

Chapter 14: Introduction to Unfairness.

Cloyster Kingdom Arc.

The crew continues to be taken away by force. Sheer and Exo are in front of the group, Iris and the others restrained within the Cloyster guards' grasp as they exit the pathway and enter another town area. The town is filled with Cloysters and Shellders just like Cloy Town but instead, lively and energetic. The Shellders are playing games with each other such as Freeze Tag, and the Cloysters tend to be socializing with each other happily. As if they're in a land of everlasting joy. The town also contains a few houses and shops on either side, and a water fountain that has an Cloyster statue wearing a crown and robe while wielding a staff, spewing water from its mouth.

By one of the houses on the left lies three Cloysters. One is speaking boldly to the other two as they giggle at him. "Yeah. So I told one of the king's men, 'Sheer can't beat me in a spike off. Because my spike is more superior and stronger than his!' And they laughed." The Cloyster says, grinning to himself as the two female Cloysters giggle once more. The Cloyster continues speaking as Sheer and the group appear near him. "So I laughed as well, knowing that they agree with me."

"I'm pretty sure those guards laughed *at* you. Not *with* you, Mat." Sheer says calmly, leading the Cloyster to jump from his sudden presence and stand firmly.

"Wh-Whoa! Senator Sheer!" Mat, the male Cloyster, says as he bows down slightly to him. "What brings you here?"

"Just happened to catch some troublemakers in Cloy Town, that's all." Sheer answers, eyeing Iris and the others. Mat looks at them as well.

"And who might those be--" Mat pauses for a moment and gasps as he sees Norah, Azure and Norah's father. He sees the crew as well, but his eyes remain focused on Norah, gritting his teeth and forming anxiety across his face before looking back at Sheer. "Senator, with all due respect, mind telling me what she did wrong?" The Cloyster asks.

Sheer raises his brow at Mat in a concerning manner. "From what Exo told me, she was protecting her child from him and the other guards after her child stole an NeverMeltIce from a shop owner."

"If it didn't cost over two thousand Pokedollars, then maybe she wouldn't have stolen it." Norah says, lowering her brow at Sheer. Sheer glances at her.

"Zip it, peasant." He says before eyeing back at Mat. Norah huffs as the large barbed Cloyster continues to speak. "Anyway, you don't happen to know this Cloyster lady, do you?" Sheer scans Mat, looking at him as if he did something wrong.

Mat gulps and shakes his head. "No sir. N-Not at all."

"Even her family?" Sheer addresses. Mat shakes his head in a response to the Cloyster's question. "Hmm...Even the disgusting looking Dragonite and her filthy friends?"

"Hey!" Iris yells, her and the crew glaring at Sheer. Mat looks at them and shakes his head immediately.

"Nope. I definitely don't know *them*." Mat says quickly. Sheer blinks at the quick reaction from Mat, glancing at him. Mat stares back, sweats forming down his forehead as his body shakes slightly.

"I see. Carry on with your silly impression on the ladies while I go take these rule breaking rascals to the king." Sheer says calmly, floating away from Mat. The guards follow him, forcing Iris and the others to come along, of course. Norah looks behind and stares at Mat, seeing him staring at her. The two Cloysters beside Mat look at the group curiously as Mat opens his lips and moves them silently, lip-syncing the words 'I'm sorry'. Norah forms a stern look on her face before a guard tells her to keep going, leading her to focus on the road in front of her.

Meanwhile, Sheer and the others make it to a fence gate in front of them. They can see the big castle in a better view instead of it being as the background view. Two guards seem to be in front of the gate, looking at Sheer before they nod and open the gate. The gate opens slowly as the group walk enter, heading towards the big castle on a pathway. The castle looks rather medieval, having a couple of windows on the left and right side, its color being mostly white with some gray on the sides, and a huge brown door.

Hmm...Interesting how Mat answered slowly when I asked him if he knew about the Cloyster, but answered quickly when I asked him if he knew the Dragonite and her friends. Could it be that he was lying to me about the Cloyster? Sheer thinks, letting his mind wonder into thoughts as he and the others continue onward on the pathway. As the gate behind them closes, Cerise manages to crawl past it quickly. He hides in the grass on the right side of the pathway, following the group. Exo rushes to the front door and opens it widely, letting Sheer and the others enter the castle.

"You're welcome, sir." Exo says to Sheer, bowing to him elegantly. Sheer nods and continues forward. As the group enters inside, Exo closes the door behind him before Cerise enters just within the nick of time. Exo blinks for a moment, seeing something green and quick entering the castle. "Hmm!?" Exo looks around, tilting his head a bit in confusion. "Strange. Could've sworn that I saw something enter the castle just now..." He then sighs and shrugs. "Oh well. Must be hallucinating or something." He chuckles, still having the Pokemon Egg within his possession as he catches up with the others. In the corner, Cerise sticks his head out of a random vase and sighs in relief.

"Phew...That was close." The blob says before hopping out of the vase and following the group while staying hidden. As for the castle itself, the inside has some complex elegance to it. With portraits of a Cloyster wielding a staff, wearing a red cape and a crown all being hung from different places on the walls. The Cloyster within the portraits has a rather blue color on its shell than the blue-violet color, unlike any of the others. A shiny Cloyster, that is. The castle walls are also the color red and yellow, and the castle contains some decor such as vases, pots, tables and more.

Ahead of the group lies three Cloysters. Two are wielding gray spears while the other is holding a staff. The staff being color yellow with the blue color at the top of it. The staff Cloyster is sitting in a semi-tall chair, him wearing a red cape and crown just like from the portraits as he looks off to the distance. The two Cloysters beside him notice the group and stood firm, having the shiny Cloyster look as well. "Hmm...Senator Sheer, would you mind telling me why these groups of Pokemon are being held against their will?" The shiny Cloyster says in a soft tone, leaning his head against the staff with sorrow drowning his face.

"I'll answer that, my king." Exo answers immediately, pointing his spear at Azure. "This Shellder stole a NeverMeltIce from the Freeze Store owner, and her mother tried to protect her." The Shellder goes to hide behind her mother, whimpering in fear. Norah comforts her as the egg holding Cloyster continues speaking. "And not only that, these...different looking Pokemon just came out of nowhere and tried to stop us."

"In fact, those Pokemon aren't even our species. Therefore, they're not supposed to be in this kingdom." Sheer says calmly, smiling at the shiny Cloyster. "Am I right, King Cocoon?"

Cocoon, the shiny Cloyster, nods in approval. "Why yes, you are. So I'll thin--" Cocoon is interrupted by Ashen and Lucas chuckling, eyeing at the two sternly.

"Cocoon. Haha! Some name that is, mate!" Lucas says, holding his stomach in laughter.

"Yeah." Ashen agrees, snickering.

"You two are already in enough trouble. You think laughing at my name will make things better?" Cocoon says, continuing his menacing glance. Ashen and Lucas gulp and remain silent. "Thought so. Now off to the dungeon you go until I decide on a suitable punishment for you." Cocoon sighs, looking off to the side.

Anna backs her face up a bit before opening her mouth. "Excuse me, King Cocoon. But we're not in the wrongs here." She says in a firm tone.

"I don't listen to outsiders." The Cloyster sighs once more.

“What!? But you have to listen to them, your highness!” Norah shouts her way through the conversation as sorrow forms across her face. “Those guys harassed me and my daughter over an extremely high price! It needs to be addressed! Please!”

Cocoon groans, continuing to look off to the side. He seems to be staring at a portrait of him being next to another Cloyster happily within an grassy area. “I don’t talk to troublemakers either. Take them to the dungeon, guards.” The shiny Cloyster says, his eyes narrowing at the picture. Sheer and the guards nod before forcing Iris and the others to head toward their right, going down a big hallway. Everyone restrain from their grasp, Norah pleading the king to listen to her as Cocoon continues to stare at the portrait. *You were the closest friend I’ve ever had, Senator Brisk...I just wish you were still alive, pal...* Cocoon thinks before directing his attention to Exo. “Hmm?”

“Your highness, I found this Pokemon Egg with the group. What do you want to do with it?” Exo asks, showing the shiny Cloyster the egg. Cocoon takes a look at the egg before shrugging.

“I suppose just set it on my bed for the time being. I may have it cook for the royal feast I’ll dine on later tonight.”

Exo bows down at the king. “Yes, your majesty.”

Anna flickers her ear, hearing what the king’s said as she gasps in terror. “No! Not the egg! PLEASE DON’T EAT THE EGG!” She yells while being taking away.

“Shut it, Ninetales!” One of the guards says, pushing her forward in the hallway as Exo floats to his left. He seems to be heading to a stairway leading upstairs with the Pokemon Egg. Cerise is watching him, whimpering from the thought.

I hope we can find a way out of this kingdom as soon as possible. Cerise thinks as he gulps quietly. *Egg eating and imprisonment are not my forte.* He then goes to follow the group while remaining hidden.

. . .

The group end up being in a mostly dark area of the castle, with little to no light being shown. Four prison cells are shown within the group’s view, two being on the right while the other two on the left. The guards put the eleven Pokemon in their prison cells: Mark, Natalie, Claire and Jimmy are in the first cell. Lucas, Ashen, and Anna are in the second cell. And Iris and the other three are in the third cell. The inside of the cells look old and dusty, containing cylinder shaped bars and brick walls on the opposite side of the bars.

One of the guards closes the prison doors for all three of the cells and locks it. Anna snarls and tries to use Flamethrower on the bars but fire didn’t come out of her mouth. She glances at Sheer, knowing that he’s the one preventing it. “There’s nothing you could do, prisoner. So stop

trying to resist.” Sheer says with a grin. “And even if I’m not around, these bars would take more than an Flamethrower attack to break you free.”

“Ugh. How are you doing this, anyway? Preventing us from using our moves?” Anna asks. Sheer laughs humbly as the others look at him.

“Oh you silly, silly Ninetales. I don’t tell my enemies my secrets. Nor prisoners.” Sheer turns to look at two Cloyster guards beside him while Anna glares at him. “I’ll be returning back to the king. You two guard the cells. Alright?”

The guards nod at him. “Yes sir.” The two guards say, one standing firm while the other looks rather shaky. Sheer then smirks and floats off to the exit of the dungeon along with the other guards, minus the two that’re remaining in the dungeon.

Iris sighs heavily while Lucas walks back and forth constantly. “Oh man, oh man. We’re trapped on this land! Only to be imprisoned!” Lucas says in a worried tone. Anna pats the Furret on his back.

“Don’t worry, Lucas. We’ll find a way out of here.” Anna says, trying to cheer him up.

Iris rolls her eyes. “Well, we would’ve found our way out of this land if it weren’t for the dumbass that thought THROWING MY CALLER ACROSS THE OCEAN WAS A GOOD IDEA!”

Anna snarls. “Oh shut it. At least Lucas isn’t a jerk like you.”

The Dragonite grips the bars. “At least I HAVE FLIPPING COMMON SENSE!” She yells.

“Whatever, Iris!” Anna rolls her eyes at the Dragonite.

“Can you two SHUT UP!?” The first Cloyster guard shouts, glaring at the Ninetales and Dragonite. The two Pokemon huff and look away. The second guard raises his brow at the two, giving them the ‘What the heck?’ treatment.

The rest of the crew converse with each other, trying to cheer each other up and hope things will be fine as Iris turns toward the three Pokemon she’s with, sighing heavily. “Sorry about all that. We’re just...not getting along right now. To put it simply, heh heh.” Iris says, forming a bead of sweat by the side of her face while having her hand behind her head.

The old Cloyster blinks at the Dragonite. “I...see.” The old Cloyster says, shrugging awkwardly.

“The name’s Iris. My crewmates are Anna, Lucas, Ashen, Jimmy, Mark, Natalie and Claire. A...not-so pleasure to meet you.”

"I see. The name is Brook and this is my daughter, Norah. And my granddaughter, Azure." Brook, the old Cloyster, nods his head slowly. "A pleasure to meet you, too...And sorry that you ended up in this situation as we have."

"Eh...We'll find a way out of it, eventually." Iris says, shrugging. Azure tilts her head slightly.

"How did you all end up in this kingdom, anyway?" Azure asks curiously. Brook and Norah become curious as well.

"Yeah...how?" Norah agrees.

"Probably the same way I ended up in this kingdom, too." A male voice says out of nowhere, joining in on the conversation. The gang stops conversing and looks at the voice's location.

"Huh? Who said that?" Mark says, blinking at the location of the voice. Iris and the three Pokemon look as well. Everyone is staring at the fourth cell, containing a Pokemon leaning against the wall on the ground. The Pokemon happens to be a Lucario, having his ears down and staring at the ground depressingly. Brook floats close to the cell next to his, showing a surprised look on his face.

"Another Pokemon that isn't the Shellder line in this kingdom?" Brook says confusedly. "...It has been awhile since I've seen a different species here, come to think of it..."

Norah thinks for a moment before staring at the Dragonite. "Again, how did you and your crew end up here?" Norah asks.

"Yes...The same goes for the Lucario, too." Brook agrees.

"Well you see, we were setting sail across the sea when all of the sudden, a huge wave came by and wiped away our ship..." Iris says, shrugging.

"Which led us to a shipwreck." Jimmy speaks, forming a sweatdrop while staring down at the ground. "We're trapped on this unknown land due to the wreck and we found a pathway leading us to Cloy Town and...got in this situation." The Heracross scratches the back of his head.

"I see." Brook says before taking his eyes on the Lucario. "And what about you, sir?"

The Lucario lifts his head up, leaning it against the wall. "Me? I just happened to be lost on this land, and found this kingdom after a long while of traveling." The Lucario says in a soft tone, sighing heavily. "I thought this place would be calm and serene after the journey I had. But I was wrong. The Cloyster guards immediately arrested me just because I look like a different Pokemon."

"I see..."

"Trent would be my name, if you were wondering." The Lucario, Trent, looks at Brook with his sorrowful red eyes. Brook stares back and looks down.

"Well Trent, Iris and the rest of you...I'm sorry that you all went through such a harsh time right now." Brook sighs. "I...I swear that the kingdom didn't used to be this way. Arresting Pokemon that don't look like our kind, and arresting those who oppose things that're rightfully wrong."

"Oh?" Anna says with curiosity floating in her head.

"Yes. Cocoon used to be a nice, caring king. Making good decisions that'll benefit not only Cloy Town but the town this castle is in: Ster Town."

"So what happened?" Iris asks, leaning against the wall.

"One day, Cocoon's childhood friend and senator, Senator Brisk, was assassinated during the king's Cloyster Ceremony speech." Norah says, looking to the side. "We don't know who assassinated him, but he at least saved the king's life during so." Norah begins to form tears from her eyes. "And because of that dreadful day...even to the senator's funeral, the king wasn't himself...and it...became apparent after he has a Cloyster named Sheer became the new senator to lead his guards." Norah whimpers, nudging her face against the wall. "Cocoon began to restrict different Pokemon from entering the kingdom for no reason, increases the pricing to become higher in Cloy Town in favor of benefitting Ster Town's marketing more instead of letting the pricing be balanced like before, and he punished those who opposed his decisions." Norah then begins to cry as Brook and Azure go to comfort her. Iris and the others stare at the Cloyster in sorrow.

"So this Brisk guy being dead is the reason why the king made the kingdom like this?" Iris asks. Norah slowly looks at her, nodding shakily.

"Y-Yes...I miss seeing my daughter play outside with her friends. Even those from Ster Town. And I miss chatting with my friends, without feeling like I've done something wrong." Norah sniffles, Azure nuzzling her as she nuzzles back.

"Cocoon is making rules to suit his own needs...not everyone else. Ster Town is benefited because it's the town that he was born in. That's the only reason, as far as I know." Brook says, shaking his head while closing his eyes.

Anna sighs heavily, shaking her head as well. "That's a shame. He shouldn't let the kingdom be unstable just because a close friend of his is dead. That's not right at all!" Anna exclaims, putting her paw down. "We have to do something about it!" Iris lifts her brow at the Ninetales across from her.

"We? Thought you didn't want to work alongside me anymore." Iris says, folding her arms.

"I'm sorry. Correction: Me, the crew, the Lucario and the Cloyster family *besides* Iris will do something about it." Anna glares at the Dragonite. Trent blinks and looks at the Ninetales.

"Whoa now. I'm not involved in this. I just wanted to be free from this prison, that's all." Trent says, scratching the back of his head nervously.

Iris and Anna glare at the Lucario and say, "The only way out *IS* to fix the issues here. So you're involved, regardless!". The second guard yelps from the two's banter as the two look and snarl at each other, leaving Norah, Azure, Brook and Trent to sweatdrop.

"Hey! WHAT DID I SAID!?" The first Cloyster guard yells again, gritting his teeth angrily at the two.

Talk about drama between the two, I must say... Trent thinks, raising his brow at them.

Later on, a bunch of Cloyster guards enter the dungeon area. Sheer is in front of the guards as he says, "Get out of your cells. The king would like to see you all.". The guards unlock the cell doors and force everyone to exit out of them, pushing them towards the exit and such. Trent groans from the pushing as he moves.

"I'm moving, I'm moving." The Lucario says, rolling his eyes. Sheer floats next to the Lucario, whispering something to him. Anna notices Sheer being near him, tilting her head curiously.

Hmm...odd. The Ninetales thinks as she and the others exit out of the prison. Behind a decaying statue of a Cloyster wielding a spear lies Cerise poking his head out.

Huh. An unstable kingdom was formed because of a fallen friend, leading the king to become corrupted due to sorrow and grief, I assume. Poor fella. Cerise thinks in his head, getting out of the hiding spot. He then follows the group. *I have to think of a good opportunity to save them. One way or another.*

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Everyone is at the center area of the castle again. Sheer and the guards bow their heads at the king before lifting them back up. Cerise is hiding within a vase, spying on everybody cautiously.

Sheer clears his throat before he speaks. "Your highness, tell these ruthless rulebreakers what you're planning to do to them." Sheer says calmly.

"Rulebreakers? Really? That's the best of a insult you could come up with?" Claire says, giggling at the Cloyster. Sheer glares at the Shinx before smirking.

"I got disgusting words to say about your kind, little Shinx. So it's best if you seal your yaps right there."

"Oh? Snarky much, I see?"

"You're no better. Talking back to adults like that, missy."

Claire grins deviously. "You'll *need* an adult after I'm through with you, though."

Sheer blinks in surprise. "What in the--"

"Ahem!" Cocoon says, clearing his throat to interrupt the two. "After some considerations on your unnecessary actions for breaking the rules, especially those who aren't allowed in the kingdom, I'll have to...enslave you instead."

"ENSLAVE!?" The group all shout in confusion. Cerise raises his brow in response.

En-Enslavement!? What the heck!? The blob thinks to himself.

"Yes. Enslaving you all to doing work until you die or I become bored of your presence." Cocoon says, staring down at the group.

"Whoa whoa whoa. You can't just enslave us over a *NeverMeltIce!*" Natalie shouts, frowning at the shiny Cloyster.

"Yeah!" Mark joins in, agreeing with the Zorua as he forms a fist.

"It's either that or execution." Cocoon says, leading the crew to gasp at what they're witnessing.

Norah tears up, gritting her teeth into frustration. "But your highness, acknowledge the bad decision you're making right now! Don't let your beloved lost friend turn you into someone you're not!" Norah yells, sour liquid streaming down from her eyes rapidly.

Cocoon sighs, looking off to the side. "I don't want to hear it, troublemaker. Now guards, take the outsiders to do outside work."

Sheer bows his head. "Yes, your majesty." The large barbed Cloyster glances at the guards holding the group hostage. "You heard the king." The guards nod, taking Iris and the crew outside along with Trent. The crew struggles against the forceful grasp by the guards as Cerise secretly follows them.

Cocoon looks down at Norah and the other two Pokemon sternly. "As for you three, you'll do heavy duty work inside of my castle. Understood?"

"I-I...ugh..." Norah says, looking down before the guards inside get beside them. *Oh dear Arceus, I...I wish for this madness...to end...*

End of Chapter 14.