

Chapter 3: Justin and Ada.

“...e...”

Grunts echo in the void, grasping its barrier. They then transform into groans, becoming loud and recognizable.

“...ey...hey...”

The voice sounds familiar, reaching similar loudness. The Zorua hears his grunts, destroying the darkness. “Hu...Huh...?” he says, trailing.

“HEY!”

Ramon opens his eyes, seeing the boy shouting at him. His vision can’t make out the teen’s spasm frenzy.

“Oh hey, you’re awake!” he exclaims, wiping his forehead. “Phew. Thought you were a goner for a moment...That would’ve been a yikes moment for us.” He shudders.

Lowering his head, the fox widens his eyes at the boy’s hands lying motionless on his torso, blue auras surrounding them. His belly shines brighter than a nightlight, sparkling similarly to the girl’s claws. The Zorua pushes the boy’s hands. “Get off!”

“What?”

“I said get off! Get off from me, now!”

The teen lifts his hands, Ramon backing away within seconds. He leans against a tree, the rough barks scratching him.

“Dude, I was healing yo—”

“Who are you!? A-And—” the fox blinks down. “What did you *do* to me!?” he demands, twitching in place.

The boy keeps his hands up, concerned. “Hey now, relax. I was just gonna to tell you that I was healing you. You got beaten by that cloak fella pretty badly. You even passed out while we were escaping.”

Ramon blinks, holding onto the tree. “Oh...Are you sure you didn’t inject anything deadly into me? N-No, uh, poison or anything?”

The teen shakes his head. “No. Why would I do that cruel shit, dawg?”

"Well, the strange cloaked guy was hurting me so...I thought I should ask. J-Just in case." The two enter in dead silence, the wind flourishing in its presence. "...Say, how come you can understand me?"

"You're a talking Pokémon, man. An Intellicate. How else would I understand you?"

"Oh...Wait, what?"

The teen waves his hand around. "It'll make sense, eventually." He walks forward, snapping his fingers while forming two finger guns. He winks. "The name's Justin Phoenix, by the way. The girl earlier is Ada Cheng." Holds out his hand. "You?"

Ramon stares at Justin's white shirt and blue jeans: The shirt has two holes puncturing the bottom, his jeans littering with slash marks, all while his black belt keeps it from falling apart. These clothes have seen better days, but at least the dude wears something on his feet. White shoes, to be exact.

"It's, um, Ramon." The Zorua lifts his paws, wobbling and trembling. He shakes Justin's hand, pressuring them. "Pleasure meeting you."

The boy lifts his brow. "Uh. You're squeezing, dude."

"Hmm? OH!" Ramon lowers his paws immediately, brushing them off. "M-My apologies." He whimpers, looking away.

"It's aight." Justin shrugs. "So yeah, Ada and I were roaming around the forest tryna find somewhere to live when we came across you. We saw you getting your ass handed by that dude. So we figured to stop by and help ya."

"Oh...I see, then."

Justin squats, folding his arms, hand on chin. "How's your stomach feeling?"

Ramon grinds his paws against his torso, the soft furs hugging them. "I'm...not in pain anymore," he answers. "...How did you do that?"

"Aight, so—"

"In fact, how did that Ada girl use those claws?"

"I mean, I could just expla—"

The Zorua leaps forward. "All of this is so weird! Please explain!"

Justin squints his brown eyes. "I was getting to that if you'd stop interrupting me, damn," he says, agitated. The fox blinks for a moment before lowering his ears, looking down.

"Oh. I'm so, so very sorry. I just have a lot to ask and I...didn't mean to interrupt you like that."

"Well just let a man express his story, dude. Now like I was saying, Ada and I have this thing called—"

BOOM!

Flying types scatter away from the explosion, cawing in fear. Ramon jumps and yelps, hiding in a nearby bush as Justin falls flat on his butt. The boy gazes at the purple smoke rising from the air, mouth gaping.

"DAAAAAMN!" he shouts, eyes widening. Wobbling his way out of the bush, Ramon stares up at the sparkling smoke, his shakiness subsiding.

"Wow," he says, his tail wagging. "That looks amazing!"

"I know, right? I think Ada did that. Since it's coming from the same place we ran from."

"Hmm." Ramon tilts his head, the smoke evaporating.

"She probably took care of that dude by now."

"Well that was a disappointing fight," a familiar voice joins in, ringing bells for the two.

"Speaking of which—" Justin puts his fingers in his mouth, blowing like a whistle. "We're over here!"

The girl emerges from the foliage, her red jacket looking vibrant over a gray tank top. Similar to Justin's jeans, Ada's black jeans have rip marks on the front and back, which aren't supported by the red heels she's wearing.

"I thought he'd be a challenge because of how hard he hits." The girl looks up, dusting her hands while glancing. "Oh how wrong I was." She sighs while Justin smirks at her, waving.

"Sup, Ada. I did as you told me to do. And also, nice to see you back, fam!"

"..." Ada walks toward the boy, unfolding one hand.

"Uh, is something wrong?" Justin's head jolts to the side from the girl's slap, his lips puckering.

"I can't believe you left me like that without any concerns!" Ada exclaims, clenching her fists.

The two have black hair, with Ada's being longer and curlier, smoothing itself out. The clean silk makes her hair a complete contrast to her jeans. The girl's purple eyes have a slight, downward stretch, unlike the boy's straight ones.

Justin rubs his cheek, whimpering. The red mark steams his hand. "Hey man, that hurts! Plus I was doing what you told me to do: Run off with the Zorua."

"At least leave with concern for my safety! Such as saying 'Be careful'." Lips lower. "You know, like any normal person would!" Ada folds her arms, frowning.

"Oh relax, fam. I had a feeling you'd take care of that guy easily. That's why I left like that."

"What if he's a tough opponent and I get killed?"

Justin scratches the back of his head, looking at the ground. "...Then I bite my tongue." He pats Ada on the shoulder, smiling. "No need to be so uptight, Ada. At least you didn't die from that fight, right?"

"Yes, but—"

"Ada, we need as much strength as possible. Wasting it on something like arguing will get us nowhere." Justin releases a cool wind. "Relax, man. After all, you are alive so why not enjoy the time you have now?"

Silence fills the air, Ada's eyes glancing in a cold land while Justin's closes his' in a warm one. Ramon sits in place, not moving a muscle. He lowers his ears, unsure about breaking the silence or not.

Ada closes her eyes, releasing her serene sighs. "Alright. I'll cherish this moment of living another day. Thank you."

Justin chuckles softly. "At this rate, I may as well dub you 'The Girl with an Iron Fist of Fury!' Coming to IMAX and theaters on May 26th!" Ada pinches the boy's ear, glaring. "YOWCH, FAM!" He whines from the stinging punctures.

"It'll be a punch next time if you keep up the snarky jokes!" Ada exclaims, continuing.

The Zorua blinks for a moment before snickering. The two antics provide him with warmth and comfort, Justin yelping further from Ada's discipline. She then gasps and stares at Ramon.

“Shoot, I’ve totally forgotten about the Zorua because of you.” Ada squints her eyes, walking towards him. Getting on her knees, she holds her hand out. “The name’s Ada Cheng. Pleasure to meet you.” Her voice is hard and solid like a boulder.

Ramon shakes the girl’s hand. “Ramon’s mine. A pleasure meeting you too, Ada. Although, your friend already told me your name.”

“Oh.” Ada turns to the side. “I bet he introduced me in an immature way.”

“Not really,” Justin says, snickering.

“I don’t believe those words.”

“If you say so, fam.” He uses his finger guns again, winking at Ada. The teen squints her eyes and shakes her head, the Zorua chuckling in response.

“Say, I have a question to ask you two,” Ramon says, grabbing the two’s attention. “One, what were those blue lights that appeared on my stomach along with Ada’s? And two, what were those sparkling things on Ada’s hands?”

Ada rubs the side of her head. “Are you referring to earlier?” she asks. The Zorua nods. “Ah, I see. I used magic to heal myself, and Justin did the same to you, I assume.”

“...What?”

The girl lifts one finger, a purple claw spawning itself. “As for the sparkling things, I used my Magic moves: Mystical Projectile and Enchantment Claws.”

“...Again: WHAT!?”

The girl flinches, the claw fading. “Did you *really* have to yell? I’m right here, you know.” She frowns, folding her arms.

Ramon whimpers, lowering his ears. “I’m sorry. It’s just...” Head lowers. “I’m so confused by everything I’ve learned so far! Nativu, Intellicate, Transvian, magic blood, and now Magic moves and healing too!?” He shakes his head. “It all doesn’t add up! What *world* am I living in!?”

The two teens jump back. “Wait, *Transvian*!?” they exclaim, looking at each other with raised brows.

Ada turns to Ramon. “Where did you get Transvian from?”

“I got it from this jour...nal...” The Zorua looks around, drooping with jitters. “Huh!? I can’t find it!”

“You mean this?” Ada takes the journal out of her jacket, the fox drops his trembles in favor of content. “Found it lying on the ground while defeating the cloaked guy.” The two teens stare at the book’s cover, including the words ‘Dr. Yvonne’. They leap into suspense, caution emanating from them.

“Yo dude, where did you get this book?” Justin asks, curiosity peaking.

“I got it from the facility. I took it with me in hopes of anyone knowing what happened there.” A nervous laugh spawn. “A-Anyone who doesn’t want to kill me, to be specific...” Ramon gasps. “Which reminds me: Do you two know anything about the book?”

Justin shifts. “The only thing we know about it is that it belongs to Dr. Yvonne, a famous scientist at the Prospective Institute.”

“Wait wait, Prospective Institute???” Ramon tilts his head. “Now I’m even more confused than before!”

Ada clasps her hands. “Annnd that’s why we’re going to talk and walk about it. I don’t want to waste more time in this heat as we search for a place to live.” She walks forward on a grassy path.

“Even though you’re heated yourself?” Justin replies, grinning.

“Shut up.”

The boy chuckles before following the teen, the Zorua walking along. “Hey um Justin, do you have the same Magic moves as Ada’s? Or at least somewhat like it?”

The teen winks, giving Ramon the finger guns. “Yes and no,” he answers, smirking in delight.

Ramon blinks, tilting his head. “Huh?”

Ada stops, turning around and shooting her Mystical Projectile, the purple laser screeching towards the teen. “YIKES!” Two blue blades materialize in Justin’s hands, radiating sparkles. He blocks the beam, glaring at the girl. “Hey! What was that for!?” he yells.

The Zorua gazes at the blades, jaw dropping. “Whooooa...”

Ada giggles, smirking at the boy. “That’s for being a clown. Now quit messing around and come on.” Justin grumbles before following the girl, slipping his hands in his pockets as his blades fade.

The Zorua stares ahead for a moment before shaking, following the two. He brightens with content, smiling at the socializing teens. *I have no clue what'll happen from here. But I feel like I could be safe with these two*, he thinks. *And...perhaps they can help me recover my past.*

Somewhere in one of the bushes, the cloaker from earlier sticks his head out. He spits his blood, painting the grass in red while glaring at the Zorua. His cloak looks rugged, bits of his blue skin are showing.

"I will not sleep. Nor rest...Until I have you pay for your crime, Ramon," the individual says with grim, sneaking through the bushes.