When torrential water tosses boulders, it is because of its momentum. When the strike of a hawk breaks the body of its prey, it is because of timing.
**-Sun Tzu**

Chapter One: The Forbidden Scroll

Naruto squirmed in his seat uncomfortably. It was finally the exam day and he was nervous. Rightfully so, the boy knew he was failing a majority of his classes. It was a mercy that those grades didn’t count. Only the final exam had the power to hold a student back for another year. That meant he absolutely could not mess up this time. He ran over the hand signs for the various jutsu they had taught him over the years.

He rather hoped the graduating jutsu would be a henge. He could at least pull that one off if rather shabbily. It was true that his henge made him appear to be a rather short person of indeterminate gender, but it was much better than his bunshin. His bunshin were for lack of any other way to describe them, piles of goop. He had spent weeks privately training to try and refine the jutsu, but all he had managed was his sexy jutsu.

It wasn’t bad by any means, but even he had to admit it was a wee bit conspicuous. If one couldn’t walk around town in an orange jumpsuit without attracting attention, it would be impossible while walking around like that. He sighed dejectedly and laid his head on the desk before him. Maybe Iruka and Mizuki would give him a break and let him pass. He snorted. As if they would ever do that.

The red bell over the door rung sharply, signaling the beginning of class. At the front of the room Iruka cleared his throat. “Today is going to be a momentous occasion for most of you I’m sure. Four long years of studying have all been to prepare you for this, the graduation exam. Mizuki-sensei and I will be standing outside of those doors,” Iruka signaled towards the doorway behind him, “to perform your exam. We’ll be calling you all in alphabetical order. Please don’t tell the other students what happened inside the room until all the examinations are over. Best of luck to all of you!”

Uzumaki was unfortunately rather far down in the alphabet. Naruto fidgeted in his seat for nearly two hours before Mizuki called him in. He hopped out of his chair and dashed into the room with an eager grin. It would do him not good to worry his head over it. When he looked felt nervous the villagers could always sense it and it made things twice as bad.

The room was rather blank inside. There was only one table at which Mizuki and Iruka both sat. A box sat on the ground beside them and Naruto could see the blue material of a headband poking out from the side. His heart fluttered a bit at the thought. The life of a ninja had always intrigued him though he would admit to the ulterior motive of escaping the village. Nothing was better than the feeling when adrenaline pulsed through his veins. That was why he had begun his pranking all those years ago.

The ANBU were great fun to play with though they didn’t know it. Naruto liked to take good care of his friends and made sure he knew everything about them. A book said that you couldn’t really be friends with someone until you really knew him. So he had memorized the ANBU patrol patterns and the characteristics that matched ANBU to their masks. Eagle and Hawk were probably his favorites. They were the ones that were conventionally sent out to retrieve him after one of his pranks was revealed.

Oh goodness. Naruto giggled a bit at the memory of the Hokage Monument. Eagle and Hawk had taken a good four hours to find him after that fiasco. Naruto didn’t find the actual action of vandalism all that interesting. He thought the reactions people made were absolutely priceless. The Hokage Monument was the biggest calling card he could give and he was satisfied. If he became a ninja he’d have to stop his pranking temporarily. Having a sensei meant he could be punished. The old man Hokage was a bit lenient in that regard.

He sauntered up to the table and gave the two men a mock salute and barked out, “Uzumaki Naruto reporting for examination!” He flashed a cheesy smile for emphasis. Iruka groaned in response and rubbed a hand against his forehead.

“That’s enough, Naruto-kun. For your examination you’ll have to do a bunshin. Preferably the bunshin would look identical to you, but just try to get one formed.” Naruto nodded enthusiastically and put his hands together into the hand signs and yelled, “**Bunshin no Jutsu!**” A billowing cloud of smoke filled the room. Mizuki wheezed as the smoke filled his lungs and waved his hand to try and clear the room. It took them a few moments for the visibility to clear and when Mizuki looked down he had a dumbstruck look on his face.

The pile of goop on the floor stared back up at him with swampy green eyes. Mizuki poked the multicolored gelatinous mass with his pen before exchanging a glance with Iruka. “It was a good effort...” There wasn’t much else to say about the creature. It was orange, yellow, green, black, and purple, the definition of nightmarish. Mizuki was sure it could pass off for a swamp monster.

Iruka had gears turning in his head. He knew that Inoichi was planning on taking Naruto on as his student, but passing him with **that** would be beyond his morals as a teacher. “Iruka-san, can I talk to you for a moment?” Mizuki tapped Iruka on the shoulder and motioned to the back of the room. Iruka scooted out of his chair and joined Mizuki with a questioning look on his face.

“I could give him a supplementary field exam. You know, like the ones they did during the shinobi war?” Iruka remembered those with utter loathing. The Hokage had mass graduation exams where they had chuunin set out traps by the hundreds to test future genin. It was an efficient way of test taking, but it was also incredibly dangerous for the student. Naruto had always proven himself during training regimines so perhaps they’d manage that way...

Iruka thought for a moment longer before nodding his head in approval. “Alright, Mizuki-san. We’ll tell Naruto that we’re going to give him the results of his exam later on and that there is another part for him to complete. Do whatever you like for the supplement and inform me of the results when you are done. You can go with him now and I’ll finish the rest. There aren’t too many after all.”

Mizuki grinned slyly before heading back to the table. “Naruto-kun, come with me. There’s a second part of the exam for you to complete, ok?” The unknowing blonde nodded eagerly and headed out the doors with Mizuki. A part of him was suspicious of this second exam as he had not seen any of the other kids take it, but the other part reassured him that this was his sensei. His sensei would never do anything to mislead him, right?

He tottered out behind the man and to the outside of the building. He plopped down on the ground and looked up expectantly at his sensei. The white haired man had a small smirk on the corners of his lips. That was the first red flag. “Naruto-kun, Iruka and I have decided to allow you a supplementary exam to try and boost your scores up for graduation. The chance for a supplement is completely up to the teachers so in collaboration with the Hokage we set up a challenge for the lucky student. Inside the Hokage tower there will be a large scroll with kanji written around the center. Your job is to put into practice all the stealth lessons we have been teaching you and take the scroll. I’ll be waiting out in the forest for you to deposit the scroll at 6pm tonight. You had better hurry.”

That was the second red flag. Sneaking into the Hokage tower was a criminal offense, even Naruto knew that. He did realize that without this supplementary exam he wouldn’t be able to become a ninja. Naruto tilted his head to the side for a moment before bursting out, “Sure, Mizuki-sensei! I’ll be sure to get it for ya!”

He got up from the ground and bounded off the grounds. He’d need help to pull this one off. All of his pranks had gotten through without a hitch because no one protected the places he attacked. He was perfectly good at evasion, but infiltration required at least some knowledge on the place. No jonin was willing to come near him, much less talk to him. That meant he’d have to talk to the smartest genin that he knew.

He flew through the academy grounds in a made search for his comrades. Their names hadn’t been called much earlier than his had been and with any luck they’d be hanging around for a bit longer. He skidded along the battle grounds and found his targets. A mop of black hair was poking out from the edge of a tree and a maroon tangle was pushing through the leaves. “Kei-chan! Shikamaru-san!”

Naruto rested a hand on the trunk and caught his breath before gasping out, “I need your help.”

Shikamaru grumbled out a troublesome before opening his eyes to glance at the blonde lazily. “So? What is it?” He didn’t particularly enjoy being interrupting in his afternoon nap, especially since he had finally gotten out of that blasted academy for a half day. He had decided to take the day in moderation and tack on another four hours of sleep before heading home. His parents didn’t have to know it was a half day after all.

The boy beside him had managed to squirm his way into Shikamaru’s life with little to no effort. He wasn’t a true loud mouth like Ino. There was something a bit different about him. Maybe it was his uncanny ability to know when people were about to get really ticked off?

“Mizuki-sensei gave me a supplemental examination to help boost my scores enough to graduate. However,” A gleam entered Naruto’s eyes, “he didn’t say I had to complete my mission without assistance. Basically I have to sneak something out of the Hokage Tower. Will you two help me? I mean, I can do the retrieving, but I don’t really know the layout of the Tower and planning ain’t really my strong point...” He scratched the back of his head sheepishly and looked at the two of them with pleading eyes.

Shimizu bit her lip for a moment before releasing a sigh. She closed her notebook with a loud snap and slipped down the backside of the tree. “Fine. Sit.” She put a hand on Naruto’s head and shoved him down to the ground before sitting next to Shikamaru. “I’m only going to explain this once so listen carefully.”

“The Hokage Tower is positioned completely on a single floor. While this is true it is set up in a formation which requires someone to go through both the secretarial hall and the jonin dormitories to find the entrance to the main office.” Shimizu flipped towards the back of her notebook before showing Naruto a picture of the complex. It was shabbily drawn, but considering her lack of intel it was incredibly detailed.

“The dormitories conventionally house three to four jonin at any time during the day. They have postings on the wall near the entrance showing who is supposed to be on duty on any certain time. The secretarial hall is normally a cloud of chaos considering all the paperwork that goes on in Konoha. After getting through both chambers the route to the office is pretty clear. Keep in mind that the hallway has windows on the righthand side so anyone can see you from the outside.”

“The door is locked with a conventional turnkey system. It shouldn’t be too hard to open to be perfectly honest. ANBU are stationed all around the Hokage, but keep in mind that they only surround the **Hokage**. When he leaves his office there will be an opening. I don’t know where this scroll of yours is located, but I assume it would be in the library towards the back of the room. You can either take it and run out the door the way you came or head out the side window. It’s a two story jump, but you should live if you slide off the shingles.”

Shimizu looked up at Naruto to see the boy was completely floored. His jaw hung limply as he stared at the image on the paper before him. He had expected for her to have a basic layout of the place since she practically knew the average heart rate for every civilian in Konoha, but this was unexpected. “Don’t look surprised. This is all I’m good for anyways.” She muttered in a low grumble. Naruto looked up at her incredulously. Did she read minds too?

“This is incredible, Kei-chan! Thank you so much!” He wrapped her in a quick hug much to her displeasure. She coughed for a moment before he let her go with a grin on his face. He turned to Shikamaru with a glimmer in his eye.

“How troublesome, now the idiot expects something great from me too. Would it have killed you to lower his expectations?” Shikamaru drawled. It came out muffled because of the hand he laid over his face, but it didn’t prevent Shimizu’s scoff from reaching his ears.

He sat up from the tree and crossed his legs. He cupped his hands and put them together in his thinking posture. He found that the pose always calmed his mind. His mother said it got ‘the creative juices flowing’.

The information that Shimizu gave him flowed through his mind. He recalled the skill sets that Naruto had. Taking that into account he lost twenty three scenarios which would have ended in success. “Uzumaki-san, you make regular trips to the Hokage don’t you?” Naruto tilted his head to the side and nodded confusedly.

“Shimizu-san, where is the nearest bathroom to the Hokage’s office located? Also what is the age of the Third?”

“Approximately nine meters away from the entrance to his office. It’s a single bathroom and the only other one is on the other side of the complex. The Hokage is 68.” Shimizu shot back the answer with hardly a seconds thought.

Shikamaru nodded and turned to Naruto once more. “I have a plan.”

-TSUME-

Naruto stood outside the academy building and took in a deep breath. He headed through the doors and slipped towards the restroom. This was so nerve-wracking! Mizuki had better give him full credit for this one. He entered the room and locked the door with a click. He took out the small bag that Shikamaru had given him and placed the black wig on his head. He fumbled around in the bag a bit longer before pulling on a jonin uniform.

*“Look, Uzumaki-san. You’re going to need to look like you belong there. I know you can’t henge well so I’ll sneak you one of my father’s jonin uniforms. The Henge no Jutsu is a ninjutsu despite the word of mouth that it is a genjutsu. I need you to focus your henge on body growing. Try and fit into the uniform and make yourself a bit taller. One of the names on the list is Sarutobi Asuma. I’ve played shogi with him before so I’ll give you what you need to try and copy his appearance. Listen closely.*

He looked around nervously before whispering, “**Henge no Jutsu**.” A small puff of smoke surrounded him for a moment before fading away. The Naruto before him was taller and bulkier. The fox whiskers on his face still remained, but thank goodness Shikamaru had a remedy.

*Shimizu will buy some make up for you to get rid of the whisker marks. She’ll also buy you some contacts to change your eye color. You’ll owe us for this though I suppose it will be worth it for you.*

He took out the makeup cautiously before dabbing some of the powder over his marks. It was rather feminine, but it was for the headband. He flipped close the compact before storing it back in the bag. He took out the contact case and screwed open the lid. He fished around for the contact lense before chirping happily when he found it. He leaned towards the mirror and hesitated for a moment before putting the film in his eye.

He shuddered before putting in the second contact. They were really strange. The idea of poking his eye for recreation didn’t seem that appealing to him at all. He screwed the lids back close and stuck the case into the bag. Lastly, he pulled out a beard wig and a metal senbon. He tied the wig around his chin and stuck the senbon in his mouth. Naruto looked at himself in the mirror for a moment before grinning. He squawked and scrambled to pick up his dropped senbon.

He huffed dejectedly before putting the senbon back in his mouth. He picked up the bag and walked out the academy doors and dropped it by the edge of the walkway. He looked up and met eyes with Shikamaru. He quirked a bit of a smile before giving a lazily salute.

*Sarutobi Asuma isn’t energetic like you, Uzumaki-san. That’ll be the biggest change for you. Tone down your personality and keep to mild sarcasm. The fewer words the better. Don’t stop to make small talk with everyone. The faster you go the better. Say you have a mission report to give to the Hokage Sarutobi came back from a mission yesterday so it’s partially true anyways. Shimizu will run interception on him. She knows enough shogi to make her interesting enough for an hour or two. You have that long to get in and out.*

He turned back to the building and headed up the stairwell. The corridor only felt smaller and smaller the longer Naruto stayed there. He felt like his life was being squeezed out and it terrified him. Perhaps it was just the nerves. He passed a secretary on the way up and immediately sidestepped the woman. He wasn’t stupid. He knew his henge wasn’t professional quality and anymore stress through surface tension could easily snap his concentration.

He reached the top and pushed open the doors. This would be the first challenge, the secretarial hall. Cubicles were strewn about the room and dozens of men and women were shuffling around the room in a frenzy. In his disguise he was sure getting through the crowd wouldn’t be too bad, but there were too many people he could run into. It was an obstacle course for goodness sakes!

He swallowed nervously before stepping into the room. He ducked in and out of the pages running to and fro. His eyes widened as he felt a boy ram into his side. He stumbled to the ground for a moment. He clamped a hand down on his hair to keep the wig from slipping. Naruto turned and glared at the boy behind him. The senbon squeaked between his teeth as he bit down angrily on it. He stood up and let another wave of chakra go out to keep the henge sustained. It was a miracle that he had sense the boy running or the shock would have dispelled the jutsu.

He brushed off the imaginary dust before turning away from the unapologetic teen. He finally made the journey to the other end of the hall. He let go of the breath he didn’t realize he had been holding. The hall was his main worry henge wise. Now all he’d have to do was survive the jonin dormitories and he’d be mostly home free.

He pushed open the doors and stepped into the dorm. Bunk beds filled the room with only small cabinets for personal belongings. He turned to the side of the room to look at the sign in list on the walls.

*Sarutobi-san has a fairly simple signature. It’s his name in caps with an A layering over the o. You’ll need to sign in for the jonin dormitory list. Sign in for the next hour and then continue on through. It’s just to register that you are there and not a threat. Don’t hesitate in signing it or one of the other jonin might notice you.*

Naruto picked up the pen dangling alongside the list and scrawled the signature onto the paper. It surprisingly didn’t take him too long to memorize the signature. Shikamaru said that it was probably due to his strong muscle memory. He dropped the pen back and turned towards the room. The other jonin in the room was Kurenai Yuhi, the woman was a new jonin.

He gave the black haired woman a light salute as per Asuma’s nature and sidled past her and through the doors. He worried for a moment that she’d catch him. Apparently Kurenai and Asuma were good friends and perhaps a little more. If anyone would be able to catch him it would be her. He paused for a few moments on the other side of the door and was relieved that she didn’t come after him. Thankfully Asuma wasn’t known for chatting people up.

He looked ahead to the windowed hallway and let himself calm down. This was the easiest part now. Naruto strode boldly down the hallway and parked himself inside of the bathroom. He flicked off the light and kept the door open a crack to keep an eye on the Hokage’s office. Time slowly ticked by and he was almost worried that the plan wouldn’t work until the door to the office opened. Naruto let out a sigh of relief.

He opened the door to the restroom and closed it behind him in a play act. He turned towards the office and waved at the Hokage. The man’s flowing red and white robes instantly made him an intimidating figure. The Third was the one who had funded his academy tuition. The Third was the one who paid for his food and board in the apartment. It felt so wrong to be pretending like this. The only thing that kept him from confessing right there and then was that the Hokage knew that a student would be sneaking in to take the scroll.

The tanned fake jonin walked past the Hokage and the guard surrounding the man took no notice of any strange behavior. A concealed eye watched the Hokage as he entered the restroom and registered that now would be his chance.

*As Shimizu-san said, it’s a simple turnkey lock. You should be able to unlock it with a pin, but you have to do it quickly or someone will notice. The Hokage is an old man at the ripe age of 68. He’ll be indisposed for awhile, but his ANBU guard will stick around. This means you have to act inconspicuous.*

Naruto folded out the bobby pin from his sleeve and stuck it into the lock of the door. He stood there for a moment and jabbed around in the lock before he heard a satisfying click. He didn’t allow himself any relief as he turned the door open and walked through the door. He shut the wooden blockade and turned the lock back shut to cover his tracks. He looked around the Hokage room for a moment before being his made frenzy to look for the scroll.

He started off in the library and pulled nearly three dozen scrolls out from their places before he found the one encircled in kanji. “This has to be it...” He murmured to himself as he slipped the scroll from its spot. He shifted the scroll underneath his shoulder and turned to the window. He hopped onto the windowsill and dropped down onto the clay shingles softly. He carefully slipped down before he made his precarious tumble to the ground.

“Ouch...” Naruto whimpered pathetically as the henge dispelled around him. He snapped back into gear and picked up the scroll again and zipped out of the academy grounds and back towards his apartment. While he ran down the roads he pulled off his wigs and stuffed them into the pockets of his jonin uniform.

Shimizu and Shikamaru were going to be so proud! He hummed happily to himself as he headed down towards the lower district with the scroll in tow. The uniform was really handy. No one stopped him to ask what he was doing because who would stop a jonin while they ran with a scroll? The answer would be no one since they already assumed he was on important business.

He skidded to a stop outside of his apartment complex. The building was falling apart. Dents in the concrete walls of the building only added to the ramshackle appearance. Naruto headed towards the back and turned the door open. He already knew it wouldn’t be locked.

“Glad to see you haven’t been arrested yet.” Naruto grinned at the pineapple haired boy as he stepped into the apartment. He pushed the door close behind him and dropped to the ground. It finally impacted him then. He was safe. He got in and out of the Hokage Tower unscathed. He was going to become a genin!

“Yahoo!” Naruto squealed happily and threw his arms up in the air. “Thank you so much, Shikamaru-san!”

Shikamaru quirked a smile. “Just get out of my father’s uniform. He might notice it’s missing if I don’t get it back by tomorrow.”

“Oh yeah! I’ll be right back!” Naruto got up from the ground and whizzed off down the hall to change leaving Shikamaru in the dust, literally. Shikamaru laughed softly at the boys antics and turned to look at the scroll. His eyes narrowed slightly as he read the kanji spread across its surface. Why was the scroll labeled as being forbidden?

He got up from the couch and picked up the scroll from the ground. He placed it carefully near the edge of the room and rolled it out. Shikamaru froze as he read the words on the scroll. This was...

His head snapped to the door as a familiar figure joined the two in the apartment. “I can’t believe I did that.” Shimizu leaned back against the door and hung her head low. Two straight hours of being pummeled in shogi was not something she ever wanted to revisit. Her golden eyes flickered up towards the boy kneeled over on the ground. She sensed his worry and walked over towards him. She peered over his shoulder at the scroll and stalled. “That’s...”

“The Forbidden Scroll. It only contains sealed S Class jutsu.” Shikamaru rubbed his forehead. How had this happened? Had Naruto grabbed the wrong scroll or had Mizuki sent him purposefully to steal a forbidden object?

“What cha looking at?” Naruto walked back into the room with a smug look on his face. “I did a good job didn’t I?” He was jolted out of his delusions of grandeur by the chilling look sent to him by his companions. “Eh? What’s wrong? I got the scroll and everything. I even checked to make sure it was the right one!”

“Naruto, this scroll is the forbidden scroll. It only contains S Class jutsus that have been deemed too dangerous for normal use.” Shimizu looked away from the rapidly paling blonde. Out of all the possible outcomes she had thought of, this was certainly not one of them. However, there was that part of her that was just itching for information so... “If we’re going to die for looking at this anyways we might as well read it, hm? What time did Mizuki-sense, Mizuki-san tell you to bring him the scroll?”

“Eh? Er... 6pm so in an hour. But are you sure this is a good idea?”

“If I’m going to die I’m at least going to make it worth it. There’s nothing more pathetic than just dying for no good reason. If I know things that I shouldn’t then at least my death would have some sort of value.” The girl mumbled incoherently as she began reading over the scroll.

Shikamaru held back the nearly uncontrollable desire to crash his head into the wall. Here he was with two deluded people reading over forbidden jutsu. He got up from the ground and walked over to the other end of the scroll and sat down to read as well. If he couldn’t beat them he might as well join them. They had forty five minutes to read the scroll that would mean their heads.

Naruto hung his head gloomily and sat over on his bed. He just couldn’t get over the fact that Mizuki was trying to steal a forbidden jutsu. Wait, did that mean? “Mizuki-sensei is betraying the village?” Naruto’s head shot up like a rocket. The idea had just struck him now and it scared him.

“Yes, yes. He’s going to betray the village and try and kill us all. Now be quiet, we’re reading.” Shikamaru’s flippant reply slapped him silly. Mizuki was a traitor? So by extension was he being a traitor by handing the scroll over to Mizuki?

“So why are we going to give him the scroll?” It was a just question. Not every loyal shinobi would hand dangerous materials to a known enemy for no sane reason. “Don’t we still have time to return the scroll to the Hokage and say that Mizuki-sensei told us to steal it?”

“And get ourselves stabbed for breaking into the Tower in the first place? No, we’ll manage this on our own. We just need to give Mizuki-san the scroll and bring every jonin and ANBU from Konoha onto the scene. Being caught red-handed will be enough to lock him up.” Shimizu replied without turning away from the page. “Nara-san already has a plan for that.”

-TSUME-

“Mizuki-sensei! I got it!” The tall man turned around sharply to see the young boy emerging haphazardly through the trees. The jumpsuit stood out like a sore thumb in this environment and Mizuki knew he’d have to make this quick. He slipped one of the new headbands out from behind him and smile, “Good job, Naruto-kun! You deserve this. Give me the scroll and I’ll go drop it off back at the office. You can tell me how you broke in later.”

Naruto grinned and swiped the shiny metal from his former sensei’s hand. “Thank you, Mizuki-sensei! But unfortunately it won’t work quite like that.” The smile fell off Naruto’s face only to be replaced by a frown. Mizuki narrowed his eyes at the boy and moved to take a step forward only to be halted.

He tugged at his arm, but it did not move. He frantically began trying to squirm out of the jutsu. “What devilry is this?” He hissed as he struggled.

“I dunno. It’s strange how things just happen like this, right?” Naruto shrugged innocently and stuffed his hand into his pocket. He drew out a small red stick and stuck it carefully into the ground. “You know what this is, right?” Naruto pulled out a match from his pocket and struck it off the ground. He held the flame before his face for a moment with a cruel grin. “It’s a flare.” He stuck the lit end by the fuse and turned away.

The red rocket went spiraling up into the sky before exploding in a flash of colors. “In ANBU signals the red flare means an emergency. Seeing you with that scroll will work well enough, Mizuki-**sensei**.” Naruto couldn’t help but jab at the poor man in front of him. Mizuki was sweating bullets as he realized he couldn’t escape this one.

“Curse you, demon brat.” He spat out.

Naruto shrugged before running away through the trees. He passed by Shikamaru and gave the boy a curt wave. Shikamaru signaled his response and dispelled his **Kagemane no Jutsu** just before the jonin arrived on the scene. It was time to split.

OMAKE: How to Interrogate a Child

Sasuke was not amused. His eye twitched uncontrollably as the girl beside him continuously prodded him to speak. “Sasuke-kun! Hey, are you listening to me?” He sent the infamous Uchiha glare back at the pinkette. He didn’t see the point in this moronic exercise. If he didn’t talk then no one would obtain information. It was as simple as that so why even bother? If everyone decided to shut up for once it would make the world a pleasanter place.

“Ah, I’m glad! So I guess we can begin then, right? Um... What’s a synonym of stream?”

“A brook.” He drawled in response. She didn’t really think that would fool him did he? That was an insult to his intelligence.

“Another synonym?”

“Rivulet.”

“Another?”

“Creek.”

The boy that got paired with them was barely holding back a laugh. “Sakura-chan, while this is a good idea perhaps we had better try another approach.” He cringed as the rosette turned to him with a venomous glare. The unspoken words of, ‘do not make me look foolish in front of MY Sasuke-kun’ hung in the air.

“Have you ever seen the outlands near Konoha, Sasuke-kun?” She chirped. The black haired boy made a face. How did fangirls believe that he would find their two faced behavior attractive?

“Yes, I have.” He spoke slowly as he looked her over. What was she planning now?

“Have you ever seen one of the volcanos explode? It sounds so scary!” She squealed in fear. He thought it was rather pathetic since shinobi died practically every day. But she was a lower life form so she deserved some leniency on the matter.

“Yes.”

“Can you describe what hit looked like? I’ve never heard much except that there’s a bunch of lava and it can kill people!”

“It can, but it normally doesn’t go far enough down the mountain to hurt people. It escapes from the mountain in **rivers** and there are channels made to help redirect the flow.”

The boy next to them had a cheesy grin on his face. “Score~”

Needless to say he received a glare.

-TSUME-

Hinata twitched. She had never liked being the center of attention and she doubted that she’d enjoy it any time soon. It was ten minutes into the hour neither of her partners had said a word yet. Were they analyzing her? Did she have something on her face? She blushed at the thought and buried her face into her palms. She just wanted to say the word and get out of this awful situation!

“Hyuuga-san, are you alright?” Shino looked briefly over at his female companion. He didn’t quite understand her. Hyuugas were famed for being stoic and geniuses. Hinata was neither of these things. The girl was subpar in all academic and physical classes and she was skittish. The purplette squirmed under his eyes, but nodded.

“Hm. We might as well get talking though, right? At least smile you two ice cubes!” Okada whacked the two soundly on the back forcing them to double over. The brunette girl sighed in exasperation. “Don’t either of you have any personality to ya? I have faith in your ability to talk in more than a monotone.” The serious tone in her voice only added to the amusement Shino felt. He had very possibly gotten stuck with two dysfunctional people.

“Since this isn’t going anywhere, Hyuuga-san can you help me with my homework?” Okada scrambled for her bag and pulled out a few notes. She scribbled a few words onto the paper and handed it to the bemused girl.

The short girl looked over the papers and read aloud, “Th-the lion c-crossed o-over t-the... Umm...” Hinata paused as she stared at the word. What on earth was revir? She blinked slowly as she stared at it then exclaimed, “**river**! Ah....”

Shino raised a brow. Maybe there was only one dysfunctional one.

-TSUME-

Ino was sharper than most of her classmates made her out to be. She hadn’t spent the first six years of her life stalki-following her father around for nothing. She’d grown adept at lying to get around annoying individuals that asked why she was waddling about Torture and Interrogation at the age of 5. “So, you going to get started?”

Ryuu and Rima exchanged glances. The two friends hardly even knew where to start. River wasn’t a word used in every day conversations and Ino knew what she was doing. They had no doubt that the blonde would simply evade the question when they got near. This would take some work.

The brown haired boy leaned over to the red head beside him and whispered a few words into her ear. The girl’s eyes lit up and she nodded eagerly. Considering this was Ino, the plan would not fail.

“Ino-chan! Do you remember Winnie the Pooh?”

Ino raised a brow. Of course she remembered Winnie the Pooh, but what on earth was Rima talking about? She nodded cautiously and paused for a moment.

“I just remembered that song about the rain. Do you remember it too, Ino-chan? It was something like, ‘the rain rain rain came down down down in rushing rising rivlets and climbed into Piglets’.” Ino was horrified.

“NO! That isn’t right! It’s ‘the rain rain rain came down down down in rushing sising rivlets till the **river** crept out of its bed and climbed into Piglet’s’.” Ino froze and then smacked herself. Of all the stupid ways to get caught...

**Ok, so the last Omake was a bit random. xD I did the Omakes since someone said they would have liked to see the other interrogations.
I’m so happy! I never thought I’d get this nice of a response~ /happyland
Thanks for reviewing and adding this story onto alerts and favorites!
I’m not sure whether I’ll be doing a pairing yet though I do have one in mind. Romance is not my strong suite so I’ll see how the story turns out. I don’t want to promise something and then have it epically fail. Thanks much!**