

Shattered Crystal: Birth of the Godslayer

The grave poked out of the grass of the Olivine forest forlornly. It was a simple stone, roughly cut and scratched into a roundish shape by claws and smoothed by a dull laser. No body laid beneath the tombstone; its owner having been lost in the digital stream of the PC.

Omelette

Prince and friend

Aged four days

It was not a gravesite fit for a prince. The forest behind the city was wild and choked with bushes, tall grass, and closely-knit trees that would soon overgrow once more and take back the corner that he had dedicated to his friend. It would never know the glow of the sun, nor the shine of the moon that now hung full and low in the sky. But for Lazorgator, standing and shaking with barely-withheld sorrow in front of the gravestone, it was all he could do. AJ, controlled by the Voices and stumbling around in Olivine proper, could not go out of the boundaries they had set for him, and so the Gator had been left to fulfill this task on his own.

"Omelette..."

Lazorgator was never good at speaking. He preferred to let his actions speak for themselves. But for somebody like the Prince who had never stopped smiling or dropped his cheerful face, even as he was sucked into the cursed machine that had slain the Admiral and Colonel, for somebody like Omelette who he had considered a friend and in truth a brother, he felt the need to make his best effort.

He opened and closed his mouth, blinking back the tears that threatened to fall from his dimly glowing eyes. However much he tried, though, it always ended in futility.

He hadn't even gotten a chance to say goodbye.

"...I'm sorry."

The Gator growled softly in depression. What worth was an apology to a corpse? And yet, he had nothing else to say. Nothing to think about. His mind moved slowly and with great effort here before the one thing that proclaimed that a Togepi had once lived.

And with nothing left, Lazorgator finally fell to his knees and let his sorrow out.

"My, my. Whatever could a proud and mighty Feraligatr be doing sobbing all over the ground in a place like this?"

The Feraligatr in question rose his head, breathing heavily as tears trickled down his cheeks. "W-who goes there?" Lazorgator asked harshly, rising to his feet and allowing the dim glow of his eyes to cast the

surrounding trees in a ruddy wash of light. A breeze whispered by his feet, setting the low grass to rustling, and with it came the voice again.

"I and I only."

"Reveal yourself, or else leave me to my... my mourning."

A faint sigh swept through the above tree branches, creating strange moans as the limbs creaked and shook. "Would that I could, great Feraligatr, but alas. I am but the faintest echo of an echo; a fragment of what was once a monolithic presence all knew and feared."

"Then go away, ghost. I do not want to hear your words." Lazorgator reached to his side, large hands grasping for the small sword of the Admiral, and a giggle rang out, lifting the leaves from the forest floor to settle on the Prince's stone. As Gator forgot his motion in favor of sweeping it clear, the voice spoke again.

"So quick to resort to violence, Feraligatr! Can you cut through a spirit? Can your blade split air itself? If you cannot, then lay down your sword just this once and hear what I have to say."

Lazorgator grumbled, although on some level he appreciated the brief diversion from his grief. "Be quick about it."

"Oh, the moon is still high in the sky," the voice replied airily. "I have plenty of time, as do you and your poor trainer out there, both dealing with your friend's fate in the most different of ways. Have you heard what the Voices wail and cry of?"

He shook his head. "I have been... occupied with other matters. Here."

"They wheel and spin, searching for a face to hate, a name to blame. They roar in fury and screech in rage at many: Bill. The PC. Dome. Helix. Amber?"

Lazorgator shrugged. "They may do so. What matter is it to me? O...Omelette... he fell into the PC. The cause of his... death, it seems a simple thing to name."

"You think so?" The wind quieted, the trees above ceasing their creaking. Gator's spines chilled as the voice trickled up his back and came to rest next to his earholes. "This place is my home; fit only for the meanest of ghosts. I have lurked here ever since I was freed from my prison by he who now calls himself the Moon King, and I have observed all that happens here. I alone know the truth behind what transpired in the Pokemon Center."

"You do? The Moon King? The same one that rules over the Safari Zone?" Gator turned in hopes of seeing the spirit that hissed in his ear, but nothing greeted his eyes. "How? What did you see? Tell me!"

The grass rustled as the voice sighed deeply, and Gator almost caught a glimpse of what might have been a wisp moving through it. "If I speak of this, your path will be marked in the bloody hues of wrath, and the world will run red from the victims of your blade. Do you truly wish to know?"

Lazorgator drew himself up as his eyes heated with the red glare from which he had earned his name. "If Omelette was slain by the hand of a human or a Pokemon, I will kill them. I care not for the world! Let it

die if it must, let everybody die if they must, but I swear that I *will* get vengeance on the foul ones who have taken my brother from me! I will show them JUSTICE!"

A laugh bounced off the stone, trees and the Gator, ringing through the air in dulcet tones. "That's what I'd hoped you would say, Feraligatr! I do apologize for testing you so, but I had to be sure. Are you prepared to hear the truth? Can you handle it?"

"Of course I can," Lazorgator growled. "Now enough of your games, ghost! Tell me who is responsible for this!"

"Alas, Feraligatr, your task is far more momentous than you may imagine. Those who are at fault for the death of caring Prince Omelette, great Admiral Vivi, and loyal Colonel N... they are none other than the gods themselves."

Lazorgator's ruby gaze dimmed as he took in the phantom's revelation. "The gods?"

"Aye, yes, the gods." The voice took on a spiteful quality, wisps flickering in and out of the air as it spat its next words. "Amber, God of Balance. Dome, God of Order. And, most of all, Helix. God of Chaos."

Lazorgator sat down, hard and disbelieving, and the world threatened to spin around him. "That can't be true."

"And why not?"

He shook his head. "I don't know much about the gods – Johto has never been a land that held them in consideration like Kanto – but I know enough. Amber never concerns himself with us mortals. Dome has slept on still. Helix rules from Mount Silver, but even he pretty much only pays attention to converting Kanto to his light. How can they have had a hand in all this?"

"Dome awoke years ago," the voice replied with a tone that spoke of waterless deserts. "And you have surely heard that Johto is starting to come into Helix's rule as well, just as he hoped eons ago. Surely you have heard the story of how Red came to power?"

"The Voices helped him, yes." Gator nodded. "I still don't see how that shows that the gods did this."

"The Voices that helped Helix were a different breed," his confidant said. "Raw, chaotic, and easily swayed to his side. Those who live now within your trainer are different; more orderly, more planned. Helix knows of the second Host that moves within Johto, and he fears them... and you, mighty Feraligatr."

"But why?" Gator questioned, feeling his anger rising. "Why would Helix fear me? He is a god, and I am but a mortal!"

"All gods fear those who do not believe in them. And Helix, especially, understands the power of the Voices. It is for this reason that he has been sending his apostles – his agents – into your Host's mind, so

that the orderly swarm might be perverted to his ideals and turn upon you. Have you not heard their chants of recent days?"

Tick tock... kill the croc...

Lazorgator growled and looked down. "For the Voices to turn on me so suddenly and the deaths of my friends that happened through their fights at the PC... you mean that was the doing of Helix?"

"Oh, yes. It is a most insidious process, the changing of your Host's mind... it is not a process Helix is skilled in. Chaos prefers brutality and crusades such as those that have swept Kanto, destroying all who speak against him. But the Dome is familiar with such matters."

"Helix and Dome, working together?"

A howl of wind burst as the spirit laughed. "It has happened before, and it will happen again now. They may carry eternal enmity, but in the face of one who could lead to their downfall they will unite. But all the same, they could not do so without the Amber's domain. Balance binds Chaos and Order."

Lazorgator slowly rose back to his feet, his rusty stare threatening to boil the surrounding forest with its heat. "You speak of what seems outlandish, ghost. But your words are... they do not seem wrong." He felt deep within himself something waking; something primal and white-hot. His hands clenched into fists, his claws digging into his flesh, as he growled with fury, gazing up to the leafy canopy of the forest. "The gods... the gods will pay for this. The gods will die. Amber... Dome... *HELIX*... THE GODS WILL DIE!"

With his roar, a laser shot from his eyes, stronger and hotter than any he had ever created before, and cut through the canopy with a scream of sizzling plantmatter and cracking branches. It continued on, blazing across the night sky, before finally dying out with a *hiss* and a crackle. Panting, Lazorgator collapsed back to his hands and knees, spent from the effort of generating that true laser.

Moonlight shone down from the hole he had blasted through the trees, illuminating Prince Omelette's gravestone. As the Gator remained on the ground, he heard once again the voice speak to him, wisps crawling around the dirt and a light breeze kicking up with the promise of becoming something stronger.

"Excellently done, Feraligatr. Very excellent. Your power is beyond compare. But even so, you must know that the gods are beyond what any mortal may wield alone."

He growled with black hate. "Tell me how I can gain the strength I need. TELL ME!"

"The strength you need... is that of another god. One cast down by their hateful reign." The voice became heat; the phantom of burning magma and boiling stone. "One used and thrown away like trash. One left to haunt this place like some insignificant *ghost*."

He slowly rose his head. "...You? You are a god?"

"Yes, indeed. The Moon King held me in his hand and drew upon me his immense power – then, just as I could have slain the Archangel and the Messiah with my newly-released power, Helix warned of my threat, and the Voices cast me away!" The voice finished with a deep and creeping humidity, fog rising from the ground. "I spit on them! I reject them just as you do! And now, allow me to lend you my power!"

He remained on the ground, his fists still curled. To use a god to slay a god... could he do that? Should he? Helix and the other gods were responsible for all that had befallen him, and for that reason he would slay them... gain his vengeance. By any means possible. His toothy mouth became a savage grin.

"Very well, spirit. Give me your power! We will overthrow the gods!"

The breeze became a howling gale, and he faintly heard the phantom's voice again as the surrounding forest swayed in the hurricane force of the winds.

"Then I, shard of Amber's shame and Amber's bane, will give you the power to fall the gods!"

The wind cut off abruptly, the trees slowly creaking back to a halt, the bushes and grass' rustling coming to an end. Slowly, Lazorgator got to his feet. "Ghost? Spirit, where have you gone? What power did you leave me?!"

Then he saw it, lying derelict in the moonlight upon Prince Omelette's gravestone. A strange visor, golden with scarlet running through it. It spoke to him, urged him to take it, and the Feraligatr laid his hand on the object.

He took it, turning it around in his hands. The visor practically shook in his hands, begging to leap onto his face. He gripped it firmly, noting the sharp stone imbedded and facing towards him in the center of the visor's interior. From it came the final words of the ghost:

Wield this, Feraligatr, and make it known to the gods that the Moon Stone led to their deaths.

He bared his teeth in a smile, looking one last time over the rim of the visor at his friend and brother's tombstone. "I have the words now, Omelette. Your death will not be in vain. I will raise a great army with which we will sweep Johto, freeing our homeland of the gods and their influence. Then we will cross into Kanto and purge Helix's grasp from their lands. And finally, we will ascend Mount Silver, bring the Fossil Palace to the ground, and make an end to all the gods. This I promise, brother. Amber. Dome. Helix. All of them will die."

He put on the visor, and it laughed joyfully as it joined with him. Raising his head, the Gator let the sky blaze scarlet with his newfound power.

And the Godslayer was born.