

REGION: SINNOH

LOCATION: WAYWARD CAVES



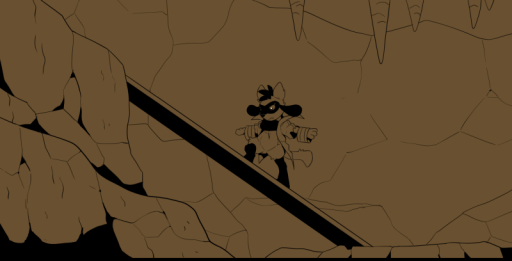
#445: GARCHOMP  
MISSION START

I DELVE INTO THE DEEPER DEPTHS OF THE WAYWARD CAVE SYSTEM IN SINNOH, SEEKING OUT A TERRIBLE PREDATOR THAT I HAD SECRETLY BEEN DREADING FOR A WHILE. WITH THIS LESSER FORM, IT WILL BE ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT, BUT I TRUST IN MY INSTINCTS, WILES, AND AURA TO GET THE UPPER PAW AGAINST IT.  
I SCAN THE CAVE AROUND ME, PREPARING MYSELF FOR ANYTHING.

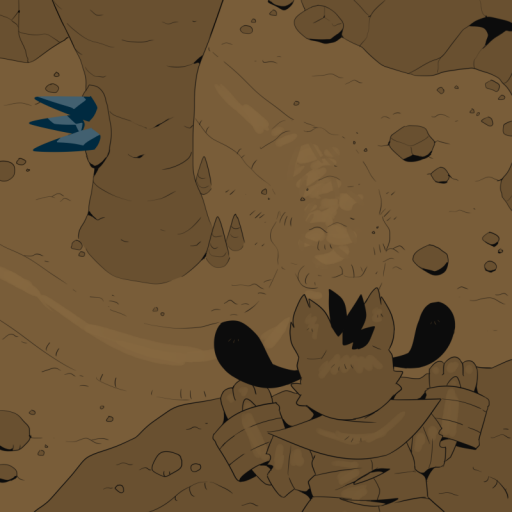


MY EYES CATCH A DIMLY-GLOWING ENERGY RADIATING OUT OF A DEEP CLAWMARK IN ONE OF THE SUPPORTS. I CAN SENSE THE DRACONIC ENERGY LEFT BEHIND IN THE DENSE ROCK. THIS COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN DONE BY THE GARCHOMP.

I TRY TO DETECT ANOTHER AURA, AND I PICK UP A FEW SOURCES SCATTERED ACROSS THE CAVERN, UNMOVING. TRAVELING TO THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE LARGE CHAMBER, I FIND A HUMAN-MADE BAG ABANDONED IN A SMALL NOOK. LOOKING AROUND INSIDE THE BAG, I CAN ONLY SALVAGE A HABAN BERRY. THE BAG LOOKS QUITE ROUGHED UP. DID A TRAINER MEET A DEADLY FATE DOWN HERE?



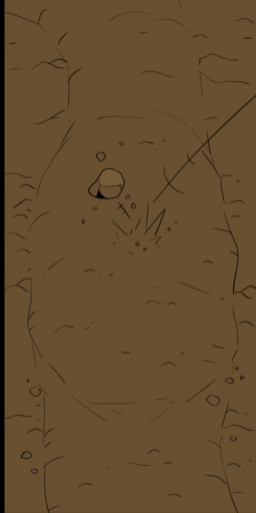
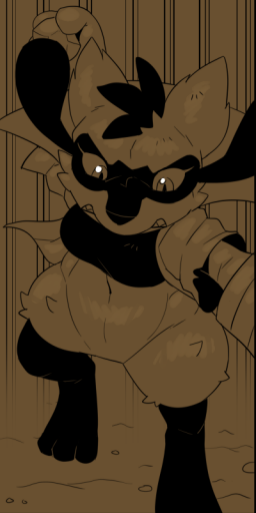
I CATCH SIGHT OF A SMALL CLIFF TO THE NORTH, BRIDGES HAVING BEEN SET DOWN TO REACH THAT AREA. I CLIMB UP CAUTIOUSLY AND FIND AN ABANDONED CAMPSITE WITH ANOTHER MANGLED BACKPACK. IN IT, THERE IS A HYPER POTION AND X SUPPLEMENTS. GOING BY THE COLOR, IT APPEARS TO BOOST SPEED.



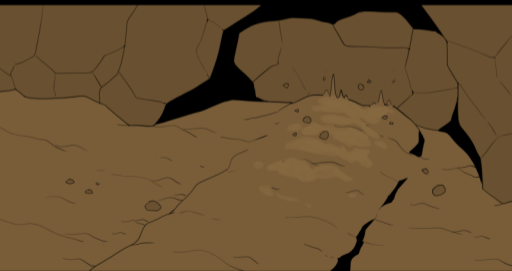
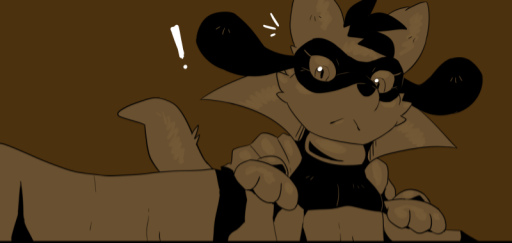
A SLIGHT TREMOR COMES FROM BELOW. LOOKING AT THE CAVE FLOOR, I CAN SEE RAISED MOUNDS OF THE EARTH THAT SIGNIFY SOME TUNNELING. IN SOME SPOTS I CAN SEE THE DIRT SHIFTING, AND IN THOSE SPOTS, I CAN PICK UP TRACES OF AURA. OUTSIDE OF THAT, THERE ARE OTHER SOURCES OF AURA IN THE LARGE AREA, THOUGH THEY FEEL LATENT.



DARK BLUE CRYSTALS JUTTING OUT OF A PILLAR CATCH MY EYE AS I SCAN THE FLOOR BELOW. THINKING THEM A POSSIBLE SOURCE OF AURA, I SHOOT AN AURA SPHERE DIRECTLY AT IT. THE CRYSTALS SEEM TO SUCK UP THE ENERGY COMPLETELY AND START TO GLOW DIMLY.



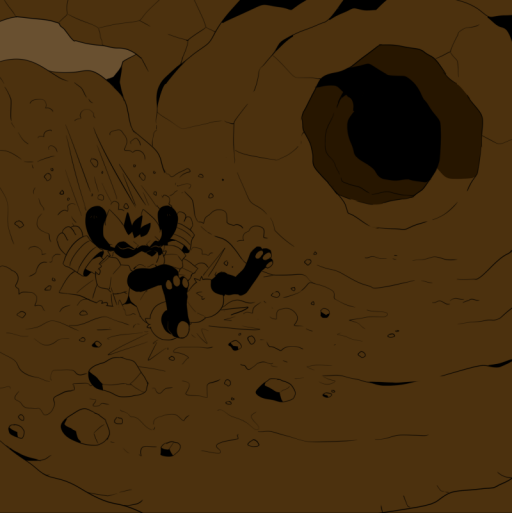
**I THEN TAKE A ROCK AND TOSS IT AT THE SHIFTING MOUND, WHICH CAUSES IT TO STOP MOVING...**



**STANDING MY GROUND, I CONTINUE TO PEEK OVER THE EDGE OF THE CLIFF, STARING AT THE BULGING EARTH. AFTER SEVERAL AGONIZING SECONDS, THE MOUND SUDDENLY SHIFTS BACKWARDS, HEADING DIRECTLY INTO A NEARBY WALL, BUT NO COLLISION OCCURS.**



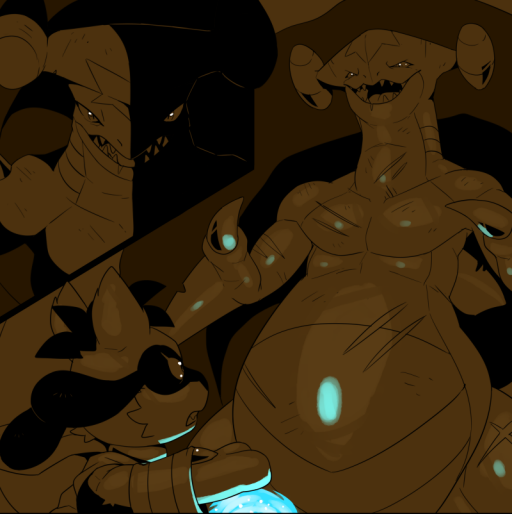
WHEN THE GROUND BECOMES STILL, THE AURA TOO BEGINS TO WANE. I SLIDE DOWN THE CLIFF TO TRY TO KEEP IT WITHIN RANGE. I TRY TO KEEP DISTANCE WITH THE WALL, BUT THE AURA CONTINUES TO FADE FAST. INCHING IN A LITTLE CLOSER, I LOSE MY FOOTING AS THE GROUND COLLAPSES BENEATH ME.



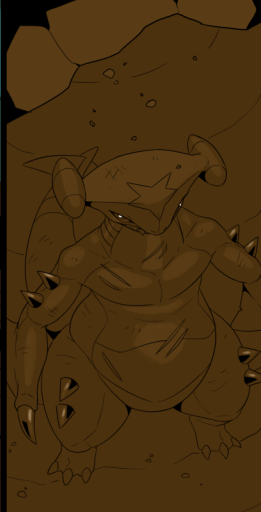
ROCK AND EARTH FALL NOISILY AND SPREAD ACROSS AN OPEN STONE TUNNEL THAT I ENTER UNCEREMONIOUSLY. THE DARKNESS HERE IS EVEN THICKER SOMEHOW, AND ONCE IT GROWS QUIET, A SOFT GROWLING SOUNDS FROM ONE END OF THE TUNNEL, FEAR GRIPPING ME DEEP WITHIN MY CORE.



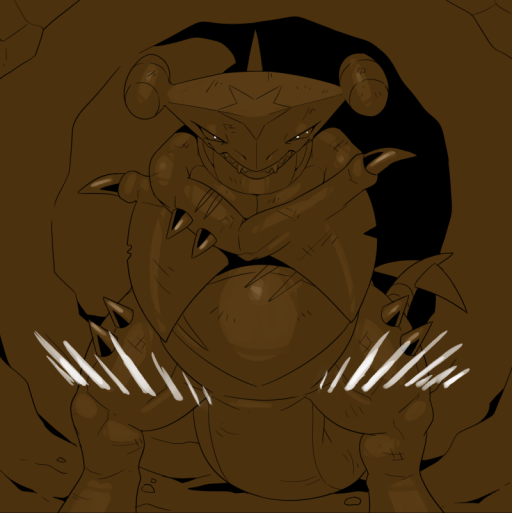
DESPITE THE FEAR TAKING HOLD OF ME, I GET ONTO MY FEET, TAKING THE BOTTLE OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCERS AND CHUGGING IT DOWN. RIGHT AS THEY REACH MY STOMACH, I CAN FEEL AN INVIGORATING WARMTH SURGING THROUGHOUT MY BODY, MAKING ME MORE SPRY. I READY AN AURA SPHERE, WHICH GIVES OFF LIGHT TO GUIDE MY WAY TOWARDS THE MALICIOUS AURA AHEAD.



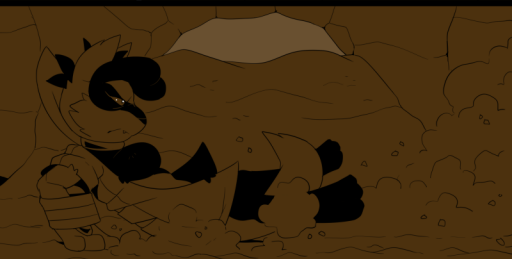
OUT OF THE SHADOWS WALKS A TRULY MASSIVE AND IMPRESSIVE CREATURE. SCARS STREWN ALL ACROSS THAT ROUGH HIDE, WITH BULGING MUSCLES AND THICK FAT PADDING THEM OUT, THIS GARCHOMP HAS SEEN MORE THAN A FEW FIGHTS (AND HEFTY MEALS), AND HE, OF COURSE, WOULD FEAR A RIOLI LITTLE.



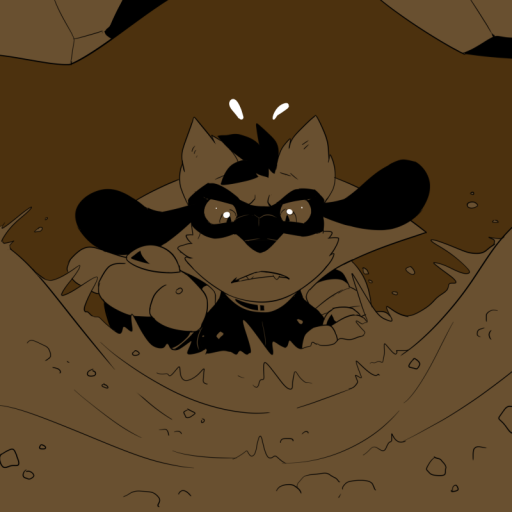
I TOSS MY AURA SPHERE DIRECTLY INTO THE CEILING, HOPING THAT IT WILL COLLAPSE, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THE ROCK IS HARDENED, AND I BARELY LEAVE A DENT IN IT. I SHOULD HAVE FIGURED FROM HOW THE TUNNEL LACKED SUPPORT.



THE GARCHOMP HUNCHES DOWN, CROSSING ITS ARMS WHILE GLARING AT ME WITH BAD INTENT. IT APPEARS TO BE DOING A SWORDS DANCE, DETERMINED TO HIT AS HARD AS POSSIBLE.



AND HIT HARD HE DOES. I CAN EVEN FEEL THE SHEER FORCE THROUGH THE PROTECT THAT I CONJURE. MY FEET ARE THROWN OFF THE GROUND AS I AM LAUNCHED BACKWARDS MORE THAN SEVERAL PACES. AS I TRY TO REGAIN MY FOOTING, I SEE THE HOLE IN WHICH I FELL THROUGH PEEKING NEARBY, ALMOST CALLING TO ME.



**I MAKE A LEAP FOR IT, BUT THE DIRT SLOPE COLLAPSES UNDER ME AS I TRY TO CRAWL MY WAY OUT, MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO CARRY OUT A SPEEDY ESCAPE.**

A Garchomp is shown from behind, lunging forward with its right leg raised to kick. The character being kicked is mostly obscured by a large, white, starburst-shaped impact effect on the left side of the frame. The Garchomp's body is detailed with scales and sharp spines along its back and tail. The background is a dark, textured brown.

HILDEGARD

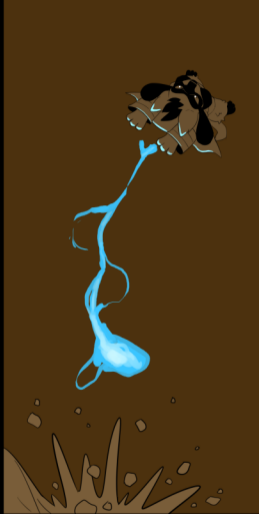
CRIT!

-6 HP

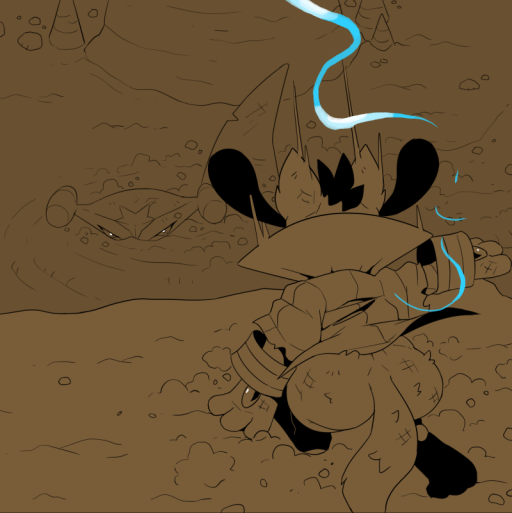
THE GARCHOMP RUSHES IN RELENTLESSLY, KICKING ME FROM THE BACK WITH ALL HIS MIGHT AND LAUNCHING ME OUT OF THE TUNNEL.



MY RUMP SCREAMS OUT IN PAIN AS I TRY TO REGAIN MY FOOTING. FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE HOLE, I CAN SEE THE DIRT FLOOR PILING AND QUAKING AS THE GARCHOMP BEGINS TO DIG FROM BENEATH, HEADED MY WAY.



HOPING TO GET MY FEET OFF THE CAVERN'S FLOOR, I SHAPE MY AURA INTO A POLE, VAULTING MYSELF UP TO HIGHER GROUND.

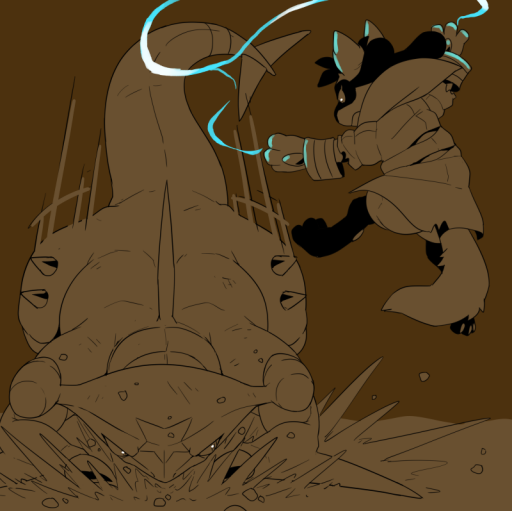


I LAND ON THE SECOND PLATFORM WITH THE SLANTED BRIDGE SET ON ITS RIGHT SIDE. I EXPECT THE GARCHOMP TO SNAP AT THE AIR IN FUTILITY, BUT HE INSTANTLY REALIZES THAT I'VE LEFT THE FLOOR.

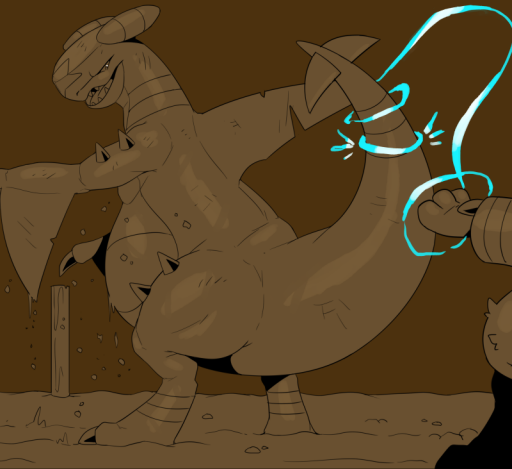


HILDEGARD  
+5 HP

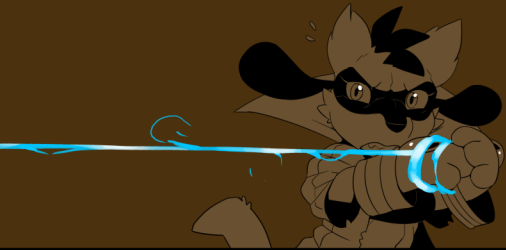
I TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAL UP, USING THE HYPER POTION. UPON USING IT, I SEE THAT THE GARCHOMP IS NOT KEEN ON GIVING ME MUCH BREATHING ROOM, HIS BIG BURLY BODY CAREENING OUT OF THE EARTH AND INTO THE AIR AS HE FOCUSES ME DOWN.



MY PATIENCE IS REWARDED AS I WAIT FOR HIS NEXT MOVE. THE GARCHOMP SUDDENLY CHANGES HIS TRAJECTORY AND DIVES DOWN STRAIGHT TOWARDS ME. I DODGE OUT OF THE WAY AND QUICKLY FASHION A LASSO OF AURA.



WRAPPING THE STRING OF AURA AROUND HIS TAIL, I TIGHTEN THE LOOP AS HE LIFTS HIMSELF BACK ONTO HIS FEET, GETTING A STRONG HOLD ON IT.



I CLUTCH MY AURA, TRYING TO SEE IF I CAN MAKE HIM BUDGE WHILE TESTING ITS HOLD ON HIM. I FIND OUT VERY QUICKLY THAT HIS SHEER MASS IS MORE THAN I CAN HANDLE.



HILDEGARD

-1 HP

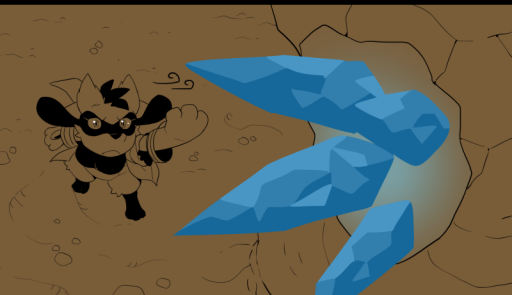
THE GARCHOMP FLINGS ME OVER HIM WITH EASE, SLAMMING ME INTO THE GROUND.

GARCHOMP  
-1 HP

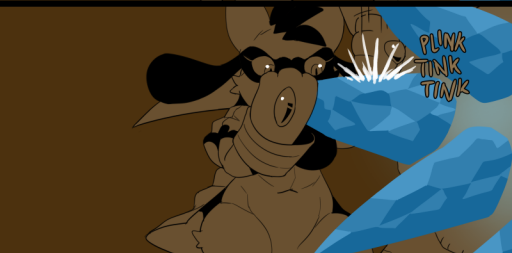
ACCURACY DOWN!



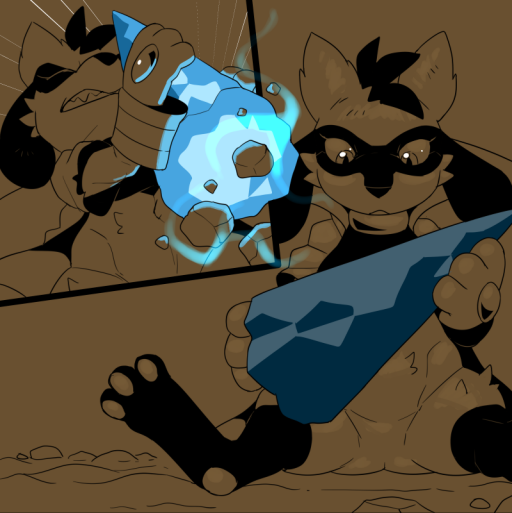
AS THE GARCHOMP APPROACHES ME LAZILY, PREPARED TO TAKE A BITE OUT OF ME, I SPRAY A BURST OF AURA DIRECTLY AT HIS FACE, INTENDING TO BLIND HIM. HE DOESN'T RESPOND WELL, BACKING OUT AND ROARING IN PAIN. THAT SHOULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO LAND HIS MOVES.



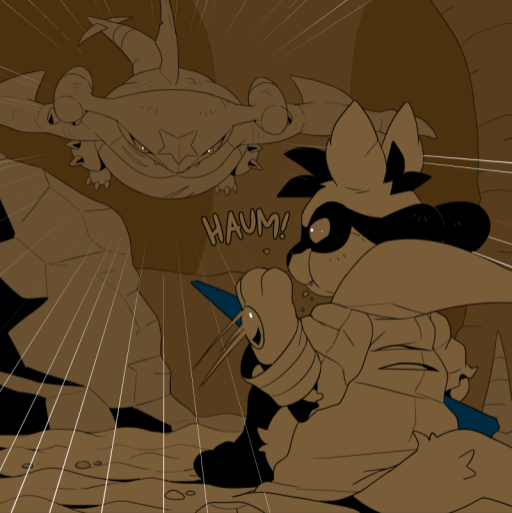
WHILE THE GARCHOMP BLINDLY FLAILS ABOUT, I DASH AWAY, AIMING TO INTERACT WITH THE CRYSTAL CLUSTER FROM BEFORE. I CAN SENSE THE LATENT AURA WITHIN THE GEMSTONES AND ATTEMPT TO SIPHON IT. UNFORTUNATELY IT SEEMS LIKE THE ENERGY IS TETHERED TO THE CRYSTAL RATHER TIGHTLY AND NOTHING COMES OF MY ATTEMPTS.



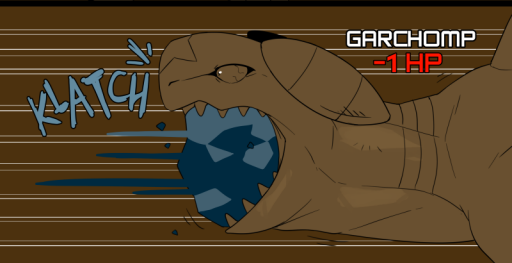
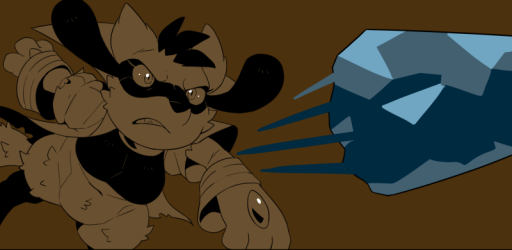
I LEAP UP AND GET A HOLD ON ONE OF THE CRYSTALS, ATTEMPTING TO BREAK IT FREE FROM THE PILLAR.



IT EVENTUALLY GIVES WAY, THE BASE SHATTERING NOISILY AS AURA LEAKS OUT FROM IT. THE SMALL WARMTH AND GLOW THE CRYSTAL ONCE HAD FADES AWAY IN SECONDS.



LOOKING UP, I CAN SEE THE GARCHOMP ROCKETING TOWARDS ME, ALERTED BY THE NOISE. I QUICKLY SCARF DOWN THE HABAN BERRY. ITS BITTER YET SWEET TASTE SENDS A SHIVER THROUGH MY BODY, AND I CAN FEEL SOME MUCH-NEEDED ENERGY RETURNING TO ME.

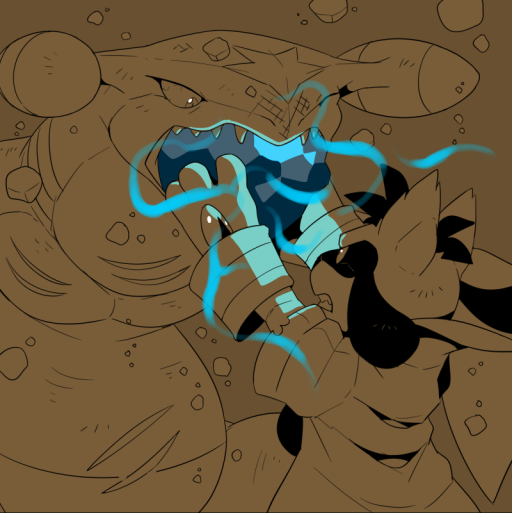


AS HE HOMES IN ON ME, I TAKE AIM, WRESTING THE CRYSTAL STRAIGHT AT HIS HEAD. THE GARCHOMP'S MOUTH WIDE OPEN, THE CRYSTAL SINKS IN DIRECTLY DOWN HIS GULLET, CATCHING ONTO HIS TEETH.



GARCHOMP  
-1 HP

WITH THE CRYSTAL IN HIS THROAT, THE GARCHOMP'S DIRECTION SHIFTS AND I QUICKLY DUCK, BARELY DODGING HIM AS HIS HEAD COLLIDES WITH THE STONE PILLAR ABOVE ME.

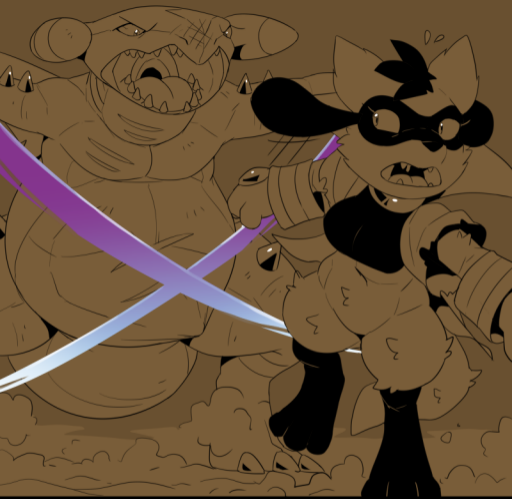


I EVADE HIS BODY AS IT FALLS FLAT ONTO THE GROUND, AND JUST AS HE STARTS TO GET UP, I GO TO GRAB HOLD OF THE CRYSTAL STILL STICKING OUT OF HIS MOUTH.

I ATTEMPT TO CHANNEL AURA INTO IT, AND WHILE IT DOES GLOW MOMENTARILY, THE CRYSTAL CAN'T SEEM TO KEEP HOLD OF IT. IT SEEMS IT MUST BE ATTACHED TO A CLUSTER.



THE GARCHOMP LIFTS HIS HEAD AWAY FROM ME, HIS JAWS SNAPPING SHUT AS HE SENDS THE CRYSTAL DOWN HIS GULLET WITH A RESOUNDING SWALLOW.



FEELING EXERTED, I TRY TO STUMBLE OFF TO REGAIN SOME ENERGY. THE GARCHOMP, HOWEVER, REACTS QUICKLY AFTER SWALLOWING THE CRYSTAL, TRYING TO CLEAVE ME WITH A POWERFUL DRAGON CLAW. FORTUNATELY, HIS COMPROMISED VISION CAUSES HIM TO BARELY MISS ME AS I MANEUVER AWAY. AT THIS SPEED, I WON'T BE ABLE TO LOSE HIM.



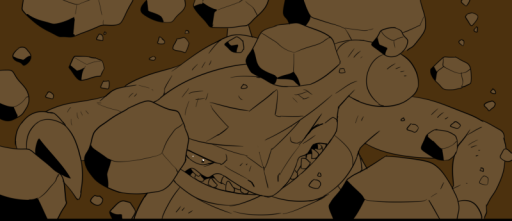
I TAKE AIM AT THE CAVERN CEILING AND TOSS AN AURA SPHERE WHERE THE PILLAR MEETS IT. THE ALREADY DISHEVELED ROCK COLLAPSES FROM THE IMPACT AND THE PILLAR BEGINS TO CRUMBLE.

HILDEGARD

-1 HP



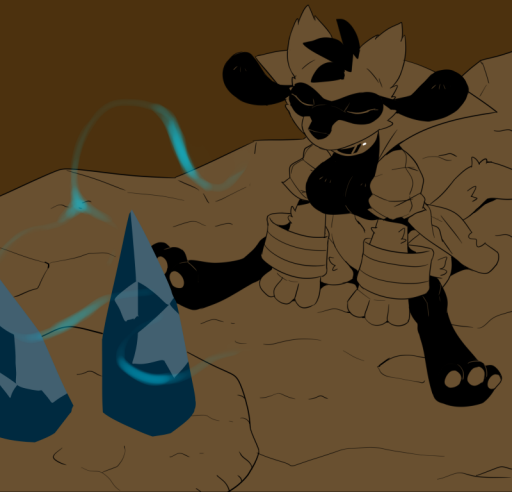
THE GARCHOMP PAYS NO MIND TO THE FALLING ROCKS ABOVE AND CONTINUES HIS ONSLAUGHT, SLASHING ME WITH A DRAGON CLAW. THANKS TO THE BERRY AND A SLOPPY HIT IN GENERAL, I HARDLY FEEL HIS ATTACK.



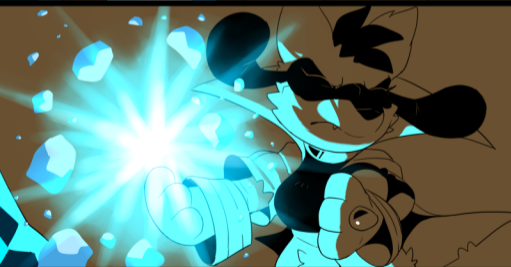
A SUDDEN CASCADE OF ROCKS TOPPLES DOWN ATOP THE GARCHOMP'S BODY, PILING ON HIM UNTIL I CAN BARELY SEE A GLINT FROM HIS CLAWS.



WHILE THE GARCHOMP REMAINS BURIED, I GO OFF TO SEARCH FOR THE OTHER LATENT SOURCES OF AURA IN THE LARGE CHAMBER. I TRACK ONE DOWN AND FIND THAT IT IS MERELY MORE OF THE CRYSTAL CLUSTERS SCATTERED ABOUT. THIS MIGHT BE THE BEST TIME TO EXPERIMENT WITH THEM SOME MORE.



**I TAKE THE TIME TO REST AND STUDY THE EXACT SOURCE OF THE AURA WITHIN THE CLUSTER. INDEED IT SEEMS THE AURA IS ONLY INSIDE THE CRYSTALS THEMSELVES RATHER THAN WHERE THEY'RE ROOTED.**



I GRASP ONE OF THE CRYSTALS WITH BOTH PAWS, CHANNELING AS MUCH AURA AS I CAN INTO IT. EVENTUALLY IT BEGINS TO GLOW INTENSELY. STRANGELY, I CAN READ HIGHER AURA LEVELS THAN THE AMOUNT I'M PUTTING IN.

SUDDENLY, THERE IS A REACTION, THE CRYSTAL UNABLE TO CONTAIN ALL THE ENERGY, AND IT EXPLODES, RELEASING A GREAT AMOUNT OF AURA.



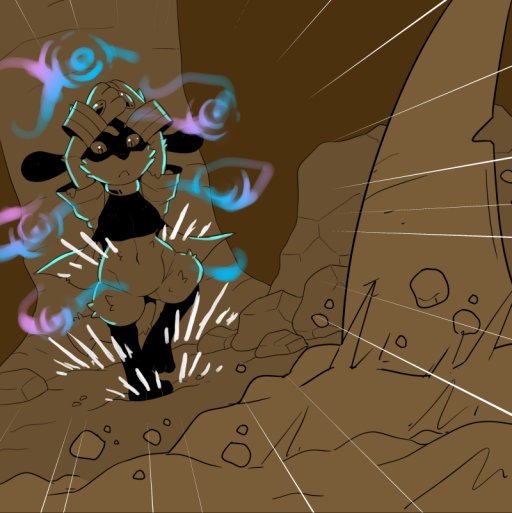
**AURA ENHANCED!**

I TRY TO GET A HANDLE ON THE AURA, OR AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT I THINK IT IS. I CAN IMMEDIATELY SENSE SOMETHING OFF ABOUT THIS ENERGY. IT APPEARS TO BE QUITE UNSTABLE, AND I CAN'T ABSORB IT OUTRIGHT. BUT PERHAPS I CAN STILL USE IT.



I NEED TO STRIKE WHILE THE ENERGY IS IN MY GRASP. I CAN SEE THAT THE ROCK PILE HAS SPREAD OUT, THE GARCHOMP ONCE AGAIN BENEATH THE EARTH.

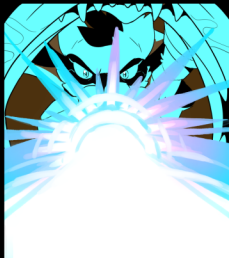
I JUMP DOWN ONTO THE SOFT DIRT, WIELDING THE UNSTABLE AURA, AND THE SUBTERRANEAN BEAST STARTS TO DIG TOWARDS ME.



THINKING I HAVE ENOUGH TIME FOR IT, I PULL OFF A SWORDS DANCE, BUT JUST AS I DO SO, THE GARCHOMP PICKS UP SPEED, CATCHING UP TO ME BEFORE I CAN PUT MY FOOT BACK DOWN.

**HILDEGARD**

**-1 HP**

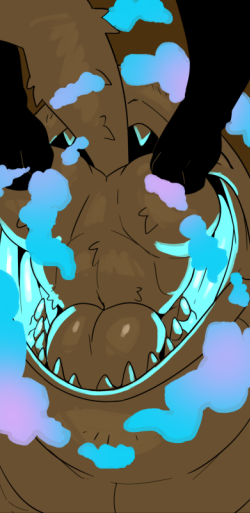


I LEAP UP IMPULSIVELY, SPLAYING OUT MY BODY AS FAR AS MY LIMBS WILL GO. THE GARCHOMP BURSTS FROM THE GROUND, HEAD CRASHING INTO ME AND MAW WIDE OPEN. I PUT MY PAWS ON BOTH JAWS, KEEPING THEM OPEN WITH THE DEEP, DARK GULLET WAITING BELOW ME. WITH ONE PAW, I CHARGE UP MY ENHANCED AURA AND SHOOT IT DIRECTLY INTO THE FLESHY TUNNEL.

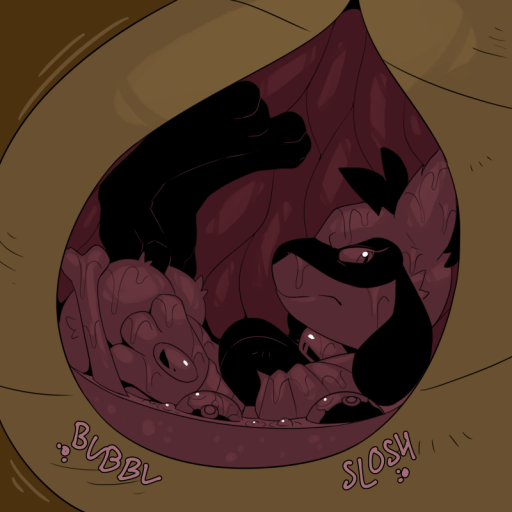
**GARCHOMP**  
**-2 HP**



**THE CRYSTAL INSIDE HIS STOMACH REACTS AND EXPLODES ALMOST INSTANTLY, RELEASING MORE OF THE ENERGY.**



THE EXPLOSION IS MORE INTENSE THAN I THOUGHT, BILLLOWING OUT OF THE GARCHOMP'S THROAT AND CAUSING ME TO BECOME DAZED AND LOSE MY GRIP. HIS GAPING MAW IS WIDE ENOUGH FOR ME TO FALL INTO, AND I PLUMMET STRAIGHT DOWN INTO HIS BELLY.



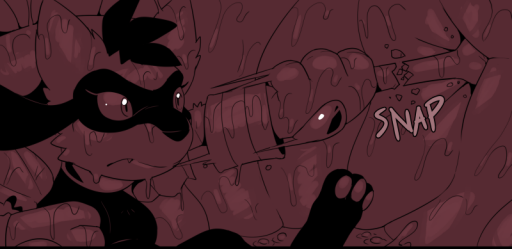
HIS STOMACH WALLS ARE QUIVERING, CHURNING IRREGULARLY. THE EXPLOSION CERTAINLY CAUSED IT SOME DAMAGE. IRONICALLY, THIS IS AN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION FOR ME, AS I CAN NOW AVOID HIS ROUGH OUTER SKIN.

A Garchomp is depicted in a dark, maroon-toned environment. The creature is shown from the chest up, wearing a black visor and a black chest piece. Its eyes are glowing red. The background is filled with bubbling, acidic liquid. Scattered around the Garchomp are several bones and broken Pokéballs, some of which are glowing red. The overall atmosphere is dark and menacing.

HILDEGARD

-1 HP

I TAKE A MOMENT TO REST, AT LEAST AS WELL AS ONE CAN WITH ACIDS BUBBLING ALL AROUND, EATING AWAY AT ME. THE GARCHOMP'S STOMACH IS LITTERED WITH BONES AND BROKEN POKEBALLS, PROVING THAT HE'S MADE A MEAL OF A TRAINER OR TWO. I CURSE THIS BRUTE FOR WHAT HE HAS DONE WHILE LAMENTING THE FALLEN TRAINERS.



AFTER RESTING UP, I TAKE ONE OF THE BONES, JAMMING IT UP AGAINST THE GARCHOMP'S FLESHY WALLS. THE BONE, HOWEVER, IS WEAKENED BY THE ACIDS, SNAPPING EASILY. MY GRIP, LUBRICATED BY THE FLUIDS, ALSO MAKES IT A VERY POOR ATTEMPT AT HARMING THE GARCHOMP.



THE GARCHOMP RESPONDS BY SQUEEZING HIS BELLY, DOUSING ME IN HIS JUICES IN AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE ME SUCCUMB.



I PUSH BACK AGAINST HIS GRIP, STRETCHING OUT HIS STOMACH FLESH WHILE LETTING AURA COURSE THROUGH MY PAWS. I RELEASE ANOTHER BURST OF AURA FROM THEM, DAMAGING HIS INSIDES FURTHER.



HHORK!

I FEEL HIS BELLY LURCH FROM ALL AROUND ME, SQUEEZING ME UPWARDS AS THE GARCHOMP FORCES ME OUT OF HIS GUTS.



HILDEGARD  
-1 HP

GARCHOMP  
-1 HP

NO TIME TO TAKE IN THE AIR. I IMMEDIATELY GO IN TO STRIKE, SWINGING A STEEL-INFUSED FIST AT THE GARCHOMP'S FACE.

HILDEGARD  
-1 HP

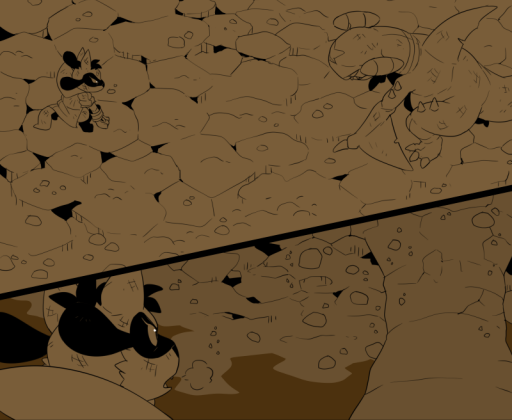


THE GARCHOMP, ROARING IN RAGE, TOSSES ME AWAY AND STOMPS HIS FOOT DOWN HARD, CAUSING A DEEP TREMOR IN THE GROUND. I AM THROWN ABOUT AS THE EARTH QUAKES HEAVILY ALL AROUND ME. I FEEL AS IF HE DID NOT GIVE IT HIS ALL, TEETERING ON THE EDGE OF EXHAUSTION.

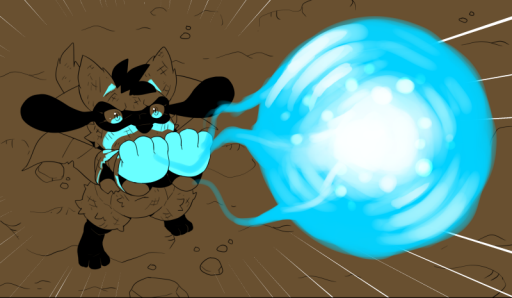


DESPITE HIS LOW ENERGY, THE GARCHOMP STOMPS WITH HIS OTHER FOOT, SHAKING THE EARTH ONCE AGAIN WHILE I TRY TO HOLD MY GROUND IN A DEFENSIVE POSITION. I CAN FEEL MYSELF FADING, NOT ABLE TO TAKE MUCH MORE.

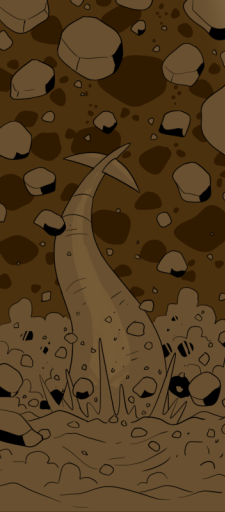
HILDEGARD  
+1 HP



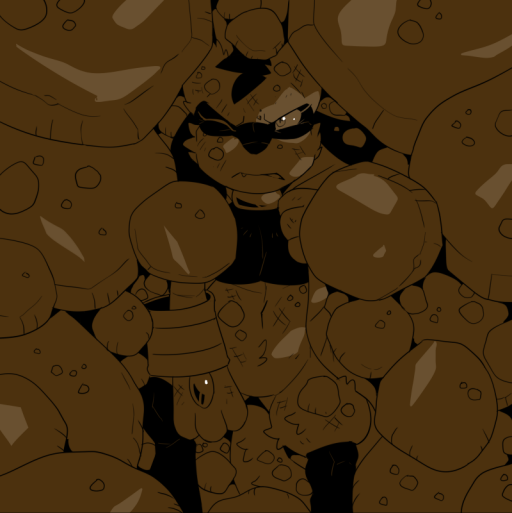
BOTH OF US EXERTED, WE TAKE THE TIME TO REST, GLARING AT EACH OTHER WITH UTMOST HATRED. AS I REGAIN MY ENERGY, I CAN SEE THE CRACKS FROM THE PILLAR I'VE DONE DAMAGE TO STARTING TO SPREAD AND MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE ENTIRE CHAMBER'S CEILING, REACHING MORE PILLARS. THE GARCHOMP'S QUAKING CERTAINLY HASN'T HELPED WITH THE CAVE'S INTEGRITY EITHER.



WITHOUT TIME FOR SECOND THOUGHTS, I THROW AN AURA SPHERE AT THE CEILING, AND A CASCADE OF DIRT AND ROCKS COMES FALLING DOWN, ACCOMPANIED BY A THUNDEROUS BOOM OF CRUMBLING EARTH.



THE GARCHOMP RETREATS INTO THE GROUND, DIGGING HIS WAY DOWN WHILE I TRY MY BEST TO DODGE THE EARTH DELUGE. IT'S NO USE. THE ROCKS CRASH DOWN ENDLESSLY, SMALL SHAFTS OF LIGHT POURING THROUGH FROM ABOVE. I BRING UP A PROTECT TO TRY TO SHIELD MYSELF AS I'M BURIED.



THE ROCKS AROUND ME STACK IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE SHEER WEIGHT OF THEM ALL DOESN'T CRUSH ME. THAT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, FREEING MYSELF WILL BE-

HILDEGARD  
-2 HP

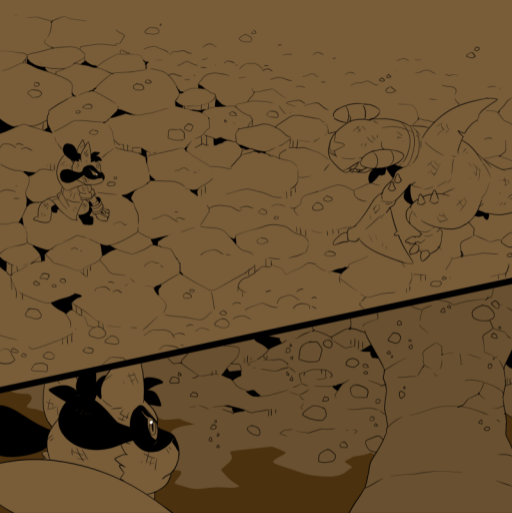
DEFEAT

CHOMP

THE DIRT BENEATH ME COLLAPSES AS A SET OF TOOTHY JAWS CLAMP DOWN AROUND ME HARD. IT SEEMS I AM FATED TO BECOME ANOTHER MEAL FOR HIM AFTER ALL, JUST LIKE ALL THE TRAINERS AND THEIR POKEMON.



"YOU WEREN'T IN THE BEST POSITION TO CAUSE A CAVE-IN, IT SEEMS. IN FACT, I THINK YOU MIGHT'VE HASTENED THE ENTIRE COLLAPSE! WATCH THE GARCHOMP'S ENERGY AND SWITCH BETWEEN OFFENSE AND DEFENSE ACCORDINGLY. REMEMBER YOUR OPTIONS AND ACT QUICKLY."



**IN A FLASH, I FIND MYSELF IN FRONT OF THE GARCHOMP ONCE MORE, GLARING INTO HIS PIERCING EYES. CRACKING AND CRUMBLING SOUNDS COME FROM THE CEILING. IT'S ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE, CLEARLY, BUT I HAVE TO TAKE THE GARCHOMP OUT OF THE PICTURE, AND FAST.**



I LEAP INTO THE AIR, WHICH ALLOWS ME TO DODGE THE THIRD EARTH-QUAKE THAT THIS BRUTE ATTEMPTS. ALL THE WHILE, I GATHER MY AURA INTO A CONCENTRATED SPHERE...



PREEEE!

GARCHOMP  
-3 HP

CRIT!

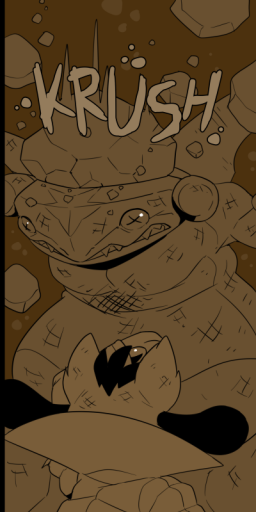
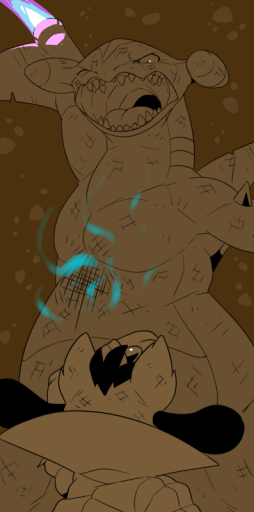
...AND RELEASE A POWERFUL BEAM, LETTING MY SIMMERING RAGE SPILL FORTH IN FULL FORCE.



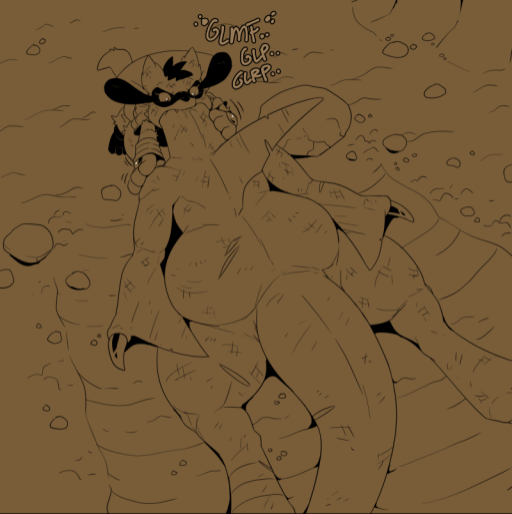
GARCHOMP  
-1 HP

KO...?

WITH THE LITTLE ENERGY I HAVE LEFT IN THE MOMENT, I LET THE GARCHOMP KNOW THE FURTHER EXTENT OF MY ANGER TOWARDS HIM, RELEASING ANOTHER BEAM TO FINALLY SEAL IT.



EVEN THAT ISN'T ENOUGH. THE GARCHOMP STUMBLES TOWARDS ME AS I TRY TO CATCH MY BREATH, PREPARING TO CLEAVE ME IN TWO. BUT THE EARTH SPEAKS, BETRAYING HIM, AND THE GARCHOMP'S REIGN OF TERROR COMES TO A CLOSE.



HIS ROUGH SKIN WILL SURELY TEAR ME UP INSIDE, SO DESPITE THE CAVE-IN SITUATION, I TRY TO EASE HIM IN SMOOTHLY.



HIS BULKY BODY FEELS LIKE SANDPAPER GOING DOWN MY GULLET ALL THE WAY THROUGH...



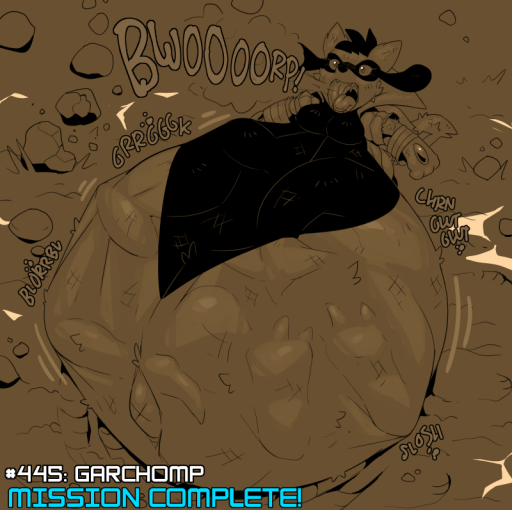
DESPITE THE UNPLEASANCE, I TRY TO VOID IT FROM MY MIND, FOCUS-  
ING ON PUSHING HIM IN DEEPER, MY STOMACH STRETCHING NICELY AT  
THE VERY LEAST.  
I THINK ABOUT HOW GOOD IT WILL BE TO DIGEST THIS BEAST, AND HOW  
HE WON'T PREY ON ANOTHER HUMAN.



DON'T THINK, JUST SWALLOW. STOP THINKING, JUST SWALLOW.  
SWALLOW, SWALLOW, SWALLOW.

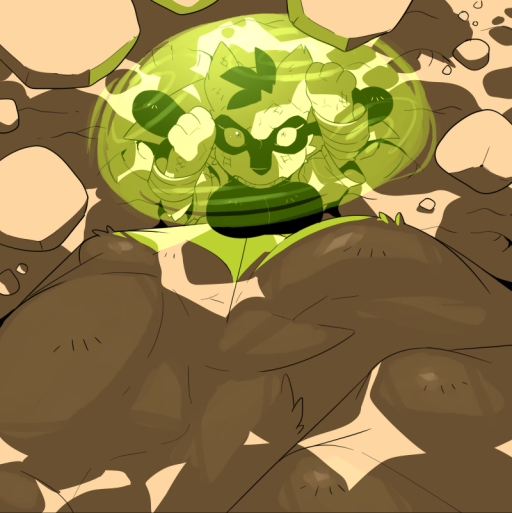


AT THE TAIL NOW, MY THROAT IS SORE AND SENSITIVE. I TAKE SMALL GULPS, LITTLE BY LITTLE, AND A GREAT RELIEF WASHES OVER ME AS MY JAWS FINALLY CLOSE, SENDING THE LAST OF THE GARCHOMP DOWN INTO MY HEAVY STOMACH.

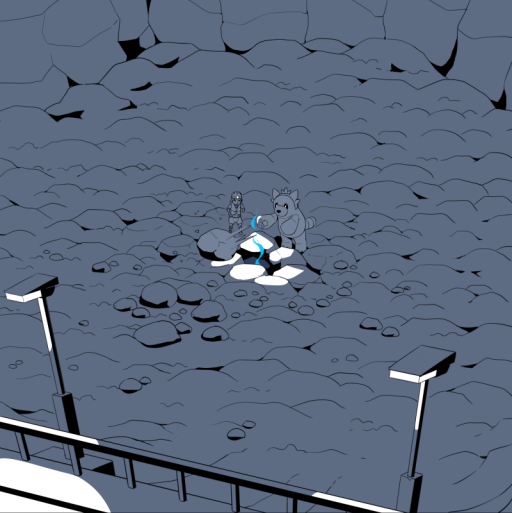


**#445: GARCHOMP**  
**MISSION COMPLETE!**

WITH SO MUCH AIR HAVING BEEN SUCKED IN, I CAN'T HELP BUT RELEASE A LOUD, TRIUMPHANT BELCH, WHICH ECHOES ACROSS THE CAVERNOUS CHAMBER. I FEEL MY CHEST SWELL WITH PRIDE, THOUGH NOT NEARLY AS MUCH AS MY IMPRESSIVE DRAGON-FILLED BELLY.



**ALMOST AS IF ON CUE, THE CEILING COLLAPSES, BEAMS OF LIGHT POURING IN FROM THE OUTSIDE. I QUICKLY SLUMP DOWN ONTO MY BACK AS A CASCADE OF ROCKS TUMBLES DOWN OVER ME. I BRING UP MY SHIELD AND HOPE THAT THE GARCHOMP CAN PREVENT MY LOWER VITAL PARTS FROM BEING CRUSHED.**



"C'MON, BEWEAR, YOU CAN DO IT! I CAN FINALLY SEE SOMETHING!  
JUST A FEW MORE ROCKS MAYBE! HEY! HANG IN THERE!  
WE'LL GET YOU OUT!"



#445: GARCHOMP  
DIGESTED

"W-WELL, LOOK AT WHAT WE FOUND! A...REALLY WELL-FED RIOLLI! SHE DEFINITELY BELONGS TO SOMEONE. LET'S GET HER TO A POKECENTER RIGHT AWAY. B-BEWEAR, HELP ME OUT HERE, WILL YA?"