

OUTER DRENCHED BLUFF

We immediately cut to outside of DRENCHED BLUFF, where MALACHI is reluctantly handing back the TREASURE BAG. We see him grimace as LILEEP scowls in the distance behind him, who is standing next to a re-materializing SHELLOS.

MALACHI

Can we get another chance, *please*?

KEATON

You're reckless. We don't need more of that in our guild.

He scowls at MALACHI, and pulls out the team's items from his own bag. He holds MALACHI's PECHA SCARF out to him.

KEATON

We will notify you when our *licensed* teams find out more about your friend's situation. Good day.

He doesn't leave time for the team to respond, flittering away quickly. MALACHI looks heartbroken behind him. He crumples up on the ground, clearly upset. RUNE reaches out awkwardly, and pats him on the back stiffly. Her lip is still bleeding from the battle earlier. MALACHI takes notice of this.

MALACHI

Oh! Your lip, I almost forgot.

He walks over to a ORAN BERRY BUSH, and pulls off an ORAN BERRY. He squishes through the skin of the berry, and holds RUNE's face in his other paw.

MALACHI

Sit still.

RUNE looks perturbed as he squeezes some juice on the wound.

MALACHI

Oran Berries, they're good for small boo-boos like this. The magical properties they get from growing in a dungeon help promote

cell growth and blood clotting,
and-

He pauses, realizing he's lost her again.

MALACHI

Ah- Sorry. I keep doing that.
Talking a lot again! Hah...

He gets up to start walking home. RUNE follows him. As they walk, MALACHI keeps looking over at RUNE, and asks,

MALACHI

So are you really mute, then? You
aren't just really quiet or
something?

RUNE looks thoughtfully at him. She opens her mouth,

RUNE

hhhhhhh

She just makes a gross sound. MALACHI seems a little surprised.

MALACHI

Well at least you can make sound
again! Yesterday you couldn't talk
at all. In a few weeks I bet
you'll be talking up a storm!

Suddenly, MAELSTROM flashes brightly. MALACHI is frozen in place, caught up in the energy she's exerting.

MAELSTROM

MALACHI MY GOOD FRIEND! I AM
FEELING MUCH BETTER AND WANTED TO
CHECK IN! HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON
YOUR QUEST TO REPAIR THE BALANCE
OF THE WORLD?

MALACHI regains a grip on himself and quickly covers up her stone.

MAELSTROM

I CANNOT SEE, MY CHAMPION!

MALACHI

Please god not now

RUNE waves at her, unsure of what she is witnessing. He winces, and takes his paw off of MAELSTROM. He sighs.

MALACHI

Rune, meet Maelstrom. She's my... Spirit guide? I don't know. She talks a lot about a "grand destiny" for me but doesn't actually know what it is.

MAELSTROM

I AM SURE I WILL REMEMBER IN DUE TIME! AND IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU... RUNE! I AM SORRY THAT MALACHI GAVE YOU THAT NAME.

MALACHI

It's a fine name! She likes it.

MAELSTROM

IT IS A NAME THAT A NERD LOSER WOULD COME UP WITH! AND YOU, MALACHI, ARE A NERD LOSER.

MALACHI

I'm not a nerd loser! Rune, you're with me on this, right?

RUNE, with half-lidded eyes, shrugs and points towards MAELSTROM. She is not, in fact, with him on this. It's a gesture that clearly says "yeah sorry buddy, you're a nerd loser."

MALACHI sighs, clearly beat out.

MALACHI

Well I've made a nerd loser of myself regardless. We flunked the exam. I don't know how I'm gonna get access to the research materials I need to get you home...

A beat as some time passes.

MAELSTROM

I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT. BUT FEAR
NOT! I AM SURE YOU WILL FIND A WAY
TO OVERCOME THIS CHALLENGE!

MALACHI gives a weak smile.

MALACHI
That makes one of us.

RUNE pats his shoulder in support. He nods fiercely.

MALACHI
Yeah! We got this!

HOME

We see RUNE and MALACHI make their way back home in a series of montage panels. They walk through town laughing, cook some food, and MALACHI gives himself a haircut that cuts his mane very short. They head to bed, and we get a clear view of RUNE's grass bed next to MALACHI's shelf bed. MAELSTROM has her own pillow that she "sleeps" on next to MALACHI.

DREAM REALM

RUNE begins to drift off into sleep, and we see her descend through a swirl of colors. She finally finds herself in an expansive field, where above a night sky is decorated with color and light. Rune gazes out, and sees a large, serpentine-like creature a short distance away drinking tea.

REQUIEM
Oh you're here! Hello, hello,
welcome to the dream realm. Tea?

Rune shakes her head to decline, looking perturbed, and REQUIEM says,

REQUIEM
Oh! You can talk here by the way,
the dream realm doesn't affect
your- ah- sore throat.

A beat as this dawns on RUNE, who seems shocked.

RUNE

Oh cool a DREAM REALM, that's really nice. I'm sorry, who are you, and why am I here?

REQUIEM laughs.

REQUIEM

Oh, silly me for not introducing myself, I'm REQUIEM! I've merely been assigned to check in on you. If you can imagine, materializing right in front of you would be much less pleasant. I meant to check in sooner, but your mind had a lot of strain on it already. How have you been faring? Is your new life treating you well?

RUNE

Ohh well, actually, since you mentioned it, this lonely dude dragged me into his house after plucking me out of the ocean, where I almost *drowned*. Oh, and I also have amnesia and maybe my entire family in TREESHROUD FOREST is *dead* or something. I dunno, I can't remember! What do you think?

REQUIEM seems taken aback by this outburst. She sheepishly rubs the back of her head.

REQUIEM

I apologize, the transfer is always a bit bumpy in the beginning. I can guide you to your destination, but I can't promise you'll land exactly in the spot I had intended. My apologies for that.

REQUIEM takes a beat to apologize, before continuing,

REQUIEM

The amnesia though? Yeah, that was vital to the process.

RUNE

Oh it was a *process*, was it?

REQUIEM

Well, yes. See, you aren't actually *supposed* to be here. You got what we professionals call **lost**. It happens to the best of us, you end up somewhere where you shouldn't be, and we have to stick you back somewhere. Preferably somewhere where you can live out the rest of your unfortunately short lifespans.

RUNE

Oh, nice. Cryptic. What am I supposed to do now, then? Eat grass? Yeah, no. I wanna go home.

REQUIEM looks as chipper as before, and with a burst of energy,

REQUIEM

You can go about living your new life however you want, sweetie! Though pursuing your old life is something I would advise against, I'd hate for you to be lost *forever* this time. Think of this as an opportunity to have a second chance at life! Take my word for it, where you were isn't where you need to be for now.

RUNE

How generous of you. As generous as taking my voice away in this "process".

REQUIEM

Is that really what you have a stick in your rear about? I should be getting a "thank you" for this. And here I was going to give you a

little gift! You're very mean to me.

We take a beat as REQUIEM takes a drink of tea. RUNE seems to have quieted down a bit.

RUNE

Gift?

REQUIEM

Well, your aura was... Separated from you, when you got here. It's uncommon, but it happens sometimes to those who are *lost*. I'm afraid you've been a bit frail and, er, useless without it, but I found it! See?

REQUIEM holds up a silver ball of energy laced with some delicate pink highlights. She seems pleased to have recovered it. RUNE looks horrified.

RUNE

That's my... soul...? I think I'm gonna be sick...

REQUIEM

What? No. Souls as a concept don't work like- Nevermind. Consider your aura your "battery" for your powers. Without it, you have no moves, no energy, and no way to communicate.

Bah, I've already spent too much time on this, you're already gonna have a *massive* headache when you wake up.

REQUIEM holds a hand up to RUNE's head, light shining from it.

REQUIEM

Along with your aura, I have a little treat for you. I hope you'll find it useful.

Light overtakes the screen, and we hear REQUIEM's parting remark.

REQUIEM

I'll check in on you in a few weeks.

We see RUNE wake up the next day in a cold sweat, and she screams.

RUNE

GYAAAH-! Ow, what the hell?!

Her eyes widen, and she looks behind her to see she has a new third tail. She then looks up at Malachi who drops a teacup in shock, shattering it on the ground. Her first spoken words.

END OF CHAPTER

CHAPTER 3

TREASURE TOWN

MALACHI and RUNE are seen walking through TREASURE TOWN, talking to several shopkeepers. They are turning away from KECLEON MARKET, looking a little disappointed.

MALACHI

I can't believe nobody's hiring, not even Kecleon Market! I didn't plan for the guild exam to go so poorly. At this rate I'm gonna run out of money really soon...

RUNE seems disinterested in what MALACHI is saying. He turns to her.

MALACHI

I know you said not to ask, but... I've got a lot of questions! The most obvious one is I want to know what you did to get your aura back. Pleeese can you tell me?

RUNE sighs, and finally relents.

RUNE

I don't know. I just had a weird dream I can't really remember, and I woke up with you fussing over me.

MALACHI

You already told me that though!

RUNE

And it seems like it didn't stick because you're still pestering me about it.

MALACHI

Well I can't help it, you woke up screaming with another tail! You're so weird and... strange! I dunno, it's exciting.

RUNE

Cool. Great. Tell me what else is bizarre and out of place with my body.

MALACHI completely misses this cue to stop being rude, and continues.

MALACHI

What else is out of place? Well for starters, you're...

He gestures vaguely at her.

RUNE

What? Oh, not pale and sickly looking? Yeah I've noticed.

MALACHI

No no, that's not it. It's that you're um... Shiny?

RUNE glances down at herself.

RUNE

Like, shiny like greasy?

MALACHI

No! Your coat has a warm color to it, KEOKEO VULPIX usually have cool colored fur. Variation in coat pigment is referred to as "shiny" for its lustrous, almost sparkling sheen.

RUNE

So you're saying I'm a sparkledog?

MALACHI ignores her and continues talking.

MALACHI

Besides that point, there's so much I want to ask you now that you can talk!

RUNE

Huh. Good luck with that, I still don't remember anything.

MALACHI

Ah... Well, you've got to remember your *real* name, at least! What do I call you?

RUNE

You want my name? Hmm... No.

MALACHI

O-Oh! I didn't realize.

(Rune: You can call me *never*, because I'm done answering your stupid questions.

Malachi: Call you...? O-Oh! I'm so sorry, I didn't realize...!)

RUNE cocks an eyebrow, interested to see what MALACHI has to say about this, as his reaction was unexpected.

MALACHI

Augh, asking a fae pokemon for their name, that's so rude of me!

RUNE

Ah?

MALACHI

Well you aren't fairy-type yet,
but lots of fairy-types and
rudimentary fairy-types are
uncomfortable sharing their names.
It's a complicated tradition thing
that I can't believe I just
forgot! Bah, I'm sorry.

RUNE

You are... forgiven?

MALACHI

It's why everyone just calls the
Guildmaster "Guildmaster", people
say he's never told anyone his
real name before!

But, speaking of *types*, let's see
what you got!

RUNE walks away, in the direction of SHARPEDO BLUFF.

MALACHI

Wait, where are you going?

RUNE

What I've "got" is the ability to
walk my little legs wherever I
want. And right now, I want to
water my berries. I'm gonna get a
heat stroke out here.

MALACHI

Alright, but you've gotta show me
at least one ice-type attack! Ooh,
or fairy! Pleeese, I've never
seen a fairy-type move in person!

RUNE

The words coming out of your mouth
don't make any sense.

MALACHI

You know, attacks! Like this.

He immediately zaps a small, nearby plant with electricity.

RUNE

Oh, I see.

I don't do that.

MALACHI

Of course you do! Every pokemon can!

RUNE

I'm afraid you've got a bit of a dud on this one, bud.

She points at herself.

RUNE

Besides, I'm not a circus act, I don't owe you any tricks.

MALACHI

You're not wrong, but... You really should try figuring out how to do them in case we have to battle.

RUNE

Battle? For what? Is that a job skill people need in this town?

MALACHI

Attacks don't have to be used *just* for battling, you know. Lots of pokemon use their abilities for more domestic uses, like fire-types working with the railway, or grass-types working on farms, or even poison-types doing apothecary work!

RUNE

Of course. Then why haven't we found a job since the guild incident?

MALACHI

That's only really because all the other teens got dibs on everything.

RUNE

All the "other teens", implying you're not just a little baby boy. An infant.

MALACHI

I'm not! Clearly, look at me! I'm big and strong. As if you have any room to talk anyway, you look younger than me!

RUNE

Yeah no, I may be a little forgetful, but I know for a *fact* I've got a few years ahead of you. I can feel it in my bones. My aged, brittle bones.

They stop in front of KANGASKHAN'S STORAGE. MALACHI walks up to the counter and is greeted by a friendly looking KANGASKHAN.

CHARLOTTE

I apologize for eavesdropping, but did you say you were looking for work?

MALACHI

Oh- yeah! Do you have any positions?

CHARLOTTE

Oh me? No, I'm afraid not. My wife on the other hand runs the local dojo, and she could always use an extra hand! It's just her, our son, and some help running it right now.

MALACHI

The uh... Dojo?

MALACHI frowns.

MALACHI

I can't say I've... been there.

CHARLOTTE

I promise it's not as rough as it sounds. Tell her I sent you over! You seem like a good kid.

MALACHI

We uh, appreciate it.

The pair walk towards a big, stone building that has an enormous skull on the top of it. MALACHI looks determined, and says,

MALACHI

Lots of pokemon like to come here to hone their skills. I've never been here personally because of, uh, reasons.

MAELSTROM

HE IS A BABY BOY WHO IS AFRAID OF GETTING HIT.

RUNE

That checks out.

MALACHI

No, that's not true! Stop calling me a baby!

MOXIE'S DOJO

They enter the dojo, and RUNE is immediately struck by a young AZURILL that knocks her over. We see from her perspective a Meowth plucking the child off from on top of her, as she scolds the boy.

DIELLE

PAX! What have I told you about running around like that!

She suddenly notices RUNE, and sets the AZURILL down to help her up.

DIELLE

Oh gosh I'm so sorry, are you
alright?

RUNE tries to get up, but is hit with a sudden wave of
dizziness. Her eyes begin to glow a faint purple.

RUNE
D-dizzy...

She squeezes her eyes shut, and a beam of light shoots
behind her. The DIMENSIONAL SCREAM has been triggered.

Everything RUNE sees is dark. She can make out two figures,
but they're too blurry to really see in any capacity. She
suddenly hears,

PAX
H-h-h... **HELP!**

The screams ends as quickly as it began. Rune feels very
groggy as she comes to, seeing a blurry figure looming over
her. She squints to focus, and she hears faint voices above
her.

DIELLE
Is she coming to?

MALACHI
Hold on, I think she's waking up!

MOXIE
I've got this handled.

Suddenly, RUNE is hit with a gush of water over her head.
She jolts awake, yelling.

RUNE
AAGH, what's the big idea?!

She sees that she is surrounded by many pokemon. MALACHI
and the Meowth show the most concern for her well-being,
the rest of the people surrounding her seem to be...
Children? As well as a Nidoqueen holding an empty bucket.

MALACHI
RUNE, are you alright? You just
fainted out of nowhere!

RUNE looks around, and asks,

RUNE

Is that why someone screamed? It's not that big of a deal. I'm fine.

MALACHI tilts his head.

MALACHI

N-no? I don't think anyone screamed, anyway. Are you sure you're alright? Maybe we've been walking in the sun too much today...

RUNE begins to feel a headache coming on.

RUNE

Hghh... Yeah, that's probably it.

DIELLE pats her shoulder, and RUNE flinches in response. DIELLE seems unfazed.

DIELLE

I'll get you some tea! How about you sit down for a minute, you seem exhausted!

She bounds off before RUNE and MALACHI have a chance to respond. MOXIE walks them over to some pillows in a corner, in an area that looks much like a lobby you'd see in a doctor's office. There's magazines strewn about, some toys for children, and a table. They all take a seat, and MOXIE asks,

MOXIE

What brings you two here today?
Looking to train?

MALACHI

Oh no, nothing like-

MOXIE

I'm afraid that we don't have any open rooms right now. My son's been holing himself up in the training room for weeks now. Something about a tournament in the next town over, but he really

should be going out and getting a
job!

MALACHI

Oh, uh- Actually, we just came
here to ask about that. Jobs.

MOXIE seems surprised, and then laughs.

MOXIE

You must really be desperate!
Couldn't find work at the Kecleon
Market?

MALACHI smiles sheepishly.

MALACHI

Nah, they're not hiring...

MOXIE

Well I'm sorry to disappoint, but
you'll only find volunteer work
here. We do offer room and board,
though!

MALACHI

Oh that- that won't be necessary.

RUNE

Uh yeah, gonna pass on that one. I
was under the impression that this
was a *dojo*, not a daycare.

MOXIE laughs again.

MOXIE

Oh the kids? They're just part of
the orphanage, this building
serves both fighting skill and
life skills. I'm lucky that I've
got help as dedicated as Dielle to
help with the kids. Inigo on the
other hand...

As she says this, we can see DIELE in the kitchen pouring
tea. She starts walking towards the crew, when MOXIE talks
about INIGO.

There's a CRASH from the other room. There's a hushed silence for a moment and then a door down the hall flies open and a sandbag spills right in the pathway, right in front of a dazed Dielle.

INIGO

Moom, I think I broke one of the bags again!

MOXIE

Oh for God's sake...

INIGO! What the hell do you think you're doing?!

DIELLE steps over the sand, and delivers the tea to RUNE and MALACHI. They both accept it, and DIELLE sits herself down next to RUNE. She offers her a SMILE, which is met with a look of puzzlement.

DIELLE

I'm sorry about the kids, they just get excited when people come to visit!

She offers out a paw to RUNE.

DIELLE

I'm DIELLE by the way. It's so nice to meet you!

RUNE offers a somewhat forced smile.

RUNE

Yeah, sure.

MOXIE can be heard from the other room, and INIGO walks in through the door trying to evade her.

INIGO

I said I was sorry!

MOXIE

Listen here young man, this is the last time I'm letting you bust up the equipment without repercussions. You are going to find a real job, *and pay me back.*

INIGO

But *Mom!* Dielle doesn't need a
"real job"!

MOXIE

Because *Dielle* actually lifts her
own weight around here. You know
mama and I are always gonna have a
place for you in our pouch, but
you're nearly grown! Look at
MALACHI here, only waltzing into
town last year to find a living
for himself, and he's younger than
you! I just want what's best for
you, pumpkaboo. Just try a day of
job searching with these two?
How's that sound?

INIGO

Not great.

The conversation is interrupted suddenly by a Riolu/Pancham
mix running straight into DIEELLE, burying his face in her
fur.

BRUNO

DIEELLE! Miss DIEELLE do ya know
where PAX is? We was playing hide-
and-seek but he's hiding really
good and now I can't find him!

DIEELLE pulls him away gently.

DIEELLE

I'm sure we can sniff him out!
C'mon, let's go look.

DIEELLE exits the room with BRUNO while RUNE's gaze lingers
with a concerned expression on her face. Her contemplation
is interrupted by MOXIE slapping her back straight into the
stratosphere.

MOXIE

Best of luck job searching, you
lot!

TREASURE TOWN

They exit the dojo, looking a bit dazed from the experience. INIGO refuses to really acknowledge RUNE and MALACHI with eye contact. Wandering aimlessly through town, RUNE's mind seems to still be on the vision from earlier, or more accurately, the current headache she's sporting. Her thoughts are once again interrupted, this time by bumping into a DROWZEE merchant. He turns to look at her, and she starts to feel dizzy.

RUNE (THOUGHTS)

Again?!

This time, her dimensional scream holds much more detail. She stands in front of DROWZEE, who is staring her down with a threatening gaze.

DROWZEE

Didn't you hear me?

RUNE seems intimidated briefly, but takes on a brave stance, when she hears a voice behind her.

PAX

I wanna go home!

She turns and sees PAX, crying and cowering.

DROWZEE

I **said** you better get in there
right now and get that gold, or
I'll make you **forget** all about
home.

DROWZEE prepares a powerful psychic attack, and RUNE flinches downwards to accept the brunt of the blow, but suddenly wakes up.

On the ground, she looks up to see MALACHI, INIGO, and DIELE hovering over her, all of them wearing concerned expressions on their faces except INIGO. She can hear their conversation barely audible over her.

DIELE

Is she okay? I just saw her fall
over and-

MALACHI

I really thought she was fine,
maybe we ought to call it a day-

RUNE

He's in trouble.

They stop their conversation at her interruption.

MALACHI

Huh?

RUNE

PAT or whatever, he's in trouble
and we have to go now.

MALACHI

RUNE, this isn't a weird nightmare
you had, is it?

RUNE is getting increasingly frustrated with MALACHI,
something that DIEELLE tunes into.

DIEELLE

PAX? Where?

RUNE

I dunno! Sharp rocks, mountain-
We're wasting time!

She runs off without them, MALACHI seeming alarmed. DIEELLE
and INIGO look at each other.

DIEELLE

You don't think...?

INIGO

Mt. Bristle or Mt. Horn. Let's put
our bets on Bristle.

They tail after RUNE, leaving MALACHI behind. He looks
around nervously before pursuing them.

MT. BRISTLE

The quartet arrive at the entrance to Mt. Bristle where
RUNE is seen tired and panting. She's holding her head from
an intense headache, looking like she might fall over.

DIELLE

Who should we be looking out for?

RUNE

A DROWZEE. He's missing part of his ear.

MALACHI frowns.

MALACHI

What's up with this, ah, DROWZEE?

RUNE

I... I think I saw him on a wanted outlaw poster? Who cares, he gave me a bad vibe.

(Malachi: An outlaw poster...?
But we didn't look at any of...)

MALACHI frowns, but doesn't argue with her about this. They continue on their way, and start making their way through the dungeon. Along the way they see glimpses of shadows of wild Pokemon.

INIGO

We're wasting time, we don't even know where to go!

RUNE

Well what do you think we should do, just ask one of the *locals*?

With almost comedic timing, the team turns to look at a Spinarak who immediately starts sweating.

MALACHI

Ma'am, do you know where a Drow-

She breaks into a sprint away from the group. Inigo immediately snaps into action chasing after her.

INIGO

She's getting away!

Scaling the wall, she calls out to a Starly and says,

SPINARAK

Exploration team! The jig is up!

STARLY

Not on my watch!

Swooping down, the Starly swipes both RUNE and DIELE with a wing attack, knocking RUNE down while DIELE withstands the attack. Thinking fast, DIELE puts both her paws on the ground and unleashes a THUNDERBOLT in the approximate direction of the Starly. It misses easily, and she seems frustrated.

INIGO

Don't do that, you could hurt someone!

DIELE

It works fine!

INIGO

Like hell it does! You aren't an electric type, you don't have precise control!

As they argue, RUNE gets a grip and stands up. She looks between the Starly and the Spinarak, lost. Coming to swoop in again, the Starly attempts to attack INIGO with a tackle, but he kicks him back up in the air.

INIGO

Blast him with ice, now!

RUNE stands there looking lost, and in her hesitation is hit by a string shot from the Spinarak. Stuck on the ground, she struggles to wriggle free. We suddenly see a spark shoot next to the Spinarak, barely missing it. We pan over and see MALACHI attempting to attack her, but she retaliates with a poison sting that zashes through his Pecha Scarf, leaving a hefty tear in it. MALACHI looks down at MAELSTROM nervously, but can't summon the ability to spark up. DIELE notices he's having trouble, and calls out,

DIELE

Lightning rod!

She lets loose another thunderbolt, and MALACHI braces himself to redirect it. As it hits him, he directs it very precisely towards the Spinarak, knocking her down. His victory is short-lived as he gets hit by the Starly. As

he's hit though, INIGO grabs him and pulls him out of the air, delivering a swift kick that knocks him to the ground.

INIGO

I'm afraid you didn't answer my friend's question- **Where's Drowzee?**

The Starly squirms and notices his partner dissipating into light.

STARLY

Look we don't *really* associate with him, we just wanted some of the treasure he's after!

RUNE

Treasure?

STARLY

Yeah, something about a Golden Chamber in the dungeon. He said that if we made sure nobody bugged him while excavating, he'd give us a small cut. That's it!

INIGO

You didn't answer me. **Where is he?**

STARLY

At the peak! He's at the peak, that's where the Golden Chamber's rumored to be.

INIGO turns to the team and shrugs.

INIGO

I guess we'd better head to the peak, then.

As they start walking, MALACHI asks,

MALACHI

Inigo, where'd you learn to battle like that?

INIGO rolls his eyes.

INIGO

Dojo. Duh.

MALACHI looks embarrassed.

INIGO

We're pokemon. We're made to fight. If you can't do that, you're not anything special.

He shoots RUNE a vague glare.

INIGO

You. Why'd you choke up when I asked you to use an ice attack?

RUNE

I don't need them.

INIGO

What, you're just gonna tackle anyone that looks at you funny? Elemental attacks are some of the strongest tools at your disposal. Without them, you've got nothing.

The team begins to skirt around the edge of a cliff, careful not to fall.

DIELLE

So what Inigo, they aren't planning to join tournaments like you. Nobody actually cares about that stuff.

DIELLE is bumped by a rock that suddenly juts out, and almost loses her balance, but RUNE catches her.

DIELLE

Eep! ... Thanks, I was real worried for a second, hah...

She smiles softly at Rune, who seems surprised.

RUNE

It's nothing.

INIGO

If we're gonna deal with Drowzee, we need some good moves to use

against him. I doubt any of you are dark types.

MALACHI

Well I'll have you know that as a member of the Luxray line, I'm a rudimentary dark type!

INIGO

A what.

MALACHI

You know... A pokemon that uses a lot of dark moves, a rudimentary dark type.

INIGO

A rudimentary dark type, do you hear this guy? That's like if you said Dielle was a *rudimentary electric type* because she can use Thunderbolt. It's not a thing.

MALACHI

Yeah it is!

INIGO

Oh yeah, then why don't you have the same resistances?

MALACHI

Well why would we learn so many dark-type moves if we weren't?

The group is interrupted by a scream.

DIELLE

Pax!

RUNE breaks into a sprint towards the cry.

INIGO

Well Shinx, you'd better hope you're a dark-type after all.

The rest of the group chases after her, DIELLE stopping right in front of her.

RUNE

Let me through, he's in trouble!

DIELLE

We need a plan first! You shouldn't get yourself hurt doing this.

INIGO

Here's the strategy- Shinx can use whatever dark type moves he won't shut up about, and Dielle can try stunning Drowzee with Thunderbolt. I'll stay around the perimeter and do what I can since I'm weak to his attacks.

RUNE

And me?

INIGO

You can't use elemental attacks. Stay out of it. As for you two, let's get close, look for an opening.

They edge closer to the scene, RUNE staying behind. Fuming, her tails begin to rise slightly as purple flecks come off of them. She charges toward the group and leaps- Flying straight over them into the battlefield. As she lands, the scene from earlier plays out.

DROWZEE

... Forget all about home- Eh?

RUNE jumps over PAX, and lands a FEINT ATTACK directly on DROWZEE's hand. DROWZEE looks stunned for a moment, but gathers his bearings. He lifts his other hand.

DROWZEE

Bad move, kid.

He uses DISABLE on her, rendering her unable to attack from a searing headache. He prepares to use HYPNOSIS, but MALACHI comes in quick with a BITE, pulling his arm back. DROWZEE uses CONFUSION to stun him and push him back slightly, as MALACHI pulls away with confusion.

INIGO

Damn it!

INIGO charges in, and slams his tail in the ground manipulating the elements of the Mystery Dungeon to lift a rock in the air that he then kicks at DROWZEE. The first rock hits, but DROWZEE catches the second rock with CONFUSION and deflects it back to hit him. INIGO mostly dodges it, but is still hit in the ear.

INIGO

Gah- Dielle, Malachi, lightning rod!

DIELLE

Got it!

DIELLE charges up and directs her THUNDERBOLT at MALACHI- who is still CONFUSED. He gets struck with it, and gets knocked down. (SHINX hurt itself in its confusion!)

MALACHI

GAH!

DIELLE

A-I'm sorry!

DROWZEE looks smugly at the group.

DROWZEE

I hardly have to do anything, seems like you'll all take care of yourselves.

He turns to walk away with PAX, and RUNE charges after him.

RUNE

We're not done yet!

She leaps in the air, and telegraphs an obvious attack. DROWZEE puts a hand up to block it, but she leaps off of his hand and kicks the back of his head with another FEINT ATTACK. She doesn't stick the landing, but it knocks DROWZEE down. He doesn't seem to get up from this.

DIELLE is running over to check on PAX, and INIGO gets up and walks over cautiously, eyeing DROWZEE on the way. He turns to MALACHI who has recovered from confusion, and comments,

INIGO

Seems like she's more of a dark-type than you.

DIELLE is checking PAX's bruises and is cooing to him softly.

DIELLE

There, there, we'll get you all patched up at home, okay?

PAX tearfully turns to RUNE and says,

PAX

T-thank you miss... I'm sorry I ran into you earlier...

RUNE

Um. It's fine. I'm glad you're okay.

MAELSTROM

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR WIN, MY CHAMPION! LET US REJOICE!

Everyone goes silent and stares at MAELSTROM. MALACHI exclaims,

MALACHI

MOLLY, WE... We talked about screaming in front of strangers...!

RUNE

Y-You're calling her Molly now?

MAELSTROM

HE CALLS ME THAT WHEN HE'S UPSET WITH ME! LITTLE DOES HE KNOW THAT I AM A GREATER POWER THAT DOES NOT NEED BABYING ON WHO I CAN AND CANNOT TRUST WITH KNOWLEDGE OF MY EXISTENCE.

INIGO

Huh. Okay.

DIELLE

Nice to meet you, Molly!

MAELSTROM
PLEASE, THAT IS MALACHI'S DUMB
NICKNAME FOR ME! I AM CALLED
MAELSTROM.

DIELLE
Are you sure you don't want me to
call you Molly? It's cute!

MAELSTROM
... YOU MAY.

DROWZEE begins to break into strands of light and
disappear.

MALACHI
OH yeah, we have to get him into
the authorities. Let's head out,
we can take turns carrying him.

TREASURE TOWN

A montage begins with the group walking back to TREASURE
TOWN, all of them struggling to carry DROWZEE except for
DIELLE who doesn't seem to break a sweat. They turn him in
to the authorities, who offer a reward, but MALACHI
declines and points to the guild. The group heads back to
the DOJO. Waiting for them there is MOXIE, who appears to
be visibly upset and talking with CHARLOTTE. She turns and
sees the group, and rushes in to hug INIGO. PAX runs over
to his friends.

MOXIE
Where have you been, you big
dummy?! We just heard about the
sheriff, and the outlaw, and the-

INIGO
Ma, you're squishing me-!

She loosens her grip on him.

MOXIE
Oh, I'm so glad you all are safe,
I don't know what I would have
done if...

DIELLE

It's alright now, Ms. Moxie! Rune and Malachi helped us get Pax back.

MOXIE turns to them.

MOXIE

I can't thank you two enough. We don't have a lot, but I'm sure we could give you some kind of reward?

MALACHI

Oh, it's fine! We're just glad Pax is safe and sound.

A large, intimidating shadow LOOMS over him. The group turns, and everyone is surprised to see GUILDMASTER WIGGLYTUFF gracing their presence. KEATON is nowhere to be seen.

He smiles.

GUILDMASTER

Heya, friends!

He turns to MALACHI and RUNE.

GUILDMASTER

Can I play at your house for a lil bit? I'm avoiding Keaton!

He turns to DIEELLE and INIGO.

GUILDMASTER

You guys can come, too!

Struck with awe, they all look at each other.

SHARPEDO BLUFF

We pan out to a wide establishing shot of SHARPEDO BLUFF.

MALACHI

So, uh... What brings you here?

WIGGLYTUFF is seen seated at MALACHI's table, an empty teacup sitting in front of him. RUNE, DIELE, and INIGO are all also seated around him, wearing expressions of various levels of curiosity or disinterest.

GUILDMASTER

Oh, a couple of things! First thing's first, the donation the guild just received! I like to thank donors in person for their hard work.

MALACHI

Oh, it's nothing!

RUNE

(QUIETLY) Not like Malachi would let us keep it anyway.

MALACHI pours WIGGLYTUFF a cup of tea, who proceeds to drink it.

GUILDMASTER

I like that! Doing things to be good, not for a prize.

He immediately spits it out directly on RUNE, who is jarred by this.

GUILDMASTER

S-Sorry friend! Do you have sugar?

MALACHI

O-Oh, I don't, I can't taste sweet things, so I never keep it around.

GUILDMASTER

Oh! Horrible, oh no! How can you stand it?

MALACHI

Can't miss what you don't have.

MALACHI tries to be casual with the GUILDMASTER, but is clearly horrified and embarrassed by this infraction. He begins mopping up the tea.

GUILDMASTER

I also wanted to check in on your friend!

He looks over at RUNE, who is attempting to lick her coat clean with little success.

GUILDMASTER
She looks. Different!

RUNE
Maybe it's because I'm covered in tea.

GUILDMASTER
Oh you can talk again, good! And your-

He looks at her eyes and seems startled. Rune notices this and tilts her head. He snaps out of it.

GUILDMASTER
Your fur is so pretty and pink, like mine!

RUNE
Um. Yeah. Have you... Heard anything about Treeshroud?

GUILDMASTER
Ah... Well yes, we got news. It's not very happy news I'm afraid.

Time has frozen there. Not everyone made it out in time. The Keokeo Vulpix tribe wasn't found.

RUNE
Oh...

She blinks some wetness out of her eyes.

RUNE
I see. It's fine. I'm not sure I would recognize my family if they stood in front of me...

GUILDMASTER

Don't worry! We'll do what we can to help our friends out! We're on it.

He smiles softly.

GUILDMASTER

And you could help too, if you want.

MALACHI

What? What do you...

GUILDMASTER

See, normally we can't overturn a guild blacklist, but Keaton, the silly bird! He broke a rule during your test.

MALACHI

You mean...?

GUILDMASTER

He jumped in when he wasn't supposed to! So I have no choice but to void your results.

He smiles.

GUILDMASTER

The work you did today was more than enough proof that you guys are good! So, whaddya say? I want to endorse your team as members of Wigglytuff's Guild.

MALACHI beams, jumping up and down.

MALACHI

Yes, yes, a thousand times, yes!

RUNE

I'd like to help too, yeah.

WIGGLYTUFF turns to DIELE and INIGO.

GUILDMASTER

You guys can join also if you want! You also helped get that meanie!

INIGO looks thoughtful.

INIGO

I guess it can get Ma off my back.

DIELLE

Join the guild? Oh I'd love to but... Well, I'll have to think about it.

GUILDMASTER

That's fine! Come over to the guild if you decide!

And now we just gotta make it formal. What's your team name?

MALACHI

A team name?

He squeals.

MALACHI

Team Maelstrom!

GUILDMASTER

Got it! YOOM-TAH!

He claps his hands together, and the room flashes brightly as an explosion weaves around everyone. Etched in the ground is a circular logo with an abstractly-conceived Wigglytuff in the center.

GUILDMASTER

There! This base has been registered as your home location.

Once we calibrate your badges, you can teleport here anytime!

Come over 'n play tomorrow to grab your badges and first job! I gotta go now or Keaton will get cranky. Bye bye!

MALACHI excitedly thanks him as he leaves, leaving the four of them in the house together.

INIGO, however, bursts out laughing.

INIGO
You guys failed the exploration test? You really are hopeless without us.

He turns to RUNE.

INIGO
I feel like somehow, I know exactly what area to work on first. You, come to the dojo tomorrow when you have time. Someone has to show you the basics.

RUNE puffs up a little.

RUNE
No problem. I'll get you with my stunning dark-type moves. Or should I say *rudimentary* dark-type moves?

INIGO
It's a deal. That's what my rudimentary fighting-type moves are for!

MALACHI
C'mon, you guys!

Everyone laughs, and The scene transitions to the crackling fires in the guild chambers, ominously illuminating a silhouetted guildmaster as he makes his return in front of an illuminated Yveltal tapestry.

GUILDMASTER

No Keaton... Looks like I'm off the hook, hehe!

The door cracks and light falls across the guildmaster's face- as Keaton has just caught him red-handed. Keaton sighs, and closes the chamber doors as he enters.

KEATON

You really couldn't help it, could you?

He rubs his temples.

GUILDMASTER

How could I? We really couldn't have timed it better without staging missions for them!

Chatot sighs.

KEATON

And this isn't staging? I gave you your loophole, but I still failed them for a reason. They need more experience or they're going to get themselves killed. Thank god the dojo trainees were with them, or we could have had blood on our hands-

GUILDMASTER

Keaton, you worry too much! With the guild's protection, they'll be much safer than they would be trying to do solo missions. Not to mention they have a cute team name- Team Maelstrom! Doesn't it have a nice ring to it?

KEATON

Hah. And it's not just about blatant favoritism?

GUILDMASTER

Well, I'd be a big fat liar if I said I wasn't picking favorites.

After all, when will I get another chance to meet a human?