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### Synopsis

So yeah... That happened! And as if to drive home this point, we open on Ash being about as surprised as we are!

“This trophy won’t stare at itself, Misty! I’ve only got a short window before I completely forget about it so just give me this, okay- WAAH!”

\*splash\* MY TROPHY! WHY DID I CARRY IT ON AN UNSTABLE TRANSPORT?

No, but Lapras does seem to be incredibly keen on booking it, I wonder if it senses a unique island with some kind of strange quirk? But it turns out it’s just

A school? I don’t know, that’s more of a fish thing, I’d say it’s more of a pod, but what do I know... Anyway, yes, the gang have a horde encounter of larpras including one shiny! Lucky!

Yes, I know that’s not the proper shiny colour, but with how many pokemon just have a lighter shade you can’t blame me for assuming. Then Tracey’s all “Wow, this could be the group that lapras was separated from!”

And ash is all “Really? You know, that reminds me of when I first met Lapras!”

“I...Know, Ash, I was there. So was misty. I’ve also succinctly explained their deal, you don’t need to-”

“I was a fresh faced boy of ten years old, in the habit of assisting pokemon when they were stranded on the beach-”

“I WAS THERE, ASH, I ASSISTED YOUR ASSISTING-”

“Tracey, just... sigh, just let it happen...”

So yes, after one of the most obnoxious and unnecessary flashbacks in a long time, Ash resolves to check if these Lapras are Lapras’ Lapras. Ash, would it kill you to nickname your pokemon sometimes?

\*subtitles\*

“HOW DARE YOU SHUN YOUR FRIEND! Y’ALL ARE LOWER THAN DIRT!”

“Ash, there’s more than twelve Lapras in the world, it’s possible this is a different group-”

“-AND I CURSE YOUR BLOODLINE WITH POOR TRAINERS AND WONDER TRADE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME, MAY YOUR IVS BE SUB OPTIMA- Oh yeah, that’s true.”

Then Tracey’s all

“Unless they’re caught by a trainer of course! Boy, Lapras sure do love battling when they have a trainer! No unfortunate implications here, no sir!”

But it seems like one of the Lapras DOES react to our lapras, so It is likely there’s a connection. However, when someone responds to your invite with a stream of vomit...

Communication tends to break down after that. So SUDDEN GORGEOUS ESTABLISHING SHOT as Ash asks professor Oak what’s up

“Professor! My Lapras is being rejected by other lapras, what the heck! Oh and I won the league, b.t.dubs.”

“Oh! Congratulations, you must come destroy my dinner party soon, maybe when you’re dropping off THAT BLASTED GS BALL-”

“Professor, focus!”

“ME FOCUS- ahem. They probably don’t like people, you really should have read the subtitles, you know...”

“But what POSSIBLE reason could any pokemon have for not liking people? Any ideas, Charizard?”

But seriously, it turns out that, and I’m not joking, POKEMON PIRATES are behind the distrust. Take it away, Jenny!

“Why Captain Crook? Does he eat a lot of McDonald’s or something?”

“Wow, that’s a deep cut, kid, no it’s because he’s a freaking pirate!”

“But pirates are adventure-loving scallywags who search the seas for treasure! They’d never break the law, right?”

“Geez, kids these days with their One Piece... Watch Captain Phillips and get back to me, okay? The grown-ups are talking...”

However, Ash then assumes Team Rocket is behind it because, well, it is a conflict in a pokemon episode after all, which leads to a pretty awesome entrance, I’m not gonna lie.

Wait, they were faking the injuries? Why would -

Breaking bones for a good entrance. Can't get much more team rocket than that. So yes, it turns out it really was pirates, complete with exploding cannonballs. Then after explaining how they really were injured, they then smash through a plate glass window rather than report their assault to the police... even though they aren't legally obligated to file a report and now she can write them up on destruction of property. Nice.

Meanwhile, after a heartfelt conversation between plesiosaurs...

We finally see the pirates AND THEY LOOK JUST LIKE ASH'S CHILDISH FANTASY? Can... can Ash will things into existence? Coma theory confirmed! No, but seriously, at least we finally get the pokemon pirates I always wanted and they're... kind of lame, to be honest.

I just want to know why they all have fake noses, did they sniff too many exploding cannonballs? Well then we catch up with the twerps who are formulating a plan to befriend the Lapras.

Yes ash, just grin at them, I'm sure that won't be seen as aggressive AT ALL. I also really like tracey's expression here, he looks so done. Heck, it's the most expressive he's been in a long time, let's be honest.

"Oh I know THAT, Tracey! A Lapras nearly killed me and then she took me to see Santa!"

"...What?"

"Hey look, a pirate ship!"

Yes, Captain Pokewash here and his assistant who appears to harbour a secret wish to be a ballerina with how often he pulls this weird double salute, are attempting to poach the Lapras and of course Tracey can't have that!

Tracey, that's a marrill. No, see he's going back to get Officer jenny, actually a smart move, and misty's all "You know, you could borrow my Staryu, It's pretty easy to stand on and goes way faster than your water rat..."

"Yeah, but Marrill's from Gen 2, so..."

"Ah, say no more. You go get the cops, we'll try to fend off this swarm of nasty, vicious, achingly beautiful tentacruel."

"Did you just say-"

"Go get Jenny already!"

Meanwhile Team Rocket are planning to recycle their Drake plan of waiting for pikachu to get exhausted before nabbing them... while also recycling some animation for good measure. Twice. I'm not complaining, though, I really wish Jessie would use her tail whip more often.

So the Lapras are surrounded and about to be weakened for capture. How will ash stop this? Why, by killing them all, of course!

Can't poach a dead pokemon! Smart! So after that the Tentacruel are lured over and the pirates be all "Gyar, why be ye stopping me dex completion? Time fer some scurvy child murder!" "Aye aye, Cap'n! Class A Felony off the port bow!"

So the twerps are being freaking shelled now and misty's all

"Jeez, misty, is this really the time? I mean your arms are well toned but I wouldn't exactly call them-"

"Not THAT, you idiot!"

"What, you have a gun? You can't, 4kids would censor it!"

"No, our pokemon, dang it!"

"Oh."

So she orders all the pokemon to fire their water guns and HOLY-

Okay, either that's a rotten ship or I've been underestimating the power of water gun SEVERELY. Hydro pump got nothing on this! Luckily I'm guessing they have extremely good control over the pressure otherwise that man would be missing more than just a nose, let me tell you. Then after the captain uses a certain move well before Sea Of Thieves made it popular...

Then ash aggroes the tentacruel so the Lapras can get away. It seems to be working and he even gets a get-out-of-team-rocket-free card out of it.

While this is going on, Misty wh-WHAT? MISTY SINGLE-HANDEDLY SUBDUED THE ENTIRE CREW WITH JUST HER POKEMON? Of all the sequences not to show, I feel freaking robbed! But now Ash is surrounded and since waterboarding doesn't work (of course), he has to fend them off on his own. Not an easy feat when they're hit by the most disturbing looking supersonic I've ever seen!

IT JUST KEEPS GOING HOLY GEEZ! “ I see... all my failures, past and future! Do I really peak at age ten!?”

But luckily then the other lapras swoop in and ice the suckers. Dang how dense are those things that they even sink when encased in ice! So then the lapras realise the pirates are outliers, Lapras is reunited with its...

MOTHER, okay! And then Misty's all

Wait.. they were being used against their will? But that can't happen, Charmander left Damien, remember? Lawrence III needed cages to catch the legendary birds! You even showed us in Island of the giant pokemon that pokemon only do bad things if they're ordered to, you just need to say you're releasing them, not freeing them! What, was Captain Crook threatening their families or something? Well anyway, all is well, but it seems Ash has come to terms with Lapras leaving way easier than he ever did with his other long-term pokemon! Even the obligatory montage didn't even bother to put the vocals in! Guess I'll have to do it...

The time has come,  
You were my favourite ferry,  
Who would have guessed they'd write you out?  
If only the staff could give you more screen time...

And then Ash pretty much sums it up.

Thoughts

Well shoot, another long-time companion of Ash's leaves. So why don't I feel anything? I mean for one thing it happens so fast I barely have time to acknowledge it, but maybe I'm just spoiled after Brock's departure was done so well. Remember how we talked about Brock's character and how the writers were able to use different aspects of it to create a multi-leveled scenario where the audience would feel satisfied? Yeah, here I feel like it's the complete opposite of that. We know ONE thing about Lapras, that it was separated from its herd, and when that's the full extent of its character your options of making an effective exit are somewhat limited.

Even in regards to all ash and lapras have been through, there's been no really conflict that Lapras has helped resolve aside from a couple of battles and being a boat. Even Butterfree, which similarly didn't get much screen time yet got a much better reaction

from audiences, still had a couple of episodes where it overcame big personal issues and ash was there for that. For a constant presence, Lapras sure didn't really make itself known. However, I must stress that it really didn't help that the leaving stuff was just shoehorned in at the end. I still found Lapras cute even if it was basically just a boat with ice beam and the races and battles it was used in were exciting. But the pod of Lapras just didn't play any major role in the plot aside from being damsels in distress and everything was pushed to the side for the pirates sub-plot, which was ALSO a disappointment! Pokemon pirates are a brilliant idea but making them this kind of pre-school level baddies really wasn't the way to pull them off. They need to be a legit threat, not bumbling idiots taken out by a single pre-teen! That's Team Rocket's job!

And can you believe it, there's yet ANOTHER disappointment in this episode, where the animation was overall lackluster despite my Golden boy Yuji Asada working on it. You can see his hand in a few moments like the multiple interesting expressions, the destroying of the ship and that traumatic supersonic sequence, but without a suitably talented animation team behind him there's only so much he can do. Not to mention he recycled footage which he hardly ever does, and then he did it again! It's just a crying shame.

It was sad to see Lapras go, certainly more so than Pidgeot, but I feel like they botched the execution something fierce here. Much like the episode where Lapras was introduced! Hey, at least they're consistent! I guess I'll give them the same rating of a Poke Ball.

### Trivia

There's seriously not much trivia I could dredge up for this one guys, aside from when the Pokedex says that Tentacool's poison sting will paralyze its opponents. This obviously isn't a thing in the games but it is in real life, so that might be where the confusion came up. In fact, the box jellyfish has a sting so painful it can cause people to scream even under heavy sedation, so respect those things, dang!

Aside from that, I guess the only thing I should mention is that while Caribbean pirates in the age of discovery might be fun to embellish, real life piracy is no laughing matter. Especially in Somalia piracy is a real problem that causes people to lose their lives and livelihoods at a horrific rate. There's a charity known as ISWAN that dedicates itself to the protection and recompensation of piracy victims that does really good work, so drop them some cash if you want to do something universally good. This wasn't a

sponsorship, I just felt like we can always use info about people doing good and i think this is the one form of piracy where the morality isn't a gray area.

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And so, Suede ends a big part of WHOA WHAT THE HECK? LAPRAS COULD JUST JUMP THAT HIGH WHOLE TIME? ARE YOU GUYS SEEING THIS? WHERE WAS THAT IN THE LEAGUE? LET'S SEE TOGEPI DO THAT!