

Chapter 16: SAVE JIMMY!

Cloyster Kingdom Arc.

Darkness begins to rise in the sky with stars shining down at Ster Town, providing light for the citizens to see. However, there's even more light coming from the castle itself. And inside of it, lies a bunch of Cloyster guards taking the crew and Trent to the dungeon hallway. The gang notices a bunch of other Cloysters roaming inside of the castle and chatting with each other, seeing them head into another hallway.

"I bet they're having a good time while we're suffering like crazy." Iris mumbles to herself, stopping in her tracks as she looks at the civilians. She's then pushed by a guard behind her.

"Did I tell you to stop, prisoner? Keep walking!" The guard demands in a firm tone. Iris snarls deeply before continuing to walk.

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Somewhere within the castle, lies another prison. The prison is mostly dark but has one cell instead of four. Two guards are guarding next to the cell, having their spears within their possession. One is standing firmly while the other is sleeping quietly, having his eyes closed. Inside of the cell are Jimmy and the male Cloyster. Jimmy have his forehead against the wall while the Cloyster floats back and forth quickly.

"Oh dear. Oh dear. Oh...DEAR!" The Cloyster shouts, stopping in his place. "I-I'm about to be executed tomorrow! I'm not ready to die yet!" He whimpers.

The Heracross grits his teeth, gripping his fist. "Same here..." Jimmy says angrily. "I'm supposed to be honored for saving others, not be executed for it." He then takes his eyes on the Cloyster, showing nothing but pure rage. "Norah and her father was right: This kingdom is undeniably corrupted!"

The Cloyster nods. "Tell me about it. I mean, I used to run a business shop here in Ster Town. I sold things such as Weapon Mischiefs, old toys I used to have, and much more. But when other shops were selling much higher than mine, the king wanted me to get rid of my shop."

Jimmy tilts his head curiously. "And what did you do?"

"I refused his order and...ended up being prisoner here afterwards." The Cloyster sighs. "It was my only business shop that I built all by my lonesome...only to get taken down because the king said so."

Jimmy pats the Cloyster on his back. "Sorry that your shop got taken down, sir."

"I know...Jeez, was the king always like this? Forcing shops like mine to be taken down if they're not selling well?"

Jimmy shrugs. "Well, I'm not sure about answering that. But from hearing one of the prisoners here, he didn't used to have his kingdom be corrupted. In fact, he was making better decisions than the ones he's making now."

"I see. Then what caused him to be this way?" The Cloyster asks curiously.

"As far as I know, they told me it was because of a close friend of his named Senator Brisk being assassinated at the Cloyster Ceremony."

"Ah, I see. I wasn't aware of any of those news due to me not paying attention to most of the things going on in Ster Town." The Cloyster shrugs and sweatdrops. "That's what I get for not being aware of my surroundings, heh..."

"Yeah...Try to do that next time." Jimmy sweatdrops as well.

The Cloyster nods. "Will do..." He then huffs angrily. "Anyway, just because a close friend of his is dead, doesn't mean he has the right to be this way. Especially towards those that want to create their own business shop!"

"Agreed." Jimmy holds out his hand. "The name's Jimmy, by the way."

The Cloyster looks at the Heracross' nail before turning to his side and leaning his spike forward. "Zeke would be mine. Nice to meet you, Jimmy." The two shake each other's parts. "When you were beating up the guard earlier, I was stunned. So amazed by your courageous action and bold choice to save me."

Jimmy blinks from the compliment and chuckles. "Thanks...I used to rescue others from any kinds of harm all the time back then. But..." Jimmy looks to the side, sorrow forming in his face. "Seeing as how those folks only appreciated me for taking care of their deeds and nothing more, it makes me feel like that any heroic thing I do...doesn't matter." He then sighs heavily. "And I'm receiving that feeling after being sent to execution. Just for saving you."

Zeke stares at Jimmy, looking rather down and patting him on the back. "Hey now. Don't let this situation make you think that you're meaningless. You're willing to risk your life to save another. That's you not being selfish. And I respect that within a Pokemon."

Jimmy looks at Zeke. "Really?"

The Cloyster nods meekly. "Absolutely. I thank you a lot for protecting me from that guard earlier. And I'm pretty sure that you have friends thanking you for saving their lives, too."

Jimmy slowly smiles at Zeke. "Yeah...you're right." The Heracross stands heroically. "Thanks for cheering me up, fellow citizen!"

Zeke laughs softly at Jimmy's heroic stance. "No problem, Jimmy."

Jimmy then scratches the side of his head. "However, the question is: How can we get out of this execution? Hmm..." Jimmy thinks to himself for a moment, having his nail against his chin.

"Psst, Jimmy!" A male voice says in a soft tone. Jimmy blinks, beginning to recognize the voice.

"Huh? Is that..." Jimmy slowly looks up to see Cerise being behind a small bar window. The blob-like creature waves at the two Pokemon with his tail. "Cerise!"

Zeke looks at Cerise, tilting his head confusedly. "Cer-who???"

The first guard hears the Heracross' shouting and looks at the cell. "Hey! What's with all the ruckus!?" The guard yells. The second guard wakes up from the sudden outburst, pointing his spear all over the place before turning to the cell.

"Y-Yeah! What that guy said." The second guard says before yawning.

Cerise quickly hides behind the bars before Jimmy speaks. "Oh, erm. I was just talking to myself and my buddy was telling me to stop. I'm crazy like that, ya know?" The Heracross then crosses his eyes to look silly while making some awkward noises.

"Yeah. Man, why don't you be normal for once, you weirdo?" Zeke says, playing along as he shakes his head at the silly Heracross. The guards look at each other for a moment before staring back at the two.

"Alright then. And stop being crazy, Heracross." The first guard demands.

"Durr, okay!" Jimmy says, sticking his tongue out playfully. Cerise sees all of this and snickers quietly.

The guard shakes his head before he and the other guard turn around, no longer looking at the cell. "Welp, I'm hungry so..." The first guard looks at the second. "Mind keeping an eye on these two?"

The second guard looks at the first and nods. "Sure sure. Go ahead." The second guard says before the first floats from the cell. As soon as the first guard leaves the area, the second goes right to sleep. Jimmy blinks, returning his tongue back into his mouth.

"Well then, didn't know that I can act very well." Jimmy says, feeling quite amazed by his performance.

“Haha, same here.” Zeke agrees, snickering quietly. Jimmy then takes his attention to Cerise, seeing him no longer hiding behind the bars.

“Anyway, Cerise, where have you been?” Jimmy asks quietly to the blob-like creature.

Cerise shrugs, looking off to the side in guilt. “I...have been spying on you and the others after you guys got captured.” Cerise says, closing his eyes in shame.

Jimmy gasps in surprise. “What? Why didn’t you do anything about it!?”

“L-Look. It’s because I’m trying to figure out a way to save you guys while spying...” Cerise sighs. “You think I enjoy seeing you guys in pain? Especially after hearing the history behind this kingdom and why it’s like this.” Cerise shakes his head. “I feel *terrible* for not being able to save you all...but again, I just needed a good opportunity to do so...especially you, Jimmy. You’re about to be killed tomorrow.”

Jimmy stares at Cerise for a moment before sighing. “I see. Sorry for thinking that you didn’t care about us.”

“Oh please. After accepting me to tag along with you amazing Pokemon, I would never dare to ditch you all.” Cerise smiles at Jimmy.

“Why thanks, pal!” Jimmy smiles back.

Cerise nods before gasping, forming a realization. “You know what, Jimmy...I’ll tell you my plan on how you can escape after I go rescue the Pokemon egg. It just came to my head, recently.”

“The Pokemon what?” Zeke asks.

“Erm, some Pokemon egg that a friend of mine found a while back.” Jimmy answers, shrugging.

“Oh.”

“...Oh right, um. Cerise, this is Zeke and Zeke this is Cerise.” Jimmy says. “I manage to res--”

“Rescue Zeke from that guard earlier? Yeah. I saw the whole thing, Jimmy. I’ll be sure to tell him about the escape plan as well.” Cerise interrupts the Heracross, smiling gleefully.

“Ah, I see.” Jimmy nods. “Anyway, good luck retrieving the egg, buddy.” Cerise nods firmly and hops off from the window, no longer being at the two’s sight.

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Meanwhile at the dining room, a bunch of Cloysters seem to gather around the dinner table. Glorious amounts of ice related foods and drinks are on the table. Some of the Cloysters even feast on these foods and drinks as they chat with one another. Also at the table are Cocoon, Sheer, and Exo; Cocoon is sitting at the top of the table while Sheer sits next to him. Exo is sitting on the left side of the table, drinking his cold beverage in pure pleasure. Beside the three are Norah and her family, serving as waiters for the Cloysters. And being on the right side of the table is Mat, who's socializing with other Cloysters besides him.

"My my, king. Your feast is absolutely astounding. More so than the last feast." One Cloyster says humbly, holding his cup in a proper manner.

"Yeah! I agree!" The second Cloyster says before her and the others nod their heads. Cocoon looks at them and smiles gently.

"Thank you all. I'm always willing to invite my citizens to our wonderful feast." Cocoon says calmly. Norah stares at him, her eyes filled with grudge.

Yeah but you're not willing to improve your town's condition, huh? Norah thinks before letting out a soft sigh. As the Cloysters continue their dinner, Norah looks at Mat in hopes of him looking back. Mat seems to be laughing with the Cloyster next to him, lifting his head up in joy.

"So I told the woman, 'Well ma'am, maybe you should make your *dol* out of *clay*'." Mat says while grinning. Norah raises her brow at Mat, shaking her head slowly. Brook then coughs loudly, catching Mat's attention as he looks at Norah and her family. "Hmm?" Norah tilts her head repeatedly at Cocoon, signalling Mat to talk with him. "Oh. Um." Mat turns toward the shiny Cloyster, seeing him drink his beverage from his jeweled, golden cup. "My king, may I speak with you for a moment?"

Cocoon looks at him, blinking confusedly. "Is it important?" He asks.

Mat nods. "Yes, it is."

"Alright then." Cocoon and Mat exit out of their seats and float toward the corner of the dining room. Sheer watches them, turning his head slightly as the others continue their lovely meals. The two Pokemon stop within their tracks and look at each other. "What is it that you want to discuss about?"

"I...wanted to ask you if you could, well..." Mat looks off to the side, shrugging nervously.

Cocoon raises his brow at him. "If I could what?"

Mat gulps. "If you could release those prisoners from earlier, please? I mean, they've done nothing wrong to become prisoners here."

The king glances at the Cloyster sternly. "So stealing from a shop owner, then harassing my royal guards isn't wrong?"

Mat shrugs. "I...erm. Well...you see..." Mat chuckles nervously, sweatdropping. "I mean, you have to understand, i-it's a misunderstanding."

"On what, Mat? I don't see anything misunderstanding about stealing an item and harassing others." Cocoon glares at him. "Are you trying to side with the *wrong* here?"

"What? No. I mean...well, I, erm." Mat shrugs awkwardly while Norah sighs heavily and Brook shakes his head. Then Sheer exits out of his seat and floats toward Cocoon.

"Sorry to interrupt this conversation of yours, my king. But I must inform you that an execution is set to happen tomorrow." Sheer says firmly. Cocoon looks at him.

"And who's being executed?" The shiny Cloyster asks.

"Just some no life prisoners who attacked one of our guards for no reason other than to cause trouble. Those prisoners being a Heracross and a Cloyster."

"I see." Cocoon sighs. "I suppose the execution can commence for tomorrow. And don't worry about our conversation." The king stares at Mat sternly. "It has ended, anyway."

Mat gulps cautiously, taking his eyes on Norah and Brook. Brook shakes his head while Norah looks off to the side. *A Heracross is being executed tomorrow? Could that mean...* Norah thinks to herself, staring at the ground with concerns forming throughout her face. As the three Cloysters return to their seats, they hear shattering noises.

"What in the world?" Cocoon says, him and the others turning toward their right. They look at a brown door in front of them, hearing the noises coming from there. They float towards the door, Exo being the one deciding to open it with caution.

The door leads to the kitchen area; The kitchen contains bowls, pans and other objects being set on the ceiling or next to the sinks. The sinks themselves are on the left or upper left side of the area and an open window being above the left sink. Within the kitchen are three Cloyster chefs, each wearing an apron containing a Cloyster figure. They seem to be chasing after Cerise, who is holding the Pokemon egg on his back.

"Stop right there, you green blob!" One of the chefs yells, dashing after the blob. Cerise is turning from one corner to the next, outrunning the three chefs.

"Hey! What seems to be the problem here!?" Exo asks before seeing Cerise having the Pokemon egg. He drops his jaw from the madness he's witnessing. "What the!? HEY! THAT

EGG IS FOR THE FEAST, YOU THIEF!" Others look at the blob as Exo begins to chase after him.

Norah tilts her head slightly in confusion. "Hmm?" She says curiously, watching the chase madness. Cerise then hops onto the counter nearby the open window and throws the egg towards it. Cerise prepares himself to jump.

"Quick! Now's our chance!" Exo shouts before him and the chefs float towards Cerise in a quick pace. As soon as they reach him, Cerise jumps over the window, leading the four to bump against each other hard and fall onto their backs. The four Pokemon become dizzy afterwards, remaining there for awhile. Cocoon and the others rush towards the window only to see nothing but the dark sky, the forest in the background, and grass.

"Who was that thief?" Cocoon asks, staring firmly at the outside. Sheer looks at him and shrugs.

"I have absolutely no clue, sir." Sheer answers. Exo and the chefs then stop being dizzy and look at the group.

"Well jeez, whoever that was, they took something that'll make this feast ten times better than before!" Exo pouts, streaming tears infinitely. "These chefs are so amazing at their jobs. I remember tasting their Icy Supremes, Icicle Express, and much...much more. Just..." The Cloyster begins to whine drastically. "Why would anyone do such a foul thing!?"

Everyone looks at Exo and sweatdrops, Mat chuckling softly to himself while Sheer shakes his head. Cocoon sighs softly. "Now now, Exo. No need to throw a fit over an egg. I'm sure that the feast would be magnificent even without it." Cocoon says calmly, patting Exo on the back. Norah sees the kind act from the shiny Cloyster, sighing softly before looking away. "So with that being said, shall we resume to the feast?"

Exo looks at the shiny Cloyster and nods. "O-Okay..." Then everyone exits out the kitchen area, the chefs returning back to cleaning the dishes and other things. While that happens, Norah looks at the window curiously.

Hmm...I wonder what kind of Pokemon that thing is. Norah thinks for a moment before following the others.

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Back at the prison cell Jimmy and Zeke are in, the two lean against the wall. Jimmy is tapping his nail calmly on the wall, looking up at the bar-like window. Zeke looks at the window as well, having a rather paranoid look on his face.

"Um. Are you sure that your friend is coming back?" Zeke says, looking at the Heracross. Jimmy looks back at the Cloyster.

"I'm pretty sure of it. I've known him for quite awhile now so I'm aware that he won't ditch us." Jimmy says, smiling warmly at Zeke. The two then see Cerise appear on top of the bar-like window, trying to balance the Pokemon egg on his head. "Oh speaking of which."

Cerise sweatdrops, leaning his body back and forth from trying to hold the egg. "C-Crud! Jimmy, quickly catch this egg!" Cerise says before tossing the egg towards the Heracross.

"Oh shoot!" Jimmy goes side by side, trying to find the right angle to catch the egg. Zeke watches the egg fly towards the Heracross worriedly.

"U-Uh..." Zeke says in a awkward tone before Jimmy catches the egg.

"I caught it! No worries!" Jimmy smirks proudly and sees Cerise falling onto the hay in the corner of the cell, having it make some noise. The Cloyster guard wakes up for a moment, looking around cautiously before going back to sleep. Zeke sees the guard returning to his slumber and sighs in relief, taking his eyes back onto the blob.

Cerise brushes himself off with his tail and sighs. "Thank goodness you did. It'll be such a disaster if you didn't catch the egg." Cerise says worriedly.

Zeke tilts his head curiously. "Why's that?" He asks.

"Because," Jimmy pauses for a moment before showing the egg to Zeke. "This Pokemon egg contains a potential newborn who's ready to see the world." He then rubs the egg gently. "My friends and I are willing to take care of whatever Pokemon is going to hatch from it."

"I see. And how long have you been keeping that egg?"

Jimmy thinks for a moment. "I suppose a few days ago." He then rubs the egg against his face, feeling how warm it is and hearing some kind of...heartbeat? Jimmy's eyes widen, gasping softly at what he's hearing.

"Is something wrong?" Cerise asks, him and Zeke blinking confusedly at the Heracross.

"Wow...I'm...hearing heartbeats from this egg." Jimmy looks at the two. "This means the egg *could* be close to hatching."

Cerise and Zeke gasp shockingly. "R-Really!? Th-This is the worst possible time for it to hatch!" Cerise shakes his head. "Erm, hopefully it can wait a little longer before it hatches..."

"I see. I'll hide it underneath this hay for now." Jimmy walks to the hay, sliding the egg underneath it and covering it with the haystacks. "We'll come back for it when all of this is over."

Cerise nods. "Indeed." He then sighs heavily. "So about the escape plan..."

Zeke blinks for a moment before speaking. "Ah yes, the plan. What is it?"

"Well..." Cerise then begins to whisper to the two Pokemon, Jimmy and Zeke leaning closely during so.

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Meanwhile at the crew's cell, everyone is in the same prison cells they were before. Two guards are guarding the cells, one being next to the first cell while the other is next to the third cell across from the first guard. Both guards stand firmly, having their spears within their possession. Coming in the area are four guards returning Norah, Brook and Azure to the cell Iris is in. They lock the cell up and exit out of the prison area.

Iris looks at Norah and her family, folding her arms while leaning against the wall. "Are you three alright?" Iris asks.

Brook nods slowly. "We're...doing fine so far. You?" Brook replies.

"Well..." Iris turns her head towards the crew, seeing them drown into sorrow before sighing. "A close friend of ours is being executed by tomorrow."

The three Pokemon gasp. "O-Oh no..." Azure says, shaking in fear. "N-Not that thing that makes others become g-ghosts..."

"Excuse me, what?" Iris tilts her head confusedly at the young Shellder.

Norah shrugs. "She thinks every Pokemon that withers away becomes a ghost..." Norah says. "Which that itself I can't prove on being true or not."

"I see..."

"And about your friend...It's the Heracross, right? If so, then I'm truly, truly sorry that he's about to get killed."

Mark's ear flickers at what Norah said and slams his paws against the bars. "HE'S NOT GOING TO DIE! WE'LL FIND A WAY TO SAVE HIM!" Mark yells, tearing up while gritting his teeth. Norah yelps from the loud slam as the first guard glances sternly at the Riolu.

"Shut up, Riolu!" The first guard says, pointing his spear at Mark. Mark grips his fist before bursting into tears. Natalie hugs him, rubbing his back gently. His tears of sorrow lead others to feel grim and depressed for the Riolu. Anna and Claire shake their heads, Anna gritting her

teeth angrily while Ashen presses his head against the wall gloomily and Lucas curls himself up on the ground, not showing his face to anyone.

Iris sighs, having her hand against her face. "I mean, can there be a way to save Jimmy?" She asks.

"It seems to me like he's already a goner." Trent says, leading Iris to immediately look at him in the fourth cell. "I know this from my experience on losing those I grew close to..."

"But you told me that you won't give up on finding your true love. Therefore, we shouldn't give up on finding a way to save our friend, right?"

"I know but...how can you save him exactly?" Trent blinks, worriedness forming throughout his face.

"I...I'm not sure but..." Iris groans heavily, looking away. "We'll find a way...Hopefully..."

Norah takes her eyes on Trent in a curious manner. "Wait, did you say true love?" She asks.

Trent nods firmly. "Yeah, um..." The Lucario tells Norah what he told Iris, seeing her nodding afterwards.

"I see...I hope that you can find your significant other someday..." Norah smiles warmly.

"Same here..." Trent lowers his ears, sighing heavily. Iris looks off to the ceiling, having her paw against her chin.

"Hmm..." She says, squinting her eyes gradually. Brook notices the look Iris is forming, floating close to her.

"What are you thinking about?" The old Cloyster asks curiously, leading Norah and her daughter to look at Iris as well.

"Hmm...I'm curious about that Sheer fella..." The Dragonite answers, looking at the three Pokemon. "When my friends and I tried to attack him with our moves, he prevented them from working by having his eyes glow blue..." Iris then stares sternly at the brick wall. "This leads me to believe that he has a--"

"Mythical Power? I'm pretty sure that's the case, too." Norah says, interrupting Iris. Iris looks at her.

"You know what that is?"

Norah nods. "Yes. Pokemon being born with rare powers, correct? My father and I read a book called 'The History behind Mythical Powers' from the Cloy Town Library."

Brook joins in on the conversation. "It goes into detail about the mystery behind it and how it occurs to some Pokemon that are born with it. Even those that are born with it aren't aware that they have it until they've used it."

"Huh...Interesting." Iris says, being intrigued by what she's hearing.

"Also, from what Norah and I read from the book, these powers are labeled as one of these three categories: Attack, Defense, and Diverse. Attack allows the user to only harm their opponents, Defense allows the user to only defend themselves or others around them, and Diverse allows the user to harm their opponents and defend themselves or others at the same time."

Iris blinks in surprise. "Oh wow. I...didn't know that about Mythical Powers."

Anna and Lucas' ears flicker, leading them to look at the third cell. "So my Mythical Power must be Attack then. Since it only harms the opponent." Lucas says, catching on.

"And mine is Diverse. Since it harms the opponent and protects me at the same time." Anna says, following along before shrugging. "Well...sorta protects me if you ignore its tediously long healing process and painful as heck wounds I had to endure..." Anna grimaces at the thought of it. Norah and Brook raise their brows at the two.

"Wait, those two have Mythical Powers as well?" Norah asks curiously. Iris shrugs awkwardly.

"Yeah, erm..." Iris explains the whole thing about Anna and Lucas to the two.

"Ah, I see. Interesting MPs, I should say."

"Yeah...but back to the subject, Sheer's MP has to be Defense. Because it only protects him from being hit by our moves and it doesn't harm us during the process, right?" Iris says, catching on to the mechanics of Mythical Powers.

"Hmm...I would say it could be Diverse since it technically is harming you guys from using your moves on him."

"I mean, technically. But harming would imply us feeling pain from the effect. We didn't feel any sorts of pain when he used his MP. More so we felt confused, for that matter."

Norah shrugs. "Then it's likely Defense."

“But. What Norah and I did learn from The History Behind Mythical Powers,” Brook clears his throat for a moment before speaking. “Is that they all have a weakness. The weaknesses can either be easily spotted or hard to noticed.”

“I feel like that’s obvious to know about Mythical Powers.” Iris leans against the wall, having her arms behind her head while her tail swings back and forth gently. “So what could be Sheer’s MP weakness?”

Norah and Brook look at each other before shrugging at the Dragonite. “We’re not one hundred percent sure on this exactly, but we predict that his weakness could be his barb on his forehead.” Norah says firmly. “Think about it: No other Cloyster, not even the king, has a barb as big as his. So maybe that could be the key to weakening him.”

Iris thinks for a moment before nodding. “Alright. I’ll keep that in mind then. And speaking of Sheer, I got one more question to ask you two.”

“And that is?” Norah tilts her head slightly, curiosity digs within her body.

“Can you two trust Sheer?” Iris asks, leading her eyes to glance at the exit of the prison area. “Because I sure as heck can’t.”

“Well...you’re not the only one, Iris. He’s ruthless and uncaring compared to the king’s previous senator, Brisk.” Brook says in a vexed tone.

“I mean, he gives his prisoners a 1 second break. *ONE*.” Iris grips her fist. “Oh that just pisses me off the more I think about it.”

“I mean, he does worse than just a 1 second break. Such as insulting others for making a mistake, ruining children’s dream on becoming a senator just like him, and much more.” Brook sighs while shaking his head.

“And he does all of that *without the king noticing it!*?” Brook nods at the Dragonite’s question, causing her to snarl and punch the wall. “That guy *NEEDS* to get fired from his position.”

“Indeed.” Norah agrees with the Dragonite, sweatdropping while forming an annoyed look on her face.

Iris then sighs heavily, sitting down on the ground. “Well...I’ll have to get some rest for tomorrow’s unnecessary scavenger hunt again.”

Brook nods calmly. “Same for us getting some rest for more castle work.”

“Alright...goodnight then.” Iris says, shaking her head before closing her eyes. The others go to rest silently as well.

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The next day, Jimmy and Zeke are resting against the wall quietly. Jimmy cuddling against the wall happily while groaning. "Mmm...delicious tree saps..." He says to himself sleepily, chuckling softly. Then the cell door opens for the two, leading Jimmy and Zeke to wake up. "Hmm?" Jimmy blinks, seeing four guards being within his view.

"You two, come with us." One of the guards says in a firm tone. Jimmy and Zeke look at each other for a moment before looking at the guards and nodding. The guards then take the two with them and head towards their right, exiting out of their prison area.

Over at the crew's cell, about six guards enter the prison area they're in and do the same for them as well: Opening each cell and forcing them to exit out of the prison area. As the crew make it to the hallway, they see four guards holding Jimmy and Zeke hostage. The gang all show grimace within their faces, seeing their friend being taken away. Mark and Natalie gasp when they see Jimmy, leading them to immediately escape from the guards' grasp and head towards him.

"Mistress, wait!" Claire shouts, seeing the two running off as the two guards chase after them.

"JIMMY!" Mark and Natalie yell, tears running down from their faces like waterfalls as they drop to the ground and leave trails. As soon as they try to reach closer to the Heracross, the guards catch them. They have them pinned down before dragging them away from Jimmy. The two start restraining from the capture, both whining and whimpering during so. "No! Jimmy!" The two yelp, wanting to be with their heroic friend so much. Jimmy looks at the two and sighs heavily while moving forward.

"Let us go, you...you--"

"YOU ASSHOLES!!!" Mark yells, interrupting Natalie. The crew gasps at Mark's behavior before one of the guards glances at him.

"Watch your foul language, kid!" The guard says in a annoyed tone before everyone continues walking.

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The gang are being taken to the forest while Jimmy and Zeke are heading to Ster Town. In the town, the two notice Exo being next to two wooden boards as a crowd of Cloysters stare at him in the middle of the town.

"Ladies and gentlemen! I announce to you, our 30th execution in a long run!" Exo confirms while the guards take Jimmy and Zeke towards the boards.

Jimmy raises his brow at what the Cloyster said. "Wait, this is their 30th time executing someone!?" Jimmy says, feeling terrified by the thought. Zeke blinks, tilting his head curiously.

"Yeaaaah...I guess this town has some problems regarding cruel folks or something. I don't know." Zeke explains, shrugging awkwardly. Jimmy gulps as the guards push him and Zeke towards the boards.

On top of one of the buildings, Cerise is lying down while spying on the execution event quietly. Exo gladly continues his speech. "There lies the good. There lies the evil. These two *are* a part of the evil. Whom are willing to face their deaths as boldly as their disobedient souls can be!" Exo preaches to the crowd in a stern, terrifying tone while the guards set the two Pokemon onto the boards. They use the straps on the boards to tie the two, making sure that they don't escape. "So with their bygones be bygones, rest assure that this lovely town of ours shall be purified from ANNNY kinds of evil spouting from the Distortion's domain!" Exo dramatically lean his head back, releasing his breath heavily. The crowd all sweatdrop at the odd Cloyster before he continues his speech. "With that being said, thou shalt release thy executioner!"

The guards hear someone coming from behind them and move out of the way, revealing a Cloyster wearing a black mask and carrying an black axe. The Cloyster moves next to the two Pokemon, leading them both to gulp nervously. *Oh I hope Cerise knows what he's doing to make this plan work...* Jimmy thinks, having his eyes narrow at the sharp curves on the axe.

"The executioner will be rid of the evil! He will be rid of the corruption! He will be rid of the dar--" Exo coughs out a random piece of ice, clearing his throat for a moment. "Heh heh, my sincere apology for that, everyone. I had a bit of those Icicle Expresses stuck within my mouth." Everyone sweatdrops more at him before he continues speaking. "Anywho, the execution shall rain down upon these two," Exo turns toward Jimmy and Zeke, narrowing his eyes at them. "Disgusting, filthy, abominations from the Cloyster Kingdom!" He then looks at the black mask Cloyster, nodding his head at him. "Let the execution commence!"

The executioner nods back, preparing to use his axe on the two. Some of the audience look away while others continue to watch. The executioner positions his axe at Zeke first, slowly lifting his axe up in the air. Zeke closes his eyes, embracing himself as he winces. "Oh dear..." Zeke says to himself.

Cerise sees the execution about to happen as he gets up. "That's my cue." He says before hopping off from the building. He aims to land in between the wooden boards and manages to do so, having the executioner stop in his tracks. The executioner looks at Cerise in confusion along with everyone else.

Exo's eyes widen at the green blob. "Wait a second...isn't that--"

“Hi.” Cerise says, interrupting the Cloyster before glowing bright green. This causes the executioner and the guards around him to become blinded by the unexpected glow.

“Ah! What the!?” Exo groans, looking away from the green light. This leads the crowd to be confused by the situation going on. Soon a bunch of flat blobs appear all over the town and glow green as well, turning into green light and flying towards Cerise. The crowd notices the lights aiming at Cerise, gasping and aweing at the green arrays.

Cerise’s size begins to grow, leading him to form four canine-like legs and his tail to extend a bit further. His face resembles that of a canine as well while he’s still glowing. Cerise slashes the straps off from Zeke and Jimmy with his paws, grabbing the two subsequently with his teeth: Jimmy’s arm in one end, Zeke’s spike in another. “Whoa!” Jimmy yelps, seeing the glowing figure dashing off with him and Zeke within his possession.

The green light fades away, no longer in the Cloysters’ view as they look to see the canine running off with the two Pokemon. “Wh-What in the...THAT THING IS HEADING TO ZERO FOREST! A-AFTER IT!” Exo shouts angrily, leading the guards to chase after Cerise. The canine seems to be running in the pathway that leads to the forest.

As Cerise heads into the forest, he zooms past the guards roaming around the area and continues on dashing. While this happens, Iris and the others happen to see the canine running in a quick pace. The crew are next to a tree as they witness the glowing figure running off into a pathway that’s dark. “Huh?” Iris says, tilting her head curiously. “Was that...Jimmy just now?”

The gang then notices the guards from Ster Town looking around the area thoroughly, trying to find Cerise and the other two Pokemon. “It seems like that may be the case if the guards are searching around rapidly.” Trent replies to Iris, concerned about the situation as well. Natalie whimpers, having her ears down.

“I-I hope he’s okay...” Natalie says worriedly.

Ashen sighs. “We hope so too, Natalie. But...he was being taken away by something else...” Ashen says, putting his hand against his chin. “So I’m not sure if he’s going to be fine or not...”

The gang looks off at the pathway worriedly. “Ashen has a point...Whatever that thing is...” Anna pauses for a moment, shaking her head. “I hope that it doesn’t harm Jimmy...” She then blinks into realization. “Which leads me to realize...Where’s Cerise?”

...

Deep within the Zero Forest, Jimmy and the other two are resting by a couple of bushes and trees. Not much sunlight shines through this part of the forest, leaving Jimmy and the other two to barely see anything.

“Oh man...That was...a close call.” Jimmy says, sighing in relief.

Zeke pants heavily, looking at the Heracross. “Yeah. Tell me about it. I was nervous throughout that situation.” He replies before chuckling softly. Jimmy then turns towards the canine, who seems to be in the bushes at the moment.

“I’d like to thank Cerise for telling us about that escape plan.”

“You’re welcome.” Cerise says in a rather low yet soft tone. Jimmy and Zeke look at the bush, raising their brow.

“Uh...is it me or did that dude’s voice sound different than before?” Zeke asks, tilting his head slightly. Cerise pokes half of his body out of the bush, having a black canine-like appearance with a green ‘leash’ that continues beyond his neck. His eyes is also pure white, hexagon-like shape, has an red crest on his chest, and his left front paw is colored green.

Jimmy blinks, feeling quite surprised by Cerise’s appearance. “Cerise...You look...different.” Jimmy says, scratching the side of his head.

“Yeah...I know. Apparently, I remember that I can change my appearance. With these flat versions of myself...I’m not exactly sure how but I’m glad that I remember. Because it played a major role on this escape plan.” Cerise gets out of the bush, revealing his full body.

Zeke smiles. “Ah. Now I see what you mean by ‘I’ll do something drastic’ when telling us about the plan. This *is* something drastic.” Zeke says, sighing in relief.

Cerise nods firmly. “Now then...we need to form another plan.”

Zeke tilts his head curiously. “On what exactly?”

Cerise looks at the dim light from the sun. “On saving the others. And I think I might know how...”

Jimmy leans against the tree next to him, poking a hole in it and having his mouth next to it. “Alright. Tell away, pal.” Jimmy says before drinking some sap from the tree. Zeke looks at the Heracross, raising his brow at him. Jimmy looks back and blinks confusedly. “What? My kind drinks saps from trees. It’s in our blood, believe it or not.” The Heracross grins before continuing to drink sap.

“Uh...right.” Zeke says, sweatdropping before taking his eyes back to Cerise. “So what’s the plan on saving these friends of yours?”

Cerise nods. “Right. So...” Cerise begins to tell the plan to Jimmy and Zeke.

End of Chapter 16.