A Smasher's Support Log

by ChilanBerry

Summary

Robin has been given a task by Master Hand: find a way to help the Smash community grow closer. There's really only one way to do that that he can see; he dusts off his old Support Log and starts making new entries.

Notes

I didn't see a fanfic crossing Fire Emblem and Smash Bros. in the first few pages of either fandom. So, I decided I'd make one! Originally, I was going to go for a more classic Fire Emblem plot with the Smash crew, but those kinds of big battles aren't exactly my cup of tea. So, I'll be writing the theoretical supports instead. Hope you enjoy!
Master Plan

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Smash Entry 1
June 11, 18

I was just looking through the old entries of my Support Log, in preparation for what I'm doing now. The last entry I made during my days in Ylisse, five or so years back. It feels like so long ago, I can hardly believe it. Before I go any further, though, I should explain what brought me here, in case anyone decides to read this after I've finished.

To introduce myself, I'm Robin. I'm a tactician from the Halidom of Ylisse - or, more specifically, I'm from its neighbor, Plegia. After certain events I've detailed in my Tactician Log (b. 3, c. 20), the major catastrophic event of our world ceased. Following this, I received a letter from a place beyond the Outrealm Gate, as was common at that time (b. 4, c. 1), as did my associate, Lucina.

When we entered the Gate and emerged in this place, we were thrust into an exciting series of meetings and battles. We broke into our new routine easily, as I'm sure every other resident of the Smash world has. In case something changes in the future, I will explain the system by which our matches occur. At any time, a match can start, by command of one of a pool of sixty-odd fighters against another. A stage for the fight is chosen at a seemingly-random chance, and the two or more fight to remain on the stage while knocking the other off. The fighters are then transported back, none the worse for wear.

Occasionally, however, Master Hand, the arbiter of these events, will descend from on high and begin a regimental series of Smashes, called a Classic, without so much as a finger-snap. Around a quarter of the fighters will be pitted against each other for the day, and once someone wins against everyone once, they'll go up against Master Hand themself. Whether they win or lose, he'll disappear, and the whole thing will repeat at seemingly random times.

The reason I've described the system previously is so that I cam impress upon you the due weight of the following events. I must reiterate - only the person who defeats everyone at least once may fight Master Hand. Earlier today, a Classic had been held, and I failed to defeat Ness in the fifth round. Nevertheless, despite my loss, I found myself on Final Destination's stage, turning to face Master Hand. His visage, as far as you call four fingers and their knuckles a visage, was relaxed, restrained. I still felt the crackle of power behind every move he made, though. I tightened my grip on my Levin Sword.

"I mean no harm." The statement was simple. "I wish to talk with you only. Sheathe your weapon."

"You want to talk with me? What about?" My sword stayed at my side. I was no fool; Master Hand wasn't trustworthy, and for all I knew, this was some sort of trick, to get me to lower my guard.

"I have elected to give you certain knowledge, and make of you a request. Will you be willing to listen?"

Though I was still distrustful, my grip slackened. "What happens if I refuse the request? You knock me out until I say yes?"

Master Hand hesitated. "Uh, no, that wouldn't happen. If you say no, you can just go home, no
problem." His voice was far less commanding saying so, and closer to the tone of a casual conversation, and his flippant wave to allay my fears forced the thought in my head: Master Hand must have found whatever this was to be something compromising, maybe even embarrassing, but not necessarily dangerous.

I replaced my sword. "Fine. What is it you brought me here for?"

"Whether you may know it or not," he began, his former tone used once again, "this world is not very..." He turned by his wrist. "well-together. It's actually rather a hodgepodge. The places get pulled from other worlds, and important people from them, too. As a result, we are all... divided."

Silently, I agreed. The people of this world do have little in common between each other. Comparing someone like me, for example, to Fox, there are a myriad of differences. I couldn't begin to list them.

"Yes, well, I worry that it may come to a head soon. You see -" he moved closer to me, motioning to lend him my ear "- there's been a new round of invitations sent out. Today. We've only got so much time before the new fighters arrive, and I'm... worried."

I blinked, looked at him aksance. "You're worried? About who?"

"Well, all of us!" Master Hand threw his body skyward in an all-encompassing gesture. "You all from the Fire Emblem worlds, The ones from the Mushroom Kingdom and all, the ones from the Legends of Zelda, the Pokémon!" he shouted, turning himself left and right in what I can only assume were the directions the worlds he named were. "All of this adds up to an broken, incongruous state! We're close to shattering after all's said and done, and I don't want that!" He punctuated the declaration with a slam to the ground. A light blast escaped. "Oh, sorry about that," he mumbled.

"So what exactly am I supposed to do about it?"

"There's got to be some way. From what I know, you've used a weird trick to bring your comrades-in-arms together, right?" I nodded, though I did - and do - protest at the word trick. "Well, do the same thing here!"

"What? Hold on!" I sputtered. I couldn't possibly do something like that, I'd thought. "I haven't got the time, or the resources!"

"Then I get them to you," he said, throwing himself out. "I wouldn't ask you to do this without any assistance. I can take care of what you need, as long as you agree."

I was hesitant, but I couldn't deny what he'd said was true. Almost no one actually knew each other, at least not as well as they could. I admit, the idea does sound appealing now that I'm thinking about it. So, I agreed, and we figured out the details of what I would need. I won't need a particular method to induce a Smash, considering how it already works, and how I help form Supports. However, handling the location the Smash went to would be necessary. In addition to this, I needed Master Hand's word that he wouldn't call for a Classic for at least a little while, to which he readily agreed.

And so, I find myself in a peculiar position. Having read up on my previous Supports, I can remember how the general rhythm went. Still, I am rusty. I may require some practice, and Lucina should be willing and able to help me. I shall ask her tomorrow.

Smash Entry 2
June 12, 18
Lucina/Link C
The announcement broke today. I broached the subject with Lucina over breakfast this morning. Of course, I left out the exact reason I'm doing this, as I thought it would be more than a little unbelievable. In its place, I voiced 'my own' concerns about us all.

She agreed. "We really aren't very put-together, are we? And since you've been thinking about this so much, have you come up with a solution?"

"I have," I said, and showed her the cover of this book. "A Support Log should do nicely, don't you think?" I couldn't hide the smile on my face. I'm actually starting to warm up to the idea now, especially after the progress I made today. But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

"You're getting back into matchmaking?" she asked, slightly incredulous. "I guess you enjoyed doing it before, but are you sure everyone will agree? Some of the people here aren't exactly... easy to handle."

"There were challenges in Ylisse too," I said. "Between people like Maribelle, Nowi, Lon'qu, Owain, Inigo - even you, Lucina." I gestured to the sparkling ring on her finger. "It's a different group, but I've got to try. Our bonds between each other were strong enough to work miracles - and our strongest bonds were the ones I helped with."

"So, if you can bring all of these disparate people together, you can do anything?" She seemed amused by the thought. "Well, I've got nothing to lose. Some friends I'm close to could help me improve my fighting, as well."

"Alright," I said with a nod. After breakfast, I called for a Smash between Lucina, myself, and Link, who was wearing some unusual new clothes, I noticed. Now, though I'd assumed I'd choose the location we'd be sent to, it seemed Master Hand had other ideas; we were instead sent directly to a tall spire in the middle of a great plain, which I know now is the Great Plateau Tower.

Something else I hadn't planned was that the battle was a team fight. I'm no stranger to team-based fighting, mind you. I'm also no stranger to fighting duplicates of historically important people, or my own allies. (b. 4, c. 2) What I'm not as used to is a two-on-one fight between two sword users. In retrospect, telling Master Hand that pairing people together brought them closer faster may have been a bad idea. I just hope it won't be a regular occurrence.

I lost quickly. The announcement rang out across the tower's balconies: "This game's winner is - the Blue Team!" The sound of applause echoed around us, a supposed reward for a hard-fought battle. The peals soon died, and we waited for the teleport back.

After around twenty seconds of waiting, Lucina spoke up. "Shouldn't we have gotten back by now?"

"Is it Sudden Death?" asked Link.

"No, it couldn't be," I said. "The announcement just said you won."

"Maybe it's just dragging behind," Lucina said. "Today could be a heavy day for Smashes. We just got a few new fighters, after all."

"Possibly," I said. "Whatever the case, it's not working right now, and we can't get back to our world. As it stands, we should find out what we can and can't do here."

Link nodded, then looked outward to the great plain beneath us. Breaking into a wide grin, he dashed for the edge and flew off with a triumphant cry. Before he could sink like a leaden weight, though, he pulled out a cloth stretched across a frame, and gently floated to the ground. Lucina and I
were shocked, of course - he should have long-since hit the blast zone. "Come on!" he called from so far down. "Climbing down that tower's easy!"

I looked at Lucina, whose face belied her unsureness. But then, the thought crossed my mind: we just had to make it to the ground safely. I suggested a Pair Up of our own, then we leapt from the tower ourselves. Before we impacted, I threw down an Elwind and properly softened our landing.

Link dashed up to us. "That was some quick thinking! You got down here in record time."

"What was that thing you used?" Lucina asked. "It looked like a sheet."

"Oh, my Paraglider." He took the contraption out as he said so, and I confirmed my expectations of its construction. "Apparently, I received it in this era. It's the Era of Calamity, I think." Lucina's face darkened when he said the word "calamity".

"You think?" I asked.

"Memories," he said. "You've never dealt with this, but I'm not only one person named Link." He pulled out his Gale Boomerang and threw it. A breeze followed. "I'm how the heroes remember their stories, what was important to them." He caught the boomerang and turned it over in his hand. "I'm pulling more from the new era, because it's fresher in my mind, but I still remember the others."

"You're talking about the Era of Twilight, right?" I'd heard about it from Zelda.

"The Era of Time, too. I'm still the Link you remember, but I'm also Era of Calamity Link."

"So, what happened here?" Lucina asked, casting her eyes across the plain. "It's desolate." I saw a hint of worry creep onto her face.

Link only confirmed her fears. "Ganondorf had warped into a mass of pure evil and hatred. I fell in battle against him, and he ravaged the countryside for one-hundred years. He was trapped in that castle there." He pointed to a ruin in the far distance, obscured by fog. "The only thing that stopped him from razing the continent to the ground was Zelda - that Zelda's magic keeping him trapped."

Lucina shuddered, and I felt a pang of guilt at it. "You said ravaged, though," I said. "You defeated him, right?"

"I did. After I woke up and got my bearings again, at least. It was here, actually." He looked up to the tower-top we were under. "I had to relearn a lot. I had help, but it was difficult at first." He took out the Master Sword. "I didn't even have this."

"You'd lost your Master Sword?"

"I had to improvise a lot of the time. Other swords, spears, axes, magic rods - I got a lot of experience with different weapons."

"Really?" Lucina asked. "You can wield lances? I wouldn't have expected that."

"Why not?" Link asked.

"You're a Hero. In our world, Heroes can only use swords and axes."

Link cracked a smile. "Sounds like a strange rule. What can you use right now?"

"I'm a Great Lord right now, so Swords and Lances."
"Well, would you like to learn how to use axes?" He said it as a flippant suggestion, but Lucina's face lit up.

"Of course! I would love to!"

Link gave me a bewildered look, and I shrugged. We walked over to an old, abandoned cabin, where an old woodcutting axe laid. Lucina picked it up and then the two of them began to train. After some few hours, they called an end to that day's training. And at that exact moment, we were teleported back to Ragna Ferox.

"Why did it happen then?" Lucina asked as we made a late lunch.

"Who knows?" I replied. "Maybe there was a buildup of teleports, and we had to wait. At least we got to spend time with Link."

"Oh, right!" she said as she scrubbed some vegetables. "You could probably count that as your first Support, couldn't you."


"Well, I'll leave you to it. Just don't try to marry anyone off!" she said in a half-joking manner.

The remainder of the day, I've spent brainstorming other Supports. The question I'm facing is, how should I proceed from here? I could press forward with Lucina or Link, or find someone else entirely. That said, if I do that, I'll need to think about compatibility between people that I don't know very well. I'll just have to work it through, I suppose; I've got no doubt I'll have a solution soon.

Chapter End Notes

The dating system conveniently lines up with the current year, doesn't it? Well, Smash Bros. was released in July 1999, making it ~19 years old right now. The years since 2000 and years since Smash line up pretty well.

The figure I arrived at for Tactician Log Book 3’s number of chapters comes from: Chapters 21 through 25 and Finale (Post-Valm), every child paralogue found on Continent!Ylisse (Kjelle, Severa, Morgan, Yarne, Laurent, Noire, Nah), and every SpotPass Paralogue (Dead King, Paths, Miracle, Ghost, Truth, and Hero), plus one for detailing the events afterward. Meanwhile, Book 4 deals with Spotpass and DLC stuff. The way I see it, the Einherji and DLC maps aren't capital-C Canon, but Robin still probably used them, so they go in a separate book.
Smash Entry 3  
June 15, 18  
Robin/Lucina/Daisy C

In the end, Lucina and I decided to try for another support with her. We're most familiar with each other, after all, and she had already volunteered herself to help. I asked her for her opinion on a few different Supports. After rejecting quite a few of them out of hand, and most of the rest after some thought, there was one that gave her pause.

"Daisy?" she asked. "Who is Daisy?"

I repeated the announcement to her of the new fighters. There had been the Inkling and Ridley, but also the princess Daisy would be entering battle as Peach's Echo Fighter. I also reminded her that was classified as an Echo Fighter now as well.

The face she made made me regret saying so. "Right, I forgot entirely." She chuckled a bit bitterly. "I haven't pretended to be Marth for years, but it's what I'll be known for now, I suppose."

"What? No!" I rose from my chair and drew myself close to her. "Lucina, you are your own person. You aren't just Marth's double, and you know that. You're Chrom's daughter, and Princess of Ylisse by birthright. That was what I'd had in mind. I don't think you're just some imitator."

She hesitated, then smiled warmly. "Thanks, Robin. I appreciate the kind words. You're right, I probably should meet Princess Daisy."

I smiled. "Alright. I'll set up the Smash," I said as I stood. "Remember, Lucina, you don't have to hold back on my account. Five years hasn't exactly made you more open."

"I'll keep it in mind, Robin." Her slightly sullen expression didn't fill me with great confidence that she would come to me if she had issues, but she's done it before, so chances are still good.

I challenged Daisy and Lucina to a Smash, as I had yesterday. I found myself at the Mario Circuit racetrack, and its more sedate version, to my preference. I've sometimes found the madcap turns and gravity changes the other possess to be so offputting, I've had to lie down for the remainder of the day. Nevertheless, my lack of nausea did little to help me against both Lucina and Daisy, and after getting run over some few times, I lost all the same. It was at this point I realized that this likely would become a regular thing. I've been in a less-than-pleasant mood since then, obviously.

"This game's winner is... the Blue Team!" As the applause faded, and the teleport once again failed to occur, I began to suspect this would also be a regular occurrence. Presumably, this is Master Hand giving me more time for the Support to actually build.

"Well, that's weird," Daisy said. "Shouldn't we have all gotten back to what we were doing?"

"Should have, yes," I said. "Has, no." I looked out to the roads and where the carts had been left. "As it is, we could probably use our time getting to know our new fighter. Wouldn't you agree, Daisy?" Despite having only one point of data to look at, that being Link and the Great Plateau Tower, I took the educated guess that this place was somehow relevant to her interests. Pointing to
the carts, I said, "Do you know how to ride in one of those?"

Her face lit up, a wide and earnest smile breaking through. "I sure do!" she said. "Come on, I'm sure that it's okay for us to use a few! Won't even miss 'em!" She led the way, dashing ahead of us to the carts and waving us over. "Come on!" she shouted, throwing her arm invitingly.

"She's certainly enthusiastic, isn't she?" Lucina said, an uneasy smile on her face.

"She really is," I replied. "Still, maybe we'll have fun racing. I've never done it before."

I now regret those words. Daisy helped us strap in, to keep us safe from the items. Needless to say, we both panicked when we heard about the different ones that appeared on that course: stuffing a Mushroom into the engine to boost speed, dropping Banana Peels to trip entire cars, throwing green Koopa Shells to launch people into the air as if we were still in a Smash?! Figuring out how to use the car itself was an ordeal, too, even with Daisy's instructions. I've never had to deal with such a complicated machine before in my life. It probably won't be the last time.

Then, the race began. Daisy sped off as the light changed to green, and Lucina and I trailed behind her, in that order. Daisy had us get into carts she said were great for beginners - ones with good acceleration, but lower weight. If we made mistakes, we'd be able to make up for them easily. I was able to test that fact out firsthand: as we closed in on her, she ran through a glowing box in the road and in her hand appeared a banana. When she threw it behind herself, it was crushed by my tire and its slippery oil forced my cart into a spin.

As I've already written (b. 2, c. 2), I found wyverns' flying to be too much for me a lot of the time, and I preferred being a Griffon Rider. Lances always gave me trouble, too, so together with the griffon's better mobility under heavy load, I was well suited for the class. I indulge in a digression at this point because just thinking of the spinout drives my stomach to empty itself, to put it bluntly.

I was still pointed at the road, so I started driving again, passing Lucina on the way. By this point, we'd gone through one lap. Following Daisy's example, I opened a box of my own and received a Mushroom. I stuffed the toadstool into my engine as she'd shown me, and I could soon see her. Her machine, I had assumed, was running at less than full capacity, as she'd told us earlier that her vehicle had a higher top speed than either of ours. Knowing what I know now, she was waiting for us.

Lucina was close behind me, and Daisy wasn't far enough to be safe. I pushed my foot onto the accelerator as hard as I could. She drew closer. Suddenly, my cart was thrown to the side by Lucina's. After reading up, I've learned she used, probably accidentally, the Slipstream technique, trailing behind my cart and moving faster in the vacuum I left. In her hand was a red Koopa Shell, which she threw forward. Like one of Samus's missiles, it guided itself to Daisy's rear bumper and impacted it, sending her spinning and leaving her behind us.

We passed into the final lap. The only competition Lucina had from that point was going to be me, I thought. My foot was a lead weight against the pedal, but Lucina wouldn't give up so easily. As we closed on a set of boxes, the last ones before the finish line, I hoped for something I could use. I ran into one and received another Mushroom. "Perfect," I said, despite no one being able to hear me. I threw my hand forward with all my strength, and felt the lurch of the engine boost. Lucina moved to block me, but I darted to the side.

We crashed into each other, pushing her left and me right in an endless cycle, until the finish line was in view. We were neck-and-neck, I was ahead, then she was! The sounds as our vehicles crashed into each other were joined by a third engine, too far off to be important, I naively assumed. Surely Daisy couldn't possibly impact this now! There couldn't be any item that changed things so late! Those fate-tempting thoughts passed through my mind as I turned my wheel to run into Lucina's
side, and hopefully push her enough to let me come in first.

In my supreme focus, I missed the fourth source of sound: a bright whizzing, echoing from above my head and behind us both. Before I even registered the noise, the world turned a bright blue, and I felt a weightless sensation, the straps on my seat being the only things keeping me tethered to the cart. I crashed to the ground as the light cleared, dazed. I pressed my foot to the accelerator and drove over the finish line without much presence of mind, then waited for someone to tell me the race was over. In my defense, I'd just been struck by a exploding Spiny Shell. Apparently, being dazed is a common side-effect.

I'd gotten third place, Lucina second. Daisy, the one who'd recieved the shell from the same set of boxes I had, threw it before we crossed the line and it flew straight for Lucina.

"That was fun!" Daisy said, bouncing with her arms pulled up, hands balled into soft fists. "I don't get to have these small cart races often enough! It's usually eight or twelve people. You've got to think differently about your strategy in these."

I rubbed my sore neck. "What sort of things change?" I asked.

"Well, for starters, if I got too far ahead, you wouldn't be able to get to me." She smiled coyly. "I wanted you to think you had a chance. Also, you remember how I mentioned that items get stronger when you're in twelfth place?"

"Yes, I do."

"Well, if you don't have twelve people, how would you use the Spiny Shell or the Bullet Bill?" Without waiting for my speculation, she answered her own question with, "Easy! Just be in last place. All the best items are in last, always. In a twelve-person race, it's not worth it to stay in last for the items, but when there's only three..." Her smile turned conspiratorial, her brow raised.

The realization hit me. "You were trying to get the Spiny Shell for an easy victory."

"Second would have been plenty, it's a risky strategy. But you got into it with Lucina, so I got to kill two birds with one stone!"

"You definitely know a lot about cart racing," Lucina said.

"Well, I have to. When I've got any break from running Sarasaland, I've gotta pounce on the chance to hang out with Peach."

"Sarasaland?" I asked, stretching my body. "I'm not familiar with that world. Is it part of the Mushroom Kingdoms?"

"Close," she said. "We're a separate nation, but I'm from the same world as Mario and Peach. Technically, she runs a -"

"- principality," I answered with a nod. I'd broached the subject with Peach when she visited Ragna Ferox to welcome us, but her only answer was that her residents called it a kingdom. "Is Sarasaland also a principality, then?"

"Not quite," she said with a finger wag. "Sarasaland is technically a 'principalistic empire' - I'm the princess-slash-leader of four different kingdoms." She bobbed her head as she said it, like she was saying something less consequential than if she'd said she preferred chocolate with beet sugar instead of cane. "But, like I was going to say, who's counting? All it means is that the name's wrong. And a daisy by any other name smells just as sweet, right?"
I cracked a smile. "Usually, people would say a rose."

"Well, I'm not a usual gal." She matched my smile. "I do know a lot about running an empire, though. I have to make time for Peach a lot because you wouldn't believe how much trouble your entire continent gets into."

"Try me," I said. "Lucina and I have dealt with some crazy things."

"Crazy things, sure." She shook her head in sympathy. "Peach gets kidnapped all the time, she's magic, Mario has to get called to get her back and it takes time, I get it. But her retainers have to deal with all of her day-to-day affairs whenever she's gone." Her posture shifted, clearly getting more annoyed with every word she said. "Taxes and revenue, public funding, laws - they've got a lot of experience handling the little bits so Peach doesn't get a mountain of paperwork when she gets back. I mean, their economy completely tanks whenever she gets kidnapped by someone who isn't Bowser - it's business as usual otherwise!"

"And you don't get that," I surmised.

"I've only ever been kidnapped once. An alien, named Tatanga." She looked off for a second. "Actually, I think he's working for Wario right now." A violent head shake. "But anyway! I got kidnapped once." She held up one finger. "How long do you think it took to pick up all the pieces, just to get things working again?" She threw her hand out.

I hazarded a guess. The number, I don't remember, probably some number of months, two years at the most. That was about how long it took to get Plegia in some kind of working order.

"Wrong. Ten years."

The number blew me away. In hindsight, working to bring four kingdoms together again after being practically deposed would take a lot of effort. At the time, though? I argued with her. "You can't be serious. Plegia didn't take that long to rebuild."

"Really, it didn't? So, this Plegia, when did you stop being its ruler?" It was a leading question, and we both knew it, but her assumption was accurate.

I stammered. "Well, I'm the ruler now, but-"

"But you weren't the leader before, right? Not from the start? You became the leader because of -" She paused for effect, brought her clenched fists to her face. "crazy stuff!" Her fingers flew out. "Something weird happened, maybe you got in trouble with an evil king, so you took him down or something. But it wasn't a normal case of succession." She shook her head and let out a tired sigh. "We're getting off topic. I don't have a problem with crazy stuff - my best friend gets kidnapped by a giant turtle-dragon on a regular basis, for pity's sake! I'm just saying," she said, laying a hand on my shoulder, "I've got a less exciting life than Peach, but that comes with its own issues."

Uneasy, I nodded at the statement. Then, the teleport started up and I found myself in my room at Ragna Ferox. As it is, I've been writing this entry in bursts - my stomach's been lurching a bit since I arrived. It's currently sunset, so the time is probably 7:30.

Lucina brought me supper a half-hour ago, and I appreciated it. "I know you meant for me to be friends with Daisy, but it seemed like you really have something to talk about her with," she said.

And she's right. Even if I don't like writing down my personal Supports anymore, it's still disingenuous to pretend I don't make connections. As such, I've corrected the Support label for this entry. I may have to look into finding a less permanent option of writing.
(This was supposed to be Lucina/Daisy, me! What were you thinking?! I mean, I like it, but ???)

Skip to the last paragraph if you don't want the correlating info. I may have over-explained.

Personal preference, but I made my Robin into a Griffon Rider in the end. They're really great utility, even if they don't do much special regarding battle. That said, I doubt this Robin really liked being a Griffon Rider very much, anyway; he maybe preferred being a sorcerer or just staying Grandmaster after picking up some good skills. Motion sickness is a real... piece of work. Robin would have likely discovered this after meeting Cherche, near the start of Valm.

I got the info about Sarasaland from the Super Mario Wiki, because I've never played Super Mario Land! Still, the entire concept of a "principalistic empire" is probably not what Nintendo had in mind by naming Land's worlds "___ Kingdom". (A principality is ruled by a prince or a princess - a non-gendered royalty term, surprisingly, since it's based on the word "prince".)

At the start of Mario and Luigi: Superstar Saga, the Mushroom Kingdom's currency has an exchange rate to Beanbean coins of roughly 10-12 MUS:1 BB. Later in the story, after winning a bet, a prince gives the bros 100-trillion-less-one Mushroom coins. These are converted, not to nearly 10 trillion coins, but 99; in other words, the economy completely tanked between the two times. (Overthinking a gag? Me? Never!) The only significant event we're aware of in the interim is Princess Peach traveling abroad to Beanbean and... getting kidnapped by someone who wasn't Bowser. (Bowletta used Bowser's body, but had Cackletta's soul, so it counts.) Meanwhile, in Bowser's Inside Story, the Mushroom Kingdom currency seems to suffer no apparent drop in value despite Peach's current status regarding Bowser.

Daisy's first appearance is in Super Mario Land, a 1989 game. She appears as an NPC in NES Open Tournament Golf, released the same year, as Luigi's caddy, of all things! Presumably, she wouldn't stay long. Maybe she was visiting to thank Mario for saving her. Her next appearance, and first playable one, at that, is in Mario Tennis in 2000. The number works out to eleven years, but Daisy seems like a down-rounder.

After finding out exactly what Grima did to the Shepherds, I imagine Robin got more hesitant writing down his personal Supports, something like imposter syndrome.

Man, I didn't mean for this one to go on for so long! It's just that, like Waluigi, Daisy's character recently has really just been "Peach's doubles partner", or in this case just "Peach's double". I needed to come up with a reason for that, and she can't get kidnapped because if Mario had to rescue her once, why doesn't he do it more? So: work. As for why the support seems contrary to Daisy's character, that's because not every support can be lighthearted, even the ones from as happy-go-lucky a world as the Mushroom Kingdom. Some of them get deep into characters' personalities and issues.
First, a note: I won't be detailing what I consider the "lead-up" anymore. That would be me challenging the two people I list to a Smash and losing, then the teleport failing to activate. Writing each loss down feels disheartening. Should something unusual happen, I'll write it down, but at the moment the implication should be enough.

Over the past few days, I've been considering my mission from Master Hand. The point of all of this is too bring all of the Smashers together. Meeting new people is all well and good, but I've also got the responsibility of the veteran group. Therefore, I'd decided to meet with Kirby and Dedede, and we met on the fully-colored Dream Land stage. Kirby smiled after the fight. "If you'll be here for a while, would you like to play a game we made?" he said.

"What sort of game is it?" I asked.

"Kirby an' I call it the Gourmet Race," Dedede said. "A while back, me an' him made it to that mountain over there." He pointed off to a far-off hilltop with a protruding caldera. It looked almost like a gigantic stone bowl. "So, I raced him to get the most food."

"So, do wild fruits grow there, then?"

"Yep!" Kirby said. "But a lot of other stuff does, too! Like ice cream and milk!"

At my bewildered expression, Dedede explained. Gourmet Mountain, as they called it, seemed to generate not only fresh produce every few days, but had places where whole dishes of already-prepared food appeared, ready for eating on a biweekly basis. Curry, coffee, even things like strawberry shortcake. Kirby began to salivate at the mention of that one.

"Well, if you'll have me, I'd enjoy participating," I said.

"Great, kid!" Dedede slapped me on the back, throwing me forward a few steps. "You ain't gotta worry about gettin' too competitive between us."

"Dedede's really cooled down over the years," Kirby said. "It'll just be for fun. And the best part is, you can keep all the food you collect!"

"If Kirby eats all'a yours, I'll give you some leftovers," Dedede said with a snicker. "Good luck."

We made our way up to the lip of the caldera and waited for a Waddle Dee to call the starting signal. From there, we'd all have ten minutes to claim as much food as possible, by any means we had at our disposal. Waddle Dees would be keeping track of each player's collection. As he threw the flag downward, we were all off. Kirby and Dedede went in opposite directions, left and right.

I ran forward and found myself in an old, decrepit building of some kind. Growing between cracks in the tiles were all sorts of wild fruits and spices, blueberries, bay leaves, oregano leaves, even a small tomato plant. I pulled them from the ground and handed them to the referee. Then, I dashed further...
into the building, into a kitchen. Perfect, I thought. I threw open any cupboards that had been closed and found bags of varying powders: ground coffee, dried milk, and even vanilla sugar. Handing those, too, to the referee, I ran into the pantry. Scanning the shelves, I grabbed what few vegetables were there: an ear of corn, a freshly-washed carrot, and a pepper.

Making my way from the kitchen and into a dining room, on a table were a few full plates. One was on omelet with rice in the middle, still piping hot; another was a glass filled with a chilled, green jelly; yet another was piled high with fresh fruit. I gave them all to the referee and ran down the adjoining hallway. I found myself in a communal bedroom equipped with some twenty or so beds. I turned to exit, but stopped. On a hunch, I lifted the pillows at the heads of the beds. Sure enough, each one had a small tin of candy beneath them.

I made my way out the back of the building just in time to be assaulted by a harsh, reverberating boom. I crouched down, fearful of the chance that it was some sort of attack, possibly by a dragon. On the contrary, Kirby flew by with the noise at a speed that I almost couldn't track with my eyes alone, a strange metal apparatus fixed to his head. Apparently, it's his Jet ability. Realizing that meant he'd be so much faster, I ran as fast as I could in a perpendicular direction, heading north.

Splashing into a puddle, I looked to my right. The field I saw not far off was awash in golden grain. A gust of wind flew across the field and made a rolling wave of amber light. It was a perfect chance to increase my score, but there was no way I could cut it all down in time with only the swords I had leftover from the Smash, let alone make it into something worthwhile. Then, the idea struck me: my swords weren't my only weapons. I brought out my Elwind tome and ripped the grain from the ground with a harsh blast of wind. Then, after collecting huge bunches together, I used Nosferatu to not only destroy any disease it held, but also to reduce it to a fine powder. Then, I fashioned a pseudo-oven from my Arcfire tome and mixed unleavened dough together to make flatbread.

Half the field was down when my referee blew his whistle, signaling the contest was at its end. I disassembled my oven and made my way back to where we met and looked at my opponents' baskets. While Kirby's basket was almost overfull with all sorts of foods, Dedede's was only mostly filled. Looking at my own, which was also nearly full, I didn't know exactly if I could win.

One of the referees began to write something down, conferring with the others as they did so. After a bit, and what seemed like a brief disagreement involving who I remember as my referee, they stopped. "The person who has obtained the most food is... Kirby!" Kirby jumped up and down in excitement at the statement. "He leads by forty items! Dedede is next, and leads by eight. And now, for bonus foods." I hadn't been told about these, and the confusion was evident on my face.

Dedede told me, "After talkin' to Bowser, I got the idea that it would spice things up a bit if you couldn't just win by gettin' the most food. Well, that, and I like actually winnin' every once in a while. So, we've got bonus food - every one you win, you get fifteen added to your total."

"How many are there?" I asked.

"Today, we'll be using four randomly-chosen bonuses," said the referee with the paper. "The first is the Dish Bonus! This bonus is awarded to the one who obtained the most inedible food-related items, such as plates or glasses. Before we award the bonus, however, we have a ruling which the King and Kirby should agree upon."

Kirby and Dedede gave the go ahead to the rule, which was to also count spices which were inedible. As such, the bay leaves I pulled from the floor were deemed eligible, and "therefore, by a margin of two we award Robin the Dish Bonus."

"The next Bonus is the Complete Set Bonus! This bonus is awarded to anyone who created a meal
containing a fruit, vegetable, grain, meat, and dairy product. This bonus is awarded to... Dedede and Robin!"

I was shocked that Kirby hadn't received that bonus. Dedede said to me quietly, "He went to a place where there wasn't any dairy food first. It's got almost everything else, but not that. Where I headed had a lot of milk and cheese, and Kirby'd think of goin' there first, so I took all of it 'fore he could get there." It's clear to me I hardly avoided coming into Dedede's crosshairs. I might not have made it out alive if I had.

"The next Bonus is the Maxim Bonus! This bonus is awarded to anyone who obtained a rare Maxim Tomato! This bonus may be earned more than once, but subsequent Maxims are only worth five points!" My mind flashed back to that tomato plant. My only hope was that it was a Maxim. A bead of sweat ran down my forehead.

"This bonus goes to... Kirby, twice, and Dedede!" That feeling of defeat stung. My points started at forty-eight below, so I'd needed to win all the bonuses, and for Kirby to win none, to win. As it stood, I was now behind Dedede by eight. Second place was the best I could get now.

"The final bonus is the Idea Bonus! For this Bonus, one person must have more novel ideas than their opponent...s." The referee faltered as his eyes darted to me. "The idea bonus goes to..." I unconsciously leaned inward. Dedede did the same, as did Kirby. Thinking of it now, I'm not so sure why Kirby did that. "Robin, with his book oven and Puddle Flatbread! Congratulations!" The referee clapped as he awarded me the points, in a frankly stunning display of hand coordination.

"The final totals are as follows," the referee said, "King Dedede takes third place with a total of 108 points! Robin steals second away with 115, and first place, by a very narrow three points, is Kirby with 118!" The other referees popped a few party favors and confetti sprinkled the local area, their applause and congratulations lightening my mood. So what if I hadn't gotten first? The point of this was to get to know Kirby and Dedede, and I feel like I have.

As we wound down and I wrote down some of this entry, Kirby and Dedede discussed the results. "I'll get ya next time, Kirby! We keep gettin' closer in raw numbers."

"I know! You're getting really good at this, Dedede! I hope you can beat me someday!" Coming from someone other than Kirby, the statement would have been extraordinarily arrogant and condescending. As it was, he was only stating an earnest wish. I found it endearing.

"Thanks, Kirby..." Dedede's face, on the other hand, showed he'd taken it rather the wrong way, as is to be expected. "That's one more loss on my record. I'll have to train my stomach even harder!" He picked up one of his food items, a very juicy hamburger, and downed it in a single bite. "What about you, Robin? How's your food?"

I looked at my own basket, and at the misshapen, puddle-water flatbread I'd made using my Arcfire tome. While I was thinking of winning the competition, I also should have considered whether I'd eat it afterward. As it was, I'd have a hard time trying to choke it down.

The disgust on my face was evident. Kirby noticed it immediately, the intelligent creature that he is. "That can happen to me sometimes," he said. "I know it sounds silly, but there are some foods I don't wanna eat some days. Do you wanna come with me to change 'em out?" His eyes sparkled like stars as he suggested it. I agreed, and he told me to grab any other items I wouldn't be using. Taking up my three spent tomes, I followed him to the caldera's lip.

He pulled out a small device and began to talk into it. From what I saw, it had a hinged, clam-like design and was made of a pink plastic, a substance I've seen on Ness's yoyo. It had a clear screen
and small buttons Kirby could push. Kirby told me after his call it was a cell phone, where I'd only been familiar with the regular, land-lined type in the Onett's store windows. Soon after he said so, a glowing star fell from the sky and hovered before us. Kirby invited me to hop on, and I did after he assured me it was completely safe.

Dedede neglected to come along, as he was going to boss around his Waddle Dees. As we flew upward, Kirby told me how much he didn't like that, but because Dedede was his friend, and because he still treated his Waddle Dees with the respect they deserved a lot of the time, he couldn't bring himself to tell him to stop.

As we passed the Fountain of Dreams, Kirby pointed it out to me. I'd assumed it was only flying because of the Smashes, but there it was, in the air, floating. It was very majestic, and the feeling I had as I looked at it was something I'll treasure for the rest.

Kirby offered to write the last third of the entry (from after judging on) because I got airsick on his Warp Star. Please disregard the last couple of paragraphs.

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Smash Entry 5
June 18, 18 3:30 PM
Kirby/Pit C

Kirby and I touched down in Skyworld from his Warp Star. (see prev.) As we did, I took back my Log and immediately headed this new entry. I don't think I'll hand off the logbook to Kirby as easily in the future.

Kirby and I made our way into Palutena's Temple and were brought before the Goddess of Light herself. She greeted us warmly from her throne, saying, "Kirby, welcome back. Robin, it's good to meet you. It's been too long."

"Has it?" I asked. I don't exactly keep track of my Smashes, after all - though now I likely should, considering what I'm handling. "My apologies," I said regardless.

"I expect you to come come back here soon. I may yet be able to aid you, as you may me." Those sentences have been bouncing in my head for a while, and especially that final part. I certainly hope it doesn't mean what I fear it does.

Either way, Palutena continued. "I assume you are here to see Pit. He's finishing up training exercises in the garden now, so you can head on through." A divine light shone above the door leading there, presumably a benefit of being the Goddess of Light. "Give him my regards." Her smile was kind and carried with it a quiet wisdom. At the risk of seeming redundant, it suffused the room with further, warmer light that I felt from the inside out.

We made our way to the garden and began walking around the fence to the proper field. Pit caught sight of me first. "Ah, hello. Robin, right? Lady Palutena said you'd be coming over here soon. What do you need - Ah, Kirby!" His demeanor turned from polite, but professional, to a much more casual, excited one as we rounded the corner into the field.

"Pit! I've got good news!" He held my basket in his arms, which held my Nosferatu, Arcfire, and Elwind tomes as well as my food. "I've got a really big bunch today!"

Their eyes reflected the light above as they talked animatedly, catching up on detail after detail.

"Alright, well, training made me really hungry," Pit said. "I'll go get a ladle and we can get started." He dashed down a corridor, leaving us alone.
"So," I said to fill the vacuum, "you seem like you're already friends with Pit. How'd that happen?"

"We just became friends one day," Kirby said. "I guess we had something in common."

"Would that be food?" I asked. At that moment, Pit came running back carrying a common kitchen ladle.

"Alright," he said with some panting, "let's get started. I'm starving."

"How's that?" I said. "Is there a pot somewhere around here?"

Pit laughed. "No, just watch this," he said with pride.

Kirby swallowed the ladle, like I'd seen him do to many Smashers over the course of five years. This time, though, his transformation was a mystery to me. He wore a tall, white hat with a flared top. Suddenly, a deep pot appeared from thin air above a roiling flame, already filled to the brim with a red soup of some kind. He pulled a ladle and a spatula out and clanged them together. As he did so, the items within the basket began flying in: first the books, then each individual piece of flatbread, then any other items I didn't want like the single carrot or the bay leaves.

Kirby stirred the bubbling soup a few times, then leapt to the side and called, "Ta-dah!" A plate of omelet and rice popped out from the pot. As did a meat-patty sandwich, a whole roast chicken, a bunch of grapes, and any other food you could name. A monstrous amount of foods lurched from that cauldron and fell upon the ground in neat groups.

Then, just as it started, it stopped. The pot disappeared, as did Kirby's ladle, spatula, and hat.

"Alright," Kirby said. "Robin's the most picky, so he gets his first pick."

"Yeah, that's fair," Pit said. "I do want the ice cream, though." He pointed to the cone of ice cream, resting precariously against a chunk of raw meat on a femur bone. Mentally, I decided he could have it.

I chose a plate of omelet-rice to eat then, as I had been hungry at the time. Besides that, I took a lot of the raw materials, so Lucina and I could use them. That suited Pit well enough, and he took a lot of the prepared food. Kirby took all the rest, inhaling it then and there.

"How often do you two do this?"

"Well, after every Gourmet Race, definitely," Kirby said. "Besides that, it's not very often."

"But they do these enough that I can get out of cooking for Lady Palutena every once in a while."

"Oh, Pit," Palutena said, her voice coming from above. "I hope you're not implying I'm a bad cook in there." Her voice was calm and placid, with an edge of a joke to it.

"Ah, no, of course, Lady Palutena!" Pit scrambled to say. "You're a great cook, I promise. It's just that sometimes cooking can be such a hassle, right?" He sounded as if we was trying to convince himself as much as Palutena.

"You're right. Could you bring me something, Pit?"

"Of course, Lady Palutena. Anything!"

"Well, I've been craving some ice cream recently. You wouldn't happen to have gotten any, would you?"
Pit slumped over slightly. "Of course, Lady Palutena." His voice didn't waver, but his pained face made me feel a little bad for him. Kirby patted him on his back and consoled him.

"You two do know that you can make ice cream, right?" I said.

Pit's face lit up. "We can?!" He and Kirby started animatedly pressing me for information about how to make it. I think I found myself agreeing to find them an ice cream machine, because neither of them had ever seen one before. Apparently, this was how they got a lot of their food. I was teleported back then, and I have been writing this entry the remainder of the day. It's nearly supper, so I should go give Lucina the good news and tell her we'll have grapes for dessert tonight.

Chapter End Notes

Gourmet Race is a simple race in Kirby Super Star with food collection, but the way I figure it, it can be expanded on for the purposes of this fic. Also, southern Dedede! Yeah, I watched the anime as a kid, and it definitely influenced how I see Dedede's dialogue. In the new games, I constantly expect more casual speech from him. I'm surprised a lot of the time.

Kirby's a real sneaky guy, isn't he? Even if he can be an expert in everything he does, he's got his own biases that are going to show in his writing.

Pit and Kirby supporting came to me because they're both games by Masahiro Sakurai, like Smash. They've got some common links, too (like eating food off the ground), so it just felt natural.
Over the past few days, I've been considering that I'll have to confront a significant issue soon. That being, what do I do about fighters who fight against one another? If I ignore any such interaction, I could miss some significant potential Supports. On the other hand, should I miscalculate, I could sour someone's desire to Support at all.

I'd been talking it over with Lucina when we both received a Smash request, from Link and Zelda. It was a two-against-two Smash on top of the Hyrule Castle - the one that wasn't a ruin. We won, surprisingly enough.

"Wow!" Zelda said, looking out at the countryside. "I've never been up here before!"

Link watched her as she climbed up the tower in the middle of the stage. He then gave us a look that I read to mean, "Help me, please!"

I was confused, as well, and called her down. She leapt down to the roof and immediately bent over her ankle. "Ow!"

I got over to her after Link. Thankfully, after looking it over, it wasn't anything more than a sprain. She would be fine after a little rest. More to the point, I asked her what she meant by having never been on the castle roof.

She explained, "I've never even seen this castle before. Allow me to introduce myself." She held out her hand. "It's good to meet you. I am Princess Zelda, of Hyrule."

I took it in my own. "It's an honor, Your Highness. My name is Robin, and I'm the ruler of Plegia."

"Plegia? What an interesting name! And no title?" After I said no, she turned her attention to Lucina. "Then, who would you be? You're related to Robin, correct?"

"Sort of," she said. I explained part of our relation to each other, neglecting some of the negative parts. (Tac. b. 3, c. 17)

"I see. Well, Lucina, Robin, I'm likewise honored to meet you."

Link nodded.

"Judging from the fact you're introducing yourself," I said, "you're a different Zelda entirely than the one we know."

She nodded. "I am. In my world, my Link could travel between dimensions by moving through cracks in the wall! Isn't that amazing?" Her voice ratcheted up, becoming louder and more excited.

Link raised his eyebrows. His eyes darted back and forth, presumably searching for those memories.

"Of course, he left Hyrule entirely to go to Hytopia. I heard he saved a princess over there, too, and
he was working as a fashion model when I came here, which, good for him!" The words came from her like a torrent, an aggressive flood of joy and praise.

I noticed Link's wholly bewildered expression. "Excuse me for a second," I said as I took Link to the side. "Link," I said, "what's wrong? You haven't been talking much."

He looked off. His whole body was tense, wound up like the spring of a trap.

I hazarded a guess. "You're worried about this new Zelda, right?"

He nodded, then cleared his throat. "That's most of it. She's completely different to the Zelda I know."

"She is rather... peppy," I agreed. "But if that's only most of it, there's something else, right?"

Link groaned. "It's the me from the Era of Calamity. Apparently, people kept putting pressure on him, and he stopped talking much at all."

"And you inherited that reflex."

"Exactly. It's like I've completely forgotten how to start a conversation. That's why I requested the Smash."

"You remembered that Lucina and I failed to teleport," I surmised, "and thought if it happened again, you could get help." It was a clever idea.

"I really need it. Think you find a way to let me break into the conversation?"

With I smile, I said, "I'll see what I can do." I turned back to the conversation between Zelda, who had only become more excited, and Lucina, seeming rather exhausted at the onslaught of sentences Zelda levied.

"I'm sorry to interrupt," I said. Zelda paused mid-word, a "do you think" catching in her throat. "I'm sorry to interrupt," I restated, "but I was wondering about your Link. You said he was a fashion model? What sort of things does he wear?"

"Well, by the time I left," she said, starting up again, "he was wearing those nice-looking clothes that they wear in Hytopia. He told me in one of the letters he sent me, you see. But when he was saving that princess, he wore some really strange magic clothes like a suit that made his bombs huge! He had one that made his bow fire a bunch of arrows, too! He could swim faster when he wore his Zora outfit, too!"

I threw Link into the conversation by saying, "Link, have you ever heard of clothing that can change how someone swims?"

Link had the look of a wild deer caught in a battlefield. "Uh, yeah," he stammered out. "I - yes, I have."

I took a glance at Zelda. She stared at Link with rapt attention. I gave him a nudge to keep going.

"Uh, I actually - I've got a suit of Zora armor from the Era of Calamity. The bow clothes are surprising, though." He seemed to pick up a little steam as he went. "Usually, I just use a bow of my own that duplicates arrows." He hesitated. "I've also got some clothes that stop monsters from hearing you."
Zelda's eyes were so bright, they nearly outshone the sun. "That's incredible! I've never even heard of the Era of Calamity, let alone its special armor and bows!" She hopped forward on her good leg and gripped Link's arm. "You've got to show me whenever you get a chance! I'd love to study them! Actually, can you bring them to our next Smash?"

"You can't," I interjected. Zelda's head snapped to me, and I'll admit, I flinched a bit. "The Smashes have equipment you get automatically. It's not possible to change it out."

She stamped her foot futilely, then flinched, drawing her arms down. I reminded her she still had a sprained ankle. "Well, that's annoying. How's anyone supposed to learn about weapons if they can't get them?" She gave a huff.

"They're fragile anyway, Your Highness," Link said. "They break pretty easily."

She took that into consideration. "Well, that could be worked around. Tell me, do you have a way to get to where I am?"

Link nodded. "I can use Farore's Courage, too."

Her eyes lit up again. "Really? That's so interesting! I'm not entirely sure how these magic spells work, so I would love if you could teach me!" She gripped his arm again, and Link fell back.

"Maybe," I suggested, "we could try meeting up later?" Putting aside my own needs to know their conversation, I could already tell Link would need me at wherever they'd meet for moral support. "In a week or so, we could have another Smash, and if we don't teleport, we'll have that lesson?"

Zelda thought about the arrangement for a split second, then nodded. "It sounds fine by me! If we're in a place that we can get special weapons and armor from, we'll do that. If not, magic!"

Link agreed as well, and gave me a grateful expression. Zelda pressed Link for further details of his magic items, but I asked her to wait until he could get something more than a haphazard list together. She agreed that would be best, and we bid each other goodbye, as I'd expected the teleport to begin.

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Smash Entry 7
June 21, 18 11:00 AM
Ganondorf/Link C

The teleport from the previous entry failed to happen. In fact, something else magical seemed to occur: the sky, which had previously been a relatively clear blue, turned dark and stormy. I watched the clouds begin to let loose their rain onto the ground in great crashes, with thunder roaring and lightning striking. I asked Link what was going on.

He looked down, a serious expression drawn across his face. "It's Ganondorf." He pointed down to the field, to the black-coated horse with the fiery red mane. Its rider was certainly similar to Ganondorf, but his face was more gaunt and his body leaner than I'd been used to.

"Oh, I'd heard Ganon used to be a human!" Zelda said so loudly. "I think they were called Gerudo, right? I've never seen one."

I'd have asked why not, but at the time I'd been preoccupied. Ganondorf had spotted us, and leapt up to the castle roof to meet us. He felt a head taller than me, and I felt the power his piece of the Triforce gave him.

"I'd thought I'd find you here, Link." His new voice was deep, with a strong vibration to it. All the
same, his tone was more smooth and refined, nearly regal. "I've been looking for you. I'd like to talk with you, you see."

Link had assumed a fighting stance as Ganondorf approached. He made no move to relax his guard, and had one hand on his scabbard.

Ganondorf sighed. "If you are unwilling to talk, fine. There are other ways for me to pass my time."

He turned his attention to Zelda. "Ah, Princess. We meet again. It is good to see you again."

Link and Lucina stole a glance at each other. Zelda said, "I'm not the Zelda you know."

As Ganondorf opened his mouth to express his confusion, Link and Lucina drew their blades and charged. Link drew the Master Sword and swung high. Lucina took the low slice with her Parallel Falchion. Ganondorf battred their blades away with a swipe of his hands and darted close to them, where their swords couldn't easily reach. With a single slam of his clenched fist, he sent them both skidding across the roof. "Really, was that necessary?! I announce I'm here to talk, and you attack me?"

"You were here to talk last time, too, Ganondorf," Link said.

Ganondorf hesitated. "Well, fine. I can't begrudge you for that; I'd do the same. But this swordswoman -" He threw his hand out to Lucina "- has no reason to behave like this!"

I helped Lucina slowly climb to her feet. "What are you here to talk about?" I asked.

"As I've been informed, there's been another era accessed by Master Hand. I wished to know how things were in the other eras. However, I can tell I'm unwanted. Allow me to exit with some of my dignity." He turned to leave.

I stopped him with a shout. "Ganondorf, wait!" Despite the looks the others gave me, I continued. "If you're really here to talk, now's the time."

Slowly, he turned around. "I've no interest in speaking with someone who is unwilling to listen. My apologies, Robin, but I will take my leave of this place." With a great heave, he threw his body from the roof and down to the ground. He hitched himself up to his horse and began riding off.

It took a second, but Link, shaking his head, took a running leap from the castle roof, as well. Pulling his ocarina out as he fell, he twittered out two descending sequences of notes quick enough to be unintelligible and fell onto the horse he called with it. Without missing a beat, the horse, named Epona from what Link told me, dashed after Ganondorf.

"Come on!" I said to Lucina, as we Paired Up.

"Wait, what should I do?" Zelda asked. "I can't just teleport willy-nilly!"

"I'll take care of it." The voice came from somewhere beside us on the roof. In a flash and a puff of smoke, Sheik appeared before us. "I'll handle the princess."

"Oh, wow!" Zelda shouted. "Are you really Sheik from the Era of Time?! I've always - "

"Later," she said. "We've got to catch up to Link." Zelda nodded, and they vanished in another flash.

Lucina and I leapt from the roof and followed after them, throwing each other arm after arm to increase our movement across the field. Sheik and Zelda followed behind, but Link and Ganondorf widened the gap every second, Ganondorf more than Link. His horse was getting farther and farther.
Then, what happened next was incredible. Link leapt twenty feet in the air above Epona and brought out his bow. In place of the arrowhead on the nocked arrow was a red, sparkling bulb. He aimed the shot ahead of Ganondorf's horse and let go. The arrow sailed through the air, touching down a few yards ahead of Ganondorf and erupting in a great ball of flame. His horse, frightened at the sight, bucked wildly and threw him off.

As the five of us closed in on him, he rose into the sky and threw down a dark ball of energy. "This is intolerable! I make it clear that I have no desire to speak, yet you charge against me! I have had enough!" He charged a ball of dark energy the size of his body in his raised hands.

"Let it go, Ganondorf." Sheik summoned a bow of pure Light and pointed its payload, an Arrow of Light, straight at Ganondorf's heart. "Release the energy and come down here, now."

Ganondorf's body shivered. As he lowered his hands, the energy dissipated. He floated down to the ground, and Sheik put away the bow. "Fine. However, this is no way to begin a conversation, is it, Zelda?" He bared down on Sheik.

"I guess not," Zelda said. "We didn't really give you a chance."

Ganondorf's eyes darted to Zelda. "Well," he said, slightly put off by Zelda's response. He'd likely been expecting Sheik to answer, as apparently, Sheik is also a Zelda. "Well, at least you'll admit it." He sighed. "All this for a simple question. At this point, I'm not sure I should have even bothered, but you've gone to the trouble of blowing me up, so I should at least take advantage."

Ganondorf turned to Link. "As I understand, you are from a new era, one I've never seen before. I'd like to ask, how are the Gerudo after my passing?"

Link blinked at the question. "After your passing?"

"Yes." He drew his arm to his forehead. "I'm under no illusions. I know you had to have killed me at some point in the new era, and I'd like to make sure the Gerudo were getting along well without me."

Link hesitated, but said, "Yeah, Ganondorf. They're surviving in the desert without you."

He nodded. "Good, good. I'm glad. What sort of things do they do? Have the Hylians accepted them?"

"They have. The only weird thing about their society is that men can't be in their cities."

Ganondorf chuckled. "So, what will happen when I'm resurrected? Will they drive their own king from his home?"

Link failed to respond. Looking at his eyes, he was clearly reliving something that the Calamity Ganon had put him through.

"It would seem," Ganondorf said, "I've touched a nerve. I'll ask again after some time. Excuse me, Your Highnesses." Leaping onto his horse, he rode off toward the desert in the distance.

As he disappeared from view, the teleport began and brought Lucina and I back to Ragna Ferox. I found today's entries to be an excellent example of the difficulties I have ahead of me. It will only get more difficult from here, but that only means I'll have to be ready. My first step is to improve the relationships I've already marked down. This could take some doing, so my following entries may take time.
Zelda's character is a little unusual because she was chosen in Ultimate as a contrast to Wild!Zelda. She doesn't really get much characterization outside of the cutscenes she's in, so I'm making her a little wild and enthusiastic. As to why she's not timeline-linked, well, she's from a completely different Timeline than Child-Link-Timeline Twilight Princess. That's enough of a gap to split them up, I'd say.

Did you notice you could use Pair Up to increase a pair's movement? It's pretty simple: First pair up two units that haven't been moved or Paired Up before this. Then, send the pair forward and separate them instead of Waiting! Quick and easy 1 Mov boost. And in Awakening, they still get some of the boosts if you get attacked by Jerk Reinforcements!
Smash Entry 8
June 28, 18
Link/Lucina B

The day had finally arrived. (E. 6) Lucina and I accepted Link and Zelda's Smash, and we found ourselves aboard the Spirit Train. In order not to risk falling off the train and suffering serious injury, Alfonzo drove us into a village named Aboda. Honestly, I'd been looking to talk to Toon Link, but I suppose it's better that I don't spread myself out too thinly.

We stepped off the train and made our way to a fenced-off field that the Link of a previous era used. Link suggested that Lucina and he go against each other first, and Zelda could be shown magic afterward. Lucina and Link took their places, Lucina holding a Bronze Axe I gave her from the Convoy. (Despite the fact that during the Ylissean campaigns, Chrom was the one who could access the Convoy, control of it would seem to have passed to me here. I may be able to take advantage of this somehow.)

Link, meanwhile, had switched weapons to a bulky iron sword he called a Cobble Crusher. "Hold on," I said. "How do you have that?"

Link nodded and explained as follows: His appearance was sacrosanct in Smashes. He must always have in his inventory the Master Sword and Traveler's Bow, etc. However, in the Era of Calamity, he gained the ability to carry many different kinds of swords and such at one time, enhanced by a special forest spirit called a Korok. While during Smashes he can't change weapons, he can keep them in reserve for later. He can't do the same for his armor or any materials he finds, though.

At any rate, Link had a Cobble Crusher. (Sword C. Mt: 15, Dur: 30. Can't follow up, AS -9.) He had the advantage, but Lucina could still pull ahead.

Lucina made the first strike, throwing a clumsy horizontal swing with the axe. Link flipped backward and then performed a jumping slam. Lucina dodged to the right, then swung the axe again as Link hit the ground. The force of the blast pushed her back, but she managed to get a hit in, knocking him to his right. He rolled to his feet and stood, not much worse for wear. With a nod, he charged her, arms back and prepared for an uppercut strike.

Lucina drew to Link's right side and chopped. Link flipped just before the axe's blade could impact him. With the sword on his left side, I assumed he couldn't get the blade in a place to swing it from there. Link proved me wrong by taking the crusher into his right hand and speeding forward far too quickly, making four wide swings in enough time for me to notice he'd changed hands. I didn't know Link was ambidextrous, but looking back to our Smashes, it should have been obvious; he'd been a left-hander before the new fighters, and he used his right now.

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Lucina flew back from the force of the strikes, rolled to a stop near the fence Zelda and I were behind. I leaned over and helped Lucina to her feet, asking her if she was alright. She nodded in return, then turned her attention back to Link. Gripping her axe tight, she ran over to him and drew her arm back to swing. Link flipped again, and Lucina thrust her axe as if it were a polearm, pointing the axe side skyward. Link landed on the blade and tumbled back, coming to a stop and standing up.
"Pretty good," he said. "Caught on to my Flurry Rush in one go. Something I picked up in the Era of Calamity. You're using too weak a weapon, though. Every hit you take pushes you farther down, and you can't afford not to be dealing more damage."

"I appreciate the advice," Lucina said. "I can't exactly use a stronger weapon, though. I'm not even an E Rank in Axes yet."

"E Rank?" Link asked, to which I explained our Weapon Rank system. (Tac. b. 1, c. 4) As a primer, an E Rank is the lowest level of proficiency suitable for battle. Anything less is too negligible to be written down. Using a Second Seal to change Class changes which weapons and animals you can be proficient in, at the cost of lowering your ability to use the originals. Lucina can, of course, use Axes at A Rank as a Great Knight, but not as a Lord.

"So, then," Link said, "you're trying to increase your expertise in axes without taking an easy way out. I can respect that."

Lucina nodded. "If I can learn how to use Axes without changing class, that ability could translate to more potential in other classes. We may live in a time of peace in Ylisse, but seeing if it's possible could help if something surfaces later."

Link listened to Lucina with a solemn expression. "I'm not familiar with your world, but you're right about one thing. It's important to aim to surpass yourself. Now, come on!" He brought himself into a fighting stance. "If you want a good fight, I won't hold anything back!"

Lucina smiled, then charged forward, axe primed for a strike. I looked around for someone like a Sage who could possibly use Staves in case Lucina needed it. Zelda offered, and I handed her a Heal Staff. She then proceeded to spend half of its uses on herself and I.

Link had clearly been holding back before. He moved like he was a different person now, throwing all of his weight behind every strike, aiming to crush Lucina beneath him. Whenever she backed off, he'd pull out his Sheikah Slate and stop her in her tracks for only an instant, long enough for him to close the gap and push back in.

Around a half hour later, both of them were tiring; Lucina's arm was clearly throbbing, and she was gripping her chest. Link's Cobble Crusher must have at least bruised her ribs, maybe even broken them. Link was little better: his body was covered in small cuts from the Bronze Axe. I'd counted every hit each had scored: both weapons were close to breaking, cracks in their blades evident. Zelda asked who I thought would win, but I wasn't sure this fight would have a winner.

"So," Link said during a lull, panting, "you managed to go this far. I've got something I've been saving, and I think you can handle it. Ready?" Lucina nodded grimly, and they began the final strike. Link whirled the blade over his head and began Spin Attacking, his heels digging into the soil as he gained speed and spun toward Lucina. Lucina drew her arms close in and turned her axe to the best position she had to inhibit the attack, edging forward in a mix of tiredness and caution.

I felt the air change, that same air-splitting feeling I felt whenever I used Thoron. "Lucina, stop!" I cried out. "It's electric!" As Lucina drew her weapon down, Link struck with the fury of a thunder storm, slamming the ground and creating a dome of electricity. As the crack of thunder faded from my ears, I ran over to her. Using Elwind to clear the air, I found two things: Link and Lucina were both unconscious. Not dead, thankfully.

The pole from the axe was near Link's unconscious body as well as his sword's empty handle.

"That was one of the toughest fights I've ever had," Lucina said after they'd been healed up and we'd broken for lunch. "You used a lot of things I've never seen. That Stasis magic completely stopped
me."

"It's tough to use during a fight," Link replied. "It only lasts a split second on living things. I was cutting it off whenever I reached you because it takes a while to recharge, too."

"Still, I could barely move. And that electrified Spin Attack was so powerful. How did you learn that?"

He smiled. "That was a gift," he said. "A friend taught it to me. She could use it a lot better, trust me." I pictured what exactly that entailed. I failed fairly quickly, and looked over to the girls, doing much the same.

"Are there other abilities like that you can do?" I asked.

Link nodded. "I can summon a perfect shield," he said, his mouth full of apple, "create a wind, and revive myself if I die. My other friends taught me those."

"Would they be related to the Hyrule Royal Family?"

"Yeah, they are. We're the Champions of Hyrule." He swallowed, then looked off. "I knew them a hundred years ago, before the Calamity almost killed me."

Lucina's expression turned grave. "What happened to them?" The sentence was a question, but I heard in the tone of her voice she had already figured out.

He looked down. "They all died. I didn't even know them that well before, but hearing about how I'd failed them, cost them their lives - it hurt. I'd spent the year or so trying to make up for my mistakes."

"Sometimes you can't." Lucina's voice echoed the somber subject. I'd never tried to pry into what had happened in the future she left, but I know it wasn't good.

We finished the remainder of our meal in relative silence, then made our way back to the fenced-off area to begin Zelda's magic lesson.

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Smash Entry 9
June 28, 18 1:30 PM
Link/Zelda B

As discussed in the previous entry, Zelda, Link, Lucina, and I were in Aboda Village. Link had offered to help Lucina with axe training, and Zelda with magic and weapons. Zelda took her place against Link, and he pulled out a small staff not dissimilar to the Heal Staff I'd given Zelda. (She'd used the whole thing on the four of us, despite only two receiving injuries.) The staff was short and almost metallic, with jagged blue material composing it. At its end were three spikes connected to a hexagon, almost like part of a snowflake. He called it an Ice Rod. (Staff D. Mt. 3, Dur. 15, R. 1-2. Attacks, Inflicts Spd -3.)

Zelda took it in her hands and prepared to use it. Link drew his shield and called for the combat to begin. Zelda threw the Ice Rod at Link, and it hit him on the head and shattered into a thousand blue-glowing pieces.

Link clarified: the Ice Rod worked when it was waved, not thrown. To make up for that, he gave Zelda a different weapon to practice with: a large Korok Leaf. (Staff E. Mt. 0, Dur. 25, R. 1. Attacks. Pushes target, at no durability loss.) He mentioned that even if she tried, that leaf couldn't be thrown any appreciable distance. Then, they began.
Zelda swung the leaf in wide swipes, and great and powerful wind gusts launched through the air. Link dodged the wind as if it were a real attack, flipping left and right as Zelda continued to throw gales at him.

Soon, though, Zelda tired. "This leaf's tough to throw around," she said. "I don't know how you do it, Link. It takes a lot of force just to move it!"

"I've had practice, Your Highness. Do you think you understand how the wind works?"

"I think so," she said. "What's next? Are you going to give me a Fire Rod?"

He shook his head. "I want you to use Farore's Wind, and picture how the wind carries you. You should be able to find your way around more easily that way."

"Picture... the wind." She lifted the leaf in her hand. "I can do that, sure!" She spun in a circle, holding the leaf out so it created a great gust. As it flew through the air, Zelda tossed the leaf up, enveloped herself in the yellow ribbon of Farore's Wind, and disappeared.

The three of us looked around for where she could have possibly went. "Hey, over here!" Zelda waved at us from across the train tracks, some 200 yards away - much farther than she'd ever flown before. "I'm all the way over here!" she said, excited.

"That was impressive," Link said when she got back. "It looks like I was right about your Farore's Wind."

"Hm? My Farore's Wind? You can use it, too?" Her eyes lit up again. "How often can you use it? What are the restrictions on it?! What's its range?!"

"Uh, Zelda," I said. "Let's stay focused on the lesson, shall we?"

Link silently thanked me for stepping in. "The point was that Farore's Wind uses the air to bring you along. When you use it, if you can find a connected airway, you can really fly. If you practice with the leaf, you should get the hang of it."

She nodded feverishly. "What else can you show me? Can my Din's Fire be improved, do you think?!"

He nodded hesitantly, then handed her a Tree Branch. (Sword E. Mt. 1, Dur. 20. Not suitable for combat.) This part of the training, he said, would help Zelda learn to control Din's Fire better. She seemed disappointed that she wouldn't be using a Fire Rod, but took the branch, anyway.

As they proceeded with the Fire training, Zelda drew the fireball close to her body and far away, without letting it explode. This part was meant to teach her control, and she did well at it. Link then had her light her Tree Branch on fire, to better show the power of Din's Fire.

Zelda threw a great ball of fire from her makeshift Fire Rod and it launched far up into the air, exploding into a great gout of flame that seemed to suck in all the air from the spot it went off at. The sheer amount of heat was impressive - Zelda had a lot of raw ability when it came to magic, or so I thought.

"Alright, that's enough," Link said. "We'll practice more another time. In the mean time, don't slack off on your training, alright, Your Highness?"

Zelda nodded, and smiled. "Of course, Link. I'm going to keep doing this until I can do it in my sleep! I really appreciate that you gave me things I could practice with without needing to come back
"It just makes sense," he said. "We'll call them your training set."

"Of course! And I can always ask Impa if she could find more in the Lost Woods."

"Oh, Impa," Link smiled at the name. "What's your Impa like?"

"Oh, she's wonderful!" Zelda twirled as she said it. "She's my nursemaid, and she taught me a lot about Hyrule's history, and how to run a kingdom! She's even a Sage, did you know that?!"

"I do. I had to save her once because she was - well, I had to save one of the Impas I know. The other one was a smart old woman."

"Oh, mine is, too!" Zelda clapped her hand over her mouth. "Mm! Please don't tell her I said that!"

"The older someone gets, the more intelligent they usually are," I said.

"Yeah!" She pointed at me. "That's what I meant! She's really intelligent, and she knows all about the history of Hyrule!"

"What is your Hyrule like?" Link said. "I'd like to know."

Zelda nodded, and began, "Well, let's see. First, Hyrule was founded a long time ago, by the first Zelda and Link. Records are really spotty, for obvious reasons, but Impa did tell me that Hyrule experienced a prosperous era after the Triforce was sealed in the Sacred Realm.

"Then, while the triforce was sealed away, a Link had to stop a powerful wind mage named Vaati, who had stolen the Zelda of the era and tried to steal her Light Force."

"What's the relationship," I said, "between the Light Force and the Triforce?"

"I don't know," Zelda said. "What I do know is that the Light Force is always in the royal family line, and that it gives us a lot of magical power. We can even summon Light Arrows at will! Though, we do need to tap into the Triforce sometimes for that.

"But, anyway, the wind sorcerer had stolen that Era's Zelda, but Link defeated him. Soon enough, the Era of Time happened."

"I know this one," Link said. "I was a Hylian raised in Kokiri Forest, who opened the Gate of Time and let Ganondorf into the Sacred Realm when I drew the Master Sword."

"Oh, yes, you're right! I guess you've got memories from your other incarnations! Well, I'll skip to the end, then. The Link of that era awakened the six other Sages besides the Zelda of that era and made his way to Ganon's Tower, where he fell in battle. Afterward, my -"

"Wait, wait, what?!" Link, bewildered, wrenched back. "What do you mean, I fell in battle?!"

Zelda seemed confused. "Your previous incarnation fell in battle. I don't understand, did you not know that?"

I saw Link frantically searching through the memories in his head, dredging up every last detail from the Era of Time. Finally, he shook his head. "No, I beat Ganon," he muttered. "I did. I beat him, and then the Era of Twilight - but, wait, that's not..."

Zelda's leaned over to him, put her hand on his shoulder. "What's wrong, Link? Did I say something
Communication had broken down. I can acknowledge that now. Whatever Link had realized, it was clearly affecting him very strongly, enough to completely tear down any thoughts he had. Still, when the teleport began, I felt cheated and concerned at the same time. I've occupied my time writing this entry. I'll try to contact Link tomorrow, to see if he'll be alright.

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Smash Entry 10
June 29, 18
Botch

I failed to get in contact with Link. Looking up the Smash results from yesterday, it seems Link did not take any Smashes after the previous entry.

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Smash Entry 11
June 30, 18
Botch

I failed to get in contact with Link, again. It occurs to me that he may need space, so in the mean time, I will attempt to cover other Supports until such time as Link comes to me.

Chapter End Notes

The reason that Link can use some of his BOTW inventory, Doylistically speaking, is because it's more fun to have Link be able to use multiple weapons. Same with Robin's shiny new Convoy. Technically, Link's inventory should act like Eventide Island, but that's less useful for me.

Zelda is a Sage in her home series ... but I don't think classes carry over across series, Robin.

I used an underline because Robin's supposed to be writing this, and you can't really hand-write italics.

The thing about the Light Force ... I'm willing to bet that it's the blood of the Goddess Hylia. It just feels appropriate.

Twilight Princess!Link is from the Child Timeline, where Link-as-child (a.k.a. Young Link) stopped Ganondorf from rising to power. Ocarina of Time!Link is from the Adult Timeline, where Ganon was killed by Link at Ganon's Tower, and Link was sent back in time by Zelda's Song of Time. This left that version of Hyrule without a Link, and caused Wind Waker's ocean flood. Breath of the Wild!Link is from some timeline, but it's unknown which.

And about the botches, hey, they can't all be winners.
So how about that Direct, huh?

...  

Alright, I gotta admit, I'm feeling a little intimidated by that. Hyped, too, let's be clear; like, my god, I'm so pumped for Ultimate. But (uhh, heh) they just revealed FIVE new characters. I've got so many more options now, just from those five that I'll have to consider. I'm feeling a little giddy from it all, really.

I'll be OK, it's just... WOW. I'd been expecting two new characters, not five! (One brand-new, one Echo.) I'm gonna have to look up stuff about Metroid because it's got four people here, even if two are villains, and one is some kind of weird mass of alien evil? (Never played a Metroid game.)

Of course, considering my dating system, the only thing I do by talking about it like this is tell you how far behind the real date I am, and I'm still, like, three weeks behind. Oh, well. I can at least use foreshadowing this way. Ready for Chrom to trip over himself in Magicant? Because I SURE AM.

Smash Entry 12  
July 1, 18  
Bowser/Peach C  

This morning, I'd intended to further my understanding of the Kirby world, and perhaps participate in another Gourmet Race. Before I could, however, I was sent a request by Peach and Bowser, to participate in a 2-on-2 Smash between them and Daisy. Realizing I could stand to talk to Daisy, as well, I accepted. We battled on the roof of Princess Peach's Castle.

"Hm." Peach seemed to nod when we failed to teleport out. She then proceeded to invite us all into the castle for tea, including Bowser. I expressed my confusion in a subtle manner.

"I'm in here all the time, actually," he said in reply. "You don't have to treat me like a leper, y'know."

I had been, perhaps, slightly tactless in retrospect. I will admit, I haven't gotten to know Peach very well at all. Unlike those of Zelda's worlds, I don't feel a strong kinship between us over things like our systems of magic or weaponry.

Regardless, we made our way to a drawing-room, on the wall of which hung a great painting of several Bob-ombs, marching in a line. I was offered a cup of a bittersweet tea, and declined offer of milk and sugar. My eyes were drawn to the landscape, and Bowser took notice.

"That one's a real conversation piece," he said. "You ever see that one?"

"Bowser," Peach said, "Robin's from a different world, remember? I don't think they have movie theaters."
"Oh, yeah, that's right. Sorry for assumin', man."

"It's fine, though I'm interested in what you meant. You used that painting in a movie, then?" I'm rather unfamiliar with movies, knowing them only through second-hand accounts.

"Yeah! We're in 'em all the time, you know, over here."

"We've quite the filmography," Peach said. "Mario, Bowser, and I are very close as a result."

"What do you film?"

"Well... Take our latest film, for example, 'Super Mario Odyssey'. The plot was that Bowser had kidnapped me in order to force me to marry him."

"We did it," Bowser said, "because she wanted to raise money for a foreign aid thing."

"The films follow a regular plot, I'll admit."

"They're pretty darn clichè."

"But people enjoy them enough to come see them, and I truly appreciate it."

"So," I said, "your antagonistic relationship..."

"It's all fake," Bowser said. Daisy spat out her tea. "Peach an' I have been best buds since... when was it?"

"I believe it was that one, actually," Peach said, gesturing to the painting.

"Oh, hey yeah, it was! Man, it's a shame you got rid of the old one, huh?"

"It certainly was. It could have been useful when we wanted to go on vacation."

"Woulda saved us a lot of heartache for Delfino. 'Course, that was a work trip, anyway."

"You're going a bit fast for me," I said.

"Oh, right. Well, let me go through it. See, the first time we met, I kidnapped her. That much, everyone knows."

"However, Mario and Luigi rescued me," Peach said. "After that, though, we were all left with a dilemma. Namely, our countries were tense, and our economies drained."

"War's expensive."

"Yeah, we did. Only thing was, I was just gettin' cast as the villain in everything. Eventually, I got fed up with it."

"So, he came up with a plan to really hold me captive," Peach said. "It was a good plan, too. We
never put on airs for the camera as such, so he knew all of my weaknesses - Mario's, too."

"This was about the time Mario was gettin' done dealin' with Wario. That was, ah, Land 2, right?"
Bowser muttered a bit about Wario being a diva.

"It was. Bowser invited us all to the castle - this castle, actually, under the guise of drafting up plans for a new movie. I, Mario, Luigi, and Wario all came to the guest rooms upstairs."

"Then, I sprung my trap!" Bowser slapped his hands shut like a vice, and squeezed them tightly. "I locked the Bros. and Wario in the rooms and dragged Peach upstairs. Then, I used some Magikoopa magic with the Power Stars to put all these locks and stuff on the doors, and animate all the paintings."

"Of course, Bowser had failed because of two things. One, there was a Yoshi on the roof who could use the paintings to take back the Power Stars."

"Aw c'mon, Peach! You're really making me talk about that one?"

"It's your fault for doing it, Bowser." A smile slipped onto her face.

He sighed. "I forgot about... the key-stealing bunnies that live around here."

I asked him to repeat that statement, as the very idea of key-stealing rabbits sounded completely ludicrous to me.

"Yeah, they shoulda stuck out more, right? But the darn things live in the woods. Koopas're used to hot temperatures, y'know? Didn't think about it."

I looked to Daisy for help. She shrugged. "Look, the Mushroom Kingdom's weird, Robin."

"Says the girl with wild sphinxes," said Peach, with a playful smile.

"Yeah, in the desert! That's where sphinxes belong!"

"Anyway," Bowser said, "the rabbits stole most of the keys to the rec room. That wasn't a problem. Then, one of 'em made its way up the tower and snatched the key to the front door."

"The one place that Bowser couldn't completely seal away," Peach said. "He had to get in and out of the door somehow."

"Wouldn't teleportation work?" I asked.

"Not likely," Bowser said. "Teleportin's short-range here, and besides, when you teleport through a magically-stuck door, you unstick it if you're stronger, and just plain can't if you're weaker."

"Sort of like taking an axe to it," I said.

"Exactly, except it's made outta magic."

"Another issue," Peach said, "though secondary, was that he'd conscripted someone from the painting world to watch a Power Star for him, and it was a Bob-omb."

"Explosives make bad guards," he said.

"So, that was the only time you backslid?"
"Yeah, well, after that, I got word from the storks that I'd get a kid soon. Had to make sure my act was completely clean, y'know? Can't be a bad role model for Bowser, Jr."

"I see. Well, how often do you make films?"

"Oh, we release one around once a year," Peach said. "It's expected by this point."

"Yeah, and we also have a few different things goin' on at any given time. If you can believe it, Mario streams his parties over the internet sometimes!" I assume that's a big thing, not that I would know.

"Huh. So, you've got a close relationship, despite your less-than-pleasant first meeting."

"Yeah," Bowser said. "I wouldn't trade this gal for the world!" She pulled Peach under his arm, and she laughed.

---

Daisy pulled me away from the drawing room in which I was having tea with her, Peach, and Bowser in the previous entry. She asked me into the hallway, and I duly obliged.

"I think I need to apologize to Peach," she said to me.

"Why do you think that?" I asked.

"Well, I've just been kinda harsh on her, y'know? Just because she's tied up a lot doesn't mean I need to be so unforgiving, you know?"

"I get it. So, why not do it now? Or when Bowser and I leave the room to do something else?"

Daisy smiled. "I appreciate that you'd do that for me, Robin. But I can't just apologize, you know. I've got to do something big. Like make something for her."

"What were you thinking?"

"Well, I was thinking... a cake." She rolled her eyes coyly to me. "Do you think you could ask Peach to use the kitchen?"

"I can," I said, "but why me?"

"Well, if I ask, I might give it away. But Peach doesn't have a reason to suspect you'd be helping me."

"Sure, I guess," I said with a smile. "I'll ask."

After securing the kitchen, Daisy and I set about preparing a cake. It soon became clear to me that neither of us knew how to make a cake, and that I can't read Mushroom, a fact which I will soon remedy.

I will preface this with a recipe for Mushroom Kingdom Special Strawberry Cake, as read to me by Daisy.

Step 1: Mix together 2/3 cup sugar and 1 egg in a mixing bowl.
Step 2: Add 2 cups flour and 4 tbsp. butter.
Step 3: Add 3 cups milk, then mix by hand until smooth.
Step 4: Place in 400 F oven for exactly 20 minutes, cool on wire rack.
Step 5: Decorate with whipped cream and strawberries.

To begin with, I should mention I've never made a cake like this in my life, or any dessert, really.

I began by figuring out which ingredients were which. I put my finger into a canister of white, granular powder and tasted it. It was salt. "Well, we might need this eventually," I said.

"Ugh, this is really bitter!" I said, tasting a mystery powder by the sink. "This won't go in the cake, will it?"

Daisy walked over to where I was and lifted the container slightly. "Robin, this is detergent."

It is embarrassing to admit I ate soap, but I have to maintain my integrity. I also found some tea leaves, and a few juices, which we may use for later cakes. We eventually found the ingredients for our first cake, and began.

Measuring out the proper amount of sugar and adding the egg, I got out a whisk and stirred them together. As I did so, Daisy asked me, "So, what do you normally eat? Like, at Plegia Castle?"

"Well, I was never there often, even before the Smash invitation. I spent a lot of my time in Plegia outside the castle, trying to rebuild it after... the crazy stuff."

"Oh, yeah," she said with a nod. "Of course, right. I guess I never actually asked about that, so let me fix that: What exactly happened?"

Avoiding the more... sordid details, I explained to her the events which I have previously catalogued in my Tactician's Logs.

"So, that's how it was." She had listened to me solemnly, handing the flour and butter over as I interrupted myself for them. "It took them two years to regenerate your father?"

I hesitated at how she put it. "I suppose what we did technically marks me as having committed patricide," I said, "but what Validar had done warranted it. Besides, I learned about our relation after the fact."

"Still, I hadn't thought about what you had to do to make things right." Her expression had been uneasy.

The next time she spoke up, my arm had tired from mixing the flour mixture into the milk. I occupied myself by cleaning the counter of its displaced flour, when Daisy said, "I can't believe I'm surprised."

"Hm? About what?"

"Peach and Bowser," she said. "He never hurts her, so I don't know why I'm shocked to hear about their movie careers. I might just be a terrible friend."

"Don't say that about yourself," I said back. "It's normal to feel frustrated about things that your friends do or don't do. You felt like you got the short end of the stick, and ten years is a long time to rebuild for."

"I know, it's just - ugh!" She shoved the bowl back into my hands. "Why didn't I know about this?! I see her all the time!"
"Did you ever ask?"

Daisy looked off into the corner of the room. "Well, no. That's kinda the problem."

"You can't punish yourself because of a simple lapse in judgement. Did you ever let it impact your friendship with Peach?"

Daisy looked at me. "No, I would never try to hold it against her."

"Do you want to hold it against her now that you know differently?"

"Of course not!"

"Then don't worry about it. Just treat her the same as always."

Daisy nodded, then took back the mixing bowl and stirred it together. Pouring it into a pan in the oven, we set it to 400 degrees and waited the twenty minutes it took.

I began the conversation this time, around ten minutes in. "It smells pretty nice."

Daisy sniffed the air. "It really does. I haven't had a good cake in forever, either."

"Peach doesn't make them?"

"We haven't had a tournament in forever. Not only will this cake be a great apology, but I'll be able to take this experience and bring it back to Sarasaland. Maybe we can get as good at baking as the Mushroom Kingdom."

"Is the Mushroom Kingdom famous for baking?" I asked.

"That and its princess always being kidnapped." Daisy's smile fell a bit. "I guess one of those isn't real, but they do make good desserts. See here?" She showed me the package of flour, and the golden star in the front corner. "'Mushroom Kingdom Seal of Gold Quality'. They only give this seal to the fields they personally inspect as the best."

"Sounds like it's labor-intensive. They're very selective, then?"

"Probably. They do manage to make it to Sarasaland, though, and our wheat's on the rise." She chuckled. "Didn't mean to make that pun, but hey! We're getting better every year, and this past inspection one was just shy!"

"You must be happy. Reconstruction sounds like it's going well, then."

"I know! I'm so proud of my citizens! Of course, right now, I can't exactly contact them, being in this Smash tournament and all. But, things are getting better!"

"It's difficult, to be sure. You're pulling it off."

We brought the cake from the oven when the timer rung and cut two slices off.

It was one of the worst cakes I've ever had. Its texture was somehow both wet and soupy, and tough and chewy. It fell apart soon after we cut into it, too, sagging terribly. I think I need to look up the proper method of baking a cake before next week.

Daisy seemed to like it, though. "This is awful!" she guffawed, a wide smile on her face. "We can't cook at all, can we?"
"I can make a good stew," I said in my defense. "Baking seems a little different, though."

"It is," Peach said from the doorway.

"Ah! We've been caught!" Daisy said.

"You've been gone for a half-hour, Daisy. That's a long time, and Robin did ask me to use the kitchen before you both disappeared."

"You figured all that out, huh?"

"I did. So, I came looking for you, and find you made the same kind of cake I made my first time baking." She took a look at the cake. "I could show both you a little bit about baking. What do you say?"

We both agreed.

Smash Entry 14
July 1, 18 2:00 PM
Daisy/Peach C

"The first thing you do in a kitchen," Peach said, picking up the mixing bowl Daisy and I'd used trying to make a cake, "is make sure you clean up after yourselves. It saves you a big headache later to clean as you go." She set the bowl in the sink and used the detergent on it, wiping it clean.

"Now, when making a cake," she continued, "you need to read the whole recipe first. Then, set the oven." She picked up the recipe Daisy and I had been reading from. "This isn't a bad recipe to use as a beginner, but I've got one that my cooking teacher started me on." She brought out a different recipe entirely, one for a simple pound cake. "Set to 350, and then while it's heating up, we begin preparing the batter.

"Measure everything before you do anything else," she said. "There's nothing worse than trying to make food and finding out you don't have enough of something to make it work."

"Couldn't you improvise?" I asked.

"Not in baking. Robin. Improv has its place, but sometimes, you've got a formula to follow, and if you mess up..." She gestured to the disgusting first attempt we'd made. "It can be tough, especially if you don't have a rigid mindset. I know I struggled with it."

"Really? You had trouble with making cakes?" Daisy asked. "I always thought you were a natural at it."

"And I was, not to brag." She poured the sugar and butter into the mixing bowl and mixed them. "But I was never an expert from day 1. It takes a lot of work to get better at something. It doesn't help that I can be... a little flighty, I'll admit."

"You're one of the most level-headed people I know," Daisy said, deadpan.

"I'm good at making it look like that," she said. "But a more level-headed person wouldn't have forgiven Bowser. She would have locked him in some deep corner of the castle dungeons to waste away. It would have been the sensible thing to do."

Daisy brought her hand up to her chest. "I never really thought about it that way."
"The thing that bothers me is that I considered it an option - no, it was the decision my council convinced me was the only option." She cracked two eggs, specifically on the counter, and broke them into the bowl. "I'd nearly sent the order off."

"Did something stop you?" I asked.

"Yes. The economic reports."

"War's expensive."

"Exactly. My country was in shambles. So was Bowser's Kingdom. Dealing with courts can be so frustrating. You wouldn't believe the things I had to do just to get Mario and Luigi more than a simple thank you."

"So, what did you do about your countries?"

"First, we formally annexed Bowser's Kingdom, and held a celebration party in the Mario Brothers' honor." She slowed her pace and took a deep breath. "It took me a few minutes to excuse myself to a quiet corner of the castle and break down."

Daisy drew her hand to her mouth. "Peach..."

"If a ruler can't be humble, they can't be kind," she said, shaking her head. "If I can't be honest about the worst time of my life, I can't expect people to trust me. Things were bad. When Luigi found me, he asked what was wrong. I told him, and before I knew it, we were in the castle dungeons, staring down a deposed king."

"It was difficult to speak." Peach poured the flour into the bowl and began to stir at a blistering pace, without dropping the conversation. "Believe it or not, Mario took charge. It was explaining to the council afterward that was the hard part. 'Bowser's our best hope of saving our kingdom!' I said. 'He's a tyrant! He should be locked up!' they said. So we went, on and on."

"So, when you made that first movie," Daisy started.

"It had taken a lot of persuasion. And after a few tries, Bowser had seemed to be willing to reform for the good of our kingdom. Things got better." She poured in the milk, pointing out to never add dry to wet. "We've had one hiccup, and I've never heard the end of it."

"The painting incident," I surmised.

"Exactly. It's been a precarious balance, though. I can't run my country as effectively from an actor's chair, after all."

"Your councillors pick up the slack," Daisy said, rueful.

"Certainly, and they're competent at their jobs. But they do try my patience. They've gotten better, but being a ruler isn't all it's cracked up to be."

In the silence that followed, Peach poured the batter into a fresh pan and put it into the oven. "After 30 minutes, we'll check it with a toothpick in the center. If it's clean, the cake's done."

Daisy drew her hand down to her side. "I'm sorry, Peach."

"Hm? For the other cake?" She smiled. "We all make mistakes. Don't even worry about it. I make mistakes every day."
"Yeah," Bowser said, entering the room, "like leavin' your guest in the drawing room while everyone bakes a cake without him."

"Oh, no! Bowser, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to make you wait."

He laughed. "Nah, it's no problem. I gotta get goin', anyway. Junior's probably wakin' up from his nap about now, so I was tellin' ya I'm goin'."

"Alright, Bowser. Have a good trip!"

I'm almost certain that, if Bowser hadn't shown up, Daisy would have qualified her apology. However, once the conversation shifted away from the topic of Support, the teleportation began and brought me to my room at Ragna Ferox.

I'm beginning to suspect Master Hand is having a laugh at my expense. Tomorrow, something else will surely happen. It only remains to be seen what.
Isabelle is in Smash! Woo-hoo! Good news for me: another character, and one I know!

Bad news for me: I was going to use the Villager in an upcoming arc, so I've got a little rewriting to do. Oh, well, more foreshadowing is always useful.

And, hey, I'm timely with this one!

I was right. Today, I'd had every intention of meeting with Kirby and Dedede. It would seem fate, and the Ice Climber duo, had other plans.

I awaited the teleport from the Summit, set adrift over the course of the Smash. It didn't come. Nana and Popo, as they called themselves, looked down to the icy peak we stood upon.

"Really?" I asked no one in particular. "Them? I've never met them before. I don't know anything about them."

"Hm?" said the one in blue - Popo, as I found out. "Did you say something, Robin?"

I sighed. "Nothing important." I sat down on a platform that hadn't been completely frozen over. "As long as I'm here, I might as well get to know you two."

Popo nodded. "Well, I'm Popo!" He hefted the wooden hammer he carries around. "Nana and I are the best team of mountain-climbers you'll ever meet!"

"Mountain-climbers?" I asked. "What kind of troubles do you find there?"

"All sorts of weird stuff! Have you ever seen a Topi?"

I said I hadn't, and Popo explained what the creatures were: small creatures with white fur and beaks that created blocks of ice and made dams from them. "They probably get cold, and ice is a surprisingly good insulator."

"Uh, Popo?" Nana asked.

"Yeah, Nana?"

"Do you have a fire?"

Popo's face drained of its color. Frantically, he searched through the pockets of his parka and came up empty. "What are we gonna do?"

"Why don't we use my Arcfire tome?" I asked. Popo nodded at me frantically, and Nana, though
"Thank goodness," Popo said, stretching his arms out to the flame. "That's better already."

"You don't enjoy the cold?" I asked, huddling up to the fire myself.

"Not especially. I can handle it, but I was born really close to the equator. I'm more used to tropical weather."

"Ah, hot all year round. What brought you up to the mountains?"

"Thrill-seeking, what else?" He looked to the mountain we'd fallen from and were rapidly drifting away from. "You wouldn't believe how great it feels to get to the top of a mountain and look down. It makes you feel so small."

"You enjoy feeling small?"

"It's just a reminder - the world's pretty big, but it's not impossible to get to the top if you try hard enough."

"I see." I looked to Nana, who had taken a stick to the flame and brought it to a small cooking stove. "Is Nana in the same boat?"

Popo shook his head. "We met one day on a climb. She was from the local village, and I just fell for her."

"Just like that?" I asked.

"Well first I fell on her." Popo pulled out a packet of some kind from an inner pocket and tossed it to Nana's waiting hand. "From the mountain, of course. She helped me get back on my feet, and I told about what I do. She decided to come with me."

"Seems like a hasty decision."

"She's about as headstrong as I am, and she was tired of her village." He watched her pour the contents of the packet into a small pot with a lovestruck smile on his face. "We've had our fair share of fights, sure, but if I had to give all this up for her..." He looked at me. "It's no contest."

"You have a strong bond," I said in reply.

"Soup's on!" Nana said, pouring the pot's contents into three bowls. "Seal-meat stew! Hope you don't mind the taste, but seal's really common around here."

Being no stranger to strange meats, I obligingly dug into the stew. Honestly, if I hadn't been told it was seal meat, I would have mistaken it for fish or liver. It was lean, but good. "You're a good cook. It's got a lot of onion, though."

"At high altitudes, you can't taste much," Nana said. "You have to force yourself to eat, sometimes."

"It's really important to bring some of your favorite foods so you can at least keep something down," Popo said. "I really like onions, and Nana..."

"I'm a big fan of cocoa powder! Popo and I found it one day at a market, so I tried it."

"She'd never had it before."
"Well, I really enjoyed it."

"You put it on everything back then," Popo said with a smirk. "I saw you eating a cheese sandwich covered in cocoa powder once."

"That one wasn't bad," Nana said, "but I really needed to pair it better. The cheese was too mild."

Popo rolled his eyes with a smile. "Sure, Nana. That was the problem." He turned his head to me. "You see what I like about her?"

"Sure," I said. "She seems wonderful."

"Well, don't get any ideas, Robin. She's mine." He winked good-naturedly. I finished my seal stew and waited.

The teleport still failed to start up. "Really? Still?"

"It certainly is taking a while," Popo said. "Wonder why?"

"Well, if we'll still be here," Nana said, "I'll scout around a bit." She stood and walked from the fire around a wall of ice.

She then shouted, "Polar!"

Popo's eyes nearly blew out of their sockets. "What?!" In a fluid motion for a stout fighter, he turned, stood, and hefted his mallet. "Robin, get the fire off! We've got Polar to take down, now!"

Picking up the Arcfire tome, I asked him to explain. My request fell on deaf ears, however, as Popo ran around the corner. I followed, making sure to take the pace slowly enough not to trip. I came face-to-face with the adversary which had spurred the duo into action: a bipedal, white bear wearing pink shorts and dark glasses. The sight still baffles me.

"How many slams has it done?" Popo asked.

"I didn't count any," Nana replied. "Ice is stable for now, but could go any time."

"Robin, have you ever survived falling into ice water?" Popo asked.

Perplexed at how to respond, I answered in the negative. Popo then swore, an action which I will not recount specifically if only because there are impressionable people among our fighters.

"Nana!" Popo glared at the polar bear, renewed venom in his eyes. "We're taking him down. You take right."

Nana nodded, then the two pushed off the ice as one unit, leaping into the air, hammers raised far over their heads. As they slammed to the ground on opposite sides of the bear, their hammers swung around to pinch the polar bear's body between them. Nana then whirled around in a spin attack, slamming her mallet onto Popo's.

This did little but stun the bear, though. It shook its head to clear it, then leapt into the air. It hovered for a split second, then slammed onto the ice. The Summit shook with a vicious intensity, ice water climbing the peak's edge and lapping.

"That's one," Popo said, watching the water climb. "Two more?"

"If that," Nana replied. "We've got no choice."
Popo nodded, then pulled something from his pocket: a piece of flint. Nana repeated the motion, and drew a metal bar. They scratched them together once and drew their mallets into the resultant sparks. Suddenly, as if by magic, they burst into the flames - the mallets, I mean.

"This is it!" shouted Popo.

"Burning Squall!" shouted Nana in turn. They then began to spin rapidly like a top, ramming themselves into the polar bear and slamming him with ten - twenty - fifty - a hundred strikes! I lost track of them and only saw the rotation of their pink and blue hoods, two great whirls of flame obscuring the bodies entirely.

Then the two gouts of fire became one great strike and slammed into the bear's center of mass, sending it skipping across the water like a thrown stone, eventually sinking into the icy waters.

Popo fell to the ground, completely spent. His hood and gloves were singed badly, and his skin was bright red. "That was so rough this time."

"We are out of practice," Nana said, herself exhausted, and her clothes in much the same state. "Haven't had to do that for years."

"What did you do?!" I asked them. "That was incredible!"

"It was just a little magic Nana can do," Popo said. "No big deal."

I'm certain the face I made deserved to be in an art piece. "I've never seen anything like that! Even during our match, you spun, but you didn't do that!"

"She's got a little bit of magic she uses sometimes," Popo said, rolling a bit. "Oh, that feels so nice..."

I pulled his face off of the bare ice. "I'd like to know more."

He explained that Nana's village was one that knew ice magic. When she was born, she was considered an outcast for being able to use fire and not ice, despite the end result being the same: near-immunity to the cold, a necessity in high altitudes. However, using it tended to overheat them, explaining why I'd peeled their faces from the ice each three times.

Polar, meanwhile, was some kind of polar bear that antagonized them for no apparent reason that they knew of.

I asked if they'd be alright. "Sure, sure," Popo said. "Just gotta get home and take a nice, cool bath. Cool us right off." He tried to roll his body over to the ice once again.

"Would you stop that?" I asked. "You'll catch your death doing that."

"Can't catch death from just cold," Nana muttered. "Gotta catch a virus." She pulled a spoon from her tin of cocoa powder and ate a spoonful of the stuff. She smiled. "Mm, good. Really bitter."

"If you've got fire powers, why hide it?" I asked. "It doesn't make sense."

"We're the Ice Climbers, Robin." Nana frowned. "Not the Fire Climbers. My fire isn't important here."

"Besides," Popo said, "Master Hand's orders. No fire powers around the other Smashers, unless it's life-or-death. Of course, we haven't really needed 'em for a while, since we toughened up in Smash Bros."
"Is that why you weren't here the last series?"

"Too crowded," Nana said. "Not used to large crowds. Learned a lot, too."

"You wanted to try out the fruits of your training, then."

"Right."

The teleport began, and I wrote this entry almost immediately after. Frankly, I'm exhausted from this one Support alone, and I believe I will be turning in early tonight.

Chapter End Notes

This one was tough to get a grip on. Nana and Popo are characters that don't really have defined characters, per se. The only things we know about them are that they're sore losers, and they're in love. (See: Melee intro.) So, what should I do with that?

I decided to go with the approach the Kid Icarus: Uprising had, create a character whole-cloth from what little was already there, and make the rest up as I went along. If the Ice Climbers ever get another game, I'm just going to have to roll with it.
Forced Card

Chapter Notes

**HOLY CRAP, YOU GUYS. THAT LAST TRAILER.** For how this will affect the fic, check the end notes. But for now:

That was great! I'm so happy about the roster, the new modes, everything! Having all these unique characters in Smash, it's wonderful! And even a Piranha Plant?! I never, in a million years, would have picked that one. Sakurai, you're probably a little crazy, but in that good way. (Also, please take an actual vacation. You've more than earned it.)

I won't lie, I am disappointed about Trophies being gone, but they were usually pretty one-and-done anyway. And now, we can power up our Spirits! I'm looking forward to that.

Getting the game was always at the top of my Christmas list, but now, I'm not sure I'm gonna wanna stop playing it. I really wonder what 5 DLC characters we'll get...

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#).

Smash Entry 16
July 3, 18 2:00 AM
Regards Link, Sheik.

I was awoken in the night by a great rush of some kind. What, exactly, I didn't know, but it had awoken me all the same. Taking a tome from the Convoy, I rose from my bed and made my way down the hallway. It had sounded as if it came from the arena grounds, where the Smashes occur.

The night air there was cold. It never came as much surprise to me until today. After all, Ferox was a cold place when we had visited, and it continued to be when Lucina and I arrived here. The only reason I'm thinking of this now, of course, is because of the following encounter with the result of my search.

That being, the woman who pressed a knife against my throat had little experience dealing with the cold. Her arm and hands shivered horribly, which understandably alarmed me, as if she brought her arm the wrong way, she could have pierced my neck. "Who are you?!" I demanded.

"Put your magic book down," she said. "I'm not here to hurt you."

"Then why do you have a knife?" I asked.

"You walked into the arena with a weapon, with every intention of using it. If I wished to protect myself without endangering you, there is only one recourse." She pulled the knife back slightly. "Though I admit, I'm not so skilled with this right now."

"What do you mean?" I broke the grapple and turned to face the intruder. Her hair was brown, and braided at its end. Her dress, with a purple bodice and white skirt, bore gold pauldrons with a gem inset into the right. Her face was set in hard lines, a small, diamond-shaped knife in her hand. It was a visage I knew so well, having seen it for the past four years. "Zelda?!" (I describe her here for the
benefit of any such persons, fighters or otherwise, who have never seen her as Zelda, and to not confuse her with the blond, pink-clad Zelda who currently resides in the position.)

She nodded. "I am." She placed the knife to the empty gem inset on her left pauldron, and it magically sunk in and replaced the missing gem. "We haven't seen each other for two weeks, have we?" A smile was on her face, despite herself.

At first, I didn't understand what she meant. Then, it hit me. "You were Sheik, when Ganondorf appeared on the tower."

"I was. I've been Sheik for around three weeks by now, since the other Zelda had appeared."

"June 13th," I said without thinking.

Zelda was taken aback. "You know the exact date? I don't remember having a match with you that day."

"Well, I'd had a Smash with Link that day." It wasn't technically a lie, but it was flimsy reasoning, and didn't address the underlying question of "why keep track of the date". "I suppose I'd just assumed."

Zelda thought on that for a moment, as I hoped she wouldn't ask that question, but luckily a shudder wracked her body. "Goodness, it's cold out here!"

"Oh, right!" Grateful for the change of subject, I said, "We should head in. There's a kitchen just over there; I can make you some tea to warm you up."

I poured Zelda a cup of green tea and sat down in the opposite chair. "So, how did you get here? Unless I'm missing some link between our worlds, you can't world-warp here."

"You're correct," she said. "Ordinarily, I wouldn't be able to. However, in the Era of Time, there existed a spell which allowed one to warp."

"Farore's Wind," I assumed.

"Exactly. You've observed how it works in Smash battles, but its use as a more standard warp can't be ignored. For this method, though, it requires an entrance to a room or building."

"Why so?"

"It creates a certain place to return to. With a passageway, you leave yourself less open to having your target occupied, as most people move through them without stopping."

"So, there's no particular restriction?" I asked, confused.

"No, that's the reason the magic is forced to work that way. Otherwise, I would have spoken to you sooner. It took some time to make my way here. She paused to flurry her fingers in a counting method I'm unfamiliar with. "It's taken some twenty Smashes to get here, taking two or three a day."

"That pace seems difficult to keep up," I said. I, myself, have only been taking Smash requests every three days or so, without counting Support days. I may need to slow my pace even more to avoid burning out.

"The Smashes in other arenas were of less importance to me, so I threw the matches. I didn't want tip my hand to Master Hand, though - Hm?"
I had perked up at the mention of my benefactor subconsciously. Dismissing my reaction, I urged Zelda to continue.

"Yes, well, like I'd said, if I lost too many matches too easily, Master Hand would surely discipline me. He's done so before, after all."

"He has?" I asked. "On what occasion?"

"It was before my time. You'd be better off asking - Oh!" She slammed her hand to the table. "How could I have gotten so far astray?! I wanted to talk to you about Link. Have you had contact with him?"

"No," I replied. "It's been five days, now. I can't help him work this out."

"Work what out?" she asked. Her face grew gaunt and pale as she heard me explain the events of the 28th. (Ent. 8) "Oh, Hylia... How could this happen?" Her head fell to her free hand. "How could I have -"

"You couldn't have known," I stated. "The way Link reacted is something you couldn't have predicted. He's gained the memories of an entirely new timeline, besides, one where he fell fighting Ganon. It's possible his mind is struggling to separate the old and new memories." I filled her cup again. "It's the first time he's dealt with it in years, after all."

Zelda nodded gravely throughout what I'd said. "You're certainly right. All of your points are factually accurate and logically sufficient." She straightened her back and set down her cup. 

"However, the fact remains. I had every opportunity to explain to him the idea of alternate universes. I could have told him about the fact that I knew, Robin. I knew I had the mind of two lines of Zeldas. There was always a chance he would fall in the tower, that he had never even known about.

"He's always so headstrong, so stubborn, so... so courageous! Of course he is." Her voice took on a slightly mad lilt, her arms whipping around as she talked. "He'd never consider he could have died. He can't, in his mind! He takes it on faith that he'll succeed! It was never a question that there were two worlds: Ganon dies, and Ganondorf is banished! Ganon wins?! Ridiculous! That would never - could never happen! Why would Zelda ever need a backup plan? The other Six Sages using magic to seal Ganon away? Make him someone else's problem? Never! Why should that have ever crossed her mind! It was never -" The back of her hand smacked into the cup, sending it spiraling to the ground.

It broke into a thousand fragments, tea leaking from the shattered ceramic. "It was always going to happen."

The silence that passed hung heavy in the air. 

I never was one for choking silence. "Assigning fault to yourself won't help now, even if it were yours." I stood. "Clearly, we've got planning to do."

"You mean -"

"I'm going to help him the best way I know." I smiled and took her hand. "It seems like you know him pretty well, so we need to have a strategy meeting."

Recognition lit up Zelda's face. "Ah, you'll be using your Support system, then!"

"Huh?" I took a look back at her. "I... I will. How did you know that?"
"Ah, that's right." We began walking to my room to better plan. "I've been meeting with Lady Palutena regularly. It was where my Farore's Wind had been set to bring me before."

"It was? Why?"

"Lady Palutena has been showing me a few different things I could do with my Light Force. She said it was similar to her powers as the Goddess of Light."

"She took a good guess, then?"

"No, she also showed me through her All-Seeing Eye. It was some sort of comparison of our energies' signatures." She smiled uneasily. "I have to admit, I didn't understand a word of it."

"I understand," I said. "Then, you saw me explaining Supports to Kirby? Or did you watch when I made them in Ylisse?"

"No, I never saw you do one yourself. Lady Palutena said she saw you start making Supports in your journal. I really only know about it as a word, and what I can assume from it."

I stopped in my tracks, the next thought I had blown away. "'Start?' I asked.

"Hm?" She turned to where I stopped. "I'm sorry, I don't understand."

"Did she say start? Specifically?"

Zelda thought about it for a moment. "Yes, I believe so. Is something wrong?"

My mind raced at that. The remainder of my meeting is rather a blur at this point. Zelda and I put together a particular plan and will set it into motion in a few days. In the meantime, I've got a meeting to make. I haven't been able to sleep the past few hours. I hope it won't impact my ability.

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Smash Entry 17
July 3, 18
Kirby/Pit B

I watched the sunrise this morning. It was nice, and a rare treat, considering the cold climate of Ragna Ferox. I'd been up for some time, contemplating my next move, and now I was going to put it into action. I sent a request to Kirby and Pit, and we met at Skyworld, as I'd figured we would.

Excusing myself from the two of them as we entered Palutena's Temple, I made my way to Palutena herself. "Lady Palutena." I bowed deeply. "I seek an audience."

"I thought you would," she replied. "However, at this time, I'm unable to grant it to you."

I frowned. "Why would that be?"

"It's not the right time, Robin." She gestured to the doorway Kirby and Pit had retreated into. "You're already spoken for right now, aren't you?"

"I came here with the express purpose of speaking to you."

"And you have." The smile she'd had up to this point fell. "This is something important, Robin. There will be plenty of time to ask me about things later, but you're missing a chance you'll only get once. I will not grant you an audience right now. Now, go."
Shooting her a look, I walked to the garden and found Kirby writing on a paper and Pit listing something to him. "What if I tried to put spinach in it? Do you think that would be a good idea?"

"I think it is," Kirby said, writing it down.

"I guess I should get a second opinion." His eyes drifted to me. "Oh, Robin. All done with Lady Palutena?"

"I am," I said, with a poor tone. "What's going on here?"

"I'm trying to figure something to add to the weekly curry," Pit pointed to the paper. "That's got all the ideas I'm coming up with."

"Really?" I peeked at it. I couldn't read a word of it, of course, but it seemed particularly messy. Looking back at where Kirby took over writing in Entry 4, it's nearly indistinguishable from my own handwriting. Is that how he normally writes?

"While you're here, do you think spinach would be good in curry?"

Professing that I'm not a particularly good cook, I gave my honest opinion. (It could work, but might need special care.) I then asked, "Why is Kirby writing this down, and not you?"

Pit flinched. "Oh, uh, well, y'see..." He cleared his throat. "I can't read." It wasn't said very loudly at all, but I heard it all the same.

"I see," I said. "I'm sorry for prying. It's not really my business, is it?"

Pit reassured me it wasn't a problem. Meanwhile, Kirby had begun doodling on the paper... I think. He might have been writing a recipe, as far as I knew. It's only just now really striking me that I can only read Ylissean.

"You know," Pit said, "I feel like I remember you saying something last time you were here. Can't remember what, though."

I, however, did, and I apologized. "I may not be able to get an ice-cream maker here. I have to accept a Smash to get here, after all."

Pit snapped his fingers. "Ah, that's right. Too bad, I was looking forward to it."

"I could bring you here," Kirby said. "It wouldn't take a lot of time."

I hastily declined. Taking the Warp Star the once was all I needed to experience in one lifetime.

"Well, I don't think you can take the door I use to warp around," Pit said. "Lady Palutena told me it only worked on people like angels."

"As in?" I asked.

"If I had to guess, I'd say she meant people who can do light magic."

"And I've never even seen a light tome."

"Yeah, it's a real shame. If you could do that, you could just pop over and get it, then jump right back like I do."

It hit me. "You can use Palutena's door to get to my room, can't you?"
"Uh, yeah, I think so. Lady Palutena has to see the room first, though. Do you mind if -"

"I'm sure she already has." A hair of annoyance crept back into my voice, quickly dispelled. "It'll be on my work desk. I was working on it for a little while."

"Got it," Pit said. As we wished him a safe journey, he ran down a short hall and leapt through the doorway that appeared in the wall.

"Why were you working on it?" Kirby asked. "Was something wrong?"

I looked down to the puffball, now staring at the grass. "Nothing major. It was just damaged from being in a Ragna Ferox storeroom for so long. I had to replace a few worn-out things, but it should be fine to use."

The doorway opened again and a defeated Pit emerged. "I couldn't find it. Sorry, guys."

"Really? It's bowl-shaped." I mimed out the bowl's deep basin. "Nothing like this?"

"No. There wasn't anything like that over there."

I thought back to the night I'd finished repairing it. It had been a long night already, and I'd been training hard. I'd bid goodnight to Lucina and Chrom and retired to my room. On the work desk was the ice-cream machine, and I'd set to work repairing it. Eventually, I forced myself to be satisfied with how complete it was and must have set it into the chest I normally placed my weapons into while half-asleep. I likely hadn't gone to bed until long past midnight.

Working from the hunch that memory gave me, I checked the Convoy. I pulled from it the missing ice-cream machine, to the amazement of Pit, and Kirby, who began to clap uproariously.

"That's amazing? Have you had that the whole time?" He got a knowing smile on his face. "You just wanted to give it a big entrance, didn't you?"

I shook my head. "I had no idea I did this at all. I had to have been in some sleep-deprived daze, though."

"I guess you usually take more care with kind of thing."

"Exactly."

"I'll go get the ingredients!" Kirby shouted, and dashed down a hall.

After calling Kirby back for the knowledge of what to bring, we got to work, pouring all of the materials into the basin and turning the crank as it mixed together. Kirby was the most enthusiastic, if it wasn't obvious. I had to deliberately slow him down to avoid spilling it over the sides.

"So, how long do we have to keep doing this?" Pit asked when his turn came around again.

"I'm not sure." I peeked in on the ice cream. It hadn't come together at all. "I've never made this in a climate warmer than North Ylisse."

"You haven't?"

"It's tough to get ice after you get out of the cold regions. It's a shame, because the army really liked it when we could make it."

"Well, how long did it take then?"
"About a half an hour," I said.

"Half an hour?!" Pit flung the whole concoction into the air and Kirby caught it, taking another turn. Fine by me, I thought, my arms could use a break. "Do we even have that kind of time? You're going to get teleported back any time now, right?"

I'll admit, the fact that I wouldn't get to taste the ice cream I'd already put several agonizing minutes of my time into was a large motivation in itself... not that I needed the extra motivation, of course. "I've noticed that if we're interacting, we're less likely to be interrupted."

"Okay! What can we talk about?!"

"Hm." I gave it some thought... and came up blank. "I can't think of anything."

"What are we going to do?"

"Maybe I can do something to help," Kirby said. "I've just got to do something for a second. Excuse me." He set the bowl down and got out his telephone.

In only a few seconds, a giant pink machine crashed through the wall, sending Pit flying, as well as myself.

Climbing from the rubble, I asked Kirby what he was thinking, bringing such a machine here so recklessly.

Tearing up, he replied, "I-I'm sorry. I didn't mean to..." I was perhaps overly harsh in my admonishment.

"Hey, it's OK, Kirby," Pit said, brushing his wings of the dust. "You've got to be more careful is all. Next time, just bring it in more gently, OK?"

He nodded with a sniffle. "I'm really sorry, Robin. I promise, I wasn't trying to hurt you."

I nodded. "At least I didn't break anything." I took a closer look at the machine before me: a giant, two-legged, two-armed machine of some kind, whose metal seemed to be turned a bright pink with two large electric lights on its front. It was nearly as tall as me, or perhaps a little taller, and very stocky and rounded. Perhaps it was used to move cargo, I thought. "It's a very interesting device, at least. What's it called?"

"It's called a Robobot! I got it when Dreamland got invaded by robots."

"So, how's this thing going to help?" Pit asked.

"Just see!" Kirby hopped up into the machine and started it up proper, it coming to life with the roar of an engine. As it stood, Kirby pushed a button and the glow of the eyes changed: for a split second, they'd gone from yellow to green. Then, the ice cream maker broke down into green light and was absorbed into the Robobot, and it changed from the bottom up in color from pink to a light blue. Its arms, too, changed from regular arms to giant, whirling fans covered by metal grates. "Ta-da!" Kirby said, holding his arms up. "Ice Mode! It can freeze anything, and if we put the ice cream into the fans, maybe it can blend it up, too!"

I nodded appreciatively. "That'll get this done quickly! Good thinking!" I looked to where the ice cream maker had been, and noticed the space it had occupied was empty now. "Except you took the ice cream with you."
Kirby paused for a second, an unthinking smile frozen on his face. Then, the robot's legs collapsed to the floor, and Kirby let out a great cry of, "Nooooo!"

Pit laughed, despite himself. "Looks like it didn't work, I guess. I've gotta start prepping for dinner anyway, so maybe we should table this until next time."

I nodded, resigned to the situation. After I was teleported home, I wrote down this entry, and now it's evening. I think, for dessert tonight, ice cream would've been nice. Too bad Kirby used the maker.

Chapter End Notes

Alright, first and foremost: I need to update this fic more. Clearly, people enjoy what's already here. I get that. I'm not going to promise a regular date, but putting more things to paper should help me get more into this.

And it's not like there's a dearth of material.

So, the November 1st Smash Direct: The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly!

**Good**: Ken and Incineroar are coming! Incineroar will be an easy, but fun write: that whole jerk-facade-hides-a-good-heart thing might be nice, and so would a revel-in-your-heel attitude. Ken, meanwhile... I'll admit, never played Street Fighter. Fighting games aren't my style. But, I have read the Street Fighter webcomic on Hiveworks, and I can pull together something workable from that knowledge. If anyone has any other resources they want to point me to, let me know!

Also **good**, but I'll get flak for it: Isaac isn't a playable character. I'm sorry! Golden Sun is a fine Game Boy RPG (that I was too young to be around for), but Isaac's another silent protagonist with a save-the-world shtick. I could get something out of his green-thumb powers and maybe pair him up with Pokémon Trainer for the djinn, but it would be kinda shaky at best.

Speaking of tough characters to write for... **Bad**: Pirahna Plant is Character #70 of 75 after DLC. Now, either of these facts is awkward: 75 total characters, plus echoes and Nana, makes for so many pairings, you don't even know, I don't even know. But Pirahna Plant with it? How do I even write for him?! It's a freakin' plant! It doesn't even have a Donkey-Kong-style translated language! (sigh) Well, Bowser or Jr. is a given. At least one of the Mario group. Ivysaur...? Villager...? This is going to be a challenge, to be sure.

And... the **Ugly**. This could very well move into AU territory. One of the dangers of writing fanfiction for something still being made: you'll inevitably break canon. With the restrictions I set up already, I don't have the time to get my plot out, and still integrate Kirby of the Light's Stars. (Kirby's series name and World of Light have the same pronunciation in Japanese, Hoshi no Kabi.) My deadline would have to be the day the info came out: November 1st. 121 days might sound like a lot, but out of around 4500 pairings? It's way, way too little, especially with needing three conversations to get to A Rank!

Note: I'm **not** complaining. I've got a lot to work with, and I'm grateful. But it's still a
shame when things don't work out. I'll just proceed as planned, and work it in later, I suppose.
Smash Entry 18
July 5, 18
Zelda/Sheik C

Sheik brought me into a meeting within the Skyloft Bazaar today, a Smash between Zelda, Sheik, Ganondorf, and Toon Link having preceded it. (I came in 3rd.) I'd been preparing myself for some sort of meeting the past few days, though all details of it had completely escaped me in my pursuit of Palutena in the previous entry.

Thus, when Sheik looked to me to explain our plan's finer points, I found myself at a loss. What had preceded... was this:

"Robin and I have tried to come up with a vague idea," she'd said, putting away her weapons and addressing the gang of fighters before us. "As near as we've figured, Link seems to avoid taking battles right now. The proper answer to this should be to find a way to force him to accept a Smash, perhaps by cornering him." Then, she looked to me. "Robin, have you got any ideas to do that?"

My mind boggled. Was that... it? Where had my head even been two days ago?? "Well, I've been contemplating these past few days," I bluffed. "Doing it like this might very well be an issue. We've got vast stretches of territory that Link can access." I named them: Hyrule Field, and the Great Plateau being chief among them. If he broke away from us, it would be a waste of effort to pursue him. "As well, we've got one chance to do this. If he suspects the surprise, we might run into issues."

"Then, what?" Ganondorf said. "I must admit, I've missed fighting Link in combat. He's an inventive opponent, even with his limited Smashing moveset."

"I want to see Big Link, too," Toon Link said. "Anything you need me to do, I can do it!"

I took a moment to think. "To begin with," I said, "our approach is an issue, as I said. The best way to get him into a more receptive environment would be to use the Smashes. But if Link won't accept Smashes, that's not a proper option for us. Putting him under duress won't help, either.

"Let's all remind ourselves of the seeming root of his trauma: his memories come from different timelines, with incongruities popping up. I think our first step is to establish this, so we're all on the same page." My stalling worked: as Sheik drafted an explanation of the different timelines, I pushed myself to think of some other plan that would be more... effective. Of course, I listened to the explanation, too, and I've written it down within the appendix of this tome.

"And that brings us to Toon Link's timeline," Sheik finished, "from which the Phantoms come... eventually."

Zelda raised her hand. "What relation do the Phantoms have to do with us?"

"They haven't got much to do with you, specifically," Toon Link said, "but my Princess Zelda had to use them when her body got stolen."

"Oh my! How horrible!" Zelda covered her mouth. "How had she managed to do that?"
"They're made out of light magic. That means they can get evil cleaned up off them pretty easy."

"We've gotten off topic, I feel," Ganondorf said. "Though, I would like to hear about this timeline later, Toon Link." Toon Link looked away with a guilty look on his face. "Regardless, now we understand what the issue is: Link killed me as an Adult in the Era of Time, however the history of the Era of Twilight doesn't closely fit the aftermath of that at all."

"Its history does show that, yes," Sheik said, nodding gravely. "Ganondorf was tried and sentenced for treason before the Era of Twilight."

"Which the two of us are familiar with," Ganondorf said, "in intimate detail."

"Quite," Sheik said, a slight amount of venom in her voice. "So, the question is, how should we fix this?"

"The major issue is timeline discrepancy," I repeated. "As such, it would be best to obtain an expert on the subject. There are very few people who have experienced time travel here, correct?"

"I know Ness has," Toon Link said. "Bowser Jr. said his dad has, too."

"Yes, Bowser did as a child," Ganondorf said. "Not that I'm familiar with the specifics. Bayonetta, as well, from what Captain Falcon has told me."

"Lucina, too," I said.

"Is it just me," Zelda said, "or is there something weird here?" We looked to her, but she was looking up at the ceiling.

"What do you mean?" I said.

"I mean, I don't recognize this place from any of the history books. But, according to the stage list, this is from our world. Is there some other Link that was here?"

"Another Link?" Toon Link asked. "I saw there was another Link on the fighter list, wasn't there? Maybe it was him?"

"Ah, yes, Young Link," Sheik said. "I don't remember him very well, but he was around during the Melee series, wasn't he?"

"He was," Ganondorf said, eyes widening. "I didn't exactly recognize him - ah, but he must be here, too!"

"What makes you say that?" I asked.

"Because I've seen his stage." Ganondorf pulled out a small book and leafed through it. "Here it is - it was a great ocean, with a sandy beach as a far shore. We fought on a metal platform in the sea."

Sheik seemed to recognize the location as he described it. "It had a giant turtle, right?"

"And a moon that was tossed into the air every three minutes," Ganondorf said. "I guarantee you, Young Link is there."

"And the stages reflect our memories of the location," I said. "If it's every three minutes - "

"- we may have found our time-travel expert," he said. "We'll have to world warp, then."
"Uh, I won't be able to," I reminded him. "I'm not from here."

He clicked his tongue. "We'll have to go a slow way, then."

"Maybe we could use your painting method," Sheik said sarcastically.

"That only works on shadows and phantoms," Ganondorf shot back with a toss of his hand. "We'll have to take a platform."

"That could take hours!" Toon Link said. "It'll be nightfall before we get there!"

"The pains we go through for good help," Ganondorf said. "Despite Robin's attempts at deflection, he is an able tactician. We'll have to form our plan on the way and we will have plenty of time."

I blushed a bit at Ganondorf noticing. I suppose I had been pretty transparent about it, in retrospect.

And so, the five of us had boarded a platform and were moving toward the Great Bay.

"So, you're the Zelda from the Era of Time," Zelda said. "And you're also the Zelda from the Era of Twilight."

"I am," Sheik replied. "How much do you know about the Era of Time?"

"Oh, I know a lot," Zelda said. "Like how that era's Link managed to get a Goron's sword to use against Ganon, and how he'd had to travel through time to get all the medallions to open the way into his castle."

"How did he die?" Ganondorf asked. Toon Link elbowed him in the ribs.

"Ganon attacked him," she said, her face falling. "An attack too quick for that Link to block with the sword's blade."

"You don't mean that Link tried to use the Master Sword without a shield?!!" Sheik demanded.

"The Master Sword got knocked from his hands - at least, that's what the history books say. Obviously, the blade he did use, called Biggoron's Sword, didn't seal Ganon's spirit away."

"Obviously," Ganondorf said. "My power is not so easily stymied, even by a Goron's superior steel."

"So, then," Sheik said, "I sealed Ganon's spirit away?"

"You had," Zelda said. "then, with the full Triforce, Ganon tried to break out of the Sacred Realm. The Sages sealed the way there, and Ganon corrupted it."

"I must offer my apologies," he said. "I don't know what I was thinking, truly."

"It doesn't matter to me," she said. "You didn't do it, anyway."

"But, in another life, I did," he said. He didn't try to hide the smile on his face. "Isn't that still a problem?"

Zelda paused, then moved to the edge of the platform and looked out at the endless Hyrulean fields passing below us oh-so-slowly. "But it wasn't you. You didn't."

"Something bothering you, Ms. Zelda?" Toon Link said.
"No, it's nothing."

"Don't hold back for our sake," I said. "If you feel something, go ahead and talk about it."

Zelda hemmed and hawed. "I guess we will be here for a while." She turned back to us. "I feel a little bit awkward, listening to all of you talk so easily about other worlds and times you've experienced... it's leaving me feeling a bit bewildered, that's all."

"We'd never meant to do that," Sheik said.

"I know! And it isn't your fault!" She threw her arm out. "You're being honest about your experiences, and I'm learning a lot! I'm just struggling to understand it. I've never had to deal with other memories, after all. Just those vague whispers and dreams that a lot of Zeldas get."

"The echoes of Zeldas long dead - not only the ones in eras with Ganondorf in them, but most of our family lines' experiences."

"Tetra never had to deal with that," Toon Link said. "Why do you think that is?"

"They're usually centered around performing as a Princess of Hyrule. In other circumstances, it's not likely their knowledge would be as useful."

"That would mean that you don't feel them as much now, right?" Zelda said.

Sheik paused. "No." Her voice carried a slightly shocked tone. "I hadn't really thought about it, but I don't." She closed her eyes. "Since the thirteenth? Perhaps a few days after?"

"The day the new fighters were invited," I said.

"So it seems," she said. "It would seem I'll have to draw on my own experience from now on."

"Oh." Zelda looked off. "Maybe since I'm here, your Zelda memories aren't working? After all, how many Zeldas have met their duplicate at the same time?" She tried to keep the mood light, but her face was slightly downcast.

"Perhaps," Sheik said. "Maybe this is a sign that my double life is coming to an end." She laughed dryly. "The entire time I've been here, I've been at least two people. Now, I can't really say that." She looked at her hands. "I wonder how long it will take to adjust to being just one person again? It's been years."

And in the silence that followed that statement, we ride to Great Bay.

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Smash Entry 19
July 5, 18 10:00 P.M.

We made "landfall" at Great Bay at 9:30 PM, and the platform vanished as we left. Though the platforms are a convenient method to move between worlds and locations within them, they are certainly not very fast. The remaining half-hour is how long it took us to reach town, a twisting place of stone and wood called Clock Town. Looking at the great clock tower in the center of town, I wondered how far you could hear it ring. Our motley crew asked around, and we found out that Young Link would be most easily be found at night in the Eastern part of town, around a restaurant called Latte.

Knocking on the door to the building, however, proved a fruitless endeavor, being told through it
only, "This is a members-only establishment. Anyone without proof of membership is not allowed in."

"How do we obtain membership?" I asked back.

"You must have proof of adulthood."

I looked at my hand, and the ring on it. "I'm married. Does that count?"

The man behind the door hesitated. "Do you have your Couple's Mask?"

"My what?"

"Leave it, Robin," Ganondorf said, putting his hand on my shoulder. "There's no point. We'll have to come back with this 'proof' ."

I nodded, and the five of us walked away from the door. We sat in the southern square of the town, contemplating what this "proof of adulthood" could be. Well, mostly; I will freely admit, since bringing up by own marriage, I wondered how my wife was doing. I'll have to send her a letter soon.

"If this place uses masks for marriage," Zelda said, "does it follow that the proof might be some kind of mask?"

"It's not an impossible idea." Sheik looked around. "What a strange custom, if so. It's unusual to think of this place as being part of our world. It feels so different."

"It's the magic in the air," Ganondorf said, face-up on the bench. "In Hyrule, the ambient magic is a lot more light-filled. Here, it's scattered and random." He pointed skyward. "No Triforce."

"You can tell that?" Toon Link asked.

"Magic is another kind of power," he replied. "As the rightful bearer of the Triforce of Power, I can detect it in many ordinary things. For example, the item we're looking for will not have some kind of magic hidden within it."

"How can you tell?" Sheik asked.

"There was no source of any kind of magic within that bar." He sat up at looked at her. "Logically, a magic item will give off magic energy. And the lack of magic energy indicates...?"

She nodded. "I understand. In that case, what we're looking for would only be a symbol, probably given by one particular group since it's also the key into a member's club."

"Hold on," Zelda said. "There was no magic in the bar?"

"Not exactly," Ganondorf said. "Simply no great sources of it flavoring the local makeup."

"But if the other Link were in there, wouldn't he give off magic anyway?"

We all paused. Ganondorf then slapped his forehead. "Damn! You're right! The Links all have distinct magic energies that I can detect at close range." He hurled himself to his feet from the bench. "I'll just have to be on the lookout. There isn't any time to lose."

"We can't all go searching," Sheik said. "I can't detect magic like you can."

"We'll travel in a group," I said. "We'll canvas the town. Toon Link should move to the front of the
"We still can't get in, though," Toon Link said.

"But Young Link can," I said. "If he tries, we need someone to wait there and keep him outside until we get there."

"Oh!" He took out a small, blue stone. "Use this to keep a lookout on me!"

"A Gossip Stone?" Sheik asked.

"The Pirate's Charm! You can use your light magic to look through it, and talk to me, too!"

"You can!" Zelda said, eyes closed, her echo coming from the stone. "I can see everyone here!"

"That'll work well," I said, "but that means the Zeldas split up. Ganondorf, take North and East Clock Town."


"That means Zelda and I take West and South Clock Town. Let's go!" We Paired Up and moved to our respective locations.

"Something non-magical," I said, standing at the entrance to a line of shops. "Where would be the best place to start?"

"A general store would sell a lot of things," Zelda said.

"True. Still, which one is the general store?"

"I'm not really sure," she said. "The signs are written in ancient Hyrulean. I can't read them easily."

"Then, we'll go by pictures." The first store we saw, with a sign like one of Link's old bombs, seemed to be the an explosives seller. The next one was a symbol like a cloth sack with a rupee print. We concluded it was a bank, which left the remaining one: a clay pot. Figuring it was the best place to start, we headed in.

The place was slightly cramped, things piled up on either side. The shopkeeper welcomed us to the "Curiosity Shop" and asked us whether we'd be buying or selling.

"Ah, we might be buying!" Zelda said before I had a chance to reply. "It depends on what we find. Is there anything you recommend?"

"Well, we just got a few things in. Little trinkets that might interest a couple like yourselves."

We made our way to the counter. "We're not - " I began, but Zelda grabbed my hand.

"Well, we've been looking for something to give us something to brighten up our room. Would you happen to have anything like that?"

"I think we might have something," the clerk said. "Don't go anywhere." He retreated into the back for a few seconds, and I turned to Zelda.

"Why are we pretending to be a couple?"

"Because if there's no Triforce, there's probably no Kingdom of Hyrule," she whispered back. "It's
better to look like another tourist here, don't you think?"

"I guess," I said.

"Here we go!" the clerk said, producing a clear bottle. "It's a beautiful piece, isn't it?"

"Oh my!" she said, leaning up to the sparkling glass. "What expert craftsmanship! Where did you get
it?"

"We've got a special service," he said. "If you like it that much, you can get it for a nice, low fifty
rupees."

"Fifty rupees?" I said sotto voce. "How much is that?"

"It's too much," she replied. "I'm sorry," she said. "I don't have that much on me to spare right now.
I'm saving up." She glanced at me, then mouthed the words "special present". "I don't suppose you
could part with it for a little less?"

The shopkeeper nodded. "Well, I couldn't stand to get in the way of a good time. Suppose we call it
thirty. That sound better?"

She nodded. "I can do that." She took out a wallet. "Do you have change for a silver rupee?"

His eyes glinted with greed. "No, ma'am. 'Fraid we've only got forty rupees in the till."

"Oh, I'll just have to pay with a purple, then."

The man, with a hint of annoyance, took her purple rupee and gave her four blue ones in return.
"Thank you for your business, ma'am. Will there be anything else?"

"Well, you wouldn't happen to know a nice place to eat on the East side of Clock Town? I saw a
really nice restaurant over there, but they were members only! Can you believe that?" She was
pulling off the tourist act quite well, talking vapidly in between asking for information we actually
needed. (I've taken the liberty of cutting out the extra conversation.)

The man nodded. "Well, that place is tough to get into, yeah. I might to be able to find a way for
you, though, if you've really got your heart set on eating there. It would only take about two days or
so, if you're stayin' that long."

"Oh, my! That sounds wonderful! I couldn't ask for better, really."

"Where you going to be stayin'? I can send a message your way - "

The door at the shop's front slammed open, and in walked a small boy wearing bright green with a
scabbard on his back. In other words, Young Link walked in, and his face had harsh lines of anger
set into it. The first words out of his mouth were, "Where's my bottle?", said in a harsh growl.

"Hm? Oh, if it isn't my favorite customer!" He man smiled. "I'm glad to see you."

"Cut it." He pushed us to the side somewhat roughly. "You've got my bottle, and I want it back."

"Let me check for it," he said, and walked back in the store's back.

Zelda held out the glass bottle. "Oh, this must be yours, then! I was wondering why a glass bottle
would be sold here."
Young Link turned to her and his eyes widened in shock. "You bought my bottle?!

"I didn't realize it was yours," she said. "Here. Take it."

He took the bottle into his hand. "Thank you. I owe you twenty rupees, then."

"Huh? It cost me thirty."

His face darkened again as the clerk reentered. "I'm afraid I can't find any bottles, sir. If you leave your address, we can get back to you when - "

"Forget it," he said. "I've got it back anyway." He walked out the door, and we followed.

"So, who are you two?" He looked between us. "You feel familiar," he said to Zelda, "but I really don't know who you are," and then to me.

We introduced ourselves on the way to the Latte Milk Bar, and the six of us reconvened in front of the building.

"You probably came all the way for nothing," Young Link said. "I'd rather have this talk down there, though." He pulled out a mask shaped like a cow's head and slipped it over his own. All five of us stifled some laughter at the image... some more successfully than others. (Sheik barely laughed, Toon Link had the most difficulty, etc.)

Descending the stairs, the six of us sat at the bar. "I'm not sure how I'd be able to help you," he said. "What do you expect me to do?"

"Maybe you'd be able to help Link with his timeline trouble," I said. "At least help him fill in the gaps, or explain how you dealt with time travel."

"We're the same person, though," he replied. "It probably won't make a difference."

"You've had different experiences," Sheik said. "You expertise may very well help."

"I really doubt it," he said. "But, fine." He sighed. "I've not nothing better to do with my time, and it beats getting stolen from by a bird every day. We'll do it tomorrow, and I'm only doing this once."

"That's all we need," I said, then we discussed some strategy. I made sure to monitor the conversation fully this time, and we created a useful plan. And now, I'll retire to bed. I'm very tired, and I need to prepare for tomorrow.

Chapter End Notes

We're almost at the finale of our first "arc". I'm excited, especially since after this, I'll be getting to other worlds than Mario and Zelda and Sakurai's kids. I hope you'll enjoy it! I already know which one's going to be first.
A Link to the Future

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Smash Entry 20
July 6, 18
Link/Young Link C

We began our plan in the early morning hours. (see prev.) I, along with Lucina, challenged Zelda, Sheik, Ganondorf, Toon Link, and Young Link to a Smash at Skyloft. (We placed 2nd.) We then proceeded by platform to Link's most probable location: the Great Plateau Tower.

"So, everyone was in the right place?" I asked. "How did everyone do?"

"I made my way between Hyrule Castle and Gerudo Valley," Sheik said. "Using Farore's Wind, it wasn't difficult."

"The Temple was all clear," Zelda said. "Not a soul in sight! Actually, it was kinda creepy." She scratched her chin.

"The Pirate Ship was empty," Toon Link said. "Alfonzo isn't running the Spirit Train today, either - it's my turn. I guess it won't be running all day."

"And the Bridge of Eldin?" I asked.

"Not a soul in sight," Ganondorf said. "I made sure of that with some good barrier magic, though it won't be necessary, considering." He looked back to the stage we were leaving. "And obviously, Skyloft is free."

"Great Bay's clear," Young Link said. "Other Link doesn't even know it's back yet, I'm assuming."

"That's all the other stages from your world covered. Now, we all realize what we'll be doing once we get there?"

"Of course," Ganondorf said. "We corner him before he has a chance to escape and pour our hearts out in some sickening display of affection." He spoke with a sarcastic flip of his hand. "Saccharine, but necessary."

"It won't be easy," Zelda said. "If he flies away with his Paraglider, we'll have to use Farore's Wind just to reach him."

"And only three of us can use it," Sheik said. "Two, considering Young Link has never done it in quite this way himself."

"Do you want my help or not?" he said.

"Lucina and I will be supporting you from the air," I said to interrupt. "We'll make sure Link can't get away from the plateau proper."

"I'll be equipped with a Longbow," Lucina said, "and Robin will have Hand Axes to throw."

"That part still bothers me," Toon Link said. "We're not trying to kill Link, you know."
"Of course not," I said. "I won't be aiming to hit him, they're there as a deterrent.

"Of course, since Link will also have a bow, we'll need to be cautious. Him getting in range of us could spell trouble."

"Nayru's Love should help with that," Zelda said. "We'll be catching arrows before they hit you - "

" - in freefall," Sheik finished. "Hopefully, that will be enough, since we can't float, and Ganondorf can't use Nayru's Love."

"Bah!" He tossed his hand out again. "Who needs Nayru's Love when you can use Din's Power?"

"Then, we all know what we're doing," I said. "Let's pass out items." I opened the Convoy and began to distribute items:

- Robin (me) used a Second Seal and Class Changed into Griffon Rider and was equipped with a Hand Axe (12/25).
- Lucina used a Second Seal to Class Change to Sniper, was equipped with a Longbow.
- Zelda was equipped with a Korok Leaf, a Heal staff (8/30), and a Vulnerary.
- Sheik was equipped with a Physic Staff, a Steel Knife, and a Concoction.
- Toon Link was equipped with his Phantom Sword, a Vulnerary and a Korok Leaf.
- Young Link was equipped with his Golden Sword and a Bottle of Milk.
- Ganondorf was equipped with a Steel Blade, an Elixir, and a Metal Device.

No other units were deployed.

It felt nice to write that up again, actually. Though, it requires some explanation: This is how I would write up preliminary battle prep for the army. Maybe I could get back into doing this... If I had a partner to share it with. I wonder how Virion's doing? The specific items in question were either donated or lent by the members of the group to use as I saw fit (see: Korok Leaves, Bottle, Metal Device donated by Ganondorf who said he stole it from a snake(?)) or bought from a merchant or Anna, if they weren't already in the Convoy.

...I detail all of this ahead of time, because our preparations were more than were necessary.

The platform drifted through the sky, eventually bringing us in sight of the tower. We readied our weapons, and Lucina boarded our griffon.

Link, upon seeing us, waved us in.

We reached the Great Plateau Tower and all disembarked the platform, which flew lazily into the sky and vanished. "What's going on?" he asked. "Why are all of you dressed like soldiers?"

"We, uh." I looked at everyone nervously. "We thought you wouldn't want to talk to us, so..."

"So you were going to storm the tower," he said, "so I would talk to you?"

I laughed nervously. "I guess we didn't think this through all the way." It turned out, he really did just need space after all. ...Egg on my face, I suppose.

"You were avoiding me," Sheik said. "You were avoiding all of us. I was worried."

"For a few days, I was trying to piece things together," he said. "It was tough, but I'm feeling better now - Are you holding an axe?"
I looked at the Hand Axe I was holding, then quickly put it back in the Convoy. "Let's just call it a wash, then, I guess!" I said hastily. "We're all doing fine now, so let's just get down to the plateau."

"I'd rather just head back, if it's all the same to you," Young Link said.

"You're already here," Zelda said. "You might as well stick around.

"I'd rather get back to Clock Town."

Link looked at Young Link's face. "Wow, is that what I looked like as a kid? I can barely remember."

"I'm not a kid," Young Link said. "I'm an adult now."

"With a mask to match," Ganondorf said. (Toon Link giggled. I'll explain it to Lucina tonight.) Young Link shot him a glare.

"Well, I'd be happy if you stayed," Link said. "The more, the better."

Young Link frowned. "Fine. I'll stay for now, but I'm calling a platform before it gets too late. I'd like to get into Latte as it opens."

Gliding down from the tower and putting our items away and back into the Convoy, Lucina and I sat on the grass and waited.

Link caught Zelda as she hit the ground from the last step, making sure she was alright. "I'm fine! Just never had to do that before." Sheik leapt down and landed in one piece from the final step, as did Toon Link and Young Link.

Ganondorf, however, elected to leap from the top of the tower with a cry of, "Behold the Power of the King of the Gerudo!" He landed feet-first with a smug smile on his mouth, and found himself unable to stand up.

"You broke your legs, didn't you, Ganondorf?" Link asked.

"Silence, you whelp," he spat back. After Zelda and Sheik healed him, they returned their staves as well. "I could have healed that off, you know."

"Never mind," Link said. "Right now, I just want to make sure what I know is right." He pointed to Zelda. "I've never met you, and never had a chance to. You're from the world where I failed - " He looked to the castle in the distance. " - or, at least, one of them."

"You're right," she said. "And many years after that time, to boot."

"You're Sheik," he said, pointing to her, "the Princess Zelda from the Eras of Time and Twilight. You're also the person I know the best out of everyone here."

"How did you find out?" she asked.

"I knew Master Hand wouldn't just leave you behind." He smiled. "You're way too important."

Sheik blushed a bit, and muttered her thanks for the compliment. Perhaps another day...

Link continued with Ganondorf: "The King of the Gerudo, and the man who has the Triforce of Power."
"And a former king of Hyrule," he added with a smirk and a cross of his arms. "You're slipping."

"I've beaten you three times, two of which you're connected to. One of them happened after a beat you as an adult, and the other one happened in another timeline, somehow."

"You don't know that?" Young Link asked.

"No, I don't. I guess that's just how Master Hand brought me over, but I've got no knowledge of what actually happened back then."

"I can explain!" Zelda said, raising her hand.

Link shook his hand. "I pretty much know what happened, I just never saw it happen."

"And then, you two." He turned to the Links. "Toon Link is from after Ganon was killed by the Master Sword, which I guess had to have made a flood all over the world?"

"It had," he said, "but only over Hyrule itself. Other lands were fine."

"Alright," Link said. "Now, as for you." He bent down to look at Young Link in particular. "I know that you have to be the younger me that got sent back in time somehow. I just know how you got there, or what you did."

Young Link scoffed. "What an insight."

"Alright, so tell me."

"What's the point? We're barely gonna see each other, anyway."

Link sighed. "Fine. I guess you're feeling kind of punchy." He squinted. "There really is something familiar about you, though. Can I see how you use a sword?"

Young Link shook his head. "Fine." He took out his Golden Sword and turned to face the open field. From there, he did a few different sword slashes, then turned back. "Happy?"

Link paused, then drew the Master Sword. "It's right there," he said. "I just can't put it together."

"So, what, we're sword fighting now?"

"If you'll let me."

After a split second, Young Link nodded.

Link charged forward, sword held high in the air. Young Link took out a polished shield with a grotesque face on it, all the better to take Link's sickle-shaped beam of energy he launched with a slash through the air. (Zelda noted Link was completely healthy when he started, then.) Closing the gap, Link slashed diagonally, catching on Young Link's sword in turn. In the clash, Young Link pushed in and kicked Link in the gut, sending him back.

Catching his breath, Link took his sword and switched it to his left hand. With a new aggression, he slashed at Young Link, who backflipped out of the way while pulling out a strange yellow thing with a blue shell. Setting it on the ground sent it scuttling forward and Link jumped out of its way. Off in the distance, it exploded, causing a fire in the field. Link, meanwhile had brought his sword in and tried to knock Young Link in the gut in return with the hilt of the Master Sword. He succeeded, and Young Link collapsed to the ground.
Link then leapt into the air, sword pointed straight down. Down he sailed, with Young Link avoided being skewered by the inches-wide margin that his roll gave him. He stumbled to his feet and got his sword back out, but Link sat still, sword planted in the ground, eyes wide.

"What?! Is that all you're doing?!" Young Link demanded.

Then, Link stood, drawing his sword from the ground. "That's it!" He sheathed it and ran over to a patch of flowers - thankfully, not the ones Young Link had bombed - wrenching one from the ground with a shout of "There!". "How did it go?" he said, eyes clenched shut as he pressed the horseshoe-shaped bloom to his lips. He created a short snippet of music from it, that sounded sort of familiar.

"Epona's Song?" Young Link said.

"Ah," I said, "the song when Link called his horse to shoot Ganondorf with a bomb?"

The statement hung for a second. Young Link swiveled to me. "What?!"

"Did we forget to tell you that's part of why we're in this mess?" Ganondorf said. "These two were the inciting incident." He gestured to Lucina and I.

Then, Link played a different tune - where Epona's Song went high-middle-low, high-middle-low, this new tune sounded more like middle-low-lower, middle-low-lower. (I haven't got much of an ear for music, admittedly.)

Its effect on Young Link was pronounced, however, his face turning completely white from shock. "Where did you learn that song?" His voice sounded slightly hollow.

Link looked up. "This was the song the Ancient Hero taught me. He was the spirit of a hero of Hyrule."

Hands shaking, Young Link took out his Ocarina of Time and played the same song, as if he were in a trance. Mid, low, lower. Mid, low, lower. Mid, low, lower-low-lower. Then, his knees gave out, and he clutched his face, trembling.

Zelda bent down to him. "What's wrong, Young Link?! What happened?!"

"It's a magic song," Ganondorf said, trying to remain calm. "I can't tell what kind of effect it had, though - it's not any kind of magic I'm familiar with."

"It felt dark," Sheik said. "A haunting sort of melody."

"Yes, but that doesn't help narrow it down. There are many ways to work magic!"

I stopped them from getting into a fight. There was nothing we could do until the magic had worked its way through Young Link. After a few minutes, he stopped trembling and let out a deep, shaky sigh. He stood, his eyes red as if he'd been crying for some hours. "So, where did you say you learned that song, again?"

"From an Ancient Hero," Link said. "I can only think that's you."

"It seems like it," he said, his argumentative demeanor completely drained away. "I gotta... I need to lie down. Excuse me." He walked over to the tower, taking Zelda's hand so he wouldn't fall over into the grass.
"I'll have to talk to him again later, after he recovers a bit." Link smiled good-naturedly. "I guess now I'll get to know what you all went through. Though, maybe I won't try to invade his home."

Smash Entry 21  
July 6, 18 1:30 PM  
Link/Lucina A

After spending some time recuperating (Ent. 9), Link was ready to resume training with Lucina. Lucina took my Hand Axe from the Convoy, and Link got out a Wooden Mop. (E Rank Spear, Mt: 1, Dur: 20. Poorly suited for combat.)

"You had a bow earlier," Link said. "Can you usually use that?"

"No," Lucina said, and we explained how the Second Seals worked again.

"Hm, would that work on Link, as well?" Sheik said.

"I'm not sure, but I'm afraid I don't have many to spare," I said. "I can't accept Smash requests without changing back to Tactician or Grandmaster."

"I see."

"Can she use one for that axe?" Link asked. "I'd like to fight her at her best."

Lucina agreed, and Class Changed into Great Knight. Mounting her armored horse, she got out a few more weapons at Link's request: one of my Levin Swords, a Brave Lance, an Elixir, and the Metal Device Ganondorf had donated.

Link, too, mounted Epona and showed us his set of arms: the Master Sword, a Silverscale Spear (B Rank Lance, Mt: 7, Dur: 35. Made by the water-dwelling Zora.), the aforementioned Wooden Mop, and a heavy-tipped sword forged by Biggoron. (Biggoron's Sword. A Rank, Mt: 16, Dur: 30. Def - 5, can't double.) He also ate a small bowl of Pumpkin Soup. This bolstered his defenses immensely.

At my signal, the two began their battle. Lucina made the first strike, charging in and leaping with her horse, lance in hand. Taking two quick stabs and hitting with only one, and leaping back, she readied herself for Link's strike.

"Fast!" Link said and charged after her, holding out Biggoron's Sword. Lucina hastily retreated, turning this into a cavalry chase.

I leapt onto my griffon and took Sheik with me for the extra movement. Ganondorf protested, saying, "What are we supposed to do?" I told them to find a way to follow.

Then, Toon Link waved a staff in the air and summoned the Spirit Train. (Train? Prf? Staff, ???) Deciding now wasn't the time to ask, we made our way across the plains as Lucina and Link's battle raged.

Lucina tried to stab at him, but he batted away her strikes. The Brave Lance's light construction was acting as more of a hindrance than a help here, so she switched to using the Levin Sword - not that Link couldn't handle the change. He swung Biggoron's Sword down as he pushed his horse past her, forcing her away.

Of course, Lucina then used the Levin Sword to summon bolts of lightning to hit Link. I flinched a bit when she did, since Levin Swords aren't exactly inexpensive, but this was a battle.
Link, switching tactics, pulled out the Wooden Mop and his Sheikah Slate. Sheik asked what it was, and I pointed out it was what detonated Link's bombs. I also told her it could freeze living things for up to a few seconds at a time.

He then threw Lucina from her horse by freezing it. Tumbling to the ground, Lucina stood up and struck with lightning again. It shot wide and dissipated into the ground. Lucina mounted her horse again and they returned to their cavalry battle.

"There's no way he'll be able to lose as long as he can use that slate," Sheik said.

"I don't know how she could avoid it," I replied. "It's not like she can hit outside of its effective range."

"What is its range?"

"That's exactly the question." Link froze her horse again. "And I don't think the answer will be good for her."

Pulling out the Hand Axe, Lucina feinted a throw at Link, who circled around her to avoid it. Then, she threw the blade in a peculiar fashion, sending it spinning through the air like Link's boomerang.

"She's boomeranging her Hand Axe?!"

"This is going to be interesting," Sheik said. "I didn't even know you could do that."

"I don't know where she picked it up!" Then, I realized: Ike can use Axes. Including Hand Axes, and he throws them like boomerangs.

Lucina's axe swung around and chopped Link in the back, sending him falling from his horse. As she caught the handle, Link drew the Master Sword. He charged her, and she threw the axe again.

Link froze it and leaned his charge out of the way, giving it a quick swipe and causing it to plink off of nothing and into the grass. Without a weapon, Lucina was helpless against the Master Sword and had her shoulder cut into.

Equipping her Brave Lance in her off hand, Lucina fended Link off as best she could as she opened the Elixir and took a swig. Then, as the Brave Lance snapped at the shaft, Link slashed at the hand holding the bottle, with Lucina only barely withdrawing it in time. (It was at this point Lucina swapped what was in her hand for the Metal Device.)

The fight then became a sword battle, with Link's Master Sword against Lucina's Levin Sword. The sword's electricity and jagged blade certainly made Link's arms tingle and vibrate painfully. Still, every slash he made pushed Lucina back. Lucina took what was in her hand and opened it. Then, Link knocked it from her hand.

By this point, the four spectators had made their way to the field and were watching at a safe distance. So, we were all witness to what happened next: the explosion, its propulsion of small metal bits into the air, and the crackling of static electricity. Link's eyes narrowed, and Lucina dashed toward the Hand Axe in the distraction. Link took out his Sheikah Slate...

and Lucina continued running. While he tapped at the screen, Lucina made her way to the Hand Axe and hefted it, taking another swig of Elixir.

Both of them were breathing heavily at this point. Toon Link sounded the Spirit Train's whistle. "It looks like you two are pretty even," he said. "How about we call it a draw?"
They looked at each other, and nodded. Sheathing their respective weapons, they walked toward center ground and shook hands.

A battle well fought.

The six of us sat in the grass, without the Spirit Train, my griffon, of Lucina's horse, and talked about a few of the battle's supremely amazing moments.

"I'm really tired now," Link said. "You fight well."

"It was tough," Lucina replied. "I got lucky that whatever that thing did stopped your Sheikah Slate."

"Bringing it out at all was surprising. You had a decoy item prepared for when you ran - I was impressed. The Sheikah Slate was a bonus."

"Being able to stop my horse was something I should have anticipated."

"I think your swordfighting was great, too. That special sword really messed with my arm." He rolled his shoulder.

"It was really clever of you to stop my Hand Axe, too. You're a natural with those abilities."

"Thank you." He looked out to the fields below the Great Plateau. "It took a lot to learn that kind of thing."

"It seems like you're doing well honoring your friends' memory."

Link blinked, then looked to Lucina. "We both are. If we keep fighting, then the future is going to be a better place." The ghastly shadow disappeared from the castle in the distance. "It already is, right?" He smiled.

I think I'm getting the hang of this again.

Chapter End Notes

END OF ARC: INTRO

Well, here we go! Not a big battle here, but a one-on-one fight's almost as nice, right?

I'm glad I've gotten this done. After this, I can get a lot more free form - well, until I've got to introduce the Belmonts. But that's not until... August 8. I've got a good month in-fic! We'll be fine.

I'm looking forward to it! Thank you for reading.
Fun and Games

Chapter Notes

Welp, Joker's in Smash. At least they've already got Xander Mo-

JOKER?!

Alright, that's awesome. So, I know it's a long way off, but I've got a great way to handle this one.

That said... Have you ever posted fan content right before a new release completely upends you? Yeah, well, that ain't happenin' with Joker! Darn it, I already had something for December 6th, and I'm not changing it come hell or high water!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Smash Entry 22
July 7, 18
Botch

Today, I'd decided to begin branching out into unfamiliar worlds. Asking Daisy where a good place to start would be, she suggested to arrange a meeting with Mario. During the meeting, I ascertained that Mario would be willing and able to Support Pikachu.

Unfortunately, when they met, I couldn't understand a word of what Pikachu had said, and neither could Mario. So, now, I find myself without a way to handle that portion of the roster of fighters. As well, I'm reminded of those who don't speak any understandable language - or at least, not one I know, such as the Kongs or Yoshi. Until such time as I find a method of translation, I will be unable to create Supports with them in mind.

Smash Entry 23
July 7, 18 12:00 PM
Robin/Duck Hunt C

As soon as I finished penning the previous entry, I received a Smash request from Lady Palutena. As we found ourselves on the platform above Town and City, I am currently sitting in Kapp'n's bus on the way to Smashville, and Palutena has told me to look within the mayor's office for something to solve my issue.

Of course, I asked her how she knew I needed a translator, but she refused to answer. I'm starting to get very annoyed with her.

Upon exiting the train, I was welcomed warmly by one of the helpers summoned by the Assist Trophy, Isabelle. "Hello, Mr. Robin!" she said. "It's so good to have you visit! Ms. Palutena sent a letter our way, and we might be able to help you!"

"Ah, yes, of course," I said. "What exactly did you have in mind?" (Inquiring about Palutena offered me nothing new.)
We entered the large town hall beside the stop and I sat down in front of Isabelle's desk. "Alright! Now, I understand you're looking for someone who can understand a lot of languages."

"Not only that, but I need someone who can give me the information immediately."

"I understand completely!" She tapped her chest, and sparkles emanated from her head. "Leave it to me!"

I do have to admit, I trust her, for some reason, perhaps because I just can't see her being anything else but worth trusting? It's unusual.

Isabelle rummaged through the papers on her desk and then from a file cabinet, and pulled out a dossier on a particular resident. "Yes, I think they will be the best fit for the job!" she said, looking it over. "They're not busy, too, so it works out all around!" She ushered me from the office and led me down a cobblestone path.

As she did, she gave me a tour of Smashville. I must confess to listening somewhat intently, as I'd never seen much of the place from so high up in the air during Smashes. I was introduced to the various Public Works projects throughout the town, some in various states of redress. Apparently, the Mayor was searching for donators to renovate them. In addition, flowers covered large portions of the ground, in all shapes and hues.

Admiring some particularly beautiful blue roses, I looked over at a house and its leaving resident - a relatively-out-of-place Mewtwo, wearing a red robe of some kind. I was baffled, as the other residents I'd seen so far had been most like Isabelle herself.

"Ah, allow me to explain!" Isabelle said. "We offer residency to the animal and animal-like Smashers around here, in case they haven't got a place to stay! Mewtwo was the first Pokémon to take us up on the offer, though."

"I am unwilling to stay at the Pokémon Center at the Indigo League," Mewtwo added, beaming the thought directly into my head with psychic power. "I much prefer the solitude of this location, and I am able to find it easily." He indicated a place nearby, over the cliff, where the beach was broken up by a waterfall, creating a small peninsula surrounded by the ocean. "Excuse me, I have matters to attend to." As he said so, he floated away to the north.

"So," I said as the tour continued, "who else is here?"

"Well," Isabelle said, "you've met Mewtwo. We're also housing Pichu and Ivysaur and her roommate. There's Wolf, as well, and we've offered houses to the other members of Star Fox."

"I don't think Wolf works for Star Fox," I said.

"He doesn't?" She looked up. "But I thought that was the last job he put on his residency application..." She slowed her pace to ponder it.

While Isabelle tried to solve the hole in Wolf's story, I tried to solve one of my own. Specifically, the Pitfall I'd just fallen into.

"Oh, dear! How awful!" Isabelle said as she shifted her weight repeatedly, doing a very nice dance... but not helping me from the hole in the ground.

Finally wrenching myself up, I sat on the cobblestones and sighed. "That was more exercise than I was expecting."
"I'm so sorry! One of our residents is just terrible about planting those!"

I sighed. "That's alright." I took note of the line of star-shaped indentations surrounding where I was - an island of cobblestone housing a restaurant of some kind - less the one I'd stepped on. "At least I wasn't hurt. So, what's here?"

"That's our coffee shop!" she said. "If you need coffee, you can get it there. Mr. Brewster is very good at his job, and so is the Mayor when he works there." Her ear twitched for the town's hourly song, played by the clock tower's bells. "Oh, he's almost done with his shift, too!"

Around two minutes later, the Villager stepped out of the coffee shop holding a shining, silver-colored bag. He noticed me immediately and then Isabelle. "How's it going?"

"Oh, things are going well right now," I said. "I'm kind of stuck here, though."

"Huh?" Villager then noticed the pitfalls surrounding us, and sighed. "Of course. Just one second."

He then took out a gold-covered shovel and, with incredible speed, dug up every pitfall surrounding us, as well as around five blue rocks with bone-like stones embedded inside. Piling the pitfalls on the ground, he said, "That's better. Now, if you'll excuse me."

He swapped his shovel for a net, also gold-rimmed, and dashed toward a nearby bush with a menacing gleam in his eye and a smile plastered on his face. The bush's occupant, the Duck Hunt duo, dashed off, howling with laughter.

"Mr. Mayor, wait!" Isabelle tried to run off after him, but tripped and fell over. Picking her up, she explained: the duo enjoyed living in the town, but were also terrible pranksters. The pulled pranks at all hours of the day, and on everyone, bar Isabelle herself. Their favorite target, of course, was the Villager.

After waiting for them to calm down, Isabelle and I made our way up to the three of them. "Well, at least we've finally found you," she said. "Mr. Robin, I'd like to introduce you to your new translator!" She then pulled out a party popper and popped it.

"Ah, I see." I looked to the Villager and held out my hand. "I'm looking forward to - "

The dog took my hand and shook it, snickering. I couldn't help but express my confusion.

"What's going on, Isabelle?" Villager asked.

"Oh, right! I just made the arrangements with Robin a little bit ago." She explained that I was in need of a translator because of my work - though she didn't describe it in exact details, according to Palutena's direction, apparently. "Of course, I would never commit to any plans without your go ahead - "

"Take 'em," Villager said. "It'll give them something else to do besides mess with the town."

"Huh?" I said. "What do you mean? Are you not my translator?"

Villager was taken aback. "I just know Animalese, Robin! Well, I know a little Bebebese, too," he added sotto voce, "but I'm not that good at understanding other languages. Plus, I'm already swamped as Mayor. On the other hand," he said, frowning, "these two can understand a lot more than they let on. They're your best bet."

"Are you sure?"
"I promise!" Isabelle said, "that Duck Hunt will be the best translators you've ever had! It's my personal guarantee as the Mayor's secretary." She tapped her chest proudly. Stars shot from her head as she did so, somehow.

"They'll be the only translators I've ever used," I said, "but alright. Still, it might be tough to coordinate our schedules."

The dog shook its head, then said something I couldn't understand.

Whatever it was, though, Isabelle thought it was a great idea. "What do you think, Mr. Mayor?"

"If it keeps them out of our hair, whatever it is, it sounds good to me." He hefted the blue stones. "I've got to get these to the museum."

The dog had a smug expression, and Villager's expression darkened for a fraction of a second. I felt something otherworldly emanate off of him in that brief flash, which completely stopped the dog from making the face it had been.

"Well, then it's settled! Mr. Robin, you can expect the bus to arrive at around 5:00. And don't worry about feeding them, they'll be bringing food."

"Huh? What are you talking about?"

"A sleepover! So you can get to know them before you work together!"

I would have asked more, but I was teleported back home and left to prepare for a sleepover.

They arrived at 5:00 exactly, at the front of Arena Ferox. I welcomed them in and we (being myself, Lucina, Chrom, and our guests) sat down to a modest dinner.

Then, they presented us with wrapped gifts. First, to me, they gave a letter and a wrapped book: 1001 Tarot Card Readings. Written in a language I can read, but not useful for my magic studies, and very heavy, to boot. I have elected to class it as a Tome weapon, for now. (Tarot Book. E Rank Tome, Mt: 7, Dur: 20, R. 1. Cannot perform follow-up attacks. Uses Str to calculate Atk.) The letter was a relatively effusive and gracious thanks for the opportunity to perform translation duties for me. A fine gift for a king, but I'm... only technically that.

For Chrom, they had provided a sword with a well made, guarded handle, but a poor, bulky blade to match. As he took a few practice swings, the whole blade broke from its base. Closer inspection revealed that moulded paper had concealed the real blade of the sword, a Rapier.

And to Lucina, they had gifted several wooden Boomerangs, apparently having heard of her battle with Link. (Boomerang. D Rank Knife, Mt: 2, Dur: 40, R. 2-3. If its attack misses, it gains a second chance to hit.) She was gracious when receiving the gift, despite the fact that she can't use throwing knives. She also received a book of some kind, which neither of us could read. The dog snapped its paw like fingers... somehow... when he heard that.

Regardless, we retired to where they would be staying for the night. On such short notice, the only place we could find that was warm enough was the room where I was sleeping. Thinking nothing of it, I told the duo to get comfortable while I got more blankets.

I returned to find my papers in complete disarray, strewn all over the bed from their previous position spread out on my desk. Sighing, I placed the blankets on the ground and arranged the papers on my shelves properly. Admittedly, I'd needed to handle that for a little while.
Unfortunately, that gave them time to go rummaging through the Convoy chest. Shooing them away, I found an old Iron Blade I borrowed from Ike once. He'd forged it and had it named "Iron Bar", the moniker forged directly into the blade itself. Looking at the language the name was in, I noticed it was remarkably similar to the words on the cover of Lucina's book. Concluding they were the same language after matching a few characters, I brought the news to Lucina.

This gave the duo time to completely overturn my bed, stirring up a lot of collected dust.

I'll spare you the details of every prank pulled upon me, and my housemates, at this time. Suffice to say, I've been running myself ragged trying to fix all of this nonsense for the past four hours. Every time I try to sit down, I become the victim of another practical joke.

I'm getting so tired of this. Pulling my loose change out of a bowl of vinegar, I made my way into my room and confronted the Duck Hunt duo personally.

"Why are you doing this?!"

The dog stared straight at me, head tilted, and snickered.

I was at my wit's end. Sitting down in my chair (and onto a farting balloon), I sighed. "How am I even supposed to use you as my translator? I can't even understand you." I said something to that effect, at least.

"Well, I suppose that is the nature of communication, isn't it?"

Eyes likely bulging from my head, I whirled in my chair to face the duo. "Uh?"

"The crux of the issue with communication is that where one means to send ideas and the other receive them, there is never any true proof that it has actually occurred. Even if the desires of the sender have been met, it is entirely possible that the person receiving heard something completely different and simply decided to produce such a thing on their own. For example, if I ask you for a hamburger, and you don't know what that is, and I tell what it is, but the only things I say are, 'bread and meat', and you give me a bun and meat patty, which I wanted but never said, have we truly communicated?

"Likewise, if I claim a tomato is red, and so do you, is it even the same red we see? Is it not possible that color is something different that we see between the two of us, but because the color remains consistent, we are ignorant? If you see green where I see red, and vice versa, and it's been like that your whole life, when we see the same thing, it would be in different colors. But would the difference even be noticeable? Perhaps there are people in the world who have never noticed the difference enough. Have we not communicated things effectively enough? Or is it better not to notice?"

The previous paragraphs about the nature of communication came from the mouth of the duck. The duck with a smooth male voice and Bayonetta-like accent. I'm beginning to believe the events taking place right now are happening just to humiliate or befuddle me.

"You can talk?" I said.

The duck blinked. "Yes, I can."

"Have you been able to talk this whole time?"

"I have."
My eyes rolled back in my head. "Why didn't you tell me you could talk earlier?"

"You didn't ask."

I might have fainted then for a second. Apparently, though, the duo didn't even notice.

"Well, my dear boy, I think I should be heading to bed soon. Get ready for a wonderful morning tomorrow! The bus will be arriving at three o'clock to pick me up." The two of them curled up and slept - on my bed - and left me bewildered.

So begins our strange partnership, I suppose...? What did Palutena get me into?

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Smash Entry 23
July 8, 18
Mario/Pikachu X
No Common Ground

Quack snores. (see prev. entry.) I am tired. (In addition, at their request, I will be marking the Duck Hunt duo's names down as Bark and Quack. As a duo, however, they will be referred to as Duck Hunt.)

We left for the Mushroom Kingdom early in the morning, a Smash between myself, Duck Hunt, Daisy, and Mario. With renewed purpose, we made our way to the Pokémon Center within the Indigo Plateau Pokémon League, by platform.

We arrived after lunch and walked through the Center, locating Pikachu after getting directions from the other Pokémon staying there and being led by what looked like a soft, brown evolution of Pikachu. (I was told it was called a Raichu, from a place called Alola. I'm curious about Pokémon evolution, now, but there are more pressing matters.)

(At this point, as there is no better time to explain, the method by which Duck Hunt translates is as follows: Bark, who understands many languages but can only speak in barks, translates what someone says to Quack. Quack then translates it into Animalese, which is a language that gets translated into the language the hearer understands in turn. They get this done almost seamlessly, with barely a second passing between the original speech and translation... even if he does speak with accents while he does so.)

"So, you guys are back," Pikachu said. "Got everything you need this time, or can I get back to doing nothing?"

After thanking Duck Hunt for the translation, I replied, "We've got everything we need, yes."

Pikachu sighed. "Fine, let's get this over with." He got up and walked us over to the counter. "So, what's going on, Mario? I haven't seen you in a while."

"I've been busy with a lot of things," he said. "I've been planning another party out. Do you think you'd like to come?"

"I'm good, thanks. Your parties ain't really my thing, y'know?" (Quack leaned backward and reclined onto Bark, apparently to better "get into character".)

"Well, that's alright. The offer's always open."

"I really prefer the Smashes if nothing else. At least it's kinda like a Pokémon battle."
"To each their own."

Pikachu ordered a round of Berry Juice. (Item. Heals 20 HP. 1 use. Can be used immediately after falling below half HP.) As he sipped it, he said, "So, what's with you and those parties, anyway?"

"Well, I'm sure you remember how I told you about Bowser took over Peach's castle a while ago?"

"You did? I probably wasn't paying attention."

Mario curled a finger over his mouth and closed his eyes. "Hm, I suppose it has been a while since the Melee tournament. It's alright if you don't remember."

Pikachu's tail shot straight out for a fraction of a second when Mario said "Melee". "Uh, yeah. Sorry about that, Mario."

"It's alright. Not everyone can remember everything. Well, I'll just start after the Castle was free. Bowser was in trouble again with the kingdom, but we wanted to give him another chance."

"You're... pretty trusting, huh?"

"People tell me to be more cautious, yes. But life's too short to be suspicious of people. I had wanted to find a way to clear the air. And then, Donkey Kong came barging into the meeting room." He laughed. "It was so tough explaining where he was from!"

"I can imagine," Pikachu said, taking a languid sip. "That guy's a real wild one."

"You were like that, too," he said with a nostalgic twinkle in his eye. "I remember it like it was yesterday, Pikachu."

Pikachu set his drink on the table with a clack. "Let's get back to DK, huh?"

"Ah, right. Well, we'd had some leftover sets lying around, so Bowser filmed a board game with an old camera on the set. And it just took off! People liked it, and there weren't any hard feelings. Having fun is a great way to bring people together."

"Of course." Pikachu looked off. "So, how many people are coming to the party?"

"Well, I'm looking for anyone who wants to participate." Mario looked to me and offered, but I was forced to decline because of my work.

Daisy, however, pushed us both to accept as a team. Mario was happy to hear it, so I acquiesced. I'll be at Peach's Castle the next few days, so there will be fewer entries made by that time.

Nevertheless, Pikachu finished his drink and hopped from the counter. "Well, it's been fun catching up, but I was busy doing nothing, so, ah..." Pikachu shooed us away.

I cleared my throat. "You haven't told us anything about yourself, Pikachu."

"What's to talk about?" he said with a flip of his paw. "I'm done for today."

Completely blocked off, we walked away as a group. "That was weird."

"Maybe he's tired?" Daisy said. "Do Pokémon get tired?"

"Don't worry about it," Mario said. "I'll figure out why he's being so distant. Then, we can try again."
"Well, one thing's clear to me," Quack said.

"What's that?"

"We were great," he said with a smug wobble of his head.

"Yes, you translated well enough," I said. "Thank you. It's just a shame Pikachu didn't have more to say."

"Well, that will happen. The nature of communication is such that - "

"Please don't launch into that right now," I said. "We've got to get you to the bus."

"Ah, yes. Certainly, my boy! Shall we go, then?"

The teleport began, and I bid the duo goodbye. This was one of the strangest ordeals I've dealt with so far - though I've got a feeling it will be eclipsed by whatever happens this Saturday, when the Mario Party is set to begin.

Chapter End Notes

Isabelle just strikes me as the kind of person who would offer to house people.

The fact that Smashville's being used as a hideout is an unfortunate consequence of that.

And as for Isabelle being a fighter, well, we know that now, but we didn't on July 7! It's what they call "dramatic irony".

Mewtwo is wearing the graduation gown. It's Official Style, which I felt suited him well, even if the color is a little deep.
A Close Connection?

Chapter Notes

I was trying to figure out which character to use here. I was coming up blank, so I used a random number generator.

I got Villager, and then Ike. I... guess that works!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Smash Entry 24
July 10, 18
Villager/Duck Hunt C

I returned to Smashville today to thank Villager and Isabelle for permitting me to borrow Duck Hunt, and to ask permission to keep him on retainer for translation in the future.

When I arrived, however, I was quickly pulled into the nearest building - the house of a blue pig wearing a spiked strip between his ears. "You don't wanna go out there, man. Bark, Quack 'n' the Mayor are gettin' into it."

"Uh, what are they getting in to, exactly?"

He looked out the window. A silver plate filled with whipped cream flew by. "Pranks."

I got closer to the window and looked out. Before my eyes were holes covering the ground and fossils placed on the ground next to them, rotten apples and envelopes littering the landscape. Farther afield, Villager, smiling blankly and net out, chased after Duck Hunt; Bark did the running, while Quack occupied himself with spraying cream into plates and throwing it at him, as well as what looked to be beehives.

"Where did he get those?!" I asked.

"I know. They don't sell whipped cream around here." My face I assume plainly showed I was not amused.

"How long is this going to last?"

"Usually takes about this long, actually - ah, there we go." Villager threw his net over Duck Hunt and lifted them into the air. "Alright, it's over."

"Is this a regular thing?"

"Eh, whenever they get it in their head to start really messing with the Mayor, yeah. Look, be careful. The Mayor might not have gotten all the Pitfalls."

"Alright, thank you." I opened the door. "Ah, what's your name?"

"Ganon." He caught my unamused glance. "Look, I'm as surprised as you that someone else has my name. Why do you think I just watch the Smashes on TV? Oh, speakin' of which." He walked over
to the TV and turned it on for a highlights reel of the day's smashes, hosted by a Mii Fighter.

Exiting Ganon's house, I walked over to the Villager and Duck Hunt, who seemed to have calmed down - even if the duo were still inside Villager's net.

"Ah, Robin." Villager upturned the net and released them. "It's good to see you. I've got to thank you for the other day. I actually got some work done."

"Good. So, it would be alright if I took them out in the future?"

Quack brushed himself off. "I've no objections, as long as it's not too frequent. Bark and I have a lot of things to do here, ourselves. Why, last time alone represented a sig-"

"Whenever you want, I don't mind," Villager said. "Just try to work with the bus schedule."

"I will."

"Well, I say!" said Quack. "The way you treat me, Villager, you'd think I were a criminal!"

"You prank everyone in town," he said. "You are a criminal."

The two of them blanched and flinched back. A few duck feathers flew into the air.

Villager rolled his eyes. "Would you two stop messing around and clean the town up? I've got to get to The Roost for my shift."

"Yes, sir!" The duo saluted as Villager walked off to the coffee shop.

"Does he need to work there, really? He's the mayor here, right?"

"From what I understand," Quack said as he picked up another blue rock, "he donates all of his salary back to the town. He says he makes enough money doing what he does."

"Donates it all? That doesn't exactly seem like a good idea."

"He's pretty well off. You ever see his house?" Bark pointed with his nose at the only two-story house in town. "He's got five or six rooms in there, secret storage cabinets - the works." Quack shook his head. "Don't know how he does it."

I started helping to clean up to make things go faster. "So, where does he get the money?"

"If I knew, I'd tell ya." He looked around surreptitiously. "One rumor going around town is that he goes to Tortimer Island and picks up everything he can. But I've been there during Smashes, and nothing's on the ground when I do. You?" I agreed. "Exactly. He's even got a pretty full catalogue." He picked up a leaf. "This is one of the things he's missing, actually. Guess he didn't notice - he never does."

"What is it? I assume it's not just a leaf."

"No, it's furniture. A server, actually." He craned his head up and looked for anyone overhearing. "I got it from that Shadow Moses Island place. They've got scads of these things."

"There's a place called Shadow Moses?" I checked the list of stages, and there was such a place. "What's it like over there? I haven't been."

"Cold. I almost turned into a well-preserved ducksicle out there." They both shivered. "Don't go
unless you have to. Can't imagine who lives out there."

Soon enough, we got the remnants of the pranks together and headed to The Roost. Entering, we sat at the coffee bar.

"How can I help you?" said Villager with a smile that didn't quite reach the corners of his mouth.

Bark and Quack shared a glance, then at once began shouting a very complex order. I'm certain, over Bark's howling, I caught the words "non-milk foam" and "non-blend" followed by at least three different types of coffee bean. (I assume, at least.)

Villager closed his eyes, which didn't make his smile any less uncomfortable. "We serve coffee and sweets here, sirs. Please order from the menu." He tapped his hand to the board behind him. "Do not go off menu," he said through clenched teeth. His nails scratched the board as he put his hand down, and Bark let out a yelp and covered his ears.

I looked at the board itself. I couldn't read it at all. "Um, I might have a problem."

Villager blinked. "You, Robin, may take your time. I'm here for a few hours while Brewster visits the Museum, so whenever you're ready. We've got some sweets, too, so - "

"I can't read the menu."

He paused. "Yeah, that's an issue." He turned to Duck Hunt. "You two, translate."

"I can't read cursive Animalese, actually," Quack said. "Got no clue what's up there."

Villager gave him an unamused glance, opened his mouth to comment, but then turned his attention back to me. "I'll just ask you what kind of coffee you'd like, and pair it up as best I can."

After a few questions, I was eventually served a coffee with a light flavor that tasted a little sweet, with a mild pastry. I'd already eaten this morning, so it was all I wanted.

Duck Hunt, meanwhile, had received a sandwich and bird seed with water. "That's not bird-safe bread, so don't go sneaking any bites," Villager said.

Quack looked offended. "You impugn my honor, good sir! I wouldn't dream of it!" He eyed the sandwich hungrily and drooled, a fact which Villager pointed out. "Well, okay, I would, but I wouldn't actually eat it. I'm in no mood to contract angel wing today."

His mouth full of bird seed, he said, "Oh, by the by, I noticed a server on the ground earlier. Is it yours?"

Villager shook his head. "I got one two days ago in a furniture swap. I've already got it in my catalogue."

He swallowed. "I see. Well, I'll just take it, then. How's a thousand Bells sound?"

"I'm pretty sure it's yours, Quack. Do whatever you want with it."

He shrugged. "As you wish, my dear boy."

"How many of the fossils did you check with Blathers?"

"Oh, all of them, of course!"
"And how many were new?"

Quack got a devious gleam in his eye. "Two, Mr. Mayor. Can you suss out which ones?"

"Drop them off at my house, and I'll get to them after this."

"So," I said, "does this happen often, Duck Hunt doing this?"

"Unfortunately," Villager said, arms crossed. "They're a nuisance, and I only get to say that because they admit they are, too."

"No, not that. I mean, them helping you find things."

Villager blinked. "They're not doing that. They're making a pest of themselves, that's all."

"I must concur, Robin," Quack said. "We are irascible pranksters, the two of us! Just happen to get the bad luck sometimes to help where we try to screw things up." Bark nodded and snickered in response.

Soon enough, we finished our food and walked out of the restaurant. "You're too clever by half, my friend," Quack said as the door closed.

"So, you are trying to help him. Why not just give him the items on their own?"

"That's a mystery best saved for another time, isn't it? I'll be in touch on my schedule, but thinking of schedules, you should catch the bus before it leaves you behind. It'll leave at two sharp."

Despite my protests, I found myself ushered onto the bus, and as two'o'clock rang out from the tower bells, Kapp'n closed the doors and drove me back to Ragna Ferox.

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Smash Entry 25
July 10, 18 3:30 PM
Ike/Lucina ©Bond

I returned to Ragna Ferox by Kapp'n's bus from Smashville. (see prev.) When I arrived, I located Chrom, who told me that Ike was here. Seeking to greet our guest, I made my way to the stands of the Arena where they were, and found Lucina practicing throwing her Boomerangs.

It took a second to realize she was doing so in her Great Lord class, which couldn't wield knives or throwing weapons at all. I gripped the railing and watched as she, without error, threw one and let it soar, catching it without a second's hesitation. "How are you doing that?!!" I called as I leapt over and into the arena proper, using Elwind to soften my fall.

"Robin," Ike said with a nod.

"Ah, Ike. It's good to see you again."

"We aren't around each other very often, yeah. She surprised me this morning when she showed up at the Castle Seige. You guys usually stick around here."

"Yes, well, a constant blazing wall isn't exactly my idea of a good time."

"Guess I just had to get used to it. I'm pretty sure Roy's at the Coliseum for the same reason, though; so's Corrin."
"I think you and Marth are the only two who stay there willingly." I looked to Lucina, who had gone back to throwing her boomerangs after greeting me. "How exactly is she doing that? I take it you could read that book, whatever it was?"

He nodded. "It was a Skill Manual." He pulled another one from his pocket, a small packet of paper emblazoned with a symbol like a cross with a blue circle in the center. "You read it, and you learn the Skill inside."

"Is knife-throwing a skill in your world?"

"I think it used to be. At least, that's what Soren said. I told you about him, right?"

I nodded. "I'm pretty sure I've got his card in the Einherjar chest somewhere, now that I think about it."

"Uh, right." Ike usually was uncomfortable at the thought of the Einherjar. Reasonable, I suppose, considering I had cards of him, Marth, and Roy. Though not Corrin, for some reason, I'm just realizing. "Well, he told me that knife-throwing was a skill like using light magic. I guess he gave up that theory since he never found a book for Knife as a skill, though."

"Ah, so that's what Duck Hunt brought, then. A Knife book."

"The dog brought it in? Huh. Where did he even get it?"

"A good question." A thought occurred to me. "A better one for now is, can she still use them in a class that uses three weapons already?"

"You'll have to figure out on your own. I just taught her how to take Skill Manuals off properly. It took me a bit to learn how, but I've got it down well enough now." He began to bid his farewells.

"Well, hold on, Ike. I just got back, and us meeting up doesn't happen too often. Would you like to stay for a bit?"

Ike decided so, and we made our way to the pantry. "Haven't had that ice cream thing you made in a while," he said.

"Uh, we don't have an ice-cream maker right now. Kirby... ate it."

He shrugged. "Did he? Ah, well. Maybe next time."

"I've got to try to rebuild it from memory, that's all. I've made progress recently, though."

"You don't realize how much you want ice cream until you don't have a way to make it," Lucina said.

"It's like that with a lot of things," he said. "Food, places, people... It can be rough."

"It really is. Especially if you don't know what the future holds." She looked off.

"Having people you can trust helps. During the war with Daein, I managed to find a lot of people I could trust. I barely knew what I was doing, then."

"Why was that? Did your country get invaded?" I asked. Though Ike and I had held conversations with each other, we didn't know much about each other.

"Not in the way you're thinking. We were mercenaries." We sat down at a table with some light
food. "It all really started with the princess of Crimea, Elincia. She'd been hidden away a long time ago, and Crimea was invaded by Daein. I won't explain what happened to her before she met us, but my father - Greil - decided we'd help her." He looked at Ragnell. "Then, we were attacked by the Black Knight."

"The person the Mii Fighters dress up as sometimes?" I asked.

"They look sort of like the General on the throne at Castle Seige," Lucina added. "Is that him?"

"No," Ike said. "I don't know who that is, and I haven't seen him for a while, anyway. But, anyway. The Black Knight attacked my father, and won."

Lucina reacted about how I expected it at. "It was a duel to the death?"

Ike nodded solemnly. "Then, I was put in charge of the company. We stopped the invasion by Daein after a lot of fighting."

"I understand," I said. "Everyone from a world with a Fire Emblem has gone through something similar."

Ike shook his head. "We did it again a few years later."

My mind boggled at that. "What happened to make that kind of war happen again?"

"Daein had to liberate itself from its own occupation. After they did that, a lot more fighting, infighting, and chaos happened."

"Sounds like a problem."

"Then, the god of chaos emerged from our Fire Emblem."

The combination of words that had come from Ike's mouth individually made sense. Fire Emblem. God of chaos. Emerged. But from a world where the local Fire Emblem is a shield that unlocks chests? I needed him to repeat it a few times so I fully understood things, and I managed to piece enough of it together to get the gist.

"I won't explain everything that happened then. It's over now."

Lucina nodded. "We've each made a better future. That should be enough."

After the short meal, I took out the Support Log and began to pen this entry. Ike looked over my shoulder and asked what I was doing, as well. I explained that I was detailing Supports.

"Ah, I think we kept track of those, too. I think it was more of an army effort for us, though. What kind of Bonds have you written down so far?"

Expressing my confusion, I was given a basic explanation of Bonds: previous positive relationships which exist regardless of my noting them down. I will be using them in the future.

Before Ike left, he gave Lucina another gift: a basic Tellian book. "I was looking around for it in the Castle Seige storehouse. I thought you might need it if you ever get another book from that dog."

Lucina accepted the gift with grace. "Thank you, Ike. This might help me."

"Of course, if you need help reading it, you know where I'll be. I think Tellian is supposed to be a tough second language." He then muttered something about a woman called Leanne. "I'll head back,
then. Thanks for having me over."

"Any time," I said. And with that, the three of us were alone once more.

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**Smash Entry 26**  
**July 10, 18 5:00 PM**  
**Notice of Method Change**  
**Correction of Entry 15**

In light of recent explanations from Ike on Bond Supports, (see prev.) I will be recategorizing the C Support from the Ice Climbers into a Bond Support, and integrating them into my future endeavors. This does not preclude regular Support, but acts as a supplementary designation.

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**Chapter End Notes**

Guess even the universe is telling me to get on with it...

So, I've introduced Bond Supports! I've got a decent enough grasp on how I'll be using them.

I think I'm really getting into the swing of this. Hey, has anyone ever written a story from the parts in the middle? I've got some Supports planned for later on that don’t involve the newcomers... but I've gotta get there first.

Also, I guess amiibos are canon, huh? Seems like I'm going there, anyway.
Ice Cream in July

Chapter Notes

For those of you in the future, this was a chapter uploaded on Christmas Eve, so I put into it something cold and cheery! ...Set in July.

You know. Like Ed, Edd, 'n' Eddy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Smash Entry 27
July 12, 18
King Dedede/Kirby B
Kirby/Pit A
Involves Ness.

Apparently, it was a very hot day today. According to the Weather Letter Service, most of the local areas were in the midst of a heat wave due to a horde of Pokémon rampaging nearby called Vulpix. We in Ragna Ferox were spared the heat due to our arctic location.

We were, however, full up in our spare rooms, between Chrom, Lucina and myself, as well as Ike, Marth, and Roy, whose castle was in an unlivably hot condition. (Incidentally, this is the first time I was given any hint that Marth could actually be translated from Altean now. When he specifically asked me if there was a room for him. I feel like there were ways I could have been notified sooner.)

Finding myself without a room for the day (Marth had taken mine.), and finding the weather outside to have far too much hail for my liking, I decided it was as good time to get to work as any. I looked up the Fighter List and decided that today would be the day to finally deliver on my promise of ice cream to Kirby and Pit. I challenged the two of them to a Smash.

It was declined, but Kirby himself requested we battle with Dedede added to the group. Finding no fault with it, I agreed and we battled in the city of Onett. Afterward, Kirby called for the Robobot and we sat at a table in front of the drugstore while we waited.

"That sun's just too dang bright," Dedede said, covering his eyes. "What's even goin' on up at Master Hand's place?"

"Who knows," I said. "Maybe it's just one of those days."

"I've had enough of 'those days' to fill up a limetime."

"Well, it's just what happens," Pit said. "I mean, we've all had to deal with at least a few of 'those days'."

Dedede leaned on the arm of his chair. "O' course, kid. Hey, you ever been possessed by somethin' evil?"

Pit blinked. "Uh, no? I don't think I have."

"I have," I said. "Well, sort of."
"Ever tried to fix something and just got someone who's usually a good guy to mess it up worse?" Dedede continued.

Pit shook his head, and I similarly said no.

"That's my point. Sometimes, your worse days are bad. But I just feel like mine're that bad."

"It's okay!" Kirby said, giving Dedede a hug. "I'll help you whenever you need it!"

Dedede smiled. "Thanks, Kirby. I appreciate you sayin' so."

Soon enough, the Robobot arrived, gently landing in front of the drug store. A young boy with a large hoop around his waist ran off at the sight, and we got to work. I handed Kirby the ice-cream machine and he scanned it into the Robobot - without destroying it, thankfully. The machine changed to its Ice form, with giant fans and an ice-blue color scheme. I fed the ingredients into the hole Kirby pointed out, and we waited.

In the meantime, Ness's PSI Teleport brought him to the front of the drugstore. As he slowed to a stop, he greeted us, and we each greeted him in return.

"I heard there was something weird going on over here besides Smashes. What're you guys doing?"

"Making ice cream," I said. "There should be enough for you, too. Would you like to stay for it?"

He nodded. "OK. Sounds good to me." He took the seat at the table that Kirby had previously occupied.

"So, how did you and Kirby meet?" I asked Dedede.

He laughed. "Aw, that! Well, it's a funny story. See, I was a prideful idiot when I was just a little chick."

"You were an adult, Dedede," Kirby said from the giant ice cream machine.

"...Uh, yeah. Well, I was a prideful idiot when I was a younger adult, wanted to eat all the food in Dream Land. I had some of my subjects collect food taxes from all the residents, and Kirby was the only one who could stop me.

"Well, then I wised up a bit. I took the Star Rod from the Fountain of Dreams."

"Why would you do that?" I asked.

"The Star Rod we use in Smashes?" Pit asked.

"Yeah, kid, it is. And the reason I did was to keep the Nightmare from gettin out. O' course, by this time, Kirby's finally figured out Copy Abilities, so I didn't stand a chance in heck."

"I beat up the Nightmare, too!" Kirby said. "I needed to help Dedede because he did something nice, too, so I got him a present after!"

Dedede leaned in. "Kid got me a frying pan. Never used the thing until I hired a chef, though." He leaned back in his chair. "Well, after that mess, I just had to get a little more teenage rebellion out of my system."

"You were an adult, Dedede."
He smiled, embarrassed. "Uh, like I said, I had some adult-age rebellion in my system, and after that, Kirby an' I have been best friends."

"I love you, Dedede!"

"Yeah, pal. You're pretty great, too."

Kirby gasped. "It's ready!" We all turned to face the Robobot ten yards away... in time to get a blast of ice cream to the face. After a moment, we all laughed as Kirby profusely apologized. "It's supposed to be a fighting robot. I should have made sure not to let it shoot too hard!"

"It's alright, Kirby," I said, as I cleaned off my robes. "You didn't cause any permanent harm. Let's just get it going again."

He nodded, and dried the corners of his eyes. It took just a few more minutes before we all got ice cream to eat - at a more reasonable velocity. We each got a scoop or two in a bowl, and Ness passed over some fish-smelling crackers of some kind to finish the dish for the rest of us, but took a packet of some red sauce and added it to his own.

Dedede's face curled in disgust. "Are you putting ketchup on this?"

"Yes." He ate a spoonful of the stuff. "Hm, not bad."

Dedede turned to Kirby. "Kirby, can you believe what Ness is - wait, I forgot who I'm talkin' to." He turned to Pit. "Pit, can you believe - wait, I forgot who I'm talkin' to." He turned to me. "Robin, can you believe what Ness is putting in this ice cream?"

I shrugged. "I don't know what he's putting into it. What's ketchup?"

Completely halted, Dedede laid his chin into his hand. "I never considered that you wouldn't - you've gotta be kiddin' me."

"We all worked really hard on this ice cream, Dedede!" Kirby said. "Please have some before it's all gone!"

He shook his head. "Yeah, alright." He broke off a piece of the cracker and sprinkled it over the ice cream - apparently, it was some sort of garnish. He took a whole scoop of ice cream and nearly bit off the spoon as he ate it in a single chomp. "Mm! Kid might have no taste, but he's still got good taste!"

"How does that make sense?" Pit asked. Pit tried the ice cream in turn, and so did I.

The cracker definitely made it a lot better, in some inexplicable way. I would never have thought that fish flavors went with ice cream...

Regardless, we soon finished our food, and went for a walk around Onett (after getting the ice cream out of the Robobot and sending it away). Ness showed us a few places he enjoyed, such as the arcade and the library. Between the stops on the tour, we talked about this and that.

"Lady Palutena's really going to appreciate that ice cream recipe," Pit said. "We'll be able to make it all the time!"

"I'll come over and help!" Kirby said.

"You mean you'll help eat it!" The two of them laughed. "All we need to do is get an ice cream
maker!

I handed him the one I was carrying. "I can always make another, now that I've built one from scratch already."

"Really?!" He took it with gratitude. "Thank you, Robin! Seriously! I'll pay you back somehow, I promise!"

An idea occurred to me. "Can you help me find a time to talk with Palutena?"

"I'll do it!" He clenched his fist in the air. "I'll get a message to you as soon as I find free space in her schedule!"

"That would be what I need." It's about time I receive some actual answers regarding Palutena's involvement in all of this - even if they're not the ones I want to be true.

"And that's the burger shop!" Ness said. "Time has really changed - I never thought they'd start serving ketchup packets for free with your food!"

"You mean they didn't before?" Dedede said. "That's highway robbery - and I'd know; I've stolen enough food!"

Ness shrugged. "Well, it makes it easier for me to get ketchup for hamburgers now - but I usually grab that when I'm eating because it's what I have on hand." He shrugged. "It's usually not half bad, though." Dedede shook his head and muttered something about Ness's poor sense of taste.

"So, if we try to make something, what would be a good idea?" Pit said, looking at the ice cream machine.

"You could try banana," Dedede said. "You got those where you are?"

"No, but Lady Palutena can get them from Villager. Did you guys know he sold fruit?"

"Huh. No foolin'? Might have to get some strawberries from him."

"Strawberries?!" Kirby jumped up into the air. "Yay! You're gonna make cake!"

"Kirby, I'm not gonna be the one baking, my chefs are!"

"Would you mind," I said, "if Daisy and I sat in? We're trying to learn how to bake." (I should mention we met up recently and had another baking lesson at Peach's Castle. I neglected to mention it as no significant conversation occurred besides "shop talk" about baking.)

"Yeah, sure, come on ahead. We can do that this Sunday. Oh, yeah, that reminds me." He pulled something out of his pocket, written in Dreamlandic. "You get one of these letters for Mario's party thing? Bowser mentioned you were gonna be there."

"Uh, sort of."

"Well, you wouldn't mind givin' me a ride? Don't wanna wake up early enough to get a platform."

I looked at him aksance. "I don't have a way to get there except by platform, Dedede."

"Well, sure ya do! Just challenge me to a Smash and we'll get over there in a flash!"

I paused. "I'm not too sure that would even work. I can't control where we end up."
"No, but we usually end up where we need to be, all the same."

"We might not be able to stay that way, either."

Dedede looked around. "This don't like my castle, kid. I think it'll work out."

I shook my head, but agreed to challenge Dedede to a Smash Saturday morning. Regardless, we continued on the tour, ending at the drugstore.

"Well, that's Onett!" Ness said. "It's nice to have people over. Usually, the only one here with me is Lucas. We both need to get out more."

"I'm free whenever you need," I said.

"Thanks, but Lucas is kind a nervous guy," he said. "I think we'll have to take this slowly."

"I can handle that," I said. "If we could meet and I could talk with him, maybe I could help."

Ness thought about it. "I'll ask him if it's alright."

Kirby interrupted the conversation by groaning. "It's hot all of a sudden!"

I tried to turn my attention to the ambient temperature, but didn't have much success at gauging it. (It feels somewhat warm to me almost all the time due to my robes and the fact that I usually live in a cold climate. At least, here I do.) "The heat wave must have rolled over to here," I assumed. "We just took a walk around town, too, so it feels even hotter."

"It's too bad we don't have a way to make it cooler," Dedede said, waving his hand in front of his face.

Pit lifted the ice cream maker, an idea lighting up his face. "I've got something that can help us!"

"We just ate ice cream," I said.

Kirby, however, seemed to pick up on the hint, and pulled out his cellular phone. Suddenly, I realized what would happen, and actively wanted to be home before it happened. Unfortunately, I wasn't: the Robobot returned.

As it scanned what was in front of it, Pit holding the ice cream maker, I briefly wondered if it was a good idea to use the device to spray ice all over the affected area.

The giant wings that erupted from its back and equally-large crossbows that appeared were enough of a surprise to blow the thought from my head.

"Huh?!!" Kirby said from inside the angelic-looking machine. "Cupid Mode? Wow!" His eyes sparkled in the strong sunlight, and an awed expression was on his face. "Wait, that's not what I wanted!" He pushed a button to send the ability off and scanned again. This time, the familiar giant fans appeared. "Okay, let's get started!" Kirby pushed the machine forward and began blowing the fans, spraying ice all over the place and coating the roads. Several of the cars ran into each other.

"I think we should go," I said.

"Yeah, this was a bad idea," Pit said. "But look how happy he is!" Another two cars ran into each other. He flinched. "Okay, I'll stop him." He ran down the street after Kirby. Mercifully, we returned to our homes soon after Kirby was stopped. Still, I'll need to apologize to Ness the next time I battle him.
Vulpix's Hidden Ability is Drought, which makes harsh Sunlight. Alolan Vulpix's Hidden Ability is Snow Warning, which summons Hail. Ragna Ferox didn't get out unscathed from the Vulpix hordes.

Ness, please don't put ketchup in your ice cream. I don't care if the condiment system of improving healing items in Earthbound is weird, have some class. (Speaking of Ness, I'd like to ask you guys something: do you have any preference as to what his PSI is called? Earthbound US's canon says it's all PSI, but Smash canon matches the Japanese EB's usage of PK for attacks.)

I enjoyed writing this chapter. It definitely felt nice to close another Support off, and I've got a few other ones lined up for the Mario Party!

Something that I was thinking of, though, while I wrote it: demonyms. They're not special ways to summon creatures from beyond the ken of mortal men, but how to refer to them. Everyone else, too. OK, bad joke aside, they're how to refer to the people, language, and anything else of another country or group. For example, I'm from America. I am an American, and I speak American English. A person from Japan is Japanese and speaks Japanese.

If I were to make a fictional country, and name it, say, Dreamland, what would its demonym be? Looking at other countries that end in "-land", my options were really -ic and -ian, and I didn't really like -ian for the language. A good demonym can help make the country feel more real in the ears of the audience, since it has a proper way to refer to its people.

This is why the Dragon Ball Z fandom makes me mad. The demonym is Namekian, you animals! Namekian! We're not called Earths!

but yeah Mario Party next time i promise
I will begin writing the day of the week before the date in these entries. It should help whoever needs to keep track of events, having more than a date.

Today was the day the Mario Party would begin, between Daisy and myself, Mario and his unknown partner, Dedede and Bowser, and some duo of others who I didn't know of.

Nevertheless, I challenged Dedede to a Smash, and we found ourselves within the Mushroom Kingdom... after a fashion. Rather, we were within its ruin counterpart, Mushroony Kingdom. I looked at Dedede. "I'm not sure we'll be getting where we need to go very easily."

"They're bound to notice we ain't there, kid. Besides, it ain't like we're one and done. If we needed to, we could just keep Smashing until we got to the right place."

"I'd rather not test what happens when I nest Smashes like that, if it's all the same to you."

"Meh, fair enough." He looked around at the ruin. "You know, I never really looked at this much sand before."

"Huh. Plegia's a desert nation, so I'm used to it."

"Ah."

Thankfully, we were spared further awkward conversation by getting said sand plowed upon us by a Clown Car - Morton Koopa Jr's car, to be precise. "What are you jerks doing here?" he asked as we pulled ourselves out of his splash.

"We're trying to get to Mario's party," I said. "Can you help?"

"It's at Peach's Castle," Dedede added.

Morton's face turned sour, and he sighed. "Fine, let me call it in." He took out some device from the inside of the car and spoke into it. "Yeah, I got, uh," (He had to get our names.) "Robin and Dedede here. Need someone to get 'em to the Princess's castle."

Clearly, the suggestion had been poorly recieved. "Well, I'm in the middle of - " More chatter cut him off. "Ugh, fine." He hung up. "Alright, get in the Clown Car." He thrust his thumb toward the inside.

"Is there going - "

"Shut up and get in. I just wanna get this over with." More fool me for asking questions, I suppose.
We boarded the Car without much spare room and, after Morton converted it to Flying Mode, we got to Peach's Castle in silence.

"Morton!" Bowser greeted the Koopaling as we touched down. "How ya doin'?"

Morton put on a smile that, as far as I could tell, was... actually genuine. "Things're going well, actually! Had to take these two numbskulls here, but what can you do?"

"You went for a Smash just before coming here?" Mario asked.

"We thought we'd wind up closer," I said.

"Well, I'm gonna get back to 'Shroomy," Morton said. "Nice and busy over there. Ludwig's got Junior today! Working on composition!"

"Got it!" Bowser called back as he flew off. "Well, that's good. Ludwig must be in a good mood this week."

"Does he get in bad moods?" I asked.

"Eh, he's an artist. You know how they are with what they make." I was reminded of Olivia. Not exactly a temperament issue, but she didn't like people watching her as she worked. Not entirely the same, I suppose.

"Well, almost everyone's here, then!" Mario said. "We're just waiting on my partner and Waluigi."

"Did you send them messages, too?" I asked.

He shook his head. "My partner will be here soon enough, and Waluigi is going to be fashionably late, as usual." He laughed. "That's why Luigi told him an early time! His partner's inside the castle, having tea with Peach while we wait."

I met up with Daisy, and Dedede with Bowser. "So, how have things been?" I asked.

"I can't really complain," she said. "I've gotten challenged to a lot of fights, though. I've been running myself ragged!"

"You don't have to accept every request, you know."

She shrugged. "I have to make a good impression, don't I?"

I supposed so, and told her about my plans for tomorrow - and she excitedly agreed. "I'd love to test out what I've been learning from Peach!" She clapped her hands.

It was about this time that a slight breeze began blowing. "Ah, here he is," Mario said. My confusion was settled when the wind (in fact, a suction) became suddenly stronger. A blur emerged from the top of the hill - a blue one.

Sonic, touching the ground again after he left the hill at its crest, came to a sudden stop in front of our host. "Hey, Mario," he said. "What's everybody here for?"

"You're just in time, Sonic," he said. "We were going to do a Mario Party. Would you mind being my partner?"

Sonic tilted his head awkwardly. "Well, I was heading to the Chao Garden. Is it starting right now?"
"Waluigi needs to get here first, but yes."

He sucked in a breath. "Well, I was kinda..." Sonic looked him in the eyes, then sighed. "Yeah, I can afford an hour and a half - but not longer!"

"I wouldn't have figured you for the timely type," I said.

"I mean, it's not for me. I've got animals and drives for my Chao," he said. "I don't wanna keep them waiting, that's all."

"Chao?" I asked, and was given an explanation: in essence, small animals that take on the characteristics of small animals they copy the powers of... a little like Kirby, I suppose?

Waluigi emerged from the castle, dressed in a purple polo shirt, with his hair neatly styled. "I," he said, as he ran his fingers through it, "have arrived. You may hold your applause." As he struck a pose, I was informed he's "just like this" by Daisy. In addition, his partner met us: Isabelle, wearing glasses, greeting us all with a slightly timid "Hi, there."

"Changing up your style?" Mario said. "You look nice."

Waluigi flashed an ego-filled smile. "You're too kind, Mario."

Mario took a second to react. "Of course, Waluigi. I especially like - your shirt! And, Isabelle, you look very nice, too."

"Of course," Waluigi said. "I should only pick the best in partners for these Mario Parties, and since you told me I couldn't get Wario, she was the next best thing."

Isabelle noticed me and waved. "Oh, Robin! Good news: the Mayor's put through the paperwork for you to bring Bark and Quack out whenever you need them!"

"Isabelle," Waluigi said through slightly clenched teeth, "these guys are our competition. Don't be nice to them."

Isabelle tilted her head. "Huh?" (According to Daisy, Waluigi's "almost pleasant" when not in a competition.)

"Well," Mario said with a clap of his hands, "Looks like everyone's here! Time for the Party to start!" He jumped up in the air. "Let's-a go!"

We were given a quick run-down of the rules, which I will now reiterate. Each turn, we roll a die numbered 1 through 6, or a special die which our Mushroom Kingdom partner had with six other faces. Then, we would move around the grounds or into Peach's Castle itself to obtain Stars, for which we would pay 10 coins. Landing on certain spaces would grant us certain effects, and there were special items we could use to gain an upper hand. (I internally groaned at them, remembering the kart race.) There would also be opportunities to gain coins during special "mini-games". After that, we'd switch leaders and the process would continue.

The route of the game would take us in a circle from the starting spot at a divot at the front of the castle, up and around to the grounds itself passing a hedge garden, and through the castle in one of three paths, one left through the castle's rooms with warping paintings, one through the middle and the ghost-infested rear garden, and one up to the roof. They converged behind the castle and turned around the back to the right side, and after passing a bridge, the path began again at the divot.

We split up early, as Dedede's team rolled Bowser's special die for an 8. Apparently, it could... do
that. Luckily, they landed on a red space which took coins from them. The rest of us remained relatively together, with Isabelle's team being ahead of Sonic's and my teams. That brought us to the first mini-game, entitled "Pineapple Rollover". As Dedede's team was the only one to land on a red space, they took the lead position... of trying to run us over with a giant pineapple.

This was the point where I made a note not to accept invitations from Mario blindly anymore. (Also, I realized I was the slowest person on the roster.) Nevertheless, I had fun, and we won when Dedede failed to crush all of us (i.e. Sonic) in thirty seconds. The next mini-game, "Forget-Me-Knot", had Daisy weaving a knot of flowers to make a braid of yellow ones. (I think they were tulips, actually.) We came in second.

"Heh, what's the matter, Daisy?" Waluigi said, having finished in fourth. "Don't know your flowers?"

"What's the matter, Waluigi? Don't know how to tie knots?" she shot back, pointing to Waluigi's slip-on shoes.

On the third turn, two things happened. Dedede got a star (sending the next star to the opposite side of the castle), and Sonic landed on a space called the Ally Space. With it, he could summon another ally to aid him, and obtain another special die. He summoned Rosalina... in the middle of practicing for a Smash. Sonic was knocked into the air by Rosalina's forward hopping attack. Gold rings flew into the air. "Ah. My apologies, Sonic. Allow me to assist you." She got out her special die.

"Ah... yeah, that's - that'll be good." He picked up a few of the rings before they disappeared, then accepted the Rosalina die as she took a place beside him.

The mini-game that turn was called "Water Chumps", and it was a mini-game that all our teams were to participate in, using a rotating pump to draw water to fill a giant glass. Sonic's Team had the advantage with an extra ally, but they had trouble getting started. It would seem the rhythm between them was off, with Mario and Rosalina pumping slightly too much and sending it spinning out of Sonic's reach. They finished second, and Dedede and Bowser finished first. (We were third.)

"We'll get 'em next time!" Daisy said as she rolled her die for a four.

"I'm having fun," I said. "I would never have expected this kind of thing to interest me, though."

"That's what I thought at first, too. I mean, I'd really only played tennis with everyone at first, but Luigi talked me into it, and I'm glad he did. Sometimes, you just need to let off some steam, you know?"

"That's why I started these up," Mario said, a few spaces behind us. "I needed to clear the air between Bowser and the rest of us." He smiled fondly. "I asked DK to show up, too. Those were good times."

"That was before or after we met?" Sonic asked.

"Ah, after, I think. Yes, you were talking about Station Square around then."

"Oh, yeah. Man, that was a crazy few days." He scratched his head. "I still remember what a jerk I was when we first met."

"We were both at fault," Mario said. "I didn't make things easier for you."

"What happened?" I asked.
"We got to meet each other when there was some mix-up," Sonic said. "See, I was supposed to show up for the Melee tournament."

"Only his invitation got mishandled," Mario said. "There was a bit of bad blood, apparently, among the higher-ups."

"There's more than one higher-up?" Daisy said.

"We know of Master Hand and Crazy Hand so far," I said. "Still, they have to have people working under them. There's no way for all of this to be done by just two giant hands."

"At least, that's the theory," Sonic said. "I think Game and Watch works for him, too, right?"

Mario wiggled his hand. "Sort of. It's a complicated relationship, from what I know."

Sonic and I both nodded. "Well, at least I'm gettin' to meet everyone now, right? Even Pichu - that little guy was the one I wanted to meet the most. Glad I've got a chance now."

"We're glad to have you!" Mario rolled the die and got a six, pushing them ahead of us and putting an end to the conversation.

"Is it the same for you?" I asked Daisy.

"Well, I'm not really in the same boat. After all, I know Luigi... Peach... Mario, DK and Diddy, Wario. Pretty much everyone who lives in the Mushroom Kingdom, actually."

"I guess not."

I would have said more, but Daisy had to play a mini-game first, "Carry-on Birds". She escorted several bird chicks to a nest across a desert while fending off vultures (played by the others). We won.

"Like I was saying," she said as we began the next turn, "I already knew some people, so settling in was a little easier. It was a lot tougher my first time meeting Luigi and Peach."

"Ah, right - you said something about that. Tatanga, right?"

"The worst experience of my life. Still, I got to meet Luigi from it, so I can't say I didn't make it out of it alright!" She gave her arm a celebratory wave. "Got to look on the bright side!"

"I guess that's what you just have to do."

"Ugh, tell me about it. Kingdoms can't rebuild themselves, right? Gotta stay positive, put on a brave face!" She leaned forward a bit. "I'm a pretty perky gal - "

"I noticed."

" - thank you - but I've gotta take time for me sometimes, too. I just didn't get that at first. Really unhealthy work ethic." She shook her head. "I'm a lot better about it now. Any progress is good progress, right?"

"When you're fighting a war, you barely ever win on battlefields," I said. "The best way to win is to get your opponent to expend their own resources without you needing to do anything."

She looked at me. "I don't understand."
"You can't always fight to succeed," I said. "Sometimes, you have to let things take care of themselves."

She smiled. "Yeah. I guess that's I'm saying." She pumped her fists. "And that's why I'm here! I've gotta take care of myself, too! And this is one of the best ways to do it!" She pointed forward. "By having fun with my friends!"

It was at this point that Waluigi told Isabelle to use a Poison Mushroom on us. (-2 to dice roll) Daisy's face (and my own, presumably) turned purple. I definitely felt ill. The nausea carried over into the minigame, unfortunately, though for different reasons: in "Rocketship Service", I was supposed to ride a rocket toward locations to deliver packages. We lost. Badly.

At this point, five turns had elapsed out of ten. "Alright!" Bowser said, appearing on screens held by Lakitus. "Last five turns time!" He pulled a board out on thin air and drew our teams on it. "In first place, Dedede's team, with 1 Star and XX coins!" The remaining places all had numbers of coins, but no Stars to speak of, with us in second. "Let's mix things up, huh?"

"Uh, Bowser," Dedede said. "We're winnin', ya know."

"Yeah, but it's no fun if it's a runaway victory!"

"I kinna beg to differ."

"Let's disburse some special items!" he said regardless, forming a ball of dark energy. It flew into the air and split into four parts, one landing in my hands and changing into an item chest. "Go ahead and open 'em! Special present for everyone!" The screens switched to a view of the non-Mushroom Kingdom Smashers, each with one such chest in hand.

Sonic opened his first, and took out what looked like a giant piece of topaz. "It's a Chaos Emerald?" He blinked. "Wait, this is a fake Emerald. I can probably use it for Chaos Control, though."

Mine was next. "A blank card?" Daisy said about the item within, an ornately-backed card with a stark white face.

"This is an Einherjar Card!" I said. "I can summon a copy of anyone I want with this."

"Lloyd!" Isabelle said, pulling out one of those Gyroids that Villager can summon. "How'd you get in here?"

"What's that one do?" I asked.

"Oh, Lloyd's really good with money!" she said. "He could probably - "

Waluigi gently nudged her in the side. "Don't give it away, Isabelle. We could use it to win!"

She hesitantly nodded. "I'm sorry, Robin."

"That's alright." Even if Waluigi was the one trying to be in charge there, he was still a little gentle with Isabelle, at least.

Dedede was last to get his special item: a strange rainbow-colored fruit called a Hypernova Fruit.

"Let's how things change from there!" Bowser said, and the screens switched back to showing the regular board.

It was only a few seconds before a powerful vacuum started up, caused by Dedede eating the
Hypernova Fruit. As I Daisy and I took positions low to the ground, several coins flew from us and into the funnel. On the screens, Waluigi and Sonic had coins stolen from them, as well... as well as a Poison Mushroom from Waluigi. All of it went into Dedede's gullet at once, and he swallowed it all down. His face turned purple, but he got to keep all of the coins.

"Alright!" Bowser said. "Now that we've done that, let's go!" He rolled his special die, and it came up as Minus Three Coins. He smacked his lips. "You know, I should have expected that." Three coins left his body, and he stayed put. "Wouldn't have gotten that far this turn, anyway, with the poisoning." He puffed out some smoke.

The mini-game that turn was a team-based one, and one which I was familiar with: "Home-Run Contest". We pummeled Sandbag for a few seconds and then prepared the Home Run Bat to launch him.

He smacked into Daisy, who didn't realize she had to get out of the way. I got a new record today... for the Daisy Home-Run. Strangely, I don't think I'll have much competition. Obviously, we got fourth.

I decided it would be best to use our item as soon as we could, since the extra team member could really help us. "With your die," I said to Daisy, "we've got the middle ranges locked down. Who has higher numbers?"

"Hm. Well, Wario's got a block with four sixes. Boo has a die with two fives and two sevens, too, but they can also lose two coins. Dry Bones has one that's half ones and half sixes. DK has three zeroes and two tens, and Diddy has two zeroes and three sevens... Those are probably the best ones."

I made my decision to summon a Boo with my card. When it appeared, and I paid it a fee of ten coins, it joined us. The decision may have won us the game. Using Boo's die, we barely passed an item space and received a Golden Dash Mushroom (+5 to dice roll). We were currently heading up the castle and onto the roof, where a special Lakitu apparently was. The mini-game that turn was "Cart Nouveau", involving us driving around a track. After the rocket, the cart was barely an issue, but it had a very finicky steering system; I crashed into everyone multiple times on my way to second place.

Mario used his item next... not that anyone could see it. Instead, an instant replay was shown, without sound. Sonic used the Chaos Emerald and rolled a regular die, along with his allies. He rolled an eight, in total: four, two and two. That sent him straight to the star... but he passed it right by. Apparently, when time is stopped, it isn't possible to buy stars like that. It was a shame. He rolled his die and moved around the board as normal.

While Daisy and I considered our best move, Sonic was asked by one of the Lakitu what he was thinking. "That's just the way it goes, I guess," he said with a shrug. "Can't change the past."

The other thing that happened before us was that Waluigi's team went to a shop and bought a Star Pipe. (Instant teleport to the star.) After doing so, though, they landed on a space that took ten coins from them. They had seven coins - not enough money for the Star as long as they completely lost the next minigame.

I had an idea. The next mini-game, "Catch a Falling Luma", was a 2 vs. 2 mini-game, since I asked Daisy to land on a red space. Then, I asked her to do something:

Do not participate in the game, and inhibit Waluigi. She declined my request, though. "I can appreciate what you're trying to do, Robin, but I think I've got a better idea." We won the minigame,
and Waluigi was guaranteed to get the Star next turn. "Besides, it's not that sportsmanlike."

I begrudgingly agreed. I then watched as Waluigi sabotaged his own chances to win. "Alright, Isabelle," he said, "time to use that special item!"

She nodded, and took out Lloyd. "Alright, Lloyd, do your stuff!"

Waluigi smiled, then pointed up. "Not what I meant, but OK! Let's get some more coins before next turn, and seal up the win!"

Lloyd gyrated profusely, and as he did so, our items all floated into the air - including Waluigi's Star Pipe. Suddenly, they turned into coins - around twice what they cost in a shop.

Waluigi collapsed to the ground. "No!" he cried, pounding the dirt. "That's not what I wanted to happen!"

"I-I'm sorry!" Isabelle said, her tail tucked down. "I didn't know that would happen!"

He sighed. "I never win these lousy games anyway..." He stood up. "I'll get over it."

The closest person by that point was Bowser. They got their second star, much to our chagrin...

Or so it would have been, if we hadn't gotten to the castle roof and met the special Lakitu. Paying it thirty coins, which we only had because of Lloyd's auction, we had Boo steal one of Bowser's stars from him.

"How dare you, Boo!" he said, shaking his fist. "You'll never work in this town again!"

"It's not a real Boo, Bowser," I said. "It's a drawing of one." I showed the camera Lakitu the card.

Bowser blinked. "Well, I'm still right, then! He won't!"

"Give it up," Dedede muttered.

"Honestly, my plan was to steal from Waluigi," Daisy said. "This worked out better. Gotta let things happen on their own, after all."

"How dare you, Daisy!" Waluigi said, shaking his fist. "You'll never work in this town again!"

"I'm the ruler of another country, Waluigi," she said. "You're gonna have to get a different threat!"

Waluigi growled.

Until the end of the game, nothing else major happened, only two mini-games titled "Gold Minor", where we each earned coins for digging up gold-plated instruments, and "New Leech on Life", where we had to remove parasites from a Wiggler's body... Obviously, after the Lakitu's services, our coin count was less than Dedede's team's, so without Bonus Stars, we couldn't possibly win. The first was the Windfall Star, given to the team who had gotten the most coins in one turn. Isabelle's team won that one, since Lloyd's auction allowed them to gain twenty coins at once, and she did well in Gold Minor. The second was the Ally Star, given to Sonic's team, and mine, since we each had one extra ally.

That gave us two stars to everyone else's one, netting us the win. Daisy cheered, "We did it! Woo-hoo!" and spun me around. I returned Boo to its Einherjar card. (I might have to get it redone by an actual artist. It is, after all, just a circle with a tail and a face on an otherwise blank card... I did not have enough confidence in my ability to draw Wario or likewise.)
"See, if we hadn't given them the special items, we woulda won," Dedede said.

"But that's no fun," Bowser said. "Besides, you gotta be gracious in defeat an' all that."

"I thought that was humble." Dedede shrugged. "Guess you're right, though. Good game. You earned the win."

"Thank you," I said while Daisy ran into the castle to tell Luigi. "How did you two get to know each other?"

"Well." Dedede barely smiled. "It was during the time with the Subspace Emissary we really met for th' first time," he said. "Not exactly the best first impression."

"We've got a lot in common, though," Bowser said, putting his arm around Dedede's shoulder. "We've got people that work under us we like to look after, we've got pals that tried to beat us once, we're both not technically kings - "

"Hey, I'm a king!" Dedede said, thrusting his thumb into his chest. "I'm the king of Dreamland, remember?!!"

"Dedede, I keep telling you, you can't be a king unless you collect taxes and stuff - that's how royalty's supposed to work."

"Alright, so I'm one o' them benelovent [sic] kings! I don't have to do taxes, that's all! Don't make me less of a king!"

Bowser shrugged. "Look, I don't really care one way or the other. I'm cool with not being a king."

"And I ain't." He huffed.

Bowser paused. "Well, that kinda spoiled the mood, huh?"

Soon after that, Dedede and I teleported back. I am currently resting after all of that sudden and strenuous exercise. Tomorrow, I make my way to Castle Dedede and learn more about cooking along with Daisy. Even if our Support is complete, after all, it doesn't mean we break ties.

Chapter End Notes

I'll be honest: the weekday's for me. I'm having trouble keeping dates straight in isolation.

The Mario Party here is mostly Super Mario Party, with a little of 7 thrown in with the signature items, and my own additions with the minigame names and Windfall Star. Mario Party is always trying to innovate, after all. I hope the game was easy to follow - I realize how boring the minute-to-minute would have been, so I pared it down. I hope I didn't go too far?

I had fun thinking of the special items and minigame names. Anyone have any they're itching to get out? Go ahead and comment if you do.

Also, I've been trying multiple Supports in one entry. How's it working? Did you prefer the other way, with each one getting its own entry?
Daisy and I made our way to Dedede's castle. (see prev.) Once we got in the door, we were quickly ushered by the Waddle Dees that make up its staff into the king's hall, where Dedede reclined over one arm of his throne.

"Howdy. What brings you two here?"

Daisy looked at me. "Didn't you say he invited us?"

"Technically, I invited us," I said. "We're here for your kitchen staff to show us more about cake baking. Remember?"

Dedede took a moment to think of it. "Oh, yeah." He frowned. "You might wanna come back later. There's a bit of a situation goin' on in the kitchen, apparently."

"What kind of situation?" I asked.

"Ah, nothin' worth worryin' about." He looked up. "Kirby's just got a friend over, so the Dees and Doos are occupied, that's all."

"Oh?" Daisy said. "Which friend?"

"Bowser's kid. He asked if Junior could come over yesterday, and the castle was free."

"Except we were already going to come over," I said.

He scratched his head. "Yeah, you kinda slipped my mind. Yer just gonna have to wait." He shrugged. "They should be in the castle garden awhile, I think. Might have better luck then."

Shaking my head, we walked back through the castle. Daisy opted to stop by in the kitchen after all, just to see what Bowser Jr. was doing.

Flour flew into our faces the second we crossed the threshold to the room. It was bedlam in there: Whole sacks of flour and sugar were flying everywhere; white-dusted Waddle Dees were chasing down a blanked-out Koopa Clown Car alternately flying and driving around in circles around the room and launching balls of powder. Meanwhile, Kirby sat off in the corner, humming to himself with the giant Robobot gently running. Its giant fans were out, which I remember meant it was in Ice Mode.

I took a step in after dusting off my face and accidentally knocked my foot against one of the Waddle Dees - or, as I found out, a Waddle Doo. "Are you alright?" I asked, ducking down.

"I'm fine," it said, its face on the ground. "I'm just not gonna move, and it'll all end up OK."

"Do you have anything broken?" I asked as I accessed the Convoy.
"No, an' I'd like it to stay that way! I just got the one big eye, pal, an' I don't need any flour in it, thank you very much!"

"How did this happen?" I got out a Heal Staff - for all the good it would do without someone who could competently use it.

"It all started when Kirby and the other kid came in here and Kirby wanted to grab something. Then, he calls in that big Robobot! So, then that guy decided he'd get his big machine, too, and he just started makin' a mess."

"Is there a way I can help?"

"Nah, don't worry." He waved a stubby arm. "Kid gets into all kinds of mischief. We've got a cleaning crew just for him."

I looked up. "Does it usually cover the room like this?"

"Not always. We got out a bunch of flour 'cause the King told us we'd be making cake today."

Daisy huffed. "Well, he didn't forget that part, at least." She bunched up her sleeves. "Alright, let's get Bowser Jr. under control." She snatched the staff from my hand and hefted it like a Javelin. "Hey, Junior!"

Bowser Jr looked toward the shout, and ducked as Daisy hurled the staff into the Clown Car while accounting for how the Car would travel, expertly hitting a switch that opened a panel on the front of the car and forcing it to a halt. "Ooh!" Bowser Jr. impacted the side of the vehicle and tumbled down into the cup.

Daisy smirked. "Those things come with seatbelts, Junior! Wear 'em!" She shook her head. "C'mon, let's get your wand."

"That was impressive!" I said. "You even took into account how far it was turning. How'd you learn to do that?"

She smiled. "I learned it in the Olympics! I was a great javelin thrower!" She shrugged and lifted the Heal staff from beneath Bowser Jr.'s body, flipping him over from his back in the process. "It was a little lopsided of a throw, though, even with the weird weighting. I'm out of practice."

"I'd love to see how you handle an actual Javelin, then," I said as I returned the staff to the Convoy.

Bowser Jr. pulled his head up over the Clown Car's lip. "You could have hurt me, Aunty Daisy! You know that, right?"

"You're not supposed to be doing donuts indoors, Bowser Jr. You know that, right?" Bowser Jr. huffed and crossed his arms.

"Alright, we're gonna need about thirty minutes to fix all this up," said the Waddle Doo, whose face was a clear line after which there was no flour - and thankfully, it included his eye. "We can come get you for that cake lesson then. Go ahead and wait in the garden."

A crew of Waddle Dees replaced the flour-covered ones, each one wearing a terry cloth on its head and carrying some sort of cleaning implement, whether it was another cloth or a mop or filled bucket. They ushered us out of the room in a rush, and began cleaning.

Finding ourselves without another option, we moved to the garden and dusted off. The Robobot
seemed to be dust-resistant, too, all the better for Kirby.

"Well," he said, "are you ready, Bowser Jr?"

He nodded. "Let's do it!" Kirby started up the fan and Bowser Jr. poured milk into the designated spot.

"Ah, you were going to make ice cream!" I said.

"Seems a little big for an ice-cream maker," Daisy said.

"That isn't its only form," I said, and explained how I saw Kirby use it before, and about its Cupid mode. (E. 27)

"That was a new one!" Kirby said. "I think it scanned Pit to do that!"


"Oh, you've met Pit?" I asked.

"Yeah, he was one of the first ones to challenge me, actually. Him and his boss, Palutena, anyway."

I reacted to Palutena's name less than excitedly. "Ah. Her."

"Something wrong? Have some kind of problem with her?"

"Not exactly." I shrugged, and explained what I asked Pit to do, and how I felt like I was being dragged around by her.

"I guess that'll happen. I hope you can meet with her soon."

"Is it ready yet?!" Bowser Jr. said, more a command than a question. "I want ice cream, already!"

"It's just gonna be a few more seconds," Kirby said. "But be careful! I can't control how strong it fires at first!" As he said so, the first blast escaped the fan and splattered itself onto the castle's outer wall. "Oops. These controls are a little bit sensitive!" A Waddle Dee shook its head and opened a closet, exchanging its spear for a mop. "I'll adjust it." Kirby pressed a few buttons and adjusted the strength of the attack to how it had been on Thursday, dispensing a bowl's worth of ice cream for each of the four of us, and left it running for any Waddle Dees that could spare the time... even if very few of them really could.

"So how often do you do this?" I asked. "The visits, I mean, not the large, floury messes."

"I can come over whenever I want!" Bowser Jr. said. "Papa lets me all the time!"

"I bet you have to finish your homework first, though," Daisy said with a knowing smirk.

He stomped in the car. "Leave me alone, Aunty Daisy! I can come over here whenever I ask!"

"Oh, so you've got to wait until someone can bring you here." She nodded. "That sounds more like it."

Kirby tapped the table - in an effort to diffuse the situation? "The ice cream is really good! Bowser Jr. had a great idea to put something special in it."

He sniffed. "Well, yeah. Ev'ryone likes ice cream when it's got 1-Up Mushrooms in it." (Despite my
misgivings about fungus-flavored ice cream, I had to agree.)

"Well, just because you're young doesn't mean you can't come up with good ideas," Daisy said.

"Hey!" Bowser Jr. said, then shook his head. "Wait, huh?"

"Junior, I don't know if you know this," she said, "but sometimes grown-ups are really dumb."

After a second, he nodded. "Yeah, actually! Grown-ups can be so stupid!" He crossed his arms. "A lot of the time, they don't listen to me."

"Yeah, sometimes, the people that know best aren't the ones people want to listen to. You know, where I live, there's a lot of people that don't like to listen to me."

"Really?" His eyes got a little wide. "I thought Princesses always got what they wanted!"

"Nah, I don't get what I want 'cause I'm a princess," she said. "I get what I want because I push people into making them listen to me." She leaned in a little and lowered her voice. "If you can keep a secret, some of those people think that I'm a bully!"

"A lot of people do that to me, too!" He seemed to be seeing her in somewhat of a new light. "You're pretty cool, Aunty Daisy!"

"Thanks, Junior," she said. "But a lot of the time, I've gotta listen to them, too." She lifted the spoon to her mouth. "Even if I don't want to admit it, there's people that know what they're talking about more than me. Sometimes, you feel the same way, right?"

Bowser Jr. hesitated. He wiggled his head back and forth. "I guess, maybe sometimes. Not a lot, though. Like, Ludwig and Morton and the other Koopalings are smart, and so's my papa, and Mama Peach."

"And?" Daisy leaned in.


She smiled and bowed theatrically. "Thank you, Junior. That's all you had to say."

"Well, only sometimes!" He leaned the Koopa Car forward. "And that's a really big 'sometimes'!"

As we finished the ice cream, we were led into the newly-cleaned kitchen. Meanwhile, I asked Kirby, who had exited the Robobot, a question: Why had he stopped Daisy and Bowser Jr. from arguing?

"That's what friends are for!" he said with a jump into the air. "When friends are feeling bad, it's important to help them not feel bad anymore! I love all my friends and I don't like when they start feeling bad."

A bit of a simple sentiment, but it felt very... earnest. I'm not sure there's a better way to put it.

"Alright, so when two friends are arguing - "

"I need to stop the argument first," he said. "Then they can talk about things until they become friends again. A lot of arguing is that two people don't understand each other, so that helps a lot if they just talk about things!"

"I suppose it does," I said. Again, simple, but earnest.
And so, Daisy and I learned a little more about baking cakes, with Daisy teasing Bowser Jr. a little more as they sat in on the lesson. That concluded our business for the day, and we teleported back.

Smash Entry 30  
Sun. July 15, 18 5:30 PM  
Bowser/Mario C

That did not conclude our business for the day. (see prev.) I was immediately asked into another Smash between Bowser, Mario, and Daisy - I was on Bowser's team.

"We've got our answer, Bowser," Mario said. "We've got to go get him."

"Mario, come on," he said. "It's been a while, let him have one night!"

Daisy inched over and whispered, "I'm sorry, Robin. I didn't know what to do! When I got back, they were just arguing like this!"

"How long has this been going on?"

"Apparently, hours. Peach is visiting friends, apparently - someone named Sam?" I corrected her on Samus's name. "Well, they've been going at it since she left. At twelve. I just found out about it when I went over for dinner."

"That's a long time for an argument to last," I agreed. "What is it about?"

"I don't know. Bowser gets really snippy about people butting into his business, so the only thing I could think of - "

"I get it. Let's see if I can't at least find out the cause of the argument." I walked up. "How are you two doing?"

Bowser crossed his arms. "Butt out." Well, Daisy was definitely right about that.

"I'm doing well, Robin. Thank you," Mario said. "How are you?"

Remembering what Kirby had told me earlier today, I jumped to a different topic. "Well, I was just thinking about what to make for dinner when I got the request. Any ideas?"

"Hm?" Mario thought. "Have you tried combining cocoa with pasta?"

"I didn't. That's a pretty novel idea, actually. Have you ever had that, Bowser?"

"Huh?" He looked at me. "Of course not. Who would even think about eating chocolate pasta?"

"I know, it sounds like a dessert," Mario said, "but I found myself enjoying it. It doesn't get overly sweet."

"Is that right?" He closed his eyes. "It doesn't sound half-bad as a dessert, either. Guess it would depend on how you make it. I've been looking for something to spice up the rations - the guys have been getting a little tired of 'em."

"Give it a shot, then. I'll ask Tayce T. to give you the recipe."

He nodded. "Yeah, do that. Maybe Zess could help, too - she's better with army food."
"I'll find out and get back to you."

I nodded. "Well, I'll have to try it, too." I looked between them. "So, what will you two be having today?"

"I was just going to eat in my room," Bowser said. "I've got a lot of work to do, so whatever they gave me would've been fine."

"We have been a little busy lately, haven't we?" Mario said. "Still, having all of you at the table is important."

Bowser crossed his arms again and huffed. Mario had touched a nerve, and that sentence made me realize which one.

"Ah, so that's the issue," I said. "Bowser Jr. wants to spend the night out."

Bowser flinched. "How'd you even guess that?!" I explained my reasoning, and Bowser sighed. "Yeah, that's why we're fightin'."

"So, what's the problem with him staying out one night, Mario?" Daisy asked.

"I've been worried," he said. "He's been having trouble in math, and he needs the extra time with Morton Jr."

"Oh, so that's it," she said. "But, I think he's a little smarter than you're giving him credit for. Why can't he stay out one night?"

Mario nodded. "I know he's smart. That's why I want him to get the best education he can."

"Well, then, tomorrow's out," Bowser said under his breath. I asked him to repeat the statement. "The math lesson for tomorrow's gonna have to wait a couple days," he added.

"Why's that?" Mario asked.

His eyes darted over to Daisy and me. "It's just not gonna happen, Mario," he snapped.

Daisy put her hand between them. "Look, just say it - and if it's a secret, you can ask me and Robin to back up." I was impressed she caught the glance - at first, I hadn't.

After a second, Bowser set his jaw. "No, I think I can say it with you here. It was Morton's birthday today."

Mario lifted his head. "Was it? Oh, it completely slipped my mind." He nodded. "How unfair of me. Then he won't be in any shape to teach tomorrow, you're right."

"What, is Morton a wild partier?" Daisy asked.

Mario laughed. "Well, he does enjoy a good party!" He paused. "Though, he's never come to one of mine. But, yes, he'll be a little out of it for a bit." He looked Bowser straight in the eyes. "I'm sorry. It was callous of me to forget about today."

"It's no problem," he said, scratching his head. "I could've handled myself a bit better, too. I guess I was mad at you fer forgettin'. Call it lava under the bridge?"

"Of course. Lava under the bridge."
We all teleported back after that. And that concluded business for the day.

Chapter End Notes

Good night, sweet Shop Channel. May a flight of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Another day down! ...You know, I'm beginning to suspect I've got less time than I think to include everything I want to before August 8. I've got to plan things out a little more.
Smash Entry 31
Tue. July 17, 18
Fox/Samus C

Today had been what was meant to be a relatively normal day. I accepted a request for a Smash against Fox, and we fought in the Frigate Orpheon. Our battle did not end with us being sent back to our homes. Fox decided therefore to send a message to his crewmates to pick him up with the Great Fox. Together, we attempted to make our way back to the surface, the better for them to find us. At this point, I had anticipated a Support involving Falco and Fox.

Ridley burst through a thin wall and dashed whatever conversation he were having into the dust with a harsh screech. Crawling along the wall toward us, he spat a fireball, which Fox shielded us from using his Reflector. (Skill. When equipped, can reflect energy-based attacks at Spd%.)

Further attempts to attack us were stymied by the Super Missile that came from Samus shortly thereafter through the hole in the wall Ridley had carved. "Come on!" she said.

Needing no further prodding, we followed after her. "Why is he doing this?!" I asked.

"To cause trouble!" she said, turning her head to face us as she charged backward. "He intercepted your signal, Fox!"

"How? It's not like we don't encrypt it!"

She fired another Super Missile, then began launching three-pronged shots from her arm cannon. "He found a way, then!" As we made it into a room where the best way to go was up, she pointed it out and began to Space Jump.

Making a mental note to get a list of all of the suit's features, I Paired Up with Fox and Elwinded up the shaft as Ridley clambered behind us, buffeted by my inadvertent attacks. As we finally made it up, it was a short dash to the exit to the surface of Tallon IV.

Samus turned to face the entrance as soon as she made it out, charging a blue blast of energy. We dived out of the way as she fired, barely avoiding the Ice Spreader attack that covered the entrance in a thick sheet of ice, that Ridley clawed at savagely. "Won't hold for long. Move!"

Again, we needed no further prodding, and we ran into Samus's ship and flew into the upper atmosphere, Ridley breaking off as he could only chase the waste gas the ship left. We took a second to breathe.

"Thanks for the save, Samus," Fox said. "I don't wanna think about what would have happened if that guy had caught us."

"Most likely, he would have killed you," she said. "After all, he hates when people have matches there."

"I wonder why?" I asked, not realizing the effect it would have on Samus.
"Who cares?!" she snapped. "That murderous monster can have whatever reasons he wants, and he'll still kill all the same!"

"Hey, don't jump down the guy's throat," Fox said. "He just asked a question."

Samus turned her head slightly away, and sighed. "I know, and I'll apologize for that, but the space pirates are the worst kind of scum." Venom dripped from her voice. "I don't enjoy talking about them."

"Then, let's drop the subject," I said. "Instead, can you tell us how close the Great Fox is?"

"Hang on, I'll check." She tapped a few lights that had to be serving as buttons. "Around fifteen minutes, I'd say. Why were you two there, anyway?"

"Your guess is as good as mine," Fox said. "We just didn't get sent back, as far as I can tell."

"It seems like it's been following me around," I said, feigning ignorance. "I've been able to make the most of it, but I'll admit, it can get frustrating."

"Well, hopefully, it doesn't start spreading."

He would have said more, but a request for another Smash came in for me on Samus's computer. Still wary about nesting Smashes, I cautiously checked it. The request was from Pit, and in it, he had put into the nickname field "NOW NOW". It took me a moment to understand what this meant.

I groaned. "I expected more time than this, Pit!" At their confusion, I explained to them what Pit was doing for me. (Ent. 27)

"Do you have any idea when this could end, then?" Samus asked.

"No clue. Is there any way I could get there from here?"

Fox shook his head. "Not unless you can warp past world barriers. I mean, space is pretty nebulous, but we still have to push to break through that separation."

"Perhaps there's a solution up here, then? Is there anyone that can send me there from out here? If there's any place I'd expect warping from, it's space."

"Warping, huh?" He looked on Samus's map. "Looks like the Comet Observatory's pretty close. You think Rosalina could do it?"

"She's got those Launch Stars, right?" Samus said. "It could happen. I'll let her know we're heading over."

As we altered our course to head in that direction, Fox and I got as comfortable on the ship as we could.

"I'd feel more comfortable if we were on the Great Fox," he said. "This place is just built for one, huh?"

"I'm a solo bounty hunter," she said. "It's not much, but it's almost the only home I've got left."

"I know a few soloes," he said. "They're usually really prickly at first, but the good ones warm up quick."

"A lot of my missions have left me with something personal to lose." She chuckled drily. "I'm
starting to think that's the only way I can work."

"Hey, whatever makes you work best," he said with a shrug. "We've had plenty of old history creep
into jobs, too. Guess that's just what happens when your father leaves you an archenemy."

"A world that's less riddled with the space pirates as a legacy would be enough for me."

"What about those Metroids? You've got a problem with those, huh?"

"They're dangerous creatures," she said. "Driven by instinct to kill and spread, and awfully effective
at it. The pirates and the Federation are the reason they've spread so far, though. I can't blame a
predator for doing what it's evolved to do."

"But you still have to kill them."

"It isn't any stranger than removing any other invasive species. Of course, the pay isn't usually so
good, but that's because Metroids are the highest caliber of hunter. The Chozo gave them their name
just because of that." I detected a note of pride in her voice.

"So, it's Chozo language," I said, making note. "Does it have an exact translation?"

"'Ultimate hunter'. They're supposed to be a nuclear option on especially dangerous parasites. The
Chozo had created them."

"Ah," came an unfamiliar, smooth voice over the radio, "the Chozo giveth and the Chozo taketh
away, hm?"

Fox grit his teeth. "Wolf! How did you find us?!"

"Your driver there hailed the Obvservatory, and we were listening in. Hope you weren't planning on
getting there in one piece, Fox."

"Evasive action!" shouted Samus, and began turning the ship back and forth to avoid blasts that lit up
the windows to outer space.

Trying to avoid falling into a daze, I shouted, "I'm on a diplomatic mission, here! Does that mean
anything to you?"

"Well, I'm already wanted by Corneria," he said, "so no, not really. I got hired to keep the girl from
getting away from Ridley, and I intend on collecting in full. If you like, just think of yourself as...
collateral damage."

"What can you even spend it on?" Fox said. "You're on the run all the time!"

"Maybe he's renovating his house?" I said.

Fox's train of thought came to a screeching halt. "Wait, huh?"

"He's staying in Smashville. Isabelle said she gave you applications, too." (Ent. 23)

"Seriously?" Fox's lip turned up, and let out a laugh. "You're staying in the cutesy village just to,
what, throw us off?!" He continued to laugh, high-pitched yipping escaping him.

Wolf growled. "All right, this wasn't anything personal before, but now..." His radio cut out, then
back in. "Star Wolf, I need backup. This ship's going down."
Fox got up from his position and dashed over to the cockpit. "How can I help?"

"You can't," Samus said. "This ship's arranged for one - me. I haven't got any spare guns."

I said, "If I could just get outside, Thoron would be of use."

Samus looked up, then erupted from the controls. "Take over and keep her steady! I'm getting out there!"

Fox jammed himself into the pilot's chair and took the reins (Do spaceships have "reins"?) as Samus rode an elevator up to the outside of the ship and began firing back. "This thing flies as smooth as butter!" Fox said as he leaned forward.

I strapped myself in.

The following twenty minutes are a nausea-inducing blur of shooting and shouting. Had I known this would be the result, I would have waited until Palutena's next opening. At some point, two other ships appeared, as well as the Great Fox. I stumbled out of the ship and may have fallen unconscious at one point on the floor of the Great Fox's hangar.

"You don't mind if I stay still for a few minutes?" I asked as I collapsed onto a chair.

"I know a Chozo remedy for motion sickness," Samus said. "Mind if I see what I can cook up?"

"Be my guest," Fox said as he waved her to a corridor. "Third on the right."

She came back a little while later with a glass filled with some pink liquid. "This'll help a little bit, but it would be more effective on the Chozo themselves. I get the full effects, but it'll probably be at around... a third strength, I'd say."

Taking whatever I could get, I downed as much as I could. It had a mildly-sweet taste, but was thick and soupy. The second it hit my stomach, though, all of my nausea nearly vanished. "That's incredible. And this is only one-third strength?"

"The Chozo made effective cures. I had some trouble finding what I need, but I managed with some scrap parts you guys had." She held up a glittering crystal, shaped like a series of rainbow-colored cubes. "This bismuth helps a lot."

"Is that what that is?" Fox said. "Slippy's had that thing for months, insisted it would come in handy." He shrugged. "Here I thought it just looked pretty."

"So," I said, shaking my head and sitting a little straighter, "how long until we reach the Observatory?"

"Won't be more than an hour, by our estimates. In the meantime," he said to Samus, "you mind humoring Slippy a bit and letting him take a peek at your ship?"

"He may have trouble with the Chozo technology, but he's welcome to look as long he helps repair the damage, too."

"Hey, it's what we pay him for!" Slapping Samus's back, he walked her back to the hangar and left me alone when he returned, letting me write.

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Smash Entry 32
Tue. July 17, 18 2:00 PM
Palutena's Aid

Following the previous entry, Pit had reiterated the urgency by sending a Smash request with his nickname set as "HURRY!!!". I exited the Great Fox with Samus and Team Star Fox as we arrived at the Comet Observatory, Rosalina's home.

"Robin," she said, arms held out and wand at the ready. "It is good to see you again. I neglected to congratulate you before. And you too, Samus. Will you be staying long?" she asked.

"Is that one little Luma busy?" she asked.

"He has been very hard-working, yes. All the same, he would appreciate the respite." She smiled faintly. "If you would be so kind."

Samus nodded and took a flying leap toward one of the many domes.

"And Team Star Fox, if you would like, the bedroom has been made for you. Do feel free to rest."

"Don't have to tell us twice," Falco said. "I could use some R&R after that ambush."

"Hey, shouldn't I be the one saying that?" Fox said as the group broke off.

"I understand the reason you have come here, Robin," said Rosalina after we were alone. "It is a private matter, as I understand, though Palutena has told me very little about it."

"So, how much does she know?" I asked.

"I am unable to say. I can, however, give you the power to see her. I apologize for the method, though." She coaxed a Luma over. "Would you please help out our friend Robin, Luma? He needs to talk to Palutena."

"Okay, Momma!" said the Luma. It swirled around and in on itself, and into a Launch Star. The sight filled me with dread.

"Again, I apologize. This is not ideal for you, I know. I can only hope the medicine Samus gave you will be enough to help you." Before I could ask how she knew that, she added, "I wish you well."

The Launch Star swallowed me in an instant, and with a flick of her wand, I was sent off past the depths of space.

Landing with force that should have broken all my bones, I looked up at the giant statue of Palutena ahead of me and headed toward it.

...Then I was guided by a Centurion to the actual area where Palutena was.

When I met her, she was lounging and watching something on a projection along a white wall - a makeshift television, I assume, as a Mii Fighter went over a Smash in detail. Looking over to me, she retracted it into her staff and sat on her throne more properly. In accordance with Yllisean royal court procedure, I waited for her to give me leave to speak, but did not kneel.

"Robin!" she said with a smile. "It's so good to see you. I'm glad you made it here alright."

Taking that as my cue, I said, "Do you know why I'm here?"

She shrugged. "I'd like to say yes, but I've been wrong before. Tell me, what do you need?"

"Have you been spying on me?" I asked.
"Wow, that's pretty direct! You know, that could be taken the wrong way pretty easily."

I stared her down.

Her smile fell from her face. "But yes, I have been."

"For how long?" That was the next question.

Palutena nodded. "You remember June 12, right? The last Classic we've had for a month, now? I was part of it, too. Now, how long did you think it took for Master Hand to get to fighting Ness that day?"

"Certainly not a long time."

"Longer than you'd think," she said. "You were the first win Ness had, and it took him a while to rack up the rest of the KOs he needed. I should know - "

She projected the outside of the temple onto the wall - the stage.

"I saw the whole thing." She flicked her hand to her right and flipped through a few Smashes currently going on - one involving Lucina. Finally, she landed on Final Destination, currently barren. "Everywhere the light touches, I can see. I'm the Goddess of Light, after all."

It stood to reason that was part of her domain. I should have realized it.

"Master Hand brought you onto the stage right after Ness lost. Of course, no one else knew, because they didn't record it for the analysis block."

I grit my teeth. "So, you know everything."

"I haven't been following you every day, mind you." She stood and descended to the ground, shaking and shrinking the projection with her. "The first few days, I'd had my suspicions, but you won me over with how earnest you were."

"I'm flattered," I said sarcastically. "You've invaded my privacy, Palutena."

"It was too forceful of me, I agree. I should have had a gentler touch, as I've been doing."

"You should have talked to me! If I had known - "

She shook her head and produced a red-wax-sealed envelope. "Sorry, Robin. Even a Goddess can't ignore the rules of Smash." She handed the letter to me, and a crystal ball.

"What's this for?"

"Well, the letter's written in Ancient Greek, Robin," she said with a smile. "Call me crazy, but you can't read that, can you?"

Holding the ball in one hand and the letter against the wall (and complaining as I did so), I read its contents:

[Translated]
Dear Smasher #54, Lady Palutena, Goddess of Light,

You have gained knowledge of matters beyond what is fair for you to know.
You have two options:
Admit to your guilt and leave the tournament;
or
Assist Robin in forming bonds between the Smashers.

Do not bring up this matter to anyone, or it will be taken as an admission of guilt. Should you refuse to leave, you will be made to. Do not attempt to avoid, bend, or break this rule.

Signed,
[several lines which appear to be part of a thumbprint]
[End translation.]

"As you can read, I'm not allowed to bring it up," Palutena said. "Too bad, right?"

"I don't think I'm covered under that banner."

"I'd rather not take any chances." She took the letter and ball back after I finished copying it down. "The Hands are two people I don't want to try my hand against."

Ignoring the poor play on words, I nodded. "Alright, fine. At this point, I know, so let's assume you can talk about it freely to me. What do we do now? I assume you want to help me more."

"I suppose I can afford to get a little more overt with my assistance," she said, then pursed her lips together. "But I can't teleport you around like I can with the angels. You're not light-oriented, after all."

"The Smash teleports should suffice for now. I don't expect you to help me with any special items, either - "

"Ah, that's right!" She turned around and motioned for me to follow. "I wanted to get your opinion on something. It's been bugging me for a few days, now." She gestured to a list of what I presumed to be names. "These are the people you haven't gotten Supports for yet. Who do you think you'll finish taking care of first?"

"I'm not going to make a decision like that!" I said. "It has to be a natural ending point!"

"So, it probably won't be Luigi, then?" She shook her head. "That puts a dent in that idea."

"What are you talking about?"

"For splitting the workload," she said. "I can't collect Supports for you, obviously, since that would be spying. Even if I were willing to do that, you aren't. But having someone else to work with - that would be a good idea, and you could coordinate through me. I was thinking someone who didn't try to hog the spotlight, and was pleasant to be around." (Among other attributes she named, more specific to Luigi himself. What exactly does his well-groomed mustache have to do with this?)

In trying to follow her, I found she actually seemed to make some level of sense. "I can't discount someone just because they're loud. The most important part is objectivity."

Palutena nodded. "Well, then. You're the one who knows about this, so I'll defer to your superior expertise," she said with a wry smile. "Just send me a signal when you figure it out. Don't worry, I'm pretty perceptive."

"I'm sure." I turned to walk away. "I'll work something out with someone." Briefly, I considered whether Lucina would be an ideal partner... simply because she was the only one whose writing I
could read. "Please figure out a better way to use that crystal ball."

"That'll be on the top of my list, don't worry!" She waved goodbye as I was teleported home.

I've got a decision to make.

Chapter End Notes

I'm excited! No reason, I'm just excited.

As someone who doesn't know the Star Fox series, I decided to look some stuff up about it... That was a mistake™. I couldn't make heads or tails of Command, though I understood the rest of it well enough. With that said, the Star Fox gang seems to have trouble sticking together, huh? I'm going to have to think about them... It doesn't help that I'm not exactly confident in my portrayal of them, but that'll go away in time.

Other than that, a quick space battle and a character moment before I truss up the hook. Not bad for one chapter's work.
"You've been getting much better!" Peach said as Daisy pulled a cake out of the oven and tested it for doneness. "You're moving like a Mushroom Kingdom pastry chef already!"

"Maybe the dish guy," Daisy said, half-joking. Taking the toothpick from the center, it came out clean. "Looks like we're good!"

"Great, and the next step is...?"

"Let it cool on a rack for an hour before frosting," she said, flipping the cake onto the wire rack. "How's yours, Robin?"

I set mine back into the oven. "A few more minutes, I think."

"Well, that will happen," Peach said. "You can't rush a good cake, after all!"

"Well, sometimes you can," Daisy said. "It's just not something you should do too often."

Peach nodded. "A good cake takes effort to make. If you can rush and still make something you're proud of, then you're a better baker than I."

Daisy scoffed. "Sure, I'm a good baker. I'm pretty sure my standards are just lower than yours."

"You judge your own results more harshly," I said. "I usually go over battles after they're over and consider how I could have done more."

"Exactly," Peach said. "I know I've done a lot of the same, wondering if I'm doing the right thing."

Daisy pursed her lips together. "You mean with Bowser, right?"

She sighed. "Was it that obvious? Yes, I do get weighed down by the thought every once in a while." She shook the thought away. "But that's enough about that! Let's get back to baking." She got out the ingredients to make frosting. "Now, the best thing for this cake is probably going to be Dry Dry lemon. We can get started while we wait." She led us through it, and our cakes were soon dressed up nicely.

"It turned out great!" Peach clapped at the job we'd done. "You've come really far in such a short time."

"Well, I've got a little experience cooking," I said, "even if my frosting job is a little lacking." (It was somewhat patchy and uneven.)

"Mine actually looks like something I'd get served in Sarasaland," Daisy said. "Maybe I can bring a few things back with me. Diplomats always seem to like sweets." (I nodded.) "Scraping something together won't be too tough, either."
"Sarasaland does have a lot of interesting things you could use in a cake. Oh, like those Superball Flowers! What do they taste like?"

Daisy pushed her forefinger and thumb together. "Peach, I'm gonna be honest - before Mario came around, we did not think those things were edible. They're really rubbery, too."

"Hm. I guess that explains why Mario prefers using Fire Flowers..."

"I guess Pirapt does have carob and sugar cane. I'll give it a try next time I can find any."

"Maybe you could add something from Chai or Muda, as well. A diplomat would be able to taste something that reminds them of each Kingdom!"

"Hm. I'll see what I can think up. Chai has a lot of savory kinds of foods, but it does have ginger and wheat and star anise. I've seen you use a lot of those when you bake. Muda's got a lot of cassava melons and bananas, too - and they usually get to us and get ripe at exactly the right time."

"Exactly! We have to import a lot of our ingredients, so Sarasaland-native plants would have to be fresher!"

"The problem is Easton. Most of what they usually make was brought in when Sarasaland annexed it." She closed her eyes and thought. "I guess it's got... rhubarb?"

"That could be useful. Don't discount anything just because it seems unusual."

"Well, I'm trying to be realistic for what I can try out here and now. I mean, it's going to be tough to get things around here, and I didn't bring Sarasaland's coffers with me, after all."

"Perhaps it's better to keep it simple. Try coming up with one ingredient and pairing things up to match it."

Daisy nodded. "One ingredient, huh. I'll try to put it together."

"In the meantime, we should serve these cakes while they're still hot!" Peach picked up each of our cakes and walked to the drawing room.

Daisy held back and asked me quietly, "Do you think you could help me find some things I could use? I'm still pretty new here, after all."

"I've got an idea where to get the bananas," I said. "We can head there after tea time."

"Today," Peach said, "I want to thank you both for putting aside your differences and helping our fellow fighters improve their cake-making skills."

"I'm just here for the free cake," Waluigi said. "Even if I have to sit next to this guy, I'll deal with it."

"Of course I would come! I want to support Daisy however I can."

Peach smiled and set the cakes down. "On our left is Robin's cake, and on the right is Daisy's. Now, which would you like first?"
Waluigi slammed the table. "Daisy's."

Luigi flinched at the sudden noise. "Well, then, I'll take Robin's first."

Daisy shot Waluigi a look, which made him scoff. "Fine, I'll take a piece of Robin's, first. Cake is cake, after all." They were served, and took their first bites.

"It's simple, but competently made," Waluigi said between bites. "I give it a C-."

I was slightly taken aback. "Is there anything you can suggest to make it better?"

He rolled his eyes. "Can you believe this guy?" he muttered to Luigi, who was busy eating Daisy's cake. "It's all just the same cake, the whole way through. I want something besides just the lemon frosting and plain cake to taste."

"Maybe chocolate powder would help with that," I said. "Isn't it supposed to be bitter?"

Waluigi nodded appreciatively. "Now, that would have been a cake!" he said with a point. "Make one like that next time, would ya?"

Daisy pinched the bridge of her nose. "Waluigi, do you have to be so... pushy?"

"Hey, you guys asked me for the favor."

She sighed. "Well, at least you're actually helping. That's more than I can say you've done in some of the Mario Parties."

Waluigi looked offended. "Well, that's a real nice slap in my face!"

"You two, stop arguing," Peach said. "This isn't the time or place."

Waluigi pouted. "She started it."

Meanwhile, Luigi had cut himself his second slice of Daisy's cake - his third in total. "So, what did you think of my cake, Luigi?" I said.

He nodded. "I liked it! I thought the flavor the cake is pretty nice, and the Dry Dry lemons are nice and sour. But the idea you had about chocolate was a good one, too - you should really try it!"

"For next time, then. I'll need to find cocoa powder to use."

"I'll be happy to try it!"

After cake and tea, Daisy and I took Kapp'n's bus to Smashville to see about finding some bananas, as Dedede had told me about. (Ent. 27) As far as I figured, Daisy and I wouldn't have to take the bus back, since the teleport would bring us back to our homes.

Asking Isabelle where the best place to find bananas was, she informed me that banana trees grew all along the southern beach, as well as coconut trees, and that they were free to be picked. Villager had apparently grown them along the beach and forgotten to regularly harvest them, so he didn't have a problem if anyone else took them. Finding there to be no issue, we started toward the southern beach, and were soon joined by the Duck Hunt duo.

"Howdy, pardner!" Quack said, in an entirely-too-thick accent. "What brings you 'round this neck a' the woods?" Bark pointed his paws at us as if they were guns, and Quack adjusted an imaginary hat.
"We want bananas."

After a moment's silence, Quack and Bark laughed at me. "Hahaha - wow, that's just - haha - so blunt!" They cackled a little more, then caught up to us when we tried to leave him behind.

"I'm sorry," he said, a smile still pulling his beak up. "That was just - not how I expected you to answer." He gave a conspiratoral glance. "I figured you'd need me for another Support."

"Ah, it has been a while, hasn't it? Well, something happened that I need to fill you in on."

"Need me to go on ahead?" Daisy said. "If this is something private, I mean."

I said it was nothing major, just that Palutena would be helping me from now on.

"Alright, well at least you're getting some help, now," she said. "It probably isn't easy. Is she sending in what she sees other people talking about like an advice column, or something?"

"Nothing like that. She's actually taking a more hands-off role."

"Well," Quack said, "Better that way than the alternative! You read stories about gods meddling in the affairs of man, and it never ends well for man."

"Well, at least she's trying to help," Daisy said as we walked down the ramp to the beach, where Mewtwo was whacking the trees with psychic force.

"I understand," he said through telepathy, "that you wanted these. Please, take them." He levitated a bunch to Daisy at arm level.

"Thank you!" she said, but smirked. "You didn't really seem like the 'please' type."

"Oh, he's not," Quack said. "He just hates eating these things, and he's got a best friend who can't get enough of 'em."

Mewtwo blushed, then the air around him darkened as he charged some attack. "You speak of things beyond your ken, Quack!"

"What'sa matter?" he said with a smirk. "Tryin' to get rid of 'em all before Pichu notices?"

"ENOUGH!" A blue flash lit up my vision, and five minutes later, I picked myself up from the sand.

"Uuurgh." Daisy gripped her head and winced as I helped her up. "Okay, Quack, that was uncalled for."

Bark mumbled something in Dog that Quack didn't translate, as he was still stunned. Regardless, hopefully he'd be more considerate in the future.

"Well, we've got bananas," Daisy said, lifting two bunches. "I guess we should see what else is around, huh?"

"The apples are free," slurred Quack, eyes blinking. "Town fruit's free, 'cept the perffvec' ones."

Bark elected to carry Quack in his mouth for the time being, so that he wouldn't fall off his back.

Shaking a few apples from a tree and colecting them in a basket provided by Isabelle, we worked through the regular fruit trees throughout town, pointed out to us by the residents as the ones without apples that looked like they were made of solid gems.
Fairly distinctive, I'll admit.

"And that," Quack said, more sensibly-minded but still without his balance, "is what happens when gods interfere in the affairs of man! Proof, I tell you!"

Slightly more sensible, at least. Bark shook his head.

"Whoa, hey, be careful! You'll start trying to squeak me at this rate!" According to him, Disable tends to affect him more badly than it does Bark, due to his brain still being mostly duck-like. He has trouble reading anything other than plain Animalese, and his writing, while I assume I could understand it if I could read Animalese... I can't. He can, however, do "excellent duck calls", which I hear well. Unfortunately, he wouldn't work as a partner, which crosses off one of my only options.

We had gotten enough apples to fill the whole basket by this point. "I wish I could be the one who could help you," Daisy said, "but I can't write in your language, either. What was it, Ylissean?"

"And I can't read Sarasan. Even with Mushroomese, I'm limited to a couple of phrases I see on public signs, at most." It was starting to look like Lucina would be my best answer. After all, I had no idea when or even if Palutena would have that crystal ball ready for me. "I can work something out."

"Well, still, if you ever need a spare pair of eyes, I'll be there for you. You name it!" She threw her free arm to her chest.

It meant a lot to hear her say that.

The wind shifted, and a new smell found its way to us. "Wait, is that?" She turned her head. "That smelled like a cherimoya flower!"

"Cherimoya?"

"They're these green fruits, they taste great! Oh, I used to eat them all the time as a kid!" She felt out where the wind was. "I think they're over there!" Handing the basket to me, she dashed over to the source of the scent.

"Ah, wait, no!" Bark and Quack walked after her. "Don't run that way, Daisy! Please!"

"Should I ask what's over there?" I said as I followed.

"Oh, only the Mayor's priceless blue roses!"

Daisy, somehow, had managed to make it over to someone's property by running through the flowers and only killed the tulips she ran through. Hoping that Villager wasn't very attached to them, I looked where Daisy now knelt. In front of the house was four pots of soil, each one holding a plant that grew in two blue fronds. A nest of white flowers clustered at their base.

"Not exactly what I recognize," she said, "but there's no mistaking the way this flower smells! That's definitely some kind of cherimoya!" She stood up. "Whose house is this, Quack?"

Quack steepled his feathers. "That, my dear, is the house of Ivysaur and her roommate. I'm afraid she's stepped out for the day to visit family, and won't be back until late tomorrow." He pointed over to the bulletin board in front of the station, where a few notices were written in various languages, with translations in red ink, apparently from Isabelle and Quack using a text-translating program.

"Is that right? Darn it." She snapped her fingers. "I would have loved to have one, if she would have
"We'll have to ask, then," I said. "I don't mind coming back here tomorrow if you don't."

"Alright! I'll make the request, and hopefully she'll have some to spare."

"Certainly, she'll be willing to give some up for a princess," added Quack.

Daisy shook her head. "I'm not going to play the princess card if I can help it. This isn't royal business, after all."

Quack shrugged. "Fair enough, I suppose. Best of luck, then. I'm going to go find some Pitall Seeds."

That concluded our business in Smashville, finally, and sent us back to our homes. And now, as I lay in my bed, turning a magnifying glass over in my hands, I find myself wondering two things:

Would this be a good way to make the crystal ball?

And what will the first language be that I use it on?

Chapter End Notes

I, uh... accidentally gave myself a buffer last week. So, here's an update more often than twice a month! (or less!)

Sarasaland's four kingdoms are based off of, in order, Egypt, Bermuda, Easter Island, and China. I know that the first kingdom is named "Birabuto", but that's a mistranslation from the Japanese version. (びらぶと, ぴらぷと...Look pretty similar, huh? It's supposed to be the Pyra- from pyramid and the -pt from Egypt.)

Easter Island is far off the coast of Chile, in South America. It's a little tough finding info about what it once had, as opposed to what it has (mostly agriculture and sheep-grazing grassland). As such, I snuck the cherimoya away from Chile itself.

The rest of the named foods are available in that country.
Daisy and I met in Smashville early that morning, in an effort to begin our efforts to locate recipe items for Daisy's cake. She was satisfied with the bananas she'd received, but wanted to secure different sources for her other ingredients.

We began by asking at the coffee shop after something we could use. The pigeon working the bar, named Brewster, offered some premium coffee beans in exchange for three hours' work. Unfortunately, neither of us were willing to go that far alone, and there was no way to fit both of us behind the counter. We left and proceeded up to the main shopping district. Finding no shops that sold food, except as decoration, we resolved to take the bus to another place.

We were interrupted by Duck Hunt, coming up to us brandishing a pen and a set of short stationery and asking for me to help them. "I've already got three letters in the post," Quack said, "so I just need two more to get Pete to deliver it all. But I don't like hogging Pete's time like that, so would you mind?"

Rolling my eyes, and confirming that I didn't need to send it to anywhere in town, I wrote the following letter to Palutena:

[Begin transcription.]
Dear Lady Palutena, Goddess of Light,

In order to confirm my thoughts on a potential Support-writer candidate, I will need the crystal ball as soon as possible.

Would it perhaps be possible to make it in a way similar to a magnifying glass? With one handle and a round metal frame holding the crystal in place of glass. (See Fig. 1.)

I will attempt to ascertain the candidate's readiness in other ways, but their writing style is an important part of my decision.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,
Robin, Shepherds' Tactician

[Figure 1. A drawing of a magnifying glass. Labeled are the handle, frame, and lens, with the lens having the additional label of crystal ball.]

[End transcription.]

I addressed the letter and handed it to Duck Hunt, who thanked me for assisting him and walked up, presumably to the Post Office. While we were waiting for the bus, we saw a pelican in a green uniform take to the air, a mailbag at his waist. I hope he doesn't have to go all the way to Palutena's temple.
We rode the bus to Lumiose City. Briefly, I wondered how Kapp'n could drive through the barriers of the world, but in between songs, he told me that his bus was given special permission to stop at any bus stop - but since he was the only one with a bus, he needed to make definite pickup times now. Otherwise, people could be stuck waiting for a while. Apparently, Villager could call him whenever he wanted before. Our pick-up back to Smashville would be at three.

It took us some time to orient ourselves - starting at the Pokémon Center opposite the lab, we walked up Vernal Avenue. (Thankfully, the language they speak in Kalos seems to be translatable.) We walked into an shop that it turned out sold herbs and spices, and were given directions to where we could perhaps find juice. Unfortunately, their stock of star anise had been bought out earlier in the week, but we did purchase some herbs for Pokémon, should we need them.

After looking into the juice shop and buying something small, we sat at the storefront for a short time. The flavor, apparently Cheri, was more peppy than regular cherry was, and had very little sweetness. I brought up the idea that the cherimoya might not taste like a normal one, either.

"Yeah, I'm thinking it'll be a little off from what I remember, too," she said. "But the fact that I could even find something halfway to a cherimoya! It's practically a miracle."

"You said you hadn't had it since you were a kid. Why not?"

Daisy picked at her lip. "Easton Kingdom is one of the only places that cherimoya grow, and..." She sighed. "A lot of it has been converted to grazing land. I'd like to help them fix that, too, bring a lot of the old plants back, you know?"

"Well, I hope you can get there," I said.

"It'll be tough, but it's worth pushing for," she agreed.

After the brief respite, we continued walking around the city. There were many cafés throughout the city, each one serving a different clientele. Stopping at one called Café Lysandre as we doubled back for a Pokémon Center, we discovered that the location used to house a group of people bent on taking over the world. Daisy shook her head, presumably at more "crazy stuff".

At the Center itself, we sat and watched as a girl wearing a blue shirt without sleeves and a red skirt walked in and greeted the nurse at the counter, presenting some Pokéballs to her. I recognized her from somewhere, but I couldn't exactly place where.

She looked over to us afterward. "Oh, hey!" she said. "It's Robin, and Daisy, right?"

Shocked by how she recognized me, I greeted her. Daisy did the same, curtsying. "I'm sorry to ask, but where do I know you from?"

She rolled her eyes with a smile. "Wow, I never thought I'd hear that old line."

Realizing my error, I explained that I was married.

"Oh, oops!" She tapped her head and stuck out her tongue. "My bad. I guess I should introduce myself, huh? My name's Leaf. I'm one of the fighters."

"You are?" Daisy asked. "I don't remember seeing you on that roster list, though."

That had been where I recognized her. "You're one of the Pokémon Trainers. You were never on the stage, so I must have forgotten. My apologies."
"Oh, it's fine! I know everyone's probably used to Red being there, anyway - " She hesitated when she saw my confusion. "Have you met Red?" I hadn't. "Alright, he's right outside, I'll just call him in."

Soon after, the other Pokémon Trainer came in - a young man, likely not even in his teens, wearing a black shirt, red vest, and blue pants. He nodded at us as a greeting.

"Red, this is Robin and Daisy. Robin, Daisy, this is my little brother Red. I guess you haven't met before, huh?"

Red took out a small machine and typed something out on it. From its speaker, a voice said, "We were in different tournaments."

"Oh, is that a text-to-speech thing?" Daisy said.

"Yep!" Leaf said. "He uses that thing to talk to people - I mean, when he's not in a battle. Takes too long, you know."

"I can imagine," she said. "What language does he type in for it?"

Leaf hesitated. "Japanese? Why, what language did you expect?"

Red held out a finger, then typed out, "They speak other languages." (From this point, I will be treating this method of talking as the same as regular speech, unless otherwise necessary.) "Do you speak Mushroomese and Archanean?"

"Not quite," Daisy said. "I know Mushroomese as a second language, but I'm hearing most people in my home language, Sarasan. Robin here speaks Ylissean."

"More accurately," I said, "Ylissean is a modern version of Archanean. I couldn't understand Marth until recently, since our languages are so different."

"O...kay," Leaf said. "Didn't actually realize that. Well, that's pretty neat, then!"

"It's really helpful," Daisy said. "I wish I had it when I was working the royal courts. The diplomats people have sent have so much trouble with Sarasan. It's the curling R, really. Have you two ever tried to learn another language?"

"I tried to learn Alolan once," Leaf said. "The Sevii Islands are pretty close to Alola, so we got to take trips there during winter break." Leaf clarified that she attended a private school on Eight Island, part of an archipelago off the coast of Kanto called the Sevii Islands. "But I'm not that great at Alolan. The way the sentences are laid out confuses me."

"I can speak English," Red said, "but I can't write it very well. It's got a lot of arbitrary spelling rules."

"And that means he doesn't usually talk very much in America. He can't use a text-to-speech program if he can't spell. I mean, there's this one combination of letters that has four different pronounciations! How are you expected to keep all of that straight?"

"But he can speak?" Daisy said. "I understand if you'd rather not talk about it, but if I could ask, why does he use the text reader?"

Red nodded. "People ask that a lot. The sound of my own voice bothers me, so I don't like talking."
Leaf jumped in. "The doctors call it..." She paused. "How do you pronounce it? [Mi] [so] [fho]... [ni]?” (It was sounded out. Those were the individual syllables used.)

"Misophonia."

"Yeah, that was it. Well, it's not really a curable medical condition, so they can't treat it. We're hoping once he grows up, it'll stop bugging him."

"It probably will," he said. "I don't find it a problem during Pokémon battles, after all, so I will figure out how to ignore it soon enough."

"Thank you for telling me," Daisy said. "I kinda know what it's like to bother people with my voice. I've never really bothered myself, though." We left the Center as a group and began talking.

"So, what brings you guys here?" Leaf said. "You don't really look like the Pokémon-battling type."

Daisy explained what we were looking for. "I see!" she said. "Yeah, they import a lot of ingredients around here for the restaurants. We've been knocking them down as we go around town." She put her arm around Red's shoulder. "Anything in particular you're looking for?"

"If you know where to get star anise, that would be great."

"Hm. A think people usually put that in coffee. What do you think?" She looked at Red. "Café?"

"We can try to look through a few more. They won't sell their ingredients to us, though."

"Well, of course not!" Leaf pushed air through her lips. "But we can stil find out where they get it from."

"The other thing I'm looking for is cherimoya."

Leaf looked up into the air. "Hm. [Che] [ri] [mo] [ya], huh? Let's see. [Ya mo] berry, [ya ri] berry, [mo che] berry? Oh, I've got it!" She turned to Red once more. "[Che ri] berry!"

"That's the Cheri Berry," Red said.

She snapped her fingers. "Darn, thought I had something, there."

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Well, I was trying to figure out what kind of berry would work as a cherimoya."

"Ah, and since your berry names sound like our fruit names - !"

"Exactly. But I can't think of any berry with those comboes of syllables, or I know the ones that are real berries and the fruit they're related to."

"Another name, maybe," Red said. "Does cherimoya have any other name?"

Daisy nodded. "I think I've heard people also call them apples, even though they're not apples. I think that's just the word they use for fruit." She sighed. "I just don't remember very well. It's been so long since I had one. It was really sweet, almost like custard - "

"Custard?!" Red said aloud. He hastily tapped something onto the device. "Custard," it said. "Apple. Custap Berry. It's the Custap Berry." (Presumably, the second one was a translation.)

"Oh, you're kidding!" Leaf's face lit up. "My Custaps are going to fruit today! I've been waiting three
days for those things - when I left yesterday, they were about to bloom."

"Left?" Daisy's face lit up in turn. "Are you the one staying in Smashville with the fruit garden right outside your house, then?"

"I thought Ivysaur was living there," I said.

"We're both living there," Leaf said. "See, Ivysaur is my Pokémon. When Red's Charizard decided to join Smash as a solo fighter, he needed to evolve his own Ivysaur to fill the space." She looked at him. "You know, I still say using your Moltres would have been a better idea."

"It was his time," he said.

"I know, I know. But anyway, because he didn't have an Ivysaur anymore, they tried to de-evolve him so Red could participate."

"I said no." A fire shone in the back of his eyes.

"Oh, you should have seen the fight!" Leaf laughed. "I'd just gotten home, for the March break before high school, so I got to see them go at it! Laser beams and Frenzy Plants flying left and right, Protect and Toxic strategies, oh, it was incredible. But then, once they'd tired themselves out, I walked up and said if they need an Ivysaur, why not use mine?" She threw out a Pokéball, and from it came a bright green Ivysaur with a yellow bulb - not the usual color scheme, from what the other fighters have told me. "She's plenty strong, so she's a natural fit. Of course, I insisted I be allowed to accompany my little brother and my Ivysaur to the tournament."

"So, she is a fighter," Red said. "And so far, she's been able to balance breeding, catching, and participating in Smash Bros."

I nodded. "So, whose is Squirtle?"

"Mine," Red said. "That Squirtle doesn't want to evolve, so I gave him an Everstone. He keeps it in his shell during battles."

With that, we decided to have an late lunch at a restaurant named Restaurant Le Nah. The food was simple and filling, and Red and Leaf busied themselves with Pokémon battles while we waited, always arriving at the table at the right time to eat. I confess, their battles are something I must still learn the nuances of.

We made our way back to the bus stop, and bid Red farewell as he walked into the Pokémon Center, where he could world-war back to the Pokémon Stadium center. Soon after, Leaf walked us over to her house in Smashville and allowed Daisy to take two of the Custap plant's full-looking, pink berries. It crumbled into the dirt, and Leaf planted one of the berries back into the soil to regrow.

Daisy and I sat on a bench to rest and wait. "Is there anything else you need before we call it a day?" I asked.

"Hm." She looked up. "Well, let's see. I've got two basically-cherimoya, two bunches of bananas, apples... I can probably make something nice out of those..."

"We're not going to be done here until you have what you need, you know," I said with a smile. "Just name it."

She nodded. "You're right, that is usually how this works, huh? Well, one thing Pyrapt is known for is its sugarcane. I wanted to see if I could find some, but we didn't have any luck."
"Sugarcane? What for?"

She blushed a little. "I kind of wanted to make some rum. I thought it would be nice in a cake, and they don't have any in the castle, since Peach prefers champagne."

"Ah." Rum was made by distilling sugarcane, and popular with sailors making port in western Ragna Ferox. Farther inland, though, they preferred potato-made vodka. Still, I suggested they likely had an old still somewhere in the basement storerooms. Were there one there, it would only need to be cleaned thoroughly. "We'd cover more ground together. Would you help me search?"

She nodded enthusiastically. "Honestly, I'm glad I've got you helping me. I hadn't even considered we'd need one. Do you think we'll be able to get there easier if I put these back in my room?"

"Well, it's supposed to be random where we Smash... but I get the feeling that won't be an issue."

Smash Entry 35
Fri. July 20, 18 5:00 PM
Daisy's Aid

In my room in between Smashes (see prev.), I found a letter and a present box placed onto my bed. The letter was written in the same Ancient Greek Palutena had shown me earlier, and the present box held what Palutena dubbed the Lens of Reading. I will now transcribe her letter:

[Begin transcription.]
Dear Robin,

There's really no need to be that formal in these letters. I already knew you were the Shepherds' Tactician, and you don't need to address me by a title like that. It was very flattering, though!

Also, I know what a magnifying glass is, though I hadn't been thinking about making the Orb of Vision into one. Maybe I could do that again with other parts of it. But regardless, what you now hold in your hand is Palutena's Lens of Reading! As you have no doubt discovered by now, putting it close to a single word translates just that word, and holding it far away will cover whole sentences and paragraphs. I've even added a reading light, just in case you need it! You need only press the button on the handle, and the one on the other side will light up. Turn them both on, and it can act like a torch.

There are limitations, though. First off, you have to able to recognize it as a language in order to translate it. Also, it's subject to Master Hand's limits on magical enchanting - I can't let you read certain languages that he doesn't let you understand. In other words, people like Cloud will still be fairly incomprehensible to you. I didn't let it read words that are magically encrypted or sealed, either, since we've already established that would be spying.

Glad to hear you've found someone to help - but you didn't tell me who it is. You either want to surprise me, or you don't want me sticking my nose in it. Either way, I'll stay hands-off - just send me a signal when you want my input, just like I told you.

Best of luck,
Palutena
[End transcription.]

Nodding appreciatively, I put the letter away and slipped the lens into my pocket. (Lens of Reading. Item. No use limit. Allows reading of every translatable language.) Around that time, Daisy and I fought in Arena Ferox. Afterward, we moved to the storage basement in search of a still. In the mean
time, I showed her the lens.

"That's great! So you'll be able to get some help soon, after all!"

"I think so. The only question is, who should I ask?"

"Hm." She pushed a box of nearly-spent tomes with a grunt. "Phew. Maybe try asking somebody like Peach? Hm, no, she's usually pretty busy, though."

"Almost everyone was, when I thought about it. Villager is running a town, Dedede or Zelda a country, Rosalina has her Lumas to look after... There's only a few candidates I can think of."

"Well, don't keep me in suspense."

"Right. First off - " I hefted an Iron Blade and set it down. " - there's Ike, and the rest of the people from worlds with Fire Emblems, but Ike especially. We haven't got a country to take care of, here, anyway, but Ike was a mercenary. He'd be used to travelling, and would know how to handle people."

"Sounds like good qualities to have."

"The problem is, we're still operating from the same basic perspective - I think the term is 'sword and sorcery'?"

"I get what you're saying." Setting the Vengeance axe into a box, she took a moment to steady herself. "You know, this place is a mess. How do you get anything out of here?"

"I use the Convoy, mostly," I said sheepishly. "Everything I can get from there is organized already."

"I think you need someone to remind you to organize the physical space every once in a while. But anyway, so your locals are out. Who else could you ask?"

"I could ask Duck Hunt," I said. "The problem is, Quack's mostly a duck, so I don't know how well he can commentate."

"Well, he gets sarcastic enough," she said. "I think he'll be fine."

I pulled an Arcwind tome from the fire tome box. "I'm not sure 'sarcastic' is the tone I want, then. Link's in the opposite boat, I don't know how much of his personality would come through. Kirby can copy my style exactly, but his regular writing I can't distinguish from scribbles. I'm not sure the Lens of Reading could translate. And that almost exhausts the people I've made Supports for."

"Ah, I gotcha. It would be awkward for your first experience with somebody to be, 'Hey, can you write down intimate conversations for me? I promise it's not for anything weird.'" She propped herself up on a broken spearshaft. "So, out of those people, whose flaws are you going to be able to overlook?"

"I think I've got someone in mind," I said, locating a Goddess Statue and propping it up. "They're clever, and come up with offbeat solutions to problems. They aren't concerned with appearances, but do care about making other people happy. That demonstrates a lot of compassion. They can also help push people toward having a conversation without bullying them."

"Sounds like a good group of traits to have," she said, a proud smile on her face. "Someone after my own heart."
"Most importantly, they're adaptable. Between their own past tragedy and getting used to Smash, they've shown the ability to get up on their feet easily."

"Heh. If I didn't know any better, I'd say you were talking about me."

"I am." I lit up the reading light on the Goddess Statue, casting a ring of light past its shadow onto the wall. Daisy lost her balance and fell to the floor.

"Ah, Robin!" came the voice of Palutena from nothing. "Excellent signal! Very unambiguous! So, you figured out who you'd get to help you?" She paused. "Is it Daisy, then?"

"If she wants to," I said, helping her up. "Do you think you'd like to? It's up to you."

Daisy pressed her lips together. "If I say no, what happens?"

I shrugged. "Well, I'd feel a little disappointed, but it's your choice. If you don't want to, don't let me stop you."

"Well, it's not that, it's just... Why me, specifically?"

"Like I said, you're clever, compassionate, assertive, and you adapt easily."

"Do you really think I'd be a good fit?"

I shook my head. "I realize this is sudden. You don't have to give me an answer right this instant. I've already made the mistake of not giving someone space once here, I don't need to make it twice."

"For what it's worth," Palutena said, "I don't think this is a half-bad idea. I guess my Luigi guess wasn't too far off, huh?"

Daisy looked down for a second. "I think I'm going to need a little bit of time before I say yes."

"Of course," I said. "In the meantime, I can still help you with the cake."

But, she shook her head. "I'm going to need some time. Would you mind if I gave you a job and left you to take care of it? I just need a few more things by this point."

I said I wouldn't mind at all, and she gave me my mission: Locate a still and sugarcane to make rum.

Chapter End Notes

I am officially out of buffer! Hope you liked the regular updates.

I hadn't planned this at first. The exact moment it happened was when I wrote Lucina/Daisy C, and it turned into Robin/Daisy C. The idea of multiple writers didn't even occur to me until a ways after, though. The ways writing can surprise you, huh?

Enter Leaf! Logically speaking, Red and Leaf have the same mother, so they could be siblings. Also logically, since Red was introduced first, Leaf should be the younger sister... but that would mean she'd be younger than the vaguely-ten-year-old Red. I don't really know how write that kind of relationship, so she's his big sister, instead.

The Sevii Islands are so named because legend has it they were created in seven days.
There are thirty-two canonical islands separated into seven groups, numbered One Island through Seven Island, as well as Navel Rock (housing Ho-Oh and Lugia, event-only) and Birth Island (housing Deoxys, event only), for a total of 34. Eight Island is an invention for this fic. (Side note, did anyone else ever have trouble pronouncing "archipelago" as a kid? I always thought it had a "ch" sound, but it's a "k" sound.)

In Japan, a common pick-up line is asking whether or not someone is familiar, with the implication that they have met in a past life. (I think. I can't find corroborating info, so take this with a grain of salt.) Also in Japan, their break between grades is in March, and their high school takes up the last three years of schooling. Leaf is therefore approximately 15 here.

...And since I am a complete Pokémon nerd, I will stubbornly insist upon Red remaining mute, despite my prior statement that no character will not communicate. I'm glad text-to-speech exists, since it gives me an out while keeping the spirit of his muteness. (If you noticed, Leaf took the lead and left places for Red to speak.) I definitely will be dialing back Red's dialogue during intense moments, though how often it will happen, I don't know yet.
Notice of Progress

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Smash Entry 36
Sat. July 21, 18
Notice of Progress

With assistance from Lucina and Chrom, I have found a still in the Ragna Ferox basement - nearby the Khans' rooms, specifically - and cleaned it, and after asking Lucina if she'd ever seen sugar cane, she remarked that Link apparently had some. I challenged him to a Smash and we are currently riding on horseback to where it can be purchased.

I have purchased sugarcane, and am currently researching how to distill rum.

I have been informed by Palutena, at Daisy's request, that I am to accompany her Monday to lunch at Princess Peach's Castle. I have made enough rum for this endeavor.

An unforeseen issue has occured. Owing to this, it will take until late tomorrow for a usable amount of rum to be produced.

Smash Entry 37
Sat. July 21, 18
Daisy/Luigi Bond
Greninja/Pokémon Trainer C
Notice of Progress
Author: Daisy

[I received this entry on Monday, July 23. I have inserted it into its proper place, and made corrections and clarifications as necessary.]

After I got home yesterday, I needed to calm down, so I went to dinner with Luigi. He noticed I was just picking at my food, so I told him about what Robin asked me to do.

"Well, do you want to?" he asked me.

"I don't know. I mean, it's not like I'm against helping people get closer to each other, but am I really the right person for the job? I've seen him just write everything down like it's nothing. I've never even made a diary before. Can I do all of that?"

Luigi pushed a napkin toward me. "Why not try it right now?" he said. "Just write down everything we talk about over dinner."

So, I did it. But I looked over all my notes, and I don't know. I don't think I talked about anything interesting enough. We did agree to go ingredient hunting tomorrow, though, since [Kapp'n] makes stops over here. And I made sure to tell Luigi that he couldn't tell Peach what I brought back because it's going to be a surprise. Side note: it is really tough to write on a moving bus. I saw Robin doing that, too, and I just don't get how!

[Robin's Note: Cherche and Gerome's tendency to talk during flying exercises have prepared me for writing in nearly any motion at or below the speed and dexterity of a wyvern.]
Well, we took the bus back over to Lumiose City, since I'm still looking for some other things for my cake. Honestly, I'm starting to think I should try to do more than just a cake. So, I got some other ingredients together, and I'll make it lunch instead of just dessert. The problem is, they don't sell meat here! I guess the Pokémon count as meat... I don't really want to think about that, though. I need to find some fish, now.

Luigi and I started talking while we waited for the bus. He said, "So, what are you going to do with all of these?" He picked an artichoke out of my bag. "I don't think I've ever seen one of these things before in the pictures of Sarasaland you've shown me."

"Well, no, but they do grow near Lake Lamode, back home. You know, the Lake Kingdom?" He nodded. "Okay, so I got to try some one day, and I found out they taste really great! And with rhubarb, they're even better." I gave a bit of a huff. "Too bad I've got no idea where to get that. It's so pretty, too!"

"You can find it!" Luigi said, putting up his fists. "I know you can!" He's always helping me like this, and he never complains. I'm really grateful to him.

"I still need some special spices, too. Things like ginger... and I'd still like to find that star anise. Maybe there'll be some in another city?"

Luigi nodded and opened his mouth to say something, but he stopped! Because where we were sitting was suddenly attacked by somebody throwing something at it! A few somethings, actually! There were some brown blurs that flew in front of us, and the hit the wall behind us and fell to the ground after they broke into a bunch of pieces. I looked over them, and they looked like... little seed pods. A special smell came up from them - it was star anise! Whoever threw it at us, they had something I needed. "Where did that come from?" I said.

"I think they came from over there," Luigi said, and he pointed over to an alleyway behind the Pokémon Center. He had to swallow. "Stay behind me, Daisy. I don't want you to get hurt." Oh, Luigi's always doing things like that for me, keeping me safe even if I can see his hands shaking. If he keeps this up, I might actually fall for him!

I'm joking, of course. Luigi and I are already dating.

As we walked into the alley, Luigi held me close and didn't walk too fast for me. It wasn't too tough, since I was wearing flats, but if I were wearing heels, I would have had a lot more problems. Good thing I wasn't, right? Especially since another couple of star anises flew at us. We ducked underneath them and Luigi ran forward with me to find out what was going on.

Well, as it turns out, the alleyway had a big, blue frog in it. It had a big pink thing [it's tongue] wrapped around its head, and in its hands were the pods of star anise. According to Luigi, this was Greninja, but why he was throwing them at us, I couldn't have told you... until it started trying to run away. As Luigi tried walking closer to it, it made what looked like a star anise pod out of glowing blue water [Water Shuriken] and threw it right at us! And when we fell onto the ground, it hopped up onto one leg, with the other one just hanging there, and leapt over a building.

Whatever was going on, I didn't really know, but I do know that its leg was probably hurt. "Luigi, you need to follow it!" I said. "I'll try to find the herb shop and meet up with you!"

He nodded and did his super-special kicking jump up to the roofs of the buildings. Meanwhile, I ran out and tried to find Vernal Avenue in the net of streets this city was. Why did it even need to be so confusing, anyway?! I think I wound up wandering around for twenty minutes before I finally found the shop. And on the way, I ran into Red.
"Why were you running?" he said. "You look flustered."

I tried to explain things as quickly as I could... then I tried explaining things at a speed Red could understand. He got it that time.

"I'm coming, too," he said. "Greninja's panicking because of an injury. It's a common response for Pokémon who have been without their Trainer for a long time."

"Does Greninja," I said between pants, "have a Trainer?"

"He emerges from a Pokéball during Smashes, he must." It made sense to me. Red bought something called a Revival Herb [Revival Herb. Item. Used on Pokémon. Revives from fainting, but inflicts Atk-10.] and we ran to where Luigi and Greninja were going, the Lumiose Tower.

Red ran to the entrance and Luigi and I pushed Greninja that way. Then, he took a leap and tackled Greninja to the ground! It looked pretty effective. Greninja slipped out of his grip, though, so he took out a Pokéball and summoned(?) a giant green toad monster with a smelly flower growing out of its back! [Venusaur, presumably.] And with its magic vines, Greninja got wrapped up and tied down.

Then, Red kneeled down in front of Greninja's leg and broke the leaves of the Revival Herb up. I think they smelled worse than [Venusaur]. He crushed them and put them into a cloth wrap. Then, he tied them good and tight onto Greninja's leg. After he stood up, he said, "Looks like Focus Blast. What happened, did you get hit by one of Mewtwo's attacks?"

Greninja looked down at its leg and nodded. Then, he looked at his hand and found the star anise he was still holding. I'm pretty sure he was really confused, because his head started bobbling and he started blinking like crazy.

"Wait, how did he buy that?" I said. "When I went yesterday, the herb shop lady said that somebody bought all the star anise."

"Pokémon can use money." ...He said that like it was no big deal! "He probably thought they could be used as Grass-type shuriken. Pokémon get a little stir-crazy when their Trainer stops giving orders." He returned [Venusaur] to its ball. "I'd argue it's some kind of cruelty."

"It sounds like it," I said. "Well, don't let me keep you from the rest of your day."

Red nodded. "Greninja, would you like to come with me?"

Greninja's eyes lit up. He looked down at his hand, and passed the star anise to Luigi, then clambered on four legs to Red's side as they walked away.

Luigi smiled as he handed it to me. "Well, what did I tell you? We'd find it eventually!"

He was right. And since he believed in me, I gave him a kiss on the nose. "We've still got a few more things to find, Luigi!" I said, rolling up my sleeves. "Are you ready to keep looking?"

"Okey-dokey, Daisy! Let's-a go!"

We may not have found much else today, but I think I got enough done. I really hope this works for Robin. Like I told him, I've never done this before.
The still had been running for most of the day, and I had made an entire bottle of rum for Daisy to use. At this point, I had already resolved myself to making no other progress in a Support today. As should be obvious from my heading, I was mistaken.

Sitting in the audience of Arena Ferox, I bore witness to a Smash between Kirby and Dedede. I'd been rooting for Kirby, and my faith was rewarded in his victory. As the applause faded, and the two of them did not return to where they were before, I realized that they were to Support here. Leaping from the stands and using Elwind to soften my landing as I'd done before, I made my way over to them. "Welcome to Ragna Ferox!"

"Ah... huh." Dedede raised an eyebrow. "You know, I wasn't exactly expectin' this. Hope I didn't catch your teleportin' problems, after all."

"I get the feeling there's a reason for this. Did either of you need to talk to me?"

Dedede squinted into the middle distance, then snapped his fingers. "That's right! I've got some stuff for ya. It's back at Castle Dedede... that we ain't at. Well, that don't work, huh?"

"I can get it, Dedede!" Kirby said, pulling out his cell phone. "I'll bring it so fast, you won't even miss me!" He ran to the exit of the building and presumably hopped onto a Warp Star, since its twinkling hum grew loud, then quiet once more.

Dedede smiled. "He's been a lot more eager to please recently. I don't exactly know what's got into 'im, but I've been likin' it."

"Does it have something to do with friendship? The last time I met him, he seemed rather focused on it."

His sucked in a breath. "Ooh, yeah. Man, I thought he worked that out of his system already. Well, Meta Knight's gonna wanna know about that. Good on ya for lettin' me know."

"Of course... but what exactly is the issue?"

"It's a long story that I ain't gonna go into. But makin' it short, Kirby can make these things called Friend Hearts. Charms the socks off anybody who gets hit by one. He calls it makin' friends, but..." The statement seemed to pain him slightly. "I've been brainwashed enough times to know what that's like."

"It sounds like a a bad thing, then. Had he used on you often?"

Dedede waved a hand. "Oh, nah, nah, nah. Kid's not that kinda guy. He used one on me once to patch me up after I got hit by a nasty one. Since it wore off, he never did it again." He looked up to the ceiling. "Happened when Dreamland was in trouble again, too. Kirby saves the world like it's nothing, even if he's the one was puts it there sometimes, too. Sometimes, I start wantin' to know how that goes. After all, I ain't much of a hero. I just had to learn to clean up my own messes."

The sound of a Warp Star stopped him from talking any more. Kirby then proceeded to break through the Arena Ferox ceiling and crash-land onto the arena. "I'm back!" he shouted, a smile on his face.

"Well, at least the air won't get much colder," I said, looking at our new skylight. "So, what did you have that you needed to get to me so... quickly?"
"It's vegetables!" Kirby said. "They're leftovers from the Gourmet Race!"

"Oh, right. Your Gourmet Race. (Ent. 4) Well, thank you both."

"It was Dedede's idea!" Kirby said.

"Hey, it was my idea, too!" Dedede's face froze. "Uh, I mean, yeah. I figured that you were the next best candidate, since the Waddle Dees eat like birds. Myself excepted, of course." He patted his stomach.

"Ah, well, thank you, then, Dedede. What kind of vegetables are they?"

"Mostly stuff I tried and didn't like," Dedede said with a laugh and another pat of his stomach. "There's one in there that's really sour - blech! Can barely taste it, an' I still taste way too much. Anyway, Kirby swallows all his stuff whole, so by the time I came up with it, he didn't have anything left. It's just my leftovers for now. I'll pick 'em up if you can show me where to put 'em."

"Well, I tried tidying up the storage room. I'll be able to grab them from the Convoy that way. This way." We walked over to the storage room. "I must say, I'm surprised that you're willing to carry them, Dedede. I would have thought it would be Kirby."

"Haha! What Kirby wouldn't drop on the ground, he'll eat as a snack on the way." He hefted the crate. "I had this thing overfilled at the castle. Now, it's barely full!"

"Kirby, you weren't gone five minutes!" I said.

Kirby smiled. "Dedede calls it a healthy appetite!"

"Nah, that's just gluttony - and I'd know that better'n nobody else!"

I opened the door to the storage room and directed Dedede where to set it down. "That should work. I'll get these to Daisy as soon as I can."

"Wow!" Kirby said, looking at some of the disused weapons. "What a collection! Can I try a few of them to see what kind of Copy Abilities they'd give me?"

Seeing nothing wrong with it, and finding the place to be truly cluttered with weapons with so few uses remaining in them, I agreed.

"Alright then!" Dedede clenched his fist. "Let's play the Copy game!" The Copy game, as he described it, was a game they played when Kirby found many different things to use his Copy Ability on. The object was to guess correctly more times than not what the Ability would be. "Jus' a little something to pass the time, y'know?" said Dedede, scratching his head, seemingly embarrassed.

To begin with, Kirby Inhaled a Bronze Sword, easy enough to replace. As Dedede and I both thought, Kirby gained the Sword ability. Next was an Arcfire tome; where Dedede had guessed Fire, I decided it could possibly be Leaf. I had been incorrect, and Dedede correct. "See, you psyched yourself out, Robin," he said with a pat on my back. "Kirby's a pretty simple guy; what you see is what you get with him."

I nodded. "Perhaps a blank book would have been Leaf. Or nothing, too - that could have been it."

The next thing was an Iron Axe with a chipped edge. Cutter, Cutter, and Cutter. An easy one; the same for the Steel Spear with the broken shaft, turning into the Spear ability. So far, so simple.
Next, however, he grabbed the last piece of an old batch of Gaius's Confection. This batch had been strawberry-and-orange-flavored, and made as a glass-like candy. It was a toss-up between Ice and Stone to me, and Artist for Dedede. I was correct this time, the candy turning Kirby to his Stone ability.

Following that had been a Blessed Bow. Dedede informed me that Kirby had the Archer ability, so against my better judgement, I agreed. Like when the Robobot had scanned Pit, however, my Blessed Bow created Cupid Kirby.

Next, an old Dragonstone that Nowi and Nah had both outgrown by the time we found Dragonstones+. "Stone!" Dedede said. "Definitely!"

I contemplated it. "I'll say... Dragon."

Dedede looked at me. "Dragon? I don't think Kirby has that Ability, Robin."

"Are you sure? Fire breathing, flying, claw attacks... those are all things Kirby can do with his other Abilities, right?" Kirby looked upward into the air. "I don't see why they can't be combined into one Ability."

Dedede shrugged. "Well, if that's what you're goin' with. Kirby, go on and eat it."

Kirby did so, and sat there for a moment, face neutral. The space on his head where his hats go glowed for a moment, bulged out. A strange lump emerged from his head and shaped itself into a scaly blue face, two long whiskers sprouting from its scarlet nose and trailing down. Its eyes, yellow and slitted, shone fiercely as the glow faded. From the back, two small webs of wing popped out.

And so, Kirby gained the power to change into Dragon Kirby.

"Well, this doesn't happen too often!" Dedede said. "I ain't never seen it before in my lifetime, at least! Looks like you were right on the money, Robin! Dragon Kirby it is!"

Kirby smiled widely. "I can't wait to try this one out!" He pulled me into a hug. "Thank you, Robin! I never would have thought about my Copy Abilities like that!"

I smiled and reciprocated his hug. "Sure. So, would you like to end the game, or...?"

"Hm? Oh, no, we can keep going." The Copy Ability popped from his head as a star and bounced around a bit before shattering. "I just need to inhale a snake or something to get that one back, right? I can do that!"

"I'll let Meta Knight know, kid," he said. "He'll probably be able to make a real nice Copy Essence for it." He looked at me and shook his head. Presumably, he realized a "snake or something" wouldn't be quite the same as a dragon, like I did. "Alright, what's next?"

Kirby's next choice had been Valflame. For obvious reasons of it being a historical relic, I could not allow him to eat that one.

"Ah, no, not that one, either!" I said as Kirby picked up another particular book. "I don't even know why that one was in that box. Let me take that," I said as I took it from his hands, perhaps a touch too harshly. "I'll be some time finding a proper place for this. Go ahead and keep playing while I'm gone, but only use the weapons and items, not tomes." I had thought that it would be best to limit their destruction to things which had no magic in them, since they couldn't sense it.

That was a mistake. When I had returned, the things which were now missing were:
I was particularly cross about the last of these. (Though, the Master Seal wasn't inexpensive, either.) "It's going to take me all day to make more rum."

"I'm sorry, Robin," Kirby said, eyes downcast. "I won't inhale your bottles of rum anymore."

"In his defense, he doesn't know what alcohol looks like," Dedede said. "Neither did I, or I woulda figured you'd still want it. I don't drink, though, so..."

"It's alright. I can't get mad at you over an honest accident. I'll just need more sugar."

Kirby nodded. "I'll be back in just a second." He pulled out his cell phone.

"Kirby, make sure not to bust another hole in the ceiling!" I shouted after him, but I have no clue if he heard me. Dedede teleported back, and I was left waiting for sugar.

Chapter End Notes

First off, I did say No Romance in my tags. I am holding myself to that. Romance will not, nor will it ever be, the focus. However! Background relationships, as far as I'm concerned, are perfectly acceptable as things to be mentioned in passing. Canonically, a few of these people are married, anyway. Avoiding mention of romance altogether would be both a pain and a disservice.

As it turns out, birds don't have very fine senses of taste, or smell. And the common expression, "eats like a bird", doesn't really make much sense when you consider that, relatively, a bird can eat significant portions of its entire body weight in a single meal. Sure, absolutely, it's a small amount, but not to them. (Also, they shouldn't drink alcohol... because they have such low body weight, that is.)

Okay, so I made up a new Copy Ability. And since we've already got Fire, Wing, Animal, and Whip, I doubt we'll ever see a Dragon Kirby... but then again, that's the same thing I'd say about Archer (Cupid), Cupid (Wing), Artist (Paint), Staff (Spear), Poison (Water), Beetle(Suplex-to-Backdrop), Metal (Stone), and the original strange double-up, Plasma (Spark).
Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Smash Entry #38 39
Mon. July 23, 18
Daisy/Peach A
Author: Daisy

I don't know how Robin managed to come through even more than he already had, considering he already brought me the rum I needed. Then, he showed me a box of vegetables he said Dedede gave him, and he asked me if there was anything I could use. After I rooted around in it for a bit, I found something really special: rhubarb. Just what I needed. But, I want to do this on my own. Robin's helped me enough.

So instead, I got Waluigi to help me, in exchange for a seat at the table, too. "At least you've got enough sense to get somebody who actually knows how to cook to help you," he said. "You're trying to make lunch for four people without anybody else in the kitchen? And people think I'm crazy!"

[Robin's Note: The four people Waluigi is talking about are myself, Peach, Luigi, and Daisy.]

"Are you done, or do you need another minute or two?"

"Hmm." He stuck his hand underneath his chin. "Nah, I'm good for now. What's your plan?" I told him my plans for my lunch, and started to explain how to make each of them, but he stopped me. "I've been to Sarasaland, you don't have to tell me how to make anything."

I was a little put off, but nodded. "I didn't know you were ever in Sarasaland," I said as we washed up.

"You don't know a lot of things about me, Daisy."

"Yeah, because you never tell me anything about you! Whenever I ask, you always change the subject!"

"Yeah, and?"

I rolled my eyes. "Never mind. Let's just get cooking." Same Waluigi as always. At least I know how to get him on my side.

And man, it was a good idea to have him with me in the kitchen. If I didn't know any better, I'd say he worked in a kitchen at one point, because he kept things running really smoothly. I feel like there were times where I needed to do something like chop onions, and Waluigi had already chopped them for me and handed me the cutting board. The taps were turned on when I needed to wash my hands after touching raw meat, and by the time I was back at the cutting board, it had been switched so the meat wouldn't contaminate the veggies. Little things like that, you know.

The first thing to go out was the tea - served in Pyrapti style, really strong and with beet sugar - absolutely never cane. It was pretty tough to make without the special tea pot, but Waluigi managed to rig something together a while back for it. Apparently, he likes Pyrapti tea, too.
"Oh, my!" Peach said, covering her mouth as she took a sip of it. "I don't think I'm used to the intensity of this flavor."

I smiled. "Now you see why I take my tea black, huh? You Mushroom Kingdom folks make great milk tea, but when it comes to something to really perk you up, nothing beats Pyraptea!" Leaving them no doubt stunned at my wit, I went back into the kitchen. [Robin didn't get the pun, since it was in Mushroomese. After clarifying, I had him translate the joke like this. I hope people will still get it.]

[Robin's Note: I'm sorry, Daisy. Puns do not translate well between languages.]

Next up, I used the veggies from Robin to make a salad, artichokes and rhubarb, like they have in Chai. From what I read somewhere, they would work nicely together since artichokes have something that makes foods less sour. Apparently, though, it's still really strong, since Peach had to take two tries at the first bite.

"This is a very intense flavor, too. It's very bright!"

"Too much for you?" I said.

"No, I - " She cleared her throat. " - I'll just have to get used to it, that's all. It seems that Sarasaland has very powerful flavors."

"Well, we're pretty varied out there, yeah. Don't worry, though - the next dish is going to be more suited for you."

"Oh!" Luigi leaned forward. "What is it?"

"That's a surprise!" I put a finger up to my mouth. "But don't worry, you'll like it."

"I'll like it, no matter what, Daisy!"

Waluigi walked into the room and tapped my shoulder. "Why am I the only one in the kitchen? If you've got time to chat, you've got time to make sure your food comes out right."

"Right, right, sorry. I'll be right there."

"Good. And I'm just about done with helping you, since you insisted on making a whole cake yourself. Don't forget about making enough food for everybody at the table, either."

"Right, I remember our deal." I turned back to them. "Sorry, guys. I'll just be a little bit longer."

"Of course!" Peach said. "Please, take all the time you need! I know that good food takes time to prepare!"

"Will do!" I went back to the kitchen and worked on the main dish: pastel de pescado, made like they do in Muda. Then, I mixed up the cake batter, and put in the cherimoya and the bananas. The only thing left was the rum glaze, and I got that mixed up and ready for when the cake was ready. And after I did that, I brought out the four pastels I made.

I forgot about me needing to eat, obviously. It's a good thing Luigi was willing to share. He's such a good person!

"Oh, my!" Peach said that again as she took the first bite. "I've never had something like this before! It's quite heavenly!"

"Thanks. It's a pretty middle-class dish, so they wouldn't try to serve it at royal banquets and stuff."
Sometimes, you just want a nice fish pie, though, you know?"

"It's really is fish, isn't it? But it's got such a nice flavor. It doesn't taste like just fish at all!"

"That's Sarasan spices for you!" I'm pretty sure I smiled. "You can make anything taste like anything else as long as you season it right. If I wanted to, I could have put a heavy pinch of paprika in it and made it taste like sausage."

"Oh. That would have been surprising, to say the least. Do you prefer it like that?"

"Not really. There's a time and a place for sausage flavor, you know? No, what I like is when you add just a little bit of sugar."

"Sugar? In a main course?" She looked down at the pastel. "I didn't think it tasted sweet."

"No, it was there to give it a little more punch, that's all. See, it's pretty common knowledge in Chai that adding sweet to fatty helps cut through it and make it lighter. Of course, they've also got plenty of spicy food over there." I laughed. "You haven't ever tried some of Sichu Province's food - you'll be able to sleep without a coat in the glaciers after you ate a whole day's worth of those!"

"And do you like those?"

I shook my head a bit. "I can take or leave them, really. Some of my favorite dishes come from all over Sarasaland. I'm not really all that picky. That really helped when I started visiting here more often."

"It did?" Peach's face fell a little bit. "So, Mushroom Kingdom cuisine was something you had to get used to?"

"Yeah." I shrugged. "You've got plenty of things you make that I turned out to really like. One thing, though."

She definitely arched up her back when I said that. "What is it?"

I scratched at my chin. "I'm not really that big a fan of 1-Up Mushrooms. You guys from the Mushroom Kingdom can't get enough of them, though, so I guess I had to pick up a taste for them."

She looked down when I said that. I think I made her upset, so I started to say something.

"Does anyone else smell smoke?" Robin said.

"My cake!" I said, and then I ran for the kitchen! Good news: it wasn't ruined.

Bad news: it did get burnt. Pretty badly, actually.

But good news again: after I scraped the burnt parts and poured the glaze on, you couldn't tell at all that I'd cut into it!

Worse news: it collapsed. Apparently, you're not supposed to pour glaze on a cake until it's cooled at least a little.

Okay news: it still tasted alright. I could still give it to everybody. So, I did. Peach got the first slice.

"You've made a wonderful cake," Peach said. "And next time, you'll be able to make it even better."

"Maybe I bit off a bit more than I could chew here," I said as I served everybody else. "Probably
should have just done lunch or cake, do you think?"

"I think you did very well, actually!" Peach smiled. And Peach has a really warm smile when she really means it. "I know that diplomats would be able to get a great picture of Sarasaland, no matter where they're from if you served this to them!"

"Well, that's good to hear. I'm glad you like it."

"Of course I like it! How could I not." She stopped smiling again. "I just wish I knew a little more about Sarasaland before I agreed to this."

"Huh?"

"I think I've made a bit of a fool of myself, asking all these questions about your country that I should have known already - and about you, too. I fear I'm not a very good friend."

"Peach..." I put my hands on her shoulders. "Now, you listen to me. I was doing this so that I could apologize to you for not being a good friend."

She looked at me with confusion. "What do you mean, Daisy? You're great to me."

"A better friend would have been able to tell that you were holding so much back about Bowser. I made assumptions, and I was worried I hurt you."

She smiled sadly. "Well, if I were a better friend for you, I would have noticed the things you don't like, and I would have tried to find out more about your culture."

I looked down. "Well, how about we just say that we can help each other out when it comes to things like this, and try not to keep quiet so much?"

She put her hand to her heart. "Of course. You mean a lot to me, Daisy."

I pulled her into a hug.

But, of course, Waluigi had to ruin the moment by clearing his throat. "C'mon, you two, you're ruining my appetite."

I glared at him. "Who asked you, Waluigi?"

"Well, excuse me from wanting to actually eat your lumpy cake before it turns into disgusting mush. Hey, Green Guy. Back me up here."

Luigi looked at him as if he were crazy. (Honestly, I think he might be. No, maybe that's not really nice to say. If I'm going to helping Robin more, I should cut back on the insults.) "You know my name, Waluigi."

"Whatever. Robin?"

"It's not my place to control what people do," he said. "Besides, nothing's stopping you from eating the cake."

"If I try to eat something sweet with something that saccharine in front of me, I'll get a cavity."

I was annoyed. "Alright, fine. I guess he's got half of a point. Let's finish the cake, and then we can bother Waluigi as much as we want."
"Hey, I never signed up for that!"

After we finished eating and chased Waluigi off (and he shouted back "There's gratitude for you!")
we all sat down in the lobby for some tea. Then, when we had a free moment, I handed Robin my
journal pages, and he copied them down.

So, it looks like this is officially what I'm going to be doing while I'm here! It'll be good practice for
diplomacy back home, at least.

Smash Entry 40
Mon. July 23, 18 3:30 PM
Author: Robin

After Daisy handed me the entries numbered 37 and 39, I immediately copied them into the Support
Log. Then, I realized there was an issue with pulling Daisy into service without her full knowledge
of why exactly I was doing this. I asked Peach if there was a private place Daisy and I could discuss
things, and she pointed us to a quiet room.

"Daisy, I haven't been entirely forthcoming about my motives for doing this," I began.

"You haven't? Don't you want to help everyone become closer?"

"I do, but I didn't for a long time after arriving. Since everyone hasn't exactly been the most
forthcoming on their issues, you probably already noticed."

It took her a moment to agree. "You know, now that you mention it, that does make sense. Well,
why did you start?"

To answer her question, I handed her the Lens of Reading and turned to Smash Entry 1. "Read it for
yourself."

She did. "So, Master Hand is asking you to do it? Huh. Well, I guess that makes sense. He must be
really busy, since he hasn't made an appearance since I got brought here."

I blinked. "I... I suppose that's true. The main method by which they interacted with us was through
the Classic, and the last one was June 12th."

"That's the same day as your first journal, right?" She adjusted her grip on the Lens. "Right. So,
nothing since then. And, I mean, you did ask for that, right?"

"I did. The Classics would have been frustrating to work around, but..." Thinking about it now, I'm
struggling to remember who it was that brought up the Classics in the first place. Had it been Master
Hand? I would have to ask Palutena. Hopefully, her divine memory was better than mine.
"Regardless, I hope I can count on your continued assistance, even despite you knowing this."

"Why would this bother me?" She handed the Lens back. "From what I just read, the big hand seems
like a perfectly nice fella."

"The ones who participated in this tournament for more than a few years might disagree. As far as
I'm aware, this may be the first time he's fraternized with one of the fighters." Events happening
before my time point to them being on the same side at one point, but I can only assume it was a
tenuous partnership.

"Hm." She nodded. "Well, lucky, I haven't got anything against him, so don't worry about it!" She
flinched. "Oh, but if you want to bring anybody else in on this..."

"Exactly. I am worried that others' prejudice would color their perception of my mission."

"Well, obviously, I can keep a personal secret." She tapped her chest with a closed fist. "You can count on me, Robin! I won't tell anybody without you giving the go-ahead."

I nodded, and took out a Goddess Icon to call Palutena... who had apparently been napping. "Nn, Robin." She stretched. "I wasn't expecting you to call. Give me a second to wake up."

"Why does a Goddess need to sleep?" I asked.

"Why does a human? Some things, we just don't know." She stretched once more, and made a sputtering noise. "There, I'm up now. What can I help you with?"

"I wanted to ask if you had any suggestions about who we should try to Support next."

"Hm, let me see here." She touched her staff to the ground, and it echoed through the projection of her voice. "I think our best bet now is going to be writing down a meeting that was going to take place already, don't you?"

"You mean two people are going to meet soon? I hope you haven't been - "

"I wasn't eavesdropping, don't worry. I've just noticed that, for some reason, a lot of psychic interference tends to pop up on my radar around Smashville as of late. I suspect it could be Mewtwo getting in some secret training with another psychic."

"I see. When do you expect it to happen again?"

"Thursday looks like a safe bet. I'll mark it on your calendar, if you'd like."

"That won't be necessary. I'll be able to remember."

"Well, I thought I would offer. I'd hate to tax your human memory."

I narrowed my eyes. "Were you really sleeping, Palutena?"

She laughed. "That's a Goddess's secret! Do you need anything else?"

"Oh, I've got something!" Daisy said. "I noticed that Robin had to scratch out a few numbers when he wrote down my journals. So, do you think you could tell him when I write something, so that he won't have to do that again?"

"No problem. Now, if you'll excuse me - " She yawned. " - I've got a nap to take." Not get back to, take.

I put the Goddess Icon away. "I'm pretty sure she was watching us."

"She didn't exactly make a secret out of it," Daisy agreed.

Chapter End Notes

I apologize for the long time between updates (We passed 4k hits! That's amazing, and
thank you all!), but recently I seem to have been afflicted with that most common ailment among artists: WiPitis. It is categorized by an inflammation in the number of works in progress the victim has created. Will I ever finish them? ...Well, I mean, if I do, you'll be able to find them on here, so... yeah, probably.

More to the point, though, we've got Daisy sign! I'm picturing here being used for two groups of people, mainly: the royalty, and people that are really into sports. Obviously, she'd probably take over for most of the Mario verse and probably Sonic too, though Robin, as a generalist and the main character, is going to be able to cover anyone and everyone. Her style seems to be slightly amateurish, since she isn't very experienced, but with her direct attitude, she can get along well with those among the cast that butt heads a lot.

I've actually got the plan for the next week and a half planned out, and then we get to the next newcomers' arc: Dracula's Castle. (Man, it's been a long time coming, huh?) ...Then, I've got to plan out the Supports that go into that one. I've got a good plan so far, but it could always use more polish, right? I'm expecting a minimum of thirty new entries in the Support Log by the time I'm done.
Pokémon Training

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Smash Entry 41
Thur. July 26, 18
Mewtwo/Robin C
Mewtwo/Ness C
Lucas/Mewtwo C
Lucas/Ness C
Author: Robin

Daisy and I, as well as Luigi at her request, made our way to Smashville in order to investigate the matter discussed in the previous entry. We arrived by bus, as committing to a Smash was likely to bother who I suspected was causing the psychic disturbance.

After confirming our objective, we split up in order to cover more ground; in addition, Daisy had asked me if I had any suggestions for Luigi's Supports, but I told her she was likely better able to recognize them than I was, having known him longer. As such, she is likely taking this opportunity to get to know some of the other Smashers and gauge their capacities as Supports for Luigi.

As for myself, I searched high and low around Smashville for the source. Finding myself stymied, I went to Town Hall and asked Isabelle if there was anything she could tell me.

"I understand, Robin! But, I don't think I can tell you. It's a private matter between one of our residents and his friend, and I can't help you look in on them. It wouldn't feel right!"

I nodded. "In that case, can you tell me any place I could find Mewtwo, so that I could talk to him about this? I'd hate to drop in on him unannounced."

"Ah, now that, I can do!" She walked over to a filing cabinet and pulled out a file written in Animalese, with Mewtwo's picture on it. "It says here he likes to go the secret beach to cool off at this time of day. You should be able to catch him right now!"

"Thank you, Isabelle. You've been a big help." I then left the building. I immediately reentered the building and asked for directions to the secret beach.

Mewtwo was indeed there, though the Elwind I'd launched to soften my landing surprised him. "What are you doing here?!" He assaulted my mind with his psychic power, slamming the thought into my head.

"I'm here to talk," I said after the sand stopped shifting beneath my feet. "I'd like to ask you how you are."

"I am fine. I was better without you here." He turned away. "You are tiring. Leave."

"I came here for a reason - "

"No, you are literally tiring. The extent of my psychic powers is so great as to cause actual brain trauma when unrestrained. Right now, you are likely experiencing a migraine headache. To speak to you any more will cause you great mental anguish."
I blinked slowly. "I'm not sure I understood that entire statement." The migraine was very difficult to work through, in my defense.

"Precisely." He shook his head. "Annoying humans. I was hoping to get some actual peace and quiet before Ness showed up." He turned to me and, putting his hand on my shoulder, teleported me back to the spot we were standing on. He blushed. "I will have to physically move you, then."

"Why didn't that work?" I said as he picked me up, supporting my upper back and legs.

"In my world, Teleport can only be used to move to the last location the user considered safe. This is my place." He glared at me. "I prefer when I am not disturbed here."

"Duly noted," I said, clutching my head. "I'll make sure not to bother you here, then. Now, you said Ness would be coming?"

"Unbelievable. You have a truly one-track mind, don't you?"

"Thank you for insulting me. I have plenty of tracks in my mind! It's just, your migraine took half of them out."

"If you'd like, I can just leave you on the beach."

I looked down - a bad idea, from the vertigo I got. "If you do that, I might not make it to the ground. Besides, that's your place, right? It's not fair of me to intrude on it."

I think he must have gasped. I have no clue why. "Then, I'll deposit you on the nearest bench and get you a bunch of bananas. They are apparently good at helping with migraines."

"Thank you." He did so, and floated off.


"I surprised Mewtwo."

He sucked in a breath. "Yeah, that's not something you're supposed to do. So, what brings you to this neck of the woods?"

"I could ask you the same thing." I sat up. "What brings you to Smashville?"

"Well, see, Mewtwo and I like to practice our PSI with each other, and today, I asked Lucas if we wanted to come and he said yes."

Lucas, clinging to Ness's side, waved hello sheepishly. I waved back.

"Sorry, he's kinda shy." Ness took a step away from him and Lucas straightened up his back. "I gotta thank you for putting the idea in my head to help Lucas talk to more people. I think he's been doing okay so far, too!"

Lucas looked down and blushed slightly. "I'm okay, I guess."

At that time, Mewtwo reappeared, levitating a bunch of bananas. The absurdity of the picture was slightly difficult not to laugh at for my addled mind. He then threw the bananas at my head. Somehow, I get the impression he was reading my mind.

"Mewtwo!" Ness took out a stag beetle and hurled it in Mewtwo's direction. He shouted and
teleported away.

"Do you frequently throw beetles at people?" I asked.

"Well, I already bought them, and they'd only sell for $4."

I ignored that that wasn't the point I'd been trying to make. "Well, don't let me keep you from what you'd be doing. I'm just here as an observer."

Mewtwo floated back, arms crossed and head turned away. "You know I don't tolerate bugs, Ness."

"And I don't tolerate you throwing bananas at people. So, I think we're even."

He sat down in lotus position. Mewtwo did the same, as did Lucas after picking up the bananas and handing them to me. As I understood it, they were going through a kind of meditation, likely to increase psychic focus.

I closed my eyes, and found myself in a void-like space with the three of them. "This is a surprise," I said.

Mewtwo looked at me. "This was an unintended consequence of leaving you nearby, perhaps also along with giving you your migraine."

"Oh, Robin!" Ness smiled and floated over to me. "I didn't know you were psychic, too!"

"He isn't." Mewtwo shook his head. "This is an entirely separate method of accessing our shared mental space, using some innate power of his."

I got the feeling I knew what power it was. "Well, I'm sorry to intrude. I can go, if you'd like me to."

"I think it'll be fine," Ness said. "I mean, I brought Lucas here, so it's only normal that Mewtwo got to bring a friend, too."

Mewtwo flew backwards. "Robin is not my friend! The first conversation we've ever had happened only a few minutes ago!"

"I've found friendships in shorter conversations," I said. "But, let's get back to the point. What are we supposed to do here?"

Ness floated back to where he had been. "Mostly, we try fighting each other. Since we're in our minds, no one really gets hurt! It's great practice for the Smashes."

"Indeed." Mewtwo nodded. "Ness's power is great, but his method needs polish. That is why we are here. As for Lucas - " Lucas physically shrank. " - Ness has asked me to evaluate his ability as I see fit. Would you like for me to try you, as well, Robin?"

"Considering I'm not a psychic? I think I won't have much to show you."

"Then, Ness and I shall begin." They let their legs fall and took battle stances. Mewtwo attacked first, throwing out a Disable and stopping Ness from teleporting. Ness, meanwhile, had exchanged his cap for a blond wig and thrown a PK Fire α. Mewtwo countered with a ball of water that glowed a deep blue, putting out the flames before they reached him. Ness then used PK Thunder α, weaving it into Mewtwo, who flinched from the attack.

Ness nodded and waited for Mewtwo to recover, his sudden hair turning back into his cap. "So, how was that?"
"You are doing admirably," he said. "But, you're still picturing Paula performing this move, instead of putting yourself into it. Allow me to test your PSI Magnet, then."

Ness nodded and started using it. Mewtwo then proceeded to use Confusion on it, and it dissipated harmlessly, breaking down when it touched the barrier and swirling into Ness's body. "This one you seem to have down pat, at least."

"Well, it's pretty defensive, so it just comes naturally to me." He smiled as the barrier disappeared. "I mean, for the longest time, the only attacking PSI I could use was Rockin. Paula's the one that knew these first, you know?"

"It is only reasonable. But all the same, you are capable of these powers, as well. Now, I ask that I be allowed to gauge Lucas's psychic power."

Lucas, who had only been watching up to this point, nodded nervously and switched places with Ness. "So, um. I can start how I think I should?"

"You may."

He nodded, then used some sort of defense-boosting PSI. Before Mewtwo could attack, though, a dog appeared and sniffed at Mewtwo's feet. "W-what on earth?!" The dog barked at Lucas, who seemed to understand, and disappeared.

"Oh, so Boney can do the same thing Jeff can!" Ness, having moved next to me, nodded appreciatively. "Good idea, Lucas!"

"What did that do?"

"Well, now Lucas knows Mewtwo's weaknesses." He shook his head. "I don't think he's got any moves to take advantage of that, though."

Mewtwo shook his head to restore his concentration. "Right. Now, my turn!" He created a Shadow Ball and hurled it at Lucas, who put up a PSI Magnet to absorb it. "You're quick. Let's fix that, shall we?" Mewtwo sent a Thunder Wave from the tips of his fingers and it wrapped around Lucas, paralyzing him.

Lucas performed some kind of Healing PSI - \( \beta \), according to Ness - and cured himself of the ailment. He then proceeded to use PK Freeze, and managed to freeze Mewtwo solid.

"Wow! He's up to \( \beta \) already, huh?" Ness said. "I don't I could ever get past \( \alpha \) for that one." Lucas then used PK Thunder and weaved it throughout Mewtwo's frame. "And he's all the way up to \( \gamma \) on Thunder! Man, I've got a lot of catching up to do, don't I?"

"I'm not quite familiar with the terminology," I said as the fight went on, "but it sounds like Lucas can use more powerful PSI than you. Do I have that right?"

"Yep! I'm so proud of him! And, I mean, it makes sense, you know? Where he's from has had a lot more time around PSI, so it probably would be more powerful."

"And where is he from?"

"The future, I think. He didn't really tell me too much, though. Lucas is a pretty quiet person."

Mewtwo tumbled back from the force of PK Fire \( \alpha \) and used Recover. "You are doing well so far. Now, show me your ultimate technique, if you would."
Lucas nodded and took a deep breath. He threw his hand into the air and shouted, "PK Love Ω!"

Suddenly, a dark presence loomed over the space we were in. I felt it make my hair stand on end. I will freely admit that I was incredibly scared at seeing what it was - a dragon, preparing a breath attack.

That was likely the reason I woke up, sweating and panting on the bench. The other three followed me out shortly after to make sure I was alright. And, aside from my worsening headache, I was.

Lucas let out a sigh of relief. "I'm so glad. I didn't want you to get hurt because of me."

"May I ask what troubled you so?" Mewtwo said.

I smiled, despite finding myself in very poor condition. "I saw a ghost, that's all. It's nothing to worry about." I clutched my head tightly. "I just feel like my head's about to explode."

"Perhaps we hold the remainder of our discussion outside of our minds, then." He turned to Lucas. "That was incredible, the way you handled yourself, and your sense of self is ironclad - you didn't have to picture anyone else to use those moves. That last attack was especially effective - if I hadn't used Amnesia right before it hit, I would have fainted on impact." He rubbed his own temple. "As it is, I'm hanging on by a thread."

"See, Lucas!" Ness patted his shoulder. "You're plenty strong enough to be here! You're even stronger than me!"

"And yet," Mewtwo said, "his technique is far rougher than even yours, Ness, perhaps due to his upbringing. It is strength and weakness both that separates you two. It is, however, nothing we can't work on."

"Hold on," I said. "Ness, did you imply Lucas didn't think he was strong enough to participate in this tournament?"

Lucas looked off.

"Well, that simply isn't true," Mewtwo said. "Frankly, I think you could beat anyone here if you had unfettered access to your psychic powers."

"We can just say the same about everyone here," I said as a counterpoint. "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. But, that's no reason to think you're doing poorly. I mean, look at me. I could handle all of us in a large-scale battle, but I'm not one of the better individual fighters."

Ness nudged him with his shoulder. "See, Lucas? You've got nothing to worry about."

After a second of hesitation, he nodded. "Thank you. I'll try not to get so down from now on."

"Alright." I lifted the slightly-bruised bananas Mewtwo had thrown at me earlier. "How about we celebrate with these?"

Mewtwo shook his head. "Thank you for the offer, but I'm no fan of bananas."

"I'm sorry," Lucas said, "bananas make me cry."

"Ah, are you allergic?" I said.

"No."
Before I could ask for an explanation, Ness pulled out a packet of ketchup. "I'll take one!"

"Ness, for your health and mine," Mewtwo said, "I am forbidding you from eating those together."

"Have you ever heard of banana ketchup?"

"That is made when you use bananas in place of tomatoes! It has nothing to do with putting ketchup on a banana! They're already bad enough!" He began to turn slightly green.

"You know, I think I'll just eat these myself," I said. I may as well save Mewtwo's stomach. Perhaps they'll settle mine, as well.

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Smash Entry 42
Thur. July 26, 18
Luigi/Pokémon Trainer C
Daisy/Pokémon Trainer B
Concerns Pichu.
Author: Daisy

Robin probably already said so, but we were looking for somebody in Smashville who could use psychic powers. I don't really know what to look for, though, so I asked him if I could maybe look for somebody to be friends with Luigi.

"Well, I'm not sure," he said. "I'm pretty sure you'd know more about what Luigi thinks than I would. You are his best friend, after all."

"I'm not his best friend, that's Mario," I said.

"Well, then, besides Mario, you're the one that knows him the best, right? I'm almost certain you would be able to tell a good choice faster than I could."

"So, what, should we split up, then?"

"Well, my focus is going to be split if we take care of things together," he said. "If you want, you can try talking to people on your own about Luigi. We just have to be ready for Kapp'n's pickup time."

"Got it, Robin! I'll take care of it!" I gave him a thumbs up and, with my arm around Luigi, we started looking around town.

Since I didn't know anybody around here, he and I looked around a bit, and we eventually wound up over by Leaf's house. I knocked on the door, and I heard her say, "It's open!", so we went right in.

"Sit down anywhere there's room!" she said, gesturing to chairs covered in papers and a couch covered in clean clothes. "Alright, I guess I need to make some." She laughed nervously. "I'm not used to there not being a cleaning service like at the dorms. And I mean, I keep enough of my bed clean to sleep on." She pointed over to it, and most of it was covered in papers, as well.

"So, how have you been?" I said, after we made a spot for ourselves.

"Oh, doing fine, doing fine. I just wrapped up another personal project." She held out a Pokéball. "This is my best Chikorita yet! Shiny, 5 IVs, plus Special Defense nature, and I'm raising her for clericing with Leftovers. I mean, I'd be better off using a lot of other species, sure, but Meganium's ability to use Aromatherapy is interesting enough for me to take a chance on it." I had trouble catching the rest of it. I hope that bunch of jargon makes more sense to Robin than it does to me.
"But I'm not used to getting commission on my breeding projects."

"Oh?" I sat down at the edge of her bed, making sure to leave enough room for Luigi. "What kind of project was it?"

"Well, I'm a Pokémon Breeder by nature, right? I like trying again and again until I can get the perfect Pokémon. But, before the tournament, after I got Ivysaur ready, right? That Master Hand guy came knocking on my door again. He said they needed another Pokémon for the whole thing, and they needed it on rush order." She got out another Pokéball, and out came a little tiny baby Pikachu! He retreated back over to Leaf’s leg and hid.

"Oh, how cute!" I said. "What's its name?"

"Well, I don't usually give my Pokémon nicknames, but if you mean its species, it's a Pichu." She smiled. "6 IVs and Timid Nature. Red thought I should keep going until I got Hasty, but really, the extra point of Attack doesn't matter too much if you're already using Volt Tackle. And I mean, I'd only use it myself in LC. Pichu isn't highly rated there, anyway." She continued using technical words that I didn't understand before offering us some tea.

"But yeah, anyway," she said, sitting on the arm of her couch, "that guy gave me and my mom something really useful: he's gonna pay for my next year of school! Whenever I get back, mom and I are going to have to go over our options, but he said he'd pay for anywhere, and I can even still train to be a better Trainer while I'm here!"

"Ah, like your brother?"

She shrugged. "Oh, he and I are on different levels completely. I've never won a Pokémon battle against him, even when he stacked things in my favor. He's that good. And I'm even one of the better battlers at Sevii Academy!" She smiled. "Maybe part of that's because he and I battle so much? I don't know."

"Well, it seems like you know a lot about your Pokémon battling."

"Oh, I do, don't get me wrong. It's just that Red can do all this stuff without needing to focus on it. He wouldn't even need that Pokédex if it didn't have text-to-speech!"

"It sounds like it! Is there anything he can't do?"

"Well, I mean, he's got nothing on me when it comes to math!" She smiled shyly. "I guess that's not much, huh?"

"No, that's plenty! You don't have to just be your brother's second best." I gestured to Luigi. "He isn't, so you don't have to be, either."

Luigi looked up from Pichu and looked at me. "Huh? What's going on?"

"Oh, I haven't introduced you to each other!" After I did that, I said, "But like I was saying, just like he doesn't have to be just Mario's player 2, you don't have to just be Red's older sister."

She smiled. "Thank you, Daisy. That does mean a lot to hear. For right now, though, I think it's getting a little bit late in the morning. I have to make sure Pichu gets his exercise in."

"I can help!" Luigi said. "I don't exactly feel right about sitting on the sidelines while Daisy does all
this work!"

So, we went outside and Luigi ran around with Pichu for a while until he got tired. He fell on the ground, panting hard. "This little guy's got some energy!" he said.

"Well, he does like sweets!" Leaf said. Robin, please tell me you can figure out what this had to do with anything. If not, sorry for the confusion!

[Robin's Note: Your guess is as good as mine, Daisy.]

Luigi took a bite of an orange to get some water back into his system, and offered part of it to Pichu. He ran back to Leaf's side and hid behind her leg again. "Oh." Luigi seemed a little bit disappointed.

"Sorry, Luigi!" Leaf picked Pichu up and walked over to him. "Like I said, he's Timid Nature. If you give me the pieces, I can feed him."

"Well, I know what it's like to be nervous about new things!" He placed the orange into her outstretched hand. "Mario had to drag me along sometimes when we were younger."

"Really? What did he drag you along to?"

"Well, plenty of parties, for one thing. Mario's always been more of a party-goer than I was - he even makes his own party games!"

"Oh, how interesting! Is he taking suggestions? I've heard there's this special game from Kalos that I thought might be fun to play. I think it's called Super Training?"

"I could get you in touch with him," I said.

"Only if it wouldn't put you out. I know that you and Robin are going to be busy for a while."

"It's not going to be a problem. Right, Luigi?"

"Of course it won't!" Luigi looked up with pride. "Mario's one of the easiest people to talk to about anything!"

"He can get kind of bullheaded sometimes, though," I added.

After a second thinking about it, he nodded. "He does sometimes, yes."

"Well," Leaf said, "I'm looking forward to it. I should probably let you get back to what you were doing, though."

"Oh, no, this is working out pretty well so far!" I said. "Maybe we could come back in a few days or so, so Pichu can get used to being around us?"

"That sounds great!" We said goodbye to each other after we made a few plans. Hopefully, Robin can use those, too. Maybe Palutena's doing her "I'm not actually watching you" thing and could tell him?

Actually, speaking of Robin, when I got back to him, I could only call him green around the gills. He had a pile of banana peels next to him. "Uh... are you okay, Robin?" I asked.

"I fear he is unwell," Mewtwo said. "Due to an accident earlier, he has gone through too much stimulation in too short a time. Perhaps you should head home."
"Yeah, maybe." Luigi and I walked him to the bus stop. "You gonna be able to keep everything down on the ride back?"

"I've dealt with worse conditions, and in worse condition." He shook his head. "I'll be fine." And he only messed up once! So he did really well, all things considered.

Chapter End Notes

A monstrous 4 Supports in a single entry! I'm not expecting to be doing that too often, but there you go. And luckily, it was between 4 people. Imagine if I'd need to use ll 8 slots in a unique way! (Though, wouldn't that just be four seperate entries?)

Man, Earthbound has an... eclectic collection of items, doesn't it? Stag beetles, handbag straps, pairs of dirty socks, a single snake that's more expensive than an entire bag of them, bags containing a whole Pokémon... (What do you mean, that's not what the Bag of dragonite is?) And those are just the battle items.

...Alright, I've got a confession to make. I don't know very much about the Pokémon competitive scene. I've just got a little bit of knowledge I picked up through osmosis. I've got very little clue whether or not what Leaf is saying is truly accurate - even if my gut is saying it probably is. If I made any mistakes in this text, feel free to correct me. (In-universe, I'll chalk it up to neither Robin nor Daisy knowing the third thing about Pokémon battling. (The first two points, of course, are that the point is to beat the other Pokémon, and that no one actually gets seriously injured by doing this.))
Royal Burdens

Chapter Notes

So, E3 '19 happened last Tuesday! The newest DLC characters have been announced! For how that’ll affect the fic, see the post-chapter Author's Notes. In the meantime...

**WOW! INCREDIBLE!**

I keep trying to figure out what else I want from Smash Bros, and I keep coming up blank. So, getting characters from Dragon Quest, as you might expect, is a miracle I wasn't expecting right about now. And Banjo? That's going to have some great implications for the Nintendo-Microsoft relationship, I think! Sadly, I've never played a Banjo game, but I'm still looking forward to it, make no mistake.

And in non-Smash news, Pokémon Home gives me feelings that I refuse to articulate in a G-rated fic! I'm still getting SwSh, but a lot of my enthusiasm has been sapped away from that tidbit they just slipped into the Treehouse. Like, that was a terrible way to do it. If you're gonna talk about outright removing half of the Dex from being usable in Gen 8, say it upfront. I hope this isn't permanent. (Actually, I'm hoping for a miracle and that the decision gets changed altogether, but let's not get crazy. I want to be able to use all my favorites if I have the choice, not just some of them. (Let's leave it at that, and **not bring this subject into the comments**, shall we? **I mean it.**)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Smash Entry 43
Sat. July 28, 18
Mewtwo/Robin B
Concerns Ness.
Author: Robin

I had intended to return to Smashville with Daisy. (Ent. 41) However, according to Palutena, an important matter kept her (Ent. 44), so she insisted I go on ahead of her. I took the bus to Smashville early in the morning, and met with Ness and Mewtwo, without Lucas. Curious, I asked why he hadn't come.

"Lucas got really tired the other day, that's all," Ness said. "He wanted to stay home and rest."

"Psychic training is difficult on the mind," Mewtwo said. "Frankly, I'm impressed you're back, Robin. Have you recovered fully?"

I shook my head. "I wouldn't say I'm able to take another of your psychic blasts, but I can handle myself alright."

"Do you think you'll be able to join us within our mindscape once more?"

"I can certainly try. It wouldn't be fair to either of you to tell you to do otherwise." I laid down on a nearby bench, taking a sign off of it beforehand saying it was in need of renovation. (I made sure to
check before I put my weight on it, of course, but it was perfectly sturdy.) I then closed my eyes and let myself be brought in. Having done it before by accident, it wasn't incredibly difficult.

Once we returned to that void-like plane, Mewtwo nodded. "If you begin to feel off, say so. I will summon a platform and send you home without delay."

"I think I'll be fine." I sat down on the empty air and nodded. "So, what should be our plan from here?"

"Well, we just practiced psychic combat," Ness said. "I've got to work on my picturing training, but if I want to make progress, I'm gonna need time."

"And without Lucas," Mewtwo said, "I have no pressing matters to which I must attend. Any suggestions?"

I paused to think. I supposed it was my place to provide an activity, but I wasn't entirely sure that they would like to only sit around.

No sooner had the thought passed through my mind than Ness said, "Honestly, I think I'd be really bored doing that."

"Ah. Then, the barrier between thought and actualization here -"

"There is little, if any," Mewtwo said. "You would have to specifically try to suppress a thought to keep it hidden."

"I understand." The issue with that kind of thought is that you end up in a cycle of trying not to think about something, making you think of it more and more. Therefore, I suggested the thing I always did when something weighed heavily on my mind: to go through a mock battle.

"Huh?" Ness frowned. "We just did a battle yesterday, though. You were even here for it."

"No, no," I said. "A mock army battle. I want to go against the two of you on a battleground."

Mewtwo smiled mischeviously. "Are you sure about that? You do know what you're getting into, correct? I believe our respective general placements in the Smashes speak for themselves." At this point I will note that Mewtwo has been doing better than me within the Smashes themselves. I think he might have been trying to give me a way out.

"I do." Extending my hand outward and creating a lush field, I stared them down. "You have two minutes to prepare your battle plan. Then, I attack."

"Wait, can you do that in just two minutes?" Ness said.

Several figments of my imagination appeared - and took the forms of the Shepherds. Each of them held a Regalia and had their best class and skillset. "Maybe on a bad day."

Looking at me with wide eyes, they retreated immediately. During this time, they conjured up several defenses: some Pokémon that were likely very powerful, Ness's friends, a man in a red suit driving a tank, and a bug of some kind that Ness apparently considered powerful enough to pay special attention to. I understood why immediately when a purple energy emanated from it and covered the opposing army.

"Figments of the Shepherds!" I said, extending my hand after the two minutes were up. "Our mission is to defeat the commanders Mewtwo and Ness! Their mission is to defeat me! This is our phase!"
And everything, as it usually did, began to move at my pace. (Tactician's Log, B. 1, C. 1) As this is my Support Log, I will not take down every note of the battle as I usually would. The better for me, as I struggle to remember them at the moment.

First, my Dark Fliers, equipped with Arcwind tomes, defeated the flying Pokémon approaching me. They then moved to defeat Paula and the bug (Buzz Buzz, apparently) using their lances. While Paula has a strong defense with her plush bear, it was not insurmountable.

My lower-movement units, meanwhile, were making quick work of Mewtwo's Ice-types and Fairy-types using Steel weapons. Not normally the best options, but still useful, apparently for more reasons than economy. With a Wyrmslayer, the figment of Yen'fay destroyed a large, chubby dragon (Dragonite). Say'ri's figment guarded him from an attack by a Venusaur.

By this point, Ness's friend in the tank (Frank) was firing back hard with his Frankystein Mark II, so I had Gerome's figment break it with a Luna-powered Hammer. It took a single strike. And, since she knew the Skill Swordbreaker, the boy named Poo's Sword of Kings (Poo Prf Sword. 10 Mt, 95 Acc, 10 Crt. Infinitely durable. Obtained by the grace of the stars.) was no trouble to her.

Ness's healing was my next target. He'd been reviving, healing, and curing his defeated friends and Mewtwo and making things less simple than they could have been. Still, it was an effective tactic; I'll have to remember he can do that in the future, as I told him after.

Mewtwo's Psyshock was a pleasant surprise, to be sure; an attack that uses Mag, but hits Def feels like an effective solution for high-Resistance enemy tome wielders. However, despite Mewtwo's high Mag, an effective general unit would be able to best him. Thankfully, I had one in particular in my mind: myself. Armed with the figment of Chrom as my backup and his Exalted Falchion, I crossed the battlefield without fear.

This concluded the battle.

Ness laid back onto the empty air. "That was exhausting!" He panted heavily. "You barely gave me a chance to breathe!"

"I must agree," Mewtwo said, clutching his chest with a pained expression. "I underestimated your ability to control many different people. The orders you gave - I'm shocked you imagined they could hear them all!"

"I've never had a problem with things like that. During a battle, I can direct my army with exactness and precision."

"You're not even showing a bit of fatigue. You are truly a demon in human form." Though he'd said it in jest, my mind immediately conjured that visual I'd been using the battle to fight back from: a looming dragon with breath made of harsh shadows. Reflexively, I started and woke up.

And suddenly, I was feeling very terrible, indeed.

"I should have known," Mewtwo said. "You shouldn't try to put on a brave face for our sake."

"I'm not." I gripped my head to maintain clarity. "I wasn't expecting the comparison, is all. After a few minutes, I'll be - "

"No. I will summon a platform, and you will go home for the day. I refuse to accept any argument about that."

So, despite my insistence I was fine, Mewtwo levitated me onto a platform. "Now, you'll need to get
"There's nothing I need to rest about." I stood and tried to walk off, only to be rebounded by Mewtwo's Reflect.

"Then, I will see you return to your home, myself." He boarded the platform and it began to move. The fact that the platforms followed the thoughts of their riders seemed to have the caveat that when their thoughts were in conflict on staying and going, the platform opted to go. "This is important. You need to rest."

"Do you plan to tuck me in, too?" I said as Ness waved goodbye and ran into a building in an effort to Teleport away. "Mewtwo, I know my limits."

His head fell as he watched Ness's Teleport leave a hole that quickly closed up. "I know." He sat down at the edge of the platform, dangling his legs over. To compensate, the platform tilted slightly upward where he sat, so there was no risk of him falling off. "I wanted to talk to you, away from Ness."

I sighed. "I suppose I had figured you had an ulterior motive." I tried to bite back that I thought he just wanted to be left alone.

"It's a fair assumption, but no." He read my mind. I was beginning to get tired of that. Then again, it probably wasn't something he could control. "You're correct.

"Now, I want to know. You seem to have some sort of issue involving dragons. Yet, during the battle, my army's Dragonite didn't bother you at all. Why is that?"

I looked at him, then up to the sky. "Palutena, are you listening?"

A vision of her figure appeared on the platform, translucent enough to see the sky behind her. "I am at your service, Robin."

"I don't want anyone to listen in on this. It's a private conversation."

"I'll do my best to make sure this information doesn't get out to anyone."

"That includes you."

She brought arm to her chest theatrically. "Well, that's a pretty bold accusation!"

"Are you denying it?"

She smiled cheekily. "I'll just take care of two little things before I leave you be." She closed her eyes and looked up into the sky. "Ah, yep. Daisy's got her next entry ready. That's one." Having so done, she then walked over to Mewtwo. "Now, as for little thing number two. Mewtwo, am I right in thinking that you have a collection of clothing from the Animal Crossing world on you somewhere?"

Mewtwo looked at her, confused. "Yes. Why?"

"I'd just like to confirm something. Call it a Goddess's curiosity." He took out a few items from an inventory of some kind. (I should probably ask Daisy to find out about the Pokémon world's methods of storage.) She looked over the clothes he produced, and seemed to find them satisfactory, giving them a tap with the head of her staff. "These are nice choices! You really do have a very good fashion sense. If I were you, I'd see about finding something in a nice blue, though. It might help make your eyes pop a little more."
"Um. Thank you, I suppose." And then, she vanished into a trail of sparkles that drifted lazily through the air and off the platform. "Why on earth was she watching us?"

"I assume she's doing it to help me. So far, she's been useful, even if her demeanor grates on me sometimes. I feel like I've been collecting a lot of bold and brash people to help me." I shook my head. "But, back onto our original topic. You wanted to know about why I panicked about those dark dragons."

"I still do. I know enough about humans to know that's not a regular reaction."

I sighed. "You weren't who I was expecting to talk about this first with."

"Oh? And who was that?"

I shrugged. "As far as I knew, I'd need to explain it to Corrin first. The problem is, both of them are hardly ever around."

"Perhaps the other Robin has told them about it?"

"I doubt it. I've had plenty of opportunity to see them with world warp, but I haven't yet. I don't know that she would have, either."

"I see. Well, if that's the case, I am honored to listen."

I will not reiterate the events detailed in my Tactician's Log. By the end of it, I was well and truly exhausted. Mewtwo, upon learning all of it, despite my best efforts to save him from some of the worse details, made his excuses and left. Now that I have done this, I feel sick to my stomach due to a combination of the psychic exertion and plain mental exhaustion. I will be taking some time to rest.

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Smash Entry 44
Sat. July 28, 18
Bowser Jr./Daisy B
Author: Daisy

I was getting ready to head back to Smashville with Robin, and maybe talk to Leaf some more, but when I was just getting out the door, Bowser showed up. "Hey, Daisy. Can I talk to ya?"

"Uh, sure." Even if I do know that Bowser's actually pretty cool now, he and I don't really talk very much. "What's going on?"

"Well, Peach and Mario and I are supposed to be talkin' to Zelda and them about some royal stuff. I wanted to ask you to watch Junior while I'm gone."

"Huh? Why me?"

"I'll be honest, most of my usual options're busy. I told Kamek he needed a day off, and he finally took it today. The Koopalings and Luigi are out for the day with Smashes and stuff, so you're my best shot."

"What about Wario? Nevermind, answered my own question." DK and Diddy Kong were nice people, but I didn't think they'd be good babysitters for a Koopa. "Yoshi?"

"I checked there, too - somehow, all 8 Yoshis are in the middle of something, and we're leaving in fifteen minutes. Plus, Kamek hates Yoshis, not that it matters." He shook his head. "Can't believe
how long the guy holds a grudge."

I sighed. "Alright. I'll let Palutena know I can't meet Robin today, and then I'll be right over to your castle."

He smiled. "Thanks, Daisy. I owe ya one!" He walked off with a spring in his step - which was really weird to see, honestly. I'm not used to him being in high spirits.

After I walked through the world warp, Kamek floated up to me on his broomstick. "Well, there you are! Honestly, you've been keeping me waiting for..." He looked up at the sky, though it was covered in red clouds, so I don't know what he could have seen. "...a while!" Apparently, he didn't, either. "I was halfway considering just telling you to go away and I'd take the day off some other time!"

"So, why didn't you?" I said. I wasn't really in the mood to chitchat, with how hot it was in Bowser Kingdom. I was already sweating buckets. Obviously, I was going to change clothes as soon as I could. (Glad I brought my tennis outfit!)

Kamek crossed his arms. "Master Bowser wouldn't let me hear the end of it if I did something so selfish! Now, you'll find notes about what to do throughout the castle. I can't be expected to babysit you while you're babysitting Bowser Jr. I, of course, assume you can read," he added with a sneer.

"You want to say that again?" I got out a 9 Iron.

He pointed his wand at it and turned it into a whisk. "I'm making sure you'll live up to my exacting standards. Beggars can't be choosers, but you will need a modicum of competence. Since His Highness is expecting me to be gone by now, I'll have to leave it at that." Turning my whisk back into a golf club, he flew off, shaking his head and muttering something. Well, whatever. There wasn't much of a point in getting mad at him, right?

Bowser Jr. tried to run me down in his Koopa Clown Car as soon as I walked in. Honestly, that kid! Getting him to stop wasn't too tough, though - all I had to do was mime like I was throwing a javelin and he threw on the emergency brake for me. "Hi, Aunty Daisy!" he said, trying to act innocent.

"How are you?"

"You can cut the act, Junior. Show me what you did while you were unsupervised, and we'll see if we can fix it."

He stomped in the car. "Hey, I didn't do anything!" He crossed his arms and let out a puff of smoke. "That's not fair!"

"Well, you can never be too careful. I used to get in a lot of mischief in Sarasaland, honestly." I had to laugh a little at what a brat I used to be. "This one time, my daddy was talking with an archaeologist, and I got to hold a vase he brought with him, and I just dropped it right on the ground!"

"Wow, really?" He was looking at me, completely wide-eyed. It was actually kinda cute. "Tell me more, Aunty Daisy!"

"I'd love to." I had to wipe my forehead. "But first, I'm gonna change my clothes. Where's a good place?"

"I can show you!" He really pilots that clown car thing like a pro. Just like that, we were in front of the dressing rooms, and I got to feel a little less stuffy. I don't know how Peach does it all the time! "So, what else did you do as a kid?"
"Well, I got into a lot of stuff when I was little. I got punished for a lot of it, too."

He pouted a bit in his chair. "Mean old people. It's not fair, huh."

"Well, it's not always easy to raise a kid. Especially when they're gonna be in charge of a country, like I was and like you are. Sometimes, they've gotta tighten the leash a little." I shrugged. "It's just how it goes, you know?"

He grumbled a little, but nodded. "I'm hungry. Can I have something to eat?"

"Sure, let's just head to the kitchen and I'll get something ready for you." Well, as it turns out, even if I can read Mushroomese, I can't read whatever crazy cursive Kamek writes in. Bowser Jr. wasn't much help either, since according to him, Kamek writes like that to keep Jr. from changing the rules. "Well, that's annoying." I looked around a bit and found some ingredients I could use. "Well, how about I just make something up?"

He frowned. "I don't wanna eat that. It looks like it'll be gross."

"It's in your pantry, so it's fair game, right?" I tried to roll up the sleeves on my shirt, then started breaking down a Koopa leaf and mixing it into some Mushroom-Kingdom-certified cake mix. "Trust me, there's plenty of ways to make food so that you'll eat it." I smiled at him cheekily. "I bet I can make something you like out of this."

"And I bet that you can't!" He got up and gripped the edge of the car. "So there!"

"But if we wanna settle this, you're gonna have to try it, alright? And if I can't pull it off, then you get to pick what we eat."

"Deal!" He let out a roar and sat back, satisfied he wouldn't like the food.

That gave me plenty of time to get the berries I found to dry out and start mixing them into some dry pasta. After I added a few spices and finished cooking everything, I had my Yummy Pasta dish with Kooky Cookie side! Not a bad lunch for something I had to scrounge up, if I do say so myself. Side note: the Bowser Castle has really fast ovens. Probably because it's over a lot of lava.

And from the look on Bowser Jr's face, he liked it. "How did you do this?!" he said, wolfing down a handful of pasta. "This is great!"

After I put a fork in his hand, I said, "I know a lot of recipes from Sarasaland, and a little bit that Peach has shown me. I'm glad you like it. Sarasan cuisine can be a little too much for some people."

"I think it needs more stuff in it!" He pounded on the table. "I want seconds!"

I was probably grinning ear to ear. "Let's finish the first plate before we take seconds. Meanwhile, I can tell you about another time I did something I wasn't supposed to." We had a pretty good time.

Chapter End Notes

Alright, so. Obviously, the fic is... a year behind real time. And, short of a huge timeskip (which wouldn't solve much of anything, tbh, just give me more characters to juggle), it's probably going to stay that way. That said, it does give me plenty of time to plan out how characters will interact. For example:
The Hero, or rather, the 4 Heroes from Dragon Quests III, IV, VIII, and XI. Each one would probably have a slightly different personality, considering the worlds that each were from. They'd be from the most recent versions of each game, obviously, since that's how I'm doing things. Obvious supports would be Link, Robin, and Pit. Slightly less so would be Pokémon Trainer for Eighter. (I need to play the other games, eh heh. And I call myself a Dragon Quest fan!)

Banjo-Kazooie, meanwhile, seem to have an obvious synergy with Duck Hunt... well, if their personalities weren't so different from each other. Where DH are pranksters with a heart of gold, the both of them, BK are more of a dumb-guy-snarky-girl duo. I'm seeing characters that like nature? Maybe Falco for a Kazooie-focused Support... and for a Banjo-focused one, maybe Pit? I'm not sure.
It's the Summer Solstice! Happy 1st day of summer 2019, everybody!

I went through the entire 5 stages of grief about Pokémon SwSh. I don't really want it anymore, which is the sad part. But, I'm gonna lift the moratorium in case anybody wants to talk about it. (Note: you still need to be civil! This is a comment section, not an argument section.)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Smash Entry 45
Wed. August 1, 18
Bowser Jr. / Daisy A
Concerns Koopalings and Bowser Jr.
Author: Daisy

I thought I heard something in the middle of the night. At first, I didn't think it was anything important. But after this morning, I really think I've got a problem. I got a few letters in the mail, and I stuck one of them in here for Robin to translate.

[Begin transcription.]
Dear Princess Daisy,

You made a real big mistake yesterday. There seems to have been a mistaken assumption given to If you don't make up for what you've
Hello. How are you?

Writing a letter is hard with seven people trying to write it.

Expect our Smash request today. Accept it, or else.

Yours,

Larry, Morton Jr., Wendy, Iggy, Roy, Lemmy, and Ludwig
The Koopalings

[Each signature was written in their own handwriting. In addition, the greeting and text of the letter were in several different handwritings, and the paper was scratched and ink-covered.]

[End transcription.]

The rest of them were pretty simple letters, even if one of them read like it should have had some kind of baseball cap attached to it. Obviously, I wasn't doing anything else today, not that I had any other plans in the first place. They were probably counting on the teleporting being on the fritz, like it has been for Robin. I guess word travels fast around here.

So, I won the Smash. They spent a lot of time beating each other up instead of me, which I thought was a little bit weird. I mean, if you're going to use a Smash to get me alone, shouldn't you team up
on me? But as it turns out, they're about as uncoordinated with talking as they were in the fight.

"Daisy," the one with the wide blue hair [Ludwig] said. "It is good to see you - "

"No, you have to address her as Princess!" said the other one with blue hair, except his was in a really big plume. [Larry] "She's royalty, you idiot!"

"You've got a lot of nerve!" The one with the pink head and sunglasses [Roy, not to be confused with the man from Elibe] took a step toward me to intimidate me. "You're gonna apologize right now, got it?!"

"Hey, is that going to help?!" The one with a turnip-top haircut [Iggy] pushed him in the shoulder. "Explain yourself first!"

"You got a problem, punk?!" He pushed back.

"Oh, don't you two start doing this!" the girl [Wendy O.] said. "It's bad enough we have to talk to her about this!"

"Can't we just go home?" the one with the rainbow mohawk [Lemmy] said. "I wanted to catch a rerun."

"No, we can't!" [Larry] said. "This is going to disrupt a lot of stuff in His Portliness's life, and I haven't got the time to deal with it!"

"Did you really just call him that?!" [Roy] said. "You've got a lot of nerve, too!"

After that, they really started to argue, so I couldn't catch a lot of what they said. Then, they started actually fighting each other. The six of them were all going at it, with the exception of the one with the black scales and white head. [Morton Jr.] He just shook his head and sighed. Then, he stomped his foot one time. "Shut up!"

They stopped.

"I don't wanna be here doing this any more than you guys, but we're here now and we have to. Stop acting like you're the only person here."

They let go of each other and all got on their feet, dusting themselves off.

He pointed at each of them and said their names. "Alright. Larry, you start."

So, he did. "Princess Daisy, we are grateful for you granting us this audience. Thank you."

"Well," I said, getting the first word in that I had this entire time, "your letter didn't really give me much of a choice."

"I understand. We will try to engage in a more positive way in the future." He bowed, then turned to his siblings. "How was that? Good enough?"

"It'll work," Morton Jr. said. "Now, Ludwig, you go."

He took a bow. "As you are no doubt aware, Princess Daisy, things have been changing because of the new fighters. Our household has been undergoing some changes, too." He pressed his hands together. "Which is why we're here. There's been an issue, and you're the one who has to solve it."

I scoffed. "Why am I the one who has to fix it?"
"Because you caused it in the first place!" Roy shouted at me.

"Roy." Morton Jr. looked at him, and he shrank a bit. "Since you're so eager, you can tell her what the problem is."

He frowned. "Alright, fine." He cleared his throat. "Kamek's been locked up in his room the past three days ever since he got back from that day off."

"Again, what does that have to do with me?" I said.

"It's because Bowser Jr. doesn't like him any more," Lemmy said, taking out some kind of game system. "Or at least, that's what he said, according to Kamek."

"Guess who he likes instead?" Wendy said, eyebrows raised.

I really couldn't believe it. "I've had two conversations with him! There's no way he'd pick me over Kamek."

"You know, you're right, but it still happened." Ludwig crossed his arms. "Obviously, you're the one who has to tell him you can't see each other any more."

That part I was really not having. "You don't get to decide what I do with my time!"

"Enough," Morton Jr. said. "We've got to fix this. What do you think is the best way?"

I put my head in my hand. "Well, first off, I definitely need to see Junior. I know that much. But I'm not just going to stop being anywhere around him! That's completely ridiculous."

"See?" Iggy shoved his hand in my direction. "She knows what to do. We just needed to send the letter!"

"Well, it certainly didn't hurt to figure this out now," Ludwig said. "We mustn't underestimate the power of the in-person element and of the united front."

"The way I see it," I said, "I'm going to have to sign up as a backup babysitter. Kamek stays as who he sees most often, but I'll take over when he needs to take a break."

"You mean you're gonna sub in every day?" Larry laughed. "Well, it'll be better than the Yoshis, at least. His Utter Brattiness can be a real piece of work on them."

"Hey, what's with you?!" Roy turned to him, arms ready to fight. "You're getting real nasty today!"

"Kid's got a destruction streak! Come on, you had to have noticed!"

"Hey." Morton shut them up again. I was beginning to suspect he was the only thing keeping these guys together. "If you're willing to do that, 'Aunty' Daisy, we'll have to go for it. Hopefully, Bowser Jr'll be okay with it."

"Whether he does or not, he'll have to take it," I said. "Just because he's a prince doesn't mean he gets everything he wants. I'm speaking from experience when I say that a kid like that is just plain spoiled."

"Oh yeah?" Morton Jr. straightened up. "Who do you know that was like that?"

"Me." I shook my head. "Don't worry about it. I'll come over as soon as we're back."
"Sounds good." Ludwig twirled his finger. "We're done here, Koopalings!"

"Thanks for managing to keep things civil, Morton," I said. "Having someone here who wasn't trying to hate me was a relief."

"Oh, I hate you more than everyone else here." He shrugged.

He stunned me so hard I couldn't think of a response before we teleported back. So, I marched through the world warp and into Bowser's Castle, as mad as I could be. "What's that supposed to mean?"

Morton Jr. was confused. "Uh, what's what supposed to mean?"

"You hate me more than everyone else?! What did I do to you?!"

"You're messing with my family. So, I hate you." He shrugged. "That's it."

"With your - I didn't do anything! We're trying to fix this, right now!" I said, pointing down.

"I know. That's why I'm not mad at you. But I still hate you."

I really can't wrap my head around this, but honestly, I didn't want to put in the effort, so I just dropped it. "Just show me where Bowser Jr. is, okay?"

"Will do." He led me through the castle one more time, and we were at Bowser Jr.'s room before I really got the path down. "I've gotta trust you, but you're gonna fix this."

"You don't have to keep telling me." I pushed open the door. "I know what I'm doing."

"Aunty Daisy!" Bowser put down what he was doing and ran up to me as soon as I walked into the room. "You're here!"

"Bowser Jr." I knelt down to him. "I think we've gotta talk, kid."

"Okay, but can we have some fun while we do it?" He gestured over to what he was doing... which I think was messing with the gearage on his Clown Car. "Come on!"

"Alright, alright." He dragged me over and we sat down. "So, hey," I said once he put on his welding gloves and some dark goggles. (Side note: who let this kid handle welding gear?!) "What are you doing, exactly?"

He took a break from breathing fire and sighed. "I'm trying to get this thing to go faster. I mean, Iggy taught me a little bit about how the motor works, so I can totally handle it!"

"Can ya?" I leaned in. From what little I know about cars, I couldn't really tell a difference. "Is this hunk of junk going to be safe to drive afterward?"

"This is a broken one, so Iggy says it's safe to work on." He started breathing fire again.

"Right. Does Iggy teach you about mechanics, then?" He was the one with the turnip-top haircut, I'm pretty sure. "Seems like you learned a lot."

"Iggy's pretty smart when it comes to science and machines, yeah. It's like you told me a couple weeks ago [Ent. 29]: I gotta listen to people sometimes."

I had to suck in a breath. "Yeah, I gotta talk to you about that, Junior."
"I've been listening to the Koopalings, though!" He stamped his foot. "You can't tell me I haven't been!"

"Junior, I don't know anything about those guys." I looked at the other side of the door. "Except that they aren't exactly nice people." I had to shake my head. "But I'm here to talk to you about Kamek."

He slumped over a bit. "Oh. Kamek. I don't like him anymore."

"Why not?"

"He's boring!" He stamped his foot again. "It's always 'Oh, Your Littleness! You can't stay up this late! You can't eat that! You can't play with those toys today!' I hate having to hear it all the time!"

"Alright, so what makes you think I'd be any better at caring for you?"

"Well, I like you more, for one thing." He crossed his arms. "You let me do a lot of stuff that Kamek doesn't let me do. He's always treating me like a baby."

I sighed. Replacement babysitter syndrome, huh? I had to sit down right next to him. "C'mon, Junior. Look at me for right now. Take off the gear for a sec."

"What is it?" He popped them off his body and tossed them away.

"I wanna tell you right now, I definitely get it. There were times when I got sick of dealing with Daddy and the rest of the Sarasaland royalty. 'No, Daisy, we can't do that today. I have to be in a meeting until supper.' "I'm sorry, Daisy. I'm busy all this week. We can't go to the festival.'" I shook my head. "So, I ran off one day, in broad daylight."

"Really?" He looked at me with those big, wide eyes again.

"There was a festival in town that day, so I went. I had a lot of fun, don't get me wrong. But I wasn't old enough to move around the city on my own. I didn't know enough to be safe."

His wide-eyed look broke up a bit. "But, you turned out okay, right?"

I couldn't help but laugh a little. "Well, I got to take a bath and eat something really nice once I got back to the palace. But the three days in between weren't fun."

"Three days?!!" He was just plain shocked now.

"Yep. Can you imagine being left behind and away from everybody that's trying to help you for that long? It's not fun." I pulled my legs in close. "Once I got back, I knew that I needed to do two things."

"What were they?"

"Well, one, I needed to learn how to navigate the city. And two, I needed to actually listen to people when they said something to me. And I mean listen, not just hear the words they were saying."

He tilted his head. "I don't really think I get it."

"You will, trust me. Actually, let's start right now." I let my legs drop so I was sitting flat on the ground. "When I told you that story, what was I trying to do?"

He thought about it for a bit. "You wanted me to listen to people?"
"Right. Now, when I tell you that Kamek has gotta be your regular caretaker, what does that mean?"

He really had to think hard on that one. "I don't know. What does it mean?"

"It means, Kamek has what he needs to be good at looking after you. I mean, he raised your dad, right? And he turned out alright." Better than I expected, actually. "I've never had to take care of a human baby before. I wouldn't know where to start when it came to Koopa kids."

He frowned. "But I don't like how Kamek doesn't let me do anything."

"Then you've gotta talk to him about it. You've gotta listen to him, too. Try to keep an open mind, okay? Listen, don't just hear."

He slumped over a little and sighed. "Okay, fine, Aunty Daisy." Then, he looked at me with a sad look in his eye. "But, could you still come over every once in a while?"

"Believe me, kid." I ruffled his hair a little. "You're not getting rid of me that easy." I stood up and pulled him to his feet. "Now, come on. Kamek's gonna wanna know he can't start using those vacation days yet."

"But, he doesn't use them in the first place." He looked at me, kinda confused. "Oh, wait, this is one of those listening things, huh?"

"See? You're picking it up quick."

Smash Entry 46
Wed. August 1, 18
Concerns Robin and Robin'.
Concerns Palutena.
Author: Robin

[A note before we begin. I will be denoting Supports featuring the Female Robin with the prime symbol ('). For the Supports involving one of the Corrins, which one will be demarcated as the base Corrin will be determined at that time, and so on with any duplicates that occur, should any others come to light.]

I was finally feeling nearly up to my usual self after my mental exhaustion from the previous few days. [Ent. 43] As I figured, another night of rest would bring me to 100%. As it stood, however, today was meant to be a relatively restful day. I had only one thing planned: a particular meeting, as I always did on the first of the month.

My opposite-gender counterpart arrived, as she usually did, early in the morning. "Robin, it's good seeing you again," she said. "Have you been getting enough sleep? You look like you've seen better days."

"I've been better, but I've been a lot worse, too." I rubbed at my temple. "And how are you?"

"I certainly can't complain. I've got half of a wing of the Coliseum to myself, and Roy isn't a very demanding roommate." She smiled. "I'll start brewing something up. You take coffee with one scoop, right?"

After getting our morning drinks, we sat at the dining table. "So," she said. "What exactly have you been up to? I checked the Convoy earlier this week, and we're missing a few things. That half-drunk Elixir, those old lances." She leaned forward. "One of the tomes."
"I put that one in a special place." I cleared my throat. "The rest of them, Kirby ate. I realize I should have told you earlier, but it slipped my mind. I'm sorry."

"Well, we definitely weren't using that 3/50 unforged Bronze Sword [Ent. 38], so I'm not too torn up about it. Though, that brings me to my next question. Why did we have a bottle of rum?"

"That was for Daisy. She needed it for a cake."

"A cake? You've been busy these past few weeks, huh? You took out a bunch of weapons before, too, but they went right back in the convoy." [Ent. 20] She smiled. "We're not starting up mock battles again, are we?"

"Definitely not," I said with a laugh. "The battle we have is exactly the right amount of tactics that I want to deal with in one month." I checked the time. "Speaking of, shall we?"

"Let shall." We made our way to the game table. "Of course, we're still doing the same rules as before, seize or defeat leader. Now, I don't mean to impose, but I think, in your condition, the Virion position might serve as an effective handicap." (The Virion position being that I do not try to conserve units and may invoke reinforcements more often.)

I nodded. "If you hadn't suggested it, I would have myself. Let's draw our cards and start arranging our army, then." I drew the Axe, she drew the Arrow. Higher Attack power on my side, higher Accuracy on hers. We selected our units, one for her, two for me, two for her, two for me, and so on until our armies were at proper capacity.

It is here that I should note that the Virion strategy is highly effective, and frequently results in a victory for the side it is used on, even if it is a clear suicide play that translates poorly to true war. It did so here, and so I elected not to use it for the remaining bouts. I therefore lost 1-2. (See Tactician's Log; Mock Battles; August, 18)

"Tough fight," she said as we sorted the figures back into their proper places. "That Baron of yours was dangerous. 1-range Bows specifically to counter my Falcoknights. Clever strategy."

"But you kept shuffling them around so much, I could hardly keep track of which ones would do the Triangle Attack." I shook my head. "It wasn't a surprise when you brought him down - and thankfully, in Bow Knight range."

"My fault." She sighed. "We should never underestimate our opponents, right?" We shook hands. "So, you've got a few books with you. Not just the usual Tactician's Log. Getting back into Supports?"

Hesitantly, I acknowledged that fact. Trying to avoid the subject would only arouse her suspicion. "Of course, a lot of what they've been saying has been private."

"Of course." She knew as well as I did the kinds of things people said behind the closed covers of the Support Log. "I guess I shouldn't let you take all the work on yourself, huh?"

"I wouldn't feel right doing that," I said. And I really wouldn't. If she were to begin writing entries, I would want her to do so with full knowledge as to why.

However, I am not at liberty to give that information away. So, I had to awkwardly cut myself off. She noticed the issue. "I take it you're in a compromising position." She nodded. "Well, it hadn't occurred to me to start trying for Supports again, either. I've been too busy preparing for the Classics." She noticed that, too, the fact that there hasn't been a Classic in weeks. Two unusual things
happening in so short of a time span... "They're related, I take it?"

"I don't believe the two have any clear, direct relations." Strictly speaking, true, but not very effective as a deflection.

"Then, you're working with the Hands." She cut right to the heart of the matter. "You don't have to answer; I realize this isn't the best-case scenario - "

We were interrupted by a sudden burst of light. Palutena appeared in the room, her body slightly damp, her hair soaked through, and her face showing an emotion I hadn't seen on her in quite some time: anger. "I was in the middle of something." She glared at me. "She's too sharp for her own good."

"We're nearly the same person, Palutena. It's only natural." She would only need to approach things from her own perspective to match my own.

"Yes, but she's not nearly as prudent as you are." Without warning, she flashed behind my counterpart and lifted her Plegian robe. From its lining, she pulled a small machine. "This is the third time this week."

"What is it?"

"I don't know, but I keep finding them in inconvenient places. You wouldn't believe how many I've had to pick out of people's clothes. Thankfully, they're sensitive to ultraviolet light. One quick burst - " She pinched it and it shattered into many pieces. " - and it's done." Palutena shook her head. "You two are lucky I've been so on the ball with these things. I managed to give you some kind of protection from it, whatever it is, once I got to my Staff of Light. Another half-second, and the word Hand would have already been out of your mouth."

"What were you doing before?" my counterpart asked.

"A lady never discusses her private matters, and a Goddess is no different." Gaining a little of her fire back, she winked. "Now, I've got to get back to it, so if you'll both excuse me." And as if she was never there, she vanished.

"She was taking a bath," I said.

"Definitely," the other Robin agreed. "But, back to what we were discussing before."

"Right. Obviously, since you know this much, I can't hide it from you." I handed her my Support Log. "I'd be grateful if you helped me out."

"I'll certainly try, but I'm not sure where I'd start." She handed the book back to me after leafing through the pages. "I've still got my few years' worth of rust on me, you know?"

"Maybe we should start slow, then. If you ask Lucina - "

"We'll be able to figure something out, I'm sure. I'll be asking you to accompany me, of course." She looked at the time. "It's about time. Are you ready?"

"I certainly am." We sat in front of the Dragon Gate and waited for noon exactly.

This time, my daughter was the one who appeared first. "Morgan!" I embraced her warmly.

"Father!" It was always nice being able to see her. "I've missed you so much!"
"I know." I had to hold her tighter. "I miss you, too. How's your mother?"

"She's doing fine. Mother's been expecting the past few months, so she's been upset about that, but she's fine otherwise."

"Right." Having already had the present version of Morgan in this timeline, we were used to this kind of relationship.

"Aunt Robin!" Morgan ran over to the other Robin and gave her a hug, as well. "It's so great to see you, too! Has your Morgan gotten here yet?"

"Not yet, niece Morgan." The phrasing was slightly awkward, but our family relationship wasn't very usual. "It'll just be a little longer, I'm sure."

And from there, I will not disclose further our family gathering. It is a personal matter, and has little to do with the Smashes.

Chapter End Notes

The Koopalings are a little tough to write. There's seven of them, and since they're the bosses, they don't always get the most characterization. I've tried to pull as much together as I can (having never played a game they're actually in with dialogue), and the rest, I've just got to work around.

And we've got double sign! I don't suppose you all were expecting it happening so soon after I mentioned her, but I'm happy about having two Robins. ...I was expecting to get a Support in between them, though. The plan didn't exactly pan out, though. Still, her knowing about all of this from the start will open up a few new possibilities.
I had awoken in the middle of the night, my mouth somewhat dry and my head slightly aching. I looked into the Convoy to pick up a Vulnerary.

There were too many items in it.

I quickly located the culprits: an empty Box, and a small Machine, like the one Palutena had shown me yesterday. (See prev.) Whatever the case, I suspected foul play - and that the one who left them there would still be around. I removed a Second Seal from the convoy and, after Class Changing to Sorceror and equipping Mire and Thoron, I began to walk to the storage room.

In my alert state, it was easy to pinpoint the location of whoever it was. After striking them twice with Mire (Since Sorceror is a slow class, I could conclude they were very slow, as well), I moved into the room, Thoron at the ready. "Move at your own peril," I said. After the last time I was caught unawares in my own home [Ent. 16], I was in no mood to offer this intruder the same allowance. "What is your name?"

Whoever it was, he laid on the ground without moving. For a brief moment, I wondered if I'd done serious damage to him by using a Dark tome. "Solid Snake." His voice was very rough. "I'm a former member of the anti-terrorist unit, FOXHOUND." He then gave me a number of some kind.

"What are you doing here?" I moved slightly closer to him. "Are you the one planting those small machines on people? What are they?"

It was a mistake to do that. Before I understood what he was doing, he was on his feet and punching me in the body and head. I fell backward, Thoron flying off to the right. Mire wouldn't work as a close-range tome. And with the gun he levelled at me, I couldn't take afford to make any moves to take something from the Convoy.

"I take it you're Robin, right? Commander of the Shepherds and expert tactician." He didn't need me to confirm the information; his tone of voice showed as much.

Whatever response I had was interrupted by my suddenly finding myself in a teleport, as if I'd completed an ordinary Smash. Master Hand seemed to have summoned me to Final Destination once
"Robin!" He waggled his index finger at me over my head. "You're supposed to be in bed!"

"I was." I twisted myself to my feet. "But I got up to investigate a disturbance in my Convoy. Who is Solid Snake?"

"Ah, he's one of the fighters. Surprised you hadn't met him before, actually. He's been here a while, you know." He shuffled his fingers together, as if he were rubbing at his nose(?). "But, you can talk to Snake later. Right now, I've got a job for you to take care of."

"Is this in addition to the job you already have me doing?"

"Well, naturally." He swung himself out grandly. "You see, your job is about to get a little more hectic. We're getting in a new crop of fighters for the roster!"

"Are we? You seem excited."

"I certainly am!" His voice reverberated through space. "These guys have been hotly requested for a while, so we knew we'd need a big to-do to welcome them in!" He flinched. "The problem is, my brother and I are completely swamped with work and setting up the welcome Classic."

"Your brother?"

"Ah, it's a long story." He waved the question off. "We've got a lot of the stuff ready, but it'll take until the eleventh hour for everything to be finalized, and we're announcing it on the Eighth." He turned in on himself. "So, would you mind if you took care of the party planning? Do whatever you need to, of course."

"I'll take care of it. I'll have to assemble a team, though." Likely out of those I already have Supports for? "I'll manage it."

"Great!" He snapped his fingers, and began to teleport me back. "I know you can do it! Make a Smash with your team, and I'll take care of the rest!"

Too late, I realized I had some things I needed to talk to him about, too. I was, however, forced back to Arena Ferox and in front of Solid Snake. We each reached for our weapons. (I reequipped Thoron while I was away.)

"What are you going to do?" He stared me down.

"I don't exactly trust you," I said. "You did plant something in my Convoy."

"How could you tell? It's a pretty small bug."

"It doesn't matter how small it is; I have the number of items in here memorized. You added two things."

"Two?" He looked at where he must have been, without turning his head. "I only had one bug on me."

"The other one was the Box."

He looked down. "I see." His hand drifted away from his weapon. "Do you actually want to fight, or do you just need answers?"
"The answers would be nice. I'd rather not waste any more charges of Thoron."

"Then let's call a truce for right now." He broke his fighting stance, standing tall. "And let's exchange information."

I agreed, and we went to the kitchen.

"So, what was with the teleport?" He said once he'd gotten some tea. "Did one of the Hands have business with you?"

"Something along those lines," I said. So as not to arouse suspicion, I bent the truth and said, "I have to throw a party for the new fighters. Master Hand's orders."

"I see. Do you know who? How many?"

"I've got no clue. The only thing I know about them is that they've been sorely wanted in the battle. By who, I couldn't tell you."

"Probably whoever's watching these tournaments. Maybe even the ones participating in them. So, where's the party? Here?"

"If I had to guess, it would be on Final Destination," I said. "But it might be a bit cramped there. I've got to pick out a team and initiate a Smash, and we'll be teleported."

"Maybe it'll be in that old mansion underneath Battlefield?" He leaned over his drink. "Then again, I'm not sure how many people would enjoy being in that place."

"Bad memories from before my time?"

"Pretty much." He scowled.

"What is it? Does it have something to do with the Subspace Emissary I've heard about?"

He let out some kind of grumbling noise. "Not my story to tell, Robin. Let's just say that mansion's probably out of the question."

"I suppose I can't afford to press you on that, and if it's a secret... All the same, I'd like to get an answer eventually."

"You've got a lot of curiosity." He cut me off from replying. "What's your team going to be like?"

"Let's see." I started out with eight fingers across both hands. I would have to go, and so would Daisy. It was likely we'd need multiple people with open ears for Supports, after all. After that... I would need to consider who would be the best match for party preparation, whom I already had entries for. A single entry might not be a strong enough relationship, and so I excluded them from consideration.

- Lucina;
- Link and Zelda;
- Kirby and Dedede;
- Bowser, his son and the Koopalings, Mario, and Peach;
- Duck Hunt and Villager;
- Mewtwo, Pichu, and the Pokémon Trainers;
- and finally, Lucas and Ness.
Zelda is the ruler of a country, and may have other, more pertinent issues preventing her from assisting. Link, meanwhile, is quick, efficient, and effective. According to Lucina, however, he has been taking a short break from Smashes since his last Support, Lucina excepted. [Ent. 21] He may decline the invitation.

Kirby could be especially useful when it came to setting up the party. With his Copy Ability, he might be especially effective. However, I have my concerns about his penchant for collateral damages. When that thought came to me, I had to look up at the hole in the ceiling. [Ent. 38] Perhaps it would be a good idea to pass over him for the time being. Dedede might not be effective as a party planner, and has duties of his own to handle, similar to Zelda.

I would have certain misgivings including Bowser Jr. in the proceedings, as he is a child. In addition, the bulky machinery of the Clown Car would have to be worked around, and as it is a battle-focused machine, I doubt it would have very many utility applications. This excludes the Koopalings. Bowser and Peach are monarchs. Mario could likely be an effective team member. However, taking into account later ideas, it would be likely Luigi may be a better bet, as he can accomplish many of the same things as Mario can such as jumping to high places, and is directly related to Daisy.

I would need to consider if Bark and Quack would be strictly necessary. I would need them for translation, especially, and of the people named... only Pichu would need a translator. His owner Leaf and Mewtwo's psychic powers could possibly serve the same purpose. Therefore, Duck Hunt was not a priority. Secondly, the Villager would likely be busy as Mayor of Smashville, and so could decline getting this duty on short notice.

Mewtwo, Pichu, and the Pokémon Trainers may be very effective persons to request, as they would be able to perform many different functions. Pichu's small body would allow him to reach high places. Mewtwo could use his psychic powers to levitate things, and the Trainers may have more Pokémon with them. Specifically, I would need Leaf, to limit the time Pichu spent away from his owner.

I could not take Lucas or Ness, as they are children. In addition, The only Supports I have between them are each other and Mewtwo, which could be somewhat tenuous.

With those reasons, I said, "Myself, Daisy, Luigi, Leaf, Pichu, and Mewtwo."

"Pretty quick response," Solid Snake replied. "That all you get?"

"No, I believe I'll be able to use all 8 spots. I'm just not sure who else I should pick." I took a sip of my tea.

"Two extra spots, huh...?" He nodded sharply. "I'll take one, and the other one can be R.O.B."

"R.O.B.? I don't know much about him. Why do you think I should bring him?"

He leaned back and looked off. "You'll need to eventually, and it'll be better sooner than later."

"If you think so. Thank you for volunteering yourself, too."

"It can't be any worse than what we've already been through." He didn't comment further, and soon left the Arena through some strange method he didn't let me see. However it worked, though, I believe it involved the Box he took with him.

Having finished the conversation, I waited until around 9:00 AM, to ensure most people would be awake. Somehow, however, I only barely managed to accomplish this; Mewtwo had apparently awoken only five minutes ago. As an aside, communicating through nicknaming tags is very
limiting; I hope Master Hand changes that in the future.

The field on which we found ourselves was the very eerie and very dark Dracula's Castle. I could scarcely see my hand in front of my face at times, and the fight resulted in more than a few self-destructs as the floor seemed to disappear between fighters' feet. I placed third.

"This place is huge!" Daisy turned herself around in a circle as the applause faded. "I mean, even besides the stage, look down there." A seemingly-infinite series of towers and rooms sprawled beneath us. A clock tower rose in the distance, from which came certain flying ghosts or monsters of some kind. "Does anybody recognize this stuff?"

"Aside from the obvious?" Leaf said as Mewtwo performed the move Flash, letting us see somewhat better. "It reminds me a lot of an old English novel. Like, Dracula, or something. I guess this is his castle, so it makes sense."

"You've read Dracula?" Snake said. "I wouldn't have thought that, since you're a Japanese schoolkid."

"The Sevii Islands have a lot of Alolan influence, since they're not too far from each other. It was in the library, and I needed practice with English last year."

"Alola? That would be Hawaii, I'm guessing."

She hesitated. "Ah, yeah, I think that's right. This parallel world stuff is still a little bit beyond me."

"Hawaii became part of the United States in 1959. Your Alola must have done the same at a similar time, then."

"We have strayed from the current topic," R.O.B. said. "The current topic is as follows; we must create some sort of celebration for the fighters currently planned to be included within the Super Smash Bros. Ultimate series of tournaments. Is this correct?"

"We are throwing a party, yes," I said, slightly put off by how verbosely he'd said it. "This seems to be a fairly sword-and-sorcery-based world, so let's assume we'll be interrupted by monsters and spirits along those lines. Now, what does that tell us about the new fighters? Or at least a few of them."

"I predict a high possibility the person or persons to whom this stage corresponds possesses some kind of magical prowess, as well as navigational capability."

"Yeah, I gotta agree." Daisy looked down the stairs, which were rapidly reconnecting themselves to the remainder of the castle. "This place looks like it would be a nightmare to look through."

"It's not so bad," said someone who hadn't been there during the Smash from atop his throne, "once you get a proper map of it all in your head." His skin was pale, his clothes classical, and the fangs in his mouth sharp. In his hand was a glass of red liquid.

"You must be the man named Dracula," I said, ignoring his clearly-monstrous figure. "Will you be giving us instructions, as well?"

"More like warnings." He straightened himself in the chair. "The Hands gave me explicit orders to tell you where the dangerous places here are. I'm also expected to keep my minions far away from you, and recover your trophies should you fall in battle and be unable to return."
"Why?" Snake asked, hand hovering over his gun.

He sighed disgustedly. "Don't bother with that pea shooter." He sounded incredibly bored with the whole proceeding. "If it isn't a holy weapon, it won't do anything." He slouched over once more. "If you must know, I'm doing this under duress. My existence here is contingent on giving you my assistance. If I derelict my duty, they'll destroy me on the spot."

"As an ally," Mewtwo said, "will you give us as much aid as you can?"

"If I think I have to. Until then, let me just get away with telling you the nastier spots. Obviously, you won't be allowed to set up in this room, as it is my throne room. Take the one just downstairs, if you must. There's a map downstairs, as well - it's magic, so you'll be able to see where my nastiest minions and traps are. I will warn you explicitly that within the clock tower lies death. Enter it at your own peril, and don't imply I never informed you of the risks."

"What isn't marked down on this map?" Snake said.

"Anything I have no control over. There are a lot of little monsters that I imagine are from the same world as that yellow rat and the cat with the tube in its neck. The largest thing, however, is the Rathalos that's roaming the halls."

"Rathalos?!"

He quirked an eyebrow. "Ah, you've heard of it? Surprising, considering what kind of power it has inside of it."

"What exactly is it?" I said.

"A dragon. What else?"

"What kind?"

"A powerful one." He shook his head at my next question. "Make up your own answer, because I can't give it to you. It's not from my world." Dracula curled his lip in disgust. "Ask your kitted-out friend there if you need to know that badly. In the meantime, I've satisfied my obligations." He bolted upright and threw the glass away. As it fell on the ground, he was engulfed in a beam of light and disappeared.

"Alright," Daisy said. "So, disregarding Mr. Vampire over there, where do we start?"

"Let's find some rooms to mark off," Mewtwo said. "The dark energy that permeates this place will need to be dispelled for our more delicate guests, and myself. Taking fewer rooms would make things easier than cleaning the entire castle."

"Ah, I've got my Chikorita!" Leaf took out a Pokéball. "She's got Aromatherapy."

"That will be a supreme help, but the PP may be - "

"I've got plenty of Leppa Berries!" She put her arm to her chest proudly. "You don't have to worry!"

"I've got an air filter," Snake said, taking the item from his belt. "I'll go scouting for the Rathalos, since I'm the only one who knows what it looks like."

"You should really have someone go with you," I said. "I don't necessarily trust that everything Dracula has will be on the map, and it could be too much for one person to handle."
"I can go!" Luigi raised his shaking hand.

"Huh?" Daisy looked at him concernedly. "Are you sure about that, Luigi? It seems like this place might be... you know, kinda creepy."

"It's - it's nothing I haven't been through before!" He clenched his raised fists. "I might be scared, but I can do this!"

She smiled at him. "Alright. Well, let me give you a reason to make it out safe." She gave him a peck on the cheek. He seemed to have his excitement overpower his fear for a brief moment and stood ahead of Snake, raring to go.

"If you do locate it," R.O.B. said to Snake, "transmit the data to my visual output using your digital camera. I will project the image into the air, to allow the others to view the Rathalos. It will be in monochrome."

"Monochrome, huh? Better know my colors, then."

"I may also distribute audio data, if you would give me access to your nanotechnological codec."

Snake pressed his finger to his ear and wriggled his other hand, I assume as some sort of code. For a few moments, he seemed to have a conversation with someone without moving his lips. "Otacon'll contact you with my number."

"I am very grateful." Snake and Luigi went downstairs.

"As long as we're assigning jobs," Daisy said, "I can take care of the food!"

"I'm not entirely sure how big the guest list will be," I said. "Even if it's just the fighters we already have, that'll be a lot of food."

"Well, I mean, we've gotta assume we're getting help from the Hands for actually making the food, right? They probably know we've gotta feed these people. I've just gotta draw up a plan, and they can poof it up!" She turned to the empty throne. "Hey, Dracula! Where's the kitchen in this castle?"

"There isn't one." Dracula's voice came from nothing. "I dine on the blood of men. What use have I for a stove?"

"Well, vampire or not, you have to have somewhere with an open flame, right? Just point me where to go, and I'll take it from there. I've got a great sense of direction!"

"Didn't you just give me a Support where you said you got lost in your own city?" I said.

"I was ten years old!" She blushed. "Cut me a little slack!"

"Wait, you got lost at ten?" Leaf said, looking like she was about to laugh.

"Oh, don't you start," Mewtwo said, lifting her into the air with telekinesis. "Some people aren't Pokémon training prodigies like you and your brother. Ten is a perfectly reasonable age to get lost at."

"You're just saying that because you're not that old yet." She crossed her arms.

"Do you need me to throw you over the edge of this castle?" he said as they floated downstairs, with Pichu skittering down after them.
"Well," I said, "one of us is going to be near R.O.B. if we find a Snake Support, Daisy." She agreed. "From here, let's make sure we can contact Palutena and get started."

"I assume," R.O.B. said, "that it is the Goddess of Light that has been attempting to present herself through my ocular projectors, then."

I was taken aback. "How long has she been trying to do that?"

His top eyelids snapped to halfway down his eyes. "I have been receiving communications this entire time. I will use it to justify my eighth-place finish." Then, his eyes shone red and a vision of Palutena appeared.

"Oh, thank goodness!" She slumped over in her chair in relief. "Don't scare me like that, Robin!"

I took a second to think about why she seemed to be so panicked. "I take it you can't see us here?"

"Not any more than I could if I were a mortal right where this projection is." She looked around. "And it's only you, Daisy, and R.O.B.; I can't see anything else. You must be in the Hands' private space right now."

"They have a private space?"

"As far as I know, it's where they keep anything they're working on, or repairing, or dismantling, or what have you. It's completely impossible to scry into, and they consider spying with angels to be... in incredibly poor taste." She smacked her lips. "Poor Pit. Angel wings were on the menu that night."

"Then, you won't be able to aid-slash-spy-on us here?"

"We've got to talk about your bad habit of assuming." She sighed. "But yes. I can't do anything for you there."

"That's a shame. If things go poorly, we might need a Goddess's power."

"Maybe they won't. And if they do, don't you think you'll be able to handle it? You do have that Convoy power, after all."

I nodded. "I do." Whether it will be enough is an entirely different question.

"Well, I'll let you get back to the party-planning. I know you probably have a lot of work ahead of you."

"I never told you about the party." My token protest was cut off by her image disappearing from the air.

Daisy clapped her hands. "Alright! Now that we've got our work cut out for us, I'll go look for that kitchen! You can take the first R.O.B. shift?"

"I've got it." It will give me plenty of time to look for Supports, and also to plan for any potential problems. I can start with taking inventory of the Convoy. This coming Thursday, I expect I'll be paying the local Anna a lot of money... not that I don't already.

Chapter End Notes
Kept you waiting, huh?

Here we go, the start of the Party Arc! Like I said, I'm expecting a lot of Supports here. I'm really looking forward to doing this story, and I hope you're looking forward to reading it, too. We'll be on a little bit of a ride until next Wednesday (in-fic).

And yes, since this is AU, we're still working with Trophies, not Spirits. Galeem ain't around right now, after all.
Taking Steps

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Smash Entry 48
Fri. August 3, 18
R.O.B./Snake C
Concerns Snake's team.
Author: Robin

The set up had been proceeding for a while when Snake finally spoke to R.O.B. again. I say spoke, but he apparently could communicate only by thinking using his codec technology. It directly transmitted his thoughts to R.O.B, who repeated them without error.

"They've got plenty of Pokémon down here. If I had to guess, they're that Ghost type, or maybe the Dark type. No sign of the Rathalos, though."

"That's a good thing," I said. "If it hasn't shown up by now, it might be in an entirely separate part of the castle."

"I wouldn't hold my breath," he said. "Even if I haven't seen it, there's still signs of its activity. Plenty of scratches along the floor, among other things."

"I understand. I know what wyvern scratches on a stone floor look like."

"Yeah, well this thing's probably a lot stronger than any wyvern you had to deal with."

"How do you know about it, anyway? Looking at you, your world probably doesn't have very many dragons in it - or magic, for that matter."

"You're right about that." He grumbled. "It's a long story, but for now I'll just say that it's not something anybody thought was real."

"I see. Then, let me ask you something else. Why did you want to invite R.O.B. here?" I looked up at his head, currently turned to face Snake, presumably to help with some kind of signal. His eyes were slowly flashing blue. "I definitely appreciate the help, but I feel as though that's not why you suggested it."

"It's not." There was a pregnant pause. "But it seems like R.O.B. isn't ready to talk about it."

He blinked. "It is of no concern to the present day." He snapped his head up. "I will not continue performing this service if this conversation continues down this path."

"Message received," I said. He nodded sharply. "I would like to ask you, though, R.O.B.: what do you think of Snake as a person?"

"As a person?" His neck snapped to one side. "I think he is as good a person as he can be. Though he may have seen many harsh battles, and dealt with terrible things, he has ultimately overcome his pain." His eyelids shot down to halfway, and his eyes began to glow blue once more. "If we could all do that, I think we would be in a better place."

"I seem to have brought up a tough subject."
"You've got no idea," Snake said. "Those kinds of scars run deep; you probably get it too well, considering you're a tactician."

"It isn't the same thing." R.O.B. 's eyes turned red. "I have had enough of this." Dropping his arms to his sides, he cut the codec off and drove himself to a far corner of Dracula's throne room. Never in my life did I think I'd see any kind of automoton behave like this.

Thinking it wise, I attempted to give him some space by moving downstairs. However, what seemed like the middle of a Support was in progress, and so I retreated back to the throne room.

After some time, R.O.B. turned his head toward me again, without rotating the rest of his body. "I do not think that Snake's assessment is erroneous in its logic. However, to explain why..." He turned the remainder of his body to me. "It is not a subject I enjoy thinking about."

"I assume it was some kind of war? Your title within Boxing Ring points to you having lost your people."

His eyes went half-lidded and blue, and his arms dropped. "It does. But the pain I feel is still too great for me to speak of."

"You've gotta talk about it." Snake said, from directly behind me. After dodging a swing of my Bronze Sword and knocking it out of my hand, he continued, "It's been years. I've been through enough battle that I know when it's tying you down."

"How did you get here?!" I said.

"I used the package transport system." He pulled out the Box and crouched underneath it. "I can go between any two places if my box is labelled right."

"Could you not try to hold a conversation underneath that piece of cardboard?"

"It is no trouble to me," R.O.B. said. "I can access his codec here, as well."

"Alright, so he'll be able to help you through this while he searches through the castle. And when he does, Daisy or I will write it down."

"I'm not a therapist," Snake said.

"Then I'll be the therapist and you'll be my consultant, however you want to arrange it. We still have to locate the Rathalos before the party!" I looked behind him, at a person who should have been there, but wasn't. "Speaking of finding it, where's Luigi?"

"I split up with him so we could cover more ground."

"That explains the trophy." Dracula's voice once more echoed through the room. "Your friend Luigi fell to one of my monsters. You didn't give him the map, did you, Mr. Soliton Radar?"

Snake grumbled. "I'll take care of that in a second - "

Daisy, holding a new Support, came charging up the stairs with fire in her eyes. "You'd better think again, buster! You're gonna rescue Luigi right now, or so help me - !"

Things had rapidly gotten out of hand, and it took Snake leaving the room for a relative calm to return.

"Like I was saying," Snake said over codec, "I'm not a therapist, but I do have one on my team. Her
name's Rosemary. R.O.B. can patch her in so she can help with the session."

Upon asking, I received information about Snake's remaining team members:

- Colonel Roy Campbell, a military advisor;
- Hal Emmerich, nicknamed Otacon, a technology expert;
- Mei Ling, a data analyst;
- Gray Fox, the Assist trophy, in his codec under the name Deepthroat;
- Rosemary, the aforementioned therapist;
- a man named Raiden who is related to Rosemary in some way;
- Kazuhiro Miller, who knew survival techniques;
- Meryl Silverburgh, who I sense Snake was romantically involved with, even if he denied it;
- and a woman simply called The Boss. According to Snake, she is an excellent soldier.

"Of course, Rosemary's going to want patient-client confidentiality."

"In other words," I said, "she won't want me listening in."

"Me, either." He grumbled. "I'll have to sign off for now. Concentrating on responding while I search for Luigi is splitting my focus, anyway."

"Let us know when you find him."

"And please," R.O.B. said, "remember to contact Rosemary on this matter."

"I will," Snake said, and cut off the codec.

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Smash Entry 49
Fri. August 3, 18
Mewtwo/Pichu C
Mewtwo/Pokémon Trainer C
Author: Daisy

I was sitting down in front of a fire that Dracula popped in for me (Which I was pretty surprised by, let me tell you! I guess he's not a bad guy for a vampire, after all?), and I was trying to work on the food for the party.

Mewtwo peered over my shoulder while I was making notes in my journal. "You're not supposed to use it for that, you know."

"Oh, shut up, Mewtwo. It's my journal, so I'll use it for what I want."

He shook his head and hovered over to where Pichu was. "Well, as long as we're here while your Trainer's shackled to her Chikorita, is there anything you'd like to do?"

Pichu climbed up Leaf's shoulders and out onto the hand she held out for him. According to Leaf, he was ready for a battle. (From what Robin told me, almost every Support Mewtwo's had so far has been about fighting. Is this just how Pokémon make friends, or something?)

"Naturally, I accept." They took their places at opposite sides of the room and suddenly charged at each other. Pichu was moving really quick, like he did in his Smashes, and Mewtwo was just standing there and taking it - and with one big blast, he knocked Pichu clear across the room again. "And that's that."
"Does it normally go that fast?" I said.

Leaf picked Pichu up and broke some kind of diamond-shaped medicine above his head. He perked up right after. "Usually, Mewtwo finishes it even faster," she said. "He probably doesn't want to risk getting the attention of something nasty, though. Who know's what's around here?"

"I can put no faith in my ability to fight anything off in this haunted house." He crossed his arms and turned away. "Especially not without a Mewtwonite X."

"Yeah, too bad Red isn't here. He could probably Mega Evolve you if he caught you."

"He'd have to catch me, first." He got angry when he said that. One of his Shadow Balls charged in his hand. "I've resisted him thus far, and I plan to continue doing so."

"Message received."

"I find Pichu to be quite lucky in that regard, in fact."

She tilted her head. "What do you mean?"

"Your Pokémon was bred and hatched for the role it has found itself in. I, fortunately, am not, but it has left me without much purpose."

"What do you mean?"

He made a weary noise. "Going into it now would do nothing. It is of no relevance to now. Suffice to say, I am a wanderer now. My only solace is in making sure I am the only one who must be."

"So, that's why you don't want to be caught by my brother," she said, "but what does that have to do with Pichu?"

He turned his head to look at the permanent, starless night sky. "I fear it may not be forever that we all stay in this tournament. I have been retired once, and it would take no great feat to retire me again. If it happens, I will have to resume my life of wandering, having only brief respite in my home in Cerulean Cave."

"Cerulean Cave?" She blinked. "Wait a minute. You don't mean that - ?"

"I fear I may. Loath as I am to admit it, my days of freedom could well be numbered. If any will, Red is the one who will catch me. I know that much already. It was known by the former Pichu, a fact which I have no need to confirm, though I cannot."

Leaf had to sit down on the ground. "There's another Pichu?"

"There was. There is no more. I can only assume he was sent back to the version of our many worlds that he came from."

"So, hang on." I put out my finger. "How do you know that, then? If Red caught you in old Pichu's world, that doesn't mean his and yours go the same way."

"No, but there was a certain thing which should not have existed, that did."

"Certain thing?" Leaf said. "What do you mean?"

"It is a detestable concoction called the Berserk Gene - so named as it draws from my DNA to drive a Pokémon mad, as if under a permanent Swagger."
"Whoa." Leaf bit her lip. "That's - uh, yeah. If the wrong Pokémon got a hold of that, it'd be real bad. There's no way somebody would make that unless they were Team Rocket, and Red and I took care of them already."

"It was the beginning of the end for them, at least," Mewtwo said. "After I was caught, I suspect a Rocket Scientist infiltrated Silph and stole the data from my Pokéball, taking the structure of my DNA. From there, it is a simple matter of synthesis." His tail waved itself back and forth, like an angry cat. I guess he is a cat, though. "An attempt to refine what they'd already tried."

"That's terrible! I can't believe they'd try to use something like that!"

"Thankfully, they have definitely dispersed - for good, according to that Pichu. Some seventy years or so years of servitude is a small price to pay for that knowledge."

"I guess. Still, I'm sorry it had to happen to you." She stood up and walked over to Mewtwo.

"Ah - hold on! I'm not prepared for any displays of affection!"

Pichu climbed up Leaf's hand again and gave Mewtwo a peck on the cheek. Mewtwo's face lit up completely red.

"Daisy, if you write that down, I'll hit you with a Psystrike."

Right about that time, I heard the sound of a car engine, and then all of a sudden, a cardboard box walked through the doorway out of the castle. I think it might have been Snake. I figure that Palutena can't tell Robin when I'm done without seeing me, so I'll just go up and tell him myself.

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Smash Entry 50
Fri. August 3, 18 6:00 PM
Daisy/Luigi C
Author: Robin

Snake returned with Luigi's trophy late in the day. Daisy tapped his base as soon as she was told to, and Luigi came back into the world, screaming at the top of his lungs.

"Sweetie! Sweetie, it's me!" She grabbed his hands and calmed him down.

"He was farther down than I expected to get in one day," Snake said. "There were plenty of things I wasn't expecting on the way."

"He shouldn't have been in that position in the first place!" She turned her anger onto Snake. "You said you were going to work as a team, and I expect you to treat him like a teammate! You left him defenseless!"

"Daisy, it was my idea," Luigi said, cutting off her tirade.

"Wha - why?"

"Well, I was watching how Snake was going through the castle, and I was watching him, and I was watching him. He's pretty slow when it comes to moving around this place."

"That, or you're just reckless," Snake said. "I've never seen somebody try to charge into enemy territory like you do."

"Well, it's what a hero's supposed to do! Even if I'm not Mario, I've gotta give it my all!"
"You don't have to be Mario, sweetie. You do a great job being you." Daisy gave him a kiss on the nose.

Luigi shuffled in place, blushing furiously. "Aw, gee, thanks, Daisy."

"He doesn't have any permanent damage, thankfully," I said, "but I think it might be best to finish up for the day."

"I'll let the Pokémon and Leaf know," Snake said, and left the room.

"I'm really glad you're okay, Luigi, but you can't just do stuff like that, you know. Snake probably knows what he's doing."

"I know. I'm just used to following Mario, and he moves a lot faster through a castle." He chuckled. "If I didn't know any better, I'd think he was a carpenter and not a plumber!"

She laughed right back. "Yeah, he can get kinda ridiculous about old buildings. Having to keep up with him would light a fire under anybody's feet." She shrugged. "I guess I can't exactly blame you, but tomorrow, try not to do that again, okay?"

"I might not go out tomorrow," he said. "I've got to help out up here, too, after all."

"Well, let's figure it out when we get there, right?"

He nodded, and went down the stairs to meet the others.

Daisy put her hand to her chest and muttered Luigi's name. After I asked, she said, "He's still not quite over comparing himself to Mario. I mean, he's gotten better at it, but - " She shook her head. " - I guess there's only so much you can do when the world keeps doing it for you."

I couldn't offer much advice of my own, but since it's so important to her, I honestly doubt she'll give up.

Chapter End Notes

R.O.B.'s expressions are unusual to use, considering he's got, you know, no facial muscles. He's got a neck and light-up eyes, though, so that's cool.

Snake's support team is about half of the Spirits from the MG series. Not working alongside him are his brothers (Solidus and Liquid), his dad (in either Naked Snake or Big Boss form), Revolver Ocelot (III or V), the Metal Gears or Sahelanthropus (REX, RAY, and ZEKE), EVA, Paz, or Strangelove, or the Gekkoes. (Of course, it should be obvious there is a single Spirit missing from this list... but the Cardboard Box is neutral in all conflicts, obviously.)

Man, the Berserk Gene is an anomaly... It's one of the few items introduced in GSC that both has an actual effect, and never appears again after it. Though, it apparently hasn't been forgotten, if Detective Pikachu's R drug is properly related to it. I mean, it is synthesized using Mewtwo, after all.
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