

“- Hyuuga Hiashi, Jonin of Konhagakure, Head of the Hyuuga Clan .-“

“Nobody move or the Kyuubi brat gets it.”

I may have made a mistake.

“I advise against whatever it is you’re planning.”

Hyuuga Hiashi found himself in the unenviable position of having to reconsider all of his choices.

Perhaps not all his *life’s* choices, but his actions of the past day required an urgent reassessment at the very least. Certainly all his choices of the past ten minutes.

“Doctor, I’m surprised at you. Condescending to other people, why, one might mistake you for someone else!”

I did not underestimate the enemy.

“At least it would be *other* people mistaking my identity and not me.”

The enemy had been completely blindsided. The enemy endured the strongest Hyuuga technique seemingly unscathed. The defense was some sort of living second skin technique. The same technique was responsible for his perfect disguise. A second enemy had been lurking nearby without the Byakuygan catching the barest sign.

“Whatever could you be insinuating, doctor? Was it not all of you who mistook me for the poor gatewarden? Besides, I don’t remember making any claims to any identity, now did I?”

Now Konoha’s Jinchuuriki had a knife to his throat because of it.

“Naruto,” Masanari began speaking tongues. “*This is the bad man who forced Kurama to kill your mom and dad and the village.*”

It took a self-taught civilian to avert the same from happening to Hiashi’s own daughter and all other clan heirs.

“What?! He’s-AH!”

I underestimated my allies and overestimated myself.

“Speaking in tongues now, Doctor?” Uchiha Obito said idly while twisting Naruto’s head by the hair. “Don’t you think that’s rude?”

Masanari had comprehended the situation before anyone else, but Hiashi had been too self-absorbed to recognize his all too deliberate de-escalation.

“Kid, your keeper just *gutted* me, you have no room to talk.”

All of which led to the man being gored through the gut by *wood release*.

“Did he? It doesn’t seem to impair you much.” The black and white creature began to slither out of the ground behind the enemy, arm missing and a massive gouge in its torso slowly knitting together like black tar. “That was quite the feat you pulled off too, as far as it goes. How many Celestial Gates did you have to open just to match a mere shunshin?”

Eight Trigrams Time Distension.

It was beyond wasteful to accelerate one’s personal time just to *stand* there, but the only thing more impossible than Senju Hashirama’s technique re-emerging – in the hands of *enemies* – was seeing Masanari’s gut wound closing as he talked. That, too was, a technique only ever exhibited by the First Hokage, though leaving the surface layer bloody and torn was subterfuge that only the Byakugan let Hiashi see through. All this on top of seeing him open all Celestial Gates at once, something that should have taken considerable time, something that should have been fatal regardless of circumstances, and now the others... The Uchiha and his own clan members were frozen mid-way through absconding, the Ino-Shika-Cho trio were just as still in the face of Obito’s threat, there were abnormal movements in Nara Shikaku’s throat...

Subvocalisation.

Hyuuga Hiashi kept his eyes pinned on Uchiha Obito, but it was the Jonin Commander he paid closest attention to as *Eight Trigrams Time Distension* finally ran its course.

“Naruto, stop squirming. You’re throwing me off.”

Nara had strategically made sure to land in a spot where Hiashi impaired Uchiha’s line of sight.

“Yes, brat, stop squirming and watch, your uncle and I are about to show you how the world works.”

Orders? Hiashi signed behind his sleeve.

“Kid, you don’t want to get into this with me.”

“See, fox brat? Your uncle wants peace, but at the same time he’s just aching to charge at me in a flash and hurt me like he hurt guruguru. In the end, the life of humans always comes to this.”

Premeditated stunt, Nara Shikaku conveyed. Hiashi took careful note of his throat movements while Masanari bravely endured the missing nin’s galling soliloquy that followed. *Trash-talking too weak, hostile not even trying, likely distraction, presume enemy backup imminent, will pretend retreat at first opportunity to check for other insurgents, Uchiha have perimeter, stall*. The Hyuuga chief had much less trouble than he wished in pretending he was giving the two all his attention, as opposed to the jonin-commander whose plan finally began to show its shape while-

“And this, Naruto, is *projection*, when you know you’re bad but instead of *stopping*, you choose to delude yourself into thinking everyone else is bad too because you’re a *coward*.”

...

“Maybe I was wrong about you, Doctor.” Uchiha Obito said as Masanari’s insolent choice to use him as an abject lesson for a seven-year-old child finally made him lose his composure. “I thought you to be one of the rare enlightened, but in the end even you default to petty insults. And to think that we share the same pain-“

“If you dare say I should sympathise with you *murdering my entire family* because of a thirteen year old *brat’s decade-long tantrum over not getting the girl*, I will fucking lose it, I swear to God.”

Hiashi barely managed not to lose *his* composure like Chouza and half of everyone else when Masanari literally threw Uchiha Obito’s trauma back in his face. Was he serious, was it even true, were the enemy’s motivations truly so petty, what kind of world was this, how was he supposed to do any stalling after this, was this man suicidal-?

“WHAT? No... That’s impossible! The Fourth would never get beat by someone so lame!”

It was to the frozen tableau of clashing beliefs derailed by Uzumaki Naruto’s fool mouth that Hyuuga Hiashi felt his mouth drop open.

“... Alright, brat. That’s enough out of you.” Uchiha gripped Uzumaki from behind his ears and Hiashi tensed, his Byakugan saw exactly how chakra injected into the child through the thumb, he was going to – Hiashi blinked away red as the child snapped awake before he was

even half asleep. “Oh, the fox is paying attention?” Uchiha yanked Naruto’s head around by the hair-

“Kid, I *sincerely* advise against what you’re planning.”

Uchiha Obito’s Sharingan stared into-

Uzumaki *screamed*.

Uchiha Obito jumped back in shock, the orange mask shattered to splinters as he turned intangible, just barely in time to avoid his face being also split in twain by the golden chains that burst out of Uzumaki, Ino-Shika-Chou leaped back and out of sight as fast as body flicker could take them, the Uchiha clan and guests scattered with the children - *Now-agh!* Hiashi stumbled mid-leap. *My eyes!* – Masanari surged forward in an eye-searing flash and kicked *through* the intangible Uchiha-

“KURAMA, BRING ME INTO THE SEAL!”

-and covered Uzumaki with his body just as the Uchiha became solid again and grabbed *him*.

The Gates, they’re blinding, what did he just say – no, no time! “Eight trigrams-!”

Obito froze, choked, he trembled impotently, eyes bulging against the white crust that covered half his face as arteries and veins throbbed beneath his crumpled skin, a massive amount of chakra flared in his heretofore hidden *second* Sharingan only to vanish just as suddenly, Hiashi struggled to see it all clearly even in time dilation on account of being flash-blinded *again*, somehow the nin was frozen stiff even as Masanari tore open his own clothes with *bone claws* – the Kaguya bloodline? – seal smoke, some manner of piped tool fell into his hand from a seal on his armpit, Masanari pointed it behind under his arm, what was that supposed – *the enemy is paralysed, now’s my chance!*

BANG

The sound of thunder blew a hole through Uchiha’s chest and straight through the thing’s face.

Hiashi flinched. *I only saw a streak*. His disbelief nearly brought him crashing on his face as he skidded to a halt between Uchiha and the creature. *Even with the Hyuuga space-time*

technique I only saw a streak, had I been slightly faster – you are within the range of my divination!

“Two Hundred and Fifty-Six Palms!”

One hundred and twenty eight on Uchiha, one hundred and twenty eight on the *thing*, the satisfying staccato of crumpled flesh and shattered wood landed each and every time in as little as it took Masanari to whirl around and now *Masanari* had Uchiha by the hand while – *don't point that thing at me!*

Hiashi ducked.

“GET DOWN!”

BANG

BANG

The *rock gun jutsu* blew Uchiha Obito's Sharingan eyes out the back of his skull, once, twice and he was dead, Masanari just killed him, killed without a scrap of killing intent, his enemy's blood and brains were spraying his face after his first kill and there was nary a flinch even in time dilation, what kind of mind-?

BANG

The shock of everyone and the *thing* behind him was like physical weight as the rest of the head of wood and tar blew to pieces.

A weapon with no chakra, Hiashi's thoughts raced as he rushed to reposition through the molasses that air became in dilated time, the blood and brain spray above him already too wide to avoid as Time Distension elapsed, omnitenketsu chakra burst to deflect gore, *a weapon that shoots c-rank earth techniques with no chakra, no, no mere c-rank, the speed does not compare!* “HAH!”

“Guh!”

The flesh and wood creature folded over his palm strike, Hiashi may not see its chakra system but the Gentle Fist could be a misnomer in times of need-

BANG BANG went through Obito's heart and his head *again*. "Don't let your guard down, he might still respawn! He's only vulnerable to Yin Release!"

He might what? But the Byakugan clearly saw the Uchiha Clan head blanch on the roof behind him.

"Izanagi?" Fugaku whispered behind his hand, inaudibly but a trifle to spot to the Hiashi's eyes. "How-with what Sharingan? No, can't risk it!" His hands flew through signs.

Damn the Uchiha and their secrets!

"Scatter!" Yelled Fugaku's second.

A gigantic Fireball descended from the rooftops.

"No don't, FUCK!"

Hiashi was already mid-leap when he saw Masanari jump over Uzumaki and *not* run.

Back on the rooftop, Fugaku blanched.

... We keep treating him like a ninja!

The Supreme Fireball Technique slammed where Hiashi had been with all the physical force that only a ninjutsu master could impart on fire.

The fireball exploded violently, red and gold flames detonated like one of the Four-Tail's magma bombs he'd once had the misfortune of facing, the grass vaporised, the lake's water beyond frothed backwards in an upsurge of steam, the earth crumbled and cratered, charred blacker than black just from the pyroclasm, Hiashi had to make one full kaiten spin the moment he landed just to rebuff the heat, assess ally status – of all the times for Masanari to become *completely* invisible to Byakuygan, confound that man! "Masanari!"

Movement in the flames *not* where the Uzumaki child had been.

"Eight Trigrams Vacuum Palm!"

Pressurised air blasted a funnel straight through the flames and the black and white creature.

Only for the swaying thing to catch itself as if it wasn't *missing its spine* and snake between five additional fire techniques at Obito's charred corpse.

Hiashi body flickered, but already knew he wouldn't be in ti-

An Adamantine Sealing Chain burst out of the ground right in the thing's path, two, three in an instant, even the fourth was dodged just barely – “URK!” – the creature's rasp of pain was *satisfying* but Hiashi had to lurch aside so he wasn't also caught in the next fifteen – no, not so many, it was the same chains bursting, growing, folding over and over through their prey and then back, even as others did the same to the Uchiha's carcass, once, twice, five, nine in all, how could Uzumaki – no, not the Uzumaki boy, the Byakugan had no problem seeing through the ground to spot the end of *those* – wait, the Uzumaki boy himself was invisible to the Byakugan as well now, how? “Masanari,” Hiashi grunted to himself as the strain of too many space-time techniques made itself known. “What *can't* you do?”

The black tar *poured* out of the creature and whipped itself at the corpse, the chains held firm, the sludge splattered past in loose chunks, moved as one in a chaos of wiggling threads, how, there was barely a palm's space between the chains- “Vacuum-!” -

Crack.

Hiashi had to strafe away from a Chakra Chain bursting from the ground at his feet, Masanari why?

SPLAT

The black tar splattered itself over a giant tongue.

What.

Gama the Toad fell down from the sky right on Uchiha's corpse, its tongue a wall wreathed in blue light, where did it *come* from? The Byakugan didn't see it but it could before, another thing he didn't even register vanish from his perception, what was **happening** here?

“Croak.”

Hyuuga Hiashi stared in incomprehension at what he was seeing.

“Curses, what now?!” The black tar *shrieked* with Hiashi's own outrage.

The giant tongue wrapped around the living sludge and yanked

“Guh!” The black sludge *gargled* as it spread and hooked itself into the ground. “You fool, this won’t work, no matter how much of me you destroy, I can always come back-“ The ground began glowing as well, dislodging the black ropes, motes of blue and gold light rising up from the charred earth, arcs of light shooting from one to the next while black drops wriggled inside. “Wha-no, no this is ridiculous, by my mother, how are you doing this, how many tricks do you have, what is this, how are you even controlling this mindless beast, you – ninshu?! Ninshu, that fool boy’s idiotic dream, you dare think you can use this against me, *me* when I’m the one who-!”

With one last wrench, the screaming ooze vanished down the toad’s maw.

...

“Ribbit.”

Around the beast, the world burned.

“... Masanari?” Hiashi didn’t even know if he was addressing the fire or the toad anymore.

Gama gurgled.

The toad flinched, its stomach wriggled, its eyes crossed as its face twisted in nether pains, the blue shine began to flicker and shimmer wildly on its skin, the lightning arcs shooting over its form began to spew chaotically everywhere – SQUELCH – the black ooze spurt out through its nostrils, pried its jaws open, burst out from its mouth, even its eyes seemed about to pop out as black seeped from behind them and the *sounds-*

“- I’ll not be food for some frog’s guts-!”

A sheet of blue light rose from the earth.

It fluttered through the conjoined abomination, its surface silk-like and gossamer-thin, soundless, almost languid, and where it passed everything else fell still.

Gama swallowed hard, turned around and jumped into the fire.

Hiashi made an aborted move, but where the flames didn't stop him, the chains did. A muffled thump came from within the conflagration but nothing else. Fugaku landed beside him, his face showing none of the pride that would normally be warranted after displaying such a fire technique that broke ground and still burned after so long with no fuel save naked earth. The Uchiha Clan head breathed out, then looped his fingers in front of his lips as if about to cast again, but instead *inhaled*.

Over a long, tense fifteen seconds, all the fire-pected chakra in the conflagration returned to the source.

The flames thinned and began to go out. Shapes began to distinguish themselves again, then all the colors other than burning red. The toad stood stiff in a translucent silk-like shell, wracked by microshivers as a rising tide of blue light motes flowed through it from the ground. The Uzumaki boy was curled up on the ground, unconscious, enclosed in a cage made of the golden chains coming out of his back, wreathed in a blue shell of light inside *that* that the Byakugan couldn't see, though normal sight *did*. Over and around the boy, Masanari was a shield of horribly burned flesh, hissing, smelling like pork as hard-charred crust crackled with his every movement. Nine glowing chains of his own stuck from his spine as the flesh visibly knitted before their eyes, rebuilding melted meat, shedding charred flesh and fabric, forming new skin, hair growing back where there was none left, Hiashi could see in real time as fused meat gave way to new sinews and skin upwards from the fingertips as he touched the toad -

Blood burst out of the man from a hundred places and travelled around him in straight angles like threads of steel, piercing the toad straight through from foot to head.

“Yin Release: Trito's Tribulation.”

Almost drunkenly, the giant toad kicked a leg, wobbled, blinked, opened its mouth and-

“Uuuuuuuuuuuah!”

Hiashi twitched, he grit his teeth, found no solace in seeing Fugaku flinch as well next to him, *dear gods it sounds like a baby*.

Mercifully, the toad ran out of breath. But it only gurgled something and then screamed even louder.

“**Uuuuuuuuuuuah!**”

The animal thrashed in its impalement, writing on itself as it kicked its legs in desperation, opening its maw wide to-

“Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

The shriek was painful to the ears, by the highest gods, he knew frogs and toads screamed in self-defense, but he didn't-

“Rrryyyeeeeeeaaaaghhhh...!”

That was when the black sludge began to seep out through its skin.

“UuuuAaaAaaAAH!”

The black muck came out in droplets, traces, yet somehow the desperate scream still became *two*.

“UuuaaaaAaa-AAAAAaaAAa!”

Beside him, Fugaku looked like he wanted to point his Sharingan at everything *other* than the screaming abomination.

“HuUuaAAaAaAaooOooOOOooOOGH, oH YoU WreTCH, yOu tHInK you've WOn, yOu THInK yOU'rE DIFFerEnt, thInk yOu alONe Are DIffErENT, you'rE noT difFERENT, DON't PreTEND yOU'rE nOt TAKIng adVaNtAge of OTheRS, What do YOu EVeN thInk YOu know, YoU Don'T know AnyThiNG, YoU Don'T know WhAt I kNow, you DON't KNOW, You can'T kNow, The fuTuRE is NoT yOurs To Know, i deciDE WhO KnoWs, i dEcidE And It's NoT WHaT You know, i cREatEd this World, THE NinJA wORld iS Mine, You CAn NEvER eSCaPe, YoU Can'T ChANgE-!”

The spikes of blood pulled out of the toad with the last of the black, the tar-like creature reduced to barely enough to fill a cup's worth.

The battlefield erupted in blue light. Living plasma rose from the earth in a soundless, rustling, upsurge. It converged on the center like a swarm of fireflies to surround the rambling, screaming sludge in an impervious barrier, the more arose, gathered, entering Gama, entering *Masanari*, wrapping around him, blending with him until Hiashi couldn't tell where he ended and the cloak of power began, the cloak that still grew outwards and upwards, iridescent, shimmering, azure like the deepest sky, up and up, taller than the buildings around them, then outward and down again to unfold over the man in the shape of a... a...

“S-susanoo?” Fugaku gasped.

A giant.

A guardian spirit, tall, muscular, dressed in helm, breastplate and armlets of a make Hiashi had never seen. The lower body diffused around its master, giving of itself to support him, protect his modesty, protect *him* by wrapping, fusing with him, merging in what looked impossibly like a jinchuuriki’s chakra cloak and the Raikage’s lightning body in one. Its face was unfathomable beneath its full face helm. And the mantle... it fell down around Masanari like a wide, tapered, protective veil. And grew. The mantle flowed outward along the ground, then further and higher through the air, enfolding everything in a shifting weave spliced from many bands, some growing forward, some rising up and back, ethereal and buoyant. They barely shifted, they didn’t even flutter in the wind, instead they shimmered into sight as Hiashi watched, lightning arcs and plasma motes unseaming themselves from its outline, coming together and adding to their length as if the spectre was weaving itself into the world and out of the world in reverse.

In one hand was a spear. A second gripped a chain acting as the toad’s leash. The third held a large shield in front of its master, round, see-through and impregnable. And the fourth...

The fourth hand held the writing creature in a sphere of light from which it thrashed and failed utterly to escape.

“Hiashi,” Fugaku said lowly beside him, the tomoes spinning in his Sharingan eyes. “That’s not chakra.”

He was right, the Byakugan could see nothing – no, wait, there was something, a funnel of gold coursing here and there behind the great blue cloak, small but growing slightly and slightly more with every ebb and flow.

“Yang Release: Yemo’s Sacrifice.”

[The Sacrifice] lifted its spear high, then thrust down.

“WhA-!”

A shearing wind. A flash of light. The burbling scream was ran through with a sharp, ringing sound like a song as the spear pierced the sphere.

“nNnaAAAaGH!”

The tip stabbed through, gored the tar and splintered, burst in a spray of shards, strands and links of lightning fireflies that cut and ripped and burned and kept going. The shaft followed, tearing, twisting, ripping the black mass apart and twisting it on itself as it went in, eating itself along with the abomination in a churning, shrieking, crunching, crackling, storm-wrought hysteria of mutually assured destruction.

“No You cAn’T, You cAN’t, You cAN’t, You cAN’t, You cAN’t dO THis, You cAN’t, I won’t diE, I CAN’T diE, nOt NOw, Not nOW I’m SO close MoTHer-!”

[The Sacrifice] did not stop until the spear was all the way inside to the end of the shaft.

“NoOooOooOO, You can NeVER cHANGe, NOthiNG WILL changE, I SeE WHAT you sEE, I kNOw what yOu KnOW, WHAT you tHINK yoU kNOw, You ThInK You kNOW BUT You DON’t, i CrEAteD This World, yOU are Not iTS mESSIaH, YoU Can’t KiLL me, YOU FOOL I aM tHE WILL oF God, don’t KiLL me, NO, NO, nOT NOw, Not nOW, I’m SO close, I’m SO close MoTHer, MoTHer, SaVe mE MoTHer, STOP, AAAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!”

With one last, bone-rattling scream, the black sludge died.

[The Sacrifice] did not stop, forfeiting an entire arm until there was naught left in the sphere besides vapour.

All fell silent, save the last gasps of the guttering flames.

Hyuuga Hiashi stood there, speechless.

Were... were the Uzumaki always so formidable?

But what was that thing, what was it rambling? Its claims, preposterous, for them to be even remotely true it would have to... How could any of it be real? What sense could one make of the world if...?

... Those drawings and stories weren’t fairy tales?

“... c-c-croak...”

Masanari finally turned to face them, an opaque haze of living plasma clothing his tall, muscular frame, now fully healed once more. His gaze was unfocused but his presence more *present*, somehow. He pat the great toad, dispelled the chain leashing it and it seemed to rest easier. Behind him, Uzumaki Naruto remained surrounded in a glowing blue field and a cage of chains, still asleep. Above him, [The Sacrifice] regrew its arm and grasped a new spear made of the former chain's weightless mass, once more whole of body and only slightly smaller than before.

All around them, the last fire from Fugaku's Supreme Fireball finally went out.

But silence didn't return. There were other noises of battle now, muffled and out of sight, but not truly distant. Outside the passive range of his Byakugan but surely not beyond a focused scan, he needed but switch to long-range view-

"What have you done?"

Hiashi leaped and spun, landing in guard position next Masanari, facing the source of the voice almost at the same time as Fugaku did the same on the man's other side – *i-impossible, how did he still live, no one could have survived that!*

But there he stood, as if he'd never been touched after he lost his mask. The lone Sharingan was locked on Masanari, opened wide as if it had never been blown to paste along with his brain.

"Uchiha Obito," Masanari sounded everything *but* surprised as – crack! – an adamantite Sealing Chain erupted from the ground behind Uchiha Obito and came out through his front. "How's the heart?"

Slowly, in a stupor, Uchiha Obito looked down and brought a hand to his chest. It passed through the chain like a ghost, like the rest of him, the chain was through his back and came out the front but didn't even touch him, what a ludicrous power, how was a Hyuuga supposed to fight something like that?

He's only vulnerable to Yin release.

The Hyuuga style favoured the inner path, he couldn't do more than the first step of the Sixty Four Hexagrams kinjutsu and it took time he didn't have, he had no combat iryojutsu, his

genjutsu was barely any better and would be foolish to try on an Uchiha with a mastered Sharingan regardless-wait-

That eye, those aren't mere tomoes, what kind of Sharingan is that?

[The Sacrifice] brushed against him, a single sliver of its mantle passed through him for but a moment, and suddenly Hiashi felt *strong*. His chakra... it was returning!

Not a moment has gone by today without me having to reassess this man.

“Freedom for freedom,” Masanari said next to him, not taking his eyes of the madman. His words seemed borne of some unseen weight. Above them all, [The Sacrifice] loomed like a spectre of retribution possessed of a palpable will to destroy. “And no, freeing Naruto from the shackles of ignorance doesn't count.”

What did he mean? Obito's heart was as whole as the rest of him again – wait, no, something was different, a difference in shades to his Byakugan sight, not through the heart but around it, over it, he'd need to get close and focus on that area to the exclusion of all else to see properly but even from afar... The heart looked *less* unnatural than the rest of him now, but in a strange pattern that was *not* natural, almost angular. Something had changed about it, but what?

More chains burst out of the ground all around Uchiha Obito, spearing through him without harm, enclosing him and the space around him, crossing overlays, building a dome inside a dome inside a dome around him with the smallest gap just barely enough to toss a kunai through.

“Take your win and go.”

Win? But he lost.

Didn't he?

The enemy stared at Masanari, silent, unmoving and untouchable. The clamour of weapons and techniques rose stronger beyond the compound's inner walls. Flashes of fire, arcs of lightning and bursts of wind began to toss dust, smoke, leaves and bodies in the air.

Hiashi watched Uchiha Obito closely, but even with his mastery of reading people augmented by the Byakugan, he couldn't tell what the half-plant manchild was thinking at all.

With a thundering roar from just five streets away, Akimichi Chouza grew into a giant so tall he blocked out the afternoon sun, tossing like ragdolls half a dozen bodies dressed in masks and black cloaks with red clouds.

The next moment, Hiashi felt the indiscriminate, mass telepathic transmission of Yamanaka Inoichi, crystal clear with first-hand memories of numbers, masks and seemings.

Uchiha Obito stared. Just stared with that lone, bizarre Sharingan eye, not one flicker of chakra to suggest he was using techniques or whatever else. Looked from Chouza to Masanari and back.

Twice.

Then...

“Orochimaru can have you.”

With but a ripple from his lone eye, the man was gone.

Hyuuga Hiashi faltered. Across from Masanari, Fugaku did the same before he began scanning the area closely with the Sharingan. Masanari, too, seemed to be doing something, though Hiashi could barely tell based on what he previously observed of the man when he turned his thoughts inward. Doing his own part, Hiashi scoured the area with the Byakugan and found no trace of the interloper, even among the other foes after a careful scan around him with long-range sight.

The fight had concluded. The enemy had fled. So why did he feel like nothing at all had been resolved? No, that, at least, was easy to answer.

A battle Hiashi had started was ended by a technical noncombatant. The same noncombatant had to suffer all the retaliation that might have otherwise resulted in the worst of personal loss for everyone there. At the hands of an enemy Hiashi's eyes didn't see. In service of the enemy his eyes did see, to the exclusion of all else despite that he should have known better.

Sharingan, evolved Sharingan, intangibility, *resurrection*, and now teleportation as well, a technique superior to even that of the Fourth and Second Hokages themselves, as if the First Hokage's legendary ninjutsu was not already disastrous all by itself in the hands of an adversary.

What a monstrous enemy.