

Thank you to Linstar for beta'ing this!

Flo whooped with joy as they were bowled over by yet another wave. For the first time in years, they were able to just mess around in the sea. Luka, their Ribombbee, was hovering a safe distance above the surface. They could make out their partner relaxing on a towel on the sand, next to the elaborate sand castle she had recently finished. As far as anyone else was concerned, they were busy putting canon characters back where they belonged after yet another mission. They'd head back, eventually...

While wiping the salt water out of their face, they were unexpectedly drenched again. Not from a wave this time, but from a Remoraid apparently looking for a fight.

"Hey! Luka? Come over here and fight this guy!"

The Ribombbee sighed as he flew over. The Remoraid continued to make angry noises at Florence.

"Let's go! Pollen Puff!"

Luka gathered a green powdery ball and tossed it reluctantly at the Remoraid, who dived under the water. The ball of pollen plopped weakly on the surface and dissolved into the sea. Luka looked back at Flo and buzzed in exasperation.

"Look out!" Flo yelled as the Remoraid resurfaced behind Luka, who was only just able to dodge the ensuing Water Gun. The water streamed over their heads, destined to splash harmlessly on the sand.

"Noooooooooooo!" a familiar voice shrieked. Unfortunately, it seemed the Remoraid's attack had landed a direct hit on Melody's sandcastle, completely destroying it while somehow leaving everything else completely dry. "My beautiful sand fortress! I spent a whole fifteen minutes making it! Who did this?!"

"Whoops!" Flo laughed and pointed to the angry-looking Remoraid. "That would be this little guy."

"Oh really?" Melody slurped down the rest of her Pinap juice aggressively. "Then 'this little guy' is about to regret ever deciding to use that move on my beautiful creation!"

Melody stared down the Remoraid with a deranged look in her eyes. She looked ready to murder the fishmon with her bare hands. And she might have, if her phone hadn't started beeping at her.

"Dangit! Alright, you just wait there. Gotta see what this is..."

Melody's murderous expression shrivelled as she realised it was a message from the Floating Hyacinth.

I hope you two are enjoying your unauthorized vacation. Might I recommend the wonderful destination that is RC 289 + 3i? It's got four tiny floors of luxury and a console just waiting to send you two on your next mission!

“What is it?” Flo asked, noticing Melody’s sudden change in expression.

“We’ve been rumbled. We’ve got to get back.” Melody glared back at the Remoraidd, who was looking decidedly less aggressive now. “You got lucky this time, but if I ever see your stupid fish face again, you’re not gonna like it.”

Flo regretted their decision to go for a swim almost as soon as they stepped through the portal. Their waterlogged hair turned into a waterlogged mane of cotton-like fluff. The human/Whimsicott hybrid trudged across the room and crashed onto the couch. Despite apparently being made entirely of fire, it didn't burn them at all, and did nothing to dry their heavy cotton.

"What are you doing?" Melody whined. "You're gonna put out the couch!"

"It'll be fine, and my cotton's too heavy for me to get up anyway."

Melody rolled her eyes and clambered down the ladder to the lower floors. Flo heard her rummaging through something a floor or two below, before she scrambled back up carrying a hair dryer.

“Here you go,” Melody said as she chucked it at Flo. “Now go un-waterlog yourself before we get a new-”

[BEEEP]

Melody sprung into the air, and would have fallen back down the ladder shaft had she not grabbed a rung at the last second. Her ears folded over to block out the noise.

“...Of course. Perfect timing, as always.”

The next few minutes were a desperate scramble. Flo blasted himself with the hairdryer on the highest possible non-flamethrower setting. Both agents rushed to change out of their beach attire into their normal clothes. Despite arriving later, Flo finished first.

“Can you go see what it says?” Melody asked, fumbling with the pink ribbon laces on her impractically long boots. “I’ll get back down as soon as I-”

[BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP]

"Gaah!" Flo yelped. "Okay, okay! I'm-"

[BBP]

"-going!"

Flo slid down the ladder and ran over to inspect the mission on the console.

"Okay, apparently it says it's a *Yandere Simulator* fic?"

"What?!" Melody yelled from upstairs. "That dumpster fire has fanfic of it?!"

"I think it's *Yandere Simulator*..." Flo replied. "The console seems confused about the continuum. There's something about Pokémon and Danganronpa mentioned. I think it's broken, could you come have a look?"

"Fine, I'll go grab the console maintenance kit."

Melody climbed down the ladder, the laces on one of her boots still undone, wielding a large hammer.

"Let's see..." She leaned in to look at the console screen.

Ryoba Aishi finally met her match in the form of a blacklist Organization. Not being heartless, the assassin decided to take in the baby with her husband, renaming her Ayano Ketchum. Years later, she hails as the Ultimate Cosplayer. When the truth of her parents' royal heritage was revealed, she was sent to Akademi for a chance at normal life. But was she meant to be just normal?

"...This doesn't help." Melody sighed as she dropped her hammer dangerously close to her foot. "But I don't think it's the console that's the problem."

"Ash Ketchum?" Flo was incredulous. "What's he doing here? Why didn't this get sent to the DIC?"

"I mean, we are Floaters. We do just about anything. It's also *apparently* not a crossover with Danganronpa, despite having ultimates."

"Let's just get this done, I guess." Flo started messing with the disguise generator. "Two average humans?"

"Yup."

Luka made himself known by buzzing loudly at Florence.

"Sorry, you can't come on this one unless you wanna be a bee. I don't want you turning into a human and falling all over the place again."

Luka buzzed in disappointment and flew back to his bush. Melody finally finished tying her laces and began stuffing things in her pockets.

"CAD, bleepin, dairy-free Bleepolate bar, alcohol gel for cleaning, alcohol gel for exploding, Anti-Lustin inhaler, neuralyzer... Alright, I'm good."

"Disguise generator's ready," Flo said as a portal opened in front of them. "Let's go."

"Yup. Let's get this over with." Melody grimaced. "I can still feel the sand between my toes..."

—

The pair of agents trudged reluctantly through the portal, dreading whatever punishment the Floating Hyacinth was going to hand out for their misbehaviour. As they walked out into an ambiguous alleyway, the author's notes began to echo around the area.

BP: I am taking a break from Pokémon and decided to write any story that comes up to my mind.

Melody instinctively clamped her hands over the top of her head, before moving them down to where her ears actually were. Once again, her theory that she would never be entirely used to a regular human disguise was proving to be true.

For those Yandere Simulator fans, this is the plot that my other readers (who have been reading my other works) have voted on, and I will deliver to them.

For those who have read my other works (namely the PAL Series), you voted in the poll, and you got what you want! Of course, you'll have your requested pairing, RoyalShipping!

"RoyalShipping? PAL series?" Flo said, staring at nothing in particular with a bemused expression. "Did I miss something here?"

Melody shook her head.

I hope everyone would give this story a chance.

Melody responded by pulling out her phone and starting a new charge list document.

In here, there would be references to my previous stories and to the AUs N. Aepic Fael and I discussed.

The rest of the alleyway faded in to reveal a rather unpleasant display.

Blood dripped from the knife, as the beautiful black-haired woman with amethyst eyes stood over her victim. Her victim's jet-black hair tumbled around her, her arms and legs splayed like a ragdoll's in a way that was horrifying. Bruises decorated those arms and legs like splatters of paint on canvas, indicating broken limbs.

What was worse was that her grey eyes were wide, frozen in shock and fear, staring past her killer, into the clear blue sky. Waterfalls of blood were spilling out of various splitting gorges all around her body.

"Yikes. Well... this is certainly a way to start a story..." Flo muttered, averting her gaze to focus on the words instead of the bloody corpse.

If one knew the organization the killer was part of, they would assume that she was on some mission to kill a target given to her by whoever lead that organization. However, this was not the case at all. The woman had actually just gone to town to have a good time, only to be ambushed by someone who really wanted her dead in the alleyway. Someone who was now her victim as the victim was simply outclassed badly.

Melody seemed a lot less perturbed.

"Wait a second, you're telling me this lady is a professional assassin and she makes this much of a mess?" She almost seemed offended. "You'd think a professional wouldn't do such a sloppy job."

"This was all in self defense? It seems a bit... excessive. Surely someone as great at combat as she apparently is would know how to not kill them."

"I guess, but if you're gonna go all the way you might as well do a good clean job of it. I wonder what the heck happened to-"

There was an unpleasant cracking noise as the world slanted to the side.

"My back!" Flo groaned. "What in the distortion world just happened?!"

Melody heard a mechanical whirring noise and noticed some smoke wafting out of her pocket. She pulled out what appeared to be a brick made almost entirely out of duct tape with a badly cracked screen and a small exhaust pipe poking out of the top.

[Italics detected. Revert agents to non-italics?]

There was the start of a Y, but the screen beyond that was non functional. Melody pressed one of the lumpy parts of the duct tape. The CAD spluttered and let out a bit more smoke as the agents

returned to their non-slanted selves. She looked back over to the scene in front of them. It looked fairly similar, except the corpse from earlier was decidedly less dead and fighting with the other woman.

"I think we're in a flashback," Melody noted.

"Wow, I'd never have guessed." Flo rolled their eyes. "Shouldn't we be using your character thingy on these guys?"

"Yeah, let me just-" Before Melody could finish, she erupted into a dramatic fit of coughing. Fortunately, the two characters were too engaged in their fight to notice her.

"What do you think you're doing?" The assassin asked angrily as she blocked another attack from her victim. "Why are you attacking me? I haven't done anything to-"

"Yes you did," The woman said coldly. "I know you are after my husband from the way you talked to him. What have you got to say for yourself?"

Melody covered her face with one arm and pointed the CAD at the assassin lady. She could feel it struggling not to explode in her hand, before it sparked slightly and let out a cloud of thick black smoke. Once again, the characters were too occupied to notice.

"Wait...he was your husband?" the assassin asked, now completely confused. "Where did you even get the idea that I was flirting with him? I was just asking him for directions."

"Oh, that was what all my rivals said." The woman giggled insanely. "But I know that look in your eyes." the yandere woman said with her anger slowly making its way to her voice. "I can't think of any reason for you to talk to him other than trying to get his love. But, he. Is. Mine!"

Finally her lungs decided to give her a break and she could properly look at the results.

[Pakura. Human female. Original charact]

The rest of the screen was once again broken, but it was fairly obvious what it was going to say.

"You're crazy. I don't need to be in love to ask for directions from the opposite gender." the assassin said. "But I doubt a freaking lunatic like you will believe that."

The woman tried to kick the assassin to the side of her head, only to be blocked by the assassin's arm. The woman tried to back away, but the assassin kicked her arm, breaking it instantly, and forcing her to drop her knife, and it being caught by the assassin. The woman hissed at the pain, but the assassin grabbed her ankle and twisted it, breaking it as well to prevent her from moving.

"See? She could have just let her go there, but nooo, you've got to self defense them to death." Flo groaned, once again redirecting their gaze towards the words.

Meanwhile, Melody inspected the cloud of smoke the CAD had produced.

"Let's see what we've got here... It's an edgy shade of black, that's for sure." She said, stopping to sniff the smoke. "Smells like... Blood, obviously, but it also reminds me of the dinner parties my dad used to drag me along to."

"So it's something fancy?"

"Sort of. But also boring, way too long, and full of snobby people judging you."

"You know, I should've known who you were," The assassin said as a sadistic smile appeared on her face, stepping on the woman's chest. "Ryoba Aishi, the one who was a suspect for the 1989 tragedy in Akademi High, but got off scot-free. You may have fooled all of Japan, but you can't fool me. From the way you fight, I know you're experienced in using the knife to kill. But too bad, you've met your match in me. I'll show you exactly why I'm one of the seconds-in-command of Quarantine."

"I take it that's not canon?" Flo asked.

Melody shook her head. "Nope, not from any of the ones that show up here at least. And wait a second, how does she even know about what happened with Ryoba, let alone recognize her years after the case?"

For the first time, Ryoba felt fear at that mention of Quarantine. She had heard of Quarantine. It was the first legally sponsored blacklist organization by the United Nations and they are contracted to handle threats around the world and was based on America. Of all the official blacklist groups, they have the most jurisdiction.

"Ah yes, based on America," Melody chuckled for no reason in particular. "But, I mean, this does seem kind of accurate."

There was a Blacklist Clause, a law that protected blacklist organizations that have been officially recognized from prosecution from their actions. It basically granted free reign to this organization to carry out their tasks. Headed by Lieutenant General Anna Guth and multibillionaire Archie di Angelo, both of them are two of the most influential people in the world.

It was said each member was influential in their own ways and not only that, they were once an Ultimate, a title given to talented high-schoolers that were described as being the very best at what they do and attended an extremely prestigious school in America, even more so than Akademi High. As they have graduated, they were instead called Former Ultimates.

"Sooo, it's Hope's Peak High but American, okay..." Melody hurriedly typed some extra lines for her charge list.

"Now, do you know what I'm going to do next?" The assassin asked.

Ryoba's eyes went wide with horror, as the knife went down on her. The last thing she could think of was her husband.

Melody's CAD must have pointed at Ryoba as she was putting it away, as it once again sputtered out a puff of smoke as it displayed some results on the working part of the screen. Slightly more of it seemed to be working than usual.

[Ryoba Aishi. Human female. Canon. Deader than i am]

"Great, this is the Interpol Authority all over again!" Flo suddenly exclaimed in exasperation.

"The what authority?"

"You know how my home version of *Pokémon* was a bit of a dystopia?" Flo explained. Melody nodded. "Yeah, that was the international police's fault. They really went off the deep end. They didn't have much influence in Alola, but in places like Unova they were really-"

The rest of the scenery abruptly snapped back to normal as the flashback ended.

"Such a waste. If she hadn't attacked me, I would have left her alone." The girl sighed, shaking her head. She left a calling card behind, so in case if the police ever came, they would know Quarantine did it, and would not pursue the murder case any further.

"Yeah, just like this. Never just subdue them, never let them run once you've shown them who's boss, just slaughter them because you have the excuse to," Flo sighed. "Then it's justified just because they-"

"That's super depressing and all, but right now we're looking for crimes against canon, not crimes against justice!" Melody interrupted. "And here she's betraying one of the only concrete things about this canon! You can't just leave an obviously murdered body out in the open and expect to not get arrested! There's hiding the body, destroying the evidence, keeping your sanity up... But this lady can just leave a calling card and they'll be like 'oh ok then nothing to see here'!"

The girl's phone rang, and she answered with a sigh.

"What?" The girl said emotionlessly, walking towards the Aishi house.

As the Sue left, Melody began to pace, wringing her fingers as she let out a quiet chuckle.

"Fuhuhuhu... This is going to be a good one, Flo... Did Upstairs really think this was a punishment? You'd better watch your back, Miss Pakura lady... We'll be watching you *very, very* closely... Then... *then*, you'll see how a true assassin gets the job done!! Fuhuhuhahahahaha-"

Flo looked on awkwardly as their partner's lungs once again failed them and they doubled over with a roaring cough. "Yup, sounds like a plan, but shouldn't we maybe be following her?"

Melody gave a "you go, I'll catch up" type gesture. Flo ran to catch up with Pakura as the phone call continued.

"Paku, I went to the house Ryoba Aishi lived and it's as you said. The man we found is suffering from Stockholm Syndrome. We're taking him back to America for rehabilitation as we speak." The voice said on the other line. "But...it would mean he could no longer care for their daughter."

"Do you think she has any relatives that can take her in?" Pakura asked.

"That's not a good idea, Paku." The caller replied. "Remember what Phillip researched about the Aishi family? She's going to end up like them too if they raise her. Everyone would be in danger all over again."

Flo's eyes narrowed. How did this lady know so much about this woman she'd allegedly just encountered randomly in an alleyway? Who was Phillip? She made a mental note to keep an eye out for him, and add the former concern to the charge list.

"What do you suggest then?" Pakura asked.

"Why don't we raise her?" The caller said.

"Ash! Do you think it wise to for us to raise her?" Pakura was so surprise that she stopped.

"Ah, Paku, but here's the thing. We know someone who broke their clan's curse. Maybe this girl is the key to break the yandere curse. Give her a new perspective." Ash replied.

"So, they're just going to fix all her canon problems? Those are her canonical issues, right?" Flo thought out loud. "I'm sure being adopted by a family of sadistic, bloodthirsty assassins will do her great!"

Pakura had reached the house, and hung up. When she entered, a male with brown eyes and neck-length black hair with combed down-fringe smiled down at her, and handed a baby in a blanket over to Pakura. Pakura looked slightly apprehensive when she looked at the baby, who was sleeping peacefully.

"Ash, do you really think it's a good idea, raising her in a household like ours? I mean, we are the most dysfunctional 'family' in America. We're Quarantine."

"But we're the most fun-loving family." Ash grinned. "Come on, Paku, if what Phillip had told us about the Aishi family is true, she's like a blank canvas and we can instil our teachings into her. Besides, your nephew Yuki would have someone to play with growing up."

Flo frowned. Something about the blank canvas statement felt a bit off. Melody finally caught up as Pakura and Ash stared at the baby.

"Okay, I'm back. Remind me to just use the RA next time." She wheezed. "What did I miss?"

"Not much. Pakura and this guy claiming to be Ash Ketchum decided to adopt this baby and solve all her yandere problems."

"What? How do they know about the yandere curse thing?"

Flo shrugged.

"Anyway, let's see what's up with 'Ash' and his new kid."

Melody pulled out her CAD and pointed it at Ash. A puff of black smoke similar to Pakura's reading sputtered out along with the message.

[Ash Ketchum. Human Male. Original char]

"Oookay, guess we'll need to deal with this guy too." Melody grumbled. "What about the kid?"

The smoke coming from the CAD was different this time. It was thinner, grey and looked a lot more like normal smoke.

[Ayano Ketchum. Human female. Original ch]

"What does that mean?" Flo asked.

Melody looked frustrated. "I don't know. She's not canon, but I can't work out what this smoke- wait, did she just ask for her birth certificate?!"

"Yeah," said Ash, passing her the documents. "I guess we'll leave this house for now, until we need it for another time..."

"How did they find that so fast?!"

"Ash probably searched the house while we were on our way."

"Did we really take that long though?!"

"I dunno. Anyway, you were saying about the smoke?"

"I can't work out what it means. I'll have to try again later, I guess."

The pair of agents looked on as the two suvians and their newly adopted baby left the Aishi house, completely oblivious of the upcoming time skip.

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For as long as she could remember, Ayano could not feel. It didn't matter if she was being bullied, she felt no rage. Not that anyone would dare bully her after the ones who did try ended up in the hospital. It didn't matter if she saw a cute animal, she felt no joy. It didn't matter if she hurt herself during self-defense training, she did not cry.

"Urgh... What just happened?" Flo picked themselves up and looked around the void they'd apparently arrived in.

"I think this is someone's internal monologue." Melody mused. "How old is she here? And what exactly is this self defense training involving? Just because the poor kid doesn't have emotions doesn't mean you can just batter her into a mini assassin!"

"Yeah, but what about the bullies she sent to the hospital? They're just kids as well!"

"It's not like her parents are particularly good role models in the 'not murdering people as a first resort' department."

Meanwhile, the monologue continued.

She was simply empty, incomplete. There was a place somewhere inside of her, a place for emotions. But they were closed away, trapped behind a stone-cold heart she was born with her bloodline. According to her mother, this was because she was born an Aishi. Pakura had told her that she was 'cursed' by her DNA to be emotionless until she found her true love, just like her mother and her grandmother and so on and so forth.

Ayano wished she could hate this fact, as to how empty she felt, and how she never really connected to others like how people her age did. But she couldn't, for even her hate was locked away somewhere in her frozen heart. However, she had no time to really dwell on the lack of emotions, for every spare time was occupied.

"Maybe I'm being hit with her Aura of Smooth, but I feel kind of sorry for her." Melody scratched her head.

"Yeah, I think it's just you. Seems like she's got a pretty nice life to me," Flo said, gesturing to the next few paragraphs.

Ever since she was born, her parents had been subjecting her to lessons on various subjects and even started entering her in competitions. She knew her parents were trying to raise her to be as normal as possible, but normal isn't exactly what one would describe people like Pakura and Ash. Looking back, she wasn't too surprised at the way they raised her, as both her parents were considered the top of the totem pole among society. Their definition of normal would probably differ.

When the other members of Quarantine heard about it, they decided to chip in to help her with her training when her parents are busy with work since they all lived together in one, large mansion that served as their Headquarters.

Hence, she can't say she was lonely, considering the type of company the Quarantine members were. The fact that her peers from Royal Pratibhe Academy accepted her for who she was, allowing her to fit in easily also helped matters. After all, they have the mindset that everyone is different in their own ways.

“Oh nooo, my life is so traheck I was raised in a mansion and I have so many friends at my super fancy school which I’m pretty sure is the Hope’s Peak High knockoff you were talking about earlier!!” Flo pretended to sob overdramatically as vague images of Ayano’s childhood faded in and out of the area.

“Hey! Did you miss the part where her parents have had her in non-stop classes and competitions *since she was born??*” Melody half-yelled back. “And what about all those *child beauty pageants?! They’re not raising her to be normal, they’re raising her to be perfect. Or at least, their definition of perfect.*”

Her very first competition was when she was just an infant, apparently for a baby beauty pageant. She could not remember it, but apparently, she had racked up plenty of scholarships through those competitions and had the various tiaras and sashes to prove her victory.

Subsequently, being raised by an organization like Quarantine who are made up of former Ultimates would mean that she would start to rack up gold trophies and medals for other competitions, ranging from gymnastics to singing to figure skating and even art competitions. Sometimes, she had even assisted various charity organizations to provide services such as cleaning up litter, giving food to the needy, and putting up performances or recitals.

By the time she was six, she had at least 250 trophies, medals, tiaras and certificates to commemorate her services towards the charities. Eventually, two rooms had to be used to store her awards.

Many children may have snapped at the sheer pressure of it, but not Ayano. She didn't care after all, it was something for her to do. Besides, it wasn't as if she was the only one going through this, with her company being in the form of Yuki Paradinight, her adoptive cousin.

“Hmm, it’s almost as if her parents are exploiting her lack of emotions to work her far harder than a normal person could handle so they have loads of trophies to show off to people!” Melody rambled sarcastically.

“250 trophies at six years old. How much is that from her suish abilities and how much is it because her parents are at **‘the top of the totem pole among society’** and can get away with murder by just leaving a calling card?”

“See? So much of this can be chalked up to Pakura and her influence. If we took her out of the picture we’d be left with a perfectly decent character!”

“Okay, fine.” Flo folded their arms. “But that doesn’t mean I’m obliged to feel sorry for her, and I still think she could be a sue in her own right.”

“Let’s give it some more time. Maybe, when she’s not a baby, the CAD’ll give us some more conclusive results.”

A glittery pile of magazines and discs materialised on the ground. They seemed to feature Pakura, Ash and some characters they didn't recognize.

Whenever she had free time, she usually found herself mildly content to be immersed in the PAL Series, with the original series being placed in the Pokémon world, though there were series relating to those characters going to school and even one with the characters participating in a killing game.

"What are all these?!"

"More *Danganronpa* stuff, maybe?" Melody commented as she looked at the materials. "Looks like a lot of *Pokémon* stories."

Apparently, the author who created the series said the characters in those series were based on members from Quarantine, including her parents. It was very popular worldwide, as when Ayano went on trips with her parents, she would see them heavily featured despite having originated from America and besides an anime series, they even had its own television show and live-action movies based on the novels.

Melody's eyes suddenly widened. "Wait. Is this the PAL series they were talking about in the Author's Notes?"

"...Yeah, I think it might be."

"But then if this apparently in-universe thing is the thing they mentioned in the Author's Notes... Are these actually other fics?"

Flo groaned. "Don't tell me we're going to have to kill this cast *multiple times*!"

"Wouldn't be the first multiple offender the PPC's seen. When we get back, we should let someone know to look into it." She typed a reminder for it into her phone. "Besides, it might not be us who gets sent to those."

"I guess we'll need to keep these, then..." Flo reluctantly picked up some of the PAL series merchandise and stuffed it in their pockets.

Meanwhile, the narrative had taken a tangent to talk about the fictional and real-life bands that Pakura and her brother Shiki were apparently also part of. It then shifted its focus onto Ayano's noncanonical passion for cosplaying.

This was what inspired Ayano to make cosplay costumes, as she felt that her, as a blank canvas as her father had described her to be, can be anybody she wanted and could almost imagine herself as any character if she just dressed in the right clothes.

Over time, while she realized she preferred to make her outfits rather than wear them, she would wear her own outfits if it meant wearing to express the love of the character that she was cosplaying.

It sounded weird to admit, but Ayano preferred cosplaying as the fictional character based on her mother most of all, if only by a margin. She only wished that she could be just as strong, brave, smart, talented and charismatic as her mother someday.

“Come on!” Melody groaned. “We were getting some good introspection and character stuff there! Stop going back to how great Pakura is!”

“Yeah! We don’t care! Can we skip this part?”

“Yeah, gimme a second...”

Melody pulled out her Remote Activator from her pocket and configured it, as the story went on about how Ash had no idea how someone as beautiful and popular as Pakura had noticed him, and how well their personalities complimented each other.

“Aight, it’s ready!” Melody pushed the button and a portal opened up. Their planned exit portal showed up next to them about half a second later. “...Guess we won’t need that, then.”

Flo sighed. “I think we’re back to cosplayer stuff now. Oh, and we’re getting close to more Dragon Romper references.”

“It’s *Danganronpa*.”

“I know. I don’t care.” Flo said, smiling mischievously.

Due to the number of costumes she had made, Ayano found herself establishing an online store called Haute Dezain and as suggested by her father, she operated under an alias. She ended up picking the alias Ayane Ameyuri, the surname being taken from the character based on her mother.

“*Dezain*?! Just spell it Design like a normal person!” Melody ranted. “What a stupid name.”

Her cosplay costumes eventually became very popular, with people worldwide buying them and she ended up having to take stock and made more to meet customer’s demands. That was how she was scouted and invited to attend the legendary Royal Pratibhe Academy, formerly known as Specialized Institute of the Arts, where only the best of the best was invited to attend so obviously, each class consisted of only a select small group of students each year.

“How are we supposed to pronounce that academy’s name?” Flo asked.

Melody shrugged with one hand and typed something into her phone with the other. Suddenly, she burst out laughing.

She gained the title of Ultimate Cosplayer and a sponsorship that allowed her to create costumes with expensive materials. That made her parents ecstatic as they had once attended that school just like her, as did the other members of Quarantine.

"What is it?"

"I'm sorry- I just- I just Google Translated it-" Melody replied between fits of laughter, showing her phone to Flo. Google Translate was open, showing that pratibhe apparently was Hindi for talents. "I'm sorry- But royal talents academy! Could you not be more on the nose?"

Her laughter quickly returned to quiet seething as the description continued.

After all, simply gaining entry to this school was widely considered to mean that success in life would be guaranteed, enough to make one sought after by the wealthiest and most powerful corporations in the world. Put simply, if one was accepted into Royal Pratibhe Academy, then they were already on the fast track to enormous success in their future career.

"Wow, they really did just copy-paste Hope's Peak high here..." Melody frowned. "Yet they've somehow managed to make it even more insufferable. I'm impressed."

Ayano wished she could feel the satisfaction that her parents had felt on her behalf, as they threw a celebration at her entering the school, along with fellow peers that were the kids of the other Quarantine members who naturally also got into the school.

"So, it's nepotism Sue academy." Flo pondered. "Can we charge for that outside of the fact that it's definitely a knockoff of that school from dinghy ramper?"

"Sadly, I don't think so..." Melody groaned. "We can't even blow it up because it's just another thing mentioned in this endless exposition!"

She swallowed a bleeprin, irritably returning the bottle of hand sanitizer it had been intended for to her pocket.

All Ayano could feel to a certain degree, was boredom, annoyance, and contentment. The three blandest emotions, but it wasn't enough to satiate Ayano. She wanted to feel more, and wanted to find out just how she could unlock them. She had envied her adoptive cousin Yuki, who was able to express feelings readily, but yet never chose to do so unless it's in front of her.

"All this fic is making me feel is boredom and annoyance," Melody ranted. "Can we get a bit of contentment over here?"

"Guess we'll need to keep an eye out for this Yuki person..." Flo sighed.

She wondered if her lack of feelings could be broken by love, like how it does towards the characters from the many fairy tales Ayano had read. Nevertheless, she noted fairy tales could never really be a guide to real life. Because how many times in real life can a heroine truly live happily ever after with the love interest? How many times can someone really know if the person they just met is their true love?

"Your point being?" Flo deadpanned, yawning.

"Come on, let her mull!" Melody protested. "She might realise what kind of situation she's landed in! We've nearly got some quality internal monologue going here."

"If by quality, you mean stating the obvious..."

Regardless, she would always sit and listen to her parents or one of the members tell her stories before bed. Sometimes it was about her biological parents, especially her birth mother Ryoba Aishi. Other times, it was about their school days.

"Nooooo!" Melody looked ready to pull her hair out. "We were so close to something again!"

That was what she liked about the Quarantine members, as they never bothered concealing the truth in their stories. Ayano knew her adoptive mother was the one who offed her birth mother, but she held no grudge due to her lack of emotions and secondly, it was in self-defense. After all, Ryoba was the one who tried to kill Pakura, forcing her to defend herself.

"Of course that's what they'd tell you." Flo scoffed.

Melody assumed a dramatic thinking pose. "You know, if I'd been adopted by an assassin who killed my birth mother and could get away with murder scot free, I'd make sure to keep any grudges I held out of sight. After all, they could definitely kill me too."

She didn't really blame her birth father for deciding not to raise her, considering Ryoba probably saw her as a physical manifestation of the love between herself and her husband, if what her mother told her about Ryoba was the truth.

"...And her adoptive mother considers her a blank slate to paint all over. How much better is that?" Melody ranted.

Flo frowned. "She could still be a sue, you know. Might not be worth all your-"

The agents received another free chiropractic adjustment courtesy of a flashback. After the obligatory surprised yelps and slightly pained grumbles, Melody pulled out her CAD and de-italicized them.

"We really need to look ahead," Flo grimaced. "A bit of warning that my whole body's about to be rearranged would be nice."

"Yeah..." Melody said, glancing sadly at her CAD. "I'm not sure how many more of these flashbacks this thing can take."

The pair were now in Ayano's bedroom. Pakura and Ash were once again reminding their daughter of what a terrible person her birth mother was.

"Ryoba, your birth mother, was like you as a child, but when she met your father, everything changed for her. He brought warmth and color and life into her world. He made her...complete." Her mother had told her.

"Then what happened?" Ayano had asked.

"She perceived the girls talking to him as rivals, per se." Ash explained. "So, she disposed of them...permanently, just so that she can have him all to herself."

"I guess they've had a few years to find this stuff out this time, but still. How do they know her exact thought process?" Flo pondered. "Did they go to school with Ryoba? Were they in the courtroom during her trial?"

"Maybe they read the *Yandere Simulator* wiki or something..." Melody half-joked.

"Isn't it like you, in a way?" Ayano deadpanned.

Both agents nodded enthusiastically.

"Honey, the difference is, we kill because we were ordered to, or to protect someone, or for self-defense." Ash replied. "She killed because of a perceived reason in her own head. Besides, her perspective of love isn't really true love."

Flo facepalmed. Melody grinned.

"Well, would you look at that? We've been ordered to kill both of them. Guess that's fine for us then!"

"Yup! We're protecting this canon, so we can be as violent as we want, I mean need." Flo added sarcastically. "I bet there's a way we can spin this as self defense, too."

"What do you mean?" Ayano was confused.

"Think about it. Your mother only said she was addicted to the way your father made her feel. She never said that she actually loved his personality or truly cared about him." Pakura said firmly. "They say every Aishi woman fall in love at first sight, and that the Aishi woman in question do anything for them. Anything."

"Ughhhh, this whole speech feels icky..." Melody shuddered. "But, unfortunately, fairly accurate."

"We can still pick her up for knowing stuff she shouldn't be able to know, right?"

Melody nodded.

"Yeah, either she knows way too much, or she's just lying particularly accurately. You know, it would've been a pretty interesting plot to have Ayano slowly discover things about Ryoba and what she did throughout the plot and-"

Her ramble was interrupted by the flashback ending. The agents snapped back to an ambiguous room, possibly Ayano's.

“...But I'm not sure we're going to get that here.”

Ayano knew what her mother meant then, and even now, as she was using a portable computer she wore on her neck called Monita to use a design program for ideas of the next outfit to make, she still did. The Aishi bloodline's expectations for her to do anything and everything to keep her love by her side. Even if it meant hurting somebody...or killing somebody.

"Bloodlines this... bloodlines that... Can we stop talking about genetics for five minutes?!" Flo ranted, throwing their arms in the air. "...Also, isn't that computer necklace kind of like that one from those lawyer games?"

Melody quickly searched something on her phone. "Huh? Apparently yeah, you're right."

As cold, empty, and emotionless Ayano was, she knew that she did not want to harm anyone out of jealousy or selfish reasons. After all, she knew what true love really was, as she looked at her adoptive parents, and her uncle and his wives. A love that was reciprocated on both sides, love that did not require fighting others for. She didn't want a love that would manipulate her to keep her love for herself.

"That is not love!" Melody stomped around. "Okay, maybe they love each other, but what about you? We've spent the past million paragraphs hearing about how awful and cursed your genes are, how your DNA expects you to do horrible things somehow! Who else have we seen going on and on about that? These are not loving things to tell a kid!"

Flo nodded. "From what we've seen of these 'quarantine' people, I wouldn't be surprised if their perspectives on love were as skewed as their ones on killing people. Just need to make sure you're not being an awful selfish person and anything is justified!"

She knew it was possible. After all, her aunt Akeno had told her all about her own clan's curse, and how she broke it.

Flo glanced at the words. Their eyes widened. "Incoming!!"

"I have a curse in my clan too, just like you." Akeno had told her. "You see, Ayano, my clan consisted of spirit mediums. Because only the females in the clan are able to inherit the power of channelling spirits, the clan structure is very matriarchal, such that males are rarely ever mentioned."

The agents recovered from the latest flashback slightly quicker. The CAD, however, was struggling. A wisp of ghostly purple smoke sputtered out as it tried to make sense of the woman talking to Ayano.

[~~Maya Fey~~]

[~~Maya Fey at home~~]

[Akeno. Human female.]

"How is it a curse, then?" Ayano asked.

"Because marriages in the clan usually fail." Akeno sighed. "We've never had a marriage that lasted more than two years."

"If they're like everyone else here, I'm not surprised..." Flo groaned.

Melody nodded. "Doesn't sound like a curse to me."

"Never?" Ayano was surprised.

"Never. All the marriages just end in failure, for varying reasons. It was to the point that some of the women in my clan attempted to try and tie down their husbands literally so they won't leave them, but due to the curse, they always get caught and arrested." Akeno explained.

"Yeah, still doesn't sound like a curse."

"How did you break it?" Ayano wanted to know.

Akeno smiled, as she took Ayano's hands gently. "Simple. You see, the women in my clan is too focused on chasing for the perfect husband that they forget they can just lure them like woodland creatures with tiny breadcrumbs and soft words of encouragement. You can't just simply whip out a rock and conk them over the head with it. All I did was bring out my best qualities and attract the person I love from there."

"What the heck does that mean?" Melody's eyes narrowed.

"I think she's just saying you need to be nice to your partner?" Florence mused. "Still doesn't sound like a way to break a curse."

"Yeah, that's just obvious. How did noone work that out befoooooo-"

The agents warped back to the present time, in an ambiguous hallway, sprawled over the floor.

While Ayano did not understand what Akeno meant at that time, she agreed with whatever Akeno had said. From Akeno's story, she learnt that there is more than one way to break the curse without harming others.

"I agree with you there, Ayano." Melody said, detangling her limbs into a more comfortable sitting position. "I didn't understand that either."

"How did it take an awkward metaphor story to learn that?" Flo pondered, picking themselves up.

"What are you doing there, Aya?" A voice called. Ayano looked up from her holographic screen to see an extremely handsome boy with black hair and azure eyes. He had a katana strapped to his back, and everyone noted he looked just like his father when he was that age, except for the eyes. Ayano mumbled a greeting at her adopted cousin and arranged fiancé,

Yuki. She remembered why her parents arranged a marriage for her, despite their objections towards arranged marriages in general.

Melody and Flo could only stare dumbfounded at the information they'd just been given. *Yet another flashback snapped them out of it.*

Ayano raised her eyebrow as they arrived at a rather posh looking restaurant. Ash had confirmed the reservations, and all of them were seated at one of the tables.

Melody de-italicized herself and Flo and, realising where they were, sprang up from the floor and pulled Flo over to a table.

"Dangit, we should've bought something more formal..." She grumbled, hoping nobody would pay attention to the two people in casual wear, and particularly the plume of smoke coming out of one of their pockets.

Flo chuckled. "Is this one of those fancy dinners you were talking about earlier?"

"This would definitely be the kind of place to have one..." Melody grimaced, scanning the room for anyone staring at them. "Let's just try to act natural and watch what's going on with them."

The waiters placed the menus before them, and Ayano noted that her mother did not give the menus a glance, looking contented with just waiting, though for what, Ayano couldn't tell. Ayano was about to deduce that her mother might have placed an order in advance when someone called out to them.

A waiter approached the agents' table. Melody was ready to bolt and hide until she noticed he was just bringing a bottle of water and some menus. Flo focused on Ayano and Pakura's table.

"Paku! Have you waited long?" A voice asked.

Pakura smiled, something that was very rare, as she got to her feet and hugged the newcomer, whom Ayano recognized as Shiki Paradinight, her mother's twin brother.

"And here's another one..." Flo sighed. "He's not a canon from anywhere, right?"

"Let's check..." Melody sipped some water and tried to point her CAD at Shiki as discreetly as possible.

"Not at all, Shiki. Have a seat. It's been quite a while since I last saw Yuki." She smiled at the boy next to Shiki. Ayano blinked when she saw her adoptive cousin next to her. What was this all about? Especially since Yuki was dressed so formally, wearing a tuxedo and had his hair perfectly combed down. He exuded the aura of an aristocrat, and somehow, Ayano had a bad feeling about this.

A plume of sparkly black smoke wafted out. Melody examined it, before burying her face in her sleeve to stifle the incoming cough. Mercifully, it wasn't a full-blown coughing fit this time.

"Yup, both him and Yuki are OCs..." Melody croaked. "Did anybody notice that?"

"I hope the thing she's got a bad feeling about isn't what I think it is..." Flo shuddered.

"It's got to be, though." Melody frowned. "This is a flashback, and we know he's her fiancé. The only part we don't know is how awful or otherwise this is gonna be."

"Let's at least get some food while we're here." Flo opened their menu. "You're the fancy dinners person, what on here would be good for a quick meal?"

It didn't take long for Ayano to figure it out just what was going on. He observed the conversation between her mother and uncle, and he observed the way the two was giving meaningful glances in her and Yuki's directions. Ayano had to fight down a sigh. She had walked herself into what her mother would call an omiai, an arranged meeting with the possibility of an arranged marriage.

"Great, we're getting front row seats to an arranged cousin marriage setup." Flo frowned. Their menu could no longer distract them from the insanity. "When you convinced me to start doing this stuff, this was not what I was expecting."

"Definitely one of the stranger things I've had to see..." Melody poured some water into a glass, obviously trying far too hard to appear calm as the waiter approached. "Personally I'd recommend the fish, but everything on here looks quite nice."

"I'll go for the beef," Flo told the waiter.

"I'll have the fish, please," Melody said. "And to drink... What do you have available?"

Flo's eyes widened as the waiter took Melody through the restaurant's list of spirits. The waiter's eyes widened when Melody ordered an entire bottle of the strongest thing they had. Nonetheless, they nodded and turned back towards the kitchen.

"It'll probably just be generic fancy food again..." Melody whispered as the waiter left.

"Won't the drinks be like that too?" Flo questioned.

"Mhm." Melody nodded. "Doesn't matter."

Her mother pulled her aside after the talk and said, "Listen to me, Ayano. This is only a measure in case someone wants you only for your wealth or status so that you can tell them you're taken. You're still free to date anyone you like, but we must approve of him first."

"I guess it's not just anyone, then..." Flo murmured. "Sounds like normal parent stuff, but I'm sure *these* parents would be able to twist it to be as strict as needed."

Ayano knew. Her mother meant the 47 times she was almost kidnapped due to her background for ransom or marriage purposes, even though she was underage. The only reason no one succeeded was because of Ayano's extensive self-defense training. That was

why Pakura had to resort to this in order to protect her from being kidnapped, lest someone somehow succeeds.

Melody buried her head in her hands and groaned with exasperation. She then remembered she was in a fancy restaurant, removed her elbows from the table and resumed her barely passable façade of serenity.

"Sorry about that, but this makes no sense! What kind of kidnapper would stop trying to hold someone for ransom just because they have a fiancé? And haven't we established she can defend herself?"

Flo nodded. "Yeah, if you're that concerned just hire a bodyguard or something."

"But why do that when we could instead solve this European royalty style? It's flawless!"

If she had more emotions, she supposed she'd be utterly traumatized by now, and that was one of the times she thanked herself to be unable to feel.

"Lucky you. No need to brag about it," Flo grumbled, fidgeting with a butter knife.

"I understand, mother." Ayano nodded, and went back to the table.

As Ayano returned to her table, the waiter returned with Melody's drink. He took off the lid and picked up a glass, but she stopped him.

"I'd like to pour it myself, if you don't mind."

The waiter nodded, then hurried off.

"You're not going to drink all that, right?" Flo looked concerned.

"Nope! I'm not drinking any. I have other plans for it." Melody smiled devilishly, trying to put the lid back onto the bottle. "Unless you want some?"

"Nah," Flo replied. "I can barely handle normal alcohol. This stuff might actually kill me."

As they returned, Shiki got up from his seat. "Now then. Let's leave the two kids alone, so that they can get spend some time with each other."

"If you say so, Shiki." Pakura nodded, as Yuki continued smiling even as the grown-ups left, with the twins chatting animatedly. Ayano waited a while for them to leave the building completely before turning to the boy sitting before her.

"Let's see how this goes without Shiki around..." Melody mused. "The CAD didn't have enough screen to say if Yuki was a Stu or not."

"Let's be honest, he probably is."

"Well, yeah. But I can have dreams!"

"When's the food getting here?"

"I was made aware of your situation." Yuki said after they left.

'Eh?' Ayano thought.

"They arranged this so there would be an excuse for someone to stay by your side at all times to protect you. As the current Ultimate Assassin and how we used to play with each other and train alongside each other since we were kids, naturally I got picked." Yuki grinned.

"Of course." Ayano rolled her eyes.

"Ultimate assassin? Really?" Flo joined in on the eye rolling.

"There go my dreams..." Melody sighed.

"Hey, it's fine by me if you suddenly have someone else in mind during this agreement. I promise not to cancel this until you find someone my aunt approves of." Yuki went on.

She didn't say anything, letting him do all the talking. "After all, you should know by now none of the Quarantine members have that traditional thinking regarding girls. It's just that because of the high status you get when you're born to one of the members, you get lots of marriage proposals from the more traditional-thinking families, especially for females."

"Ah yes, they don't have traditional thinking regarding girls and yet here they are sorting out an arranged marriage. Makes total sense." Melody sipped her water indignantly. "Also for someone who was apparently raised without such traditional thinking, this guy talks kind of like an incel. You know, with the whole 'females' thing."

"That explains the kidnapping attempts on me." Ayano mumbled.

"Huh? What? Proposals explain the kidnapping attempts?" Flo turned to Melody. "Do you know anything about this?"

"Nooope. But I guess I've never been particularly invested in courtship and marriage and stuff."

"Exactly. You're someone from high breed, so naturally, they'll do something called bridal kidnap on you. That is why my aunt and my dad have this agreement to do something about it so no one can get to you. No hard feelings, right?"

"High breed?" Melody groaned. "Yeah, he still sounds like an incel or something. Also how is that supposed to deter bridal kidnappers?"

Flo rolled their eyes. "I guess being betrothed to *your cousin* might deter some people, but surely they'd need to marry to properly take her off the eligible rich young brides to kidnap market which apparently exists. But why *her cousin*? Do assassins and bodyguards have similar skillsets? Also, what about Ayano's self defense training? Also if this family is so loaded and famous why not just hire some bodyguards?!"

"Ssssssh! Our food's here!" Melody gestured towards the approaching waiter. "Personally, I think it's a pride thing. Why hire bodyguards when you're a family of super assassins? Or, I guess it could be a trust thing. A bodyguard could always be a rival assassin or someone looking to take you out."

"Makes sense."

The waiter placed two plates of food on their table.

Ayano nodded. She was slightly relaxed though, since the purpose of this meeting wasn't about the arranged marriage, but rather a pact of protection.

Melody groaned quietly. "Please tell me this is at least relevant later in the story..."

"No idea." Flo sighed. "At least we've got some food now. This place is making me hungry."

Realising what Flo had just summoned, Melody made a quick grab for the bottle of spirit.

Right on cue, the pair were snapped out of the flashback.

"Noooo! My beef!"

"Curse you Ironic Overpower! We'll be back!" Melody shook her fist to the sky, before checking her other hand to make sure the bottle was still there. "Anyway, what were we doing here?"

The ambiguous room from before the flashback now resembled a school corridor.

"Just the next idea a costume I want to put in the online store, Yu-chan." Ayano saved her design and deactivated the holographic screen coming from the "face" of Monita. When inactive, it looked like an ordinary heart locket with a face on it that can actually change color and its expression according to how she is feeling at that time. However, due to her lacking emotions, it was usually in its default state.

"Right! We were in the middle of a conversation before the flashback!" Melody smiled sarcastically. "...That's not confusing at all."

Flo, meanwhile, was pondering Monita.

"Why do you need something that tracks your emotions if you don't feel any? I guess it could help you identify the ones you do... but why broadcast that to the world? Why not just have it be a normal computer necklace thingy?"

"Yeah, seems really intrusive...." Melody agreed. "Guess that's another point for team 'all of this is her parents' fault!'"

Yuki smiled wryly, as they walked to the cafeteria for lunch. "Have you ever tried expanding your stock, like Gothic Lolita or even date outfits? You certainly have the talent and a lot of people would love it."

"You sure it's not just a point for team 'they just wanted to give her cool speshul tech'?" Flo questioned. "After all, she's *so talented*."

"Yeah, you're right..." Melody sighed. "Could still be the other one, though."

"I'll have to stock on other materials for that." Ayano replied, as they reached the high-class dining hall. "But I'll think about it." Unlike most schools, their school had an hour and a half lunch with waiters and menus where students were actually assigned seats so that the students will not form cliques and can learn to get along with anyone.

The agents followed the pair into the dining hall. It looked rather generic, which made it somewhat resemble the fancy restaurant from earlier.

"Told you we'd be back," Melody chuckled. "This place is so pretentious. Imagine being forced to spend half an hour chatting with random people every single day."

"When you put it like that, it does sound pretty bad."

"Maybe it isn't if you're the social sort, but I only had to do that for a few days one time and completely lost it." Melody shuddered.

At least due to her arranged marriage, she was usually assigned the same table as Yuki. While they ate lunch, they chatted with the people assigned to their table about various things as well, such as their favourite characters in the PAL Series, which was the current trend in America despite having been around for more than a decade.

While it was awkward to talk about their parents' fictional counterparts, they did not let it stop them from talking about their favourite points of the plot.

"What in the distortion world is with this 'series'?!" Flo exclaimed quietly, to avoid attracting attention. "And of course our speshul couple get privileges because they're betrothed to each other. Can't have people forming cliques, but arranged marriages? That's great! Let's help them get along!"

Flo waited for Melody to respond, but she was busy writing something on her phone, appearing quite enthusiastic about what she was doing.

"Hey! You good?" Flo waved at her. "This is the part where you agree with me."

"Yeah, yeah, gimme a second. I'm just filing 'take over the world by making a popular TV show featuring myself to influence people' under my 'evil plan ideas in case I become a supervillain again' list. It's kind of cliché now I say it out loud, but still a good one." There was no response as she finished her note-taking. "Whaaat? It's not like it's actually going to happen."

"Ooookay, can we get to the next part of the fic?" Flo gestured at the approaching section break in the words. "You've got the portal thing."

"Oh, right. Here you go. You know how to use it, right?" After some rummaging through pockets, Melody produced the Remote Activator and tossed it to Flo.

With a press of the right buttons (and one or two wrong buttons), the portal opened to a living room.

"I've got it. Are you ready to go?"

"You go, let me know what I missed when I get back to you." A menacing grin formed on Melody's face as she pulled out a sheet of bleepin. "I've got some demolition to do."

—

As Flo left, Melody surveyed the cafeteria. The students should head back to class at some point. Waiting for that moment would give her the proper time to scheme, and should prevent her from being caught in the act by the two non-bit characters in the setting. Eliminating Pakura and her lackeys would probably get rid of this rather minor setpiece, but giving the building a bit of encouragement wouldn't hurt. This was a golden opportunity to bring fiery, cathartic destruction to a snobby, pretentious school for society's greatest, an opportunity she'd been waiting years for. She wasn't going to let it go to waste.

Slipping on a face mask for later, she observed the dining hall. The generic students began standing up to leave, giving her the opportunity to wander in for a closer look. Finally, the last few students filtered out of the area. It was showtime.

When Ayano got home, Pakura and Ash were sitting at the living room waiting for her, clutching to a missive that looked like it had the royal seal on it. Pakura looked up and had a pained look on her face and said, "I need a word with you."

Ayano noted that both of them looked grim and they were home from work so she knew it was serious. She wondered what was so serious that they had to take time off their work just to talk to her about it.

"What is it, mother, father?" Ayano asked, as a maid served tea and cookies to them.

"Ayano, I want you to know the truth. I think you're old enough now, and the fact is, before you were born, after your aunt Ilia's sister lost the right to become the heir apparent to the British throne, Ilia was passed over as heir apparent because of her refusal to marry..." Ash started.

"Uh-huh." Ayano nodded, sipping her tea.

"But then Queen Janice did a little digging, and found that both Shiki and I were part of the line to succeed the throne. Your father felt strongly that there wasn't any reason for you to know, and I agreed with him since Shiki and I were way down at the succession line. You know I had a very abusive childhood-" Pakura continued.

If what her mother had told her about her childhood was true, she couldn't refute that.

"Besides, I agreed that a palace is no place to raise a child, and well raising you here wasn't any better, but I would admit it didn't seem to have done you any harm. In fact, growing up with us probably instilled you with a healthy amount of perspective and scepticism about the human race at large." Ash explained, eating a cookie sadly.

"What's your point?" Ayano enquired.

"What I'm trying to say is, both of us thought we were doing you a favour by not telling you. We never envisioned that an occasion would arise where I may be succeeding the throne. After all, the moment one becomes the heir, they have to dedicate everything to their royal duties. Because of how far both Shiki and I were down the succession line, we thought we were safe from royal duties." Pakura answered.

'Uh-oh.' Ayano thought, knowing where this was going.

"But now, unfortunately, Queen Janice refused to let the other heirs take the title of Crown Prince or Princess due to her perceived reasons of them not being fit and...it somehow reached us, and Queen Janice is really fixed on having one of us become her heir. Specifically, me..." Pakura looked like she was about to have a breakdown.

"So...that means..." Ayano blinked.

"You're not really Ayano Ketchum anymore." Ash confirmed sadly.

"Then who am I?" Ayano asked.

Pakura went, kind of sadly, "You're Ayano Estelle Alexia Ketchum-Windsor, Princess of Cambridge."

"...What?" Ayano was dumbfounded.

"Believe me, we didn't expect this to happen either. We thought you wouldn't need to be involved with this royal heritage because while we aren't the most normal of people, being a royal is a big thing, especially if it's the House of Windsor. That is why we kept it a secret from you. But we didn't expect Queen Janice to straight up change the line of succession so Shiki and Paku are now in front and subsequently as Paku's child, it will affect you." Ash shook his head in dismay.

"Oh dear..." Ayano held a hand to her head. Then again, she shouldn't be too surprised. Someone of her calibre would likely do well as a royal, and Queen Janice must have thought so too. "But wait, why wasn't Uncle Shiki in front of mother? He's the older twin."

"That was what we thought too." Ash sighed. "Except Queen Janice thought you mother showed more talent and confidence in deportment and she decided to make her heiress to the throne."

"Listen to me, Ayano. She doesn't know about you yet. If she finds out about you, she's certainly going to cart you off to England and subject you to royal duties...your life would

never be the same again. I'm going to do whatever it takes for you to have a normal teenage life...as normal as you can be, anyway." Pakura promised.

"What do you suggest?" Ayano asked.

"...You'll be going to Japan. You'll have to attend Akademi High and I'll make arrangements with the principal to make it so that you can continue your schooling in your current school. Here's the pictures of your mother's old house, and just tell me what changes you'd like to make to the house to suit your needs." Ash answered.

Ayano nodded, inwardly feeling pity for her mother, whose career is potentially ruined by one letter. "Am I going to attend the school as Ayano Aishi?"

Pakura nodded. "I don't want you to have people associate with you just because you're my daughter. I want them to like you for you. It's a very rare thing to have someone to love you for who you are, and I feel that you'll understand one day."

Ayano nodded, and ran off to make the arrangements after taking the file Ash handed to her as to the house she'll be living in, which was the house Ryoba used to live in with her biological father.

Later, as Ayano looked at the pictures of the room that was her parents' bedroom all those years ago, she looked thoughtful. Since her biological parents would no longer be using the room, she wondered what kind of room she should turn it to after getting rid of the furniture.

In the end, she decided to turn it into a guest room, in case someone stayed over at her house, but decided to replace all the furniture, for the ones used in the current bedroom was not to her taste, as she looked at all the purple decorating the room. Now, all she needed to do was to go to her computer and find the list of items she needed to turn that room into a guest room to suit her taste and get someone to deliver it to that house.

As she looked at another room that was probably the room she slept in as a baby, she decided to furnish it to her taste, ordering the basics such as a bookcase, bed and computer. However, she also decided to order other decorations such as lace carpets, bedding covers, a white dressing table and a corkboard for photographs. Taking out a piece of paper and pencil, she sketched out the room layout.

For other unused rooms, she decided to convert one of them to a design studio to store her works as the Ultimate Cosplayer. After all, she still needed to send her work to her original school as part of her assignment. She contemplated another room, before deciding that it could be used for an art studio, where she would be able to paint her inspiration onto a character to see how they'd look like before deciding the make the costume.

She decided that the basement will be the Music Room to practice her instruments as according to the notes, the basement was apparently soundproof and would be perfect for that. Ayano made a mental note to order some musical instruments and stock the shelf in the basement with either CDs or music books.

Ash came over just as she was finishing the list of things she needed and had sketched out the rough position of the furniture she had envisioned them to be.

"Yes, father?" Ayano had asked.

Ash sighed. "Unfortunately, I'm here to tell you that both of us can't come with you, because we are ordered to go to United Kingdom to settle this royal matter. Yuki also can't come as he has to continue his studies here, but chances are, no one would try to kidnap you in Japan as long as you hold up your alias well. Do you want to go alone, or should we send Shiki to come with you?"

From the look on Ash's face, Ayano knew he felt really bad for not being able to come with him, but Ayano felt that she could handle being alone, if she was like Pakura as everyone had always said. Ayano felt slight contentment whenever she heard people say she was just like her mother. After all, she wished she could be more like her mother, except without the abusive childhood.

"No, father, I'll go alone." Ayano gave a small smile. "I don't want Uncle Shiki to abandon his work just for me."

"Are you sure?" Ash pressed on. "Are you sure you'll be fine?"

"Yes, father." Ayano said. "I'll be fine."

"If you say so, darling." Her father patted her head. "I know what a good head you have on your shoulders. I promise, once we deal with this matter, we'll come for you."

Her father had not said anymore, but the look on his face told Ayano enough. Her father was hoping that he would be able to dissuade Queen Janice from making Pakura the heir as soon as possible so that they could go back for Ayano.

"Are you done with the list of what you need for Japan?" Ash smiled sadly.

Ayano nodded, and handed Ash the papers. He took one look at them, and said, "Very detailed, Ayano. Don't worry, we'll get the house done in three days' time. Meanwhile, we'll get the private jet and you just pack your stuff, alright?"

Ayano nodded, as Ash left to make the arrangements for her living accommodations.

On the day of Ayano's departure, she woke up at five o'clock the next morning and for some reason could not go back to sleep. She got up and refreshed herself, before pulling on a long-sleeved black dress with a lacey collar and checking her handwritten list yet again to make sure she had everything she needed.

Ayano walked out of her room to the kitchen and saw all this pink light coming down through the skylight right on her mother, who was wearing her best dark blue cocktail satin dress and making breakfast for everyone. Apparently, it was her turn to cook the meals.

All the current Quarantine members along with their kids were already gathered around the dining table, talking quietly.

As soon as they saw her, one of the adults who had brown hair and baby blue eyes was all, "Ah, Ayano."

"Uncle Phillip." Ayano greeted the former Ultimate Inventor.

"Here." Phillip handed Ayano what looked like a ball of blue fur with a pair of antennae that could fit on one palm. It has a screen that shows its expression at the moment.

"Woo?" The little ball of blue fur made a noise, as its eyes on the screen widened in curiosity.

"It's a User Wellness Upkeep bot. It's a personal healthcare companion, capable of monitoring vital signs, alerting caretakers, or reminding patients to take medications. In other cases, it can also monitor and record your diet and recommend meals you should take to maintain your health or to meet your weight goals." Phillip explained. "It'll help us monitor your well-being to all of us...and it makes a good pet!"

"Thanks." Ayano said politely, as Phillip handed her the charger that looked like a mini-bed for the robot along with the bot, who automatically climbed onto her shoulder.

"How did you come up with that idea?" A woman who had her brown blonde hair tied to a ponytail with azure eyes asked. Ayano knew her as Anna Guth, the former Ultimate Soldier and one of the two heads of Quarantine.

"Well, I heard Ash's situation and got inspired." Phillip scratched the back of his head.

"Somebody has to make sure she eats well. Also, I programmed the Monita in such a way if you send me a picture of something or someone, I can send you the information right away."

Ayano nodded in thanks, just as Pakura rolled in a cart filled with food.

"Breakfast is ready." She flatly called out, as she served scrambled eggs, French Toast, sausages, batter cakes covered in fruit frostings, hot grain smothered in beef stew and a basket of rolls. For drinks, there was orange juice, hot chocolate, American Expresso and Earl Grey tea.

"Oooh, perfect as always, Paku!" Akeno cheered, as most of the members had predatory looks in their eyes.

Ayano knew those looks from the times she ate meals with them. It was the same look she always saw when one of them sensed their favourite food nearby. She had witnessed plenty of scuffles between most of the Quarantine members because of food. The only people she never saw fight over food was her mother, her father, her uncle Shiki and honorary uncle/aunt Akeno, Phillip and Jude.

As for her, she didn't really have a preferred taste regarding food, but even she had to admit her mother's food stood out from all the other food that she had eaten.

After breakfast, everyone made their way to the airport to say goodbye to Ayano and her parents, with Ayano enduring the hugs and tears from everyone in Quarantine, including some of her fellow classmates, including her adoptive cousin/arranged fiancé Yuki.

"I'm going to miss you." Yuki had hugged her like he didn't want to let go. "School won't be the same without you."

"Me too, Yuki." Ayano replied, inwardly thinking school won't be the same without him too, considering she was going to a whole other school and for the first time in years, Yuki wasn't going to be with her.

"Come back safe, okay?" Yuki asked her.

"Yes," Ayano nodded, as Yuki gave her a kiss on the cheek, before Ayano had to leave for the jet.

Her parents had decided to accompany her on the jet ride to Japan, but would fly back immediately after Ayano reaches Japan.

As Ayano hummed a tune and wrote down some song lyrics that she thought of, waiting for the jet to reach Japan, she was inwardly content at the decision her parents had made, though she probably would have to play the part of a normal schoolgirl, and an Ultimate student isn't exactly what you would call a normal student.

Ayano couldn't really imagine herself living in a royal palace and felt that she'd make a terrible royal, considering she'll probably never get used to being Princess Ayano Windsor. Perhaps her parents never really gave her time to dwell on herself, but she found that that suited her just fine. For that, she felt the dimmest of contentment.

Maybe everything would turn out fine.

BP: Ok, I got some explaining to do.

Alright, this fic is more closely grounded to reality, so this is how the characters from PAL Series would be like if they exist in real life. So no Pokémon exist here, despite the series they originate from.

Quarantine is a Blacklist Organization that eradicates crime through whatever means possible, and are made up of those who Archie di Angelo, the principal of Royal Pratibhe Academy, considered the best in his school. It is saying something considering this school is like Danganronpa's Hope's Peak Academy (at least the main course). Due to his political influence through his insane amount of wealth that he got through his many businesses that do extremely well financially, no one really dared oppose him.

All members of Quarantine are highly trained in combat skills, and have anticipated all sorts of opponents and attacks. That is why even if this is closer to reality, Pakura would be able to defeat Ryoba easily due to her experience, speed, reflexes, enhanced senses, and the variety of options she can access to take Ryoba down quickly.

Even Ayano as a student is considered the norm in RPA, which might hint at how talented Quarantine members were when they were in school. For less confusion, I have given each member positions that reference their own in the original PAL Series (e.g. Pakura being a Princess) although of course I'll have to make some adaptational changes to fit the story's theme.

Obviously, for people like Pakura and Ash, they would want to bring out the very best in their child, and to make up for their intensity of training, they usually also give their child nothing but the best. For her sake though, despite being Ash's child and getting into that school, she was actually raised relatively out of the spotlight and her real name only being known to those actually attending/working for the school and all of them are great secret keepers.

If Pakura had her own way, she would have kept Ayano in America, hence I needed a reason to send Ayano to Japan, where the plot would happen in to keep up the consistency. Hence, I came up with this problem, that was inspired by the Princess Diaries first book. With N. Aepic Fael's planned OC that had the status of a Queen, I decided this situation is ideal.

For those Yandere Simulator readers, if you want to know what Pakura is like, read the PAL Series for an idea. As for Ash, well he's Ash Ketchum from the series Pokémon, though I am using his more mature personality from my Pokémon fanfics.

All original characters originate from my PAL Series, and those that are not is N. Aepic Fael's characters. Yuki is the only one that is created for this fanfic.