



NARUTO

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Masashi Kishimoto volume

1



岸本 斉史

This volume of *Naruto* is apparently the first to be created entirely digitally. My guess is that, in the future, manga production will continue to move further and further into this kind of production and away from the more traditional methods.

Both the backgrounds and the characters themselves are created in software as polygons, and once the initial design and programming is done, any imaginable composition is possible. For action sequences, we use motion capture to create and manipulate the coolest poses we can come up with. It's all done on the computer, without using any paper or ink. Our methods will probably continue to change as the technology evolves... but there's one thing that won't ever change: the need to invent good stories!

—Masashi Kishimoto, 2001

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





NARUTO VOL. 7
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

This graphic novel contains material that was originally published
in English in **SHONEN JUMP** #27-31.

STORY AND ART BY MASASHI KISHIMOTO

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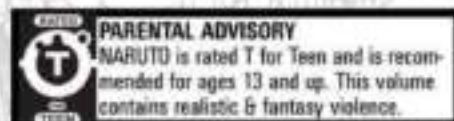
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SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL



VOL. 7

OROCHIMARU'S CURSE

STORY AND ART BY

MASASHI KISHIMOTO



SAKURA サクラ

Smart and studious, Sakura is the brightest of Naruto's classmates, but she's constantly distracted by her crush on Sasuke. Her goal: to win Sasuke's heart!

NARUTO ナルト

When Naruto was born, a destructive fox spirit was imprisoned inside his body. Spurned by the older villagers, he's grown into an attention-seeking troublemaker. His goal: to become the village's next Hokage.

SASUKE サスケ

The top student in Naruto's class, Sasuke comes from the prestigious Uchiha clan. His goal: to get revenge on a mysterious person who wronged him in the past.





MITARASHI ANKO

みたらしアンコ

The Second Chief Examination Officer, proctor of the test in the Forest of Death! She tried hunting down Orochimaru herself, but since he slipped through her fingers, she has been waiting for the help of the elite Black Ops team she summoned.



ROCK LEE ロック・リー

Rock Lee is one of the most talented young shinobi around, and he's completely infatuated with Sakura. Separated from his teammates Neji and Tenten in the forest, he tried to act as Sakura's protector but was severely knocked around by the Sound Ninja.



THE SOUND NINJA (OTONIN)音忍

These mysterious ninja are in the forest only to do their master Orochimaru's bidding — to destroy Sasuke!



THE ASUMA CELL

Choji チョウジ

Ino いの

Shikamaru シカマル

Choji, Ino and Shikamaru chased after Naruto's team hoping to steal their scroll. Watching from the sidelines as Lee and Sakura fight the Sound Ninja, they've been debating whether to get involved or stay in the shadows...but now Ino is jumping into the fray, coming to her rival Sakura's aid!

THE STORY SO FAR...

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

Naruto, Sasuke and Sakura are deep in the Forest of Death, the site of the second stage of the Chūnin (Journeyman Ninja) Selection Exam...but more urgent concerns have distracted them from collecting the scrolls they need to pass the test. After coming under the attack of the nefarious impostor Orochimaru, Naruto and Sasuke now lie unconscious on the forest floor. Mitarashi Anko, the exam proctor, chases after Orochimaru and learns his intentions: to mold Sasuke into his successor...assuming Sasuke survives the curse that Orochimaru placed on him. Orochimaru's minions, the mysterious Sound Ninja, are also hunting down Sasuke, and they're confused to discover that their leader has already caught his prey. But they're not prepared to back down, so the burden is on Sakura to defend her helpless teammates...



NARUTO


VOL. 7

OROCHIMARU'S CURSE

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 Number 55: No Holds Barred!!!



FATHER
AND
MOTHER...

...NEEDN'T
HAVE
DIED.



WHO
ARE
YOU?



BECAUSE
YOU...



EVERYONE
WAS
KILLED...



OUR
CLAN WAS
DESTROYED.



THE
ME...
OF LONG
AGO?!

WASN'T
STRONG
ENOUGH.

ULTIMATELY,
WITHOUT
STRENGTH,
THERE'S
NOTHING
YOU CAN DO.



BECAUSE YOU'RE
NOTHING BUT A
WEAKLING!



YOU
JUST...
STOOD
THERE
AND
WATCHED!

...LET
THEM
DIE!





OUR ORDERS WERE TO FIND AND KILL UCHIHA SASUKE UNDER THE COVER OF THIS EXAM, BUT...

...IT CERTAINLY IS.



STAY HERE AND WATCH OVER YOUR TEAM.



SAKURA...!

!!



RIGHT!!

CHOJI'S SHIRT SAYS "SHOKU" MEANING "FOOD" OR "EAT." ↷



YES, MA'AM!!

GO

THIS IS IT, TEAM INO. UP AND AT 'EM, FULL SPEED AHEAD!

BAIKA-
NO-
JUTSU!
ART OF
EXPANSION!!

OKAY!!

FW UP

IT'S
ON
YOU,
CHOJI!

INO-
SHIKA-CHO
BOAR-
DEER-
BUTTERFLY
FORMATION!!

TAK



FOLLOWED
BY KONOHA-
STYLE
PHYSICAL ART
THE NIKUDAN
SENSHA,
OR HUMAN
JUGGERNAUT!!

THE ART OF EXPANSION:
A SECRET SHINOBI
SKILL PASSED DOWN
TO MEMBERS OF THE
AKIMICHI CLAN.
THIS TECHNIQUE
ENABLES A NINJA TO
TEMPORARILY ENLARGE
PART OR ALL OF
HIS OWN BODY.
ITS USE REQUIRES
THE EXPENDITURE
OF AN ENORMOUS
AMOUNT OF CALORIC
ENERGY.







IF THAT THING HITS ME, I'LL BE PULVERIZED!

MAYBE ULTRASONIC WAVES...?!



WITH THAT KIND OF ROTATION... SO MUCH FOR AIR PRESSURE!



DARN!!



SINCE YOU'VE BEEN THE BIGGEST PAIN IN EVERYBODY'S ASCOT...

OH, NO YOU DON'T!

RWA



WHOM



SSSSSSM

ART OF ME- AND- MY- SHADOW!!





IT'S HIS SHADOW!

TAK



I... CAN'T MOVE! WHY IS THAT?!

GRRRR



AUGH!!

SSSSSSSS!!



TAK

BAM



WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT A TIME LIKE THIS?! DOSU!

?!



FWUP

WHAT THE...?!

?!



INO!
THE
WOMAN
IS THE
ONLY
ONE
LEFT.

KAGEMANE-NO-JUTSU:
THE ART OF
ME-AND-MY-SHADOW
SHIKAMARU'S
HALLMARK
TECHNIQUE,
WHERE HE JOINS
AND ATTACHES
HIS OWN SHADOW
TO THAT OF
HIS OPPONENT,
FORCING HIS ENEMY
TO MIMIC EVERY
MOVE HE MAKES!
HE CAN DO THIS
ONLY BRIEFLY AT
ANY GIVEN TIME.



WHOA.

GRAB
SLUMP



**SHINTENSHIN-
NO-JUTSU!**
ART OF THE
VALENTINE...
A TECHNIQUE OF
ASTRAL PROJECTION
WHEREBY INO CAN
TEMPORARILY TAKE
CONTROL OF HER
OPPONENT'S
BODY, HEART
AND SOUL!!

YOU GOT IT,
SHIKAMARU!
TAKE CARE OF
MY BODY WHILE
I'M GONE!
♡

GOTCHA!



MAN,
THAT
MAKES
MY
HEAD
SPIN!

URP



ZZZZZ



DOINK



BOTH OF YOU, LEAVE YOUR SCROLLS HERE, AND GO FINISH THE EXAM WITHOUT THEM.

IF EITHER OF YOU MAKES A MOVE, YOUR TEAMMATE KIN IS AS GOOD AS DEAD!

WHEN I CAN NO LONGER SENSE EITHER OF YOUR CHAKRAS, I'LL RELEASE KIN!



YOU'RE FINISHED!



WHAT DO THEY THINK IS SO FUNNY?



HEH



HEH



?!



FWUP

NO!!!



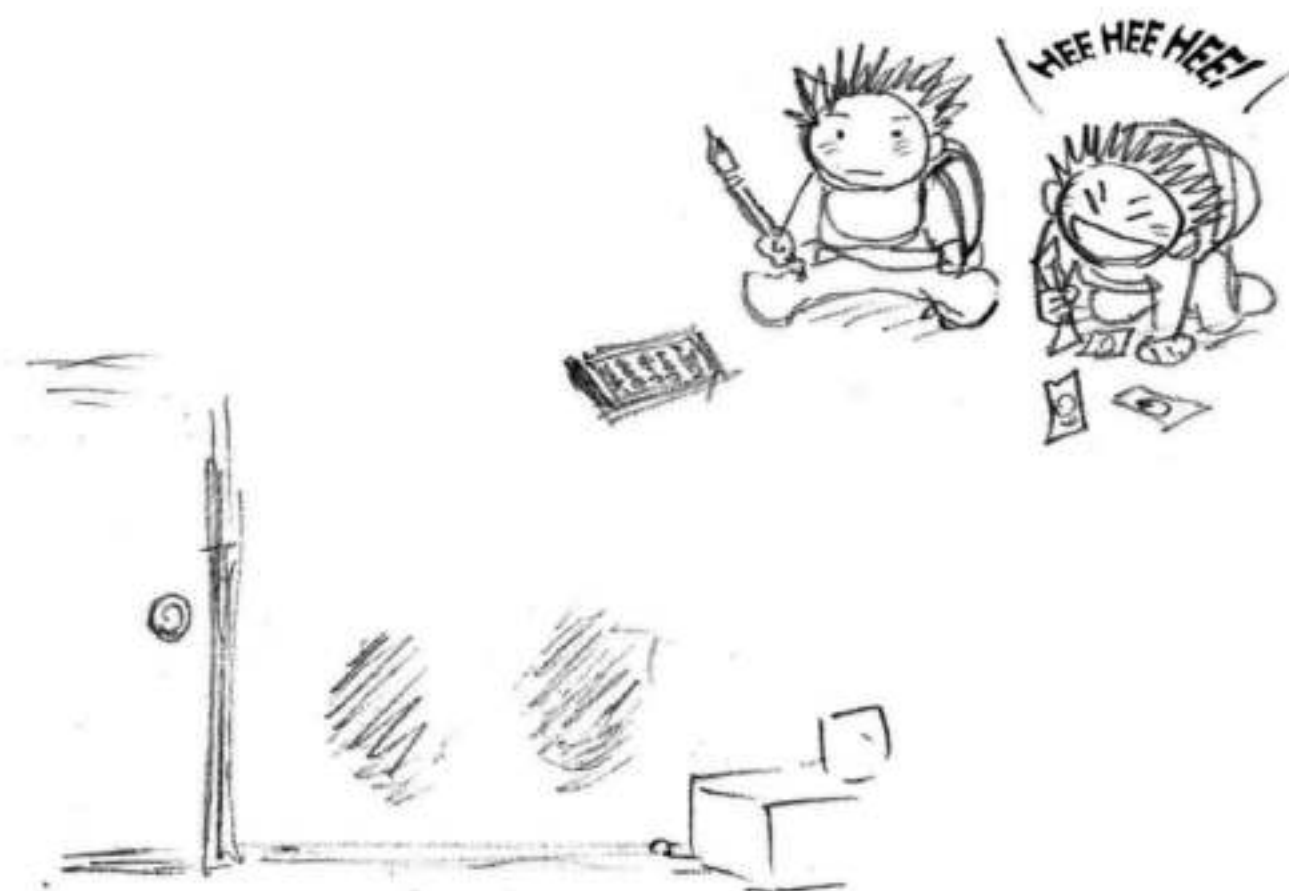
THEY'RE GOING TO--!!

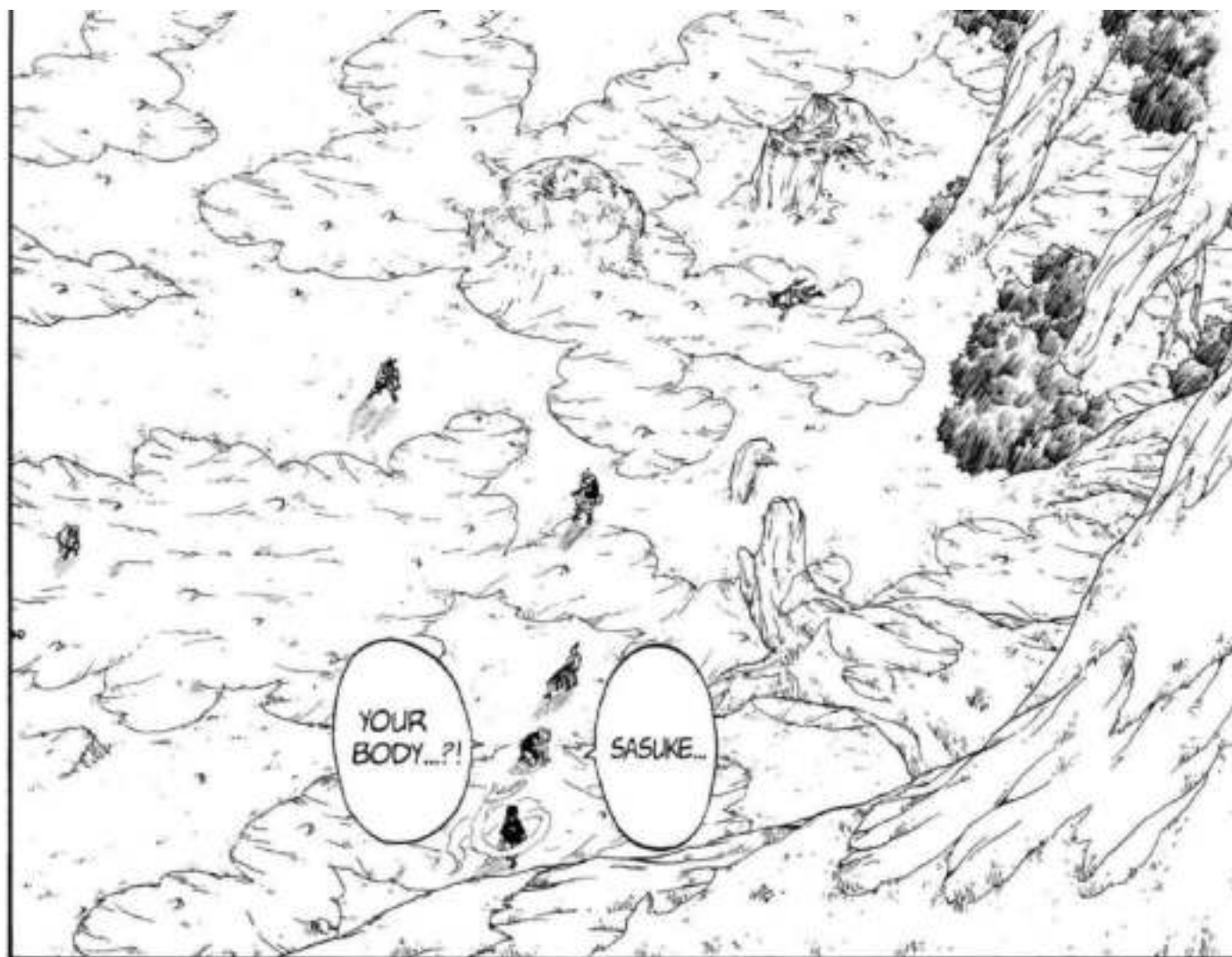
!!



THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI
MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART ONE: GROWING UP

I WAS THE FIRST-BORN OF TWIN BROTHERS IN A TOWN IN OKAYAMA PREFECTURE IN 1974. I WAS EXTREMELY PREMATURE AND HAD TO BE PUT INTO AN INCUBATOR AT ONCE. WITHOUT IT, I WOULD HAVE DIED. MY SURVIVAL WAS A VICTORY FOR SCIENCE. MY HOMETOWN HAS A TRADITION THAT PERSISTS TO THIS DAY WHERE, ON ONE'S FIRST BIRTHDAY, A MOCHI RICE CAKE IS PLACED UPON YOUR BACK AND THREE OBJECTS ARE PLACED BEFORE YOU. DEPENDING ON WHICH OF THOSE THREE A CHILD GRABS FIRST, THAT CHILD'S FUTURE PATH CAN BE DETERMINED. IN FRONT OF MY TWIN AND I, OUR PARENTS PLACED AN ABACUS (TO REPRESENT SCHOLARSHIP), A BRUSH PEN AND MONEY. THE STORY IS THAT AFTER SOME HESITATION, MY YOUNGER BROTHER TOOK HOLD OF THE BRUSH PEN. AND AT THAT SAME MOMENT, I'M TOLD I UNHESITATINGLY WENT FOR THE CASH, LAUGHING ALL THE WAY. WHAT A BRAT! I MAY HAVE BEEN A MERCENARY BABY, BUT AS I GREW OLDER, MY INTERESTS TURNED TOWARD DRAWING... AS DID THOSE OF MY BROTHER. TO THIS DAY, THERE ARE TWO LARGE BROWN STAINS ON THE WALL OF MY PARENTS' HOME. WHEN I ASKED MY MOTHER ABOUT IT, SHE TOLD ME, "WHEN YOU TWO WERE BABIES, YOU USED THE POOP THAT HAD OOOZED OUT OF YOUR DIAPERS TO DECORATE THE WALL. WE'VE TRIED TO WASH IT OFF TIME AND TIME AGAIN, BUT THE STAIN REMAINS." THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED I'D WANTED TO BE AN ARTIST MY ENTIRE LIFE.







I UNDERSTAND NOW.

I AM AN AVENGER...



HUH?

I GOT IT FROM HIM.

TAK



...EVEN IF IT MEANS SELLING MY FLESH TO THE DEVIL!

ON THE PATH I WALK, I HAVE TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GAIN POWER...



HE'S CHANNLED AND MIMICKED IT... AND ACTUALLY MADE IT TO HIS FEET!

JUST AS I THOUGHT...

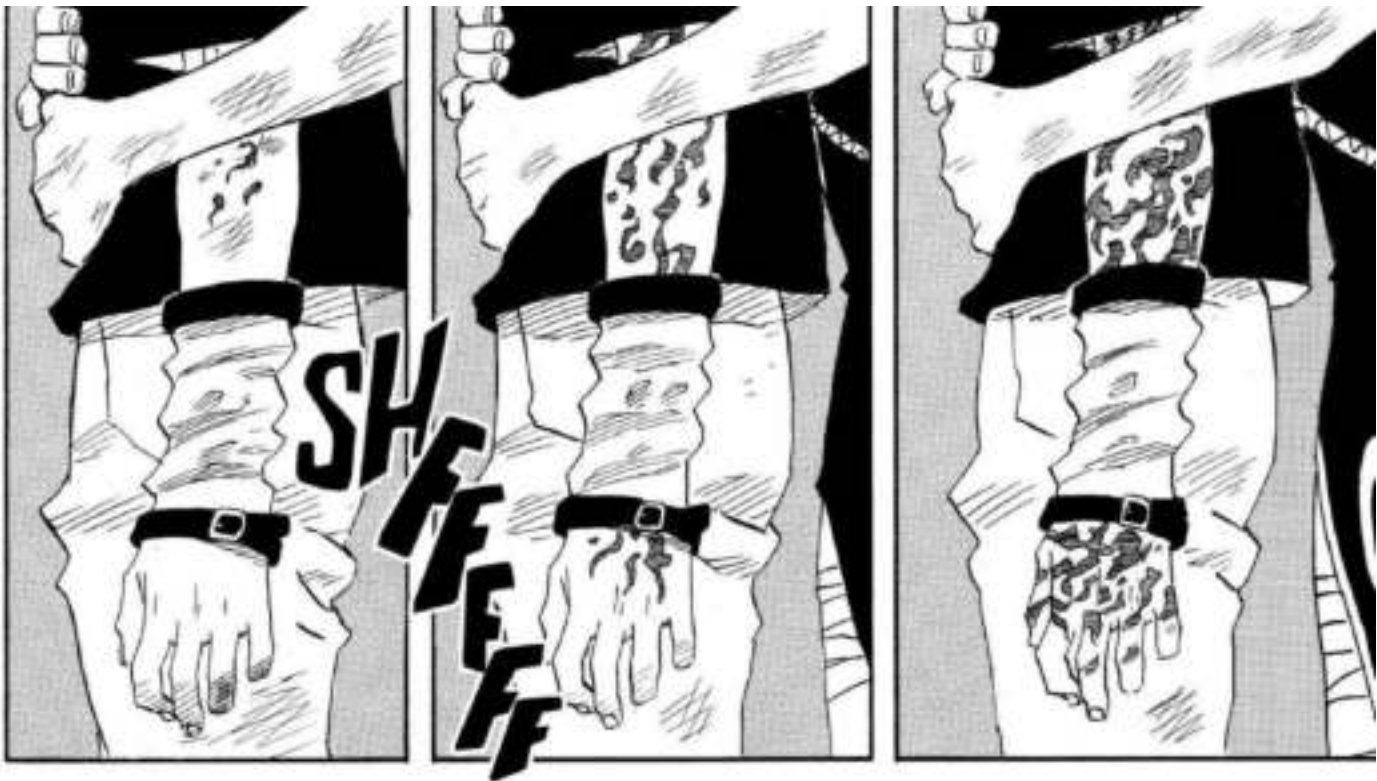
...THE SPELL MARK ON HIS NECK THAT LITTLE SAKURA WAS BLATHERING ON ABOUT IS THE MARK OF THE CURSE HE WAS PLACED UNDER...















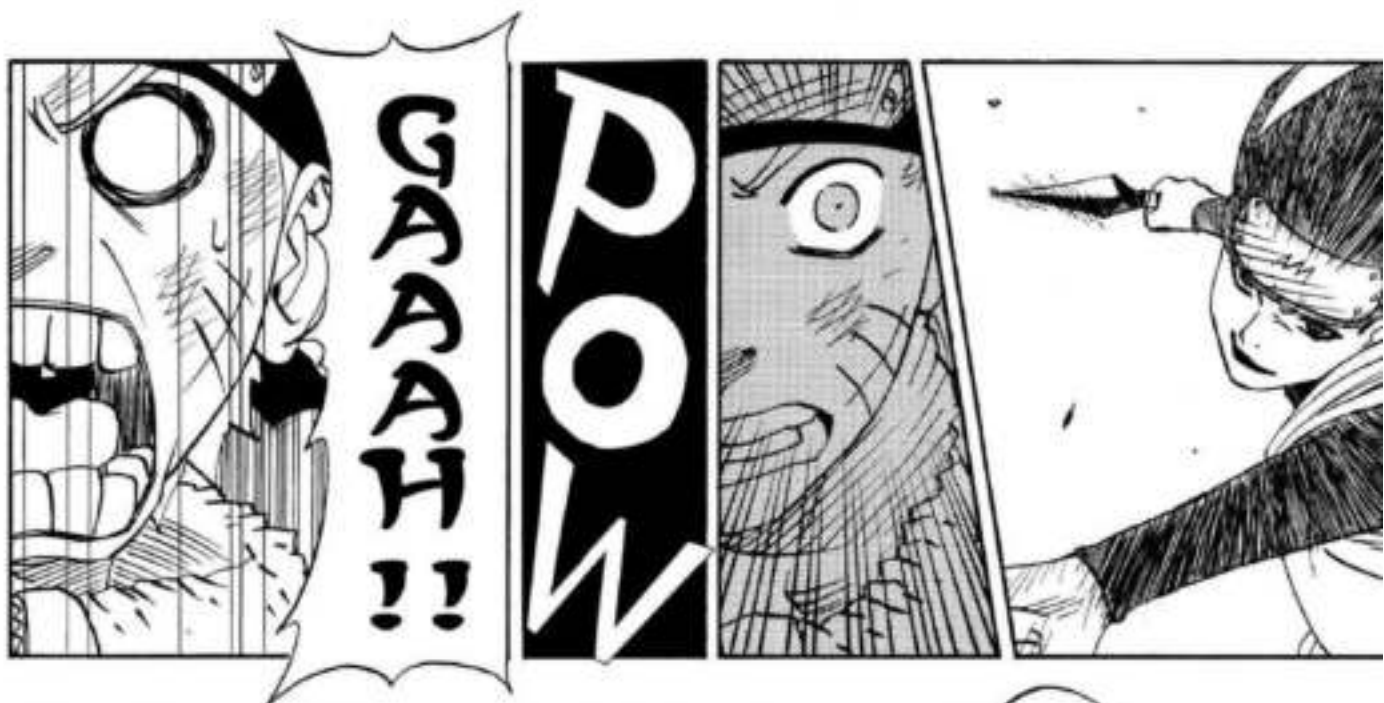
READ THIS WAY





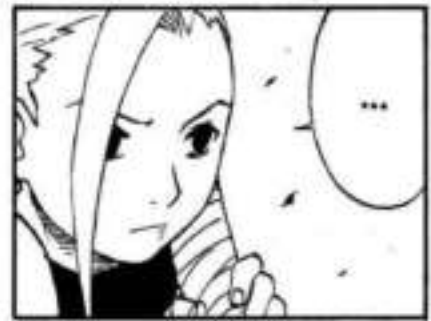


 Number 57: Ten Hours Earlier...













OH...

...



SASUKE SCARED THEM OFF!

...HUNH...? WHERE DID THE OTONIN SOUND NINJA GO...?



IF LEE HAD FACED THOSE GUYS BY HIMSELF, WITH NO DISTRACTIONS, HE COULD HAVE TAKEN THEM!!

OH, FOR CRYING OUT, LOUD!!



LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE A MESS!

WHAT WERE YOU THINKING, GOING OFF HALF-COCKED LIKE THAT, ALONE?!

S-SAKURA NEEDED ME! SAVING HER WAS MY SACRED DUTY... AS A MAN!



I KNOW YOU! THE UNIBROW!!!

BOUNCE

HEY!



YOUR WORDS ARE SO SHARP, IF I TRY TO ANSWER BACK, I'LL CUT MYSELF!

YOU'RE AN IDIOT. YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?

SLUMP









WELL,
AREN'T
YOU
SWEET?



...ACTING LIKE
YOU JUST HAD TO
HELP SASUKE...
SO YOU'D HAVE
AN EXCUSE
TO HUG HIM...
BILLBOARD
BROW!

THAT
WAS
A
CHEAP
TRICK...

WHAT
CAN I SAY?
YOU SNOOZE,
YOU LOSE, INO...
YOU PORKER.



BY
BIRTH...
AND BY
HIS OWN
ABILITIES...
HE'S A
FORMIDABLE
FOE.



UCHIHA...

SASUKE...



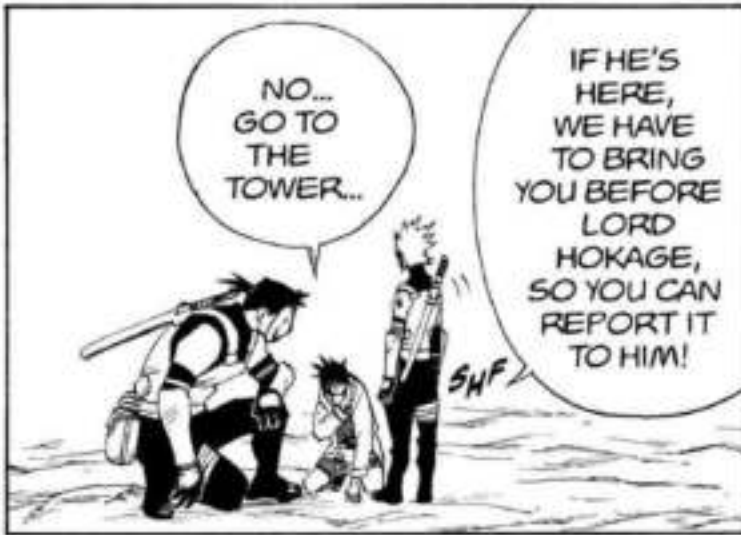
AND ABOUT
10 HOURS
EARLIER
THAN THAT
(AROUND
8:00 PM ON
THE FIRST
DAY IN THE
FOREST)...

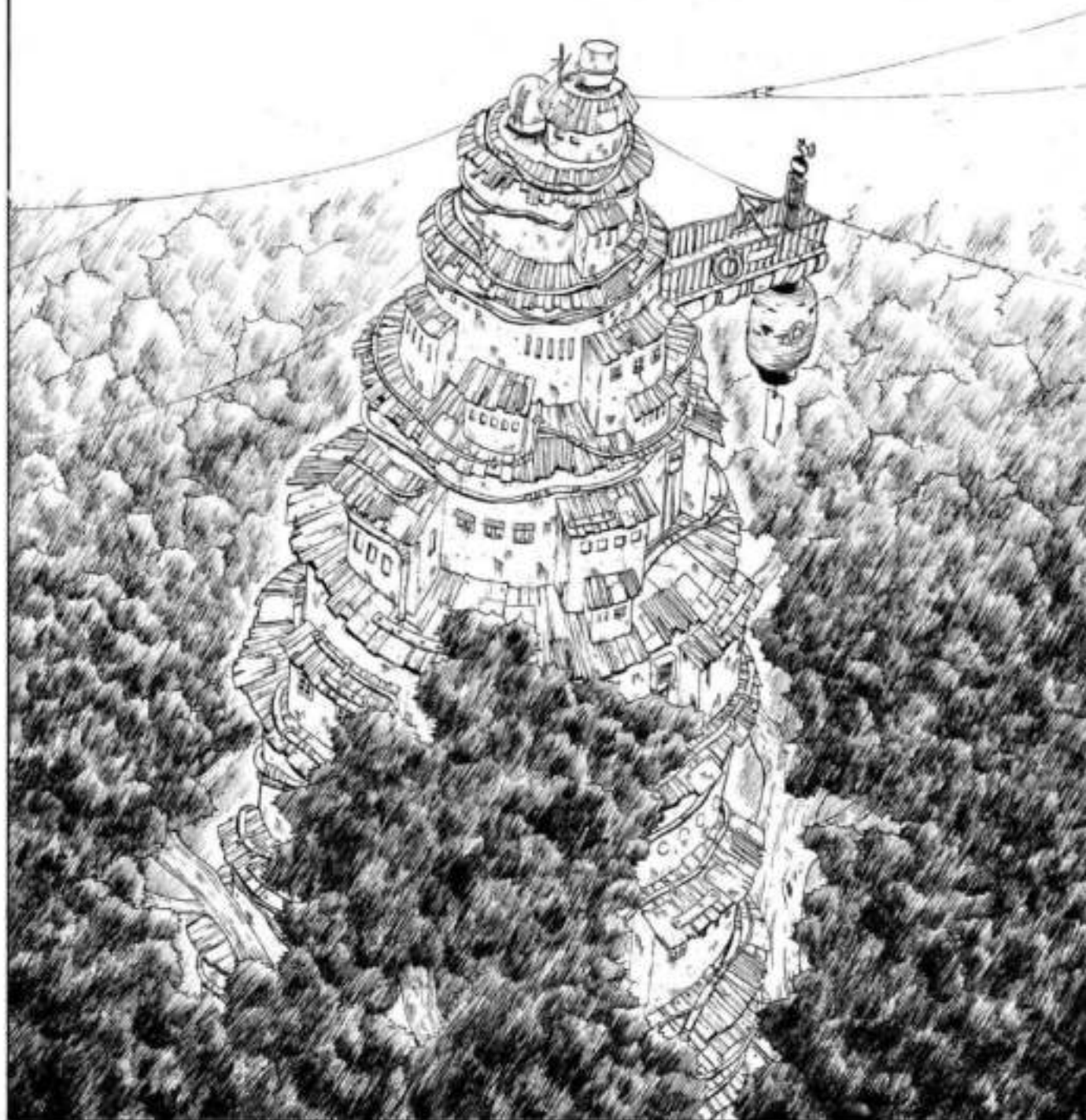
WHO.OOO















THE
THREE
NINJA
FROM THE
LAND OF
SAND...



IT'S
NOT
POSSIBLE.

...



...HAVE
ALREADY
COMPLETED
THE SECOND
EXAM.



THIS IS
UN-
PRECEDENTED!

UNHEARD
OF!

IN
JUST
97
MINUTES...

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART TWO: STARTING SCHOOL

WHEN I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO GO TO KINDERGARTEN, I BECAME INTERESTED IN A WHOLE VARIETY OF NEW THINGS. BUGS, THE FLOW OF A RIVER.. IF SOMETHING CAUGHT MY ATTENTION, IT WOULD HOLD MY FOCUS UNTIL SOMEONE INTERRUPTED ME. I'M TOLD MY MOTHER AND MY TEACHERS HAD TO COME LOOKING FOR ME ALL THE TIME. AT HOME, I DID THE SAME THING. WHEN I WAS WATCHING TV, I'D TUNE OUT THE REST OF THE WORLD. EVEN IF MY FATHER CALLED ME BY MY PET NICKNAME, MABO, AND PHYSICALLY TURNED MY FACE SO HE COULD SEE ME--UNDERSTANDABLY WANTING HIS CHILD TO PAY A LITTLE ATTENTION TO HIM--I STILL CONCENTRATED ON THE SCREEN. HE SAYS THAT MY FOCUS REMAINED SO COMPLETELY ON THE TV AND MY FACE GOT SO INTENSE THAT IT WAS A LITTLE SCARY. AND IT MADE HIM ENVY THE TELEVISION. BACK THEN, TV WAS THE MOST INCREDIBLY THRILLING, STIMULATING THING I COULD IMAGINE. ONE OF MY FAVORITES WAS "DORAEMON." I WOULD DRAW THAT CHARACTER'S FACE OVER AND OVER AGAIN, NO MATTER WHERE I WAS. ACTUALLY, ALL MY KINDERGARTEN CLASSMATES LOVED DORAEMON, TOO, AND ALSO USED TO TRY AND DRAW HIM WITH ME. BUT I WAS A TOTAL STICKLER ABOUT IT, ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE WAY THE CHARACTER'S EYES HAD TO BE DRAWN. THE DIAGRAMS BELOW SHOW WHAT I MEAN. EVERYONE KEPT DRAWING THE CHARACTER THE WAY HE LOOKS IN FIGURE 2...BUT FIGURE 1 IS THE VERSION THAT'S CORRECT! I ALWAYS POINTED THAT OUT TO THEM AND LECTURED THEM ABOUT THE RIGHT WAY TO DO IT. IN RETROSPECT, I'D HAVE TO SAY I WAS AN OBNOXIOUS LITTLE PERFECTIONIST. BACK THEN, I EVEN CONDEMNED ANYONE WHO USED THE "DORAEMON DRAWING SONG" TO DRAW DORAEMON AS A HERETIC!

'EDITOR'S NOTE: "THE DORAEMON DRAWING SONG" (OR "DORAEMON NO O-EKAKI UTA") GIVES STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOW TO DRAW DORAEMON; PRESUMABLY, USING THE SONG SEEMED LIKE A COP-OUT TO THE KINDERGARTEN-AGED KISHIMOTO.

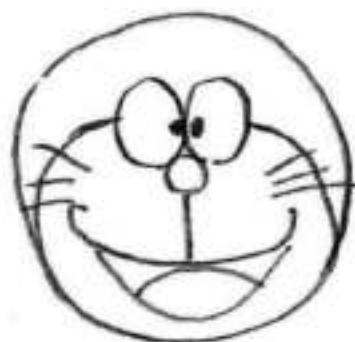
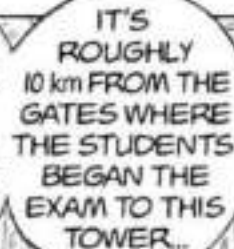


FIG. 1



FIG. 2









...AND NOT SO MUCH AS A SMUDGE ON HIS CLOTHES!

THERE'S NOT A MARK ON HIM ANYWHERE...



...A FEAT LIKE THAT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE!

EVEN FOR ME... OR FOR ANY OTHER JOURNEYMAN-LEVEL NINJA...



BACKTRACKING EVEN EARLIER FROM THE TIME INDICATED ON THE VIDEO SURVEILLANCE TAPE...



IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE WE'VE SEEN SUCH A PROMISING CANDIDATE.

BUT HE'S GOT A NASTY LOOK IN HIS EYE...

THIS MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH HIS INNATE TALENTS!

DAY ONE,
APPROXIMATELY
50 MINUTES
AFTER THE
START
OF THE
SECOND
EXAM...



WE'LL BE
CELEBRATING
AT THE
TOWER
IN NO
TIME!!



WE REALLY
LUCKED OUT...
THE FIRST
PEOPLE
TO FALL INTO
THE TRAP WE
SET WERE
CARRYING
THE EARTH
SCROLL
WE NEEDED!

...DON'T
WE,
AKAMARU?!

WOOHOO!!
SURVIVING IN
THESE WOODS
IS AS EASY AS
I THOUGHT!
WE RULE...



THESE
WOODS ARE
CRAWLING
WITH ENEMIES,
YOU KNOW!



CHILL OUT!
IT'S WAY
TOO
EARLY TO
CELEBRATE!

...MAYBE
SHINO
HAS A
POINT,
TOO!

B-BUT...
BUT...



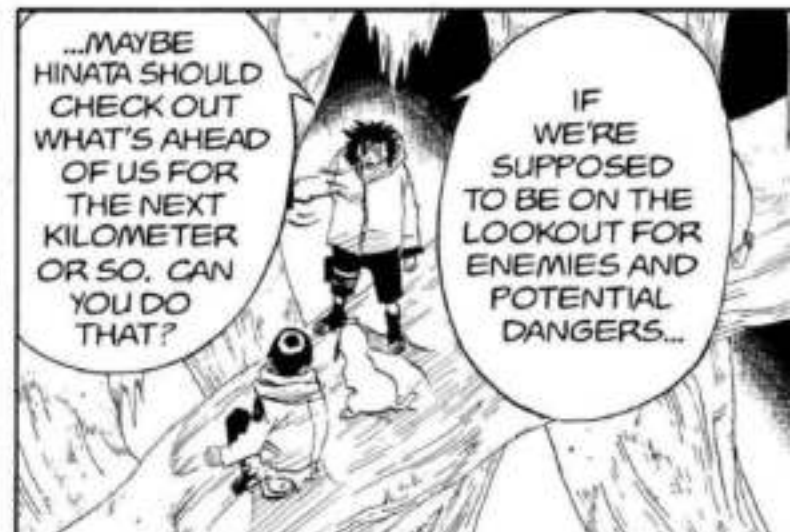
I GET IT...
BUT HOW
YOU ALWAYS
MANAGE TO
TWIST
EVERYTHING
AROUND
UNTIL IT
RELATES BACK
TO INSECTS
AMAZES ME!

AND, JUST
FOR THE
RECORD, I
AM STILL THE
LEADER OF
THIS TEAM!

ALL
RIGHT,
ALREADY!

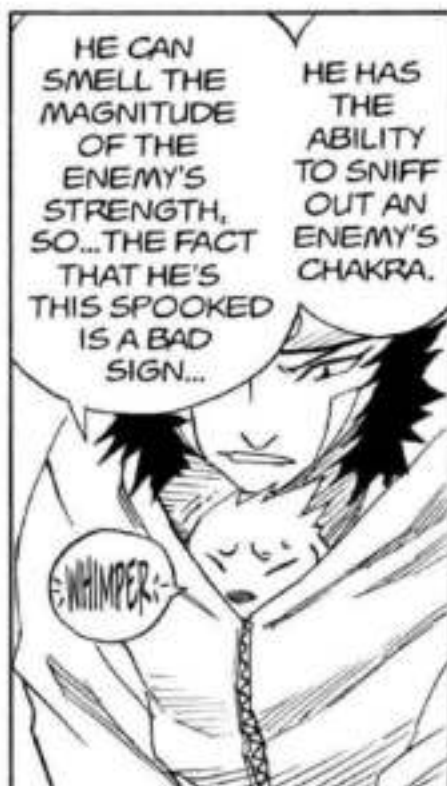
WHEN
IT FEELS
THREATENED
BY EXTERNAL
DANGER,
EVEN THE
SMALLEST
INSECT WILL
ALWAYS--













OWNING







...EVEN IF YOU WOV THEM BACK IN THE VILLAGE OF RAIN!

ARE YOU GOING TO FIGHT US... OR TALK US TO DEATH? WE DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM FOSSILS LIKE YOU...



PREPARE TO MEET YOUR MAKER!



HEY, GAARA! I THOUGHT WE HAD AGREED WE WOULDN'T FIGHT ANYONE UNTIL WE FOUND OUT IF THEY HAD THE SCROLL WE NEED!



MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE HAS ALREADY AMBUSHED THEM... AND NOW THEY DON'T HAVE EITHER!

I CAN'T TELL WHETHER THIS GROUP HAS THE HEAVEN SCROLL... OR THE EARTH!



!



I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!

WE SHOULD ONLY FIGHT IF THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE GAINED!

THERE'S NO POINT IN ATTACKING IF WE CAN'T PROFIT BY IT...







YOU'RE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED. NO GAPS... NO BLIND SPOTS.

ALL 1,000 OF THOSE NEEDLES WILL SWARM IN RESPONSE TO MY CHAKRA, SEEKING YOU OUT LIKE MISSILES THAT HAVE LOCKED ONTO YOUR SIGNATURE!!







IS
THAT
ALL
YOU'VE
GOT?







Number 59: The Tragedy of the Sand!!





IT
STINKS
OF
BLOOD.



...AN
IMPENETRABLE
DEFENSE!!

EXACTLY,
INFINITELY
MALLEABLE...



A
WALL
OF
SAND...?

AH--!



...INDEPENDENT
OF HIS
WILL.

EVEN
MORE
REMARKABLY,
IT IS DONE WITH
NO CONSCIOUS
EFFORT ON
HIS PART.
IT HAPPENS
WHEN HE
NEEDS
IT TO...

...THEN
MANIPULATES
IT INTO THE
SHAPE HE NEEDS
AND RENDERS
IT UTTERLY
SOLID.

ONLY
GAARA HAS
EVER
MASTERED
THE ART.
HE DRAWS THE
SAND WITHIN THE
SPHERE OF HIS
OWN MASSIVE
CHAKRA...

THOSE NEEDLES SHOULD BE ABLE TO PIERCE EVEN A FIVE-MILLIMETER THICKNESS OF TEMPERED STEEL!



N-NO... WAY...

ANY FRONTAL ASSAULT ON GAARA...

...IS DOOMED TO FAIL!



YOU'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO TOUCH OUR GAARA.



OHH...

BLAST!



TAK

SHUT UP, YOU--!!!







AS YOU SEE, GAARA HAS TOTAL MASTERY...

...OVER THE SAND ON THE GROUND... AND IN THE AIR AS WELL...



THUNK

THUNK



BUT YOU'RE HARDLY WORTH IT.

POP



IF YOU DON'T STOP YAPPING, I'LL SEAL YOUR LIPS... AND CUT OFF YOUR AIR.

SHHH



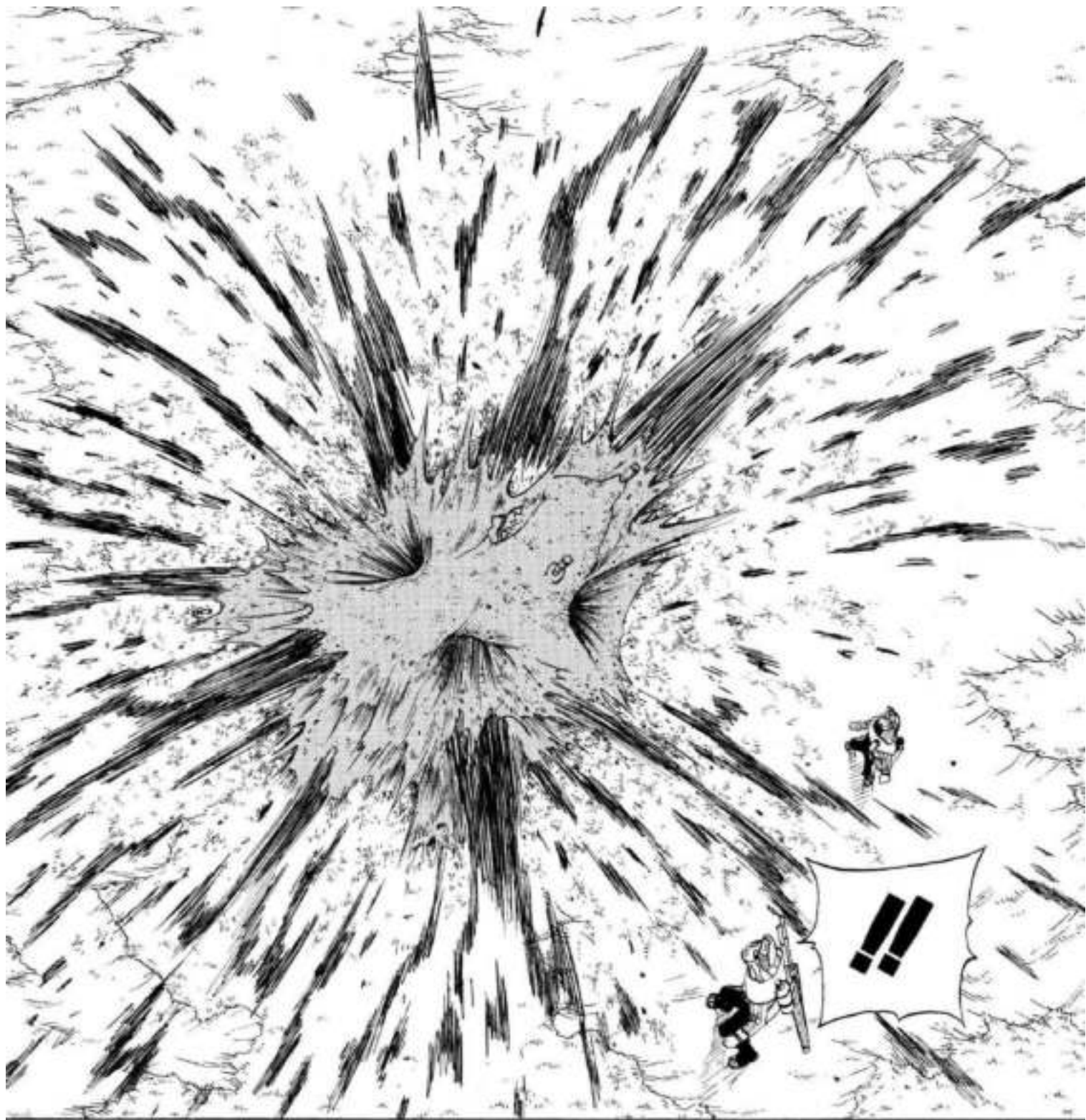
GUNK

I CAN FREE MYSELF... E-EASILY... AUGH!!



SSSS

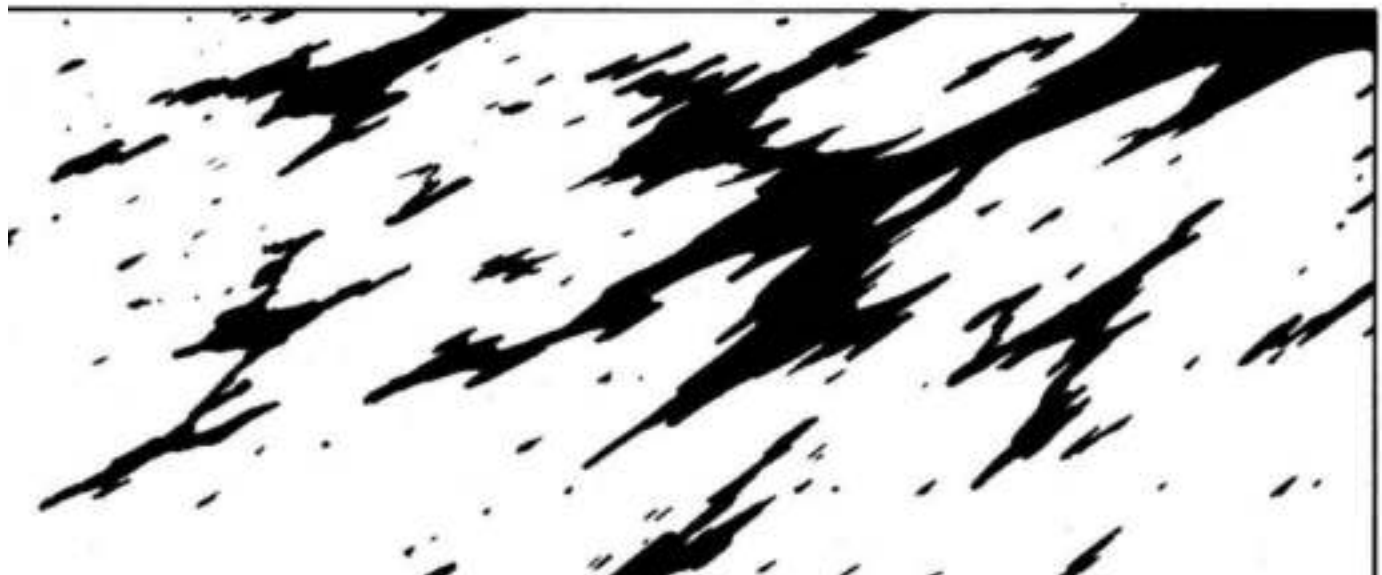




SABAKUSÔSÔ!
IMPLoding
SAND
FUNERAL!









IF THEY SPOT US, WE'RE DEAD MEAT!!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE... WHILE WE STILL CAN!



LUCKY US... WE NEEDED THE HEAVEN SCROLL.



NOT YET!



NOW WE CAN HEAD STRAIGHT FOR THE TOWER.

THE SOONER WE'RE OUT OF THIS FOREST, THE BETTER!



...I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN SATED.

NO...













THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART THREE: PRIMARY SCHOOL

AS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLER, I SPENT A LOT OF TIME EVERY DAY DOODLING IN MY "ANYTHING GOES" SKETCHBOOK. EVEN WHEN I WAS OUT ON THE PLAYGROUND PLAYING TAG, I ALWAYS HID REALLY WELL IN HOPES THAT WHOEVER WAS "IT" WOULDN'T FIND ME AND SAT QUIETLY, DRAWING DORAEMON IN THE DIRT.

THEN ONE SUCH DAY, I SAW AN AMAZING TV SHOW. "WHAT IN THE WORLD IS IT?" I WONDERED. "IT'S SO COOL, AND THE ARTWORK IS AWESOME." THE SHOW WAS... "MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM." AFTER THAT, MY SKETCHBOOK WAS ALWAYS CRAMMED WITH DRAWINGS OF ROBOTS CALLED MOBILE SUITS. ZAKU, GOUF, DOM, GM, DOZLE ZABI... I FEVERISHLY DREW ALL KINDS OF GUNDAM CHARACTERS.

THEN ON ANOTHER DAY, I SAW ANOTHER INCREDIBLE TV SHOW AND THOUGHT, "W-WOW! THE ART IS AMAZING! AND IT HAS SUCH STYLE!!" THE PROGRAM WAS "DR SLUMP: ARALE-CHAN." FROM THAT POINT ON, ALL I WANTED TO DRAW WAS ARALE-CHAN. I EVEN ENTERED A CRAYON SKETCH OF ARALE-CHAN INTO AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ART EXHIBITION. I CAN STILL REMEMBER MY MOTHER SAYING, "IF THIS ARALE-CHAN IS A GIRL, THEN YOU HAVE TO PUT LIPSTICK ON HER," AND JUST LIKE THAT, SHE ADDED RED LIPSTICK TO MY DRAWING OF ARALE-CHAN. I ALSO REMEMBER CLEARLY THAT THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE THAT I COMPLETELY LOST MY TEMPER.

A RED SMEAR OF
LIPSTICK LIKE THIS!



Number 60: The Last Chance...!!

MEANWHILE,
NARUTO
AND HIS
TEAM ARE...

SPLASH

CONABUNGA!

ART OF THE
SHADOW DOPPELGANGER!!

YAAAH!

SPLASH-SPLASH

SPLASH SPLASH

GLUB
BLUB
BLUB
GLUB
BLUB!!

GLUB GLUB

FW
HIP







THE SECOND EXAM STARTED FOUR DAYS AGO... RIGHT?

YEAH...



OH! HUNGRY, I'M HUNGRY! HURRY UP AND BE READY TO GET IN MY TUMMY!



WHICH MEANS... A LOT OF TEAMS MUST HAVE FINISHED BY NOW.



...SO IT WILL BE OVER IN LESS THAN 26 HOURS. AND IT BEGAN AT AROUND 2:30 P.M....



THAT LOOKS LIKE THE BIGGEST LITTLE FISHIE, RIGHT THERE!!

...PEOPLE WILL BE GETTING DESPERATE.



RATTLE

CHARACTER POPULARITY POLL!!

8TH PLACE
HAKU
1,302 VOTES

9TH PLACE
MOMOCHI ZABUZA
756 VOTES

6TH PLACE
ROCK LEE
2,327 VOTES

3RD PLACE
UCHIHA SASUKE
13,674 VOTES

1ST PLACE
HATAKE KAKASHI
22,692 VOTES



Number 60:

The Last Chance...!!

ANNOUNCING THE RESULTS OF OUR

4TH PLACE
MASTER IRUKA
7,128 VOTES

10TH PLACE
HYUGA HINATA
553 VOTES

7TH PLACE
GAARA
OF THE SAND
1,353 VOTES

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES:
72,733 VOTES!!!*

THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR
ALL THOSE VOTES!!!!

11TH: MITARASHI ANKO	332 VOTES
12TH: HYUGA NE-JI	288 VOTES
13TH: YUHI KURENAI	217 VOTES
14TH: MASTER GAI	216 VOTES
15TH: OROCHIMARU	199 VOTES
16TH: MORINO IBIKI	174 VOTES
17TH: SARUTOBI ASUMA	165 VOTES
18TH: KISHIMOTO MASASHI	157 VOTES
19TH: INARI	156 VOTES
20TH: KONOHAMARU	143 VOTES
21ST: INUZUKA KIBA	135 VOTES
22ND: KABUTO	110 VOTES
23RD: OTONIN SOUND NINJA	107 VOTES
24TH: TENTEN	83 VOTES
25TH: NINE-TAILED FOX	72 VOTES
26TH: TEMARI	71 VOTES
27TH: NARA SHIKAMARU	66 VOTES
28TH: KANKURO	62 VOTES
29TH: EBISU	55 VOTES
30TH: YAMANAKA INO	53 VOTES

*THESE ARE THE RESULTS OF A CHARACTER
POPULARITY POLL CONDUCTED IN JAPAN.
VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER
BY WRITING TO:

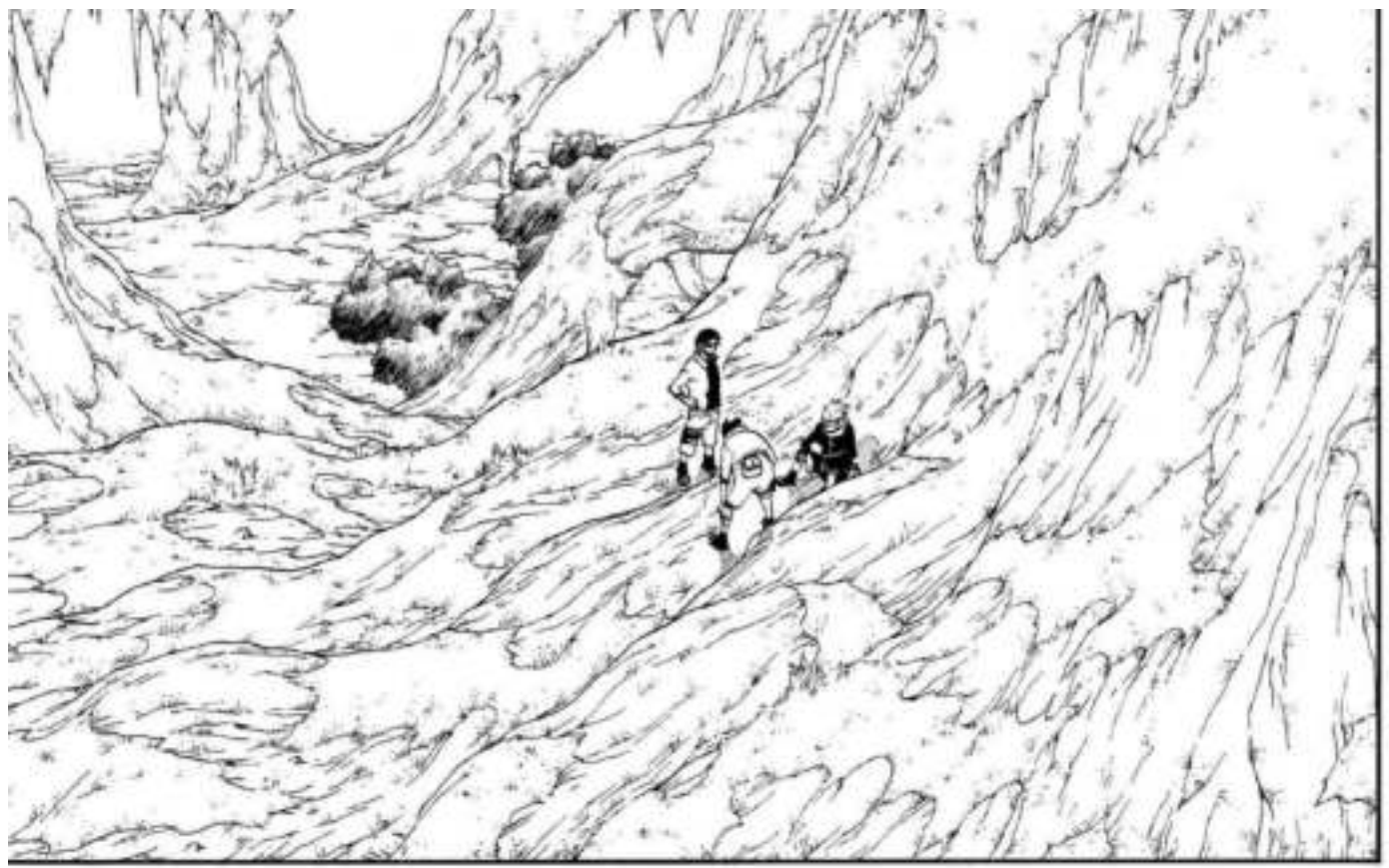
NARUTO CHARACTER POLL
SHONEN JUMP
C/O VIZ, LLC
P.O. BOX 77010
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94107

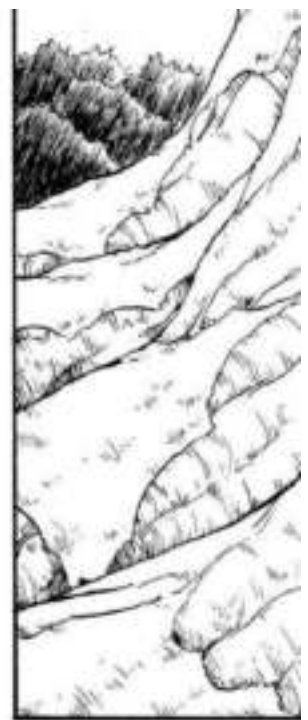
2ND PLACE
UZUMAKI NARUTO
16,729 VOTES

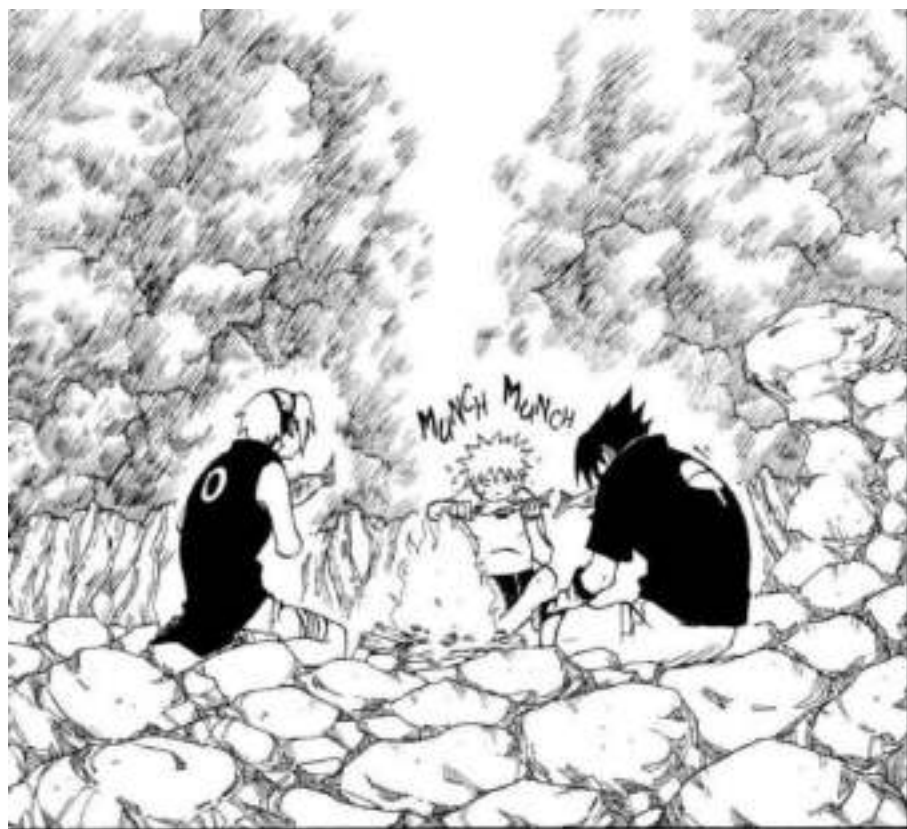
5TH PLACE
HARUNO SAKURA
3,055 VOTES

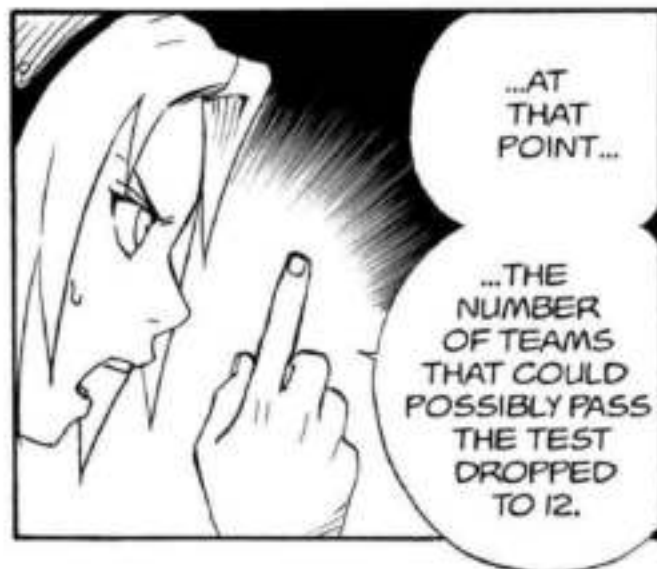












READ THIS WAY



AS SOON AS ONE OF EITHER TYPE OF SCROLL IS DESTROYED...

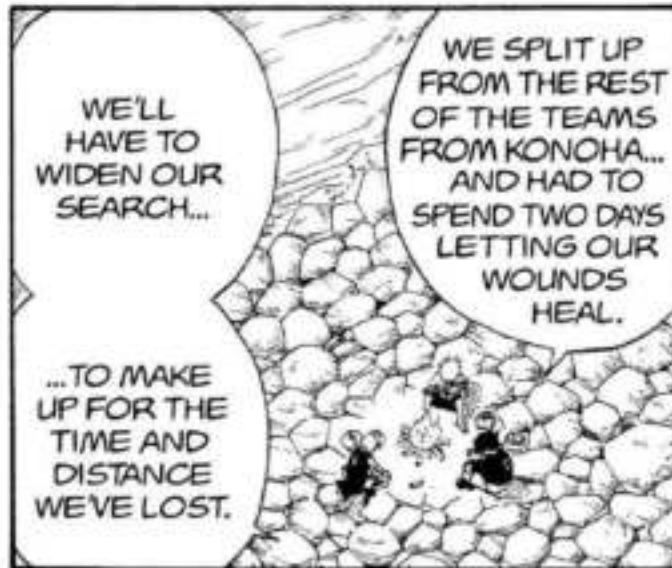
...ONE SCROLL OF THE OTHER TYPE AUTOMATICALLY BECOMES USELESS.



AND WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING IF ALL 25 OF THE OTHER SCROLLS SURVIVED, EITHER.



THE NEXT ENEMY WE MEET...



WE'LL HAVE TO WIDEN OUR SEARCH...

...TO MAKE UP FOR THE TIME AND DISTANCE WE'VE LOST.

WE SPLIT UP FROM THE REST OF THE TEAMS FROM KONOHA... AND HAD TO SPEND TWO DAYS LETTING OUR WOUNDS HEAL.



...



...OUR LAST CHANCE!!

...COULD BE...







NINJUTSU MANUALS, RECIPES FOR POISONS, BLANK SCROLLS FOR TAKING NOTES...

A FEW BRUSH STROKES HERE, SOME DECORATION THERE, AND ONE OF THESE CAN PASS FOR A HEAVEN SCROLL IN NO TIME!

IF IT'S SCROLLS THEY WANT, I GOT A MILLION OF 'EM.



...OR WHAT'S WRITTEN INSIDE THEM!! THE MINUTE THEY OPEN IT, WE'LL GET BUSTED, YOU IDIOT!

EVEN IF YOU COULD MAKE THE OUTSIDE LOOK THE SAME, WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE INSIDE OF THE SCROLLS LOOK LIKE...



?!

W-WAIT JUST A MINUTE!!



I BET YOU THAT'S IT!!

SO... YEAH! YOU PROBABLY NEED THAT PASSWORD TO GET INTO THE TOWER AT THE END OF THE EXAM!

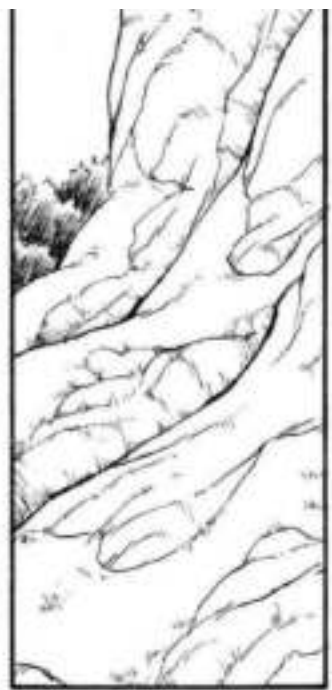


...THESE THINGS HAVE SOME KIND OF CRYPTIC PASSWORD WRITTEN IN THEM THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE UNTIL YOU BRING BOTH PIECES TOGETHER.

WELL, USUALLY...

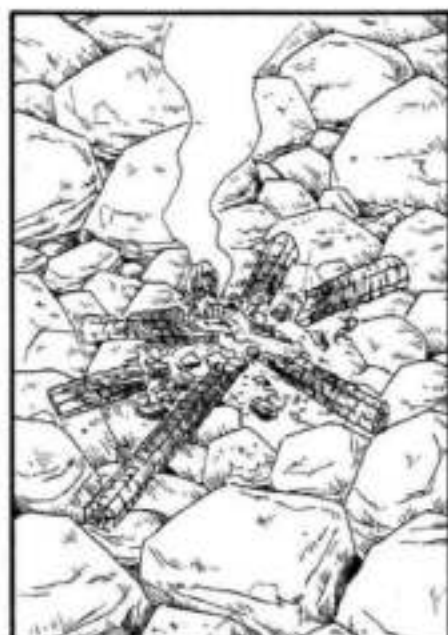


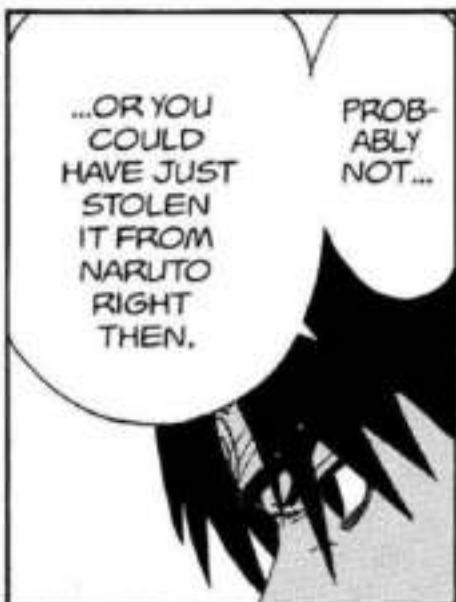
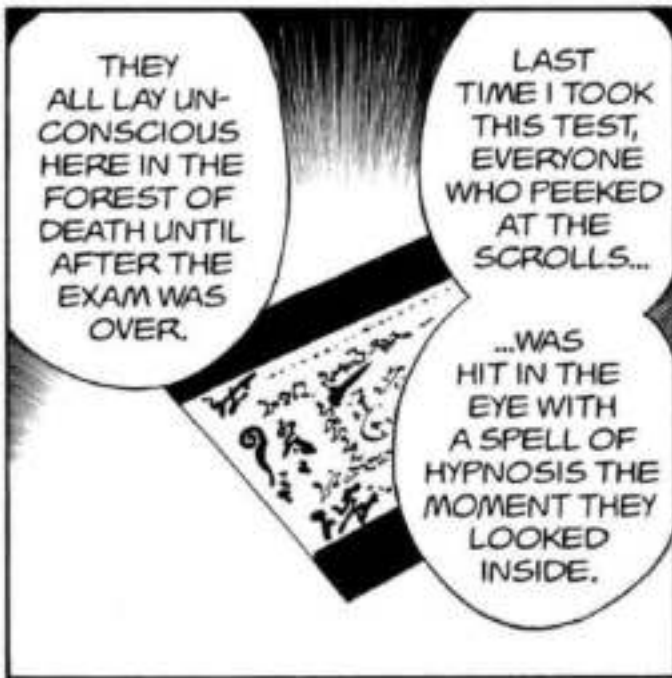
















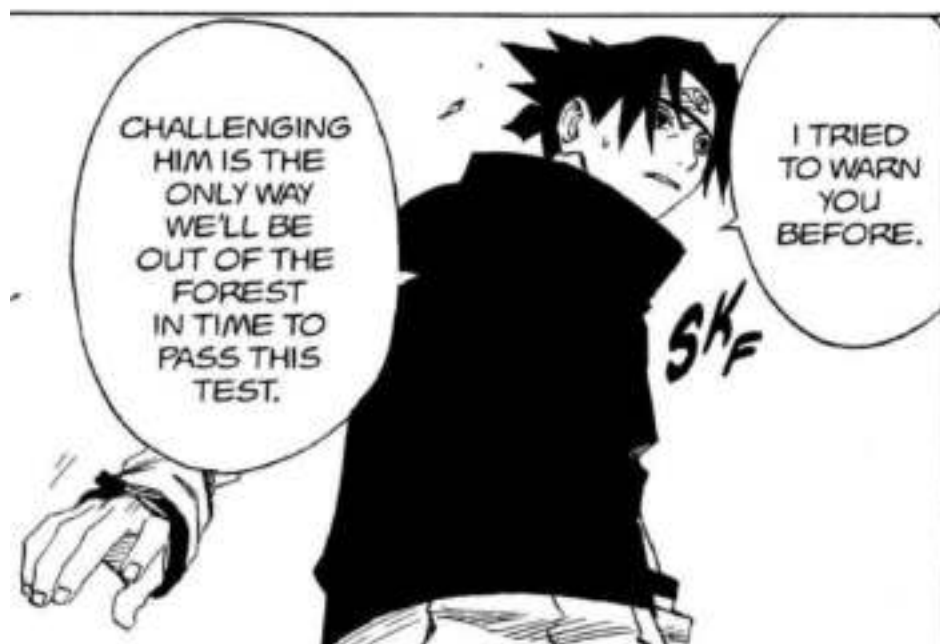


Number 61:

The Path You Should Tread





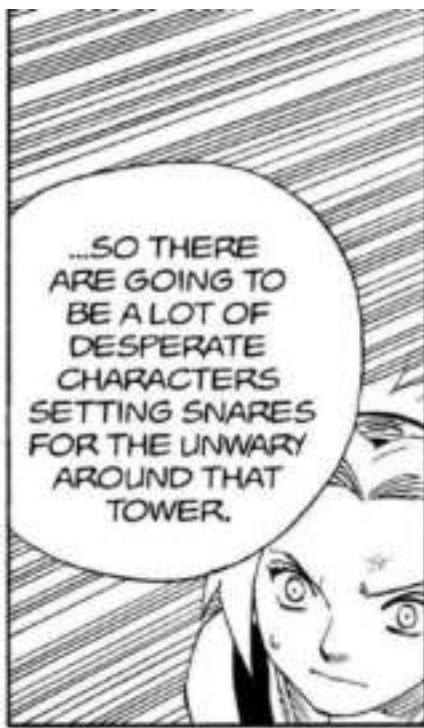












...SO THERE ARE GOING TO BE A LOT OF DESPERATE CHARACTERS SETTING SNARES FOR THE UNWARY AROUND THAT TOWER.



FIRST OF ALL, YOU WON'T BE THE ONLY ONES WHO'VE FIGURED THAT OUT...



HAH!! I PLAY MY BEST GAMES WITH A HANDICAP!



I GET IT! WHILE WE'RE WAITING TO AMBUSH THEM...
...THEY'LL BE TRYING TO AMBUSH US!!

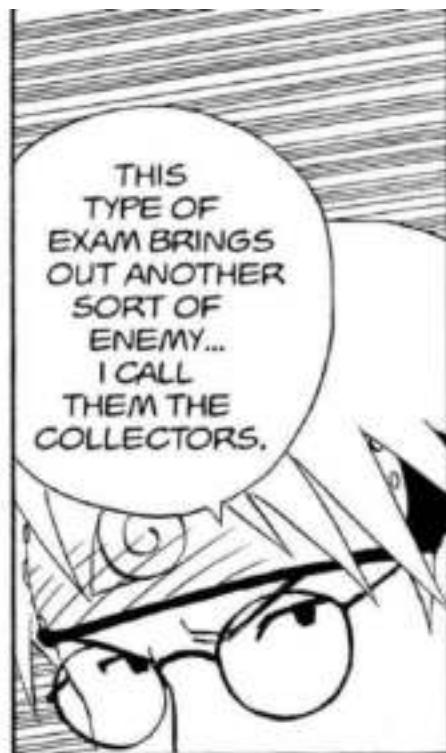


KABUTO... WHAT'S THE REST OF THE ANSWER...?



...AND WALK AWAY WITH THE OTHER SCROLL WE NEED TO PASS THE SECOND EXAM!!

THIS IS GONNA BE SWEET! IT'LL BE WORTH A LITTLE SWEAT IF WE GET TO KICK EVERYONE ELSE'S BUTTS...



...AND YOU THINK YOU'RE HOME FREE, DON'T RELAX YOUR GUARD FOR AN INSTANT. THE CONDITIONS OF THIS EXAM ARE APT TO GIVE RISE TO THEM...

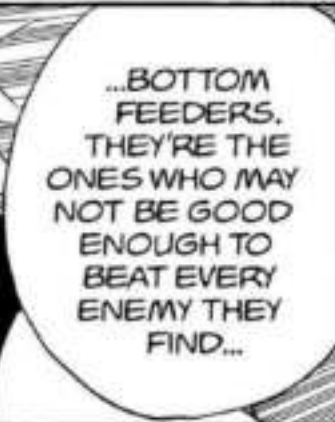
EVEN WHEN YOU'RE STANDING AT THE TOWER DOOR...

COLLECTORS?

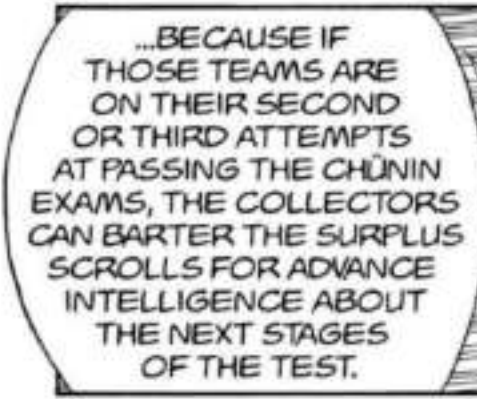
THIS TYPE OF EXAM BRINGS OUT ANOTHER SORT OF ENEMY... I CALL THEM THE COLLECTORS.



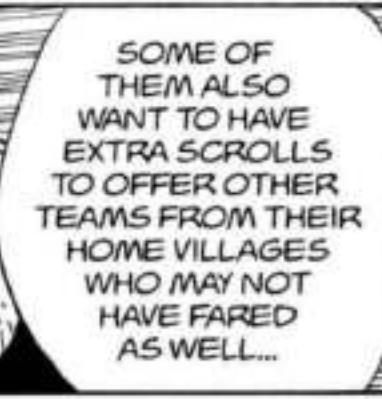
...SO THEY TRY TO GET THEIR HANDS ON AS MANY EXTRA SETS OF SCROLLS AS THEY CAN TO BUY THEMSELVES SAFE PASSAGE FROM ANYONE THEY CAN'T OR WON'T FACE FAIRLY.



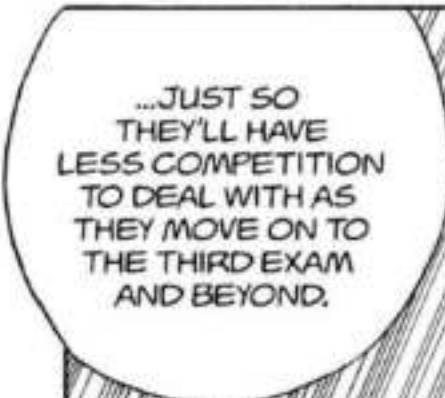
...BOTTOM FEEDERS. THEY'RE THE ONES WHO MAY NOT BE GOOD ENOUGH TO BEAT EVERY ENEMY THEY FIND...



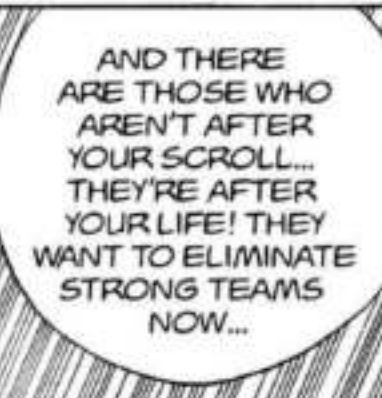
...BECAUSE IF THOSE TEAMS ARE ON THEIR SECOND OR THIRD ATTEMPTS AT PASSING THE CHUNIN EXAMS, THE COLLECTORS CAN BARTER THE SURPLUS SCROLLS FOR ADVANCE INTELLIGENCE ABOUT THE NEXT STAGES OF THE TEST.



SOME OF THEM ALSO WANT TO HAVE EXTRA SCROLLS TO OFFER OTHER TEAMS FROM THEIR HOME VILLAGES WHO MAY NOT HAVE FARED AS WELL...



...JUST SO THEY'LL HAVE LESS COMPETITION TO DEAL WITH AS THEY MOVE ON TO THE THIRD EXAM AND BEYOND.



AND THERE ARE THOSE WHO AREN'T AFTER YOUR SCROLL... THEY'RE AFTER YOUR LIFE! THEY WANT TO ELIMINATE STRONG TEAMS NOW...





HERE'S WHERE THE FUN REALLY BEGINS.

WE'RE IN VIEW OF THE TOWER...



AN ENEMY... SO SOON?!

!!



!!

TAK



THEN LET'S GET TO IT!!



OVER THERE!!

FW
YIP

AT

KZ

THE WORLD OF KISHIMOTO MASASHI MY PERSONAL HISTORY, PART 4: GRADE-SCHOOL OBSESSIONS

BY THE MIDDLE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MY INTEREST HAD GROWN TO INCLUDE SCULPTING AND MODEL-MAKING. INITIALLY, ANY TIME MY PARENTS WOULDN'T BUY ME A TOY I REALLY WANTED, I'D MAKE IT FOR MYSELF OUT OF CLAY. BUT THAT DIDN'T SATISFY ME FOR LONG, SO I TURNED TO THE PLASTIC MODELS BASED ON THE GUNDAM SERIES -- GUNPLA (GUNDAM PLASTIC) FOR SHORT. I GOT SOME FOR A NEW YEAR'S GIFT AND ASSEMBLED THEM IN AN ABSOLUTE FRENZY. THE NEXT FAD WAS PLAMORAJICON (OR PLARAJI) -- RADIO-CONTROLLED PLASTIC MODEL VEHICLES -- AND I JUMPED ON THAT PONY AS WELL (IN AMERICA, THESE WERE CALLED R/C CARS).

I NAMED MY PLARAJI "THE ELEPHANT," MADE AN ELEPHANT-SHAPED DECAL OUT OF SHEET PLASTIC, STUCK IT ON, AND RACED IT... DUE, NO DOUBT, TO THE INFLUENCE OF A POPULAR MANGA OF THE TIME CALLED "RAJICON BOY." THE PLARAJI I OWNED WAS BASED ON THE MITSUBISHI PAJERO, BUT IT WASN'T VERY FAST, AND WAS CONSTANTLY BEING OVERTAKEN BY THE PLARAJIS OF MY LITTLE BROTHER AND ALL OF MY FRIENDS. THIS ANNOYED ME VERY MUCH, SO I REMODELED MY PAJERO WITH THE "GRASSHOPPER UPGRADE KIT," WHICH WAS ACTUALLY DESIGNED FOR A DIFFERENT MODEL ENTIRELY. I MELTED THE PAJERO'S PLASTIC CHASSIS WITH A SOLDERING IRON -- NEVER GIVING A THOUGHT TO THE TOXIC FUMES BEING RELEASED INTO THE UNVENTILATED LITTLE ROOM -- AND WAS ECSTATIC WHEN I SUCCEEDED IN MAKING THE UPGRADE. BUT MY IDIOTIC ELATION WAS SHORT-LIVED, AS NEW PROBLEMS QUICKLY UNFOLDED!

BECAUSE I HAD FORCIBLY WELDED INCOMPATIBLE PARTS ONTO MY CAR, THE PAJERO'S BODY NO LONGER FIT WELL ONTO THE CHASSIS. I WAS TERRIBLY DEPRESSED OVER THE IRREVERSIBLE DAMAGE I'D DONE TO MY CAR, WITH THE BODY LEANING OFF THE CHASSIS AT ABOUT A TEN-DEGREE ANGLE, BUT I INSISTED THAT APPEARANCE MEANT NOTHING. A PLARAJI SHOULD BE JUDGED BY HOW IT PERFORMS, NOT HOW IT LOOKS! BUT WHEN WE RACED AGAIN, THE OTHERS OUTMATCHED MY POOR LITTLE CAR IN BOTH SPEED AND APPEARANCE.

UNDAUNTED EVEN AFTER GETTING HIT WITH THIS ONE-TWO COMBINATION OF DISAPPOINTMENTS, I MANAGED TO GET MY HANDS ON AN INCREDIBLE MOTOR CALLED THE "BLACK MOTOR ANGELS" AND INSTALLED IT IN THE PAJERO. "I'LL NEVER LOSE AGAIN!" I SAID, AND FINALLY WON THE RACING VICTORY THAT HAD BEEN MY HEART'S DESIRE. BUT THE MOTOR WAS SO POWERFUL THAT SUDDENLY SMOKE BEGAN POURING OUT OF THE CONTROLS. THE PAJERO WOULD NEVER ENTER ANOTHER RACE. I KEPT IT ON DISPLAY IN MY ROOM, BUT IN MY HEART I WAS DESPONDENT AND FULL OF REGRET ABOUT EVER HAVING TRIED THE GRASSHOPPER UPGRADE KIT.











HOW LONG CAN WE?!



OHHH!
HOW LONG CAN THEY KEEP THIS UP?!



NARUTO, NO!!
DON'T SQUANDER YOUR CHAKRA!!

A DIRECT ATTACK CAN'T HELP US!



...WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO JUST HURL KNIVES AT US WITHOUT US SEEING WHERE THEY'RE HIDING!

IF WE WERE TO DISSIPATE ALL OF THE ILLUSIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY, WHOEVER'S CASTING THEM...



















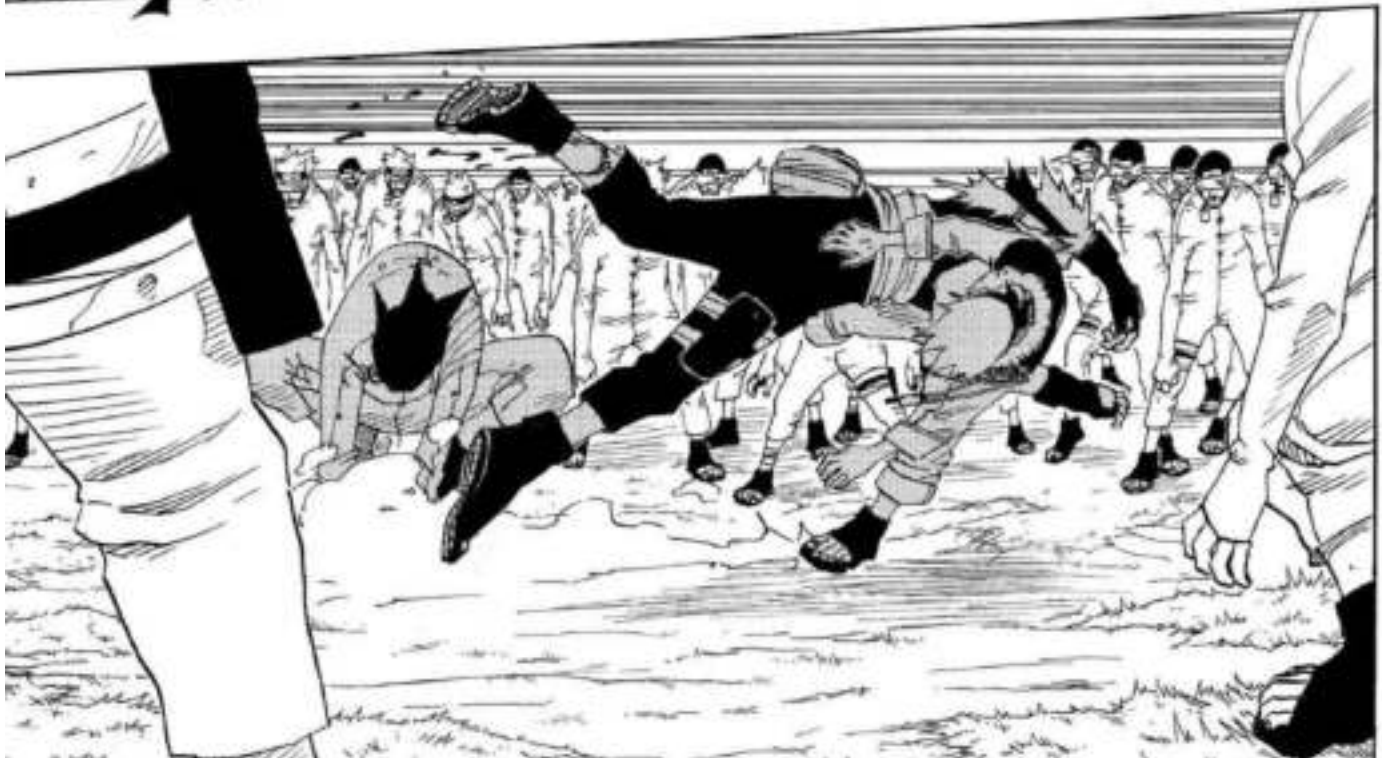




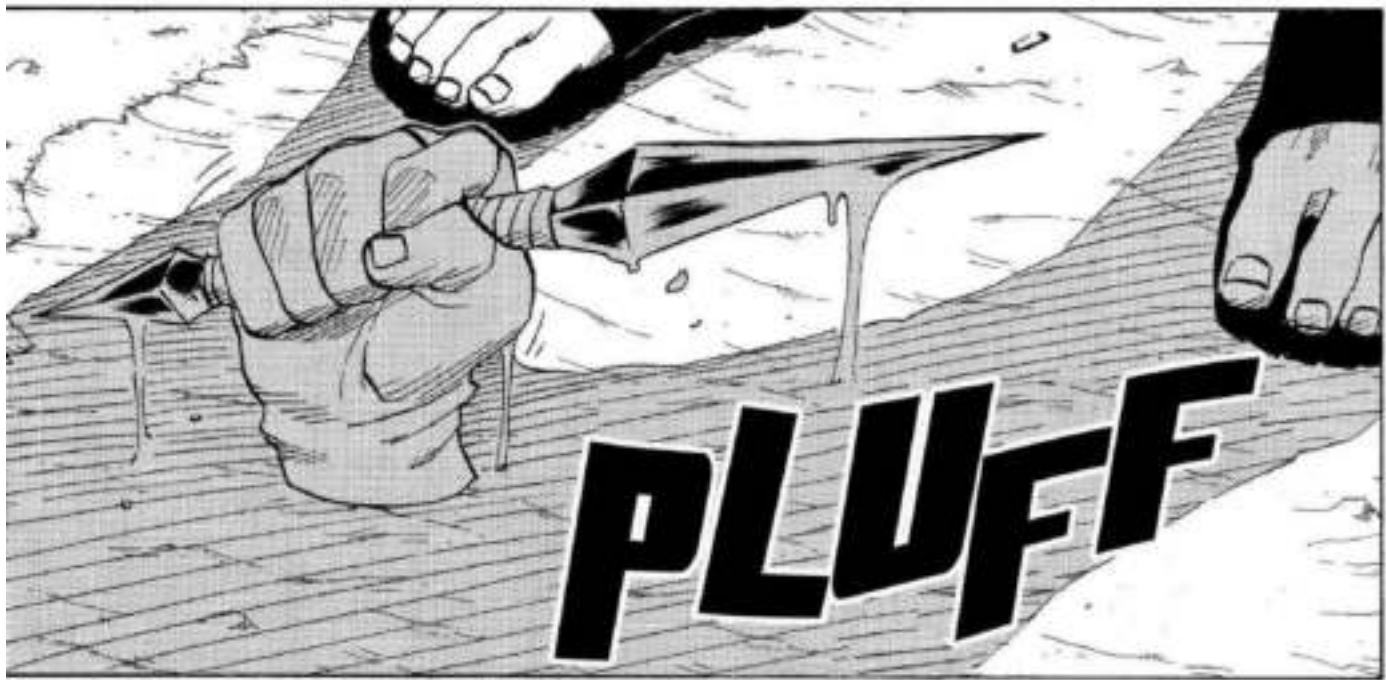














THE SEAL ON THE DOOR SAYS "OPEN." ↓



THE CHARACTER ON THE CARD SAYS "SHINOBI." ↓



HEH HEH... IT ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE A LITTLE BIT WORRIED...

I FIGURE YOU'LL NEED THIS.

I'VE KEPT A CAREFUL RECORD OF HIS PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE SECOND EXAM.

AND... HOW WAS HE?



...LORD
OROCHIMARU.

NO...
I'M JUST
CURIOUS
TO HEAR
YOUR
OPINION...

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