

Xander's Meanders #17 - Route 9

[Rival Theme plays on the Pokédex as it powers up.]

Welcome to the Trainer Zach Show!

Blue: What's up, losers?

I'm your host, Trainer Zach, joined by my sick-ass uncle...

Blue: Me. Trainer Blue, the [mumbles] Ex [normal] champion of the Pokémon League.

Rival Zach: We're on Route 9. Still recording from, uh, this cool Pokédex I found and I'm tired. There are so many ledges. And we keep accidentally jumping over the wrong ledge, and then we gotta go back and do it all over again!

Blue: [quiet, irked] *You* keep jumping over ledges, Zach. Not me.

[**Rival Zach** sighs wearily.]

You keep jumping over ledges.

Rival Zach: We are gettin' a workout!

Blue: It's true. You can tell a trainer by the size of his calves.

Rival Zach: Get yolked!

[A trainer hums in the distance.]

Hey. Look, there's, uh, there's some, uh, trainer up there, speaking of which.

Blue: Oh, there you go. That could be a good workout for your Pokémon.

Rival Zach: Let's, uh, let's go get to know 'em, and then battle 'em and embarrassed 'em.

Blue: That's a good idea.

[Heracross hums and swipes at the air.]

Heracross, calm down.

[Footsteps crunch on dirt as the group heads over to the trainer.]

Rival Zach, Blue: What's up, looooooser?

Trainer: Hey, boys. I saw you jumpin' over them ledges. Lookin' pretty, pretty sweet over there. I was thinkin' to myself, hey who's that there with the good lookin' Pokémon? I'm Camper Chris. Wanna battle?

Rival Zach: Oh, you talkin' abt my Tangela? Tangela, go!

[Tangela exits its Pokéball with a whoosh.]

Blue: [contemplative] Do you know this kid?
[Tangela slurps.]

Camper Chris: Hey! Who's that there with the good-lookin' Pokémon.

Rival Zach: Sorry, what's your name again? You said Chris?

Camper Chris: Yeah. Camper Chris. I'm Camper Chris.

Blue: Oh...

Camper Chris: Who's that there with the good-lookin' Pokémon?
[Beat.]

Rival Zach: Uh, we, uh-

Camper Chris: What's your name?

Blue: We- we are. We have...

Camper Chris: Wh- who is that the- [firmly enunciates] Who is that there with the good-looking Pokémon?

Blue: Okay. Okay, okay, man, calm down. I'm- I'm Blue and this is-

Camper Chris: Did I stutter? Did I- did I stutter?!

Blue: Hey, whoa, whoa. There's no need to get so intense, man.

Rival Zach: Wow. That is an aggressive smile.

Blue: My name's Blue, this is my nephew, Zach. And these are our respective good-looking Pokémon.

Camper Chris: Very good-looking.

Rival Zach: What brings you to Route 9, bro?

Camper Chris: I'm camping. I'm Camper Chris! I'm out here holdin' it down. Campin' over here, campin' over there. Lookin' at everybody's good-lookin' Pokémon. Occasionally go for a battle. You and your good-lookin' Pokémon wanna battle?

Blue: We definitely wanna battle you. But first, wanna get to know you a little. I'm recording a podcast with my cool uncle here, who you might not know i- was a Gym Leader at Viridian City.

Blue: Oh, this is true.

Rival Zach: And for m- at least most of a day.

Blue: Most of a day. Almost 23 hours.

Rival Zach: Was also the champion of the Pokémon League.

Camper Chris: Wow. Well, who's that there with the good-lookin' Pokémon?

Blue: Okay. Lis- you're startin' to freak me out, kid.

Camper Chris: That one was-

Camper Chris: That one was rhetorical. I- I- I heard you. That's great! Wow. I'd love to battle a former Gym Leader and Pokémon champion for a day. Is that an elected position? Is it like when they give a sick kid the key to the city?

Blue: Uh...

[Sage stifles laughter.]

You know what it's actually not that different. It just requires, like, the last person who had the key to the city not be there anymore.

[Beat.]

Camper Chris: Oh.

Blue: It's weird, man.

Rival Zach: But it's alright, 'cause my sick uncle Blue's get the title back.

Camper Chris: Can't wait.

Rival Zach: Rihgt? You said you're gonna get it back, so I mean, that means you're workin' on that, right? I mean, it's gonna happen.

Blue: It's gonna happen. No, it's gonna happen.

Camper Chris: So hold on. If I beat you here and now, do I- do I get a Badge? Is that how this works?

Rival Zach: [hisses in a breath] Is that how it works?

Blue: That's a really good question. Uh, I actually would have to call my legal counsel regarding that.

[Beat.]

Camper Chris: I'm Camper Chris.

Blue: Y- Chris, yes. Ik.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

This is not a sanctioned Gym battle. A- a Gym battled, according to Indigo League regulations has to take place enti- inside an officially registered Indigo League Gym. So I don't think I can give you a Badge. Uh, however, if you beat me, Camper Chris.

Camper Chris: I'm Camper Chris!

Blue: You are. I can personally guarantee you that people will know your name, Camper Chris.

Camper Chris: And they'll be like, who's that there with the good-lookin' Pokémon? I get it!

Blue: Exactly.

[Sage stifles laughter.]

Camper Chris: Let's battle.

Blue: Let's do it.

Camper Chris: Alright.

[Blue and Camper Chris move into battle positions.]

Rival Zach: Alright. I'm gonna sit this one out and just watch. And learn some really sick shit. You listening there at home.

Camper Chris: Let's see. Hmm. Charmander or Growlithe? Those are the Pokémon I have. My good-lookin' Pokémon. As Camper Chris.

Blue: Hmm.

Camper Chris: Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Hmm. Growlithe, go!

[Growlithe exits its Pokéball with a growl.]

Xander: [distant] Hey! [pants, getting closer] Hey!

Rival Zach: Oh shit.

Xander: [distant] Stop!

Rival Zach: [frantic] Uncle Blue, Uncle Blue.

[Xander pants as he jogs toward the group.]

The poor kid. He's comin' back. We gotta go, we gotta go!

Blue: Oh it's this kid again.

[Xander yells at them in the distance.]

Oh, shit.

[Blue recalls his Pokémon quickly.]

Xander: [distant] You don't know it!

Blue: Shit. Hey, sorry, Camper Chris. We gotta go.

Xander: [distant] You don't know!

Rival Zach: You've been listening to the Trainer Zach Show!

Camper Chris: What the fuck is goin' on now?

[Air horn blasts and cloth rustles over the microphone.]

Who's that there-