

## The Black Wings of Vengeance

The dream started out as it always did, in flames. They whipped around him in an endless inferno, intense and wild yet, it gave off a strange chill; as if the source was something unspeakably dark, and horrid, something that should never see the light of day.

Suddenly, a dark black mist spread through the flames, seeming to drain the energy from them until they died down to tiny embers on the verge of burning out. He stood there, confused, this is where the dream usually ended, but as he waited for the scene to fade and him to wake up, nothing happened. The mist had gotten so thick that it became the only thing he could see, an inky blackness that seemed to block out all of his senses.

Just as he was about to move around, he heard the flapping of large wings above him, followed by the sound of something massive landing behind him. He dared not move, fear filled his core as the entirety of his being shook from the presence of whatever now stood behind him. Then he heard a voice, deep, sultry, and distinctly feminine call to him from the darkness.

*"Daniel"* it whispered alluringly, shocking him with the knowledge that this thing somehow knew his name. He dared not answer, trying to make himself invisible to whatever the hell this *thing* was. He heard something move around him in the fog with heavy clacking footsteps.

*"Clacking is not good,"* he thought, becoming even more stricken with terror, if that was even possible at this point, *"Clacking usually means long claws, sharp claws."*

Suddenly, the mist surrounding him began to whirl around in a hurricane-like fashion, clearing up the area in front of him. There, hidden in shadows that clung to its form like leeches, was the creature. Two sky blue eyes, burning with a deep dark hatred, stared down at him from a height of nearly 30 ft, wreathed by maelstrom of the shadowy mist. They stared into his own eyes, and through them, his very soul. The malice inside of them was so intense that it forced him to his knees. Then something in its eyes change, something made him fear this creature more than anything else.

Amusement.

It had seen his fear and had become amused by it. It knew it was in control and relished in it. Who knew what it would do to him now.

*"Do you fear me, Daniel?"* it asked in a playful tone that did not fit the creature standing in front of him. Without thinking, he nods shakily, too afraid to speak.

*"Good, remember this feeling when we finally meet in the flesh."* it said, *"remember and never forget this helplessness you felt before me."*

As it finished that sentence, the creature's form dispersed into the mist. Then, the mist began pulsing violently, pushing him onto his back. He looked up to see the mist form the shape of a gigantic bird of shadows that flew above him, before suddenly diving right at him with its beak opening to show a gaping red maw, ready to consume him.

Daniel woke up to see an orange streak coming at him at a dangerously high speed. Reflexes honed through years of training allowed him to barely roll out of the projectile's path, causing him to fall out of his bed in the process. The streak banks before it hits his pillow to do a circuit around his room before

landing lightly in front of his face. As he focused on it, the orange “projectile” turned out to be the family’s pet Fletching, Blaze. He was a small orange bird with a tannish-white underbelly.

“About time you got up,” Blaze stated in a voice that was deeper than you’d expect; ignoring the murderous glare in Daniel was giving him, “ Miss Grace has been calling for your lazy ass to come downstairs for a good twenty minutes.”

“Ya, ya, I got it, no need to read me the riot act okay” Daniel grunted as he got himself off the floor.

“We have company, so at least try make yourself look presentable.” Blaze commanded as he flew out the of the via window.

“There has to be something wrong when the family pet is above you in the chain of command.” he complained as he walked over to the closet, noticing himself in the mirror before he got there. He was rather tall at around 6’2, with tanned skin and medium length black hair that was a 7:3 mix of spikes and curls that he had never liked, but found impossible to permanently straighten no matter what he did.

His most striking features, however, were his eyes, which were a strange mix of hazelish-gold and sky blue. He been told that, with his sharp, chiseled features, they gave him an air of mischievous divinity. Right now, he couldn’t see it, but that probably had to do with the fact that he was only wearing his black pajama bottoms at the moment.

After a moment of consideration, he decided to respect Grace’s wishes this morning and get dressed, if only to distract him from the strange dream he had that morning. He was no stranger to nightmares, but this one hadn’t felt like a dream, not in the slightest.

But he wasn’t about to dwell on it, not today, the day when he will begin his journey. The day when he takes his bloody vengeance on the bastard that had murdered his parents right in front of him.

After taking time to cool down from that line of thinking, Daniel quickly put on a black short sleeve T-shirt, followed by a black jacket with a red inner lining. He switched his pajama bottoms for some old jeans, the knee part scratched up and stained from numerous collisions with the ground, and finished the look with some black and red sneakers. Satisfied with his choice of dress, he was just about to go downstairs when he noticed something on his dresser. It was a pendant, made of a strange silvery metal, shaped like a bird in flight. After a moment of hesitation, he picked up and put it on before finally going downstairs to meet Grace's "company".

Daniel walked downstairs, expecting to see some of the adult neighbors who had come to welcome the new arrivals. He was not expecting them to be two girls near his own age. It made him freeze in panic near the bottom of the stairs.

Daniel, despite his delinquent looks, was very shy around people he didn’t know, girls especially. So he began to slowly walk back up the stairs, hoping no one had seen or heard him.

" And where do you think your going?" a voice called out from the kitchen. Daniel stopped halfway up the stairs, wondering how she even knew he was trying to get away without even looking at him. Sighing, he walked the rest of the way down the the stairs into the small kitchen/dining/living room area to see his foster mother standing there with a wooden ladle in hand, looking none too pleased at her adopted son’s failed attempt to avoid human interaction.

She was around 5’7 with straight brown hair that was styled in a short bobbed fashion with a single strand hanging between her grey-green eyes. She had a small, athletic build from her career as a Rhyhorn racer. She was wearing a dark grey top and lighter grey sweatpants. The top for said pants was currently tied around her waist as usual. In his 9 years in living with her, Daniel had yet to see her actually

wear any of her sweatshirts properly. And perched on her shoulder, giving him the usual disapproving look, was Blaze.

“Why you continue to avoid others of your kind confuses me to no end.” Blaze sighed, shaking his head in exasperation. He might have said something back, but Grace looked pissed and he didn’t want to make it worse.

“Daniel, please come greet our guest properly,” said Grace in a dangerously calm tone, “ and apologize for trying to avoid them as well.”

Might be a bit late on that front.

Daniel slowly walked around Grace, keeping his eye on the ladle she held in her hand, knowing she wouldn’t hesitate to use it if she felt the need to enforce her authority. He was in no hurry to get hit by that thing any time soon, it hurt like hell.

He took a seat on one of the couches and decided to take a closer look at the girls currently seated across him. The taller one was around 5’6, pale-skinned, blue-eyed, and had her long dark blonde hair tied up in a ponytail, except for two bangs she had to frame her face. She wore a black sleeveless top, a red skirt that went down to the middle of her shins, and a pair of plain brown shoes. She was actually very pretty, and having her attention focused on him made Daniel feel nervous. He soon switched his gaze to her shorter friend, who was busy playing with some strange device.

She was around 5’4, pretty short by his standards, and had tanned, caramel colored skin similar to his own, if a shade or two lighter. She wore a pink short-sleeved shirt that had a row big black bows going up the front of it, as well as a strange pair of jean shorts. The bottom of the short legs seemed to be fringed by what could only be lace, making them look more like an incredibly short skirt than anything else. Her most noticeable characteristic, however, was her hair. She had four pigtails, two of which curled up around the base of the other two in a way that clearly defied both gravity and logic. The amount of hair spray needed to hold them up must be staggering and couldn’t be healthy for her. He could tell from her state of dress, and ridiculous hair, that this person was probably excitable, childish, and most of all annoying.

Apparently his dislike showed on his face, for when the girl looked up at him, she gave him a look of her own.

“What are you looking at?” she asked.

“Nothing.” he answered, quickly looking down at his shoes.

Yep, definitely annoying.

An awkward silence hung over the room, until Grace stood up to announce that she was going to go get some snacks for everyone. As she walked away, she gave Daniel a look that seem to say ‘Be a good host and make conversion, or suffer the consequences.’ He shivered, remembering how Grace’s punishments always involved either an exhausting training regime from hell or brutal Rhyhorn riding for months without a saddle. Riding on a Rhyhorn bareback is like trying sit on a mountain top, and was bound to leave you sore for a long time.

Eager to avoid said punishments, Daniel looked back to his guest and decided to introduce himself.

“Hi,” he mumbled, still kinda nervous around the two girls, “My name’s Daniel and it’s a pleasure to meet you.” He raised his hand up to shake whoever’s hand came to meet his.

“*Maybe this won’t be too bad,*” he thought.

“Didn’t seem like such a pleasure to you a couple minutes ago.”

*“Retract that, this is going to be a pain,”* He turned towards the petite girl, who looked him straight in the eyes with a tiny glare of annoyance.

“I apologize for my earlier rudeness,” Daniel said through gritted teeth, becoming rather annoyed himself, “I am just not used to being around other people.”

“Sure you are.” was her nonchalant reply. He wasn’t sure why but, for some reason, the way this girl was treating him was really pissing him off.

Usually when faced with people like her, he just tuned them out, but he was feeling extremely agitated today and this girl really wasn’t helping his mood.

A soft grunt brought his attention back to the blond, who gave a scathing look at the brunette before returning her attention to Daniel.

“Thank you for your apology and considered it accepted,” she beamed, yet her tone seemed slightly cold and distant, “but I believe it’s time to get to the point of our sudden visitation.”

Daniel decided to put his hand down, since no one seemed to be reaching to take it, and sighed. These two couldn’t be any stranger to him and he wished he could send them away. However, if he did then Grace would come out to beat the crap out of him with that damn ladle of her’s, before having him to laps until he faints and then some.

“My name is Serana,” said the blond girl, before pointing to her companion,” and this is Shauna; we are here to give you your first pokemon and trainer test, then take you to Professor Sycamore in Lumiose City for your secondary trainer test if you pass the primary.”

“W-W-Wait a second,” Daniel sputtered, “ that damn womanizer sent you here, instead of coming himself?”

“That is correct,” Serana replied, “ is something wrong with that.”

“The fact that he didn’t say anything about it is a big one,” Daniel groaned into his hands, planning a hundred different ways to kill that lazy ass, before looking back up at the girls with a determined look in his eye, “Alright, lets get this over with, what’s the test.”

Shauna got up and walked over to her bag, which was near the door, rummaging through it for awhile before pulling out a rounded case with a clear glass top. Inside the case were three pokeballs, shining and newly made. Daniel heart rate instantly skyrocketed as the weight of this moment finally hit him.

*“It’s finally happening,”* he thought, *“today’s the day that I finally take the fight to that bastard and his lackey’s.”* A small smile sneaked onto his lips, but there was no glee in it, nor joy, just a dark satisfaction that shone in his eyes along with a flare of scarcely hidden rage. Shauna backed up a little, uncomfortable with the sudden intensity that had seem to have overtaken the boy at that moment. It soon passed as he got up and walked over to her, his face once again composed and determined.

Serana called his attention with another grunt before pulling out some paper, of which she spread on the table in front of her.

“Considering your training results from the academy, and the three pokemon we have available for you at the moment, I would suggest you go with the water-type pokemon Froakie,” she explained with a calculating diligence, “ Like you, this pokemon is a speed-based fighter and is highly adaptable to any situation . . .” She continued on with statistics and such, but Daniel had stopped paying attention as soon as Shauna had opened the case. One of the pokeballs, the one located in the far right corner of the case, seemed to draw all of his attention. It was like something was drawing him to it, something deep in his blood, in his very being, wanted him to take that one.

Without any conscious thought of his own, he picked it up, stopping Serana in mid-lecture, her mouth first stuck open in a humorously fish-like state, then quickly forming into a cute pout.

“Were you even listening?” she asked, clearly annoyed at having been ignored.

“Nope,” He stated, “ because I choose this little guy right here.” He threw the pokeball into the air, where it opened up with a pop and blasted a spot on the floor with an intense burst of white energy. He caught the pokeball as it returned to his hand, and stared at the being that had been unleashed.

It was a small critter, that looked like a mix between a gopher and an otter. It was around three feet in height, with light brown fur covering the front of it’s body, and a strange mix of a maroon wood-like substance; which acted like a sort of flexible carapace. This armor also had two rows of sharp looking spikes that ran down it, showing that the creature could defend itself in a pinch if need be. The armor extended down the creature’s tail and ended in a yellow tip. The pokemon’s eyes were a deep chocolate brown that matched with the triangular patches of dark fur that framed its face and covered its arm.

Those eyes stared into Daniel for a quiet moment before looking down at the floor.

Or, to be more specific, the carpet.

It seemed startled at the feel of it, and soon began rolling around on it, making soft barking noise that sounded a lot like laughter.

“Has it never seen a carpet before?”, Daniel phrased his question to Serana, but Shauna was the one who answered.

“Nope, it was hatched and raised in a lab,” She explained, though in a way that made Daniel feel like she was talking down to him, “its probably never seen anything natural or particularly comfortable in his life.”

Something about that last bit made him want to ask a question, but then Serana made another grunt, much harsher than her other two, in order to reacquire his attention.

“Since you have decided to ignore my presentation, you have chosen what maybe the worst choice for you,” she gave herself a moment to regain her composure before continuing, “ The pokemon you have chosen is a Chespin, a defensive pokemon that is suited for a trainer with an equally defensive fighting style.” “ By choosing this pokemon you will face more difficulty early on which, in today’s world, can lead to both you and your pokemon’s death”

She stated that last fact with such a cold finality, that for a second, he doubted himself. This was the first he felt that strange pull towards something, that instinctive knowledge that told in times of great importance what he would need to survive. It had never been wrong before, but there’s a first time for everything, and he didn’t want that lesson to cost the little guy’s life. But before he could voice his thoughts, he felt something grab on to his pants leg.

Looking down, he saw the Chespin gripping it tightly, gazing up at him with a sadness in his eyes. With that one look, he knew why he chose this little guy. In those Chocolate pools, he saw the same loneliness, the same sadness, the same emotions that he saw in his own eyes everytime he looked in a mirror. Shauna had said he was born in a lab, but he could tell that wasn’t true. The creature hadn’t been excited to see the carpet, it had been happy to be back out in the the world again, to be free. But even more than that, Daniel saw in this creature a darkness he was quite familiar with. In this world was something this pokemon hated, something that had taken everything from him, leaving him with nothing but bitterness and rage.

Daniel knew what he had to do, and decide to do it know before he lost his nerve.

He reached down and placed his hand on the Chespin's head and formed a Sync with him. For a moment, they were one, in mind, body, and soul. Everything the Chespin was became his, and vice versa. Then, as suddenly as it had started, it was gone with only one thing to signify that it had ever been.

The Chespin's eyes were no longer a deep chocolate brown, instead they were a fierce golden-hazel color with white pupils. Without even looking, he knew that his own were the same.

How he knew this? Simple.

He could see them, but not from his own eyes. He saw through the Chespin's eyes, felt through his fur, and smelled through his nose. That was also how he saw the punch Shauna was throwing at him from behind. Reacting faster than he ever could before, he spun around and caught it, before pulling her close. He then kicked her legs out from under her and slammed her on the ground. There they stayed, here glowing topaz eyes staring into his golden ones. Wait a minute, since when did her eyes become topaz, and when the hell did they start glowing. Before he could ponder any longer, he saw something blue speed towards him through his Chespin's eyes. But before he could even make an attempt to turn he was struck full in the face by a punch that had the force a small car going 50 mph. He was launched into a nearby while, a little bruised but okay; which surprised him since he had been expecting a broken jaw.