

Chapter 12: An Unexpected Battle at Sea! The Grant Crusaders Strike Again!

The crew sails across the Pirate Sea, the sun shining at them and the Water types surfing throughout the area. Iris, Anna and Ashen seem to be chatting with each other while the other five seem to be doing the same but mostly admiring the Pokemon in the sea. Cerise is inside of the ship's room, looking out of a small window while being next to the Pokemon egg on the bed.

Just who the heck am I? Zare? Is that's my name the voice is trying to tell me? In fact...was it the flat thing that looked like me said that? Cerise groans, shaking his head. *I'll never know, I suppose...* He sighs heavily, sorrow forming over his face as he leans his head against the egg. Meanwhile, Jimmy chats with the four Pokemon about the time he used to be a hero in the Noctis Forest.

"I was heroic, brave, courageous and filled with boldness and determination. I was known as the 'Incredible Vermin' to the Pokemon of Noctis Forest." Jimmy says proudly while waving his arm swiftly. Natalie raises her brow at the word 'Vermin'.

"Um, isn't that an insult word use for Bu--" The Zorua gets interrupted by the Heracross' nail against her lips.

"No no, my little friend. That's the worthy title of a true hero. Going beyond and yonder to blunder the troublemakers that have been causing problems within the forest as a request from the Pokemon of Noctis Forest...Though..." Jimmy stops to think for a moment. "For some reason, after taking care of all of those troublemakers, my fame begins to wear down drastically. Not sure why but it had gotten me to retire from doing heroic things."

Mark scratches the side of his head. "Maybe it's because those Pokemon were only using you to take care of things and not thanking you for it?"

"Nonsense! They did ask my help, after all."

"Yeah but Natalie and I thanked you for saving us from those horrible Malamars..." Mark states.

Claire pouts. "And I feel guilty for not being there with my mistress during the time..." The Shinx says, lowering her ears sorrowfully. Natalie pats her on the back.

"It's alright. At least you've saved us from those same groups at the Verdant Village." Natalie smiles, cheering Claire up before looking at Jimmy. "But yeah, I agree with Mark on that...I mean, did they ever thanked you for taking care of those troublemakers?"

Jimmy thinks for a moment. "I believe they thanked me but they say it in a way that they..." Jimmy soon forms a shocked look on his face and becomes down. "Don't care..." Jimmy sighs heavily afterwards. "First my pincer got sliced off, now I realized I've been used and no one

really appreciated me.” Jimmy sobs, rubbing the top of his half pincer head. Lucas pats Jimmy on the back while Mark hugs him and Natalie nuzzles against him.

“D’aww cheer up, bud. It’ll be alright. And who cares about what those folks did to you. At least we appreciate you helping us and tagging along our adventure. We’re the ones that matters, not them.” Lucas states proudly. Jimmy sniffles and looks at the Furret.

“R-Really?” Jimmy asks.

Lucas nods. “Absolutely, mate.”

Jimmy soon begins to cry and hugs the Furret, bear hugging him during so. Mark. Natalie and Claire back away from the massive hug before giggling at the Heracross. “Th-Thank you so much for appreciating my help! I’m so glad I tagged along with you all.” Jimmy’s tears are like waterfalls streaming down rapidly as he nuzzles against the Furret.

Lucas gasps for air, weakly patting the beetle on the back. “Yes, yes. You’re welcome. Now please, stop hugging me. Not to be rude or anything but I’m starting to see the light if you keep this up. Gah!”

Jimmy sniffles and puts the Furret down, having him inhale and exhale repeatedly. “Heh heh, sorry for the bear hug...Was just...so happy that you all feel that way.” Jimmy wipes a tear off from his face, smiling at the four. Lucas looks at the Heracross and smiles back.

Mark winks at Jimmy, giving him a thumbs up. “Any time, my heroic bug friend!” Mark shouts cheerfully.

“Though...” Lucas puts his hand underneath his chin. “I wonder who those troublemakers were, Jimmy?”

Jimmy shrugs. “Just some random Murkrows and Ariados, that’s all.”

“Oh.”

As the five go to continue admiring the Water types, the other three Pokemon begin to laugh at each other.

“Seriously? What’s up with that old Psychic goofball?” Anna says while giggling. “Like, why would he stick his head inside of that Tyrantrum’s mouth?”

Iris shrugs with a smile. “Beats me, he seems to like living on the edge of danger. Instead of being safe and examining the Tyrantrum’s teeth, not risking being eaten, he plays it dangerously and does that. Astona and Maza were annoyed by his poor decision as I laughed my tail off.”

"I see. Ego really is living up to the name, "Daredevil Slowking" alright."

Iris snickers. "He is, indeed. He'll take any risk he could muster. That's why he's...honestly the best thing that could've ever happened to me when I was a Dragonair." The Dragonite looks off to the sea, smiling warmly.

"D'aww. That's sweet to hear, Iris." Anna nudges against the Dragonite, looking up at her.

Iris sighs softly before shrugging. "I mean, he doesn't necessarily heal my wounds from that dreadful day but...He does put a smile on my face once in awhile."

"I see..." Anna sighs as well, looking across the sea herself.

"I mean, why wouldn't he? His crazy tales had really gotten me smiling a lot, honestly." Ashen says, chuckling. "He's a pretty interesting old man, not gonna lie."

"Agreed." Anna states, admiring the Water types racing against each other underwater while smiling in delight. Soon, Anna sees Natalie walking towards her along with Claire, curiosity beginning to spread throughout her face. "Hmm?"

"Hey Anna. Just curious to know...What was that attack you did to those two Mienshaos before?" Natalie asks curiously. Anna stares down at her bandage first before speaking.

"Well..." Anna tells Natalie what she did and Natalie's eyes widen.

"Oh wow, really? So that's how a Mixturing Move looks like." The Zorua then smiles happily. "Pretty cool, I must say."

"Oh! Speaking of which, do you mind telling me what is a Mixturing Move and a Weapon Mischief?" Claire asks, joining in the conversation.

Anna looks at the Shinx and nods. "Sure. I wouldn't mind telling you at all." She states. "Well, a Mixturing Move is..." She explains to the Shinx about what they are, seeing her nodding afterwards.

"I see. I believe I understand how those objects and moves functions, now. Thanks for telling me."

"Oh...um." Anna tilts her head curiously. "Are you sure you don't want to ask anymore questions about them???"

Claire shakes her head. "No ma'am. I'm good."

"Erm, alright then." Anna takes her attention back to Natalie. "Anyway, I also added a little bit of my...Mythical Power to the Mixturing Move...If you called it as that..." Anna shrugs awkwardly.

Natalie tilts her head confusedly. "You have a Mythical Power, too?"

"Yes...I...was born with it and it's more so of the reason why I was alone in an abandoned cave...Due to my behavior being so corrupted by it..." Anna looks down at the ground. "I guess my parents didn't want to take care of a child like me...So...that's why I called the power: Corrupted Reign..." The Ninetales looks back at the two. "Because I am the reign of corruption. The monster to everyone's eyes. The unholiness that shouldn't be brought to on Sol--" Iris interrupts her.

"You're none of those things, Anna...You just struggle to control your behavior at times. That's why we're traveling together...to help you." The Dragonite smiles warmly at her. Anna looks at Iris and smiles back slightly, hugging her afterwards.

"Thanks...And sorry for scaring the two of you about my past." The Ninetales looks back at the two Pokemon, shrugging uncomfortably. Natalie shifts a bit while Claire giggles in satisfaction.

"It's fine, Miss Anna. Dark and scary things are always my forte." Claire says, purring while wagging her tail. "Something about them fascinates me so much. With the gruesome depiction of someone's death and the uncomfortable void of someone's past." Claire puts a paw against her face, grinning deviously. "It's the equivalent of eating a yummy frosted cake, you know?" The four look at Claire, raising their brow and giving her an awkward look. Claire stares back and giggles softly. "What?"

"Um...nothing." Ashen answers hesitantly. *What kind of normal Shinx enjoys those sort of things...?* Soon, Ashen notices the sun beginning to set, the sky slowly turning a orange yellow during so. "Looks like the sun is about to set."

Iris looks at Anna. "Alright then. Anna, wanna play Truth or Dare?" The Dragonite says, smiling in delight. Anna smirks deviously.

"Of course. Let's head inside and see who'll start first." The Ninetales giggles, walking towards the room. Natalie and Claire follow behind in curiosities.

"I would like to watch! Wanna see how you two's dares would go." Natalie snickers.

"I'm just watching because of me not being aware of this game." Claire states. Natalie looks at the Shinx, raising her brow.

"You never heard of this game?" The Zorua asks. Claire shakes her head in response. "Well, let's them play instead of me explaining what it is. Maybe you'll get the idea from there, okay?"

Claire nods obediently Natalie. "Yes, mistress."

Iris walks towards the room. "Oh our dares would be as interesting as a *legendary*, Natalie." She then stops and looks at Ashen while everyone else heads inside. "Wanna come watch?"

The Linoone shakes his head. "Nah. I'll stay outside and row the ship for awhile."

Iris nods calmly. "Alright. Come inside whenever you feel tired, okay?"

"Got it." Ashen gives the Dragonite a thumbs up, smiling warmly. Iris smiles back before rushing inside of the ship's room.

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Midnight arrives as the ship remain sailing or more so drifting along the liquid blues. Everyone seems to be sleeping quietly within the ship's room; Iris sleeps on the left cot with Lucas curling up on her belly, Jimmy and Ashen rest on the floor against the dresser in the middle of the room, and the other four rest on the right cot, the three younglings nestle against the Ninetales' warm fur.

Although, Natalie begins to shift back and forth against the Ninetales, groaning and wincing a lot. "U-Ugh..." She mumbles, beginning to dream about her being in some kind of dark and distorted area. She hears endless amounts of dreadful and decaying voices all around her, whimpering in fear and confusion. She then sees a pathway leading toward something big ahead of her. She walks toward it slowly, her body trembling in unspeakable fear. She notices that the more she walks, the more details she can see from the figure ahead of her.

The figure looks shadowy, having a serpentine look with six ghost-like streamers. It stares down at Natalie with its eerie red eyes, giving the Zorua an uncomfortable vibe. With the voices coming along to make things more unsettling, she shakes even more in fear. *That thing looks similar to the figure I saw at the Noctis Village but this time, th-this one is shadowy...A-and, what's with the v-voices?* She thinks to herself, whining in terror. The figure breathes heavily and menacingly at her before speaking.

"You're confused and afraid of what's happening...but fear not. Once you've regain your memories...then you'll finally come back to me...My child..." The figure says, revealing a rather strange smile at Natalie.

Natalie blinks, her eyes widening in surprise. "Ch-Child!?" The figure raises its streamers and strikes the Zorua before she wakes up from the dream, yelping in terror. "E-Eek!" She pants heavily, causing the three Pokemon around her to wake up.

"Natalie! D-Did something happened?" Mark says worriedly. Claire hugs the Zorua, putting her paws all over her face.

"Y-Yes, you alright mistress?" Claire asks. Natalie takes the Shinx's paws off from her and sighs softly.

"I'm fine, guys...Just...had a nightmare, that's all..." The Zorua shrugs.

"What's it about?" Anna says, tilting her head curiously. Natalie groans while rubbing her head.

"About some ghost-like figure claiming I'm its child or something...I don't know, it's just random, that's all." Natalie shifts awkwardly. Anna and Mark seem puzzled about her reasoning. Claire, however, seems to know about Natalie's nightmare before yawning and returning back to sleep.

"Don't worry about it, mistress. You'll understand when the time comes." Claire says, purring sleepily as she curls up against the Ninetales. The three look at the Shinx, confused by what she meant before Mark yawns.

"Welp, I'll head back to sleep." The Riolu says, cuddling against the warmth fur of the Ninetales. Natalie looks around the room before noticing that Cerise isn't present. She scratches the side of her head, having her eyes focus on Anna.

"Hey. Where's Cerise?" Natalie asks in a curious manner. Anna shrugs, shifting her body a bit while yawning.

"Not sure. Maybe he went outside or something...Don't see him swimming in the sea, honestly." Anna says, forming a bead of sweat on the side of her face. Natalie nods and hops off of the bed.

"Alright. Thanks, Anna." Natalie walks out of the room as the Ninetales goes back to sleep. The Zorua wonders around the outside of the ship, seeing the beautiful stars in the sky and the full moon brighten its light towards the sea. Natalie notices the blob-like creature staring at the sky, being by the side of the ship. She walks toward him with a smile on her face. "Hey Cerise."

The blob looks at her, blinking curiously. "Hi, Natalie..." Cerise says in a soft yet mobby tone. Dark circles form underneath his eyes, signifying that he's tired.

"What are you doing out here in the middle of the night?" The Zorua asks, tilting her head slightly.

Cerise shrugs. "Just admiring the dark sky, that's all. Loving its gorgeous scenery." He smiles at her. Natalie smiles back warmly.

"I see. I enjoy its scenery, too. Reminding me of the time Mark and I explored in a cavern filled with lights." The Zorua puts her paws on the edge of the ship, smiling softly at the beautiful stars in the sky. "I believe it was called Star Cavern, if I'm not mistaken."

"Hmm. I see."

"The reason why it was called that because of the lights resembling the stars you see at nighttime, according to Carrie."

Cerise blinks in surprise. "Huh. Didn't know that a cavern's light can look like the stars...Interesting." He says, being intrigued by Natalie's memory.

Natalie looks down at the ocean water, seeing her reflection surfing along the mini-waves as she sighs. "I miss my sister, though...She was so kind and protective towards me and Mark. And I just...refused to listen to her until..." The Zorua whimpers, a tear beginning to slide from her face. "I'm such an idiot...I should've listen to her..." Cerise notices the Zorua's sorrow and pats her on the side with his tail.

"Hey now, no need to beat yourself up over this. She may be gone but...from what I know of, I'm certain that she doesn't want you nor Mark to reminiscent about the past." The blob says with a soft tone. "Assuming that she cared about the two of you deeply, she wanted you two to have the best future. To make the right decisions. To help one another. To," He pauses for a moment, looking up at the Zorua. "Become the greatest Pokemon anyone could've ever met in their entire lives."

Natalie looks back at the blob, sniffing as she wipes her face. "You...think so?" She asks.

"No. I *believe* so." Cerise smiles at the Zorua warmly, leading her to do the same for him.

"Thanks, Cerise." She leans down to nuzzle against the blob, leading him to sigh in relief.

"You're welcome, Natalie." He gazes back at the aquatic blues, hearing the ocean waves swishing peacefully and quietly. "By the way, mind telling me why you're out here, too?" He asks.

"Oh. Um...well I wanted to take my mind off of a nightmare I had, that's all..." She shrugs uncomfortably.

"A nightmare?" Cerise tilts his head slightly, raising his brow.

"Yeah...I had a dream about being in this place filled with disturbing voices and screeches. Then I encounter this odd figure that claims me to be its child...wanting me to come back or something." The Zorua groans and shakes her head. "I don't know. It's just all...random."

"Hmm...I know where you're coming from, Natalie. I was hearing these weird voices as well. Although, it wasn't a dream. I was witnessing these phenomenons in reality."

Natalie jumps up in surprise. "R-Really!?"

Cerise nods calmly. "Yes...and even saw a weird flat version of myself staring at me for a few seconds before turning invisible right before my eyes...The voices were also saying the word 'Zare'...for some reason. I don't know who Zare is..." Cerise stares at his reflection in the seawater. "Nor do I know if Zare is me..." Natalie blinks for a moment before sighing and stares down at her reflection next.

"We're both experiencing some crazy shenanigans. With me having visions and dreams about this weird shadowy figure and you encountering these voices and a flat version of yourself." The Zorua shakes her head. "I just....don't know what all of this even means..."

"Same..." Everything becomes quiet between the two for a moment before the blob continues to speak. "Alright. Guess I'll be heading inside to get some sleep."

"Me too. Hope that I don't get that nightmare again." She shivers as Cerise nods, agreeing with her. The two head inside of the room and close the door behind them.

During the next day, things seem peaceful; Everyone in the room sleep soundly in their exact spots last night. Then a sudden booming noise hits their ship, causing the gang to wake up immediately.

"Holy sweet whiskers of a Mienshao, what was that!?" Lucas shouts, latching onto Anna instantly. The Ninetales grows irritated as Jimmy performs a heroic pose.

"My heroic sense tells me that we're being attacked by an unexpected guest!" The Heracross proclaims, pointing at the background ship from the window.

Anna throws Lucas off from her and says, "Well no shit, genius! We need to go check it out and fast!". Everyone nods and heads outside, including Lucas after he gets up and follows along. The gang looks to the side to see the said ship firing a cannonball at their direction. The ship has a menacing design compared to Iris' ship; It having the flaming color red throughout its decor and a black flag having an image of a Nidoking wielding the skull symbol in its hand.

Iris notices the cannonball and grits her teeth. "Oh not on my watch." She says, immediately flying towards the ball itself. Her tail glows red aura around it and swipes at the cannonball, sending it flying away to the sky: Dragon Tail. Then she notices the ship closing in on her and hurries back onto her ship. It slams against the crew's ship after Iris landed on board, causing everyone to lose balance.

"Wh-Whoa!" Everyone yelps before looking at the other ship. They hear laughters coming from the ship as seven Pokemon appear onto theirs.

Iris rolls her eyes. "Oh dear, it's the Grant Crusaders." She confirms in an annoyed manner. Jimmy, Mark and Natalie look at the Dragonite in confusion.

"The Grant whom now?" Jimmy asks, scratching the side of his head. Tybalt, the Nidoking, cracks his fist while his lackeys behind him make some threatening poses.

"We're just a bunch of pirates that like to steal things and harm others for any loot they have in their homes." Tybalt says, grinning menacingly.

"Although, a certain Dragonite just had to ruin those lovely fun for us at the empty village known as the Noctis Village, mhm." Octo says in a mannerly tone.

Iris huffs and crosses her arms. "That's because you guys always do this in every area I'm in. Do it when I'm not around next time!"

The Grant Crusaders laugh at the Dragonite's comment. "But Iris, you're a pirate too. Aren't we supposed to work together to find some loot? Or better yet," Tybalt pauses and leans forward a bit, his hand on his knee. "Why aren't you stealing anything if you lot are supposed to be pirates as well?"

"It's because I have other priorities on my mind, rather than stealing some belongings from others that I'll rarely give a single Pokecent about."

"Pfft, now that's what you call the worst damn pirates ever!" Blake shouts, leading the Crusaders to laugh rudely. Iris squints her eyes while Lucas becomes vexed by the laughs.

"H-Hey! We did steal something before!" Lucas pouts, puffing up his face.

Ashen looks at him with a raised brow. "Uh, like what?" He says.

"Um...let me think about that, uhhh..."

Anna facepalms while Lucas attempts to think about what his crew stole. Mark and Natalie glance at the Crusaders' continuous laughter and poking fun of the gang, remaining still and engaging for a potential battle. "These guys sure are mean and threatening." Mark says calmly. Cerise nods, agreeing with the Riolu.

"Yes. I witnessed how they battle against Iris and her allies. They're not to be trifled with." Cerise says in a serious tone. Mark and Natalie catch their attention toward him.

"Wait, you know them?" Natalie asks.

"Well, yes. Sorta. I did mention that I was following you guys after that Noctis Forest incident so..." Cerise shrugs uneasily.

"I see...I guess that makes sense." Mark says, shrugging as well.

Iris sighs heavily before speaking. "Alright alright. The joke on me being the worst pirate is over with. And onto a more serious topic, why are you guys terrorizing us?"

Tybalt and the gang stop laughing as he stares at the Dragonite. "Heh, well we were originally going to go to some random island to find some treasures but then we saw your ship and decided to do exactly what you've said." Tybalt smirks. "Also, you've forgotten already about what I've told you if we meet again?"

Iris thinks for a moment then blinks into realization. "Oh."

"Wow. You even forget about what Tybalt said to you." Minx says, shaking her head. "So sad, man."

"Hey! At least I know that you guys want a rematch now." Iris cracks her neck before her and the others get in a battle position. "So let's see what you lot got in round 3."

"Round 3?" Jimmy asks confusedly.

"Our first round is where we first met. And the second was in the Noctis Village." Iris states.

"Oh."

The Crusaders glance at Iris and the gang while they stare back. "Alright, fellas. Let's really show them why we're known as the Grant Crusaders!"

The Crusaders shout "Yeah!" as they charge towards Iris and the others. The gang embraces themselves for the horde of attackers heading their direction; The Dragonite forms flames around her fist and punches Tybalt with Fire Punch while the others go to attack the rest of the Crusaders. Ashen and Lucas pounce on Octo and Pus with their Fury Swipes while Anna uses Flamethrower on Blake, a straight line of fire beaming toward his way intensely.

"Yikes!" Blake shouts, covering himself before Minx gets in the way. She takes the attack, groaning a bit from the burning touch on her skin. Soon, Anna stops and notices that Minx is now under the burn status, her skin turned red as she pants heavily.

"Oh wow." Anna says. "For a move that has the least amount of chance to burn someone, I sure be getting lucky with it."

"Oh dearie. I believe that you've made a grave mistake by giving me such a status. Not only is my attack not halved but also," Minx looks up at Anna, smirking eagerly. "My attack is boosted drastically because of the status condition, thanks to Guts." Anna's eyes widen, leading her to

slowly back away from the Conkeldurr. Minx laughs and throws her pillar at her. The Ninetales ducks underneath it before suddenly getting slammed to the stomach by Minx's glowing red aura-like arm: Hammer Arm. Anna gasps, spitting out blood onto the ground. She is about to get blown away by the massive force of the attack until Minx grabs her by the foreleg and slams her down, causing her to yelp in pain.

Ashen hears the yelp and grits his teeth. *Anna!* He thinks before he and Lucas get trapped under the Octillery's tentacles; Octo slapping Ashen's head roughly while Pus slapping Lucas'.

"Hey! Ow! Stop! Ow! Hitting me--Ow! Like that! OW!" Lucas shouts as he keeps getting smacked by the Octillery.

The Octillery brothers chuckle in delight at the two Pokemon. "This is quite entertaining to give the brainless Furret a taste of knowledge for once." Pus says.

Octo nods, agreeing with the Octillery. "Same goes for the Linoone as well, brother." Ashen grunts in pain while Lucas strives to get out of the grasp.

"Hey! I don't--Ow! Need knowledge--Ow! If knowledge hurts this--Ow! Much! Owwwwie!"

As the Octillerys continue messing around with the two, Blake walks to Minx and pats her on the back. "Phew. Thanks for saving my behind from that Flamethrower attack. I would've been so boned."

"Right. Just like every other time I have to save your ass, Blake. Learn to be useful for once and not have me do all the dirty work." The Conkeldurr giggles. Blake becomes furious and huffs, folding his arms in disapproval.

"Well excuse me miss muscular tough shot, I've done something beneficial for our crew."

"Like almost getting yourself killed or knocked out by one of those Emboar guards at Noctis?"

"...Oh hush up." Blake rolls his eyes while Minx reveals a smug look on her face.

"Get good, ice twig." She giggles once more, leading Blake to grumble at her insult. Then she looks at the Ninetales while pinning her down. "Bet my strength hurts, doesn't it?"

Anna coughs drastically, glaring at the Conkeldurr. "Nah. It feels like paradise in Clarity itself--OF COURSE IT HURTS!" She yells, groaning in pain.

Minx and Blake snicker before hearing Natalie's voice yelling "HEY!" loudly, grabbing the two's attention. "Leave Anna alone!" The Zorua exclaims, dashing toward the two.

"Heh, watch wreck this Zorua easily, Minx." Blake says, his claws turning metallic as he races to the Zorua's direction: Metal Claw. *I'll show her! I'll show her that I'm not worthless to the Crusaders!* Natalie prepared her Night Daze attack, her forepaws glowing red as the two start swiping at each other. *For I am Blake, the Amazing Weavile!* The two continue dodging each other's moves until Natalie dodges the Weavile's Metal Claw completely and slams him against the ship's pole. "Oof!" Natalie then turns her attention towards Minx and dashes towards her.

Minx shakes her head in disapproval. "God dammit, Blake. Can't even handle a flipping Zorua out of all things." She states, sighing afterwards.

Anna pants heavily while seeing the Zorua charging at Minx. "N-No, Natalie. She's strong. Real strong. Don't face--" She is cut off by Natalie swiping at Minx all over the place, trying to make some intimidating karate sounds. "Her..."

"Take that! And that! And this and that!" Natalie yells, continuing to slash the Conkeldurr. Soon, she stops and pants heavily. She looks at the Conkeldurr up and down to see not a single mark is formed on her beside the burning status she's currently in. "Uuh..." She gives the Conkeldurr an awkward look before gulping.

"Should've listen to her, girly." Minx says before grabbing Natalie by the head. She yelps, shrieking in fear while being lifted. "Don't mind me slamming ya towards your helper, sweetcheeks."

"O-Oh no..." Natalie whimpers, catching Claire's attention. Claire leaves Mark and Jimmy to handle the Cradily and Poliwrath, dashing menacingly at Minx. Minx is about to throw the Zorua towards Anna until she winces from the burn damage.

"Ugh...I forgot about the burn." She says, annoyed by the damage. Soon she's hit by a red Discharge coming from Claire, screaming in massive pain. "Ah!" She and Natalie fall to the ground, the Conkeldurr being knocked out during the process.

"No one dares to harm my mistress! No one!" The Shinx exclaims with rage forming from her voice. Natalie looks around instantly, seeing Claire purring at her while walking towards her. "Are you alright, mistress?"

"Yeah, thankfully. I'd almost been choked to death, kicked in the stomach and slammed against a tree before. I don't want to add being crushed by a Conkeldurr to the list." Natalie says, laughing nervously as she sweatdrops.

"Eh. You'll get used to the pain given from others." The Shinx says in a casual manner.

Natalie raises her brow at her confusedly. "Uh...suuure..." Then she and Claire go to aid the Ninetales. "Are you alright, Anna?"

Anna grumbles uncomfortably. "Well, thanks to Minx, I'm in a lot of pain now..." She says, whimpering softly. "Back to square one, basically."

"Sorry for having you go through the pain again, Anna." Natalie whimpers as well, nuzzling against the Ninetales.

"Nah, don't be. You can heal me anyway so it's fine."

Natalie nods firmly. "Right. So Claire and I will try our best to protect you as I heal you...Well, just Claire trying to protect us, actually." The Zorua corrects herself.

Anna winces in pain. "But--" Then she notices that Iris is still handling Tybalt, him and her punching each other in the face as if they were in a boxing match and Ashen and Lucas are in a tough situation themselves. The Ninetales sighs heavily. "Alright...just be careful you two." The two Pokemon nod at her obediently, Natalie proceeding to heal her afterwards.

Meanwhile, Mark and Jimmy are battling Crisis and Mr. Buff; Mark blocks the pink tentacles attacking him from every angle with his bow while being careful of Crisis' Sludge Bomb. "Jeez, how are you multitasking so well!?" Mark yells, firing an arrow at the purple-like ball substance. Crisis chuckles proudly to himself.

"I've been training myself years and years of doing more than one thing at a time. Basically, practicing multitasking over and over. Arnold knows what I'm talking about, right?" Crisis says, continuing his attack. Mr. Buff becomes angry as he wrestles with Jimmy.

"Yes. I have seen you train since the day I've met you as a Poliwhirl. But what did I say about you calling me by my real name!? IT'S MR. BUFF! NOT ARNOLD!!!" The Poliwrath yells, grabbing Jimmy by the pincer and swinging him around.

"Aaah!" Jimmy screams due to his half pincer being grabbed as Mr. Buff leaps into the air and brings him and the Heracross towards the pole: Submission. Blake wakes up from his knocked out state before seeing the two bodies aiming at his direction.

"Oh shit!" Blake rolls forward to dodge from the two massive bodies, the Poliwrath slamming Jimmy against the pole and obliterating it. He winces from the recoil damage as the pole starts falling to the ground. Oddly enough, it didn't hit anyone. "Jeez. Give someone a heads up before you use that move, Arn--" Mr. Buff glares at the Weavile, having his foot pinning Jimmy down. "I- I mean, Mr. Buff. Heh heh..." Blake sweatdrops in a uneasy manner.

"And Crisis, don't call me that ever again! I told you numerous of times on not to call me by that *dead* name. You don't hear me calling you by your real name, huh!?" Mr. Buff states, folding his arms while glaring at the Cradily.

Crisis snickers softly at the Poliwrath. "That's because Crisis *is* my real name." The Cradily says, continuing to occupy the Riolu.

Mr. Buff rolls his eyes. "Oh right. Your parents were stupid when they gave you that name."

"Oh those sound like fighting words, Arnold." The Cradily says sarcastically.

"WHAT DID I JUST SAID!?"

"Don't call my *deceased* parents stupid then." The Cradily lowers his defense, eyeing at the Poliwrath deadily.

"I can say whatever I want. Wanna do something about it!?" Mr. Buff takes his foot off from the Heracross, walking towards the Cradily.

"Might as well, *Arnold*."

"THAT DOES IT!" And within a flash, the two end up fighting each other. Punching and kicking noises are present along with some few insults as everyone else sweatdrop at the embarrassment they're witnessing. Even Octo and Pus, who are hanging Lucas and Ashen upside down, feel embarrassed by what they're seeing.

"And I thought I was the only one dealing with idiots..." Iris says, shrugging nervously.

"Tell me about it." Tybalt agrees, shaking his head. While this happens, Cerise tries to sneak away off into the ship's room.

Jeez. I don't know what I was thinking when coming out here in the open, since I can't defend myself... Cerise thinks, continuing to sneak away as everyone is being distracted. Blake seems to notice the blob sneaking away and jumps high in the air.

Mark's ear flickers as he looks at the Weavile. "Hmm?"

Blake lands in front of Cerise, grinning down at him. "Why hi there. Didn't know that you were here this whole time, little fella." Blake says. "You look pretty different compared to all the other Pokemon I saw before, too."

Cerise looks back at the Weavile and gulps, *Oh dear...*

Mark soon gets in front of Cerise, using Force Palm on Blake. "I don't think so, pal!" He shouts. Blake counters the Riolu's attack with Metal Claw, glancing tensely at him.

"Hmm. I see that you're protecting this fella, huh?" Blake grins, him and Mark starting to attack each other repeatedly. "Let's see how long you can protect him, then!"

Tybalt stretches his body before grinning at Iris, Natalie, Claire and Anna. Minx begins to wake up from her knocked out state and stares at the four Pokemon. After Natalie finishes healing Anna, the four prepare themselves for the two opponents they're about to face. "Brace yourselves." Iris says, staring sternly at the Nidoking and Conkeldurr.

Soon, Lucas feels a raindrop falling onto his face. "What the...Raindrop?" He says before getting his body slammed down by Pus, coughing due to the amount of force bestowed into the slam. "Oof!"

"What on Solark are you talking about, brainless one?" Pus asks into curiosity. Ashen blinks while being tangled by Octo, glancing at the sky for a moment and seeing the clouds turning gray.

"Oh dear mother of the seas, it's about to rain!" Ashen shouts. Everyone stops what they're doing and looks at Ashen before feeling the numerous amounts of raindrops falling upon them.

"Ah crud. The rain sucks in the sea...especially since I'm...I'm a..." Tybalt's eyes widen in fear and realization. "GROUND TYPE!!!" He instantly looks at his crew, snapping his fingers towards his ship. "Come on, lackeys! We're getting out of here and fast!" The Crusaders nod and all return back to their ship immediately except for Tybalt. He remains on the ship for a brief moment, looking at the Dragonite and shrugs. "Sorry that our battle has to end this soon but it was great overall. Better than our last one."

Iris looks at the stormy clouds as she feels some rain showering on her and the others. "Uh...you're welcome."

"And be sure to not die in this rainstorm. Our rematch is still a thing, ya know."

"Yeah yeah, sure. Now get on your ship before you *won't* have one."

The Nidoking nods and scurries off to his ship. "Get us outta here!"

"Aye Aye, captain!" The Crusaders say as the ship sails away quickly. Meanwhile, Ashen goes to immediately take the wheel and attempts to turn the ship around. Anna shakes in constant fear due to the weather.

"Oh dear oh dear...I don't want to die. Not right now!" Anna says, whimpering. "I just wanted to relax and then this happens!"

Iris shakes her calmly. "You're not going to die, Anna. We'll find a way out of this rainstorm. No need to panic."

“Uh...guys....This don't look good.” Ashen says, pointing at something in front of him. Soon, the gang looks to see a big wave heading their way.

“...okay, panic.” And just like that, everyone starts panicking.

“C-Crap! The egg! SOMEONE PROTECT THE EGG, PLEASE!” Anna yells drastically.

Natalie and Claire nod immediately at the Ninetales. “We got it, Anna!” Natalie says before she and the Shinx rush towards the room. Iris then turns her attention back to Ashen.

“Steer the ship away!”

“I'm trying but it seems like it's stuck or something!”

Soon, the massive wave begins to engulf the ship as everyone screams in terror. Everything fades into darkness afterwards.

End of Chapter 12.