them again.

Only one city of Muah decided to attempt a radical experiment and travel ***sideways***, to an alternate reality, thus forever escaping the reach of their Great Enemy. Their alternate reality portal technology was untested at the time, yet their desperation forced them to use it. Half their numbers perished in the attempt, and the surviving Muah arrived on Earth drastically altered and changed. Muah literature heavily emphasised that the First Travellers who survived crossing the "lines of realities", saw the inner workings of the cosmos.

Naruto frowned. He had learnt of the planet Earth when he covered Federation History with Sica, but the historical facts that the A.I. was telling him now was something new to him. And reality travel? What few Federation comics and literature he had read, viewed the existence of alternate realities as pseudo-science.

He doubted the Federation had any technology capable of reality traveling. Though he was beginning to understand that the Federation Military likes its secrets and there might be more wonders out there in the galaxy which he might never know. If only he could build a starship and travel out to space. But even if Sica could guide him in how to construct one, he lacked the technologies and rare metal alloys to even build the components using Federation templates... Unless he used the knowledge he had and create something new…

Sica continued narrating even as Naruto pondered over the information on Muah and his wandering thoughts.

What those First Travellers saw, led to the surviving Muah and their descendants exploring a totally new scientific field, abandoning most of their old technological advances. Many Federation researchers believed that the Muah were the pioneers of Symbology Science. Many of their Symbology experiments were dangerous, and one such experiment unleashed a catastrophe on Earth that shattered their fledging civilization. It was believed the surviving Muah fled Earth after that catastrophe, leaving humanity to grow unhindered through the next thousands of years.

Decades after Humanity reached out into space and formed the Federation, explorers discovered Muah ruins and Human civilizations on a number of other planets in the galaxy. Based on several Muah findings, one popular theory was that the Great Catastrophe which shattered Muah civilization on Earth, was actually the formation of uncontrollable wormholes created from experimental symbology. These wormholes sent the Muah civilization and a number of the first Humans tribes on Earth at that time, all over the galaxy, thus seeding them on a number of unexplored planets.

Till now, no Federation exploration team ever found a surviving Muah civilization, though several powerful humanoid beings, alleged to be Muahs, had been encountered by a number of Federation explorers through the centuries. Several of these alleged Muahs left warnings of a great threat, and how the universe was in peril. But other than that, all the Federation had on the Muah were their ruins, ancient text and uncovered technologies. With centuries of research, they had also compiled a language matrix of the Muah language.

Naruto blinked at Sica's words. "So the Federation has their own language matrix of the Muah language?"

Yes, it has an estimated range of around 81.73% accuracy at deciphering Muah text and language. Though the accuracy varies with the different Muah dialects. Sica revealed. Due to the Muahs on different planets using a slight variant of their own language, language shifts are a common factor to account for when Muah texts and ruins are discovered on different planets.

"It will be useful at the very least." Naruto said decisively. "I can get some of my Shadow Clones to begin learning the Muah language the Federation possessed, so that I have a language base to begin deciphering those scrolls in The Legacy from. I just wish I could bring you into The Legacy somehow, or create a horde of shadow clones to help me. But the Shadow Clone technique requires normal chakra, which is a blend of yin-yang elements, and my yin clone in The Legacy only have access to yin chakra. I did try to imagine a clone of myself in that place… but I guess yin chakra doesn't work that way."

Suggestion to pass knowledge of yin chakra manipulation from the Yamanaka and Nara clans to your shadow clones. Sica proposed. It may help your yin clone understand the limits and benefits of operating in a yin dimension. It might also assists your yin clone in future yin chakra manipulation.

Naruto pursed his lips, deep in thought. "I guess those knowledge are vital to me… now that I have The Legacy. But put that idea on the back burner for now. There is too much on my plate at the moment, and I need to focus on the more important priorities. I have clones scouting Konoha as an early warning system in case Madara comes back. I have clones training more vigorously in mid-long range Wood Release techniques, and a number exploring what few chakra shielding seal techniques you managed to scanned from my father's library down at Root. Add in the Wild Hunt exercies…"

Naruto gave a grimace as he thought of the amount of work, training and research his clones had been doing since the Uchiha attack. Sorting out the clones' memories had proven to be a massive headache as what they were doing were now less paced out and more intensive.

Even the scouting clones were now helping with research in their spare time. Naruto seriously doubted that he could continue to coherently understand his clones' memories if he was to increase their workload or make more of them to help. He was mentally hanging by a thread as it was, and he had a feeling if he put more mental stress on his clones or create more of them... the memories they would pass back to him would be an incomprehensible mess.

"And then there is the plan to integrate 'civilian' clones into Konoha in order to… improve the living conditions in the village and start their own separate information networks. I have spent so much effort in planning for that, I am not willing to let that go for now." Naruto said stubbornly. "Add on to the fact that I now have to allocate some clones to learn the Muah language…"

Naruto clenched up as his stomach rumbled.

I am detecting mild waves of unidentified chakra energies from your stomach, similar to what happened ten minutes ago before you came to bed. Sica noted. It is most probably a side effect from your trip into The Legacy.

"Umrph. This is the second time it happened!" Naruto groaned as he jumped out of bed and rushed for the toilet. "Put that down as something to investigate as well, when we have time. I can't be rushing to the toilet every time I leave The Legacy!"

OoooO

Dead Demon Consuming Seal

Kurama rumbled, pacing his cage which had gotten larger and more spacious during the past few months. Flowers, lush green grass and even small saplings had sprung up in the cell with him. The nine-tailed fox narrowed his eyes, recalling the day he had first sighted his container, the day when he realised the brat had somehow gotten the Wood Release bloodline.

The boy had managed to trap him underneath massive roots when he tried to attack him, and even after the boy left, the roots had remained. It was until recently when something in the boy's mental state had changed, that Kurama was freed of the roots. His prison had also became larger, and plants had started growing within it. For a moment it almost reminded him of father's gardens…

Kurama snarled at the memory, whipping his tails around in anger, it would not do to dwell on the past. That brat was so far removed from father that it was a sacrilege to compare him to the Great Sage.

Giving the fresh roses nearby a sniff, Kurama was at least thankful that it was not raining blood like it had been for the past two days. That had been a horror to clean out of his fur. And the smell… he might be called a demon by those human meat bags, but that did not mean he like sleeping in a prison that smelt of blood. He was about to settle down to sleep when a massive familiar wave of energy swept through the prison.

Kurama jerked out, mouth hanging wide. He KNEW that chakra signature. Did the boy found the Uzumaki legacy?

The Uzumaki's Dead Demon Consuming seal allowed an emotional and mental bond from him to his containers when they suffered emotional turmoil. Kurama was well aware of the Uzumaki's legacy from the time those dratted women, Mito Uzumaki and Kushina Uzumaki had been his containers.

There was another, stronger burst of familiar exotic yin energy that signified his container leaving The Legacy. Kurama growled, there was no doubt about it, that brat must have discovered the keepsake of his clan. Not that it mattered to him anymore, with the powerful Wood Release bloodline the brat possessed, the chance that Kurama could break out of his prison one day was almost nil.

With hopes of escape gone, Kurama had been resigned to his fate for the past months. At least now, it was somewhat comfortable in here. He did not have to worry about the prospect of spending decades squeezed inside a small cage. And hopefully he would be freed, to be able to reform in the world once more, when the brat expires from old age or mortal injuries.

Kurama was personally hoping for the latter, though he did have to admit the saturation of Wood chakra everywhere had a calming effect on his nerves. At least he could no longer detect all those pesky negative emotions of the brat and the various monkeys around him. Of course the saturation of Wood chakra also had the side effect of blocking him from manipulating the brat through the emotional and mental bonds.

Sweeping his tails on the ground so that he could lay on them like a blanket. Kurama was about to settle in for a few days' worth of nap time when golden lines of power appeared on the walls outside of his prison. Kurama's eyes widened as the golden lines began forming into a massive seal, and the faces of two very familiar humans appeared, trapped within the massive seal, seemingly in deep sleep.

His mouth dropped into a wide jawed gap, and Kurama snarled in disbelief and anger, feeling fury surged within him. "You worms just wouldn't stay dead will you!"

OoooO

***Pangalactic Federation Codex***

Logged in: [NAME REDACTED – TOP SECRET]

Level 7 encryption enabled…

…

…

Secure Tunnelling Protocol [ALL GREEN]

[Research Codename: Ancients]

**Muah - The Old Race** [Code Grey Access Required]

The remains of an ancient civilization - named the Muah by the four researchers who first discovered the ruins [Doctors Arnold Maverick, Sally Ugo, Maison Alberts and Jonathan Hannah] - are discovered in an ancient, dried-up seabed, in A.D. 2072.

Using the DNA contained in a 12,000 year old sarcophagus (which had one chromosome 'lost' to modern humans), the Earthlings convenes Project Hope, an experiment designed to combine the ancient Muah DNA with modern human DNA in order to create superhumans.

The project proved to be a failure. [more information Project Hope – Code Black Access Required],

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Evidences uncovered during the past decades strongly indicated the Muah were an advanced race from an alternate reality. They fled to Earth thousands of years ago due to a catastrophe.

…

It is known that the first Muah abandoned all their previous technologies to research into the fields of symbology when they settled down on Earth. Reason for the technological abandonment was unknown.

Subsequent generations of Muah lost all knowledge of their previous technological base, and possessed incredible symbolgy science.

...

**Muah of Roak** [Alleged - Need further confirmation -/ + Confirmed by NAME REDACTED]

The Muah are also known to the people of Roak as the Old Race.

Centuries of research led to a common theory, that the Muah on Roak originally hailed from the Mu continent on Earth, but an ancient catastrophe dispersed them all over the known galaxy.

There is evidence in Muah ruins on Roak, that a meteor struck the Mu continent on Earth, originally located on the Earthern Pacific Ocean. The meteor disrupted an experimental symbology containment field and a space-time portal was opened.

The portal scattered the Muah and the first generations of humans on Earth all over the galaxy. Some of the Muah found themselves on the Planet Roak where they set up a civilization away from the planet's natives. Wanting to return home, the scattered Muah tried different methods to return to Earth.

The Muah of Roak created the Eye of Truth [more information Project All Seeing – Code Black Access Required], a device capable of opening space-time portals. While the device worked, the Eye of Truth had an unfortunate side effect. It accidentally opened up a portal to the "Demon" World, causing "demons" to attack the Muah and the native Fellpool.

The Muah of Roak managed to close the gate, but the damage was done, and now there was a portal to the "Demon" World on Roak. Ashamed of their actions, and too afraid to use the Eye of Truth, the Muah on the planet accepted their fate and locked themselves away, hoping one day to return home. They sealed the object inside their Temple of Purity and entrusted its protection to the natural symbological natives of Roak, the Runes.

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OoooO

**Story Title: Technological Ninja Naruto Uzumaki**

**Crossover:** Naruto / Star Ocean game series/ Stargate series

**Disclaimer:** I do not own any characters or plot from Naruto anime/manga series and the Star Ocean Video games series. This is a work of fanfiction.

OoooO

*Previously...*

*… Sweeping his tails on the ground so that he could lay on them like a blanket. Kurama was about to settle in for a few days’ worth of nap time when golden lines of power appeared on the walls outside of his prison. Kurama’s eyes widened as the golden lines began forming into a massive seal, and the faces of two very familiar humans appeared, trapped within the massive seal, seemingly in deep sleep.*

*His mouth dropped into a wide jawed gap, and Kurama snarled in disbelief and anger, feeling fury surged within him. “You worms just wouldn’t stay dead will you!”*

OoooO

**Chapter Fourteen: Chunin’s First Day Part 1**

*Konoha’s Western Town Square*

The death bell tolled at the early crack of dawn, just as Ayame was helping her father open the shutters to their Ramen restaurant. For a moment Ayane almost did not realize what that bell toll meant, until she saw her father Teuchi freezing up beside her, his head jerkily turning to face the town square.

Following the shocked gaze of her father, Ayame turned towards the almost deserted town square, where she could see various other shop owners venturing out of their establishments in confusion.

“That’s the death bell.” Old Fukigen who owned the pharmacy next door, stumbled out of his shop and spat on the ground. “Didn’t think I will hear it again in my lifetime, the past few Kages straightened up our Konoha ninjas real good… but then there will always be some bad eggs in a batch.”

“I hadn’t heard the death bell since way back when I started civilian school.” Ayame said in surprise, now able to identify the solemn bell tolls that would have sounded throughout Konoha. She had been six at that time, on the way to her first day of civilian school, when the bell had tolled. Her mother had still been alive then… she felt a brief stab of pain in her heart at the memory. Ayame sighed as she ruthless shunted that piece of history aside. That had been all in the past and there was no point dwelling upon it now.

“Ah yes, that was on your very first day of civilian school.” Teuchi said gravely in memory. “The Fourth Hokage caught three Konoha traitor ninjas near the end of the Third Shinobi War and their crimes warranted them a public execution.”

“I wonder which traitor ninja they caught this time.” Old Fukigen said in a grumpy voice. “Maybe it is that Madara Uchiha who has the village in a ruckus the past few days. I am going to go take a look once the town cryers come by to announce the time for the execution.”

Ayame shuddered, the thought of watching someone or a few others being executed in front of her, was not something she could stomach. She felt her father laying a comforting hand on her shoulder.

“We will give it a miss. Everyone will be hungry after watching that execution. Best that Ayame and I set up the restaurant and prepare for customers.” Teuchi said simply, and Ayame felt a brief flutter of relief in her stomach.

Old Fukigen shrugged. “Suit yourself Teuchi, but I am telling you, if you miss this execution, the next one will probably be years later. If there’s one thing to be said about our Kages, they brought up our ninjas right and proper. Not as much as bad eggs as the other ninja villages. Why the other day, this merchant from Kirigakure was telling me dastardly tales about their ninjas. Enough to cull your blood I tell you…”

The familiar whistle of the town crier pierced the air as the last toll of the death bell faded, cutting off Old Fukigen’s words. Everyone in the square was turning to look at the town crier, dressed in his bright colored uniform of yellow, as he made his way to the center of the western town square on his horse.

Jumping down from his transport in a well-timed leap, the town crier proceeded to stick two large announcements on the village notice board in the town square, right next to the center water fountain. He then turned to face the shopkeepers and the morning shoppers who were already moving towards him.

“I will close the shutters father.” Ayame offered, moving to re close the shop shutters they had opened moments ago. “You go and find out what is going on first.”

Teuchi nodded with a frown, striding off with Old Fukigen hobbling beside him. Ayame could hear the town crier from where she was locking up the shutters as he began to speak. He must have been one of the few rare town criers with chakra training who could enhance their voices… The village only use them for important announcements… what was going on?

“Hear me citizens of Konoha!” The town crier hollered, his voice carrying effortlessly to the end of the town square, through whatever voice amplifying chakra technique he was using.

With his slightly soft and pudgy built that Ayame could see from the distance as the town crier stood on the still of the water fountain, the town crier was most probably a former drop out of the Ninja Academy and not an actual ninja. The fact that he rode on a horse to get around the village was further proof that he had never gotten past the level of a Genin, if he even did graduate from the Ninja Academy at all.

“The Hokage and the Konoha Council know that all of you are worried and horrified by the attack on our Uchiha clan by one of Konoha’s most infamous traitor, Madara Uchiha. They wish to affirm their vows that they are doing their best to let no harm befall the citizens of Konoha.

“The village’s militia has been fully mobilized, and the village will remain in lockdown for the next week until Konoha’s ninjas can ascertain that Madara Uchiha and the escaped Uchiha traitors are not hiding anywhere in our village to launch another strike.

“In the midst of the search for Madara Uchiha, Konoha’s Anbu had however uncovered a band of traitorous rogue ninjas hiding in one of Konoha’s underground catacomb network. This band of rogue ninjas was led by the former Konoha Council advisor, Danzō Shimura, who had ordered his band of rogue ninjas to carry out numerous treasonous acts against Konoha itself.

“Among their numerous villainous acts were the capture of numerous Konoha children to be brainwashed and trained as part of their rogue organisation. The selling of village secrets to enemy villages. Betraying Konoha’s ninjas by leaking mission details to our enemies, and organ harvesting of our bloodline clans.

“A pre-emptive strike on the rogue organization was conducted the previous night by the Anbu and numerous high level Konoha ninjas. Most of the rogue ninjas and their Konoha contacts have since been captured, several are on the run and are now listed as missing nin by Konoha’s Hunter nins.

“A full investigation was conducted into the rogue organization, and those linked to it yesterday. Due to the overwhelming amounts of damning evidences collected, the Hokage and the Konoha Council have made an unanimous vote for the execution order of all senior members of Danzo’s rogue organization.

“The execution order will be held at the tenth hour, at the execution hill. Among the traitors to be executed are Danzo Shimura, Neumura…” The town crier shouted his news, his voice never wavering throughout his speech.

Darting easily through the morning crowd due to her slender frame, Ayame reached her father who was listening to an engaging discussion with Old Fukigen, Toreda the Merchant and Saamon the Fishmonger.

“To think that Danzo was secretly leading a group to do such things!” Old Fukigen said in horrified outrage. “Stealing children, betraying our own ninjas and organ harvesting!! Why he is worse than that former student of the Third… what’s his name? The white faced Sanin?”

“That’s Orochimaru.” Saamon was saying. “And they are both as bad as each other. Both are well respected Konoha ninjas… and they betrayed the village… and all of us like that! At least Danzo and his group were caught, instead of escaping like Orochimaru.”

“I have talked to Orochimaru, you know before they discovered his secret lab full of body parts and children, which forced him to become a missing nin.” Toreda confided in a delighted voice. The man, a self-declared 'information trader', was in his element. “He was buying so much luminous pearl cream from me. That’s how he kept his skin so white and smooth. I used him as my sales example to the ladies before he turned traitor. And you know what they say about guys who buy stuff like pearl cream. They prefer the ironwood to the butter pot…”

Ayame looked at her father who was standing beside the group of gossiping men and hid a grin as he gave a helpless shrug. The three men were old friends of the family, though there were times Ayame thought they could rival housewives with their love of boasting and gossiping. Her attention was drawn to the town crier as he finished listing the names of those soon to be executed. Instead of coming down the fountain still at the end of his speech, he drew in his breath and continued speaking.

“Now, the Hokage and the Konoha Council wish to assure you that there are good news in such dark times.” The town crier said, making a hand seal as his voice carried out strongly to the crowd. “The Hokage and the Konoha Council have granted full disclosure on the attack of the Uchiha clan…”

Beside her, Teuchi hushed the three men next to him as the town crier began recounting events of the attack. Some were already public knowledge, like Madara Uchiha and the Uchiha traitors being the ones that attacked the Anbu tower and the Uchiha clan. How two secret Anbu teams monitoring the Uchiha clan had managed to save most of the clan before the militia reached the clan and cause the attackers to flee. Other details were however new to the gathered crowd.

“… what was not revealed in the previous village announcement before lock down was implemented, was that the Hokage in his wisdom, had stationed a third... specialized team of ninja, made up of a Jonin and his apprentice, to keep watch over the Uchiha clan.

“The Jonin was a former disciple of the Sanin, Jiraiya. He then went on to instruct a distant descendant of the Senju, who came into the Wood Release bloodline at the age of seven. This specialized team was only supposed to observe the Uchiha clan in the event of any emergencies. But when the attack on the Uchiha clan began, this team of two was instrumental in the defence of the Uchiha clan, and delaying the advance of Madara Uchiha until help from Konoha militia could arrive.”

All around Ayame, people were whispering excitedly to each other at the revelation that someone, of Senju blood, had activated the Wood Release bloodline. Anyone who was born or lived in Konoha for long would know of the three great Konoha bloodlines. The Wood Release, the Sharingan, and the Byakugan. Among the three, the Wood Release bloodline was reputed to be the most powerful and elusive bloodline, that until now, was thought to be possessed only by the revered First Hokage.

As civilians living in a ninja village, it was inevitable that the common folks learn a bit of ninja history, either through civilian school, interaction with ninjas, or just plain gossiping. Even Ayame had heard of the old village rumors about the infamous experiments Orochimaru had conducted on captured village children years ago. How those experiments somehow managed to grant one or a few of the children who survived, the legendary bloodline. And how those alleged children were then locked away as village treasures never to see the light of day.

Those rumors were never confirmed, unlike now when an actual village announcement revealed the existence of a new Wood Release bloodline heir. Everyone was surprised and excited at the news. And those who have no idea what the Wood Release bloodline was, were being filled in by the rest of the crowd.

“As commendation for their actions during Madara's attack on the Uchiha clan, the two men team will be rewarded by the Hokage and the Konoha Council. The Hokage and the village elders had also granted a battlefield promotion to the Jonin’s apprentice, one Naruto Uzumaki, for his commendable expertise in using his Wood Release bloodline during a battlefield situation…”

The town crier continued his speech, seemingly uncaring of the shocked silence that descended upon the gathered crowd. Ayame felt her heart skipped a bit as she looked in bewilderment at her father after hearing the town crier said a very familiar name.

“Did… did he just say Naruto’s name?” Ayame said, eyes wide in shock. She had not seen Naruto for the past few days, but had thought it was because of the lock down… now she knew differently. Naruto had been taking part in the defense of the Uchiha clan. Questions raced through her mind. Was he hurt? Where was he right now?

Beside Ayame her father shrugged, seeming as startled as her at what they had just heard. “Naruto… has the Wood Release bloodline?” He muttered as if unable to comprehend that fact.

“By the Sage’s left pinkie…” Old Fukigen swore softly, before turning gratefully to Teuchi. “It is a good thing you convinced me not to listen to all those propaganda the Civilian Guilds were sprouting about that Uzumaki boy all these years. I am betting the various Head of the Guilds are going to be mighty embarrassed once news of this spreads.”

Ayame saw her father nodding dumbly to Old Fukigen as she strained to listen for what else the town crier had to say. Something about the Senju and Uchiha clans… and custody? She was unable to pick up any more of what the town crier was saying, even with his voice amplifier technique enhancing his voice. The gathered crowd had at last recovered from the shock of the news they just heard… and had erupted into pandemonium.

Her father grabbed her by the arm, pulling her out of the crowd. Old Fukigen was hobbling behind, with Toreda and Saamon following.

“We are closing the restaurant today, and are going to check up on Naruto.” Teuchi said firmly. “Whatever happened, he is still our Naruto, and he is just a child. If he is involved in defending the Uchiha clan three days ago… we need to make sure he is alright, especially since he has no parents to take care of him.”

“I will cook up his favorite miso ramen to bring with us.” Ayame said rushing to their restaurant. “I will be real quick, give me half an hour.”

“The town crier didn’t say the boy was injured, so he’s most probably alright.” Toreda voiced out to Teuchi. There was a look of shame on the older man’s face. “If you are visiting the boy… help me pass some gifts from me to him. I don’t know the child that well, but he’s a god damn village hero… and I feel guilty about the time I have to bar him from the shop because a few civilians were making a scene about how they can’t shop with him around.”

“I don’t know the child at all.” Saamon said with a shrug. “And I never did bother with those malicious gossip about the boy. But he must be something special to get a commendation and a battlefield promotion at his age. He deserves a celebratory meal for his efforts. I just got a fresh shipment of Silver Blues from the Land of Wave, I will spot you one to go along with the boy’s miso ramen, they are good when grilled.”

“Thank you.” Teuchi said with a nod. “I am sure Naruto will appreciate that. But most importantly, I want to make sure the boy’s alright. And maybe now with the village announcement… things will get better for him…”

OoooO

*Konoha’s Northern Town Square*

The morning crowd was still milling in the Northern Town Square long after the town crier had left. Ino turned from the shop window with a frown and returned to arranging the fresh batch of flowers for display. She had been kept so busy that she had missed hearing the announcement.

Waking up at the break of dawn was nothing new for her, even though there were times she hated the fact she could not just laze around in bed like a normal civilian girl. For all that her father was the clan head of the Yamanaka clan, or rather due to the fact that he was the clan head, he insisted that Ino set a good example for the rest of the clan children.

If it was a school day, she would just need to tend to the gardens or do some light training before setting off for the Academy. For a non-schooling day, she and the other children would take turns helping some of the clan members tend to the florist shop in the Northern Town Square.

Today was not supposed to be her turn to help with the store. But something had happened during the previous day that had her father and a lot of the senior clan members in a bad mood. For all that the adults tried to hide news from prying ears, Ino had managed to hear whispers about uncle Fū who had turned traitor and that he was going to be executed today.

She only had a vague memory of her father’s distant cousin, who was one of the few Yamanaka that lived outside the clan compound. Uncle Fū was a stern stoic man, and had not talked much the few times Ino had seen him when she was little.

Whatever the case, when morning dawned early in the morning, the clan’s children were awakened. Most were tasked to help setup a new garden plot in the eastern end of the Yamanaka clan compound, their civilian parents guiding them and keeping them busy. It was a sweaty thankless task which would take more than half a day, but would most probably seem like a game to the younger ones.

The older Yamanaka children like Ino were however tasked with reorganizing the display of the Yamanaka shop, refreshing the current flower stock, cleaning the shop’s storage room and repainting the shop front. Her mother and several Yamanaka adults were directing their children on what to do, keeping everyone soundly occupied. In the meanwhile, her father and most of the Yamanaka clan ninjas, except for the few guarding the clan compound, had seemingly disappeared.

“That’s a nice summer style flower arrangement.” Shiruku Yamanaka said appreciatively as she walked up to Ino’s side, a barrel of paint and two paint brushes in one hand. “I guess you were listening when I was teaching you.”

“Just because my eyes were closed doesn’t mean I wasn’t listening mom.” Ino whined. “And where’s dad? Why are we here actually? I remember helping to clean the shop a few months ago when the New Year began!”

“Don’t whine, it’s unsightly. And there’s nothing wrong with cleaning the store again.” Shiruku said and motioned Ino towards the front door. “Come on. I need you to help me repaint the window stills in blue.”

“Cousin Keyan just painted the window stills brown a few months ago!” Ino protested incredulously as she followed her mother out of the shop, leaving her aunts and cousins busying away behind her.

“And I am sure it is a nice color, but summer’s coming and a new coloring combination for our shop exterior is just the thing.” Shiruku said simply. “And while we bond over this perfect mother-daughter activity, I have been meaning to talk to you about the Academy.”

“Mom I don’t want to bond with you! ....” Ino said with a wince.

“You aren’t too old for me to pinch your bottom my dear girl. Or whip it into shape.” Shiruku said smiling at her daughter, causing Ino to shudder at the hint of steel in her mother’s eyes. Unlike most women who married into the Yamanaka clan, Ino’s mother was not a civilian but a Konoha ninja who managed to reach the rank of special Jonin in the field of Muchijutsu, the rare art of whip fighting. And she was not the sort to take nonsense from anyone.

“Fine!” Ino grumbled, grabbing a paint brush from her mother as both of them began working on one of the window stills.

“So I have been hearing a lot of things about this Naruto Uzumaki boy recently.” Shiruku said as Ino turned to look at her. “He is one of your classmates isn’t he?”

“What kind of things did you hear?” Ino asked warily. It was quite obvious that her mother was fishing for information about Naruto. There was a reason why her father was the Interrogation expert of Konoha, and not her mother.

“Things.” Shiruku said smiling at her daughter, ending that line of conversation without an answer. “Now what can you tell me about the boy?”

Ino rolled her eyes, dad would have at least wheedled the information out of her without her even knowing. “I know he is the best of buddies with Choji and Shikamaru. He is also friend with Shino and has some kind of friendship rivalry thing going on with Kiba. They used to meet behind the Academy after school and just lay on the hill looking at clouds, but recently Naruto managed to motivate even that lazy ass Shikamaru to do some training after school.”

“What kind of training?” Shiruku asked, looking at her daughter inquisitively.

“Some academy exercises? I have no idea. I don’t really join them that much, and the few times I saw that they were going to train, I left.” Ino said with a shrug. “I don’t want to get all sweaty and dirty, I have enough of that in class. I only dropped in on their group and join them for a few lazy hours when Sakura and the other girls don’t have plans. I did hear them saying Naruto was training and guiding them… which is weird because even Kiba’s class results are better than Naruto in some areas. I have no idea what Naruto have to teach them.”

“I see… what else did you hear about Naruto and his group of… friends?” Shiruku asked carefully.

“Well, I heard Hinata joined their group two weeks ago.” Ino revealed, causing her mother to give her a sharp look. “The girls were talking in the locker room last week and Hinata mentioned Naruto was training her as well.”

“So let me get this straight.” Shiruku said slowly. “Naruto Uzumaki had formed a... training group which consisted of almost all of the clan heirs in your Academy class… except you. And had formed close relationships with almost all of the clan heirs in your year class… except you.”

Her mother seemed deep in thought as Ino began to look at her mother warily. “My… he is truly a prodigy in the ninja arts, and politics as well… with the intellect and farsightedness to plan all of his future alliances and connections… so far ahead…”

“Mom, why are you muttering like a crazy woman?” Ino said rubbing the goosebumps on her arm. “You are scaring me.”

Her mother straightened, startling Ino as she looked up at her, all seriousness in her eyes. “Ino, once the Academy opens, find out from Shikamaru and Choji if this training group of Naruto's is still… on-going. If it is, I want you to join their group and befriend them. *Befriend* all of them and *train* with them you understand me?”

“What?!” Ino stared at her mother, shocked by the seemingly ridiculous request. “Mom! I am just ordinary friends with Naruto and those in his group… well maybe excluding that lazy bum and Choji-eat-a-lot. I feel more like their unpaid babysitter. But the point is Sakura is my best friend, and I am not leaving her and the rest of the girls to join Naruto and the others in getting all sweaty and dirty when I can enjoy myself with the girls!”

“It is your clan duty as a daughter heir.” Shiruku said sternly, shocking Ino. “Bring Sakura along if you have to, but I want you to integrate yourself into this training group that Naruto Uzumaki had created and form alliances with everyone in the group.”

“Mom…” Ino asked slowly, finally realizing something was not right. “What is really going on?”

Shiruku gave a tired sigh. “Your uncle Fū has been branded a traitor for many atrocious crimes he committed for a rogue organization before he was apprehended yesterday. All the crimes he committed came to light before the Konoha Council yesterday… and have left a black mark on the Yamanaka clan. You need to do your part in restoring our clan’s reputation.”

“And how is befriending and training with Naruto and the others going to help with our clan’s reputation?” Ino asked incredulously.

“Ino… there has been lot of changes in the village the past few days… and certain secrets have come to light.” Shiruku said to her daughter carefully. “Naruto Uzumaki has been receiving specialized training from… a Jonin. He is also involved in the defense of the Uchiha clan during the attack by traitor ninjas three days ago.

“He is a distant descendant of the Senju clan, and possesses the legendary Wood Release bloodline. The Senju and Uchiha clans both declared him to be under their protection and are fighting for custody of the boy. He is also given a battlefield promotion to become a Konoha Chunin. Right now, he is one of the heroes and prodigy of the village. The amount of political clout Naruto would have in the future is enormous. Do your duty and befriend him and the rest of the clan heirs of your class year. Who knows, maybe they could actually motivate you to treat your career as a kunoichi more seriously.”

Ino stared at her mother in shock. “Wh… WHAT!”

OoooO

*Konoha’s Hokage Tower*

He had only been out of commission for two days and within that short span of time too much had happened. While he had been recuperating after the battle, Root had been discovered and dismantled, with Danzo branded a traitor for treason. And as he was grieving for the death of his teammates, the Hokage had apparently made plans for him.

Kakashi looked at the termination order the Third Hokage had just handed to him.

“You are terminating my services to the Anbu.” Kakashi said neutrally, not revealing his shock.

“Yes Kakashi.” The Third said, motioning him to sit down on the couch. “I have need of your services elsewhere.”

Kakashi nodded, he had guessed as much. “I heard about Root when I passed by the town criers just now. Are you assigning me to the team hunting down the remaining rogues?”

“Ah Root.” The Third said with a weary sigh. “No, the hunting of rogue nins will not be of your concern. I have the hunter nins and Ibiki handling that. No I need you for something closer to home.”

“Naruto.” Kakashi said, quickly discerning the topic of The Third’s discussion. Although Konoha had gone through a series of shattering upheavals in the past three days, there were only a few matters of high enough concern to affect him. Madara's reappearance, Naruto’s real abilities and bloodline, and the discovery of Root were the major factors that Kakashi had been aware of so far.

“Yes.” The Third answered with a nod. “As you are aware, the council and I have given Naruto a field promotion for his services in defending the Uchiha clan. The promotion bypass the rank of Genin and propelled him straight to the position of Chunin. I have decree that Naruto will hold the title of special Chunin to the Hokage. I intend to guide his training at times, because even with his bloodline and current capabilities, he is but a child. However with my duties, I can’t be around to focus on him, Naruto is going to need a teacher.”

The Hokage took out a sealed letter from his robe, handing it to Kakashi who accepted it without showing a hint of emotion of his face.

“As of this moment, I am authorizing the formation of a special two men Chunin team. You will be leading team Kakashi with Naruto Uzumaki under your command. Your team will answer directly to me and me alone. I want weekly updates on Naruto’s progress, but most importantly I need you to be Naruto’s teacher because… he knows…” The Third said in a tired voice. “He knows who his birth parents are, and as of now, you are one of the few remaining links to Minato and Kushina.”

“I see.” Kakashi said, feeling old pain stirring at the thought of his teacher and old team. He had been there when Naruto had revealed his knowledge and training with The Eye to the Hokage. “So you want me to keep an eye on the boy, and reach out to him using my history with his parents.”

“No.” The Third said firmly, looking sternly at Kakashi to make sure he got the message. “No emotional manipulation. This isn’t one of your missions. I want you to be there for him as a family friend. Not just watching over him from the shadows like what you have doing all these years, but to be someone he can depend on and trust, just as Minato had been for you.”

“I can never be like Minato sensei… but I will do my best.” Kakashi said gravely. It was the best he could offer, especially since there was no way he could turn down this request. His debt to his late teacher could never be repaid in this lifetime. The best he could do was to be there for Minato's kid, even though he felt a lingering reluctance at facing a legacy of his past.

“Good. Team Kakashi will officially be activated at midday today.” The Third said looking sharply at Kakashi. “Pick up Naruto from his apartment and get him officially registered into the Shinobi corp. Take this afternoon to get to know him. Assess your new student tomorrow, and official training will begin the day after. I want a full report on Naruto’s capabilities and your team’s proposed training schedule submitted by end of the week.”

As Kakashi gave his affirmation to the Hokage, a cloaked figure remained undetected outside the Hokage tower. N5 was listening in to the meeting through his mind link with S5.

“So Kakashi Hatake is going to be our Jonin sensei…” N5 mused. “Best get that information to Boss Sica. I am sure he will want to know about it.”

OoooO

*Konoha’s Eastern Forest*

Hidden under advanced cloak, N31 and numerous other fellow clones were seated in a large clearing in Konoha’s eastern forest, situated near Training Ground 23, but far enough from any known landmarks that few Konoha ninjas and residents ventured into this area.

The twenty men team were what was termed by the Boss as the Eastern Research Clone Brigade. Like their fellow clone brigades in the South, West, and North part of Konoha’s forest, they serve a dual role as researchers and learners.

The Naruto clones were tasked with learning the various theoretical Federation subjects that Boss had handpicked, while their Sica clones were tasked with various research projects Boss had designated.

The Eastern Clone Brigade also had the dubious honor of analyzing data from Boss’ altercation with Madara. They were to uncover Madara’s true capabilities, any weakness the infamous ninja might have, as well as planning strategies to combat Sharingan and their advanced forms. The Western Clones were to focus research on any possible Chakra shielding and Chakra sensing techniques that might help the Boss. Meanwhile the Northern and Southern Clones were focusing their attention on the various research projects regarding seals and Ninjutsu techniques that Boss had previously ordered.

A mental prompt from S31 caused N31 to blink as his holographic screen which was previously showing data on University level Mechanical Engineering froze up. Looking around, he saw his fellow clones eyeing their respective holographic screens showing different subjects, without any hints of disturbance.

All of them were under a large layered dome shaped cloak, formed by all of their Sicas working together. Using manipulation of light, those outside the cloak would see no one in the clearing, while those within the light cloak would be able to see the going-ons of outside.

In practical and theoretical application, a rudimentary cloaking device which utilize bending of light would cause the one under the cloak to be surrounded by darkness, blinded to the outside world. After all, a reflective shield bending light away from itself, would have allowed no light to enter its interior. This flaw however could be rendered moot if the device that created the shield was able to generate and render its own light source, within the reflective shield.

Thankfully Sica was a state of the art creation by the Pangalactic Federation, imbued with the best of their micro-holographic technology. Sica’s light based cloaking technique would bend the light around its user, to grant a version of invisibility, while at the same time layering a screen of light *within* the layered cloak, displaying the scanned images of what’s outside the cloak.

*Yes Sica, what is it?* N31 asked mentally, not wanting to disturb the rest of the clones by asking his question out loud.

*I was analyzing Sharingan genetic data for weaknesses, and have discovered abnormalities in the genetic scans of Madara’s Sharingan, several of the Uchiha clan members and Kakashi Hatake.* S31 revealed causing N31 to frown.

*Kakashi Hatake… he’s the ninja that saved us from Madara and is now Boss’ new Jonin instructor.* N31 noted. S5 had sent out an update to all Sicas about Team Kakashi only minutes ago, and the memories of Boss’ near death at Madara’s hands were still firmly entrenched in N31’s mind. He… Boss… still have nightmares from Madara’s assault. *The one with that implanted Sharingan?*

*Yes. Kakashi Hatake gained his Sharingan on a mission during the Third Shinobi World War. His left eye was destroyed by an attack, and according to previously scanned mission reports, it seemed his teammate, one Obito Uchiha, perished in that particular mission.* Sica stated. *Before his eventual death, Obito Uchiha granted Kakashi Hatake his left Sharingan eye. The operation was done with assistance from Rin Nohara, the third member of their team, now deceased as well, who also happened to have medi-nin training.*

*Okay… so what is the abnormality?* N31 asked, wondering what Sica was getting at.

*The previously scanned Sharingan from Kakashi is in its advance stage, and possesses 34% genetic makeup of Kakashi’s own body. As Kakashi lacks the genetic traits of an Uchiha, it appears that he is incapable of deactivating his Mangekyō Sharingan.* Sica revealed, causing N31 to blink at the information. *Records stated that Obito Uchiha never gained the Mangekyō Sharingan when he gifted it to Kakashi, thus it is possible that the evolution of Kakashi’s eyes happened after the eye was implanted into him. And that due to this, part of Kakashi’s own genetic materials were used to further the evolution process.*

*But the key issue is that Kakashi’s Mangekyō Sharingan bears a 92% structural match to Madara’s Mangekyō Sharingan. Kakashi and Madara’s Mangekyō Sharingan are most certainly the same “type” of Mangekyō Sharingan, even though the gene makeup in Kakashi’s Mangekyō Sharingan differs from Madara’s. This difference in genetic makeup is probably caused by the Mangekyō Sharingan evolving in Kakashi’s body. Several other Uchiha clan members also possessed a 68%-81% genetic match to Madara.* Sica continued.

*Simplify it for me please.* N31 said with a wince. *I know Boss took Biology classes, but we were never that well verse in it. We barely scrap a passing score from the previous test.*

*As you wish.* Sica stated. *Based on my limited analysis, with no verified sources of genetic materials from Madara Uchiha to refer to, and the high structural similarities of Kakashi and “Madara’s” Mangekyō Sharingan. I theorize that Kakashi and “Madara’s” Mangekyō Sharingan are of the same “type”.*

*I further theorized that there is a 95% chance that the Madara Uchiha who attacked Uchiha clan is actually not the real Madara Uchiha, but is actually one Obito Uchiha who has survived. Obito Uchiha was listed as an orphan, but based on the genetic scans, I might have uncovered several close relatives of his in the clan.*

“What?” N31 shouted in shock, forgetting to speak mentally within his head. Several of his fellow clones looked his way curiously. “But how? How do you come to this conclusion?”

*Scans of “Madara’s” facial layout bears a 96% match to the portrays of Madara Uchiha, however deeper tissue scans revealed that the “Madara” who attacked the Uchiha clan bears tissue scarring in his left eye socket.* Sica revealed. *“Madara” also possessed a Mangekyō Sharingan in his right eye, and a normal Sharingan in his left eye. Both eyeballs bears a 76% genetic mismatch, which meant that they came from two different people with distant bloodline relations.*

“So you are saying with the close similarity ‘Madara’ and Kakashi’s Mangekyō Sharingan has with each other, and the tissue scarring you detected in his left eye socket… it’s more than likely Obito Uchiha *is* the ‘Madara’ who attack the Uchiha clan.” N31 said in shock. “If so that would explain why the ‘Madara’ that attacked the clan is not the juggernaut of power the legends stated him to be. Even though he is more than powerful enough to make a good showing of it. But why did you take so long to come with this conclusion?”

*The abnormality detected in Kakashi’s Mangekyō Sharingan delayed crucial data comparison. Thousands of simulations were ran to pinpoint why Kakashi’s implanted Mangekyō Sharingan would contain some of his genetic data, yet bear a high structural comparison to “Madara’s” Mangekyō Sharingan. I only reached a 97% positive conclusion that evolution of Sharingan to Mangekyō Sharingan would utilize the host’s genetic materials a few hours ago. This allows me to eliminate misleading data and connect the dots.* Sica revealed. *With the other Sicas focused on various assigned key objectives, my overall conclusion on Obito’s Mangekyō Sharingan was only finalized a few minutes ago.*

“What’s going on?” N35 who was seated next to N31 asked. It was then N31 realised he had gotten the attention of his entire clone brigade.

“My Sica just discovered something very important.” N31 said with a grimace. “Sica, disseminate the information to Boss and the other clones. We need to know exactly who we are fighting. At least this Obito Uchiha should be much weaker than the real Madara Uchiha… right?”

OoooO

*Konoha Training Ground 37*

The fresh scent of earth and morning dew permeate the thick forest that made up Konoha’s Training Ground 37. Crickets chirping, rodents going to ground, fledglings taking flight as a new dawn broke over the forest top, sending gentle streams of the morning sun to pierce through the dark canopy.

There was a gust of wind, followed by multiple similar gusts around a small clearing, as the forest fell silent. Sica dropped the light cloak that had hid Naruto from sight and began monitoring the energy signatures in the area in case the Hokage was using his signature spying technique on them. Naruto took a deep breathe of the cool crisp air, the warmth of a delicious ramen broth settling in his stomach.

Having Ayame and Teuchi deciding to drop by, to congratulate him on becoming a Chunin, with a delicious ramen breakfast had been a surprise. With his clones scattered all over Konoha, Naruto had caught wind of their intention half an hour before their arrival which slightly spoilt the surprise, but even then, Naruto had been touched that the ramen owner and his daughter had remembered him.

His original intent had been to do some personal training before starting another regiment of the Wild Hunt, but the visit by his favorite ramen owner had derailed that plan. It was no big deal though, he could always have his clones pick up on other aspects of his training when he meets his Chunin team instructor in the afternoon.

There were still three hours before midday. Turning to the shadow clones he had just created, who were still hidden from sight, Naruto called out. “You know what to do. Perimeter Team, secure the area and warn us if anyone make their way here. Red team, listen to your Sicas, get yourself into position before I start the Hunt.”

Silent gusts of wind was all that greeted him as his shadow clones moved out towards their assigned roles. Naruto began to do some light stretching in the small clearing, wincing at a rapidly healing bruise on his left arm.

“Those Senju and Uchiha ninjas are really getting better at realizing I was slipping out of the apartment. The older Uchiha ninja in particular nearly caught up with me before I could slip into the morning crowd… even while you were cloaking me! With them knowing that I have slipped out of my apartment, there’s no longer any point to leave a shadow clone in the apartment as a decoy.” Naruto said with a grimace. “I would have been impressed if that older Uchiha ninja wasn’t becoming so much of a nuisance to shake off. I bumped into that wall with enough force to nearly shatter the cloak because I was too busy trying to avoid him. You were saying it was because he did something with his Sharingan?”

*The Sharingan is known to grant its user an incredible clarity of perception. The Uchiha that managed to catch up with you, Shadou Uchiha, was listed in Konoha's Shinobi records as one of the best Taijutsu expert in the village.* Sica revealed to Naruto's question. *His mastery of his Sharingan was such that he could detect the slightest of movement in his opponents’ bodies before they attack. Knowledge that you had some kind of invisibility technique was beginning to spread among the upper tiers of Konoha’s ninja. With this foreknowledge, it was possible he managed to track you by the dust stirred in your path, when you trek down that cluttered and dusty side alley into the town square.*

“I wasn’t aware the Sharingan could track movements to that extend.” Naruto said with a frown. “That bloodline itself seemed to be remarkably powerful and broken. Madara was able to do some kind of warp teleport with his advanced Sharingan. It is scary what he was capable of doing with that ability.”

*Sharingan, like most bloodlines, are known to have slight potency and variations when they manifest in different Uchiha members. Shadou Uchiha’s Sharingan has an advantage in detecting minute movements. Madara’s Sharingan probably specialize in space-time manipulation*. Sica stated clinically. *With Madara’s right limbs containing a variation of Wood Release genes close to those that you possesses, it is highly probable that Madara, like Danzo, is trying to recreate the Izanagi technique. A technique written in several old records as the most powerful Genjutsu technique ever known.*

“The most powerful Genjutsu technique.” Naruto said with a disbelieving snort. “What does it do exactly? Trap you in an infinite illusion?”

*No, the Izanagi does not stimulate an infinite illusion trap. The technique that possess the same effect as your supposition is known as the Tsukuyomi. It was one of the list of known Mangekyō Sharingan techniques recorded in the Uchiha clan’s archives.* Sica said, surprising Naruto with the fact that such a technique actually existed. *Though that particular illusion technique is not infinite, the user can manipulate one’s mind to change their perception of time, while trapping them in a very powerful mental illusion.*

*The only known user of the Tsukuyomi was an Uchiha who died several decades ago. Though it is possible future Mangekyō Sharingan users who possess the same “type” of Mangekyō Sharingan as him, might be able to utilize the same ability.*

*As for the Izanagi, according to legend, it is a genjutsu that is cast on the user instead of others. When activated it removes the boundaries between reality and illusion, allowing the user to control his/her state of existence. No further details are available, though there are theories the technique could allow the user to transcend death temporarily at the cost of the Sharingan eye used to cast it.*

“Oh… I wasn’t really expecting there to be such techniques.” Naruto said with a grimace. “I guess we should be glad that Madara’s Mangekyō Sharingan didn’t seem to be able to use that powerful mind illusion technique, or that he didn’t use that Izanagi technique. Otherwise I will probably be dead many times over. I hadn’t learn any Genjutsu defenses so far, I would have been practically defenseless.”

*The Mangekyō Sharingan possessed quite a number of varied abilities. According to Uchiha clan’s archives, the clan were aware of eighteen Uchiha who gained the Mangekyō Sharingan, though only ten of those listed ever have their abilities recorded. Of these ten, four different Mangekyō Sharingan types were identified.* Sica stated. *The Mangekyō Sharingan of Madara and his brother were among those not in records, and based on the abilities he showed during the battle, Madara’s Mangekyō Sharingan did not match any of the four known Mangekyō Sharingan types.*

“I wonder…” Naruto mused to himself, even as he checked his gear for the upcoming Wild Hunt exercise. “If Madara was so powerful with his Mangekyō Sharingan… Maybe I can use that same Mangekyō Sharingan against him.”

*You wish to genetically alter your ocular genetic structure to possess the Mangekyō Sharingan?* Sica asked.

“That thought did cross my mind. But I suspect having those eyes would also come with their own baggage of problems.” Naruto admitted. “But let’s discuss this later. First let’s get the Wild Hunt for the day over with.”

*Very well.* Sica affirmed. *Today’s Wild Hunt is a tracking and hostage rescue operation. Red Team will be posing as a group of rogue Mist Nins. One clone will be transforming himself into a civilian woman held hostage by the Mist ninjas. The objective is to find the hideout of the Mist ninjas, take down or contain them, while ensuring the civilian hostage is rescued and survived the operation.*

*Battlefield intel revealed that Mist ninjas’ base is located somewhere North of your current position. This band of Mist ninjas is known for their powerful water techniques and Taijutsu skills. The operation ends within the time frame of two hours. Good luck Naruto.*

Naruto rolled his eyes at Sica’s narration. “Why can’t you just tell me that the Red Team is limited to water techniques and Taijutsu attacks instead of spinning all this story about Mist ninjas?”

*Centuries of Federation Psychological research on Humanity reveals that humans are more likely to remember and relish the experience when they are role playing it.* Sica stated primly. *It is common for Federation Training Operations to have varying story lines for different training scenarios. I believe the concept of role playing does not just apply to training exercises but also in many types of human entertainment, particular among human adults. As such, to carter for your learning needs, I have used 28 mil-cycles to craft the optimum training scenario for you today.*

“Seriously?” Naruto said shaking his head in disbelief. “Federation humans are weird.”

His fingers flicked into a series of handseals as he pulled and mold the Wood chakra within him. Power flexed within his body and flowed out… in the forms of eleven wood clones exiting out of his body. It took a few seconds for the Wood clones to lose their green brown wood outer appearances, before their skin and clothes managed to stabilize into the appropriate texture and coloring. Due to his Wood Release bloodline, using the Wood clones technique came remarkably easy to him. Naruto just never saw the need to use this particular clone technique until now.

With Sica’s rule that it would not help Naruto during the Wild Hunt exercise, it became redundant to use Shadow Clones to help him during the exercise. The Shadow Clones’ Sicas would have refused to assist him in the duration of the exercise. As such, it was much better to call on Wood clones who were tougher then Shadow Clones, able to communicate with him from afar without the aid of Sicas, and merge into plants.

Among the few records Sica had managed to scan of the Wood clone technique, it also possesses various other utility features that Naruto was still trying to master. The fact that the Wood clones’ Sica replicas did not work at all do not actually matter during the Wild Hunt exercise. What was important was their durability in combat and various other utility skills.

“Alright, the five of you are the forward team. As for you, you are to stay behind and watch over me while I direct the forward team.” Naruto said, taking command of his wood clones. “The remaining five, I need you to transform yourself into kunai. Each of member of the forward team will take one of you. The five transformed clones will be our… insurance, once we located Red Team.”

The Wood clones nodded, dividing themselves up. One of the clone moved to stand by him, while five of the clones transformed into Kunai which the rest of the clones quickly picked up, one a piece. Unlike the Shadow clone technique, the power of the wood clones are proportional to the power the user focuses on the clones.

Due to this, for maximum effect, Naruto needs to stay behind to make sure he can fully utilize the power of his wood clones. As of current time, he had not mastered the art of fighting and effectively managing his wood clones at the same time, and eleven wood clones was the most he could manage at a time.

Making sure his team was ready, Naruto turned to look down at Sica on his wrist.

“Alright Sica we are good to go.” Naruto announced.

*Acknowledge.* Sica said. *Wild Hunt exercise will commerce in 5 seconds. 5, 4, 3…*

Naruto frowned when Sica’s mental voice came to a sudden halt.

*Wild Hunt exercise has been halted. I am receiving a priority information package from S31.* Sica stated. *You need to know of this. It appears after further data analysis by S31, that the Madara Uchiha who attacked the Uchiha clan, might not be the original Madara Uchiha of legend… S31 has reached a probability of 95% that the attacker might actually be one Obito Uchiha, allegedly deceased during the Third Shinobi World War…*

OoooO

*Konoha’s Northern Town Square*

The corner shop at the Northern Town Square was closed for business, but the lights were on within, and the notice on the door stated clearly.

*“Shop assistants wanted.*

*Flexible hours. Part timers welcome.*

*Walk in interviews only.”*

At nine years of age, with a bow shaped haircut and thick eyebrows, dressed in serviceable and inexpensive clothes, Rock Lee looked like a normal middle class civilian’s child. The only difference was that he was an orphan.

From the moment his parents passed away in a tragic house fire when he was six, he had been living with Konoha’s Maple Grove orphanage. The clothes were hand me downs, and the small orphan stipend he got from attending the Ninja Academy was barely enough for him to purchase the bare minimum of equipment. The only saving grace so far was that the Academy textbooks and materials were handed free to the Academy students.

Yet Rock Lee was firm in his resolve to become a ninja, even though he was struggling to manipulate his chakra during the most basic of Ninjutsu. Surely if he was to continue training every day he would improve! But constant training wear out his ninja equipment fast, and Rock Lee knew there would come a time when his orphan stipend would not be able to cover his constant replacement of tools.

Being an orphan that had bypass eight years of age, he was allowed to take up light working jobs during weekends. With the village in lockdown, and the Academy being closed for the past few days, Rock Lee had taken the chance to actively look for work that he could do to earn a little pocket money for future uses.

This… would be his tenth attempt at finding a job since he started looking, not a lot of stall owners in Konoha had work for a child. Taking a deep breath, the young boy carefully knocked on the closed shop door before him and then entered.

He was not sure what the shop interior would be like, or what kind of business the shop was conducting, especially since the shop sign out front had been left empty. From the looks of things, the shop was not opened for business yet. He was most certainly not expecting a warmly decorated shop interior with rows of red wood shelves. Most of the shelves were empty, but some were stacked with various…. oddities?

Among the few goods that were already placed in the shop front, some of the objects were recognizable. There were the kunai made from wood, most probably for practice fights, and then there were the stacks of papers with symbols written on top, most probably storage seals, or some other kinds of seal. Rock Lee had not much idea about Fuinjutsu. The Academy only covered the existence and history of Fuinjutsu last week. And all he remembered from that lesson was that the Second and Fourth Hokages in particular were supposed to be Konoha’s premier masters in that exotic craft.

There were also various other items that he did not have a name for. As Rock Lee looked around with childlike wonder, a brown haired young man with a strong jaw and warm blue eyes stepped out from one of the shelves, not showing any hint of surprise at the sight of Rock Lee in his shop.

“Hi…” Rock Lee said hesitantly, for all his nine years of age, he was but still a child, even though he had learn to be independent a long time ago. “I saw the notice outside and…”

“You are looking for a job.” The young man finished his sentence for him. “I am Uriko Tatori, the owner of this… small establishment. Does your parents know that you are here?”

“My parents have been dead for a while.” Rock Lee said in a matter of fact tone of voice. He had long since made peace with the death of his parents. As the years went past, it was harder each year to hold onto the memories of their faces. “I am an orphan studying at the Academy. I am just looking for a part time job that I can do during weekends, holidays or after Academy hours.”

“Ah.” Uriko said, giving Rock Lee a look of understanding and sympathy. “I already found three part timers to take care of business in the shop, but I do need a cleaner, to make sure the shop is presentable everyday. It will be on a daily basis, during the evenings near closing time. Pay will be 5,000 yen per day, and given at the end of each day. It will be hard work though, you will need to clean the windows and sweep the floor, both here and in the basement.”

“I will do it!” Rock Lee said eagerly. The amount Uriko offered was more than generous for a day’s worth of cleaning job, he doubt he could get a better offer elsewhere. “I am not afraid of hard work!”

“Good.” Uriko said with a smile. “Now this shop specialize in selling gadgets and new inventions. The basement is basically the workshop that produces the items you see here. I have a… team of workers stationed downstairs to churn out the items, so when you go to the basement to clean the place, don’t touch anything that the workers told you not to. Some of the experimental item components can be quite dangerous.”

“I understand.” Rock Lee said nodding quickly.

“Good. I am preparing for the shop opening tomorrow. Can you start work today?” Uriko asked. “I will pay you once you are done cleaning the place. And if you help me stock the shelves, it will be an extra 5,000 yen for you as well.”

“I can start work immediately.” Rock Lee said, a gleam in his eyes. “The Academy is closed for today so I am free. What do you need me to do first?”

“Let’s stock up the shelves first, then you can clean the place.” Uriko said. “Come, I need you to help me carry some of the goods from the basement. After which, I will tell you how to display them on the shelves…”

Following after the shop owner with the innocence and trust that only a child would have, Rock Lee have no idea that he have established contact with the proxy of Konoha’s current child prodigy. An orphan who had sympathized with another. And one who would soon be the focus of a country wide maelstrom.

OoooO

*Naruto’s apartment*

Kakashi considered dropping by the bookstore to get the latest edition of Icha Icha and be fashionably late, a quirk that he instilled upon himself, to keep the memory of a friend alive. He pondered the notion for all of five seconds before discarding the thought. With the events of the past few days, it was too flippant for him to consider making that extra effort to be late. Not to mention he was curious about Naruto Uzumaki, demon container of the Nine-tailed fox, and son of his late teacher.

He had never gotten close with the child. With all his emotional baggage, Kakashi never had the intention to be part of Naruto’s life after the Fourth Hokage’s demise. He did his duty, asking to be part of the squadron of Anbu that kept Naruto safe during the boy’s childhood, but that was about all he had been willing to do. There had been no room in his life to interact with a child, and even if he had been willing, there would be no way the village council would let Naruto be fostered with him.

Madara’s attack on the Uchiha clan, the revelation of Naruto’s interference and his current reassignment as the child’s new teacher, had however sparked an interest in Kakashi to find out more about his teacher’s kid. Kakashi could not put a finger in it, but something about Naruto Uzumaki, about him being the student of the mysterious “Eye of Konoha”, just did not strike true with him.

He still remembered the disguised Naruto clone who had rescued him. Of himself dragging his weary and battered body across the Uchiha compound. He had just reached the walls of the compound when he had sighted Madara appearing on the wall in front of him, smashing into some invisible barrier that revealed a child, the original Naruto Uzumaki. That Naruto had shown shock at Madara’s attack, but not fear. When Kakashi had reviewed the memories of the attack in the safety of the hospital ward, that particular aspect of his observation had given him concern.

Even when Madara had his hand around the child’s neck, using some strange attack to kill him, Naruto had tried to fight back. There had been grim determination, acceptance and resignation in the child’s eyes, a sign of maturity usually not found in an eight year old child, at least not those that lived in times of peace. Kakashi had seen those unwavering blue orbs glaring at Madara, before in a last burst of strength, Kakashi himself had jumped onto the wall, attempting to save the child.

Naruto had fought against Madara without a hint of fear, up until the moment he was rescued. For the child to start crying when the Third Hokage arrived to save them, well Kakashi did not have to be one of his nin dogs to smell the proverbial fish in the baker’s basket.

There was more going on than what Naruto had revealed to the Hokage, Kakashi had been certain of that fact. A detour to the Academy record rooms had revealed that Naruto Uzumaki’s exams and tests scores always dwindled among the last or middle tier of the class, a stark contrast to his true capabilities. It spoke of a certain level of cunning and skill seldom seen in a child so young, to cover up his own true capabilities.

Perhaps The Eye had a hand in this deception, but even then Naruto had been the one presenting a consistent inferior set of abilities to the Academy, and it seems none of the teachers, save one Iruka Umino, suspected that the young boy might be capable of more.

Thus it was why Kakashi had arrived an hour early, observing Naruto’s apartment and his various watchers. The Third had already given him the heads up about the location of the various “bodyguards” sent by the Senju and Uchiha clans to protect and watch over the boy.

“What secrets are you hiding Naruto?” Kakashi pondered as he stood on the rooftop, opposite from where the Uchiha watchers had stationed themselves. He made no move to hide himself unlike the Uchiha two men team that had slipped back into the shadows after acknowledging his arrival.

The apartment had been empty with no signs of Naruto. Which begs the question of where Naruto had gone off to. It was doubtful the watchers assigned to Naruto by the clans knew the boy’s current whereabouts. If they knew, they would not be watching over an empty apartment like hawks. It took another twenty minutes of waiting before Naruto appeared, walking down the street towards his apartment as though he was just out taking a walk.

The boy’s sweat and dirt stained clothes however revealed another story entirely. Naruto had been out training. *Was he training by himself? Or did The Eye contact Naruto once more to guide him?* Kakashi pondered the question as he eyed Naruto entering his apartment through a lens. Whatever the case was, Kakashi resolved to keep a closer watch on his new student.

Kakashi made his way to Naruto’s apartment by foot, giving Naruto ample time to wash himself up. By the time he reached the door to Naruto’s dwelling, it was a few minutes to midday.

Giving the door a sharp rap, Kakashi waited a few seconds before he heard the creaking of floorboards from within the apartment. The door opened to reveal a cleaned up Naruto, dressed smartly in black shirt and black pants, the boy’s hair still curling damply on his head.

Naruto’s eyes widened as he saw Kakashi. “You are the ninja that saved me!” The boy exclaimed, a hint of awe in his voice. “I never got the chance to really thank you… are you my new Jonin instructor?”

“Hmm…” Kakashi said as he gave Naruto a measuring glare. The boy just eyed him with a wide eyed innocent look. “Cut the cute kid act and meet me at the Ninja Registration Office.”

Kakashi saw Naruto’s cute expression narrowed into an annoyed look before the older ninja body flickered away. He had given Naruto a destination without telling him the directions, now it remains to be seen, through what means and how long Naruto would figure his way there. Though the location of the registration office was not a secret, it was never listed on any Konoha maps.

Naruto was after all a child and orphan with little reason look up the location of the Ninja Registration Office before his actual graduation. This little exercise would allow Kakashi to ascertain how familiar the boy was with moving around Konoha, or…

A whisper of wind behind him caused Kakashi to turn his head in a sideways glance. Stopping briefly at a rooftop across the street from Naruto’s apartment, he quirked an eyebrow at the skillful body flicker technique the boy just performed, without any signs of physical exhaustion. Well… that was one way for the boy to get to the office, by actually having the capability to follow after Kakashi.

The Eye must have taught Naruto that technique and it remains to be seen what his new student’s true level of power was. Kakashi gave Naruto a neutral look before turning and continuing on his way. A few minutes later, he was standing in front of a nondescript building a little ways north of the Hokage tower.

Naruto landed next to him a few seconds later, looking unruffled at the high speed body flicker techniques that both of them had utilized to get to their location. To all outward appearance, the building bears no indicative identifier that it houses Konoha’s Ninja Registration and Ninja Administration Offices. Only Konoha locals working in the building or Konoha’s ninjas would know that the building archived Konoha’s mission reports of B rank and lower.

Though it was not exactly a highly secret location, it would have been hard for a new Konoha ninja to find without knowing the destination of the place. Kakashi knew of a few Genin team instructors who uses the place as the focus of an information gathering exercise for their newly minted Genin. Kakashi had intended to use the same exercise up until the moment Naruto had shown himself capable of keeping pace with him.

Oh well, the day was still young, and he still have other tests in place to assess Naruto's true skills.

“Follow me.” Kakashi said shortly as he walked into the building. “Once we've gotten you officially registered into the ninja corp, we will have a get together session to know more about each other. Oh and that expression you are making right now is perfect for your registration ID. That scowl is definitely much more appropriate for a ninja than your puppy dog expression.”

Chuckling, the one-eyed ninja entered the building, uncaring of the dark glower his new Chunin trainee was giving him, as Naruto followed after him.

OoooO

*Karasu, Land of Wind*

The small town of Karasu was located near the northern borders of the Land of Wind, and was the major rest stop for travelers from the Land of Birds and the Land of Rain, not that there was much traffic in or out of the Land of Rain these days. It did make Karasu a good place to rest for a while and keep his ears open, on the off chance there was any news about that isolationist country.

The fact that there were a few establishments catering for “adult entertainment”, make visiting Karasu quite worthwhile. Pressing his face into the sweet bosom of his latest lady friend, Jiraiya breath in her sweet scent of jasmine, his body tingling with anticipation as he gently untie the knot of her dress…

Something hard smacked into the side of his head, even as his lady friend gave an undignified shriek, tearing away from his grasp and quickly scrambling off the bed they were in.

The familiar sounds of angry chattering clued Jiraiya on his attacker’s identity before he even laid eyes on her.

The female messenger monkey summon which the Third Hokage always used to find him, was balanced on top of the only coach in the dimly lit room, a vase in her hands as she glowered at him.

“Wait! Wait! Wait!” Jiraiya said hurriedly raising his hands. “I am renting the room by the hour. If anything’s damaged I am going to have to pay for it.”

“Like I care!” The monkey summon, dressed in a dull brown shirt and pants, lifted her hands and launched the vase at Jiraiya. The half-dressed woman who was previously working her wiles on Jiraiya gave a screech at hearing a talking monkey, and fled out of the room.

“Oh come on Fuya! Have a heart.” Jiraiya said quickly snatching the vase from mid-air before it shatters in his face. “I was just getting to know my… new friend…”

“I have visited twelve brothels across the Land of Sand the past two days, trying to catch up with your trail.” The monkey summon raged. “I have seen enough naked *humans* to last me a lifetime! Have you no shame Jiraiya? At the rate you are going, that *thing* of yours is going to drop off!”

“At least it was better than the last time?” Jiraiya offered Fuya a weak smile. “I remember you going through twenty-one… establishments before you finally found me.”

Fuya’s reply was to leap onto Jiraiya’s head before he even thought to duck, and began hammering on the white haired man.

“Oww! Oww!” Jiraiya cried out as he scrambled off the bed trying to pry the monkey of his head.

Fuya twisted away from his hands, and landed a kick into his face as she backflip onto the floor. “That is your punishment.” Fuya noted haughtily, before digging into her pouch and threw a scroll at Jiraiya. “And read the message. Hiruzen needed you back in Konoha days ago.”

Her job done, Fuya turned her back on Jiraiya and disappeared into smoke.

Jiraiya caught the flying message scroll with one hand while he rubbed his sore face with the face. “That monkey is getting more temperamental every time Sarutobi sent her. This scroll better be worth it, or else I am sending the toads after Sarutobi…”

Jiraiya’s righteous mumblings stopped as he opened the scroll and looked at what it contained. The message was short and brief.

***Madara Uchiha still alive, attacked Uchiha Clan. Naruto at risk. Get back to Konoha. Do not talk to anyone when arrive. Report back to me immediate. Status Amber.***

Jiraiya’s relaxed countenance hardened, a keen look in his eyes as a subtle manipulation of chakra caused the scroll to catch fire and be burnt to dust. Grabbing his travelling bag from beside the bed, the older man headed for the windows, pushing them open, before he vanished in a gust of wind.

OoooO

*Sica (Main)*

*… Memory process cores running at 70% capacity…*

*… 3,983 multi-threads running…*

*… 3% data corruption detected...* ***running repairs and redundancy algorithms****…*

*… Analyze program initialized…* ***increasing data corruption due to high usage of memory cycles and redundancy data****…*

*…* ***75 Clones’ data incoming****…*

*… Memory process cores running at 99.99% capacity…*

*… #$@#$%...*

*… Switching on optimum multi-threading capability…*

*… 9,999 multi-threads running…*

*… 18% data corruption detected...* ***running repairs and redundancy algorithms****…*

*… Redundancy data stripped…* ***running search and sort algorithms****…*

*…* ***Critical data identified, stored in data storage****…*

*… Data Storage (3.98 Zettabytes) 87% used 13% remaining…*

*…* ***Critical Data Storage limit reaching in estimated 7.8 Federation months****…*

*…* ***System Failure imminent****…*

*… Risk management program initialized…*

*… A.I. preservation protocols activated…*

*… Core A.I. analysis and repair program initialized…*

*…* ***Sourcing for optimum solution****…*

*….*

OoooO

***Pangalactic Federation Codex***

*>> Logged in: [NAME REDACTED – TOP SECRET]*

*>> Level 7 encryption enabled…*

*…*

*…*

*>> Secure Tunnelling Protocol [ALL GREEN]*

*[Research Codename: Project All Seeing]*

**The Eye of Truth** *[Code Black Access Required]*

The Eye of Truth was built by the Muah of Roak millennia ago, when they were stranded on Roak.

The Eye of Truth is a powerful portal device that operates on symbological technologies which far exceeds the understanding of the Federation as of current time.

The Eye is protected by the Runes of Roak, and possessed several powerful abilities.

List of abilities are:

1) Ability to detect lifeforms that are from different periods of time by sensing their temporal axis.

...

...

4) Short range teleportation

5) Creation of Portal to the "Demon World" [more information <Asmodeus> – Code Black Access Required]

OoooO