

Chapter 53: Deeper Into the Falls.

Revival Falls Arc.

Nered presses her blue hand to her chest, her black scarf shuffling. Her eyes close. "Wizlorian praised me, outlaws feared me." She smirks at the guards. "As an adventurer, I've traveled across the calming snows, the raging sands, and—" she flicks petals to the side. "The vast, énorme land of Wizlore!"

"Oooo!" the guards exude in unison.

Nered giggles. "My parents moved here from Kalos, and raised me very well. To the point where I'm able to venture on my own upon becoming a Roselia." She slams her bouquets together. "Taking down any evil doers out there and finding neat treasures." She tugs on her scarf. "Including this one I'm wearing."

"Whoa!" A Leafeon claps his vines together, smiling. "You're a fantastic explorer, Ms. Nered!"

The Roserade waves her bouquet. "Don't sweat it. I even defeated a ton of bandits who almost ran off with my treasure!" Nered pats her scarf.

"How so?" one guard asks.

Nered closes her eyes, smirking. "I utilize my hidden power. My magnum opus. Ma spécialité!" A red mask casts over her face, green auras surrounding her. The guards quickly move out of the way as she zips around, her speed rapid and instant. She zigzags back to the middle.

"*Masquer La Vitesse.*" The mask fades as she poses: Throwing her arm back, tugging her scarf, and gazing down with a confident smile.

"Oooo!" The same Leafeon guard claps once more, the others cheering on. "That's so dope, Ms. Nered!"

Nered bows. "Thank you, thank you."

The illusion Infernape blinks. *So that's her Rune, I see.* Ramon walks towards her. *Alright, time to do this.* Poking his fingers together, he eyes down the flower humanoid. "Um..."

Nered looks up. "Hello! Do you need anything?"

"I-I, uh, have a...question to ask you."

The Roserade smiles. "Go on ahead! Feel free to, mon ami!"

“Eh?”

“It means ‘my friend’ in Kalosian.” She snickers behind her bouquets.

“O-Oh, I see.” The Infernape scratches the back of his head. “Well, what I wanted to ask is, um...” Wiggles in place. “Do you know where the Revival Spell is?” Every guard slowly eyes the Infernape with mystique, Ramon gulping. *Shoot, did I mess up!?*

Nered tilts her head. “Que? Don’t you already know where it’s at? Pretty sure Kellie told every guard about it.”

A Morpeko munches on his treat, nodding. “Yeeyee!”

“U-Um!” Ramon chuckles, scratching the back of his head. “I-I needed a refresher! Yeah, that’s all.”

“Hmm...” Nered nudges her chin, glancing. “The Spell is located at the bottom of the large waterfall behind me.” She points back.

Ramon eyes ahead: The massive waterfall showering down, barriers forming around it. The Infernape’s maw drops, eyes sparkling with awe.

“Whoa...”

“Is there any reason why you want to go?”

“Oh. Um.” *Gotta think of something quick!* Ramon caresses his fingers together. “I...I wanted to go see K-Kellie! Wishing to, u-um, c-confess my love to her!”

“‘Them’, le chéri.” Nered giggles. “Good luck with the confession! It isn’t easy to admit your true feelings towards someone.” She looks off to the side, caressing her arm while blushing. “I should know from personal experiences. Said experiences that are still going till this day.”

Ramon looks down, hearing the words ‘true feelings’ hitting him in the heart. *Right...*

Nered’s hands presses her cheeks, her face glowing further red. “Oh, I do hope to tell him how I truly feel someday.” She wiggles, the guards quirking their brows.

“Er-Erm, thank you for the answer, Ms. Nered!” Ramon moves around the daydreaming Roserade, passing by some guards while walking towards the large waterfall.

Nomar snarls. *Pathetic.*

Hmm?

This 'false' harmony I'm seeing between humans and Pokémon right now.

Ramon stops and turns around: Eyeing the guards of all kinds, both human and Pokémon, laughing nervously at Nered's fantasy as some chat with her, all smiling at her company. The Infernape tilts his head.

I mean, they look like they're having a decent time together, though.

Hmph. Nomar scoffs. If I were alive, I'd shake my head at these Pokémon for even daring to aid humans. Frankly, they shouldn't coexist in this manner.

Ramon stares at the group for a moment, melancholy painting him. He continues towards the waterfall road. *But like... Sighs. Is it really a bad thing though? For Pokémon and humans to be together?*

Absolutely. The Shiny Zorua wishes to facepaw. I've gone over this with you many times, and you have to understand: WE'RE the enemies. Doesn't matter if we help humans or not: At the end of the day, we're nothing but tools for them to destroy afterwards.

The Infernape shrugs, stroking the side of his arm. "Rgh..."

Let's just...focus on getting to the Spell. Our separation from each other has done more damage to your belief than I thought.

"Hmm...Alright then." Ramon's foot touches the air before the ape moves back. "Whoa!" He gazes down, a large pit widens itself between him and the waterfall. He then eyes the waterfall itself: The lushious blues, the laidback flow—it is *captivating*.

How massive and...beautiful. Ramon smiles. Gloria Falls is amazing.

Brother, look: There's some staircase near you! Nomar points out. Ramon looks left, rows of stairs descending down into the pit, spiraling around the huge waterfall. He walks ahead.

As the Infernape descends, he eyes up: The light from the sunset seeping further and further away. Not that it matters since the waterfall is still vibrant enough for him to see. He smiles.

You're seeing this too, right Nomar?

Yes: The waterfalls here are lively. Nomar sighs in relief. *Reminds me of the time where we'd visit this one waterfall with our parents, too!*

The ape's hands nudge his chest, his tail wagging. *That's sweet! Gasps. Oh speaking of parents: Do you know what our mother and father is like? If you can still remember, of course.*

Nomar hums. *I thought you'd never ask! They're fantastic and protective parents, although having some oddities to them.*

Torches start appearing by the walls, flames guiding the Infernape. *Hmm? In what way?*

Well...Dad would get bitter and cruel when something bad happens to us. That's normal for any parents, but he does it to the extreme. Whimpers. It can get scary at times.

Oh...and about mother?

She's just...odd. She can be calm and relaxing on one day, and then aggressive and vicious on another. She's a pretty unpredictable Zoroark, honestly.

The Infernape blinks in disbelief. *Yeesh.*

But despite their downfalls: They're still loving, amazing parents! Sighs. Here's hoping we get to find them together.

Ramon nods. *Same.*

The Infernape soon reaches the bottom: Gazing at the cavern ahead as torches light up in rows. Nomar gasps.

We're so close. So very close to our reunion. The fox yaps. I can't wait to come back to life and escape these humans with you.

Ramon doesn't say anything, his lips sealed. If Nomar can blink, he would.

What's wrong?

The Infernape shakes his head. *I— his teeth grits. I don't know if I want to leave my friends. Because I like them. His fist forms. I like them a lot, in all honesty...*

Nomar groans. *Really? We're not going over this again.*

But—

Nomar growls. *Okay, let me spell it out for you: Justin, Ada, Merlin, Delia, and any other humans out ARE the enemies. All of them. Sighs. Which unfortunately includes those Pokémon 'friends' you're with since they've been brainwashed into befriending humans, believing whatever ideology they throw at them.*

Ramon shakes. *Nomar, I—*

Another sigh. *We're deep into this plan at this point, Ramon: It's too late to back out now.*

Ramon looks down, sighing. He walks ahead before—

“Ack!”

Black blood splats the ground, dripping from the ape's maw. Ramon groans, leaning on a nearby wall while caressing his head. He whimpers, gnashing his teeth and wiping off the blood. *Ugh. Why am I in pain all of the sudden?*

...*We're getting there*, Nomar says, monotone.

Ramon blinks, shaking his head. “What...?”

Soon the disguised Infernape encounters a bodyguard ahead: An Amped Toxtricity, sitting in a chair in front of the entrance behind her. The yellow amphibian lifts her cap, eyeing the Infernape.

“Hey.” Is all she says, turning her cap around. Getting from behind the chair, she cracks her knuckles. “I'm the Guard Tester for today.”

Ramon tilts his head. “What's that?”

The Toxtricity lifts her brow. “You should know what that is.” Her fists lift, crackling electricity.

Ramon blinks and jumps back. *Okay, I see now!*

Ramon. Whatever you do: Do NOT get hit.

The Infernape blinks. *Why's tha—* Ramon leaps from a large row of electricity, sliding. He grits his teeth. *YIKES! That was close!* Eyeing the Toxtricity, he frowns: His fists up and ready.

. . .

The Torchic screamed and screamed, nothing flowing out of his mouth. The cops pulled him away, one Blaziken crying on another's chest. Tears rained down the armless bird's cheeks, the boy clenching his feet on the ground so badly, pleading to not be taken away: But it was null and void.

“Sylock?”

The Blaziken snaps into reality: Sweats sliding down, breathing irregularly. He looks at Courtney, the two of them sitting on a bench while in the stadium's breakroom. The Lopunny tilts her head. "Our next match is about to start soon."

Sylock blinks for a moment, nodding.

Courtney pats his back. "Are you alright? You're even sweatin' like crazy."

The Blaziken slowly smiles, moving his hands, "*I'm...I'm alright. Let's go kick some butt, yeah?*" The chicken stands, walking towards the entrance to the stadium.

Courtney eyes the Blaziken, stroking her knees. *Sy...What's going on with you?* She follows.

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The Team Conjure Leader wields a pink book in her hand, standing in front of many more Conjures in the same shadowy room. The grunts eye her, anticipation flourishing throughout—even Lycus and Xenia are casually eating their apples in wait! Munching on them like crazy, at least in Lycus' case!

The teen clears her throat, hand against her chest, eyes closed. She sighs.

"We'll teleport the moment Ramon gets past the Guard Tester," the leader states.

Jester scratches his messy hair. "Eh!? Why not use the zippity-zoom Spell when he gets the Revival one?"

Lycus gradually turns towards the man. "Zippity...what???" Food particles fall out in disbelief.

Arthur rolls his eyes. "He's an unorthodox ally. Ignore him."

Jester points at the blonde. "Shut it, numbhead!"

The Floatzel squints. *Weirdo.*

The girl spins the book, her face turning to Jester. "I want to create a distraction." Stops. "Should be self-explanatory on why."

"Oh-ho?" Jester claps his hands. "Think I've already caught on to your devious plan, Mistress!"

Xenia lifts her paw, grinning. *Things are going to get spicy, hehe.*

The Conjure Leader nods, sliding her fingers across the middle section of the spellbook. She then releases another sigh, a small smile spreading.

You're almost there, Dne.