

With Love, Hate, and Angst

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“Eevee, eevee eevee!” (Please, please don’t!) whimpered a voice as it was being carried through the darkness of some old stone battlements. There was something else with it, carrying the speaker with little or no concern for its well being. The voice set up in a loud wail. “Eevee eee eeveee!!!” (I’ll try harder!!!) This was followed by fitful sobs. It knew exactly why it was brought where it was. “Eve . . .” (No . . .) it moaned softly.

“Shut up!” was the unkindly response from the second. The figure stepped into the light of a broken stained glass window, glancing at the glass and having no appreciation for the fragile beauty of the small amounts of color that still hit the hanging dust motes. It was a boy, maybe of some fourteen years. His eyes were cold and bitter, and cruel. Hanging from his right arm was a battered Eevee. A small creature, brown, fluffy, an Eevee was generally considered a cute and easily manageable creature. Slung from his left shoulder was a backpack that contained a lot of Pokéballs, all consisting of Pokémon that were more recently caught than the Eevee that was being so roughly cared for.

“Eeveee evvveee eeveee eeve eeve eee?” (What are you going to do to me?) asked the Eevee, trying to be certain that the fears that raced through his little mind were not true. He hung his head in grief, knowing the trainer was too callous to even bother to respect his pleas, let alone understand him. His name was Eevee, it had been Killer earlier but the trainer, his name was Ralph, realized that Eevee was not suitable of the name and had his name demoted. He tried his hardest to train, and really was a good Pokémon, but Ralph did not understand. The boy was ignorant.

Ralph whipped the Eevee out from under his arm, staring at it with contempt. The icy stare of his eyes was unmoving and Eevee tried in desperation to search for an answer. A sign. Anything! Any sign of humanity that were behind those pair of steel blue eyes. There was nothing, and even less as Ralph took in a deep breath to have a one-sided screaming match with his starter Pokémon.

“You are the most useless Pokémon to ever exist. You don’t know any attacks. You can’t fight properly. All you ever do is sit there and cry.” Eevee was crying right then. He knew this would be it, the way the tone was of Ralph’s voice, he had had it. “You won’t evolve into something cool like an Umbreon. You let yourself be pushed around by Bruiser,” which was a Granbull who was pretty weak. “Heck, even if I were you’d I’d be pushing him around. See, that’s how pathetic you are. And you know what, no one will miss you either.” Across the boy’s face was a gradual show of a sinister sneer. Ralph’s gripped tightened substantially, causing Eevee to cry out in pain as the fingers dug into his ribs. “Get out of my sight,” the boy spat and with more force than Eevee would have expected, the poor Pokémon was thrown hard into one wall before smacking away from it and rolling to a stop in a patch of light from an even worse off stained glass window. The boy turned and started to walk out of the building, not even regretting what he did, not turning back to the dying Pokémon on the floor.

The strike against the wall was enough to do most of the damage. Besides knocking the wind out of Eevee’s lungs and forcing him to cough up blood, the blow got

the back of his skull with enough ferocity to kill him, but not quite as hard as it could have been. Eevee lay by himself lit by the afternoon rays of the sun, thinking over and over to himself as the seconds drew out to minutes of what he could have done to the self-centered brat that was his trainer. His mind was growing dim and he stared at the footprints of Ralph left behind in the dust. "Eeveee eee . . ." (I hate you . . .) Eevee gasped raggedly before his body was cut off from whatever kept it alive for as long as it did.

The state of mind where the brain was halfway between the living and the dead, all Eevee could think of was a loathsome hate. So powerful that it was consuming his soul and eating him alive from the inside out. Then he felt something more terrible than the hate, it was the fact that the dead would not accept him and the living would not either. It felt as if together the living and dead were saying, 'Here is your gift, now suffer with it.'

"I did nothing wrong!" screamed Eevee, even though his voice was no longer speaking Eevee, or even human. It was just a combination of emotions that came out as words. "Don't reject me!" Eevee hollered piteously. His world was crumbled enough and he would not accept the rejection. The living and the dead gave a shrug to his needs. Both could care less. "But . . . but . . ." Eevee whimpered. There was a loud scream. There was no way either would let him either live or die. Eevee was to be stuck between two existences. "Tell me why!" ordered Eevee since there was no other way to get an answer. He had done nothing wrong, so he did not deserve this. The interpretation came out as, 'Because you hate', and that was all it would give before throwing him into the physical state of what his mind was already in.

Eevee came back to consciousness in a bright light, brighter than the light that poured through the broken window. Except now he could no longer remember his name. He stood tall, aware that the living world was a now perverted view to him and his death was a mockery to behold. "Poltereon!" he shouted defiantly. That was it, his name would be 'Poltereon'. There was no one around and his voice sounded to him as normal as any other. "So, this is it," he snarled to himself, glancing around the room of broken windows and shafts of dusty light.

He took, for once, a powerful and confident step, feeling the muscles beneath his skin. Poltereon was now taller, stronger, and meaner than he ever was as a pitiful Eevee. His tail flicked from side to side, a scrawny thing, long and nothing but skin, bone and whatever muscle that allowed it to sway. His ears, cartilage covered in the short olive fur that embraced his entire body. His eyes were sharp, narrow and crimson in color. His mouth drew back with protruding fangs and a jaw enhanced with sharp teeth. He gave a shake of his head to clear his mind and set his goals, feeling tufts of fur hanging from his lower cheeks and jaw. "Revenge, revenge, revenge, revenge, revenge," Poltereon sang melodically as he sauntered through the hallways and rooms of the stony battlements. His mind was definitely set.

Poltereon figured that Ralph would linger. He was such a lazy boy and he knew it. He felt the presence of life near the entrance of the building, of course that life was Ralph and whatever blood that was left in Poltereon's body, boiled. With a quick grasp of his abilities, Poltereon let gravity rotate itself so that way he clung to the walls. He hurtled across them, passing through other walls as he charged after his adversary.

Ralph was in a narrow, dark hallway leading to the entrance room then to the door that would get him outside. “Spooky,” he said with a snicker and a laugh. He heard a rustle noise behind him, and not certain what was, he decided to turn slowly towards it. The first thing he saw were glowing crimson eyes then a flurry of black as Poltereon descended from the wall, howling like a demon.

“Poltereon!” Poltereon howled loudly, pouncing on Ralph and sending him to the floor.

“Ah! What is it?! Get it off! Get it off!” the boy squirmed, trying to grab a Pokéball from his backpack but Poltereon was smarter than that. He sat forcefully on one hand, and using his needle-sharp teeth, took the other. “Ahh!” Ralph cried as Poltereon bit deep, hitting bone before letting go. Poltereon leapt off the boy. While Ralph was nursing his injured hand, Poltereon tugged at the backpack. Ralph whipped his head around to look at the Pokémon. He had no idea that Poltereon use to be his Eevee. “Hey! That’s mine!” Ralph swatted at Poltereon with his good hand.

“Pol?” (So?) came the sarcastic remark from Poltereon as he jumped on Ralph’s back as he sat up, wrestling the bag from his shoulders. The one thing Ralph would not give up would be the backpack with his Pokéballs in it.

“Let go!” Ralph ordered then smashed his fist down on Poltereon’s head.

Poltereon braced for the blow but it did not even phase him. He was a ghost type Eevee evolution, there was no way punches or kicks would be dealing him damage. He chuckled in wicked delight, knowing that as long as the Pokéballs stayed with him, Ralph could not possibly fight back.

Poltereon tugged at the backpack, trying to rip it off but Ralph had used his brain for once and used his hands and arms to clutch the straps of the backpack to his chest. This was disheartening to Poltereon because it meant he could no longer try and get the backpack away. With little care, he let go of the backpack and immediately proceed to try and rake the back of Ralph’s head with his now exposed claws.

Ralph yelled and leapt to his feet, staring down at the strange Pokémon with glowing crimson eyes. Before he could retrieve a Pokéball, Poltereon was on him again. This time he jumped at the boy’s chest, trying hard to get some serious blows but his claws would not go that deep. He landed back on the stone floor, tensed and apprehensive.

“Killmount, go!” A Pokéball was thrown and opened to reveal a Rapidash. Poltereon jumped back to make room for the Pokémon that was a ball of fire, and that also lit up the hallway. No wonder Ralph picked it. He looked in surprise at Poltereon, he had been dead certain that it could have been a Houndour or an Umbreon. Some dark type anyway. The scrawny, shabby Pokémon seemed far less intimidating in the light.

“Pol eon poltereon. Eon polter poltereon. ‘Poltereon pol . . .’, ‘Poltereon pol . . .’,” (Of course it’s Killmount. It’s always Killmount. ‘Killmount this . . .’, ‘Killmount that . . .’,) Poltereon muttered sarcastically. Killmount was puzzled because it too did not recognize Poltereon to be Ralph’s Eevee, yet it wondered why Poltereon seemed to know it.

“Flamethrower!” Ralph ordered with as much rage as the fire that was quickly spat from Killmount’s mouth. Poltereon gulped since he had hated training against that

attack. Gravity flipped and Poltereon clung to the ceiling, looking down at a stunned Ralph and Killmount.

“Poltereon!” (Nightshade!) snarled Poltereon as the room became dark again and the Rapidash whinnied in distress. The room was relit by the light from Killmount once it had taken a successful amount of damage. Poltereon beamed with pride then ran along the ceiling before dropping onto the top of Ralph’s head.

Ralph panicked calling attacks that Killmount knew better than to use. The Rapidash stomped around frantically, hoping it could aim a kick or something. Poltereon clung to Ralph’s shirt, taking the Pokéball from the hand of what was once his master and threw it at Killmount, recalling the Pokémon back. It was starting to annoy Poltereon.

Ralph managed to let Poltereon drop to the floor. Poltereon in turn went to the lone Pokéball and rolled it back to Ralph as some sort of demonstration of his superiority. Ralph shakily took the ball and looked at Poltereon, not knowing what to do with it. For a while there was calm and silence. Ralph thought that the insane actions of the Pokémon were done.

“Good Pokémon,” he mumbled quietly, reaching forward to touch Poltereon. Poltereon’s eyes flashed with sinister delight as he leapt at the exposed hand and bit hard. Again Ralph was screaming from pain, both of his hands were now sorely injured. Poltereon dropped to the floor and glanced up at Ralph. He could feel the body shake from fear, the fear that Poltereon was so blissfully relishing.

“Polter pol. Eon. Eon!” (Come on. Run. Run!) Poltereon jeered, his crimson eyes expressive with what Ralph assumed was insanity. He had no clue what Poltereon was saying but ran for the door that was still a bit of a ways away.

Poltereon followed, excited by the chase. He jumped from wall to wall, leaping over Ralph’s head, ripping hair out, scratching his eyes, and even taking a sizable chunk of the boy’s ear as he went.

Ralph stumbled outside, blubbering babyishly as he fell, turning to the battlements as he tried to crawl away, backwards on his rear end. He was scared that the crazed Pokémon demon thing was still out to get him. Ralph was surprised to see Poltereon standing in the frame of the doorway, looking at Ralph with calm consideration. That same look that deceived Ralph into letting Poltereon bite his uninjured hand. He did not trust that Pokémon, no way in heck would he trust it. He continued his panicked shuffle backwards before jumping to his feet and bolting. Several times he stumbled over his own two feet but got back up again. Poltereon watched then shouted loudly for the boy to hear.

“Pol polter eon eon pol polter poltereon . . . pol . . .” (And that’s what you get for hurting . . . uh . . .) Poltereon did not remember his previous name and made a substitute. “. . . Eon!” (. . . Me!) he laughed then walked back inside.

Sixteen years later . . .

It was a bright summer day on a tropical island beach. A strange species of all female Pokémon basked in the warmth of the sun. Some sang songs, others gossiped to one another. Some were looking after their daughters with tender care. There were no humans

here and their language was their species name; yet, with no humans to listen, who would know it was Pokémon?

“Mom!” called one of the most loving daughters on the beach. The female bounded up the beach away from the salt water. She was cat-like in appearance. Her fur was white with large puffs of it flowing around her cheeks. She sported large angelic wings and a flowing tail that looked like ribbons. The colors of her inner ear, tail and wings were yellow and sandy looking. Around the ankles of her forepaws were heavy gold bracers. Around her chest was an even heavier gold chest plat with thick rims. Peach colored accents of diamonds and reversed check marks adorned the center of her gear. She smiled joyously, her pouting lips a shiny gold. Her eyes were that of crystal clear blue water. She batted her thick eyelashes as she sat before her mother, waiting for her to acknowledge her presence. Her ears flopped as her mom continued to talk to one of her friends. “Mom!” Her mom ignored her. “Mom! Mom! Mom!” she set off in an annoying chant of repetition, accompanied with high notes and whining.

“Yes, dear. What is it?” her mom turned to her with an exasperated expression. Her mother looked similar to the daughter except the decorative accents were primarily triangular. The friend of the mother had light green eyes. The species was called ‘Sunkissed’, and each one was different in their own, unique way.

Each Sunkissed was female. There were no males. They all sported the heavy metal armor for reasons no one knew. It was a wonder how they flew, let alone how they acquired them. There was a legend about the Sun god bestowing the gold as a sign of protection for his daughters. No Sunkissed doubted it and all praised the Sun god in the morning when the sun would rise to greet the day. The protection of their armor could be a bit of a joke, but the species needed all the help they could get. They were all very blonde if the term could be used. There was a lack of common sense, wisdom, basic intelligence, survival skills. The species was fading dramatically because of the general stupidity of its members. There were cases, lots of, where a Sunkissed would fly over open water, forget how to fly, and drown. There were ones who developed sudden phobias for food. Some were stupid enough not to fly away from predators, choosing to attempt a delightful conversation; some even went as far as talking happily as they were being devoured. There were ones who ended their lives because the male they loved did not love them. It was a group of drama queens, divas, runway models and all women in the world that had beautiful but tragic lives. In a way, Sunkisseds were human.

The daughter had a big smile. Her face became pleading as she started to beg for permission to do something. “Can I go for a fly?”

“Where?” was her mother’s response.

“Just out over the water a bit,” responded the daughter. The mom, who was quite old and had to be wise to have lived so long, looked out to the water and saw a small gathering of dark clouds in the distance.

“But Passion, there is a storm. You should stay here with the rest of us,” her mom frowned. The one thing the mom lacked was the ability to force someone to listen to her passive suggestions. Passion glanced out to water, seeing the storm but not even thinking of it as dangerous.

“I’ll be fine,” she smiled. ‘Passion’ was what her mom and her close friends called her. Most Sunkisseds liked to be called Sunkissed rather than go by any other

name. Passion did not mind, she was use to it and too loving to be mad at her mom's concern.

"Okay, be back by sun fall," the mother spoke with a worried tone, her blue eyes set upon the sand. It was a little before noon and would be a while before sunset, but it was easier to say 'sunset' since that was the easiest time to tell.

"Thank you, Mom!" Passion said gleefully. She kissed her mom on the cheek, nuzzling a bit. "Love you. I'll be back by sunset!" Passion turned away, and with a skip and a hop, was flying off over the open water.

Away from the rest of the group, Passion was known as Sunkissed. Sunkissed looked around at the darkening sky and the choppy waters below. She was not only loving but she was also the most powerful of her species, and there was one reason why. Sunkissed was foolishly brave because her stubborn will and caring nature. She tended to keep others out of danger. Of course the foolhardy nature that came with what she did meant she was one of the few Sunkisseds that got into the most trouble. And right now, she was flying into some big trouble.

The stormy sky and the rough winds buffeted her body, making flying hard. She was lost in the storm as a thermal grabbed her and threw her in wild circles. Sunkissed screamed then started to concentrate to improve her flying. She was too high at the moment to see ground and she struggled to get lower. Lightning crackled, making a thunderous 'boom' as it shot through the air. It was too close for comfort and gold is an excellent conductor of electricity.

Sunkissed tried to fight the wind, wings beating hard as she aimed down for whatever ground there might be. The wind roared around her, shooting her higher before whipping her in circles again. "Eee. Eee. Eee," Sunkissed squeaked, the spinning making her feel sick. She brought her wings in tight, legs close to her body. The wind had less effect on her and she dropped for a while until a lighting bolt seared through the air, scaring her, causing her wings to spread eagle. The wind yet again caught her, taking Sunkissed deep into the storm. "Aaaaaahhhh!" Sunkissed screamed all the way up on her terrified ride into the heart of the storm.

The constant buffeting was becoming too overpowering. Sunkissed was exhausted, no longer having any bearings of where she was. She refused to give up but her body was growing weak and no longer able to take the attacks from the storm. She flapped, she struggled. She shot off her small fire attacks, blew Sunkisses, the attack that was the specialty of only Sunkisseds. She tried Sunny Day, another attack that Sunkisseds were good at. Unfortunately the storm ignored her pleas. It was stronger than Sunkissed was and she quickly realized her hardest fight might be her last.

"No!" Sunkissed screamed, the air slapping her down, then shoving her up. "I won't lose!" she wailed, a ditz at heart. She flapped in desperation, her wings cramping and a particularly strong blast knocking Sunkissed's head back. It sent her into a state of unconsciousness. She was at the complete mercy of the storm.

The rain fell heavy today. A storm had rolled in two hours ago and was bringing strong winds and thunder. It was a late summer storm and no person or Pokémon would be caught out in it. Not even Poltereon would put himself in it, dead or alive. The claps of thunder did not scare him, nothing about a storm did. It was the way the rain felt on his body. It did not refresh him nor comfort him. It always felt alien and made his body feel empty since he had lost the part of his soul that would delight in such simple pleasures.

He sat in the frame of the broken stained glass window that shed light on his dead body that day sixteen years ago. There he sat, staring out at the rain with little interest. In fact, nothing at all really interested him. Poltereon could not stand other Pokémon, and people were things that he chased throughout the battlements or in the surrounding woods. He despised them and all were left with marks of his hatred towards them. Poltereon kept a vigil so that way he would know when some ruffian had entered his domain. It was not like he did not know when someone entered, he could feel their life and their emotions as they moved about. He hated every living thing even more for having such a precious gift; that gift that was stolen from him, leaving him empty and hollow inside.

It rains, he thought, staring at the falling water. The wind blew a particularly strong gust causing the rain to fall on his paws. Poltereon drew back with a scream of horror. He leapt down from the window which so happened to be over two meters above the floor. Poltereon had a sense of carelessness when he did things. He knew he could cheat death as many times as he very well pleased. This was only known to him after hundreds of attempts at trying to die. Drowning was the most unpleasant of the group.

Poltereon shuddered violently, shaking his body to get rid of the few stray raindrops that had touched him earlier; the evil reminder of who he was. He trotted towards the entrance with casual ease, waiting for the storm to pass. Sometimes he liked to be outside, looking for things to tease. Once the rain would stop it would be a brilliantly sunny day. He disliked the sun too, but he could not hide from it all the time and had to accept it as something that would always be.

It was not long before the rain began to halt and the wind blew away the storm clouds, making the sky clear within an hour and leaving the world beautiful with a delicate sheen of water. Poltereon winced at the intensity of the light and slowly went outside, letting his eyes adjust as he went. Life was all around him. In the air, in the trees, the little bugs that skittered about. It was everywhere and of course, he hated it.

Poltereon tramped along the grass as he walked. Squashed bugs beneath his paws. He saw a Bayleaf and chased the poor thing for ten minutes straight before finding another Pokémon to terrorize. He never seemed to grow tired and continued his delightful romping for quite some time before jumping into a tree and staring at the sun-drenched leaves.

"I see you," he cackled towards the leaves. "Yeah, you know it," Poltereon shouted, making a one-sided argument with the leaves. "Haha! You stupid things." The leaves rustled but made no other noise. "Aren't you going to talk back? Oh! That's right, *you* can't! Mwahahaha!" he cackled again then jerked his head towards an open meadow off in the distance. Usually Stantler grazed in the meadow and were great to chase in circles. There were none, but some other life was. Poltereon flopped out of the tree,

smacking into the ground before getting up like the fall had not even hurt. He had never felt that type of life before.

"I wonder what it is," he mumbled quietly, moving swiftly over the ground with precision. The way the life felt to him was fascinating, it radiated. Poltereon continued to slink through the trees, getting close to the clearing. The light played through the trees making it hard to distinguish anything out in the meadow. He skittered to a halt at the edge of it then slowly moved into the light.

A breeze moved the long grass and delicate flowers like ripples in a pond. The smell was refreshing and alive. Poltereon would have been pulling at the most potent, or most stunning of the flowers but was too awed by the creature sitting in the middle of the field.

Is it an angel? Poltereon thought then was almost overrun with joy. *An angel! I can escape this heck hole I'm stuck in!* He approached quietly, body low to the ground. The figure was looking at the sun in an apparent daze, mumbling quietly. Poltereon stopped and sat upright to gaze at what to him was a heavenly being.

The voice carried with the breeze. Poltereon could catch pieces of conversation and a voice that tinkled musically in his ears. It also made him cringe. He was awed and disgusted all at once. He made a noticeable rustle and was still.

"Who's there?" the angel asked and whipped around to face Poltereon. Everything about her was so softly refined. She looked at him in surprise, her blue eyes questioning. "Hello? Who are you?" Poltereon realized very quickly that her speech patterns were that of a Pokémon.

Maybe Pokémon go to heaven too, he thought then stood up proudly. "I am Poltereon, you must be an angel who has come to take me away from here." His statement was so definite that the figure could do nothing but laugh. Her laugh was as beautiful as she was and she took quite a while to calm down.

"Hehehe. You think, I'm an . . . angel?" she smiled broadly. "Aww, you're so sweet but I'm not an angel." Poltereon's ears dropped.

"You're not?" he asked, his tone of voice devastated by the news. She laughed again

"Of course not, silly. I'm a Sunkissed. My name's Sunkissed. Pleased to meet you," she continued to smile and then walked up to Poltereon, paw outstretched. He stared at her like he had been cheated and was debating whether to just walk away or rip her wings off. She saw his expression, and being a bad communicator had no idea what was going on. "You're suppose to shake my paw," she told him flatly. Poltereon turned away from her, sitting down with a thud.

"Shaking paws are dumb tricks humans teach their dumb Pokémon," snarled Poltereon with such aggression that it nearly made Sunkissed cry. He glared over his shoulder at her, his crimson eyes very bitter.

"Ooh, humans! I heard they're nice," Sunkissed babbled with a blush. If Poltereon could puke, he would have. He snorted in response to her then began to pace around her, telling Sunkissed exactly why humans were not what she thought they were.

"Humans are evil creatures that capture Pokémon in small little balls. Then they leave them trapped in there for days on end. And when you finally get out of the confounded things, it's only to fight some other Pokémon caught by some equally

horrible human. Most never treat their Pokémon well. And none understand what the heck any Pokémon is saying. If humans kill each other, in the end, I will be happy.”

Sunkissed’s eyes widened as she listened to Poltereon. She suddenly realized that this Pokémon had problems and no doubt he was wrong in her mind. She made a huffy noise then launched into her counter. “Well, you . . . cold, heartless creature. Humans are good. They are loving and caring and all they want what is best for others. They make beautiful music, and have all these wonderful ideas. And if I could be human, I would be! They are perfect. You should know better than to insult perfection.” Sunkissed then stuck out her tongue at Poltereon. He growled, fur erect in anger.

“Yeah well, you sorry excuse for a Pokémon. I at least know what humans are like! I bet you haven’t seen one in your stupid little life!” Poltereon became incredibly intimidating as his face grew dark and hate-ridden. He could feel Sunkissed lose some of her confidence but this ditz was undeniably brave.

“I may not have met a human, but I have an idea what they’re like,” she tilted her head slightly away from Poltereon then sighed. “Can’t we just be friends?” she spoke, so off-topic that Poltereon himself was the one being shocked.

“Wuh?”

“Friends, you know, like pals, buddies, companions,” Sunkissed told Poltereon. She did not have an extensive vocabulary but her loving heart knew those words well. Poltereon was puzzled and confused, then thinking it to be a bunch of lies shot back at her.

“Friends. Don’t need them.” Poltereon turned his head away as he spoke. Sunkissed was appalled.

“People need friends!” protested Sunkissed with a high-pitched wail. Poltereon winced and got right in front of Sunkissed’s little nose.

“I am not ‘people’! And I don’t need friends. And I don’t need you!” he snarled then ran for the stony battlements.

“Wait!” Sunkissed exclaimed loudly. “Can’t you tell me your name? Or at least where I am?!” Poltereon was running deeper into the woods. “Ooh . . .” Sunkissed grumbled then tried to fly after him. Her left wing failed her entirely and she crashed onto the ground. Somehow she managed the grace to right herself quickly and barreled after the strange, olive colored Pokémon.

Poltereon raced through the woods, confused and angry. He passed through a tree which made his pace slacken. Feeling life like that was always a weakening feeling. He picked up the pace again, reaching the battlements and running through the entranceway. Poltereon continued his run, tilting gravity and going along the interior of the outer walls and righting himself as he sat upon the sill of his favorite broken stained glass window. He kept a vigil for Sunkissed then briefly glanced away before turning back and lone behold was a near breathless Sunkissed. She had followed him all the way there.

“What the heck are you doing here?!” Poltereon demanded, greatly irritated by the female Pokémon. Sunkissed glanced up and saw him distinctly. She looked ahead at the wall. She put the last kick into her run, flaring her right wing and leaping into the air. Sunkissed glided calmly down next to Poltereon.

Poltereon nearly fell off the window, startled and nervous around such a vivid Pokémon. He kept his ears open as she opened her mouth to speak. "Who are you? And where am I?" she pouted with her darling full gold colored lips before panting from the lack of breath. Poltereon had to hand it to her, the ditz had determination.

"Poltereon. Don't remember my real name," he answered her first question. Sunkissed smiled, glad that Poltereon gave her the first answer. She grabbed his right paw in both of hers, sitting on her hind legs she began shaking his paw vigorously.

"Pleased to meet you, Poltereon. I'm Sunkissed," she smiled.

"I know," growled Poltereon, wrenching his paw away from Sunkissed.

"Did I have another question?" she asked, staring at the interior of the battlements.

"Yes, you did . . ." Poltereon had little patience. "You are at some old castle thing in the coastal mountains of Johto."

"Johto?" Sunkissed blinked. "Oh! That place with all the . . . I know!" she smiled, proud of her intelligence. "Not as warm as the Orange Islands though."

"So that's where you're from," Poltereon muttered then spoke up normally. This was the first time he had had a true conversation and was not all too sure of what to say. "Makes sense why I haven't see you before. You must have blown in with that storm." Sunkissed nodded dumbly in response. Poltereon saw the way Sunkissed kept her right wing flared but her left wing was tucked closely to her body. He saw her glide up to the windowsill but the girl must have known how to do some flying stunts with one wing. The left was probably broken.

"You hurt or something?" he asked with little concern. She nodded then started to bawl. Poltereon quickly learned to loathe the sound that was loud and very unappreciated to the ears of any living or dead thing. "Oww, stop!" he ordered. Sunkissed became quiet on instant; well, she did sniffle a little.

"I miss my mommy, and my friends, and the warm sandy beach back home. And I can't get home if my wing is injured . . ." she was holding back her sobs. Poltereon was glad she was stifling her noises. He did not want to hear the awful din that was a huge contrast to her normal speaking voice. Poltereon noticed the very helpless look of Sunkissed. She wanted to know how to get home, he could tell by the puppy dog eyes she made and the way her bottom lip quivered. And personally, he could not stand the idea of her hanging around. She seemed to have this way of sticking to whatever spoke to her, by the looks of it.

Poltereon had been to the beach only once, or so he thought. His past life had become a terribly vague memory as days passed, and within the first year of his death, he had forgotten most of his former self. He did know there was a river nearby, and all rivers lead to the ocean but Sunkissed probably did not want to go alone. He dreaded the idea of walking all the way there and all the way back. Then again, terrorizing new things in new places was a giddy little idea. *Maybe it would be fun*, Poltereon shook his head, Sunkissed took no concern to it. *What am I thinking? Fun with that bimbo?*

"Do you know how to get to the ocean?" Sunkissed asked suddenly. Poltereon looked up at her eyes.

"Yeah, I do. Follow the river," he told her.

"I'm really bad with directions, and I'm scared to go alone," she responded. Poltereon knew it. Sunkissed probably could not navigate her way out of the building, let alone over kilometers of ground.

"Just as long as you leave me alone after I take you there," Poltereon spoke to her, voice dripping poisonously. Sunkissed heard the line and missed the tone, she smiled with delight.

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" she cried tears of joy and leapt at Poltereon to hug and nuzzle him. Sunkissed misjudged her enthusiasm and crashed into Poltereon so that the pair tumbled off the high ledge. They crashed audibly into the floor, Poltereon taking the entire blow, Sunkissed was basically unharmed.

Sunkissed got off Poltereon and began to holler, "Are you okay?" at him. Poltereon jumped to his feet, unhurt. Sunkissed was stunned.

"I'm fine. Come on, let's go. Follow me," he said as he trotted down the hallway. Sunkissed followed with her jaw hanging open.

Sunkissed trotted behind Poltereon as he guided her along the edge of the riverbank. Silence had hung heavy in the air for several hours as dusk fell. "Shouldn't we rest?" Sunkissed asked wearily. Her left wing was throbbing in pain and she felt that she could go no further. Obviously Poltereon could care less.

"Who needs rest? I could go on like this for days." Poltereon continued his deliberate pace, Sunkissed groaned from behind which made Poltereon slacken his pace briefly. "What is it now?" he glared, his crimson eyes glowing in the dimming light.

"I . . . really . . . Poltereon, I need to rest." Sunkissed then stopped deliberately, refusing to move an inch. Poltereon sighed as he turned around, approaching her with as much bitterness as he could muster.

"We didn't need to stop," he hissed at her. Sunkissed sort of managed a small glare in return, not able to understand why Poltereon was being so cold. She turned to look at her wing, it was blue in places, the thought made it hurt more. Poltereon could see Sunkissed wince visibly and realized then that she was mortal and had limitations. He stared at her quietly for several minutes, then spoke abruptly. "I'll go get you something for that," before racing off into the underbrush. Sunkissed was left blinking in confusion.

Poltereon returned as twilight descended, sporting a makeshift carrier in which there were mosses, ferns and some long, twine substances; seemed to be some flammable substances as well. He dropped his load before Sunkissed who continued to blink. Poltereon did not need the wood that he brought, he could see fine in the dark. It was there just in case Sunkissed was afraid of the dark, after all, he had to be ready for anything.

"Lie down and I'll bandage that injury," ordered Poltereon with more harshness than intended.

"Okay . . ." Sunkissed whimpered as she lay down rather unwillingly.

Poltereon was satisfied that she followed instructions then jokingly said, "This will hurt a bit," as he pounced on the broken part of the wing. Sunkissed screamed and tried to roll away but Poltereon applied all his weight and Sunkissed was pinned. She looked over in sheer terror at Poltereon as he glanced down at the break. "Hehe, now it's

set right,” he laughed as he stepped off Sunkissed’s wing to grab his supplies. Sunkissed was too busy sobbing to herself to even think of moving. Poltereon brought the supplies over, dumping them next to the injured wing before setting about his task of wrapping.

“Aaaahhh!” Sunkissed hollered, trying to squirm away yet again. She began to create an awful din of crying, whining and pleading, asking over and over again for Poltereon to stop hurting her. Poltereon only stopped whenever he was moving over to the river edge to scoop up mud. He plastered, layered, wrapped all with the aid of his paws and teeth. For a near torturous hour he kept up his onslaught, Sunkissed half passed out because of the pain. Poltereon finally stepped back from his work.

“Ah, done!” he sighed in satisfaction. Sunkissed glanced over at him weakly.

“What did you do?”

Poltereon walked in front of her, his nose nearly touching hers. “I wrapped that injury of yours. Now it won’t be able to move for awhile, but at least it will heal properly so you can get away from me!” he snarled, strutting over to a nearby bush and sitting next to it. “Now go to sleep. I’ll watch out for anything that comes near.”

Sunkissed wanted to say something, maybe thank Poltereon or tell him how cold he was, but she was too weary and soon fell fast asleep.

How many days have we been trekking for? Three? Poltereon glanced up at the forest canopy watching the shafts of light move as a breeze passed over the leaves. Sunkissed was behind him, appearing to be rather depressed. Her wing was solidly bandaged but the walking was taking its toll on her this time. The pads of her feet were badly blistered from the walk on rough ground. Poltereon tried to compensate by only walking during the day and keeping a light walking pace. Still, Sunkissed was unable to handle the strain.

“I . . . Poltereon!” Sunkissed shouted ahead of her. “Can we stop? Please?”

Poltereon stopped all right, he stopped, turned around and immediately vented.

“Again?! This is the eighth time today and it’s hardly past noon!”

Sunkissed looked emotionally hurt. She raised one of her paws to display it to Poltereon as she spoke. “My feet are all sore, it hurts to walk.”

“Argh, why do you make this so difficult?” groaned Poltereon, causing Sunkissed to whimper. “Don’t start crying, it hurts my ears.” Sunkissed did her best to keep a stiff upper lip at his request. “At the rate we’re going we won’t be to the shore till mid-autumn. I don’t want to walk back through the mountains during that time of year.” Sunkissed responded by hanging her head.

“Why do you get mad so easily? I’m not that hard to deal with,” Sunkissed moped. Poltereon gritted his teeth.

“You are to me,” he snarled, not even bothering to look at Sunkissed anymore.

“That can’t be it,” Sunkissed stated pointedly. “No one can have that big of a problem unless something happened to them.”

. . . I’m impressed, she can actually ‘have’ a brain! Poltereon faced Sunkissed, his crimson eyes a deep russet. “You know what blondie, you’re right!” Poltereon had a sadistic grin, his muzzle was scrunched up, there was no lack of evil in his demeanor. “You’re a problem. The whole world is a problem! Heck, I can’t exist a day without wondering why I’m still here!!!” he screamed it loud and clear. Sunkissed was shaken by

the scream but stood fast. Any other Sunkissed would have run off in terror. He held a stance, trying to motivate Sunkissed into at least the degree of fear that he could feed off of. She was a rock. Sunkissed scowled at Poltereon, her beautiful blue eyes a bit icy as she began to reprimand Poltereon.

"I knew a Sunkissed who said that," Sunkissed began, trying to compare Poltereon to a fellow Sunkissed. "She had problems singing; wanted to be the best vocalist in the world but no matter what she thought she was never good enough. One day she told another Sunkissed that she couldn't take it anymore, that she was wondering why the Sun god was torturing her so. She set herself on fire and died." Poltereon was quizzical about what Sunkissed had said. Such a happy-dappy Pokémon could not possibly be touched by such events. Her face was serious, yet saddened.

"I'm no freaking Sunkissed," Poltereon retorted, being compared to one was such an indignity to him.

"But she had her reason to say what she did, why do you?" Sunkissed frowned elegantly, sad but beautiful. Poltereon did not know if he even should humor her but his logic was out of the question as he shot off into a full blown torrent of hatred and abandonment.

"You want to know why? Huh!" he challenged Sunkissed, getting in her face. "They won't let me die!" he yelled, causing Sunkissed to fold her ears against the back of her head. "They keep me alive! I've tried so hard and they *still* keep me here! I'm trapped. I can't stand it! Why do you have to be so full of it!?! I can't have it either. I got stuck with this instead. With all of *this* and they won't let me die!!!" He paused, taking a breather so he could calm himself down. "I hate you," he whispered. "I hate you for what you have, all of it." Poltereon tramped a couple meters away, circling twice and sitting heavily, his back turned away from Sunkissed.

"Poltereon?"

"Leave me alone!" Poltereon snapped at Sunkissed. She was tentative about approaching him for a moment. The air was warm, birds could be heard serenading to each other about random things. The drone of insects accented the birds, a delicately composed orchestra of nature. The warmth of the sun filtered through the leaves, casting curtains of light where they passed. Yet there was no warmth in the space occupied by Sunkissed and Poltereon. Each passing minute was oppressive, suffocating the life out of Sunkissed. She ventured forth.

Sunkissed stopped behind Poltereon, her chest close to his back. Her sore forepaw lifted from the ground and she placed it on Poltereon's back. Poltereon whipped his head around to look at Sunkissed, hating her essence. Sunkissed was somber, unmoving despite how dangerous Poltereon could be. She slowly drew her paw down his back, to his tail before placing it back on the ground. Her eyes became downcast. "Do you know why?" she asked quietly. Poltereon matched Sunkissed's expression.

"No," he replied meekly. He turned his head away, his face pointing down. "I don't remember if there was a reason." Sunkissed patted Poltereon's back sympathetically. She was not aware of it but Poltereon never confided in anyone. Somewhere deep inside he needed to reach out in hope that maybe someone could help, someone like Sunkissed. "Uh, I'll go get you something. You rest," Poltereon said

suddenly, sounding distracted. He disappeared from sight in little time, not even giving Sunkissed the time to respond.

Sunkissed was left alone as she waited for Poltereon to return with food. After an experience with her nearly eating poison berries, Poltereon made certain to get her nourishment instead. The time Sunkissed was left alone gave her enough time to fluctuate from a gloomy mood to a more jovial mood. A Sunkissed is always emotionally adaptable, yet in the back of her usually oblivious mind she wondered what was truly wrong with Poltereon.

Poltereon too was wondering what was wrong with him. Ever since Sunkissed came along he had started to act more irrational than usual. Poltereon used a makeshift sling to carry berries, prodding around bushes for berries for Sunkissed. He just could not get the thought out of his head. *What am I really missing?* Poltereon thought emptily to himself while pawing several salmonberries into the sling. *What does she represent in my . . . life?* He knew he was bitter about something, although unable to remember why. The search for food for Sunkissed continued, he made sure to avoid anything that was visibly alive, or use to be. Sunkissed, like most apparently; and it did not surprise Poltereon one bit, all avoided hunting and killing for food. Their favorite foods were coconuts and some sort of berry Poltereon could not pronounce. This was found out when Poltereon brought a dead Pidgey for Sunkissed to roast. It took Sunkissed quite a while to calm down after seeing the dead bird, he would never do that again, the wailing was deafening.

Poltereon found an adequate supply of berries, nuts, and wild flowers that he had seen other Pokémon ingest. He paraded back to Sunkissed, trying to act like he was unfazed by his earlier venting. He placed the sling down momentarily to speak. "Hey, Sunkissed. Got you . . . food?" Poltereon had picked up the sling, but then placed it back down again, padding slowly, ghostlike in order to not disturb Sunkissed.

Sunkissed was sitting in a ray of sunlight that was sifting through the trees. Her gaze was looking up at the sky, seemingly lost in thought. Poltereon padded a little closer, he could hear her whispering, something like a prayer though he could not quite make out the words.

" . . . and help me find a heart inside him. I thank you for hearing my prayer, O' great Sun god, giver of life and light," Sunkissed was saying quietly. Poltereon was not listening to her quite as much as he was watching.

So full of life, he thought, feeling dejected. Poltereon turned around and grabbed the food, he dropped it next to Sunkissed's paw so that she would notice him.

"Oh? Poltereon?" Sunkissed blinked in surprise, turning to Poltereon with a bit of a cutesy, blanked expression on her face. She had not noticed him eavesdropping in on her prayer to the Sun god, and was unaware that he was listening in on some of it; otherwise, she would have panicked, considering the prayer was about him. Sunkissed noticed the sling with a couple berries and other types of edible vegetation spilling forth. "Is that for me?" she asked innocently.

Yep, naive as ever, Poltereon thought to himself, amused by Sunkissed's continuous show of stupidity. "No . . . it's for me," he said in sarcasm. Sunkissed's ears perked up.

"Oh, okay then," she said with a smile. Poltereon almost liked teasing Sunkissed, if she would actually catch on once in a while.

"It's for you, you idiot," he said with an exasperated sigh. "You should know by now that I don't need to eat." Sunkissed had not even considered that. She knew Poltereon was different than her, but could not imagine not ingesting food.

"Well, if you want some . . ."

"I don't eat!" Poltereon barked at her. Sunkissed slunk backwards at the bark. Poltereon sighed, shaking his head, then shoved the sling forward for Sunkissed to take. "Come on, eat," he urged. Sunkissed nodded her head timidly, then padded forward to nibble on the berries. She did not really like the fruit; not as sweet as the fruit where she lived, but she knew this was not home and ate the berries anyway. Poltereon sat back and watched as she ate, keeping aware of the surroundings. *If she died I could just head home. Hmm . . . nah.* Even that seemed too cold to him.

Sunkissed finished her food, and took a drink of water from the stream, before washing her face. Poltereon got up, ready to start walking again. "Time to move it, princess."

"Ooh, I always wanted to be royalty!" Sunkissed giggled, prancing behind him, though quickly resorting to a limping walk in order to keep her feet from hurting.

"Not going to carry you," Poltereon muttered, taking the lead with Sunkissed limping behind him.