

Chapter 26: Cocoon the Shiny Cloyster.

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The sky looks as clear as day, the sun gracing the Pokemon on Solark with light. Flying Types such as Wingull and Altaria are soaring in the air, enjoying the cool breeze wind given by nature. Soaring alongside the air however, are two black helicopters with the rather fancy-looking letters 'OP' spreading throughout the entrance doors. The choppers are aligned side by side, gradually increasing the distance from each other. Two Weaviles are seen piloting the choppers separately, adjusting the wheels to drive them cautiously.

Within one of the vehicles are the Units, resting casually on the seats while communicating with one another. A couple of Bisharps and Weaviles are beside the Units, wielding black spears and staring sternly across the interior of the chopper. Fiona folds her arms, smirking in delight while moving her legs back and forth.

"Unevolving feels so satisfying. The freedom, the passion, and the appreciation of it all!" Fiona exclaims, waving her hand around. "It gives me so much confidence in myself. No peer pressure to wanting to evolve, nor do I feel worthless because I'm seen as 'weak.' Unlike some folks here..." The Sneasel gazes at Ebony sitting across her, grinning deviously.

Ebony rolls her eyes. "You might as well be considered weak for bragging about it every single time." She responds.

"Oh you just don't see my point of view on evolution."

Ebony raises her brow. "Uh, that's the other way around."

Fiona looks at her white claws. "Whatever. Point is, I believe Pokemon should choose to evolve or not evolve, and feel satisfied with their decision. Be happy with your decision instead of evolving because everyone else is doing it. Or because it's a way to 'get stronger.'"

"Definitely not what I heard from you earlier."

"Agreeing with the Grovyle here." Gonel says, joining in on the conversation while being besides Ebony.

Fiona folds her arms and huffs. "Well excuse me, I was exercising this thing called 'preference.' And I'm pretty sure that everyone has one."

"Yeah? And you were treating that preference like it's a fact."

"Well you were the one boasting about wanting to evolve, though!"

Ebony grits her teeth angrily, closing her eyes. "For the last time: I wasn't. I told myself that I'll get stronger and ended up evolving during training."

"And you chose to evolve just to get stronger, right?" Fiona raises her brow while smirking, leaning her head forward.

Ebony glances at the Sneasel. "Yes. I've been telling you this multiple times before."

"Hmph. Then that further proves my point on why I preferred *unevolving*." Fiona looks away smiling while Ebony sweatdrops.

Even though I provided legitimate reasons for why I evolved. Ebony thinks before looking away as well. "Sure, whatever."

Meanwhile, Brad is sitting besides Helena and Leon, rubbing his chin tensely as he stares down at the ground. "Hope we return back to the O.P. House soon." He says, his tail tapping on the seat anxiously. "My sister could be waiting outside of the school endlessly during this kind of weather. Having to endure that dreadful heat while I'm gone..."

Helena pats the Breloom gently on the back, smoothing his back with her tail. "Relax, Brad. I'm certain your sister will be fine." She says in a soft tone, Leon nodding to agree with the Milotic.

Brad glares at the Milotic. "Fine? You can never tell in a world like this. Where she could potentially ride home with some stranger because I'm taking too long. Or worse, kidnapped!"

"With you thinking that way all the time, that scenario will most likely happen."

"Helena. Don't you feel paranoid about something happening to your love ones? Something you don't want to *face* nor *think*, but you just can't help but think anyways?" Brad grips the seat, his face filled with concerns everywhere.

Helena looks to the side and shrugs. "Yes. I do...*Sometimes*. It's why I try to look at the positive outcomes of things rather than always seeking the negatives."

"You don't say..."

The Milotic looks back. "Although, if you're this concerned about your sister, then why haven't you homeschool her?"

Brad looks down, his mushroom hat-like head casting a shadow over his face. "I...would rather not do that."

"Why's that?"

“...” Brad remains silent, continuing to stare down at the ground. Helena notices the look on his face, acknowledging the sorrow forming throughout it.

“...Nevermind the question, then.” Helena looks away, feeling as though she’s done something she regrets.

As everyone continues onward with their conversation, Mystery turns to his right, looking at the shiny shell-less Cloyster next to him. “...So I’ve been thinking lately...” Mystery says, leading the Cloyster to look at him curiously. “...About the court’s decision to imprison you.” The Sceptile stares at Cocoon sternly, his yellow eyes giving the Cloyster chills. “I’m going to persuade the court to reduce your sentence to prison.” Cocoon gazes back at him in confusion as he continues. “After what happened yesterday, seeing how willing you were to do what’s right for your kingdom, I feel like reducing your sentence would give you a second chance at redemption. From how you reacted to those you love, I see you as an good person, Cocoon...You may speak, by the way.”

Cocoon sighs as he looks away. “You don’t have to do that for an awful Pokemon...” The Cloyster says softly, staring at the wall besides him. “...I deserve the longer sentence...”

“I’m persuading them, anyway. Because you don’t deserve it. Solely by the fact that you feel guilty for your decision. You feel ashamed. You...*regret* treating your kingdom in a cruel and unjustifying manner.” The Cloyster slowly looks back at Mystery. “Not many criminals the SU arrested felt that regret from the unlawful decision they made. Hence why, I’m willing to help you.”

“...” Cocoon sighs once more and looks up at the ceiling, remaining silent throughout the remainder of the trip. Mystery stares at him for a moment before looking off to the side, holding his hands together as he gazes at the helicopter windows.

Soon, helicopter noises come to an halt, everyone stopping their communication. “We’re here.” Mystery states, getting up from his seat and carrying the Cloyster. Everyone begins to look out of the helicopter, noticing that it lands behind an enormous, big house.

The back of the house has about four pillars aligning side by side, several windows covered from behind the pillars, and two largely conjoint doors. The group even sees the other helicopter besides theirs, the two choppers themselves being next to other buildings behind the house. The house itself is also colored white, looking as though it’ll be smooth and soft to touch. Everyone is under the house’s shadow due to the sun shining its rays.

“Excuse me, you all.” Brad says, moving past the group and being the first to exit out of the helicopter. Everyone else follows along, the other Bisharps and Weaviles leaving the second chopper as well. Cocoon scans the area he’s in, noticing some group of Pokemon running on the sidewalk casually while a car passes by them. This leads him to realize that he’s in some type of city. Everyone walks towards the red doors, seeing two Bisharp guards standing firm

with their black spears in front of it. The guards see the group of Pokemon and open the doors for them, getting besides the doors afterwards. The two guards then close the doors behind the group after they've entered.

Cocoon gasps softly to himself, gazing at the interior of the place. He admires the amount of decorations and portraits the house has, with the house itself being colored light brown. He also sees the numerous amounts of Pokemon from different kinds passing by him and the others in a busy pace. Those Pokemon include Druddigons and Conkeldurrs. There're also some virtual man-made creatures with fuchsia heads and yellow eyes socializing with some bipedal creatures with large tusks on their faces and medium-sized red eyes: Porygon-Z and Haxorus would suit as names for the two respective Pokemon.

The Cloyster notices the amount of paperworks, luggages, and other materials being carried by the Pokemon. Each Pokemon in the building is going from place to place, some occasionally saying hello to the Savior Unit before rushing off towards another direction. Soon, the group comes to another halt, leading Cocoon to look ahead of him.

"Hmm?" Cocoon says, staring at a brown counter in front of him and the group. Multiple Pokemon such as Haxorus, Garchomps, and Heatmors are roaming behind the counter and conversing with other Pokemon by them. The group's main focus, however, is a purple feline creature with a scythe-like tail, green eyes, and has long violet markings above her eyes: Purrloin.

The Purrloin sits on a chair behind the counter, holding her hands together in a professional manner. She also has black glasses with clear lens as well, smiling at the group softly. "Welcome back to the Official Protection House, Units." She says in a calm, polite tone.

Fiona snickers and puts her arm on the counter, staring at the Purrloin. "Molly! Glad to see you too, girl!" The Sneasel yells, leading the Purrloin to feel awkward from her response.

"I...see that someone is happy to see me...again." Molly shrugs.

"Oh excuse my loudness, Molly. I'm just so happy to see another unevolved Pokemon in this building. You know how the majority of the Pokemon working for the government are all fully evolved or close to fully evolving, you know?"

"Yes. I am well aware of that." The Purrloin struggles to smile once more.

"I'm just glad that I'm not the only one being grateful with my unevolved stage, and not feeling pressured to evolve." Fiona puts her claw against her mouth, attempting to whisper to Molly. "Unlike that Grovyle over there." She says, looking at Ebony.

Ebony folds her arms, squinting her eyes at the Sneasel. "You know that I can hear you, right?"

Fiona giggles in delight at the Grovyle while Molly smiles awkwardly at the two Pokemon, sweatdropping. "Well anyway, it's good to see you Units returning back from your duties." Molly says, adjusting her glasses as she looks at the group. She notices Mystery carrying the shiny shell-less Cloyster in his possession. "I see that there's someone else with you all."

Mystery nods. "Yes. This Cloyster's name is Cocoon. He committed a crime yesterday that involved him performing illegal actions towards his people in the Cloyster Kingdom." Mystery explains to Molly. "Actions such as keeping one town wealthy while letting the other go into poverty, as well as cruel punishments towards those questioning the unjust laws in the kingdom."

Molly stares at the Cloyster, displeased by the explanation. "I see. I suppose I shouldn't be surprised that criminals always do something to ruin others' lives." She shakes her head. "A pity, I say."

Cocoon looks off to the side in guilt as the Sceptile continues speaking. "Anyway, notify the authorities about the Units bringing in a new criminal here. I'll take this fella to the Recovery Center and have his injuries get patched up."

"Alright. I'll get in contact with them shortly."

Mystery nods at the Purrloin as Brad goes to walk towards a Garchomp besides the Purrloin, setting his hand onto the counter. "Tell the government leaders that Brad the Breloom has to depart from any incoming missions today. I need to pick up my younger sister from school and drive her home safely." He says to the hammerhead shark.

"Alright but...Couldn't you contact someone you know to pick up your sister?" The Garchomp questions him.

Brad glances at the Garchomp. "I'd rather be the responsible brother and pick her up myself rather than letting anyone else. I don't trust anyone else to do it."

The Garchomp stares at the Breloom confusedly for a moment before navigating his arm to the Caller next to him. "Alright, sir." Brad adjusts his backpack before taking his leave.

Soon, the rest of the Units separate from each other, going off to do some business in their lives while waiting on their next mission. Except for Ebony, who follows her brother towards a hallway to the left of the counter.

Cocoon gazes around the hallway, staring at the many doors that leads to offices and some of the Pokemon entering through those doors. *Huh...never thought that I would get a chance to see the inside of the OP House.* Cocoon thinks to himself, astonishment sprawling throughout his facial expression. *Wish it wasn't from committing a terrible crime, though.* The Cloyster sighs, looking forward afterwards.

Mystery then turns to the right, stopping in front of two red doors. Cocoon looks up and notices a sign labeling 'Recovery Center for Criminals' above the doors. The three walk toward the doors, Ebony pushing the doors open for Mystery to enter inside.

As the three enter, Cocoon sees the inside of the center; An open space place filled with numerous amounts of doctors and nurses, roaming from one direction to the next, socializing with several patients and escorting one of them to another room. Mystery walks towards a wide counter, seeing a Clefable being behind the counter and other materials.

"Good afternoon, sir. How may I assist you?" The Clefable asks in a soft, feminine tone.

The Sceptile holds up the Cloyster, allowing the Clefable to get a better look at him. "I would like this Cloyster to have his injuries fixed, please. He's gotten his shell crushed by someone and it would be great if his shell gets repaired." He answers.

The Clefable takes out a clipboard and pencil from behind the counter and writes on the paper attached. "And what might his name be?"

"Cocoon the Cloyster."

The Clefable nods. "Alright. The last room in the second hallway after entering the one to your left should be available to use, sir." She points to a hallway where a doctor has entered through two black doors.

"Thanks." The three Pokemon then heads to the doors, opening them with ease and continuing forward. Cocoon looks around the white hospital-like area he's in, noticing the amount of rooms being filled with injured Pokemon and doctors treating their wounds as well. He also sees some conversation being made between other doctors from each side.

So if this center is for injured criminals, then there's one for those that aren't criminals, right? Cocoon thinks. *It would make sense, if that's the case...* As the three Pokemon are about to enter inside another hallway, the two doors in front of it burst open, leading Cocoon to yelp. He sees two gray humanoid creatures with four muscled arms grasping onto a yellow bipedal creature with several black stripes on his neck and a red orb at the tip of his tail: Machamps and Ampharos. The Machamps are shown trying to hold the Ampharos still as they pass by the group.

"Everything we do in life does not matter! Because *they* will come back to get us! THEY I SAY, THEY!!!" The Ampharos shouts, screaming relentlessly. The Ampharos and Machamps eventually enter the door, no longer being seen by the three Pokemon as the scream fades away. Cocoon stares at the door confusedly, unsure of what just happen.

"Welp. That just happened." Ebony says bluntly, looking at Mystery. "Let's continue onwards. Not like hearing crazy Pokemon talking is new to us, anyways."

"Agreed." Mystery replies, continuing onwards in towards the designated hallway. Cocoon looks at the ground, his mind circulating with thoughts and concerns about what happened earlier. After entering the second hallway, the three soon come to the end of it, encountering the last room. Ebony tries to open it but couldn't. "...Oh right. I forgot that doctors and nurses lock the doors on criminals."

Ebony facepalms as Mystery sweatdrops, the Sceptile laughing nervously. "For a leader of the Savior Unit, you sure tend to forget things." Ebony says.

"My mistake, Ebony." The Sceptile then turns around to look at a couple of Watchog doctors leaning against the wall, most likely taking their breaks. "Hey, could one of you unlock this door for us? The nurse at the front told me that this room is available for this patient to be in."

The Watchogs look at Mystery and one of the nods. "Sure, sir!" One of the Watchogs says, immediately walking towards the door with a key in hand. He goes to unlock the door and opens it for the Sceptile.

"Thank you." Mystery enters inside of the room.

"Anything for the leader of the best government team in the world!" The Watchog smiles warmly, Ebony's face scrunches from the Watchog's response.

Suuure... The Grovyle thinks to herself, following her brother. The inside of the room isn't much to admire: Just two beds, a curtain between the beds, lamps on the shelves, and a window that looks similar to a jail window.

Mystery sets the Cloyster on the first bed, being gentle throughout the process. "Alright, Cocoon. I'll go talk with the authorities about your crime and...We'll just see from there, I guess." He says to the Cloyster, smiling warmly at him. Cocoon looks at him, sorrow spreading throughout his face. "...If I'm unable to convince them, Cocoon. Then just...hope that you'll live to seek another chance in life. Alright?"

The Cloyster nods at the Sceptile as Ebony looks at him. "Wait, convince them on what exactly?"

Mystery looks back. "Reducing his inevitable sentence."

"Why?"

"He felt remorse. Something that rarely any criminals do when they committed a crime. He let his deceased friend lead him to making these unlawful decisions. And while it was mainly that

Sheer fella being the one manipulating him, he was still involved in the entire crime scene, nonetheless.” Mystery explains.

“Well brother,” Ebony shrugs while folding her arms. “Good luck telling the court that. They rarely care if the criminal felt bad for the crime they’ve committed. The sentence will last however they feel like making it depending on the crime. And from what I heard from Cocoon...” Ebony stares at the Cloyster. “His crime will most likely be a life sentence.”

Cocoon looks away, guilt showering his face. “That’s why I’ll become his lawyer. I’ll do whatever I can to defend him from having a life sentence.” Mystery replies with confidence in his voice.

“Do you even know how to be a lawyer? From what I know of, you confused a bay for a town. How can you be one if you couldn’t remember what a bay nor a town looks like?”

Mystery scratches the side of his head, sweatdropping. “I’ll...find a way to defend him. Try to stay positive, Ebon.”

Ebony nods slowly while closing her mouth in a uncomfortable manner. “Whatever you say, brother.”

Mystery turns towards the Cloyster. “Anyway, here’s me hoping that things will go well for you, Cocoon.” He smiles. “I respect those that know they’re doing something wrong and wanting to improve from it.”

Mystery and Ebony then turn around to exit out of the room, turning to the right and walk away. “By the way brother, don’t call me Ebon, please.” Ebony says as her voice fades away from Cocoon, the Watchog closing the room’s door afterwards. Cocoon sighs and remains still on his scattered shells, staring up at the ceiling.

...Silence. That’s what Cocoon hears at the moment. Just silence, with some occasional winds here and there from the outside window. The Cloyster breathes calmly, feeling as though everything around him is decaying. The room he’s in. The bed he’s on. Everything feels dead, nothing lively or cheery about it.

“I see that I’m not the only one digging a deep hole in my life.” A calm voice says, breaking the silent barrier within the room. Cocoon blinks curiously and looks besides him, seeing a curtain that half covers someone else that’s on the second bed. He sees a ladybug-like creature with two large blue eyes and four black arms: Ledian. The Ledian appears to be missing one antennae and one wing, having bandages covering the two of those body parts.

The Ledian sighs heavily, staring off at the ceiling with the look of dread and sorrow. “The difference is: I see no hope in me getting out of prison after what I’ve done.” The Ledian laughs softly. “What am I saying? There was no hope for me to begin with...”

Cocoon begins to slowly open his mouth. "Ex...cuse me, ma'am." He says hesitantly, catching the Ledian's attention. "I'm...curious as to what you've done. That got you here, too." The ladybug stares at him, silence beginning to form between the two for a moment. "I-I mean, you don't have to. I understand..."

"...I tried starting a war." She answers.

"Really?" Cocoon looks at her in interest.

"Yes...In another continent." She looks to the side. "It was over an ideology on carnivorous Pokemon. You know, the ones that rely on meat to survive."

"Yes. What about them, if I may ask?"

"...My idea was to kill them all. Thinking that it'll be the solution to benefiting the society we're living in."

"I...see." Cocoon forms a concerned look on his face. "That's a terrible way of thinking that'll make society better."

"I know. *But my past self disagreed.*" The Ledian grips her fist. "I was so driven by that ideology. So convinced that the carnivores are the problem. To the point of killing the innocent ones and even...harming those that I loved."

"Oh dear..."

"After realizing how wrong that ideology was, and how much damage I've caused because of the mindset, I...tried to kill myself." She sighs heavily. "But failed because of the government soldiers arriving at my location in time to stop me." The Ledian goes to look at the palm of one of her hands, staring solemnly. "I screamed 'Kill me! Just kill me! Just end me with your weapons right now!' But...that never happened. I wished it did a few months ago. And...I still kind of do, to be honest..."

"...I'm..." Cocoon looks at the Ledian. "I'm sorry that you're going through such a cruel time right now. The regret...the guilt...I know how exactly that feels."

"I had a feeling that you would. Seeing as how you're under this prison center, too." The Ledian gazes at the ceiling. "I heard something about manipulation being involved in your reasoning here. Is it true?" She asks.

Cocoon nods. "Indeed, it is true. I let my grief over a close friend of mine linger throughout my entire life, leading me to feel unmotivated to rule the kingdom properly. And it became apparent when a Senator I thought I could trust, Sheer, fed me with lies that led to me mistreat the kingdom..." Cocoon looks up at the ceiling. "After knowing all of that thanks to nine outsiders in

the kingdom, I decided to turn myself in when the Savior Unit arrived. Even though I was being manipulated, the damage I've caused on the kingdom was unjust regardless of my grief..."

"I see. You...used to be a king?"

"Yes. I gave that title to someone else who'll...rule the kingdom better than I could."

"..." The Ledian shifts her body to the side, having it face towards the Cloyster. "Cinella."

Cocoon looks at the Ledian confusedly. "Hmm?"

"My name. Cinella."

"Oh. Cocoon is mine. It's a pleasure to meet you, Cinella."

Cinella weakly smiles at the Cloyster. "Which is unfortunate. Since this'll be the one and only time I'll see you because of the fate the government will give me. No doubt."

Cocoon looks off to the side. "I mean, there...could be a chance that they may not punish you too severely."

"A terrorist not receiving life sentence nor death row? Sounds like fantasy talk, to me." Cinella shrugs.

"...Well...Can't say I didn't try to bring some light to our situation..."

...Another silence afterwards. Not much sound can be heard between the two for a brief moment. Then soon, the door opens and two Clefables enter inside along with a Watchdog. The three Pokemon having nursing utensils in their possessions.

"We'll attend to your wounds, Cocoon. Do something sneaky and our guards will not hesitate to attack. Understood?" The Clefable says cautiously. Cocoon notices about three Bisharp guards being behind the group of Pokemon, nodding at the three calmly. They soon get close to him, proceeding to fix his shell.

One of the Bisharp guards glares at Cinella, the Ledian looking back before sighing. "I'm useless. No need to worry about me being a threat." She says to them before turning her body towards the wall.

Four Days Later...

"Ugh..." Cocoon says, struggling to lift his body up. He's in the same room with Cinella, on the same bed, attempting to test out his movement in the stitched shiny Cloyster shell. Cinella watches him testing the shell, giving him a look of discomfort.

"Your face..." She pauses for a moment, seeing Cocoon's facial expression looking off when attempting to float. "It looks like you're constipated."

"I'm just...trying to...lift!" He falls yet again, groaning in disappointment. "Ugh! It's been four days and I'm still unable to float like a normal Cloyster!" He shouts, becoming frustrated by the attempts. Cinella sits on the edge of her bed.

"It's alright, Cocoon. I'm sure that you'll be able to float again." She smiles. "Our injuries take time to heal, you know?"

"Well, this injury of mine is taking even longer to heal!" He sighs heavily. "I swear, when I'm able to float again, I'll try my best to avoid having my shell body crushed again."

"Good idea." The Ledian giggles softly.

Soon, the two hear the door open, looking at the door's location. They see Mystery walking towards Cocoon, with two Bisharp guards standing in front of the door. Cocoon looks up at the Sceptile, seeing the stern look on his face.

"Cocoon." Mystery says. "Your court case is about to begin."

The Cloyster looks down at the bed, sighing softly before nodding at the Sceptile. "Yes sir." He says calmly, taking his attention towards Cinella. "It was nice knowing you, Cinella. If...this is the last time we'll see each other then..." Cocoon smiles warmly at her. "This is goodbye."

"..." Cinella remains silent for a moment before nodding herself, slowly smiling back. "It was indeed a nice talk...even though it was mostly about why we're here."

"Ha, true, I suppose..."

Cinella waves at Cocoon as Mystery picks him up, escorting him out of the room.

"Goodbye...Cocoon..." She says, slowly looking down at the ground as sorrow begins to spread throughout her face. Knowing that she...may not see the light of day ever again...

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End of Chapter 26.