

The Flame Orb exploded into a massive burst of flames. The flames reached as high as two hundred feet tall. It burned the blue grass all around, along with any nearby mushroom trees. And within stood A-Ninetales.

A-Ninetales winced and stumbled back onto his hind legs. "What the—"

At once, his Flash Fire ability went to work. It absorbed the flames he touched without burning him at all. Though it would not burn him anyway since he was a Fire-type. However, it led him to a different problem.

His body grew in size.

"Eep!" A-Ninetales blushed, not just from the growth but from the excitement he felt but suppressed. That caused him to pause despite the rational part of his mind screaming to run out of the inferno. By the time he shook the excitement feeling off, he fell into a cycle he could not escape from. "Oh, dear!"

With every new height he grew into, his body touched and absorbed more flames. With more fires absorbed into him, he grew greater than before. Thus allowing him to feel and absorb more flames without moving an inch.

From the outside, it looked like the flames spiraled into a tornado. It spun around, reaching higher into the sky. The

heat scorched or blistered anything within three hundred feet.

At once, A-Ninetales's muzzle poked through, followed by his tails.

His front legs ripped through the tornado, absorbing every bit of it.

Soon, he towered over the fiery tornado, which sank into his body.

He took in every bit of the flames within seconds, but he still grew.

"Oh-oh jeez!" A-Ninetales blinked at the surroundings.

When he fell onto all fours, A-Ninetales towered at a thousand feet. His growth, however, continued without stopping. Any fungus creatures that saw him and wanted to drive him out discovered their sense of self-preservation. They all fled as far as possible, away from the mountainous Pokémon.

Despite the enormous and still growing A-Ninetales across the land, no tree crumbled against his paws. The ground beneath him remained intact despite all physics demanding that he sink deep paw craters by just standing. Even the grass blades, including the ones that got burnt, remained whole instead of ripped or crumbled.

This alone showed how great A-Ninetales's control over his sizeshifting abilities was.

By the time A-Ninetales stopped growing, he had reached the mountainous height of 3,670 feet tall.

"Woah!" A-Ninetales glanced all around. The mushroom trees that once stood taller than him lay no larger than grass to him. His body shoved away any clouds nearby by the slightest touch. He rubbed his bandana and badge, with them growing along him. His brown bag, however, lay on the ground, burnt to a crisp and at its regular size. "Welp, I hope some of my items survived."

Despite his internal joy of being so huge, he felt it might be better to return to his regular size. Under normal conditions, he would shrink because his body used up the energy he absorbed. At this moment, it would take at least a couple of months. Still, he held one way that allowed him to shrink at this moment.

A-Ninetales reached up to his badge and pressed against it.

"Time to store my excess size inside," A-Ninetales said. He waited, but nothing happened. He flinched and pressed his badge again. Again, nothing happened; not

even the warning light that flashed that his storage reached full capacity glowed. "Huh?!"

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"I must say, it's rather clever of you to disable his badge like that," Glaurung said. He grinned wide with a couple of fangs poking from his lips. "Not even I would think of that."

Glorfindel rolled his eyes. He bit his tongue on making scathing comments and instead said, "It was simple. When A-Ninetales left Saria to my care, I left a simple spell on his badge that prevented him from using it to contain his growth. Given that I made it, I should know how to best disable it."

Saria nodded but kept silent. She gazed up at the towering Ninetales, who reached heights that only a few buildings she witnessed achieved. Her eyes sparked with joy, much like the first time she met him so long ago. Even after Glorfindel teleported them away twice from how fast and large A-Ninetales grew, she remained still and watchful of her love. It took a careful poke from Glaurung to wake her from her loving gaze.

"Right. That's phase one down," Saria said.

“Yup! Now for phase two.” Glaurung winked and drew on the ground. “I’ll go ahead and teleport cannons nearby and—”

“Wait, wait, wait! Stop!” Glorfindel folded his ears back. “We’re not killing him! We’re just making him grow!”

“No, no! Those are not shells they’ll be firing! They’ll fire out Flame Orbs!” Glaurung grinned with pride. “The Flame Orbs, much like before, will explode upon contact with his fur. Once done—”

“Couldn’t you just *teleport* the Flame Orbs to him directly?” Glorfindel asked.

Glaurung paused, frowned, and glared at Glorfindel. “That wouldn’t be nearly as fun as my idea.”

“OK. Both of you stop!” Saria waved her front paws between them again. “Glaurung, teleport the next patch of Flame Orbs.”

“Alright, alright.” Glaurung paused, and his yellow eyes gleamed. “That’s a good idea.”

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“Strange. Why isn’t this working?” A-Ninetales pressed against his badge five more times before he stopped. He

sighed and shook his head. “Oh, well. At least that was just—”

A few popping sounds came from above. A-Ninetales blinked and glanced up. He widened his eyes, seeing several Flame Orbs falling toward him.

“—one?”