

Where I Stand

By: Vaporeon Lugia Krabby

<“This must be Hell.”>

Mewblade took her eyes away from the scene, bringing them to her father.

“If this was Hell, then at least it would have some sense behind it. This on the other hand,” Mewblade motioned coldly to the view, “is nothing but pointless carnage. Not even they would do this.” Mewtwo looked past his daughter and at the reality that had once been so naively surreal.

The air was choked with smoke, a nauseating smell of burnt flesh and engine parts travelled with the drifting plumes. Flames circled around, hot and impenetrable as the Legendaries stoked the fire. In the distance, sirens were screaming. Even a whimper now was too much to hope for. The ground was littered with bodies, those of children. Not a one crested the age of twelve. An arm here, a leg there. The explosion that ripped through the armored bus was absolute in its destruction. After all that could be said and done, it was only after the fact; a device deployed to kill the children of delegates, that Mewblade even appeared.

“Mewtwo, remain on guard,” Mewblade instructed, walking into the epicenter of the devastation. Her approach was different. Usually she went to each victim individually, but instead stood among the dead, nowhere near a single soul. Mewtwo was holding back the lurching feeling in his gut, practically forced to watch in stupefied awe as Mewblade dealt with the bodies in a way he had not expected.

Normally Mewblade performed a resurrection by first Recovering the body of the injured dead. Proximity was paramount, and the closeness conveniently blocked most viewers from witnessing the often nauseating process of repair. Mewtwo could see the spongy tissue of the cerebral cortex form in the body of a kid who was missing their head only seconds ago. Where the other head was, Mewtwo did not want to know.

There was a pause in the process, setting Mewtwo into a state of wary confusion. He reluctantly took a tally of the corpses. Of the thirty-three that lay amongst the debris, twelve had been healed. Even one innocent worthy of resurrection was extremely rare at any given instance, but the number Mewtwo was seeing did not support the theory. There was no possible way that all the healed children were pure and slotted for resurrection. Innocent, definitely possible, but pure, unlikely.

<“You’re not resurrecting all of them?”> Mewtwo asked rhetorically, believing that Mewblade had misjudged the children’s worth.

“Do you know what would happen if the governor general found out that his daughter was dead? Or if the foreign minister realized that this was planned?” Mewblade’s stern eyes locked with her parent’s, making the point that her judgement was not to be contested. Mewtwo pursed his lips, understanding the situation. The Mewthree turned her head away, confident that she made her point clear.

A war between the countries outside the Kanto, Johto and the Hoenn regions was something no human would want. It was also something the Legendaries did not desire either. The destructive forces that humanity could unleash on one another was often full of consequence. Mewtwo knew exactly how evil humanity had become. The incident he was currently observing was hardly front page news in what had become a steady stream

of mishaps. Mewtwo was the one to know; where Mew was responsible for the Pokémon of the world, his charges were people. In the last ten years it had become more concrete to Mewtwo that the humans were losing their moral direction; whereas, Mewblade did not seem to notice a difference. The preteen had been brought into a world of taint, the corrupt being all she knew. What she was dealing with was everyday to her, although how she was about to overcome it was not.

“Do not move,” Mewblade instructed further, intently focused already. Mewtwo did not have time to ask why as Mewblade’s indigo aura came alive before lacing its way visibly along the ground, towards the victims. With her back turned and arms spread, Mewtwo could not believe what Mewblade was about to do.

<“Are you mad?!”> snapped Mewtwo, moving enough to agitate Mewblade. <“You can’t resurrect all twelve at once! Let alone all that are unnecessary!”> Mewblade whipped her head to Mewtwo.

“You do your job and let me do mine!” she retorted, reprimanding him for his concerns. There was little reason in actually swaying Mewblade’s decisions once her mind was made up.

<“I just don’t like it when you think you can handle your own self-destructive stunts,”> he countered, muttering beneath his telepathy.

Mewblade made no further reference to the issue, choosing to say, “I will need cover once I am out.” Reluctantly, Mewtwo gave way to her request.

<“I will be here. Zapdos and Moltres have each offered one of their own to help cover our tracks.”>

“Good,” Mewblade said whilst ignoring the loud clap of the Zapdos, Bolt’s Thunder booming overhead. “If you can hold off the humans for a dozen minutes and make this look like a fluke, then that would be perfect.” Having barely finished her sentence, Mewblade placed herself into the trance-like state that defined the misleading calm of her resurrections. This time the process would be anything but predictable as Mewblade would be trying to cheat death from several souls, rather than just one.

Mewblade entered into the blackness, her psyche practically torn asunder with her attention split between her twelve charges. With a force of will she ordered the pockets of fourth dimensional space into a larger, more unified plane. What she created was vaguely familiar, with all the kids together in one area and aware of one another. It took her no effort to find them.

“Where are we?” one of the girls spoke up, unaware that she was dead. Despite the fact she was communicating in English, her only known tongue was of Arabic origins. None of the other children noticed.

“This isn’t the military base,” commented one of the boys.

“Of course not,” scolded the eldest boy. “The others are missing, and look,” he tugged at his pressed, white shirt, “we’re not even dressed the same!”

“Oh no! Did they get us?!” squealed the eldest girl in terror. The younger children began to cry and there was an overall sense of hysteria. The only child that remained calm was the six year old Hamid, who stared blankly at the others, unfazed by their behavior.

Hamid was the human Mewblade was sent for. His reactions were normal to her, though she never had an unworthy person to compare with. From what she could see, the

proximity the other eleven had to death was overriding Mewblade's control over the space. The children should have already been divided between the varying dimensions of the afterlife, and Mewblade's intervention had only stalled that process from happening. As she paced around the spotlight, she could only grimace.

"As long as we're not chained, I'm making a break for it." The eldest boy, Amar, took off.

Curse free will. Mewblade shot after him, catching the human at the edge of the spotlight.

"Infidel! Heathen! Let go of me!" Amar bellowed, trashing between his punches and kicks. Mewblade dumped him back into the center, the other children hardly making a peep as they gazed at the nasty looking creature. Only Hamid remained indifferent. Most of the others were in tears, fearing for their lives, with the three children between the ages of ten and twelve being very resistant.

Mewblade paced around them, looking at the sorry bunch as she tried to figure out what to do. Only psychics and Legendaries seemed to be aware of themselves, normally. She assumed the talentless group in front of her would be the same, but instead of being self-aware and understanding of Mewblade's purpose, they acted like the law breakers in whom she killed, aggressive and scared. The number of them would not have been a problem if it were not for the challenge that their prevailing non-submissive attitudes and limited qualifiers for mortality presented. As Mewblade was here, she had to resurrect them, though the thought of doing so, especially with the limitations, was making her cringe.

"What sort of demon are you?" the eleven year old Aisha hissed, her little sister, Imani, clutched tightly in her arms. Mewblade did not respond, unsure if she should calmly reason to them or just order the kids into position.

"She asked you a question!" Amar barked, having no tolerance for interrogation scenarios. Certain cultures deemed Pokémon in ways Mewblade did not enjoy, knowing that to theirs, Pokémon were barely respected. She would be either considered lowly dirt or a demonic entity, depending on what the Arab impression towards her powers were. Mewblade hesitated to answer the question, not thinking of herself highly enough to entirely disregard the demon title.

"You're a good Pokémon." Mewblade looked down. The pure hearted child had taken hold of her paw, a trusting gesture.

"Stay back!" one of the kids cried. Hamid turned away from them.

"Am I right?" The boy looked up with an innocent smile of trustworthiness.

"I . . ." Mewblade wanted to answer, but her definition of 'good' was the qualities that the child possessed. Murder had to be something that even the most twisted of cultures thought was sinful.

"It spoke!"

"No way . . ."

"Stupid! You're imagining things," corrected the voice of one of the children, followed with a smack to further rectify the mistake. Mewblade watched them quarrel for a moment before picking up Hamid and returning to the group with him in her arms. Amongst the mass she knelt, causing them to intimidate themselves into pleasantly welcomed silence.

"Listen. I am here to resurrect you, not harm you," Mewblade said, looking them all in the eye as she did. "Your parents do not know that you are dead . . ." She was cutoff as the children gasped, some reacting to her statement ahead of her finishing.

"We died?" little Hannah whimpered.

"How could we have died? Our fathers said we'd be safe!" protested one of the boys.

"Yes, you all died!" Mewblade snapped at them abruptly, scaring the lot into a state of stupefaction. "And when your moms and dads find out, a lot of bad things will happen. What I am trying to do is to reverse your deaths so all the adults do not find out and kill each other because they miss you. Understood?" She received a few dumb nods, intermingled with snivels and wary looks.

"Where's the others?" One question Mewblade was not willing to explain was why the other kids on the bus were not being saved. At their age they did not know about politics, or understand that their fathers were collectively a bunch of hotheads.

"They all went to another place. The rest of you are going back."

"That means no virgins . . ." Amar muttered, seeking some sort of clarification. A pure hearted individual, by designation, would care little of what they had been cheated from. Of course she was not surprised, Mewblade found the delusions religion fed to bribe their flocks to be irritating. Still, his question was an innocent one, as he simply did not know.

"Maybe next time, as long as you behave." It was not like they were going to beg for death at this point.

"So what happened?"

"I am not saying," Mewblade muttered, impatience audible in her voice. Time was usually on her side, allowing her to stall for hours if needed, but she could feel the afterlife trying to tear the children away. She was beginning to have to put considerably larger amounts of effort into holding them in the trance.

"Rasheed!" Mewblade quickly grabbed onto one of the boys, seeing and feeling a force make the same motion. She used her energy to wrench him away prior to grounding him back into her perceived reality.

"What happened?" Hamid whispered, looking at the visibly shaken boy.

"Some *thing* just tried to take him!" Mewblade exclaimed, already drained from mentally wrestling the opposing forces.

"But I didn't see anything," remarked Amar, contradicting the Mewthree.

"You do not have to see it for it to hurt you." Mewblade was up on her feet, racing with urgency. She had no time to stall. The governing forces would soon all be clamoring for the eleven kids she was about to steal from them.

"Get in a circle. Now!" Mewblade yelled at the children, them scrambling into a wonky elliptical. "Hold hands," she said, joining them. The boys and girls refused to touch, even though Hamid was trying to with his reluctant neighbor. In most cases, Mewblade was not this rude but at the moment patience was a harmful virtue. "Do it!" she yelled once more, receiving no hesitation this time. The kids were all shaking, terrified to wits' end while their white knuckled fists held onto one another. "Good. Whatever you do, do not let go." Hamid bobbed his head, firmly acknowledging Mewblade's command, the rest cowered instead.

Mewblade had hardly flared her aura before sending it into the circle through the children's arms. As long as they remained physically and spiritually connected, it would be harder for the other worldly forces to take them, though it did not stop them from trying.

The Mewthree could feel the tug against the kids, causing her to waste more energy as she tightened it around the soul energy of the children. It was a struggle in of itself to keep them there, let alone progress through the three stages of resurrection. The outcry at Mewblade's defiance echoed throughout her mind. The dead gave her chosen individuals to bring back to the living, and now she was grabbing at ones that were not hers to take. They were outraged at this gross misstep, never for a moment failing to let her know. Mewblade needed to do this quickly.

Soul to body! Mewblade thought, pushing hard against the forces, speedily moving herself into the second phase. *Soul to mind!* Having hoped to have blasted through the pain, it crashed into her, the same instant that Chaos made its grand entrance. She knew that the pain would be encroaching on the level that even Mewblade would define as unbearable, but with the combination of a very ineffective resurrection, and it being multiplied by twelve, she was struggling. Having been overwhelmed by pain and distraction, her hold over herself caved and her body buckled to the proverbial ground.

~The worth of the young versus the worth of the world. A decision only the most desperate make.~ Chaos was watching in interest, having not seen Mewblade struggle to this level in the past. Where usually she would question what Chaos meant to some level, Mewblade had no time to do so. Grabbing hands made their move, and Mewblade realized she was about to lose a good portion of her charges. She brought more energy into her task, whipping away the ethereal hands from the circle. The vulnerable children, now considered slightly alive were ashen faced, having felt their souls being pulled upon by at least two sources. They could not take this, and nor could Mewblade as she ripped through more of her energy, almost three-quarters depleted in a matter of minutes.

Chaos had said something, likely of questionable value. The bombardment from all directions made Mewblade ignorant of its words, even when its cries for attention had reached the level of deafening, and its insanity inducing visual imagery the level of blinding. Nothing she did would distract her from the agony, or the pressure Mewblade was feeling as she realized that by the time she was done her primary energy pool would be completely expended.

Like a good innocent, Hamid gave reassuring squeezes to Mewblade's paw as a reminder that at least someone believed in her. This put her back in her place.

Guess what, Chaos? You lose again, Mewblade mocked it and its inability to effectively turn her to its interests. Her delirium had made her sound strangely perturbed, even in comparison to the disjointed delivery of Chaos.

~Yet, you gain nothing. There is little worth.~ The energy did not exactly mind that it had once again failed to have Mewblade for its own. With as little energy as she had, and the stresses she was in, it was not exactly a fair game to be won and let her be.

Mewblade felt Chaos' effects recede, giving her the focus she desperately needed. Speed was foremost above all else, as she tried to finish the resurrection against the next wave of soul snatching. Through the obstacles the last thing she wanted was a human war and more of this process that she so despised. Twelve lives, her suffering to stop a deadly conflict.

It's worth it! Mewblade rapidly prepared the last of her energy, leading her and her charges into the final phase. *Soul to the living!* The forces that surrounded them were taken away by the light, and Mewblade with them. The challenges that this resurrection brought were over.

~Then think of this,~ Chaos began as Mewblade parted the white washed space. *~If it was one for another, then who would you choose?~*

Mewtwo waited anxiously as the time passed. The impenetrable flames of an apparent gas explosion had stalled rescue workers from entering the scene, but it would not last for much longer. Above, the sub-Legendary Zapdos, Bolt and a Moltres named Ignition were circling around. The pair were creating a frenzied firestorm in order to keep emergency personnel at bay. If the humans caught sight of Mewblade's capacities, or Mewtwo's cover-up there would be widespread paranoia amongst them. The Pokémon uprising against mankind was a secret fear. Mewtwo, while focused on his duties was deeply concerned for his daughter.

Come on, Mewblade. Don't do this to me. Mewtwo tensed as he felt Mewblade spend massive chunks of energy. He was certain she had put herself into a comatose state upon watching the children stir.

<Mewblade.> Mewtwo used his power to move quickly to the Mewthree's aid, her swooning frame collapsing into his outstretched arms. Only barely had he managed to support her long enough to wrap his energy around her substantially heavier frame, a means in which to carry her. <Got you,> he said to her directly, and to himself he thought, *She's really heavy.* Mewtwo brought up his blue colored aura, and with Mewblade in tow, raced towards one of the closest, condemned buildings. Any building was a good choice in this area, half were dilapidated wrecks from years of persistent conflict. What he wanted most was one that no person would wish to enter.

<Bolt, distraction. Ignition, douse the fire,> Mewtwo called out privately to the pair of sub-Legendaries.

<Sure thing,> Bolt responded, sending threatening lightning bolts close enough to Mewtwo's target building of refuge that no human would dare risk trespassing. Ignition effortlessly eased the flames surrounding the crash site, allowing for the children to be properly rescued by professionals.

Mewtwo reached the building and found an empty room to hide in. With a considerable amount of caution, Mewtwo gently eased himself to his knees, then placed Mewblade gingerly across his lap. A deafening crash sounded all around but he ignored it, his worry deep for Mewblade, his only remaining child, the only thing in the world he was biologically obliged to care about. She had wasted all but a sliver of her useable energy, though to his great relief, her soul energy was still intact. Despite his jubilance with knowing that Mewblade's most precious of energies was unharmed, it still did not alleviate his worries as she was unconscious.

<"I told you it was a bad idea,"> muttered Mewtwo, talking mostly to himself. With Mewblade being as vulnerable as she was, it made Mewtwo that much more so. He was tied down to this very hefty, immobile being of which he feared Teleporting away. While he knew this without being told, Mewblade had once affirmed that part of her resurrecting process involved bringing the soul to the living, directing a soul to a distinct area in the physical dimension. Removing her from the scenario, even after completion

could; although unlikely, rip her away from her body, possibly damaging her psychologically or worse. As long as she remained unconscious, and him unsure, Mewtwo was stuck being anchored in place within the cemented walls. It was at times like this he wish he was better informed. There was never any way for him to know how much of her was really with him at any instance, giving way to the creeping notion that there was always a chance that Mewblade simply lost her mind and was now a vegetable.

“Heh.” Mewtwo looked down to the contents of his lap. Mewblade smiled up to him, half delirious with pain and not even remotely comprehensible as she spoke.

From what Mewtwo could decipher she said, “I am still here, am I not?”

Mewtwo made the attempt to grin, despite him being unable to mask the worry that showed through. Indeed, at least she was alive, somehow still. She simply refused to quit given any odds. A good quality in some scenarios, and a very bad one in others. She was still here, and for that he was thankful. <“You did a good job,”> was the compliment that was offered from him.

Mewblade hummed, having no capacity to speak beyond minor tonal noises. It was the only sign she gave that she was proud of her accomplishments and alive. She had resurrected twelve individuals, eleven of which she had stolen directly from the dead. It was an impressive feat, and likely to never be repeated as the cost was much too high, even for the Mewthree. Her head lulled to the side and she slipped back into unconsciousness. This was one of the few occasions where Mewblade’s body and mind graciously let her escape the worst of her punishments.

Ten years had passed since the fateful day when Coline had become Mewblade’s Chosen, and since then she had grown into a responsible young adult. As a Chosen she contributed her part to society and the Legendary cause, acting in the role of a Legendary Pokémon anthropologist upstart. Even to this day, her loyal friend, Eevee remained steadfast by her side, having evolved into a talented Umbreon. To reflect the change, everyone politely referred to her as Eve. Together the pair were considered one of the foremost examples of a balanced human and Pokémon unification.

Over time the regular exposure to the powerful auras of Legendary Pokémon; and especially that of Mewblade’s, had an influence on the girls. The exposure, considered a positive poisoning, had enhanced the pair’s own natural skills, making them each a prominent psychic on her own. Where Coline had developed skills in empathy and empathetic written tone; Eve had developed psychic traits and attacks as her time as an Eevee, which then carried over when she evolved into the dark type Eevee evolution, Umbreon.

Eve’s evolutionary path caused great confusion. It was expected of her that she evolve to the psychic Eevee evolution, which was known as an Espeon, due to her strong psychic traits. Through their bond with Mewblade and the frequent nighttime visits, it finally pushed Eve to the dark type evolution over the psychic one. It was something neither Coline or Eve minded, seeing it as complimentary to one another and a good reflective balance to Mewblade’s dark and psychic traits. In a sense the dark typing was even better suited considering Eve’s non-submissive attitude. She was happy with what she had become, even if she was seen as the more ill-natured of the two individuals.

Since Coline was considered the darling amongst those that were close, her colleagues, and even the Legendaries, it came with benefits. Her spirited nature gave her privileged insight into the daily lives of those around, especially with the Legends that she aptly studied. Her associations gave her access to information that most of those in her field would only dream of, and was the reason why she had quickly earned high status amongst the other Legendary Pokémon anthropologists. Despite her close relationship to Mewblade, she never dared to reveal the Decider of Fate to her professional associates. Through Mewblade she was gifted with having wild, unimaginable encounters with the most rare and powerful creatures in the world, something of which others attributed to fortunate strokes of luck and natural skill. Coline let them keep to their guesses. While having an 'in' with the Legendaries was not something all that shocking, humans did become Chosen to Legendaries and sub-Legendaries after all; it was who she was Chosen to that was the shocker.

Being Chosen to the Decider of Fate had instilled Coline and Eve with a sense of duty. They wanted to get the news out to the world about their findings. It was their job to portray to the masses the importance of the Legendaries and their individual roles, advocating for better understanding and demystification of each Legendary and their purposes. To come outright and proclaim the function of each Legendary was incredulous, which explained why Coline and Eve had pursued the route they had. At the current time they had joined a team of archeologists that had journeyed to the ruins within the rugged hills of Hoenn. The ruins in question were apparently those of one of Hoenn's Legends, a Registeel. This was part of the reason why Coline had become involved. It had been made factually clear that no matter the Legendary encountered, they never dare attack her. The other was that her innate talents with empathy and language had given her a rare skill to decipher words by emotional context. She was useful, and she was brought to many a dig because of it. Unfortunately, Coline still had to resign herself to the aspects of careful research. It was something both her and her friend were thinking over as they waited near the ruins.

"Are you ready to go in?" Coline looked over her shoulder at the speaker, long, wavy hair blocking her view. She was forced to shift around, rearranging the white, sleeveless trench coat collar in addition. Grabbing her composure, she greeted the person with a cheery demeanor.

"Yes, of course, Dr. Worthshire," she beamed modestly to the man. Like most of the people on the expedition, it was composed of varying specialists who were experts in their chosen fields. It was hard to imagine that anyone was particularly professional though, as most wore t-shirts, khakis, and in Coline's case not much other than a trench coat, pink sports bra and denim shorts. No one was particularly offended by her appearances. She was cute to look at, and beyond that with her being the psychic that she was, it was not as if the teenager was cold. Dr. Worthshire also dressed really nothing like his position as expedition leader entailed, though his scruffy appearance and dorky nature seemed to play into the notion that he was one of those scientists that enjoyed roughing it.

Dr. Worthshire was polite, showing his respect by reminding Coline why she was brought there in the first place. "While your knowledge of the Legendary Pokémon is unquestionable, I do not want to see my best researcher hurt. Are you sure you want to go in alone?" The compliment was well-received, so was the apprehension that Coline could

feel emanating from the man. Eve made a mental note of it as well. If it were not the fact that Coline had yet to submit her doctorate papers, Dr. Worthshire would not let her go in alone at all. She was a bit too special to risk carelessly already. A nervous Lillith stood beside the group leader, teeth grinding about in her mouth. Her sonar equipment had verified the stability of the ruins, and the go ahead was entirely her call, but she worried that maybe she would be mistaken. The problem with the equipment was that it did not guarantee there were no potentially violent Pokémon inside.

Lillith began to say something but went silent. Coline understood her concern, the context of Lillith's words that had failed to spill forth. Every word, spoken or not, carried a meaning, sometimes far removed from its origins. She knew exactly what Dr. Worthshire and Lillith were feeling, and like every time she went into a tomb, a temple, crypt and so on, there was always some associated risk.

"I'll be fine," assured Coline, then gestured to Eve beside her. "After all, I have Eve and my Pokémon with me. I won't really be alone."

"Take this so you can at least see." The woman handed Coline an electric torch. "It will last for a few hours."

"Thank you," said the girl, voicing her appreciation. Dr. Worthshire had turned his gaze down to the Umbreon, debating on how reliable the thing was considering her attitude. This riled Eve.

<"Hey!"> she exclaimed in telepathy, insulted with what she could perceive with her empathy. Eve's capacity to use English telepathy was startling to most who heard it, but the team had become accustomed to her fiery nature.

"I'm sure Coline will be fine with you," chirped one of the men off in the distance. Arte had successfully managed to sooth Eve's jaded nerves. He treated her mostly like a young girl, instead of an animal or an exalted peer. The Pokémon neither liked or appreciated what he thought.

"Just be careful. Even though the last three ruins were empty, you don't know if something will appear, let alone a Hoenn Legendary Pokémon. There is little research on them, so they may be unpredictable." Dr. Worthshire's advice was sound in reason. No one, not even the Legendaries of Kanto and Johto knew much about the Hoenn Legendaries. It was not something she was going to let herself fret about. She was certain of some things, and that gave her a sense of confidence. Even if they did happen to encounter a Registeel, for the most part the actions would be of nervousness. Most Pokémon, and especially those of the rare kind, enjoyed being left alone and having their territories undisturbed. Eve with her, Coline headed towards the entranceway, receiving a final wave of luck from her colleagues.

<"Ugh! This place is creepy. You sure it belongs to a Registeel?">

"From what we know, there is a chance. Registeels, just like Regices and Regirocks are all guardians to ancient structures of importance. Although since we haven't seen one yet, I'm starting to have my doubts."

The tunnel that the pair had found themselves in was deep with a shallow ceiling, amplifying the feeling of claustrophobia. Aside the actual congestion of the entrance, the tunnel was considerably bare. The rock of the walls were the same as the surrounding hillsides, though primitively smoothed. Coline treaded cautiously down the passage, Eve behind her. Eve's natural night vision let her see in the dark, but Coline could only see so

much with the limitations of her human vision. Lillith's flashlight was in quick use to help Coline find her way.

"Looks like it changes," Coline murmured, the artificial light source casting a beam across a well-framed archway. Eve made no remark as they passed quietly through the threshold and down several flights of winding stairs. At the base they stopped to gaze upon the subterranean domain. The Umbreon broke her silence, gasping in awe, taken aback by what she was seeing. They had arrived in the anteroom of the ruins. Coline paused for a moment longer before she made any comment.

"What is this?" she muttered, the dim light tracing across the walls.

The room was visibly man-made but of what era was beyond the knowledge of the teenager. The high ceilings and perfectly squared pillars that flanked the center aisle were of simple yet clean design. The rock was no longer of its native soil, but instead was a flawlessly flat obsidian encased in almost a foot of seamless glass. Ambient lighting illuminated everything with a rather unsettling pale glow, negating the need for a flashlight. There were several chambers leading off the anteroom from what the girls could see.

Coline approached one of the glassy supports, hands running across its surface. She jumped back, startled as the walls lit up in an alarming red color, then screaming for attention. Senses overloaded, she could not even begin to question what had just happened.

<"You know when they tell you not to touch things? That's the reason why!"> Eve yelled, very startled by the reaction of the ruins.

"It's just some rock. It can't hurt anybody," whispered Coline before turning her attention back to the pillar. "I think it tried to say something." She made a ginger approach to the pillars once more, against Eve's anxious whimpers. Coline hovered her hand over the glass, looking back at Eve to ease her concern. "It'll be okay," the girl gently tracing her fingertips across the surface. This time the effect was less profound.

Eve cast her eyes around the room, no longer afraid but immersed instead in the wealth of information that had been waiting to expose itself. Coline noticed too, and pressed her palm firmly against the glass.

<"Ooh! Let me try!"> Eve shouted excitedly, taking the place of Coline at the pillar. The glow was substantially reduced, making it unclear to what exactly caused a heightened response and what did not. Coline glanced down at the sulking Umbreon.

"Maybe it reacts to our energy." Once more, Coline pressed her hand against the glassy surface, but this time forcing her will into it as well. The walls became vibrant with holographic images hiding amongst the glass and faint text visible all around. After feeling that she done a satisfactory job at figuratively charging the walls, Coline joined Eve to continue their tour of the complex.

<"The pictures, they look like they're Pokémon."> In-between the seamless panes, on each pillar there was an encased hologram of a Legendary Pokémon. The text around them, a slur of ancient whispers, was barely discernible. Though Coline could read any language written by a feeling being, the messages were too vague both visually and empathetically.

"I can't feel the words. They're there but really unclear." Coline was straining her thoughts, trying to interpret the text that surrounded a picture of the mystical Ho-oh. While she could tell that the writer was aiming for something eloquent, she could feel a

sort of resentment behind the words. Ho-oh's impression on that individual had been negative enough to form a biased opinion in the writer's mind.

Coline continued to amuse herself, mulling over the potential meanings of the secretive text. Bored, Eve let her focus wander elsewhere.

<Coline? Did you hear something?> Eve whispered privately, certain she heard movement.

"Nope," Coline responded, still intensely focused on her task.

<No really, Coline. I heard something!> Eve repeated herself frightfully. The sound of footsteps grew closer, Eve chancing to look behind. The glowing orbs for eyes were unblinking, motionless for a moment up until Eve let loose with a terrified yelp when she realized they were not alone.

<"Coline! Coline!">

The girl only had time to turn her head before her body was shoved against the nearest wall, the force temporarily stunning her.

<"Get off of her!"> Eve screamed at the creature, adding a verbal growl.

"Whu . . .?" Coline blinked, trying desperately to surface from her muddled mind. The creature proceeded to press her harder into the wall.

The sickened red glow from its circle of gem-like eyes made it pretty evident that the creature was a Registeel, though nothing more than a sub-Legendary. The state it was in was quite characteristic, as Legendaries were protective of their surroundings. The girl knew that reasoning with the Registeel should work, although she could not help but feel something was amiss.

"My name is Coline. I'm the Chosen to Mewblade, the Decider of Fate!" proclaimed Coline, hoping that for a moment, her words would make sense to the faceless monster. It passively listened, then released her, toddling its way down a corridor then from her senses.

<"That was weird,"> Eve remarked turning her attention back to her master. The human girl reflected quietly on the encounter, wondering why the Registeel had attacked her unannounced and left without saying anything. She hummed ponderingly, uneasy about the experience.

"Did you get a sense that something was off with that Registeel?"

<"Yeah, but maybe they're all like that."> Eve snuck yet another wary glance down the empty corridor.

"No, it wasn't that." Coline snapped her fingers, trying to develop a hypothesis. "It felt like it was ill."

<"You mean like a cold? Mewblade said the Legends don't get sick."> The Umbreon was unsure with what Coline meant by 'ill'.

Many Pokémon were naturally immune to certain types of colds, with Legendaries being exceptionally resilient to things such as viruses and cancers. As Mewblade had explained, Legendaries and their mortal brethren were simply biologically superior. Their immune systems were aggressive against infections, and their genetic replication did not produce errors outside of invasive techniques such as cloning, of which Mewblade was exposed to. The one thing that Mewblade did not deny was the concept that reclusive Legendaries could become temporarily vulnerable to new diseases, where in turn they could potentially redistribute bygone ailments. The chance that any

Legendary would become sick, especially ones that did not sport the biological standards for disease distribution, were slim.

“It could be possible that it was something, but it still behaved rather weird.” Coline paused then clapped her hands together, remembering that she had a job to do. “We should explore some more. Once we’re done reviewing this site, and confirm that the Registeel has approved us being here, then we can go and see Mewblade and tell her about this.” Eve nodded solemnly, understanding what they were doing. Their job currently was to make sure that the place was clear before they gave the research team approval to continue their investigation. Priorities first, Mewblade later.

<“Hey, Mewblade?”>

“What . . .?!” Mewblade groaned, suffering from bouts of agony following her marathon resurrection. She covered her head with a pillow to shutout the nuisance that was Eve.

<You know that doesn’t work,> Eve chimed, talking right into the Mewthree’s head with private telepathy.

“I wish it did,” grumbled Mewblade, then chucked the pillow in Eve’s general direction. Eve easily dodged the projectile, bounding onto the bed where she took her spot next to the immobilized Pokémon.

<“I have a question.”> Mewblade shot the Umbreon a dirty glare, quite aware that she was doing this on purpose. Granted, she was a distraction from her grievances, though still considerably annoying. Ever since Eve had arrived she had been constantly pestering Mewblade without let-up. Somehow the whole inability to be mobile and threatening made Eve ripe with new ideas of how to be a pest.

“What is it?” Eve curled up next to her face, despite the deterring stare that any other individual would wisely stay away from.

Once Mewblade had regained consciousness she had been taken home only to lie in bed for hours. She was grateful that Mewtwo had taken her to her dwelling since she was in no state to do so herself. The pain had been crippling enough, making her decided on doing nothing, if only Eve would let her.

<“What’s the meaning of life?”> Of all the questions she had to ask, she had to pick the one with the most convoluted answer. Mewblade sighed, considering rolling onto her other side to avoid answering Eve. The red eyes blinked, patiently waiting on Mewblade’s apparent wisdom in regards to the subject.

“We could always kill you to find out,” Mewblade flashed a striking grin, putting Eve on edge. She watched as the Pokémon bristled, not liking the nature of the remark. Over the years Mewblade’s sense of humor had improved, her learning how to back talk. The question was seriously considered, but the rise from her friend was still funny. “Why do you want to know something like that?” Eve pawed gently at the purple sheets, shying around the subject. Mewblade let her take her time. She was in no need or condition to go anywhere.

<“Well . . .”> she began, still pawing away. <“You know how Coline and I research Legendaries, right?”>

Mewblade nodded her head, responding with a, “Yes.”

<“Well, Legendaries all seem to have a purpose, and since you’re the Decider of Fate . . .”> Eve looked away, uncertain of how to broach the matter. <“What’s mine?”> Mewblade frowned, her eyes showing how saddened she was by the plea for insight, a clue about one’s own worth. This was something Mewblade had personally rejected, such knowledge holding potential danger for her; although, she did know why there were those worthy of her gift, and those that were not.

Years ago when Eve was still an Eevee she had died in an effort to save Coline. Her purity and the fact that her death was the fault of another gave Mewblade the reasons to resurrect the Eevee. It always was revealed to Mewblade what the purpose of the individual slated for resurrection was, but finding out that Eve’s was intrinsically tied to that of her own had caused Mewblade to reject learning of it. Thus when she was asked once before as to what Eve’s purpose was, all Mewblade could respond with was that she did not know, but it was greater than most. It was the same excuse she gave for herself regarding a different incident that played out the same day.

Fate led Mewblade to believe that Hamid was an innocent with an unfilled purpose great enough that it required Mewblade’s skills to mend his death. The other eleven children were only deemed worthy to Mewblade alone. To tell those children that they were either too corrupt or useless to divine intention, while sobering, was the truth. Their only real worth for being on this world was for that of Mewblade’s means alone. Another war meant more victims and more people she had to resurrect or kill. Although how to tell a near dozen children that the only reason they were saved was to spare Mewblade a headache, was not the sort of purpose one would have in mind for themselves. Then again, without Mewblade’s involvement, the universe had considered them worthless, so better a purpose, though a bad one than none at all. It was still a concept that bothered her deeply, and Eve’s question, added on top of the strains of the day had made her a little choked.

“Why are you so eager to know?”

<“I was just wondering, since that day you saved me, if I’ve done right by the world,”> Eve murmured, her eyes downcast. Mewblade’s were full of pity, feeling herself responsible for leaving Eve with such a dilemma.

“I ask the same thing every day,” confessed the Mewthree. Eve perked up, intrigued by the admission. “Usually I do not let it affect me, but some days are harder than others. The thing is,” Mewblade said as she glanced at her deepwater skylight, “is that life for most is too short to dwell on. Soon enough your time will come and it will be clear. For now, take some pride in knowing that whatever worth fate has for you is inconsequential to the value you have for yourself and others.” The notion brightened Eve’s mood. In the matters of life and death, right and wrong, Mewblade was the master; her explanation likely the best that could ever be given.

“Eve, stop interrogating her with these existential abstractions and leave Mewblade alone,” Coline ordered, one hand pointed to the hall and another clutching a towel to her barely covered frame. Eve grumbled something in her native Umbreon tongue as she stepped down from the bed and left.

“What was she bugging you about this time?” the girl asked with a bemused smile, plunking herself next to Mewblade. The lone towel that was used to cover her body was now being used to dry her cornflower blonde hair, her signature pink daisy barrettes removed so her hair could be washed thoroughly. Showers were deemed rather

unnecessary if the person was a psychic. They could simply project any foreign matter away from themselves, negating a need for a bath. While the Mewthree preferred to clean herself this way, Coline enjoyed the mental feeling of cleanliness that water gave her; no matter how much of a time waster it was perceived as. Fellows psychics might hold that against her, but as the girl figured she was human, she would behave like one, even though strutting about stark naked was not a customary human practice.

Mewblade had no care for modesty, she was naked all the time. It was part of being a Pokémon. Her Chosen held no reverence to being exposed in front of her Pokémon or Mewblade. There was no sexualization in her mind when it came to the naked form, her opinion of bare flesh absolved of sin. It was this quality, among many others that one could recognize as pure. Free-spirited, kind yet morally bound, Coline was Mewblade's opposite in every way possible. It was her that could make Mewblade laugh on a dark day or cry without concern over how stupid it felt. The girl was a beautiful soul, inside and out, and Mewblade was blessed to have her as her Chosen.

Coline smiled down at Mewblade, grasping the emotions that naturally came out of anything that thought. It had been years since Mewblade could no longer read the girl's mind, and almost the same amount of time since Coline had learned to 'hear' Mewblade's inner feelings. Neither minded as both were open in their way of communication. Keeping secrets was not a specialty of Mewblade's, realizing that the act of doing so merely shut people out of her life when she truly needed them the most. As long as the person or Pokémon in question did not aim to hurt her, she did not mind the small lack of privacy Coline's empathy broached.

Mewblade turned her head to look up at Coline as she waited for her to finish drying off, seeing past the impressively beautiful woman she had grown up to be. Being genderless negated the needs of sexual attraction, often making it hard for Mewblade to determine the social standards of beauty, though she had a pretty good idea. Sure, she loved Coline, undeniably so but it was not for appearances. That love was about the only thing they had in common, the only thing that Mewblade could see in herself as being pure. But unlike most pairings this was a relationship removed from desire; whether that be for lust, monetary gain, or some other stipulation that revolved around giving and taking. There was nothing more Coline and Mewblade needed than each other, something Coline knew Mewblade was content with, although Mewblade did hope that the girl would seek human normalcy some day.

To have Coline waste away her youthful potential and deny herself a husband, children and human interaction was not something Mewblade could ask of her Chosen. Most Chosen throughout history would eventually weaken their ties with their associated Legendaries, something Mewblade was understanding of. She did not want Coline to one day be on her death bed, wishing she had not wasted away her life in service to an uncompassionate Legendary. Legendaries lived forever unless their lives were acted upon by an outside force, the somber notion having come to grips with Mewblade after her release from her coma. Her Chosen was not an eternal being, and for the girl, life was too short to make mistakes. Neither told each other their standpoint, as right now Coline was still young, parting staying far from their minds.

The Mewthree had been dwelling for far too long, and with her hair mostly dry, Coline saw it as her responsibility to distract the brooding Pokémon. Putting the towel aside, she ventured forth with a question. "Rough day?" Mewblade tilted her head up as

much as her head blade would let her. She had yet to talk about the incident with anyone other than Mewtwo.

“Do not get me started,” she murmured. Coline laughed softly. How much Mewblade loved her Chosen’s relaxed nature.

“That’s what I’m here for. So what happened?” she leaned in closer to listen. Mewblade made an exasperated sigh before beginning.

“There was more violent activity in the war torn region again.” Coline nodded, knowing which one Mewblade was talking about. “The two countries are on the brink of full-out conflict, and Mewtwo and I are convinced that what happened today would have dissolved peace talks completely. There has been a rush to pull the delegates and their families out of the area. They have been breaking them up to make it harder to recognize the politicians involved. Problem was is that they grouped some of the children together, and the enemy caught the rouse.” Coline gasped as she figured out what had caused Mewblade to be in the state she was in now. Mewblade closed her eyes, angry with the circumstances and disappointed that she could not do more.

“They were suppose to look like a group of students, but they saw right through it. They blew-up the bus and killed all of the children. If it were not for the one innocent in the group, I would not have been able to save any of the kids.” Wordlessly, Coline embraced Mewblade, knowing that the event she had been put through was wrought with challenges and tough decisions. “Thank you,” whispered Mewblade, nestling into Coline’s softly scented hair. She continued on.

“I picked eleven of the kids who had the most irrational parents. The rest can accept it as a freak accident. If those parents lost their children then they would absolve any facts and dissolve negotiations altogether. I personally cannot handle another war, and nor can the other Legendaries. All of this fighting, the dying, the law breaking, I am exhausted,” she confessed, overall feeling downtrodden. “Whatever is going on with the humans has to stop. The world is suffering and soon the damage will be irreparable.” Mewblade grimaced at the thought, having already dealt in some aspect with the big three of human destruction.

Chemical warfare was the most tolerated by her of the three cataclysmic inducing weapons, being biological, chemical and nuclear. Suicune and Celebi were able to contain and repair the damage done to the natural world in a chemical attack, and even Mewblade herself could heal the physical damages done to people and Pokémon. Pathogens were the ones she despised dealing with since the most effective way to deal with them was through snuffing the disease carriers, as none of them had the capacity to remove a viral source. Mewblade had the know-how to eradicate disease, but doing so was challenging, and under the pressure of other Legendaries, she was often brought in to kill the carriers, law breakers or not. The last on the list she had not seen in use yet, which was from the radioactive realm since those were not only the easiest to detect, but simple to cease manufacturing of, as long as it was not Mewblade dealing with it herself. One particularly bad incident was enough to remind her of why she scoured minds for those ones.

There was little Coline could really do for the Mewthree. The most she could do was just hug her tightly to reassure Mewblade that everything would be all right. Mewblade sat upright in order to properly receive the embrace, reaffirming for herself that the majority of humanity, and specifically Coline, had not lost their minds.

“Even for humans, it is hard to believe they are becoming this corrupt.”

Coline grabbed Mewblade’s shoulders, pushing her back a little. With a firm grip, she then looked Mewblade straight in the eye. “Don’t lose faith in us yet. I’m sure whatever it is, it will pass with humanity coming out the better in the end. We’ve been around for over one hundred thousand years, a little strife is expected.” She kissed Mewblade between the eyes. “It always gets better. We just take a while to learn,” she said with a comforting smile.

Mewblade bowed her head, hoping that was the case. “How was your day?” she asked, trying to change the subject to something less bleak.

“It was definitely different,” Coline said with a light shrug of her shoulders. The Mewthree knew the details of Coline’s research and who she was working with, and was curious to hear more. “The last few ruins turned up empty, when both you and I know that shouldn’t be. Legendaries can’t just abandon their posts like that.” The stern expression on Mewblade’s face was a sign that she agreed with her Chosen. It was an odd occurrence to see the sites abandoned, though it had become such commonplace that it was almost the norm instead of the exception.

“Get this. Eve and I actually saw a Registeel!” Coline exclaimed with an enthused gesture.

“Really, a Registeel?” Mewblade questioned in the midst of trying to find the Registeel that Coline was referring to. Coline stared at her in intrigue as Mewblade’s omnipotence raced across every land, through every mind within her capacity to trace. The intensity on her face was something unseen by the girl. Normally Mewblade could multitask to a level beyond known comparison, but even now the Legendary was shutting down all other activities, bringing her brain to focus only on the one goal.

“Anything yet?”

“Nothing!” gasped Mewblade, snapping out of her trance, frustration evident in her voice. “I cannot sense any of them!” Abrupt movements occurred, a sign of desperation as Mewblade turned to the girl, grabbing onto her. “Coline, did it say anything?” Mewblade was almost on the verge of a plea.

“We didn’t even notice it in the room. Eve saw it before I did, and I didn’t even pay attention up until it had me pinned against a wall.”

“It attacked you?!” Mewblade was flabbergasted. The only way she would not have sensed that happening was if it either happened while Mewblade was in a trance or while she was inexplicably unconscious. She could have been blind and deaf, and Coline could still tell that Mewblade was frightened that something so serious had gone on without her noticing it.

“It was just trying to be protective. The Registeel was defending its territory. It didn’t actually hurt me, just roughed me up a bit. Sort of like a type of warning,” Coline said in the Registeel’s defense. “Although I’m not really sure of its intentions. It never said anything, it really didn’t think anything for that matter either.” Because of Coline’s explanations of her abilities, Mewblade was aware that almost all thoughts were attached to emotions, even primitive ones such as hunger or terror. For any Pokémon to not express emotions through thought was unnatural. The Mewthree’s pensive expression made it evident that this issue was of grave concern. While she was not responsible for the Legendaries, it was expected that she still be insightful about the issues regarding them. Today just happened to be one of those times when such insight was lacking.

"If you want to you can come to the site at night. It might show up again," offered Coline.

"I doubt it." The bitter whisper and stooped posture evident of the mood Mewblade was in.

"I'd still like it if you came anyway." Though generally unable to refuse Coline's requests, Mewblade did not want to risk exposure for the privilege to look at an archeological site. "Oh, come on," Coline whined, seeing Mewblade's unwillingness. "Please?" She pouted excessively, a small whimper escaping as she used her doll-eyed cuteness to manipulate the Pokémon. Arms crossed, Mewblade turned her head away, playing along to some degree. Her smirk gave the go-ahead for Coline to elaborate.

"The ruins are full of holographic images, all regarding the Legendaries." Indeed, this had garnered Mewblade's interest. "I can't quite make them out since they respond to high grade psychic energy, but it's still really neat. The things that are said about the Legendaries so far is very insightful." Mewblade pondered for a moment, able to see some use in it for herself.

"If it can possibly help me find a solution to at least one of my problems; then of course, I'd be delighted to visit it with you." With a soft kiss on the cheek, Coline thanked the Legendary.

"Tomorrow evening good for you?"

"Should be. I doubt a bus load of kids will need my intervention anytime soon."

"Great," Coline said as she bounded off the bed. "Call it a date," she giggled upon exiting the room to fetch her clothes. Mewblade just chuckled, shaking her head. She relished the idea of watching Coline in her element. At least her career was far less volatile than the duties of Mewblade.

<Why did you call me?> Mewblade said while delivering her glare to the back of Mewtwo's head. He remained stationary, staring off into the distance. <Well?> She was impatient and in need of an explanation.

Mewtwo had brought Mewblade to an overpass, the span of which was stretched across a major highway. Afternoon rush hour traffic zipped beneath, no one aware of the two psychic Pokémon thanks to Mewtwo's concealing Barrier. To be in the middle of a city highway was uncomfortable for the Mewthree, where it was clearly obvious to her that her father was quite at ease in the urban jungle.

Face still affixed to the flow of traffic, Mewtwo finally supplied Mewblade with the reason to his summons. <There is a person, Barrett Dole, who stole one of our artifacts from a natural history museum. No one there noticed its absence, and I am concerned since he plans to use it for ill intent. Currently he's on the highway, heading this way.> Mewtwo looked to Mewblade to see if she understood what he said. She nodded her head but remained quiet out of feigned cluelessness. It was pretty obvious what he was asking of her.

<You want me to kill him, correct?> Mewblade spoke in a dry tone, her glare making it clear that what he was asking of her was poorly received.

<Yes . . .> was Mewtwo's uneasy reply. The attitude was the precursor to one of Mewblade's outbursts.

<Can you not do it yourself?> she growled, still continuing with the private use of telepathy.

<You're good at it. The only time I ever did it, it was hardly subtle.> There was silence, forcing Mewtwo to elaborate. <If I did it . . .>

<You wouldn't!> interjected Mewblade. <Every last Legendary uses me for their dirty work, because you are either too lazy or suddenly too morally opposed to actually do it yourselves.> She crossed her arms, sickened by her elders' mentalities.

<I'm sorry. I assumed you didn't mind,> Mewtwo gave his sheepish apology.

"Mewtwo," was the audible sigh from the Mewthree. <It is just that I do not actually *like* to kill things, and most of you, especially Zapdos, think I am some sadist who enjoys killing others. It is perfectly lawful to kill law breakers. Only because I am the Decider of Fate does not mean I have claim to all laws upheld by us. But if you want me to do it, fine! If your only excuse is collateral damage then maybe you should come up with a better one.> Mewtwo did not know if he should have been insulted or relieved, at least it would not be someone else's blood on his hands.

<I sense him,> announced Mewblade, taking her place against the railing. The man was still a few minutes away, passing cars and nervously exceeding the speed limit. At the rate he was going it would be a surprise if he did not spin the car and result in an accident; still, Mewtwo had insisted that Mewblade should do something. She sensed the man, casually predicting the cars that would be sharing the same pavement when she decided to enact her judgement.

Mewtwo has no idea of the art in effective collateral damage. I guess I will just have to show him and then maybe he can decide for himself whether it is better if he did this himself, Mewblade thought with a smirk, poised and ready to begin her task. After a casual glance over the guard rail, Mewtwo ventured forth with a question.

<What do you plan on doing?>

<I was planning on having him lose control of the vehicle and careen into a few cars before finishing with a crash into the median,> Mewblade said, turning to him with a fiendish grin.

<Won't that kill innocent people?!> exclaimed Mewtwo, horrified that Mewblade would even consider such a thing. Hands to her hips, she turned to her father.

<Do you think I am that unrestrained? Obviously you did not if you asked me to come here.> She turned back with a wave. <I can show you the mastery of what it takes to make a good accident. You cannot have one without some damaged cars and a few broken bones. Makes for good insurance claims, so I have studied.> She gave a dismissive shrug, then flashed a smirk towards Mewtwo. <Just consider this a good deed.>

Mewtwo was quickly regretting what he had asked for. Instead of having Mewblade go about her usual methods of quick assassination, she was going to reap carnage just to prove a point. This was not what he had in mind and could only observe as Mewblade continued with her work.

<And there he is,> Mewblade announced, now able to visually identify the car from a distance. Everything came down to timing. It had to be precise so she could properly execute her plan. *There!*

Barrett was speeding down the highway, the speedometer barely changing as he refused to lever his foot from the throttle. The artifact he had stolen, a tablet that was responsible for summoning the sub-Legendary Lugia of the Arctic Ocean; was placed on the passenger seat. Between bypassing cars and checking to see if anyone knew of his crime, he was making rapid, paranoid glances at the stone text. For a second he was convinced that the tablet had left his sight. Another lane change and a secondary glance later, it was confirmed, the artifact was missing.

“Oh, shit. Oh, shit! Where is it?!” Barrett panicked, looking to the other seat to see where the stone had gone.

Mewblade sneered, sensing his sudden bewilderment as she passed the stolen tablet over to the confused Mewtwo for safekeeping. Breaking it was just as bad an idea as actually using the thing. There was some entertainment value in simply stealing it back though. Admittedly, it was kind of funny to sometimes scare people in such a manner. Despite the temporary distraction it would take more than a clever heist to cause the car to crash. With a cold, unwavering gesture, Mewblade took control of the sedan and nudged it to the tail ends of two cars.

<See, Mewtwo? This is how it is done,> she spoke, directing the car while Barrett remained oblivious in the midst of his search.

The man briefly glanced up from looking in the glove compartment, the last words echoing from his being of the same nature to the like of those he uttered earlier. They hardly escaped his mouth upon impact.

Mewblade looked down, and with her intense reaction time, enhanced with her Foresight ability, she directed the path of destruction. Under her direction the car began what would become a fatal five car pile-up. The only fatality had already happened upon Barrett’s head smashing into the driver’s side window. From there the rest was pointless manipulation of physics. After spinning two cars, her victim’s vehicle was smashed from the side by a tailgating driver. By now Barrett’s body was broken and his head resemblant of a smashed gourd. His sedan collided into the median, combusting on impact, an effect that normally would not happen instantly if it were not for Mewblade’s meddling. Of the four other cars, all were piled into a cluster, another driver nearly joining them. Rush hour had come to a standstill. Mewtwo peered down at the gnarled mess beneath and the long line of traffic stopped behind.

<Mewblade,> Mewtwo began, uncertain if the result was to Mewblade’s intentions, <this isn’t helping.> Mewblade chuckled, not bothering to look at Mewtwo.

<I could have gotten him earlier, but the passengers in the struck cars were important to me. I felt that maybe I could do something with them. See that one?> Mewblade pointed casually over the edge. Mewtwo looked along the line of her finger, somewhat curious while she explained. The human, a man in his late fifties had just stumbled out of his car. <He has a brain lesion. The doctors who will scan him for signs of a concussion will likely see it, treating it before it gets any worse.> Mewtwo was understanding as Mewblade went on. <And that man there,> she was pointing to a guy slumped over in his car, <is an addict. His legs are broken and he will require rehabilitation, and hopefully for his habits as well.> That one was a bit more personal to her, of which Mewtwo acknowledged what Mewblade was hinting at. To another car she gestured, where a frazzled mother was standing, comforting her sniveling youngster.

<They need the money, plus that car would have killed them.> Turning from the false accident, Mewblade watched as Mewtwo stared harder at the scene.

<You mean to tell me you did that all on purpose, to not only excusably kill the law breaker, but inadvertently benefit others as well?> Mewtwo questioned for the sake of clarification.

<Yes.> Mewblade did not see it as being much of a problem. Mewtwo straightened himself before speaking again. There were humans gathering close to them, cars slowing down. Mewblade exchanged glances with Mewtwo, it was time for them to leave; otherwise, they would surely be discovered. Mewtwo dismissed his concern, shaking his head towards the Mewthree.

<You've been doing this too long.> She did not reply, only grinning slightly instead; not long after her Teleport initiated and she was gone. Mewtwo had to admit that what she had done was clever, despite its destructiveness and it being a sign that Mewblade indeed had the intellectual capacity beyond that of a trained killing machine. A thought of his was interrupted again as a car stopped behind him. In a rush Mewtwo followed Mewblade's lead, Teleporting himself away from the crash site with tablet in hand.

It was late evening in Hoenn. As promised by Mewblade she was to meet Coline and Eve at the ruins of a Registeel. With as subtle an entrance as possible, she Teleported to the front of the cliff face where the ruins were concealed.

<Hello,> Mewblade greeted the girls in a whispered telepathy.

<Hello, Mewblade,> Coline spoke, her flashlight in hand. She switched to verbal speech. "Let's go before someone notices." If they stayed put for too long, it was possible one of Coline's colleagues would notice the strange Pokémon. Quietly, Mewblade followed, up until she noticed the size of the entranceway.

<Coline, I cannot fit through that.> The girls looked back, sizing Mewblade in comparison to the hole. Eve began to betray a grin while Coline giggled lightly.

"Maybe if you lost some weight."

"I . . .!" Mewblade quickly caught her outburst. <I do not need to lose weight!> she hissed. <Even a grown man would have problems.> The knowing smirks made it clear. Between Mewblade's height and her exceptionally wide thighs, she was simply too large to fit. Indignant, Mewblade responded with folded arms and a growl. Though not vain about her appearance, she was still proud of her general physique. It would have been all too easy to counter with a snide remark about Coline's fat content, but Mewblade brushed off such behavior as childish. Instead, she flared her aura and chose to Teleport the group to the proper entrance.

"This is it?" Mewblade inquired as she stared into the ambient glow of the anteroom.

"Yes." Coline dashed past the Mewthree, doing a twirl in the center of the room.

"Isn't it amazing?" she babbled, so full of delight.

<"Yeah, as amazing as a haunted tomb can be,"> Eve muttered sarcastically, joining the girl.

Mewblade passed through the room, casually gauging the scope of it. With her ability to sense life and the effects of entropy, Mewblade could grasp how relatively old

the structure was. Being the only Legendary with the capacity to carbon date at any time required her to showcase the uniqueness of her skills. It was not a skill she used frequently, finding little relevance in such observations, though she figured she may as well put it to some use.

“Do you know the origins of this place?” murmured the Mewthree, unable to match the materials and their age to the style of architecture.

Twiddling her fingers in uncertainty, Coline responded with an added shrug. “Lillith had spent most of today collecting samples for analysis. Why do you ask?”

“The rock here is old, but whoever made the walls was from roughly four and a half thousand years ago.”

<“ . . . How would you come up with that?”> Eve looked over, perplexed.

“The human body sheds hair and skin on a regular basis, which is made up of carbon that I can sense.” At times Mewblade was unsure how she really did the things that she did, only that she could and was very good at it. This information was only obtainable through careful study of atomic decay, of which was not pinpoint accurate, nor easily performed; yet Mewblade could gather such information instantaneously and flawlessly. This was a trait she had not shown to her Chosen, and further elaborated. “I can tell from the rate of decay that either he or she . . .”

“He,” Coline corrected her. This was Mewblade’s turn to stare. “The writing is done in a masculine hand.” Mewblade nodded, watching as Coline went over to demonstrate. Still fascinated, it changed to awe as Coline began the spectacle of powering the walls. At the touch of her hand, the walls lit up in red. The girls were no longer startled by the mini phenomena, though Mewblade herself was a little alarmed.

“It works under a psychic’s influence. When you touch the walls it holds a charge,” Coline explained, stepping away from the nearest pillar. “The more powerful the psychic, the clearer the impressions. Abbott can get a pretty good picture but I know if you did it everything would be more than clear.” Gesturing, the young lady waved her representing Legendary over to give it a try. She stood back, welcoming Mewblade in as she took a further step into the center of the anteroom to observe the reaction.

<“Holy . . .”> Eve gasped. Mewblade was startled, jumping back as the intense red screamed across the walls. The emotive yell was somewhat overwhelming for Coline; still, she managed to quickly gather herself to watch history undress. Even the Mewthree found herself marveling. The hologram beneath Mewblade’s fingertips drew her in. The clear 3D image of the Legendary Pokémon, Rayquaza was finely detailed that one could not help but commend the artistic mastery.

“Oh my . . . Mewblade, you did it! It’s all clear to me!” Coline giggled, so endlessly entertained as her mind went about absorbing all she could see. Although Mewblade could not understand the meanings of the text, she did recognize the style immediately.

“Does this writing look familiar to you?”

“Hmm?” Coline joined Mewblade, hooking her hand around the Mewthree’s left arm. Unabashed, she rested her head upon Mewblade’s broad shoulder, reading the writing. The scrawls, a rare text with a blatant ancient Greek accent, was similar to the chicken scratch Mewblade had carved all over her main room back home. Coline hummed, realizing what Mewblade wanted to ask. After all, the similarities were uncanny enough that it made sense that she was concerned.

“They are the same. Probably the innateness between naturally occurring Pokémon languages.”

“Can you read it?” Mewblade asked, her purple eyes looking upon the sweet face of the calmly collective Chosen. Eve was attentively listening from where she was situated, finding it best if Coline explained.

“Mmm-hmm,” she hummed, signifying that she could. “But unlike this one, all yours ever says is, ‘Blah, blah, blah,’” she smiled in amusement.

“Really?” Mewblade was puzzled. “So despite that what I scratch is writing, it means nothing?”

Coline laughed and patted Mewblade’s chest comfortingly. “Kind of like a kid who is learning to write. To them, their scribbles mean something, but if they were to just scribble with the intent of scribbling, it would say nothing; kind of like yours.” Though Mewblade gave a nod, she still did not quite understand. With an additional pat and more laughter, Coline added, “It’s okay if you don’t get it. It is a bit convoluted.” After a moment’s pause, Coline parted. “I’m going to take a look around the room and gather some data.” Coline flashed a smile and revealed her digital camera.

“Okay,” Mewblade replied, casually glancing at the holograms.

The teenager made her way around the large room, taking periodic snapshots in between reading the wealth of text. Among the holograms there were images of the Legendaries that held post over four thousand years ago. Each Legendary from Kanto, Johto and Hoenn was present; although, the preoccupied Mewblade had yet to notice that there were two extra columns, something which made the two mortals leery.

Coline and Eve exchanged glances, double-checking to see what Mewblade was up to. Upon one pillar was the mention of a single instant Legendary who was over one million years deceased.

How come Mewblade has never mentioned this Legendary? From what Coline could read, even the writer’s information was secondhand. The species was best described as some offset of Mew. A few seconds later, stifling a potential gasp, Coline and Eve jointly realized that this Legendary was an ancient ancestor to Mewblade, the first Mewtwo or Mewthree prototype. Using subtle glances, the pair double and triple checked that Mewblade had not noticed. Whatever happened those few thousand years ago, the revelation meant that at least a few of the Legendaries that were alive then were engaged in keeping a dark secret. Concerned, and with the utmost need to know, Coline furiously read the scrawl.

The angelically robed figure was described as a Decider of Fate, solidifying Coline’s and ultimately Mewblade’s original theory that Ho-oh had been actively conspiring against Mewblade. The haunting expression and sad elegy to her existence made this Decider of Fate’s life come across as a thing of misery. Further checking, this one’s functionality was the exact opposite of Mewblade’s, being the essence of life and named appropriately as Vita Sanguine. To the facing pillar was another Decider of Fate, also something comparable to a Mewthree, yet this one was human. It was completely unheard of. Mewblade had never mentioned her and most likely she was not aware.

“Are you still looking?” called Mewblade, oblivious to Coline’s discovery.

“Uh, yes,” Coline said in return with a hesitant smile, knowing she was lying through omission.

<“Yep, still looking,”> Eve added, enough of an excuse for Mewblade to continue on her own.

Coline read the text furiously, although she could not help but notice how well designed the hologram for this particular Legendary was. Her noble stance and proud portrayal of her signature sword and scales could not help but emphasize the creator’s deeply profound love.

This must all be the work of this Legendary’s Chosen, Coline thought, looking at the room prior to returning to the image of the beautiful woman. Sure enough, the prose was written with affection and longing, that of a lover. Her name was Iustitia, and her function was that of law. Amongst the Legendaries, with the exception of Mew, Mewtwo and Mewblade, they all would have known Iustitia. It explained why most of the text had a deep seeded undertone. In regard to Ho-oh, the emotions were downright hostile. Whether Coline was destined to find this or not, two Legendaries with Mewblade’s title had died, the fact remaining clear, that it was never intended for Mewblade to find out. Mewblade was now making her way over, and as a cover Coline decided it was best to lead her onward, away from the painful revelation that her paranoia was truth.

<“Hey, Mewblade. Let’s go this way!”> Eve suggested first as she went to one of the hallways. Coline pressed her hand against the small of Mewblade’s back, encouraging her to follow the bounding Umbreon.

“There is more to explore,” she beamed but inside her mind was racked with guilt. The girl knew exactly how Mewblade would respond to the news, and wanted more concrete evidence before sending the Mewthree into a needless frenzy.

“It is a dead end,” Mewblade said, commenting about the room. The new room was perfectly cylindrical with steps leading to a waist-high column in the center. Atop of it there was a black sphere, comparable to that of a plasma globe.

“I suppose one would have to touch the ball to get this room running?” Mewblade asked of her Chosen.

“I suppose, but neither Eve, myself or Abbot could get a response from it. You can try though,” she spoke, gesturing to the orb. Seeing no harm in it, Mewblade made her approach. With an absurdly bright flash, Mewblade’s slight fascination with the resulting text was quickly overshadowed by Coline’s tearful cry.

“Coline!” Mewblade whipped around, alarmed by the sound Coline had made. Eyes wide and hands clutched to her mouth, Mewblade could only imagine the horror that her Chosen was reading off of the walls. “Coline, what does it say?” Mewblade addressed the girl by name, trying to get her attention. The girl began shaking, tears flooding down her face. It was the one expression Mewblade hated to see on Coline, not to mention how much it bothered her. “What does it say?” demanded the Mewthree, grabbing a hold of the girl’s wrist. The physical contact worked, bringing Coline back to reality, though it only lasted for a bit until once again, she became lost to her inner turmoil. Mewblade released the girl, looking down at the Umbreon, hoping for an explanation. Eve was just as distant, choosing to purposely avoid any eye contact whatsoever.

“What is wrong with you two?” Mewblade growled, becoming fretful and annoyed. Their emotional reactions and refusal to divulge any information was frustrating. “Please, Coline. You are making me worried,” she murmured, paws resting gently on her Chosen’s shoulders. Still with little known reason, Coline flung herself

wordlessly into Mewblade's chest, sobbing. Mewblade was flabbergasted, completely unsure of how to deal with the somehow distressing news.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry . . ." Coline moaned, brushing her eyes back and forth against Mewblade's fur.

What is going on here? This was not making sense to Mewblade. Coline went from giddy to distraught in seconds, and was now apologizing for it. Mewblade faked a smile, trying to project a feeling of ease. "Sorry for what?" She tightly embraced the girl in her muscular arms, letting the human know that she was not the one to criticize her. There was a brief look to the walls from Coline, the gesture not betraying her thoughts.

The red wording scratched across the room were appropriately represented, no deceit, only truth. How could she tell Mewblade the secrets that they held when she knew for Mewblade, it was already too late?

"Oh, Mewblade . . ." Coline whimpered, deeply apologetic. While rubbing her eyes with the back of her hand, she was carefully considering how she should word her next statement. The distant expression made Mewblade worry only more, but all the Mewthree could do was give her Chosen time.

Coline paced around the circular floor of the room, rereading the wording over and over, trying to deny all it said but she could detect a lie, and gathered that the information lacked any deceitfulness. Empathy was advantageous in most cases, but as the saying went, "Ignorance is bliss," of which Coline could really go for. The Legendary posted in the center of the room continued to observe, waiting anxiously for her Chosen's insight. Being helpless was not a position Mewblade enjoyed, resulting in her constantly reminding herself that if she gave Coline what she needed then it might pay off.

Clockwise from the doorway the text began. The author formally introduced himself as Chosen to Iustitia, his beloved Justice. His name was Benevo and he hailed from the Mediterranean islands of the once divided Greece. This epic was a plea, a request from his former Legendary as she died in his arms, to deliver a message to the future. A message of warning to its Decider of Fate. While delirious and in the throes of death, Iustitia may have been able to predict that Mewblade would see the message, when was the failing point. The cascade of events from then until now was to the likeness of a runaway train moving on momentum, to stop the crash was unavoidable. Too many events had occurred, solidifying the finale's outcome, the inevitable fate of all Deciders of Fate. It was already too late and from Coline's tears, Mewblade could guess what the message had meant. About the only thing Coline ever cried about was in relation to Mewblade directly.

"Is it that bad?" came to sulky tone of Mewblade.

"Huh?" Coline turned around, her face red and puffy, a look quite unbecoming of the normally cheery girl. She took the question with thoughtful considering, bowing her head in the most humbly apologetic of ways. " . . . I'm sorry." Eve too whispered the phrase.

Mewblade ventured forth with another question. "Can you tell me what it says?" The crying fit had affected her deeply. The Decider of Fate was not stupid, part of being what she was came with being able to navigate through the unknown. As she could surmise, if Coline was apologizing, fretting about in tears and this place had indeed revealed interesting details about the Legendary Pokémon; then the revelation could

likely have dealt with her directly, or that of the other Legendaries Coline knew. Such information could still be valuable to the Mewthree.

In a moment of reluctant, but wisely intentioned defiance, Coline shook her head, uttering the single word, “No.” It could be considered punishment to leave Mewblade in the dark, but it was better this than the inevitable outbursts towards the Legendaries involved. Before Mewblade could ask why, Coline supplied the answer. “If I told you, it wouldn’t change anything. You’d just get mad, worry more, and in the end make everything worse.” She paused, though not for long as she sullenly admitted her betrayal. “I’m sorry, Decider of Fate. If you don’t want to associate with me anymore, I understand.” The girl dropped her head, blonde locks covering her face. Eve hardly made a peep, finding any opinion from her to be deemed insensitive.

Mewblade frowned, saddened that above all else her Chosen resented such a decision. The girl’s judgement could almost always be trusted, and despite the fact that Mewblade was in a dire need to know the secrets that Coline was guarding, she was not going to hate her because of it.

“I forgive you,” Mewblade smiled bitterly. Coline looked up, relieved and overjoyed that the Decider of Fate was understanding. She brought herself deep into the fold’s of the Mewthree’s arms, endlessly vocal with her gratitude.

Absentmindedly, Mewblade took the time to look at the whispering walls; secrets meant for her but ones they could not share.

“They’re higher life forms who have conscience thought. Any human and Pokémon can befriend one another and form lifelong, symbiotic bonds. If you need proof of that just look to me and Pikachu, or any of my Pokémon.”

Mewblade was letting her screen run, remotely viewing an international discussion on the environmental worth of the creatures. Representatives from the world’s many regions were present, including the likes of the Elite Four and the Master; who was currently taking his stance on human and Pokémon unions. While some regions and countries disapproved of Pokémon battles, as of late, most altogether wished to see the advent of widespread continental eradication of Pokémon. The Legendaries had begun to place their faith in their Chosen in order to safeguard their own survival.

Coline Campbell was the voice for the Legendaries; whereas, Mewtwo’s Chosen was the passionate leader for the support of all Pokémon. Mewblade could not help but think his stance was weak. The twenty-two year old Ash Ketchum believed stoutly in the relationship between people and Pokémon, making his passionate portrayal of friendship seem of little substance within the assembly.

<“Makes you almost wish Swadeaqua was still around, doesn’t it?”> Mewblade glanced up behind her, there was Mewtwo having just arrived. He glanced down to the contents of her lap. To why Mewtwo even made the comment was apparent as a photo album was spread across the Mewthree’s legs.

“If we could convince her to do such a task then these countless discussions would all be summarized and wrapped up in an hour. Under Swadeaqua’s allure, and with the right equipment, the entire world would be practically eating from her hands.” Mewblade involuntarily shuddered, as she too had once been placed under such control.

<“She did seem quite at home with it,”> muttered the Mewtwo, taking a closer look at the photograph.

Mewblade had stolen the photo several years ago, after she killed her remaining brother and sisters. Since that day she had regretted the decision, although some things gave her peace. The picture the album was open to was one of those.

Standing before a crowd of curious Team Rockets, with the scientists of Project 10.a Intensity at their flank were the Mewthrees Swadeaqua, Demisewan and Harddense. One could see how shy Harddense was in front of the crowd, where in contrast the two sisters were flush with pride, Swadeaqua likely with an additional sense of glory.

Upon snapping the book shut did Mewblade face Mewtwo again. He seemed a little surprised.

“Something wrong?” the Mewthree inquired while leaving to deposit the album amongst her assorted collection of folders, binders and novels.

<“When they fought you they weren’t wearing clothes, just utility belts.”> In the photograph Mewtwo had seen, Demisewan and Harddense were wearing offsets of the special Team Rocket agent uniforms. Swadeaqua was in an amethyst business suit. Normally all of the Mewthrees were sparsely clad, often bare, which was customary of Pokémon.

“Swadeaqua demanded wardrobes so she could feel included as a human. She eventually got over the self-consciousness of wearing clothes, but she was still a psychological mess,” stated Mewblade matter-of-factly, knowing full well of how the Mewthrees, her included, all lacked sound minds. There were pictures in the album of Vicebane chewing on a living Oddish, if anyone needed evidence to prove how deranged they could be. Images alone could prove some of their mental degradations, though there were folders with pages specifically devoted to the detailed psychological profiles of each of the Mewthrees. The one Mewblade had read of hers was written by the middle child of the family through her analysis of Mewblade’s fight with Vicebane. Pinpoint accurate and derogatory, she hated reading that thing. Mewblade returned from depositing the album, briefly delivering a threatening glare to the obnoxious folder, then joined Mewtwo to watch the screen together.

“You need to have more faith in your Chosen. At least he is trying,” Mewblade told her parent.

<“Yes, but I can only advise him so much. Your Chosen is wise and knowledgeable, whereas mine is more foolhardy and compassionate. Everything he says falls on deaf ears. They want facts, but without Coline to support him, Ash is doing poorly on his own.”> The pair quietly observed for a while as a representative from Canada, one of the countries passionately against the stabilization of native Pokémon species, spoke in regards to how destructive Pokémon bonds had become. The great wide north, strong and free had to protect its native animal species over invasive, yet critically endangered creatures.

“Coline is not done her paper yet. Once that is published then she can be at these discussions; unfortunately, the going is slow with the absence of the Hoenn Legends,” Mewblade frowned with a deep sense of frustration. Mewtwo was sympathetic to Mewblade’s vexes.

<“We can only hope these talks don’t become worse. Already people are acting on their darkest instincts, maiming and killing Pokémon.”> This was something Mewblade could agree on.

“It is a disturbing increase. None of the other Legendaries recall such moral shortfalls in memorable history. Missing Legendaries, failing morality . . . It does not add up, but I have a bad feeling it is all intertwined somehow.” Mewblade gave a long look to her screen, listening to the Master’s rebuttal. “We are to have faith in the Master but I am afraid this is out of his league, and maybe even ours.” Just then the universe cried afoul. Another pure hearted individual had their life cut short by the ills of another. The Mewthree scowled. “Excuse me,” she grumbled, taking her leave, visibly sick and tired of it all. The perpetual cycle of death was weighing heavily on them, but no one more so than Mewblade.

The blackened sky above let loose with a torrent, the downpour so thick that the air was almost choked with rain. Mewblade blinked the water from her eyes, focusing on what was ahead of her instead. The Mewthree stood among a sodden city back alley, trying to comprehend the full scope of what had just transpired. With the humans in a seemingly endless struggle of conflict and war, just about everything Mewblade had seen by now. Before her it visually appeared no different.

An incident caused by an individual resulted in mass hysteria; people running out onto the streets, screaming. Smoke rose above the buildings, fire eating away at the vulnerable wood frames of their structures, debris littering the roads. The alleys were dangerous, thus void of people, of which Mewblade preferred. The emptiness of her location was the Mewthree’s only solace. To her senses, this was a pure act of terrorism, but to the idiots running around outside, it was a classic example of continental drift. It too was evident to Mewblade as she sidestepped a saltwater puddle that had collected twelve miles from shore.

Mewblade had waited a considerable amount of time before bringing herself into the city due to the nature of seismic activity. All of the cities residing on the Pacific rim were located on what was colloquially known as the ‘Ring of Fire’. Earthquakes were a commonality, tsunamis of exceptional power were not. Seismology was a weak area of knowledge for Mewblade, forcing her to depend on the intellects of trained seismologists. It was unnatural for a tsunami of its force and size to penetrate so deeply onto dry land, just as it was not normal for the epicenter of the earthquake to be so shallow and not miles out to sea. To any human, this was a freak occurrence; to Mewblade, there was a definite cause of which was not natural.

Why? A simple question with no easy answer. The clouds had no response for her, them being the final remnant of the devastation. Despite the intensity of the downpour, it did little to stop the fires, and as this was a region plagued with drought, the risk of flash floods was sharply rising.

Mewblade made her way down the alleys, partially because she was trying to figure out what had transpired, and also because she was trying to buy herself some time before she approached her innocents. *There should not be innocents. There should not have been any innocents!* she repeated in her mind, knowing full well that in order for there to be a qualified innocent, it would be because of someone’s purposed direct, or

indirect action resulting in the death of a pure hearted individual. The reality that someone caused such an upheaval was frightening, considerably more so as Mewblade somberly realized that whomever it was, her own far-reaching omnipotence could not find them.

“Why can’t I find you?!” Mewblade shouted to the sky, overwhelmed with her own emotions. Her fist smashed into the bricks beside her, mortar falling away from the exposed wall. Infuriated, her mind went rampant, drilling deep into the minds of every human and Pokémon within the stretch of the continent. As before when looking for the Registeel, she turned up with nothing. There was no trace of the cause, only the remaining fact that something so fearsome had caused the ground to heave and the sea to churn. To do nothing was terrifying, as the unknown of the thing’s potential made Mewblade dread further. Theorizing on who caused it was put to the wayside, having been interrupted by a small group of onlookers.

“Vul vulpix?” (Decider of Fate?) Mewblade motioned her head to the tiny cluster ahead of her, all city dwelling Pokémon. In the group there was the fox looking Vulpix, the pigeon Pokémon, Pidgey, several Rattata and a lone blob, best known as a Grimer. It was not uncommon for Pokémon to recognize her, most instinctively knew who the Decider of Fate was, if by only title and duties. The Cleansing Ceremony she had performed with her Legendary counterparts had made it vastly easier for her to be recognized in the Pokémon conscience.

“Yes, I am she,” Mewblade replied to the Vulpix’s question. In times of need, Pokémon banded together, often in aid of the closest Legendary or sub-Legendary when available. The small group was there for Mewblade, and even though she preferred to work alone she was not going to refuse their help. She began to instruct them, walking as she talked. “I need to see the teenager, Adam, first. He’s the boy who feeds you leftovers.”

“P-peoo. Piidge piedodg pppi,” (Sure. He lives this way,) cooed the Pidgey as he directed his beak, then perched on a pipe a few meters away.

“Grime grime grime grimer grimer?” (Can we do anything else for you?) offered the Grimer as he slowly oozed alongside. Mewblade knew her question would be a fruitless one but hoped it would give her something to work off of.

“Did you see anything unusual before all of this happened?”

<“You mean to say that even you don’t know?”> Mewblade turned to look behind her to see Suicune and the sub-Legendary Entei, Helen. The mortals present were concerned, quickly grasping that the shaking and the waves baffled even the godly Legendaries.

Paw rested on her hip, Mewblade retorted, “If I did I would not be asking,” she said with the addition of a snarl.

<“Lugia offered his sub-Legendary, Pacific to see if she or her offspring can find anything, but they’re coming up blank as well,”> Suicune frowned, embittered by the notion. Helen stepped in to address Mewblade on more polite terms, as the sub-Legendary she saw it fit to at least give a proper greeting.

<“Hello, Decider of Fate. My apologies for my lateness. It is hard to get into such a city undetected, as you must understand,”> apologized the Entei with a slight bob of her head.

“Thank you for being here,” Mewblade said before going into her next sentence with a sigh. “Do you know what caused this? It’s not human and any force of nature would never bring me here.” The other Pokémon were listening intently as the elusive Pokémon proceeded to discuss.

<“The rift that runs inland has only moved in a specific spot, one of which I recall has not been strained. There were no warning tremors and there is an absence of aftershocks. I would have expected at least a few profound ones, but it has only been the one, large quake,”> informed Helen to the best extent of her knowledge. <“At this magnitude and scale, only something with the equivalent power of a Legendary would be able to pull this off on their own.”>

<“And seeing that you are indeed here, Mewblade, then we can only assume that something of our capacity could have caused this,”> added Suicune, gravely aware of Mewblade’s duties.

<“Before Mewblade starts talking, would you mind using telepathy? I’ve heard rumors that you favor spoken human,”> a voice swiftly interrupted within the Pokémon’s head. As Mewblade could guess, the telepathy belonged to Pacific, the sub-Legendary Lugia who monitored the primary current in the nearby ocean. Mewblade switched into using open telepathy, with a minor adjustment to fully include Pacific without resulting in her shouting. Mewblade valued the Lugia’s opinion, yet generally disliked telepathy for its lack of personable interaction.

“Keep moving,” Mewblade gestured to the collective to continue walking, then engaged the sub-Legendary in conversation. <“What did you find?”>

Pacific was quick to respond as she took her responsibilities quite seriously. Lugia had informed her of how cooperation with the Decider of Fate was paramount, especially considering the nature of the disaster. <“Along with Helen’s observations, I’ve found that the movements on the sea floor wouldn’t support a tsunami of that size. To go as far inland as it did would be impossible based on what Helen has informed me of. The water moved without any aid of tremors.”>

<“There were no signs of subdividing?”> Helen asked, making certain to clarify. Whatever was said, Mewblade hardly gave notice. The reality was that something with the capacity to escape her senses was tramping around in the ocean with the potential to wipe every coastal human civilization off the map. The millions of lives it could displace was not as mortifying as the realization that of those there were hundreds of pure hearted individuals of which Mewblade was responsible for saving. She stopped in place, a small convulsion moving through her body.

<“No offense, but you make talking to you just that much harder by not talking back,”> remarked Pacific, not liking to be ignored. The city Pokémon were unsure of what was bothering the Decider of Fate, but remained quiet so not to disturb her. Suicune ventured forth, also bothered by her silence.

<“Is something wrong?”> She was still quiet, in a state of shock.

<“I’m sorry if all of this information is overwhelming. Do you need me to explain?”> offered the Entei, trying her best to be comforting. Mewblade roused from her state, knowing that for now her duties held priority.

<“This is all starting to make sense in the worst way possible,”> Mewblade scowled, jaw clenched tightly. Suicune and Helen exchanged glances, not having Mewblade’s ability to siphon vast amounts of information. She turned to the pair, her

eyes grave, letting their questions remain unanswered. It bothered Mewblade too much to speak of it. <“Thank you, Pacific for helping. Your work is appreciated,”> Mewblade said then moved on.

<“Uh . . . You’re welcome, Decider of Fate.”> The Lugia had not expected to be suddenly dismissed.

“Vulpix vul vulpix?” (Are you okay?) inquired the Vulpix timidly while walking slightly ahead of Mewblade, frequently looking back as to not outpace her.

“I will be okay,” the Mewthree mumbled, suppressing her fears. There was nothing she could do right now, mostly since she did not know where to start.

The Pidgey fluttered to another exposed pipeline to wait for the rest to follow. Mewblade glumly walked behind the small group of Pokémon, Suicune and the Entei trailing after. The general collective of Pokémon were complacent, though the silence from the two dogs was obvious. Despite how much private gossip irked her, Mewblade was quite sullen, and frankly could care less in regards to how much the pair was insulting her. There were duties to attend to.

“P-ppi pppidge ppp,” (The coast is clear,) the Pidgey announced as it fluttered to the next alleyway. The city Pokémon scurried quickly while the much rarer ones madly scrambled across the street. Discovery was not an option for them. “Pppii!” (Watch it!) the bird sounded the alarm, bringing attention to a threat. A stray, and very panicked domestic cat shot past, chased by a scraggly mutt. The Pokémon jumped to the dampened walls, evading confrontation with the feline. The dog was less brazen and stopped in apparent terror before the group.

<“Mewblade, what do you make of this *thing*?”> Suicune growled, looking down upon the sorry excuse of a canine before him.

“Rrrtata rattata,” (It’s a dog,) one of the Rattata said, speaking without cue. The rest of her species was preoccupied, holding defensive postures.

<“A dog?”> Suicune asked, stupefied. It was a surprise to Helen and the other Pokémon that a Legendary was clueless of such animals. Mewblade too found it perplexing, if not horribly ignorant.

Very few regions on Earth actually had conditions that favored Pokémon dominant populaces. Most of the land, sky and water was in fact dominated by the Animalia kingdom rather than that of the Pocket Monsters. Pokémon, while undeniably stronger had little capacity to fill evolutionary niches. As fossil records proved, most animals eventually diverged from their powerful cousins to stake claims in better suited environments. A single Pokémon could easily kill a valuable niche, and subsequently cease to be on part because animals preserve their surroundings where Pokémon might destroy them. Most Pokémon were simply too large, their physical demands making widespread habitation virtually impossible. With big bodies and a need to fuel both those and their abilities, Pokémon lacked overall evolutionary staying power. The one thing that Pokémon developed outside of their extraordinary abilities was their capacity to raise young together. This adaptation reflected in their way of interbreeding across species, and the universal language structure that all Pokémon shared. If it was not for those adaptations alone, then only the Legendary Pokémon would remain. Such details Mewblade was certain Suicune knew of, even though his knowledge of domesticated animals was subpar. She humbly informed him of such.

“A dog is a domesticated cousin to the wolf. This particular one in particular is a crossbreed between a retriever, collie and pit-bull, all of which are breeds of dogs,” Mewblade explained, trying to exercise her humility as much as possible. Suicune directed his next question to Mewblade, being this was the sort of question only a Decider of Fate could answer. It definitely proved that to some extent, the Legendaries had an elitist way of thinking about themselves.

<“What is the purpose of these things?”> The Pokémon were intently listening for a reply. Mewblade went to grab the dog for demonstration, it squirming and yelping until she subdued it with her mind. The mongrel became lethargic in her hold, otherwise unharmed. She faced Suicune with the animal, flat with her answer.

“I am not Ho-oh, or Mew, or a Legendary so ancient to exist before there was solid land and salty seas. I have no capacity to view the future, or see into the past. Suicune,” she spoke his name with stern authoritativeness, “I do not know everything. You should all stop assuming I am as omnipotent as my guardian.” Suicune glanced sideways, shameful of his assumptions. The non-Legendaries automatically surmised that a Legendary was infinitely knowledgeable, stunned that Mewblade admitted that they were not. “I know my area of specialization. Death and the afterlife is extensive, but for something like this dog,” she gently lifted it for emphasis, “I can only tell you what will become of them when they pass on, not what was, or will be.” She returned to cradling the mutt in the crook of her arm.

<“Then are they anything like us? Do they think, feel, have souls? What happens to them when they do die?”> That was something directly within Mewblade’s capacity to answer. The Pokémon were intrigued to know exactly how inferior their competitors were. Passively petting the dog, Mewblade replied calmly.

“Sort of. Their thoughts are very primitive. They can only think in pictures and have little capacity to gauge time. They can feel pain, anger and loss, but for less sentimental reasons. This dog here,” Mewblade said, still petting the canine, “feels fear at seeing us, but it cannot carry the thoughts further than an instinctive reaction. This is one of the reasons that when most of them die their souls and their energy is recycled back into the universal system.”

“Vul vul vulpix?” (But what about us?) whined the little Vulpix. Mewblade smirked reassuringly and explained.

“Some of the animals with the capacity to realize that they are a curious being are not always cycled into the system, and are treated like Pokémon, reincarnating into similar bodies. Beings with even higher levels of thought, particularly humans can either be reincarnated or actively distributed among the afterlife. This is all based on self-awareness, rarely religious preferences. Animals follow a pantheistic, ‘one with the universe,’ system. Pokémon fall under the reincarnation system akin to Hinduism or Buddhism, but with less superficial nuances. People are to what suits them best.”

<“Then what about you and the others?”> came the darkened tone of Suicune. Mewblade was internally seething, though she hid it well as she released the dog and let it escape. The group perked their interest at the strangely placed question. To Mewblade there was nothing odd about it, just that its mention was so insidious to her. She glared coldly at Suicune, angered that he unfortunately knew just enough to ask such a thing. Mewblade tried to restrain her emotions, unable to as she vehemently hissed.

“We Legendaries are treated differently, fought over amongst the afterlife or reincarnated back to this Earth to be its continuing beneficiaries. Some humans, and those Pokémon who closely mimic humans become the pawns of the afterlife to add to their collections, to wield against one another.”

<“And when you fall . . .?”> Helen whipped her head away, instantly ashamed of herself to have asked. Mewblade narrowed eyes, jaw further clenched, so bitter with her reply.

“Then I will likely join the ranks of my brothers and sisters.” Mewblade stormed past the collective, ending the conversation. The Pokémon followed willingly, the sub-Legendary and the Legendary took to the rear. Helen and Suicune felt equally guilt-ridden, having pushed the subject too far.

The issue of Mewblade’s abuse was well-known to the Legendaries but never spoken of. Such a topic was treated as something dirty and vile, none able to fathom themselves going through such treatment. In fact, most were convinced Mewblade was the first to have experienced that level of depravity. It took a Mewthree to hurt another Mewthree to the level that psychologically shattered one’s will; the species mentally sickened enough to take it so far that Mewblade had once felt justified in killing them. Having the mastery over death and life as she did gave her little peace of mind. Her resurrections always constantly reminded her of the afterlife, and what awaited her if she lost her life to it. Being that fate seemed to have such a brutal sense of humor, Mewblade was convinced any misstep would bring her to her siblings, all of whom she dreaded.

The silence perpetuated itself for some time, reflecting Mewblade’s mood. It remained that way until Mewblade broke it to issue instructions. “I will need all of you,” she said, speaking to the lesser Pokémon, “to distract any passing humans while I save Alex. Wait for me to instruct you once I’m done.” The Pokémon understood and left to act as decoys. Mewblade glanced once more at the stormy sky before entering the dilapidated building. It looked like it would be another long day.

<“As I understand it, a natural disaster devastated a city, and Mewblade linked it to a self-aware source that cannot be found,”> Articuno reiterated for the third time, unable to wrap her mind around the problem. <“Actually, could you go over it one more time?”> The collective of Legendaries groaned, although most were silently questioning the circumstances. Next to Ho-oh, Mewblade should have been able to locate the sources. Due to Mewblade’s current absenteeism, Lugia attempted to press the remaining all-knowing being for information.

<“Ho-oh, you must know who caused it. Nothing eludes you.”> Lugia narrowed his tawny eyes towards the brilliantly colored bird. The bird, while well-intentioned became notoriously evasive in its responses as of late, making the collective somewhat uneasy when in its presence.

The bird turned its head and calmly replied, <“Even if I knew of whom, what benefit would it be to you all if the Decider of Fate cannot find it, and go about the task of destroying it?”> Before anyone else could mistakenly agree to the statement, Moltres spoke to counter Ho-oh’s mindset.

<“You give her directions, tell her who and . . .!”> Moltres then swiftly silenced herself. Mewblade’s aura had appeared on the field, signifying the use of a Teleport. Mew and Mewtwo moved aside to make space for Mewblade’s entrance.

<“Late as usual,”> Zapdos chimed from the opposite end of the circle. Mewblade gave him little recognition, deciding to face the rest of the assembly instead. She was not going to explain her lateness. Her duties kept her occupied and was the only excuse she would ever need. All of the Legendaries were generally respectful of this.

<“We were in the middle of talking about a freak natural disaster,”> informed Entei, bringing Mewblade up to speed with the conversation.

<“Decider of Fate,”> Ho-oh made mention of Mewblade’s title, <“would you please inform us of the event?”> Mewblade took a moment to gather her thoughts, holding back her irritability over her shortcomings.

“From what happened, I sensed several innocents die and arrived at the scene to save them. I normally do not hunt for a cause, though since all the innocents died because of the same thing I felt I should investigate. The cause of death varied, but the source was a combination of ground shaking and wave damage, neither of which were started by natural means. Whatever it was, it was skilled enough to evade my senses.” Mewblade’s explanation was grim.

Having heard the words from the mouth of Mewblade, Mewtwo was fast to note that some details were missing. He made such concerns audible to the group. <“Anything that has evaded your senses, and essentially the rest of us has only been each other: Psychics, ghosts, Legendaries.”> There was a collective gasp. Mewblade hung her bladed head, having realized this earlier.

<“But what about the missing Legends?”> Raikou spoke out in alarm. <“Can’t you find them? Can’t you find any of them?”> he yelled, on the verge of panic. <“What is going on?!”>

“I don’t know!!!” Mewblade screamed at her elders, instantly shutting everyone up. Her frustrations over her perceived incompetence had come to the surface. The outburst made her draw herself in, embarrassed by such childishness. Moltres was a true friend, standing up for the Mewthree.

<“I, for one, don’t expect Mewblade to know everything. Besides, we are all edgy from what has been happening in the last few months, Mewblade especially. You, and Mewtwo, and Mew have all been working really hard.”> Mew agreed, taking to comfortingly patting Mewblade on the shoulder.

<“We are starting to assume the human unrest, widespread corruption, absence of the Hoenn Legends, as well as a higher level of unexplained incidents to be connected,”> Mewtwo surmised, offering his theory. Everyone else was thinking over the many meetings about how seemingly worse everything was becoming. Mewblade was mulling over one detail that she was told by her Chosen.

The Registeel. I wonder . . . “Ho-oh, my Chosen, Coline found a sub-Legendary Registeel during one of her archeological digs.” There was a lot of interest from her counterparts at the news, although it did not come without its criticisms.

<“How long have you been keeping that from us?”> Zapdos hissed, liking to jib the Mewthree at any given opportunity. Mewblade crossed her arms critically, not amused by the confrontational buzzard.

“I was going to mention it and I did.”

<“Decider of Fate, I believe there was more to your story,”> Ho-oh spoke up, preventing the pair from escalating into an argument. Mewblade let herself talk.

“The Registeel attacked her then left suddenly. My Chosen said it did not speak, or even think. I wanted to ask you, Ho-oh,” Mewblade looked to the golden bird, “is behavior like that common for Hoenn Legendaries?”

With a shake of its plumed head, Ho-oh gave its answer. <“No. I agree with Mewtwo that there is something going on, but until more solid evidence is found we cannot make any quick actions. For now, let us stay calm. To fantasize over such things will only deter us from our duties. Let us be off, as we all have things to which we must attend. We will convene at later date.”> There was physical gesture of understanding made, followed quickly by Ho-oh’s departure.

“Bii bii, bii bii,” (Suspicious, suspicious,) Celebi whispered before she too Teleported away. The rest left on their own accord, taking to their territories. Moltres approached Mewblade prior to leaving for hers.

<“Is Coline all right?”>

“Yes. She’s a tough girl,” Mewblade said with a smirk.

<“That’s good,”> Moltres smiled in return, although she seemed slightly bothered. <“This dig site . . . has she mentioned anything else about it?”> Mewblade could not get the haunting reminder of Coline’s distress out of her mind. Moltres tilted her head as she watched her friend. Mewblade had taken to looking at the sky absently, she then returned her gaze to the Titan of Fire, rather humbled.

“She never said what it was for, but when she found out she cried. I have never seen her look so sad.” In a way, Mewblade seemed to be taking everything rather casually even as she asked, “Something bad is going to happen, is it not?” Put in her place, Moltres did not know how to answer.

<“I . . . I,”> she started to stammer. <“Mewblade . . .”> the bird twittered sadly. A gesture of Mewblade’s paw was the cue for Moltres not to bother. <“I only want to protect you . . .”>

“I know, and I will not hold it against you if you cannot.”

“You’re up late.”

Coline looked up from her desk. Mewblade was leaning against the doorframe of the office. Silently she made her approach, standing beside the girl’s chair to look over her work.

“I’m putting together the part of my research paper that involves the ecological significance of the Legendary Birds.” Coline exhaled heavily, resting her head on her hand. “It’s just hard to word it in a way that would get people to listen. I want to do what Ash does and say whatever it is I have to say, and people would believe me, but it doesn’t work that way. There is such a split of public opinion in regards to how Pokémon should be treated,” she glanced over at her Legendary, “especially so for the Legends. People think you all are too powerful, controlling. Of course you are all essential, yet the unknown and that power scares them. You especially would scare them.” There was no disagreement from Mewblade. Life and death had such a strong hold on the human psyche that any mention of the Decider of Fate’s powers would send humanity into a

frenzy. The thought would terrify them, since the real thing already frightened the Legendaries. Admittedly, even Mewblade was at times afraid of her own capabilities.

"If it makes you feel any better, I still love you," Coline assured the Mewthree with a pat to Mewblade's paw. She was aware of the Mewthree's concerns. There was no need for verbal encouragement, Mewblade knew she could freely speak her mind.

"We had a meeting and I mentioned the Registeel you saw." Coline softly hummed, a verbal signal to signifying she was listening. "Do you think the 'sickness' you described and the absence of the Legendaries is connected?"

"Along with the growing human rebellions towards Pokémon . . ." mused the young woman, thinking it over. "You could say that the Hoenn Legendaries' disappearances, combined with the human hostilities is either caused by one or the other. Or the humans' aggression makes the Hoenn Legends sick and scared. And it has been evident that you all," Coline spoke of the Kanto and Johto Legendaries, "have been taking part in cataclysmic events in the last fifteen years. You make it hard for public relations, that's for sure. We Chosen are a small voice, and we can only do so much to save face for you all. Master Ketchum is at the forefront of collective Pokémon support, and his overall experience with the Legendaries is negative. You all prove yourselves again and again to be of good will, but even my first experience with you would be considered unsettling."

Mewblade remembered the first time she met Coline. She had just fatally injured her brother. If it were not for Coline's presence, Mewblade would have left the trainer to die. She Recovered him, saving the boy's life, eventually wiping his mind of the horror of a near death experience. Betraying the slight animalism that was complimentary to the nature of a Mewthree, Mewblade smirked over her own inner humor, of which Coline continued to see past. Not to be rude, Mewblade vocalized her thoughts.

"He still can't remember anything, can he?"

"Nope," Coline chirped while still looking at her writing. "Dan's busy, working as a teacher. If you hadn't blocked his memory he would probably be rocking back and forth waiting for you to come back and kill him." Mewblade blinked in confusion, aware that Coline accepted her but generally did not share the same tastes in what she found to be funny. She stared out of cluelessness at her Chosen. The girl flashed another smile.

"Thank you for saving him." Mewblade showed a relieved smirk, deeply afraid of corrupting her Chosen, and glad that she had not. She observed Coline rising from her seat. "Maybe humanity is losing its mind, but I haven't." The girl had gotten up to stretch, Mewblade's eyes following her around the room as the blonde continued to talk to the Mewthree casually. "I don't want you to worry about me. You already have enough to deal with. Anyway, I'm going to turn in." Coline went to Mewblade's side, standing on her toes so she could kiss the Mewthree squarely on the cheek. At 5'11", she was tall for a woman, but still short when compared to the Pokémon.

The departure was slow, Coline running her hand down Mewblade's arm, her fingers leaving at the Mewthree's paw. The forlorn look on Mewblade's face as her Chosen left her was tumultuous for the young adult. While she could escape to sleep and sweet dreams, Mewblade could not. If that did not make Mewblade feel inhuman enough, it was the emptiness she felt knowing that Coline would once again be going to bed alone, and she could never join her.

"Goodnight, Mewblade."

“Goodnight, Coline. Sleep well,” Mewblade said upon Coline exiting the room. Once she was out of sight and empathetic hearing did Mewblade drop her façade, shoulders sagging and head hung. She hated to admit it but there were times when she envied mortals.

“What is it now? Why did you call me here?”

<Shh . . . Quieter,> Mew shushed the Mewthree with private telepathy.

<We can’t let the humans spot us. We are at risk enough as is.> Confused, and overtly concerned, Mewblade approached her mother and father’s side.

“What’s going on?” she said in a hushed voice.

<Take a look for yourself.>

Mewblade made her way to the precipice, overlooking a sight that was the sum of all her horrors. Of the things she had seen and experienced, she was bearing witness to one of the worst.

How does it get to this?

The Mewthree had joined her genetic parents, Mew and Mewtwo in one of North America’s most affluent cities. Above the sidewalks and streetlights rose skyscrapers, tall buildings of concrete, glass and metal. Billboards, ticker tapes and large screens displaying the latest in commercialized consumables covered most of the building faces. On any given day the hustle and bustle of the most photographed city square in the world was lively and inspiring, full of curious tourists and the daily motions of its busy residents. Today, the square had mutated into something sinister.

Below there was a congregation of people, motivated by a mob mentality. Immediately it was obvious to the Mew and the Mew clones that the Pokémon preservation movement no longer had any foothold here. North America had been a thing of contention among the Legendaries and Pokémon supporters alike. The Elite Four, the League, the Master had failed to maintain balance, even one of such tension. Mew seized up. The show was on.

A surge rippled through the crowd, the masses circling to make a jagged, oblong shape. Individual voices were almost indiscernible, though the motivation was obvious. Almost jubilatory cries of, “Get ‘em in there,” and, “Let’s get this started,” made their way their way to observers’ ears.

<Gods, help them,> Mewtwo whispered. Mewblade had not pegged Mewtwo as the religious type, but with the way things were going even she had to admit there was little anyone could hope for other than divine intervention.

From the writhing mass of hysterical flesh it produced a small cluster of defenseless Pokémon. There was a collection of city creatures, several confiscated pets, and the odd, illegally obtained battle monster. The group of Pokémon bunched together, all wanting to make their escape, though seeing no way in doing so. One brave Skitty made a break for it but a timely swipe from an aluminum bat sent it crippled to the ground. There was already a fair share of bruises and lacerations spread around, those with injuries bordering on life threatening already had a fatalistic outlook towards the given situation. With the insight that comes with being psychic, the family of Legendaries were painfully aware of the cruel aims of the crowd. The pulse resumed, acting as a single, multi-cellular organism of warped desires.

“Meep meep meep?” (What’s happening?) bleated the Mareep, having been pressed up against the back of a primed Ninetails. Usually a vain creature, the state of its nine luscious tails were no longer its primary concern.

“Kill them!” howled a voice. A resonating sound of approval went through the crowd. Recreational gear, construction equipment and all likes of potentially harmful apparati came to hand. The Pokémon were shocked, and instantly cried out in a panic, their pleas and cries reaching the ears of the onlookers some several stories above. Their pleas were nonsensical to humans, but Mew’s tears told all she understood every sound.

“What’s wrong with you guys?”

“Master! Master!” the Ninetails whined fearfully.

“Are you mad? You can’t do this!” protested another Pokémon, all to deaf ears.

Mew looked at Mewblade, hissing tensely, <You have to do something.>

Mewblade was motionless, fixated on the Pokémon and their peril. The indifference made Mew further persist. <Please, Mewblade. You have to save them.> Stone cold silence was her only response. The Mewthree did not even flinch as the pain-stricken scream from a pet Squirtle rang in her ears.

“Someone help us!”

“Help me!!!” shrieked one of the creatures dangling from a man’s hands, another person was preparing to light it on fire by means of a blowtorch.

<Mewblade!> Mew yelled into her daughter’s head. <Do something!!!> Mewtwo too joined in with the demands.

<Why aren’t you doing anything? Don’t you care?> he said, half expecting her to jump in. To not be discovered, Mewblade snapped back at them telepathically.

<I am *not* responsible for their well-being. Mew, you’re suppose to protect the Pokémon. Mewtwo, you’re suppose to control your humans. Instead of doing your jobs you expect me to come up with the solution for you! And guess what, I have none.>

There were options. Mewblade could just jump down there, rip into every person who dare even look at her the wrong way and save the Pokémon. Her Teleport skills were paltry in contrast to Mew’s, and even then it was obvious that a Pokémon would have intervened in the rescue. Anything tried risked exposure, something that a Legendary Pokémon would never do in front of a human unless dire. Maybe to Mew and Mewtwo the situation had reached that point, as for Mewblade, such a sight, while unwelcomed she could easily stomach.

<Can’t you at least bring them back?> murmured the Mew, still hopeful. Mewblade shook her bladed head, still unfazed by the humans’ brutality even as one of the men was laughing at the combustible Ivysaur.

<We all go through pain and loss,> Mewblade said in a stark tone of voice. An older man with garden shears had just taken off one of the Ninetail’s many tails. <They will die and forget that this ever happened. The fate of those unworthy of my skills is that they can truly forget.> To explain herself as to why she was not taking action, Mewblade added, <Anything more risks discovery, of to which it benefits nobody.> Mewtwo was frowning, saddened by what she said, and while understanding of her viewpoint he still felt obliged to try and pressure her into some sort of action. She must have been through something like this personally, and should have had a better suggestion for how to handle an ordeal of this caliber.

<Wouldn't you want to be saved if that was you down there?> Mewblade just simply turned away, angered by what Mewtwo was implying.

<Where are you going?> inquired Mew.

"To warn the Legends. I am telling them all to leave their territories, immediately. Humanity no longer has a control of itself." Mewblade began to prepare her Teleport, then slowly she glanced over her shoulder. Even in the night her parents could see the watery film across Mewblade's eyes. "They had it better than I did," she said then disappeared.

"With your announcement of the emergency scramble it means my documentation has become recently outdated. You needed to make that call. It's scary to know that people hate, actually *hate* the thought of Pokémon. Can you guys imagine that?" Coline turned her head to her Pokémon.

Currently she was cooking dinner for herself while her seven Pokémon were picking through theirs. Since their mouths were busy it left only Abbott and Eve free to communicate.

<"Kind of like how Mewblade hates people?"> Eve said cheekily, briefly catching a glimpse of Mewblade.

<"She does not hate people,"> Abbott corrected the Umbreon, always preferring to keep the information said about others accurate.

"You should be careful. I could turn out like the humans," Mewblade warned with a slight wickedness to her smirk. She had parked herself on one of the couches, watching Coline's Pokémon absentmindedly.

"Jumpluff jump pluff jumpluff pluff," (No you wouldn't,) laughed the walking cotton ball, finished with her meal. The enthusiastic Hopscotch, who had evolved into a Jumpluff, skipped onto a seat cushion next to Mewblade. The genuine behavior of Coline's team was refreshingly different from Mewblade's Legendary life.

"Turkey bowtie pasta," Coline quipped, having felt Mewblade's eyes leering into the back of the skull. She wanted to know what she was making, thus she answered, continuing to amuse herself in the kitchen while she did.

The kitchen had been one of Mewblade's many pet projects, fully equipped and intended for Coline and her Pokémon. At Coline's intense scolding, most of the items had been reclaimed or cleverly salvaged from houses where Mewblade was aware of someone's recent passing. With everything that there was available, there was a surprising lack of a microwave. Leftovers would have been greatly appreciated though it was not much of an option around the titanium composed Decider of Fate. Because Mewblade's blades were pure titanium she had some weird complications, sensitivities and allergies. Though unlikely to happen, a nitrogen rich environment could light her on fire. Sonic pulses could internally bruise anything around her skeleton. Almost anything that produced radiation beyond the standard background spectrum had the potential of making her titanium take up hazardous gamma radiation on its own. Mewblade had discovered this particular 'allergy' in an instance when a Celebi and her were trying to demolish a recently erected weapons-grade nuclear reactor.

Coline was not going to even hint that she wanted a device just so she could reheat her dinners. The mention was insensitive at best. Mewblade had disappeared for

over three days, to which only after Mewblade returned, dumped the previous microwave out the cavern, and then yelled at it for a good half hour did Coline know she would never see another one again. Apparently at one point, if you knew where to look, one could find several, grotesquely irradiated copies of her skeleton, a testimony to how much effort it took Mewblade to remove herself of the sickness. Of course any proof of that was long gone by now, as Mewblade, with the aid of an Entei ended up smelting her body parts in a geological hot spot. Other than death, Mewblade and her father shared the concern that one day their biological material would be found and used to make another. The radiation poisoning had not helped, and thus there would be no microwave food.

By now Coline's Pokémon were done eating and had reassembled to more comfortable positions, either around or on Mewblade. The couch was rather small for a group of its size, to the point that Coline's Pokémon were clambering all over it, hanging off of arm rests, and the back of the seating. Eve audaciously took her place on Mewblade's lap. The Mewthree would have shoved the Umbreon to the floor, though the determination of the Eevee evolution made the efforts fruitless.

"I still don't see how anyone would want to hurt them. They're so well-natured." Coline took her steaming bowl of pasta and sat on the couch across from Mewblade. A bad habit, Coline began to engage Mewblade in telepathic conversation while having food in her mouth. <"How are the other Legendaries handling the scramble?">

"They understand, but most of them and their fellows are anxious. Legendary Pokémon are territorial, partially because if we leave then the environment around it is directly affected. We cannot keep this up for long."

<"Things always get worse before they get better,"> Coline stated factually, playing the eternal optimist.

"How much worse? Outside of killing the Legendaries and engaging in global war, humanity has little further to fall." Mewblade sighed and looked out to the exit, pondering. If she was paying attention she would have noticed the intense look of guilt across her Chosen's face. Things truly always get better, but the bottom was what worried her. Eve shared her trainer's regret, sympathizing with the girl.

"I hope Ho-oh does not expect me to do all the resurrecting," grumbled Mewblade while scratching behind the Arcanine, Riley's ears. She rolled her eyes and faced Coline. The girl quickly changed her facial expression to reveal a smile, attempting to be reassuring and covering for her earlier appearance. The Lanturn, Chincey and the Azumarill, Maps caught the cover, which was odd since Coline was rarely deceptive towards her Legendary.

"You always think so tragically," Coline said, adding a fake laugh. Mewblade, being a poor judge of character did not even notice. She smirked slyly, then chuckled a bit before explaining herself.

"It has been that way since the day I was created. There is even a family history of it. I am sure that despite the difficulties we will get through this in the end. You always remind me of . . ." Mewblade turned her head, having sensed something, "of that." The Pokémon scrambled off of her, letting the Mewthree get ready for departure.

"Duty calls," chimed the teenager with a wave of farewell. Mewblade gave a wave then jetted out the entrance. Once out of earshot Maps turned to Coline with a bitter look.

"Marill marr marr marill marrilll?" (So when are we going to tell her?)

Already crying, Coline really did not want to answer the query. She stifled a few sobs then gave herself a small breather before speaking.

“There really isn’t any point anymore. After what happened yesterday . . .” A shuddering sob escaped her. “I can’t!” she bawled, fists clenching. “Any time we have left, if there is any at all now, I don’t want to spend crying about what’s going to happen. Mewblade doesn’t deserve that.” Her Pokémon gathered around her for comfort, sharing in Coline’s sorrow. Truth be told, the only one who did not know where the bottom was, was Mewblade.

“This is not happening!” Mewblade growled, pacing the length of her home at a furious rate. *What do I do?* she questioned herself, throwing her paws up. *Forget it. The other Legendaries are already there. I need to leave!*

“Not without me!” Mewblade was startled by a breathless, half-dressed Coline standing braced between the bedroom doorway. “You’re taking me with you!” Coline repeated herself, shouldering her white trench coat over her body. Eve joined her, stoically taking her place by her trainer’s side. The red eyes of the Umbreon were more intense than usual. Neither of them ever behaved this strangely, it unnerving the Mewthree.

“You have no idea how serious this is. It is too dangerous. You are staying out of it!” ordered Mewblade firmly.

Stamping her foot, Coline shot back with a, “No!” tears vivid in her eyes, just as much as her fear. Mewblade knew the situation was dire, but Coline could not possibly know.

Why does she look so afraid?

“You’re not going it alone. Not this time.” The teenager tried to show her bravado, though her lips were quivering at the edges. “Every Legendary needs their Chosen by their side, sometimes.” Curious by what she meant, Mewblade relaxed to hear her out. Put under pressure, and no way to really explain, Coline looked away, wringing her hands, letting the silence hang.

<Come on, out with it,> Eve urged from below. Working up the nerve, Coline took a pained inhale and spoke.

“Mewblade,” she grimaced, no longer able to conceal the fact, “it’s your time. Your crisis.”

“My . . . crisis . . .?” Mewblade’s voice trailed away, along with her thoughts.

Predicted from the dawn of time, often repeated through generations of their brethren, this was considered to be a Legendary’s most defining moment, a summary of all they were. Whether fate dictated, none were to say, but all Legendaries were aware that sooner or later fate would come to them with a challenge.

Mewblade knew what said challenges were, most of which she observed from afar. They were the private matters of the Legendaries involved, often to be resolved with the Master’s aid and that of a selected individual, most often the Legendary’s Chosen. Some instances did not warrant any interference. The Legendaries involved may have had an argument over territory that resulted in a light quarrel, though history tended to repeat itself, of which some disputes were severe. Not all involved conflicts between Legendaries, as some were caused by people, but many did. Usually the outcome of the

more dire circumstances, if positive, was accredited to the Chosen's force of will. Not having him or her there raised the chance of casualty, something considered potentially fatal depending on the participants.

The Legendaries approached these types of events with dread, and for good reason. While they rarely suffered losses to the level of death, these fights were taxing and wholly destructive. Adding to the fact that a good portion of these events eventually wound down to Legendaries fighting other Legendaries, it was no wonder they became colloquially known as 'the crisis'. Where most were not at the level that valued the use of the term, for Mewblade the word held a lot of foreboding.

During a truly worthy crisis, a participating Legendary would fight to their absolute brink of capability. Often they injured, maimed, or even killed one another in the process. It was one of the most darkest traits of a Legend. Come the time of a crisis, one of their fellows was potentially sent up to the chopping block. Mewblade, being the Decider of Fate was also the killer Legendary. A fight with her was to the death, whether it be the life of her enemy or that of her own, someone would perish. There was little relief in knowing that the Master would be present in some sense, or that her Chosen had already offered to be by the Mewthree's side. She was going into this, knowing she had a high chance of dying, the realization absolutely frightening her.

This is not my time. This is not my crisis. I am not ready! I am not ready to do this! screamed Mewblade's terrified thoughts. The advantage of being warned several minutes in advance was no advantage at all. Coline and Eve watched as Mewblade shook, honestly afraid to face a fight with a fatal outcome. *Am I the good one? The bad one? How long has everyone known?! I am going to die. I am going to die. I am going to die,* her mind continued to natter.

Mewblade was ten years old, her age practically infinitesimal to that of every other Legendary. The other Legendaries were older, more experienced, but she was the deadliest one of them, the most effective at destroying her adversaries. What scenario justified the extreme of sending her in instead of anyone else? Her fear of dying was beginning to get to her. It was intense enough that running away was becoming a real option in her mind.

<"It's going to be okay,"> Eve said, trying to soothe the child Legendary.

"It is not okay!" Mewblade yelled at the Umbreon in a complete outburst. "You have no idea what I am about to go through!" she hollered further. Like the pair of Chosen had guessed, telling Mewblade much of anything in advance was completely pointless. Eve would not back down, and Coline would not either. Mewblade had to do this, and being that they were her Chosen it was their responsibility to support her through the crisis, whether the Mewthree liked it or not.

"Mewblade, listen to me!" Coline yelled loudly enough that she instantly silenced Mewblade's thoughts. "As your Chosen, and you as my Legendary I am *not* going to just stand by you and do nothing!" shouted the girl, finger stabbing to the floor. "This may be your crisis, and we know what could happen but if you do it alone, you fail and that's it!" Coline swiped her hands in front of her, gesticulating an absence of things, then let her shoulders drop. "I'll do whatever I can for you. I don't want to lose you. Anything to help."

<“Anything to help,”> Eve repeated. The human and Pokémon were passionate about supporting their Legendary. Mewblade was really the only choice for this crisis, and she needed to be there to do what the other Legendaries were unable to.

“I believe in you and always will, no matter what. You can do this, Mewblade. It is your crisis, just for you. You were destined to do this.”

“Okay.” Mewblade was not going to question her Chosen’s insight. Whatever it was, however she knew, again, fate acted in mysterious ways. If it was her time, then so be it. At the very least, Mewblade had a Chosen by her side, which usually meant the odds were in her favor. An unsupported Legendary fared poorly in most cases, and a Chosen was usually symbolic of their Legendary’s spirit. Mewblade was most likely not the aggressor, but the defender, and with Coline and Eve there to support her it gave Mewblade the confidence that she could win.

“Ready?” Coline asked, making sure Mewblade was up to the challenge. The fiendish Mewthree smirk was more than enough confirmation that Mewblade was ready. She would face this head on if she had to.

Mewblade, Coline and Eve appeared on the uninhabited portion of Indigo Plateau. An audience of all the Kanto and Johto Legendaries was assembled with one new addition amongst them.

<“I see you have finally decided to grace us with your presence, Letum Falcifer. Things would just not be the same without you.”>

Having never been addressed by such a title, Mewblade was unsure of how to respond. This Legendary was already making her leery and it had barely spoken, not as if it had much of a mouth to speak with. Barely five feet tall, the cadmium red creature did not seem all that intimidating, just strange. The spikes evenly placed along its head and peg leg knees paled to Mewblade’s bladed assemble. Her black and purple fur gave a powerful impression in contrast to the other Legendary’s muted brown, cyan and orange russet complexion. The jewels on the creature’s forehead, back and front were a mingling swathe of constantly changing purple, blue and green hues. The four tentacles finished its alien appearance. Mewblade knew well of this Legendary, though having never met she would not have guessed what it was at first glance.

<“To reintroduce myself, I am Deoxys. Call my nature by what you may, but I am the Legendary of Outer Space,”> the Deoxys said, a smile in its eyes. Mewblade knew it by a different title, ‘The Legendary Space Virus’. Its power extended beyond the atmosphere; although, to its more passive nature all it ever did was protect the void beyond habitability. This Deoxys on the other hand had strayed, hence why the current players were present.

<“We’re here, Deoxys. We answered your challenge. Come out with it,”> barked Entei to Deoxys’ back. It ignored him completely, fixated solely on the Mewthree. The intensity of its stare made Mewblade nervous. Deoxys had no Chosen to speak of, but she did and Coline was vulnerable on the field.

<Stay behind me,> she whispered to Coline and Eve.

<“You harvested two of your sub-Legendaries, a vile crime against Pokémon,”> said Ho-oh, telepathy widely projected to the group. Mewblade let Ho-oh speak, since it was still her guardian and also the self-appointed leader of the Legendaries. It knew the rules as well as she did, so the only responsibility Mewblade had was to wait for the

silently commanded opportunity to strike. Judgement for a Legendary usually came with an explanation.

<“How am I evil when Letum did more of the same?”> smirked Deoxys with its inverted black and white colored eyes.

Mewblade was already starting to become visibly agitated by the constant misuse of Latin honorifics. ‘Letum Falcifer,’ loosely translated meant, ‘Death Carrying a Scythe’. It was an insult at best, as the word ‘Letum’ could also translate to mean ‘annihilation and destruction’. Mewtwo was to the defense of his daughter.

<“She is addressed as, ‘Mewblade: Decider of Fate!’”>

<“You’re corrupted with age and isolation!”> Articuno squawked, adding her opinion.

<“Am I truly?”> Deoxys spoke, feigning ignorance as it mocked them. To Mewblade it added its own personal, snide remark. <After all, I am not one of the Fatalis Dators who have this habit of laying with Chaos.>

“Why you . . .!” Mewblade snarled, outright infuriated before catching herself. No one else had heard Deoxys, making the outburst uncalled for. The only two individuals who would have grasped why Mewblade was flustered was Coline and her Umbreon, and upon a quick glance the girls did not seem all that surprised.

<“I am not the one who is corrupted, but they most definitely are.”> With a spread of its tentacles several screens came into view to a resounding gasp. On the screens the once hibernating Hoenn Legendaries appeared. A psychic could clearly tell that their minds were vacant of any thought outside of destroying anything that stood in their way. The virus lived up to its reputation; the missing Legends were infected.

“Mew mew mew. Mew mew mew mew!” (That’s what happened. It’s why they disappeared!)

<“Let them go!”> commanded the second oldest Pokémon present. <“They are not your toys to play with.”>

<“Actually,”> Deoxys began with a wicked tone, <“they are to be yours. Seeing as it is difficult to control strong and aware Legends, I decided to take those of the Hoenn region. Having them is halfway to controlling this world, and all life. You would all complete it, but you,”> Deoxys directed its gaze to Mewblade, <“are the greatest obstacle here. A Fate is too strong-willed to control; although, your energy would be a great asset.”> Refusing to humor it, the Mewthree simply narrowed her eyes.

<“And you’re really stupid to threaten us on your own. Attack it!”> screeched Zapdos, readying himself to fly at Deoxys. Moltres broadsided him with her wing.

<Zapdos, if you want to live through this you better stop what you’re doing,> warned the Titan of Fire. Deoxys was unaware of their conversation but was definitely pleased.

<“I have done nothing to you. Only Letum Falcifer makes the call here; besides, I have no interest in weaklings such as you.”>

<“Say that again and I’ll shock you until your eyes pop from your skull, you faceless freak!”> Deoxys just ignored the loud-mouthed bird.

<“My only interest is in the Fate, and only the Fate.”>

By all logical standpoints, the group of Legendaries could easily takeout the Deoxys, even without Mewblade’s help. The Hoenn Legendaries would probably be controllable if Mewblade distracted them while utilizing her Chosen’s gifts, having

Coline empathetically calm down the Pokémon. Mewblade could then join her fellows afterwards in case they needed her to deliver a finishing blow. For once Mewblade had an almost conflict neutral plan, making this crisis seem laughably easy. Five of those present knew it would not be so pleasantly simple, even as Mewblade lauded her idea.

“I agree with Zapdos, which is rare, but his logic is simple and effective,” Mewblade said, arms casually folded across her breast plate. Zapdos was a bit surprised by the compliment, since he and Mewblade differed on so many things. “Myself and my Chosen can calm the Legendaries. You all have fought before. I am not needed and have no stakes in this fight.”

<“You forgot one thing . . .”> Everything went awry before Mewblade could even figure out what was happening. The moment Deoxys spilled its sentence there was calamity on the field. From across the grass came tentacles that latched onto Coline, ripping her away from Mewblade’s protective reach. Everyone screamed the girl’s name, yet Mewblade was unheard. She should have been the loudest but was so stunned that she could not even bring herself to whisper. In the middle of the circle there was Deoxys with Coline wrapped up in its four tentacles. Unafraid, the girl thrashed and hollered, calling Deoxys names.

<“Without your Chosen your plan fails at conception,”> Deoxys said, mocking Mewblade’s predicament. Though most of the Legendaries had attacks prepared, none could hit Deoxys due to Coline’s close proximity. Mewblade was able to heal any injury, of to which was not the concern, the actual worry was the risk of harming another Legendary’s Chosen, an action worthy of a death sentence. Deoxys was to exploit two of Mewblade’s weaknesses, one being her obligation to Pokémon Law, and the other being her love for her Chosen. To bring Mewblade’s focus to itself was exactly what Deoxys wanted.

<“And if I were to harm your Chosen, then by law you are to punish the thing that did said asset harm. Now I can be reasonable.”>

“Don’t listen to it!” Coline shouted to the Mewthree, to which Deoxys promptly gagged her. Despite having something impeding her verbal speech, she still called out in telepathy. <“You can’t stake my life on this. Don’t agree!”>

<Any more projections from you and there simply won’t be anything left to project with,> Deoxys warned the girl, making its threat evident with a further tightening of its binds.

With her Chosen at the enemy’s mercy, Mewblade had no choice but to listen. “Go on, Deoxys. What do you propose?” Almost on the verge of a psychotic breakdown, Mewblade was struggling to restrain the very fiber of her being from running into the center and mangling the virus.

<“It’s quite simple. Either we fight on your conditions,”> Deoxys suggested, a tentacle awkwardly placed on the inside of Coline’s waistband, <“or on mine. I am pretty sure that a non-virgin is of lesser importance to your duties overall.”> The maniacal intent of its words were clouding the remainder of Mewblade’s reasoning. Her Chosen was pure, untouched, something of which the Mewthree refused to see violated.

“Don’t you dare!”

<“It’s your choice. You know the sacrifice,”> the Pokémon grinned with its eyes, enjoying its maliciousness. Coline was attempting to thrash about and dislodge the unwelcomed presence. Her baby blues went to the Mewthree, pleading to not let herself

be misled by Deoxys. She would do anything to not let the predictions come to pass, even if it meant losing all essence of her purity and her life. It was a sacrifice she was willing to make, but not one Mewblade would ever consider agreeing to.

“Fine! I will fight you on your conditions, so let my Chosen go!” Mewblade growled, sacrificing a field advantage for whatever Deoxys would have in mind.

<“You have made a wise decision, Letum Falcifer. Your humanity is a welcome.”> The space virus released the girl, to only have her stand there and sulk. For what had just happened, one would think she would try to get as far away from the monster as possible.

<You okay?> Eve was concerned for her friend and what she had been through.

<No,> Coline replied darkly.

<“The arrangement is simple. You are to join me in combat, in my domain. If the rest like, they can see to the others, but you are mine to contend with. Do we have an agreement?”> It was not like Mewblade really had a choice.

“I agree with your terms,” answered the Mewthree, lips drawn back and paws angrily shaking, feeling like she was suckered into something terrible.

<“You have made a good decision,”> Deoxys spoke in the most poisonous of ways. <“Meet me up above the atmosphere at half to the hour.”> With its plan set in motion, Deoxys shot off into the sky.

Twenty minutes was not a lot of time to think things through. Mostly Mewblade was wondering what she had gotten herself into. Unable to stop the event herself, Coline collapsed to the grass, so mad that she forgot how to cry.

<And things come to pass . . . again,> murmured Lugia to Moltres, who nodded her head in turn just as Ho-oh stepped in to issue instructions.

<“A deal has been made and it is up to us to decide our parts. Attacking other Legendaries is impermissible in almost all circumstances. If you fight, then it is at a cost.”>

“Bii bii?” (A cost?) whimpered the tiny Celebi.

<“If we fight we will be punished?”> Articuno turned her plumed head to the Mewthree.

“That is correct,” she said with a nod. Mewblade reasoned that as this was her crisis then most happenings were to be dictated by her. Addressing the assembly purposefully, it was only she who could waive the consequences of the upcoming combat.

“Who of you wishes to fight?” The response was adamant, fully in support. They would take up Mewblade’s crisis and make it their own.

<“I do!”> Zapdos volunteered openly.

<“We do!”> Entei spoke for himself and the other Legendary Dogs.

“As the Decider of Fate, I formally allow the Legendary collective of Kanto and Johto to engage in preservation combat against the Legendaries of Hoenn. Furthermore, all combat damage dealt by either party is to be considered self-defensive and thus not punishable under Pokémon Law.” With her approval set they were all excused to fight as they pleased. For Mewblade this meant she could permissibly ignore the urgency that came when the Legendary Pokémon were in duress.

Mewtwo parted from the main circle, stepping into his own of rapidly forming screens. <“I am not going to disagree with the fighting, but I see it best if I remain here as

a guide,”> he said from the middle of the psychically generated visualizations. <“I would be more helpful to everyone by warning of incoming attacks and managing the overall well-being of those involved. At least this way we will be able to track our progress.”> The suggestion was an intelligent one. Years ago Mewtwo had intended to create a Pokémon army of his own to rule the world. The Master derailed him from his plans, but this experience showed that Mewtwo could manage Pokémon easily, despite his position of being the Legendary that guided humanity. His support would be a greater gain to the rest rather than waste his skills in combat with a single Legendary. Coline was close and could see Mewtwo optimizing the screens for the fights, forming them into graphics and heads-up-displays with his mind.

Currently the screens were displaying live video of the Hoenn Legendaries, along with their recent stats, including health, Pokémon Power, energy and perceived level. All of the screens were devoted to several clusters of Legendaries. The viewing screen devoted to the sky dwelling dragon, Rayquaza and the Tidal Twins, the sleek, bird-like Latias and Latios was of particular interest. The stats for them read their health and energy to be 100%, with a perceived level of eighty-nine for Rayquaza and thirty-eight and thirty-two for Latias and Latios respectfully. Level was comparative to how humans judged age and development. The highest level was one hundred, which was based on the best output of a particular individual in comparison to the rest of their species. Mewtwo’s results were really just educated guesses, using the sub-Legendaries to gauge the development of their Legendaries. The numbers meant really nothing to the generally non-detailed oriented Legends. All that mattered to them was stalling long enough so Mewblade could do her job. At the moment she was giving a nod of approval, appreciating the help that Mewtwo’s strategizing mind offered, finding it to be a good idea if he just ran on it a bit more.

<“Moltres, Articuno, Zapdos, due to Kyogre and Groudon’s sheer size, you best take them on.”> The three agreed for once, respecting Mewtwo’s guided opinion. <“Entei, Suicune, Raikou, your typing and ground level agility would be best against the Regis.”> They did not disagree. The Regis, Regirock, Regice and Registeel were slow moving monoliths for Pokémon. <“Celebi and Mew, you two should probably figure out how to stop Jirachi. Your movesets are the broadest.”>

“Mew.” (Right)

“Bii bii.” (Gotcha’.)

<“Lugia, that leaves only you,”> Mewtwo frowned, worried about the Titan’s odds. Ho-oh would be of no use to anyone, leaving Lugia to fight Rayquaza, Latias and Latios on his own.

<“I will be fine, Mewtwo. As Rayquaza lives in the sky, and the twins in the sea, I am the only suitable option.”> The others humbly accepted Lugia’s view. <“I will admit that it will be a struggle. I trust you will guide us well.”>

<“I will do my best,”> Mewtwo spoke, bowing his head.

<“So fifteen minutes and then they’re on the move?”> Raikou asked, needing clarification. The Hoenn Legendaries had been rather still, yet to become mobile.

Ho-oh offered probably a rare, worthy contribution. <“For those who wish it, I can bring you to the fight.”>

<“Actually, Ho-oh, Lugia and I would like to stay just a little bit longer,”> Moltres swiftly refused, having something else in mind.

<“Why would you do that?”> Zapdos asked, eager to leave. Moltres’ threatening stare forced Zapdos to correct himself. <“Great idea, actually. We’ll see you there.”> Moltres smiled, letting it be clear that Zapdos should know when to keep his beak shut. <“To the battle!”> he gave a cackle, lightning sparking all around. The roars, chirps and meows of hearty enthusiasm sounded out. Ho-oh took that as a sign to begin, leaving Mewblade’s influencers, along with Lugia to remain on the field. Coline was still slumped over on her knees in a depressive state, though the vigor returned suddenly once it was obvious everyone else had left.

“You never should have agreed!” the girl hollered across the field. Mewblade was taken aback. She had saved her Chosen’s life. It was no way to thank her.

“I would never sacrifice you!” Mewblade protested in her defense. “I did what I had to do to make sure you were safe.” Moltres and Lugia looked on with the saddest of eyes. Back when they were Chosen they too wish they could stand up for their Legendaries. Picking up on their emotions, Coline reworded what she had said.

“All you ever do is sacrifice. You sacrifice your happiness, your life, your soul. And here we are, and you’re doing it again!” the girl blubbered loudly. “I was okay with it. Oh, Mewblade!” Coline cried and flung herself chest deep into Mewblade’s arms. She grabbed a hold for everything she was worth, scared that this would be the last time they would ever touch. Mewblade gingerly embraced the girl, unsure of herself and what could be done. No one was willing to intrude, leaving Mewblade to cope on her own.

“It will be okay,” Mewblade shushed the girl, petting her hair while the whole time trying to silence her own mind’s concerns. She had inadvertently agreed to her own demise, and there was little she could do to even convince herself that things would be okay. Lost in thought, Mewblade was caught off-guard by her Chosen.

“Mmm?” Coline’s lips parted from her own, having displaced Mewblade’s thoughts entirely. The kiss was sudden and out-of-place. Coming back to reality she caught a glimpse of Coline’s sad smile, feeling her touch as the girl’s hand drew slowly along the Mewthree’s cheek. Despite having little romantic experience Mewblade knew the differences in a kiss. Having once been forced against her will, this was completely different, a sign of desperation from someone she loved, a gift that she was not going to reject.

“Whatever happens, I want you to remember me. Even if you die, you live, please don’t forget me,” pleaded the girl, so helpless in Mewblade’s hold. She was the best thing in Mewblade’s world, of which she was convinced few things would ever replace her.

“I would never forget you,” Mewblade said, frowning.

The level of randomness continued to prevail, tension running high, and time too short that if things were not said and done now, they likely never would be. With that in mind Coline blurted out, “I love you!” almost expecting rejection because of her sudden admission. Mewtwo and Mew watched on, having thought them to be more like friends than anything else. Lugia and Moltres on the other hand knew. Mewblade was prematurely cut-off as Coline launched into a torrential spiel of words. Maybe it was the fear of Mewblade not reciprocating, but she poured her heart out to the Mewthree anyway.

“I always wanted to be yours. Your only. I don’t care for boys or parties, or stupid things that aren’t important; or who I could make a family with, it never mattered to me. If it would mean I would grow old, childless and have only you, then I could take that to

my grave and be happy. When I'm with you, I'm happy, and when I'm not, I'm miserable. You are all I ever think about. Whatever happens, I . . . I will always be yours," Coline finished with a sob, hands clutched tightly around Mewblade's left paw.

"No, Coline. I don't want that for you," Mewblade spoke, distressed that Coline was willing to pledge her human happiness to a terminal Legendary. "I would never ask for that."

"It's not much of a sacrifice if it's for you," Coline said, her smile a saddened one. She never liked to see Mewblade upset, brushing a loose tear away from the Mewthree's eye. It was shocking, exciting and desperately wanted despite the taboo of what such a relationship meant. Being Chosen to a Legendary was a supportive role, anything beyond that was frowned upon. The remaining Pokémon were not going to pass judgement, remaining quiet as the pair embraced.

If she let go, there was a chance that Mewblade would never touch Coline again. Her paw wrapped tightly around the small, human hands, time too short and precious to make her want to miss a second. The line was crossed mere minutes before Mewblade's full-fledged crisis would begin and only because Coline realized that they had no more time.

Could I stay this way with her for just a little longer? Emotions were a horribly stupid thing, encompassing all aspects of life's relations. It was emotions that were making her wish for the opportunity to just walk away from it all, escape with her Chosen and not have to face her commitments. Eyelids closed, Mewblade was to accept what was to happen, what Coline had said to her. The human, as a sign of devotion had made a sacrifice, and it would not be long until Mewblade would make one of her own. Ho-oh was counting the minutes, yet to interrupt but knowing it would have to soon. The Legendaries were talking amongst themselves, casually observing.

<Reciprocate, you stupid thing,> Moltres hissed between herself and the others, not actually directing her private telepathy towards Mewblade though the comment was about her. The human was able to relate, hoping Mewblade would since she had yet to do so. Sometimes the nagging of Mewblade's thoughts were a bit beyond the girl's perception. A being that could multitask their own concepts tended to carry multiple ideas at any given moment. It was up until Mewblade squeezed one of Coline's hands tightly did the Mewthree manage to surmise how she felt.

"You mean the world to me. I will give up everything for you if it would make you smile," Mewblade said with a finishing sigh, receiving a cheery glow from the girl. Their natures were not all that different when it came to how they felt about each other. Coline was the more assertive one, with Mewblade passive in return. Moltres' urging glare further encouraged the Mewthree to use a set of words that a Legendary would rarely ever utter. "I love you," murmured the Mewthree, shy and sheepish with her delivery though completely truthful. Coline did not need any more confirmation than that. The girl wrapped her arms around Mewblade's shoulders, lips touching for however long it would have felt. The world could wait.

Aware of the fading seconds, Ho-oh had given them enough time to stave off the inevitable. Eventually it would have to break apart the Mewthree and her Chosen's happiness, a tinge of guilt in its mind. The moment the world would give Mewblade a small sample of joy, there would always be something to steal it all away.

<“Decider of Fate,”> Ho-oh quietly spoke Mewblade’s title. Coline glanced over, head nestled against Mewblade’s fur with Mewblade hugging the girl tightly. Normally any expression of even the most mundane of human characteristics embarrassed Mewblade, and there she was, unabashed by the loving gesture. Of those that would mind, only Ho-oh cared at all, of which it still felt guilty. <“It’s almost time,”> it mentioned, getting Mewblade’s attention.

“Okay.” Mewblade took a step back from her lover, paws squeezing Coline’s shoulders for some extra reassurance. Duty bound like always, it took the Mewthree little effort to get into the mindset of being the Upholder of Pokémon Law.

“I believe in you,” Coline spoke her words of encouragement. With Ho-oh bringing mention to the time constraints, Mewtwo was next to get Mewblade’s attention. What he said was of the highest importance since it directly affected the outcome of her fight with Deoxys.

<“This is space that you’re dealing with. Be careful.”> Mewblade’s reply did nothing to convince Mewtwo that she understood him.

“I know how dangerous space is,” she said, seeming to take it lightly.

<“I really don’t think you do.”> Mewtwo began to elaborate further. <“In space there is no air, no pressure. It is a vacuum. Adding in gravity and orbit, you would be forced to compensate your flight speed to some seventeen thousand miles per hour.”> The number was a lot but something which Mewblade had learned to exceed when trying to navigate around the Earth’s some twenty-five thousand mile circumference. She was not a marathon flier by any means, and persistent energy usage just so she could stay centered in space would be noticeably detrimental to her overall energy pool. Already Mewtwo’s words were hitting home for her.

<“Any wandering space debris moves just as fast, and will shoot through you easily. Our atmosphere protects us from most of the impacts. Your biggest worry will be the sun itself. Any part of you exposed to it is instantly affected by both irradiation and heat radiation. Your body temperature, if not protected, will be an additional three hundred degrees centigrade. Anything not exposed to the heat will be absolute zero. Flying in the night zone will kill you in seconds if you’re not protected. You may get some background heating, but you can’t count on it.”>

Coline did not want to say, “I told you so.” This was not the sort of game she personally wanted to play, or anyone else. Instead she whimpered her Legendary’s name, clinging to the Mewthree out of worry.

<“All of space emits background radiation. The advantage of Earth’s atmosphere and its magnetosphere is that it deflects most of this from space and the sun. No protection and you receive fatal radiation doses in less than a few minutes. A well-timed solar flare will probably instantly kill you.”> Mewblade was keenly aware of all of this, but put into context by her father, it was a scary concept.

“Mew mew. Mew mew mew mew mew mew mew, mew mew mew mew mew mew.”
(Don’t worry. My Barriers have always been particularly good, and they should give you a head start.) Mew’s aura spread around Mewblade, creating an almost skintight, protective layer. “Mew mew mew mew.” (I think that will do.) The Mewthree received her mother’s work before fusing her energy into it so she could keep the Barrier circulating constantly.

<“Thank you,”> Mewblade expressed her gratitude. There was no air in her Barrier as to why she was using telepathy now.

<“A piece of advice,”> Lugia said, looking at the Mewthree. <“No matter what happens, you are never truly alone.”> Confusing, she still took the advice to heart.

<“I will be watching you the whole time to cheer you on. Hope it brings you luck,”> smiled Coline, blowing a kiss to the Legendary she loved. Mewblade was making preparations to leave.

<“Eve, if anything happens . . .”>

<“Way ahead of you, MB. I’ll watch her.”>

<“Always so negative. Go and kick Deoxys’ orange butt,”> Moltres cheered Mewblade on, adding a little cackle.

<“I will,”> Mewblade flashed her titanium white teeth, grinning at the concept of a fight. While afraid of dying, the conflict driven Mewthree instinct would propel her far. Aura flared, Mewblade raced high into the sky to meet her opponent. She sped off into the atmosphere, through levels of extreme heat and cold. It was time to see the world from a different perspective. Below on terra firma, Moltres spoke openly to the other Titan.

<“I hope Mewblade doesn’t fall as my Decider of Fate did. It was a painful event,”> she twittered depressively. Mewtwo looked over, not even bothering to ask what she was talking about. Right now the pair needed to be at their fights.

<“Are you two ready to be Teleported?”>

<“Uh, yes,”> answered Moltres.

<“Yes, Mewtwo.”>

Mewtwo used his abilities to Teleport the birds to their designated locations. The screens confirmed that they were safe. Mew was the only one remaining on the field that had yet to go to her mini-crisis. The little Legendary needed no prompting, also able to Teleport herself when she wished.

“Mew mew,” (Take care,) the Mew said with a smile and a twirl, then Teleported to the aid of Celebi. The field had become even emptier, Mewtwo, Eve, Coline and Ho-oh the only four to remain.

Mewtwo was running down a timer, one that would signal when the Hoenn Legendaries would start to move on their destructive paths. He had set a viewpoint near the equally motionless Deoxys, though there was no sight of Mewblade. The Mewtwo proceeded to instruct the other Legendaries in the meantime.

<“You all will notice small groupings of my energy near your locations. I am using them to view you remotely, so do not be alarmed. The energy close to your heads,”> most of the Kanto and Johto Legendaries drew their attention to the invisible energy, <“is for your telepathy. I will direct my thoughts to you personally but to spare your resources and attention, project to that source instead. I will receive your messages and redirect them if needed.”>

<“Very good. You have thought of everything,”> complimented Entei, the broadcast spread to the others, giving them confidence in Mewtwo’s handling of the situation.

<“Check, check,”> went Suicune, this followed by Zapdos and the less confident Celebi.

<“Mewblade, are you hearing me?”>

<“Yes, I have received you,”> Mewblade responded as she passed through the final remnants of the exosphere, shedding yet another Barrier in favor of the final one Mew gave her. She built three points of energy for Mewtwo to detect. His response was fast, taking over the clusters so he could view his daughter from his place down on the ground. The thing that Mewblade preferred to be in sight of was Deoxys. Sensing it was not a problem, its aura was unrestrained, making the vacuum reek because of it, but in the vast blackness of space, it was a daunting prospect to try and catch a glimpse of the space virus.

<“Daddy does love to make sure his little girl lives, doesn’t he? After all, if he kept an eye on his other two daughters he wouldn’t have lost them so easily.”>

<“Shut it,”> Mewblade snarled across the emptiness, now able to see her enemy. Deoxys was smirking coyly. How it loved to rile her. She was so easy to tease. Mewtwo heard and did his best to coax his ‘little girl’.

<Don’t let it get to you. Doing so affords it an advantage, and it already has enough as is.> Mewblade was aware of that fact since she could physically bear witness to Deoxys’ complete disregard for any form of protection.

<I still have more energy than it does,> Mewblade muttered, trying to find a source of optimism in her predicament. It was a bad time to mention this, but Mewtwo had to state the facts.

<That is if Deoxys is only relying on itself. You have the energy of all the Hoenn Legendaries to account for, Jirachi especially has a high yield. That doesn’t explain all of it. Deoxys is grabbing energy from another source as well, I’ve yet to figure out how much though.>

<Then the other Legendaries have their work cut out for them.>

<“Time’s up!”> Deoxys announced to its waiting Legendary audience.

<“They’re moving. Weaken them or knock them out, but don’t kill them,”> Mewtwo instructed the fighters, them taking to advantageous positions in their assaults. With so many combatants, Mewblade would mostly be left on her own, one of the ironic inconveniences of having a powerful Recover ability.

<“Fly by Groudon’s waist. He will have problems attacking you there,”> Mewtwo said to the slow moving Articuno. <“Go for their backs. They’re frontal assault types, nothing else,”> Mewtwo further guided the trio of Dogs in their fight against the Regis. Deoxys had yet to strike Mewblade, so their fight was nothing to be concerned with. Neither of them had moved beyond circling one another, sizing the enemy. Admittedly there was some fear involved. The virus was knowledgeable of the Mewthree’s fighting capacity, and she knew nothing of its capabilities. She was unsure of where to start.

<“Are we going to fight or what?!”> snapped the Mewthree, not willing to make the first move. Attacking first gave the defender time to prepare a counter-attack.

<“I would enjoy seeing your failings, Strangelet,”> Deoxys giving her the name of a cluster of subatomic particles known as ‘quarks’. The particular cluster which it referred to was composed of only one of the seven types of quarks, these ones being the

strange quark. In some fields of science it was considered to be anti-matter, possibly the universe ending dark matter. The deadly and destructive connotations that Deoxys used to address Mewblade were irritating. Figuring that it rather talk, she proposed the only viable option.

<“How about you die instead?!”> she yelled, making her move.

There is no sound in space, being that sound is a product of particles vibrating with one another, creating an audible resonance in the ear drum. Coline could only imagine the noises that Mewblade and Deoxys were making as they collided. Horrible sounds of struggling Pokémon could be heard coming from Mewtwo’s screens, making it hard to fathom that the wise and powerful immortals could be so primal. Lugia was the most obscene of them all; Aeroblasts accompanied by ear piercing screeches. Hardly becoming all considered as Eve quietly pointed out the Regis and their noises.

<“And that’s why computers are evil!”> she remarked, overhearing Regice offensively blurt something in binary. Coline quickly realized that for once, she could not understand them.

“Why can’t I understand them?” mumbled the teenager. While most of the vocalizations were those of simple posturing, she could still hear Zapdos screech commands, just as much as she could tell when the Dogs were barking plans. From the Hoenn side, even the comparatively young Latias and Latios were only partially discernable; the rest of them were not. Emotionally the Hoenn Legendaries were blank, and even verbally they were just as opaque.

<“I was hoping I could, but they make no sense to me,”> Mewtwo added distractedly, more focused on Lugia at the moment. The Pokémon had just successfully defended himself from a bombardment of cyclonic Dragon Rages.

<“Young Chosen,”> Ho-oh spoke, though Coline did not know why it bothered as it seemed generally disinterested in anything except for its Mewblade conspiracies.

<“They slumbered for quite some time, and are so ancient that few have been replaced more than a handful of times. With awareness of themselves, you will understand.”>

<Interesting,> Eve said, finding the answer to be suspicious. Ho-oh knew too much to not be involved. The information from the bird was useless to Coline on the other hand. She could do nothing with it, elevating her feelings of worthlessness.

“Isn’t there something I can do other than stand here?!”

“Unown?”

“Ahh, jeez!” Coline screamed at the floating, human head sized eyeball that had just appeared in front of her. “Don’t do that!” she yelled at it further. The eyeball with the vague shape of an exclamation mark tilted its form, not certain with what it did wrong. Mewtwo would have looked himself, evidently the overly concerned Mewthree noticed first. The loss of focus awarded her with a shoulder and hip dislocation, courtesy of Deoxys.

<Coline is fine. Just focus on yourself.> Mewblade had already healed herself and was moving on. To Coline Mewtwo turned and addressed her. <“Why is an Unown here?”>

“Good question . . .” As if on cue, an Unown in the shape of a question mark appeared. Coming up with an idea based on the notion that their appearances coincided with something said, Coline rattled off the alphabet. On command, three sets worth of

Unown materialized, all streaming out of a recently opened dimensional tear. Taking up the rear was a Pikachu, one which Mewtwo instantly recognized.

<“The Master’s Pikachu,”> he spoke, sounding more awed than what should have been expected. In case of a crisis, the Master almost always intervened in some way.

“Pika pikachu, pi pika pi pika pikachu,” (That’s right, and we’re here to help,) boasted the yellow rodent. “Pikachu pi pikachu pika pi pika chu pikachu pika pikachu.” (Exclamation and Question told us something big was happening.) Unown were intrinsically linked to all scopes of reality and not, sharing the same conscience likened to the hive mentality of insect colonies. The two punctuating Unown were an exception and could mingle between sets. They were rarer than the rest of the alphabetical Unown, as to why Ash had only these two in his collection. They were exotic, but less necessary and unlikely to upset any balance.

The three sets wavered up and down, agreeing with Pikachu. Their empathetic natured ways, while easy to understand were too great in such numbers. Eager to communicate they were swiftly dizzying the girl. Mewtwo too found their disjointed hovering to be eerie. The Unown understood that their behavior was considered strange, choosing to cluster into three oscillating circles around Coline. The sets took on alternate roles of spelling and speaking, never more than a few individuals at a time communicating. Their actions were inspiring, enough that Ho-oh was touched by their gesture as it watched.

<“Our three sets are complete, but so many are not. A sickness has gone through us and when one falls, it spells doom for the rest. They cannot fight the poison.”> There was a permeating sense of loss among the Unown.

<“You’re kidding. All of them? But that’s . . .”> Mewtwo trailed off, having no idea how many Unown there happened to be. <“Mewblade, how many Unown exist?”> His projections were spread between the Decider of Fate and those present on the field. Mewblade was tailing Deoxys, a Shadow Ball just missing it. She was preoccupied, not willing to waste her thoughts on a question she saw little validity in answering.

<“There is a lot, and unless you are drowning in them it is not worth caring about.”>

<“The seven dozen here say that the rest of them are infected.”>

Mewblade braced her left paw on her energy cannon, releasing a second Shadow Ball that just nicked Deoxys. She let it go for a moment.

<“That is impossible. Do you know that their number is practically countless? The last time I checked I stopped counting at a couple million.”> Mewblade began pursuing Deoxys again.

<“It only takes one. Alone we are nothing, but as a set we are a whole. As much of a Legend as you or the Decider of Fate.”> Ho-oh’s bob of its feathered head was a show of respect to their statement. The Unown, travelers of dimensions, realities, dreams. They existed through intention and thought. A single Unown was harmless, but a full set was commendable. For Deoxys to possess them all took a skill only it could utilize, the space virus was flaunting its most darkest of talents.

Coline had faith in her Legendary, and now she had nothing to believe in. Deoxys on its own was scary enough, but with it feeding off of the energy pool of Jirachi, and now the Unown, it could go on forever, just as long as it did not suffer a strike. There was

no guarantee that Deoxys knew Recover, though if it did then there was likely no chance of stopping it.

“Mewblade . . . no . . .”

“Pika pi pika pika pikachu pi pikachu. Pi pika pikachu pika pi pi pika pi.” (Ash sent out as many Pokémon as possible to deal with the Unown. We were hoping the Legendaries could help.) The look of optimism on his face had faded.

<“That’s not going to happen.”> Eve laid her ears back, the odds becoming visibly insurmountable. Ho-oh was keen on offering a suggestion. It knew all there was to know about the Unown, it giving a valid piece of information that most other Legendaries could not provide.

<“Unown use the power of dreams and emotion. A loving Chosen can inspire them.”> It then showed its own hidden wisdom. <“The universe has presented an option to the Chosen in crisis.”>

<“Inspire us, Chosen!”> the Unown giggled excitedly, keen on the idea. For everything Ho-oh was, it deserved no thanks, yet it gave Coline the one thing she wanted, a chance to help.

“Thank you.” Coline was invigorated with determination and promise. Disarming her six Pokéballs, she released her full Pokémon armada.

<“That’s not going to work,”> Mewtwo said pessimistically.

“We love her. If there is no emotion stronger than that, then I can stand corrected.” To her Pokémon, Coline gave directions. “Eve, Riley, Maps, Abbott, Hopscotch, Sandy, Chincey. You already know what do. Go!” Unquestioning, the seven Pokémon followed the Master’s Pikachu and the two Unown into the portal.

Thousands of kilometers out in the bareness of space, Mewblade could only pray that the efforts of her Chosen and Mewtwo would help. Deoxys had yet to betray any healing capacity, and if it did, no amount of effort would matter. With it siphoning resources from the vast energy pool that was the Unown, it had already won by technicality.

It had been half an hour into their fight, Deoxys not showing any substantial advantages, or other noteworthy skills. For the most part it avoided her, occasionally doubling back to hit or stab, nothing outwardly threatening. It was starting to become obvious to Mewblade that other than its infectious disposition, Deoxys was unremarkable.

The Mewthree closed her eyes, Deoxys leading them back into the sunlight. She was starting to learn that melting her retina due to such a massive light source was a bad idea. She was so close that she could almost touch the Deoxys, her grab missing without vision to guide her. Mewblade began to flank the virus’ side, forcing it to circle away from the offensive glare of the sun.

The Earth took up a substantial portion of her view, making the orange of her enemy blatantly obvious against the most spectacular jewel of the solar system. Unlike Mewblade, Deoxys was pretty poorly camouflaged for such a bleak environment. She proceeded to chase it down once more, catching up to it quickly. In contrast to the Mewthree, having her follow it around was to its advantage. Any energy wasted was only wasted by her, making pointless chasing costly. Chasing had become the choice option for Mewblade, as her aim was poorer than her odds of actually making contact with Deoxys in a three dimensional space void of obstacles. Planets rarely collided in space,

making the interpretive chances that she would in this situation rather low. Unless Deoxys was willing to engage her, she may never get in a hit.

Ideally what Mewblade wanted to see was exactly how frail Deoxys' form was. A small stature and thin limbs suggested that if she did land a strike on it, it would likely succumb to its injuries. To this she resigned herself to following Deoxys, knowing that eventually her patience would reward her with a kill. The best predators were always those that lay in wait, and if her kill count was any testimony to her techniques, then Mewblade expected that she had a mastery in this area of combat.

Deoxys was beginning to pick up speed, going for Earth's atmosphere. This was the perfect place to fend off Mewblade, and they both knew it. The more she tailed it the higher the chance that Deoxys would lead her further in, and the more likely Mewblade would ionize.

<You can't chase it in!> Mewtwo warned her, sensing Mewblade's increasing speed, carelessly burning energy just so she could outpace Deoxys and force a change of direction. Mewblade was so focused that she hardly had the courtesy to reply.

<I have this covered! Keep an eye on the other Legendaries,> Mewblade snapped at her father. *I've got you.*

<“Decay is truly a creeping process,”> sneered the space virus, further increasing its velocity thus propelling it into the exosphere. Too risky, Mewblade stopped just on the verge of the isotopes that could turn her titanium into a state of nuclear toxicity. This was not going to deter her. Calling forth her aura, she condensed it into her energy cannon. Deoxys barely turned its blank eyes to see the alarming glow of a Hyper Beam blasting through the void. All but a quarter of its body was left, the rest ripped to shreds.

Mewblade hooted and howled, her ejaculation loud in all of the Legendary's minds. Before her was an eviscerated Deoxys, its right head and shoulder trailing to indiscernible parts of its emancipated frame.

“I can't believe she did it already,” Coline blinked, letting her attention wane slightly so she could watch Mewtwo's screen. The health bar for Deoxys was flashing at 2%, still alive but barely. Gibberish from the Legendaries was flying around Mewtwo, excitedly anticipating Deoxys' quick demise. Mewtwo redirected their encouragement and battle cries upwards to Mewblade.

<“Take it out!”> Zapdos cackled bloodthirstily.

<“You really are amazing!”> cheered the tiny forest guardian. Egged on by her superiors, Mewblade moved in for the kill.

<“You made the call too quickly, Letum Falcifer!”> mocked a voice as Mewblade whipped in to finish her opponent. If it were not for the thin Barrier around her, she would have surely imploded from her gasp. With a bright flash Deoxys had instantly regenerated its damaged and missing appendages. Mewblade was stupefied. With an almost boundless amount of energy, coupled with such an effortless Recovery capacity, there was no doubt that Mewblade was in serious trouble.

At least it cannot fight, she grimaced, already trying to come up with a stalling technique that would give her helpers the time they needed to disable Jirachi and the Unown. Below, Mewtwo was dumbfounded, gaping at Deoxys' perfect health and energy bars.

<Maybe if you obliterate it completely,> was Mewtwo's weak suggestion. It was the only one Mewblade had, and she took it. Bringing herself back to focusing on dealing with Deoxys, she wondered if it had any idea about what she had planned. Such a plotting gaze following the mad darting of eyes was easy to decipher. The Mewthree was up to something, and there was nothing more entertaining to it than to partake in the Decider of Fate's inevitable failure.

<“That you're not discouraged by your compounding failures is astonishing. Let's see your next 'glorious' try.”> Its lack of a mouth may have been a hidden blessing. Such a statement was best expressed wickedly, slightly more unnerving than the complete lack of a mouth altogether.

Calm and determined, a deceptive guise that turned into a frontal assault. Mewblade whipped out a total of three Shadow Balls, each in rapid succession. While this combination had failed her before, it never disappointed her for its deadliness. A flash occurred as the highly concentrated, yet sporadic energy crashed into themselves with Deoxys in the middle.

That has to be it, thought Mewblade with an air of confidence, self-assured of her murderous specialization.

<“You would think for something called 'Letum Falcifer', you would at least be able to do *some* damage.”> The snide attitude was overshadowed by more of Mewblade's own bewilderment. Deoxys had not only survived the attack unscathed, but had morphed its shape to suit an anti-offensive tactic. Its orange armored frame with smooth, bulky appendages and large, plank-like arms was the perfect defense against Mewblade's attacks. It calmly, and with effortless fluidity, shifted its body back into the spiky first form. How many more of these it had, Mewblade could only guess. On Earth, Mewtwo looked on, unsure of what he could suggest for his deterred daughter. Mewblade had one.

Let us see how fast it can adapt to me. Forcing energy into her own momentum, Mewblade charged in, head blade first, using Extreme Speed. Stoic in its execution, Mewtwo watched as Deoxys shifted into its defense form, followed by its use of a Barrier.

<“Mewblade!”> Mewtwo cried out, making Coline jump and causing her Unown to panic. Mewblade's health bar had crashed to 15%. A quick body change and Deoxys took her health down a further 12%. Coline's agonized howling made the empathetic Unown psychotic, spinning around the girl furiously, her eyes unable to tear themselves away from the sight. Mewtwo himself was too stunned to look elsewhere.

In the collision with a high density Barrier, followed by a myriad of tentacle goring, Mewblade was severely maimed beyond physical recognition. With the gravitational force being as high as it was, coming to an instant stop was deadly. Resulting damage included a bent and broken cranium, a twisted head blade, a loss of most of Mewblade's teeth, along with massive hemorrhaging and other trauma caused from the high velocity impact.

<I can take care of myself!> Mewblade told her father, already healing herself and progressing to almost being done. Recovers worked two ways for her, both for healing those she was suppose to help and her own body. Rarely had she ever been injured so severely though, it taking a lot of effort of overcome the alarming pain while she was repairing.

<“Impressive,”> Deoxys gave its compliment while it lazily floated by. She joined it at its side, smirking to herself. There was a certain pride she had in her Recover ability, the one thing she excelled at above most others. They had each seen one another’s skills, affirming that their opposition was a high energy yielding Legendary with a talent for sustaining lethal damage. Deoxys had played an opportunistic offensive, where Mewblade was to a full-on frontal assault. She had to start thinking smarter or Deoxys would continue to exploit its one guaranteed advantage over her, its energy pool. It was not a matter of who could hit the hardest, but who had the most stamina. Up until this point Mewblade would be unchallenged. Deoxys’ parasitic leeching of other Pokémon’s energy made the virus’ dominance unquestionable. Endurance tests were not to Mewblade’s fighting style, always having favored a fast outcome. For the sake of trying, she would test the speed of combat.

<“Come get me,”> teased the Mewthree, charging ahead.

<“Gladly.”> Deoxys followed closely, Mewblade taking the lead. It edged in close, forcing her to increase her speed as it trailed her tail. The pressure would let up for a few moments before Deoxys would press in again, bringing Mewblade’s speed higher still as a result. A couple minutes later and Deoxys still managed to keep pace. Any faster and there would be considerable burnout.

<“Got you.”> With that Mewblade felt a hand, an actual humanoid hand grab the tip of her tail, wrenching her backwards. Deoxys had once more changed its shape, its body looking like the average between Deoxys’ defense form and the first one which Mewblade dubbed, ‘attack’. Unlike the other forms, its normal form sported two upper appendages instead of four, one of which was still holding on tightly. Their eyes met, Mewblade unsure of herself and visibly unsettled. Deoxys was enjoying every second of mocking her predicament.

<“There, there, dear Strangelet,”> it cooed, grabbing her left paw and patting it in false reassurance. Metal Claws activated, Mewblade backhanded the virus once with her right paw, then ripped into its neck with her left.

<“If only you had vocal chords so I could enjoy ripping them out!”> Flesh tore away, blood flash freezing while Mewblade partially decapitated the enemy. For her efforts Deoxys rewarded her with a multi-stab to the abdomen, disposing with as much organ tissue as possible before Mewblade reciprocated. Still intertwined, the Mewthree severed all four tentacles, giving her the freedom to roll away and heal the loss of her mid to lower gastrointestinal tract. A deft flick and Deoxys was repaired as well.

Close combat was hardly beneficial for either party. Long-range seemed to be neither of their specialties. It was time to grab some major distance.

<“You want me? Try it!”> challenged the Decider of Fate, gone in a Teleport.

I love these games. Hardly a challenge, Deoxys shifted into its final form, one specifically designed for this special task.

Mewblade was convinced she had Deoxys beat. Teleport may be one of her slowest moves to ignite, though it definitely covered the distance. Seemed like a good time to think things over while she gazed at the city lights that were only visible in the night zone. *That should have stalled it for a while*, she thought with a relieved mental sigh. The moment was short-lived. A massive energy source was making its way towards Mewblade. Broaching the distance was Deoxys. *That’s not possible!* In the time it took Mewblade to construct her Teleport and arrive at her destination, Deoxys had flown to it.

Touting away, Deoxys made its remark once it was within viewing distance. <“For such an all-knowing being, you aren’t exactly knowledgeable. Space is *my* domain!”> It shifted from its two tentacle, streamlined body to its normal form. <“I thought you were a serious breed. Are we done playing now?”>

<“You already know how I like to conduct business.”> Holding back was pointless. If Deoxys wanted to see how serious she could be then she would show it. The long spread of her Steel Wings ruptured from her back, blood lost to the metamorphosis as it solidified into blood ice. Dire situations called for one of her most costly of moves.

<“How spectacular,”> complimented Deoxys. Flattery was beneath her. Mewblade went straight to businesses, like always.

<“Die!”>

Mewtwo could not focus all his attention on his remaining child, despite how much he wanted to. Mewblade could heal her body where even the most fatal of injuries were hardly inconveniencing. The same could not be said for the other Legendaries. Most could sustain some damage but bones could break, they could bleed, and most would surely die if they were not careful. As much as it pained him that he could not be there for Mewblade, it would hurt everyone all the more otherwise. Mewtwo tore his eyes away, deciding that it was best to check on the two primary support groups. The first was Coline and her Pokémon.

The teenager’s wild emotions were hampering the effectiveness of the Unown. Every time Mewblade was in distress, Coline reacted; whether with fear, anger or sadness. Her lack of proper attention was evident enough that Eve stepped out of the portal to remark about the jumpy state of the Unown.

<“What’s going on?”> From below Eve could still see Coline making hasty glances at Mewtwo’s screens, particularly the ones for Mewblade. Coline adored the Mewthree, and to turn her back on her was one of the things she would not consider doing.

<“Coline, turn around,”> Eve suggested flatly. Robotically, Coline obeyed the order. <“Better. That should help you and the Unown. She is strong and will be just fine without you looking.”>

“If only I could . . .” Coline began to murmur.

<“If only you could. If only I could. If only *we* could. What we can do is help, and what you can do is properly direct these Unown.”> The Unown were in agreement. <“I don’t like this either, but we have to make this work.”> The pair looked at one another in quiet contemplation. Eve was right. While Coline was the stronger empath of the two she was less emotionally stable, always thinking with her heart which contributed to her gift. Eve took to being the rational thinker, offering further guidance.

<“If you really don’t have the right feeling, at least try some words. They’re an alphabet. Spell it out of you have to, but me, and Riley, and Maps and the rest, and Master Ketchum’s Pokémon can’t do this with a bunch of clueless Unown. They *need* direction. Really need it.”> Eve could not further stress how important it was for the Unown to have a guide. Like all colonizing creatures, there was a collective mind. They lived harmoniously with their way of thinking, which was for the group and not to that of a single leader. Having a leader, even if it was not of the same species was what was

necessary in order to motivate the Pokémon as they were often content and unmotivated by the hive's mind.

"All right," Coline said, sullenly smiling. This had put Eve at ease.

<"Good. I will see you later when things get better,"> Eve bid her farewell, dashing back into the portal. Coline turned her head up to the three sets of eagerly awaiting Unown.

"Are you ready?!" she called to them. Their energetic squeals of enthusiasm was a bit deafening. She was about to begin the verbalization of her first instructions. The Unown were useful in many ways, they could attack, boost her Pokémon's physical stats and also instruct other healthy sets. They were synced into the girl's psyche, which is how she knew of their potential and ways she could use it.

"Guard!" The five letters making up the word joined in a line, spelling it out. The Unown in the circles glowed, activating offsets of the moves Barrier, Protect and Reflect on her Pokémon and the complacent Unown. Being tuned with them allowed her to feel their anxiety when one of Master Ketchum's Pokémon sustained damage.

"Heal!" Coline called to the Unown. They expressed further concern for Coline's Alakazam, Abbott as he began to show decreasing displays of strength. "Can you transfer your energy to Pokémon other than Deoxys?" The collective responded positively to her question. "Okay. Use Refresh." The Unown were glad, having been thanked by Abbott for their assistance, and Coline could feel that too. Confidence improved she further boosted that of the Unown. "Very good. Keep listening."

It seemed like Coline was doing fine, as far as Mewtwo could hear. With the infected Unown being taken care of it would at least mean that Deoxys could no longer strip the Unown of their energy at such a vicious rate. There was not much comfort in that thought as the Unown were still numerous, and Mew and Celebi were seemingly not so successful in their attempts to stop Jirachi.

Jirachi was unique in the way that it lived. Hibernation for most Legendaries involved going to a remote location while retaining their full form. Instead of curling up somewhere, Jirachi did that and transitioned. None of the other Legends knew what Jirachi looked like outside of hibernation except for Ho-oh. Every millennia, for a single week, Jirachi would rise from his hibernation to absorb energy from a comet. This energy would then be fed into the surrounding environment. Since Jirachi's function was linked to a shooting star, he was known as the Wish Legendary. The function tied in with the current appearance; since his current state resembled a large, jagged piece of crystalline rock. Even in hibernation, Jirachi was resilient.

<"Any luck with stopping Jirachi?"> Mewtwo asked the Mew and Celebi.

<"Not yet,"> Celebi said, teeth gritting while she tried to encourage any substantial energy drain through her use of Leech Seed and Giga Drain. There were vines wrangled around her small arms, attempting to take the energy for herself. Mew was concentrated with her efforts, floating alongside Celebi. She had just finished executing a Disable with no results.

<"At least it doesn't fight back,"> noted Mew. She brought out her aura and directed it around the muddled, dreamy haze that surrounded Jirachi's proverbial head. Little psychic fingers ripped away chunks of Jirachi's sleepy thoughts. "Mew!" (Bleh!) protested Mew upon bringing them back to her mind.

“Bii bii?” (What is it?)

<“Ugh . . . It tastes like stale dirt.”> Celebi began laughing at the notion, having personally done that when she was a child sub-Legendary. <“They really aren’t thinking for themselves. Deoxys has them.”>

Celebi made a few more attempts with her vine wrangling before dropping them. <“Want to try something else?”> Celebi glanced over while asking.

<“We could try paralyzing it, poisoning and so on,”> Mew mulled over the idea.

<“Do you think using sleep moves would make it better, or worse?”>

<“Anything positive would be nice. I’m just worried that if we chip the rock we might take off a finger or something.”> With that in mind, Celebi sought Mewtwo for some help.

<“What is Jirachi made out of?”>

<“Let me ask.”> Mewtwo looked to Ho-oh, who heard their conversation. It had willingly offered some insight earlier, and maybe if he was lucky it would offer some more now. At least it was not prudish enough to withhold everything, and with an answer Mewtwo replied, <“Tungsten carbide.”> Neither of the little Legends understood what that was. <“You should be fine. Jirachi has high defense, and if you did do something you both know Recover. See if you can weaken him first.”>

<“Him?”> Celebi blinked at Mew who merely shrugged. <“If I couldn’t sense that, that ‘rock’ was alive I would be convinced it was a shiny boulder.”> Mew agreed, though their indulgence in trivial conversation was partially distracting.

<“Even if Jirachi is nothing more than a power-producing rock we should still take this seriously. I don’t know how long Mewblade can hold out if Deoxys keeps using Jirachi this way.”> Celebi cast a critical eye to Mew’s view, not able to sympathize with her. Only Mew and Mewtwo shared a genetic child, something no other Legendary had. The attachment towards Mewblade was non-existent in the Celebi. She was not interested in the struggles of Mewblade, just that she did not want Deoxys to win.

<“Then I will hit him with everything I’ve got.”> Celebi dusted her wings over the rock formation, her attempt at using Poison Powder. Mew joined her, using a paralyzing Thunder Wave. <“Nothing.”>

<“We’ll keep trying,”> Mew spoke, showing her positive outlook. With a graceful gesture, Mew Sung to the rock, with Celebi using an equally sleep inducing Spore. Still, there were no results. <“We could always see if we can knock it out,”> the Mew suggested, her optimistic attitude fading. <“I could always use Transform and see if that helps.”>

<“I don’t think we have much of a choice. Hopefully the others are having better luck.”>

Luck could be considered the only thing keeping some of the fighting Legendaries alive. The participants had all been holding their own, but as it was feared, one mess-up could mean serious injury. When it came to the Legendary Birds in their struggles against Kyogre and Groudon, being stepped on was a very real threat. While Mewtwo was assured that the likelihood of it happening was small, he did keep an eye out for any wayward flicks that could tumble the birds. This held especially true for the slow flying Articuno.

<“Behind you!”> Without question Articuno whipped her head behind her, Ice Beam holding off a Flamethrower attack. The effort to hold back the flame was exhausting.

<“Incoming!”> Zapdos screeched, flapping at Groudon’s eyes. Groudon attempted to snap at the nuisance and was just not fast enough to catch the speedy flier. The Titan of Thunder joined Moltres above, who opted to remain higher out of fear because of Kyogre. Kyogre was as long as Groudon was tall, which meant that she too was extremely massive; although, unlike Groudon, Kyogre was exclusively water dwelling. Zapdos and Articuno were not intimidated by her power or size. These were two Legendaries that could create droughts and floods on a whim, and were known to shove continents around in favor of territory expansion. This same pair had been used by Deoxys earlier when it gleefully decided that decimating a large city was a giddy idea. The dangerous potential of the two Legendaries was the greatest on mass scales. They moved slow otherwise, and were not adept at combat.

Kyogre’s skyward attacks resulted in punishing uses of lightning, of which a surface ice blockade followed afterwards. The strategy was brainless on Zapdos and Articuno’s part, though tiring for its intensity and repetition. Testimony to their size, the Hoenn Legendaries were hard to fell. Though Kyogre was receiving damage her condition had only worsened by a small fraction, the stalling tactics were doing nothing more than that, of which was to stall.

Groudon was the more difficult one of the two, being exclusively a ground type with a large fire arsenal. This made Articuno the only bird capable of causing lasting damage, although being in the line of fire put her at the greatest risk. Not being as attack driven as Zapdos made Articuno inexperienced and vulnerable.

<“You have to stop Groudon,”> Moltres said from on high, looking down at Articuno and Groudon further below still. The firebird could see Articuno flinch nervously before reluctantly throwing her weight into a dive. She flew past the gargantuan lizard, her Powder Snow filling the air and slowing down the monster, reducing his turn radius. Unable to retaliate, Kyogre surprisingly did the attacking for Groudon.

The massive whale of a Legendary beached her frame onto the shoreline, shooting a large Water Gun from her seemingly bottomless maw. Back turned, Articuno did not see it coming and tumbled to the ground.

Loud bolts of curses jumped around Zapdos as he mercilessly shocked Kyogre. Moltres panicked in turn, able to see Groudon shake the cold and proceed to storm over to the stunned Articuno.

With a hellish screech Moltres landed on Groudon’s head, drilling his forehead with her beak no matter how futile a move it may be. Groudon pitched and bellowed, heating up his body to an extreme in order to dislodge the bird. Moltres was absolutely relentless.

Mewtwo watched cautiously, ready to call the three birds back to Indigo Plateau. At the same time he was contemplating throwing himself into the fray. Kyogre and Groudon’s destructive potential could not be realized. The devastation they did once already was enough to remind him of that. He was torn between bringing them back and letting them remain. The birds were functional but still weakened, with the exception of Moltres if only because she had yet to involve herself.

After many attempts, Groudon finally dislodged Moltres, tossing her aside. The firebird joined the infuriated Zapdos and the battered Articuno. <“How about a little more teamwork?”> Moltres suggested.

<“Of course, there is no Moltres in team,”> Zapdos squawked at his ally, annoyed by her lack of measurable contributions. Articuno glared at him, in no mood for internal squabbles.

<“We could try a Tri Attack. At least I could do a bit more.”> Moltres was trying to avoid an argument that would revolve around her type casting having little value in the current situation.

<“Good idea!”> Articuno said ahead of Zapdos. <“If we weaken them a bit more then maybe we might have some success with freezing or stunning them later.”>

<“Let’s try it.”> The birds went into formation, ready to send a blast of their combined primary attacks.

It probably took a bit of a bird brain not to come up with the Tri Attack sooner, as the Legendary Dogs had already used it several times in succession. In situations where there was less of a type advantage, the move seemed useful. The one problem with the attack was that it required a great deal of coordination, and hinged on whether or not a Regi was in a vulnerable position. These highly defensive creatures neither stunned or startled, making precision timing key to the Dogs’ survival. From time to time it was good to get in an attack, but for the most part the Legendaries of Johto were finding themselves avoiding the attacks of someone else.

<“I really wish they would stop doing that!”> Raikou howled as he dodged the three Zap Cannons that were Locked-On to him. <“It makes it even worse since they don’t lose focus. They don’t even flinch!”> The quarry that they were fighting in gave them a lot of different running spaces, and some optimal posts for attacking. Entei jumped onto a high ledge and let loose with a mighty Roar, almost startling Suicune and Raikou. Entei jumped back down then proceeded with his observation.

<“They didn’t even notice.”> This was followed by Suicune’s barking.

<“Of course not. Those primitive things probably don’t even have brains!”> The eerie bleeping of binary conjecture sounded forth, with it the Regis converged on Suicune.

<Apparently they have brains,> Entei said prior to using Earthquake to shake-up the ground around the golems. <“Run!”>

Raikou joined Entei in barking and yapping at the cluster of Regis in order to detract them from Suicune. The rouse worked, their attention focusing on the two Dogs instead of the loner. While his comrades were making a ruckus, Suicune ran behind the enemies’ backs. The essence of the aurora borealis condensed into a beam, fired through the air, diverting the attention of the Regis further.

<“What is the point of that?!”> challenged Raikou, finding the move Aurora Beam to be a poor choice as it mostly diminished a Pokémon’s attack capacity.

<Distraction.> Suicune became a blur, running fast enough that it looked like there were multiples of him. In addition to the use of Double Team, he blasted water in front of his forepaws, Surfing the wave into Regirock. Raikou and Entei imitated the water dog. Using Double Team, Entei then added his move, Strength into the mass, using

a combination of his weight, speed and power to knock into Registeel before dashing away. Raikou went after Regice, adding a powerful Shock Wave to his Double Team.

The three Regis had a hard time comprehending what was happening, let alone keeping track of the Dogs. Raikou, normally the fastest, had slowed down a great deal. He could feel the eerie stares of their spherical eyes Lock-On to him. Raikou looked up with his badly frostbitten face, barely able to see through his eyes, puffy and biting from the cold.

<“You can physically attack Regirock and Registeel, but the temperatures I’m sensing from Regice are below minus two hundred and fifty,”> informed Mewtwo. <“At that degree you would not be able to melt it.”>

<“Thank you, Mewtwo,”> Entei said, though distractedly as he was timing his attack with that of the Regis. With impeccable skill and a bit of luck, his Fire Blast engulfed their Zap Cannons, dissipating the four moves with a large explosion before the cloud following it dispersed. <“I was thinking it was the hold Deoxys had on Regice in particular,”> he said as a side note. Mewtwo had been trying to figure the same thing out for himself, and only recently realized that it was not the case.

<“Could have told me sooner. I can’t see!”> The electric type had tears streaming down his muzzle, a reflex of the body trying to dislodge what it saw as an irritant. The other two Dogs observed his nose rise and fall. <“I can’t smell!”> Raikou’s eyes and nostrils stung, fluid falling from them. A canine with two senses gone was useless and a sitting duck. The confidence exuded by Raikou, emphasized with his proud stride and high raised tail were nowhere to be seen. His posture was low, timid in nature, trembling from cold and fear. Other than hearing, most of Raikou’s body still had touch available to his senses. Neither of these were comforting, especially since Regice moved as a silent flotilla. Too far away, Entei and Suicune watched on as Regice moved in. Raikou could feel it, Regice’s energy absorbing aura taking the warmth from the air. All Raikou could see was giant, wobbling yellow glows, Regice’s eyes as it knocked him down.

The pain-stricken yelp fell the hearts of Raikou’s pack. Mewtwo was staring at the screen, flabbergasted, unable to act as he was stunned by the revelation that Regice had caused significant injury to Raikou while under his watch. Raikou was scrambling to regain his footing on three working legs, Regice still bearing down. Shot after shot from the other Dogs did nothing to distract the golem, even as it was receiving damage. So alarming was Raikou’s 44% of health that up above Mewblade became distracted, she herself receiving graver injury. Mewtwo was trying to ready a Teleport, Coline acting faster than he did instead.

“Protect! Heal!” she ordered, sending one of the recently released Unown sets to Raikou’s aid. Half of the set put all their efforts into buying the other half some time. Only able to hear them, Raikou remained fearful and still, complacent as thirteen of the Unown did their jobs of removing frostbitten tissue and repairing the broken bones. The intervention of the Unown had upset the Regi force, viciously attacking the Unown in protest. The protectors were obliterated easily.

Ho-oh’s black rimmed eyes emphasized how much the sacrifice bothered it. Coline’s howling showed how much the loss affected her in turn. The emotional link was taking its toll. To be connected to the conscience of a living individual, then to feel it snuffed out was a terrible feeling. The further extremes presented by the remaining

thirteen Unown were just as distressing. Unown needed to be with their sets, the full loss of one made them nothing close to their sense of a whole.

Having nothing to live for the Unown buzzed after the Regis, recklessly striking them. The Regis took this as the equivalent to swatting flies, batting them with their large upper arms. The Dogs looked on, unable to do anything as they watched the Unown's suicide attacks up until only R remained before its life too was gone. A full set was a Legendary in its own right, of which a Chosen had commanded that this one be sent to their deaths. Coline felt especially torn, having felt the loss, despair and hatred of the now dead Unown, along with the shattering rip that came with their demise. Emotionally crippled, the girl was reduced to pathetic, grief-stricken sobs. Mewtwo should have warned the Legendary Dogs earlier, so part of this was his fault but he made sure to point out that it was the will of a human that saved them.

<“The Decider of Fate's Chosen and the Unown did you a great service. Be smarter next time. They can't take losses like that.”> The Dogs understood, heads hung in shame. The nature of the Regis did not let them reflect for long, making them return to combat since they had yet to be stopped.

Over open ocean, Lugia was oblivious to the happenings of the other Legends, choosing to care only for himself and his survival. The Tidal Twins, Latias and Latios were of little threat, but the same could not be said of the considerably ancient Rayquaza.

The dragon superseded Lugia's age by far. Her fearsome, primeval jaws snapped at the bird, letting it be clear of how old and dangerous she was. Lugia's wing tips narrowly missed the protruding red, jaw-infused teeth. The black of her eyes, soulless upon close gaze chilled the King of the Deep. His lifestyle of being a recluse exposed him to all sorts of unpleasant aquatic wildlife, though they seemed delightfully charming in comparison. The glow from Rayquaza's maw was a signal that soon to follow would be a Hyper Beam. Not wishing to contend with it, Lugia took to diving for the safety of the waves.

It was strange to consider Rayquaza as the skittish type, but as she preferred to be high in the reaches of the stratosphere, going some fifty kilometers below that level instinctively frightened her. The phobic nature of the beast was being used to Lugia's advantage.

Not long into the start of Lugia's dive, Latios mimicked his superior, the sister doing the same and diving after him. The pair, nicknamed either the Tidal Twins for controlling localized waves, or the Torpedo Twins for their streamlined design and speed, were gaining quickly on Lugia. Calling on the water below, Lugia let it swallow him up in a cyclone, aiding his escape. The twins refused to follow, Lugia's entrance making the seas choppy. Unfamiliar with the look of waves, Rayquaza's Hyper Beam hit the surface to harmlessly dissipate.

To the humans, Lugia was recognized for his power, being one of the most relevant examples of the butterfly effect. A small action on his part could retrogressively result in massive disasters. The same lack of effort Lugia could also put into his attacks, he demonstrating this as he shot out of the waves in a screaming water spout. The dragons retaliated, using Twister in their assaults, hoping it would reverse the churn and leave Lugia defenseless.

Taking the water many meters into the air, Lugia struck Rayquaza with it. Her petrified shrieking was nearly deafening to the sensitive hearing of the three water dwellers. Truth be told she *hated* getting wet, something which Lugia was not making light of as he mentioned it in his native tongue. For something as old as the K-T extinction event, she was quite a baby. The juvenile usage of Scary Face settled it. Although to Rayquaza's credit, her fearsome maw was already considerably unsettling, of which it ended up disabling the twins. Lugia took the opportunity Rayquaza's immaturity gave him. With the twins confused and nearby he spun his body around, using his tail to knock the pair out of the sky. He was assured that while the move hurt them, the smack and fall would probably only stun them, not kill them.

Mewtwo was almost jealous of Lugia's calm and tactful execution of his powers. It was the sort of mental and physical balance that the other Legendaries wished they could emulate, though with one catch. That much power did force Lugia into isolation for fear of its destructiveness. No Lugia should have been around so long to have to resort to hiding in the ocean's currents. Ho-oh was aware of why, Mewtwo having just figured it out as signaled by its stare.

<“Lugia, you shouldn't be doing this good,”> muttered Mewtwo as he watched Lugia twist and turn, doing a Dragon Dance in tandem with Rayquaza. He came out of it focused and all the more powerful, taking to delaying his response following it.

<“And what do you mean by that?”> he asked politely, swiftly evading Rayquaza's use of the move Thunder Bolt. There was a little bit of feigned naivety to his telepathy.

<“Your statistics are nowhere near the levels of your sub-Legendaries. They're too high.”> Mewtwo was tiptoeing around Lugia's age, the bird being smart enough to notice.

<“You mean to say,”> Lugia spoke as he flew past Rayquaza's snapping teeth, <“that I have been around too long?”>

<“Yes,”> Mewtwo said sheepishly, slightly distracted as he gave some advice to Moltres. Lugia proceeded with taking small kicks and nips at the sky dragon, biding his time until Latias and Latios returned while still offering an explanation to Mewtwo. Based on his impressions of Ho-oh, any divulgence of Lugia's early Legendary life was condoned. There was a certain level of disregard Lugia had towards the bird when it came to forbidden topics. Snubbing any of its cares, Lugia began to speak nostalgically.

<“When I was a fledgling Chosen, my Legendary desperately fought to keep me alive. She did this for all the years she was living.”> He smiled sadly to himself, reminiscing between slamming the clumsy Rayquaza. <“Part of me still thinks she watches over me. You might not see this but my Recover is well-honed because of my experiences with her.”> Mewtwo was wondering who 'she' was. The only Legendaries capable of proper Recoveries were psychic ones, back then it likely would have been either another Lugia, or a Mew.

Through Coline's mental eavesdropping she knew Lugia was Chosen to the first Decider of Fate, Vita Sanguine. Being an emulator of life must have rubbed off on Lugia, explaining part of the reason he had managed to live so long evading accidental death or insanity. Red eyes bearing on her skull told Coline to stay quiet and continue with what she was doing. Mewtwo's tendency to collect and dispense information at a whim was hazardous at the current moment. As long as Mewtwo remained comfortably

oblivious to all of this then he would do no harm. It was about the only reason why those who knew of the Fates were still quiet. Ho-oh's hidden dislike of them was less of a deterrent than Mewblade and her parents becoming distraught over things beyond their control. That would have been the case if the Mewthree's plight was not bordering on gravely serious. Lugia and Mewblade may have shared confidence in their Recovers, and Mewblade had to completely rely on hers.

<“Your aim is terrible,”> Mewblade said through a gritted smirk. She had a paw braced to her left bicep, already Recovering a stab wound intended for her heart. Deoxys was a ways off, also Recovering a gash that had split most of its middle. Back turned, Deoxys delivered its rebuttal, spinning around and chucking a Shadow Ball in Mewblade's face. The damage was barely a concern, and after a small reprieve the competitors were in the full heat of battle once more.

Everyone else on the field was forced to look away from the screens, a luxury Mewtwo wished he could indulge in. The progress of Mewblade's fight was comparable to a slasher film. He was lucky if a minute did not go by without someone losing an arm, an eye, or some vital organ. Weapons at the ready, Mewtwo grimaced as the spectacle continued.

A mental growl ripped through the vacuum as Mewblade condensed parts of her aura in front of her before hurtling it as a Psybeam. Effortless execution of a shape change and Deoxys was ready to intercept. Shear power versus seemingly endless energy, Deoxys willingly met Mewblade's Psybeam with its own, unafraid by her capabilities. An explosion occurred in the middle of the attacks, the incompatible energy fighting to overwhelm the other. It was quick to see who was excelling at the match. Power rarely equated to stamina, and as Mewblade had failed to best Deoxys in the initial seconds of the assault, it was only moments before Deoxys would overwhelm her. Resigning herself to the inevitable, the Mewthree brought her metallic wings before her body so she could minimize injury. The virus' Psybeam, weak but persistent was shrugged off by Mewblade's Steel Wings. Seeing it as being a waste of effort, Deoxys ceased, something of which Mewblade was anticipating.

Unable to feel pain in her wings, Mewblade ripped feathers from them, creating an intimidating display. The titanium pinion feathers flickered solitarily in the sunlight, as menacing as they were beautiful. Deoxys winced preemptively. Steel moves were dangerous to psychics. Even with its defensive form at its disposal, this was going to hurt. Ferocious in her abilities, Mewblade's feathers ripped into Deoxys, punching hole after hole through its flesh. A shattered husk was what remained. Satisfied, Mewblade recalled the feathers, fusing them back into her thinned wings. Holes made up more of Deoxys than anything else, though she knew her gloating was to be short-lived.

<“That hurt.”>

Mewblade was silent as she watched Deoxys rid itself of its fatal damage. No matter how many times she struck it, the Legendary Space Virus always Recovered flawlessly without any negative loss to its energy; whereas, for Mewblade hers was slowly dropping. Both of their Recovers took time, which allowed for opportunistic attacks if one was injured and the other was not. Further attacks bought welcomed seconds, still the pair of them were playing to a slightly noble stance, both finding it low browed to be dishonorable enough to attack someone when they were down. Stalling was

the only real strategy, since only once the Hoenn Legendaries were freed could she truly defeat Deoxys.

Wings splayed behind her, Mewblade raced in at full charge, aiming to split Deoxys in two. Still in its defense form, Deoxys smoothly performed one of its more sinister tricks. It quickly turned out that anything, even protective moves could be deadly in space. Mewblade found this one out the hard way.

The use of a Barrier quickly brought the speeding Mewthree to a dead stop. The impact forces were great enough that only her split second instinctual reaction to protect her most vital organs saved her from possible sudden death. The blood loss was substantial with the snapped, bent and dislocated bones puncturing the rear facing flesh of her frame. Her head blade had ricocheted as it cracked in half, taking out part of her tail. The only thing on her that remained unscathed was the part of her skull surrounding her brain case. There was no face to speak of.

Mewtwo lurched, the dry heaving an unsettling noise to the Chosen on the field. Even the collective Ho-oh was ill from the sight, though unconcerned. It knew Mewblade well enough to know that the slivered 1% representing her health would not remain there for long.

In a daze of anger and agony, Mewblade was quick to Recover. She had to count the bones, and especially the blood as a loss, beginning their repair from scratch. The flash freezing of space had made the altered state of the lost components no longer viable. Mentally she grimaced, since it took more energy to replace body parts that would have been easier to deal with if they were still present and in need of mending.

Deoxys observed and laughed telepathically. The sound was hollow and soulless in Mewblade's still malformed skull. The damage that had been dealt made Deoxys thoroughly proud. Finally, it had figured out a way to effectively eviscerate the Mewthree, if only temporarily. This little discovery of the virus' doing was not a pleasant one. Everything in space, including space itself was moving and constantly expanding. In order to stay in place, one had to adjust their position accordingly. Deceptive as it was, the act of staying still was done at rapid speeds. Mewblade dreaded the notion that basically if she moved from her spot, Deoxys had a high chance of killing her.

With her head blade and severed tail fully formed, it was time to consider the next course of action. Mewtwo would have nothing helpful to suggest, leaving Mewblade on her own with a lot of options that would likely result in her either losing her arm or all her teeth.

<“After all this you’re just going to sit there?”> sneered Deoxys, having changed to its normal form.

Seems like the best option. A further thought crossed Mewblade's mind. *It is worth a shot.* <“Was not planning on it,”> Mewblade replied to Deoxys' previous sentence, with it she flung her feathers at the creature, pinning it to her own Barrier. And just like that, she ran away.

That should keep it busy long enough for me to get out of its range. Stupidly cheap . . . <“Sh-!!!”> Mewblade exclaimed as she found herself up against another impenetrable Barrier.

<“Do you enjoy being stupid?!”> howled Deoxys as it caught up, aura blazing so it could power its speed form. Cheap as it was, Deoxys could not stand for its own tricks to be done upon itself. Mewblade faced the virus though unable to see it as her eyes were

pulverized for the second time. If the use of this skill sets bothered her as much as it did, she could not wait to explore more of its potential by testing it on Deoxys.

The Mewthree rarely used defensive and restraint-based moves, few things ever warranted the use of it as they rarely caused her harm. Still healing, she figured she would show Deoxys what it really felt like to be on the receiving end of a dangerous restriction move. Despite that she had no eyesight or working limbs, Mewblade managed to call her energy forth and lasso Deoxys in an Imprison. Frantically Deoxys whipped through its four forms, unable to figure out which one was best to deal with the move. Fully healed, Mewblade was welcomed by the sight of Deoxys' sporadic shape changes. Arms in working order, Mewblade imitated the action of grabbing the Imprison and strangling her opponent on it. She struggled to simply hold it there, let alone wring it. As it went in the game of power versus stamina, she could not hold it forever.

Resigned to her shortcomings, Mewblade threw her arms wide, crushing the Deoxys. Unlike the time where she strangled her sister Demisewan into a ball of mutilated flesh, this opponent survived. The repeated failures were causing Mewblade to become demoralized. Deoxys remained confident while healing its injuries.

Both of the combatants had some etiquette to not attack one another during their Recovers, but at this point Mewblade was looking for anything that would allow her to remain on par with the enemy. She had given up hoping for attaining an edge some time ago. Out of sheer spite Mewblade created the elastic type barrier move Reflect and sandwiched Deoxys between a pair of them before callously bouncing it around. A move as such worked poorly in an environment with friction, but it did well in a place that did not slow refractions down through particle interference. There was something entertaining about watching one's aggressor splatter around in a state of alarm. The entertainment would be only momentary. Reflect never lasted long since the reverberations tended to shake away its solidity. This still gave Mewblade enough time to prepare a Hyper Beam in her energy cannon. She would not give Deoxys a chance to attack her if she could help it.

Battered, bruised and broken, Deoxys came out of its multiple prisons in speed form. A nimble twirl to its right allowed it to evade the blatant stream of condensed energy before it was four tentacles deep into Mewblade's abdomen. Despite being gored several times over, the experience was no less painful.

Coming to her senses, Mewblade brought forth her metallic arsenal of Metal Claws, Iron Tail and Iron Defense. The latter she used mostly on her feet. She then proceeded to Slash and pummel the virus with her fists, mashing its features nicely prior to withdrawing. Both of them used the reprieve to Recover before going at one another. Mewblade practically jumped the Deoxys, ripping, Slashing, tearing and Biting with all she had. With patience, Deoxys endured the attacks, then sent Mewblade backwards with a Hyper Beam and into another one of its Barriers. Most of Mewblade's blades were flung off; some penetrated her body, and the rest went into the vastness of space, never to be seen again. At least this time the damage was not as fatal. She retaliated with her own Hyper Beam while in the midst of healing.

The space virus was quick to think and act. As defense Deoxys it braced with a Reflect, the move shooting back at Mewblade. The angelic Steel Wings took the hit, but the force knocked her backwards into another Barrier. Using Agility, Mewblade righted herself enough that she skidded to a stop, claws braced on the illusionary surface. Fast

and focused, she unleashed a Shadow Ball from her cannon, followed by a pair from her paws. Ghost type moves worked well against psychics, just as much as dark or steel ones did. Even in defense mode, the moves did their damage, easily passing through the aura of a psychic. The Decider of Fate did not wait to see the results and jetted upwards. As speed Deoxys, it chased after. Mewblade was prepared, throwing a Barrier in front of it. The sudden decrease in speed, along with Deoxys' curses signaled that it worked. Sadism was not something Mewblade enjoyed, though she knew that her mocking laughter would at least rile the Deoxys enough that she could take some satisfaction from that.

Deoxys regained its composure. It chased after Mewblade in its speed form, then while still accelerating it transitioned into its attack form. There was an attempt to impale the Mewthree, her lack of mastery with Barrier and Reflect showed as she barely raised her blockade in time. This worked in her favor since Deoxys unexpectedly plastered itself within two feet of her bladed tail. Up close, the effect was pronounced, disgusting to even Mewblade. There were just certain injuries an individual would never see in real life, and she was about to make it worse.

Digging her claws in, she used Crush Claw to break Deoxys' limbs. Using her Psychic ability, she ripped the Deoxys apart, sending the chunks far away. This move was used a lot by Mewblade, though in such unconventional methods that she rarely considered it one of the innate psychic type skills and instead as something that was just her expression of her own powers. Because of Deoxys' regenerative skills, leaving it as a husk was merely temporary despite what the Mewthree had done to it. To do this to Mewblade was challenging for Deoxys in turn. Despite she was a psychic and dark type, her steel type traits made it hard to tear apart her titanium skeleton. The slamming had been the only thing that actually broke the Mewthree.

Mewblade shot off again, building muscle mass. From what previous encounters with Deoxys dictated, it would likely invest in the effort to spite her. This meant that for the next few minutes Deoxys would not only be abnormally agitated but also devotedly violent. With her Bulk Up maxed, Mewblade was hoping it would help her buffer damage, primarily those of the skeletal nature. Sure enough, she could hear Deoxys' sing-song call in the distance. Anger had overtaken it.

<<"Strangelet! Come back and play with me!">

<<"Are you not a little old for that?">> Mewblade called out behind her, trying to increase the distance between herself and the tantrum throwing Pokémon. That thing was wholly unsettling. Mewblade became aware that the distance between herself and her opponent was increasing. Only the defense form could not keep pace with her.

Not this again, groaned the Mewthree, almost striking a Barrier, then narrowly missing another one. The third Barrier caught her. At least this time the muscle helped, it taking most of the damage as she shoulder-rolled onto it, bouncing along the surface of the Barrier, feathers flying before rolling off the edge. The experience left Mewblade in a listless daze, hanging still in the void. Deoxys wanted to use this opportunity and made the distance quickly. Mewblade came to in a cube with a visible sense of resistance. The virus was outside it, sneering.

<<"Your metal is titanium, isn't it?">> Its black eyes were full of evil intent. It was going to enjoy its little spot of revenge even if it took a lot of effort on its part to perform.

Still recuperating from her concussion, Mewblade glanced lazily at her rapidly paling Metal Claws. Like the rest of the metal she used, it was pure titanium. Slowly it

dawned on her what Deoxys was implying. For her metal to oxidize into the brilliantly white titanium oxide that fast, it meant there was some air present, likely a lot of oxygen, but also nitrogen. To put air in the cube was not for Mewblade's convenience. In a nitrogen-rich environment, all it took was the addition of a heat source for titanium to light on fire. With a dense distribution of oxygen and nitrogen along with other gases, there was no doubt what Deoxys had in mind.

Before Mewblade could regain her thoughts completely, Deoxys rammed a super heated fist against the framework of Barriers, causing a dramatic increase in temperature then an explosion. Mewblade roasted from the inside out, and it were not for the flaming Steel Wings she would have been dead. Using her wings she shattered the cube and freed herself, the move Brick Break being specifically designed to deal with such situations.

The fire had killed enough nerves that Mewblade could not feel really anything. The lack of smell in space was a mere comfort since the burning fur released sulfur, as would the fat that had melted off of her body. Unfortunately the sight of Mewblade could not be escaped from, a charred black form with a pristinely white skeleton showing through in many places. Sometimes Mewblade wished her Recover was not as good as it was. There had to be some convenience in dying from injuries like this. Energy cannon charging and body reforming, she readied a Hyper Beam. Taking up its attack form, Deoxys met the challenge.

<“Strange how the Strangelet keeps asking to be punished.”>

Face back, Mewblade grinned widely while stating, <“I am made for it, law breaker. The only thing strange here is how stupid you are for not realizing it.”> Without another word, they unleashed their attacks. Mewblade's missed and Deoxys' Hyper Beam only nicked her head blade.

<“Your aim is awful,”> Deoxys insulted the Decider of Fate snidely. Mewblade was charging another Hyper Beam.

<“And what was your excuse?”> she retorted, letting loose with a second blast of energy. This time their beams met in the middle before exploding outwards. The use of the move was taxing, but Mewblade was able to return to fighting faster. It was wasteful to use such a move repeatedly without a break, though Mewblade could care little, just as long as Deoxys suffered. Her next strike was successful, but by this point she needed to recuperate. Deoxys took that moment, laying a strike on the Mewthree. This marked a series of exchanges.

For every one Hyper Beam used, the other would return it. And as they began to move and dance around the beams, the Barriers came back into use. Mewtwo was dismayed by the carnage, worried for Mewblade. Deoxys' energy levels remained the same while Mewblade's were steadily dropping.

From his place on Indigo Plateau, Mewtwo was still watching Mewblade's fight. He saw the some nine hundred pound Mewthree masterfully back flip across a set of Barriers in an attempt to avoid injury. Watching her in particular was surreal. Despite Deoxys being a literal alien to Earth, there was indeed an otherworldly aspect to Mewblade that he could not quite put a finger on. If it were not for the Legendary infection, Deoxys surely would avoid a confrontation with this so called 'Letum Falcifer'. Having seen this fight in its entirety made Mewtwo thankful that his only violent encounter with Mewblade had

ended peacefully in a truce. Mewtwo could not imagine having to keep up with the Decider of Fate.

Deoxys was draining energy from other Legendary Pokémon but Mewblade was relying purely on her own reserves. It was no wonder the other Legendaries regarded her with a sense of wary. Ten years old and Mewblade could claim she was God. Looking over at the other screens, every present Legendary, while still in good health all had energy pools hovering at half or lower. The one exception was Jirachi, who had an energy pool designed to be leeched off of. Mewtwo was not at all sure about Ho-oh, who generally refused to reveal much of anything. He could only assume if Pokémon such as Lugia, or Kyogre were at the levels that they were, that Ho-oh's was far greater. There really was no way to prove that theory.

Ho-oh rarely exerted itself beyond what was minimally required of it, which was often nothing. The lack of relatability with Mewblade was only succeeded by everyone's distrust for Ho-oh. Always watching, always knowing, likely quietly reading his mind despite Mewtwo's impressive mental capacity. Mewtwo suppressed a shudder, having thought about the bird leering into his head.

In actuality, Ho-oh was less concerned of what Mewtwo was thinking as it was about the fighting. Its passivism kept it from battling. Though it had a lot of animosity towards the Mewthree, it did not want the Earth to become a putrid wasteland controlled by a parasite. It had seen mass extinctions during its long history, silently hoping Deoxys would not contribute to such an event. The last one it had witnessed had only been temporary, as it was miraculously rectified; still, it was not a pleasant sight. Everything had whittled down to some handful of individuals, of which the current Lugia was one of them. To be fighting as he was, was likely not as horrifying to Lugia as his time as a fledgling. The events a million years later still haunted him in addition to something else.

The current thing that was haunting Lugia was a duo of annoying twin Legends and one easily irritated sky snake. His age gave him a lot of power, but lent very little in terms of speed. Dodging around Rayquaza was effortless. Latias and Latios were entirely different. The pair were less than sixty years old, making them useless when it came to damaging the Titan, though were they ever fast.

Lugia periodically flared his aura and raised the odd Barrier as a means to distance himself from the pests. Of the injuries he received from them, most were isolated to welts caused by the super fast siblings butting him with their heads. Thinking about them was almost pointless, mostly since if he did then it took his focus away from Rayquaza. A moment's distractions was costly around the very ancient sky dragon. She may not have been overly powerful, but she had one particular talent that Lugia did not want to find himself on the receiving end of.

The dragon had exceptional targeting skills that were used to direct her shots at invading space debris. Her attacks could vaporize rock, that is if she could hit the nimble sea dweller. It took Rayquaza a considerable amount of time to power her abilities, of which were hardly subtle. Not being a space rock, any sign of a beam attack would send Lugia fleeing to the safety of the waves. This avoidance tactic had done well for him in the past, though the twins were becoming smarter, making it harder for him to reach the undercurrent's safety in time. For now his three opponents were all confused, the effect

of being spun around in circles. He expected the twins to recover first, as Rayquaza's primitive dinosaur brain probably would not allow for it.

Lugia made his way towards the brother and sister, bypassing close to Rayquaza. He had just underestimated the sky dragon, something she was quick to remind him of. The red-lined maw snapped at the bird, teeth digging into his fleshy sides, leaving the bird to hang in a dazed state of pain and paralysis.

Mewtwo had seen the action. By the looks of it the injury was fatal. The fatalness of the wound was confirmed as it had distracted the Decider of Fate enough that she took several hits. It was bad, and it not hard to guess how serious it was.

<"I am Teleporting you now,"> informed Mewtwo, his aura preparing the move in a hurry.

<"No!"> Lugia refused. <"I can handle it."> This began an argument amongst those who had heard.

"He's fine!" Coline shouted over her shoulder.

<"No, he's not,"> Mewtwo countered.

<Mewtwo, do something!> Mewblade commanded from on high. She could not be in two places at once and losing Lugia was risky.

<"Lugia told me not to,"> protested Mewtwo, standing in for his own defense. There was a bit of a pause.

<Make him!> snapped the Mewthree.

Lugia brought his long neck around, biting at Rayquaza's face repeatedly. Her hard plates of hide made most physical attacks easy to ignore; still, Lugia persisted. A sharp chomp around Rayquaza's ear forced her to let go, revealing the whole extent of the injury.

Lugia's right midsection was basically gone. If it were not for the layer of blubber that held the lobbed chunk, it would be missing completely. His shriveled organs were of no loss, though the gaping injury was still gushing blood. Lugia was wincing to himself, while exceptionally disciplined and tolerant, he was unaccustomed to the feeling. That alone was fogging his brain, yet it was clear to him that Latias and Latios were on the move.

The pair of young Legendaries charged in, slamming the bleeding Lugia between them. Rayquaza joined the twins, wrapping the bird in her long body. The Titan of the Sea bided his time, making sure all three of his foes were close before using his next move. A quick, expanding vortex of air pressures surrounded the Pokémon, blasting the twin Legendaries into the water below, and Rayquaza part way into them. He had been waiting for such an opportunity.

Aside energy and know-how it also took time to make for a successful Recover. In the midst of Mewtwo, Mewblade and Coline's argument, an observation was made; Lugia's health was improving. Mewtwo gawked as he saw Lugia seam up his side. Within a few minutes there was no sign of the gaping hole. He was impressed but also embarrassed, since he had no way of personally healing a head size worth of his own flesh.

<"Everything is fine,"> Lugia assured him, trying not to sound all that smug. He had learned from the best and was finally able to prove it. This all meant that Mewtwo had one less Legendary to worry about, though it did not relieve his anxieties about all four of the participating birds.

Birds bothered Mewtwo significantly, in part because of Zapdos and his attitude. Above all else, it was that quality that irked Mewtwo the most. The same confrontational spirit that the Titan of Thunder displayed to him had its uses in combat. Zapdos was purely aggressive in battle, obvious as his energy levels were lower than that of his companions. He put more force into his abilities than the others despite his limited effectiveness. After a considerable amount of trying, Zapdos alone had stunned Kyogre into a state of immobility. The giant whale of a Pokémon listlessly bobbed about on the water's surface, occasionally twitching with a few spasms added in, the result of many nerve misfires. As an homage to his triumphs, Zapdos took a casual perch on his floating platoon, furthering the effect of Kyogre's immobilization. He was useless against Groudon anyway, so felt that was in his best interest to remain where he stood.

Groudon had been using the move Overheat for some time now, it being characterized through an extremely high body temperature of the user. The heat radiated so much that it was known to collapse neighboring Pokémon in the user's vicinity through heat exhaustion and stroke. Zapdos remained safe where he was, out on the water, but Articuno risked injury in such predicaments due to her low body temperature. She had no choice but to remain high in the clouds, cowardly and useless. Aiding the lone Moltres was out of the question as ice would weigh the firebird considerably, even before any effect would be felt by Groudon. Moltres did not hold anything against Zapdos or Articuno. Zapdos was still contributing effectively, and Articuno was wisely staying out of harm's way. As for Moltres herself, she had it all under control. Groudon's rise in body temperature had no affect on her, since her species was partially made of scorching flames. Moltres glided about with ease, both in body and mind, casually circling about the monster's head. The slow moving beast could barely move fast enough to keep the bird within his view.

"Around, and around, and around it goes," the Moltres chimed in her native tongue whilst flying lazy circles around him. The displeased and somewhat nauseated grumblings of Groudon were hardly audible over his bumbling footsteps.

<"What do you think would come out of that thing if it threw-up?"> Zapdos asked, slightly dizzy from watching the idiotic circling.

<"Eww,"> Articuno said in disgust. <"I don't want to see that."> Zapdos continued on, not as easily grossed out as the icy female.

<"I bet he would spit-up an Aerodactyl,"> he laughed.

<"Uh . . . maybe rocks?"> Articuno added as an afterthought. Moltres decided to make her contribution to the nauseating conversation.

<"With the way this thing is, probably lava.">

<"I've got to see that!"> laughed the lightning bird, his electric discharges of approval further disabling Kyogre. The aquatic Pokémon was in her own state of discomfort, and Groudon occupied with his own that neither one paid attention to the other, wallowing in their own misery instead.

Mewtwo did not particularly care of the small flock and their choice of conversation. He was thankful that his lack of digestion would mean that Zapdos would not be hounding him for hundreds of years because he lost his lunch listening to them. The thought of Groudon vomiting was not something he cared to see, subsequently bringing his attention to the next screen and the other trio of Legendaries.

The Legendary Dogs were fast, long-distance runners, constantly being on the move as part of their directive. Given enough room to roam, they were capable at battling. The problem with their match-up against the Regis had almost entirely boiled down to location and the use of the move Lock-On. The ability was identifiable by a Pokémon's brief meditation followed by a sharp increase in their focus. This combined with the usually unreliable Zap Cannon gave the Regis a dangerous arsenal to use at their disposal. As to date, the Regis had not managed to get an accurate strike on any of the three Legendary Dogs. Their speed was advantageous, since not only were they fast, but well aware of their surroundings. Performing last second dodges, increasing their speed, or ducking behind boulders had saved them from direct hits. As location also was a factor in combat, their location was starting to show a lack of usefulness. Where before there were many free-standing boulders, now they were being reduced to free-standing piles of rubble. In the quarry the use of rocks was necessary for hiding, as the tight curvature of the space was preventing any sense of free movement.

<"I could really go for some trees right about now,"> this being said by Raikou as he managed to jump over a stray beam. After his earlier encounter with Regice, Raikou was being cautious and evasive, not wishing to repeat the same mistake that had almost killed him. This methodology was good at keeping him alive, though he had little to worry about just because of his electric typing and mobility. Being hit by a Zap Cannon was less likely to injure him than the other two members of his current pack.

Suicune could probably agree with Raikou's way of thinking, if only for the fact that him being a water type made for a poor match-up against electric dominated movesets. Adding the fact that his speed was not all that remarkable, it made Suicune long for the cover of trees. Unlike Raikou who could carelessly evade, and Entei who was utilizing a different defensive tactic, Suicune was particularly dependent on boulder diving.

<"I second that!"> Suicune hollered out above the sound of exploding rubble. Entei peeked out from one of his ditches, ducking back down as a rock soared overhead.

<"The problem with a forest is that we won't be able to spot them."> Entei took another peek out from his den, running towards another ditch as the Regis converged on his location. <"I have enough problems already with trying to smell them, or hear them. Just keep running around the quarry.">

<"And let them take shots at us? Are you crazy?! If it has to be the quarry, then there is plenty more of it around,"> Suicune barked just as he started to run up the slope and escape. It was not a bad idea, and he took to favoring it instantly.

<"The only crazy one here is you,"> Raikou joked in between dodging a barrage of Zap Cannons. Both Raikou and Entei had yet to join Suicune on the quarry rim.

<"Says the dog still dodging attacks. Come on, let's take the Regis for a walk,"> the water dog said prior to dashing off. It took more effort for the other two to remove themselves from the pit, but they were soon to follow. This would give the Regis more things to accidentally shoot at other than the Dogs.

The world was spinning, hazy, indiscernible. Coline's head was throbbing, being overworked and exhausted from trying to keep up with, and provide for the Unown's emotional states. Her efforts were not exactly useless. The reclaiming of sets had begun

to multiply itself rapidly, yet it was still not enough to make much of a dent in Deoxys' energy pool. It still was depending on Jirachi and the other Hoenn Legendaries, and there were many sets of Unown to go through before Deoxys would be forced to rely on only itself. She was trying, and she was doing well, but it was not enough and the strain was beginning to show in how she expressed herself.

"Heal!" Coline screamed, her voice hoarse from yelling. "Refresh!" Coline let out an irritated snarl as the salt from her sweat stung her eyes. She could feel that the Unown were concerned for her, but there was not much they could do to better reign in Coline's emotions. Mewtwo's constant projections of alarm made her worried sick for her Legendary. Part of her wished she was as capable with her empathetic control as much as Mewblade was with her own powers. Having such a level of omnipresence could surely allow her to control all the Unown instantly. The notion that she could not do that made the girl frustrated.

"*Stop* paying attention to me!" Coline whipped her head around, yelling at Mewtwo. With all the distractions, he was startled that the human could still pick-up on his interloping. The teenager was normally positive and reserved, unlike the Pokémon she served. Mewtwo had been trying to gauge Coline's energy levels at that moment, though any prodding made in her general direction was detectable to her. There was a certain level of annoyance to be thought of as incompetent enough to justify the mental probe. Sure, she may not have been a Legendary in a situation where one was required, but she was not going to let her weaknesses dictate when she should quit. Coline would go until she dropped if she had to. Her Legendary was out in space fighting for her life, and as the Decider of Fate's Chosen it was her duty to aid her Legendary to the fullest, anything less was inexcusable. Then again, there was no excuse for her outburst.

"I'm . . . I'm sorry," Coline whimpered, realizing she had hurt Mewtwo's feelings by yelling at him. Hands clasped to her mouth, she was sincerely apologetic for her behavior. It was Mewtwo's responsibility to be take care of all those engaged in the crisis, and he could no longer ignore the human involved in it. His Chosen, Master Ketchum was not as important as the primary Legendary's Chosen in the current situation.

<"It's okay. I understand. You're going through a lot right now."> Once confirming that the Kanto and Johto Legendaries would be okay for a moment without him, Mewtwo made his way over to the girl. A Legendary touching another Legendary's Chosen was rather repulsive, especially when considering that the particular individuals were romantically invested in each other. Mewtwo gingerly put his paws to Coline's shoulders, hoping Mewblade would understand. Right now Coline needed the reaffirmation that touch brought. <"You are doing more than any Legendary could ask of their Chosen. You need to call Eve back since you can no longer do this all by yourself. Every Chosen can use help, and often that is of other people, or their Pokémon. Together the two of you should be able to instruct the Unown more easily.">

Coline opened her mouth to protest, Mewtwo having damaged her pride slightly. She realized that he was right, and relented. She could no longer handle the Unown on her own. There were far too many of them to deal with, and she really could use the help of a familiar. The girl quietly acknowledged what Mewtwo had said, looking up to her Unown as they awaited her direction.

“Bring Eve to me,” she instructed the alphabets, them obliging her request. Eve appeared, surprised since she was not expecting to be ripped so abruptly from combat.

The Umbreon stuttered, flabbergasted as she spoke. <“Is something wrong?”> It had to be something awful for Coline to bring Eve to her without warning. Something must have been gravely amiss since Coline was in tears. She had been crying again.

“Mm-hmm,” Coline sniffled, brushing her eyes. From what Eve could empathize, the issue was not bad enough that she personally needed to worry about it. She breathed a sigh of relief, having thought Mewblade was gone.

<“Okay, let me help you,”> the Umbreon offered with a smile. Coline was glad that she did not have to ask. Eve was a true friend to her, always eager to help without much reason. After all the thinking of nothing but Mewblade, Coline needed someone to think of her in turn and aid her with the burden of trying to save the life of her Legendary.

<“I think you two have this covered,”> Mewtwo further affirmed, leaving Coline and Eve to their work, and letting him return to his.

<“Unown,”> Eve called to the Pokémon, commandeering them. <“Safeguard.”> It was almost comical to see a Pokémon instructing other Pokémon, but Coline was already emotionally approving the Umbreon’s involvement. They accepted the instruction willingly, performing the move that helped protect the defending Pokémon against mental stresses. <“Bind.”> This order told certain Unown to restrict the movement of the infected ones long enough for the others to weaken them. <“Thunder Wave!”> The Unown loved Eve’s drive, it being similar to Coline’s.

“Flash,” Coline called out. The move was a good choice against the Unown since they were predominately floating eyeballs, susceptible to disability from bright, seizure inducing lights. Eve grinned, adding to the torment.

<“Unown, Smokescreen!”> With the pair alternating instructions, the three sets of Unown were full of enthusiasm, despite the mounting pressure that the girls were under to save their Legendary.

Mewblade . . .

<“Mewblade! I need to use Legendary forms!”> Mew shouted into the wide space, her telepathy filling the heads of every Legend. <“Let me use your forms,”> begged the Mew, Celebi beside her. They had run out of ideas, this being the last thing remaining on their list of things to attempt. With access to the bodies of the world’s greatest fighters, maybe Mew could put Jirachi’s energy draining to a halt. There was of course one catch.

Upholding a Legendary’s form was punishable under Pokémon Law. Being another Legend could hamper everything that the particular species was responsible for maintaining. A lack of control and Mew could place the world in danger simply because she picked a body that she did not know how to use properly. Doing such a mimic through the use of Transform was dangerous, something which always had to be approved by both the Legendary being copied and the Decider of Fate before being attempted. Mew was certain that all of the other Legendaries trusted her sense of responsibility, which indeed they did. A flood of responses came in, no Legendary questioning her wish, and all well aware of who was committing.

<“I approve,”> Lugia said, responding first.

<“Do it!”> encouraged Raikou.

<“Go.”>

<“I approve it!”>

<“You have my permission.”>

<“Yes, gladly,”> said Mewtwo. No one had heard Mewblade’s response, where even Ho-oh had agreed to Mew’s request. More effort was required on the Mewthree’s part as formalities had to be involved. She broadcasted to all of the Legendaries so that they too could be informed.

<“I, the Decider of Fate, approve the use of a . . . Aah!”> The Legendaries became alarmed as Mewblade’s telepathic death cry rang out in their heads. There was an instant chorus of concerned telepathy, only those on Indigo Plateau having been aware of Mewblade’s struggle up until that moment. Moltres in particular was the most vocal, screaming Mewblade’s name repeatedly. <“ . . . of all agreeing Legendaries’ forms to be utilized by the Legendary Pokémon, Mew,”> came Mewblade’s weakened telepathy. Celebi could only imagine the guilt Mew must have been feeling. Glancing over, she could see Mew motionlessly staring ahead at the rock formation of Jirachi. The little mother had just unwittingly been informed that her only child was struggling, the recent bought of damage being caused by Mewblade’s dealings with Mew’s request.

<“Maybe you should try her first,”> Celebi urged, snapping Mew out of her addled state of mind.

“Mew, mew . . .” (Right, right . . .) Mew murmured distractedly, still dwelling on the thought of Mewblade. She was slow to bring herself to the business at hand. <“Those blades can cut through almost anything.”> With a flash, Mew’s body melded to imitate that of her firstborn. One of the interesting aspects of Transform was seeing what did and did not come with the package. The fears that Mewtwo and Mewblade shared, that a copy of them would not be identical to themselves, had the potential of happening through the use of this particular move. Mew was a true female, giving her the option to assign her gender to many of the bodies she could uphold within reason. In theory she could give Mewblade’s form, one of the five Mewthrees, a perceivable gender.

<“Hmm, 100% ‘it’ through and through. Just like a rock,”> Celebi remarked, making a casual observation. She had never personally seen Mewblade’s brothers and sisters, though Mew had and her nod confirmed it. The males lacked the dramatic headpieces of the girls, and the girls lacked the fleshy formations for ears. Androgynous as Mewblade was, the copy showed no shift towards male or female.

“Mew mew mew mew!” (Her body is heavy!) Mew complained while shifting about uncomfortably, though using Mewblade’s voice to express her vexations. Mewblade constantly used her energy to keep her weight light, which was a natural behavior for her; for Mew, she had not been aware that Mewblade cheated her weight that much. Celebi was laughing hysterically, both from Mew’s clumsy movements and the sound of Mewblade’s voice squeaking in Mew tongue.

<“Ooh, ooh!”> Celebi hooted ecstatically. <“Say something she wouldn’t say!”> giggled the tiny fairy Legendary, mischievously.

<“Enough!”> interjected Mewtwo, annoyed by Celebi’s negligence towards Mewblade’s sacrifice. He had been watching Mew’s Transformation technique with quiet curiosity and did not see anything funny. Once Mew was able to figure out how to make the four hundred pound plus Mewthree move did she attempt to harm Jirachi. With a mighty Slash of her blades, she stepped back to eye her work only to find that it did nothing. It then occurred to her that Mewblade wore an energy cannon.

<“All right. We’ll try this. Wait, where did it go?”> Mew was looking down at her right arm, puzzled. The arm was bare of weaponry. She looked around briefly, still seeing no sign of it. <“Is Mewblade’s energy cannon just a weapon that she was given?”> Mew asked of Mewtwo, aware that some Pokémon carried items with them that were not replicable.

<“Yes, but no one knows the source.”> What Mewtwo said bothered him. Mew merely shrugged it off, not finding the concept odd.

<“Time for the next form . . . Moltres!”> Mew grinned excitedly, scaring Celebi with Mewblade’s white teeth showing up starkly against the black of the fur. A bright flash and Mew took up the form of the equally brilliant firebird.

Mewtwo had never thought much of Mewblade’s energy cannon, and she never seemed to give it much heed either. To Mewblade it was just something she was given and never bothered questioning unless someone touched it. Only once had Mewtwo touched the cannon, instantly repulsing the Mewthree. There was the likelihood that she treated it as a security item, but Mewtwo was convinced that it was a part of her. It matched the rest of her titanium structure and responded to Recovers when any other man-made material should not have. There was no reason why it should not have copied over, and he could not help but wonder why.

Mewblade was not really sure what her energy cannon was, all that she knew was that it felt really good to shoot Deoxys with it. The virus had just Recovered from another blast, struggling to fix itself. The use of her energy cannon was putting a considerable strain on Deoxys’ healing abilities. Aim was a big problem for the Mewthree, her Chosen’s work one of the few things contributing to her current successes. Every time an Unown set was reclaimed, Deoxys would notice, the distraction mild but anything helped at this point. This trend of using the energy cannon was bothering Deoxys to the degree that it was starting to truly fear the potential of one of Letum Falcifer’s most darkest traits. Bothersome enough was this trait that even Ho-oh feared its prophecy. The last blow had disrupted the energy flow of Deoxys, though a loss that only it sensed. It was still a loss all the same. Thankfully for it, Mewtwo’s attempts at being helpful had stopped Mewblade from further exploring the types of energies she could charge and throw at it, even if the reprieve was brief.

In Mewtwo’s extended paws a folder lay open to a page listing the techniques that Mewblade was predisposed to. Originally, he wanted to find the origins of the Mewthree’s overstated arm brace, only to find that even her creators did not know where it came from. Having given up on finding that, and having made no meaningful contributions to date, Mewtwo figured the creation documentation might hold some guides to Mewblade’s attacks. Maybe there was something Mewblade missed which could help her in her fight.

<Have you tried Brick Break yet?> Mewtwo half suggested while reading through the list.

<That I have, when one of its Reflects does not catch me,> Mewblade replied, twisting around a Psybeam as she did. That move had saved her life when in Deoxys’ hellish fire box, creating an energy source that was good at shattering defensive moves such as Reflect and Barrier.

Mewtwo was still reading down the list. Destiny Bond was present, but not something he would suggest. He was not aware of a time when she used that move, although he personally had used that ability on her when attempting to save the Mewthree's life. A successful use of Destiny Bond would play out with Mewblade committing suicide. Maybe it was something she had thought of, though not desperate enough to perform. Aside that one skill in particular, the list was not a long one, and most of the physical moves she likely already tried.

<How about Focus Energy or Foresight?> Mewblade thought for a moment, using a Barrier to stop one of Deoxys' attacks.

<Yes, and a bit.> Mewblade had been using Focus Energy in connection with her mounted weapon. It was how she charged so many different versions of attacks in it and stored them there for later use. Foresight was an ability that could help her better predict the movements of others. She only used that move when desperate, giving her the extra bit of split second reaction time she needed. Never was Foresight ever used just for the sake of using it. <I will try that then.> Mewblade ignited her aura and moved in.

Deoxys saw the blue flicker, an uncommon occurrence when indigo and purple often prevailed. Where Deoxys had forms to be deciphered, it had figured out what the colors of Mewblade's aura meant. Blue was for intellectual skills that required more psychic mastery to perform. Indigo was the merger between the brute strength of Mewblade's purple aura and the smarts of her blue one. The purple power aura had been the one it had most often seen, a sign that Mewblade was using whatever favored aggressive damage over cunning. She was up to something and it could not wait to spoil it for her. A Shadow Ball was released, Mewblade dodging around it as her mind was in such a rapid state of thought that everything else moved slowly in comparison. A little miffed but undaunted, Deoxys brought forth its tentacles, aiming to penetrate. At close range, Mewblade nimbly bypassed Deoxys, making sure to dismember it as she went by.

<Good suggestion. I should have used this earlier!> Mewblade smirked, pleased with the outcome. Using her energy to ignite every neuron in her brain was making her practically untouchable. Without a care to how much energy she was burning through she charged in again, safe in her mind. *No more Barriers. No more stabbing. This strategy has to work!*

Using Focus Energy, Mewblade told the auras of her body to be everything she wanted it to be. Destruction, annihilation condensing into her energy cannon to make something that represented the perversion of all living things. Mewblade took her shot. A moment's alteration in her vision let her lose her focus at release, warping the trajectory of her attack. The issue that had plagued her some nine years ago had returned.

The visible world around Mewblade had warped into a sprawling vortex, with what looked like to be energy streaming into a void that must have surrounded something important in Deoxys.

Deoxys' soul! It was in the middle of its chest gem, and around it was a giant hole of negative space, drawing energy into it. Mewblade did not even question what happened. She saw something she should not have been able to see at all, but she just bore witness to a visible existence in a realm far removed from her own concept of reality. Her vision cleared, but she was too late. The shot was removed from her weapon, barreling down on the enemy. All this time she had been aiming for Deoxys' head when what was important was laying for all to see in the center of its chest.

Deoxys cried out in terror, the hit ripping through all of its head and part of its upper body. Almost a full two-thirds of its gem had been spared. The attack had not been a direct hit but it did not matter anymore to the Mewthree.

<“I did it!”> she howled victoriously. Aside a partially molten blob for a jewel, Deoxys had disintegrated into nothing. A minute passed and Deoxys had failed to reform. Mewblade was elated, her telepathic laughter was heard by all as she tried to get over her stresses.

Mewtwo was unable to respond. Between his shock that the fight had gone from deadly to done, he was also inundated with the alarmed telepathy of the Legendaries. All of the Hoenn Legendaries had either stopped moving or collapsed. Lugia was especially troubled as he found himself going from fleeing Rayquaza to trying to rescue her from a half mile long freefall.

“Teleport the Legends now!” Coline demanded of Mewtwo, seeing Rayquaza drop to a drowning death. Mewtwo was fast to comply, his aura reaching out to yank the collective back to him. Like Mewblade, his Teleports were slow in normal circumstances, and anything faster would burn him out. He had no choice in the matter and depleted large quantities of it just to Teleport the Legendaries to him. He would not have the death of the sky dragon on his head if he could help it.

<I need to stay to ensure Deoxys is fully dead!> Mewblade interjected, resisting the abrupt pull. Mewtwo’s unexplained action was costly on his energy pool, since the more resistance a Legendary gave, the more energy it took to overpower them and bring them to him.

<“There!”> Mewtwo said with a tired exhale, crippled to his knees. The Kanto, Johto and Hoenn Legendaries appeared spread out on the field around him, their injuries healed by him in the process of Teleportation. Coline’s Pokémon and the Master’s Pikachu poured out of the dimensional portal, with Pikachu fast to check on his master’s Legendary.

“Pi pikachu?” (Are you okay?) he asked in concern. Mewtwo nodded, bracing his paws to his knees then rising to his feet. It seemed like Mewblade had been successful, which was good in his view as most of the Legendaries, himself included, were running on sparse amounts of their own energy reserves.

<“What was that about?”> came the voice of Suicune, this followed by the curious mutterings of the Kanto and Johto Legendaries. Mewtwo usually explained himself before he did anything, and ripping them from their places had startled most of the members of the collective.

“Rayquaza was in trouble,” Coline said ahead of Mewtwo, more aware of the cause than he was. “Mewblade did something to release the corrupted Legendaries.” How she came to the conclusion was no mystery to her, having felt the sudden wave of harmony move through the Unown, a sign that the infection had been cured. She could feel the condition of the Hoenn Legends now that they were present. Other than being considerably groggy and confused, they were all of their own minds. There was a feeling of uncertainty, Coline having to explain further. “She did something to destroy the connection Deoxys had between itself and whatever it was controlling.”

<“Does this mean Deoxys is dead?”>

<“I’m afraid not,”> Mewtwo said darkly. Mewblade was right to have stayed behind. He resized the screens, moving them around for all the Legendaries to view. What was evident to him was soon obvious to the rest. Deoxys’ health bar was holding barely at 1%, close to death but as experience had shown, that was not enough to kill either Mewblade or Deoxys.

<“It’s still not dead?!”> bemoaned the Articuno.

<“But this means that at least it’s running only on its own power,”> said Raikou with a touch of optimism.

<“Yeah, all 100% of it,”> Zapdos added.

Regice babbled something in its native binary, incomprehensible to everyone else with the exception of Ho-oh and its fellow Regis. It had to do with the low statistical chances of Mewblade winning.

<“Can you please bring them up to speed?”> Lugia growled to Ho-oh, barely coming across as polite. Given the direness of the situation, he could guess what the Regi had said, and wanted the Hoenn Legendaries to not add any other opinions in their nonsensical languages until Ho-oh had resolved it. It would not take long before the other Pokémon would make up an excuse to attack the Regis for their beeping, or Rayquaza for her primeval screeching. They had been out of synchronicity with the other Legendaries long enough that their language structures lacked modern understanding.

<“I will synchronize them with the rest of us,”> Ho-oh said its solution quietly. The bird casually displayed its aura, tracing it to the Hoenn Legendaries so they could be updated with the current state of world affairs. Doing so would also increase their language capacity and make it easier for them to understand what was going on. Despite the language barrier, the sound of worry needed no translation. All were in rapt attention as they watched the screens.

Mewblade did not need Mewtwo’s screens to tell her what was obvious. Deoxys had not died from her assault. The Decider of Fate would have known that in an instant. Her wavering vision briefly hinted that at least the void around Deoxys was gone, yet it had not decimated Deoxys’ own energy in the slightest. Whatever move she had managed to pull off had done a good job. This could almost be called a fair fight, that was once Deoxys healed itself, if it could at all.

Mewblade ventured closer, her sight clear and her mind no longer running on overdrive. The space around Deoxys crackled, a sign that it was struggling to regenerate. Again, whatever she had done, Mewblade was thoroughly impressed with it. Not only did her move release Deoxys’ grip on the Legendaries of Hoenn, but it was disruptive enough to the virus that it took it a lot of effort to rebuild its body. A few curses wavered through the vastness as Deoxys gradually took shape. The Mewthree was ready. Her Steel Wings were ripped to shreds, thousands of feathers surrounding the enemy. The moment it had a body she sent the feathers through it and flew away, reclaiming the remainder of the wings as she left.

<“You’re at 36%. Deoxys’ energy levels are at 99%, already healing,”> Mewtwo informed. Any telepathy he broadcasted to Mewblade was also being spread amongst those standing with him. She did not need to be told that. Mewblade was omnipotent and knew exactly how well Deoxys was doing, and she did not like it.

<“Drag it down to the atmosphere. A persistent burn will weaken that viral ass considerably!”> Mewblade was puzzled. She did not recognize the telepathy’s owner, knowing it was not Zapdos and none of the females resorted to swearing. Mewblade was about to point out the flaw with the speaker’s reasoning when Mewtwo did it for her.

<“Mewblade would irradiate quickly in the upper atmosphere. That’s not an option.”>

<“Then let me handle it,”> the female speaker offered, partially demanding. Mewblade was wondering why they were bothering to project their full conversations to her without identifying themselves. From what she could guess, the new female voice, with the addition of her either wanting to, or capable of being in the heights of the atmosphere meant that the speaker was Rayquaza.

Ho-oh modernized them quickly, she thought to herself, impressed that the bird had managed to deal with the Hoenn Legendaries’ language problems so soon.

<“Rayquaza, you are not strong enough to handle Deoxys. Stay where you are.”> On the plateau, Rayquaza blubbered in protest. She loved destroying anything that entered her atmosphere and would especially love it if that thing happened to be Deoxys.

<“Wait your turn. I will corrupt you all later.”> Deoxys had been eavesdropping on their conversations. It still had tons of energy to go through, making the other Pokémon not much of a concern. The one that it was most bothered by was Mewtwo, but that Pokémon was inexperienced enough at mass Teleports that he burned through a good portion of his energy in the attempt. Mewblade was still the second biggest player in Deoxys’ game, of which it was the first. Already it was claiming itself to be the victor. Estimating its level of burnout to that of Mewblade’s, she had no chance in this fight. The only thing left to guessing was how long it would take Mewblade to realize that for herself.

<“Oh, God!”>

<“Ooh . . .”> cringed one of the Pokémon. A dry heaving noise was heard to the back of the crowd. Mewblade had just pummeled her fist through one of Deoxys’ Barriers, taking off its head. Its spiky knee lodged itself in Mewblade’s gut in turn, forcing her to vomit blood. There was another sound of heaving.

<“Come on . . . come on . . . come on . . .”> whispered Moltres, intensely watching the two sets of bars, praying for a good outcome. Lugia was doing the same, though silently and unflinching. Coline and Ho-oh were unified in one thought, hoping that Mewblade would win but not by specific means.

Mew had resorted to resting on Mewtwo’s head, howling and crying at every injury Mewblade received. Her constant verbalizations of a mother fretful of losing her child was wearing thin on the collective, just as much as the sickening acts of violence. Of course Mew could fly to Mewblade and try to save her, but after five Disables from various Legendaries, no one would let her.

<“Calculating a 100% chance of death given the current data,”> Registeel blithered from its stationary post. All three of the Regis were in thought, evident when their eyes changed in color. <“Calculating a 92% chance of death for the Decider of Fate.”>

<“Dead. Dead. Dead,”> Regice repeated, singing in a monotone telepathic voice. Regirock joined in, bleeping in binary as if the concept was almost funny to it.

<“Death, how ironic,”> Groudon grumbled from above, his shadow casting over quite a bit of the field, adding to the gloom. With the exception of the Tidal Twins, the rest of the Hoenn Legendaries were old, most a few million years at least. Death did not seem like a real concept to them. The world changed, things decayed, but it never affected them. The only reason why any of them were hysterical was mostly because the Regis were constantly expressing their rates of demise.

<“Go death yourself!”> Mew screamed hotly at the elderly Legends. At the size of Groudon’s pupil, Mew was a mere blip to him. Her age was also nothing more than a second in comparison to his lifetime.

<“Mew!”> Celebi scolded the little, pink Pokémon; this putting Mew in her place, a curled up, shivering ball of tears. Everyone’s thoughts were derailed by Zapdos’ loud squawks.

<“That’s disgusting!”> Mewblade and Deoxys had not really left each other’s physical reach, them taking into tearing one another apart. Deoxys was rather fond of ripping out Mewblade’s liver.

<“Keep the commentary to yourself!”> hissed the Titan of Fire, emotions running high before glaring over to her icy opposite. The creature was huddled close to Kyogre, both of them with their eyes diverted. Of the Dogs, the only one watching was Entei; a silent vigil if it were not for the gagging sounds. Most of the Pokémon were diverting their gazes, occasionally glancing over in between the combatants’ sparring. Only those who felt that they had to be involved, or were ambivalent, watched.

Mewtwo was fully focused on Mewblade, his desperation setting in. On its own, Deoxys had a large energy pool to draw from, while it was not as monstrous as Mewblade’s, it was more than what she had currently. Mewtwo did not want to say it. He did not even want to think it. The silence hung over the group, Master’s Pikachu speaking up amongst them.

“Pi pikachu pika, pikachu?” (She’s going to die, isn’t she?) The only sound in the oppressive quiet was Mew’s additional sobs. That was it. Mewtwo wanted his daughter back, now!

“Mewtwo, don’t you dare think of telling her,” warned the solitary human. Of all those there, she should have been the first to consider it. Coline’s body was tense, fists clenched tightly. She regretted what she was saying, but knew what was best for her love. “If you say anything like that to her, you risk her having a meltdown, so don’t.”

Mewtwo had to agree with the girl. Mewblade took bad news as it was, badly. He winced as he watched his only living daughter being stabbed through, wanting to intervene, to do something. He could still Teleport her back, if she would let him, which was likely not to happen. He did not have the energy to force her, and the only way she would let him if she was banging on Death’s door.

A strangled, choking rasp escaped Mewtwo’s mouth. The expression of heart break, impending loss. He could not take it anymore. He would not lose his genetic child. A garbled verbal mutter of frustration came out of his muted neck, so badly designed that the second neck was a secondary genetic add-on meant as a way to keep him alive. Mewtwo inhaled sharply, a useless reflex as it was, readying himself to call out to Mewblade.

<“Mewblade! Come back!”> he cried in desperation, disregarding Coline’s warning. Before Mewtwo could go any further, those aware of the Deciders of Fate were almost on top of him. Coline being the closest was the fastest to act and the primary aggressor.

The young adult was shivering with anger and grief. <“Stay out there!”> the girl ordered to her Legendary. To Mewtwo she said, “I will paralyze you for life if you so much as think of doing that again,” the girl snarled, hand wrenching viciously on Mewtwo’s second neck. The feeling was incapacitating, his brain almost numbed to unconsciousness. Everyone thought they knew Coline enough to think that she would not act in such a manner, and instead it seemed like she was mimicking Mewblade’s behavior by acting out viciously.

<“Go Mewblade!”> Moltres shouted to her friend, cheering her on. Then again, it appeared as if the Mewblade supporters had snapped. Both her parents were emotional messes, where the rest were actually encouraging the Decider of Fate’s finale.

<“Kill it!”> Lugia roared.

<“I love you, Mewblade! Fight it hard for me!”> Coline yelled, upset with what she was doing, though feeling that she had no choice. Their survival was tied in to Mewblade’s will to fight. Discouraging her in any way was not ideal.

<“Are you all insane?!”> Celebi squealed at them in dismay. Moltres and Lugia were quick to drop the guise.

<“We have to be.”>

<“Don’t tell Mewblade this,”> Moltres said to the audience, her telepathy not reaching her friend. <“She obviously has not figured it out by now, and it’s too late to really try. We knew about this crisis all along and its outcome. And it’s going the way it was predicted to happen.”> Moltres looked candidly at the group, unable to betray a lie. <“When I was a fledgling, I was Chosen to a human and Mew chimera.”> This instantly received appalled looks. <“Yes, I know. Never been done since.”> The mention was disturbing enough to some of them that several of the Legendaries began to derail the intent of Moltres’ explanation.

<“When you were a chick I was already a Legendary. I would have heard about that.”> Entei was a bit accusatory with what he had said. Moltres nodded, understanding.

<“You did, but my Legendary forbid that memory. This was so she could protect the next Decider of Fate, Letum Falcifer. Or as we now know her as, Mewblade.”> Lugia, Coline and Eve agreed with nods of their heads. Lugia was permitted to remember as he had once been Chosen to a Decider of Fate, and Coline and Eve were privy to the knowledge through their ability to decipher text. Ho-oh also knew mostly since it was too powerful to have its brain washed by another Legendary, even one as powerful as one that shared Mewblade’s title. It had not asked for this conversation, seeing the removal of the memories as a needed convenience. Mewtwo was listening, wondering why no one had the courtesy to tell him that they knew exactly what was going on when he did not have a clue. Lugia elaborated further, him being the second eldest of the Kanto and Johto Legendaries, and thus more respected than Moltres.

<“My Fate was also one of the Deciders of Fate. The first one in fact. Moltres knew a lot more about Letum Falcifer than mine ever did.”>

<“Just say, ‘Mewblade’. I don’t like that title for her,”> Eve muttered sorrowfully.

<“My Fate was called, ‘Iustitia’, or ‘Justice’ in English. She predicted the coming of Letum Falcifer, or ‘Death Carrying a Scythe’ as it translates. No idea what she looked like, as Iustitia was blind, but that name shook us back then.”> Moltres was calm with how she mentioned these details. Lugia was just as relaxed as he took over.

<“Iustitia was noble, but dangerous. Mine defined life,”> hence why Lugia had managed to learn a well-honed Recover, a trait not shown in any other members of his species. <“Iustitia defined law. Loosely described as a manipulator of all physical things. When we saw Iustitia in action, utilizing her Fate-given gifts, it was frightening. That sort of power was unrestrained and obscene.”>

<“She drowned an entire city,”> Moltres said with a hung head, <“on the grounds that she was law, and she was right. They were the enemy to her people but . . .”> Moltres trailed off briefly. <“ . . . it did make for peaceful times following. She mentioned of Lugia’s Fate, Vita Sanguine a lot in hindsight. And around me she would mention of Letum Falcifer, making it her goal to protect her any way she could for just being . . . her. When she was dying she mentioned to everyone about Mewblade, and to protect her. I obliged as one of her Chosen, but the rest of you . . . cowards, were frightened. The Death Fate sounded far worse to you, and a coming akin to an apocalypse. You did not support my Legendary at all, and she had you brain washed!”> Moltres was bitter, venting her frustrations, almost glad that the Legendaries living back then had been wiped of their memories. <“They need to be the ones in their fights. The universe handpicks them for these moments, even if they might die . . .”> There were a few details missing that she, Lugia, Ho-oh and Mewblade’s Chosen feared. It were those details specifically that Iustitia blocked that Moltres refused to mention. It was hoped that Mewblade would succeed without going the way of the previous Deciders of Fate. If the crisis worsened, it was preferred that she die trying over the last ditch attempts both the Life and Law Fates took. Guessing on the way things had turned out with her predecessors, it was unlikely the crisis would work in a way which Ho-oh especially would have liked to see.

“If we support her,” Coline piped in, “then she may pull off a turn around.” Mewtwo was not convinced by those optimistic words.

<“You all think she’s going to die anyway. That was the whole point of preventing Justice’s predictions, was to keep Mewblade alive or from doing something catastrophic.”> Coline’s tears and lip biting was all the answers he needed. He had front row seats to his daughter’s own funeral, of which had been predicted by a creepy, overpowered, twisted abomination of a Legendary. As far as he was concerned it was the delusions of a bastard Legendary played on them all as her final attempt to snub them. All Moltres and Lugia had done was make the other Legendaries afraid of his offspring, who was unable to truly keep herself alive. *Stupid birds. Stupid, daft blonde!* Mewtwo’s thoughts raged, his aura visible as his anger mounted. <“She does *not* deserve to die like that!”> he roared.

<“We know that, Mewtwo,”> came the gentle voice of Lugia. <“But again, it’s too late to intervene if she doesn’t already know.”>

<“What is that suppose to mean?! Do you *want* to see her die?!”> screamed the Mewtwo in a full-throated roar.

<“Of course not!”> Eve protested.

“We’ve just come to terms with it, and have been trying to find other ways to help instead. She’s a Mewthree,” Coline stated, trying to work up the courage to speak without crying. “Let her fight for you and give everyone a chance. It’s what would make her . . . happy . . .” Coline failed to keep herself from shedding tears, sobbing quietly to herself. She had not accepted it, and did not want to. Only the reality that she could do nothing for her had made Coline confess her affections in the first place. Mewblade would not be coming home.

The Decider of Fate was fighting for the Legendaries, for the world. It gave her purpose and drive. If no one else died but her, it was better that way. Mewtwo knew that at least in that respect, it was how she would want it. Mewblade was happier with the belief of her dying so everyone else would live, rather than someone else risking their life for her. She would have it no other way.

Up in space Mewblade was unaware of the conversation, and too preoccupied with fighting that the question of her own mortality had not come up yet. Deoxys was wondering what was taking her so long. It could not wait to see the look of desperation on her face when she finally figured out that she was a goner. The virus mused the concept of telling Mewblade outright, but could not pass up on a tease as it started to drop hints.

<“You know, something that has such a natural affinity to death as you do seems so out-of-place in the world of the living. Haven’t you noticed that?”>

Mewblade was not paying attention to it. Her current interest was in her energy cannon. She was currently smacking it around, trying to figure out how it worked. *If I could do that again, I might be able to kill it in one strike. Why did this not come with an instruction manual?* Mewblade lamented, looking down the barrel of her cannon. The inside and outside of it were smooth titanium, with identical composition to that of the rest of her metal. Nothing abnormal to speak of.

Deoxys watched while Mewblade studied herself, annoyed that she was actually ignoring it. There was no fun to be had if she refused to engage it in its teasing. It would have to resort to other methods to get her attention, and it knew just how to do it. Transitioning into its attack form, Deoxys charged at Mewblade. Her reaction time was usually excellent; though unprepared, she found herself being gored through.

<“Pay attention!”> yelled Mewtwo.

It would not be a repeated problem for her. Mewblade did not enjoy being hunched over with her entrails spilling between her fingers. She had to dismiss the effectiveness of her energy cannon. It had taken far too much of her concentration and energy to make for anything truly effective. In a match defined by Recover capacity, she always fared better just so long as Mewblade kept her offensive up. Depending on anything else was hazardous.

With the attention back on itself, Deoxys proceeded with its little game, starting off by saying, <“Do you know what a strangelet really is?”> Mewblade had been trying to rake it with her Metal Claws as it danced away in its speed form. She had a feeling that if she did not at least indulge it, that Deoxys might start to whine. A successful maneuver had Mewblade flying past Deoxys, her tail blade taking out a tentacle.

<“No, what is it?”> she asked, not a hint of curiosity in her telepathy. Mewblade could always read the mind of an experienced individual, but if Deoxys wished to waste

its attention span explaining, then she was glad to let it. She could use the distracted state to her advantage. Mewblade moved away, charging some Shadow Balls as she did; Deoxys followed, proceeding with its ramblings.

<“A strangelet is a cluster of quark particles called, ‘strange.’”> This she already knew. Mewblade passively listened as she threw her two Shadow Balls. One missed and the other hit Deoxys’ side. <“You’re not listening!”> it yelled at her. Maybe what it said had importance to it, but it had none to her.

<“Strangelets are made of a lot of strange matter. I heard,”> Mewblade repeated back to it. She was in Deoxys’ face, literally, her head blade slicing it in half before she jetted on by. <“I’d rather fight than talk. Either do both or fight,”> she called back, then turned around to unleash a Psybeam. Deoxys looped around it, talking and swinging at her as it went.

<“The common hypothesis,”> continued Deoxys, stabbing at a bit of Mewblade’s flesh, <“is that it is a cluster of anti-matter, the opposite of matter. If the two collide, they explode in a huge burst of energy. Another hypothesis made, states that if a strangelet collides with matter, it will turn all the matter it contacts into more of the strange sub-atomic particles.”> This was all being said while the combatants twirled and danced around each other, engaging in attacks with Deoxys still rambling on top of it. Mewblade was citing some hidden irony of dying through boredom. Deoxys had chosen a topic to discuss at length, of which she saw as pointless.

<“What is the point of telling me this?”> asked the Pokémon, fist casually punching through Deoxys’ gut. The Deoxys ripped into her chest, pulling her in close with the tug of her breast bone. Through the pain, they still could see each other’s expression, clearly reading one another’s intentions.

<“Dear Strangelet. The cluster of anti-matter. The strange death. Curiosity of a black hole, of which nothing returns. Don’t you see the meaning in it? In demise?”> it cooed delightfully, dislodging from Mewblade then carried on as normal, only to briefly look behind to see if she understood.

Decay and entropy were the topics of Deoxys’ discussion, any hidden meaning in it Mewblade chose to ignore. Mewblade refused to play into someone else’s mind games; whether it be Ho-oh, her siblings, Chaos or Deoxys. It was an obvious attempt to psyche her out, of which she was not going to fall for.

<“I am beyond your games!”> Mewblade shouted at it, finding one of her bloodied ice comets and slamming it into Deoxys for effect. It effortlessly blocked the move, much to her disappointment.

<“Considering we shall have a winner and a loser, then it is a game we play!”> cackled Deoxys, tentacles lacing through space. Mewblade had seen this move only once, and it was used on Coline. She knew exactly what it wanted to do to her and tried to escape.

<“Ugh . . .”> she gasped, impaled from pelvis to neck, wrapped around and slammed into a Barrier. Of the injuries she hated, impaling was one of them. Psychological trauma was more damaging than the pain would ever be, and despite how much she loathed it, there had been times she wished she had a more naturally accommodating cavity. A strange thing to lament about given the present circumstance.

<“You really didn’t seem to like that one,”> Deoxys sneered, drawing itself in. There was not much to enjoy. Another horrible thing her coma had taught her, that one,

being asexual was particularly punishing for someone who liked to claim they were female; and the other lesson, that her blades could be used against her. Vicebane had a fondness for imbedding her blades into objects such as floors, walls, and concrete slabs since it made it easier to handle her because it stopped her from rolling over. Without any energy she never did figure a way out of those positions.

I can do this. I did not reject Ho-oh's offer for nothing, Mewblade thought, stone-faced as Deoxys approached. She hardened her resolve as Deoxys tried to work her mind. A skittish Mewthree was all too easy to win against, and if Deoxys was right, certain mental stimuli would incapacitate this particular Mewthree. Done right, Mewblade could probably perturb Deoxys with her own manipulations. It meant the Legendaries were going to have to observe something she did not want to show, but she was trapped and would take any edge she could have over the virus.

<“Letum Falcifer, only good for death. Couldn't carry a child, only kills them instead. Does it hurt to have nothing inside?”> it sneered, ripping her organs, mashing them around. Mewblade was currently amassing her lost blades, bones and feathers behind Deoxys, not hinting that she was up to anything. The going was slow, as a strong flow of energy would betray her actions.

<“With you in there, it feels a lot better,”> Mewblade lied, her expression lustful and passionate, not hinting that she was fibbing or at all suffering due to the intense pain. Deoxys did not like that answer and made sure to work her over more thoroughly. The pain was nothing, the approach was mostly out of infuriated annoyance. Deoxys wanted to rile her, as any Legendary pegged with their legs spread would have been bitterly humiliated. It hurt, though she masked the pained face with a pleased gasp and a moan, only making Deoxys madder and feel ever more ineffective at its aims. Telling the difference between whether it felt good or not was often difficult for the observer to determine, which Deoxys had no references for which one it was. Its focus was solely driven on making her miserable that it did not notice the wall of metal waiting to strike. At this point Mewblade was really looking forward to turning Deoxys into her interpretation of modern art.

Mewblade was lining up her arsenal, feigning boredom with a roll of her eyes and a yawn. <“You are bad at this. If being gendered means putting up with someone like you, I will pass. Your technique is crap. Frankly, I have had better.”>

Better . . . ? Deoxys was confused. It was four tentacles deep into Mewblade's center, and she was complaining about not how it hurt, but how it was basically bad at intercourse. Mewblade smirked slyly, she had won the mental match. She celebrated her victory by eviscerating Deoxys, giving her the chance she needed to escape. In the midst of healing she sent waves of her own decaying body into that of Deoxys, less than pleased with what had transpired. Sexual innuendos always bothered Legendaries since they adhered to a sexless culture, and sure enough every Legendary on the field was uncomfortable.

<“That was . . . umm . . .”> Mewtwo had no words for it, his flushed face enough to explain how he was feeling. Mewblade did not really want to answer for her behavior. One learned a lot of things, often unsavory ones in order to survive. Steel Wing was not the only thing she had picked up from her coma years ago, something which she was not going to be ashamed to admit.

<“I told you that you are all a bunch of prudes,”> snorted the Mewthree. Experience taught her that even the bad ones could be made useful. Any other Legendary probably would have struggled and died because of their lack of coping skills and broken will. The mind played just as much of a role in a fight as the body did, and with the mental dominance established, Deoxys completely gave up on any chance of swaying the Mewthree. The thing that did change her attitude turned out not to be Deoxys at all, and was Mewtwo instead.

<“Your energy is holding at 26%. Deoxys’ is at 87%.”> When placed in numbers, the differences were substantial. The momentary feeling of consequence crossed Mewblade’s mind, dampening her mood.

Is it really that much? she wondered. To Mewtwo, she thanked him. Slowly she was becoming aware that she was in deep trouble. Had she had more energy she would not be weighing her chances of survival. The growing worry had diminished any feelings of elation she felt for besting Deoxys, her mind replaced with the thought of, *Am I going to die?* instead. As the struggle continued it became one of the few phrases left in Mewblade’s head.

<“Mewblade, you’re down to 6%,”> Mewtwo said, informing her of the new number. He had been confirming her energy levels at intervals of five, and only recently began doing so at every singular detriment. His constant reminders were causing Mewblade to panic. She had been fully using Recovers up until this moment, and now started considering rationing her energy. Deoxys was still over 40% in terms of its energy pool, and it looked like it was not going to drop much further. Mewblade pursed her lips, dodging energy released from Deoxys as her mind screamed for her to find a solution. Because of Deoxys’ earlier, ever-replenishing energy pool, Mewblade had no idea which moves of Deoxys’ actually drained it more than others.

<“Try Giga Drain!”> Celebi suggested hotly. Easy said for her. Mewblade did not have the capacity to do that.

<“I cannot do that!”> she retorted, telepathy unable to hide how petrified she felt. Celebi began to berate the half Mew and Mewtwo clone.

<“What sort of Mew copy are you?”>

<“One that does not have time to learn a new move set!”> Mewblade screamed at her. Civility could kiss her rear for all she cared. She knew every move in her repertoire, and absolutely nothing was going to make up for the 34% energy difference.

<“You’re going to die up there!”> Entei barked in alarm.

<“I know! I know!”> shouted the Mewthree. During this time Deoxys had noticed Mewblade was not directing her telepathy at it. As it figured, she did not want it to know that she was scared.

Mewblade stopped in midflight, Deoxys speeding past. With good timing she performed a successful grab on its neck, breaking it then disposing off the head. A move done to her would also not be fatal. To avoid further injury, she backed away. Physical moves were her only saving grace with low energy requirements and high damage output. Using them though placed her within reach of Deoxys, the thousands of stabs alone contributed to the large depletion of her resources. Deoxys Recovered itself, flawlessly as

usual, and all Mewblade could think about was her next assault to keep it away for longer.

<“Getting desperate, aren’t we?”> Mewblade did not even see where it had come from, only that the tentacles had stabbed her through from behind. This display had been done so many times before; Deoxys stabbed and Mewblade ripped it apart with her tail. She got away from the monster, facing it with a sense of dread.

Still holding on . . . she grimaced, then cringed. If she used Recover, her energy would go down to a mere 5%. Fluid was starting to fill her lungs. She would have to let this one slide.

<“What is she doing?”> Kyogre whispered, eyes attentive on the screen.

<“Why isn’t she using Recover?”> Raikou asked the group. Mewtwo stared at the screen, watching with silent dread. He needed to call her back. The deadly struggle began again, and he had enough of it. Any longer and she was as good as dead.

<“Come back to Indigo Plateau while you still have the energy!”> More of a plea than an order, the Legendaries waited silently for Mewblade’s decision.

Mewblade withdrew from her bloody tango, forced to waste her precious reserves due to a wayward stab to a major artery. It was the only thing she fixed. Still gushing blood, she replied, <“Over my dead body!”> affirming her refusal for outside intervention.

Deoxys heard that one, and laughed gleefully. Fight to the death, how it loved the Mewthree mentality. No one else was laughing. The taut lipped Mewtwo, pushed to his wit’s end began yelling at his daughter, much to Deoxys’ mirth.

<“Get back here! Now!!!”> ordered the Mewtwo, red-faced and mad. Mewblade wholly ignored him. With little other options, the next voice the Mewthree and the Deoxys heard was that of Mewblade’s mother.

<“Come back!”> begged the Mew.

Mewblade shut them out completely. If she did not fight for all she was worth, the rest of the Legendaries would perish. Her loss would be their chance at life. Bitterly frustrated, full of fear, Mewblade slammed full throttle into Deoxys, the pair ripping and tearing. She hated Deoxys. She wanted it to die. The thought of losing, facing her own demise once again burned into her mind, the thoughts turning into spiteful actions. She did want to lose, given what was at stake.

<“5% . . .”> Mewtwo murmured, sticking to his responsibilities all the while knowing he could do nothing to protect her. Maybe he could try to tear Mewblade back, but her stubborn will would never allow for it, only costing him energy that he desperately needed to fend the rest of the Legendaries from the virus. He was next on the list as Earth’s defenders, and he knew he had no say in the matter. Torn between decisions, Mewtwo had to take to being a Legendary first over being a parent.

Mewblade was aware of the considerable contrast in Deoxys’ energy levels and that of everyone else, including her own. She had to work to conserve whatever she had left. Currently, she had lost most of her neck, part of her face, and the mobility to her right arm. This was not going to stop her. Over the screaming, pleads and cries, there was nothing but her and the enemy. The encounters with Chaos had taught her well, allowing her to shutout all external distractions.

The pair collided, alternating blows, and ripping at each other repeatedly. The battlers parted; Mewblade with Deoxys' flesh in her mouth and Deoxys with her blood coated up to its four shoulders. Mewblade was spurting fluids from an artery in her leg, refusing to staunch it. She gave Deoxys little reprieve, charging in again, desperate and animalistic, giving her attacks every ounce of effort that she could muster.

<“4%!”> Mewtwo yelled at the Mewthree. <“You have to come back!”> It fell on deaf ears, Mewblade ignoring him as she attempted to slice Deoxys in half. It returned with a spiked knee to her jaw.

Tongues were useless in space, Mewblade surmised, spitting blood and sneezing the rest from her ruined nasal cavity. *I need to keep going.*

<“I am impressed! Only until you realized that you have no chance at winning did you show me the real mark of a Fate,”> complimented Deoxys upon lodging itself in the Decider of Fate's fleshy center. <“Pity you're so strong-willed. You would be a pleasure to control.”>

Mewblade spoke nothing, punching her fist through its face. If it had called for a ceasefire, even then she would neither have listened nor cared. There was only one thing in her mind, and that was to give her comrades a fighting chance.

<“3%!”> read Mewtwo, the life bar for Mewblade holding at 15%, her energy level unaccustomedly lower than her health. It was hard to believe she could even function at this point. He knew there would be no way he could. *Please, Mewblade. Don't do this to me.* Any more loss to her energy pool and there would be no way to heal. Then a realization dawned on him. Mewblade was the only thing alive that could do the unthinkable, harnessing the energy of her very soul. The source was weak and hardly viable. Any attempts at using it had always resulted in crippling agony, placing her in a vulnerable position of simply being struck and dying due to the strain. At least if she had to die, it should not have been in a way that afflicted her as excruciatingly. Was she so desperate that she was willing to die to such an indignity? This was Mewblade after all, and Mewtwo had no doubt she was considering it.

“Oh no . . .” Coline gasped, Mewtwo's hollow gaze confirming what she and the other Legendaries were suspecting. If Mewblade was going to fight to the death then she would go so far to damage all aspects of herself to do so.

<“Mewblade! Don't do it!”> screeched Moltres, watching the fight and realizing Mewblade had already undergone preparations. She personally witnessed how awful the process of using soul energy was for the Mewthree, and never would ask of her to do that.

<“2%. Mewblade, stop!”>

Mewblade had no idea how she was going to be able to handle the pain and the mental crush of tearing her soul energy apart. She had done this once in a trance, never in combat. Trances afforded her the luxury of dual consciousnesses, allowing her to manage any effects her soul suffered due to the resurrection process. Without that to aid her, she was unsure of how she was going to balance fighting with such a level of disjointed focus.

The Mewthree wiped the blood from her eyes, her sinuses damaged enough that she was crying blood. Doing so was a mental way of physically bringing herself to focus

on the task ahead of her; trying to buy more time. She honestly did not want to die like this, with her very being screaming for release, begging to be weakened and handed over to the afterlife, unable to fend for itself, again. Mewblade was aware of what had become of her brothers and sisters, her likely to join them. It was a naïve hope of hers, wishing to be spared from at least something after all that she had done. Life never rewarded her, only punished. She had given everything to those she loved, her family, her friends. Mewblade had used her capabilities for the safeguarding of Pokémon, people, and the unwritten laws that bound them all. It had been her world to protect, an ultimate failure of her duties if she could not do that alone. If she did not give it her all, all of herself, then in her mind she was just as deserving of a horrible end as the universe likely demanded of her. Anything that happened to her now, Mewblade felt that she was deserving of it.

Those around her on the other hand were not.

<“I love you . . . I’m sorry,”> Mewblade choked, miserable and apologetic. Losing horribly was one of her worst fears, and she not only had failed herself, but failed everything she ever cared about. All that she had left to give was really nothing.

<“Don’t you say that,”> Mew whimpered, sobs escaping. <“Don’t you dare say that.”> It was a send off, a goodbye. The onlookers watched, a mixed bag of emotions. Some were losing a daughter, a friend, a lover, and the rest knew that no more Mewblade meant that they were next. <“I will try, but it is not much,”> Mewblade whispered, deeply ashamed. She steeled herself for her final ordeal with Deoxys. Many of the Legendaries were willing to place their faith in this Decider of Fate, omens or not. Zapdos was the first to speak out.

<“We thank you for your brave service!”> he saluted, stern-faced. <“You were a true warrior.”> Of all he had said about her, their squabbles and conflicts, Mewblade was shocked that not only did the Titan of Thunder actually show her respect, but he expressed it to her honorably. She smiled, overwhelmed and heart-broken.

<“You damned bird,”> Mewblade said with a laugh, then ending it with a sob. What he had said cemented everything in her mind. She was dead, doomed to die alone in the vacuum of space, never to succeed. All her suffering, loss . . . nothing. She would die a warrior’s death and feel no honor.

It was all for nothing, she thought. *Everything I did was for nothing!* her mind further screamed.

<“My, how touching,”> Deoxys smiled a toothless grin. <“Any last words?”>

<“Go to Hell!”> Mewblade snarled at it, elbow knocking it away.

<“We are not judging you. Do your best. We believe in you!”> came the telepathy of Mewblade’s most beloved human. Coline felt it was her place to offer Mewblade the encouragement she desperately needed. This did nothing to help, only further grieve the Mewthree. Once she fell to it, she was certain it would follow-through with killing Coline. A blood bath would ensue, Mew and Moltres trying to protect her Chosen, Mewtwo attempting to kill Deoxys as it slowly murdered or possessed them all, one by one. They believed in a false hope, that somehow anyone was going to come out of this alive.

<“I’m so very sorry . . .”> was Mewblade’s final, pathetic mutter to the crowd. Some of them had to know that anything she did now was basically just for show, that it would not save them. She had to try still. Maybe in the end, that off in a distant place in the universe they would look at her failings, saying that at least she gave it her all.

There was no point in warning her about the dangers of her next action. Mewblade transferred the last of her reserves from her shield, willing to face the cold, heat and irradiation of space. Comfort and convenience no longer mattered. Pain in comparison to the rest would pale in significance. As far as she was concerned, she was already dead.

Deoxys watched in fascination as Mewblade began tearing apart her soul energy, partitioning it for use. Even from a distance it could see the blood flowing down her face, her teeth biting hard into her lip so she would not scream. All she suffered through was because of it, and Deoxys could be no more proud.

<“I will remember this day for the rest of eternity as you are what made it great. Thank you so very much, Letum Falcifer, the most strange of the Deciders of Fate.”>

To die as such and being mocked while doing it, was all pointless to her. Why she bothered was in-of-itself, a defeating concept. Through the torment Mewblade remembered that she was still the Decider of Fate, that even at her worst she had a title and a world to defend.

<“I am the Decider of Fate, and I will fight you to my very end,”> proclaimed the Mewthree, telepathy unbroken. It would be her last stand. Deoxys had to admit, along with the other Legendaries that there was a sense of admiration for this child Legend. Disciplined and warrior-like, there was nothing to mock. To her very end, at her worst, she would do anything to stand by her duties.

<“I am flattered,”> Deoxys said with a full bow, righting itself to see Mewblade moving in. She sling-shot past, relying on the force of gravity from the Earth in front of her and the moon from behind. Her shoulder slam sent Deoxys into a flying tumble. She would not let Deoxys regain itself, catching up to it, fists slamming it hard downwards. Mewblade finished with an upwards lash of her tail, causing multiple lacerations across the virus’ frame.

While Deoxys was in a dizzied delirium brought on by Mewblade’s brutality, Mewblade herself was forcing down heaves. The pain was sickening, her wanting to hurl at almost frequent intervals. Migraine induced symptoms had affected her vision, her sense of direction. There was a persistent feeling of vertigo. Along her body her skin was scorched, and any of her flesh not facing the sun was severely frostbitten. Part of her wanted to blame the radiation for the burns, nausea and vision problems. The irradiation of space had turned her exposed head blade and tail blade into blue light emitters, an effect known as Cherenkov radiation. It would not go down far enough to inflict her with acute radiation sickness yet; although, it would definitely hamper the system of anyone else exposed to it.

In Deoxys’ travels, irradiated aluminum was an uncommon sight, and while it had seen it, it never looked like what vaguely resembled a fiery version of Mewblade’s controlled aura. The suicidal glare from the Mewthree was a signal that a world of hurt was about to begin for Deoxys. Defensive form to the ready, Deoxys prepared itself for the onslaught.

Below, the spectators cringed, taking in the images of the screens and the information of their interfaces. For those who wanted to know but could not sense it, Mewtwo gave them all the references they needed. A poisoned symbol was placed near Mewblade’s marker, representing the radiation poisoning she was experiencing. Two more symbols were placed next to it. One of the symbols was of fire, the other of ice,

representing burn and frost damage respectably. The percentage next to the poison symbol was climbing rapidly, with the other two holding in the 50% margin. Her health, as they all could guess, was best described as shit. Only her black fur covered the visible appearance of any damage, though she was starting to blister. While not taking the full onset of the sun, Mewblade was still frying because of it.

At this point even Deoxys realized that any damage it dealt would no longer be a deterrent. Soul energy and the agony of using it was beyond anything a physical body could experience. Mewblade would simply continue going until she could do so no longer. It braced for impact.

The four broad fins that defined Deoxys' defense form were designed for blocking. Their effectiveness against gamma radiation was moot, a fact Deoxys realized too late as Mewblade broke down the aura of the psychic, her own decimated long ago. Penetrating whatever blocks Deoxys had, Mewblade lodged her head blade into the center of the virus' face, removing it from herself with a slice of her largest tail blade. She then unceremoniously lodged that very blade into Deoxys' center, parting company from with it a twirl of her body and a snap of the tail blade. Her blades, what defined her and gave Mewblade her name were now part of Deoxys, no longer hers. She would fight to a bladeless husk if she had to, even if that meant there would be nothing left of her to possibly identify.

Deoxys was telepathically screaming from pain and terror. Everything hurt! The incendiary feeling was horrifying, having never been burnt before, and the disruptions to its own aura set off a whole new level of fear in the Pokémon.

Certainly some part of that was amusing, but being as incapacitated as she was, Mewblade was mostly hoping that healing such damage was as difficult for Deoxys to heal as it had been for her. The other part of her was wishing her sensitive nerves would die faster. Blistering of the skin was resulting in a terrible itch, adding to her grievances and distractions.

The opposition had managed to dislodge the blades, sending them as far away as possible. Horrible things there were, leaving searing gashes in its body. Inexperience showed as Deoxys tried to remove damaged cells from its frame, clueless as to how to rid itself of the irradiated spots and overall toxicity. Mewblade bided her time, conserving energy while Deoxys' dropped. Fighting it ran the risk of accidentally taking off Deoxys' head, which was doing it a favor. Unlike Mewblade who could and would sacrifice her body parts, Deoxys did not, evident as it still struggled to heal. From what the observers could tell, its energy was not dropping fast enough. Still Recovering, Deoxys threw its rage into a Barrier, then Mewblade into it.

No! Mewblade cried in her mind. The damage was too much. She could not take it. Either she healed and lose her energy, or just die. Instinct took over, ripping the soul energy apart to save her life, and it was not enough.

Its aggressor was hanging on by a thread, and Deoxys relished it. Mewblade had saved herself, but only barely. Of her most vital of organs, her heart was functional and her brain intact, everything else was gone. She left her bones bent and fractured, every punctured cavity and orifice losing volumes of blood. She could not see, could not hear, could not smell. The shape of her face was present, masked with a thick sheen of vital fluids oozing from every available hole. Unable to sustain her miniscule protective shield, Mewblade lost it, her body suffering massively to exposure. Given the state she was in,

Mewblade did not notice a thing above her writhing soul energy, it agonizingly crying to be released from the torment that the Mewthree had put it through.

In her mind there was nothing but shouts and screams from everyone she knew, telling her to hang on, to try, to do anything. To her, it was over, no longer able to go on. In the most optimistic of minds, there was really nothing anyone could do for her. A Teleport at this point would kill her, and even if she did survive, the damage she had earned was untreatable. Coline's howl echoed inside Mewblade's head, wishing this had not been the last thing she would ever hear.

Deoxys slammed the helpless Mewthree against another Barrier. Given her sparse physical condition and remaining 1% of soul energy, there was nothing left to sustain her and she went unconscious. Any loss of mental awareness was disastrous, since once the soul energy was damaged it no longer retained the capacity to hold its owner's essence in place. Whether Mewblade's body was present, her mind surely was not, permanently comatose if Deoxys did not have its way.

The Legendaries stiffened, witnessing Deoxys readying a blast of energy to wipe her completely from existence. <“You see that?!”> it cackled triumphantly. <“You sent your best fighter and now she's nothing but space debris. You're all next!”> boomed the voice of the virus. <“Goodbye, Letum Falcifer.”>

~Lost already?~ murmured the many voices of Chaos.

Awareness was slow to come to her, though even without a body the pain was intense. Wherever Mewblade was, she was merely present with Chaos, nothing else. It was a place dictated by the energy's will, not her own, putting the Mewthree in its full control. Normally the idea would be frightening, but she was spent, exhausted and demoralized that she did not care anymore.

Chaos was in an uncharacteristic state of silence, waiting patiently for Mewblade to bring herself to a complete sense of presence before engaging her further. Ever so tenderly, it embraced her soul, carrying her along. She neither fought or complained, relaxing in the familiar hold, acknowledging Chaos' respect for her.

“I failed them,” Mewblade spoke, disappointed and distant sounding, the actual words meaningless wherever she was but conceptualized all the same.

~You only fail if you do not admit your worth.~ Chaos always spoke in paradigms, none of which Mewblade understood. Chaos elaborated further. *~An option is presented for you, of which the explanation will not be from Chaos,~* giving the impression, which perplexed Mewblade, that it was actually obeying the directive of another. It delicately offered itself to her, graciously leading Mewblade down into another existence and onto a physical plane. Her first thought was that she was no longer hurting, and turned to Chaos, questioning.

~Return with your answer. I wait,~ it spoke in a wise voice, though still keeping to its playful riddles.

Mewblade was perplexed as Chaos left her side, bringing Mewblade to take in the full scope of her surroundings. Looking down past her rejuvenated paws, she noted she was standing on a dock. Her eyes cast to the sky, seeing that it was sunset, though it was peculiar. Called a ‘sky dome’, it looked to be a painting, while a well lit one, there was an aspect of falsity to it that she could not quite put a finger on. In front of her there was a

steep hillside covered in Mediterranean vegetation, Grecian steps and railings leading up and behind the side of it. Whatever illusion this was, it was elaborate.

A few minutes passed without change when she heard footsteps heading down the stairs, towards her. They belonged to that of a young man, dressed in what appeared to be ancient robes. Despite the queer expression on Mewblade's behalf, the male greeted her with a genuinely broad smile, having no hesitation with introducing himself.

"Hello, Mewblade. I am Benevo, Chosen to the Decider of Fate, Iustitia," he said, outstretching his hand. Mewblade clasped it briefly, confirming for herself that the human was real. The mention of this Iustitia, or 'Justice' as it was translated to in English, likely meant that anyone who was once Chosen to her was long since deceased. Mewblade was aware that her title, while special was not uniquely designated to her, and there must have been Pokémon that had it before she did. Although why she was greeted by the dead Chosen of one of them, she was not sure.

"Please follow me," spoke the human, waving back to Mewblade as he ascended the stairs. She really had no choice but to follow.

When in her coma some time ago, Mewblade was unable to tell if she still had a physical body to go back to. The realm that she had been placed in was distinctly devoted to tending to the deceased, and had to be told by others that she was technically still alive. At the moment she was not sure if Deoxys had finished her body off. A better predictor of this was Chaos. Being a living energy it seemed to interact only with living things, any dimension dominated by death it refused to enter. This annoyed Mewblade since Deoxys did not have the decency to kill her yet, and still she ended up in limbo. Delaying was a cruel tease, and depending on how time worked here, she could be stuck in limbo for quite a while before being handed over to her properly appointed caretakers, her brothers and two sisters.

"I am really excited to meet you," babbled Benevo, his uncut brown hair blocking his view of the depressive Mewthree. She had not spoken a word to him. Personally, she did not want anything to do with the human. Anyone who knew anything about her that was outside her circle of influence was worrisome. The universe, and especially certain circles of the afterlife most likely enjoyed sitting back and watching her exploits, just as Deoxys and Ho-oh had done. The thought of it disgusted her, not even wanting to think of what they saw in her and Coline.

Coline . . . moaned the Mewthree. In all the calamity she had forgotten that she could no longer protect her Chosen from Deoxys. It was going to violate and kill her girl, and she could do nothing to save her. Benevo glanced back subtly, brushing his hair aside to catch the sight of tears welling in Mewblade's eyes. After all he had been told about her, he was a little astonished by how weak Letum Falcifer appeared to be. Once you got past the glaring eyes and imposing metal structures, it was not hard to notice how vulnerable Mewblade really was. He felt a sense of pity for her, though made no mention of it. Insulting her pride was a bad idea. If anything, it really looked like she could use a nice, long hug.

"And here we are," Benevo announced as he crested the final step, allowing Mewblade to stop ahead of him. Continuing with the Greek themes, the circular plateau was surrounded by rails and marble pillars. A hearth was positioned in the center, and beyond that there were a row of marble benches with two figures sitting atop of them. "Go on," Benevo urged. "They have really been looking forward to meeting you."

Mewblade sighed and obeyed, with no real energy to utilize, she had little choice to say otherwise.

Having barely left the side of the male and already one of the figures was up and bounding her way over. She stopped less than an arm's length away from Mewblade, looking up at the tall creature.

The girl was 5'8" with straight, brilliantly highlighted golden hair. She appeared to be in her early twenties and looked nothing like the Pokémon of which Mewblade was expecting. The girl was exceptionally pretty, dressed in an elaborate sky blue Grecian dress worn for special occasions. If it were not for one very demeaning flaw, no one would make any negative judgement of her appearance whatsoever. Even as the girl mimicked the focused gaze of a curious individual, she simply was unable to see. The cloudy blue color of her pupils were a clear marker that no matter how good of an act she could pull, the female was completely blind.

"It is so good to meet you, given the nature of events. We had not intended to meet you in this manner," she said apologetically, her eyes downcast. "I . . ." she began, sounding hesitant, "I would like to see you. That is if it's okay with you?" Having resurrected an individual with a visual impairment, Mewblade understood what the girl meant. A person who was blind saw their world through smell, sound and touch. To her, Mewblade was perceived as a blob. If it made further interactions easier, than it was to the Mewthree's benefit to humor the request.

"It is okay with me," Mewblade said, trying to resist fidgeting as the girl reached out to touch her face. She gasped in delight.

"I would never imagine that you looked this way. The name makes so much sense now," the human said in awe, having left Mewblade's head blade to gently clasp her paw. Annoyed at the lack of introductions, Mewblade glared pensively.

~She's annoyed. Introduce us, please,~ came the emote of someone else, no actual words being attached to it. The emote was uncomfortable, forcing the listener to internalize the emotions of annoyance, necessity and forgiveness.

"Ah, sorry," the girl further apologized, letting go. "I am Iustitia and she is Vita Sanguinece," she gestured to the robed figure sitting behind her. "We were the Deciders of Fate before your time. It seems that we have caught you in a situation where we think our advice would be helpful. Your situation shouldn't have become as bad as it did. Apparently the message I gave my Chosen did reach yours, but it wasn't passed on. Guess my timing was a bit lacking then."

So many questions, and Mewblade did not know where to start. If it was all true, then she was talking to a rare Legendary that shared her title. While the thought of Coline and Eve and their weird behavior at the ruins made sense, it was easier for Mewblade to believe that this was a malevolent individual who was taking her for a ride. After all, there was no such thing as a Legendary human. Before she could challenge Iustitia, the robed figure moved, disrupting the Mewthree's thoughts.

Mewblade observed the figure rise from her seat, almost startled by what she later found herself to realize. Rose colored velvet was the only component in the draping robe she wore. Her hood covered distinctly Mew shaped ears, the overhang of it shadowing her face, or what little of it that there was. From the pearlescent white skin of her face, the only thing that stood out were the two large, blood red irises. She had no eyebrows, nose or mouth. Her tear dropped sleeves hid fused hands, making them appear more like

winter mittens than actual hands. Her fingers were fused together enough that the only way Mewblade could tell what they were was by the several small bumps at the ends. Upon watching the creature 'walk', she observed a part in the robe and the subsequent void that ran from slightly below her breasts to the floor. Aside the large, stellar white angel wings, Vita Sanguinence or 'Life of Blood' as she was referred to in English, was an incomplete corpse. Vita stood, floated, whatever it could be called, beside Iustitia. Mewblade caught a small glimmer in their eyes, the same as her own, surprising the Mewthree.

~Amusement!~ said the wordless emote, projecting the concept of entertainment and laughter. Mewblade watched Vita's eyes close in a faceless smile, similar to how Deoxys would. The empathetic telepathy, Mewblade surmised, was coming from the robed figure. ~An explanation.~ Iustitia agreed, and further explained without any hesitation. She had been waiting many a lifetime for the opportunity to talk to Mewblade, mentally prepared for the encounter.

"Like you, we are Deciders of Fate, each descendants of Mew. Fate has a preference for Mew bodies as they are powerful, adaptable, carrying a closer connection to the origin of existence than many others. You are, as are we, the only Deciders of Fate, but we Fatalis Dators," she explained, choosing to use the Latin phrase that meant 'Fate Givers', "are actually Fate incarnate. That is what we are led to believe anyway. Vita Sanguinence," who politely nodded at the mention of her name, "was the first Fate, and came into being about one and a half million years ago." The time frame was a strange one to mention, since that meant Lugia might have actually known this particular Decider of Fate when she was once alive.

~Tragedy,~ lamented Vita, emoting strongly enough that it almost brought Mewblade to tears. Vita's expressive overrides were incomprehensible and emotionally hijacking. While she was trying to suppress, there were times when Vita Sanguinence's projections were just that loud and domineering.

"As we consider you to be the deaf one of us three, then it will take you probably a long while to get use to her," stated Iustitia in a snarky manner, which bothered Mewblade greatly. It did not take her long to grasp that Iustitia was the controlling, leadership type, and that neither of these two so claimed Deciders of Fate did she actually like. The Mewthree had to remind herself that she was in no position to argue, but it was already hard for her to reign in her confrontational urges, and Iustitia was not helping. Vita Sanguinence, being a true empathetic user, noticed Mewblade's current attitude, where Iustitia did not. When it came to the art of perception, Iustitia was blind in more ways than one.

"Her making was tragic. An Articuno who called herself 'Ice Queen' started an ice age, eradicating life. One of the last Legendary Mews stood in defiance, and she too fell. From her remains Vita Sanguinence was born."

~Humiliation.~

"You can probably tell that it wasn't nearly enough material to do the job. Her Concept, her Fate, which is existence, life, creation; gave its gift, which is the robe you see, to clothe her. We all received gifts from our universal concepts. She can make anything from the blood of her robes. I carry a sword and scales. Whereas for you, you have that . . . thing." Having not felt it, Iustitia only gestured at Mewblade's right arm. It was starting to make sense. The energy cannon, as it was formally addressed, was truly a

part of her; only once she was fully grown did it appear. Even in her trances and coma, the weapon had shown up, as it was doing currently. Items such as clothing, or jewelry did not remain with its bearer after mortis. Iustitia had caught Mewblade's interest. How much of it was lies, Mewblade was not sure, but she figured she would at least try to listen, despite Iustitia's earlier jab towards her capacity to internalize words.

"Nothing is all that definite to us, especially when it comes to each other. We theorize, Letum Falcifer . . ." Vita Sanguinence was startled while she witnessed Mewblade's attempt to grab Iustitia and wring her neck. Only a long sword that had materialized from nothing stopped her, it pointed at Mewblade's nose. Vita's hesitated motions signaled private telepathy between the pair of Fates.

"It is the title *I* gave you back when I was a Legendary, and before I knew your given name," Iustitia stated hotly, annoyed that Mewblade tried to jump her over something as stupid as a name. The only time Mewblade had heard that term was from Deoxys. To call her a bad listener, while true in some sense was an overstatement. She could hear perfectly fine, but it was interpreting things that was the problem for her. Mewblade was stubborn, set in her ways and ideologies.

"Maybe try to listen through that thick metal skull of yours before you jump to conclusions," snarled the woman. She returned her sword to her side, holding it there in case it was needed. Mewblade eyed the sword, considering wrestling the thing from the girl's grasp. It had happened rarely, but from personal experience she knew that intimate touching of her energy cannon by someone else always set her off. Iustitia had admitted that in a sense their weapons were the same, and it was possible that her reaction would be as possessive.

~Bad intentions!~ Vita snarled in Mewblade's mind, hands holding her robe close. Use to Vita Sanguinence's nonsense, Iustitia interpreted for Mewblade's convenience, adding her own little twist.

"You touch mine and I'll throw yours into a void so deep that you will never be able to get it back."

Benevo was observing as the three Fates bickered with one another. They were all impossibly headstrong, Mewblade seeming to fit right in. He could not cover his laughter. Mewblade refused to look, still eyeing the sword instead, where Iustitia heard but was not sure what was entertaining. The empath of the three understood the joke though, and emotively laughed, automatically forcing an ease of tension. "Justice, you should give Letum Falcifer a break. She's probably mostly scared than anything else." Iustitia sighed, accepting her weakness for not being able to perceive the obvious. Benevo smiled coyly from his spot next to the stairs. They all had such horrible trust issues. Mewblade was persistently abused by her superiors and her siblings. Iustitia often had to lie to get by day-to-day when she was still alive, and Vita Sanguinence had almost been entirely dependent on herself for support. A new individual, especially one that was exceptionally powerful, set them on edge.

Sword gone, Iustitia held out her hand, playing the diplomacy card. "Can we start over?" Mewblade had to force down a snarl, something of which Iustitia would not notice anyway, prior to outstretching her paw and shaking the girl's hand.

"I will try," Mewblade muttered, the distrust catching to everyone's ears. She had just gone from fighting for her life to this. Of course the Chosen was right; she was scared, uncertain of where she was, and was at the mercy of two individuals whose

powers likely surpassed those of her own. Granted, neither of them looked to be the warrior type that she was. Vita Sanguinence was nonthreatening, and all Iustitia carried was warnings and a sword.

~Sigh. We are not here to fight, just talk.~

“It’s hard to have a conversation with you when you think everyone wants your hide,” added Iustitia. They waited for Mewblade to retort, or at least speak for her actions.

“How do you expect me to respond? Only minutes ago I am fighting Deoxys, eating through my soul energy, knowing that . . .” Mewblade choked. “Knowing that I lost. My Chosen is . . . she is back there . . . and, I can’t save her!” Mewblade cried, throwing her face into her paws. “After everything I went through, and I cannot even protect the one thing I care about most! What’s the point?!” screamed the Mewthree at the other two title carriers. “If she’s some Life Fate thing,” Mewblade used her body to gesticulate and direct the topic of conversation, “and you are, whatever you are . . . Then what am I?” she questioned in bewilderment, coming to her own conclusions ahead of any facts. “Am I Death? That is what Letum Falcifer means in the end. The Reaper. What is the point of being this way if I could not kill one damned Deoxys?!”

~Offended,~ Vita Sanguinence murmured, arms crossed. Confrontations were deemed as immature to her, and not to her forte. The swearing did not help either. Iustitia closed her eyes, lips tightly drawn, really not enjoying Mewblade despite the thousands of years she had been looking forward to meeting her in person.

“If you would let me explain without interrupting then maybe we could educate you into some understanding. But if all you expect is to die, lose your Chosen and be thrown to the dog pit with your brethren, then fine. I’m done with you,” Iustitia said with a wave of her hand, tramping back to her seat.

~You say such mean things,~ the other Fate pointed out sulkily, standing helplessly, unsure of what she should be doing. The young woman was aware that Mewblade had to be properly educated before anything else could be done. She had not called Mewblade, ‘Letum Falcifer’ for nothing. It was the Death Fate concept that was concerning. Mewblade had used her associated title’s ability once already without knowing. During the process of accomplishing it she was making many potentially lethal mistakes, all costly if not managed correctly.

Mewblade was looking about, feeling dejected in the midst of being grounded. She was worried and was not in the mood for name calling or storytelling. The expressions of concern from Vita Sanguinence were grating on her nerves, of where she could tolerate most things from the physical realm, the mental was draining on her patience. Finally, with an exasperated sigh, Mewblade opened her mouth. “Can we continue from where we left off?” Mewblade asked, trying her best to not sound annoyed. Iustitia haughtily brushed her dress and walked over, taking her place in front of Mewblade. There was nothing about this she enjoyed. “Go on, I am listening,” she urged.

“Okay. I was talking about Vita Sanguinence and her origins.” Iustitia made a verbal mental check. Some of this had to be rehearsed as she comfortably continued without missing a beat. “After receiving her gift, Vita was left mostly alone and without a guardian. She took up her Chosen Lugia, Silver, of whom you know.” Mewblade was familiar with him. It was the current Lugia, which confirmed her assumptions that Lugia was with one of the Deciders of Fate when she was in power. “They spent years trying to

save and restore a cold, snowball Earth. When they had gathered a number of individuals did Ice Queen make her attack. Vita Sanguinence, being an internalizing empath couldn't fight, only defend. It is why they never sought the Articuno outright. Any injury done to anyone in her vicinity, whether friend or foe, hurts her. Just as your resurrections hurts you." Part of that was common knowledge, Mewblade yet to be truly impressed. The human Decider of Fate was more curious to here than anything else.

"And what is your repercussion?" Mewblade wondered aloud, testing the Fate.

"Honestly, nothing," Iustitia responded shamelessly.

"Ego!" coughed Benevo, not doing a good job at hiding his smirk. His Legendary shot him a dirty look. "She can't use Recover properly. Only by forwarding or reversing time can she undo damage." Mewblade felt better knowing that this stuck-up person could not do something that Mewblade thought was a basic requirement to be a Decider of Fate. Iustitia was fuming, desperately wanting to bring the attention away from her miserable Recovery skills. The show of her humiliation, Mewblade figured, could not be easily faked.

"Anyway, risking those around Vita also had its negatives, as she couldn't have them fight for her either. The emotions were too much."

~So much shame.~

"Chaos has an affinity to life in particular, and offered Vita Sanguinence the option to fight for her." If Iustitia was trying to win Mewblade's trust, she picked an odd way to do it. Such a thing was forbidden and no one would mention it under coercion, let alone willingly. Speaking for someone else was a callous action when Chaos was part of the subject matter.

"And how do you know this?" asked Mewblade in an accusatory tone.

"One of my abilities, in part with things involving time, allows me to witness the future, and the past. I often had premonitions of you both when I was very little." A bob of Vita's head signified that the statement was true, the whole while openly nattering about the wrongs of the experience. The primary expression was corporeal terror, mixed with grief. Recalling what Coline had told her regarding emotions and truth, there was no lie in Vita Sanguinence's feelings. After realizing that her emotes were making everyone uncomfortable, only then did the Fate calm down, allowing Iustitia to continue.

"Her experience was as terrifying as you could gather. Chaos took her and used her completely to fight the Articuno, despite how much she fought against it. It did win her the crises, forcing her to kill her enemy." With Vita's sincerity and the horror of such an admission, Mewblade was actively listening. To warrant a Chaos bond, the situation had to be beyond dire.

"While Vita Sanguinence revived the world, she ironically can't use her ability, Cry for Existence, on anything she destroys." This did not explain how an immortal died. Vita Sanguinence was not truly living to begin with, Mewblade only guessing that Chaos was to blame.

~I . . .~ Vita was weeping. Now Mewblade understood why Iustitia had coined Vita Sanguinence's ability the way she did. When she cried, she only cried blood. Such a miserable thing she was that Mewblade was unsure who of the two suffered more. She regained her composure, brushing away the bloody tears with her sleeves. ~I couldn't live knowing someone had died at my hands.~

"She died of grief," Iustitia summarized.

What a way to go, the Mewthree thought with a mental snort. She always threw herself at the gates of the dead through severe injury and sacrifice, not because of a depressive driven suicide. *Three times now and they still . . .* Mewblade reminisced about her experiences then had a revelation.

“Wait, if she can revive a whole world, then she can revive me!” Intense optimism was obvious in Mewblade’s expression and voice, though it faded quickly upon seeing the two Deciders of Fate look to the side.

“Even if she did, you would not live for very long. Working around it will make them forced to destroy you,” Iustitia said, her referencing the Legendaries. “Pokémon Law was initially invented because of Vita Sanguinence’s actions.”

“A lot more was piled on because of Justice’s doings,” Benevo added from his post. “Your turn to explain yourself,” he smiled adoringly towards his Legend. “Don’t worry, Letum. I’ll catch her if she starts lying.” Hands on hips, Iustitia gave a cocky little snarl to him. Despite what she represented, she hated having to be forward when it came to the topic of herself.

“All right. I’ll try,” she said to her Chosen then faced the Mewthree. “You’re probably really curious about me,” Iustitia gestured down the length of her body, citing that she had a human form. “My Chosen, Benevo is the source of most of the Greek myths. My city was in war with what the myths describe as ‘Atlantis’. This was over four millennia ago. I was born into an affluent merchant family. My mother was Chosen to my father, who was once a Mew. Their copulation produced me, and my father was punished to hold human form and live a mortal life.”

“Hence where all that Zeus transforming into animal stuff came from.” Benevo supplied that bit of information, useless as it was, he was fully proud of himself. Iustitia’s Legendary parent and human mother had given her both the capacity to be human, and a Legendary at the same time. Shell-shocked as Mewblade was from her earlier endeavors, she could not help but be astonished by the notion of a hybrid that crossed the biological kingdoms. The blindness was a convenience for Mewblade, since she did not have to hide her gaping mouth, on the other hand, for Iustitia it was a curse.

“As I was crippled due to my blindness, and a girl, my family disguised me as a boy so I could live normally and obtain an education. Through that I learned of my two strengths, sword fighting and law, of which defines me as a Fate.” The concept of life and death made sense, as self-aware beings thought in finite terms. There was no real way to grasp how law contributed to it.

~Confusion,~ mentioned Vita, referring to Mewblade’s current mental state.

“My concept,” the girl gestured to her chest, “is rules and logic. I can define things that are not ruled by creation and decay. Those are the laws of physics that have no end, thus not to my concept at all as they are not actually physics in of themselves. There are many other things that can be explained through scientific theory and philosophy,” she mentioned, then started the next sentence with a slight grin. “I make the rules, pass judgement, hence my sword and scales. I am Law.” With that she produced a pair of golden scales, Mewblade realizing then how potentially dangerous this so called ‘human’ could be. She could simply do anything she wanted that did not involve the creation of something new, or the act of breaking something apart. Benevo saw Mewblade stiffen at the notion of having to fight something that could habitually rewrite the laws of gravity at a whim.

“Only once she figured that out did Ho-oh pass more laws. They thought if she was scary, you’d be worse.”

“I only used my better abilities during my fight with the enemy. Their Emperor had made a deal with the then three Legendary Birds, of which the Moltres was later replaced by my Chosen Moltres, Flaming June. Unfortunately I cannot foresee my own fights, and am ill-equipped for sky combat,” she motioned to her glassy eyes. “They dumped me in the Aegean Sea. I couldn’t win the crisis with the way I was,” her tone of voice turned dark, head down. “Chaos offered me its services. With its aid I could see, and I accepted it into my body. My experience with it was different. Being the Fate that I am, Chaos could never fully control me, and even with it bound to my being, most of the fight I won on my own.” There was a sharp inhale as she went on. “Of course I wasn’t done yet,” her voice hissed angrily, “and I left Chaos to face the Emperor. The Birds were just tools to his ideas, he the wielder.” At this point Iustitia, who had been engaged in speaking, stopped talking completely.

“Then what happened?” Mewblade asked after a couple seconds of silence. What she was saying had held her interest. She wanted to know how it ended, and how this Decider of Fate led to Mewblade replacing her and taking such a title.

“They had a sword fight. Iustitia was better and she gutted the bastard,” Benevo chuckled, carrying on from where Iustitia left off. “The problem with her is that she can’t sense when things truly pass away. During her moment when she was using her Fate ability, Absolute Justice; nothing just about it, mind you,” adlibbed the male, “she weighed the wrongs of Atlantis’ entire population and sunk it. Hence the myth and why Atlantis is no more,” he said with a shrug and shake of his head.

“I let my guard down and my adversary still had the will to stab me through.” Iustitia closed her eyes to reflect, a strange gesture considering she could not see. “It was a long death, and I deserved it, but that is what happens when emotions get in the way of duty.” Another moment of silence hung over the group. Iustitia’s folly was a terrible one, something which Vita Sanguinence and Mewblade shared. Vita had an excuse, that for her everything was tied into emotion, and thus how she bowed out of her crisis for so long. For every incident Mewblade was involved in, it was how she killed her eldest sister, Swadeaqua that was the worst. Her sister was incestuous, and a molester, someone Mewblade did not want in her life and thus disposed of. Wants of the heart equated to losses in the hearts of others. For two of these Fate Givers, an inability to deal with their circumstance pushed them hard enough to do the unthinkable, which was to bond with the ethereal Chaos.

Is this why Chaos greeted me? Is this all a warning?

~Chaos is in favor of Life. I sent for it,~ Vita Sanguinence smiled sadly, hands gently folded. A horrible reality dawned on the Mewthree.

“Are you telling me the only way I’m going back is through a Chaos bond?” Mewblade asked, fearful and wary.

~You’re not dead,~ Vita clarified.

“You’re the only thing that we know of that can break soul energy. Really anything, apparently. You were already in a limbo when we intervened and had Chaos bring you here,” explained the chimera. “Vita Sanguinence has been maintaining you. If she didn’t do that, she’d be driven absolutely mad. Your pain tolerance is very high, but it is different than emotional pain, and not something she’s use to.” It was not exactly a

compliment to be that use to such brutality beyond the level of what most would consider extreme. “It’s not hard for Vita to bring you back, it’s just not viable on your own. Normally, you’d be a sitting duck. Deoxys right now is poised to destroy your body. And the other option, as I mentioned earlier, no one wants. Chaos is helpful, but neither it or we can substitute your energy. Only our energy exclusively works for our gifts.”

“But that leaves me with nothing!” Mewblade protested, having only 1% left, of which kept her soul energy from instantly running away from her body and life in general.

Iustitia shrugged apathetically and said, “You will just have to deal with it; besides, no would want you alive after that point.”

And why should they? Mewblade would be dependent on Chaos to get the job done. The living energy had always wanted to be a part of her. It was one of its most common demands. Letting it be a complete part of her was risky. She only needed to look as far as the sorrowful Vita Sanguinence to figure that out.

“If it weren’t for the fact that you have almost no energy, I would not even suggest a Chaos bond for you. Frankly, even now it might be too dangerous,” Iustitia said, casting doubts.

“Chaos is easy for me to handle,” corrected the Mewthree, having interacted with it through every one of her resurrections.

“Of course. You’ve already bonded with it twice,” Iustitia said breezily, enjoying how smart she was. Mewblade almost slapped her. *No one* knew that, absolutely no one. If anyone had found out she would have been executed. Mewblade was shaken by both the accusation and the absolutely sickening admission that she had not only done something so repulsive once, but that she had done it twice.

~A very dark secret,~ whispered the eldest Fate. She spoke her sympathies.

Neither embrace was particularly lengthy. Both bonds were done out of necessity. Mewblade’s first bonding experience was what she credited for helping her escape her tortured coma. Steel Wing was a desperate move to utilize, and it had only taken her as far as the life and death boundary. On the verge of being captured, Chaos actually went across the dividing line to grab her and pull her through. It was something it should have never done, but it did so for her. Mewblade never spoke ill of it after that since she realized that its intention was to help. Maybe it wanted the company that her constant resurrections promised, but it did something against its own nature. That reliance made Mewblade safe in her decision to ask for Chaos’ help a second time.

The second instant where Chaos bonded with Mewblade was as quick and subtle as possible. Up against death and Demisewan, she felt that she had no choice but to call upon it. Together they Imprisoned her sister, and released Mewblade from the inflictions of a disabling Night Shade. Once again, Chaos went out of its way to save her, doing its best not to harm the Mewthree in any way. To be honest, she never understood her relationship with it.

~It likes you.~

“Which is not what we’re really worried about. Chaos values life since the more individuals, the more it thrives. Bonding with Letum Falcifer is forbidden fruit, of which Chaos has been waiting for its full taste. We had the mutual understanding that if it helped us, we would save existence and it gets to continue on merrily. And it *will* bond

with you for the same reason.” So far from what Iustitia explained, it was not sounding like much of a problem.

“Then what is the problem? Why all the warnings? If you say your experiences were bad, but Chaos is okay, then this does not sound like an issue at all.” Mewblade gave a quizzical look to her elders, still not seeing the problem that to them was literally staring them in the face.

“The problem is,” Iustitia spoke sternly, “has less to do with Chaos than with you.”

Insulted, Mewblade retorted, “And what is wrong with me?!”

“Addictive personality, one. Two, a poor understanding of your ability, and a dangerous one at that,” signaled the girl with a raise of her fingers. “It is possible you will do damage beyond a comprehensible scale, of which we can’t fix.”

“What exactly are you afraid of that I might do?” Mewblade questioned with a growl, the conversation once again turning sour.

~Too caught up in the feeling,~ Vita Sanguine said, supplying her version of one of the answers.

“Addictive personality,” reiterated Iustitia. “Chaos is powerful. Chaos is life. Chaos feels good. Your life is very miserable, and you have never been able to obtain happiness in a physical sense.” There was not much for Mewblade to like about this girl. Mewblade was convinced that she was not going to go on some random Chaos bingeing high to justify the fact that she felt that she had no control in her life. To say that Iustitia was wrong was not entirely true either. With her distress at its greatest, Mewblade had sought escape from her psychological anguish through masochistic self-infliction. In a moment as dire as such, there was no possible way that she could see herself going off and actually enjoying a Chaos bond.

“Tell me about the second one,” she snarled, dismissing the first concern entirely.

“Well, remember how you stopped Deoxys from controlling the Legendaries?”

“Yes. Coline’s work with the Unown partially distracted it long enough for me to try a couple techniques and get a lucky shot.”

“Well, if that’s how you came about it, now I’m really worried.” There was no sarcasm in her voice, Iustitia was justifiably fretful of sending the juvenile Letum Falcifer back on the grounds that already Mewblade did not know what she did, but that it also depended on finicky aim. “You shot Deoxys and it released the Legendaries. That was your ability, ‘End To All Things.’”

Awfully cryptic for a lucky shot and a Disable, Mewblade thought to herself, remaining cynical.

~No understanding.~ The Life Fate had read Mewblade’s emotions, mentioning that what had been said did not get through to her. For the last while Mewblade had been sending dirty glares at Iustitia, mostly because she could get away with it. The constant disrespect for Mewblade’s privacy was making her want to include Vita Sanguine in her immature displays as well. That Fate had eyes and used them, Mewblade’s snap of her teeth a show that she did not appreciate the emotive mind reading.

~Grow up,~ Vita Sanguine scolded her, not like she was any better at Mewblade’s age. Vita knew from her emotional sensing of others’ thoughts that she was considered a crybaby while she was still alive. None of them were particularly mature upon the start of their destined conflicts. Iustitia could only stand there and guess what

Mewblade had done to set Vita off, likely a hand sign that implied something wrong. Continuing on, she did not even need to mention the recent action to explain how inexperienced Mewblade came off as.

“If you don’t know what you’re doing, not focusing correctly, that could have been a dead Deoxys and countless Unown. Or even worse, you could have destroyed all existing phosphorous molecules depending on your focus, aim and mood. You can do those resurrections of yours, and that takes a lot of concentration, but if you screw up, it can be really, really bad.” The blue eyes were locked to Mewblade’s, every word that Iustitia spoke was heavily emphasized. Like all things with her, it had to figure that the most dangerous move Mewblade had was also tied into one of her weakest skills. Mewblade was a terrible shot on a good day. It was not quite as difficult in comparison for her to guess how she used End To All Things. The wane in her vision during the later parts of combat was part of that ability, letting her identify different things she could target. Recalling her emotional state at the time, she was keenly focused on killing Deoxys, and if only she had not missed would Deoxys have been gone.

Why do I have the worst of luck? Nothing for her was ever easy. She would be given a solution to a problem, and it always came with a horrible catch. Aim alone was the most worrying factor to Mewblade, and using that move in a fight sounded much too risky for her to willingly invest her trust in it.

“Can I not do that to Deoxys? It was running low on its own energy the last time I checked.” Vita Sanguinence fielded the question in the most wordy way she could manage.

~Deoxys are special. Only their flesh dies. The gem in the center cannot be destroyed by normal means. They regenerate.~ Mewblade only partially understood what was expressed to her, and looked to the woman for further insight.

“Could you explain this?”

“Supernovas, black holes, quasars. They die as most Legendaries do, but for a Deoxys it is on a cosmic scale. Destroying one to the point where it can no longer regenerate still leaves them with that durable gem. It takes a lot of energy at that point for one of them to regain the use of its limbs, but give Deoxys a decade and it would be back.” What it meant was that Deoxys would have to be thrown into the sun in order for it to perish. There was no way the other Legendary Pokémon could accomplish such a feat, not even Mewblade. Chaos would not be able to do that either, since it would not use its own energy for the act of murder. The Fatalis Dators had given her options, the only one she could take was not one Mewblade wanted to consider. The consequences sounded disastrous but she was the only one who stood the chance of any success. She had to go back by any means necessary. Mewblade turned tail and ran to the stairs, towards Chaos.

~Wait!~ came an empathetic shout, stopping Mewblade. There could not be anything else that she needed to know. She already knew that the Chaos bond and End To All Things was a risky combination, and she also understood that she was merely stalling her exit from the world. Nothing else needed explaining.

~You can destroy anything. Have mercy on its soul.~

“Mercy? After what I’ve been through?! Forget it!” came the snarl from the Mewthree.

“Listen to her!” Iustitia shouted loudly enough that she was sure it would easily penetrate Mewblade’s titanium skull. “The moment you erase something, it’s gone, and it’s not coming back. I can’t rewind your mistakes. Now if you want to be the type of individual that decides the existence of another simply based on how you felt that day, then be my guest. But be warned, I refuse to pull strings for anyone who does that. If the universe or anything we said taught you anything during your short little blip of a life, then you’d know better than to do that.” Iustitia stood back, arms folded beneath her breasts, face as judgmental to match her judging personality. “If you do that then you can go to the dogs for all I care.”

~Grace and mercy for good deeds,~ Vita Sanguine said in agreement. A Fate who murdered callously was not one they wished to associate with. The Mewthree had to think for a moment. The regret shown by Iustitia towards her self-righteous mass murder was almost convincing enough on its own without factoring in Mewblade’s history. Killing her own siblings with no show of compassion had been one of the Mewthree’s lasting regrets. Had she not learned from her past, then maybe obliterating Deoxys would have been the path of retribution she would take. She was not a monster, and she would not let herself become one that dictated the continuation of another simply on a passing glance.

“I just want to protect my family.”

“Then get going,” Iustitia said with an ambivalent wave of her hand.

~With my blessing,~ Vita Sanguine added, her safe in her trust of Letum Falcifer. She was assured she would do the right thing. ~Grace and mercy for good deeds,~ she repeated, gently waving as she sent Mewblade off.

“See you later,” Benevo bid his farewell as the Death Fate went by.

Mewblade hurriedly made her departure, running down the stairs two and three steps at a time, racing for the dock and Chaos. All the information and desperation was dizzying to her. She had already come to terms with her death, and while being told about her position in the universe was fascinating, she figured she would let it sink in later, if there was to be a later. Her primary thought pattern had become rudimentary.

Bond with Chaos. Fight Deoxys. Kill Deoxys with my energy cannon. Save the world. Die happy. She had to rephrase that slightly. *And not miss and destroy everything.* Irony always found a way to bite her, and this time she was hoping it would not follow-through with it completely. If she could not kill Deoxys, no one else would be able to either. Most of her mind was devoted to her next several actions, barely noticing her rate of descent. The downward run along the stairs was rapid, with Mewblade skittering across the docks and towards the waiting Chaos.

“I am ready, Chaos. Let’s do this.”

Chaos and Mewblade both agreed that the best place for their merger would be in the trance-like environment where they often crossed paths. The familiarity was comforting, and Mewblade could really use it at the moment.

~What is your decision?~ Chaos asked, swirling about just outside of Mewblade’s senses. As Mewblade understood, Chaos would not possess her unless she demanded it outright.

“I want to save them. I want to end Deoxys,” she said, snarling the virus’ name. She could swear that she almost felt Chaos smile, enjoying the notion with a sense of delight. Chaos may have been in this to exploit her, but they both wanted Deoxys dead.

~Then it is in agreement that at least one goal is mutually shared.~ The secondary voiceovers were of curious whispers and giggles. Mewblade could not believe she was about to submit herself to pure insanity. At any cost, she refused to fail, no matter how repulsive the path to victory was, or how entertained Chaos seemed with the idea. Its happy chortles were not comforting to the Mewthree. Having bonded with it twice was not as reassuring as she had hoped. Those bonding experiences were weak, lasting barely seconds. A full commitment to Chaos could destroy Mewblade’s mind, something she made mention of.

“What will happen to me if I become one with you?” A valid question of which Chaos answered.

~The perfect balance between all existence and all destruction.~ Despite Chaos was being plain spoken, what it said had a sinister ring to it. *~Let Chaos and Letum Falcifer join, and we shall be one like no other.*~ Always with the riddles, the avoidance. This was not the answer Mewblade wanted to hear. Being part of it was not a comfort, she wanted to be herself in the remainder of her fight.

“If I . . .” Mewblade stammered, fearing for the loss of her mind and her devastating capacity to kill. “If I lose it completely, will you let me go?”

~Yes.~ Chaos loved this Fate for the forbidden delights she brought; it also simply just enjoyed who she was. While bonded, that was something it was not going to be able to hide from her, its enjoyment, anticipation for when the Decider of Fate would be exposed enough that it could honor her with its presence. Who she was, was what made her special, and it was something it had no intention of breaking.

No amount of preparation was ever going to ready Mewblade for this. The energy had teased her, hounded her ruthlessly, and yet it had done more than enough to protect her and keep her safe. True to its word, Chaos was not going to lose Mewblade. Whatever the cost may be to her, neither were sure but it would not risk her to all ends just for its own pursuits. Mewblade would have to be willing to place her faith in it this one last time. Her fate was sealed with her next statement. There would be no going back.

“Chaos, I accept.”

“Mewblade!!!” howled Coline and Eve.

<“You fucking asshole! I’ll murder you for that!”> screeched Moltres, launching herself into the air.

<“Don’t you dare touch her!”> Lugia screamed at the virus, shooting into the sky after the Titan of Fire. Rayquaza uncoiled, giving chase with Latias and Latios by her side. Zapdos was close behind them, refusing to let Mewblade’s death go to waste. If the Decider of Fate had the courage to die as she did, he could do the same.

“Mew mew!” (My daughter!) came the agonized cry of Mew. Mewtwo was no better, wordlessly mouthing Mewblade’s name, tears streaming and limbs taut with fury.

<“Get it!”> he spitefully snarled his orders to the Legendaries. <“We’re not going to let her die in vain!”> Mewtwo roared. <“Deoxys, my face will be the last thing you ever see!”> was Mewtwo’s direct threat to the space virus.

Deoxys did not care what they said, or what they did. Its Hyper Beam was ready to wipe Mewblade out completely. All the others were doing was volunteering themselves for a faster demise. With maniacal glee, the energy was released.

<“ . . . What is this?!”> Deoxys gave a startled cry. From Earth, the reaction was entirely different.

<“Pull back!”> screeched Lugia, the small group of flying Legendaries halting.

<“Oh no . . .”> Entei stammered from below, everyone’s gazes turning up. <“Of all things, why that?!”> Those on the ground defaulted to shaking, where those in the sky, the more aggressive of the bunch, were hostile.

<“Shit,”> Moltres swore. <“Shit!”> she repeated again.

<“Mewblade, you idiot!”> berated the Lugia. Zapdos, who would normally join anyone in the insult game was strangely silent. It cowardly remained quiet, Lugia continuing on. <“You were better off dead than this!”>

A demonic garbled entity laughed, Mewblade’s voice at the center of it. The sound was a horrible, mind penetrating noise, able to bypass the defenses of its listeners. It was everything the Legendaries did not want. Their nightmare revealed itself as the smoke surrounding the voice’s owner parted.

From head to toe, Mewblade was encased in titanium varying between an inch to three inches thick. Her ears, fingers and toes came to elongated metal points, claws similar to those she used when utilizing Metal Claws and Iron Defense. The pungent aura of the bond was everywhere, making the air even on Earth thick with it. This same aura, a mint green in color, camouflaged the purple of her eyes leaving no sign that Mewblade was there at all. The Mewthree had been replaced by Chaos. The Legendaries feared it, whereas Mewblade absolutely loved it.

~“*I should have done this earlier!*”~ Chaos Mewblade purred, not paying the slightest bit of attention to Deoxys. The virus frigidly remained in place, petrified by what it saw. All Legendary Pokémon were knowledgeable of Chaos and its effects, and how dangerous a bond was for those around. Drunk on power, a bond often expended the will of its host, usually within seconds as the power was too intoxicating. A law breaker as Deoxys was, even it knew not to touch it. For the Decider of Fate to make such a pact, she had to be crazy. Deoxys had the unfortunate position of being within several meters of its enemy, waiting to see if she made a move, or was already lost to her indulgences. Since she had yet to move, it could only assume that she had already lost control to Chaos.

Together, Chaos and Mewblade were the perfect bond, a single individual, synced completely with each other. Vita Sanguine and Iustitia may have fought their bonds, Mewblade unable to reason why they would. She welcomed Chaos’ embrace with all the openness her body, mind and soul could offer. Being one with it was of understanding.

Chaos was ubiquitous to a level that far exceeded anything Mewblade could conceptualize. It was the every, the all. Wherever life was, or had been, Chaos was there. Together Mewblade could reach out to the greatest finiteness of the universe, transposing across the dimensional planes, beyond the third, the fourth, the tenth. There was a universe upon universe, folded across another universe of possibility, all melding into a single instant in her mind. To be strong enough to bond with Chaos and relish it, was beyond the scope of description. She was the willing vessel, to which Chaos could express its desire to just be. Through her it lived, and through it she was free.

Had Mewblade known, had she not cared for what others said, she would have done this sooner. Many a lifetime of misery was erased, her mind dazzled by senses greater than her own. In the same moment she was physically present within the orbit of the Earth, she was tasting stardust in the Omega Nebula, basking in the passive glow of Betelgeuse, and moving to the rhythm of a humming black hole at the center of the Milky Way. She did not care if Deoxys was close by, that it had tried to kill her, that it would kill her family and the Legendaries. Nothing mattered anymore. She was happy, and that was all she cared about.

Deoxys was statuesque, stuck observing the possessed Mewthree sway and twirl, caught up in a blissful haze. Chaos was notoriously unpredictable, and Mewblade was violent. The bond's mood was hardly anything it was expecting. Maybe if it was lucky, it could sneak away undetected. Slowly Deoxys moved away, only to freeze. The minty eyes had it in their line of sight. Unsure of whether to stay or flee, Deoxys did something unseen by the spectators below, it ran for fear of its life.

Chaos Mewblade was disappointed that her personal euphoria of just being what she was had to be interrupted. Of course, it was not like she could not enjoy the prospect of a good chase. She did have to kill Deoxys eventually, and there could be some fun to be had here. Amused with her little idea, Chaos Mewblade went after the Pokémon.

Why it had moved, Deoxys had no clue. The combination was faster than it was, and way too powerful for Deoxys to ever handle properly. In speed form, it still was not fast enough to escape the possessed entity.

~*"Hello,"*~ Chaos Mewblade grinned, appearing in front of the virus suddenly and without warning. While Mewblade's Teleports were slow and obvious, Chaos' were instantaneous. If Mewblade wanted to go to Mars, it could take her there. Deoxys did not figure this out until it tried to flee once more, only to bounce into Chaos Mewblade's metal chest. ~*"Oh, I see how it is. When you have the unfair advantage, you stay, but when someone else does you run away,"*~ she smirked. The smile was fearsome, but Deoxys could not get past her eyes and their disturbing mint green glow. ~*"Chaos got your tongue?"*~ asked the Mewthree, her face splitting into a wild sneer, claws ripping into Deoxys' head and taking out its spine. ~*"That was disappointing,"*~ she remarked, mostly to herself. Chaos Mewblade moved away to circle the virus, giving it some space and time to Recover, this did not mean she left Deoxys alone entirely.

The Chaos bond was a perfect blend of Mewblade's brutal, sometimes dark sense of humor and Chaos' playfulness. Playing was enjoyable, especially with someone its host did not like. It could mess with the enemy, and the host would be pleased to see her enemy suffer. Together they teased Deoxys with mostly Chaos driven traits. These were the same behaviors Mewblade had been exposed to all her life; where Chaos would project truths and ramble, pushing its victims into near insanity. While she circled, Chaos Mewblade happily explained all the joys of Hell, of dying, of end and demise. There was a particular realm that was worse than the standard mortal impression of eternal suffering, of which Chaos Mewblade fondly mentioned. She wanted Deoxys to feel fear, and in turn fear death.

~*"I want you to suffer!"*~ she sung gaily to her aggressor. The multiple levels of voices in its head, and the effort it took to try and shut them out was draining on Deoxys' mental state and energy pool. All that thing had to do was speak to cause damage. Chaos Mewblade could talk the virus to death, but where was the fun in that? ~*"Scream for*

me,”~ she whispered, taking a large chunk of its left head spike off with her teeth. With her claws, she sunk her paw deep into its chest, touching its central gem. The disruption to its energy was intense enough that Deoxys temporarily lost consciousness. ~“*It can handle the energy of a bunch of Legendaries, but not even a second of me. Pathetic.*”~ Dismissively, she tossed the virus aside, debating on what to do to it next. Vulnerable as it was, it would not be difficult for Chaos Mewblade to Teleport the thing into a star of her particular choosing. It was such an easy way to deal with the virus, that they wanted to consider it but Chaos was reluctant.

Life was precious, and if Chaos were to use its own energy to kill something it would outright refuse. Aiding something in the act of killing was fine. The Law and Life Fates were responsible for killing their enemies using their own skills and energy and it had no qualms with assisting, or even forcing them to commit murder. On Mewblade’s own resources, which was the paltry soul energy, the act of Teleport could not be done; besides, End To All Things, that if it struck, was a guarantee. Either she could erase all traces of its body, or its soul; though which one, she had not quite decided.

Deoxys was slowly coming to, still disorientated from the potency of Chaos’ energy. Finding no point in beating on something that was unresponsive, Chaos Mewblade welcomed Deoxys’ wakefulness with a new round of battery. The Mewthree approached and swung with her metal-clad tail, batting the Deoxys. The thrill of the chase continued as she passed the virus back and forth between herself, cackling inanely as she went.

~“*This is fun!*”~ she giggled, enjoying every moment of her personalized amusement.

On Indigo Plateau it had taken a few minutes for the full ramifications of what had occurred to sink into the collective minds. The relief that they should have felt for Mewblade’s evasion of death was overshadowed by the horror that in order to survive she had done so by the worst means possible. Given the nature of what was to transpire, it was still inexcusable to depend on Chaos. ‘Always better dead than bound,’ was the prevailing mental perception of Chaos bonds, and having a Decider of Fate of Mewblade’s borderline maniac caliber was the worst of the worst.

<“Now tell us what happens, geniuses?!”> Zapdos squawked at the three Chosen to the Deciders of Fate. In the batch, it first looked at Coline. She was helpless, unable to discern how the situation had reached the level of severity that it had. The text on the ruins warned her that a Chaos bond was possible, but she thought that after all she knew about Mewblade, the last resort would have been her special skill over that and a bond. Her reasoning was, that even by some slim chance that Mewblade did unite with Chaos it would be similar to that of Justice or Life of Blood; although, from what she was seeing, this bonding was different from the rest.

Moltres was shaking her head towards her comrade, shoulders shrugged, her terror of the unknown visible in her eyes. She had not known this at all. Iustitia had shown that a desperate Decider of Fate could Chaos bond successfully with few repercussions. It was mostly the mention of Letum Falcifer and that she could display Fate-given skills specializing in decay that her and the rest of the Legendaries had worried about. The dangerous potential of Mewblade had been more worrisome than the

potential of her bonding with Chaos. Moltres could not deny that it could happen, but to her the chances were nigh impossible.

Lugia and Ho-oh had seen two Chaos bonds already, and this was the third. With Mewblade at the mercy of Deoxys, both of the birds thought the threat of a Chaos pairing had passed. Irrationality was a trait strongly displayed in the Mewthree, and Lugia had honestly thought she would have made the attempt sooner. He also thought Mewblade would have been skilled enough to have used her gifts in battle. Evidently he was proven wrong on both accounts. Ho-oh was purely pessimistic, reasoning that even if Mewblade had died, she still could somehow come back and risk everything. After all these years, the only thing it truly despised in Letum Falcifer was her skills coupled with Chaos. Until it could confirm her functionally deceased would it stick to that point of view. It was right, and it resented being correct. The Deciders of Fate were all the same, Mewblade no different. It rationalized that it needed Mewblade to stay alive to solve this crisis; although, it still regretted resurrecting her in the first place.

<“World’s going to end. What do we do?”> Zapdos further pressed his concerns.

<“Your Deciders of Fate did this before. What did you do to get them out of it?”>

Eve spoke up, saying the despicable truth. Moltres winced at the question, having not admitted to the Legendaries that the Fates were favorable of Chaos bonding. The expected alarm was not as pronounced as it should have been. No one really cared for bygone Legendaries and their actions, it was the present that counted. Lugia was less ashamed of his Legendary’s Chaos bond, supplying the information.

<“Honestly, we didn’t. Once Chaos and our Legendary succeeded at their goal, only then did Chaos let them go.”>

<“What goal is that?!”>

Lugia shook his head, answering Raikou. <“For Mewblade, I really don’t know. Vita needed to be able to fight when she couldn’t. She had no attacks of her own. For Iustitia, I really can’t say.”>

<“She needed sight to see her opponents,”> Moltres blurted quickly, not wanting to give anyone the chance to make the wrong assumptions of her Decider of Fate. The Legendaries cast their blame on Coline, the only one there who at least thought she knew everything there was to know about the Mewthree.

“She intends to kill,” spoke the girl in a hushed tone, able to feel a level of murderous desire amongst the murky fog that was Chaos Mewblade’s aura. Most of what she could gather, which was generally undecipherable to the girl, was a muddled feeling of ecstasy. Empathetic or not, the Pokémon could easily see that Mewblade was no more.

<“There is no reasoning behind it. Your Legendary has lost it. She’s surrendered to Chaos,”> said Celebi, acting as the voice of reason. Coline was dismayed by the many nods of agreement from the Legendaries. Mewblade had always had a handle over Chaos, it was not like her to just submit to it easily. The girl turned pleadingly to Mewblade’s father, looking for someone who shared her views. Mewtwo was with Celebi on this one. Over the years he had feared for Mewblade’s sanity. She wrestled through the inflictions of resurrections, abuse from others and towards herself, and when encountered with death and the fear of more abuse, it would not be beyond Mewblade to finally give up and snap.

“You can’t possibly believe that, after all this time.” The girl was in tears, mad that no one had faith in her Mewblade. Chaos Mewblade was still the Pokémon she loved, and she would prove it.

~“*Get back here. It will only hurt for a moment,*”~ cackled the chaotic being, still in pursuit of her prey. The exertion from fleeing her was tiring for Deoxys. All it wanted to do was get away from this nightmare that was Chaos Mewblade. Everywhere it turned, she was there, hounding it, maiming it. Soon it would run out of energy to maintain its forms, and then Chaos Mewblade could do whatever she pleased. No one was sympathetic to its situation, it getting what it deserved for irking one of the most powerful combinations in the universe.

~“*There. Doesn't that feel good?*”~ Chaos Mewblade showed her amusement with an euphoric smile, her blades taking off Deoxys' tentacles, whipping the virus with its own body parts. The appendages had been a bother. Finally after many hours she was able to let Deoxys feel what it was like to be on the receiving end of them. Watching it cower before her was hilarious, her poisoned laughter crippling to those close-by. The others were unconvinced by Coline's beliefs. She would not be detracted by the actions. When she first met Mewblade, anyone else would have said she was a despicable creature, where Coline saw someone who was misunderstood.

<“Stop this! The Mewthree I love would never do that!”> the girl shouted at the Chaos bond, despite the fact that if Chaos Mewblade projected back it had the potential of causing lasting mental injury.

~“*Co-Coline?*”~

<“You're a good Pokémon. Remember why you committed to this. Remember me!”>

Chaos Mewblade stopped, stunned as her mind tried to scramble to the surface. The temptation of being lost in the energy's orgy was strong. Mewblade wanted to surrender to it, escape the commitments that her duties had tied her to. In submitting to Chaos though, she had done the one thing she promised not to do, which was forget Coline. Had she not cared about her Chosen, she would not have struggled so hard as she did, sacrificing her life, soul and sanity to protect her. Chaos and Mewblade may have shared in the goal of killing Deoxys, but for Mewblade every reason behind anything she had been doing was for Coline.

Chaos, my Chosen. It is not worth it if I forget my Chosen.

~*Pity. It was so enjoyable,*~ the energy sighed, its intrusive hold retreating far enough that it was Mewblade's personality ahead of its own. Being one with Letum Falcifer was a treat that they both relished, though Chaos recognized how important Coline was to her. Without strong motivation, Mewblade would leave with nothing but shame, where this was something she should have been proud of. ~*You are truly a spark in existence. Forget nothing of this as Chaos shan't.*~

Thank you. I do not think I ever will. Love ahead of lust, Mewblade knew what was most important to her. Chaos respected that trait in Mewblade, it was what would make her a great Letum Falcifer. The Death Fate honored life and its relationships, even the one she had with Chaos, despite how strangely perturbed it was. The energy had humored Mewblade's delights, giving her feelings that no one else could, pleasures of the mind and the body, things she had been denied. It would leave the spiritual fulfillment and love to the responsibility of her Chosen; that, Chaos could never replace.

~“*I remember you,*”~ Mewblade said, the voice mostly her own. ~“*Thank you for making me remember.*”~

<“I believe in you!”> cheered the teenager, rooting for Mewblade. In the moment where she desperately needed to be herself, it was Coline who reminded her. Mewblade could never thank Coline enough. The beaming smile of pride from the girl told all the Legendaries that she had everything under control. No one knew Mewblade better than she did.

<“I owe you an apology,”> Celebi muttered to the girl, though unwilling to look at her directly.

<“Whatever you did . . .”> Mewtwo trailed for a moment, <“you did a good job. I hope she stays that way.”> The attention was drawn back to the screens. It seemed as if Coline’s intervention had given Mewblade a handle in her situation. Chaos no longer ruled her, easing the Legendaries’ tensions moderately. As long as Coline could wrangle her Legendary back into a semi-aware state, there was hope.

<“You can do it!”> Coline further projected skywards.

During Chaos Mewblade’s pause, Deoxys had fled as fast as it could, closer to the Earth’s natural satellite than to Earth itself. Chaos used its own energy to propel the chaotic Mewblade combination after it. Still as one thinking being, it was an equal effort on both their behalves to seek the virus. Right now though, Chaos was giving Mewblade a reprieve so she could focus on her task.

Using the remnants of her soul energy, Mewblade placed it into her energy cannon for the final assault. As long as it remained connected to her body, she was still present in this world.

We need to weaken it so it does not dodge, reminded the Mewthree.

~To my delight, Letum Falcifer.~

I trust you. It was not something Mewblade had a choice in, she needed Chaos. In a single body, their sense of a soul was separate; this allowed Mewblade to work on her task, letting her perception waiver. With the warped vision she was able to see the connections in the universe that were not perceivable to most. Doing this would allow her to synchronize End To All Things to do as she asked, wiping out the type of existence that she chose. She honestly had more confidence in Chaos than she did in herself and an untrained skill. *I have to get this right.*

~The Fate of Death is not wrong in her practices,~ Chaos reassured the nervous Fate; after all, she resurrected individuals successfully, a skill that took from life as much as it did from death. During their first encounter, while she struggled, she still succeeded. There was no reason for Mewblade to doubt herself if Chaos did not see a reason to.

Chaos Mewblade, predominately led by the energy itself, bore down on the virus. Barrier, Imprison and Guillotine were performed, one deadly move after another. Persistence was resulting in a radically rapid drop of Deoxys’ resources. The virus wasted even more energy as it tried to remove itself from the situation, any and all attempts failing. The pressures to keep itself safe was too much for it to handle.

~“Having problems?”~ Chaos Mewblade asked, clicking her tongue as she said, *~“Tsk, tsk,”~* mocking its predicament. Carelessly, she threw it into one of her Barriers. Did it ever feel good to be on top.

The Legendaries had the impression that Chaos Mewblade was beginning to lose it again, having not been informed of the current arrangement. Moltres was first to remind her of it.

<“Get a hold of yourself.”>

~“*I am,*”~ Chaos Mewblade spoke, back-talking to the bird. Mewblade was not Iustitia who was intimidated enough by Vita Sanguine’s bonding experience to let Chaos do anything with her. Mewblade was use to a lack of control in her life, and even with Chaos intertwined with her being, it was the complete surrender that made her feel the most capable. ~“*Everything is under control,*”~ she added.

Mewblade had gone through her preparations, addressing Chaos in her mind. *I am ready.* Chaos gave the primary reigns back to the Mewthree, removing it from the responsibility of eliminating Deoxys.

~*As it be.*~

Any reprieve that Deoxys was hoping for was a whimsical thought that was not going to happen. Letum Falcifer was a stubborn individual, and as Chaos Mewblade she was jointly united with Chaos in its destruction. Whether Chaos or Mewblade was leading, it did not matter. It should have listened to the myths and never pursued Mewblade in the first place, a stupid idea that it regretted. It did not want to die and go to an abyss of eternal misery.

~“*Anything to say?*”~

Don’t kill me? Fat chance that was going to work. Mewblade was not going to invest the effort she had if she wanted to let Deoxys live. It decided not to dignify the menace with an answer. She would punish it as much as she thought it deserved, and based on how many Recovers Deoxys had recently performed, apparently it really deserved it.

~*It is almost time,*~ reminded Chaos, noticing that Deoxys was finally slowing down.

When the moment comes, leave, the Mewthree instructed it, not wanting to put Chaos at any risk in case her plan failed. *I would like to say, ‘Goodbye’.*

~*Of course.*~

After everything Mewblade had been through, it was almost over. Finally, over. Where earlier she was a warrior without honor; now she was a Decider of Fate, full of pride. Chaos may have helped her, but it was her mind and her abilities that now dictated her place in the crisis. Remembering what Lugia had told her, she had not been alone in her fight. There was Chaos, there were the Fates, there were her friends, her family, Lugia and especially Coline.

<“I love you!”> Mewblade cried to her Chosen, using her own telepathy with the aid of Chaos’ energy. At the very least, they deserved a proper farewell. <“I will not forget.”> Mewtwo’s screen caught the titanium covered visage of Chaos Mewblade break into a tearful smile. This was Coline’s Mewblade, Decider of Fate, Letum Falcifer, whatever anyone could call her, she loved her all the same.

<“I love you!!!”> Coline laughed and cried, the projection being crystal clear. Life may have been short, and a lot shorter for Mewblade than she had expected, but love and friendship were unending.

<“I love you too!”> Eve joined in, being Mewblade’s Chosen Pokémon and her friend. The Umbreon had spared Mewblade from the awkwardness of admitting that she cared deeply for the Eevee evolution. Crying in space, a pointless action for Chaos Mewblade was enough for Eve to understand that as a friend, she loved her.

<“Mew . . . Mom,”> Mew perked her ears, having never been addressed by any terms of endearment. <“Thank you.”> Mew pulled a sniffled smile. She did her best as

any mother would, and Mewblade had showed her acceptance of Mew's role has her mom. They fought and bickered like any well-intentioned parent did with their independent child. There was no denying that Mew did it because she felt for Mewblade as a parent should.

<“You're welcome.”>

<“Mewtwo . . .”>

<“I know,”> Mewtwo interrupted her. <“You're a good Mewthree. Fulfill your destiny.”> Mewtwo was smirking through his tears. A dry chuckle chimed in from Mewblade. He was her father, the first individual she would run to when she was at her worst and most vulnerable. His expectations had always been high, and even though Mewblade had done many a thing that he disapproved of, Mewtwo still cared for her deeply. He was a proud creature, soon to regain his crown as the world's most powerful psychic, and there he stood, crying to himself not minding the indignity of it all. Mewblade needed this as well. Of the regret the Fates expressed, this would not be one of them.

<“You can do it, Letum Falcifer. Prove yourself,”> Lugia spoke encouragingly, urging the final Fatalis Dator to show her mark as a Fate. Earlier he had been scared by the concept of Chaos and Letum, but now all he could see was Mewblade in her struggle to help. His wisdom told him that in the end, despite the negative criticisms and presumptive accusations, Letum Falcifer was nothing to be afraid of.

<“You're the best friend this Moltres has ever had. Go get it!”> Moltres may have been duty-bound to protect the future Decider of Fate, but she was more than willing to become her friend. She never failed at being one to Mewblade.

<“You're worth it.”> Thankfully Chaos was taking the lead, as Mewblade would have been brought down by her own sobs. Everything she did was really for something, for someone. She did these things because she cared for others, even if only a few of them returned her feelings.

~*Listen*,~ Chaos murmured, hushing the Mewthree as together they shared its omnipresence. A wave of cheers rippled through the group, all started by Ho-oh. The bird had raised its wings to the clouds, a glorious symbol of triumphant applause. It never liked the Fates or Chaos, but by no means was Mewblade any less worthy of the praise. It was the finest send off anyone could ever ask for.

<“Thank you.”> Chaos Mewblade smiled, Mewblade at peace with her decision and Chaos happy for her. Serving Letum Falcifer was a joy. The only thing that could make it happier was accomplishing what they had originally set out to do. With nothing left to do but their goal, Chaos Mewblade went after the weakened Deoxys. It had made one last attempt to escape on its depleted reserves, a Barrier stopping it in its tracks.

~“*Nowhere to run?*”~ Deoxys looked back at the Chaos bond, fearful for its life, and even more so as Chaos Mewblade pinned it within a set of Barriers and an Imprison. There was nowhere left for Deoxys to go.

Your service is appreciated. Please leave me.

~*As you wish. Good luck.*~ Chaos parted her company, lingering momentarily, a way to forever remember the privilege of being one with a god. The restraints remained as did the Destiny Bond Mewblade had placed between herself and Deoxys. It was the final remaining precaution she would take, her close proximity to the virus was her further guarantee.

Mewblade braced a paw to her energy cannon. This is where she stood, on the line between life and death, of which she decided. With no regrets and no reason to hold back any longer, the energy was released along with her life. She was Mewblade, Letum Falcifer, and through her all things would end.