

One typical night in Konoha

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My character is a mild tempered ninja who is the youngest Anbu Black Op in Konoha history.

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1 - One typical night in Konoha

One typical night in Konoha village, a young teen ninja sat in a bar. Yes she wasn't actually old enough but everyone knew her so they figured it was all right. She was only thirteen years old, soon to be fourteen, but everyone knew she was one of the most responsible ninjas in the Leaf village. She had beautiful brown, green eyes and long brown hair. She was very well built for her age. Many of the older men in Konoha adored her. But she paid them no mind, which made them want her more. She had already chugged down six cups of sake when a older man came into the bar. He had extremely wild, silver hair and was pretty attractive for an old man. Hey, get me your largest keg of sake. I'm feeling like celebratin'. The old geezer said roughly. The young girl known as, Kari Mitsukai, just stared at him. He was so hot; she just wanted to leave with him. A wide blush went across her face when she thought about it. She slid her pale of sake down to his side of the bar. He looked at her. Ain't you a little young to be drinkin', missy? He asked slyly. Jiraiya, sir, this is Kari. She's one of the most responsible ninjas we have here in Konoha. The bartender said cheerfully. Is that so? Hm& He glanced over at her, How old are you, girly? He asked curiously. Thirteen&almost fourteen, sir. Why do you ask? She questioned. Just wonderin'. Cause they say you're the most responsible&but how can you be responsible if you're drinkin' at only thirteen? Jiraiya asked&he was asking to many questions. Was up with old fold and all their questions? Kari asked short temperedly. Hey, Kari, was it? I'm just askin' cause I'm curious, that's all. He said hoping he wouldn't get beat up by a mere teen-ninja. Whatever. Ba-ten&get me and my&old man, another round of sake, will ya? Kari asked somewhat slurring. Um&I think you've had enough, Kari. Jiraiya said concerned about the young woman's behavior. I ain't done, till I say I'm done. Got it? Kari said briskly. Ok&but if you have a mighty hangover tomorrow I ain't going to help, cause I warned you. Jiraiya said, he began looking up and down her curvaceous body. She was merely fourteen and she had the body of a beauty in her mid-twenties. Kari, I couldn't help wondering&why is it you have a body of a twenty year old when you're still only about fourteen? Jiraiya asked while glancing at her beautiful form. I don't know. Early hormones or something. Why? She asked hoping he wasn't getting any nasty ideas that, she didn't know, he was famous for. I was just observing, and wondering. He said simply. Ba-ten&where's our sake? She asked sweetly. I'm sorry, Miss Mitsukai, but we have run out. The man said hoping she wouldn't attack him like she had before. Ok, can you give me our bill, please? We'll be taking our business elsewhere. She said sweetly. Is this how she always is or is this just a mask? Jiraiya asked himself. She glanced at Jiraiya hoping he agreed. He nodded. She smiled in return glad that she wouldn't be wandering from bar to bar alone. She opened her back pocket and took out the biggest wad of cash Jiraiya had ever seen. How does a kid like you get that much cash? He asked with his jaw hanging. I work everyday repairing houses and the barrier around Konoha. The 5th Hokage pays me pretty well and anyone else whose houses I'm fixing. She said simply with a large smile across her face. She took out a fifty, signed the bill, and gave the bartender the money. C mon Jiraiya!! Kari said enthusiastically. The bartender grabbed Jiraiya. We still have some left, I just don't want her over doing it. The bartender whispered. Jiraiya nodded. I'll try and convince her she should go home. Jiraiya replied also whispering. Wait up, Kari. Jiraiya yelled trying to catch up with the young drunk. Holy shuriken she's attractive. Jiraiya thought to himself, a large, naughty grin spreading across his face. He had the hots for a fourteen year old. That was a new record. He walked beside the young teen hoping she wouldn't stop at another bar. She was telling him how she was allowed to drink at any alcoholic establishment. She talks a lot when she's drunk. It's kind of cute, really. Jiraiya thought to himself admiring his accomplice's body, watching her butt when she walked. He tried so hard not to grab

it, afraid that if he did she and everyone who knew her d kill him. His will power wasn't strong enough though. He firmly grabbed the right cheek enjoying the tight feel. She just glanced at him happily. She's enjoying it? He was surprised and confused. She stopped and pulled him into an alley. Jiraiya? She asked. Hmm. Jiraiya said while squeezing her bun harder. She slightly moaned. Do you want me? Kari asked. Want you for what? He asked with a devious grin on his face. Do you want me, in general? Kari asked with the cute little hurt bunny look on her face. Oh, yeah. He said in his perverted manner. Can we go to Akutopi bar first? Kari asked shyly. Then can I research you? He asked in his hermit voice. She shrugged. Let's go! He said happily just wanting to use her for his so called research. She was happy. She finally got him to want her. She was beaming with joy. Akutopi pub Kari said loudly. This is my favorite place to come. Jiraiya and Kari said in unison. Really? How frequently do you come here kid? Jiraiya asked curiously. Not too often but it serves the best sake in any of the villages that I've been to. Kari replied when she was already half way in the door. I've caught a good one. Nice body, alcoholic, loaded with cash, and best of all she likes my perverted ways. Jiraiya thought with a grin from ear to ear. He walked in and yelled, Is Kitsune in tonight? He asked one of the younger men who worked at the pub. Yeah he's round back, I'll go get him for you, Jiraiya. The young man said while eyeing Kari who was sitting at her usual spot at the pub. The man walked into the back cellar and called, Kitsune, your fat oaf of a friend is here, and it seems he's brought one of our favorite customers along with him. The young guy said with a wide grin. It seems that whenever a man speaks or sees Kari they are always grinning a large mouthed grin. Hey, Hebi, he coming or not? Jiraiya yelled starting to get annoyed. He'll be up in a sec. Hebi replied sternly. If you don't cool your jutsu down soon you won't be getting served, Hebi yelled, while hearing a loud groan coming from the large old man. It's ok Jiraiya, if they don't serve you we can go to Kajitsushu, instead. Kari said loudly hoping that Kitsune and Hebi heard her. The two men came rushing from the back cellar holding her favorite sake in hand. They placed it before her; all they got in response was a large and sweet smile from the young customer. Thanks guys. Kari said cutely but with a tired look on her face. She poured Jiraiya a glass of sake and began chugging the rest from the bottle. She was so tired she just rested her head on his shoulder and yawned. It had been nearly three hours since they had arrived and Kari had drunken six bottles of sake, and Jiraiya had drunken nine bottles. Here's your tab miss. Will that be all for tonight? Kitsune and Hebi asked. Yes, thank you. That'll be all for a few days, besides I've gotta go to work in three hours. Dang it. Why'd the night go by so quickly? Kari said tiredly. She took out the wad of money she stashes in her back pocket and gave them a hundred. She on Thursday, guys. She said hugging the two men. Jiraiya saw how tired she was and decided he'd save her until tomorrow night. He threw her over his back and he began to take her to his house since it would be much quicker than trying to find her home. I'll take you to my house, you can shower, and you can sleep for an hour or two, okay? He asked. She had already fallen asleep on his back. She kind of reminds me of Tsunade. Drinker, nice figure, has a lot of money, except she doesn't seem to gamble like Tsunade does. Jiraiya thought to himself looking at the sleeping form he was carrying. She was like an angel but she had a fierce bite. Finally after a few long minutes they arrived at his home. He quietly opened the door, and walked inside to his living room. He placed Kari on the couch and searched for a blanket. He walked up his stairs and began disposing of his clothes got into the shower and turned on the water.

Jiraiya got out of the shower put a towel on and walked into his bedroom only to find Kari laying asleep on his bed. He grabbed some bottoms put them on and climbed into bed. He was amazed that she had come upstairs and fell asleep on his bed. He thought it was old and rickety and very uncomfortable. But she was probably too tired to care. Next thing he knew he heard her frantically scurrying around his room. I'm late&oh man, I'm so dead. Tsunade's going to kill me for being late. Kari said, while running around the room. Kid, just go take a shower and I'll worry about Tsunade, okay? Jiraiya asked. Okay.

Kari somewhat calmed down and walked into the bathroom, shut the door and he heard her clothes fall to the ground. Oh how he wished he could watch, but he knew he would have to help her out first before he could do his research. He hurriedly got dressed and rushed out the door. I've gotta tell Tsunade the truth&aw&who am I kidding she's gonna think I took advantage of the kid. Jiraiya thought while leaping quickly from roof to roof trying to get to the Hokage as fast as possible. Tsunade. He said while out of breath. Yes. What is it you want, Jiraiya? Tsunade asked frustrated.

She&is&taking&a&shower&at&my&house. He said panting from running so hard. Why would she be at your house? She asked curiously thinking one thing and one thing only. Not for the reason you're thinking&she was bar hopping last night and when I met up with her she was practically falling out of her seat. She was drunk and tired, so I took her to my house so she could get at least an hour or two of sleep. He said regaining his breath. She cocked an eyebrow figuring he was probably lying. I doubt that, highly, Jiraiya. That doesn't sound like something you'd do. You are the pervy type who takes advantage of girls like that. Tsunade said angrily. I wish people would believe me every once in a while. Besides she wanted me to take her to another bar but I said she had had too much to drink. She had dragged me to Akutopi pub. She and I had sixteen bottles of sake altogether and she covered the bill again. He said truthfully, probably for the first time in his life. Is that so, Jiraiya? Ero-sennin. She asked. Well, this is obviously no lie since you are actually keeping eye contact, but wait&you want this girl don't you? Tsunade asked, oh so curiously. Sweat dripped down Jiraiya's face. I knew it. You will leave her alone you, understand? But make sure she gets to work soon, or I'll kill you. The 5th Hokage demanded. Yes&yes ma'am. He said, terrified. He hurried to his home hoping she wasn't done with her shower. He couldn't help his naughty thought, that's what he was built around. He arrived at his front door, cracked it open and slipped inside quietly. He used his jutsu to arrive upstairs unnoticed. She was drying off and noticed he was home. She shrieked and grabbed the towel to wrap it around her. She slid back over to the bed trying to keep away from him. I bought you some clean clothes on my way back. Hopefully they aren't too big for you. The old hermit said showing her the Anbu Black Ops uniform he had purchased for her. She slid underneath the covers and peered above them. She outreached a hand to grab them from him. She quickly started to poke back under the covers and she used her jutsu to replace the towel that was around her with the anbu attire. She hopped out of the bed and ran over to give Jiraiya a thank you hug. He blushed as soon as he felt her melons against his stomach. She slipped on an anbu mask resembling a badger and set it on top of her head. So you really are an Anbu black op after all. Hmm. Jiraiya said, he was actually surprised. Yep. The youngest Anbu Black Op member in Konoha history. Kari said proudly. Well we better get this anbu back to work or my butt is as good as gone. Jiraiya said worried about his safety, which was in Tsunade's hands. If you do anything wrong I'll make sure to keep you alive. Besides this house is the nicest I have seen. Kari said somewhat distantly. Don't you have a house and parents that worry about you? Jiraiya asked kind of confused by her quick changes in emotions. No. She said darkly. I don't have anything or anyone. That's why every guy in this darn village is trying to get with me, because they know I don't have any parents that could stop them. They want me because I look older than I am and because I act responsible and am wise for my age&no comment. She said almost beginning to cry. I'm sorry. I'm one of the only people who didn't or doesn't know. I didn't mean to make you upset. Jiraiya said concernedly. She shook her head trying to get rid of the pictures that floated in her head about how her parents died. She was sobbing. Do you want me to tell Tsunade that you aren't in working condition today? Jiraiya said. That pervert part of him was still there causing him to hug the young naive girl. Oh man she has nice melons. I just want to squeeze them. Jiraiya was becoming aroused which wasn't something the young girl needed to see. Ok off to work with you then. I can help if you need. But you're gonna have to instruct me on it. Jiraiya said, just thinking about watching her with that skintight suit made him warm and fuzzy. He would stare at her as much as he could.

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Jiraiya followed the young anbu across the village and they finally stopped at a tiny little home that had a large hole in the wall. Time to get cracking. Well, actually fixing. Anyways& Kari said excitedly. She did hand signs that were too quick for Jiraiya to make out. Then he saw an enormous amount of chakra come pouring out of Kari. He began watching her as the wall slowly began to fill in. She has a large amount of chakra and for such a young age, too. Her hand signs are even too quick to comprehend. She is an amazing ninja. He thought while gaping in awe of this young beauty. All done. The hole is fixed so, on to the next destination&Jiraiya? Kari was confused as to why he was gawking at her but she ignored it easily. She quickly began leaping away from the finished job leaving Jiraiya behind. If he ain t gonna pay attention, well, I ain t gonna wait. She thought as she began feeling a quick breeze and a presence beside her. Thought you were gonna get rid of me, huh, kid? Jiraiya said flatly. Maybe. Too bad it didn t work you old geezer. She replied jokingly as she quickly and easily sped up. She had arrived at the crack in the barrier that surrounded Konoha village. It was all that was left from Orochimaru s devastating attack. She once again, like before. Opened up her pool of chakra and applied t to the barrier to repair it. She stood there for three hours allowing her chakra to flow out of her and into the wall. As soon as the last bit of crack was filled she fell over in exhaustion. Jiraiya had been watching and waiting in a tree. He noticed her falling to the ground and quickly caught her. Should we take you to go get your pay? Jiraiya asked the tired girl he held in his arms. She nodded. He carried her bridal style to Tsunade s headquarters. Welcome back, Jiraiya. Oh, poor thing. She said glancing at the bundle he had in his arms. You can lay her in the lounging chair over there. Tsunade instructed. He did as he was told. He gently placed Kari on the chair allowing her to sleep. So what did you think of her job, Jiraiya? Tsunade asked deviously. How the heck can that kid pull it off? Jiraiya asked while pointing at the sleeping, Kari. She has unlimited chakra. She contains a demon much like the Kyuubi that is inside Naruto. Tsunade said calmly. That would explain things somewhat. But how can she control it so easily? Jiraiya asked. She was born with the demon inside her and since her training began she has been a top student. She doesn t know she has this demon, but she just thinks she s special and has an increasing amount of chakra. Tsunade replied agitatedly. Jiraiya nodded. He was tired for some odd reason and decided to go to sleep but he wouldn t leave Kari here. So he sat beside the lounging chair and dozed off. When he awoke it was well passed sunrise and he looked up to see Kari was resting her chin on his head. Morning sleepy head. Kari whispered not wanting anyone to know she was awake. Morning? Jiraiya asked groggily. Yep. I don t have to work today so I thought I should wake up early and watch the sunrise. It was captivating, with all the tints and colours. Kari said peacefully. She got up and out of bed seeing that Jiraiya was getting ready to get up and leave. She jumped in front of him and put her hand out. Need help, sensei? She asked cheerfully with a wide and happy grin on her face. Sensei? Jiraiya asked. Yeah&oh&sorry about that. I just remembered. I was gonna ask you if you would train me so I could learn some new jutsu. She said still with that wide grin on her face, which slowly disappeared when she saw his troubled face. You don t wanna train me either, do you? She asked sadly. Um&perhaps. I may need to see some of your techniques first. He said tiredly. She bowed her head respectfully. She s so much like Naruto, but so much more respectful and gorgeous. He thought naughtily. He was grinning. She helped him up off the ground and pulled him out the door. Come on, Jiraiya let s get going. She said excitedly. I wanna prove I can be a worthy student. She continued. You re more than worthy, I just wanna see what you ve got and what needs to be learned. For her all she needs to for the sexy-no-jutsu is take her clothes off. He thought drool sliding down his

chin. Wait&after this can we go shopping for groceries and stuff? Kari asked while gliding from each rooftop dragging Jiraiya along. Yes, but only if you stop dragging me. Jiraiya said halfheartedly. Fine. She said, I guess she liked dragging me. Maybe she wanted to hold my hand. Jiraiya thought smiling largely and genuinely again. She threw his hand out of hers. She quickly sped up and jumped high into the air landing daintily on the ground. She landed in a fighting stance ready to perform any jutsu she was told. Ok. I guess this is a good spot. Jiraiya said falling onto the dirt landing on his knee. He looked almost elegant. She shook her head to dispose of the thought. Know any good jutsu? Jiraiya asked. She nodded. She closed her eyes and when she opened them one had become bright purple. Why d her eye change colour? Jiraiya asked himself. Jiraiya shrugged. She quickly looked at Jiraiya and immediately saw what kind of jutsus he knew. Rasengan. She shouted emitting a bluish ball formed in her hand. How&but&What the? Jiraiya asked dumfounded. My tomokenzanboushi. It allows me to see any jutsu whether it be taijutsu, genjutsu, or ninjutsu. It s my greatest weapon. Kari said timidly, but with much pride in her voice. That may be useful in your training then kid. Jiraiya said in his tolerant voice. This chic has more experience then I do now and she s like a fourth of my age. He frowned. But shook his head when he noticed she was giving him a weird stare. I knew it. Kari said with excitement. Knew what? Jiraiya asked annoyed. I knew you were jealous. She replied. What can you read mines, too? He asked furiously. He growled. She flinched and backed away from him with a terrified look on her face. She had landed against a tree and jumped up t hoping he wouldn t follow. Why is he so angry at me? Didn t mean to upset him. Kari whispered to herself, beginning to cry. Dang it Jiraiya you made a kid cry. He said to himself growling at his somewhat short temper. For some reason around her with her being more than one personality it was hard to stay calm. He heard a rustle in the tree and saw she was trying to get away. He jumped up and grabbed Kari s wrist. You aren t leaving. Remember you said you wanted to go buy groceries and stuff. Jiraiya said with an ashamed look on his face. She just pouted as he carried her, holding her between his arm and his side like you carry logs. I hate you! Kari said bitterly. I wanna go home. She said through clenched teeth. You can t because it s my house. Jiraiya said, tired of her pouting. I don t care I ll leave this village if that s what it takes to get away from this old grouch. Kari growled. I thought old people were supposed o be happy! Kari said, hoping to get his attention. Who you calling old? He asked sourly. You, you old geezer. Kari said while trying to flail to get out of his arm. Finally she got out. I don t care if I m needed in this village if someone like you, would give me shelter and then yells at me. That s not a good atmosphere for an orphan. She said grudgingly with an evil looking frown on her face. He cringed to see her so angry. I m sorry, Kari. Jiraiya said, knowing that her being an orphan just like Naruto, that it must be hard to live everywhere in one village and not actually have a home or family. He bent down to one knee and cupped her chin causing her to look at him. He smiled at her hoping she would smile back. He got just that. She jumped into his arms to hug him. He felt like what he thought a father felt like, for that one moment. Then she let go, tears streaming down her face. She looked at him with so much pain. I know what s inside me. No one will tell me but I found out by looking at the Hokage s scroll. Onikouryaku. Kari said quietly. You should know not to go peeking around the Hokage s belongings. Jiraiya said seriously. Why not? The *thing* I was born with was the same *thing* that killed my parents eleven years ago. Why should I not know about that? She asked tearfully. Because, it was stated by the third and fourth Hokage that you must never find out. The effects of you knowing such things may allow the beast to come out of you and create the same destruction as it did the first time. Jiraiya said knowingly, hoping he wasn t upsetting her. Now let s go shopping, shall we? He said while getting up and picking her up off the ground. Ok. She said emotionlessly. He sighed deeply. There s a book store that I need to go to while you re shopping so I ll be back in an hour to come and help you with the groceries. Jiraiya said deviously. Sure you pervy hermit. Kari said intelligently knowing which *bookstore* he was talking about. He flinched, Does she really know? Ah crap. Jiraiya thought devastated. She shrugged and went to the

produce. I think I'll get him a papaya and an apple. Kari said quietly. She read down the list she had written. *Pork loaf, tomatoes, chives, celery, wine, sake, wheat, flour, and honey.* She quickly picked up the items on her list and told the grocer to hold them for her until she got back. Yes, ma'am. The old grocer said sweetly. She bowed her head and went off to Jiraiya's bookstore. She of course was allowed in any shop or establishment in Konoha so here was no different. She quickly found the old hermit glancing through a book called *Make Out Paradise*. She grabbed one from behind him and placed it on the counter. I like to purchase this please, Sasshi-jin. She whispered. The man nodded. She grabbed the money out of her back pocket like she had three other times this week but of course the wad was thicker since her recent payday. She handed him a five hundred. That's what she always paid him, even though it was slightly too much. She smiled and placed the hand-sized book in her pocket. She said thank you to older gentleman and stood in the doorway waiting for the pervy hermit to be finished. She cleared her throat, which quickly caught his attention. Dang it, she does know. The toad sage thought to himself. Hurry up, sensei. Kari said calmly. The Sasshi-jin looked at Jiraiya curiously. Don't ask. The old man nodded showing he understood not to. He placed the books on the counter and glanced over at Kari, What are you expecting me to pay for everything you get. Sensei, I ain't a bank you know. She said while walking over to the bookseller. She whispered something in his ear, Jiraiya couldn't hear what. The gentleman nodded and placed the books in Jiraiya's hands. Kari smiled and walked out the door. Jiraiya shot a questioning glance at the owner of the shop. All Jiraiya received was a shrug. He quickly ran after Kari hoping she hadn't done anything irresponsible to get him free books. What did you & Kari cut him off by slapping him in the face. Oww & what was that for? He asked. She shot him a nasty glance. You don't need to know everything sensei. Besides you don't know much about your student. I just said I would fix the leak in his pipes of his house if he let you have the books for free & Will you please help me with the groceries? She asked sweetly. He nodded. Why is she so worried about other people's homes & probably because she doesn't actually have one so she wants people who do, to have proper houses. She's too kind hearted to be a ninja. She only uses her jutsu to repair houses, I doubt she's ever really fought an enemy before. Jiraiya thought intently. Hello? Wake up Jiraiya. She yelled in his face. Sorry, kid. I'm just a bit groggy from my rough night sleep last night. He said with a yawn, while scratching his head. She took off her backpack and placed two bags into it. Handing him one back full of vegetables. When he saw the round juicy tomatoes he blushed thinking his pervy hermit thoughts. Kari rolled her eyes. She got up and grabbed the other bag holding it in her arms. C'mon Jiraiya. She said calmly. I gotta go cook dinner. She whispered hoping he didn't hear her. He didn't. She quickly leapt up in the air and bounced from house to house quickly getting back to his house. Hurry up old man and take a shower. She yelled from the kitchen. He dropped the bag on the counter and went upstairs to do as she had commanded. He's like a puppy. He listens to you when you command something. She whispered. He heard a quiet giggle from his new roommate and blew it off thinking she had a visitor or something. Downstairs Kari was making a Roast pork loaf baked with chives and freshly pounded tomatoes. On the side would be a honey loaf, wheat bread baked with honey to make it sweet. Then to drink either wine or sake. He was in the shower for maybe around thirty minutes and had quietly crept downstairs. He was watching her make dinner. It looked delicious, How could she learn how to cook so well? She didn't live with anyone who could teach her. He thought while glancing at her curves in her cute little apron. He blushed. He had fallen for a fourteen year old's body. He needed *her* for his research. Jiraiya! She yelled not realizing he was already downstairs. Yeah? He said loudly making it seem like he was upstairs. Come here, please. She said quieter. He slowly walked in and gawked at the food. This looks great. Jiraiya said, drooling. Thank you. She replied. Do you want sake, or wine? She asked simply. He pondered. Sake, please. He said cheerfully. She put a plate of pork and bread in front of him and went to go sit down in her seat across from him. He shot up and went to pull the chair out for her. He smiled, Thank you. She whispered. He bowed his head and sat back in

his chair. She sat there watching him gulp down her cooking. It made her feel proud that a man as old as he was could still act like someone her age when it came to food. She didn't eat anything because she was afraid that if she did she might bring it back up seeing as she hadn't eaten in a week. He stopped to look up at her and swallowed. Why aren't you eating? He asked politely. I'm just afraid it might not stay down since I haven't eaten in over a week. She stated tiredly. He passed her some of the bread telling her to eat it. She refused. He walked over to her and said, If you want to be my student then you'll have to eat a few decent meals. He said in a parental manner. She started to glance down at the floor. Everyone seems to care but no one seems to know how I feel. Maybe I should just do what everyone tells me instead of refusing them. She thought empty mindedly. Jiraiya tore off a piece of bread and gently pressed it against her mouth. She opened it and began chewing the bread, and then she swallowed. Eating that one piece of bread made her realize how hungry she was and she began to slowly eat some of the pork loaf. It was so juicy and it slid right down her throat. She washed it down with a few gulps of sake. She sighed. Better now? He asked. She yawned, filling up her stomach after it being empty for so long made her feel so tired. Yeah&may I be excused? She asked politely. Yes, you may be excused, Kari. He said calmly. Now that she had eaten something he wasn't as worried about her. Kari walked upstairs grabbed a towel from the cupboard and walked into Jiraiya's bedroom. She quickly untied her shirt and pulled it off, setting it beside her. Then she quickly took off her armor and placed it on top of her shirt. Lastly she shimmied out of her pants and was now just wearing her under clothing. She quickly unlatched her bra and took it off. Followed by her underwear, which soon joined it on the floor. She quickly jumped into the shower turning on the hot water. She sat down to relax. She hadn't realized that she didn't shut the door fully and someone had been spying her while she had gotten undressed. This same ero sennin was watching her bathe in the shower. He had a wide smirk on his face while he was finally getting his research on his young subject. Finally I have her for my researching. He thought deviously. She had fallen asleep in the shower and was woken up by a knock at the bathroom door. *Eeep!!* Kari squeaked. It's ok. I was just checking to make sure you were okay. Jiraiya said calmly. How long have I been asleep in here? Kari asked. I don't know. I fell asleep outside sitting on the back porch. Jiraiya said tiredly. Kari tried to get up but was so stiff she fell back down. She reached for the faucet to turn it off; the water was now running cold. She draped the towel around herself and stepped out of the shower. She grabbed a pair of pajamas she had picked up while shopping. It had the anbu black ops marking all over it with all the anbu masks. Then she had a cute little frilly tank top that had her anbu mask on it. He gasped. The pajamas she was wearing did nothing but compliment her shape. Kari blushed at the way he was looking at her. She punched him in the stomach hoping that would make him stop staring. It did just that. He fell on the floor holding his stomach in pain. I'm sorry but it was the only thing I could think of to make you stop staring at me. It was making me feel uncomfortable. Kari said embarrassedly. It's ok. I just can't believe what an awesome figure you have. Jiraiya said blushing. She glared at him he quickly turned his head hoping she wouldn't punch him again. She grabbed his coat from the bed railing and put it on while walking out of the bedroom. He stared at her wondering where she was going. Now that the Exams will be held again soon it isn't safe for her to go walking around outside by herself. Jiraiya said parentally. He was mostly worried about her falling for some other ninja from another village. Meanwhile, Kari was sitting on the back porch gazing up at the stars. Jiraiya was standing in the doorway watching the young anbu stargazing. The moonlight off of her head made her seem almost angelic. He shook his head and walked over to her and sat on the pavement next to her. I just love looking at the stars at night. It reminds me of when my parents were still alive. I wonder if they're proud of me for being an Anbu Black Op. Everyone else seems proud of me for not turning out like my brother. Gaara. I was adopted into his family when I was young so at the time it was as if I had two families. But when my family died, my new family was afraid I would become evil like Gaara seemed to be. But I just wanted him to be happy. Never

once did he smile for me. He was actually a kind kid but no one gave him a chance to be their friend after he killed his mother and father. Kari said, she talked about her and Gaara's lives as if they were two similar people. Why do you show him such compassion when he killed your closest thing to family? Jiraiya asked curiously. Because it wasn't truly him that killed his parents. He was overcome by a demon much like the Kyuubi except its name is Shukaku. This thing, took control over Gaara's body and that thing is what killed them. Not Gaara. Kari said teary eyed. I've lost two families. No one can say they know how it feels&no one except me. My fate has told me I am destined not to have a family, nor shall I be destined to have any from of parents. She said coldly. She put her head in her hands and leaned against Jiraiya afraid she might fall over. She is so torn up about what has happened in her life. I think she finally feels comfortable around me. That wasn't what was supposed to happen though. Oh well. It's best for her to let go of her emotions now than later. Jiraiya thought intently. She had finally fallen asleep after crying for so long. Her eyes were puffy now from crying for almost two hours. He carried her upstairs bridal style trying carefully for her not to wake up. He felt like a father but wanted her like the rest of the men in the villages she has visited. She was a highly desired woman for her age and many men wanted her. But yet she held strong and denied every guy who asked. But now he had a chance to be with someone who all the other men would be jealous of him for. He didn't know anymore if he should use her for research or if he should use her in general. He liked looking at women's bodies but this one was different. He couldn't do it anymore to her. He felt like she was his kid and he couldn't feel that way about his kid. That felt perverted, even to him. Maybe when she is older. Jiraiya thought to himself. He placed Kari on his bed and walked downstairs to the living room to sleep on the couch. It felt uncomfortable to even look at her now. Jiraiya had somehow become mature by living with a fourteen year old who was the most mature you women in any rivaling village. He was amazed at how caring she was for everyone else even when they have been terrible to her. He had to talk to the Hokage before sunrise. He decided he should just leave now so he wouldn't worry Kari. He hadn't realized she was awake and was planning on doing the same. But first she would be visiting a bar or two for some sake. She was wearing her anbu black op suit to somewhat blend in. It was white with strips of black down the sides. She opened the window and leapt down to the ground landing softly and jumped back up to close the window, swiftly placing on her anbu mask. She quickly sped through the village until she showed up at the spa house. She felt like this would be a better time than never to pamper herself since she was now practically living with a 50 some odd, year old perverted hermit. She entered the bathhouse casually and took off her mask. My, you're out late, Miss Mitsukai. What brings you here so late? Kitsune asked. She knew he worked here in late afternoon. I just felt like pampering myself for once since I'm staying at the perverted hermit's house. Kari said briskly. He nodded. He led her to her reserved changing room and let her change in piece. It had a beautiful view of the village. It showed the tops of homes and the beautiful trees that filled the sky, slightly hiding the moon. She sighed at the breathless sight and began to dispose of her clothing until later. She wrapped a silky aqua coloured towel around herself and walked out of the changing room into the sauna. She felt so relaxed and laid on a mat covered table to wait for a massage. Shortly after Kitsune walked in with a bottle of lotion in hand. He always chose to be the one to give Kari her massage. She felt uncomfortable around most men because they desired her like an object. Besides the fact that she was very self-conscious. He squirted some of the lotion onto his hands and began firmly rubbing her back, attempting to grab her melons. She growled and he moved them again to her back. She sighed at the relief of being able to relax for the first time in days. You're very tense Miss Mitsukai, what has gotten you this way? Kitsune asked cooingly. She ignored his tone and replied simply, I've been thinking about my past too much&that's all. She said with a deep sigh as he began rubbing her thighs. From all the running around she had been doing lately her leg muscles were very tight.

3 - One typical night in Konoha

Kitsune was enjoying rubbing her legs because soon he would be able to work on her butt. He slowly began working his way back up but luckily she had already fallen asleep. So he began firmly rubbing each cheek, enjoying every movement. He wanted to claim her so no other guy could have her. But he had enough will power to control his manly urges. He was twenty and wanted to have sex with a fourteen year old for the joy of being in her well-formed body. His member began growing and trying to thrust it s way into her but luckily it was still sealed inside his pants. He could hardly control his need for this. He stopped massaging her and walked outside to gather his thoughts. He wanted more than anything else to thrust inside and break her. But he knew he wouldn t be looked at the same by the rest of the village unless she wanted him to. Then he could ride her until he couldn t keep himself together any longer. He drank a glass of sake to calm himself down and walked back inside. Meanwhile, instead of going to the Hokage to see the Hokage he decided to brush up on some of his research by going to the bathhouse. He sneaked in from the back as usual and peeped inside and found Kari asleep on the massaging table. The towel looked ruffled around her butt but no one was in sight, telling him they were trying to rape her but backed out. He felt so sorry for the young girl because earlier that week he was one of those men. He quietly walked over to her sleeping form, Hey, you. What are you doing in here? Kitsune asked. Oh. So it was you who was trying to break her, was it? Jiraiya asked, deviously. I&l don t&know what you re talking about&Jiraiya. Kitsune stuttered. Jiraiya cocked a brow. I can t believe you were trying to take advantage of a fourteen year old. Even I haven t sunk that low. Kitsune, you re pathetic. Jiraiya said fiercely. He picked up the young girl and walked out of the bathhouse. You won t be getting paid buy her. Wait, where is her dressing room? Jiraiya asked. Kitsune pointed to a large door, made of a mahogany wood. Kitsune walked over to the room and unlocked it. Jiraiya sat Kari up on a bench outside the room and began gathering her anbu black op suit. He glared at Kitsune. Jiraiya had no intention of letting this slide. He would make, Kitsune, suffer for what he had almost done to her. He gathered her clothing and put them in a silk woven bag. He walked back out into the hallway to find that Kitsune was gone. This time he top of Kari s towel was ruffled. Jiraiya growled. He picked up his young roommate, like he was carrying a newborn child. He did his best not to wake her and he wouldn t tell her what almost took place tonight. He hurried home and discovered his house had been broken into. He figured whoever it was must have been from an enemy village and was coming to capture Kari. They must have heard that she had been staying at his house. Nothing was missing, just thrown around and Jiraiya discovered a note on his window ceil. It read, *Bring her to the outskirts of the Leaf village and we shall take her back. If you do not fulfill this demand we will punish your pathetic little village. Meet us outside Konoha village walls at sunrise tomorrow. Make sure you have brought her.* Jiraiya had to wake her up now. Sunrise was in less than an hour. Kari. Kari wake up. I need to take you somewhere. Jiraiya said while shaking her, trying to get her to wake up. Hmm? What s going on? Kari asked groggily. Jiraiya handed her the note. Her eyes got big and she leaned against him for comfort. You have to get dressed if we are to protect this village and fight off these invaders. Jiraiya said flatly, but with much concern in his voice. *Sand village?& Why do they want me so bad?* Kari asked worriedly *Has something happened to Gaara?* She asked herself. You re positive this is the Sand village? Jiraiya asked worriedly. If they still had that Gaara kid they could do more than damage this village. They could lose many lives just for the sake of one. I m positive. They are the only village, who would write like this. It s&it s written in blood. Kari said not able to hold back a shudder. Jiraiya handed her, her clothes. She nodded and walked up to the bathroom in his room to change. He heard her

scream. He quickly ran upstairs. What is it? He asked worriedly, thinking one of the men who had written the letter and thrashed his house was taking her by force. Gaara? She whispered. A boy with blood red hair lay in front of the young anbu. He was surrounded by sand. Gaara, are you okay? Kari asked worriedly. This kid had once been like her best friend and her brother, now he was attacking the village to get her back. She picked the Sand ninja up and sat him in her lap, realizing she wasn't wearing real clothes she propped him up against the wall. She walked back into the bathroom and quickly used her chakra to switch out the towel with her clothes. She opened the door to see Gaara standing and trying to attack Jiraiya. Gaara, stop it. What are you doing? Kari wailed. She ran over to the young man with the gourd on his back, blocking the attack thrown at Jiraiya. Jiraiya just stared at her in amazement. She had jumped in front of him to stop a deadly attack that was launched at him. She was so caring for everyone, she wouldn't allow anyone to die on her account. Gaara, please stop this. Kari said out of breath as she fell to the ground. Jiraiya just stood there in shock. This was the first time he had ever seen her wounded. He didn't like the thought of seeing it. She was strong willed, spirited, and minded. She had the physical strength to match. But there she was on the ground defeated by her own friend, who had at a time, been her brother. I'm sorry, Gaara. I wasn't there to help you. I was distraught by the fact that I had had two families and then I didn't have any. Kari said exhaustedly, while trying to crawl over to her old friend. If I must go to the Sand village to protect my home and you, then I shall go. I can't see all these people perish because I was too afraid to go back to the land of my second family. Kari said while she tried to sit up next to Gaara, against his feet. She hugged his legs hoping he would stop. Gaara, don't let Shukaku control you. Please, stop attacking Jiraiya. He was merely providing me with a home. Don't attack him for something like that. Please, just be the Gaara I used to be friends with. I can't take the weight of knowing you won't forgive me, please!! Kari said sobbingly. Gaara fell to his knees. I'm sorry Kari. For taking your only family away. After you had already lost your parents. Gaara said, somewhat sadly, but mainly unemotionally. You're wrong, Gaara. It wasn't just my family you took away. You took away your own family. But it wasn't actually you doing it. It was Shukaku. He controlled you like a puppet because you were too young to control him. Please don't let him take control of you again. Kari said, putting her face into his chest, crying. Jiraiya just stood there speechless. She was the only person that could get through to this monster. He would only open up to her. Does she always have this impact on people? Jiraiya asked himself. Come on you two, we need to get out of here quickly. Gaara, was it, you lead the way to the meeting point. Jiraiya said coarsely. While realizing Kari was holding Gaara's hand. They swiftly began leaping through the trees of Konoha. The two young ninjas were too fast to allow Jiraiya to keep up. If I must go to the Sand village to protect my home and you, then I shall go. I can't see all these people perish because I was too afraid to go back to the land of my second family. Jiraiya was recapping everything that had just been said in his house. She cared for this boy so dearly. The other night she had talked about him, saying she had to protect him from the ninja that discriminated him because a Shukaku was sealed inside of him. How it wasn't Gaara's fault, that he had killed his parents because he had been under Shukaku's control. She cared for this Gaara kid because no one else would, and because they had once been like family. Jiraiya felt uneasy about this whole situation. Finally he had caught up with the two of them and whispered into Kari's ear, If anything happens here that wasn't agreed on you come back and help us out. Understand? He said forcefully. Yes, sensei. I'll consider this my first mission. Possibly even my last. I'm sorry sensei. Kari said briskly. She walked forward with Gaara still holding her hand. Jiraiya followed out into the open forest where the letter said they would meet. Good, I see you've brought her. Now, Sand ninja ATTACK!! A fierce voice called from the trees. Please, NOOO!! Kari said before getting struck in the back of the head. This was a typical move when a medical ninja tried to knock you out but Kari had expected this and had learned a way to avoid the effects. She flailed behind her and had knocked a ninja straight onto his back. STOP!! She wailed. Every attacking ninja stopped in there

tracks. I have come of my own free will. DO NOT ATTACK THIS VILLAGE!! Kari said fiercely. The Sand ninja jumped back down to the forest floor and surrounded the young Anbu Black Op. They didn't know that that was her new title in the village. You can have me, as long as you do not attack the Leaf village. I will not see my comrades perish because of your desire to have me. I am not an Anbu Black Op because I've laid around, I have fought for my village and I will die for my village. Because that is my ninja way. Kari said boldly. The men laughed. You're an Anbu Black Op? They must be real desperate in the Leaf village. You're only a mere fourteen. The men yowled. Kari had finally lost her temper. A glow of red surrounded her. She began changing into the form of a badger. Onikouryaku!! one of the men yelled. Her demon was well known in the Sand village because she had been born there but was a Leaf ninja by blood. They had sealed the beast in her mother, not knowing she was bearing a child. So instead of the demon devouring the mother it became imprisoned in the young girl. I see you remember my little friend, do you? Isn't that because you sealed it within my mother before I was born? But instead I became his capsule. Too bad. Because now that you have tried and betrayed my village I will unleash his devastating power onto you. But I can easily control him. He hasn't ever controlled me and never shall. She said as she performed the five prong seal hand signs and pressed her hand against her neck. She no longer held the demon but still controlled it like her own gigantic puppet. Now we shall see who is pathetic. She said. Onikouryaku, attack them all except for the hermit and Gaara. Kari instructed. Before falling off of his shoulder from exhaustion Jiraiya jumped to save her but was beaten by the boy with the gourd. Sand poured out of the gourd and formed a hand to catch her before she hit the ground. She opened her eyes and walked off of the hand formed sand. It quickly disappeared back into the gourd and Gaara put the cork on it to stop it from letting itself out. She leaned on him as he had done with her. She could hardly hold herself up and decided she would just lie on the ground. No, Kari. You mustn't sleep. If you sleep now Onikouryaku may not follow your orders and destroy the leaf village. Gaara said flatly. Ok. Besides I think they've had enough. Onikouryaku, return to me and leave the measly ninja be. She performed yet another sealing hand sign and pressed it against her neck causing the monster to turn into a glow of red and surged back into her body. She was tossed back by the force. She quickly stood up, wobbling on the way up and shouted, Now, do you see the true strength of this young Anbu Black Op? My village is not desperate but has chosen someone they thought worthy of the title of Anbu Black Op. Kari said proudly, hissing at the pain in her neck of resealing in her inner demon. Markings began forming around her neck showing that she had sealed him properly. She fell backwards onto her butt right in front of Jiraiya's feet. I don't see why you need me to be your teacher. You performed the five prong seal perfectly. Jiraiya said emotionlessly. Kari picked herself back up and dusted herself off, without saying a word and walked over to Gaara checking to see if he was okay. Jiraiya had seen the scariest side of her and wondered how many faces there were to this one frame. She walked back up to Jiraiya and kissed him on the cheek, Thank you for giving me a temporary home sensei. I'll do my best to keep in touch, but they may figure that out and prevent it. Kari whispered. She hugged him and walked back over to Gaara waving before they sped away through the trees. She gripped Gaara's hand tightly as they leapt quickly from tree to tree. She would miss her home more than anything but knew she was leaving in order to protect her comrades. Meanwhile, Jiraiya was making his way back to Akutopi pub. Get me a keg of sake, *Kitsune*. Jiraiya said with an edge. Why the long face, you perverted hermit? Kitsune asked with just as sharp an edge as Jiraiya. They took her from the village, they were going to kill you all because they thought we had forced her to go. She saved us all. Jiraiya said not referring to whom he was talking about. Who, Kari? Kitsune asked with worry, and edge in his tone. Yes, Kari. The one you tried to rape. She saved your sorry excuse for a life. She saved our whole village knowing she'll lose her life in doing so. Jiraiya said flatly. When Jiraiya said that one word every man in the pub turned to look at Kitsune. How dare you. She is only fourteen, and our best ninja. The men growled. Kitsune walked to the back cellar of the pub

and told Hebi to serve them instead. When Hebi walked out all of his costumers were surrounding the door, waiting for Kitsune to come back out. What's all the ruckus guys? Hebi asked timidly. Your partner over there tried to rape Miss. Mitsukai. The men yelled. He tried to do what? Hebi asked, surprised by what he heard. Hebi unlocked the cellar and said, You can have the scoundrel, men. The men swarmed in trying to attack Kitsune with fists, broken glass and stools. Jiraiya just waited patiently at his usual spot waiting to be served. What may I do you for? Hebi asked the troubled man. Get me a keg of sake. The Sand ninja took Kari away. They were going to attack you all, possibly kill you. But she yelled at them and flailed shouting at them to not harm you people or the village. She went willingly so she could save you all. Even though she knew she wouldn't ever be back in our village alive again. Jiraiya said depressed. Hebi came back with the keg and placed it by Jiraiya's feet. You must be proud to have her as your student. She already has learned the way of a true shinobi and is proving that she will do whatever it takes to protect her comrades. Hebi said thoughtfully. Yeah, very proud of her. Kitsune had been working at the bathhouse when he tried to violate her. I had taken her home or rather to her temporary home and I had found my home thrashed by the Sand ninja. He brother Gaara was in my bedroom barely alive. Jiraiya said. She had two families when she had met him. Her actual parents and also his parents who had practically adopted her in. When he had killed his parents all they had were each other. She had stayed up late the other night telling me this. I think she knew that they were coming for her. Jiraiya finished not able to even drink his sake. Jiraiya, if you're this worried about her then why don't you go find her? Hebi asked, worried for the sannin. Because, if I do, our whole village will be endangered. Jiraiya said stubbornly, even though he wanted to do nothing else but going and getting her back. But he had to stay and protect his village instead of risking many lives for the sake of saving one. Many lives would be lost if he tried to go save her and that was not an option. Kari wouldn't want them to be killed because then all she had done would have been in vein. He shook his head remembering where he was. Jiraiya, are you gonna be okay without her? Hebi asked. I don't know at this point. I'm not who I was since I've met her. I don't think of women the way I used to after seeing how strong this young girl could be. Jiraiya said troublesomely. You should tell Tsunade what has happened. Hebi advised. She already knows. She has the Hokage's orb of sight&thing that allows her to see what's going on. She knows that Kari is gone. Jiraiya said dully, losing all his focus. I'll have to come back for my sake later. Jiraiya said as he sped out of the pub.

Meanwhile Kari had arrived with Gaara at the sound village where she had grown up. It looks so similar to back then. Kari whispered to herself. It isn't though. I must take you to the Kazekage. Gaara said angrily. Kari noticed something was troubling him but she didn't know what. He grabbed her wrist firmly, his hand shaking slightly. Kaze& Gaara was cut off. Come in. It's his her I must speak with, not you Gaara. The firm voice ordered. No. Either he comes with me or I don't come at all. Kari demanded. Very well. The Kazekage agreed. The two young ninja walked inside the room. Sit. The Kazekage ordered. Kari sat without question not wanting for him to turn on her village. What is it you want from me? Kari asked feebly. Oh&I just desire you. You are quite rare and many a man are out for you. So I decided I'd beat them to it. The Kazekage hissed. Kari shivered and hid behind Gaara. Why is it I am so appealing to you perverted old men? Kari asked the village leader. Because you have all the right curves in all the right places and are so well developed for your age. The Kazekage said from behind his shadowy shades. Kari was afraid of this man. She didn't know who it was but she was deathly afraid of him. She wrapped her arms around Gaara's waist hugging his back for comfort out of sheer fright. Gaara felt uncomfortable with hugging him like that but her situation was something that even he was scared about. Gaara turned around so she would be leaning on his chest. I'll do whatever it takes for him not to do&this. Gaara gulped. Kari squeezed him tighter as the man came out of the shadows and removed his kage hat. She looked up at the man terrified. Orochi& She couldn't finish her statement

because of her pure fear of this man. What? Orochimaru is my Kazekage? Gaara asked surprised. Yesss. I killed your beloved Kazekage. Are going to try and kill me now? Orochimaru hissed. No. Then you'll try and take Kari Mitsukai away and break her. I will not allow it. Gaara wailed. Kari felt stronger hearing him say he would protect her. The guards had heard what had been said and quickly ran to inform the Sand ninja. Soon after the ninja were back at the Kazekage tent and barged in to see Kari releasing all of her chakra to create a large blow that should easily kill the imposter. Gaara stood behind her in amazement as she flew backward into him. Orochimaru flew against the wall and fell to the ground. They cheered at the sight of the defeated imposter and looked at the battered young woman who had easily defeated him. She was exhausted so Gaara got up and put her on his back to piggyback her around. She gave him a kiss on the cheek to say thank you before going unconscious. The ninja were quiet trying not to wake their savior. She was so meek but so strong at the same time. They carried her to their village inn allowing her to get some rest. Just in case Orochimaru isn't finished off, Gaara, you will stay in the room and guard her. Understand? His sensei ordered. Yes, sir. Gaara said sympathetically. This girl had helped him all through his life making sure he was safe and that no one was discriminating him because of Shukaku being sealed inside him, when no one remembered she had Shukaku's brother sealed inside her. She woke up shortly after being placed in the inn and had heard what went between Gaara and his sensei. She looked up at his worried face and knew what he was thinking about. She sat up and he turned to face her immediately. You shouldn't get up. He growled. Kari flinched at his sudden anger. His eyes became scared. I'm sorry. I just can't help but think how you always protect me. It makes me feel weak for not being able to protect myself or you. Gaara said flatly. No, you're wrong again Gaara. You protected me today. What you said about not letting him know to me gave me the strength I needed to overcome my fear of him and defeat him. Kari said smiling. Gaara sat on her bed hanging his head. Stop it. Why are you so unhappy? Kari asked sadly. Because, you shouldn't be here. You should be in Konoha. Orochimaru was our Kazekage and he ordered us to get you, but we didn't know it was Orochimaru. Gaara said frustratedly. It wasn't your village's fault. He tricked you and killed your real Kazekage. Kari said, trying to lift his spirits. I know but whenever our Kazekage is beaten or killed the person that beat him takes the title of Kazekage&Which means you are our new Kazekage. Gaara said, somewhat cheering up at the thought of her staying here to be the Kazekage. Kari's glance fell. I can't be a kage&nor can I be your Kazekage. I'm only fourteen and I don't know how to lead a village. Kari said laying her head on his lap. He felt a little awkward with her head being right there but ignored the manly urges and thoughts easily. Kari was still very exhausted and now so was Gaara. He leaned against the wall and propped her on his legs so they could both be comfortable.

Kari woke up, still with her head on her friend's lap. He was sleeping peacefully and looked adorable as usual. Her stomach growled, making her realize she was still hungry. She slowly lifted her head off of his lap trying her best not to wake him up and walked outside into the hallway. Luckily for her she still remembered how to get around. She walked down the corridor and found the stairs. She remembered she had left her and Gaara's teddy bears under one of the planks. She lifted up the plank she had marked and found them still there the way she had left them. She walked back up the stairs to the room she had stayed in and walked back in to a still sleeping Gaara. She lightly lifted his arm and placed underneath it his old teddy bear. Then she kissed his forehead, which made him open his eyes. What? You found them? Gaara asked. Kari nodded. I remembered putting them under a plank in the stairs and said, At least they'll always be together forever. So I picked up the plank and they were still there the way I left them. Kari said sweetly. She handed him her teddy bear and held out her hand for his. This way we'll always have a piece of each other no matter where we go. She said sweetly remembering her childhood when her parents said they had to go back to Konoha. She had been utterly

devastated. She shook her head to relieve her mind of her dead parents. She snuggled his teddy bear. It still smells like you after all this time. Kari said sheepishly. He gently placed hers in his pocket because that was the safest place to put it.