

The Gift of Music

"King Bertrand! The palace is under siege!"

"New Hyrim, I presume?"

"Yes, my liege! Their flag matches the one those two enemy spies described."

The Serperior king sighed. "Very well then. Let's show these Hyrimers the full might of the Western Kingdom. Prepare the troops for battle; we're going to war."

As Harrietta and her Pichu friend, Henry, huddled together in fear of the war raging outside the palace, they heard the door to their cell unlock and open.

"Henry, Harrietta, King Bertrand has requested your presence," a guard declared, stepping inside.

Harrietta gulped nervously. "...What for...?"

"He says it's for your protection...and he says your presence calms him."

Harrietta sighed. "So I guess that means the binds go back on, right...?"

"I'm afraid so," the guard nodded, "I must apologize, but it's a matter of security, ESPECIALLY at a time like this."

Harrietta groaned. "Just try not to be too rough...okay?"

Henry and his Meowth friend, Harrietta sat in uncomfortable silence in King Bertrand's secret chamber deep inside the heart of the palace for what seemed like ages. Their paws had been unbound as soon as they were lead inside, which surprised them, especially considering who's presence they were in. Finally, the Serperior monarch spoke, "So...I presume you are aware of what's transpiring outside the palace gates, right?"

Henry and Harrietta simply nodded, averting their eyes.

"I don't suppose you two have any tactical advice to offer."

"No, sadly we don't," Henry admitted, "We were spies, not soldiers. All I can tell you is that we've had access to gunpowder for a few years now...but I'm guessing you probably already know that."

"Indeed," Bertrand nodded.

More silence ensued.

"I know...it may not appear as such, but I've actually grown quite fond of you two, hence why I'm allowing you to stay in the safety of my personal chamber with me until this war blows over," Bertrand explained. "Also know that even though I am confident of victory...I am not heartless. I do not relish the thought of our two armies losing so many lives to each other. This is why I was hoping...you could boost the morale of both myself and my troops."

"With our music, you mean?" Henry asked.

King Bertrand nodded. "Your voices are like no other I've heard in a VERY long time. I do believe, however silly it may come across, that your talent may help us greatly in bringing a quick end to this conflict. Perhaps even a peaceful solution can be reached, if your songs can sooth the hearts of the enemy as well."

Henry and Harrietta looked at each other. They both new they wanted little more than the fighting to stop, so they could work towards their freedom once again. "We'll do our best, King Bertrand," Harrietta bowed.

"Please, no need to curtsy, Miss Harrietta. We are friends, are we not?"

"Of course, I just like being formal, your Majesty."

"So what exactly would you like us to do?" Henry asked.

"I know this is asking a lot of you two...which is why I'll give you a choice in the matter. You can either stay in here with me and wait the conflict out...or, if you two are brave enough...you can be escorted to near the front lines, atop one of the highest watch towers...and share your best performance with the battling soldiers. If you chose the second option, and you perform admirably...I will consider granting you your freedom afterward. But keep in mind...it will be EXTREMELY dangerous. There is a great risk to your lives if you get caught in the crossfire. So...will you accept the risk?"

The two looked at each other again. Freedom...this could be their only chance. "We'll do it," the Pichu and Meowth said in unison.

"I am glad to hear it. I do not envy your task...which is why I am presenting you both with a gift." The superior handed the pair two instruments; a mandolin to Harrietta and a Ukulele to Henry. Both items looked well made and very expensive. "Let these be your companions in your mission. I trust you'll know how to play them well."

"Of course!" Harrietta cheered.

"Thank you, King Bertrand!" Henry was smiling from ear to ear. He'd already grown attached to his gift.

"Good luck, you two, and may whatever gods you believe in watch over you."

To Be Continued...