

The beginning of Everything



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There are moments in life where you wonder how you end up right there, at that exact moment and place. How Everything began. Your muscles impulse you to run to avoid the fatal scenario that is unfolding in front of you. Those instants in which your senses are maximized due to adrenaline, your heart aching to impulse you even further, to your body limits.

You forget about what's surrounding you. The electric jolts from a Toxtricity that fly over your head towards a figure that is trying to stop you. A stomp from a Garchomp on your right that protects you from an unknown attack. You just have faith and run. Keep running. He is in danger. Your muscles ache, your brain is overload, yet you can't... no, you MUSTN'T stop. The shadows are surrounding him more and more. Someone screams your name, warning you. And even with that, you don't stop.

Without him, the one who completes you. The one that knows the depths of your heart. Your Everything... without him, all else is just... gone.

He is just some inches from your grasp. Your body is about to stretch beyond the impossible for him. But it doesn't matter. Whatever is necessary to save the soul that gives you meaning and purpose. The soul that colors your existence with feelings that are far from any description.

Just... just a Little more...

You can't hold it anymore, and scream his name. Your Everything.

"VER..."

For Joma, everything began with his first solid memory. It was like a little picture in his head. He was playing in the center of the living room with Io, his mother's Leafeon. She was just patting his three-year old gecko head with a softness and delicacy that gave her an elegant touch. His mother was in an armchair, just a couple meters away, reading the infant one of her stories. It was about a Gardevoir that was trapped in a tower, who was rescued by a charming lizardborn prince. Gardevoir was trapped because she was so beautiful, her trainer decided he was the only one in the right of seeing it. But it was so unfair for the sweet Gardevoir, who just wanted to explore and see the world with her pure yes. Luckily, there was this kind gentle anthro who rescued her and accompanied her on a neverending journey, admiring the wonders of the world.

"I will do the same with my Eevee!" Joma claimed happily. "When will I have one?"

His mother exchanged a certain smile with her Leafeon, and chuckled.

"All in due time, my son. Things will happen when you least expect it"

Maybe it was because of the gentle touch of Io. Maybe it was because of the Gardevoir's story. Joma's fascination towards Pokémon came from somewhere. But as his father usually said: "Sometimes things are as they are. What matters is what you do with it". When he got older he understood why his parents were so motivational. They were both teachers in the main highschool of town. Anne, his mother, gave literatura classes. His father, Raphael, was one of the best Maths teachers the highschool had ever had. They were really appreciated by the students, managing to catch almost everyone's attention. They did what they did with a passion their little son admired from such a young age. How they tried so hard for all their students to find their own path, to achieve their dreams, or discover new things about themselves... having the power to help someone shape themselves is truly marvelous.

Perhaps that was the reason why Eevee was their family's emblematic Pokémon. Since many centuries ago, families were bound to a Pokémon, representing social status, or the family's philosophy. The Pokémon could vary between generations, but the bond was a symbol that represented the deepened connection between anthros and Pokémon over the centuries. Eevee and their potential evolutions, even some of them to discover, was really in sync with their parents' perspective of life. A path with endless branches. An adventure, truly! And he was so wishing for the day he would receive his first Pokémon. An Eevee, like his parents.

But also, like his dear future Eevee, he wouldn't know which next step to make. His parents were teachers. Following the family path would make their parents proud. Sure, a life in Andalusite town sounded good: not a big city, surrounded by rural mountains, with beautiful scenery...

And yet, Joma felt there was something missing. He felt like a puzzle that was incomplete.

He could always find some inspiration in his parent's books. Even if he had trouble understanding it, there was a special charm in the arcaic words of the Odyssey. It was said to

be written before Arceus gave the anthros the gift of the Pokémon. Or at least that's what some religions said. It was long, the protagonist facing a wide variety of situations... but in the end, everything had a purpose.

Joma's wandering mind was one of his biggest virtues. But also one of his biggest flaws. He didn't have many friends at school. He always found it harder talking to other anthros rather than dealing with Pokémon he came across by the Street. Some of his classmates even laughed at him when he asked his teachers why Pokémon didn't have the chance to go to classes as well. They were equals after all, right?

The adults themselves didn't fully know how to answer that and other questions. In the end, Joma felt misunderstood. When it was nighttime and looked at the window that was by his bed's side, he felt like the Gardevoir from that story. Trapped, in a way. Yet he didn't understand the nature or the dimensions of his cage. His mind still was so limited...

"Trouble sleeping?" A soothing voice came from the door. His mother was in the door, looking at him with that kindness she always emanated. Joma nodded. She stepped in and sat besides him. She didn't continue talking right away, and just kept looking at the sky, like his son. She sighed. "There is a legend that says that wishing stars are actually a product of a legendary Pokémon. Amazing, isn't it? A Pokémon that can traverse through space. Doesn't it make you think about the wonders that are beyond this city?"

Joma tilted his head.

"That sounds as if you didn't like living here"

Anne smiled, and her eyes shined with the stars on her blue eyes. She cooed Joma with her tail, drawing him closer to her.

"Sometimes, life is... well, there are more variables than we initially thought. But I can say I am where I have to be" She turned to face his son "I am aware you have been thinking about things a 6 year old shouldn't think about yet. Your tutor told me about you and your questions"

Joma turned red and shrank a bit, ashamed. Her mother hugged him, softly, with love, petting his head.

"He didn't say it in a bad way. Actually, he admires you"

"What?"

Anne pulled him closer. He could almost hear her mother's heartbeat.

"It's ok if you don't understand right now. It's ok if you don't find people who understand you. It's ok if you feel you don't fit in. Because that means you still have a long and enriching path ahead of you. A path in which I am sure you will find people and Pokémon who are akin to you. You can't know when you will meet your soulmate!" Anne chuckled. "I met your father by sheer luck. I have this warm feeling in my heart that, of course, there will be

hardships in your life. But you will also find plenty of surprises. You just have to be patient and not let sadness take the best out of you. Do you promise, Joma Wildheart?"

Joma hesitated, but finally nodded.

"That's my good boy. So... what about a bedtime story? Maybe one of your favourites"

Even if he didn't fully understood what her mother was trying to say, he felt a tingle of hope in his belly. With renewed strength he turned on the bedside lamp and looked on his shelves for a worth story with a happy ending.

They were so focused on the family moment, neither of them realized that, over the sky, a shining star passed by.

A couple days passed. It was weekend, the 17th of May. It was raining, which was unusual considering the time of the year. His parents had gone to see a play in the theatre.

"But don't worry. You won't be alone, as Io and Agni. Right guys"

Agni was his father's Pokemon, a Flareon. As odd as it was, Io could cuddle him without getting burned. Agni nodded while Io nuzzled his neck affectionately, a gesture he was quickly to return. They had been acting quite affectionately, Joma observed. But his parents didn't find it bothersome. Actually, there were some conspirational look between them. Maybe he would understand someday.

So, there he was, watching one of his fav films on the tv (Milo and Scruffy), hugging an Eevee plushie. Agni and Io were nowhere to be around. Where would they be? They normally accompanied him during his film sessions...

"...dipshit!"

He startled when he heard some voices coming from outside. His heart shrank in anxiety. It was raining a lot outside. Who could they be.

"...useless...away"

Those words were alarming. Even more when he heard a heart wrenching whine he had never heard and a thud. That sounded like...

He almost ran towards the entrance door, just in time he saw a yellow shabby car leaving the street. However, the thing that drew his attention were the cries that came from the garbage container that was almost at the entrance of the garden. He had never heard such hopeless whines. He didn't mind it was raining, he just ran as fast as he could towards the container, and took off the container lid.

What he saw made him heart freeze.

A Froakie. He seemed quite young. Almost a baby, probably, because his eyes were closed. Or maybe they were closed because of the blood that came from a deep cut in his forehead. His little body was limp, full of bruises, and his cries were getting quieter at an alarming rate.

“Fro...a...kie”

Maybe he was hallucinating. But for a moment, he could see his very soul, within his body, slowly fading away.

Help...

For probably the first time in his life, Joma acted without thinking at all. He took the Froakie with all the care he could muster and put him under his shirt, trying to give him some warmth. His clothes were already drenched in water, yet he didn't mind. His feet started running towards the closest Pokémon center. All his inner thoughts, his feeling of being misunderstood, everything... it stopped existing. His world right now was that little Froakie he had just found. He even fell a couple times on his knees and started bleeding. And he didn't care.

At some point in his life, Joma realized two things. First, he had actually thought when he saw that tiny Pokémon in need. He did not with his mind, but his heart. And second...

That helpless little Froakie was gonna be his beginning of Everything.