

A Very Confused Pokemon Adventure

Novus Peregrine

2B stared at the little pink ball of fluff that was looking at her in a way she could *somehow* tell was deep concern. It was very...round. With a tuft of hair on its head, huge eyes, and a little swirl thing on its forehead. It was also, more importantly, not any sort of animal or creature she'd seen before. Which, well, she supposed that made sense given that she was supposed to be dead. She sort of expected there to be a lot more *nothing* when she died, if she'd been able to think at all. It's not like anyone really expected that androids had souls, like the humans used to.

All of which made waking up in a very green glade, with a tiny pink creature that looked extremely concerned for her, among the most disconcerting events of her life.

Mentally groping for some sort of signal, 2B blinked in confusion as she found...nothing? Not as in finding no signal, but as if she was completely missing her transmitter/receiver hardware. Was she...damaged? She didn't feel damaged. But she'd certainly been *very* damaged when she'd died. Did damage when you died carry over to whatever strange sort of afterlife, one she hadn't expected to exist for her, that this was?

Blinking, she decided that maybe she should examine herself. She sat up, causing the little pink ball-creature to scurry backward and into a bush. Not that it was hiding very well. She could still see its concerned looking eyes and, well, *pink* wasn't a very good color to blend in with an almost violently green bush. Ignoring that little detail for now, 2B focused on something considerably more concerning. Namely, that she couldn't seem to access her diagnostic software...which was a major concern as she was *clearly* malfunctioning. After all, 2B knew her height was 160.38 centimeters. 168 centimeters with her heels. With that knowledge, her sitting height was easy to calculate...and didn't match with what she was experiencing at all.

Lacking access to her diagnostic software, 2B was forced to rely on the much less accurate means of assessing her own state. Given that her visual receptors seem to be damaged, that seemed unreliable, but it was the only option she had. With a shrug, she looked down at herself and assessed.

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“What the fuck?”

Now, it must be said that 2B wasn't really one to curse much. For that matter, she just wasn't all that overly inclined to talk at all. Better to hide her turmoil over her orders regarding 9S. Better to conceal the fact that she had plenty of the emotions that were 'forbidden.' Yes, better just not to speak much, in general. Let alone to do something as emotional as *curse*. It was, however, literally the only thing she could think to say after the two minutes and thirty-seven seconds she spent *staring* down at her own body.

She was shorter. Actually, no. She was *smaller* in general. Her limbs were thinner, her bust more modest. She still couldn't access any of her diagnostic programs, so she wasn't sure by how much, but she was fairly certain she'd shrunk roughly 10cm in height and several cm in the bust as well. Possibly a little less on either or both. Worse, all of her other sensors seemed to be reporting this as accurate data, and she *still* couldn't access any of her internal systems. Frowning, she turned her attention inward, finding her power core. Why could she still feel that, if none of her systems were reporting properly?

Drawing on a bit of her energy in an attempt to access her digital inventory...she blinked and stared again as her *hand lit up blue*. Why was her hand lighting up? What was going on here? Utterly bewildered, her head nevertheless snapped to one side as the pink ball of fluff accidentally stepped on a twig, having crept closer to stare in seeming fascination at the blue glow now surrounding 2B's hand.

It froze when it saw her looking at it, but seemed torn between curiosity about the glow and wariness of coming any closer. It didn't flee back to its bush, and some instinct that 2B had no idea where it came from whispered that it wanted to feel the blue glow. Looking between her glowing hand and the little creature, 2B decided that little whisper wasn't any weirder than everything else going on, so she slowly extended her hand toward the little ball of fluff. It tensed, then seemed to relax and lean into the aura as it got closer. When she actually touched its *extremely soft* fur, it made a chitter of delight...then...spoke?

“Igglybuff!”

2B blinked. What? That had sounded far more like language than an animal noise.

“Can you...speak?”

The little creature's huge eyes shifted to her.

“Iggly, Ig, bufffff!”

2B outright gaped as she got an *impression* of indigence. Not from the *words*, but from whatever the blue stuff coming from her power core was? Why was the glowing result of her power core acting as a *translator*?!

“lg, lggly, lgglybuff!”

It was...worried that she was lost? Well, 2B supposed she *was* lost. Though she was no longer at all certain this was the afterlife. Though she didn't have any other idea what or where it could be?

“lggly, lg, ly, lggly!”

It...wanted to show her to...people that looked like her? Other androids? She got some sort of impression of a settlement. Though it was hazy. Not so much an image as a series of concepts like ‘food,’ ‘nice man,’ big cuddle...dragon? Okay, she gave up. This wasn't going to make any more sense to her no matter how much longer she stared and assessed. Maybe these androids the creature wanted to take her too would have some answers.

“Okay, little one. But it will be faster if I carry you. Is that alright?”

The idea seemed to *excite it* if anything, the little ball of fluff dancing in place and tugging at her hand. Shaking her head in confusion, 2B slowly stood, took one more moment to assess her body, and then scooped up the little pink thing and headed in the direction it eagerly pointed her. At least she seemed physically undamaged. Even if she felt considerably weaker than she should if that were the case. Though she was even more confused that her usual outfit seemed intact...save for her heels behind replaced with combat boots?

It had only taken half an hour or so to cover the distance between where she'd awoken and what appeared to be some sort of ranch. That half an hour had been among the most disorienting in 2B's admittedly short life, however. For one thing, it had confirmed quickly for 2B that she was nowhere on the Earth she was familiar with. The Machine Wars had been far too all-encompassing to leave any part of the Earth so untouched. Even places like the Forest Zone had the signs of old damage, ruins, and bits of machine parts. Here, there was none of that. Only the next best thing to untouched wilderness.

Then, of course, there had been more creatures that certainly didn't match anything in her database. Most seemed shy of a person walking through, but she'd caught sight of several odd-looking animals. The most normal was a type of bird that seemed largely indifferent to her, though it was no type of bird she'd ever seen. A much odder rat-thing had

hissed at her, but not attacked when she'd ignored it as not much of a credible threat. A few bugs of unusual size, and an *extremely* odd-looking blue ball with a flat tail and a swirl on its stomach, had both joined the bizarre sights along the way.

Just to add more confusion on top of confusion, 2B's own body was beginning to worry her. Not only had she continued to fail at accessing any of her various programs and internal hardware, but she was feeling something in her limbs she could only describe as *tiredness*. Which should be thoroughly impossible. She shouldn't truly even know what that was, in more than an intellectual sense. Androids did not get 'tired.' Not physically. Added to her reduced height and a noticeable drop in strength, she was certain she was still damaged quite deeply. Even if she carried no physical signs of the wounds that had killed her.

Was death supposed to weaken you? Was she actually dead? 2B had an ever-growing list of questions, and no answers to any of them. Hopefully, the ranch she could see in the distance now would bring some clarity. Oddly, it seemed to have many more creatures of wildly differing types penned up, like how humans used to keep livestock. Though she only knew of such things from one of 9S's odd fixations with human things of the past. Hopefully, something here would begin to make sense soon.

Following the increasingly energetic pointing of the little being in her arms, 2B headed for what appeared to be a main building of some sort. Much more advanced looking than the various pens and sheds dotting the area, it was still a bit primitive to 2B's eyes. Still, it was properly *intact*, which was a rare thing for any android community. Add in the lack of destruction in general, and she was more and more convinced she was nowhere even remotely familiar. Again, though, perhaps that was to be expected. If death simply returned you to a familiar place, then people would naturally know far more about it.

As she approached what seemed like the rear of the building, she blinked as a male android model she'd never seen before bustled out. He looked...old? Not in the sense of rusted or broken parts, but as if he'd been modeled on an old human. How odd. Why would an android be modeled on an *old* human, instead of a young one? He did seem to be moving well enough...and he'd obviously caught sight of her, frowning at her before seeming to be put at ease by the eagerly chanting creature in her arms that was pointing her toward him.

The closer she got to him, the more surreal something about him seemed to be. What was bothering her so? It was *very* annoying that her scanner programs were still refusing to respond. Hopefully, she could get them fixed soon. The man greeted her as she came within a few strides.

“Hello! I don’t think I’ve seen you around before! I’m Professor Oak! I specialize in studying the Bond between Humans and Pokemon! You seem to have found one of our wayward Pokemon, thanks for bringing her back! Where did little Igglybuff get off to this time?”

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This wasn’t an android. This man was a *human*. 2B’s brain froze as she finally connected the dots. Then, her systems finally seemed to have had enough, as she felt reality fading away and her body falling...

Chapter 2: A New Life

Professor Samuel Oak (Three Days Post Arrival)

His new guest was, just possibly, the single oddest thing he’d ever run into. For a Professor and former Champion that regularly studied the oddest of mysteries that were Pokemon, that was saying something. Let alone when you considered that Sam was someone who had personally experienced time travel via Legendary-Pokemon-Express. Given a long life full of such colorful events, not to mention the many mysteries he’d had a hand in investigating, virtually anyone would acknowledge that *Professor Oak* struggling to wrap his mind around something was a big deal.

Which didn’t change the fact that such was exactly the case with his new guest.

‘2B’ as the young woman called herself, had spilled everything about her life with barely any prompting, shortly after she’d first awakened from her unexpected faint. If he hadn’t been familiar with the idea of other dimensions from reading the studies on Ultra Beasts from Alola, he’d have been worried the woman was completely insane. As it was, he’d quietly tested her with a crude device of his own design...and discovered that the trans dimensional energy radiating off of *her* put any Ultra Beast wormhole to shame! And that in pure spite of the fact that it had already been *fading*!

With that little detail confirmed, her fantastic and disturbing tale of a world without pokemon. A world, indeed, where even humanity had long gone extinct? Well, it became a lot more believable. Even if there *were* some problems with it. Such as the fact that the young woman remembered dying...and that she *wasn’t* an Android. His few quick tests to confirm his suspicions that she was now fully human had, unfortunately, had the unexpected result of sending her into a ever-so-slightly catatonic state for a few hours! He

was sure that wasn't worrying...probably. Daisy had handled it. She he was sure it would be fine...

Of course, as weird as it was to say, the mysteries didn't end with her change to being human. Human she might now be, but she wasn't exactly a garden variety specimen. She was Aura Active, for one thing, possessing significant reserves of aura that she could summon up as easily as most pokemon. She didn't really know how to *use* it once she'd summoned it, but he had little doubt that would come in time. Assuming she wanted to learn.

Just to make weird weirder, she also still possessed a degree of her inhuman strength. Though she claimed that she was *much* weaker than before, she was still strong enough to lift one of his Tauros herd, *without* using her aura. All in all, she had the potential to be a vary dangerous young woman. Which, unfortunately, was a serious problem, as she also had a distinct issue saying 'no' to basically anything a 'human' wanted. It wasn't *programmed* into her anymore, according to his Alakazam. But it was a train societal reflex from her old world that could become a serious issue. It would make it entirely too easy for someone with few scruples to abuse the young woman for her power...or for even worse reasons, given her attractiveness.

Thankfully, Samuel Oak was no stranger to odd situations, and he was getting old enough he could always use some more help anyway. So now all he had to do was convince the young woman to stick around for a while, to help him out with the pokemon. With enough time, he was sure they could help her over the worst of the culture shock...and then she could go on a Journey to finish acclimating to her new reality! Why, with her strength and aura, she could go to all sorts of places and learn all sorts of things about pokemon that had never been discovered before!

Yes, he was certain it would work out nicely! He was just grateful that it wasn't unusual these days for young people to wait until sixteen to go on their Journey, instead of doing it at fourteen like used to happen. Really, that change had been a long time in coming. The last war was a fading memory now, and they didn't need to push as hard to replenish the number of trainers available to keep the pokemon back from cities and towns.

Most of the kids he'd mentored had never properly understood why the age had been lowered for the last two generations, and he was honestly grateful for that. While he might champion the idea of pokemon and man working together, he was no fool. Humanity had always been on the backfoot, only able to keep the wild pokemon that would happily eat them away by developing bonds with partners of their own.

With the number of veteran trainers and powerful pokemon that had died in the last round of wars, the world had been left in a far more precarious position than the younger generations realized. During the worst years, in the most heavily weakened regions, a few towns had been outright lost as the low number of trainers failed to keep the stronger wild pokemon from overrunning human civilization.

Thankfully, things had largely stabilized. Though there were large stretches of wilderness that had changed in the meantime. With legendries freely shifting the landscape even *without* idiots like Teams Aqua and Magma egging them on, plus changes caused by mass pokemon battles during the wars, that wasn't exactly a surprise. Nor was it something that hadn't happened before. It was a state of affairs that virtually always carried on for a few decades any time there was a serious war, sadly. Which meant that, even if things were getting better again, there was still quite a need for trainers to travel out into those wilds, and 2B could easily become one of the few he didn't *worry* about when they did so.

Yes.

Yes, this was a good plan. And, really, he could *always* use more help around here. Ash and his grandson really had a terrible habit of catching any pokemon that caught their interest, then dumping them on *him* to take care of. Seriously, those two were almost twenty now! They needed to take more responsibility for their actions!

Sighing at that familiar thought, Professor Oak sipped his coffee as he waited for his guest to make an appearance this morning...

2B (Fifteen Minutes later):

2B was very annoyed at how inconvenient and inefficient being a human was. While androids *could* mimic many of the functions of a human body, 2B had very rarely bothered. Needing to sleep was perhaps the most objectionable, even if the male human she'd met said she needed considerably less sleep than the average human. But the dozens of other things that the Professor's daughter had cheerfully insisted were a normal care routine for a fifteen-year-old female human were *obnoxious*, rather than just inefficient. She could admit that the scrubbing and treatment of her body and hair with certain products actually did feel rather nice. But it was the sort of thing she'd have much preferred to a rare indulgence rather than a time-consuming daily routine!

Sighing, 2B *finally* finished with all the things 'Daisy' said she needed to do to maintain herself. Somehow, despite how good her sense of time still was despite the lack of an atomically accurate internal clock, she kept underestimating how long this would take. She'd kept the Professor waiting again. Which, while he seemed to think that was

normal for teenager girls, was something that annoyed 2B herself greatly. So much so that she *nearly* forgot the grumpy looking form of the Igglybuff that had stuck to her like glue since they'd first met.

She truly was grateful to the little being. It, embarrassingly, seemed to have a better grasp of human norms than she did and regularly corrected her or helped her puzzle out new things. Giving it an apology pat for nearly forgetting it, she scooped it up and carried it with her as she headed into the lab to see what it was the Professor wanted with her today. He'd said he had a plan to help her get used to the new world she was in, and she had to admit she was curious what it was...

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2B considered the Professor's offer. Her? Become an assistant around his pokemon ranch and stables? As a way to learn more about pokemon, as well as people? Did she want that? Did it *matter* what she wanted? 2B was a combat model, not a researcher. But was that what she still was? She was, herself, human now. At least for a given value of human. Moreover, this world wasn't facing some great threat to humanity. At least...not that she knew of. Actually, she really ought to make sure of that.

"Professor? Do this world's humans face any threats?"

Professor Oak's genial smile faded just a little bit at the question. The old man sighed, considered her seriously for a long few moments, then nodded.

"I should have known you would ask that, given the story you told me of your fight and its purpose. Understand, in many ways what I'm about to tell you goes against my own beliefs...sort of. More accurately, it is the *reason* for my beliefs. It's not something I tell to most young potential trainers, as the knowledge does more harm than good to the bonds they might form. I'm only telling *you* because you've already lived a life of danger and combat. You understand, probably better than even I do, how fragile life can be and how important allies are."

Professor Oak paused, obviously considering his words very carefully. It was clear he wanted no misunderstandings here. Which, given how out of her depth she was in general, was honestly something she appreciated. Besides, she knew how to be patient. Indeed, one might say it was her most practiced skill outside of combat. Better to not rush, to make sure you had all the right intel if you could get it. So she let the kind old man feel his way around for the right words.

"Our world...it is miraculous. A wonderful and beautiful place. Something I understand all the more clearly now that you have described a far more terrible one so

readily to me. That isn't to say, however, that our world is a *perfect* one. For that matter, it often isn't a *safe* one, either."

2B nodded at his words. She was fairly certain she wouldn't have believed him, if he'd claimed the world was some sort of paradise. Perhaps if this really was the afterlife, she might have. But as far as she could tell, she was still alive. *More* alive, in fact, than she'd ever been before. The only android, so far as she knew, who had truly learned what being human was. Or, well, started too, at least. Professor Oak continued on, pointing at the Igglybuff in 2B's arms as he did so.

"Pokemon. The creatures that literally define our world. In truth, no one is quite certain just how or why humans came to inhabit this world at all, as it seems to be *us* that our the most out of place, not the pokemon. While many pokemon, such as Igglybuff there, are friendly...that isn't always the case. Indeed, in long gone days, it was very *rarely* the case. Pokemon are, by their very nature, creatures of conflict and change. In the wild, they fight. When partnered with a human? Many of them, perhaps even most, still want to fight and grow stronger."

2B nodded along. She'd already seen a little of that. Many of the more aggressive pokemon on Professor Oak's ranch had to be stopped from fighting too often or seriously. Even only three days after arriving here, she'd witnessed some of the stronger pokemon of the ranch need to break up fights before they went to far.

"This is where the danger is. Pokemon that regularly interact with humans can be safe enough. They can be lifelong companions, protectors, and more. But the very reason ancient humans developed that relationship was because *we needed* to. While pokemon that train under us often grow stronger and faster than those in the wild, giving them a reason to partner with us, *wild* pokemon are dangerous. They not only can, but *will* attack humans. You have seen a map of our world, yes? How there are relatively narrow Routes carefully outlined between cities and towns?"

2B nodded, already beginning to draw conclusions from what Oak was so carefully outlining. She had thought it odd to see so little in the way of infrastructure between towns, when the general technology level of the world was fairly advanced. Far more primitive than her own reality, but advanced enough that they should have had more built-up infrastructure. Professor Oak confirmed her growing suspicions moments later.

"The Routes between cities are so well defined because those Routes are patrolled. Pokemon Rangers discourage stronger and older wild pokemon from populating the Routes. This makes it *relatively* safe to travel along them. Even then, nearly everyone travels with at least a single partner pokemon just in case they are confronted by an aggressive

wild pokemon. Few humans have your physical strength and would be horribly outmatched by even a pokemon of average strength.”

That was the threat. And it was an old one at that.

“Ancient humans here tamed pokemon to protect them from other pokemon, didn’t they?”

Professor Oak nodded, smiling at her drawing the right conclusion.

“They did. Both pokemon and people quickly discovered that there were *other* benefits of growing close. As I said, trainer pokemon virtually always advance faster than their wild counterparts. They also benefit from being taught tactics, getting reliable food they don’t have to fight for, and more. The poorly understood bonds between humans and pokemon even aid many of them in evolving, in ways that even I don’t fully understand, despite arguably being the world’s foremost expert on the subject!”

The old professor was quickly growing more animated, and 2B sensed if she didn’t keep them on subject, he would begin to lecture on his favorite topic...again. Not that 2B truly minded. He was a good teacher and virtually everything he taught her was new to her. But they *had* been addressing an important question.

“So, modern trainers still serve the same purpose? Groups like these Pokemon Rangers help keep the wilds at bay, so the cities and towns are not overrun by strong pokemon?”

Professor Oak winced, deflating a bit as she brought them back to the main topic at hand.

“Yes. That is essentially correct. It’s quite a bit more complicated than that, of course. Things like pollution and disruptive habitat destruction need to be managed by Police and Rangers as well. But, essentially, yes. A precarious balance exists, a balance that is regularly threatened by criminals and terrorists, egotistical fools, or simple bad luck. While *most* trainers don’t exist purely for such purposes, the reason why being a trainer is such a cornerstone of our very society is so that both individuals and communities can protect themselves. Pokemon can be wonderful friends, companions, and allies...but they can be dangerous too. Very much so.”

2B could understand that. More, she was no fool. Daisy had shown her how to access the local ‘pokenet,’ a primitive form of the internet humans had once used in her own reality. She had already seen news clips of pokemon being used for crime, and there had been a few quiet mentions of a war when she attempted to skim local history. Though no one seemed to like to talk much about it, even online.

Thankfully, the context provided by Professor Oak's information also helped her resolve her original question. 2B wasn't at all sure what *she* wanted, or if such a thing even mattered. What she *did* know is that Professor Oak was offering her a path that would satisfy her original purpose. She had been made to protect humanity from existential threats. Pokemon, despite her ready agreement with the Professor that they could be allies, *were* such an existential threat. For now, that would be enough.

"I believe I will take you up on your offer, Professor. I would like to learn more about pokemon and their influence on this world."

She could tell that he'd already guessed her reasoning and wasn't entirely satisfied, but the older man's smile was still genuine when he replied.

"Excellent! You've already met my granddaughter, who is my primary aid with the stable and ranch. Tomorrow, I will introduce you to a few of my other research assistants, who also help out with the stables a little. Even if many of them also travel to continue gathering research data. For the most part, you'll be working with Daisy, but I may have you sit in on lectures I or my assistants give from time to time..."

With her immediate future decided, 2B was momentarily content. She had no idea what would come of this new life she'd been unexpectedly granted, but she was quite interested in finding out. At the very least, it was nice to actually meet some of the species who she had been sworn to serve.

Even if she was now in the very odd position of being one of them herself...

Chapter 3 – Duties with Daisy:

"Good morning, 2B! I'm happy you decided to take grandpa up on his offer! I could certainly use the help with managing the stables and ranch, and if Igglybuff is any indication, I think the pokemon will like you!"

2B looked down at the pokemon nestled in her arms. Igglybuff didn't exactly seem like a troublesome pokemon. She wasn't at all sure that its behavior was a good indicator of how she'd do with pokemon in general. Her doubt must have shown in her body language somehow, as Daisy giggled and offered a bit more explanation.

"That particular Igglybuff is a well-known menace, of sorts. She's not malicious by any means, but she has wandering feet and a talent for finding trouble. That's why grandpa wasn't surprised to see her being brought back to the ranch by a stranger when you first arrived. But she hasn't run off at all since then!"

2B blinked, looking between the pokemon and the human. Given that Igglybuff was looking shifty, there seemed to be some truth to what Daisy was saying.

“I...don’t think I did anything, though?”

2B’s voiced her confusion, only for Daisy to grin.

“That’s where you’re wrong! Or, well, half wrong at least! While I manage the stables and ranch here, I’m also a researcher. As it happens, my current area of study is aura and how both humans and pokemon interact with it. It’s sort of an offshoot of grandpa’s studies in the bonds between human and pokemon, as there’s some pretty solid evidence that aura plays a big role in such things.”

2B considered that for a moment. Igglybuff had been curious, even worried, before she’d first accessed her aura. But the little pokemon’s hesitance to interact with her had only fully vanished when she’d summoned her aura that first time. Mostly on accident, it had to be said, since she’d been trying to access her power plant.

“Aura influences pokemon?”

Daisy made a so-so waggle with one hand.

“Outside of specific pokemon moves, it doesn’t do so *directly*. However, it appears to act as a sort of carrier wave for intent. Pokemon are *far* more sensitive to it than humans, and can read another pokemon or Aura Active human’s intent through any projected aura. I eventually discovered that this is the reason pokemon have always reacted well to me, as I’m Aura Active enough that I project my genuine delight at meeting and interacting with pokemon to all of them, constantly. Part of being a cheerful person raised on stories of how wonderful pokemon and their bonds with humans are, I guess!”

Ah. 2B slotted the new knowledge into place, reviewing her interactions with Igglybuff in light of them.

“So, when I projected no intention of harming her, Igglybuff became more comfortable with me. Then, since I find her helpful and calming, she likely picks that up as well?”

Daisy nodded, smile widening.

“Exactly! The more time a human spends interacting positively with a specific pokemon, the more their aura synchronizes as well. This is a large part of the ‘bond’ between pokemon. The other part, friendship and understanding, is important. But it’s the aura-link and, I *think*, a sort of mutual aura stabilization affect, that allows some pokemon

to evolve via a strong bond with humans. Like two identical broadcasts from a multiple antenna array producing a stronger signal!”

Okay. That sounded much more like a proper scientific explanation for the things Professor Oak had been saying over the last week. There was that caveat at the end there, though.

“You think?”

Daisy seemed unbothered by the question, shrugging as her smile turned into a slightly more sheepish grin.

“I’m researching it still, remember? Someday, I might have enough data to publish my research and be recognized as a Pokemon Professor in my own right! But I’m not there yet. Currently, we don’t have a scientific way to measure aura, though certain pokemon like my Medicham can read it. As a psychic type, they can then also try to explain what they are feeling to me, and even try to teach humans that have enough aura how to call on it. I’m currently learning, as part of the process of studying the phenomenon.”

Daisy held up her hand, took a deep breath, and seemed to both concentrate and *relax* at the same time. For several heartbeats, nothing happened, but then a weak blue light shot through with swirling pink formed for a few seconds over her raised hand. It flicker out quickly, seemingly to leave Daisy somewhat tired as it did.

“Whew! That’s hard still! At least for me. But from what grandpa has said, *you* can summon it up much easier. That will help you a *lot* in making yourself understood to the various pokemon here. If you’re willing to help me, it could even help my own research!”

2B didn’t need to even think about that.

“Of course. Helping humans is what I am for.”

Pausing, already having experience with Professor Oak not liking her putting it that way, she quickly added.

“And I would like to know more about it besides. It seems a useful ability, and I have very little idea what to do with it, besides mimic a few of my former abilities...”

Daisy looked intrigued by that last bit.

“Mimicking you former...no, wait. I *really* want to know what you meant by that, but we’re supposed to be getting you instructed on some of the basic chores here!”

Suppressing her obvious urge toward research, Daisy smacked both her cheeks.

“Right! We can talk aura later! Now, you’ve spent the last week going over the basic information packets on pokemon grandpa gave you, right?”

When 2B nodded, Daisy waved her to follow.

“Right! Then, if grandpa’s happy with how well you absorbed the basics, that means you’re easily qualified to handle simple interaction with our calmer pokemon. It will be easy stuff, at first. Putting out or mixing their food, checking them over for obvious injuries, learning how to do general care for common pokemon types. That sort of thing. Once you get a little experience, we’ll have you start working with more ticklish pokemon. But even just helping out with the more friendly ones will help ease the load on me and the other assistants...”

2B followed along after her new...boss? Mentor? Well, she followed after Daisy, anyway, memorizing everything she was told and asking for clarification semi-frequently. At least the whole ‘becoming human’ thing hadn’t messed with her perfect memory, even if she no longer knew quite how that worked...

2B had discovered she didn’t quite like the sound of herself giggling. It was a little...uncontrolled and undignified. Unfortunately, the baby pokemon that she’d been put in charge of for the last two weeks didn’t agree. They seemed to enjoy making her lose control, with the slightly older Igglybuff that was still hanging around her proving its mischievous nature by leading the charge. Literally, in this case, as the hoard of starter pokemon that would be used for the next year’s trainers swarmed over her with enthusiasm.

Even combined, they weren’t nearly strong enough to pull her down, resulting in Bulbasaur, Squirtle, Charmander, and a few more esoteric options all clinging to her in the attempt. The Bulbasaur hung from her arms, Charmanders were enthusiastically attempting to pull her off her feet by the legs, and a trio of Squirtles had managed to latch onto her torso.

The sight was as ridiculous as it was ridiculously cute. Worse, 2B had discovered that her newly human body was *ticklish*...and so had Igglybuff. That last spelled her doom now as Igglybuff used the baby pokemon as stepping stones to dart around her body, assaulting previously identified ticklish spots. The move, along with 2B’s inability to move without throwing the baby pokemon around too harshly, resulted in her doubling over in a giggle fit, much to all the various pokemon’s great delight.

Thankfully, they also took that as their ‘victory,’ letting go of her and crowing and dancing with glee at having ‘won’ through ‘superior tactics.’ Despite her mild annoyance at them getting her to giggle, as the giggle-fit faded she looked upon them proudly. Daisy had quickly realized that younger Pokemon reacted to 2B even more positively than they did *her*. As best they could figure, the baby pokemon seemed to see her as some sort of quasi-elder because of her strong aura and their simplistic mindsets, and it had led Daisy to assigning their early training to 2B.

Of course, she had to follow a set training plan. She wasn’t supposed to turn these pokemon into her personal army, but into relatively standardized starters. That *didn’t* mean she wasn’t allowed to try teaching them to think outside the box, or find ways to make training fun for them. With oodles of her own combat experience to draw on, 2B had been quick to focus on teaching them to think their way around problems, even if in simplistic ways.

Daisy had been impressed with the results, admitting that it would likely help the new trainers quite a bit, so long as 2B didn’t take it too far. A lot of new trainers simply had no idea how to actually *train*, and having a starter that was familiar with a bunch of ‘training games’ would likely do them a world of good at adapting on their Journey.

Of course, this lot also needed discipline. They needed to *obey* their inexperienced humans as well. The trick was how to do that without being cruel about it.

“Alright! Enough fun, little ones. I’ve got a new game for you all today! It’s called ‘simon says’...”

2B locked eyes with the Tauros, staring the newest problem-child of the herd down. It looked its own eyes on hers, a spark of defiance in its eyes and aura. It snorted...and charged. Instead of giving way, or even dodging as a sane human would, 2B drew on her aura to enhance her already somewhat superhuman muscles. With speed that would have made a Hitmonchan proud, her hands flew out and grabbed the charging bull’s horns.

Her body moved, putting all the whip-crack power of her entire slender frame into a single smooth motion, planting her feet and diverting the pokemon...by *lifting it off the ground by its horns*. The bull made a confused howl-moo of its name, even as 2B spun and released. The pokemon, far more durable than any cow from 2B’s old reality whose neck would have snapped, thudded into a tree. It was unharmed, really, but very dazed and confused looking.

Helpless giggles that didn't originate from 2B this time came from a few meters away. 2B turned to see Daisy practically crying as she hiccupped around laughter. Tilting her head in confusion, 2B waited for the older woman to get over it. When she did, Daisy gasped out an explanation.

"2B, that is *not* how you're supposed to handle conflict resolution with a territorial Tauros alpha! Even if it seems to have worked..."

"I have determined that this is a cursed activity that serves no purpose."

2B's monotone delivery caused Daisy's lips to twitch, even as she did her *very best* not to laugh.

"2B, swimming is an extremely important skill. Both for general survival, as well as for the ability to properly interact with water pokemon."

2B, horrifically cute in the black-and-white one-piece Daisy had gotten her, was looking downright *sullen*. Not to mention more than a little *done* with the activity. Unfortunately for 2B, it truly *was* important. It also, apparently, wasn't something she'd been able to do as an android. Her frame had apparently weighed too much and something called a 'Pod' had needed to fish her out if she ever got more than chest deep in water.

"It is an unnatural skill for a human. Doubly so for a human female. Moving atop the water was irritating enough. Managing to swim smoothly underwater with floatation devices built into my chest is even worse."

Daisy couldn't help the snort that escaped. She really couldn't. 2B didn't have particularly huge breasts, but they were certainly larger than Daisy's own, despite their age difference. Apparently, they were also just big and buoyant enough that they were adding to 2B's difficulties. Something Daisy could believe, since the younger girl had approached the entire idea of 'swimming' with clinically mechanical precision.

"Well, better you learn now then! Those 'floatation devices' will likely only grow as you get older!"

2B tried to glare, but it honestly came across more as a pout. The girl was, thankfully, slowly getting more expressive. She was also almost terrifyingly smart, devouring everything about pokemon at a truly alarming rate. Which made her difficulty with something as simple as swimming reassuring to Daisy. She was starting to see 2B as a friend of sorts, or perhaps the little sister she'd never gotten. It was good to see her acting more...human.

“Come on, time to try again, 2B. Once you get the hang of this, you might even enjoy it!”

Somehow, the subtle twitches of 2B’s face, despite baring changing, conveyed her disbelief quite firmly...

Chapter 4 – Aura Studies and Training:

“That is such bullshit.”

The crude phrase from the normally bright-and-family-friendly Daisy Oak actually made 2B do a double take. While her face only twitched slightly, the ethereal copy of Virtuous Contract in her hand flared brightly with her emotional shock, only to settle down into the semi-stable form that she’d managed to shape her aura into. Daisy’s lips twitching were the only evidence that she’d noticed 2B’s surprise as she continued on.

“No, seriously. Normally, human aura users are limited to copying what they see pokemon doing, and even that only with a lot of study.”

Daisy waved with obvious incredulity at the blade in 2B’s hand.

“*That* isn’t any pokemon move I’ve ever heard of. The closest I can think of is Psyblade, which *does* form an ethereal blade like that. But it does so with pure Psychic-type energy. *Yours*, on the other hand, is fairly obviously pure aura, much like an Aura Sphere, only shaped into a blade.”

2B tilted her head, considering the blade and the information both carefully.

“Perhaps it is because I did not know I wasn’t supposed to be able to do it? Or maybe because it is one of the objects with which I am most intimately familiar. A near extension of my limbs, as a claw or tail would be for a pokemon?”

Daisy looked a very curious mixture of uncomfortable and fascinated by the idea. Eventually, she shook off the discomfort, most likely cause by the reminder that 2B had been built and used as a living weapon, and focused on the fascination.

“I’m almost reluctant to expose you to what we *do* know about Aura, now. We might accidentally limit you by introducing know patterns and methods...”

2B hummed in thought, but ultimately shook her head.

“I have completely failed to give my Aura any type of elemental alignment. Even your own limited use shows such alignment. I think I at least need *some* examples to work off of, even if I ultimately choose not to duplicate pokemon moves exactly. I now know I do not need to do so, after all.”

Daisy pursed her lips, then nodded.

“I think we could use the more usual method to get you as far as elemental alignment at least. Specifically, for you to bond with and study your personal pokemon’s energy. The more synchronized with it you become, the easier it will be to mimic its typing. Normally, people stay with a specific typing once that happens. It’s hard enough to achieve *once*, after all. In your case, however, I could see it maybe being possible to attempt multiple typings as some pokemon do...”

2B blinked, confused about an important part of that statement.

“I don’t have a personal pokemon, though?”

Daisy snorted, then grinned and pointed.

“Oh, don’t you? I think you’ve offended her now.”

2B followed Daisy’s finger to...Igglybuff. Who was, in fact, looking very huffy and offended as she sat on a fencepost. Seeing 2B look her way, she spun around and gave 2B the cold shoulder. Daisy giggled at the interaction, though she was also quick to soothe ruffled feathers.

“I’m sure she didn’t mean that, Igglybuff. She just hadn’t realized that you wanted to be *her* pokemon when you grow up big and strong. Isn’t that right, 2B?”

2B’s mouth opened, closed it for a few seconds as she properly considered the idea, then opened it again as she saw the baby pokemon looking at her hopefully.

“Ah...yes. I had not realized you were interested in fighting, Igglybuff. I apologize for my mistake.”

Igglybuff immediately perked up, spun around, and began flexing its tiny arms, clearly trying to make muscle-man poses despite how stubby those arms were. This segued into quick ‘punches’ and ‘kicks’ that were adorable, but not exactly effective. 2B’s lips twitched.

“I think we’ll have to find a style of combat that works for you, now that I know you’re interested.”

Igglybuff cheered...then promptly fell off the fencepost. Of course, it caught itself in its balloon-like form of levitation before it hit the ground, but it was still a humorous sight. 2B caught herself smiling without quite understanding why, even as she mentally attempted to figure out a way to make such a pokemon effective in a fight. Maybe treat her

like she was a Pod? Could Igglybuff learn any moves that shot out like a Pod's hardlight gatling gun did?

She was going to have to research this...

Daisy stared, gaping in shock as the berserkly bouncing Igglybuff spit out a stream of dozens of bullets of pink light. No single bullet did all that much damage to the wooden targets, but the constant stream of them *was* tearing them apart rather effectively. Objectively, Daisy could also see that the wildly moving little pokemon would be absolutely nightmarish to try hitting with anything but an area attack. She's never been much of a battler, but she was certainly familiar enough with those who were to recognize what she was seeing could easily become an outright terror.

Absolutely none of which explain how it was being done.

It *had* to be some sort of combination move effect, since she'd never seen a move like it. But she wasn't truly a move expert and wasn't at all sure what moves were being combined. Turning to a smugly happy looking 2B, she decided just to ask.

"How did you get her to do that? That's obviously fairy type energy, but I don't know of any move even remotely like it..."

2B nodded seriously.

"Yes. It was quite a trial to find a fairy type move Igglybuff could learn that was directly damaging. A TM of Dazzling Gleam proved to be the key. The move itself is too much for her to do justice to at the moment. But I wasn't really interested in it. Only in the understanding it would grant Igglybuff of damaging-type Fairy energy. Once she understood that, I got one of the Jigglypuff to teach her how to use Stockpile and Spit up. Then I worked with her until Stockpile was stockpiling *Fairy* type energy that was offensively aligned. Once she fills the stockpile, she uses tiny bursts of Spit Up to fire the Stockpiled energy as fairy bullets. We call the move Fairy Gatling."

Daisy gaped. She couldn't help it. There were *so many things wrong* with what 2B had just said. Starting with the fact that Igglypuff weren't supposed to be able to learn Stockpile and Spit Up yet, moving on to Stockpile *not working that way*, and ending firmly in the fact that 2B had somehow taught a *baby pokemon* to combine *three* different moves into something so custom it might as well be an entirely new move in its own right!

A sharp crack went through the training area as the last of the wooden targets completely shattered. There was a wild cheer from Igglybuff...and then a familiar flash of

light caught out of the corner of Daisy's eye that had her head whipping around. She was just in time to catch the tail-end of Igglybuff's evolution into a Jigglypuff, bringing her at least *some* solace. Apparently, the pokemon had been *very* close to evolution. Which could explain why it had managed the Stockpile and Spit Up moves, at least with help from a Jigglypuff to teach it.

"Oh, good! That will help her a lot! She was straining a bit to get enough power into her shots."

Daisy groaned as the oblivious 2B next to her treated the entire affair like it was normal. She was going to need *so many* painkillers when she sat down to document this all for her grandfather...

Daisy stared at her hand. This was it. She was absolutely, one hundred and ten percent sure that she'd actually gone insane some time ago and was locked up in an asylum somewhere. Most likely, it had happened when she was a child and strayed into a psybeam or something. Everything after that must have been one long delusion of an unstable mind.

That was, clearly, the *only* rational answer to how she was holding a globe of pulsing moonlight above her hand.

Her Clefable and Chansey, both of them among her oldest and most dear pokemon, began clapping wildly and cheerfully, breaking Daisy out of her shock and questions about her sanity. The globe of moonlight faded away, leaving her quite drained feeling. Which was just about the *only* believable thing about this. The surrealness of the moment was only added to when her 'teacher' for this exercise spoke.

"Congratulations, Daisy. I think that went well."

Ha! *Went well*, she said. As if the results of the last two months of 2B's experiment with her hadn't just *utterly shattered* a huge chunk of what they knew about humans and Aura. As if she hadn't just *given Daisy enough data to make her a Pokemon Professor a dozen times over*. Huffing a helpless laugh, she shook her head.

"Yes, 2B, it certainly went well. I admit I can't quite believe *how* well. It should have taken *years*, possibly even *decades* to learn to actually do a move like Moonlight. Your theory about slowly transfusing type-aligned Aura into a compatible host steadily enhancing their reserves seems to be proven beyond any shadow of a doubt."

That was what had happened. When 2B had approached her with an entire ream of research, including notes taken from Daisy's own papers, Daisy hadn't known what to think. When it had all been focused on *Aura Transfer* of all things, she'd been alarmed. That particular technique was known to be dangerous to Aura users. It was one of the few ways to drain yourself so badly of aura that it could *kill* you.

Thankfully, 2B's actual idea hadn't been quite as insane as Daisy had initially feared. Instead, it had cited quite a few topics like evolution stones, mega evolution key stones, and more as proof that a steady transfer of already-typed energy could be done safely. Not only that it *could* be done, in fact, but that it could have significant benefits if applied over time. Aura was like a muscle in most ways, but it was one whose growth was less about throughput and more about total available reserves and efficiency of using those reserves.

2B had proposed the idea that, since she and Daisy both had a shared alignment of the fairy-typing, that 2B steadily bolstering Daisy's own reserves as she practiced with Aura could accelerate the development of Daisy's small reserves. The process had taken months and been very carefully monitored by her Chansey, but...it had worked.

Daisy had just performed a pokemon move. One that had been 'taught' to her by her Clefable guiding its own aura through hers to show her how to direct it. Yet another theory of 2B's, made possible by the strong bond between Clefable and herself. The move had been extremely weak by that moves standards, but Daisy had produced her all on her own, without Clefable's external guidance. As she'd told 2B, it had also been something that should have taken years to build up to, even from the head start Daisy had already had from her studies and aura.

Breathing out a sigh, Daisy decided she was just going to have to get used to her friend breaking her reality regularly. Somehow, she just didn't think 2B was going to stop doing it. Particularly not when the younger girl didn't seem to even *realize* she was doing in in the first place!

Well. That was fine. She couldn't possibly end up being worse than Ash Ketchum, at least. Right? As she tried to believe that as firmly as possible, she picked up her custom pokedex to begin adding notes on this new development...

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