

Chapter 15: Abnormal Crime Rates.

Majestic City Arc.

The four sit on the sofa at the Pokémon Center.

Justin's elbows relax on his legs, hands beneath chin. Ada folds her arms, tapping on them: Eyes shaking at the door. Clinton stares, stroking his legs. Nickel gazes, gripping his cane.

They wait and wait, trembling.

Soon, Nurse Joy opens the door behind the counter, walking forward. "Mr. Maplethorn?" she says. The teens leap up, ushering to the counter.

"How is he?" Ada asks, Nickel and Clinton standing next to her.

"Unfortunately, we're unable to heal Ramon today. Due to his severe injuries, more so than we thought, he'll remain in the center for the next few days."

Ada looks off, clenching her fist. *Dammit...*

Joy bows her head. "I apologize if this upsets you."

Clinton shakes his head, waving his hand. "It's fine. As long as he's safe, we have no problem with him being here."

Joy nods. "Thank you for understanding."

One tap on Clinton's shoulder leads him to turn towards Nickel. "You don't have to worry about the Majestic Restaurant: The police department has it taken care of," Nickel says.

Clinton glares. "...I hope so."

"Yo, why did that shootout happen, anyways?" Justin asks, rubbing his head.

"It's because some thieves tried to steal the most luxurious and expensive food in Majestic: The Malamari!" The mayor's hand leans against his chest, eyes closed. "Its exquisite and rich flavor from Malamar's arm provides wonders to the tastebuds!"

Justin tilts his head. "So...that's why it's expensive?"

"Yes: It's a popular dish. So popular that even Intellicates enjoyed it!" Nickel then shrugs. "Although one time, I walked into the restaurant to purchase one and saw some Malamar

couples being appalled by the dish.” Nervous laughter ensues, the mayor’s hand behind his head. “It...obviously isn’t for everyone.”

Justin stretches his arms. “Well that’s a yikes, dawg.”

BOOM!

Objects fly off, crashing and clashing against each other outside.

The group jumps, looking out the many windows. “What the hell—I mean, heck!?”

“What was that?” Clinton says. One car passes by with a bunch of criminals shooting behind. Several officers shoot back while driving intensely. “...Oh.”

“Daaang! That’s a lot of shooting,” Justin mentions, hands in his pockets.

Nickel sighs, nodding. “You’re right, young boy.” Shakes his head. “And we just took care of another crime earlier...These crimes are getting worse and worse.”

Clinton quirks a brow. “So is poverty: There’s more homeless folks living here because of those crimes.”

“Clinton, I understand where you’re coming from.” Nickel looks off to the side. “If I could end poverty, I *would*...”

“Then why *aren’t* you!?”

“Because I’m more focused on the crime rates itself.” Nickel lowers his head. “I’m doing the best I can at having the law enforcers and detectives solve it.”

Clinton folds his arms. “And how’s that turning out for you?”

“Progress, Clinton. We’re making progress, at the moment.”

“Tauros-shit.”

Justin covers his mouth, eyes widening. “Daaamn. Clinton is trash-talking the mayor like it’s nothing, huh Ada?” Blinks for a moment. “Ada?” He looks at her, the teen gazing outside while rubbing her chin.

“Those two do have a point. Especially with these crimes running rampant,” she says, tapping her chin. “There was one at the man’s home earlier. And then one at the restaurant.” She frowns. “And now, we just saw one passing by the center.” She takes her attention towards Justin. “Don’t you think something’s off here?”

Justin looks at the ceiling, caressing his chin. "Hmm...Yeah, fam."

"And...I don't know about you but—" the teen tugs on Justin's arm, nearing his ear. "I don't trust the mayor," she whispers.

He whispers back, "Hmm? Why's that?"

"He kept saying the detectives will handle the crime scenes: I have yet to see *any* detectives he mentioned. The only group stopping these acts are the law enforcers and even then, they don't treat it as a big deal." Ada looks at Clinton and Nickel continuing their discussions. "I believe the mayor is making up excuses for the city's crucial state. Not only I heard it from Clinton, but also from those living here too."

"Really?" Justin raises his brow, Ada nodding. "Wow..." Squints. "Now that you mentioned it, something is up with that mayor."

"Alright sure, Nickel. Whatever you say." Clinton shakes his head, digging in his pocket and taking out a piece of bread. "Now excuse me while I give this to a friend of mine."

"Oh no thanks: I'm already full from that Malamari special," the mayor says, laughing.

The elder frowns. "I wasn't referring to you."

"Oh...Who are you referring to, then?"

"Someone who lives in the streets throughout his entire life."

"Oh..."

Soon, the four exit the Pokémon Center. Ada looks at Nurse Joy and the counter for a moment, the nurse smiling at her. The teen then leaves.

. . .

Nighttime arrives as the duo lie on their beds. Justin's hands rest behind his head, gazing at the dark ceiling while Ada turns towards the wall, her fingers tapping the sheets. Ada sighs, snuggling against her warm pillow.

"Man today was crazy, fam," Justin says, whistling. "We saw that restaurant having a shootout. And then faced those Team Conjure fellas again, although, got our ass handed this time by that voice crack guy. And theeeen encountered that cloak dude again, who was beating the shit out of Ramon!" He turns towards Ada. "And theeeeeeen, you know, more crimes happened even after the one from the restaurant. It's nuts, dude!"

"Yeah...Our lives have been crazy since our home burned down." Ada twirls her fingers around the sheets. "Still boggles my mind that we went from exploring the forest to saving a Zorua. And now, we're dealing with major city issues."

"Yep." Sighs. "This city has some out of wack shit, yo. Hope it gets resolved soon."

"Same, honestly." Ada looks back at Justin. "Speaking of the Zorua..." Her eyes trail with somber. "I hope Ramon is okay. The beating he received was...brutal."

"Yeah, man." The boy caresses his head. "I'm...sure he'll have his wounds healed, though." Justin smiles. "So there's no need to worry."

"But what if his wounds are so severe, not even the nurses can heal him? They may be expert healers, but him being there for a few days concerns me..." Ada exhales, looking at the ground. "I know we just met him, but I cared for his safety. He seemed like an interesting and kind person to be with, so I wanted to help him recover his memories." She then looks up. "It'd be very unfortunate if he dies right now."

"Ada, stop worrying." Justin lifts up, folding his arms. "I told you that worrying will get you nowhere but anxiety, man: The more you worry, the more paranoid you become." His arms are gripped. "You'll soon lose yourself in nothing but paranoia!"

Ada glances at him. "How would you know?"

Justin blinks for a moment before sighing, staring down at his sheets, bleak as the rainy day. "It's..." Sighs. "It's because of what happened to our village." He strokes the sheets. "I...I don't want to go back to feeling that way...Ever..."

Silence.

The teens stare at each other, the moon shining through their windows with melancholy.

"...Anyways," the boy stretches. "Ramon will probably be healed by tomorrow. Or the day after. Who knows? All we know is that..." A soft smile shows. "He's going to be alright."

"I hope so..." Ada squeezes her pillow.

"Alright, fam. Hope you have a good ass night." Justin pulls the cover over himself.

"Wait."

Justin pushes the cover down a bit. "Ye?"

"There's...something strange about Ramon. Something odd..." Ada lowers her brows. "I noticed it when we arrived at the alley."

"What's that, fam?"

She looks at the boy. "Why did purple blood leak out of his mouth instead of red?"

"Eh?" Justin blinks before throwing the cover off from him, lifting himself to snap his fingers. "Oh shit, yeah! I noticed that, too!"

"Don't Intellicates usually have red blood? ...Why does he have *purple*?"

Justin caresses his chin, staring down. "Yeah. Aren't Sorcerous the only ones with purple blood? Weird to see it in an Intellicate."

"Right..." Ada taps her chin. "Unless we're missing something important about Intellicates and Sorcerous...Perhaps some Intellicates are born with purple blood, and some Sorcerous with red?" She looks out the window. "I have no clue, really."

"Hmm." The two ponder over their thoughts for a moment before Justin grabs his cover. "I guess we'll ask him about it, maybe? See if he knows or something."

"Justin, he's an amnesiac: How would he know the answer to having purple blood when he doesn't even remember his past?"

The boy lifts his finger. "Well he knows his name. That's at least something, right?"

Ada shrugs. "I suppose so."

Justin yawns, covering himself before turning towards the wall. "Anyways, goodnight, fam."

"Goodnight, Justin." Ada closes her eyes, remaining still.

. . .

"How is he now, Nurse?" Clinton asks as he, Ada, and Justin are in front of the counter. The sun shines through the center's windows, the four becoming the spotlight. Joy smiles at the visitors.

"He's doing fine," Joy says. "Although, he's still in need of healing. It'll take much more magic to heal him because of his severe injuries."

"How severe is it?"

“His back is in a much worse state than we thought. Our healing process normally goes by under 30 minutes. But with his back having too many fractured bones, it looks like it’ll take longer.”

Fractured bones!? How the hell is he still alive!? Ada and Justin think, eyes widening.

“You think he’ll be here for another day?”

Joy’s hand rests on the counter. “Even though I said he’ll be here for a few days, there’s a slight chance he’ll fully recover by tonight. Regardless, we’ll let you know immediately.”

“Alright. Have a good day, Joy.”

The group turns around and walks towards the exit.

“That sucks,” Ada says, holding her hands. “Was thinking Ramon would fully recover today.”

“Maybe he will later on. We’re not sure yet,” Justin adds.

“I wish the nurses were sure of it!” Ada shakes her head. “A slight chance of him fully recovering? It’s as if they themselves don’t even know!”

Clinton lays his hand on his chin, nearing the exit. “Come to think of it, you’re right about that.”

BOOM!

The three yelp.

“Oh what the hell is happening now!?” Clinton yells.

They rush outside of the Pokémon Center, a bank appearing from afar. Its twin doors are on the ground, crunching and deteriorating. Two robbers leave: Wearing black and gray clothing, holding several bags over their backs. They head towards their car, another robber inside looking at them eagerly.

“Great, another crime is happening. This time the bank is getting robbed! ...AGAIN!” The elder’s hand plants his face. “When will these crime rates ever *end*?”

Clinton uncovers, Ada no longer being present. “Uh, where did she go?” he asks. Justin spawns his blades, pointing at the bank: Ada running towards the robbers, her beams appearing. Clinton sighs heavily, taking his revolver out. “Ada continuing to get involved in crime scenes is starting to bug me.”

“Weren’t you agreeing to let us help, classic man?” Justin corrects the elder.

“Yeah yeah.” Spins the cylinder, reloading. “Just wished she'd give us a warning beforehand.”

As Ada fires her purple beams at the robbers, one of them exits the vehicle, surrounding him and the others with his purple shield. The projectiles hit the Mystical Shield, fading. Ada lifts her brow, stopping.

What? One of them is a Sorcerous? she thinks, preparing. *A Sorcerous Robber...How creative.*

Justin and Clinton arrive next to her. “Let us know ahead of time when you dash off, Ada,” Clinton says, glancing.

Ada glances back. “I follow what is the right thing to do. My apologies for not telling you first.”

The two robbers stand beside their Sorcerous partner, dropping the bags into the car. Afterwards, they take out their pokéballs and toss it forward, summoning two Pokémon: One is a draconic creature with medium-sized wings while the other is a zebra creature with white jagged stripes. The Druddigon and Zebstrika growl at the three, glaring.

Ada's claws form around her hands as Clinton pulls his revolver's tip. The two robbers take out their handguns, aiming it at the group as the Mystical Shield fades.

“Let's see what you thieves got,” Ada says, glaring.