

## Finding Family

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# Finding Family

by [thatdamnuchiha](#)

## Summary

Middle-earth is a strange new territory, with strange new threats, overprotective elves, and four little elflings who just want to find their way home... wherever that home might be, because like it or not, they're stuck there with no chance of return. Death tends to be final like that, especially when there's no one left to edo tensei oneself back to life.

A second chance at life should be a blessing, but trouble somehow always finds Team Seven, whether it comes in the form of strange beasts called orcs or nosy golden-haired elves who think they've returned from the Halls of Mandos too, though perhaps this time they might get a few thousand years of peace before the action begins.

## Notes

thatdamnuchiha: OK, I'm going to make this a very very serious fic  
brain: ͇\_ ( ° ͇ ° ) \_/

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

## The Pranksters of Rivendell

It had become a habit, Elrond noted with minor amusement and exasperation, to check above the doors in Rivendell. One never knew when a bucket of water might drop down on an unexpected elf, nor if a chalkboard duster would stain their hair with flakes of white powder. Wire was spun across walkways, near invisible to any eyes but an elf's, and glue was poured on chairs about to be used for meetings. It was the fast-drying stuff too, which had resulted in more than a few wardrobe malfunctions as of late.

Sighing quietly, he pushed open the prank-free door to his office, taking in the soaked form of Erethor, along with the considerably drier Glorfindel. "What news do you bring from the west?" he asked, directing his question at his old friend. "How fare the patrols?"

"Orcs have been sighted." Glorfindel closed his eyes, cutting straight to the heart of the matter. "Not enough to pose a real threat, and yet they are still encroaching on our lands."

"Will the current patrols be enough to deal with them?"

"I'll lead my company out to join them on the morrow," he replied smoothly, gesturing at the door stiffly, silently eyeing the sodden elf next to him with a hint of curiosity. "May I take my leave, now?"

"Of course." Elrond nodded, turning his attention back to his sodden steward.

Glorfindel paused by the door, curiosity overtaking his solemn expression, eyes alight with a hint of glee as he looked between the room's occupants. "By the way... might I enquire as to why the chief of your household is currently looking like he took a dip in the Bruinen?"

Erethor sighed, feet squelching in his boots as he stepped back, careful not to drip too much water onto the furnishings. "Ah, that's right. You've been away for a short while, so you don't know."

One golden brow rose. "Are your sons back up to their usual mischief?" A smile curled at his lips. "The last time they caught you in one of their pranks was back when they were still little elflings," he said, watching the small twitch of irritation flashing across Erethor's face at the memory of the miniature little Balrogs they'd been.

"Elladan and Elrohir have both been adamant about not being the culprits behind all this chaos," Elrond said, a fond smile on his face as he turned to stare out across Imladris. "So I suppose we'll have to wait until our mischief-makers come forward... or make a little slip up. My sons are having a fair bit of fun looking for them as we speak, if only to pick up a few more tricks. Until then, I advise keeping an eye out, especially above the doors."

"If that's what Lord Elrond advises," Glorfindel murmured, making a show of looking up at the doorframe where no buckets were in sight.

"Safe travels, old friend." Elrond nodded.

“Expect me no later than seven days,” he said, shutting the door behind him with a soft click as he saw himself out.

“Hopefully we’ll have sorted out these damned pranksters before his return,” Erester grumbled, still dripping water everywhere. “They are making a nuisance of themselves.”

“Patience.” Elrond sat down at his desk. “I have a feeling there’s more to this than meets the eye. Whether good or bad, I know not. The answers will reveal themselves in time.” He looked down at the documents on his desk. “In the meantime, though, I have all this paperwork to sort out...” A smug smile pulled at his lips. “If you have the energy to complain, I’m sure Elladan and Elrohir won’t complain if you join them in searching for our troublemakers.”

Water squelched in his boots as Erester excused himself, heading to his rooms to clean up before joining in the hunt for Imladris’ newest source of pranks. He was not a happy bunny. First there were these pranksters, then that weird cry out at Weathertop, and now orc trouble... He sighed, running a hand through his dark locks. *He was going to be busy. He just knew it.*

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Kakashi rested his head on his hands, peering down at the bustling street below him. It was amusing, how little people looked up, but that was part of what allowed them to flit around the city practically undetected. Evidently, not many elves used the rooftops to travel. He couldn’t blame them. They didn’t have chakra. *And now neither did he*, the snide voice in the back of his head reminded him. *They were on Middle-Earth now. Chakra didn’t exist... and neither did all their friends.* His heart pounded, smile falling from his lips as he stared out across the dwelling of their new kin.

“Kakashi...” Naruto’s voice sounded, his tiny hand pulling on his sleeve. “I think we should get back to camp. “There are these three elves coming, and they look like they mean *business.*”

“Ah. Is that so?” He pulled himself away from the lip of the roof. “Looks like they’re trying to find us... again.”

“Not that it’ll do them any good, ne, Kakashi?” Whiskered cheeks stretched in a grin, pointed ear tips just about visible under the smooth curtain of blonde hair. *Just like Kushina’s...* It made Kakashi’s heart ache.

“Come on,” he said, leading his younger charge away. If he looked about eight, then Naruto was definitely looking closer to a four-year-old. *Likely meaning they weren’t any younger... their ages had just translated into elvish ones, and they aged weirdly.*

“Coming,” Naruto all but sang softly, following him as they silently leapt from roof to roof, the muted sounds of their passing drowned out by hubbub below.

They hurried away, trading rooftiles and drainpipes for branches and leaves as they deftly evaded the guards keeping watch over one of the few entrances and exits to the elven dwelling. *Rivendell, or Imladris, it was called.* Someplace Naruto would probably be able to find home, and comfort in. Kakashi sighed, making it back to their makeshift den – angled logs against an outcrop of rock, forming a little lean-to, the gaps filled with moss in case of the event of rainfall. Naruto would no doubt be discovered soon. He wasn't quite as good at chakra-unaided stealth, and more often than not they split up in the city to cover more ground. *The main reason the elves knew it wasn't just one person... they covered far too much territory with different traps for that.*

“So, what prank are we gonna play on them tomorrow?” Naruto rocked back and forwards on his feet, that *fake, fake* grin plastered on his face.

Neither of them were admitting it, both too content to find joy in pranking the elves to focus on their feelings. An unhealthy habit which would come to an end sooner or later. But the elves could take care of Naruto. Kakashi bit his lip. *They'd be the family he'd never had before. The family Kakashi couldn't be.* The campfire crackled, heat blazing from the flames in the sheltered little valley they'd found a little ways away from the target of all their pranks. “I don't know, Naru,” he mumbled, leaning back to stare up at the sky. “But we've got a while to plan.”

“Awesome!”

Kakashi smiled. He wasn't used to being without his mask, without his shield against the outside world and all the dangers it wrought. He wasn't used to the emptiness welling up inside his chest, nor the voice reminding him that sooner or later everything would come crashing down around him. *Again and again. The same repeating cycle.* He was a bad luck charm, and while he was there Naruto wouldn't be able to find the happiness he needed.

He glanced sideways at the blonde mop. *Just a little longer,* he told himself. *Then he'd vanish, just like when he'd become ANBU Hound. He'd done it before, he could do it again.* Naruto didn't need his misery to keep him company. Kakashi could deal with it on his own. *As per usual. He was an adult, no matter the laws of elves.* He didn't need the comfort of his new kin.

## The Loner of Weathertop

Sasuke huddled inside his cloak in the little alcove of the abandoned ruins. He still had no idea where the hell he was, and he wasn't sure he wanted to, given all the howls and the sheer eeriness of the forest around him. Trees seemed to shift whenever he ventured in, creaking as if they were moving, though Sasuke was fairly sure he wasn't anywhere near the First Hokage. Senju Hashirama was dead, and so was he. The thought brought giggles to his lips. His hands were tiny. Child-sized. Yet he could feel the blood racing through them. He could feel their warmth. That told him he was alive. *He was alive and yet he was supposed to be dead.*

Nibbling on one of the various berries he'd found, he pulled the worn, tatty cloak he'd found further around himself, snuggling down to sleep for the night as he had many others. No beast, human-looking or otherwise, had dared to come into the ruins, and for that Sasuke was grateful. He could brood in peace. Mourn in peace. He was supposed to be dead. He was supposed to be with his brother. Tears pricked his eyes. *He wanted nii-san.* Sweet turned bitter inside his mouth, stomach twisting in knots the more he thought about Itachi... *and the way he'd killed him. The way Konoha had forced him to. It was their fault. All their fault.* Furious, he swiped at his eyes. *He was a shinobi, and shinobi never showed their emotions.* Teeth sunk into his lip. *But he was alone... and he couldn't see any enemies about.*

Sighing, he pulled the cloak over his head, sinking into it, closing his eyes as exhaustion finally hit, and it hit hard. He'd never slept peacefully through the night before, so waking up to warm sunlight surprised him. It crept in through the small entrance to the little alcove, warming his face, nearly blinding him when he opened his eyes. They were still sensitive, despite his lack of sharingan. *His sharingan was gone.* He'd tried every trick in the book, but the chakra pathways which were supposed to be there were not. There were no chakra pathways anywhere in his body, because the strange energy inside him wasn't chakra.

*Useless.* That was what he was. *What good was a shinobi without chakra?*

Scowling, he slumped against the wall, trying to become one with it as best as he could. *What was he supposed to do?* There was no one around for miles. He could tell that much thanks to his surprisingly far-seeing eyes. The weird ruins he was in were the only form of settlement. *Was he alone?*

Ice flooded his veins. "Is this my punishment?" he whispered, cuddling his knees to his chest. "Where's brother...? I want my brother..." Tears rolled down his face, thick and warm. "Itachi would know what to do..." *He wasn't anything like his brother.* His shoulders sunk. *Konoha had ruined him. It had ruined the Uchiha.* He laughed bitterly. "Not that it matters," he muttered in that musical voice of his. The voice of a child. *He was anything but a little whining brat...* Sasuke froze, hiding his face in his hands. "Wait. That's exactly what I am right now..." More tears leaked out, dripping down onto the stone floor. "If Naruto could see me now," he said, pushing himself to his feet, ready to venture out into the world yet again, ignoring the slight fear curling in his chest as he made to leave the safety of the nest he'd made. "He'd call me pathetic, no doubt."

He trudged out into the light, skirting his way down through the ruins, nimbly reaching the treeline within minutes. His body was that of a child, and apparently with that came the boundless energy of one. Yawning, he hurried towards the bushes he'd found the berries and nuts before, some childish part of him longing to get back to the alcove where it was safe. *Though it might've been the shinobi part of him too. It wasn't good to linger in places unknown.*

The bush was at the perfect height, the berries ripe for the picking, just as they had been days before. It was unusual, but Sasuke wasn't about to complain. It was one of the few food sources he had, and he wasn't looking forward to the time when it ran out. *Not that it would be anytime soon.* He wiped the purplish stain from around his mouth, scowling as he looked at the dirt staining his skin. *He'd have to find somewhere to bathe sooner rather than later.* He stunk, and Uchiha weren't allowed to stink. *Even if they were ex-Uchiha.* He doubted there were any others around, and it probably was a name better forgotten. *It had brought him nothing but strife. He'd died, for crying out loud.* He wasn't even wearing his clan symbol anymore, it was likely lost in death and everything that had happened afterwards, or so he presumed, seeing as his memory was a blank from death to his strange arrival in the foreign lands.

"But right now," he mumbled, turning back in the direction his ruins were. *They were his now, seeing as nobody else was around to claim them as their own... besides, he was living there. It was his new home.* "I think it's time I head back," he continued, ignoring the creaking of the trees, and the way the roots seemed to shift as if to stop him from going back. His ears twitched, picking up the sounds of murmurs and laughter. *Happiness.* His newfound childishness urging him to turn around and track down the source of the sound – to join in with it as he should. *But how could he be happy alone in a place he didn't know, with neither friend nor family to keep him company?*

# The Elfling in the Forest

Sakura huddled in the darkness, water dripping from every inch of her soaping clothing. The thick tree roots kept the worst of the wind from reaching her, but she was still bitterly cold. Her shoulder twinged, reminding her about the arrow embedded in it. Blood dribbled from the wound made by the black metal, each drop leaving making her feel that much weaker. *She needed to deal with it soon.* Biting her lip, she listened out for the sounds of the strange men searching for her, silently praying they'd already left. *They were strangers. Unknowns.* Sakura didn't like the unknown. She'd always buried her head in the books, always learning, so nothing was unknown to her. The unknown was scary.

*And now she was knee-deep in the stuff.*

She shivered, barely keeping her teeth from clicking together as she sat in the *unknown* forest, with *unknown* people from her own *unknown* clan looking for her with a terrifying amount of tenacity. Dizziness made her vision swim, her breath coming in soft pants as she slumped back, her body all but begging her to shut her eyes and take a nap. She couldn't though. *She wouldn't.* If she closed her eyes, there was no guarantee they'd open again. The medic inside her told her that much. Shuffling herself to a sitting position, Sakura froze, staring at the booted foot just about visible in the dim lighting.

It was right outside her hiding spot. Sakura swallowed, halting all her movements, quietening her breathing as best she could. *She hadn't heard a damn thing.*

"No sign of the little one?" The boot shifted, a second coming into view seconds later as the people outside her little hidey-hole spoke to one another in a language she could understand. *They were her people now, so it was hardly surprising she could understand them.* "She couldn't have gone too far."

"Perhaps she's hiding..."

Sakura stiffened. *Why did they have to be smart?*

"Likely so." Another set of boots came into view a little further back than the other pair. "Nevertheless, we need to find her. She had an orc's arrow in her shoulder and I fear what would happen to the little one if it were to go untreated."

Her eyes narrowed. *Why would strangers want to help her?* She chewed on her lip, confused. *Had they been infected by Naruto or something?* Tears welled in her eyes. *Not that Naruto was there or anything. The universe wouldn't have been that nice to Team Seven.* She'd nearly died once already, and she wasn't going to risk bringing that number up to two by interacting with the strange pointy-eared people. Blind trust was Naruto's area of expertise. Not hers.

"What would you have me do, Lord Glorfindel?" The second pair of boots moved further away. "Check every nook and cranny of the forest? The trees don't seem to be offering any answers about a lost little mortal child."



Silently, Sakura cursed her luck. She was trapped, and they were likely about to start searching. Her eyelids flickered. *Though maybe she might fall unconscious and be spared the pain...* The acrid taste of blood filled her mouth, teeth sinking deeper into her lip. *She didn't want to die again. It hurt.*

She stared out from her hiding place, heart pounding in her chest as the boots in front of her crinkled, knees bending as the strange man decided to check there first. If she'd been stronger, she likely would've thrown the middle finger up at the universe. *Of all the places he could've checked first, why did it have to be her actual hiding spot?* Her throat was dry, green eyes blinking owlishly as they met a surprised grey set.

"Oh." His hair was golden, braided back in a style Sakura thought had died many years before, his jaw sharp, teeth annoyingly white. "Feiron, I found her!"

"Already?"

Sakura shrank back, silently wishing she could meld into trees like the First Hokage. It would've made her life a hell of a lot easier, and she'd have actually been able to avoid the hand reaching towards her. The man, *Glorfindel* her mind supplied, reached for her slowly, crooning in that strange language she couldn't understand for the life of her. *Why didn't he speak the one she could actually understand?* A low hiss escaped her lips, closely followed by a whimper as the arrow shifted in her shoulder. He was reaching for her, seemingly unaware of her wariness – or her tendency to bite, as he soon found out.

Her teeth sunk into the soft skin of his hand, but rather than the taste of blood she'd been expecting, there was nothing. He didn't even flinch back in pain. *She probably hadn't really hurt him in the slightest.* Grimacing, she kept her jaw clenched around his palm, silently cursing her weak body. She couldn't even bite a person properly thanks to the blasted arrow in her shoulder and the chill quickly settling into her bones. His other hand snaked inside her temporary den much too fast for her to react in time, not that she had a second mouth to fend his grasp off with. *Besides, his arm felt hot against her skin, almost scalding, but Sakura liked that heat. She needed it.* Yawning, she released his other hand, blinking sleepily as she was lifted off the ground. She felt stiff all over, and cold too. Her head bumped against his chest, warmth seeping through the travelling cloak, and her traitorous body decided it would be the best time to finally succumb to sleep.

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Sighing, Sakura snuggled into the warmth, her mind hazy as she woke from her sleep. She'd have to get up to help her teammates up soon, especially with the war going—

She stiffened, abruptly remembering she wasn't safely in Konoha. She probably wasn't even in the Elemental Nations. *She was in the unknown.* Her eyes cracked open, whimpering slightly at the brightness of the light as she burrowed into the warmth that was a travelling cloak. She'd worn enough to be familiar with the style, but she was fairly certain the one she was currently wrapped up in was of a higher quality.

With her sudden movements, she'd undoubtedly notified the person holding her that she was awake, as proven by the order they were going to make camp for the night there, before the golden-haired rider switched back to the unfamiliar language he seemed to be under the impression she could understand. She didn't. So when she found herself lifted off the horse all of a sudden, she startled, doing her best limpet impression as she clung to the green tunic he wore. The drop was far too big, her lack of height and chakra really coming in to remind her she wouldn't be able to jump down and run away. Not without breaking something or injuring herself even more.

Sakura paused, blinking as she wiggled in the travelling cloak she'd been bundled in. Her shoulder wasn't hurting anymore, and she was wonderfully warm. *Maybe these people weren't as bad as she'd originally thought.* Staring up at the face of her rescuer, she took him in for a second time, now she wasn't half delirious with blood loss and who knew what else.

He was tall, ridiculously so, considering she was about the size of a four-year-old. All of the group of strange riders were. They towered over her – well, they would if she were placed on the ground, but her rescuer seemed quite content with holding her safely off said ground. Sakura wouldn't deny she felt oddly safe, there in the arms of a stranger, and she'd bet it had something to do with the fact all their ears were pointed. *Just like her own, not that they were visible under the blood, muck, and grime she was covered in.* She was a child again, and with that came strange childish urges – like the one to follow the butterflies whenever she saw them. *But maybe she'd listen to them this one time.* The strange pointy-eared group had saved her already, so though she was suspicious of their motives and the like, she supposed she could at least trust them somewhat. *Only a smidgeon though.*

The clearing they stopped in was relatively small, the fire set up in the very centre, but Sakura was grateful they weren't too close to the flames. There were too many other people there, and as much as Sakura was beginning to trust them, she didn't want to be surrounded by them. *She didn't particularly want to get stabbed in the back.*

Her rescuer sat closer to the edge of the clearing, his hold on her loose as she curled up on his lap, feeling acutely like the child she was. Each and every one of the strange group seemed to radiate a sort of wisdom, despite their youthful appearance. She could sense it, just like she could sense the weird whispers of the trees. *She felt safe, not that she'd ever admit it.* She didn't really understand why, but she supposed it was due to her new 'outer' child.

A quiet rumble made her pause, heat staining her cheeks as the one holding her chuckled at the sound of her stomach. His voice was beautiful, his laughter making her want to giggle along, but she was an adult shinobi, and they didn't laugh around strange *unknown* clansmen, no matter how wonderful they sounded. *And how wonderful they looked,* her mind added snidely.

He spoke to her in that unfamiliar language, offering her out a sliver of bread. She stared at it, untrusting. *What if it was poisoned? What if it was a trap?* Squinting suspiciously up at him, she took it, hunger winning out in the end as she ate, blinking as another torn strip of bread was handed to her yet again. *It was safe. She was safe.*

Yawning, she slumped against his chest, sighing in relief at the warmth she'd been sorely deprived of in the hours following her arrival in the strange unfamiliar world. It didn't matter

that she was covered in muck and dirt, probably staining his green shirt, her hair and skin colour barely visible under the grime. She was warm, weirdly safe, and oddly happy.

*She could get used to this.*

## A Chance Encounter

Naruto blinked from his position upside-down in the tree. He had not been expecting it. Someone had laid a trap for him. *He felt oddly flattered, if slightly embarrassed at the simplicity of the trap which had caught him.* It was the same one that Kakashi had caught him in many a times and he had even more difficulty getting out of it than usual thanks to his smaller than normal limbs. Groaning, he pulled himself up towards his foot, silently wishing he still had a kunai to hand, but all his weapons had been lost with the rest of his belongings with their arrival on *Middle Earth* as Kakashi had explained to him. *He was on another planet.* The realisation hadn't quite set in yet, nor had the pain and agony of losing everything he'd worked for his entire life. His dreams of becoming Hokage? Gone. Vanished like smoke in the wind. The ache was deep down, unsurfaced, and Naruto didn't want to uncover it, no matter how healthy that was supposed to be. *He was young again. Tiny. And with that it brought memories of pranking the villagers. Imladris was his Konoha now.* Only they had no idea of that fact... plus he didn't exactly live legally within its boundaries. He survived in the forest with Kakashi, living off the land there. Sure, he missed the luxury of flushing toilets and warm blankets, but he had Kakashi. *He had his family... and somewhere out there the other two members of his little makeshift family were waiting... even if they were probably plotting his murder.*

"Stupid rope... stupid trap," he muttered, swinging himself up towards the tree branches, grabbing a hold of them nimbly, working his foot loose from the noose it had been trapped in. Freeing himself took far longer than he'd hoped, the sun starting to set by the time he was sitting upright in the tree branches. His breath came in pants, exhaustion clawing at his limbs as he peered towards where their camp was situated a good distance away from the elves and their uncanny powers of hearing and sight. *Could he make it before the guards changed?* He tilted his head, blinking owlishly down at the bright green grass below. *Only one way to find out.*

Leaping down, he landed quietly, the lack of chakra preventing him from making it completely soundless. It also prevented him from making the landing completely painless too. Wincing, he pulled himself up to his full height, which was still ridiculously small. Cautiously, he hurried back through his usual walkway, his footsteps barely audible thanks to the grace of his new race. Elves. He was an elf. *Yet another fact that hadn't quite sunk into the brain situated between those new pointy ears of his.* Sighing, he edged down the side street, knowing better than to hurry onto the rooftops with the bright evening sunlight bearing down on him. People might not look up all that often, but his shadow would be on the ground, and people more often than not looked at the ground. That'd really give the game away, and that was something he didn't want to do.

Kakashi had already explained everything he'd learnt from his infiltration of their new home dwelling, so he was well aware of all the mollycoddling he'd be subjected to upon discovery. Part of him waited in anticipation for that time, the other part having a full blown anxiety attack over it. *If he were caught, he'd have to come to terms with his new reality... and let go of the old one.* Naruto shook his head. He wasn't ready for the tears nor for the gaping hole in

his heart to make itself known. Not before he had something at least to fill it, even if only partially.

*The elves could probably fill it*, the snide voice in the back of his head reminded, and Naruto chuckled. It reminded him oddly of Kurama... of the bastard fox... how he missed his partner. The one who'd been with him his entire life – and he'd always had his back, if only to save himself.

He sighed again, smiling as the forest where he now lived came into view past the elven buildings. Kakashi would no doubt be back by now, and hopefully have caught dinner... otherwise probably have to do it himself. They usually took it in turns, catching fish from the smaller offshoot rivers nearby, though they did have a growing store of berries and other less perishable herbs and leaves of the like. It wasn't much, but it was his new home. One he shared with one of the three last remaining members of his makeshift family.

Yawning, he upped his pace, knowing Kakashi would no doubt be worried by now – thinking he'd gotten caught – blinking when he walked into something largely solid. Something that shouldn't have been there, but his addled brain hadn't registered it. He'd walked down that route many a times, and he knew it like the back of his hand. Somewhat groggily, he pulled his face away from the warmth, eyes widening when he spotted the two legs in front of him.

*Oh*, was his first and last thought before his own legs started moving as a confused pair of greyish green eyes fell on his small form. He darted away, the couple of precious seconds of a head start all he needed to dive straight for the nearest thickest underbrush.

“Wait!” He ignored the high elven pitch, shaking his head as he pushed away the near frantic sound. “Child, wait!” the voice sounded again, rustling sounded before the elf changed languages to the *common tongue* in these lands. Not that it did much good.

Naruto had been dodging ANBU ever since he'd been a child. He knew how to lose a pursuit, and he knew the area very well – it being the one he'd traversed through the most often ever since his arrival in *Middle Earth*. The elf probably knew it just as well, but he was smaller, and he knew how to make use of that fact.

Barely fifteen minutes later, he arrived back in camp, his hands quickly grabbing the cooked fish out of the flames. Kakashi wasn't there. A quick look at the message scrawled in the dirt. *Gone to find the other two*, the clear elven script read, *keep up the pranking*. The language of the elves was hardwired into their brains, just like the speech, thankfully, and it had seemingly overwritten the sole tongue of the Elemental Nations. *Another clear sign of how out of their depth they were*. Naruto swallowed, ignoring the small pang in his chest. He'd been wondering when they were going to go and look for the others. *They*. Not just one of them. Sighing quietly, he bit into the fish, shoulders slumping, uncaring even as his food burnt his tongue. He retreated under the shelter he and Kakashi had made, hoping there wouldn't be any rain anytime soon, his eyes watching the flickering flames as they died away under his watch. The flint was there, as was a store of dry wood in the little den they'd built, so he'd be able to restart the fire anytime. It was for the best if it went out, considering the elf had seen him.

*Surely they wouldn't be scouring the forest, but it always paid to be overcautious. Better that than the opposite.*

Smiling sadly, he leant against the bark of the tree, his eyes glazing over in sleep. Kakashi would come back, and he'd bring the other two. He had to.

## Surprises and Revelations

The loud whistling made him shiver and pull the ratty cloak further around his bony shoulders as the wind howled outside the little alcove he'd hidden away in. Rain pelted down, the sound of rumbling thunder making Sasuke quiver. He'd lost track of how many days he'd been there for. It had blurred together in a mindless slog. Wake up, find food, eat, brood, sleep, and repeat. *What else was he supposed to do?* Everything he loved was gone, and he was stuck in the middle of nowhere. It didn't help his attention span was practically non-existent whenever he went exploring and foraging for food.

He'd been possessed by the strange urge to chase butterflies of all things and roll down a grassy hill. The sheer childishness of it was ridiculous. He was Uchiha Sasuke, and he did not do things like that. It was below him. Beneath him. *And yet so utterly tempting.*

Scowling, he bit his lip, concentrating on the memories of those butterflies and those grassy hills as the storm howled. His skin was already reddened, his clothes sodden from the few moments he'd been caught in the midst of the torrent raging outside his little den. He shivered, his body shaking as he tried to warm himself up to no avail. All his clothes were soaked, and if the raging winds hit his bare skin he'd only be that much colder. It wasn't like he had the materials to make a fire to dry his clothes off and warm up. Any wood he'd be able to gather from outside would be sodden and unusable.

Tears streaked down his face as he stared blankly at the wall, silently praying the storm would pass. *He wanted his mother... or his brother... but they weren't there.* He was alone. All alone. *He'd even take Naruto's company over the loneliness.*

In the end, he sat there, huddled in the shadows of the little alcove, shaking desperately for warmth until he finally fell into a hazy sleep, mindful of the howling gales outside. Come morning he was a wreck. His limbs were stiff, his eyes crusted with sleep as they flickered open. *He'd slept with his eyes open before, weirdly enough.* His breathing was strained, and he was absolutely freezing. *At least he could still feel the cold.* He blinked languidly, pushing himself to his numb legs, staggering out of the hidey-hole and into the sunlight. *Just another day.* He rubbed frantically at his arms, sighing slightly as he felt the heat of the sun on his pale white skin. *He just needed to survive another day.* Sasuke blinked, feeling numb all over as he staggered out of the shelter of the rocks and rubble. *What was he even surviving for again?*

Stumbling forwards, he blinked sleepily, the world seeming to tilt on its axis, and he collapsed on a mercifully dry patch of stone. "Ugh," he muttered, the only sound he was capable of producing as he basked in the sunlight like some sort of reptile. The wind from last night was gone, and the sunlight was bright. *Maybe he'd be able to make it if he just lay there for a little while...* Not that he could move. He was too tired and far too cold.

"If we are to deliver a message to Lord Elrond, then why must we pass through here?"

Sasuke blinked languidly, taking a few moments to register the sounds of voices and footsteps with his sharp pointed ears. He was tired, and out in the open. Anything could pick him off. *He needed to go. Needed to find cover.* These people could kill him otherwise, as small and helpless as he was. But he couldn't find the strength to move, or even cry out for help. *At least his death might be somewhat swifter than dying of the elements would be.*

"This visit to Weathertop has taken us well out of the way," that clear musical voice continued, heedless of Sasuke's eavesdropping. But it wasn't like they were making an effort to hide their presence.

"Lady Galadriel instructed us to come to Weathertop before heading to Imladris, so come we have," another voice spoke, that lyrical sound ringing in Sasuke's ears as he lay there, cheek smooshed against the cold stone of the ruined flooring.

A third set of footsteps were just about audible, the sounds becoming slightly louder as they finished climbing their way up to the ruins. "She said something would be waiting for us, and that we must find it, but those were rather vague instructions..."

"Calm yourself, Orophin," the second voice sounded once more. "She said we would know when we saw it."

"Haldir, brother, then I believe we should separate and search," the first voice spoke. "The usual tactic when scouting unfamiliar lands."

"Ai," Haldir said in what Sasuke assumed to be agreement.

He barely resisted the urge to groan at his inevitable fate. Sasuke was going to be found, he knew it, though if he was completely honest it sounded like the *Lady Galadriel* they'd mentioned had known about him being there in the ruins. *Unless there was something else in the ruins... something valuable.* Though he'd have thought the place would've been stripped out of anything valuable a while back. The ruins weren't all that recent. The destruction of the place, *Weathertop*, had to have taken place years before.

Blankly, he waited there, unable to even lift his head. *It seemed he'd no longer be able to brood in peace and quiet.* The quiet crunch of small stones under boots grew louder and louder to his fine hearing, followed by the quick exhale. *One of shock.* It was then he knew deep in his bones that he'd been spotted, even before a pair of boots came into his limited vision.

He was tall, almost impossibly so, his hair a light blonde colour which fell past his shoulders. He was clad in a grey cloak, quiver and arrows slung across his back, and Sasuke's sharp eyes had already found the small cache of weapons attached to his belt. *His clothing was so out of date,* Sasuke mused, and if he'd had the strength he might've snorted. *Good grief, had Sakura infected him with fashion sense somehow... He'd never exactly cared for how he looked.*

Hands turned him over rather gently, his dark grey eyes locking on a brighter pair that widened as his discoverer realised how very cold he was. His soaked cloak was taken from him in an instant, along with anything else bringing his temperature down, replaced by a



warm, dry tunic and cloak – both of which were far too big for him. *But he was warmer...* Sasuke blinked up at the weirdly beautiful stranger. *Why was he helping him?*

“Little one...” the strange male mumbled, and Sasuke recognised it as the first voice he’d heard. The one whose name he had no clue of. “What are you doing out here all alone...?” he breathed, looking away, evidently not expecting an answer. His large hand wove through his slowly drying mass of black hair, only to freeze all of a sudden. Wide grey eyes met his half-shut matching ones in shock, fingers tracing the point of his ear gently. The touch was feather soft, his voice barely a whisper as the words escaped him in that lyrical language which he too now spoke. “You... you are of elf-kind... impossible...”

“Rúmil!” The shout made his rescuer stiffen, but he didn’t move – far too transfixed by the sight of Sasuke’s ears. *Of all things to be staring at...* “Brother, what have you found? Haldir waits for us at the entrance.”

“Do my eyes deceive me, brother?” Rúmil breathed, cradling Sasuke to his chest almost reverently. “Have I wandered into a dream?”

“Brother?” Orophin crept closer, and Sasuke was met with the sight of a twin of the *elf* holding on to him for dear life. “Elbereth... *a child?* Lady Galadriel sent us to find a lost child?”

“An elf child.”

Orophin stumbled closer, staring intently at Sasuke’s exposed ear, hand outstretched as if to touch his wonderfully pointed ear, and if Sasuke been vaguely more conscious he might’ve been a little flustered at all the attention being directed his way. As it was, he just wanted to fall asleep. *But before that he had to figure out these strange people’s intentions.* “Truly?”

“I would think it but a dream, if I did not hold him in my arms,” Rúmil whispered, and Sasuke barely felt the rocking as they began their graceful walk back to the entrance to the ruins. *Weathertop*, his mind supplied. “I can scarcely believe it... and yet here he is...”

“I know. I can hardly imagine the birth of an elfling passing unremarked and uncelebrated...” Grey eyes peered down at him, intent, focused. “He cannot be older than sixteen, at most.”

Sasuke blinked slowly. *He looked sixteen at most to them?* He swallowed, his throat aching and dry. He wanted to snuggle up and sleep, and he was probably gaining enough warmth, both from the elf carrying him like some sort of precious treasure, and the wonderfully dry clothes he found himself in. But before sleep, he wanted some damned answers.

As luck would have it, though, his body soon decided it had quite enough. He barely managed to get a glimpse of the third elf, only hearing his voice as he sunk into a boneless sleep.

“We ride for Imladris. Make haste.”

He wondered what the Imladris place was as he slumped against the warm chest, leeching as much heat as he could.



## Of Patrols and Elflings

Sakura woke to daylight with a yawn, wrapped up in a warm cloak once more. Somehow she was aware of the gentle hand that brushed against her dirt streaked cheek in an effort to wake her moments before it happened, so her shinobi instincts weren't as riled up as they could've been. Not that she had any weapons on her person with which to jam into his throat. Her limbs were practically sticks too, so it was probably for the best that her newfound childishness made it so she trusted the strange golden-haired being a smidgeon more than she should have. She squinted up at him suspiciously, nibbling on the offering of breakfast that had been given to her, eyeing the one they'd called *Glorfindel* all the while. *If he gave her just one thing to be suspicious of, then she'd...* Sakura blinked, shivers running down her spine as she realised there was nothing she could feasibly do, short of running away from him. *And the small childish part of her whimpered in fright at the thought of being alone in the strange forest again.*

His teeth were unnaturally white, she decided as he grinned at her once more, before asking her questions in that strange unfamiliar language. *Well, she assumed they were questions at least, from the tone of his voice.* Sakura clamped her lips shut, her eyes fixed on his face in the silence that fell after he'd finished speaking. He didn't seem to be angry at her lack of answers, more befuddled and saddened by her refusal to open her mouth. The frown soon vanished from his expression though as he lifted her up, cloak and all, and gracefully set both of them on the white horse she'd woken up on the first time.

Silently, Sakura missed her chakra. She longed to feel it flowing through her, if only so she could take to the trees and escape the boredom that came with hours upon hours of horse riding. It was mind-numbingly boring to just sit there – and it wasn't like she could sit on the horse by herself. No, she had to have Glorfindel hold her in place, whether it be by arm or the makeshift sling that consisted of the travelling cloak she'd apparently borrowed. *Not that the weather was looking to take a turn for the worse anytime soon. The skies were mercifully clear for the time being.*

Biting her lip as gently as she could, she stared blankly at the sky, wishing there were clouds she could at least count, or muse over their shapes, but the universe still apparently hated her, and the skies remained clear for the rest of the day.

It wasn't until evening that the group of her new clansmen made camp, aside for a quick stop in the middle of the day for a light lunch. Everything was similar to the night before, though she was slightly less alarmed when lifted to and from Glorfindel's mount. *She refused to cling to him more than necessary. The very idea burnt at her pride. Well, the tatters that were left after having been punted into a forest in a child's body.* Sakura sighed softly, blinking in mild confusion as she wasn't set down immediately as had been done last time they'd made camp.

Another of her clansmen came over, offering out a saddlebag of some description, Glorfindel nodding his thanks before carrying her into the forest. Sakura tightened her grip on him, relaxing only slightly when their destination became apparent – a shallow, slow flowing river.

He set her down on the banks next to what Sakura presumed to be the safest part of the clear waters to bathe in. She assumed she was supposed to wash, not just thanks to the bar of what had to pass as soap and the set of hilariously large dry clothing set down by a small fluffy towel that was soon set out on the dry grass. *Why they had a towel on their little trip, Sakura had no clue...* None of her new clansmen were on a vacation as far as she could tell. One didn't generally tend to go on holiday armed to the teeth, unless they were shinobi. *But there weren't any shinobi without chakra, so there couldn't be any there.*

A wooden comb was pressed into her hands, Glorfindel speaking to her in that strange unfamiliar language she couldn't make heads or tails of. Still, it was fairly obvious he was giving her a chance to bathe – and she didn't know why she was so surprised by that. She was covered in dirt and grime, and there was a thick covering of it thanks to her conveniently forgetting about her personal hygiene. Not that she was going to be that concerned by it when chased by those terrifyingly twisted creatures who'd shot a damned arrow into her shoulder. Frowning, she rubbed at the spot her wound had been only a day or two before. *How it had healed up so quickly, she wasn't quite sure.* Movement in the corner of her eye snapped her out of her daze, and her eyes snapped over to where the golden-haired figure sat, his back turned to her.

*If she was going to get away, now would be the ideal time.*

But her feet didn't budge, her hands already moving to peel away at the dirty, ruined clothes she'd found herself in upon her sudden awakening in the strange land. There was no rescuing them. Especially not with the rip in the shoulder of her little tunic. *A reminder of the black arrow that had pierced right through her tiny new form.*

A small gasp escaped her lips as she trod into the stream, bar of soap in hand, and Sakura decided she needed to move quickly. She was an ex-shinobi. She could handle a little cold for a short while if it meant getting clean. Besides, it felt wonderful to be clean once more. She hadn't paid much attention to the grime before, but with it removed... Sakura sighed, scrubbing until all her pale white skin was clearly visible, and her hair was no longer a dirty brown. It fell down her back, now the pastel pink colour it was meant to be, and Sakura wondered how her apparent minder would react to its colouring. All the rest of her new clansmen seemed to have variations of brown or black, with the occasional head of silvery or golden locks mixed in, like Glorfindel.

Drying herself off as best she could, she pulled on the oversized green shirt, knowing almost instantly it belonged to him. *It smelt like him, not that she'd deliberately been scenting him or anything.* Sakura pulled at the loose material, noting how it was practically a dress on her. It billowed out around her ankles, and it was horribly breezy underneath, but ripping off a strip of her ruined clothes helped her make a belt of some description.

Next came the horrifying amount of tangles in her hair, which took a surprisingly short amount of time to remove with the comb given. Nervously, she pulled at the pink strands attached to her head. *Surely it wasn't too odd of a colour?* She tucked it behind one ear, chewing on her lip as she worked up the courage to tug at Glorfindel's shirt. *Why she was suddenly behaving like a shy academy student with a crush she wasn't quite sure...* Glorfindel felt strange to her. Like he'd burn his enemies with the strange inner radiance of his. *Sakura*

*didn't want the ire of such a being to be turned against her.* She wouldn't be able to take it if that happened. Not as she was.

Her fingers curled in his shirt, green eyes narrowed, her legs tensed, ready to flee at the first sign of anything untoward. But he just turned, saying something in the unfamiliar language, a smile on his face right up until caught sight of her properly. The grin fell from his lips, and Sakura flinched.

His hands wrapped around her smaller ones, and she almost froze as she realised he *wasn't angry or disgusted at her*. Shock was written all over his expression, along with a hint of awe as he kept her grounded there in his grasp. *It was firm, yet not uncomfortable.* He held onto her like he was terrified she'd slip away – that she'd vanish into thin air if he loosened his hold. “Little one,” he murmured, kneeling down in front of her before his expression turned sheepish. “You have not been able to understand a single word I spoke before, have you?”

An impish smile curled unbidden at her lips as she shook her head in confirmation. *She felt safe there all of a sudden, and she was beginning to suspect Glorfindel had no ill intentions.* Either that or he hid them extremely well. *He felt weirdly pure in a sense, and Sakura couldn't quite comprehend it.*

“You are of elf-kind,” he whispered, letting go of one of her hands to trace the point of her ear, his wide grey eyes drinking in every inch of her, from her grass-stained feet to the tops of her silky pink hair.

Sakura blinked. *What the hell was an elf?* She stared at the pointed ears they both shared, Glorfindel's exposed thanks to the braids running through his golden locks. *Was that what the clan was called? What she was called?*

His hand mussed in her hair, rubbing the pinkish locks between his fingers with a curious expression, before finally fixing his serious grey eyes back on her green ones. “Little one, you must tell me... why were you in the woods alone? Where are your parents?”

*Her parents were dead. Casualties of war. She'd never see them again.* Sakura bit her lip, harder that time, hating the newfound childishness which made her eyes tear up. *Shinobi weren't supposed to cry in front of strangers.* She ignored the small part of her that whispered Glorfindel wasn't a stranger.

A frown marred his cherubic features, eyebrows knotting together as he read the mood radiating from her – one of despair and sadness. “Then where might be your home, little one?” he asked, unperturbed by her silence, his expression pitying as he kept his gaze fixed on her. *He seemed to be fairly good at picking up things empathetically and Sakura was glad for that fact.*

She shrugged, unsure of what else to do. She didn't have a home there. Her parents were dead. *She didn't belong there.* Tears pooled in her eyes, and she swiped at them furiously. She'd punched a damned goddess in the head, even if she'd been turned to ash moments later. *She shouldn't have been crying over a simple matter such as that one.*

His face fell at her response. “We are headed to Imladris,” he spoke, gathering her up in his arms. “Might there be any family waiting for you there?”

Sakura looked away, staring at the ground, even as he gathered up the comb and other essentials into the leather satchel with one hand – the other being busy holding her tightly to his chest, as though afraid she might vanish if he let go even the slightest bit. *She had no family. Not anymore.* She sniffled. *They were gone, and she was all alone.*

“I see,” he whispered, voice unbearably soft, and Sakura decided to rest her head against his shoulder. *It felt nice to finally understand everything Glorfindel said, and she could finally say she trusted him slightly more than she could throw him now.* “Come,” he said, voice brightening along with his face as a smile crept onto his lips once more. “We have some elves to surprise, blossom. You clean up nicely.”

*If her cheeks pinkened at the endearment, then that was entirely her own business and nobody else’s.*

*It wasn’t like he called her the same thing her parents used to because of her colouring. It wasn’t like the word made her gut feel fuzzy with warmth and nostalgia. And it wasn’t like she felt protected and safe there in his arms as she was carried back towards the camp.*

*Definitely not.*

# Rivendell At Last

## Chapter Notes

Short chapter, but I always planned for Sakura to arrive at Rivendell first (since Kakashi and Sakura arrived in Middle Earth before Naruto and Sasuke due to the times of their deaths, so this is me ensuring everything is in the correct timescale before I go back to switching between POVs again). There might be another Sakura chapter in which she gets settled in Rivendell... and then Sasuke, and possibly Naruto will make an appearance.

Sakura wanted to curl up into a ball and promptly vanish. She didn't like it. She didn't like all the stares. They could all see her ears – proof of her heritage – and it made them stare at her for reasons unknown to her. *Did they not see children very often or something?* she mused, pulling the travelling cloak she'd been wrapped in earlier closer towards where she sat. Glorfindel's lap was oddly comfy, and it gave her a slightly better vantage point, so Sakura saw no problems in staying there. *It was simply a good strategy. That was all. It wasn't like she trusted him. Not fully at least.*

The campfire was ablaze, the sounds of crackling wood oddly comforting as she snuggled back into the sole elf she actually trusted somewhat. *It wasn't like she liked the fact he kept calling her 'little blossom'.* Yawning, she watched the proceedings with droopy eyes, leaning heavily on Glorfindel as she waited for the elves who'd gone off to hunt. They were catching dinner, *and despite how she thought burnt at her pride, she knew she was too small to help them do just that.* She'd been fully capable of that and more a few days ago. It was actually rather shocking and scary how quickly her life had turned into this mess.

A snuffle sounded, and Sakura took a few moments to realise the sound came from her. *She missed everything. The people. The familiarity.* “Blossom, why do you cry?” Warm grey eyes stared into her green ones, a thumb brushing at the tears which trailed down over her cheeks. “You are safe now, worry not...”

One tiny hand fisted in his tunic, and Sakura hid her face away in the soft fabric. *She wasn't crying. She was an adult, and adults weren't supposed to cry in front of possible enemies. Especially not when they were shinobi.* But the shirt and the warm body it was covering was sinfully comfy, and it smelt nice. Her eyelids flickered, eyes threatening to glaze over in the weird sleep she found she wanted to fall into. It wasn't like she was utterly exhausted now and had to sleep with her eyes closed because of that. She was comfy, well-fed, and safe.

Sakura blinked at the realisation. *Glorfindel made her feel safe.* Her cheeks turned red, and Sakura pouted. *She was an adult, dammit.* So why did she suddenly feel so small and childish. *It was all Glorfindel's fault. It had to be.* Yet she couldn't bring herself to hate the

golden-haired being who'd rescued her somewhat unwilling self and treated her with such kindness.

"You should rest if you are tired," Glorfindel spoke, and Sakura looked up at him, scowling petulantly as she yawned. "Sleep," he said, smiling at her so sunnily that she felt a sudden compulsion to listen to what he said. *It felt like he wouldn't lie to her.* "I will wake you in time for the evening meal."

Sakura mulled over the order for a few seconds, deciding in the end it would be better for her to face off against her new strange reality with a good few hours of sleep behind her. Her head impacted softly with his chest, hands curling loosely in his tunic as her eyes glazed over and she surrendered to the not-quite-sleep that had been calling her name for a long while.

She wasn't too sure how much time passed, but Glorfindel woke her as he'd said he would, tucking a few loose strands of her hair behind her ear. "Time to rise, little blossom," he called softly, and Sakura was greeted to his wide smile as she woke.

Tilting her head, she glanced up at him enquiringly, nose twitching as she caught the scent of food. Her head turned, eyes locking on the bowls of stew that were already being distributed throughout the group.

"The evening meal is ready. Come," he ordered, striding towards the heart of their campsite, stopping after he'd taken a few steps. "You are hungry, are you not?"

Sakura felt her stomach rumble, and in the end, the need for food won out over her fear of her pointy-eared kinsmen. Her hand grabbed onto Glorfindel's pant leg, and she shuffled closer behind him. *He was her shield. That was all. It was a perfectly logical move to make when engaging with unknown strangers who made her feel scarily safe.* The older elf adjusted his pace so as not to kick her accidentally, and before she knew it she was sitting by his side at the campsite. *And the lack of any millimetres between them was only so she could use his arm as a means of a barrier.*

"Lord Glorfindel, my lady," a vaguely familiar voice sounded, and Sakura struggled to place it for a few moments. *He'd been with Glorfindel when searching for her... and his name...* Sakura tilted her head, glaring at the brunette. *Something with an F...*

He offered them both a bowl each, and Sakura took hers hesitantly after Glorfindel had taken his. *A spoon was thankfully provided, though it was small – likely meant for travelling – but it certainly got the job done.*

"Thank you, Feiron."

*Oh. Feiron, that was it,* Sakura mused, eyeing up the delectable-looking soup she held. *It looked nice... but was it safe?* She bit her lip, watching as Feiron engaged 'his lord' in conversation, and Glorfindel was left there, spoon held aloft and full of piping hot stew. Sakura's eyes narrowed. *They wouldn't have poisoned Glorfindel's meal, that was for sure.* So Sakura wasted no time in reaching up and over, stealing that unguarded spoonful of his evening meal. *His head was turned, his focus otherwise occupied, so there was barely any harm done. He hadn't even realised, distracted as he was.* Though the sniggers from across



the campfire told her she hadn't gone completely unnoticed as she compared the taste of hers and Glorfindel's meals. *They were the same. No added herbs or poison in her own meal.* Sakura wasted no time in breaking her way into her own bowl, staring up at her golden-haired saviour with wide, guileless eyes as he looked between her and his now-empty spoon, golden brow raised.

*It was hardly her fault he hadn't guarded his dinner.*

Though she had Naruto as a teammate, and no food was safe around him. Especially not when it came to ramen. *It was defend your food or go hungry with him.*

Yawning, she set down her empty bowl a short while later, leaning heavily on Glorfindel as the fire crackled in front of them. *It was just the right heat,* she found, eyes glazing over as she fell asleep, using the older elf as a pillow yet again. Though he didn't make a single complaint, nor did he wake her until dawn came around.

She woke wrapped up in his travelling cloak, the morning light slightly harsh on her eyes as she blinked blearily up at Glorfindel. Breakfast was a simple affair, and all too soon Sakura found herself settled atop the horse. Again. *Her backside was killing her.* She wanted the journey to be over already. *Though she was oddly excited at the thought of their destination, the larger part of her just wanted to sit down on a comfy sofa.* Still Imladris, from the soft whispers she'd heard around the campfire, was a beautiful place.

And as though the world had heard her thoughts, they broke out of the treeline, and a small town sprawled out before her in the valley. It was nothing like Konoha. Konoha could hardly compare to it. The craftsmanship of the houses told her of skilled labourers, and the neat layout told her the person who'd designed it had Senju Tobirama's organisation skills. *Those were legendary, and Sakura sorely wished she had them.*

They rode into the courtyard, passing through a gate-like structure, and clattered towards what Sakura presumed to be the stables. Thankfully for her, there weren't many people around, but the few that were glanced towards her small figure. She could feel the stares boring into her, and she shrank back into Glorfindel's chest, wishing she could hurry up and disappear already. *Shinobi weren't supposed to have that much attention directed there way. They were supposed to blend in more often than not...* Not that her pink hair helped her in that respect. *She was only thankful she was still wrapped up in the cloak.* There probably would've been a lot more stares if the cloak hadn't been shielding her ears and her pink hair.

Once again, she was lifted from the horse, held safely with one arm as Glorfindel passed the reins of his horse over to the stable hand. "Let us be on our way, little blossom," he said, bidding farewell to the other members of the patrol as he carried her towards the largest of the buildings. "There is someone you will need to meet should you wish to reside here."

# Many Meetings

## Chapter Notes

Sorry it's short...

It's the work of months of procrastination, and me doubting all things Tolkien I've written...

Here's to hoping I'll be able to write something a bit more substantial for next time.

The halls Glorfindel carried her through felt horribly long and had an alarming amount of fancy decoration – whether it be tapestries or paintings, and Sakura felt her attention constantly being pulled from one interesting object to the next. *She just needed to locate the exits and have a good idea about the layout of the building should she need to escape.* It wasn't because she had a child's attention span. *Definitely not.* Sakura shook her head, ridding herself of the thought

The sound of a sharp rap had her twisting around in his arms, her fingers tangled in his tunic as she stared at the heavy wooden door in front of them. There were carvings on it, like woven rope curling around the corners, and Sakura reached out for them – before she realised what she was doing and how utterly childish it was.

*She was not a child... and as such, she wouldn't run her fingers over the intricate carvings.*

She had already indulged herself by staring at all of the tapestries and paintings on the way to the office. At least that was what she assumed it to be, given Glorfindel had said they were going to meet a rather important figure in Imladris. *Anybody important had an office to call their own.*

The door clicked open, and another pair of grey eyes met Sakura's own.

"Lord Glorfindel," the elf spoke, blinking rapidly as his gaze flickered between her apparent minder and her tiny pointy-eared self. "You have returned to us later than expected. Lord Elrond has been concerned by your delay."

"Errestor." He inclined his head in greeting, and Sakura found that Glorfindel's tunic became that much more interesting all of a sudden. *He kept staring at her.* Though evidently he cottoned on to her discomfort and hurried on his way, as he had been doing so before he'd caught sight of the pair of them in the hallway. *No doubt there'd be gossip about some orphan the golden-haired elf had found on patrol.* Sakura shuddered at the thought of being at the centre of gossip.

“Enter,” a voice called, possessing that same unnerving tone, an almost musical lilt which all of her new kin seemed to possess. *A weird Kekkei Genkai?* Sakura could only guess.

Glorfindel walked in, revealing bookcases lining the walls of someone’s study – though Sakura could only assume it belonged to the elf sitting behind the desk. He was dark haired, unlike the pair of them, and when he looked up, Sakura was greeted by his silvery-grey-eyed stare which quickly darted up to land on her minder.

“Glorfindel, my friend!” he exclaimed, smoothly climbing to his feet. “You have returned to us...” he murmured that much more quietly as he strode across the room to greet them. “You were nearing on three days overdue, and I feared what might have befallen you. Though I believe the answer to that question may lie in your arms,” he remarked, and Sakura gulped as she once again found herself the receiver of that silvery-eyed stare. “Who might this young lady be?”

Sakura barely repressed the squeak that wanted to claw its way out of her throat as she turned and buried her face in Glorfindel’s shoulder. She chided herself a few seconds later. *How terribly childish and timid of her.* But still, she didn’t move from the comfort and safety of that tunic.

*She looked like a child, so she might as well act somewhat like one.* That was right. It was just an act. She was a strong adult *who didn’t have access to her most important resource which made her that much stronger.* Well, physically at least.

“Might you be willing to share your name with us, little blossom?” Glorfindel asked, eyes boring down into her own, and had Sakura actually been a little child, she might have caved. *But she was a mulish adult, who quickly hid her face back in his tunic, much to what must have been their exasperation.*

## One Elfling. Two Elflings...

Sakura swung her short legs back and forth as she sat in the armchair, heart racing as she watched the two older members of her new clan discuss her circumstances. *Being that she was an orphan with no prospective family members.* Dimly, she wondered what would happen? They seemed like a nice clan from what she had seen so far, but Sakura knew she could never be too careful. *Silently, she admitted it was nice to have people there who seemed vaguely concerned for her wellbeing, what with how she was unfamiliar with the terrain.* She had literally just died and been reborn – at least that was the line of thinking she had settled on.

There wasn't anything else she could really think of, given how the memories of her painful death were still fresh in her mind. *She didn't want to die again.*

Pulling her knees to her chest, she listened as the conversation carried on over her head, mulling over the fact she would be considered a ward of Imladris for the time being. That was a decent outcome, or so she presumed, given she hadn't exactly been very cooperative – what with being stubbornly silent. *But it wasn't like she was afraid to talk, she was just simply waiting until she had a better grasp of the situation.*

Her eyes narrowed, a knock at the door startling her out of her stupor.

“Lord Elrond!” the frantic cry came, and Sakura blinked, tension pooling in her gut for some unknown reason, and she soon found herself leaning against the back of the armchair. She was anticipated. For what, Sakura knew not.

Though the answer soon came in the form of a group of three elves with pale hair. *Not as bright as Glorfindel's though,* or so Sakura thought feeling oddly prideful. She shook her head. *Why was she feeling proud simply because the one who found her had hair which was like strands of gold gleaming in the sunlight?*

But it wasn't the presence of the three elves that shocked her to the core. Instead, it was the small figure in what had to be their leader's arms. She wasn't daft, but she hadn't really considered the possibility that she hadn't reincarnated there alone.

*Because that was Sasuke there in the elf's arms.*

She wasn't alone.

Her vision grew blurry then, tears spilling down her cheeks before she even realised it. Relief. Happiness. Grief. Love. Emotions crashed over her like waves, and Sakura wept, hating the soft sounds which escaped her even as Sasuke was fussed over by this *Lord Elrond* fellow who ran the place she was seemingly going to be staying at.

*It helped that the tears only added to her childish act – because of course it was all an act.* Shinobi didn't cry in the middle of an unknown situation surrounded by unknowns. *Though they were her clan now, or so Sakura had decided.* There was nothing else they could be,

what with their similarities and the fact they hadn't tried to kill her for being born into a rivalling one.

"He was so cold when we found him atop the old watchtower," one of the unknown elves spoke, and Sakura leapt down from the armchair, little legs carrying her over to where Sasuke was set down – wrapped up in a travelling cloak, much like she had been upon her brief travel.

Dark grey eyes slid open then, from where they'd been shut – no doubt in an attempt to block out the strange new world – blinking a few times at the sight of the people around them, before they slid onto her and widened.

Sakura burst into tears yet again, silently scolding herself as she sprinted over to him almost entirely on instinct, leaping up onto the sofa he had been set down upon, ignoring the startled elf kneeling on the floor beside him as she tackled her dear teammate in a hug.

*He was real*, she mused, neither of them saying a word as they hugged each other then and there. Eyes were on them, she knew, but Sakura couldn't really bring herself to care. *Because Sasuke was there, and she wasn't alone in that scary new place.* But it was then a thought occurred to her... *because if Sasuke was there...* was Naruto there too? Kakashi as well? She couldn't help but ponder those thoughts, worry and amusement bubbling up inside her.

Team Seven had always had such a strange luck.

"SASUKEEEEE!" Sakura's head snapped around at the high-pitched *familiar* voice. "SAKURAAAA!" A small, blonde blur was all she caught sight of before she was body slammed into the cushions. "What took you so long to get here?" Naruto demanded, and Sakura was fairly sure she saw the beginnings of tears in his eyes. *Tears of relief.* Not the same tears she had spilt. "Where's Kakashi?"

Sasuke merely blinked placidly. Sakura joined him in that endeavour. She hadn't spoken a word in ages, and the thought of doing so felt oddly tiresome.

"Three of them?" one of the adults behind them spoke.

"Where exactly did the blonde one come from?"

Sakura ignored the stirrings behind them, instead settling for poking at Naruto's cheek as he held them at arms distance, looking them up and down.

"You're alright, aren't you, Sakura?" Big blue eyes peered into her green ones, worry written there in their depths. "I was really scared when I saw you get turned to ash!" he declared, blissfully oblivious to the adults surrounding them. *Oh what a terrible shinobi he was...* Sakura chuckled, but it came out as more of a choked sob combined with a pitiful whine. *It had hurt. It had hurt so much.* But they were alive now. They were in Imladris. *They were safe.*

Hands lifted her up then, and Sakura blinked through teary eyes as she met those grey ones which stared down at her with such sorrow. "You are like me," Glorfindel whispered, his

thumb brushing away the tears which rolled down one of her cheeks. “Oh, little blossom... is this why you have not said a word?”

Sakura said nothing, content with burying her face in the collar of his tunic. *After all, a good shinobi made use of the resources around them. It wasn't like she was a child in need of comfort.*

Definitely not.

# Pulling a Sasuke

## Chapter Notes

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

Naruto wasn't entirely sure of what was going on – only that most of his precious team were back together. Only Kakashi was missing from their number and given how he had gone to find Sasuke and Sakura, Naruto was fairly sure he would be coming back soon. In the meantime though, he had ensured they wouldn't be separated ever again, and if he had used his new, large, weebegone blue eyes, then that was entirely his business and nobody else's. *he was tiny, and very adorable*, and Kakashi had told him exactly how to use it.

"They said they're gonna look for him," Naruto said, swinging his legs back and forth as he waited atop the bed. "Kakashi will be with us soon."

"Hn," Sasuke grunted, which was more than he could get from Sakura – who simply reached forward to pat him on the shoulder in that silent way of hers. It was slightly unnerving to see her being so quiet, what with how she was one of the loudest people he'd known in Konoha. He winced, remembering the way her skin had turned grey, the cracks sliding over her body before she crumbled into ash. It had hurt in his heart to witness it.

But she was back now, and Kakashi would no doubt be joining them soon.

He had to. They were family, and family stuck together, even when his absurd luck dragged them into yet another weird situation.

He laughed then, wanting to fill the silence as he grabbed Sasuke's hands in his own, enjoying the small smile the sound of his giggles brought to their caretaker for that day. The Elrond guy who seemed to be in charge of the place had introduced him as Erester – a scholar, *whatever that was*. He had kept him and Sasuke entertained with weirdly interesting stories. Ones that were tales of their new clan.

Sakura was just sitting there, stiff as a board whenever he or Sasuke touched her or attempted to hug her again. But Naruto supposed her death had been more painful. His own had been something more akin to falling asleep, chakra drained, heart slowing to a stop. So instead of invading her personal space as he had always loved to do back in their old world, he settled for sitting nearby her. Blue eyes met her green ones every now and then, and Naruto smiled tentatively.

A knock at the door came then, the tale Erester was telling them of coming to a halt as he called for their visitor to enter. The figure was familiar, and Naruto scowled when he spotted the smile on Sakura's face as she spied the golden-haired figure. *Sure, he loved that Sakura smiled around him, but he wanted to be able to make his old friend smile*. Pouting, Naruto levelled a glare at Glorfindel as he seated himself near them – Sakura crawling into his lap then, before he began speaking to her in a quiet voice, eyes holding pity, sorrow, and relief.

Naruto tried to reassure himself he wasn't jealous. *He wasn't. He didn't get jealous.* Sighing, he sat back turning his attention back to Sasuke and Erestor as the tale continued. At least they were together. *Well, almost.*

---

Frowning, Naruto folded his arms. *It had been a week.* A week since he had bumped into his other two teammates. *Kakashi should have been back.*

“What is it?” Sasuke grumbled, glaring at him as he sat in the bed on the other side of Sakura. “Your frown is annoying.”

“I was just thinking,” he mumbled, glancing out the window as soft moonlight filtered through the curtains which danced in the mild breeze. They liked leaving the window open somewhat, no matter how the adults seemed to fret. They were shinobi through and through, even if they had been relegated into weird bodies with a lack of chakra to aid them. “I thought Kakashi would have come back by now.”

“He’s not in trouble,” Sasuke muttered – which was probably as close to a compliment as Kakashi would get from him.

“Don’t you think he should have figured out that we’re all here by now?” Naruto asked. “He should have joined us by now... unless...”

Sasuke raised an eyebrow. “You aren’t thinking what I’m thinking are you?” he enquired, chewing on his lip as he mulled over that thought. “He wouldn’t be stupid enough... wait, actually perhaps he is, hn.”

“Do you think so too, Sakura?” Naruto asked, a smile lighting up his face when she nodded vigorously – one of the best responses he’d gotten from her. *Ha. Take that Glorfindel,* he mused, puffing up his chest as Sakura’s hands curled in the shirts he and Sasuke wore. “He’s totally pulled a Sasuke on us.”

“Do you really have to call it that?”

## Chapter End Notes

I'm trying to update... but it's short, though hopefully sweet.

We're hopefully getting to the end soon enough, since as much as I love writing crack fics, I want to devote some more time to writing more serious works. You might, with any luck, be getting a more serious elfling team seven crossover. Or maybe a Sakura in Middle Earth crossover... or maybe some more Sakura time travel shennanigans... or



some more vaguely Twiceborn AU stuff... because I have oodles and oodles of ideas, but I need to reduce the amount of works in progress I have before I even think of posting anything new and painfully long up.

# Getting the Gang Back Together

## Chapter Notes

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

Sasuke raised a sceptical eyebrow, ignoring the way Sakura was happily sitting in the arms of her favourite golden-haired elf – and it wasn't Naruto, much to his idiotic friend's disappointment. "That is not going to work," he said, folding his arms as he stared between Naruto and the basket propped up over a plate of food. "Do you think he's an idiot or what?"

Naruto huffed. "Well, what else would you suggest?"

"I don't know, maybe going out and scouting the area for him?" Sasuke hissed, silently wishing he was still in that bleak, silent place. He wanted his brother back. He wanted to curl up quietly in a ball somewhere, but then Naruto would just come and bother him.

"Our... minders said they'd only take us out deep into the forest occasionally, like for a picnic or something, 'coz it's dangerous or something," Naruto informed him, arms crossed. "And Kakashi will be *evasive* if he hasn't already gotten out of the area."

Sasuke huffed. "Why can't he just come back already?" he grumbled, beyond fed up of plotting to get their idiot sensei-turned-elfling to come back to them. They were family. They were the only things each of them had.

Sasuke knew Naruto would be damned if he let Kakashi be alone then and there. *Really, their idiot sensei should have known Naruto wouldn't let him just vanish.* But he was somewhat thick-headed no matter how incredible of a shinobi he had been.

Naruto raised an eyebrow at him, as if to say *you really think that would have worked with you back then?*

If he had hackles, they would have been raised. *He hated being reminded of what he'd done in his blind rage.* Of what Itachi had driven him to. *Hadn't he realised what it would do to him when Itachi chose to kill himself through Sasuke's hands?* He wanted his brother back. Though he'd grudgingly take Kakashi at the current moment in time. *If only to shut Naruto up.*

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Kakashi poked at the basket propped up over the plate of food. *Did Naruto really think he was that stupid?* Or had his traps taken a turn for the worse without him there to keep an eye on him? He tilted his head, walking back to where the rope to spring that trap had been left. *Naruto hadn't even bothered to stick around in order to trigger it.* Snorting, he pulled at the rope, watching as the basket fell. *Such a simple—*

Ropes lashed around his body, yanking him up into the air with a grunt of appreciation – *he did not yelp in surprise* – and Kakashi silently cursed his adorable little minions. Naruto had only grown better at laying sneaky traps. Though Kakashi was fairly sure Sasuke, and possible Sakura if she had spoken, had a hand in this.

Truly he had failed to *look underneath the underneath*. Now he was paying the consequences for it – because he didn't have a kunai with which to cut himself loose, nor could he use chakra to escape, given how it had been glaringly absent since their arrival to those strange lands. He was worming his way out slowly though.

So very painfully slowly.

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Naruto stared at Kakashi, a big grin on his face before he turned to Sasuke. "Ha," he said, gleeful and gloating. "Told you it would work."

"Hn," Sasuke grunted. "Clearly."

"Naruto, would you—"

Blonde hair swished as Naruto turned his head away with a huff. "Nu uh, Kakashi," he said, not loosening the knot even as he cut down. "You pulled a *Sasuke* on us, and your name isn't even Sasuke."

Sasuke folded his arms. "We're handing you over to the elves," he informed him tartly. "Because you clearly can't be trusted to look after yourself," he said, sniffing distastefully as he took in the dirty clothes Kakashi wore.

Kakashi hissed at him, baring his teeth.

"You do realise you're just emphasising my point," Sasuke grumbled, rolling his eyes as they grabbed their ex-sensei under the armpits and made their way back to their new home. *Naruto highly doubted the elves would let them run around on their own, what with their apparent ages there.* But maybe in a good few years...?

"This is our clan now, Kakashi!" Naruto declared. "'Coz I don't think we're going back."

"Might as well get used to calling this home," Sasuke remarked. "Gods know Sakura has already settled in well enough... well, aside from the whole not-speaking issue she's got going on."

Naruto perked up, even as they dragged their unwilling captive back. "Where even is she, anyway?" he asked, peering about as though he'd be able to see her somewhere there.

"Just find your least favourite elf," Sasuke said dryly.

Naruto scowled. “Uh.”

## Chapter End Notes

Truthfully, when I started this, I was going to make it longer - there was going to be a whole 'finding Kakashi arc'. But as you can see that didn't happen, because this entire fic devolved into fluff and crack (and I unfortunately lost a lot of my 'steam' for this fic after I took a long break from writing it - not to mention I feel like I can now do a better 'more serious' version which also has cutesy moments in it, but you might be waiting a while for that, since I still have twenty works in progress).

### End Notes:

- Glorfindel becomes the main caregiver/baby-sitter, mainly because Sakura is attached to him like a limpet for pretty much all hours of the day, because she finds his presence soothing. Plus he was the one to find her.
- Kakashi tries to escape. Multiple times.
- Naruto attaches himself to Kakashi like glue, imitating Sakura, because it's a surefire way to ensure Kakashi can't get away from the love and affection being showered over them.
- Sasuke sits on Kakashi while Naruto is away, just to ensure Kakashi can't get away - because otherwise Naruto will complain.
- Elrond would like his seneschal back.
- Sakura refuses.
- The twins find everything about this hilarious.

## End Notes

Well, I'm hoping to do a more serious version of this which actually has some plot, so expect that sometime in the future (not right away though because I have a lot of works to finish). There also might be a Sakura in ME longer fic coming your way too - the oneshot prelude to this is currently up.

Works inspired by this one

[Restricted Work] by [Orlha](#)

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!