

“...Spear Pillar...” Grasscutter looked up at the large mountain stretching up into the clouds. He sharpened his claws reflexively, preparing for the climb they would partake tomorrow.

“Indeed.”

Grasscutter turned his head to see Ak walk up to him.

“Tomorrow we shall begin the climb. We must prepare. We don’t know what we shall face there.”

Grasscutter nodded, taking one last look at the mountain as they returned to their masters’ side.

That night, Pepe was wandering around aimlessly while the pokemon were preparing for the arduous day ahead of them.

“Uraah!” A lowered her head, charging at Maggie.

Maggie moved back, shield raised, and aimed the tip of her lance straight at A’s head. The fire type dodged to the side, her legs catching fire as she slammed them into the Magnezone’s shield, knocking her backwards.

The armored pokemon lowered their body, lance raised, and shot towards A like a rocket. But Donphan was too quick for her, jumping out of the way, leaving only a trail of flames in her wake.

The two pokemon collided again, testing out each other’s combat tricks.

Meanwhile, Pachi sat upon her tail, curled up beneath her as she meditated.

“So, prophet, what is it that you see?” Ak asked, staring at the small rodent.

“It’s unclear...” Pachi said, shaking her head. “I can only see what the ancient ones want me to see, and they won’t give me any clues about what waits for us atop Spear Pillar.”

“I see...”

“The only time when I can’t see anything is when a force of ancient power to rival those of the gods is involved,” Pachi said, looking down. “Which means that what awaits us is a danger we haven’t likely seen the likes of before.”

Ak nodded thoughtfully.

“Hey, hey!”

The two pokemon turned to see Emma run over to them, excited.

“What is it?” Ak asked.

“Well, I was meditating under a waterfall, cause I thought it would, you know, get me more synergy with the water and stuff and make my magic even better,” Emma explained. “But, like, the concentration and

stuff was getting really boring and I was really impatient so I decided to go swimming instead, and you'll never believe what I found!"

"What?" Ak asked.

Emma held out her hand, a large blue stone resting in it. Ponyta's eyes widened.

"A water stone!" Emma said, grinning.

"But why do we need a water stone?" Pachi asked.

"Um..." Emma scratched her head, frowning.

"I mean, most of us have already evolved, right? We really don't need it."

"...I guess not," Emma said, tossing over her shoulder. "So, what's up, are you guys ready for the trip tomorrow?"

"I am always prepared," Ak said, nodding.

"I'm worried," Pachi said, hopping off of her tail. "Still, I think we can do it."

"And those two are so impatient they want to make the climb now," Ak said, nodding towards the two sparring pokemon.

"That's the spirit!" Emma said, nodding.

"What happened to Grasscutter?" Pachi asked, realizing that one of them was no longer there.

"He went for a walk," Ak explained. "He said he needed some time alone for training."

Grasscutter's blades were dancing around, slicing into the stones.

"Just a little more..."

Suddenly, movement out of the corner of his eye caught the attention of the Sandslash, and he noticed a dark figure moving around on the rocks above him.

Metal struck stone as Grasscutters' armored claws dug into the rock surface, and he scaled the cliff face, climbing up onto the grassy plateau above it.

"What are you doing here?" Grasscutter demanded, his bladed tail pointed at the black pokemon in front of him.

"Is that any way to greet an old comrade?"

The black pokemon moved closer to Grasscutter, their form obscured by the cape wrapped around them and their black mask, concealing all but the pokemon's eyes, which glowed like flames through the small holes.

"I had thought you were trapped in the PC?" Grasscutter asked.

The Black Knight waved their paw dismissively, shaking their head.

"Such a thing is unimportant. As a servant of Lord Dome, I cannot be trapped so easily."

"I see."

Grasscutter stared wearily at the masked pokemon.

"So, tell me, Black Knight, why have you come?"

"My master has sent me to warn you, Knight of Sinnoh. That what you confront on Spear Pillar is an evil that you might not be able to defeat. The Gods have sought fit to assemble Pepe's pokemon together into an army of great might. When the darkness comes for us, we shall be ready. But you six, who stay with his majesty, you are the ones who will turn the tide in this fight. It's all up to you."

"I know," Grasscutter said, nodding.

"I came to check on you all as well, but it seems my fear was unwarranted." A sound like a muffled laugh came from the masked knight.

"Thank you, my friend," Grasscutter said, smiling.

"Good luck, grass knight." One final nod and the Black Knight turned away, disappearing into the darkness, leaving Grasscutter standing alone on the cliff.

Grasscutter returned to the team, choosing not to tell them about the conversation he'd had.

That morning, the sun was bright in the sky as they entered Mt. Coronet.

Pepe rode nobly atop Ak, looking as regal as a boy in a frog hat possibly could.

A was burning with excitement while Maggie had their lance at the ready.

Pachi seemed uneasy, but a smile was still on her face, while Emma was all smiles, imagining the different "spells" she would get to use to fight her opponents.

And Grasscutter followed beside his master, blades out in anticipation.

Spear Pillar was waiting.