

Chopper wasn't about to lie and say that the crowd of people who had gathered didn't make him a little nervous. Crowds were never his thing, and especially crowds that involved dozens of eyes upon him. They were getting louder and more rowdy with excitement as they forced a massive circular ring with their bodies to fill a stage in the center that for the moment remained bare. Here in the middle of the town square of this little village was where Chopper was going to put on a show to entertain these people...

"Remember your lines?" A voice asked Chopper from behind. It was enough to make the little reindeer jump as he looked around to see Usopp next to him.

"Uh-huh," Chopper said with a slight nod. "I think so."

"Good," Usopp said as he got down onto one knee so he could put his hands both on Chopper's shoulders. "Just remember exactly how I talk when I do my stories, got it? The crowd'll love you."

Chopper looked away from Usopp and back into the crowd. He spotted several familiar faces. Nami in particular was going around with a massive bucket that the crowd couldn't wait to throw their coins into. She was collecting bets for the outcome of this fight. Franky and Brook were both tall enough to tower over the regular villagers so it was easy enough to spot them. He didn't see Zoro or Sanji around but figured that they were somewhere in this mess of people.

Across from Chopper on the opposite side of the people-made ring was Luffy. He was wearing a black mask and cape around his neck, but no shirt. His usual sandals were missing and the only real clothing he was wearing was his usual shorts. Robin was standing beside him talking to him about something, likely going over the lines he was supposed to say, and Luffy was looking more and more pumped by the second.

"Here, don't forget this," Usopp said. He held out a small mask for Chopper, which the reindeer took and gingerly adjusted to fit onto his face. After that a cape was tied over the top of his hat and down his back. "Remember, with this outfit you'll overcome anything. You. Are. Chopper. Mask."

Usopp's words were strangely inspiring to Chopper, much like when he was awestruck by the stories of heroism Usopp told him.

"Oh, yeah," Usopp said. "Also have fun. This is just a show, after all."

"I'll try," Chopper said with a slight nod.

Chopper was still struggling to reel a bit from how he had even gotten here. He glanced over to Nami who was staring into her bucket of shimmering gold berry. It was all her fault, after all.

Nami had been the one to announce their dwindling funds that very morning. The way she had burst into the kitchen during breakfast screaming had been panic-inducing enough for Sanji to nearly tear a wall through the cabins trying to protect her and for Chopper to hide under the table in panic they might be under attack. It wasn't until they calmed her down that they were able to listen to her explain that a good chunk of their money had vanished.

It took far more time calming Nami down compared to realizing where their money had gone. Luffy apparently had taken a fair chunk of it to eat some of the local foods. Chopper had been so frightened of the way Nami acted after that that he was fearful to go and check on Luffy's wounds once she was done in fear she might lash out at him as well.

The rest of the morning was sort of a haze of panic and scrambling. Chopper wasn't sure who had put forth the suggestion of the mock show in the middle of the village to raise funds, but the moment Nami heard the idea her eyes lit up with delight. Luffy being one of the participants was a no-brainer, but how Chopper got involved was still a bit hazy in his mind. He remembered Nami coming up with the idea of a mock show involving a hero and a villain, and then she had started flattering Chopper with how dashing and cute he would look as a hero and he snapped at her for calling him cute and...

Really she had just sweet-talked him with praise and the promise of some candy once this was done. Chopper tried not to blush as he thought of how easily he had been swayed into a problem that wasn't his. He especially felt silly when he looked over at Luffy and fully took in the difference in their strength.

Nami had made it very clear that this was to be a mock show, and that neither of them was supposed to get hurt. Even so, Chopper knew full well what Luffy was capable of, and that made him worry.

"Ladies and gentlemen and creatures all between!" Nami shouted once entering the center of the ring and holding the large bucket of berry above her head. "We have collected the bettings for the show! Who will rise victorious? The dastardly Pirate, or the heroic Chopper Mask?"

The crowd erupted into cheers. Luffy was the first one to step out into the ring. Brook stepped forward to the side of the stage and began to play a dramatic rhythm on his violin to fit the stage.

Chopper felt himself freeze when it was his turn. It wasn't until he felt Usopp's hands on his back and a light whisper in his ear that he felt himself gain the confidence needed to step into the limelight.

"You are a hero. Save the day!" Usopp whispered to Chopper.

Believing into the fantasy for a moment Chopper summoned his courage and stepped out. The crowd roared in so many different tones that Chopper was unable to tell what their general feeling for him even was. It was getting pretty rowdy here. Brook began to play a softer yet heroic-sounding song as Chopper was introduced. The reindeer felt shaky on his legs as he approached Luffy. Even knowing this was fake, approaching his captain for means of a fight felt wrong in so many ways, least of all the knowledge that he was far far weaker than Luffy when it came to all out strength. It was something he always admired in his captain, but right now it was something he feared.

Chopper couldn't help but feel the least bit silly as Luffy picked his nose as these thoughts of fear crossed his mind. He had to reassure himself that Luffy was going to hold back. Chopper sucked in a deep breath. That was when Luffy began to cackle in a voice far deeper than his normal tone.

"Muahahahaha! I have come to rule you all! For I am the Great Conquerer!" Luffy cried out as he shot his arms above his head. The crowd began to boo as they got into the show and realized Luffy was the clear villain.

"N-Not if I can stop you!" Chopper cried out once remembering it was his turn for his line. "Y-You won't do any conquering, Great Conquerer! Chopper Mask is here to stop you and put you in your place!"

"Ahahaha! A little thing like you stop me?" Luffy asked. He was really getting into character now and reminded Chopper a bit of when Usopp got a little too into his stories. "I'd like to see you try!"

"Battle is starting now!" Nami said. "Please keep the ring clear!"

Chopper pushed down his fears and took a step forward. He tried to think about this less like dozens upon dozens of strangers staring at him and more like he was just playing a game with Luffy on the deck. Luffy slammed his foot on the ground in an almost sumo-like stance as he glared at Chopper with a wicked grin. Chopper held his ground and raised his hooves like fists as he prepared.

Luffy struck first. Chopper was still working up the nerve to ignore the roaring crowd when he saw one of Luffy's arms shoot out and grab him. The arm wrapped around his body and forced his arms down against his sides. Chopper cried out and let out a squeak of panic as he struggled to hold his ground. Luffy was holding one hand on his straw hat looking satisfied.

"Nnngh! Think this trick'll work?" Chopper asked.

"No, but this might!" Luffy said.

That was when Chopper felt something squeeze his side. Right above his maroon shorts on the side of his belly he felt fingers squeeze. His eyes widened as he let out a squeak which he quickly muffled by biting down hard on his lip. He felt fingers stroke and run against that area, and for a moment Chopper could do nothing but twist and writhe in place trying to fight the urge to laugh he knew was only building.

“Ehehehe!” Chopper felt the first giggles slip out. The fingers were dancing along his side now squeezing and poking at an area Luffy KNEW was sensitive. Chopper fought to free his arms but Luffy’s grip was iron tight.

“Nnngh! Ehehehe! Ahahaha stohohohop!” Chopper cried out as he writhed and squirmed helplessly.

“It seems Captain Conquerer has struck first!” Nami called out to the crowd. “Will Chopper Mask be able to attack back? Or is he about to laugh his last laugh?”

Nami’s commentary was probably exciting for the crowd, but for Chopper it was just a reminder of how powerless he felt. Rather than let panic get to him he let himself relax for a moment and think, as difficult as that was with the fingers digging into his side, and snapped his eyes open when he thought of a solution.

Chopper quickly transformed into his humanoid form. The crowd gasped. Luffy’s arms constricted him just the same, but quickly Chopper snapped back into his normal form and suddenly Luffy’s arms fell around Chopper like loose rope. The reindeer squeaked in panic at his newfound freedom and scrambled away before Luffy could recover. The crowd went wild at the sight of this and Chopper could feel the bashful blush cross his face. He might have turned and snapped at the crowd for praising his quick thinking if it didn’t look like Luffy was about to strike again.

And strike Luffy did. The captain flung his other arm out, but this time Chopper managed to dodge it. The reindeer grabbed the arm and gave it a tug. Luffy clearly wasn’t expecting this and let out a gasp as he fell forward onto his face. The crowd cheered yet again. Chopper took a moment just to stare at the fact he had managed to knock Luffy off of his feet, but quickly snapped out of it and sprinted over.

“Chopper Mask fears nothing AHHHH!” Chopper cried out at the top of his lungs as a battle cry as he flung himself forward at Luffy. Mid jump he transformed into his large humanoid form again and pinned Luffy to the ground.

“Chopper Mask has gained the upper hand and has PINNED Captain Conquerer!” Nami shouted.

Chopper shot his hands down and began to strike at Luffy’s sides. Luffy was still on his belly and was quick to let out a loud squealing laugh as Chopper’s large fingers dug into him.

Chopper wasn't really thinking about what areas Luffy was actually sensitive, but rather attacking everything he could at once from Luffy's ribs to his pits.

"Ahahahaha!" Luffy cried out. "Stohohop that tickles! Ahahahaaaa!"

"Chopper Mask continues his assault!" Nami cried out.

The crowd cheered.

Chopper's chest was beating at about a million miles per second. He was so focused on his assault and Luffy's laughter that he was too silly to notice that Luffy had made his own attack. Suddenly and without warning Luffy stretched his rubbery legs around and linked them around Chopper's chest. Suddenly Chopper was yanked back and fell onto his back, freeing Luffy and causing himself to be coughing on the dirty ground. The crowd gasped.

Before Chopper could get up he felt a hand snatch at his ankle. His eyes widened in panic as he looked up and realized that Luffy had caught him. Luffy wrapped his arm several times around Chopper's ankle to ensure no hope of escape.

"It seems that Chopper mask during his attack has left himself wide open for a counter!" Nami shouted.

Chopper stared up in horror at the unusually cruel look on his captain's face. He wiggled his fingers just a few inches over the arch and already Chopper was giggling and tugging.

"Please! No no no not there!" Chopper squeaked.

Luffy didn't listen to Chopper's pleas and instead sent his fingers attacking along the massive sole. Chopper's cheeks puffed as his head shot back and then without warning he exploded into a mess of hysterical laughter. He twisted and rolled onto his belly trying to crawl away but Luffy kept a tight grip on him. Chopper laid there on his belly laughing helplessly as fingers assaulted up and down his bare sole which could do nothing but flap and wiggle in vain.

Chopper's feet were more sensitive than the rest of him. Most of his time was spent as a smaller creature with hooves instead of feet. His hooves were tender, but to a degree far less than this. His human-like toes in particular hardly saw use and as such were extremely soft compared to the rest of his body, as they were normally hardened hooves not used at all to the environment which would have toughened them up for such an assault.

"AAAAHAHAHAHA!" Chopper burst out laughing as his foot was continually attacked. Trying to think of a strategy was next to impossible when the only thought running through his mind was how horribly bad it felt for Luffy's fingers to squeeze and claw at his toes. Every little touch produced more squeaks and cries of helpless ticklish agony from Chopper.

Chopper had to think now or he was really going to lose it entirely. With his free leg he took a chance and swung it wildly at Luffy. This was enough to catch the captain by surprise and cause him to fall down onto his back. He landed with a thud and quickly released Chopper's ankle. The reindeer sat panting for a moment as he got up to his hands and knees and began to pant.

"Wooooohooo! Chopper! Show him hell!" The familiar voice of Usopp screeched from the side of the crowd. Chopper looked over at his friend who looked like he was a few seconds away from ripping off his shirt and spinning it in the air for support. Usopp was certainly getting into this for what was meant to be a staged match.

"Owww," Luffy whined as he started to get up.

Crap. Chopper let out a squeak of fear as Luffy recovered and he had still yet to make any kind of counter attack. He quickly popped back into his usual small form just as Luffy was sitting up. Unable to think of anything else to do, Chopper let out a loud war cry and charged as fast as he could right into Luffy's back. Mid tackle he transformed back into the humanoid form and pinned Luffy to the ground. He was quick to turn over and grab Luffy by the ankles and trapped them under his own muscular arm. Soon both of Luffy's bare feet were just under his arm, and Luffy was squirming trying to free himself.

Chopper set to attack quickly. He dug all of his fingers in at once and let both feet really have it. He made sure to quite literally rake his claws from the ball all the way down to the heel. He was so rough that he ended up leaving little trails of blushing pink down where he had just scratched which quickly faded. The noises Luffy made told Chopper he had hit a sensitive spot.

"Aahahahahaha stohohohohop that!" Luffy cried out. The captain was on his belly now and began to beat on the dirt with his fist as he hollered with laughter. He twisted and turned and with his rubbery body it was like trying to hold onto a slippery bar of soap. Somehow Chopper managed to keep the ankles tucked firmly under his arm as he blindly assaulted the soles. He didn't care where his fingers landed, and he was a bit too panicked to properly think of where to attack to get Luffy to panic the fastest. All he knew was that the more Luffy laughed the better chance of his own victory was.

Unfortunately once more Chopper was a bit too caught up in his assault to notice Luffy's own counterattack. The moment Luffy lunged for Chopper's body and wrapped arms around him the reindeer thought it best to transform into his tiny form in an attempt to slip out of Luffy's grip, but very quickly realized that was a mistake when rubber arms quickly held him down. Luffy's entire body was quick to pin him, and Chopper let out a grunt as he felt the weight of his captain fall down on top of his tiny body.

"Nnnngh!" Chopper let out a groan.

With Chopper's current size it was all too easy for Luffy to overpower him. He took both of Chopper's wrists and held them above his head. Suddenly Chopper was on his back lying on the dirt with Luffy pinning his arms way up near his antlers. They both panted as they stared at each other.

"You're good," Luffy said with a sly grin. He was holding both of Chopper's wrists with one hand, and lifted his free one and began to wiggle all his fingers around. "But are you good enough to handle this?"

"Eeeeh! No! No no no!" Chopper squealed in fear.

Luffy's fingers fell down right to Chopper's armpit. The first finger was enough to make Chopper's heart skip a beat out of pure fear. He was already laughing before he had even started to be tickled. Suddenly his armpits were under assault by Luffy who kept poking and prodding them at random. He would dance his fingers up and down one of Chopper's pits for several seconds before switching to the other. It left Chopper in a panicked dance as his body squirmed from side to side in a desperate attempt to free himself.

"Ahahaha! Ehehehehe pleheheheese! Luffy Ahahahaha! I cahahahahaaaan't!" Chopper cried out. The poor reindeer was getting so overwhelmed by how bad it tickled that he momentarily broke character and called his captain by his actual name. The two had fought like this several times playfully and Luffy was very aware where Chopper was ticklish because of it.

Chopper kicked and flailed like his life depended on it, and given the hysteria rising in him from Luffy's simply stroking he truly felt like it was the case. Each little touch might as well have been a direct and lethal attack by the way he was letting out squeals. Luffy was sitting over him grinning goofily and giggling to himself at each little squeak and cry he made Chopper give out.

"Ahahaha! Ahahaha pleheheheeeese!" Chopper squealed.

"Give up, hero!" Luffy cried out. "You will never defeat me!"

"Kick his ass, Chopper Mask!" Usopp's voice shot from the crowd. It was loud enough to make out in the wave of excitement. Chopper for a moment forgot about how bad it tickled and thought in desperation how to free himself. All he could think to do was raise one of his legs which Luffy had left unpinned and press it to the captain's chest. Then he transformed, and with it extended his leg to fling Luffy off of him.

Luffy went flying, and the crowd let out a series of shocked gasps. He landed on the ground with a hard thud and dust and dirt went flying everywhere. Chopper fell onto his back and began panting in a desperate attempt to catch his breath. His pits still tingled from where Luffy had been ruthlessly assaulting him. He continued to giggle as he caught his breath.

Chopper rolled onto his belly. Luffy was still on his back groaning from the kick. Chopper's gut instinct was to go over and see if his captain was hurt, but the roar of the crowd brought him back to his senses of what he was doing. He looked up to see Usopp jumping up and down with excitement screaming at him to attack.

So... Chopper attacked. He stumbled a bit as he got up onto his feet but as he rose the crowd roared. He charged just as Luffy was starting to sit up and tackled him full force. He turned into his humanoid form and pinned Luffy down the exact same way he had before with both arms held above his head.

"See how you like it!" Chopper cried out as he dove his fingers down for attack.

"Baaahahahahahaa!" Luffy cried out. Chopper could feel Luffy's legs start to go wild kicking and flailing and even stretching, but due to his position Luffy's powers were little help to him.

"Get ohohohohooof!" Luffy cried out as fingers ran up and down his bare pits.

Chopper got greedy and lowered both of his hands to attack both of Luffy's sides at once. For a moment it seemed to work, as the tickling power was enough to overwhelm the sheer difference in strength that he knew Luffy possessed. The captain rose his arms weakly trying to grab and pull Chopper away, but the reindeer for the time being was able to overpower him. It wasn't until Luffy reached up and dove his hands for Chopper's own armpits that things got interesting.

"Ah!"

Chopper cried out in a gasp as he was attacked. Suddenly he was rolled onto his side as he and Luffy fought for control. They were trying in vain both to tickle each other's upper bodies while also grabbing the other by hands to prevent them from doing so. A hand managed to get to Chopper's belly while one of Chopper's own got into Luffy's pit. Both laughed as they fought in vain against the other's advances. Their strength was about even when weakened by having to endure tickling so it was a far more fair fight than Chopper had expected.

"Ehehehe! Lemme go!" Chopper squeaked.

"You first!" Luffy cried out.

For a bit the two were at odds and equally matched. It wasn't until Luffy lunged forward and pinned Chopper onto his back and began tickling him again that the reindeer felt like he was losing it. Hands dove to his sides and ran up and down from his belly to his ribs nary missing a spot between.

Chopper transformed quickly, and popped into his smaller form. However before he could scramble away Luffy caught him and grabbed him by the ankle. Chopper let out a fearful cry as he was drug back and suddenly felt the weight of Luffy as he sat down onto his back and pinned him.

“Captain Conqueror has taken a SEAT on Chopper Mask!” Nami cried out. “What’s he planning?”

Chopper felt a spike of fear run through him when he felt Luffy grab him by the ankles. While his hooves weren’t anywhere near as sensitive as his toes were, they were still by far one of the most ticklish spots on his body. Luffy knew this well, and started to cackle with a maniacal laugh as Chopper squeaked and began to outright plead for Luffy to stop.

“No, no wait, not there!” Chopper cried out. “PLEASE NOT THEHEHEHEEEERE!”

Of course his pleas fell on deaf ears. Luffy took him by both of his hooves and dug all his fingers in at once. Chopper was in misery in mere seconds. First his cheeks puffed than he started to beat his fists on the ground, and then he broke. First it was a loud squealing laugh that was full of pleas and swearing. He rubbed at the pads and dug into the center where the hoof was the softest and most tender. Luffy unfortunately knew just where to attack to make Chopper suffer the most, and he wasn’t afraid to exploit it.

“AHAHAHA NO NO NO STOHOHOHOP IT STOHOHOHOP IT NOT MY FEHEHEHEEEET!”

“But these aren’t your feet!” Luffy teased. “These are your hooves, duh!”

The absolute last thing Chopper could do in his helpless state was argue terminology with Luffy. This was usually Luffy’s trump card when the two of them fought playfully. It was strange for him to think that long ago before he had eaten a devil fruit he didn’t have the biology capable of feeling ticklishness, yet right now he was in utter agony over nothing more than a few fingers running along the bottoms of his hooves.

Chopper could feel tears form in his eyes from laughing so hard. He really was fast approaching a breaking point where he didn’t care about the competition or even the act, and simply wanted the torment on his soles to end.

Yet for some reason Chopper didn’t call for mercy or admit defeat. Even as he squealed and suffered and felt like he was going to go insane if he was tickled one second longer he refused to shout defeat. The crowd was a mixture of gasping and cheering for Luffy and cheering for him to get back up. In the midst of it all he could hear Usopp crying out to him to get up and fight and Nami commentating about how it looked like Chopper was out for the count.

Chopper kicked and squirmed but Luffy looked like he had him for good this time. Even transforming didn't seem to work, as Luffy expected that and had properly secured himself for any sudden growth spurts. In fact transforming into his humanoid form had only made the soles Luffy was so desperate to attack even more sensitive, and his laughter grew even more hysterical.

Once Luffy started tickling his toes though, Chopper found a strength he didn't know he possessed. Perhaps it was just sheer desperation to have his feet stop being toyed with but the moment his toes started to be teased his mind told him to do anything possible to make it stop. He twisted his body quickly, and in doing so managed to writhe his way out of Luffy's grasp. Luffy hit the dirt hard and let out a grunt. The crowd's roar was deafening as Chopper pounced on his prey with a battle cry and pinned him down. He grabbed both of Luffy's arms and then both of his feet. Since Luffy was so stretchy Chopper didn't have to worry about hurting him as he forced all the limbs together and put Luffy up into a hog-tied looking position with one of his massive arms holding all limbs. Luffy's fingers and feet were mixed together flailing and splaying in desperation.

"Nnnngh, get off!" Luffy shouted.

Chopper could feel exhaustion start to creep up on him. Luffy was strong and already Chopper felt himself losing grip. He dove his fingers right for the soles under his arm and suddenly it was a fight just to keep Luffy in his grasp.

"Chopper mask has turned tables yet again! Is this what it finally takes to stop Captain Conquerer?" Nami cried out.

"AAHAHAHAAAA STOHOHOHOP!" Luffy cried out. He was flailing like mad now. If it wasn't for the tickling drastically lowering his strength output Chopper had no doubt he would be easily overpowered, which was what drove him to attack with such ruthlessness.

It was like trying to hold down a wild beast the way Luffy started to fight. He was experiencing the same if not an even more intense hysteria than Chopper had. Chopper raked his fingers all the way from heel to toes up and down and up and down again. Each stroke made Luffy cry out, and his laughter was so loud it even drowned out the crowd who had gathered.

Chopper gripped Luffy for dear life and didn't relent. He kept tickling and tickling until Luffy's soles were flushed red from just how intensely the reindeer had been clawing the soles. Luffy at this point was practically weeping from how ticklish he was and struggling to catch his breathe. It wasn't nearly as difficult to keep him under control now, and Luffy's squirming seemed to be more instinct than any actual strength he had left within him.

"Ahahaha! Make it stohohohop make it stohohop!" Luffy cried out. His feet flailed helplessly but all that did was dig them further into Chopper's ruthlessly dancing fingertips.

"Give up!" Chopper shouted.

"Nehehehever!" Luffy cried out. "Yohohohou'll never ghehehet me to surrender!"

That was when Chopper realized he did have one last trick up his sleeve. He set his fingers down against Luffy's arches. The most sensitive and ticklish part on his captain's body. Then he began to put all of his focus there. Within moments Luffy exploded.

"AAAAHAHAHAHAAA!"

It was just as much of a shriek as it was a laugh. Luffy really had lost it in that moment. He was louder than the crowd by several margins. Chopper had heard Luffy's volume before, and even this was surprising to him just how loud his captain got.

Chopper ran fingers up and down the arches and focused nowhere but there. He rubbed and stroked and clawed and raked all at once just trying to get any reaction possible out of Luffy. He was practically possessed with how ferociously he was attacking.

"I GIHIHIVE UP I GIHIHIVE UP!" Luffy shrieked.

Chopper was so involved in his own attack that he didn't even hear Luffy at first. It was at least thirty seconds of pleading for mercy before it registered to the reindeer that he might have gone a bit far and he finally stopped. He was panting and sitting there on top of Luffy and trembling from what he had just done. Luffy was laying down exhausted and hardly able to move. The crowd was going wild.

"Chopper Mask wins!" Nami's voice echoed.

"I won?" Chopper asked. He transformed back into his usual form and shakily rose to his hooves. The crowd was going absolutely ballistic for his victory. Brooke was playing a victory theme on his violin while Usopp shouted Chopper's name again and again while jumping up and down. His chest rose and fell rapidly and he could feel sweat clinging to his fur. His legs felt a bit like jelly from just how worn he was from that fight.

Chopper stood there stunned a few moments looking around before he spotted Nami giving him a serious look. For a moment he forgot he was still in the show, and it was her gaze that brought him back to reality and reminded him of the plan.

Chopper stood up on Luffy's chest. He lifted his arms in a flexing pose and beamed brightly. Despite his size he felt powerful standing over Luffy as he was.

"I have defeated Captain Conqueror!" Chopper shouted.

Chopper then moved his hoof to Luffy's chest where he made another pose. His grin was so wide it was beginning to ache yet he didn't find himself minding in the slightest. He rose both arms out wide and shut his eyes to take in the moment.

The crowd roared with approval, and Chopper couldn't help but blush. Even if it was all fake he couldn't help but get all flustered when he was praised. Luffy looked like he was groaning and started to get up, but at the last moment Chopper stepped off of Luffy and went to the front of him where he proceeded to plant his hoof right on top of Luffy's face.

"Stay down!" Chopper said in a mock bravery voice. "You will not win this day, Captain Conqueror!"

The crowd roared.

The captain groaned in an over the top manner, and as the hoof covered his mouth and nose he shut his eyes and went limp as he faked falling unconscious. He stuck his tongue out to really sell the knocked out act and didn't move a muscle.

"Chopper Mask! Chopper Mask!" The crowd roared.

Nami was very quick to take advantage of this and went around collecting more and more berry from excitable folks simply paying for the show they had watched. Her eyes glimmered with each golden coin dropping down. She had stopped caring about commentating all together now that her focus was on money...

Chopper leaned down and grabbed Luffy by the mask before ripping it off. As it waved in the air the crowd burst into applause. He held it high above his head in both hooves as if it were a champion's belt.

"The criminal is unmasked!" Chopper shouted with pride. "You are safe for another day, dear villagers! All thanks to Chopper Mask!"

Seemed it was up to Chopper to wrap up this show. Chopper transformed into his humanoid form and began to pick up Luffy. He wrapped the captain's limbs around his body and tied them tightly around him like a backpack.

"Now this criminal is off to jail!" Chopper shouted. "The village is safe! A hero does not need thanks, but only knowledge that he has done a good job in protecting the innocent!"

Chopper tried his best to word his speech how he imagined Usopp did when he told his own stories. Judging by the way the crowd continued to chant for him after he finished he supposed he did a good job. Even as he blushed and turned away from the crowd he couldn't help but feel joyful at just how much they seemed to adore him. His belly was full of butterflies and it took everything in him not to snap at them for making him so happy.

“Heh, that was fun,” Luffy giggled into his ear once they were leaving.

“Shh!” Chopper hissed. “You’re supposed to be passed out!”

With that Chopper and Luffy made their way back to the ship. Chopper began to walk away from the crowd dragging Luffy with him. Like a hero riding off into the sunset he left with the villain in tow to make sure he wouldn’t harm the town anymore. Nami of course stayed behind to collect more berry to distract the crowd from where the hero and villain vanished. Soon enough they would make off into the night like the pirates they were with plenty of the towns berry on their ship.

Regardless, for several hours after Chopper found it difficult to stop smiling. The praise from the crowd stuck in his head for some time, and even if it was all for show Chopper still felt pride in being a hero. He wondered if it would be strange to suggest to Nami them doing this again in another village, though also thought she’d jump at the opportunity to make more money.

Regardless once the crew came back to the ship they all praised him. Chopper was a mess of embarrassment shouting at them telling them to knock it off, but they all knew him too well to buy that he didn’t adore the praise. Usopp even took it a step further and hoisted Chopper up onto his shoulders and shouted his praise running around the ship. Already Usopp was trying to work his usual story magic into the battle he had just witnessed, and of course his tales always made things sound so grand and wonderful.

Though it was all for show, Chopper still felt pride looking at himself in the mirror one last time before he ditched his costume. He couldn’t wait for another opportunity to come back as Chopper Mask.