

# Green and Blue Blues

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*The backstory of my Charater, Pretz. Itachi's in it too. Not good at describing things*

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# 1 - The Madness Begins

Upon a hilltop sat a silver haired jonin. She sighed and lay back in the cool grass. The war between Konoha and Iwagakure, the hidden village of stone, was almost over it seemed. But things were far from over for her. She rubbed her belly, now larger then ever from the infant inside, and boy was she a kicker. Feeling frustrated over not being able to help Konoha at all the past months, she removed her forehead protector, tossing it over her shoulder. A sudden "Ow!" was heard behind her.

She sat up and looked behind her. There stood another ninja. Short black hair stuck out over his own headband, but there was not the leaf's emblem, rather it was the stone's. He wore a simple red shirt, similar to the standard issue jonin jackets. Deep crimson, with two slits in each sleeve and a katar hanging at his waist. His emerald eyes were shining in the moonlight, spiral pupils looking odder then ever. His name was Sadano Ozate.

"I'm so sorry" She said, fairly embarrassed as he handed it back to her.

"It's alright. How are you?" He smiled.

"Nothing to report. Still the same old blimp"

He chuckled "Well, at least our child's healthy, right?"

She smiled. No one in the village knew one of the 'enemy' was the father, and with any luck it would stay that way. She couldn't stand the thought of ridicule on account of genetics. He smiled as she rested her head in his lap. He looked up at the stars, very worried his village would eventually find him and force him to fight against Konoha. He removed his forehead protector and set it in her hands.

"Wont you need this?" She looked puzzled.

He just smiled. "I'll be fine. When has a forehead protector ever actually done just that" Besides, I have the Narichi anyway"

She blinked. Either the pregnancy was making her stupid again, or he simply never explained this. She stared at him blankly. He chuckled and ran his fingers through her white hair, her pale white eyes almost glowing in the moonlight.

"The Narichi" He started "Has three stages. Stage one allows the user heightened senses and speed. Stage two partially transforms the user into a monster, and also allows the user to see body heat, making it almost impossible to hide. Stage three fully transforms the user into a terrible beast of pure hatred and rage. The most primal part of the brain takes control. So naturally I try not to use it... Pride of my village, sort of like those Sharingan are here"

She nodded. She would probably forget that all by morning as she slipped the forehead protector into her pocket.

The next day news came that the war was finally over. Sadano had died that morning; a shuriken to the forehead.

The next month the baby finally came, though a month premature. Her short hair was a very uneven color, far lighter in the front than back. As she held her sleeping daughter with a smile, the nurse came in, filling out some paperwork.

"Any thought on a name for her, miss?"

She thought for a moment and smiled.

"Pretz"

## 2 - A Turn For The Worst

The next month the baby finally came, though a month premature. Her very short was a very uneven color, far lighter in the front than back. As she held her sleeping daughter with a smile, the nurse came in, filling out some paperwork.

"Any thought on a name for her, miss?"

She thought for a moment and smiled.

"Pretz"

The nurse nodded and continued on her way. No one talked about the baby's eyes. Only in the privacy of the break room was it ever brought up. Her left eye was a brilliant blue, nothing out of the ordinary. The right eye however was green, and with a very unusual pupil shape; a spiral. A well known trait of the Ozate clan: Pride of the hidden village of stone. Medical ethics prohibited the nurses from gossiping, so naturally the whole village knew about it.

When it was time for their release, Katsuya grew nervous. She didn't know what kind of reaction others would have. As she walked she could plainly see the eyes of many a villager, along with several crude remarks along the lines of 'slut' or 'traitor'. Many people even went so far as to say the baby should be destroyed once they were out of earshot. The issue was even brought before the hokage. Rightfully, he immediately decided against it, as it would not be right because the infant had no idea of anything wrong.

Growing up Pretz had it rough. Many people would not allow their children to play with her. In fact most of the parents would simply turn the other cheek when their children would spurt out insults such as 'monster'. Mostly because they feared the Narichi. So Pretz would either play alone or stand to the side and watch others play. Watch them wrestle, or tell each other secrets. Or chase a select few boys who would run away in terror of cooties.

One fateful day after watching an entire game of hide and seek undetected (She was getting quite good at it) she sat on a wall and sighed. She still didn't understand why everyone hated her. Had she barfed on the hokage when she was a baby or something? How could an eight year old have no friends? It was getting dark, nay, already dark. Everyone had gone home for dinner with their families. She didn't bother. Her mother was away on a mission, as she often was, so a sandwich wasn't going to get cold or anything. She looked up at the sky, simply relaxing and looking at the stars, until she heard footsteps behind her. There stood a boy about her age. He had long black hair, tied in the back and parted in the front. His shirt was black with a very high collar. He stood beside her and smiled.

"Shouldn't you be at home? It's kinda late" He said.

She smiled. "Nah. My mom's away on a mission again"

"Heh, nice. I'm Itachi"

She looked nervous. Anytime someone had talked to her they were always shushed away by their mothers. She smiled awkwardly.

"My name's Pretz..... You don't think I'm weird?"

"Naw. I see nothing too out of the ordinary"

She chuckled grimly. "I was gonna say my eyes..."

"That's not so weird. Here, watch this"

He sat beside her, closing his eyes and concentrating. When he opened his eyes they were a bright crimson color; the sharingan. Pretz's eyes widened as she found herself on her hands and knees, leaning towards his bright eyes.

"Wooooaahhhhh.... That's awesome..."

The sharingan disappeared slowly.

"Yeah, it's something only my clan can do"

Pretz smiled. She had never thought about clans or bloodlines much before. For as long as she could remember it had just been her and her mother, who had no real extraordinary powers to speak of. She just had high taijutsu and ninjutsu. She simply smiled.

"Well, I've just got this one eye here, but I don't think it does anything special like yours. To tell the truth, I wish I didn't have it. It's the reason everyone makes fun of me, it seems"

"That's a shame"

He reached out towards her face. She flinched for a moment. He messed with the white part of her hair carefully and smiled.

"I like your hair"

After a while, Itachi's mother came looking for him and he had to leave. They agreed to meet tomorrow around the same time. Pretz went home and ate her sandwich happily. As she crawled into bed she couldn't help but feel happy. Maybe, just maybe, she had made a friend.

The next few weeks were like a dream. They would sit and talk, or play tag, wrestle, play ninja, though Itachi usually won that one, or just share sandwiches. One day in particular they were racing around the streets of Konoha, Pretz ran straight into someone, causing him to drop his new book he was so wrapped up in. She apologized and handed the orange covered book back to him.

The next day Pretz brought some sandwiches, but Itachi had other plans. So they went back to Pretz's

house and put the sandwiches in the fridge. They walked through the streets calmly talking.

"Itachi-kun, where are we going?"

"My mother gave me some spending money yesterday. I wanted to do something special. Oh, here it is!"

They stood before a small ramen stand. They walked in and climbed up on the stools. Pretz looked around curiously. She had never been to one of these before.

"Heh, Uh, Itachi-kun... I have no idea what's good or not, nor do I have any sort of money"

"Don't worry about it. Two spicy shrimp ramens, please"

After several glasses of water and pieces of bread, they finally finished the ramen, completely stuffed. They walked through the park playing catch with some old baby toy. Inevitably, Pretz missed and was pegged in the head. She fell over backwards and laughed, a small bump coming in on her head.

"Sorry, Pretz"

"Heh, it's alright' People say I have a big forehead anyways" She said as she poked at the bump.

Itachi carefully took the forehead protector off of her neck. Her mother had given it to her last year for her birthday. She said it belonged to her dad. Itachi tied it around her forehead and smiled.

"There. No one will notice the bump now" He smiled "Hey you wanna meet my baby brother?"

She blinked and nodded. She followed him back to where the Uchiha houses were. The forehead protector slipped from her head back onto her neck. As they entered the house Itachi's mother politely said hello, and his father just stayed silent. As they went into the other room to see the baby, Itachi's father finally spoke up.

"That's the child with the Narichi....." It was never said in a nice tone.

Itachi's mother just sighed. "Well, I think it's sweet. He has a friend. Don't muck it up"

Meanwhile, the two children walked over to the mat on the floor where the baby played with his toys.

"This is my brother, Sasuke"

Pretz smiled "He kinda looks like you"

"Yeah but he's not as cool as I am"

The two of them played with baby Sasuke for some time, until it got dark and Pretz had to leave. Itachi wanted to at least walk her home, but his father protested with a stern 'no'.

"It's alright Itachi-kun. I'll see you tomorrow" She waved and took the walk home alone.

The next day they met in the park. They had only been playing ninja for an hour before getting tired. They sat in the grass and laughed.

"Thank you, Itachi-sama....."

"Huh? For what?" He looked quite taken back.

"For being my friend" She leaned over and kissed his cheek softly.

He turned bright red and smiled. They played in the park the rest of the day. Once it got dark he had to leave for dinner and Pretz stayed behind. As he left she smiled and yelled. "Run, Run!" She lay in the grass looking at the stars like she normally did. They were as shiny as ever. Everything was great, until she heard a voice behind her.

"HEY!"

She quickly turned around, but was not met by a smile, or even a face. Only a rock to her forehead. It was obviously not thrown by any kind of expert, just some angry soul. After looking up again, blood dripping into her hand from her head, she saw a small crowd. Some of them had sticks, swords, or knives. On first instinct she took off running, but being small, they quickly caught up with her by throwing a miniature shuriken at her back. In a flash of blood, dirt, tears, and such, they beat her senseless. Slash marks covering her back, and there were several small shuriken embedded in it. Her right eye felt as if it were on fire. She felt a pulse of rage run through her suddenly. No one really knows what happened that night, but the next morning the bodies of ten people were found in the park.

She had no idea how far away from Konoha she had run by the time it started to rain. She finally tripped and fell into the mud by a small stream. She looked at her face in the water, looked at her eye. The eye that had caused people to hate her, caused all of this. She took off her father's forehead protector and tied it around her head so that it covered up that eye.

### 3 - Savior

She sat in the wet grass, her hands trembling like crazy, tears flowing from her eyes. Everything had happened so fast. With a horrified look upon her face she hastily began wiping the blood from her hands onto the grass. Little snippets of what just happened were racing through her head. The blood, the screams, that terrible feeling of rage though all of it. As she continued to fail to get the blood off her hands continued to tremble as she panicked. "No no no!" She curled into a ball on the ground, the heavy rain pouring on her face. Why was all this happening? She wanted to go home. She wanted her mother. The moving grass making the fresh wounds on her back sting, she sat up. Legs extended slightly, leaning over, she folded her arms, setting them, along with her head on her knees.

After some time of crying, she no longer felt the rain on her back. She looked up confused. The rain had not stopped. She peered around, uncertain. Behind her was another girl holding an umbrella forward. She smiled with the umbrella hanging over Pretz. She had long, straight golden hair and golden eyes. The falling rain started turning her light blue shirt dark. She smiled curiously at Pretz, trying not to look at her mangled back.

"Need a hand?"

Pretz said nothing for a moment, then smiled weakly as she whispered a quiet 'Thank you'. She stood up slowly, walking beside the stranger as she began to walk back the way she came. They walked silently for a time, until the girl finally spoke up.

"So.... Mind if I asked... Where the devil did you come from?"

Pretz looked at the ground for a moment. "K-Konoha...."

She smiled. "I'm Himine. Himine Sechi"

"Pretz....."

They said nothing more. They walked toward the outskirts of a village and up to a small house. Pretz cautiously stood behind Himine as she rang the bell. Himine smiled.

"Don't worry so much. This is my house"

An older girl with darker golden hair, almost brown, came to the door.

"Hello- ... Oh It's just you Himine. You know, being your sister, you should actually listen to me for once and not go out in the rain all the time"

"Pssh. Onee-san, this is Pretz" She said, nudging Pretz in front of her. "Can you take a look at her?"

"What the-? Holy hell, what happened to you?" She said. She started to shush them inside, until Pretz



finally fainted from exhaustion. Catching her, Himine's sister carried her to a nearby table, laying her on her stomach.

"Go bring me my wound ointments and such"

"How much?"

"All of it you dolt" She said, cutting off the tattered remains of Pretz's shirt back, and slowly peeling it away. The wounds hadn't started to scab yet because of her sitting in the rain. "What the hell did you get yourself into, kid? Oh, thanks Himine. Wait, where the hell are you going?"

"I'm getting some juice or something"

"No, you stay here in case she wakes up while I'm working on her" She began to run various ointments on Pretz's wounds, stitching up one of the holes left by a kunai. After some time she looked at Himine with a smile "No, you can't keep her"

She bandaged up the work she had done on her back and carefully turned her so her face could be worked on. She untied the forehead protector and set it on a desk. "Was this kid a ninja or something? I've never seen wounds like the ones on her back before, except for one time. That abuse case with the whips and such"

"I don't think so. I mean look at her. She's younger than I am"

"Well, whatever the case may be, she's very lucky. Though I must say, I've never seen hair like this before" She sighed and carried Pretz over to a bed and set her down under the covers. "She sleeps in your bed. Now please, don't bring home anymore stray animals, or people tonight. I need my rest"

When Pretz awoke she was in too much pain to move. She spent a whole day just staring at the wall the bed was next to. No speaking, no thinking. Simply blank. It wasn't until the next day she actually moved. Himine had brought her some food. She smiled.

"Oh so you're awake then, Pretz. Here, I brought you some food, but if you're feeling up to it we can go get something that tastes better. My sister isn't always the best cook when she's in a hurry"

Pretz nodded, keeping her green eye closed all the while. She grabbed her forehead protector off the desk and tied it onto her eye once more. She followed Himine through the streets quietly, occasionally asking a question or two.

"So... where are we?"

"You don't know? The hidden village of rain. So anyways, how old are you and why the heck were you alone the other night?"

"I'm eight, but I really don't wanna talk about that right now"

"I'm nine. It's alright. We're here anyway"

They stood before something that appeared to be a run down shack. Himine smiled and told Pretz not to worry, and that appearances could be deceiving. As they stepped inside it was a small restaurant, and a nice looking one at that. Himine had Pretz sit and she went to get some food.

“What kind of ramen do you like?”

After a moment of thinking, she answered with a slight smile “Spicy shrimp”

A little bit later Himine returned with a tray. “Okay, so I’ve got pork miso with an egg for me, and spicy shrimp for you. I’ve got two strawberry bubble teas. Don’t ask, just drink it. And the main course, just some simple burgers. With cheese of course”

They both ate, talking lightly with each other. Himine asked Pretz if she wanted to stay here, or what she was going to do. Pretz didn’t know. Half of her wanted to be as far away from Konoha as possible, and another half wanted to go back. But how could she go back? What was there to go back to now?

“Hey, Pretz. Since you dunno what you’re gonna do just yet, why not come to school with me tomorrow? We’re doing survival stuff”

Pretz agreed as they walked home. When they arrived home, there was Himine’s sister, standing at the door.

“Well, good to see you up and moving, but why didn’t you eat what I made you? Hmmmmmm?”

“Cause I can find better food”

“Well since you guys have eaten, I guess we’ll have dinner later. But Pretz, I’m not gonna beat around the bush. How’d you get those slashes on your back?”

Pretz said nothing. She only looked down. Himine sighed. Her sister crouched down beside them with a smile.

“By the way, I’m Saruko. And maybe your minds just blocked it out... Maybe.....”

“Maybe...?”

“Maybe a negi would help you remember?” Saruko grinned, holding up a leek.

Pretz leaned toward Himine. “What’s a negi?”

Himine whispered something in Pretz’s ear, which was quickly followed by a look of pure horror.

“ARE YOU CRAZY, WOMAN?!”

Saruko laughed and went inside. The next morning as Himine was leaving for school she stopped Pretz.

“You might wanna take off that headband. It is the rain ninja academy after all. Here, if it’s really a big deal use this”

As she was handed a blue piece of fabric she tied it around her head. They headed off to the academy together. The teacher had no issue letting Pretz stay, as it was basic survival, pretty much taught everywhere. Later in the day Pretz had to leave because they were learning this for rain shinobi only. So she headed back to the house where Saruko was reading a book on the couch.

“Welcome home, munchkin. How was survival whateverness?”

“Alright I guess. I know how to survive in the woods now”

“Sweet. I’ve been here all day looking at this new medical stuff. Being a medic for ninjas ain’t easy. You get some pretty odd patients. Including you I suppose. So... Whaddya gonna do, anyway?”

“I don’t know. I can’t really go back to Konoha. And I can’t really-“

“No, no. I mean in life. C’mon. Eight year olds always know. A fireman, or a ninja, or a teacher are the answers I hear a lot”

“I’m not sure anymore” Pretz said, sitting on the floor by the couch “I used to know...”

She then began to recount little snippets of her life back home. How the kids would mock her. How her mother would try to make it all better. She could remember saying countless times ‘When I’m Hokage, then no one will ever mock me again!’ But it all seemed like a far off fantasy now.

“I see” Saruko sighed “Well, all I can say is follow your heart, not your brain. The brain thinks too much”

Pretz smiled. “Thank you Saruko-sama”

“Call me Onee-san”

That night Pretz and Himine sat on the roof and relaxed. Pretz sighed.

“What would you say if I said I might leave here...?”

“Then I guess I’d have to say... Then I guess I won’t give you the antidote”

“To WHAT?”

“To the poison you just drank!” Himine laughed.

“You really are a prick sometimes” Pretz smiled “Anyway it’d only be for a little while”

“Well, I’ll give you can keep the clothes I lent you then”

Pretz did look a bit different in her new clothes. Rather than her usual green shirt, she now wore a fishnet type shirt (Think Anko).

“Thank you. You think I should leave without your sister knowing? I really don’t want her chasing me with a leek again”

They hugged and walked to the edge of the village together. Pretz left on her way. Off to see whatever was out there. As Himine arrived home, her sister looked puzzled.

“Where’s Pretz?”

“Gone. Why else would her forehead protector be gone?”

“I see. You coulda told me, ya know?”

“I just did, didn’t I? But she’ll be fine”

Before long, ‘only gone a little while’ turned into a year. Nothing had really changed. Pretz still had a big forehead and Himine was still her same old pushy self. Only thing that had really changed was their age, and that Pretz was quite a lot stronger. As she approached the familiar village she smiled. It was like home to her. As she passed a familiar tree and sighed after tripping on the root.

“Did that last time too, sheesh”

But she didn’t have time to think because as soon as she looked up there was a speeding apple heading toward her face. She only just caught it and looked around.

“Alright, Himine, where are you? You’re a pretty crappy ninja”

Out of the bushes crawled Himine, now wearing darker blue shirt.

“Well, I’m not a ninja yet, but I’m more of one than you’ll be at this rate. I thought you said you’d be back soon” She chucked another apple at Pretz’s head, who easily caught it this time.

“I got caught up”

“For a friggin YEAR? You’ve gotten faster”

“That’s what happens when you live in the middle of nowhere. Stuff chases you and you run away really, really fast”

Himine smirked as Pretz stepped forward. A hidden trap closed around her foot, lifting her upside down, hanging from a branch. Pretz crossed her arms.

“Must you? Really?”

“Yes, until you tell me where you’ve been” Himine untied one end and took the hobbling Pretz home on

her new leash. Saruko must have seen them coming, because as a joke she ran out of the house holding a leek. Pretz screamed and cut the rope, hiding on the roof.

“Long time no see, munchkin” Saruko laughed, sporting a spiffy new chunin jacket.

“Yeah, and this could be why, sis”

They all went inside and did the usual family-like thing to do: Asked question upon question. Basically what they got wasn't too interesting. She had been all over the place. But what stuck out the most was the night she was attacked. By, as she described it, this weird wolf-like monster. It was a narichi user. She didn't remember the fight much at all. Just sharp pains here and there, and the unforgettable feeling of pure rage sweeping over her again. He had slung her against a tree and knocked her out. When she awoke he was gone, but there was a shiriken in her hand. They all agreed it was odd, and went for ramen.

Afterwards Himine was antsy, and really wanted to spar with Pretz. So it began out in the field. Himine charged at Pretz, hands at her side. Pretz put her hands up as Himine hit her, sliding back a good ten feet. She picked up the apple at her feet and threw it at her as a distraction, punching her in the gut, then a good kick to the side, sending Himine to the ground. Pretz backed up a few steps, her eyes flickered a moment to Saruko, who was munching on an apple. But the moments distraction was a mistake, because Himine soon threw what she thought was an apple. The rock hit Pretz in the same place the rock in Konoha had hit her. She toppled to the ground, wincing. What was this feeling? She lifted her forehead protector to a normal position to keep this from happening again. Her eye burned as the pupil began to turn a fiery orange.

Everything seems as if it had slowed down a lot. She could hear everything from Himine's charging footsteps to Saruko munching on her apple. She quickly ran forward, sliding and tripping Himine, then delivering a kick to her ribs, sending her into the tree's trunk. Saruko quickly called the match to an end after that, as both girls were out cold. As she carried them back one of her teammates approached her.

“Those your sisters?” He asked.

“Only one. One's just her friend. Weirdest thing though, I've never seen a nine year old move as fast as she does. It's bizarre” She said, walking back toward the house.

By the time Pretz woke up, Himine had already been up and about for a few minutes.

“Why is it...” Pretz smiled “That every time we meet, I end up bleeding?”

Himine laughed and shrugged. However their laughed was stopped when Saruko came in.

“Hey, hey you're supposed to be lying down, Himine. You bruised a rib today”

“Bruised a...” Pretz blinked “The hell?”

“I could ask you the same thing” Saruko looked at Pretz as Himine went into the other room “What the hell was that? I've seen chunin move much slower then that at their best”

"I don't know. I don't remember much of anything after she threw the rock at my head. And if you say the word negi, onee-san, I'm leaving"

Saruko smiled. "I see. Well, I'd get control of that if I were you. Look, I get the feeling you're not gonna be staying tomorrow, so I'll leave out some new clothes and a cloak for you. And hey, make sure you come back at least next year. Himine'll be a ninja then"

"I wouldn't miss it for the world"

"I do wish you would stay though"

"I can't" Pretz sighed "Even if I became a ninja here, I could never fight Konoha if I had to..."

Saruko gave a smirk "Oooooohhh... is it a boyyyyy?"

Pretz chuckled. "Heh, his name's Itachi Uchiha"

"I see....." Saruko looked a little grim "He's a genin now actually, I heard somewhere. Anyway, g'night Pretz"

Pretz left early the next morning. New clothes on, exactly the same she had before, but she now had a black cloak. She had seen a similar one from across a ravine once. But the one she saw had red and white clouds, this one was plain black. She also had a pretty nice sakkat (If you don't know, its those hats Itachi and Kisame wore during their first anime appearance) Now when it rained, she wouldn't get totally soaked. She tripped on the tree root once more and stopped. Someone was behind her.

"You're really leaving again, huh..."

Pretz smiled weakly at Himine "Yeah, I can never seem to stay anyplace too long. Maybe when you finish the academy you can come with me sometime."

After a long hug Pretz continued on her way with a smile. Saruko's words echoed in her mind. Itachi was a genin. That meant he was alright, for now anyway.

## 4 - Home

After a long hug Pretz continued on her way with a smile. Saruko's words echoed in her mind. Itachi was a genin. That meant he was alright, for now anyway.

Pretz wouldn't return till the next winter. Nothing of interest had really happened since last year. She was now ten years old and looking forward to seeing Himine as a ninja, given that she graduated a year early like she was supposed to. As she got closer to passing by Konoha she abruptly stopped. Someone else was standing in the clearing, blocking her path. It was a female ANBU member. Her mask was a standard kitsune mask, except for the markings. The markings on the left side were blue, though other green. The only other identifiable factor was her white hair. As snow started to fall, Pretz's sakkat protected her head, the cloak keeping her warm.

"What do you want?" Pretz said, with no real regard for the skill the ANBU members had.

"I'm ordered to stop all foreign ninjas from passing this point. Turn back now"

"What the hell makes you think I'm a ninja? I'm no one's dog!"

The woman pointed to the forehead protector that rested around Pretz's neck, since only her nose and below was visible.

"Turn back now, or I will have no choice but to use necessary force"

Pretz searched her pocket for a moment. The shuriken from the fight with that wolf creature was still with her. She smirked and hurled it at the woman's chest, but since she had almost no practice, it hit her square in the forehead of the mask. It cracked in two, falling to the ground, her cold white eyes exposed.

"Very well"

She charged forward, grabbing Pretz in some sort of arm lock. Pretz leaned forward, throwing her to the ground and jumping back. As the woman stood up Pretz charged forward, only to be blocked and kicked back into a tree. Many punches and kicks were exchanged, most of them blocked by each of them. It looked pretty bad. There was no way she could beat an ANBU, and she knew it. She jumped forward, slamming a rock into the woman's stomach. She fell backward, staggering. She turned into a log suddenly.

"What the- AH!?!"

A swift kick to Pretz's head sent her to the ground, but before she even hit the snow she was beaten several more times. As she rose to her knees slowly, she smirked. The woman was obviously very aggravated already that a ten-year-old could even hold her own against her.

"You're gonna have to do better than that, granny..." Pretz smiled, wiping the blood from her lip.

That's where she turned wrong. The woman performed an unfamiliar hand seal, and immediately started growing in size. It must have been some type of blood limit. Pretz looked in shock as she stood at least twenty feet tall, probably more. She immediately tried to make a run for it, but was slammed to the ground by one of the woman's hands. Lying on her back in the snow, she gasped for air. The woman applied both hands, a very angry look in her white eyes, she started crushing Pretz. As the earth below her cracked, she screamed in pain. As she pushed harder and harder, all Pretz could do was scream. Her head leaned back slightly, the sakkat falling off, exposing her face. Suddenly it all stopped.

The woman had already begun to shrink back down, a look of sheer horror on her face. As she staggered back she stared at Pretz for a moment before completely fainting. Pretz looked over at her one last time before coughing up a quantity of blood and going out herself. Soon after several other ANBU arrived, with a medical ninja, and examined the fallen woman.

"She'll be fine, she just needs rest. The kid however, she's too far gone"

And with that they left. The snow continued to fall. As Pretz came to she was in an all too familiar bed. She moved her eyes across the room just as Saruko ran over to her.

"No, no, no! Don't talk, don't move. Seriously. And leave that oxygen mask on too"

"Wha-?"

"What did I just say? Look, you've got cracked ribs, a broken arm and a lot of internal injuries. You have to stay in bed for a good while. I've given you some medicines, so you'll be allowed to move again in a week, maybe"

"How the hell did you give me m-meds? If you say n-negi I'll kick your @\$@"

Saruko smiled and walked across the room. "I'm heading to bed. You should try and get some rest. I'll see you tomorrow"

"G'night, onee-san"

And so Pretz stayed in Amegakure. Mostly because Saruko refused to let her leave until she fully recovered. She tried to escape though. She was caught within an hour. So while Himine was out on missions Pretz would wander around, or train herself, though she knew nothing of controlling chakra. Within the first few weeks she began to heal nicely. As Himine left for a mission, Pretz headed to the outskirts near the cliff for a walk. The cliff extended to a point in one spot, and was clear of trees for a solid thirty feet back from it.

Everything was going swell, until someone else arrived. He was someone from Himine's team. His spiky black hair stuck out over his forehead protector, and his icy blue eyes stared at her. His name was Kaji. He walked over to her with his arms crossed.

"Hey, narichi!"



Pretz turned around to face him, and was greeted by a good shove, and she tripped backwards.

"What the hell did I do to you? And what the hell are you talking about?"

"You know DAMN WELL what I'm talking about!" He yelled and punched her "You're all the same, you're monsters! I've seen that eye of yours!"

He gave her face a solid punch and she fell back over. As she started to get back up she was on her hands and knees.

"Why the hell-?"

"Why?" He kneeled down beside her "Because a group of you bastards killed my brother"

He kneeled her sharply in her still healing ribs. She screamed and collapsed to the ground. If it weren't for something her mother once told her, she might have reacted differently. She remembered it vividly.

One of the Konoha children had pushed her onto the sidewalk and she had scraped her knee. As her mother sat her on the couch and cleaned her cut she was a little surprised at how bent of revenge Pretz was.

"You shouldn't give them a response. Then they know they can keep doing it. And revenge is just sinking to their level"

Kaji kicked at her once more. "Get up! Fight back!"

"N-No..."

Pretz refused to fight back. Maybe it was because of what her mother said, or because of the amount of pain she was in. The world may never know. But the beating continued and he eventually left. Pretz just lay thinking. Maybe she really was a monster. It would make... sense.

She didn't move for a good half hour. As she walked home slowly she thought about what he had said. Maybe he was right. But standing at the door as usual was Saruko. She walked Pretz inside and put a Band-Aid on her forehead.

"Fat lip, hmm? Get into a fight?"

"No"

"Whatever the case, you need to take care of those ribs. Understand me?"

Perhaps it was out of laziness, or for no reason, but Pretz stayed. But not without a fair share of problems. Because her and Himine ended up like sisters life was prank after prank after prank. Pretz was asleep on the couch, relaxing, and laying on her belly. Himine took a can of air freshener and sprayed a very large amount on her butt. She then took a lighter and the rest is history. Pretz returned fire by pouring a whole bottle of baby powder on Himine's head in her sleep.

This continued for a solid three years, until one day Pretz spoke up while everyone was relaxing because Himine was going to take the chunin exam in a month or two.

"I think..." They all looked up at her "I think... I'm gonna go back to Konoha..."

A grim silence filled the room.

"You..... You sure?" Himine stuttered.

Nobody really spoke for the rest of the night. Pretz once again left while Himine was away. Saruko once again gave her a cloak and a sakkat. With a hug Pretz was off, but she could never stay away too long, despite the fact Saruko said she was going to give her a physical next time.

She was gone several months. She walked through the woods thinking to herself. She had gotten almost no better at controlling that weird feeling during fights when everything would go blank. What Kaji had called a monster. She started planning a trip to the hidden village of stone, though maybe next year. She looked up at a pair of all too familiar gates before her: Konoha.

## 5 - Return To Konoha

She was gone several months. She walked through the woods thinking to herself. She had gotten almost no better at controlling that weird feeling during fights when everything would go blank. What Kaji had called a monster. She started planning a trip to the hidden village of stone, though maybe next year. She looked up at a pair of all too familiar gates before her: Konoha.

This was the last place she thought she'd ever end up. She walked forward slowly. The empty street made it creepy enough, but the fact that it was Konoha made it almost nerve wrecking. As she began to calm down she passed through familiar places. Most of it hadn't changed much at all. It was the same old shops, occasional nick in a building side. As she passed the book store, the shelf extending outside still with books on it. The plastic cover was locked down to prevent theft. Pretz ran her hand along it and sighed. So many memories filled her mind. She glanced across the street. There stood the ramen stand. She made a mental note to stop there later.

As she walked for a short time, she stopped dead in her tracks. She noticed a wall that was very familiar. It was where she had met Itachi. She couldn't help but smile. Life had been better when he was around. She didn't know if people still made fun of her but she didn't care. He made her feel special, like she was the only one that mattered. As she looked at the wall she could picture the two of them sitting and laughing, sharing lunch, or just looking at the sky together. But then the image of Itachi faded, leaving the younger Pretz alone on the wall.

Pretz's smile faded and she sighed. She couldn't even remember why she decided to come back to Konoha. There were no real friends to go back to, and Itachi probably wouldn't even remember her even if she saw him. She was convinced her mother was most likely dead by now. So why did she come back?

In all her thought Pretz found herself at the Uchiha houses. The first thing that caught her eye was the lack of lighting. She gazed up at a wall illuminated by the moon. One of the Uchiha fans was severely cracked. She continued to walk through the complex. Maybe they were having a meeting? She saw a dark figure sitting atop a pole. Maybe he was hooking himself up some free cable or something. When she walked around the corner however she looked forward in horror. There were several bodies skewed about the street with blood to accompany them. She staggered back a few steps.

Upon looking again the while street was littered with bodies. She felt slightly faint as she fell over backwards. But something broke her fall. Something cold. As she looked behind her she screamed. She had landed on a body. She was up and running within an instant. She had only been running for a few seconds when she heard a scream.

It came from the general direction of Itachi's old house. It sounded way too young to possibly be him, but something drove her towards the house, and in a hurry. Maybe it's that other little booger. Ah, crap what was his name?! Sa something. Mother!

"Sasuke!" She rounded the corner and there he was on the ground.

She almost had a heart attack. He did resemble a younger Itachi quiet a bit. She darted over to him and checked his pulse. She sighed with relief that he still had one. He seemed fine. No real stab wounds or anything. She would have moved him inside his house, but the thought of more bodies was afloat in her mind now.

Someone was coming around the corner. She quickly darted onto the roof and tumbled off the other side. She finally found a quiet roof, far away from the Uchiha's. Everything that had just happened was finally sinking in. She curled her legs up to her chest and held them closely. She just cried and shook madly. Dead people were bad enough, but some of them had open eyes. Open and staring. As she began to lose breathe she slipped off the roof and hit the ground hard. She wasn't hurt; the wind was just knocked out of her. She just laid in silence.

It took her an hour to get up and dry the tears. She walked slowly, almost drunkly until she spotted the ramen place. She sighed and decided to get something to eat. As she sat at the stool there was only one other person there. A young boy with blond hair, and some sort of lines on his cheeks and a white shirt.

"What'll it be?" Asked the guy working there.

"Spicy shrimp"

The man smiled and started making the noodles. Pretz glanced over at the kid only to notice he was staring at her.

"What?" She asked.

"Your eyes are different colors"

"You're seeing things. Whatcha got there?"

He sighed. "Just some plain noodles in chicken broth. It's all I can afford"

"Why are you up so late anyway?"

He said nothing, so she asked a different question.

"A better question would what's your name?"

The boy grinned.

"My name's Naruto Uzumaki! I'm gonna become the next hokage, believe it!"

She paused, remembering her own dream to be hokage and smiled as her food was handed to her. She ate quietly as the boy picked at his ramen. As she finished, she paid and got up to leave. No sooner had she stepped outside the door and straightened her sakkat was she face to face with a high level ninja, by the look of it. She jumped slightly, and then composed herself.

"Can I help you?" She asked.

"Since there's been a murder, and I'm supposed to take in all suspicious persons walking about"

"What the hell makes you think I'm so suspicious!?"

She began to get very worried when he grabbed her arm, but the man working at the ramen stand stepped outside.

"Leave her be. She's been with me all night"

As the ninja left Pretz turned to the man.

"You didn't have to do that, you know"

"Sure I did, Pretz"

She was about to reply when she was rendered speechless.

"Wait, how do you.....?" She followed him back inside and sat down.

He pointed to the white hair that came down far enough down to be seen from the bottom of the sakkat.

"Only one other person has hair that color, and that's your mother" He smiled and flicked the sakkat, knocking it back off her head.

She blinked at the sudden increase of light. Because she had a hat on she hadn't bothered to fix her headband over her eye.

"Are you aware how creepy you sound, old man? That can't possibly be the only thing that gave it away though"

"Well... No one's ordered Spicy Shrimp in years for one thing. Itachi came in a few times after you left, but that was it"

The name froze her mind, and made her sad at the same time. The old man must have noticed because he smiled.

"He's fine. He's an ANBU nowadays. He was never really the same after you left though. Much more internalized. Scary change. Why did you leave?"

Pretz said nothing. What could she really say to that?

"You should have seen your mother, you know" He continued. Pretz said nothing "No one could convince her you were dead. She's an ANBU now as well. Everything was fine until a few years ago. She came back from a mission one night like she'd seen a ghost. Said she'd seen you. Well, everyone

thought she was crazy. She actually had to attend therapy, and take a break from her ANBU staff duties"

"I see"

He sighed and tilted his head back.

"You're not going to stay are you?"

Pretz shook her head. "No. I can't. It really seems like I only cause problems for the people here. If I came back it'd just-"

"Prove your mother right..."

"Just.... give her my regards I guess. Tell her I was here, ya know?" Pretz stood to leave.

"Here at least take this" He handed her some money "I don't want you starving to death"

Pretz smiled in thanks. She paused however and looked back toward the young boy. The old ramen man had already walked around the counter. She faced him and spoke quietly.

"That's the fox boy... isn't it?" When the old man nodded she sighed. "Then he's in for the same crap I was or maybe worse"

She put the wad of bills next to the boy, who looked confused. Pretz smiled and turned to the girl behind the counter.

"Pork miso ramen with an egg. He keeps the change"

Naruto still looked a bit lost. Pretz grinned and ruffled his hair.

"Don't ever lose that dream of yours, kid"

And with that she was off again. This time with a full belly and empty wallet. When she reached the city outskirts she looked behind her at the gates. This was it, she was leaving again. She almost thought she saw a younger Itachi sitting on the gate. She sat leaning against the city wall and sighed. She was exhausted, there was no disputing that. She tried to fight it, but she slowly slipped off to sleep.

She had only rested for a few moments when a shadowy figure emerged from the bushes. He wore armor that looked blood spattered, including one distinct handprint that looked smeared. He had sharp lines under his eyes, which glowed crimson. His long black hair was a dead giveaway. It was Itachi. It took him a moment, but he recognized her as he crouched beside her and sighed.

"Of all the nights to come back..."

She certainly couldn't stay here. It probably wasn't going to be safe for her by morning. He picked her up and began to walk away from Konoha, but very soon someone was coming. He quickly tossed her into a bush and turned his armor inside out. He gave a quick nod to the silver haired ANBU as she ran by,

probably having just received orders to investigate the Uchihas. He fixed the armor and fished Pretz out of the bushes.

With a chuckle he continued to walk along with the sleeping Pretz in his arms. He would have to walk all night to get far enough away from Konoha, and he did. By the time he reached the outskirts of the hidden village of rain he had to stop. Not only was killing people hard work, carrying dead weight was no easy task either. He propped her against a tree trunk, thinking what might keep her asleep a little while longer. He opened one of her eyes and trapped her in some sort of light genjutsu. It would only last a few hours then dispel on its own, but until then she would be in a state of relative peace.

He sat against a tree a few feet away. 'What the hell do I do now?' He thought. He certainly couldn't just leave her there, could he? He definitely didn't know any places he could take her. He glanced at the horizon. He could now see the small town. This would probably work fine. He tilted his head back and sighed. Before he knew it the sun was starting to rise. As he stood up to leave he remembered the last thing Pretz had said to him. Run, Run! Hold on to life! He couldn't help but laugh that he'd just told Sasuke the same phrase, yet it was so different. He would have to leave immediately. People were bound to start trickling outside soon enough. He quickly leaned down beside her and kissed her goodbye.

Before long Himine had wandered into the woods and spotted her. She prodded Pretz until she awoke, but even then it was only for a few seconds. So Himine carried Pretz over her shoulder. In one more blur of consciousness Pretz thought she saw Itachi in the clearing, but what were the odds of that?

By the time Pretz woke up again it was almost dark again. She and Himine caught up. Himine had become a chunin, Saruko had advanced as a medical ninja, and Kaji was still an @\$\$. They went out for bubble tea that night. Pretz and Himine sat on the roof and Pretz couldn't resist poking fun at Himine.

"Soooo... Got any love interests while I was away?"

Himine paused. "I think so... I met them at the chunin exams... Only a year older than me and a jonin in Konoha..."

"That doesn't tell me much-"

"The point I'm making here, Pretz, would be that... well I think..... I think I'm gay....."

And with that Pretz spit the bubble tea and a barrage of the pearls that were in it all over some innocent bystander "WHAT?"

Himine explained the whole scenario. Pretz didn't have a problem with it at all; it just came as a bit of a shock. But things would become more bizarre that night.