

## Would you love a monsterman?

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# Would you love a monsterman?

by [Woofgang69](#)

## Summary

Jugo hadn't been sure that staying in the Leaf with Sasuke was the right choice, but then he met Hinata.

## Notes

this is a SUPER early valentines day present for [HelloThereGhoul](#) who convinced me Hinata and Jugo would work. 💕💕

thank you [LilyShinx](#) for betaing and being a Hinata expert!

title is from [this](#), which i only know because of ghoully 💕💕

listen...Hinata and Jugo *could* work and i believe it with my whole heart

# Chapter 1

Being at peace was strange, but in a way Hinata knew she could get used to. There wasn't any more fighting between the villages. No threats of war or risk of betrayal. The missions she was sent on weren't as dangerous as before, and she was sure that she'd never have to feel someone die in her arms ever again. The space where Neji should've been was always there, loudly pulling at her attention. But she still had Hanabi and even her father, who seemed to have grown softer with the new peace. And she still had Naruto.

As things settled after the war, Hinata had hoped that Naruto would finally answer her confession, but he never did. He didn't accept her feelings or reject them, he just never mentioned them at all. He still hung out with her just like before, smiling widely and encouraging her to chase after her dreams. Hinata thought about confessing again, but she was happy just to get to stay by his side.

With the new peace, things had become calm in the village. Everything was finally rebuilt from Pain's attack, Kakashi had taken over as Hokage, and things had settled into a new sort of normal. Hinata got to spend most of her time with her friends, just enjoying the new calmness. And then she heard Sasuke was being released, causing a new kind of chaos through the village.

No one had been sure what to do with Sasuke or his new teammates after the war. They had threatened the village and briefly been part of the Akatsuki. But they had also helped fight the war and, from what Hinata had heard, they had only won the war because of Sasuke's help. She couldn't help but notice the way he and Naruto had both lost an arm each during the war though and fixated on the fact that neither one of them would tell anyone what had happened. Even with the missing arm, Naruto had been the one to plead with Tsunade to let Sasuke stay in the village. She agreed, probably because of her soft spot for Naruto, but only under the condition that Sasuke faced at least some consequences for his actions. So they agreed that he would spend time in their not-quite jail cell so he could 'reflect' on what he had done. His new teammates had been given the option to leave the village, but they all decided to stay with Sasuke in jail. Hinata didn't understand the loyalty he seemed to inspire in people. She had never understood Sasuke when they were kids and she understood him even less now.

Everyone was all excited when the news got out that Sasuke was being released. Most of the village crowded around T&I headquarters waiting for him. Hinata had been pulled into the crowd by Ino even though she would've much rather been at home. She felt uncomfortable with so many people pressed up against her on all sides. She tried to sink further into her jacket, like that would somehow protect her. Hinata could barely see over everyone, but she knew the moment Sasuke came out as Ino grabbed her arm tightly and squealed loudly in her ear.

“Oh my god, it’s really Sasuke!” Ino shook Hinata as she said it, knocking her into the people standing nearby. “Come on, we need to get closer.” Ino was already pushing her way through the crowd, pulling Hinata behind her as she moved. Hinata kept shouting ‘sorry’ behind her as she struggled to keep up with the other girl.

Eventually they were at the front of the crowd, Sasuke actually in sight. Ino finally let go of Hinata’s arm so she could run over to him, even though he was sandwiched between Sakura and Naruto. Hinata hung back, not really caring about saying ‘hello’ to Sasuke. She thought about leaving now that Ino wasn’t keeping her there, but she didn’t want to try to force her way through the crowd again just yet. So she just stood there, trying to make herself as small as possible, and gazed at Naruto. He was smiling widely, his face pink from all the excitement, and her chest felt warm just looking at him.

Hinata would’ve been happy just standing there all day looking at Naruto, but more and more people kept pushing into the crowd and she eventually lost sight of him. She got shoved towards Sasuke’s new teammates, who were arguing loudly about something. They didn’t seem to care about the way people were whispering about them, too busy seething at each other. Watching them fight made Hinata feel uncomfortable, so she finally decided to leave. It wasn’t like anyone was going to miss her. To her disappointment, Naruto hadn’t even noticed that she was there at all. She started walking towards what she hoped was the edge of the crowd.

Hinata hadn’t made it very far at all when she bumped into something so solid that it almost felt like a wall. A large hand quickly grabbed her arm to steady her before she fell. Hinata looked up at them and then kept looking up until she saw their face. It took her a moment to realize it was Sasuke’s last teammate, Jugo. She was surprised she hadn’t noticed him before as he was incredibly tall and bulky and his hair was a bright, eye-catching orange. But then she became less surprised as he let go of her arm and then folded in on himself, like he was trying to become invisible. She stared at him for a long moment, but then blushed as she realized how strange that was.

“Oh, I’m sorry! I...I didn’t see you.” Hinata felt silly saying it as he was noticeable, but he just hunched in on himself further.

“It’s okay, it was my fault.” For such a large man, he was incredibly soft-spoken. Hinata had to lean in to hear the deep rumble of his voice clearly. Not sure what else to say, she just nodded at him quickly and then dove back into the crowd. But then she stopped again as she heard the whispers around her.

Everyone was calling Jugo a dangerous monster, looking at him through narrowed eyes. Hinata was certain he could hear it all as he kept hunching in on himself, though there wasn’t any way he could make himself smaller. He had a resolved sort of frown, like he was used to hearing these kinds of things. Hinata felt a righteous sort of anger on his behalf. Jugo didn’t look anything like Naruto, but she still saw the blonde-haired boy when she looked at him. She saw a much younger Naruto crying as the whole village called him a monster. Her anger felt a little hotter as her heart twisted at the memory. She held her head up and then turned around, walking back towards Jugo.

Jugo looked at her in surprise as she stopped in front of him. Hinata's face felt hot under his attention, her confidence having fled already. "I...I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Hinata." She said it all in a rush, then bowed, trying to give her blush a second to die down. Jugo looked even more surprised as she straightened up. His cheeks had a slight, pink tinge to them, making him look less intimidating.

"I'm Jugo." He sounded hesitant, like he wasn't sure Hinata would actually want to know his name. She smiled at him, then watched his cheeks turn a darker shade of pink. Her own blush returned as he looked at her expectantly, probably thinking she had more to say. Hinata just looked down at their feet and started playing with the sleeves of her jacket. Jugo made a quiet sort of noise that almost sounded like a laugh. "So why haven't you tried to talk to Sasuke? Everyone else has." Hinata looked back up at him at the question.

"Well....um....honestly Sasuke and I aren't friends. I don't even know him very well." Hinata's voice was quiet and awkward, afraid everyone might hear her and then give her dirty looks. Jugo laughed, but it sounded kind.

"You're the only one being honest about that. I don't think anyone knows him, not really."

"Not even you?" Hinata asked without even thinking about it, but then her face felt hotter as she tried to stammar out a way to take the question back. Jugo just laughed kindly again.

"Definitely not. I need to rely on him, but I don't know him. We're just teammates." Jugo said it like he didn't mind not knowing Sasuke, which confused Hinata a little. She didn't understand why he would jail himself for someone he wasn't friends with or didn't even know.

"Why did you decide to stay in the Leaf then?" Jugo smiled at her question, though it looked a little sad.

"I know you can hear what they're saying about me. It's all true, and Sasuke is the only one who can cage me. It's safer for everyone if I stay here with Sasuke." Jugo sounded resigned, and it twisted Hinata's heart a little. She didn't know him, but she knew no one should be caged.

"You should do what's best for *you*, Jugo." Hinata barely recognized the strong voice as her own. He blinked at her a few times before his blush got even darker. He smiled at her shyly.

"Thank you, Hinata." He said her name slowly and carefully, like he wanted to make sure to get it right. She got an odd fluttering in her chest as she looked up at him. "I—"

"OI! WHAT'RE YOU DOING TO HINATA?!" Hinata jumped a little at Kiba's shout, somehow forgetting that her and Jugo weren't alone even though they were still surrounded by people. She looked over at Kiba, who was pushing his way towards them with a snarl. Akamaru was running ahead of him, almost at Hinata's side already.

"Wait, Kiba! It's not what you think!" Hinata waved her hands in front of her as she tried to shout, but the crowd drowned out her voice. Akamaru pushed in between them, and Hinata held her breath as he leapt onto Jugo. He wasn't strong enough to knock Jugo over, so just

ended up with his front paws on Jugo's shoulders and his teeth inches from Jugo's face. She gently grabbed him by the scruff, afraid he was about to bite Jugo. "Akamaru—"

Hinata cut herself off as she watched Akamaru lick Jugo's face. His tail started vigorously wagging, knocking hard against Hinata's leg. Akamaru barked loudly right in Jugo's face, but he just laughed back at the dog. "Alright, I get it." He started to pet Akamaru with a fond look on his face.

"Oh." Kiba sounded a little out of breath as he finally stopped next to Hinata. His face got a sheepish look as he looked at Akamaru and Jugo. "If Akamaru likes you then you must be okay. Heh, sorry about yelling at you." Kiba rubbed the back of his head as he mumbled out his apology.

"It's okay, I understand." Jugo didn't sound offended at all. He just spoke in that familiar, soft way. "Akamaru's a great dog." Kiba smiled toothily at the praise, then pat Akamaru's side a few times.

"Hell yeah he is! Best dog in the village, aren't you buddy?" Akamaru barked loudly at Kiba's question. Hinata laughed quietly to herself at the way the dog's tongue lolled out of his mouth. Then she made a startled noise that almost sounded like 'eep' as someone put a hand on her shoulder. She hadn't even noticed anyone else getting close. She tried to calm her racing heart as she looked at the familiar form next to her.

"Sh-Shino! You shouldn't sneak up on people like that." Hinata was embarrassed with how high her voice sounded.

"I apologize." If Shino actually felt bad for startling her Hinata couldn't tell, not with his collar and sunglasses in the way. "Are you actually alright, Hinata?" She softened at the concern clear in his question.

"I'm fine Shino, everything's okay." Shino's shoulders relaxed slightly. "Have you met Jugo yet?" Jugo, Kiba, and Akamaru all looked over as she said Jugo's name. Hinata's face felt hot under all the attention.

"No." Shino raised a hand as he spoke, and Hinata watched one of his beetles fly out of his sleeve and over towards Jugo. The tall man was also watching it fly over in interest. He held one of his large hands once the beetle was close enough so it could land on his palm. He slowly brought his hand towards his face and looked at the beetle closely.

"Is this a kikaichū beetle?" Jugo's voice was somehow even softer than before, like he was afraid of scaring the beetle away. Hinata smiled to herself at the fond way Jugo was gazing at the bug like it was something interesting.

"Yes. I'm surprised you recognized it." Hinata only heard the impressed hint in Shino's voice because she knew him so well.

"I've met a few kikaichūs before. They're always so interesting." Jugo fondly watched the beetle fly from his hand into the air. Then he went a little cross-eyed as the beetle landed on his nose. Hinata covered her mouth to hide the way she was laughing. Jugo left the beetle on

his nose and then went right back to petting Akamaru. Looking at him now, Hinata couldn't believe that the man who was willing to let a beetle rest on his nose as he happily pet Akamaru was the same intimidating figure from the war. She hadn't known much about him when she walked over, but now Hinata hoped she would get the chance to know him.

"Hah! Even Shino's bugs like you." Kiba patted Jugo hard on the back, the same way he'd pat Akamaru. "Stick with us and you'll be alright. I'm going to Hokage someday, you know." Hinata startled as she heard a familiar laugh practically right next to her ear.

"You? Yeah right, dog breath. *I'm* going to be Hokage, believe it!" Naruto smiled widely as he threw an arm around Kiba's shoulders. It felt like Hinata's whole face caught fire as she looked at Naruto's smile.

"Na-Naruto!" Her face felt hotter as he looked at her.

"Oh hey Hinata." Naruto turned his smile to her for a moment before looking back over to Sasuke. "Come on Sasuke, I'm hungry." Sasuke rolled his eyes at Naruto's whine, and Hinata couldn't look away from his rinnegan, having completely forgotten about it.

"We're leaving Jugo." Sasuke was already walking away, not waiting for Jugo to say anything. The tall man's face fell a little, but he gave Akamaru one last pet before taking a step back from the dog. Akamaru whined sadly, butting his head against Jugo's leg as he tried to leave. Kiba frowned, shrugged Naruto's arm off of him, and then ran after Sasuke, grabbing the back of his shirt once he was close enough.

"Hey you can't just order Jugo around like that!" Kiba bared his teeth at Sasuke, almost like he was a dog himself. Sasuke only had one arm, not getting a prosthetic like Naruto, but he was still able to pull Kiba's hand off his shirt without even turning around.

"Don't touch me." Hinata winced at Sasuke's sharp tone.

"Listen here you jerk—" Kiba stopped talking as Jugo put a hand on his shoulder.

"It's fine. I should get going anyway." Jugo didn't sound upset or anything, but Hinata suddenly felt incredibly lonely looking at him.

"I hope we'll get to talk again soon, Jugo." She smiled at him and watched the way he blushed.

"Yeah, I do too."

Hinata watched them leave with a heavy feeling of disappointment in her stomach. Naruto hadn't said goodbye, hadn't even glanced at her before following Sasuke. She sighed to herself before finally slipping away from the crowd that was already dispersing. She took the long way home, thinking about nothing.

## Chapter 2

### Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Hinata knew that Sasuke was Naruto's friend, but she hadn't actually expected to see so much of him around the village. Everytime the group all hung out together, Sasuke was there, having been dragged by either Naruto or Sakura. Whenever Hinata would ask Naruto if he wanted to get something to eat, he almost always had already eaten with Sasuke first. It seemed like Hinata even ran into Sasuke every time she just tried to take a walk through the village.

He was never alone either. Usually he had Naruto or Sakura with him as well as all of his new teammates. Karin and Suigetsu were both loud, always arguing either with each other or whoever was closest. And then Jugo was their complete opposite, always standing by Sasuke's side quietly and stiffly like he was assigned to protect the last Uchiha. Hinata felt bad thinking it, but she wished Sasuke hadn't come back to the village. She had just gotten used to the new normal of her life and now had to get used to something else. And, honestly, she wasn't sure she'd ever be able to get used to the way Naruto was always fawning over Sasuke, like the other boy hadn't tried to kill him.

Despite the way all of their recent hangouts had left Hinata feeling disappointed and unnoticed, she was still getting ready to go to dinner with everyone. Ino had come over to help her get ready, saying she knew exactly how she could help Hinata capture Naruto's attention. Hinata had agreed readily when Ino offered, running out of her own ideas of what to do. But now she was starting to regret it. Ino had dressed her in a tight, sleeveless shirt along with a pair of shorts and impractical thigh-high socks that slipped down her legs every time she took a step. The outfit made her feel uncomfortable and it didn't protect her at all from the chill in the air, but Ino dragged her out of her house before she could grab her favorite jacket.

It didn't take them long to walk to Yakiniku Q, but Hinata was embarrassed as the restaurant came into sight as it looked like everyone was already there waiting for them. She tried to stammar out an apology for being late, but Choji was already pushing her inside. Naruto was headed inside too, but Hinata couldn't catch his eye, even as she shifted onto her toes. She sighed to herself as she realized she might as well be invisible.

There was only one table at Yakiniku Q that could all fit at, and they almost always sat in the same spots. Hinata was always between Kiba and Tenten, with a small space between them where Neji would've sat if he had still been there. Naruto always sat on the complete other side of the table with Sasuke and Sakura, so she usually spent most of the meal gazing at him. Ino would always roll her eyes whenever she'd catch Hinata staring, but luckily she didn't tease her too much for it. Hinata quickly settled into her normal seat and then waited for everyone else to sit down.

Hinata was watching Naruto's end of the table, so she noticed the way Karin quickly sat in Jugo's usual seat by Sasuke's side right away. She immediately latched onto Sasuke's arm,



trying to tell him something as Naruto was doing the same thing on his other side. Jugo looked down at them in a concerned sort of confusion.

“That’s my seat, Karin.” Jugo’s voice was soft and the restaurant was loud, but Hinata heard him clearly anyway.

“Sit somewhere else. I want to sit next to Sasuke.” Karin didn’t even look up at him, too busy pushing further into Sasuke’s space. Jugo frowned, looking more concerned.

“But I *need* to be close to him. What if I lose control?” Hinata’s heart twisted at the fear in Jugo’s voice. She looked at Naruto and wondered if that was how he felt before he befriended Kurama.

“It’s just dinner, you’ll be fine. Take deep breaths and meditate or something.” Karin waved him off, not sounding concerned at all at the possibility of Jugo losing control. His frown deepened, and he looked a little lost. Hinata’s heart twisted again, then she looked around at the seats at her end of the table. Both Kiba and Tenten had already sat down, but there were two empty seats on Kiba’s other side as Shino was still standing up. She gently knocked her shoulder into Kiba’s, who gave her a questioning look in turn.

“Move down one.” Kiba raised an eyebrow at her uncharacteristic demand, but did as Hinata said. She smiled at him, then turned that smile towards Jugo. “You can sit with us, Jugo.” He looked surprised at Hinata’s offer, but then gave her a small smile. He looked down at Sasuke one more time before walking over.

Hinata hadn’t forgotten how big Jugo was, but somehow he seemed even bigger than she remembered as he tried to cram into the small space between her and Kiba. She shifted closer to Tenten, but her side was still pressed up against Jugo’s anyway. He smiled at her sheepishly as he tried to hunch in on himself.

“Welcome to the better side of the table, Jugo.” Kiba patted Jugo hard on the back as he said it, and the sound echoed as the table suddenly fell silent. Karin, Suigetsu, and Sasuke all looked at Jugo in concern, like they thought he might suddenly go feral. Hinata felt oddly protective of the large man as she watched Sasuke’s sharingan spin to life. She shifted a little so she was in between Jugo and Sasuke’s line of sight.

“Everything’s fine.” Jugo’s voice was low and soothing. Karin and Suigetsu looked away, relieved by Jugo’s quick assertion. But Sasuke kept looking at him, his body tense like he was about to leap across the table. Hinata felt strange as she looked at mismatched eyes. Sasuke didn’t say anything or lose any of the tension in his body, but his eye faded to its usual black as he looked back at Naruto. Hinata let out the breath she didn’t even notice she had been holding.

“Anyway, Jugo, you need to stop by and play with Akamaru sometime. He misses you.” Kiba’s tone was his usual light and friendly one, like he hadn’t noticed the tension that had just covered the table. Jugo laughed quietly and fondly.

“I’ll try to.” The way he said it made it clear that he was just trying to appease Kiba, but Kiba didn’t seem to notice. He just grinned toothily before turning his attention to Shino.

Hinata sat quietly through dinner, content just listening to everyone else talking around her. Jugo kept quiet too, which she found oddly comforting. Her side felt warm where they were pressed together, and she found that comforting too. She lost track of what everyone had been talking about, but she didn't mind, too focused on the brightness of Naruto's smile anyway. He had turned his smile to her a few times during dinner, and it had felt like she had been caught in the sun's warmth. That smile was turned to Sakura now, and Hinata only felt a little jealous. She sighed to herself quietly as she rested her head on her hand.

"Hey guys!" Ino's voice was loud and mischievous. Hinata got a bad feeling as the other girl winked at her. "Don't you just *love* Hinata's new look? I think it makes her *glow* ." Ino cooed the last word, like Hinata was a little kid or small, cute animal. Hinata's face felt like it caught fire as everyone turned to look at her. She covered her face with her hands and then tried to curl in on herself, feeling uncomfortable with how exposed she felt in the outfit Ino picked out.

"I don't think anyone glows quite like you do, Ino." Sai's flirty tone stole everyone's attention, especially Ino's. Hinata deflated once everyone looked away and gave Sai a grateful smile. Her and Sai had gotten closer after Sasuke was released, both feeling left behind by some of their other friends. They also liked to commiserate over the fact that both of their crushes were obsessed with trying to get Sasuke's attention. Though Sai had been having better luck than her getting Ino to notice him. She was staring at him now with stars in her eyes.

"Does that mean you'll draw me sometime?" Ino's voice was just as flirty as Sai's had been, and Hinata could see Sakura roll her eyes at them.

"Of course. I'm always available for you." Hinata almost wanted to cover her face again to hide from the intimacy in Sai's voice. Ino's cheeks turned a pretty kind of pink as she practically melted. Sakura pretended to throw up.

"Jealous forehead?" Ino's question was smug, and Hinata could practically see a vein throb in Sakura's forehead at it.

"Yeah right. You're embarrassing yourself Ino Pig." Sakura snapped back quickly. They started fighting loudly, and the rest of the table started talking to each other again to try and drown them out. Hinata finally relaxed back into her seat once she was sure no one was looking at her anymore. Her face still felt hot, but, with the chill in the restaurant, she was sure it would cool down soon.

"I think you look very nice, Hinata." Jugo's voice was even softer than usual, a hushed whisper just for her to hear. Hinata's face felt hot over again, and she quickly covered her cheeks with her hands, hoping to hide her blush.

"Th-thank you, Jugo." He smiled at her kindly, and she tried to smile back through her embarrassment.

The rest of dinner passed quickly, with Choji and Lee eating the scraps off of everyone's plates. Hinata's blush never went away even as the restaurant kept getting colder as the night got later. Her face stayed a bright red even as she started shivering. They all finally got up to

leave after Sakura yawned loudly, complaining about an early shift at the hospital she had the next day.

Hinata's house wasn't far from Yakiniku Q, but Ino insisted on walking her home anyway. Hinata had a feeling Ino just wanted to talk about Sai, but she didn't mind. She was happy that her friends were happy. They were standing in front of the restaurant saying goodbye to everyone, and Hinata was trying to rush through it as she had her arms wrapped around herself, trying to keep warm. The night's chill felt even worse now that she was actually outside.

Hinata startled as something heavy dropped onto her shoulders. She looked up and was surprised to see Jugo. His cheeks were pink, and he had a shy sort of look. "You were cold." Hinata blushed as she realized Jugo had draped his cloak around her shoulders. She started waving her hands in front of her, feeling flustered.

"I couldn't! I don't want *you* to be cold!" He smiled fondly at her.

"I'll be fine. You can give it back next time we see each other." Hinata tried to shrug the cloak off as he spoke so she could make him put it back on. But he was already walking away, his long strides quickly taking him further and further away from her. She sighed, then pulled the cloak back around herself tightly as she *was* cold. Ino gave her an odd sort of look, but didn't say anything yet. She just started walking away, so Hinata hurried to follow.

Ino kept looking over at Hinata with a knowing, mischievous smile, but oddly stayed quiet. It made Hinata nervous as to what Ino was keeping herself from saying. She tried to ignore Ino's glances, but it got to be too much as the other girl giggled to herself.

"Why do you keep looking at me like that, Ino?" Ino smiled widely at Hinata's question, like that had been all she was waiting for.

"I'm just glad the outfit worked on *someone* ." Ino winked as she said it, but Hinata was confused with absolutely no idea who she could be talking about.

"What do you mean?" Ino rolled her eyes at Hinata.

"Honestly. Best eyes in the village and you can't see the obvious." She moved closer and tugged on Jugo's cloak. Hinata understood who she meant immediately, and her face felt hot at Ino's implication. She shook her head vigorously while also shaking her hands in front of herself.

"You're seeing things that aren't there. Jugo's just really nice." Hinata's voice was oddly high, maybe her sound less believable than she wanted. Ino looked at her like she didn't believe her.

"Yeah right. I might not have the byakugan, but I know what I saw." Ino sounded like she knew she was right, which was almost always how she sounded. Hinata knew it'd be useless to try and argue with her, so she just sank into Jugo's cloak. It was warm and comfortable, feeling familiar even though she had never worn it before. It had the faint scent of a campfire clinging to it, and Hinata smiled to herself as she sank into it a little further.

## Chapter End Notes

ino dresses her in her blank period ninja outfit. i think the outfit makes her look super cute, but really can't believe hinata picked it out herself lmao. also a crumb of saiino.

thanks for reading 💕💕

# Chapter 3

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Knitting was much harder than Hinata expected it to be, but she was determined. Naruto still hadn't answered her confession or mentioned her feelings, which bothered her more now than it had before. But then she realized he had probably forgotten all about it. She had confessed right in the middle of an attack on the village, which Naruto ended up saving. Then a war specifically threatening Naruto's life was declared. He was busy protecting himself and everyone else, saving the whole world along the way. He had had much more important things than her confession to worry about, and she had been selfish expecting him to remember it. Now that they were at peace, Hinata was going to confess the proper way, giving him a gift and everything. Though she wished she had picked an easier thing to make.

After deciding that there was a spark of *something* between Jugo and Hinata, Ino refused to keep helping Hinata try to get Naruto's attention. The only person who was still trying to help her was Sai, who was incredibly kind but also out of his depth with this. He ended up lending her a book on romance that said the best thing to do to show your feelings was to make your crush something. Knitting had been one of the suggestions, so she went with it and had been regretting her choice. She could've tried doing something else, but she had already wasted too much time and didn't want to waste anymore. She had been aiming to knit a sweater, but eventually decided that a scarf would have to be enough.

As the hero of the village it was hard getting Naruto alone, but Hinata was determined. She was going to get him alone, give him the scarf, tell him her feelings, and then accept whatever response he gave her. She waited until it was dark, thinking she'd have a better shot getting him at home alone, then started her self-appointed mission. She almost turned around and went back home a few times, but then she'd remember Naruto's smile and would feel determined all over again.

Hinata was still a few minutes away from Naruto's apartment when she saw a familiar shock of blonde hair. Her heart started beating wildly, but her chest still felt light as she walked towards him. She took a few steps closer towards his back, but then stopped suddenly as she noticed Sasuke was already with him. Hinata quickly dove into the shadows, not sure what to do. Most of her wanted to go back home, but the small, still-determined part of herself figured she could wait it out. It wasn't like Sasuke would be with Naruto forever.

It was dark so Hinata hadn't noticed right away, but now that she was looking closely she realized that Sasuke was *smiling*. It was just a small smile without any teeth, but his face looked so much softer. She had also never seen him smile before, not even before the massacre. It made her feel uncomfortable, like she was spying on a private moment. She took a step back, intending to sneak away, but then stopped suddenly again as she watched Naruto's hands come up to hold Sasuke's face. Sasuke's face somehow softened even further, like he was basking in the sun. Hinata watched him reach out for Naruto, like he wasn't afraid of getting burned.

Hinata gasped, then dropped the scarf as she quickly covered her mouth with her hand, watching them both lean into a kiss. She could feel her heart shattering, the pieces falling heavily into her stomach. But even with her heartbreak and the tears she could already feel fighting to fall, she could also feel the way they loved each other. It only made the heartbreak sharper though. She took a step back, then quickly took another, and then she was suddenly running, wanting to get away from Naruto and Sasuke as quickly as she could.

Hinata's chest hurt, and her vision was blurry, but she didn't stop running until she reached the little park by the academy. She knew no one would be there and she just needed to be alone. She thought she had readied herself for a possible rejection, but she really had no idea how much it would hurt. Even worse was how *stupid* she felt for not realizing Naruto was already in love with someone else sooner. She angrily wiped the tears off of her face, then jumped a little as she realized she wasn't alone.

Jugo was looking at her in concern. His broad shoulders were completely covered by small, perched birds, and Hinata wasn't sure if she wanted to laugh or start crying again. He walked over to her slowly, like he was afraid of scaring her away. He was even crouching a little, and Hinata could feel a laugh start to bubble up in her throat.

"Are you okay, Hinata?" Jugo's voice was soft and familiar. She nodded her head probably more vigorously than she needed to, but she was afraid of what kind of sound she'd make if she opened her mouth. "Are you sure?" He was looking at her face intently, and she wondered if her eyes looked red already.

"Yeah, I'm—" Hinata cut herself off with a sharp inhale as Jugo put a hand on her shoulder. Her sharp inhale hitched, and then she was crying again. Her vision was already so blurry that she could barely see Jugo anymore, but she could still smell the scent of a campfire that seemed to cling to him. She pressed her face against his chest, not thinking past how comforting the smell of a campfire was to her right then. She could hear the sound of flapping wings and then started to cry harder at the thought that she had scared all the birds away.

With the way she was pressed against him, Hinata could feel Jugo raise his arm. He put his hand on her back, and his touch was so light that she could barely feel it. He tentatively started running his hand down her back, like he was trying to calm her. His light touch reminded her of the way he pet birds, and she started laughing, the sound a little hysterical. Jugo's touch became a surer as she kept laughing and crying.

Hinata eventually stopped crying and then awkwardly pulled away from Jugo. She looked at the ground as she rubbed the tears off of her face. She thought about running away, but didn't want to be any ruder to Jugo than she already had been. "What happened, Hinata?" Jugo asked like he really wanted to know the answer. Her face felt hot as she felt incredibly embarrassed.

"It was nothing. I was just being stupid." Hinata's voice was hoarse from the way she had been crying. She looked back up at Jugo as he put a hand on her shoulder. He was frowning at her in concern.

“You weren’t being stupid.” Hinata’s heart skipped at the intense way Jugo said it. “What happened?” Hinata looked back at her feet as she started playing with her sleeves.

“I...I saw Naruto and Sasuke kissing.” Hinata whispered it, not wanting Jugo to actually hear her.

“Oh. *Oh* .” Jugo shifted on his feet awkwardly. “I feel like I should’ve seen that coming.” Hinata laughed even though she didn’t really think anything was funny.

“Yeah, me too.” Hinata felt even more awkward and embarrassed than before. She took a step back from Jugo. “I should go home.”

“I’ll walk you back.” Jugo took a step closer to her. She shook her head vigorously.

“No, you don’t have to do that.” He shook his head too.

“I want to.” Her heart skipped a beat again, and she didn’t try to argue with him. She just started walking, and he fell into step with her.

The walk to Hinata’s was quiet and awkward. Her eyes still stung, and her chest felt tight. There was at least a foot between her and Jugo as they walked, but their hands accidentally brushed together every so often. Hinata breathed a little easier as her house came into sight. She looked at Jugo out of the corner of her eye and then blushed as he was already looking at her.

“Goodnight.” She said it quickly before running towards the door.

“Goodnight Hinata.” Jugo’s voice was quiet, but she heard him clearly anyway. She grabbed the door handle and then hesitated. She looked over her shoulder, but Jugo was already gone. Hinata sighed to herself and then rested her head against the door. She had never felt so stupid and so embarrassed in her life before.

Hinata only went inside after she started shivering. It took her a long time to fall asleep.

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Even though she hadn’t slept, Hinata still spent most of the next morning in bed. She was trying not to feel sorry for herself, but it was hard not to. She had been carrying a torch for someone who barely noticed she existed for years. She had hoped things would be different after the war, but she should’ve known that there wouldn’t be any reason for things to change. Hinata would be fine—Naruto was so much of her life, but he wasn’t all of it. She just needed to mope a little first, then she would be okay.

Ideally she would’ve stayed in her room *all* day, but then Hanabi would’ve noticed something was wrong. Hinata didn’t feel like detailing her heartbreak to her younger sister just yet, so she forced herself out of bed and then out of her room. She didn’t want to do much of anything, but figured training would help her clear her mind. Hinata shouted a quick goodbye at Hanabi before running out of the house.

Hinata didn't make it past her porch. Jugo was standing in front of her house with a small smile. Her face immediately heated up, and she wanted to dive back inside, but then that would only make Hanabi suspicious.

"Good morning, Hinata. I hope you're feeling better." Jugo didn't sound like he was pitying her or anything, but Hinata still felt like he was. Her face felt even hotter as she felt embarrassed all over again.

"I'm sorry you had to see me like that last night. I'm okay and I don't need you to check in on me." Hinata fiddled with her sleeves as she spoke, just wanting to disappear completely. Jugo frowned, but even that looked kind too.

"You don't have to apologize, and of course I wanted to check on you. You're my friend." Jugo blushed as he called her his friend. "So...would you like to get some tea with me?"

"I...yeah, I'd like that." Hinata tried to smile at him, but she wasn't sure how believable it looked. He smiled back, so he must've at least understood what she was trying to do.

They walked together to the tea house quietly, but the silence didn't feel as awkward as it had the night before.

## Chapter End Notes

i haven't seen the last but i know about the scarf!



# Chapter 4

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It had been months since Jugo first came to the Leaf with Sasuke, but he still wasn't used to it. He had spent most of his life in caves and cages and the seemingly unending freedom he had now was overwhelming. He mostly stayed by Sasuke's side, but somehow he had still managed to make some friends of his own.

Hinata was the first person who had ever approached him without wanting anything, and he was still surprised by it. She was incredibly kind and had made being in the Leaf a little easier. Jugo had never been very good with talking to other people, so he usually just watched her whenever they'd all spend time together. It was like watching a flower slowly bloom, especially with how shy she was. He liked watching her slowly become more outgoing and gain confidence with herself. And then he felt an incredible pain in chest the night he found her crying, almost like his own heart had been broken too.

Jugo didn't have much experience with people and definitely didn't have experience comforting anyone, but he wanted to comfort Hinata. He wanted to ease her pain and protect her from ever getting hurt again. But he had no idea how to do that, which made him feel useless. He wanted to be someone she could lean on.

Despite not quite being sure what to do, Jugo spent more time with Hinata. She kept telling him she was fine, but she always said it with a smile that never reached her eyes. So he kept spending time with her, helping her the only way he could. A part of him was nervous that he might lose control and hurt her, especially as Sasuke had been disappearing a lot lately. Jugo knew he probably wanted to spend time with Naruto without people hovering over his shoulder, but that meant he couldn't rely on him as much anymore. Relying on himself made Jugo nervous, but not enough to stop spending time with Hinata.

Jugo was the one who usually found Hinata first, trying to pull her from her heartbreak. So he was surprised to see her on the other side of his door with a small, shy smile. Her cheeks were a pretty sort of pink, and Jugo's chest felt light as he smiled back.

"Good morning Hinata." Her smile got a little wider.

"Hi Jugo. I...do you want to hang out today?" Her voice was quiet, and her question was shy, like she was afraid Jugo might say 'no'. He widened his own smile.

"Yeah, I would like that a lot." Hinata's blush darkened at his answer. "Do you have something in mind?"

"Yes, I was....well you haven't gotten to see much of the forest and I thought you might like to explore it a bit." Hinata fiddled with her sleeves as she spoke, which Jugo found endearing.

“That sounds really nice.” Jugo had meant it, but then he frowned as he thought of something. “Though I should probably ask Sasuke to come too in case I lose control.” Hinata’s face fell, and then she vigorously shook her head.

“I...I’d rather Sasuke not come.” Hinata’s voice was high and awkward, and Jugo’s stomach sank as he realized the mistake he had made. But he also didn’t want to make a worse mistake and hurt her later if he lost control. He had been nervous being alone in the village, but there were at least other ninjas nearby that could hopefully subdue him until Sasuke could find him. There wouldn’t be anyone in the forest if something happened.

“But what if I lose control? I don’t want to hurt you.” Hinata started chewing on her bottom lip, probably knowing Jugo had a point. He felt bad that he was making things difficult.

“Oh!” Hinata’s face brightened considerably. “I have an idea!” She activated her byakugan, then looked at him hopefully. “It’s not the same as a sharingan, but I’d be able to see any change in your chakra right away. Then I could go get help if needed.” Jugo thought about his answer for a long moment.

“Only if we stay close to the village.” Jugo wasn’t sure he was making the right choice, but he didn’t regret it. He couldn’t, not with the way Hinata was smiling widely at him.

“We will.” She grabbed his hand and then started pulling him towards the village’s gates.

The place Hinata led him to was close to the village, but it didn’t seem like it. The forest was dense, blocking out the noise from the village completely. Winter hadn’t officially come yet, so all of the leaves were still clinging to branches, a bright mix of red, orange, and yellow. There were a handful of critters scurrying around, stopping briefly to look at Jugo and Hinata curiously before running away again. It was so incredibly peaceful that it almost felt like they were in another world. Jugo breathed easier than he had in months.

“It’s beautiful. Thank you for thinking of me, Hinata.” He smiled at her and then watched her blush.

“Of course. I thought you might like the quiet.”

“I do.” Jugo looked away from her as a bird landed on his arm. He ran two fingers down its back and smiled as it shook a little. “I like the animals too. I find them easier to deal with than people.” Hinata laughed lightly.

“I do too. I tell everyone that Akamaru’s my favorite teammate.” Hinata’s voice was a light kind of joking that Jugo rarely heard from her. He hoped he’d get to hear more of it.

“Akamaru’s a good dog. Kiba did a good job raising him.” Hinata laughed again, a little louder than before.

“Akamaru was the one who raised Kiba.” Jugo’s own loud laugh surprised him. Hinata smiled widely at him, and his gaze lingered on her lips. Then he looked up at her byakugan and felt guilty. He was just touched that she wanted to share this piece of the forest with him, but he felt bad that she had to strain her chakra to do it. As much as he wanted to spend the

entire day out in the forest he planned to keep their visit short so Hinata wouldn't tire herself out. "Um, Jugo?" He blushed as he realized he was still staring at her and probably made her feel uncomfortable.

"Ah, I'm sorry for staring." Hinata started shaking her head and her hands before he even finished apologizing.

"It's okay! I actually wanted to ask you something." She paused, and Jugo nodded once he realized she was waiting for permission to ask. "Do you..." She looked at the ground as she trailed off, fiddling with her jacket sleeves. "Do you really need to rely on Sasuke so much?" Jugo's stomach sank a little at her question, but it wasn't entirely unexpected. Most people wanted to know about his other self.

"Yes. I'm dangerous and I can't control it at all. I've tried everything and even went to Orochimaru because he promised to help. But then I realized he only wanted to help himself." Jugo's stomach sank even further as he remembered the seals Orochimaru put on everyone, making their chakra take over their minds. "There used to be someone else who helped me whenever I'd lose control, but he...he passed away." Jugo had to swallow down the lump that appeared in his throat as he remembered Kimimaro. "If it wasn't for Sasuke I'd be back in a cage." Hinata's frown kept deepening as he spoke.

"No one should be caged, Jugo." Even though she had said his name, it felt like Hinata was also speaking to someone else. He shook his head slowly.

"I need to be. I don't want to hurt anyone, especially not you." Jugo hunched in on himself as he spoke, not liking the sad way Hinata was looking at him.

"You won't hurt me." Jugo started to shake his head, but stopped as Hinata gently grabbed his hand. "I *know* you won't. So please don't think you belong in a cage." Hinata was looking up at him, her face set in determination. Jugo's entire face felt hot as he got a fluttering feeling in his chest. He wasn't sure he'd be able to say anything at all, so he just nodded at her. The fluttering feeling got worse as a smile spread across her face.

They spent the rest of the day out in the forest, even though Jugo kept telling Hinata not to push herself. She would just tell him that she wasn't and then would point something new out to him. It was the most peaceful day Jugo could ever remember having.

## Chapter End Notes

jugo's backstory always gets me 🥹

thank you for reading!!

# Chapter 5

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Jugo felt like he only grew closer to Hinata after the day they spent together in the forest. They started spending even more time together, sometimes not even doing much at all, just enjoying each other's company. They slowly learned more about each other, and Jugo held every new thing Hinata told him close to his chest afterwards. He held each smile he got from her close to his chest too.

They spent almost every day together, but Jugo was still surprised when Hinata held a beautifully wrapped box out to him one day. Her cheeks were bright red, and she wasn't meeting his eyes as she held it out to him. Jugo took it tentatively, having no idea why she would give him anything. He was careful as he unwrapped it, not wanting to rip the paper too badly.

Jugo opened the box and then blinked a few times as he looked down at what seemed like a lot of purple wool. It felt incredibly soft as he reached into the box and pulled it out. Hinata watched him closely as he unfolded it, looking at all of it for the first time. It was a large sweater, and Jugo had a feeling it might even fit him. He smiled as he looked back at her.

"It's very soft. Thank you, Hinata." Her cheeks turned a deeper shade of red as she smiled back.

"I hope it fits. I wasn't sure what size you are, so I measured Kiba and doubled everything." Jugo laughed fondly as he imagined Hinata forcing Kiba to sit still so she could measure him. "And...I know the stitching is a little messy. I'm still getting the hang of knitting." Hinata looked away as she said it, tucking a piece of hair behind her ear.

"I think it looks perfect." They were sitting so closely together that Jugo heard the way her breathing hitched. It was warm in the tea house, but Jugo pulled the sweater on anyway. It was a little tight across his chest and the sleeves were a little short, but it otherwise fit perfectly. He smiled at her wider than he had before. "And it seems like doubling Kiba's measurements worked well." Hinata looked him over slowly, lingering on his sleeves, but she just smiled back.

"I'm glad you like it." Her voice was warm, and Jugo found himself leaning closer.

"It's the nicest thing anyone's ever given me." It was the only thing anyone had ever given him, but Jugo didn't tell her that. He just watched the way she started to get flustered with a fondness in his chest.

Jugo wanted to stay at the tea house with Hinata all day, but her sister had come by to get her for a clan meeting. He had the same fondness in his chest as he watched her leave.

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After the Leaf had released them from their unofficial prison sentence, the village had given them a small house to all stay in. It was cramped with all four of them, Karin and Suigetsu complained about having to share the small space often, but Jugo didn't mind. Staying with Sasuke made him feel less nervous and staying in a house at all still felt like a luxury to him. He wasn't sure he'd consider it his home, but it was close enough.

As they slowly started becoming part of the village the house started to get empty during the day. Despite all of her complaining, Karin started helping out with the village's Sensor Division. Jugo had a feeling the complaining was mostly for show as she always smugly bragged about how the rest of the division praised her abilities. Suigetsu had become something almost like friends with Kiba and Tenten and started training with them often. And Sasuke still disappeared a lot, probably spending time with Naruto. Jugo had been nervous about all the changes at first, but then he started spending more time with Hinata, which chased his nervousness away.

Jugo had expected to come back to an empty house after leaving the tea house, but he was surprisingly the last one back. Everyone looked at him as he ducked through the doorway, clearly noticing the sweater Hinata had made him. Jugo felt oddly nervous under their attention as they usually never looked at him for so long.

"Where the hell did you get that eyesore?" Karin's voice was derisive, which immediately made Jugo defensive. He frowned at her as he stood a little straighter than usual.

"It's not an eyesore. And Hinata made it for me." Jugo couldn't keep his fondness for Hinata out of his voice, still touched that she had made him something. Both Karin and Suigetsu raised an eyebrow at him, but Suigetsu was also looking at him with a toothy smile while Karin was scowling. Sasuke rolled his eyes.

"Tch, Hinata's so annoying. She's always following Naruto around, acting like he's so great or something." Sasuke's voice was dismissive, and Jugo felt an uncharacteristic spike of anger. Hinata was the kindest person he had ever met, holding everyone in the village in her heart. She didn't deserve to be written off like this, especially not because of Sasuke's own feelings for Naruto.

"She got over Naruto pretty quickly after she saw you two kissing." It wasn't quite true, but it got Jugo's point across. Sasuke's entire face turned red as Karin's jaw dropped.

"You were kissing *Naruto* ?!" Karin screeched the question at Sasuke, who was looking at Jugo in betrayal. Suigetsu laughed loudly as Karin grabbed Sasuke's arm and shook him. "If you want an Uzumaki I'm right here!" She shook him again, even harder than before. Jugo ducked back outside as Sasuke tried to defend himself.

Jugo could still hear the tenor of Karin's voice, but couldn't quite make out the words anymore. He sighed to himself as he looked up at the sky. It wasn't quite dark enough to see the stars, but he could just make out hints of them. He sighed again as he heard someone else walk outside.

"Man, I can't believe you talked back to Sasuke like that." Suigetsu sounded like he was laughing, but also like he was a little proud of Jugo. "I don't think I've ever seen him turn

red like that before.” Jugo shrugged awkwardly, feeling strange having unintentionally gotten Suigetsu’s approval.

“I just didn’t like him saying that about Hinata.” Suigetsu’s usual mischievous smile somehow grew more mischievous as Jugo spoke.

“Well of course you need to defend your girlfriend.” Jugo blushed at the other boy’s teasing tone. He looked back up at the sky to avoid Suigetsu’s knowing look.

“Hinata’s not my girlfriend.” Jugo only knew that Suigetsu shrugged as he made sure to knock his shoulder against him as he did.

“Maybe not, but you *do* have a crush on her.” Suigetsu’s voice was still teasing, like he was trying to get one up on Jugo.

“Well yeah of course I do. She’s incredibly kind and thoughtful. She’s always putting others in front of herself, and it’s cute watching the way she gets flustered.” Jugo’s chest felt warm as he thought about Hinata. He did have a crush on her and had had one for a long time.

“If you already know you like her then why the hell haven’t you asked her out yet?” Suigetsu’s question was incredulous. The warmth in Jugo’s chest sank, becoming a heavy feeling weighing down his stomach.

“Because she actually still loves Naruto.” Jugo wasn’t upset or jealous about it. Hinata had loved Naruto long since before he had met her, it was just another part of her to him. And Jugo wasn’t the kind of person who would’ve deserved to be loved by someone like Hinata anyway. Suigetsu scoffed loudly.

“Obviously I don’t know what she thinks about Naruto, but I *know* she loves you. I mean she made you a fucking sweater. Who does that?” Jugo’s face felt warm as Suigetsu tugged the hem of the sweater.

“Hinata’s the kind of person who would and she’d do it for anyone.” Suigetsu rolled his eyes in response.

“She definitely wouldn’t. I can prove she’s into you. I’ll tag along next time you guys hang out and I bet she’ll be disappointed that I’m there.” Suigetsu sounded like he had already proved his point.

“She won’t be. I know I’m right, I know her better than you do.” Jugo knew it was a childish thing to say, but he was trying to squash the little bit of unrealistic hope that had started to bloom in his chest. Hinata didn’t have feelings for him, and he *knew* she didn’t.

“Yeah yeah yeah. You’re the Hinata expert. But, let’s just say that I *am* right and she *does* have feelings for you, I think you should tell her how you feel.” Suigetsu’s voice was uncharacteristically serious, and Jugo was touched that his friend cared about him this much.

“If you’re somehow right, I’ll think about it.” Suigetsu gave him a toothy smile before knocking his shoulder against Jugo’s side.

“You better start practicing your confession, big guy.” Suigetsu winked at him before going back into the house. Jugo didn’t follow, wanting to be alone for a little longer.

Jugo watched the stars steadily get brighter and couldn’t stop himself from comparing each one to Hinata’s smile.

## Chapter End Notes

more knitting as a love language content!!! also would suigetsu be this helpful???  
maybe not but i love him

# Chapter 6

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Before Hanabi had pulled Hinata away the day before, she had asked Jugo if he had wanted to hang out again the next day. Jugo had said ‘of course’ without even hesitating and asking what she had in mind. His chest felt light as he walked to her house, even with Suigetsu walking next to him with a smug smile. He still didn’t think the shorter boy was right, but that didn’t dampen his excitement to see Hinata. She opened the door as soon as Jugo knocked, smiling widely at him. Her smile didn’t disappear as she noticed Suigetsu, but it did shrink a little.

“Good morning, Jugo, Suigetsu.” Her voice was as warm and pleasant as always, no hint of disappointment. Suigetsu waved at his name.

“Hey Hinata, hope it’s okay that I tagged along. Jugo’s always going on about how much fun you guys have together, and I wanted to get in on it.” Jugo blushed at Suigetsu’s teasing tone. He tried to subtly step on Suigetsu’s foot to shut him up, but the other boy’s foot just melted into water before Jugo could’ve touched him.

“Yeah of course!” Hinata’s face was just as red as Jugo’s felt. “I...I just need to pack some more food.” Jugo realized she had been holding a basket in her hands. He got a fluttering feeling in his chest at the thought that she had made food for him. “I’ll be right back.” She took a step back, further into her house, but then Suigetsu waved his hand again.

“Actually! I just remembered that I uh had a thing I had to do and can’t come anymore. I just need to talk to Jugo real quick before I go.” Suigetsu grabbed Jugo’s arm and started to pull him away. Jugo considered just standing his ground as he knew he was stronger than Suigetsu, but he let the shorter boy pull him away. Suigetsu only pulled him a few feet away, he could still even see Hinata, but he made Jugo lean down. “So uh she *definitely* has feelings for you. She made you a picnic. A picnic!” Jugo blushed at Suigetsu’s loud whisper.

“And she was going to add more food for you.” Suigetsu rolled his eyes at him.

“Yeah but she didn’t *want* to. Didn’t you notice the way her face fell as I said I was going to tag along? She was completely disappointed that she wouldn’t get to be alone with you. She likes you!” Suigetsu gave him a toothy grin. “And what’s a better place to confess than a romantic picnic?” He winked at Jugo, whose face felt even hotter.

“But....she deserves someone better than me. I’m a monster. What if I lose control and hurt her someday? I wouldn’t be able to live with myself.” Jugo’s voice wavered a little, imagining hurting her as he said it. Suigetsu’s smile was replaced with a more serious, knowing look.

“I don’t think you will, Jugo. You’ve only gone monster mode once since we’ve been here.”



“You mean that first night when you stepped on my face as I was sleeping.” Suigetsu waved Jugo’s words off.

“It could’ve been because of anything. *Anyway* you haven’t lost control since you started hanging out with Hinata, and I don’t think you’re going to. You just need to trust yourself a little.” Suigetsu started to walk backwards and away from Jugo.

“But—” Jugo tried to grab Suigetsu’s shoulder, but he just turned his arm into water, making him impossible to hold.

“Good luck, big guy.” And then Suigetsu melted completely, not even letting Jugo try to argue with him anymore. Jugo took a deep breath and then another one as he still felt nervous. He walked back over to Hinata, who was still waiting in the doorway, and hoped his face didn’t look as red as it felt. She smiled at him warmly as he got closer, and he smiled back, only feeling more nervous.

Hinata led him to their usual spot in the forest. It wasn’t really a good day for a picnic, it was cold enough that there was frost on the ground and all of the trees had lost their leaves, but Jugo appreciated the quiet of the forest. Hinata had thought ahead to bring a thick blanket, so they at least weren’t sitting on the cold ground. Jugo helped her lay it down, then sat close to her, telling himself it was just to help her keep warm.

Jugo looked around as they sat together, still awed by the beauty of the forest. Even in the cold winter, the area felt alive. He was also still touched that Hinata had wanted to share it with him and *kept* sharing it with him. As they grew closer, she had told him that this particular bit of the forest was where she had spent a lot of time when she was younger. She had always been unsure of her abilities as a ninja, so would train there in secret, not wanting anyone to see her struggle. Jugo had been touched when he realized she hadn’t just shared a piece of the forest with him but had shared a piece of herself. He looked back at Hinata and felt a warmth in his chest as she was already looking at him.

Jugo still wasn’t completely convinced that Suigetsu was right and that Hinata had feelings for him. But he did have feelings for her and it felt like all the reasons he had for not saying them before were unimportant now. He smiled at her and liked the immediate way she smiled back.

“Hinata, I like you.” Jugo’s smile widened as he watched her blush. “And I don’t just mean as a friend. I think you’re amazing and kind and have feelings for you.” Her eyes widened as her blush darkened.


“You have feelings for *me* ?” Her voice was high and full of disbelief. “But I... I mean I’m just....but you...” She stumbled over her words as she became more and more flustered. Jugo got a warmth in his chest as he watched her. She didn’t accept his feelings or reject them, but somehow Jugo knew right then that she felt the same way. Jugo gently grabbed her chin, liking the way her skin felt warm under his fingers. Her eyes widened even more as he leaned in further.

Hinata’s lips felt soft and they parted in surprise. Jugo kissed her a little harder, which was all the encouragement she needed to kiss him back. She grabbed his arm tightly and pulled

him closer. Jugo couldn't stop himself from smiling into the kiss and he liked the way he could feel Hinata smile back.

Hianta's cheeks were flush, and she was breathing heavily when they stopped kissing. But she was also giving Jugo the brightest smile he had ever seen. He was already leaning back in to kiss her again. Now he had gotten to kiss her, Jugo wanted to kiss Hinata forever. The only way he knew time hadn't stopped was the continued noises from the forest around them. Something settled in his chest as they kissed, and Jugo knew this was exactly where he was supposed to be.

## Chapter End Notes

obviously they have to kiss  thank you for reading and i hope y'all are sold on them now.

thank you again [LilyShinx](#) for taking a first look!

and i hope you liked it [HelloThereGhoul!!!](#) 

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