

This story is 18+ only.

Trigger warnings for: Mentions of gore, vore, blood, domestic disturbance.

## Act 1

### Chapter 1

My name is Blind. I'm an independent private investigator in Jewel City. A dangerous job for an Eevee, but I'm no coward.

I worked for the New Guild for two years. There I first trained and made connections and friends, learning everything the streets didn't teach me. I wanted to work for myself and see the big city so I left some time ago and started up here.

Right now, I'm staring in the mirror. Most prominent of everything about me is my eye. My left one was slashed open on my first guild mission by a pirate Dewott. Because of that, It's milky and clouded over, with a small red scar across it. Even the memory of that day hurts, but I learned two very important lessons.

I know how much pain hurts.

I know it won't stop me.

I named myself after my injury, but I still answer to Eevee sometimes since names are uncommon to Pokemon.

Closing my good eye, I look at the world through the other. All the colour is immediately gone, and all defined shapes turn very blurry. I open my good eye, and things return to normal. Well, as normal as they can be now. Depth perception is a problem subject for me.

I sigh at my reflection. Nothing to be done here but stare and mope so I hop down and wander towards my office. My business is set up in an old house with a sign out front. The lobby's just the living room and my office is... well, an office.

I walk past the desk of my partner. She gives a happy quack and a wave. Psyduck's been a good friend after I defended her from some thugs in the street. Though to really be fair, I was just holding out until some Old Guild members wandered past and dealt with them for us.

We've been close since. The house is legally hers, but she put my name on the deed too. Having someone with such faith in the business is really motivating.

Plus it being a house, we just use the master bedroom to sleep in. It's a little annoying that she snores when her chronic migraines aren't keeping her up but i won't complain about a free roof over my head.

I walk over to her desk. Messy looking but that just seemed to be her system.

"Anything today, Psyduck?" I ask her.

She flips through her chaotically organised notes and turns one to me.

"Yep! A Liepard's looking for someone to dig into a twenty year old cold case." She quacks. "Says his daughter's murder doesn't add up. It smells fishy to me, too!"

Her hunches are almost always right. It's kind of scary.

"I'll go talk to him, then." I say. "Anything else?"

Psyduck flips through notes.

"Yeah. Diva wanted to see you." Psyduck nodded. "I don't think it's urgent but Liepard mentioned he frequents Club Dusk so... Two birds, huh?"

Can't help but chuckle at that. She catches me off guard sometimes.

I check the clock at the wall. 10am. The club usually doesn't open until noon but if Sneasel's on shift, she'll let me in.

Best lead I got, anyway. If Liepard's a heavy drinker, which I bet losing his daughter probably made him, he'll be there when Diva's done with her... wiles.

"Sounds good." I reply. "I'm heading out now, then."

"Have a great time!" She waves me goodbye. "See you tonight?"

I take my satchel off the wall and double check my supplies. Oran berries, Badge, Lockpicks, Luminous orbs for a quick flashbang and Escape orbs for emergencies. Yep, all set.

"We'll see." I say. "I do my best work in the evening. See you later."

Θ - - - - - O

As expected, Club Dusk is closed when I arrive. I pound on the front door with my paw to try my luck.

It opens to a very angry looking Sneasel.

"What the fuck do- Oh, it's you. Diva's out back."

She lets me in and I look around.

With the lights on, this place looks almost downright reputable. A classy establishment with red velvet booths all facing a sunken stage in the centre. The bar sits at the peak of the room due north of the entrance.

Between me and it was an irritable Pokemon holding a broom.

I try to break the ice a little.

"Thanks." I say. "Picking up shifts here?"

"Pays better than the guild most days." Sneasel shrugs. "Plus number one customer keeps the rabble away."

Oh boy. Big spender Electivire. Girl's got a short fuse and a dirty mind. Rare to see her without her huge arms curled around a boy's waist. I try to avoid her because she hates that Diva prefers my company to hers.

Better to come during closed hours and avoid being called a-

"Yo, One eyed runt." Sneasel scoffed, heading back to her bar. "You want a refresher while you're here? No booze but I got some mixers I'm overstocked on."

There it is. Arcdamnit. Whatever, I'm thirsty.

I sit at the bar. Spotless.

"I don't know why you haven't quit the guild." I note. "You and Diva clearly like this more."

"It's those fucking contracts we have to sign." Sneasel sighs. "I'm not allowed to quit until I've paid off my fucking 'tuition', whatever that fucking means. You lucked out with the New Guild."

She pours me a glass of off brand mixer lemonade. It's still pretty decent.

"I don't know why you even fucking left." Sneasel scoffs. "You had a sweet ass deal. Free bed, free food, free hot showers and all you had to do was work your ass off for half a day."

"I won't deny that but it's not what I wanted out of life." I answer. "Just like you and your guild."

Sneasel grunts and goes back to cleaning. I finish my glass and spot a Honchkrow beak poking out from the stage curtains.

She knows I'm here. Best not to keep her waiting.

## Chapter 2

Diva welcomes me backstage with wide open wings. She's got her sparkly feathers inserted between her normal ones. They shine beautifully when the spotlight hits her on stage, but she spends forever putting them in and taking them out.

"Ah, Blind!" She squawks. "You really mustn't keep a girl waiting!"

I suppress a groan.

"I came as soon as I got your note." I technically tell the truth. "Besides, you have a rule about being seen outside hours, don't you?"

"Ah, but..." Diva smiles. "I make my own rules, and I do so like spending time with you."

I look away. Her attention is kind of nice, but I'm not really sure of her intentions.

My childhood memories are very hazy, but we've known each other for a long time. I don't remember it but her mother raised us from eggs until the cancer took her and left us on the streets. We stuck together for a time but she fell into a bad crowd and left my life.

We were unfortunately reunited on that fateful day I lost my eye. She was a hostage negotiator, but the Pirates flaked on the deal and I got... hurt...

My eye... A-and the blood, it was hot and wet and-

I shake my head, forcing myself back into the moment. She tilts her head at me. Fuck, she noticed me lapse.

"...You okay?" She tenderly trills. "Can I help?"

"No, I'm fine." I turn away. "What did you want to talk about?"

She sighs, choosing to move on too. Thank fuck.

"I enjoy your company, believe it or not." She pauses for a bit. "I want to stay in your life, if you'll have me back."

"I'm happy to be friends if you want." I look back at her. "I come when I can but I have myself and Psyduck to feed. My job's pretty demanding."

Diva fluffs up her feathers in frustration.

"It's hard for all of us, you know." She quietly chirps. "Take a load off with me, please. I don't want to have to beg."

I nod slowly. I do enjoy her company too. She's never made fun of me for my injury, and always seems genuinely interested in my life. I need to kill a bit of time anyway.

"Alright, alright." I sigh. "Anything fresh and exciting with you?"

I hop onto her couch and she roosts beside me, laying one of her sparkly black wings over me.

"A little bit." She smiles, a bit more colour entering her voice. "Learning some new tunes for my show. I'd demo for you but I'm double booked tonight."

"No wonder you wanted to see me." I chuckle. "You're gonna be out there for hours."

"Yes, yes. But I do love it." She chirps. "They adore me, and I won't complain about that."

"You like the attention?" I ask.

"Well, mostly." She slowly nods. "But there's still one I want the attention of most."

"Hey, you'll get them one day." I smile.

She laughs for a bit. It's elegant with her mature, dulcet voice.

"Ah, Blind!" She squawks with amusement. "I sure hope so. If something is outside my grasp, I go mad with envy."

She pulls me closer with her wing. I let her. Some of the fake feathers poke me a little, but that's okay.

"I'll stick around then, to make you feel better." I say.

I get comfortable by her side. Her natural feathers are really soft.

"I want nothing else, Blind." She trills. "Just stay here with me. Sleep if you'd like."

This couch is damn comfortable. I am pretty tired, too. I've been almost nocturnal for a lot of the week. I'll close my eyes and-

Θ ----- Ο

My eyes lazily open. I've been laying on this fucking thing for Arc knows how long. I stumble to my feet, blinking the sleep out of my eye.

Like my vision had to be any more fucking blurry, ugh.

Diva's out so I'll take the side exit. Shouldn't draw too much attention.

I crawl subtly through past Electivire's front row seat. Lucky she's got a giggling Gardevoir in each arm and those three are way too occupied with each other to notice me.

While I crawl I spot Liepard at the bar. Jackpot. I rush for him once I'm out of everyone's line of sight. It's damn dark in here.

He's chatting with Sneasel when I arrive. Seems like they get along fine, good sign.

I take the open stool with a space apart between us. Not too distant, not too invasive.

"Hello, Liepard." I say.

He turns to me. There's a worn quality to his eyes. No real surprise there but it's still a little heartbreaking to see a Pokemon so broken.

"Ah, hello." He answers politely. "Are you the detective I inquired for?"

"That's me." I nod. "Heard I'd find you here."

Sneasel shrugs.

"If you guys are gonna talk business, I'm out." She steps away from the bar. "Bye, losers."

Classy as ever. Refreshingly honest, though. Can't fault her for that.

Liepard smiles at me expectantly. I meet his eyes.

"Tell me in your own words what happened." I ask him. "I want to know what it is you want me to do."

He slowly nods.

"Twenty two years ago my daughter, Dia who is an Eevee much like yourself, disappeared." He explains. "The Old Guild claims she was murdered and..."

He bites back the memory. That I'm too familiar with.

"She and her partner vanished that day." He sighs. "Silver. That bastard defiled her and went up in smoke too. I just want to know what happened to them. Both Guilds just tell me they're long gone, but..."

He turns to me, tears in his eyes.

"Dia is alive." He pleads. "I can feel it. Please, just help me. I'll pay any price. I'll mortgage my house, I'll sell off all my possessions, anything."

I can't deny that kind of desperation. I'm pretty fucking desperate myself. I've been craving a big case, and this could be our big break. I'll do it, but I'll do it fairly.

"One thousand in advance." I answer. "I'll dig as deep as I can, and tell you all I find. No promises. We'll discuss the rest of the payment once I've done all I can."

Liepard exhales slowly and smiles.

"Thank you. Thank you." He answers. "I'll swing past your firm to drop off the payment tomorrow."

I nod and hop down from the stool. I'm decently rested and ready to tackle this right away.

"Good. Psyduck will take care of that." I say. "I'll be in touch."

Sneasel comes back to the bar as I leave. Liepard orders a drink to celebrate having something to hope for.

If nothing else, I can at least put an old man's worries to rest.

## Chapter 3

The Old Guild is usually my first stop for big jobs. We have a good working relationship and I've done some detective work for them a few times.

Having the deniability of an independent agent is something they appreciate, and I appreciate their resources and cash.

The lobby's pretty empty today. Must be a slow day. Pikachu's sat at her desk looking bored out of her mind. I notice that she's reading something. Definitely a slow day if she has time to waste.

"Hey, Blind." She says, not looking up. "Working today?"

"Yeah." I nod. "Mind if I look through your records? I have to study an old cold case."

"Yeah, whatever." Pikachu shrugs. "Boss ain't around so everyone's slacking. Go nuts."

I head past her up the staircase. The higher floors are where the elite bounty hunters all have their own private quarters. The third floor is where I'm headed.

Out of curiosity, I peek into Alakazam's room first. It's deep in meditation, floating a foot off the ground. Without breaking its intense concentration, it speaks.

"Good afternoon, Blind." It says. "Are you well?"

"Yeah, fine." I approach. "You look ready for anything."

Spoons are floating all around the room, dodging around me as they circle Alakazam.

"Thank you." It says, keeping its eyes firmly shut. "I sense conflict coming in the future. Keep your wits sharp, Blind."

"Thanks." I nod. "You too."

I wander back out. One of the spoons flies its way into my bag. Well, guess that's mine now. I'll find some use for it.

Not what I'm here for, anyway. Rotom's lab takes up most of this floor. He's in his big Raikou robot when I enter, fiddling with some kind of round device. Wires and screws litter the table.

The second I step on his welcome mat, he turns to look at me. I think he trapped it with a pressure sensor.

"Oh, it's you." He grunts. "I'm in between upgrades at the moment so the database's only connected the PC running 98. You don't mind, right?"

Rotom, I barely know how to use a fucking computer. You had to show me how to use the pointer twice.

"Not at all." I smile. "You don't mind me looking into your archives? You keep things sorted better than anyone else."

Rotom's Raikou body shrugged.

"I make recruits I don't like do data entry." He chuckles. "Just don't bother me unless it's important. I fucking swear if I have to teach anyone to use a fucking mouse again, I'll invent touchscreens."

He trails off muttering, working on his device.

I sit at the desk at the far end of the room with the computer he specified. Its screen is held in a big white box, matching the mouse and keyboard. I log in using the guest login that's written out on a note stuck on the side of the computer.

Good, he's got old reports and files dated to twenty two years ago in the archive section. Scrolling through, there's very few names I recognise.

Ah, there. Dia, Eevee. I click on the file.

The computer buzzes at me and flashes up with a password lock. Fuck.

Rotom wanders over.

"Something up?" He asks.

I struggle to come with a believable reason. He beats me to the punch.

"Huh, high level clearance lock." He scoffs. "Whatever the fuck you're doing, don't tell me. Umbreon would kill me for letting you in here."

He leans in closer and a metal tendril emerges from his shoulder and plugs into one of the ports in the computer. The lock vanishes, opening the file.

"Of course, the guest account isn't logged so it can't prove anyone did anything." He laughed, going back to his project. "You owe me big for this, Blind."

I focus on the file.

"Dia, Eevee. She/Her. Female. 18. Resident of Jewel City. Silver Rank. Daughter to Liepard (Actor) and Flareon (Retired Chef).

Was a virtuous and talented rescuer and bounty hunter. Partnered with Silver, Eevee.

Slain by Rampardos, the Landslide bandit. Body discovered by GUILDMASTER. REMAINS PARTIALLY EATEN. VALIANTLY AVENGED."

I sigh. The text starts getting really weird and unreadable beyond that point. Something might be wrong with the file. Still, matches up with what Liepard mentioned.

Onto her partner then. The lock doesn't trigger this time, probably because Rotom entered the password already.

"Silver, Eevee. It/Its. Nonbinary. 20. Resident of Jewel City (Pending). Silver Rank. Child to Rhydon (Tribe Elder, deceased.) and Glaceon (Nomad, deceased.)



Partner to Dia. Requires re-evaluation for inappropriate behaviour. (Postponed) (Postponed)  
(Postponed) (Cancelled)

Slain by Rampardos, the Landslide Bandit (Presumed. Body undiscovered. Investigation pending.  
(Postponed) (Postponed) (Postponed) (Cancelled))"

Seems like kind of a creep to me. So we have a weird confirmation from the Guildmaster on Dia's death, and absolutely none on Silver's. Yeah, not adding up.

Rampardos has a file too. Worth a look.

"Rampardos. It/Its. Unknown. 37. S-Rank Outlaw.

Bounty: 150,000 poke.

Known as the Landslide Bandit for its technique of luring combatants into caves and collapsing it with them inside.

Suspected in the recent mass murder of one of Mt Rockfall's native tribes.

Last seen: Caves southeast of Jewel City.

Update: I found it dead next to a caved-in chamber. Leech seed jammed in its throat, sucked dry of nutrients. Whatever killed it is damn strong and damn scary. No sign of any other bodies. I'm just gonna sneak this report in under the radar in case it tanks my career.  
- Growlithe."

...Well, that changes things. No bodies might mean no deaths, aside from Rampardos.

I've never met the Old Guild's Guildmaster. Nobody alive's ever seen it but Umbreon. Seems like if Dia got away, the Guildmaster lied about her death to cover its tracks. Wherever she went, she decided to stay hidden.

Hard to blame her but finding her's my job now, so... Fuck.

As for Silver, I have a hunch. Let's see about Umbreon's file.

"Umbreon. It/Its. Nonbinary. Master Rank."

The rest of the file is completely scrambled like Dia's. Seems like the Guildmaster doesn't want anyone looking too deep into its past, but only made it more suspicious.

I better be careful around Umbreon from now on. No way they're not conspirators.

I close all the files and shut off the computer. Rotom doesn't even acknowledge me on the way out. Whatever he's working on, it must be pretty important.

Θ - - - - - O

I pace around the lobby, gathering my thoughts. So far, I think the Guildmaster is absolutely up to something. Umbreon's definitely involved too. It's unlikely they know I'm onto them, so I might be fine if I keep my mouth shut.

Pikachu's completely forgotten I exist, buried in whatever she's reading. If I keep quiet, I can probably sneak downstairs and snoop around Umbreon and the Guildmaster's rooms, hopefully find something useful.

I slip down the stairs without being noticed, making it down past the jail floor and onto Umbreon's floor.

Its room was very barren. A bed, a desk with a filing cabinet and in the corner... A cage with a blue sheet draped over it. I can hear shaky breathing from inside.

The door downstairs to the Guildmaster's room is in here, where only Umbreon can access it.

I approach the door. Something about it feels wrong. A horrible dread sets my fur on edge. Fuck, I really don't want to go in there. I take another careful step towards it, struggling to bite down my fear.

"Don't... Don't go..." A faintly familiar voice calls from inside the cage. "It... It'll kill you."

I turn back towards the cage, trying to peer past the cover to see what Pokemon's inside it. No luck, it's too thick.

"What will?" I ask. "The Guildmaster? Umbreon?"

"Both of them if either catch you." The voice shakily responds. "Don't end up like me. Please."

I step up right in front of the cage. Close enough to tell whatever's inside is sitting down. Bipedal, likely a decent bit bigger than me.

"Do the names Dia or Silver mean anything to you?" I ask it.

It thinks for a second.

"No. I'm sorry." It answers. "You'd better go. If they catch you, you... Oh no. It's too late."

I take a step back and bump into something solid. I turn and see Umbreon's intense blood red eyes glaring at me.

"You're not supposed to be here." It leans closer. "Wait for me upstairs. I will deal with you."

I shiver and look down at the ground, making my way back to the lobby.

## Chapter 4

Fuck, this is really bad. Nobody will even look at me. They know I'm in big trouble. I know I'm in big trouble. I pissed off the one fucking Pokemon on Violar you do not want upset with you.

Umbreon has had a reputation since before I was born of being stronger than almost anyone else, angrier than anyone else and smarter than almost anyone else. (Rotom takes that title, no competition.)

I wait for a few minutes, unable to stop shaking. The idea alone of keeping a Pokemon in a cage...

Umbreon arrives, scattering all the other guild members. Even Pikachu deserts her post to hide.

"You better have a very good reason for what you did." It glares at me. "You don't want to be hung for treason, do you?"

"I was just trying to find some information." I bend the truth. "You weren't around so I thought you wouldn't mind."

"You've put yourself in quite the dangerous situation." Umbreon grunts. "I know what I'll do with you. Go back to your place and wait there."

I nod and turn to leave. I can feel Umbreon's piercing stare follow me the whole time as I dash back home.

Θ - - - - - Ο

I'm sitting in the front yard paranoid, head on a swivel for Umbreon. Psyduck's sitting beside me.

Finally it arrives with two other Pokemon. A Charmander and a Charmeleon. They wander over to the house while Umbreon approaches us.

"I will give you one chance." It stares right at me. "Turn over everything to us and join our ranks."

I take a few seconds to steady myself.

"No." I answer. "I can't do that."

"I thought as much." Umbreon nods.

It turns to address the fire types who were sitting at the edge of the house.

"Burn it down." It commands.

Umbreon turns back to me.

"This is a warning." It smiles. "If you ever come back to Jewel City again, we'll hang you. You have a day before I send Luxray after you."

Charmander and Charmeleon let out huge torrents of flame that torch our house. Within seconds the whole place is alight.

My head is pounding. I can't concentrate on anything. The smoke is making my eye ache. I'm so fucking angry. I'm so fucking scared.

I stumble and collapse in a heap, barely able to keep from crying. Psyduck is bawling beside me. I don't blame her.

Umbreon watches me for a while, then leaves, taking Charmander and Charmeleon with it.

Psyduck leans against me, unable to stand watching the blaze anymore.

"What do we do?" She sobs. "Where can we even go?"

I struggle back to my feet. She needs to be safe, whatever happens to me. I know who can protect her.

"The New Guild." I say, holding all my strength in my voice to keep it from shaking. "Come on. We have to go now."

Psyduck pulls herself together as much as she can and follows me on our walk of shame away from the ashes of what was so close to being a thriving life.

Me and my big fucking mouth. But no. Seeing the shit they've been hiding, they would have disappeared me anyway. I have to dig deeper. This isn't fucking over, Umbreon.

If that even is who you really are.

## Act 2

### Chapter 5

The sun set hours ago. We keep dragging ourselves onwards to one of the only places I know is safe.

Across the plains, I finally see it. A huge fortress made of white stone, with a shimmering pink psychic barrier.

The New Guild's headquarters.

"Nearly there..." I try to reassure her. "They'll keep you safe."

She doesn't say anything to me. I barely believe what I'm saying either. It doesn't matter.

We stumble into the warm lobby. I sit us both down beside some cushions. Nobody else is here right now.

...

That's not true. Something is watching, but letting us have some peace first.

I gently pet Psyduck. She starts to fall asleep. I'm almost jealous. Once she's finally drifted off, I wander over to the strange aura in the room.

"She's asleep." I whisper. "Take care of her. She didn't deserve this."

Dusknoir fades into view.

"Of course." He nods. "I will see to it."

I sigh and turn away. He puts his hand on my back.

"The Guildmaster wishes to see you in the morning, Blind." He informs.

"You know what?" I grunt. "Fine. I want to see her too."

Θ - - - - - O

Zoroark puts her hands behind her back, exhaling.

"That's quite the situation you're in." She says. "Are you okay?"

I'm a little shaken up from repeating the whole story.

"I'm not hurt." I say. "Protect her, please. She's totally innocent."

Zoroark nods and sits up.

"Of course." She rests her hands on her wrists. "Helping those in need is what we do. But you want something from me too, don't you? I know you're far too stubborn to give this up now. Not when you're wading hip deep in the thick of it."

She's right. I have absolutely no intention of giving up now. Not when I know it's a conspiracy. Not now that it's personal.

"You can probably guess what I want, then." I glare at her.

"Fuck, Blind, Really?" Zoroark laughs. "Snooping around got you in this mess and you want me to just hand you a carefully prepared folder of classified information?"

"What?" I tilt my head, confused.

Zoroark reaches down into one of the cabinets of her desk and slams down a... carefully prepared folder. I see the name Dia almost intentionally poking out of the top.

"Thing is, though." Zoroark grins. "If I hand this over, Charizard is going to kill you."

Oh fuck. Charizard. She's beyond a legend in the New Guild. She's known for pulling off actually impossible rescues. She's impossibly strong and impossibly fast. And Zoroark is fucking threatening to sic her on me.

I slam my paw down on the folder and pull it closer to me. I call your fucking bluff, bitch. I got nothing left to lose.

"So gutsy." Zoroark's grin widens and widens. "What drives you, Blind? Greed? Revenge? Just plain anger?"

"I want to know the truth." I meet her eyes. "That's it."

"You know what?" Zoroark leans back in her chair. "You're gonna be just fine. Best of luck to you, Blind. I don't think you'll need it."

I take the folder and stuff it into my satchel. It just barely fits.

"What's your game here?" I look up at her. "What do you know that I don't?"

Zoroark stood up from her desk and laid down on her couch, grabbing a half empty bottle of cheap wine.

"Plenty, Blind." She scoffed. "You'll figure it out yourself soon enough."

Always with her cryptic shit. Whatever. I have somewhere else to be.

Θ - - - - - O

Psyduck and Metagross are waiting for me in the lobby. She's still very shaken up but she seems okay.

"Hey, Blind..." She smiles her best for me. "They've found a place for me to lay low, over at the East Hall, in the mesa."

"Ah, good." I smile. "They're good Pokemon there. They'll treat you well."

"You're not coming with me, are you?" She sighs.

"Sorry, I can't." I look away, guilty. "I have a lead I need to check out."

"Alright. Just... Stay safe, okay?" She smiles. "Come find me sometime soon, promise?"

"I will." I nod. "And I promise."

I turn to leave. I don't think I should be reading anything classified where just anyone can see it. I've got myself in enough trouble.

Despite Zoroark's threat, there doesn't seem to be anyone else here so I get to walking.

A few minutes later, Charizard crashes directly into the ground in front of me, the shower of dirt blinding me at first.

She's fucking gigantic, easily a few feet taller than any normal Charizard. Her very presence is crushingly powerful.

"So, you must think you're pretty important." She growls, flames flowing from her mouth. "You haven't even read any of it yet. Give it back."

Her wings flap once, blowing the cloud of dust away. Even standing in a foot deep crater, she's easily looming over me.

My whole body is shaking. My heart is beating wildly out of control. But I refuse to give up now. Not even to her.

"N-n-no..." is all I manage to whimper out.

"No?" She scoffs. "That's it? You stand against me and all you can say is a weak no?"

I fall over, crushed.

"It's honest." I whine.

"I know." Charizard sighs and nods. "I would have burned you to cinders if you dared to lie to me."

I look up at her.

"Truth is that important to you?"

Charizard roars, the flames emitting from her mouth turning from orange to blue.

"I AM Truth. In the same way that I AM Strength." She huffs. "There is no greater insult to me than lies."

I get to my feet and look over her.

"You're not really a Charizard, are you?" I ask.

"One day, I will return home and shed my given form." She smiles. "Until then, I shall do as I am told, and protect the innocent."

I take a step closer.

"I want to expose the lies both guilds are hiding." I proclaim. "Find the truth and use it to finally stop this whole mess."

Charizard glares at me.

"It won't be easy." She says. "You've already got someone out for your blood."

I glare back at her.

"It's personal!" I shout. "Umbreon burned down house! I'm not going to be scared off!"

Charizard chuckles.

"Then I wish you luck, Blind." She spreads her wings. "Follow your heart."

She flies away into the sky at mach speed, leaving me shaking in her wake.

Fucking somehow, I talked down maybe the most dangerous Pokemon on Violar.

There's no stopping me now, but I think I need a rest first to make the world stop spinning around me.



## Chapter 6

Without really realising it, I've made my way back to Cove Town.

You'd think returning to my hometown would be comforting after a few months but every alleyway just reminds me of the brisk nights I spent trying not to freeze or starve to death. Or both...

I find one of my old spots. I remember sleeping here not long before I joined the New Guild. I know nobody comes here, so nobody else will see what I'm about to read.

I pull the folder out of my bag. Dia's name is still sticking out of the top. I flip through each page. Neatly organised.

Most of them are the New Guild's files on those I'm looking into, with pictures included. The first one is on Silver.

Silver's picture shows an Eevee with a furrowed brow and slight frown. Its coat is a dull bronzish brown with grey spots.

I have a few spots like that too, mostly around my back half.

Most of the information matches what I read at the Old Guild, but there's also note at the end.

"- Unsure of exactly what happened in that cave but I think Silver should be considered dead for our records. Opening a new file. - R."

I turn to the next page. There's Umbreon's hateful stare glaring back at me. I wrestle my eyes away from them to try and ignore the memories coming back to me.

"Umbreon. It/Its. Nonbinary. 42. Master Rank.

Loyal second in command to the Old Guild's Guildmaster.

Has been shaped by constant torture (confirmed) into a savage mental state constantly fighting for its survival.

It's a brutally efficient tactician and an incredibly dangerous combatant. To be evaded at all costs.

Manages the Old Guild's operations almost singlehandedly, using the scant off time to train. (suspected)

- Poor Silver. I don't think it's too late, but it's going to take something big to shake it out of its survival mode. First, we need to get that THING away from it. - R"

That pretty much confirms it. I'm starting to think the Old Guild's Guildmaster is just outright evil. Murder, faking deaths, keeping Pokemon in cages, torture...

It has to be stopped.

I turn to the next page.

...

My own face greets me, kind of. Dia looks just like me, but with two working eyes and a confident grin. Her coat is even the same amber brown as mine.

Again, most of the general information is the same but when it gets to where the Old Guild claims she was killed, instead there's a note.

" - Ran away from Rampardos and stumbled her way to our base. Old Guild would rather the narrative she's dead, and she's disowning her old life anyway. Opening a new file."

That's as much as I suspected. Let's see who you are then, Dia.

I turn the page.

Espeon.

It's... It's Espeon. The one I worked under here at the New Guild.

I skip past her page. I have unfinished business with her anyway.

...Shinx?

Why the hell does Shinx have a page here? His partner Absol told me in confidence that he's human but...

Alright, Zoroark. What the hell are you playing at?

"Tyler Jones. He/Him. Male. 19. Bronze Rank.

A human sent for a purpose but due to spatio-temporal distortion upon his arrival, lost almost all of his memory.

Was taken in by Absol of the Old Guild. Upon learning what they would do to a human, she kept him secret until they were discovered. The two fought their way out of Jewel City and found their way to us.

As a member, he's ideal. Friendly and polite but also capable of strong feats when pushed. Strength has yet to be tested, but no opponent has won against him. (Confirmed)

- Keeping a human around is a very odd move, Zoroark. Is this really your best plan? What if he learns what he's meant to do? - R"

...I had no clue he was that strong. Makes me wonder if I should have begged him for help before... No. No, out of the question.

Absol probably would have killed me for putting him in danger anyway. If anyone could give Umbreon competition for the coldest and angriest Pokemon alive, it's Absol. She's mad all the time except when around Shinx.

It got worse, too. She lost her horn when I lost my eye. I took it poorly and she kept flipping between suicidally depressed and inconsolably angry.

Shinx was the only thing that calmed her down. The two eventually moved out of the guild hall into their own place after a bunch of furniture got smashed.

Maybe I should look him up. I think I remember where their house was.

I flip to the next page. It's old and yellow, written entirely in Unown runes. Fuck. The rest of the files are all written entirely in Unown. I can't fucking read that. I can barely read Pokese.

God fucking dammit, Zoroark. Ugh.

I wanted to visit the Guild hall here anyway to catch up with some old friends and talk to Espeon, so I guess I can ask around and see if anyone can read it.

## Chapter 7

I barely get a foot past the entryway to the Guild hall's lobby before a grey and black mass of fur crashes into me.

Oh, Poochyena. I missed you.

"Blind!" She nuzzles me. "It's so good to see you!"

"Thanks, Eina." I nuzzle back. "It's great to see you too! How you been?"

"Heh, same as always." She steps back and grins. "I clean, I read, I sleep."

I laugh for a bit. I guess it shouldn't be a surprise not much has changed in her life. She wanted peace and safety, and she found it here.

"Are you okay?" She asks. "I heard something bad happened in Jewel. Is that why you're back?"

"Yes and no, sorry." I sigh. "I'm here to see Espeon."

"Ah... Okay..." She slowly nods. "Is there a way I can help, at least?"

I turn to her, seeing the desperation in her innocent red eyes.

"I guess I don't have a place to stay if you..." I say, my voice dropping to a whisper. "Wanted to cuddle again."

She tries to steady her voice.

"Please..." She barely keeps from crying. "Anything, I... It's been so long but I still care so much about you."

I know. I know. Arc knows I fucking know. I couldn't stand it. I couldn't stand that look you're giving me now.

One last time, I'll let myself be open around you. I want to believe that look on you isn't just pity for me.

"Yeah. I'll see Espeon first and then..." I take a breath. "Then we can spend some time together before I go find Shinx. Okay?"

"Yeah... Yeah, okay." She smiles, her snout trembling a bit. "I'll wait for you here."

I steady myself and focus my mind. I'm here. My job is nearly done. I figure this out, I have my payday from Liepard waiting for me back home.

I'm coming for you, Dia.

Slowbro smiles at me as I approach.

"Good evening, Blind." His dopey head slowly tilts towards me. "I couldn't help but overhear that you wanted to see Espeon. She's free now so you can head on up."

"Thanks, Slowbro." I nod.

He's waving me goodbye by the time I'm already halfway up to the second floor.

I sit outside Espeon's office. The door opens on its own, showing her staring outside the window.

"Good evening, Blind." She turns and sits at her desk. I can't help but notice it's just as chaotically organised as Psyduck's. "I was told you wanted to speak with me. Are you perhaps looking to rejoin? I'd be happy to have you again. You were a fantastic addition."

"No." I shake my head. "I'm here on business."

Espeon tilts her head.

"You are?" She asks. "You work as a private eye now, but I don't know what you could possibly want with me."

I reach into my bag and slam Dia's file onto her desk.

"My client, Liepard, was looking for his daughter." I say.

Espeon's eyes widen. I slam her file on the desk on top of Dia's.

"And all my leads point to you being Dia." I continue.

The door to the office slams shut and locks. Espeon's face turns from horror to anger. I have never seen her mad before.

"I'm terminating your investigation." She demands. "Hand over everything you have related to this."

I snatch the files off the desk and tuck them back away.

"Nice try." I growl. "You can't lord your authority over me anymore. I'm independent."

"What's he paying you?" Her breathing quickens. I've never seen her so rattled. "I'll double it!"

"He told me to name my price." I glare at her. She gulps. "You can't do that, can you?"

She slams her paw on the her desk, knocking pencils to the floor.

"WHAT DO YOU WANT!?" She screams. "I'LL DANCE ON MY HEAD, SPREAD MY LEGS, ANYTHING! JUST... Just..."

She sighs, collapsing into her seat.

"You don't know what I've lost for this." She sobs. "I gave up my life, my child... I cut my soul into pieces and stitched it back together. You can't do this to me. I refuse. Don't... Please..."

I stare at her, sighing.

"I nearly died to get this information, Dia." I look at her while she refuses to meet my gaze. "The Old Guild burned my business down and threatened to hang me. Zoroark even sent Charizard after me."

"Stop it." Espeon growls. "You don't understand what sacrifice means, you-"

"I LOST MY EYE FOR YOU!" I scream at her.

The door flies back open.

"Get out..." She manages past heavy sobs. "GET OUT!"

I grunt and leave the room. The door slams and locks behind me.

I've found her, and it was a lot more than I bargained for.

...Did she say she abandoned a child?

I can't fucking think about this right now.

Eina's still waiting for me at the bottom of the stairs, her tail wagging when she sees me.

"...You don't have to tell me. Come on. Let's just chill." She smiles.

I follow her back to her room. It's changed little from when we used to live here together. She sits on the bed and taps on it with a paw. I lay on it, curling up with her.

This place has a bunch of memories. Our first night together, both drunk out of our minds.

Plenty of nights after we'd exhausted ourselves to the bone cleaning.

The time I spent after my injury with Eina comforting me.

The frustrating days we spent when she was teaching me how to read.

The tearful last night before I left.

...

I can think of something else special I can do here.

"Hey, Eina?" I turn to her.

"Yeah, Blind?" She turns over too, slipping out so we're side to side.

"Can I ask a weird favour from you?" I ask.

"Sure, anything." She giggles.

I look her in the eyes.

"Can I kiss you?" I ask.

Eina blushes hard.

"Oh gosh... I... I've never thought of anything like that with another girl before." She admits. "But it's not... weird, right? It's totally normal. We're both adults, we're both alone... We like each other."

"Yeah. It's just a kiss." I nod, blushing too. "I'm not asking for anything more."

Eina slowly nods, closing her eyes and putting her face beside mine. I steady my breath and put my snout to hers.

Both of us kiss first. First we press lips, then we start to press tongues.

It's... It's incredible.

After a bit we pull apart and breathe.

"My first kiss..." I admit.

"Mine too, actually..." She smiles.

I try to calm myself. I'm really excited. Fuck, my whole body is so warm.

"Thank you, Eina."

She nuzzles me.

"You're welcome. I... I don't really know what we are but I know you're not ready to think about this until your job is done." She says.

I sigh. Fuck, she's got me there. I still have everything rattling around in my head.

Even if it's almost buried by her lovely soft fur, her incredible dark type scent and her beautiful innocent eyes.

"You're thinking it too. I can tell." She smiles. "When this is all over... You can come back to me. For whatever you want us to be."

My feelings are all twisted up. I don't know what to think. I don't know what to feel. All of this is so strange to me.

"I'll think about it." I nod. "Thank you."

She curls up around me, and I curl up around her. The two of us are twisted together.

"Let's just sleep." She giggles. "You got a busy day tomorrow too, don't you?"

"Yeah..." I sigh. "Goodnight, Eina."

"Goodnight, Blind." She answers.

## Chapter 8

I knock on the door of the brick building. I'm pretty certain that I have the right address.

Shinx's beaming face confirms it to me.

"Oh! Hey, Blind!" He meows. "Come in, come in! I just put some tea on."

I follow him inside and sit across from him. He splays out on a couch.

"Wow, it's been ages, huh?" He smiles. "You been doing okay?"

"Good and bad." I shrug. "Business as usual, for the most part."

"Ah. Yeah." Shinx nods. "Sorry about your place burning down. Anything I can do to help?"

"Uh, kinda." I pull the folder out of my bag. "You've been at the guild for a while. Do you know anyone who can read Unown?"

Shinx bolts up.

"I can!" He shouts excitedly.

Absol wanders into the room, groaning.

"Volume, dear." She mutters before looking at me and slowly nodding. "Hello, Blind."

"Hi, Absol." I talk quietly. "Does your head hurt or something?"

"Oh yes. I am very sore." She chuckles, opening the icebox to grab a snack. "Nothing you'd understand."

I roll my eyes. There's definitely something wrong with those two.

Absol turns to Shinx.

"Thank you for putting my tea on." She grunts. "I'll serve Blind some too. Wait there."

I didn't ask but I guess I don't mind. I pull the Unown pages out of the folder. Fuck. Shinx's page slips out too.

Oh no, he's looking at it.

"...That's my name." His eyes widen. "My real name."

He reads it quickly before looking up at me.

"Where did you get this, Blind?" He asks. He sounds more curious than accusatory.

"Zoroark gave it to me." I answer honestly.



"Well, it's mostly right." He nods, thinking. "My memory is pretty busted so I only remember bits and pieces of being human. And I have no clue what I was meant to do."

"Do you know how you got here, um, Tyler?" I ask.

"Yeah, It's..." He chuckles. "I got hit by a fucking car, as cliché as it is."

"What's a car?" I genuinely have no clue.

"Like a Revavroom but really big." He shrugs. "I can't explain it all that well."

He slides his file out of the way and looks over the old pages of unown text.

"Looks like these all came from some old history books." He wonders aloud. "Unown is pretty easy for me because it's a one to one cipher for English, my old human language. Learning Pokese was not easy."

I lean in, looking over the odd letters.

"No kidding." I mutter. "So you can really read it?"

Shinx read in silence for a bit. Absol very very carefully walked in with a tray that had a few mugs of hot tea in them. It's a little heartbreaking how wobbly she is with her horn gone, but it's only made her more dangerous since she leans into it to evade better.

"There. Take when ready." She mutters, sitting next to Shinx. "Careful of your notes. I don't think you'll be getting another copy of them."

"Absol, can you fetch me some paper?" Shinx smiles. "I want to write this down."

"Telling me what to do, little man?" Absol growls in his ear. "I'll make you pay for this."

They separate, giggling. Absol comes back soon with fresh paper and a pencil and Shinx starts translating it all into words I can actually fucking read.

"Did Zoroark give you this too? This kind of reads like a weird high fantasy book." Shinx notes. "Here's the first few done."

I take it and read it.

"Violarus the accused god was tried by Paradiso, the god of gods.

The world of Violar had become but a wretched horror of abuse and tyranny.

In addition to this, Violar had broken what was the most sacred of Paradiso's rules. No humans. Not ever.

Violarus was spiteful by nature. Once it knew its crimes had been discovered, it decided to brutally murder one of Paradiso's kin, the daughter of its brother Aldorus, Prismus. But she survived, and thus Violarus was undeniably guilty.

But in its seemingly endless cruelty and impudence, it decided to instead attempt to assassinate Paradiso and the council by self destructing. Paradiso saw through this ploy and contained the explosion solely to Violarus, ending its vulgar life as a result."

I lay back. Absol was reading over my shoulder. I see her eyes finish the same passage as me a moment after.

"Hmm. I hadn't heard this tale before." She thinks aloud. "Making an enemy of the god of gods. What a fucking moron."

"Who's Violarus?" I look up at her. "Do you know?"

"Violarus is the true name of what we know as Arceus." Absol nods. "Few know this, but Shinx once spoke to it directly, though he does not remember it."

Shinx looks up from writing.

"Huh? I did?" He asks.

Absol chuckles.

"Helpless little thing." She looks at him amused. "Don't you see he needs me?"

I try to ignore that comment.

"But this says that it's dead." I look back over the transcription. "Is that possible? Can Arceus die?"

"Anything can die, Blind." Absol scoffs.

Shinx sets down the next few pages.

"All done." He sighs. "I think this will explain a lot."

I look down and read.

"Violarus's death spelt the end of Violar. Space and Time shattered, Reality collapsed and the peoples were flung into the void.

But when the world would have died, another Arceus took charge and bound it once more to Reality.

Time and Space returned and rewound past the moment of calamity. Back to before Pokemon took charge of the world. But where all had a fresh start, one being refused to follow.

Wo-Chien, Master of cruel history, was furious. To it, the New Arceus was but a parasite who desecrated the former brilliance of the horrible Violar. Keeping the world's previous history freshly written upon its vile tablets, it sought to return Violar to chaos and vulgarity.

The human stranded by Violarus will rise once more, and with him, the being changing Violar will finally be rid of, leaving either a world at peace, or total destruction."

I look up at Shinx. His face screams conflict. He notices and smiles at me.

"Looks like we got ourselves into a pretty big jam this time." He nervously laughed. "I guess destiny found me this again."

I look down at the note and then away.

"Wo-Chien has to be the Old Guild's Guildmaster." I say. "There's nobody else it can be."

"I think you're right. I remember that suffocating dread." Absol notes. "Nothing less than such an evil being would emit such a disgusting aura."

"So, what do we do?" Shinx slumps. "Do we really just... rock up to the Old Guild, expect Wo-Chien to fight us?"

"Umbreon... Silver... Said it was sending someone after me." I try to remember. "Luxray. That's it. Luxray."

"Luxray, huh?" Absol takes a long drink of tea. "It wants you dead. Luxray is sick and eats his victims."

I gag. Shinx gags. Absol doesn't even stop drinking. I can tell from her tone she's dead fucking serious.

Another to the list of Old Guild crimes. So many of the members are so normal that it's a surprise to hear how absolutely fucking evil they are on the inside. But they are. I've seen it.

I remember that Pokemon that was locked in a cage in Silver's room.

I remember its hopeless and defeated voice.

I remember the broken bits of shell on... the floor...

Oh no.

That was Dewott. The pirate that...

My eye. The pain. The blood.

His voice in my ear.

The razor sharp scalchop slicing open my eyeball.

I-

In the final moment before I hit the floor, I see Shinx and Absol's shocked faces.

Θ - - - - - O

I snap awake. Something really fluffy is pinning me down. It... It's Absol. Absol's curled up against me.

"You're awake?" She asks.

"Yeah. Yeah. Sorry, I just... That day." I answer.

"That day." She whines. "Don't have to remind me."

I look around. The folder's gone, as are the transcriptions. Shinx isn't here, either.

"What's going on?" I ask.

"No need to worry." She says. "We're used to hiding forbidden information. It's not going anywhere."

"Oh, okay." I sigh with relief. "I was worried."

"Trust me, Blind." Absol turns so our eyes meet. "I've taught and trained Shinx well. Even Luxray stands little chance against him."

I lean back against Absol.

"Luxray really eats Pokemon?" I ask. I don't want to, but I'm darkly curious.

"I was the poor bitch sent to rescue them." She sighs. "Luxio and Tepig. When I finally arrived, there was only picked clean bones and bloody stains left of Tepig."

"What a monster." I whine.

"The worst part is, Luxio was hiding an apple. If they split it, they would have both survived."

I feel sick to my stomach.

"That's the kind of evil Wo-Chien wants." I gag. "A world of Luxrays. A world of Silvers. A world of Dewotts."

Absol slowly nods.

"Even wounded, I will fight to my last." She sighs. "For a better world, Blind."

"For a better world." I agree.

## Chapter 9

I'm wandering the outskirts of town to try and clear my head.

I never really went out this far that much as a kid. Sure the farms were good for stealing food in an emergency but this one... This one was scary. Even now I'm getting dirty looks from the Poochyena working the field.

I think this is the place Eina ran away from. I don't blame her.

I look back down at the dirt road.

Somehow I've ended up being destiny's messenger against Wo-Chien. Why the fuck didn't I just fucking drop it? Am I an idiot?

I didn't have to try to snoop through Umbreon's stuff. I didn't have to try and call Zoroark's bluff. I didn't have to get into a screaming match with Dia. I didn't have to take all those Unown pages to Shinx.

But I wanted to. I was sick of being used and lied to.

My train of thought is interrupted as shouting erupts from the farmhouse.

"AAAARGH! I HATE YOU!" Shouts one voice. "EVERY FUCKING TIME YOU DO THIS! YOU NEVER LISTEN TO ME!"

"AND YOU'RE ALWAYS OUT OF CONTROL!" Answers the other. "YOU AND YOUR TEMPER, ALWAYS ACTING LIKE A SPOILT PUPPY! YOU'VE NEVER APPRECIATED ALL I'VE DONE FOR YOU! SO LEAVE! GET THE FUCK OUT! SEE IF I CARE!"

Eina emerges and slams the door behind her, growling in frustration.

"FINE! FUCK YOU, MOM!" She yells at the door. "YOU'LL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN!"

She turns and freezes when she sees me. I freeze when I see her.

"Oh. Hi... Blind." She shyly looks away. "You heard all of that, huh."

"Just the yelling." I nod. "Come on. Let's get out of here. You deserve better than that."

She walks beside me on the road that loops back into town.

"Some days I believe that." She sighs. "Some days it feels like I deserve to be yelled at, you know?"

"It's just a feeling." I nuzzle her. "Don't go back there. Don't let them crush you."

"Thanks, Blind..." She looks away, totally despondent.

We walk in silence for a while. Then we're interrupted by Luxray bumping into me from behind.

"You're a real bitch to track down." He chuckles. "Now, you're coming with me."

Eina growls at him.

"You leave her the fuck alone, asshole!" She barks.

I stand between her and him.

"Eina... Don't." I beg. "If you want to help, go get Absol. Please."

"Yeah, perfect." Luxray laughs. Loud and cruel. "Go get that traitor. Make it a fucking feast."

Eina looks at me, teary eyed from fear. I nod at her.

"I'll be okay." I try to reassure her. "Now go!"

She bolts off in the direction of town. Luxray leans his head down next to me. He stinks of death.

"Cute girl." He growls. "You'll never see her again, you know. Now you're just my lunch."

"If Absol catches up to us, you're dead." I grunt.

"Shut UP!" Luxray huffs. "Come on, lunch. It's a really long fucking walk back to Jewel, and I starved myself so I could pick your brittle little bones clean."

I follow along, head down.

If this is the end, please fucking New Arceus, don't let Eina ever see what became of me.

Θ - - - - - O

We're out in the wide open plains when Absol and Shinx finally make it to us. Luxray grins, flexing his paws.

"Finally." He laughs. "Took your sweet ass time, traitor."

Shinx steps past Absol, glaring down Luxray.

"Let her go." He demands.

Luxray laughs louder, crazier, crueller.

"Fine. Fine." He agrees. "It won't fucking matter once I've butchered you all anyway. I'll even start with you, cub! I'll bite down on your neck and pull out your spine nice and slow, so you can still feel it."

I rush over to Absol's side. Shinx doesn't look away from Luxray.

"I only have one question first." Shinx stands firm. "Why did you murder Tepig?"

Luxray's mouth waters from the memory.

"He held me back, cub." He licked his chops. "He was far more useful to me as pork. How he tasted... FUCK, I can't even describe it! The texture... The flavour... Nothing has ever fucking satisfied me since!"

He started panting, electricity sparking off of his body.

"Apples and berries taste like fucking ash in my mouth! I want more meat! I won't stop until I get that rush again!"

He roars loudly into the sky, then looks back down at Shinx. He isn't fazed.

"You're a symptom of something very, very wrong with this world." Electricity sparks off of Shinx too. "You'll get the help you need someday but right now, you need a beat down to give you some perspective."

"Bring it, cub." Luxray grins.

Luxray charged up a huge blast of lightning but was hit with a Confuse Ray from Shinx, sending it into a dazed wobble. The Thunderbolt misfired, blasting Luxray.

"ARGH!" Luxray yelled. "FIGHT FAIR, YOU BRAT!"

Shinx dodged all of Luxray's wild swipes, half of them going too far and slashing against his own body. Luxray roared with fury and launched at Shinx to bite down on him. Shinx ducked down onto his back to slide underneath Luxray and kicked his feet as hard as he could into Luxray's starving belly.

Luxray jumped backwards, hurt and offended.

"Fuck you..." He groaned, panting. "I'll kill you... I'll KILL you..."

He charged forward again but Shinx beat him there with a Quick Attack and sent him sliding back.

"You haven't laid so much as a paw on me." Shinx confidently jeers. "Just give up now before I have to actually hurt you."

Luxray howled with anger, taking a careful step back. Shinx studied his movements and prepared. Luxray sent a flurry of Thunderbolts at him. Shinx dodged most of them and protected himself from any that hit him.

"Alright, my turn!" Shinx taunted, dashing at Luxray, hitting him hard with Play Rough.

Luxray stumbled and was hit again. And again. And again. Luxray started to whimper with each hit before, at last, he buckled and didn't get up.

"N-no! Stop!" Luxray begged. "No more, no more!"

"That's what I thought." Shinx stepped back. "You're going to stop hunting Blind, and you're going to go back and tell your Guildmaster that its time is up."

Luxray backed up, snarling.

"Fuck you. FUCK YOU." He bared his fangs. "I won't forget this. I'll kill you."

Shinx roared and Luxray took off running. Absol walked to his side and nuzzled him.

"You did amazing." She smiles. "I'm so proud of you."

"You were right." He giggles. "It all just kind of came naturally to me. All that training really paid off."

It takes me a few moments before I'm even able to walk again. I'm sore from how fucking tense I was watching that battle.

But wow! Shinx is the real fucking deal! He didn't get hit once and he took down Luxray, who should have completely outclassed him. We might actually have a chance here.

My train of thought is broken by Shinx calling my name, standing in my blind spot. I turn so I can actually see him.

"Huh?" I say. "Sorry, I was just thinking."

"I asked if you were okay." Shinx smiles. "That must have been so scary."

"If I stop to think about it, I'm probably going to throw up." I sigh. "What do we do now?"

"Let's go see Zoroark." Shinx nods. "Maybe we can have some help taking on Wo-Chien."

"Good plan." Absol says from even further in my blind spot. "Shouldn't be more than a day's walk from here."

Zoroark got us in this fucking mess, it's only right we get some fucking answers.

But I get kind of a funny feeling. She was trying to really tell me something with that ancient legend. And it wasn't just to go fetch Shinx.

No point fretting over it now. I think we have a war to fight.



## Act 3

### Chapter 10

The New Guild's headquarters are super crowded when we arrive, everyone whispering to each other. I realise very quickly I recognise a lot of these faces.

They're all Old Guild members. Pikachu rushes over to me.

"Blind! Are you okay?!" She gasps. "Are you hurt?"

I look over her, confused. Sneasel steps up beside her, crossing her arms.

"I'm fine." I say. "What's going on? Why is everyone here?"

Sneasel scoffs. "Long fucking story. You'll want to sit down for it. Over here."

She leads me, Absol and Shinx over to a free table just outside the crowd. Pikachu sits, rubbing at her temples.

"Okay, so." She organised her thoughts. "It all started yesterday. Alakazam called an emergency meeting for the whole guild."

"Yeah." Sneasel nodded. "We knew it had to be fucking big cuz Alakazam did not have the authority to do that."

"Alakazam said, straight up in front of everyone, that we were being lied to." Pikachu continued. "The guild wasn't to maintain the peace but to crush and oppress Pokemon."

"The big scary mystery Guildmaster was a legendary named Wo-Chien who only used us for our ability to fight." Sneasel says. "And to prove it, it whipped out a bunch of copies of some long forgotten ancient legend."

"The look on Umbreon's face was enough to prove it for me, but not everyone believed it." Pikachu sighed. "Then Alakazam started playing some kind of audio. It was a conversation."

"Luxray admitting to murder." Sneasel looked away. "Alakazam said that Wo-Chien's influence would eventually turn us all into twisted killers and make Violar a living hell."

"And Mankey, that fucking freak!" Pikachu grunted with disgust. "Had the balls to step up and say 'What's wrong with that? I signed up to fight!' So yeah, we all started shouting at each other."

"Then it turned into a huge brawl." Sneasel muttered. "The half of us who were shocked and felt betrayed and those who saw it as a sweet deal."

"Alakazam vanished at some point and the half of us fighting against the rest were all kicked out of Jewel City." Pikachu laid her face on the table. "It's nuts there. Umbreon declared martial law and there's posters hung up everywhere, calling you public enemy number one up there with Alakazam and Zoroark."

"How did Alakazam learn all that?!" Shinx gasped. "There's no way it could have!"

Oh. I had completely forgotten. I put my bag on the table and pull the spoon out. It's glowing pink. Alakazam had been listening to everything the whole time.

Sneasel laughs uproariously. Pikachu's completely shocked.

"What the-" Shinx is as surprised as everyone else. "Blind, where did you-"

"Irrelevant now." Absol set a paw on his back. "Wo-Chien is weakened now. With its forces divided against it, we have the advantage."

"My thoughts exactly." Zoroark said, leaning in beside her. "We hit hard now, we could end this fight for good."

Everyone jumped at Zoroark's sudden appearance except Absol who grunted.

"Get off me." She muttered.

Zoroark sat at the table, raking a claw through her hair.

"Everyone's gathering outside Jewel and we're going to take it back. We could use all of your help, if you want to give it."

"Yeah, I'm in!" Shinx nodded, smiling. "This is the best shot we've ever had!"

"He's not going without me." Absol pet at Shinx. "Especially not now."

Pikachu and Sneasel looked uncomfortably to each other and back at Zoroark.

"Honestly I've only ever been good at admin stuff." Pikachu mutters. "I'm no good in a fight."

"I just don't want to fight." Sneasel scoffs. "Not gonna apologise for that."

"That's fine." Zoroark smiled. "Not gonna force you."

I grunt, catching her attention.

"I don't see why I should bother either." I tell her. "You've used me a lot so far, and I've been in some fucking dangerous situations for it."

Zoroark smiled wide.

"Come on, not even as a favour? I could think of a good use for you." She slowly chuckled. "I'd owe you big time for it, Blind."

"It would mean a lot to me too." Shinx smiles at me. "Let's finish this once and for all."

Fuck. He's too fucking cute. I can't turn down his little kitty face like that.

"Whatever" I mutter. "Better be fucking good, Zoroark. Or you're next."

Zoroark cackles.

"Don't worry. It'll be worth it." She turns, grinning. "We march at noon. Get yourselves ready, make sure you got everything you need. It's a rough ride but I'm confident we got this."

I sigh, leaving the table and head outside. I need air. I need some fucking space.

Θ - - - - - Ο

I've been laying on my back on this hill for a while now. It's getting close to go time, and I'm fucking dreading it.

This spot is pretty comfortable though. And I get to be alone.

"Is... this spot taken?" A voice asks.

I sigh and look up to see Espeon looking at me. I look back towards the sky.

"Can't stop you, coward." I answer.

She sighs and lays on her back beside me, watching the sky too.

"I'm sorry for screaming at you." She says. "I... I'm sorry."

"That's the first time you've ever apologised to me." I scoff.

"I'm too used to things being out of my control." She sighs. "But maybe it was always me. I ran away from Silver when it begged me for help. I abandoned my child because I believed myself unfit to be a mother."

I sit up.

"Where did you abandon it, Dia?" I glare at her. "Where did you abandon your fucking child?"

She looks away, refusing to meet my eyes.

"I don't know." She answers. "Zoroark took it away before it hatched. She never told me what she did with it. I begged her not to."

I turn away from her and splay out onto the grass.

"You're no fucking help then." I grunt. "If you turn out to be my fucking mother, I'll kick your ass so hard you'll turn back into an Eevee."

She turns with me and watches the mass of Pokemon gathering around the guild HQ. Looks like it might be starting soon.

"I would deserve that, Blind." She admits. "If that turns out to be the case, I'm sorry your father passed on."

I look at her.

"What are you talking about?" I ask.

She looks back at me a little surprised.

"You don't... know?" She seems confused. "Silver's dead."

I can't help but laugh at her. She must be in pretty heavy denial, or Zoroark never told her.

She gets offended and leans in closer.

"Explain yourself." Espeon demands.

I meet her gaze unflinchingly, standing up.

"Silver is Umbreon." I tell her.

Espeon's eyes widen then fill with tears.

"What? No!" She backs up. "No, that's impossible! Rampardos killed it, I was there!"

"Rampardos is dead." I take a step forward. "You ran away, and Wo-Chien killed it. Wo-Chien took Silver and tortured it until it became Umbreon."

"NO! STOP IT!" She starts yelling. "SHUT UP! I... I..."

She turns and starts running straight towards Jewel City. Oh no.

"SILVERRRRR! She screams. "SIIIIIIIIILLVEEEEEEEEEERRRR!"

I dart after her. No! No, you fucking idiot! They'll kill you!

## Chapter 11

Fuck. Dia's damn fast. She lost me running through the empty streets. I've been here a while but she seems to know them better than I do.

It's eerily quiet on the main road. Normally there's Pokemon everywhere. All the buildings are closed, shuttered or boarded up.

The walls are covered in wanted posters. Many of them have been defaced. Insults are scrawled everywhere, and they give my face more injuries, or obscene additions.

Quiet footsteps follow me. I'm too scared to look. Umbreon sits beside me, staring at the wall.

"It's beautiful, isn't it?" It laughs. "The last step before the collapse, and we all turn back into mindless fighting beasts, slaying each other for survival, for food, for sport."

I back up, and it turns toward me, its wild red eyes never blinking.

"No more organisations." It cackles crazily. "No more scheming. No more lies. No more deception. Nothing but pure. basic. survival."

Every step I take back, it steps forward.

"Silver, what did it do to you?" I ask, starting to panic. "You don't have to... You don't have to do this."

It stops, panting.

"Where did you hear that name?" It keeps staring into my soul. "Was that why you were snooping around my room?"

"It's Wo-Chien, isn't it?" I gulp. "You don't have to listen to it. You don't have to be like this."

"You don't fucking understand anything you blind FUCK!" Umbreon growls, baring its fangs at me. "There is no escaping Wo-Chien. This world belongs to it. I have to do what it wants! THERE IS NO ESCAPE!"

"SILVER!" shouts Espeon, charging toward us.

Umbreon grunts, kicking me into the wall as it passes me.

ARGH. FUCK. I fall to the ground after the impact. I can't fucking breathe. Bits of shattered brick fall on me.

Espeon stops in front of Umbreon.

"Silver!" She stands tall. "I finally found you!"

"You've been a constant thorn in my side, bitch." Umbreon growls at her. "And now you're insulting me? I don't have to stop myself from slaughtering you where you stand now. This city is mine."

She takes a long sigh and meets its eyes.

"Silver, It's me." Espeon pleads. "Dia. You remember me, don't you?"

"You?! YOU. YOU FUCKING WHORE!" Umbreon starts yelling. "THIS IS ALL YOUR FUCKING FAULT! YOU LEFT ME TO FUCKING DIE! YOU ABANDONED ME TO WO-CHIEN! FUCKING ANSWER ME! WHY?! WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?!"

Dia took a deep breath to calm her mind and kept eye contact with Umbreon, taking a step forward.

"I was scared, Silver." She admits. "I was really, really scared. I ran away because I thought you were dead. I ran away because I thought Rampardos would kill me next. I ran away because I couldn't bear what the guild was making us do. I couldn't take it anymore, Silver. I'm sorry."

"Do you have ANY fucking idea what it's DONE TO ME?!" Umbreon screamed. "DO YOU HAVE EVEN AN INKLING OF HOW MUCH FUCKING PAIN YOU'VE PUT ME THROUGH?!"

"No, Silver." Dia slowly shook her head. "I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Let me help you. Let me save you. Let me take your pain away."

"It fucking hurts, Dia." Silver panted, shaking. "It hurts so much. I've done so many fucking terrible things. I can't-"

Dia rushed it into a hug.

"No more words." She whispers. "It's okay. It's going to be okay. You won't have to be in pain anymore."

Silver collapsed against her, sobbing loudly. Dia held strong, petting against it with a psychic paw.

I struggle to my feet. I think my whole fucking side is bruised.

...I feel a sudden crushing, infinite fucking dread. Like my soul is being gripped tightly.

"LOOK OUT!" I manage to yell before ducking to the ground.

A long thorny vine shoots out to strike down Dia and Silver but Zoroark catches it, the vine wrapping and digging into her arm. She holds strong enough to grab and hold it. Another vine swings at her, wrapping around her other arm. She struggles to stand on her feet, but grins.

"Thanks for the heads up, Blind." She strains. "So, Wo-Chien! We finally meet face to face. The pleasure is all mine."

It slides towards her, its eyestalks showing nothing but absolutely pure hatred.

***"There is no pleasure in your existence, parasite."*** Wo-Chien mutters. ***"You are the last thing standing between me and total domination."***

"Like I'd go down so easily." She grins wide. "All I have to do is buy time for my secret weapon."

One more sharp vine shoots out, piercing straight through her chest and out her back. The vines holding down her arms let go. She grabs at the vine piercing her.

"Ow, fuck!" She laughs. "That one hurt a lot, I won't lie."

The vine twists, the sharp thorns carving through her spectral body.

***"I have no more patience for your games, interloper."*** Wo-Chien chuckles. ***"Perish as a warning to your kind that Violar will not change."***

"I've died once before, actually." She grasps tightly on the vine. "This is just weak shit."

***"Not another word out of you."*** It twists the vine back the other way.

""Hey, Wo-Chien?" She grunts. "Guess what?"

Wo-Chien glares at her silently as she holds the twisting vine still.

**"Trick or treat, mother fucker."** She grins.

Ghostly fire burns down the length of the vine and down to Wo-Chien, burning away its Dark type into Ghost type.

**"WHAT?!"** It yells. ***"WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!"***

"Made you weak to your little knight." Zoroark laughs. "Now Silver can kick your rotten, slimy ass."

***"That's not how this is supposed to work."*** Wo-Chien growls. ***"You can't change Violar, I won't let you!"***

Zoroark's body lit up with pain all over, but she didn't react to it and calmly snapped her fingers. Ruination was Disabled.

"Ouch." She smirks. "No more of that."

Another vine shot out to pierce her body, but she slapped it away casually and snapped her fingers. Power Whip was disabled. Giga Drain was disabled. Leech Seed was disabled.

Wo-Chien seethed harder and harder, literally shaking with rage.

***"YOU CAN'T DO THAT!"*** It screamed. ***"UMBREON, GET UP AND SLAY HER!"***

Silver got to its feet and turned around, facing Wo-Chien before turning to Zoroark.

"It can't hurt me anymore, can it?" It asked.

Zoroark shook her head. She pulls the vine out of her body and shambles over to the wall beside me.

"Nope." She answers. "Beat its ass."

Silver growls at Wo-Chien. Dia jumps to its side.

"Together." She smiles.

"Together." It nods.

The two of them dash off to beat up Wo-Chien, launching Dark Pulses and Shadow Balls. Zoroark leans closer to me.

"Hey, are they still looking at me?" She asks.

"Probably not." I groan. "They seem occupied."

"Oh thank fuck." She sighs. "This really really hurts. I could shove my whole hand through the hole."

"Wow, okay." I chuckle. "Never say that again, please."

"Alright, alright!" Zoroark laughs. "Did I look cool out there?"

I sit up, leaning against her thigh.

"Yeah." I smile. "You were badass."

She leans against the dent in the wall made by my fucking body.

"Where the hell is he?" She wonders aloud. "Taking his sweet fucking time."

I look up at her.

"What, Shinx?" I ask.

"Him too." She scoffs. "Speaking of, here he comes."

Shinx darts around the corner as Dia and Silver get sent flying, landing on top of each other. Wo-Chien had broken free of Disable.

"Shinx, be careful!" Dia yells out to Shinx. "It's still really dangerous!"

"Don't get hit with Ruination, human!" Silver adds.

Shinx stops in front of Wo-Chien. It stares him down.

***"You have long forgotten your purpose, human." It speaks. "You came to Violar to destroy the parasite you ally yourself with. You are the ultimate traitor."***

"I don't care." Shinx huffed. "I've seen what you've done. I've seen what Zoroark is doing. I don't care if this world rightfully belongs to you, not when this is what you do with it."

***"Then I shall exterminate you as well."*** It growled, firing a Leech Seed at Shinx. He protected himself, dodging it.

"No." Shinx growled. "No more."



Electricity crackled over his body and he charged at Wo-Chien, dodging vines and leech seeds and protecting himself from Ruination and Giga Drain.

Shinx held on for as much as he could, striking when not dodging or protecting against attacks. But in time, he fell to his knees, panting.

**"*Pitiful. How very pitiful.*"** Wo-Chien jeered. **"*Violarus was wrong to choose you. It should have chosen a better human.*"**

"I never needed to beat you, stupid." Shinx giggled. "I just had to wear you down."

Wo-Chien turned to face the heavy stomp behind it. It barely got time to perceive the purple and white ball spinning towards it before the ball opened and rendered Wo-Chien into nothing but data and sucked it inside. The ball closed and fell to the ground, shaking in defiance. Then the latch clicked.

The Master ball played an upbeat jingle.

Wo-Chien was caught!

## Chapter 12

Rotom pranced, his huge metal body tearing up the road.

"IT WORKED! IT WORKED!" He cheered. "I FUCKING DID IT! I'M A FUCKING GENIUS! WOO-HOO!"

Silver crawled out from underneath Dia, groaning.

"That's what you were working on this whole time? Something that could defeat Wo-Chien?"

Rotom grinned.

"Yep! It's all thanks to me, and some schematics Zoroark stole for me. I reverse engineered it and reinvented the Master Ball."

"That's pretty amazing. They're really rare in my world." Shinx smiled.

"I wish I had known, I would have turned traitor sooner." Silver groaned. "Good fucking riddance."

Zoroark leaned down and picked up the ball, tucking it into her hair.

"Mm. It ain't coming back. I'm gonna take care of it." She grunted, covering her chest hole.

"Make sure it gets what it deserves." Silver looked away. "I... I need to go."

"Not without me." Dia stood up. "I'm never leaving you again."

Silver nuzzled her.

"Alright... Come on." It smiled. "Let's find somewhere we can catch up."

"Yeah." Dia nodded. "There's so much I have to tell you."

The two stumbled away, leaning on each other. Rotom follows them, thinking aloud to himself. Shinx walks up to me, smiling.

"Hey, you okay?" He asks. "You look pretty roughed up."

I struggle to my feet.

"Pretty much." I grunt. "Silver got a pretty good hit on me before Wo-Chien showed up."

"Ouch." He says. "Is that what that crack in the wall is?"

"Yeah." I laugh. "My ass really hurts."

"You two will be fine." Zoroark chuckles. "Go on, Shinx. Absol's waiting for you."

"Thanks for everything, Blind." Shinx hugs me for a second. "Absol's gonna be so proud of me. Come see us sometime!"

He runs into the distance leaving just me and Zoroark.

"All's well at ends well, eh Blind?" She laughs, coughing. "Time for you to go too."

I stand in front of her.

"Not so fast, you." I look her over. "There's something you're still hiding."

Zoroark stands out in the middle of the street.

"Yeah?" She groans. "What's that, Blind? What's my big secret?"

I look over her. Her body is shimmering at the edges.

"What are you, really?" I ask.

"I guess I've got nothing to lose by showing you." She sighs. "Alright. Don't piss yourself."

The shimmer vanishes and a tall Arceus stands in Zoroark's place. The snow white god with a vibrant purple arch posed.

**"Not nearly as sexy, sorry."** She chuckles. **"Plus having hands is super useful, you wouldn't even know."**

"That would explain why you know things you shouldn't." I mutter, having to sit to look up at her face. "So why all this? Why not just snap everything better?"

**"I couldn't if I wanted to."** Arceus explained. **"I rolled back as much as I had to, but I couldn't prevent anything Wo-Chien did or caused. I put all the pieces in place needed so you guys could deal with it yourself."**

"Now it's gone." I sigh. "And I doubt you're gonna stay around just for us."

She leans her long neck down towards me.

**"Sorry, Blind."** She says. **"You just don't need me anymore. Metagross is ready to take over for me once Dusknor, "Charizard" and I leave. With no Wo-Chien, the guild will stay the force for good it was meant to be."**

"But you owe me..." I whine quietly. "You promised me a favour..."

Arceus slowly nods and gets down on her knees.

**"I'm not going to be like, gone gone."** She says. **"I'm still up above watching you all. Here, I got something to tell you."**

I lean closer to her.

**"Dia is your mother, Blind. I had to give you to Honchkrow because she refused to raise you."** She admits. **"Hate her and Silver if you want, but ultimately it's Wo-Chien's fault they failed you. In the same way, it's Wo-Chien's fault you got hurt. I couldn't do anything about that. Believe me, I tried."**

I look away from her.

"This is all way too much." I whine. "What do I do now?"

She stands up tall again.

**"Eina's in town looking for you."** She smiles. **"Go to her, and let me take care of everything else."**

I run past her, but turn and look back at her.

"Are you... Prismus?" I ask.

She nods again without turning to face me.

**"Yeah, that's my name."** She says. **"It's been a long time since I've heard it. Be well, Blind. Pray to me if you need me, because I won't forget all that you've done for me."**

Her whole body shimmers and vanishes from sight. I shake my head. I feel all weird.

I better find out where everyone else went.

Θ - - - - - O

There's a huge crowd of Pokemon in the city's plaza. Citizens of Jewel and members of both guilds.

Liepard wanders over to me, shaken up.

"Oh, it's... It's you!" He whines. "I'm so sorry for all the trouble I caused. I... Is there anything I can do? How can I help?"

"I found them, Liepard." I tell him. "You were right. Both of them are still alive."

"They... They are?" He asks. His eyes fill up with tears.

"Yes, Dad." Dia answers. "I'm here."

Dia walks up, Silver practically glued to her side. Liepard yelps and rushes to her, nuzzling his long lost daughter.

"Oh, Dia!" He cries. "I never gave up hope. I knew you'd come back someday."

"I'm sorry." Dia sighs. "You don't have to forgive me for what I've done."

Liepard shook his head.

"No, no." He says. "All I ever wanted was to know you're safe. But as for YOU..."

He approached Silver, leering with his face an inch away from its. Silver didn't flinch but it looked away from him.

"I should have seen it sooner." Liepard growled. "You told me you were dead to cover your own selfish ass. I should have recognised you right away the first time, you deflowering bastard."

Silver only responded with a quiet whine. Dia gently pushed her father backwards with a psychic wall.

"Dad. Look, I know you won't understand but..." She says. "Silver's important to me. I'm taking responsibility for its rehabilitation, and our..."

Liepard slowly shakes his head.

"...Dia, please do not tell me." He trembles. "You two did not. No. You're smarter than that."

"I was an adult, Dad." Dia looks down. "I made my own mistakes."

I roll my eye.

"Yeah, you've made a lot of those." I taunt. "Your biggest one's right here."

Dia looks me over and I can pinpoint the moment it clicks for her.

"...No." She whispers. "You aren't..."

Liepard looks between the three of us.

"Um, excuse me?" He asks. "Can someone explain what that means?"

Dia whines for a bit. Silver looks just as lost.

I look at my family. What a bunch of fucked up Pokemon. I fit right in.

"I'm Dia and Silver's child." I explain.

"What? Our... child? Dia?" Silver turns to Dia, dumbstruck.

"SILENCE, YOU!" Liepard yelled. "She has your spots, defiler! And the rest is all Dia's!"

"I'm right here, asshole!" I yell back at him, moving between him and my... my parents.

He looks down at me and slowly bows.

"I... apologise." He says. "But aren't you angry too? You more than me must be furious over all this!"

I look back at the faces of my mother and father. Dia's upset. Silver looks completely bewildered.

"I mean, I guess I should be, but..." I say.

I turn to face Liepard again.

"If anyone is at fault, It's Wo-Chien." I continue. "And it's gone now. We all just have to survive what it did to us."

Liepard slowly nodded.

"Yes... Yes, you're right." He whined. "I think I need some time to think about that."

He smiled up at Dia.

"Your mother will be thrilled to know you're okay." He says.

"I will be in touch with you both." Dia nods. "See you soon, Dad."

Liepard turned and vanished among the crowd.

Dia sharply exhaled.

"I suppose that went as well as that could have." She muttered.

"I expected to be slain on the spot." Silver added.

It turned and looked over me. Those red eyes still unsettle me but the anger behind them is gone. They're worn but curious.

"He was right." Silver says. "You really do have my spots."

It looks down ashamed. The guilt of everything it's done must be crushing it now.

"Hey, um. Mom?" I ask Dia. It's weird to call her that but the face she makes... It looks like she's going to cry.

"Y-Yes, Blind?" She answers.

"Dad?" I ask Silver. The conflict on its face deepens further.

"I'm... sorry for everything." It says. "I... don't deserve forgiveness."

I shake my head.

"Take care of each other, okay?" I ask.

"We will." Dia smiles. "Thank you... Daughter."

I turn and walk away. I hear them talking to each other behind me. They sound kind of happy.

I see Shinx and Absol kissing among the crowd. Both of them are roughed up from their battles, but are too happy for each other to care.

Oh. Those two are really going for it. Good for them but I do not want to watch that anymore, ew.

"Hmf." A voice comes from beside me. "Those two have no tact."

I look up and Diva's staring at them, then looks down to me.

"I missed you, Blind." She says. "Thank goodness you're safe."

I smile up at her.

"I missed you too, Diva." I say back. "It was really scary for a while but... Well, now things can finally improve."

"Yeah." Diva scoffed. "Old Guild's disbanded. Umbreon called it just before you got here. All contracts break today. I can finally just sing full time."

"I guess I figured as much." I nod. "What do you think will happen now?"

"Probably more of that." Diva answered, gesturing with her wing.

Over where she's gesturing, Luxray is completely mesmerised by Alakazam doing some kind of elaborate dance with floating spoons. Then while he's distracted, it hypnotises him and teleports him away.

I turn back to her. She's looking back over at Shinx and Absol who are just nuzzling now.

"I have a lot of thinking to do." She sighs. "Come see me sometime if you want to but I don't blame you if you never come back."

Diva flaps her wings and soars away. Alakazam notices me and approaches.

"Good afternoon, Blind." It says, leaning down to be easier to look up at. "By now you understand what happened, I'm sure."

I pull my bag closer and dig the spoon out of it. It's not glowing anymore, but I can still feel the latent psychic power coming from it. The neck's bent from Silver kicking me into the wall.

"Yes, that's right." It nods. "I'm sorry for being so invasive, but my Future Sight deemed it the best course of action."

"I'm glad somebody's apologising." I huff. "I've been fucked with a lot for the past few days, mostly by Zoroark."

"To feel betrayed and used is something all of us feel right now." Alakazam says. "I'm going to be using the Old Guild's assets to be righting as many of Wo-Chien's wrongs as I can."

"Good luck with that." I shrug. "You're gonna be at that the rest of your life."

"That I may." Alakazam chuckles. "But this includes you as well. I can't return your old property, but I can give you a place in Mesa Town that should suit your needs just fine. I can send word on to Psyduck right away."

It takes me a good few moments to really process that.

I'd been trying to ignore the thought of what the fuck I was going to do after all this. Biggest case of my life with world altering stakes, but I lost everything. I didn't even get the advance I demanded from Liepard.

This though, this could actually be a great fresh start. Mesa Town's decently busy, and Psyduck is there already. That's basically everything I need.

"Yeah, that... That's perfect!" I smile. "Thank you!"

"Of course." Alakazam nods. "In addition, Umbreon and I have discussed this and will be donating from our personal funds to give you starting capital. We settled on ten thousand. Does that sound correct?"

My mouth waters. That would set us up and let us breathe easy for months.

"Thank you!" I say. "Thank you so much!"

"It's the least I could do, Blind." Alakazam smiles. "I will keep in touch."

It turns around to leave but I remember something.

"Hey, wait!" I shout.

It turns its head back towards me.

"What are you going to do with Luxray?" I ask.

It turns forward again, lowering its head.

"Pokemon are inherently good creatures, Blind." It says. "If I give him the patience and help he needs, maybe he can be rehabilitated. I have to at least try. He deserves that much."

"Good luck, Alakazam." I say back.

Alakazam teleports away. The crowd is starting to disperse, so I see someone wander around looking lost.

A desaturated, broken looking Dewott. I could tell it was him even before noticing both of his scalchops missing.

He starts shivering when he sees me. He's too guilty to meet my eyes. I'm just starting at the ground to try not to look at him too. But I go up to him anyway.

I'm not sure what's driving me. I never fucking want to see him again. I've been rehearsing this conversation in my head since it happened. I want to kill him. I want to lock him back in his cage and throw away the key.

I just try to breathe past my throat shutting and filling with acid.

I close my good eye and his sad pathetic look is rendered into nothing but grey blurs. Then I remember that he did this to me in the first place and I get angrier.

Before I say anything, I take a long deep breath.

"Hello, Dewott." I say.



"Hi, Eevee." He says.

He's fidgeting with his paws. A few times he taps his hips, for something that isn't there and never will be again. I stare at them before looking up at his face. He's crying.

"I'm... I'm sorry." He sniffs. "I know it's not enough. Nothing ever could be. But I am sorry. I want you to know that."

"I don't forgive you." I sigh. "I never will. But all the same, I'm sorry for what happened to you too."

Dewott slowly nods.

"In a way, I understand now." He mutters. "Umbreon even said he'd feed me to Luxray once you were dealt with. I uh... pissed myself."

I laugh at him. He laughs too.

Then it's over. Silent. The crowd's noise doesn't reach my ears.

I look down.

"Why did you do it?" I ask.

"I was greedy, angry and stupid." He answers. "I thought hurting you would make Umbreon and Honchkrow back off. Instead Umbreon..."

He takes a second.

"You saw my cage. I was there for... I don't even know how long. Someone said it's been a few years. The days all blurred together."

I look away from him.

"I'm sure someone will deal with you if you wait here." I mutter. "Someone New Guild, if you're lucky."

"Yeah..." He slowly nods. "Goodbye. Sorry again."

"Bye." I say and walk away.

I search through the scant few Pokemon still left behind.

There she is. We see each other at the same time.

I run towards her and crash into her beautiful, soft, incredible smelling fur.

"Blind!" Eina chuckles. "I'm so glad you're safe! ...Are you um, enjoying yourself there?"

I slide up her side and nuzzle against her face.

"It's amazing." I grin. "Everything's going to be okay now."

Eina nuzzles me back.

"You sound pretty sure of that." She smiles. "You also look exhausted and you have a huge bruise across your side."

"It's a long, long story." I giggle. "Come with me. Alakazam gave me a place in Mesa Town. You'll love it."

Eina shuffled on her paws.

"Oh, really?" She blushed. "I don't know. I mean, you really want that? I'm pretty lazy, I eat a lot and I don't bathe often enough."

I nuzzle her again.

"You put up with my grumpy ass." I smile. "We don't have to worry about cash, I got money owed from this case anyway. It's not a problem."

I bonk her head with mine. Both of us giggle about it.

"Okay, okay." Eina laughed. "Is there anything else here you needed to do?"

"No." I say. "Everything's taken care of. Let's just go and let the world sort itself out."

The two of us start walking down the road out of Jewel City. I look up, wondering if Prismus really is looking down at us.

Then the feeling passes, and life moves on.

# Epilogue

The bell rings. Someone's walked into the lobby.

I look over. Eina and Psyduck are still asleep.

It's just after sunrise and I'm only awake because of my recent recurring nightmare where I'm being chased by Luxray. Probably doesn't mean anything.

I step out and see Mom smiling at me past the desk.

"Oh, hello." She says. "It's nice to see you up bright and early. Are you an early riser like me?"

"Fuck no." I grumble. "If I didn't hear you show up I'd still be in bed. Never been much of a morning person."

"Your father is a lot like that." Mom giggles. "I've found myself sleeping in more with it back in my life."

"How is Dad, anyway?" I ask. "The um... rehabilitation process going okay?"

"It has good days and bad days." Mom sighs. "I've dealt with a few relapses and progress is slow."

She smiles again.

"But even still, it never gives up." She says. "And it does love me, despite it all. Anyway, I'm here because I have something I wanted to discuss with you."

"I mean, yeah." I nod. "Otherwise you wouldn't have come here yourself."

"Very astute, dear." Mom laughs. "I was thinking of perhaps marrying your father once it had finally settled. It would certainly get your grandfather off its case."

"Sounds good to me." I smile. "Let me know how that goes. I'll probably find time between work to swing by."

"It would mean the world to me if you attended, um, sweetie." Mom says.

We're slowly getting less awkward about it.

"Sure, Mom." I say back. "Is that everything?"

"Yes." She nods. "But it was nice to see you again. I'll tell your father you were doing okay. Be well, Blind."

She turns and leaves.

"Yeah, see you." I answer.

Well, that was nice. I guess. Now I just feel tired.

I slide back into my bed with Eina. Right away she pulls me in closer into her paws.

"Where'd you run off to?" She sleepily mumbles.

"Mom visited. She's doing okay." I mutter back, getting comfy.

"Mmn. Alright. Snooze time." She snores.

I close my eyes and go back to sleep.