

Track Down

By Catdragon66

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Rouge is attacked by the remaining members of a gang called Crab. She goes to Knuckles to heal but she is attacked before she can heal fully. Now Knuckles has to save her from a chocolaty death! What? KnuxRouge (Includes the original oneshot)

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1 - Flames

Kitty: This is an old fic that has been fixed up over my two week vacation in the Adirondacks. This was done instead of working on my book. I really don't like this fic anymore and other people really don't either. That's why I'm going to try and fix it up.

I hate the large use of fan characters but there's nothing I can do because they're all part of the story and not just there because I felt like it.

Also, this is going to be broken up into chapters because all of my revisions have caused this one shot to be very long, much like 'Dance for the Moon.'

Note : I first used the Crab Gang here but I transferred them over to my cousin's and my comic, 'Devils and Saints.' But, again this is the first time I've used them and thus this explains more then the comic does. I can not, nor would I, change that so you'll have to deal with a little extra story then you would like.

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 1: Flames

Rouge's head was forced under the water of her bath tub. Two creatures then started to destroy her belongings in her apartment. Her eyes opened slightly through the muggy water to see the rippled reflection of orange and yellow. They widened noticing it was fire! Her intruders were setting everything ablaze!

The white bat had just returned home from shopping. She was heading into the bathroom and started her bath when three identical being attacked her, catching her off guard. One had crept up from behind and was currently the one trying to drown her.

Rouge began to struggle harder, kicking her feet and trying to pull herself up. He was strong, keeping a firm grip around the back of her neck to ensure she had no chance for another breath. His claws sunk into the flesh of her neck, turning the water a thin red.

Finally, the bat regained her composure and organized her assault. The back of her heel slammed into her attacker's jaw, sending the startle being backwards. Once the grip was released she swung her head above the water taking in a large breath of air. But none of it was refreshing making her cough and swallow gulps of dry, smoky air. She looked behind her into her bed room seeing all of her things smothered in flames. Rouge clasped her hands over her mouth to try and keep from taking in more smoke then she had already done.

It was then that she felt a tight grip clamp around her throat. Her attacker had finally recovered and was now back for more.

"You'll pay with your life for what you did to us!" He hissed in her ear.

"I'm guessing you've never taken on Rouge The Bat before, have ya?" The thief asked, smirking.

It was then that Rouge threw her arms over her head to grip the being's shoulder's. With a quick jolt of adrenalin she lifted her assailant over her head and out into her smoldering bedroom, and onto her bed.

She only had a second to view who it was.

The lizard had grayish skin that was covered with a brown trench coat. Its hands were covered with spiked gloves, similar to Knuckles'. Its feet were bare with a hooked tail that whipped around as the flames hungrily ate at its flesh.

Rouge listened as the sound of his hissing screams that were soon drowned out by the sizzling sound of his frying skin. Soon the smell of burnt skin filled the room along with the suffocating fumes of her destroyed belongings.

"I... *cough* have to... *cough, cough*.... get out of here!" She told herself, her paw hardly working to keep out the smoke.

Rouge the bat scuffled her way out of the now flooded bath room into her flaming bedroom. The heat was nearly unbearable and she felt as though she had been placed in an oven. The brightness of her room and the blackness of the smoke made it hard to make out anything, but lucky this was her terrain and she knew where everything was in general. So she began to maneuver herself towards a distant window in the corner of her room.

As the frantic bat passed by her canopy bed her wing cough onto her bed post. She gave a screech as the heat consumed the membrane of it, she fell to the floor. The scuffling as she hoister herself back up caused an updraft of ash that turned her drenched, white fur to gray. Her lungs began to burn and sting even more from the deadly mixture of water and particles of ashes scraping scraping them and filling them with blood and making her breathing shallow.

With out a second thought she charged at her window with another burst of strength. Her body toppled into the night sky, unable to get her wing to expand as if the mechanism was jammed somehow. Her weakened flesh tumbled downward to the city street trailing smoke, glass, and blood. The blackness of the pavement became closer and closer till, in a split second stroke of luck, her ebony wings shot open between two speeding cars. The two structures came to a screeching stop as the unexpected bat flew off into the distance.

Rouge flew as fast as her one aching wing could take her. Soon enough both gave out a few feet into Emerald Beach, her frail body toppling into the frozen ocean with a splash. The salt of the ocean's liquid shot into her throat and gashes making every part of her flesh sizzle was such an uncomfortable pain. She rose back up to the air and took in deep breath, but coughing up blood and seawater afterwards. All she could do now was float on the surface of the ocean, staring with bloodshot eyes at the white-speckled, night sky.

She gazed up at the shimmering, full moon. "shoot, I must of swallowed at least three gallons of water through this episode. Though I much prefer the bath water." She whispered, her throat scruffy and shaky.

Rouge couldn't sleep like this so she slowly switched to her stomach and swam towards the bank. She looked up ahead to see the beach, and her smoldering apartment off in the distance. The flames consumed the entire portion of the building as giant black clouds rose into the night air. She could hear loud sirens, possibly from fire engines, as well as screams from frightened and curious spectators. Rouge slowly dragged herself onto the damp sands of the beach and laid there, weak, cold, and in pain. Every single part of her body, from her aching head to her stiff legs, would not allow her to move any further at the moment. But, She closed her scorching eyes and curled her body enough to gather her energy and lift her flesh was more effort then she would dare admit.

"I don't think I can say here, and I can't go back to my place." She gave a weak, amused laugh at herself. "Looks like I'll need to ask for some help." Every word was labored and cracked from the poison inside it.

(Preview of Chapter 2: Long Time No See)

The scarlet echidna echidna walked through the main room and to the main entrance. He was reluctant to turn the knob for fear of what was on the other side. But, he did so thinking that any self-respecting demon would just have knocked the door down. So he slowly turned the handle as was met with a sight more gruesome than he could have imagined.

His eyes widened at the mangled sight of a grayish-white bat standing limply in the space the door had just revealed. Her entire body was caked with dried mud and scabbed over cuts all down her flesh. Her arms were clasped meekly over her chest with her legs spread out a bit for support. Her black jump-suit was torn across her stomach and hips, all down her legs. Her entire form shook as if the mini space she was on top of was experiencing its own earthquake. Her beautiful, aqua eyes were red with veins and black with bags beneath them. She wore no makeup but it would not have helped or hindered her at the moment.

The bat spoke with a voice so dim and crackling she almost appeared as though she would experience hell if she uttered one word. "Hey, Knucklehead." Rouge smirked, "Long time no see." It was then that the bat gave a loud exhale as if she had been holding her breath the entire time. She then collapsed on the ground, with little resistance, and fainted.

Kitty : The first part, now on to the second.

2 - Long Time No See

Kitty: The second part is where Knuckles comes in. These 'chapters' are really short but I have my reasons. I could only do so much with this fic without completely scrapping it and starting over, so bear with me here.

Note: One thing I do hate is the reasoning behind how she was able to get up on Angel Island in the first place. I'm sure I'm not the only one who thought of that. Again, bear with me. This was written many years ago when I didn't think things through and logic wasn't part of my fiction vocabulary. I have no idea how she gets up on Angel Island and it bugs me to death! I know this is just a fiction but for me this is unexceptionable. When I do think of something I will write it in. But for now, let's just assume she had enough energy in her state to fly, okay?

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 2: Long Time No See

Knuckles the Echidna was up at around five that morning making his rounds. The sun was just peeking up over the island, warming and waking all other creatures within the area. The steadfast echidna checked every inch of the island for any trouble spots, taking in deep breaths of refreshing air as he went. Everything seemed fine. He jogged up the shrine to check his lovely Master Emerald, not a shard out of place. He headed back down the shrine to his small, but comfy, home at the entrance to Angel Forest. It was a shack-like place, made of the same wood that came from the trees that grew on the island.

He stepped inside the wobbly doorway through the main room and straight into the kitchen. It was a quaint space with a sink, stove, a fridge, cabinets, two windows, and a simple table and chair set. He had assisted the help of Tails, after the pestering from Sonic to get some technology up on the island, to pick out some simple devices and fly them up to the island. He had to admit some of the stuff wasn't too bad.

So, to quell his growling stomach he mixed up some increments he had stored away in the fridge and cabinets to make a couple of buttermilk pancakes. He also collected some fruits and berries around the island during his rounds to squeeze some fresh juice for a drink.

It was just another calming day for the echidna. These were the days he loved. The sun was shining beautifully with little to no clouds in the sky. He poured the thick, creaming batter into a sizzling pan to make the first of many flapjacks. As he shifted it in the smooth pan and flipped it into the air he thought to himself, *this would be a nice day for a swim*. He inhaled the, mouthwatering aroma then looked upwards to a window carved above the stove. Outside he could make out a corner of the Master Emerald shifting in the warm sun, *I just hope it doesn't get too hot*.

He took a plate from the cabinet to the right of himself and gave the pancake another flip. Instead of landing it the pan he placed the plate beneath it and caught his breakfast there. The gentle aroma wafted in the air around his nostrils.

"Mmm, that smells great. I can't wait to eat." He licked his lips again and was about to get the mixing

bowl full of batter to make another when his ears perked up at a sound.

Knock, knock, knock, A few loud bangs came from his wooden door.

He looked towards it with a grim expression. "Who could that be?"

The scarlet echidna echidna placed down everything he was holding and walked out towards the doorway. He stopped and stared at the darkened wood as if it would open itself merely by thought. He was reluctant to answer at first but, he did so thinking that any self-respecting demon would just have knocked the door down. So he slowly turned the handle as was met with a sight more gruesome than he could have imagined.

Knuckles' eyes widened at the mangled sight of a grayish-white bat standing limply in the space the door had just revealed. Her entire body was caked with dried mud and scabbed over cuts all down her flesh. Her arms were clasped meekly over her chest with her legs spread out a bit for support. Her black jump-suit was torn across her stomach and hips, all down her legs. Her entire form shook as if the mini space she was on top of was experiencing its own earthquake. Her beautiful, aqua eyes were red with veins and black with bags beneath them. She wore no makeup but it would not have helped or hindered her at the moment. Her ears were crimped and her fur an utter mess, the image was far beyond words.

Rouge spoke with a voice so dim and crackling it almost appeared as though she would experience hell if she uttered one word. "Hey, Knucklehead." Rouge smirked, "Long time no see."

It was then that the bat gave a loud exhale as if she had been holding her breath the entire time. She then collapsed on the ground, with little resistance, and fainted.

Knuckles immediately bent down and took her in his arms, still in unspoken shock. He lifted her brown patched body to him and cradled her close to his chest. She was so cold. The echidna bent his head outside to see if anyone was near or watching. There was no one. He looked down to her lifeless body that hung in his arms like a new-born infant. *Who the Hell did this to her?* He questioned angrily in his mind. He stood up and closed the door to the outside world.

But, he was wrong. There was someone watching, two someones to be exact.

(Preview of Chapter 3: Planning)

The other being stood at the left corner, his back straight with arms crossed. A tall black cat with navy spiked hair stood strong against the golden background. His ears were slim and pointed, standing up above his hair. He wore a pair of blue jeans, ripped around the ankles with a thick brown belt harnessed strangling his hips. Out of the back three thick, black tails looking like living snakes hovering in the air. Attached to his brown, leather belt a black and silver sheath hung as if to ward off any foes. Nothing was upon his feet and chest, exposing his physically fit body.

The two being stood in the center of the room as the cat looked up to reveal startling, topaz eyes. The newly entered characters lifted their hats to reveal identical faces only made distinguishable by their eyes and crowning fetchers. One had yellow irises with a spiked Mohawk, the other two stubby horns with green irises.

"We are sorry sir," The red eyed one spoke.

"But, she was too strong for us." The other continued.

"She was able to take out Mark during the scuffle." Said the red eyed one.

"We were lucky to have escaped the inferno ourselves but she escaped as well." Continued the one with the green irises.

"What do you mean she escaped?" The black cat growled at the two.

They both cringed but it was the green one who was the first to gather enough courage to speak again.

"We underestimated her." His voice shook.

The cat snarled, "You're both idiots. After she was able to track us down you..." He was about to say

something more before a hoarse growl interrupted his train of thought.

"Shut up, all of you!" A fat, slobbery voice hushed them.

Kitty : The next part is where plans are made by the Crab Gang. It contains all fan characters but I can't take it out because it explains a bit of the plot. Skip it if you want, I really don't care. I'm still arguing with myself if I should delete the section and take the time and effort to work around it. Maybe some other time.

3 - Planning

Kitty: The deal with the Crab Gang is that Rouge was able to find them, by going undercover, and hand them over to the police. As you can see some members of the gang were not captured, no duh. Thus the remaining ones are after her, what this entire headache is based on.

Note: Just some stuff on Mark, Moe, and Matt. The three are triplets who basically look exactly alike except for their eye color and the way they do their hair. This was changed when they were reborn in the 'Devils and Saints' comic, giving them some more distinct coloring, body structures and personalities. But, before that they were pretty much all the same character, operated like one being, finishing each other's sentences and stuff like that. Though this was a part of them before they were reborn I couldn't stand it and had to give them something distinctive. As such it was just their eye color and hair. Though it isn't much it makes me feel better.

As for Kikirue and Seraue I just changed their personalities to better fit the alternate ending. And again, I don't know how Moe and Matt got on Angel Island and back other than swimming. Please don't kill me over this, it is old and to tell you the truth I hate it too!

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 3: Planning

Back in Station Square all was in a ruckus. The fire department had gotten there late so the only real part of the apartment building that was still standing was the coal-colored first two levels. There was a huge mob around the area giving off useless shouts, whispers, and gasps at the scene. There were groups of officials that looked as though they were of high status checking the surrounding area. The small group of suited people made sure no one unimportant passed through the neon-yellow, 'do not enter' tape fencing off the charred scene.

Through the crowd two smaller beings slithered through as though they were nonexistent. The two had just returned from a long swim to Angel Island and back, checking to ensure nothing was amiss. The two clothed themselves in tan trench coats and mob hats as they tried to conceal themselves as best they could. One checked the surrounding area and gave a nod to the other who was farther away. The two then made their way down into the sewer system in the back of the building, crawling under the metal bars that attempted to keep anything overly large from entering. They swiftly navigated pipe like passages, left, two rights, and another left till they came to a blocked off area, seemingly a dead end.

One removed a thin hand from its coat and placed it on a strange looking area of the cement wall. It was then that a small block flipped open to reveal a flat, black microphone.

The one being's black snout poked out towards it. "Boss, we've returned. Moe and Matt." He spoke. "Come in..." A deep-throated, slobbery voice responded through the crackling microphone.

The block of cement in front of them lifted at the ended conversation to let them pass.

The two then entered a huge area that looked nothing like the sewer and more like a mansion. The walls were painted a smooth, cream color with the floor carpeted in crimson fur. A row of obviously

expensive, crystalline Chandeliers hung upon the ceiling, shedding a warming, sparkling light. The beings headed inwards and through two fancy corridors lined with costly paintings, priceless artifacts, and ancient memorabilia from times past.

Both stopped at a large, oak door covered with fancy embroidery patterns. One took a clawed hand to gently knock on the door which made deep, echoing thumps with every hit. Slowly the wooden walls opened inward to reveal a gleaming, golden room. The carpet was a stiff orange with the walls it curled against a blood red. The ceiling was twice as height as one might think the entire length of the sewer might be. Upon the left and right walls more portraits hung and looked as though the figures within, all bulldogs, were glaring at those who had just entered. Straight ahead a gigantic desk took up most of the back half of the room. Two beings were within this view as well. One took refuge behind an overly large, maroon-colored, swivel chair facing away from the door.

The other being stood at the left corner of the desk. His back was straight with his arms crossed, his head was tilted downward with eyes closed in waiting thought. As a tall black cat with navy spiked hair he stood strong against the golden background. His ears were slim and pointed, standing up above his hair. He wore a pair of blue jeans, ripped around the ankles with a thick brown belt strangling his hips. Attached to his brown, leather belt a black and silver sheath hung as if to ward off any foes. Out of the back three thick, black tails looking like living snakes hovering in the air. Nothing was upon his feet, paws, and chest, exposing his physically fit body.

The two new comers stood in the center of the room as the cat looked up to reveal startling, topaz eyes. The two lifted their hats to reveal identical faces only made distinguishable by their eyes and crowning fetchers. One had yellow irises with a spiked Mohawk, the other two stubby horns with green irises. Both were thinly Komodo Dragons.

"We are sorry sir," The red eyed one spoke.

"But, she was too strong for us." The other continued.

"She was able to take out Mark during the scuffle." Said the red eyed one.

"We were lucky to have escapes the inferno ourselves but she escaped as well." Continued the one with the green irises.

"What do you mean she escaped?" The black cat growled at the two.

They both cringed but it was the green one who was the first to gather enough courage to speak again.

"We underestimated her." His voice shook.

The cat snarled, "You're both idiots. After she was able to track us down you..." He was about to say something more before a hoarse growl interrupted his train of thought.

"Shut up, all of you!" A fat, slobbery voice hushed them.

The three turned their attention to the maroon chair as it slowly turned to show the prodigious being's girth occupying it. He was a huge bulldog with coarse, cream-colored fur with a chocolate-brown snout. Two of his bottom canines pierced through his lip to gleam menacingly in the light. His eyes were like tiny, black marbles hardly visible under the rows of fleshy eyebrows. On the edge of his thick, wet lips and floppy cheeks a caramel-colored cigar sat calmly. He dresses himself in a violet-colored, black-stripped gangster outfit with inch-thick, golden rings hugging his short, pudgy fingers. Each one having either a large gemstone or long rows of such.

"Sorry sir." The cat said.

"Moe, Matt," He scoffed. "Where was she last sited?" Once could tell his voice was labored with each word, having to take in deep, hindered breaths through mid sentence.

"She was last spotted sir," Moe, the green, started.

"On Angel Island." Matt, the red one, continued.

"She sought shelter," Moe spoke.

"From the echidna that lives there." Matt ended.

"Knuckles," The dog snarled in his deep-throated voice. He took a moment to engulf a quick breath of tobacco then lifted a fatty paw to remove the cigar from his jaws. "The guardian of the Master Emerald," He contemplated. "The most sought after jewel then the Chaos Emeralds." As he spoke those words gray smoke seeped from every pore as if he were about to breath fire.

"What do you propose sir?" The cat looked to his master.

"You, Kikirue, will go after her." He flicked the tip of his smoldering cigar towards the cat. "If that Echidna guardian tries to stand in your way, Moe and Matt I want you two to redeem yourselves by mangling him so that he can not even crawl."

"Of course sir." the two Komodo brothers responded.

"Good. Now get out of my site you vermin!" He swiped a paw at the two.

Both jumped and shot out of the door in fear, leaving only the cat and his master.

Kikirue watched them leave before speaking. "I'm guessing I should go too."

He to a step forward before stopping from Seraue's voice.

The dog placed the cigar back to his lips for a moment, drawing in a deep breath. "I want the bat returned to me alive, Kikirue." He exhaled a long stream of smoke, "I want the pleasure of killing her myself." He spoke so calmly it was as though he were simply asking them to pick up some milk.

"Right," The cat answered.

The dog's eyes narrowed, "I do not want any screw ups from you, boy."

Kikirue bowed, "Have I ever done so?" He asked in a melancholy voice.

"You may leave now." Seraue gave his last words.

The black cat then slowly strolled straight for the door and exited with out another word spoken. Soon enough the bulky dog was left alone to himself and trinkets. He took a long inhale without his cigar, coughing up blood and mucus on the exhale.

"This bat," He hissed through his thin breath. "She is a clever one." He paused. "I will take pleasure in ripping out her heart and lapping up her blood." He then grinned such a grin at the thought that even an incubus would be jealous.

(Preview of Chapter 4: Knuckles Enters the Fray)

From his voice Rouge's wrathing stopped and her eyes slowly opened. Her blue-green irises held new life as she was obviously rested to an extent. Her jaws relaxed as her head gently turned to view the worried face of her savior. Knuckles stared at her for a moment then breathed a sigh of relief and let his muscles relax as he released her.

He took off the folded towel on her forehead as she sat up with a groan.

He placed the item back into the bowl of ice water, "You should lay back down and get some more rest. I don't think you're completely healed yet." Knuckles told her serenely.

The bat took one of her paws and placed it on her forehead, closing her eyes as if trying to quell a headache. It was then that she noticed her gloved weren't on and her eyes shot open. She looked and felt herself over and realizing what he had done, and could of done.

She glared at him, "What did you do?"

Kitty : The next part was my favorite sequence to re-edit. It also made me realize just how horrible this fic really was. And kind of still is.

4 - Knuckles Enters the Fray

Kitty: As I've said this whole sequence was a pleasure to edit as it really was awful. It still has some damaged areas but nothing too bad.

Note : I took out the information for the move Kikirue uses to knock out Rouge. It's called 'Bone Crush' and a lot of defensive based fancharacters of mine have it (yes, Kikirue is considered a defensive character.) The wielder of the attack simply jumps into the air then falls fist first onto his/her opponent. In order for the move to work the knuckles of the attacker must hit certain points of the top of the skull simultaneously. These points are like pressure points and when all are struck at the same time the victim loses all feeling in their body and thus collapses, unconscious. The move must be executed with great accuracy because if all of the points are not struck at the same time then it will not have the same effect, (just having numbness, a woozy feeling, or a headache.) If you would like more information of this move or others I have feel free to leave me a Note on my bio page.

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 4: Knuckles Enters the Fray

Upon Angle Island Knuckles had placed his injured, passed out friend upon his bed on the far end of his hut. He covered her frail form with two warm, animal skins he had made into blankets when he first made his hut. He hoped they would provide her with some unseen comfort.

The echidna returned to the kitchen where he searched through his hanging cabinets for a large, chrome bowl, a baby-blue teapot, and a couple small, white towels. He turned on the sink and filled the teapot with a large amount of frigged water. He took off the now burnt pan and placed the pot onto the magma hot burner to boil. Because of its cool temperature the impact making a hiss of evaporating water which warmed his muzzle. Knuckles then placed the large bowl beneath the sink and let it fill to the brim with the clear liquid. He removed it and turned off the running water so as not to cause a flood. It was then that he took the few towels and walked out and returned to the room she was within, located to the left of the kitchen, through the main room.

It wasn't much, probably to Rouge it was nothing. The bed was low to the ground and obviously wasn't manufactured in some factory. To the left a low, wooden dresser rested with a half burnt candle standing upright in a smudged, tin holder. A long, rectangular window opened straight ahead of him, revealing the forest and letting a cooling wind blow through. The wooden walls were a dull, chocolate coloration with the planks hoisted vertically around the area.

Knuckles placed the bowl on the small dresser and sat down on the edge of his bed, looking over the bat. He removed both white gloves, revealing his strong fingers tipped with black, claw-like nails. Upon two of his knuckles bone-spikes protruding from his scarlet fur. He took one of his paws gripping a small towel and dipping it into the silver bowl. With the other paw he gently slip of the two sheets covering her to reveal the damaged state she was truly in.

His mind was completely on helping her get better. He removed the towel and wrung it before lifting it to

her dirty flesh. Knuckles decided to start at her head and work his way down.

He placed a paw to the back of her head and lifted her up slightly for a better reach. As the damp towel touched her cheek she moaned a bit but did nothing more. Knuckles proceeded to rub off the black dirt and ash, grains of sand, and hardened blood that mangled her beautiful fetchers. This was sort of hard through her fur but he gave it an attempt and she didn't look any worse than before. He made sure to gently rub her large ears as they must be sensitive. Though through the cloth he could feel the heat her body was giving off. She surely had a fever.

He placed Rouge's head back on his downy-stuffed pillow and re-dipped the towel to remove some of the grime he had just taken from her. Knuckles then placed a paw to her back to get at her neck to clean her collarbone and shoulders. Her skin was much easier to clean than her fur but he became fearful of going anywhere near her breast so decided to begin her arms next.

Again Knuckles dipped the cloth into the now gray water and placed her back on the bed. He took her farthest arm from him and lifted it gently in the air. The echidna gently proceeded to rub down her flesh from the scars of maroon blood. This action caused the water and small parts of the cloth to turn pink from the reopened wounds.

Knuckles was able to gather enough courage to remove her tattered glove to reveal her perfect paw. He placed it near the foot of his bed as he examined her frail fingers. Her palm was so small inside his overly large one and just the sight of it lying limply in his grasp caused him to go into a trance.

Luckily he was startled by a high-pitched whistling coming from the kitchen, apparently the water he had placed on the stove was boiling. Knuckles shook his head and stood up, recovering her in his sheets before placing the dirty cloth to the side. He took one of the clean ones and dipped it into the bowl and wrung it before folding it into a long rectangle and placing it across her forehead.

The worried echidna then walked into the kitchen and removed the teapot from the burner and onto the salmon-colored counter. He looked for two mugs and poured into each the heated liquid. Because he drank a lot of tea he always had a canister of it near the sink. He removed two bags from the small tin and placed one in each of the mugs. One was for Rouge when she wakes, which he hoped would be soon.

He also took out a smaller bowl and filled it with water and then ice from an ice tray in the freezer section of his fridge. Knuckles then walked back to her, holding the two mugs in one hand and the bowl in the other.

He placed the bowl and mugs down on the dresser and removed the hot cloth from Rouge's forehead. This time he placed it into the bowl of ice before replacing it back on his friend's head.

The echidna took another towel to the dirtied water and cleaned her other arm and legs as best he could without removing her jump-suit. It was only after all this was done that the echidna crossed-legged on the floor and placed on his gloves. He took his mug from the dresser and swallowed a drop. He nearly yelped and bit his tongue because it still had some bite in it from the boiled water.

So instead he watched Rouge sleep. Her breathing was hoarse and labored and sometimes Knuckles thought she stopped breathing all together. As he watch her he thought over what could of happened to her that lead up to this point. He also wondered why she came to him and how she could sleep so calmly in his care. She must of trusted him a lot more than he always thought.

Sure the echidna had feelings for her but he was naive to them. He knew that he cared for her as a friend, a valuable partner, but he didn't know what these other feelings were. The same feeling that were connected to different thoughts that sometimes consumed him invisibly.

He growled at himself and shook off the feeling to continue watching her. He could sense that her body was becoming tense. Her arms and legs slowly shifted beneath the animal skins and her head tossed to one side. Her teeth were clenched and bared as if she were snarling and Knuckles knew she must be having a bad dream.

He placed his scalding mug on the dresser then gripped her shoulder, "Rouge?" He shook her lightly. "Rouge, wake up! You're only dreaming!"

From his voice Rouge's writhing stopped and her eyes slowly opened. Her blue-green irises held new life as she was obviously rested to an extent. Her jaws relaxed as her head gently turned to view the worried face of her savior. Knuckles stared at her for a moment then breathed a sigh of relief and let his muscles relax with hers.

Knuckles took off the folded towel on her forehead as she sat up with a groan.

He placed the item back into the bowl of ice water, "You should lay back down and get some more rest. I don't think you're completely healed yet." Knuckles told her serenely.

The bat took one of her paws and placed it on her forehead, closing her eyes as if trying to quell a headache. It was then that she noticed her gloves weren't on and her eyes shot open. She looked and felt herself over and realizing what he had done, and could of done.

She glared at him, "What did you do?"

Knuckles placed his paws up defensively with his face showing that of a disgusted look, knowing well what she was getting at. "Hey, don't even think that! All I did was clean you up. I didn't go any farther than that!" He shot defensively.

She then looked around to find her lost items next to her. Rouge placed them back on and flipped off the sheets still warming her legs. She then lifted her body on wobbly legs and walked straight past him.

Knuckles shot up and gripped her shoulder, forcing her to stop. "Whoa, wait a minute! Where do you think you're going?"

She shrugged him off and turned her head to face him with a serious look. "Knuckles, you're in danger."

"Okay?" Knuckles was confused at this. "What's going on?" He was hoping he could get out more.

The bat turned away, reluctant to tell him anything. "This has nothing to do with you." She snapped. Her voice then took a kinder turn, "Thank you though."

Rouge then started to walk out, finding her way easily through the small home. Again Knuckles went after her, chasing her as he exited and walked across the grass on the bottom of the shrine.

He gripped her shoulder again and stopped the spy in her tracks. "Rouge, tell me! What happened to you? Is someone after you?" He sounded more like he was demanding.

This time when Rouge looked at him she had a more worried or confused expression. "Why do you care?"

This question shocked the guardian but he didn't release her. Her stammered for a bit, "I'm worried for a friend's safety." He finally admitted.

Rouge smiled "A friend?"

Knuckles gulped, "Well, I..."

Rouge still had that smile as she stopped him, "Fine, I guess I owe you that much after I came to you in the condition I was." Knuckles released her and stood in silence, waiting for her explanation.

"It all started two days ago." Rouge began. "I was able to track down an elusive gang called Crab. They had been plaguing the entire city, committing crimes and all sorts of murders for no reason. The government decided to do something about it. They wanted someone to go undercover and expose them. I volunteered."

Knuckles listened closely and noticed that her voice sounded strange on that last sentence.

"Unfortunately not all of the gang members were arrested. Apparently a couple of their members, the Three Komodo Brothers, tracked me down with intent to kill. They destroyed my apartment with everything I own. I was able to escape though and that's when I went to you." She then stopped and didn't seem as though she was going to say more.

"Interesting story," Knuckles finally spoke after a minute of silence.

She gave him a peeved look, "And, that's all you have to say about this?"

"You forgot something though," The echidna smirked with intent.

"That is?" She looked a bit skeptical.

"How we find out where those sleaze balls are hiding and bring them to justice." He explained with a strange sense of happiness.

"What?" She gave him a look that showed just how crazy she thought he was.

"You didn't think I wasn't going to help after all this, did you?" He questioned, crossing his arms in amusement.

Rouge's eyes lit up for a second, but then she turned away.

Knuckles could tell something was up. "Rouge?"

"Knuckles, if you come with me you'll more than likely get killed. They probably already know I'm here and you're helping me." She paused as if contemplating the next few words. She then turned to him and smiled. "Don't worry about me, I can take them."

But, Knuckles wasn't going to take that as reassurance. "I'm still going to help you, no matter what you say." He drew closer to her as she stared up at him. "You're my friend Rouge." He smiled as if this sentence was the answer to everything.

"Well, well, well." A laugh was heard. "Aren't you two sweet."

They quickly looked who spoke to them. It was a black cat with three tails, Kikirue of the Crab Gang. He stood leaning against the side of the shrine. A paw was gripped on the handle of his hidden weapon. The backdrop of the forest casted a shadow making parts of him morph into the background as if invisible.

Rouge tensoned. "Kikirue," She breathed.

"Yes, I am." He looked up and shot a death glare to her. "And I'm here to kill you, Rouge the bat."

The cat in his prime stood and withdrew the aged katana from the sheath at his side. Its blade was rusty yet well cared for, the edge was so sharp its grade could be seen from a distance. He took a fighter's stance as he rubbed two fingers against the sword's side and pointed its tip at Rouge.

"Good luck," The bat struck a fighting pose as well.

"I'm afraid you're the one who's going to need it." Kikirue smirked and with a jolt of his legs charged forward towards his target.

Rouge thought fast and rolled to the side. The cat was just as quick and changed his direction right after slashing the air. Rouge was lucky to have been so close to the woods. She flipped into the air as Kikirue swung a horizontal slash. At the height of her jump she flipped and struck an overhanging limb with the tip of her foot. The branch snapped and she grabbed it on her decent back to earth.

"Rouge, I'm coming!" Knuckles called out and rushed towards his endangered friend.

Unfortunately before he could take three steps two gray-scaled being became a blockade in his way. Both held a curved dagger in each of their claws.

"Sorry echidna," Spoke the one with green eyes.

"But, we can't let you interfere." Finished the one with red eyes.

"What the?" Knuckles growled. "I suggest you get out of my way."

He tried to run past them but they moved in sync and caught him off guard. Two parallel gashes dripped to the green grass of the island from the edges of four steel blades. He stumbled and gripped himself to try and stop the crimson life from draining out of his stomach. All the while the thought of helping Rouge was his first priority. Unfortunately, for now he had to eliminate the idiots that were standing in his way. The branch that Rouge had grabbed did little as a shield against her foe's weapon. Kikirue's katana was sharp and Rouge was no fool. If she used the branch to block his sword it would be the equivalent of a hot knife through butter, inevitably striking her. But, the lengthy piece of wood was something she could use to score long range hits without getting too close.

When Kikirue decided to take another swipe for her neck Rouge ducked lowly to the ground. Without a

second though she shot the tip of the branch into her assassin's abdomen. He shot back a ways, gripping his stomach from the unexpected hit.

"Ha, your not half bad." He complemented. "Seeing as though you're badly injured I have to give you credit." The cat grinned.

"Thank you," Rouge stood up and remade her stance, holding her makeshift weapon at the ready . She was breathing heavily as she stood back up. She wouldn't admit it or show it but ee was right, and so was Knuckles. She could still feel the sting on her arms and legs like little needles simultaneously pricking up and down her muscles. She at least hoped that Knuckles was able to remove some shards of glass that might of clung to her from before. But, that wasn't such a hindrance on her. She had been through tighter situations before with the consequences much worst.

"Unfortunately, the boss wants you alive." As he said this he sheathed his sword by running the edge against the hilt of its sheath, then pushing it through.

Rouge narrowed her eyes in contemplation. She wondered about the statement and the attack he was going to employ. The cat charged forward, and as a reflex Rouge lifted the branch she was wielding in defense. But, that wasn't his plan.

Kikirue stopped about an inch away from her face and flung himself into the air high above her. Rouge's first reaction was surprise but her second was to take flight as well. Unfortunately, that thought came a second too late as Rouge felt a startling impact on her skull. Apparently, Kikirue had dropped a fist squarely on top of her to hit certain points of her head all at once.

The result caused the bat's very flesh to tingle and go numb. Her legs felt as though they were so weak they could no longer hold her upper-body and thus gave out from under her. Soon enough a tiring sensation came over her, then all went black before she could felt her form topple to the ground.

Likewise, Knuckles was having some trouble of his own. The two lizards were perfectly synchronized with there attacks, sending him back with each new blow struck. He didn't want to pay a mind to the creatures, only wanting to get to Rouge. When he saw her hit the ground he began to rush but the Komodo dragons further stopped him by both grabbing his neck and thrusting him downwards, into the dirt.

"That's It!" He roared, knowing that he would have no luck getting to Rouge without getting rid of those two first.

The echidna leaped up with all of his strength and plunged a spiked fist into the gut of the one called Moe. Red blood spewed from two puncture wounds as his frail body flung back into the grass.

"Why you little!" Matt hissed and tried to stab the echidna from close range.

Instead Knuckles took hold of his attacker's wrists in his vice-like grip and lifted the Komodo dragon off of the ground. He gave a battle cry as he spun his victim around like a messed-up carnival game. The force of the spin was so great that when the echidna released him the wanna-be assassin flew straight off Angel Island and into the ocean. The Komodo dragon gave a cry as his small body disappeared from sight, his knife sparkled in the air before coming down directly between the echidna's feet.

Knuckles paid no mind and wasted no time in doing the same to Moe who was just picking himself off the grass. He took hold of the lizard's neck as Moe gave a yelp. Again picked up his other foe and spinning him with one arm. Then shooting the poor creature off into the distant horizon.

Knuckles took in deep breaths. The wounds across his stomach were stinging profusely, but that didn't matter at the moment. He spun around and scanned the clearing with bright, violet eyes. There was no one.

"shoot!" He spat.

It was then that the shimmering knife caught his attention. He went to it and picked it up, examining its features. It was tiny and curved, a sharpness to it that was very find. Across its back a row of spines were cut, perhaps for a design. He decided that it might be useful. It was so small that he could place it

neatly inside of his glove. He gave caution to ensure he didn't inflict injury on himself. Knuckles then rushed to the edge of his island home. He wasn't sure where the cat was taking her or how he got on or off the island. But, that was a minuscule concern. Knuckles leaped off of Angel Island and shot out his arms to let his dreadlocks catch the air. He glimpsed a black dot off in the glare of the sun heading towards Station Square, that had to be him.

(Preview of Chapter 5: The Ending)

Kikirue took hold of the thick, metal handle in his paw and opened the entrance with a short jolt of strength. When it opened Kikirue had to squint his eyes for a moment at the brightness of the room. Ahead of him prodigious vats of chocolates, caramel, and other liquid sweets that filled his nose and made his mouth water slightly.

He turned to the left to face a swinging, metal staircase that lead up to a small maze of hanging walkways. It was at the end where he would meet Seraue, like he had done some times before. The staircase was rickety and rusted but he had little fear of this. His bear feet patted against the walkway as he navigated towards a lopsided, circular figure in front of a large canister that looked to be of white chocolate.

Kikirue stooped a couple feet in front of his boss. "Here she is sir, like you asked." He then tossed Rouge onto the wobbling platform, in front of Seraue.

"She had better be alive." The bulldog growled.

"Of course, just knocked out sir." Kikirue assured.

"What's the matter Kikirue? You don't seem like yourself." The dog gave his minion a questioning look. Kikirue clenched his fist and looked calming into the eyes of the towering dog. "I'm fine sir," He nodded.

"I can also tell you that both Moe and Matt have been killed by the Guardian of the Master Emerald. We are now the only two left of the Crab Gang."

Seraue raised an eyebrow, "You don't seem to be too mournful at this, Kikirue."

"Don't you dare lay a claw on her!" A voice roared from behind them.

Kitty : So, yea. I still don't like this in its entirety. There are cretin parts that still need to be tweaked, but other than that it's 100 percent better than before.

5 - The Ending

Kitty: This sequence has been changed a lot from the original, just to warn you. I thought through a lot of scenarios, most of which dealing with Kikirue's point in this this. This was the one I most liked which made Kikirue turn out to be a sly son-of-a-gun. But he is no longer the center of interest, thank god!

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 5: The Ending

Station Square was oddly clear and devoid of sound, save for the rare passing car and nesting seagull. There were hardly any cars on the road with only a pedestrian or two crossing on a crosswalk or entering into a dinner for an early afternoon bite.

Only a few seconds passed before the quiet was broken by the high pitched whoosh of a Hover Scooter's air tank. It zipped across the blue sky like a giant, black hornet on a straight course for something sweet. Gripping one of the yellow handles was the black cat, Kikirue. Over his shoulder the white bat was flung, still unconscious.

A silver foot-rest ran along the sides of the scooter and at the base of the handle a large, blue speaker protruded. It cracked and buzzed to life as a deep voice spoke over the wail of the engine.

"I'm assuming you have the bat." Seraue spoke nonchalantly.

Kikirue never removed his topaz eyes from the path ahead. "Yea, I have her."

"Good." The bulldog's voice seemed oddly amused. "Meet me at the abandoned chocolate factory in the Blue District. I have a lovely plan in mind for her."

Kikirue gave an expression exhibiting his distaste for Seraue and the ideas he usually had for disposing of unwanted pests.

"Right. I'll be there in about five minutes." Kikirue responded.

And that was the truth. The black cat had a feeling that the bat's end would be at the old chocolate factory. Seraue had disposed of a lot of his enemies, feeling that a 'sweet' end was the best end. The whole reason the factory was closed down was because of all of the bones and flesh found in the machines.

The Blue District of Station Square was the industrial district, where all the factories were. Kikirue could easily see the place off in the distance due to the darkened ambiance on the far horizon. There was never any light there because of all the smoke blocking the sky making it always seem evil and corrupt.

As for the given factory it was on the eastern end and was closed off by tall, chain-linked fences. Kikirue drove his Hover Scooter beyond the fence to land on the cold, cement path that led to the broken double doors. The factory was huge and shaped to be like a wonderland castle from the east. Pointed pillars rose up to the carbon clouds looking like pale Kisses. Their rainbow of colors that once glowed were now hardly distinguishable, one could only make out blacks and grays. The windows were once beautiful, stained glass but now all were shattered and gave off an aura that said 'keep away or you'll never get out.' All were small and dotted the structure in a way that once made it look magical, now it only made the factory look as though it were glaring.

Kikirue dismounted his vehicle to look over his destination. He then turned back to the seat that lifted it to reveal a secret compartment. Inside was something wrapped in a white cloth. He smirked and placed it inside one of his denim pockets.

“Sorry you had to get messed up in the Rouge” He gave a quick laugh as if he knew something no one else did. “But, you know how it is in this business.”

Kikirue then walking forward, into the works. Little did he know he was being followed closely behind. His fur blended in with the black paint like a three-dimensional shadow. The car twisted his form under the bent planks of the entrance, making sure to keep his hostage unharmed. He walked through the brown hallway, its carpet was once a bright red and gold but now it was so matted with dirt, dust, and wood chippings the colors now appeared maroon and orange. A long row of windows was at his side and gave off shattered rays of black light as he crossed through. Kikirue counted down the large wooden doors as best he could in the darkness till he came to a metal one, locked by a long, metal bars across its length.

Kikirue walked over to its side to a small panel with broken buttons popped out on springs. Above it a tiny light flashed red next to a black microphone to signal that it was on.

The cat placed his gray muzzle forward to it, “It’s me boss.”

It took a couple of seconds before the words registered and Seraue’s voice came over the speaker.

“The door’s open.” He coughed.

With that said the factory seemed to have been woken up from an eternal slumber. On the high ceiling orange lights flickered and sparked till the majority came on and reviled the dusty air in an uneasy glow. Things began to bang and screech as mechanisms roared into life. The gears on the other side of the door hissed and clanked as they slowly lifted the bar across the door to an upright position.

Kikirue took hold of the thick, metal handle in his paw and opened the entrance with a short jolt of strength. When it opened Kikirue had to squint his eyes for a moment at the brightness of the newly revealed room. Ahead of him prodigious vats of chocolates, caramel, and other liquid sweets stood tall against the light and filled his nose, making his mouth water slightly.

He turned to the left to face a swinging, metal staircase that lead up to a small maze of hanging walkways. It was at the end where he would meet Seraue, like he had done some times before. The staircase was rickety and rusted but he had little fear of this. His bear feet patted against the walkway as he navigated towards a lopsided, circular figure in front of a large canister that looked to be of white chocolate.

Kikirue stooped a couple feet in front of his boss. “Here she is sir, like you asked.” He then tossed Rouge onto the wobbling platform, in front of Seraue.

“She had better be alive.” The bulldog growled.

“Of course, just knocked out sir.” Kikirue assured with a smile.

“What’s the matter Kikirue? You don’t seem like yourself.” The dog gave his minion a questioning look. Kikirue clenched his fist and looked calming into the eyes of the towering dog. “I’m fine sir,” He nodded. “I can also tell you that both Moe and Matt have been killed by the Guardian of the Master Emerald. We are now the only two left of the Crab Gang.”

Seraue raised an eyebrow, “You don’t seem to be too mournful at this, Kikirue.”

“Don’t you dare lay a claw on her!” A voice roared from behind them.

The two quickly turned to see a crimson figure with two gashes across his stomach glare daggers at them. He stood with teeth bared and first erect, ready for what ever stunt they could pull.

Seraue looked calmly at the new arrival. “Ah, Knuckles the Echidna.” He greeted. “It’s a pleasure to finally meet you eye to eye.”

Knuckles just stood there with a heartless look eclipsing his warm features.

“I see, not very much of a talker are we?” He spoke without moving an eye from the echidna, “Kikirue,

kill him!" There was no response. "Kikirue?" He finally looked to him but he was not there. "Kikirue, you traitorous feline! Where are you?" The dog called out.

"Up here!" He called.

Both looked up to see the blacked form of the character gripping onto a metallic rope above them. Being a cat, and how nimble he was, he had easily sneaked past the two during their staring contest. He had in his free hand a device that neither could make out from that distance.

"What are you doing up there?" Seraue snarled.

Kikirue showed a look of disgust, "You do know that not only is smoking bad for your health but so is being overweight." He taunted.

"Why you little..." the dog growled.

"And those old platforms can only hold so much, even where they're first made. But now, with all the rust and stuff I'd say you're treading on thin ice." Kikirue taunted.

"Kikirue!"

"Goodbye!" Kikirue gave a sneer before pressing something on the side of the device.

A short, blue laser extended from the handle and with a one, swift movement he swung the manifested blade beneath him and sliced right through suspension cable. With a hideous jerk the platform slanted to one side. As a domino effect more cables snapped and swing in the air like deadly whips causing the platform to further tilt and sway and break. Knots and bolts shot into the air from every direction like silver bullets with no direction. Snaps, cracks, clanks, and smashes resonated through the four walls with a deafening echo. Through all of this commotion the sly cat slipped out through one of the many broken windows and disappeared.

As for the ones on the feral platform all was in chaos. Seraue was toppled over making a sag in the metal. Knuckles yelled as he took hold of one of the guard rails. It was only a matter of time before the last of the cables behind Seraue finally snapped and thus the end was broken. There was now nothing between Seraue's girth and the vat of white chocolate a few feet below.

Because of the angle Rouge's body began to slip downward towards Seraue.

"Rouge!" Knuckles called.

He released his one of his paws on the rail and slid down enough to grip his friend's shoulder before she could slide any further.

"Don't worry, I've got you." Though Rouge couldn't hear him it was more reassurance for himself to say it.

With that he began to hoist her up into her arms.

"Oh no you don't!" Knuckles heard a voice growl.

He looked down to see the pushed in face of Seraue. One giant paw was gripped into the metal of the platform, the other flung forward and latched itself onto one of Rouge's hanging legs.

"Let go of her damn it!" Knuckles yelled.

"If I die, she's going with me." The dog grinned.

Knuckles tried to think of what to do. He then remembered the knife stashed in his glove. He was going to have to act fast to make this work. He was against killing but there was no other choice.

He released Rouge and drew the tiny dagger. He flung it towards Seraue and hit him straight in his left eye. Seraue roared in pain as the blade sliced through the delicate jelly of his eye, letting go of both Rouge and the panel to grip his face in agony. This was Knuckles' chance.

The Echidna tumbled down with them and gripped Rouge's outstretched paw before releasing his dreadlocks and pushing off of the slanted platform, gliding away from the molten liquid.

Unfortunately, Seraue wasn't so lucky. His massive fat fell into the silky substance like a stone dropped in a small glass of water. The white chocolate gushed out of the canister like a white volcano as a new mass entered. The bulldog's cries soon turned to gurgles as his lungs filled and burnt with chocolate. His

fur and skin felt as though they were being eaten by flames. The temperature of the rich sweet was up to such a degree that his flesh baked under it. He tried to kick and claw his way to the surface but the more he tried the farther he sank till nothing was left of him. The only different was a small swirl of rosy pink near the center of the silken chocolate.

Knuckles' heart was beating a million miles an hour as he flew to the other wall and dung into it as best he could to cling on. He still held Rouge by the hand so he hoisted her up into his arms to perhaps make her more comfortable. He then shot over to one of the windows that Kikirue had used to escape.

He positioned Rouge in his arms to carry her as he walked out into the cool air of the afternoon sun. This had been a very interesting day, but it wasn't over. He jumped up onto one of the lopsided towers and seen that Kikirue's Hover Scooter was no longer parked inside the gate. The cat was gone.

(Preview of Chapter 6: Nowhere Else)

She looked him over in the pale light, his features so strong and defined. She noticed his stomach was wrapped tightly in a stained cloth and she wondered what had happened. All she remembered was Kikirue leaping into the air in front of her. But, surely there was more to the story than that.

She bent down to him with a smile and placed a paw onto his shoulder. "Knuckles? Knuckles, wake up." She spoke softly to his ear.

He shifted slightly then shivered and groaned. "Rouge?"

"Yea. You okay Knucklehead?" She joked.

He opened his eyes and sat up groggily. "You know I hate when you call me that."

"I know." The bat giggled.

Kitty :

6 - Nowhere Else

Kitty: And here is the ending, completely changed from the original! It was actually suppose to be part of chapter 5 but I decided to give it its own chapter just to make it even. Yea, I'm that special.

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Chapter 6: Nowhere Else

Rouge slowly stirred as she began to awaken. Her senses were weak but in her half conscience state she could feel the familiarity of her surroundings. Her aqua eyes opened once, but everything was blurry, she blinked a couple more times till her sight adjusted. Her nose was sent whirling with the smell of cool water, fresh air, wood, spices, and dry fur. She looked around the darkened space to finally realize where she was. She was back in Knuckles' bed.

She sat up and looked around. There was no one. She looked out of the window next to her and saw the forest and navy blue sky. The stars sparkling happily as insects chirped to the night. It was night? How long has she been knocked out? What happened? So many questions fulfilled her, and only one person could answer her.

Rouge lightly removed the covers and headed out. She didn't have to go far, a small lump of maroon fur curled over a long sofa in the center of the main room. The sofa did little to contrast the fur, it looked as though it were covered in brownish fur itself. She walked around it till she was facing the front and saw him, sprawled out across its length. He rested his huge head on one of his arms while the other hung limply down to the floor.

She looked him over in the pale light, his features so strong and defined. She noticed his stomach was wrapped tightly in a stained cloth and she again wondered what had happened. All she remembered was Kikirue leaping into the air in front of her. But, surly there was more to the story then that.

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He shifted slightly then shivered and groaned. "Rouge?"

"Yea. You okay Knucklehead?" She joked.

He opened his eyes and sat up groggily. "You know I hate when you call me that."

"I know." The bat giggled.

As Knuckles began to fully awaken he asked, "How are you feeling?"

"Fine, but I could ask you the same question." She sat down in the newly freed space on the sofa.

She found it soft and welcoming, almost as much as his bed. It was slightly sunken in but no so much to make it uncomfortable.

Rouge looked straight a head as she spoke. "Knuckles, what happened after I was knocked out?" She asked bluntly.

Knuckles gave her a contemplating look, thinking over everything that happened. "Do you really want to know?"

She turned to him with an expression of disgust, "Why? Did something happen that I shouldn't know

about?"

"Don't start that Rouge! I would never do anything like that to you!" Knuckles responded quickly. "I saved your life so you should show some gratitude towards me."

"You... saved my life?" Rouge questioned.

It was then that Knuckles began to tell her all that had happened. From how he chased down Kikirue to the abandoned chocolate factory to confronting the cat and his boss on the walkway. From how Kikirue became a traitor and cut one of the cables to how Knuckles swung the small dagger into the eye of Seraue. He explained how the boss met his end in a vat of white chocolate to how he took her back to Angel Island to let her rest.

Rouge listened to all of this and, though she wouldn't admit it, she was quite awestruck. So much so that when Knuckles had finished his story she couldn't find any words to respond with.

"Wow," She mused, then turned to him. "I didn't know you cared so much."

At this comment Knuckles blushed and turned away. "Well, I mean, you still don't have a place to stay right?" He tried to change the subject.

Rouge turned to him with an amused look. "What are you suggesting?"

He turned away as to not show her his blushing face. "I mean, if you really have nowhere else to go then-"

But, he wasn't able to finish his sentence for a small wight had placed itself upon one of his shoulders. He felt her warm muzzle snuggle into him as if comforting him. The echidna's face was now boiling hot.

"Thank you, Knuckles." Rouge's soft voiced warmed his heart.

He still didn't look at her, his form as tense as a stone statue. He gulped and after a while that hardness melted and became a jolt of adrenalin to his heart.

"You're welcome, Rouge." Was all he could think to respond with before lightly leaning his head against hers.

It didn't take long before both were in a deep slumber, their thoughts consisting of the other lying next to them.

(The End)

Kitty : This in its entirety still isn't great but its better then it originally was. There's just so many points still in it that tick me off! Also, I really don't like romances that much anymore, except for hentas. It's just that cute and cuddly now really puts me off. Well, this is better then it was and I'm going to leave it be for now. If anything it may just be taken down entirely and considered a lost-cause.

7 - Original

Kitty: This is the original oneshot before it was remade.

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Track Down

By: Kitty Hamagochy

Rouge's head was forced under the water of her bath tub before she could even see her attacker. The beasts started to destroy her belongings in her apartment. Her eyes opened slightly through the muggy water to see the rippled reflection of orange and yellow. Her eyes widened noticing it was fire! They were setting everything ablaze! Rouge began to struggle harder kicking her feet and trying to puller herself up. He was strong keeping a firm grip around the back of her neck making sure she had no chance for another breath. His claws sinking into her, puncturing the sides of her neck turning the water a thin red. Finally she got a lucky hit. The back of her heel slamming into his jaw. She swiftly swung her head above the water taking in a large breath of air. She looked behind her into her bed room seeing all of her things smothered in flames. She clasped her hands over her mouth to try and keep from taking in smoke. Once glad to take in air again found it not so good. The lizard crept up again and put her into a deadly neck lock.

"You'll pay with your life for what you did to us!" He hissed in her ear. He was a thin, green, kamodo dragon in a brown trench coat and hat with yellow eyes.

"I'm guessing you've never heard of Rouge The Bat before have ya?" She sarcastically asked smirking slipping her hands over her head and grasping his shoulders sending him upwards and onto her flaming bed.

She listened as the sound of his hissing screams were only drowned out by the sizzling sound of his frying flesh. Soon the smell of burnt flesh filled the room along with the suffocating smoke.

"I... cough have to... cough... get out of here!" She told herself.

Clasping her mouth again scuffling to her nearest window dizzied from the fumes. Making her way out of the now flooded bath room into her flaming bedroom to a window which was right ahead of her. the question was could she make it. As she pass through her bed room her wing cough onto her bed post causing it to burn and the updraft of her walk caused flaming ashes to lift in her perfectly white fur. Her lungs began to hurt even more from the deadly mixture of water and particles of ashes scraping her lungs and filling them with blood. With out a second thought she charged at her window sending her body into unwilling flight tumbling downward to the city street trailing smoke, glass, and blood. She fell at first not being able to get her wings to open. But before she could hit the street her wings snapped open right between two on going cars causing them to stop fast and run out to see what happened.

Rouge flew as fast as her aging wings could take her. Which wasn't really that far. They soon gave out a few feet into Emerald Beach. She fell into the salty water. Which was not a pleasant dip. She arose taking a large breath coughing out blood. She grabbed hold of a piece of drift wood and coughed so more.

"Dang I must of swallowed at least three gallons of water through this episode. Though I much prefer the bath water." She whispered, her throat scruffy and shaky.

She couldn't sleep like this so she swam her way towards the bank. Looking up to the starry night sky then to her smoking apartment. The blackened clouds clogging the night air. The salt of the water started to kick in. Making its way into her open wounds. She crawled off the drift wood and onto the bank. She stood up and looked into the smoke filled sky her wobbly legs trying to support her.

"Why do you shine so beautifully tonight of all nights?" She looked up to the stars. Burning her throat with each word.

Knuckles was up at around five am making his early morning rounds. Checking every inch of the island for any trouble spots. Everything seemed fine. He jogged up the shrine to check his lovely Master Emerald. Not a shard out of place. He headed back down the shrine to his small but comfy home at the entrance to Angle Island woods. He stepped inside and headed to the kitchen to quell his growling stomach by making a couple of Buttermilk pancakes and squeeze some juice from the fresh fruit he just gathered from outside. It was just another calming day for the echidna. These were the days he loved. The sun was shining beautifully with little to no clouds in the sky.

This would be a nice day for a swim. he thought to himself pouring the pancake batter into a pan and inhaling the aroma. I just hope it doesn't get too hot. He spun the pan back and forth so the pancake wouldn't stick and flipped it into the air making it land smoothly back in the pan on its opposite side. Knuckles inhaled through his nose inhaling the lovely smelling food.

"Mmmmm that smells great. I can't wait to eat." Her stomach growled again.

Knock Knock Knock...

A few loud knocks came from his door.

"Now that's weird who could that be?" He asked himself feeling a little worried.

He slowly opened the door and before him stood what looked like a first glance a walking zombie. But as the door opened further the figure came into view. Knuckles eyes snapped open wide and his jaw dropped a little. For before him stood a crippled body of Rouge standing before him. Almost all her body was covered in blood. Her eyes were blood shot her head had a large bump crusted with red dry blood. On her right leg blood ran down like rivers on the land. All over her body was crusted with blood and clumps of soil covered her clothing. Her eyes filled with tears but she did not blink. She looked up to him her face soiled as well.

Her voice was cold and dimmed to a whisper "Help...Me..." She managed to speak before collapsing into her beholders arms.

Knuckles looked down to her. She had fainted. He picked her up in a wedding style carry and stepped out to look around. No one within his view could be seen. He looked back down at her. Rouge, lifelessly hung in his arms as if she was dead. What could of happened to her? He asked himself shaken with worry.

Deep within the corridors of Station Square an interesting conversation was going on.

"What do you mean you lost her!" A growling voice scolded the two lizards in front of him.

A tall black cat with black spiked hair and narrowed ears with three tails looked up. He wore a pair of blue ripped around the ankles jeans with a thick brown belt harnessed to a Japanese sword. Nothing on his feet and his chest exposing his physically fit body. Definitely a body builder. He glared at the two identical kamodo dragons with tan over coats and tan old fashioned gangster hats to go with it.

"We are sorry sir." one said

"We didn't know," the other picked up.

"How cunning," the first one continued.

"She really was." they both said in unison.

"We were able to,"

"Burn her apartment,"

"But she took out,"

"Mark in the process." Again in unison

"Enough!" The black cat lifted himself from the wall. "Of course! She Had To Be Cunning In order To Track Us Down You Imbeciles!"

"Shut up..." a fat slobbery voice hushed them.

The three looked to the side over a desk to see a fat bull dog in a gangster purple striped suit puffing on a cigar.

"Sorry sir..." The cat apologized.

"Moe...Matt...where was she last sited?" He asked slowly to the lizards.

"She was last spotted sir," Moe started.

"On Angel Island." Matt continued.

"She sought shelter,"

"From the echidna that lives there."

"Knuckles..." The dog huffed. "The guardian of the Master Emerald. The most sought after jewel then the Chaos Emeralds." He spoke slowly and replaced the cigar back into his jaws. Inhaling the smoke and exhaling through his nose.

"What do you propose sir?" The cat bowed to his master.

"You, Kikirue, will go after her." He stopped to inhale his cigar. "If that Echidna guardian tries to stand in your way. Mangle him so that he can not even walk. I want the bat returned to me alive." He passed between his servants taking another inhale of his cigar. "I want the pleasure of killing her. She has no prayer now. When you mess with the Crab Gang you mess with fire. And we all know you will...get...Burnt!" As he spoke the smoke escaped through his nostrils and mouth making him look like he could breath fire at any moment.

"Yes boss. I will not fail you. She is frail and weak so now is the perfect time to strike." Kikirue responded.

"Good. Now get out of my site you vermin!" He swiped at Kikirue causing him to jump. He ran for the door and exited.

"What about," Moe started

"Us Boss?" and Matt finished.

"I want you two to follow as well!" The bulldog howled. "Wile Kikirue attacks Rouge I want you to keep that Echidna from messing up our plans! Do you understand! I will not except failure!" He roared.

"Yes sir..." Both answered and slinked out before he got even angrier.

"This bat..." The boss hissed reveling even more smoke from his jaws. "She is a clever one..." He paused. "I will take pleasure in ripping out her heart from her rib cage and lapping her blood. For no one messes with the Crab Gang!" He gave a low hideous laugh that made your skin crawl. The laugh lead to a bloody cough.

Upon Angle Island Knuckles placed on the stove a pot of boiling tea. Knuckles had placed his friend upon his bed wiping off the stains of blood, dirt and ash from her fur and clothing. He placed the cloth that he had placed on Rouge's head earlier into a bowl of cool water and placed it back on her forehead again. Then covering her with some blankets. As far as he knew she had somehow gotten a fever in the process. He got up and went into his kitchen to take off the pot. Pouring the now boiling water into a glass and adding a tea bag to it, then mixing in a spoonful of Buckwheat Honey to give it a sweet flavor. He brought out two cups of it just in case Rouge awoke. He placed them on the table where the water bowl was and sat in the chair next to it then taking his cup and sipping the contents. He watched over her noticing she was tense and breathing heavily.

His face gave a look of stern worry. What could have happened to you Rouge... Who could have done this? And why did you come to me? These questions and more played through his head constantly. He honestly couldn't stand her in such a condition. She may have been a novice but he still felt as though they were still close. Close as friends that is. Her head began to sway side to side and to his surprise she sometimes skipped a breath.

"Rouge! Rouge, wake up your only dreaming! Rouge!" He placed his paws on her shoulders to try and quell her fight.

She suddenly stopped and her eyes slowly opened. Her teeth clutched together still tense from before. She sat up and looked over to Knuckles who was above her. He stared at her and sighed in relief sitting back down and taking the cloth that was once on Rouge's head back into the cool water bowl.

"Rouge you should lay back down your wounds haven't healed yet." Knuckles looked over to her through the corner of his eye.

Rouge looked down as if in deep thought. And without warning she pulled the covers off herself and began to stand up.

"Whoa, where do you think you're going?" Knuckles got up and grabbed a hold of her wrist. She easily pulled away from him. "Rouge you should go back to sleep. You need to rest. Your wounds have not yet healed." He tried to calm her.

Rouge turned back to him a look of determination in her eyes. "Knuckles you're in danger." She warned.

"Yea, so?" He asked trying to coax her further.

"You're in danger because I'm with you. Some creatures are after me and if you're seen with me you'll be murdered as well." Her eyes seemed to shine as she explained his fate.

"Sense when do you care what happens to me?" He popped another question.

She frowned and turned away not wanting to look upon his face no longer. "I ...aaa, I just do okay. Is there a problem that I don't want to see anyone else hurt." She answered sternly.

"Rouge what is going on? Moments ago you came to my door steep, battered and bruised asking for help. Now that I help you, you regret any knowledge of asking me for help. You could at least tell me how you became the way you were."

Rouge looked down, her ears lowered a little. "Fine, I guess I owe you that much." She turned around and went back to seat herself upon Knuckles' bed. "It all started two days ago. I was able to track down an elusive gang called Crab. They had been plaguing the entire city committing crimes and all sorts of murder for no reason. They had to send someone to track them down and I was the one. I wish I didn't..." Knuckles had sat back down again and listened intently. She seemed to sadden at that last statement. "Ever since yesterday my life has been a living hell. Unfortunately not all of the gang members were arrested. The reminders tracked me down and swore revenge. They destroyed my apartment and have been trying to kill me. I was strong enough to elude them until I finally understood

that... well..." She paused. "I needed help. So I came to you seeing as though I knew exactly where you were."

"Interesting story..." Knuckles added at the end.

"And that's all you have to say about this?" She looked up to him giving that stern aura.

"You've forgotten one thing..." He smirked.

"That is?"

"You didn't include me."

"Oh yes I did! I said..." she was cut off.

"Naa, I mean me helping you. Hear me out Rouge no one deserves to carry such a burden. No one needs to go it alone. Especially after you got me psyched about all this." Knuckles chuckled a little.

Rouge's eyes lit up but almost looked like she was about to cry. The she looked away and stood up again heading towards his door without another word.

"Rouge...?" Knuckles watch her but got up to follow.

Rouge started walking out the door and Knuckles could see where this was going.

"Rouge what do you think your doing?" Knuckles grabbed a hold of her shoulder and forced her a steep back.

"Knuckles if you come with me you'll more then likely get killed. Your probably already on their murder list..." She trailed not baring to look at him. "If you die... I, I don't know what I'd do..." She whispered so Knuckles wouldn't hear. But with his good ears he heard every word. "I can take them!" She perked up all of a sudden.

"I'm still coming no matter what you say." He turned her around but her face remained fixed on the ground below them. "Rouge I'm your friend and like all friends I'm going to help you get through this." Knuckles gave a smile. Not a smirk, but a heart warming smile.

Rouge looked up and seen this. She as well gave a smile seeing as though that's all she could think of doing.

"Well, well, well aren't you two sweet." They quickly looked who spoke to them. It was Kikirue the black cat of the Crab Gang. He stood hunched on one side holding the base of his katana, cockily, as it rested in its sheath fastened to his belt.

Rouge tensioned. "Kikirue." She spoke his name.

"Yes I am, and I'm here to kill you Rouge the bat." He smirked and pulled out his katana swiftly,

revealing the elder blade that once rested in the sheath.

"Ha, good luck." Rouge responded taking full notice of the sword in his possession but not letting it get to her.

"I'm afraid you're the one who's going to need it." Kikirue smirked and with out warning charged towards her with blinding speed.

Rouge used her quick thinking to roll to the side and scoop up a long stick that happened to be on the ground near her. She got up and block a second hit from Kikirue who had recoiled from the miss.

"Rouge I'm coming!" Knuckles tried to rush to her aid but from out of no where two kamodo dragons in overcoats landed next to him each with a switch blade knife in there claws. "What the! Where did you two freaks come from? Never mind I can't deal with you now!" He tried to run past them but they both made sure he didn't get through by slashing his shoulders in unison. Sending him a step backwards.

Blood ran down to his chest usable until it came to his white crest fur. He held back a scream in pain and just glared at the lizards in front of him. Also looking ahead to Rouge and that black cat, Kikirue, as they fought. Rouge was doing okay, for now.

Rouge had picked up another stick to defend herself using both to block strong thrusts with Kikirue's sword. Then sending him back with a strong kick in the abs. But it only set him back a short ways. His muscles were like armor. As thick as diamonds and iron combined. Rouge tried to steady herself as she was not fully healed yet, feeling a bit woosie.

"Ha, your not half bad." He complemented patting his abs where she struck him. "Seeing as though your badly injured. I have to give you credit." His voice now seamed much more tamer. "Unfortunately the boss wants you alive." She smirked, resting his sword on his shoulder.

Rouge gritted her teeth. She was slouch like a hunch back feeling drained from the lack of time to heal. She just wanted him to make his move and get it over with. But with that thought he did. But it wasn't a sword attack, for he had sheathed his sword seconds before. Instead he charged forward. Rouge placing up her arms for defense. But that wasn't his plan. When Kikirue was an inch away from Rouge he used his strong legs to jet himself upwards with great force. Then came down like a rock, planting a fist on the top of Rouge's skull. The move was called 'Bone Crush'. Because with impact with the skull it doesn't damage but it hits a special part of the brain making your entire body shake and feel numb and weak. A knock out move. The move did as he planed she began to wobble and shake, soon toppling over, knocked out for the time being.

Knuckles was having some trouble of his own. The two lizards were perfectly synchronized with there attacks. Sending him back with each new blow struck. He didn't want to pay a mind to the creatures, only wanting to get to Rouge. When he saw her hit the ground he began to rush but the kamodo dragons further stopped him by both grabbing his neck and thrusting him backwards into the dirt.

"That's It! I've Had All I Can Stans' And I Can't Stans' No More!" Knuckles roared. Jumping back up and making a reflex like action thrusting one of his barbed fists into the gut of one of the Lizards.

Matt watched as Moe was taken out. "Why you little... How dare you!" He tried to stab Knuckles in the chest. But Knuckles easily grabbed a hold of Matt's tiny snake like wrists into his larger gloved paws.

Knuckles through him aside. Making sure the thrust was strong enough to send him a wile distance off the edge of the island. He wasted no time in doing the same to Moe who was still fainted on the ground. He watched as both made there way off the island and into the deep water below. Knuckles snapped out of his current position and scanned his surroundings for Rouge and her stalker. They were gone, both of them.

"Oh no..." He whispered to himself gathering all of his energy to dash off the island and into a glide towards Station Square.

Station Square seamed to be oddly clear at the time. It was afternoon and there was no hustle and bustle. Just a few people walking on the sidewalk and one or two cars on the road. Kikirue thought this would be as good a time as any. So he slipped into the sewer in the back of Twinkle Park with Rouge slung over his shoulder. He made his way to the and of the line where there was a cage blocking the rest of the path. He walked over to the side and pressed a block. It lifted to revel a panels. He remembered what the boss had phoned him earlier. 'I want you to bring her to the empty factory near the outskirts of town. The only secretive way to get there in through the sewer...'. He began to place his paw on the scanner that had just appeared. But stopped about an inch away. He was having major second thoughts. His eye's were wide and he seamed to be shaking some. He almost looked like he was about to cry.

"Kikirue!" A familiar voice growled over a speaker.

He looked up to see a still active camera and a netted speaker next to it.

"What are you waiting for bring her to me!" His boss growled over the speaker continuing his sentence.

With out hesitation Kikirue placed his paw on the scanner waiting for the cage to life so he could continue. He walked on his path trying to keep a calm and collective face. Little did he know that another unwanted figure was closely following. As the boss said he was soon lead to a strange factory. A chemical factory.

Kikirue waited for the elevator that he was on to stop. He stepped out to the fat bulldog figure in front of her. He dropped the lifeless figure of Rouge on the walkway they were now on that towered above large barrels of green slimy liquids.

"Here she is Boss like you asked." Kikirue spoke first.

"She better be alive." The bulldog growled.

"Of course she's just knocked out for the time being." Kikirue further explained.

"What's the matter Kikirue? You don't seam like yourself.." The dog chuckled. "You remembering why you were here in the first place?" He elaborated.

Kikirue only gritted his fist trying to keep a straight face. "I'm fine may I leave? My job has been completed. Moe and Matt have fallen, there for you and I are the only ones left in the Crab Gang." Kikirue informed.

"Yea, so..." The boss lit a cigar and began to smoke. "We can recreate the Crab Gang. Us as partners. Once we get this troublesome creature out of the way." He bent down to Rouge who was on the ground still fainted.

"Don't you dare lay a claw on her!" A voice spoke from behind them.

Kikirue and the Boss quickly turned to see who had called out. From the elevator that had not been there before came a red figure with angry violet eyes staring daggers at them.

The boss was the first to react. " Well, will you look at this. It is a pleasure to meet you face to face Knuckles." The bulldog greeted.

Knuckles just stood there with a heartless cold look spread across his face. His figure shrouded in the dark shadows. He almost looked evil.

"Not the talker are you?..." He bent down and clasped the back of Rouge's neck.

"Don't You Touch Her!" He roared finally reacting.

The dog lifted her above the ground squeezing her neck. She finally awoke half opening her right eye to see what was going on. Rouge began to struggle trying to pry the giant paw from the back of her neck.

The boss didn't even remove his eyes from the agitated echidna. "Kikirue kill him while I kill his little friend here."

"Knuckles..." Rouge faintly whispered.

Kikirue, for some reason, didn't even move. He just stood there gritting his teeth and shaking some. It was like he was trying to block out something. Knuckles stared at the bulldog menacingly not even paying attention to the stunned cat next to the dog.

The boss turned his head angrily to Kikirue. "Did you hear me Kikirue? I said Kill Him!" He barked angrily.

Kikirue dropped his head to look down at the platform underneath them. He loosened up before turning his head upwards to meet his angry eyes with the bull dog. His blue eyes shimmering like they had just gained a soul, a purpose.

"Now what wrong Kikirue?" The dog asked menacingly. Knuckles finally took the time to look over at the black cat. "Don't give me that look. You want to join your mother!" He roared.

Upon hearing this Kikirue's fur stood on end, bearing his teeth and hissing lowly. His eyes looked like they had been taken over by some force beyond all knowledge.

"Don't You Dare Speak Of My Mother You Basted!" Kikirue hissed pouncing into the air and landing dagger claws into the dogs shoulders and clawed feet into his sides.

The boss had dropped the weak Rouge onto the metal support and Knuckles rushed to her side.

"Now Lets See How You Like It!" Kikirue lunged his right set of claws into the dogs fat, gloated neck.

The dog began to stumble backwards making his way the edge of the platform. Kikirue's claws were so deep into the body that he couldn't pry himself from the fleshy fat. He turned to Knuckles and Rouge, who was alert now watching. The cats eyes once again gained that soul. His face saddened and eyes tearing.

"I'm sorry. For everything I did. Now I can pay my debt to society. I can go on knowing I actually did something good in my life. Take care." Kikirue told them feeling the weight finally topple over the side. "Good bye..."

"Oh No!" Rouge forced herself to get up and run the edge.

She was able to catch Kikirue's free paw and the large weight below him jerked free from his other into the large containers of chemicals.

"Rouge what the!..." Knuckles came over and helped both Rouge and Kikirue onto the secure platform.

Kikirue looked up to them both still a little stunned. "You...you saved me. After all that I did. You still saved me...But why?"

"Because you weren't bad." Rouge answered quickly. Kikirue stared at her. "You didn't deserve to die." She continued.

Kikirue was silent. All three standing up. Kikirue looked over the edge of the platform to where his once boss was cooked alive within the green liquid below.

"Your probably confused as to what I did right?" Kikirue asked still looking below.

"Well, yea sorta.." Knuckles answered.

"My father was the one who use to work for Crab. Then he met my mother. She softened his heart. When Seraue, the boss, found out he waited until I was born. He sent out some goon to kill my mother. My father took me into Crab. He told me that my blue eyes reminded him of my mother when ever he looked at me. I had to take my fathers place in Crab after he committed suicide. I never forgave Seraue for what he did. In some ways I felt like all that happened was my fault and tried to cover it by reminding myself of my life long commitment to Crab." He told the story as if he was reliving it.

"Hey, well at least everything is over now. Crab is gone now and your free to live your own life." Rouge sounded so caring. Knuckles couldn't imagine this was coming from that spoiled bat he knew.

"I still need to pay my debt to society." Kikirue explained turning to them revealing a somewhat sad yet happy face.

"Wait what are you going to do?" Rouge asked.

"My father took it the wrong way by committing suicide. I want to do it the right way. I'm going to turn myself over to the police and do the time it takes to earn that trust back and become normal. Though the memory of my past will always be a constant reminder. But I think they'll also make me strong." Kikirue smiled to them and Rouge and Knuckles nodded and smiled back.

The police were soon contacted and they came to the scene in record time. They looked through the factory to see if they could find anything worth while. They tried to fish out the body but it seemed the chemical had dissolved even the bones.

Kikirue smiled good bye to Knuckles and Rouge as he was driven away in a police car. It was sunset and Station Square was lit up in a portrait of colors. Orange mixed with yellow and purple shading the figures captivated by its light. Knuckles and Rouge walked down the cool, lit sidewalk path towards the beach. Rouge seemed to be content at the moment.

"Rouge..." Knuckles tried to get her attention.

"Hummm?" She peered over to him.

"Why did you save him anyway?" Knuckles asked staring into the lovely sky. The sun highlighting his feathers.

"Well its like the Ying and Yang." Rouge answered him.

"Humm?" Knuckles looked over to her a little confused. Signaling for her to elaborate.

"In every bit of Evil there is some good. And in every bit of Good there is some evil. You can't have one with out the other." She explained to him.

They found themselves at the edge of the beach. The crisp waves sliding smoothly the sand playing its sweet song. The wind dancing within their fur. The perfect romantic moment.

"Well I still don't get what you mean, but..." Knuckles responded after a moment of silence.

"Hump...Everyone's different Knux. No need to get over exerted." Rouge smiled.

They looked at each other sweetly. Knuckles actually smiling and before another word was said he embraced her in firm yet loving hug. Rouge was in a bit of a shock.

"Knu...ckles?" She wondered. pausing between syllables.

"Rouge..." He choked out. The look of a stern protector plastered on his face.

She soon embraced him back not really knowing why. The blissful moment lasted for a life time. The two taken by the others embrace both not wanting to let go. Knuckles wished with all his heart that nothing like that would ever happen again. He admitted to himself that he cared for Rouge too much to see her hurt. Rouge was taken aback by his surprising sympathy. They seemed so perfect in each others arms. That strong feeling that they found the one they belong with.

Ending Song: Together Forever

By: Rick Astley

If there's anything you need
All you have to do is say
You know you satisfy everything in me
We shouldn't waste a single day

So don't stop me falling
It's destiny calling
A power I just can't deny
It's never changing
Can't you hear me, I'm saying
I want you for the rest of my life

Together forever and never to part
Together forever we two
And don't you know
I would move heaven and earth
To be together forever with you

If they ever get you down
There's always something I can do
Because I wouldn't ever wanna see you frown
I'll always do what's best for you

There ain't no mistaking
It's true love we're making
Something to last for all time
It's never changing
Can't you hear me, I'm saying
I want you for the rest of my life

(repeat)

So don't stop me falling
It's destiny calling
A power I just can't deny
It's never changing
Can't you hear me, I'm saying
I want you for the rest of my life

(repeat)

(The End)

Kitty: Now can you see why I remade it?