

## **Death, Decisions, and Destiny**

By: Vapoleon Lugia Krabby

Mewblade was sitting in an eloquent high-backed chair, relaxed and intently cleaning her tail blades with a cotton cloth. She was situated in a large cave that was made of an auburn colored rock. Furniture, such as chairs and tables, were carved into the very rock itself, most with peculiar carvings placed at random spots. The carvings were generally of odd picturesque scenes that really made little sense to Mewblade despite that she carved them herself. Mewblade's handiwork was nonetheless than impressive, and it showed. She prided in her hobbies, which were oddly enough interior decorating and carving, thus her environment was very humanly fashioned but with the added Pokémon and Mewthree touches.

Mewblade glanced at the screen in front of her. It was translucent and at the moment a blank gray. The screen was always running since her psychic powers and energy took little of either to make it work. With the energy she had, Mewblade could be doing a lot more than she was, yet she was relaxed, cleaning her tail blades.

Her face briefly flashed with an expression of curiosity and intrigue, but it was too fast and subtle to notice. She had sensed something. Now, that something was trying to make its influence work on her screen.

Mewblade let the attempt follow-through. This something was a big surprise to her and she was more than interested in knowing why it had chosen to contact her. Her attention did wander, though a Pokémon like herself had a brain that could multitask more than one thing at a time.

On the other end of the screen an image came to life. It was a Pokémon just like Mewblade, really a parent to her. The differences were noticeable, at least in appearance they were different and noticeable. Their thoughts were similar and their power almost as equal as the other. It was proven once in a fight between them, though Mewblade dominated the fight.

*Mewtwo*, Mewblade thought, identifying the Pokémon. Her eyes did not so much as move as she caught a glimpse of Mewtwo's surroundings, sensing that there had been other Pokémon there some time ago. Mewtwo was living like a Pokémon, at one point with Pokémon, and in an environment that was suitable to his lifestyle; a very primitive human decor situated in a network of tunnels and caves. And like Mewblade, Mewtwo was sitting down, except he was on a cylindrical seat, also staring fixedly at his screen.

So, she mused, a small sardonic flash in her eyes, *he must have had clones for himself since I doubt he could make friends. Pathetic.* Mewblade was not familiar with pack natures of various Pokémon. She could not judge why Mewtwo had clones; actually copies of trainers' loyalist creatures, and decided to keep them. Where they were now was a mystery to Mewblade, and she could care less.

Mewtwo observed Mewblade with equal intensity, both mimicking each other's behavior, never blinking, never looking away from the other. Mewtwo noticed a few of Mewblade's blades, the ones that did not happen to be clean in particular. He stiffened briefly as he noticed crimson stains on some of the blades. Mewblade's last three tail

blades had a thick collection of a crimson liquid, all of which was being removed by the cotton cloth. Mewtwo did not like knowing what Mewblade had been up to recently, although the thought crept into his mind, disgusting him. He made a cemented decision that he would not ask. Mewblade doubted if Mewtwo would talk about what he saw, instead she listened to him speak of something else.

<“I see that you found yourself a suitable habitat,”> Mewtwo allowed himself to look at the entire screen, his focus not just on Mewblade anymore. He wanted to keep an eye on Mewblade since he knew relatively nothing about her, and what he was seeing now was confirming his earliest fears of her. <“Evidently I was slightly worried.”> His mouth never moved but his facial expression changed from concern to relief. In some ways his telepathy could scare humans, especially since Mewtwo never seemed to blink or even draw in a breath of air. Mewblade was in no mood for small talk and was not frightened or awed by Mewtwo.

“Get to the point, Mewtwo. I am rather busy,” she told him irritably. Finished with cleaning her blades, Mewblade shifted in her chair so that she assumed a more aggressive stature. Her eyes narrowed, the least amused. Mewtwo was quick of reply.

<“You have not been spotted since we met, which was three weeks ago. Someone like you just does not go off unnoticed or off doing nothing,”> he pointed out, his expression hardening into its normal, serious way. <“What have you been doing?”> Mewtwo dreaded to ask that question though Mewblade seemed calm as she Teleported another cotton cloth into her waiting left paw and began polishing her energy cannon. It was frustrating for Mewtwo to watch since Mewblade purposely let the question hang in the air, her eyes diverted to her energy cannon.

“Upholding Pokémon Law,” she answered mildly. The answer was all but mild.

<“Pokémon Law?!”> Mewtwo questioned, almost angry. He now knew why Mewblade had blood on her blades. *How could she? She's sick*, thought Mewtwo. *If this is her idea of what she thinks she needs to do with her life, then she needs to be taught otherwise.* He decided to openly ask Mewblade why. <“What's the reason? How do you go about this?”> Mewtwo asked, his anger showing more noticeably now.

Mewblade was amused yet she thought Mewtwo would understand or be acceptant, but Mewtwo did not act in either way. He just kept being bitter towards her. She could be just as bitter at times.

“Simple really. After my attack against you I realized that there should be someone to protect the Legends,” Mewblade said, enjoying the topic.

<“So . . . Pokémon like Moltres, Lugia, Mew, myself. Special Pokémon,”> Mewtwo replied, glaring at Mewblade. <“That can't be the only thing you do.”>

“I know, it isn't,” Mewblade smirked. “I destroy those who attempt to mimic, capture or oppose the Legends. Protecting the Master is another priority. Or to be more specific, the Master To Be. Isn't that a part of your destiny? Correct, Mewtwo?”> Mewblade smirked smugly. She was welcomed by a low growl from the other side of the screen supplied by the enraged Mewtwo.

<“Keep out of my affairs!”> growled Mewtwo, his eyes began to come alight with blue energy, Mewtwo's signature psychic aura.

Mewblade stopped polishing her energy cannon, the cotton cloth mysteriously disappearing. She shifted her position again so that she was lounging. Mewblade

chuckled at Mewtwo's anger. She knew what Mewtwo was back when he first got out of his tank, a destructive, dangerous Pokémon that later tried to rule the world. Mewblade was not doing anything bad, and it seemed funny. Nothing was funny to Mewtwo at the moment, his aura came alive all around him, flickering dangerously. A powerful psychic had a large and dangerous aura, it is not wise to touch it.

<“I don't see what is so funny!”> Mewtwo's telepathic voice was at a near roar. He seemed more fearsome as he rose from his seat. <“You cannot kill Pokémon for such insignificant means!”>

“It is usually the odd normal type and their trainer that cause the problems. You shouldn't worry. It makes the world more organized,” Mewblade said, still calm. She was not mad at Mewtwo for disapproving this. His methods of detouring problems was by erasing memories. Mewblade solidly believed in the rule that if they could do it once, they could do it again.

<“This is extremely unjustly, Mewblade,”> Mewtwo said in suppressed rage, about to make another point. Mewblade had just risen from her seat, more in ignorance than in anger.

“Mewtwo, you don't seem to understand destiny.” She began to pad softly towards her cave entrance, back turned to the screen as she engaged in a telepathic conversation. <“See, I chose my pathway, my destiny. I made *my* decision,”> she looked at the screen over her right shoulder. <“I was created to be a weapon of destruction. And for a weapon, I'm actually doing something good and productive,”> she paused, her expression a bit pained. <“I'm surprised you don't understand that, Mewtwo. That you can't accept what I'm doing.”> *No, he'll never understand. He barely tolerates me now, and I him.*

Mewtwo sat back down, stunned. His aura died down, as did his anger. He really did have to think about what Mewblade was doing. She had a legitimate reason and it did suit her, but what she was doing just seemed to be a constant amount of rash actions. Was there forgiveness in Mewblade's heart?

<“Oh, and Mewtwo?”>

<“What?”> Mewtwo muttered, feeling like he had lost an important battle.

<“Don't try to track me.”> Mewblade turned fully around to face Mewtwo. The light from outside was slightly silhouetting her body. <“I will kill you if you try.”> Then the screen on Mewtwo's end became a translucent gray as Mewblade ended the link between the two screens.

Mewtwo frowned as the screen on his end went dead. He knew better than to attempt to find Mewblade. The first time they had met, Mewblade was only recently out of her tank and Mewtwo was beaten harshly. Then again, he was not trying to play on the offensive. Not like that would have changed the result.

Mewtwo shook his head, trying to rid himself of his own thoughts. *Only some miracle could possibly make her change. I doubt that even with Mew's genes she'll improve. She just does not get it! She lives on rash decisions, how can she change?* Mewtwo rose from his seat, heading for the entranceway to the room. There were stairs leading down to the exit of his refuge. Mewtwo was glad he was alone, he no longer had to worry about one of his clones asking if he was okay or not.

*Insolent human. Wanted to go catch Raikou. Well, he's not going to be able to do that anymore,* Mewblade mused with a slight sneer.

Mewblade had felt more into target practice instead of bloody massacre as of recent. Her energy cannon trailed with thin, wispy smoke as she flew above the lofty canopy of Ellix Forest. She was not paying much attention to her surroundings, and it would be amazing if she could. Mewblade was a very fast flyer, going at speeds that were above and beyond that of a Pidgeot. Although, being psychic gave her advantages, the mind sees more than the eyes.

*So much for some activity. This place is deserted,* she thought with an absent mind. Mewblade suddenly stopped in the middle of her flying, her head turned to the north-east. *High level Ditto and a trainer with a Pokédex. Drat, it's an Articuno!*

Mewblade had a very quick grasp on opposing powers and the strengths of many Pokémon. The higher the level, the more powerful their weather warping capabilities. Very few Pokémon actually knew how much effort it took to control the weather which is why Mewblade often aimed to destroy them. The Ditto's power was already becoming violent as a cold breeze whistled through the air, all part of a potentially disastrous chain of events. For Mewblade, it was all fun and games.

"Great job, Ditto!" a sixteen year old, brown hair boy in khakis and a red Nike shirt cheered. "Try to hold the form for a few more minutes." The boy then shivered and clutched his arms from the chill. "Why did it get so cold?" he asked mostly himself. His transformed Ditto shrugged its icy wings and suddenly let out an agonizing screech as it fell to the forest floor.

"Ditto!?" the boy cried as he ran to his de-transformed Ditto. He slowly reached down and cradled the goop in his arms. His arms were becoming wet with a warm liquid. It was confirmed as he looked at the Ditto's backside. His favorite and most loved Pokémon was bleeding to death.

"Ditto . . ." his voice was ragged with sobs of anguish, and then of rage. "Who did this?! Come out!" he demanded. No one would kill his Pokémon and live through it.

The boy heard a rustle behind him and twisted to see. He was too late. A dark ball of energy shot at his exposed back, ripping through as much flesh and bone as it possibly could before disabling itself. The attack stopped short of killing him. He let out a muffled gasp and fell, almost instantly slipping into a state of unconsciousness.

"Your Ditto should have pretended it was too tired to perform a Transform," Mewblade spoke coolly, revealing herself as the Barrier that was concealing her vanished.

Mewblade walked up to the fallen pair with calm and resolute feline grace. Seeing the bloodied bodies covering the mossy patches of earth did not bother her. Actually, it did not bring forth any emotion, moral feelings or sympathy. She was suppose to be a weapon. A weapon does not feel when it maims and kills, it just does as it is meant to do.

"All Pokémon know the laws. Humans are the ones that make them forget and break those laws," she explained, not minding that she was addressing dead air as she did. Well, there were five occupied Pokéballs that happened to be listening gravely; that,

Mewblade did know and she was going to deal with the Pokémon promptly. If not dealt with, the Pokémon might escape their small spherical prisons and try to destroy Mewblade themselves. She had that happen once, and it was very entertaining for her. Still, it was better to take precautions anyway.

Psychic energy wrapped around the five Pokéballs, making them levitate in front of Mewblade. Mewblade observed the Pokéballs critically as she thought of ways to dispose of her five hostages. A minute passed and Mewblade was ready to make her choice when the voice of a little girl and an Eevee stopped her.

The little girl was an eight year old with blonde hair, blue eyes, blue jeans, a pink shirt and daisy barrettes. Her name was Coline. Mewblade dabbled into the girl's memory to find the information that she wanted, all done without anyone except Mewblade knowing about it.

Coline saw the boy and the Ditto, so did the Eevee. Ignoring Mewblade, she ran to the boy's side, the Eevee to the aid of the Ditto.

Coline had knelt next to the boy, the boy being her brother who went by the name of Dan. She reached out to touch her brother but her hand drew back because of the blood. It was obvious that little Coline was scared and had no clue what to do. An eight year old had no idea what death was or what it looked like to see someone die. And in her case, the only difference was that she was more brave, more curious, and more trusting than most children her age.

"Dan, wake-up!" she pleaded as she gently shook her brother's shoulder. Dan's body was getting cold, he was barely alive as it was. The blood trickling from his mouth was making it more obvious. "Please get up. You have to. Dan, please?" she broke down into tears. Her brother was not getting up. She did not know how to help. The Eevee was acting the same way as well.

*I can't kill her unless she does something wrong. Maybe I should take her away from this place. The human will only waste her breath,* Mewblade thought, not entirely sympathizing as she watched the sad proceedings before her eyes. Yet something was bothering Mewblade. She seemed compelled to do something, like help. Mewblade briefly gave her head a shake, trying to rid the idea from her head. Instead of ridding herself of it, it got worse. *It's the girl. She's making me think like this. Grr, I might as well.* Mewblade was irritated as she walked up to the depressing sibling display.

"Here, I'll help," Mewblade muttered as she knelt next to Dan and his Ditto. She raised her paws above the pair, using a Recover ability. That was the first time Mewblade had ever used the ability and it seemed to work well. Almost too well.

The two severe injuries healed completely and at a rate that took only thirty seconds. Mewblade had focused some of her energy into removing dead body tissue and cells so that way there would be no scarring. A small percentage of the energy removed any remnants of blood or signs that there had been an incident. The rest of the energy used was focused through the boy and Ditto, making the healing process fast and efficient. It puzzled Mewblade that she knew such a Recover off-hand like that. Maybe there was a reason why she had it. For all she knew, the scientists who gave her life must have let her learn the ability so that she could use it on possible allies.

Mewblade rose from her kneeling position. Her mind whisked the five occupied Pokéballs back to Dan's belt, unharmed. She was not happy with what she had done. Mewblade had wanted to take out seven lives and had not even ended one.

Dan groaned as he opened his eyes. Sitting up and quickly standing, he noticed Mewblade. Having been unconscious before Mewblade had appeared, he only thought that the strange Pokémon had been there to help. Dan blushed and was constantly looking away.

"You know. Umm . . . well, err. Thanks for saving me," he finally said. Mewblade glared at him, despising his ignorance.

"I nearly killed you for letting your Ditto transform into an Articuno and nearly disrupting the natural weather balance. And you," she glared down at the quivering Ditto, "for disobeying Pokémon Law." The Eevee gave a look of protest but kept her mouth firmly sealed. "If it weren't for your sibling and her *pet*, you two would now be dead." The boy was about to ask a question but Mewblade was far ahead of his thinking, reaching into his mind as she often did. "I helped you because I was getting rather annoyed with the emotions coming from the girl. I allowed myself to forgive you, so I forgave," she stated as she turned away, "for the moment," Mewblade added. She heard two audible sighs of relief from behind, then something latched onto her leg.

"Thank you for saving my brother and forgiving him." The little girl, Coline, was hugging Mewblade's leg tightly, seemingly not afraid of Mewblade the slightest bit. It was odd that Coline could have just ignored the, 'I nearly killed you,' part of Mewblade's speech.

Mewblade did not know what to do. She was angry but almost had this deep sense of compassion for the girl. In her few weeks of life she knew more and had seen more than any living thing fifty times her age. She never had to deal with a situation quite like this. To help herself out, Mewblade ventured into the girl's mind.

*Hugs are sometimes a form of appreciation. She only thought I saved her brother though,* Mewblade thought this over. Her reaction to one thought was of puzzlement. *The human only thinks I act and look tough,* Mewblade paused. *I am not that vain!* Coline was thoroughly convinced that Mewblade was a sweetheart, totally caring but denying it. This was almost sickening to Mewblade.

"Eevvvee eee." (Thank you.) Mewblade looked down to see the Eevee at her feet. The Eevee, a female, was smiling and waving her highly bushy tail back and forth. Apparently the Eevee was adapting at least one similar view that her mistress had. Neither trainer or Pokémon thought Mewblade had done any wrong.

Coline looked up at Mewblade. "What's your name?" Such an innocent question, one that Mewblade did not want to answer, but the big, pleading eyes of Coline made her answer.

"Mewblade. My name is Mewblade," answered Mewblade. Dan scoffed from behind.

"Mewblade? What sort of name is that?" Mewblade cocked her glowing indigo eyes in his direction. Dan quivered almost as much as his Ditto.

"My name was given to me by my creators. Based on genetics and appearance, Mewblade is a well suited name . . . unlike Dan," she snarled.

Dan and Ditto were both confused and they did not want to ask questions. Mewblade was defined as a scary Pokémon that could probably kick their hides without lifting a finger. Evidently silence hung in the air until Dan became a little cocky again. He figured that this 'Mewblade' was not going to hurt him unless he tried to physically hurt her first, but he waited since Coline had spoken.

"Hi, Mewblade. My name is Coline," Coline greeted as she took a step away from Mewblade, extending a hand. "Pleased to meet you."

Unfamiliar to such a human gesture, Mewblade once again read Coline's mind. It was becoming irritating for Mewblade because she never had to read that many thoughts in such a small space of time. Extending her paw, she took Coline's tiny hand in her paw and gave a firm but gentle shake before releasing.

"Are you a Pokémon?" Coline asked as she smiled sweetly. Coline was not certain and frankly too young to know much about Pokémon species.

Mewblade was rather puzzled. She was created like some inanimate object from an industrial line or like a stem cell in a petri dish. Sure, she may have been made from Pokémon DNA but she was not born, she was created. It perturbed Mewblade to a certain extent. She had no parental guidance, there was no sense of breeding, there was no artificial insemination. Even how she thought and acted was designed for her. Mewblade lived life like she had been living it for years, when in reality she had only been living it for a few weeks. In the end Mewblade was as far removed from a normal Pokémon birth and upbringing as possible.

"I am a Pokémon in some ways," Mewblade answered emotionlessly. Coline began to have a pleading look on her face.

"Can you please be one of my Pokémon?" she asked, hands folded in front of her, almost as if she were begging. The very question made Mewblade angry. She was a sentient creature, not some mindless drone that lived to serve an overruling baron of an eight year old.

"I am nobody's property, and I will not be yours. The human who funded my creation tried that. If he attempts to capture me, I will destroy him."

"Oh," Coline replied meekly in disappointment. She tried at least.

"You're created like some sort of science experiment?" mocked Dan as he asked, finally getting to say his piece.

Mewblade glared at Dan, her eyes narrowing threateningly. Dan and Ditto backed away inch by inch, just wishing that they could run as fast as possible. "Yes, I was created," Mewblade sighed, wondering why she even bothered telling the humans and their Pokémon this. "I was made through the process of genetic engineering and advanced cloning techniques." This made no real sense to Coline. She heard something involving science things and that was it. Mewblade personally did not care much about talking to the humans anymore. She was becoming more irritated as the seconds passed and wanted to leave. "I have to go now," Mewblade said quickly as she faced away. Her aura was flickering faintly around her, readying a Teleport.

"Bye, Mewblade," Coline said sadly.

"Eee!" (Bye!) Eevee said.

“You have to visit us again! Promise?” Coline quickly added after her Eevee. Dan and his Ditto were silent and silently relieved that Mewblade had just announced her departure.

“I can’t promise that,” Mewblade’s head lowered as she spoke and then she used Teleport.

Back in her spacious cave Mewblade monitored the usual disturbances. The screen in front of her flipped from scene, to scene, to scene as if it were changed with a remote. The screen went back to its usual off state.

*Nothing.* Mewblade sat in her high-backed chair, paws clenching the ends of the arm rests. *I can’t believe I felt compassion for that girl. Mewtwo may have compassion for the Master To Be, but for a worthless girl? Never,* she thought. Mewblade crossed her arms over her waist, her head leaning back as she gazed up at the earthen ceiling. “Why? Why do I have feelings and emotions?” she asked herself. Mewblade was suppose to be a weapon, she was not allowed to have emotions, or so she thought.

Mewblade stood with a sudden ferocity, her energy cannon aimed at a far wall. She swiftly released a large blast of energy. The wall spewed rock away from itself, large pieces of rock crashing to the floor, dust hanging heavily in the air.

Mewblade growled harshly while her muscles tensed noticeably beneath her rough, black fur. It was not the mess that was making her have that reaction. She wanted to release her frustration but had a hard time doing it in a productive manner. Mewblade snarled at the settling dust and with a swipe of her paw, the dust and debris was gone.

“Mew, mew,” (Hello, Mewtwo,) greeted Mew as she flew in through a window. She moved so that she was facing Mewtwo, noticing his solemn expression. “Mew mew mew,” (You seem upset,) she pointed out the obvious as she looked at his face closely, backing away as Mewtwo shooed her with his paw. He did not bother to look up as he gave his reply.

<“It’s about Mewblade. She is upholding, or rather enforcing Pokémon Law,”> Mewtwo muttered.

“Mew mew mew mew, mew. Mew mew mew mew mew, mew mew mew mew mew mew,” (That is her decision, Mewtwo. Plus with all the rebels, her help is somewhat appreciative,) Mew said quietly. “Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew,” (Even if she does kill some Pokémon,) Mew added as a depressive side note.

<“You find no wrong in what she is doing because you think Mewblade is confused.”> Mewtwo looked at Mew seriously at the same time wondering why Mew had come in the first place.

“Mew . . . Mew. Mew . . .” (I . . . Hmm. Well . . .) Mew looked away.

<“Or is it because she protects you? Fends for you, that you can see no fault?”> questioned Mewtwo, knowing he had cornered Mew. Mewtwo was relying more on knowledge than Mew who was only relying on a gut feeling. <“Mew, is she . . .”>



“Mew mew,” (Not certain,) Mew interrupted Mewtwo before he finished his question. She knew what he was asking. “Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew.” (She doesn’t have a hold on her choices.)

<“I think she has a hold like super glue to rubber,”> muttered Mewtwo while giving his opinion.

“Mew mew mew mew mew,” (I get this feeling that,) Mew was sounding distant and quickly made herself sound more confident. “Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew. Mew mew mew mew. Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew.” (That maybe she has more to her. Like some deep power. The ultimate good behind that black veil of hate.) Mew gazed to the window and the setting sun, lost in her thoughts.

<“I’m new to it. I just doubt Mewblade is one. But, you have wisdom beyond that of what my intelligence could ever compare to. At least you can see the good inside of everyone,”> Mewtwo told Mew, complimenting Mew’s most favorable trait as he did.

“Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew?” (Then do you feel this *other* power?) Mew glanced at Mewtwo, her face looked worried. Mewtwo’s paw tightened. He never thought the matter of great importance but now he did. That must have been what Mew wanted to talk about.

<“The power wreaks with evil. Almost like Mewblade’s when I provoked her. It’s judgmental whether to act now or later,”> spoke Mewtwo, getting a mild headache from searching around with his mind. Everything was irritating him easily as of late, all because of Mewblade. <“Mew, you should leave now. We can see into this problem later,”> he grumbled. Mewtwo did not want to offend Mew if he happened to lose his temper.

“Mew mew, mew. Mew mew mew,” (Sure thing, Mewtwo. See you later,) Mew said her farewell with a wave before gracefully flying out the window.

*What to do about Mewblade?* Mewtwo thought, not helping to rid himself of his headache.

Mewblade carved random patterns into the wall where she had ruined it. It gave her something to do and she was usually quite content while she was carving. The spot had quickly become an alcove. Mewblade had summoned the usual style of cushions she liked and had it placed in the spot. It was not a bad spot for the alcove, quite convenient actually. It was close enough to the doorway but far enough from the screen that Mewblade would feel a bit peaceable.

Stepping back from her work, Mewblade admired it briefly before gazing at a row of shelves off to her right. One shelf caught her eye in particular, it consisted of trainer badges. It was quite a collection, a different badge from every trainer she had killed. The concept seemed ruthless but it did not bother Mewblade; evidently, she was not really admiring her collection at the moment. What she was actually noticing was that she had not seen a single Earth Badge for the last two weeks from any trainers.

The Earth Badge was a trademark badge from the Viridian City gym; the gym that Mewblade would have been fighting in if she had allowed herself to be tricked. The Gym Leader, who would have been her master, was Giovanni, leader of Team Rocket. It was not likely that Giovanni had quit the profession. The job provided a large income and an

excellent front. It was even less likely that Giovanni had obtained a common, but powerful Pokémon that could win against every opponent it faced. That left Mewblade with one other conclusion. Giovanni was a very desperate and a very stupid human who had funded another.

Mewblade sighed as she walked towards the high-backed chair that was in front of the screen. She swished her tail over one side of the chair so that way she could sit down easily. *Time to see what Giovanni is up to.* Mewblade focused on the monitor, thinking of the bustling city of Viridian and the vile gym in the center of it.

In response to Mewblade's visualizations the screen showed a moderate view of Viridian City's center. Mewblade wanted a closer view, or rather an inside view. She thought of the entranceway, on the screen it showed large gold doors and two guards dressed in gold roman military attire. She was about to think of the inside when something happened.

On the screen a boy had appeared as the doors opened and he ran out crying. The guards stood like statues, emotionless and completely dehumanized. The child had a bloody bundle in his arms that was not even recognizable as a Pokémon. It was small patches of fur, scarred skin, infected everything, a missing limp, battered body. On the boy's belt two Pokéballs pulsed rapidly with red light before the lights were individual flat streams of light, then fading away until they were blank. Three of the child's prized Pokémon were dead. Now Mewblade was intrigued and had even more reason to see the inside of the Viridian Gym.

Mewblade paused before pressing further with her mind. She wondered what could have done that sort of damage and that fast. It was rare for a short fight to end with death, yet the damage was quite varied and nothing pieced itself together. Mewblade *had* to see the inside of that gym. The screen flicked to look inside.

The gym still remained the same since Mewblade was in it three weeks ago. The place was dark except for a pale white glow from a curtain opening up to a second floor indoor balcony. The skylight above was also shedding a dim light into the interior. Even in the darkness Mewblade could see the silhouetted figure of Giovanni and his Persian. They were both on the balcony looking into the center of the gym. What must have been two scientists were off in opposite corners, also looking into the center.

Mewblade adjusted her focus while looking at the screen, her pupils enlarging to let in more light. She fixed the screen so that way the details were easier to identify. By now every small minuscule thing was identifiable inside the gym.

The earthen floor was wrecked, absolutely demolished. There were pot holes with radiuses of fifty centimeters. Scorched spots were strewn everywhere across the floor, making the floor appear to be a lunar landscape rather than an actual floor. More attention to detail. There were dark patches of red, dried blood from many fights before, also including the pools of it from the fight that only happened a few minutes ago. That was not the only liquid. Various colors of one type of liquid were slowly corroding the floor as it steamed away. Yet Mewblade was more interested with the thing in the center of the gym.

In the very center, amongst the aftermath of many battles, was a Pokémon. It was eight feet and four inches tall with dark red skin, no fur. It had three fingers, one thumb per each of its two hands, and three toes per each of its two feet. Each digit ended with

long, steel and platinum claws; hard to recognize that they were metal since the Pokémon had its hands soaked in its victims' fluids.

The Pokémon had the basic shape that Mewtwo and Mewblade had, there were a few catches though. This Pokémon was more lean and far more masculine than Mewblade. It had a reptilian tail, thick base, thin end, same color as the body. Along the Pokémon's tail and chest, its enhanced metal skeletal structure was exposed, making it look like a rotting corpse. This was only identifiable to Mewblade because she sensed through the armor of the Pokémon, rather than just guessing its framework. The armor was made of some very costly platinum, steel alloy metal covering almost the entirety of the Pokémon. Mewblade could tell that the armor was made mostly so that Giovanni could have a higher amount of control over it.

The Pokémon moved so that way it was looking behind itself, focusing on the two scientists and Giovanni. Mewblade could see a type of energy as she watched. The energy was psychic acting in nature but the energy itself was very dark, deep and ridden with impurities. The energy was being exchanged in a wave pattern, or to be more exact, a voice pattern.

*It knows I'm spying on it*, Mewblade thought as she watched Giovanni nod and the Pokémon looked straight ahead, seeming to be staring at Mewblade. Her screen was invisible and usually undetectable. Suddenly Mewblade felt dark energy lace around her screen and it reacted to the wishes of the Pokémon.

The Pokémon pressed a button on the left side of its helmet and Mewblade had a first glimpse of the Pokémon's face. The eyes were red but completely glazed over, looking as if the eyes were either dead, or blind. Glancing behind the Pokémon for a millisecond, Mewblade noticed Giovanni was watching with amusement. The Pokémon had a screen on its end and Mewblade was exposed. She hid her shock.

"You must be Mewblade," it said with a wild grin. Its mouth was full of sharp fangs, suitable to a carnivore and a great contrast to Mewblade's omnivorous teeth. The Pokémon's voice was very venomous sounding, almost like a snake but deep enough that it was not quite that way. "And you're spying on me."

Mewblade growled, her paws creating cracks in the armrests as she nearly crushed them. She knew Giovanni was just letting the Pokémon speak his mind and Giovanni was enjoying it.

"I'm Vicebane," Vicebane said as he sneered at Mewblade. "A Mewthree, just like you." It was obvious to him that Mewblade was not going to say anything. Her eyes said everything so Vicebane did not to wait for verbal answers.

*Vicebane. Why does he seem so familiar?* Mewblade glanced to her right, away from the screen and then looked back at Vicebane. He was a full male, she had not doubt about that one. Giovanni did not have any control over Mewtwo or Mewblade, probably because they were both half-sexes.

"I'm expecting your company soon," said Vicebane with a sly tone of voice. Almost immediately the screen on Mewblade's end went blank. Vicebane had ended the conversation.

Mewblade got up from her seat and leaned against a wall close to the main entrance of her cave. She paused for a moment, her mind reading the minds of all those but

Vicebane's in the Viridian Gym. Mewblade's best ability was well refined and she used it to find all the information she wanted about the strange Mewthree, Vicebane.

Dark, poison and psychic, initially a ghost type, which explained a few things about him. Vicebane was created just after Mewblade, reason why he awoke almost a week after she did as well. Mewblade found out that herself, Vicebane and some other Mewthrees were part of a project called '10.a Intensity'. All of the Mewthrees were partial clones of Mewtwo with other traits taken from dragon, ghost, steel, and dark type Pokémon.

Mewblade was made to have immediate power as soon as she awakened, just as Vicebane was. As she read more and more of the scientists' minds in particular, Mewblade started finding things that maybe she did not need to know. A mistake.

*It's only one error. Natural for humans to make mistakes,* Mewblade dismissed the idea as she continued her mind-reading.

Her creation process was rushed, it relied on no previous data. Maybe Mewblade was lucky that it only took eleven months to create her, that she was not obedient and semi-passive like she should have been. The scientists tried to bring out some gentle female qualities by not only making her a partial clone of Mew but also making certain her body produced at least some hormones that made her even the slightest bit female. Those qualities were deformed.

*Maybe that is why I can't control my emotions well, or why I have such poorly functioning ones.* Mewblade looked outside, the sun was setting slowly in the west, reminding her that it had only been one day with so much going on. She continued to poke around in the humans' skulls.

A slightly more annoying problem was that Mewblade was only suppose to be a dominant steel and psychic type. The dark type qualities showed fast in her though. Really odd considering where her genotypes came from. Fortunately, she did have strong psychic qualities, so there were no worries.

Digging still deeper in the selected minds, Mewblade found out a helpful tidbit of information. Vicebane and the other Mewthrees were partial Mewtwo clones created specifically to be loyal and obedient to a greater extent than Mewblade. As well, they were all far removed from being asexual, that could be a possible advantage. If any were female, they would be physically weak. And the males would be naive fighters, or so Mewblade assumed.

Mewblade was done with her mind-reading for now. She got some information that could be to her advantage and other information that explained a bit more about herself. Outside it was dusk and to the east there were stars beginning to show in the evening sky. Mewblade looked at the stars, caught in their beauty.

"Not a care, not a thought or a feeling. Just masses of helium and hydrogen," Mewblade mumbled as she just stared at the sky, a deep blue velvet in color. A swarm of Butterfree flew past, pollen shimmering off their wings and falling to the earth. They did not see Mewblade hidden within the shadows of her cave. For a moment Mewblade envied the blissful unawareness of the world, and how the clock always kept marching forward. "I better meditate," she muttered as she headed into the depths of her dwelling.

Mewblade walked into what was her sleeping quarters. It was the only room with a carpet, which was actually a purple dyed Ursaring fur throw-rug. There was a master

size bed in the back of the room, covered in soft purple sheets and purple comforter. The bed was there but never slept on. Mewblade had never felt the need for sleep besides before she awoke from her tank.

Above the center of the room was a skylight. The skylight was deep, with a layer of glass, water in between, then another pane of glass. This gave the feeling that room was a bit underwater, the way the light constantly changed was eerie but calming at the same time. Another effect involving lights were the gold, bowl-like wall sconces. There was a wall sconce next to the two sides of the entranceway. Then there were two above the bedpost of the bed, slightly offset the right and left of the bed. Four sconces were divided between the other two walls. Six hanging sconces were arranged in a circle around the skylight.

Mewblade took a seat in the middle of the room, sitting on the throw-rug. The room had been dimly lit but Mewblade had changed that. The sconces each came alive with a purple ball of light that was held gently by each of the single sconces. Once Mewblade did that the sconces could run on their own until a psychic force stopped them. It took no energy to keep the sconces on besides the energy that nature provided. Looking around the room one could tell that Mewblade had an obsession for decorating with purple. The color purple was her favorite color, she loved the rich hues it had.

Mewblade shifted into a comfortable position and began to meditate. She calmed her mind and allowed her psychic potential to become more accessible. Doing this might actually be necessary for what she was planning tomorrow.

It was late afternoon in Viridian City. The Viridian Gym stood out ominously against all the skyscrapers and office buildings. It had been closed only an hour earlier but unlike the office buildings, there was still some serious business going on inside.

Giovanni stood on the gym floor facing Vicebane. Giovanni did not feel afraid of Vicebane, even if the Pokémon literally towered over him, was a ferocious fighter and looked like the representation of Satan. His confidence was no less even if Vicebane was also not wearing his armor, one of the few things that guaranteed Giovanni the ultimate control over Vicebane.

Vicebane looked down at Giovanni. He respected his master for giving him life, for letting him fight, and encouraging his generally catastrophic behavior on the gym floor. It was something he was designed to do. Like Mewblade, Vicebane was already prepared for the lifestyle that he was programmed for. He lived a lot of experiences without really living them, making his view on everything seem unnatural. For instance, the removal of his armor was a rare bliss, although he had only worn the armor for two weeks. The responsibility he was being granted also was rare to him, and it made him respect Giovanni even more. Call it brainwashing, or maybe a twisted loyalty, but Vicebane had some feeling of respect for the human that everyone else called 'Boss'.

"Remember, you're still under my control. You must disrupt the weather patterns, wait for Articuno, Zapdos, and Moltres to arrive, then capture them," Giovanni barked as he motioned towards seven black Pokéballs on a mantel placed upon the balcony rail. "Clear?"

Vicebane bowed his head acknowledging Giovanni's authority. "All is clear," he answered emotionlessly.

"Good. I will return by the twenty-two hundredth hour. If you contact me before then, I will come here sooner." Giovanni headed for a door that led to the training rooms, offices and most importantly a stairwell going up to the helicopter pad on the gym roof. He paused briefly and removed a remote from his breast pocket. Pressing the button on the remote the skylight split in the middle and folded onto the roof. "Begin," he ordered Vicebane and nearly ran down the hallway and up the stairs towards his private helicopter. He wanted to be in the air while the weather disturbances were mild.

Vicebane looked up at the clear blue sky, a lone helicopter was making its way to the Viridian Forest. Now it was time for him to start. Vicebane outspread his arms, his right paw facing up, his left paw facing down. This would create an imbalance in air pressure. Vicebane focused his dark energy manipulating it so that it performed almost wickedly powerful psychic abilities.

Vicebane's aura was a deep red with flecks of black and he made it move through his arms to his paws, where he forced the air pressure to move in the opposite direction. His right paw was forcing the low pressure skyward, the left paw forcing the high pressure towards the ground. Where the two types of air pressure met, there was chaos as Vicebane willed the two air pressures to be more than just storm clouds, he wanted complete weather havoc.

The effect was fast acting. Clouds swirled, almost like funnel clouds but not quite. Lightning crackled through the sky, tainted red with not just the extreme heat but also by Vicebane's aura. Scorching wind battled with chilling blasts of air for the upper hand in the weather power struggle. The hot air became a deafening roar while the cold air acted its own fury in the form of a snowstorm.

*Those bird brains will be here in minutes, and if Mewblade shows up, she'll be an extra bonus.* Vicebane looked up at his work, swirling clouds, lightning, snow and raging hot winds. Perfect to him, horrible for everyone else. He had no need to waste anymore of his energy, the weather was doing a perfect job of working itself up into a frenzy without him. But this was not the best part of what he was suppose to be doing today, in a few moments the *real* fun would begin.

Ash Ketchum, Misty, Brock, Pikachu and Togepi were walking down the streets of Viridian City. It would be their third time walking down the city streets of Viridian for everyone except Brock and Togepi.

"Ash, why couldn't we fly straight to Pallet Town?" Misty grumbled, glancing at Ash as she walked on the sidewalk. Togepi made the usual senseless trills of encouragement, noticing the slight tone of irritation in Misty's voice. Misty heard but did not say much to Togepi, the little baby Pokémon often made noises for no apparent reason and was often hard to speak to when it rode in Misty's backpack.

Pikachu was sitting casually on Ash's backpack. He was a bit bored as he looked forward, only to have his view partially blocked by Ash's hair. Slight bit of movement and Pikachu caught a clear glimpse of Misty looking over at Ash, who was impatiently waiting for an answer.

“There’s no airport in Pallet,” Ash bluntly stated. His enthusiasm was nearly gone at the moment, nothing was interesting and he was tired.

“Pika pika chu,” (This is boring,) Pikachu grumbled as he looked at the people walking past. They were so dull, always staring straight ahead and acting as if they never saw a single person who passed them on the same sidewalk.

“What was so important that Professor Oak insisted that we take a plane anyway?” Misty griped some more.

“Pika pikachu pi pikachu,” (I’d like to know too,) Pikachu nodded with agreement, not liking to run errands as much as Ash did.

“It was something about my Muk, and it was urgent,” Ash said in his still rather tiresome way. Brock listened to the pair, already expecting an argument. He kept quiet since he did not want to start taking sides. He sighed in slight dismay as Misty breathed in heavily, ready to shout at Ash.

“If you hadn’t ruined my bike we would all be getting there a lot faster!” yelled Misty, startling Togepi as she did.

“Pika pi chu pika,” (Not this again,) Pikachu groaned.

“I can’t believe how stubborn you are Misty! It was just a bike,” Ash retorted as he stepped closer to Misty, more than ready to start some sort of foolish struggle. It was most likely that Misty would win in a struggle against Ash. Brock realized that if he did not intervene he would have to take Ash to the hospital and Misty to a therapist.

“Alright you two, no fighting. Let’s put aside our differences and keep walking.” Brock got between the pair, hands held in front of both of their faces in order to halt them.

“Fine!” Ash and Misty said in unison as they looked away from each other, trying to pretend they loathed the entire existence of the other. The silence was unbearable but it did not last long. The sky around the group began to darken dramatically and the group looked up at the blackening sky, a gasp escaping them.

“The sun. It’s gone,” Misty frowned, hugging her arms closer to herself as Togepi sought refuge deep within Misty’s backpack.

Pikachu looked behind himself as he watched black clouds race towards the horizon and engulf the sun in near perpetual blackness. Street lights flickered on and people on the sidewalk stopped, looking around feverishly for the cause of the early, cryptic sunset. Fear began to show and chaos spread as the first crackles of red spider lightning laced across the sky. Every person ran to seek immediate shelter.

“We’ve gotta’ go!” Brock shouted above the din of thunder, running people and screaming voices. Misty and Ash both agitatedly began to make small motions towards an overhanging canopy. They stopped moving, tensing as the hot searing winds roared and the chilling winds began their ancient fight of dominance.

“Pika pi!” (Ash!) Pikachu exclaimed as he climbed onto the top of Ash’s head, pointing at the city center. Ash heard Pikachu call his name and looked to where Pikachu was pointing.

The air was unbearably hot and humid, making it hard to breathe or even imagine what Ash was looking at. He shielded his eyes, standing stalk-still amongst throngs of moving people. “How the . . .” he mumbled, perturbed to see a white haze, snow that was spreading out from the center of the city.

“Ash, do you think a Pokémon could be causing this?” Misty asked, forgetting her little grudge with Ash. She had moved closer to Ash, partially looking over her friend’s shoulder as she noticed the odd weather patterns which all seemed to be coming from a main focal point.

Ash glanced up at the sky, then to the city center. He saw the people running away from the source of the problem. There was only one place that had Pokémon and that was in the center of Viridian City. “The gym!” Ash exclaimed, finally showing his enthusiasm but more so his courageous determination. “A Pokémon at the gym must be causing this. We have to stop it before someone gets hurt,” he spoke with purpose and without warning began to race through the streets, Pikachu barely managing to keep a strong hold on to Ash.

“Wait up!” Brock waved his arms.

“Ash!” Misty followed after Ash but there was a fair distance between her and him.

“Oh brother,” Brock sighed, not willing to run into trouble. A white flash from behind Brock startled him as a bolt of lightning blasted a nearby building, breaking windows and sending glass onto the streets. “Never mind. Aaaahhhh!” Brock hollered in a panic as he ran after Ash and Misty, much more quickly than expected.

Mewblade had been meditating for the last eighteen hours. Her psychic potential was strong because of her meditation. It was the first time she had tried it but it was a tried, tested and true method now that she had actually done it for herself. Mewblade’s ears twitched slightly, immediately she was out of her meditation and straight up to her feet in one swift, fluid motion.

It is a misconception whether or not Mewblade can sprint because of her body type since psychic and steel types are never known for their physical fitness. The dark type qualities enabled her to move agilely, so Mewblade actually ran from her sleeping quarters into the main room.

Mewblade skittered into the room, nearly racing right past her high-backed chair before she took a seat in it. The screen in front of her flicked to a slight aerial view of the Viridian Gym. Mewblade’s eyes absorbed as much information she could see.

On the screen a helicopter was heading towards Viridian Forest, obviously Giovanni’s helicopter. Though eyes are deceitful, Mewblade saw the true likeness to what was going on. A very large, vile aura was taking control of the weather around itself. Mewblade used her mind to visualize the air currents, static charges, humidity and temperatures. She knew what was going on.

“Vicebane,” she hissed as she thought of the vile creature.

The screen changed to look at a pleasant late morning view of Shamouti Island in the foreground and the three neighboring islands, the island of Ice, the island of Fire, and the island of Thunder in the background. Against the background of islands, sea and sky, three forms took shape, all of them birds.

The bird in the front, known as the Titan of Thunder, was the spiky yellow bird also known as Zapdos. Slightly behind him and off to his left was the Titan of Fire; a pale orange bird surrounded by flames, known as Moltres. The lagging one in the group was



the Titan of Ice; a beautiful blue bird with a trailing tail of shimmering ice, known as Articuno.

All three of the titans had sensed the serious disturbances in the weather. They saw it as their major concern since they felt that someone was trying to overthrow their elemental powers; otherwise, none of the birds would have ever agreed to leave their territories.

“Articuno, Zapdos, Moltres,” Mewblade murmured as she looked at the birds with interest. Something was a bit hazy with Mewblade’s focus so she forced herself to blink. “What?” Mewblade winced, seeing something she had not expected to.

Articuno looked soft and feathery to everything alive, but Mewblade saw a moving sheet of ice and energy that was presenting a frozen wasteland. Her form showed a heart that barely beats, lungs too chilled to draw a breath, a spine of black ice with wispy tendrils of nerves escaping it, eyes frozen open in an eternal memorizing gaze. Zapdos appeared like a jagged figure of compressed lightning threatening to explode from a contained shell. Everything was wild, fast paced inside and hard to make out. Moltres looked normal, if what Mewblade was seeing now was normal. Moltres was a shape of a phoenix that had been set aflame by a fire too bright and too hot to be close to.

Mewblade shook her head, everything looked the same again. The birds soared and dived, crying out in crackles, squawks, screeches, whistles and tweets as they communicated a plan. Zapdos came close to Mewblade’s viewpoint, changing into a large bolt of electricity before disappearing. It was Zapdos’ Teleport. Moltres and Articuno mimicked Zapdos’ lead, converting to a stream of fire, the other to a puff of ice crystals before completing their Teleportations.

Mewblade leaned back in her chair momentarily, willing the screen to turn off to its usual translucent gray format. She gave no heed to what she had seen of Articuno, Zapdos and Moltres. It was possible that she was imagining what she saw but it seemed so real. Instead, Mewblade thought of Vicebane and Giovanni’s scheme.

Vicebane must have been ordered by Giovanni to capture the Legendary Birds by attracting them with the chaotic weather. Giovanni most likely received information from some of his researchers about how to lead the certain Pokémon into a trap, this way Giovanni would get the Pokémon he wanted. The perilous weather patterns could then lead to the destruction of entire cities and force people to surrender to Giovanni at a price.

*A good plan Giovanni thought of,* Mewblade thought as she grinned. It did not take a genius to figure out Giovanni’s intentions. The prospect of facing Vicebane did not elude her mind either. A feeling was welling up inside of Mewblade, in one way it horrified her but in the other way it absolutely delighted her. Rising from her seat, Mewblade focused on the Viridian Gym and Teleported.

Ash’s breath came out as steam as he sprinted towards the gym. “Must get to the gym,” he huffed. Pikachu listened to Ash with worry. He knew his trainer was pretty exhausted. Ash paused from his running to catch a breather. He hunched over, having barely any stamina left in order to stand up straight. The snow was cooling him down quickly since it stuck to his skin and clothing but the searing wind insisted on hitting him. A particularly loud crash boomed from behind Ash but Ash dismissed it entirely.

“Ash,” Misty called from a distance, nearly a block away from her comrade. Ash heard Misty and glanced at her from his hunched position. Misty was jogging, she seemed pretty aggravated.

“Oh . . . Hey, Misty,” Ash said weakly. The sound of electricity searing metal was heard by Ash. Misty in turn saw the result, skidding to a halt in the snow and nearly slipping as she did.

“Ash!” she shouted. “Behind you!” Misty was in utter panic and disbelief.

Hair whipped into both Ash’s and Pikachu’s face as they turned to look at what Misty was so worried about. A large lamp post was cracked near the base, leaning erratically towards Ash and Pikachu. No time to move, Ash and Pikachu were done for.

Misty closed her eyes. Ash and Pikachu braced, anticipating their inevitable doom. Then out of nowhere a streak of blue light snatched Ash from his position. The figure holding Ash faltered and fell sideways into the snow a few feet away from harm. Pikachu had let go and was caught by a small, pink bubble. Misty opened her eyes, realizing that Ash was not beneath the lamp post. Brock had just recently caught up and was stunned.

Ash lay still in the snow next to a tall Pokémon. The Pokémon stirred and shifted into a crouching position next to Ash. Misty edged closer but stiffened as the Pokémon brushed a paw gently over Ash’s neck to feel if there was a pulse, scowling as it did before sitting upright. Ash had come to at the touch, sitting up as well. He looked at his savior, blinking.

“You, you saved me,” Ash looked into the cold lavender eyes of the Pokémon, jumping back as he did. “You’re that Pokémon who guarded all those other Pokémon and the water. Mewtwo, right?”

Mewtwo kept a rather serious expression, even though he was a bit surprised. <“I am Mewtwo,”> he answered bluntly.

“How come you saved me?” Ash had a curious and grateful expression on his face. Mewtwo gazed at the lamp post before looking back at Ash. He felt responsible for watching over Ash, and when the vile aura took over the weather, Ash just happened to be in the epicenter. Mewtwo had made it to save Ash’s life in the nick-of-time.

<“What was received is now returned. You helped me, I helped you.”>

Brock and Misty exchanged looks, staying quiet. Neither of them had such a bond with rare Pokémon that Ash had. The pair was silent as they listened with interest. Ash nodded in understanding towards Mewtwo, as he did he noticed a bloody gash running along almost the full length of Mewtwo’s tail. Ash reached out then withdrew his hand. “Your tail.”

Mewtwo looked at his tail as well as the blood staining the snow. His folly earlier had been caused by that very injury. <“It’s just a minor inconvenience,”> he said as if the injury were nothing more than a measly paper cut. <“It is easy to fix.”> Mewtwo thought of healing the injury and used Recover, the injury sealed itself and healed without a scar or missing fur. Blood still happened to stain the lavender fur of Mewtwo’s tail, yet he was not in Viridian City to sport appearances.

Ash looked around in puzzlement, he could not find Pikachu. He frantically looked to his left and right, calling out the name of his Pokémon. He felt terrible.

“Pika pika.”

“Mew.” Two highly squeaky voices spoke behind Ash. Ash turned around, his face bright, cheerful, and most importantly, relieved as he caught a glimpse of Pikachu seated on a small, pink bubble conversing with a small, pink Pokémon. The pink Pokémon flew in front of Ash. “Mew,” it said while viewing Ash curiously.

“What’s that?” Misty asked as she turned to Brock.

“Probably another rare Pokémon,” Brock suggested.

“Pi, pika pi,” (Hi, Ash,) Pikachu smiled from the bubble before jumping through the snowy air and straight into Ash’s waiting arms. Pikachu nuzzled his master happily, glad that Ash was okay.

“I’m glad to see you’re okay too, buddy,” Ash laughed as he scooped Pikachu up in his arms before placing his best pal onto his backpack. At the moment Ash would have preferred to hold Pikachu but he wanted to check something. Reaching down into his vest pocket Ash removed his Pokédex so he could properly identify the pink Pokémon. The Pokédex responded with a monotone voice.

*“Scanning data banks . . . Pokémon identified . . . Pokémon: Mew.”* The Pokédex stopped talking since Ash had gotten enough information from it.

“Mew,” Ash whispered as if he were trying to recall a hidden thought. Misty and Brock were on either side of Ash now, looking at the entry in the Pokédex.

“Ash?” Misty looked concerned and waved her hand in front of Ash’s face. Ash blinked.

“I’ve seen that Pokémon before. It was at the docks across from New Island!” A small gasp from behind signified that Mewtwo was worried about Ash’s statement.

Brainwashing only blocks the passage of information from one part of the brain to another. Nothing alive can possibly erase a memory. Memories are a vital process to life, and taking even forgotten information away can completely destroy someone. Mewtwo deeply hoped that Ash would not recall any information from that certain moment in time.

Ash shrugged his shoulders. “That’s all I can remember about that Pokémon.”

“Mew?” (What?) Mew spoke as she did a playful somersault.

“Are we going to the gym or not? I did not run all the way here, to get into trouble, not to go further,” Misty frowned in agitation.

“Oh yeah, you’re right, the gym,” Ash said, embarrassed, remembering his previous quest and ready to run off again.

<“Wait . . . Ash,”> Mewtwo said from the rear of the group. He had never spoken the human’s name before but he had encountered Ash enough times that he could at least address Ash by his name. The human meant something to Mewtwo, he had changed his life and gave Mewtwo spirit. <“Both myself and Mew will accompany you.”>

Ash looked back at Mewtwo, smiling fearlessly, making a fist to emphasize a point. “K, we’ll probably need your help.” The group moved towards the gym, finding no need to stand in that spot any longer. A few lone colorful trails of different auras had passed over top of the group, entering the gym.

*They better get here,* Vicebane thought irritably as he stood in the center of the Viridian Gym floor looking up at the open skylight. Watching the spider lightning crackle almost

continuously through the sky was beginning to bore him. Seeing his Barrier through the skylight was even more dull to stare at. It was there to protect the gym from the rage of the storm, not to amuse Vicebane. "I want to fight already!" he roared, steam started to rise mysteriously from the floor. Within a minute Vicebane was calm again. He folded his arms over top of each other, trying to be patient. And there he stood, awaiting the moment in which he could finally go about his task. Fortunately for Vicebane, the wait was not long.

An elaborate electric charge drifted into the gym through the skylight. A small trail of fire followed, as did a lagging puff of ice crystals. The elemental particles descended gracefully to the floor, light began to spread from the contact points. Vicebane forced himself to turn away since the light was painful to his dead eyes. As soon as the glow subsided Vicebane glimpsed at the new arrivals.

Three pairs of eyes stared back at Vicebane, each eye possessing a glint belonging only to that of a Legendary Pokémon. He had been waiting for their arrival with anticipation. They in turn were not as thrilled.

The bird encased in fire, Moltres, squawked, stating that her powers were infinite. The spiky yellow bird, Zapdos, glared lightly. Zapdos' electric telepathy filled the gym with an eerie yellow glow before dissipating.

<"We are infinite,"> Zapdos corrected Moltres. His telepathic voice matched his snotty personality. Moltres scowled and sent her telepathy around the room. Articuno did the same.

<"It does not matter,"> Moltres shot back at Zapdos with little disdain. <"At least that creature,"> she paused and motioned at Vicebane, <"is not infinite."> Articuno listened and shook her icy head. She had no tolerance for Zapdos, who was one to start arguments. She had barely any tolerance for Moltres, who was as equally hot-headed as Zapdos.

<"You two can argue later. We agreed to come here to deal with the threat. So we shall destroy this law breaker, first,"> Articuno said, reminding the other two titans of their task. The birds looked at Vicebane, studying him as coldly as Articuno's Ice Beam. He did not feel intimidated at all; in fact, he enjoyed the attention and the overzealous remarks coming from the birds. They thought that their combined power would easily defeat him, mostly since he was mortal and they were not.

Zapdos had been next to Moltres, and Articuno a ways off to his front-right. He spread his small wings, flapping them vigorously before swiftly flying over top of Vicebane and landing across from Moltres. They had made a large triangle around the Mewthree, penning him in so he would not be allowed to escape if he tried.

<"You shall die!!!"> hollered Zapdos, his electricity massing around his body erratically before it surged towards Vicebane. Vicebane stood stock-still as the electricity laced towards him.

"No, you will." Vicebane's eyes glowed red, the electricity stopped where it was. With what seemed to be little effort, the electricity shot up through the skylight. A bolt of red lightning responded to the high charge of Zapdos' electricity and the two charges met with a large crash. While the crash echoed deafeningly in the gym, Zapdos stared up at the sky, totally flabbergasted. His attack had been manipulated so easily. Vicebane

smirked and began to make an offensive movement. The timing to attack Zapdos in particular, was perfect.

Mewblade appeared at the entrance doors of the Viridian Gym. The hot air blew at her short fur as some snowflakes stuck lightly to it. Her aura spread out around herself, protecting Mewblade's body from the elements.

"Pikachu." Mewblade heard a voice behind her. She spun around gracefully and was somewhat surprised. Three humans were jogging up to the gym. Mewblade could almost know them by instinct, Ash Ketchum, Misty, and Brock. Next to the humans were Mew and Mewtwo. Mewtwo was flying slowly while Mew had to be a bit more fast to keep up.

"Mewtwo, Mew," Mewblade muttered. Ash and his friends stopped, scared of what Mewblade might do. Mewtwo and Mew also stopped but Mew made no hesitation to go forward a little more.

"Mew. Mew mew mew mew?" (Hello. How come you're here?) Mew asked. Mewblade was cut off from speaking an answer by Ash.

"Go, Chikorita!" A grass type appeared from one of Ash's Pokéballs. "Vine Whip." Mewblade could not believe it, she was about to be attacked by the Master To Be.

Chikorita was about to use her attack. Her loyalty and trust to Ash overrode the fear of facing down such a powerful looking opponent. Mewblade did not want to have to kill Ash for attacking her. Psychic energy snatched the Pokéball right from Ash's palm and recalled the Pokémon. It was willed back safely to Ash's belt.

"Hey!" Ash shouted, angry and bewildered.

"Pika chu," (It's dangerous,) growled Pikachu who clung with anticipation to Ash's shoulder.

"It's psychic." Misty was tense. "You have to be careful, Ash," she warned. Mew and Mewtwo listened, both with emotionless expressions.

"I don't think any of our Pokémon can beat a psychic Pokémon," Brock muttered, his voice low and cautioning.

*So that is how they portray me,* Mewblade thought bitterly. From the humans' minds she had found that they seemed to regard her as the cause to the whole storm. After all, it was suspicious that she just so happened to be standing in front of the entrance to the Viridian Gym. In the dark, she seemed wicked, evil. A true antagonist to the eyes of the beholder. The humans were afraid that the Pokémon was there to deal with them.

"First of all, I am *not* here to kill you," Mewblade snarled, crossing her arms. "Second. I am a female, not an 'it'. And lastly, you are contradicting a very powerful Pokémon. You could try to not jump to conclusions and attack me." She glared at Ash who glared back at her in response. Ash was definitely brave, but foolish as well. "I could have killed you. Which I would like to avoid now and in the future."

"Then why are you here?" Ash demanded, Pikachu nodded. They still did not trust Mewblade.

"I am here to deal with a problem," answered Mewblade gruffly as she crouched to see eye level with Ash. "You're here for the same reason I am. Just ask Mewtwo, he'll vouch for me." Mewblade moved her head in Mewtwo's direction, looking back at Ash

after he had also taken a peek at Mewtwo. Mewblade then stood to her full height, making Ash pale in comparison. “Go on, ask,” Mewblade said with a grin. She did not seem convincing to Ash, Pikachu, Misty, or Brock that she was nice.

<“Mewblade is right,”> Mewtwo said with a light nod of his head. Mew giggled and nodded several times.

“Okay, I believe you,” Ash said reluctantly to Mewblade then made a wave at Misty and Brock who had still been lingering. “Come on, we’ve got to get inside.”

“Yeah, it’s really uncomfortable out here,” Brock mumbled. He still wished to be cautious of Mewblade.

“Move out of the way,” Ash said to Mewblade who stepped aside just in time as he hurtled past her and used his shoulder to try and force open the doors. Instead, all he managed to do was bash into the doors and fall backwards. “Oww,” he groaned as he rubbed his throbbing shoulder.

“Pika pi? Chu pi pikachu?” (Ash? Are you okay?) Pikachu had landed safely in the snow and was immediately in Ash’s lap.

“I guess I couldn’t break my way in,” Ash laughed nervously as he got up, shouldering Pikachu.

“You should really think ahead,” Misty nagged while Mewblade looked down at Ash mockingly. Foolish was an accurate description of Ash.

“You may not be able to force your way in but I certainly can.” Mewblade spread her arms out and levitated an inch off of the ground. She pivoted coolly so she was facing the doors. Mewblade lowered her head ever so slightly. “This is how you should do it.” Mewblade sped forward with a burst of speed. Above her in the sky there was a large crash as red lightning and a yellow bolt of lightning met at a vertical level. She was busy and did not pay much attention to it. Her head blade seared through the center of the doors, breaking a high bar that kept the doors closed. Now Mewblade and the others had full access to the Viridian Gym.

Vicebane was starting to take a leap at Zapdos, ready to Slash the bird. That was when he heard the noise that made him stop, and it was not just him who heard it, Articuno, Zapdos, and Moltres heard it as well. The noise made them all turn to the entrance doors. First they heard this thudding noise, which sounded weak.

<“What in the world?”> Articuno said with a low voice. A few seconds later a much harder thud was heard and something that almost looked like an obsidian-tipped scythe just simply sliced the high bar barricading the doors. The two halves fell to the sides of the door before tipping and rolling out of the way. Vicebane knew almost instantly who it was and grinned ecstatically. The three Legendaries started to wonder what sort of ferocious beast could have done that. Moltres in particular, who saw Vicebane’s expression, was wondering if the ally of the red Pokémon was a brute of a Pokémon.

<Zapdos, I think we’re in trouble,> Moltres told Zapdos and Articuno, but mostly Zapdos. <Look at the way he’s grinning. That *thing* could kill us!>

<Be quiet,> Zapdos responded back. He did not care.

<No, listen to her. We should leave while we have the chance,> Articuno replied.

<How about *you* listen to me? We will kill the source, and then deal with the weather. Otherwise, the problem will keep coming back,> Zapdos growled mentally. Vicebane casually skimmed over the birds with his eyes. He watched their body language and they all seemed relatively angry.

The heavy double doors were then slammed forcefully, crashing against the wall and the broken bar as they did. A similar looking Pokémon to Vicebane stood there with a sneer on its face. It effortlessly had pushed the doors open and then lowered its black arms calmly to its sides. Three humans, another Pokémon similar to Vicebane stood there, then there was a small pink Pokémon, and two ‘low-lives’ as the birds may have liked to call them.

<It’s that human!> Articuno flapped her wings. <What is he doing here?!>

<How about you ask him?> Moltres replied calmly with a passive face.

<And what is Mew doing here?!> Articuno was having a hissy-fit. She had not expected to see any of them there.

<I said, ‘*be quiet*’!> Zapdos snarled at Articuno then shifted his feet, showing he did not care at all with what was going on.

“So you finally got here.” Vicebane flashed a fanged smile. Mewblade narrowed her eyes and then acted almost as ignorant as ever and walked a few feet inside. Ash, Brock, and Misty followed, sticking to the wall. Mewtwo and Mew went over to Mewblade’s right where they stayed by one of the many marble pillars.

<“Mewblade, what is that?”> Mewtwo asked out loud as he watched. Mew hovered close to his shoulder.

“Mew mew mew mew mew,” (It looks like a Mewtwo,) she said as Mewtwo shot her a glare. “Mew mew.” (No offense.)

<“None taken.”>

“His name is Vicebane,” Mewblade answered as she padded up slightly closer to Vicebane. The pair locked eyes, just staring. Time passed for a whole minute and they were still looking at each other. Everyone was puzzled.

“Pika pi pikachu?” (What are they doing?) Pikachu asked. Ash responded by quickly putting Pikachu in Brock’s arms.

“Ash, what are *you* doing?” Misty demanded, arms open. She had no idea that she was basically repeating Pikachu. Mewtwo and Mew snapped their heads to their left to look at Ash as he walked past Mewblade. Mewblade noticed Ash suddenly and looked down at him in puzzlement.

Ash stood nearly right up to Vicebane, well within a range that allowed Ash to not strain his eyes in order to look up at Vicebane. “Why are you causing such problems?!” he demanded hotly. Ash had expected Mewblade to ask Vicebane the question, but since she was not and no one else seemed to be, it was his job.

“Because I felt like it, human,” Vicebane answered smugly. He had adapted human sarcasm into his speech as he insulted Ash. Mewblade watched cautiously, but she sort of just stared at Vicebane again. Vicebane would have been doing the same if Ash had just decided to stay against the wall. Yeah, the wall, that was where he should be.

“Destroying the weather effects everyone, even you. Just stop it!” Ash shouted at Vicebane. Vicebane sneered more. The human was asking for it.

“You want *me* to stop?” he laughed. His laugh sounded wicked and raspy. “I’ve only just begun!” Vicebane threw his arms wide and a dark blast of energy struck everyone who was there.

With little to no time to react, Ash lost his balance altogether and struck the far wall. Misty, Brock, and their Pokémon also hit the wall. Mewblade, Mewtwo and Mew had each of their auras flare and dissipate. It allowed for the energy to part harmlessly past them. Articuno, Zapdos, and Moltres on the other hand took the hit but only stumbled slightly since the force was weakened by their own auras.

The humans and their Pokémon hit the wall with a gasp of surprise and pain as they crumpled semi-unconscious to the floor. Mew squeaked in concern, hoping they were okay. Mewtwo’s facial muscles twitched. He looked from the fallen trainers, then back to Vicebane.

<“Who are you to allow yourself the right to hurt them?!”> Mewtwo roared. Vicebane just chuckled. Mew hovered a distance away, scared of Mewtwo’s aggression. Mewblade looked at him calmly, she was acting kind of drugged. The birds noticed and just watched with apprehension. <“Answer me!”> Mewtwo bellowed, his lips were curled, teeth showing.

“Mewtwo, Mewtwo,” Vicebane sighed and shook his head. He walked right up to Mewtwo. Mewblade watched Vicebane as he walked over. Articuno suddenly caught on to what was wrong with what at first seemed to be the violent Pokémon.

<Moltres, do you think that Mewblade thing holds interest?> Articuno twittered lightly as Vicebane walked past her and was basically in front of Mewtwo.

<Well . . .> Moltres quickly looked Mewblade up and down. <It seems like it but I think it’s different. Actually, I can’t really tell. Look at the expression, and the way the posture is. Seems aggressive to me.> Then they went back to watching Vicebane.

Vicebane towered over Mewtwo. At six feet and seven inches, Mewtwo was over a foot under Vicebane’s 8’4” height. Briefly, Vicebane noted that Mewtwo was very serious and did not play games.

<“What are you?”> Mewtwo spoke steadily. Vicebane held out his right paw and placed it gently on Mewtwo’s left shoulder. He did not supply an answer. No one could understand the gesture either, and Mewtwo kept the same expression. Well, he did for a couple of seconds until he began to wince.

The Legendary Birds conversed privately with each other. A few gestures were made. They reacted with surprise as they saw Mewtwo wince.

“You should know me better than anyone,” Vicebane finally spoke as Mewtwo’s face became slightly more pained as the seconds drew on. “After all, I’m one of your clones,” then callously, Vicebane added something else, “just like my sister over there,” he motioned to Mewblade. Briefly the pair locked eyes again then Mewblade reacted to the statement as normally expected.

“I’ll never be one of you. You understand that, Vicebane?” Mewblade was snarling audibly. “Never was, never will be. So forget it.”

*They’re related? And then those names?* Mewtwo pondered as the pain was just getting worse. Vicebane was not digging his claws in, thus Mewtwo was not quite certain what was causing it. *Mewblade. Mew and blade. Vicebane.* <“Vice and bane!”> Mewtwo



looked alarmed. Without a second thought he used his right arm and shoved Vicebane away. It became obvious to the spectators as to why Mewtwo was in pain.

Mewtwo's left shoulder looked as if it had been partially corroded away by acid. The fur there was gone and the skin looked swollen, oozing, and burnt. <“You're corrosive!”> Mewtwo declared as his right paw held his left shoulder tightly. No less haste was taken as Mewtwo used Recover on his injured limb. It healed quickly and effectively since the wound was fresh.

Mewblade listened, eyes scanning over every little detail. She thought of the time only a few hours ago when she was looking at the Viridian Gym on her screen. The Pokémon with the atrocious injuries. The melted and scorched gym floor. The Pokémon again, the injuries. They were caused by strong chemicals. Vicebane was literally a walking piece of acid! *This is perfect*, Mewblade thought almost sadistically. Mewtwo did not hear what Mewblade was thinking but saw the sly look on her face and began to accuse her.

<“You're against me too,”> Mewtwo glared, paw raised and a finger pointed. Mewblade gave her head a brief shake. She had not expected Mewtwo to say that. He even agreed with her earlier that she posed no danger to the group.

“That isn't true, Mewtwo.” Mewblade looked worried. Vicebane on the other hand crossed his arms and briefly gave a smug glance at Mewblade. Mewtwo saw it. Out of anger he made a Shadow Ball, hitting Vicebane unexpectedly, sending the Mewthree to the floor.

<“You've been conspiring with him the whole time. Why else would you break into the gym? Just so you can stand there and talk to him privately? I think not.”>

Mewblade hung her head briefly, she had to agree, not even she herself knew why she was just simply looking at Vicebane and not doing anything else. There was this feeling, she did not like something about it. “Mewtwo, calm down.”

<“No I will not. You led me here to be captured and even when I gave you the chance to mend your ways you still want to take me down. You're a traitor.”> Mewtwo made another Shadow Ball and threw that at Mewblade. Mewblade nimbly brought her longest tail blade forward and sliced at the Shadow Ball, which disappeared.

“And you underestimate me,” Mewblade snapped at him in response.

<“No wonder. I was led to believe that you were an ally.”>

“I am. I want to kill Vicebane and you know it!”

<“How can I know that if you're allying with him instead? I see how you two get along.”>

“I don't even know him, Mewtwo. I know his name, and that is about it.”

Mewblade and Mewtwo continued to bicker. Mewblade had no idea why Mewtwo was accusing her. Mewtwo thought that Mewblade was a complete hoax. In turn, they were completely absorbed in their argument. Mew chose not to listen and noticed Vicebane had finally gotten up and was making a move to attack the nearby Articuno. Mew knew she had to do something, anything!

“Mew mew!” (Stop it!) Mew cried out as loud as her little lungs could. Mewblade did not ask why Mew had said that, she knew that Vicebane was up to something. After all, who could not notice Vicebane holding Articuno violently up against a marble pillar?

“Aaaaarrrr!” Articuno screeched vocally as the blood was temporarily cut off from her neck and she fainted. Vicebane looked down with satisfaction at the bird. It had been a lot easier than Giovanni had made it out to be.

<Moltres, don’t stand there gawking,> Zapdos ordered Moltres from the other side of the gym. Moltres stared in disbelief at Articuno. Vicebane had moved so fast that she had not seen him even initially grab Articuno. <Do something.> Moltres would have done something but that was when Mewblade intervened.

Mewblade had walked up to Vicebane who ignored Articuno and turned to face Mewblade. She walked right up to him, the distance was less than a hand’s width apart. It did not bother Mewblade at all that she had to look up at Vicebane. Vicebane had a pretty clear view of the two feet of titanium and black diamond head blade which ended slightly above his head level. Like before, they stared at each other. Mewtwo watched with a glare of suppressed rage.

Vicebane passed Mewblade on her left and paced around her once before stopping back where he was. Mewblade mimicked Vicebane’s action. They then stared at each other again. “Shall we?” Vicebane gestured to the center of the gym. Mewblade smirked and nodded, walking over with a bounce in her step, a swish in her tail.

<Mewtwo?> Mew flew close to him, looking concerned. She had telepathy as well, but she chose to use it less. <The humans and Articuno are still out, but they’re fine. I’m just wondering, what is Mewblade doing?>

<I have no clue what is going on here,> Mewtwo growled. <Get ready to attack them,> Mewtwo said not to just Mew but Zapdos and Moltres too.

Vicebane walked calmly to the center, spacing himself five meters away from Mewblade. They proceeded to pace around in a circle, never once letting their gaze leave that of the other. Mewtwo raised his eye-ridge out of pure confusion. He could not figure anything out.

<Well,> Zapdos said to Mew, Mewtwo and Moltres. <If they were lovers, they would not be pacing like that,> Zapdos finally concluded. Mew blinked.

<So who came up with that idea?> she asked with an ironic smile. Moltres blushed, motioning to the fainted Articuno and turning away. <Okay, never mind,> Mew giggled.

<Watch. They’re predatory and territorial. You can see who has the dominance.> Zapdos was talking about Vicebane, who had the most noticeably confident expression. <They’re sizing each other up too.>

<I find this very hard to believe,> Mewtwo remarked as he watched Mewblade and Vicebane continue to circle each other. They passed each other, smelling the aura of the other, briefly rubbing cheeks. Mewblade flicked her tail occasionally, Vicebane had his teeth bared. As aggressive as it may have been, the two seemed to like it.

<Hahaha!> Zapdos laughed. <Whatever you are, your species is not smart. It’s obvious.>

<I’m a Mewtwo, they’re both Mewthree. I know Mewblade is not that instinctive. She acts so human,> Mewtwo replied.

<Oh really? Then you must be hard of sight too,> Zapdos jibbed. Mewtwo did not like the bird’s attitude one bit.

<Zapdos is right. Mewblade fought you as blindly as it comes. It's completely instinctive,> Mew said with an air of wisdom. Moltres nodded to the instinctive concept. Mewtwo looked at the floor for something to say against that, but he could find nothing. The Legendaries were right. Mewblade was an organic weapon that right now saw something else in its way and wanted to destroy it. And whether or not Mewblade knew that, it did not matter since she was doing it anyway.

Mewblade knew very well that she wanted to kill Vicebane. It was plain as day to her. She was having a giddy little thrill from the idea of it too. Vicebane, a Mewtwo clone that came after her was most likely better constructed. She knew he was a skilled fighter as well.

Now unlike Mewblade, Vicebane was almost always happy in a battle situation, especially if he was being ruthless. He so badly wanted to fight Mewblade. She was the original Mewthree and was a talented psychic from what the scientists had told him. They both wanted a challenge.

The two Mewthrees made stances before launching at each other. Mewblade went for the higher route while Vicebane went for the lower. As it went, Mewblade liked to bring her attacks down on the enemy, and Vicebane liked to rise up into his attacks.

Mewblade whipped her body around, aiming a good portion of her tail blades for Vicebane's head. Vicebane ducked under her tail effortlessly, coming up to slash his claws along her chest. The move was countered as Mewblade blocked the slash with her energy cannon, making an odd noise as platinum and steel grated against titanium. Their upper bodies moved away from each other for only a moment before flying back in with more attacks. The Legendaries watched in fascination as they observed some sort of ritualistic battle dance.

*I can't believe this . . .* Mewtwo thought to himself, surprised by the fighting style that Mewblade was using. The other Legendaries were wary in case Mewblade and Vicebane's fighting brought them close to their places. The pair of Mewthrees were practically scrapping with each other, disregarding anyone or anything else.

The combatants' fighting became a myriad of punches, and clawing. Type wise, Mewblade had the advantage and powered punches at Vicebane, only to have him dodge nimbly left, right, left, right, out of the way. After a failed attempt at a combination of moves Vicebane retaliated, bringing his claws up and over. Mewblade found herself on the receiving end, choosing to use the flat of her blades and her energy cannon to block. Momentum ran dry for Vicebane, he had to come up with a better way of attacking. Mewblade was aware of her opponent's mental lapse and took the seconds pause to do a close combative move. Her tail was drawn in close to herself, thus followed by a tight twirl, her version of a Rapid Spin. The move was quick to initiate and exposed all of Mewblade's blades to the enemy. There was no way Vicebane would ever want to be on the receiving end; instead, he backed away to give himself some space, which he needed for his next move.

A nauseous gas began to drift around Vicebane, Mewblade stopped her spin, realizing that the strange mist emanating from Vicebane was Poison Gas. Mewblade was not afraid of the gas, just what Vicebane could do with it. For a moment her vision was hazy, combined with the stinging of her eyes and a slight acidic burn of her skin. Mewblade closed her eyes tightly to avoid being blinded, moving away from the gas, not

aware of Vicebane's position. She felt his presence behind her, unable to react fast enough to the vulnerable position she had put herself in. Vicebane jabbed poison covered claws in the space between two of Mewblade's back blades, right into her spine. Mewblade resisted most of the poison but was forced to use Recover and destroy it before it paralyzed her central nervous system. With her back turned, Mewblade healed her injury, giving Vicebane even a greater opportunity to attack. A paw came up, claws sharp and exposed, dripping with something toxic. Vicebane made a swipe for Mewblade's back, but there was nothing there.

"Behind you, Vicebane," Mewblade's voice sounded from behind the poisonous Mewthree. Vicebane turned all too slowly. Within the blink of an eye Mewblade's fist connected with Vicebane's face. Vicebane hit the floor, Mewblade floating back down to it as she watched her brother collapse before her feet. Vicebane shot up, bringing a paw forward and forcing his psychically converted dark energy into a Barrier. The move was used quickly for the purpose of giving Vicebane some space. Mewblade stumbled then caught her footing, startled by the choice of attack. Based on fighting style, Vicebane was not a wealth of psychic capabilities.

Vicebane stood up with an air of arrogance, dusting himself off, snorting in contempt. He had proved he was not that easy to push around. Mewblade snarled audibly, making an arch with her leg as she aimed a kick at Vicebane. The first time Vicebane dodged and the second time the pair connected at each other's side, causing them both to wince. Playing on fighting abilities was dangerous for them both, but especially for Mewblade. She brought her paw to the injury, annoyed that it hurt her more so than what was actually perceived.

"Gotcha'," Vicebane smirked, liking to know that Mewblade could take damage from something so simple as a kick.

"So you think," Mewblade snapped at him, almost playful in a way. Mewblade turned her body and brought up her leg, kicking Vicebane hard in the chest. The wind was knocked out from him, causing him to slump over. There was a small smirk from Mewblade, proud of her hit, although Vicebane was not going to let her revel in it for all too long.

Vicebane ducked down and tried to trip Mewblade. She jumped over, doing a somersault and landing on her paws. She tried to slice at Vicebane with her tail, still holding the position but he rolled forward, swiftly rising out of harms way. Mewblade thudded to her feet, whipping around.

Mewblade and Vicebane began to pace around each other yet again. Mewblade made the first motion after the short reprieve. She braced then moved at Vicebane with a lot of speed. She was going to simply just use the same movement she used on the now broken door bar, though the same move does not work twice. It was proven as Vicebane simply stepped to his left, bringing his right elbow in and then he timed it so that he elbowed Mewblade right in her middle. This was done fast enough that Mewblade did not even notice the motion.

"Gah!" Mewblade cried out as the force from Vicebane's hit sent her flying into the ground. Eight of Mewblade's blades were lodged in either a pillar or the ground at various odd angles. She was extremely ticked as she tried to remove her head blade from

the marble pillar. Since she was angry, Mewblade could not make her blades go flat and thus was running the risk of taking out a support column.

Vicebane noticed Mewblade's predicament and walked over to Articuno, who stirred much quicker than assumed. He had the time to deal with Articuno while Mewblade tried to remove herself. Moltres also noticed that Vicebane was trying to hurt Articuno again and created flames that parted Vicebane from Articuno.

<“Watch it!”> Articuno squawked as she came aware of her surroundings at the uncomfortable notion that there was fire close-by.

“That won’t save you.” Vicebane passed through the flames, a type of acid protecting his body from burns. His eyes lit up at the prospect of wounding Articuno, his claws within close reach of Articuno’s crest. All thoughts of capturing the Legendaries was now out of the question. Vicebane wanted to battle, and how Vicebane wanted to battle was until his opponent was dead. He wanted to win. Mewblade saw this and moved in the blink of an eye. After all, she was a dark type just like Vicebane was and could summon a lot of speed when needed.

Vicebane was grinning as a claw scratched against the chilled feathers; suddenly, a blur stopped him in his movement, thrusting him up into the air. Vicebane gave a strangled gasp. Mewblade had hefted Vicebane off the gym floor by his neck. Her entire left paw was encased in steel as she held him. No one there could ever imagine the amount of sheer brute strength it took for Mewblade to lift something two feet taller than she was, off the ground, and keep it there. As far as it was assumed in the Pokémon World, psychic and dark types never possessed any strength to win them a physical competition.

Mewblade looked up at Vicebane and continued to squeeze. The strain from holding Vicebane showed in her arm muscles that now visibly flexed. She glared and dug her paw in deeper, at the ends of her fingers were 3” long steel claws that brought more pain to Vicebane.

Vicebane’s acidic body became slick with a strong acid, a defense mechanism to try and force Mewblade to drop him. Of course, the steel on her paw protected her vulnerable flesh as the steel slowly melted away. Instead of letting go, Mewblade drove her claws deeper still, causing Vicebane to bleed, his breathing becoming weak and deliberate.

<“I alone will stand between you and harming the Legends. For your acts, you must perish,”> Mewblade snarled in telepathy. Her teeth gritted from the continuous strain of keeping Vicebane off the ground. <“I am the Upholder of Pokémon Law.”>

Vicebane’s dead eyes widened slightly. He looked at Mewblade, taking in what he should have noticed in the first place and what he noticed now. Steel was dripping and steaming from Mewblade’s paw. He saw the reflection of fire in front of her dance and flicker across her titanium blades. The light from the fire even brought out the red tints and colorful shimmer of the rare specimen of black diamond on her blades. Her face was masked with fury, an animal instinct mixed with a strong sense of duty, and at the same time, an intelligence that seemed far beyond Mewblade. And her eyes, how intense they looked. Vicebane caught a sparkle, not a reflection of the fire, but something else, something eternal.

Vicebane made a strangled, muffling gasp. He saw it in the birds' eyes, Mewtwo's. *It can't be!* He began to struggle at the cold chill of realization. He was staring into the face of a Legendary Pokémon!

<“Have anything to say?”> Mewblade teased her prey as she noticed the brief transpire of something Vicebane was thinking of.

“Let . . . me . . . go,” gasped Vicebane as he felt his mind grow weak. He did not want to be in such a position as he was.

“Fine!” Mewblade snapped at him, almost glad to have a reasonable excuse to get rid of him. With the most violent movement of muscles and psychic energy, Mewblade twisted her body and pitched Vicebane into the furthest wall of the whole entire gym. Vicebane was thrown into the wall so hard that he made a considerable depression. Through the process Vicebane's acid showered down to the floor, making acid rain as the floor beneath corroded and steamed.

Mewblade had her left paw held in the air, still holding the motion of her chucking Vicebane. The Metal Claw that had encased her paw disappeared, leaving no sign of any damage. She briefly relaxed her position as she stared at Vicebane scornfully. The muscles beneath her fur relaxed as well, but when she was so tense, it was amazing to see how fit she really was. All of the muscles used were hers, just enhanced slightly with a Bulk Up to make her all the more physically powerful.

Mew was awe struck, catching fast glances at Mewtwo for comparison. <She really is stronger than you!> The insult bit into Mewtwo. He was proud to claim himself as the strongest Pokémon the world would ever know.

<Physically, I can believe. Mentally? Unlikely,> he answered, his pride ran too deep to acknowledge Mewblade as more than that.

Pikachu was perched in front of the crumpled form of Ash, poking him lightly on the cheek. “Pikachu pika, pika pi. Pika chu?” (Wake up, Ash. Please?) begged Pikachu as he began to worry more and more. Mew had flown over, just to leave, giving no answers to comfort his mind. “Pika pi!” (Ash!) yelled Pikachu, starting to sniffle as thoughts of his trainer being dead drifted into his mind. Ash started to twitch. He squinted his eyes before opening them fully. “Pi pikachu pi pika.” (You're okay.)

“Yeah, but my back hurts,” Ash groaned as he put a hand to his back while sitting up. Pikachu scampered up his side before perching himself on Ash's head. Ash ignored the feeling, he was virtually use to it; instead, he scanned the room for Misty and Brock, both of whom were alert but huddled close to the wall. “Hey, Brock, Misty,” he hissed quietly to them.

Brock crawled over to Ash, keeping a low profile as he whispered in Ash's ear. “I don't want to attract attention. That Vicebane thing might notice us.”

Ash nodded, understanding the dilemma before looking over to Misty. He could see Misty was trembling a bit. In her arms she held on to Togepi. Togepi had its face buried in Misty's shirt. Misty straightened up as she felt a pair of eyes viewing her. She turned to see Ash was awake and well. Hurriedly, Misty scurried beside him.

“Glad you're up. I think Vicebane might be the bad guy and not Mewblade,” Misty informed, not knowing what had happened while she was unconscious. “Or not . .

.” Misty said as herself, Ash, Pikachu, and Brock watched Mewblade struggle to hold Vicebane off the gym floor.

“Let . . . me . . . go,” the Pokémon called Vicebane gasped.

“Fine!” Mewblade snapped at him. She was not making Misty’s theory very solid. Mewblade forced her whole body to throw Vicebane into the furthest wall. Evidently the furthest wall was the one the trainers were against.

Ash, Misty, and Brock jumped to their feet and moved out of the way as Vicebane nearly collided into them. Brock had been the closest and ended up diving to the ground to avoid injury before moving away. Misty was ahead and had moved to another wall just to avoid being in the way of the fighting. Obviously spectators were not encouraged or protected in this battle.

Vicebane crashed into the wall, creating a depression that was steaming from his acid. He slumped down to the floor as his back became momentarily ridden with paralysis. Mewblade looked at him from across the gym for a second or two. Mew was also looking at Vicebane, although she basically had her nose shoved in his face as she was curiously observing the Mewthree in her adorable fashion.

Mewblade had completely ignored the fact that she had nearly endangered Ash Ketchum and his friends, she also did not really notice Mew hovering above Vicebane. She charged at Vicebane as he was slowly making a struggle to rise to a standing position. Mew squeaked as she dodged, since Mewblade had neglected to watch for her while she hurtled passed. Mewblade had her head lowered at the time, her largest head blade stabbed Vicebane’s arms just as he too was trying to move out of the way. Mewblade stepped back as she watched.

Vicebane winced and nearly cried out as he stared in stunned fascination at his oozing arm. He had never bled as he was now and the thought was infuriating. The wound felt warm, numb, even though it was throbbing from pain. Vicebane converted his dark energy so that way he could use a Recover on the wound. The Recover proved faulty and only diverted the cut to a shallow cut. It still hurt, still bled, but at least it no longer had the ability to kill him.

“You shouldn’t hit someone when they’re down,” Vicebane snarled in amusement as he suddenly shot passed Mewblade’s left, raking her chest, arm, and side with his platinum and steel claws.

Mewblade roared in pain as she wrapped her tail around her body, her right paw was holding the deep gash along her left arm. Blood was running thickly down her leg since Vicebane managed to expose several arteries. Thankfully, Vicebane missed the arteries of great importance but he still struck ones that could cause harm. Mewblade’s eyes were closed tightly as she pushed the pain aside in her mind. She stopped caring about whether she needed healing or not when she heard Zapdos crackle and screech.

Zapdos stumbled about, not knowing what to do as an acidic hole was rapidly burning away at his middle. He kind of looked at it, wondering if the damage to his torso was as real as it felt. Moltres’ eyes were wide in horror as she gaped at Zapdos. Zapdos gawked at her, his mouth hanging open.

<“Zapdos!”> Moltres called out, fluttering and flapping, having no idea what to do. Blood began to flow from his beak, his lungs full of fluid. Moltres’ jaw dropped. Zapdos’ eyes rolled into the back of his skull and the thunder bird dropped as if he were a

stone to the gym floor. Moltres jumped back as blood lapped near her talons. She was on high alert for Vicebane, seeing him move toward the startled Articuno. <“Move, Articuno! Move!”> cried Moltres. Articuno was too scared to move now. She saw Zapdos keel over before her eyes. <“Move!!!”> she screeched. Articuno shook her head and flapped above Vicebane to land elsewhere.

Mewtwo sped ahead of Vicebane, letting the Mewthree put his focus on him. Blue fire. Mewtwo’s aura flickered around his body and was shot at Vicebane. Vicebane’s red and black flecked aura deflected the Psywave. Mewtwo snarled as he tensed into a fighting position.

<Mewtwo, let me handle this!> Mewblade shouted into Mewtwo’s head. Mewtwo winced at the loudness of Mewblade’s telepathy and moved. Vicebane was puzzled to why Mewtwo moved away so suddenly and glanced over his shoulder. He saw Mewblade powering two Shadow Balls and energy in her energy cannon. Vicebane swiftly disposed of Mewtwo as he leapt forward, his right arm went up and over, nailing Mewtwo in his chest, but not before swiping at his neck with his poisoned claws. Mewtwo was knocked helplessly into a marble pillar, more stunned by the poison effect from Vicebane’s Poison Claw, rather than the force it took to knock him back.

Mewblade was focused on Vicebane but did catch Mewtwo using a Recover out of the corner of her eye. *Ready. Aim. Destroy.* Mewblade tossed her Shadow Balls to the left and right of Vicebane, they honed in on the Mewthree. As soon as the Shadow Balls were released Mewblade had her left paw braced on her energy cannon and released the energy, which was aimed for Vicebane’s visible upper ribcage.

The Shadow Balls used a pincer movement to enclose Vicebane. Since the movement was so fast and somewhat unexpected, Vicebane had no time to avoid the attacks. Mewblade’s Shadow Balls struck Vicebane in the sides. Vicebane drew his arms in and screamed in pain as he dropped abnormally fast to a crouched position on the floor. The attack meant for his ribcage narrowly missed him as it soared over his head.

Moltres was standing behind Vicebane, determined to avenge Zapdos. Her mouth was wide open with a Fire Blast in preparation. To everyone’s shock and surprise, the energy aimed for Vicebane’s ribcage shot straight over Vicebane’s head and went after Moltres. Mewblade gasped in surprise but had no time to stop the energy.

The energy vaporized the Fire Blast at the instant of contact. Moltres could do nothing as the energy shot down her esophagus. The attack was tearing shreds in the lining of the esophagus. It blew holes in her neck as the attack slowly combusted on the way down. It then bounced against her spine, snapping the delicate nerve cords several times over. The attack finished as it contacted her stomach acid and exploded.

Moltres made a gurgle noise as her neck bent and folded at odd angles, twisting up and falling limply against her back. Moltres’ entire body flopped to the ground with limbs sprawled and contorted everywhere since the nervous system could no longer even coordinate something as terrible as a crumpling body. Blood wept from her eyes, salivated from her mouth and gushed from the holes in her neck. Her whole middle was purple from internal bleeding.

Vicebane was looking behind him at the fire bird with evil joy. Mewblade had unwittingly done his dirty work for him, and far better too. He sneered at Mewblade who was looking gravely between Zapdos and Moltres. Their life energies were holding on for



a couple of seconds before Moltres' flame dispersed from her body. Zapdos died not long after. The mutilated corpses of the birds were a sight to be seen and not to be seen.

"I . . . I killed Moltres!" Mewblade said in wide-eye horror. She looked absolutely mindless as she stood there. Mewblade's duty was to protect the Legendary Pokémon, not eradicate them.

From behind her the trainers were crying out in disgust and horror that seemed to fill the minds of everyone. "The Legendaries can't just die!" Misty yelled from her position near the demolished door. "They can't." She looked at Ash who had a white color in his cheeks. Brock was even more pale.

"I don't know, Misty. They look pretty dead," Brock muttered as he shivered and turned away from looking.

"But, but," Ash stuttered trying to think of something to say yet nothing could be said about the reality of the death in front of them.

<"Nothing can live forever, humans. Even the Legends themselves will die,"> Articuno muttered as she overheard. She turned her head so that they could see her serious and saddened red eyes. Zapdos and Moltres may have been out of the picture, and maybe she should have been happy but she knew what was going to happen to her. This was not the time to rejoice.

Vicebane jumped to his feet, taking advantage of Mewblade's weakness and sliced her across the eyes. Mewblade put her paws to her eyes as a natural reaction to the surprise and pain. She opened them only to notice that the muscles around the exterior were damaged. It hurt to blink the blood that was pooling into her eyes. The blood loss from that wound was beginning to add to the blood loss from the previous injuries along her left side.

Vicebane continued his fluid motion towards Articuno. She knew it was coming and only turned her head before Vicebane got his one last shot at the bird. He dove down and reached up to rip at Articuno's jugular with his stained claws. He stopped a meter past Articuno, not even watching to see Articuno fall.

Articuno sank slowly to the ground as her body forced itself to shut down at the news that somewhere in her body was losing precious blood. She blinked in pain and a heavy tiredness that was settling over her as her body began to go through the stages of shock. Blood was still being pumped in great quantities to her brain, stopping at her neck as it splattered her previously white chest. After a couple moments her brain forced itself to black out, sending Articuno into a coma and evident death.

Mew could not stand to watch anymore death. "Mew!" (Psychic!") she cried. Her eyes glowed with her pink aura, surrounding Vicebane and constricting him to one spot. Mewblade heard Mew's brave efforts to hold Vicebane despite how much both Vicebane and Mew struggled to either escape or keep a solid hold.

"Hold him tight, Mew! I'll finish Vicebane off!" ordered Mewblade as she swiftly whipped her body around, blood flicked off her just as sweat might have. She walked up to Vicebane, looking far worse than Vicebane had over their encounter. Her longest tail blade went up to gently rest on his head. Mewblade painfully blinked the blood from her eyes and spoke to him. "Great day to die," she remarked and scornfully added, "is it not, brother?"

Mew released her Psychic on Vicebane, she knew that Mewblade had everything under control now. Vicebane understood. He stopped struggling as his eyes turned to look away from Mewblade. "I guess."

Mewblade turned her head a bit to the side, Vicebane was trying to avoid eye contact. "You're hiding something."

"And I'll die without you ever finding out!" he shot back scornfully, his claws making a mock swing to Mewblade's breast plate. Mewblade took that as an incentive to kill Vicebane, which was exactly how Vicebane planned it.

Mewblade brought her tail up in a high-arch, bringing it down as hard as she could. Mewblade was welcomed with little or no resistance as her tail went straight down Vicebane's entire head, neck and body. Vicebane perished on instant as the two hemispheres of his brain were no longer joined. That did not stop Mewblade from her almost giddy dismemberment of Vicebane's pathetic corpse. The two halves fell apart from the other. Blood, organs, and acid splayed across the floor in a mess no longer resembling that of a Pokémon. Mewblade looked down with contempt at the corpse, no emotion seemed to register about how she slaughtered her sibling. Evidently Mewblade took no heed to the blood that had been splayed onto her body. It really made no difference to her since she was already drenched in places.

Ash, Brock, Misty, and Pikachu had been fixated to watching the gruesome battle. Misty's stomach finally stopped working for her. She tossed the shaken Togepi to Brock and ran out the entrance of the gym. Ash, Brock, and Pikachu would have done the same but their legs felt like led weights. They were both too terrified to breathe, not to mention move.

<"It had to be done,"> Mewtwo told the three. He leaned his back against the pillar he had smashed into earlier. Mewtwo was exhausted from just being there in the first place, yet the poison that Vicebane had inflicted him with had been incredibly difficult to get rid of. Mewtwo had not considered that Mewblade received a similar dose, and was still completely mobile and full of energy. If he was in the right state of mind he would have likely presented this information to Mewblade.

Mew flew over Mewtwo and collapsed onto his head. The energy it took for her to hold Vicebane had drained her energy considerably. "Mew mew mew mew mew mew," (Vicebane put up quite a fight,) squeaked Mew openly.

<"He did,"> Mewtwo said in agreement. <"Vicebane was one powerful clone."> He looked at the mess and shuddered. Even he felt sickened. <"Now that the three Legendary Birds, and Vicebane are dead, the storm will continue to destroy on its own."> Mewtwo looked to see a flash of lightning crackle above. Misty raced back in a second after the thunderous boom. Her eyes immediately diverted to look away from the vile mess of corpses.

"The weather is getting worse," she said shakily. Brock held out Togepi who was starting to cry. "Shh, everything is going to be okay," she cooed as she gently cradled Togepi in her arms. Pikachu's ears drooped as he listened to Togepi.

Mewtwo frowned at them, briefly shaking his head to throw Mew off. Mew did not appreciate it but she knew he had to get annoyed of her perching on him sooner or later. Mewtwo sighed heavily, he had bruises and gashes littered across his body. Wasting energy on things that could no kill him was pointless, yet he still did not have as much as

he would have wished for at that moment. <“Mewblade, what do you think we should do?”> Mewtwo asked with his head still turned away from Mewblade. He received no answer, which was peculiar. <“Mewblade?”> he looked at Mewblade, Mew was floating next to Mewtwo’s head.

Mewblade was slowly backing away from Vicebane’s carcass with her longest tail blade twitching decisively beneath her chin. The bottom of her lip was quivering in uncertainty.

“Mew mew mew mew?” (What are you doing?) asked Mew in suspicion of something. Mew flew curiously up to Mewblade.

“Back away!” Mewblade snarled. Mew hesitated but stopped.

“Mew?” (Why?) Mew pouted. “Mew mew?” (Something wrong?) Mew was hoping for a simple answer, not a judicial procedure like what Mewblade did next.

“I, Mewblade, the Upholder of Pokémon Law, have failed to protect the Legendary Pokémon, Articuno, Zapdos, Moltres, Mew, and Mewtwo,” Mewblade stated as if she were speaking to a formal assembly.

“Mew mew, mew mew,” (Uh-oh, not that,) Mew mumbled. Mewtwo was agreeing, he was starting to edge closer to Mewblade to prevent her from doing anything rash. The humans and their Pokémon could not understand what Mewblade was doing and were too depressed from all the death to really care.

Mewblade continued, “I, Mewblade, the Upholder of Pokémon Law have also killed the Legendary Pokémon, Moltres, in my trials to protect her.” Mewblade’s tail was lowered to the ground, not threatening at all. “For my failure and ill deeds, I must be punished.”

“Mew mew mew!” (No you don’t!) Mew told her. Ash perked up because what he heard from Mewblade was the last thing he wanted to be hearing.

“Wait a minute, you can’t hurt yourself because of an accident,” Ash interrupted as he began to approach Mewblade only to have Mewtwo make a gesture that signaled Ash to stop. Pikachu was angry that Mewtwo did not want them to help.

<“No one is putting any blame on you,”> Mewtwo was facing Mewblade with a concerned expression. <“Mewblade, you do not have to go as far as hurting yourself over this.”>

“I still failed and deserve punishment for it. I’ll go further than what you think!” Mewblade shoved Mewtwo away with one paw. She swatted Mew away with another. This was done to give her enough time without their intervention. Her tail arched in front of her, stabbing herself through the abdomen with her longest tail blade. She left the blade embedded there as she leaned forward and severed her longest head blade and tail blade at the same time. The head blade made a metallic clatter against the gym floor. Her tail fell limply to her side before she lost the ability to stand any longer and collapsed to the floor. Mewblade sort of stared at the dirt without much interest, the blood that kept getting in her eyes was blurring her vision. She did not really care. She was going to die, but she wanted to die a little bit faster rather than only with the help of the wounds Vicebane had given her. While Mewblade was capable of killing herself quickly, she still liked to vary her killing style.

“Mew!” (No!) Mew hollered as loudly as she could. She flew swiftly to look at Mewblade, scanning the extent of the injuries. She would never be able to use Recover on anything more than the eye injury before running dry of energy.

“You can’t save me, Mew, so don’t try. Just let me die,” Mewblade muttered, her voice was weak and distant sounding. Ash was motionless as he watched, appalled at what Mewblade was requesting.

Mewtwo had a rather unlikely reaction. He was to Mewblade’s side almost faster than Mew had been. The injuries across Mewblade’s body were too great for him to use Recover on. He sighed in grief. <“I’m not letting you die,”> Mewtwo said in determination.

“Too bad,” Mewblade retorted, her voice was but a whisper. Her body was starting to go into shock just like Articuno’s had done. The difference was that Mewblade would be bleeding more profoundly because of where the blade was located. While in shock, the blood tends to pool in the organs of the body, which in Mewblade’s case, she had ruined hers.

<“Fine then, if you want to die so much then you’ll run the risk of taking me with you,”> Mewtwo grinned. Mewblade glared at him weakly. *Destiny Bond*, Mewtwo thought as he used the ability, wasting a large portion of his precious energy. Mewblade shot him a dirty look before her eye lids became heavy and closed. She did not even realize what Mewtwo had exactly used in her last few seconds of consciousness. No matter how much pain could be ministered or verbal stimulation, Mewblade was in trouble. Mewtwo gritted his teeth as he tried to resist falling into shock himself. Mew caught on.

“Mew mew.” (Destiny Bond.) Mew placed her paw on one of Mewblade’s. Mewtwo was already holding onto the other paw. “Mew mew mew mew mew,” (You can’t do it alone,) Mew spoke passively. “Mew mew mew,” (Let me help,) Mew winked.

<“Thank you,”> Mewtwo said to Mew as the pair strained to keep themselves stable, let alone Mewblade. Ash was looking over at Mew, Mewtwo, and Mewblade.

“Can we help?” he asked. Pikachu was visibly expressing his worry far more than Ash was.

<“Get Nurse Joy,”> Mewtwo told Ash distractedly.

“Ooh, Nurse Joy is so pretty,” Brock babbled. Misty could not believe it. The greatest drama had been unfolding before their eyes and somehow Brock still managed to get lost in his little fantasy world. Misty’s eye muscles twitched.

“Don’t just stand there! Go get help!” Misty shouted right into Brock’s ear. Brock was out of his fantasy world very quick.

“Yes, ma’am. Right away,” he stuttered and sprinted out the door, or at least what was left of it. Ash would have gone but Brock was eager to see Nurse Joy, he was also afraid to be in close contact with Misty’s wrath.

“Chu pikachu?” (You okay?) Pikachu muttered somberly as he leaned over Ash’s hat rim. He was hoping someone would answer. Answers from Mew and Mewtwo were ones heavy set with weary and concentration. Ash answered to Pikachu, he usually did.

“I’m okay, Pikachu. I don’t think they are.” Ash was talking about Mew, Mewtwo and Mewblade who was on the verge of death.

Mew looked at Mewtwo hopelessly. She did not want to talk openly while the humans were around, most importantly, their Pokémon. <Mewtwo, I'm too weak. I can't stop the storm with the birds gone. I don't think I can stop Mewblade from slipping either,> she said in private telepathy. Her sea blue eyes were distant, upset. Mewtwo could offer no sympathy, it was not his department.

<Vicebane made quite a mess. I would fair no better than you.> Mewtwo looked outside from his position next to Mewblade. He was slumped over, barely aware enough to sit-up. His tail was crossed over Mewblade's. Momentarily, Mewtwo noticed the contrast in colors, the lavender of his fur and the purple of Mewblade's. His gaze then drifted to look upon the storm through the Viridian Gym skylight. <What about another Legendary Pokémon like Raikou?> asked Mewtwo as he looked back at Mew. He knew very little about the subject.

<Unlikely,> replied Mew. <They keep to their own business. I can't contact them either. Mewblade probably could, she seems to hone in on it.> Mew cocked her head towards Ash. His face was furrowed as he struggled to come up with a solution to the problem. Beside him was a sour Misty, her Togepi was in her backpack, her arms were wrapped around herself in attempts to create false comfort. Mew returned to staring at Mewtwo who in turn continued to gaze at Ash. <Mewtwo?>

<Huh? Oh, sorry,> Mewtwo replied distractedly.

<You put so much faith into that human, don't you?> Mew smiled warmly to lessen any embarrassment he was feeling.

<Yes. He means a lot to me,> Mewtwo answered with his head bowed. Mew brushed her tail across his paw.

<Nothing to be ashamed of, he's really special.>

<I know. The Master To Be.>

Mew smiled, saying, <I believe that he can always make a difference.>

<Yes, but from what I know, only with a Legendary's assistance.> Mewtwo was sneaking glances at Ash, making certain the human was not aware of the conversation. <We can't provide it now.>

<Do you have the feeling that this really is the end?>

Before Mewtwo could answer, three new arrivals appeared at the gym entrance. Three dog or cat-like Pokémon stepped majestically into the building. All at once heads turned to look at them. Mew and Mewtwo had no doubt in their minds that whatever prayers they had been thinking were answered.

The Pokémon were all above 6' tall. The Pokémon were classed, not based on their type, but on their appearances. The three all posed enormous head pieces and weird additions. Another common trait were the manes that streamed from the back of their head pieces. Their purposes were all generally linked as well; best known as watchers.

The Pokémon in the front, the definite electric type, was peculiar to observe. It closely resembled a saber-tooth tiger, except it sported a grayish-purple mane, a hard gray skull plate, large hard duo whiskers, and tusks that extended from the whiskers and wrapped around the skull plate. Its body was yellow with arrow shaped black markings. The very end of its body had a jagged tail with a dozen pointed tip star at the end.

The Pokémon behind the electric type was not quite so obvious to class, besides being blue, and probably being water based. It was definitely the most beautiful to catch a glimpse of. From appearance it could be defined as something like a greyhound, or a cheetah. Its head piece was giant, making up for the lack of other additional peculiar pieces. Turquoise in color, icy in composure, it resembled a hollowed diamond shape. The mane across its back was long, sleek and purple. Along its body were white diamond patterns to match the head piece and match the two ribbon tails that reached from the rear to the front of the Pokémon.

The lagging Pokémon in the group was amusing to glimpse upon. It was a large, brown and very furry Pokémon. Its face was covered with additions; two large, three pointed, red fans around its eyes, a sharp horseshoe going around its mouth, and a forehead piece that looked like a banana peel. On its legs were black bands. On its back was a cloud-like mane, contrasting to the four giant triple peaked fans.

Ash was unshaken by the newcomers' presence but Misty was scared. She felt small in comparison and shied away to hide behind Ash. Togepi was greeting the newcomers from inside the backpack.

"Hush, Togepi," Misty whispered to her Pokémon.

The blue Pokémon growled and barked a bit. The yellow Pokémon nodded and growled back. The brown Pokémon somehow managed to make a sighing noise while shaking its head. Then it muttered, <"Use your brains,"> to its companions. The pair being spoken to both snarled in response.

<"You think you're so smart. We had to tell you where to go,"> remarked the yellow Pokémon.

<"I still got here when you did,"> retorted the brown one.

"Mew mew, mew, mew," (Hello Raikou, Suicune, Entei,) Mew squeaked to them as best as she could, addressing them in order of entrance.

<"It is an honor,"> Mewtwo nodded, acknowledging their status over his.

Ash Ketchum pulled out his Pokédex and made the machine analyze the three Pokémon. It responded to all three in a monotone voice, stating that it had no recollection of such Pokémon. Defeated, Ash put it away. It was to generally help him if they proved hostile, but the three Pokémon had made no move besides staring at him eerily. Pikachu was defensive about it and began to create sparks despite Ash's calming demeanor. Mew and Mewtwo watched tiredly, never releasing their hold on Mewblade. Mew knew that at least one of the Legendary Dogs; as she preferred to address them, would give answers to their reasons for being at the gym.

Suicune stepped forward and poked Moltres curiously with his forepaw.

<"Dead."> Raikou and Entei stood on either side and shook their heads.

<"So it is now confirmed,"> Raikou muttered as he turned away from the grotesque sight of Moltres' mutilated body. <"Places,"> he ordered. The dogs moved away from the gruesome mess and faced each other. They made a small triangle and began to howl.

"Pi pikachu pi pika?" (What are they doing?) Pikachu questioned in awe. Misty had shivers down her spine from listening to the howls. Ash was prepared with a Pokéball in his hand.

The howling turned into a roar, stopping suddenly. In the center of the triangle was a rainbow colored pillar of light that shot through the skylight and into the stormy sky. The storm calmed down but it did not stop. Entei looked up. <“It is the best we can do for now.”>

Mewtwo was glaring at them. <“You didn’t seem to do anything.”> His remark was rude, not called for. Scarred, bloody, burnt, tired, and sore, he was in no position to criticize anyone, especially three Legendary Dogs. Suicune looked upon Mewtwo coldly.

<“You aren’t even close to our superiority to be contradicting us,”> Suicune bragged. Mewtwo growled, wanting to stand up to defend his honor but he could not leave Mewblade’s side.

<“I am stronger than anyone!”> snarled Mewtwo.

<“Strong Pokémon don’t have weak mates. A Legendary like yourself, though a low one, should not even *have* a mate,”> jibbed Suicune, noting Mewtwo’s physical resemblance to Mewblade and his defensiveness over her.

Mewtwo replied, his telepathy sounding hoarse. He ignored Mew’s giggling. <“You really underestimate a lot of things. That could get you into a world of trouble.”> Suicune shrugged, not really caring right then. <“Mewblade is my young female clone. I would place my life on this, that she is far stronger than you are. She is also not my mate.”> Mewtwo was disgusted at the thought.

“Mew mew mew mew mew mew, mew mew mew mew mew,” (Of course if it is Mewtwo, he’d scare all the girls away,) Mew giggled as wildly as her exhausted body would let her. Entei chuckled and Pikachu laughed at the humor, trying to lighten his dark mood. Mewtwo gave them his most hostile glare yet kept quiet.

“Even Pokémon can get into squabbles,” Misty spoke quietly, her eyes were empty. Saying it was for the purpose of trying to keep her mind from falling apart. Ash glanced at her and nodded. He walked away, then was next to Mewblade, brushing some blood away from her eyes with his hand. More blood trickled to replace the blood he had removed. Ash sighed wearily, standing and walking up to Misty. Pikachu had leapt off and tried to form some sensible conversation with Mew.

“I don’t know . . .” Ash muttered. “With all these rare Pokémon around, I probably should be trying to capture one.” He eyed the Pokémon, no real incentive to try and make a fight with them when all they were doing was trying to help.

<“Forget it, human,”> Raikou said. He trotted up to Ash, cuffing the boy’s hat and knocking it in front of Ash’s eyes. Ash scowled as he effortlessly placed his hat back where it belonged.

“Hey, I didn’t mean it,” he said with a wave of his hands.

<“I know. We came to try and slow down the problem. If under different circumstances, you *would* have the right to challenge any of us. Right now, you don’t.”> *Even if he is The Master To Be.* Raikou paced back to the light pillar, continuing his pacing around it as he monitored it.

Suicune was watching Raikou watching the pillar of light. His head followed the electric dog’s motions, gradually making him dizzy. <“Ugh, enough of that,”> he said with a shake of his head and looked to Mew, Mewtwo and their predicament. <“Why do you bother saving her when she is a fraction from dead?”>

<“Because I care,”> Mewtwo snarled at Suicune, embarrassed with his answer. Being heartless was easier for him than being nice. Suicune scowled, he chose to sniff at Mewblade, judging her.

<“She is awfully young, slightly under a year. Why would she be with those injuries?”> Suicune asked. Most species of Pokémon age faster than people but Mewblade looked full grown to him, his sense of sight or his sense of smell must have been deceiving him. <“You smell a little under twenty years of age, Mewtwo. Your species must age at an incredible rate.”>

Mewtwo did not like the idea of being sniffed at. He said nothing on that topic, yet addressed the other. <“I matured at the same rate of a human. Mewblade is a Mewthree, they seem to mature much faster.”> Entei overheard Mewtwo’s age and made an opinion.

<“We could always use new blood and ideas. Why are you around though?”> Entei questioned, seeing no link between Mewtwo and nature, or metaphorical purpose. <“Doesn’t make much sense to me.”>

<“Can’t you smell it, Entei? Humans created them. That,”> Suicune gestured to Vicebane’s corpse, <“is the same as Mewtwo and this Mewblade thing. I think humans were trying to create Legendaries.”>

<“Humans creating Legendaries? That plays creation itself!”> Raikou remarked with some disgust.

<“Mewtwo and Mewblade don’t have the common smell of human contact but the red thing,”> he gestured to Vicebane’s corpse again, <“does. The . . . Mewthree?”> Suicune asked Mewtwo who agreed. <“Okay, the Mewthree are from the same litter, but different. I smell you in them, Mewtwo.”>

<“Easy to expect. The scientists that created them had access to my DNA.”>

<“Mew, strangely enough, I smell you in Mewblade,”> Suicune looked at Mew, she giggled quietly.

“Mew mew,” (Same thing,) she smiled before sulking.

<“I smell what you do. Something besides that makes Mewblade different than the other,”> Entei said. <“Still, they are from the same litter.”>

“They probably had it planned so they would fight against each other too. It’s sick,” Ash grumbled, looking away. He saw the beginning and the end of the fighting, how he said it was how it was portrayed in his memory.

The mood became more sour. The Legendary Pokémon were Pokémon known not to look favorably upon human activities, especially when other Pokémon were used as pawns and hurt and destroyed. Having two family members pitted against each other was even more despicable. Entei shook his great head, saddened with it.

“You know something, if Mewtwo and Mew are Legendary Pokémon, then why aren’t Mewblade and Vicebane?” Misty questioned since no one else thought of it before she did. It sounded to her like it was genetic. Ash stared at Misty, surprised she was thinking. Then again, it was better to think about that rather than how the mess on the floor came about to being. The Legendary Pokémon shrugged, they had no idea. Misty thought for a moment longer and came up with her own thesis. “You think they bred out whatever trait makes a Pokémon a Legendary?”



<“She’s a smart human,”> complimented Raikou. Misty blushed before her face became white. She remembered about the mess on the floor.

“Mew mew.” (It’s possible.)

<“Someone’s coming,”> Raikou warned the Legendary Dogs. They prepared fighting stances.

An ambulance screamed to a stop at the gym doors. Brock hopped out from the passenger side of the vehicle.

“Hey. I brought help,” he said with a wave then paused as he noticed the dogs staring at him. “Uh.” Brock was pointing feebly at the dogs.

“We’ll tell you later,” Misty glared. The dogs immediately relaxed. The human was harmless, so was the one in the pink outfit with her three Chanseys. Nurse Joy stiffened at the sight.

“Dear Lord, what happened here!?!” she exclaimed, never seeing such a mess in her life. Nurse Joy had seen enough surprises from the Viridian Gym in the last two weeks, but none prepared her for what she saw now. The sight of Vicebane’s body was like a picture from a graphic novel to her, gruesome in all contexts. She knew immediately that he was dead. Seeing a huge divide between two sides of the body was evidence enough. “What happened?”

<“Depends on who you ask,”> Raikou smirked halfheartedly. Nurse Joy did not even notice the telepathy, she was a little too preoccupied scanning the extent of the injuries in the gym. She knew what was definitely alive and was wondering what was definitely dead.

Nurse Joy faced her ever so loyal Chanseys, listing duties that they had to do. “One of you, get the med kit. And not the first aid kit this time.” One Chansey blushed before running off. “You two, a stretcher. Hurry.”

“Chansey,” (Okay,) the two Chanseys sent for the stretcher said. The three raced towards the ambulance to fetch the supplies.

Nurse Joy went to Mewtwo, kneeling next to him and began to check for any cuts, burns, or possibly broken bones. Mewtwo’s eyes narrowed. Even though he had sent for Nurse Joy, he did not need her attention. With a free paw Mewtwo shoved Nurse Joy and she landed gently on her butt, nearly sitting in a pool of Mewblade’s blood. Nurse Joy was angry with that and was about to berate Mewtwo with words.

<“I do not need your help. I had the human to go and fetch you in order to save her,”> he signaled to Mewblade. <“If she dies, myself and the pink Pokémon there will die as well.”>

“How?” Nurse Joy reached to touch Mewblade’s neck.

<“Destiny Bond. We want Mewblade to live.”>

Nurse Joy was grave as she listened to Mewtwo. She touched Mewblade’s neck, pressing two of her fingers against an artery. The pulse was weak. “I found a pulse,” she replied worriedly. She put her ear to Mewblade’s nose, watching her chest. It did not rise and fall as it should have. “She’s not breathing!” Nurse Joy leaned over, knowing that getting Mewblade to breathe was vital. Mewtwo rolled his eyes.

<“Mewblade does not breathe,”> he stated plainly.

“That’s impossible!” Nurse Joy exclaimed again. Mewtwo looked her in the eye with dead seriousness. She did not see his chest move, nor hear the inhaling of air. Nurse Joy looked at Mew, same thing. She was surprised and confused. “Are you all dead?”

<“We’re very much alive. Breathing isn’t necessary for our survival, that is all,”> Mewtwo sighed. He watched as a Chansey approached Nurse Joy and offered the medical kit to her.

“Thanks,” she paused. “That is so weird, never seen it.”

<“You probably will never see it again either,”> Mewtwo muttered.

“Uh,” Nurse Joy said uncertainly, judging Mewtwo’s statement.

<“We’re very rare Pokémon, you probably don’t have many administered to your hospital.”>

“Oh, okay. You had me worried,” Nurse Joy smiled as best as she could, never being able to shake off all that she was witnessing. “And what about the others?” Nurse Joy spoke about Articuno, Zapdos and Moltres.

<“They’re dead,”> Suicune answered.

“Oh . . . Well let’s get . . . Mewblade on the stretcher.” Nurse Joy brushed some hair away from her face. “That will be the first of many challenges,” she sighed as she looked at Mewblade.

<“I’ll help,”> Entei offered. Nurse Joy stared at him, blinking then smiling. Entei’s eyes glowed, his aura surrounding Mewblade and Mew. <“Mewtwo, you’re going to have to stand up.”> Mewtwo obliged. Entei lifted Mewblade and Mew off the ground and onto the stretcher before he stopped the action. Mew smiled, she did not want to exert herself trying to hold onto Mewblade while she was being moved. Mewtwo smirked at Mew while he was leaning heavily against the stretcher. Blood from Mewblade was already running down the sides of the stretcher in thin streams. Mewtwo looked down at the floor.

*Where does all that blood come from?* he wondered to himself.

“Let’s go,” Nurse Joy said. The stretcher was pushed by the two Chansey with Nurse Joy looking over Mewblade’s injuries and judging what to do. Mewtwo trudged beside, never letting go of Mewblade’s paw. Ash, Misty, Brock, and Pikachu followed.

“Are you coming?” Ash asked the Legendary Dogs.

<“No,”> answered Raikou. <“Our duty is here. Good luck with Mewblade.”>

“Thanks,” said Ash.

<“We’ll need it,”> added Mewtwo.

“*Nurse Joy, code blue.*” Nurse Joy looked at the speaker on the ceiling. “*Code blue.*” Nurse Joy’s shoulders sagged as she listened to the almost endless chatter of the speaker. She had been running around, trying her best to help the injured Pokémon but the work load was too grand. Nurse Joy faced Mewblade.

Mewblade was placed on what was now a blood soaked operating table. Mew was sitting on Mewblade’s leg, tail wrapped around Mewblade’s paw. Mewtwo was standing next to Nurse Joy, his paw still clasped firmly with Mewblade’s. If either Mew or Mewtwo left Mewblade’s side, all three would surely perish. Mew’s eyes were pleadingly

looking at Nurse Joy's. Nurse Joy knew what Mew wanted, even though language was a barrier.

*"Code red."*

<"Who else do you have on staff?"> Mewtwo asked with his slowly fading telepathy.

"Doctor Reed, Doctor Johnson, Doctor Mystex, couple interns, around two dozen Chanseys," Nurse Joy muttered. She glanced at the three Chanseys that helped her retrieve Mewblade. They were running around, gathering tools and medical supplies. "There are a lot of victims to this storm. To treat one Pokémon, it takes at least five staff. And most of the injuries are not like the cuts and bruises you got," she told Mewtwo. "Actually, Mewblade is one of the better ones."

Mew and Mewtwo exchanged shocked expressions. Mewblade, one of the better ones?! It was inconceivable. Mewblade had a giant stab wound through possibly vital organs. They could feel Mewblade dying. How could she be better?

*"Code blue. Code blue."*

"Shut-up already!" Nurse Joy yelled at the voice on the speaker, finally losing her patience. One of the Chanseys poked Nurse Joy's leg. "What?!" Nurse Joy snapped at it. The Chansey quivered a little then handed Nurse Joy a paper before continuing to run around. Nurse Joy frowned apologetically, she was stressed and had not meant to snap at one of her helpers. The paper was the test results from a blood test for Mewblade. Nurse Joy's face dropped.

<"Are those the results for Mewblade's blood type?"> Mewtwo asked. Nurse Joy's expression was not encouraging. She flashed the paper towards Mewtwo, assuming he could read.

"She doesn't have a known blood type . . ."

"Mew mew mew mew mew?" (What does she mean by that?) Mew asked, not certain.

<"Are you sure the text isn't wrong?"> Mewtwo demanded. There was a picture of a microscopic view of the blood sample attached to the back of the paper. Mewtwo took the paper in his free paw and turned it over to look at the back. He was confused, shocked. Just like Nurse Joy, he had expected it would be easy to give Mewblade a blood transfusion to keep her stable, but that was not the case. The red blood cells were far different than any he had seen before. By looking he could tell why Mewblade did not have to obtain oxygen normally. The defenses for the cells were very advanced by just a mere glimpse. The properties were entirely different, and at a glance were very similar to that of a steel type Pokémon but at the same time were not.

"We have a serious problem," Nurse Joy informed him, looking at Mewblade and the several drips attached to her arms. "Mewblade seems to be resistant to the drugs we gave her. It's very likely she could die of blood loss now."

<"I realize that."> Mewtwo looked at the floor, feeling slightly dizzy as he did. <"See if either Mew or myself are compatible matches,"> Mewtwo ordered. Mew was confused by the conversation. She knew relatively nothing of what they were talking about.

“I can try,” Nurse Joy told the pair. A Chansey handed two needles to Nurse Joy. “Thank you,” Nurse Joy sighed. “This may hurt.” Mew and Mewtwo almost laughed. A needle meant nothing to them.

Nurse Joy withdrew a small amount of blood. It was passed over to a Chansey who immediately ran out the door to have it tested. Two other Chanseys waited solemnly for instructions. “Chansey chansey chansey?” (What should we do now?) asked one.

“Get Doctor Mystex. We can’t hope that those blood tests will turn out positive,” she said. The Chansey saluted and skittered out the door and down the hallway. “For now we might as well stitch the more shallow wounds,” Nurse Joy muttered. Mewblade had been cleaned as best as possible in order to prevent infection, although the blade still remained imbedded in the torso of Mewblade. Bandages were tied tightly around her waist, chest, one of her arms, and her head to stop the four most concerning injuries from bleeding atrociously. Nurse Joy snapped some latex gloves onto her hands and removed the bandage around the chest. “Okay, we’ll fix this one up first.”

Nurse Joy had taken the equivalent of a sewing needle and thread, prepared to stitch the injury. The spare Chansey swiftly applied a salve to further disinfect the injury; a super potion would have done nothing to heal the wound. Nurse Joy immediately went to work. There was no need to graft skin and one of the long, deep claw marks was soon only an area of pinched skin and drying blood. The wound was cleaned again. It was not long before the claw marks on the chest were wrapped tightly, a sign of completion. Nurse Joy was done with the arm and nearly finished with the head injury when the Chansey she sent to test Mew and Mewtwo’s blood samples came back with the results.

“Chansey,” the Chansey chirped depressively, showing the two sheets of paper to Nurse Joy. Nurse Joy tilted her head. “Unknown blood type again?” For a second she was hopeful then her face saddened. “No match.”

<“What?! How can she not be a match? I’m her genetic parent!”> Mewtwo hollered.

“Mew.” (Same.)

“I’m sorry, Mewtwo, but neither you or Mew are a match. If one of you were a steel type, you might be more compatible,” Nurse Joy stated. Mewtwo stared for a moment, trying to think why that would be. The Chansey grabbed the sheet for Mewblade’s blood test and pointed to a symbol that both Nurse Joy and Mewtwo missed. “Titanium. She must have a metal skeleton.”

“Mew mew mew,” (I don’t get it,) Mew said, becoming more confused by the minute.

<“Blood is made from bone marrow. Mewblade’s bones are likely made primarily of titanium. Catching on?”>

“Mew mew.” (Sort of.)

Mewtwo elaborated a little more for Mew’s sake. <“Her body would reject anything that isn’t like the other blood cells. Again, most likely because hers are made from the titanium bone marrow.”>

“Mew!” (Oh!) Mew said.

Nurse Joy finished fixing the more minor injuries. She removed her gloves and tossed them into the trash before replacing them with a more durable pair. “Where’s Mystex?” she asked herself impatiently. She heard soft treading along the hallway and

turned to look at the door. The Chansey she had sent to retrieve Doctor Mystex came in with a female Alakazam in a doctor's coat with the trademark spoons stashed in the pockets.

"Ah, finally. You're here," Nurse Joy gave a relieved sigh. She then made a mock stance of anger by putting her hands to her hips. "What took you so long?"

Doctor Mystex the Alakazam smiled gravely and answered in telepathy. <"We had an Eevee that was caught under rubble while trying to save her master. The Eevee was alive when she got here but died soon after."> Nurse Joy felt sympathy towards Mystex.

"You can't reverse death. In a place like this, that technique would be a godsend but unfortunately it doesn't happen like that," Nurse Joy said as she patted Mystex's shoulder.

<"Thank you, Joy."> Mystex caught a glimpse of Mewblade. <"Chansey told me there was no blood type match?">

"Yes," answered Nurse Joy. "We took some blood samples from Mew and Mewtwo," Nurse Joy gestured to the two Pokémon. "They didn't match either." Mew and Mewtwo lowered their heads shamefully. Nurse Joy rolled her eyes. "It's not your fault so don't go blaming yourselves."

"Mew," (Sorry,) Mew muttered.

<"Hmm, psychics,"> Mystex noted. <"Powerful too. Guess you don't have enough energy for Recovers?">

<"True, we did the only other thing we could think of,"> replied Mewtwo.

<"I'll do my best to cease the blood flow in that area but I'm running very low on energy myself."> Mystex retrieved her spoons from her pockets.

"You can activate your ability once I start removing the blade," Nurse Joy instructed. Mystex nodded, understanding the instructions. She prepared a stance as she watched anxiously. "Chanseys, be ready to help me fix up Mewblade." More nods. The monitors checking Mewblade's vital signs began to drop rapidly. Her brain waves were dropping. Her heartbeat was dropping too. Mew could feel her body starting to shut down. Mewtwo put more of his focus into trying to keep Mewblade stable.

<"Focus, Mew!"> Mewtwo shouted at Mew. Mew's head jerked up and she put all her thoughts into keeping herself, Mewblade, and Mewtwo alive. <"Nurse Joy, hurry.">

"Right!" Nurse Joy said as she stood with her hands hovering over the severed blade. "It seems so unorthodox to just pull it out but it is probably the most efficient way." A Chansey was on the table with tools in her pouch and in her little hands. A second one quickly joined the first while the third would be moving back and forth with supplies. They watched as Nurse Joy wrapped her hands around the blade, surprised that it dulled to her touch. She braced herself and gave a mighty tug. With a squelch and a gushing of blood the blade came out. It was swiftly placed on a spare table next to Mewblade's severed head blade. "Mystex!"

<"On it!"> Mystex focused her energy into slowing down the blood flow. Her spoons bent as she activated her psychic abilities. The Chanseys glanced behind themselves before racing in with needles, thread, gausses and other pieces of medical equipment. Everything seemed to be everywhere as it was a mass rush to repair the injury.

They could not afford for Mewblade to lose anymore blood, and were not trying to surgically beautify the damage. Their goal for now was to stop the massive blood loss. With the amount that had been lost it would take weeks before Mewblade's blood would be replaced. Losing anymore could mean death.

Mystex kept up a valiant effort to assist but her energy was dropping and she was not doing as good of a job as she would have hoped. Nurse Joy noticed too and was trying to fix a broken artery as she did. "Just hang on for a couple minutes."

<"We can't,"> Mewtwo responded with a dramatic faintness in his telepathy. <"We're trying, but we can't . . ."> Mewtwo looked across to Mew, she was already unconscious. He glanced at the monitor, Mewblade's heart had flat streamed. Mewtwo quickly crashed to the floor in a dead heap. Mass hysteria reigned in the room.

"No . . ." Nurse Joy dropped her tools and knew there was no longer any point to trying to save Mewblade, she went to Mewtwo to try and save him. Mystex had stashed her spoons and was desperately trying to get Mew's heart to start. "No, no, no!" Nurse Joy hollered then started to cry.

Endless strains of voices echoed through what seemed to be the equally endless darkness. "No . . ." came a voice as clear as crystal, then all reverted to silence. In the endlessness small stars flashed to life, followed a minute after by thousands more. In the distance of space the sun flashed alive. Amongst the stars, nebulae, natural satellites, the silhouette of what must have been the Earth and its natural satellite, the moon, surfaced. The planet and its companion drifted slowly by along their set orbit.

*~Mewblade.~*

Mewblade opened her eyes and blinked, though she felt no evidence of it. For a moment she gazed calmly at the space, the vastness of it and its beauty. The Earth was at an angle that the sun could be seen casting a late evening glow across Kanto. Mewblade smirked to herself then looked around more. Something was odd about this.

"Am I dead?" she asked the empty silence. She felt a sense of satisfaction that she obviously must have been. Succeeding with her punishment was thrilling in a way, even if it was to herself, and Mew and Mewtwo were unable to stop her. Mewblade felt glorified with her accomplishment, until all her psychic senses kicked in. "This isn't where I'm suppose to be!" Mewblade's eyes narrowed as her aura wrapped around her body then was thrown out into space. "Take me out of this!" Her feeble attempts to right her location did not work. Attempts to get rid of what was to her mind, an illusion, did not work. Nothing worked. No matter how hard she tried, she was always welcomed with the continued stillness of the mock space. Mewblade ran out of expendable energy and curled up into a fetal position, quickly admitting defeat to the unknown.

*~Hello, little one.~* Mewblade uncurled from her position to find the source of the voice. It spoke not in words, but thought. She had never heard anything like it, an emotional, wordless telepathy.

"Who are you? Show yourself!" Mewblade demanded hotly as her body twisted and turned in order to find the source. The voice chuckled. It was the first time Mewblade felt helpless. "Leave me alone! I am not here to be mocked by you." Her tail whipped in

front of her to protect herself. Mewblade noticed briefly that she had no injuries, that her end tail blade was unharmed. "I can fight you."

*~You have much to learn, little one. Put your tail down.~*

"No," Mewblade refused. A force pinned her arms to her sides and forced her tail to stand down. "Let me go!" Mewblade struggled. She had no idea how frightened Vicebane had felt when he had said that to her, now she knew.

A blinding light flashed in the middle of space, hurting Mewblade because of its purity. A figure stepped forth. Mewblade gasped, she knew exactly what the figure was. "Ho-oh?"

Nurse Joy took her hands away from Mewtwo's chest, no matter what she did, that heart would not start. Mystex had long since stopped trying to start Mew's heart, hooking up the machine that had measured Mewblade's brain waves to Mewtwo. It was turned on, Mystex glanced at the monitor. <"Nurse Joy, there is nothing we can do.">

"Huh?" Nurse Joy mumbled as she looked at the monitor, there was nothing on it but a straight line.

<"I thought about it, and realized that we probably couldn't start their hearts. I know how a Destiny Bond can work. Their bodies would take little to no injury from it, but their brains on the other hand would. Even if by some small chance we did start their hearts, they would be brain dead for the rest of their lives.">

The Chanseys sympathized with Nurse Joy as tears streaked down her cheeks. She stepped shakily off of Mewtwo, removing her gloves and brushing her hand across her cooling, sweat soaked forehead. The tears became more frequent as anger and frustration were ever more present across her usually sweet face. Her body trembled as she walked over to the table that had been covered with surgical supplies. Her eyes darted across the room, focusing from Mew, to Mewblade, to Mewtwo. Then the outburst. "It's too dang hard!" Nurse Joy finally broke down, everything had been too much for her. Her fist slammed against the table, scattering the bloodied supplies on the floor. The knees that supported her grew weak and she slumped to the floor, sobbing into her stained hands. "How am I suppose to save them all?" Nurse Joy sobbed fitfully. "I can only do so much."

A Chansey patted Nurse Joy on the shoulder, offering her support. "Chansey chansey, chansey chansey, chansey chansey chansey chansey chansey." (You tried, gave your best, and can still save lives if you believe you still can.) Nurse Joy looked at the Chansey, wiping her eyes across the back of her lower arm.

"Thank you, Chansey. I just wish I could have saved them," she muttered in regret. "We might as well put them on a stretcher and send them for autopsy later."

Ho-oh's red eyes shone with the same glitter as any other Legendary. The black rings along the edges accented the eyes, making them more pronounced against the orange of the bird's base feathers. To a casual observer they would never notice the constant sweep of planets, Pokémon, people and nature that swept across the eyes of the most elusive creature in the world. It saw things that Mewblade could not understand, or grasp within

her mind. Her eyes remained stagnant, as blank as her mind was to anything outside of her immediate circle of influence.

The beak of Ho-oh drew back in a smile that should not, or could not be possible. It obviously knew something, but answered Mewblade's first question. <"Yes, I am Ho-oh.">

Mewblade bowed her head in response, both in shame and acknowledgment. "It may be too late for your appearance to make a real significance but it is a great honor nonetheless." Ho-oh brushed its wing tips beneath Mewblade's chin, forcing Mewblade to look upon its eyes once more.

<"Child, you can face me, we are equals,"> it coaxed Mewblade gently, keeping her head softly raised. In Mewblade's current state of well-being, she was not feeling highly esteemed. Mewblade gave her bitter reply.

"I am dead, you are eternal. You appear to me and demote me to 'child'. I am your lesser." She moved her head to the side, turning away from Ho-oh. Mewblade looked at the stars beneath her feet, watching them sparkle.

<"I see it through different eyes. If I am superior then why must I appear to you?"> it asked with wings slightly outspread. Mewblade coolly gave her reply.

"Because all Legendaries have a calling, an objective given to them from the beginning of their creation." Her eyes narrowed dangerously as she spoke. Mewblade was irritated with Ho-oh's interference in her demise. Ho-oh moved its long neck over Mewblade's head blade, looking at the same stars she was staring at.

<"Then do you know the importance of my visit?"> Mewblade nodded her head in silent reply. <"What is it that you know? Like those stars below, they cannot see absolutely everything before them.">

"Your appearance identifies important people, Pokémon, and their destinies. You are almost omnipotent in your lifestyle. Elusive. You see over all life that resides on Earth." Mewblade's eyes had become glazed over with recollection of what she knew as she thought it over and judged the worth of fables, myths and legends that she was lucky enough to have learned. Ho-oh straightened its body, seemingly disappointed in Mewblade.

<"You understand, but not to the fullest. The evidence has been around you the whole time but you have dismissed it as easily as you dismiss your own emotions and of those who try to help you."> There came a short break in Ho-oh's speech. Mewblade looked over her shoulder, glaring. Her respect for the bird had quickly gone downhill.

"I am not suppose to have emotions," was Mewblade's blunt remark as she faced away again.

<"We have watched you. We know what you are,"> Ho-oh spoke, the words striking eerie notes and causing Mewblade to shiver. <"Weigh my words, for I do not lie.">

Mewblade snorted in contempt, she no longer cared what Ho-oh had to say. Her body posture showed it. *It can tell me nothing but what I know. Why should I care? I never did in the first place.*

As if by mind-reading, Ho-oh answered Mewblade. <"You will care in a few moments,"> it paused, taking in the cinematic climax of its speech. <"You are one of us, Mewblade. You are a Legendary.">



Nurse Joy walked tentatively into the front room, approaching Ash and his friends rather cautiously. The news she had to deliver had been common in the last while, but no matter how often she said the dreaded words, it could never become any easier. She could see the somber expressions from the trainers that were seeking shelter and from the ones waiting the news of their Pokémon.

Ash had been waiting impatiently, tapping his feet against the floor. He heard the walking pace of Nurse Joy and jumped to his feet. "Are they okay?!" he blurted out, shouting across the room in his display of eagerness. No one else really bothered to even shift their eyes. Ash's stance relaxed slightly, although still noticeably tense. Nurse Joy did not want to shout the news to him, it would likely make half of the trainers there reflect on the messages they received. For a moment there was a great deal of hopefulness in Ash's eyes, but Nurse Joy's were grave. She stood before Ash, fist clenched and head bowed.

"None of them made it," she said hastily, spilling the answer too quickly for even herself to hear in her mind.

Ash's bottom lip quivered slightly, while Misty and Brock both gasped in shock. Misty trembled, holding back her anguish as best as possible before it spilled forth. Brock was crying silently to himself while Pikachu shared the shocked expression of his master. All of them were without words, only Nurse Joy who saw it as her duty to inform them, spoke.

"Mew and Mewtwo died painlessly. I just wish I could have said the same for Mewblade. She lost too much blood and there was nothing that could be done for her. My team is finishing fixing up Mewblade but it is more out of modesty. Frankly, we don't know what to do with them."

"You're not giving them to the people who tried to capture them." Nurse Joy blinked as she looked at Ash's tear stained face, hat covering the rest, a fist shaking in anger. She had never seen such determination in any person besides him. "Take them far away from people. You have to! Even if they're dead, I know that they'd want that."

Nurse Joy hesitantly bit her lip as she glanced away. Mew, Mewtwo and Mewblade were wild Pokémon, generally, although she noticed a look in Mewtwo's eyes that showed a small hint of domestication. The Pokémon did not belong to Ash, and had no other owners. They were free pickings in a sense, and were so rare that studying them, even in death, would prove beneficial to Pokéologists world-wide. How to explain such a concept to Ash was a little complicated. Plus his determination could go as far as destroying the bodies if needed; that is if he could somehow dispose of Mewblade's skeleton, and for him and his Pokémon combined, it was impossible.

"Ash, I'm sorry I couldn't save them but if they are sent to a laboratory, experts can analyze them and maybe uncover the greatest mysteries about Pokémon and the origins of even life itself. This is very important to science, and they would be happy if they knew that even in death, they were contributing to a greater cause."

Pikachu could be heard making numerous amounts of remarks from his position on a single seat. Ash stared straight into Nurse Joy's eyes. "They never wanted to be used. Besides, maybe people are not suppose to know! They should be protected, not

exploited!” This was turning heads now. “I don’t care if they don’t have a say in it. I knew them better than you, and I know what *they* want. And what *they* want is not what *you* want.”

Nurse Joy was a bit set back by that. There was no reasoning in Ash’s mind. “Okay. I’ll leave them alone for a bit but you’re going to have to decide what you will do with them.” She left rather quickly, sort of lost in her thoughts. What bothered her about the three Pokémon was their blood, something about it was so strange. As long as Nurse Joy had samples of that blood, she could analyze their genetics. She really wished she could have saved them, and really she just wanted to find a way to better help Pokémon. Unfortunately, she brought forth the wrong points. “I really need a break,” muttered Nurse Joy as she turned down a hallway, mentally, physically and emotionally exhausted.

“This is so terrible,” Misty spoke, breaking the silence. The other trainers had turned their heads away, but Misty was focused on Ash. “It is like everything is dying. You can hear that storm, it’s just getting worse. We probably will too . . .” The dark clouds outside were not as dark as the mental ones inside the building. The howls and the constant buffeting of wind against the doors and windows were displaying the gradual worsening of the storm. Lights were flickering constantly inside the building, signifying an evident blackout. The back-up generator in the building could only last so long, especially with all the injured Pokémon in Intensive Care. The Pikachu generator that Ash had been familiar with when he brought his injured Pikachu to Viridian City was a last resort and was likely depleted because of the excessive use of defibrillators.

“We probably will have to give up sooner or later,” Brock added tiresomely. Ash turned to them.

“What are you? Quitters? We can’t give up! I for one am not giving up without a fight. There must be something we can do.” Uplifting as the statement was, the empty eyes around the room did not change.

“Let’s face it, Ash. We can’t fight the weather,” said Brock as he hung his head.

“There still must be something.” Ash then put his hand beneath his chin thoughtfully. “The dogs! Maybe they can somehow contact some other rare Pokémon who can help!” He slammed his fist into his open palm, strength coming from his idea. “Yeah. Come on, Pikachu.” Pikachu scampered onto Ash’s shoulder without hesitation, even as Ash was heading for the door leading outside.

Mewblade could have stumbled in shock if only gravity were in affect. She just could not believe her ears. *Me? A Legendary?* The thought boggled her mind, it was so unreal that she could not grasp it despite the fact that her mind was running through the reasons of why and how. *How? How can this be?* Immortality, status and power beyond her wildest desires or fears, it had been there when she was alive. *How? I thought . . . I thought that because I did not need to breathe, eat or blink was just a fact of my life!* How? Mewblade was staring at her open paws as they shook. Defeated by her own reasoning, she brought her paws to her face to seemingly cry in.

Ho-oh watched quietly as Mewblade could be seen fighting with her mind over the possibilities. Somehow Mewblade could not give herself any credit at this point. It saw and decided to reiterate for her. She was lost.

<“You became a Legendary since your creation,”> it told her soothingly, a warm smile on its beak and in its eyes. Mewblade brought her paws down from her face, looking at Ho-oh pleadingly to tell her more. <“You stood out from the others having been blessed with the gifts of only Mew and Mewtwo combined.”> Ho-oh did not emphasize its words much but the word ‘only’ had the most emphasis. Mewblade knew very well that she had been made from only those two genetic parents, yet knew what Ho-oh was eluding to. Either the other Mewthrees were not genetically related to her mother, or made of more than just Mew and Mewtwo.

Mewblade chuckled, “I guess my creators gave up on creating Legendaries after I was made.” Mewblade shook her head, still trying to clear her mind. “Never knew I was one.” Her tone of voice became heavy.

<“I understand that it is hard to see the special qualities in yourself. By looking with my own eyes I can see the glitter that makes you a Legendary,”> Ho-oh said, taking a long pinion feather and brushing it along Mewblade’s cheek. Mewblade shuddered rather involuntary, naturally reluctant to being touched. She narrowed her eyes to see a knowing smile in Ho-oh’s eyes, but nothing deceptive about it. She tilted her head slightly, trying to understand more than what she could possibly handle. Mewblade winced briefly as her mind was wracked with pain. Ho-oh appeared behind Mewblade, surrounding her with its wings and using a peculiar Recover for a headache. While being dead and being where she was at the present time, Mewblade was amazed that she still retained some connections to the physical world.

*Why does it keep doing all this? It knows very well I hate being in contact with anything,* grumbled Mewblade with a mental gritting of her teeth. Ho-oh was affectionate towards her, which annoyed Mewblade. It was an attempt to relax Mewblade since the only other way Mewblade could think of was if Ho-oh tried to dominate her mind and force her into that state. Mewblade shifted uncomfortably, her blades flattening into her back instinctively. It was a slight enforcement of passivity but at least it proved that she was relaxing.

<“I will be asking you several questions soon and need you to be able to think them out calmly and with certainty. For the last few moments you have been quite jumpy and very spontaneous,”> Ho-oh informed her quietly, remaining calm.

“So what is the point of telling me about my present status now?” Mewblade asked while looking over her shoulder to only see the lower part of Ho-oh’s neck. She stared back to the space ahead of her. “You obviously have an agenda,” she noted.

<“You are correct about that; although, I do nothing for my personal benefit and nothing that seems pointless. If I saw it as pointless to come to you then I would not have come and left it to the afterlife to decide your fate. I have more purposes than you are likely aware about at this moment. I know that you are very overwhelmed, so I do not expect you to recall it.”>

Despite what Ho-oh had just told her, Mewblade was struggling anyway to remember what those other purposes were. She growled in frustration and Ho-oh yet again had to use a type of Recover to get rid of the headache for Mewblade. “I can’t remember,” she muttered.

<“I was going to tell you, and I still am. You must save the thinking for my questions,”> it smiled warmly again. Mewblade could not see it but she could feel it in

her mind and Ho-oh's aura. It seemed to radiate different degrees of light and warmth depending on the emotion. Ho-oh continued after letting Mewblade think over what it was telling her. It would have to go much slower in order to balance Mewblade's quickness to respond. <"I can resurrect a dead Legendary, although that is only if they have died once and only once."> There was a lengthy pause as it let Mewblade calmly think it over.

"Right. There was a case with Suicune, Raikou, and Entei. The humans had the lore written so to seem that you created them but in reality they were only being resurrected. Before that time, their presence was not felt around humans." Mewblade knew her history lessons, this one being easy to her. "Although I am not certain of their original origins."

<"Do not think over that too much,"> it told her laughingly.

"Okay. So you're going to send me back?" The line was full of detest and hate that it almost stopped and swallowed Ho-oh's outward feelings.

Mewblade had a noticeable death wish, a huge obstacle for what Ho-oh was offering her. Mewblade had successfully committed her own suicide and was basking in it before Ho-oh ever appeared. The incentive to live was very distant, given the opportunity to throw it aside, she would leap at that chance to toss her life away. There were a lot of explanations, rules, reasons, and justifications to make Mewblade a little willing to go back and stay.

<"I will, but before I send you back, I must explain everything to you.">

Nurse Joy had one of those gut-feelings as she checked a patient. The feeling told her that in the waiting room, something was about to go wrong. She could only guess what it was but felt quite assured that she had to move to that room quickly for whatever reason.

Ash was unbarring the door swiftly. Pikachu was glancing behind himself, seeing if anyone would notice what they were up to. "Pika chu. Pika pi, pi pikachu!" (Uh-oh. Ash, move faster!) Pikachu saw Nurse Joy walking briskly into the room. Her face became momentarily slapped with indignation as she spotted Ash ripping away the barricade. She walked even more quickly, grabbing Ash by his shoulder.

"Young man, what do you think you're doing?!" she demanded with a scowl. Nurse Joy was not in the mood to be nice anymore. Ash started to stutter before he even started speaking. "The last thing we need is for you to end up as a casualty." Her face became grieved and opaque. Ash lowered his head in a bit of an apology. "Go take a seat, Ash." Nurse Joy sounded exasperated, not wanting to go through anymore problems. She gestured meekly to an empty space on a couch, watching Ash as he shuffled towards it before flopping down. Nurse Joy left the room to check on the patients.

Ash slouched in his seat, one next to a very distressed little girl. He had not noticed her, and she did not notice him. Ash's excuse for being apathetic was that he was trying to think of ways to save the world. All he could come up with was somehow contacting Lugia. Figuring that getting out of the building was the first priority, he began to look around for other exit doors.

“Pika pi?” (Ash?) Pikachu leapt down into Ash’s lap, tilting his head as he watched his master with worry. “Pikachu pi pika?” (Are you okay?)

“Huh?” Ash shook his head then laughed. “Of course I’m okay. I’m just trying to think of a way to get out of here . . . As long as we’re together, we’ll solve this problem.” His smile comforted Pikachu greatly.

“Pi pika pi!” (Me and you!) Pikachu nodded with agreement as he laughed in an adorable way. Ash ruffled the head of his best friend, who giggled in response. The little girl next to Ash sat up, facing Ash and Pikachu, the two very apathetic, self-absorbed beings.

The girl’s face was tear stained, her blonde hair was wet and in tassels. What was once a pink shirt was now soaked with someone else’s blood. She tried to hold back her tears, her choking sobs, but she broke down suddenly, weeping uncontrollably. She let her head and arms fall limply across her lap, muting some of the sounds except for the calling of her deceased Pokémon’s name. Ash and Pikachu stared, not certain if they had caused the girl to cry.

“Oh, I’m so sorry,” Ash winced. “Can I help you?” he offered. The girl just continued to cry, almost as if she had never heard Ash.

“Pikachu pi pikachu pika,” (I wonder what happened,) Pikachu muttered. The Pokémon saw a teenage boy approach the girl.

The boy was partially wet though his hair, like the girl’s, was drenched. His khakis and red Nike shirt clung to his skin at odd places. Their facial structures looked similar, obviously related in some way. The boy removed his backpack, placing it on the floor as he rummaged for an item. Finding it, he lifted out a blanket that was bone dry. The backpack had to be waterproof. He straightened himself then leaned over the girl, gingerly wrapping the blanket around her shoulders. “There you go, squirt,” he smiled, the insult being friendly. The girl looked up, smiling dryly.

“Thank you, Dan,” she choked back sobs as she spoke.

“Don’t mention it, Coline.” Dan ruffled Coline’s blonde hair teasingly, briefly fixing a loose barrette. As far as Ash and Pikachu could tell, they were brother and sister. “You better get some sleep,” Dan suggested as he walked up to a nearby chair, taking a seat in it, casually watching his little sister as she nodded off.

“They must have had it rough,” commented Ash with a low voice.

<“Being a Legendary is a very important position and one not to be taken lightly,”> Ho-oh began, waving a pinion feather in front of Mewblade’s face as she tried to listen. She knew very well she had not taken it all so lightly when she was told, and could not understand why Ho-oh would even bother to begin with that line in the first place. Omnipotent beings do not waste their energy telling things the listener already knows. <“Mewblade, pay attention.”>

“Huh? Yeah, I know. I’m important,” she remarked sarcastically. Although Mewblade could not see it, Ho-oh was dismayed by Mewblade’s remark. Sarcasm was not a form of communication for Mewblade, in fact, she never used it up to this instance. She obviously wanted to get the point across that she did not value Ho-oh’s judgment. This was going to be much harder than what it perceived. Ho-oh Teleported to reappear

before Mewblade, its head lowered so Mewblade could see its expressions as they were made.

<“Say it with me, ‘I am important’.”> Ho-oh kept an even stare with Mewblade. She narrowed her eyes, refusing to move her mouth or use her mind. <“Mewblade, you must say it.”> Mewblade was about to open her mouth. <“No sarcasm.”> She shut her mouth and snarled audibly. <“I want you to be honest about it. You are a Legendary, that makes you very important.”>

Mewblade looked up at the red eyes, wanting to escape them but she would not back down in her staring contest. The whole topic was uncomfortable for her. Mewblade was frustrated, angry, and depressed, this was also making her remarks all the more spiteful. She turned her head away, ripping herself away from Ho-oh’s eternal stare. “I don’t think I’m important, Ho-oh,” she spoke quietly, head still turned. At least she was being far less rude. Ho-oh had unmatched patience and let the time pass on for what would feel like several minutes to Mewblade. She looked back at Ho-oh, the silence finally unbearable. “Aren’t you going to pressure me with your question?” Ho-oh just smiled. “Well?” There was silence. “You appear to important figures and . . .” Mewblade realized she could not make an argument against that part of Ho-oh’s existence and answered the question without having to be asked again. “I am important,” she smirked mildly while turning her head away.

<“That wasn’t so hard now, was it?”> Ho-oh chuckled as it nuzzled the base of her head blade. Mewblade could have shot back with several dozen sarcastic claims but she did not say a single one. There was a certain amount of defeat Mewblade was feeling, all of it directed towards her pride. Ho-oh stopped grooming Mewblade and continued to drill her with information. <“I know you detest being forced into any position of weakness, sadly almost all Legendary Pokémon are selected without their consent. Consider it a monarchy system in ways. You, like almost every other Legendary are the ones that are selected who can ultimately live up to their duties. Although, failure of duties often results in punishment or death.”> Ho-oh stopped speaking for a moment, letting the information sink in before it continued. Mewblade nodded, understanding. <“Each different species of Legendary Pokémon has a defined purpose.”> That got Mewblade thinking. She wondered what exactly hers might be. <“I will tell you in a bit. You know all the main purposes of each different Legendary. There are secondary and tertiary purposes as well, all of which are more or less exclusive amongst each of the species. You’re very gifted, dear child, to know some.”> Mewblade smirked proudly, her aura flickering around her briefly. She was using her ears to listen, not her mouth, making most of her responses quite complicated to understand but Ho-oh knew. <“It’s nice that you’re showing some eagerness to say the least. Anyway, I have come to you, and you’re a Legendary without any true aged guardians at this present time.”>

“What about Mew or Mewtwo? Or are they dead?” Mewblade asked, not certain about the pair in general.

<“I will also talk about them in a bit. I will be your guardian for several years until I deem that you are fit to uphold your duties without any monitoring.”> Mewblade was ready to interrupt just then, Ho-oh kept talking, not allowing her to protest against it. <“There are reasons why you must be looked after for at least some duration of time. Legendary Pokémon are very powerful, and you definitely are no exception. The powers

you have are ones that can be so easily abused if not monitored closely. They are also powers that can likely kill you if also not used properly.”>

*What is it that I do?! Ho-oh is making it seem like I'm worse than Mewtwo in some way. I wish it would tell me what I can do rather than jump around it,* thought Mewblade. These powers that Ho-oh was speaking of had to be quite beyond what she already knew she could do; although, she was not all too sure about what exactly her reasons would be to use them. Mewblade's best guess was that it was a more amplified version of her previous duties as the Upholder of Pokémon Law, which was a self-appointed title.

<“You will bring back your headache again,”> Ho-oh noted as it saw Mewblade with lowered eyes, thinking. <“Your powers, like that of every other Legendary must be used in the ways of neutrality and Light, although your dark type nature is a bit of a concern,”> said Ho-oh with a dry tone of voice. Mewblade looked up, a bit of a glare in her eyes.

“That shouldn't make a difference,” she protested lightly, moving her paw to her side then making a fist. “I'm obviously not as good as you are, but I would never let myself be corrupted in such a way.” Mewblade thought of how Ho-oh's entrance had hurt her. It burned her very soul, Ho-oh knew that.

<“Any Legendary can be corrupted. Many of history's struggles have been caused by a Legendary gone astray. Guardianship is to help keep you from going down the wrong path as well as for the basic guidance and tutelage. It still remains that you are a partial dark type, and you do burn with hate. You must never reach for the darkness or the temptations of Chaos, it may offer the power but that is the only good it will do for you. A very old transcript that you know of states that many great rulers have sought power, only to do wicked deeds in pursuit of it, later to have themselves destroyed by the people they served. It may be human, but many Pokémon are no different when it comes to personalities, and you are also much more human in personality than most other Pokémon.”>

Mewblade crossed her arms, whipping her tail back and forth. “I don't want to be degraded to the same level as the humans who created me!” she snarled, turning her head to the side. Ho-oh frowned as it watched the very arrogant Mewblade try to ignore it.

<“That was never implied. It is a good thing that you can relate with humans on some level. Because of the original origins of most of the other Legendaries, most are lost to human concerns and thus may prove the downfall of Pokémon worldwide. The only ones that are not are the Mew species, the Mewtwo species, and yours, the Mewthree species. The Legendary Dogs are learning to relate, otherwise, it is a grim testimony.”>

“If I have to mediate . . .” Mewblade began with a warning tone.

<“Never!”> Ho-oh exclaimed with a laugh. <“It is preferable to leave it to those who can do that naturally.”> Mewblade sighed in relief, making Ho-oh chuckle.

<“Anyway, we have gotten a bit off topic. The transcript was a reference to let you know that what it represents applies itself on many levels when it comes to you and how you should conduct yourself.”> Ho-oh closed that part of the topic without any questions from Mewblade. <“Each Legendary, as you know, has specific titles, gifts, duties that are specially designed for them. You are no exception. Unfortunately, I cannot tell you what those are unless you accept your Legendary position.”>

“Why is that?” Mewblade tilted her head.

<“It’s a danger to your life if I send you back, letting you know the extents of your abilities, or even what they are.”>

“So? I never really cared whether I’m alive or not,” Mewblade shot back.

<“I was afraid that you would acknowledge that. Shows how comfortable you are with the concept. And don’t smirk at that either,”> Ho-oh warned using a feather to point out the smirk across Mewblade’s face. <“You should be quite ashamed of yourself for taking pride in something so selfish and so demeaning of your personal well-being.”>

“Why does it matter to you whether I die or not? I may be important but I don’t see what’s so important about what I can do.”

<“Because you are important and because your abilities are unique. If you actually try to live life past just your existence, you may learn to like it. Many beings give up before they even start the race.”>

Mewblade raised her eye-ridge, snorting in contempt as she listened. “I was doing my duty. Law is law and everyone must follow it.”

<“That is not the point. I want to be certain that you will use your abilities and not give in to death. Mewblade, I am asking you to try to treasure life, especially your own. If you cannot accept that, then I may as well leave you for dead, or send you back with nothing but questions. I still must be your guardian if you can accept that since resurrection does not heal self-esteem issues.”> Ho-oh paused as it again let Mewblade think it over. She was insulted pretty well and was snarling and hissing beneath the snarls.

“I have no issues. I am perfectly fine!” Mewblade hollered as her aura flared.

<“I would not have said it if it weren’t true,”> it stated calmly, the sentence being a smug one but Ho-oh was not attempting to rub anything in Mewblade’s face.

“Grr . . . Still, I really do not like to be told that.” Her aura dissipated as did her temper.

<“I know you don’t. Can you try to live life without breaking the rules?”> Ho-oh arched its neck so that it was no longer looking at eye level with Mewblade, this was to give Mewblade the feeling that she was under no pressure. Mewblade looked up, rather unwilling to accept, yet she was compelled to know more.

“I will give it a try, but only that much.”

<“That is good. Could you accept the possible implications of knowing everything there is to know about yourself?”> Ho-oh was speaking of Mewblade learning about her Legendary self. There was a glint in Mewblade’s eyes, one that said that she was up to the challenge. She had no idea how true of a true challenge it would be, although Ho-oh was prepared to supply it.

“I can accept anything,” she smirked.

<“It will be quite a burden for you. Are you very sure?”> Ho-oh leaned over, its eyes so serious that it could send shivers down a Steelix’s spine. Mewblade adapted the same seriousness. She could accept it and learn to deal with it. This challenge was hers, and she would embrace it for all it was worth.

“I, Mewblade will accept whatever burden I am to bear,” she stated with certainty. It would mean she would have to deal with being less careless, having Ho-oh as a guardian, also either being blessed or cursed with apparently some rather astonishing abilities. Ho-oh was greatly pleased with Mewblade’s willingness. The Mewthree was



one to keep her word more often than not, so as long as she said she would commit herself, then she would.

<“I shall explain you as a Legendary,”> Ho-oh smiled in almost giddy delight. It did not have that specific expression yet convincing Mewblade to agree was a hard fought battle of linguistics. <“Mewblade, you are a Pokémon with your own personal gifts. You have a beautifully crafted combination of psychic, dark and steel abilities. Those abilities are accompanied by subterfuge, battle tactics, intelligence, a blossoming wisdom, great willpower and an undying strength. Among this you have abilities that even extend those of many living things, but one very specific ability that you will learn to harness, bests even that of mine.”>

Mewblade looked up in thought as she puzzled over what she could possibly do that was better than Ho-oh. Ho-oh was not a known killer. Ho-oh had quite a pure aura, still it was very unlikely Mewblade was any better, or way worse. Intelligence or wisdom were two areas Mewblade was certain that she could not compete with. Borrowed intelligence and a very youthful sense of wisdom were both not going to make Mewblade any better than Ho-oh. It was very unlikely she had to communicate to anything in general which meant that she would obviously be terrible at it. Mewblade pondered in absolute confusion. Ho-oh watched with interest before speaking.

<“Figured it out?”> it asked with innocent curiosity.

Mewblade sighed in regret. “No.”

Ho-oh twittered, a bird version of a hum as it took Mewblade’s right paw in its wings, studying her palm before letting it drop back to Mewblade’s side. <“It’s very unique but has one very distinct similarity to what I do. I am surprised that it did not cross your mind, especially since I mentioned it not so long ago.”>

There was that shiver down the spine again. Now if Mewblade had thought of that earlier, she would have said that she disliked what Ho-oh was telling her even more than she would have if she were told that she had to be a mediator. Mewblade was very good at the exact opposite of the ability, a master as some may put it. She glared down at her paw, hiding it behind her back, trying to deny the existence of her paw and what it likely could do. *No wonder it never mentioned about me ever learning about it without its help. I would never have thought of it in a million years,* Mewblade thought with a tinge of bitterness. She glared down at the stars beneath her feet in attempt to blame them for everything.

<“It is not that bad of an ability,”> Ho-oh said with a calm voice.

“I am a weapon! A born killer! And you’re telling me that I’m not!?!” Mewblade roared, her aura alive once more. Ho-oh waited patiently for the anger that fueled the aggressive aura to fade away. After what was three minutes to Mewblade, she calmed down. “It may be a good ability, but it does not suit me.”

Ho-oh frowned as it looked at Mewblade. <“I believe it suits you just fine. Besides, you are not to be denied what you were originally designed to do. Your natural Legendary instincts have already allowed you to perform the first part of your duties, destroying the law breakers. The second duty is tied in with your resurrection ability, reviving the pure of heart that have fallen slain due to wrong deeds. There are other responsibilities though they are designed for you alone, thus I can never tell you exactly

what those are. Understand though that in life, your purpose is far greater than two applications of Pokémon Law.”>

“I can’t believe this,” Mewblade snorted, trying to deny her reversal death capabilities. “Explains why I have such an effective Recover though,” she added beneath her breath.

<“You are quite familiar with death, that makes you perfectly suited for the familiarity with life. It goes hand in hand, so to speak. Although you will grow to understand very quickly that returning life in particular has repercussions. That is something I cannot entirely prepare you for. I can tell you the basics of it, as well as how it should exceed mine. With time the ability will be able to do more for you than you will ever realize when you start it. I know that at the moment you are able to repeatedly use it for an individual where I can only use it once. That already bests mine, and you are so young.”> It watched as Mewblade retrieved her paw from behind her back to gaze upon it. <“I am not all too sure of your exact repercussions. As best as I know, the matter of life and death are very complex, as long as you stay as a standing point between it, it may become quite dangerous for you. The process could leave you very vulnerable, making you a likely target for the Chaos at that time. Do not deny your strength, your best intentions, or your will. If something does happen in that situation, only you can help yourself. I know the other Legendaries will agree with me upon seeing your true show of determination. If you were not the one for the position, then you would have shown no Legendary traits at all.”>

“I suppose fate works in strange ways. Doubt that something like an ability can take me down so easily. If it comes to me naturally, it should be simple.” Ho-oh was doubtful but said nothing about Mewblade’s last two sentences of her speech.

<“That is quite interesting that you mentioned fate. Your combined duties come with a title that pertains to the word. It can be considered like a second name to give you the air of mystery, the sense of salvation, the sense of demise to anyone who hears of it. It may also be considered entirely degrading since it may sum your whole existence in one simple phrase.”> Mewblade was listening intently as Ho-oh spoke. <“Or be considered uplifting for its accurate simplicity. The slayer of the impure who break the halo laws. The savior to the pure of heart who have fallen slain before the weapons of the wicked. Upholder of the Laws of Pokémon. Your title is 'Decider of Fate'.”>

Mewblade nodded her head, accepting the title rather willingly. ‘Decider’ was not a real word in any language though it did make sense. It seemed suitable to her, appropriate too. Basically, Mewblade got to pick who lived or who died. If she were not so restrained, she would hear that and envision how horribly brutalized the world could be under her control. She knew better than that of course. For a moment Mewblade noticed Ho-oh looking like it was holding back something. It wanted to come forward with an emotion or a thought but was suppressing it. Ho-oh had such a strong hold over its own emotions that seeing one slip through, even if it were so subtle, meant something was going on. Mewblade privately made a mental note.

The title meant more than what Mewblade would initially realize. Ho-oh was being deceptive because there was no way to actually properly explain ‘Decider of Fate’ without causing upheaval. It would not cause a small little argument that Mewblade would make, but the upheaval would cause tensions, possibly even start fights or wars

amongst Pokémon and people. No one can really tell someone that they know everything that is going to happen, and that because of what a single phrase means that the person's life will be hell. Ho-oh wanted to say 'sorry', to cry and not see it again. In ways it deeply regretted convincing Mewblade to agree to her responsibilities as a Legendary, unfortunately destiny is a cruel mistress and fate an even crueler master.

Ho-oh briskly returned back to the topic, almost too fast for Mewblade to ponder if something was wrong. <"I believe you must be wondering if you are to be called 'Mewthree' instead of your original name, correct?">

"Hmm, yes. I would prefer if it stayed the way it is." Mewblade had not even thought of that, she was compiling data in her head.

<"Because you have a more human personality, having a name that is suited to you is more personalized and thus more human,"> Ho-oh explained as Mewblade scowled at being considered human in any way. <"Your species is Mewthree, your name is Mewblade. You are the only Legendary of your species. There are no sub-Legendary Pokémon beneath you.">

A sub-Legendary is a Pokémon meant to replace a Legendary that had recently died. All known species of Legendaries had certain numbers of sub-Legendaries. Ironically for instance, there happened to more than one Articuno. The Legendary of the species would be named by the species name, while the sub-Legendaries beneath their Legendary leader would be named individually. All sub-Legendary Pokémon are capable of eating, breathing, sleeping, et cetera. To some extent a lot of normal body functions are mandatory. The average sub-Legendary ages slowly over the period of a millennia. They also can breed normally, which is how the species maintain some representatives. Mewblade was not entirely too familiar with the workings of how one could easily be promoted to Legendary, but she knew how one could automatically be omitted. Usually age was a big factor, often a sub-Legendary younger than twenty years of age or one older than seven hundred were automatically omitted. Sub-Legendaries that also mated were automatically omitted from becoming Legendary if their leader died. Technically, it was any full sex sub-Legendary that would be omitted.

Mewblade smirked towards Ho-oh since she knew why. "The scientists gave up on trying to create another Mewthree like myself. If that were the case, I would have known if Vicebane was a sub-Legendary and would have suspected that something was up with me." Mewblade loved knowing her information.

<"Because of the lack of others beneath you, there is no need to be all too formal as well."> Mewblade liked that part of the huge discussion. Formality was something she struggled at, not like she cared much.

"Just curious. Say if I died, could I bring myself back, or are you able to bring me back a second time?" The thought was rather innocent, plus Mewblade was a bit hopeful if that she did not finish something and died, she could return to complete it.

<"It does not work that way. You had only one chance, which you wasted very quickly. You no longer have anymore chances. Consider yourself lucky since many have no chances."> Ho-oh looked rather grieved. <"Do not give in to death so easily this time as you have done before. For once you return, death can take you and not even I will have a say against it."> Ho-oh smiled lightly, brightening up as soon as it stopped talking about

the depressing topic. Mewblade did not. Mewblade was thinking over the information in her mind, the resurrection ability making her bitter still.

“So,” she paused, thinking. “I play God.” Her paws were held in front of her face as she examined them. “I no longer kill, I save as well.” That was followed by a snort of contempt. “Of all the strangest irony.”

<“It will take some time getting use to yet it still remains that you are the one who can handle it. You are not afraid of Pokémon Law, or your position as its keeper. You have proved yourself enough with that.”>

“And you are still going to be my guardian, correct?” Mewblade questioned as she glanced up at the smiling bird.

<“Until I deem you ready to leave the protection of my wings, yes,”> said Ho-oh with a gentle bob of its colorful head. Mewblade had another question, probably many more to follow, though Ho-oh knew it could not answer every little one.

“Did Mewtwo have something to do with how long it took me to die? I should have bled to death in a couple minutes. I am sure my sense of time was right and it took much longer than that.” Mewblade was seeking answers from the omnipotent Ho-oh.

<“Actually, both Mewtwo and Mew attempted to prolong your death in hopes that they could get you to the hospital and save you. It was a noble feat.”> Ho-oh had a face of wisdom as it spoke. It waited for Mewblade to lash out in anger.

Mewblade was enraged. She could not fathom why they would waste their energy on her. “Those idiots! Why would they do such a stupid thing?!” she let out a low growl. Ho-oh was not alarmed one bit. It calmly replied to Mewblade’s demanding question.

<“It was not a stupid gesture by either of them. They both care about you very much, little one, especially Mewtwo. He was the one who tried to save your life. They did not know that they did not have to attempt to save you, for I was here waiting. They still care about you. When you wake up, do not greet them with hate, greet them with compassion and respect.”> The words fell on deaf ears of course. Mewblade was pondering over how she first of all should address her genetic parents and secondly, she was trying to think of more questions. <“I believe it is time for you to head back to your body,”> said the fading voice of Ho-oh as it disappeared from sight. The blackness of space was fading to white right before Mewblade’s eyes. This was incredibly alarming to Mewblade.

“Ho-oh? What are you doing?” Mewblade spun around as the color palette was washing to white. “Ho-oh!” Mewblade started to panic as she called for the bird. Everything was blinding white.

*~I will always be near, child.~*

Mewblade woke up with a start. All she could see as her eyes shot open was white. Funny to some people though not to Mewblade that she nearly mistook the fading to white in her mental vision for something in her actual vision. It happened to be one of the stiff, thick sheets that covered dead bodies.

“Grr, stupid sheet,” she growled as she threw the nuisance onto the floor before sitting up. Mewblade righted herself, immediately looking down at her waist to see if the vision was really a dream. Around her waist were blood drenched swathes. There was no pain, there was no injury. *So I really did die and Ho-oh really did bring me back.*

Mewblade smiled, then grimaced. She was now a true Legendary with a true purpose, and with no idea how to exactly do any of it. First things first, Mewblade wanted to get rid of the constricting bandages.

Mewblade grabbed at the bandages with her paws trying to rip them off. Her muscles were a little weak considering she had been dead and likely had gone into an early stage of rigor mortis. In ways it was gross for Mewblade to think that the body she was in had been dead only a couple seconds previous. Mewblade whipped her tail around her body, blades slicing away the nuisances that covered her. The strips of blood soaked cloth flopped to the floor, the ones that had been around her waist making wet slapping sounds. She swung around the table she had been seated on, touching feet to the floor and standing. If it were not for her tail, Mewblade would have fallen straight to the floor. Her body really had been dead. She padded over to another table.

The table was bare except for Mewblade's two most treasured blades. Her bloody tail blade lay on top of the lengthy head blade. The two blades were the only two that were more than three times the length of the other eighteen blades, which happened to average at about 12 inches each. Seeing them lying there, away from the rest of themselves was almost tearful to Mewblade. The sentimental value was a lot, the actual economical value was astonishing. The black diamond was a rare specimen, high carat, and more than what some mines would find overall. The titanium, almost pure. The head blade alone was worth tens of thousands of dollars at the very least, not like Mewblade would be selling her blades anytime soon.

Picking up her tail blade, Mewblade brought her tail in front of her body. Mewblade placed the shorn part of the blade on the stump that was still connected to her tail. Titanium melted at several thousand degrees Celsius. Black diamond melted at a much higher temperature. If she could not use Recover to fix the breaks then she would be out-of-luck with her head and tail blade. Mewblade concentrated on a Recover ability to join the molecules that surrounded the break. Miraculously, the break healed leaving no sign that the blade had ever been damaged. This amused Mewblade quite a bit.

The blades were easy to manipulate depending on the emotion or the degree of contact. In most cases the blades would dull at the tips to prevent Mewblade from accidentally harming something she had no intention in causing harm to. The Recover on the blades proved how much the titanium and the black diamond were genetically and psychically bonded to Mewblade. Next was the head blade, which also proved to be relatively easy to fix.

*It's a good thing I am a partial steel type, I might never have Recovered the damage,* Mewblade mused, swiftly making a slicing motion with her longest tail blade, then moving into a ducking position before thrusting upwards with her longest head blade. *Perfect.* The blades were to Mewblade's liking. She made a couple more slicing and jabbing motions, pivoting gracefully on the floor, finally regaining her normal fitness levels. The two bodies off to the side of the room began to stir. Mewblade stopped her battle dance to look at the bodies, she was not the least bit surprised by who she saw.

Mew sat up with a yawn, the white sheet folding into her mouth. "Mew!" Mew squeaked senselessly as the sheet muffled her noises. Mew fought the sheet madly, looking for an escape from it. "Mew mew! Mew mew!" (Get off! Get off!) The sheet was removed from over top of her head, a large amount of the white fabric resting in Mew's

lap. She blinked then laughed giddily. Mewtwo was disrupted from his death slumber by Mew's complaining. He deftly grabbed the edge of the sheet, throwing it to the floor distastefully. Mewtwo only noticed Mew to his left, swinging around to face her then stepping gently off of the table. Both of them shared shocked expressions. Mewtwo was thinking of scientific explanations, Mew stated the obvious.

"Mew mew, mew . . ." (We're alive, Mewtwo . . .)

<"Yes, but the question is how? We used Dest . . ."> Right then Mewtwo noticed the very disgruntled Mewblade standing, glaring at them with her arms crossed over her chest. She had heard and was not happy. Totally disregarding what Ho-oh had told her moments before, Mewblade stomped up to the pair, growling aggressively.

"You Destiny Bonded, didn't you?!" she shouted, nearly roaring. Mew and Mewtwo had somber faces yet Mewblade knew that no Legendary could lie without showing it in some way. They kept quiet since their voices would be the most obvious sign of their deception. "Didn't you?!" Mewblade repeated, bellowing the words at them and making them cringe. Her aura had not come to life but her voice sure had.

Mew shook and whimpered as she looked up at one of the world's most dangerous, and very much alive Pokémon. Mewtwo bravely summoned his courage, not nearly as fearful as Mew.

<"Yes we did,"> he replied calmly. The one thing Mewblade could not do so easily was reason, giving her anymore information would be pointless since she would not hear it anyway.

"And why did I need you to do that?" The statement dripped heavily with suppressed anger. There was nothing between Mewblade and her genetic parents to keep them protected from her anger if she chose to unleash it. Mewtwo was making smart judgments.

<"You wouldn't want us to but we did because we hoped that the Destiny Bond could ward death. Your injuries were too extensive for us to prevent death from occurring."> Mewtwo relaxed his body, leaning back slightly as he watched Mewblade's expression.

Mewblade kept her eyes narrowed, jaw clenched. The only thing that moved on her body were her arms, which for some peculiar reason she was raising above her head. Energy gathered in her paws, Mewtwo and Mew both thought Mewblade was preparing an attack. With a violent burst of energy, Mewblade threw her arms open. The surge from the energy shocked the three. It ended shortly after.

"There," Mewblade said with a slight tone of satisfaction. "The Destiny Bond between us is broken."

"Mew, mew mew mew mew mew," (Oh, so that's what you did,) Mew muttered, whipping her head around to gaze at the white room. She looked up to see Mewblade pad towards the doorway. Mewblade stopped before the closed door, pausing to think. She did not even look back as she spoke.

"So why did you really save me?" asked Mewblade, her voice expressionless. The question brought tears to Mew's eyes. Shouldn't Mewblade be grateful for their valiant efforts to save her?

"Mew mew mew!" (Because we care!) shouted Mew before curling up and sobbing. Mewblade turned to look at Mew, shocked that Mew was so emotional about it.

Her struggle to argue that her death was better than life ended up winning. Mewblade's lips drew back in a snarl as she spoke.

"If you cared so much then you should have let me die!" Mewblade yelled back. Mew's head shot up, her tearful sea blue eyes enraged by Mewblade's insolence. Mewtwo patted Mew on the head before approaching Mewblade and touching her on the shoulder. He could not believe that Mewblade was so ungrateful. Then again, it was Mewblade after all. There was a look in Mewblade's eyes, one that was threatening enough to send Mewtwo into the nearest wall but Mewtwo had to talk to Mewblade to keep her from doing anything rash. He looked Mewblade in the eyes. His lavender meeting her purple.

<"You may be one of the few living beings I have ever cared about. You deserved the privilege to stay alive.">

*Why are they telling me this?* Mewblade looked into Mewtwo's eyes because she refused to look away this time.

<"I had the option of being either dead or alive, once. I chose dead but thanks to the determination of one human, I lived. I never go through a day without thinking of that one human and how he allowed me to appreciate how precious life is."> Mewtwo stood back a little. He was not one for those sort of speeches. Mewblade took the opportunity to look away before glancing back as Mewtwo continued speaking. <"So who, or what saved you?"> He was concerned.

*~Tell them, little one,~* whispered a voice in Mewblade's head, who smirked slightly.

"Ho-oh," was Mewblade's one word reply. Mewtwo looked at Mew, she blinked, nodding. Mewblade smirked broadly as she watched them exchange glances. She could not lie very well and Mewtwo knew Mewblade could not although he was taken back by what she said, so thus questioned her.

<"You must be joking.">

"No, I'm not," came the toneless reply from Mewblade. "It resurrected me because I am a Legendary Pokémon. Because of the Destiny Bond it must have revived you two as well." Her voice was calm, like talking about a sunny day or a cloudy sky, Mewblade was treating the issue so lightly.

Mewtwo's mouth was slightly ajar. Mew was listening intently but Mewtwo was in need of proof or something tangible. <"I don't believe this!"> he exclaimed. <"You? We guessed but we thought you weren't cut out to be one of us.">

Mewblade had the tiniest smile of compassion in her eyes. "I didn't either," she opened her arms. "Surprise." Mewblade lowered her arms to her sides. "I have powers that I would have never even dreamt of. That is really why I'm back."

<"Dare I ask?"> Mewtwo questioned, Mewblade nodded.

"Resurrection. I have the ability to play God far better than what Ho-oh could ever do. I am that important." Mewblade's voice had wavered as she spoke. She was scared because she did not really know what to expect in the near future. She had been so prepared that going anywhere without a back-up plan was foreign territory. A small chuckle sounded from the most unlikely source.

<"You are unbelievable,"> Mewtwo said, finding Mewblade to be honest and the concept to be funny. Mewblade glared back at him as she crossed her arms defiantly.

<“You have tried to kill me, yourself, Moltres by accident. And those are just the Pokémon with Legendary status. You obviously must have killed dozens of others.”>

“Two hundred and twelve,” Mewblade replied emotionlessly. Mew and Mewtwo did not say anything to that, it was disturbing to think Mewblade kept track.

<“Anyway, you have lived to kill. But to hear you and know that you will be saving lives that have already been destroyed, it is of an incredible irony.”> There was a playful glare from Mewblade.

“To know that you risked your life for mine is of the same irony.” Mewblade opened the door and walked out of the room, peering back at Mew and Mewtwo. “Now I have to go about my duties as the Decider of Fate.”

Mewblade treaded softly along the dark corridors of the Pokémon Center. Outside there was eerie wailing noises and piercing screeches, all of which seeped through the walls and made itself known to those seeking shelter. Inside could be equally compared to the outside. The halls carried their own sounds of grief, pain and despair. Whimpers and groans of the Pokémon, and the cries of the trainers made the place seem full of death. It even made the storm welcoming in comparison. Mewblade’s eyes gazed down the empty hallway. The rooms in this one must have been full and all the patients most likely could no longer be helped by normal means. She knew what she had to do.

*I better adapt my awareness*, Mewblade thought tunelessly as she still gazed down the hallway. Her mind was set to filter different information from her environment, anything that was junk in her mind was kept out. Now Mewblade would have to open up a little more than what she was comfortable with. Effortlessly her mind fixed into a new state, one that was designed to work with her duties.

“Ahh!” Mewblade gasped in shock. She should have done the process slowly. The amount of information she had just let in was much greater than she was use to sifting through normally. “Ugh . . .” Mewblade collapsed to the floor, her mind dazed by the flood of knowledge. Mewblade stared vacantly at the wall across from her as her mind organized and compiled the data into something neat and relatively tidy. There was a sense of horror at exactly what her brain was collecting. Mewblade was only aware of the conditions of Legendary Pokémon and law breakers up to this point. Now in addition to that, her brain was constantly updating what was living, what was dead, what was being created, what was dying, what was pure, what was evil, what was neutral, and it went on and on.

Mewblade leaned her head wearily against the wall, her eyelids already drooping. The strange tired feeling she felt when she was dying was sweeping over her again. Mewblade hummed, quietly dozing off for several dozen seconds before her brain accepted the flood of information as normal and she snapped awake. Her head turned to look up and down the hallway. *Good. I haven’t been spotted.* Mewblade stood up shakily, bracing her paw to the wall for support. There was a pause for a few more moments as she waited to regain her balance. Satisfied with that, Mewblade walked down the hallway prepared to try her first attempt with her resurrection ability. She was a Mewthree on a mission.



*A lot of death. Surprisingly several pure hearted Pokémon. Six . . . now seven . . . I better get started,* Mewblade thought with an involuntary shudder as she entered the first room.

A young Asian boy was stroking the blood clotted fur of what was once a loyal Growlithe. At the sound of Mewblade opening the door and stepping in the boy turned to her. His face was solemn and he gave Mewblade a saddening reply.

“Are you here to take away my Rover?” The eyes never stopped looking at Mewblade. Mewblade had not expected the question and desperately reached into the boy’s mind to find out why he asked such a thing. The boy thought Mewblade to be the ‘Grim Reaper’ for Pokémon. Mewblade had to admit that she use to be just that except it was not only Pokémon, but people as well. The boy had a more stereotypical image of the Grim Reaper, a skeletal figure dressed in a black, shapeless, hooded robe who carried a crooked scythe. It often demanded for the souls of the dead. Mewblade rolled her eyes ever so slightly.

“I’m not here to take anything of yours. Now if you could be a little patient and stop sobbing, I may actually give you back something.” There was a low growl throughout Mewblade’s explanation. She did not like dealing with humans. She did not like dealing with other Pokémon. And mediating was the last thing she wanted to be doing. The boy could only nod, dumbfounded, not even noticing Mewblade’s growling. “Would you mind moving over there?” Mewblade asked, signaling to a seat with her eyes. The boy tottered over, slumping in his seat. Mewblade could finally have a decent view of the corpse. The first thing she would have to use was a Recover on the Growlithe.

Waving her paw over the Growlithe she used a Recover on the wound and it healed at a dramatic pace. Mewblade gazed at her paw in surprise. Her Recover had taken near to none of her energy. Earlier it had taken more energy. *I’m so powerful.* Mewblade was being misled to believe that her new position granted her a lot of new abilities, including an even more efficient Recover when in fact the energy was nothing but a gift for Mewblade. Ho-oh had the foresight to realize that Mewblade needed all the energy she could get and it gave her body as much as Mewblade could possibly handle.

Mewblade looked back down at Rover. There was no more injury and the injury had been a severe bash to the head, splitting the skull open. Mewblade was so fascinated with her abilities that she had almost forgotten the boy who was staring at her. Mewblade focused on the corpse again, wondering what she had to do to resurrect the Pokémon.

There was something that compelled Mewblade to touch the body, the urge was only slightly resisted. The Growlithe was cold, the texture was furry. With little thought and a trickle of nervous sweat, Mewblade forced herself into a trance.

Brock ran into the main room at the front of the building, immediately holding onto Ash’s shoulder and shaking him violently. “They’re alive, Ash! They’re really alive!” Pikachu was not being shaken violently but he was far more responsive than Ash was.

“Pikachu, pikachu pi pika pikachu?! (Mewtwo, Mewblade and Mew are alive?!)

Pikachu scampered onto Ash’s backpack knowing Ash would be excited about the great news. Pikachu was right.

Ash leapt from his seat, grabbing Brock's hand and literally dragging him along the floor. He knew exactly where their room was and was wasting no time to see them. "Come on, let's go see how they are!" The other people in the room looked over to the ecstatic trainers, wondering how they could possibly be so cheerful. Most were not really listening and those who were figured that Brock and Ash had snapped. Brock started to complain about Ash's eager mood.

"Stop it! You're hurting my stirring arm." Brock squirmed from the vice-like grip, pausing for long enough that Ash was already at the door leading down to one of the corridors.

"Hurry up!" Ash said with an impatient wave.

"Coming!" Brock called, not as far behind as he was when Ash bolted from him the first time in the city street.

"I'm so glad Mewtwo is alive! It was dead but now it's alive? I can't wait to see Mewtwo!" called Ash, the last thing anyone heard from him as they sat with confused and somber faces while in the front room.

At the sound of the shouting and talk about Pokémon somehow being revived, Coline stirred from her pitiful sleep. After hearing the joyous remarks about some strange Pokémon called 'Mewtwo' being revived from the dead, Coline assumed that the same must have been done for her Eevee. With a bit of a skip and a hop, Coline went through the doors to see if her Eevee was really alive.

Mewblade came to awareness. She felt very awkward, not use to being in a trance and also because she was not certain about what exactly she was suppose to be doing. Looking further into her trance, and all Mewblade could see was the same darkness that greeted her during the first few minutes after her death. Being back in the same place *still* provided no answers.

*~This is your first time, Decider of Fate. Child, I shall guide you.~* Ho-oh appeared and Mewblade was suddenly standing beside it.

"Thank you, I could really use your help." Mewblade glanced at Ho-oh. "I have never been in a trance before. So what do I do first?" asked Mewblade as she turned to look at the black space in front of her. There was no response. "Ho-oh?" Mewblade turned to look back at the bird, her mouth agape at what she saw. Ho-oh had no shape! Ho-oh was nothing but a giant ball of blinding light. *I'm seeing things again*, Mewblade thought with a groan. This was the second time in the same day that Mewblade's vision had deceived her, and she was scared. This was something Mewblade had no control of, she wanted to be on top of things but this was not helping.

The light was starting to become blinding and Mewblade drew back with an irritated snarl then a pain-stricken hiss. She started to move slowly from Ho-oh, wanting to get away, wanting to stop the light from hurting her. There was no way to escape the light and nowhere to run to. In the trance she was hyperventilating. The process was abnormal for her, not helping Mewblade at all. No running, no way to defend herself, Mewblade had one other option; getting the bird to stop.

"Stop it!" Mewblade whimpered.

<“Child, are you okay?”> Ho-oh asked with concern in its eyes, not like Mewblade could see them anyway. Her arms were wrapped tightly around her head, her tail over top, all in attempt to shield her eyes from Ho-oh. Despite Mewblade’s best efforts the light still continued to blind her. It was too painful for Mewblade to be near the bird. Ho-oh realized something was very wrong. <“What’s going on?”> Ho-oh voiced its concern this time.

“You are . . .” Mewblade began with an agonized voice. The light dimmed suddenly, making Mewblade wonder what exactly had happened. “. . . blinding?” She lowered her tail cautiously, then her arms, looking around in shock. Ho-oh was normal again, no longer some blinding beacon that seared her very soul. Ho-oh was quite puzzled, it had no idea what Mewblade was talking about. It looked at itself.

<“I am aware of your sensitivity and have been suppressing my aura from you. I do not see how I could have caused you harm.”> Ho-oh padded up softly to Mewblade who started to back away.

*I don’t want it to touch me*, Mewblade thought, her lips drawing back in a slight snarl. Ho-oh stopped in its place looking at Mewblade, still confused.

<“Tell me what you saw,”> Ho-oh said, finally curious enough to ask what could have caused Mewblade to act in such a strange way.

“You had no shape!” Mewblade hollered, she was angry, her aura flickering lightly against the black space. “And you were so bright! How could you *not* notice?!” Mewblade threw her arms wide open, her expression demanding and hurt. Ho-oh was shocked for what Mewblade had just gone through. Mewblade was a partial dark type and Ho-oh’s light emissions were too pure for most Pokémon, let alone Pokémon with dark type traits and of Mewblade’s nature.

<“I’m sorry,”> Ho-oh spoke quietly, honest and true for its words but to Mewblade, ‘sorry’ was not enough.

“So then you did do it!” accused Mewblade, finger thrust at the bird.

<“No. I cannot explain what you saw. All I know is that I did not cause you to see what you did.”> A stern expression swept across the face of Ho-oh. Mewblade knew Ho-oh could not lie to her. She looked at the blank space beneath her feet, head lowered, paws shaking.

There were so many emotions that were overwhelming Mewblade in the last two days. At that moment she felt lost and afraid for her sanity. Ho-oh could see Mewblade struggling with her psyche and despite Mewblade’s early snarl of warning, it brushed a comforting feather across Mewblade’s cheek. It added as possible reassurance that Ho-oh would not harm her.

“Maybe I’m just stressed.”

<“That must be it,”> Ho-oh replied calmly, lowering its wing and giving Mewblade some space. <“You are new to your duties and soon the stress will lessen.”> Ho-oh had an idea of why Mewblade was seeing strange things and it would be too late for it to ever tell her. If Mewblade was lucky, she would figure it out herself. <“Come now, child. We have delayed long enough. The first thing you must do is do as I did, and that is finding the innocent.”> Mewblade nodded in response.

“So I am finding a Growlithe then,” Mewblade said as her voice trailed off. She could see nothing but herself and Ho-oh in the blackness. “I’m going to have to do this

the other way obviously.” Ho-oh watched calmly as it sensed Mewblade feeling around with her energy. She was finding soul energy, a special type of energy found in the middle of the torso. Soul energy determined how long something would live, as well it carried on after the time of death. Basically, soul energy is the soul, except it was never meant to be in the heart or the head of a body. Mewblade’s search was instantaneous, she knew exactly where Rover was.

She moved fast within the darkness, leaving the comfort of Ho-oh behind her. In the darkness she came upon a small whimpering figure. The thoughts of the creature echoed around her since the physical was not present in the mental, yet the idea of being alive and physical persisted. Speaking had to be universal in some sense, because the being was talking.

“I want to go home!” it whimpered, for some strange reason it sounded different than it should of, human. Then again, a Pokémon was only as understandable to those who knew the language. The space must have been sensitive to Mewblade’s preferences, since Mewblade preferred English above everything else. If the space was sensitive as might be the case, why was it black? Mewblade would play with the environment later.

Mewblade looked at the figure, still not close enough to see it clearly, but she was still sickened by its pitiful complaining. Ho-oh was there, somehow it knew this realm better than Mewblade, and knew how to travel in it properly. It raised a wing and deftly smacked Mewblade along the right side of her body.

<“Comfort it,”> Ho-oh half-ordered, half-suggested. Mewblade glared at Ho-oh. Luckily they were still out of range of the innocent or whatever it could be truly called. It knew nothing of the pair of Legendaries.

“I refuse to lower myself to such a level!” Mewblade said with a hiss, in turn Ho-oh shoved Mewblade into the range of the figure. She stumbled but caught her footing as she looked upon the figure. The lighting in the darkness was strange, it preferred to radiate from above, but only in the area about the equivalent of a couple meters of a particular figure. The light was on nothing else but the saddened Rover. He heard her catch her footing and looked up at Mewblade, tears streaming down his furry muzzle.

“I miss Kyle. I want him to hold me again.” Mewblade looked down at Rover, almost helpless since she had no idea what to do. She was not the nurturing type and ended up sending a semi-demanding look towards Ho-oh. It gave a whimsical smile.

<“Comfort him. Show him love and compassion.”> Ho-oh kept the same smile. At least Rover had not noticed Ho-oh and was not paying all that much attention to Mewblade.

“How?!” Mewblade whispered fiercely.

<“You are a partial clone of Mew. Rely on her gifts of love and kindness.”>

“Great,” Mewblade grumbled as she stepped forward, kneeling beside the Growlithe, paws stroking the fur with a great deal of hesitation. The large coal black eyes saw her, they were pleading to her. “It’s okay, I’m here,” Mewblade said as sweetly as she could. Growlithes were trusting Pokémon, and Rover was no exception even as his face relaxed at the sight and sound of her. Rover whimpered slightly still.

“You’ll take me home?”

“Of course,” Mewblade smiled fondly, her mind screaming at her because she could not stand the sugar-sweetness of her voice or her actions. If she could rip off her

own skin at that moment, she would. Ho-oh watched with amusement but Mewblade did not notice, she was busy. It knew she had it in her, and watching Mewblade have a sickened face in-between actions and sentences was hilarious. “Everything will be okay,” she sort of cooed, scooping up the Growlithe and cradling him gently in her arms. “Your trainer misses you and wants you in his arms again.” Mewblade then glanced at Ho-oh, who Rover could not see or hear. Ho-oh was masking its presence. Mewblade avoided speaking vocally since it was no comfort to be held by a psychopath. <What do I do now?>

<“Will the soul back to the body and fix the broken connections. Careful now. Your own body, mind and soul might take some punishment throughout the process, yet you might be entirely unharmed. I do not know the limitations of your abilities.”> Mewblade nodded subtly. <“Just to caution, you might face other challenges.”>

<Such as?> Mewblade inquired, her eyes focused on the Growlithe. She shifted him in her arms so she could rub his belly. *Dogs are always so easy to please.*

Ho-oh made a bow with its head, saying, <“I am not sure what they may be, but do not fret.> It paused for a moment. <Good-bye and good luck, child. I am no longer needed here.”> With nothing more to say or do, Ho-oh left in a small flash. Mewblade made a mental note of its intense entrances and weak exits. She then sighed and focused her eyes entirely on Rover.

“This is my first time doing this,” Mewblade told Rover with a slight sheepish tone. She yet again shifted Rover in her arms so that way she had full support of his tiny frame.

“It’s mine too,” Rover yipped and laughed, showing encouragement and trust in Mewblade. She had to admit, it meant a lot since she was nervous. Mewblade was about to start playing God, and for all she knew what she could be doing was not exactly considered righteous in someone else’s eyes.

*I better get started,* Mewblade thought as she focused her thoughts to go deeper still into the trance. She wanted a level where she could understand energy and connections, not just ‘see’ things. *Knowledge, truth, power.* She went over the words of a psychic’s power triangle, something she knew from whatever programs the scientists had fed into her head. *Know what I am doing, believe I can do it, and I will be successful. I can do this.* Mewblade knew how to harness energy for different effects, but doing something foreign, and solo, and unheard of was uncharted territory. This was a challenge beyond anything any other psychic could ever imagine. She grinned slightly, if she could do this she would make Mewtwo’s psychic abilities pale in comparison.

Mewblade’s aura flared to life with her energy and the extra energy Ho-oh had given her. Ho-oh had made sure that the energy it had given Mewblade would be compatible for such a task.

Mewblade’s aura was as powerful as it could be. The colors were blue, her controlled aura; purple, her powered aura; and indigo, her balanced aura. Mewblade had no idea how much energy she would need but all the energy she had was available for her disposal if the need would arise. Rover watched the aura dance around in fascination, not noticing Mewblade any longer. If he did, he would see her in a deep state of thought and concentration. Mewblade’s aura was far more interesting than her face. She began the true part of the resurrection.

*Soul to body* . . . Mewblade thought with determination, her thoughts giving her actions drive. Her energy reached out into the blackness and into the room where Rover's cold body lay. Her energy wrapped around the body and almost literally jumped into a dimension that was non-existent, the one Mewblade was in now. Moving the energy out of the boundaries of what the laws of physics knew was difficult but not impossible. Her energy was like tracks, a guide for the train. The train would be Rover's soul. She used her energy and at both ends she anchored the soul of Rover and the body of Rover to each other. Rover noticed absolutely nothing except the space around him started to go from black and gradually to gray. Mewblade on the other hand noticed a big difference.

Trances, out-of-body experiences, remote viewing and meditation cause the mind to lose awareness of the body and most of what it would feel. Mewblade may have been in a trance but she felt absolutely everything. As soon as that one connection for Rover was established, her soul, the soul energy in her body, and her body itself were all in incredible agony. Her soul energy was convulsing since that was what Mewblade had given Rover. The resurrection could be a give-and-take process, or it was the fact that Mewblade's crucial aspects to her survival were too confused to understand the process. Either way, the pain was unbearable. She could feel her soul energy dying as it tried to leave her body, then feel it revive with such intensity that everything hurt even more. All Mewblade wanted to do was be alone and scream forever. The space did as her pride wanted and kept her body stationary, keeping her from opening her mouth or truly expressing her grief.

*Does Ho-oh really feel this!?! Mewblade demanded in her head, her thoughts breaking apart and her concentration fading. Come on, focus!* She willed her mind into a state of numbness, yet all it did was give her just the right amount of concentration so her focus did not break. She grabbed at the energy around her, throwing it around, preparing for the next connection. *Soul to mind!* Rover saw the blackness, or the gray rather, become more washed out. Mewblade had made the connection between the soul and mental thought. If she failed to do this then the body would be a vegetable. Rover knew nothing of that and continued to watch the more erratic churn of Mewblade's aura. Mewblade had more to deal with. Along with the pain that continued to persist at the same, steady rate of excruciating torture, her mind received a very unappreciated guest that was not just the dramatic lose of her concentration but something, or someone else.

Mewblade tried to shut her mind from listening to a long strain of voices that mimicked her, Vicebane, everything she knew and everything she did not. She quickly realized why. The connection for Rover had basically left her thoughts vulnerable to things she did not even have to think about blocking normally. It was as if she were that close to death that she was that vulnerable.

*~You can always stop this.~*

*~There is peace in power.~*

The voices, as Mewblade quickly realized were not that of a schizophrenic mind, but those of something every Legendary was entirely against, Chaos.

*Get bent!* was Mewblade's first thought to it. She had no tolerance for it, and whatever Chaos said had to be lies. Then again, energy cannot lie, let alone speak. Mewblade felt chilled at the realization of what exactly had walked into her mind.

*~Torment can be avoided.~*

*~The pain is only existent because of Ho-oh.~*

*~Death is the power of darkness.~*

*~Light is your prohibitor.~*

Chaos spoke in thousands of voices and Mewblade could only understand so much. It whispered vile secrets into her head, convinced her of things she was sure she knew but lacked the evidence to judge. The only energy that was sentient, wanted her. Mewblade could feel it wrap around at the edges of her mind and soul, trying to make her part of itself. Chaos as she could feel, had no goals besides existence but it was chaotic and even that was skeptical. And the whole time Rover noticed nothing! Mewblade wanted Ho-oh to be there, to get rid of the pain and keep the voices from speaking all the things that were true and that she wanted to hear in her head.

*~Accept what is us, what is I, what is all, what is nothing,~* spoke a large number of the voices and echoes in clear harmony. Mewblade was enraged. She would bow to no one and be no slave. Chaos thought it had her, and it was wrong.

*I accept no offer of Chaos!* Mewblade snarled mentally with such aggression that Chaos stopped trying to embrace her and hovered at the edges of her senses, making pointless, whispered conversations. At certain times it screamed, cried, coaxed yet even in her moment of torment, Mewblade would not be sued. With the pain and the Chaos hovering around her, Mewblade was worried that the last phase could be killer. The thought it took to even wonder that was unbelievably hard. *I won't fail!* Mewblade thought to the demons in her head and the pain that finally sent her crippled to the ground of the space. Rover was still held firmly in her arms and finally he noticed something was going on.

"Are you okay?" he asked, concerned. In the trance Mewblade could not openly express her grief. The space was obedient to her normal state of mind, she would not show weakness in any way, though her flopping to the ground was compensation. She responded, her voice wavering slightly.

"I will be fine as soon as I get you out of here," she told Rover who was confident that Mewblade was pretty much okay. Saying that line had completely destroyed Mewblade's concentration and she struggled to piece it together. Mewblade could not ask for help and had to muster the strength to deal with this problem on her own. This was the most brutal lesson of responsibility that there ever was. She salvaged herself as best as possible and continued on. The pain and near insanity were not going to subside, since it came as it was.

Mewblade's aura came to life, wild and uncontrolled, lacking the ability to keep it in check. Rover was back to his state of amusement, watching as the shade of gray lightened. Mewblade was prepping the next phase. *Soul to the living* . . . her thoughts gasped. The space was now white, Rover was going back and the resurrection was done, but not before one final reminder of why Mewblade should not defy death. Mewblade could no longer sense Rover's existence, all she was aware of what she was facing.

Death. There is no reality to compare to it. A living being can witness death, but seeing it in its true graphic magnificence and horror was beyond that of the living imagination. Something shoved her into the middle of souls and Mewblade cowered at the sight, at the presence, strange sensations that she could not appreciate because her physical state was still screaming with pain at her. Then there was Chaos which seemed

to cling close to her like she was a shield. The views of death cascaded and Mewblade witnessed different aspects of the afterlife that she never knew of. It was as if the most dominant world religions were covered in here, there, wherever it may be. The two most dominant were the views of Heaven and Hell. Mewblade realized very quickly that besides Chaos being literally rejected by all forms of the dead, it was in contrast a more vivid and alive energy. It drew away, getting even more uncomfortably close to Mewblade. There was a negative too, that the dominant Light and the dominant Dark of death were both very against Mewblade. She could feel it in her soul and she knew that she was both respected and despised by both yet unable to figure out why.

*~You cannot be accepted for what you are, for you are a Decider of Fate.~*

*~You are both good and evil, life and death.~*

*~ You are in a place where you stand between.~*

*~In the service of both, but in the service of neither.~*

*~Chaos is just like you.~* As if Chaos was going to receive any sympathy from Mewblade. Sympathy was her own little greedy possession at the moment. Her pain, her problem. Everything else was second after her.

Mewblade glanced around, her mind absorbing the information as it also tried to beat away Chaos and quell the searing pain. Then she could only cry because the afterlife told her truths to accompany Chaos. Mewblade was given emotions to feel, and thoughts to think over; witnessing deaths and listening to the torment of Hell, which scared her. And then being somewhere in Heaven and knowing that despite the warmth she felt cold and her mind was grieved as the purity rejected her dark type aspects. Mewblade screamed loudly as the Light burned her very soul and she withdrew from searching.

Death moved in a cascade once more, paralyzing her mind as she understood the reasoning beyond everything there was behind her destruction of lives. The afterlife started to tell Mewblade her personal worth and that was when Mewblade had enough. She did not want to know. She did not want to sit in her home, fearful of herself because in the end, death was ultimate. It was bad enough it was destroying her ability to callously slaughter lives and save lives. "No more," she whimpered, curling into a ball. She wanted it to end. Nothing was worth this. She felt a sharp tug and Mewblade realized the resurrection for her was over and she could be free of the nightmare. Mewblade was out.

"Hello?" said Ash as he peered into the room that Mew and Mewtwo were in. Brock stood next to him.

"Pika pikachu?" (How are you?) came the squeaky voice of Pikachu who was perched on Ash's head.

"Mew!" (Hi!) responded Mew from her seat on one of the tables.

<"Hello, Ash,"> Mewtwo said with a smirk. <"We are both fine and well."> Ash walked further into the room, knowing that Mewtwo did not seem to mind his presence. He looked around and seemed disappointed to not find what he was looking for.

"Where's Mewblade?"

"Mew mew mew mew mew mew." (Off somewhere doing her duty.) Mewtwo translated for her.



<“She is preoccupying herself with some various duties. It is probably best if I go find her.”> Mewtwo paused, thinking. <“Ash, it may be best if you head back to the gym. If the Legendary Dogs are still there then ask them how long the world has left. Mew, go with Ash and his companions. Protect them as best as you can.”>

Mew gave a salute and started to giggle. “Mew mew, mew.” (Sure thing, captain.) Mewtwo gave her an icy stare and pointed to the door.

<“Now go!”>

“Mew, mew. Mew mew mew mew mew mew,” (Okay, okay. Don’t have to be such a grouch,) Mew grumbled as she levitated and flew out of the room. Ash and Brock followed. Brock began to whisper in Ash’s ear.

“We better get Misty too.” Ash nodded in response.

Mewtwo admired the courage and willpower of Ash, always thought of others before himself. Mewtwo stood for a moment in the doorway and then went on his little quest to find Mewblade.

Mewblade came out of the trance with a gasp. Rover was already up and in the arms of his trainer, lapping the boy’s face, yipping happily. The boy was laughing and crying at the same time.

“Thank you!” the boy cried out, continuing to hug his Pokémon. Mewblade did not hear him, she stumbled out of the room, leaving the pair with no recollection of her presence.

Mewblade went about three rooms down the hallway before looking at one with only a couple neglected dead bodies in it with consideration. What happened in the trance still continued to torment her outside of it. Mewblade stumbled through the slightly open door, crashing to the floor, no longer able to catch herself. The room was pitch black and the faint smell of death hung in the air. She did not notice it one bit. With a great deal of effort, Mewblade slammed the door shut then summoned a Barrier around herself. This one was made for one purpose, and not for protection, it was soundproof. Mewblade could no longer take the abuse without reacting in one way or another. Knowing she was safe from obvious discovery, she threw all cause to the wind and screamed.

It was out of fear, pain, and near insanity that she screamed. The effects were relentless. Mewblade screamed for several minutes straight before she grew too hoarse to scream. Giving up on the screaming, Mewblade curled into a ball and sobbed. Not caring how foolish it was to do so, she continued to vent her agony, which was now primarily the physical pain. All she wanted it to do was end.

Mewtwo walked down the hallway, occasionally glancing into rooms. Every time he saw someone, he wiped their memories. Being known was not something he desired either. Sensing some energy further down the hallway, Mewtwo decided to check it out. He found it coming from a room and opened the door slightly, turning on a dim light. Mewtwo was startled to see Mewblade. Tears were streaming down her face, a paw was braced to her head. Mewtwo could see her gritting her teeth as well.

*Something is wrong*, Mewtwo thought. He crouched next to Mewblade, realizing there was a Barrier in place, one that flickered with very unorganized energy. Mewtwo

quickly got rid of the Barrier, using his energy to disassemble it. Now he could at least hear Mewblade's sobs and in turn, Mewblade sort of noticed Mewtwo.

"Leave . . . me . . . alone," she choked in between her sobs. Mewtwo frowned.

<"What's wrong? You can tell me,"> he said as he reached a paw out to touch Mewblade's shoulder. Mewblade drew back with a snarl.

"Don't touch me!" she shouted hoarsely. Despite being mad, the effects of the resurrection were wearing off, although slowly. Mewblade did not seem to notice.

<"Something obviously happened to you. Now I know you can't really talk. Just let me give you a run through."> Mewtwo again reached out to touch Mewblade. She sniffled, not budging. Mewblade was very reluctant to being touched, but after Ho-oh poking around and Chaos wrapping around her mind, anything Mewtwo would do would be considered tame. Of course in Mewtwo's opinion, touching someone was nearly a taboo, so both of them felt awkward. Mewblade sat up a bit and let Mewtwo rove.

Mewtwo was very medical about his approach, like he was checking for broken bones and cuts. He carefully went along her tail, sometimes brushing against a blade or two, making Mewblade shiver slightly in response. He then checked her feet and legs, his expression was the same determined, stern look for the most part. Mewtwo then checked her left arm, finding nothing odd. He went to her right and Mewblade was a bit repulsed as he shifted her energy cannon by accident. Still finding nothing odd, Mewtwo placed a paw behind Mewblade's back and one over her middle, his expression growing dark. He finished his assessment finally with her head and withdrew with a sigh. Mewblade looked at him, pain-stricken. She was about to ask Mewtwo a question when a particularly bad bout of pain ripped through her soul energy.

"Argh!" Mewblade groaned, doubling over in pain, clutching her middle. Mewtwo did not know what to do or how to help. After what seemed like an hour, Mewblade sat upright again. She smirked half-heartily at Mewtwo, who in turn was rather stunned. The tears still trickled down her black fur and Mewtwo decided to tell his daughter what he learned.

<"Your energy dropped a noticeable amount since I last saw you,"> was the first thing Mewtwo mentioned. Mewblade nodded solemnly in agreement. <"It felt like your soul energy was hurting itself, or something. I've never felt something so jumpy. As for that brain of yours, I have no idea what you did to it but it's not what I would call, stable. To be blunt, you're physically fit, just that everything else seems to have taken damage. Who did this to you?"> Mewtwo asked with concern, yet he was afraid that what had done this to Mewblade could easily deal the same damage to him.

"Myself . . ." Mewblade answered with pained bitterness in response.

<"What?! Not again. Why are you trying so hard to kill yourself!?"> Mewtwo demanded, thoroughly angry with Mewblade. She looked at him, feeling ashamed and defeated. Frankly, his anger was just giving her a bigger headache, plus making her cry more.

"I'm not trying!" Mewblade protested. "Resurrecting . . . it . . . it . . ." Mewtwo could see the evident terror in her eyes. She did not want to talk about it. Thinking of it was bringing back painful memories that were already too fresh in her mind.

<"Go on,"> urged Mewtwo, curious but in a way having a sense that he should not inquire.

“Oh God . . .” Mewblade wept, turning her head away, eyes closed. Mewtwo had a slightly curious expression. She looked back at him, shuddering at the idea of telling Mewtwo anything then opened her mouth, speaking to him quietly and hesitantly. “It starts off by grabbing my soul. It then throws it back and forth between living and death. And my body feels it. Then my body thinks it is pain and it just hurts because it’s . . . it’s like I’m dying. Every second.” Mewtwo listened intently, not doubting Mewblade’s words because he knew Mewblade could not lie. “And everything goes dim, then it becomes too bright . . . It’s horrible!” Mewblade started to cry heavily again.

Mewtwo let Mewblade take the time to gather herself. He had the patience to wait long enough to hear more of the horrible information. He knew that he could not imagine Mewblade’s agony. She was stronger than he was, more determined than he was, and overall, better. Mewblade looked up at the ceiling, tears drying on her cheeks. All that had been grieving her was now a dull throb.

“Then *it* came and started to talk.” Mewblade was not only upset but angry as well. “I can’t believe what it was telling me. All this trash! But all of it was true . . .”

<“What is ‘it’?”> Mewtwo inquired because Mewblade was not in the state of mind to cater to his assumed lack of knowledge.

“Chaos.” The one word that Mewblade spoke fell so heavy that Mewtwo physically cringed at the thought. Before Mewblade could react he grabbed her head, practically wrenching it so he could get a good, solid look. Mewblade could have done so many things as Mewtwo’s eyes darted about. He leaned back, satisfied and relieved that he did not find what he hoped was not there.

<“You’re clean,”> Mewtwo announced then his tone was grave again. <“What did Chaos tell you?”> Mewblade could be seen swallowing hard.

“There were thousands of voices and all of them saying different things. Some of them took on voices of people I know. Some even mimicked you . . .” Mewblade seemed very shaken by her encounter. Mewtwo was of course disgusted by the energy’s behavior. “And it kept telling me, over and over again how the darkness was my benefactor. How Ho-oh was *betraying* me! That I needed the darkness of Chaos to help me. It wouldn’t quit! And despite the fact that I told it to go away, it came back. It lingered at the edge of my thought. I thought I felt bad when Ho-oh tried to comfort me, but Chaos . . . ugh! I doubt I’ll ever feel as dirty as I did then.” Mewblade was hugging her arms close to her chest in attempted comfort. Mewtwo was still listening intently. “Then on top of it all, I got to see what it’s like to be truly dead. Everything was a mass of different worlds. Different types of energy. The death provided feelings, emotions. Grr, if I could kill it for that, I would!” snarled Mewblade, teeth barred. After a moment she relaxed. “Because of this knowledge I am ‘bestowed’ I no longer feel that I can kill something without wondering where it will go, and what it will face. I feel like it gave me something I know I don’t want, and then took away something I need. It wanted me to learn the meaning of existence! *My* existence! I don’t think anyone deserves that knowledge. Nobody! It’s painful, it’s shameful, it’s what could drive any sane thing insane. And to top it all off, I bet that I get to go through the whole thing, every-stinking-time-I-resurrect.” Mewblade sighed heavily and then added a small bit, although it was grieved. “Time and time again for all eternity. I’ll have to learn to deal with it, risking my life to some stupid magic trick! I wish I had never agreed to Ho-oh! I wish I could live an ignorant life like every

other Pokémon my age. Nothing is worth the torment . . .” Mewblade buried her face in her paws.

Mewtwo was pretty stern the whole way through the explanation. He felt pity and could have agreed with what Mewblade had said about Chaos and what it told her about Ho-oh. Ho-oh must have known Mewblade was going to experience the torture. And if it knew she would distinctly loathe the resurrection, then Ho-oh never should have even appeared to her. It just was not fair, even if it was for the greater good, nothing deserved to suffer. What it took to make Mewblade suffer, was a very ruthless demand.

<“So, you’re in the line of fire,”> Mewtwo finally spoke. Mewblade looked up to him then nodded in agreement before glancing away.

“Yes . . .” she sighed. The aftereffects had subsided to the point where Mewblade could no longer feel them. She would always fear it but the first time for anything was always the hardest. It was likely that her skill would become so easy that she would feel no effects at all in due time. Mewblade then realized that Mewtwo had been there for her the whole while to support her in her time of need. At the realization Mewblade began to blush. She glanced back at Mewtwo. “Thanks for your concern. I appreciate it.”

Mewblade got up stiffly then gave her body a shake. Mewtwo rose with ease in response.

<“It really was a father to daughter thing,”> Mewtwo grinned, trying to lighten the mood. Mewblade mimicked Mewtwo.

“I’ll just sticking to calling you, ‘Mewtwo’,” then Mewblade walked towards and down the hallway to look for another innocent.

<“I’ll be at the gym, you best come,”> Mewtwo called to her. Mewblade gave him a wave, back turned, speaking directly into his mind.

<Just give me a few minutes. I can work my gift on the Legends then.>

Mewblade now had only one more innocent victim of the storm to resurrect. The effects of the last few resurrections were still hard on Mewblade and she needed at least a minute to regain herself. While the aftereffects were minimal afterwards, they were still grotesquely amplified beyond that of what Mewblade knew as normal. As Ho-oh had mentioned, she was made for her position and could easily handle the grievances.

There was another trait about resurrecting, since Mewblade did notice patterns with the state of the corpse and how easy it was to resurrect. If the body was near mutilated or had been dead for quite some time then it was harder to revive the innocent. As well, the higher the rarity the more complex the process became. Mewblade knew she would be in a lot of trouble if she was going to resurrect three Legendaries in a row. With the added factor that her energy dropped dramatically through each resurrection, she might run out of the precious resource in the middle, then who knows what would happen. Mewblade did not need to worry yet since she still had one more innocent to take care of in the Pokémon Center.

Mewblade heard the sobbing that she was becoming all too familiar with. Casually she walked into the last room and saw the exact same scene she had seen around half a dozen times before. On the common operating table was the common Eevee. A blonde girl obstructed the view of the Eevee slightly. The girl was stroking the bloodied

coat, somewhat in a daze. Mewblade walked up behind the girl and knelt. The girl turned around, talking before actually facing Mewblade.

“Look, Dan. I want to be left . . .” she gasped as she turned completely around to see Mewblade. “Mewblade?!”

“Coline?!” Mewblade was equally surprised.

“I’m so glad to see you again.” Coline flung herself at Mewblade, burying her head into Mewblade’s chest. Mewblade felt very awkward and wanted to squirm away. The contact was again uncomfortable, unnatural but in some way, humbling. “Eevee,” Coline began, choking with sobs, her voice muffled by Mewblade’s body, “she tried to save me . . . And, and she moved me away. And, and . . .” Coline could no longer speak resorting to clutching to Mewblade. Mewblade thought for an instant of forcefully pushing Coline away but she just could not bring herself to do so. She had compassion for this, human. Though Mewblade hated the feeling, she could not reject it. Maybe with Coline there would be an answer to why Legendaries would protect and care for one individual human, Pokémon, sometimes both no matter who they are. Mewblade knew she had fallen prey to what she thought to be a disease yet she was not going to fight it, just merely accept it.

“It’s okay, I’m here and I can bring Eevee back,” Mewblade told Coline, her voice was softer than usual. She kept thinking the word ‘Chosen’ over and over again in her mind, this human. With little hesitation Mewblade embraced Coline, running a paw over the frizzing blonde hair in attempts to comfort her. In a way she was also comforting herself by focusing on someone else’s pain rather than her own. Mewblade was very unaware of how potentially maternal she could be but managed to show it towards Coline. There was a quiet understanding as the Pokémon nurtured the human, Coline gradually became questionable about Mewblade’s statement and finally spoke up.

“So you can bring her back? Isn’t that impossible?” Coline asked, looking up at Mewblade while brushing the tears away from her eyes. Mewblade looked down at Coline with a slight, playful smile. Coline blinked and showed a faint smile in return. She knew Mewblade was a good Pokémon inside and finally it was shown.

“I am a Pokémon with a lot of potential. I can give life to Eevee,” affirmed Mewblade with a confident smirk. Coline managed a large smile and hugged Mewblade in gratitude which made Mewblade chuckle. Mewblade let go of Coline and took the girl’s arms away from her body. Coline blinked at the Mewthree in apparent confusion. “I am going to do the procedure now but you have to be really quiet so I can concentrate.” Mewblade stood with feline grace, patting Coline on the head.

“Sure thing!” Coline chirped as she walked over to the far wall and leaned against it, eagerly waiting to see what Mewblade would do. Magical spells, creepy voodoo, alluring chants, all those things came to Coline’s mind.

Satisfied that Coline was following orders, Mewblade went to the Eevee’s side. She began by sensing the injuries that needed Recovering, although casual observation was all that was really required. The Eevee, to plainly state it, looked like road kill. A large object must have fallen on Eevee, crushing the bottom three ribs, the lower spine and the pelvis. The object must have also been sharp since there was a deep wound still slowly trickling with dark red blood. The blood was the exact same blood that had stained Eevee’s furry body and Coline’s now ruined pink shirt. An injury as such was not out of

the ordinary for Mewblade to do. Sometimes using an Iron Tail resulted in the same damage as whatever had likely fallen on Eevee. Although in this case Mewblade had not caused the fatality, she was to reverse it.

Mewblade waved her paws over the Eevee using a Recover as she did so. The wound healed, the broken spinal cord was mended. The bones solidified in the cracked places and all seemed well either than the fact that Eevee was still dead. Mewblade eyed her healing abilities proudly. No scars were left behind since Mewblade removed the dead cells with her mind and had healthy skin cells replace them. All of this did not mean Mewblade would be signing up for a position in nursing anytime soon.

Cringing slightly, Mewblade reached forward with her paw. She touched the Eevee, just about ready to perform the resurrection. *Here I go, again*, she thought grimly to herself as she sunk into a trance and back into the nightmare.

Coline was in a state of awe as Mewblade miraculously healed her Eevee's injuries. She was about to ask if Mewblade saved her Eevee but Mewblade placed a paw on Eevee, not yet done. Mewblade looked a little worried and then her face went absolutely expressionless. A few seconds passed and Mewblade did not even twitch. Several stray beads of sweat began to form on Mewblade's brow. Coline was starting to become really distressed by this. Disobeying the earlier command from Mewblade, she went to the side of Mewblade.

"Mewblade?" she called. No answer. "Mewblade!" Coline shouted a few times while jumping up and down hysterically. She stopped and stomped her foot in irritation. "This isn't funny!" But Mewblade did not move. Coline ran to the opposite side of the operating table and looked at Mewblade's eyes. They were open and devoid of emotion. Leaning over the table a little, Coline waved her hand in front of Mewblade's face. Mewblade did not blink. Though Coline was somewhat young she knew that Mewblade was not focusing either. It was as if she was looking at a statue. Coline decided that she needed a better vantage point and clambered onto the operating table, making certain not to disturb the table or the connection between Mewblade and her Pokémon. Coline stood to her full height, feet on either edge of the table for balance. She leaned forward, now relatively eye level with Mewblade. Again Coline waved her hands and shouted at Mewblade and again there was no reaction. Being rather bored and seeing a window of opportunity, Coline reached into her front jeans pocket and retrieved a red marker she had found recently. The marker was uncapped and held close to Mewblade's face. Coline moved her head closer to make certain her little face painting was perfect. She was just about to make her first squiggle when suddenly Mewblade blinked.

Mewblade came out of the trance, blinking as her pupils contracted from the brightness of the florescent lights. There was Coline, standing on the operating table with a red marker held perilously close to Mewblade's face. Coline yelped, shocked that Mewblade was suddenly out of her trance. She lost her balance, falling backwards, landing on the floor with a thud. The marker clattered to the floor, bouncing and spinning as it struck the floor at odd angles before going beneath the cabinetry and lodging itself there. Mewblade joined Coline and the marker on the floor as she collapsed, not being able to stand due to the aftereffects of the resurrection. Mewblade was doing her absolute best to ignore the

pain, voices and images but they were hard to overcome quickly. Meanwhile, Eevee woke up with a yawn, as if she had had a long nap.

“Eevee eee eevveee evvee,” (I had the strangest dream,) she said aloud. “Eeeveee evve eee, eee?” (Mewblade was in it and, oh?) Eevee looked over each side of the table to see Coline rubbing her bottom and moaning slightly. On the other side was Mewblade who looked rather angry and agonized. “Eevee evve eee eeeve eevvee evve?” (What are you doing down there?) Coline shifted to a kneeling position and looked at her Eevee.

“Eevee! You’re okay!” Tears of relief streamed down her face. She outstretched her arms and Eevee leapt willingly into Coline’s open arms. Coline jumped to her feet, holding the Eevee close to her body. “I’m so happy you’re alive. I thought I would never see you again.” Coline stopped her excitement when she noticed that Mewblade was hidden behind the table. Eevee squirmed out of Coline’s hold and leapt down to the Mewthree’s side as Coline tip-toed up to Mewblade. “Are you okay?” asked Coline with a meek voice. Mewblade did not give a reply. She put her paws to the table and used it to help her stand. This must have required a lot of effort since Mewblade struggled noticeably. It took some time but she finally managed to stand, using the table afterwards to steady herself.

“I am just a little sore from the resurrection. I’ll be fine in a few moments,” Mewblade muttered, not exactly telling the whole truth. In contrast to the resurrection with Rover the Growlithe, the resurrection on Eevee had gone along just peachy.

“Well, tell me when you’re okay. Okay?” Coline said, concerned. It took about a minute until Mewblade let go of the operating table and stood without any aid. She gently gave her whole body a shake.

“I’m fine now,” announced Mewblade.

Coline grinned at the reply, saying, “Good,” then she leapt at Mewblade, clinging to her legs. Eevee jumped to the table and up onto Mewblade’s shoulder where she began to lick Mewblade on the face.

“Grr, get off!” Mewblade shouted though truly not meaning it. Eevee paused briefly from her face-washing to reply.

“Eevee eee evvee, evvee.” (I’m thanking you, silly.) And then continued with her previous activity.

“I know you two are grateful but this is ridiculous!” Mewblade protested as she shot angry glares at both trainer and Pokémon. Coline giggled.

“Thank you!” she hollered and let go. Eevee hopped into Coline’s arms. They had tortured Mewblade enough. Mewblade was rubbing her cheek indignantly.

“You’re welcome,” she muttered and headed for the door. Mewblade was stopped by the voice of Coline.

“Mewblade, where are you going?”

“The Viridian Gym. I need to do a couple of things.” Mewblade looked at the closed door then moved her paw to the knob. She was interrupted again.

“You can’t go out there! It’s dangerous!” shouted Coline, tears forming in her eyes. Her voice was low. “I don’t want you to be killed.” Mewblade lowered her arm and turned around.

“Coline, you barely even know me or understand me. I nearly killed your brother. Does that mean anything to you? Why should you care whether I live or die?! If you had

any sense you should hate me for hurting your kin!" What Mewblade just said was a big mistake. Coline stood there, Eevee in her arms and making water works. Mewblade sighed regretfully. *Oh, gee-whiz. Now I made her cry.*

"Well, you don't understand me either! I care because I thought you had some good inside! I care because you could have killed my brother but you didn't!" Coline paused taking in a deep breath. "I care because I thought we're friends!" she cried.

"Eeveee . . ." (Coline . . . ) whispered Eevee. Mewblade on the other hand was very quiet.

*Friends?* thought Mewblade, the concept clear but at the same time distant in her mind. How could she possibly have a friend? "I'm sorry that was implied but a friendship between us would be impossible," said Mewblade with a blunt tone. Coline showed typical childhood frustration.

"Then why can't we be?!"

"You wouldn't understand."

Coline stomped her foot in irritation. Eevee was becoming distressed by this and lowered her ears as Coline gave her rebuttal. "Only because I'm little doesn't mean I'm stupid." This received a very out of place chuckle from Mewblade. Coline was confused. "What's so funny?"

"The fact is that you thought being little makes one stupid. I know that you're eight years of age. How old do you think I am by human standards?"

"Uhh, thirty something."

"Eee eevve eee eevve!" (One hundred and two!) Eevee laughed. Mewblade chuckled in response to their guesses.

"You are both incorrect but it proves a good point to not always rely on superficial qualities to judge age."

"Eeveee eevvve evveee eevve eee?" (So how old are you?) asked Eevee, not enjoying to not get her answers.

"Tell us, please?" begged Coline, making an innocent face.

"I'm three weeks and eleven months old." This was shocking.

"Eee eevvee." (You're lying.)

"No way could you be one years old," Coline said, obviously not believing Mewblade either.

"I was created and my creators thought it was pointless for me to have a childhood."

"Eee, eeve. Evvee eeve evve." (Oh, yeah. You mentioned this before.)

"You never were little?" Coline asked sympathetically.

"No, I suppose I am deprived of many things . . ." Mewblade trailed off, thinking. She was neglecting a general need of most social creatures. Heck, even Mewtwo had sought companionship in the clones that he made. It likely would not cause much harm if she at least humored Coline's ideals. ". . . But the one thing I shouldn't give up is a friend," she smirked which received a smile from Coline.

"If we're going to be friends then the least we can do is go with you to the gym." Coline made a note to highlight the partnership between herself and Eevee.

"Then I should make this simple," Mewblade said as she let her aura spread around herself, Coline, and Eevee. She noticed how her energy was very low, but decided



to use the Teleport anyway; after all, it was only a short distance and it would not even be a noticeable depletion of Mewblade's energy.

*Can Coline and Eevee comprehend the friendship I am able to give?* Mewblade questioned to herself as the Teleport whisked the trio to the gym.

Mewblade, Coline and Eevee appeared outside the gym. They were actually further up the walkway, a large marble pillar obstructing the view of the gym from the trio. It was one of the few pillars standing that had little damage from the various forms of bombardment that the weather was providing. Mewblade had chosen this spot since the open doors of the gym caused her concern.

"Eevee eee evveee evvee?!" (Why are we outside?!) demanded Eevee, having to shout over the din. Mewblade spoke nothing while raising a paw above her head, a transparent Barrier spread out around them as she did this. Occasionally the Barrier flickered with alternating purple and blue colors.

"We're outside because I still need to tell you a few details about myself. This may allow you to make an informed decision about our friendship."

Coline hugged her Eevee tightly and looked around. Her gaze focused on what was now a cobblestone pathway. Earlier the pathway was nothing but two feet of non-compacted snow. The Barrier had conveniently shoved the snow outside the circumference of itself. Snow was already collecting on the outside of the protective bubble, dulling the deadly strokes of red forked lightning and spider lightning that jumped beneath the clouds. The roars, crackles and eerie wails of wind and electricity were greatly muted. Even the hot, buffeting wind and the nippy feel of the snow was not present. Mewblade's Barrier only offered simple comforts, though Mewblade herself offered less comfort as she spoke with graveness.

"I was created as part of a project called 10.a Intensity, one of what I believe is a total of five Mewtwo clones, possibly more, possibly less although that I am not sure of." Coline was about to interrupt with a question, Mewblade saved her some breath. "I look somewhat like Mewtwo. You will likely meet Mewtwo as well as my mother, Mew." Coline looked very eager, now struggling to pay attention. She wanted to meet these other rare Pokémon. Mewblade continued to inform her 'friend'. "I was created to be a weapon for what was suppose to be my trainer, but I was able to understand his motives and escaped. Despite that I am under no human's influence, I am mostly still a weapon. And sadly, it is one of the ways I live." Mewblade paused, letting Coline and Eevee take the time to absorb the information. To some extent Mewblade seemed regretful that she went about killing and maiming living beings. Coline took what Mewblade said as in Mewblade was occasionally violent and did not know how to control her rage. Besides that, Coline could see right through Mewblade, and Eevee could as well, but to a lesser extent. Somehow, Mewblade almost wanted an outlet to be something more. Coline digested the information, Eevee made a nod with her head for Mewblade to go on with her little story.

"Humans have long since forgotten what is an unwritten code of Pokémon. The code, or more specifically Pokémon Law is a system that outlines how the Legendary Pokémon are important in sustaining life, also that purity and justice prevail over the corrupted. It's a system made for balance though it really has no name, and no true

existence. To some extent, even Pokémon are rarely aware of it as nothing more than a driving instinct that calls them when something goes terribly wrong. It's there to keep them out of danger and keep their hearts pure. While on the other hand, humanity has overcome most preserving instincts and even what should be basic morals. When things do go wrong, like right now, I'm suppose to show up. I uphold Pokémon Law, which if you really were to analyze what I do, you'd be wise to stay away from me." Mewblade watched the emotions of Eevee and Coline, this time neither quite knew what to think. They could judge the emotional worth of Mewblade's words, although her speech was complicated. Mewblade was mentally displaced, having to force herself to be strong when she felt so weak, ignoring certain needs of others. She felt even weaker since it was time to clear up the ultimate misunderstanding, the one that bothered Mewblade more than it seemed to bother Coline. "Coline, your brother was nearly killed by me because it was my job. His Ditto is talented, I must admit, in order to use Transform and change into a fake Articuno as he did. Unfortunately, the Ditto's level, and his inexperience with being such a powerful Pokémon caused him to start an almost freak winter storm. For taking up such a form, and for causing weather disturbances, I had to make an attempt at killing them both. You understand now? You are talking to a Pokémon that is completely familiarized with the act of murder. And Eevee has caught on to what I meant," Mewblade noted as Eevee stared wide-eyed in horror at Mewblade before trying to lose herself in the folds of Coline's bloodstained T-shirt. Coline still did not quite get the message. Maybe she was in denial but Eevee's pitiful wails of terror were making her gradually more edgy.

"Eevee, what's wrong?" Coline asked as she stroked the fur of her Pokémon.

"Eevee won't answer you, she's too scared."

"You really didn't mean what you said, did you?" Coline asked shakily. Eevee was whimpering and shivering noticeably in her master's arms.

"I meant every word, Coline. I couldn't convince anyone if I even tried to lie." Mewblade was somber, looking down at Coline with expectation for what her reaction could be.

"But you still saved Dan and Ditto, and you saved Eevee too." Coline gave a sideways glance, trying to see Mewblade from a different perspective. It was what Eevee finally squeaked that made Coline begin to see the entirety of Mewblade.

"Eeee! Eevee eeee! Eeve eeevee eve eeevee eevvee evve!" (Death! She's death! She only shows up to kill all of the bad Pokémon and people!) Eevee quivered as she said it, finally looking at Mewblade in sheer terror. She was afraid because they were outside, trapped in a Barrier, far away from anyone who could even have the most remote chance of saving them. This is what Eevee expected as her jumbled thoughts imagined that Mewblade had led them on, subconsciously lying all the time. That now would be Mewblade's judgment on them for likely insulting her in some way or just for a quick kill fix.

"You're not Death, are you?" asked Coline, speaking the word 'death' as if it were a title or a name.

"Depends on what your views are. I do kill and defy life, and that likely can make me qualified enough," confessed Mewblade, leaving Coline to join her Eevee in the joint conclusion that they had unwittingly walked into their own doom. The pleasant

perspective that Coline had quickly vanished to be replaced by an incorporeal terror. She backed away from Mewblade to only be stopped by the marble column braced firmly behind her back. Coline had six Pokémon but the only one worth tossing was her own Growlithe named Rowly, but that was a pointless waste to even think of doing.

Coline cried out suddenly in a panic. "Don't kill us!" Her arms went to shield her Eevee as she leaned forward in a standing fetal position. She would risk her own self for the sake of her Eevee who risked her life for her earlier. Coline just waited. Mewblade stood there, the red lightning reflecting on her blades. She did not advance. Mewblade just turned her head away, disappointed.

"I knew you would never understand if I told you everything," sighed Mewblade, she turned to look back at Coline who gazed up at the Mewthree, still fear-stricken. "No, I thought you might. I had doubts and in the end there were none," then there was silence; Mewblade not certain what to do and Coline waiting for a death blow that never came.

"How come you're not killing us?" Coline asked, still fearful but almost annoyed that Mewblade had barely moved a muscle besides those in her neck and face.

"Why would I?" Mewblade gave her blunt rhetorical question. "I would only kill you two if you broke a law. Neither one of you has the capabilities or the conscious thought to carry about any type of heinous deed, let alone breaking a Pokémon Law. So there is absolutely no reason for me to ever destroy you." Coline blinked in absolute confusion, even Eevee opened her eyes to puzzle over what Mewblade said.

"So you only kill the bad ones, right?" Coline questioned in need of confirmation.

"Of course," Mewblade coaxed the little girl. "Your brother was an unfortunate case, and I'm sorry he became a victim of mine. I'm glad you came along to change my mind," admitted the otherwise very stubborn, elitist Pokémon. "I also resurrect good people and Pokémon if they die, and if fate wants them to live. I have to have a reason to both kill and save, otherwise I would do neither." Her honesty rang true, and to some extent Mewblade was questioning herself as to why she would even bother to appeal to Coline and Eevee, since they seemed so scared of her.

"Eee, eee eevvee eeevvveee evve eevve eevvee eevveee?" (Oh, so you saved me because I'm good and have a purpose?)

"Yes, for those reasons. Also this storm was caused by a vile Pokémon. Because the storm is like an extension of his now dead self, if it kills anything particularly good, I'll have to save it."

"Eeevvvee eeve eevvee?" (So what is my purpose?) Eevee asked excitedly, her fear forgotten. Mewblade kept a straight face, she knew but did not know at the same time. Mewblade would have known more if the Eevee had not had some predestined fate somehow linked with hers, and Mewblade beat away whatever aspect of the afterlife that dared to tell her any meaning of her own life. This meaning that whoever had the potential of affecting her fate, she knew very little about.

"Not much actually. I paid little attention to your purpose, although you have one and will fulfill it at some point or another." Eevee looked crestfallen at what little information Mewblade provided.

"But because you can bring back people and all that, you must be a powerful Pokémon," Coline jumped in with her analysis, no longer fearful of Mewblade who still had a good side and was a lawful executioner. The killing part did bug Coline but she

seemed to be a rather desensitized little girl, since she did not mind much. Then again, having a brother eight years older than herself did have a tendency to expose her to things other children at her age would naturally avoid. The happenings of the last two days could be another culprit.

“A Legendary Pokémon actually. My title is the Decider of Fate. I already told you my responsibilities.” More surprise. The awe of being in the presence of now such a powerful Legendary Pokémon made the experience almost cool in contrast to the fearfulness experienced not so long ago. The pair became a fountain of bubbling questions, their moods entirely changed, changing quickly like those of most children.

“Eevee eevee eeveeve eeve eevee?” (Aren’t Legends suppose to be old?)

“That is an understatement. We live until our deaths then we are replaced by a much younger Legendary. Some are old, some are a decent age, I’m a baby in comparison.”

“So how old do you have to be before you die?”

“There is no set limit. We die because of something unfortunate that can happen to us. For instance, a Moltres can die by falling into the ocean. One Legendary is over a million years old, another is at least two billion.” Imagining those ages was almost impossible for anyone.

“Eee eve eeveeve eeveee, eeve eee eee eeve eevee?” (So if you’re so young, then who did you replace?)

“I am a new species, so I am the first, thus I replaced nobody. The species is called ‘Mewthree’, but I stick to being called ‘Mewblade’.” The questions were becoming a revolving door as Coline and Eevee alternated.

“What makes you special? Like Articuno makes snow, so what is it that you do?”

“Articuno is the carrier of winter, and she and her fellows tend to save people caught up in their storms.”

“Eeeveee eeve eevee?” (Articuno is a girl?) Eevee interrupted.

“Yes she is. Most Legendaries have a gender, all except one. The Legendary Bird, Ho-oh has no gender, thus it is asexual. Although if you want to be blunt, Ho-oh is an ‘it’. Myself and Mewtwo are basically like Ho-oh, we’re sort of ‘it’.” Mewblade waved a paw. “Sorry, Coline. Got a little off track there. What I told you earlier is what I do as a Legendary. Although generally I protect the Legendaries, their responsibilities and try and keep the balance of life in balance.”

“How can you be sort of ‘it’?”

Mewblade did not want to get into the conversation that was really meant for Coline’s parents to tell her. She was speaking freely with the trainer and her Pokémon but that was not her department. “Well, you’ll learn this when you’re older in knowledge and maturity.” Mewblade was the youngest so she could not use the, ‘I’ll tell you when you’re older,’ phrase because of her own age. “Well . . . females are different than males because of how they look, sound and act, and also because we have these little codes,” Mewblade paused, struggling here. She could relate sequences in DNA but telling a child that has no clue about biology was complicated. Mewblade tried to make her speech simple. “There is a special set of codes that say if you’re a guy or a girl. I don’t have that. So my body doesn’t know if it is a guy or a girl, so it thinks it has no gender. The scientists that made me and Mewtwo worked very hard to make Mewtwo seem a lot like a guy, and me, a lot

like a girl. We call ourselves ‘half-sex’ for that reason because we’re not quite like ‘its’ but not quite like a guy or a girl. Do you understand?” This received dumb nods from Coline and Eevee, Mewblade was silently relieved that they sort of got it.

“Eeve eevveee evvveee eeve eeve evve eevveee!” (Well now that explains why you look like a guy!) joked Eevee with a laugh. Mewblade scowled, crossing her arms.

“Do you have any family, besides a mom?”

“Mewtwo is my father, Mew is my mother. They’re not really my birth parents, so it’s a bit complicated. I had a brother named Vicebane who died not so long ago. And don’t frown about it. He died for good reason. He was the one who caused this storm in the first place.”

“Eee,” (Oh,) Eevee said at the same time as Coline.

“Oh,” Coline said at the same time as Eevee did, although in English. It made no difference to Mewblade, she could understand both of them perfectly fine just as long as they were not speaking in some foreign language like French.

“Eevee eee eeve eee?” (Where do you live?)

“Near Ellix Forest, in a mountain cave.”

“Doesn’t it get a little lonely, or cold?”

“I am a Legendary Pokémon. We don’t really notice things like loneliness or cold. In fact, since I don’t eat, breathe, sleep, well, a lot of mortal things, I rarely notice a thing,” Mewblade stated with a shrug of her shoulders.

“Evvee eeeve evvveee?” (Isn’t that a little impossible?)

“Sometimes it helps to not think about it. You’d just hurt your head trying to come up with an even remotely logical answer.”

“How do you become a Legendary?”

“By birth-right.” Coline raised her eyebrow, forcing Mewblade to elaborate.

“Every Zapdos born has the right to become a Legendary if the one that is the leader, the main Legendary of their species, dies. Then the replacement is bumped up to Legendary status if they qualify. I’m a Legendary because I was just made that way.”

“Eeevee eevvee eee eeeveee? Eevee evveee eee evve.” (Who’s the most powerful of all of you? Order would be nice.)

Mewblade sighed as she thought it over. “Depends. I guess I can order this by a couple things. Since Ho-oh is the oldest, and basically god-like, it’s the most powerful, except it does very little besides watching things and intervening on occasion. I’m second because I have skills that are similar to Ho-oh’s. Then after that point it gets tricky. Likely Lugia, since he can have control over the Legendary Birds. Mewtwo is powerful but he has no real purpose, so he may as well be fourth. Zapdos, Moltres, then Articuno. This is followed by Suicune, Raikou, and Entei. Then in the rear would be Celebi, then my mother, Mew who is last.” Coline did not know a lot of those Pokémon that Mewblade listed, and Eevee was no help either. “At least you have an idea where I am amongst the other Legends.” Mewblade stopped speaking, her eyes losing a bit of focus as she looked off distantly.

“Something wrong?” ventured Coline.

“I suppose so,” muttered Mewblade as she turned her attention back to Coline and Eevee. “Coline, Eevee, about our friendship. You have to realize that I’m not going to age

and you both will. Like every other normal, living creature, you've been slowly dying since birth." There was surprise from the pair, they both investigated themselves looking for signs of death. "Don't take it that bad. You two will age noticeably in contrast to me because I don't age at all. You will grow old and weary and sooner or later you will ultimately die. I cannot reverse that type of death, it wouldn't be fair to you anyway if I could."

"Eevee eeeveee evve eevvvee eee?" (So you get to see everything die?)

"I see a lot of death already so it shouldn't phase me." Mewblade was more worried about the crippling insanity that would catch up with her in due time, likely within the duration of a century. "You two have to be able to accept the fact that you are not immortal. You also have to be able to accept the repercussions that go along with being a friend of mine. That would include the violence and gore that comes with it," Mewblade said, realizing she was sounding a lot like Ho-oh with the condescending lists of rules and catches.

Coline moved her Eevee to her shoulder saying, "I think we've seen enough of it already. It can't possibly get any worse."

"Actually, it can," Mewblade smirked. "The gym looks like a war zone, to state it bluntly. There is a lot of blood, guts, and gross stuff. By now it likely smells pretty bad too. I suppose you'll see it when we get there." Mewblade whipped her right paw out, the snow on the Barrier shooting away. She looked to the snow covered pathway, the snow on it repelled from the cobblestones, landing to either side of it, creating four foot high snowdrifts. "Follow me," Mewblade spoke coolly. Coline followed hurriedly after, not wanting to be left out of the safety of Mewblade's Barrier.

*What is taking her so long?* Mewtwo thought as he worried greatly. He had asked Raikou how long before the storm would break free of the Legendary Dogs' hold, as well as how long the world had until it plunged into eternal chaos. The answer was grim of nature and by no means pleasant. Since Raikou, Entei and Suicune were weakening dramatically, the storm would escape its confines within three hours. The world had about sixty-three hours until it was completely consumed by one massive storm. This was disturbing news, a final contribution courtesy of Vicebane.

"Mew mew mew mew mew?" (Still worried about the storm?) asked Mew as she playfully hovered in front of Mewtwo.

<"I can alter the weather but without Articuno, Zapdos and Moltres to keep the balance it becomes too difficult to keep everything in check. I suppose once they,"> Mewtwo nodded his head towards the Legendary Dogs, <"become too weary, we'll have to take over.">

"Mew mew mew mew mew? Mew mew mew mew mew mew?" (What about the sub-Legendaries. They can help control the weather.) Mew had more knowledge of the sub-Legendaries than Mewtwo did. He was only vaguely aware that they even existed up until recently.

<"They are assisting from their territories, but they are not strong enough,"> Mewtwo replied.

“Mew mew mew mew mew mew?” (Well couldn’t we promote some to Legendary?) asked Mew, her tail twitching hopefully.

<“They are all not qualified in their own ways, Mew.”>

Suicune had overheard, walking away from his post to converse. <“Mewtwo is correct,”> he said with an air of gravity. <“They’re too old, too young or too impure for the positions. They can’t pass as Legendaries even on a temporary level.”>

“Mew, mew mew mew mew mew mew mew,” (Sorry, I don’t keep track of these things,) Mew admitted sheepishly.

<“It’s okay. I don’t keep track either,”> interrupted Entei with a weary smile, then growing quiet once again. The Legendary Pokémon rarely held long conversations with each other since none were quite that sociable. Part of the reason was because that when they would encounter each other it would be under a situation that put a fellow Legendary in crisis. As one of the main rules amongst themselves, they were usually forbidden to meddle in another Legendary’s affairs; thus, they would remain on the sidelines as spectators.

Entei glanced over his shoulder, although how he could see past his fans and mane were questionable. Raikou paraded onto the battle floor, back from escorting Ash and company from a tour around the entire gym. The humans and their Pokémon were in need of distractions, being quite frail from all the violence that they had witness. Mew and Mewtwo had secretively numbed the non-Legendaries’ minds with their own, yet it did not rid them of all the horror.

Ash could be seen taking the problems well as he shouldered Pikachu, briefly glancing at Brock who was holding some rather lengthy documents. Misty was watching Togepi who had decided to ride on Raikou’s back.

“We’re back and look what we’ve found!” Ash shouted triumphantly, picking up a folder. He ended up tripping over a stray Dark Ball, papers went flying everywhere. Pikachu flew up into the air but managed to land unharmed on Ash’s backpack.

“Ash?” Misty knelt beside him, concern on her face that was quickly masked by anger. “Next time watch where you’re going!” She stood, walking over to Raikou and snatching Togepi off his back. Togepi was upset that its fun was over but willingly let Misty take it. Raikou turned around after that, along with Mewtwo who together came up to Ash. They were intimidating standing over Ash, yet he did not notice as he got up and reached out to grab the papers. He was laughing nervously.

“Ehe. Maybe next time I should look where I’m going.”

“That would be a first,” Brock muttered, starting to show signs that his load was becoming burdensome. Raikou decided to assist Brock since Mewtwo was likely more interested in dealing with Ash.

<“I will take care of those,”> Mewtwo smirked, the papers hovering off of the floor, organizing themselves, then flying into the open folder. Ash stared, somewhat impressed. After the little trick the folder went to Mewtwo’s waiting paw. He began to look at it without really looking before actually reading the folder’s title which labeled its contents. Mewtwo was shocked enough that he gasped aloud. Ash and Pikachu became tense. None of the humans had actually read the folders, just picked them up and left.

“Pika pika?” (What’s wrong?) Pikachu demanded, sparks showing around his red cheeks.

“Something wrong?” added Ash. Mewtwo shook his head.

<“No, just a bit surprised.”> He opened the folder, reading the contents.

<“Surprised? Surprised about what?”> Entei asked, trotting over to Mewtwo to take a look at the document. Mew took some interest as well and hovered above Mewtwo’s head. Ash, Misty and Pikachu also looked at the document that Mewtwo was holding. Suicune, Raikou and Brock began to thumb through the many other documents.

***Top Secret***

*Project 10.a Intensity*

*Subject: 001 M2M1 50F PsSDa*

*Mewblade*

The name was written at a later date, the group unable to help saying Mewblade’s name in unison. Flipping through there were spread sheets, lengthy chemical and genetic charts, thesis, notes of graphical errors, psychological altering programs and whatever else could possibly be documented. The document covered Mewblade’s entire creation!

“Uh, so what is this all about?” Indeed that was one Ash’s questions. Misty sighed at Ash’s ignorance.

“It’s going on about how Mewblade was made.”

“Pi pika pikachu pi,” (I don’t understand it,) Pikachu grumbled, completely confused.

<“You might not understand it but I do,”> Mewtwo stated, furthering the fact that he was everyone’s intellectual superior. Brock decided to read one of the documents he was holding since it made little sense to him.

“*Subject: 002 M2 100M GhDaPs/alt. PoDaPs.* No clue what it means,” he said as a brief after-thought. The document lacked a name, although it seemed to be in need of one. Suicune removed the document from Brock’s hands with his teeth then tossed it to the floor where he began to view the pages. It was a wonder how the Legendary Pokémon knew how to read but all seemed quite capable of it. A given theory was that the earth itself provided them with whatever modern knowledge they would need.

<“Oh, they mention battle stats in here. Going over some graphs of attack hit percentages. Higher attack and speed with lower health and defense, still nothing to snort at. Some stuff about tests, lots of them actually. I don’t care for dates but this stuff is recent,”> informed Suicune. Mewtwo psychically willed the folder and its contents to come to him. The second one floated on top of the one that he had been previously looking at. The group placed their focus on him since he was the brains of the group.

<“Most of what is suppose to be a name is given in the subject label. Scientists are very thorough, though at the same time highly foolish. Anyway, this document is about Vicebane’s fighting statistics. Those other ones,”> Mewtwo was talking about the pile of documents Brock had been carrying, <“they are most likely about the creation processes. This one of Mewblade was brought along with Vicebane’s files probably for reference.”> Mewtwo gave a sigh and forcefully threw the two folders to the floor. They fell into a small pool of blood. Mew immediately Teleported the folders and lingering papers to a cleaner spot in the gym. Mewtwo was angered by this.

<“Let me guess, Mewblade might want those?”> Mewtwo looked at Mew who in turn winked.

“Mew.” (Exactly.)



Pikachu had been looking outside absently, the abnormal having long since become the norm. Without any explanation the snow from the gym's pathway suddenly became clean. "Pi, pikachu!" (Hey, everyone!) Pikachu exclaimed excitedly. "Pika!" (Look!) Pikachu was pointing to the door with his tiny forearm.

"Wasn't there snow there earlier?" asked Ash. No one was able to see too far outside, it was very dark with the exception of the lightning. A large flash struck off in the distance, displaying the silhouettes of two figures. One was walking with a confident, even stride. The other not as brave as it noticeably shuffled along.

"That must be Mewblade," smiled Misty.

"Yeah, but there appears to be a person too," Brock said, pointing out that there was a small figure next to the second. This confused Mew greatly.

"Mew mew? Mew mew mew mew." (A person? But Mewblade hates people.)

<"Unless . . ."> Suicune grinned, exchanging a few nudges with Raikou and Entei who had joined him on either side. All three chuckled, enjoying their private joke. Everyone but the Legendary Dogs did not comprehend what was so humorous, it was just making them anxious.

Mewblade got to the gym without any difficulty. Coline was behind her, to the left of Mewblade with Eevee in her arms. Mewblade walked through the threshold, followed by Coline. The pillar of light temporarily blinded the trio, causing them to wince as they waited for their eyes to adjust. Although Mewblade's looks were designed to make a statement, Coline was receiving an unprecedented amount of stares. Three very odd dog-like Pokémon, a large purple cat and a small pink cat were looking at her strangely, scaring Coline. She immediately ducked behind Mewblade, startling the Mewthree greatly as the little girl chose to latch herself onto the base of her tail with one arm. Mewblade was relatively calm when she had entered, yet now she was not.

Mewblade looked at the tiny crowd in front of her as if she was not all that interested in them. She already knew that Suicune, Raikou and Entei were there dealing with the weather problem, she had known ever since she had been revived. Mewtwo was there as planned, as was Mew. Her stature was that of someone important who was on a mission, it went downhill from that point as soon as Coline chose to cower behind Mewblade, making her flustered, and embarrassed. There were a lot of emotions in there that she could not explain, a blush displaying the obvious. The Legendary Dogs responded at first with small chuckles that quickly progressed into full out howls of laughter. They leaned on each other for support, nearly falling if it were not for the gruesome mess on the floor that kept them from doing so. Mew was giggling loudly, spinning circles. She flopped onto Entei's back after losing her concentration. Even Mewtwo could not help showing his amusement. He had to cover his mouth with a paw to hide his smirk but it could not disguise his telepathic chuckling. The non-Legendaries had no idea what was causing the spontaneous laughter. They basically stood there, checking the gym and Mewblade to see if anything was out of place. Coline managed to peek out from her hiding place, as did Eevee who had clambered onto Coline's shoulder. They exchanged looks, also not understanding the laughter but from what they could tell, Mewblade was fuming mad.

<"Hahahahaha! To think her to have . . ."> howled Entei.

“Mew mew mew mew mew!” (Ms. Fearsome is Ms. Tamable!) squealed Mew.

<“Yeah, she’s the Decider of Fate all right,”> laughed Raikou merrily.

<“Mewblade, I’m sorry, but are you really sure you’re feeling okay?”> Mewtwo chuckled, looking cautiously over his paw.

<“Okay?! I’ve never seen such a thing!”> Suicune laughed, taking the humor farther than the rest. The taunts and rather insulting conversation continued back and forth between the Legendaries, all except Mewblade. Coline ignored their speaking, finding them to be mean. Her gaze wandered about the gym, quickly catching sight of the corpses and nearly retching because of it. Eevee acted the same. Neither seemed to react as most do when in sight of a badly mutilated body, but the sight still shook the pair. To take her mind off of the carcasses, Coline decided to inquire about the Legendaries’ weird sense of humor.

“Umm, Mewblade? What’s so funny?” asked Coline, looking up at the back of Mewblade’s head. Mewblade turned her head so that she was looking over her shoulder. Coline could now clearly see Mewblade’s face, who was both scowling and blushing. Her pride seemed rather hurt.

“It is rather odd for a Legendary Pokémon to have a friend,” Mewblade spoke to Coline and Eevee in a low voice. “It is even more odd to have a human friend. I’m suppose to be considered far too harsh to even get along with people. That is why they are laughing.”

“Oh? I don’t think it is that funny,” Coline glowered. Mewblade sighed lightly.

“If they were in the same situation I would be tormenting them too. They are just making fools of themselves to begin with.”

“Eee eve eevee eee?” (So who are they?) Eevee asked loudly.

“Yeah, I want to know who they are!” Coline added eagerly. Mewblade thought for a second, then noticed that it was the perfect given opportunity to taunt her superiors. She was feeling a bit playful, first pointing out Raikou for Coline and Eevee.

“See that dog with the bad oral hygiene?” Mewblade spoke, voice raised so that she could be easily heard. This caught Raikou’s attention.

<“Hey!”> he exclaimed, straightening up and looking very offended. This caused more of an uproar.

<“I always thought it was your breath that smelt funny,”> jibbed Suicune.

Mewblade was ready to turn the tables on the arrogant Suicune, but not before she introduced Raikou to Coline.

“That is Raikou. He is responsible for carrying storms.” Mewblade then pointed at Suicune, directing her verbal wrath towards him. “The blue thing with the lawn ornament on his head is Suicune. He is the reincarnation of the north wind, and responsible for keeping water clean.” Now Suicune was rather upset, especially after having his head piece insulted. Entei, Mew and Mewtwo were calming down but Mewblade had not finished with her ‘introductions’.

“The brown fluff ball with the banana peel on his head is Entei. He represents volcanoes.”

Entei looked up vainly at his head piece, whimpering, <“A banana?”> as he stared at it.

“The pink rat is Mew, my genetic mother. She protects those who are pure of heart.” Mew did not like being called a rat and she started to snifle. Mewtwo looked at Mew, then looked at Mewblade in anticipation of the insulting introduction. “And the purple, deformed alien is Mewtwo, my genetic father. He watches over humanity.”

<“The black, genetically altered alien remake is Mewblade. She is the Decider of Fate.”> Mewtwo grinned, Mewblade grinned back. Coline and Eevee were furiously comparing Mewblade to Mew and Mewtwo, seeing all of the resemblances in Mewtwo but none in Mew. They were both fascinated, watching from their hiding place.

“I wouldn’t have done that if the five of you at least acted your ages, if not acted like proper Legendary Pokémon,” Mewblade stated, arms folded across her chest, acting the most mature of the group.

<“So you don’t disagree with Mewtwo on what he said. You must have been honored by Ho-oh’s presence,”> said Suicune. Entei moved away from Suicune and padded up to Coline. Coline moved so that Mewblade’s dangerously bladed tail was between her and Entei. She was being careful, but Mewblade’s blades dulled and flattened in places so she would not harm the girl.

<“I believe we haven’t met. As you know, my name is Entei. What is yours?”> he smiled warmly. The dogs were more kindred spirits than the rest of the Legendaries, Entei was a true example of it.

<Coline, Eevee, it’s okay. He won’t hurt you.> Mewblade grinned and turned around so that she could easily see both Coline and Eevee, although doing this meant that Coline was no longer hiding behind Mewblade.

Coline began to stutter nervously since Entei was so huge and she was so small. “I, umm . . . mmm. I’m Coline. Eevee is mine,” she pointed to Eevee who timidly squeaked in response. “I’m Mewblade’s friend.” Entei bowed the front of his body, giving quite an elegant leg for an otherwise bulky Pokémon.

<“I am pleased to meet you, Coline, friend of Mewblade. It is not often that I see humans as sweet as you,”> Entei told Coline with an endearing smile. Coline returned the smile, reaching her hand forward to pet Entei’s muzzle. Mewblade knew from that point Coline would be just fine being with the other Legendaries yet she was not all too eager to leave Coline’s side. She did so with reluctance though, walking over to Zapdos’ corpse. Mewtwo saw this, knowing what Mewblade was up to and intervened.

<Mewblade, could I talk to you, privately?> he gestured to the large gym level doorway. Mewtwo placed a paw to Mewblade’s back, guiding her.

<Well, you are conversing with me privately,> she told Mewtwo as he led her off of the gym floor, down a hallway Mewblade and Mewtwo knew all too well, and into a small office. Mewtwo deftly flicked a light on with his tail. The room was barren except for a small desk, an office chair, and a barren light bulb that hung from the ceiling. Mewblade glared at Mewtwo.

“Okay, so why have you brought me here?” she growled. Mewtwo did not answer, instead some documents, two of which had blood stains, appeared on the desk. Mewblade looked at them quizzically.

<“Do you know what those are?”> Mewtwo faced Mewblade who continued to stare him down.

“No,” she said bluntly, sounding irritated. “I have to go back and resurrect the Legendary Birds. Whatever it is, I am certain it can wait until later.” Mewblade turned away from Mewtwo. Mewtwo’s eyes glowed and he psychically forced Mewblade to about-face. Mewblade did not resist. She could not waste her desperately needed energy in a power struggle. Mewtwo’s face was stern.

<“Look, I realize how important your duties are to you and the world.”> Mewtwo looked at Mewblade, eyes going from her head to her toes, then back up to her face. <“I also know your energy is very low. All I ask is for a little time, it won’t hurt you.”>

“Fine!” Mewblade snapped at him, storming over to the table and picking up the first folder with a great deal of irritation. She found it to be backwards and flipped it to its front, prepared to find nothing interesting. Mewblade read the title.

“It’s, it’s,” Mewblade stuttered, fumbling with the folder. She dropped the folder on the table as if it had burned her. “Why are you showing me this?” Mewblade asked, her voice quiet. She was too emotionally fragile for this. Mewtwo was standing next to her, looking down at the folder.

<“I thought you might be interested. Bet it feels peculiar that those papers hold all that there is to know about how you were made, where you came from.”> Mewtwo watched as Mewblade reached out hesitantly, touching the folder before swiftly opening it. She had not expected to see it and flipped through the papers before a piece of text caught her eye.

“Day forty-seven,” Mewblade began, reading aloud. “*Subject: 001 M2M1 50F PsSDa. They’re writing about me . . . Another error of what is one in too many. Already my team working on Project 10.a Intensity agrees that the problems in the early stages of development are a sign of worse things to come.*” Mewblade reread it quickly, appalled at this. “*002 is showing far more promising results and already the debate of whether to continue working on 001 has begun.*” Mewblade looked at Mewtwo, trying to ask him questions with her eyes then went back to the contents of the folder, flipping through a couple more pages before stopping. “*Day sixty-three. Subject 001 M2M1 50F PsSDa. The problems have compounded. Just recently 001 went into . . . Cardiac arrest!*” Mewblade shrieked. “*We were forced to perform what is considered one of the most invasive forms of surgery on such a small frame.*” More pages were flipped and Mewblade was becoming noticeably frustrated. “*Day sixty-five. 001 has rejected the synthetic blood sample yet again. This knowledge is very stressing. We’re resorting to withdrawing her own blood and encouraging cell division among her blood cells. We don’t know why her blood type is so incompatible. We’ve decided to call it type C. Day ninety-two. 001 has yet again gone into cardiac arrest and it was harder this time than expected. We have noticed a change in her skeletal structure, that it is becoming denser and harder to cut. We fear that the next time this happens we may need to use non-surgical equipment.*”

There was another excerpt about the exact same situation, a failing heart. By now Mewblade’s reading had turned into rather broken speech as she recited what she read. It greatly upset her to be reading the document. “*Day two hundred and twelve. The team has hit rock bottom with the combined spontaneous combustion of 002 and cardiac arrest from 001. In addition, 001, or ‘Mewblade’ as she has been called has been on a respirator and IV for the past two weeks. We have noticed a loss of organ tissue and as of now her entire digestive tract has shriveled, causing a rejection of various forms of*

*nourishment and even drugs. We have no choice but to take her off the feed-line. She has been kept alive for so long but we realized this day would come . . .*” Mewblade read over the other files to herself, nearly on the verge of crying as she did. She put down the folder.

“So, I’m a big mistake. One utterly huge mistake who had little hope of survival. Is that what you wanted to tell me?!” Mewblade whipped around to face Mewtwo, Mewtwo in turn not realizing how extreme the files in the folder were or Mewblade’s mental state. “Is that what you wanted to tell me? That I’m just one big mistake who should be dead?! The Legendary screw-up, the Mewthree who creates all the problems in the world!?!” she hollered at him, feeling even more broken inside. Mewtwo knew that Mewblade had a tendency to explode, and she had a right to. What she read told her, that in the end it was a fluke for her to survive.

<“I never said that or implied it,”> Mewtwo corrected, doing his best to stay calm despite there was a seething mad Mewthree snarling at him. He took Mewblade’s paw and forced her fist open with his. Immediately Mewblade began to calm down, mostly because she was confused. Mewtwo had his paw held up against hers, palm to palm. <“If you want to hear it your way, then so be it. You are my clone. I am a mistake, you are a mistake. Things go wrong and we can’t fix them. So what if they wanted to give up on you? Most people would way before then. Obviously the people who made you had more respect for you than they ever did for me. They tried as hard as they could to keep you alive and give you a chance. They’d have been better off with Vicebane and despite the fact that you could have been completely deformed, they kept you. You were a labor of love, sweat and tears, even if Giovanni funded you. I bet the head doctor in the team that created you was not even willing to give you up to that callous human.”>

“You’re right about the last part,” Mewblade muttered quietly, having calmed down a significant amount because of the realization. Doctor West was afraid that she would have been injured in a battle as soon as she was put to work in the gym. He insisted in making sure she was okay at the very least.

<“It’s a miracle and probably destiny that helped you get through in the end,”> Mewtwo remarked. <“Take the problems as you like, but you were meant to survive.”> Mewtwo’s palm was still pressed against Mewblade’s, his thumb rubbing against hers. Mewblade looked at the joined paws curiously. <“We are very alike. We share similar creations, founders, genetics. There is nothing I can see in you that I can’t see in me. See, we have similar paws too,”> he smirked fondly. <“That is why I can put up with you.”> Mewblade sneered back at Mewtwo.

“Thank you,” she said, lowering her arm. “I guess I should keep those documents?” She gave a sideways glance at the folders.

<“If you want.”> Mewblade used her sparse amount of energy to Teleport the documents back to her home for her to read later. <“I wanted to bring you here so you could understand yourself better, and Vicebane too. His folder is in that pile. It’s information that could likely help you in the future.”>

“I hope so,” Mewblade smirked, her gaze falling to the floor. “I know these little talks are not your forte.” Mewblade raised her head to look at Mewtwo, a smirk creeping across her face. The smirk quickly disappeared as Mewblade began to focus on the inevitable. “Could I leave now? I have some duties to fulfill and I believe they have been neglected long enough.”

<“Of course,”> Mewtwo said, his telepathic voice heavy. <“I shouldn’t be keeping you from your duties,”> he added, nudging Mewblade with his tail. Mewblade nodded in response, turning tail and leaving the room. Mewtwo followed closely behind her heels, secretly anxious about Mewblade.

Coline was sitting, bored on Entei’s back listening to Eevee translate Entei and Mew’s conversation, mostly because Coline was a little too lazy to try and understand Mew. Eevee was perched between Coline’s legs as they sat together. Mew started squeaking, having noticed Mewblade as she walked onto the gym floor. Mewtwo was basically ignored by Mew.

“Mew, Mew!” (Hi, Mewblade!) Mew greeted, waving to Mewblade as she did. Mewblade nodded her head, showing that she heard.

“Eve, eeeveee!” (Hi, Mewblade!) Eevee translated, causing Coline to look up. Entei knew that Coline would want to approach her friend, so he knelt for her. Coline hopped off excitedly, Eevee bounding after her. Mewblade turned her head to watch the pair, crouching and raising her index finger.

“Stop right there,” Mewblade said, not really ordering. Coline halted in mid-step, quite lost. Eevee clambered up onto Coline’s shoulder, then proceeded to join Coline in the apparent confusion. Mewblade looked Coline straight in the eye, serious as ever. “I’m sorry, Coline, but I have to resurrect the Legendary Birds and do not need anymore distractions. Understand?” Coline lowered her head, foot shuffling against the ground. Mewblade had business to do and she did not want Coline to get in the way.

“Okay . . .” Coline mumbled. “Hmm?” She was caught a bit by surprise as Mewblade brought her paw beneath Coline’s chin, causing the girl to look up. Mewblade frowned apologetically, not wanting to disappoint Coline like she was. There was a small smile on Mewblade’s face, causing Coline to smile back. For Mewblade it was the first genuine smile she had given.

“Good girl,” Mewblade patted Coline on the head then proceeded with her duties by first approaching Zapdos. This heightened everyone’s curiosity, all of their attention went to Mewblade as she knelt, taking position next to the Titan of Thunder. They wanted to know what it was like to witness a real resurrection, but in truth, they did not know the half of it.

Mewblade looked over the injury casually, trying to assess the scope of the damage. The largest, most problematic injury was the twelve inches of nothing that was in the center of Zapdos’ torso. The hole was deep and already infected. There was no way to mistake an infection with gangrenous ooze dribbling about in places, the acid Vicebane had used to kill the bird had done a number.

Acid tends to corrode and rot away flesh and various tissue, leading to the gangrene. As Mewblade knew from her bizarre assortment of biology knowledge that once gangrene did set in it became difficult to treat with antibiotics. Even if it was cured, it tended to leave permanent scars and a weakened immune system. *At least it isn’t necrotizing fasciitis*, Mewblade reminded herself, knowing that there could be worse. Still, the work involved to repair Zapdos seemed extensive especially when part of his diaphragm and early digestive track were missing. A lot of the organs in Zapdos were useless, just as they were in Mewblade. Useless or not, Mewblade still had to make the

conscious effort to heal Zapdos, all of the useless organs included. *I hate you, Zapdos. Having to die like this*, Mewblade thought angrily. Mewblade basically had to recreate anything that was not present, remove all of the infection, close the hole, and remove any sign that such an injury had occurred. Thinking over it made Mewblade realize that she would be completely drained of energy before she could fully resurrect the last bird. It became clear to the other Legendaries that Mewblade was placed in a difficult situation. Suicune padded up to Mewblade, offering his paw.

<“Take whatever you need,”> Suicune offered, a very polite gesture. They had energy to spare, in which case Mewblade did not. Raikou and Entei did the same as Suicune, offering their paws and their energy for Mewblade to use.

<“There is no point in wearing yourself thin as you are,”> Raikou said, Entei bobbing his head in agreement.

<“Indeed. We are more than willing to offer our energy to help you in your duties,”> Entei added, giving Mewblade all the reason, or so they assumed for her to accept their offer. Mew and Mewtwo waited for Mewblade to snap at the dogs. On the other hand, the humans and the normal Pokémon knew nothing about Mewblade’s personality or how energy worked. They played it safe, staying as far out of the conversation as possible.

“I don’t need your assistance, or that of anyone else. These are *my* duties and I can do them all on my own!” Mewblade snapped at the dogs, showing her teeth, she then ignored them altogether. Despite everything Ho-oh had mentioned, Mewblade would not let herself be helped by anyone. Her pride ran too deep because evidently, her self-worth was weighed by her own ability to do things.

Mewblade brought her paws above the injury, forcing a Recover through her body and into that of Zapdos. Her mind was down at the cellular level, searching, destroying and repairing every problem she faced. With little effort she took Zapdos’ DNA, manipulating it and making perfectly healthy cells to replace those damaged by the attack. The process took four minutes, a gruesomely slow pace, slower than what Mewblade was used to. She finished by removing the scar tissue, making it look as if there had never been an injury at all.

“Is she done yet?” this coming from Ash. Misty placed a hand over his mouth, shutting him up.

Mewblade sat on her heels, admiring her work briefly, yet at the same distressed that she had used more energy than she intended. Now it was time for the hard part, the part that Mewblade so dreaded. Mewblade placed her paws on Zapdos and went into the trance that started her nightmare. All was silent for the moment.

“Eevee eevvee evvee eee eee evee eve eee? (Did Mewblade have to do that for me?)” whispered Eevee, breaking the silence. She was entranced by what she was seeing, which seemed like nothing to her.

“Uh-huh. She acts like a zombie, watch.” Coline sidled up next to Mewblade and waved her hand in front of her face. Coline then walked to Mewblade’s side, yelling, “Mewblade!” right into her friend’s ear.

“What do you know,” Brock said, “she isn’t responding.” Mewblade was completely oblivious to all that was going on in the physical world.

“Kind of reminds me of Ash when he just wakes up,” Misty giggled. Ash was quite insulted by the statement.

“Hey! I act nothing like that!” he retorted, starting an argument amongst his companions. While they were squabbling Coline was poking Mewblade. Raikou saw this as a problem because Mewblade had made a noticeable display of physically connecting with Zapdos. He did not want that link, if there really was one, to be disturbed. As a precaution, Raikou trotted up to Coline, picking her up by the back of her shirt and carrying her away from Mewblade. Eevee jumped onto Raikou’s head, watching as Coline squirmed about, trying to break loose.

“Put me down!” ordered Coline, but Raikou just walked with his little prize and plopped the girl down a few feet away from the main attraction. He tried to make his most serious face, meeting the gaze of Coline, although he had troubles considering there was a fuzz ball on his head and a disgruntled little girl in front of him.

<“Now you just sit there and let Mewblade do her work in peace, okay?”> Raikou went back to his vantage point where he could watch the resurrection. Eevee scampered down Raikou’s body, not wanting to stay with the Legendary. She ultimately preferred the company of Coline, and she was needed anyway.

Eevee ran over to Coline, taking a seat in her lap and licking her cheek encouragingly. Coline smiled appreciatively, not liking to be left alone.

Mewblade came out her trance, the aftereffects nearly as horrible as the first. She closed her eyes, trying to push the pain, voices and images aside, not exactly noticing the many pairs of eyes watching her. Their attention left her, going to Zapdos as he stirred. The bird looked rather disgruntled, not speaking.

“Mew mew mew?” (Are you okay?) came the concerned voice of Mew. Zapdos rose to his feet, looking down at Mewblade once he was balanced. His eyes diverted to the puddle of blood, that of his own. Zapdos took an arrogant step out of it, the whole time ignoring everyone else.

“It worked,” Misty said in awe, letting go of Ash’s shirt. Ash brushed his shirt but could care less about the condition it was in. Mewblade had just performed a miracle.

“I wish I could do that,” Ash grumbled, not knowing what he was truly jealous of.

“No you don’t!” Mewblade snarled, her voice full of pain. She made the valiant effort to stand, being quickly brought back down as violent pain ripped through her body. She stifled a scream, making a small, whimpering gasp as she sank to the floor. Sharp breaths escaped from her mouth, adding to the pain as she also tried to overcome the feeling of vicious nausea. Zapdos continued to have the air of authority, giving no sympathy to Mewblade.

<“Stop stalling and do your duties,”> he ordered, a talon stomping on the ground to give more strength to his command. Mewblade could not even bring herself to shoot a glare at Zapdos, she was too weak. Suicune did the job for her.

<“Be quiet, Zapdos. You have no business ordering the Decider of Fate around,”> Suicune barked, displaying his anger via his now wildly flowing mane. Despite him taking to Mewblade’s defense Mewblade rose, obeying the order.

Mewblade was very unsteady on her feet, unable to walk or she would fall. Ash had noticed the distress in Mewblade’s voice and was to her side quickly. An arm looped



behind Mewblade's back, the other was used to drape Mewblade's right arm over Ash's shoulder. He stood strong, offering support to the otherwise shaken Mewblade. The touch, the support, it made Mewblade's mind reel. As if Chaos had not violated her enough already, she now had the indignity of this human aiding her.

"I think you need some help," Ash said, looking up with a frown. Pikachu was on Ash's backpack, patting Mewblade's arm reassuringly.

"No!" Mewblade snarled, pulling away from Ash violently, followed by tripping. She landed on all fours, snarling at the gym floor. "I don't need anyone's help, got it?!" Mewblade yelled loud enough for everyone to hear, catching their immediate attention. They all stared at Mewblade, startled by the outburst. Ash was bewildered but got next to Mewblade, not intimidated by her. Coline was there as well, worried greatly. Both Eevee and Pikachu were almost underneath Mewblade, trying to get a clear view of her face.

"I'm only trying to help," Ash explained calmly, trying not to vary his pitch otherwise he might anger Mewblade. "Please, let us help." His hand rested on Mewblade's back. Coline gripped onto Mewblade's paw.

"Mewblade, do you need to see a doctor? Do you need to see Nurse Joy?" she asked, feeling out of place in such a situation. Pikachu made no remark, just the drooping of his ears. Eevee tilted her head to the side, still trying to get a better view.

"Eve eeve evve. Eeevvee eve eeve eeevve?" (You look sick. Can't you rest a bit?)

*Why are they doing this?* Mewblade thought dazedly. Ash's other hand clutched onto Mewblade's paw, balancing between himself and Coline. Mewblade blinked curiously at the little hands holding tightly onto her paws. There was such an emphasis on hands today. Why the thought crossed her mind was beyond Mewblade's understanding, she just stared. The Master To Be and her Chosen, the two most important people she would likely ever know were worried about her. No human would ever bring themselves so close to the emotional level of a Pokémon as the two children were at that moment. They sincerely cared, reason why they were so special. The realization pacified Mewblade a bit, making her feel better. She got up, this time with grace, whipping about to face Zapdos.

"Zapdos!" Mewblade called out. Zapdos' puffed out his chest, uppity about where this little talk would be going. "You ungrateful feather-bag should be grateful to be even alive. If it really were up to me I would have left you for dead. Someone as self-centered as you is really no loss to anyone." Zapdos was insulted, shaking his head and acting snotty as he turned his beak away. "Suicune," Mewblade addressed the dog, facing him. "I do not need you to stand up for me, I can take care of myself. The same goes for the rest of you. What I do and how I do things should be none of your business. I do not interfere with your duties, you do not interfere with mine," she sighed bitterly, turning to Ash. "And Ash, as much as I appreciate your concern . . . What I mean is that you're a good person at heart but this is not the place where you should be that person." Mewblade brushed past Ash, making her way to Articuno, side-stepping Vicebane's corpse as she did. Coline just watched, not wanting to get in the way of Mewblade since she seemed far too agitated by everyone else.

Articuno had fallen to her side, only Pidgeys and Spearows lie on their backs with their talons in the air upon death. The right side of Articuno's face, neck and breast were

soaked in her blood, as well as her lower wing as the blood pooled on it. The wound, a deep gash to the carotid artery and the jugular vein caused Articuno to lose a great deal of blood in a short period of time. The injury was very simple to treat, except for the massive blood loss. Mewblade knew her Recover would compensate for the loss of blood, but with her energy hovering over the danger zone it was quite an obstacle to overcome. Mewblade brought her paw over the injury, healing it in record time. There was no sign of scarring, which was always good. Legendary Pokémon like Articuno were rather vain about their appearances. Zapdos looked critically over Mewblade's work, even more hung up on looks than his icy counterpart.

<“You could at least remove the dried blood on her,”> Zapdos said scornfully. Mewtwo could no longer tolerate Zapdos' attitude, which was strange because Mewblade was so passive in contrast. She could not risk the energy to counter Zapdos' remarks.

<“Stop acting like you're better than everyone, you stuck-up, bossy bird,”> Mewtwo growled, aura flared. Zapdos backed away, realizing that the powerful one in the group was more in favor of Mewblade than him. Mewtwo let his aura fade away, smirking. Mewblade was smirking to herself, glad that Mewtwo had put Zapdos' in his place. Her smirk speedily diminished since she had to continue with bringing back the birds, not able to enjoy in the humiliation of Zapdos. Her paws touched Articuno's body, once again sinking into the dreaded state.

Everyone just watched and waited, able to place that the resurrection must have hurt Mewblade the first time. They all wondered how she would fair on the second. The Legendaries could sense the state of Mewblade's energy, feeling it crash in stages leaving proportionately minimal energy than what Mewblade would normally have. After what seemed like forever but was really only a minute, Mewblade awoke from her trance followed by Articuno. Her eyes unglazed, once again full of the sparkle that only a Legendary Pokémon could possess.

<“Great, Articuno. You're alive,”> Zapdos remarked, although whether he was joyous or disappointed was hard to tell. He stood over Articuno as she shifted to a low perched position then stood to join Zapdos. Blood was crusted on her upper body but she chose to ignore it, surprisingly enough for such a beautiful bird.

<“I have to admit, Mewblade is quite talented,”> complimented Articuno to Mewblade who in turn could never seem to escape the aftereffects of the resurrecting process. Articuno saw the distressed look on Mewblade's face. <“Hmm, she has worn herself thin as well,”> Articuno noted from her observations. <“Can't you rest?”> she asked to Mewblade who stayed quiet, minus the gritting of teeth and gasping whimpers.

<“She refuses our assistance, stubborn thing,”> Suicune muttered. <“It's as if she's going out of her way to harm herself.”> Which was only half true. She was going out of her way to refuse assistance, and that was part of the reason why she was struggling as she was.

“She is not!” Coline shouted defiantly.

“Eeevvee!” (Yeah!) Eevee shouted, joining Coline in her protest. Their defiance received a large number of glares, but neither backed down. Misty made certain Togepi was snug in her backpack before walking up to Coline and taking her by the hand. The situation was becoming gradually more ugly, causing Misty to surmise that Coline was not wanted in such a situation.

“Come on, Coline. You can come with me and explore the gym. It’ll be fun!” she said, although Misty did not come across as enthusiastic. Coline shot an angry look at Misty.

“No! I won’t leave Mewblade. Never ever!” she yelled and tried to pull away. Eevee did the second best or worst thing by nipping at Misty’s ankle, allowing Coline to get out of Misty’s hold.

“Oww!” Misty winced, briefly reaching down to tap her ankle to make sure it was okay. Eevee trotted over to Mewblade, tail raised high in the air. Ash and Brock stared at the display of childhood arrogance.

“Jeesh, they’re a bit mean,” said Ash, scratching his head in bewilderment. Brock and Pikachu bobbed their heads in agreement, watching as Coline embraced Mewblade. The look on Mewblade was one of grief. Mewblade knew Coline cared for her, she could not deny it but she had to say what she had to say, whether it hurt Coline or not.

“Go with Misty,” Mewblade spoke, trying to be as gentle as possible yet it was snappy and irritable in delivery. “I’m tired, I’m cranky. And if something happens to me I want to be certain that you’re safe.” Mewblade showed concern, a hint of fear in her eyes since her greatest fear was for her own sanity. Coline’s hand slid down Mewblade’s shoulder, she knew probably more than what Mewblade could express. “Misty, take Coline somewhere else, please,” Mewblade said, looking away bitterly. Misty took Coline by the hand, Eevee jumping onto Coline’s backpack.

“You heard Mewblade,” Misty said softly. Coline stared emptily at Mewblade, trying to make sense of what she was picking up from her friend.

“Go!” Mewblade barked at Coline, alarming the girl. Misty began to guide Coline away easily since Mewblade’s hostility had gotten Coline to budge. Coline sniffled, then started to cry, much to the regret of Mewblade. She could not let any emotions get in the way of what had to be done. Ash and Brock hesitated, not certain if they should follow. With the Master To Be there, Mewblade could not undermine his safety either. “You two,” the males stood to attention, “go with Misty,” Mewblade growled.

“Pika! Pikachu!” (Right! On it!)

“Yes, ma’am,” said Ash.

“Going!” Brock was the first out after Misty and Coline, exiting into the Pokémon training facilities. Ash soon followed, not bothering to look back. Once the trainers were out of earshot Mew began her tongue lashing.

“Mew! Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew mew?”  
(Mewblade! How can you possibly do that to them, especially Coline, your Chosen?!)  
Mewblade ignored Mew.

“If anything, and I mean *anything* happens to me I want none of you to even hesitate for a second and kill me!” Mewblade ordered, loud enough for everyone to easily hear her and all the layers of stress in her voice.

~ *I want none of you to even hesitate for a second and kill me . . .* ~ mocked  
Chaos inside Mewblade’s skull. Mewblade ignored its jeering.

“I want no help, no disturbances, nothing. And if I do die,” Mewblade paused, “don’t lie to Coline. She’s a real fighter,” Mewblade flashed a smirk at the crowd. “Erf!” Mewblade exhaled painfully, hauling herself upright. Once she could have risen

gracefully, but now she felt like dead weight, laboring to move her heavy frame. No energy could be spared to easy mobility, it was all needed for one purpose alone.

Mewblade's feet rose and fell heavily against the floor, making dull metallic thuds as she moved herself towards Moltres' dead body. Her eyes were full of frustration, anger and a weary beyond that of being tired. The look in her eyes made her look old, but youthful, weak, but strong. Mewblade knew she was pushing herself too far but if she waited to regain herself Moltres would slip further away and the resurrection would be no better. She regretted rejecting the offers of energy from the Legendary Dogs, but in the back of her mind she doubted that their energy was compatible for the task at hand. Mewblade glared bitterly at the corpse beneath her feet, in silent homage of things to come. Unknown to her there was a private conversation starting up amongst the other Legendaries, all except Mew who was too sensitive.

<She's out to give herself a death sentence,> Suicune stated, starting the round of gossip that was to follow.

<She's true to her Legendary self. Determined and willing to do whatever it takes to complete the task at hand,> Entei spoke, admitting his admiration for Mewblade.

Mewblade knelt next to Moltres and began using Recover on the battered bird. The attack that killed Moltres was deadly, destructive and above all, effective. For Mewblade it was a reminder of why the humans had made her, to be a weapon, a killer. The attack on Moltres was the very reason she took her own life. All her problems stemmed from this one badly timed attack. Mew hovered over Mewblade's shoulder, observing the injury as well. She could feel Mewblade grab every last speck of her energy to use in the Recover, meaning that Mewblade would be without energy for the resurrection. Mewblade made a peculiar action as she used her free paw to touch her abdomen, her eyes closed thoughtfully, her face humble before returning to her duties.

<Articuno? Stupid or arrogant?> Zapdos joked as he felt Mewblade's energy drop even lower to the point of being indistinguishable. Zapdos was very apathetic and Mewblade's visibly mounting stress did not reach him.

<Neither, she isn't trustworthy,> muttered Entei solemnly.

<You know what, it's the exact same problem that you have, sparky,> Suicune snickered to Zapdos, at this Zapdos' electricity began to dance around his body. Mewtwo blinked, annoyed with the immature behavior of the elder Legendaries. How the younger Legendaries managed to be more mature was beyond him. Raikou stepped in between the pair, not afraid of either of their attacking capabilities. Mewtwo would have done it, though he secretly wanted to see Suicune pulverize Zapdos.

<Quiet, you two. Neither of you should be fighting. This isn't the time or the place and you both know better,> Raikou coaxed, keeping his body posture low to not come across as a threat. Articuno shook her icy head, joining Mewtwo in their shared contempt for the others' actions. She noticed Mewblade's energy continue to drop, turning her head to watch Mewblade's progression through the regeneration of Moltres.

<She is so stubborn,> Mew grumbled, keeping her thoughts away from Mewblade. She looked at Mewtwo, a pout on her face before looking back at her genetic daughter. Mew blinked in wonderment. Mewblade had turned her head ever so slightly and gave everyone a single, solid glare. It was all too well known to Mewblade that none of the Pokémon present could be that silent while remaining physically active, making it

obvious to her that they were discussing things behind her back. Her look had so much compressed rage in it that a movement could likely send her off the deep end of sanity.

Mewblade refused to address them on their rude behavior and instead assured them by saying, "I'm in control." She did not want them to think that she was ready to take them down. Mewblade moved a bit of a way to her left to give a clear view of Moltres, allowing them a chance to critique her work. Zapdos craned his neck forward, and besides the fact that Moltres was pale and had no flame, she looked fine. The bird tilted his head this way and that, unsure of what to really say about Mewblade's work on his opposition. With Mewblade's energy gone it was a matter of guessing about how she was going to resurrect the bird and she was obviously working very hard to accomplish her tasks. Zapdos digressed.

<"She looks as she should,"> Zapdos commented with a blunt telepathic voice. For Zapdos that was the most flattering thing he could have said to anyone. To Mewblade, he was trying too hard yet she took the compliment for as much worth as Zapdos thought it would mean.

"Thank you," Mewblade said with a slight bow of her bladed head. She immediately got back to her task, a paw resting on Moltres' chest in anticipation.

<"Wait,"> Mewtwo interrupted, this received an even more wilder look from Mewblade than before. One of the few times in his life Mewtwo actually smirked proudly. Mewblade blinked, peering at Mewtwo, quite confused by the expression. <"You know,"> he grinned. Mewblade returned the grin, a weary gesture on her part, she knew what Mewtwo was implying. Mewtwo could not form the words in his mind, being a Legendary negated the feelings that he wish he could let out. He cared for Mewblade.

"So do you," Mewblade frowned, her eyes downcast. Her attention diverted to the body, letting her mind lose itself in the state of the trance. How she would go about bringing back Moltres puzzled the Legendaries. Mew left Mewblade to the comforts of Mewtwo and his large head. She took her perch there.

"Mew mew mew mew, mew mew?" (You care for her, don't you?) Mew asked from her spot on the top of Mewtwo's head. She watched Mewblade, Mew's stature becoming heavier with worry.

<"We have an understanding. I hope she realizes that we care about her, otherwise she may never know,"> he said and looked at Mewblade, sensing her current condition.

"Mew mew mew," (Please be okay,) Mew whispered as the ultimate waiting game began.

Mewblade looked for Moltres in the darkness, it was not long before she found what she was seeking. Moltres was seated, her flames flickering around her not letting any emotion come across. The odd thing about Moltres' flame was that despite how bright it was it could not chase away the looming darkness. Her own light only managed to illuminate herself, and the spotlight that was ever present in the space was the only other source of illumination. Mewblade paced around Moltres, just outside of her sensory range. Moltres' face was sullen, waiting for something to happen. Her head turned to Mewblade as she made her presence known, stepping into the light around Moltres.

“Here to continue your onslaught?” she hissed. Mewblade looked at Moltres bitterly, wishing she could make this experience easier by not being confrontational. She did not address the bird because she knew that her words would be meaningless, like many other things at the moment.

Moltres was dead and dead things tend to notice very little about what was going on, especially in an environment that catered to Mewblade’s will rather than her own. It was pretty obvious that Mewblade had such dominance since Moltres was speaking in English, unlike her native bird twitter or her telepathy. Another obvious sign of control was how Mewblade moved about. She lacked little finesse, taking strong, even strides towards Moltres unlike how she did in reality. Mewblade realized that her life and the life of Moltres depended on the amount of control that she would exert. She needed as much control as possible before she started otherwise she would fail and that would be the end of them both. Moltres did not gather this information and instead continued to be confrontational.

“You’re here to make my death worse. Sick, vile Pokémon,” hissed Moltres, definitely out to make Mewblade as miserable as possible. “You not only killed me, you probably came here to torture me. What you even did with my body, I cannot even imagine.” Zapdos had been far more cooperative unlike Moltres. Figuring that she deserved Moltres’ scorn, Mewblade just accepted it as it was. She reached out with her paw to touch Moltres’ cheek, gingerly stroking it. Moltres let out a screech and a flap of her fiery wings, making Mewblade withdraw. Unless Moltres cooperated nothing could be done, so she let the bird settle down, taking her time. “Go on, you can’t cause me anymore harm. Just try,” Moltres said challenging, obviously still hostile. Mewblade made another attempt at physical contact with Moltres, this time Moltres snapped her beak at Mewblade. Once again Mewblade withdrew, sighing as she spoke to the bird.

“Calm down,” she muttered, her voice sounding normal, not set with weary as it had been earlier on. Mewblade closed her eyes, distressed with the difficulty Moltres was demonstrating. She opened her eyes to reveal a peculiar sight. Moltres looked as Mewblade had seen her on her viewing screen only a couple of hours ago, the shape of a phoenix, set on fire. Mewblade stared in bewilderment, there was no way in heck she could be that crazy to see the same thing twice! *First the birds, then Ho-oh, now back to Moltres. What is going on?!*

“Why should I, killer?” Moltres snapped at Mewblade again. Mewblade heard a ridiculously garbled slur that was incomprehensible no matter which way Mewblade pretended to hear it. Mewblade closed her eyes tightly, shutting out all stimuli. Everything was back to normal as she opened her eyes.

*Way too much stress*, Mewblade surmised, figuring that Chaos could have also been playing mind games on her. Moltres was annoyed with Mewblade’s lack of response.

“Answer me why I should calm down,” she growled.

“I’m here to resurrect you!” Mewblade yelled, glaring. Moltres raised her eye-ridge, trying to piece things together.

“Decider of Fate?” she inquired. The title was not that familiar to the other Legendaries as it was to Moltres. They had to be told the title, Moltres managed to guess.

Mewblade could not believe that such a hothead would be that intelligent, yet dismissed the idea of anything Moltres may have known.

“Yes,” Mewblade answered with a bob of her head. “I’m sorry I killed you, it was a great deal of bad circumstances. As my duties go, I had to end my own life for ending yours,” Mewblade said with a bow of her head. Moltres took on a level of understanding.

“That means Ho-oh must have brought you back, and that you gave up your only chance. I accept your apology,” Moltres said with a frown in her eyes. “Something wrong?” she asked, noticing Mewblade’s fearful expression and her paw resting on her abdomen. Mewblade’s fear became evident in her voice.

“I have no energy to bring you back besides that of which rests here,” Mewblade signaled to the spot where her paw rested. Moltres was confused for a moment then alarmed as she understood what Mewblade was talking about. There were several different types of energy that existed, the one that Mewblade used was primarily her own, but wasting it only meant that she had simply exhausted her body and was in need of rest. The only other energy Mewblade had available to her was her soul energy. Soul energy could dry up as one aged, in a Legendary’s case it stayed at the same level. Another peculiar trait about soul energy was the inability to use it. If one could use it they would be killing themselves without any physical damage; basically, with no energy to keep the soul in the body, it would escape and thus the body would die.

“You can’t use that, and even if you could you would die! The least you could do is wait!” Moltres shrieked, flapping her wings before settling back down.

“And where am I going to get the energy from now that I’m here?” Mewblade growled, signaling to the blackness of the space that surrounded them. She understood the concept of life and death, and knew exactly how to harness her fragile energy into something usable.

“Then let me die!” Moltres pleaded, not wanting to be selfish any longer. She was comfortable with her death and saw no harm in it.

“I can’t . . .” Mewblade muttered, wincing then jerking her head to stare coldly at Moltres. “You are what is important and if you don’t live the world will die!”

“And if you knew you’d be risking your life, then why didn’t you get some help? I’m sure Mew would have gladly provided you with her energy.”

“I . . .” Mewblade paused, looking away. “I didn’t want any help.”

“What?!” Moltres exclaimed, she shuffled over to Mewblade, still keeping low. Her wings went wide, surrounding Mewblade but not touching her. “You can’t be serious.”

“I can do this on my own, and I’m going to prove it. I give you my word, I’ll do anything to bring you back, so you have nothing to fear,” Mewblade said, trying to reassure Moltres but she seemed doubtful. As she thought over how stupid it was her to do this whole thing alone she confirmed that the energy needed was not compatible, just as Mewblade could not do the other Legendaries’ jobs, they could not do hers. Besides, it took a great deal of effort to customize energy from other sources. Mewblade had no choice in the matter, even if she wanted to. “Nothing would have changed this moment, Moltres. What is going to happen would be the same no matter how long I waited or how much help I sought.” Mewblade took a seat in front of Moltres.

“Is there any way I can help?” Moltres asked, her eyes searching Mewblade’s for an answer.

“Sit still, stay in contact with me and avoid my blades,” Mewblade spoke calmly, reaching up with her paws and resting them on the shoulders of Moltres. Moltres gently touched her wings to the sides of Mewblade to further the bond between them. They were in Death’s embrace, knowing that in the back of their minds that the hug was a mutual understanding, neither a form of comfort or pleasure.

“I’m so sorry . . .” Moltres whispered, hating how she had acted towards Mewblade and hating herself even more that in order for her to live it would mean at the cost of Mewblade’s well-being.

“Don’t be,” Mewblade whispered back, already focusing her mind. She used her mind to sense her soul, prodding at the energy around it, asking it to let her manipulate it. The energy blatantly refused but further prodding caused it to succumb to Mewblade’s will. *Wish there was a better way than this*, Mewblade grimaced as she tore a sizable portion of her life away so she could give Moltres what she herself was afraid to lose.

<“Yee-ouch! Are you sensing what I am?!”> Suicune exclaimed, his telepathy leaving a ring in the others’ heads. Mew paled thinking about it, clutching her tiny paws to her waist. She looked too ill to respond. Entei and Raikou shuddered, Raikou giving his opinion.

<“She’s actually using her soul energy! How . . . how could she use it?!”>

<“Ugh!”> Entei groaned, turning away, the imaginary pain causing him to physically shudder, he then let out a howl as he sensed Mewblade rip another chunk of her soul energy away.

<“Again? At this rate she will be dead or worse.”> Mewtwo was the only one who was not as visibly phased by Mewblade’s violent self-destruction, although emotionally he was taking it quite hard. *Mewblade, if I knew you were going to do this I would have stopped you.*

“Mew mew mew mew mew. Mew mew,” (Don’t say anything about dying. No more,) cried Mew, giving the extreme of who was most visibly shaken.

<“We have no say in this matter, Mew. I wish we could do something to, but we can’t,”> Mewtwo growled, swallowing his grief.

“Mew mew,” (Forget it,) Mew said defiantly, bolting from Mewtwo’s head and flying for Mewblade. Entei and Mewtwo were alarmed by the ruthlessness of Mew, using Psychic in unison to stop Mew. “Mew mew mew mew!!!” (Let me help her!!!) came Mew’s shrill, anguished scream. Mew could not watch and do nothing.

<“You cannot help her, not this time,”> Entei spoke, trying to be gentle. His Psychic hold left Mew along with Mewtwo’s. Mew was so shaken that she did not even try to levitate, she just smacked into the floor, curling up into a pink heap of fur and crying. Everyone felt pity for her. Such a loving creature who only wanted to help but was unable to.

“Hurry, I think they’re in trouble!” came the voice of Ash as he raced down the corridor that led to the main floor of the gym. Misty and Brock were by his side, Coline was panting, taking up the rear.



“We heard a scream,” said Brock, the scream being from Mew when she protested being restrained. Coline ended up running past Ash and company in order to see Mewblade.

“How’s Mewblade? Is she okay?” Coline questioned with child-like innocence and curiosity. Mew looked up, face wet with tears. She gave a squeak then instantly was wrapped up into a ball, rocking back and forth. Coline had to admit that such an action from the usually bubbly Mew was quite out of character. She looked to the other Legendaries for their answers. The Legendaries made a considerable attempt to avoid answering Coline, even to the point where they kept themselves from looking in her general direction. The trainers exchanged glances with each other.

“What’s up with them?” Ash asked, puzzled. Misty shrugged.

“She’s going to be okay, right?” Coline pleaded for an answer, yet there was none to give. “Right?” she asked yet again, her voice wavering. Eevee was glaring at the Legendaries, wanting answers just as much as Coline did.

“Eevee eevee eee eevveee?! (Why won’t you answer?!) Eevee cried out as loudly she could. The Legendaries begrudgingly faced the pair.

<“Mewblade probably won’t make it,”> Raikou muttered, head low. Coline and Eevee looked as if they had been stabbed in the heart, staggering about aimlessly trying to figure out what had just occurred. They stared in disbelief at first. Coline’s response became surprisingly reserved as she hung her head, her hair covering her face as she cried silently to herself. Eevee on the other hand was angry and showed it visibly, such a contrast in what is a perfect partnership.

*~You are too weak to succeed.~*

*~In Chaos you can find your true calling.~*

*~Mewblade . . .~*

“Mewblade! Focus!”

“Wha?” Mewblade came to but barely as Moltres shouted her name. Mewblade only had one last phase to go through in order to bring Moltres back to the living, yet everything imaginable was stopping her from accomplishing that final, last step. The sheer effort it took to do the first two steps had considerably weakened Mewblade, forcing Moltres to cope more than she had to.

“You have to concentrate!” Moltres begged, trying to encourage Mewblade as best as she could. Mewblade’s cheek was resting against Moltres’ chest, looking like a small child in the arms of their mother. Both Mewblade and Moltres would have been repulsed by the closeness but it was not the time to be Legendaries. Moltres made coaching and contact her top priority, giving Mewblade less to worry about. Mewblade’s only priority was finishing the resurrection, anything else that happened she could care less about.

*~You have to side with the only one who truly cares, who can help you.~*

“I can’t,” Mewblade whimpered, the first audible phrase she had made in what seemed like eternity. Mewblade’s semi-omnipotent, multitasking brain barely could handle itself under the stress of the crippling agony and insanity. The only thing that kept her from giving up was Moltres, for who she was thankful for. Mewblade was too close

to the edge of nothing, hanging by threads. Chaos was pushing hard against her, wrapping tightly and refusing to let go. Mewblade nearly gave in to its twisted desires on more than one occasion. There was Chaos, then there was the pain.

Mewblade's dying soul energy was no longer even distinguishable as pain. A million gruesome deaths could not sum a fraction of the pain she felt. It was not pain any longer but an evolution of its former self, taking on a new name and a new way of application.

*~You're right, you can't but Chaos can.~*

"I believe you can do this! I will never give up on you so don't you dare start giving up on yourself!" Moltres shouted, never growing hoarse in the gray of the space. Her beak nudged beneath Mewblade's chin, causing the Mewthree to meet the Moltres' gaze. Mewblade's eyes were wild, terribly unfocused but there were few signs that gave Mewblade's true torment away. Mewblade slunk her head down, cheek once again resting on Moltres' chest. What did give Mewblade away was the weakness in her body, plus the very noticeable agony in her voice. When Mewblade tried to speak she often failed or was incoherent.

*~Give up, for this is how it is meant to be.~*

"You have so little of this torment left, it's one more step. You are designed to do this. You can make this happen!" Moltres shouted her encouragement. There it was again, Moltres' bizarre knowledge of Mewblade and her abilities. Mewblade did not have the sense to wonder how Moltres knew that there was only so little of the resurrection left. Mewblade never told Moltres about it. "I know it hurts, I know it's distracting, but try!"

"S-ss . . . Soul . . . Soul to . . . to . . . Uh! Soul to the living!" Mewblade roared, tearing what she needed from her soul energy and thrusting it into the space. All her remaining thought was placed into that one action, the one to finish the resurrection and bring Moltres back. Mewblade smirked to herself, almost delighted that she had done what she had set out to do, seeing the space around her become blinding white before being lost in the wash of death.

*~ . . . And yet you believe that you are safe, trapped as you are between two existences.~*

"Eee eve eeve eeevveee eeve eeevvee!" (And you have no sense of hope!) Eevee yelled. Her look of anger became that of dread as the Legendary Pokémon whipped their heads around to stare at Mewblade, all in sync.

<"She is done,"> announced Raikou. Coline jerked her head upwards, surprised and quite relieved by the news.

"That means she didn't die," Coline smiled, clapping her hands together. Eevee was by her feet, smiling, ready to race to Mewblade ahead of Coline. Ash and Misty also made obvious signs of relief, Brock was slightly more reserved, just as the Legendaries were.

Mewblade's eyes shot open, for a moment it seemed like Coline was right, that Mewblade would be okay, but that victory was short-lived. Mewblade could have been a million miles away from the Viridian Gym at that moment, she was barely there as it was. Her mouth let out a gasp, a fleeting link between her thoughts and her body as it

expressed the pain she felt before falling over. Blood started to trickle from her mouth, a very bad sign.

<“Yep, knew that would happen,”> Zapdos sneered, mostly to Coline. Coline looked on in horror, not able to comprehend what she was seeing. Someone who meant everything to her was dying right before her eyes.

“No . . .” Coline sobbed. It was not happening again, not so soon. Her brother, Ditto, Eevee, now Mewblade. So desensitized in such a short period of time because everyone Coline cared for kept trying to leave her. “No!!!” Coline screamed, her voice echoing off the walls. “No, Mewblade! No!” Coline yelled, racing over to Mewblade, crashing onto her knees right next to her. Moltres was awake by now and shifted to accommodate Coline. She watched with sad eyes. “Mewblade! You can’t die! You just can’t!” Coline wailed, shaking Mewblade by her shoulders. “You’ve got to open your eyes, Mewblade . . .”

“Oh no . . .” Misty covered her eyes, upset by what was going on but not quite as devastated as she should have been. With Mew and Mewtwo’s continuous numbing on her and her friends’ minds, she lacked the more extreme of emotional reactions.

“Pi pikachu,” (Poor Mewblade,) Pikachu said with a drop of his ears.

“Eevee,” (Yeah,) Eevee muttered to Pikachu, then slowly made her way to Coline. She paused, puzzled as Coline raised her hand. “Eevve?” (Coline?) There was a resounding smack as Coline struck Mewblade across the cheek. Coline kept her hand raised, it was going red from how hard she struck.

“Mewblade . . .” Coline whimpered, realizing that her friend was not going to be getting up any time soon. She rested her head on Mewblade’s chest, sobbing, feeling the faint beat of a heart.

“Can’t anything be done?” Ash hissed. Brock shook his head, his expression was stern.

“Doubt it. Someone would have acted by now,” he said. His voice was low so Coline could not hear and she poised a similar question towards the strongest beings in the room.

“You’re all special Pokémon. Can’t you do something?!” demanded Coline. Moltres brushed a wing tip across Coline’s cheek, drying some of her tears. Her eyes were frowning, looking not all that hopeful. Mewtwo approached Coline, Moltres gestured past Coline and in turn she faced Mewtwo.

<“Coline, Mewblade is badly damaged in here,”> Mewtwo touched his middle, knowing that the term ‘soul energy’ meant little to Coline. <“She’s so close to death.”> Coline glared, patting the spot Mewtwo showed on Mewblade. She was unconvinced. <“Okay. Her soul energy . . .”>

“Eevee evve?” (What’s that?) Eevee interrupted from her spot almost directly beneath Mewtwo.

<“Special energy that determines how long someone will live,”> Mewtwo told Eevee, not liking to be interrupted. Coline listened to Mewtwo as he continued to explain. <“As I was saying, Mewblade’s soul energy is a tiny spark. Her mind isn’t there . . . She’s very close to being dead and should be left to die.”>

<“Even if her mind was there, it would likely be in very bad shape. She didn’t fair nearly as well with me as she likely did with Zapdos and Articuno,”> Moltres said,

looking up at Mewtwo from her position on the floor. <“She tried, she really did, and so did I. I’m sorry that I couldn’t help her more. The most merciful thing you could do for her now is let her pass away.”>

<“Hmm, I figured as much,”> Mewtwo muttered, his arms folded across his chest. Coline looked up, so full of disappointment yet a faint sense of hope. Mewtwo blinked at Coline, sighing regretfully. <“I can stabilize her condition but it doesn’t seem worth it.”>

“You have to try!” Coline pleaded with Mewtwo. He knew this was devastating for her, just as devastating as it was to him. To keep her going was selfish but there were so many unknowns if she was kept alive. Mewblade requested that if something terrible happened to her that she wanted to be dead, and with no mind left, she was as good as dead.

<“Mewblade may no longer be Mewblade if she ever awakens,”> Mewtwo frowned. The other Legendaries knew relatively little about what was required in the resurrection besides Mewtwo and Moltres. Their opinions were all that the group was going on.

<“Honestly, with Chaos practically living in her head how could she be the same?”> Moltres asked her rhetorical question. The other Legendaries made graphic displays of disgust, none wanting to ever have to deal with Chaos in any form or another.

<“Then leave her!”> Zapdos hollered.

<“Chaos? *The* Chaos?”> Raikou chattered his teeth, petrified.

<“Oh grow up,”> Moltres said with a shake of her head. <“She’s strong willed, and you likely all witnessed it. Besides, we would all know if Chaos was inside her.”>

<“I still think she has a chance no matter what you say. Right, Coline?”> Mew spoke in telepathy, giving a playful wink to Mewblade’s Chosen. <“Mewtwo, help me out here,”> she instructed as she placed a paw on Mewblade’s forehead. Mew knew where she stood in such a disagreement.

<“Uh, okay,”> Mewtwo muttered, caught a bit off guard. He leaned over and gently placed a paw on Mewblade’s forehead. A brief flash surrounded Mew and Mewtwo’s paws. They moved away, not before Mewtwo wiped the blood from Mewblade’s mouth. <“Like it or lump it everyone, but Mewblade will be alive for some time, even in such an artificial state.”>

<“Consider it hibernation,”> Mew squeaked optimistically, the other Legendaries were not as convinced. The humans were confused, all but Coline who was very happy. She hugged Mew, who really enjoyed it and then hugged Mewtwo, who wanted to practically scream in terror. Coline was so grateful for their help.

“Thank you for saving Mewblade,” she beamed a smile. Eevee was quite relieved as well.

<“Now that that’s taken care of, Articuno, Zapdos,”> Moltres twittered, although grieved that Mew had made such a critical decision about the outcome for Mewblade on her own. For her she would worry about Mewblade later, since her duties were her major priority. Given that Mewblade had sacrificed almost everything for Moltres and her duties, the least she could do is not keep Mewblade waiting.

The birds met each other at the pillar of light, touching it with their wings. Each of their individual auras shot into the sky, instantaneously clearing it. One could easily tell it was nearing sunset with the beautiful hues of blue and red in the sky.

<“Just out of curiosity, but where are you putting Mewblade?”> Articuno asked, lowering her wing and letting the light pillar fade away. Coline perked up, also wanting the answer.

<“With Mewblade so frail it’s easy to find out where she lives,”> Mewtwo said with a smirk. <“She’ll be safe in her own territory.”> Mewtwo focused his blue energy around Mewblade, using Teleport to take Mewblade to her home. <“Easy done.”> Coline stared at the spot where Mewblade was a second earlier, starting to become upset yet again. She stayed quiet, not wanting to disrupt anyone else.

<“Very good,”> said Entei. <“I hope she rests well.”>

<“You know, now that Articuno, Zapdos and Moltres are up, the threat has been taken care of and Mewblade has been dealt with, we’re kind of useless,”> Raikou frowned, looking between the other two Legendary Dogs and exchanging looks of awkwardness.

<“And this circus is ruffling my feathers,”> Zapdos added, wanting to be back on his island, guarding his territory. For him the threat had been taken care of and that was all that mattered.

The Legendaries had aimless looks on their faces, all of them not quite certain about what to say or do. It was pretty obvious that the Legendary Pokémon were very bad with good-byes. They rarely cared about each other and were solitary. With nothing more to do, standing in the gym was making them edgy.

<“I understand, you are all welcome to leave,”> Mewtwo said with a wave of his paw. The two sets of Legendaries nodded.

<“I’ll check in on Mewblade from time to time. I owe that to her at the least,”> Moltres spoke quietly, exchanging a nod of her head with Articuno and Zapdos.

<“We’ll be off,”> Articuno announced. The trio caused the other Legendaries to look away as they used Teleport, becoming a puff of ice crystals, a trail of fire, and a bolt of lightning that moved swiftly from the room.

<“I guess we’re gone too,”> Suicune smirked cheekily. <“So sorry about Mewblade,”> he frowned, turning away.

<“Good-bye, Mewtwo. It was a pleasure meeting you,”> said Entei, turning away and running out of the building.

<“Take care,”> Raikou said, not all that enthusiastic. He followed Suicune and Entei outside, quickly outpacing them as they raced away from Viridian City. For them they had no option but to leave as soon as possible otherwise they would encounter people heading back into the metropolitan area. They made a good pace, bounding over buildings and down side streets, quickly leaving the view of those left in the Viridian Gym.

Ash patted Pikachu on the head subconsciously, looking at Vicebane’s corpse with disgust before facing Mewtwo. “Thank you for saving me earlier,” he said quietly.

<“It was no problem,”> Mewtwo smirked mildly.

“Yeah, without Ash who would I have left to order around?” Misty laughed, trying to brighten the dark feeling still hanging around in the gym. Brock stayed quiet, tired from the day and in need of sleep. He was pretty convinced he had experienced a nightmare.

<“Well if you still want him around you better leave. The owner of this gym will not be too happy to see you here along with his prized Pokémon cleaved in half.”> Mewtwo glared at Vicebane’s corpse, glad his clone was dead. No one else bothered to look at the body since it was nauseating to even think about. Mewtwo made a mental note to wipe the memories of this day from Ash and his friends for it was too gruesome and would likely stress them out. As for Coline, there was nothing he could do. She was still marked as Mewblade’s, and ridding any memory of Mewblade in particular would never work for more than a couple hours.

“I’ve had enough trouble for today . . .” Ash grumbled, giving a wayward glance at Mewtwo as he trudged towards the entrance doors. Misty and Brock shuffled on behind. A thought came to Misty’s mind, stopping her.

“Coline, aren’t you coming?” she asked, a hand extended. Coline shook her head.

“No thanks, Misty. I’ll be there in a bit. I just need to talk to Mewtwo for a second,” she spoke quietly. Misty nodded her head slowly, falling back into step with Ash and Brock.

<“You won’t need me, right?”> Mew asked Coline.

“I’m good, thanks.” Coline remained rather emotionless.

<“Okay, bye,”> Mew smiled, hugging Coline then Teleporting away. Mewtwo looked down at Coline, already way ahead of her thinking. A Pokéball of his own design appeared in his right paw. He handed it to Coline who took it uncertainly. The Pokéball was black and purple with what looked like an eye on the recall aspect of the ball.

<“I never thought I’d have to use one of those again,”> Mewtwo was talking about the Pokéball. <“Inside is an Abra with a specialty in Teleport. I caught him a couple seconds ago because there is no other way to make your visits to Mewblade easier. I trust that he will be loyal to you.”> Coline turned the ball over and over again in her hands. <“I let the Abra know of where Mewblade is and how you are, so with him you can see Mewblade as often as you like.”>

“Really?” Coline smiled widely. Mewtwo chuckled, glad that the girl was happy once again.

<“Yes.”> Mewtwo’s eyes darted about the gym cautiously. <“I should probably go just as the others before I’m discovered. Viridian City is a very dangerous place for Pokémon like me.”>

“Eevee?” (Why?)

<“You’ll know later. I’m sorry, I really have to get going. Take care, Coline, Eevee.”> Mewtwo made a wave with his paw, his blue aura surrounding his body and he left without a trace. Coline and Eevee looked around the gym, empty for all except them, the Pokéball and the corpse.

“Eeevvveee eeve eeevee eeve eee evvee eevvvee evveee evvvee eve evvee eve,” (We should be getting back to Dan before we’re either caught or he freaks out,) Eevee suggested. Coline nodded in agreement, slowly making her way out of the Viridian Gym back to her brother with a mighty secret to keep that she was not willing to ever let anyone know.

“I bet Dan has ran around the Pokémon Center a hundred times by now,” Coline laughed, Eevee laughing along with, trying to find something to look forward to.

It had been several days after the incident in the Viridian Gym, Giovanni was surveying the damage reports that the insurance agency had provided him, reading them as he paced about the Team Rocket labs in the Viridian Forest. His pacing had brought him around the entire complex to the labs for Project 10.a Intensity, the Mewthrees. Giovanni's gaze fell upon the tanks that held the last three Mewthrees of the project. He lowered his arm to his side, his interest diverted to the contents of the tanks. *You have evaded me the last time, Mewblade. When they awaken, you will be mine.*