

Chapter 41: Coleo and the End of The Aquatic War.

The Aquatic War Arc.

"I am TIRED of seein' ye two bicker ove' the strongest nonsense since our youth!" Everyone looks at the three Pokémon, curiosity thriving. Coleo frowns at the giants, fury plastering throughout.

"But Virt—"

"Hush! Ye hav' yer chance to talk! So it is me turn!" The Blipbug folds his setae. "It started off bein' minor, somethin' that only bugged me a little. But then it became worse when Damon used us in battles. I was becomin' worried because I care for our friendship!" He winces. "I became eve' more worried after Damon abandoned us. The two of ye then...coul' not stop fightin' over who is at fault on the abandonment. No matter what I say nor do, ye two would always push me advic' aside." Coleo looks down, somberness spreading across. "It was till we reached the lake that ye two forgot abou' me and involved yer kind in yer addle cause."

"Well, it WAS Behemoth who sta—"

"WHAT DID I JUST SAY!?" Coleo shouts at Virtuous, pointing. "If ye were so worried about me, ye would have let me finish!"

"...Apologies." Virtuous looks away in guilt.

"Like I was sayin', this war pushed away visitors from comin' here. Bringin' the lake into ruins." He spreads his setae. "Look around ye."

Virtuous, Behemoth, and their soldiers scan the lake: Dirt and debris slosh throughout, broken paddles surfing across. Pieces of canoes nudge against Virtuous and Behemoth, the two squinting down. They both blink.

"Did we cause this?" Virtuous asks.

"Yes."

"Huh..." The Wishiwashi shakes his head. "I don't remember forming a mess here."

"That's because ye were too focused on The Aquatic War between ye and Behemoth."

"I...see, then."

Behemoth squints towards the shadow shield, snarling at Ramon and gang. "It doesn't excuse that foul PRICK over there for pretending to be one of us!" Ramon looks away in remorse, his lips quivering. Behemoth continues, "We should get rid of him right no—"

"I agreed to him using his Illusion!" Coleo shouts.

The Gyarados blinks. "What!? Really!?"

"Yes..." The Blipbug sighs. "I wanted him to disguise as yer kinds, hoping to plea' ye two on ending the war. I was not tryin' to deceive ye nor yer allies." Coleo looks behind him at Ramon, the fox stroking the side of his arm. "Neither was Ramon and his mateys."

Virtuous huffs. "That doesn't explain what that Lycus guy showed us!"

"Lycus twisted the truth, lad!" Coleo lowers his head. "He used his Capture Projector to show *half* of the truth, treatin' it as Ramon usin' his Illusion to toy with ye when that isn't the case!"

"Well it certainly looked to be the case. In fact, what if *you're* a Zoroark in disguise? Pretending to be our beloved Coleo?" Virtuous and Behemoth glare at the Blipbug.

"Lad, think: I was drownin' not too long ago. If I were a Zoroark, why wouldn't I change into one of yer kinds at that poi—ARGH!" Coleo groans, covering his belly and gritting his teeth.

"Drats..."

Behemoth raises his brow, leaning his head down. "Are you alright?"

Coleo shakes his head. "Nay. Lycus gav' me and the others some apples, and poisoned us with somethin' called a Weakener..."

"Huh. That explains your pale face."

"And dark circles," Virtuous points out. "So I guess you are the real Coleo, then."

"Does that mean the things you said are true?" Behemoth asks.

Coleo nods. "Yes, lad..." He whimpers, eyeing the two with melancholy. "I miss ye two's past selves. The two of ye were being so caring for one anothe', even when ye two tend to fight each other here and there." Smiles. "I...was not as open with meself back then. I used to not be ver' vocal until I met ye two. Ye two...gotten me feelin' better about meself: The many adventures we had, the times we saved each othe' lives, and the funny jokes we made while with Damon. It was...all comforting to me. It is what strengthened our relationship the most." He sighs. "So it hurts me to see ye two fall down this deep hole of bickers, to the point where ye involve yer own kinds."

Behemoth shakes his head, grumbling. "I'm sorry Coleo, but I just could NOT stand Virtuous' way of thinking. He pisses me off with his strength mentality!"

Virtuous snaps a glare at the leader Gyarados. "And I could NOT stand your barbaric way of thinking!"

"But Coleo's right, man: This war has got to stop!" a familiar laidback voice says, Virtuous and Behemoth turning to their right. Quintin is there next to Aquatus, the two eyeing their leaders.

"I've felt a lot of doubts and insecurities about my liking the Wishiwashis, man. All cuz it'll make me look weird if I told others about it." Quintin sniffles, tears sliding down his cheeks. "I don't want to get in a fight with those I like, man. I just...don't want to get in a fight over some superiority nonsense, *period*."

Behemoth lowers his head. "Quintin..."

Aquatus pats the Water Gem Gyarados' back, nodding. "I agree." She sighs. "Virtuous, why should you care about who's the strongest between the two species? To prove an ultimately useless point? A point that would only escalate more violence than peace?" Virtuous stares off to the side. "In fact, why should *ANY* of you care about who's the strongest? Honestly..." Aquatus gazes up. "The only thing that matters isn't who's the strongest: It's the help we can give towards one another, regardless of our strengths and weaknesses."

Virtuous lowers his head. "Aquatus..."

The Mystic Water Wishiwashi pulls Quintin into a hug, looking at the two armies. "Some of you probably agree with me on this, too. Deep down you know how ridiculous this war has gotten, and how it has benefited neither of us." Frowns. "It impacted our relationships and the state of our palaces."

The serpentine and fish soldiers converse with each other about the situation, some of them nodding.

"Hmm...yeah. This war was honestly becoming brutal for me," one Gyarados states.

"Same here," one of the Wishiwashis agrees.

"I just wanted to hang out with my friends...But had to deal with 32 days of nonstop fighting, instead!" another Gyarados exclaims, whimpering.

"Same!" another Wishiwashi shouts.

Ramon keeps the shadow shield up, staring at the necklace wearing Pokémon with intrigue. "Aquatus...Quintin."

The Mystic Water School looks back at the kings. "Even your followers believe this war is taking a heavy toll on them." The Wishiwashi sighs, gloominess spreading across. "So please...put your differences aside and lay this war to rest. I don't want to continue this. And nor does Quintin...*No one* wants to continue this." She presses her fins together.

Quintin nods. "Yeah, man..."

Virtuous and Behemoth look at the two Pokémon before eyeing around the place, maws opening at the sight of the two armies concurring to Aquatus' speech. The rain slow itself, turning into light drizzles. The two look at each other, right into their very own eyes: Memories of their youth come flooding in. From the time they defend each other during double battles to the time they help Coleo overcome his fear of mud. Behemoth remembers the small compliment Virtuous gave to him when he was a Magikarp, during the time he fought off a Pidgeotto by himself. Virtuous recalls the small compliment Behemoth gave to him when he was in his Solo form, during the time he fought off a Trumbeak by his lonesome.

The giants have tears welling up, lips shaking before the two cry. "I'm sorry!" they yell, hugging each other while closing their eyes, tears streaming down their cheeks.

The aquatic soldiers all look at the leaders for a brief moment, shock sparkling. Soon they look at each other and bawl their eyes out, hugging.

"We're sorry, too!" the two armies state, patting each other's backs with their fins and tails. Aquatus and Quintin look at the two groups, warmth emanating throughout. Coleo looks at the armies in awestruck, gleefulness shining within.

Justin blinks, remaining on his behind while lifting himself forward, grunting. "Huh. Wasn't aware that the war was run by a bunch of crybabies."

Roan raises his brow. "Oh my word, Justin sir!"

Ada lifts herself forward and smacks the boy's head, Justin yelping. "Shush! Don't ruin the moment now." She folds her arms before grunting herself.

The boy sighs, rubbing the back of his head. "Ye-Yeah, that...was uncalled for, even as a joke. I deserved that. My bad." He laughs nervously.

After what feels like hours, the leaders and their armies release their hugs, keeping their gazes. Virtuous sniffles. "I've been such a fool throughout these many days. So obsessed with proving you wrong that I've...forgotten about those times you've helped me."

"And the times you've helped me." Behemoth sniffles.

"Along with the times ye two...*helped me*," Coleo concludes, the leaders staring down at him. "Our relationship may not been great from the star', but we were still stickin' by each other's sides. To the point where we coul' joke about our downfalls without turnin' it into a man-o-war, argh."

"Yeah...That's true." Virtuous sighs, looking at Behemoth. "For all those times I've belittled your efforts...I'm sorry."

Behemoth nods. "For the many times I tried showing off in front of ya, I'm sorry too." He shakes his head. "We were both fucked up by our own stupid ways, man."

Virtuous blinks, shaking his head. "Hah, I suppose that's one way to put it." He smiles.

Behemoth snickers, playfully bumping his tail against Virtuous. "Yeah." He smiles back. "Hey, I think you and I know what to do next."

"Mhm. I couldn't agree more, my Gyari."

Aquatus and Quintin keep smiling while blinking, visible confusion plaguing them. '*My Gyari?*' they think.

Behemoth laughs, waving his tail up and down. "Ah come on, man. You don't need to call me that."

The crown Wishiwashi blushes, looking off to the side and twiddling with his fins. "Y-Yeah, you're right." Behemoth blinks in confusion, the armies along with Ramon and his friends looking at the two in admiration.

Quintin brings his maw close to Aquatus. "I'm sensing a crush moment going on here," he whispers.

"Same." Aquatus giggles.

Virtuous looks at his army. "A-Anyways, some of you may have already told the others about the war ending. But I will declare it, anyways."

"And so will I!" Behemoth follows suit, looking at his army.

The two leaders clear their throats and yell, "The war between us has officially ended!"

Soon, more Gyarados and Wishiwashis surface above the lake, looking at the leaders in shock and intrigue. Some of them are Aquatus' family, Yowa and Fisher widening their eyes and blinking in surprise. The Wishiwashis are also in their Solo forms.

“Well I be dang: The two made up for each other and ended the war?” Fisher says, tilting his head. “Huh.”

Virtuous smiles. “My Wishis, I shall propose an utmost proper message upon all of yo—”

“Hey, no need for all that formality crap.” Behemoth snickers softly, Virtuous following suit.

“I suppose so.” The leader School continues, “You Wishis can be weak, but you can also be strong.”

“You Gyarados can be powerful, but y’all can also be gentle.”

“But what matters is not our strengths and weaknesses!”

“It is...”

The two leaders look at each other briefly before nodding, Virtuous spreading his fins while Behemoth spreads his tail at everyone.

“The support we gained from one another!”

Some of the groups cheer in unison while others nod, all smiling up at the kings. Marsh and Beckett open their mouths in amazement. “Whoa...” the two simply say. Yowa and Fisher fold their fins, raising their brows.

“Hmm...I don’t know if I dig this sudden change of peace with the Gyaradorks,” Yowa states.

Fisher shrugs. “I just hope this means the shell economy will get better.”

Aquatus begins to tear up once more, smiling in pure glee. “Finally...It’s over.” She leans against Quintin, wailing. “Oh my god, it’s finally over!”

“Y-Yeah, man.” Quintin cries along with her, patting her back.

Ramon and gang stare at the whole group, sighing in relief and satisfaction.

“I agree with that Wishiwashi chick over there,” Courtney says, pointing at Aquatus. “Bout time this mayhem is done wi—ACK!” She strokes her side, sighing heavily.

The Zoroark’s shadow shield starts fading, his shadow arms disappearing. Ramon sighs, staring down at his right paw. The scar mark remains in place, sticking out like a sore thumb. *Glad it’s over, too...* His smile fades, being replaced with sorrow. *...It doesn’t excuse me for what I am, though.*

Behemoth and Virtuous turn towards Coleo, the Blipbug getting on his stubby legs and dusting himself off. "Thank you for ending 'The Aquatic War', as you called it," Virtuous says.

"Nay." Coleo points at Ramon and others behind him. "I have Ramon and his friends to thank fer comin' across the Lake of Purity. If it wer' not fer them, this war would've continue in this bloodbath of broken friendships."

Virtuous enlarges his eyes, grimacing. "Yeesh, y-yeah...Again, that was a huge mistake on Be—erm, *OUR* end." Behemoth glares at the Wishiwashi for the potential victim blaming, to which the Wishiwashi laughs in a shaky manner. He hugs the Gyarados. "A-Apologies for that."

Ramon's friends stand up, walking towards the three while groaning along the way: Moving at a steady pace, with Ramon being beside Justin while aiding him. Justin carries Roan on his back, his arms laying on top of Ada and Ramon's neck. Mesmeren leans close to the fox, shaking while holding his hand. Sylock and Courtney rest their arms on top of each other's neck, panting.

"I agree!" Roan says, lifting his arms up before quickly hanging onto Justin. "Glad to have come here to help you out, Coleo!" *E-Even if I almost died not too long ago!*

"Same here," Courtney agrees, Sylock nodding at her.

"Me three, fam." Justin smiles.

"Agreed..." Ada sighs in relief. "I'm...still unsure about the lying part when it comes to Ramon's Illusion, but..." She looks at the gray sky, the storm calming further. "I suppose it was for a necessary cause."

Justin frees his left arm from Ramon and jabs Ada's shoulder lightly, smiling. "That's the spirit, fam. Thanks for understanding the difference between our lies and Lycus' lies. Sure it doesn't make it entirely okay, but it's still a healthy useth of it, though."

Ada rolls her eyes and shakes her head, smiling back. "Sure, if you consider that as 'healthy'."

Ramon gazes at Aquatus and Quintin. "Speaking of my Illusion, I...need to go talk with those two." He looks down at Mesmeren, moving her close to Justin. "I'll be back, alright?" Mesmeren simply nods, her shakiness persisting while she clings onto Justin's shirt.

Ramon takes a deep breath, walking towards the two Pokémon while the others continue conversing. The soldier Wishiwashis revert back into their Solo forms, including Aquatus herself.

The fox reaches the fish and serpentine, the two gazing at him. Ramon lifts his paw up. "Hey, I'm—"

"I'm sorry for not understanding your motive, Ramon," Aquatus says.

Ramon shakes his head. "No...I'm the one who should be apologizing the most. For deceiving the two of you as 'Larry' and 'Sam'." He lowers his ears, looking down. "Again, I...only did it to help Coleo bring peace between his friends."

"...I get it, man."

Ramon blinks. "You do?"

Quintin nods. "Yeah, Aquatus told me about it." Shrugging, Quintin stares off. "I'm still hurt by the whole Illusion stuff, sure. But after knowing why you did it, I understand. In a way, I..." He looks back at the Zoroark. "Thank you for even tryna end the war like that."

"...I see." Ramon looks away. "I still believe I'm in the wrong for doing such a thing. Like Aquatus said to me, I should feel *ashamed* for even doing that."

Aquatus holds her hands together. "About what I've said to you: I'm genuinely sorry." Ramon perks his ears up, blinking. "I was so emotional and distraught by what Lycus showed us that I just...ended up taking every single thing he said to heart, including the generalization of your kind being evil and vile." She grits her teeth, clenching her fin. "I was against Virtuous' portrayal of the Gyarados kind, so it felt very backwards of me to...say those things to you. I *regret* saying them..."

...*What?* Ramon's eyes tremble, his gaze remaining at the lake. Tears cloud his vision as the rain occurs less and less.

"Honestly man, you ain't an awful person. I'm glad that you used those Illusions: You've gotten the two of us to meet each other last night!" Quintin shows off his toothy grin while closing his eyes.

"Agreed. I've gained interest in him because of our meetup." Aquatus soon blushes, shaking her head. "I-Interest as in becoming friends, of course!" She blinks, staring off to the side. "...I think. Ugh, sorry if I'm acting awkward."

Quintin snickers. "Nah, it's fine."

"Mommy, look: Aquatus has a boyfriend!" Marsh exclaims, pointing at the Mystic Water Wishiwashi. He and Beckett giggle while Aquatus' parents stare in perplexion.

Aquatus leans close to Quintin, her fin besides her maw before she whispers, "Ignore them."

Quintin blinks for a moment, chuckling. "Alright then." He turns towards Ramon. "By the way dude, I forgot to mention that your eyes look...different..." The Gyarados tilts his head, staring at the fox raining tears.

But why? Why would she forgive me? Ramon's lips quiver, eyes squinting. *Lycus literally showed off the evilness of Zoroarks.*

"Uh, Ramon?"

Who would even forgive someone like tha—

"Hey!"

Ramon blinks, looking to his side. "H-Hmm!?"

"You alright, dude? You're even tearing up and everything." Quintin and Aquatus stare with concerns, the latter holding her fins together.

The Zoroark pauses for a brief moment, his shakiness coming to a complete halt. He sighs, wiping away his tears. "S-Sorry. Just, uh...thinking about something else on my mind. It's personal."

Aquatus nods. "Whatever it is, I hope you feel better soon." She smiles.

"...Thanks." Ramon scratches the back of his head. "And about my eyes, I wasn't aware of them still looking different."

"They look dark instead of green like before."

"I see." Ramon blinks, feeling less raindrops crashing onto him. He gazes down at his paws, the lack of water being noticeable. "Hey uh, is it me or...is the rain gone?"

Soon, the gray clouds fully evaporate along with the rain, a brightly lit sun taking its place. Below the sun is also a large streak of colors prancing across the lake, a rainbow forming from it. Everyone looks at it, gasping in pure awe.

"Whoa..." they say collectively, the rainbow showering its sparkles upon the Lake of Purity.

That's...so beautiful, Ramon thinks, his jaw hanging open.

So pretty! Nomar says in Ramon's head, his tone booming with enthusiasm.

"...It's been so long since I've seen that rainbow," Aquatus states, sighing in relief. "I miss it so much..."

Justin, Ada, and the other four gaze around the lake, clear water flourishing themselves from one spot to the other. The trees stop their wavings, the bushes coming to a halt. The sparkles even give the water a fresh look to them, the leaves swishing along gently.

Mesmeren and Roan leave their maws hanging, their eyes diving into the world of amazements. *Wow*, the two think.

Ada smiles. "This place looks gorgeous."

"Mhm. Definitely seein' the 'purity' part now," Courtney agrees.

Roan points at some debris near the other side of the lake. "There's still some dirt left here, however. So Purity is still a mess, despite the rainbow."

Everyone looks at the spot, even eyeing at the broken canoes and paddles besides the Wishiwashis and Gyarados. Courtney nods, grimacing. "Yeaaaah, that part still looks bad."

Behemoth puffs out his chest. "No worries: We'll do our best to clean the lake here."

Virtuous nods. "Agreed...Albeit, somehow try to find a way to clean it." Shrugs.

After Roan translates what they said to Justin, the teen sighs. "Admittedly, Ada and I would've used our Magic to easily clean the lake for ya, but we're...not doin' so hot at the moment." He squints to the side. "Thanks, Weakener. Very cool."

Roan translates Justin's words over to the kings, both of them tilting their heads.

"Magic?" both Pokémon say in unison.

"Nutshell version of that: Humans, at least some of them, have Magic type and are capable of using Magic moves. These types of humans are called Sorcerous, which is what Justin and Ada are," Roan explains, pointing at the teens below him.

"Oh." Virtuous and Behemoth look at each other for a moment, raising their brows before looking back. "I *think* I got that."

"It's okay if you don't get it!" Roan smiles, closing his eyes. "Magic type is a pretty complex type compared to other elements! So don't feel bad about not knowing much about them." The Axew raises his arm up at the colorful sky. "The Pokémon world is vast and wide, filled with many wonders and mysteries to discover! And Wizlore expands upon them further! Thus it is why it's okay to not know about things until you've discovered them!" He spreads his other arm out, looking as though he's praising the sun itself. "I hope to one day find my mentor and explore this region—this *WORLD*, with him. Perhaps even solving issues and helping others along the way,

including the weak themselves!" Roan puffs his chest out, smirking. "Traveling with these lovely six friends will certainly benefit my goals, too!"

Sylock squints at the dragon, embarrassment drenching over him as Courtney giggles at Roan's speech. *Does he ALWAYS have to be so over-the-top about adventuring? Also I do not remember us being friends at all, kid.*

Behemoth and Virtuous blink for a moment before laughing along, nodding. "Sounds like a huge goal, alright," Behemoth states.

"I've done some fair bit of traveling myself. Knowing past experiences, it's tough out there, kid. Stay safe," Virtuous advises.

Roan nods. "Certainly!"

Coleo stares off for a moment. *Traveling, ay?* He caresses his chin before nodding. "...Speaking of this world," he looks at Ramon beside him, waving. "Lad, set me on top of your head, please."

Ramon blinks, lifting his brow while staring at the bug. "Um, sure." The fox picks the insect up, placing him on his head. Coleo shoves some hair aside to give Behemoth and Virtuous a better look at him.

"Behemoth, Virtuous: There is somethin' I want to tell ye two."

The two leaders gaze at Coleo and Ramon, perplexion spreading across. "Yes?" the two say.

"I will be travelin' with Ramon and his friends."

"Huh!?" the two exclaim.

"D-Did we mess up a lot, man!?" Behemoth whimpers.

"I-I know that we've been fighting each other for a very long time, but I didn't think we've ruined our relationship *this* badly, too!" Virtuous whimpers as well.

"We're sorry!" The leaders whine, tears raining down their cheeks within seconds.

Coleo sighs in exhaustion, shaking his head. "Ye two: I'm not leavin' cuz of the war. Relax."

Virtuous and Behemoth pause their teary states, blinking. "Eh?"

"This is from me own personal choi'. I wanted to know more about thi' vast region outside of the Lake of Purity." Coleo points at Ramon's friends behind him. "These guys hav' tol' me about

other things out there that I neva knew about. Such as me trainer not suppos' to own me since I am an Intellicate."

"Intellicate'?" Virtuous asks.

"A Pokémon that's able to share similar intelligence to humans and can communicate like one, apparently. Allowing them to bypass speech barriers easily," Ramon explains. "At least, that's the short version of what they are."

"Aye, indeed." Coleo frowns. "Thi' makes a human ownin' one illegal, and I...wondered if Damon knew."

Virtuous sets his fin underneath his chin. "Interesting..."

"Does this mean Virtuous and I are Intellicates, too?" Behemoth asks.

Roan lifts his finger. "Considering I have to translate your words over to Justin and Ada: Nope!"

The crown Wishiwashi smacks the water in a playful manner. "Drats, thought I could be as smart as Damon, then."

Behemoth raises his brow. "Then what the hell are we? Just some normal ass Pokémon?"

"Yep, apparentl' under the name 'Nativu'. Pokémon that lives out n' the wild like ye two."

"Hmm...Weird."

Aquatus puts her fin underneath her chin. "Yeah...This whole Intellicate and Nativu stuff seems quite bizarre to me." She smiles. "But interesting, nonetheless!"

Coleo folds his setae, gazing up. "And that is why I want to know more about it." He grins in pure eagerness. "Know more about the world I live in."

"I have no problems with you joining us too, Coleo!" Justin states.

"Same," Ada follows. The rest of the group agrees, with Sylock giving off a neutral shrug.

Behemoth nods. "Since you're bout to leave, then I guess this is farewell, bud."

Virtuous sighs in relief. "Thank you for helping us see the errors of our ways, Coleo." He starts tearing up. "I'll never forget you, my beloved friend."

Coleo forms tears as well, sniffing. "O-Oh ye lads...Come here!" He leaps off from Ramon's head, diving towards Behemoth. Virtuous jumps out of the water, catching Coleo. He hugs the

bug, Behemoth wrapping his tail around the Wishiwashi Solo and bringing him close. The three shut their eyes, nuzzling and embracing their warmths. "I'll neva forget ye two as well!"

"D'awww," the group of Wishiwashis and Gyarados say, hearts blooming with joy. Justin and the others smile at the three Pokémon, warmth spreading across.

Ramon eyes at the three, folding his arms. He sighs. *I...still don't think I'm a good person*, he slowly lifts his lips. *But I'm at least glad the war is over, rekindling those three's friendships.*

. . .

Everyone travels across the lake: Aquatus next to Virtuous, Virtuous next to Behemoth, and Behemoth to Quintin. Ramon and Mesmeren are on top of Aquatus' School form while Courtney and Sylock are riding on Quintin's back, the two Sorcerous being on Virtuous' School form. Coleo and Roan ride on Behemoth's back, with Coleo sitting on top of Roan's head.

The group swims ahead, the Wishiwashis and Gyarados are either watching them or following along. Aquatus' family does the latter, being next to the Mystic Water Wishiwashi. They all socialize with each other, the Intellicates doing all of the translating except for Sylock. The Blaziken leans his back against Courtney's, his eyes closed shut as he folds his arms, sighing.

"So you're just teens traveling around this region in order to reunite with your friends and family?" Virtuous asks.

"That's the nutshell of it fam, yes." Justin gives a thumbs-up.

"Sounds very valid," Aquatus agrees, joining the conversation. "I'd be worried sick too if I was separated from my family."

"D'aww!" Yowa nuzzles against the School. "I'm so happy to hear you're very considerate of us, Aquatus hun."

Aquatus nuzzles back, smiling. "Always has been, Mother."

The main seven jolts in sudden pain, Coleo covering his belly. Ramon holds Mesmeren, patting her back. Quintin looks behind him, grimacing at the sight of Roan clenching his teeth. "Yo, are you guys going to be alright?"

"Yeah...I'm worried about this unknown illness taking a toll on you seven." Aquatus whimpers.

Coleo has one eye closed, grinding his teeth. "Ye ca' thank Lycus meddlin' with the apples we ate."

Aquatus sighs. "Right...I hope you all get well soon."

The four aquatic Pokémon make it to the other side, turning their backs towards the land. Virtuous and Aquatus lean themselves, their tails touching the brown dirt. Ramon carries Mesmeren, the Drowzee blushing with intensity while the two slide down. Justin and Ada spiral from Virtuous' back, falling face first.

"Oof!" the teens exclaim, rubbing the back of their heads.

Virtuous winces at the sight, flinching. "Ah...My apologies, you two."

Ramon reaches the ground in time, translating Virtuous' words over to the teens. Justin and Ada groan, having their arms rest on each other's necks before standing.

"It's fine," Ada says.

Courtney, Sylock, and Roan hop off, grunting in discomfort. Virtuous and Aquatus revert back to their Solo forms, looking up at the group while in the water. Mesmeren gazes into the distance, her hand against Ramon's chest fur.

Di-Did he have to carry me like this!? H-He could've easily just held my hand! She blinks. ...Is that any better, though? She covers her face, whimpering. Oof!

Ramon quirks his brow. "Something's wro—"

"NOTHING!" Mesmeren shouts, everyone looking at the two in curiosity. "I-I am fine! Yes, fine in fact!"

The Zoroark tilts his head. "...Okay then."

Mesmeren looks at his eyes, the dark scleras dancing around his red pupils. The Drowzee blushes further. *Wh-What is WITH him becoming more h-handsome with every new look!? F-First the bangs, and now the eyes...* She buries herself into Ramon's chest, the Zoroark reddening himself up. *Heh, h-how embarrassing of me to feel this way!*

Aquatus sighs softly, nodding. "I suppose this is farewell, you all. Once again, thank you for everything you've done to end this war." She turns towards Ramon. "Especially you, Ramon." The Zoroark remains still, staring at the four Water types in perplexion.

"If it weren't for you, my bro would've kept squabbling with Virtuous and I'd look like a weirdo for liking the other side," Quintin says, showing off a toothy grin.

Behemoth scratches the back of his head in a nervous manner. "Yeah...Again, my bad for pretty much ruining the vibe for everyone involved."

Virtuous sighs. "Same here." Lowering his brows, he nods. "We'll do our best to repair the damages being made here!" The Wishiwashi whimpers. "Even if some of my citizens still hate me for what I've done. Understandably so."

"Argh, cheer up, lad. At least I forgive ye, and a close friend forgiving ye two matters the most." Coleo closes his eyes, smiling in pure relief.

Behemoth and Virtuous form tears in their eyes, sniffing. "U-Understood, our beloved Coleo!" they both exclaim in unison. "Here's hoping for a wonderful journey of yours'!"

Coleo raises his setae up. "Thank ye, lads—AGH!" He covers his belly, laughing in a shaky manner.

Ramon looks away, squinting. ...*I don't get it.* His left bangs do their best to shield his despondent. *I twisted your emotions throughout the whole ordeal. All of you.* His teeth gnashes. *Why thank me?*

Mesmeren looks up at the fox with concern, lowering her ears. She is about to say something before Ramon says, "I'm glad that the war has ended, too. Best of luck on fixing the Lake of Purity."

"Thank you," Virtuous and Behemoth say, nodding.

Ramon and gang wave at the leaders along with the rest of the aquatic Pokémon, all turning around afterwards. They walk forward at a sluggish pace, a swirly road being ahead of them, rows of trees providing them proper guidance. The group passes by a crooked sign: '*Now leaving Lake of Purity*'.

Once they're gone, Aquatus whimpers, her fins against her chest. "I wish there was a way we could heal them from this 'Weakener'." She looks down.

Quintin pats her on the back. "Same here, man." He gazes at the pathway. "Same here."

Virtuous sighs in a calm manner. "Hopefully they'll find a kind person that'll cure them."

"Yep," Behemoth agrees.

The four turn around, gazing at the crowd of Wishiwashis and Gyarados conversing about the events. The two leaders smile.

"You know, we should combine our kingdoms at some point, Virtuous."

The leader Wishiwashi yelps from that sudden statement, eyeing the leader Gyarados. "R-Really?" Behemoth nods, Virtuous forming a red look on his face. He adjusts his King's Rock,

laughing shakily. “C-Certainly! I...wouldn’t be against such an idea at all, my Gyari—I mean, friend!”

Behemoth chuckles, bringing Virtuous close to him with his tail. “D’aww! Come here, you knucklehead.” He hugs him.

“Hahaha...” *He’s completely unaware of my crush on him, huh?*

Yowa, Fisher, and their children swim close to Quintin, all eyeing up the big Water Gem Gyarados. Yowa leans close to the Mystic Water sardine, her fin beside her maw. “So you wanna tell us who this big Gyarafella is?” she whispers.

Aquatus blinks for a moment before gasping. “Oh right!” She turns to Quintin. “Since the war is over and all, I’d like you to meet my family.” She gestures to the Wishiwashis behind her.

“Quintin, this is my mother, father, and my two siblings over there named Marsh and Beckett.” She turns towards her family. “And everyone, this is Quintin, a friend I met before Phase 32.” She shoots a glare at her siblings. “And *only* just a friend.”

“Whatever you say, Sis!” Marsh exclaims, snickering with deviousness.

“Why it’s a pleasure meetin’ ya, Quintin. You can call me Mrs. Yowa!”

“And you can call me Mr. Fisher, Quintados!” Fisher grins.

Quintin blinks. “...Wha—”

“Bet you could swallow us all at once. Definitely with how HUMONGOUS you are!” Fisher laughs.

“Uh, yeah man. That’s what evolving into a Gyarados feels like, I guess???”

Fisher gasps. “Actually, I’ve thought of a new name for your kind! Instead of Gyarados, how about this one: *GINORMORODOS!*”

“Oh my gosh, honey stop it!” Yowa waves her fin up and down, laughing along with Fisher and their kids.

Quintin tilts his head while Aquatus presses her fin against her face, shaking her head. “I’m... lost, dude.”

“Pay no mind to those...’*jokes*’. They’re not used to this sudden peace between our kinds,” Aquatus states, sighing heavily.

“Anyways, what do you do during your spare time, hun?” Yowa asks in genuineness.

Quintin blinks. "Oh. I guess I like hang out at the game area and play some sand dust sports?"

Beckett gasps. "Wait, you play Sand Dust Thrower, too!?"

"Huh. Is that what it's called?"

"Yep!" The little Wishiwashi swims close to Quintin, her parents following suit. "Were you the Striker? Protector? Or are you a filthy casual Mixer?"

"Eh!?" Quintin blinks in confusion.

"Just teasing about that last part! ...*Kind of.*" She giggles, leading the Gyarados to form the look of uncertainty.

"Al...right, then." He laughs, scratching the back of his head. "I'd like to think I'm a Striker? As in the one doing most of the throwing. I found it more fun, honestly."

"Oh my gosh, same here! Hehe."

Fisher tilts his head. "Huh. If you and my daughter found something fun about this game, then maybe I should join in, too."

Quintin nods. "You should, Mr. F! I've seen some Gyarados doin' some crazy tactics when it comes to that sports game."

"Really now? I'd imagine due to how big y'all are." He blinks before shaking his head. "Also, 'Mr. F'?"

The five laugh and continue on with their conversation, Aquatus watching them while smiling along. *I guess introducing him to my family isn't a complete disaster, after all. Maybe.*

"Serah!"

"Page!"

Aquatus blinks from those two voices being called out, looking to her side. Another Gyarados and Wishiwashi rush towards each other, hugging. The Gyarados carries her beloved Wishiwashi, nuzzling her. Aquatus' heart flourishes in warmth at the sight, the Mystic Water Wishiwashi sighing in relief.

I'm so happy to see us move forward in our new lives...