

pokemorph

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Submitted: January 5, 2008

Updated: June 6, 2009

team rocket has been up to its old tricks again and created pokemon morphed with humans to create a new breed of trainer. this goes very wrong. Now the mewmorph Serena must do whatever is nessasry to stop this new threat to the pokemon world...

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0 - excerpts from the scientists' diary

Prelude

Excerpts from the head scientists' diary

Day 1

I have sent my searchers to Southern Isle to recover ancient data ROMs from the pyramid of the river. These contain the details of how the ancient people of the river created beings called pokemorphs. With the creation of Mewtwo already a success I see no reason to not proceed with phase two of our plan.

Day 3

I have been informed that not only have we the Data ROMs but that we have also garnered yet another mew fossil. This one however is a complete specimen. My scientists have also informed me that all items will be back in Team Rocket labs by nightfall.

Day 4

The process behind project Pokemorph has begun.

Day 44

Arg! All of our pokemorphs are flawed only in personality traits! Otherwise they are exactly as we get them to appear! We cannot, for some reason, get them to be the ruthless Rocket catchers our forces require them to be!

Day 200

We have successfully created a Rocket catcher that meets our exacting requirements. At long last our dream will come about!

Day 201

May God have mercy upon us, the Rocket Catcher has the temperament of the failed Mewtwo& he destroying the base as I speak, he&&..what?! Noooooo!!!!!!! Grah!.....flicker&&.. flicker&&& flicker&&.crack&&&& I control my own destiny&&now, die!!!! &&&&..oh yes, before I forget there s no sense in letting you keep the mew fossil now is there?...especially since all of you are dead&&..slam!

1 - escape

Book 1: Last to Escape

Chapter 1: The Escape

"After her, she mustn't escape!" The Rocket Admin ordered. "If she escapes the boss will have my head on a pike for allowing all of the pokemorphs to have escaped. Those fool scientists made them to be too powerful for the containment devices that were designed to suppress their powers to even work properly! Only one worked even halfway correctly and now she's trying to run. Thank god I had foresight to place a tracker on this one early." Were his following thoughts that were quickly proven wrong as the pokemorph in question promptly vanished into the Shrike River after backing away from the idiotic grunts trying to trap her against the river edge. The tracker was smashed to pieces on the rocks as she was whisked down the rapids by the powerful current.

Some 100 feet down the river Serena the pokemorph was realizing she was now in some serious trouble. Her terror of being recaptured and forced once again to commit the theft of other pokemon was so great that she had failed to notice the river and had fallen into the force five current of the river. After a couple moments of gentle floating, the river at once started becoming more and more treacherous as it neared its falls. That was when she took a smack to the back of the head by a boulder, effectively rendering her senseless. Noting what it perceived to be a human in its river, a Dratini decided to help Serena. It knew that an unconscious person would have very little hope of surviving the falls. Quickly, the Dratini nosed Meka toward a side passage that would go on a slighter slope but not over the falls and would eventually lead close to civilization. After about an hour of drifting, Serena began to regain consciousness. As she did so she slowly came to notice the friendly Dratini who, as she had been drifting, had rather decided to come along with her as a permanent partner pokemon. The pair drifted into Lake Serenity near the town of Maple Grove. A local trainer who was fishing the lake at this point was at this point obliging enough to call out his Lapras who then came and got Serena to shore. The Dratini, spontaneously deciding to join her, started pestering her. The trainer, recognizing this, was kind enough to give her a pokeball which the Dratini promptly caught itself in. Holding the pokeball close, Serena called back a word of thanks as she disappeared into the grove.

2 - dawn of nightmare

Chapter 2: Dawning of Nightmare

Far away, in the center of the oceans, the sky pillar reared large against the waves crashing down upon its island. Not many of its inhabitants were stirring, for the Golbats had just taken up their roosts and the Claydols were still in slumber. Even its mighty protector, a jet black Raquaza, was in a fitful state of slumber. The reason for its disturbed slumber was a powerful aura emanating from the steps of the sky pillar.

Galefor, gazing upwards to the spire of the sky pillar sensed the Raquaza. He carried no pokemon of his own but he intended to start proving to the world exactly how dangerous he was. He had just flown halfway around the world from the destruction of the lab of New Island. The only things he carried at the moment, was a small mew fossil and a backpack. Suddenly his black eyes started glowing a blood red, and with a hardly an effort, he jumped straight to the top of the sky pillar.

Raquaza awoke with a start, for the aura he sensed earlier at the base of his spire was now suddenly at the top and staring him down with such malice that it made him feel very threatened indeed. Raquaza let off a roar at the intruder, dressed in plain black with a small backpack. "Catch you? That is hardly my plan. No, I intend to kill you!" the figure said to Raquaza's shock, for the figure could apparently understand Pokemon speech. That's when Raquaza no longer felt threatened. He felt very, truly terrified.

Galefor's eyes had started glowing again, concentrating immense power to his entire nervous system, which would have immediately killed any normal human being. But as he knew, he was not a human being. Then again, neither was he a Pokemon. He was what was classed in an ancient time as a Pokemorph or "a crossed one". In his bloodline ran the DNA of the Pokemon he now faced down. As the Raquaza roared and took to the skies, he rose from the ground and began the battle.

With his opponents' eyes glowing a blood red and power extruding from his body, Raquaza knew it was dealing with a foe not to be taken lightly. The last time he had dealt with ilk of this magnitude was over four centuries ago, during the time of the crossed ones. Even then it had barely managed to defeat them. Hence why it was shaking in its scaly armory. Taking to the sky was its best hope of defeating his opponent. Raquaza roared his challenge and rose to the skies.

Almost immediately after leaving the ground the combatants began their battle. Raquaza shot a jet of fire from his mouth, hoping to scorch his opponent to a cinder. His opponent countered with a jet of fire coming out of his hand that was followed up with a colossal bolt of lightning which struck home on his side. Twisting in agony, he let off a mighty snarl and started to move at an incredible speed and blasting out icy jets with which he hoped to utterly freeze his opponent. With beautiful grace his opponent neatly dodged each and every icy jet and sent bolt after bolt of lightning into his side. Severely weakened, Raquaza went into an outrage, tapping into the power of his dragonfang. Charging his opponent, he attempted to grab him in what would hopefully be his fatal blow. With perfect timing and precision, his opponent neatly grabbed him and Raquaza had time for one terrible roar before he felt a deathly chill ascend upon his soul. Abruptly letting go, he raced for the ground and was hit in the back by a monstrously cold blast of frigid air. Raquaza crashed into the top of the spire, the whole building came crashing down, and he knew no more.

Galefor alighted upon the rubble of the sky pillar and gazed down at his defeated foe, which was encased in a block of incredibly cold ice. With terrible malice shining from his glowing red eyes, he started moving his fallen opponents' dragonfang out of the ice. After a good ten minutes of channeling,

the dragon fang came to rest gently in his palm. With a final flash of power, he disappeared, and the rubble of the once mighty pillar was left in the glow of dawn, which glinted off the sea spray and the giant block of ice that contained the now single inhabitant of the island.

3 - starting of a journey

Chapter 3: Startng of a Journey

Bugsy had waited many a day for this moment, his pokemon egg was beginning to hatch! Suddenly the egg glowed a brilliant white and the shell dissolved, revealing a shimmering golden brown, silvery white, and light turquoise pokemon called Eevee. Bugsy knew he got really lucky with this egg because eevees' are normally a chestnut brown and creamy white as opposed to the latter. Quickly captureing the Eevee with the waiting premier ball, he then called it forth again so that it could check things out. The little eevee went b-line for the berry case, opened it with its nose, and selected a soft pecha berry with which it started to munch contentedly on. Gathering his materials to bring start his pokemon journey took him most of the day, owing to the fact that it required a trip to the pokemart so that he could stock on requirements like potions, pokeballs, and antidotes. Also because it required spending a large amount of time outdoors to find some of the rarer berries such as Watmel and Stara. By the time he got home it was well past nightfall so he decided that he would go to Professor Aspens the next day to recieve his basic starter.

Bugsy woke early the next morning to find his Eevee curled up in a ball next to him, blinking sleepily in the early morning light. After grabbing what was to be his last really good breakfast in awhile, he fed his Eevee some pokefood and the two departed to Professor Aspens lab. Choosing a mildly quirky Cyndaquil as his starter, Bugsy and his Eevee walked into the woods of his home near Maple Grove. After some hours of walking steadily westward, the pair saw many pokemon and

defeated a few of the overly aggressive ones. There was 1 pokemon though who they never saw but had decided that it rather liked this unlikely pair and thus followed behind as an uncaptured gaurdian pokemon. Bugsy would not see this pokemon for many weeks, but he would most certainly notice how healthy it kept his crew of pokemon.

Finally, Bugsy came across one of the groves most rare spesces of pokemon, a mighty Absol! The battle raged for a good hour with neither side backing down. Blow after blow was rained down upon Bugsys' little Eevee which stood up with a remarkable resiliancy (of course this was because of the gaurdian following them around). Eevee was slowly draining the Absols' HP with a series of tackles and quick attacks all while sending as much sand flying as possible to stop it from getting hurt as much, not to much avail because of the number of times Absol used its' Faint Attack which never missed. Finally, with a mighty leap into the air, Eevee ended the match with a stunning blow to the side after useng an inherited Iron Tail attack. Quickly Bugsy grabbed a pokeball, and threw with good force at he heavily weakened Absol in a bid to capture such a worthy opponent. In a flash of blue light, Absol disappeared inside the ball and after several tense secnds the ball chimed a small chime signalling that Bugsy had gained a new companion.

Suddenly Bugsy got a very strange feeling coming from his newly captured pokemon. "Would you please let me out you bloody numbskull? I feel cramped, hungry and rather irritated at being cooped up in here?" Bugsy looked around with a rather baffled expresson wondering where the voice came from.

"In your hand doofus." said an exasperated voice in Bugsys' head. "My pokeball?" Bugsy asked aloud. " No, the pokemon inside your pokeball. I'm talking to you idjit!" Now knowing to whom and where the

voice was coming from, Buggy released Absol from his pokeball. "About time you figured it out kid." it said testily. "Your telepathic?" Buggy inquired. "Course I am what with that blooming pokerus virus that was insde that pokeball you captured me with, which I thank you for by the way. It will allow me and everyone else in your party to grow devastatingly strong." "Pokerus?" Buggy asked. "Pokerus is a virus that pokemon contract when caught with infected pokeballs. It only takes one to render all your pokemon telepathic and gives them the abilty to grow amazngly strong and learn moves it would never be able to learn normally. As far as talking back to us, just think in our general direction, it wll allow you to avoid looking stupid in public." "I see" buggy thought back. Suddenly a small voice chimed in coming from the drection of his Eevee. "Would you please feed me now? I'm hungry!"

4 - time to fly

Chapter 4: Time to Fly[br]

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Amy the Beautifully Pokemorph was one that certainly stood out in a crowd. This was not because of her brilliant silver-blond hair, nor her exceptionally bright clothing that she had a preference for wearing. It was merely the fact that she had a pair of wings growing out of her back that were as brilliantly colored as her clothing and as glossy as a polished gold medallion. Her Pokemon were primarily ones that could fly so that she had somebody to talk to as she flew.[br]

“Well, it’s been awhile since I got outta that hellhole on New Island. But hey at least they were bright enough to give me an easy way to escape, these wings rock!” Amy said to her companion, a female silver and pink colored Butterfree nicknamed Moondance, or Dance for short. “Very true, wings are a wonderful way to get around, especially for us butterflies” she said “Getting the Pokenus from that luxury ball you caught me with is an upshot for the both of us” she added. The pair glided along the tree tops looking at the scenery as they went. “What say we hit that town over there for a bit of a snack?” Amy suggested to Dance. “An excellent choice, Maple Grove has some wonderful honey for those of the true butterfly persuasion to snack on while you visit the town.” “Catch you later then Dance, I’m going to grab a berry smoothie from that snack-bar by the forest edge on the south side of town.”[br] Unknown to the pair of them, they were being watched by a pair of bright hazel eyes belonging to a rather sinister counterpart to his carefree cousin. Ertal was a magnificently garbed Fearow Pokemorph who excelled at making long range potshots at anybody he wanted with his far range stun gun. Upon recognizing his cousin he decided it was time for a little payback for getting him saddled with being an outcast of society. Not like he hadn’t been in the first place even before he was turned into a Pokemorph. “Amy, Amy, Amy ... will you never learn that you don’t split up from your pokemon for any reason whatsoever? You just made yourself a sitting duck for this kid.” unloading his stun gun and setting it on lowest setting, which would send anybody to sleepyvill with a quick pulse. He waited for his opportunity high above them.[br]

Amy bought and finished her smoothie the went off to look for her partner, Dance, who was supposed to be in the area, enjoying the nectar from the trees. No sooner had she gotten above the treetops when she felt a nasty electrical pulse come crashing into her and bringing her crashing through the trees to the forest floor below, where she lay unconscious. Ertal neatly glided down, alighted softly, picked up his cousin and flew off to his hideout in the direction of Draco falls.[br]

Some hours later Dance, who had had her fill of nectar in the forest went to try to find Amy. After a good 15 minutes of searching with no results. Dance decided it would be a good idea to start searching the skies. And then of all the bad luck, it started to rain, completely putting a stymie on poor Dance to find her friend and trainer.[br]

5 - The Beginning

Aqua woke with a start. His faithful companion Silver, an unusually colored eevee, was mentally pestering him about an imminent danger. *"It's about time I got your attention! I'm getting a really bad feeling here. We need to get outside, as of yesterday."* Yawning mentally, Aqua thought back *"okay okay I'm moving already. Can't see what your arking about though, nothing big ever happens in maple grove."* "Well your kind may not think it big, but the crossed ones are back." Suddenly aqua was sensing an incoming presence, in the air of all things. Galvanized into action, he ran to the door opened it and got about ten feet away before the yet unknown pokemorph completely blasted his house. "Okay Silver, start talking. What's going on? How did the crossed ones come back?" "If I actually had a clue I would tell you." Aqua started going towards the groves, where the Jirachi shrine lay. "Whoa hold up, I'm sensing another crossed one in there." Silver yelped mentally. *"I'll be careful, care to come with?"* Silver trotted over and jumped on his shoulder, and then the pair walked into the trees and disappeared into the grove.

Serena had reached a strange shrine in the middle of the grove. Bending over she began to read the inscription.

When the crossed ones walk the world
The world will tremble once again
Legends will fall and the world will quake
One to find the hearts and one to join them
The Water and his silver, the hope of the world
The legends shall come and hope
That the Water and his silver
Can save the world.

Felling a strange chill on this warm night, looking up she saw Galefor, who was searching for his next challenge. She blinked and he was gone. Feeling safe for the moment, Serena leaned back against the nearby boulder and dropped off to sleep.

Aqua and Silver came upon the shrine about four in the morning and were startled to see one of the dreaded crossed ones nearby, slumbering against the nearby boulder. Serena sensed a nearby presence and snapped awake in fight or flight mode. Equally startled were Aqua and Silver, who went into a defensive position. Having seen his house casually blown to bits, Aqua was in no mood to join it. Eyeing each other warily, they gradually began to get the idea that neither meant the other harm. As if to reinforce this thought, Silver hopped off Aqua's shoulder and trotted over to Serena and passed along a thought. "Hey from what I'm reading off this crossed one, she's actually rather nice. Come on." Breaking into a relived grin, Aqua trotted over and started apologizing. "Hey, sorry we gave you a bit of a scare. I've been having a rough night my house got blasted by some evil force of a crossed one and thought you might do the same to me." Meka herself broke into a relived grin, walked over, and put him into one of the tightest hugs he'd ever had. "I'd never do such a thing even if I knew how. I'm just trying to stay hidden." "Picked a good spot for it, the Jirachi shrine hides anyone unless their pursuers walk right into the bubble themselves" Aqua replied. "My name is Aqua, and this is my companion,

Silver. What's yours?" "Serena" she replied. The pair, feeling equally exhausted, walked over to the boulder and dozed off and were not to wake till sometime later.

6 - Enter the Fox

Kitsune was a pokemorph unlike most. She possessed more natural grace than her cousins owing to her genetic combination with a Ninetails. If anyone saw her they would immediately identify her genetic combination by her nine tails and slightly more pointed canines if they got close enough. Sensing an airborne danger she leaped to the side and a poisoned dart thudded into the ground. "Bloody hunters...." She growled irately "That's it, I've had enough, let's see how you like a taste of your own medicine you creeps." The hunters had by this time gotten a lock on her and fired simultaneously. Kitsune now employed her psychic abilities and snatched them all out of midair with only her mind. Speaking loud enough to be heard by the hunters she said, "I'm giving you one chance, drop your weapons or get killed by your own darts. Trust me; you know you wouldn't die quickly judging by the fact that you probably put slow acting venom on the tips." The guns clattered to the ground and the hunters vanished quickly into the night.

"Huh, cowards" she said picking up the fallen weapons. "At least I have other more conventional ways of defending myself now without having to resort to actually showing what I can do." Strapping one to her back, she picked up the other two and went into town to pawn them off. Some time later, she was back at her favorite tree, looking at what she had gotten in town with the hocked guns. Arranged at her feet was a backpack, food and water, a pair of shades, ten pokeballs, and the remainder of her cash, not to mention an exquisitely made and extremely deadly claymore. It was at that moment a wild Ninetails came passing by. Kitsune decided then and there that that particular Ninetails was to become her first pokemon.

Summoning twin fireballs to her hands, she began the attack making sure to only get the Ninetails attention. The Ninetails looked over its shoulder at her and coolly assessed the situation. Then the Ninetails did something completely unexpected by Kitsune. "So, you are a crossed one. I did not expect such an instance to happen again for at least a millennium or so. Unlike most of your ilk however, I sense that you are far more pure than some of your tainted cousins. Knowing this I would be happy to come along with you. Now throw your ball, I will not resist" it said telepathically. Thunderstruck but ecstatic about the situation, Kitsune threw her ball. True to its word, the Ninetails didn't struggle and was neatly caught. Grinning, Kitsune knew she had a new friend for all time.

Suddenly hearing men cussing nearby, Kitsune bolted to the nearby river where the voices were coming from. She arrived just in time to see her cousin Serena go over the edge into the river. Furious, she turned her wrath upon the grunts and their leader. Upon drawing her claymore, the grunts got really nervous. Only the leader was calm. "Well well well, it's Kitsune. I see our hunters didn't manage to take you out. No matter, I'll deal with you myself. Go, Ariados!" he said and threw his ball. Ariados erupted from its ball in a blaze of dark light. "Ninetails, get out here!" Kitsune responded in turn. Ninetails sprang from its ball in a blaze of flaming embers. "Ninetails, take care of the Ariados. I'm taking down the leader." Kitsune's claymore suddenly became shrouded in a red aura. Meanwhile, Ninetails and Ariados were sizing up the competition. Suddenly Ninetails struck, sending its opponent off balance and almost immediately the Ariados was subdued by a firm paw to its back. Ariados lay very still, for it knew that the Ninetails could easily crush it. The leader wasn't faring nearly as well as his pokemon however. Barely dodging Kitsune's enraged slashing; he was steadily backing away towards a tree when he tripped. Sensing her chance, Kitsune was about to deal a fatal blow when her hand was stopped dead in its tracks. "No." Ninetails said simply "It is not right, let him live, despite what he has done to you." "Very well my friend, he lives, for now...." Sheathing her claymore, Kitsune and Ninetails started

to follow the river, leaving behind a much shaken admin and his grunts. [br]

7 - danger in the sky

Rayquaza defrosted with agonizing slowness. Slowly opening its eyes, it surveyed the wreckage of the pillar bitterly. Summoning its mighty powers, it leaped into the sky to find the other legendaries before they too, fell to the pokemorph. The only thing it could think of was that he must not get his hands on either the darkness quiver or the bow of shadows. One would be disastrous, both would leave the world to face the arrows that can pierce the day, a fatal catastrophe that could not be allowed to happen again.[br]

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Bugsy stumbled upon the Jirachi shrine unexpectedly; he had never known there was a shrine in the maple grove to begin with. Waking with a start, Aqua and Serena nearly clobbered him before Aqua recognized him. "Well this is a surprise to see you here, Bug. Your egg hatch for you?" "Yes, it did." said Bugsy proudly, calling out his Eevee. "Well I'll be damned... it was a shining Eevee that hatched for you huh? That doesn't occur too often man." "Yah I know, I got more Pokémon here in the grove too" "Excuse me but could you please explain who this guy is Aqua?" Serena interrupted "My bad, Serena this is Bugsy, a friend from in town who is currently on a quest to achieve great things. Bugsy, this is Serena, a friend of mine I met last night." suddenly Everet piped up in Serena's head "Hey you're a pokemorph! Hey Bugsy she's a pokemorph!" "What the hell is a pokemorph?" Bugsy asked "Man you gotta teach that Eevee some discretion. Well since the cat is outta the bag, yes, Serena is a pokemorph. As to what they are, the last batch was a natural occurrence that ravaged the world for three generations. This batch, as she told me earlier, was a result of genetic experimentations. Apparently only one or two actually have any wish to destroy the world as we know it." "How are they gonna do that?" Bugsy asked. Surprisingly, it was Serena who answered "The Arrows of Piercing Day" seeing the blank looks on her friends' faces, she continued. "The arrows of Piercing Day rip the light asunder, causing trails of darkness to follow behind it that eventually close. If they hit anyone, then that person is then corrupted and then acts as an arrow of darkness himself who is then far more dangerous than the arrow ever was." "Geez, my day just keeps getting better and better." Aqua grumbled.[br]

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Rayquaza went from place to place of the legendary Pokémon. In the heart of a volcano, he found Groudon, frozen without melting. In the seafloor trenches, he found Kyogre, also frozen. Place after place he found the same. Finally he found that the only ones not frozen were Jirachi, Celebi, and Mew. Jirachi, however, was still in its thousand year slumber and Celebi not even in this dime dimension. Mew was not to be found as always. Rayquaza thought silently, "The prophesy is coming to pass. I must find the Water and his Silver, and quickly!" [br]

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The air above them thundered and trembled and the mighty Rayquaza alighted before them. Suddenly, he went berserk. "A crossed one is with you! This cannot be!" he roared and promptly began to try to destroy Serena. Rayquaza suddenly found himself to be held in a powerful psychic grip from which he could not move. Looking around, he saw that this aura came from none other than Aqua. "Rayquaza, knock it off. Crossed one she may be, but she is not the one who has done you harm. Stand down." Aqua released his grip on Rayquaza, and he immediately snapped out of it. "Water" he rumbled "you

are the one to put the final end to the threat of the crossed ones once again. True I stopped them before but you delivered the final finish oh so long ago. Your body may be changed, however your mind, and your taste in friends, hasn't. Silver, it is good to see you again" "What me?" Silver jumped "but I've never met you before" he thought. "You have always been at Waters side since you first met, ages ago. Through the ages you and he have risen to fight the threat again. In ages past you were the Eevee of transformation." [br]

Rayquaza began to glow. Brighter and brighter till the grove shone like the day. And the Water and his Silver were awoken anew in their memories. "Oh crap" Aqua breathed, "The crossed ones have returned. Fortunately for you there's only one who is intent on destroying the world this time". Suddenly a snapping sound occurred, and Mew slid into the visible spectrum. Buggy jumped, he now knew why he felt like he had been being followed for the past few days, because he had been followed by Mew. "Mew would you please look below the shine to make sure the darkness arrows are still there?" Aqua asked. Four astonished heads whipped around to face him. "You mean that the darkness arrows are here?" Rayquaza rumbled. "Yes" Aqua replied "this is where I hid them, although the shrine wasn't here of course." [br]

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Suddenly a horribly evil aura was sensed and Galefor came into view. Seeing Rayquaza, he was greatly surprised. Even more surprised, was to find a human so close to equal in his power. Smiling grimly, he realized that this must be the place where the arrows of darkness or the shadow bow was hidden.[br] Alighting softly he put his hands into a fighting position, and summoned his weapon, The Sword of Slashing Shadows. "Oh damn, this is so not my day" Aqua grumbled. He was just about to summon his weapon when a new face appeared bearing a flaming claymore and eyes blood red with rage. [br] [br]

8 - The Heros Failure

“Kitsune” Galefor growled “what the hell are you doing here?” “Protecting my sister you worthless piece of scum.” She snarled back and flew into the dance of swords. Blow after blow was rained onto the others sword and Galefor just stood there and took it. He suddenly sidestepped and snapped the blade with a well placed blow. That’s when things really started heating up, because now Kitsune was using her own psychic abilities to conjure a blade of phantasms. It was all Galefor could do to parry the blows raining down on him from the blade. Suddenly clouds started forming, and everyone knew there as a storm brewing. The sky got darker and darker, and still the two battled on without mercy to the other. Suddenly lighting cracked the sky and Kitsune jumped, and Galefor went in for the kill. The blade of shadows whipped through her momentarily flickering blade of phantasms, and straight into her side. Kitsune dropped without a sound and lay still.

[br]“No!!!!” Serena started crying and tried to heal her, with limited success. “Hey kid” Kitsune breathed, the battle light had faded from her eyes “you okay?” “Course I am, but your not dong too good” Serena responded through her tears. “Course I’m not, would you be if you had a two inch slash to the side?” Kitsune tried to grin and slipped into unconsciousness. Serena’s sobs regained their intensity.[br]

Suddenly, Galefor was blown off of his feet by a strange pulse which emanated from the onlookers. “That does it” Aqua snarled “you’re going down, hard” and started shooting lighting from his hands. Galefor leapt into the sky with Aqua following. “You’re outta your league up here, the sky is my dominion!” he was suddenly shrouded in a white flash of lightning cased by how much power he was using. Suddenly, Aqua was ht by four consecutive bolts of lightning from Galefor. Shaking them off easily, a white nimbus of light surrounded him and he summoned twin swords to his hands. Gleaming like the midwinter starlight and as cold as an Antarctic blizzard, the battle was renewed with a new intensity. Blow after blow was rained with cataclysmic violence, equally matched, they parried ad riposted each others blows. Ice and lightning were summoned and thrown and deflected all in the same heartbeat. Galefor’s sword slipped through Aqua’s defenses and drew blood. At the same moment Aqua’s sword cut the area above his eye and also drew blood, partially blinding him. The battle aged on still, and the blades passed through their defenses more and more easily. Finally, Aqua was caught again across the chest and his energies weakened and faded. He dropped to the ground and lay there, still as ice, and completely out of it. Suddenly the world swam and the five were teleported to a region in the mountains of thunder. Galefor then destroyed the shrine and took the arrows, draining them of their powers.[br]

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9 - the prisoner in waking sleep

Aqua did not wake for many days. Tormented by dreams, he tossed and turned ceaselessly. Unfortunately for Aqua, they weren't dreams, but a world of dreams that was just as deadly as the real world. Aqua escaped death by a hairsbreadth a hundred times over during his time there. Finally, towards the end of the sleep, he encountered a strange soul hidden away in the corners of the dream world. "Who are you?" he thought. Sensing him, the soul turned, and he was looking at himself. "What the hell?! You're me!" Aqua yelled. "Hardly" the soul laughed and started transforming. Eventually she took on the appearance of a pokemorph. A deep purple in her eyes and ocean blue hair, combined with what looked like the ears of a Dragonair, gave him an impression of beauty. Yet somehow, there was an undertone of despair and malice mixed. "Who are you?" Aqua thought again. "I am a Dragonair of ages past, when man and Pokémon were still indistinguishable from each other if they chose to be. I have been imprisoned all of these millennia by a madman; a madman who created a crossbreed of human and Pokémon that could never change." "Oh my god, these things were created millennia ago?" Aqua said, shocked. "Yes, and you have always been there to stop them." "So everyone tells me..." he mused. The Ancient continued "Something strange has happened this time. There are many good pokemorphs, yet only one completely twisted one. This one must be stopped at any cost." "One problem with that. I already tried, and failed." "I will help you to train, if you can manage to release me from my prison that is." "Which is?" "The heart of the glacier, in the Lightbane Ridge." "Consider it done, my friend." "Your presence here continues to grow stronger, how long have you been?" "Haven't a clue. Last thing I remember clearly was hitting the ground after the battle with Galefor." "Then you must wake up. Otherwise, whether or not you are killed by anything here, your body will die anyway." With that, the dream world slid into the darkness of a dreamless sleep.[br]

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Aqua woke a few hours later. From the view coming into the cave, he surmised that it was just about daybreak. He got up and trod softly out of the cave, and stood and watched the day break in soft pastels of color. Sometime later, he was joined by Silver. "Good sleep?" he asked "Not really, but we have to free someone. How long was I out for by the way?" Aqua asked "Nearly three months." was the reply. "Oh shoot, three months? This can't be good. Bring me up to speed and I'll tell you what I've learned while sleeping."[br]

"Well aside from the obvious in keeping our butts alive. The darkness arrows were captured and half of their power unleashed. There have been reports of a shadowy region in the Shadowbane Ridge and of strange deaths. They all died sleeping, and there were strange rents all over their bodies." "Okay, I know now what those were about. Galefor tried repeatedly to kill me while I was sleeping, and a lot of people were killed." "Okay that's one mystery down then. What did you find out?" "I found that this struggle has been going on for millennia and that there was an ancient frozen into a prison of sorts." "Where at?" Silver asked coolly "Well, you're not going to like this one bit; it's in the heart of the Lightbane Ridge Glacier." "Oh damn, not good. That place is crawling with shadow souls and demons." "Like it or not, I need that training. You gonna come with, bud?" "You think any of us wouldn't come with you?" Buggy asked, walking out into the dawn air. "Cause I know damn well your not leaving me behind." said Kitsune, joining him. "Can't leave me behind either." said Serena, following close on her

sisters heels. "Guess that settles who's coming then." Aqua said "Come on then, we have a friend to free. Onwards, to the Lightbane Ridge, and let us strike a blow to the heart of malice."[br]
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10 - soul diamond prison

"Damn, here we go again." Aqua said as he and Kitsune summoned their blades. The demons, creatures of shadow, and lost souls bore down on them quickly, only to be cut down; but, as always, they felt like they were fighting a losing battle. The air around them trembled with power and whispered the death songs of the enemies as their swords passed. Finally, the demons, shadow creatures, and lost souls retreated to recover their strength. Even for those who were immortal, they too needed time to gather their strength for another assault. "Press on my friends; we can probably get another couple of miles in before they try again." "Are you crazy Aqua?!! Everyone has been going on empty for the past five days! Your going to get us killed doing this much longer!" Kitsune shouted at him "Look, if we stop before we get to that sanctuary spot we'll be killed as we sleep, which has nearly happened many times now." Aqua said calmly "But the sleep has kept us able to fight, despite the risks. We need a couple hours sleep. Not even Serena, with all of her powers and mine combined, can keep ending everyone's fatigue; not without killing ourselves at any rate." "Very well then, we shall sleep." Aqua relented. "However I will see what I can do about making it so that we can sleep soundly without fear of death." With that, he constructed a mind barrier around the group. "Be warned that this can still be easily cracked and won't hold off something battering on it for long." he cautioned. "So long as we all get a bit of sleep, I could care less." Kitsune answered gratefully. The group curled up and dozed off on the icy surface, surrounded by the shadow stares of the denizens of the Lightbane Ridge.[br]

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Silver woke suddenly. Not because something was battering on the shield, but because they had been asleep for a good twelve hours. Feeling something smoother and more slippery under his paws than the ice he looked down. "Oh crap, a soul diamond. I gotta get everyone awake, quickly too before they get trapped here." Furiously, he started to try to awaken them by any means necessary. Serena was the first to wake, and she was not in a happy mood. "What the hell, Silver? I was having a great sleep. Why'd you wake me up?" "That's the thing, we shouldn't have slept this long. Even now we're in danger. We've been sleeping on a soul diamond." Serena looked alarmed. "I need you to help me wake the others before they become prisoners of a waking dream." Silver pleaded. "How do we know we're not in one already?" Serena asked. "It takes thirteen hours to become trapped when sleeping on a soul diamond, and we have already slept twelve." Silver told her. Serena's eyes went wide and she started for Kitsune. Kitsune didn't wake up especially pleased. Serena, booking no nonsense spoke her mind for once. "I don't especially care right now what you want to do. I need you to start waking Buggy while I work on Aqua. We have less than an hour to get everyone awake and the longer it takes the worse danger we're in."[br]

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Aqua was back in the waking dream and back to being beset by demons and shadow fiends of all sorts. It was the only reason the barrier hadn't cracked for a full twelve hours. The snow and ice around him was spattered with blood. Whose, he could not tell, and there were yet more coming. He looked over his shoulder and saw the group, moving, and saw his body being shaken for some peculiar reason. "What the hell is going on?" he wondered dashing into the safety of his mind barrier. Suddenly he realized, this wasn't a dream at all. He didn't even inhabit his body anymore for the time being. "Oh come on wake

up, wake up, wake up!” Serena yelled “If you don’t wake up your going to be stuck in about two minutes!” “Whoa I’m okay girl, chill. I’m not going to die in two minutes.” Aqua replied coolly. Serena looked around wildly for his voice “um, stupid question, but where is your voice coming from?” she asked “I seem to be 2 feet over your head” he replied. “Well then, I suggest you get back into your body and awake unless you want to look that way forever! You’re sleeping on a soul diamond!” Aqua paled visibly “How much time do I have left?” “A 30 seconds, maybe a minute, tops.” He dove for his body. “Don’t let me be too late.” he prayed.[br]

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Aqua woke with excruciating pain. “Damn, that was so not fun. Remind me not to do that ever again.” He looked over the ice and shuddered. “We still have a long way to go, and many a demon to fight before we get to the heart” “Aqua, you’re missing something fundamental here. Glaciers move, along with anything they picked up, what if we’re over our captive right now?” Silver asked. “Only one way to find out.” Aqua said, delving his mind beneath the ice. He came upon a heat source in the shape of a human body and withdrew. “Looks like were already here guys.” “First things first, Aqua, we gotta find a way down.” Serena said. Aqua grinned a grin nobody liked the look of and started backing away edgily. “Not a problem, I’ll make a path in.” he placed his hand on the soul diamond. Suddenly his hand glowed, the diamond cracked, and finally shattered into shards that fell inwards into the gaping hole of the chasm. Without waiting for anyone else, he jumped in, hit bottom and started sliding. “Where the hell do you think you’re going Aqua?” yelped Silver, jumping in after him. “Well, we can’t stay here waiting for them to get back come on!” Kitsune said as she stood on the edge of the chasm. “Together then?” Serena asked “Together. C’mon Buggy.” As one, they stepped into the chasm.[br]