

PokemonDB

PokemonDB Lore Universe

In the dead of the night,
all was quiet.
All was chill.

Banana: Prologue

“GET OUT!”

No..this can't be.

There's no way they discriminate against me based on my skin color...right?

However, it looked like the other Marowak were dead set on throwing me out. Even my own younger brother, still an unevolved Cubone, was hiding behind Mother at the sight of who I am now.

My father, a high ranking council member and well respected Marowak, walked up solemnly and pointed his bone at me.

“Son, I am very sorry for this to happen, and I know there's a lot going through your mind right now. That being said, you must embrace the truth. You are now an Alolan Marowak, which means you will only bring harm to our tribe.”

I opened my mouth to protest, but Father did that “shush” face and continued on.

“You know how it is. There's increasing amounts of Human activity near our desert, and we're already short on food. Tensions are rising.” He looked around at the Council, who all nod their heads, agreeing to this imminent threat. “We can't afford to mistake you as a potential prey or enemy, and for that reason, it is safest for both parties that we let you go.”

Again, I opened my mouth to speak, but no words came out.

Because I knew he was lying.

The people in the Marowak tribe hated me. They never had an Alolan incident in generations. Folk stories often compared Alolan Marowak to female Hippowdown, mocking their lack of camouflage during the day compared to their male counterparts, thus making for significantly easier prey. They knew that any Alolan Marowak would stick out in the terrain similarly.

And then I came to be.

As the son of a council member, a lot of resources were spent on making me as smart and strong as possible in hopes of inheriting Father's position. As soon as I evolved, though...

“No! You're kidding...”

“You're seeing this, right?”

“A-Alolan??”

“Kids, get away, this Pokemon's dangerous!”

I was feared upon, for whatever reason.

The Marowak in the surrounding crowd began to lose patience. "You heard your dad, now GET OUT!" "We don't want YOU to get our hunting crews KILLED!" "IMAGINE BEING A FEMALE HIPPOWDON!"

The rioting grew, yet the council did nothing to alleviate the skyrocketing tension.

Father stepped up to the crowd. "SILENCE! Give my son 24 hours to pack his things and say his goodbyes." A few—no, many Marowaks in the ground glared at me. "Let him leave in the middle of the night." He turned to me. "Now go, son."

So I trudged on alone to my hut, carrying the weight of my new bone and my lost family.

ClodOfTheSire: Prologue

“Bap. Life is good.”

There wasn't much happening in the royal Sires these days. After yet another failed invasion attempt by the neighboring Quagsires, the Clods of the nation are resting easy and sleeping a lot. I personally decided to stay up late to look up at the stars.

A meteor shoots by.

Huh, you don't see that a lot, don't you?

My dad, the king, trudged up behind me.

“Bap?”

“Bap.” I responded.

My dad looked a bit excited. “Son, it's about time you get to know this.”

Confused, I turned around. I was already the oldest prince in the royal bloodline and was taught basically everything there is to learn in the Sire military. My troops were unstoppable. Under my genius strategy and utilization of the mud, we were able to fend off attacks not only from Quagsires, but also from hordes of Swampert and Seismitoad attempting to claim the lands for themselves. The Clod nation has never been stronger, and I am poised to become the greatest king there ever will be.

However, when I laid eyes on what was presented to me, it all made sense.

The SireGun.

The greatest weapon in all of Clod history.

My dad smiled. “Prince Clod, I suppose you understand the history of this weapon.”

Indeed I do. The SireGun was a piece of technology originally brought to the nation by a lone Clodsire roaming the mud. When the royal guards found him, he was carrying—well, more like dragging the gun. The Clodsire was so exhausted from the journey that he was on the verge of collapse when he was found. Upon further explanation, it was revealed that the SireGun was able to harness the power of a Clod's poison simply by contacting it with the poisonous spine of a Clodsire. The gun was then able to unleash the poison with large amounts of energy.

However, there is only one SireGun, and that will likely be the case for the rest of time.

Historically, the SireGun has been the signature weapon of the king: a symbol of power, an indicator of respect, a weapon of force.

The king smiled.

“My son, I have decided that it is time for you to wield the SireGun.”

Amazed, I picked up the gun. It felt...surreal. I know my dad isn't retiring as king, but it seems like he entrusts me with the SireGun.

I looked at him, still bewildered.

"But you're still the king...right?"

"Of course, of course." My dad turned around. "The royal Clods basically never see a king retire. Anyways, it's getting late. You should go to sleep."

"Alright, good night, dad."

"You too, son."

I turned back to the night sky. The endless stars in the boundless cosmos returned my glare. Surely, my dad knows something I don't, right?

Or why break this century-long tradition?

Anchor: Prologue

“Drop the anchor!”

I felt the splash of water hit my face for the millionth time, and the gradual sinking reunited me with the ocean floor once more.

The water does significantly muffle the voices of the Humans, but I can still make out their words, like I always do.

“Alright crew, we’ll be staying here for the next couple of days. Get your trades in; we’re here for profit and profit only. Now scramble and sleep; we don’t want to waste precious daylight.”

The men scattered across the beach, and eventually, I can’t make out any more moving blobs again.

I sigh, or I guess, I feel like sighing.

I am what Humans call a Dhelmise: an anchor, or whatever that is, infused with mangled pieces of conscious seaweed and attached to a steering wheel. But I’m different. I’ve witnessed my fellow anchors be infected with that parasitic plant and succumb to its control. I’ve watched sailors toss them out for fresh, new anchors, only for the same thing to happen again.

I, however, learned to control the seaweed.

Under my observations, I recognized that sailors will only tolerate a certain amount of seaweed on their anchors. Any more than that amount usually goes to the dump; any less, and it has a solid chance to continue being used. Therefore, every night, I inspect the amount of seaweed clumping on my body and systematically remove them. This mitigates the risk of me ending up in god knows where and resulting in the end of my consciousness.

Tonight, though, isn’t the time.

This coast is special.

Two of my friends, Banana the Cubone and ClodOfTheSire the royal Sire inhabit this island. Knowing the royal Sires, ClodOfTheSire is likely aware of this and will head to our designated meeting spot tomorrow night. Meanwhile, Banana’s parents will probably scout the beach tomorrow morning and relay that his good friend is here.

Thank Arceus, too.

Because something is not right for us Pokemon.

Banana

It's the dead of night again.

God, why do I have to be Alolan?

Nobody came for my departure. Traditionally, at least the council members should accompany a leaving Marowak, even if he was Alolan.

Not for me, I suppose.

Only Father came. He has the same, unwavering gaze as he had the night prior. That gaze weighed me down, alongside the satchel of items I brought with me. Mainly just Nanab berries and a few Potions dropped by Human travelers in the desert.

Well, there's no good in waiting, I suppose.

"Bye, Father."

"Banana, wait."

The fact that he knows my nickname amongst my friends astounds me.

I turn around, and I'm shocked to see that he's holding a book.

"Here." He passes the book to me. A pain throbs in my heart when I, again, notice the color discrepancy between my hand and his hand. I am truly an outcast.

The book has no cover text, but it seems to have basically the same color as my skin.

"This, my son, is a book given to us by an unknown Alolan Marowak years ago." He pauses. "Well, I guess we knew him. He was some sort of old, 'wise' Marowak in that nearby cave I used to bring you to when you were young." Father pauses for a second. "Good times, right? Anyhow, One day, we found him in terrible shape, like terrible terrible. But he refused to be touched by any of us, even our elite medics."

Bewildered, I ask him if it has anything to do with their skin color.

Father shakes his head. "I don't think he cared that much about the fact that he was Alolan. Anyways, he had this book with him, and as nearly every council member and medic surrounded him, he said, 'save this book for an Alolan Marowak.'"

"And then?"

"And then he died."

"What?"

Father chuckles a bit, then as if reading my mind, says, "Honestly, he seems to be suffering. Having a quick death seems like the best fate. What matters is that there hasn't been a single

Alolan Marowak in decades, and everyone seems to have forgotten about this book and that estranged Alolan Marowak.”

“Estranged” is quite the unique word to me.

“Father, what does ‘estranged’ mean?”

“It’s basically someone who is no longer close to others. But keep in mind, son.” I meet his gaze again, and Father has this gaze he always has when delivering a “life lesson”. “Estranged people may just be misunderstood. Even if they isolate themselves, it may be for a good reason. Leave them alone, but never exclude them or mock them when they come to you.”

“Well,” I said, still trying to process this information.

“It’s a lot, I get it. And I know you’ll find new friends elsewhere.” Gesturing westwards, Father continues on. “The royal Sires have been friends of the group for years now, perhaps you can go to them for now.”

“Yeah...and I guess I’m on good terms with ClodOfTheSire.”

Father smiles. “There you go, son. If you want, I can meet up with you once in a while outside of the tribe borders, just to catch up.”

The words of affirmation. It feels like yesterday night never happened. The vibe of the atmosphere felt..different, as a tear started to form in my eye.

I hide my tears and turn around. “Alright, Father. I’ll be off now.”

“Good luck, Banana.”

After a few steps, I turn back around. Father is still there.

“Thanks for everything.”

Father maintains his smile. “You’re welcome.”

And with that, I’m on my own again.

Within a few seconds, my dear Father has been reduced to a silhouette; within a few more seconds, he’s gone from my view. All I have now are the stars to guide me and my items for company.

I take out a Nanab berry; of course I do, it’s so iconic as my comfort food that I modified its name to become my nickname. Along my journey westward, I recollect the experiences I’ve had in my 28 levels. The play fights I had with other Cubone, the nighttime chats with my friend ClodOfTheSire...Clod. I was at his Evolution ceremony when he reached level 20 the fastest out of his brothers. It felt great to see him basically guarantee a spot as the royal prince. Maybe he’ll let me live in the Clod kingdom for a while as I figure out my next steps.

These truly were good times.

Speaking of next steps...

I take out the book Father gave to me, flip to a random page, and start to read.
“How to light the flame on an Alolan Marowak’s bone...”

ClodOfTheSire

Oh Arceus, my legs are so sore from today's practice.

It's almost midnight. I flip myself up and start trudging along the mud. I've walked this path tens of times already, but it feels like millions. It's the path to the nearby beach.

In the morning, right before my strategy training, a royal scout reported the arrival of a familiar ship on the coast of the beach. For the rest of the royal Sires, this means that the coming days may bring about increased invasions of Humans, and the royal guards should be extra diligent. For me, though, this means that my friend Anchor has arrived.

I continue trudging myself across the muddy path.

Whenever Anchor and his boat arrive at night, we always meet up the night after. Banana and I always have some sort of way to know about his arrival, and with a few exceptions, we always meet up with him the night after he arrives. We dub ourselves the BCD: the Banana Clodsire Dhelmise alliance. For some reason, Banana doesn't want to use his species name, Cubone, or his eventual species name, Marowak, but we respect that. Anchor always has exciting new stories about the Humans, and it always excites me so much; I basically never see Humans, let alone contact them.

The mud starts to give way to a stony path.

One night, Anchor recounted how the "sailors", or the water-travelling Humans on his boat, were talking about some myth of a meteor in the sky. On rare occasions, when a meteor shower occurs during a lunar eclipse, something great always happens to those who witness it. It has never been confirmed, but it always intrigued me to look up into the night sky ever since. Pretty sure Banana does that, too.

The path reaches the more grassy section. It's always my least favorite; the grassy texture is weird compared to the comforting texture of mud.

Another night, Anchor recounts that he once saw legendary, lion-like Pokemon made out of metal. He didn't get a good glimpse of it, but the sailors on his boat later revealed what the Pokemon was. Its name is Cobalion, and it apparently rarely appears next to Humans with "an iron will", or whatever that means. However, Anchor later said, "sometimes the Humans who see Cobalion are actually incredibly stubborn; maybe seeing this Pokemon can be a blessing or a curse." For some reason, Banana took that to heart, perhaps because of the "life lessons" his dad always gives him. Oh, and also the Cobalion sometimes confuses hallucinogenic food as edible food. Go figure.

The grass finally ends, and I start to see the first grains of sand.

According to Anchor, he actually made another friend elsewhere: a Pokemon by the name of Beldum. He called the Beldum "KRLW890" or just "KRLW" since those are the characters written on him, for whatever reason. I questioned Anchor why this Pokemon had these letters on him, and he shrugged, or at least he tried to shrug. "I think it's some factory protocol," he said. "Pretty sure this Pokemon's gonna evolve into something big and strong to help out in factory work."

Factory...still not sure what that place is like. Heard Anchor talking about it a few times, but by now both Banana and I understand that it exists where Human life is developed, so not on this land. A series of potential “factories” flash in my mind, each more horrifying than the next. I kept trudging on, but I shut my eyes in order to stop thinking about...

“...Clod! Clod...you alright? Clod?!”

Caught off guard, I retroactively stuck out my spines, only to realize that Anchor was floating in front of me. Apparently, I had already walked to the beach and was dangerously close to hitting the water. Ew.

“Oh hey Anchor. Sorry, I was thinking about...something.”

“Glad you’re ok, Clod. Listen, I picked up some terrifying stuff this time around, but I don’t wanna say it before Banana arrives.”

I look around. The Humans this time thankfully have kept their distance, and all that are visible are random crates scattered about. Everything seems peaceful. However, even though a Dhelmise isn’t known for expressing emotions, he seems tense.

And as the certified comedian of the BCD, I made sure to relieve the air in preparation for Banana’s arrival.

“Hey Anchor,” I asked nonchalantly, “how do you actually speak?”

The ghostly anchor slash steering wheel thing turns around. “See, I have these chains dangling from my side. I purposefully keep them on when removing excess seaweed. By manipulating the sounds the chains make, I can imitate speech.”

Huh, that’s interesting. Somehow I never noticed the moving chains when Anchor talks, but that makes a lot of sense.

It’s now Anchor’s turn to ask questions. “Clod, where’s Banana? He’s usually never this late.”

“I don’t know,” I responded. “It’s not like I know the ins and outs of his life, man. I only kinda met him a few more times than you. Perhaps he’s just running late; give him some time.”

And so we decided to talk some more. Almost an hour flies by as I question him on how his Beldum friend is now, and Anchor goes on to explain Beldum’s whole situation in the Human city.

“Anyways, one of the Humans is rumored to have brought KRLW with him here, but honestly, I don’t know. But yeah, last I saw him, he’s alri—”

A silhouette appears in the corner of my sight.

“Anchor!” I hiss, turning my body at the silhouette. “Look; that’s not Banana, he’s too tall to be a Cubone.”

“Relax. It’s probably just a normal Marowak.”

The silhouette gets closer.

“Anchor...I don’t think this is a normal Marowak.”

“Yeah...the skin...”

Anchor and I visibly tense up, and I can tell because I couldn’t understand his clashing chains as words anymore. The shadowy figure trudges on towards us, holding the bone of a Marowak, but...his skin...the dark skin...

But who would think to check here, of all places?

Anchor is the first to speak. “An Alolan Marowak.” He says cautiously. “Whereabouts might you be from? We don’t have a lot of Alolans here.”

Alolans, huh. The Marowaks haven’t seen an Alolan in decades...

The Marowak starts to raise his hand up, but he suddenly trips over jutting rock, scaring me enough to fully extend my spines. But my eyes aren’t focused on the Marowak. I’m staring at what falled out of his bag, which is...a half eaten Nanab berry.

Anchor and I watch in silence as the Marowak pulls itself back up and smiles.

“Hey guys, it’s me, Banana.”

Anchor

Banana?

He's...Alolan?

How...?

Clod is the first to break this silence. "Banana, you evolved!" This is slowly followed by a cautious, "Why do you have all your stuff with you?"

Banana sat down and sighed. "Yeah, Anchor was right. There aren't a lot of Alolan Marowaks here. Which is why I was basically exiled from the tribe as soon as I evolved into...this."

I'm stunned. Genuinely stunned. Just like how some Pokemon are physically unable to speak with their mouths, my chains lie dormant on my side. First, my friend is now an Alolan Marowak, and second, he's exiled?

Outraged, ClodOfTheSire starts to shout, but thankfully my quick instincts managed to slap a pile of seaweed over his mouth. Angrily, I regained the ability to speak. "There's HUMANS asleep here, Clod. Not now."

Banana reaches inside his satchel and pulls out a Nanab berry. "Here, Clod, eat one." He turns to me and says, "you too Ancho—oh wait, my bad."

"It's alright." I responded. At this point, not remembering I don't have a mouth is common behavior.

In an instant, Clod devours the Nanab berry and immediately says, "Banana, how—"

"Not now, Clod." I swiftly interrupted him. "Remember, I have to inform you two about something."

Banana tilts his head. "By the sounds of it, this is important."

"Indeed it is." I responded. "Now, listen carefully. Lately, there have been many whisperings that Arceus has abandoned the Pokemon universe."

Immediately upon hearing the deity's name, Clod gasps. "That can't be! Historical legends state that Arceus vowed to protect this land and allow Pokemon to coexist with Humans!"

"That much is true." I stated. "It's just...ok give me a sec." I turned to Banana, who seemed to be lost. "Banana, Arceus is basically the god of Pokemon. The creator, the ruler, the whatever. Long ago, when Pokemon and Humans first started to interact, it agreed to offer invisible protection, basically to make sure Humans don't just destroy us within a second."

Banana processed the information for a bit, then asked, "Who said we can't fight back, though?"

Before I had a chance to respond, Clod opened his mouth. “These things.” He pulls out something I vaguely recognize as a gun. “They’re incredibly strong, and it is stated that these could end lives within an instant. Think of..think of an Inteleon’s bullet.”

I quickly follow Clod up. “Humans are also much smarter and have devices that allow them to do things they biologically can’t. They already have boats that allow them to effectively swim, and I’m pretty sure they have things that allow them to fly, too.”

Banana pulls another Nanab berry out of his satchel. “Yeah, and I guess there’s Pokeballs too.”

I nod. “Most certainly so. Anyhow, it is rumored that the mystical forces that protect us from Humans are now dissipating. Since the last time I met with you guys, the sailors brought me to a lot of new land; many of which I suspect were taken from wild Pokemon.”

“That’s horrible!” Clod exclaims, before I had the chance to slap another piece of seaweed on his mouth. He looks at me apologetically for a second, then continues on. “I have to return at once to inform the royal guards. They must be aware of this—”

“Clod, I don’t think that’s going to be fast enough.” Banana interrupts Clod with a sad look on his face. “Humans are strong, man. We’ve lost many Marowak to Human forces, and despite these “mystical events” saving many of our strongest warriors, our forces are dwindling.”

“But—”

“Banana’s right.” I state solemnly. “Plus, who back there is gonna believe that me, a seemingly infected piece of junk, said that Arceus no longer shines on us?”

Clod opens his mouth to protest, but no words come out. Instead, he gestures to Banana for another berry.

“I think I know what you’re trying to say.” Banana continues on while giving Clod another berry. “You want us to somehow get Arceus’s attention?”

They’re figuring it out. “A bit more direct.”

With his cheeks full of Nanab, Clod asks, “We offer a sacrifice? Maybe we pray?”

“Clod, a bit more direct. Key word’s “direct” here.”

Banana lays back on the sand. “God, all that walking made my body so sore.”

I make a laughing sound with my chains.

“Huh?” Banana instantly shoots back up. “Wait...what I say? Sore?”

“Banana, lay back down.” Clod was already in the middle of doing a full body rotation in the sand. “I don’t know, man, roll around, do something. Don’t waste your brainpower on another one of Anchor’s mystic riddles. Bro’s leading us on a journey, and he’s making every part of it up.”

It is genuinely hilarious how close they are getting without noticing it.

Banana laid back down and began to mutter. “Sore? No, I don’t think—Walking? How can walking have anything to do with this? Maybe it’s something Clod mentioned just now—journey? Making stuff up?”

Suddenly, he pauses. His arms stop moving about, and he seems like he just had an epiphany.

“Anchor?”

“Yeah Banana?”

“You want us to go find Arceus by ourselves, right? And confront him directly?”

“Bingo.”

ClodOfTheSire

Okay, say WHAT NOW?

Arceus?? The god of Pokemon? And Anchor wants us to go find him?

I quickly finish what started as a relaxing roll in the sand and glare at Anchor. "My brother, you have to realize how much a freaking death wish this is, right? The GOD of Pokemon! He's probably going to—"

"Hear me out." Anchor says calmly. "Hear. Me. Out."

I swear to Arceus, this piece of metal's been with humanity for longer than us two and suddenly he thinks that he can take down Arceus himself.

"You guys remember Cobalion? That legendary Pokemon I brought up a while back? He said that Arceus is on some sort of...break? Hiatus? I don't really know. What's concerning is that he's not budging. He's not willing to continue helping Pokemon, at least for a short while."

Banana stares blankly into the sky. "Not willing? But...why?"

Anchor made a sighing noise with his chains, which sounded more agonizing than anything. "Cobalion also doesn't know, although he's heard some other legendaries say that it's because Arceus had given up hope for the Pokemon kingdom. It's basically letting us fend for ourselves and see how much longer we can last."

All this time, the noise feels like it's being drowned out by my sheer confusion. How can a god abandon those of its own? It didn't really have anything to lose, right? It's a god! And more pressingly...

I refocus my gaze. "So Anchor, how would you suggest we take down Arceus?"

Anchor turns towards me. It's always scary to see that bright red...pupil thing relocate its sight onto me. "I don't think we have to. We basically have to convince Arceus that the Pokemon are currently suffering, and it'll probably do something. It's the best shot we have, anyways. If we just sit here..." He set his gaze out towards the ocean.

"Then what?" Anchor's tone is getting to me. I genuinely feel like we have a solid shot against the Humans, and him hiding all this information is seriously annoying me.

Anchor made another sighing noise, this time much more accurate than the first. He turns around again. "Clod, Humans have these things called bulldozers. They destroy landscapes, eviscerate huts, eliminating any sort of order your 'kingdom' has built up. Then, they either systematically eliminate the Pokemon one by one, or they catch them. What they do after catching Pokemon...it's hard to say. Either way, though, the Humans win."

Astonished, I turn to Banana, only to be met with the same fearful gaze.

"But...my family...the Quag invasions..."

The Fletchling nearby are starting to rouse. The sun has started to rise.

“Clod, we have no time.” Anchor scans the perimeter, and with a hushed voice, says, “Let’s get outta here. You two know any good hiding spots?”

Banana quickly packs his berry and a strange-looking rectangular item. “I know a place. Coincidentally, that used to be the refuge of the last Alolan Marowak the tribe has seen.”

I decided to inquire about that weird item. “Banana, what’s that rectangular thing?”

“It’s a book.” Banana throws on his satchel. “It’s made of paper, or thin pieces of tree wood, and Pokemon write stuff in it to share. We learnt this from some Humans that dropped paper while they were in the area.”

“Why do you carry it around, though?” Anchor also seems curious about the “book.”

“Apparently, it contains knowledge that only an Alolan Marowak should know. Father gave it to me right before I left.” Banana started to move. “Hurry. The cave’s quite far from here, and we don’t want to be spotted by any Humans.”

He briskly treks towards the grass, followed by Anchor.

Banana turns around “Clod! Come on, we gotta be fast!”

“In a second!”

I was looking in the direction of the Clod kingdom. The moon, now a diminishing disc of white, lay in the backdrop of the kingdom I lived in for my entire life.

“Goodbye, parents. I’ll return one day.”

I pull out my SireGun and follow my friends, terrified about what dangers may lie ahead.

Banana

“Are we almost there, Banana?”

“Clod, you’ve asked that like ten times already.”

I remember this path like it was the back of my bone. Father explored every bit of land around the cave, so I am able to navigate it clearly even though it has already been many years since I last came here. Clod, on the other hand, is beyond tired.

“Banana...can we stop...at that river? I need...mud...”

“Clod, there’s plenty of mud in the cave, just hang—”

“I see...yellow thing...near river...”

Rolling my eyes, I retorted, “Stop trying to slow us down. We have to get there and start strategizing.”

What I didn’t expect is for Anchor to say “Banana, he’s not wrong. I can faintly make out the outline of...something.”

I whip my head around, expecting the two of them to prank me, but then I see it. A yellowish outline sat on the bed of the river, and I hear faint sobbing sounds coming from the...Pokemon? Is it a Pokemon?

“Alright, Clod.” I look at the river in defeat. “Go get your mud. I’ll investigate...this”

The three of us make our way to the yellow silhouette, and Clod starts rolling around at the first sign of mud. Meanwhile, I carefully approach the small Pokemon. Based off the ears, I can tell it belongs to a species known as Pichu...but it’s all alone here. Where are its parents? Pichus are still babies; they can’t fend for themselves in the wild against other Pokemon, let alone humans!

“Hey little fella,” I cautiously whisper, “you alright?”

“N-n-no. My fam-mily...”

I quickly gesture for Anchor to stand back; this doesn’t seem like something he should get involved with. Anchor understands and starts to float back to Clod.

I continue to talk to the Pichu. “Pichu, where’s your family?”

“They’re gone...Humans took them...who are you?”

The Pichu lifted her head and looked at me fearfully. I recognize that expression. It’s the same face of fear my own Cubone friends had on their faces when they realized I had turned Alolan. The pain of it still hurts my heart; it’s as if I can never forget the day that everyone turned against me.

I must have let that pain get to my face, because the Pichu seems frightened.

“Hey, look, we can help you. Here.” I quickly reach into my satchel and grab a Nanab berry. “Eat this. It’s alright, I got friends with me. We won’t get attacked by more Humans anytime soon.”

The Pichu timidly reach out towards the berry. Interestingly enough, when she touched my hand, I felt a slight ting, almost as if I had been shocked. Then I remembered that I am not a normal Marowak, and my body’s more electrically conductive due to the decreased composition of earthly materials.

Ah, well, another flaw of being Alolan, as if I needed more.

I hear trudging noises behind me, and I see ClodOfTheSire and Anchor making their way over. At the sight of two hulking Pokemon, the Pichu frightfully looks at me, but I return a reassuring gaze. It seems to work beautifully, as the Pichu rapidly calms down and continues eating the berry.

“The name’s ClodOfTheSire, or just Clod. This floating piece of junk—” Anchor glares at Clod “—is Anchor. Don’t be scared, we’re here to help. We hate humans!” Clod stretched his gaping mouth, imitating a roar.

The Pichu does not seem to enjoy that one bit.

Anchor shakes his steering wheel in disappointment, and says to me, “See Banana? The Humans are getting too strong. We have to get to Arceus right away.”

“A-arceus?” The Pichu shuddered. “The god of Pokemon? Why do you seek him out?”

Before Anchor could get a word in, the Pichu adds, “and how can you speak? Where’s your mouth?”

Again, Anchor attempts to move his chains, but I stop him with a hand gesture. “Give this Pichu a second.” I turn to the Pichu, still visibly curious about how Anchor is able to talk. “Look, Pichu, how about you tell us your name and what happened to your family? Maybe we can help you.”

The Pichu exhales, and I still see droplets of tears in her eyes.

“It’s okay.” Clod comforts her. “Take your time. We’re here for you.”

Looking at the ground, the Pichu hastily shoves the last bit of Nanab in her mouth, swallows, then starts her story.

“Well, I guess I’ll start with my name. I’m Zyla.”

Zyla: Prologue

It felt like a normal night.

My parents brought me and my younger siblings out for a walk, cause why not? The air was good, the vibe was nice, and we know that the only creatures that cross this area are random Corvisquire and patrolling Marowak. What's there to fear?

After a bit of walking and a lot of complaining from my siblings, we stopped next to this river. I wanted to go swimming. I usually never have a chance to swim, since we lived in a dense forest with no nearby bodies of water. Slowly, I dipped my body into the cold water, first my feet, then my entire body. It felt good.

My siblings were next to me bickering about who knows what and throwing water at each other. My parents were on the lakeshore, enjoying the scenery at night. Nothing was wrong. My mom walked to me and sat nearby, watching me relax. Out of curiosity, I dipped my head under the water, but that strange new feeling of being surrounded by liquid made my head shoot back up.

Mom laughed a bit, and I looked back at her. "Mom, do you want to come in?"

"I'm fine, Zyla. You can play on your own."

"You'll still be watching me, right?"

"Of course. I'll always be here, watching you...and your rowdy siblings."

That reassuring look on my mom's face...that...was beautiful.

Nothing was wrong.

The flow of the river and the fighting of my siblings.

And..a strange roaring sound.

That's not natural, is it?

The next few seconds happened so...quickly. I couldn't even figure out what was happening. The noise was...deafening. Within seconds, a large metal thing basically just appeared right next to us. And guess who was inside that metal monster?

Humans.

Two of them, to be exact.

In their hands, they held a spherical thing. It's not like those spheres you find in the wild. They're so smooth you can see the moonlight reflecting off of them. It was unnatural. Then I remember that these are the Pokeballs my parents warned me about.

My dad was instantly alert. "Kids, hide! Now!"

Dad didn't need to say anything. I was already in the process of submerging my whole body. My parents have always made it abundantly clear that I need to do anything possible to hide from Humans, especially if they have Pokeballs. Was I scared? Yes, definitely, of both the Humans and the water. But what else can you do about this situation?

And so I watched from the bottom of the river, in fear of my own life. I was originally scared that I was going to drown, but it was clear that there was a much bigger issue than that.

Opening my eyes underwater took some time to adjust to. When I was finally able to open them, though, I saw a horrifying sight. Two large flower things have now appeared out of seemingly nowhere, and both my parents have collapsed on the ground. The Humans had seized my siblings, who were kicking and screaming at the Humans, but they weren't budging. In a mere few seconds, they, too, appear to have lost consciousness.

What...what happened?

My vision grew blurrier by the second, probably because I was actually drowning, but I still kept on hiding. I knew that if I exposed my position, I would be joining my family in Arceus knows where. The Humans seem to have...done something, something that...turned my parents into a sort of blueish white energy.

They were gone.

The Humans got back into their metal monster thing, and it started making that horrible screeching noise again.

At that point, I couldn't take it anymore. I had to resurface. Thankfully, the Humans or the metal monster didn't see me, and they ran off in...some direction. I genuinely cannot remember.

The last thing I remember seeing before passing out was 7 letters on the back of that metal monster.

They spelled out "Ferrari".

ClodOfTheSire

‘Ferrari’? What’s a Ferrari?

The Pichu, Zyla, is still sobbing.

“When I woke up, it was already daytime. I was still trying to process what happened last night. I was scared. I began crying. Then you guys showed up.”

Banana turns to Anchor. “Anchor, you know anything about what ‘Ferrari’ means?”

“Hmmm,” Anchor does that thing that Humans call “pondering”. “Well, first, I suppose we should fill Zyla in on what we know.”

Anchor then goes on his rant on the whole Arceus situation, how he’s ‘abandoned’ us, and yes, he explains how he talks. While Anchor is talking, I focus on Zyla’s facial expressions. Yes, the kid is scared, but she has that...glint I rarely see. Well, I sometimes see it in Banana’s eyes...what’s it called? ‘Determined’? Yeah, that sounds about right.

“Anyhow,” Anchor continues on, “I don’t know what ‘Ferrari’ means, but I probably know what the metal monster is. It’s called a car, and they basically let Humans travel fast. They don’t really have eyes or senses or anything, because they’re not alive.” He turns to Banana. “Kinda like the boat.”

Banana nods. Zyla, on the other hand, is still very much confused. “What do you mean, it’s not alive? How is it moving?”

“It’s...complicated.” Anchor uses his seaweed to gesture at himself. “Look at me. Imagine my metal body, but they’re a ton of small pieces and they work together to simulate a creature. They allow it to move in a certain way. Then all Humans need to do is to provide the energy, and...yeah.”

“Well, if it isn’t alive, how do we beat it?”

“That’s the key, Zyla. We don’t.”

“What?”

I decided to step in. “Zyla. The machines—machines are basically large metal creations that Humans have—don’t work without the Humans. The Humans are the enemies here.”

Zyla thinks for a moment, then says, “So we have to find Arceus now to stop the Humans.”

Banana sighs. “Yeah, pretty much.”

The four of us sit in silence for a while as I sneakily take another Nanab berry from Banana’s satchel.

Anchor is the first to speak. “Let’s not waste our time here. Banana, don’t you know someplace near here that we can take refuge in?”

Banana stood up. “Yeah. Clod, give me the berry, I saw you. Let’s go.” He then pauses for a second before turning to Zyla and saying, “You follow us. We’ll protect you.”

“Dang it.” Reluctantly, I hand the berry back to Banana, and he stuffs it back into his satchel. “It’s close, right? I don’t want to walk very far.”

“Decently close.” Banana continues to walk. “Right, let’s get moving before—”

A massive boulder impacted the ground in front of us.

“—why the hell are there Bombirdiers here?”

Still in shock about how such a large object seemingly descended from the heavens, I witnessed in both awe and genuine concern as a flock of white birds descended from the sky. And they did not seem friendly.

“FOOOOOOD!!!”

Dear Arceus, that is one hell of an unholy shriek.

Banana readies his bone. “Look, I don’t know what you Bombirdiers want from us, but we don’t have the ‘food’ that you want, alright? Leave us alone.”

“FOOOOOOD.” The birds shriek again, directing their gaze on Zyla.

Oh, no you don’t. Not if the SireGun has anything to say about that.

“It is not wise to engage.” Anchor remarks. “Banana! Get Zyla out of here. Clod and I can fend them off for now. They can’t kill us anyways.”

“But—”

“The SireGun wants blood, man.” Even I can tell that I sound noticeably pissed off. “We got this.”

“FOOOOOOOOOOOOOOD!”

These ‘Bombirdiers’ need to learn what patience means. And personal space. And also what it means to not be a public nuisance.

Banana turns around and nods at me. He knows I, prince of the Clod kingdom, heir of the royal Sires, have the battle expertise. “Zyla, let’s go.” He picks up Zyla and starts to run away.

One of the Bombirdiers shrieks at the sight of their ‘food’ escaping, but the big Bombirdier, which seems to be the leader of the flock, redirects his attention onto us.

Rightfully so.

I extend out one of my spines and inject the SireGun with my lethal toxins.

These birds are so dead.

Anchor

We are so dead.

Well, I can't really die, but I'm scared for Clod.

I've seen many Pokemon in my life. As such, I know that when a Pokemon has the ability to hurdle enormous chunks of pure rock, I understand that the odds are heavily stacked against us. It's a group of five 'Bombirdiers' against Clod and I, and I have no idea how we're even supposed to do when it's flyin—

In a flash, a streaming jet of toxin land on one of the Bombirdier, causing it to scream in pain.

Well, I never knew that Clodsires can shoot their toxins.

Bewildered, I turn around, only to see Clod wield a device that strangely resembles a gun, yet it shoots...poison? Wait, that's the same gun that Clod showed off last night, right? Could that be...the legendary SireGun?

I had to no time to think, though, as the Bombirdiers launch a deafening battle cry and fly at full speed towards me. Big mistake. I swing my anchor with maximum force, and this brutal 120 kilogram piece of metal flying at high speed straight up demolishes the first Bombirdier that it touched.

Oof, that must have hurt.

I reel my anchor back in for another attack, and I hear Clod reloading his SireGun. After the first two casualties, the remaining three Bombirdiers seem to take a more cautious approach. They start spiraling up ahead, far from the reach of my anchor and likely too far for the SireGun's toxins to hit. The two wounded Bombirdiers seem to have retreated.

"Interesting strategy." Clod mutters. "They have to get tired at some point, right? Not like they can attack us like this."

"Yeah."

After the extreme events in the first minute of our confrontation, the proceeding three minutes of pure stalemate feels incredibly boring. It definitely isn't just me, though, as one of the Bombirdiers finally starts to leave the group. Thankfully, it isn't headed for the direction that Banana and Zyla ran, and even if it did, it was unlikely that they would run into each other.

Another Bombirdier starts to spiral downwards, and Clod decides to take a shot. The bulk of the blast missed, but a slight droplet landed on its wing. It hisses but manages to stay airborne. Seeing that a weakened Bombirdier distracted by Clod's shot, I ready my anchor and launch it at a stupendous speed at the target.

I missed.

That's not that big of an issue, right?

The Bombirdier grabs hold of my anchor chain with its claws.

Okay, that's an issue.

"Clod! Need some help here!"

"I got you!" Clod aims at the bird and fires rapidly. I attempt to draw in my anchor, but to no avail; this Bombirdier's claws seem to penetrate the chain itself and is desperately trying to keep itself in the air while streaks of deadly poison rain around him.

And rocks, too.

Wait, rocks?

In our blind tunnel vision on that one Bombirdier, we failed to realize that the other Bombirdier has returned with heaps of rocks and is raining it down on us. Seeing this as an opportunity to attack, the last Bombirdiers, which is the leader, shrieks and starts descending at an alarming rate.

"Anchor, I can't keep shooting! The venom's gonna seep into your anchor chain and corrode it!"

Great, now Clod's basically useless in this fight.

I tug down on the anchor chain with all my might, but the Bombirdier leader seems to be dragging on it as well. Gradually, I feel myself start to ascend, which isn't good, considering that if the seaweed on my body gets consumed, I lose the source of my consciousness.

"Think of something, Clod!"

"I'm trying!"

I attempted two more forceful tugs, to no effect.

"Clod, just shoot! I can take it! I can repair my body!"

My body is starting to spin from the centripetal force. I faintly see streaks of purple and pellets of gray, but things are moving so fast that it's started to get disorienting. Amidst the shrieking and squawking of the Bombirdiers, I hear...thunder?

Clod seems to have heard that too. "Anchor, you hear that? That must be Zyla!"

Zyla...? Is she that strong to...

Before I finished that thought, my body was forcefully reunited with the Earth as I crashed down with a loud thud.

"What...what happened?"

In a daze, I make out Clod on my side. “Anchor! Anchor, there were lightning bolts in the sky. Zyla must have harnessed her electric powers and scared off the Bombirdiers...or fried some of them.” He looks to my side. Peeking over, I see that a Bombirdier basically has its entire body electrocuted, and it’s the same Bombirdier that got some venom on its wing.

Dang, what a brutal way to go.

I adjust myself and float upwards again. “Anyhow, if Zyla’s here, Banana should be here too. Clod, you see him or not?”

“No...they’ll show up eventually though.”

“Who’ll show up?”

That sound literally made me jump, and I don’t even know how that’s possible. I swivel my body around to see a Pokemon...if my memory serves me correctly, it’s a Manectric. It also is a Pokemon with electric powers. Perhaps...

“Hey, my name’s Volt, and I’m a Manectric. Saw that you guys were having some trouble there, so I decided to help out.”

“Thanks.” Clod extends his hand. “I’m ClodOfTheSire, prince of the Clod kingdom and member of the royal Sires.”

Volt looks confused. “Clod...kingdom? Never knew that Clodsires had a kingdom.”

“I—” Clod is visibly hurt by Volt’s comment. “Just call me Clod.”

“Don’t mind him, we’ll explain everything later.” I decide to step in. “I’m Anchor, and I’m a Dhelmise. We’re on a journey to find Arceus.” After pausing, I quickly added, “And before you ask this question, I talk by manipulating the chains on the side of my body.”

“Interesting. Probably an overly ambitious endeavor, but okay.” Volt turns around. “I’m on the search for my Mega stone—you guys know what that is? Been hunting it for a while, and it apparently has the capability to—”

“Volt, listen. The whole Pokemon universe may be at stake.”

“And why would I listen to you, Anchor? You know how illusionary your statement is?”

“Because I can also help you find your Mega stone.”

This got Volt’s attention. “You can?”

Clod looks at me, confused. “Anchor, what do you mean? You’re not born with the ability to Mega. How do you know anything about—”

“I have my connections.” I state calmly.

“Connections...” Volt thought about it for a while. “Very well, let’s get back to where I live. I can introduce you to my two good friends, too. This way.” He started moving.

“Wait. We have two friends of our own that we should wait for.”

Clod, however, continued to follow Volt. “Anchor, trust me, Banana’s survival skills greatly exceed what you may think. Plus, look what I just did back there.”

I turn around, and on the ground where Clod originally was standing, there is an arrow of decayed plant life pointing towards the direction that Volt is walking in.

“We use arrows to communicate all the time. Trust me, Banana will know.”

I make a sighing noise with my chains. “Alright Clod, I trust you. Not like we can find them reasonably quickly anyways.”

After a moment of silence, Volt said, “While we’re getting there, I think it’s best that you get to know the backstory of my friends and I a bit more.”

Sure, I suppose.

How shocking can it possibly be?

Volt: Prologue

“Volt, wake up.”

I blinked several times. There still wasn't sunlight yet; it is the dead of night.

“Fish, why did you wake me up? You better have a good reason.”

“Today's the chance to get out of this crappy place.”

I scrambled to my feet. “And how exactly do you think you can do that?”

Fish smirked. “I got some...external help. Alright, get ready, he should be here at any time.”

Fish is a huge specimen, a Pokemon called a ‘Dracovish’. Apparently, Fish was revived from two separate fossils: one of his fish head and one of his draconic body, forming...this amalgamation...that also has a tendency to sprout wildly diabolical quotes.

I looked around. There's basically no Pokemon awake yet, and for good reason. The things that this place puts us through are genuinely painful at times. In the morning, we're either doing labor or entertaining the Humans here. At night, we're thrown in these cages and forced to ‘sleep’, just for the same thing to happen next night.

When I got in here, there weren't many Pokemon. I was lured in due to the false promise that they have my Mega stone. However, instead of decent living environments and the ability to become a more powerful version of myself, I ended up being used by the wretched Humans. Over time, they began to respect my aggression more and treat me slightly better, but I can only sympathize with weaker Pokemon that lack the ability to stand for themselves.

Fish was a more recent addition, and the only reason we share a cage is because they're running out. Since Fish was recently revived and has no knowledge of the outside world, he's more nonchalant here...or maybe it's because one bite from his jaw can essentially end Human lives, meaning Humans rarely mess with him.

Well, apparently now he found a way to break us out of here thanks to his ‘external help’.

“Who did you contact, anyways?”

“Well...” Fish exhaled, “yesterday, when I was working on the fields on the northeastern quadrant, I found a Whimsicott. He's cunning; he says he knows the ins and outs of this place. I told him our cage number, and he said it's the cage that makes escaping the easiest, at least for now. So yeah, he told us to wake up early and wait for his arrival.”

I sighed. “The sun's still not up yet. By ‘early’, he could've meant, like a few hours later!”

Just then, a vent on the ground popped open with a slight hiss. This garnered the attention of the Noivern in the adjacent cage, but he didn't really seem to care. I watched in pure disbelief as a Whimsicott poked its head up and whispered, “Come on, let's get out of here!”

And that was that.

The Whimsicott had somehow excavated an area large enough for Fish to fit through, and in the blink of an eye, we're in a forest surrounded by thick foliage and with no view of that stupid Pokemon enclosure.

I tentatively touched the vegetation around us. It felt surreal that I had escaped...just like that.

Fish took an enormous yawn. "Thanks...Whimsicott. Hey, you got a name?"

"More importantly," I chimed in, "you got someplace for us to rest for a few days?" After a period of hesitation, I added "the name's Volt, nice to meet you."

The Whimsicott smiled. "Hi, Volt. Yeah, I got someplace, I'll lead you guys to it. It's just me there, so it's large enough for Fish too. I like to consider myself a typical Pokemon, so I usually go by JustATypicalPokemon. That's quite a mouthful, though, so you can just call me JATP. Or you can call me whatever, I'm not your mom."

Zyla

Almost home...

Except, you know, my whole family's gone...

Banana and I have been trekking for hours on end, mostly because I'm still slightly traumatized about everything that happened last night. Banana's always been supportive; however, I can sense that he does miss his close friends.

We decided to take a short break. Banana takes out two of his last Nanab berries, giving one of them to me. At this point, I'm too tired to object. We both sit in silence as we recover our stamina for the last time before we reach our destination.

"Banana, you alright?"

After we ran away from the Bombirdier attack, I suggested that we go to my home instead. It's much further away and provides significantly more shelter than Banana's cave, which seems to be more of a temporary refuge. Banana agreed, so we set out on a journey eastwards towards my home forest.

Banana sighs. "I'm fine. I just hope Clod and Anchor are alright."

His daze is unfocused; it's as if he's looking at something that's not there. I've heard tales about Alolan Marowak and the mystery surrounding them, but I'm pretty sure there hasn't been an Alolan Marowak in these lands for years. To be fair, I never really know. My parents were never...close to the Marowak tribe.

Banana places down his Nanab berry and takes out his 'book'. Curious, I move next to him and ask, "What's in that book, anyways?"

With his focus still on the contents of the book, Banana said, "I told you that the strongest Alolan Marowak have flames on their bones, right?" I nod; this was one of the random things he told me during our trek. "This book basically teaches me how to connect me to the spirit realm and infuse the power of souls with my bone."

Wooooaahh...what?

"The blue-green fire on Alolan Marowaks' bones is a result of the souls that bind to it." Banana chuckles at himself. "If the Marowak is able to harness the power of a lot of souls, that could allow him to have some...extraordinary abilities."

I was awestruck. Seeing my face, Banana laughs and continues on. "Getting the power of the souls, though, requires trust. The souls have to believe that you are capable of doing good in this world." He snaps the book shut. "I just hope that we're doing the right thing."

Closing his book is usually an indication that he wants to keep moving. I shove the last bit of Nanab berry in my mouth as he packs up his berry, and we continue moving.

As we get deeper and deeper into the forest, Banana's larger size definitely impedes him much more in terms of movement, especially when considering the size of his bone. Over time, I realize that maybe bringing him to an area of the forest with extremely dense branches isn't the best idea.

Banana is already covered in cuts and scratches. "Zyla...you got...somewhere else we can settle?"

I hesitated. I didn't want to hurt my new friends, but at the same time, nightfall is approaching. My home offers tons of protection...but that protection is probably the same reason why Banana is having trouble reaching the home.

Just then, I got a genius idea.

"Banana! Try lighting your bone with just a bit of fire!"

Clearly exhausted, Banana looks at me as if I just spoke gibberish. "You for real? I'm already crumbling as is, and you want me to concentrate enough to speak to the souls?"

"Just try it! Then we can burn a path through!"

"Yeah, I suppose there's no better solution, huh."

Banana clears out a few branches and sits down. "Alright, Banana. Communicate with the lost souls. Talk to me, guys. Talk to me..."

Within seconds, Banana drifted into this trance-like state, and I don't really know what to do. I can't just leave him in case hostile Pokemon attack him, but I also can't help him do...whatever he's doing right now. If only my family is still with me, if only the Bombirdiers never attacked, if only Arceus still has faith in Pokemon, if only...

Why do I smell smoke?

I nearly trip over myself as I whirl around, and what I witnessed is nearly magical. The tip of Banana's bone is faintly glowing blue, and sparks of white-hot fire began sprouting at random intervals.

"For the...Pokemon...for the...souls...For...for..."

It wasn't enough. What tiny sparks of fire soon dissipated, and bone stopped glowing. Slowly, Banana's eyes returned back to normal, yet he did not look satisfied with himself.

"I'm sorry, Zyla." Banana stands up slowly. "Can't do it. Too hard to concentrate."

"It's alright, Banana. I'll find...another way. Perhaps—"

"Zyla?"

Huh? Is that...JustATypicalPokemon? I refocus my sight, and there he is. JATP, a close family friend and another small forest dweller, has arrived.

“JATP! Oh my god, I, I, I...” The sight of him begins to flood me with the terrifying memories of when my family got taken...and I...I...

Banana also notices JATP. “A Whimsicott, huh. I’m Banana, and I found Zyla not too long ago.”

“Nice to meet you, Banana, I’m JustATypicalPokemon, but you can also call me JATP.” He focuses back onto me. “Zyla...what happened?”

Words start to form, but I can’t find the energy to deliver them, nor can they escape through my quiet sobbing.

Thankfully, Banana steps in. “A lot happened, JATP. I can tell you what she’s been through and what we’ve been through, but do you have a place we can stay for the night?”

JATP blinks. “Uh, yeah, sure, follow me.” He floats over to me, gently comforting me with his soft cotton. “It’s okay, little one. I’m here now. Let’s go; we don’t have a lot of time before the Noctowl start to get aggressive.”

Oh, JATP, it’s nice to be with you...

JustATypicalPokemon

Well, today's been eventful.

What started as a simple evening walk soon turned into an emotional meeting with Zyla. I've never really known the Raichu family, but Zyla's always been a really nice child. We kinda share that gremlin energy, and we get along very well together.

But to hear what happened to her family...is truly painful.

As we walked to the Refuge of Serenity, Banana filled me in on everything that happened, from Zyla's family being abducted to the sudden Bombirdier attack. I'm kinda surprised by his friendliness, especially seeing how he's an Alolan Marowak. Regular Marowak are territorial and aggressive enough, and the few Alolans usually are much more extreme.

"So," Banana said, eyes still locked on the path ahead, "who's living in this Refuge of Serenity right now?"

"Not a lot of Pokemon," I replied. "Other than me, it's just a Dracovish that chills in the refuge all day and a Manectric in pursuit of his Mega stone."

"Dracovish?"

"Oh yeah, forgot to explain that. A Dracovish is apparently what happens when you revive the bottom half of a dragon, the top half of a fish, and stick them together. Not very typical, is it?"

"Indeed it isn't."

I continued to fill Banana and Zyla in on how I found Volt and Fish, including how I helped them escape that Pokemon enclosure. All this time, Zyla has been quietly walking by me. To me, it is quite clear that Zyla has grown attached to Banana, perhaps due to the long period of time they've spent together. Who knows.

The path ahead starts to open up. Colorful flowers of all kinds sprang out from nowhere, and the area is filled with beautiful fragrant smells. The setting sun cast a beautiful ray of light into the refuge, directly onto the sunbathing Fish, laid down and having a good time.

At the sight of my arrival, Fish did his trademark yawn. "Welcome back, JATP...and who are these Pokemon with you?"

"Hi Fish. This is Zyla, the Pichu friend that I've been telling you about, and this is Banana, an Alolan Marowak."

Right as he heard Alolan, Fish's gaze focused on Banana. "Alolan, huh? Pretty sure I saw a few Alolan Marowak in the enclosure, although I'm fairly certain they're actually from Alola."

Banana shrugs. He takes out a book from his satchel and sits down in an isolated corner.

Fish clearly isn't done with knowing more about Banana. "Hey Alolan, what's that weird object?"

"First of all," Banana's tone instantly shifts to the Marowak aggression I originally feared, "call me Banana, that's my name. Secondly, this is a book. It's basically a collection of thin paper—paper is like thinly cut wood—and Pokemon can write stuff on there."

"Whatever, Banana. If that's even your real name."

Banana sighs and starts to read the book. I've seen a few books here and there, mostly left by Human travelers, so I have a basic understanding of what they are. Deciding to leave Banana alone, I float over to Zyla.

"Make yourself at home. We'll take care of you from now on, and eventually we'll find your family again."

I made sure to sound as reassuring as possible, and I know Zyla appreciates that. She yawns, evidently tired from her long journey, and lays down on the foliage, mumbling something about a floating anchor.

Seeing how our new friends have settled in quite nicely, I float to the southern entrance of the refuge. Volt still isn't back home, and that's starting to concern me. Sure, he's quite stubborn on finding his Mega stone, but I don't think it's worth sacrificing sleep—

Oh wait, he's right there...with...with two more Pokemon.

Volt briskly walks in the refuge. "Hi, JATP. I found these two nearby, and they were in quite the intense fight against some Bombirdiers. I decided to stop by and help out."

Wait...didn't Banana and Zyla also encounter a horde of Bombirdiers?

Of the two Pokemon, I recognize the species of one: a Clodsire. Strange, since Clodsires usually don't wander out of their kingdom. The other is a floating piece of metal, and for a second, I doubt if that's a Pokemon at all.

The Clodsire spoke after Volt. "Hello JustATypicalPokemon, I am ClodOfTheSire, prince of the Clod kin—"

The floating metal 'Pokemon' produced a sort of metallic sighing. "Clod, you don't gotta say that to everyone."

"Right." The Clodsire continues to introduce themselves. "I'm ClodOfTheSire, or just Clod, and this is Anchor. He's a Dhelmise."

"Nice to meet you." Anchor said. "I notice the confused expression. I talk by moving the chains on the side of my body, and my consciousness is derived from the seaweed latched on my body."

"We're looking for our friends." Clod chimes in. "They're an Alolan Marowak and a Pichu. Have you—"

“Clod! Anchor!”

I turn around and realize that Zyla knows Clod and Anchor. “Banana! Clod and Anchor are here!”

“Huh? What?” Banana quickly stands up, in a hurried daze. “You two...holy crap, you two are here.”

What happened next was a moment of reunion for the four of them, as they shared their respective perspectives on what happened that day. Meanwhile, I pulled Volt and Fish together to have our own private meeting.

“Listen,” Volt started, “the stability for the Pokemon world might be at stake.”

“That’s a bold claim.” Fish comments. “Hell, it felt like that when we were stuck in that enclosure.”

As much as I trust Volt to be a logical thinker, I have to agree with Fish. After all, there’s no basis for this happening at all...

“Zyla’s family.”

I didn’t consciously say that. I blurted that out, as if I was in a trance.

This piqued Volt’s attention. “Zyla? The Pichu? What about her family?”

I briefly informed them what had happened.

While the two of them are thinking, I state, “Look, Humans are beginning to be more aggressive than before. You two have seen it too—aren’t the enclosures running out of cages at a rapid rate? Zyla’s family being abducted...Arceus wouldn’t permit the sheer quantity of these acts against the Pokemon universe, would it?”

With a blank stare, Volt slowly says, “Yeah, you might have a po—”

“It’s pure baloney.” Fish interrupts. “That has to be the most suckfest loser claim I’ve ever heard. See, we’re doing alright.” He gestures around the refuge with his head. “Why the worry? Why the concern?”

Volt sighs. “Fish, wouldn’t you say it’s better to be safe than sorry?”

“Plus,” I quickly chime in, “haven’t you always wanted to have some action in your life?”

“Hmmmmmm...”

“Fish, listen to me.” Volt’s voice is dead serious. “You know me. I go out almost every single day, hunting for my Mega stone, and that means I see and know a lot. I initially didn’t trust them at first, but as I was thinking about it, they might be right.” He looks around the refuge. “You know how beautiful this place is, but you know equally well how destructive Humans can

be. If we do nothing, this forest may be reduced to nothing but flatland, fit for Human residence. Do you really—”

“Alright, alright, Volt, I get it.” Fish lay back down again. “Tomorrow. We’ll talk with our new friends tomorrow, and we’ll see what to do. Just let me spend one last night here.” And of course, he yawns.

Volt walks away to eat some berries, and I float over to our new friends. “Hey guys, I just had a chat with Volt and Fish, and we’re going to discuss our plan to...find Arceus tomorrow morning. For now, make yourself at home. You’ll need that energy.”

Banana nods. “Thank you, JATP.”

“No problem.”

Clod rolls around in the grass. “Ugh, this grassy texture. I really wish there was some of my premium mud that I used to bathe in back home.”

Clearly exasperated by Clod’s complaint, Banana said, “Clod, it’s not gonna get much easier after this. Enjoy it while you can.”

“Yeah, fair enough.”

Before going to sleep, I float next to Volt, who is finishing up his meal.

“Hey Volt.”

“Yeah, what’s up JATP?”

“Do you think...we can trust them?”

Volt blinks. “Yeah...? Oh yeah right, you don’t know what Anchor told me.”

Anchor? “What did he tell you?”

“Well, he seems to understand a lot more than me regarding my Mega stone...”

Fish

Them new Pokemon sure seems concerned about Arceus and whatever the hell it's up to these days.

In my opinion, though, just live life. It ain't that complicated.

JATP dragged me to my feet early in the morning, hours before when I would usually wake up. Over the next half hour, I stood in a corner as the six of them talked about every little detail about this "journey" to find Arceus.

Who cares about 'details' anyways? We know the general direction, why don't we just head there, kick Arceus's ass, and get back as soon as possible.

I yawn, and this definitely won't be the last time I do that on this boring ahhh journey.

Finally, we started to move. According to Anchor, our destination is the Mount Coronet of this land, because apparently there's a 'Mount Coronet' every so often. He said that there's always a piece of Arceus that was left behind to kinda act as a vessel between us Pokemon and Arceus himself.

To me, this all sounds like random stuff the piece of metal made up. Bro's practically a hunk of junk kept alive by ghostly seaweed and sheer determination, he's literally more useful recycled to be made into something more useful.

The dense foliage of the forest is something I haven't seen in ages. Usually, I just sit in the Refuge of Serenity while JATP or Volt find the food. Hell, if it isn't for the path that JATP already scouted out, I would've definitely been stuck in some of those gnarly branches.

At least we aren't moving that fast. Even though Banana and Volt insisted that we hurry up, Clod and Zyla seem to be taking their time, with Zyla occasionally riding on Clod ever so often. It seems that those two have become decently good friends...speaking of close friends...

"Hey Volt"

Volt turns around "What's up, Fish?"

"You would think I'm a very close friend, right?"

"Well..."

I did not appreciate that hesitation.

"Well, what?"

"Ummm, Fish, uhhh, I appreciate you as a friend so much I see you as a, uh, a brother!"

Yeah, that's about right. Volt the Manectric, with his clumsy words.

Now that he is probably relieved that I won't destroy him with one crunch, Volt continues focusing on the road ahead. I sigh and continue walking.

A few seconds later, a streak of yellow crosses my field of view, and I realize it's Zyla running up to Volt. That Pichu. When JATP first told me about her, I thought she has a slightly wild personality, but nothing much overall. Well, it seems like her body is always filled with some sort of energy, because she is now trying to talk to my 'brother'.

Well, to be fair, she does have electric powers.

"I think your electric powers are very cool, Volt. Can I call you Zappy?"

Taken aback by this wild name change, and rightfully so, Volt responds with "Uhhhh...yeah sure."

"Yay! Zappy's my friend! Now you're also my close friend!"

"Yeah...we're friends."

Watching the two of them converse makes me think back to when I first met Volt. After being just revived, I was energetic, chaotic, and quite frankly had a diabolical vocabulary. Still don't know how Volt tolerated all that, especially in such a small environment, but I guess that patience is carrying over to Zyla.

I was so focused on them talking that I didn't even notice that we had left the forest. We're now on this huge expanse of grass. Not far from us, a rapid river flowed, and tall trees sparsely grew on the riverbed. Since I never know what 'nature' is like prior to my escape, I'm kinda shocked that this bit of 'nature' looked so different from the forest that I called home for so long.

It's all green. Yes, there's that flowing river, providing a blue color, but it's mostly green...and yellow...

"Hey, what's that white thing?"

JATP, being the fastest of the group, points that out, and Volt and Banana quickly confirm the observation. My eyesight is quite poor, so I don't immediately see it, but there is an awfully shiny bit near the river somewhere.

This seems to remind me of something...

"It's shining, isn't it?"

Anchor responds, "Yeah, it is shining. Odd. Natural objects don't shine very often."

That confirms my suspicion.

"Guys, it's a Shiny Pokemon."

Banana, Clod, Anchor, Zyla, and JATP all turn their heads in shock. "Shiny Pokemon?"

“Yeah, a Shiny.” Volt seems unfazed at this discovery. “They have a different color than other Pokemon of their species, and they emit this shine when under the sun. Beautiful, but definitely a safety hazard. I’ll go check it out.”

“I’ll go too,” JATP chimed in.

“And me,” added Banana.

The three of them run forwards a bit while the rest of us follow behind. Amidst the chirping of birds and the gushing of water, I could make out a few words, something like “training” “home” “special” and “day”. Weird assortment, but alright.

As I came closer, I managed to figure out what Pokemon it was. It’s a Shiny Eevee, which trades in its brown coat for a shining white one. Next to it is...that seems to be an Eelektross.

“Greetings, travelers.” The Eelektross spoke. “I am an Eelektross, and this is my friend, a special type of Eevee. What brings you here?”

At this point, all of us have gathered around the two Pokemon. The shiny Eevee looks visibly scared, especially when Zyla approaches her and asks a lot of questions.

“Now, now, Zyla,” JATP coerces her back. “Let’s get to know who they are first before we start asking so many questions, alright?”

Knowing who they are? “Why do we want to stay, though? Don’t we want to continue moving to get to Arceus as soon as possible?”

“Arceus?” The Eelektross seems to be in deep thought. “Heard some stuff about it...”

Anchor starts to speak. “See, Fish, we may be able to use their help.”

God, that piece of metal. Him and his weirdly correct statements.

Anchor turns to the Eelektross. “Why don’t you two introduce yourselves? After that, it’ll be a lot easier to discuss what we’re trying to do.”

The Eelektross nods. “Alright, I’ll start. My Eevee friend goes by Silver, and I actually met her in a really funny way...”

???: Prologue

Alright, I got this.

I readied myself for yet another nighttime swim. Unlike most other Tynamo, I really struggle when it comes to orientation, which makes swimming at night a near hazard.

But I got this.

I've been training. A lot.

And in the worst case scenario, I'll always have the moon to guide me.

With all fear out of the way, I started swimming. What I didn't initially realize was that this was during a new moon, meaning I had no moon to guide me, and I was about to be punished for my recklessness.

It initially felt great. Swimming felt natural, as it always should have been. Every training session I feel my clumsiness in swimming gradually fade away, and I always emerge with a renewed sense of confidence that I can definitely swim as well, if not better than, my peers.

The water flowed effortlessly around my skin.

I always knew I had it in me. We're Tynamo; we're fish. Sure, we still need to breathe air, but that doesn't hinder our ability to tell up from down. We have always had the capability to swim with absolutely no hindrances, just like how a land Pokemon is able to walk all fine.

The water started to close in on me.

I am absolutely sick and tired of being ridiculed by other Tynamo: I can't join them in school trips, I get laughed at by my 'friends', it feels like everyone agrees that not being able to swim with your eyes closed is a huge deal! Alright, I'll prove it to them. I'll show them that I can do this, I'll finish this nighttime swim and I'll prove to them...

Wait, where am I?

Oh Arceus, please, not this again...no...crap no...

That feeling of confidence began to slip. Rapidly. Everywhere looks the same, everywhere feels the same, and I can't even see my own air bubbles. Normally I'll try and find the moon, but no matter how hard I looked, I couldn't find it. It was then that it dawned on me that it was a new moon, and there was truly no light to guide me.

Hold on, what's that? That's the moon, right?

That...certainly seems like the moon, but it's...it's the new moon...

Doesn't matter, all that I care about is escaping this wretched river and getting air!

Instinctively, I shot up towards the glowing light, thinking that it might have been some sort of Human thing. Instead, as my eyes left the water, I saw myself looking at...a white Eevee?

A strange glowing white Eevee?

I managed to control my trajectory enough so I didn't hit her, but the Eevee was clearly frightened by my arrival, retreating a few steps.

"Hey," I said cautiously, "thanks for saving my life."

The Eevee looked confused. "Your-your life? Yeah, no problem...I guess. My name's Silver."

"Hi, Silver. I'm..."

Huh, I really don't have a name for myself. That's interesting.

"Anyways, why are you out so late? I quickly diverted the topic.

"I...I came out by myself to find...answers."

"Answers?" I looked at her shining white fur. "For your...shininess?"

Silver didn't answer, but I assumed that's what she meant. We stood for a moment in silence until I said, "Hey, let's be friends."

"F-friends?"

"Yeah! You know, with other Tynamo, I'm always separated, too! Maybe I can help you find the answer you're looking for, and maybe you can make sure I don't drown in the river!"

"Uhh...yeah, sure. I gotta go now, though. Maybe we can meet up sometime?"

I smiled. "Sure, that works."

Silver smiled back, and she started to leave. "Alright, I'll be leaving now."

"Wait, Silver!"

"What?"

"I thought about my name. It's linked to my birthplace; it's always been a special thing to me, and...you know, it can work for a great name."

"What's the name, then?"

"From now on," I hesitated, "whenever you see a school of Tynamo, I'm going to be known as Amethyst."

And that's it for now.

Banana, the Alolan Marowak
ClodOfTheSire, the Clodsire
Anchor, the Dhelmise
Zyla, the Pichu
Volt, the Manectric
Fish, the Dracovish
JustATypicalPokemon, the Whimsicott
Silver, the Shiny Eevee
Amethyst, the Eelektross.

Also featuring:

Cobalion, who doesn't have a name but is sometimes hallucinating
KRLW890, the Beldum
Ferrari, the...Ferrari
Two Vileplumes who will be unnamed for now

This is the start of a great journey, and there will be many more to come.

HAPPY APRIL FOOLS SUCKERRRRRRRS