

Darkrai awoke, weary and exhausted.

Before him lay a pleasant stretch of green grassy field with a bright blue sky and fluffy white clouds.

Something was wrong.

A Darkrai floated before him, over a picnic blanket laid on the grass. It sipped casually on some tea from an elegant teacup. Its colours were the exact inverse of his.

Something was definitely wrong.

There wasn't a sun.

He tried to move, and felt the shackles bound painfully tight to his ankles pull taut. They were bolted to chains that dug into the ground.

"Ah." He said, unamused. "So that's your game."

"Good morning, Darkrai." Said the other Darkrai. "Such a pleasant day, is it not?"

Darkrai looked around, anxiety flaring as he realised the walls were a lot closer than he first noticed. The field was barely bigger than a room. His chains rattled as he kept fighting them to turn around.

"Not very funny." Darkrai growled, pulling at his shackles. "Let me go, now!"

"Nonsense. You haven't had your tea." The other Darkrai said, smiling with razor sharp teeth. "It'll get cold."

Darkrai huffed and grabbed its own elegant teacup. Despite expecting some kind of disgusting concoction, it was a very normal cup of tea. Pretty good, actually.

"You're so distrustful, Darkrai." The other Darkrai chuckled.

Darkrai threw the empty teacup at the other Darkrai. It didn't even flinch as it broke into pieces upon its face.

"And ungrateful." It laughed. "So cute how you think you can resist."

Darkrai stared down the other Darkrai, then folded his arms.

"None of this is real, is it?" He scoffed. "You can't hold me forever."

"Partially true. I've decorated the place for your benefit." Other Darkrai laughed harder. "But holding you forever? I could do that, but I don't intend to. Right now I haven't decided on whether I'll swallow you or spit you out."

Darkrai fell silent for a while, pulling at the shackles.

"You're... You're lying, right?" He gulped. "No being is capable of that."

The Other Darkrai simply grinned in silence.

"Oh. Oh no." Darkrai whispered. "Palkia you fool, where did you take me?"

"Ah, yes. It was rather unfortunate where it discarded you." Other Darkrai smiled. "Not a very observant one, that Palkia. Or maybe it truly tried to be rid of you forever by dumping you into the mouth of a hungry predator."

"A..." Darkrai squirmed. "What are you?"

"I told you last time." Other Darkrai slowly approached. "Something beyond your comprehension, but I think by now you won't go insane simply by seeing my true form."

"What?" Darkrai asked. "Last time? What do you mean, last time?"

"Oh, I forgot. Silly me." Other Darkrai giggled. "I've wiped your memory a few times. I had forgotten that, ironically enough."

Darkrai made a choking sound. He fell to his knees onto the picnic blanket.

"How... How long have I been here?" He asked.

"By now? A lifetime." Other Darkrai crouched beside him, petting his hair. "You've been very fun to play with."

Darkrai slapped its hand away, then lunged and grasped its throat.

"LET. ME. GO." He growled.

He crushed Other Darkrai's throat. Black sludge coated his claws. It didn't flinch, it didn't cry out in pain, it didn't even stop smiling.

"Well now." Other Darkrai gurgled. "This is interesting. Finally have some bite, do you?"

Darkrai roared with anger and rapidly slashed at the mockery, cutting its body apart.

It stumbled backwards, every wound leaking more and more black goop.

"Haha. Hahahaha! AHAHAHAHAHA!" It laughed uproariously. "THIS IS NEW! SINCE WHEN DID YOU FIGHT BACK?!"

Other Darkrai held together despite the many wounds. Sharp fangs and glaring eyeballs were exposed through its gashes, all staring at Darkrai and laughing alongside its supposed mouth at him, turning the mocking laughter into a full chorus.

Then all of it stopped at once.

"The kicked puppy really does finally have some bite to its bark." The monster said calmly. "Show me, then. Show me what you're capable of."

It snapped its fingers and the chains all snapped, Darkrai's shackles busting open.

The tight walls of the fake field broke apart, revealing the true dark abyss Darkrai was trapped in. An infinite lightless darkness.

Darkrai flexed his claws, facing towards his captor. He scratched the black goop off.

"Oh, not even bothered, huh?" The monster chuckled. "Not intimidated?"

Darkrai huffed.

"Shut up." He said. "If I have to kill you to make you release me, I will do so."

"Oh! Well, by all means." The monster smiled. "I'll give you a fair fight."

It grabbed at its body, squishing itself back together to seal its wounds back shut.

"All better, now." It chuckled.

Darkrai grunted with disgust.

"You find new ways to be abhorrent." He sneered. "The world will be better off without you."

He launched into a volley of attacks, blasting his captor with dark bolts.

The monster answered in turn by spraying Darkrai with toxic sludge, badly poisoning him. It followed up by slashing at him with poison dripping claws, which Darkrai managed to just barely dodge.

"Tick tock." Mocked the monster. "Better hurry up."

Darkrai roared with fury and went on the offensive, slicing up his captor with his own claws, ending the battle by impaling it through with his claw.

The monster coughed, sludge dripping from its mouth.

"Well. What do you know?" It wheezed. "You really would kill."

Its body went limp, and fell into the abyss.

Darkrai panted, choking on the poison.

"It's over... It's fucking over." He started to laugh. "You're dead! You're dead!"

"Oh, don't get ahead of yourself." The monster's voice came from nowhere.

Darkrai spun around, looking for the source.

"What? No!" He yelled. "You can't be!"

Thick slimy black tendrils grabbed Darkrai from the abyss, holding his limbs in place. He struggled against them, and one pet his head, getting his hair sticky.

"So cute. So adorable." The voice mocked. "Sorry to tell you that all you've earned is that I won't eat you."

Darkrai whined.

The tendril petting Darkrai instead pressed against his forehead.

"Hold still for me." The voice chuckled. "This is going to hurt a lot."

He braced himself as the tendril pushed through his skin and burrowed itself into his brain.

Darkrai screamed and screamed. Then he passed out.

D - - - - - D

Darkrai woke up, suspended upside down by chains in some kind of cell.

The bars were made of huge, sharp fangs and the walls of darkness were covered in smaller fangs and glaring eyeballs.

"Have a nice sleep?" The voice asked.

"It was awful." Darkrai huffed. "I was surrounded by everyone I wronged, and they forgave me."

"Aww. And yet, nobody will forgive you, will they?" The voice said with mocking compassion. "You've driven everyone away, so nobody cares that you're here, all alone."

Darkrai let out a hefty sob.

"It's okay. Let it out. Let it all out." The voice said gently.

Darkrai started to cry, feeling the tears fall from its face upside down.

"Ah. So sweet, so innocent." The voice laughed. "You really really care, don't you? You know precisely how badly you **SCREWED IT ALL UP!**"

The voice laughed uproariously. Darkrai cried harder.

"They all hate me, don't they..." He whimpered.

"Cresselia doesn't." The voice stated.

That snapped Darkrai from its despair. It looked around for the source of the voice.

"...What?" He asked.

"Oh yes." The voice chuckled. "It's looking for you, even right now."

"It... It is?" Darkrai whined.

"But it won't find you here, no." The voice taunted. "Your last shot at redemption, taken away before you even knew it was there."

Darkrai went back to crying.

Having a spark of hope given and then ripped away completely broke him.

The voice said nothing, enjoying the torment.

D - - - - - D

Darkrai swung on his chains, bored out of his mind.

He'd run out of tears hours ago, and that left him with nothing at all to do.

"Are you even there?" He asked into the darkness.

It was probably safe to assume it was, but the eyeballs in its cell had all closed.

Funny how that made him feel lonely when them staring at him was unsettling.

"I don't see what amusement you could possibly be deriving from this." Darkrai grunted. "Messing with me and leaving me to rot? Making me fight for my life, then tie me up anyway? What's the point?"

Silence.

"I know you're listening! You might be ignoring me, but you can't pretend not to hear me!" Darkrai yelled. "If you're really so omnipotent and omnipresent, there's no way you can't!"

More silence.

Darkrai went limp, groaning with frustration.

"The silent treatment." He said, then chuckled. "Just another way to torture me, isn't it? Well, you're gonna be disappointed to find I don't have any problem with being alone or ignored. Just watch."

Darkrai swung from his chains, thinking.

Hours went past without any noises but the ambient groaning of the abyss. He pictured himself inside of the stomach of a giant beast, tucked away into a little side cavity to be digested later.

He wasn't far off.

Darkrai tested his bonds again. Still tight. Not digging into his skin like the tea party, but not coming off anytime soon. The chains still rattled whenever he moved, but he'd tuned it out ages ago.

He sighed. His boredom was getting to him, and keeping up the solitary act was as painful as ever.

Ugh. Thinking about all the gods he turned away was getting tiring. Every time he wasn't thinking about his current situation, he thought about his mistakes.

Turning the whole world against him as he tried to destroy time and paralyse the planet. Oh, how angry they all looked.

Not even Cresselia stood by his side. It started hunting him down, and he kept fleeing from place to place to avoid it, and anyone else. It always tracked him down eventually.

But that won't happen now. If Cresselia had any sense, it'd stay far away from here. There's no telling what kind of torture that THING would do to it.

Palkia probably wouldn't spill where it dumped him anyway. He was convinced it was an attempt to kill him. It might as well have been, since this was a death sentence for sure.

Darkrai turned to the bars.

"Hey..." said a quiet voice. It wasn't the monster he was used to talking to.

"Hello?" He asked.

"Oh... So there is someone else here..." The voice said, then coughed. "I'm Talonflame. Nice to meet you."

"I'm..." Darkrai started, then stopped. "I'm Umbreon."

It felt disgusting to lie, but being himself was worse.

"Ah. The darkness must be a lot less scary for you, huh?" Talonflame chuckled.

"It would be, if not for that thing that lives in it." Umbreon sighed.

"You've seen too?" Talonflame said. "I've seen it. Just an... ugly creature with too many eyes, too many wings, and that awful screeching... I'm kind of glad I got locked up instead."

"It didn't look like that for me." Umbreon said. "It looked like me but... wrong. The colours were the wrong way around."

"Say, you're tied up too?" Talonflame asked. "It clipped my wings. I can't fly anymore."

"That's... That's horrible." Umbreon frowned. "It didn't do anything like that to me. I'm just tied up upside down."

"Lucky, I guess." Talonflame chuckled. "Oh, man. We're doomed, aren't we?"

"I don't want to say it." Umbreon whined. "But yes."

"Ah. Damn." Talonflame sighed. "I wonder what the rest of my team is doing. I miss them."

"They're not here?" Umbreon asked.

"Nope. Thank god, honestly." Talonflame grunted.

Umbreon and Talonflame talked for hours until their throats got sore, and both took a nap to recover.

Then Darkrai woke up.

"Hey... Uh, hey, Umbreon?" Talonflame said, clearly panicking. "Something-Something's happening!"

"Talonflame?" Umbreon asked. "What's wrong?"

"The, the walls are closing in. They're-They're... Oh no... Oh no no no no no..." Talonflame panted. "I think- I think this is the end, Umbreon. There's a lot of sharp teeth coming for me."

"No! Talonflame!" Umbreon yelled.

"Umbreon, I... Uh, uh... It was really nice to meet you." Talonflame gulped. "Goodbye, buddy..."

Umbreon fell silent.

"No no no no no!" Talonflame yelled. "I-I I DON'T WANT TO DIE! HELP! HELP! UMBREON, DO SOMETHING! HELP ME! I DON'T WANT TO DIE! NO! NOOOO! EYAAAAAAAAAAH! AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!"

Darkrai put his hands over his ears to try and block out Talonflame's screams.

They screamed and screamed, then gargled, then stopped after a loud crunch.

The only sound left was squelching.

Then silence.

Darkrai cried again.

D - - - - - D

Darkrai awoke in a pleasant field. The same one as before, with the tight walls.

The sunless blue sky and fluffy clouds were a relief to see after so much darkness and horror.

Other Darkrai was back, sipping from an elegant teacup once more.

Darkrai wasn't chained up, and he sat down on the picnic blanket.

"You ate them." Darkrai said.

"I did." Other Darkrai nodded. "It's no bother to you, right? You wouldn't even tell them your real name."

Darkrai made a noise like he was wounded.

"And besides!" Other Darkrai laughed. "Whatever happened to 'I don't have any problem with being alone'? You're such a liar, aren't you?"

Darkrai looked down.

"I..." Was all he managed.

"You wanted to doom all the mortals just so you could live in a world of darkness." Other Darkrai grinned. "Really, I'm doing you a favour here."

Darkrai looked back up at Other Darkrai. The soft, kind look on its face was a direct insult.

"Is this what a world of darkness is like?" He asked. "Loneliness and death?"

"Yep!" Other Darkrai smiled. "Isn't it wonderful? Nobody to bother you while you do anything and everything you want!"

"Don't you have anyone to talk to?" Darkrai asked. "Doesn't it get boring?"

"Why should I care? Everyone else is just food, Darkrai." Other Darkrai laughed. "Not even worth considering as equals."

Darkrai sighed.

Other Darkrai set down their empty teacup and snapped their fingers, one appearing in front of Darkrai.

It wasn't full of tea. Not with that colour. Not with that viscosity.

The teacup was completely full of blood.

"Drink your tea, Darkrai." Other Darkrai grinned.

"What?" Darkrai said, sliding further away. "No, that's disgusting! I don't do that!"

"DRINK. YOUR. TEA." Other Darkrai demanded.

Darkrai moved to swat the teacup away, but dark slimy tendrils grabbed his arms and pinned them to his side.

"You miss your little friend, don't you?" Other Darkrai mocked. "How about you give one last goodbye? Because I'm just so nice to you."

Darkrai fought and clawed against the tendrils but they were far too strong. They wrenched his mouth open and poured the drink in, then held his mouth shut until he swallowed it.

He'd never tasted something so disgusting. He wanted to throw up, but the tendrils kept his mouth shut.

Other Darkrai met his gaze, looking like it had just heard the best joke in the universe.

It might have.

Darkrai was let go, and he fell to the ground. He immediately puked up the blood he was forced to drink. It ran on the grass, mocking him further.

"Talonflame..." He sobbed. "Talonflame, I'm so sorry..."

"You're so pathetic." Other Darkrai huffed. "Come on, you were right there! I even did all the work for you!"

"How DARE YOU!" Darkrai roared, slashing through Other Darkrai until it was nothing but ribbons. The body flopped to the grass.

"How disappointing." The monster said from nowhere. "You really are a failure, aren't you?"

Darkrai wiped his mouth and turned away, folding his arms.

"I'm not going to be like you." Darkrai said. "No matter how much you torture me, no matter how long you abandon me. I'm better than that."

"Well now, that just won't do." The monster's voice sighed with exasperation.

Tendrils flew out and lashed at Darkrai until he fainted.

D - - - - - D

Darkrai swung upside down in his cell again. He had no idea how long he'd been waiting here.

To him, the silence was proof he'd truly bothered it. That was enough satisfaction to swing here in silence for years.

Luckily there was nobody else locked up with him. He didn't think he could take that all over again.

He sighed.

...

Something was different. His eyes hurt a little as some kind of light was floating by his cell bars.

No way.

It couldn't be.

"Darkrai?" Cresselia gasped. "Is that you?"

"Cresselia..." Darkrai whined. "You found me... I can't believe you found me."

"It wasn't easy to track you down." Cresselia nodded. "Now come on, we need to get out of here before it notices us."

Cresselia blasted the teeth bars with light, making them recess and open.

Darkrai floated out of his cell, into the abyss. It was far too dark to see if there was another side.

"How did you get in without it finding you?" He asked.

"Luck, mostly. This way." Cresselia answered.

She floated through the darkness, lighting his way.

After a while, Darkrai stopped.

"This isn't real either." He said.

Cresselia turned around, looking concerned.

"Pardon me?" She said. "Darkrai, it'll find us if we stop now!"

"How stupid do you think I am?" Darkrai growled.

Cresselia paused.

...

Then burst out laughing.

"Wow! Bravo, Darkrai. Bravo." It talked with the monster's voice. "I really thought that would fool you."

Darkrai sighed.

"I was going to fly you around in circles until you got tired, then devour you." It laughed. "It would have been hilarious to see the look on your face, but I guess last spark of hope really is just gone, isn't it?"

Darkrai looked through the abyss.

"Is this really just it?" He asked. "You eat me now, and that's the end of it?"

"Well, you won't cooperate with me anymore." Not Cresselia shrugged. "What good are you, then?"

Darkrai took a deep breath, then slashed at Not Cresselia. It fell into the abyss, its head coming loose before it vanished into the darkness.

"I'm sick of this. I'm sick of this." Darkrai whined. "Stop toying with me! If you're going to kill me, just kill me!"

"You want me to eat you?" The monster asked.

"I don't, but compared to an eternity with you? I'd rather die." Darkrai scowled into the void as eyeballs stared at him from all over the abyss. "So do what you will, I'm done playing with you."

It stared at him in silence for a long time. Darkrai floated there, ignoring the stares and dripping fangs all around.

"You're just going to be all mopey like this, huh?" Mocked the monster. "Fine. How bout a deal, huh? Since you're so miserable being you."

"I'm listening." Darkrai said coldly.

"If I destroy you, piece by piece, but let you go? Would you accept that?" Asked the monster.

"What does that mean?" Darkrai asked.

A tendril shot out and lightly tapped Darkrai on the forehead.

"Oh, it's very simple." Said the monster. "I will destroy your mind, and everything that makes you you. Then, someone else will stumble away with your body."

Darkrai looked away from the tendril.

"Death in all but name." Darkrai huffed.

"Or a new beginning." The monster chuckled. "You can finally face everyone and say you're a brand new mon, changed for the better. It's what you've always wanted, only you won't be around to see it."

"I'm not getting out of here either way." Darkrai huffed. "At least I get the satisfaction of denying you a meal."

"A little upstart from beginning to end." The monster laughed. "That's definitely going. Goodbye, Darkrai. I hate you."

The tendril struck at Darkrai, piercing straight into his brain. He felt it ripping through, tearing away every part of himself.

"Oh, I know EXACTLY what I'll do with you." The monster mocked. "This will be fun."

Darkrai screamed as he felt himself slipping away. He could tell it wasn't even talking to him anymore.

Further and further and further away he fell until his grip let go, and he was gone.

There was silence.

Darkrai ceased to exist.

D - - - - - D

Blake drank a glass of water. His head still pounded, but ignoring the pain made him feel better.

It was still staring at him, studying him.

What was its damn problem, anyway?

"Do you mind?" He asked.

"Oh, my apologies." The pink and yellow Pokemon said, bowing. "I cannot deny I am... curious, about this situation. Can you please repeat your story to me?"

Blake rolled his eyes and set down the cup.

"Ugh. Fine. I'll start over. My name is Blake." He explained. "I'm a human from a planet called Earth. I got sent to this world through a black hole. I used to be part of a religion called Team Plasma until they changed, and kicked me out. I don't remember much from then because my memories are all fuzzy."

It nodded.

"And you know nothing from this world." It said. "You aren't aware who I am, correct?"

"Not a damn clue." Blake said. "You're annoying, that's all I got."

"My name is Cresselia." It said. "You are aware you do not resemble a human?"

Blake looked down at his dark body, his long white hair flowing behind him. His claw gripped the cup hard enough to dig into the glass.

"Don't remind me." He growled.

"I mean no offence, of course." Cresselia floated backwards.

Blake grunted.

"Whatever." He said, going back to the drink.

Cresselia tilted its head, curious by the lack of violent escalation.

"You're quite the curious case, Blake." It smiled. "I hope you understand my curiosity is solely for the sake of helping you."

"Yeah, I get it." Blake sighed. "Not every day someone shows up in a different world with the body of a god."

"Precisely." Cresselia nodded. "In the meantime, I have some business I must attend to. You're welcome to stay here in my abode, help yourself to any food you need."

"Uhh. Thanks." Blake said.

Cresselia teleported away, leaving Blake alone.

Its home was a rather cozy cabin beside a lake shaped like a crescent moon.

A crackling fire lit the room with an orange glow from a stone fireplace, and a bed sat in the corner far from the table and chair Blake sat in. Not far from him were crates of food and supplies and a barrel of water.

He cautiously took a few berries and refilled his glass, quenching his thirst and sating his hunger to try and help with his migraine. It did, a little.

Then he laid in the bed, looking out the window.

"I'm a long way from Unova now. I wonder what Team Plasma's up to now." He thought.

He rolled over.

"They probably don't miss me, those ungrateful bastards." He hissed.

With his thoughts quieting down and his migraine subsiding for now, he was able to finally sleep.

D - - - - - D

Darkrai stirred from the bed to hear voices outside.

The fire had long burned itself out, and the sun glared firmly overhead.

He sat up to look out the window. Outside, Cresselia was talking with an odd trio of other psychic Pokemon, all smaller and each with a different colour.

They seemed to react to his presence and Cresselia turned, smiling at him from the window.

Feeling expected, he stepped out the door and shielded his face from the sun.

His migraine threatened to get worse again, but it stayed manageable.

"Uh, good morning." He said.

"It's afternoon." Said the yellow haired Pokemon.

"Uxie, please be more considerate. He's confused and in pain." Said the pink haired Pokemon.

"He'll be fine, Mesprit. So, how do you feel, Blake?" Asked the blue haired Pokemon.

"My head's killing me, but otherwise I'm okay." Blake said. "Who are you?"

"We are known as the Lake Trio." Said Uxie. "I am Uxie. This is Mesprit, this is Azelf."

"Nice to meet you." Mesprit smiled.

"You're a pretty weird guy, huh?" Azelf smirked. "We're here to figure out your deal."

"Do you think I'm lying?" Blake huffed.

"It is impossible to lie to us." Mesprit said. "Just tell us what you know and we'll decide from there."

"Please repeat what you believe happened." Uxie asked. "I understand that may be frustrating, but it's very important."

"I get it." Blake shrugged. "Alright. Here's everything I know."

He repeated the story he'd told Cresselia a few times. The Lake Trio listened intently, each with unique reactions to it. Once he was done, they huddled to discuss it in private.

"Is that bad?" Blake asked.

"I... do not know." Cresselia answered.

The huddling trio broke apart and each floated with various states of tension on their faces.

"So you believe me, right?" Blake asked.

"Uh... That's complicated." Azelf smiled awkwardly.

"You're not lying, but it's factually incorrect." Uxie said.

"It's... not... true...?" Blake said.

His migraine came back worse than ever and he held his head, groaning.

"Nnngh, ow ow ow. No, it has to be." He groaned. "It doesn't make any sense! I know what I remember!"

Mesprit took Blake by the hand and carefully led him away from the group.

"Hey hey hey, it's ok!" It said. "That's not what we're saying. Just relax. Here's a little something for the pain."

Mesprit carefully dulled Blake's emotions, pinpointing the doubt that Blake had and suppressing it, which immediately took the migraine with it.

"Oh... Oh, sweet relief... Thank you..." Blake panted. "Thank you, thank you..."

Mesprit pet Blake's hair.

"Oh wow, this is super soft and fluffy." It said. "Oh, uh, just hang on for a bit, okay?"

Blake sat on the grass, being pet by Mesprit as it held a telepathic conversation with Cresselia, Uxie and Azelf. He didn't hear it. He was glad he didn't have to.

"Blake?" Mesprit said.

He looked up to see it smiling down at him.

"It's going to be okay." It said. "We'll take care of you, alright? You're not alone."

Blake felt an odd melancholy. It came with a sharp spike of pain in his head.

"Nghf. Yeah." He nodded. "It means a lot, thank you."

"No problem." Mesprit nodded. "We're here to help, all of us. Just take it easy."

Blake closed his eyes and accepted the petting, falling into a comfortable lull.

Then he passed out.

D - - - - - D

Blake woke up, almost hanging off the edge of the bed.

"Huh? Wha happen...?" He asked, still half asleep.

"Take it easy." Cresselia said. "You shouldn't be pushing yourself so much."

It pulled the blanket back over him, and he held it tight.

"Mnh, thanks." He said, still groggy.

"Sorry I didn't realise just how strained you were." It said, floating closer. "You're quite weak. Perhaps your level was reset."

"Sounds about right." Blake muttered. "At least Mesprit made my damn headache go away."

"Ah, yes." Cresselia nodded. "We seemed to find the root of that issue. Do try to avoid... thinking too deeply about your past. That seems to be the trigger."

"It would be easier if all of you didn't keep pestering me about it." Blake said.

"Yes, that's true." Cresselia laughed. "But for now it would be best to consider the future."

"The future." Blake wondered, rolling onto his back. "A future here, in this world."

"Have you not considered it?" Cresselia asked.

"I had a lot else on my mind." Blake chuckled. "Maybe I got lucky. A life in a utopia, free of worries, with the body of a god... Well, that I could get used to."

"Yes, that's the spirit." Cresselia smiled. "This is a fantastic opportunity."

"We'll see." Blake smiled, getting comfy in bed. "I'm going to rest for a while longer."

"Great idea." Cresselia said. "Goodnight, Blake."

"Goodnight, Cresselia." Blake said.

D - - - - - D

Blake stood, his arms shackled together and bolted to the ground.

Not quite the warm welcome he was expecting.

Many gods stood in tall chairs around him. Dialga, Palkia, The Lake Trio, and far far above them someone he couldn't lift his head far enough to see.

Cresselia stood at his side, appalled by the whole affair.

"This is barbaric." It complained.

"SILENCE." Shouted Dialga.

"DARKRAI, YOU HAVE CAUSED NOTHING LESS THAN THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF OUR WORLD." Palkia said. "I SAW THIS FUTURE WITH MY OWN EYES, AND PUT MY OWN FOOT DOWN TO PREVENT IT. THIS DOES NOT CHANGE YOUR DESPICABLE ACTIONS."

Blake tilted his head.

"You talking to me?" He said.

Palkia slammed its fist on the arm of its throne, growling.

"INSOLENCE!" It yelled. "YOU DARE DENY IT?!"

"Palkia, please." Uxie said. "We have discussed the current circumstances."

"HE'S A LIAR." Palkia roared.

"It's not possible to lie to us!" Azelf yelled. "Palkia, you're out of line!"

"I AM NOT." Palkia growled. "WHO IS OUT OF LINE IS THIS DECEIVER. I HAVE MET THE REAL BLAKE."

Blake gasped.

"YOU ARE NOTHING BUT A FRAUD!" Palkia roared again, louder.

Blake yelled with pain, his migraine flaring worse than ever before, falling to his knees.

Mesprit flew down, helping to numb the doubt.

"Palkia, enough!" Cresselia yelled. "You're deliberately hurting him!"

Palkia stood up, and the entire room rumbled. It immediately sat back down and shut up.

Cresselia took a long breath.

"We can't be certain on punishment if we aren't certain on what has happened." It said. "There's an important piece of the puzzle missing."

"WHAT WOULD THAT BE?" Dialga asked.

"Darkrai's mysterious disappearance." Cresselia nodded. "After the events at Temporal Tower, Darkrai completely vanished."

Palkia folded his arms.

"PALKIA, YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS?" Dialga asked.

"Palkia's responsible." Uxie said. "To my knowledge, it had dealt with him personally."

Palkia slammed his fist onto his throne's arm again, breaking a chunk off.

"YEAH, AND WHAT ABOUT IT?" It yelled. "WHAT WAS I TO DO, ALLOW DARKRAI TO CONTINUE ITS PLOTS? I SAW THE DESTRUCTION, THE MASS DEATH. I SAW DIALGA DYING IN FRONT OF ME. WAS I NOT TO ACT?!"

"We're supposed to all work as a team." Azelf said. "You can't just up and rewrite Pokemon!"

"I DID NO SUCH THING." Palkia interjected. "ALL I DID WAS DUMP HIM INTO A GAP BETWEEN DIMENSIONS HE WOULDN'T COME BACK FROM."

"That's true." Uxie said.

"Then what happened to Blake?" Mesprit asked. "If Palkia didn't do it, who did?"

"Wiping memories is one thing." Uxie thought. "But rewriting memories in a way where contradictions cause pain? That's far beyond anything any of us could do. Aside from..."

The room rumbled again.

"A-and you'd never do that, of course." Uxie continued. "Palkia, did you check the space was empty when you abandoned him?"

"I DID NOT." Palkia grunted.

"True." Uxie sighed. "So an outside force did this."

"What kind of horrible thing would do this?" Azelf asked. "I hope we're not in danger."

"I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN PASS JUDGEMENT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES." Dialga said. "I WOULD RATHER BE DONE WITH THIS WHOLE SORDID AFFAIR."

"IF YOU INSIST." Palkia sighed. "YOU HAVE SUFFERED FROM THIS MORE THAN ANYONE. IF YOU WISH TO DISMISS IT, I WILL DO SO TOO."

"Blake as we know him is no threat." Uxie said. "He's not capable of anything that Darkrai was."

"I vow to take full responsibility for him." Cresselia said.

"I think that sorts everything out." Azelf said. "Something outside of our control turned Darkrai into Blake, and Cresselia's volunteering to watch over him from now on."

It looked up at the tallest throne.

"What do you think?" It asked.

The room rumbled once more as the supreme god stood up.

"I HAVE HEARD ALL I NEED TO." Arceus said. "I WILL LOOK INTO THE MATTER REGARDING DARKRAI'S CHANGE. FOR NOW, IT WILL LIVE IN PEACE AS BLAKE WITH OVERSIGHT FROM CRESSELIA."

The room shook violently as it teleported away.

Everyone took a breath of relief. Palkia teleported away next.

"YOU HAVE BEEN GRANTED THIS MERCY." Dialga said. "BUT I WILL NOT BE SO KIND IF I BELIEVE YOU DARE TO THREATEN ME. FAREWELL."

Dialga vanished next.

The Lake trio each descended around Blake. His shackles burst open and he held his wrists.

"That was terrifying." He complained.

"Yeah, being in the room with it never gets any damn easier." Azelf agreed.

"You did fantastic, Blake." Mesprit smiled.

"Indeed." Uxie smiled too. "Staying quiet and letting us debate on your behalf was definitely the best play for your innocence."

"I shut up mostly because how much my head hurt." Blake admitted. "You try thinking when it feels like you're being stabbed in the brain."

"Let's go home." Cresselia said. "You deserve a long rest after today."

"No complaints here." Blake chuckled.

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Blake sat above the water, arms folded and staring up at the new moon.

Cresselia floated over, looking up with him.

"It's quite pretty, isn't it?" It said.

"Yeah. It is." Blake said.

"Something on your mind?" Cresselia asked.

"Yeah. Old Darkrai." Blake sighed.

He held his head. Approach this carefully, or the pain would get worse. Right now, it was manageable.

"I was thinking about it." Blake said. "Were you two close?"

"Not particularly." Cresselia said. "We're part of a duo, and yet it felt like we were always in direct competition. It would run, I would chase it. I'd grown long tired of the game by the time it disappeared."

"Sounds like kind of a jerk." Blake said.

"That may be true." Cresselia nodded. "It takes a very selfish Pokemon to try and destroy the world for one's own personal gain. I don't think I liked Darkrai very much."

"Are we close?" Blake asked.

"I think so." Cresselia smiled. "I've been glad to help you, and you've been fantastic company."

"Heh. You're great too." Blake chuckled. "Wanna go back inside?"

"Yes, I would like that." Cresselia's smile grew. "Shall we resume the board game?"

"You read my mind." Blake grinned. "Come on."

The two floated back to their cabin and settled inside.