**Naruto**

 **Waifu-Den**

*I’m gonna be a Ninja! Believe it!*

Okay, that was corny as all hell, but, like, *dude.* Who watched this show as a kid and *didn’t* want to be a ninja? And, yeah, Basic Company training was kind of insane, but Steven noticed Stacy was gonna be an idiot, *again,* so instead of a dying Neo-Tokyo our class blitzed through Amestris, in a world where Edward and Alphonse never made it out of Lab 5, Scar not having offed Basque Grand before they arrived, and they were *not* ready for that level of resistance.

We, in turn, were there to Stamp the local talent, male and female, before they all got turned into Philosopher Goo. While I wasn’t exactly. . . *happy* with enslaving people, everyone else was pretty damn on-board with it, and it was all I could do to convince them that there was a ‘secret test’ that we’d get bonus points if we passed. I was *completely* pulling that shit out my ass, and most didn’t believe me, until after I’d saved them from the ‘iron sand’ Alchemist, the dude having tried to copy Mustang but with *magnetism* instead of fire, though thankfully not *nearly* as well.

The dude was *dangerous*, and could actually feel the shifting energy of alchemy to counter attempts to stop him, but I shoved a wooden stake through the back of his head, which he was *not* prepared for, as half the class had frozen up as soon as the iron spikes started flying, most only taking the *required* classes for their agreements, all of them *sure* that they’d be able to dominate the battlefield with the powers they were going to get.

Powers they *didn’t have yet.*

They’d listened after that.

So, the nation was on a timer before a local apocalypse went on, likely closely followed by a *worldwide* apocalypse, via a country wide alchemy array, which we then short-circuited by tracking down the tunnels that made the circle’s structures and getting the few of us who’d specced into mage-builds to. . . *modify* it. It was complete out-of-context bullshit, but that was an Agent’s greatest strength, and I’d *love* to see Father’s face when his little creation turned *inwards* instead of outwards.

Hell, me might even succeed in his chosen task, not that he’d be around to appreciate it.

Coming back, we’d all scored in the high eighties and low-nineties, out of a hundred, Stacy mad because we didn’t get a *perfect score,* but we were told that pretty much *no one* got a hundred, which had just pissed her off. We didn’t care, as that fascist bitch was *never* happy, though the fact our debriefer had looked *right at me* when he said it was kind of weird.

Regardless, there was some sports-team-esque trading behind the scenes, and I got bounced to a different department, no longer working for my recruiter, which I was *perfectly* fine with.

Seriously, *fuck that duplicitous* ***cunt****.*

Offered the chance to update my agreement with a newer version of the [catalog](https://waifu-catalog.neocities.org/), it seemed iffy, until you started to *really* look into it, and then, *hot-damn, this thing was even more broken!* Easily agreeing, glad I was dealing with the *Summer* Court now, my first choice, Cyberpunk, had apparently been ‘taken’ by another me which was an. . . *interesting thing to just drop into conversation*, but I could *roll with this.*

And thus, I found myself in the Land of Fire, so named because of the metaphysical concept of determination it embodied, instead of the others, which were all *exceedingly literal.* Land of wind? A Desert. Lightning? Mountains and constants storms. Mist? Kinda misty.

Regardless, I was in Punch Wizard land, though, as this was the *original* dimensional line, *not* the Shippuden one, the general power level was, like, *halved,* the screaming alien energy mecha ridiculousness Shippuden got up to not in the cards so stealth was *hopefully* going to be a thing. Glancing down at the *daffodil yellow* shirt I was wearing, the extra I was dropping into a fan of the Doug Funnie school of outfitting so that this was *the only thing I owned,* but I had *twelve* of them, maybe that wasn’t quite so true.

‘Li Tamashii’, as it turned out, was a 4th Hokage fanboy, and had latched onto the entire ‘yellow flash’ thing a bit *too hard*. An average student with average grades, he probably failed his Jounin’s test, and then either became one of the disposable masses in Konoha’s Genin Corps. You were still a ninja, and could still take missions, but you didn’t get specialized instruction. That said, *seeing* what some of the Jounin were like, they weren’t missing much except plot relevance.

Honestly the issue was that you were solo, so getting a team, let alone a well-rounded one, got a *lot* harder.

Though, stepping onto the academy grounds, and seeing all of the people here, that *might* not be as hard for me as it would’ve originally.

See, the new version of the Catalog had a little option called ***Universal Calibration****,* which, yeah, cost as much as *eternal youth,* but kicked you further off the path of the parent dimensional main-line’s setting, but in ways that worked better for *you*, which handled the problems some settings could present.

For instance, I was currently *sixteen*, not fuckin ***twelve.***

The child-soldier thing was an issue with coming her, though, I’d also admit not having to wait four years, *at least,* to get laid, and skipping going through the worst parts of puberty for a second time were two things I was *very* okay with. I mean, I technically *could* get my some strange*,* but Shota-cons were just as bad as *Loli*-cons in my mind.

I mean, I get that some Asians just looked child-like, I even had a friend in college, before I made a deal with that she-devil, who, even when she was 22, looked *fourteen,* and didn’t drink solely because she got sick of having to call the cops as places kept stealing her ‘obviously fake ID’, but when the limb-proportions of characters started to shorten, that wasn’t a cultural quirk, that was *pedophilia*.

Regardless, though this place had that weird ‘Asian with a hint of Caucasian’ thing going on, it still had a lot of Asian cultural ideas, which was gonna hurt me as much as it helped, ‘Li’ thankfully having strong enough American-like features that it was generally agreed he had some ‘Lightning-nation’ ancestry, which meant I could get away with more shit because I looked like I should. Hell, he might’ve actually had family there, though I couldn’t ask my parents, as they’d died during the Kyuubi’s rampage shortly after I was born.

That. . . kinda sucked, but having had bad parents my first go round, and checking this body’s memories, they *weren’t* better than no parents, at least given that I was on the ‘Ninja’ career track, which meant I got a good deal of societal support.

And then there was the *other* thing **Univeral Calibration** had changed, as I made my way through the halls, the thing that’d make forming teams easier. Groups of girls watched me as I made my way through the halls, my retroactive **Body Talent** making me quite the ‘specimen’, which, *yeah*, felt just as dehumanizing as it seemed, which original-Li, an artificial soul used to set me up, had reacted to by becoming socially withdrawn.

Turns out, the gender ratio in this dimension? When it came to ninja it got borked. *Hard.* Civilians were still about fifty-fifty, but, according to our classes, chakra did odd things to developing fetuses, which meant a pregnant ninja either needed to *not* ninja for the first sixth months, or have a good chance of miscarriage if the unborn child was male. That. . . kinda fucking horrifying consequence was *not* something I would’ve picked, but **UC** just picked a ‘compatible’ dimension and dropped me in that one instead.

That meant that of our class of twenty-seven, *six* of us were guys, and that was higher than average. There was Sasuke and Naruto, *of course,* as well as Shikamaru, Aitake, Isoken, and myself.

Everyone else? A chick.

Kiba? Unkempt tomboy.

Shino? Kinda-creepy bug girl who used we pronouns.

Choji? Now called *Micho* and a girl *right* in any chubby-chasers strike zone.

So yeah, even if I fucked this up, I was pretty sure I could form a team just by virtue of having a *dick*, which. . . didn’t feel great, to be honest, but this was *ninja-land*, and I was pretty sure I’d end up having to do a distasteful thing or three before I got strong enough to be able to back up my morals with actions.

Entering the classroom, everyone was chatting, and, yeah, there was the *actual* protagonist of this world, which is why I’d picked up **Fate Resistance**, stupidly expensive as it was, and, if things got fucky, I’d go on a few ‘assassination’ missions, take out some enemy ninja, and grind the *fifty* points it’d take to up that to full *immunity*

The kid was clearly dispirited, and, from the way that Sasuke was glancing his way, absently touching his lips, the ‘is it gay if it’s accidental’ kiss had already happened. Dimly remembering what was on the canon route, from watching the show close to a decade ago, and the shitshow coming this kid’s way, I couldn’t help myself as I stopped by him, asking, “Didn’t you fail?”

Naruto sat up, pointing to the forehead protector he was wearing, demanding, “You blind or something? Can’t you see what I’m wearing?”

I gave the known prankster a deadpan stare. “Dude, are you saying you *wouldn’t* make a fake one just to see if you could get away with it, because ‘Ninjas are supposed to be tricky’ or some shit like that?”

The blond boy blinked, grinning and rubbing the back of his head, “Uh, *heh*, actually, that’s a good one. Didn’t expect that from a stick in the mud like you.”

Rolling my eyes, aware the others were staring, I replied, “There’s a difference between *bored* and *incapable of fun*. I just didn’t disrupt class for everyone else. And *you* didn’t answer my question,” I pointed out, giving the boy a chance to show off that, *maybe*, he wasn’t full of shit.

“Nah, I got another test. Straight from old man Hokage himself! I kic- uh, I, uh, can’t tell you what happened, though. Secret and everything,” he shrugged. “Sorry, but it was *awesome.”*

Beside him, Sakura glared at the boy I was talking to, the pinkette looking much like her Shippuden self, her self-imposed malnutrition clear to my eyes due to one of my. . . *other* purchases. “Oh *lay off it*, Naruto! No one believes you, and no one thinks you’re funny. Just wait until Iruka-Sensei gets here!”

“I *will,* and then you’ll see, and then *I’ll* be the one laughing!” the teen shot back, glancing my way. “But, yeah. I passed. *Believe it!”*

“The Hokage said so?” I checked, getting a firm nod from the boy. “Then I do. Good job, man,” I smiled, holding up a fist for him to bump.

Naruto blinked, surprised, not moving. “R-Really?”

“Oh come *on!”* Sakura sneered. “Like the leader of our *entire vill-*“

“I do,” I repeatedly calmly, not moving, only glancing over to her. “I’ve seen him having lunch with Naruto, a time or two, and Naruto doesn’t lie about the Hokage. I, well, *‘believe him’*.” Glancing back to the boy in question, I smirked, “So you gonna leave me hanging, or what?”

Jumping a little, startled, and turning red with embarrassment, the boy grinned, *honestly* this time, and completed the most manly of gestures, *the fist bump*. With my good deed for the day done I headed over to my normal seat off to the side, by the wall, which made for an *excellent* sleeping spot, the class not *terribly* difficult, and, again, being male, I could get away with a *lot* of shit in this dimension, though I didn’t abuse that privilege *nearly* as much as Shikamaru did.

Regardless, I settled in to wait, Nomi took her normal seat next to me, the girl having ‘staked her claim’ on me, which was. . . *cute,* and I might even give her a shot if she wasn’t a *raging bitch* to everyone but me. “Do you really think Naruto’s telling the truth, Li-kun?” the average looking brown-haired girl questioned.

“Am I known for being *nice?*” I replied absently, my previous self sharing my proclivity for blunt truths, the body I pseudo-reincarnated into’s artificial soul patterned off my own to a small extent.

She frowned, but remained silent, *thankfully*, and I closed my eyes, feeling outwards with my new senses. I wasn’t a Chakra Sensor, like Karin would be, as Chakra was made up of spiritual and physical energies mixing together. No, I couldn’t see physical energy at all, which was probably a good thing as Naruto was an *inferno* of the damn stuff, but *spiritual* energy?

Well, I’d be a pretty shitty Soul Reaper if I couldn’t sense *that*, wouldn’t I?

Closing my eyes, I meditated, and, yeah, Naruto was *still* incredibly bright, his Soul likely trying to compensate for holding in the demon fox sealed within him, which was pretty much just *physical* energy incarnate, if I remembered right. The others were there, though were a lot harder to differentiate, and I spent a good fifteen minutes trying to make heads or tails of it, but. . .

*Well, hello there.*

Up, in the one of the top corners of the room, by the blackboard, despite the fact that I hadn’t *seen* anyone, nor was there anywhere to hide, was a decently strong soul, feeling. . . cold, bored, and a little annoyed. The energy coming from him, or her, was contained, but the *presence* of a soul there was undeniable.

Mind you, it’d taken me *so* long to figure it out that, if they’d meant me ill, I was fucking *dead,* but, hey, Out-Of-Context Bullshit for the win!

Iruka entering the room, her soul practically humming with positive emotions, forced me to pay attention, and, *huh*, she was kinda cute.



The announcements of teams went about as I expected, but the fact that this shit was *news* to my class was. . . odd, though, checking Li’s memories, yeah, the kids were pretty much kept in the dark about a *lot* of shit, the academy classes only covering the basics of Chakra manipulation, basic bitch combat, some sciences. We had phys ed and sparring, which developed our physical energies, and the classes took care of the mental stuff, though everything was done to what would be the equivalent of a middle-school education.

Mind you, even being able to *use* Chakra at all, even if we washed out of even the Genin Corps, would pretty much guaranteed us a middle-class lifestyle, with our higher-than-average strength, toughness, and all-round education, so it was hardly the worst thing in the world that we were missing the knowledge needed to make *this* aspect work, though, by looking around, most of the Clan kids seemed surprised about this too, which at least told me they didn’t get any kind of leg up, which was. . . oddly honorable, especially for ninja.

“Hey, Iruka-sensei,” I called, when she paused before she started to lift off the teams. “Did the Hokage *really* give Naruto a harder, second test to become a Genin?” The class quieted, and the teacher shot a frown the blond’s way. “He wouldn’t tell us more than that, said it was secret.”

The teacher blinked, surprised, nodding as she stated, “That is correct, Tamashii-san. I cannot say more.”

Nodding, I leaned back into my seat and dozed as the class erupted into whispered conversations, Naruto suitably smug as he just grinned in an ‘I *told* you bitches so’ way. I perked up when, after a *great* deal of yelling, Iruka corralled the students into compliance and got to announcing the teams. Team One was already a thing, Two made up of extras, Three *also* already a thing, while Team Four was Nozori Ren, Ishiko Sato, and *Li Tamashii*.

Glancing over to the two girls I. . . *wasn’t impressed*. Nozomi was dressed in blue and blacks, long dark hair hanging over her face, but not in the cute bob that Hinata had, more like it was just limp and she didn’t see caring for it as important. It seemed *damp*, actually, and while I did like the entire ‘wet-hair’ look. . . she didn’t pull it off. The teen seemed dispirited at the announcement, but, well, from my new memories I could tell the girl was *always* gloomy, so maybe this was normal? Did she just have Resting Depressed Face?

Ishiko, meanwhile, *glared* at me when I glanced her way, the brunette in the standard olive drab and navy blue that it seemed *every* standard Chunin and Jounin wore, unless they were flashing clan colors. The girl, from my memories, was a *complete* asshole, possibly having the Wood release, from how firmly she’d bonded with that *stick up her ass*. Seriously, you’d think I fucked her dog, and *then* killed it in front of her, from how she was looking at me.

Smiling cheekily, of course, I waved back to her, the girl’s scowl only deepening, before she turned her nose up and away. *Well, fuck you too,* I thought, rolling my eyes as the rest of the teams were announced. I mean, Li didn’t have the best grades, and was something of a generalist in these classes, but he wasn’t *that* bad.

Well, at least he wouldn’t be *anymore*.

**<NWD>**

Naruko gingerly limped out of the bathroom, having left Sakura waiting, but her plan could *still work!*

The blonde girl had layered her first transformation before she’d left the stall, more out of habit than anything, making herself ‘Naruto’ once more. She’d started doing it when she was younger, wanting friends, and *everyone* liked boys more than girls, so she’d thought if *she* was a boy then people would like her. Old Man Hokage had even let her change her documents to match!

Only it hadn’t worked.

It didn’t matter if she *was* a boy, *no one* liked her, or the few who did stopped talking to her out of the blue a day or two later. It wasn’t even that they realized she was a girl, Naruko could *understand* that, they just started finding problems with everything ‘he’ did, like they were *looking* for an excuse. A couple of times they pretended to be nice after. . . . *whatever* it was happened, but Naruko could always tell there was something. . . *off* about them, and avoided them. They’d never taken it well, which showed how nasty they really were.

And *everyone* was like that, calling her dream stupid, calling *her* stupid.

Until today.

It’d taken her a couple minutes to even *remember* Tamashii’s name, but he’d. . .

He’d *believed her*.

Well, he believed Old Man Hokage, but that was the same thing really, and yeah, he’d checked, and she’d worried he *hadn’t,* but she could tell that was just to get everyone *else* to shut the hell up.

And when they had?

All staring at her.

Not wanting to believe *she* was special, but unable to argue with Iruka-sensei?

Top ten moments.

*Easily.*

Getting on a team with Sakura, who he’d been friends with for an entire *month* before the girl had turned on her, that would’ve been another, if she wasn’t on the same team as *Sasuke*, who was a guy, yeah, so she guessed he was supposed to be likeable, but the dude was an *asshole*, with hair like a duck’s butt. He had the same stuff going for him that Naruko had, but *he* was popular, when he didn’t even *want* to be!

So now she was trying to give Sakura a moment with the dick, to show her pink-haired ex-friend how he *could* be, which was how *‘Naruto’* could be too, so when Sasuke was, well, *Sasuke* she’d realize he was a dick and drop his mopey ass! And, yeah, Naruko had almost kissed Sakura, which was. . . a little weird, but being a ninja was deception and stuff, and it wasn’t really *that* bad.

*If only it didn’t feel like her guts were trying to run down her legs!*

With a nauseating whine, she held firm, she could *do this.* ***Believe it!*** So she just needed to layer another transformation over the first one, which had taken a bit to do in class, calling it her ‘sexy jutsu’ when she’d dropped them both by accident, which was a pain in the ass right now because the pain in her stomach was making it *really* hard to concentrate, but-

“Naruto?” a voice called, concerned, and she froze, turning, seeing Tamashii walking towards her. “You okay?”

*Shit, I can’t shift in front of him,* Naruko thought, trying to think of an excuse, starting to say, “I’m fi-” before her stomach let out another pathetic, gurgling whine.

The guy frowned, walking closer, “That doesn’t sound okay,” he observed, hesitating, glancing around, before nodding to himself. “I know a couple medical jutsu, if you want me to see if I can help.”

“You know jutsu?” she asked instantly, perking up. “Can you show me?”

Tamashii frowned, before nodding. “Um, yeah? That’s what I was offering?”

“Hell yeah!” Naruko grinned, no one *ever* showing him jutsu, except the three everyone had to learn to graduate, and even then it took until Iruka-Sensei this year to show him the other two. Transformation had been easy, though Setsuna-sensei had been surprised Naruko had learned it after she’d showed her that one time, but Setsuna-sensei was an asshole who never believed in Naruko, so *fuck her.*

“Okay, so, it’s GI distress?” the boy asked, clarifying before she could ask, “Stomach ache and stuff?” At the girl’s nod, he nodded back. “Okay, then take off your shirt.”

Naruko froze, “Uh, *what?”*

“I mean, if I’m gonna do something to help, doing it *through* your jacket’s gonna make this ten times harder. Or you could just lift it up, but, yeah,” he stated, going down on one knee right in front of her.

“I, uh, yeah, of course. And we’re both guys, so it’s no big,” the transformed girl bluffed.

“Exactly,” Tamashii agreed as Naruko lifted up her jacket, trying not to blush. “Now, hold still.”

There was a. . . *feeling* in the air, like it was just a little heavier, as her fellow Genin’s hand started to glow. . . *yellow*? Yeah, a dark yellow, dark green at the edges, as he started saying stuff, like he was some monk chanting, *“Life in harmony, all in place. Balance maintained, pathogenic concordance! Kaido eight, aseptic grace!”*

Bringing the hand up, he pressed against her stomach, ‘Naruto’’s abs holding firm, the glowing energy sinking into her, the boy not noticing the transformation, something she only realized he *might* be able to do after it was too late.

An odd feeling filled her stomach, the liquid-y sensation fading, as her clenching guy slowly relaxed, and, while Naruko had a moment of worry that she’d shit herself in the process she. . . was fine?

“Uh, ya didn’t use handseals?” she asked, to try and make this less awkward.

The jutsu stuttered for a second, and the blonde kicked herself for interrupting him, but it resumed as he said, “Kinda figured it out myself, and hand-seals are great for being quiet, but this works just as well for shaping the energy, and if I’m healing someone things have *already* gone wrong.”

*That. . . made sense,* she figured, wondering why the Academy never mentioned it. Either way, Tamashii held his hand against her skin, which was. . . kinda nice, even if it was embarrassing. Well it would be if Naruko was a *girl*, but she was a *guy* right now, so that made it okay, right?

Soon enough though the glow faded, and he leaned back, shaking his head to clear it, standing as he asked, “Let me guess, you thought whatever you ate was still good? Been there myself.”

Dropping her shirt, ‘Naruto’ grinned sheepishly, one hand reflexively going to the back of ‘his’ head. “Uh, yeah. But it was all I had. Groceries are expensive, ya’know?”

However instead of smiling back, Tamashii frowned, “You got a gambling habit or something?”

“What? *No!”* she shot back. “With what money? Food and rent and stuff clean me out, *believe it!*”

“I. . . do, but. . .” he hesitated, “How much does a pack of instant ramen cost?”

“Fifteen Ryu,” Naruko replied, confused. “Says so right on the package!”

“Pound of ground beef?” Tamashii questioned.

“Hundred Ryu,” she told him.

“Pound of carrots?” he pressed.

She grimaced, “Like, hundred-fifty? I normally don’t bother.”

“Wait, carrots cost more than *beef?”* he frowned, and she nodded.

“Like, duh?” the blonde girl questioned. Like, this was *basic stuff.* “But they’re not really my thing. Too slimy, ya know?

Tamashii closed his eyes, and sighed, pinching the bridge of his nose. “No wonder you won’t shut up about Ramen.”

“*Hey!”* Naruko objected. She thought he might be cool, but *no one* dissed rame-

“Use my face,” he commanded.

She stared. Blinking. There was no *way* he’d just said that. Like, she’d *heard* people say that, but. . . wait, he thought she was *‘Naruto’*. Was he gay? Like, that was fine, and stuff, but she felt weirdly disappointed. And he was now staring at her, waiting for her reply, but she had *no idea what to say*, so just went, “Huh?”

“You’re good with the Transformation, better than I am,” the boy admitted, which made Naruko blink, as *no one* ever admitted she was better at them in something, even when she *obviously* was. “And, from what I’ve seen, you’re stealthy enough to escape notice wearing *that,* so, again, better than me.”

*Twice at once?* she thought. *What the hell?*

“I live in district three, so don’t go there or else we might meet while you’re doing this, but pick another one, transform into me, and buy your groceries that way,” he commanded.

“I, uh, oh, uh yeah,” she sputtered, having *totally* gotten the wrong message. “But, what if they think you’re me?” the blonde wasn’t blind to the looks she got, and he *was* trying to help, so it’d be shitty of her if he got crap for doing her a solid.

Tamashii just snorted, “*Let ‘em*. I’d *love* to see the Hokage see them go, ‘I treated him badly because I thought he was a *different* *member of* ***our village’s military***! That makes it okay!’”

That got a laugh out of Naruko, and a grin. People got away with shit against *her* all the time, it’s why she got so good at delivering her own kind of ‘justice’, but she had a feeling it’d be different the other way round.

“Just make sure, if you got caught, you tell them that I told you that you could, and if they don’t believe you demand they check with me,” he warned. “Transformation’s useful, but it’s dangerous as hell for a *reason.*”

“Wait, i’s dangerous?” she questioned. “How?”

Naruko didn’t like the look he gave her, the one that said, ‘are you stupid?’, and she wanted to smack him, but he’d *just* helped her, and was already talking before she could do more than stop herself. “It’s just as dangerous as the other two, maybe even more. It’s a weapon of *social* harm, just as much as a kunai,” he said, and she furrowed her brow. What the hell was *‘social harm?*’

“Like, you’ve got a bandit camp you’ve got to clear, and you’ve been watching them for a bit, and figure out whose lower on the totem pole, or, even better, if there’s two different groups,” Tamashii continued. “You turn into someone, sneak in, and do something kind of assholic, but not out of character, like steal someone’s drink, or shove someone off their seat, or something, not stabbing them or anything, and disappear behind a building, and then when they go looking for ‘you’ they spot the person you were *pretending to be*,” he laid out with a grin, and Naruko followed along, smiling herself, seeing a pretty decent prank in the making.

“So they see the second guy,” the blonde nodded, “And the first one’s like ‘why’d ya do that’, but the second one’s like ‘no I didn’t’, cause he *didn’t*, and the first guy *‘saw’* the second guy do it, so he’s *obviously* full of shit.”

“And because they’re *bandits,* they’re *violent idiots by definition,”* Tamashii agreed. “So someone’s gonna pull a knife, and even if they don’t, if ya wait a few hours *you* can kill one of ‘em when no one’s looking, so *obviously* it was the other guy. And then, Boom, they’ve got knives on each other, and you don’t have to take out twenty bandits, you have to take out, like, *half* that, after they’re tired out from killing each other. Easy peazy, cause they’re sleazy, but that’s why turning into allies is, well, *kinda fucked up,*” he agreed, and Naruko nodded, until she froze, realizing that she’d *just done that.*

*Well. . .* ***shit****.*

“Uh, yeah, it is,” she shakily agreed. *Would Sasuke say anything? No, he didn’t see me change, just saw me kick his ass. Which he didn’t expect. Because we’re allies.* ***Shit.*** “Uh, if you’d gotten into a fight with one of your teammates, what’d’ya do?”

Tamashii gave her a flat look. “Go apologize to Sasuke, Naruto. Tell him someone told you. . . I don’t know, that you had to show you were stronger if you were going to be ‘team lead’. He’ll snap something about not being stronger than him, and how *he’s* gonna be the ‘team lead, and here’s the thing: *let him.* That edgelord’s pride is such that he won’t tell anyone else he lost to the ‘dead last’. It *was* Sasuke, right?”

“I’d never hit Sakura!” Naruko replied, horrified at the thought.

But the boy snorted, “She might like you more if you did.” He paused, “Well, if you do it right after she hits you. She’ll scream, but, like, *what else is new*, but call it gender equality and ignore her.”

“W-wait, really?” she questioned.

“Dude, girls are kinda nuts,” he warned, correcting as the *hidden girl* scowled, “Well, *some* of them are. Maybe most. It’s a statistically relevant kinda crazy. The *good* ones tell you what you want, but others try and make you guess, like it’s some sort of test, and then try and ‘punish you’ for guessing wrong.”

“Well, *I* want to be Hokage!” Naruko declared. *“Believe it!”*

Tamashii rolled his eyes, “Yeah, but you’re a *guy*. Honestly, if I knew a girl like you. . .” he trailed off, and said girl *really wanted to know what he was gonna say,* but he shook his head. “Well, Lunch’s almost over, and *you* have to go apologize to Sasuke.” He paused, as her stomach rumbled, no longer twisting, but now empty. The boy reached into a pocket and pulled out a plastic baggie filled with onigiri, and tossed it to her. “Have these, I make a ton of them, ‘cause I’m a bit lazy. Not *Shikamaru* lazy, but I have extra. Seeya around.”

“I, uh, seeya,” Naruko muttered, waving, as Tamashii walked away, before shaking her head and taking off running, opening the baggie and grabbing the first one, biting down on it.

And almost ran into a wall.

It had a *filling,* and it was *delicious!* Like, like ***Ichiraku Ramen*** *good!* She’d say it was *better* if that wasn’t ***sacrilege!***

She glanced back, but Tamashii was already gone, and Naruko resolved to track down the boy, when she had time. And not just because he was nice to her, and would show her cool jutsu, and was maybe sorta okay looking in a warm but laid back way. Nope, she *had* to figure out how to make these onigiri, and while Teuchi and Ayame need to keep their recipes secret to make a living, Tamashii was a ninja like her, so he’d show her, right?

But first, she had to go apologize to *Sasuke.*

*Ugh.*

**<NWD>**

Returning to our classroom, I wondered if my teammates would come sit next to me, so we could coordinate, and. . . *nope.*

*Well, sucks to be them,* I thought, reaching into my pocket, toggling my **Pocket Space** open to grab another pack of, as Brock would call them ‘donuts’. This set were filled with seasoned fish, made by turning Faerie Feast up to *just* below addicting. I didn’t have **Addiction *Immunity****,* only **Resistance**, so spoiling myself would just be stupid.

I needed to use my Company Phone to place the doorway for my **Pocket Apartment**, but the space was meant to be toggled at will, so Company Basic Training had shown us how to mentally control it.

Polishing them off, and dropping the empty baggie back into my hammerspace, I relaxed, half-meditating as I tried to feel out the souls around me. Again, it took me *forever,* but the watcher from before was still there, only now there were two more outside, on a branch, but, turning to look over, I didn’t see *shit*.

*Probably possible Jounin senseis?* I wondered, but let it go, as the rest of the class slowly trickled assembled, and one of the presences moved, out of my range but towards the school’s entrance. Not long after, a few adult ninjas came in, one at a time, introducing themselves, and heading out with their prospective teams.

The soul from outside turned out to be *Kurenei*, the anime not really doing the woman justice, who grabbed Kiba, Hinata, and Shino, the three women following the smoking-hot genjutsu expert out the door. Asuma grabbed his three right after, other ninja grabbing *their* students in a steady stream, until it was just us and the other team. The presence outside was still there, just like the person in the top corner of the room, neither of them Kakashi by sheer dint of being here *early.*

“Heads up, Naruto,” I said, the boy’s head snapping up. “I’ve heard some shit, and if you’ve got Kakashi, dude’s known for being late to *everything.*”

“Maybe *you* have Kakashi,” Sakura snapped at me, obviously annoyed for some reason. Not that I gave a shit, after this there was a good chance I wouldn’t see Team Seven until the Chunin Exams, and Tamashii didn’t really have *friends* so I’d have a shit ton of time to myself to train.

“God I hope not. Dude reads porn in *public*,” I sighed, and, yeah, I could feel distant mirth from the soul waiting outside, which meant I was likely right and that *probably* wasn’t the man himself. It was silent, but, out of the corner of my eye, I could see the window high above us slide open. A moment later, three kunai came flying through, one in front of each of us, each with a note attached that read ‘Training Ground 44 -Team 4’s Sensei’.

“Hey, free knife,” I commented blandly, pinging my body’s memory, and realizing who our sensei probably was. And if I was right? *Score.* Pocketing the blade and standing, I sighed “Whelp, we’ve not got Kakashi. This is way too much effort for that guy.” I looked at the now open window, and gauged the distance.

It took a second, but ‘flash step’ was *basic bitch* Soul Reaping, though it took a couple quick steps to get going, launching myself up to the window with physics-defying acceleration and decelration, stopping correctly, but *feeling* the downgrade from my template’s source in my bones. That terror had been a Tier *7* threat, not the Tier 4 version I got, but this process let the Company turn a single possible clone into *hundreds* of Templates for shmucks like me. However, while my skills were blunted to the point that they weren’t just rusty, they were *corroded,* what *wasn’t* downgraded, at least not seriously, was the Soul Reaper’s *knowledge*, which is what I was *really* after.

Glancing back, I saw the five students staring, Naruto opened mouthed, so I waved back, smiling as I said “Ren, Sato, see you there.” Before they could respond, I launched myself out for the treeline, having felt our instructor start to leave, then stop, watching me, though I couldn’t see the Jounin directly, the faint sense of the ninja’s soul ribbon was enough to get a general distance and direction, however.

Landing on the tree-branch, I had to steady myself, my body *not* used to that kind of strain, and my instincts made for someone several inches shorter with a completely different build, but, thankfully, I knew a high-ranked, variable-cost Kaido that essentially gave me low-level *regeneration*. Well, fast healing, not *actual* regen, the one that *actually* regenerated was probably out of my reach, and would drain my limited reserves of spiritual energy dry in a minute or two if I tried to use it as ‘rusty’ as I was now. Not using the incantation, I started up the ‘workout-recovery’ Kaido, subtle enough to not give any visual effect, but able to put me back together in a way that wouldn’t just undo the damage, and started to continue.

I knew it wasn’t the *ninja* way of movement, which was a smooth jumping, but the short starts and stops let me travel at a good clip, as I took my time, getting used to the technique known as ‘Shunpo’.

My sensei-to-be, after watching me take another, slower flash step, tossed another pair of kunai through the window and then sped off, *far* faster than I could, but given that my teammates were hoofing it, civilian style, that meant I was still going to be there *ridiculously* quicker than they were. Pacing myself, I covered the several miles to my destination in about three times as many minutes, which considering I was also doing so in practically a straight line, didn’t seem that bad to me.

Landing with one last step, I grimaced, rubbing my legs, *definitely* needing to train that, as, while enhanced by the mere fact of having Chakra, I had Ichigo’s problem of the spirit-powers being willing, but my meat-body being weak and squishy. It was something I *wouldn’t* have to worry about if I was made of pure spirit energy, but I kind of liked being alive, so that was something to work on in the future.

*Could I die, kill the shit out of whoever killed* ***me****, heal my body, and jump back in?* I wondered, the image amusing, but *not* something I wanted to test *or* rely on. Looking around, I couldn’t spot my sensei, but, *given where we were,* I was almost *certain of* who she was, feeling her presence move and. . .

*Shit, she’s right behind me.*

Launching myself forward, I pulled the tagged kunai and slashed out, only for *Anko motherfuckin’ Mitarashi* to easily catch my wrist. “Good instincts, kid,” the purple haired Jounin smirked, the woman the definition of ‘Crazy Hot’ in every respect, as she plucked the blade from my gasp. “And thanks for giving this back. You made good time, the others. . .” she glanced in the direction of the Academy, like she could see them, her arrogant smile fading. “Not so much. What was that?”

“Huh?” I asked, surprised how much **Martial Talent** had flared, showing me what I’d been doing wrong with my reply-stab. While my Template gave me sword skills, my knife-skills were much weaker, and even *this* much interaction told me that trying to take Anko in hand-to-hand was a *bad idea.*

“That movement Jutsu you used,” she prodded, frowning.

I blinked, realizing that of *course* she’d notice what I was doing, and *maybe* blatantly using Soul Reaper abilities *wasn’t* the best move in a village full of spy-assassins.

*Whelp, I’ve already committed, so let’s lean into the spin.* “You mean shunshin?” I asked, the ‘body flicker technique’ the local equivalent of my own shunpo. “Did I do it wrong?”

“That. . . *wasn’t shunshin*, so yeah. Ya fucked it up. We’ve got so time, boyo, so watch my amazing self,” she instructed cockily, doing *something* as I could feel her spirit energy flare up before the woman blurred away, my eyes straining to track her as landed a hundred feet away. Then, without even seeming to turn around, she launched herself back, not taking any *steps*, just jumping outright. “Now you.”

I nodded, telling her, “Sure, sensei,” which caused her to wince, as she was almost *certainly* going to try and fail our team, but I’d do my damndest to make sure she *didn’t.* As I focused my spirit energy into my legs, and took a couple rapid steps to build momentum, before flying forward at extreme speeds, ones that made *no* logical sense, holding myself tight, until I let go and the world seemed to go ‘Hey! What are you doing?’ and I was suddenly brought back to a walking speed in an instant, my momentum confiscated as the fee for my ‘speeding’.

That effect made shunpo absolutely *useless* for attacking directly, for as soon as one tried to move to do so they’d get dropped out of their high-speed state, but for repositioning it was *awesome*, even if my template was no ‘Goddess of Flash’. Turning around, I took a couple more steps, then burst forward, landing in front of my sensei-to-be, still taking my time, still not going as fast as I knew I probably could, and rubbing my legs as I turned to her with a hopeful smile.

The Jounin, however, was frowning. “What’s wrong with your chakra?”

“There’s something wrong with my chakra?” I questioned in turn.

“*Yes there’s something. . .*” the older woman, and by older I mean *late-twenties*, started to insist, before instead demanding, “Show me a transformation.”

I grimaced, but I tried anyways. Falling upon my body’s memories, I pulled together my spiritual and physical energies. The former was no longer the vague cloud Li had access to before I’d arrived, but now I reached into a grand ocean, like a second sky above me, while my *physical* energy was just as he remembered, a muddy pool that I was ankle-deep in. Spirit energy was easy to gather, almost *too* easy, my reiryoku collecting with barely a thought, though even at *that* level I knew I was hobbled compared to the person I was copying, while, comparatively, my grip on my physical energy, my ki, was the drunken fumbling of a *toddler*.

*Start physical, match spiritual* I thought, making the appropriate handsign, the mnemonic device having been drilled into us until we automatically moved our energies in the appropriate way, adding physical energy until I got the right amount, then easily pouring in exactly the correct amount of spiritual substance to make the jutsu function.

I poofed into a small bit of concealing smoke, which gave way to show me as the twin of my instructor.

“Huh. That’s kinda shit. And *actually* chakra,” she commented, poking my copy in the tit, finger pressing through the illusion, which started to destabilize, and I, as I tried to keep the energy matrix intact, I used too much reiryoku and it popped like a soap bubble while she kept poking me in the stomach. “And you suck at controlling it. So what the shit’s the other stuff?”

I shrugged. “Well, uh, you know how chakra’s two different kinds of energy?” At her flat look*, yes, she did.* “Well, physical energy’s kinda hard to work with so I just, you know, *don’t*.”

She stared. “You. . . *don’t.*”

“Yeah,” I shrugged, “like this.” Turning to the side, I put my hands together, making a triangle with my thumbs and pointers, forgoing the chant as it was as basic bitch as offensive kido got, being number *two* in terms of difficulty. It still took me a moment to summon it this way, which for Genin wasn’t bad, but *barely* made it truly combat useful. Though the look on Anko’s face was amusing when a deep blue fireball the size of a baseball was formed and fired, slamming into a tree and blasting the bark off, scorching the wood without setting it alight. “Like that,” I needlessly stated.

“What the *fuck* kind of fireball was that?” the Jounin demanded.

“. . . A blue one?” I questioned in return.

With squinted eyes, she sniffed, demanding, “How high are you?”

“Uh, ‘bout six-two?” I replied, confused. “Wasn’t that in my file.”

“*This* shit sure as fuck wasn’t,” the purple-haired woman growled, gesturing to the tree.

Shrugging, I told her, “Well, they didn’t ask. And I kinda figured out most of it myself. Our instructors were kinda terrible at teaching, not gonna lie.”

“Well *I’m*-” she started to say, then caught herself, probably not wanting to say she’d be better, when we hadn’t even had our ‘test’. Looking past me, she called, “You two are finally here! Not very *considerate* of you, to keep your sexy superior waiting! Least one of you can move that tight ass of his.”

*“How!?”* Sato demanded, breathing hard, Ren outright dropping to her hands and knees, damp hair almost brushing the grass. *“How did you get here so fast?”*

“Used shunshin. Kinda?” I shrugged, getting a blank stair from the brunette. “Body flicker?” Still nothing.

“What’s that?” the angry girl demanded, and, thinking about it, *yeah*, Li’d never been taught what that was either.

Anko scoffed, “Sheesh, I thought *this* guy was an idiot, but you don’t even know *that?”*

“To be fair, it wasn’t mentioned in class,” I offered. “I did a lot of, er, ‘extracurricular studying’. And by that I mean hanging around ninja bars and shit and eavesdropping, then trying to do what I heard.”

“You only heard what they *let* you, newbie,” the Jounin pointed out, before frowning at the others. “So, big-brain here’s a jutsu specialist, but what about you two?”

“Brain?” Sato scowled. “*That* loser?”

I barely saw Anko move, the kunai flashing out and barely slicing the girl’s cheek, the knife thudding into a tree before the Genin even flinched. “Loser got here before you two,” the Jounin noted, annoyed. “So, brat, who are you, *what can you do?*”

“Y-you cut me?” the girl questioned in disbelief, hand going up to her cheek, and coming away red, as she stared at it in horror.

The purple-haired woman looked at the brunette in disgust. “You gonna answer my question, kid, or should I even ya out?”

*“I’m Ishiko Sato!”* the girl squeaked. “I, I know a couple earth jutsu, and I’m good at capture!”

“Earth? That can work,” Anko noted. “How ‘bout you, gloomy?”

“Nozmoi Ren,” the last member of our squad answered, having gotten to her feet, and was now watching the kunai our instructor was holding warily. “Water jutsu. Poisons.”

That got a laugh from Anko. “Poisons? Oh you *poor bastards*. You never had a chance.”

“What’s wrong with poisons?” Ren questioned, sounding offended.

Grinning, our Sensei replied. “Nuthin’. That’s why *I* use them too.”

The dark-haired girl frowned, “Then, why is that a bad thing?”

“Because you’re not my students, *not yet*,” the Jounin grinned. “Ya see, you’re Genin, *yeah*, but that just means you’re part of the Corps. You want a *teacher,* you gotta impress us. And what I’m seeing? Not impressed.”

“Well then how *do* we impress you?” Sato demanded, taking a step forward and lifting a fist in determination.

The snake-summoner grinned, “That’s easy, ya gotta *make me bleed!”*

“W-what?” Sato questioned. “Isn’t that *extreme?”*

Anko waved the question away, “It’s not like you rookies will be able to actually *do* anything. So why don’t you-”

Ren threw a needle, cutting our instructor off, the woman catching it easily. Sniffing, it, she nodded. “Good hussle. What’s this, yellow crocus? Not bad.” Then the woman licked it, because of *course* she did. “Heavily distilled too. This is some dangerous stuff, but using toxins on an expert in them? Not the best idea.”

The younger, more amateur poison user paled, which was kind of impressive since she already looked like she had a restraining order out on sunlight. “*. . . oh.”*

“Yeah,” Anko grinned. *“Oh.* Now let’s see if you can dodge.”

“Dodg-*ah!”* the girl screamed, scurrying backwards as snakes shot out of Anko’s sleeve and snapped at the girl. Falling on her ass, she scrabbled backwards on all four as the snakes kept going, but I’d started to move myself, launching another kido fireball, this time at the woman’s back. I forced her to twist out of the way, as I closed on her, another of my Kunai out as I went for a stab, my Template’s memories wanting me to hold it like a tiny sword.

My swipe was clumsy, missing her, and she frowned at the blow as she sent snakes my way, which I tried to fend off, one biting me before she pulled them back.

From how I felt **Body Defense** ping, that *should’ve* done a number on me. Not that I was going to let it through, but I stumbled forward, putting myself between Sato and Anko, just in time to get sprayed across the back with. . . purple water?

As my poison defenses pinged *again,* I looked back at the soggy girl, who had purple fluid dribbling from her mouth. “Seriously?” I asked, dropping to one knee.

“Uh, sorry?” Ren offered, while Anko laughed.

“Holy *shit* you’re terrible,” she sighed. “What about you, bleedy? You gonna call it quits?”

Sato frowned. “I’m just getting started!” she announced, going through a *lot* of handsigns, while Anko just. . . stood there.

Waiting.

The Earth-user slammed her hands on the ground, yelling, *“Earth Release: Rock Spike!”*

From in front of the Jounin, a spike of rock did indeed emerge, causing Anko to take a step back, only for the ground behind her to give way, revealing the area behind her to have been transformed into a hidden pit. Instead of falling inside, though, the woman just took a single step *into* the pit, footing secure on its wall, bending over as the spike extended past her. Anko lashed out with a fist, causing the spike to explode, but in the processed showed that the spike, while it *looked* like solid rock, was just a sheathe of rock covering loose dirt.

Easily walking out of the pit, the purple hair woman started to nod. “Not ba-“

Which is when *I* launched a slightly higher ranked Kido at her, the bolt of lightning shooting out, causing her to dodge, as I was down one knee, still pretending to be poisoned.

“Lightning too?” Anko questioned. “Huh that’s-”

Having repositioned, Ren shot *another* ball of purple fluid from her mouth, which our instructor just leaned out of the way of, though she skimmed the top of with a finger, which she then licked. “See, this isn’t nearly as good,” she criticized. “And look, you’re almost out of Chakra!”

Glancing back, from how the damp girl was breathing hard, limbs trembling, despite having barely moved, I could tell our sensei was right.

Ren shifted gears, starting another chain of handsigns, while Anko sighed, “Yeah, you blew your load kid, enough of that.”

The Jounin blurred forward, but so did I, flash-stepping as I charged, forcing her to deal with *me* as I threw a kick she ducked under, throwing a punch in return, but while I wasn’t as good at attacking, I knew how to *dodge*, and jumped out of the way.

However, as soon as my feet touched the ground I reversed course to stop the Jounin who was slowly closing on Ren, the woman *absolutely* still playing with us. Taking another Kunai out of my **Pocket Space**, I tossed it at her as I used offensive kido number *one*, which was pretty much just a ranged poke, but that accelerated the knife fast enough that it caught the woman off guard, her arm blurring *far* faster than she’d moved before as she deflected it.

She shot me a confused look, then dodged to the side, Ren, behind her, having thrown *more* needles which *I* tried to dodge, only to take three in the chest. Staring at my teammate, who was looking a little ill, she offered a weak, *“sorry,*” as I sighed and pulled the toxin-soaked metal out of my skin, taking another knee to ‘deal with the poison’.

At least *Anko* found it funny, which bought us more time.

Sato finished her next Jutsu, the setup for this one *just* as long, as she yelled, “*Earth Style: Mud Stream Jutsu!”*

In a streak, the dirt in front of her turned to mud, jetting towards our opponent, but Anko sidestepped it, nodding to herself as bolts of mud flew out of the stream coming directly for her. The older ninja blocked one, only for it to stick to her and spread, the woman avoiding the others by twisting around mid air. Landing, the woman listed to the side, slightly as if the clod of wet dirt stuck to her was *far* heavier than it should be.

“My Mud Weights got you!” the brunette grinned victoriously. “Now I just need to-”

Anko made a single handsign, then breathed a thin stream of flame, the mud hardening. Then, in a single motion, she flicked her hand to the side, the hardened dried out mud falling right off her, slamming into the ground hard enough I could feel it through my feet.

“Need to what, bleedy?” the Jounin asked, smug, before glancing over at me as I stood, shaking my head. “And aren’t you poisoned?”

“Just a little,” I shrugged. “But I can take on all *three* of you! I just have to get *one* of you to bleed, right?”

The jounin turned to look at the younger poison user. “What was *in* those needles of yours?”

The girl wilted even more than she already had. “. . . *a lot of stuff*,” she quietly replied, embarrassed, teetering on the edge of Chakra Exhaustion.

“I can still make this work!” Sato commanded. “Just keep her busy!”

“Still got some in the tank after four moves?” Anko questioned, which seemed *off* as the girl had only used two. “Nice job, layering them.” *Oh.* “Keep doing that and you’ll do well in the Genin Corps. Not good enough for *me*, though. And this was fun, but I’m done.”

And then the woman *moved,* showing how much she’d been holding back, slamming into me and giving me *another* half-dozen snake bites, then, when I was staggering back, she blurred past me to slam a punch into Sato’s gut, making the girl vomit, before dashing over to Ren, stopping behind the poison user and slamming a blow into the exhausted girl hard enough to send her flying our way. I was able to cushion her impact, deflecting her to the side in a way that sent her rolling without hitting her head, while keeping focus on our opponent.

“Alright, yeah, you guys fail,” the Jounin announced, dusting her hands off. “Sucks to suck. Seeya la-”

“I didn’t hear no bell,” I drawled a little drunkenly, staggering to the side, and in doing so got my classmates out of the line of fire.

She blinked, “Kid, I don’t know how you’re even *standing.* Like, mad props and all, but anymore and you might *die*. For *real.* And then I’d have to do *paperwork.*”

“You said my specialty was Jutsu,” I remarked, hamming it up, but having a *great* time. As opposed to my Final Exam in Basic, unless shit went *really* wrong, I’d be fine. I’d either get *Anko Mitarashi* as my Jounin, which, *score*, or I’d be an unattached Genin, which would afford me a certain degree of freedom. “It *really* isn’t.”

The woman gave me a flat stare. “You’re an all-rounder who’s managed to *invent* a couple Jutsu. You’re the Jutsu guy. Own it. That’s not bad at your age. I mean, I was *way* better when I was your age, but *I’m* awesome,” she informed me without a hint of shame.

Blinking, I turned up my ‘general heal’ Kido I had running, which didn’t do much for my puncture wounds, and took a chunk of my energy, but patched me back up to completely fresh as it made me glow gold for a moment. “Jutsu isn’t my thing,” I repeated clearly, smiling, reaching out, and grasping the red handle of my zanpakuto, pulling the slightly longer than normal katana, made to be part of my *soul*, out of my **Pocket Space**. I’d need to buy the upgrade if I wanted her Shikai and Bankai empowered forms, instead of having the blade further pattern itself naturally off my own soul, and I wasn’t really sure if I wanted that.

*But that was something to consider later.*

Anko took a step back, suddenly unsure, as I leaned into my grafted instincts, and smiled, not cockily, but in an oddly content way, at peace with things, looking forward to the coming fight.

The obvious choice for a Template would’ve been Ichigo Kurasaki. Being a Shinigami *and* a Hollow *and* aQuincy was *shonen protagonist* levels of broken, but, like most shonen protagonists, that guy was as subtle as an ICBM to the face, and I was facing enough problems as is. No, the man was overwhelming force, and little else, the equivalent of Naruto in his own setting.

What I needed was the skills gained over *millennia* of life in the Soul Society.

What I needed was subtlety to work as a ninja.

What I needed was *healing.*

So the choice was simple.

*Retsu Unohana*.

The Tsunade equivalent of Bleach, only instead of being a mopey drunk with PTSD, my source was a *bloodthirsty master of the blade,* who’d eventually learned healing just so, when she fought them, her opponents didn’t ***die as fast.*** Then, when she got bored, decided to switch to be a healer after finding someone she thought would eventually, *eventually* be able to finally fucking kill her in combat, something she was *very* much looking forward to.

So. . . nothing like Tsunade, now that I thought about it, other than being able to heal and fight at the same time, but, she was the closest equivalent.

Regardless, even knocked down to a Tier 4 equivalent, that was a *lot* to pull from, **Martial Talent** allowing me to adapt her style for my body type, which meant I was *not* your average Genin.

“No,” I smiled placidly, the sword just feeling. . . *right* in my hands, “my specialties are kenjutsu, the use of my blade, and *healing, for* keeping myself and my comrades alive*.* So let’s give this a shot, Anko Mitarashi, since the three of us working together wasn’t enough.”

Flash-stepping forward, I slashed out, *hard*, Anko jerking her kunai up in surprise, blocking my blade. The woman was still stronger than me, but as the Jounin leapt back, she glanced at her knife, which was halfway cut through.

“What kind of blade is that, Genin?” the woman questioned, an edge to her tone.

I shrugged. “[Mine](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTGlS2sHzq0&ab_channel=rothril).”

Following after her, more snakes lashed out, but, following my instincts, it was *easy* to turn the blade to meet them, slicing them apart, the chakra constructs dissolving into shadows as I followed up, slicing for her, the woman trying to deflect my blade, but, to my surprise, I was her *better* in bladed combat.

Which didn’t exactly help when she slammed her armored shin into my ribs strong enough to break them, and send me flying.

On one hand, *‘Ow’*, on the other, the Template that I was following just found the experience. . . refreshing? Yeah, definite personality overlap from Unohana, but not *true* personality bleed. Not stopping myself completely, as standing on air being *way* too obvious for what I was trying to go for, I still was able to flip myself over and land, my blade stabbing into the ground to slow me, and Anko was already on me. But I wasn’t idle either, binding my broken bone with a strand of energy, freeing me to move, gaining space with a flash step backwards, then turning around and slashing as my opponent tried to attack me from behind with her own body flicker.

I didn’t have time to think, reacting on sheer instinct, my opponent faster, and stronger, but Unohana had sparred against Yoirichi a few times, before dismissing the girl of only a few centuries as unworthy of the woman’s *needs*, and the techniques stuck, even if they were blunted, clumsy in my hands, like a test you’d studied for last semester, and only dimly recalled.

However, even *with* that degradation, it was still enough to keep me in the game, the poison the woman then spat *directly* into my mouth, while tasting *vile*, completely ineffective, though I bumped my general healing technique up enough to glow a bit more to ‘counter’ it.

My lungs *burned*, my muscles ached, and I was *well* aware that I was cheating like a *motherfucker* to fight at this level, my skill in this fleshsuit pushing me to the extremes, tendons on the edge of tearing, but I hadn’t managed to so much as *nick* the other woman, and, well, *I kind of wanted to know if I could.*

We kept going, blade flashing, taking hits, as I burned through my available energy, my grip on my energy slipping, causing more and more of my spiritual pressure to manifest, as I focused more and more on *cutting this damn woman!*

And then she backed off, throwing daggers to try and stop me, and I felt a *Presence* settle on my shoulders, causing me to pause, all joviality gone from the woman’s face as she *glared* at me, and it took me a moment to realize what it was.

*“We’re done!”* the woman commanded, her killing intent boring down on me, Ren and Sato off to the side having both gone white with fear just from being at the edge of the pseudo-genjutsu that gave someone the *bone deep* knowledge that they were *about to die*.

But, with **Mind Defense** doubled up to full **Immunity**, it did *nothing* to me.

“[We’re *almost* done, Mitarashi-sensei,](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLwFmryO-Yg&ab_channel=rothril)” I corrected, amused, deciding to go for full ‘fuck it’ mode. Hell, I might even awaken something interesting!

Throwing a hand out, I switched tactics, using the most basic of the *binding* Kido, which made the woman’s arms slam to her sides, as I rushed forward, blade at the ready. She could still dodge, so this wasn’t going to be fatal, and, as she flared her Chakra, she burst its bonds easily, which made sense, but that moment of hesitation let me close, the woman already in motion, and-

*Holyfuckthat’sabigfuckingfireball!*

A *raging inferno* shot for me, *several times bigger than I was,* and ***maybe*** this was a mistake, but I was in too deep to stop now, and the only way forward was *through!*

*So that’s* ***where I went.***

Unleashing *everything* I had, I, with a yell, tried to *cut the fireball*, which promptly exploded like a bomb, trusting my instincts to ride this motherfucker out, the flames *pouring* forth and covering me, **Wild Immunity** the only thing keeping me from burning to death though even *it* was getting pressed hard, my clothing scorching, but I was a god-damned *Soul Reaper Ninja,* which sounded *really dumb when I said it out loud,* and I wasn’t gonna die on my *First Fucking Day!*

I felt on the edge of *something* giving, but I got right up to that edge and spat in its face, ready for what happened, but then I was *through*, and someone was screaming, someone who *wasn’t* me, flames in *every* fucking direction, so I was gonna fucking *end this!*

I grabbed hold of Anko’s soul ribbon, the woman having moved since she’d tried to kill me, and *pulled*, pushing myself as hard as I could to flash step like the *goddamn Captain I remembered being*, the inferno around me parting as I blasted out, sword trailing embers, and I stopped *right* in front of the wide-eyed Jounin, putting *everything* into that one strike, live or die, coruscating golden energy lined with emerald hues pouring from me.

Anko got her kunai up, but that was mere metal, and this was *my* ***goddamned*** ***SOUL****,* as I sliced through the inferior blade easily, the woman yanking back, but not before I *finally fucking* ***hit her!***

It was shallow, the slice cutting her shoulder but missing the joint, but it *still counted*, as I staggered, *victorious*. Lowering my sword, I grinned, and started to say *“Got you, Sense-”*

Which is when the kunoichi punched me in the face so hard I blacked out.

In retrospect, I should’ve seen that coming.